



5 WAYS TO GET **MORE TRAFFIC** TO YOUR **ONLINE STORE**

5 WAYS TO GET

MORE TRAFFIC TO YOUR ONLINE STORE

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Use SEO to increase site visibility

Build customer engagement through content marketing

Reach your target audience through social media

Promote your site in-store

Use influencers to get more traffic

2020 was a year like no other, which among other things saw a massive and necessary jump from bricks and mortar retailer, to online selling. One consequences of this, of course, has been a sharp rise in online competition. Trying to be found in this online labyrinth is one of retailers' biggest challenges.

Before we start, we're taking it for granted that your web store works properly, that links work, that your payments process properly and that your products are in stock. Don't expect visitors to return if their initial experience is poor.

Getting people to buy when they reach your store is one thing, but how do you get them there in the first place? Discovering how to get more traffic to your store has become a major area of interest for all online retailers. It's not easy, but here are some ideas to help you in your efforts.

- Use SEO to increase site visibility
- Build customer engagement through content marketing
- Reach your target audience through social media
- Promote your site in-store
- Use influencers to get more traffic

1. Use Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) to increase your site's visibility:

Whether you set up your online store yourself or hired a design company to do it for you, some work on Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) was probably carried out during the initial development stage of the site. If it didn't, you are already on the back foot and you will struggle to be found in a competitive marketplace.

If you did, good, but remember that SEO is not a "once-off" activity, and should be a part of good web practice throughout the life of the web store.

Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for store owners never to revisit SEO after the set-up stage of their site. As a result, when search engines such as Google crawl your site, they often don't see anything new or interesting about your site and your site quickly falls down the rankings.

So, what should you be doing. First, start with search key words. What words will potential users put into the search engine, hoping to land on a site like yours? This could be your brand name, your regional location, the brands you sell or the services you provide, but most likely a mix of all of these. There are tools out there to help you with this such as Google's Keyword Planner, but often this is fairly obvious. Put yourself into the shoes of your audience, so use words that they would use, not necessarily words you might use - these can be very different! Also, look at your competitors. On what search terms are they scoring well?





The content you write about could be anything, but something that will be of interest to your audience. So, if you're involved in fashion, it might be something about latest trends in fashion, or a write up on a recent fashion show; or if you're involved in tourism, it might be latest trends in Irish tourism numbers or an interesting article about the practices of similar businesses in other geographical markets.

Try and consider using content that you know will be of interest to your customers and if you don't know what this is, just ask them. You might be surprised with the feedback you get!

Be patient. Your transformation in this space may not be immediate. It might even take months or years. Review it regularly too. Get feedback from your customers to ensure your content is on point.

3. Reach your target audience on social media

A great way to promote your website and drive traffic to it, is through your social media channels, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, TikTok, YouTube, and LinkedIn. Chances are, you are not on all these channels, nor do you need to be, but certainly you should be using the channels that your target audience uses too.

If you're just starting out, perhaps just focus on one and resource is adequately. Social media is all about immediacy so it's important that you feed it regularly and respond to it quickly. Try and add content regularly, and try to mix the content so that it's fresh and interesting. Don't just share other people's content - post your own and become an expert in the space (a bit like that referred to above in content marketing). Tell people about things happening in your store and on your website. Social media is a great way to promote flash sales or open evenings.

In terms of driving web traffic, push out specific web promotions and deals, or web-only discounts. Social media can be a good place to promote 'customer feedback' and 'reviews' but be careful as people may give negative reviews too. If they do, don't ignore the feedback. Engage with them, thank them for their feedback and look for a way to turn the negative into a positive. The companies that are most proactive here tend to be most successful.

As mentioned, social media is all about immediacy. Nowadays, many customers turn to social media to communicate directly with a store to ask a question, rather than picking up the phone or sending an email. Ensure that you resource your social media channel adequately, so that these questions are dealt with quickly. There is nothing worse in social media than seeing lots of open questions on a company's channels, unanswered and not dealt with. This is very poor practice and will negate any of the good work you might be doing elsewhere to drive your website's business.

As you get bigger, or as your target audience grows, you may have to look at expanding your social media efforts. If you do, the same rules apply - resource adequately, post regularly with fresh and interesting content, and respond quickly. Remember that each social media channel tends to appeal to a slightly different demographic, so try and tailor your content to suit that demographic. Don't just post the exact same content in the exact same way on each platform. This doesn't always work.

And finally, don't just link from your social media channels to your website. Make sure that you link from your website to

your social media channels too. This can be done with simple add-ons which show all the latest feeds and posts from your social media on your website.

Social Media advertising is an attractive option for many retailers. All social media platforms sell advertising space or sponsored posts. Once again these can be a great way to drive traffic to your site, and allow for wonderful targeting options, so you can be very specific about who sees your ad. Unfortunately, like all advertising, it can be expensive, particularly if used on an ongoing basis over multiple platforms.

4. Promote your website in-store

At the time of writing this piece, most of Ireland's retail is locked down, therefore it's hard to picture anything in-store right now, however doors will open again and we will welcome customers back in store once more.

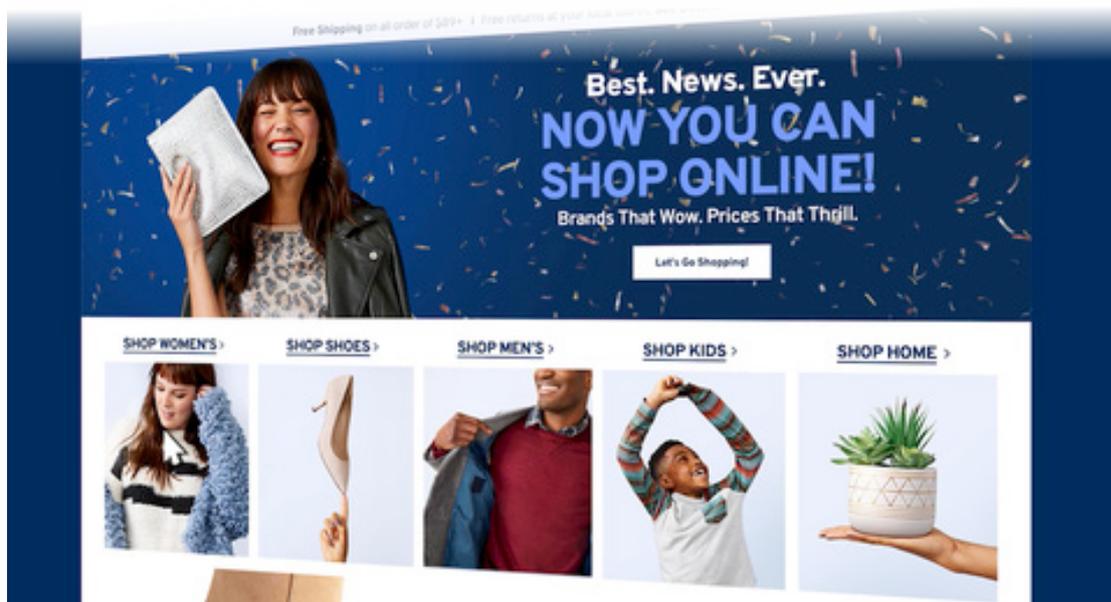
The easiest customer to get to buy from your webstore is an existing customer who visits your store. They are already brand loyal to you, so unless they are very web unfriendly or your product doesn't lend itself to online selling, they should be relatively easy to convert.

Start with in-store poster campaigns. Tell people about your webstore and promote special "on-line only sales", which perhaps just run for a short time. Incentivise their first web purchase.

Promote your webstore at the till area, print on the till receipt, and even ask them if they have visited your webstore yet. Give customers printed discount offers, with perhaps a web-only discount code. Don't worry about web sales cannibalising your in-store sales; they won't! What you want to end up with is a good mix of both.

If you don't do a digital or printed newsletter, do one, with a digital one being very quick and easy to do. Get your customers to sign up to this. Ensure this is GDPR compliant with a double opt-in process, and full transparency on what you will use their data for. Now that you have your customers email information and their permission, use it. Tell them about special offers, new products, promotions, etc. Much of the information you are using for your content marketing in 2 above or your social media in 3 above can be used here also. Keep the information short and sweet and don't over-communicate. If you bombard customers with email traffic they will "unsubscribe" and you may never get them back as an email contact again!

Encourage your in-store customers to "tell a friend" about your site or to review your site, or to promote it on their social media channels. This could be as simple as sharing a photo of your product in an Instagram post.



5. Use influencers to get more traffic

In consumer marketing, influencers are becoming a significant part of the marketing process. Because they have a large following, and because people are "influenced" by them, marketers are turning to this channel more and more to promote their products! And it does work!

Unless they are major media personalities with access to TV, Radio or Newspapers / Magazines, most influencers tend to have a large social media following, hence it's a good place to promote your store's website

Sometimes, this can be as easy as sending your product to them and asking them to give your product a “shout out” if they like it. This might work particularly well if the influencer is perhaps a bit more low key or local.

For national celebrities, this is more of a business transaction, and getting them to promote your product may cost you money, and for the top influencers, potentially quite a lot of money!

If you do go down this route, the most important thing to consider is the brand fit between your product/store and the influencer in question. How well do they match? If it's a good match and they come across as being genuine in how they promote it, then this is perfect. Alas, the converse also holds true so take time to consider who you would like to represent or promote your brand, and how it is presented.

Remember too that an influencer need not be a major YouTube sensation or international model or sports star, they really can be anybody who knows about your sector and may have good connections, respect, or a large following, e.g. bloggers, business people, sports people, etc.

For maximum traction, you might consider using a few influencers to promote your website. There is nothing wrong with this approach, but it's probably wise to just make sure that they are from different sectors, promoting to different audiences.



Conclusion

If you are finding customer traffic to your website is low, don't panic. There might be a reason for this, but don't ignore it either.

Your web store is part of your omnichannel approach to sales, so you want it to work well and to grow over time. Once you are happy that your web store is built well and works properly, it's then time to start promoting it.

The ideas presented here to promote your site are just a selection of what you can do, but if you do these things well they will make a massive difference and will help to drive your business forward in a very successful manner.

There has never been a more opportune time to get your “bricks and mortar” store online. Thanks to **OMNISHOP** from Retail Integration, it is now much easier to seamlessly integrate your Meridian EPOS and Stock Management System and your online eCommerce solution (Shopify), ensuring that the two are totally in sync and you are fully in control of your truly omnichannel environment.

For everything you need to know, please visit our **OMNISHOP** website (www.retail-int.com/omnishop) where you'll learn more about how it works and why you need it now. If you would like a one-to-one demonstration, please contact us today, by email info@retail-int.com or by telephone 01 429 6800. We'd be delighted to hear from you.



Retail Integration

Unit B3, Centrepoint Business Park, Oak Road, Dublin 12, D12 DW63

Tel: Ireland +353 1 429 6800 | UK +44 131 618 3637

Email: info@retail-int.com | **Web:** retail-int.com