

How To Convert More Website Visitors Into Customers

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You are fighting some tough obstacles to get a website visitor to respond to your company. These include the short attention span of the web, you being one of hundreds of websites they can visit, and the visitors having seen thousands of websites already.

In analyzing the 25 most successful websites we've written for our clients, here are the 9 big-picture secrets to having a website that gets you maximum conversions, leads, sales and profits.

1 Your website needs a headline that is very specific, unique, remarkable and features a mouth-watering customer-benefit.

Generalities in your headline and website will kill your response. People have heard general statements hundreds of times before, so they have no power:

"lowest prices" ... click away;
"great services" ... click away;
"industry leader" ... click away.

2. Develop instant credibility on the first page of your website by using logos of well-known customers, membership associations, years in business, etc.

The internet is a phenomenal tool because it literally puts the world at your fingertips. The problem is that there are a lot of crooks, cheats and nuts in the world who could all have web sites.

You need to make sure your visitors instantly know that yours is a legitimate, professional business. This not only puts their minds at ease, but it removes a huge

obstacle they might otherwise have to doing business with you.

3. Get to the point on the first VISIBLE screen.

The key here is VISIBLE. This means make sure your visitors know EXACTLY how you will solve their problems and meet their needs BEFORE they ever touch a scroll bar.

There is nothing more aggravating than a site that forces you to link and scroll before you can even figure out if they can meet your needs.

Think about it: do you take the time to dig through one web site when you can GOOGLE thousands or millions of other sites that also claim to have what you need? Neither will your prospects. If people have to go hunting, they will simply move on.

Two other important tools that can help turn visitors into buyers are a site search, and easy-to-find contact information. You want to make sure no one visits your site without INSTANTLY knowing you WANT to help them and YOU can solve their problems.

4. Make a free or special introductory offer.

You need to get the website visitor to DO SOMETHING NOW ... IMMEDIATELY! Because if they don't, they're gone ... and you've lost your opportunity. (When we added a free evaluation offer to our Profit Boosters Copywriting website, our response rate tripled.)

5. Offer a free eNewsletter sign-up.

This is a must. Give it a good name, offer free special reports along with it and push your privacy policy. You must capture your visitor emails and follow up with helpful information to them on a regular basis.

And don't worry about writing your eNewsletter. You obviously have a passion and expertise for your business, or you wouldn't be in it. Just write about what you know, using your own words.

Here's another important related tip: don't try and impress anyone with technical jargon and flowery language. Pretend you're writing a letter to help out a good friend. That's the perfect tone for your eNewsletter.

6. Focus on the message, not the technology.

With a media as technology-driven as the internet, it's unbelievably easy to get caught up all the latest bells and whistles.

But remember, people are visiting your site because they WANT something ... NOT because they want to be impressed by how much technology you've packed onto your site.

Your headline is still the key (see tip number 1 again) to driving business. And whether you use the latest technology, or plain old text, EVERYTHING on your site should point your prospect to a BENEFIT only YOU can provide.

Here's another good reason to hold back on the tech stuff a bit: not all new technology is ACCESSIBLE or ACCEPTED by most users right away, or even at all.

To reach the largest audience, wait until a technology is generally accepted by users and developers so they'll already have, or be willing to download the necessary components to view your site. Some examples of this are:

- java applets
- activex controls
- shockwave objects
- tools that require plug-ins
- specialized document formats

7. Keep it Simple.

One common mistake is to overdo the graphics. Web design programs make it so easy to add graphic elements that they're sometimes hard to resist. Remember, just because you CAN do something, doesn't mean you SHOULD.

Try the "Squint Test". Look at your web page and kind of squint your eyes. Do you see a main thought and graphic ...

or do you just see a bunch of colors, shapes, patterns, boxes and flashes?

As a rule of thumb, anything that diverts your attention to ITSELF as a graphic element and AWAY from the MESSAGE of your main benefits, is probably overdone.

Some common things that get overused are:

- excessive graphics
- frames
- background images
- bevels and other graphic tricks

Keep in mind that overdoing it can be more than just a visual problem. Too many graphics and frames can bog down a page or make it too difficult to navigate. Either way, you've lost your prospect for good.

8. Give prospects a reason to visit your site.

The #1 reason people visit web sites is for information. So, in addition to making sure they know you can solve their problems, give them some information.

Good examples of things you can easily "give away" on your site include free marketing tips, a how-to section, or tips for buying your product or service. You don't have to give away the farm. Just give some helpful tidbits that show people you know what you're talking about. All of these things will build your credibility and generate business for you.

9. Give both customers and prospects reason to want to visit your web site again.

Studies show that people usually won't buy from you until they visit your site 4-5 times. You can help that process along tremendously by giving people a reason to return to your site.

Some ways to do this include updating product or service information, timely/seasonal how-to tips, change your offer, change your free premium, upgrade or update samples and demos. These are all good reasons for people to return to your site or maybe even bookmark it.

A good rule of thumb would be to update your site in some way every 1 to 3 months, even if the changes are minimal. Not only will it give your visitors reason to return, it will help drive new visitors to your site since search engines re-index/re-catalog changed pages.

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