

Website not selling? Twelve questions you should ask yourself

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By David Bell

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So your website is getting visitors, but not enough are buying. A common online problem, unfortunately. Here are twelve common faults found with websites that don't sell. If you answer no to any of them, you need to take action.

1) Does your text focus on emphasizing the benefits and the results the customer will get from purchasing and using it?

Sales copy needs to be focused on the benefits to the end user, not on the features of the product. List the features, and then translate them into benefits the customer will get. Move away from "our Widget does this, this and this.." to "You will soon be doing this .."

2) Does your website convey enough strong benefits?

Brainstorm to come up with a list of benefits. Rank them in order of importance. Then mention them in order throughout the text, best first. Summarizing them with bullet points too also works great.

3) Does your text stimulate the emotions?

People buy with the heart not the head – so try and stimulate emotions – use words to paint a picture of life after they've bought your product "Imagine the freedom of no more back pain..." or "...money worries could soon be a thing of the past, and you could soon be taking those exotic vacations...".

4) Does the headline grab and draw you in?

You've got to try to stop them dead in their tracks with the headline. Use the best benefit of your product, and create interest so they read on. Make it hard hitting, but not unbelievable.

5) Do you have a call to action?

People put off decisions, even if they're 90% sold on your product, they may still decide to "sleep on it". Don't let them have time to forget – give them an incentive to purchase now – discounts, bonuses etc.

6) Does your website load and function ok?

Slow load times may cause people to get impatient and go elsewhere, even though it registers a visit. Do all links work, and more importantly, have you tested your order page by running dummy orders?

7) Do you have any testimonials from satisfied customers?

Testimonials are everywhere online, and people expect them as a matter of course. Ask those who have purchased what they thought – email them a simple customer satisfaction survey, offer a freebie for replying and use the best comments. If your product is free, try a testimonial swap with a seller of a

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complementary (but not directly competing) product –offer to review his product if he reviews yours.

8)Do you take a credit cards?

I shouldn't really have to ask this now should I? It's a plain fact that you are going to lose a huge amount of customers if you don't accept them.

9)Are you absolutely sure there's a market for it?

Does anyone else sell anything similar –if so, there should be a market for it. If it's a highly unique product, did you do a survey or market research to see if anyone wanted to buy it? If not, canvass opinion from forums and newsgroups.

10)Is your website easy on the eye?

Strong colors can make text difficult to read –it doesn't matter how good your offer is, if someone gets a headache looking at the screen there going to give up.

11)Do you offer a guarantee?

Most people are wary of getting "scammed" online, so remove those doubts – offer a guarantee. Make it as unconditional as you can.

12)Can you compete with your competitors?

Do you have any big competitors who are just cornering the market and "blowing you away"? Are customers just visiting your site to "comparison shop" and returning to your competitor to buy. If this is a possibility, try to devise a unique selling point (USP) which differentiates your product from others – perhaps you can compete on quality, benefits, or price. Emphasise the differences and advantages of your product. Research your market and familiarize yourself with what else is on offer. Then carve out a niche for your product.

Once you can honestly answer "yes" to all the above questions, it's just a matter of constant fine–tuning until you get a decent level of sales. You're never going to sell to everyone who visits your site, but you can do lots to increase the odds in your favor.

I hope this helps in your future marketing decisions.

David Bell is Manager, Online Marketing, at <http://www.wspromotion.com/> , a leading Search Engine Optimization services firm and Advertising Agency.

Your Website Should Be Selling

By Ben Norbury

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It may come as some surprise to a traditionally off-line business that their website should be attracting new sales, or at least supporting the sales they have made. There is a common misconception that a website is more of a cost than an asset. When I ask companies why they would like a website the common answer is, "I don't know?" It seems to me that having a website is more of a reflex than something that is planned to help grow sales for the company. In other words, "Every business has one, I should too."

This is of course a little unfair. Too many companies have been stung by website designers in the past, with websites that are not designed to sell their company. When it comes to selling on-line it comes down to a no-nonsense approach. Your website should be designed to deliver information to a visitor so that they can make an informed decision about purchasing from you. So this requires your website to be well laid out, to the point, answer the most common questions and have a clean layout. Once your website is achieving these points you will start selling.

When planning your page copy, keep in mind the following points:

Be concise, call a spade a spade, not a fabulous ground displacement tool.

Avoid superlatives such as, "we are number 1!" common reaction is "no your not!"

Don't write to fill in space. Large pages can put off visitors from reading anything.

Put the important stuff at the top!

Have other people that are unfamiliar with your product, service or company read your copy. Make sure they don't have any questions. If they do, answer them in the copy.

Give your website designer full editorial control. You may not like this one. Most website designers have experience of what should be where on a website. Some website designers/web marketers know how it should be written. You may pay extra for this, you need to ask them about it.

If you are unhappy with the results of your website it can be contributed to many factors. These factors are all solvable and generally fit under the headings of, Page Copy, Search Engine Validity, Layout and Usability. By solving these issues your website will begin to be an asset to your business.

Ben Norbury is Director of Design and Development at

Ltd. a company that has recently

launched its new Website Healthcheck service. This new service identifies and corrects issues that are

affecting website sales. To learn more go to:

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Seven Simple Questions to Build Your Site's Sales

The 10 Myths of Successful Selling

How to get clients from local businesses

Alcoholics Anonymous – The Original 12 Step Program

Blogs and RSS Revealed

Software Empire

7 Ways to get Great Links to your Website

Reply Email Automator

PPC Profits



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