

7 Ways to Improve Your Website

By Kurt Scholle



It has been my privilege to have helped Celtic Marketplace attendees with reviews of their websites for several years and to now report on some of the common needs, strengths and weaknesses of NACTA members.

Most retailers use their sites to help attract customers to their stores while some members sell online in addition to their physical location, or over the phone.

There are many keys to website success, but the most important is to have a website that converts visitors into buyers and then attracts more visitors to your site.

Remember, it's important to have a high converting website before you begin driving traffic, otherwise your efforts, and possibly budget have been wasted. So let's begin with conversion and building a good foundation.

1) Every page on a website has a job, and the job of the Home Page is to immediately confirm to visitors that they have found the solution they are looking for. They make the decision in 8 seconds or less, so it is important to have a scan-able Home Page where most content is viewable without scrolling. Avoid welcoming people to your

site. It's a nice gesture but it's better to appeal to their needs by showing them what they want.

2) Buyer personas need to be understood so that you can highlight products they like and build interest in buying from you. We write out descriptions and sometimes name the buyers whose interests may be different. Male, female, young or old are one way to define buyer personas, but others will be interested in different departments, just as they are in your store. People looking for Irish wool sweaters may not be interested in religious goods and vice versa. Some customers may resonate with some traditions and not others. Some visitors will appreciate the support you can give them in choosing something appropriate.

3) Too many websites promote features that the owners think are important, but it's better to create content that highlights the benefits to the buyer. Features tell, benefits sell. Promote what they want and then sell them what they need.

4) Make sure that buyers can find what they want within 3 clicks, otherwise you're making them work too hard to buy from you. We often find opportunities to delete a layer of navigation, which improves UX. (User Experience) Home page -> Products -> Category -> Product is a good funnel template.

5) Having the ability to update your website makes it easier, faster and cheaper to maintain. WordPress gives you many options, is loved by Google and you can learn how to do anything on WordPress on YouTube or WordPress.com. Plugins provide functionality that used to cost hundreds, if not thousands, including the ability to offer an online store.

6) Mobile-ready or 'responsive' websites are required! More than 50% of Internet traffic comes from smartphones and tablets, so it's important to have a site that looks good on those devices, especially when those users may be in their car looking for gifts or other products right now! And in April,

Google began devaluing sites that were not mobile-ready. Most WordPress themes are responsive.

7) Finally, make sure you can view and understand your site's Key Performance Indicators. Google Analytics is free and allows you to track how many visitors you've had to your site, which pages are most popular, how long they spend on your site and where they leave your site. Good insights on what needs to be fixed and then monitor the results of your efforts. Don't guess! Using Google Search Console (formerly Webmaster Tools) allows Google to tell you if they find problems so that you can work on fixing them.

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I hope you find these 7 Keys useful and I believe that if you implement them, you will be much more competitive than other stores in your town or niche. If you have any questions, feel free to email me at kurt@WebAsylum.com. Follow my blog: Website-ROI-Guy.com

In a future newsletter, we will address how to increase traffic to your website, so watch this space!

Kurt Scholle