

Website Success: Chapter 1

Written by Doug Stewart

A victim is found, face down on the ground. Dead. The homicide detective is called in. The detective snaps her gloves on, raises one eyebrow and leans over to examine the body...

“Just as I thought. Someone wanted to get away from this website as fast as possible. Multiple click wounds. Nothing here for anyone to see.”

You’ve been there. You go to Google searching for answers. Click to a promising website and it doesn’t look like it’s for you. You can’t find the answers you want fast enough. It’s dead to you. Click. You go immediately back to Google.

You are out of there.

But people paid good money for their website. It looked nice and professional. It ranked well on the search engines.

What happened? Could this happen to you?

You better believe it could happen to you. It happens to smart people every day. That’s why I wrote this book. So, you can avoid the deadly traps that kill a website’s effectiveness.

What will you learn in this chapter?

In this chapter, you'll learn about the biggest problem that prevents a website from being effective. You'll also learn how to pull high quality buyers into your website like a magnet.

Imagine the words on your website warming visitors up. Excited. They act. They contact you.

Imagine your website delivering a predictable number of quality sales leads every month. Guaranteed. Day-in and day-out.

There are other reasons for a website (serve current customers better, inform stockholders, provide information for the press, etc.). But in this book, we're concentrating on creating a constant stream of quality leads.

If that's what you want, a website that generates quality sales leads, then keep reading . . .

The Major Reason a Website Fails

Many people in charge of updating a website or building a website start the design process by looking at their competitors' websites. They hunt down the websites that look the most professional. They start designing the look of the website. ***They decide to paint their house before they build it.***

They have no idea if their competitors' websites are effective. They look at the "paint job" and guess that prettier equals more effective.

Alex Turnbull of Groove software admits he made this same mistake several times with his company's website. Here is what he said,

In every prior iteration of our site, we put aesthetics first.

More than anything, it needed to "look" nice.

We would build designs, draft copy, and then cut or rewrite our words to fit the design.

Looking back, this was insane.

Alex finally fixed his website. Now it brings-in twice as many new customers every month. But it only happened once he quit focusing on aesthetics and started focusing on solving the problems his customers wanted solved. In [his blog](#) he goes into depth of how he accomplished this.

Alex decided he wanted results. The pretty paint job was no longer a priority.

What results do you want? Do you want people telling you how pretty your website is? Or do you want your email box filled with requests from people wanting to buy from you?

Planning and Preparing for Website Success

Before the internet, direct response marketers would tell you the two most important elements of a successful direct response marketing campaign are the list and the offer. In other words, the people who see your message and your actual message are the most important elements. Not the artwork.

Don't get me wrong, the artwork is important. But what you say on your website and the people who see your message are more important. The same thing goes for websites. The traffic to your website and your website's message determines your success online more than the paint job.

Before you decide on the look of your website, find out exactly who your best prospective customers are. Second, create a strong message that your prospects will act on.

Begin with the end in mind. If you want a website that brings-in lots of new customers, then the first step is to make sure you're getting enough of the right people to your website. In the next few pages we'll help you do just that.

The Most Important Element for Website Success

Before your website can attract great prospective clients, you must know who a great prospective client is. Right?

Start by looking at your current customers. Use the 80/20 rule (80% of your business comes from 20% of your customers). Look at your customers who spend the most with you. Look at your customers who are the easiest to work with.

Who has bought from you recently? Who buys from you frequently? Who has the largest average order size?

What customers do you like working with the best? List these customers. Then make lists of them by job title and job function.

Next, Making Your Website Talk Specifically to “Your Best Customer”

From the list of your best customers choose someone. Or create a fictitious character based on a composite of your best customers. When you write your web pages, write as if you’re talking directly to this character or person (sometimes called a persona).

DEFINITION: A buyer [persona](#) is a semi-fictional representation of your ideal customer based on market research and real data about your existing customers. When creating your buyer persona(s), consider including customer demographics, behavior patterns, motivations, and goals. The more detailed you are, the better. – Sam Kusinitz of HubSpot

Now imagine someone like your best customer. Imagine someone searching for a solution to the same problem your best customer searched for when they first started working with you.

What would they search for when trying to solve the problem? What happens when they find your website online? What happens when they find your competitor's website online?

If your website is talking directly to them. If your website uses their language. If it understands exactly what their immediate online goal is and addresses that goal. Will they stay and use your website? Or will they choose your competitor's website?

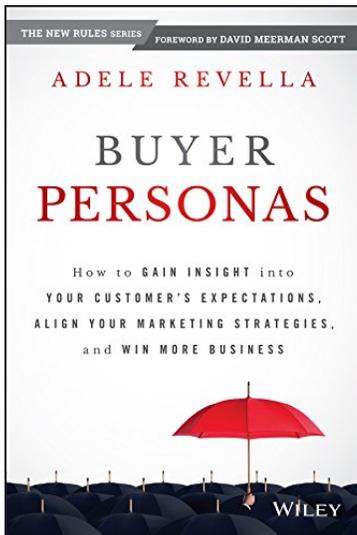
The More People See Themselves in Your Website, the More they'll like Your Website

"We like people who are similar to us. This fact seems to hold true whether the similarity is in the area of opinions, personality traits, background, or life-style."

— Robert B. Cialdini, *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*

Part of your research should include interviewing your best customers. In Adele Revella's book, [Buyer Personas](#), she identifies what she calls the "5 Rings of Buying Insight."

When interviewing customers, ideally you want to learn the following:



1. Pivotal Pain Point – What Made the Problem Urgent Enough to Find a Solution?

2. Buyers Success Criteria/Expectations – What results do buyers expect from purchasing a solution like yours?

3. Perceived Barriers - Objections – What prevents buyers from considering your solution?

4. Buying Process in the Organization – Who influences the decision to buy your solution? At what point in the buying process are these influencers involved?

5. Decision Criteria – What specific attributes of your product or service will buyers compare with other possible solutions before they make the decision to buy?

Walking a mile in your prospect's shoes

When your prospective customer starts gathering information to make a purchase decision, what do they do? What are their online goals?

Brainstorm on this. Make a quick list of reasons why they would be researching your product or service online. Could their current equipment be

breaking down, and they're looking for parts or someone to repair it? Are they looking for a quick fix to a known problem with older equipment that your product(s) replace?

Are they experiencing a problem that is a symptom of a bigger problem that your service solves? Make your list.

Grab the Ripe, Juicy, Low Hanging Fruit. It's waiting for You...

Once you've identified the main reasons why your best prospects would be online looking for your product or service, prioritize your list to the reasons that someone would be close to making a purchase today.

Your first web pages will start here. Pick the top, most urgent problem; we're going to need it down the road.

Chapter 1 Review

1 - Avoid the #1 Website Mistake - Painting Your House Before You Build It.

A pretty "paint job" doesn't mean your website will bring-in new business day-in and day-out

2 - Planning and Preparing for website success

Plan for website success. Plan and prepare to get the right people to your website. Get your message right.

3 - The Most Important Element. Define and decide who your best customers and prospective customers are.

4 - Interviewing Best Customers/Prospects. Find out what the 5 rings of buyers' insight are for your best customers and prospective customers.

5 - Grab the Ripe, Juicy, Low Hanging Fruit

Address the top, most urgent reason why someone would be searching for your product or service online today before buying.

CHAPTER 1 WORKSHEET

List your best customers or prospects by name and job title

Who bought the most from your business in the last 12 months?

COMPANY/ORGANIZATION: _____

NAME: _____

JOB TITLE: _____

Who ordered the most frequently in the last 12 months?

COMPANY/ORGANIZATION: _____

NAME: _____

JOB TITLE: _____

Who placed the largest order in the last 30 days?

COMPANY/ORGANIZATION: _____

NAME: _____

JOB TITLE: _____

Which customer did I enjoy working with the most last year?

COMPANY/ORGANIZATION: _____

NAME: _____

JOB TITLE: _____

Interview your best customers. Get on the phone or use survey monkey and ask the customers listed above these questions:

QUESTION #1 - What was happening when you realized you wanted (your product or service)

QUESTION #2 - Take me back to the day when