




Client Acquisition: The Rules of Engagement

Or...Want More Business From Your Website? Start a Conversation....

Chris Bachman | May 17, 2016

So you have a beautiful new website, you have invested some time and money on marketing and driving traffic to your site, your SEO person has waved their magic wand and you are ranking nicely on Page One. As a result of your brilliant efforts traffic to your site is way up and people are hitting it like crazy. Congratulations, you are a rock star of business acumen! ...what could go wrong? 

The first thing which could go wrong is that this new traffic comes to your website, and promptly leaves. This means that you are not delivering what they expected to receive when they visited. It could be that your Title and Description tags are not accurate for the pages they represent, maybe the content of the page your advertising invited them to visit isn't delivering what was promised, or maybe you just have low quality content or not enough of it to keep their interest. The result is two-fold, the visitor leaves quickly – and the search engine notices the poor experience and demotes that page in the search engine results.



The second thing which can easily happen is that you have not designed a clear pathway for the visitor to follow to get to what they want (solution), or what you need, selling the product or service which provides the solution. This is a matter of design and UX, otherwise known as User Experience. This brings into play things like navigation, marketing, landing page layout and engagement. If talk of that leaves a blank look on your face and a queasy feeling in your tummy, it is time to hire a pro.

However, it is the third deadly sin, and my pet peeve area, which is most often ignored and so easily remedied....Engagement. Think about this, you spend loads of valuable time and money to get people to your site and then you ignore them, don't say hello, don't start a conversation, make no effort to find out who they are or what they want you just let them walk out the door to never be heard from again. ...probably because they ended up on your competitors site and he is smart enough to know how to engage them. Sound disturbingly familiar? If so, what you are doing is expending a lot of effort to get, say, 1000 people to your site and your only hope of success with them is if they are ready, right then and there, to do business with you; which is highly unlikely, since study after study show that people do a lot

of homework before taking that step to purchase a product or service. In fact, less than 1 in 10 typically takes a buying action on their first visit to a website. That means over 90% of your marketing effort is being wasted. ...wow.



Ready to change that? Here is the 3-step solution I recommend to my clients. It is simple, easy to implement, and once you get the hang of it just becomes part of your everyday business model. It also helps you move well beyond the <10% rate of conversion you are currently experiencing.

Step 1. Sign up for a quality email marketing and management program. Most will let you get started for \$25 /month or less. My favorite, which I have been using for years so I know it works, is Constant Contact, they even offer a [free trial](#). Once you are signed up, gather together all the names and email addresses of your past and current clients and upload them to the service.

Step 2. Create a “whitepaper” or other valuable offer which potential customers of your would likely want to have and offer it for free on your website. All they have to do to get it is to register and the download is automatic. Any web dev person should be able to handle that for you. You can also implement a sign up form for your monthly Tips & News or other informative and useful method of communicating with your new subscriber. Now, they have something of value, with your name and contact information on it, and you have their name and email address so you can continue the conversation...nice!

Step 3. Create a monthly newsletter containing from 2-5 items which the average potential client or past client of yours would find at least one of which to be useful and informative. Determining content, creating it and composing the newsletter is probably the hardest part for my clients. It is like any new habit or skill; it takes time to make it a habit. If this step just isn’t your cup of tea, in whole or part, there are lots of independent services which can assist with some or all of the process. At my firm we create and manage newsletters for a number of clients who just don’t have the time or interest to do it themselves.

That’s it. What this does is create a conversation with new or existing clients by providing them with useful information, free of charge. People like that. It not only allows you to affirm yourself as an expert in your field but also as a valuable resource they can depend upon. By continuing this conversation on a regular basis with a newsletter you create repetitive recognition with the client which predisposes them to doing business with you when the time come that they are ready to make the buying decision.



Sounds like a no-brainer, right? So simple everyone should be doing it.... Unfortunately, and here is where I am sometimes baffled by my clients decisions, a great number of business owners don’t see the light. They would rather keep settling for the 10% they have been getting with no effort rather than expending a little effort and building a buying relationship with the other 20-30% of website visitors who would buy from them in the future...if that visitor could only remember what their business was.

I recall two clients recently who really surprised me by their decision not to try and engage potential clients or remain in contact with existing clients. The first one, I’ll call her Susan, has a successful

consulting business and she is pleased with her 10% growth each year. She decided not to try and engage people coming to her site and to not reach out to past or existing clients. When I asked why she stated that one of her clients had expressed to her how much she appreciated that Susan didn't do any marketing, i.e. didn't send her emails....incredibly, she used that one person's personal view as her reason for deciding not to do any marketing of her business, not even a newsletter to existing clients.



What I wanted to point out to Susan was that one person could have easily opted out of any correspondence and that would have allowed Susan to provide useful, informative content to the rest of her clients and potential new clients, most of whom would have been pleased by the timely and helpful information. Facts is, in the first six months of receiving a new newsletter only about 5% of people on average opt-out, 95% like the information and want to continue receiving it. In my opinion, Susan turned away a good chunk of potential new business, and abandoned many past clients by ignoring the opportunity to engage her audience.

The second client, let's call him Steve, has a summer activity business which does well but has quite a bit of competition in the marketplace. For Steve I proposed offering a "club" to website visitors which potential new customers could join and then receive a small discount on the activity. By doing this he would have a very small cost of marketing while capturing a customer who might otherwise be lost to a competitor's website. These new names and emails could be combined with Steve's existing list of past clients, which he was doing nothing with, and the result would be a growing list of customers who he could then market to all season long, year after year. Why Steve chose not to do this simple and inexpensive bit of marketing is still a mystery to me.



If as you read this article you too are baffled by why these people didn't take simple steps to expand their business and yet you find yourself asking why you haven't done it either...then perhaps it is time for you lay out a plan of action to take advantage of the business which is walking by your front door each day. Invite them in, "bake some cookies" to offer them, have some helpful information you can pass along. It works, really. Find yourself a local marketing pro, or give me a call, and discover how easy it is to find the gold in starting conversations.



Chris Bachman is a business consultant and Project Director at ProClassWebDesign.com as well as a self confessed serial entrepreneur. He is a regular writer on topics pertaining to marketing, SEO, and business websites as well as an instructor and independent consultant.

Learn more about Chris Bachman on [Google+](https://plus.google.com/) or [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/in/chrisbachman/). Contact him at Chris@ProClassWebDesign.com.

