



Website Psychology

by Dr. Nicola Davies

Do you know the difference between “a \$5 fee” and “a small \$5 fee”? It turns out that a single word —“small” — is enough to boost online sales by 20 percent. This technique has been dubbed “Psychological Selling”— the use of psychology to boost business income. Here are 7 tips for using psychology on your business website.

1. Decisions are emotional

We are egocentric and see the world in terms of how it relates to us personally. As a consequence, people tend to base their decisions on feelings and emotions rather than on logical thought processes. Make sure your website has an emotional component to it, demonstrating how a product or service applies to consumers personally. Will it help them feel better or enhance their lives in some way?

2. Decisions are justified with facts

In order to justify their purchase, consumers will look more closely at your service before denting their bank balance. We have a need to find the rationale for following our feelings. This is where demonstration of value is key. Let your customers know how your service compares to others in terms of cost or function. Do you strive to be 10 percent cheaper than high street shops? Are you offering three for the price of two? Bargains move a consumer from being interested to making a purchase.

3. People want to be helped

People love to buy, but hate to be tricked. Therefore, change your mind-set from one of selling to people and replace it with one of “helping people”—make it your aim to sell your

product or service to those who will truly benefit from it. Psychological selling isn’t about making people buy from you, but more effectively reaching your target audience.

4. We are naturally suspicious

Humans are naturally suspicious, particularly in situations that involve parting with their hard-earned cash. Support any claims with facts in order to reduce the suspicion of those considering your service. We have all heard the saying, “If it sounds too good to be true, then it probably is too good to be true.” If your product or service sounds too good to be true, prove to your customer that it isn’t.

5. Demonstration— show not tell

Don’t just tell your customers how your service or product works—show them. This is where animated video can be particularly effective. Videos are a great way to express ideas and concepts simply, and provide greater visibility in search engines; videos have a 41 percent higher click through than plain text. In the past, such a tool might have only interested large corporations. Today, where entrepreneurialism is increasing, more people are building their own businesses and advertising online via video.

6. We love convenience

The more convenient your service is, the more sales you will get. Make it easy for website visitors to make a purchase, clearly displaying a “Buy

Now” or “Ask a Question” icon that takes visitors directly to the next stage of the purchasing process. Don’t hesitate to point out the ease of your service—can it be purchased in “2 easy steps”? Like Amazon.com, do you offer “1-Click” ordering? If so, make this clear.

7. We don’t want to be alone

People are social beings, whose primary function is social interaction. Therefore, we are more interested in websites involving people and real-life situations. Be sure to use names, pronouns, and testimonials— anything that places your service within the social context. Let website visitors know what others think of you, either through testimonials or by including a counter on your homepage that displays the number of visitors or purchases. Never underestimate the influence of even one good testimonial. This is why sites like Tripadvisor.com are so popular— testimonials from real people are the decision-makers’ oracles.

Along with these tips, ensure that your website includes at least one “call to action”—“Click for a Quote,” “Ask a Question,” “Buy.” To make a sale, you need visitors interacting with your website.



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