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Designing a Site for Maximum Lead-Generation Effectiveness: A Case Study of KajaGamDesign.com

The purpose of any website will determine what the makeup should be. Ecommerce sites have inherent design distinctions as do service-oriented sites. The goals of the site will also guide the development based on whether the end result should be a direct online sale, lead generation, etc. For KajaGamDesign.com, there was a deep need for a site that delivered highly targeted leads. Since early attempts yielded limited success, Kaja Gam was skeptical, but we quickly won her undivided loyalty by creating a site that did everything she wanted and more.

Early Attempts at Online Success

Originally, Kaja's website consisted of two pages: a home page and a testimonials page. It was, in essence, a billboard. Search engine optimization was in its infancy (1998), and there was no real competition for keywords or phrases at that time.

That is when she decided to take her interior design business and her Web presence to the next level. Approaching Mustang Web Designs in 2004, Kaja was aware that she needed a site that not only spoke to her visitors, but also actually attracted them because her site ranked high on Google and other search engines. In addition, she wanted a site that pre-sold and pre-qualified visitors through compelling copy and images. She was after an online lead-generation process that would deliver prospects to her who were just steps away from hiring her for interior design projects.

Taking such an assorted background and translating it into a functional website that worked the way Kaja needed it to was the challenge we faced with KajaGamDesign.com.

Matching the Site to the Site Owner

Kaja had some specific requests when it came to her website. "It's always been difficult for me, personally, to stand in front of people and speak. It's exhausting to make cold calls, and it absolutely frightens me. I cannot do it." In addition, her schedule with work and family didn't leave her time to pursue new clients and do everything involved with the interior design work.

Just having eye-appeal was not going to cut it. The site had to lead visitors through the entire sales process and - in the end - actually turn them into paying clients!

The Creation of the Site

At first, due to the past performance of her original site, Kaja was not convinced a website was going to provide leads for her business. We kept the existing color palette since it linked to an established brand. However, since lead generation was of primary importance, we focused on shortening the sales cycle through providing a lot of copy about Kaja Gam, the person, as well as Kaja Gam Design, the company. We also added more pictures to her portfolio. This approach was a little unorthodox because most designers did (and still do) focus on the visual and cannot understand why someone would put text on a site that deals with design.

Search Engine Optimization

Kaja owned a local business and didn't accept national or international projects. For that reason, her organic (free) search engine optimization (SEO) efforts were to include location terms such as cities and counties matched with terms that described her services. Also, her pay-per-click (PPC) campaign would be limited geographically so as not to waste her SEO budget chasing terms that would deliver visitors from areas she did not serve.

After the new site was launched, PPC campaigns were adjusted and bidding increased. Since Kaja wasn't selling a product, we considered someone that went to either the portfolio or contact us pages as a very warm lead or a rough conversion. Through testing and tracking over time, we were able to find terms that brought in the right visitors, which converted well.

The Results

The most accurate and highly descriptive word that applies to Kaja Gam's website is "remarkable!" The implementation of her new site design began a chain reaction that has continued to produce year after year. Like dominos falling in line, one after the other, Kaja's site has experienced a generous portion of success as pieces of the puzzle clicked into place.

Numbers sometimes portray a better picture than words, so allow us to share a financial picture of Kaja's growth, thanks to the Internet. Her revenue dollars one year after the redesign increased by 197%. Three years prior, her increase was 284%. Also, her net income just from web clients increased by an astounding 477%!

In many service industries, including interior design, landing just one client via the Internet can cover all the expenses for site maintenance and SEO for an entire year. As you can see by the above-mentioned results, Kaja has far exceeded the hope of getting just one client ☺.

"I love this! The site gives me confidence so that when people do call me, the hard part is already done. They've been introduced to me through the site and are ready to talk business. Before the website, converting prospects into clients took months. Now, when I get a call from someone who found me on the search engines, went to

my website, read the copy and saw the pictures, it usually takes them less than 10 minutes to decide to go with me."

Web design doesn't function in a vacuum. Every part of a website - from the images to the navigation to the copy and the SEO - has to work together to make a site convert. When designers only focus on the appearance of the site, site owners usually end up with an online presence that's narrow and detached. When everything works in sync, the results - as you can plainly see - can be fantastic!