



Turn Visits into Sales (or Leads or Customers ...etc)

Website conversion is about using analytics generated by the visits to your website and using the information to further help your visitors find what they are looking for on your website.

Conversions are usually defined in terms of the goals set for your website. For example, do you want to build your email list? Generate more leads? Make more sales? Each of these is a conversion point.

The idea, of course, is to increase the number of visitors to your website that take the desired action(s). After all, if you have a thousand visits a day but only 2 of them take action, you aren't getting very far. But if you have 500 visits a day and 30 of them take an action, you're business is growing!

Here are 10 important considerations that, when implemented, can increase the number of conversions on your website.

- 1) Begin with the end in mind. Company websites are not just a static representation of your business; they are actively marketing and can perform a number of functions if you devote a little time up front to identifying goals. Do you want to generate leads? How many leads do you currently receive each month and how will you measure results?
- 2) Check the time it takes for your site to fully load. Incredibly, if it takes longer than 1.5 seconds you lose visitors – even before the site is finished loading. Studies show that for every second over 1.5 that it takes for your site to load you lose 10% of your potential visitors.
- 3) Install a web analytics program and use it to determine top entry points, most visited pages, etc. This information is invaluable when it comes to tailoring the website to what visitors want to know. It also gives you an indication of where to focus cross-selling efforts that can further build your business.
- 4) Use your real estate wisely! The more important the information is to your visitors and goals, the higher it needs to be on your webpage. Why? Because this is the first part of the site that will load, and you don't want to make visitors search for information. More than anything, visitors want to know if you have what they are looking for, so show it to them upfront with bold headlines, graphics, and strong call to action messages first and foremost.
- 5) Write all your copy in an active voice focusing on the potential visitor. Some people refer to this as being "benefit oriented." Use text that speaks specifically to the visitor like, "When you work with us you'll get a guarantee with all our top quality products." This is a strong statement that is focused on the potential customer, not bragging about the company. Visitors don't care how great you are – they care about what you can do for them.
- 6) Include plenty of opportunities for visitors to interact with your site. The more your visitor interacts, the more likely they are to do business with you. Provide free "white papers" (like this one), opportunities to save money on a purchase, calendar of events for planning, etc. Be sure to include a call to action message with each opportunity, merely putting a sign up form on the site does not assure your visitor will use it. Telling the visitor to "sign up now" is more likely to elicit the desired outcome.



- 7) Give visitors a reason to trust you and give you their information. Use your business address on the site – even a post office box with a real city and state is better than nothing. Tell visitors the steps to doing business with you. Have clear links to your company policies and include policies for privacy, terms and conditions, shipping, returns, refunds, guarantees, and how to communicate customer concerns all clearly outlined on the site.
- 8) Include clear contact information. Ever been to a website that had no phone number, no email address, only a contact form? It's amazing how many sites don't contain even the most basic information about how to buy! Include contact information on every page. Be sure the contact page has multiple ways to contact your company including phone, email, and a form. If possible, include a live chat option and let visitors know that your staff is "standing by" to promptly take their calls, answer their questions, and respond to their emails.
- 9) Keep it simple. Make it easy for visitors to do business with you starting with the home page. Identify the route to the final point of contact or sales check out. How many clicks does it take? When you know the primary goal of your visitor, you can work to eliminate unnecessary steps in the process keeping as few clicks as possible from the point of entry to the final destination. Don't put obstacles in the way like customer surveys, etc. Strive towards a specific action point with clear links, instructions, and call to action messages.
- 10) Include frequent questions and testimonials. Give your visitor every reason to do business with you now, not shop around. Testimonials should be interspersed throughout the site while frequent questions should be linked directly to copy within the site. Remember how you actually sell in person and integrate those concepts into the site. Be creative in your approach!

Don't forget your visitor after they have left. Follow up is important for visitors as they consider the decision to buy from you and for customers after they have made the purchase. Tell them what the next step will be. Continue to communicate about additional products and services. Nothing can be more frustrating than to make a purchase and then have to call the company a week later wondering where your order is. Show your customer service skills, and they will be your customer for life.