



## Does Your Website Sell? by Evan Stait

I speak with a lot of business owners about marketing. When the topic turns to websites, a common conversation emerges. “A website? Yeah, we’ve got one of those,” says the business owner. Tick... next question!

But alarm bells sound in my mind, all familiar – there’s been a “sales breach”! This website may be wasting sales opportunities. Usually when I’ve dug a little deeper, alarm bells start ringing for the business owner too – because unless the website is generating many high-quality leads, it’s just costing them money.

What are these businesses missing? Many already have a website well optimised for search engines. Often the issue is simply that their website communicates one-way only. Sure, it’s full of information and has flashy pictures, but it doesn’t encourage their prospects to contact them. The website acts just like a television.

You may be saying “but they could email... if they were really interested they could call”. This is true. But firstly: any old website has email, it’s hardly a compelling reason for potential clients to submit their details. Secondly, people often need a push in the right direction before they act. I can think of several products / services I would have bought (a recent example being a guitar), had the sales rep just contacted me again. And I probably would still buy it, if I was asked the question and given a good reason to buy.

This is what your website should do – provide a good reason for the web surfer to submit their details and begin the sales process. So let’s look at how to make your website generate more leads:

### **1. Set the Objective:**

What is the objective of your website? In most cases this will be to generate leads and sales. But it’s not until you’ve set the objective that you are in a position to choose the right strategy.

### **2. Decide on the Strategy:**

How will you achieve your objective? If your objective is to generate sales leads, a possible strategy could be a data capture area on your website. This is a function that will encourage web surfers to submit their contact details and other information in order to receive a benefit / reward. You can then use this information to contact these prospects directly. Your actual data capture strategy will vary depending on the industry but here are some examples for you:

- Competitions
- Free information
- Trials / samples
- Tickets to events
- Special club offers

### **3. Test & Measure:**

A data capture strategy that is generating leads isn't necessarily successful. It depends on two things:

- The quality of those leads
- Whether you are converting the leads into sales

But how will you know unless you test and measure?

### **Real Life Examples:**

#### Village Movie Club:

By joining the Village Cinema Movie Club you receive invitations to preview screenings as well as movie and candy bar offers.

#### Amazon.com:

www.amazon.com uses wish-lists to encourage surfers to submit their details. Wish-lists act like an online gift register allowing you to flag items of interest or search for a gift for someone else.

#### Borders:

When buying an item at Borders bookstore they invite you to subscribe to their "Shortlist". By joining their club you receive emails with benefits such as discounts vouchers and information about popular upcoming releases.

What incentive(s) will encourage your web visitors to submit their details? Is it a Discount? Newsletter? VIP Seating? Free DVD?...

---

### **About the Author**

Evan Stait is the Manager of Everything Marketing at Shoestring Marketing.

Shoestring Marketing present workshops all over Australia and New Zealand teaching businesses how to market themselves on a Shoestring budget. Visit [www.shoestringmarketing.com.au](http://www.shoestringmarketing.com.au) to get your free shoestring marketing tips.

AIM runs several marketing related short courses. To find out more about how these courses can help your business visit [www.aimvic.com.au/coursedirectory](http://www.aimvic.com.au/coursedirectory)