

How To Automate Your Website and Increase Sales By 43% or More -

Part 1 of 3

By Mark Idzik

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Is Your Site Automated?

In today's internet marketplace, where competing sites are only "a click away" .. you must provide an easy to use web site, with up-to-date information that meets your visitors needs. To do this without software and a database of some type would take excessive amounts of time, and make your web designer very wealthy!

Quite often your data is scattered on different systems, from your web site, to your email software, to your desktop databases. This makes it challenging, and time consuming, to stay connected with your clients and prospects on a regular basis, as well as be able to easily organize all your data.

Using a database, along with special software, tools or 3rd party services, you can automate the information you present to your clients, automate your site maintenance, lower your overhead as well as save time and make more money. By keeping your data in one place, it allows you to stay organized and have all your pertinent client and business information at your fingertips. Automation is truly the fastest and smartest way to run a successful, and profitable online business.

For example, all web hosting companies now offer support for some type of "middleware" applications like ASP, Cold Fusion, PHP, Perl/CGI, and Java, among others, that allow you to use pre-made and custom functions to automate routine tasks like uploading files, adding dynamic contact forms, shopping carts, maintaining databases, adding newsletter subscribe functions, displaying special offers, showing current date and time, and more.

Here are a few of the top "must-have" web site functions you need to automate today:

=== 1. Automate your newsletter signup process

If you're not building a newsletter list now, drop everything and start today. The main reason most successful web businesses online today became successful, and stayed that way, was by building a large list of prospects or clients. Whether you choose a 3rd party mailing list service, or create your

own newsletter database, choose to do so today. Don't wait. This one item could make or break your business.

=== 2. Automate your client or prospect follow up

Follow up is one of the most vital components in building a successful business. On average, a prospect needs to see your message 7 times ... that's right .. 7 times .. before doing business with you. Don't rely on your memory or manual methods of following up with your leads. Use a 3rd party autoresponder system (Aweber, Get Response, Net Office .. and others) and capture your leads name and email address automatically. Use a pop-up window and add a subscribe form to every page of your site. Use built-in functions and examples from these services to create subscribe forms as well as the functions available in software like Cold Fusion, ASP, and Perl/CGI to automate this process for you. Just set it up once, and you'll have a follow up system in place for life.

=== 3. Automate your order processing

Processing orders by hand (authorizing credit cards, emailing, verifying, etc) is costly and mostly a waste of time. Some ordering systems must have a human factor for one reason or another, but try to automate as much as possible. Your competitors are doing it, and you won't be able to stay competitive on price, or keep your overhead down, if you don't automate at least part of your ordering process .. online or off-line. Automating your ordering most often increases your sales, and instantly lowers your overhead, saving you time and money. A recent example of automating a client's sales process skyrocketed their sales 43% in just 2 weeks! Another client realized a 1038% jump in sales over a 9 month period. And those numbers keep growing every month with no increase in overhead, thanks to automation.

In Parts 2 and 3, we'll cover more "must-have" web site functions that you need to automate, exactly how to implement them, and how to find someone that can help you setup these site automation "nuggets" (if you need assistance).

Mark Idzik is the Author of "Database Profits", how to automate your site and get your database online, quickly, easily and inexpensively. A successful Cold Fusion Database Developer and Online Marketer serving online business owners for over 6 years, he offers a free ezine and more information about his book at:

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