

For an eCommerce website, time on site is vital in order to keep your business booming. A quick one-time purchase may help, but in the long run it's not going to keep your business afloat in such a crowded sector.

The line between keeping potential customers shopping and quickly losing a customer's interest is very thin. Sadly, the latter side is much easier to fall upon. Customers are much more likely to click off an e-storefront within the first couple of minutes due to poor accessibility. From scannability issues to something as simple as hiding contact options, it all counts towards first impressions and ultimately, [a negative first impression](#) isn't going to bode well for your conversion rate.

Once you get past the first impression stage, it's time to look at how to keep your customers shopping as the longer they spend on the store, the more they will buy.

### 1: Keep navigation simple

As we mentioned earlier, accessibility is key to keeping customers on your website. Make your storefront too difficult to navigate and they'll quickly close the page. Not only is that going to obliterate any chances of impulse buying, it'll likely lose you the initial sale you've worked so hard marketing for.

Search functionality within your site is crucial. It's not enough to add a search bar as an afterthought when your competitors have already implemented advanced features. Having an easy to spot search bar featuring an auto-complete function, filters and images is the gold standard and makes it easier for your customer to find exactly what they're looking for.

Make sure to keep your listings concise, your page layout clean and most importantly ensure all content is actually relevant. The last thing a customer wants to do is click a link that takes them to a section of the site that is completely useless to them. Chances are, they'll click off the site all together rather than trying to navigate back to where they were originally. Sure, we want shoppers to stick around longer, but sending them on a wild goose chase isn't going to do your conversion rate any favors.

### 2: Incorporate micro-conversions

The average conversion rate for eCommerce is surprisingly low, at less than 5%, so you've got your work cut out for you when it comes to pulling in your casual browsers. One of the greatest tools at your disposal for grabbing that sale is to incentivize potential customers with micro-conversions.

Micro-conversions are a great way to engage browsers, offering something that may not get the sale straight away, but greatly improves the chances of them coming back to your site and buying something in the future. In this case, time on site is less focused on one visit and instead about bringing customers back to the site.

These days, the most common example would be encouraging browsers to connect to your social media sites. Social media offers a very cheap way of engaging your potential customer-base on a regular basis, while encouraging sharing directly from a product listing acts as free advertising.

Another great example is to encourage newsletter sign-ups. The most well-known eCommerce websites offer discounts to incentivize sign-ups and as we all know; customers love a discount!

### 3: Use multi-media content (wisely)

One of the biggest downsides to online shopping is the lack of contextualization customers get from the experience. In a physical store, shoppers are able to pick things up, try clothing on and really get a feel for what they're buying before they hand over the cash. Obviously, that's not an option within eCommerce so you have to improvise a little bit.

The standard is a photo gallery. The more pictures available, the more likely a customer is to purchase the product as they can see a more accurate representation. However, there is an even better way to engage your potential customers.

Research shows that shoppers are more likely to watch video content rather than read plain text, while being able to see a product in video allows for greater contextualization than a regular video gallery. Product videos are hugely impactful when it comes to boosting your conversion rate yet, despite the positive impact, videos are rarely utilized.

Unfortunately, correctly using video content isn't as simple as you may think. Creating videos for every product is a costly and time-consuming job. Each product is different, so a one size fits all format won't work across your entire site and may actually negatively impact your visitors. That being said, research has shown an incredible 144% increase in the likelihood of a customer going ahead with a purchase after watching video rather than a plain text listing.

### 4: Include strategic pop-ups

Pop-ups may be associated with spam and yes, most users tend to dislike them, but for your business they play a vital role. Thanks to the darker, early days of the internet, pop-ups have a pretty bad reputation, so it's very important that your eCommerce site deploys pop-ups correctly in order to not put off potential customers.

Exit-intent pop-ups are a perfect example of a good pop-up. Thanks to advancements in web development, a page can sense when a user is moving towards the close button and trigger a pop-up within the site itself, rather than opening a new tab or window (which distracts the user even more from the potential purchase). They're much less intrusive than your standard pop-up as they only appear at the end of a user's session and just provide a little nudge in the right direction before the customer abandons the buying process.

Combine exit-intent pop-ups with micro-conversions and you have a winning formula that will absolutely improve your conversion rate.

Away from sales, pop-ups can be used to get valuable feedback from visitors. One of UserReplay's newest features, [Active Feedback](#) is a great tool to find out what your potential customers really think of your storefront. Think of it as an improved form of feedback cards you might receive in a brick-and-mortar store. Instead of trying to get a consumer to visit a separate page after the fact, Active Feedback is available at every stage of the process as a discreet widget. All the customer needs to do is click the widget and a questionnaire pops up, offering a quick and easy way for them to tell you their likes and dislikes about your eCommerce store.

### 5: Don't Be Afraid To Promote Your Site's Reviews

Hubris is a valuable quality in a person, but not so much when it comes to eCommerce.

Customers these days are smarter than ever, with the entire world at their fingertips thanks to the modern luxuries we're afforded. That means the time for being humble is long gone and it's time to start bragging. Google any eCommerce site and amongst the top five suggestions will be "\_\_\_ reviews" as customers prefer to research the site before making a purchase in order to feel safe from scams, poor quality product, bad customer service and so on.

This presents a small problem for your business, as a confident customer is great but an absent customer is not. The longer someone is browsing reviews, the less time they're browsing your storefront and the less chance you have of getting extra items in their basket. So why not make it easy for them?

Include a "testimonials" page or even add a "featured on" section to the bottom of your page featuring links to positive reviews, especially if those reviews are from a well-know and trusted source. This eliminates the need for a potential customer to navigate away from your store and offers peace of mind up-front.