



GREAT USER EXPERIENCE

WEBSITE USABILITY AND USER EXPERIENCE TOP TIPS

If your website proves difficult to use or a customer cannot find what they are looking for, they are unlikely to hang around. Therefore, to avoid losing potential customers it pays to have a website which is easy and intuitive to use.

Website usability is about designing an easy to use website that appeals to as many people as possible. Common usability problems include unclear navigation, poor checkout design, and slow page loading. The upside to addressing any usability issues can be massive, including happy customers, increased conversion, and more sales.

Below are our top tips on improving your website's online user experience.

GET FEEDBACK ON YOUR SITE

The first step to improving your site is to understand its current usability. This can be done in several ways:

- **Compare your site against usability best practice.** For starters, check out our usability tips below.
- **Get feedback from your customers.** Why not run an online survey?

- **Usability testing.** Sit down with someone who is not familiar with your site and ask them to try and buy something from your site whilst you watch. This will reveal where customers are having problems.

CLEAR DESIGN AND COPY

The design of your website should quickly communicate what it's all about. A professionally designed, clear, and organized site will help convey to customers the quality of your products or services. Here are some tips:

- **Be consistent.** Help users navigate by using a consistent design throughout the site.
- **Be easy to read.** It is best to use a light background as dark colors can obscure text. Don't be tempted to try unusual fonts; they often just look out of place or odd.
- **Be engaging.** Your content should be engaging, relevant and easy to read. Keep it brief and to the point. Remember that online, people tend to scan headlines and copy, so avoid large chunks of text.

INTUITIVE NAVIGATION

A simple navigation system is essential. A customer should be able to intuitively understand how they can get what they want from a site. People don't want to have to work hard to find what they want, so navigation must make sense and be consistent throughout the site.

Create a navigation that will group your products or services in an organized way. A general rule is to try and make every page on your site no more than two clicks away. Alongside the main navigation, a breadcrumb trail is a great way of providing a way to get back to previously viewed pages on your site.

COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION

Customers should not have to hunt around the site to find information. All the info they need to make a purchasing decision should always be within one click. This should include:

- **Returns policy.** A clearly stated returns policy will reassure customers and increase sales
- **Terms & Conditions.** This should cover terms of use, condition of sale, age restrictions and other legal requirements
- **Contact details.** To include email, postal address and phone number
- **Delivery.** Provide estimated delivery time and details on any special delivery costs up front



EFFECTIVE SITE SEARCH

Make it easy to find products on your site with an effective site search. Searches should return only relevant information or products. In addition, effective filtering options help customers to narrow their options and remove irrelevant products.

EASY TO USE CHECKOUT

The average abandonment rate at the checkout stage of purchases is often as much as half and although there are various other reasons for this, poor usability is responsible for many lost sales. It's madness to lose a sale for lack of a simple, fault free checkout.

A SITE THAT WORKS!

It sounds obvious, but every element of your site should work. There is no bigger turn off for visitors than broken links or missing pages. Make sure your site is up to date and regularly check all links are working (this can be checked by using tools like [Xenu Sleuth](#)).

Also remember to check your site looks the same in all the major web browsers (Internet Explorer, Firefox and Chrome). What looks okay in one browser can frequently not work in another. Also don't forget that more and more users are turning to mobile devices to browse websites.

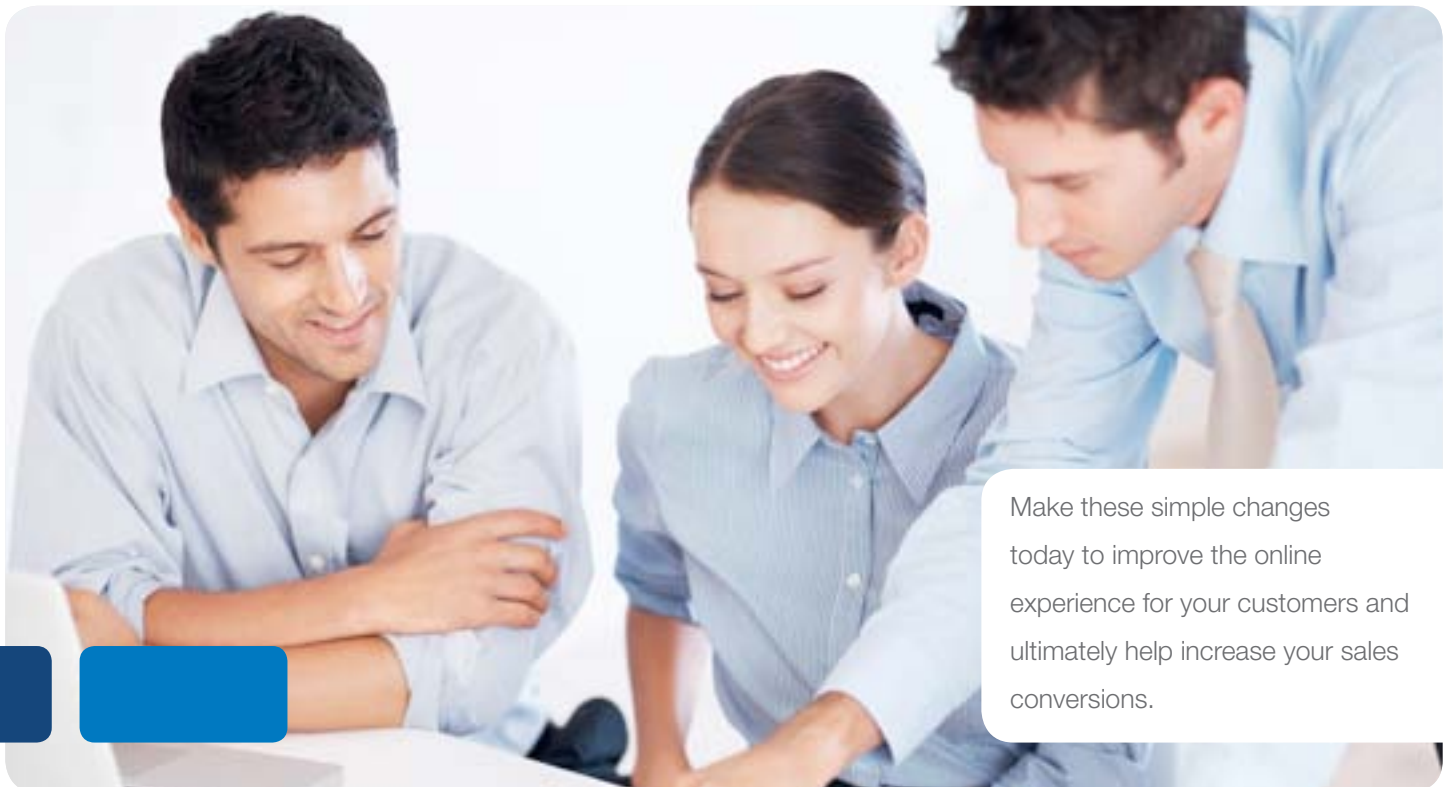
KEEP LOAD TIMES SHORT

If your site does not load in a few seconds, customers will get impatient and go elsewhere. A slow site can also affect search engine rankings as Google now monitors site performance.

CLEAR PRODUCT PAGES

A good product page should deliver a clear and persuasive sales pitch. It must provide all the information that a customer needs to make a purchasing decision, including:

- **Clear Descriptions.** Include the product's main features and benefits
- **Great images.** Use multiple, high resolution photos
- **Delivery cost.** Don't make customers wait until the checkout for shipping costs
- **Video.** Make your product come to life with video
- **Product reviews.** Customers and search engines love product reviews!



Make these simple changes today to improve the online experience for your customers and ultimately help increase your sales conversions.