

Your website is your business. Optimizing it is ours.

Resolve Digital has completed over fifty website evaluations for the Microsoft Partner Marketing Essentials program. We've summarized the most common problems, along with our top tips for creating a highly effective lead generation site.

The Seven Elements of a Highly Effective Lead Generation Site

Our top tips

1. Succinct, engaging, visitor-focused copy

Good web copy provides useful information that helps visitors accomplish their goals, persuades browsers to contact you, and, with the right keywords, attracts traffic from Search Engines.

Keep your copy brief and easy to scan. Focus on your visitors' needs. Use language they understand: No jargon, marketing fluff or happy talk. Everyone's busy, so tell us what we want to know and what to do next.

Eliminate content that isn't necessary. Ask the question: "Does this build our credibility or help persuade our visitors to contact us?" If not, get rid of it.

People come to your site for a reason. Help them achieve their goals and they'll feel good about themselves and your company.

Smart Tip - Try reading your copy out loud. Remember, you're "talking" to one person sitting at his or her computer.

You've got to get more prospects to your site and give them good reasons to take the actions you want them to take.

2. Strong calls-to-action

"Conversion" is the process in which you persuade visitors to take the action you want them to take: signup for a newsletter, submit a form, or call a sales rep.

How can you improve your conversion rate? Use strong calls-to-action on every page.

Minimize elements that detract from the action steps. Provide reassurance with your privacy policy, guarantee, and testimonials. On most of the sites we evaluate, calls-to-action are either minimal or non-existent. If you want visitors to take an action - **make it obvious!**

Smart Tip - Don't put your call to action only at the bottom of a long page. You can't assume everyone will scroll down to see it.

3. Search Engine optimization

Without a comprehensive list of your most important keywords it's impossible to optimize for the Search Engines and get high rankings.

Identify the keywords your prospects will use to find your site in Google. **Do it yourself!** Search for your company, but don't use your company name. What terms would you use? How would you narrow your Search?

Once you have your list, make sure your browser page titles, page headings, and links contain your keywords. Optimize different pages for different keywords. Try to use two or three keywords in the copy on every page.

Smart Tip - Your browser page title is an important factor for ranking well. The title of each page should relate to the specific content on that page.

"Maybe you still get customers via word-of-mouth, but every day your competitors are getting new leads because somebody found their site in Google. If your site isn't optimized, you're missing out."

4. Credibility indicators

Add case studies, white papers and success stories. **Demonstrate** your competence, don't just talk about it.

Do you include testimonials or other 3rd party endorsements? You can and should highlight your expertise. But no matter how impressive your credentials, people pay attention to what others have to say about you.

Smart Tip: Provide bios and photos of your key staff. People do business with people. Good quality photos (no mug shots or high school year book pictures) help prospects get to know you.

5. Good design matters

According to a study by Stanford University, almost half of web users assess a site's credibility based on the appeal of the overall design, including layout, typography, and color scheme.

Within seconds of coming to your site, visitors will form an impression. People respond positively to sites with a polished, professional look. They feel a higher degree of confidence in your company.

On the other hand, if it seems "home-made" or seriously out-dated, you're undermining your credibility and hampering your site's ability to "convert."

Smart Tip: Prepare images properly. Fuzzy, blurry, or pixilated graphics and logos don't convey a professional image.

6. Functional forms

The Contact page should include a form to allow users to send a message or request information without having opening their email application. Keep your forms simple. Don't require too much information, but make sure that required fields are clearly indicated.

Test your forms! Look at them in different browsers. Make sure they submit.

Send an auto-reply message. Of all types of email, your auto-reply is the most likely to be opened.

Take advantage of this opportunity. Start building a relationship with your prospects by

- Promoting a conference
- Offering a free white-paper
- Inviting them to read your latest newsletter

Smart Tip: Get rid of the "Reset" button. It serves no purpose and if someone clicks on it by mistake they may never bother to try again.

7. Simple navigation

Most of the sites we reviewed were relatively small, but even so, navigation was a significant problem.

Keep it simple. Make sure you use link names your visitors understand. Don't give them too many choices at any one time. And be consistent from page to page.

Visitors shouldn't have to rely on the site navigation alone: Create keyword-rich links within the text to help them find what they're looking for. And above all, make sure they know where they are and can get back to the home page or site map if they get lost.

Smart Tip: Avoid links that say "click here." Use links that include your keywords, benefits and/or a call to action instead.

About Resolve Digital

Resolve Digital is a web design and optimization firm with offices in San Francisco CA and Christchurch New Zealand. We create effective, visitor-focused websites and web applications in Ruby-on-Rails. Our professional website evaluations help our clients convert more prospects into customers.

Contact us to learn how to optimize your site for lead generation. Call toll free 888 832 0781.