

# How to Generate More Leads from Your Insurance Agency Website...

...And the ONE Breakthrough  
Guaranteed to Improve Your Results!

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*“...in positioning yourself and your business for success, you have to **clearly determine who you are, then drive that message home to your marketplace.** And it’s important to make the right decision. The marketplace will usually accept the positioning you choose for yourself and present to others.”*

*~ Dan Kennedy*

# How to Get More Leads Through Your Agency Website

## 1 INTRODUCTION

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Let me ask you a simple question... **how effective is your website in getting the phone to ring?**

Now, if you've got a steady stream of prospects calling your office or filling out your lead-gen form on your site then you might not think that you need to read this. And if you're happy with the number of new policies you write each month then you can probably stop reading right here and focus on doing something else with your time.

But if you're like most business owners I've spoken with over the past several years there's a good chance that the time, effort and money you've spent on your website has felt wasted.

Right up until now.

After all, **even the "best" website in the world is completely useless to you if no one finds it.** Or if, when folks

finally do land on your site, they don't take any meaningful action once they get there.

## THESE DAYS INSURANCE MARKETING IS WEB MARKETING

These days more and more people turn to the internet FIRST when searching for a product or service rather relying on any other method, including asking friends and family for referrals.

In fact...

**"89% of consumers turn to Google, Bing or another search engine to find information on products, services or businesses prior to making purchases."**

So how do they find those websites?

It's all based on the keywords people type when searching online, how well you've done your job targeting those very same phrases, and then optimizing your site for the ones most relevant for your agency.

For example, consider these terms:

- business insurance: 22,000
- whole life insurance: 18,100
- auto insurance quote: 6,600

The number next to each keyword refers to the amount of

times that particular phrase was used in a given month. If you look at the first one on the list that means the phrase “business insurance” was used roughly 733 time per day by people looking for business insurance online.

But that’s not all. A similar list could be made for local searches as well, such as:

- auto insurance Rochester: 390
- homeowners insurance Long Island: 170
- California auto insurance: 1,300

What’s more, the web has become much more “local” over the past few years as people now search the web using smart phones, tablets and iPads.

In fact, a recent study found that **“43 % of total Google searches are local.”**

[Atlanta Car Insurance | Atlanta Auto Insurance Quotes – Progressive](http://www.progressive.com/georgia/atlanta-insurance/)  
www.progressive.com/georgia/atlanta-insurance/ ✓  
Learn about Atlanta car insurance quotes, rates, policies and coverage at progressive.com. Getting Atlanta auto insurance quotes is quick, thanks to ...

[Peachstate Insurance](http://www.peachstateautoinsurance.com)  
www.peachstateautoinsurance.com  
Google+ page

[Direct Auto Insurance](http://ga.atlanta.local.directgeneral.com)  
ga.atlanta.local.directgeneral.com  
Google+ page

[State Farm Insurance](http://www.corninrobinson.com)  
www.corninrobinson.com  
2 Google reviews

A 3754 Buford Hwy NE  
Atlanta, GA  
(404) 320-9995

B 530 Joseph E Lowery  
Blvd SW  
Atlanta, GA  
(404) 260-4797

C 75 Ponce De Leon Ave  
NE  
Atlanta, GA  
(404) 810-0000

local search results

Map for [auto insurance atlanta](#)

[\\$29 Cheap Auto Insurance](#)  
connecticut.usautoinsurancenow.co  
Get Cheapest CT Auto Insurance.  
Lowest Rates From \$29.99 / Month!

[MetLife Auto® Insurance](http://www.metlife.com/)  
www.metlife.com/ ✓  
See What Employee Discounts Are  
Available w/ MetLife Auto & Home!

[21st Century Insurance](http://www.21st.com/)  
www.21st.com/ ✓  
Free Auto Insurance Price Quote.  
See If You Could Save Hundreds.

The best part for you is that there are literally hundreds of relevant keyword combinations for just about every type of insurance policy you offer clients.

Now let me ask you a question...

**Is your site currently set up and optimized to capture your share of traffic** from these local searches?

## THE TRUTH ABOUT SEARCH PSYCHOLOGY

Picture for a moment that YOU are searching for something online. So what do you do?

1. type in a keyword or phrase
2. scan the search results for the “best fit”
3. click on a link and visit a website

Now, I know this sounds pretty basic and fairly obvious. We all use search engines every day, and it has become so commonplace and automatic that we take it for granted without giving much thought to the process.

And that’s why search engines work so well... when you’re the one searching for something. **After all, no one had to teach you how to search** for stuff online.

But it’s very different when you’re on the other side of the equation, i.e. relying (hoping?) for your site to come up for relevant search results and then getting people to stay on your site long enough to become a lead.

Now consider this — how long does all this take?

A couple of seconds (at most) to generate a list of results, right?

And yet, **the “search experience” isn’t something that ends after a couple of seconds**. After all, it’s typical for the



first few websites you check out to not “fit” what you’re looking for exactly. Some sites may load slowly. Some may be “ugly.” Some may land you on a page completely irrelevant to what you’re looking for. Some may seem “OK” and yet have no contact page or easy-to-find contact information.

You get the idea.

And after a few minutes you might get frustrated (who wouldn’t?) as you continue to go back to the search results page and click more links to visit site after site until you finally find what you’re looking for.

So what does this have to do with your agency website?

Well, YOU know what you do for people and the value you provide your clients by helping them protect their assets and financial situation. But **the guy or gal who finds you online doesn’t have much patience with the “discovery” process** when they finally land on your website.

They may have visited half a dozen sites already before they finally find you. What’s more, they don’t know you from Adam – and at first glance have frankly have no idea HOW or WHY your agency is any different from the dozens (or hundreds) of others seemingly just like yours that they find online.

Think about that last line for a minute, because this is extremely important for you to understand. You need to take into consideration the search experience and **get “inside” the mind of your prospect** as they search for you online.

Knowing all this, and getting it right, is the ONE thing that is

absolutely critical for your success, because you need to stand out from the “sea of sameness” while appealing to what they are looking for, and then provide them with the type of information they want with respect to getting the policy or policies they need.

### **So how well does your site stand out from the crowd?**



**TIP:** check “average visit duration” on your Google Analytics report to determine how long new visitors stay on your website.

**Having a “sticky” website is essential** because you need to get their attention and get them to interact with your website (typically reading the content/copy of your webpages) as a necessary first step for becoming a lead.

And this is what I mean by having a “sticky” website – i.e. a site where people stay for a couple of minutes to check out the information on your site.

Now, when you combine this with the FACT that people tend to do business with those who they like and trust you can get an idea of what you’re up against, and perhaps why your website has underperformed up until now.

As you can imagine this presents you with a challenge, **because you only have a couple of seconds (at most) to grab their attention** and get them to stay on your site long enough to learn a bit about you (i.e. establish rapport) and possibly become a prospect by calling your office or filling out a web-form.

And this final piece of the puzzle is accomplished by the

copy on your website. Your language (what you say and how you say it), forms the only “bridge” that allows you to communicate the value you provide to clients when people finally find you.

In other words, seen as a whole your website needs to:

1. to attract the right audience
2. get them to stick around for a moment or two
3. and then “speak their language”

**Your site, as a working sales and marketing TOOL**, forms a SYSTEM that is supposed to prequalify visitors and convert them from total stranger to prospect and possible client.

## 2 THREE FACTORS FOR SUCCESSFUL LEAD GENERATION

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So what is the “secret sauce” that can transform a static, seemingly dead website into a lead generation machine?

What is it that will get a total stranger, someone you’ve never met and who has most likely never heard of you or your agency to “raise their hand” and take the next step with you, i.e. call your office, send you an email or complete a web-form on your site?

Well, believe it or not it comes down to knowing and addressing **3 critical factors that need to work together in order for you to see any consistent results.**

This is the ONE breakthrough that makes all the difference.

You see, when it comes to marketing in general, and the web in particular, there’s no such thing as getting “half way decent” results. In other words, your marketing – and that includes your website – is either working for you... or it’s not. And when it comes to “working” that means generating leads.

So what are those factors?

And how do they come together to create a lead generating SYSTEM for your insurance agency?

Quite simply, **you need to have** the...

1. Right traffic
2. Right web design
3. Right language

These three factors make up each leg of what I call the **“Lead Gen Triangle.”**

And understanding how these three elements work together — and then APPLYING these principles to your existing or future website — is the **ONE BREAKTHROUGH** that changes everything for you and your business.



What’s more, each one of these elements, on its own, needs to function properly for you in order for people to seamlessly move people through your pipeline. And if any one of these (or in some cases all 3) are “off” then that becomes the impediment or obstacle preventing proper “lead flow” — i.e. having your site prequalify total strangers into prospects and possible clients.

So where’s the good news?

Well, like any system **once you identify the factor or factors that are holding you back you can properly address them to improve your results.**

And it does happen for those businesses that take the bull by the horns, admit there’s a problem, and make a concerted effort to address those issues and fix them. It’s not rocket

science. Rather, it **relies on the age-old principle of “test and measure,”** or to be more precise:

- review website stats
- check for proper keyword targeting
- analyze your site from the perspective of “user experience”
- measure, test and measure again

Not a quick fix to be sure, but very fixable indeed.

“Now THIS is what I call SEO!!! So now we’ve had four leads through the website in two months, where we had no leads through the website in THIRTEEN YEARS!”

~ Joshua Slavitt, Senior Policy Advisor, John Dunham & Associates

But I don’t want to get too far ahead of myself here since we need to discuss each factor one by one so that you can see for yourself what I’m driving at here.

## THE RIGHT TRAFFIC

So what do I mean by getting the “right traffic?”

Well, quite simply not every visitor to your site is the same. Or in the same frame of mind.

Think of it this way... you wouldn’t want to waste your time

with someone who isn't an ideal prospect for your services, would you?

Some people, to be blunt, are time-wasters. Rate-shoppers. Tire-kickers.

To put it another way, not everybody is in the same frame of mind when it comes to purchasing a product or service. Some are ready to buy, right now, while others are merely gathering information during their "research phase."

Hence **the need to "prequalify" your prospects.**

In fact, for many service professionals (i.e. accountants, attorneys, financial advisors and insurance agents, to name a few) this step is the most important one for you to get right, because far too often people in your profession end up wasting too much time trying to convert an unqualified "prospect" into a client. And this translates to a LOT of wasted effort spent talking with people who don't fit your "ideal client profile" or who are not a good fit for your agency, either because they only buy on price or because they can't afford your services in the first place.

Makes sense, right?

Well, believe it or not the same is true for the type of traffic that lands on your site.

In other words, **there's a big difference between the person who is rate shopping**, looking for the cheapest available quotes for insurance, **and someone who is interested in working with an independent insurance agent**

to get the right coverage for THEIR NEEDS at a reasonable price.

The first type of person is solely driven by price, while the other is motivated by other factors, including convenience, service and expertise.

With me so far?

Good.

**So how do you attract the right kind of person** to your site (like in our example above) and have your site prequalify them for you while limiting how many “rate shoppers” find you online?

Well, that has a lot to do with the sources of traffic to your website. And roughly speaking there are 3 main types of traffic sources based on how you get people to find you:

1. offline traffic driven by marketing (ads, radio spots, etc.) and direct mail
2. paid traffic through Google, Facebook, etc.
3. organic traffic – people finding your site while using a search engine

And as you can imagine attracting the right people to your site varies somewhat between each method, as we’ll discuss in more detail below...

## 1. OFFLINE TRAFFIC

How can a well thought out, well executed direct mail



campaign work, even in today's "digital world?"

**Because our mailboxes aren't as stuffed with junk as they used to be** while our inboxes are crammed full of spam. Consider these statistics from a recent study based on surveys from 2,226 U.S. consumers which revealed:

- 50% paid more attention to postal mail than email
- **60% enjoy checking the mailbox** for postal mail, highlighting an emotional connection
- **26% view direct mail as more trustworthy** than email

Hey, even Google uses direct mail to get people to sign up for their PPC platform Adwords.

Furthermore, though people may think of direct mail as "old fashioned" it is the preferred channel in just about every category, from health to household products.

So why don't more businesses use this strategy?

Like everything else to see results requires thought, planning, execution, testing and optimization. You don't create a direct mail piece in 10 minutes, mail to 100 random people, get no results (which, frankly, is to be expected with this "approach") and then write the whole thing off as a waste of your time and money.

**For this to work for you, and work well, requires thinking through each part of the system** which can be broken down into discreet pieces:

1. Direct mail piece (i.e. postcard/letter)
2. Offer (i.e. the “freebie” that gets them to your site)
3. Landing page
4. Lead generation mechanism (i.e. webform)
5. Follow up sequence (the next step to take)

In fact, some of you may have picked up a copy of this book by responding to a postcard mailed to your office which directed you to my site. Using this real example you can see that there was...

1. a postcard to notify you about the book
2. an offer (i.e. a free copy of this book)
3. a landing page on the site where you completed a web-form
4. the actual form with relevant questions and which sent you to a follow up “thank you” page
5. and then my actually mailing you a copy of the book

### **So who do you mail to? A targeted list!**

And choosing the criteria that make up the targeted list is the key for generating the right traffic to your site for the offer or information that you make available. For example, if your specialty is insuring classic cars, then you can get or find a list of owners of classic cars, and then devise a direct mail campaign that sends these people a piece in the mail which offers them important information they may not know, say about a tax law change or a planned rate hike.

The specifics for this example aren't important right now because you know your business, and I'm sure we could brainstorm together to come up with something that these people would want to learn more about. **Once you have your message and offer in place you can then mail to them with the goal of driving them, not to your homepage, but to a specific page on your site** related to your offer.

That's the "missing sauce" when it comes to direct mail.

Used this way you can see that the goal of the mailed piece (i.e. postcard, letter) is not to sell someone on the "first touch," but rather to get them to your site to "take the next step" with you.

**As you can see the point is not to "sell" someone when mailing a marketing piece to them,** but rather to drive them to your website so that they can get some free information.



**TIP:** Think in terms of "test and measure" when starting a new campaign, because each component above can be improved upon until you get results.

This is the cornerstone of "education-based marketing" – which involves generating a lead based on giving away some valuable information, some offer, which is attractive to your target audience. And those who respond are now prequalified because they've taken the first step with you.

## 2. PAID TRAFFIC (I.E. PPC)

Paid traffic to your site is probably the easiest method of the three to understand at first glance.

However, this ease of understanding **often leads to the biggest waste of marketing dollars** for most businesses. That's because it's relatively easy to create an ad (though I didn't say a good or effective ad), link the ad to your site and then pay somebody (i.e. Google or Facebook to name a few) to "turn the traffic on."

The fact of the matter is that paid traffic doesn't convert as well as it once did, especially on search platforms like Google. Combine this with incredibly high costs per click (for some keywords more than \$20) and you can see that few companies can make this work profitably for them.

But that doesn't mean it can't work.

Only that you have to be smart, try different ads, ad placements, ad types, platform, and test everything (including conversion rates) to make sure you don't blow your marketing dollars with nothing to show for your effort down the line.

Sadly, few businesses do this. Or do it well. And though we don't have the space here to deal with paid advertising in detail, here are some important thoughts with respect to possibly using it to get traffic to your site.

First, **what are your goals for the campaign?**

What would you consider as a successful spend of your ad dollars?

It's relatively easy, for example, to advertise on Facebook to drive folks to your Facebook page and get them to "like you." And a click might only cost about a dollar or two, and people on Facebook aren't being asked to leave Facebook and visit your site directly.

But does that new "Like" translate to business directly?

More often than not the answer is no.

Not unless you have a comprehensive strategy for using social media, like Facebook, to get your message out to a large number of people rather inexpensively.



**TIP:** Content marketing works with social media because it's easy to share your content and is seen, rather correctly, as a "soft sell."

So the big takeaway for you when it comes to paid advertising is to think through the goal of your campaign. Then determine which platform gives you the best ad spend to reach your target audience. And finally, keep track of your ad spending and conversion rates to make sure that your cost per new client is within acceptable limits for your agency.

**The downside of paid advertising** is that once your campaign is finished (i.e. you stop buying traffic) you have nothing to show for your efforts or dollars spent. There is no lasting asset to point to, nothing of lasting value created for agency.

### 3. ORGANIC TRAFFIC

Why do I think that generating **organic traffic is a better use of your resources** when it comes to driving traffic to your site?

Because organic traffic tends to be “evergreen traffic” if you’ve targeted the right keywords.



**TIP:** The key here is **patience & persistence**. Rome wasn’t built in a day, and improving your organic search results won’t happen in a day or two either.

Let me explain...

The term “evergreen” refers to traffic landing on your site day in and day out, month after month after month. And this can (and does) happen if you’ve **targeted the right keywords and then optimized your site accordingly**.

And by choosing the best ones for your agency you can attract the right people to your site, based on the keywords selected. Here’s an example of what I’m talking about:

- free insurance quotes
- cheapest auto insurance
- new york business insurance
- independent insurance agent
- cheap auto insurance in ny
- auto insurance quotes ny
- new york auto insurance

Yes, these are real keywords that get typed into search engines every single day.

So... **can you guess which keywords correspond to “rate shoppers”** and which indicate the kind of person who is interested in the solutions you provide?

Words like “cheap,” “cheapest” or “free” tell you a lot, don’t they? Well I certainly hope they do.

Clearly phrases that focus on how cheap the insurance will cost or even words like “quotes” (note the plural) mean that the person using these phrases wants more than 1 quote, is most likely rate shopping, and is looking for multiple quotes rather than talking with an expert.

Now, those keywords may work well for a site selling leads to insurance agents, but they don’t make any sense for your site to use because someone typing in those keywords isn’t really looking for ONE agent.

Does that make sense to you?

When reviewing the list above (which took less than 5 minutes to put together), I hope you were able to notice the subtle variations on a theme, which should indicate a few critically important points for you:

1. there are **literally hundreds of keywords available** that you *can* choose to target
2. **each keyword indicates the *mind-set*** of the person using it to find you
3. it’s **easier to generate a list of keywords than to know which ones to target**, and then optimize your site for

This forms the basis of search engine optimization, or SEO. And understanding these principles, and then applying them consistently, makes all the difference in the world for your site and your business.

I am in the process of completing a book regarding SEO titled “How to Drive More Traffic to Your Website.” It will be available for purchase on amazon.com as well as through my website. For more information and to reserve your “pre-release” copy please visit:  
[www.bestwebpresence.com/traffic/](http://www.bestwebpresence.com/traffic/)

Targeted traffic, i.e. attracting the right kind of person to your site, **gives your site the chance to communicate your core values** to people who are more disposed to listen to what you have to say.

Think of it this way... someone looking for the cheapest price online doesn't care about your years of experience or how long you've served your community.

They are seeking the lowest possible price, period.

So when it comes to “talking” with these people there isn't much to say to them, to differentiate your agency from a number of other agencies or insurance companies they may find online.

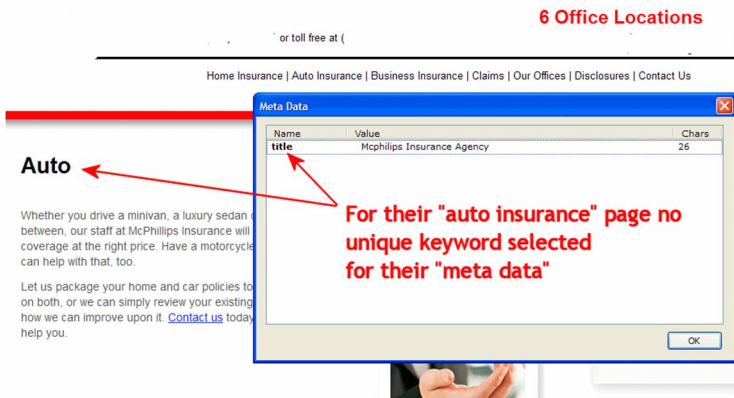
For them it all comes down to price. And as marketing expert Dan Kennedy points out, **“you cannot build long-term customer (or client) retention via the cheapest price.”**

Almost goes without saying, right?



So avoid those keywords that illustrate the mind-set of a “rate shopper” and optimize your site for keywords that indicate an ideal positioning of your agency as the “go-to” insurance experts who offer solutions to people’s problems, rather than “cheap policies.”

Now, once you get a list of keywords that fit your agency (and those keywords may include geographic targeting, like the states or cities where you would like to get clients from), then **make sure they get loaded on your website.**



This is key. You would be amazed how many sites I have reviewed over the years, across a range of different industries, that fail to optimize each and every page of their site with **unique keywords for THAT page.**

And that’s just a darned shame. Because having a good list of keywords and then not adding them to your site is the same as not having any keywords at all.

What's more, pages like the one shown above are basically invisible to Google. They lack even basic fundamental information (i.e. called "meta data") that the search engines use to categorize your webpages to determine where your site should rank for searches.

## THE RIGHT WEB DESIGN

So as you can probably see by now, the question is not necessarily "how do I get more traffic?" but rather "how do I get more targeted traffic to my site?"

You need the right people to find your site to even have a small chance of generating leads on a consistent basis, **provided, of course, that your site is designed to "deliver the goods."**

This is the next "leg" of the lead-gen triangle we talked about earlier.

After all, getting a steady stream of folks who fit your ideal client profile to finally "find you" online doesn't mean that they will necessarily stay on your site for a couple of minutes, read your articles or web pages, and then give you a call, send an email or complete a web-form. Even the best audience in the world may fail to engage with your message found on your site. And if this happens you'll still have a 0% chance of generating leads.

Not sure how well your site is doing?



**TIP: Check your “bounce rate”** with Google Analytics and note how well your site and web pages are doing to communicate your message.

It’s all in the numbers, right there in black and white.

So site layout and design matters, big time. It’s the virtual vehicle to carry them to your virtual door.

And now it’s time to focus on this critical component.

About five or six months ago I wrote an article for my site titled “21 Insurance Website Design Flaws that Sabotage Your Business.”

Needless to say, there’s not enough space here to devote an in-depth analysis for all 21 flaws listed in the article. But don’t feel like you’re missing out, since some of those flaws involved keyword targeting and implementation (already discussed above), layout and design (which I’m going to discuss here), and your use of language and copy on the site (reserved for the next section).

So what are those **7 fatal design flaws that undermine your site’s ability to generate leads**? In no particular order they are:

1. confusing layout
2. not enough copy/information “above the fold”
3. font size too small to read
4. poor use of “sidebar”
5. no product specific pages
6. hard to find your contact information
7. poor quote form layout and design

For each item listed above we're going to discuss in greater detail, along with showing you real examples so you can "see" what I mean. After all, a picture is worth a thousand words...

## 1. CONFUSING LAYOUT

Of all the items on the list this one is the least "empirical" of them all, and at the same time the same time probably one of the most important ones.

Let me explain...

If you have a high "bounce rate" for your site's home page, this can be attributed to 2 possible reasons:

1. poor keyword targeting
2. confusing layout

### **So what constitutes a "bounce?"**

When your web-visitors clicks their back button within 1 second, or less, after landing on your site.

Now, this could mean that what they found on your site typically occurs because of poor keyword targeting. For example a business coach client of mine posted an article after hurricane Sandy about disaster preparedness for business. But because he used "hurricane Sandy" in the title guess who found his website? People looking for information about hurricane Sandy, not people looking for business coaching.

And as you can imagine folks looking for hurricane Sandy news didn't want to "stick around" on site about business coaching. So all of the traffic generated by that article resulted in a 100% bounce rate.

Makes sense, right?

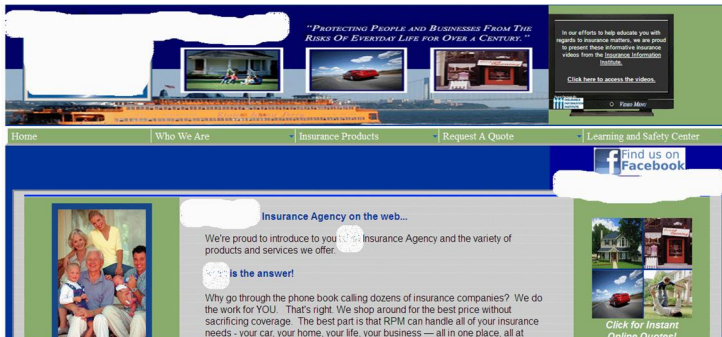
Okay, but **let's say you are targeting the right keywords and folks are still "bouncing off."** What is the reason?

When I review analytics for clients the first thing I check is their bounce rate. It can tell you a lot of information, such as which pages are working for you, and which ones are not. And if your home page has a high bounce rate, especially for "new visitors" this may indicate that your site's layout is confusing.

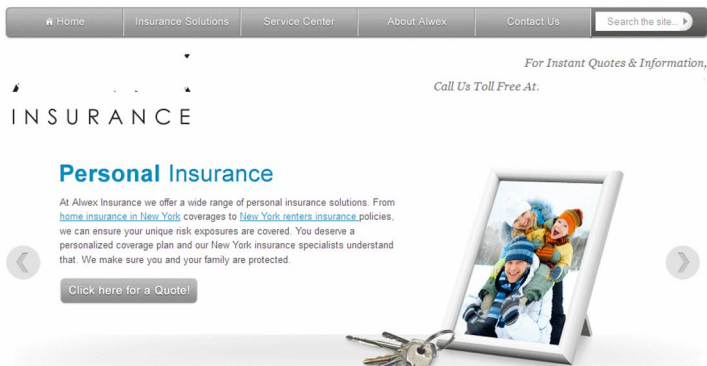
And **a confused web visitor is likely to click the back button faster than you can say "wait a..."** because another website is always just a click away.

So what do we mean by confusing?

Generally speaking it can involve a number of issues, like poor use of images, mismatched images, and a confusing layout for the "eye." Now, like I said earlier this is the one item on the list that has more to do with gut instinct and feel than anything else, so hopefully these few examples will help to illustrate for you what I mean...



Too busy, poor layout (never use 2 sidebars – more on that later), and confusing for the eye (what do they want me to read first?)



Here's a site that "gets it."

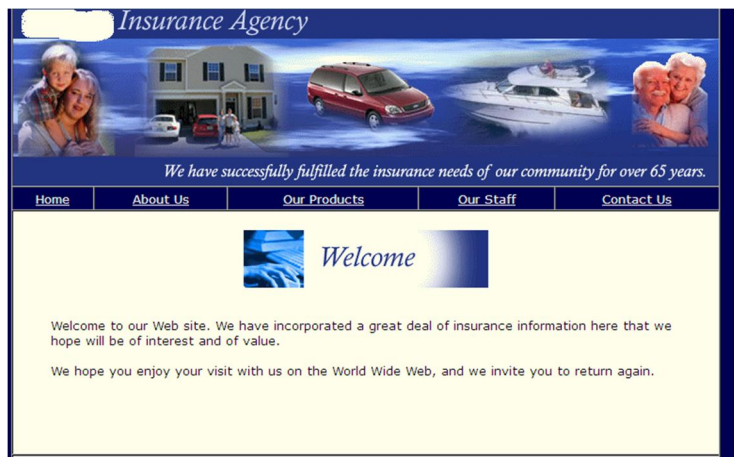
And do you notice how clean the layout is, and how easy it is to read/find/see their contact information? **Not confusing at all...** and that's precisely the point (though I'm not suggesting that you merely copy their site template, design or layout).

And though there are some areas of their site that could be handled better, especially with respect to #5 below, their layout isn't hurting their chance for people "sticking around" and reading/learning more...

## 2. NOT ENOUGH COPY/INFORMATION "ABOVE THE FOLD"

The term "above the fold" refers to the viewable space on your site that you can see without scrolling down to read more.

So why do some websites seem to have so little copy on them?



And **do you think 2 lines of text are enough to get me to stay here and learn a bit about this agency?** Be totally honest... *what is YOUR reaction* when looking at this page?

Now, the #1 reason why so many websites don't have enough copy is simple... because **most designers simply believe** (quite falsely) **that people will not scroll down the page to read more information.** And though there's ample evidence to the contrary, this wrong-headed idea still persists in the minds of many people who you rely on to design and build your site.

The simple fact of the matter is this... **people won't scroll down the page to read boring "corporate-speak" or "me too" copy that's all about you.** But they will read information that they consider relevant and important for addressing THEIR needs.

Got it?

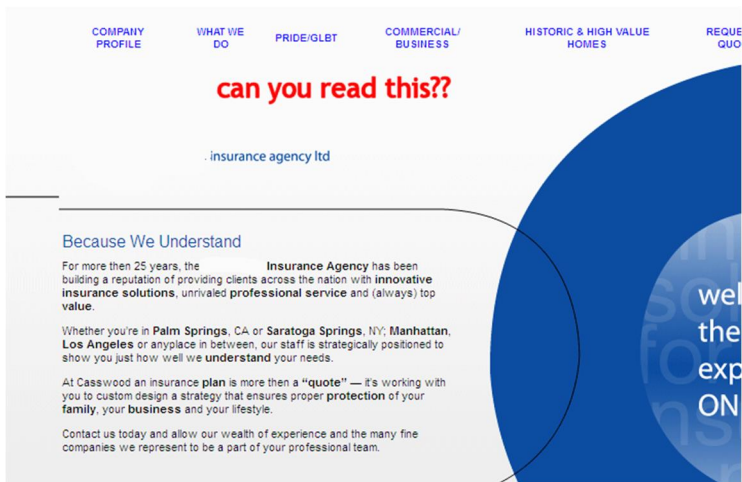
### 3. FONT SIZE TOO SMALL TO READ

I still have 20/20 eyesight (thank goodness), but chances are some of the folks who find you online might have a hard time reading your site. And even though I have good eyesight and use a 24 inch monitor with my computer I still have a hard time reading some websites.

Here are a few tips when it comes to formatting your copy:

1. **never use italics** – hard to read online
2. don't underline words because people assume (correctly) that underlined words are a hyperlink
3. don't bold every darned word on your site – selectively bold only relevant information





Look, your site is supposed to communicate your core marketing message(s), but if folks can read it, or you don't have enough information on the site to grab their attention, then they'll click the dreaded back button and be gone forever.

#### 4. POOR USE OF YOUR SITE "SIDEBAR"

What is a "sidebar?"

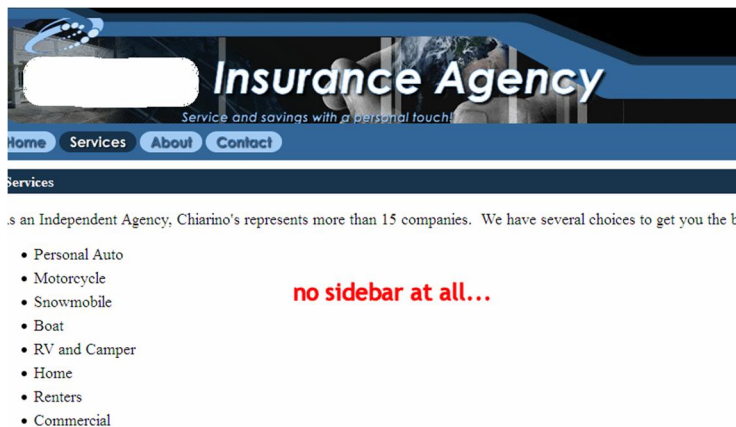
Well, it's the virtual real-estate located either on the right or left hand side of your webpage.

And what makes a sidebar so important for you to use effectively is because it shows up for each and every page on your site, often times including the home page.

That means it's a great space to put critical information for folks to read/see when they land on your site, such as your address, phone number, and links to important pages on your site.

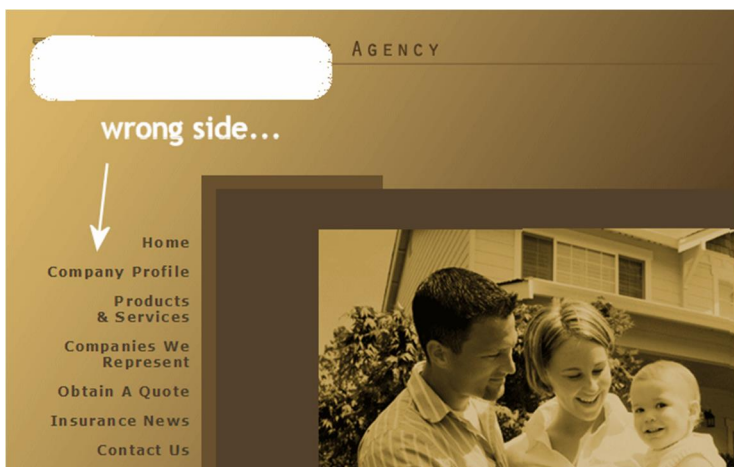
Now, when it comes to using a sidebar effectively there are **3 common mistakes people make:**

1. not having a sidebar
2. having more than 1 sidebar (one on each side of the page)
3. or having it on the wrong side of the site (i.e. putting it on the left rather than the right hand side).



So why put it on the right hand side rather than the left?

Because it is natural for us to read from left to right (unless your primary language is Hebrew, Japanese or Korean, to name a few).



In other words, because we normally read books from left to right it's natural for us when "reading" a web page for our eyes to start at the left and drift right. And you want your most important information on the right hand side where someone's eye will naturally pause or "finish" reading.

With this in mind here are a few more examples of poor use of sidebar...

## 5. NO PRODUCT SPECIFIC PAGES

What do we mean by specific product pages?

Well, it comes down to **having pages that EXACTLY CORRESPOND to the types of policies you offer**, and then naming and keywording them according to actual searches online. In other words, if you offer motorcycle insurance you

better have a motorcycle insurance page on your site. And the same is true for home, auto, renters, etc.

Now, this is a **VERY common mistake that is found** on most insurance agency websites that I've ever reviewed.

Not sure why, but there you have it...



In fact, it's **quite common to find a page for “personal insurance.”** Now, that term might have meaning and relevance internal to your agency and your agents (i.e. personal lines, business lines), but it's not a term that regular people use at all. Ever.

So, make sure your site has all the “product” pages you need for each type of policy you offer.

## 6. HARD TO FIND CONTACT INFORMATION

It never fails to amaze me when I come across a website and have to hunt for the contact information. And if this has

ever happened to you then you know exactly how frustrating it can be.

So why do this on your own site?



Make it easy for them to call you, and you know what? They just might!

Fixing this can pay some immediate dividends. Back in 2009 and 2010 I worked with an online wine retailer, and **this one fix improved their phone orders dramatically**, from an average of \$9,069 per month to \$21,004 per month in the first year alone. That's a **131.6% increase**, which helped to generate an additional \$479,856.46 of revenue for them over a 2 year period.

## 7. POOR QUOTE FORM LAYOUT AND DESIGN

When it comes to the quote forms on your site, **people WILL fill them out, provided** you don't include a laundry list of questions that makes "Moby Dick" or "War and Peace"

seem like a quick read. For example, here is a quote form that I found that helps to illustrate the point...

INSURANCE AGENCY, LLC

Home Get A Quote Customer Service Claims Blog Make a Payment Resources

Company Name  
*Required*

First Name  
*Required*

Last Name  
*Required*

Street  
*Required*

City  
*Required*

State  
*Required*

ZIP / Postal Code  
*Required*

Primary Phone Number  
*Required*

Alternate Phone Number  
*Optional*

E-Mail Address  
*Required*

Owner Name (First & Last)  
*Optional*

This one quote form had **28 questions that people were supposed to fill out** in order to get a quote!

28 questions! Are you kidding me?

Would you answer all those questions? And do you think someone who doesn't know you is going to sit at their computer and take all the time and effort that's needed to **fill that out a form that is the equivalent (in their minds) of doing your job for you?**

Because that's how it looks. And feels to anyone presented with so long a list of questions. Just about any reasonable person presented with a form like this is just going to move on and find somebody else to talk to or deal with. And

looking at this form **I can tell you from experience that I'd be shocked if they get more than 1 quote request per year.**

Now, let me tell you something very important... the goal of your quote form is to get enough information from the person requesting the quote to make your time on the follow up phone call constructive and concise.

In other words, **you don't need your quote form to do ALL the work.**

You only need enough information from the person to pre-qualify them, know what they want, and have enough preliminary information to make your time on the phone call productive.

That's it... and that's how lead gen is supposed to work.

In fact, **here's an example of a quote form** (from a different industry, **on the next page**) that I tested more than 250 times over a span of 4 years.

We tested:

1. the language of the copy above the form
2. how the questions were worded
3. which questions to include and exclude
4. the order of the questions
5. the font of the copy
6. the form background color
7. the form border color
8. the "submit" button layout and color

Why did we do all this?

Well, the only reason to test something on your site is to help it perform better, i.e. generate more leads. By testing all of those variables we were able to convert roughly 28% of all cold visitors into a pre-qualified lead.

Bottom line?

No one is going to answer dozens of questions just to get a quote. Nor do they have to. Just **make sure you ask enough of the critical questions** that are easy to fill out online, and save the rest of the information for your follow up phone call.

## Merchant Account Quotes

If you are searching for the best merchant services, save time and aggravation by **comparing rates and fees for yourself** from a handful of companies.

That way you can find the right merchant account for your business.

To get started simply answer 7 questions below and **receive your free quotes** from providers that can help you get set up today...

### Get Free Merchant Account Quotes Today

Do you already accept credit cards? ☐ No

☐ Yes

What type of merchant account do you need? \*

----- ▾

How much do you (or will you) process each month?

----- ▾

Does that make sense to you?

In the end, you don't want to ask just 1 or 2 questions,



because that doesn't help you much. I would say that **as a standard rule of thumb for EACH specific type of policy you offer ask 6 to 10 of the most important questions** you need answers to in order to have a meaningful dialogue when you call the person who complete the web-form.

## THE RIGHT LANGUAGE (I.E. WEBSITE COPY)

My mom was right... **it's not just WHAT you say, but HOW you say it.**

This is essence of copywriting, and where the rubber meets the road. Because the **ONLY** way to "bridge the gap" between people is the language we use, the **words we choose to say and the way in which they say them.**

And marketing, at the end of the day, is nothing other than communicating your message to your core audience, i.e. your ideal client.

Makes perfect sense, right? Additionally...

"Websites that come up in organic searches have a much better click rate when compared to PPC ads. **Customers seem to trust organic results much more than they trust paid ads** because search engine users assume SERPs ranks to be unbiased." Excerpt from a March 2013 article published on [www.solocube.com](http://www.solocube.com).

Now ask yourself, why are they searching online prior to making a purchase? **What are they looking for, anyway?**

The answer is simple... they are looking for information to help them choose a service provider, or for product reviews, or any other information **to help them decide what will be, for THEM, the right purchase.**

And it is the copy on your site that should be doing that. Yet, people generally make 3 big mistakes when it comes to their copy:

1. lacks a conversational tone (i.e. 3<sup>rd</sup> person voice or too much “corporate speak”)
2. not enough copy on the page to adequately convey your marketing message
3. no (or poor use of a) “call to action” that asks them to take the next step with you

Let’s review each one in a bit more detail, complete with examples to help you see what I’m saying.

## 1. LACKS A “CONVERSATIONAL TONE” OR STYLE

Nothing turns a person off a person more than “corporate speak” or reading copy on your site written in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person or in a style that is common in a press release.

Save press releases (which, in my opinion, are a huge waste of your time and money) for publication off your site.

When it comes to writing about your agency and the services you provide **you simply must “speak” and sound like a regular human being.** And that means avoiding technical “in-house jargon” that may or may not connect

with your audience, since this can be seen as condescending our “out of touch” with their needs, their wants, their situation.

For example, would you read this if it was filled with technical jargon that “sailed over your head” or confused you?

**Confusion is the worst thing you want your web visitor to feel** when they land on your site. Nobody wants to feel stupid or talked down to, and no one wants to slog through language that is “stiff” or formal.



If you don't talk like that, then don't write like that.

#### **Some terms to avoid:**

1. **“full service”** – well, that's certainly better than working with a “half service” agency... I guess. This term is meaningless and communicates absolutely nothing of value
2. **“we represent a number of companies”** – to be blunt, no one cares... it's not about who you

represent (yawn!) but what you can do for THEM, the folks who find you online

3. **“one of the premier...”** – that kind of boast means nothing and gets you nowhere
4. **“save money,” “free quotes,” “shopping around”** – ouch, are you nothing but a glorified order taker? Do you offer sound insurance planning or do you simply just sell the “cheapest” policies?

How you choose to position yourself through the language you use will determine the type of people who will resonate with and respond to your site.

**Do you really want to be the “lowest” around, or appeal to someone “shopping around?”** Because if you load up your site with phrases like this, guess what, you will.

## Compare New York Auto Insurance and Home Insurance Quotes Online

If the thought of shopping around for a new property, homeowners or car insurance policy seems overwhelming, you need to stop putting it off any longer since you can now get insurance quotes instantly. Gone are the days of digging through the yellow pages and making multiple telephone calls to independent agencies in your area. Now, as long as you are online, you can get dozens of quotes in a matter of minutes.

Club Agency Insurance Brokerage offers a comparison tool to help New York City area residents, including Garden City, Brooklyn, Queens and Manhattan, get information about policies and coverage details. Simply fill out the online form, submit your information and you'll soon have a list of all of the top insurance companies that provide coverage for your area. You'll even be

How is this helpful to me?

Why would I want to slog through dozens of quotes in a matter of minutes? Are you selling widgets or providing

solutions? What is your business really about?

**How you answer these questions IS your business,**  
because it defines your business.

When someone turns to an insurance professional they're not looking for dozens of cheap quotes. Leave that to quote sites and the rate shoppers who frequent those type of sites.

The real reason why I, and anyone else who became your client, turned to an independent insurance agency in the past was because working with a professional made my life easier, not by supplying me with "dozens" of quotes but because you walk us through the process and make an experienced recommendation regarding coverage based on our situation that makes sense to us.

## 2. NOT ENOUGH COPY ON THE PAGE

There's a prevalent myth out there about websites that goes something like this: "people don't read anymore. It's all about audio and video."

So nobody reads anymore?

Well then, why is it that the Huffington Post sold for 315 million dollars in 2011?

Or how about a 2012 Pew Research Study which indicated that **more Americans get news online than from radios or newspapers**. Or a recent statement by Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon.com, who was quoted in December, 2012 that

**“eBooks is a multi-billion dollar category** for us and growing fast – up approximately 70% last year.”

Someone is reading news sites, and somebody is buying all those e-books and, yes, actually reading them.

So it’s not true that nobody reads anymore. Rather, it’s that we have more CHOICES for content outlets, more places to find what we’re looking for rather than the local paper or the “big 3” channels of ABC, NBC, and CBS.

Say what you want but the **web is a CONTENT driven universe.**

And the amount of copy on the page affects your search engines rankings (because Google thinks unique, quality content matters), and it affects your ability to communicate with the visitors that find you online.



**TIP:** For a helpful article on how to write effectively for the web, visit [www.bestwebpresence.com](http://www.bestwebpresence.com) and look for “3 Tips for Effective Article Marketing.”

You can think of it this way... say we met at a client appreciation golf outing you’re hosting and I showed up as a guest of one of your best clients. Right before the round kicks off we’re standing in the club house after a pre-round light breakfast, and you have my full attention for 10 to 15 minutes.

Now, given that setting are you just going to tell me your address, phone number and email address?

Hand me your business card without a couple of words

about what you do or how you do it?

And let's say I express a bit of interest, are you just going to limit yourself to 100 words? Or **will you take the time and have a conversation with me** and say as much as you need to say to communicate your message?

If you attend business networking events you know that your "elevator pitch" is only an introduction to a further conversation, a quick "blurb" you tell people to spark their interest and give them an idea about how your agency is different.

An "ice-breaker" if you will.

You know all this, right?

And yet, time and again I find websites (not just insurance agency sites, but a LOT of websites) that simply ignore two fundamental facts:

1. you need enough content on your site to "tell your story"
2. Google (and the other search engines) require you to have **at least 350+ words on a webpage** to consider it a "valid" page

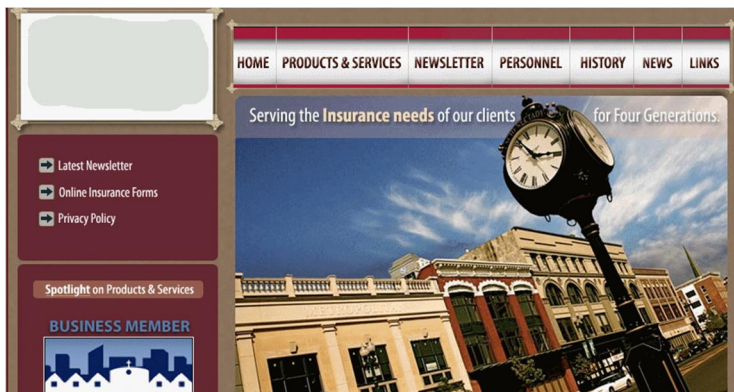
**A "copy-poor" site will consistently fail to deliver results** because, on the one hand, they will not attract enough traffic, while on the other the few people who stumble onto the site will never take a meaningful action because there is no "meat on the bones."

It's your site, you can communicate whatever you want on

it, so for goodness sake put some meaningful text on there and stand out from the crowd. Use your voice effectively and you'll get more leads, unlike this site...



Think that's an isolated example? It's not...

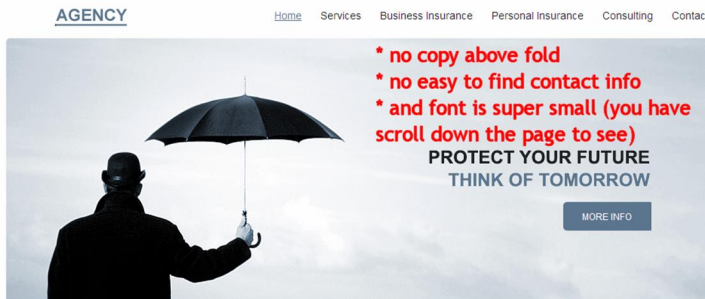


Besides looking “back dated” and ugly – sorry, just calling it like I see it, this site has absolutely no copy at all. Just some



navigation buttons on the top and a huge photo of a clock. One line of text isn't going to cut it, I'm sorry, but it isn't.

And finally...



Look, my goal is not to humiliate the people who own these sites. I'm not calling into question their intelligence or integrity. **My reason for using concrete examples is to SHOW you** what a lot of sites look like, and the common errors that most of them have, in some form or another, and how those errors are holding them back.

### 3. No (OR POOR USE OF A) "CALL TO ACTION"

In case you're not familiar with the expression "call to action," it's a marketing term that describes...

"a banner, button, or some type of graphic or text on a website meant to **prompt a user to click it and continue down a conversion funnel**. It is an essential part of inbound marketing as well as permission marketing in that it actively

**strives to convert a user into a lead and later into a customer.”** (Wikipedia).

In simplest terms, what is the “next step” in your sales process that you want your web visitor to take?

Call, email, or complete a short web-form?

In other words, what do you want someone to do next after reading your page and learning a bit more about you?

Whatever that is, **now is the time to ask them to do it.** I know it sounds simple, but that’s how you leads get prequalified. Anyone willing to take the next step based on what they’ve found on your site is a viable lead. And as long as your form isn’t asking them for DNA samples or to solve complex mathematical equations (just kidding) they will most likely do what you ask them to do, provided you use the right language and make the process relatively easy.

Case in point, just the other day I had to renew my invoicing software (Invoice2go), and every year it becomes incredibly hard to do. The link that my software gives me is supposed to open a renewal link, but it doesn’t. Instead my web browser opens a new window. And going to their website is even less helpful, since they don’t post a phone number of have an easy way to buy or renew the product.

It took me 45 minutes using live chat to solve the problem.

So why tell you this?

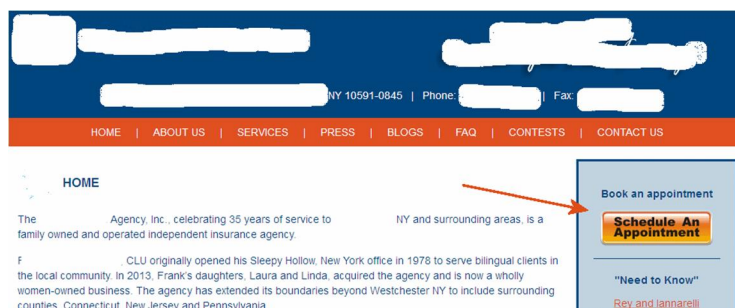
Well, I only went through that arduous process because I had pending invoices to send and edit. Otherwise it was off

to another company. And I've been a loyal customer for 7+ years.

So when it comes to a call to action, **you simply tell them what the next step is**, like “call us to schedule a policy review” or “click the link and complete a short web-form” or some other text, button or graphic for them to click on to call, email, whatever. And as long as your language is clear and the actual process simple enough you should generate more leads through your site.

This time, I'm going to show you some examples, both good and bad, and ask you to review them to see whether or not YOU think they are compelling enough to warrant taking the next step.

Ready?



Can you see what they are using for the call to action?

Though the button is located in the right spot — i.e. right hand side, above the fold and just below nav bar and header —(which, by the way is PRIME website real estate), **I'm not convinced that “schedule an appointment” is compelling enough** to get people to respond, especially people who are

just finding them online and don't already know something about them.

So they're close to getting it right.

Here's another...



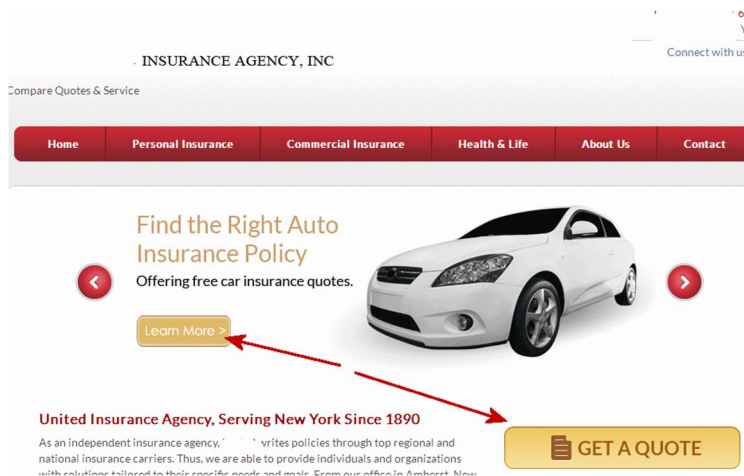
There's nothing wrong with language like "get a quote" (as long as you don't use the plural, i.e. "quotes"), but it is located on the wrong side of the page. The button color and graphics don't "pop off" the page as well. I would suggest moving it (and the entire sidebar) to the other side of the page as well as using a different button graphic.

You could skip a button altogether and use some text/copy to get people to take the next step, i.e. fill out a web-form, by giving them a compelling reason to do so, like downloading a free report or requesting a policy review.

Here is one final site to review.

In this case I like the quote button they use (stands out from the white background), though for the copy next to the car

image I would have used “offering MORE than free car insurance quotes” or something ties in better with the line above about **finding the right auto policy**.



Why?

Because the way it stands now the copy below in black above the “learn more” button implies that getting the right policy is only a matter of price. Plus, you don’t want to offer them “quotes” but rather, a quote.

Overall, however, they are doing a lot of things right.

Am I splitting hairs here, or being needless picky?

Not at all. Having been involved in online lead generation since 2008, I can tell you with absolute certainty that **little things mean a lot**. A minor tweak in language can be all the difference your site needs to unlock lead flow.

### 3 HOW WELL DOES YOUR SITE WORK FOR YOUR AGENCY?

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Thank you for taking the time to read through this short book about how to get more leads through your website. Hopefully you found it helpful in identifying possible shortcomings with your own site.

The overall point of this booklet was to highlight that **there are concrete reasons why websites fail to deliver meaningful results.**

What's more, once you are able identify the obstacles that get in the way from moving people through your sales process from visitor into prospect and finally client (or not), then you can take the necessary steps to address those issues.

Would you like me to review what's holding your site back from generating leads?

I'm happy to perform a comprehensive website audit and customized review which will review your keyword selection and implementation, web design, calls to action your lead gen form in order to discover why your site is not performing as well as it could. **There's no cost for this and no obligation of any kind.**

I offer this free service because I run a web marketing firm that specialized in helping business get more traffic and

convert more leads. And there's a good possibility that I'll uncover issues with your website that prevent it from generating a consistent flow of leads. So if you find value in the help I provide you might want me to work with you one-on-one to dramatically improve your results.

With that said, please understand that I am not offering a sales pitch in disguise. I promise not to pressure you or pester you in any way at all.

In fact, if during our call if you feel that I've wasted even one second of your time let me know and I'll immediately write you a check for \$250, no questions asked. And you'll still have my website audit report that you can refer to regarding issues that were found on your site.

Now before you go any further, you need to know that I can't help everybody.

I can only be of benefit to people who what to get better results than they have in the past, are serious about following my recommendations and applying those suggestions and changes to their site (or have me do it for them), and who can stick with the program for the long haul. There are no "get rich quick" gimmicks, so it takes time to see results from the customized strategies we develop for you.

Here's what you do next.

**If you want to schedule a website review and planning session** with me, simply:

1. copy and complete the form at the back of the book and fax to my office
2. or visit [www.bestwebpresence.com/call/](http://www.bestwebpresence.com/call/)

Once I have that information I'll review your website and we'll set up a time to go over it together on the phone.

How does that sound to you?

Finally, I'd like to share a testimonial we recently received recently from an economic research firm located in New York City who became a client of ours about 6 months ago or so...

---

*"Now **THIS is what I call SEO!!!***

*So now **we've had four leads through the website in two months**, where we had no leads through the website in **THIRTEEN YEARS!**"*

*<http://guerrillaeconomics.com/>*

*Joshua Slavitt*

*Senior Policy Advisor, John Dunham & Associates*

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To clarify, though we did complete a LOT of SEO work for them which helped to get a couple of keywords to the top of page 1 (including "economic research firm") we actually did a whole lot more for them, including:

- Completed extensive keyword research



- Edited all of their articles to better target keywords
- Revised copy on their product pages, and added the right keywords to each one
- Added contact info, links and other information on their site sidebar
- Added “calls to action” on each and every product page
- Revamped their “contact” page and added a web-form that asked a few meaningful questions for folks to complete before becoming a lead.

**Can we do the same for you?**

Absolutely.

So go ahead and schedule your call today. I look forward to hearing from you soon...

## Schedule Your No-Strings-Attached Website Review & Planning Session

“Yes Michael, I want to claim my FREE 60 minute phone consultation and website audit today.”

**Please answer the questions below:**

1. How many leads does your site typically generate each month?
2. If you do get leads, do they tend to fit your ideal client profile?
3. Do you have Google Analytics (or other tracking software) installed on your site?
4. Do you track the source of successful leads generated through your site?
5. Do you regularly post new content to your site?
6. What is the lifetime value of a new client for your agency?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

URL: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please Complete the Form and Fax  
to: 866-274-0406**

Or visit us online: [www.bestwebpresence.com/call/](http://www.bestwebpresence.com/call/)

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