

Affiliates: 10 Ways to Improve Credibility and Conversions

By Rosalind Gardner

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Lack of consumer trust is still the biggest obstacle to online sales, and judging by the amount of spam and scams flying about in cyberspace, surfers are right to remain wary.

Savvy online shoppers, however, know how to determine a merchant's credibility with onsite information and by asking pertinent questions.

Online merchants and their super affiliates anticipate their visitors' concerns and address questions before they arise. In return, these customer-oriented salespeople are rewarded with sales and conversion rates much higher than their counterparts whose focus is elsewhere.

Here are 10 ways you too can increase your conversion rates by improving visitors' trust in your sites.

HONESTY: Visitors should know exactly what to expect before they get to your site. Dishonest advertising wastes their time and your money. They'll leave without buying, or plans to return.

SUPERIOR KNOWLEDGE: Affiliates with high conversion rates usually own the products they sell. First-hand knowledge lends credibility to their personal reviews and sets them apart from the crowd.

INVITE FEEDBACK: Testimonials from happy customers are an excellent way to build trust in your product reviews.

SELL QUALITY: Complaints, refunds and charge-backs lower your reputation, as well as your revenue. Sell only high-quality products.

KEEP DESIGN SIMPLE: Gratuitous animated graphics scream "Webmaster Kindergarten". Focus on your products, not fancy gimmicks.

SHOW RESPECT: Broken links, graphics and forms are frustrating. Pop-ups, music and noise are maddening. Respect your visitors' time and space. Make sure your site is free of errors and other annoyances.

BE AVAILABLE: Make it easy for visitors to get in touch with you. A highly visible contact link on every page is usually enough to let visitors know that you are readily available.

EXPOSE YOURSELF: It's a psychological fact that trust increases with exposure. Stay in touch with your visitors by sending them useful information through your mailing list.

STRETCH: Affiliates often receive emails better handled by the merchant partner. Don't ignore those emails. Relaying the message promptly brands you as a professional with both the customer and your partner.

GIVE TREATS: Freebies are like chocolate samples. Few folks will turn them down, and your reputation goes up when they're good.

As you can see, gaining your visitors' trust is simple. Simply be trustworthy. Incorporate one or all of the above methods and watch your credibility, conversion rates and sales increase.

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Rosalind Gardner is the author of '123eBusiness: A Beginner's Guide to Online Profits' and the 'Net Profits Coach' ezine.

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