

10 Ways to Lose Web Sales

The basic elements of a web site include the content, the appearance, and the mechanics of a site. Mistakes made in any of these areas can have an impact on your sales. You can avoid some of the common errors by learning what they are. The following list points out ten of the more common mistakes web page builders make and how to avoid them.

1. Poor site navigation. This arises generally from having inconsistent navigation links, not having enough navigation links, and links that are not clearly labeled. Easy navigation is essential to keeping prospective buyers at your site. Provide plenty of links on your home page, giving visitors an overview of your web site's content and choices. Provide links to your home page and main sections (such as order form, contact page, products, and articles) on every page. Visitors may not visit your pages in the sequence you would like them to. Provide a site map (table of contents) if your site has more than twenty pages. Make sure all links are working.
2. Large images. If images have not been optimized, the pages (or graphics) will load slowly. Web visitors are usually not patient people and will leave if they have to wait too long for a page to come up. Reduce the number and size of your images, and make sure to optimize them.
3. Too many colors. Too many colors on a page can be distracting and colors that clash can be disruptive. Keep colors consistent and limit them to a maximum of three colors.
4. Hard to read fonts. If the font is too ornate, such as a calligraphy font, your text may not be readable. Use easy-to-read fonts such as Times Roman and Arial. Use dark text on a light background for easy readability.
5. Too many images or not enough images. The right pictures can add a lot to a web page. If you only have text and no images, your web page is less interesting to look at and visitors may easily become bored with reading all of the text. On the other hand, too many images can be distracting. Use targeted images that support your sales message.
6. Inappropriate images. If your images are inappropriate for the contents of your site, they will do more to hurt your sales than help.
7. Too much text. Your visitors will lose interest early on and may never get to your special offer. If you have a long sales letter, make sure to make it interesting, put your most important benefits at the top of the page, and break up the text with benefit-oriented subheadings and bulleted listings.
8. Unfocused text. This is a sure way to turn your readers and potential customers off. If your writing is unclear, rambling, or lacking in useful information, readers will assume that you lack professionalism and this will certainly result in lost sales. The solution? Focus your content to your audience, talk their language and provide plenty of benefits.
9. Spelling and grammar errors. These will reflect badly on you and your product. Thoroughly edit your content and have someone else edit it as well.
10. Lack of action words. Tell people what you want them to do. If you do not include enough action words (e.g. buy now, subscribe now, download now, join now), your visitors may not make the decision to make a purchase from you. If you don't tell them what you want them to do, they likely will not do it.

Avoid these errors, and you will be well on your way to having a focused, user-friendly, effective and successful web site!

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