



# Why Competitors Keep Winning Your Leads: 23 Mistakes I Found After Analysing Hundreds of Aussie Businesses. Are Any of These Yours?

## Rusty Gimaev's Marketing Checklist

After 20+ years of marketing experience in Australia, I've noticed many small and medium businesses struggle with the **same set of issues that hurt their lead generation**. The good news? **All of these problems are fixable**. This checklist is designed to be clear, conversational, and practical – so you can identify where your business might be losing leads to competitors and take action. Go through each item and see if any of these common marketing pitfalls apply to you.

**Tip:** If you find yourself checking any of these boxes, don't feel bad – you're not alone. The key is to recognise the issue and address it before your competition leaves you behind.

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### Facebook/Meta Advertising – Are You Missing Opportunities?

Meta (Facebook/Instagram) is an incredibly powerful lead generation tool for businesses of any size. But many businesses either don't use it at all, or use it incorrectly.

#### **ISSUE 1: Not using Facebook/Meta to promote your business.**

**Why it matters:** With billions of people on social media, Facebook and Instagram can generate a ton of leads. If you're not advertising on Meta's platforms, you're missing out on a huge pool of potential customers that your competitors might be scooping up.

**Solution:** Start a well-planned Facebook campaign to reach your audience. It doesn't have to cost a fortune – even a small, targeted campaign can work wonders. The key is to have a plan: know who you want to reach and what you want them to do. If you're not sure how to begin, consider reaching out for guidance on campaign setup.

## ISSUE 2: Running Facebook/Meta ads without conversion tracking (just “boosting” posts blindly).

**Why it matters:** Meta's advertising algorithm is smart – it tries to show your ads to people who are most likely to take action (buy or send an enquiry). But it can only do that if you set up conversion tracking (so Meta knows when an ad results in a sale or sign-up). Without tracking, you're essentially flying blind. You won't know which ads or audiences actually bring you leads, and Facebook won't optimise for the right goal.

**Solution:** Install the Meta Pixel (a small tracking code) on your website and set up a proper conversion event. Typically, this means having a “Thank You” page that appears after someone submits a form or makes a purchase – that page triggers the Pixel to count a conversion. Make sure each ad campaign is optimised for a clear goal (like “Lead” or “Purchase”) rather than just traffic or likes. Also double-check your bid strategy – if your goal is leads, use Meta's bidding options that focus on conversions, not just clicks. This way, both you and Facebook know what success looks like, and the system can learn and improve your results.



## ISSUE 3: Low response to your Facebook ads due to a boring offer or call-to-action.

**Why it matters:** Too often, businesses run ads that basically say, “Here are our services, we're great!” – which usually generates little interest. Why? Because it's focused on what the business wants, not what the customer needs. Your audience is scrolling through a busy feed; if your offer doesn't grab their attention or address a pain point, they'll keep on scrolling. A boring or high-friction offer (like “Call us now for a quote!” with no prior value given) can scare people away, resulting in mediocre results from your ad spend.

**Solution:** Flip the script – focus on your customer. Think about your audience's biggest pain points or the questions they keep asking about your product or service. Then, create a low-risk, high-value offer that speaks to those needs. For example, it could be a free guide, a short consultation, a discount code, or a quiz – something easy for them to say “yes” to. Make sure your call-to-action is simple and appealing (and not demanding an immediate huge commitment). Also, use eye-catching, well-designed ad creatives. Don't just stick to one bland image; try multiple images or formats (Meta allows several ad sizes and styles – use that to your advantage). The goal at this stage is to spark interest and collect contact info (like an email or phone number). Once you have a lead, you can nurture it further, but first you need that click or sign-up – so make the offer count!

## ISSUE 4: Not utilising Meta's Custom Audiences or lookalike audiences.

**Why it matters:** One of the biggest advantages of Facebook/Meta advertising is the ability to target warm audiences – people who already know you – and people who are very similar to your best customers. If you ignore these features, you're leaving easy leads on the table. For instance, someone visited your website or interacted with your Facebook page, which shows they're interested. If you don't re-engage them with another ad (called retargeting), they might forget about you and go to a competitor. Likewise, Meta can find new people who “look like” your existing customers (similar demographics and behavior) – these are often high-quality prospects.

**Solution:** Take advantage of these targeting tools. Set up retargeting campaigns to show ads to people who have recently visited your site, clicked on a previous ad, or engaged with your content. These folks are already somewhat familiar with you and more likely to convert upon a reminder. Also, if you have a list of past customers, upload it to Meta and create a Lookalike Audience – Facebook will find users who share traits with your customers, essentially giving you a pre-qualified audience to advertise to. These strategies ensure you're not always chasing cold strangers, but also nurturing the warm prospects who are easier to turn into leads. (Need help implementing these? This is something our team can assist with if you're unsure how to set it up.)

## Google Ads – Are You Getting Quality Traffic or Just Paying for Clicks?

Google Ads can be an amazing lead driver because it captures people actively searching for what you offer. However, it's also easy to spend a lot of money on Google Ads with little to show for it if you're not careful.

### ISSUE 5: Your Google Ads campaign spends a lot, but you're getting few leads (and/or poor-quality leads).

**Why it matters:** If left on default settings, Google Ads will try to get you as many clicks as possible. That sounds good, but not all clicks are created equal. You might end up paying for visitors who aren't actually looking for what you offer (for example, they clicked by accident or were searching for something similar-but-not-quite-right). Or maybe they're from outside your service area (e.g., your ad showed to someone 200 km away who will never become a customer). The result? Your budget gets drained, but enquiries stay low – which is frustrating and unsustainable.



**Solution:** Take control of your keywords and targeting. Do thorough keyword research to identify the search terms that truly indicate someone is interested in your product or service. Use more precise match types for your keywords – for instance, Phrase Match or Exact Match – so Google doesn't show your ads for loosely related searches. Just as importantly, set up negative keywords (terms you don't want your ad to appear for) to filter out irrelevant traffic. (For example, if you sell luxury furniture, you might add “free” or “cheap” as negative keywords to avoid bargain-hunters.) If your business only serves a specific area, double-check your location targeting settings: target the regions you serve, and exclude others. There's even an option to target “people in my target location” rather than “people interested in my location” – use that if, say, you only want locals and not someone on the other side of the country just looking around. By refining these settings, you'll get fewer but more relevant clicks, which means a higher chance of those clicks turning into real leads.

### ISSUE 6: No conversion tracking on your Google Ads campaigns.

**Why it matters:** Just like with Facebook/Meta, if you're not tracking conversions (sales, form submissions, calls, etc.), you and Google have no idea which clicks actually matter! You could be getting 100 clicks and 5 leads, but if you don't set up tracking, you won't know which 5 clicks out of those 100 turned into leads. Plus, Google's smart bidding strategies (which optimise your bids to get more conversions) simply won't work correctly without that data. It's like trying to navigate without a map or GPS – you're driving blind.

**Solution:** Set up Google Ads conversion tracking ASAP. Typically, this involves placing a small bit of code (a Google Ads conversion tag) on your “Thank You” page or wherever you want to count a successful lead. If you're using Google Analytics or Google Tag Manager, you can integrate those with Google Ads to make this easier. Once that's in place, define what counts as a conversion for each campaign (e.g., contact form submitted, phone call made, purchase completed). This way, you'll be able to see in your Google Ads reports exactly which keywords and ads are resulting in those valuable actions. Even better, you can then enable automated bidding strategies like “Maximize Conversions” or “Target CPA (Cost Per Acquisition)” and Google will use your conversion data to bid more on the clicks likely to turn into leads, and bid less on those that don't. Bottom line: conversion tracking turns Google Ads from a blunt instrument into a laser-guided tool for leads.

## ISSUE 7: “I feel like I've tried everything on Google Ads, but it's just not working!”

**Why it matters:** Sometimes you might do everything “right” in setting up your Google Ads – good keywords, ads, landing page – but still see poor results. There could be a few reasons: maybe your competitors are simply outspending and outbidding you, so they always appear above you. Or perhaps there's an issue outside of Google Ads, like your website's lead form is broken or your offer just isn't compelling compared to others. It's important to remember that Google Ads isn't a magic tap that guarantees leads; it's part of a bigger chain, and any weak link in that chain can fail the whole system.

**Solution:** Test everything, especially outside of Google Ads. Click on your own ads (it's okay to do this sparingly for testing) and go through the whole process a customer would. Fill out the form, try to make a purchase, and see what experience you have. Is the landing page loading fast? Is the form easy to fill out, and does it submit properly? Do you get a confirmation or thank-you message? Sometimes the culprit is something as simple as a broken form submission or a CAPTCHA that never lets the user through – which means potential customers literally can't reach you even if they want to! Use tools like website analytics or even session recording tools (which show you where users click and scroll) to spot if people are dropping off at a certain point on your site. If you rule out technical issues and you're still not getting results, it might be time to step back and rethink your strategy. Look at what your competitors are offering in their ads – are they highlighting benefits or deals that you aren't? Is your pricing or value proposition competitive? It could be that the market is tough and you need to come up with a more enticing offer or niche angle. Don't be afraid to pause, analyse, and pivot your approach. Google Ads success often comes from continuous tweaking and learning. (And remember, you don't have to do it alone – consulting with a marketing expert or our team can give you a fresh perspective and new ideas to try.)

### 3

## Social Media Presence – Silent Profile, Silent Sales?

Believe it or not, your social media activity (or lack thereof) can quietly scare away potential customers without you ever knowing. Many people check a business's social pages to “get a feel” for the company. If your profiles are inactive or poorly managed, it can be a hidden reason prospects lose trust and move on.

## ISSUE 8: Your last social media post was months (or even over a year) ago.

**Why it matters:** Imagine a potential customer finds your Facebook or Instagram page and sees that your last update was from 2020. Their first thought might be, “Are these guys even in business anymore?” or “If they don't care about their own business page, will they care about me as a customer?” In today's world, an inactive social feed can signal that your business is stagnant or unresponsive, and that can definitely make a prospect think twice about contacting you. It's almost like walking into a store where the lights are off – most people will just turn around and leave.

**Solution:** Stay active, even if it's in a small way. You don't have to post every day, but you should post regularly enough to show that your business is alive and kicking. A simple way is to schedule posts in batches: for example, spend a couple of hours one day to plan out the next month's worth of posts. They could be anything from tips, customer testimonials, product spotlights, or even industry news with your commentary. Use scheduling tools (there are free ones and paid ones) to spread these posts out on a consistent schedule. If you truly don't have time, consider getting help – maybe a staff member, a freelancer, or our team can handle it for you. The key is to avoid long radio silences. Even one or two posts a week can make a big difference in how active your business appears to the outside world.



## ISSUE 9: Comments and direct messages on your social pages are going unanswered.

**Why it matters:** Social media isn't just a broadcasting tool – it's a two-way street. When people comment on your posts or send you a private message, they expect a response (and fairly quickly). If positive comments get ignored, your fans might feel unappreciated. And if negative comments (e.g., a customer complaint or someone bad-mouthing your service) are left unaddressed, it can taint your reputation – other people will see it and think less of your business. Even worse, if someone messages you saying they're interested in your product and you never reply, you've almost certainly lost that lead (and they've likely gone to a competitor). Essentially, not managing your social interactions is like letting phone calls or emails from customers go unanswered – it hurts your image and your bottom line.

**Solution:** Engage and manage your social interactions. Make it a routine to check your business's social media notifications at least once a day. Reply to comments – even a simple “Thank you!” for a nice comment shows you're listening. For negative comments, respond calmly and helpfully; show the public that you're willing to make things right. (In some cases, you might also choose to hide or delete truly inappropriate comments, but do so with caution – hiding blatant spam or profanity is fine, but if it's a genuine unhappy customer, it's often better to address it openly so others see you care.) As for direct messages, treat them like emails – respond as promptly as you can, ideally within 24 hours or sooner. If keeping up with this is overwhelming, look into social media management tools that can consolidate messages and even set up alerts for you. There are even systems (which our team can help implement) that will auto-hide comments containing certain negative keywords and forward you the important messages (like enquiries). The goal is to never leave a customer hanging. A responsive business earns trust, while a silent one risks losing leads.

## ISSUE 10: Only posting to one social channel (or a couple) and neglecting others.

**Why it matters:** Different people prefer different platforms. Some of your potential customers might be active on LinkedIn but not on Facebook, or on Instagram but not on Twitter. If you're only posting on, say, Facebook, you're only engaging one part of your audience. Building a following on multiple platforms can take time, but if you have the content ready, sharing it across multiple channels doesn't take much extra effort – especially with modern tools. By limiting yourself to a single channel, you might be leaving interested followers on other platforms in the dark. Plus, having a presence on all major platforms (even if one is your primary focus) gives your business more credibility and visibility.

**Solution:** Repurpose and automate your postings across platforms. You don't have to create totally unique content for each network – often you can take the same post and tailor it slightly (maybe shorter for Twitter, more hashtags for Instagram, a more professional tone for LinkedIn) and then publish across all your accounts. Tools like scheduling software allow you to write a post once and publish everywhere with one click. Many such tools have free tiers or affordable plans. (We also help businesses set up systems like this – even ones with one-time costs instead of ongoing fees – so if you're not sure what to use, we can point you in the right direction.) The idea is to maximise your reach without a lot of extra work. If you're announcing a new product or sharing a customer review, why only tell your Facebook fans? Get that news out on LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter, and anywhere else your audience might be. Over time, you'll see which platforms bring you the most engagement, but at least you won't be invisible on the others.

# 4

## CRM & Marketing Automation – Are You Following Up Effectively?

Generating leads is only half the battle – what you do with those leads is the other half. Many businesses lose out on sales simply because they don't organise their leads or follow up consistently. A good CRM (Customer Relationship Management system) and some basic marketing automation can massively improve your conversion of leads to customers.

## ISSUE 11: Leads come in via email or phone, but you have no organised system to track them (no CRM).

**Why it matters:** Picture this: last month you got 50 enquiry emails. You responded to most, won a few jobs, and the rest went cold. What happened to those other folks? Chances are, their emails are now buried in your inbox, long forgotten. Most small businesses are super busy, and it's really easy to lose track of leads if you don't actively manage them. Studies and experience show that by simply following up with past prospects, you could increase your sales by 10-20% – these are people who already showed interest, so they're low-hanging fruit! If you're not storing your leads' information in one place and setting reminders to reconnect, you're likely leaving money on the table and not even realising it.

**Solution:** Start using a CRM system to store and organise your leads. At its most basic, a CRM is just a fancy contact list where you can log notes, set follow-up tasks, and track the status of each prospect (e.g., Contacted, Proposal Sent, Won, Lost, etc.). There are plenty of CRM tools out there, from simple and free ones to complex and pricey ones. The key is to choose one that fits your needs and actually use it consistently. If you hate the idea of paying hefty monthly fees for software, there are one-time purchase options or even free platforms for small user bases. (If you need advice on this, our team can set you up with an effective CRM solution without those ongoing costs.) The moment you start logging every new lead into a CRM, you'll feel more on top of your follow-ups. You can set reminders like "Call this person next week" or "Email that person a new offer in a month." This way, no potential customer slips through the cracks unnoticed.

## □ ISSUE 12: Slow or inconsistent follow-up on new leads.

**Why it matters:** When someone reaches out to your business (fills a form, calls, emails), they are most interested right at that moment. Every hour or day that passes before they hear back from you, their interest cools off – or worse, they contact another company in the meantime. If you wait too long to follow up, you might as well be giving your competitors your business. A slow response can also give an impression that you're not professional or that you don't prioritise customer enquiries. In today's fast-paced world, people expect quick answers – sometimes a lead will even go with the first responder simply because that company was proactive.

**Solution:** Strike while the iron is hot. Aim to respond to new leads as quickly as possible – ideally within a few hours, and definitely within 24 hours. If you often find yourself too busy to reply quickly, use automation to your advantage. For example, many CRM or email systems allow you to send an instant auto-reply when someone fills out a form ("Thank you for contacting us, we'll call you within X hours"). While an auto-reply isn't a substitute for a personal follow-up, it at least assures the lead you received their message and care about them. Next, try to set aside some time each day dedicated to lead follow-ups, or have someone in your team responsible for it. Treat new enquiries like gold – because they are! A speedy reply like a phone call or a personalised email saying "Hi, got your request, here's some initial info..." can really impress a prospect. Remember, the early bird gets the worm: being the first (or simply being prompt) can often win you the business even if others eventually respond later.

## □ ISSUE 13: Lack of a lead nurturing system (no ongoing follow-up beyond the first contact).

**Why it matters:** Not everyone is ready to buy immediately. In fact, most people aren't. There's a classic marketing adage that a customer needs to hear about you ~7 times before they commit. So if your strategy is just "contact once and forget it," you're missing out on a lot of conversions that might happen with a little gentle persistence. Think about your own buying habits – you might enquire about a service, then get busy or unsure and not move forward. If that company follows up with useful information or a reminder, it could nudge you to take action. If they don't, you might just drop it entirely or choose someone else who does keep in touch. Essentially, without nurturing, leads go cold and revenue is left on the table.



**Solution:** Set up a drip email campaign or scheduled follow-ups to nurture your leads over time. Many CRMs and email marketing tools let you automate this: for example, send a follow-up email 2 days after the initial contact, another one a week later with a useful tip or case study, and maybe another one after two weeks with a special offer or a "just checking in" message. The content of these emails should be informative and relevant – not just "Are you ready to buy?" every time. You could share customer testimonials, answer frequently asked questions, provide insights about your service, etc. The idea is to stay on your prospect's radar (in a helpful way) so that when they are ready to move forward, your business is the one they think of first. Lead nurturing can significantly improve your conversion rates from leads to actual sales. It can all be automated once set up, but it will make your business feel remarkably attentive to the customer. (If you're not sure how to create a nurturing sequence, we can help design one tailored to your business that keeps prospects engaged without overwhelming them.)

## 5

# Email Marketing – Still the Most Cost-Effective Marketing Tool

Email is still one of the highest ROI marketing channels out there. Yet many businesses, especially smaller ones, haven't fully embraced it. If you're not actively using email campaigns to reach your prospects or past customers, you're likely leaving easy money on the table.

## ISSUE 14: Not using email marketing at all (or very sparingly).

**Why it matters:** Unlike paid ads or social media (where you often have to pay or rely on algorithms to reach people), emailing your audience is nearly free and goes straight to their inbox. If you have a list of potential customers or past clients and you never email them, that's a direct line of communication going to waste. Many small businesses think "Oh, I don't want to bother people" or "I don't have a newsletter," but consider this: if you have an offer or an update that could benefit your audience, a simple email can generate a surge of enquiries or sales in a way other channels can't. In fact, some studies show email marketing can yield an extremely high return (sometimes \$40+ for every \$1 spent) because the cost is so low. Plus, if a competitor is emailing your potential clients and you're not, guess who's more likely to get their attention?

**Solution:** Start building and utilising an email list. First, gather your contacts – past leads, former customers, people who've opted into your newsletter or downloaded something from your site, etc. Make sure you have their permission to email them (nobody likes spam). If you feel your current list is too small, think about ways to grow it: for example, add a signup form on your website, encourage social media followers to subscribe for updates or special offers, or consider using a lead magnet (like a free ebook or discount code in exchange for an email signup). Once you have a list (even a modest one), plan to send them regular emails. It could be a monthly newsletter with useful tips related to your business, or occasional announcements about new products, or limited-time promotions. The key is to make the content valuable or interesting – not just "buy my stuff" every time. Also, targeting is important: if you can segment your list (say, by interest or past purchase), you can send more tailored messages (for instance, one email for clients who bought product A, another for those who enquired but never bought). If creating or obtaining a list of potential new customers is something you need help with, there are services (we often help clients with this) that can provide vetted lists of prospects in your area or industry – just be sure to approach cold contacts carefully and respectfully. Overall, even a simple email campaign to 100 people can sometimes result in a few enquiries or sales – and it might cost you nothing but a bit of time. That's a pretty good deal, so don't miss out on it.

**Pro tip:** Consistency matters. It's better to email your list, say, once a month like clockwork, than to do a one-off blast and disappear. Consistent emailing keeps your business in people's minds, so when they do need something, they recall that email from you.

## 6

# SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) – Can Your Customers Find You on Google?

Showing up organically on Google is essentially free leads – people search for something, and they find your website without you paying for a click. But good SEO doesn't happen by accident. Many businesses miss out on organic traffic due to neglecting a few SEO basics.

## ISSUE 15: No clear focus keywords (you're not targeting specific search terms).

**Why it matters:** Think about what your ideal customer might type into Google when looking for a business like yours. Are those words prominently featured on your website? If not, Google might not realise your site is relevant to those searches. Having focus keywords means you've identified the key terms and phrases your customers use (like "emergency plumber Sydney" or "organic dog food Brisbane") and you make sure your site has content targeting those terms. Without this, your website can be a bit aimless in Google's eyes, and you'll rank poorly or for unrelated queries. Essentially, not having focus keywords is like trying to catch fish without knowing what bait to use – you're just hoping for the best. >>

**Solution:** Do a bit of keyword research. There are free tools like Google's Keyword Planner, or even just using Google's autofill suggestions, to see what words are popular for your industry. Make a list of important keywords (including specific “long-tail” phrases – longer, detailed searches – which often have less competition). Once you have your list, ensure your website has pages or blog posts that intentionally include those terms in a natural way. For example, if “affordable wedding photographer Melbourne” is a keyword you want to target, maybe write a blog post titled “How to Find an Affordable Wedding Photographer in Melbourne” and discuss it in detail. Also, consider creating a simple keyword map – a document or chart that shows which keywords go with which pages on your site. This helps you avoid overlap and stay focused. Over time, by consistently creating content around these focus keywords, you'll build what's called topical authority (basically, Google sees you know your stuff on these topics) and you'll start climbing up the rankings. It's a slow burn, but it's incredibly worth it when your site starts bringing in leads on autopilot because you're appearing on page 1 of Google for the right searches.

## □ **ISSUE 16: Lack of backlinks (other websites linking to your site).**

**Why it matters:** In Google's “eyes,” a link from another website to yours is like a vote of confidence or a recommendation. If your site has zero backlinks, it's as if no one has ever given Google a reason to believe your site is important or trustworthy. You could have the best content in the world, but without any other sites referencing it, Google might still hesitate to rank you highly. Think of backlinks as popularity or credibility votes – the more quality votes you have, the better. Without them, ranking for competitive keywords becomes extremely difficult.



**Solution:** Work on obtaining high-quality backlinks. This doesn't mean spamming your link on random forums or buying links from shady sellers – those tactics can do more harm than good. Instead, try authentic methods: for instance, get your business listed on relevant online directories (especially Australian local directories or industry-specific listings). Reach out to related businesses or bloggers for collaborations – maybe you can write a guest article for their site, or they'll mention your product/ service in one of their posts (with a link back to you). If you have partners or suppliers, see if they'll link to your site as a recommended seller. You can also create shareable content (like an infographic or a useful study) that others might naturally link to. Another idea: if a local news site or community blog features businesses like yours, pitch them a story or some expert commentary – you might get a mention and a link. Quality matters more than quantity: one link from a reputable news site or a popular blog in your niche can outweigh 50 links from low-quality sites. So aim for relevant and trustworthy sources. Building backlinks can take time and effort, but each good link is a step up in Google's ranking ladder.

## □ **ISSUE 17: Not publishing new content on a regular basis (your website is static or rarely updated).**

**Why it matters:** An outdated website can act like a big “Closed” sign for both Google and human visitors. When Google sees that your site hasn't added anything new in a long time, it might crawl (check) your site less frequently and could consider it less relevant or “fresh” compared to more active sites. Users also notice – if your latest news or blog is from 2019, they might wonder if you're still active. Regularly adding content not only signals that your business is active, but it also gives you more opportunities to target the keywords we talked about above. Each new page or post is a new door into your site for someone searching online.

**Solution:** Make a content calendar and stick to a realistic posting schedule. You don't need to publish something every day; even one quality blog post or article a month makes a difference if you do it consistently. Plan topics in advance, ideally based on the keyword research and common questions your customers have. For instance, if you're a landscaper, a series of monthly articles like “Seasonal Garden Care Tips for Brisbane Homes” or “How to Choose the Right Plants for a Tropical Climate” can draw in readers over time. Not a writer? You can record a quick video or audio and have it transcribed into a blog, or hire a freelance writer to help put your ideas into words. The content should be useful and relevant to your audience – that's what Google ultimately wants to show to searchers. Plus, when you regularly add content, you can share it on your social media and email newsletters too, so it has multiple uses. Remember, stagnant websites rarely grow, but active ones have a chance to snowball in traffic as their library of content expands.

## ISSUE 18: Relying solely on AI-generated content for your site.

**Why it matters:** Why it matters: Tools like ChatGPT and other AI writers have made content creation much easier. But Google's priority is to serve helpful, trustworthy content to users. If your website is filled with generic, AI-written text that isn't reviewed or personalised, it might come off as low-quality or even duplicative of other AI-generated content out there. Google has gotten pretty good at identifying patterns in AI content. While it doesn't outright ban AI-written stuff, it definitely favours content that shows expertise, experience, authority, and trustworthiness (E-E-A-T). Pure AI content can lack that personal touch or specific insight that a human expert provides. In worst cases, Google might choose not to index those pages (meaning they won't appear in search at all) or rank them poorly, especially if the AI content is fluffy or off-base.

**Solution:** Use AI as a helper, not a replacement. There's nothing wrong with using AI to get a first draft or outline – it can save a lot of time. But always review and edit the content in your own voice. Add examples from your own business experience, include local or industry-specific details, and make sure the information is accurate and up-to-date. Think of it this way: AI can give you a generic paragraph about, say, "how to maintain a swimming pool," but only you can inject the real-life tips and nuances that make that content genuinely valuable (like that funny story when a kangaroo jumped into a client's pool – if that happened, it would make a memorable piece of content!). By customising and humanising the content, you create something unique that stands out. Google will see that your site has original insights and real expertise behind it. Plus, your readers (potential customers) will appreciate the authenticity. In short, don't post it until you've made it your own. AI is a great starting point, but the finish should always have the human touch.

## ISSUE 19: Not tracking your SEO progress (you have no idea how you're ranking or which efforts are working).

**Why it matters:** SEO isn't a one-and-done task – it's an ongoing process, and it really helps to know whether you're moving forward or backward. If you're not tracking where your site stands in search results for your key terms, you're essentially driving with your eyes closed. You won't know if that blog post you wrote boosted your ranking for a target keyword, or if a drop in enquiries is because your competitor overtook you in Google last month. Many businesses skip tracking because SEO tools can be expensive or they just don't know what to look at. But without at least a basic tracking system, you can't celebrate your wins or catch issues early.

**Solution:** Use free tools and occasional check-ins to monitor your SEO health. At the very least, set up Google Search Console for your website (if you haven't already). It's free and shows which search queries are bringing people to your site, and how you're ranking for them. You can even see your average position for keywords and if it's trending up or down. Additionally, doing a manual check for your main keywords in an incognito browser window once in a while can give you a rough idea (just remember, search results are personalised to some degree, so use Search Console or a dedicated tool for more accuracy). There are also SEO tools (like SEMrush, Ahrefs, Moz, etc.) that provide detailed tracking, but they often have a cost. If you're not ready to invest in those, you might choose to work with a consultant or use a service (for example, we provide clients with periodic SEO reports) to get insight into your rankings and traffic. The key is to have some feedback loop. If you know what's working, you can double down on it. If you spot a drop, you can investigate and fix it (maybe a competitor's new content is outranking you, or perhaps your site had an issue that caused Google to lower its trust). In summary, track what matters – you don't need to obsess daily, but have a routine (say, monthly) check of your search performance so you can adapt your SEO strategy with real data in hand.

# 7

## Website Basics – Is Your Website Helping or Hurting Your Lead Generation?

Your website is often the final stop in the lead generation journey – it's where people decide to contact you, buy something, or walk away. Surprisingly, many businesses have website issues that actively **hurt their ability to get leads**. Let's make sure your site isn't one of them.

## ISSUE 20: Not using website analytics (you have no idea what's happening on your site).

**Why it matters:** "If you can measure it, you can manage it," as the saying goes. If you don't have any analytics set up on your site, you're essentially running your website with a blindfold on. You wouldn't run a retail shop without keeping an eye on how many people come in each day, right? Similarly, on your website you'll want to know: How many people visit daily/weekly? Which pages are they looking at? How long do they stay? Do they come back or just leave immediately? Without this information, you won't know if that

new marketing campaign you launched is actually bringing more traffic, or if people are engaging with your content or just ignoring it. You could be missing obvious red flags (like everyone leaving your site after 5 seconds – indicating something's wrong) or opportunities (like a sudden spike in interest for a product that you could capitalise on).

**Solution:** Install an analytics tool like Google Analytics (GA) on your website. It's free and incredibly robust. GA will start collecting data on visits, and you can log in to see reports on user behavior. Even if you're not an analytics pro, just knowing basic metrics like “200 people visited this week” and “our contact page got 50 views and 10 form submissions” is super helpful. It tells you what's working. For example, if you run an email campaign and see a big jump in website traffic the next day, that's a good sign! If you tweak your homepage and then see people spending more time on it, great – you made it more engaging. Conversely, if traffic drops or people aren't filling out your form, you know to investigate further. There are also more advanced analytics tools (some can create heatmaps of where people click, or record anonymised videos of visitor sessions so you can literally watch how they navigate your site). These can give deeper insights into usability issues or opportunities. (Our team uses some of these advanced tools – like seeing the exact path visitors take through a site and where they drop off – which can be invaluable in optimising for conversions.) But you don't have to start there. At minimum, get Google Analytics up and running. It's like turning on the lights in a dark room – suddenly you can see what your website visitors are up to.

## ISSUE 21: Not using Google Search Console for your website.

**Why it matters:** Google Search Console (GSC) is the lesser-known cousin of Google Analytics, and it focuses specifically on how your site interacts with Google Search. If Analytics tells you about your visitors, Search Console tells you about how people find you (or why they might not be finding you). With GSC, you can see which search queries led people to click on your site, how your site ranks for various keywords, and if Google encountered any errors when trying to index your pages. If you're not using it, you might miss warnings like “Google can't access your site” or “your site isn't mobile-friendly” – which are obviously critical to fix. It also informs you if your site has been hit with any manual penalties or security issues. In short, GSC is Google giving you direct feedback on how your site is doing in search. Ignoring it is like ignoring a health report from your doctor – you could be oblivious to an issue that's harming your site's visibility.



**Solution:** Set up Google Search Console for your site. It's free and easy to link with your Google account. You'll need to verify that you own the website (typically by uploading a file GSC gives you to your site or adding a meta tag – it's straightforward with instructions provided). Once verified, GSC will start collecting data. Check in on it maybe once a month. Look at the “Performance” report to see your search clicks and top queries. Look at the “Coverage” or “Page Indexing” reports to ensure all your important pages are indexed (and to see if there are errors like broken pages). Also check “Experience” and “Enhancements” sections for things like mobile usability or Core Web Vitals (page speed and stability metrics) – these affect SEO too. Additionally, GSC is where you can submit a sitemap of your site to help Google crawl it better, and where you'd be notified if, say, your site got infected with malware or something (hopefully not!). By using Search Console alongside Analytics, you get a fuller picture: Analytics shows you what happens on your site, Search Console shows what happens before people get there (the search stage). Together, they help you pinpoint where to improve. (There are also third-party tools that combine this data and give you nice dashboards – we often set those up for clients to simplify the view – but starting with the basics is perfectly fine.)

## ISSUE 22: Important website features (like contact forms or checkout buttons) are not working properly.

**Why it matters:** This is a silent killer of leads. If your contact form is broken or not sending submissions, potential customers might be reaching out and you'd never know it. Or maybe your e-commerce "Add to Cart" button doesn't work on mobile devices – you could be losing sales daily and have no clue. These kinds of technical issues are more common than you'd think, especially after updates or changes to the site. A lot of times, businesses only discover a broken form when a frustrated customer calls and says, "I tried to contact you through your website but never heard back." By then, who knows how many other people tried and gave up? It's crucial to ensure your website's critical paths (the actions that lead to a conversion, like filling a form, signing up for a newsletter, making a purchase, etc.) are smooth and error-free.

**Solution:** Test your website regularly – and not just when you first launch it. Set aside time perhaps once a month or once a quarter to go through every important function on your site. Fill out the contact form and see if you get the auto-response or notification you're supposed to. If you have an online booking system or store, go through a test booking or purchase up to the final step. Check these on both desktop and mobile, and try different browsers if possible. Also, pay attention to any alerts: some form plugins or e-commerce systems will show error messages in their admin panel if something's wrong (like an email failed to send). If you use Google Analytics, watch your behavior flow or goal conversion data – if 100 people visit the contact page but you got 0 form submissions, that's a red flag to investigate. Sometimes, implementing a simple monitoring tool can help; for example, there are services that will periodically test form submissions or ensure your site is up and not slow. If a problem is detected (like the site goes down or a form isn't reachable), you get alerted. But even without fancy tools, just being diligent about checking the user experience can save you from losing leads. Make it a habit to step into your customer's shoes and walk through the process – you might catch a glitch before it costs you business.

## ISSUE 23: Typos or grammatical errors on your website.

**Why it matters:** We're all human, and typos happen – but on a business website, a bunch of spelling mistakes or sloppy sentences can unfortunately make your business look less credible. It's a bit like showing up to a meeting in a stained shirt; it shouldn't matter if you have great ideas, but people do judge by appearances. On a website, your text is part of your first impression. If a potential client sees a headline like "We garuantee best quality servis," they might chuckle and then worry that your attention to detail in work might be similar. Especially if your website content was hastily written or outsourced to someone who isn't a strong writer, there could be errors that you haven't noticed. These little things can collectively undermine trust.

**Solution:** Proofread and polish your site's content. This might sound tedious, but doing a thorough sweep of your website's text can really elevate the professionalism of your brand. You can do it yourself by reading every page slowly and maybe reading it out loud (sometimes your ear will catch mistakes your eyes miss). It often helps to have a second person review it – a colleague, friend, or family member, because fresh eyes catch things you might skim over. You can also use tools: for instance, copy-paste your text into a word processor with spell-check, or use an online grammar checker like Grammarly. Even the AI tools we talked about can assist here: you could ask ChatGPT to proofread or point out any mistakes in a given chunk of text. Just be cautious to review its suggestions – sometimes it might "correct" things in a way that changes your intended meaning, so use it as a helper, not an absolute judge. Once you fix the obvious typos, also consider the tone and clarity of your writing. Is everything phrased simply and clearly for your audience? Remember, we want to avoid jargon and "academic" language – write as if you're speaking to a customer face-to-face. If writing isn't your forte, there's no shame in hiring a professional copywriter or editor to clean up your content. It's often a one-time investment that keeps paying off with every impression you make on a site visitor. Bottom line: clean, error-free copy helps build trust and shows that you pay attention to details. That can be the difference between a visitor feeling confident enough to contact you, or them hitting the back button.

## Ready to Take the Next Step?

If you've ticked off a few boxes in this checklist, you've already identified where your business could be losing leads to competitors. The good news? Every one of these issues can be fixed.

### GET CLARITY WITH A FREE, NO-OBLIGATION MARKETING AUDIT

Our team will personally review your website, social media, SEO, and advertising strategy to uncover the real reasons you might be missing out on leads – and show you simple ways to fix them.

This is a **manual audit** (not an automated report) conducted by **me, Rusty Gimaev – a marketing professional with over 20 years of experience.** You'll receive actionable insights tailored to your business.

**Book your Free Marketing Audit today and stop losing leads to competitors!**

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