

Traffic Isn't Everything - What You Need to Know About Conversions and Click-Through Rates

(transcript)

Traffic! Traffic! Traffic!

It seems like everything is about traffic today. I mean, we have SEO, guest posting, pay-per-click advertising, magnetic headlines, social media, the like button, retweet buttons, and begging! All of these methods are about getting more traffic to your site, which is important. But what happens when people get there? Are your visitors doing exactly what you want them to do? Traffic is important, but it's not everything. Conversions and click-through rates are just as vital.

Here, check this out. Okay. So let's say you have a website that gets 1,000 visitors per month and on your website you sell a product for 20 bucks and you have a conversion rate of 1%. By the end of the month, you get 1,000 people coming to your site, 10 people making a purchase, which equals \$200 in your pocket. Awesome.

Now, let's say you want to double your income. You want \$400 by the end of the month. How do you go about doing that? Well, there's a few ways we can do this. We could double the amount of traffic we have so we can have 2,000 visitors coming to our site. We could double the price of our product from \$20 to \$40, or we could double our conversion rate. In this case, it's just a 1% increase from 1% to 2%. Each of these things individually will get us an extra 200 bucks or double our income.

Now, let's look at each of these components individually. Doubling the amount of traffic coming to our site. You know that's not always an easy thing to do, and if it were, I think we would all be doing it all the time. The thing is a lot of times increased web traffic comes from external factors that we just don't have that much control over, like other websites linking to our site or Google finally picking up our content and ranking it high in the search engines. I can't just snap my fingers and double the amount of traffic coming to my site unless I was doing pay-per-click advertising which would involve paying some money in order to get some traffic. So I'm going to move on.

Doubling the price of your product. This is not actually that bad of an idea sometimes, because sometimes when you increase the price of your product, you also increase the perceived value of that product in the eyes of the potential customer, and as a result you'll get more customers. Now, the thing is I actually experienced this phenomenon, and it was really weird. I had an e-book for sale for \$19.95 at GreenExamAcademy.com, and then I increased the price to \$29.95.

I didn't understand it at first, but I had a lot more customers when I was selling it at \$29.95, and

again it was because of the perceived value of that product. Now, you can't always just double the price of your product, especially if that product has been at a certain price for a long time, but it depends on your niche and your audience and things like that. So, I'm going to move on.

The next thing is just doubling your conversion rate. In this case, it's just increasing it by 1%, and that little 1% can double your income. It's crazy to think about it, but that little increment just has a huge effect on your overall income, especially over the long-term. The thing about conversions is this is stuff that we can control in test, but not that many people talk about it.

Everybody talks about traffic, traffic this, traffic that, SEO, and they write about traffic. We read about it all the time, but we hardly hear about conversion rates that much. We're hearing about it more now, but I'd like to see more, which is why I'm bringing this video to everyone's attention because I really want you to focus on what's happening on your site, too, when people get there.

Now, I believe traffic and conversion rates are equally important. Obviously, if I had a conversion rate of zero, it doesn't even matter how many visitors I get. I could get a billion visitors with a 0% conversion rate, that would equal a big whopping zero dollars. On the flip side, I could have a perfect conversion rate but only 1 visitor, and I'd have 20 bucks from 1 product sale. So, traffic and conversions are equally important in my eyes.

So the question becomes: How do we increase conversion rates? And the thing is this applies to everybody. It doesn't even matter if you have a product to sell because the truth of the matter is you're getting visitors coming to your site, and you want them to do something. We have to figure out how often they're doing it and what else we can do to make that happen more often.

If you want them to buy a product, if you want to get e-mail subscribers, if you want RSS subscribers read a certain page, read a certain post, click on an affiliate link, watch something, listen to something, become a fan on Facebook, it doesn't matter. Conversions and keeping track of your conversions and testing to get higher conversions is very, very important.

Back to our original question: How do we increase conversion rates? It's quite simple. We just have to think about it in terms of the user experience. By user experience, I mean things like: Are you making it easy for a reader to do exactly what you want them to do? Are there any distractions? Are you giving people multiple opportunities to do what you want them to do? How many steps are involved? If there are steps, where in that process are they dropping out? That's huge, especially if you're selling products. And what's keeping them going?

Lastly, and the big question is: What's in it for them? Again, user experience. Let me give you some examples from my own websites about how I have been able to use this user experience idea and increase conversions.

This is the "About" page on SmartPassiveIncome.com. A lot of you are very familiar with the site already, which is cool, and there's my dog, Gizmo. He says, "What's up?" The one thing I did on

this page was add an opt-in box smack dab in the middle of my content here, and by doing this I was able to increase the number of e-mail subscribers from 60 to 404 on this one page. I originally relied on this sidebar opt-in form, which a lot of people have, but I added one here thanks to a tip from SocialTriggers.com. That's Derek Halpern, an amazing smart man. By doing so, I was able to increase the opt-in rate by 446%.

Again, all I did was give people an opportunity to subscribe. This is the perfect place to do it if you haven't done so already. Add an opt-in form on your "About" page. It's when they're most engaged with you and your content and what your site is all about. You might as well ask. You have nothing to lose. I just made it big and obvious for them, and again gave them an opportunity to subscribe. The amount of traffic that came to this particular page was exactly the same, but again, by just giving them the opportunity, I increased the opt-in rate by 446%. Amazing stuff.

Okay. This is GreenExamAcademy.com. This was my first website and first real online business. It's what launched me into the Internet marketing and online business space. This is my baby. I've taken good care of this site. I've done a lot of conversion testing and price testing, and this was the site earlier that I talked about where I had an e-book for sale for \$19.95, and I increased the price to \$29.95, and I saw actually more customers as a result. I kind of had a double whammy there. I had a price increase which helped me make more money and also more customers.

That was pretty cool, but that's not what I want to talk about here. I want to talk about this red arrow. Possibly, when you first saw the screen, that's the first thing you saw. It stands out to me in my eye, and apparently it does for my customers too, because as a result of adding this arrow here, that's it. Before I had the same text here, and it was just in the middle, and this part up here was in the middle as well. By adding this arrow, I increased the conversion rate for this e-book by 30%.

That's my main goal, to get people to buy that e-book, because once they buy that e-book, they have access to the practice exams. There's information in there about classes. There are affiliate links. There's stuff for the higher up or higher end study guides in there as well. That was my goal, and by adding this arrow here, it's pretty crazy. I tested a few arrows. That thick one there just works really well for some reason, so that's a 30% increase in conversions, which was amazing.

Again, the traffic could be absolutely the same, but I could still see a lot more money as a result because of the increase in conversions by doing little tricks and things like this, again, making sure that I just direct people to where exactly I want them to go.

Lastly, this is SecurityGuardTrainingHQ.com. This is a niche site that I created publicly on the Smart Passive Income blog. I shared exactly how I found this niche and how I build the website. You can go to NicheSiteDuel.com to see exactly how that was done, and it's been an amazing experience. This site is now making \$1,500 a month in about a year's time. It's just been

amazing.

Actually, all of the income is coming from AdSense, all these ads that you can see here that I'm highlighting right now. That's what is making the income, these advertisements, and I've been doing a lot of tests with those, a lot of conversion tests. You might be wondering, well, how do you do conversion tests without advertisements? Well, it's simply click-through rates, because with AdSense, you get paid every time someone clicks on those links. As a result, you get information about how often people are clicking, how many views you get and things like that.

Now unfortunately, I can't share those exact numbers as far as how many views and visits and what my click-through rate is. It's against the terms and conditions for Google AdSense, but I can share with you that as a result of some quick tests that I've done over the past month, I have been able to double my conversion rate or my click-through rate. It's not just from a 1% to 2%. It's more like in between a 2% and 3% and doubling that. It's been amazing, and even though I have less traffic in the month of September, I have been able to totally increase my income as a result of the higher click-through rate.

Now, I'm going to share with you exactly what I did and what that strategy was. For a while I was thinking, and I'm going to look at this block right here. This is a 336 x 280 rectangle block. That seems to be the optimal size now. That's the biggest rectangle size that you can get before you start to get into the skyscraper sizes. Now, this size has been doing really well, but what's important is what's happening inside.

For a while, I tried to make these stand out, the color of these; try to make them stand out. I even tried red for a while on this blue site so that it would catch people's attention, but for some reason that wasn't working out very well.

Now, please know that these strategies that I'm sharing with you right now work for this site. These strategies may not work for your site. The best way to test it is to just test it, just try it out and see if it works. That's the beauty of this whole thing, and the results are going to be different for every niche. But I found that across all of my sites, by doing this particular thing I'm about to show you, I have been able to increase my conversion rates quite a bit.

So what I did was, instead of making this stand out, I made them blend in. I made the color of the links the same exact color of other links on my site. As you can see, these match exactly what's happening in the sidebar. So that's helped out. Also, the color of the description of the link matches as best as possible the color and size of the body text on my page. And then, this URL here I just grayed it out.

These were some tips that I just read and saw people were having success with, and I figured, hey, what the heck, I'll try it out for a week and see what happens. I tried it out, and it's been doing really, really well. So, blending these in and just copying the rest of the content on my site and making sure that these look like resources that people can click on.

That's the thing. Again, we're talking about user experience here. We want them to be helpful to people. Ads are actually helpful to people. That's the beauty of Google AdSense. It reads through your helpful content. Hopefully, your content is helpful, and then it also produces helpful ads.

Now, if you made these stick out, my thinking is sometimes when you make them stick out, people absolutely know they're advertisements, so they just avoid them without even reading them. They're just used to seeing them, so they blank them out of their screen. They don't even look at them any more. As a result of these looking more exactly like what's going on, on my site, people will see these. They might read this, and it might be helpful. That's my thinking.

So, these ones up here are doing okay. I've tested the different colors with those, and those have been doing kind of [makes sound]. This block here, the 336 x 280 block justified here on the right-hand side with text wrapping around the left, has been working awesome. I have this on the home page, on every single one of my posts. I'm using a tool called Advertisement Management to make this happen. I was looking for a space to write it, but I couldn't find it - Advertisement Management.

Make sure you get that right because there are a lot of ones that look similar or are spelled similar but Advertisement Management, and that's what I'm using to put these in. I also have some at the bottom of my posts as well, as you can see, doing the same exact thing right there. This is something I'm just testing recently. Before I had the horizontal text links going like this, like similar to the top. I'm testing these out, and these were actually working out okay, too.

Again, I'm sorry I can't give you just the click-through rates and stuff, but I did double my click-through rates by using this technique. Hopefully, that helps you and again, it's about the user experience. I hope that you can see that the best thing you can do for your websites is just test, test and work on your conversions. Work on what happens when people come to your website, not just getting people to come to your website.

All right. That's it. Those are some examples from my own experience, and I have a lot more to share, but I don't want to take up too much of your time.

Now, I just have one quick favor to ask you. If you can go to PodcastAwards.com and vote for the Smart Passive Income podcast, I would really, really appreciate it. I'm up for an award in two categories, the Best in Business category and People's Choice. If you wanted to and if you've heard the podcast and you love it, I would really appreciate it if you went over there and voted for the Smart Passive Income podcast. Again, Best in Business and People's Choice.

So, again, I love you guys. Thank you so much. Thanks for spending your day with me, and I hope to hear from you again soon. Let me know what you think, and I'll talk to you soon. Bye.