



LADYBUGZ
INTERACTIVE AGENCY

A BIOTECH STARTUP'S GUIDE

A GUIDE TO LAUNCHING AND
GROWING YOUR BRAND

Prepared By

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INTRODUCTION

Biotech companies operate in a maelstrom of competition. The greatest challenge is for early-stage biotech companies seeking funding to get their product off the ground.

Congratulations if you've made it through the funding dip of 2022 and 2023! The good news is that experts predict a healthy recovery in 2024, with venture capitalist (VC) investors once again providing robust financing for innovative, disruptive platforms.

Experts predict the biotech market will grow at a staggering 14% CAGR (compound annual growth rate) between 2023 and 2032.

HOW CAN YOU GET A PIECE OF THE PIE?

Biotech companies increasingly rely on digital marketing as their primary source for lead generation, customer acquisition, and brand awareness. This guide will help you understand digital marketing for biotech companies, learn about related concepts and techniques, and learn how to select a digital marketing agency that will maximize your digital marketing opportunities.

DEFINITION: WHAT IS DIGITAL MARKETING?

According to Investopedia, "Digital marketing is the use of websites, apps, mobile devices, social media, search engines, and other digital means to promote and sell products and services." Digital marketing techniques include search engine optimization (SEO), Google Ads, paid social ads, social media posts, AI, mobile phone techniques, and more.

SET YOUR DIGITAL MARKETING GOALS

If you're reading this guidebook, you're most likely considering finding a digital marketing or web design agency. You may not yet have a website, or you may have one with limited capabilities. It's time to step it up to the next level.

Failure to build a professional, high-performing website will hold you back from critical opportunities for funding, recruitment, partnerships, and customer acquisition.

If you need to make progress with your digital marketing efforts, you've come to the right place.

IDENTIFY YOUR KEY DIGITAL MARKETING OBJECTIVES

Just as you have business goals, a good first step is for your team to discuss strategic objectives and priorities for your website. What does your company need in your current stage of development?

I WANT MY WEBSITE AND DIGITAL MARKETING PLANS TO.....

- Increase VC funding by demonstrating our company's progress and a clear path to commercialization.
- Build trust among consumers by answering their questions and showing positive results of our product.
- Shift our primary marketing focus from getting SEED funding to reaching the consumer market.
- Promote the availability of our new product to healthcare delivery professionals and consumers.
- Recruit top talent so we can meet our growth goals.

SET YOUR DIGITAL MARKETING GOALS

ALONGSIDE OF THIS DISCUSSION, IT'S HELPFUL TO SET DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT:

- The shortcomings of the current site
- General ideas for your future site (looking at your competitors' sites will help)
- The kind of image you want to present



You should end up with some preliminary ideas. You may not agree on everything, but that's okay. An agency with strategic experience and familiarity with the industry will help you identify your needs and translate them into a website designed for your unique needs.

AGENCY TIP:

Stay away from cookie-cutter agencies. Look for digital marketing experts who take a strategic approach, starting by exploring and defining your needs.

FIND THE RIGHT DIGITAL MARKETING AGENCY

You may have built your initial website internally, but you've grown a lot since then. Your new website needs to reflect your growth, innovation, and market potential. You're business leaders and scientists, experts in your niche. You'll want a digital agency with experts in designing websites for early stage biotech companies.

There are many digital marketing and web design agencies out there. How do you know which is the right one for your company? Here's a list of factors to use as you interview agencies:

10 FACTORS FOR DIGITAL AGENCY REVIEW

1

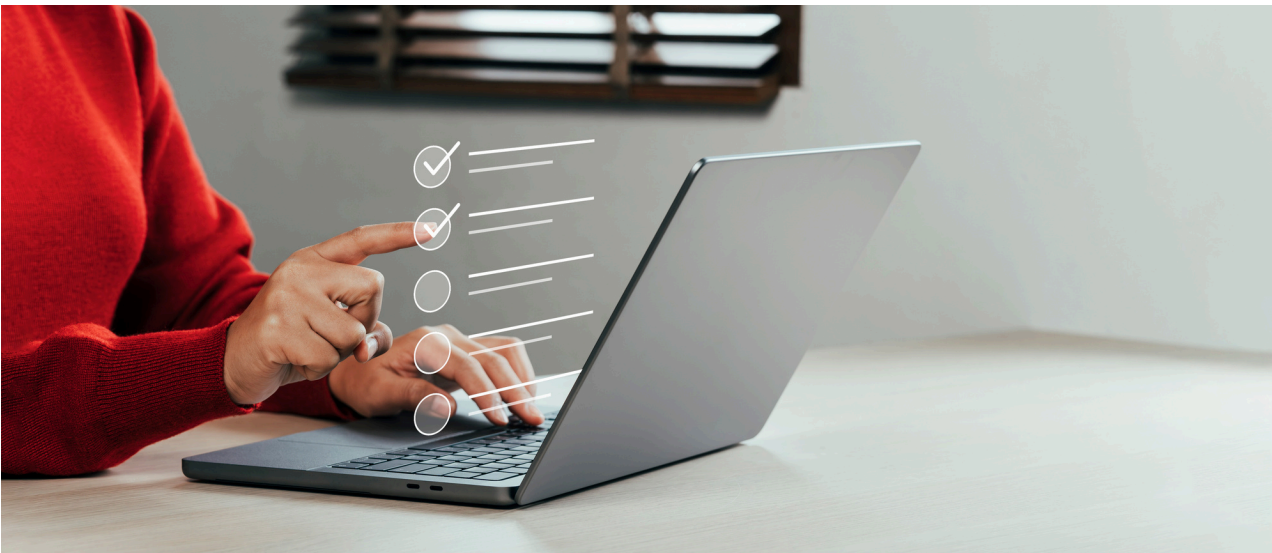
BUDGET AND TIMEFRAME:

A more substantial, complex site will cost more and take longer to develop than a smaller, simpler site. If an agency can't meet your desired website launch date (or your budget), ask about taking a phased approach—saving more complex capabilities for a future time and spreading out your budget. Agencies have various capabilities, expertise, and pricing models, so take care to gauge pricing with an apples-to-apples approach. Ensure the agency can meet your timeframe and budget without sacrificing quality.

2

STRATEGIC APPROACH:

Does the agency have marketing expertise. and can they tell you their general strategy and approach for developing an effective website?



3

BIOTECH EXPERIENCE:

Has the agency handled biotech clients in the past? Is the agency knowledgeable about biotech audiences, messaging, and industry website trends? Check out other biotech websites they have designed to see if they meet your aesthetics and ask for biotech client references.

4

CAPABILITIES AND AGENCY SIZE:

What services can the agency provide, such as SEO, content development, social media online ads, or e-newsletters? Larger agencies may have a greater range of offerings than smaller boutique agencies. However, a smaller agency may offer you more personalized attention.

5

SECURITY:

How does the agency ensure digital security? This factor is important to users (and Google), and it can have a significant financial and reputational impact on a company if its website data is stolen.

6

TRACK RECORD:

Can they discuss results with other clients? What do their clients say? What are their ratings from the BBB? Have they won digital marketing awards? Will they provide referrals?

7

TEAMWORK AND FIT:

Building a website is a complex process that requires close collaboration. In your early discussions with an agency, try to imagine working with them. Do you have a good rapport? Do you trust the expertise of their talent? Who will you be working with directly? What is their creative style? How do they communicate, and what is their process? Make sure these areas align with your team's working style.

8

DESIGN AESTHETICS:

Do you like the sites that they have designed?

9

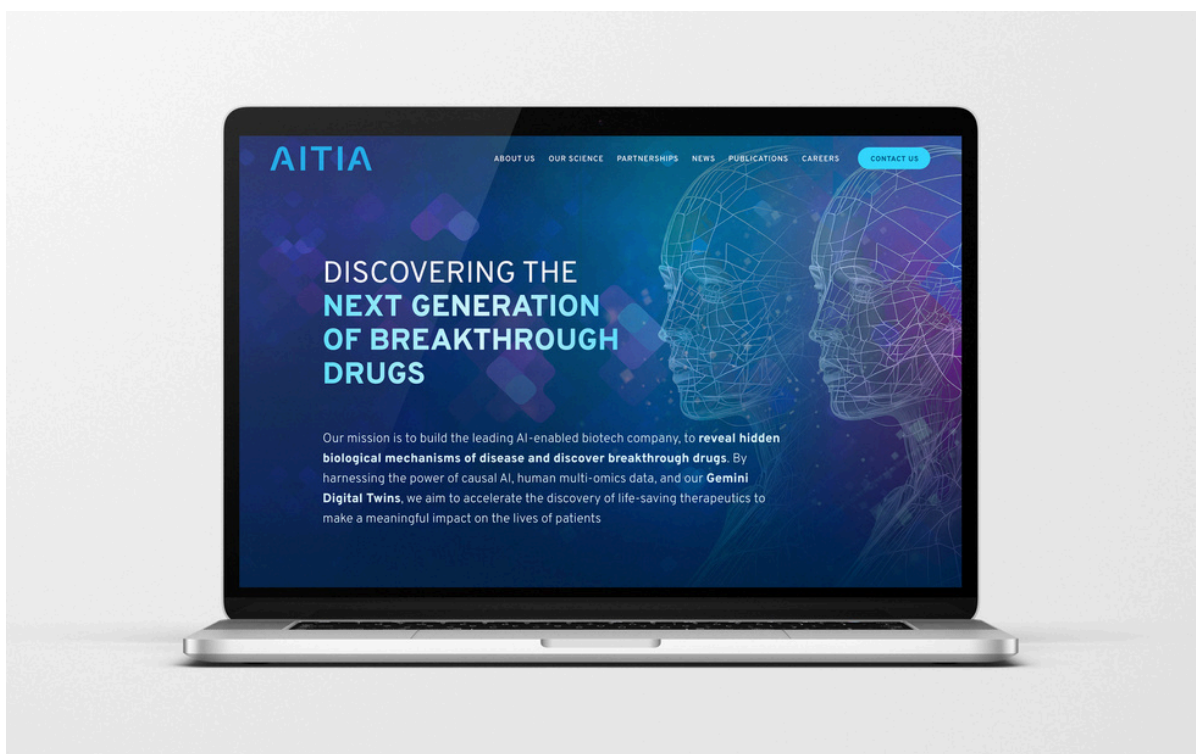
WEBSITE AND SUPPORT:

Websites are not stagnant and require ongoing upkeep. Ask the website agency about the maintenance and support services they offer.

10

ONGOING DIGITAL WORK:

Ongoing digital work: Can the agency work with you in the long run to monitor the site, report on website performance, and work with you on content updates and similar tasks?



ESTABLISH YOUR BRAND

Establishing a brand identity is the foundation of any marketing program and vital to attracting investors, partners, employees, and customers.

Successfully meeting your website goals requires that your website accurately convey who you are, what you offer, how you solve your audience's problem, how you are unique, and why it matters.

CREATING A SOLID BRAND IDENTITY REQUIRES DEFINING 4 BASIC COMPONENTS:

POSITIONING

IDENTIFYING TARGET AUDIENCES

MESSAGING FOR EACH AUDIENCE SEGMENT

VISUAL BRANDING

Let's look at the basics of creating a brand identity below and explore how they relate to developing your new website.

ESTABLISH YOUR BRAND

HOW STRONG IS YOUR MARKETING POSITIONING STRATEGY?

DEFINITION: WHAT IS MARKETING POSITIONING?

Market positioning is the strategic differentiation of a product to make it more valuable in the minds of consumers. It clarifies who you are to your target audience, the benefits of your offer, why you are the best company for them, how it solves the customers' problems, why it's different from other options.

Why should early-growth stage biotech companies establish a positioning strategy?

Your company and marketing strategy don't exist in a vacuum. Position is a way to explore your brand's challenges and opportunities—the foundation of any marketing strategy. From the positioning flows the definition of your key audiences, specific messages about your company, and your unique value proposition (UVP).

DEFINITION: WHAT IS UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION (UVP)?

"A unique value proposition (UVP) is the core benefit or solution that differentiates your product or service from the competition and positions it as the best possible option on the market."

(Source)

ESTABLISH YOUR BRAND

Your positioning strategy sets the stage for your brand identity, as well as your public image– the impression you want your customers to have about your company and its products.

What's your website's job? To promote your brand identity and set a positive image in the minds of your audience, consistently across all marketing channels.

How does solid positioning and UVP help your biotech brand?

CREATE MARKET DIFFERENTIATION:

Capture a larger market share by promoting your brand's uniqueness and the ability to solve problems better than the customer's offering.

STRENGTHEN YOUR BRAND IMAGE:

Tailor your messages to your target audiences, engendering trust and confidence in your brand.

PRIORITIZE VALUE OVER PRICE.

Convey your unique value proposition, focusing on value and innovation rather than price.

AGENCY TIP:

Share your market position and unique selling proposition with your agency to help them provide the greatest visibility, shine the best light on your company, and provide direction for website copy and other content.

DEFINE YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

Why is understanding your primary and secondary audiences so important? Only by knowing what makes each group tick can you determine the most relevant information to provide, the best way to convey it, and the right place to distribute it.

Your primary and secondary audiences will shift based on your stage of growth and development. For example, during the early SEED stage you may primarily focus on investors, but your growth also requires reaching potential employees and scientific partners. In later stages you may need to focus more on healthcare delivery and consumers while still seeking financial resources.

Each of these distinct audiences—some of whom may or may not be familiar with your industry, niche, or brand—has distinct demographics, information needs, communication preferences, and many other characteristics. A sound plan must be able to address each of these unique audience groups.

Who do you want to talk to now?

In general, it's best to identify and focus on the top one or two audiences to meet your current objective and growth stage. Even if you aren't yet in the commercialization stage, identifying and focusing your marketing efforts on your top-tier audiences will pay off. We can show this with the 80/20 rule, a popular marketing concept.

DEFINE YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

Define your audience with the 80/20 rule

The **80-20 (The Pareto Principle) rule** is about identifying your company's best assets and using them efficiently to create maximum value.

It asserts that 80% of your company's revenue comes from 20% of your selling efforts.

This concept suggests that marketers focus on a primary audience from which they can derive the greatest value. The lesson is to focus on the slice of the audience pie that will most efficiently drive future growth.

Focus your digital strategy on the top 20% to drive results

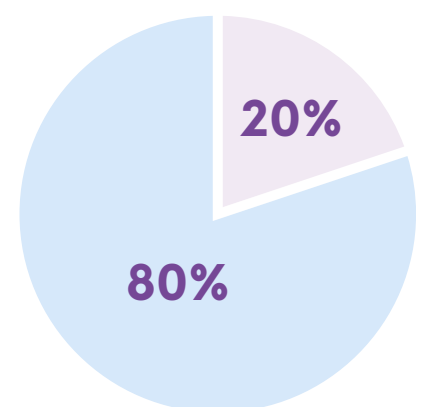
Audience: Who are the top 20% of our audience and what are their characteristics?

Channels: Which media sources/platforms comprise the top 20% of traffic to your media channels?

Social Media: Which type of content has the top 20% of engagement?

Web Traffic: What are your top 20% content topics?

Omnichannel Marketing: What are your best-performing products/services?



DEFINE YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

Can you narrow down and prioritize your company's top one, two, and three audiences?



- Early-stage investors focused on scientific innovation, addressing unmet needs in the industry, or providing novel solutions**
- Later-stage investors looking for proof of successful marketing entry, future growth, and industry impact**
- Subject matter experts and scientist-entrepreneurs who may be potential partners or supporters**
- Healthcare delivery networks that need to view you as a credible, reliable vendor**
- Patients and caregivers who must understand how your product will improve quality of life**
- Potential employees who want to be excited about their work and believe in your vision**
- Other**

MESSAGING FOR EACH AUDIENCE GROUP

Messaging refers to how you will convey your brand to each audience based on their information needs and pain points.

Goal of messaging: to confirm in their minds why your audience should pick you over an alternative brand

Audiences will vary on how much value they put on different aspects of your business, such as your product focus, company mission, the science, and path to commercialization. Messaging will shift as your company reaches new milestones.

The best way to understand messaging is by looking at examples.

Messaging for Venture Capitalists:

Risk versus reward: Biotech failure rates are between [60%](#) and [90%](#). While there can be high-risk investing in biotech, there can also be great reward. The competition to get financial support from VCs is steep. A well-designed website and solid strategy will help convince investors that your business is worth the risk compared to hundreds of other opportunities they see each year.

Reinforce your brand: Call upon all the branding, positioning, and audience definition you have worked on with your team to demonstrate your high marketing potential (and an anticipated high ROI) through compelling language, data, and proof points related to your innovation, strong science foundation, UVP, competitive advantage, track record, and market potential.

MESSAGING FOR EACH AUDIENCE GROUP

Adjust your messaging: Early-stage biotech companies will need to adjust messaging as your product goes through R&D, proof of concept, early funding, and commercialization. At each stage, you will need to align your content with what will drive VCs closer to investing in your biotech company.

Does your content answer these questions for potential VC investors?

- What problem does your product address, and what is your approach to solving the problem?
- What is the size and value of the market, industry competitors, and your Unique Value Proposition (UVP)?
- How reliable and experienced is the founder?
- How knowledgeable and committed is the team, and how will they overcome challenges?
- What is the product's commercial viability based on business models, trends, and forecasts?
- What is your credibility in the scientific and business community?
- Evidence of your company's future success, including relevant financials, such as projections, funds that have already been raised, and plans for future funding and support.

MESSAGING FOR EACH AUDIENCE GROUP

Learn More: [Attracting Biotech Investors with Your Website](#)

CONSIDER HOW CONSUMER CONCERNS DIFFER FROM VC CONCERNS

Consumers have different pain points than VCs and will need different information about your company. You will need to convey, in layman's terms, how and why your product works, what it does, and how it is different from other alternatives in the market—with evidence and data to support your claims, and demonstrate your product's value and impact.

Useful evidence for consumers:

Case studies, testimonials, fact sheets, and social proof can help illustrate how your product can help your customers achieve their goals or solve their problems. You may also need to clarify misconceptions they may have about your product and overcome fears or objections.

WHAT ABOUT MESSAGING ABOUT YOUR SCIENCE?

Even the most experienced, educated, and savvy researcher or biotech investor can easily get overwhelmed when faced with a website featuring endless feature details, long explanatory paragraphs, and data overload.

MESSAGING FOR EACH AUDIENCE GROUP

Biotech website visitors have varying levels of scientific and technical knowledge

- Subject matter experts, scientist-entrepreneurs, and other potential collaborators
- Commercial purchasers who must see you as a credible vendor
- Patients and caregivers who must understand how your product will improve their quality of life
- Potential employees who want to be excited about their work and believe in your vision

Keep a broad focus

Detailed scientific language on website pages often falls flat for non-scientists and scientists alike. Biotech companies are moving away from websites that focus on highly scientific language, dense copy, and overly detailed graphs and charts.

Instead, employ other marketing strategies and vehicles to share more complex or technical information.



Learn More: [Biotech Messaging Strategies for Your Science-based Website \(And 6 Examples\)](#)

VISUAL BRAND IDENTITY AND LOGO DESIGN

Let's assume your early-stage biotech company has taken all the previous steps. Great! But you're still wondering what your new website, pitch deck, and other branded items will look like, right?

It's time to put a stamp on your brand with a recognizable visual identity that will be used in a multitude of ways across all digital channels.



Let's talk about logos

The first step in designing the "look and feel" of your site is designing a logo that quickly communicates your brand image and vision. This visual representation may be coupled with a brief tagline that reflects the brand in just a few words.



VISUAL BRAND IDENTITY AND LOGO DESIGN



Why is your logo so important?

Your logo establishes a consistent visual brand identity and serves as the foundation of a comprehensive “brand guide” that will define your logo colors, font, and other design elements.

Your logo and brand guide together are meant to ensure consistency and reinforce your brand across all channels (plus your pitch deck and more).

Word of advice: create processes for your team to adhere to your brand guide

VISUAL BRAND IDENTITY AND LOGO DESIGN

But I already have a logo.

Now that you have a clearer vision of your brand, are you sure your logo reflects it accurately? There are reasons to ask this important question now, before moving forward with your website. Why? Your logo is a visual touchpoint for your investor pitch deck, website, and marketing efforts.

Learn more: Explore branding examples from biotech websites designed by Ladybugz:
[Build your biotech's brand](#)



POSITION AND BRAND YOUR BIOTECH PITCH DECK

DEFINITION: WHAT IS A PITCH DECK?

A pitch deck is an essential tool for early-stage biotech companies seeking investors and partners. The deck is a critical tool for presenting your product, the underlying science, the CEO's vision, team leadership, and the commercial value in the market. However, many biotech startups develop their pitch deck before fully establishing their brand strategy. If they did some initial branding at the very start, their company has likely evolved significantly since then.

Is it time to overhaul your pitch deck?

Ask Yourself

At what point did my team develop our pitch deck? Does it reflect our desired image? Is it up-to-date as far as our scientific, funding, or market growth? Does it align with our company's carefully crafted brand identity and messaging?



POSITION AND BRAND YOUR BIOTECH PITCH DECK

If not, STOP!

Go back to the elements discussed earlier in this section. Once you have your messaging and visual brand, you can realign the branding, look, and feel of the pitch deck based on these elements. Failure to do so will create a credibility gap.

Ask your agency step in:

See if your agency can review and update your pitch deck to align with your messaging and visual branding.

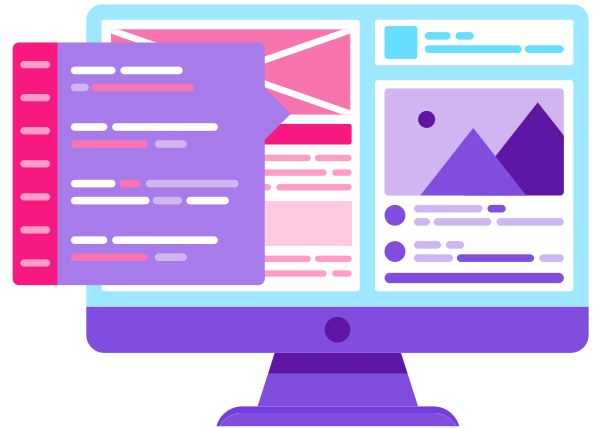
Expect them to make it more concise, include more visualizations, simplify language, reorganize as needed, and possibly create alternative slides for different sub-audiences and purposes.

AGENCY TIP:

You will likely require different messaging as you go through R&D, proof of concept, early funding, and up to commercialization. Look for an agency with marketing expertise that can help you periodically review and refine your pitch deck.

THE WEBSITE: YOUR DIGITAL HUB

As early-stage biotech companies conduct research, focus on product development, get FDA approvals, and develop go-to-market strategies, their websites may not seem to be a priority.



But it should be.

Your website is the hub of your digital marketing efforts, with the power to attract, inform, and generate interest among early investors, customers, potential employees, and the press. It's where they will turn for detailed insights into your mission, products, services, latest developments, and market potential.

Your website is a workhorse that performs these critical functions:

- **Demonstrate Company Credibility and Trustworthiness:** It showcases your expertise, achievements, and contributions, establishing trust among all your audiences
- **Improve Search Engine Visibility:** Increase your visibility on search engine results pages (SERPs) to attract organic traffic.
- **Provide a Content Platform:** Your website is home to your blog posts, articles, case studies, white papers, and other valuable content used to increase traffic and provide information about your company.

THE WEBSITE: YOUR DIGITAL HUB

- **Generate Leads:** It opportunities to capture leads, engage them, and encourage them to take actions such as contacting you, downloading a paper, subscribing to a newsletter, or making a purchase.
- **Serve as the foundation for your social media program:** Your website links to your social media profiles to connect with visitors on your social channels and also drive traffic back to your site.
- **Provide analytics:** Website analytics tools provide valuable information about what is most relevant to your target audiences.

TAKE YOUR WEBSITE TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Did you create an initial website when you first started the company, maybe even at the pre-SEED stage? If you're currently looking for a web design company to update your website, you are likely in a new stage of growth and continuing to evolve.

What are your next steps?

Did you create an initial website when you first started the company, maybe even at the pre-SEED stage? If you're currently looking for a web design company to update your website, you are likely in a new stage of growth and continuing to evolve.

THE WEBSITE: YOUR DIGITAL HUB

- 1 BRANDING:**
Again...Make sure your branding is in order: positioning, audience definition, and messaging BEFORE you start on your new website!
- 2 OBJECTIVES:**
Determine the primary objectives of your website, be it seeking Series A funding, recruiting, or building your customer base.
- 3 BIOTECH EXPERIENCE:**
Set your expectations regarding your budget, production timeline, and proposed launch date.
- 4 DISCOVERY:**
Share information about your company, positioning strategy, and other marketing factors during a discovery process. An agency without a comprehensive discovery process is less likely to accurately understand and meet your business objectives and website performance goals.
- 5 WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT:**
Work with your agency on site architecture, content, design, functionality, and other elements needed to meet your website objectives and optimize user experience.

AGENCY TIP:

If your budget and time frame are limited, talk to your agency about a phased approach, starting with a fairly simple website, with the goal of expanding the site and functionality later on.

THE DISCOVERY PROCESS: EXPLORING YOUR VISION

DEFINITION: WHAT IS DISCOVERY?

Discovery is the process of doing in-depth research into your business, your customers, and your competitors. This information forms the foundation of marketing strategy development.

Do you have the information needed to translate your brand into a highly targeted website?



YOUR DISCOVERY PROCESS SHOULD ENABLE YOUR AGENCY TO:

- Accurately address your target audience
- Leverage your team's credentials to strengthen your credibility
- Establish you as a leader in your niche
- Convey your unique value proposition and science
- Articulate your UVP and differentiate you from your competitors
- Make your complex products understandable and meaningful to laypeople
- Translate feature details into the benefits that matter most to your audiences

ENGAGING WEBSITE DESIGN

WHAT WILL YOUR WEBSITE LOOK LIKE?

Your website may be the first interaction your audience has with you. It has to engage visitors immediately, keep them interested, and lead them close to your objectives—such as filling out a contact form, downloading a research paper, asking to see a presentation, or making a purchase.



A strategically designed website can make all this happen. The current biotech website trend is to provide a clean site that prevents the user from being overwhelmed, makes it easy for the user to find the information they want (on the site as a whole and on each individual page), and is easy to understand. Techniques will include intuitive navigation, consistent page design, high-quality content, and visual components including photos, visual depictions of data and your science, video, illustrations, or other techniques.

Over 73% of companies use web design to stand out from competitors.