



8 CONVERSION-KILLING WEB DESIGN MISTAKES



REDEFINING THE CLIENT EXPERIENCE



1

Ignoring Your Visitors

Let's say that you work in a retail store and a customer walks in... and you ignore the customer. **Not a good idea, right?** Well, the same holds true for a website. Many websites, both e-commerce and lead generation sites, are guilty of doing a rotten job of anticipating the needs of their visitors and providing an experience that helps the visitor achieve their goals.

This happens so often because many sites are built from the inside-out. The stakeholders get together and decide what they think should go on their website. The problem is that the site turns out to be what the company wants, which in most cases is different from what the visitors want.

BUILD YOUR SITE FROM THE "OUTSIDE-IN"

To make your site visitor-centric, you need to be able to empathize with and seriously consider what your visitors want to see and experience on your website – you need to try and understand what's going on in the visitor's mind.

Understand your visitors' typical behaviors and their psychology of decision-making (motivations, needs, doubts, etc.) by reviewing:



- Quantitative data (analytics & heat maps) information that tells us what your visitors are doing
- Qualitative information (user testing, visitor surveys) information that tells us the "why" and what visitors are thinking and feeling

Focus your site on being visitor-centric. Empathy is the key to meaningful & effective web design.



2

Omitting Your Value Prop

Your visitors are coming to your website for a reason, and in many cases, you don't have a lot of time to make an impact on them. **Your goal is to capture their attention and to encourage them to stay on your site long enough to consider your services and products.**

SHOW YOUR VALUE IN A POWERFUL AND CONCISE WAY

Before you create your value proposition, you need to clearly have defined what demographic of visitors you are appealing to on your website. Your value will be perceived differently by different classes of visitors.

WHY A VALUE PROPOSITION IS IMPORTANT:

- It is designed to appeal specifically to your demographic of visitor
- It clearly says:
 - Who you are
 - What you do
 - How you differentiate yourself
 - Who you are appealing to and how you can help them
 - What are the next steps
- It is expressed with messaging, imagery, calls-to-action and functionality





3

Assuming Everyone's Ready to Buy

You've all seen it before. You get to a website homepage or landing page, and you feel like you're being forced to buy now or fill out a form even though you need to learn more about the product/service or company. **Are you guilty of this on your website?**

The reality is that very few of your visitors are ready to transact with you, especially on their visit. Your visitors may have other needs that need to be met first, such as:

- Can I trust this company?
- Is the product/service right for me?
- What are the pros & cons?

Don't confuse forcefulness with persuasion and try to push your visitors down through the bottom of the sales funnel. We call this error the **greedy marketing syndrome**.



4 Stages of Visitor Intent

The solution is to better understand visitor intent. There are 4 stages visitors go through when researching and deciding to transact with you and you can remember these stages with the acronym AIDA:

AWARENESS I have a problem; is there a product to help me?

INTEREST There are products available to solve my problem. What are the important features?

DESIRE I'm beginning to narrow down the candidates and need to finalize my decision. Why should I buy from you or contact you?

ACTION I'm ready to transact with your company

Remember to address the visitors that aren't in the Action stage - **the majority of your visitors**.



4



Terrible Navigation

Have you ever been navigating through a site and gotten lost and couldn't figure out how to get back to where you started?

We have all had that frustrating experience. Unless someone really needs to be on your website, they will probably leave if they are having a poor experience or feel lost.

HOW TO CREATE USER-FRIENDLY NAVIGATION

THE TOLERANCE FOR POOR NAVIGATION IS VERY LOW. THAT'S WHY IT'S EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO HAVE A USER-FRIENDLY PROCESS FOR NAVIGATING THROUGH YOUR WEBSITE.

- Navigation should be very simple and clean.
- Unless you have an e-commerce website, your objective is not to sell your products and services directly to the visitor. Your site is focused on encouraging someone to call you or fill out a form. You don't need every aspect of your business outlined and detailed on your site. That many pages and that much content will overwhelm your visitor and will hurt you more than help you.
- All pages and content are designed to encourage someone to take that next step.
- Limit or avoid drop down menus.
- They are typically cumbersome, especially on a mobile device. A marketing site typically doesn't need more than 6-8 pages.
- Focus on mission critical pages.
- Determine which pages are really important for conversion and making a strong impression on your visitor. We refer to these as mission critical pages. These pages should have the most emphasis in how they are put together and designed and the quality of messaging.



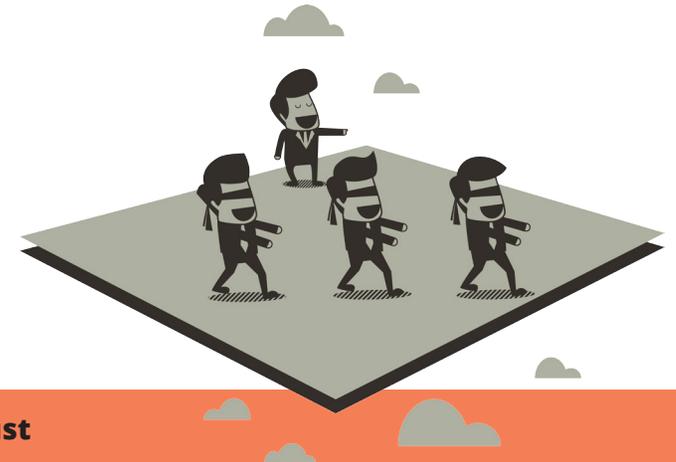


Not Establishing Trust & Credibility

How do you feel when you visit a website for the first time, especially the website of a company you've never heard of?

DO YOU FULLY TRUST THEM?

Skepticism is a trait that even the most accepting visitors possess when they land on your website. Your job is to establish a baseline of trust and credibility quickly to make your visitors feel comfortable.



Establishing Different Types of Trust

Visual Trust

Formed based on the look, feel and speed of your website. Do you have a professional site design? Do you convey a positive 1st impression to visitors?

Industry Trust

Formed based on affiliations, awards & accomplishments, and brand recognition. Are you an active member of the industry?

Social Trust

Formed based on reviews & testimonials

Transactional Trust

Formed based on the presence of trust symbols, privacy policy, and guarantees

Longevity Trust

How many happy customers have you served?



Visual Bullying

Have you ever been on a website where there is so much movement that you get distracted or even frustrated? Animation or movement on a site is typically a distraction, and if a visitor is distracted or annoyed with the visual or audio components, they will probably leave the site.

USE ANIMATION AND VIDEO WITH GREAT DISCRETION.

Recommended Types of Animation

- Well-placed videos
- Micro Animations
- Hover over's

Beware of Slideshows

In most cases, your visitors probably won't stick around a home page to read multiple slides. Then, you are missing an opportunity by placing important messaging in places where visitors won't see it.

Remember that any animation or movement on your site should serve a purpose and tie back to your conversion strategy.





7

Ineffective messaging

3 CRITERIA OF EFFECTIVE MESSAGING

LEGIBILITY

• Your visitors have to be able to read your copy. If you're using light text on a black background, you're making it more difficult for your visitors to read your content. You're creating a visual load by asking visitors to use more effort to read the text.

READABILITY

• Think about the theme of your writing – is it friendly, easy to scan, easy to read, using short sentences & short paragraphs? Or is it written like a college text book? Don't make your visitors have to concentrate to understand your main points.

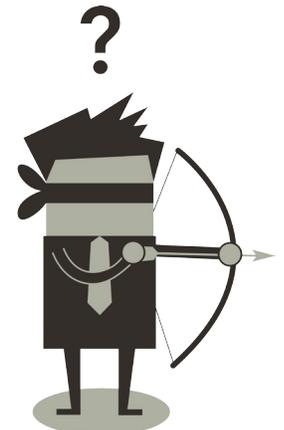
• Unless you're 100% positive your visitors understand industry jargon and acronyms, don't use them.

SUCCINCT AND VISITOR-CENTRIC COPY

• Visitors want to get the information they need with the minimum amount of reading.

• Most websites suffer from too much copy especially on the homepage. The homepage is a page to succinctly articulate what you do and why you do it better and give the visitor enough information to begin their journey.

• Beware of the "we-we" syndrome. Your visitors don't care about you, except for how you can help them. Focus your copy around your visitors' needs. And please don't say "we take pride in our customer service..." - **have you ever encountered a company that wouldn't say that?**





8

Poor Mobile Usability

YOUR WEBSITE REALLY NEEDS TO BE MOBILE RESPONSIVE.

If a visitor lands on a site that is not optimized or compatible for mobile, they will probably leave right away.

THE TOLERANCE FOR THIS IS VERY LOW.

What is Mobile First Design?

Mobile users want a very clean, simple site. Most people now even view desktop sites with that mindset so the mobile view should be carried over all the way to desktop.

We call this **mobile first design**. Your web designer should be considering how the site (content, design, imagery, functionality) will be laid out for mobile before they even get started.

Keep Your Website Simple

- Not too much content
- Not too many pages
- Limited use of imagery





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