Reviewing an existing web site

There are several standard questions to answer when reviewing an existing website. Here is an example of how one business (a not-for-profit charity organisation) answers them.

1> What are the main objectives to be achieved with this website? To what degree do you think the site has achieved each of these things?
   - to get potential customers to contact us
   - to provide information to current customers
   - to reduce the amount of phone calls received for information.
   - to improve our level of customer support
   - we tried to get potential clients to contact us. We asked people how they found us and 13 people said they found us through our website.

2> How does the existing website portray the business?
   - It makes the business look tired/small/new/interesting/dynamic/boring/technical/complicated/slow/friendly/cheap/weak.

3> What does it portray well?
   - brand- colours, logo, general style
   - technology- diagrams, look and feel, case studies are good.

4> What does it portray badly and why?
   - Not-for-profit focus – styling too corporate, looks like technology company, focus on money, pictures of holiday locations are out of place.

5> Who are the site’s target market/s? Are there things they are likely to want on the website? Are they easy to find?
   - The website was originally built for anyone looking for our organisation, especially potential donors.
   - They were likely to want to know what campaigns we were running and how to donate.
   - The information was OK but made them contact us using an email form which no one ever answered.
   - The phone number was on the website but it was only in the corporate sponsorship section and hard to find.

6> Is the content of the website up to date?
   - Most of the content does not really change except for a newsletter.
   - The newsletter was only published online twice so it was a year out of date.

Excerpt from Ben Mitchell: Website Planner, a practical guide to planning your web presence.  P 15-18
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7> What do you like about the website?
   ➢ The descriptions of the campaigns we ran and the rollover navigation headings on the home page.

8> What do you think could be improved?
   ➢ Make the design look less techy and more down to earth.
   ➢ Make the contacts for each user group more obvious.
   ➢ Have pictures of the people we look after throughout the website.
   ➢ Use white as the background colours on all of the pages, as the multi-colours are too loud and confusing
   ➢ Make the website look a bit like our new marketing brochures.
   ➢ Get rid of the links pages, and the game page, as they don’t do anything for our organization.

9> Are there any other points worth noting about the existing website?
   ➢ The drill-down maps we used to present the case studies were really good. Everyone liked them.

10> What would you do if you were to redesign the existing website?
    ➢ Make sure the design of the website had something to do with our organization.
    ➢ Make it easier for people to contact us by phone, fax or mail.
    ➢ Get a content management system built in so we can make changes to the content easily and consistently.
    ➢ Make sure an effective use of hyperlinks rather than duplicating content into different pages.
    ➢ Use a consistent look and feel to reduce confusion.
    ➢ Don’t involve the CEO in the process of changing content unless necessary.