

The maritime marketer's expert guide

to increasing visibility within the digital landscape

January 2026

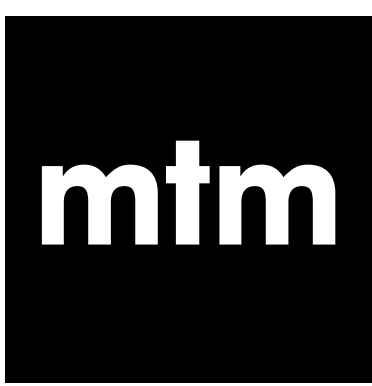
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Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, digitisation is no longer a mere option, it's a critical necessity for companies seeking to thrive in the modern marketplace.

2026 is now underway, and according to [statista.com](https://www.statista.com), by 2027, global spending on digital transformation technologies and services is projected to soar to an astounding US\$3.9 trillion, underscoring the growing importance of integrating digital strategies across the maritime sector. When it comes to digitisation within marketing specifically, not only does it help maritime brands increase their visibility within the digital landscape, but it provides a strategy on which to build relationships and grow leads from many new and existing target marketplaces.

The maritime sector is experiencing a digital transformation that has been observed in other industries for over a decade. It's crucial to get more people talking about digitising the industry as there is a lot of data available to maritime organisations but businesses are not yet taking advantage of utilising it to improve their operations and decision making and ultimately make efficiencies. Shipping in particular has only seen an awakening to digitisation in the last two-three years because the industry is notoriously quite secretive, compared to every other industry where the internet really opened up accessing information. However, businesses are getting wise to how effective data can positively drive decision making and this is something MTM advocates across all of its service offering, ensuring data proof is the reason for strategic decisions.

We know that within this sector, there is a **general reluctance** to adopt digital transformation (**Riviera**), so those who are considering it now, are already ahead of the masses within the industry.

The maritime sector is experiencing a digital transformation that has been observed in other industries for over a decade.

If you're looking to step ahead and embrace digitisation, it's the perfect time to act. This guide delves into why digitisation is so crucial, particularly for the maritime industry, where efficiency, competitiveness, and growth are paramount. From leveraging data insights to expanding market reach and strengthening brand identity, digitisation offers numerous benefits that extend far beyond the initial investment. We'll explore how digital marketing tools can provide a comprehensive approach to industry challenges, alongside opportunities, and where we've seen it work first-hand with maritime client partners.

We'll discuss practical steps towards digitisation, including the role of digital accessibility, cross-platform compatibility, and effective optimisation techniques. Whether you're looking to increase visibility, improve user experience, or manage your brand reputation into the digital world, this guide provides the valuable insights to help your business successfully navigate the digital transformation journey.

Why is digitisation important?

As mentioned previously, forecasting data provided by Statista estimates that by 2027, spending on digital transformation technologies and services worldwide will hit US\$3.9T.

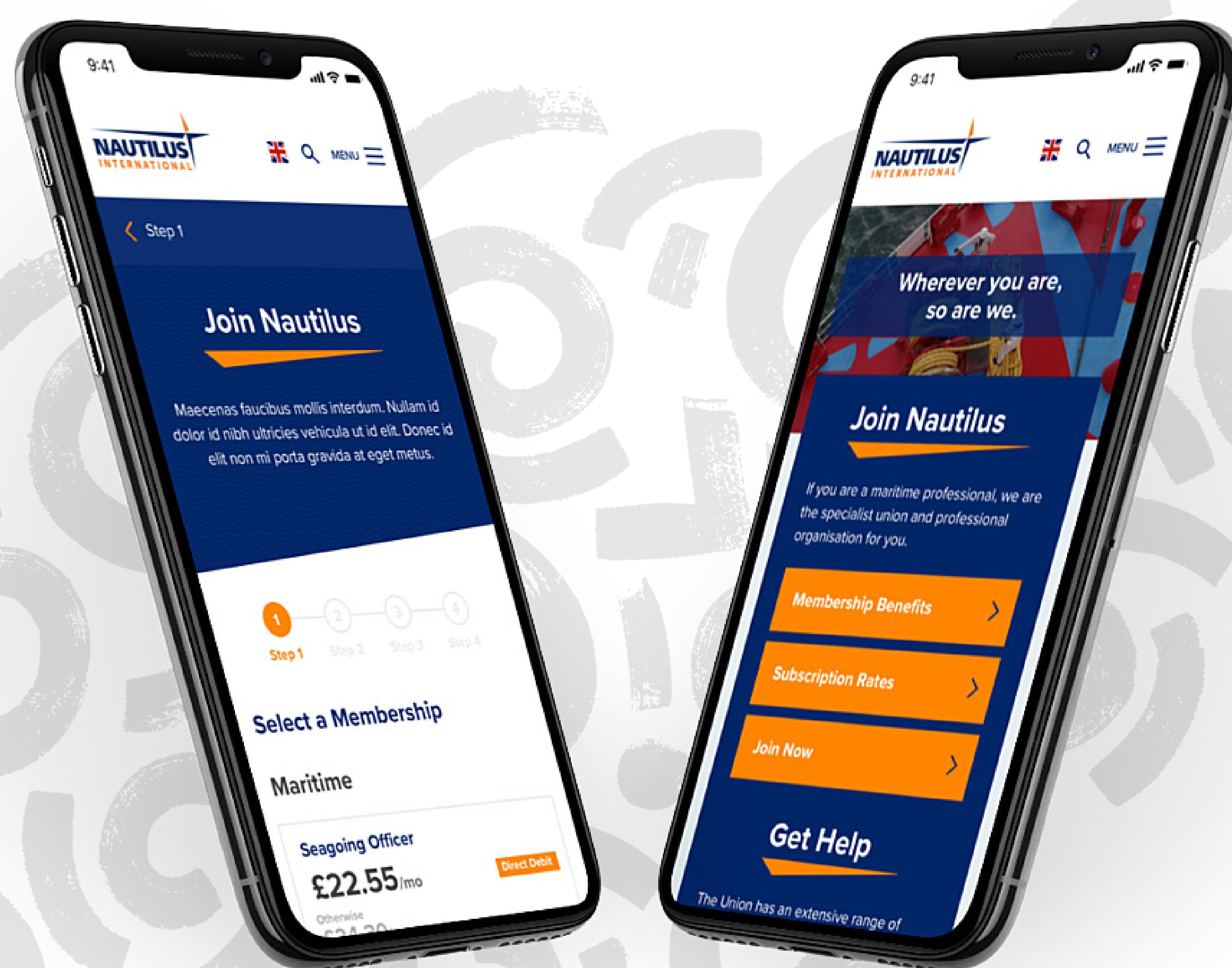
From automating processes and moving to cloud-based storage through to using technological devices for comms and collaboration, it's more important than ever that maritime businesses swaying on the edge of digitisation take the plunge and stake their position in the digital marketplace ensuring a forward-thinking and efficient practice.

Aside from keeping up with the times, digitisation offers a great deal more than simply upfront additional costs for companies. It helps businesses of all shapes and sizes improve efficiency, productivity and profitability, and this is especially true of the maritime industry where it can tap into new markets and uncover fresh audiences, whether that's nationwide, or on a global scale.

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That's not to say that traditional marketing is redundant. Participation in events and print advertising are still incredibly strong marketing techniques within the maritime industry, and are imperative to retaining visibility within the marine community.

By complementing traditional marketing methods with digitisation, maritime brands can unearth industry trends and peaks in interest, streamline internal processes, enhance customer experiences and improve communication and collaboration.



How to reach digitisation

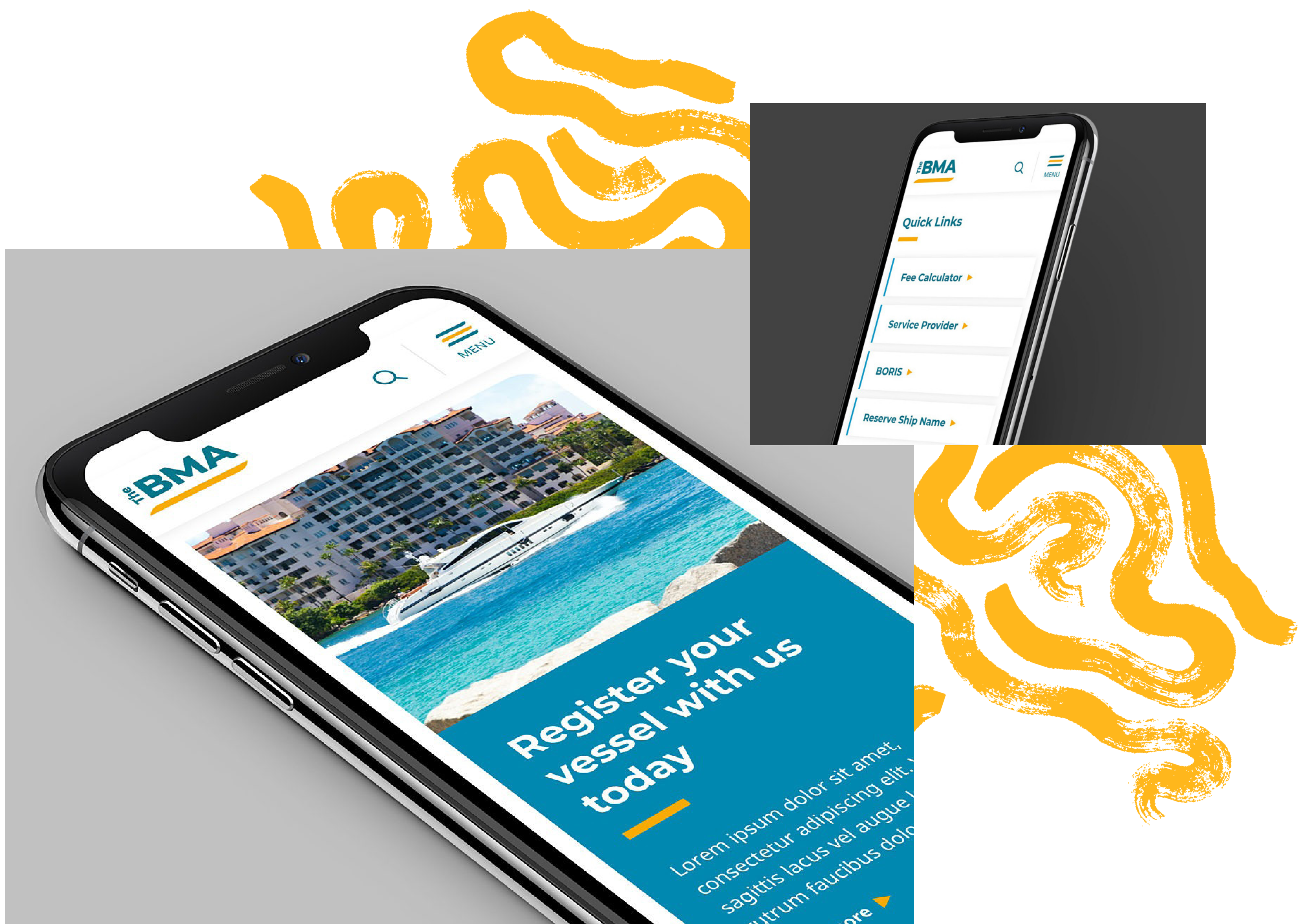
The role of digital accessibility

Efficient UX combined with practical web development

Intuitive design patterns are a big element of efficient and effective web design. By allowing the audience to navigate the website in a way that feels natural will reduce the likelihood of bouncing due to confusion or frustration.

In addition, accessibility is a requirement that is enforceable under UK law. Sites need to provide equal access to information for all, whether they have a visual, auditory, motor or other impairment. Examples of accessibility include providing descriptive alt text for all images, and using clear language. Websites that prioritise efficient UX often translate to higher conversion rates.

But how could you, as a maritime business, reach this ideal? Take for example the website that the MTM agency has built for the **Bahamas Maritime Authority**. Having restructured and refreshed their original website using best-in-class UX techniques, the website not only saw a 10% reduction in bounce rate, but also reached a larger audience with 88% more organic traffic than before, and 57% increase in page views compared to the old site.



Cross-platform compatibility is becoming more important than ever

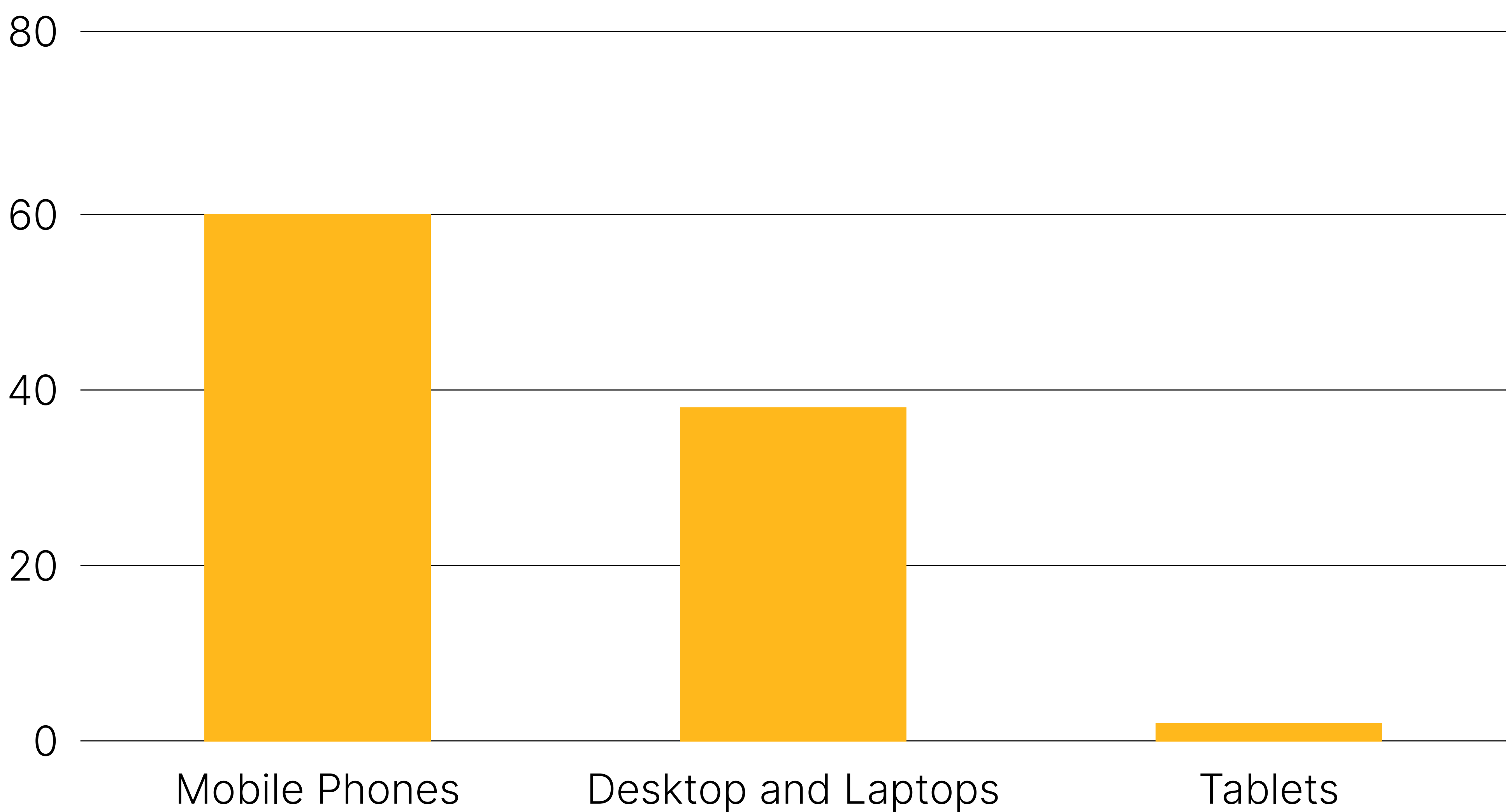
Although users who access websites via a desktop tend to browse for longer and access more pages, website visits using mobile devices are increasing more each year. This popularity is still growing even in recent years too.

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As of the end of 2025, research.com reports that 59.9% of the total global web traffic comes from mobile phones, with the remainder recorded from laptops, computers and tablets.

It's therefore imperative that sites are designed to be fully responsive to meet the demands of users across various platforms.

Mobile vs Desktop 2025
(Percentage of web traffic)



MTM's partnership with Nautilus, the world's largest maritime trade union, showcases just how effective well-thought-out cross-platform compatibility can enhance a brand's relationship with its users. A new multi-lingual/multi-regional site and a mobile app were created, reflecting how Nautilus' members interacted with the union and its content. This increased mobile users, saw users return and a significant rise in the number of overall monthly users.

Increasing visibility in an ever-growing ocean of competitors

Effective optimisation helps businesses cut through the noise

68% of all online experiences begin with a search engine, so being seen online is imperative for success in the long term.

We know that the overarching purpose of a website is to extend a business' reach and visibility with potential customers, and in order to achieve this, your site needs to be fully optimised. Search engine optimisation (SEO) specialists help your maritime business understand how to increase relevant traffic to your site and in turn build trust and credibility, as well as improving conversion rates based on the search intent behaviours of your audience.

There are various techniques and avenues that can help drive organic traffic for maritime brands, from ensuring high search volume keywords are woven into content, through to evaluating responsiveness, page experience, backlinks and a great deal more. Short and long term strategies leveraging these techniques can transform the searchability of a site, and, when done well, SEO can help your maritime brand stand out from the competition.

Navigating paid advertising for impressive ROI

Another big driver for website traffic is PPC (pay per click) advertising that is highly targeted to specific groups of searchers based on a plethora of demographics and interests. With a reported average of 200% ROI, it's a worthwhile consideration to help drive relevant customers to your site. However, an effective strategy is imperative, as you'll want to ensure you're spending your budget in the right way, and on the right advertising techniques.

Below we've provided some examples of platforms where most maritime industry-based businesses perform well:

LinkedIn Ads

This platform is most effective for B2B, where businesses can hone in on specific target audiences by job titles, company names, etc. This can help build a very specific set of targeting opportunities.

Tip:

LinkedIn offers a range of options for paid advertising. From boosting a post, to posting full ads, you can choose the best approach for your organisation to reach the right audience and make the most of your budget.

Google Ads

Google offers a wide range of different campaign types, most notably Google Search, where you can promote products and/or services to high-intent users by allowing your ads to show for specific keywords related to your business, for example, 'ship builder near me'.

Bing Ads

Bing Ads are currently under-used in the maritime industry as most businesses focus their budget on Google, however those in the industry who invest in Bing have seen higher levels of ROI from Bing Search Ads, considering the lower CPC (cost per click), when compared to Google Search Ads.

Tip:

Whether you are thinking about boosting a post on LinkedIn or opting for a sponsored search on Google, your decision should be informed. Read our blog on [paid search vs paid social](#) to fully understand the ins-and-outs of paid advertising and which one is the right one for your campaign.

Effective and consistent brand identity throughout the web

Your brand is the foundation on which your business can sustainably grow, so when thinking about your online presence, and the messaging and aesthetic it portrays, does it reflect your core values and how you want to be perceived within the maritime sector? Building a consistent brand identity is just as important as communication, as you want to use your brand to connect with your target audience, fostering trust and ultimately, loyalty.

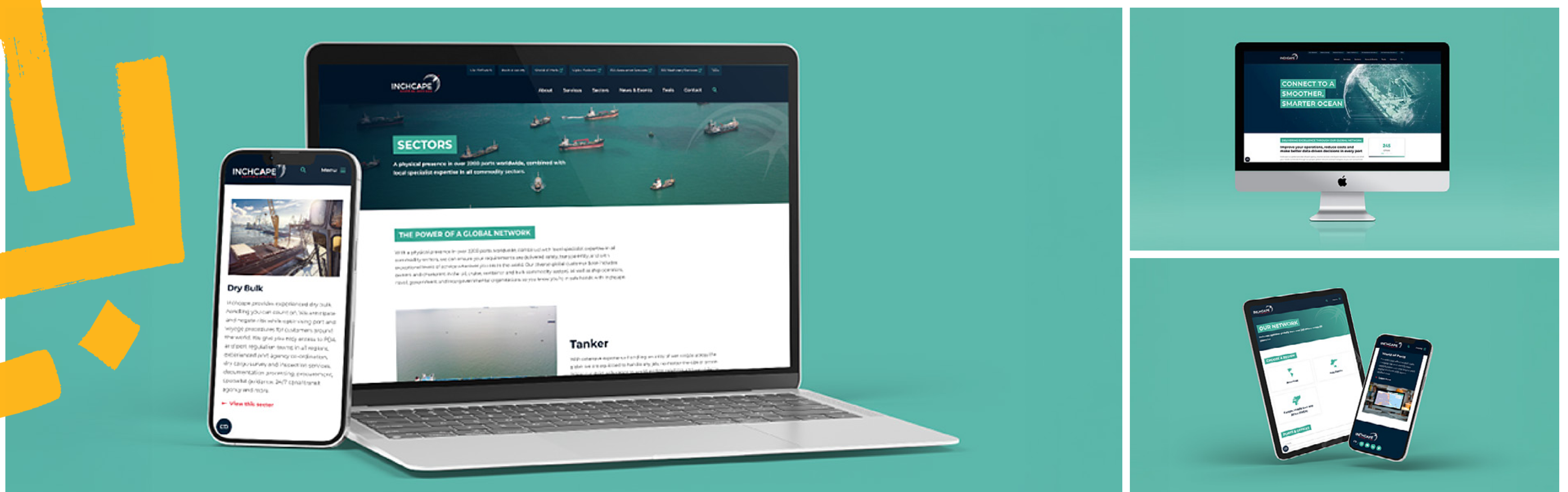
Creating a suite of branded assets that can be used across your communication channels can effectively portray your values to customers, helping you instil your position and manage your brand reputation. Not only does this help reaffirm your brand's personality, credibility and positioning within the maritime industry, but it can also help reduce bounce rates, increase traffic and boost conversion rates - results which **Inchcape Shipping Services** were able to experience directly, thanks to the digital delivery of its brand via a redeveloped website. Complete with new assets and UX for higher conversion rates.

Communicating your brand externally

Social media provides highly useful communication outlets that help maritime businesses reinforce their brand messaging. By ensuring that there is a consistent brand image across each platform and posts are thought-provoking, interesting and regular, you can effectively convey your tone of voice, brand values, and any environmental, social and governance (ESG) comms, further boosting your brand identity.

ESG strategies (and the communication of those strategies) are especially important within the maritime industry, as it is responsible for around **3%** of global greenhouse gas emissions annually. Therefore, organisations that not only have **robust ESG strategies** in place, but also communicate them effectively, provide customers with additional confidence that risks are being identified and managed, long-term sustainability is on the radar and businesses are holding themselves accountable. All this adds value to brand perception.

PR is another useful practice for communicating brand values, thought-leadership and industry expertise. Exploring collaborations with relevant online maritime media provides additional channels whereby brands can educate, influence and entice across vast readership, further increasing visibility and entering new arenas of digitisation.



Data management and useful analytics tools

Maintaining a clear delivery strategy is imperative when it comes to successful digitisation. Setting realistic goals with tangible KPIs gives you the opportunity to analyse the impact of your digital transformation. But data management is key. Tracking business performance successfully relies on having a flexible approach that utilises insightful tools, such as a trustworthy content management system (CMS) and analytics tool, such as Google Analytics 4 (GA4). These tools will help you understand user behaviour, how users are interacting with your website and where you can make further improvements on your digitisation journey.

Some of the key metrics you may want to track using GA4 are:

- Users and number of sessions
- Engaged sessions
- Engagement rate
- General events and more specific, key events
- Top landing pages
- Traffic acquisition

If you want to delve deeper into data and performance, there are a number of useful tools you can utilise, such as:

Google Search Console

This free tool provides information about clicks and impressions, average position and click through rate (CTR). It explores the keywords your site, or specific URLs are ranking for, and gives you a good overview of some technical SEO aspects, such as Core Web Vitals.

Google Trends

Google Trends gives you the opportunity to explore the interest of specific keywords over time. It breaks your results down into regions, related topics and queries, and there are various filters you can select to specify what data you want to see.

SEMrush

A subscription-based tool that provides a suite of data at your fingertips across SEO, content marketing, social media and advertising. You can explore your site's overall health, where errors are picked up, keyword overviews, organic competitors, link building opportunities, social trackers and a plethora of other data.

Ahrefs

Another subscription-based tool, Ahrefs also provides site audit capabilities, a rank tracker, keywords explorer and content explorer.

Tip:

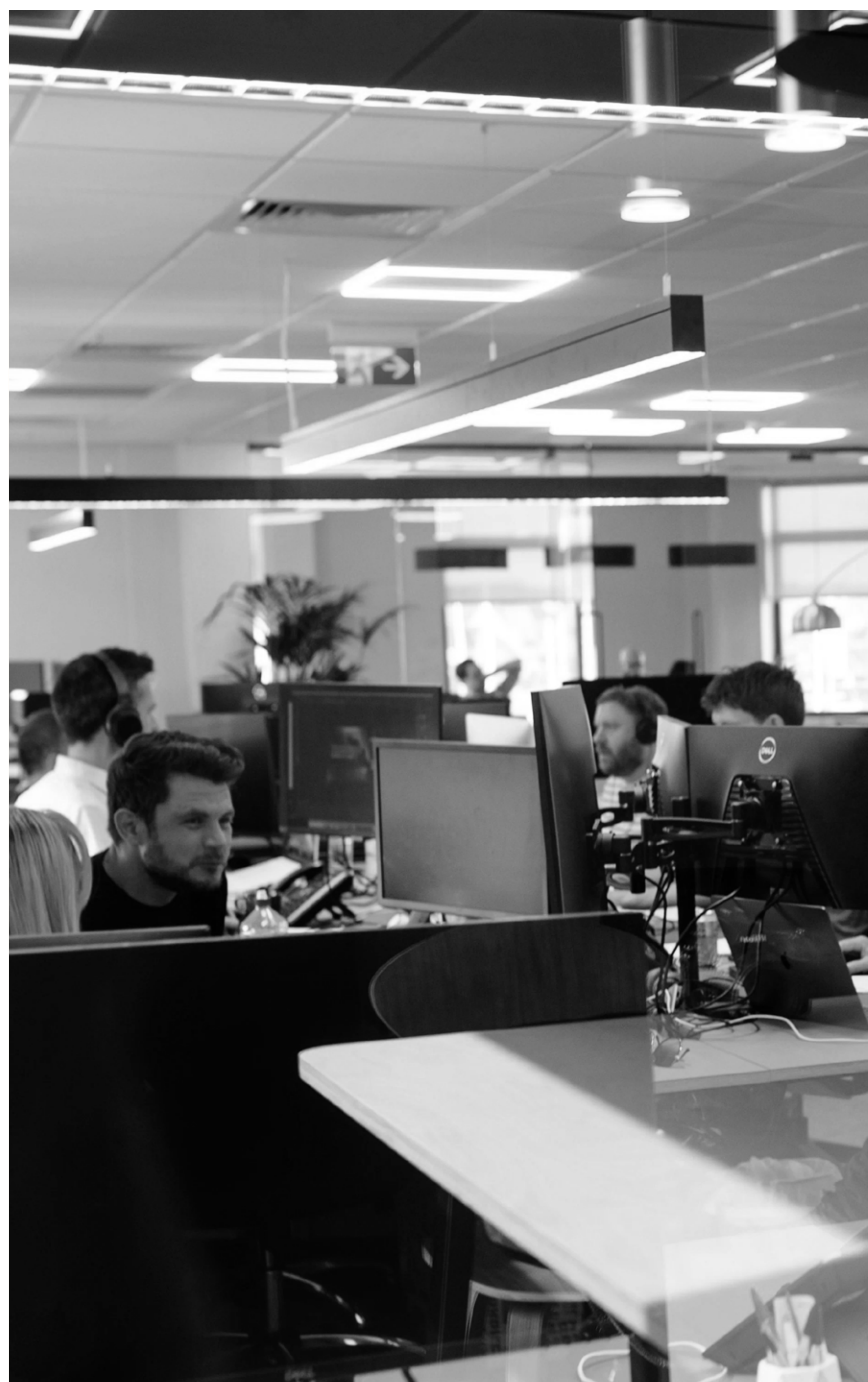
Chosen platforms must be set up correctly in order to gather data that accurately reflects the state of your website.

Which tools are best for maritime businesses?

For any maritime business looking to digitalise, the minimum data tracking tools we recommend are Google Search Console and GA4. Aside from the fact they're both free to use, they offer a plethora of insightful information that you can use to enhance and improve your site as you get more comfortable with your website and building a successful online presence.

If you're looking to enter a more technical landscape, a subscription-based service such as those mentioned above provide enough insights to build a comprehensive digital strategy that, if executed effectively, is sure to increase traffic, leads and conversions for your maritime organisation.

If you'd like more support or advice on what tools may be best for your business or you'd like to know how The MTM Agency can support your digitisation, **get in touch** today.



Common concerns around digitisation

Cost and ROI

Embracing digitisation can come with some challenges and concerns. We know that **28%** of companies report that digital transformation is still often perceived as too costly, but when we look at the potential results a well-executed digital marketing transformation can obtain, it becomes an interesting conversation.

The [Worldmetrics.org](https://www.worldmetrics.org) report highlights:

- 57% of businesses say that SEO generates more leads than any other marketing initiative.
- Mobile marketing can drive up to 30% of total online traffic.
- Content marketing generates three times more leads than traditional marketing methods.
- Paid search can increase brand awareness by up to 80%.

The above points help to reinforce the importance of entering the digital space, as although there is an upfront cost to making the transition, there is no question that when fostered correctly, it will ultimately make a difference to your bottom line.

Clarity on the best resources

From content management systems to web design patterns and everything in between, there are a plethora of resources available to maritime businesses looking to digitalise, but not just any will be the right fit for your business and the goals you have set. And, due to the cost involved, it's a good idea to get it right from the offset so you can work on increasing your company's visibility.

Speaking to **digital experts** before committing to a product is always a good idea, as we can help you get to grips with the various options that are the most suitable for your business based on what you want to achieve.

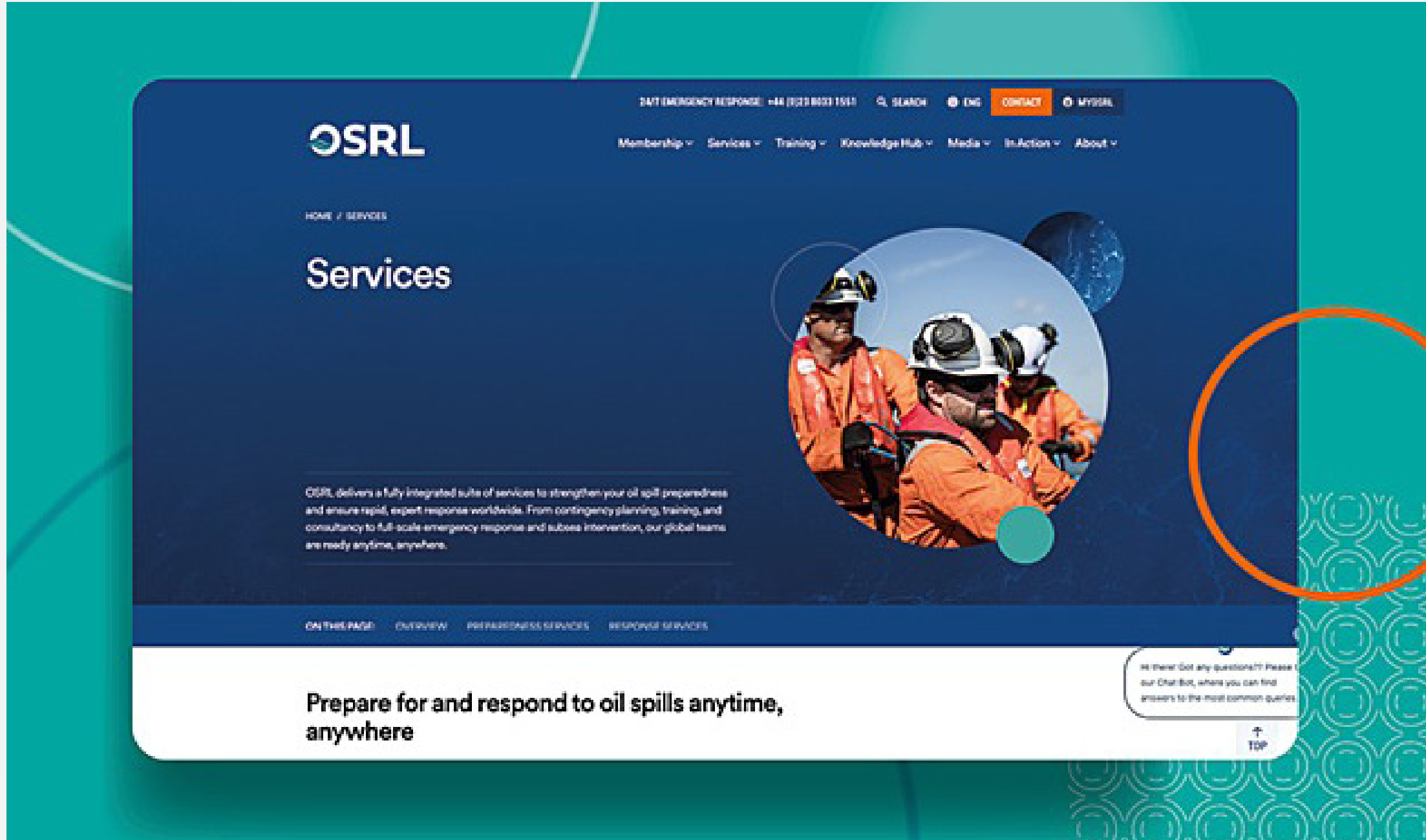


Previous failure

You may have attempted digitisation in the past without success, however, when planned and executed with the knowledge and support of digital experts who can guide you towards the best solutions for your organisation, you can expect a smooth transition into the realm of digital marketing.

When it works...


We've completed a variety of successful digitisation projects for client partners over the years and have provided some examples below:



OSRL

Bringing four decades of maritime expertise together in one future-ready brand.

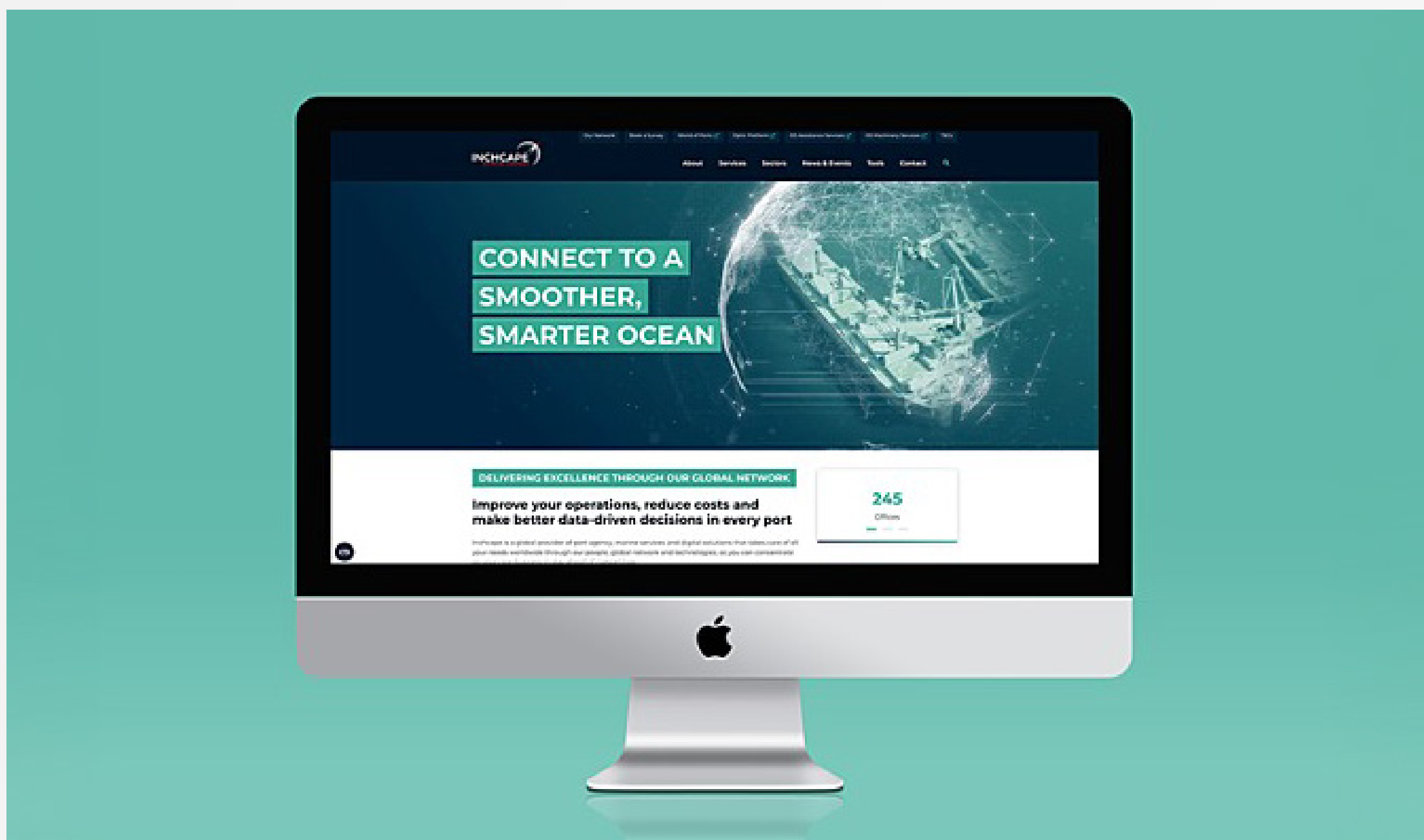
[Read the Case Study](#)



Nautilus International

How robust stakeholder research helped us to deliver a best-in-class membership website and mobile app.

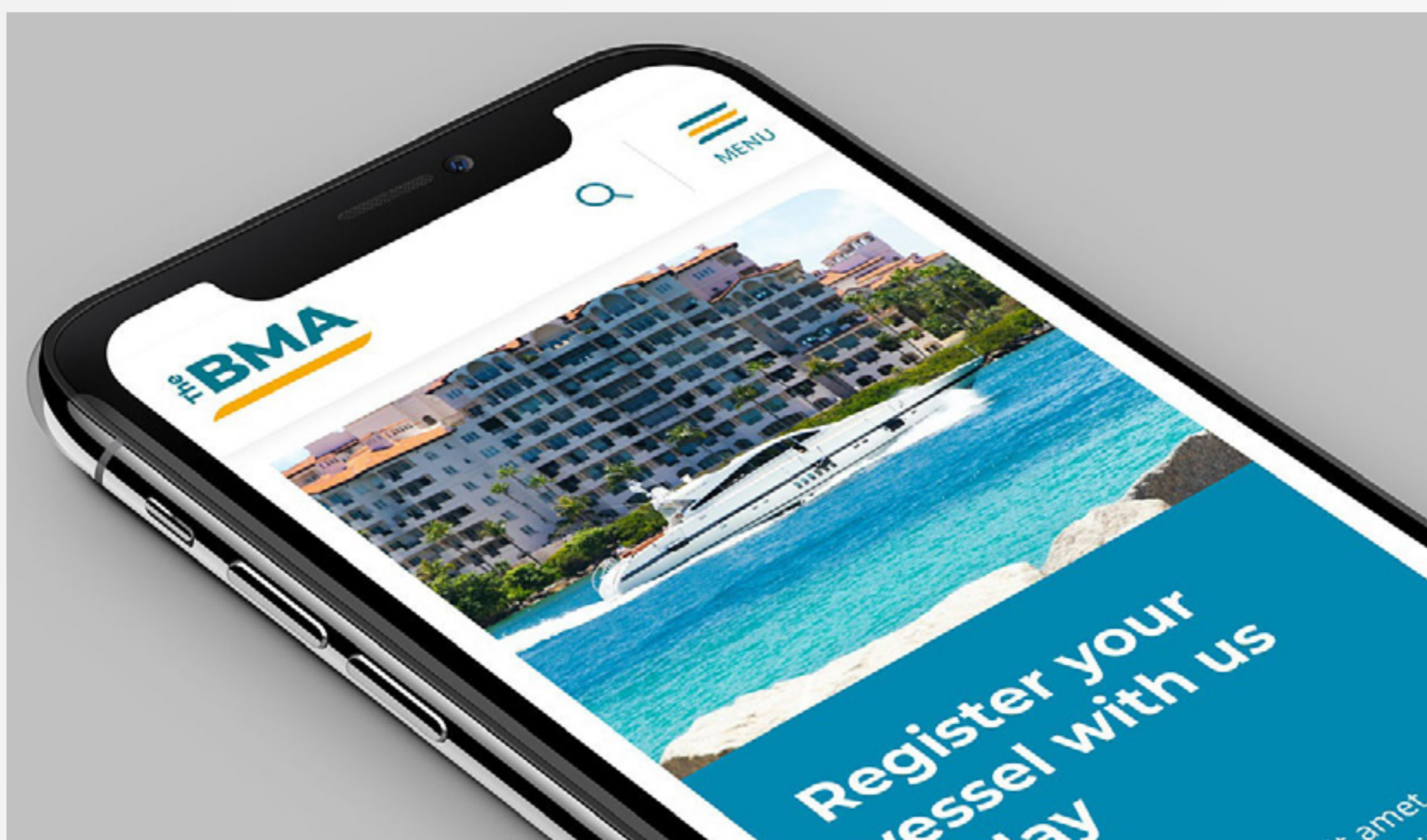
[Read the Case Study](#)



Inchcape

Bringing together two leading maritime brands to improve visual identity.

[Read the Case Study](#)



Bahamas Maritime Authority

Creating a superior interactive user experience.

[Read the Case Study](#)

Conclusion

Digitisation is a vital step for maritime businesses aiming to stay competitive in today’s fast-paced environment. By embracing digital tools and strategies, businesses can raise their visibility, compete more effectively and strengthen their brand identity. While the transition to digital may come with challenges, with the right approach, resources and expertise, digitisation can drive significant growth, resilience, and success.

Get in touch with us today for more information, support or to get started.

