

# Top 5 Mistakes

Businesses Make When

**ADVERTISING ONLINE**



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Many business owners spend a lot of time and money to create an on-line presence. Unfortunately, many build the wrong website, send the wrong message, and fail to attract customers. This report will uncover these fatal mistakes businesses make and how you can avoid them.

### **Fatal Mistake 1: Information Overload**



"Less is more". You've heard that saying and it holds true when delivering your message online. The average company website tries to put everything possible on the home page, hoping to attract more new customers.

The sad fact is, cramming all this onto one page simply makes any useful information on the page hard to find. If you focus on your company instead of what problems you can solve for customers, you dilute your message to the viewer.

Web sites with too much information frustrate customers are looking for quick access to a product or service, not an education in the company's market or their history.

Visitors to your web site scan pages rather than study them. Studies show that readers can't, or won't, read large blocks of text. In fact, many people will only scan highlights and bullet points. Your pages should have plenty of white space to make your important points stand out, and your message must be simple, compelling, and easy to read.

A web page with simple layout, clean graphics, bold headline, few bullets and with a clear call to action is much more effective than a cluttered page.

## **But what if you have a lot of products or services to promote?**

Don't try to put the entire store in one page. Create a page for each product or service, with information specific to the problem that product or service corrects. Focus just on a single service and your messages will be shorter, more focused and more useful to the person searching for that service.

'Optimizing' each page for a specific search helps it turn up in search results, and each page acts as its own on-line ad, drawing customers interested in that specific product.

Most keyword choices business owner make for their website are dead wrong! Many business owners either aren't aware of keywords, or they ignore keywords and searchability when they create their pages.

Businesses think they need to advertise who they are instead of what they do.



The fact is most local customers are searching for what you do and that should be the focus of your keywords. When people DO use keywords, they often select the broadest terms imaginable, in hopes of getting more traffic to their web site. The opposite is true; picking keywords that are too broad means facing unbeatable competition and guarantees the page will be hard to find.

Are you being found when customers are ready to buy? Who is the more motivated buyer? The one who is browsing for 'fencing contractor' (with 70 million competing web sites), or 'fix my broken gate in <your town>'?

The first is doing broad research, maybe thinking about a project down the road, but the second has an immediate, specific need and their credit card is in their hand. Which customer do you want to attract?

## Fatal Mistake 2: Making Your Website Your Only Form of Online Marketing

Are you neglecting additional online advertising opportunities with classifieds and business listings?

Most people think the only road to internet success is the company web site being on page 1 of Google's search results. Unfortunately, most business will never reach page one with their company web site for any search term.

That is understandable, though. SEO – the science of 'Search Engine Optimization' – is hard, takes specialized knowledge, and can be slow to take effect.

Don't be discouraged - there are alternatives that make your business findable in multiple places when local customers are looking for your product or service. These can include business listings and free on-line classifieds like Craigslist and BackPage.

These types of listings are constantly monitored by search engines like Google, Bing or Yahoo and can appear when consumers are searching online and ready to buy.



This means you can be found online – even if you do not have a company web site!

### **Fatal Mistake 3: Not creating a communication channel with prospects**

Once you DO get people to your site, you have a chance to sell to them, but they may not buy the first time. That doesn't mean they WON'T buy, just that this is not the right offer or the right time. They may respond to a future offer. But how do you get that future offer to them?

Smart businesses create lists of potential customers and contact information, and they stay in contact with those potential customers. Creating your list is simple – in exchange for their e-mail address or cell phone number, you can offer a free report or 'instant % off' coupons.

Place the sign-up box prominently on each web page and watch your list grow. Automated services make this easy to do.

When new customers sign up, they verify their interest in your offers and receive your offer in return. The reports can be a simple advice - a list of steps to take to prevent your pipes from freezing in the winter, preparing your car for summer vacation or springtime lawn-care tips.

As your list of your customers grows, provide them with regular mailings with helpful information, not just sales offers. Take time to build a relationship with your customers. When they are ready to buy or know someone that is looking for what you provide they will think of you.





Rising 'Mobile Phone' usage is making text marketing campaigns more attractive every day. Very affordable SMS text services allow you to send your customers discount coupons.

The systems work the same as e-mail collection, but they opt-in on their phones. Your SMS text messages are delivered directly to these phones and they can be timed for maximum impact.

If you are a traditional advertiser, you plan your promotions weeks ahead of time. You design, print, mail your ads, and then hope the ad gets saved for future use. Imagine being the restaurant that mails a discount coupons to a customer's phone at 4:55, right when they are deciding where to go for dinner. Or, maybe you need a few extra appointments to fill a slow day – send a 'Today Only!' offer to your repeat customers.

SMS messaging services are effective and reasonably priced. Your focused ads cost about a nickel each and are only sent to people who are already interested in your business. Ask LPJM Solutions LLC about e-mail and SMS services you can start using today.

### **Fatal Mistake 4: Making It Difficult For Customers to Contact You**

What is it that customers are looking for when they search you out? They want to know that you do is what they need. Next, they may want to know you are open or where you are located, and they definitely want your phone number. This information has to be on your main page and it has to be prominent.

When your customer has a broken water pipe, they don't want to search for hidden contact information.



What they want to see is, 'We Fix Broken Pipes', 'On Call Now', and a big, bold phone number.

When you think about making your sites viewer friendly, remember that traditional sites are difficult to view on mobile devices. Shoppers use their mobile devices for comparison shopping, so it makes sense to have a mobile-friendly version of your site available. Mobile-friendly sites need the same attention to presenting just the minimum, essential information. Phone numbers should be 'click-to-call', your location page should include a map to your business as well as an address, and graphics need to be small to load quickly. Your local marketing expert can help you refine your web pages for greatest readability and can also help you set up mobile web sites for your business.

### **Fatal Mistake 5: Not taking advantage of online viral referral opportunities**

'Social Media', like FaceBook, LinkedIn or YouTube, offers definite opportunities for your business. The social sites encourage your friends and customers to advertise your business for you. The very basis of social sites is sharing of interesting content, and some of that shared content could be yours.





There are over 200 million internet users in the U.S., and 71% of those users have FaceBook accounts.

Half of those, or over 75 million people in the U.S., check into FaceBook on any given day.

Every time a customer comments on, 'likes' or shares your page, the fact is posted to an average of 130 friends.

Plug-ins and code allow to put 'bookmark', 'share' and 'like' buttons on your web site. This makes it easy for visitors to 'like' your page. Every 'like' a page gets is a vote of confidence that helps boost your sites rankings while showing it to users' friends.



YouTube, now owned by Google, is understandably search-engine friendly. It has become the #2 search engine – right behind Google.



“More video is uploaded to YouTube in one month than the 3 major US networks created in 60 years” - YouTube.

Video production is now a desk-top enterprise, and anyone can make movies and put them on YouTube for free. You can use this powerful medium to advertise your business by making simple ‘how-to’ videos that show your customers how to do basic tasks.

YouTube also makes it easy for others to share your videos. Use keywords that describe the video, and include links to your web site, both in the video and in the description of the video. This way, when someone shares the video, you still get the link back to your web site.

# Local Internet Marketing Is Within Your Reach

Effective web pages, dramatic ads, search-engine friendliness, and improved social interactions are valuable and powerful marketing tools for small businesses in almost any field. Securing an online presence, especially if you do not have a website, is crucial in order to receive feedback from customers and partners.

We hope this report has given you some ideas you'll start using today. This Local Marketing Report is brought to you by:

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If you have any questions about how to implement the strategies that you read about in this short report or if you would like speak more about how to get more customers by making your business findable online please do not hesitate to contact me. Use your smart-phone to scan this QR code to gain access to our short Request A Quote Form.

