



5 Best Practices to Create a High-Impact Sales Lead Generation Web Site

SUMMARY:

If you think your Web site or landing page could generate more sales leads than it currently does, you definitely should check out this classic Case Study. Includes details on how a software company used these five Best Practices...

1. Home Hero spot Links for Both Kinds of Prospects
2. Building Trust With Loads of Client-Peer Mentions
3. Multiple Offer Options to Garner Leads
4. Personal Touch with Zip Code Search & Rep Photos
5. Watching Live Visits to Determine Final Tweaks

... to garner the highest possible conversion from visitor to registered lead:

CHALLENGE

Misys Healthcare Systems is one of the top five healthcare IT companies in North America, with more than 2,600 employees. As any marketer knows, managing sales lead generation programs for a company this large has its upsides and downsides.

On one hand, many prospects have probably heard of you. Plus, you have a sales team in 60-locations who are ready to spring on leads when you generate them. On the other hand, it's hard to do nimble online marketing tests when you've got a big IT department busy with loads of other projects, a fancy existing, general-purpose, corporate site, and years of traditional marketing ideas to overcome.

"Do doctors even search the Web looking for medical records software?" one executive wondered. "I thought they just checked their stock portfolios online." Every Net project needs an internal evangelist -- in this case it was Misys sales rep Jennifer Nichols. She'd won the President's Club Trip for 2003 and wanted to test her wings on something entirely different.

Together with an outside developer, she put together a pitch to convince senior management to let her try a test project. This internal pitch was as carefully crafted as any outside sales call she'd ever put together. With help from the marketing department's intranet, Nichols pulled cost-per-lead data on each of the traditional marketing tactics, such as trade show booths and direct postal mail.

Then she created a PowerPoint slide comparing this to the number of online searchers for terms related to software like Misys's and what the per click cost would have been if Misys bought search terms and/or optimized a site for search. "We're spending \$60-70 per lead generated on direct mail, but we could be number one in Overture for just \$9 a click." Management was impressed enough to ok a test project. Nichols had a tight budget and a deadline of 60-days to launch a lead generation site and prove the Web could work.

CAMPAIGN

Nichols put together an outside team of a copywriter, a Web designer, and a programmer to help her create the new stand-alone Web site that would function as a lead generation tool. The team used five specific best practices to make the site as high-impact as possible:

Best Practice #1. Home "Hero spot" Links for Both Kinds of Prospects

Nichols knew that she'd probably get search traffic from prospects in two distinctly different parts of the sales path -- people who researching electronic medical records software in general, and people who had narrowed their research to picking the best system.

Web sites that try to serve two different audiences like this often fail, especially for search-results clickers who want to see content that applies directly to their needs within seconds without poking around for it. The team's solution was to place two big links in the "hero spot" of the home page below the logo. One read, "Why EMR? Find out more here." The other said, "Why Misys? Find out more here."

So, no matter which kind of prospect you were, your path was immediately apparent.

Best Practice #2. Building Trust With Loads of Client-Peer Mentions

Nichols knew from in-person sales calls that prospects always want to know, "Who else is using this software? Is their practice like mine?" So, almost 50% of the home page was dedicated to elements proving Misys is popular with prospects' peers. Because peer-use was such an important point, the design team included information in three different visual styles to catch the eye of prospects no matter what their preferred site-scanning method was:

- For "readers" the headline and body copy expounded on how many practices use the Misys system.
- For "people who like people" the designers posted four headshots of actual clients along with their testimonials.
- For "newshounds" the home page featured an 'In The News' section that looked like a typical corporate site list of news releases... but instead each story was about a new, named-client who'd just selected Misys.

Best Practice #3. Multiple Offer Options to Garner Leads

Nichols thought it would be foolish to rely on a one-size-fits-all offer. So, the team developed six different interactive offers:

- o A White paper to download
- o An ROI calculator
- o An online demo
- o 'Request a free CD-ROM' offer
- o An in-person demo
- o A sales rep contact

Because the site was going to be promoted via both paid and optimized search marketing, Nichols knew that incoming traffic might easily bypass the home page, and enter on a completely different page. So, the team made the tidy list of six offer links a permanent part of the top right column on every single page of the site. No matter where you entered or surfed, you could respond by in one quick click to get the offer of your choice.

Best Practice #4. Personal Touch with Zip Code Search & Rep Photos

If you've got a big outside sales force, why not flaunt it? Misys' HR department had photos of all employees already databased, so the Web team borrowed them to create a great feature we've never seen before -- a

"Meet Your Local Support Team" interactive tool. Visitors simply typed their zip code, clicked, and saw smiling faces and contact info for the reps in their local area.

The team also hoped this functionality would raise the site's search engine visibility because now the site had a page for every zip code in America. And the more pages you have, in general the more likely it is you'll be found and indexed under more terms by search engine spiders.

Best Practice #5. Watching Live Visits to Determine Final Tweaks

Although the site was developed with a Web analytics package, the team didn't want to wait for reports to find out how they were doing and determine what to tweak to improve results. So they jerry-rigged an informal focus group to see how real-life visitors would interact with the site in real time.

How? Turns out if you install some (very) low-cost chat messaging software on your site, you can use its real-time reporting function to view exactly what search engine page the visitor found your link on, and how that visitor then moves through your site. (Link to software below.) Note: The team didn't actually use the software to chat with anyone, or to even visibly offer people the option to chat. Instead, they just used it for this nifty, easy-to-view, reporting function.

Then they tweaked both the site navigation paths, and the paid search terms chosen, based on results. (Learning which terms qualified prospects find you under in "organic" results is a great way to discover terms to buy paid results under.)

RESULTS

"The site launched five months ago, and it's definitely successful," says Misys' Marketing Communications Manager Mike Truell. "It's now the model we're using with the rest of the sites we're putting up. There are a lot of elements we want to incorporate into our main site as well."

Turns out people love having their choice of offers:

- o 19% of visitors click on the ROI calculator offer
- o 20% click on the white paper offer
- o 49% click on the link to the online demo

Plus, by watching the live visitor info, the team learned that multiple offers may be crucial to a site's success. Turns out that when most people click on an offer link and discover there's a registration form barrier, they immediately return to the "open" part of the site. Then they poke around a bit more, and finally click back to either another offer or the original one that caught their eye.

Only then do they fill out the registration form. As Nichols suspected, visitors are at many different stages of the sales cycle. According to the answers they give on forms:

- o 60% are "Just Started"
- o 18% have conducted "Extensive Research"
- o 14% have "Seen Presentations"
- o 8% are "Decision Ready"

Plus, it turns out that doctors do surf software sites. 42% of all leads generated so far are from doctors themselves.

ARTICLE SOURCE:

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