

10 PROVEN TACTICS TO INCREASE YOUR WEBSITE CONVERSION

These days, everybody and their uncle has a website (which is an awesome idea, since it took like forever for some businesses to come around on the whole digital thing).

But the problems with websites are far from over; just because everybody has one, doesn't mean they have a good one. Like the poor Ebola pandemic, bad websites have taken the Internet by storm.

What do I mean by 'bad websites'? Put simply, bad websites are those that don't convince visitors to take an intended action, whether it's to read an article, buy a product or request a service.

“Bad website is like a baby diaper. Nothing is worse for your business than having a website that smells up your visitors' experience”

Since website conversion is focused on improving what you currently have rather than chasing something you don't have (like more traffic), it's often an underrated tactic. Consider that, in most cases, ***increasing your website's conversion rate by a nearly 1% will improve your bottom line more than doubling your website's traffic numbers would.*** And yes, the one that sounds easier is easier.

Poorly constructed and managed websites are also a problem because they can derail your whole digital marketing strategy. All of your digital marketing efforts are geared toward getting customers to do something and the majority of the time, that something takes place on your website.

For example, you might be running an excellent social marketing campaign that drives people to your website in hopes that they'll subscribe to your newsletter. But when they arrive at your website and can't easily find the subscription form (or it's broken) then your website has ruined your great social media work.

Your website needs to be a well-oiled machine that can handle and support the full weight of your overall marketing strategy by effectively becoming the central hub of your digital presence.

So, what can you do about it? The fact is that a given website's conversion problems can stem from many different areas: it could be a development issue, a design flaw, poor writing or some combination of all three.

To cover all the bases, we're going to outline the full process of brainstorming and optimizing a conversion oriented website from scratch. Some of the tips will be process related (intended for businesses that don't have a website or just want to start over) and others will be actionable tips (for businesses who are looking to improve their existing website).

Here are 10 proven tactics you can use to increase your website's conversion rate.

Conversion process Refresher

There are various forms of the popular conversion process, and while each differs slightly, the purpose of the illustration remains the same: to guide customers from awareness to action.

In this example, the conversion funnel has four steps: awareness, interest, desire, and action. Understanding how to manage each of these phases will allow you to better position yourself for sales.

- **Awareness.** The first phase is obviously awareness. As soon as a person becomes aware of your brand, they transition from a consumer to a potential customer. Your goal then immediately becomes to move them from awareness to interest.
- **Interest.** It's during this phase that you have the potential customer interested and need to turn that intrigue into desire. This is arguably the hardest step, as you have to convince the individual that they actually want your product or service.
- **Desire.** Once the potential customer desires your product, you need to give them reason to purchase the product. This usually depends on elements like price, brand value, and various logistics.
- **Action.** Once the potential customer takes action, they become a customer. This group will represent a minute fraction of the total number of consumers that were in the original awareness phase of the funnel.

1. SET UP A SALES FUNNEL.

Sometimes what kills your conversions is that you are still stuck in the old and traditional means of marketing. The law of reciprocity has redefined the landscape of marketing from the old mantra of buy, buy, buy to educate, educate, educate.

Asking for sale (signup, whatever) at the early stage of the buyer journey can be detrimental to the entire process. People might be “just browsing”, not be psychologically ready or not in a hurry to buy right now.

The more expensive and/or complicated the product, the more time people need before they're ready to commit.

Sometimes offering a demo or a free trial instead of asking for a signup or purchase can bring significant improvement in conversions. But in many cases, you need to just slow down and build a sales funnel to build trust, develop relationship and prove your expertise.



Let's say your product is an online course on how to bake a cake. Here's how you should go about it.

What the visitor wants

- To learn about how to bake cake

What you want

- Get the visitor to buy your course

How to do it

- Offer valuable for free on how to bake a cake via your blog, videos, free reports, whitepapers
- Become their trusted advisor
- Give them compelling reasons to sign up to your email list (in exchange for some good info)
- Free drip content video course via email
- Send them to your sales copy and ask for the sale

There are arguments among professionals in the industry that it takes least 7 contacts with a prospective buyer before they're ready to buy from you. I haven't seen any recent research to back this argument up, but I know for a fact that the longer and deeper your relationship with the prospect, the more likely they are to buy from you.

So, slow down. Offer value and results in advance, way before asking for the sale. Just capture their email address, so you could continue talking to them.

2. COMMUNICATE VALUE

Communicating value is the #1 thing that determines whether people will bother reading more about your product or hit the back button. It's also the main thing you need to test – if you get it right, it will be a huge boost.

If I could give you only one piece of advice on communicating value, it would be to test your value proposition

The less known your company is, the better value proposition you need. When I go through a lot of my client website, the conclusion was that missing or poor value proposition is one of the most common shortcomings.

A common mistake entrepreneurs make is that they do not provide enough information and value about the products and services they sell.

Let's take a laptop computer, for instance. If I'd describe it like this (all true facts):

- **Processor:** Intel Pentium Dual Core 3805U (1.9GHz, 2MB Cache)
- **Screen:** 15.6" (1366 x 768 HD Resolutions)
- **Operating System:** Microsoft Windows 7 Professional 64-bit Edition (Includes Windows 8 Professional 64-bit)
- **RAM:** 4GB (DDR3 1600MHZ)
- **Hard Drive:** 500GB
- **Optical Drive:** DVD Rewriter (Records DVDs 8x & CDs 24x & Dual Layer Super Multi)
- **Graphics:** Integrated (Intel HD Graphics)
- **Wireless LAN:** Wireless (802.11b/g/n Wireless)

Price: ₦70,000.

Would you pay ₦70,000 based on what I just listed here?

No, that would be ridiculous. Yet so many sites do exactly that (luckily the maker of this laptop provides more information than that). They just list a bunch of bullet points with features along with the price.

The best way to sell products and services is to add as much information about them as is possible. Pages and pages and pages, videos and images. It's true that 79% of people won't read it all, but 16% read everything! That 16% is your main target group.

If one reads all of the product info and is not convinced yet, you have a problem. But if one is convinced after reading just 1/4, they can skip the rest and just complete the purchase right away. Up to 50% of potential sales are lost due to inadequate information, says International Data Corporation, a global research company.

You need to provide enough information so that the prospect could convince themselves

Add pictures, videos, reviews to all of your products. Intelligent, neutral and benefit-oriented sales copy works the best. Take a look at Amazon – they manage to create a lot of content for most products they sell, and they sell millions of products.

Aah, and list the price AFTER you communicate the value. Otherwise people might make a snap judgement based on the price without reading the value it offers.

3. CREATE URGENCY

Sometimes, the best marketing tactics are those rooted deep within human psychology. In fact, the greatest marketers are those who have the most in-depth knowledge of how the brain works. One of the key features of the human brain involves *urgency*.

It's marketing 101. Offer limited time promotions to create a sense of urgency. This age old marketing tactic exists for a reason – because it works. Yet you'd be surprised at how many sites out there don't give their visitors a sense of urgency! Use the following tactics to make sure that buying **right now** is a motivating factor:

- Give a clear deadline
- Use urgent copy, such as “Limited Time Offer”, “Offer ends soon”, etc.
- Use strikethrough pricing
- Give users a clear next step, and funnel them towards making a purchase
- Sweeten the deal – give customers added incentives to purchase your already attractive offer, like free shipping

4. ADD A CALL TO ACTION

On every page of your site, you should be guiding visitors towards a desired action. Think of each page as an opportunity to funnel buyers towards a purchase, lead generation form, event promotion, social share, etc. in order to make more money and/or promote your brand.

Persuading site visitors to do what you want is no easy task, but taking time to master the art of the call to action can dramatically improve your bottom line.

Here's a few great examples of creative calls to action. A few best practices include:

- Less is more when it comes to choices. If you give multiple choices, give weight to one choice over another, so customers don't have to think too hard.
- Give careful consideration to your call to action button colours. Different colours inspire different emotions, and some colours attract more attention than others.
- Large, visible text captures attention, but make it too big and you'll off put potential customers.
- If you offer one main product, give customers a clear way to purchase it right away from the home page.
 - Keep call to action button text short.
 - Movement attracts attention. Adding movement to your site in specific areas can draw visitors towards a call to action.
 - Make it stand out. Your call to action button should have sufficient space around it so that it clearly stands out.
 - Make your call to action contextually relevant to the content on that page. If you were shopping on BestBuy.com for a new TV and were scrolling through a TV category page, it would be weird if in the sidebar you were prompted to sign up for their camera lens newsletter.

5. OFFER PROVES

Whatever you claim, you need to back it up with proof. People are sceptical and they want to see the evidence, they don't want to be the only one buying from you.

So what kind of proof can you provide?

- **Customer testimonials.** People who used your products verify your claims. It's a good idea to use testimonials from customers that were in a worse situation than the average customer. If even people in terrible circumstances could get the results, so can they.
- **Case studies.** We've all seen before and after type of case studies. Very effective.
- **The results of scientific tests and studies.** I know a log home manufacturing company that wrestled with the claims that log homes lose a lot of heat in the winter and they're expensive to keep up. They commissioned an independent study from a well-known university. The study found that the log homes are as energy efficient as any other kind of buildings. Now the manufacturer can refer to this study to back up their claims.
- **Third-party reviews.** Did a trade magazine or a blog write a glowing review? Show it off and link to it.
- **Social proof.** If you have thousands of customers, make it a well-known fact. Nobody wants to be the only idiot using your service. If you have thousands of people / companies use your service, can't be all that bad!
- **Show it!** Nothing like a good demo to prove what your product does. Use videos that showcase your product in action.

Go over all the claims you make in your sales page and figure out how to add some proof.

6. DO A/B SPLIT TESTING

A/B testing is one of the easiest ways to increase conversion rates and learn more about your audience as you test websites, but is still underused by digital marketing professionals. This is because any form of testing is often assumed to be very technical, time consuming, and difficult to implement.

But this is just not the case. When you consider the value of conversion rates and customer insights, it's impossible to ignore such a simple form of testing that supports website optimization.

How It Works

A/B testing does pretty much what the name suggests. It tests a control version A against a different version B to measure which one is most successful—based on a metric you are measuring. You can split traffic on your website so visitors experience different web page content on version A and version B of a page while you monitor visitor actions to identify the version that yields the highest conversion rate where they perform a desired action.

By testing with live visitors on your site, you learn preferred experience from real users. Through A/B testing you also discover which visitor segments consistently perform better with specific content and improve website optimization.

Once you get good at A/B testing, robust applications of A/B testing like Multivariate Testing are a logical next step.

Conversion Rates and Measurement

A/B testing—AKA AB testing or split testing—starts with a hypothesis of the types of content changes that could impact your conversion

rates. For example, you might test if will a download button result in more downloads than a download link.

The different webpage content elements—or variants—are configured for a split test and traffic is split between the variants. The test results indicate the conversion rate of one variant over another and are monitored until a statistically sufficient number of visitors have been included in the test.

Conversion rates can also be measured in revenue. Instead of the number of sales, you can measure the impact of a change on sales revenue. Conversion rates can be any measurable action and are not just restricted to ecommerce sites and sales.

Conversion rates can include: sales made, leads generated, newsletter signups, clicks on banners, or time spent on site.

Deciding what to test

Marketers guess what factors to concentrate on and mess around testing things that have little or no impact on users or conversion goals. Instead, use the data available to you to spot the most important projects to focus on.

To help you decide what tests you want to do, consider the potential revenue each test may bring, and rank tests accordingly. It's important to test one hypothesis at a time – otherwise you won't know which change made the difference.

Main things to test:

- The headline. You should have a strong, convincing and believable headline that promotes the main offer. The legendary ad guru David Ogilvy once said:

“On the average, five times as many people read the headline as read the body copy. It follows that, if you don’t sell the product in your headline, you have wasted 80% of your money. “

- Page layout and navigation.
- The offer. What is it that the customer is getting for their money (how is it all described and laid out).
- The size of your order buttons and the wording of call to action (e.g. “Join now and get access to XYZ” vs “Sign up”). For software products the primary call-to-action should often be the “demo/trial”, not the “checkout/purchase” buttons. Enlarging your action buttons usually helps.
- Different media: test adding a video to communicate key points.
- Radical change. Sometimes you want to compare two totally different approaches.
- Make it easy to read

The expression “less is more” should ring true when it comes to the design of your site, and the words that you use in your content. Sites that reduce clutter, have clear calls to action, and beautifully display information in a conversational tone set themselves up to convert visitors.

To make your site *easy to read*, use the below tactics:

- Use bullets
- Keep sentences and paragraphs short
- Use a conversational tone
- Don't use too many font sizes
- Don't use too many typefaces
- When emphasizing text (like, you know, a call to action) consider using a coloured background as opposed to bolding, underlining, or italicizing the text

7. OFFER A RETURN POLICY

One of the most difficult parts of buying online is not being able to hold the product in your hand. Sure, you can see pictures, but who's to say they are accurate? Most of the time, you don't know if it's what you really want until you get the product and have a chance to use it.

And that scares people.

What if they buy it and don't like it? What if they accidentally bought the wrong model? What if it doesn't work?

All of the "what-if" can stop prospective customers from converting. That's why many companies with strong online presences are offering more liberal return policies.

One of the most heralded examples of a great customer returns policy can be found at [Zappos](https://www.zappos.com/), where the company foots the bill for shipping both ways. If you buy the wrong shoe, no big deal. You can just return it and get another one.

8. Compare with the competition before they do

Every product and service has its competitors – direct and indirect. Research shows clearly that people do their homework before purchasing a product and compare among providers. It seldom happens that someone will buy your product without checking out your competition first.

Taking that into account, use it –

Compare your products to competing products before users do.

People are lazy. More often people compare things without giving it a lot of thought – they just look at the price and main features. For example when choosing a web host they look at the server space and monthly payment and that's it. You, as an expert in your field, know that actually many other things should be considered.

When it's you doing the comparison, you can point out the things you feel are your biggest advantages over the alternatives. If your product is more expensive than others, then this is your chance to explain why.

What if your competition is already doing it?

Imagine if your competitor is openly comparing your services and making it look like their offer is superior, and you don't provide any

information on why your product is better? A large number of people will take that competing offer.

Another benefit to adding product comparison pages to your website is that it can keep people from leaving your website. They can already do the comparison on your site, so why leave? It won't keep all of them on your site, but you'll definitely win over a good portion of visitors.

How to do the comparisons?

This depends on your product. If it's a pure spec-based product like a laptop, you can compare the specs (battery life, disk space, RAM etc) in a traditional table. If your product is more complex, use a more descriptive comparison.

If some of the specs are lower than the competition's, point out that maybe your support is way better or you provide personal consulting or its more green or whatever. Also, admitting your shortcomings is a good thing – it makes the rest of your case more believable.

9. **Cake it easy for your website visitor to take the desired action**

You've got your prospect on your website, now you need to convert them. You've identified your primary aim and you have a clear call-to-action strategy.

The next step is to simplify the process of taking the desired action. Generally, the more information you ask of your website visitor and the more actions you ask them to take, such as clicking to another page to complete a form, the lower your conversion rate.

For example, let's say you're a professional services firm with a website that has the primary aim of generating sales leads. You measure success by the number of website visitors that complete a form requesting a free consultation.

To maximize your conversion rate you would include the form on every page, rather than having a link to another page on your site which has the form. And you would ask for the minimum amount of information required to follow up with that lead, such as their name, email, phone, company, position and enquiry type, rather than asking them 15 to 20 questions about themselves, their company and their needs.

10. Think about the visitor experience

The most important thing to think about from a user experience point of view is simplicity. Is the page easy to understand? Do the eyes draw to the call to action button? Do you over complicate the page with lots of bright colours and a lot of pointless features?

Here is a list of other things to think about which all play vital roles in conversion rates (and equally, drop rates). Visitors landing on product pages want these questions answered without having to go looking around the website.

It is essential to answer these questions in order to help push your customer through the decision-making process. If you answer each question as clearly as possible without over complicating the product page then, you should see a positive impact on sales. I'll go into more detail on each specific question.

Bonus tip: Remember that the key to a highly converting website is to test, test, test. What works for one website, audience or niche may not work for another, making it difficult to offer a one-size-fits-all strategy for achieving optimal conversions. Figure out what works best for your business, and then run with it.

THANK YOU!

I hope you enjoyed this eBook. Thank you for your continuing support of the DamilolaRobert.com blog. I appreciate you taking the time to read this book. It would be great if you left a comment on my blog or at my email Damilola@DamilolaRobert.com you can also reach me on Twitter at [@DamilolaRobert](https://twitter.com/DamilolaRobert)
Thanks again and wishing you great success.
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