

5 Website Mistakes That Lose Customers

You work hard and/or invest a lot of money getting traffic to your business website. Failing to turn visitors into customers is a huge problem many business websites face.

In fact, not too long ago, I suffered a website conversion problem. I had very decent traffic, but wasn't converting very much of that traffic to customers.

Conversion (def.): The percentage of website visitors who take an action you desire.

Over a period of about a month, I tweaked and tested my main business website to improve conversion. The end result is my conversion rate increased many times.

This report sets out 5 mistakes I made and fixed that resulted in a much improved conversion rate for me.*

Mistake #1:

Failing to place a Contact Us form on the home page

Before my changes, I only had a contact form on my "Contact" page.

Then, I placed a contact form right under my profile photograph on every page of my website, including the home page.

By adding the contact form to every page, I receive at least 4 times the number of inquiries through my contact form.

Tip: Make it as easy as possible for website visitors to contact you!

Mistake #2:

Failing to include testimonials on the home page

For most websites, the highest traffic page is the home page. This is particularly true with small business websites. It certainly is for me. I've had a testimonial page for a long time; however, not until recently did I add snippets of those testimonials on my home page.

In fact, I placed those snippets on every page of my website (in my sidebar).

If you don't have any testimonials, I strongly urge you start collecting them. After every client's matter is finished, I ask them whether they would provide a testimonial. More often than not, they're happy to do so.

Ensure you get your testimonial in writing from your customer and their express authorization to use that testimonial in your promotional materials.

Mistake #3:

Failing to have a photograph of yourself or key persons of your business prominently displayed.

I added a portrait shot of me at the top of the sidebar (right column) which appears on every page in my sites, including my home page. Along with the bio photograph is a brief write-up about me and what my business does.

Mistake #4:

Failing to have smiling people on your home page

My new website has a large above-the-fold slideshow where I display photographs. The first photograph that displays is a smiling businessman among a group of business persons. The smile is warm and creates an inviting environment.

I bought the image from www.istockphoto.com for about \$4.

Mistake #5:

Having a very dark website

My business website is built with WordPress.

Before my changes, I used a very dark WordPress theme – black background and very dark navigation buttons. I switched my theme to a light grey and blue theme. These lighter colors are much warmer in appearance.

If you're interested in trying WordPress for a business site, I set out tutorials in my free online [Small Business Marketing Guide](#) – published entirely online.

CAUTION ABOUT CHANGING YOUR WEBSITE'S DESIGN

I put the “Having a very dark website” mistake last because it's not possible for me to say for certain that this made a huge difference. I suspect it did.

You must consider changing your entire website design carefully because it can be a lot of work and/or cost a lot of money ... and not make one bit of difference.

You can try a mock-up page and test results using A/B testing (this is displaying different web pages on the same URL to test conversion).

I suggest focusing first on avoiding the first 4 mistakes first. The first 4 mistakes above cost nothing and are very easy to fix.

Bonus Tip #1:

Get a toll free telephone number and place it at the top of every page.

Toll free telephone numbers are inexpensive these days and well worth the minimal monthly and per/minute cost. I place my toll free

number at the top right of the header in prominent text. Make it extremely easy for website visitors to contact you.

NOTE: Do not use your toll free number as your primary telephone number in your Google Places business center listing. Part of what Google Places uses to know which geographical location you're in is your telephone number.

This means list your local telephone number in Google Places. Toll free numbers do not identify a particular location.

Bonus Tip #2: Try Live Chat

Live chat is a way for your website visitors to type in questions in real-time which are then answered via text by a live chat operator.

Only use live chat if you or a knowledgeable employee is available during most business hours to answer questions.

Live chat improves conversion rates for many business websites. It makes sense – once a website visitor contacts you, whether via telephone, a contact form, and/or live chat, you have an opportunity to start your relationship with them and ultimately they become a customer (you hope – more contact = more chance they become a customer).

I should note that my business offers services. I don't sell products directly off my website. My goal with my website is that visitors contact me to schedule an appointment.

Conversion rate numbers is not restricted to purchases from a website. Conversion rate includes the rate of visitors who take a particular action you want them to – such as calling your business or filling in a contact form.

Thanks for requesting this report. I hope you find it useful.

** Results may vary. Requesting and using this report does not guarantee results. Every business and industry is unique. I'm simply reporting to you what worked for my small business*