



18 *Free*
MARKETING
Tips **plus
a few
extra!**
*Guaranteed
to Increase* *Your Online Sales!*

110 Kimball Ave, Suite 210, South Burlington, VT 05403
1-888-838-1828 • www.eightbyeight.com

Thank you for your interest in Eight by Eight!

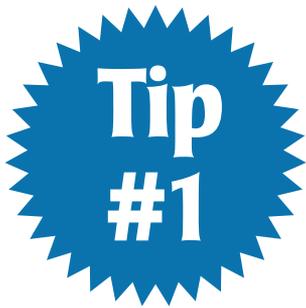
The tips we are about to share are based on proven results, and applying these principles to your site can make an immediate difference in your online success. Don't want to go it alone? Give us a call at 1-888-838-1828 or visit www.eightbyeight.com to get a quote on any of our services.

Table of contents

1. Freshen your entry pages
2. Perfect your Navigation
3. Give your Best Sellers VIP Treatment
4. Generate Click Action
5. Use Pop-ups
6. Aggressively Capture Email Addresses
7. Make your Site Dynamic
8. Display your Phone Number
9. Develop an Instigated Chat Program
10. Fix your Exit Pages
11. Promote your Clearance & Sale Pages
12. Optimize your Checkout
13. Develop an Abandoned Cart Program
14. Segment your Thrust Emails
15. Maximize your Trigger Email Program
16. Make your Emails Mobile-Friendly
17. Integrate Online and Offline Marketing
18. Implement Read and React Reporting
19. The "Must Have" Fundamentals for Mobile
20. Develop your Mobile Site to Encourage Calls
21. Separate Tablet Traffic and Phone Traffic

BONUS!
Extra Mobile Tips





Freshen your Entry Pages

Keep your visitors coming back with a website that's engaging and up to date.

We all know the importance of first impressions. A solid entry page is a huge determinate of your online success and really sets the tone for your overall site conversion.

Note that though your homepage is your primary entry page, other pages such as category and sub-category pages may be considered important entry pages as well.

The rule of thumb for entry pages is to change them based on your user traffic. Look at how many days it takes for your user to repeat (in other words, visit your site again) and change your entry page in half that time. For example, if your typical user repeats in six days, change the page in three.

The changes don't have to be major, they just need to be in a few key areas and enough for the user take notice. (In fact it's a good idea not to confuse your customers with a major overhaul). Some relevant changes may be appropriate to holidays or seasonality, for instance.





Perfect your Navigation

Navigation is one of the biggest determinants of your online success and it requires serious effort to get it right.

Here are essential components of successful navigation you should implement on your site:

◆ **Your Top Navigation should display your Best Selling categories.** If you have many categories you may want to cull out the duds, or see if they might be appropriate as a sub-category under another category. (Conversely, if you have a very popular sub-category, it may deserve to be a category all its own.)

All you have to do is look at the numbers — what products and categories are generating the most sales? Take a quick look at your top navigational bar to make sure the right items are emphasized.

If you are getting a lot of traffic in a particular area (clearance, sale, or overstock for example), consider making it stand out more, either as a bigger or different colored tab.

◆ **Your Bottom Navigation should duplicate your Top Navigation.** That way people don't have to scroll up again to access navigation. The one caveat is if you have sub-category dropdowns, you should not use dropdowns on Bottom Navigation.

◆ **Use breadcrumbs.** This gives people an easy way to backtrack. Use the standard format that people are familiar with: [Home](#) > [Category](#) > [Sub-Category](#) > **Product**

◆ **Word connect is vital.** If people are coming to your site looking for "garbage cans," or "trash cans" you shouldn't list "waste disposal receptacle" in your navigation; mentally that

name does not compute. Less than half of the time (yes, you read that correctly) we will do a second pass over the offered categories to determine where our "word" fits. You have one chance to make a word connect. If you don't get it, you will lose about 55% of your visitors. Make sure your most popular words are clearly represented in your navigation. First, look at the most popular words people are using to find you at Google, Bing, etc. Next, look at the words people are using in your text search on your site. Look at the top ten matches and make sure your words are there. If they're not, try adding them.



Tip #2. Perfect your Navigation (continued...)

◆ **Navigation should be perpetual.** People like consistency. Top and Bottom Navigation should remain the same throughout your site. Left Hand Navigation should be displayed on any page with a left column. You can highlight the category they are in, or expand to show sub-categories, but don't change the overall navigation from page to page.

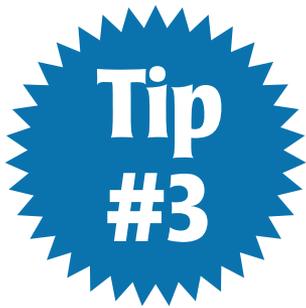
As an important footnote, for most companies navigation should be removed entirely from checkout pages. You want to keep them focused on the sale.

◆ **Clean up your "sort by" search options.** Due to the onslaught of guided navigation, many companies have gotten really sloppy with their refinements. When someone chooses "sort by bestsellers" from your dropdown, they should get your top selling products and not a hodge-

podge of garbage. Same with new – if someone is sorting by new and they get all your items from Fall of 2010, it diminishes your search credibility and makes your search look broken. (One of the top two reasons why users abandon searches.)

It's important that the item you most want to sell is first and the rest are in descending priority. Pick your top categories, test the search for yourself and see what kind of results you get.





Give your Best Sellers VIP Status

Are 20% of your products generating 80% of your sales?

Not all products are created equal.

Catalogers already know this, that's why they spend painstaking hours on a Square Inch Analysis for every catalog mailing to determine the star performers, the tried and true, and the not-so-great and design their placement in the catalog accordingly.

Since a website is virtually infinite, companies tend to simply throw everything up without crunching the numbers.

What are your best selling products and categories? Those are your money-makers and you can't promote them enough. Let's repeat that...**YOU CAN'T PROMOTE THEM ENOUGH.**

Are your best-sellers appearing on the first view of your homepage, category and sub-category pages? Are they called out as Best Sellers on your product pages? Are they displayed first on search results? Are they featured in your carousels and

banners?
Are they promoted in your emails?



Segment your categories to determine what % of sales each

is contributing. You may find for example if you have twenty categories, only three or four account for the bulk of your business.

Sort your products from highest to lowest. What are your top 50, top 20, top 10 items? These are the stellar performers keeping you in business — don't ever lose sight of them.



Tip #4

Generate Click Action

The biggest rule in sales is if you want the sale you have to ask for it — and the same principle applies online.

The point of an ecommerce site isn't for people to browse around, it's to do something, so make it obvious and easy for them to do it.

If you want someone to take an action such as sign up for a newsletter or put something in their cart, you need to say so by way of an action button. People see graphics online, not text, so links don't count.

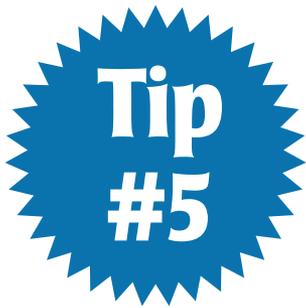
Use BIG buttons - the bigger the better. (A good rule of thumb is to ask your designer to triple whatever he thinks is big.)

Make sure that you have at least one action button on every view. Not every page, but every view. No, it doesn't look pretty but it works like gangbusters.

Be as specific as you can in the action you want them to take; for instance, "Sign Me Up Now" or "Checkout Now", is better than the generic "click here now."

TO DO STUFF CLICK ON ME NOW!





Use Pop-ups

There was a time when pop-ups were considered about as classy as Nigerian SPAM mail, but they've come a long way since then.

Yes, pop-ups are "distracting." They are supposed to be — they should be designed to grab attention and force an action.

Where to use pops? You should use a pop on entry to capture an email address, or if you already have that you can test a special offer.

An exit pop can be tailored for abandoned cart, abandoned search, or abandoned site. You can try an offer to help, capture their email address, or draw them back in with an enticing offer.

A Pop-Cart (a pop that appears when someone puts something in the cart) is a great upsell opportunity.

To keep from being annoying, a pop should have an obvious close mechanism, and once closed should stay closed.

It's important to use large, obvious action buttons on a pop, telling people what to do.

Creative is the biggest issue with pops. If the creative isn't right the pop won't work so keep modifying and testing until you get results.

Pops can also come in the form of minis, catfish and sidewinders — test to see what works for you.



Tip #6

Capture Email Addresses

After making a sale, capturing an email address is your second most critical initiative.

The success of both your Thrust and Trigger email programs depends on getting as many email addresses as possible, so it's important to have an aggressive strategy.

You should definitely have an email capture on first view, but you also need a variety of tactics beyond that.

Providing an email should be as simple for the user as you can make it. From a user perspective, the email address and a sign up button is about their tolerance limit.

Email sign up should be dynamic, appearing only if you don't have the email address,

that way you can use that valuable space for something else. (The one exception is you should have a perpetual sign-up at the bottom of the page to allow for shared computers or possible address changes.)

Other ways to capture an email address include entry pop-ups, exit pop-ups, or a catfish. Catfish are actually one of the most successful and least used capturing tools, so give it a try.

You should capture the email address on the very first step of the checkout process so you can follow up if they abandon their cart.

You can include links in other areas as well, such as in the action bar. Or you can have save cart and email cart links under the shopping cart. More possibilities could include a Refer a Friend program, a sweepstakes or shopping spree, or any other creative method you can devise.

Additional elements of a successful email capture are testing offers to sign up (the right offer has a huge impact), creating a strong landing page, designing a friendly thank you page, and using a funnel to track your sign-ups.



Tip #7

Make your Site Dynamic

Personalize your website to present relevant products and offers that will get people to buy.

If I tell you that I don't like pink shirts, you shouldn't show me a pink shirt. Period. You don't have to go all Amazon tomorrow but you need to start looking at what you can do to make your site personalized.

- ◆ Start with a Welcome Back message.
- ◆ Show recently viewed items from their last visit, or let them know if they left anything in their cart.
- ◆ Eliminate unnecessary items like email sign-up or catalog sign-up if they have already signed up.
- ◆ Display cross-sells on the product pages based on recently viewed, and upsells on the view cart page based on what is in the shopping cart.
- ◆ Save them work by prefilling any information you can in the checkout process.
- ◆ Promote relevant products in carousels and banners.
- ◆ Develop special offers based on past purchases or products of interest — with a deadline TODAY to induce an order.

It's hard to go wrong selling your customers what they want to be sold



Tip #8

Display your Phone Number



We can help you achieve online success!

Call Toll Free: 1-888-838-1828

Many companies are allergic to showing their phone number. They think customers shouldn't need to call and they're right — customers shouldn't need to call.

But unless your website is perfectly designed for every potential visitor to your site, you need to provide this alternative or risk losing 25% of your sales. Most companies get a quarter of their online visitors ordering over the phone.

The phone number should be shown prominently and perpetually on the top and the bottom of the page, and also (ideally) appear on every view.

In particular be sure to make the phone number very obvious in the cart/checkout and internal text search results (both "successful" and unsuccessful), or any other pages with a high propensity to exit.

Where appropriate include a welcoming "can we help?" type of message with a picture of a friendly representative.

Be sure to track these phone orders in your analytics!

p.s. If you have Live Chat the same rules apply



Tip #9

Use Instigated Chat

An Instigated Chat program is frequently even more effective than Live Chat in reducing abandons and converting a sale.

\$AVE THAT \$ALE!

Very few companies are using Instigated Chat to their advantage and that's too bad because wherever your website falls down on the job Instigated Chat can step in and save the day.

Where do you start with Instigated Chat?

Checkout/cart and search functions are usually the best. Help your user in the place(s) they are struggling the most. Not only will you reduce your abandons and increase your revenues, but you'll learn what works and more important, what doesn't, on your site.

It takes about 9-12 months to get your Instigated Chat formula down pat, so don't give up on it a minute before then. Why does it take so long? Usually it's because it takes that amount of time to figure out who the best "chatters" are in your company.

(Hint: they're typically not the best phone reps but instead the people who can text message, Tweet, and so on.)





Fix your Exit Pages

EXIT

Want to know where your site is "broken?" Follow the trail of Exit Pages. This is where your users are screaming...

HELP! GET ME OUT OF HERE!

A review of your exit pages is one of the easiest ways to reveal the problem areas on your site.

The only acceptable exit pages are confirmations and thank you pages. Excluding those, what are your top ten exit pages? Top five? Top one? Those are the pages you need to look at and fix first.

Is the right traffic getting to the right page? Look at your bounce rate to determine this.

Do you have "dead end" pages that go nowhere? If so, you need to create action on them, or perhaps eliminate them altogether.

Are they exiting during the checkout process? Create a funnel tracking each step to find out where they are abandoning; e.g. login, shipping info, payment page.

Be sure to capture the email address on the very first step of the checkout process so you can follow up if they abandon.

Text search is a usually a huge culprit. Both no results pages and so-called "successful" landing pages are heavy exit areas.

What words are people using in your text search? Are your successful results really relevant? What options are you displaying on your no results pages?

Clean up your text search and better yet, improve your navigation so your users don't have to resort to text search at all.





Promote your Sale Pages

Clearance and Sale pages can be profit centers if you promote them properly.

Hundreds of Items on Sale THIS WEEK ONLY!

Start Shopping Now

Have you ever been to an outlet store where the lighting was dim, the shelves dusty, and the products badly organized and poorly marked?

Take a look at your analytics, and if these pages are money-makers, treat them accordingly by featuring them in your navigation and banners.

Oftentimes that's the shabby treatment given to any type of inventory reduction pages on the web. Yet these pages — Clearance, Outlet, Overstocks, Web Specials, etc. are a great promotional hook, and tend to generate high click action.

It's important to develop strong landing pages that generate excitement — be sure to promote the savings; e.g. SAVE UP TO 70%!

You can further work these categories to your advantage by merchandising specifically to them; for instance you can overbuy popular, high margin products in order to have them as sale or overstock items.

Also it's vital to use a short deadline with any sale promotion to create urgency to order. In the case of Clearance, you can create urgency by promoting limited quantities.

**SAVE
UP TO
70%!**

CLEARANCE

Hurry! Quantities are Limited.



Eight by Eight • 110 Kimball Ave, Suite 210, South Burlington, VT 05403 1-888-838-1828 • www.eightbyeight.com

Tip #12

Optimize your Checkout

This is where the pedal meets the metal. It's also frequently where companies crash and burn.

There are many mysteries in life, but how to create the ideal checkout is not one of them. There is a magic formula everyone should follow. It's a five-step checkout that includes Welcome (an absolute must have), Bill-To, Ship-To, Payment, and the Review/Submit. (Your View Cart page and Confirmation page are separate from checkout.)

Set up a funnel and track every step to determine where people get stuck and abandon. After you master it (meaning you know exactly where and when your users abandon and you've corrected the problems), you can move to a single-step checkout, but you shouldn't do it before then.

Here are some checkout pointers that will help you reduce abandons:

- ◆ **Use temperature bars.** Make it very bold and graphic. It might look tacky but users like them so get over it.
- ◆ **Display your contact information.** Put the phone number and live chat (if you have it) all over the place.
- ◆ **Ask for the email information first.** The fact is you are going to lose people. With an email address you have a chance to recover the sale. Without it you're dead in the water.
- ◆ **Don't ask irrelevant questions.** If you want to know where they heard about you, ask after you get the sale, on the confirmation page or email.
- ◆ **Lose or reduce navigation.** This ideally should be tested but if you can't test, get rid of it. The majority of time navigation is a distraction during checkout.
- ◆ **Offer Instigated Chat.** If they are having difficulty at any point in the checkout process reach out with an offer to help. This really works.
- ◆ **Forms should be quick and easy to fill out.** Make them look like they are one screen, and put the fields in vertical order. Use lots of big action directives. (Make sure there is one action button on every view.) If you know something like the user's email address, pre-fill it for them.
- ◆ **Minimize the legalese and disclaimers.** An overdose of this is guaranteed to scare users away.
- ◆ **Put more power to the areas where your users are giving you data/information.** A lot of times companies have performance issues on things like search and checkout and these are the WORST places to have hang-ups.
- ◆ **Use pop-ups on exit.** They're leaving anyway so what do you have to lose? You can test different iterations related to capturing their email address or making them an offer to entice them back. Display your phone number prominently so they can call.





Abandoned Cart Program

Once you have this email program in place, retrieving lost sales is easy and automatic.

An abandoned cart program consists of a series of trigger emails. Not ONE email, but a SERIES of emails, preferably at least five. If you can't do that start with three.

Keep the emails very simple (they shouldn't look like your regular thrust emails); personalize them; and sign the letter from a real live person. Include the items that the user has abandoned with thumbnails showing them a picture of the product (very important); and make sure there are lots of clear action directives (e.g. RETURN TO CART NOW.)

The goal of your series should be to work your user through an appeal-type process. For example: #1: Did you forget something? #2 Your cart will be

emptied soon. #3 Here's a special offer. #4 Here's an extension of that special offer just for you. #5. Last chance.

Use deadlines to create a sense of urgency, even if you don't start out with an offer initially. Test your offers and work your timing until you find out what works best for you.

Also test taking the user directly to the cart. This may or may not work for you but if it does work, chances are it will work like gangbusters. If nothing else, make sure it's clear how the user gets back into their cart and that the item(s) they abandoned are still there.

It's still critical however to display the phone number promi-

nently. If the user abandoned because they got stuck, it's not going to help them to go back to the place they were when they first abandoned, so pushing them to the phone or chat may be your best solution.

Put a special 1-800# in your abandoned cart emails if you can. It will help you better track the orders and allow you to develop a special troubleshooting script if necessary.

Carts should NEVER be cleared. NEVER as in not in a million years. Not unless the user specifically removes the item(s) from the cart. If you're out of the inventory, offer a substitute.





Segment your Thrust Emails

Boost the profitability of your Thrust Email campaign with defined segmentation.

There are many variables which contribute to the success of your Thrust Email program, and all are important.

The offer and deadline are key factors. Design components, such as the to and from address, the subject line, and preview pane play a large part. You also need to optimize your deliverability, and get the timing right.

But to really step it up to the next level, you have to fine tune your segmentation, and not many companies work this as hard as they should.

You can break your file into basic groups such as active customers, inactive customers, and prospects, but those should be further broken into smaller micro-segments based on recency, frequency and monetary value.

This allows you to tailor the creative and offer to each segment, and mail more or less frequently as appropriate.

Controlling your list in this way will make a huge difference in maximizing the profitability of your email campaign.

Your Thrust Email Program consists of your regularly scheduled emails (both promotional and informational) meant to keep customers actively engaged and buying.

Thrust Emails should be generating 20% to 30% of your Online Sales.





Trigger Email Program

Triggers should be THE MOST successful program in your marketing arsenal.

Triggers tend to be even more successful than Thrust emails because they have higher response rates, better deliverability and improved LTP (lifetime profit.)

There are so many possibilities that it's best to perfect a few key Triggers first before adding to your collection.

Primary Triggers generally consist of abandoned cart emails and thank you emails such as for order confirmation, newsletter sign-up and catalog requests.

When you have those perfected, some **Secondary Triggers** to look at would be abandoned search emails, abandoned site emails, EBOPP's (emails based on past purchases), EBOSI's (emails based on selected interest) and Reactivation (we've missed you) emails.

You can also try Triggers for referrals, opt-outs, soliciting product reviews, and product availability notification.

A customer service trigger program can streamline your customer service operations and ensure a timely and consistent response.

If you have an Auto Ship program, you should definitely add an **Auto Ship Trigger** series to the top of the list.

There are many variables that contribute to the success of a successful Trigger email including the number of emails in the series, the timing, the offer and deadline, so test the variables to find out what works for you.

Pretty creative isn't important but a killer preview pane is. Make sure whatever you want the reader to know such as an offer or new product introduction is right up top (hint: this isn't the place for your unsubscribe option.)

Does every e-mail you send out look like it's from a real person? Is it personalized and written like a letter you'd read? Will it make them want to click? You should have lots of big action buttons to get them to click into your site or cart or wherever else you want to put them.

As a final note — on many (not all) of your triggers this is a great opportunity to upsell featured products on special TODAY ONLY.



Tip #16

Create Mobile Friendly Emails

Less than 25% of emails sent out are mobile friendly. Yet over 50% of people read their emails on a mobile device.

This is a BIG issue for a lot of folks.

Email programs (both Thrust and Trigger) are real breadwinners in your marketing family, and the payback on this improvement is well worth the effort.

As with all emails, once you have a successful template you can reuse that same format, so all it takes is a little upfront effort to create a mobile friendly version and the rest is easy!



Show your mobile customers some TLC





Online/Offline Integration

Do you have a separate online and offline marketing team?

Think of online and offline strategies as two oxen teamed to the same yoke. If they're pulling in the same direction you have twice the oomph. If they're pulling in two different directions you've got a whole lot of wasted effort.

Your online promotions should be coordinated with your catalog promotions. Your thrust email campaign should include emails to support catalog drops and sneak previews, and of course a series of trigger emails should be sent whenever anyone signs up to receive a catalog.

The most critical thing you can do with an offline user who comes online is to collect their e-mail address. You also want to make sure that you put the phone number all over the place. The phone number and contact information should be prominent throughout the ordering/checkout process. This is far more important for offline users than one might think.

And speaking of ordering, an absolute must have is an Order From Catalog page. And don't call it anything cute like "quick order" or "quick shop,"

they won't connect with that. "ORDERING FROM A CATALOG?" is much more intuitive, because that's what they are doing, ordering from a catalog. The whole point of an Order From Catalog option is for a fast way to order so make sure yours is as easy and intuitive as possible.

Generally speaking, targeted offline users will convert better than online users, if your site is tailored for them. (Such as employing a streamlined checkout.) This is especially true if the user is using your website as their preferred ordering channel (read: instead of the telephone.)

Catalog customers coming to your site should have a high rate of conversion so if they aren't ordering, figure out why and fix it. Dynamically changing your website to cater to this valuable customer segment is well worth your while.





Read and React Reporting

Don't wait until the end of the year to look back and see what you did wrong — by then it's too late.

Online companies are more fluid than offline companies — you have a huge opportunity to continuously improve what you are doing.

A good example of this is PPC spending. A lot of people set a monthly budget for PPC and then spend just to that number. Sure, they may allocate more money at Christmas than they do in July but the reality is that when the money is gone for the month they wait till the next month, which is a huge mistake. PPC is a numbers game — you need to make hay while the sun shines!

Figure out the cost per sale that you are willing to accept. If your program is profitable, don't throw away sales just because you've used your entire budget in the first week — re-evaluate and adjust accordingly.

Another example is your Thrust email program. Don't wait until the end of your plan to evaluate the results. (You do have a detailed email campaign schedule...don't you? If not, you should have at least a 3 month plan.)

After every single email goes out you should be looking at the results and tweaking for the next email; adjusting your timing, offer, segmentation, etc. as necessary to improve response. Doing so will vastly improve the profitability of your email program.

The same goes for all of your metrics. You should start the year with established benchmarks and improvement initiatives that have been defined, documented and prioritized.

A meeting of key online marketing people should take place preferably weekly, but at the very least monthly, to review your analytics and determine what's working and what's not, and respond accordingly.

If you can't handle everything at once focus on your most important initiatives — the ones that will give you the highest ROI. It's better to tackle a manageable number of things and get them right, rather than waste time doing many things poorly which will gain you nothing.





The Fundamentals of Mobile

A successful mobile site has a solid foundation of these highly critical elements.



The “Must Have” basics for Mobile:

Super-Fast Speed (think: faster than a speeding bullet)

A Perfect Entry Page

User Friendly Navigation

A Highly Functional Internal Search

A Defined Focus on what you are trying to do*

*You have a small amount of space and a short attention span to work with — do you want to get an order, get them to sign up for something, send them to a store...? Pick your target and aim for that one thing.





Encourage Phone Calls

Developing your mobile site to encourage phone calls can have a big impact on conversion.

Chances are you're like everyone else, and your mobile site leaves a little something-something to be desired.

It's a mistake but with all the other stuff you've got going on, these things happen. Don't beat yourself up about it.

Do put it on the improvements list. Mobile is NOT, I repeat NOT, a division of ecommerce, it's a whole different beast and needs to be treated accordingly.

Instead, do the best you can with what you have. For a lot of you that means putting click-to-call buttons and phone numbers all over the place (read: every view.)

Will this save the world? No.

Statistically though, if you're uber-aggressive about getting people on the phone, you'll capture about a third of them which is about THIRTY TIMES MORE than the 0-1% you are currently getting, right?



Tip #21

Segregate your Mobile Traffic

Separate your tablet traffic from your phone traffic and get better results from both.

Tablets and phones are NOT the same thing.



Behavior is going to be different, conversion is going to be different. iPads and other tablets make great shopping devices so you often see 2-3x your regular conversion on them; you don't want those numbers to skew your phone results.

If you learn how to separate phone traffic properly you'll also figure out how to design to it: What kind of landing pages you need; how you can best use your selling space (sell-

ing on a 2x4 is often more challenging than one might think); what things you need to ask for and what you don't (for example, you don't need to dedicate an entire screen to asking for the email address of someone coming from email), and so on.

By separating the traffic you can get a more accurate read on your metrics and optimize your marketing plan to each segment.



Thank You!

We hope you find these tips helpful in contributing to your online success.

Amy Africa and the Eight by Eight Team