

# Exactly How To Increase Your Website Results

You'll excuse me if I don't mince my words, and I take the "Miss Nice" gloves off.

The vast majority of websites that I see, from the largest corporation to the self employed are enough to make me cry (in terms of marketing and business development). In fact after I describe the problems in a website review, I get many a client wringing their hands, pulling their hair out and wiping a tear or two (figuratively)!

**The problem is threefold.**

**First**, the brief given to a website designer is "make my site look good".

**Second** - website design is so easy (with the tools available) that there are many people doing websites that shouldn't.

**Third** - we don't know what we don't know. Website designers don't know what they don't know. Not many are marketers. Not many will disagree with clients. Too many are technically focused.

## Travesty

Put all three together and you have stunning graphic sites that don't work. The ultimate travesty is that most sites are designed without search engines in mind (**getting new eyes to your site**). They haven't been constructed to keep people there (**so you can motivate them to action**) and most certainly aren't focused on looking for ways to bring people back time and time again (with email being the drawcard **pulling them back to you**).

## Three strategies for you

So let me cover for you three broad strategies

1. **customer acquisition** (getting them)
2. **customer retention** (keeping them)
3. **Increasing sales** (bringing them back and motivating to action).

## Getting them

In terms of marketing, your website is nothing more than a page in a book, sitting on the shelf in the central library. Websites need to be found. Most often that occurs through a search engine query (or emails forwarded).

I walked out of a major corporate client meeting leaving a very shocked management team behind. Their company hadn't placed in the first 100 Google search engine results for their product. "But Debbie, we assumed our web design team would have known and guided us right" was their response. **You can't assume**. Search engine ranking is an ever changing discipline and most webdesigners wouldn't have a clue.

**Here's 10 Search Engine tips to immediately make a difference to your ranking results.**

1. **Google is king.**  
It now even powers Yahoo - so it's got 80% of the search engine market cornered. concentrate on getting a good Google ranking, and you'll do well.
2. **Incoming Links**  
Links into your website are of top importance. But from relevant sites in relation to your keywords (words that describe your products and services).
3. **Text. Text. Text. Not graphics**  
Are your navigational links graphics? Are many text items graphically produced instead of using an ordinary font? Does the actual text start low down on the page? **Search engines work on text. Not graphics.** Let me say this again. Search engines read through text. NOT GRAPHICS. That's how

they rank your site - how your text fits in with the keyword search being conducted.

4. **Each page unique in keywords**  
Have the copywriters write each page with keywords that are unique to the subject covered.
5. **The title is the most important part of the page.**  
You know the title - it's the text in blue at the very top of a webpage. Give it keywords and don't have your company name first. The title is found in the html code.
6. **Heading 1&2**  
These are style "tags" given to text, designating it as headings, thus important. So a great tip is to have lots of headings and sub headings in the text, breaking up paragraphs with keywords.
7. **Meta tags - forgetaboutthem**  
They're old news. No one except Altavista and NZ search engines use the metatags anymore.
8. **Home page is the most important page of a site**  
Google considers your homepage the most important so give it incredible attention
9. **Site Maps**  
Have one again rich in key words as it helps pump up your ranking.
10. **BONUS - Cardinal Sins Google won't go near:**
  - Frames
  - Dynamic pages w/ "?" or "&" or "cgi-bin" in the URL
  - Flash navigation

## Keeping Them

Here's six tips to make your site more user friendly so that you can keep visitors there longer and help achieve your goals (lead generation, sales, branding). You'll think "geez Debbie, this isn't rocket science". Check your site for these common sense tips. They really will improve your results.

### 1. Simple & Easy

No clutter. Just look at [www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com) and then go to [www.google.com](http://www.google.com). I rest my case

### 2. Flash is neat but detrimental to ROI

- You'll lose people at home page
- Flash doesn't read backwards
- It HURTS your website ranking
- It's not what people want.

### 3. Contact in your template

You would think it's common sense, yet 8 - no 9 out of 10 websites I look at would not have their company contact details in the main template design. How many people go to websites looking for contact details only to find them layers deep? Why make it hard?

### 4. Discrete pop ups on entry and exit

If you come to our website for the first time - you'll see a pop up (**with compelling text, not just sign up**) for our monthly newsletter. Cookies keep it from appearing the next time the same person comes a'knockin.

Have you thought about **exit** pop-ups if you're running a website that sells something? If a person didn't complete a transaction, why not incorporate a pop up upon their exit giving a special or offer to induce them to complete the transaction?

#### **5. Easy to deal with and navigate**

Take away decisions. Don't make them think - you'll lose them. Eliminate the vast majority of text. People don't read on the internet, then scan.

#### **6. Follow convention.**

Dummy down. The vast majority of people visiting your site will be Joe average, so have it designed for what they're used to. Navigation bars on the left, blue underlined = hyperlinks (not red or turquoise). Don't expect them to know about mouseovers or how to use the arrow key to go back.

### **Bringing Them Back**

Email has had a lot of bad press recently, but for many corporations, it works beautifully. I have countless stories and case studies of incredible success like one of our clients - a tooling machine manufacturer. We sent out a colourful newsletter to 128 prospective clients. Two days later he got a call and closed the deal for a \$36,000 machine - from someone he had never heard of! Seems one of the 128 who received his newsletter forwarded it on to a colleague.

#### **The secret of email is to:**

##### **1. Really add value to the recipient**

This is either by educating them or having real internet specials. I've been doing an online marketing and business development tip newsletter for 4 years now. It's the most well read in the Asia Pacific region. Each month I ask myself "how can I just give out this information for free, it's such my intellectual property and what I get paid for in consulting" (**sign up by emailing me [Debbie@successis.co.nz](mailto:Debbie@successis.co.nz)**). Give and you'll get. I rarely have anyone unsubscribing, and when I do online surveys I get up to a 50% response rate.

##### **2. Target**

You'll burn your list if you try to sell everything to everyone. Target. And to do this you need the database to facilitate this.

##### **3. Different ways of using emails**

There are so many ways of using email to prompt for repeat business or appointments, sell things, manage events, do monthly newsletters - all personalised to the recipient, their company - with the push of a button.

##### **4. Use Colour**

I did an online survey of email usage of my newsletter database. 6800 surveys out, 3450 responses back (nice, huh?). One question asked if they prefer colourful or the plain text emails. 82% preferred colour. It takes a bit more knowledge to create these emails, but it's worth it!

##### **5. Know how your recipients use the Internet**

You must know your market and how they use the Internet. If the recipients are small businesses or consumers, will they be online all the time like corporate recipients? Do you know how this changes what you email to them?

By the way, we're running a training workshop on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December in Sydney; 4<sup>th</sup> of December in Melbourne "Exactly how to do superb and profitable online newsletters and emails".

Why not come or send your staff? This great full day course gives you absolutely all the technical and strategic information you'll need to get superb results. What's more, you'll get all my top expert tips, what pitfalls to avoid and what you must know about emailing in

2003/4 either for doing it in-house or briefing an agency. This training sold out in Auckland in two weeks.

Go to [www.successis.co.nz/saxton.htm](http://www.successis.co.nz/saxton.htm) for the agenda and to register.

**Debbie Mayo-Smith**, keynote speaker, trainer and Australasia's leading specialist in email and Internet marketing <http://www.successis.co.nz> . For more information or to book Debbie Mayo Smith, please call Nancy Tombazos at Saxton on 61 3 9811 3508 or email her at [ntombazos@saxton.com.au](mailto:ntombazos@saxton.com.au)