

A Digital Marketer's Guide To Building High Converting Websites

How to Drive Constant
Improvements in E-Commerce
Sales and B2B Lead Generation





A Digital Marketer's Guide to Building High Converting Websites

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CHAPTER 1:

RETHINKING WEB DESIGN TO DRIVE GROWTH

Stopping the Guesswork

What does a 1% growth in online sales mean for your business? Or 3% or 10%? How about a 30% gain in conversion rates? For many companies, these small numbers add up to millions of dollars in revenue. How can you consistently make improvements to grow a business?

Companies that use online communications (web, social, email, paid) to grow their business, know that improvements can be made, it's just not always clear how. Surprisingly, this is a big issue faced by many business owners, executives and marketing departments.

Customers Expect More

Because digital marketing is changing so fast, and customers expect more, company leaders feel pressure to keep ahead of competitors. So the marketing team starts the process of rebuilding the website with the latest and greatest, hoping for the best. But this is the wrong strategy! We need to understand what this *"guesswork process"* is costing us, alter our web strategy, and **take the guesswork out of our marketing.**

*We must learn to adapt our marketing in **real time** to meet **customer needs.***

The Core Problem

Most companies rebuild their website every two to three years from the ground up. The resources required to go through that process can be both financially and emotionally straining for any company and digital marketing team. They use the analytics they have to try and make the best decisions and they study competitors to get ideas they can copy.

Google Analytics Is Not Enough!

Most decisions about web design (how it looks and interacts) are more emotional than based on fact. So executives try and use metrics from Google Analytics and total number of sales to make decisions, but this is simply not enough to make the right decisions that will consistently grow online sales and lead generation.

Decisions need to be made on how visitors engage with your brand across all channels (not just web) and what drives actual sales. Just because a website has 1,000 visitors a day, it means nothing unless you can convert them into paying customers and loyal fans. **Understanding customer engagement is the key**, and this can be measured and continually improved with Visitor Optimization.

Visitor Optimization™

The idea of testing the customer experience has been around a long time. Those of us who have been around since the 80's have seen the TV commercials pitting Pepsi against Coca-Cola in taste tests. The idea is a simple one, but getting large enough numbers to be significantly accurate is really hard offline. As an example, just look at the election polling campaigns that goes on during election season, the inaccuracies are significant.

Visitor Optimization is a process developed by Click over the last 10 years that focuses on continual growth of the business by analyzing how visitors engage with a brand online and constantly improving it to drive more sales and leads.

Around 2006, with the release of Google's Website Optimizer, website testing became much more available to businesses. A/B testing is a very straightforward concept. You test one design element against another to see which one works better. It could be a graphic, a button, text or any element that can be put on a page. Then, as visitors interact and achieve the desired goal, eventually you will have a winner. Though A/B testing is a great starting point to improve the user experience, it isn't enough, which is why we created the Visitor Optimization process.

Testing the user experience can improve lead generation an average of 70% over typical processes.

Customer Alignment Drives Growth

At the same time these visitor experience testing tools became available, a number of other great tools started to arise, such as click-based heatmaps, onsite visitor surveys, live chat and form analytics. Using them all together to improve lead generation is classified as [conversion rate optimization](#) (CRO). Conversion rate optimization is a practice focused on changing or adding site elements to increase the number of website conversions.

With these tools, combined with web analytics, no marketing team should ever be at a loss to understand their customers and what influences their online behaviors. In this age of the socially empowered customer, corporate and rampant changes in technology where even the smallest voices can have an impact on your brand, having just a marketing focused website and only adding new content now and then is no longer enough.

Our websites and campaigns need to react in real-time to our customers' needs. Shouldn't our websites know how to respond to visitors that come from a campaign being run on Facebook/Twitter and display the best conversions aligned with what we know about that visitor?

“ In this age of the socially empowered customer, having just a marketing focused website is no longer enough. ”

CHAPTER 2:
STEPS TO
VISITOR OPTIMIZATION™

Defining Visitor Optimization

Visitor Optimization is the process of using visitor engagement data to create constant improvements in how the business engages with customers to increase value for **both** the customer and value for the business.

Moving from a rigid website to an adaptive one requires a change in how we approach publishing, marketing and web development. Rather than a series of creative projects and campaigns, adaptive web design is focused on constant change, based on measurable improvements and not guesswork. Adaptive web design moves marketing and web teams from a scheduled rollout strategy to a real-time validation of ideas.

Visitor Optimization means knowing what really works and not just accepting the opinion of experts.

Step 1:

Assume You Know (*Almost*) Nothing

One of the things that may be difficult for the digital marketing team is that you have to abandon what you think you know as best practices. Of course, we all “know” what the best practices typically are when it comes to campaigns and web design. They are called best practices for a reason. **Best practices are generalizations that may or may not work for your business.** They don't work for every business which is why it is important to be cautious about the expert opinions. What you need to adopt is the idea of testing everything you can.

Whether selling widgets, providing services or just educating an audience, all digital communications should guide visitors to take some type of action. Without measuring customer engagement and understanding their needs, we don't have a starting point. When we do make changes, visitors are basically “voting” with their interaction, with their data and ultimately, with their pocketbooks.



Main Point:

How visitors engage with your brand online will guide you to make smart decisions on improving their experience.

Step 2:

Start Measuring Everything

While you are gaining an understanding of your visitor's needs and giving your customers a voice, there is a wealth of information available to you through analytics. Ways of determining visitor behaviors can be gleaned from:

1. Web Analytics
2. Heatmap and Scroll Analysis
3. Form Analysis
4. Click Events
5. Video Recordings of Visitor Sessions
6. Online Surveys
7. Email Metrics
8. Chat Messaging
9. Funnel Analytics
10. Keyword Rankings
11. Keyword Trend Analysis
12. Social Reputation
13. Social Metrics
14. Campaign Effectiveness

In other words, we have a whole bunch of tools that can really generate a lot of great data so our digital marketing teams can dig into what drives visitor behavior. These are some of the core things you have to look at in order to understand what needs changing and what you are missing.



Main Point:

Develop a practice of measuring to reduce the amount of guesswork you are doing to increase sales and leads.

Step 3: Engage Visitors for Insights

At the heart of Visitor Optimization is a focus on gaining an understanding of your target visitors and keeping their information fresh in your CRM. Therefore, gaining an understanding of existing customers helps you gain a better understanding about **possible customers**. If your business works with consumers, enhance the data with appropriate information to use segmentation to communicate more effectively. If you are a B2B and doing *Account Based Marketing*, there is a wealth of information on the business and the employees at the business you are trying to reach. Use this data to your competitive advantage using segmentation.

Embrace Social Engagement

Giving your customers a voice on your product or service will enable them to feel like their opinion matters, if the communication is two way. Of course you can't respond to everyone, but it's the appearance of engagement that is important. It enables you to ask customers more important questions to learn more about them. This can reveal a number of possible surprises about your customer base, especially for those companies that have limited personal face time with their visitors.



Main Point:

Get to know your customers online any way you can. Engage with them and gain fans.

Step 4: Validate Your Customer Journey

Take a hard look at the content you have and how visitors interact with it before converting. Is it mostly fluffy marketing material or does it provide value? Either way, it should point the way for visitors (the customer journey) to their goal *and yours*. Your job is to determine if your content is guiding people through their journey and into your sales funnel.

Are people taking the time to engage with your content (text or video) or are they quickly leaving?

If they aren't taking the action you hoped for, such as clicking on a link to read more content, adding an item to their cart or filling out a form, then something is wrong with the content or the journey itself. It could be the content or the desired action isn't obvious to them, or they feel you can't solve their problem (according to the visitor). Using the analytics you have been collecting and visitor insights, focus in on the issue and test changes for future visitors to drive up your conversion rates. Remember, the goal is to make constant improvements based on what you are learning.



Main Point:

Create steps that visitors can take which help them and create sales for you.

Step 5: Start an Optimization Team

The 5th component to adopting the needed processes to drive growth is to create a **Visitor Optimization Team**. When possible, this should be a cross functional team (IT, Marketing, Customer Support, Analytics, Sales) that is responsible for constantly reviewing the performance of online communications and visitor experience. This team ensures that visitor optimization is being accurately run and that the results are quickly implemented. The Visitor Optimization Team is responsible for ensuring the business is constantly improving so that visitors have the optimum experience and greatest chance at converting. The key metric that all other metrics impact should be the **Growth Rate** of the business.

At a minimum, this should be at least a 1 or 2 person team and have access to all the tools necessary to impact the success of the business online. Additionally, this team should have enough creative freedom to test ideas and challenge the status quo of digital marketing.

Case Studies of Visitor Optimization



“By optimizing their experience and answering people's needs with just enough information, visitors are much more likely to convert.”



Case Studies

Outback Steakhouse

Outback had a problem. They were only ranking in their search results for branded terms and were missing out on a lot of traffic opportunity. A new website was being developed and it needed to be an amazing experience as well as begin competing for “steak” related terms on Google. The Click team worked with the Outback team to understand the current content, how people were engaging with that content, and what was driving restaurant visits to create a content strategy that would bring more people in for lunch and dinner.

With a large number of organic visitors and an aggressive use of new technology, there were lots of concerns about the impact of the new site on SEO and incoming organic traffic. With such a large volume of organic visitors, small losses in organic traffic would mean big losses in revenue. Click Laboratory worked weekly through the entire project to ensure that search rankings weren't going to be negatively impacted but should actually improve organic traffic. The goal was to understand visitor engagement to see how it could be improved and increase non-branded traffic.

Known Visitor Engagement

1. Find the nearest restaurant
2. Make a reservation
3. View the menu

Solution

Once all the technical issues were resolved, the Steak Experience was created. This was a portal for all things steak that you ever wanted to know. The results of this, combined with all the other improvements led to a 20% growth in organic, non-branded traffic which in turn drove an increase to restaurant visitors.



Case Studies

Homee On Demand

Homee On Demand (<https://www.homeeondemand.com/>) is a startup focused on helping property managers and homeowners find great contract help on property repairs such as electrical, plumbing and handyman type services.

The Problem

They had an urgent need to totally rebrand and redeploy their website so that they could meet the needs of each audience type when they released the public version of their new app.

Like any great start-up, they needed an amazing experience that takes each visitor on a journey to conversion and ultimately to being a fan. But with so many different audience types and so short a time, creating a solution wasn't going to be easy.

Solution

The first part of the equation was to simply know what was going on. We needed to take as much of the guesswork out as possible. The Click and Homee team studied the business models and sites for competitors, how existing customers were interacting with the brand, and created a content strategy for launch and beyond.

The website itself was built with Hubspot and tied into their CRM. Now the real magic starts to happen as new users are analyzed and how they engage with the brand as the company expands into new markets across the US.



Case Studies

Christian Brothers Automotive

Christian Brothers Automotive (www.cbac.com) is one of the absolute best nationwide auto repair and maintenance franchises.

The Problem

CBAC had recently redeveloped their website and even though the user experience was much better than previous versions, there were several franchisees that felt the new site wasn't meeting their needs to deliver the number of customers they expected from organic search results (Google).

Solution

Understanding how to convert visitors into leads using Visitor Optimization Processes starts with simply understanding your customers, who they are and why they use your business. So Click started at the most basic level to understand the demographics around each of the franchises.

We found that most franchises had grown their traffic, but some had stayed flat or dropped slightly. When we looked at the population density, these franchises should have been getting a lot more traffic based on comparisons to other locations that were doing better.

We discovered a number of possible reasons, but the chief reason for the largest drops wasn't anything to do with digital. It was offline advertising (radio and print). These had decreased after the new site went live and it caused a decrease in organic searches. For franchises and physical stores, traditional advertising can have a big impact on the organic search volume for your business. As we stated earlier, it's all in understanding your Visitor that determines how you will optimize their experience to drive up sales.



Case Studies

eDocAmerica

eDocAmerica is a long time customer of Click Laboratory. They are a SaaS provider for telemedicine and were one of the first into the space.

The Problem

eDocAmerica has been around for awhile and wanted to start really growing awareness for the business amongst consumers and businesses alike. But eDocAmerica's brand and visitor experience needed a major update. Competitors with deeper pockets were tapping into their market.

Solution

It didn't take much research to know what was needed. A new website for eDocAmerica was obviously needed. Also, as it turned out, their content was good, it just wasn't easy to find and it wasn't helping their SEO.

So Click built the new website to be easy to use, easy to navigate and not confusing to their existing customer base. Additionally the big change that had the most impact was simply making all of the blog content they had been creating easier to find. This one change has led to a year over year growth of 300% in organic traffic from their previous website averaging over 6,000 visitors a month.

As new content has been added, it is clear that Unicorn Content has been identified and used to continue to build the awareness of the brand.



Case Studies

Numara Software

Numara Software (purchased by BMC Software) was a leading producer of help desk and service desk software for companies worldwide.

The Problem

Numara Software was a rapidly growing B2B company that knew it could grow even more with a better online lead generation strategy. It just needed a team to make it happen.

Solution

This project is where the Visitor Optimization Process was first created. The full process described in this paper was used to significantly impact the growth of the company year over year. There were many obstacles and lessons learned, but the goal was always growth.

Numara was hyper-focused on the numbers and where the budget was being spent to acquire new customers. Every landing page and every conversion action was closely monitored and regularly tested to find opportunity to increase conversion rates.

There were many big wins, but the idea of looking at how people engaged at different points in the funnel, after 6 months of testing and improvements, led to a **\$330,000 monthly increase in the sales opportunity** pipeline from just our PPC campaigns alone.

VISITOR OPTIMIZATION RESOURCES

Take Your First Steps

Find out how you can start taking your first steps to using our Visitor Optimization Process to **grow your lead generation and conversion rates**. [Get an audit](#) of your website to determine if there are SEO or User Experience improvements you can make now to drive sales.



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