

COLUMNS

6 ways to disrupt shopping cart abandonment

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By A LUXURY DAILY COLUMNIST

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If you are selling anything online, you know how important it is to get your potential customers through the checkout process. It is not difficult when you stop to think about real life-scenarios and apply them to ecommerce.

For example, you are on the way home from work and remember your fridge is empty. So you stop by the grocery store to pick up some dinner items, but when you get to the checkout, you notice that there is only one line open and it is 10-people deep. What do you do?

Well, if you are like most of us, you drop your dinner items off on the nearest candy shelf, grab your phone and order a pizza.

Online shopping cart abandonment is the digital equivalent of this scenario.

High and try

Shopping cart abandonment refers to the number of people who visit a Web site with high intent to purchase and leave without completing a transaction.

The Baymard Institute reports that the average abandonment rate is 67.91 percent which means that for every hundred people who visit a Web site, about 68 of them become frustrated with the online payment system and abandon their purchase.

Think about how much money is lost due to this phenomenon. If you are an ecommerce company or moving online, you must make it your constant mission to improve your online customer experience to maximize online conversions.

Here are six ways to improve the user experience and maximize your online conversions:

1. A few steps are still one too many

Let us face it, our attention spans are short, especially when it comes to online shopping. Too many steps and visitors will become frustrated, abandon their cart and shop elsewhere.

Remember that your direct competitors are only a click away. The easier you make it for buyers to complete the

transaction, the more likely they are to do so.

2. Mobile. First

Approximately 4 billion people own a mobile phone. Of that number, 25 percent of them use it as their sole method of accessing the Internet.

Furthermore, nine out of 10 mobile searches lead to action and more than half lead to sales and that trend is only going up in the next few years.

Many companies, including powerhouses such as Google have deployed a mobile-first strategy and you should, too.

Rather than building your ecommerce customer experience from a desktop perspective, you need to think and be mobile-first and optimize for the desktop experience.

The present and the future belongs to mobile commerce and those who stick to the status quo will continue experiencing higher abandonment rates.

3. Customers trust other customers more than they trust you

When on the fence about whether to buy or not, your prospective customers will look for social proof. This social proof typically comes in the form of positive reviews.

While a potential buyer may not trust what you say about your own products as this is perceived as "selling," they are much more likely to trust a review from a customer who has already bought your product especially if that review has been shared on social media.

4. Design matters and highly influences the user experience

While you may not have given a ton of thought to your design and content, I can assure you that it is probably impacting your abandonment rates.

Great copywriting and compelling creative that is easy to understand provide visual cues throughout the user's journey.

Stock photography and poorly designed templates in no way enhance the checkout process.

Use your Web site's analytics to pinpoint precisely where the shopping cart is being abandoned and take a good hard look and what is on that page.

Chances are that your user interface will benefit from a design and content facelift and will also improve your conversions.

Online usability testing will take the guesswork out of this step and tell you precisely where your potential customers are experiencing friction.

5. Customers want to buy stuff, not make a payment

Working for a payments company has provided significant insights on best practice for the payment process.

It is very important to make the user onboarding process quick and painless by reducing the friction associated with setting up a new account and payment method.

If you make it difficult for a user to enter all of her account information, including name, email, address and payment method such as credit card, then odds will go up that they will opt-out of the process.

To make it easy for the user to upload their payment method information, include OCR technology optical character recognition is a common method of digitizing data in your mobile application.

With OCR, the user can take a photo of her credit card or debit card and set up her account in seconds. It also eliminates the fast-finger issue of improperly entering her card information, especially on a mobile device.

When a user is ready to complete a transaction, do not give her a reason to change her mind.

6. Target your re-targeting efforts

One surefire way to agitate your potential customers is to aggressively retarget them when they do abandon their shopping cart.

When they see the very product they abandoned showing up in all the ads on the sites they visit after leaving yours, they make a mental note to never come back.

Users still want to maintain privacy. If you want to retarget, be highly targeted and limit the number of impressions that you serve to a potential customer.

YOU WORK REALLY hard to drive qualified traffic to your Web site. Do not allow shopping cart abandonment issues to steal sales from your company.

Instead, focus on A/B testing and iterative site optimizations to steadily improve and deliver a stellar online customer experience. Your conversion rates will thank you, and so will your customers.

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