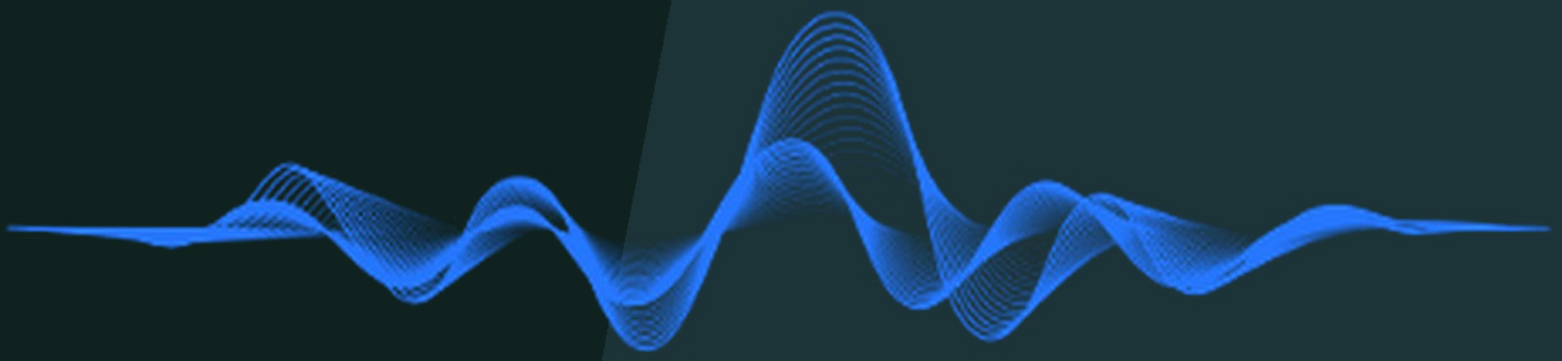
OUTSPOQEN MEDIA INC.

ROI Case Studies of Website Modernization

How faster, clearer and more accessible websites can increase revenue, strengthen customer confidence and reduce operating costs



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Executive Summary

Website modernization is not merely a visual redesign. It is a strategic investment in the digital experience through which customers evaluate, engage with and purchase from an organization. Modernization may include improvements to website speed, mobile usability, navigation, accessibility, content, search visibility, analytics and content-management systems.

The financial value of modernization is created when these improvements influence customer behaviour or organizational efficiency. A faster website may reduce abandonment. Clearer navigation may increase inquiries or purchases. Better mobile usability may improve engagement, while an updated content-management system may reduce the staff time required to publish information.

Published case studies demonstrate that these effects can be commercially significant. In a case study published in 2021, Vodafone reported that an optimized landing page generated 8% more sales than an otherwise identical version. In 2022, Rakuten 24 reported over 50% more revenue per visitor and a 33% higher conversion rate following performance improvements. Pinterest's mobile-web modernization, conducted between 2017 and 2018, was associated with a 44% increase in user-generated ad-revenue.

These results should not be interpreted as universal benchmarks. Website outcomes depend on traffic quality, brand strength, product demand, pricing, competitive conditions and the severity of the problems being corrected. Nevertheless, the evidence supports a clear managerial conclusion: when website friction affects commercially important customer actions, modernization can produce measurable financial value.

The appropriate investment question is therefore not simply, "What will a new website cost?" Decision-makers should also ask, "What revenue, customer confidence and employee capacity are being lost because the present website is slow, confusing, inaccessible or difficult to maintain?"

The Scope of Website Modernization

A comprehensive modernization initiative may include:

- Improving page speed so priority content appears and responds more quickly.
- Introducing responsive layouts that function effectively across desktop, tablet and mobile devices.
- Simplifying navigation and clarifying the paths to purchase, contact, quote or book an appointment.
- Updating content, search-engine optimization, accessibility and privacy practices.
- Applying analytics and conversion tracking to connect website activity to revenue-generating actions.
- Replacing outdated technology with a modern content-management system.
- Reducing repetitive customer inquiries through clearer information and self-service functionality.
- Strengthening security, reliability and compatibility with currently supported platforms.

The relevance of each component depends on the organization's objectives. An e-commerce company may prioritize conversion rate and average order value, while a professional-services firm may focus on qualified inquiries. A publisher may emphasize audience retention, and a service organization may seek to reduce administrative workload.

Evidence Across Industries

In research published in March 2020, Deloitte Digital analyzed mobile-site performance across retail, travel, luxury and lead-generation organizations. The study used data collected between October 28 and November 24, 2019, and examined the relationship between improvements in mobile speed and business performance.

Deloitte reported that a 0.1-second improvement in mobile load time was associated with an 8.4% increase in retail conversion and a 9.2% increase in average order value. Travel conversion increased by 10.1%, while lead-generation bounce rates improved by 8.3%.[1]

The study did not suggest that every business would experience the same return. Rather, it demonstrated that relatively small improvements in the customer experience can produce financially meaningful effects when applied across a large volume of website traffic.

Commercial Performance Case Studies

Vodafone: Faster Landing Pages

In a case study published in March 2021, Vodafone reported the results of an A/B test designed to evaluate the commercial effect of faster website performance. The company improved Largest Contentful Paint, or LCP, by 31%. LCP measures how quickly the principal content within a webpage becomes visible.

Vodafone achieved this improvement by:

- Moving the rendering of a website component from the visitor's browser to Vodafone's server.
- Preparing critical webpage content on the server so it could appear sooner.
- Resizing and optimizing the main hero image.
- Improving SVG and PNG image files.
- Deferring the loading of off-screen images until visitors approached them.

The optimized and control landing pages were visually and functionally identical. Traffic from paid display, mobile applications, search and social media was divided equally between the two versions. Each version received approximately 100,000 clicks and 34,000 visits per day, allowing Vodafone to isolate page performance as the primary experimental variable.

The optimized page reduced LCP from approximately 8.3 seconds to 5.7 seconds. It generated 8% more sales, improved the lead-to-visit rate[1] by 15% and increased the cart-to-visit rate[2] by 11%. [2]

Key Takeaway: Vodafone's controlled test directly connected a technical improvement with customer behaviour and sales. Although the company did not disclose implementation costs or calculate a formal ROI, the test provides credible evidence that website speed can impact commercial performance.

Rakuten 24: Investment in Core Web Vitals

In an August 2022 case study, Rakuten 24 reported the results of an extensive website-performance initiative. The company optimized JavaScript, removed unused code, introduced more effective caching, improved image delivery and reduced unexpected layout movement.

Rakuten 24 also developed an internal performance dashboard that connected real-user website data with business metrics. To evaluate causality more rigorously, the company conducted a one-month A/B test in which half of the traffic visited an optimized landing page and half visited the original version. The two pages were otherwise visually and functionally identical.

Compared with the original page, the optimized version produced:

- 53.37% more revenue per visitor.
- A 33.13% increase in conversion rate.
- A 15.20% increase in average order value.
- A 9.99% increase in average time spent on the page.
- A 35.12% reduction in exit rate.[3]

Key Takeaways Rakuten 24's results are particularly valuable because they connect website performance with revenue per visitor rather than relying exclusively on technical indicators. The company did not disclose its implementation costs, so a formal ROI cannot be calculated from the published evidence.

Pinterest: Rebuilding the Mobile-Web Experience

Pinterest began rebuilding its mobile website as a Progressive Web App in July 2017. The company launched the new experience progressively: an initial version for signed-in users appeared in August 2017, the full signed-in experience followed in September 2017, and the signed-out experience was introduced between January and February 2018.

The previous mobile website loaded slowly and converted relatively few visitors into active users. The modernization reduced the initial JavaScript payload, improved performance on limited network connections and created a more app-like mobile experience.

Compared with the previous mobile website, Pinterest reported:

- A 40% increase in time spent.
- A 60% increase in core user engagement.
- A 44% increase in user-generated advertising revenue.[4][6]

Key Takeaways Pinterest's results demonstrate that modernization can affect both engagement and monetization. The published case studies do not provide complete development costs, preventing a conventional ROI calculation. However, the increase in advertising revenue indicates that the project created measurable commercial value rather than engagement alone.

Audience, Retention and Re-engagement Case Studies

The Washington Post: Faster Mobile Publishing

In June 2015, *The Washington Post* joined a group of publishers and technology companies developing the Accelerated Mobile Pages initiative. At the time, approximately 55% of the publication's traffic originated from mobile devices, making mobile speed an important element of audience retention.

The resulting pages loaded 88% faster than the publication's conventional mobile pages. The proportion of mobile-search visitors who returned within seven days increased by 23%, and the organization scaled the format to more than 1,000 articles per day.[5]

Key Takeaways The principal reported outcome was retention rather than direct revenue. For an advertising and subscription supported publisher, however, an increase in returning readers can generate additional page views, advertising inventory and subscription opportunities.

The Weather Channel: Progressive Mobile Experience

In 2016, The Weather Channel tested and deployed Progressive Web App capabilities across international markets. The initiative addressed an important audience challenge: approximately half of its mobile traffic came through the mobile website rather than its native application.

The modernization introduced faster loading and browser-based severe-weather notifications. The international experience became available in 62 languages across 178 countries and improved load time by 80%. Within three months, almost one million users had opted to receive web notifications, with 52% of those registrations originating from mobile devices. Following the international test, the organization planned to extend the experience to its United States website in 2017.[5]

Key Takeaways The project improved speed, international reach and the organization's ability to re-engage users without requiring an application download. Although revenue and project costs were not disclosed, notification subscribers represented a measurable audience that could generate future visits, advertising impressions and subscription opportunities.

Flipkart: App-Like Mobile Commerce

In 2015, Flipkart reconsidered an app-only strategy that had temporarily removed its mobile website. The company recognized that requiring an application download created friction for customers using slower networks, limited mobile data or devices with restricted storage.

Flipkart launched Flipkart Lite, its Progressive Web App, in November 2015. The new experience used service workers, streamlined page delivery and reduced data consumption while allowing customers to browse selected content offline.

Following implementation:

- Average time on site increased from 70 seconds to 3.5 minutes.
- Re-engagement increased by 40%.
- Data use was three times lower than in the native application.
- Visitors arriving through an added home-screen icon converted 70% more frequently than the average visitor.[5][7]

Key Takeaways Flipkart reduced technical and behavioural barriers while improving engagement and conversion among a clearly defined customer segment. Because total revenue, contribution margin and implementation costs were not published, the company's financial ROI cannot be calculated from the available evidence.

Measuring the Return on Website Modernization

Measure Contribution, Not Revenue Alone

Incremental revenue is not equivalent to financial return. A website may increase sales but still produce an unattractive investment return if gross margins are low or implementation and operating costs are excessive. For this reason, organizations should calculate ROI using the gross profit or contribution generated by the improvement, together with measurable operating savings:

First-year ROI = (incremental contribution + operating savings − project and first-year operating costs) ÷ project and first-year operating costs

Example: Modernizing an Existing Website

Assume that a website receives 60,000 qualified visits annually and converts 2% of those visits into customers. The website therefore produces 1,200 customers per year.

If modernization increases conversion by 10% relative to the original conversion rate, the organization gains 120 additional customers. At an average gross profit of $500 per customer, the improvement generates $60,000 in incremental gross profit.

If the project costs $25,000 and reduces staff workload by an additional $5,000 during the first year, the first-year ROI is 160%:

($60,000 + $5,000 − $25,000) ÷ $25,000 = 160%

This calculation assumes that the additional conversions can reasonably be attributed to the website and that other important variables—such as pricing, advertising and product availability—remain sufficiently stable.

Example: Developing a First Website

An organization developing its first website cannot conduct a direct before-and-after website comparison. Instead, it should track qualified inquiries or purchases attributable to the new channel.

Assume the website generates 15 qualified inquiries per month and 20% become customers. The website would create 36 customers annually. At an average gross profit of $1,000 per customer, annual incremental gross profit would be $36,000.

If development costs $15,000 and first-year maintenance costs $2,000, the first-year ROI would be approximately 112%:

($36,000 − $17,000) ÷ $17,000 = 111.8%

This estimate is credible only if the inquiries are genuinely incremental rather than customers who would have arrived through another channel.

Measuring the Full Range of Benefits

A complete evaluation should consider the following categories:

- **Sales:** Purchases, bookings, quote requests and qualified leads attributable to the website.
- **Efficiency:** Reduced manual data entry, fewer repetitive inquiries and faster content updates.
- **Retention:** Repeat visits, account usage, renewals and successful self-service interactions.
- **Risk reduction:** Accessibility, security, privacy and platform-support problems addressed.
- **Visibility:** Qualified organic traffic, branded search activity, local discovery and referral traffic.
- **Customer confidence:** Improvements in credibility, comprehension and perceived professionalism.

Some benefits are easier to value than others. Sales and labour savings can often be translated directly into financial terms. Brand confidence and risk reduction may require proxy measures, including customer surveys, task-completion rates, support volume and changes in qualified traffic.

Summary of Key Takeaways

Before modernization begins, the organization should establish baseline measurements for:

- Website speed and technical stability.
- Qualified traffic by channel and device.
- Conversion rates and lead quality.
- Revenue or contribution per visitor.
- Customer-service demand.
- Staff time devoted to routine website maintenance.
- Mobile and accessibility performance.

Management should then identify the customer behaviours the project is expected to improve. These objectives must be specific enough to measure—for example, increasing completed quote requests, reducing checkout abandonment or lowering repetitive service inquiries.

Following launch, performance should be reviewed at 30, 90 and 180 days. Comparisons should use equivalent periods and account for changes in advertising, pricing, seasonality, product availability and broader market conditions. Where practical, organizations should use A/B tests, phased releases or comparable control groups to distinguish website effects from other influences.

Conclusion

The evidence does not support modernizing a website solely because its appearance is dated. A stronger business case begins with an identifiable source of customer or operational friction and connects that problem to a measurable outcome.

The most persuasive modernization proposals therefore establish a baseline, identify the value of removing specific barriers and define how performance will be evaluated after implementation. When faster performance, clearer communication and easier customer journeys improve commercially important actions, website modernization should be understood not as a cosmetic expense, but as a measurable investment in marketing productivity and organizational performance.

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