

Inside this booklet is revealed...

The 7 DEADLY Internet Marketing Mistakes Most Businesses Make

By: Anthony Mercer

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Anthony Mercer

Blymi Media –Internet Marketing Specialist

email: marketing@blymi.com

www: blymi.com

tel: **0114 360 20 60**

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An important note to business owners...

"We've got a website" is the most common response I receive from established business owners, when asked how they are using the internet to gain and retain customers.

A conversation often reveals that they are not sure how much business is coming from the internet or even if the website is getting viewed by potential customers at all.

How does *your* website perform?

49% of SMEs in the UK have a website. So if your business has one, then you may already be ahead of your competition. However, the vast majority of SME websites are of a common format known as a 'brochure website' – simply listing the services, opening hours and some contact information.

Brochure websites do little to gain new customers or serve existing ones, they rarely get listed in front of people who are 'ready to buy' and are often detrimental to the business, with outdated designs and content.

This is a common problem, because many established SMEs developed a basic website a number of years ago, expected their website to attract new customers, but were disappointed by the results. Often resulting in SMEs neglecting their websites and internet presence.

And now those businesses are losing the consistently increasing number of ready to buy customers on the internet. Even though it is the cheapest, fastest, most targeted and most effective marketing medium ever.

People are searching for your products and services online right now. By the time you have read this report, it is highly likely that someone local to you has searched for your product online, with the intention of buying.

Here are some facts that may astound you:

- *90% of online commercial searches result in offline purchases (comScore)*
- *43% of ALL searches on Google include a city or postcode (Google).*

Why is that?...

Consider this: If you need a locksmith right now, how would you find them?

1. If you are stuck outside your home and have a mobile phone to hand you can search on Google, pick the first one and call them.
2. If you are at a computer you may search for 'good sheffield locksmith', check the reviews and then ring 2 or 3 that have good feedback.
3. If you are a regular Facebook user (*and 47% of the UK population are*) you will send a message to ask your friends and family for a recommendation. And one of those contacts will probably do step 2 above, to be helpful to a friend.

That is the behavior of the modern consumer. The Yellow Pages and Thomson Directory are now used by less than a 3rd of local consumers - often placed straight in to the paper recycling bin.

How do you gain and retain customers in the modern world?

The reality is: SMEs that do not focus their marketing on the Internet are leaving money on the table and disappointing their potential and existing customers.

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This short 12 page guide highlights some fatal marketing issues that are regularly observed on SMEs websites and their internet presence. I also offer simple steps to fix these issues by implementing some effective 'modern marketing' techniques. Most require less than an hour of effort to put in to practice.

If you find this guide useful, or wish to discuss any of the topics further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Deadly Mistake #1

No Call To Action

"*What do I do next?*" - Have you ever had that feeling when visiting a website? And what did you do next?...

Most businesses just forget this piece completely, so if you have a 'call to action' on your website, you're a step ahead.

But what is a call to action exactly?

A call to action is simply a statement somewhere on each page telling the visitor what to do next.

First you need to decide exactly what action you want a visitor to take. Do you want them to purchase from you right then, or should they contact you for a quote first?

Put this on your web pages, and steer them towards the key actions you want them to take. Here are some examples for getting visitors to fill out a quote form.

'Just fill out your information below to receive a comprehensive, no-strings-attached, free quote from one of our representatives.'

'Fill out the form to receive a free quote from our sales team. Your request will be processed within 24 hours and you will receive a call between the hours you specified in the form.'

Tell your visitor exactly what you want them to do. The more detail, the better.

Deadly Mistake #2

Not Gathering Email Addresses

I recently had a conversation with a business owner who we'll call John. John had an average business with an average income. He worked about 50 hours a week and spent the weekend at home with his family.

His company was a service business and he provided a good service that helped his clients. He was good at what he did.

There was a problem though... he wasn't getting enough clients. This is something most business owners can relate to. At times it's hard to bring customers or clients through the door.

Much of John's business came from his website. He did well getting his website into the search engines, but wasn't doing so well with converting visitors into clients. And after they had used his services, he found it difficult and time consuming to follow-up for repeat business.

It wasn't until he started collecting email addresses through a simple form on his website that he really saw an increase in business. Nowadays John's practice is packed. His schedule is full and he's been able to double the price he was charging.

How did this happen? Statistics suggest '*A 5% increase in customer retention yields an increase in profits between 25%-100%*' —Bain & Company

By running a simple newsletter sharing valuable information with your customers, and automating customer follow-up, you're going to keep buyers coming back and bringing new buyers through your doors.

But don't take my word for it, the evidence is truly overwhelming:

- '*89% of retailers cited email is the most successful marketing tactic overall.*' - Forrester Research (2009)
- '*42% of consumers said the best way to receive ads for sales and specials is via email*' - Econsultancy 'How We Shop in 2010: Habits and Motivations of Consumers' (2010)
- '*54% of respondents in a consumer survey said they had a more favorable opinion of the companies that send them email.*' - Epsilon (Oct 2008)

Deadly Mistake #3

“My Web Designer Wrote It...”

The legendary copywriter ‘Gary Bencivenca’ found that a number of simple words and constructs could create dramatic differences in the response to a marketing message. Even 30 words of copy could be altered to dramatically affect a business’s turnover. Copywriters were, and still are, paid substantial fees to write very short pieces of copy.

Some web designers may have basic knowledge of copywriting, and will gladly help you. But those words on your website can make the difference between 1 sale and 10.

You’ve spent thousands on your website design – it looks beautiful, but does it deliver sales?

Take a good look at your website.

1. Does every page end with a ‘call-to-action’ and a reason to do that action?
2. Do your product descriptions focus on solutions and benefits?
3. Does your website explain why your product is superior to other options your prospects might choose (including doing nothing)?
4. Are there compelling reasons to believe that what you say is true? – Testimonials and reviews, especially off-site (see Mistake #6).
5. Are there compelling reasons to seize the opportunity today? – Special online offers, exclusivity, speed of delivery.

Bonus Tip :) People buy on emotion and justify using logic. No matter the product or group you're selling to, this is true.

- *What is the biggest problem that your customer has?*
- *How does your customer feel when they have that problem?*
- *How will they feel when their problem is solved?*

Using emotional selling is by-far the most important thing you can do. This goes for both online and offline sales.

Deadly Mistake #4

Failure To Track Statistics

Yet another factor that is critical to any businesses success online (or offline for that matter) is tracking. You need to keep track of where your leads and traffic come from so you can replicate and scale any success you have.

Google Analytics is a free tracking suite that will give you each and every statistic you could possibly need for tracking visitors on your website.

By watching closely what people do on your website, you'll be able to craft an experience that gets visitors to act in exactly the manner you'd like them to.

Going back to Mistake #1, if you want somebody to fill out a contact form, you need to find the least distracting route to get them to that form. Watch how people interact with your website, then use that as a cue for where to add links to the pages you want visitors to visit the most.

Another statistic you need to watch is where people are coming from. Do most of your visitors come from a link the newspaper printed about your business in their online edition? If so, keep trying to get published. If most of your traffic comes from searches, do some optimization and get higher rankings for more search terms.

Deadly Mistake #5

Failing To Optimize For Search Engines... *Correctly*

Search engines like Google, Yahoo, and Bing are your automated sales team. They can automatically send you hundreds of prospective customers daily, if they have the right information from you.

By following a few simple rules, you can have your website ranking well in the search results for popular terms in your local area.

Let's say you wanted to rank well for the search term, "Sheffield Locksmith". You'd want to make sure that you have that term on your main web page at least three times.

The best places to put search terms are...

- The title tag
- The headline
- The first and last line of content
- The sidebar
- And in image ALT tags

Some of these may sound like Greek to you, so talk with your web developer about them and make sure that your website is up to date with terms you'd like to rank for.

Most Web Designers and SEO guys will give you that advice.

But most are not aware of your customers' actual behavior...

Your customers go through a buying process. First they search for general words relating to your product. Then seek a review of your product or service. And then search using 'ready to buy' words and phrases.

You need to be visible online at every step of that process – especially the last.

What is your customers' buying thought process?

Think through the search terms that your customers will use when researching and then buying your product. Optimise your website to show up right in front of those 'ready to buy' customers and you've got the most powerful automated sales machine you could ever imagine.

Many businesses make millions each year just by getting this right.

Deadly Mistake #6

Sitting in an Online (or Offline) Bubble

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'Worst ISP you could possibly choose.'

'A shark of a company, not to be trusted.'
}

As I write this guide the quotes above are on page 1 of Google for the term 'TalkTalk reviews'. And that term is searched for 2900 times a month.

Unhappy customers love to talk about you, and can destroy your business in an instant.

As noted in Mistake #5, customers go through a buying process. And a key part of that process is to search for a review of your product online.

Go search for 'talktalk reviews' on Google. You will see a service provider whose reputation was destroyed by online customer opinion. Talk Talk have taken major steps to repair their reputation, but 1000s of online reviews continue to severely impair their sales and reputation.

If you are a SME, then reputation management should be a little easier. Determine the words that your potential customers search for online (see #5) then search for the *review* related phrases yourself. Check for existing reviews and respond to them - good or bad. Make it clear that you actively participate in your customers forums and value their ideas and opinions.

But my customers love me!

If you're providing a great product, and your customers know it, then you've got the perfect sales team. Happy customers will gladly review your products, recommend you, and buy more – *but only if you ask them.*

Add a short sentence to your customer follow-up, such as:

'If you are pleased with our service I'd really appreciate your feedback. Many of our customers have left a short review [here](#)'

Social websites like Facebook and Twitter are also key. You can ask a customer to click a button to express that they 'liked' your website or products. That message will go to all of their friends and family, and may be passed on further. Social media is a major new area of marketing, and well worth the effort.

Deadly Mistake #7

Not Noticing that the Internet As Changed

“In three years time, desktops [PCs] will be irrelevant” – Google, 2010

That’s a striking quote. But Google are now the heart of the Internet, so when they make a statement like that we should not ignore it.

Google’s point is that the use of Mobile Phones to access the Internet is rapidly growing, and will overtake all normal PC use. Morgan Stanley produced a detailed analysis in April 2010, predicting exactly that. Internet use on Mobile Phones will over-take PC use within 3 years, and build to 10 times the Internet we see today.

This will dramatically change how our customers find us and engage with us. This Internet revolution is also being driven by our thirst for social media and video. All immediate, more immersive experiences.

Here are 3 actions you can take now:

- **Test how your website displays on Mobile Phones.**
Type your web address in to [this tool](#) to get an idea how most mobile visitors will see your website. If it displays badly, your web designer may be able to help. Ideally, you should serve different content that is more applicable and concise for mobile visitors. Our dedicated [mobile website design service](#) will also help you do this.
- **Produce a simple online video.**
If you have a mobile phone or digital camera, you’ll probably be able to record a short video. Talk about your business, post it on Youtube and on your website. Website visitors are 4 times more likely to watch a video than read the text. And studies have seen 400% sales increases, due to the introduction of video on websites.
- **Get active on a social network applicable to your business.**
If your selling to consumers, then Facebook is a must do. 47% of the UK population are regular users. And the viral effect of Facebook can have a remarkable impact. Offer something for free, or a striking offer that people will share, and you’ll be amazed how quickly word spreads.

Thank you for taking the time to read through this short guide. I'd love to have a chance to talk with you for a few minutes about your current marketing strategy to see if there is any way we can improve it by using the power of the internet.

It's possible that by making a few small changes, you could see great results. So please, give me a call on 0114 360 20 60 for a chat.

Thank you again for reading this report.

Kind Regards,
Anthony Mercer

Glossary

Brochure Website	A website style that is often used by service businesses as a 'brochure' for their services. Usually includes contact information and general company information.
Internet Presence	A term used to describe all of a business's promotional activity and any mention of their company (such as customer reviews) on the internet.
Google, Yahoo and Bing	The most popular 'search engines' on the internet. Google is used by 73% of internet users, with Yahoo and Bing. All 3 provide internet users with their primary means of finding websites on the internet. These services are also now regularly used by mobile phone users to find local information.
Facebook and Twitter	The 2 most popular 'social networks'. Social networks provide internet users with a way of connecting with people to communicate about their internet activity and lives in general. Much the same as our natural social networks.
Search Term	The words and phrases that internet users type in to search engines when they wish to find information, products and services.