

The Best

21 DIGITAL MARKETING IDEAS

FOR

Homebuilders

in
2021



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Madison TN 37115**

For those of you that don't know me, I'd like to introduce myself. I'm the Vice President of Marketing at Power Marketing. My specialty is simple: I deliver leads. I'm a massive marketing nerd, and love the art and science of how best to get homebuyers connected to homebuilders.

In case you didn't know, single-family home sales are hitting all-time highs, and 2019 was an exceptional year for our homebuilder clients. Even though all the craziness and volatility of 2020, homebuying remained as strong as ever and most indications suggest 2021 will be just as strong. With this positive outlook moving forward, and so many new homebuyers - who start (and finish) their home search online - entering the market, I wanted to create this compilation of the 21 best digital marketing tips for homebuilders to give you an enormous edge in 2021.

I hope you enjoy every word!

Sincerely,

Scott Piper

Vice President of Marketing

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Foreword

The Importance of Search Engine Optimization

One thing's for sure: Competition for Google Rankings is FIERCE and getting tougher by the day. Everyone sees the value of a top ranking for the 'right' Google searches. And, yes, mobile-first is the real deal since Google switched over to mobile-first indexing. Your site is being judged by the mobile results even though lots of people visit on desktop.

At one point or another you've heard the term Search Engine Optimization or SEO, but do you understand what that phrase really means? Generally speaking, SEO is a complicated, detailed, labor-intensive, and ever-changing process with the goal to assure your website appears higher in search results for specifically selected keyword terms.

Here's a little secret. At Power Marketing, we take great pride in strictly adhering to an honest, truthful and customer-centric approach to everything we do. With that being said, I feel it's important to point out a harsh reality regarding this vital marketing strategy: successful Search Engine Optimization is best performed by dedicated specialists—period. Throwing keywords against the wall to see what sticks simply won't produce results and can even harm your results. Even trying to implement every technique found in the most up-to-date SEO manual, by yourself, can prove to be ineffective. But, that doesn't mean SEO isn't important.

Plenty of books and resources are available to help explain both the rudimentary and finer points of SEO, but allow me to present a quick overview of what is involved.

The following may sound like a science fiction movie, but this is what really occurs. Search engines frequently utilize digital robots, often referred to as spiders, to crawl through the internet reviewing websites. This artificial intelligence notes keywords, relevant content, functioning links—even image load times—to name just a few. This information is then returned to the search engine for proper indexing (this is what Google calls it when they record information about your website). Crawled websites are then categorized on a wide variety of criteria, earning a specific ranking which determines where your web pages will be placed relative to a searcher's queries.

Google frequently changes their criteria pertaining to what makes a website relevant, so relevant today isn't necessarily relevant tomorrow. What made a website appear first in search results prior to a Panda, Penguin, or Hummingbird Google updates (it's even a mystery why these revisions have been given animal names) may now be viewed as a disadvantage. Excessive penalties can cause your site to be buried beneath the competition—and everyone knows appearing anywhere but the front page of search engine results isn't a good thing. Do you really want to be the person responsible for overseeing your company's SEO, or would you rather have a team of specialists dedicated to ensuring positive search results? SEO is a lifestyle, not a diet. Make it a central and ongoing part of your marketing mix.



SEO is a lifestyle, not a diet.



A well-structured SEO campaign takes time to produce results. It's a gradual process requiring constant attention, both onsite and offsite, as well as consistent nurturing and detailed care. Just like planting a seed will progressively pay off in full-blown fruit, implementing a detailed SEO strategy will, over time, increase search visibility and rankings. Patient, persistent attention is required to assure your website organically receives maximum exposure.

It is, however, important to note, strictly focusing on SEO is the equivalent to placing all your eggs in one basket. A truly successful marketing campaign consists of multiple well-constructed techniques and strategies. This E-Book is loaded with practical insights, tips and full-blown ideas – many of which will aid in your SEO results – and some that will just bring you leads in other ways. So, I hope you enjoy the book. Read it. Study it. And most importantly, do it.

While I set out to keep this E-Book purely informative, it's almost impossible to not throw the occasional sales plug in. Here at Power Marketing, we just love helping homebuilders! How about we agree that I only do one plug in the entire 10,000+ words? What's that you say, I already did one?

Let's agree on two, then? Okay, three. No more than four, though. I promise.

If you find you're too busy to implement these incredibly important ideas, by all means give us a call at Power Marketing. We've been helping homebuilders with their marketing for 26 years, and we'd be delighted to help you as well.

Without further ado, here are 21 IDEAS to gain the edge over your competition in 2021!

1

Website Quality

We've been playing the Google game for quite a while now. Lots of people postulate their opinions of the latest new thing Google is monitoring for rankings. Sometimes it's accurate, sometimes it is snake oil. But one thing has always remained: Site Quality.

In 2020 your website needs to cover all the bases impeccably! Your user experience must be dead-on and your audience must match the searcher intent and desire. Here are a few items we believe you need to clean up and make perfect in 2020:

- **User Experience** – Improved user experience means you understand exactly what your web visitors want and you deliver it quickly, easily, intuitively and enjoyably. Make the user search hard and you lose!
- **Site Speed** – Making your website load fast and operate quickly has always been important, but with the competition heating up for SERPs, it is very important now. Lose the giant home page images in a slider that slow your load time down. Optimize every image. Properly label and name every image. Web latency will cost you business. Here's a great article.
- **Clean Up Your Site Structure** – Everything from page connections, broken links and redirects to URI naming plays a role. Here's a great article by Neil Patel. The way your site is built plays a huge role in a web crawler's ability to search your site and rank it.
- **Quality Web Content** – Ask yourself the question: What does a searcher hope to achieve with their search? Are they looking for a specific answer? Are they trying to find a specific website? What is their intent? Because search engines collect so much data on us, they are getting pretty savy at understanding our intent. By understanding a user's intent, you can more accurately determine your keyword strategy. And don't forget to use great writing skills: Google is watching.

2

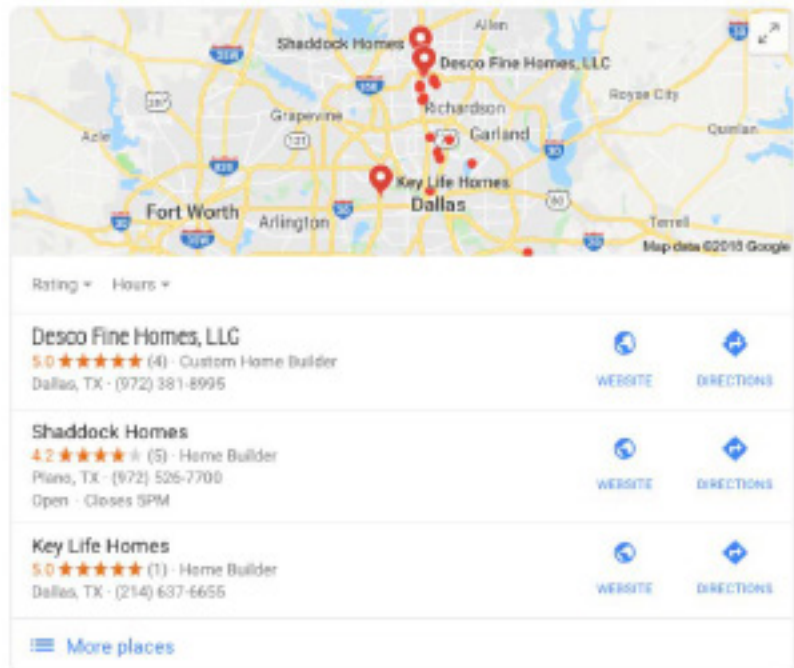
Get Your Business Listed on Google Maps/Local/My Business/Google+

Getting your business effectively onto Google Maps allows you to have an edge in search results, but it's also a necessity for potential buyers to find you online. Just like your prospective buyers can't find you online without Search Engine Optimization, they probably won't find you in person without Google Maps. What did we ever do before GPS existed?

In many cases, local results (those on a map, or that display next to a map) are given priority over organic search results. Try doing some searches in your area for things like "homes on your lot" or "homebuilder" and you'll see what I mean. With Google consistently giving priority to map results over everything but paid Google Ads - and with searches including "near me" on the rise - there's absolutely no reason you shouldn't have a complete and claimed listing for potential buyers to locate your homebuilding business. ***Below you can see a search result for 'homebuilders dallas texas'.***



With Google giving priority to map results over everything but paid Google Ads - and with searches including "near me" on the rise - there's absolutely no reason you shouldn't have a complete and claimed listing for potential buyers to locate your homebuilding business.



It's possible that you already have a listing for your business online, but may not have claimed it. Try plugging your address(es) into Google Maps or Google Search and see what turns up. If it hasn't been claimed, you'll see an option to **"Claim This Business"** on Google Maps. **Do it right away!**

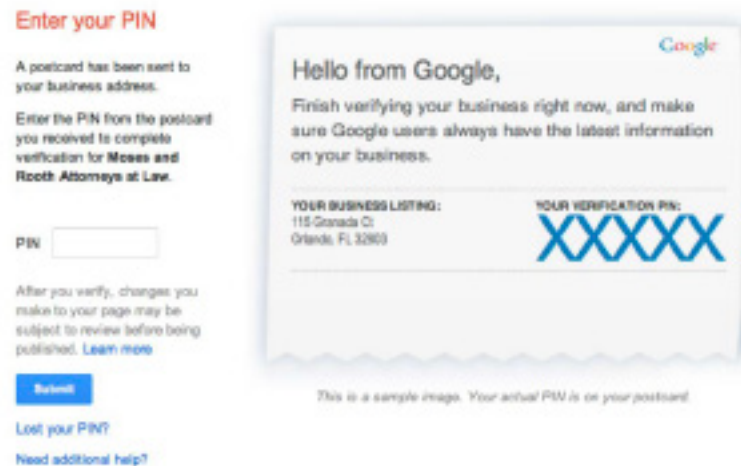
Some of you may be thinking, "What would stop me from claiming my competitor's business listings, and then wrecking them?" I appreciate your bellicosity, but Google protects against that sort of thing.

2

Get Listed (continued)

To make sure that just anyone can't claim a business, Google will send a postcard to that address with a secret code on it. Once it arrives (usually within 5 business days), just plug in the code and you'll be able to verify ownership of your business listing. So, unless you're willing to steal your competitor's mail and commit a Federal crime, there's no way to claim your competitor's business. I'll save the "21 Best Crimes to Gain The Edge Over Your Competition" E-Book for next year. Anyway...

See a post card example below.



You may already be on Google local results, but I'm willing to bet your model homes aren't. What about your sales centers? Even long-term spec-models. If you have a location that a potential buyer can drive to and visit, **it should be on Google Maps.**

Also, if you're already on Google Maps, take a few minutes to **make sure everything is correct.** Make sure your category is correct (for example, if you're a custom home builder, don't pick just 'home builder'), your contact information is correct, and your location pin is correctly located.

If nothing came up for your sales center, model home, and any other address you'd like to have listed, you'll need to add them as a listing. To get started, go to <https://www.google.com/business/>.

If your locations come up, but you don't see the option to "Claim This Business," then you'll likely need to reach out to Google. The most common situation is that someone at your company already claimed it in the past... perhaps even someone who is no longer with the company. Ask around, and if you're unable to track down the access credentials, reach out to Google. Here's a helpful article on the specific topic: <https://support.google.com/business/answer/4566671?hl=en>.

Being on Google maps gives potential homebuyers a great place to review your business and look at other customers' reviews. So, what are you waiting on? **Take a few minutes right now and get those Google listings done.**

3

Run Some paid Advertising Like Google Ads or Bing Ads

Particularly, if you're a new builder, just got your first website, or are just fresh in the optimization game; paid ads are great because they can get you results immediately. You're essentially paying to appear in search results above all of the organic (unpaid) results and local (map) results. You may be surprised how much activity you can get for only a small amount of daily ad spend. You will see results for as low as \$50 a day. And the great thing about a well monitored and properly maintained Google Ads campaign is that you can continually strive to get your clicks for the lowest possible price.

Up until now, keywords have always been the secret sauce for paid advertising – or PPC – but now in 2020, you need to be targeting audiences too. Some 'gurus' are suggesting the 'keyword' is dead. Here at Power Marketing, we don't subscribe to that thinking... yet!

But, targeting audiences is critical and important as you move forward in 2021.

The great thing about Google Ads, as compared to other marketing channels, is that you only pay for actual clicks or impressions. It's like paying a Realtor for a co-op, you only pay when there is a sale. For example – you could spend tens of thousands of dollars on a television commercial, but be delivering that expensive commercial to many people that aren't even looking for a new home. Google Ads allows you to put your ads only in front of people looking for a new home (audience targeting), and you're also only charged if the person clicks into your website. Once they click, then a potential homebuyer is in your website and it becomes your website experience role to convert that suspect into a prospect.

We'll probably get our office windows broken for sharing this out loud, but from our experience, we're convinced that homebuilders who are running an active Google pay-per-click campaign actually experience a boost for their organic results (the website results that appear down under ads) from Google in some degree. Google, if you're reading this – please just stick to denying it, and don't break our windows. While I would recommend hiring a Certified Google Partner, like Power Marketing, to manage your campaigns for you, there's also a simple alternative anyone can use called AdWords Express. It's great, but just because I know how to use a hammer, doesn't mean I can build a house.

You can find AdWords Express here: <https://www.google.com/adwords/express/>. My only words of warning to AdWords Express users is that you'll get more for your money going with a fully scrutinized campaign ran by a professional. Google has no vested interest in making sure your ad position is high and your cost-per-click is low. After all, ads are how Google makes its money. Google Partners/Certified Partners will stretch your marketing dollar and always strive for the best results.

Once your toes are wet in the world of pay-per-click, I'd recommend taking a step into the world of retargeting or remarketing.



4

Retargeting - That Creepy Realization That Someone is Following You Online

In 2021, retargeting is going to be a valuable tool. Mostly because it tends to yield much higher CTRs (click-through-rates) and conversion rates. But why? It's actually quite simple: the reason you are being retargeted (emphasis on re) is because you've already demonstrated an interest in the product. Because you know the prospect is interested in your homes and is therefore, already considering a new home purchase. So, you can even have a little fun with the ad design and be more creative or specific.

The 'Rule of 7' says that a person needs to see an ad at least 7 times for it to truly sink in.

Stalking isn't a rhetorical word, it's literally the digital process of stalking. But don't be put off, it's mainstream, so no one seems to care these days. Creepy still, but mainstream.

Perhaps your prospects haven't quite made their minds up about which plan or homebuilder to choose. Or perhaps something came up and they bounced off of your website before completing an online form. You can't call or email them because you don't know them yet, but you don't want them to forget about you, right?



If you've ever been browsing the web, and noticed that ads seem to be following you around the internet - that's retargeting at work. While marketing automation does a great job at keeping your brand in front of prospects that give you their contact info. What happens when you haven't received their contact information yet? That's where retargeting shines.

Two of the most widely used marketing platforms for retargeting are Google Ads and Facebook, both of which show your ads to well targeted audiences who have previously visited your website. The process to get retargeting running in either Google Ads or Facebook is essentially the same - a piece of code must be added to your website to 'track' website visitors away from your website and continually market to them elsewhere. That little piece of code is called a "Pixel" in Facebook terminology and a "Tag" in Google terminology. Either way, the stalk is on!

4

Retargeting - That Creepy Realization That Someone is Following You Online (continued)

Google Ads retargeting ads can appear just about anywhere digital that supports advertising - including in search results on Google, inside of smartphone apps like LinkedIn or TikTok, and on websites like YouTube or even Lowe's. The Builder Magazine website, for instance, contains several Google Adwords display network (visual) ads. As the advertiser, you are given a large measure of control over which websites display your ads, allowing you to discontinue website placements that aren't in your best interest, contain things you may not wish to be associated with, or are underperforming in conversions and clicks. You also get to choose whether you'd like to pay per impression (ad view), click, or website conversion. Each have their own purpose, advantages and recommended usage.

Facebook ads appear exclusively inside of Facebook properties. This can be in the main news feed, the sidebar, even in Facebook messenger conversations or in the middle of a video. Facebook will also let you combine retargeting with their impressive demographic marketing, allowing you to market to the individuals that are most likely to become your ideal customer. The real power of the Internet isn't its ability to reach millions of people - although it does that - it is its ability to find one person. For example, you could retarget to people who came to your website and also make salaries over \$80k/year; or to audiences who have a host of other detailed characteristics.

Both platforms allow control over what, specifically, triggers the retargeting. In the simplest example, retargeting kicks in when a prospect visits any page of your website. However, you can choose to have retargeting kick in on specific page visits and under specific criteria.

An example would be someone who visits a specific floorplan page on your website that you've been recently promoting. Since you know they visited that specific floorplan, and thereby, expressed interest, you could retarget them with an ad promoting the virtual tour of that floor plan. They'd likely see the ad, remember being interested in the floorplan, and click to experience the virtual tour.

Another example that you may have experienced in the past is sometimes called 'cart abandonment.' Cart abandonment retargets to individuals who began a customization process, a form or a purchase process on a website but did not see it through to completion.

If the prospect returns to your website and converts, you can opt to then remove them from the list that is being retargeted (so you're not paying to retarget to your homeowners and existing customers). Once you have their contact info, that's where marketing automation kicks in to nurture them through to the sale and the relationship after the sale.

Oh, yes - the world has changed. Permission-based marketing gives you many more options than the traditional interruptive model ever did. Retargeting is one of those options, and it's a powerful one if properly implemented and utilized.

5

Blog Regularly

So how important can a few hundred words a month on a blog actually be for my company. Well, depending on your goals, the actual result and benefit will be different. But there is absolutely some value. If you blog already – excellent! Pat yourself on the back and skip ahead to number five. Or, keep reading and find out why what you’re already doing is more beneficial than you may have realized.

By blogging regularly (1-2 times a month), you’re sending a few important signals to Google or your target audience. The first, and probably the most obvious positive thing about writing a lot of different blogs is that you’ll be growing the collection of content on your website. **This gives you a much better chance of being relevant** (Google’s primary search result criteria) to a wider variety of search queries and search intents. If you write a blog about ‘outdoor living’ or ‘sustainable homes’, your content can attract people interested in that subject, and so on and so forth.

I like to think about it as though you’re stranded on an island with an unlimited amount of fish trap nets. How many of those traps are you going to set? With each additional trap, your chances of catching dinner increase. It’s the same way with blogs – with each one you write, you not only increase the chances of getting a potential buyer’s attention, but you increase your overall digital footprint.

Another important signal that you’ll send to Google by blogging regularly is recency, which is essentially a measure of how old/new your website’s content is and how often it changes. Google has a tendency to not only supply a searcher with a list of the most relevant results, but also of the most recent/up-to-date results.

Take for example a search for “twitch.” In 2010, a search for “twitch” likely led you to a medical definition about muscle contractions. In 2020, if you search for “twitch,” you’re more likely to be sent to the gaming platform, Twitch.

Recency is also important because of the way that the Google web crawler/spider works. Essentially, Google sends out a virtual robot “spider” that crawls around the World Wide Web, “indexing” or making a copy of nearly everything it finds. Those copies are what you see listed when you search for something on Google. When the Google robot continually returns to your website and sees nothing new, it makes a note to wait longer until its next trip back. If it finds something new – like a blog post, and keeps seeing new blog posts every time it comes, then it will send a signal that your content is always new and up to date, hence being worth frequent ‘crawling.’

This is a big reason why SEO shouldn’t be treated like a diet – because it’s a lifestyle change. As soon as you lapse on keeping up with it (in this case, blog writing), your competitor can surpass you. If you live in Maryland near the Chesapeake Bay, the image of one crab pulling another one down in a crab basket so he cannot escape is an image you recognize. Search results are very much like that. Just when you think you are to the top, a competitor ‘crab’ pulls you back down a notch.

You may be wondering, “I’m a homebuilder, what would I blog about?” Blog about trends and things that are current. Blog about energy efficient building techniques or building sustainable homes. Blog about staining concrete or material use. Blog about something that’s trending nationwide (hint: use Google Trends) and relate the trending topic to your company in a clever way. Take a look at what your competitors or national builders are blogging about. Put yourself in the shoes of the homebuyer – what would be useful or interesting for them to read? If it’s trending nationally or regionally, **try to jump on the bandwagon and strike while the iron is hot.**

6

Create A Gated “Lead Magnet”

If you’ve never heard of a lead magnet, it is essentially something of value (a document/chart/download/infographic/checklist/etc.) that you can offer potential homebuyers who visit your website in exchange for their contact information (that’s what we mean by gated).

Surprise! You’re reading one now! I am SO looking forward to spamming you! Just kidding... it isn’t spam if you already gave me permission. Hehehe!

Great SEO and a great website are both useless if you aren’t capturing those leads. It is important to attract leads to your website, but it’s more important to capture them, or they’ll slither off into the abyss never to be heard from again.

Along with a general contact form or lead capture point on your website, a lead magnet form is a valuable and effective way of capturing new leads so you can nurture that lead to a sale.



Lead Magnets are also the ‘kryptonite’ to those horrible website bounces. If I’m getting too nerdy for you here, feel free to skip ahead a few paragraphs. Hold on while I push up my glasses...

Still here? Great! If you didn’t know, a website ‘bounce’ is when someone (hopefully a potential buyer) visits your homebuilder website, but leaves without clicking into a second page. Sure – it’s bad because they appear to be not interested, which is an issue all its own. But, it’s really bad because of the negative signal it sends to Google. It’s essentially telling Google that your website visitor, who just bounced, didn’t find what they were looking for on your website. Too many bounces and it’s going to appear to Google like “new homes for sale” aren’t being found on your website. Oops, you just got pushed down in the search engine results. Not Good!

6

Create A Gated 'Lead Magnet' (continued)

At the same time - a bounce can mean that visitors are quickly finding what they're looking for on the page they landed on. While it seems like a simple enough concept, it can be a very complex beneath the surface.

Say for instance that you own a pizza shop, and you have a simple 1-page website with your menu and the phone number to call for deliveries. While the website is handy for your customers, and most of them will probably find exactly what they're looking for (like your phone number) - each of them that visits will technically be a bounce.

Finding the perfect balance between being helpful/interesting but not giving away so much that there's no reason to dig further is one of the great challenges that marketers and web designers face.

So, why do bounces matter? The foremost concerns aside - that your visitors aren't finding what they're looking for - a high bounce rate also counts against you in Google's search results. This is because Google sees a high bounce rate as visitors not finding what they're looking for, and Google's job is to quickly deliver the most relevant and useful results. After all, if Google stops being useful, people will stop using it, and then Google would lose all of their AdWords revenue that they so desperately depend on to remain the world's internet search giant.

Google's search results further complicate the issue. If Google is doing their job properly, they should land you on the exact page of a website that best answers your query. Problem is - if you find exactly what you're looking for on that page - and you bounce - you may send a signal back to Google that you didn't find what you were looking for.

There are several marketing/navigation solutions that can be used, many of which also vary based on what sort of business you have.

In the pizza restaurant example - you could add a second page "coupons" or "specials" and be relatively sure that most of your visitors will click on it (for the promise of potential savings).

That's where a lead magnet comes in, which serves a variety of purposes. Essentially, you save some of your most useful/interesting information and put it in a downloadable document - commonly a PDF.

While I wouldn't necessarily advocate a lead magnet for a pizza place - potential good examples of lead magnet ideas could be "10 Pizza Topping Flavor Combinations You've Never Considered", or "Best Beverages to Pair with Every Type Of Pizza", or "What Your Preferred Toppings Say About You", etc.

An example of a download specific to a homebuilder, whom I work with every day at Power Marketing (and whose lead magnet would be for the homebuyer), could be "**10 Easy Ways to Reduce Your Monthly Utility Bills**" or "**10 Things Your Next Community Should Have**" or "**5 Things You Shouldn't Live Further Than 3 Miles From**" or "**10 Questions To Ask Potential Homebuilders.**"

A downloadable lead magnet document on your website would serve many purposes, a few of which are listed below:

- It would help you land/capture more organic search traffic from people seeking the topic that your lead magnet covers
- It should require individuals who supply you with their name/e-mail/phone etc. in order to download the document, allowing you to reach out to them via marketing automation or a sales call to build a relationship and work toward a sale
- It would help protect you against excessive bounces – because it is a document that would be of high value to a visitor regardless of the page of your website they enter on (lead magnets act as sort of 'interrupters,' in a good way)
- By branding the document, you are positioning your company as an authority (increases trust in your company/brand and the chances of a sale later)
- By giving away something useful, basically for free, the person who downloaded may feel like they owe you and be more likely to buy later (the influence principle of reciprocity)

Looking into the specific bounce rates of individual pages on your website can also provide some insight into how to get less bounces. For instance, if your 'About Us' page is often an exit point from your website, you can make sure that page isn't a highly visible destination. Or, perhaps you need to consider changing the content on the 'About Us' page!

With all of that said, your goal should be to get your bounce rate down significantly and land leads while doing so. I prefer to see a bounce rate of less than 35% whenever possible.

Keep in mind that it's in Google's best interest to deliver a great user experience, namely by delivering the right results for your prospect's query. The day that the search engine stops being useful, or stops being able to deliver the answers to all of our questions, is the day that we all stop using it. So – it isn't in Google's best interest to keep ranking your website high in search results if Google sees a bunch of people leaving your website without engaging in a second page.

Not sure what you can make a lead magnet about? Here's five more ideas to get your creative juices flowing:

- 10 Things to Consider Before Building on Your Land
- 10 Ways to Save Money for Your New Home Mortgage
- 10 Ways to Make Your Next Home Your Forever Home
- 10 of the Highest Resale Value Items Your Next Home Should Have
- 10 Ways for Under \$100 To Increase Your Home's Curb Appeal

7

Ask Your Customers for Reviews/Testimonials

In many geographic areas, a few customer reviews can make all the difference in a Google search result (making it another important part of SEO). To reference Google's user experience again, it isn't in their best interest to send their customer to a 1-star home builder (through higher rankings) if 5-star home builders exist within the area. Seek out those reviews from your customers and they will help your SERPs.

Make it easy for them to review you by sending a link, and always respond to reviews, whether negative or positive. Many negative situations can be resolved just by communicating with the customer; but ignoring them is the Cardinal Sin. **If the review doesn't appear to be legitimate, you can also report it to Google to see about getting it removed.**

Want to make sure you don't miss a review? If you followed along on number 2, then you'll receive notifications when someone reviews a property you own on Google My Business. You can also sign up for Google Alerts for your brand, which will notify you anytime a new webpage with your brand gets added to Google's possible results (known as their 'index'). Google aside – testimonials also serve a great purpose for your website. They function as social proof – the concept that people are more likely to do something that someone else has done first.



Wondering how to get reviews? This could be achieved by simply calling your happy customers up and asking them. I've also seen some of our clients do giveaways - like a gas grill giveaway that your customers enter by submitting a review.

You could also do it en masse by doing what number 8 says.

Bottom line is that if you don't ask for them, you won't get them!

8

Begin Utilizing a CRM (Customer Relationship Manager)

Purchasing a CRM will allow you to manage your existing customers, affiliated real estate agents, vendors, contractors, and most importantly, your prospects, organized and always available to you and your sales team. This helps make sure that leads (the ones your Search Engine Optimization brought you) don't slip through the cracks in the sales process, **making you lose out on potential sales.**

There are several options out there for you to choose from. If I could give you one piece of advice on choosing one – it would be to only get what you need. Do you have the time to learn, let alone use, all of those extra (and expensive) bells and whistles, cool as they might be?

A great measure of a CRM is how EASY it is. How better to measure 'easy' by the amount of time it takes to do a simple task? Sending a mass e-mail to your prospect list to notify them of an upcoming grand opening shouldn't take any more than a minute – if it does, I'd recommend shopping around. Having a \$399 a month CRM system and using \$50 worth doesn't make any sense to me. Better to purchase a \$149 a month system and utilize everything.

Perhaps I should write an article about "How to Divorce Your Current CRM and Not Lose Half Your Stuff." Sometimes an improperly tied lasso can become a noose.

And let's be real for a moment – how much do you really value something you don't pay much or anything for? Is your internal 'butt kicker' really going to give you grief for not using something you didn't pay for (or much for), anyway?

Take gym memberships for example – like the one you probably have. If all 3000 people that have \$10/month memberships at your gym showed up on the same day, there wouldn't be anywhere close to enough equipment or space to hold them. The gym is actually counting on most of them seldom, if ever showing up. It's what their business plan is based around. A \$100/month gym membership on the other hand – I'll bet you'd use that more often!

Check out our own Easy LeadLocker at www.NoMoreWastedLeads.com and you'll see a CRM and marketing automation package that is **truly easy and just right for homebuilders.**

TRAP ALERT!

With the pricing of nearly everything digital going down, you're probably wondering if there is a free CRM option. There are some free options out there, most of which are limited in functionality, but who knows – they may be right for your company at the current time. Just keep in mind that even a free CRM still won't run itself, and it certainly won't set itself up. In fact, approximately 40-60% of CRM startups fail due to set-up failure. CRM's are invaluable once they're configured, but they can be a bit of an uphill climb to get to that point.

9

Automate Your Marketing

You can envision marketing automation like a dedicated employee that you don't have to pay. This employee will automatically keep in touch with all of your prospective customers for you, and work while you're sleeping!

Marketing automation essentially takes processes that would ordinarily require a human, such as thanking a prospect for showing interest in a new home, and does it automatically. By automating many of the processes that a well-oiled homebuilder sales machine would be following anyway, it frees you and your team to concentrate even more on what you do best - homebuilding.

So, where can you find marketing automation out there? Just Google "homebuilder marketing automation" and you'll see several options - many of which are part of a CRM (as mentioned in #8) or a larger and potentially more expensive software package. It's possible that your current CRM has a marketing automation section that you aren't fully utilizing. If you don't already have a CRM, as I mentioned in number 8, try to only get what you need and what you'll use.

Are automated e-mails the only option here? No, of course not! Many builders find great success and significantly higher response rates using automated SMS (text messaging) versus e-mails. Think about it - are you more likely to respond to a text or an e-mail promptly? Texting has virtually a 100% open rate. Due to the challenges associated with mass texting, many CRMs don't offer it.



Many builders find great success and significantly higher response rates using automated SMS (text messaging) versus e-mails.



PSYCHOLOGY SIDE NOTE

Now that a large portion of the home buying process begins online, you don't get as much face-to-face time with potential buyers as you once did. Face-time is invaluable, because it's when buyers decide whether or not they like and trust the sales person and the homebuilder in general. So, now that the process begins and decisions are being made online, and there's no initial face-time - how do we send signals to our buyers that they can trust us? It turns out that the number of one signal of trust online is speed - how long it takes you, the homebuilder, to respond to a interested homebuyer. This is why marketing automation is so important! I should also point out here that I can't take credit for any of that knowledge above - it comes directly from Power Marketing's founder, Brian Flook. He is very much a student of the human brain, and loves to talk about psychology, marketing, and the relationship between the two. I've learned a ton from him and had many a great conversation over a beer or a cigar, so if you're interested in the psychological 'why' end of things and want to have a great conversation, I urge you to give him a call!

Marketing automation can even be used for internal processes and reminders, in addition to automated outgoing communications. For example, imagine a prospect fills out a web form on your website, and they're interested in having a new home built. Your marketing automation can automatically e-mail the prospect thanking them for their interest, notify you of their interest, assign the lead to a specific sales person, set a task for your sales person to follow up with them in the next 24 hours, and continue to nurture and educate them over a period of weeks to keep them thinking about you (and that new dream home)!

There are some truly amazing things you can pull off with a great CRM, marketing automation, and a little creativity. Here are 5 examples of how you can nurture and "wow" your customers:

- **Send automatic reminders to potential buyers about your upcoming model home grand opening**
- **Have handwritten "Thank You" cards automatically written and delivered to model home grand opening visitors**
- **Automatically e-mail your customers every year on their birthday, or anniversary of house closing, or holidays**
- **Upsell home features automatically during the buying and negotiating process (e.g. email them "10 Reasons Your Family Needs a Deck")**
- **Automatically get the hottest leads in front of your sales team every day so they're spending their time contacting those most likely to buy**

It just so happens that our very own Easy LeadLocker is also a CRM. Did I mention it's easy? Find out how easy at www.NoMoreWastedLeads.com.



10

Get On Those Social Networks

Let's revisit SEO (search engine optimization) for a moment. While a large portion of how Google decides to rank your homebuilder website in search results is based on the relevance of your website to the potential buyer's search query (eg. 'new homes Denver') and intent (to buy a home), **it is also based on popularity.**

"Yet another SEO signal?" you ask? You betcha! Like politics, popularity matters nearly much as actual substance.

A strong indicator of popularity is how many people are talking about your website/content, sharing your website/content, and visiting your website from social networks.



It isn't enough to just make a Facebook account and never use it. If you don't use it, you can count on your competitors using it (and you, by comparison, looking inactive and unpopular). If you're already blogging or are planning to start, that's a natural thing to share regularly on Facebook once you've published each new blog. It's also a great place to share your homebuilding updates. Facebook live video feeds - even just a simple walkthrough of your client's home (with their permission, of course) can be particularly popular. Follow some larger, national builders accounts and see what types of things they're sharing, then emulate them.

Social networks like Facebook also give your happy customers another place to leave reviews (which gives your potential customers another place to see them), and another place to contact you. A negative Facebook message or post is at least private, and allows you to resolve with any potential problems behind closed doors. A bad review on Google, on the other hand, may be there to stay.

Many of our homebuilder clients also regularly use Instagram, LinkedIn, Houzz, and even Pinterest.



It isn't enough to just make a Facebook account and never use it. If you don't use it, you can count on your competitors using it (and you, by comparison, looking inactive and unpopular).



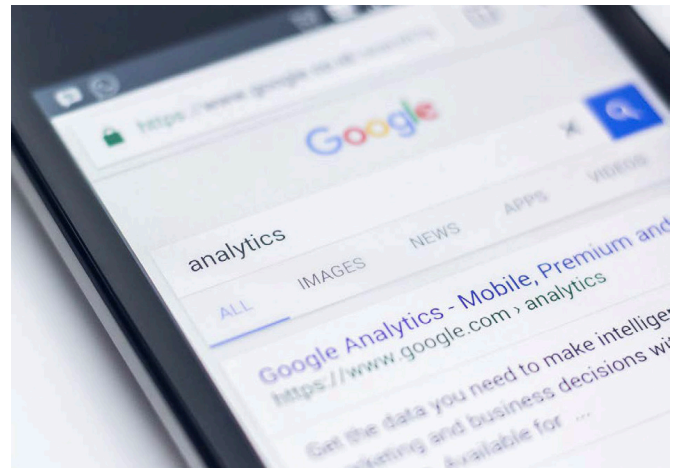
11

Set Up Goals In Your Google Analytics Account

You may already look at your Google Analytics, even if just occasionally. If you don't, ask your webmaster/web developer/marketing company if you have Google Analytics installed, and get your own login. Google Analytics can shed light on how people are browsing your website, where they are coming from, how your SEO is performing, and so much more.

One of the most important parts of Google Analytics, and one that is underutilized by many, is Goals. Goals are the actions on your website that you'd like visitors to take. Some examples include making an appointment, viewing a contact page, filling out a form, creating an account, sharing something to a social network, or signing up for a newsletter.

While some goals can be more in-depth, the contact-form based goals should only take you a few minutes to set up. All you need is a contact form on your website (which you hopefully already have), a 'Thank You' page (which is where someone will be sent if they fill out the form), and a custom goal configured in Google Analytics with the type "Destination." You can find goals in the admin area of Google Analytics, under your current View. Once you make a new goal, simply choose "Custom," and then "Destination" under type. That will allow you to enter the URL of your goal page – in this case, you'll want to use the URL of your "Thank You" page I mentioned earlier.



Once goals are set up, the data can be viewed in the Conversions tab of Google Analytics. It's a good practice to fill out your own contact form to make sure it works properly and records your new goal. Occasionally forms fail. Never ignore your forms for too long without testing them.

Having this new data will allow you to figure out your cost per lead (sometimes also referred to as cost per acquisition), and the cost per lead of all your other marketing efforts. Say, for instance, that you spend \$1,000/month on Google Ads, and last month you had 10 people download your lead magnet and give you their contact information from a Google Ads source. That means you're getting Google Ads leads for \$100 each. Let's also say you're paying to be listed on an online builder directory, which is only \$300 a month. If things were to get financially tight one month, you might be inclined to cancel the Google Ads because it costs you more. But what if you found out that this builder directory advertising only brought you a single lead in the last quarter? That would mean you're paying \$900 a lead – 9 times what you're paying for leads via Google Ads.

It takes a little more effort to get your Analytics goals linked up with Google Ads, which reminds me, you should do it now. Or, give me a call and we'll help you out.

12

Get Links To Your Website

As yet another marker of popularity and relevance, Google looks heavily at how many other websites point (click-through) to your website.

The best way to see what sites are linking to you is by using Google Search Console, previously known as Google Webmaster Tools. Just search for "Search Console" on Google and it'll turn up. Once you're in, add your domain(s). There are a number of methods to choose from, but you'll need to prove to Google that you have ownership of the website domain. This can usually be done by simply adding a file to your website's root, or piece of code to your site's header.

There are other methods of finding our incoming links, such as the Moz tool "Open Site Explorer," but I'd still recommend claiming your website on Search Console. **Verifying your Search Console domains have a host of other benefits, like showing you what keywords brought visitors to your site, giving you an idea of how many of your website pages that Google knows about, and notifying you of any potential errors.**

Aside from linking back to your website from your social networking accounts (Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, Youtube, etc.), and listing your company in various directories (Google), you are probably wondering, "Where can I get links from?"

Do you build houses in communities you don't develop? Ask them to link to you and link back to them in exchange. Use any local vendors or manufacturers? Ask them to link to you and link back to them in exchange. Have something to write about (remember number 5 above)? Look around for homebuilder or local area blogs and ask them if you can guest post and link back to your website. Any local events in your area you can sponsor that might link to you? Any local businesses you can partner with - maybe a restaurant nearby that gives a discount to individuals who tour your model home and get lunch?

You can also try searching for brand name or your website, wrapped in quotes. For example, Power Marketing would be a search for "power-marketing.com". While it might not turn up results exclusive to your actual website, it could potentially shine a light on someone else's website that mentions you but doesn't link to you. If you find a link that isn't active but mentions your site URL / brand name, contact the site owner and ask them to activate that link. Signing up for alerts when someone writes about your brand via Google Alerts, Buzzsumo or Mention.net will help you stay ahead of the curve.

Try searching for your competition's website on Google and find out where their links are coming from. Doing so will likely either give you an idea of where you can get a link, or outright provide you with another place to get a link.

You may be tempted by online sales pitches, an ad you saw, or a voice-mail message to just pay and get tons of links. Many of those links you'd likely get would be of low quality, or simply not make sense as a site that would link to you. They could have content on them with absolutely no relation to you or homebuilding. They may even have adult content on them (I have, for the record, seen it happen). You don't want your company associated with that, do you?

While some of these bad link practices may even work temporarily, you can count on them only working until Google catches on to it. And when they catch on, there may be serious ranking penalties put against your website that are difficult to overcome.

If it makes sense to link from it, link from it. Otherwise, steer clear. In any case, you should strive for more links than you have now.

13

Check Your Competition

Get on Google and search for the keywords you'd like to be ranking for. You could even just type in "homebuilder," and not specify where – **Google will assume you're looking nearby.**

Choose the competitor of yours that appears near the top of the search results, and click into their website. Look at how much content they have on their homepage compared to your homepage. Compare their navigation to your own. The more you study them, the more you may be able to tell why they are ranked ahead of you.

You can even look at your competitor's websites in historical versions to find out how often they do website redesigns. You can use a tool called the Wayback Machine (<https://web.archive.org/>) to plug in a website URL and see old versions of websites. It's a handy tool in a number of situations.

If you're already number one ranked for the keyword– then congratulations! But don't lose sight of the crab analogy I mentioned earlier. Maintaining a rank in Google requires diligence and an ongoing effort, but it is worth it. Just keep in mind that ranking is only half the battle. **Being number one for a keyword doesn't mean anything if nobody is searching for that keyword. That's where a professional keyword study is valuable.**



14

Consider A Website Redesign

As we like to say here at Power Marketing, "Your Website is like Grand Central Station." It truly acts as the centralized 'keystone' connecting all or many of your other marketing efforts. In many cases it is the first impression a potential client will get from your company, and potentially the last time if the impression isn't a good one. Like it or not, your website is where your company gets eliminated, or better yet, selected to stay on the prospect's list.

It would be a terrible shame to put marketing dollars into bringing more leads to your website if your website isn't mobile responsive, is dated, hard to navigate, doesn't have any capture points (forms, etc.), lacks great photography, or otherwise needs improved upon. It is too easy to get eliminated and your website is the #1 factor in that elimination.

If you can't afford a brand-new website, at the very least you should consider a refresh. **I recommend a new website/refresh every 2-3 years tops.** Once browsing habits change, your website needs to be updated. **Perhaps you should call Power Marketing at 301-416-7861 to get pricing information;** we specialize in designing and building homebuilder websites.



15

Experiment with Your Website (If You Can't Afford a Professional Designer)

While you may or may not be in love with your current website design, you may be willing to experiment with it. Try making edits to your website every so often and reviewing the results. Your website is supposed to capture leads, sometimes known as conversions in the marketing world. So, if it isn't doing that, what harm is there in experimentation? Functionality is key, websites are no longer online brochures. **Some simple tweaks may improve your rate of conversions significantly** - but you won't know unless you are willing to experiment. Do you even have a capture tool on the site?

Try changing the text content and colors of your call to action buttons - for example, if your contact form button is gray and says Submit, try making it green and changing it to say, "I'm ready!" Try reducing the number of fields in your contact forms, or requiring less fields. Try playing around with layout - for instance, try moving your contact form 'above the fold,' (meaning you can see it without having to scroll down) and experimenting with what elements, when grouped near the form, increase your conversion rate (such as photos of you/your team, award mentions, testimonials, etc.).



You can also opt to run multiple variations of these experiments simultaneously - sometimes referred to as A/B testing. If you're serious about experimenting and getting the most leads out of your website visitors, look into Google Optimize. It will allow you to show experimental page features to a small group of visitors, and then you can see how each one performs (with the intention to go with the best).

Sometimes just experimenting and optimizing isn't enough, however. Perhaps your website is dated and sending the wrong message to potential buyers. Perhaps your website is multimedia-heavy and loads slow, sending bad signals to Google and hurting your search rankings. Perhaps your current website is too difficult to edit and keep updated, or maybe it doesn't even technically belong to you... ouch! If any of those are true, I'd recommend investing in a brand-new website that is professionally designed.

16

Make Some New Landing Pages on Your Website

A 'landing page' is a section of your website that is separated from the rest of your website - usually with a single, specific goal in mind, and coming from a specific traffic source. Landing pages allow for greater control of visitor website experience, because you have insight into all the circumstances of how a visitor came to your site... and for what reason. Your landing page should be designed with minimal distractions - hide the main navigation bar and footer. All page elements should work toward the one goal of the page, which in most cases, is to convert the visitor into a lead.

Aside from better control over the website visit experience and increased chances at conversion, there are other benefits to landing pages, as well.

Let's say for instance that you're paying for a local billboard ad. Instead of just putting your website homepage URL on it, why not put the link to a landing page? For example, www.yourwebsite.com/billboard. To make it particularly powerful, include a promotion on the billboard for individuals that visit the specific page, such as waiver of deposit, a free partially finished basement or patio, \$500 gift card on closing, etc.



If the billboard guy comes knocking next quarter, asking you to renew your advertising, you'll know exactly whether or not you should.



Driving traffic to this specific page from only billboard visits will show you how successful your campaign is. That way - if the billboard guy comes knocking next quarter, asking you to renew your advertising, you'll know exactly whether or not you should. Impressions are nice for billboard sales people to talk about, but actual leads are the secret sauce that generate sales!

TRAP ALERT!

Not all landing pages are equal. You might search Google for "landing pages" and find a service that lets you easily create new ones, but it's important to pay attention to where these landing pages actually live on the world wide web. Remember the bounce rate stuff we went through earlier? You wouldn't want someone to come to your website only to leave it in favor of a landing page that isn't technically on your website's domain. Whose online footprint are you trying to grow, yours, or some landing page company's?

This same logic applies to all other marketing venues. If you're paying for ads somewhere, they should be linking to their own landing page. Don't worry about making them too unique, either, so long as all of the pages aren't indexed in Google (which they would see as duplicate content across pages).

17

Add an SSL Certificate to Your Website

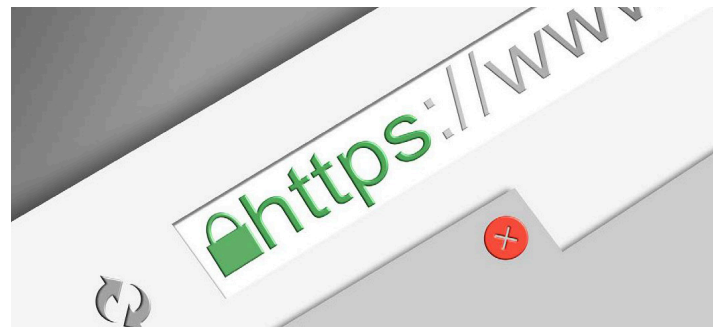
While you may need your hosting company or a technical person to help get it running, an SSL Certificate is one of the quickest things on the list you can implement on your homebuilder website. An SSL Certificate, which stands for “Secure Sockets Layer,” is essentially a layer of security in the digital communications between your website and a visitor’s web browser (Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Microsoft Internet Explorer or Edge, Apple Safari, etc.). In the near past, these certificates were generally only used on websites that took customer credit card information online, but now, every website should have one.

Remember how we talked about Google having a vested interest in user experience? Well – if Google sends a potential homebuyer to your website, and then a hacker used your website to get into that homebuyer’s computer, Google would be associated with that in a negative user experience (since they delivered you to a compromised/unprotected site).

To give businesses an incentive to get SSL Certificates and ensure a safer web browsing experience, Google began giving small search engine ranking boosts to protected sites back in 2014. As of 2017, they began negatively affecting the search engine rankings of non-secure websites – even going so far as to notify visitors to your site that it isn’t secure. See why I say, “every website should have one?”



Google began giving small search engine ranking boosts to protected sites back in 2014.



You can tell if your current website has an SSL certificate by looking up in the address bar when browsing to your website. **Does it say “http://” or does it say “https://”?** If there’s no “S,” you either don’t have an SSL certificate, or it wasn’t installed correctly.

There are paid and free SSL options, many free options of which have popped up since Google made their announcement. The paid options range anywhere from \$9 to \$200 and up annually, which is a small price to pay for a guaranteed boost in search results. Yes, you might argue that it’s a bit expensive for a single letter “S.” Heck, you aren’t even buying a vowel. For most homebuilders, where your website won’t be taking any credit card information online, a free SSL certificate may be just fine. While there are several options out there that a quick Google search could turn up, <https://letsencrypt.org/> is an example of a free option. **Whether you go free or paid, it’s important to know that having any SSL certificate is better than none.**

Looking to tackle the SSL installation yourself? Here’s the Google help center article: <https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/6073543>

18

Make Videos and Get on YouTube

Google gives a hefty weight to the value of videos, and for good reason – they potentially take a significant investment to create, explain an issue really well, and many people prefer them to reading. Getting a video ranked on Google or YouTube search results is much easier than getting a website ranked. And millennials love videos!

They're also useful on Facebook once you have them. Sharing videos significantly increases your chances of appearing on people's newsfeeds.

What could you take a video of, you ask? I'm feeling generous, so here's five more ideas for you:

- Continual video updates of your in-progress builds
- Quick before and after videos, or time-lapses of home builds (GoPro cameras are great for time-lapses)
- A simple video walkthrough of your model home – No Steven Spielberg quality necessary here.
- A slideshow that has been saved as a video file (note that portals like Houzz and Trulia may frown upon this option). That said, Houzz ranks videos very high in their algorithms
- Video of driving up to your model home - puts people in the mindset of one day doing so themselves. Just don't blame me if you get pulled over for distracted driving while taking this video

If you make a full video production, you can even use that for Facebook and Youtube retargeting video ads.



19

Get a Virtual Tour of Your Model Home

With today's online buyer expecting a more interactive buying and website experience, a virtual tour is a great way to share more about your model homes without requiring an actual tour. **Millennials in particular are buying more and more things without ever speaking to a human being or seeing the product. We're close to a point where a virtual tour is an expectation not a luxury**, plus they are shareworthy, and they can get you some bonus points on services like Houzz and Trulia. We're particularly fond of Matterport tours.

Once you hire someone to do it, the process is usually easy and painless. Someone will come to your model home and move camera equipment from room to room. It will likely take several hours. Just make sure that everything is well-staged before they arrive. If you're in a client's home instead of a model, be aware of family photo locations and ask for permission to either move them or photograph them. If you've had high foot traffic in the home recently (due to a parade of homes, open house or otherwise), make sure everything is clean prior to the virtual tour photography. If you set up traffic guides/ropes to guide people through the home, or had signage up specific to the event, take them down for the virtual tour photos.

20

Optimize Your Images & Floor Plans

Have you ever attempted to visit a website and it seemed like it took forever to load? We've all been there...and then left. You have about 2 seconds to get your website to load before your visitor leaves to look at your competition's website. People like fast websites and so does Google. Page speed is even a ranking factor in Google's algorithm now. When you optimize images, it leads to reducing load time and increases site speed. Those few seconds could be the difference between gaining or losing countless website leads and sales.

When you click a link to visit a website, the server calls all of the files for the site to load on your screen. Depending on your site, the images could account for the majority of the data that needs to be loaded. That is why it is always important to optimize images for the web. The smaller the file sizes of the images, the faster a website loads.

That's where image optimization comes into play. Knowing the right file formats and how different formats handle different types of images can help you understand when and where to use the right file type to speed up your website's load time and still produce good quality images. Understanding lossy and lossless compression is important in choosing the type of file format for an image that you want to upload.

Most new home builders don't optimize at all for their community pages which is a big missed opportunity. Typically, you'll have 3 - 12 communities depending on the size of the home builder you are. Each community has a unique name and a page that has information about that community as well as listings and floor plans.

Interactive Floor Plans allow prospects to visualize/customize plans they are considering. With different options, plan configurations, elevations, and photos, users can save their plan to bring into a sales center. This adds value to the experience for both buyer and builder.

Typically, floor plans do NOT get optimized by home builders. Sometimes this can be due to the limitation of the content management system you are on. The floor plan pages need to be optimized for the name of the floor plan, but not a generic term that someone might be looking for such as "new home floor plans in Nashville, TN".

Most new home builders are missing the boat when it comes to optimizing their community, listing, and floor plan pages. If you take the extra time to correct this on your website, you'll start dominating your local competition! (and often you'll outrank the regional and national players as well).

21

Email Marketing Can Be Extremely Effective For Home Builders

Email marketing typically has the best return on investment for our clients, if used correctly. Not only can monthly email newsletters with valuable tips and information help build your authority, but they can help drive more traffic to your website and even lead to conversions!

People like to do business with those they know, like, and trust. Email is direct communication with your audience that helps you build relationships and credibility. It is much more personal than social media marketing.

Email is still a great way to stay in front of your potential audience. 91% of consumers check their email on a daily basis and most check it several times a day.

By developing your own email list, you own that list. It's yours. It's the one place that people, not algorithms, are in control. You get to decide who sees what content and when and where they see it.

It can drive visitors to your website. Email marketing can seamlessly drive more visitors to your website and provide you with a valuable way to track which parts of your website and your marketing attracts the most interest.

The most popular type of email, especially for businesses who create online content, is the e-newsletter. According to [Copyblogger](#), a traditional e-newsletter is usually sent on a regular schedule (often weekly or monthly) and typically includes a branded HTML header, an opening greeting, and the main article.

Stay connected to your entire customer base and increase customer loyalty with the click of a button. Email marketing is one home builder marketing strategy you don't want to miss—44% of email recipients made at least one purchase last year based on a promotional email. If you want to generate and close leads with minimal investment, include email marketing in your online marketing strategy.

Using your own voice and personality builds rapport and helps your audience get to know and trust you. Take this to the next level by opening a two-way discussion with your subscribers. Give your audience something they can connect back to that can also provoke a conversation. Your family, pets, sports, or entertainment are good examples. Invite them to respond to your emails or join the discussion on your website or social channels.

Wohooo!

**As your reward for really reading and learning, we're giving you
six bonus items for FREE!**

Get a Tracking Phone Number

A tracking phone number is a phone number that is different from your normal phone number, which allows you to track calls to it. Like the landing pages we went over earlier, having a tracking number allows you to measure the success of your marketing efforts. The two (landing pages and tracking numbers) actually complement each other very nicely.

Let's revisit the billboard example. Someone sees your billboard, and goes to [yourwebsite.com/billboard](#). They are so excited by what they see there, that they call immediately instead of filling out a form. Problem is - unless you had a tracking number on your landing page, you'll have no definite way of knowing that the lead saw your billboard. Yes, you can ask them how they heard about you, but sometimes that information isn't accurate and it can be difficult to remember to ask people anyway.

Many tracking number services will note the caller's number and call duration - some will even allow you to record the call for you to reference later.

Some services, like Google Ads, include the ability to track calls both directly from the ad (on mobile devices) and also from your website (with the proper code installed). But if you want to track calls from other sources, that's where you'll need to get a tracking phone number service.

Publish Your Prices Online

You might not want to, but if you don't publish at least an idea of your pricing online, potential buyers are searching elsewhere. GONE!

Think back to the last time you researched or made a purchase online. Did you call a retailer to find the price of something, or did you find a retailer that published their price online? You know the answer! The Internet has trained us that pricing is here!

I'm not saying publish pricing right down to the dollar, and I understand pricing can be a challenge - particularly if you build custom homes. I'm saying give potential buyers an idea. ***I generally recommend a more general pricing statement like "Starting from the low 340s," but even that is better than From the \$300s.***

Reorganize Your Website Navigation/Menu

Take a look at the navigation on your website. Next, take a look at the Behavior area of your Google Analytics account. Are the most highly trafficked pages of your site also the easiest to get to? If not, they should be!

If you don't have Google Analytics set up, just try taking into account what your visitors are looking for.

The “About Us” page on your website shouldn't be the first one on the left.

Potential buyers are on your website to see houses! Floor plans! Why not make it as easy and pleasant as possible for them to access what they came for? A few quick adjustments on your website menu can make the website feel like it is for the buyer, and not for you. Since they want to see floor plans, give them multiple click options to get there. Sorry, but they just don't care “About You” at this point.

Lastly, take a look at your website on a mobile phone. Is it easy to navigate? It may not seem a big deal, perhaps, if your Google Analytics shows that only 5% of visitors are using mobile devices. According to Google, 2015-2016 was the first year that search activity on mobile devices exceeded that of desktop searches. So, if your navigation needs work on mobile, or your website isn't mobile friendly at all, it's time to get on that. Mobile responsive sites are simply the only acceptable solution today.

Make Floor Plans Accessible Quickly

Closely related to the previous item, but important enough to warrant its own mention. **Floorplans - arguably the number one thing people want to see on your website** - shouldn't be any more than two clicks away from your homepage. Do you currently have them buried? Unbury them. Do you currently require your visitors to download a PDF instead of just seeing the floorplans right on your website? Stop that! If they're visiting on a mobile device they still want to see the plans, but may not wish to download them.

Similar to publishing your pricing online - if you don't make plans available and easy to access, buyers will go somewhere that does. On your navigation, the floorplans should be first from the left unless you sell from communities.

Write More Content Menu

You may have heard somewhere that 200-300 words on a page is plenty for SEO purposes. But what if Google is trying to decide between offering up your website and your competitor's website, and your competitor has a 1,000-word section on 'new custom homes'? Do you think Google will still find your website more relevant? Probably not. If you've made it this far into the document, you're likely aware of it being more than 300 words – and how did you find this document, anyway? Google?

So – take the time to write more content for your website pages, or hire someone to do so for you. You could even do a hybrid of both – write everything that you can and then hand it off to someone for editing and keyword loading.

Get Some Rock-Solid Photography

While it might be the last item on my list, it is actually the most important element on your website. We saved the best for last! At the very least, you need some rock-solid, killer photography of the best house you've ever built. We call it the money shot! The best photo in that series should be the one you lead with on the home page of your website. We're talking high definition, great lighting, staged with furniture and decoration if possible, and maybe even including human beings that appear to be living there.

Good photography doesn't sell. Only great photography does!

**Well, there you go. 27 things you should do
in 2021 to capitalize on what promises to be a
fantastic year in the housing world.**