

3 Tips for Your E-commerce Website | Convert Visitors to Customers

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By its very nature the web is a complex place with too many websites to count and information & data on just about every topic conceivable. It's no wonder a large portion of internet users don't even contemplate interacting with websites by making online purchases or completing web forms. This isn't to say however that you can't increase the likelihood that these people will interact with your website. Your website is your storefront, you have as much or as little creative freedom as you like – so make sure you use this freedom everywhere you can.

1. Simplicity

Human nature is fairly straightforward when it comes to digesting information and this is replicated in the online world. By giving people too many options you overwhelm them. They are going to be less likely to find what they are looking for with an overload of information. The longer a person has to look to skim a page to find what they are looking for, the more chance they will leave and go somewhere else. Flashing banners, multiple sale stamps, large blocks of boring text, numerous ad blocks and too many colours are all big no no's.

Simplicity is the key when designing a website to drive conversions. Keep the key message of the page very clear; use headings to direct users to where they need to look – direct them to the goal. Fewer pages, less clicks, less clutter and more whitespace are all key ingredients in making your small part of the web simple and a conversion goldmine. In 2010, clean sleek designs were king, and online consumers continue to ask for it.

Web users have an ever diminishing attention span so now, more than ever, design needs to engage the user, provide succinct information and allow them to go on their merry way.

2. Trust

So, you've now created a beautiful simple website that is sure to boost conversions beyond comprehension, but for some reason it's just not happening. Why you may ask? One of the major reasons that online consumers do not proceed to conversion is simply a lack of trust. This lack of trust could be for your company, your website, the quality of your product/service or just a general weariness for taking risks online.

Conveying a sense of trust to your visitors and communicating that your company is a trustworthy supplier can be difficult. Previous client testimonials are of immeasurable value in this instance. Client testimonials can help visitors put a little more trust in your business, if someone else has used your service and is willing to tell the world about it then the website must be trustworthy. There is always the risk

that some visitors might be savvy enough to ask the question “are those even real testimonials?” If this is the case then hopefully further trust building design features can persuade them.

Is your company the preferred provider or a product or service to a well known brand? Obviously including a well known brand logo and clearly outlining your business as the preferred partner is another great way to build trust.

Accreditation could be the missing piece of the trust pie for many visitors. If you own and run a business that is accredited in some form or has won awards then don't be too shy to gloat about it.

By default human nature is to trust tangibility. E-commerce stores and online enquires are both intangible to most online consumers. There is no solid product in their hand, no customer service representative to help them along the way. Unfortunately there isn't a real way to change a checkout process to feel more tangible (unless of course you have enough money and resources to manage a real time help chat on your website). But don't fret! You can show your visitors how real you and your business are by including the following:

1. A well thought out, super clear refund policy
2. Detailed shipping information with estimate delivery times
3. A contact phone and email – that work!
4. A physical address if one exist for your business

The more information you provide that shows you are a real company with real staff members, the more likely someone is to trust your site and make a purchase or send an enquiry.

3. Security

We all have to agree, no one ever feels comfortable handing over credit card details online. What if the website is insecure, what if it gets hacked, and what if someone intercepts the card details and uses my money to buy luxury holidays and fancy cars! Although many more people are making purchases online these same risk assessments happen instinctively.

To ensure that your website visitors know your website is secure, and that their personal details and credit card will be secure you need to blatantly promote the fact.

Security Sockets Layer or SSL security seals are the first step, telling people that all their details are encrypted during transfer and that the likelihood of someone getting hold of their details is next to nil. The other big one is having a privacy policy – link to this during the checkout process or when someone is completing an online form. You need to tell your visitors that when they enter their details you won't be sharing these with third parties. All their private details will be in secure hands with your company.