



EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT WEBSITE TESTING

BestSellingWebsite.com

TAKING THE GUESSWORK OUT
OF WEBSITE MARKETING

Everything you Need to Know about Website Testing

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page 2

Table of Contents:

p 4	Introduction
p 5-9	WHY you should be testing
p 10-13	HOW website testing works



How 10% of website owners are taking all the money YOU are leaving on the table

Because only 10% **OR LESS** of internet businesses run testing on their websites. And just look at that number. **10%. Or less.**

Is this a competitive advantage that you can really ignore?

Every marketing newsletter you read tells you to test. But no one EVER tells you HOW to do it, or how it works, or WHERE to get it.

So beginning web entrepreneurs either plunk down a bunch of money for a product they don't understand and don't know how to use, or, 90% of them do nothing.

This document provides you with an alternative. A quick and easy way to learn what testing is, how it works, and how it will benefit your web profits.

How to test is one thing, what to test is quite another, and I'll give you 7 things to focus on as you start testing in my Web Testing Tutorial. Not to get ahead of ourselves, but if you want the "what to test" in the back of your mind as you learn about testing itself, **take a quick look at the list of 'website irritants' on p6.**

Now on to the job at hand of understanding website testing.



Why your customers don't "buy"

I have NO DOUBT that you, and me, have something on our website that is driving potential customers away. And costing us money in lost profit.

The "big guys" blow it all the time- and they spend a fortune on market research. For example, there's a big, very well known department store just up the street from me. They had mirrors everywhere. I didn't know if I was coming or going, didn't know where I'd been or where I wanted to go. I absolutely couldn't stand being in the place, so I didn't set foot in it for 15 years.

The area changed, a bunch of similar big stores pulled up and left, but these guys stayed and renovated. Guess What?? The mirrors are now gone!! Obviously, I wasn't the only one they bothered.

Irritated people don't buy- they probably won't even read

Do you have those mirrors on your website? Or something else that annoys your site visitors? More to the point- do you know?

My store didn't know – and they're not successful because they're stupid. It's not always so obvious, either online or off.

The customers experience in your store or on your website is comprised of many, many factors. For the store, it's the merchandise. The pricing. Their sales people – if you can find one. The layout. The location. The décor (like mirrors). Subtle things like the guy downstairs playing the piano or the soft lighting that makes you look so much better than those harsh fluorescents. The "no-hassle" refund policy. The whole "style" that store represents. The list could go on and on.

Websites are definitely complex little devils

Just like the big store, a website, even a webpage, is the total of many different parts (preferably MORE than the sum of its parts). Yes, your headline is important, but so is your sub-headline, and your graphic(s), the captions for those graphics, your navigation, etc., etc., and, of course, your copy. AND, the way these different elements work together to create the whole is important. And just like the store, if you get the elements and



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page 5

the combination of those elements right, you have a steady stream of paying customers and a successful web business.

So what are the website equivalents of those mirrors, those irritants that can drive people away? They can range from the seemingly insignificant to the monumental.

- A font size I can't read
- Colors I hate
- Navigation that confuses me
- Jargon I don't understand
- I can't figure out what you want me to do
- Advertising that distracts me
- Sticky sweet testimonials that turn me off
- I can't figure out who you are, or if I like you
- I don't see anything relevant to MY needs
- The graphics don't portray my lifestyle
- The headline doesn't get me interested
- Too much information
- Too little information
- Too much "hype"
- Etc., etc.

Any ONE of these can send me straight to your competition, never, ever to return. EVEN IF I'm your perfect customer, ready to buy, now. (Remember- it took me 15 years to get back inside that store.)

How to "renovate" your website

You can bet that when that store renovated, they didn't just hire a designer and say "change the store". They gave that designer explicit instructions about the things their experience and research told them worked to increase sales.

Now consider the way most webmasters go about revamping their website.

They sit down to do the job, with ideas flying all over the place. They pick what looks like the best of the bunch and get them down, losing the ideas they don't use in the process. Then, they do the structuring and the technical stuff. Followed by a re-write, new tweaks, more editing, and finally declare it done. Put it up live on the web, wait a while with bated breath, and generally find only a small improvement in their results. Sigh.....Frustration....



And this website owner hasn't learned A THING about what components of his site are working to increase his sales or subscriptions and what's not.

Webmasters need a way to get feedback on what works

The poor guy I just described is stumbling around in the dark. He has no "market research". No way to discover and eliminate those mirrors. No idea what the site visitors are looking for, what they want to see on the site, what will satisfy their needs, what those needs even are.

Your website is a one-way conversation. It's "you" talking to "them". In a face-to face conversation, you'd have all kinds of cues about the response to what you are saying- body language, facial expression, verbal response. On a website, you get...nothing.

The only means your visitors have to communicate is with their wallet, or with their email in signing up for a subscription to your newsletter or whatever.

Measure these "actions" – the sale or the subscription – in relation to the experience you are giving them on your website, and you start to get valuable feedback.

If all the shoppers in my big store were screaming at me simultaneously, I wouldn't understand a word they were telling me. But if I speak to them individually, the cacophony becomes intelligible.

Website testing turns the unintelligible noise into valuable information.

By isolating the individual elements of your website's whole, testing can then measure accurately and in real-time your visitors response to that specific element. Test results will tell you, unequivocally, if a certain element is helping you make more sales or get more subscriptions, hurting you, or is neutral. Test and you'll find those mirrors right away.

Carefully crafted tests will dig behind the action of buying or subscribing to the "reason", the "want", the "need". Well thought-out tests will bring you an understanding of what motivates or drives your customers. And that information will start your cash register ringing!!



You'll not only find and get rid of those mirrors...

you'll be spoon feeding your site visitors with exactly what they want. And then, they'll be only too happy to buy or subscribe and add to your bank account.

Now on to Part 2: How Testing Works



With a big bank account, plus all the market and design research a major retail organization could bring to bear, my renovated store is now probably the only *free-standing* (not in a mall) store in the county (a big one), successfully competing in the top tier of retailing.

And you're thinking...

Testing is too HARD, too EXPENSIVE, too SCARY!!

Every website is reaching a different audience about a different subject, so no one website's test results will apply to another. But to show you what's possible, I've improved my little website's conversion rate by **230%** using testing. **AND THAT'S NOT PEANUTS!!**

Let's look at a hypothetical website selling hypothetical watches, and you decide if a couple of hours of focused, know-what-your-doing work is worth it.

And let's take just one of the many pieces of good, solid marketing advice that hits your e-mail box every week:

It's a well-accepted marketing precept that if you try to talk to everybody, nobody listens. You need to find your "niche", your target market.

So- your website statistics tell you that more than 50% of your site visitors come to your site from a search relating to "sport watches". For that reason, your main graphic on your homepage is currently a scuba diving photo, clearly "sports" related. But are you SURE this is really what your website visitors are coming to you for? Perhaps, to them, "sport watches" really means inexpensive, dress-down, casual everyday watches? You can find out, and learn important information about your on-line market, by testing a different graphic.

Show your site visitors Both and Measure the Results

Website testing allows you to put 2 or more of those watch graphics in front of your website visitors and then measure their actions.

All you need is a "doorman" and a "cashier". The doorman sits there waiting for someone to hit your listing in the search results for watches (or when anyone types your web address in their browser window). Whenever anyone hits your web address, the doorman directs them to either Webpage A with the "scuba" graphic or Webpage B with the "casual" graphic (or Webpage C, etc.). The doorman also records that



visitor "X" received Webpage A, and should visitor X return to your website later, the doorman makes sure visitor X sees Webpage A again.

Whenever anyone makes a purchase (or signs up to subscribe to your newsletter), the cashier finds out from the doorman which visitor it is (i.e. "X") and which Webpage she was exposed to (A or B), and he writes it down.

Everything that the doorman and the cashier do is immediately sent to the accounting department and tallied up.

At the end of two weeks, 6500 site visitors were shown Webpage A and 6750 site visitors were shown Webpage B. 53 of the "A" crowd bought a watch from you, and 74 of the "B" crowd bought a watch.

Watch out- here comes the "Conversion Rate" you've heard of: test graphic "A" achieved a conversion rate of $53/6500=0.82\%$ and test graphic "B" pulled in a conversion rate of $74/6750=1.10\%$. Because I checked these results with a free statistical program, I know these sample sizes are adequate and that "B" is clearly the winner.

You just learned how to increase your watch selling website's income by 34%! [the difference between the .82% conversion rate for graphic "A" and the 1.10% conversion rate for graphic "B" ($(1.10-0.82)/0.82=.34$ or 34%]

This simple test has given you valuable market research

Even though the numbers are as hypothetical as my watch selling website, this example shows the power of the feedback loop well constructed tests set up for you. Maybe graphic "B" only pulled in a 10% increase in your sales. BUT- is this new information about the wants of your site visitor reflected in your headline, your subheadlines, your copy? Changes in these areas might produce another X% each, and NOW you're on your way to the bank.

To get full value out of your testing, it's an interactive, sequential process with step 2 building on step 1, etc. All the while applying the knowledge you gain in the prior step to the next.



But how does it really work on the Internet?

I know it sounds way too simple, but it really is. Without getting technical and making your eyes glaze over, here's how it works.

Your website is "hosted" on a server- nothing more than a computer whose primary function is to deliver web pages back to a browser upon request. That server computer is, however, capable of doing far more than this. Using a code language that this server understands (called php), your website visitors are "tagged" with a unique ID number and directed to the different test pages, A and B in the above watch example. Your server's ability to record data in a database (really just a spreadsheet kept on the server), is that accounting department in my example. The visitor's ID number, and the test version they've received are recorded in a database on your server computer. If that same site visitor returns, the ID tag tells the server it's a returning visitor and to look up their record in the database and show them the same version.

When the sale or subscription occurs, that same ID tag drives the server to the visitor's record in the database and moves that information to another database that records the sales. You, the tester, access this information through another webpage that tells the server to spit the sales information back into a webpage that you can see.

You don't need any fancy graphs or charts to determine the best performer among your tests: it's very simply the test that produces the highest conversion rate (sale or subscriptions divided by the # visits to that test version).

(While this is the methodology that I understand best, there is another that doesn't work off the website's server but rather accomplishes the same tasks using the javascript capabilities on the visitors' computer.)



There are two testing models to choose from

You can “hire” either the doorman and the cashier at a minimum wage, or you can hire an army of these virtual employees, all with PHD’s in statistics.

The “big boys” with the deep pockets go for the army. It’s called Multi-Variant or Taguchi testing and it can actually determine which of an almost infinite number of test elements caused what percentage of the overall improvement. In other words, it can decipher and decode all the “noise” into meaningful results. This methodology uses extremely sophisticated statistical analysis, is very complex, yields very quick results because it measures so many factors simultaneously, and hence is very expensive and well beyond the scope of this report. BUT- it works, and if you’ve got the income stream from your website to justify the expense, go for it.

A/B or Split testing: No big payroll required

Both are a variation on the simple kind of website testing. A/B is exactly as described above, where you test only A v. B. Split testing allows you to test a FEW (more than 2) versions of the same element at the same time, but takes longer to get statistically relevant results because your dividing up your site visitors into smaller statistical samples.

Either A/B or Split Testing is appropriate for a small web business. The lower your traffic, the better it is to test only 2 or maybe 3 versions against each other at a time to reduce the amount of time it takes to get statistically relevant test results.

No bells or whistles needed

All you need are that doorman and that cashier. Unfortunately, they’re hard to find, probably because so few small web businesses test as they should. And those that you will find generally run the testing on their computer, not yours, and of course charge you monthly or per visitor for the privilege. I’ve seen it as high as \$50/month, and most of the vendors won’t even quote a price on their website (and you *know* what that means).



Having gotten into testing, with great results for my bottom line, I was pretty unhappy when the system I was using disappeared. So unhappy, that I took what I'd learned about php coding from other tasks and applied it to the problem and created my own simple test system. It's been running on my website for all of 2006, and it works like a charm.

A simple, affordable and user-friendly testing module for you

I offer my testing module on my website. It runs on YOUR website so there are no continuing fees involved. I've very deliberately designed it so anyone that can upload pages to their website can install it in about ½ hour. No knowledge of coding or databases beyond the simple explanation you just read is required. It's user-friendly, not scary and complicated.

Testing WILL increase your website's profitability

It will put you ahead of your non-testing competition. It will teach you what your customers want to see, what will get them to buy or subscribe. It will give you a systematic way to apply all that good marketing know-how that sits in your email box. It doesn't have to drain your wallet. You don't need a PHD in php to use it. It's simple to use and the results are easy to understand.

SO- What are you waiting for??

SQUEEZE the most profit out of your website by getting on a testing regimen with ez-TEST from www.bestsellingwebsite.com. See exactly what the ez-TEST testing module includes, what you can do with it, and get in on the Pre-Release Promotion.



Take a Peek

www.bestsellingwebsite.com/ez-TEST/ez-TEST2.php



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page 13

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