

How To Update Your Website After the Holidays

Your website is a podium for your brand and identity. Therefore, it should be: easy to navigate, have a persistent tone and voice throughout and contain relevant, updated content. Below is a post-summer checklist Scholantis has created in order to get your website back in great shape after the holidays and maintain the upkeep of your site:

Updates and Links

It's crucial that all content is up-to-date and all new/existing links are working. Users come to your site seeking immediate and relevant information. If content is old, it will keep users from coming back and injure your credibility to deliver correct information. This will also result in more phone calls to your staff to find out the information they were initially looking for. Make sure your checklist includes updating everything from calendars, menus and newsletters to RFPs and registration forms.

Broken links will also damage your usability and ranking. Make sure they all point to the right place with no "error 404" pages.

Tip: You can use a broken link checker such as [DeadLinkChecker](#), which will crawl your website for you and identify broken links.

Intuitive Navigation and Layout

Navigation is the "gravity" to your website. Without it, information will float around your site with no order and therefore less accessibility. Users need a navigation that is both intuitive and fully-functioning so they can find what they are looking for, without spending hours trying to locate it.

They also need a simple layout where: sections are spaced correctly (to allow content to breathe and make it easier to read), there is a good use of instructive headings and page alignment is all in sync. Therefore, make sure both elements (navigation and layout) are operational yet easy to navigate.

Tip: Avoid clutter by having to the point navigation, such as: "About" rather than "About Our District".

Appearance in a Variety of Browsers

Most users will now visit your site from mobile or tablet devices. Make sure your design is not altered when accessed on devices other than a desktop. For example, can you only see one part of the page when visiting on a mobile? Do you have to scroll across to see the rest of it? Are images showing up correctly? If there is an issue, make sure you contact your website designer to help you fix the problem.

Tip: You can check your site is mobile friendly with [Google](#).

Graphics

Do you have any images that don't fit the page and look skewed or pixelated? Are there any images that look outdated? The way your website looks will affect how your users feel about it, so make sure all images are relevant to the information and are the correct dimensions.

Tip: There are many free stock image websites such as [Unsplash](#) and [Pexels](#) if you need new images and don't have the time to take your own.

Spelling and grammar

Make sure all spelling and grammar is correct. This will help set the tone of your school or district. For example, if you have personal profiles:

- Mrs Horry likes cooking her pet dog and teaching English.

With the correct punctuation, this sentence would read:

- Mrs Horry likes: cooking, her pet dog and teaching English.

Spelling and grammar change the way sentences read and should be high up on the list of priorities when checking your websites. Incorrect spelling or missing words from sentences decreases the value of the information and its credibility, not to mention your district or school's professionalism.

Tip: Mozilla Firefox has a [spell-checker](#) add-on that checks each page individually and highlights errors in bright green (not 100% reliable but works decently).

Tone – School Style Guide

The answer to tone is having a clear style guide for your district or school to follow. A style guide is a document that briefly defines the set of rules you expect your organization to follow. It outlines your lists of do's and don'ts. This can include everything from logo design to font styles and colour palettes.

Although it can sometimes feel like a style guide is another thing to add to your never-ending "to-do" list, having one actually saves you time, because you won't have to monitor your staff's content to make sure it is consistent!

Here at Scholantis, we help schools and districts give their websites a refresh. We advise a refresh every 5-10 years to ensure a good user experience and best practices. If you feel your site needs a little more revamp than our post-summer checklist calls for, be sure to get in touch at info@scholantis.com.