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someone invariably asks me a question related to communications, and specifically, when it's time to change their Web site.

I just ran across this blog on Ragan.com that speaks to this topic, and even though it is internally focused on employees, I've added my own twist to the four points below. Most of the time, questions also focus on the ROI connected to changing a Web site, or in some cases, creating one from scratch. That's why I like these four steps because they focus less on what to communicate versus the return on the communications themselves.

1. What's the business case? What goals are you trying to meet: cost reduction, innovative products, customer retention and/or profitable growth?
2. What sorts of information does the audience want? What's in it for them?
3. Are you sure you know what vehicles your audiences prefer – and which messages go in which vehicles? Have you asked them?
4. How will you know if your communications are working? What will you measure?

Find the answers to these questions and you'll be so much farther along than you were before!

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