



Have you ever met someone who couldn't stop talking about themselves at a party?
It's pretty annoying, right?

Unfortunately, many hotel websites still suffer from this same compulsion.

They go on and on, boasting about their rooms' features, just like a brochure. They inform rather than inspire. And that's boring, really.

As a result, just like at a party, they're steadily pushing people away.

They're killing conversations with potential guests. They have very little chance of collecting email addresses and, even if they did, people have very little reason to read their emails anyway...

As a result, it's no wonder these hotels are dismayed by their website's performance. After all, they may be missing up to 80% of your sales opportunities, according to the National Sales Executive Association.

That's why I've come up with 8, simple steps you can walk through to determine if your website is missing these important sales opportunities as well. And I've included a few pointers in the right direction if it is. I hope you find this guide helpful.

All the best,

Jeremiah Magone

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**Do you have
a clear headline?**

1

It fails if:

It passes if:

You clearly communicate what your site is all about with a visitor-centric unique value proposition.

People's first reaction to your headline is, "Huh?" This often happens when headlines are trying to be clever, cute or grandiose. Also, avoid using the word "Experience". Done-to-death headlines are a big red flag for visitors.

Your headline makes a promise, speaks to a problem, has a unique take on a common perception or underlines the importance of urgency. Also remember, because headlines are so important, make sure to use social media to test them!

**Is your website
trustworthy?**

2

It fails if:

It passes if:

You clearly demonstrate that there are real people behind your website, and if your visitors send you questions, you'll get back to them immediately.

You send little signals that you aren't active on your website. This includes stale blog content, no social media feeds, no connection to the news of the day or an All Rights Reserved footer from 2014.

There are 3rd-party stickers on the top of your website to reassure your visitors. You show that you're just a phone call away. And you introduce yourself so people know they aren't just dealing with a faceless company.

Is your intro text short and sharp?

3

It fails if:

It passes if:

You quickly answer readers' "Oh yeah? What's that about" curiosity, when they first read your headline with a crisp, clear explanation that any 5-year old would understand.

You start describing what your company is "all about." The text takes off on a different subject from the headline. It doesn't entice the reader to spend time on your website. It bores or it doesn't point to the next logical step.

Your first few sentences are no more than 7 words long. You expand on the promise or statement in the headline to bring it into focus in a reader-benefit oriented way. And by doing this, your visitors know exactly what to expect of your site.

Is your site easy to navigate?

4

It fails if:

It passes if:

80% of your visitors can find exactly what they're looking for in the first 7 seconds on your site, simply by scanning.

The links are mainly at the end of sentences with words like, "Click here," or, "Learn more." You offer a Chinese menu of links instead of grouping them into logical categories. Your page flow isn't arranged according to the sales cycle.

Your 3 most important links are prominently displayed. Visitors don't have to read much to figure out where the link goes. You've included click-forward links at the bottom of each page. You use active verbs in your descriptions.

Is your copy reader-centric?

5

It fails if:

It passes if:

You answer visitors' doubts about your track record, credibility, main promise and price superiority and/or guarantee without talking about yourself. You do this by focusing on the benefit from your customers' point of view.

You find yourself starting each sentence with, "We" or, "Our". To fix this, simply put the benefit first. Instead of, "Our chefs are the best around..." Change it to: "You'll enjoy the best food around. Our award winning chefs make sure..."

Your copy always answers the 3"W" s. Why you? Why true? Why now? And the way those answers are presented keeps visitors moving forward through your sales cycle. You add momentum with active verbs, rich media and testimonials.

Do you actively guide visitors?

6

It fails if:

It passes if:

You create momentum by telling people what to do. And you keep them engaged by always promising something exciting/ useful/ informative around the corner.

You talk "about" things people will experience with your products or services but you never give them a way to actually see for themselves through a media-rich experience. Basically, your site resembles a brochure instead of a portal.

You are always showing people the next action they can take to 'get to the good stuff'. People are able to find exactly what they want with the minimal amount of clicks and they always understand "what comes next" on the path to purchase.

**Do you capture
email addresses?**

7

It fails if:

It passes if:

You offer something of exceptional value to your target audience in exchange for their email addresses. You do this while making sure they know you're secure and you're going to send something of value.

You tell them to: "sign up for news... or special offers," and you don't have anything to tell them about immediately. You find you aren't able to deliver your emails because they don't have a real reason to whitelist your address.

You have put together a special report that speaks directly to the needs, wants and desires of your target audience. As a follow up, you then start sending content that engages your audience and helps segment your list.

**Do you follow up
quickly and
continually?**

8

It fails if:

It passes if:

You're quick to respond to new sign-ups and you let them know exactly how often they'll hear from you, while giving them a taste of what to expect. After that, you work hard to build a solid 'know, like, trust' relationship.

Your communications are purely offer- or event-driven. You haven't introduced yourself, your 'tribe', or invited prospects to connect via social media. You haven't teased your next email or asked for their opinion on topics of common interest.

You show commonality with your readers by giving them the most targeted, useful information possible. You don't include promotions or calls to action in any of the first 3 emails. After that you follow the 90% content: 10% sales message ratio.

SALES STATISTICS

48% OF SALES PEOPLE NEVER FOLLOW UP WITH A PROSPECT
25% OF SALES PEOPLE MAKE A SECOND CONTACT AND STOP
12% OF SALES PEOPLE ONLY MAKE THREE CONTACTS AND STOP
ONLY 10% OF SALES PEOPLE MAKE MORE THAN THREE CONTACTS
2% OF SALES ARE MADE ON THE FIRST CONTACT
3% OF SALES ARE MADE ON THE SECOND CONTACT
5% OF SALES ARE MADE ON THE THIRD CONTACT
10% OF SALES ARE MADE ON THE FORTH CONTACT
80% OF SALES ARE MADE ON THE FIFTH TO TWELFTH CONTACT

Source: National Sales Executive Association

(If your website isn't following up, even once, what chance do you have, really?)

With the majority of hospitality business coming through online channels these days, it only makes sense to have the most engaging website possible.

It's not a catalogue with nice pictures and descriptions, it's a hub of communication, a portal of discovery... and thanks to the automation that technology offers... it's a major revenue channel working for you, 24/7! So then, why do so many businesses *still* treat it like a parking space for old sales brochures!

I'd love to add your website to the list of positive examples to point to when people want to optimize their websites. Please get in touch, share a few of your best practices and I'll be sure to highlight your site in the next version of this guide.

- Jeremiah

P.S. With a killer website, you can easily beat the competition. *Why?* Because the majority of businesses still haven't figured out how to use their websites to drive sales.

But that doesn't just apply to the hospitality sector.

Take a look at technology writer, John Mullen's [*Failure to Deliver survey*](#) from 100 of the fastest growing IT service company websites in the Inc. 5000.

You think these guys would be leading the field, but...

- ❖ Only 24% used **lead capturing devices** on their home page
- ❖ Only 52% displayed **signs of up-to-date activity** on their home page
- ❖ Only 14% offered clear **customer-focused benefits** in prominent headlines
- ❖ Only 26% took advantage of **online video** on their home page

This is bad news for them. They're dropping the ball.

But it's good news for you, because if they aren't using lead-generation practices in the IT sector, most likely, neither are *your* competitors. And that gives you a chance to score.

Simply follow recommendations on the flow chart above – and you will!