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The 5 Toughest Problems Facing Online Retailers

By Raynay Valles

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What are the toughest problems facing online retailers in 2003?

Problem # 1 Getting visitors

The number one complaint of online retailers is they are not getting enough visitors.

Many choose to get visitors the same way their competitors do. Online retailers try search engine placement, pay-per-clicks, banner ads and other marketing tactics.

Banners can cost as little as \$1 per 1000 views. Email lists can be as inexpensive as \$30 per 10,000 names. Despite these low prices, retailers are finding that many times these tactics don't deliver enough sales to justify the cost.

Problem # 2 Low conversion rates

Turning visitors into customers is the second biggest problem that online retailers face. This becomes a greater problem when retailers sell items that people prefer to see and touch before buying, such as clothing.

Do you know the answers to this question:

What percentage of your visitors become your customers?

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That percentage is your sales conversion rate. This number is one of the most overlooked and most impactful numbers in online marketing. It's overlooked because website owners often think that more visitors is the route to more customers. What if their marketing is bringing lots of visitors but their website is sending them away?

Websites can send visitors away in many ways, from frustratingly slow download times to poor sales copy. Visitors in general complain of having to download plug-ins to view the website and confusing navigation.

Most ecommerce businesses are getting 1–2% sales conversion. A small change in your conversion rate can have a big impact on your bottom line.

Let's say you run your numbers and find that you have a 1% conversion rate. Applying marketing know-how, you make some changes to your website that makes customers more likely to buy. Next week you test your sales conversion rate and find that it's 2%. You've doubled your sales, without spending more money marketing!

Once you get your sales conversion higher, your marketing budget performs better. The same money that was bringing you 1% sales conversion is now bringing 2% sales conversion.

While a small change in your sales conversion rate will have a great impact on revenues, most website owners are unaware of this and are losing sales.

Problem # 3 The proximity of the competition

According to Nielsen/Netratings, February 2003, the average visitor spends only 55 seconds per webpage. In less than a minute, your visitors decide whether to continue viewing your pages or click away.

How many of your competitors are online? Find out now by going to your favorite search engine and typing in keywords prospective customers would use when looking for your business. How many options do your potential customers have?

Even if a visitor wants what you offer, he is tempted to

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comparison shop. It's very easy to click and go to another site. Are you doing everything you can to get customers to buy from you?

Problem # 4 Price-shopping

If you sell something exclusive, price-shopping wouldn't be a problem for you until competition shows up on the scene.

However, if you sell products that other websites offer, then you'll find intense pressure to lower your prices. Search engines give prospective customers a list of options. Plus, there are price comparison websites like Pricegrabber, MySimon and Dealtime that make it easy for consumers to price-shop. They give their users prices from several websites.

Problem # 5 Shopping cart abandonment

A visitor decides to buy from you. Somewhere between placing items in the shopping cart and completing the purchase they leave your website, usually for good.

More than 60 percent of online shoppers abandon purchases before completing the credit card transaction, according to Gartner Group, Inc. Which means if 40 people buy from you, 100 started to buy from you. Imagine how many more sales you'd have if you prevented some of these abandoned carts.

Identifying the toughest problems facing online retailers is the first step in dealing effectively with them.

Learn How to Solve Problems With a Feng Shui Mirror

By Jakob Jelling

A mirror, when becoming a feng shui mirror, can be used to many more things than allowing us to see how we look. Feng shui teaches how a feng shui mirror can be used in order to solve many different problems, and we will describe some of these uses through the next few lines.

One first way to use a feng shui mirror is to send something negative away. By placing the mirror facing whatever is negative to your space, the mirror would reflect it back not allowing it to affect you negatively. Therefore, if you have an object or a shape which disharmonizes, then you can neutralize

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its effect by placing the feng shui mirror facing it.

A feng shui mirror can also be used when you have a low ceiling and it has a pushing down effect on you. In this case, you should place a mirror facing the ceiling in order to make it reflect it. The mirror should be placed at some spot above your head level so it reflects the ceiling back before its pushing effect reaches you.

Another use a feng shui mirror can have is when your bedroom or any other room in which you need to be relaxed is placed above somewhere with machines or a garage. In these cases, placing a mirror on the floor and facing down wouldn't let the machines energy and the disturbances have a bad effect on you.

Sometimes there is an object or element which you may need at a specific spot but you can not actually place it there, when this happens, a feng shui mirror can be the solution. If you need the presence of things such as an object or a color and you can not place it where you need, you can put a feng shui mirror reflecting it in order to have it represented through that reflection where you need.

By using a feng shui mirror, you can also bring elements which are outside your house and belong to the nature. In order to achieve this, all you have to do is place the mirror inside your house facing that element through a window and that reflection would be as if that natural element was into the house.

By Jakob Jelling

Jakob Jelling is the founder of

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feng shui tips you'll ever need!

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