

Website Traffic: do you really need it as "it is"?

By Daria Winkler

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If you want just to attract visitors to your web site, you can put naked people photos on it: the high traffic is guaranteed... But will this traffic result in sales? Hardly.

Trying to turn your traffic into sales, you should focus mainly on a narrowcasting, but not on broadcasting. Normally people do not like to be treated like a majority. They are individuals and subconsciously like to be treated like this. Try to judge by yourself: do you like to stay on the site, where you are addressed as a faceless object, whom they like to sell this or that product? I bet no.

You shouldn't take your visitors (who are actually your potential customers) as weak-headed money-bags, who are likely to purchase your products, being guided by the promising slogans like: "Our software will bring you lots of profit in seconds!" or "Earn awesome amounts of money with a click of a button"... Everybody knows that one can hardly achieve something, without applying efforts: the slogans like this don't work.

You'd better concentrate your efforts on a particular (narrow!) target audience. It will contribute to your customers' flow and result in an efficient (not just high!) traffic. Analyze your urgent desire to increase it: if visitors don't turn into customers, at whose expense you traffic is growing?

The foregoing is the crucial statistics, which should be taken into account first of all: if you have decided to build efficient traffic, understand, please, your target audience. The following steps might be like this:

Judging by our own experience, I can say that the main traffic builders are:

1. Content. No matter how professional and creative your web site design might be, it doesn't influence too much on your sales. Design is nothing, advertising is everything. 70% of your sales is the result of the efficient and carefully thought out content: build it according the "Inverted Pyramid" principle: begin with the conclusion. Then goes the essence of the issue you describe. Itemize it; make it transparent, easy-to-navigate; add marked lists etc.

2. Humor. Adding humor to your site won't do you any harm. If being unobtrusive, it adds interactivity to your web site and keeps visitors involved: it makes them stay on the site; it has stamping-on-one's-memory effect. I am not talking about placing at once such humor-redundant elements like "frog in a blender" or "dancing baby". But if there is any space for it, or it is suitable, use it. But remember: redundancy is redundant.

3. News. If your start page includes news block, visitors won't go further, if the news column have not been updated during the last two months. Keep an eye on your news to make your visitors see your site is "alive". If you know that your web site can't be added with news regularly, you'd better give it up. One more thing: news message should induce to click "read more" button.

4. Design. Graphics does contribute to your site traffic, but it should be carefully thought out. Analyze your design conception: if it irritates, if it is obtrusive and overloaded with flash animations, it is bad design. Graphics shouldn't draw visitors' attention from your "magic" content (I hope you have seen to making it magic), since words sell, not images.

5. Convenience. The content should be "transparent". You are to foresee all your visitors' surfing steps. Analyze: if a passage describes the advantages of your pricing policy, it is logically that it must be ended with the link to your prices page. Do not make your customers look for the necessary information: reveal it and make it as available as possible. Easy navigation is the hallmark of professionals. Important: do not hide you "order" button! If you have succeeded to persuade a visitor in your product advantages, and he wants to purchase it, let him do it right from that page. I was surprised at how web site owners managed to hide it. Place yourself at the place of a customer. Compare your behavior and his one: seems like all customers resemble.

6. Contact Information. Customers are not indifferent machines who can buy and pay. They might like to express their gratefulness or critics, share their opinion or get consultation, last but not least, just to send you a greeting card. Provide them with the necessary information: place on your site your

email address, your physical address, fax, your phone number(s); toll free ones are appreciated. Needless to say that live chats has unmatched advantages: good help is the help delivered in time.

7. Target audience. Think properly: your target audience might not always be online. For instance, you sell books for children. Chances are it is the parents, whom you must orient your content to. I want to say, that the people, who might be interested in your products or services, might be offline. Please, consider all possible variants.

8. Portfolio. There is nothing strange in people's desire to view the works you have already executed. If you have such ones, do not hesitate to submit it to your visitors' consideration. Testimonials and references are appreciated, especially with the URLs of those who gave them.

The foregoing is just the general information about what you must pay attention to, while building your (efficient!) traffic. The room for creativity has no bounds: try, take challenge, and test.

I am sure you have great potential, just make effort to reveal it. Good luck!

About the Author:

Daria Winkler is Co-founder and Principal of Esvon LLC, information technology company, providing cost effective software development and outsourcing services to our clients and professional classified ads software for website owners.

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