

HOW TO START AN ONLINE BUSINESS?



GUIDE 6:

SETTING UP A SOLID
SALES FUNNEL

Setting up A Solid Sales Funnel

In this article, we will be discussing how to set up a sales funnel. A sales funnel is arguably the most important part of any internet marketing effort.

You can do everything else right in your internet marketing efforts and if you don't create a really great sales funnel that actually works, your entire endeavor could collapse.

In this report, we will be covering the entire buying cycle, so that you see what happens to the customer as they go through your funnel, and we will also discuss some of the most common sales funnels out there and how to use them on your own website.

What is a Sales Funnel?

So, you might be wondering just what exactly a sales funnel is. Sales funnels aren't complicated, but they can be a little confusing to anyone who is new to the internet marketing business.

Basically, a sales funnel is simply the process that someone goes through to buy a product or service from you. The reason that it is called a "funnel" is that everything within the process is geared towards them making a purchase at the end.

The Sales Process

In order to understand the sales funnel, the first thing that you need to understand is the sales process, which is essentially the framework of the funnel. We will go over each step of the process below and explain it in detail.

Awareness

The first step in the process is the awareness phase. Remember, every sale that you make is not only a value proposition – it is also a solution to a problem.

The customer is looking for a solution and you need to be there to provide it. So, the first step in the process is them becoming aware of the solution. You don't have to worry about the problem; they are already bringing that part with them.

So, suppose someone gets online and opens up their favorite search engine, then types in "sleeping bag for 20 below weather." They are looking for a sleeping bag that is going to keep them warm.

If you know that they are looking for that sleeping bag, then you can get them to come and check out your site. All you need to do is get their eyeballs to land on your listing in Google and have an HTML title that speaks to them.

In this case it might be something like: Sleeping Bags for Extremely Cold Weather.

Interest

So, now you move onto the next stage in the process. Now, you have their interest. They want to know what you have to say, and find out whether or not you really have the best solution to their problem. But you only have their interest temporarily.

They are not yet invested in your sleeping bag website. They are just a casual visitor. It's your job to groom that interest and make it grow.

So, for example, if they get to your landing page, and you have a number of sleeping bags with the temperate rating listed on each one, they're probably going to take a closer look.

But they might also take a closer look if you had an eBook titled: “How to Choose the Perfect Cold Weather Sleeping Bag,” or an article titled: “10 Tricks to Make Cold-Weather Sleeping Bags out of Average Ones.”

Evaluation

Next, they’ll move onto the evaluation phase of the proposition. The evaluation stage is where they compare your product against what they were looking for in the first place, as well as other products.

For example, suppose that you had the aforementioned cold weather sleeping bags listed on your site. A visitor might see them and buy, but they could just as easily think: “What if I can get a lower price somewhere else?”

Now, imagine that you had some way of convincing them that they won’t be able to get a lower price anywhere else. Do you see how drastically that turns the odds to your favor?

Of course, the trick is to actually convince them. Just putting the phrase: “You won’t find a lower price anywhere!” is probably not going to do it. People are savvy when it comes to advertising, so you’ll have to get creative.

Decision

So, the next thing that will happen is your buyer will make a decision. They will decide one simple thing: whether to buy your product or not. If you have done a good job and convinced them that your product will solve their problem, then they are likely going to buy. If not, they will go elsewhere.

Making that decision depends upon what you have presented them with in the evaluation stage. If you have made a good pitch then they will make the buying decision.

But when it comes to a sales funnel, them saying “no” doesn’t have to be final. For example, you could have a pop-up when they close the browser window that offers them a discount.

Purchase

The next step in the buying process is the purchase stage. You need to make it easy for them to buy at this point. They are committed but that doesn't mean that they can't back out. For example, think about purchases that you have backed out on.

Just one example: if you purchase something that seems like a really good deal and then find out that the buyer is charging four times what the shipping should be, you're probably going to back out.

In addition to making it as easy as possible for the buyer to complete the transaction, this would be an excellent time for you to get their email address and permission to send them valuable emails on future products and services.

They are already excited about buying from you, so it's the best time to ask.

Common Types of Sales Funnels

Next, we'll go over each of the different types of sales funnels in detail. Every one of these is a little different but each of them can be great if you use them right. You just have to be able to learn the system and which products work for that particular system so that you can use it effectively.

Each of these funnels has a different structure and purpose. You should understand how to set up the funnel by the time you finish each section, what the purpose of that funnel is, and how you use it to sell your own products and services.

The Email Opt-in Funnel

The email opt-in funnel is the simplest of all of the funnels listed here. You just need three things to create this funnel. The first is some kind of landing page that will allow people to submit their email.

Ideally, you just want them to be able to submit their email and be done. If you add other fields to the form, there is a chance that they might change their mind.

You are probably good with one more, as long as it isn't too personal; the first name might be fine for example. The second thing that you'll have to create is a thank you page that they will be sent to immediately after they enter their email.

Finally, you are going to need to set up an email responder to get them to verify their email so you know it's valid.

The Webinar Funnel

The next type of funnel that we're going to discuss is the webinar funnel. This is where you get people to sign up for a webinar. The webinar can be the product here, because you can charge attendees a fee to be part of the webinar, but the webinar can also be a chance for you to sell the attendees on the product.

In addition, there is a market for the auto-webinar, where they pay a membership fee or a nominal individual download fee for past webinars.

To set up this funnel, you need a webinar registration page and a thank you page immediately afterward. Then, you'll send a series of 3-5 acclimatization emails to remind them of the upcoming webinar or remind them that you have webinars to download.

Finally, you send them either to the live webinar area, or the auto-webinar area. Afterward, assuming that you have a product, you send them to the order page.

The Product Launch Funnel

Next up, we'll be discussing the product launch funnel. This type of funnel is pretty simple to set up as well, although some production definitely has to go into it. It consists of several product launch videos, which we'll get into in a moment.

First, the reason that this funnel is used is when a company is launching something brand new that people can get excited about. For example, suppose that you had discovered the secret to eternal youth and you had an eBook explaining how people could live forever.

You would use this type of funnel to launch that product. That example is unrealistic of course, but you understand the point.

As for how to set this funnel up, you simply need a series of product launch videos as part of a sales page that explains the product thoroughly.

You can do these videos through whiteboard presentations or with you on camera. However you produce the videos are fine, but videos are definitely the best way to launch a product.

The Tripwire Funnel

The tripwire funnel is sort of like fishing. You set up the bait, which is usually something free, and then get them to cross to the “tripwire” page, where there will be an offer for something that they can buy.

It isn't bait-and-switch exactly, or at least it shouldn't be, because you do want to give them whatever free thing you promised. It is more like bait-and-offer.

So, what you'll need for this funnel is a page where they get something for free, probably by entering their email address. Make sure that it is something worth giving up your email address for.

Second, you'll take them to the page where you'll offer them something even better that costs money. This is called the tripwire page. From there you want to take them to the offer page.

If they refuse the offer then you can take them to the downsell page, where you lower the price. Finally, you'll take them to the last-ditch effort – the OTO page, which stands for one-time offer.

The Membership Funnel

The last type of funnel that we'll be exploring is the membership funnel. This is pretty simple; depending upon what the membership is that you are trying to set up.

For example, if it is a paid membership, then you may have to expand your sales funnel to include offer pages, downsell pages and the like. But if you are simply offering a free membership and plan on selling to them later, then all you need are two pages.

The first is your membership registration page, where they will enter their information and become a member. Obviously, you'll want to verify their email after that, before you take them to your second page.

The link from their email should take them to the member's area, where you can deliver whatever benefits you offered to get them to join.

Upselling & Cross-Selling

Another thing that you want to be aware of when it comes to sales funnels is that you want to be making use of upsell pages as well as downsell ones. If someone buys a product, they might be interested in buying a better or more expensive one.

Also, use cross-selling whenever possible by offering related products that they might find useful.

Conclusion

Now that you are more familiar with sales funnels, and you have seen some of the common ones in action, you can build your own funnels to whatever specifications you need.

Sales funnels work, as long as you use them correctly, and the ones listed here can be the basis for your own internet marketing.