5 Critical Reasons Why Your Website May Not be Working

By Cris Johnson

If you're reading this, then your website may not be doing its job.

While a website is the backbone to an essential online presence for any business, a few simple mistakes can torpedo its effectiveness.

I'm going to tell you what some of those reasons are and how you can fix them.

Along the way, I'll be offering what I call the "5 C's" as a simple way to evaluate your website.

Those "5 C's" are:

- Clarity – Can site visitors understand what your company offers?

- Customer-Focused – Is the webcopy written with the customer in mind?

- Competitiveness – How does your company's site rank in online search results?

- Conversion-Focused – Does your site work to move prospects to take action?

- Consistency – Is the look and feel of your site consistent from page to page?

Before I begin, you might be wondering…

Who Are You and Why Should I Listen to You?

I'm Cris Johnson and I'm a digital marketing expert.
My expertise comes from two areas:

- Training – I've been studying online marketing techniques for decades. I've kept up with the changes to stay ahead of the pack.

  I'm an AWAI-Verified Copywriter. AWAI is an organization that teaches copywriting and marketing. They have a great track record for training copywriters who get results.

  I'm also a Certified SEO Copywriter from the SEO Content Institute. I know what Google likes and what it doesn't.

- Practical Experience – I've built multiple six-figure businesses of my own in two vastly different fields: as a magician and a hypnotherapist!

  I've been able to keep my sites ranked on page one of search results for multiple keyphrases for years.

I've got the training and the real-world experience to give my clients the results they're looking for.
Let's get started.

1. Your Site's Content is Confusing

Does your website clearly show what you offer?

Does it answer this question your visitors have in their minds:

"Am I in the right place?"

Remember this: When people are searching commerce sites, they are on a mission.

They are looking for a solution to a problem. Or trying to satisfy a want, need, or desire.

And because they're searching with single-minded focus, they'll hit the 'back' button in a heartbeat of they don't immediately see what they're looking for.

One thing that many companies often forget is that every first-time visitor to your site is in an unfamiliar territory.

Think about it.

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Here's what happens: A prospect interested in what you offer visits your site.

At that first visit, they must:

- Figure out the navigation

- Try to understand the words you might use to categorize something

- Figure out how to contact you

- Learn how to request more information

- And more

With that in mind, look at your company's website.

Does your company's site clearly identify what you offer?

Is the navigation across the top or along the left side? That's where most people expect to see it.

How easy is it to find your contact information?

If someone is looking for Widget X, how many clicks before they get to what they're looking for?

These might sound like silly questions, right?

Of course, a new visitor can tell where they are!

Not so fast.

In my former life as an entertainer, I had certain websites I needed to visit when I needed new equipment or supplies.

One such site, (offering some very high-end items) seemed clear to me.

I found the site because it was recommended to me. I ended buying items from this company for years.

But once I started looking at this particular website through the lens of a first-time visitor, I suddenly saw the flaws:

- The site had no headline copy telling you where you were.

- The company's name and logo were very tiny, off to the left.

- Navigation gave no clue what the site was selling.

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- The navigation had choices on it like:

     "Items under $50"
     "Discontinued items"
     "Specialty Items"

Looking at this site with fresh eyes, I suddenly wondered what a first-time visitor to the site thought.

I'd be willing to bet they left because they were not sure what the company even offered.

Reach out to someone you know on a personal level and ask them to look at your company's site.

Obviously, it's best if they've never been to your site. And the person should have an interest in what your company offers. Don't underestimate this.

I don't care how well a website is designed. If it's filled with sporting equipment, I have zero interest in going there.

Ask them the following:

- "What do we sell?"

- "How easy is it to figure out the navigation?"

- "Was there anything you found frustrating?"

- "Was easy or hard to find what you're looking for?"

- "What could be improved?"

- "What did you like?"

Do that with several people. You'll probably notice some patterns.

Once you identify these patterns, evaluate them.

Do those common issues make sense to you?

Are there ways you can fix the negatives?

2.Your Site is Not Customer-Focused

Many companies, both big and small, often forget that a website is there for the prospect, not for the shareholders or staff.

A website written in 'corporate-speak' (*jargon understandable only by those working in the industry*) is bound to turn off prospects.

Think of it this way.

Let's say your prospect is looking to buy a new drill.

What is he or she looking for?

Do they want a piece of equipment that has multiple speeds, torque, or ergonomic design?

Not really.

What they really want is a way to make a hole.

That's the drill's purpose.

Granted, some of the other features I mentioned can be used to show the prospect why this piece of equipment may be the fastest, easiest way to make that hole.

Along the way, many companies lose sight of what the end goal of their product or service is.

They forget to think like their customers.

Many websites have copy written to appeal to stockholders. Or written by the IT department and it alienates everyone who is not tech-savvy.

Am I saying NOT to talk about the features of your product or service?

Not at all.

But for many companies, their website's product or service descriptions are confusing to prospects...the very people looking to buy.

Your content must be written in a way that clearly and quickly shows the prospect:

"Yup, you're in the right place. We've got what you need."

3.Your Site is Not Competitive in Search Results

How does your site stack up against the competition?

One important element in getting your site to a competitive level is weaving the right key phrases into your site's copy.

This helps Google find your company's site and raise your rankings, so prospects see you as well.

That's an over-simplification of a process with a lot of steps but it's a start

Here's the thing: Your competition might have a horrendous looking site. And they might be ranked higher than you in Google search results.

Or they might have a beautiful website in terms of design but are ranked much lower than you.

You'll need to enter popular keyphrases in Google and look at the results.

If you know what keyphrases are popular with your audience, you can do this yourself very quickly and easily.

If you're not sure what keyphrases your prospects use when searching for products or services your company offers, well, you've got some homework to do.

Choosing keyphrases that your prospects might use when looking for the solution you provide involves brainstorming, research, and analysis.

You'll need to determine which ones you can hope to rank for as well as clarity.

For instance, in my entertainment site, I sold school assemblies as a service.

I was hired by schools to speak to 400-500 kids at one time on topics like bullying, drug awareness, and more.

"School assemblies" mean something very specific.

But if I tried to optimize my site for "assemblies," my search results might get muddied.

For instance, my site might up in search results for sites offering construction material…for "assembly."

So, a site that ranks higher than yours that is ugly or outdated looking might have better written copy.

And it may have the best keyphrases woven through the copy.,

Or the beautifully designed site that ranks lower than yours might not have any of the best keyphrases in the copy.

So, how does YOUR site stack up against the competition?

4. Your Site is Not Conversion-Focused

By "conversion" I'm talking about taking action.

So, if your prospect is urged to take some kind of action, that's a conversion.
What kind of action?

It can be many things. A conversion can be when the customer:

- buys a product or service
- fills out a contact form
- signs up for an ezine or newsletter
- calls the company directly.

But a good website does more than that. A good site works to engage viewers.

Rather than just passively look at a website, viewers are engaged to do things on your site.

Some of those activities could be:

- click on different pages (or pages within pages)
- watch a video
- listen to an audio clip
- take a survey
- and more.

When a good website engages viewers, Google takes notice, too.

Google likes seeing viewers actively participating on a website rather than just watch, too. They factor that into their rankings.

Also, a good site should actively work to obtain visitor contact information.

This is really important.

Let's say your site is intended to be just like a 'yellow page listing' online so customers can find you.

You're leaving money on the table if you don't capture your visitors' info.

Why?

People are forgetful.

If they are searching for a specific product or service, chances are they'll keep looking just to see if there is a better deal or reviews out there.

Even if they love what they saw on your site.

By the time they're ready to move forward, there's a chance they've forgotten where they found their solution.

I encountered this quite often when I was running my entertainment business.

Potential clients would call me, ask questions, and at some point, they'd ask, "Now which one were you again?"

All of this after we'd introduced ourselves to each other and had a lovely chat.

People will forget. Even if they bookmark your site, they'll forget which tidbit of info was from which site.

And without convincing your prospect to offer their contact information, they may forget all about you.

But once you have their contact information, you can follow up with them. You get to continue the conversation.
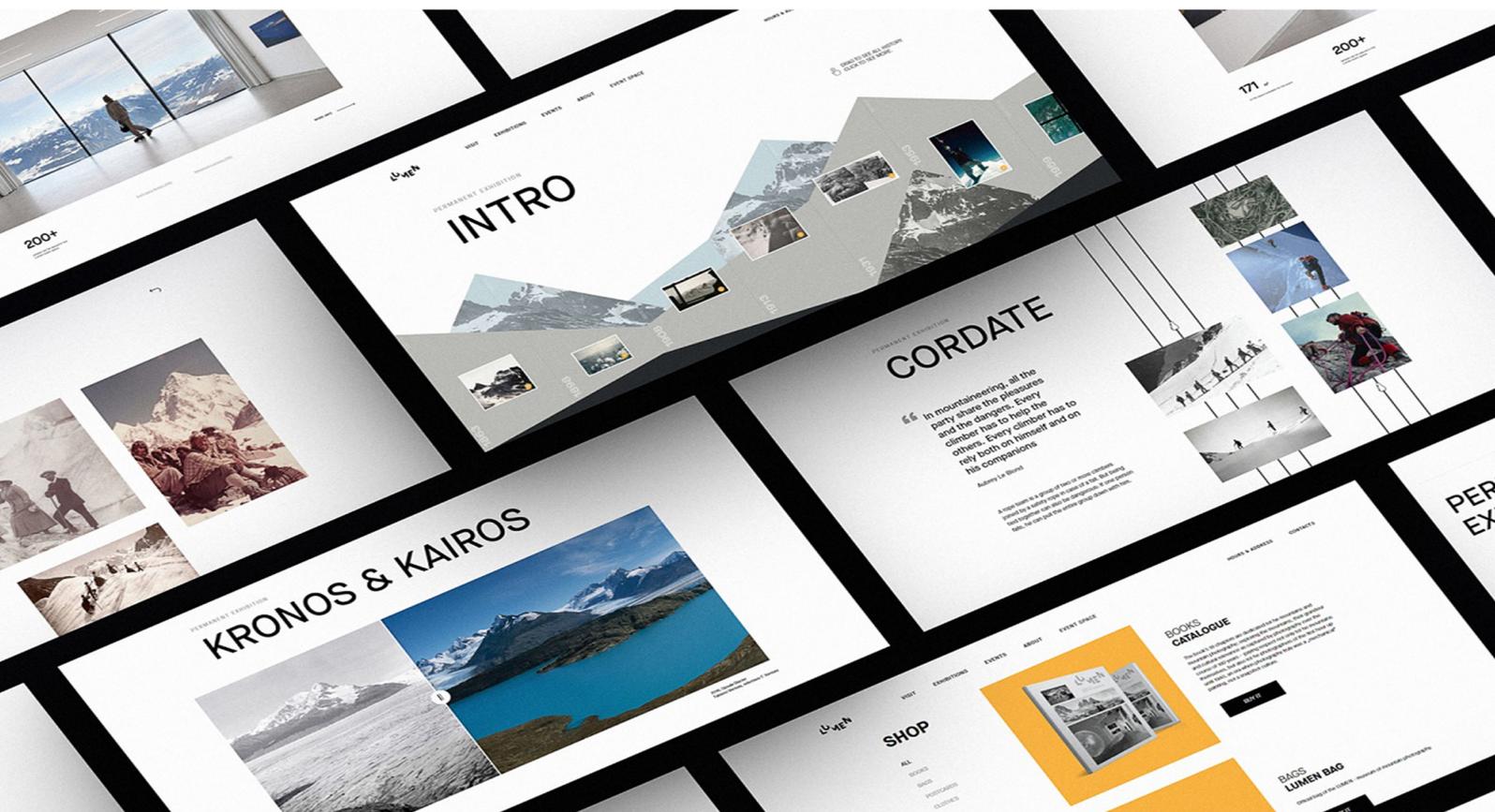
5.Your Site is Not Consistent

Earlier in this report, I wrote about being customer focused.

Equally important to that first-time visitor experience is consistency.

Most effective websites follow a similar layout.

But even small differences can be disorienting to first-time visitors.

It's sort of like driving a new car: Yes, the gas pedal, steering wheel, and windshield are all where you'd expect them to be, but there are differences from car to car.

Some of these differences are bigger than others.

A couple of years ago, I bought a new minivan for my entertainment business. It looked great, handled great, but there was one thing about it that drove me nuts.

The gear shifter was a dial on the dashboard.

I was used to either a gear shifter on the floor or one on the steering column. But a dial? On the dashboard?

To me, that was really weird.

First-time website visitors experience this all the time. And the nature of the internet means this will always be the case.

Why?

Why?

Websites will never look 100% identical to each other.

Because of this disorientation, it's important that your company's site is consistent from page to page.

What needs to be consistent?

The color schemes. Fonts. Overall layout. I've seen some very amateurish sites change their look completely from page to page.

Maybe you've been to a book reseller site. The kids' page has bright, vibrant colors. The horror section might be dark and foreboding.

While it seems like that might make sense for each book category, it makes for a bewildering experience for a person just trying to find books.

The entire feel must be the same so clients don't worry they've been sent to some weird third-party site they had no intention of visiting.

What Now?

Thank you for taking the time to read this special report.

Using the "5 C's" I outlined in this report, you now have a good measuring stick to evaluate your website.

If you'd like to go deeper, check out my Website Analysis & Review service.

Using these five C's of criteria, I'll do a deep-dive analysis and thorough review of your company's website.

With a proven 21-step checklist based on industry best practices, I'll pore over your company's site in detail.

I'll identify its strengths, opportunities for improvement, how you stack up against the competition, and more.

I'll even identify potential threats to your site in terms of broken links, harmful backlinks, and much more.

Call me at 716-940-8963 and we'll set up a phone or Zoom consultation.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

\-   Cris