

77 Ways To Skyrocket Your Website's Conversion Rate



*The Ultimate Checklist to Boost any Website Into a
Well-Oiled Conversion Machine!*

by

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About The Author



Ray L. Edwards started marketing online back in the good old days when classifieds were free on AOL. He worked a number of network marketing opportunities and wrote a popular article on how to choose a long distance MLM company. He left the industry to do computer servicing only to return to see that classifieds were no longer free on AOL!

He is the present author of a number of ebooks, short reports, ezine articles and devours everything he can find on the subject of Internet Marketing. He publishes a weekly newsletter called '[Inbization](#)', providing inspiration and latest strategies in marketing online. He runs a one-man home business doing his own web-design, script installation, copywriting, graphics, editing, marketing and e-publishing.

Ray is a former High School Teacher, trained Christian pastor and the proud father of 2 sets of twins! He resides with his family in Endicott, New York USA.

INTRODUCTION

I've seen it over and over again!

It's the same complaint on message boards and many marketing forums. And it goes something like this: "I have this great website and good traffic but nobody is buying. Could you please tell me why?"

Traffic is like the raw material for your site. But what happens if the machinery breaks down? It doesn't matter how many barrels of oil a well may be producing, if the refinery is operating at 10% capacity then that's how much oil you will get out.

It is the same for your website as well. You may be generating tons of traffic but if your visitors are not doing what you want them to do – big waste of time and money! Your site must be designed in a way that will maximize conversions. Here I define 'conversion' as getting your visitors to take whatever action you want them to – place an order, signup for your Ezine, click a link, enter a contest etc.

There seems to be tons of info online on how to get people to your site. You can even buy guaranteed traffic to your website. No one seems to be selling conversions though. In fact, no one will guarantee you how many of the visitors that they send to your site will actually make a purchase. We may even think that it will be foolish to do so.

It's like those prospectus you get for investments and mutual funds. There are always those fine print disclaimers that let you know that former performance is no reflection of future gains.

Everyone seems to be on the traffic bandwagon. But few shouting for increasing your website's conversion rate. This is one of the reasons (the other being to provide a companion to my earlier ebook, "[The No-Click Traffic Secret](#)" that deals with traffic generation) why I decided to author this ebook.

The Story of The Three Investors ...

As I start to write this chapter a story comes to mind. It's the story or parable of the talents told by the Greatest Teacher, Jesus.

Three men were given various amounts of money to invest. (Of course I am modernizing the story here but the point is the same). One was given \$5,000 the other \$2,000 and yet another \$1000. They were given much latitude in their use of the money.

They were expected to make a profit by investing this money for the owner. At the end of the investment period, the servant with the \$5,000 investment brought in \$5,000 more. The man with \$2,000 also had a 100% return on his. Now what of the holder of the \$1,000? He actually hid his in the ground and returned 0% increase.

He was satisfied just to know that he did not lose any of the money. That may be a worthy ambition in these uncertain economic times but the owner was not flattered. The \$5,000 and \$2,000 investors were both commended and the \$1,000 investor was rebuked for his lack of wisdom and asked to turn over the money to the \$5,000 investor.

I'm sure by now you are thinking, "What is the point to this story?" What does this really have to do with website conversion? Well ... a lot!

The Story of The Three Investors ...

You see Jesus made the statement that has troubled many people since. He said that those who had much would gain more and those who had little would lose that little.

I can still hear you saying, “Please get to the point!” Okay, well here goes. **It makes absolutely no sense trying to increase traffic to your website if you are not making the best use of what you are already getting.** You have to be investing the ‘\$1,000 traffic’ well if you expect to be entrusted with the ‘\$5,000 traffic’.

The bottom line here is that most of the times when people complain for a lack of traffic they need to see if they are already making good use of their present traffic. ‘He that is faithful in little things is also faithful in much’. (That’s another lesson by the Master Teacher as well.)

It seems almost a natural law of life that if you are putting to good use the little that you have the ‘much’ will automatically take care of itself. Many Internet marketers are surprised by how much a little tweak in their website can have on their conversion rate and their overall Return On Investment (ROI).

So we are about to look at 77 tips for increasing your websites’ conversion rate. The information here is particularly geared towards the so-called ‘mini-site’ used by most small business owners as opposed to large corporate e-commerce sites such as Amazon.com. Most of the principles are however universal and should apply across the board.

The material is presented in a checklist format. Much like those “pre-owned” (Note: not ‘used’) vehicles that go through the 201 point inspection. At the end of the inspection you have a ‘like new’ vehicle. You may then need to have your website before you and go through these checks (where they apply of course) to make your site like a smooth running conversion machine.

Minors That Can Be Majors

Tips are not the same as rules. They are more like strong suggestions. The overarching principle would be that form should follow function. One website that has a primary goal of providing entertainment would follow different rules to that of say a library.

These tips have been compiled from my personal research and testing. This ebook arose out of my own need to be able to carry my websites through a methodical checklist to optimize their sales potential.

Minors That Can Be Majors

The Internet did not really have a predecessor so most website designers tried to apply print design to WebPages. It soon became obvious that since the mediums were different some adjustments had to be made. This became a matter of trial and error and in many cases simple 'common sense'.

We will start off by taking a look at the general mechanics of your website.

TIP #1

Check how fast your pages load on a 28k modem.

Simply because you are living close to civilization and have a screaming broadband Internet connection doesn't mean that everyone does. The majority of

surfers are still on dialup and you have to optimize your pages to load as fast as possible. You can simply use a dialup account to check this or the service of websites like NetMechanics.com at <http://www.netmechanics.com>

This service would check your loading speed, your links to make sure they are working and will point out graphics that need to be reduced.

TIP #2

Check to see how your website appears in other browsers and on other monitors.

Again, you have to keep in mind that not every web surfer has a 21" monitor with 1024 x 768 resolution. A rule of thumb is that you should always keep the 'little guy' in mind. I mean those with the 12" monitors set at 640 x 480. If you design your website at fixed pixels, (say 700 x 600) then those surfers with smaller monitors will have to scroll across just to see the entire breath of your page. This is a little annoying and that is the last thing you want to do – annoy your visitors.

TIP #3

Make sure your font type and size are easily readable and available.

Remember everyone does not share your 20/20 eyesight. Here you can learn a lot from those who do direct marketing by mail. They seldom divert from the 12-pt.

courier font. This is because it's easy to read. Keep in mind that it is even more challenging to read from a computer screen compared to paper. No need to get fancy.

A note on the font style is appropriate here. I can recall once I used one of those fancy cursive fonts for my signature. I was impressed ... until I visited a friend's house and was showing off my new sales letter. My signature showed up in an ugly large font. I was really confused for awhile. On reflection I remembered that if the font you choose is not on the viewer's computer, the browser chooses a random substitute.

Since then I have used a scanned image of my actual signature that I just paste into my websites. This eliminates all the surprises ... well, as far as my signature is concerned.

TIP #4

Go easy on those bandwidth-hungry graphics.

Do not use graphics just to have a pretty website. In most cases pictures do not help to sell to your visitors. Of course there are a few exception.

If you were a photographer you would most likely have samples of your work on your site. In this case, the saying holds true 'a picture is worth a thousand words'. Here you can have thumbnail size copies and a 'click here to see larger sample' link. So at least your Home page would load quickly.

Another exception to the 'rule' is those 'before and after' pictures commonly associated with weight loss and cosmetic ads. In this case the picture is helping your message in a positive way. Your text content is still what will persuade your

visitors to take action however.

TIP #5

Keep your background image in the background.

In most cases a plain white text background would serve you best. Make sure that your background image or 'water marks' are not competing with the text. The first law of art they say is 'contrast'. If you have gray colored fonts against a black background you may as well curse at your visitors.

Most mini-sites have a central text area and outside this another background that is considered just the border. This border should use a dark color so that it does not distract from the main area of focus. Using bright fluorescent type colors only strain the eyes of the reader. If I came to your home and did not like the colors of your walls I would stick around just to be polite. These social rules do not apply online where your competition is just one click away.

TIP #6

Avoid those flashy FLASH introductions.

Time is a big factor on the web and Flash presentations take time to load. This is not a criticism of the Flash program itself. I own this software and it makes for great presentations. However, when this is the first thing your visitor is hit with –

“wait while your movie loads” ... he can quickly lose patience. The majority of web users are still using dialup connection, so don't insult their lack of bandwidth.

Many companies present their website as though it is the art gallery for their IT department. Many web designers use technologies because it is the latest thing out and not because it serves a beneficial function. This is a common flaw that the marketing department has to often correct – if they have that power.

You don't have to be on the Internet for too long to learn that simplicity is king. Avoid making anything harder than it really must be.

TIP #7

Make your site navigation easy and simple to follow.

Steve Krug in his book *“Don't Make Me Think – A Common Sense approach to Web Usability”* states that the first law of usability is 'Don't make me think'. He explains that when your visitor comes to your site if they have to work through how to navigate your site you will only frustrate them. (Usability = Ease of use.)

He goes on to say that most people think that you should make your site easy and obvious because your competition is just a click away. This is sometimes true but the most people blame themselves not the website.

Your navigation system is not a place where you want to get fancy. Simple text link ordered vertically or horizontally work well. So do buttons and the most effective of all TABS. Yes, tab dividers are one of the most intuitive navigation schemes. Perhaps because we are so accustomed to them from filing systems and many books. Now why do you think that top sites like Amazon.com use them?

As I mention Amazon.com let me just make a plug here.

One of the reasons why I love the Internet so much is the freedom of information. The web is really an open community. A quick course in website usability should send you directly to popular sites such as Yahoo, Google, CNN.com among others. Why? These companies have the budget to hire expert consultants that you may never match. The results are open for all to see.

You may not know **why** they do something, (which of course is important) but you know that there must be good reason behind it. The sites that I have listed may not fit in with your website's genre. So all you do is find a competitor's site that does.

When I 'crafted' my very first sales letter I used that of an expert copywriter as a template. The product was different, so I copied the general structure of the letter. Well he started by saying 'Dear Friend,' ... his first paragraph was a short one sentence ... he started with a story and then cut it midway ... then comes a strong testimonial.

You get the general idea? After studying copywriting further I learned the 'whys' but before I did I just followed the model. You will be surprised at how smart you can become by modeling. (Ever heard of swipe-files?)

TIP #8

Location, location, location! It's not just what you say but where you say it.

In Real Estate we hear the term 'location, location, location' in response to the question on the determining factors of the value of a property. This can be applied in another way to your website as well. The question this time becomes 'what is the present and relevant value of this information?' If the answer to that question is

'high' then that's **where** the information should be placed.

When traveling with my family a rest station along the highway is a welcomed retreat. After driving for hours even a smelly restroom is well appreciated. I can also find a map, snack machines and brochures advertising local tourist attractions. These are things that will be in the traveler's mind and needs at the time and place.

Your Home Page should answer basic questions about your website. Questions such as 'What is this about? Who are these people? How long have they been in business? How can I contact them? This is introduction time and the information that is relevant at this point – assuming that most of your traffic will come through your Home Page. What about placing your guarantee policy on your checkout page and your 'secure server' message next to the order button? These are points at which the information is of immediate concern to your customers.

A very profitable way in which this can be used is to offer a special discount on your checkout page if the customer added another related product. Amazon.com makes good use of this technique by suggesting you also add other related books to your primary order.

While the customer is in a 'buying mood' is a great time to ask them to buy – just little more – with special one-time offers.

The software program that I used to create the graphics for this ebook was offered for \$59. On the checkout page there was a "Save \$10" offer if I bought the Logo Design program as well. I spent \$109 when I was only planning on spending \$59, just to get the \$10 off.

So, yes it works.

TIP #9

Without reading one line of text, your website should exude a message through its design and feel.

This is a very subjective area and may be more art than science. There really are no 'standards' and 'controls'. At the same time you would not expect PBS.com that is designed for children to have a website that looks like that for Harvard University. The former is for kids the latter for serious academics – well ... hopefully. Form must match function, or at least **should** match function.

Your site must 'say' this is a shopping website or this is a music fans site. Your visitor should not have to guess for too long at least what category you fall in. This would be accomplished through proper use of color, layout, fonts and technology. You are in trouble if your Tax Attorney site says 'Britney Spears'!

Here again we see that there are no hard and fast rules except "make sure it fits your goal". A movie fans website may have a great Flash clip since those who visit are looking for movie sample clips anyway. It is still true, however that most surfers are looking for information and they want it fast.

TIP#10

Use an invisible stats counter.

Except you want to show off how popular your site is you should keep your stats private. Sites with a big stats counter may have turned heads a couple years ago but a counter is no longer considered 'cool'.

Most webmasters have a stats/logs page that they can privately access. Smart surfers also know that stats counters can be artificially inflated anyway.

TIP #11

Make sure that your site prints well.

Sometimes we can become so caught up with this new medium of communication that we forget that many people still print out your website for easier reading. Especially if your site is a content rich paradise, then you should make sure that it prints well on standard A4 paper.

What some webmasters have done is to offer a printer-friendly version of their website if they cannot sacrifice some layout feature for the 'printability'. (Don't check your dictionary for that last word). They simply create 2 versions of the same site and when the user clicks on 'print page' then they print the version intended for paper.

Once again this highlights an underlying fact that is bound up in the history of the World Wide Web. Those who started it did so to share information mostly as text – message boards, instant messages and emails.

Ecommerce is a late comer as far as the Internet is concerned. Most big companies who were involved in the Internet boom were left out in the cold after the 'bubble' popped because they basically ignored this fact.

They came to the Internet as though it was some grand advertisement medium –

touting their big names and corporate logos. Surfers were not impressed because they didn't come to the web to be sold to – they came for information and to build relationships. Those companies that ignored this fact paid big time ... those who embraced it were paid big time.

TIP # 12

Make your website 'scannable'.

Those who do usability testing report that surfers generally scan your website rather than read through it from top to bottom. This means that you should be thinking 'billboard' rather than 'brochure'. A billboard is intended to sink its message within a few seconds.

A brochure, to be read through over and over again while you wait to be seen by your doctor.

The style and layout of the message on the billboard that you passed on the highway going at 85 m.p.h. (because you were late for your doctor's appointment) is not the same as the brochure you read in the waiting room.

What does this mean for you? You need to highlight (underline, color, bold) those keywords that betray what your site is all about. This relates very much to your Home page, which is really your most important piece of real estate. Your Home page is what attracts the most visitors and is likely the most popular point of entry. After the visitor is sold on drilling deeper in your site, then you can present the detailed information.

We will touch on this some more in a later tip.

Now that your 'structure' is in place let us take a closer look at some other important features.

Making Your Webcopy 'Customer Centered'

I taught high school physics for a number of years. It was my favorite subject when I was in school myself. It is the most fundamental of all sciences.

What I mean by 'fundamental' is that the discipline deals with the most basic laws in nature such as gravity and the behavior of light. All you had to learn was one law – eg. 'For every action there is an equal but opposite reaction'. This can then be applied to a thousand cases without me having to memorize each one. Once I had the principle in hand then I could apply it.

A basic **principle** as applied to website conversion is that your sales copy must be customer focused NOT company focused. This may be applied in a number of ways but the principle remains the same.

TIP # 13

If you keep tooting your own horn, you will find everybody moving out of the way!

Making Your Webcopy 'Customer Centered'

Did you get that? We hate it when others talk about themselves just over and over again. If all you do is boast about how wonderful your company or service is then people would start avoiding you. And trust me, social mores may keep some around you at a party because they don't want to embarrass you, but on the web – forget it.

Have you ever had this conversation with a 'friend'?

Friend: "Blah, blah, blah ... Well, enough about me. Let's change the subject. What do you think about ME?"

You will be surprised to see how many large corporations – I mean Fortune 500 companies – that greet you with what a great company they are and how great their products and services are ...blah ... blah ... blah ... And nothing about what they can do for the customer. You will be even more surprised to know how many Ad agencies do the same – yes, the very ones who should know better.

You see, we are so in love with our companies – except we were 'sentenced' to work there – that all we can envision is how wonderful **WE** are. That's quite natural and deeply ingrained. Yet we have to force ourselves to look from the other side of the fence and push what benefits we can give to our customers. Whatever we present must be customer-focused.

The visitor shows up at your site with a need to satisfy or a problem to be solved. When they read through your site – if you're that lucky – the question that is uppermost in their mind is "so what?" So you are the biggest electronics retailer on the net – what does that mean to me? Better bargains, more options, free shipping...? Then don't be shy tell me.

Review your website and compare how many times you took focus away from the customer by talking about yourself. Try and reverse this and see what happens.

TIP # 14

Benefits sell not features.

I think that this is one of the most fundamental principles of sale. Yet again, simply because something is well known doesn't mean that it is well used. If you don't believe me just check the stats on the number of people who smoke even though the Surgeon General warning comes with every ad – point taken?

Because we are so in love with our products we can just go on and on about all the things that they can do.

Most people are not concerned about your “Kenwood's 2-way speakers, featuring a 6 %” pearl-mica injection-molded poly woofer, PEI balanced dome tweeter and a range of 2 to 40 watts RMS, and a 160-watt peak power handling. Plus, they come with mounting tabs, so the speakers can be mounted in a 6.3 inch opening.” Tell me how the speakers sound, how they make me feel – how they will take my music listening to angelic heights.

This doesn't mean that the shopper will not be concerned about the specs for these car speakers. It simply means that the technical specs are **secondary** to what the speakers can do for my auditory nerves.

So what are you selling? Benefits that would add value to your visitor's life or just your product features?

TIP # 15

Write as if to one person; not to a group or the whole world.

I sold Christian books from door to door to fund my college education. I can still remember those sales script that I was 'suppose' to memorize. For some reason they always used the generic 'Mr. Jones ...' or 'Mrs. Jones ...'. You were trained to speak to one person at a time not the whole family, even though the kids were sometimes present.

The same thing applies to your webcopy as well. You must write as to one visitor – just as if they were standing right in front of you. This goes back again to the fact that the Internet was formed by people who wanted to touch base with people. Not companies trying to reach consumers. Many companies have learned the hard way that the formal language associated with the brochure ads just fails on the web.

The reader must feel that you are speaking to her, now ... at this very moment. You must connect emotionally with her. And you can because you sense her problems, you've been there and now you have found the solution. Keep foremost in your mind that Internet marketing may be equally called 'Relationship marketing' – because that's what it boils down to.

TIP # 16

Deliver immediately on what you promised.

Is your website about gardening? Don't greet me on your Home page with the latest news on golf. You have to deliver immediately on what you 'promised' from your advertisement or search engine listing. Be relevant.

It can become a problem if the first thing the visitor sees is a big banner ad promoting your latest affiliate company. If your site is all about affiliate marketing then go ahead. However, you do yourself an injustice when the visitor is quickly whisked away by the top banner to another website and never return to your site.

This works on another level apart from your Home page as well. All your hyperlinks should deliver what they promise. What do I mean by this? If I click on your 'About Us' link I expect to see a page describing what you are about – here may be a good chance to show off – I asked for it! I don't expect to see a form asking me to subscribe to your newsletter.

Far worst is to discover that I have to click on 2 more links before I get to where I wanted to go in the first place.

Web surfers are not the most patient breed.

TIP # 17

Ask for your visitor's opinions, vote, reactions etc.

Making Your Webcopy 'Customer Centered'

Simply put, people like to know that their opinions count. We all like to know that we matter – even if it's in a very small way. Providing a means for your visitors to give their input can be mutually rewarding. (The first online check that I earned was from Epinions.com where you are paid for your opinions on various consumer products. Can't believe that was 3 years ago. If you doubt for one moment that people love to give their opinions just check the popularity of that site.)

In one way the customer goes away thinking that he counts – which of course holds true. On the other hand you get vital feedback that can guide you in adjusting your site or products to better suit your clients. This is clearly a win-win situation. Did you ever wonder why those sites keep running contest, surveys and message boards? Because it gets people involved and an active part of your website's dynamics.

This is one area in which the web wins hand down over former mediums of advertisement – it is very easy to get feedback from your customers. Most other media such as TV and radio have always been a one-way affair. (Maybe interactive TV will one day change this.)

TIP # 18

Let your customers know that you appreciate them and they may come back.

Showing your visitors that you appreciate them does not have to be difficult or expensive. You can give away a free report or ebook when they sign up for your newsletter. Send them free updates that are really updates and not just plain ads.

Your aim should be not simply satisfy your visitors but to delight them. Delight them by showing how easy it is to do business with you and how dedicated you are to them even after the sale.

Building Your Credibility

In a way the Internet may be compared to the Wild Wild West. (Where do you think the acronym WWW came from?) There is no real central authority that is in charge and many scam artists take full advantage of this. Especially as a small business owner with no large company name behind yours, building credibility in the prospect's mind is crucial.

In this chapter we look at several ways in which you can do this.

TIP # 19

You may find it beneficial to place your picture (even a smugshot) on your website.

Brick and mortar stores have the advantage since the clerk has a direct face-to-face conversation with the customer. It is therefore easier to 'connect' and form a relationship.

Building Your Credibility

I recently read an interesting thread on a marketing forum message board with several people giving their opinions on the pros and cons of placing your picture on your site.

Most of the fears expressed were that people might be turned off by the owner's ethnicity. Even though this is a real fear I think that the best reaction I read on this point came from an Italian-American small business owner. She said that she would not want to do business with someone who was prejudiced against her anyway – I thought to myself – “Problem solved!”

The pros seem to have it. You certainly could not tell the late Dave Thomas of Wendys fame that he should hide behind the company logo. Dave did almost all the company's TV commercials showing that you do not need a movie star to endorse your products.

Your photo helps your visitor to reach across the great chasm of the Internet and touch your customer – right from their monitors. Why do you think cellular phone customers are trading in their ‘old phones’ for the new ‘talk-to-me-and-see-me-at-the-same-time’ models?

TIP # 20

Provide an audio message in your own voice.

This is closely tied to the former tip. It all has to do with feeling connected and human. We are not computers – we just use them. We have emotions and use them to communicate. There is nothing that can communicate emotions like the human voice.

Building Your Credibility

I can still fondly remember those days before my family could afford a television. As children we often listened to those radio dramas. You were there in the center of the action. ‘The Loooooonee RRRRanger!’ the gallop of the horses, the crackle of gunfire ... trust me, you were there. You smelled the gunpowder and rode those horses!

What can you use your voice to do? At least it can say, “There is a REAL person behind this website”. In this our automated age REAL counts.

TIP # 21

Place your PHYSICAL address and contact information on every page.

Here again you are being transparent and in the open about your identity and how you may be contacted. You have nothing to hide, and you do not intend to take their money and close down your website the next day.

Your address also adds a sense of structure to the very fluid environment of the Internet. It is much like the sign on a brick and mortar store – this is where I’m located. That is why just a post office box number would not suffice.

Can you be reached by fax, landline phone, email, and mobile phone? This information adds to your credibility, not to mention your perceived availability.

TIP # 22

Do not use a free email service as your main means of contact.

Tied closely to credibility are the perceptions that you create of your business. Some say that in business image is everything. That may be taking it a little too far but you are NOT who you think you are but what the customer perceives you to be!

If you use a free email service such as hotmail.com what does this say about you? You are so successful but you cannot even afford a paid email service? Most spammers use these free email accounts anyway – that's another count against you. It may be best to use the account associated with your website's domain. I think that almost all web hosting services provide POP email accounts.

TIP # 23.

Do not use a free domain hosting service.

For the same reason as explained above, think about what image you'll be creating if you use a free hosting service like Freeservers.com? Can't he afford hosting? His business must not be doing very well.

Apart from appearing cheap, most free webhosting companies place banner ads on your site. This is a major distraction to say the least. Your site would not be considered 'permanent' because most people who use these services are very nomadic. Here today ... gone tomorrow.

Hosting fees have dropped considerably over the past few years so price is not even a hurdle.

TIP # 24

Have an 'About' page.

When a surfer appears at your site for the first time it is like going on a blind date. The visitor may have heard a little about you and knows where to find you but she is practically just window-shopping. The 'About' page gives her a good chance to get a quick background check on you. She can then know if you are the one she really wants to build a relationship with.

Information you should place on this page includes:

- a personal and professional biography,
- maybe a photograph of yourself,
- name, address and telephone number,
- your company objectives,
- a comprehensive description of you and your company.

Just knowing this 'outline' of who you are places the visitor at ease and most of the nervous jitter hopefully disappears. Why? She sees you are not afraid to be checked out.

TIP # 25

Include a 'Privacy Statement'.

Internet users are becoming more and more sensitive to how their personal

information is being used. This makes it almost imperative for you to provide a page with your privacy policy.

General concerns that would have to be addressed are:

- How you use the information that is collected.
- Is the information shared with a third party?
- Let them know how they can opt out of any mailing list they sign up for.
- Why you track their IP address.

For a more detailed discussion on website privacy you may check:

<http://www.truste.org/>

TIP # 26.

Use your customers' unsolicited testimonials and product reviews.

What you say about your product or service is not really taken seriously. I mean what are you expected to say anyway? It's your product ... duh. What carry the greater weight are the opinions of other experts in your field. But what carries the greatest weight is what the customers themselves say.

This means that you can get instant credibility if you present the unsolicited testimonials of your satisfied customers. These testimonials should be accompanied with the email address or website and full name of the customer. The less information you give about the customer who is providing the testimonial the less believable it is. I have had visitors who actually contacted these customers to confirm that the testimonials were real.

So pour on the testimonials – too much is not enough.

TIP # 27

Provide a ‘No–Risk Money Back Guarantee’.

A ‘No–Risk Guarantee’ puts the customer at ease in knowing that he can secure a refund if he is not satisfied with your product. This says that you believe in your product or service and stand behind it 100%. If you are perceived as not backing up your claims then you lose credibility instantly.

You should also honor all refund requests as painful as they may be. There is nothing to gain by battling with the customer. The trick is not to take it personally and be as professional as possible – this is just a part of doing business.

The feeling of confidence that you leave with your customer may lead them to buy another product from you.

Market testing has shown that the longer and more risk–free your warranty is, the more sales you will make. Your intuition may suggest otherwise since you think that people would just take advantage of your longer guarantee. However, the opposite is true. The shorter your guarantee is the more pressured customers feel in asking for a refund.

TIP # 28

Use a Secure Server to process all payments.

Building Your Credibility

With the scare of using credit cards online because of all those database theft stories, it behooves you to provide a secure payment page. It will help if you also tell the customer that his or her information is secure and will not be available to prying eyes.

With a greater number of payment options online now, having your own merchant account is not even necessary for you to provide this level of security in accepting web payments.

TIP # 29

Install a message board for customer feedback.

This is a risky way to go if your messages are posted live and not moderated. This means the good, bad and ugly will appear here.

If the confidence in your product is such that you choose to use a message board this can build credibility with your customers.

There is an additional benefit as well – the message board can serve as a type of FAQ page. Instead of having to answer the same questions over and over again, posters can be helped by you and by other members/customers as well.

I think that this model works very well for software type products where the users may have questions on usability, installation and general compatibility.

TIP # 30

Provide live support on your sales page.

If you can afford this, go for it. There is nothing like ‘being there’ when your customer needs you most – during the buying decision process. You are at the same time providing the face ... I mean voice, behind the website.

One caution here though. If you cannot provide the live support do not pretend that you do. I have been to some website that boast ‘live support’ and when you try to use it – ‘Sorry, nobody home’. Like my grandmother use to say, “If something is worth doing then do it well.”

Optimizing Your Web Sales Copy

All the tips that we have looked at so far are like the broad strokes of a painting. They are mostly standard checks that you should do on any site.

What would really sets you apart and allow you to differentiate yourself from all others will be your salescopy. (We will use ‘salescopy’ and ‘webcopy’ interchangeably.)

In other words, other sites may share your navigation style, have all the elements that build credibility but none can (legally) reproduce your words. Here is where you can inspire or bore as the case may be. You must provide content that is exciting original and YOU!

TIP # 31

Be sure you are broadcasting on the WIIFM radio frequency.

Humans are basically selfish creatures. Some argue that this is why babies are born with clenched fists. While that is open to debate your visitors have one thing in mind when they read your webcopy – ‘**What’s In It For Me?**’ (**WIIFM**)

If you are not answering this question up front then they are gone. Don’t just ‘show off’ your company but say what you can do for the potential customer. Read through your copy and see if you are answering that question all the way through.

TIP # 32.

Place your strongest benefit in the headline – think ‘Newspaper’.

It’s a given. The cover story in a newspaper is the main story and the headline gives the essence of the news item. There is no guessing about what the story entails.

You want to pull the reader into your copy right away – just as the publisher wants to sell a lot of papers. So here is where you want to put your best foot forward. This is like your first date and you are going out to impress! – with all those courtesies that fade away after marriage.

TIP # 33

Use a subheading that employs your second strongest benefit.

Keep in mind that we are pushing benefits and not features. After you have floored your visitor with your strongest benefit you want to follow this with your second strongest blow. Hopefully they are already on the floor so it is not difficult to keep them there.

TIP # 34

Let your headline act as a filter for your readers – qualify your visitors.

Your reader should know after reading the headline whether your site is for him or not.

A headline such as “**Grow prize-winning pumpkins in your garden this spring**” would appeal to the gardening enthusiast. Right away the reader knows that if he is not interested in growing pumpkins this is not for him.

Headlines like these help to weed out those who would not be customers anyway – save them some time. They may not purchase from you but they would love you for this. Those marketers who may use deceptive headlines lose out in the end. Everyone is searching for relevance, even Search Engines spiders.

TIP # 35

Change your “I” statements to “you” statements.

You will want to pull the customer into the copy. This means that too many “I” can distance you from the reader. The copy then appears to be about you and not the prospect. For example:

I – statement: “I can show you in 3 simple steps how I changed my website into an order pulling machine”

You – statement: “You will see in just 3 simple steps how you can change your website into an order pulling machine”

TIP # 36

Fill your copy with emotion and passion – please don’t bore me to sleep.

It’s a known fact that people make purchases based on emotion and then rationalize their decisions based on facts. What does this mean for you? You have to fill your copy with emotive words and translate facts into feeling.

When we are immersed in the decision process we evaluate how we would **feel** if we did make the purchase versus if we didn’t. It is not so much the ‘superior engineering of the Germans’ that caused you to buy that latest BMW sports car but how you thought owning that piece of steel will make you **feel**. Important? Admired? Safe? Of course this is not the explanation you give to your wife.

Don't be afraid to be audacious and provocative. Speak your mind. Give your

opinion. Nobody likes to read just the same–o–same–o. Surprise the reader, make an impression.

This makes the visitor sit up and pay attention.

TIP # 37.

Do not give away your intentions too early.

We are swamped everyday with advertisement. We are pitched with ads on television, in print, radio and now the Internet. Our brains are now trained just to ignore commercials. If you show right up front that you are trying to sell your visitors something, you are likely to be ignored. So use some stealth.

Using the word ‘guaranteed’ in your headline is a big give away. Immediately the reader becomes defensive since she knows you are trying to sell her something.

It is interesting that we love to buy (especially if you are of the fairer sex) but we hate to be sold.

You would be closing the door before the guest had a chance to even see inside your wonderful webcopy palace. Using the first date metaphor, its like asking for a kiss at the beginning of your first date– giving away too much of your intentions too soon.

Because so many sales letters online begins with the traditional salutation – “Dear Friend”, it may be a good idea to use “–by Ray Edwards” instead. In this way your salescopy can appear like an article instead of a sales pitch.

TIP # 38

Use the AIDAS formula.

This formula has been used for years as an outline for good copywriting and salesmanship. It stands for:

A – Attention – You have but a few seconds to capture the attention of your readers. This is the major purpose of your headline. Other factors involved here are the general color scheme of your site and the aesthetics overall. Your opening paragraphs must build curiosity and pull the reader deeper into your site.

I – Interest – After capturing their attention you must satisfy the needs that your opening paragraphs implied. For example if your website is geared towards those who suffer from back pain then you should say how you can remedy this after identifying with your customer.

D – Desire – Here is where you must appeal to the emotions of your readers by listing all the benefits that they can derive from your product. This section must be benefit-rich and help the potential customer visualize what the results of their decision – Imagine the feeling of getting up each morning free of back pain forever.

A– Action – You must get them to take the appropriate action. This may be to click on a link, register, subscribe to your newsletter or go to your order page. Here is where you will want the action to be as easy and clear as possible. Explain this so that even a child can understand how to do this. Keep in mind that this is the goal of all you created before.

S – Satisfy – Provide what you promised in the time frame you promised and even more than you promised. You want to aim to over-deliver not just merely please your customers.

TIP # 39

Use only one type of copywriting style on one site.

Joseph Sugarman in his book “*Advertising Secret of the Written Word: The Ultimate Resource on How to Write Powerful Advertising Copy*” gives this suggested outline for writing advertising copy:

1. Open strongly by eliciting interest and excitement.
2. Develop drama
3. Explain why the product or service is different
4. Explain how to use the product or service
5. Elaborate on the unique benefits
6. Justify the purchase
7. Identify the lasting value
8. Address after sale concerns
9. Ask for the order.

Another style made popular by John E. Kennedy is to make a **PROMISE**, give the **REASON**, then **PROOF** and finally Call to **ACTION**.

Finally the Dale Carnegie “*How to win friends and influence people*” book style.

1. Tell a memorable story.
2. Call to Action.
3. Show all the benefits to be gained by taking action.

The key here is not to mix whatever ‘structure’ you are going to use to frame your copy.

TIP # 40

Break up the letter into subheadings.

You have to always keep in mind that most people scan a website before they decide to read it through – if ever. You will want your subheadings therefore to tell the summary story for your site. If someone was to just skim through your letter they will in essence get a classified ad for your product.

Subheadings also make your copy easier to read. This is because you are providing more ‘white space’ around your text – a relief to tired eyes. Having large chunks of solid text appears as though you are just talking at breakneck speed without pausing to breathe or allow me to think about what you are saying.

Keep in mind also that it's more a strain on the eyes reading from a screen than from paper.

TIP # 41

Use one or more Post Script. (P.S.)

The offline field of direct mail marketing tells us that the P.S. is often the first section of a letter that the reader turns to after the headline. Armed with this fact, you should include one or more P.S.

Make this a short summary of the entire sales letter – a little classified ad. You will want to repeat some of your strongest benefits and your ironclad Guarantee.

TIP # 42

Write in a conversational tone.

Forget about the dry formality of the instructional manual type writing you did in school. You are building a relationship with the reader and you want to speak his language in a very conversational tone.

To learn the reader's language you must have done your research to see what the problems are and how they are normally talked about.

Don't be afraid to use contractions (you'll, it's, we'll, can't) ... ellipses to break up long sentences and long and short sentences to develop rhythm. No need to use big words. Let the simplicity of your vocabulary be prominently eminent.

You don't have to break the rules of grammar but don't be a slave to it either. If bending the rules allow you to bring across your point more effectively – so be it.

TIP # 43

The jury is still out on long vs short copy.

There seems to be no general agreement among the copywriting experts about just how long your copy should be. Some argue for long others for short.

A general rule of thumb is that the more expensive your product or service the longer the copy. You would expect that you have to do more wooing to get someone to spend \$3,000 for a seminar than to buy a \$30 ebook. Also a more expensive product should have more benefits so there would be no problem to find content.

TIP # 44

Write in the present.

Reading a passage written as though it is taking place now is more engaging to the reader than if the action has already taken place. Without getting into a whole grammar lesson the present tense form of your verbs will hit with more punch than

the passive tense.

You can see this for yourself by reading a passage that reports the direct speech of the characters compared to the indirect form of these same speeches.

One style of story telling is for the storyteller to pretend that he or she was the character and speak from the first person perspective. This engages the audience because everything is now brought into the present and seems more real. There is now a deeper level of emotional involvement with the listeners /readers.

TIP # 45

Avoid using too many complex sentences.

Try to break up complex sentences that carry more than one idea into shorter sentences. The longer a sentence is the easier it is to be misunderstood. Longer sentences also slows the pace of your webcopy. This kills the excitement and momentum.

This does not mean that all your sentences have to be short. In fact, they should be of varied length – just not too long.

TIP # 46

Use as many bullets as possible.

- * Bullets help to break up long chunks of text.
- * Bullets can give a list of benefits for quick reading.
- * Bullets are perceived as added value – the more the better. (Of course within reason.)
- * Bullets should be all benefits not features.

TIP # 47

Include your Unique Sales Position. (USP)

Tell your reader why he or she should buy from you and not your competition. What do you have to offer that is unique to yourself? Other businesses may have similar products but you have added value that they do not have. Remember that there is one thing that your competitors can never duplicate and that is YOU.

If you offer special service then you have to shout it from the mountaintops.

TIP # 48

Tell your visitor why you are making such a special offer.

The saying goes “Tell them why and they’ll buy”. Retailers are always happy for the holidays because it gives them a reason to have a ‘sale’. Just think about it. There is the Christmas sale, New Years sale, Valentine’s sale, March Madness sale, Spring Sale etc.

If you tell your customer why you are offering this special deal, marketing test show that more prospects will buy.

You do not have to wait for a special holiday to have a reason. You can become creative and ‘invent’ your own reason. What about your dog’s birthday sale?

TIP # 49

Make your general statement as specific as possible.

Instead of writing, “This strategy can increase your sales considerably,” you write instead: “This strategy can increase your sales by **373%** in just **6 months**.” The second statement is more measurable and therefore believable.

Not “this additive can boost your gas mileage” but “this additive can increase your gas mileage by **17.5 %**”.

TIP # 50

Include at least one free bonus.

Bonuses add value to your offer, ... period. The more value you extend the greater your chances on making the sale. These bonuses do not have to be expensive but should have a high 'perceived value'. In fact you should NOT give away bonuses without building the value of the gift first. Keeping in mind that 'value' and 'cost' can be very different entities.

One note of caution though. If your bonuses value \$1,000 and your product \$19.95 the reader would question the real value of these bonuses. Just seems strange giving away \$1,000 in value with a \$20 purchase – just does not seem credible – except you are running a charity.

TIP # 51

Give a deadline to take action to get the “special deal.”

Humans are by nature procrastinators. If you don't give them good reason to take action now, then most likely they would put it off for later. This is especially true on the Internet where there are so many 'distractions'. (As far as you are concerned anything that leads away from your order page is a distraction.)

Just today I bought a piece of software only because the seller says that the price will be going up in a weeks time. I bought it so that I can lock in the lower price. If it were not for this I would have put it off for later. So you see even when you are aware of the marketing ploy, you still fall for it – I guess I'm human too.

TIP # 52.

Give several ordering options.

Your goal is to secure the sale. When your visitor has gone through all your copy and is about to make the purchase you don't want to hinder this. Not everyone is blessed (or cursed) with a credit card. You can accept money order, check by phone, check by fax, echeck, egold, phone order and whatever is feasible. If you omit just one channel you may never tell how many sales you are losing.

TIP # 53

Make ordering as easy as possible.

Your order link or button should be prominent and obvious. You do not want to crowd this link with either texts or pictures. The process should be as smooth and pain-free as possible. If you complicate this transaction unnecessarily you will end up with a lot of abandoned shopping carts.

TIP # 54

Highlight the benefits you want to stand out.

Keeping in mind that most web readers are skimmers, you want to make your benefits stand out. You can do this by **bolding**, using **color**, *italics* or even CAPITALIZATION.

A neat way is by using a 'highlighter effect'. Readers are more likely to notice these sections and you can bait them into the rest of the copy.

TIP # 55

Build up the value of your product just before you give the price.

Your full copy should be bleeding value and benefits. However, the place where you want to lay it on thick is just before you give the price.

Let them know how expensive it was to produce. How much it will cost them if they had to do it all by themselves. How much time and money it will save them. How much others were willing to pay for it ... just lay it on then ... your price ... ONLY \$X!

By this time they should be giddy from the fall in price from the perceived value, to what you are offering. This is commonly done with software products where the cost to bring to market can be really expensive.

TIP # 56

Amortize the price.

A full year's membership to your site may be \$149. Well, spread the payment over the 365 days to show how much they are really paying per day – just 41 cents per day!

Again it is a matter of perception. \$149 per year sounds much more than 41 cents per day.

Another way in which you can word this is 'for less than the price of daily cup of tea'. You are reducing the perception of the cost in the reader's mind.

TIP # 57

Tell what would happen if they do not order your product.

The two main emotions that copywriters aim at awakening are **fear of loss** and **hope for gain**. We are all motivated by these. Then make real the pain of what will happen if they don't order now.

'You will continue to feel left out at pool parties because you are ashamed of your weight'. 'You will continue writing sales letters the hard way without these easy fill-in-the-blanks templates.'

TIP # 58

Include answers to common objections.

After you have been selling for some time you'll have a pretty good idea of the common objections that potential buyers have. A neat way to handle this is to work these objections into your adcopy.

Simply ask the questions and answer them. Example:

"At this time you must be thinking 'Can this really work for me?' Well, yes it can as it has for thousands of satisfied customers".

Questions are great way to pull the reader into the 'conversation' and get him talking back to you.

TIP # 59

Show how your product would save both time and money.

Not every reader is seeking to save a buck. For some people their time is more important than the money they will be saving. Be sure to include BOTH the timesaving benefits and the money-saving benefits to satisfy both groups. In our busy age having more free time is becoming increasingly precious.

TIP # 60

Address after sale concerns in your webcopy.

What happens after I make this purchase is a common question in the visitor's mind. What if I needed help using the product? How can I contact you? Do you provide an extended warranty?

You have to build assurance that you will be still there after the sale to provide support. Many companies tout their support as a major selling point. Just think about Dell Computers. Do not fail to assure the customer of your after sale services.

TIP # 61

You must show, don't tell.

Create a vivid picture in the customer's mind on the experience of owning the product. Instead of saying "This is the most comfortable mattress in the world", make the reader experience the gentle caresses of the silk cover against their body. The soft but firm support. The experience of being cushioned in pure comfort. Let them experience it even before they touch the bed – all through the power of words – but showing – not telling.

TIP # 62

Use colorful figures of speech.

Even though you don't want to overdo it here, figures of speech can paint a distinct picture in your reader's mind. You can use simple images that the reader is familiar with– 'truckloads of cash', 'faster than lightning', 'new hungry customers'. This adds flesh to the bones of your writing. (Did you get that metaphor? Flesh ... bones.)

TIP # 63

Add a sense of scarcity to your offer.

It's a fact. We want what we can't have and bypass what we can. All boils down to human nature. (Just think about Eve and the forbidden fruit. She had all the other fruits in the Garden of Eden – they were available. Which one did she choose?)

You have to present your offer as limited by time or number. Offers that are limited by number always work better because the reader never knows when all the products will be sold out. The customer may think that he has 2 more days left and wait until the last minute for the limited time offer. In case of limited number there is no way of telling when they will all be gone.

TIP # 64

Cut out the word “that” as much as possible.

The word ‘that’ tends to be overused and most of the time it does not add to the sentence. You will find many places where you can edit this out without altering the meaning.

Another common culprit is pronouns.

Many times ‘*they*’ become confusing because you do not know what ‘*they*’ are referring to. (What is the pronoun ‘they’ referring to in the last sentence? You have to think for a little while before you figure this out.) A sales letter needs to be simple and unambiguous – not a jigsaw puzzle.

TIP # 65

Read the letter out loud to see where it may be confusing.

Reading your letter out loud makes the flaws a little more evident. You can more easily see where it does not flow or may be confusing. In addition to this you should have another person read through the copy for clarity. It is very difficult for us to see our own mistakes because we are so accustomed to them.

TIP # 66

Use an “If you don’t plan to order” link.

This strategy is borrowed from the world of direct mail marketing. Along with the usual sales letter the mail order company includes another small envelope which reads, “open only if you decide not to order”. It’s that last ditch to make the sale. Here you can link to a third party testimonial or offer a sweeter deal to seal the sale.

TIP # 67

Use prices with the digit 7 in them.

There seems to be something magical about the number 7. Within Judaism it’s God’s favorite number. Some market researchers claim that prices that have the digit ‘7’ in them outperform those that don’t – \$17, \$19.97, \$97, \$997. And this was TIP 67 of 77 tips!

The Straw That Broke The Camel's Back.

TIP # 68.

Write your signature in blue ink. Not black, not red, not purple – blue ink!

Some marketers claim that signatures in blue ink carry more credibility. I guess that this is because a scanned signature shows up as black when printed. So even if you signed in black ink it appears as a copy. I'm just guessing here however.

There are not many things in copywriting that has a clear explanation – except that they just work. No wonder the bottom line of the art -- I mean science -- is testing, testing and more testing. A great number of scientific discoveries were made by sheer accident – the same for webcopy secrets as well.

The Straw That Broke The Camel's Back.

Synergy is defined as “the interaction of two or more agents or forces so that their combined effect is greater than the sum of their individual effects”.

Have you ever witnessed this scene? It's a stalled vehicle on the highway and some kind strangers have stopped to give a hand in pushing it unto the curb. There may be 5 adult men giving all they've got; yet the vehicle is going nowhere fast. Then much to the shame of these stallion men, two ladies join the effort and

The Straw That Broke The Camel's Back.

the car just starts rolling!

I doubt that this has much to do with the motivation that women provide to men (maybe just a little). The combined effort did what the separate forces failed to do. It is like the proverbial straw that broke the camels back – a loaded camel comes tumbling down with the addition of one single straw to its burden.

What does this have to do with your website conversion? You will be surprised to know what ONE little change to your pages can do to increase your conversion rate. This is the reason why many companies pay huge moneys to marketing consultants who may just suggest they make one change to their website.

Let us take a typical situation.

Imagine that your website is doing **2%** conversion. This means that for every 1,000 visitors you are making **20** sales. If your product cost **\$50** then that's **\$1,000** per 1,000 visitors or **\$1** per visitor – not bad.

But not so fast. Let's say that these are visitors from your Pay-Per-Click campaign and you are paying 25 cents per visitor. That is a total cost of \$250 per 1,000 visitors. So your real net profit is **(\$1,000 – \$250) = \$750** i.e. \$0.75 per visitor.

Now there are 2 ways you may increase your sales. You can buy more traffic or secondly, tweak your website so you have, say, **3%** conversion instead.

Let's take each scenario and see what happens.

Now we have not placed a time factor on this so we will make this your weekly traffic. If you buy 2,000 clicks from your PPC site instead then you just increase your net profit in the same time period – spent **\$500**, made **\$1,500**. You are now netting \$1,000 instead of \$750 i.e. **33%** increase – great.

The Straw That Broke The Camel's Back.

But what would happen if instead of buying more traffic we could tweak our conversion to 3% from 2%. We pay \$1,000 for 1,000 visitors, but now make 30 sales at \$50 = **\$1,500**! Our bottom line now reads the same \$1,500 with the same investment in ads as before. That's a whopping **167%** increase in profits! Compare that to a measly **33%** and you will understand why it's so important to optimize your website into a hungry conversion machine.

So let's look at some more straws that can break the camel's back.

TIP # 69

Use popups on exit and/or entry.

Marketers have a love-hate affair with popups. We hate them because they can be so annoying but they produce results so we love them. Go to any well-known marketer's site and you will see them. Even AOL uses them for crying out loud. They get attention and results.

You can use them to advertise a special bonus, capture email addresses for your newsletter subscription or a last attempt to capture that sale.

TIP # 70

Run an Ezine or newsletter.

We have said before that Internet marketing is really relationship building. There is no better way to do this than by publishing your own Ezine. It may be just to offer

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an update to your product or offer articles by other writers. The real goal is to keep your name in your customers' mind.

If you don't consider yourself a writer, you can still use the articles by other authors but always include a personal editorial note at the beginning. This have been shown to produce improved subscriber retention. (I hope that you are getting the undercurrent here. It's all about feelings, relationships, being connected, being a human being, not a big cold corporation.)

TIP # 71

Offer a subscription box for your Ezine on every site.

You hear this repeated several times. 'The money is in the list'. This is because your subscribers are more likely to buy from you than from a 'stranger'.

You should therefore offer multiple points at which a visitor can subscribe to your mailing list. It's all in the numbers – the more points of contact the more subscriptions.

TIP # 72

The Straw That Broke The Camel's Back.

Don't ask for too much information too soon.

For your subscription box all you need is a first name and email address. If you try and ask for more detail than this you are likely to see a drop in your subscription signups. Web surfers are becoming more wary of their personal privacy and their email boxes – with the onslaught of all the junkmail.

Don't be too bold here. Start with a 'hi' and a 'hello' before you ask for her telephone number.

TIP # 73

Make good use of Anchor Tags.

Anchor tags are like hyperlinks **within** the same page. A common use for them is in a frequently asked question (FAQ) document. You have all the questions listed at the top and when you click on the question link it takes you directly to the section where the answer is given. They are convenient and direct.

How can this help with conversion?

Well, remember we said that web surfers are skimmers. If you have a content rich website you can place anchor tags at the top of the pages which link to your most popular sections. In this way visitors can find what they want as quickly as possible and are more likely to stay with you longer. The longer they are in the store the more likely they will purchase something.

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TIP # 74

Lower the bar and more will jump over.

This is a sweeping principle that can apply to several areas of your business. We already looked at one – the less detailed personal information you ask for the more signups you'll get.

There are other areas as well where this can work its magic. Such as:

- Offer an easy payment plan for your higher ticket items.
- Offer a 'try before you buy' for your membership site.
- Give away bonus chapters from your ebook.
- Offer lower ticket items first then higher ticket items as a 'backend' product.
- Give away a 'free report' that presents your pricier product as the solution.
- Ask for her phone number before you ask for her hand in marriage ... courtship is really marketing yourself! (Just a bonus idea.)

TIP # 75

Compare your site to that of your successful competitor.

I mentioned this earlier but it is worth repetition here.

Graphics and words can be copyrighted but not ideas. The Internet is an open play field and you can see what your strongest competitors are doing that you are not. Maybe they know something that you don't. Maybe what you discover is the very reason why they are doing so much better than you ... ouch! Sometimes your fiercest competitor can be your best ally!

TIP # 76

Offer both physical and digital versions of your products.

What difference does the paint color makes on the performance of a car?
Absolutely Nothing! So why does the manufacturer make several colors? Because consumers like to know that they have a choice. Having choices gives us the FEEL (emotions again) that we are in control.

Closely tied to this is offering several versions of your product – standard, deluxe, platinum etc. Again this replaces the question ‘should I buy?’ with ‘which one should I buy?’ Now you know why your cable company offers so many movie packages.

TIP # 77

Don't ignore your customer list.

This may appear as an obvious but you will be surprised to know how many entrepreneurs work so hard for that customer then ignore them after the sale. The proverb is still true that a ‘bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.’ Your customer list should be your most important asset.

Offer them added value to build their loyalty, not just more sales pitch. Delight them, surprise them with an extra-added bonus and provide superior after-sale support. You worked hard for them; this is not the time to turn your back on the marriage.

Some Final Words.

You can present products that are complimentary to what they have bought before. First you sold a golf club set; do you think they will be interested in a golf video by Tiger Woods?

The point is your customer should be worth much more to you than the initial sale.

Again, you can easily isolate them if all you send are other sale offers. If you appear kind you'll find that your customers will treat you kindly.

Some Final Words.

Your website should always be regarded as a work in progress – never finished.

As you make incremental changes you have to do 'split-testing' using your best version so far as the control. You do this by sending equal amount of traffic, say 500 visitors, to your newly changed site and the 'old site'. By comparing the results you have a tangible reason on whether to make the change permanent.

Be sure that you don't make more than one adjustment at a time. If you make more than one change then you have no way of knowing which change effected the results.

Let's take a quick example.

You changed your headline AND offered an easy payment option simultaneously.

Some Helpful Resources

You noticed an increase in sales. Now what caused this increase? The new headline, the easy payment plan or both. You have no way of knowing so your experiment is a flop – apart from the increase in your bottom line.

If you just made one change then you can better gauge what made the difference.

Your web logs can also provide invaluable information on the sites which are drawing the most traffic and where your visitors are leaving you. You may want to choose a more detail traffic analysis program such as Coolstats.com. Then you can see which pages on your site are the most requested and feature them more prominently on your Home page.

The Internet is a very dynamic place. To keep your website fresh and interesting means you must be dynamic also. I hope that the time we have spent together will result in taking your website's conversion rate to heights far beyond what you imagined was possible.

Go! Go! Go!

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Bonus Report: "The Shocking Reason Why Newbies Lose Money Online!"

Secrets of their Success – Take a private tour of two "**Mom & Pop**" web sites every month that **earn \$100,000+ a year...** and discover the exact step-by-step strategies they have personally used to generate these *massive profits*.

When I first came across <http://www.SecretsToTheirSuccess.com> I was shocked

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to find REAL successful people just like you and me who were willing to give away their most coveted Internet marketing secrets.

So if you want to skip the failing promotions, [click here now](#) and learn the "**No time-wasting Strategies**" these *real people* are using to make *real money* on the Internet!

[Need a professional site review?](#) Email your request with the website info for your personal quote.

[The Inbization weekly newsletter](#). Find the inspiration and the know-how that you need to keep motivated in your online venture.

[Netbreakthroughs](#) – Join this well-established community of Internet Marketers and learn the strategies to build your traffic, sales and online presence. Get firsthand marketing advice from marketing guru Terry Dean.

[Internet Warriors](#) – Another group of Internet Marketers that you can join to learn the low-down, where-the-rubber-meets-the-road way to marketing success!