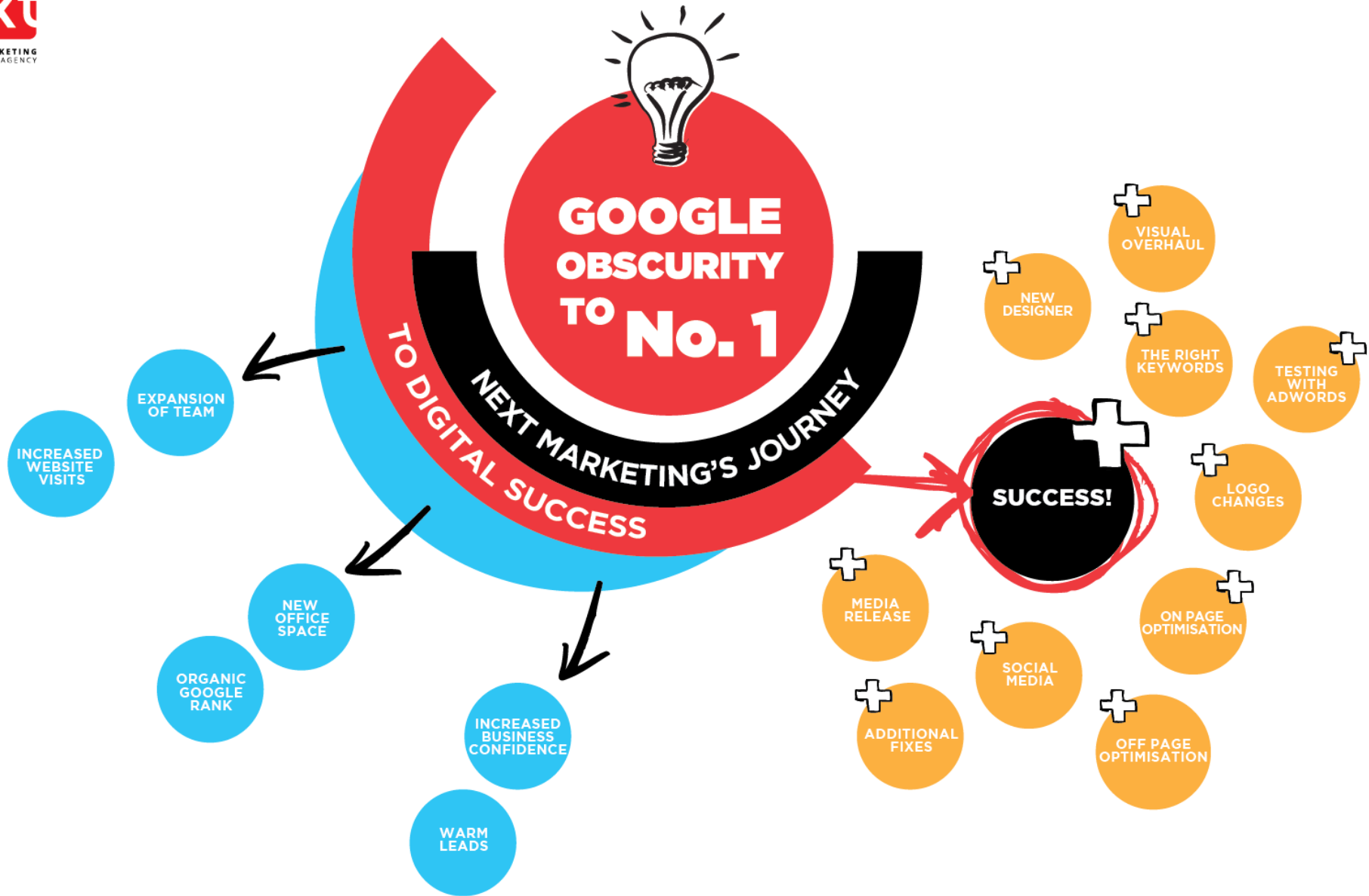


**AMI MARKETING  
AWARDS SUBMISSION  
CATEGORY 12:  
MARKETING ON A  
SHOESTRING**

MAY 2013



**NEXT MARKETING**  
AGENCY





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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Next Marketing is a small marketing agency based in Melbourne.

In April 2012, the website for the business was not performing as well as it could have been. Next Marketing's proprietor, Jo Macdermott, decided that it was time to speak to some Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) professionals about how to improve the site's search engine rankings, and overall volume of traffic.

One phone call to a SEO company started a chain of events which led to a brave step into the unknown for the Next Marketing team - a creative overhaul of the entire branding for the business and a completely new website.

Rather than choosing the tried and tested method of paying professional SEO consultants to handle the SEO for the site, the Next Marketing team decided to take an original approach and expand their basic knowledge of SEO by doing it themselves.

Twelve months later, the Next Marketing website is in the number one position on Google for the keywords:

- Marketing Agency
- Marketing Agency Melbourne.

Next Marketing is also placed on page one of search results for several other keywords such as:

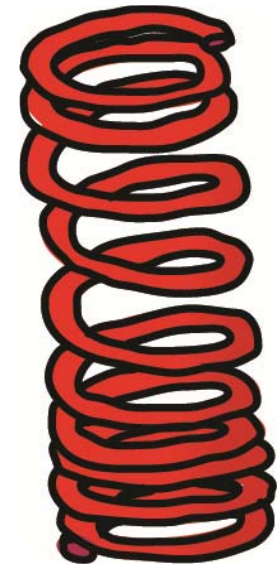
- Small Business Marketing
- Marketing Consultant.

The average number of website hits increased by 29%, and enquiries rose from non-existent, to around 17 enquiries per month.

Next Marketing has also:

- Expanded and moved into its own office space
- Been able to develop a website that generates new leads every week.

With Return On Expenditure (ROE) of 574%, the results were far beyond expectations.



# THE ISSUES



## THE ISSUES

In April 2012, the Next Marketing website was nowhere to be seen on Google, and it wasn't generating any leads.

The clients that were being drawn to the business were also not ideal. With few leads coming in, and barely any traffic from the website, it was proving difficult to attract the higher budget, higher value clients that Next Marketing wanted to target.

Next Marketing also recognised that if the business was going to expand, the website needed to start working more effectively, but there were a number of problems that needed to be addressed. These included:

### STRUCTURAL ISSUES WITH THE SITE

The website back-end was in two parts - a blog in WordPress (open source), and the main site in a privately owned (closed source) Content Management System (CMS).

This meant the design of the two sites wasn't seamless and there was additional effort required to maintain both areas. There were also problems in sourcing third party assistance.

### HIRING HELP

Jo rang a SEO company in Melbourne with the view of engaging them to work on the Next Marketing website from a SEO perspective.

That company advised that they were unable to work on the site because it was not completely hosted on an open source CMS, and that was how they did business. To enable a project like this to be undertaken, the two sites would need to be merged into one open source platform. A much bigger project than Jo initially anticipated.



## NO SEO

The Next Marketing website had no search engine optimisation at all.

The site had been live for four years, and in that time SEO had substantially changed. With the structural issues noted above, the best solution for optimising the site appeared to be to start again from scratch, with a new site hosted entirely in an open source platform such as WordPress.

Through this process, the importance of SEO was highlighted to the Next Marketing team. The team saw this as a service they should be able to advise their clients on and agreed that the best way to learn was to work on the Next Marketing website in-house.

## DESIGN ISSUES

The clients that were being attracted to the business were not in line with the audience Next Marketing wanted to target. The marketing materials needed to be updated, along with the rest of the visual materials for the business.

The website design itself was out of date, and in need of revamping. However, the current designers were not performing at a satisfactory level, so a new design team was necessary as well.

Please see Appendix One for before and after website designs.





# THE SOLUTION





## THE SOLUTION

Faced with a 'sliding doors' moment, the Next Marketing team had a number of choices and these included:

1. Recreating the entire site and then handing over to a SEO company to implement the necessary SEO elements
2. Do nothing and continuing to suffer from low Google rankings
3. Take an alternative and perhaps radical step of learning about SEO and managing it, and other online marketing, in-house.

Rather than simply adapting the previous site and marketing materials, Next Marketing took a course of action that led to a complete overhaul of the site, the Next Marketing team, and a creative rebranding of the entire business. These actions included:

1. Finding a new designer and a visual overhaul of the Next Marketing branding
2. Finding the right keywords and testing via Google AdWords
3. Changing the Next Marketing logo
4. On and off-page optimisation
5. Social media updates
6. Media releases
7. Ongoing website fixes.

The process of working out these steps and the actions required in each was a result of research, and trial and error.

### NEW DESIGNER AND VISUAL OVERHAUL

It was clear that the visual elements of the site were out of date. The first step was to find a new designer who was aligned with the concept of how Next Marketing needed to be presented, from a visual perspective, in order to attract the right customers and give the business a fresher, more current look.

This process took a few attempts, but once the right person was found, the team began work on redesigning the site, along with the other visual marketing materials.



## GETTING THE RIGHT KEYWORDS

As noted above, the Next Marketing website had no keyword optimisation and no keyword research had been undertaken to determine which keywords would be worth targeting.

Identifying the relevant keywords was a lengthy process, which took extensive research, education and testing, and also involved finding a new marketing assistant to help with the process.

The keyword research identified the term 'marketing agency' as being particularly relevant to the services that Next Marketing provided. This and a list of other keywords were identified as the words to target, through the website and the blog.

## TESTING WITH ADWORDS

Once the keywords were identified, they were tested using Google AdWords. This led to the discovery that the keyword 'marketing agency', although highly effective in generating leads, was not cost effective to use in a long term AdWords campaign. The cost per click varied, however was circa \$10 per click.

## LOGO CHANGES

The Next Marketing logo was changed to incorporate the term 'marketing agency'. Please see Appendix Two.

Although the logo change was small, the actual meaning behind the wording led to the radical step of the creative rebranding. This included the entire suite of visual marketing materials, including invoice templates, style guide and proposal templates.

This helped to change the look and feel of the business to be more in line with attracting the right target audience.





## ON-PAGE OPTIMISATION

Once the right keywords were determined and tested, the new site was designed, coded and launched.

This was a colossal task, requiring the Next Marketing team to edit all the existing content and blog posts (approx. 200 blogs), and insert the keywords in the relevant places such as the title tags (headers), meta descriptions (text that is shown in Google URLs), content, images and much more.

There was a large amount of content already on the site, and this was a lengthy and exhaustive process. However, it was well worth the effort.

The overall process took about eight weeks and the new site, complete with a new design, went live in June 2012.

## OFF-PAGE OPTIMISATION

Once the on-page optimisation was under control and the new site was live and had settled down, the next phase of the SEO process, off-page optimisation, was begun.

There was a lot of good quality content on the site, but it was not working as well as it could have. The Next Marketing team decided to turn their attention to finding ways to get more mileage out of the existing content through link building, and listings in online directories.

This involved finding another assistant to assist in building back links to the Next Marketing site to increase its standing in Google. Once the right person was brought into the team, they began submitting content to online directories, aiming for 30 directories per week.





## SOCIAL MEDIA

All the work that the Next Marketing team was doing on the SEO and branding of the business also led to improvements in its social media presence.

Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn profiles all benefited from new design elements and the strategic use of keywords. Please see Appendix Three.

Content that was created for the Next Marketing blog was posted and promoted through social media channels, as a means of increasing the ROI from each piece of content.

This process was automated through HootSuite, and led to an increase in visits to the site from social media channels, particularly LinkedIn.

## MEDIA RELEASE

In October 2012, Next Marketing was a finalist in the AMI Marketing awards. The team decided to leverage this, gain increased online exposure and traffic, and build authority with prospective clients.

A media release was produced and submitted to online PR directories, which led to a big boost in enquiries, SEO rankings and leads that continued to build for the remainder of 2012.



## ADDITIONAL WEBSITE FIXES

By February 2013, the momentum and adrenaline from the 2012 activity had started to wear off and a review of the strategy was needed. There was a dip in leads generated and search engine rankings, which led to further research and fixing some underlying on-page optimisation problems that were found with the website.

A peer review system was implemented for all the SEO work, with an external third party independent from the website developer, checking completed work on the site. It was decided that as SEO was so critical to Next Marketing, the extra effort and expense was justified.

New content was created that made strategic use of the keywords 'marketing agency'. Groups of interlinking articles known as 'link wheels' were also created to make use of a number of specific keywords. These were published in various directories. As Next Marketing had moved to its own premises, the existing directory listings were updated with the new Next Marketing office address.

Within a few weeks, Next Marketing had risen to number one on Google searches for the key phrase 'marketing agency Melbourne', and a few weeks later it also achieved first place for the keywords 'marketing agency'.



# THE RESULT





## THE RESULT

### OVERALL

The result of all this hard work, all within a year, was astounding.

Since the new website was launched, average monthly visits have increased by:

1. Total visits +35%
2. Google organic traffic +47%
3. Traffic from other sources +28%.

Next Marketing is not only more easily found in Google, the visual overhaul and social media improvements have also contributed to an increase in direct website traffic as well.

### RETURN ON EXPENDITURE

The ROE for this campaign was an impressive 574%.

### WARM LEADS

The increased activity has also led to many more warm leads for Next Marketing. Customers are well informed and ready to buy when contacting Next Marketing to arrange a meeting.

In April 2013, there were 17 warm leads generated via the website, compared to none prior to the launch.

In short, more prospects are finding Next Marketing online, they like what they see and are making contact to take things further.

### MONTH BY MONTH RESULTS

The momentum has been building each month since the new website launch and the latest monthly data (April 2013) since achieving the #1 Google ranking show an even more impressive increase compared to the old site.

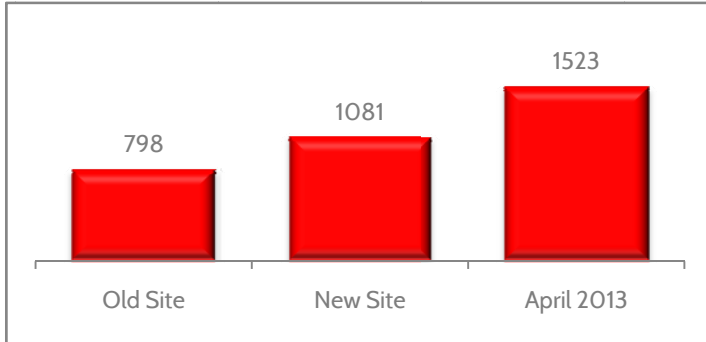
1. Total visits +91%
2. Google organic visits +103%
3. Other source visits +83%.



## GOOGLE ANALYTICS DATA

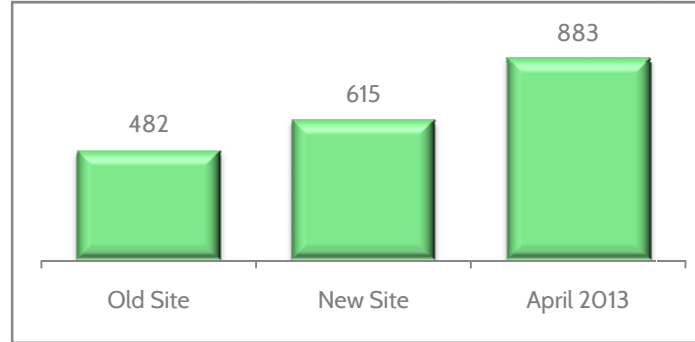
### NEXT MARKETING WEBSITE

Average monthly visits - all sources \*



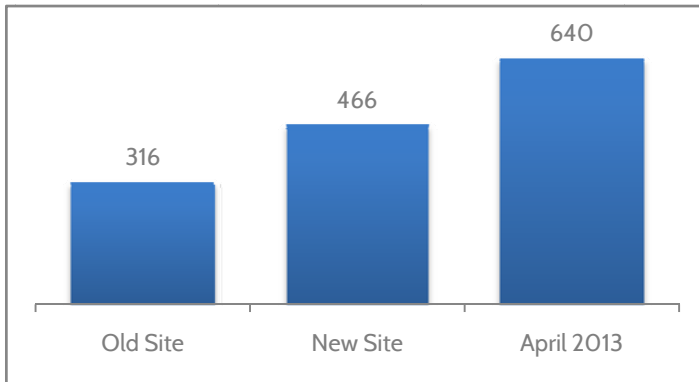
### NEXT MARKETING WEBSITE

Average monthly visits - other sources (non Google) \*



### NEXT MARKETING WEBSITE

Average monthly visits - Google organic \*



\* Data date range is:

- Old site - April 2011 - June 2012
- New site - July 2012 - April 2013
- Current - April 2013

# BUSINESS OUTCOMES



## BUSINESS OUTCOMES

There were a number of extremely positive business outcomes for Next Marketing as a result of these changes.

### EXPANSION OF THE NEXT MARKETING TEAM

The transformation of Next Marketing, along with its brand and website, led to a number of new members being added to the Next Marketing team, including two marketing assistants and a new designer.

This not only added value to Next Marketing, but gave the business' clients an added wealth of expertise to draw from, and meant that Next Marketing could offer a higher quality of service.

### ABLE TO MOVE INTO OWN OFFICE SPACE DUE TO INCREASED NUMBERS OF CLIENTS

Where previously Next Marketing had been operating from shared office space, the amount of new business coming in meant that the business was able to afford to move into its own premises for the first time.

The lease was negotiated in January 2012, and Next Marketing moved soon after that. This was a big step in the evolution of the business.

### GREATLY INCREASED BUSINESS CONFIDENCE

With the amount of business coming in, and the regular enquiries from new clients, business confidence increased giving Next Marketing the courage to drive the business forward to the next level.

Reaching number one on Google showed that Next Marketing could achieve what many other bigger businesses were unable to - through creativity, innovation and sheer determination.



**APPENDIX 1:  
WEBSITE DESIGN  
BEFORE & AFTER**



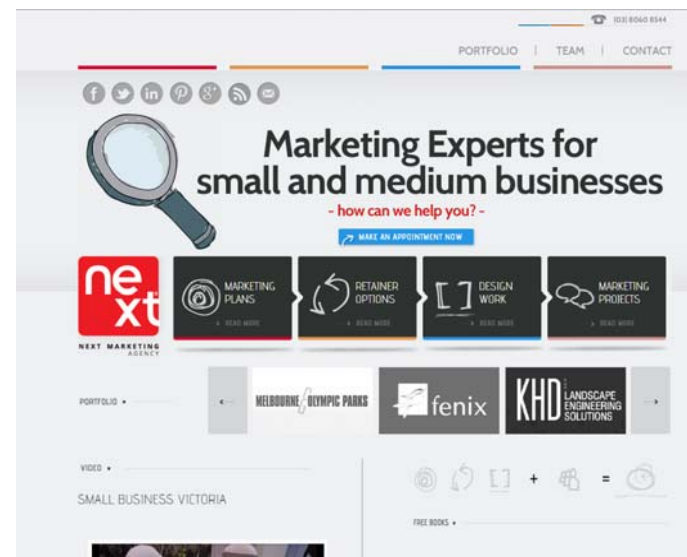
# APPENDIX 1: WEBSITE DESIGN BEFORE & AFTER

## HOME PAGE

Before the redesign...



After the redesign...

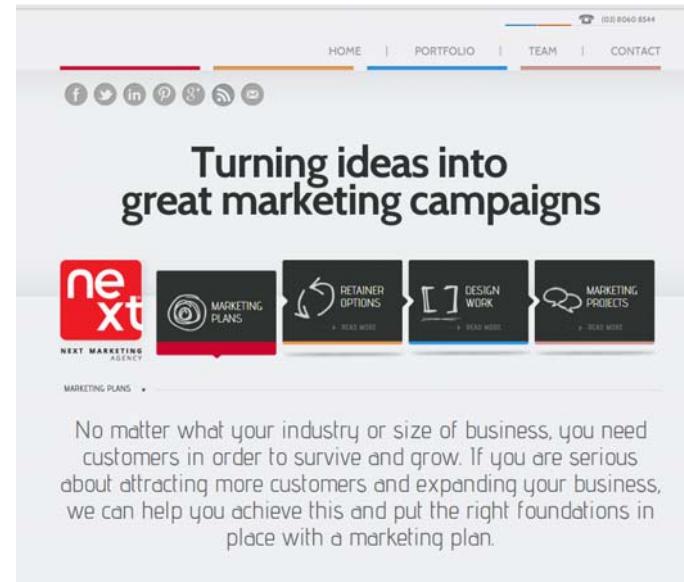


## INTERNAL PAGE

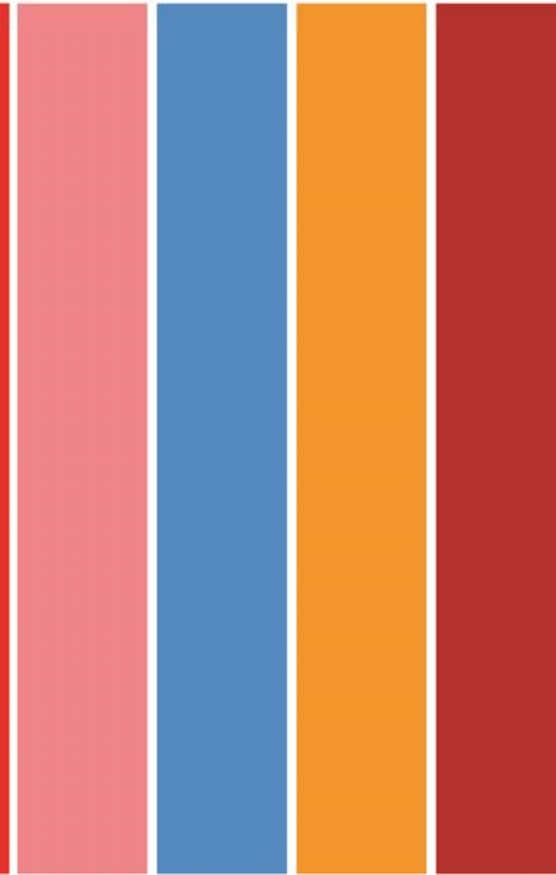
Before the redesign...



After the redesign...



**APPENDIX 2:  
LOGO DESIGN  
BEFORE & AFTER**



## APPENDIX 2: LOGO DESIGN BEFORE & AFTER

Before the redesign...



After the redesign...





**APPENDIX 3:  
SOCIAL MEDIA  
PROFILES AFTER**



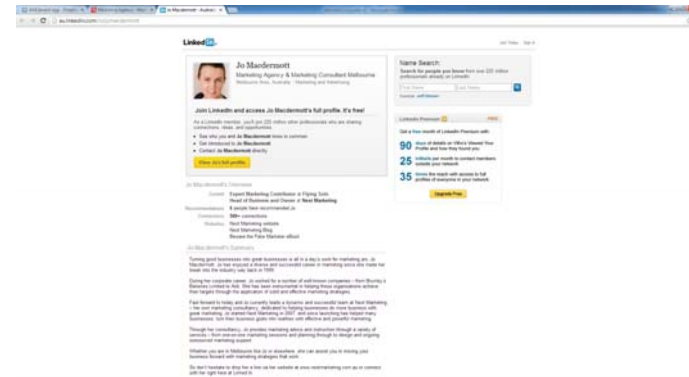


## APPENDIX 3: SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILES - AFTER

### FACEBOOK



### LINKEDIN



### TWITTER



**THANK YOU FOR  
YOUR CONSIDERATION**

**NEXT MARKETING**  
**JO MACDERMOTT**  
AFAMI CPM

