

Building An Effective Website



Know Thyself... Or better yet, Know Thy Customer!

A very popular method for building an effective website is to know what your users are looking for when they come to your site, and then target market your products to that specific group of users. Anyone who is in marketing knows that having a targeted market is the best way to increase the return on your investment.

Imagine that you had 5000 Postcards that were going to mail to advertise your products or services. If you were to randomly open the yellow pages and mail to the first 5,000 addresses, what sort of success would you get? Not much, right? Now, if you could find 5,000 people that were looking for your product and mail to them, what sort of success would you get? Significantly more!

So how do you attract people who are interested in buying your product to your website? The most popular method is the search engine. We strongly believe that the Search Engines must not be your sole form of advertising. However, their results can be one of the best ways for customers to find your website and therefore, should be considered in any advertising campaign.

One of the greatest benefits of a search engine is that it provides you with highly targeted traffic. When surfers use a search engine, they are actively looking for sites within a narrow and defined topic. Therefore having your site appear in the search engine rankings can be a wonderful method of getting traffic.

The problem is that about a billion other people also know how search engines work, and many of them try quite hard to get high ranking within the search engines. For your site to gain the number one position for any popular keyword will be quite a challenge. However, that doesn't mean that you should ignore the search engines altogether. Even if your site doesn't appear in the top 10 for your most important keywords, this doesn't mean that you won't get some traffic from them.

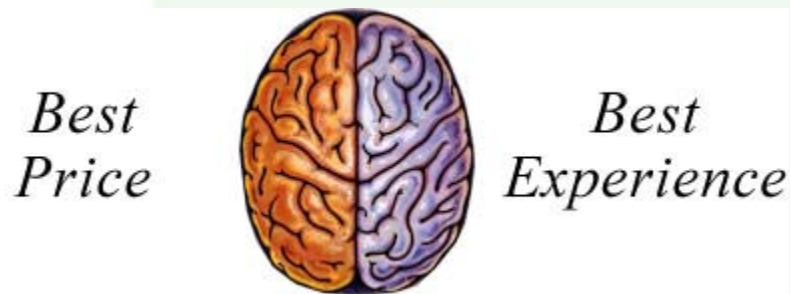


Does your site sell with emotion or information?

Knowing what a person is looking for when they come to your website is only half the battle. After that, your site must entice them to contact you about your service or products. Your sites design needs to convey a lot of information quickly, and most importantly, without making anyone read more than a couple of sentences.

What most business owners do not realize is that people generally buy based upon a combination of emotional and technical information. While marketing companies call quick emotional buying "impulse buying," we prefer to call it "emotional purchasing."

Building a site that caters to both the left and right brained user takes special skill. Emotional responses differ from person to person, but usually focus around issues like trust, past experience, site usability, intrigue, how the site holds interest, and overall impression of the quality of the company. Left brained people will be more interested in text, service information and pricing. Your site must be attractive to both of these types of buyers.



Knowing about the **emotional purchaser**, your site design needs to:

1. Clearly convey what the site is about without the need to read.
2. Identify that you have what the user is looking for.
3. Direct users to the right page to find detailed information about your service.
4. Capture information from the user about
5. the user so that you can market to them.
6. Instill confidence and trust in your company.

Knowing about the **logical purchaser**, your site's content needs to:

1. Clearly state service or product information.
2. Provide clear and easy navigation paths through your site.
3. Provide accurate and **VISIBLE** pricing information.
4. Answer questions that your users have and not questions that you wish your users would ask.

Lastly, few of us "trust" the internet enough to plunk down our credit card the very first time we visit a website. That is why capturing information about each user is critical. It gives you the ability to market to and eventually sell to them after they have left your site. To do this, try offering a free service in exchange for contact information. A good rule of thumb is that someone needs to hear from you *six* times before they are comfortable enough to make a purchasing decision.

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