

You cant just build a website and hope it works!

By Peter Simmons

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peter@dynamiq.co.uk

www.dynamiq.co.uk <http://www.dynamiq.co.uk>

Like any area of business your website needs some effort from you if its going to be successful. You'd be foolish to just build any old website and hope it works. Yet this approach, or rather lack of approach, is still widespread on the internet. Businesses still dont seem to understand what the internet can do to benefit them and their customers. They just dont get it.

This is not a new criticism, people have been saying it for years. Notice i used the word people, because thats exactly who suffers. You, me and the millions of people like us who are visiting those sites during our virtual travels. Many of these businesses do actually have great products and services to offer us, its just that they havent put the effort in to find out what we, their customers want. They havent bothered to find out about us, about our needs, about our wishes. They have other more pressing priorities it seems. So they just present them to us any old way and hope we dont notice or are too stupid to notice. Dont they understand they are losing sales, customers, repeat customers, referrals and more?

Whether your business has a whole team working on your website or just you, its going to take some effort and commitment to get to a point where your website is satisfying your customers. A website where you have a direct conversation with your visiting potential customers. A conversation where they feel you are talking directly to them. A conversation where they feel you understand them. You understand their needs and wishes like no other business has done before. In short, a place where you connect with your customers and they connect with you. A place where you are entirely focused on them, NOT on you. Not on your products, not on your credentials or ego, not on anything else about you.

For example, instead of just detailing information about your products, present your information in a way that is valuable to them. Of course, they will want to know what your product does and some key information about how it works, etc. But present it to them so that they know instantly and precisely how they benefit from it: How much money they will save with it. How much time they will save with it. How it will make their life better. How it will make their life easier, etc.

Focusing wholeheartedly on your customers is not easy, it takes time, motivation, commitment and innovation. Which i suspect is ultimately why it doesnt always get done. Dont let this happen to your site. Do it well and you will see the results. But be sure about it, you've got to take on the responsibility to do as much as you possibly can if you want to see those golden results. Ensure your customers visit is a positive one that will stay fresh in their mind for some time.

How can you tell how well your site is doing? Answer the following questions to get an indication:

Do you regularly promote your website to carefully targeted customers?
Do you know exactly how your customers benefit from your website?
Are you getting the sales figures and incomes you want?
Are you getting new customers regularly?
Do you get regular positive customer feedback?
Do you get regular positive website feedback?
Can you describe your customer and their needs and wants easily?
Are you regularly looking at ways to improve your site and products for your customers?
Does the text on your site speak to an individual person?
Is it easy to contact you via the site?

Generally, the more questions you answered yes to, the more successful your website can be. You should of course aim for 90-100% (9-10 yes's). Lower than 90% (9 yes's) indicates that you need to improve.

One of the great things about the internet, unlike other more traditional media, is its ability to be updated immediately. You can change anything on your website at anytime and as often as you like. Use it to experiment with offers and products. Experiment with the way you present them to find out what works and what doesn't. Use this great feature to improve your site for the better. Better for your customer that is.

Tips:

1. Listen to your customers.
2. Don't be too precious about your site content and products.
3. Don't become too attached to anything on your site. Change or remove it if it doesn't work.
4. Ask for honest feedback.
5. See the bigger picture.

Good luck!

Peter Simmons is editor of the DYNAMIQ EZINE. GET MAXIMUM RESULTS FROM YOUR WEBSITE! Increase your traffic, prospect conversions, sales, profits, referrals and more... START GETTING RESULTS RIGHT NOW at <http://www.dynamiq.co.uk/ezine> or email me anytime for immediate assistance <mailto:peter@dynamiq.co.uk>

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