



The qualitative and quantitative benefits gained from an always evolving website

How to keep your website relevant and revitalised through continuous development





Your website is the digital powerhouse of your organisation.

Your website is your shop window for attracting new clients and wowing existing customers. It can be a business-critical digital platform that's a membership site, a news site or a travel booking site. It's a hub for your products, content and company news. And for transactional sites, it's the eCommerce platform where you display your products and services, make your online sales and generate revenues.

In 2007, 70% of UK businesses had a website. By 2019, this figure had risen to around 83%, and the recent boom in online shopping will have pushed the percentage even higher in 2023. Having a site that represents your business is no longer a nice-to-have – it's a business necessity in our fast-paced digital world. Your website is often the first place potential customers will visit. And it's the main port of call for current customers looking for more information, or a helping hand from your customer support team or automated live chat.

It's a vital and fundamental asset in your business model. So, why do so many businesses, social enterprises and non-for-profit organisations neglect their website?

www.statista.com/statistics/282241/proportion-of-businesses-with-a-website-in-the-uk

Keeping your site at the cutting edge

You want your site to perform well and deliver the best return on investment (ROI). But to do this you've got to keep your website up to date, well-managed and solving the right problems.

We want to show you the opportunities to evolve, refine and reimagine your website. It's a model that we call [Always Evolving®](https://www.atomicsmash.co.uk/always-evolving-wordpress). And it's a philosophy that sits at the heart of good website design and management in the digital age.

[www.atomicsmash.co.uk/
always-evolving-wordpress](https://www.atomicsmash.co.uk/always-evolving-wordpress)

In a nutshell, if you keep looking after your site – making tweaks, adding new features and keeping it fit for purpose – your site will grow with your business.

In this guide, we'll ask:



What are the main causes of website neglect?



Why does your website need some TLC?



How does continuous development improve your site?



Evolve to solve: what's the Atomic Smash philosophy?



What does continuous development look like in action?

We know the value of a website that delivers at the top of its game.

Over the five chapters in this guide, we'll explain why a great website should never stand still – and how putting more time into your website development is a true investment in your future.

What are the main causes of website neglect?

Pushing your new website live for the first time is a big milestone for any business. Whether you're an established enterprise business that's relaunching a company site, or a not-for-profit organisation that's launching a new micro-site, there's a lot of excitement around this sparkling, new digital home for your organisation.

But for many organisations, this excitement can soon fade. The online presence, sales and marketing teams can become complacent about the site. And updating the homepage, content and user interface (UI) soon gets relegated to the bottom of a packed to-do list.



Your shiny new website is launched into the world.



Over time, you fail to maintain, refine and update content on the site.



Eventually, your site becomes slow, unsafe and outmoded.

The trap of taking your website for granted

No-one chooses to neglect their website. It's something that can happen organically, and the specific root causes of the neglect will be different for each organisation. But there are some common reasons why your online hub can end up being left to gather dust.

Here are just a few of the traps that it's all too easy to fall into:

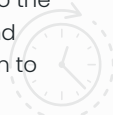
Believing that the site is 'finished' once it's been pushed live

– if you've spent months working on a new site, then the web launch can often be perceived as an endpoint. But, in truth, your site is never complete and is in a constant state of flux as it evolves and moves towards the ideal solution.



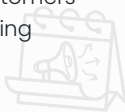
A lack of time to devote to website maintenance and updates

– time is precious and your teams are busy. Carrying out maintenance duties, or reviewing your site content can seem like a distraction, so the site will rarely be updated: and that's where the rot can begin to set in.



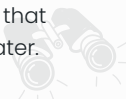
Not tying marketing and sales campaigns back to the site

– it's tempting to use all your digital and social channels to fire out customer campaigns. But if you don't link back to your site, you're missing out on an opportunity to drive customers towards your content, landing pages and company info.



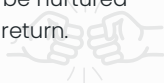
Failing to pay attention to online trends and competitor activity

– keeping your eyes open to what's happening in the online space is vital. Website trends change fast when it comes to your UI, and your competitors may well be busy creating innovative content that blows your site out of the water.



Not having a productive relationship with your web design and development partner

– this is a biggie! If you don't work closely with your web agency, there's no imperative for your site to move forward. This is a business relationship that should be nurtured to get the best possible return.



Assuming that so much about the site is not how you like it

and that there's no chance of recovery without a full 'from scratch' rebuild.



In the hustle and bustle of running a busy organisation, some areas of your online strategy can end up falling by the wayside. But there are serious and long-lasting consequences of not looking after your organisation's online presence.

As we'll see in the next chapter, your website really is in need of some serious TLC.

Why does your website need some TLC?

If you manage your website well, it can become the jewel in your organisation's crown.

With the right digital strategy, it's the place where you do business with customers and the machine that runs the central functions in your organisation. It's the digital centre of your strategy, providing a hub for your customer experience, sales, marketing, eCommerce, fundraising or onboarding activities to revolve around.

So, it's your job to take care of this website, to keep it well maintained and

to make sure it's delivering on all of these goals.

We've seen what happens when you let your site stagnate and fall into disrepair. So, let's take a look at the key reasons for becoming a proactive and engaged custodian to your site.

Giving your site the tender, loving care it deserves

75% of consumers will judge a company's credibility* on how its website looks and functions. That's how important the design, style and usability of your site is for your core audience.

You want your digital presence to draw people in and convert them into paying customers, or advocates for your cause. A big part of this is having a website that's up to the job. A site that's on point with the latest trends and best practices, easy to use and good to look at will succeed in engaging with your audience.



Give your site the love and attention it needs.



Keep your site evolving to meet new operational needs.



Delight and get the most out of your customers, every day.

*<https://www.socialmediatoday.com/news/15-website-ux-stats-to-guide-your-web-design-process-in-2020-infographic/583908/>

Here are just a few reasons why taking care of your site is so important:

1. An old site can be a major turn-off for customers.

94% of people won't trust an outdated website, so there's a real imperative to keep your site at the cutting edge of both UI and UX design.



2. Your site needs to be responsive and accessible.

73.1% of consumers will leave a non-responsive site that functions poorly on their device, or a site that's difficult to navigate and use.



3. Your website has to load quickly and perform well.

1 in 2 visitors will abandon a website that takes more than 6 seconds to load, and most homepages should load in at least 2 seconds.



4. A well-maintained site is more secure and less hackable.

39% of UK businesses identified a cyber attack in the past year, so updating patches and upping your security is a vital move.



5. Modern chat options improve engagement.

63% of customers are more likely to return to a website with a live chat option, allowing real-time interaction with your brand.



6. Regular updates boost your SEO performance.

Page clicks can increase by 437%, just by updating an existing title tag. Reviewing and updating your metadata is vital.



7. A great UI and UX can improve your conversion rates.

Conversion rates can rise by 200% when your site has a good UI, and by 400% with a better UX design. Evolving your design is a gamechanger.



8. Good website performance cuts your energy usage.

Improved website performance can help save the planet, by drawing less power and allowing your organisation to become greener.

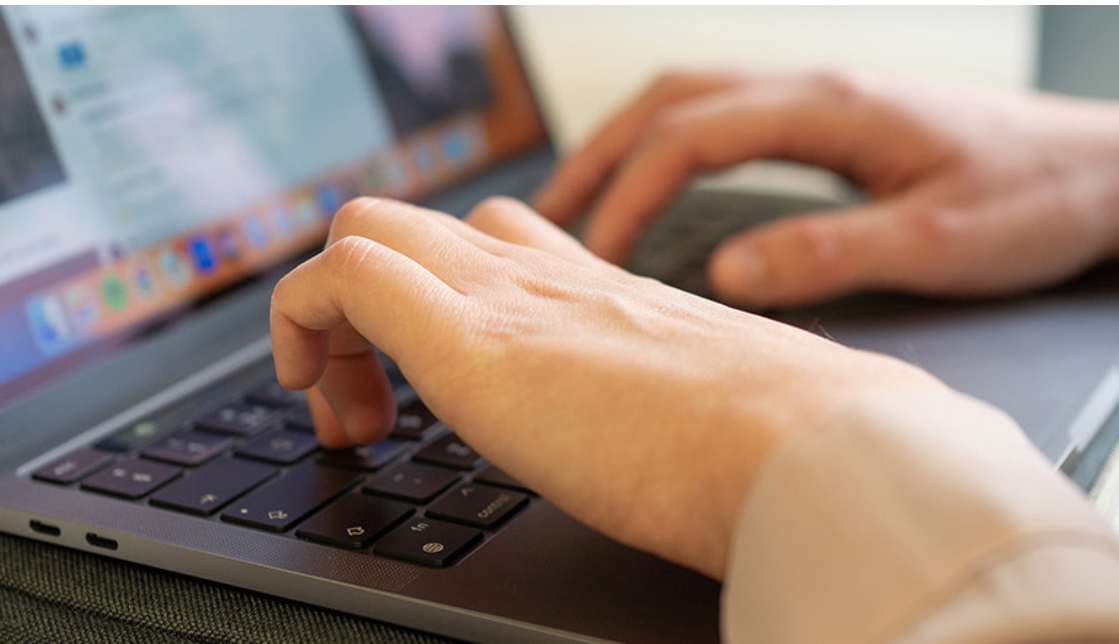


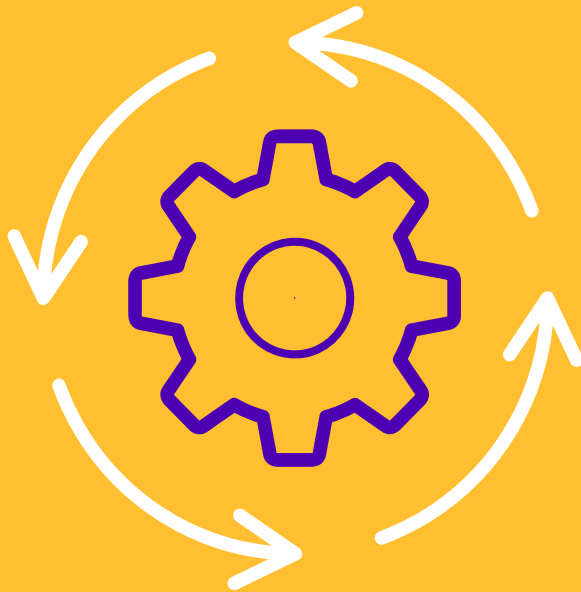
1. yougov.co.uk/topics/resources/articles-reports/2020/08/21/most-users-would-not-trust-outdated-website
2. www.goodfirms.co/resources/web-design-research-small-business
3. digital.com/1-in-2-visitors-abandon-a-website-that-takes-more-than-6-seconds-to-load/#~:text=However%2C%20when%20it%20comes%20to,will%20leave%20after%20one%20second
4. www.gov.uk/government/statistics/cyber-security-breaches-survey-2022/cyber-security-breaches-survey-2022
5. techjury.net/blog/live-chat-statistics/#gref
6. www.safaridigital.com.au/blog/seo-statistics-2019
7. www.forrester.com/blogs/09-10-15-leaving_user_experience_to_chance_hurts_companies
8. www.smashingmagazine.com/2019/01/save-planet-improving-website-performance/

There's no denying that a well-curated site delivers more for your organisation.

Regular reviews of your content, reducing old code and updating your UI and UX can have a huge impact on the success of your website. Instead of resting on your laurels and expecting your site to do all the hard work, it's important to get proactive about evolving your site.

As we'll see in the next chapter, having that clear focus on continuous development really does start to pay dividends for your site, your customer experience and your organisation.





How does continuous development improve your site?

At [Atomic Smash](https://www.atomicsmash.co.uk), our Always Evolving® approach aims to keep your website moving forward. We consistently review, update and refine every element of your website over time, in line with the founding principles of the continuous development approach to web management.

www.atomicsmash.co.uk

But what exactly do we mean by 'continuous development'?

Your 101 guide to continuous development

Continuous development in website design is influenced by the original approach in engineering. Instead of working towards one complete new release of a site, your website is broken down into discrete sections, or groups of code, that can be released over time.

It's an evolving approach to website design and management – where the site is never 'finished' and can be reworked, updated or overhauled at any point during the life of the site.

If your online shop is slowing down sales, we can review the eCommerce set-up and implement conversion rate optimisation (CRO) improvements to speed things up. If the site isn't performing well, we can investigate and set out a roadmap of improvements to boost your engagement.

Change is always needed, in our opinion. Updates, page reviews or A/B testing can be carried out on an ongoing basis, but without the need to reinvent and relaunch the whole site. In this way, you can see your site as a modular collection of parts. And these parts (or lines of code) can be replaced or refined at any point – helping you provide better solutions, a supercharged UI and an improved UX for your end users.

A home that evolves to meet your needs

You might be wondering why continuous development is such a game-changer. But this idea of long-term evolution over a period of time is something you probably already know well. Let's look at a real-world example of how Always Evolving® adds incredible value over time.

1

You buy a house for you and your family.

At the time you make the purchase, the house exactly fits your needs. It has enough rooms, enough space and has all the latest mod cons. At this exact point in time, this property ideally suits your requirements.

2

You don't leave the property to stagnate.

You keep the house well-maintained, cared for and on the ball with current property trends. And because of this, the house holds its value – and may even increase in value over the time you own it.

3

You continue to update the house.

You maintain it and keep the property in good shape. As your needs as a family change, you might build an extension, or add a home office in the garden. You may redecorate to meet the latest interior design trends and fashions.

4

Your house always remains your home throughout the development process. But it also doesn't remain the same. It changes, it grows and it evolves as your needs as a family also evolve. This is why continuous development is so valuable.

5

Through constant evolution, your home is always ideal.

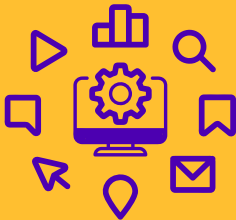
Just like Theseus' ship, you can replace every part of your property over time. The rooms, the decoration, the windows and the doors can all change. But it remains your home and the centre of your life.



The same process of constant reinvention applies equally to your website. It needs to evolve, grow and flex to meet your organisation's needs, and the expectations of your audience.

Working closely with your digital partner is a big part of this continuous development process. A good agency will suggest potential changes, will review your site regularly and will look for new ways to create online opportunities. For example:

Benefit #1



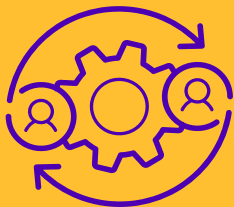
An evolving website can become the centre of your marketing, sales and community activity – giving you a solid foundation for running digital campaigns.

Benefit #2



When your security patches and encryption are being continually upgraded, your site is safer for customers to use – and your data is less vulnerable to attack.

Benefit #3



If your site is in a constant state of evolution, you're always ready to react to an unpredictable market, changing customer needs or new regulatory requirements.

How do we achieve this at Atomic Smash?
We'll tell you in the next chapter...

Evolve to solve: what's the Atomic Smash philosophy?



Just like a great white shark, your website must keep moving, or it will die. And it's this imperative to remain in perpetual motion that drives your innovation and new ideas for the site.

At Atomic Smash, we've spent the past decade helping forward-thinking businesses get more from their online presence. And our focus on continuous development has always sat at the heart of our strategy.

Always Evolving® helping you keep your online presence moving

Your organisation keeps developing, changing and improving over time. We believe your website should do the same. We partner with you to develop digital platforms that grow and evolve with your business. [Always Evolving®](#) is the name we give to this collaborative process.

www.atomicsmash.co.uk/always-evolving-wordpress



Reach wider audiences – increasing the reach of your digital sales, marketing or community outreach programmes.



Generate more leads – giving your sales and business development team more warm leads to focus on and follow up.



Engage and convert customers – so you have an improved pipeline of targets to convert into paying customers, or engaged stakeholders.



Showcase brand personality – so your audience knows who you are, what you stand for and why they should engage with you.



Maintain credibility with security and reliability – giving you a site that's safe to use and meets all the best regulatory requirements.

Always Evolving® helps you supercharge your website performance. And it's an ongoing and ever-changing process, not a one-shot product that delivers and then disappears into the night.

Building an entirely new website every couple of years is costly, time-consuming and unnecessary. Instead of starting over, wasting resources and causing an SEO dip, we'll deliver monthly improvements, optimising your site for the best possible performance.

With you every step of the journey

WordPress and WooCommerce form the foundations for your site. But we also tailor and customise every website to suit the current needs of your organisation – and we don't let that site sit still. We're there every step of the way, to bring continuous development to life.

Always Evolving® is more than a model, it's the journey we take with our clients. We'll stay by your side to help you reach your next destination. From small steps to great big strides, we're optimising your site for commercial success throughout the business journey.

We'll build an Always Evolving® team for you, tailored to meet the specific needs of your project, business or organisation.

Your team will be made up of:

- A main point of contact from your internal team, plus the opportunity for others on your team to join in, provide input and support
- A client partner
- A specialist Always Evolving® designer
- A principal developer
- Contributing and backup developer(s)
- Access to our support desk
- Access to in-house performance experts

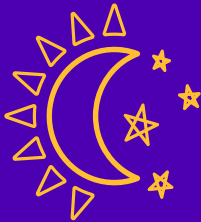
We believe regular contact and collaboration are important. We'll have ongoing weekly status calls, workshops, user acceptance testing (UAT) environments and more. This is a

truly collaborative process, where we work together as partners.

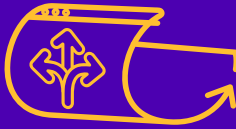
With changes happening little and often, and everyone on board with the reasons, requirements and deliverables for each step, you can hit your goals, time and again.

Building a site that's ready for the future

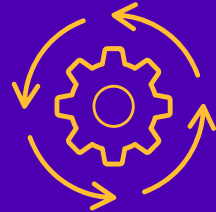
Your organisation doesn't stand still. And the environment you operate in doesn't remain stable either. You have to flex and pivot, trying out new strategies and new solutions to get the best from your model. To get the ideal return from your digital platform, your site has to do the same.



The environment you operate in can change overnight.



Your site needs to flex to meet new expectations.



Continuous development prepares you for the future.

As our MD and co-founder, Piers Tincknell, explained in [this interview](#), your website needs to evolve alongside your organisation. Keeping pace with change is a whole lot easier when you apply our Always Evolving® methodology.

www.altis-dxp.com/why-your-website-needs-to-evolve-with-your-business

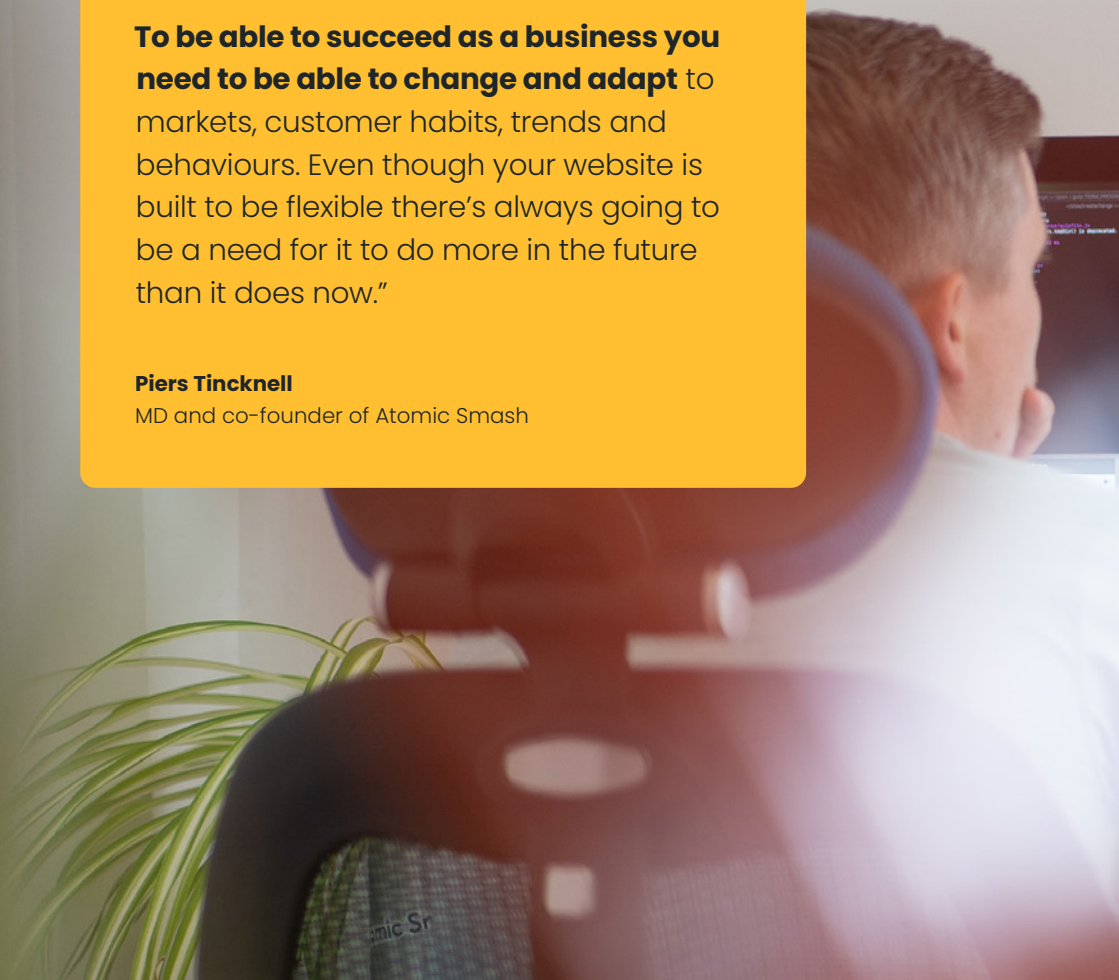
"The mistake that we often see is people launch their website and then they just leave it there; it doesn't perform as well as they were hoping, or they're not getting sales, or not getting the leads they were anticipating from the website.

It's because the website was good when it launched but maybe six months down the line they're trying to fit new things into the old design.

To be able to succeed as a business you need to be able to change and adapt to markets, customer habits, trends and behaviours. Even though your website is built to be flexible there's always going to be a need for it to do more in the future than it does now."

Piers Tincknell

MD and co-founder of Atomic Smash



What does continuous development look like in action?

You might be on board with the fundamental ideas behind continuous development. But how does our Always Evolving® methodology actually work in the real world?

This isn't a theoretical idea. It's a living, breathing system for site design and development – and an approach that we believe helps our clients stay one step ahead of their competitors.

Sawday's: creating a unique digital travel experience

Since 2017, we've been working with award-winning travel B Corp, Sawday's.

As a travel B Corp with a fresh and ambitious outlook on the industry, Sawday's wasn't looking for a standard website remodel. The Sawday's team wanted a digital partner – an agency that would help them boost their commercial success through a continuous development process.

Always Evolving® has proved to be the perfect fit, allowing us to understand the strategic goals from Sawday's and tie them into the updates, innovations and evolutions in their site. For Craig Neilson, Head of Platform at Sawday's, we're now a key part of their digital team, as he explains:

“

As a digital business, we need experts to lean on and to feed into what we're trying to achieve. Atomic Smash are the WordPress experts in our team.

Craig Neilson

Head of Platform at Sawday's

Moving the site forward, one step at a time

Over the course of our partnership with Sawday's, we've helped them refine and expand their digital platform in a number of ways. These are just a few of the key achievements:



15% increase in new enquiry conversions, through a combination of technical and visual improvements made to the site. This was a great example of the value of collaboration, with Sawday's leading the UX design and Atomic Smash putting it into action.



Better user experience with new search-by-availability functionality. This was described by the client as 'the smoothest rollout of a project of this size I've ever seen'.



Functionality rebuilt, pages redesigned and any problems from the previous site's inherited codebase fixed.



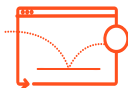
Faster site speed achieved and the back-end cleaned up for optimal performance. This included speed-testing and reducing heavy-duty page load on the local development environment by 50%.



Enabling the client to quickly respond to user feedback and reflect travel accommodation availability in real time.



Improved SEO value for their existing Detour content, helping to make the content more scannable, shareable and delivering better conversion rates.



Reduced bounce rate by analysing user data and the introduction of new layouts and compelling content blocks.



Making the content more discoverable via organic search. We gave Sawday's team the tools to complement their SEO strategy and also made the URL folder structure more effective.



An improved user journey for visitors to the site, optimising the flows through the Guides, Journeys and Inspiration content and feeding this into the wireframe design.



Redesigned pages with clearer content categories for the user. We also gave the Sawday's team the ability to customise these pages to support their seasonal campaigns.



A new template for 'Author' posts was created, housing biographical information about an author and displaying a feed of recent posts written by them.



A new archive template for tagged content. Clicking on a tag anywhere on the Detour pages will open this archive, displaying all posts tagged with the same tag.

What our clients say

Sawday's

Conversions increased 15%

Sawday's is shaking up the travel and experience sector and wanted a digital platform that could evolve with their business. We've collaborated closely with the Sawday's team to help bring their ideas and innovations to life.

By listening to customer feedback, Sawday's has been able to evolve their site, and maximise the value they get from our Always Evolving® team. It's been a true partnership, where we've both learned plenty throughout the journey.

"An ongoing challenge for us working in travel is, are we working quickly enough and getting availability out there? The speed in which we're able to work together with Atomic Smash helps us make improvements to the site and tackle issues based on what users are telling us." – Sawday's

Elizabeth Shaw

Average order value increased by 20%

Elizabeth Shaw is a confectionery business with a long history in the chocolate industry. They were looking to improve their online shopping experience to bring in more leads and convert additional online customers.

We've worked closely with the Elizabeth Shaw team to enhance their UX, with ongoing updates and evolutions to the site to boost performance, speed and overall usability of their eCommerce site and online sales channels.

"Our buying journey has been transformed, with UX improvements resolving any points of customer confusion or frustration. Incremental improvements to site speed continue to boost SEO and conversion rates and we're seeing notable increases in AOV."
– Elizabeth Shaw

ForrestBrown®

Performance score increased by 61%

ForrestBrown is one of the UK's leading specialist R&D tax credit consultancies. They wanted a high performing, flexible and secure site to demonstrate their expertise, generate leads and track conversions.

The Always Evolving® approach has helped ForrestBrown partner closely with our team, resulting in a site that's delivering leads and keeping pace with ongoing changes to R&D legislation.

"For us to maintain our SEO position, we needed to make sure that everything was technically sound. In areas like site speed, we've seen a massive improvement, which has helped our Google rankings. Atomic Smash has been with us every step of the way." – ForrestBrown



SMASH.ATOMIC.

Little
book for
big ideas



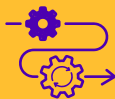
Atomic Smash: Your digital partner

Piers Tincknell and David Darke co-founded Atomic Smash in 2010. We've been operating for over a decade now and we've grown to a talented team of 24 people and a growing client list of over 40 organisations.

We do more than design web pages. We're a web development team that's on a mission to make Always Evolving® the driving force behind our clients' digital solutions. It's your opportunity to evolve, refine and reimagine your website.



Give your site the love and attention it needs.



Keep your site evolving to meet new operational needs.



Delight and get the most out of your customers, every day.

Evolve to solve

Your website is never finished. Improve your users' digital experience with continual development, improvement and optimisation from Atomic Smash.

[Learn more about our Always Evolving model](#)

[www.atomicsmash.co.uk/
always-evolving-wordpress/](http://www.atomicsmash.co.uk/always-evolving-wordpress/)

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