Make your website work

Ten ways to convert visitors into buyers

Google™

42 million
online shoppers in the UK*

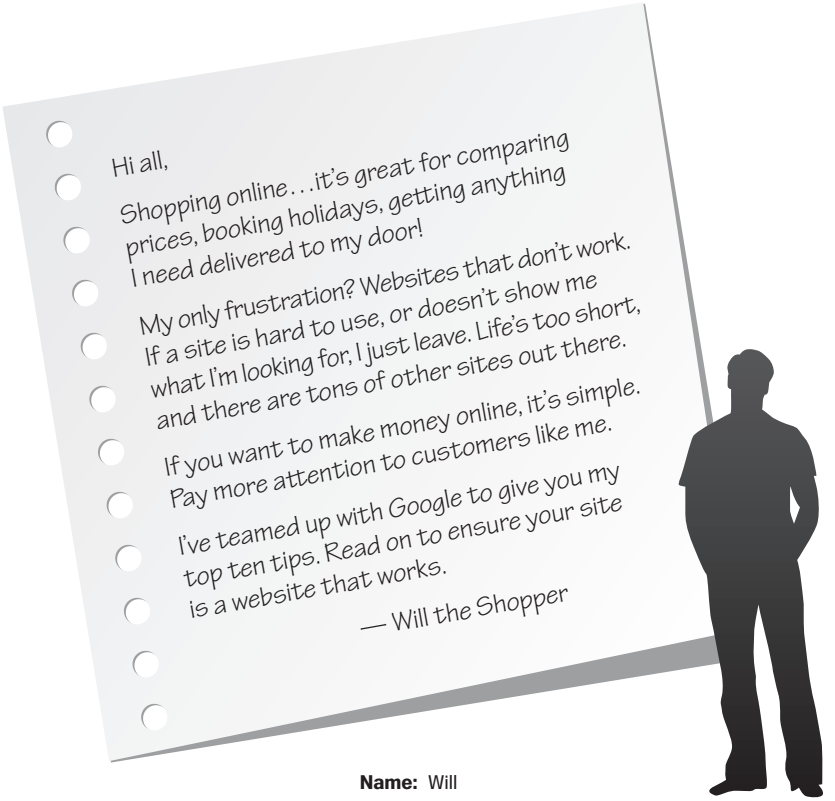
71% growth
in e-retail sales
in the last two years†

50.1%
of online shoppers who place items
in their shopping carts don't buy**

0.36% growth
in satisfaction with online
shopping in the last two years†

*Internet World Stats, Usage and Population statistics, June 2008
†IMRG Industry Report, 2009
**Core Metrics, 'Core Metrics Benchmark Industry Report', March 2009

FAO: Online businesses and marketers



Name: Will
Age: 34
Likes: Music, relaxing with friends, and finding bargains online
Dislikes: Queuing, bad weather, being disappointed

Will's top ten tips to make your website work

1. Bring me to the right page
2. Make your homepage useful
3. Help me navigate
4. Give me the right results when I search
5. Display groups of products clearly
6. Give me the product details I need
7. Make registration optional
8. Make it easy to buy or enquire
9. Reassure me
10. Find this useful? Let me help!

Identify. Diagnose. Test. Implement.

Bear in mind there is no one hard and fast rule for making your website work better. With 'Will the Shopper' we've highlighted common areas to examine in order to improve performance.

From here, use free tools like Google Analytics and Website Optimiser in order to identify areas for improvement, diagnose what causes visitors to leave your site, test to find improvements and implement changes that drive results for your site.

1. Bring me to the right page

"When I click on ads online, I do so because I'm interested in what you've promoted. But what if the offer, price, product or service from your ad isn't visible on your landing page? I'll usually leave, dissatisfied."



"Drills, just like the ad said. Clearly laid out and free next day delivery too."

20% reduction in bounce rate

By linking their ads to the relevant product pages rather than the search results page, Screwfix decreased the number of visitors bouncing (immediately leaving) from their site.

Top tips for landing pages

1. **Link ads to the right page:** Product-specific ads and keywords should link to product specific pages; more general ads about a product or service category should link to more general pages. Avoid directing visitors to search results pages.
2. **Mirror your ad title:** Try mirroring the headline or title of your ad on your landing page – this way, the customer will feel immediately reassured they've been directed to the right page.
3. **Ensure selling points are visible:** If you include compelling prices, special offers or delivery options in your ad text, a customer will expect to see these on your site. Make sure selling points from your ad are clearly visible on your landing page.

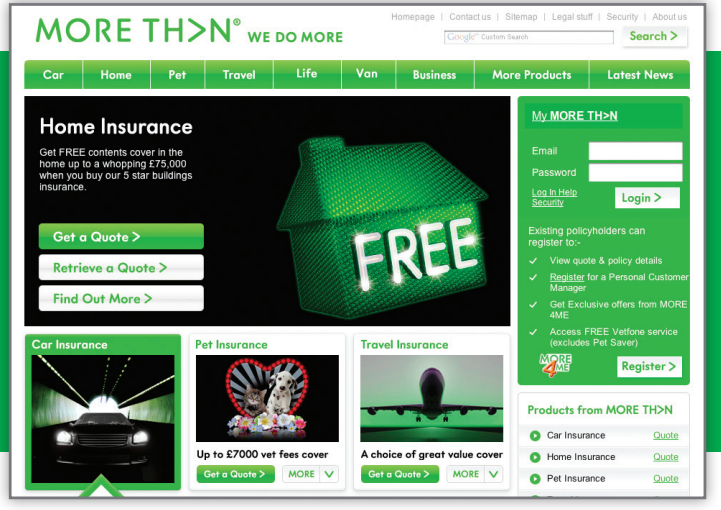
What next?

- Use Google Analytics to analyse the bounce rate from your landing pages. Find high traffic landing pages that a high proportion of visitors leave straight away.
- Try changing the pages that your AdWords ads link to and monitor results.
- Use Website Optimiser to test changes to landing page text, images or layout.

2. Make your homepage useful

"A homepage is like a shopfront: show me whether it's worth going into your shop/site or I may just move on. I like homepages that show who you are, what you sell, and any exciting offers. Give me clear headings, so I know what else I can find on your site."

Special offer ✓
Clear navigation ✓
Call to action buttons ✓
Site search ✓
Branding ✓



"Free offers, eh? Might check out home insurance while I'm getting travel cover for my hols…"

Informative, clear homepage

MORE TH>N has created a flexible, branded homepage that serves multiple purposes. A user is both directed towards key products and actions, and given clear choices for navigation.

Top tips for homepages

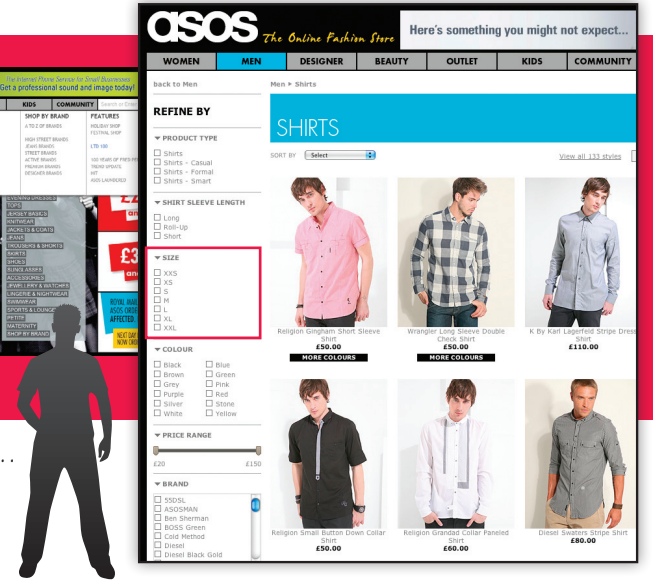
1. **Reaffirm your brand and site purpose:** Assure the visitor that they have landed at the right site - clearly display your brand and any unique selling points. Avoid long introductions as customers will seek this information in the 'about us' section.
2. **Find the optimal page layout:** Show visitors a clean and easy to understand homepage which isn't cluttered and has all relevant information available on the top of the page.
3. **Test product promotions:** Mirror any offers promoted in your offline advertising, and let customers know of any compelling deals. Popular or seasonal products that are profitable for you should be visible on the homepage.
4. **Make it easy to navigate further:** You want visitors to proceed beyond your homepage. With so many potential routes a visitor could take, make sure they don't get lost. Options on where to navigate next should be clear and simple e.g. using site search, top/side navigation, and/or product links.

What next?

- Use Google Analytics to identify high sales, high ROI products on your site. You may also want to look at what visitors search for using your site search. Consider featuring these products on your homepage.
- Use Website Optimiser to test what type and quantity of content performs best on your homepage. Experiment by including different offers and products, or by reworking key navigation text and features.

3. Help me navigate

"I've reached your site, and I'm interested. But often, the first page I see won't have everything I want. That's why I need clear ways to navigate into your site. Categorise what you offer into simple headings. Make it clear where I should click next to start my shopping or research."



"I need a smart shirt… I can look by size – that'll save time!"

Clear site navigation

ASOS helps navigation with clear drop down menus, structured by product type or department, and with on-site search. Visitors can drill down from the general to the specific in just a few clicks.

Top tips for navigation

1. **Make product/service categories visible:** People need to see how to navigate in order to do so. Use clear labels/titles that show what product and service categories you offer. Build a navigation structure that is intuitive and not too complex.
2. **Use easy-to-understand terms:** When labeling the product/service categories you offer, make sure you use terms that your customers will understand and find appealing. Avoid jargon where possible.
3. **Highlight where to go next:** Help the user understand how they can get from A to B in the easiest possible way. Experiment with call to action buttons, or click-able links and images to find out what works best to direct the customer onwards.

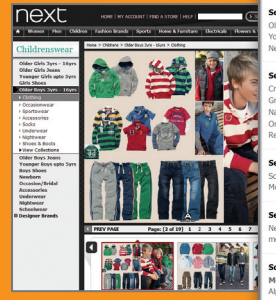
What next?

- Use Google Analytics to understand where you're losing customers from your buying funnel.
- Use Website Optimiser to test different product/service labels or call to action buttons on your site.

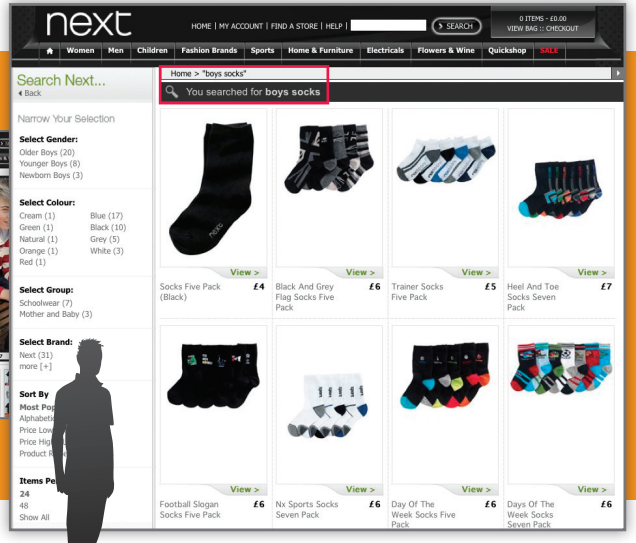
4. Give me the right results when I search

"Sometimes, I come to your site knowing the product type, name, or manufacturer that I want. In this case, I don't want to click around your site to find my product. I want to search, and be brought straight there."

Before



After



"My son needs socks…and that's just what they've given me!"

20% reduction in exit rate

Next noticed a high exit rate from its search results page for 'boy's socks'. By testing more specific results, Next reduced exit rates by 20%, and increased conversions by 7%.

Top tips for site search

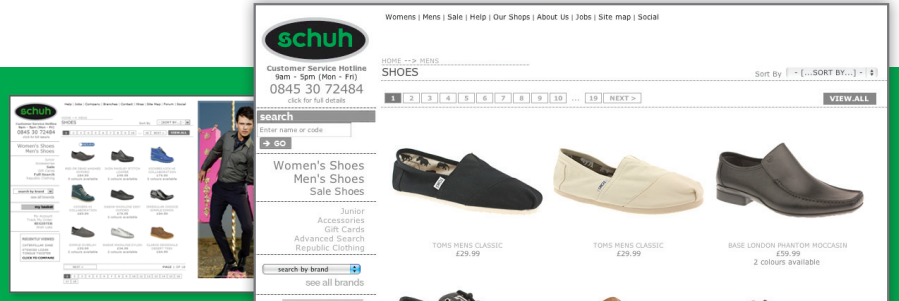
1. **Check quality of results:** Is your site's search function working well? Ensure visitors are getting relevant results, even when they search on synonyms or misspellings.
2. **Make site search visible:** Visitors to your site should be able to see, at a glance, where to search. Consider enlarging your search box or making it more prominent.
3. **Allow customers to sort results:** People like to be able to sort through search results. Allow visitors to order what they see by anything from price or popularity to colour, style etc.
4. **Lay out search results clearly:** Ensure visitors can glance through search results and compare listings easily to decide where to click next.

What next?

- Use our Google Analytics search report to understand what search terms are performing well (i.e. converting into sales or leads) or badly (i.e. resulting in an ended visit on your site).
- Use Website Optimiser to test alternative search result pages.
- Check out Google Site Search to bring the power of Google search to your own site.

5. Display groups of products clearly

"I use websites to browse and compare products before I buy. Group products together, and highlight the details I care most about. This way, I can make decisions about what to buy or click on next quickly, and without frustration."



Before

After



"This is great. Clutter free and I can see exactly what the shoes look like without having to click on each one…those brown ones are nice!"

6% increase in conversions

Schuh tested product density and image size on their product category pages. They were able to increase conversions across the site by 6%.

Top tips for category pages

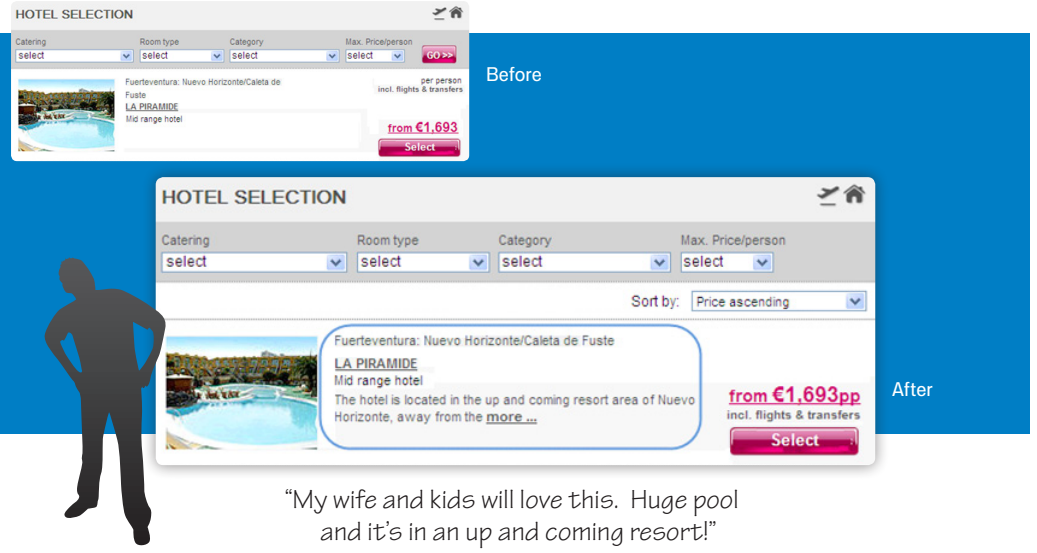
1. **Provide a clear layout and design:** It's important to get the right mix of images, products and text. Position, size and quantity of content will all have an effect on how customers interact with your pages.
2. **Enable comparisons:** As customers click further into product categories, you should allow them to make comparisons. By including images, prices and a brief description of each item, you can assist them in making purchase decisions.
3. **Group products logically:** Products should be organised in a logical manner so the visitor finds what they expected in each section of your site. Test displaying top-selling products, or those with special offers, more prominently on the page.

What next?

- Use Google Analytics to prioritise which product category pages to improve by identifying the high traffic pages which lose the most visitors.
- Use Website Optimiser to test new category pages in order to find out what content and design works best.

6. Give me the product details I need

"I've looked around and I'm close to buying from you. To make a decision, I need to know exactly what I'm getting. Don't overload me, but do show me relevant details: for example pricing, photos, customer reviews and ratings."



"My wife and kids will love this. Huge pool and it's in an up and coming resort!"

5% increase in conversion rate

L'tur.de added descriptive teasers to the hotel listings and allowed visitors to sort results based on price or category. This increased the conversion rate by 5%.*

*Site testing originally conducted in German

Top tips for product details

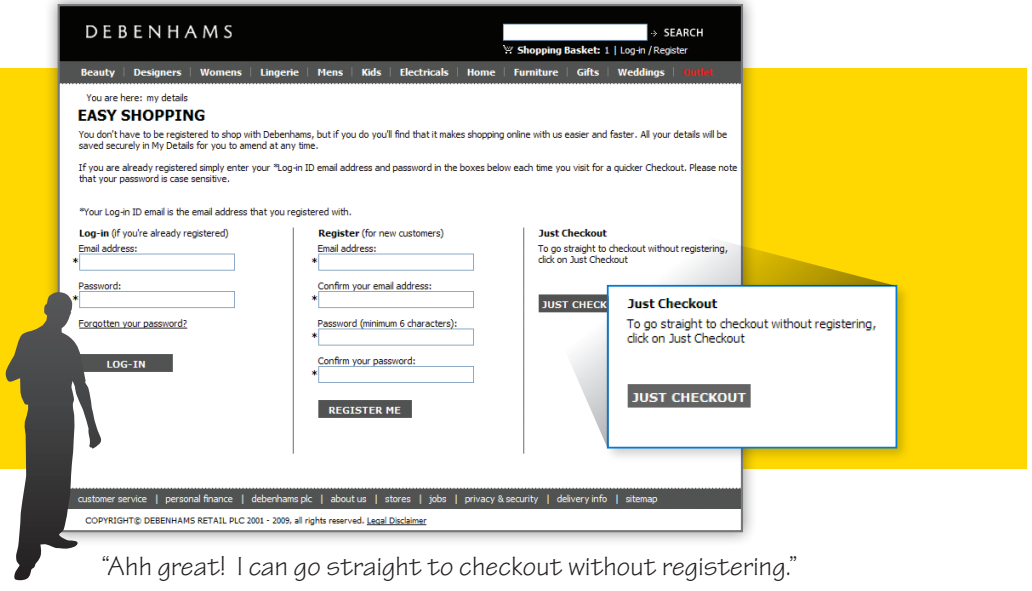
1. **Summarise key product details:** Think about what customers commonly ask for or want to know. You need to be up-front about key product features, options and price.
2. **Provide clear images:** Customers like to have a clear view of what they're buying. Make pictures large, and easily visible. Consider allowing customers to zoom in on products, or see them from different angles.
3. **Make your call-to-action button visible:** What is the next step you want a customer to take? If you want them to buy from you, make your 'buy now' button prominent so they don't have to scroll down the page to see it. If you're a leads based business, the same applies to your 'get quote' or 'talk to an expert' button.

What next?

- Use Google Analytics to identify high traffic product or category pages, which also have a high exit rate of visitors leaving your site.
- Use Website Optimiser to work out what combination of product details, images or calls to action work best together and in what layout.

7. Make registration optional

"One thing that puzzles me with websites is why I have to register before I can buy. Why are there obstacles like creating logins and passwords? I just want a quick secure way to contact you or purchase from you."



"Ahh great! I can go straight to checkout without registering."

Stop 23% of checkout drop-off

On average, 23% of checkout abandonment happens due to required registration.* Debenhams increases the likelihood of purchase by allowing customers to checkout without registration.

*Source: Forrester Research US: Required Registration Lowers Online Conversion Rates, April 2008.

Top tips for registration

1. **Allow purchase without registration:** Let customers buy from you without creating an account. You can still capture details like their email address in your payment details form; you can also offer them the opportunity to register post-sale.

2. **Make registration easy:** Try to reduce the amount of information required to register. Stick to the details you really need.

3. **Highlight the benefits:** If you want to encourage customers to register, let them know how this will benefit them.

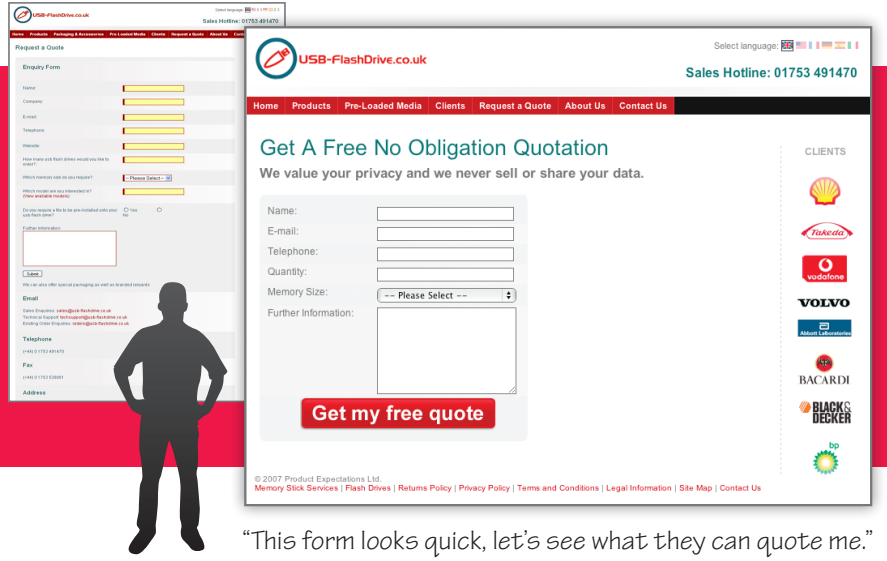
What next?

- Use Google Analytics to understand whether your current registration process is deterring visitors from making a purchase.
- Use Website Optimiser to test simplified guest registration forms.

8. Make it easy to buy or enquire

"I don't think anyone enjoys filling out forms. The longer and more complex a form is on a website, the more likely I am to give up. I do understand you need to collect information from me. But the easier you make it, the more likely I am to follow through and complete the process."

Before



After

"This form looks quick, let's see what they can quote me."

40% increase in conversions

USB Flashdrive reduced the number of fields in their enquiry form, and moved the call to action button up to a visible area of the screen. This increased quote submissions by 40%.

Top tips for purchases and enquiries

1. **Don't ask for unnecessary details:** Reduce the number of fields and steps in your checkout or enquiry process. Only ask the customer for information that's really needed.
2. **Show transparent steps:** Use a status bar to show what stage a customer is at in the checkout process. This sets expectations and makes the process seem manageable.
3. **Expedite the process:** Help the customer to complete forms by auto-populating fields where possible e.g. suggesting a delivery address based on the billing address in a checkout form.
4. **Avoid distractions:** You may want to remove advertising and unnecessary navigation bars from your checkout process. Minimise distractions that might lead a customer to move elsewhere.

What next?

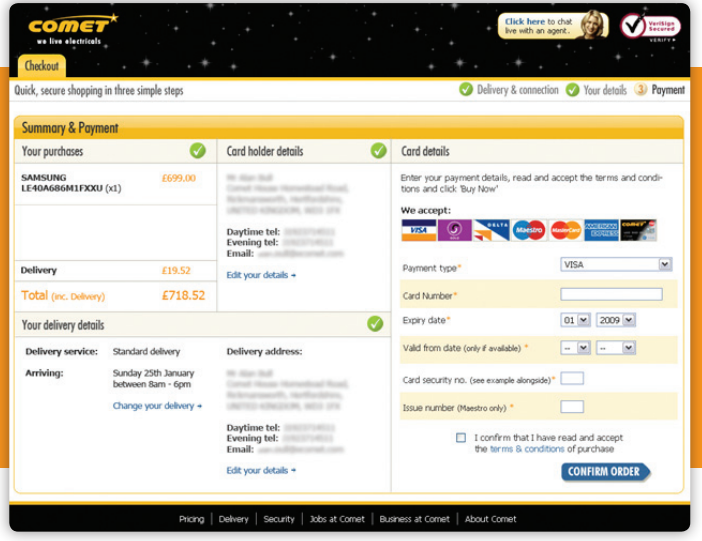
- Use Google Analytics to identify which forms or steps in your checkout process are causing customers to drop out.
- Use Website Optimiser to test for better page content: shorter forms, fewer steps, more transparency on how many stages are involved.

9. Reassure me

"I want what you offer – but I need to trust you before I submit my payment details. What if I need to return what I've ordered? What are your delivery times? Have I seen exactly what I'll be charged? Make me feel secure, or I may look for the same product or service elsewhere."

Delivery details ✓
Total cost shown ✓
Clear purchase summary ✓
Ability to edit key fields ✓





"All looks good. I'm ready to buy!"

1.8% increase in conversions across site

By introducing the checkout summary into the main body of the payment page, Comet increased order confirmation (conversions) by 1.8% across their site.

Top tips to reassure

1. **Be open about cancellations/returns:** Customers want to know they can return goods that aren't suitable, or cancel bookings if circumstances change. Ensure information on how to do this is accessible on your site.
2. **Offer transparency on price:** Be transparent about total costs and inform customers early on about any extra delivery or booking charges. It can also be beneficial in the checkout process to offer customers options e.g. cheaper or more expensive delivery based on how long it will take.
3. **Clarify what happens after purchase:** Make sure a customer knows how long your delivery process will take. If you sell a service, clarify what online confirmation and next steps a customer should expect.
4. **Offer security:** Make sure your pages are secure, and include known symbols to indicate this e.g. padlock symbol.

What next?

- Use Google Analytics to identify where customers are dropping out of your checkout process.
- Use Website Optimiser to test what combination of delivery, security and price details works best to seal the deal with customers.

10. Find this useful? Let me help!

"Thanks for listening, and I hope you've found my top ten tips useful. Here's the bottom line: your online business cannot be successful without customers! By listening to them, you can drive real improvements. Figure out what ads your customers like or don't like, measure what causes us to leave your website, test to find site design that's easy and intuitive for us to use. Help shoppers make the decision to buy from you!"



"Go on! Let me help!"

Top tips for conversions

At Google, we understand you need data to make decisions. We provide tools to help you understand how customers interact with your advertising and website.

1. **Drive high quality traffic:** Google AdWords allows you to reach more potential customers online. Learn what search terms and ad texts work best to drive results with your target audience.
2. **Understand trends on your website:** Start tracking how visitors interact with your site through Google Analytics. Understand what parts of your buying process could be improved to keep more customers on board.
3. **Stop guessing, start testing:** Website design need not be a matter of guess work. With Google Website Optimiser, you can test and track what content – images, layout, text etc - drives the most sales and leads.

What next?

- Find more information on Google AdWords at **google.com/adwords**
- Find more information on Google Analytics at **google.com/analytics**
- Find more information on Website Optimiser at **google.com/websiteoptimiser**

Additional resources

Google Conversion Room Blog
The place to go for tips on conversions
conversionroom.blogspot.com

Google Conversion Professionals
Google accredited professionals to help you
get the most conversions on your site
google.co.uk/gcp

Conversion University
Conversion help centre featuring multiple products
google.com/support/conversionuniversity



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