

# Strategic Marketing: Increase Your Web Site Conversion Rates With An Action Map

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Conversion rates are the key to a successful Web site. It is common knowledge that one of the most cost effective ways to generate business leads is through a Web site. As many have learned, you can build a Web site, however it does not mean, "they will come". Plus, if you do get visitors to your Web site, it doesn't mean that you will be able to convert them. You need to look at your Web site and think strategically. Strategic Internet marketing and its successful execution is the key to high customer conversion rates. So the question is, now that I have built a Web site, how can I convert those visitors into customers?

The Action Map Technique  
In order to determine how your Web site can effectively convert visitors into customers, you need to ask yourself what are the actions that you want your visitors to take? Think strategically as you do this. If you put yourself into your customers' shoes, what actions would you respond to? To accomplish this, I like to create what I call an "action map" (I know the name is very cryptic). The action map outlines the ideal actions (in a flow chart manner) that you think your visitors will take. If the Web site or service has a lot of complexity, the action map will have several pathways. The action map is an extremely useful tool to turn an Internet marketing strategy into an executable formula that will increase your Web site conversions. Let's look at a fictional Web site as an example. Joe runs a financial consulting company that focuses on helping clients increase their net worth. Joe's web site offers a lot of free information about various investing techniques and has a contact us form each page of his Web site. Currently Joe gets most of his business through word of mouth, but he would like to increase the amount of leads he gets online. Joe's marketing strategy is that if he provides free information, his customers will value it and contact him. Given this situation, what could Joe do to help convert visitors to strong leads? Let's take a look at the current action map for this Web site. Please note this is a very simple action map and is more like an action list, but it serves our purpose for the example.

- Visitor comes to the Web site
- Visitor reads a lot useful information
- Visitor contacts Joe for more information

This action map is quite simple and common. However it is not very effective, as most people do not convert on the first visit. If that were true, every Web site would be wildly successful. Joe needs to create smaller calls to action on his Web site. Building an action map to increase customer conversions

First let's look at Joe's Internet marketing strategy. Joe's strategy is a good one, and we can stick with it. We just need to change the execution of his strategy. We need to look at how we can enhance the current action steps to add smaller, easier action steps. In other words, baby action steps, steps that require little commitment or effort.

- Visitor comes to the Web site
- Visitor is offered a free financial guide for signing up for Joe's monthly newsletter
- Visitor receives financial advice via Joe's monthly email
- Visitor responds to an offer in the email
- Visitor contacts Joe to learn more about his services (AKA Visitor converts to a lead)

As you can see here, this action map uses a basic marketing technique. In order to get a tiny commitment from the visitor, we will offer something of value. Since Joe is a financial consultant, he could easily create a guide about hiring a financial consultant. Now mind you, the guide shouldn't be "Why you should hire Joe", the guide should be independent of Joe's business, this way the document will have some credibility and value. Remember the action we are trying to achieve here is a newsletter sign up, NOT converting them to a lead. The guide should pack a punch, such as "The Top 10 Things You Need To Know Before Hiring a Financial Service". In addition, if Joe is really strategic, he will be sure to subtly pre-position the strengths of his services in the guide. Providing the guide in return for email sign ups will allow Joe to grow a targeted email list. He can then send emails on a monthly basis and provide his prospects with different news and information about the finance world. This will allow Joe to keep in constant contact with customer prospects and build a rapport. If Joe provides quality credible information, a customer will likely begin to feel a connection with Joe. It is at this point that Joe should look to convert these prospects into leads through his newsletter. Joe can offer various offers through his newsletter to help pick up business. Offers could include free seminars, free consultations, etc. And if Joe is really clever, he will be sure to add an easy "forward to a friend" feature on his newsletter. Following an action map will increase Joe's conversion rates and in the end will improve Joe's customer base. As you can see, Joe's Internet strategy was fine, it was the execution that needed adjustment. Focusing on the desired action steps or sales cycle can help you improve the execution of your Web site. The action maps I used here are simple so that the example could easily be followed. In my opinion, action maps should try to cover every possible action so that you can properly identify conversion opportunities. Below is an example of one of my typical action maps for a Web site.