

LAWN/TREE CARE

6 ways to make your website sell

Don't just set it up and forget about it.

By ANDREW POTOTSCHNIK

Your website is your most important salesman. In fact, making sales is the only reason to have a website.

Here are six great ways to give your website the tools it needs to close sales.

1 Start with a professional design. Hopefully, no one reading this would ever let a member of their team show up at prospective client's home or business wearing cutoff jeans, flip-flops or a tank top. Like it or not, our image projects an idea of how we operate. If your website looks sloppy, hard to use or is just a glorified business card, it says something about your business. Make it professional and project the image you want to portray in your market.

2 Display certifications, licenses, awards and memberships. In a sense, every salesman presents a resume of qualifications to a prospect; your website should do the same. Letting the world know your business is licensed, insured, a member of important trade organizations and even an award winner shows you're serious about how you do business and that you strive to be (or are) the leader in your industry. Companies that aren't in it for the long haul don't go to the trouble.

3 Offer a strong guarantee. Giving a salesman the ability to guarantee your work is the ultimate counter to any objection a customer would have to using your services.



Testimonials and reviews are important elements for your website, Andrew Pototschnik says.

If you currently don't advertise a guarantee, are you not going to fix a job when a client is unhappy? If you are, then you already have a guarantee. The only thing you're not doing is telling people that you have a guarantee.

Advertise it. Make it public. Let people know that they're not going to make a bad decision if they choose you and they're going to be happy with your service, no matter what.

4 Show off your public recognition and media coverage. Those who sell services for popular or publicly recognized companies have an easier time selling and often can charge a premium. Maybe you've been featured on the local news or in other media outlets; this recognition adds a lot of credibility to your business. It lets people know that you have a good reputation, you're trusted and you're a leader in your market.

5 Share positive reviews and testimonials from satisfied customers. Seventy-two percent

of consumers say online reviews are as trustworthy as personal recommendations. More than half of them say positive online reviews about a local business make them more likely to give it a try. Showing positive reviews and testimonials on your website from real customers proves you have a reputation for high-quality service and choosing your company is a safe bet.

These also serve to diffuse the inevitable negative review you'll receive from competitors and former customers who can't be satisfied.

6 Present before-and-after photos of your successful projects, staff and fleet. A salesman who can demonstrate he's successfully completed hundreds of different projects, just like what his prospects need, has an easier time getting a contract.

Before-and-after photos of your work go a long way. Showing that you have a large staff and a fleet of trucks demonstrates you run a real business, you've been doing this for a long time, you have the resources to deliver and you're not going anywhere.

Your website is a salesman, and just like a salesman it should get better and better over time. So don't just set it up and forget about it. Continually update it, add new content to it, improve it and focus on converting visitors to customers. That's why we have websites in the first place. **LM**

» WEB EXTRA

Visit the Web Extras section of LandscapeManagement.net for a link to download Pototschnik's free guide on lawn care marketing mistakes to avoid.

Pototschnik is founder of LawnCareMarketingExpert.com, a website-optimizing consulting firm. He spoke at the 2013 Lawn Care Summit, presented by the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) and the National Pest Management Association (NPMA), in Orlando in January. This article is a snippet of his keynote presentation, "How to Get Found on the Internet and Make Your Website Sell."