

Tips to improve your real estate website

We know that our business website does the heavy lifting for many touchpoints of our professional lives. People visit our website first before they put in a call to us, before they decide to engage with us, so it's clear that the website must be good and perform the functions that we need it to in order for our business to thrive.

But what makes a good real estate website? There is a significant level of diversity in the marketplace, with some spectacular sites that look great, but offer poor user experience, while others seem very utilitarian and workmanlike, but deliver hot leads on a daily basis.

Realtor Mag, recently outlined areas where real estate websites typically fall down on the all-important user experience (called UX) and crucially, where websites fail to convert.

“When you work hard to attract qualified visitors to your website, the last thing you want is a high bounce rate or a low conversion rate,” Tony Mariotti said.

“The end goal is to create a lead-converting machine, not a brick wall.”

So here are some key areas where websites typically fall down and could improve:

1. **Awful design:** For any of us who have created a new website, it can be a daunting task. Basic rules to live by include making sure your design is appealing to look at with complementary colours, visually appealing graphic elements and loads quickly. The golden rule – make it responsive!
2. **Failure to orient the visitor:** When you arrive at the site, the structure and the message need to be immediately clear – where do I click to find out more about you; your business products/services; or to purchase.
3. **Auto-Play Video:** Be aware many do their research while at work and your potential clients don't appreciate your auto-play video blasting out an announcement that they're at their desks NOT working! Also, it makes the page slower to load. Just no.
4. **No clear direction:** Let visitors know immediately what you do and how they can navigate your site to satisfy their research needs.
5. **Poorly constructed call to action (CTA):** Be very clear – you are a real estate professional and you offer x, y, and z services. To access those sensational services the visitor must do a, b, or c. A clear CTA is vital for conversions.

6. **Poor grammar, spelling errors:** Nothing says ‘amateur’ faster than poor grammar and typos in your content. Unless you have spent time as a professional wordsmith at some point in your career, you should outsource this to a professional. It is crucial.
7. **No social proof:** A few positive testimonials, used sparingly, on your site boost likelihood of conversions. Include any media stories that you’re quoted in, or link to any articles that mention you (in a positive light). Link to social media where people can see what others say about you.
8. **No trust signals:** This is a tech issue, but SSL is pretty significant. It indicates the site is secure and uses encryption to protect data submitted over any lead-generation forms that you have on your site.

The best ways to make sure your site is funnelling people towards a solid conversion is to:

- Have a professional heavily involved in the design and construction of the site. This is not a time for penny-pinching.
- Test it heavily before you go live, asking friends and family to be your guinea pigs to make sure they satisfy all areas of weakness identified here.
- Be flexible and open to feedback!
- Be prepared to tweak and tweak and tweak. Your site may not hit its stride immediately but if you monitor bounce rates and conversions you should eventually get on the right track.

For more information visit: http://realtomag.realtor.org/for-brokers/network/article/2016/07/8-conversion-killers-for-real-estate-websites?om_rid=AAWfkP&om_mid= BXs2m8B9RRviNp&om_ntype=RMODaily

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