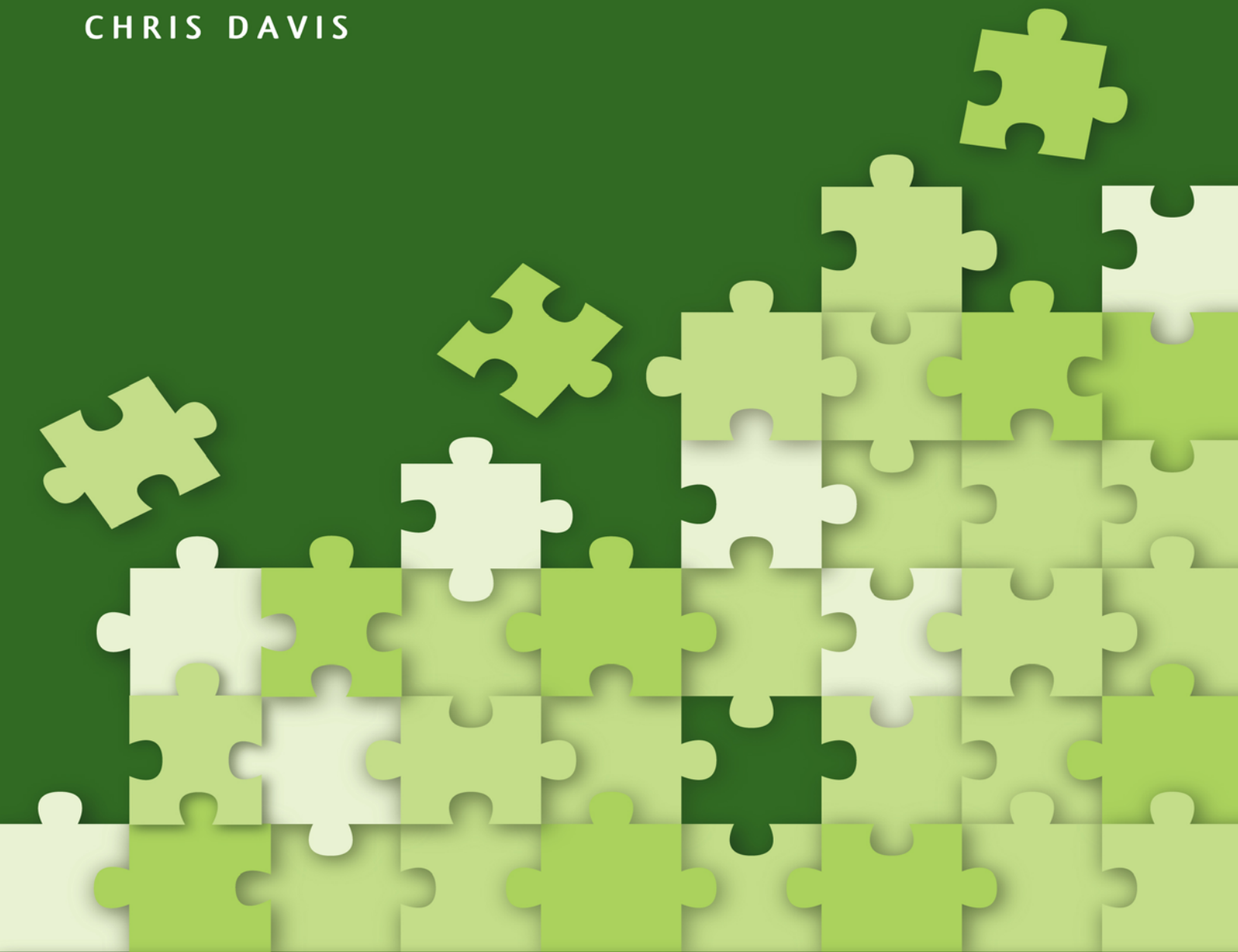


How To Redesign Your Website So It Increases Your Company's Profits

CHRIS DAVIS



DVS strategy & profit guides

How To

Redesign Your Website So It Increases Your Company's Profits

CHRIS DAVIS

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How To Benefit From This Book

This book is intended to be a practical guide for business owners, CEOs and senior marketing executives of medium-sized companies (with between \$10 million and \$100 million of annual revenue) who are undertaking the important project of redesigning their company's website. *If you keep this book by your side and use it throughout your redesign project, you will be much more likely to end up with a website that actually increases your company's profits.*

Whether or not you are planning to redesign your website, you should implement the strategy that will be discussed in Chapter 1. This strategy is so powerful that if you implement it alone, without doing anything else, even if you don't implement it perfectly, you can still significantly increase your sales and profits.

Chapters 2, 3 & 4 present some surprising, but powerful principles that will be crucial in developing your profitable website.

Use Chapter 5 as a checklist to make sure you aren't doing anything that will *prevent profits* on your newly redesigned website.

And, Chapters 6 & 7 arm you with some inside information about the web design business and help you avoid common mistakes when it comes to hiring the right firm to design and develop your website.

I've had a lot of fun writing this book. I hope you enjoy reading it and I hope it will help you to make more money from your website.

Chris Davis
Founder & CEO, DVS Consulting Group, LLC

The One Thing That Produces Website Profits More Than Anything Else... And, Why It's Missing From Your Website

You should have a form on your website that asks visitors for their name and email address and signs them up to receive your email newsletters.

And, in those email newsletters you should be:

- Pre-selling your company
- Making specific and irresistible offers to your new subscribers (your prospects)
- Positioning yourself as *the* expert in your industry
- Developing a relationship with your subscribers by injecting some personality
- Invoking the principal of reciprocity. When you give something of value to your prospects without asking for anything in return, they (because they are humans, and we are all subject to this) feel a natural obligation to return the favor in equal measure. This natural obligation makes them more likely to say yes to you when you ask them for something later, for example when you make your specific offers to them.
- (IMPORTANT) get their postal address so you can send them direct mail in addition to email

Now, before you say, “I’m already doing this, and it doesn’t produce any profits for me,” let me say this:

***If You’re Already Doing This,
And It’s Not Producing Profits For You,
Then You Are Doing It Wrong.***

How do I know this? Because almost everyone does this wrong.

And, because I know that, when done right, *it produces profits*. It’s time-tested. It works. Period. It doesn’t matter what business you are in, where you are located, none of that.

First, I’m going to show you the wrong way to do it so you know what to avoid. Then, I’m going to show you the right way to do it so you can increase your profits.

Here’s the wrong way to do it:

- 1) You offer nothing to visitors in exchange for their contact info, you just say “Sign up for updates” or “Get our newsletter”
- 2) You offer something to visitors in exchange for their contact info *that they don’t want or need*
- 3) Your form is not visible or eye-catching enough
- 4) Your form is hard-to-use, has errors, or just doesn’t work
- 5) You don’t send *any* emails after you get the visitors’ contact info
- 6) Your emails are being sent, but are not getting into your subscribers’ inboxes
- 7) You send too *many* promotional emails to new subscribers after they sign up
- 8) You send too *few* promotional emails to new subscribers

- 9) The promotional emails you send to new subscribers do not contain specific, irresistible, baby step offers, and you have not provided a reason for subscribers to respond *now*
- 10) You don't give enough value to subscribers in the emails you send them
- 11) You don't position yourself as the expert in your industry
- 12) You don't sound confident enough in the emails you send to your subscribers
- 13) You don't inject enough personality in the emails you send to your subscribers
- 14) You use *too much* personality in your emails (i.e. you talk about your cats in every email)
- 15) VERY IMPORTANT: You haven't mapped out your overall strategy, so you don't know what the next step is that you want your subscribers to take as you lead them through your sales funnel

See how many different ways there are to screw this up? It's no wonder that most people do it wrong.

But...

It's Not Your Fault.

No one ever showed you how to do this *the right way*. And, that's what I'm going to do right now.

Here's the right way to do it:

#1 – Make Sure They *Want* What You're Giving Away, And You've Got To Sell It Even Though It's Free

When you set up a form on your website and you ask visitors to give you their name and email address, you need to give them something in

return. You need to give them a valuable incentive for giving you their name, and especially their email address. The first trick here is that it has to be *something that they actually want*.

And, the second trick is that *you still need to sell it even though you're giving it away for free*. In fact, some successful marketers believe that you need to sell just as much to give something away for free as you do to sell a purchased item. If you have the room to write some copy for why your free report or e-book is worth downloading, then by all means do that, but on many websites you may only have enough room to rely on the title of the report or e-book to sell it. So, at the very least, make sure you give your give-away or bait a good title. Make the title a *benefits-driven headline*. Writing headlines that motivate people to act is beyond the scope of this book, but the title should communicate powerfully and succinctly why this report or e-book is valuable and what one big benefit they will receive from reading it and/or using the information in it.

So, if your business sells tropical fish tanks, for example, a free report entitled “101 Tropical Fish” doesn’t sound like something your website visitors would really care about. It’s too general and doesn’t sound like it would include anything that prospects would be very concerned about if they’re considering buying a tropical fish tank.

Now, on the other hand, if your free report was entitled “How To Clean & Maintain Your Tropical Fish Tank In Less Than 15 Minutes A Week” or “7 Little-Known Secrets To Keeping Your Tropical Fish Alive Much Longer,” I think your prospects would be much more motivated to exchange their name and email to get those—don’t you?

#2 – Make Sure Your Bait And Your Form Are Visible, Eye-Catching, Easy-To-Use And Error-Free

Your bait is the thing you’re giving away to people—the e-book, special report, etc. Your bait and your form need to get people’s attention and make them want to sign up.

There is nothing more important than you getting the greatest number of your targeted visitors to sign up for your email list. And, it is the image of your bait and your form (and your copy if you are using copy) that need to convince people to sign up.

So, we need to put these in a place on your site where they will be seen, and they need to be designed so they grab people's attention and get them to sign-up. Let's look at a few examples of visible, eye-catching placements and design:

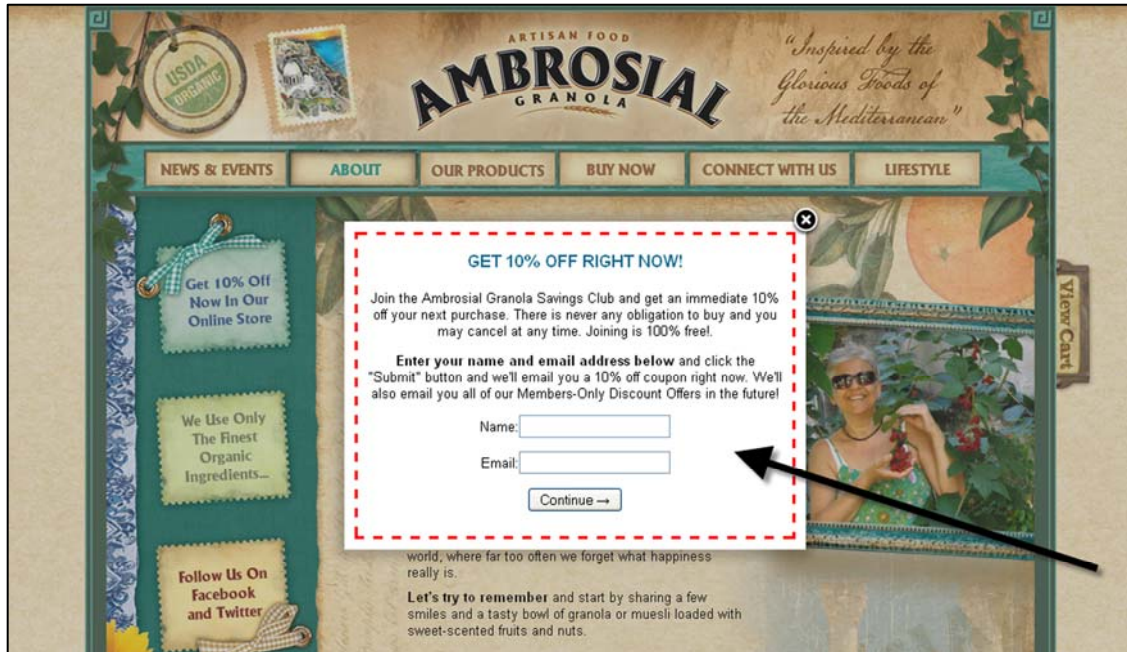
CASE STUDY: Ambrosial Granola

We recommended to our client, Ambrosial Granola (www.ambrosialgranola.com), that they offer a one-time, 10%-off coupon to anyone who signs up for their email list. So, where did we put this all-important sign-up button? Upper left corner on every page—the very first place the eye goes (see Exhibit 1 below). When visitors click the “Get 10% Off Now In Our Online Store” button in the upper left corner, a pop-up coupon-style form opens (see Exhibit 2 on the next page).

Exhibit 1



Exhibit 2

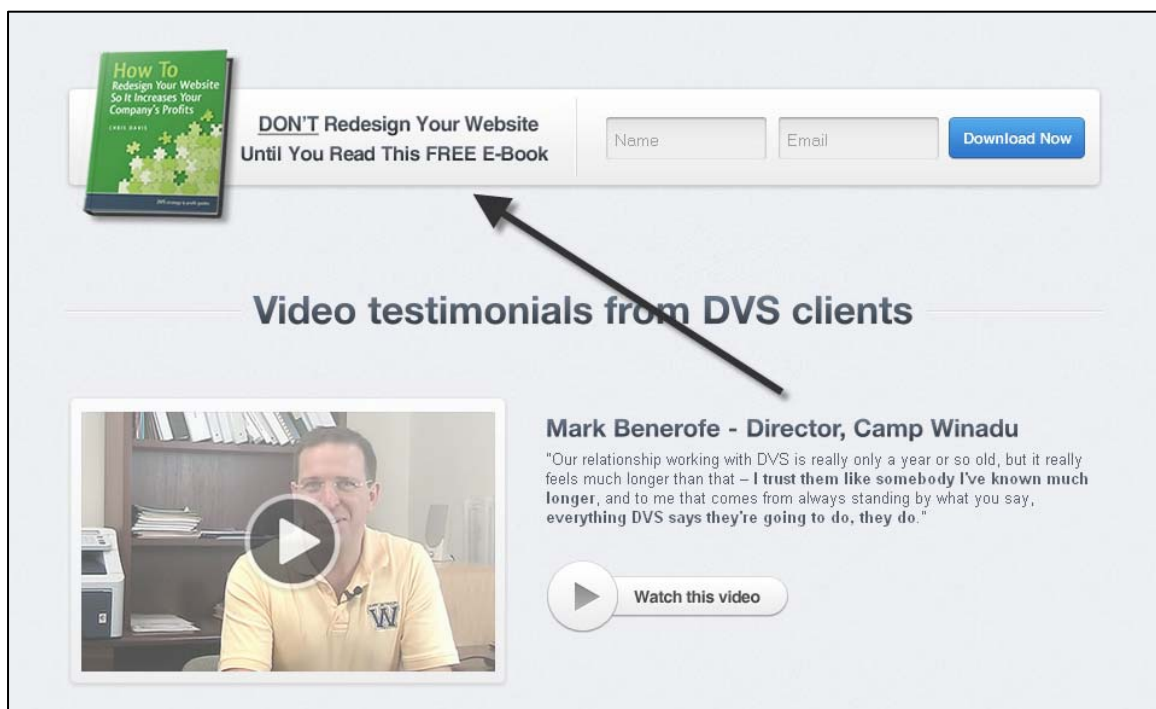


CASE STUDY: DVS Consulting Group

On the DVS website, we designed a cool, modern-looking bar that contains a horizontal form and a small image of this book you are reading now (see Exhibit 3 below). The bar also displays this eye-catching and persuasive message: “**DON’T Redesign Your Website Until You Read This FREE Report.**” It’s very persuasive because it’s a warning and because it offers a free but valuable solution.

We positioned this form-bar right below the fold on the home page, so it’s the first thing visitors see when they scroll down on the home page. And, we also put it right above the footer on every other page in the site.

Exhibit 3



We also created a much larger display to grab people on the home page of the DVS site. At the bottom of the home page is a giant image of this book you are reading now, with some enticing copy on the left side and a form right below the book (see Exhibit 4 on the next page). To see these examples on our site, go to www.dvscg.com.

Exhibit 4

"How To Redesign Your Website So It Increases Your Company's Profits"

FACT: Very few websites actually make a profit for their owners.

But, you should know... if your company sells a quality product or service, you can have a website that makes a profit – and we're going to show you how in this E-Book. This FREE E-Book reveals the strategies and tactics that transform your website from an expensive expense to a profit-producing asset.

- Why you should **NOT** hire a web design company
- The **ONE THING** that produces website profits more than anything else, and **why it's missing from your site!**
- 9 Common Mistakes companies make that **PREVENT PROFITS** on their websites
- How to avoid the 3 most common **WEB DESIGN RIP-OFFS**
- 3 Quick & Easy ways to make sure your web developer is technically competent
- ... And, more...

How To Redesign Your Website So It Increases Your Company's Profits
CHRIS DAVIS
DVS strategy & profit guides

DOWNLOAD OUR FREE E-BOOK
To download the E-Book now, just enter your name and email address and click the "Send Me the E-Book Now!" button.

Name Email

Send Me The E-Book Now!

The problem we see a lot is that when companies do have a sign-up form for their email list on their website, they usually design it poorly and put it somewhere where it's never found by most visitors.

Make this form visible, prominent, eye-catching and great-looking, and more people will sign up to your list!

#3 – You Gotta Actually Send The Emails And They Gotta Get Into The Inbox!

First, you have to send your new subscriber emails! You wouldn't believe how many people set all of this up and then don't take the time to write the emails that their new subscribers signed up to receive.

The cool thing is you can write a bunch of emails now and you can set it up so that they are sent to the subscriber on a schedule that you determine. (You use what is called autoresponder software for this—we recommend Aweber.) So, you can write 10 emails and set it up so that the first email is sent to the new subscriber on the first day that they sign up, and then the second email is sent to them 3 days later, and then the third email is sent to them a week later, and so on, however you want to set it up.

But, you have to write the emails! (Or, talk to us and we can write them for you!)

The next problem we see is that companies will write the emails and then get very little response. In a lot of these cases, after investigating, we find out that this is because their emails are ending up in subscribers' spam folders and never being seen or opened. This can be fixed very easily—get an account with a reputable email autoresponder company. We recommend www.aweber.com. Aweber has great relationships with the ISP companies because they are very strict about following the rules and not letting their members send spam. The result is that when you use Aweber for your email provider *your emails get into your subscribers' inboxes and stay out of their spam folders.*

#4 – What Should You Write In These Emails?

OK—this part is important. This is another important area where *how you do it* makes a big difference.

Your new subscriber has taken a chance and trusted you by giving you their email address.

Here's my promise to you: If you treat your subscribers with respect, send them a good mix of value and promotional emails and entertain 'em a little you should see some very interesting and exciting results.

Let's look at each of these briefly:

Treat Them With Respect:

Don't bombard them with hard-sell email messages sent every single day. That's not respectful. Don't ask them to take big next steps, or hard-sell them—that's not respecting the fact that people like to buy things and not be sold, and they like to move cautiously and slowly with a new company. Ask them to take small steps, moving them ever closer to a first transaction with you—small, safe baby steps. That's respectful, and it shows that you're not desperate for their business. It shows that you're willing to move slowly, at their pace, and that you want them to be comfortable during the process.

Good Mix Of Value And Promotional Emails:

Again, if you send nothing but emails that offer your products and services, then you'll probably get very little response and a lot of people will unsubscribe from your list. If you send emails to your subscribers that are valuable—that actually help them with what they are trying to accomplish (that is related to your product or service), then:

- They will be thankful for you
- They will begin to trust you
- They will see that you understand their problem as well or better than they do
- They will see you as the expert that can help them achieve their desired outcome (which hopefully your product and services achieves) better than anyone else

So, the value emails are important. Give before you get and your business will grow and prosper.

You should also send promotional emails—these are emails that make specific offers to your subscribers to move them to the next step in your sales process, or to get them to make their first purchase with you.

What should the mix be? Generally speaking 60% - 70% value emails and 30% - 40% promo emails.

Let's go back to our example of the store owner who sells tropical fish aquariums. Here are a few examples of a sequence of emails this business could send to its subscribers:

1. The four most common questions we get about tropical aquariums, and our answers (value email)
2. Tropical fish aquarium tip #3: Everything you need to know about water temperature (value email)
3. Free month's supply of tropical fish food (promo email)
4. Tropical fish aquarium tip #4: Everything you need to know about tropical fish food (value email)
5. Interview with John Smith, the author of *Tropical Fish Aquariums For Dummies* (value email)
6. How much you can expect to spend in total on a new tropical fish aquarium (value *and* promo email—after you give a typical budget and list of everything a person needs for a new tropical aquarium set up, you could make them a limited-time offer for that exact set up or that one and more basic one for less money, etc.)
7. And so on. . .

Entertain 'Em A Little:

People are bored—everyone sends them boring stuff, boring emails, boring voicemails, boring, boring, boring. And, everyone is woefully underappreciated also.

So, come up with some fun and creative ways to entertain your subscribers a little bit by adding some personality. Talk about your personal life a little bit, do something a little outrageous. Not too much though—we're not interested in daily updates about your cats, but do

talk about your kids and talk about your interests, music, hobbies. Weave these things in here and there and your subscribers will start to want to know more and they'll want to hear more from you more and they'll become *interested in you*.

Why Should You Do All Of This?

REASON #1: You Get More Time In Front Of Your Prospects Than Your Competition Does

One of the major problems in selling is that you only get a limited amount of time to actually be in front of your prospect. You may have a phone call or two, a few emails and maybe an hour face-to-face meeting if you're lucky.

If you had an unlimited amount of time to be in front of your prospects, you would probably sell a lot more (assuming certain other factors were in place). This is because a large proportion of sales are lost due to a lack of information. The prospect doesn't have enough information or the right information yet and this keeps them from buying from you. If you had more time, you could supply more information and eventually the prospect would have all he or she needs, and would buy from you.

This strategy of setting up the form on your website, getting visitors to subscribe to your email list and building a relationship with them through email (and hopefully postal mail also) is as close as we can get to an unlimited amount of time in front of our prospects. It's not perfect—it's definitely nowhere near unlimited, but it sure is a lot more time in front of the prospect than everyone else is getting, and *that's a tremendous advantage!*

REASON #2: You Invoke The Principal Of Reciprocity

If you've never read *Influence* by Dr. Robert Cialdini, put that book on the top of your list. One of the principals discussed in Dr. Cialdini's book is called reciprocity.

When we give something to another person and that person accepts it, they will feel a natural inclination to return the favor. They will feel obligated to give something back to you, or to comply with a request that you make in the future to make things even, so to speak.

So, when you give something of real value to a visitor on your website—your bait, that person will become more likely to say yes to a request you make of them in the future—your specific offers. And, if you provide them more valuable information in the emails you send to them, the likelihood of them saying yes to your next request increases even more.

We all feel this sense of obligation that is produced by the principal of reciprocity. None of us can escape it. It's human nature.

“Your prospects will feel naturally obligated to comply with your future requests—it’s human nature.”

Your competitors are not doing this, but *you* can. Doing it can give you an immediate and decisive advantage in your marketplace. Which leads me to...

REASON #3: You Will Gain A Significant Advantage Over Your Competitors

Your competitors are not doing any of this. If they are, they're doing it wrong, which is the same as not doing it.

If you do this, and you do it right, you and your company will appear (to your prospects) to care more than your competitors. And, hopefully you do actually care more than them, but doing this will make it clear to your prospects, *before they buy*. How many other ways do you have to show your prospects, before they buy from you, that you care more than your competitors?

Most businesses, if they even realize that it's important to show prospective customers that they care, will just say, "We care more than our competition." We know this to be true because we see this in ad slogans everywhere we look. But, saying you care is never really very effective. It's only effective when your prospect realizes it on their own, without you telling them. And, that happens when you show it for real, instead of telling them. If you provide your prospects with valuable information (your bait—free report, e-book, etc.) and no other company they're considering does that, then you must care more, because you *do* more than everyone else.

The best part is: all of this can be systematized, so showing your prospects that you care more than your competitors requires very little ongoing effort after you set this system up!

This is beginning to sound pretty good now, isn't it?

Besides knowing that you care about them more than your competitors, what else does every prospective customer or client want to know about you?

Are you thorough and competent?

Are you an expert at what you do?

The bait you give to your visitors—the free report or e-book, should be written in a way that subtly positions you as an expert. Just by doing this, you will appear to be more of an expert than your competitors, who are not giving anything away to their prospects.

"Your prospects will believe that you care more than your competitors, without you having to tell them that."

By simply putting down on paper the things you already know, and the advice you would give someone who is trying to make an intelligent buying decision about the product or service you sell, you can position

yourself as the leading expert in your field. This elevates your status in the prospect's mind, and you start to appear to be the *only* one that they would trust to buy from.

This is very powerful.

Doing that, and doing it right, will make you appear to care more, to be more thorough, more prepared, more organized, more competent and more of an expert than any of your competitors.

You can set all of this up with some front-loaded work, and then let the system automatically deliver your bait and your emails, seamlessly putting you into a higher, better, more trusted and more appealing position in your prospects' minds.

How many opportunities like that do you have in business? *Not too many.*

Let's Wrap This Up...

I could write an entire book on just this one strategy and how it fits into an overall online-front-end sales system for your business.

For now, try to follow the steps and instructions I laid out in the previous pages, and do them as well as you can. You won't do it perfectly, but it doesn't need to be done perfectly. You should be able to do it well enough to yield some very good results.

Of course, when you're ready to step it up to a higher level and turn your website into a 24/7 lead-generating machine, we would be glad to discuss how we can implement all of this for you. We offer a solution where we design, develop, and integrate this strategy fully into your website and sales system.

Why You Should NOT Hire A Web Design Firm To Redesign Your Website

It might sound counterintuitive, but *don't* hire a web design company to design your new website. Web designers know how to design. They *don't* know how to sell and market products and services.

Why is this important to you?

Because your website is a sales and marketing tool. Its primary purpose is to make you more money.

We ask our clients to think of their website as a member of their sales force. Your website is a salesperson (who is selling 24 hours a day, seven days a week, *which is pretty nice*).

Now, I agree, you wouldn't want your salesperson to show up to a new client meeting in a tank-top and sweatpants. You want your salesperson to wear clothing that makes a favorable first impression with new prospects. But, even dressed-to-kill, in fabulous threads, a salesperson that doesn't know how to sell is still not going to convert many (or any) of your new prospects into clients.

Similarly, if your website is the most beautiful and impressive website the world has ever seen, but it does a lousy job of presenting and selling your products and services, it is unlikely to convert many of your visitors into new leads or clients.



***“Web designers
and web design
companies know
how to design.
They don't know
how to sell.”***

A salesperson needs more than just the right clothes. And, your website needs more than just a beautiful design.

So what? Everyone says that these days. Everyone is saying the same thing: “Your website needs more than just a great-looking design.”

That’s true, but the people saying that are making the point that in addition to a great design, your website also needs to be simple, user-friendly, and easy-to-use, which it does—they’re right. A cluttered, confusing website will block your Internet profits from arriving in your bank. And, some of the people saying this are quite good at doing those things (in addition to web design). In the web design industry, those things are called User Experience (UX) design, Information Architecture (IA), Usability, etc.

But Even Adding Those Things Still Doesn’t Get You A Profitable Website

It makes sense if we think about it. You can have a beautiful, impressive-looking site *that is also* easy-to-use and gives the user a great experience.

So what?

Still didn’t sell anything.

What’s missing?

SALES & MARKETING.

Yes, you do need a great-looking site. Yes, you do need a great user experience and a simple, uncluttered, easy-to-use site.

But, even more important than all of that, you need a site that actually sells your products and services. And, very few web designers know how to make a site that sells.

So then, how do you get this “Sales & Marketing” that is missing from most websites?

Find someone who knows how to make websites that sell. Someone who has lots of experience selling real products and services using the Internet. Someone who is more concerned with your marketing first and your design second (while still being able to make a beautiful design!)

IDEALLY, You Should...

...find a company that can build websites that actually convert visitors into leads and new customers, and has a track record to back that up, and can also create beautiful, professional, easy-to-use websites (because they have hired the appropriate talented people to do that).

FACT: It’s easy to find people who can design great websites. Look at how many web design companies there are. (Although, sadly, most of them still don’t make *great* websites.)

FACT: It’s much harder to find people who actually know how to get things sold in the real world. Again, just look around. How many truly great salespeople do you see? Not too many. A lot of bad salespeople who never hit their quotas are everywhere you look. And, it’s even harder to find people who can actually get things sold using the Internet.

So, if you can find a firm that is actually good at online sales and marketing, that also builds beautiful, professional-looking, easy-to-use websites, then that would be the best option.

Now, I have no problem being fully transparent here. Is this a setup to highlight the fact that my company DVS Consulting Group is exactly the kind of ideal company I just described?

AB-SO-LUTELY.

But, that doesn't mean that what I'm saying here isn't true.

You'll notice I named my company *DVS Consulting Group*, not *DVS Web Design*. This is because we are first and foremost, a strategic sales and marketing consulting firm focused on increasing profits for your company. But we can also design a mean website. Want proof? Check out our online portfolio:

<http://www.dvscg.com/portfolio>

We do provide a very specific service though: *We transform the Internet into a profitable marketing channel for medium-sized companies with between \$10 million and \$100 million of annual revenue.*

This means that we may not be the right choice for you.

“Your website is a sales and marketing tool. Its primary purpose is to make you more money.”

For example, if your website only needs to be an online calling card, or if your website's main purpose is to provide customer service, then we aren't for you.

We focus on making your website and your Internet presence a profit center for your company, *and* we also build you a website that is beautiful, professional-looking, attention-grabbing, simple, clean and easy-to-use.

Because we focus first on making the Internet a profitable marketing channel for your business, *we do much more* than regular web design companies. For example, we have developed a proprietary marketing process which includes a large list of tasks that we complete before we even sketch out wireframes for your website, before we design one pixel on your website.

Here are *just a few* of these tasks:

1. Ask client what their company's Unique Selling Proposition (USP) is
2. Interview client and client's staff members with USP questions
3. Research competition, develop USP ideas for client and present to client in brainstorming/strategy session
4. Interview client and their staff about the company's process, in great detail
5. Reveal to client the little-known secret for easily making their process a tremendous differentiator in the marketplace
6. Discuss lifetime value of a customer (LVC) with client
7. Develop competitive advantage based on LVC for client
8. Collect all testimonials the client has ever obtained
9. Read all testimonials, determine which are usable, which are not
10. Discuss with client the process for gathering new testimonials
11. Ask client: "What business are you *really* in?"
12. How can we reposition/reinvent this business for marketing purposes?
13. How can we add continuity to this business?
14. Work with client to develop multiple irresistible offers
15. Interview client's customers to get their "brain words," concerns, reasons they buy
16. Use *Amazon Research Method* to extract marketplace objections, desires, "brain words" and psychological triggers for client's target market
17. Research, discover and map-out the sales and marketing strategy of client's 2 – 3 top competitors and then find the market gaps that client can exploit with their sales and marketing strategy
18. *And many more...* (This is just the tip of the iceberg. The list that these examples come from is actually a proprietary marketing process that we do not publicly share with anyone.)

Having said all that, if you choose not to work with us (which would be a grave error in judgment ☺), or if our 15 slots for the year are already filled and we can't fit you in, then I strongly recommend to you, if it is your goal to make the Internet a profitable marketing channel for your company, that you do *not* rely on a web designer or web design company (or interactive agency for that matter) to help you make a profitable website. Those companies are only good at designing. Over the years, they've added the "Oh yeah, we're also good at helping you sell things online too" because they know that's important to people and companies like yours now. But, that doesn't mean they *are* actually good at selling online. Don't be fooled.

Find someone who is an expert at selling online, someone who is an expert at converting visitors into leads and sales, someone who is an expert at creating and building relationships with new prospects, and hire them as the right company for this specific job.

Why You Should Stop Looking At Your Competitors' Websites

Most of us have a natural tendency to want to look at our competitors' websites for clues about how to build our own.

As natural as it seems, this tendency should be avoided in almost all cases (there are a few exceptions I'll discuss at the end).

Why should we stop looking at our competitors' websites?

Because most people have no idea how to make a website profitable. Most *web design companies* and *interactive agencies* have no idea how to make a website profitable.

"It is unlikely that your competitors' websites are profitable, so don't copy them."

Want proof? The vast majority of websites are not profitable.

If more people knew how to make websites profitable, there would be more profitable websites.

So, it follows that if the vast majority of websites are not profitable, then it is almost certain that most or all of your competitors' websites are not contributing profitably to their bottom lines.

If that's the case, and it is—*please don't copy their websites.*

Most of us have this tendency to want to copy our competitors because we assume that what they're doing is successful. In my 12

years of experience consulting with companies of all sizes on all forms of online marketing, I found that just the opposite is true—most websites and most online marketing are woefully ineffective.

So, don't copy your competitors' websites.

My policy is to assume that what others are doing does not work, and is not profitable, because in my experience, the masses are mostly wrong. (Yes, they are guilty until proven innocent!)

I mentioned two exceptions.

First, there is one reason why you *should* look at your competitors' sites. Don't look at their websites to copy what they're doing, look at them so you can *see what they're doing and then do something different that will make you stand apart from them and all the other people copying them!*

The second exception applies when you know that the sites you are looking at are indeed profitable or very successful. If this is the case, then using those sites as a model *is a very good strategy indeed.*

We did this with one of our clients, BoardMyBiz.com. BoardMyBiz.com is a website that uses a sophisticated matching algorithm to match small business owners with business advisors so the small business owners can build advisory board for their companies.

BoardMyBiz.com wanted a website that would convince their visitors to register for free and then fill out their profile as completely as possible. When we designed their website, we used Facebook and LinkedIn as models for how to set up the registration process. Now, we knew that Facebook and LinkedIn were very successful websites, so we knew that using their registration process and design as models for BoardMyBiz.com's website would be a very smart strategy indeed.

We were right, and it worked. Within the first three months of its launch, the BoardMyBiz.com website converted an average of 74% of all visitors into new registrants.

Important summary points:

1. Most websites don't make their companies profits and most marketing is woefully ineffective, so assume that your competitors are guilty of bad marketing unless you have proof to the contrary
2. Don't copy a website or marketing unless you *know* it works, unless you know it's successful, even if you feel a natural tendency to look at your competitors' websites.

It's Not Your Website's Job To Close The Deal—Your Website's Only Job Is To Move Your Prospects To The Next Sales Step

There are some obvious exceptions to this, like if you have an e-commerce site for example, but by and large, if your company sells a product or service that is not bought directly online, then you shouldn't try to close the sale with your new prospect on your website.

It's far better to just figure out what is the next step in the sales process that you want a brand-new visitor to take, and then have it be the goal of your website to get new visitors to take that step.

If you received this book as a result of visiting our website, then the DVS Consulting Group website has successfully moved you to the next step of our sales process. Our website didn't try to sell you a website redesign project; it only offered some very attractive reasons for you to consider us, and it offered you a free book that hopefully is of real value to you. So, now you're on our email newsletter list, and we have your permission to send you a sequence of emails that are designed to start a relationship with you, develop some trust, show you that we're experts at what we do, show you that we go above and beyond what our competition does, and so on.

When we try to accomplish too much, we tend to not accomplish anything. When we narrow our focus, and narrow the scope of our goals, it becomes easier to achieve them.

And, more importantly, the reality of human behavior shows us that you should never expect your prospects to do anything but move slowly and cautiously with a new firm that they've never worked with before.

Many people try to make their website sell their products and services fully, all in one fell swoop. This is counterproductive for several reasons.

First, very few people buy new things in one sitting, or during one interaction with a new company. People go through stages of interaction with a new vendor, and they don't like to be rushed because this throws up red flags for them.

“Very few people buy new things in one sitting, or during one interaction with a new company.”

If you appear to be selling too hard or too fast to someone new, they will see it immediately and will shut down before you can accomplish anything with them. People need to feel like they can trust you *before* they buy from you. If you try to sell them all in one shot on your website, then, from their perspective, it seems like you want to rush them through the process and just get their money. How much trust does that build? *Not much.*

Second, for all its power and ability, a website is still essentially just a one-way communication device, and converting a first-time visitor all the way into a new customer using a one-way communication device is difficult, because of the things I mentioned above: people needing to move slowly, cautiously and in stages of interaction, etc.

You may say, “But, direct mail is a great example of converting cold, first-time prospects into new customers.” And, I agree—it does happen with direct mail, but generally speaking, multi-step direct mail sequences are necessary to sell most products and services, and the more complex and expensive your product or service is, the more interactions and steps you will need in the sales process.

So the takeaway here is:

You don't need to fully sell your products and services on your website. Your website's only job is to get your new prospect to take the next step in your sales process, whatever you've determined that to be.

So then your website really becomes a piece or a mechanism in your overall sales process. And, your sales process is a strategy. You need to develop your sales strategy prior to building your website, so you know which step your website should move its new visitors to.

The companies that are most successful at converting new prospects to leads and new leads to customers are those that have a *pre-determined, and largely automated sales strategy and system.*

At DVS, we see your website as a single piece of an overall sales and marketing strategy. Your sales and marketing strategy is a *pre-determined* process that new prospects are led through that converts them into leads and then into new customers (and then into repeat customers). And, this strategy or *sales system* needs to be developed *before* your website is built or even begun, because everything important in the website will be determined by the sales strategy and system.

“At DVS, we see your website as a single piece of an overall sales and marketing strategy.”

Before we even begin thinking about designing your website, we want to know what happens when a person calls your telephone number that they got from your website's contact page? We want to know: how do your people answer the phone? How are new callers greeted? What is the conversation that follows? Do your people make an offer to new callers on the phone?

We want to know: what exactly is sent to a new caller if they request to receive information about your company? What happens after this information is sent out? What happens if the person calls again after

they receive your information? How do you get appointments? How do you follow up?

All of that is part of your sales and marketing strategy and system, and all of it is also related to the goals and objectives of your website, the information your website provides, the design and look and feel of your website, etc. It's all related. *It all needs to work together and be one coherent message and statement.*

How can you build a website without examining all of that and making sure it's all working together? It happens every day, and this is why there are so few profitable websites.

Almost no other web design companies or interactive agencies think this way or work this way with their clients. We know this to be true from experience—our clients tell us exactly what it was like to work with their previous web designers and other online marketing companies.

To build a website without first developing the sales strategy that it should serve is like completing your new house's kitchen before you even start to draw up architectural blueprints for the house.

That doesn't make sense to us.

9 Common Mistakes Companies Make That PREVENT Profits On Their Websites

#1: Your website looks like it was designed by your neighbor's teenage son in the 1990s.

Your website looks amateurish, or it's just plain ugly. Probably both. *You are actually hurting your business by continuing to have this type of website representing it.*

How do *you* feel when you're doing research on companies that sell something that you need to buy, and you see one company that has a professionally designed website and then you see another company that has a website that looks like it was designed by the next-door neighbor's teenage son in 1993? It makes a world of difference, doesn't it?

#2: Your website is cluttered and causes confusion for your visitors.

You have less than 3 seconds to get a new visitor to stay on your website and dig a little deeper. Clutter causes confusion and overwhelms website visitors. If your visitors are confused or overwhelmed, they're going to leave, because *they don't like to feel confused and overwhelmed*. Simple, clear and easy-to-understand is what we're after here.

#3: Your website is too fancy. It looks like a movie or a video game, not a website.

Yes, you want (and need) a clean, professional, great-looking website. But, overly impressive designs with too much Flash and non-standard menus, video-game type controls etc., confuse and irritate website visitors. People are busy, and they don't have time to be screwing around with something that takes forever to load and then not knowing how to use it or navigate it once it does load. Your visitors don't want to be impressed; they want what to get the information they came for, and get it fast.

Forget fancy and focus on simple, easy, clean, and professional, and on presenting an irresistible message and offer. *That's what brings money in*—not fancy and impressive.

#4: Your website has too many options for visitors to click on—it's not focused enough.

This sounds like #2 above, "Your website is cluttered and causes confusion for your visitors," but it's actually different. Most websites present too many options to their visitors—do this, do that, click on this, click on that. People get anxious when they're presented with too many options (read *The Paradox of Choice* by Barry Schwartz), and when they get anxious, they tend not to make any decision at all!

Yes, your website needs to have menus so that people can easily navigate it, but your website *can* be designed so that a small number of choices seem most appealing and most visible to your visitors. This way, they feel able to manage a small number of choices *and* they will be more likely to do the things you want them to do on your website.

#5: Your website is hard-to-use and hard-to-navigate.

I was on a frustrating website yesterday. On the home page, the link to the Contact page is located in the upper right corner. I click into

one of the inner pages and now the contact link is gone—it has been replaced with a different menu, a sub-menu I think. But, now I can't find the contact link! I scroll down to the bottom of this inner page, and lo and behold, there's the contact link, at the very bottom in the right corner. *Not good.* No consistency for your user. Links should always stay where they are. And the worst part? This website is making it difficult for its visitors to CONTACT THEM! *Not good.* This navigation and ease-of-use concept seems like it wouldn't directly affect the sales and profits of your company perhaps. But, *if you make it difficult for interested prospects who are on your website to find your contact information, how could you possibly prevent profits for your company more directly than that?*

#6: Your website doesn't do enough.

Your website is an electronic brochure. It has a Home Page, a Services Page, an About Us page and a Contact Us Page. You are not answering the questions that are in your visitors' minds, which are:

“Why should I do business with this company rather than with their competitors, or rather than not doing anything at all? Why should I be on this website at all? What's different about this company? How will I be protected if I buy from this company? How will I make sure I won't look like a fool if I buy from this company? All they have is an About page and a Services page—that stuff is all about them, but what about me? What do I get out of doing business with this company? What is their process?”

Also, you are expecting them to take the first step—that's the inherent implication in having only a Contact page and really nothing else. You're saying, “If you're interested, call us, and then we'll give you more info.” But, prospects don't want to take the first step. *They want you to take the first step.* They want you to lead them and show them the process. They want to see what *you* have to offer *them*. You need to answer their questions, make them see the big benefits of doing business with you and most importantly: make them a baby-step offer that they can do comfortably. Then, you need to lead them through a sales process that educates them, builds trust with them,

and convinces them that you are the only source of what they are looking for. *This is how profitable websites are made.*

#7: You don't have any testimonials, or you're using them the wrong way.

We've all been screwed so many times now that we've developed a skepticism when we hear companies say nice things about themselves. We just don't believe it anymore when companies say that they'll do this or that and they'll deliver this or that. This is why, ideally, you want your prospects to know all the great things about your company *without having to actually tell them those things.*

But, how do you do that?

One way is to let other people tell them for you. Testimonials can be very powerful, *if you get good ones and use them right.* Very few websites have any testimonials at all. And, most websites that do have testimonials usually either have terribly ineffective testimonials, or if they have good testimonials, they bury them so no one can ever find them.

First, here's an example of an ineffective testimonial: "I really think that ABC, Inc. is a great company. The people were nice to me and I enjoyed working with them. —E.S. Boise, ID" Why is it ineffective? It doesn't say anything about the specific benefits that ABC Inc. is claiming to offer to prospective new clients, and in fact, it doesn't really say anything substantive at all. And, the person's name is just initials, a city and a state—that seems pretty anonymous, almost like this entire testimonial was made up. In other words, it's not very believable or credible, even if it is real.

If you want to see examples of very effective testimonials, watch the videos on this page:

<http://www.dvscg.com/client-video-testimonials.html>

First, they're videos, which is 1,000 times more impactful than text on a web page. These are real people who were so happy with our service that they agreed to appear in a video to describe their experiences with us. These are real clients, and you get to see them and hear them in person. That's a far cry far from just initials, a city and a state. And, the people in the videos, our past and current clients, are genuinely and positively remarking on exactly the things that we say are different and beneficial about working with DVS Consulting Group. These testimonials are much more believable and credible, and because they are believable and credible, *they are much more persuasive.*

And, we put these testimonials front and center on our website, where they cannot be missed. They're located in the main slide show on our home page. They also occupy the second section of our home page if you scroll down. And, they're a sub-page in our "Why DVS?" section. With this positioning and visibility, these videos get watched all the time.

One of the things that we do differently than other web design and online marketing companies in an effort to make your website more profitable is that we actually get testimonials for you as part of our service. With your permission, we contact your past clients and customers and we get *highly-effective testimonials* from them. We make sure that the testimonials we get from them are impactful and specific to the benefits and differentiators of your business. And, we make sure to position the testimonials so they are visible and easy-to-find on your website. If you'd like more information about how we get testimonials for you and implement them into your website as part of our service, please visit this page:

<http://www.dvscg.com/contact.html>

and use the form to send us an email, and we'll be happy to respond to you as soon we can.

#8: Your website copy stinks.

This is a BIG one. These days, everyone says, “No one reads web copy; everyone just skims.” The reality is that many visitors do skim web copy, that is *until they see something that really interests them. When they become interested, they carefully read every word on your site.*

Don't you do the same thing? If you're researching something you want to buy, don't you skim until you find something that attracts your interest, and then as soon as a company or product seems like it might be a possibility, don't you read everything you can about it to try and confirm whether you will buy or not?

So, forget “No one reads web copy; everyone just skims.” It's a cop-out and an excuse.

To have a profitable website, you need copy that grabs the ATTENTION of the skimmer, makes them INTERESTED, fuels their DESIRE to learn more about you, and drives them to take ACTION. The words I underlined in the previous sentence comprise the classic direct-marketing formula: AIDA. Attention, Interest, Desire, Action. Your website copy needs to use the classic marketing formulas that are time-tested, and proven to work, like AIDA and PAS (Problem, Agitate, Solve). Your copy needs to make offers to your visitors, it needs to create scarcity, or a reason to respond now, and more. Writing good copy is one of the most important things you can do on your website. Don't ignore it. Don't skimp on it. Don't leave it to chance.

#9: You have no video or audio on your website.

People love to watch videos and listen to audio on the Internet. And, this is great news for you, because the more multimedia you provide to prospects (your website visitors), the more of a connection you can make with them. The more of a connection you make, the more likely it is that they'll choose you over your competition (who is not

using video and audio and has not made as much of a connection with them as you have).

During the redesign of our client Camp Winadu's website, we urged them to create a Videos & Photos page, because we believed this would really showcase the camp's culture, character, benefits and feel, and would be a great opportunity to connect with their visitors with more and different types of media.

This new page that we created for them—the Videos & Photos page became the 3rd most visited page (not including the home page) out of 86 total pages on their new website. You can see that page by visiting this URL:

http://www.campwinadu.com/videos_photos.htm

People are hungry for video! And, it builds a stronger connection with your prospects, so use it.

How To Avoid The 3 Most Common Web Design RIP-OFFs

#1: Kill fees.

One of our clients came to us straight from a bad experience with another web design company. Our client was receiving virtually no service from this other firm, their project was severely delayed, and they were very unhappy with how their web design was coming out. So, after deciding to give DVS their business instead, they realized that their contract with this previous web design firm stated that if they terminated the project, that they were obligated to pay 75% of the entire cost of the project, regardless of how much of the site was done.

It's very rare to find a web design company that offers true satisfaction guarantees. This is probably because web design is a service and web designers and other employees get paid for the time they spend working. But to me, that doesn't matter. If you can return a shirt to Neiman Marcus for all your money back and no questions asked, then you should be able to do the same with web design—I see no difference. Maybe because I tend to see things more from the customer's point of view.

Charging a kill fee and hiding it in the fine print of a web design contract is a *rip-off*.

Read your contract carefully before you sign it. If you don't like what you see, we'd be happy to offer you a full 100% money-back guarantee on your website redesign project—it always comes standard at DVS Consulting Group.

#2: Non-modifiable code.

One of the easiest rip-offs a web design company can pull off right under your nose is *the old non-modifiable code trick*. Here's how this con works: your trusty web design company writes code for your website (either knowingly because they are sinister, or not knowingly because they're incompetent) that simply cannot be modified by another web design company or developer. Not because the new person or firm can't modify it, but because to do so would cost you more money than completely recoding the entire site, because the existing code is so sloppy, convoluted, disorganized, and not properly commented—a big mess.

Why is that a rip-off? For some firms, the ones that are more sinister, it forces you to only use them to make any future modifications, so they're essentially extorting your money by making them the only firm that can or will agree to modify their code. It's also a money-sink for you because if your code looks like what I described above, then your site will have considerable disadvantages until you re-code it so it validates with W3C industry standards, so it is SEO-friendly, flexible, and easily modifiable in the future, and that also ain't cheap!

To avoid this rip-off, check out Chapter 7.

#3: Bait & switch client service.

One of our clients hired a web design firm (before they hired us), and here's what happened:

During the sales process when our client was considering hiring this firm, they had unrestricted access to the CEO and Vice President and were promised the same access to these senior people throughout their project. A month after hiring this firm, our client was relegated to contact only from a junior account manager, who was less knowledgeable and less reliable. Then, our client's project started having long delays and our client became irritated with the low-level

of service, and tried many times to contact the more senior people with no luck.

This is common in web design, even with (sometimes especially with) the larger web design companies. So, before you sign anything, ask specifically who will be working on your project and whether that will change over the course of your project. And, I strongly recommend that you ask to speak to at least three past or current clients and ask them this question directly.

DVS guarantees, and will put it in writing, that I, Chris Davis, the Founder & CEO, will personally work with you (along with our other team members of course) on your project from beginning to end. And, we have a list of references with full contact information and we encourage you to call all of them. We'll be glad to provide this list to you. Just send us an email using this form:

<http://www.dvscg.com/contact.html>

3 Quick & Easy Ways To Make Sure Your Website Developer Is Technically Competent

This section is very important and can save you a lot of money.

If you hire a web design firm and they do a lousy job of coding your website, you can end up with an SEO-challenged website that attracts way fewer visitors than it would if it were coded properly. And, to re-code your site properly after it was done poorly is an expensive endeavor.

Now, don't be frightened by this section. It's about technical stuff, but everything here is easily-understood even if you don't know any technical stuff. This section is here because it is very important.

Did you know that if your website is coded improperly that Google will penalize you and you will show up lower in their rankings?

That's how important this is.

#1: Validate your web developer's HTML and CSS code.

There's an organization called the W3C that sets the standards for how websites should be coded. When a web page is coded in compliance with the W3C standards, it's easy for Google to index that web page and put it in the search results. Web pages that are not coded in compliance with W3C standards are difficult for Google to index, and those pages typically receive lower rankings in Google because it is harder for Google to read those pages.

So, you want a web developer who is going to guarantee that the code in your website will comply with the W3C standards, because this will give you the best chance to rank as high as possible in Google and the other search engines. Writing code that validates with W3C standards requires skill and technical know-how, so before you hire a firm to do your web redesign, have them give you (at least) four URLs—two from each of two live websites that they have written the code for. And, ask them for a CSS file for two different live websites that they have written the code for.

Next step: either give the URLs and the CSS files to your expert (see #2 below) and ask him or her to check if they validate under W3C standards or you can easily do-it-yourself by visiting this website:

<http://validator.w3.org/>

After you've arrived at that site, enter the first URL in the Address input box and click the Check button. After it analyzes the page, it will show you the results—either no errors, which is good, or errors, which is not good. Repeat this process for the remaining three URLs, then ask your developer why there are errors if there are any.

#2: Have an expert view their code.

If you know someone who is a true expert at website development, ask them if they will check the code of the web design firm you are considering hiring. It doesn't take long and it's easy for an expert. If you don't know an expert, ask friends and associates for a recommendation for one. If all else fails, we will be glad to check their code for you, gratis—just contact us using our contact form:

<http://www.dvscg.com/contact.html>

Your expert should know what to look for to make sure their code is up to snuff—but the basics are: table-less XHTML, organized, lean, clean, W3C-validated and commented code.

#3: Make sure their web design looks the same in all browsers.

Your new website is going to be viewed by people using different web browsers. A web browser is a software program that allows you to see and interact with websites on the Internet. You may use Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome or Safari—these are all web browsers.

The problem is that each of these different web browsers renders and displays web pages in slightly different ways, and it is the job of your web developer to make sure that your website looks the same in each and every one of these browsers. So, if you hire a web developer who is either technically incompetent, sloppy or just lazy, chances are your website will look different and will be incorrectly displayed in some of the major browsers. This means that some percentage of people who use certain browsers may see your site displayed incorrectly. *You don't want that.*

So, to make sure that your web developer is technically skilled and competent enough to code websites so that they are consistent in all major web browsers, view their live websites in different browsers to see if the websites they've coded in the past look, feel and function the same in all of the major browsers.

Here's how to do it, quickly and easily:

STEP 1: Download these four browsers onto your computer:

- 1) INTERNET EXPLORER: [click here to download](#)
- 2) MOZILLA FIREFOX: [click here to download](#)
- 3) GOOGLE CHROME: [click here to download](#)
- 4) SAFARI: [click here to download](#)

STEP 2: Ask the web design company for URLs for three live websites they have developed.

STEP 3: Open all four of the browsers you downloaded at the same time and enter the first URL into all of them. Does the home page that comes up look and function the same in all four browsers? If not, ask the company why not. Next, in one of the browsers, click to one of the inner pages, and then click to that same page in the three other browsers and again compare the different versions of this inner page in all four different browsers. Does this page look and function the same in all four browsers? If not, ask the company why not. Continue this process with additional pages in this website and then check the other two websites the company provided you.

If the pages you check generally look the same and function the same, then it is highly likely that this web development team at this company is technically skilled and competent, and this company cares about consistency and makes sure that your website is presented the same way to everyone who visits it.

If you see a lot of differences, proceed with caution—this company is likely to be technically incompetent, sloppy, lazy or all of the above!

1-Hour Internet Profits Coaching Session

After reading *How To Redesign Your Website So It Increases Your Company's Profits*, you may decide to take action and make your website a profitable contributor to your company's bottom line.

The good news is, you don't have to do it alone. DVS Consulting Group can work with you and your team to implement all of the strategies, ideas and tactics presented in this book, and many more.

As a *How To Redesign Your Website So It Increases Your Company's Profits* reader, you are entitled to receive a free 1-hour coaching session that will include a thorough, live review of your current website and online marketing, some general recommendations and at least 3 specific things you can implement immediately to improve your website's profitability.

To schedule your FREE 1-hour coaching session visit:

www.dvscg.com/free-coaching.html

1-Page Cheat Sheet To Website Profits

The *1-Page Cheat Sheet To Website Profits* is the perfect companion to this book. It is a mind-map, which is a 1-page visual depiction of all of the inter-related strategies, ideas, tactics and activities that will improve the profitability of your website.

Keep this cheat sheet with you throughout the process of redesigning your website and use it as a reference anytime you need to boost profits, or make your website produce more qualified leads.

**To get the FREE 1-Page Cheat Sheet To
Website Profits now, visit:**

www.dvscg.com/cheat-sheet.html