



Your Web Site Could Be Your Best Salesperson

By [Amy Zucker](#), president of [Synergy Marketing Group, Inc.](#)

A Web site that facilitates your company's sales process can prove to be your hardest-working and most results-oriented sales person—and potentially the most cost-efficient. Studies show that more than 75% of B2B buyers begin their procurement search on the Web, while nearly 92% of consumers use the Internet to start their buying process. Based on these trends, your Web site frequently will be the first stage in your sales process. Therefore, it can and should become the most valuable and effective resource on your team.

To transform your Web site from a static brochure into a lead-generating engine, keep the following strategies in mind:

1. **Let marketing lead the strategy and development of your Web site.** Web sites are NOT technology initiatives, nor graphic design projects. In order for your Web site to become a “proven performer,” make sure you allow a true marketing expert to guide the development process. Your Web site will have a lengthy and complex job description if it is to become a star player on your team. It should reinforce your company's brand image, establish credibility in the marketplace, create a positive experience with your company, generate qualified leads and convert prospects into buyers. To accomplish all of these objectives, you'll need a marketer at the helm to ensure the site is intuitive, easy to navigate, understandable and compelling to your potential customers. A marketer also will help you set quantifiable Web objectives that meet your sales and business goals. For instance, once you know how many viable leads you need to equate to one inked deal, you have the start of a solid equation. This may include $X \text{ Web visits} = Y \text{ leads} = Z \text{ closed deals}$.
2. **Give your prospects a compelling reason to interact with you.** The most common Web mistake is to give away everything. If you tell your prospects everything there is to know about your company, why would they call you for more information? You may be doing yourself a disservice by allowing prospects to mistakenly disqualify themselves from the sales process after reading your Web site. A strategically developed Web site will entice browsers to learn more – to take the next step in the sales process. Motivate your Web visitors to share their contact information or contact you directly. Include calls to action throughout your Web site to compel prospects to interact with you. Examples include: participate in a Webinar, sign up for an e-newsletter, contribute to a blog, download a white paper or case study, schedule a complementary consultation, etc.
3. **Optimize your Web site to attract qualified leads through the search engines.** Search engine optimization (SEO) is a specialized marketing discipline (notice, I didn't say “technical” discipline) that attracts qualified online leads to your Web site by optimizing it for strategic keywords. SEO allows you to capture Web browsers exactly at the moment and place they are searching for the services or products your company offers. Don't assume your IT department or HTML code-writer will know how to optimize your Web site – they typically won't. SEO is not a technical challenge. It is a marketing exercise that involves truly understanding your prospects, their motivations and their vocabulary. Your marketing resource should be able to help you develop a database of strategic keywords that accurately reflect and capitalize on your prospects' buying habits. The next step is infusing your Web site with these terms and phrases. Beyond initially optimizing your Web site, there are many ongoing SEO strategies you should include in your long-term Web marketing initiative. These include link programs, online portal listings and search engine re-submissions, to name a few.
4. **Leverage online advertising and e-mail marketing to aggressively drive qualified leads to your Web site.** SEO alone will not actively or aggressively drive qualified traffic to your Web site. Supplement and augment your SEO efforts with Internet advertising via search engines like Google. Use your strategic keywords to instantly capture active buyers while they are searching for the products and services your company offers. Drive these prospects to highly targeted landing pages (or “squeeze pages”) that quickly draw them into the qualification and sales processes. Use

e-mail marketing to sell deeper (upsell, cross sell and renew) into your current customer base. This is an efficient way to alert or remind your current constituents of your company's broad range of products/services – and drive them to your Web site to learn more and engage with you.

5. **Synchronize your Web site with offline sales and marketing efforts.** From corporate culture, image and tone, to a current list of services and executives, make sure your Web site and brick-and-mortar operation are aligned. It is critical that you offer your prospects a consistently positive experience – from their first online impression (your Web site) to their first human interaction (your receptionist or a sales rep). This may include an online and offline audit of sales and marketing materials, language and processes. From your Web site, advertisements, proposals and presentations to your line-level personnel and executive leadership, you want everything and everyone that represents your company to project a consistent message, image and experience.
6. **Track your Web site's performance and modify it regularly.** Web sites are evolving organisms that actively interact with the marketplace. Capitalize on this dynamic by frequently tracking Web traffic patterns, analyzing buying trends and changing your Web site to perform better. Like any employee, you want to hold your Web site accountable. Set goals, measure accomplishments and course-correct when necessary. The best way to do this is to use strong Web analytics software (Google offers a great product at no cost). Then you'll need a knowledgeable marketing professional to analyze the data, predict market changes and recommend enhancements that will improve your Web site's performance. Learn more about Synergy's [custom web development and design services](#).

A well-planned, well-executed Web site can and should be the hub of your company's sales and marketing efforts. Moreover, your Web site should actively, efficiently and consistently facilitate the sales process. If it doesn't, it's not doing its job (or fulfilling its role as your Best Salesperson). Keep in mind, your Web site's job description is to accurately reflect your company's brand image and culture; establish credibility in the marketplace; create a positive experience between your prospects and your company; attract and generate qualified leads; and convert prospects into buyers. The bottom line is if you hold your Web site accountable for its performance you'll see a quantifiable return on your investment.

About the Author:

[Amy Zucker](#) is president and founder of Synergy Marketing Group. A marketing, branding and public relations veteran with 15 years of industry expertise, she started the company in 2002 to exclusively serve the business-to-business community. Today Synergy is one of the top 20 [Indianapolis marketing agencies](#) with an impressive roster of both B2B and B2C clients. The firm offers its clients expertise in building memorable brands, generating awareness in the global marketplace, establishing credibility, creating demand and quantifying marketing investments. In 2007 Synergy became a certified Woman-owned Business Enterprise (WBE) to bring added value to clients and vendor partners who want to meet corporate supplier diversity program goals and qualify for new business opportunities in government and regulated industries. Amy can be reached at 317.205.9690 ext. 223 or at amy@synergy-mg.com. To learn more about Synergy Marketing Group, please visit www.synergy-mg.com.