

Popular Online Shopping Site Improves Customer Service and Acquisition In Face of Recession



Case study #18: Web Pointe Mall

January 2009

ABOUT WEB POINTE MALL

Web Pointe Mall (www.webpointemall.com) offers premium online shopping to its customers and strives to make the shopping experience easy, convenient and fun. The company sells clothes, computers, books, music, video games and more, and offers an opt-in newsletter with promotional and sales announcements to its extensive user-base of approximately 50,000 visitors per month.

BUSINESS CHALLENGES

Like many small businesses thriving to succeed in today's slumping economy, **Web Pointe Mall has been negatively affected by the current economic downturn. Due to a decrease in consumer spending, the company was forced to cut its marketing budget by 50% and fine tune its strategy for attracting new customers while still providing excellent customer service in a cost-effective manner.** While developing its new strategy, the folks at Web Pointe Mall did quite a bit of research to find adequate ways to achieve its goals. The company tried everything from using the extensive power of social networks to increase its visibility among consumers, to developing and executing email, direct mail and advertising campaigns, the latter of which proved to carry a fairly lofty price tag.



SOLUTIONS

As Web Pointe Mall continued to investigate new ways to provide outstanding customer service in a cost-effective way, it came across SitePal online. "We found out about SitePal by pure happenstance," said Jonathan Browner, CEO of Web Pointe Mall. "While browsing the Internet I came across a talking avatar on a random Web site. I clicked on the character and ended up on SitePal's homepage. I typed a few words in the product demo to make the character speak and was sold instantly."

Web Pointe Mall decided to create a SitePal avatar that would provide its visitors with a virtual "information desk" service. The company recognized that this was one of the most cost-effective resources provided by brick-and-mortar malls as a way to educate visitors about the products, so Web Pointe Mall decided to follow suit.



The virtual representative from SitePal helps visitors where to find products in the site. She also captures visitors' email addresses, allowing the company to quickly build an internal mailing list.

RESULTS

With a little help from a virtual representative made from SitePal, Web Pointe Mall's customers are now finding it simpler to locate the products they want to purchase, which, in turn results in increased sales and customer satisfaction.

Equipped with a built-in lead generator form, the SitePal virtual representative also collects the email addresses from customers, allowing Web Pointe Mall an internal email list which they can market to directly for little cost.



SOLUTIONS

Once the company added SitePal to its Web page, visitor stats from October to December increased from approximately 2,000 visitors a month to nearly 50,000 visitors per month. The number of email leads also skyrocketed from a couple of leads a month to five or ten leads a day.

Web Pointe Mall contributes this success to its SitePal avatar giving it a “professional edge over the competition.”

“Customers are constantly telling us how helpful our speaking avatar is,” said Mr. Browner. “Some customers have even told us that they occasionally visit our Web site to show our avatar to their friends. SitePal has provided us with a Web presence that sets us apart from our competition. We will plan continue using SitePal as long as we’re in the business.”

ABOUT SITEPAL LEAD GENERATOR

With SitePal Lead Generator feature, users can configure their SitePal speaking character to collect contact information from web site visitors - information such as phone numbers or email addresses. The collected information is emailed to users in real time, and collected in an online report. No programming is required to use this feature.

“SitePal has definitely helped us during this economic crisis.

Not only has it provided us a way to show our customers what we offer and where to find it, it also makes it simple for us to allow customers to opt-in to our email distribution list.

This lead generator feature saved us money because we don’t have to hire a web developer to create an online opt-in form – SitePal does it all for us and at a mere \$19.95 a month.”

-Mr. Browner, Web Pointe Mall.