



PUTTING YOUR WEBSITE TO WORK

Part 2: Optimizing Your Site for Conversion

*Best practices for home performance
& HVAC professionals.*



Your Buildings Perform. Does Your Website?

An online presence has become as standard a tool for home performance businesses as having a blower door. While many still remain unaware of the whole house approach to comfort, energy efficiency and safety, homeowners are using the internet to find solutions to their home's pain points -- mold, high energy bills, cold floors, etc.

To reach these homeowners, you need to both provide solutions to these problems and make sure that homeowners researching them are able to find you. Your website is the first place they turn to get an idea of who you are, what you do and whether you are the right guy or gal for the job. Consequently, how you distinguish your website from the competition's is what separates the wheat from the chaff, and is what will drive traffic and produce leads you can convert. The two most important ways to do this are:

1. Increase Traffic: Make sure people can find your website (and that they get to yours before they get to your competition's).
2. Optimize for Conversion: Make sure people have a positive experience while they're visiting your website, so they'll schedule an appointment with you rather than going back to the search engine to look for another company.

The purpose of this three-part whitepaper is to give you a clear, concise guide to the basics of making your website work for your business. In this second installment, we'll examine strategies for optimizing the user's experience on your website.

Part 1 of our whitepaper looks at fundamentals of search engine optimization (SEO), while Part 3 discusses how website analytics are a key tool to measure your success and provide ideas for improvement.

While this is intended primarily for HVAC and home performance contractors, energy auditors, energy raters, and other residential energy efficiency professionals, the principles we espouse are fairly universal, and may be useful for a wide range of businesses looking to improve their website performance.

Making Visitors Happy (And Getting Them To Call You)

In Part 1, we covered the basics of how to get visitors to your site. The next question: how do you keep them on your site? And how do you turn site visits into sales? A few considerations:

Design & Usability

In some cases, a clunky or poorly-designed website can actually do more harm than good. If a visitor gets the impression that your company is not well-established, is not organized, or is unprofessional (an impression that can be created by a bad website, even if it's not true of the company), that visitor is likely to go back to their search results and click on the other guy's link. This isn't to say a successful website needs to be a work of art, but it should at least meet some minimum requirements. Check out your website right now and consider these questions:

- Do you have a nice, professional-looking logo?
- Do you have well-written content that's useful and informative for visitors?
- Does it tell the visitor who you are?
- Does it tell the visitor what, exactly, you do?
- Is it easy to navigate?
- Do you have a consistent format across your pages?

Your Most Important Pages

According to our data gleaned from over 300 HVAC and home performance websites, by far the most-visited pages on almost every site are the "About Us" and various service pages. When you think about it, this makes sense: your first questions when visiting the website of a person or company that you were considering hiring to come into your home would most likely be "who are these guys?" and "what do they do?" Make sure these pages clearly and accurately represent who you are and what you do to make your potential customers feel comfortable about inviting you into their homes.

The screenshot shows the Ecotelligent Homes website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for 'ENERGY AUDITS', 'INSULATION', 'HEATING AND COOLING', and 'RENEWABLE ENERGY'. The main content area features an 'ABOUT US' section with a photo of a woman and a call-to-action box that says 'WE'RE A UNIQUE HOME PERFORMANCE COMPANY!' with a form to schedule an energy audit. Below this are several text-based sections: 'LOCAL CONTRACTOR PROVIDING HOME PERFORMANCE SERVICES THROUGHOUT METRO DETROIT', 'WHAT DOES HOME PERFORMANCE MEAN?', 'A SKILLED TEAM DEDICATED TO CUSTOMER SERVICE', and 'WOMAN OWNED SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORTING WOMEN IN THE HOME PERFORMANCE INDUSTRY'. There are also 'OUR LATEST BLOGS' and 'OUR OFFERS' sections. The 'OUR METHODOLOGY' section is a grid of four steps: 1. Energy Audits, 2. Insulation, 3. Heating and Cooling, and 4. Renewable Energy. The footer contains a newsletter sign-up form and a grid of links for various services and company information.

Your "About Us" page is probably the most important page on your site. A good one will incorporate the following:

- Pictures (of the owner and the team)
- Staff bios (or a brief bio of the management team or owner)
- Personality (you want your customers to know that you are a real person with a real team — a little color goes a long way!)
- Certifications and partnerships (highlight the fact that you are qualified)

Your service pages should include:

- Keyword-rich descriptions of all individual services you offer. Whether air conditioning or air sealing, using rich descriptions has SEO goodness in addition to being useful for your visitors. Plus, you can drive any paid ads you're running to these pages.
- An explanation of your philosophy or approach
- Any related products you offer, or parts of your process, that differentiate you from the competition

Landing Pages

Do you use landing pages on your website? You should. Landing pages are one of the best conversion tools at your disposal. A landing page should have content specific to a particular campaign or offer, so that visitors are given exactly the information they were looking for when they clicked the link or typed in the URL to your site. Landing pages are traditionally hidden from the main navigation of the site and are meant to be used for specific campaigns and audiences.

- Other Uses for Landing Pages
- Social media campaigns
- Special offers, discounts and coupons
- PPC (pay-per-click) advertising campaigns

Landing pages should be customized for the visitors that will be viewing the page, but there are a few elements that you should always incorporate. Among them:

- A strong, highly relevant headline
- Logos relevant to the campaign (e.g. manufacturer certifications, efficiency program logos, etc.)
- Customer testimonials
- Prominent calls to action (contact forms, “sign up for our newsletter” links, etc.)

Trust Symbols

Trust symbols are a simple, easy and yet incredibly effective way of establishing your business’s credibility on your website. Typically included in the footer or sidebar, these icons indicate to visitors that you partner with established, national brands. Associating your company with them will help establish your business’s legitimacy and increase conversion. Consider including the following trust symbols in your footer or sidebar:

- Authorized manufacturer dealer? Include a relevant logo.
- BPI Certified? Include a “BPI Building Analyst” or “Certified Contractor” logo.

- EnergySTAR Partner? Same.
- NATE Certified? Add the NATE certification logo.
- Member of local or state efficiency programs? Add the logo.
- PHIUS Certified Builder? Same.



Visitors to your site will recognize these established, national brands, and associating your company with them will help establish your business's legitimacy and increase conversion.

On-Page Calls To Action (CTAs)

Including contextualized, relevant, strong calls to action (CTAs) on each page of your site is key to a great user experience. CTAs are designed to move visitors through the sales funnel by converting them into potential customers. Be sure your CTAs include 1) your phone number for customers who prefer to call, and 2) a webform that customers can fill out to request a certain service, ask a question or make some other point of contact with you.

When used together, these core elements of usability and design establish trust between you and potential customers, make their experience educational and informative, and provide clear next steps that encourage them to become your next customer.



Energy Circle builds tools and services to grow companies and organizations dedicated to providing comfortable, efficient, healthy buildings. It's our job to stay on the cutting edge of the digital marketing. It's your job to make better buildings. **We're here to help you move that needle.**

We help companies, organizations and institutions within this vertical excel at marketing through our unique and industry-specific products, tools and services. Based in New England, we're proud to support over 350 of the most successful national, regional and state businesses and organizations dedicated to home performance, HVAC, solar, low-energy builders and architects across 49 states. We measure our ultimate success in the \$787 million+ in energy retrofit work that our client base has accomplished since Energy Circle's 2009 launch.

Our Solution

We've built our innovative website platform as a digital marketing tool to help companies dramatically grow their businesses. We offer comprehensive marketing services that encompass the most effective tactics with the highest ROI for clients, and we're constantly developing more. Energy Circle's project and account managers excel and communication and will work collaboratively with you on each step of the process to ensure your solution is practical, scalable and permanent. Our platform and services enable contractors to easily manage their marketing efforts, maintain a dynamic online presence, capture quality leads and take advantage of online marketing opportunities in their multifarious forms.

ZERO-OBLIGATION MARKETING EVALUATION

Give us a call today.
Find out what's working,
what's not, and what to
do about it. **IT'S FREE.**

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