

7 Free Tips for a Successful Online Presence

1. Design With Conversions in Mind

It goes without saying that the design of your website plays a huge role in how successful it will be, but we'll tell you anyway. The primary goal of any eCommerce site is to generate conversions, or sales. In such a competitive, fast paced environment, you cannot afford to have a subpar design. A significant percentage of consumers browsing online will leave a website without doing any kind of research if they can't readily identify what it is you're offering just by a glance. This is referred to as your site bounce rate, and it is an undeniable factor in the success of the company. How many times have you ended up on a site, looked around for a couple seconds, and left because the front page didn't tell you what you needed to know? Most online consumers *know* what it is they're looking for, so make sure your site clearly lets them know that you have what they need.



So how do you do this?

- The way the site looks is obviously the first thing that registers to a visitor, don't underestimate the power of a strategic design. It should be easy to navigate, and attention should be drawn to important information, such as calls to action, relevant links, and testimonials.
- Include pertinent information "above the fold." In other words, make sure it's obvious what service you offer without having to scroll down the page to find out.
- Make sure your company's personality is uniform throughout all of your site pages. Logos, colors, and designs should all conform and complement each other.
- Don't hesitate to contact us for a design consultation for even more useful tips!

2. Social Media Integration

Social Media is here to stay whether you like it or not, and it's an incredible driving force in online business interactions. With 96 percent of Americans using Facebook, and one out of every six minutes online being spent on social networking, it is an opportunity to get your name out there that's just too good to pass up. However, don't assume that adding as many friends as you can, as fast as you can, is the best course of action. This is a business Facebook page, and it needs to be run differently than a personal page might be. It's important that you start out by choosing a few *relevant* companies that you aren't actually competing with, and begin to establish relationships with them. These will be the people that support you down the road and help spread the information that you need to be seen.



3. Tracking Traffic and Conversions

Information will always be the most useful tool at your disposal. If you can figure out where your efforts are working and where they aren't doing so hot, you can make the proper adjustments without tweaking something that didn't need to be tweaked. Here at Web Design Solutions we can easily track these things through a variety of methods. When you set up a Pay Per Click advertisement, your conversion rate can be tracked through ad words. This will tell you how many people that came to your site via the ad actually invested in the service you're providing. A Google Analytics account is the first and most important step in keeping track of how well your site is working. You can monitor this yourself and allow your business to grow with the market. Here at Web Shop Manager we can track important metrics through:



- Analytics
- Ad Words
- Bing PPC
- Sales Force

4. BLOG!

So many new companies underestimate the power of an effective and consistent blog, which happens to be one of the most powerful online marketing tools we have. Blogging is an easy way to generate more organic traffic through keywords, but it isn't as simple as writing up some important industry influenced words and clicking post. You need to promote your own blog through all of your social media accounts, and new content just gives subscribers a reason to come back to your site. Blogging on a regular basis gives you the opportunity to reinforce your knowledge in your field by posting relevant news updates, and will even boost your Google page rank through the use of keywords. Constantly try to think of new, relevant topics and use monthly searches to prioritize what it is you'd like to talk about.



5. User Friendly Website

At a time where everything is constantly being streamlined and optimized, your website can't be the exception. Choosing not to embrace the rapidity of how business is moving, is choosing to be left behind by the competition. There are so many options for someone shopping online, and all it takes to find an alternative is a quick search and a few clicks. There are a few vital steps that need to be taken to ensure that your website will offer the best possible experience for visitors.

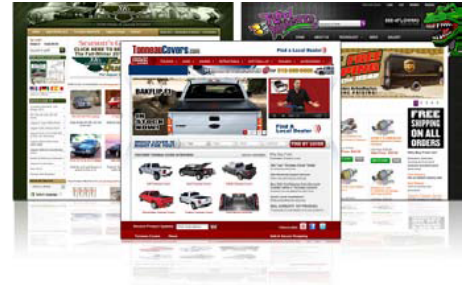


- Your homepage should load in less than 8 seconds on a 56k modem. This is absolutely crucial, as a lot of people will simply leave the site and find a better option after a few seconds.
- The layout of the menus needs to be easy to navigate and easy to understand. The whole idea behind online business is that it's convenient and everything you need is right in front of you. Your site should reflect this, if the customer is looking for something specific, they should be able to locate it relatively quickly.

- Checkouts and lead forms should only be a one page process. The goal is to make your online interaction a pleasant one, so they want to come back. Forcing the buyer through a gauntlet of information entry is not the way to do this.
- Interlinking is also very important. Not only does this give search engines more information to crawl, but users will have even more ways to find the data they're looking for!

6. Good Product Pages

Not being able to see a product right in front of you and examine it for yourself is an inherent complication for an eCommerce business. We've all been in a position where we wanted to order something, but didn't really know if it was everything it appeared to be. It's your job to alleviate as much doubt as you can for possible customers, and this is done with quality individual product pages.



- Write original, keyword rich and unique product descriptions. Give as much detail as you can, try to remove as much doubt from the consumer as you can. This is also a very effective long term marketing strategy.
- Make sure your descriptions answer the following questions: What are the benefits of this product? What is the product made out of? What options are available for the product? How does it work/are any instructions needed? Who should buy this?
- Product videos are a great way to take your product pages to the next level. Seeing someone else actually use something is the next best thing to being able to use it yourself.
- Imagery is a huge factor that many eCommerce websites do not fully take advantage of. Offering multiple pictures of a product from various angles will give your customer a more complete online shopping experience.

7. Using Meta Tags Properly

Meta tags are your tool to create the biggest web presence you can, and learning how to master search engines is a full time job. They're keyword variations that need to apply to different parts of your site and will not be seen by someone browsing the page. These tags will assist in improving your page rank for search engines. It's important to make sure you are using keywords that are relevant to the page, and are used throughout the rest of the website.



- Meta Title- Title displayed in browser title bar.
- Meta Description- This is a piece of HTML code that belongs in the <head> section of a web page. It is an important part of your SEO and online marketing strategy, and is often used by social media sites as the description of your website.
- Meta Keywords- Text in meta keywords tag. List words relative to the content of this page and separate them with a comma.