26 WAYS TO IMPROVE ECOMMERCE CONVERSION RATES

by Dano Falk / DefDevice.com

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Introduction

Improving Ecommerce Conversion Rates - Why does this matter? Because

Traffic x Conversion = Sales

Traffic and conversion are the two most important variables in our online business.

In this eBook, I will focus on the second part - conversion - which has a significant effect on our bottom line. It determines whether the traffic that we bring to our store is actually profitable or not.

What is the Typical conversion rate for Ecomm Stores?
Littledata surveyed 3,936 Shopify stores in May 2022 and found the average conversion rate for Shopify stores was 1.4%. Which I find slightly alarming because it means you have to bring 1000 visitors to your store in order to make 14 sales. Not easy to be profitable. On top of that, over the last 4 years, the average dropped by 50% - it was 2.8% back then.

Conversion rates do vary by industry, but in general they stay within a range of 1-3.6%.

Now the obvious question is: how do we improve conversion rates?
It's easy to get confused and lost in the flood of information that can be found on the internet on this topic. That's why I suggest a strategic approach which covers four areas: usability, trust, perceived value and retargeting.

About The Author

Dano Falk

Our family was always on the move. Ukraine, Moldavia, Kirgistan, Belarus and Germany where the countries I had lived in by the time I was 10 years old. All I knew as a child was migration. We settled down in Cologne for a few years, then moved to the south of Germany.

After finishing high school, I moved to Munich knowing one thing: enough sitting in classrooms for this lifetime! So I went on following my passion and learned jazz saxophone, sound engineering and DJing. Learning what I needed to know on the go - by doing.

I started my online career as an intern at Munich's first online agency - MediaLab - in 1996. Continued as a freelance Graphics-Designer and Web-Designer. Founded my first agency -DefDesign - in 2000, working for Siemens, EADS, Bosch and others. Continuing my path has a self-taught entrepreneur, I ventured into trading stocks, DJing and selling on Amazon. After selling my Amazon business in 2019, I focused on helping other businesses to grow online with my agency DefDevice.
More about me on my personal website danofalk.com

One of my favourite quotes:

"There is no failure. We either succeed, or we learn."

– John Logar

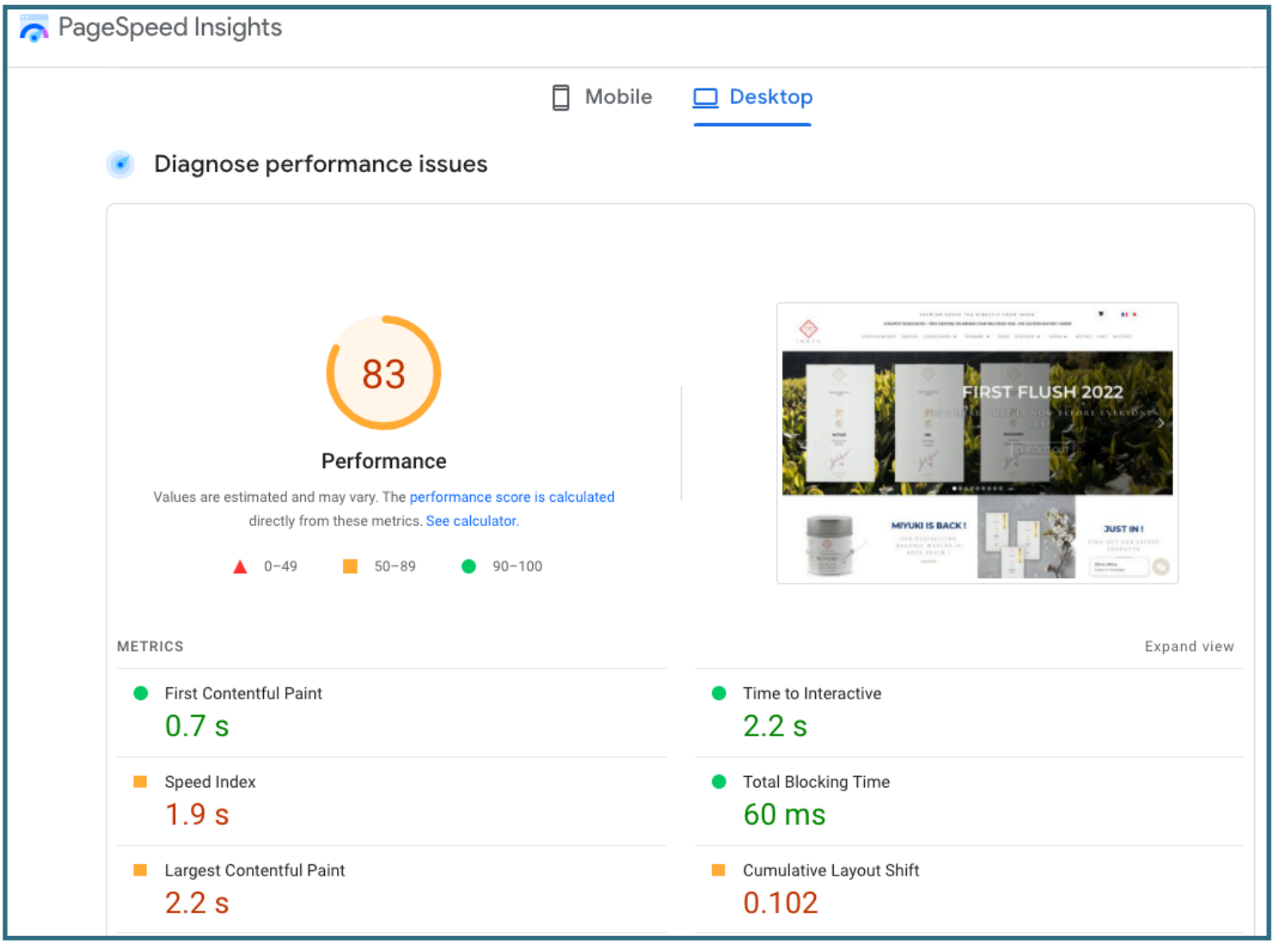
Part 1 – Usability

In order for visitors even to consider your offer, your store needs to be userfriendly. What does that mean? Here is the breakdown:

1.1 Short Loading Time

The loading time of your store has a dramatic effect on the bounce rate - the amount of visitors leaving without taking action or viewing your content. In general, it increases by 5% per second. So if your store takes 10 second to load, you are loosing 50% of your traffic. That's why it's super important to speed up your loading time as much as possible. You are loosing 5% of your store visitors per loading second.

One of the free and efficient tools to check your loading time is Google's PageSpeed Insights tool. The result page looks like this:

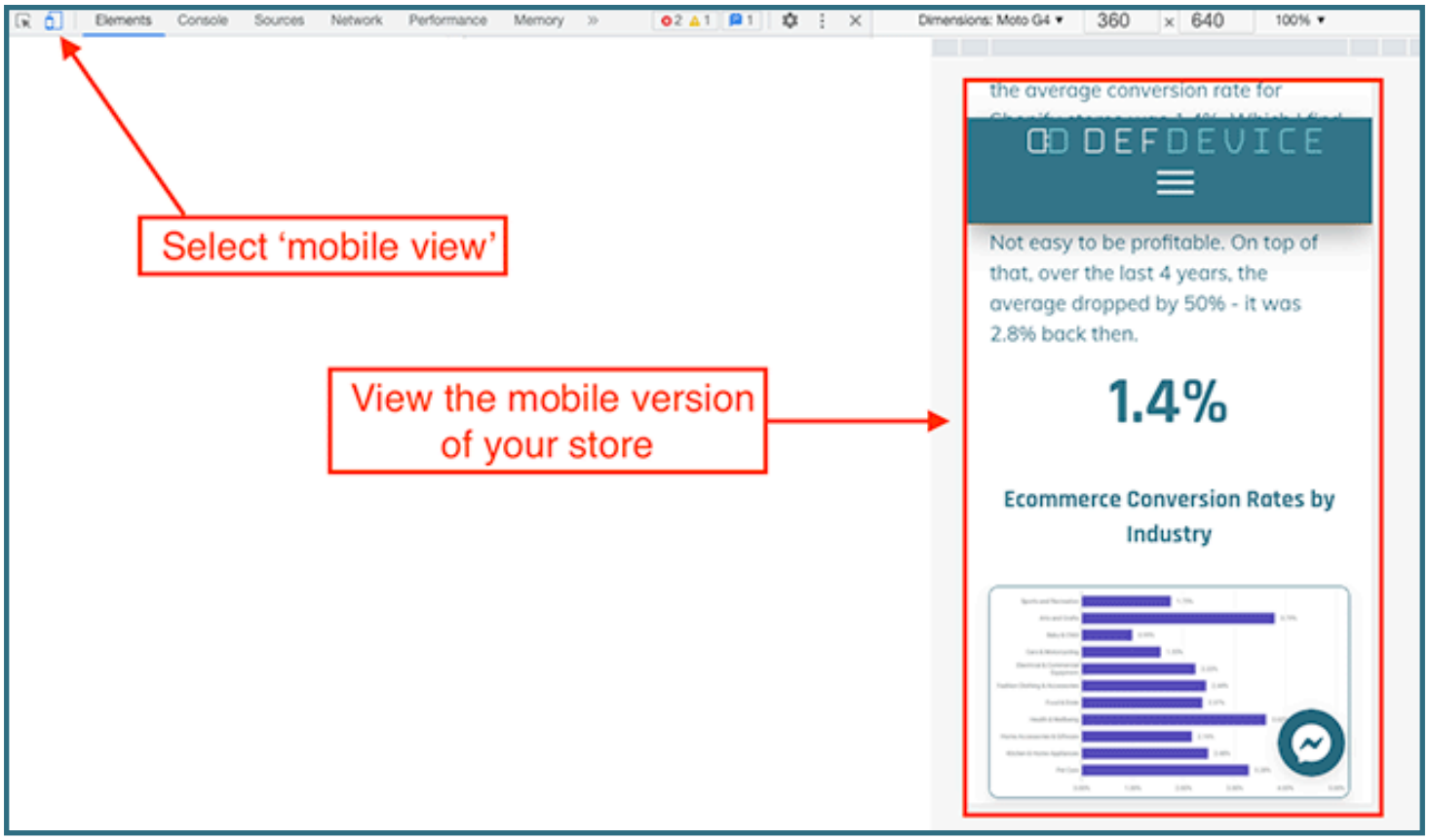


To implement the suggestions and speed up your store requires quite a bit of tech knowledge - best to hire an expert. We can help with that. This is essential in order to improve ecommerce conversion rates.

1.2 Make Your Store Mobile Friendly

More than 70% of all online store sales are happening on mobile these days. Hence making sure that your store works, loads fast and looks good on mobile is essential.

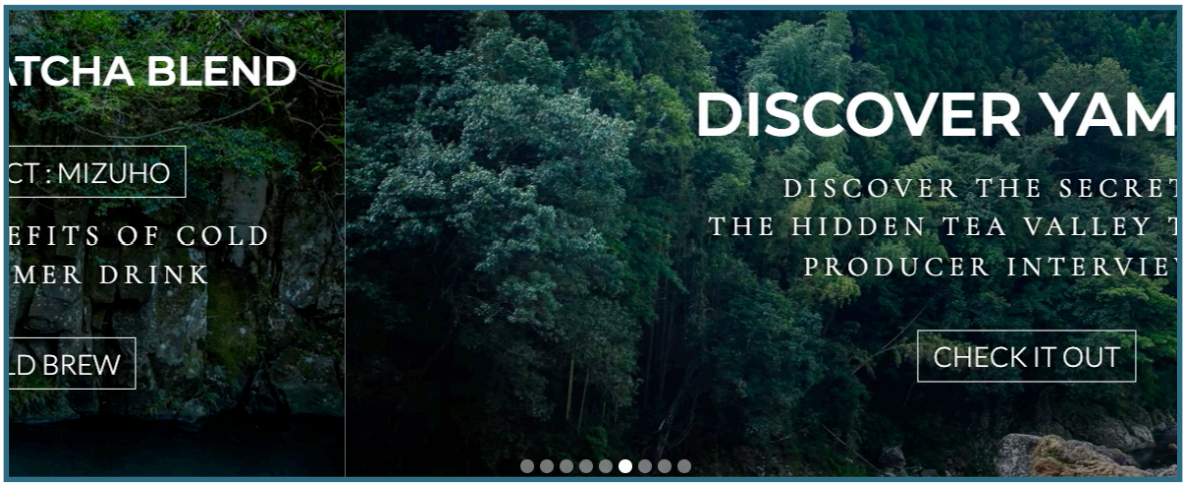
There are many ways check this. The easiest one is obviously to load your store in your mobile device and see if everything looks and works the way it should. To see the mobile version on your desktop in Google Chrome, go to 'View / Developer / Developer Tools'.



1.3 Get Rid of Auto-Sliders

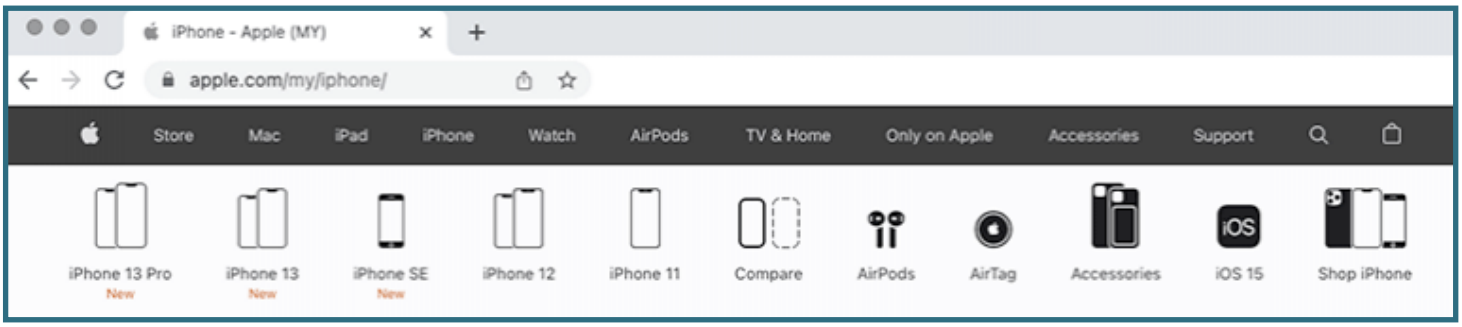
Auto-sliders are annoying and very counter-productive. Every other website has a slider sitting on its premium spot - the top section of the homepage. This is where you should place your best offer / call to action to engage visitors.

If you use an auto-slider, you keep on sliding away what might be interesting to your buyers. This is something I would highly recommend not to use on your web store because you're just confusing people and you're not giving them the time to engage with the content that might actually be relevant to them.



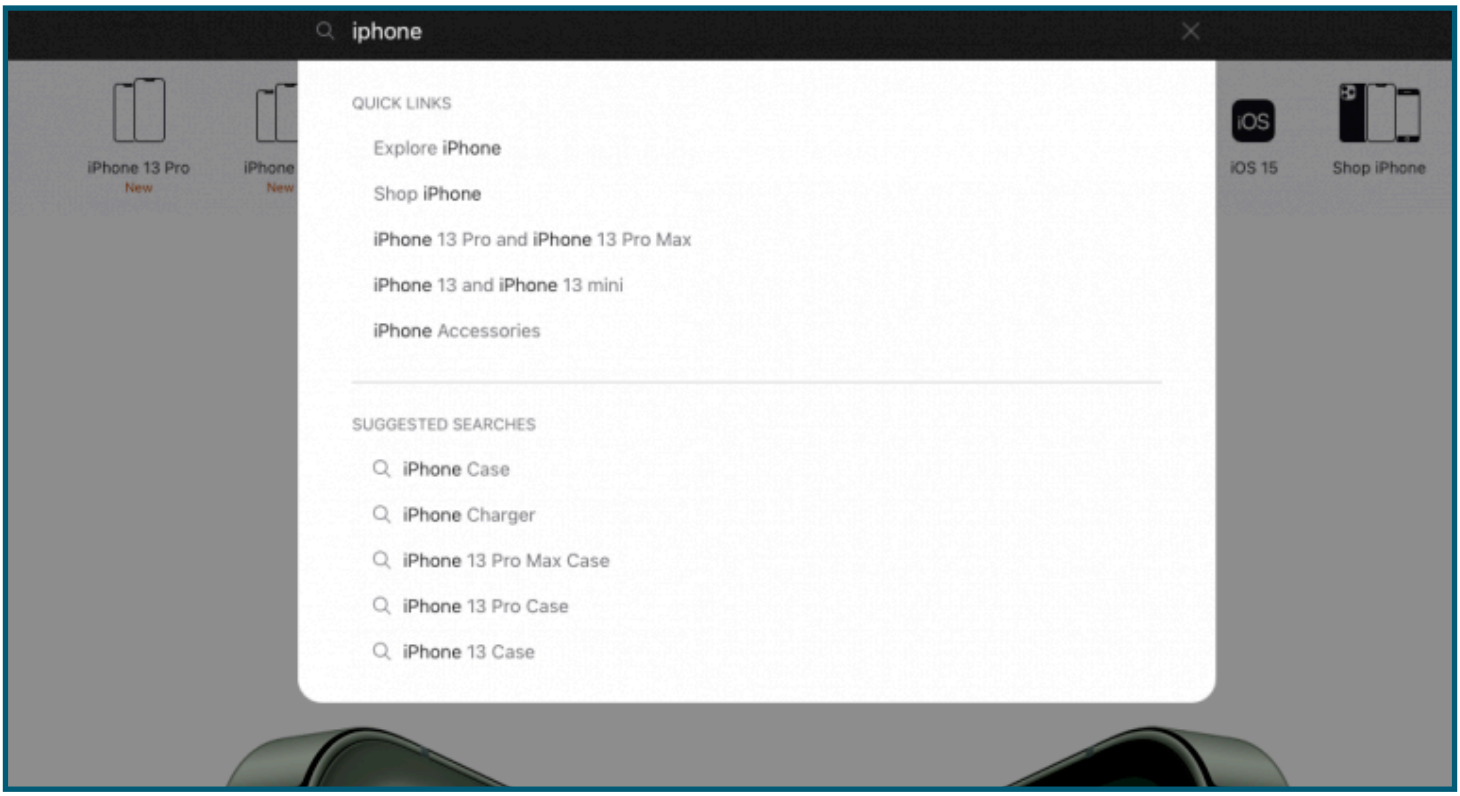
1.4 Easy Navigation Improves Conversion

Navigation is a big one in terms of usability. I like to learn from the best, and I think Apple would be one of them along with Amazon. When I visit the Apple store and click on 'iPhone', this is what I see:



There are no drop-down menus. There is no complex navigation. Everything is visible at first sight. The advice here is to keep your menus as simple as possible and to avoid long dropdown menus, which can be confusing. Make it visual and very simple.

1.5 Search Option with Auto-Suggest



Using Apple as a good example again - I can type a product in the search bar and the auto-suggest dropdown will give me all relevant results for that search. Amazon and all major stores have that function too. Definitely a conversion booster.

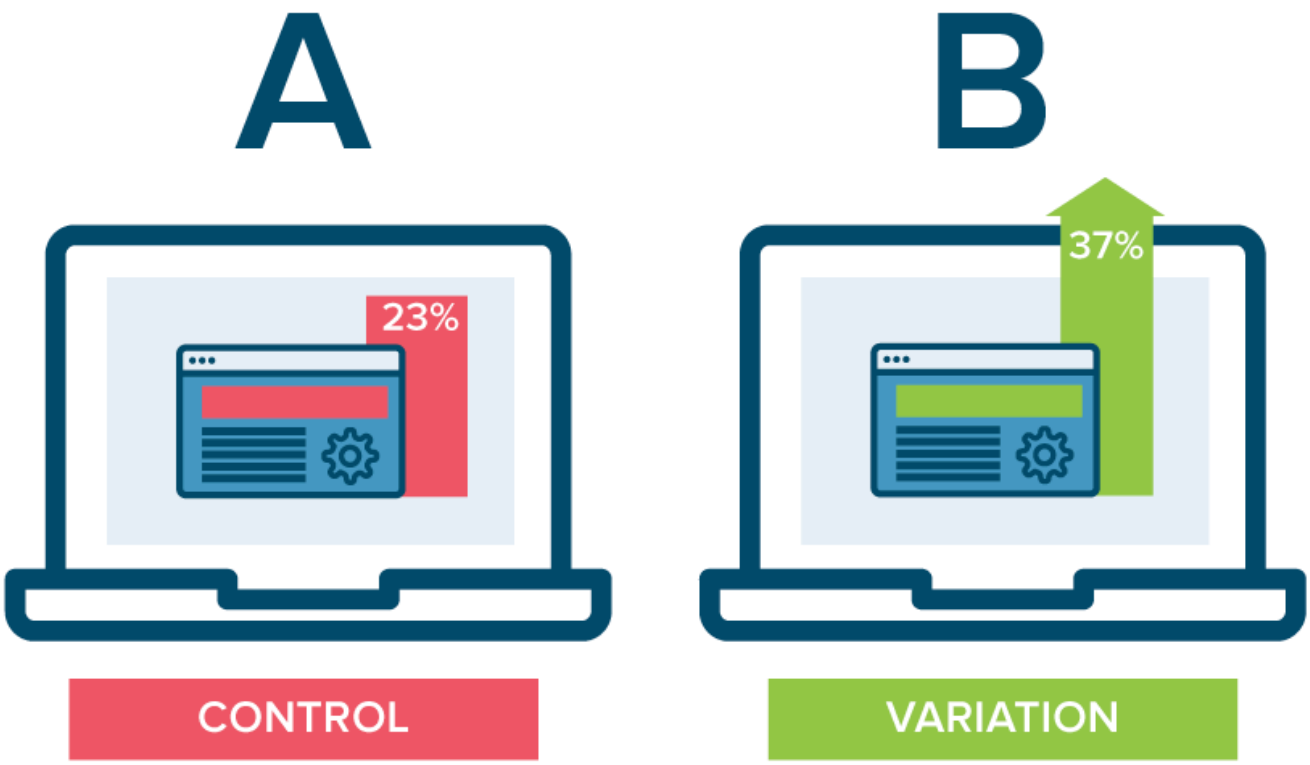
1.6 A/B Testing

A general concept that applies not only to usability, but all aspects of your store, is A/B testing.

In Marketing, **we can learn and assume lots of things. But the only way to prove our ideas right or wrong is A/B testing**.

Which means to have two versions of an element on our store (headline, call to action, colour scheme... anything really) and run a test: sending 50% of your visitors to one version of your page, and the other half to the other. Then measure the conversion results of these two versions. That's the only real way to know what works better for your page and your audience.

There are plenty of tool out there to choose from depending on your platform to run A/B tests. Here is a good overview.



1.7 Other Usability Features

Without going into detail - here are some more features that will increase your store's usability and conversions:

- Add Wish List / Recommended Products
- Make the cart visible all the time
- Simplify Checkout Process
- Thank-you page with social sharing

Part 2 – Trust

Trust is one of the biggest issues when selling online. Just think about it - when we shop in a physical retail store, we know where the store is, we see real people in the store, we can tell the size and condition of it just by looking around, and much more.

All this is missing when we come to a website. That's why we have to do everything we can to create this personal connection and trustworthyness with the tools we have available online.

2.1 Branding / About Page

When people come to your store for the first time, he questions on their mind are: ***"Who is this? Are they for real? Can I trust them?"***

One way to address these questions is an elaborate '**about**' page in which you show the owner's name and face, tell his story and create credibility by showing a 'real person' rather than just an anonymous store. People like to buy from people.

Make it personal. Show face. Tell your story, where you live and why you are doing this.

2.2 Reviews & Testimonials are Conversion Boosters

Reviews and testimonials provide social proof and help us to build trust with our customers. Which is one of the key factors to turn visitors into customers.

So it's a no-brainer that showing a good amount of positive reviews will help us to convert. Don't forget to include them on your store!

2.4 Trust Badges

House of Kids put **trust badges** on their checkout page to run an A/B test and saw a **32% increase in conversions**. Not bad for simply including an image right? Trust is king. And every element on your store that can instil another layer of trust should not be ignored. Trust badges are one of them.

2.5 Return Policy

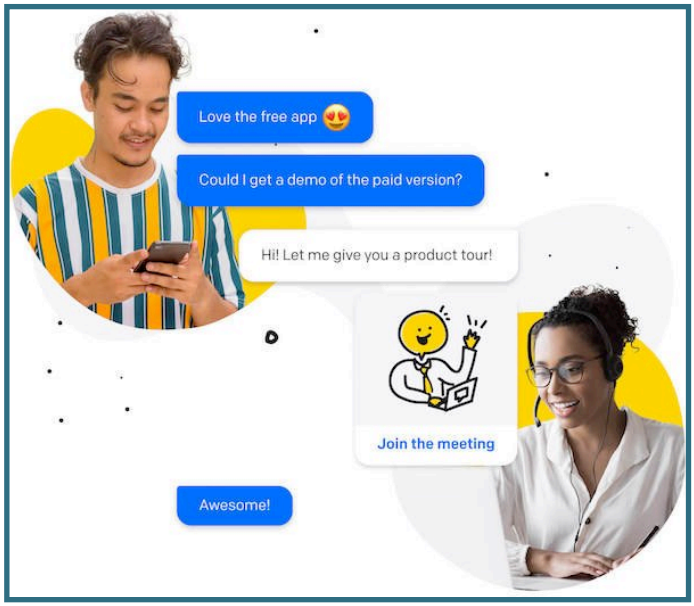
On average, ecommerce returns are between **15% and 30% on average**, depending on the product type. Here are some examples:

- Food: 7%
- Furniture: 5%
- Home electronics: 10%
- Clothing and shoes: 30 to 40%

According to UPS, **68% of shoppers check a website's return policy before making a purchase**. Making your return policy easily accessible (main menu) and as clear as possible has a big impact on conversions.

2.6 Live Chat

Being able to answers a customer's question immediately is a great way to stand out, build trust and convert prospects into buyers. But you need dedicated team members who are available to respond 24/7.



The more practical solution would be a mix of live / human chat response and a ChatBot, which would take care of requests in a more general manner, but really 24/7.

We have been in the chatbot business for years and yes, bots can be very helpful, but no bot can actually replace a well-trained human being.

Part 3 – Perceived Value

Even if your store is fast and easy to navigate and you come across as trust worthy, I still need to know what is the value of the product you're selling. Is it worth my money? How do you compare with your competition?

This section is about 'looking good' and creating a great perceived value of your products.

3.1 Images

Great images Improve Ecommerce Conversion Rates

Show people using your product

Use Infographics if there is some complexity involved

Show and mention benefits

Product images are obviously super important to present our product's design, functionality and value. Having professional photos taken and edited is a must. But besides just showing your product, make sure that you show

- A human using your product - that's how we relate to it's size
- The benefits and how it solves the buyer's problem

3.2 Videos

Video production is a complex matter. If you have the budget - outsource. If not, follow the steps below:

- Pick a tool - Decide on a editing tool (online / offline (Mac / Pc)
- Script - Write your 30-60s script
- Hook - Provide a strong hook within the first 5-10 seconds
- Solve a problem - Focuses on how your product solves customer problems
- Show a human using your product
- Include a voice-over + subtitles - more important than music
- Close with a call to action ('order here' or 'click the link below')

3.3 Description

Tell the story of your product in an emotional way. The goal is to make the customer feel: **'This product will solve my problem'**

- 4-6 bullet points, description - Follow the Amazon format: 4-6 bullet points, A+ format style
- **[Feature] so you can [benefit]** - Use a structure like this: “This product has [feature], so you can [benefit]”. Example: “this phone has a camera so you can take photos”
- Summarise in the beginning of the bullet point - consider the 'skimmers'
- Differentiate your product from the competition
- Include the Search-terms which are not in the title (SEO)
- List down all technical facts, functions, dimensions
- Mention what's included in the box (manual? cables?...)

3.4 Other Elements to Increase Perceived Value

Here are some more ideas to make your offer stand out from the competition:

- Free shipping
- ‘Buy Now, Pay Later' option
- Add urgency / scarcity
- Coupon Codes

Part 4 – Retargeting

Retargeting means creating multiple touch points. Or in more human terms - a relationship with our prospects and customers.

According to Google Zero Moment Of Truth (ZMOT) study, online buyers have 30+ touch-points before making a purchase decision. That's a lot of touch points!

As a consequence, we have to provide multiple 'online encounters' with our prospects before they become our customers. That's why retargeting is such an important topic if you want to make your store profitable.

4.1 Engage existing customers

> THE EASIEST SELL IS THE ONE TO AN EXISTING CUSTOMER.

Engaging existing customers is an essential part of retargeting.
The reasons being:

1. They already bought form us, so they know us
2. They trust us
3. We have their details

Having to choose the one thing that would make the biggest impact in an ecomm business - it would be retargeting existing clients. Provided you have a decent amount of clients of course. When starting out - it's all about getting those initial clients.

If you are already retargeting your customers - good job. Look for ways to improve communication, value you deliver and offers you make. If not - get started asap.

4.2 Retarget Prospects

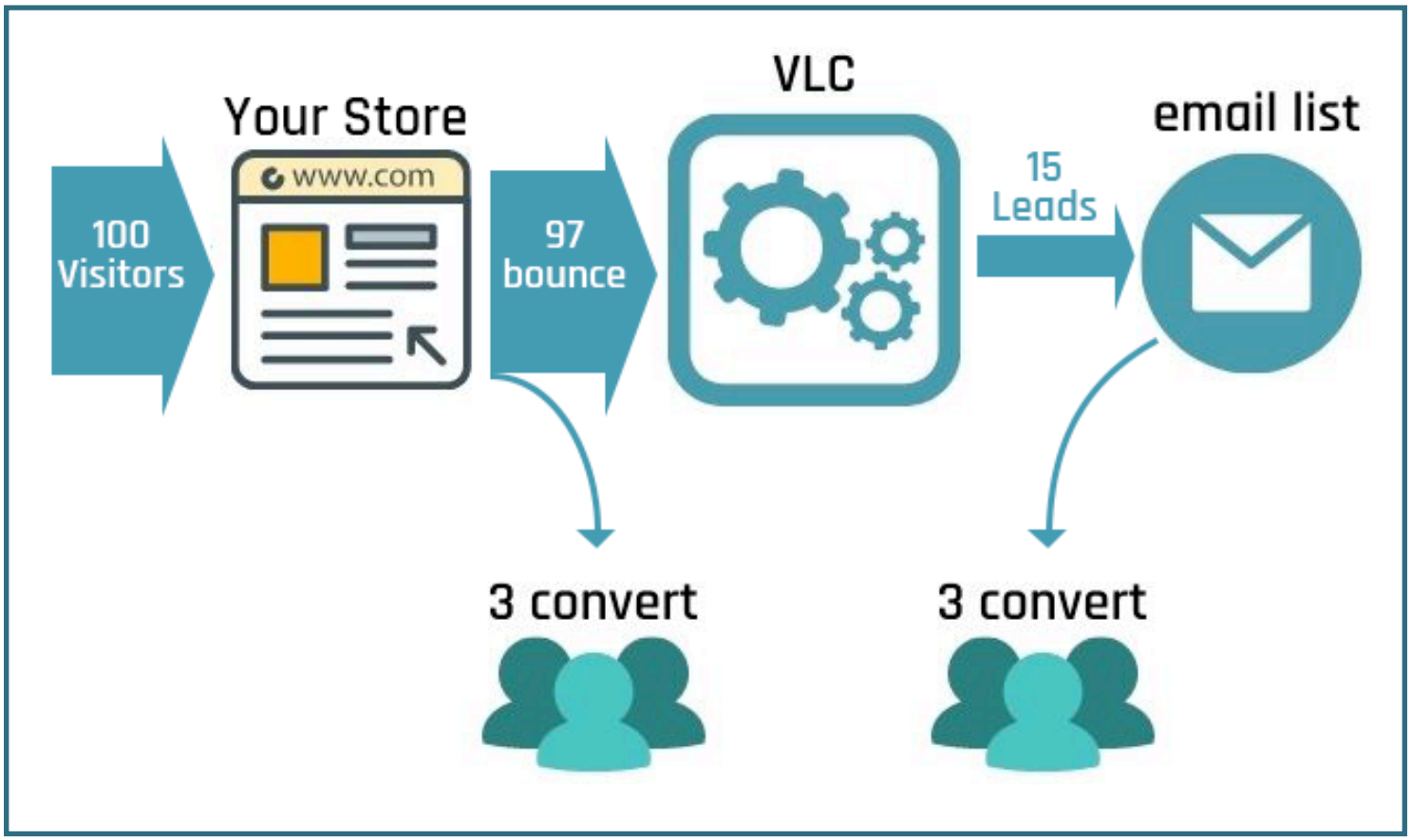
IN 2021, THE AVERAGE CART ABANDONMENT RATE ACROSS ALL INDUSTRIES WAS ABOUT 60%

This is what we can do to bring back store visitors:

1. Abandoned cart - left email
This is easy. Since these prospects left their email, all we have to do is add them to our autoresponder and send reminders and offers.

2. Left store, did not leave email
In this case, we can use Facebook and Google retargeting ads to bring them back to our store.

4.3 VLC - Our Unique Conversion Booster System
'VLC' stands for Visitors -> Leads -> Conversions



The VLC system enables you to capture the email addresses of your bounced store visitors (those who left without buying or opting in) and email them a direct offer 5 minutes after they left. This offer typically converts at 20%. Because we send it to a very 'warm' audience - people who just visited your store. As a result, **our clients typically double their conversion rates** without even applying any of the tips mentioned above.

Find out more about our VLC system here

Conclusion

Thank you for spending the time and reading this eBook all the way to the end! I hope it was useful and will help you to increase your conversions!

If you have any questions, suggestions or need some help implementing the strategies above, feel free to contact me here: **dano@defdevice.com**

Yours sincerely,
Dano Falk