THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF BUSINESS WEBSITES. WHICH DO YOU NEED?

Companies invest thousands of dollars when they want to redesign their website, hoping that a more attractive design will lead to more revenue. But is it really about the design? Or is it more about the content? Or, at the end of the day, is it more important that your website accomplishes the goals which you need to achieve?

Without taking into consideration an E-Commerce Website, the two basic types of business websites are:

Credibility Sites and Lead Sites

CREDIBILITY WEBSITE
A credibility website serves to credential a business as legitimate and trustworthy.

Credibility business websites are used by business owners who are sure most of their business is generated by word-of-mouth, by referral, or by a salesperson.   They believe a visit to their website occurs during the TRUST phase of the sales process.

People are not DISCOVERING the business online; they are checking the legitimacy of the business or just wanting to learn more. Viewers of these sites have already heard about a business' product or service. These visitors are looking for an online reinforcement of the good things they have already heard about this business.

A solid credibility site:

1) Has a professional appearance. Your small business website is your virtual storefront. No one wants to do business with a store whose physical facility is dirty or unkempt. The same is true of your webpage.
2) Is current. Are you still running a promotion on your site that ended on Mother's Day and it is now the middle of June? This lack of attention to detail can kill you, as customers think, "They aren't on top of things on their website, perhaps they won't be on point with me either."
3) Has Accreditation Logos. Are you a member of a professional association, a network, a quality assurance program, the BBB or earned specific licenses and certifications? These logos should be on your website. Even if people don't know exactly what each organization does, these logos offer a sense of psychological security to your viewer that you are legitimate. Of course, be honest and make sure you are truly a member of each organization you place on your site.
4) Is Rich in Testimonials. Nothing builds credibility more than real testimonials and endorsements from real customers.

Remember…
A credibility page is for those potential customers who are already familiar with your company and looking for an additional means of information.   It appeals to people who are already thinking of doing business with you.

LEAD GENERATION WEBSITE
The second type of business website is a lead generation site.
This type of website contains most of the same attributes as a credibility site, however, it must take things farther.

A lead site is designed to be an initial point of contact with your business' service or product. It is designed to help people discover you online when they have little or no previous knowledge of your existence.

Here is what you additionally need:

1) **Strong SEO**
   Nothing is more important to a lead generation site than where it ranks on Google, Bing, Yahoo and the other search engines. When people search looking for a product or service you offer, you must show up on page one! You must have your website and each page on your site optimized to be found on search engines. This is called on-page SEO. You must also work on external SEO.   External search engine optimization efforts are an ongoing process where an expert garners quality links created on other high authority sites that point back to your website. Unless you have tons of time and enjoy a steep learning curve, don't try this on your own because if you get it wrong, Google will bury you.

2) **Possible Paid Online Advertising**
   While organic ranking is ideal, you MUST get in front of your potential customer. People need to find your business organically (that is, they search a product or service you offer and you rank high on Google; this naturally takes time). In the interim, a paid advertisement on a search engine can get you in front of your audience quickly.

3) **Landing Pages**
   These paid ads should point to SPECIFIC pages on your site that relate directly to the ad content. A landing page helps convert visitors because it is tailored as the solution to an exact problem or need that the person just searched.

4) **Strong Call To Actions and Capture Mechanisms**
   Bright contact buttons and phone numbers are important to gain contact. They should stand out sharply from other elements on your page. An email capture field should be present. Consider providing visitors the option to sign up for educational newsletters and specials if they provide their email.

5) **Ongoing Content**
   In order to target existing keywords that people search, you'll need fresh posts. And connecting your site to your Social Media will increase this content.

So… Which Type of Site Do You Need?

A credibility site can be beautifully designed and placed on the web. Since most people will visit you AFTER they have heard of you, the site doesn't need as much ongoing content. Visitors are primarily looking to see you are legitimate.

In contrast, a lead site needs ongoing work and effort.

Before you decide…

ASK YOURSELF "What would happen if my credibility site could become a LEAD GENERATION site to gain even more business?"

If you realize that you need more people to find you online to increase your business, maybe you should consider expanding your credibility site to a lead site.

Either way, your business website needs to work for you!

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