THE PROSPEROUS PARTNER

5

Foolproof Ways to Get

VISITORS

BACK TO YOUR

WEBSITE

The **SEO TRENDS**

Making the Biggest

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Welcome To Prosperous Parnter

Thanks for checking out our 52nd issue of Prosperous Partner, your online marketing resource guide for small business. Each month we will be covering topics that resonate with local businesses just like yours.

Our goal is simple. We want to enable you to do big things online, and it all starts by breaking down the complexities of marketing your business online.

It doesn't matter if you're just starting out, or an established business owner in your local community, you can always benefit from increasing your brand's visibility online.

To your Success,

Eddie Hill
Grand Master Prospertie

5 Foolproof Ways to
Get Visitors BACK to Your Website

Attracting a visitor to your website once is good. It means that your marketing is strong enough – or your Google rank is high enough – that you stood out from the competition and snagged some traffic.

So what?

If you know anything at all about marketing, you know that it's rare for a first-time visitor to a website to buy anything or even fill out a subscription form.

It's what they do on their NEXT visit – and the one after that – that will determine whether you've gained a new customer.

Makes sense, but it never ceases to amaze me how many businesses don't focus on repeat traffic. But, that's about to change.

Here are 5 foolproof ways to get those first-time visitors BACK to your website so you can make some money.

#1 Get Them to Opt In to Your Mailing List

I know, I just said it was asking a lot to get a first-time visitor to your site to subscribe to your mailing list. But I didn't say it was impossible!

The key, of course, is to give them a compelling reason to subscribe. Here are some ways you can do that:

1. Put your opt-in form above the fold. That way, they won't need to scroll down to see it – and they'll know what they'll be getting if they decide to subscribe.

2. Simplify your form. I get that it's tempting to ask a new subscriber for extra information – but all you really need is their email address and maybe a first name if you want to personalize your emails. Anything else – whether it's their phone number, mailing address, URL, or shoe size – is extra. You should think long and hard about adding fields to your form.

3. Incentivize the opt-in. A compelling and useful lead magnet can do a lot to get someone to fill out that form.

4. Write a killer headline and call to action. Instead of just "Subscribe to our newsletter," try "Get new marketing tips every day" as a headline. And make the CTA just as exciting.

Once a potential customer's on your mailing list, you can email them with reasons to come back to your website. Simple, right?

#2 Prioritize the User Experience

If people aren't coming back to your website, it could be because they didn't enjoy their experience the first time they visited. That means that prioritizing usability is one of the best ways to encourage repeat visits.

Some of the things to think about when it comes to usability are:

» Your site's loading time
» Mobile responsiveness
» Clear and easy-to-use menus
» Text that's broken up with white space, images, and formatting (sub headers, bullet points, numbers, etc.)
» Working internal and external links that make it easy to find related content

If it's been a while since you've evaluated the usability of your site, now's a good time to do it to make sure that you're not frustrating visitors and discouraging them from returning to your site in the future.

#3 — Make the Content on Your Site Relevant to Your Target Audience

Are people finding what they expect to find on your site? If a customer comes to you because they're searching for art supplies, for example, think about what you can offer them that will add value to the products you sell. Can you provide a video tutorial on painting technique? A link to the website of an artist who uses that product?

The idea is to make sure that the content on your site – whatever it is – is directly relevant to the people you most want to attract. If you're selling Human Resources software, have blog posts about topics that are relevant to HR professionals.

#4 — Retarget Visitors with Advertising

Because it's rare for first-time visitors to convert, it's essential to have a way to connect with them again even if they don't opt-in to your mailing list. That's where retargeting comes in.

As you probably know, retargeting is a kind of advertising that targets individual visitors to your site based on their behavior when they're there. For example, you can:

» Display an ad for a product they viewed – or an alternative product

» Let them know about a new blog post on a similar topic to an older post they viewed
» Remind them of the lead magnet they passed up when they didn't opt in
» Encourage them to complete the checkout process if they added items to their cart

Retargeting is something you can do on Google or on social media. Simply pick the actions you want to target and watch your conversion rate soar.

The final thing you can do is to make the content on your website solution-oriented. Most people who type a keyword into Google do so because they're looking for answers. That means that if you want them to bookmark your site, you need to provide them with what they need.
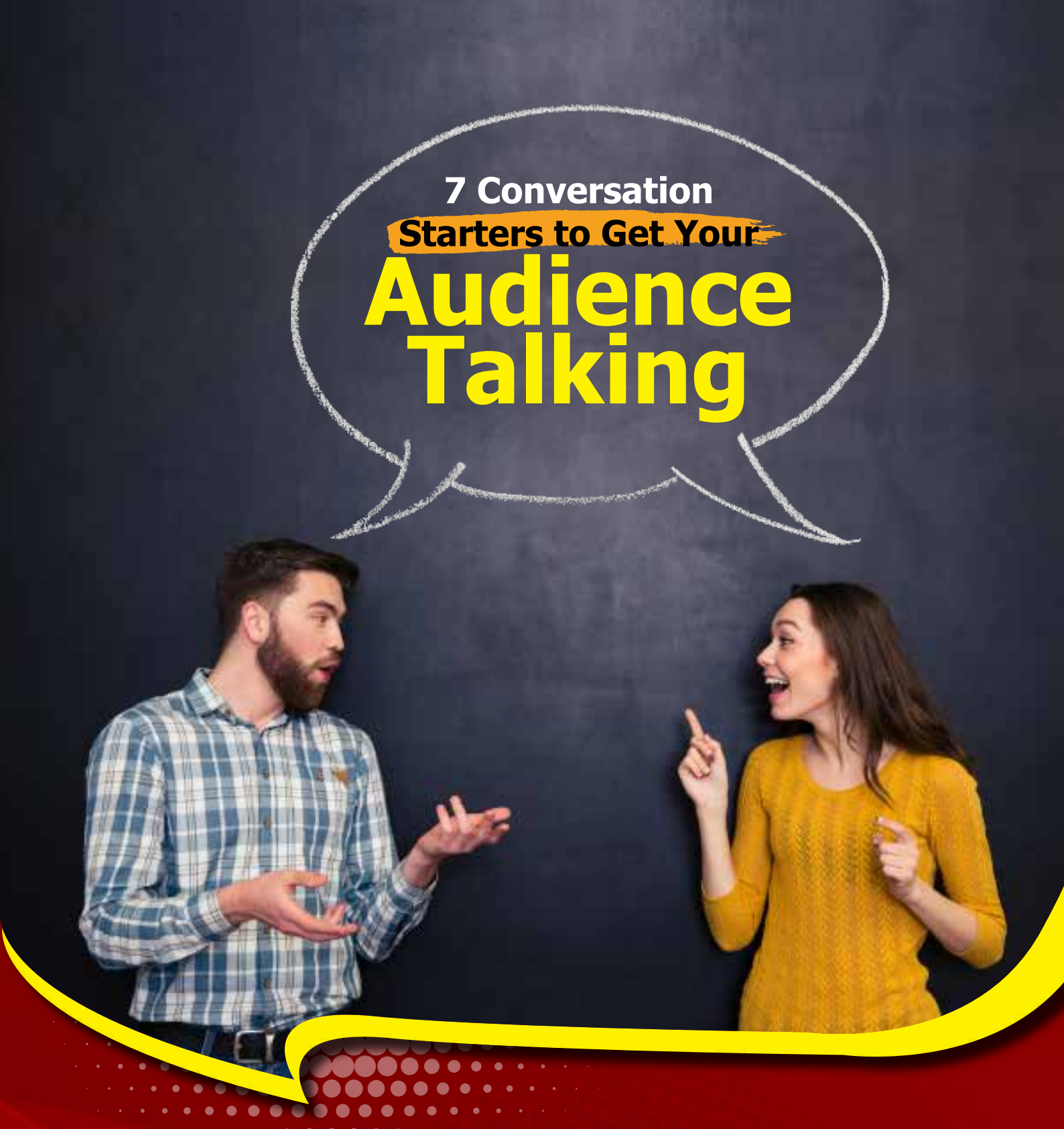
Focusing on solutions can also help you improve your site's rank for keywords in voice search. Given the increase in the use of "Ok Google" as well as virtual assistants like Siri, Alexa, and Cortana, it makes sense to think about the questions that searchers are likely to ask when looking for sites like yours. Then, you can optimize your useful content for those questions.

Your solutions may come in any format you choose. You might create a blog post with a response to one question or produce a video or even a short webinar for another. The key is to focus on the visitor's needs instead of promoting your company or brand. There'll be time enough for that later.

Visitors need an excuse to return to your site...

The five things I've listed here can help you give them one. Remember, it's less about promoting the awesomeness of your brand and products, and more about providing visitors to your site with reasons to return – as well as giving yourself the tools (like opt-ins and retargeting) to connect with them after they've navigated away.

7 Conversation
Starters to Get Your
Audience Talking

You can't read anything about marketing these days without reading about engaging your customers. But what does that really mean?

Engaging means capturing someone's attention – connecting – and having a conversation. Not easy to do on the internet, particularly when there are millions of other things clamoring for attention at the same time.

But, that doesn't mean it's impossible. It just means you need to try harder.

The thing is, your customers want to talk to you. They want to know what you think, and most importantly, they want to believe that you care what they think.

It's not as hard as you might think. Here are 7 simple conversation starters to get your audience talking to you.

#1 Express an Opinion about Industry News

You want to build authority within your industry or niche? One of the best ways to do that AND start a conversation with your followers is to express an opinion – particularly if it might be new or controversial. Of course, you should only do this if you can back up your opinion.

A good way to get started with this tactic is to follow relevant publishers and influencers in your industry. When you see them post a piece of news that's relevant to your followers, read the article (or watch the video) and figure out what you can add to the conversation. Then share it – and make sure to include a call to action that encourages your followers to chime in with their own opinions.

#2 Ask for Stories and Experiences

Everybody has a story to tell – and when you're speaking to an audience who all have something in common with you, then it's easy to think of a topic that may inspire people to share their stories.

The key here is to share your own story and then ask your followers to share their best stories with you. For example, say you own a travel agency. You might tell a story of a trip you booked for yourself before you were a travel agent and how it went wrong. Then, you could ask your followers for their travel horror stories.

The benefit of this type of sharing is that it provides you with an opportunity to respond, express sympathy or amazement, and build a bond with potential customers online.

#3 Get Recommendations

#4 Promote Your Events and Your Community

People might love to tell stories, but do you know what else they like? Giving advice and making recommendations! And asking them for recommendations is a great way to get them talking.

What kind of recommendations should you ask for? Ideally, they should be relevant to your product or service. For example, I'm a marketing guy. I might ask:

What are your favorite marketing podcasts?

» What publications do you follow on Facebook and Twitter?
» Which marketing technique is your favorite, and why?
» What marketing apps would you recommend?

You get the idea. The key is not to stray too far from your brand and product. Instead, keep a tight focus and encourage your followers to share their experiences and recommendations with you and each other.

Are you appearing at a local street fair or charity event? Sharing your involvement is a great way to remind people that you stand for something other than making money – and to underscore your involvement in your community and industry.

Even if you're not appearing at an event, there's a benefit to letting your followers know what's going on in your community. Giving a nod to other businesses or to local charities can help you build trust and earn the admiration of your followers. You can encourage conversation by asking questions like these:

» Will you be attending the Fourth of July celebration?
» What the last community event you attended?

Another option is to include an open call to action at the end, something like "We hope you'll stop by and check out our booth! There's a free gift in it for you!"

Ask about DIY Projects

Whatever industry or niche you're in, the chances are good that your followers have some DIY experiences that are relevant. Asking about them is a great way to learn about potential customers and build a warm rapport with them by responding to what they share.

Ideally, a DIY project should be something that uses (or could use) your products. However, it doesn't have to be. The key is to find a way to make what you post relevant to your brand – and then stand back and let your followers do the rest.

Ask Open Questions

Asking questions is one of the best ways to get your followers talking. It's especially helpful to you if you can get them talking in a way that helps you to learn more about them – because that's information you can use to create future content.

For example, if you're targeting small business owners, you could ask questions like:

» What's your biggest challenge as a business owner?
» What problem do you wish someone would solve for you?
» What product or service has helped you the most?

The answers to these questions can help you write blog posts, create a social media strategy, or even develop new products that are ideal for your target audience.

ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

#5

Ask about DIY Projects

You already know that reviews and testimonials are hugely important in the world of marketing. What better way to get some new testimonials to share on your site than to ask your customers to provide them on social media?

Not only will asking for opinions help you get some positive testimonials, it may also help you discover potential issues and nip them in the bud before they become big problems. You should be prepared for some surprises – but if you approach the request with the right mindset, this technique can help you learn a lot about your customers.

Look who's talking...

The bottom line is that your audience wants to talk to you. They don't read your blog or follow you on social media because they're looking for a lecture. The key is to give them the encouragement they need to share their thoughts, experiences, and opinions with you – and then, to stand back and listen to what they say.

THE SEO TRENDS MAKING THE BIGGEST IMPACT IN 2019

SEO changes are coming one after another – like waves. And in 2019, you've got two choices: sink or swim.

Sound dramatic? Maybe it is. But the truth is that it's getting more and more difficult to stay on top of the shifting tides of SEO. Google's updates its algorithm regularly and doesn't share the changes – and if you want your website to stay visible and maintain its rank, you've got to be ready to move with the current.

So, with that in mind, here are the biggest SEO trends of 2019 as I see them – and some tips about how to use them to your advantage.

VOICE SEARCH

I'm starting with a big one that many small and medium-sized companies are still ignoring. Voice search isn't going anywhere – and in fact, it's going to become increasingly important in 2019.

Why? Because pretty much all of us are using voice search in some way. Whether you're starting a mobile search by saying "OK Google" or calling on Alexa, Cortana, or Siri to help you find what you need, you're using voice search. And, estimates are that 50% of all searches will be voice searches by next year.

And guess what? That means your customers are too. One of the best ways to capitalize on this trend is to optimize your site with voice search in mind. That means incorporating common questions into your content – because your customers are asking questions and your website should answer them.

MOBILE–FIRST INDEXING

Google's mobile-first indexing is still relatively new, but only a fool would believe that it won't increase in importance in 2019. Right now, about 60% of all searches are mobile – and that number's only going to go up.

How do you take advantage of this trend? First, make sure your site is mobile responsive. Honestly, at this point there's no excuse for it not to be. Next, think about how your site's design will impact mobile users. You want a clean design that's easy to use. That means single column next, right-sized buttons, and other mobile features like direct dialing.

You may also want to think about accepting mobile payments in your store, if you have one. The idea is to make it easy for mobile customers to patronize your business.

STRUCTURED DATA

SEO is in an interesting place right now. We're still heavily mobile-dependent, but the increase in voice searches and use of artificial intelligence means that we all need to be thinking about how our websites can be easy to access as AI increases in importance.

One way to do that is to use Schema and other structures to organize your data.

Things like information architecture, tags, metadata, and structured mark-up can all help ensure that your site is easy to crawl and index.

I know that all sounds very technical, but an experienced SEO can help you navigate the tech requirements while still providing a site that's user-friendly, readable, and engaging.

BRAND AS A RANKING SIGNAL

SEO is no longer just about what's on your website. It's also about how people are talking about you on social media sites and other places online – and those brand mentions are now having a big impact on how Google perceives your company.

If you're not already tracking your social mentions, now is the time to start doing it. Following other brands on social media will reveal that some of them are responding when people mention them – and they're making a big impact doing it. Even a word of encouragement or a quick joke can make a huge difference in how people think of you. Awario is a great tool for tracking your mentions.

FOCUS ON EXPERTISE, AUTHORITY, AND TRUSTWORTHINESS

The big trio of online impact is E-A-T – Expertise, Authority, and Trustworthiness. Technically, E-A-T isn't part of Google's algorithm, but it is a guideline for Google's algorithm raters. That means that you can't afford to ignore it.

What you can do to offer E-A-T to your site's visitors is provide content that's:

» Meaningful
» Useful
» Relevant
» Authoritative
» Deep

You don't need to write 5,000 word blog posts. However, it is very helpful to cover the topics that are in your area of expertise in depth. If a topic is too big or complex for a single blog post, do a series of posts (or a series of videos) to cover it.

You can demonstrate E-A-T by creating a system of internal links to help visitors to your site navigate the information that's available and easily find content that's related to what they're viewing.

SITE SPEED

Speed is another topic you may think I've covered too much – but when I repeat myself, it's only because I know how important it is and I want to make sure that you're not overlooking something that can have a huge impact on your SEO.

There's no such thing as a website that loads too quickly. All web users are impatient and mobile users are more impatient than most. Very few are going to wait longer than five or six seconds for your site to load. Anything that might be slowing your site down needs to go. That means:

» Auto play audio and video
» Flash
» Outdated plug-ins

You can and should use Google's PageSpeed Insights to check your site's loading speed. Then, do whatever you need to update it and speed it up, so that users don't need to think about the time it takes your site to load – because they'll already be looking at your awesome content.

RIDING THE WAVES AND STAYING ON TOP.

What's going to keep you riding high in 2019 is knowing which waves matter in the world of SEO. The six things I've identified here are the ones that are going to make the biggest impact this year – and that means they're the things that will help you rise above the competition and make 2019 your best year ever.

THE TOP 10 SIGNS YOU NEED TO

REDESIGN YOUR WEBSITE

IN 2019

Is your website showing its age?

It's a new year and many of us are making resolutions to look better, or just to be better. And guess what? You need to think about whether or not to make a resolution for your website too.

Let's face it. Many of us look at website redesign as a hassle. If our current websites are up and running – even if they're not perfect – we put off redesigning them because we think it's not a priority.

Spoiler alert: it should always be a priority.

Having an out-of-date website can erode trust with your existing customers and make it difficult to attract new ones.

Does your site need a facelift in 2019? Here are 10 sure-fire signs that it does.

#1 IT'S NOT MOBILE RESPONSIVE

I know you probably think I'm beating a dead horse with this one, but mobile responsiveness is no longer an option in 2019. It's a necessity.

Google penalizes sites that don't adjust to the size of the device they're being viewed on. And the truth is, this is an easy fix. There's no excuse not to do it – and it can actively hurt you if you don't.

#2 YOUR SITE IS DIFFICULT TO UPDATE

You might use the difficulty of updating as an excuse NOT to update, but in fact, it's a clear sign that you must update – and right away. It's the best way to be sure you can stay on top of future Google updates and technological improvements.
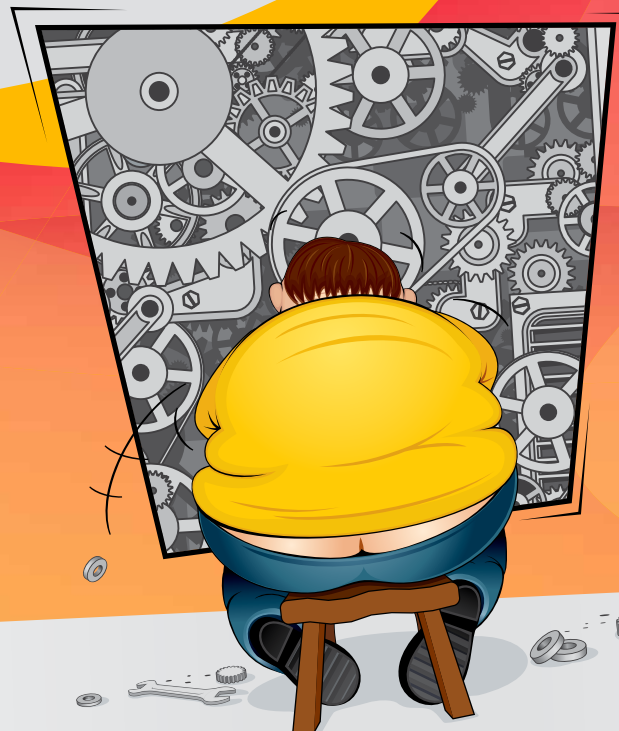
Updating from whatever it is you have now to a WordPress site where you can easily change your theme and add plugins as needed will make your life easier in the long run.
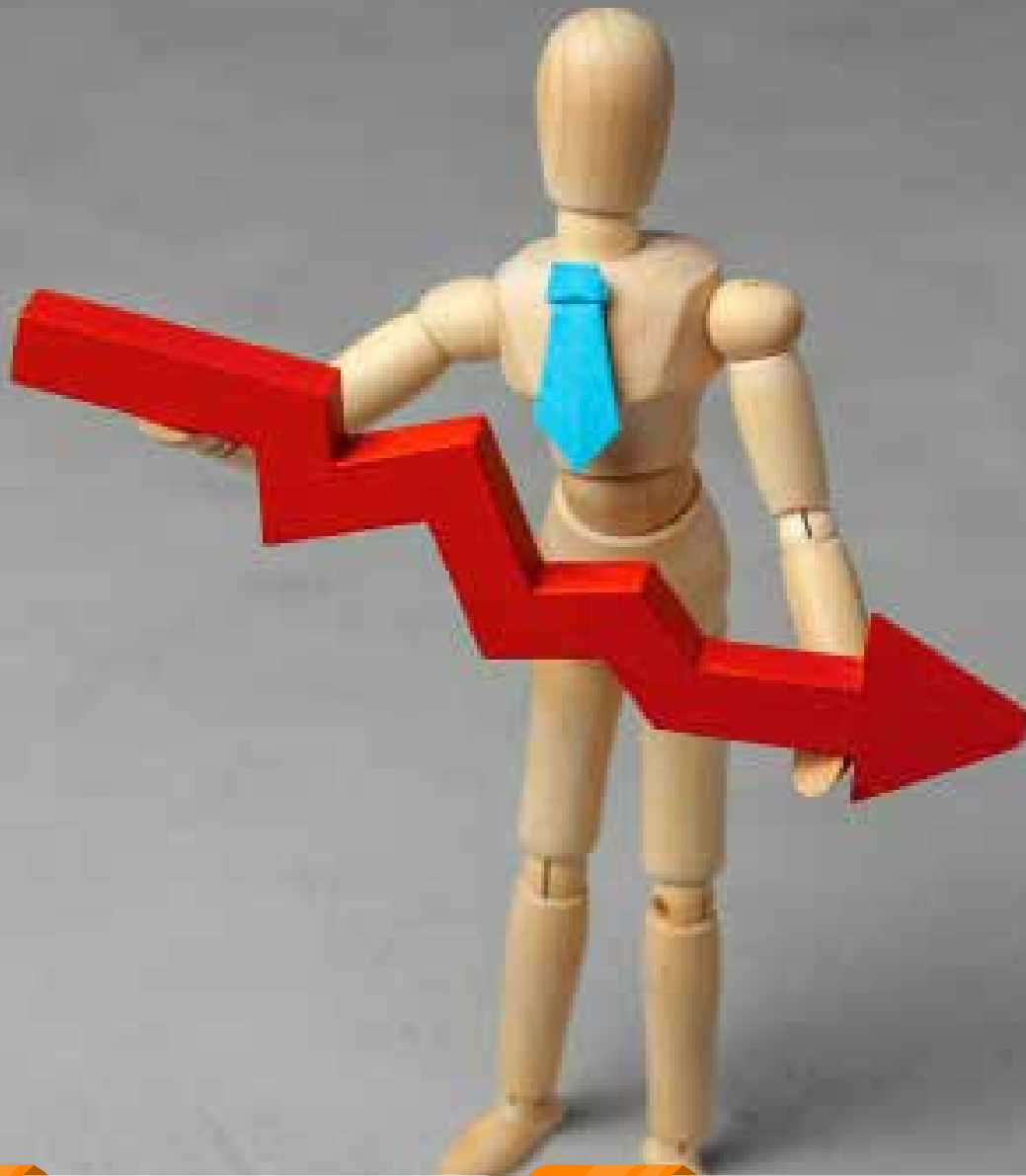
oops!

something went wrong!
Sorry, this page is not available.

It looks like something went wrong on the page you were accessing.

BACK TO MAIN PAGE

#3 IT LOOKS OUTDATED

#4 YOUR CONVERSION RATE IS TOO LOW

There are lots of little things that can make a website look out of date. For example, which version of the Twitter and Instagram logos do you have on your blog or homepage? If your Twitter logo has the old bird with the tuft of feathers on its head, your site may look like it's from the dark ages.

Trends in web design are constantly changing. If your site looks like it was designed in the early 2000s (or even the early 2010s) then it's time to embrace the present and update it.

There are lots of factors that can contribute to a low conversion rate, including your social media presence and marketing strategy. However, there's no question that your website – its design, loading time, usability, and other factors – plays a role.

It's an especially good sign that your site needs updating if you've tweaked your marketing campaigns and you've still got a low conversion rate. Something's scaring potential customers away – and if it's your website, there's only one way to fix it.

#5 YOU'VE GOT AUTOPLAY ON YOUR WEBSITE

Autoplay is dated and annoying, but there's a more important reason that you need to ditch it in 2019 as part of your website redesign. It is very likely contributing to a slow page load time. I get that you were probably eager to have people watch your video or listen to your audio at the time of your LAST redesign, but it's time for a change.

Honestly, I think the irritation level of autoplay far outweighs any potential benefit. You're much better off putting your video above the fold with a killer thumbnail and a compelling pull quote than you are autoplaying it.

#6 YOUR BRANDING ISN'T CURRENT

Have you rebranded your business since the last time you updated your website? If so, that means that your website is out of sync with your branding – and visitors aren't getting a true picture of you and your company when they visit it.

Even if your branding changes are minor – such as an updated logo or tagline – it's still worth redoing your website to match it.

#7 IT TAKES FOREVER TO LOAD

You've probably heard the statistic that says that human beings have a shorter attention span than a goldfish. It sounds absurd, but when it comes to how quickly a site loads, it's true.

Not only that, but Google penalizes sites that take too long to load. You can use their Page Speed tool to check your site's loading time.

#8 YOUR WEB DESIGN ISN'T CONSISTENT

Perhaps your last web redesign was ten years ago and in the interim, you had a different designer make a few tweaks to the design. Maybe you even did a bit of programming yourself. If that's the case, you may have a Frankensite that looks like it was assembled by committee – not a good thing.

If your fonts, colors, menus, and other design elements are a hodgepodge and not consistent throughout, a redesign can help you present a cohesive design that will attract new customers instead of frightening them.

#9 YOUR GOOGLE RANK IS TOO LOW

#10 IT JUST DOESN'T LOOK GOOD

Google prioritizes well-designed, quick-loading sites with great content. If it's been a while since your last redesign, the chances are good that your site isn't ranked as high as it could be on Google.

It's an especially big red flag if your ranking has slipped despite increased social media visibility and a higher-than-usual marketing budget. Don't ignore Google's response to your site. It's not going to get better if you wait to update it.

This last one might seem obvious and unnecessary, but I'm including it because a whopping 48% of consumers say that a company's website is the most important factor in determining credibility. In other words, an ugly or poorly designed site can scare potential leads away.

If that's not enough to scare you into updating your site, I don't know what is!

Oops...
404 Page Not Found

IT'S TIME TO GIVE YOUR WEBSITE A NEW LOOK...

If any of the ten things on this list sound familiar, don't wait. 2019 is the perfect time to update your site and take advantage of increased conversions, an improvement in your Google rank and – most importantly – more profits!

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