

WEBSITE DESIGN 101

How do I expand my customer base and reach new prospects?

When small and medium-size businesses started using the Internet to position themselves, the goal was to have a presence on this new digital and universal media that anyone could access. Today, mostly every businesses have a website of some sort, from the primitive one pager to the fully-developed e-commerce.

The question is: are you taking advantage of your website to reach new customers? In these challenging times, having an Internet presence, even with an attractive or mobile website, is no longer enough. Hoping to be found through a browser search has become a passive strategy.

A pro-active strategy is now required in order to find new customers. Branching-out, diversification, new products and attractive incentives are always valuable, but the key is to find those individuals most likely to become active purchasers. This is where your Website comes in.

YOUR WEBSITE IS YOUR MARKETING TOOL

By creating an integrated marketing strategy that drives your prospects to your website, you are taking the step to contact people that most closely fit your customer profile instead of hoping they contact you.

Obviously, this entails marketing – email, online ads, blogs, directory listings, etc... – but regardless of your strategy, your website has to be able to receive your prospects' inquiries and you need to react by providing the products and/or services they need.

When creating a website, or when assessing an existing site, there are some essential aspects to consider when strategizing your marketing. Remember, you're inviting your prospects to become your clients by driving them to your website.

WHERE DO YOU START?

- Create a visually exciting website, with rich content, simple functionality and easy navigation.
- Reach out to your prospects with your marketing strategy and offer them an incentive to go to your website. These incentives are referred as CTA or Call To Action. They include special offers & promotions, contest, raffle and/or professional tips relevant to their industry.
- In exchange for this information, you ask of your prospects to register on your website. This means you need a genuine registration page with required fields.
- You will find a range of opinions in regard to what makes a captured record suitable for marketing. The safest option is to have an opt-in box. Prospects can then choose to be contacted or not by your email marketing communications.
- There are diverse ways of collecting this information. However, if you expect strong traffic, an automated solution is strongly recommended.

HOW DO YOU CONVERT THIS PROCESS INTO SALES?

- Now that your prospects have voluntarily provided their names, addresses and email addresses, you can follow-up in order to turn them into sales leads by strategizing your marketing campaigns with these suggested steps:
 - 1) If your prospects have registered without opting-in, you can follow-up by calling them or direct-mailing them.
 - 2) If your prospects have opted-in, you can send them your email messages, aside from the above.
 - 3) When you do follow-up with your prospects, make sure that the offer or promotion they showed interest in, can be executed accordingly.
 - 4) Now that your prospects have become leads, you have to make the sale and turn them into customers.
- Keep in mind that the prospects who have opted-in can be collected in an active email marketing database, and can be re-mailed as such. Opt-out records can be maintained as potentials for telemarketing and/or postal marketing campaigns.

CONCLUSION

Now that you are aware of the process, having a website that can manage this relationship is essential. Your website should be attractive, relevant, interactive, mobile-friendly and easy to use, but should also incorporate the elements required to create sales opportunities.

If you set-up your website with a thorough registration page, coupled with an effective marketing strategy, it will grow from a branding tool to a lead generation tool. If you're in the process of creating a website for your business, or improve your existing website, this is the opportunity to integrate your site's functions in your marketing strategy and increase your return on investment.

Feel free to contact us for more information at info@e-outbox.com or call Eric at 973-320-5576 / 201-618-1328. You can also browse our website at www.e-outbox.com. Remember, our initial consultation, website analysis and/or estimate are free!
