This chapter explores various means of attracting users to a site, converting them to valuable customers, and maintaining a profitable relationship with them. From advertising and viral marketing to cross selling and up selling to email marketing, each phase of the customer cycle can have a large and lasting effect on the amount and value of users that come to a site.
Turning Browsers into Buyers

A Web site needs visitors in order for it to be seen as a success. Previous chapters have examined the methods of driving traffic through search engine optimization (SEO). SEO and search marketing sometimes aren’t enough, especially when the client is looking to gain awareness among a specific target demographic for a product or service that’s new or that fulfills a need that may not be obvious to a user. In these cases, a more proactive form of marketing is required—Web marketing. Web marketing is a multi-billion-dollar industry covering a wide spectrum of services, from banner advertising and paid sponsorships to more organic forms of advertising like viral and social marketing.

When implemented properly, SEO combined with effective Web marketing can drive large volumes of traffic to a site, but sheer numbers alone may not be good enough for a site to succeed long term. Most sites require the user to take an action, from signing up to be a member, to buying things, to viewing as many pages as possible, to help with advertising impressions. Therefore, it’s important that marketing efforts drive high-value visitors to a site. High-value visitors are visitors that come to a Web site not by chance or just to browse, but with the purpose of completing the required action of the site. Finding high-value users is a matter of promoting a site through the proper channels to target the right type of user, and by creating a compelling campaign that appeals to the needs of that target demographic.
**Web marketing** is a multi-billion-dollar industry covering a wide spectrum of services from banner advertising and paid sponsorships to more organic forms of advertising like viral and social marketing.

Browsers can be converted into high-value visitors once they arrive at the site through on-site marketing techniques. Certainly the methods of clear design and planned usability play a role in converting browsers into buyers, but there are other tools that a design team can use to further increase the conversion rate of users. Cross selling is a means of telling a user, “If you like this, you might like that,” and up selling is a means of telling a user, “This product is good, but that product will satisfy more of your needs.” Both are effective ways to maximize the value of a user. Sharing mechanisms placed throughout the customer stream on a site can help spread the word about a site through word of mouth. This type of social sharing can be seen as significantly more trustworthy among potential users than banner advertising.

Once a customer has engaged with a client’s brand by performing the required action on a site, the next step is to retain that customer. Retaining existing customers is vital for several reasons, but most important is the fact that it costs half as much to retain a customer than to attract a new one. Provided that an existing customer is happy with the experience, that person can help attract new customers by telling people about the experience and can even provide valuable feedback to the client about how to enhance the customer experience. Relationship marketing, which is used to communicate with existing customers, includes social marketing and email marketing. These elements help customers feel like they’re on the inside and that they’re appreciated.

Although entire books can and have been written on any one of these topics, this chapter gives an overview of the considerations a designer must make when attempting to add the most value for a client.
Banner Advertising

Creating an effective banner ad campaign involves many disciplines, from copywriting and design to media strategy, technology, and even psychology. Users have become accustomed to tuning out banner ads, so getting noticed takes knowing the right techniques for a specific audience. As with any form of advertising, Web banner advertising starts with the right media plan. A media plan is a strategy for determining where and when the banners will appear. These choices are made with several factors in mind, including the relevancy of the content on a site compared to the advertisement, the amount of traffic a site has, and the cost per click that a site offers.

Once in place, a media plan will dictate the types and sizes of interactive marketing units (IMU) needed for a campaign. The Internet Advertising Bureau (IAB) has set standards for file size, dimension, and animation time. Included in the IAB standards are Universal Ad Package (UAP) sizes. UAP standards make it easier for companies to advertise, since advertisers only need to create a finite set of banner sizes that can be used across a wide range of sites. Universal Ad Package sizes (in pixels) include:

- Leaderboard 728 x 90
- Wide Skyscraper 160 x 600
- Medium rectangle 300 x 250
- Rectangle 180 x 150

A diagram showing the complete set of IAB IMUs is featured on the next spread.
IAB Ad Dimensions, File Sizes and Animation Limits

- **Square Pop-Up**
  - 250 x 250
  - 40K
  - :15

- **Vertical Rectangle**
  - 240 x 400
  - 40K
  - :15

- **3:1 Rectangle**
  - 300 x 100
  - 40K
  - :15

- **Pop-Under**
  - 720 x 300
  - 40K
  - :15

- **Full Banner**
  - 468 x 60
  - 40K
  - :15

- **Half Banner**
  - 234 x 60
  - 30K
  - :15

- **Micro Bar**
  - 88 x 31
  - 10K
  - :15

- **Button 1**
  - 120 x 90
  - 20K
  - :15

- **Button 2**
  - 120 x 60
  - 20K
  - :15

- **Leaderboard**
  - 728 x 90
  - 40K
  - :15
A **click-through rate** is the number of people who’ve clicked on the banner and is expressed as a percentage of the number of people who have seen the ad, called **impressions**.

When creating a banner ad, a designer is looking to generate a high click-through rate. A click-through rate is the number of people who’ve clicked on the banner to go to the client’s site. The click-through rate is expressed as a percentage of the number people who have seen the ad, called impressions. For example, if a banner is on a page where 25,000 people visit and 250 people click the banner, the click-through rate is one percent—an admirable rate for a site with this amount of traffic. This level of detailed statistical data is unique to Web marketing, and it enables a high level of control over a campaign. Often, a banner campaign will involve multiple versions of a banner and over time, high-performing banners can replace low-performing banners to maximize the click-through rate of each placement.

*Banners present a unique design challenge because they usually exist in a cluttered environment. These banners for the Starbucks Love campaign are instantly recognizable across different sites and the design is consistent throughout the varying UAP sizes.*
Detach and Distribute

Because click-through rates are often a very small percentage of the overall impressions a banner receives, marketers have begun thinking about and utilizing the space within a banner differently. A technique called detach and distribute brings critical content and site features to the banner space, allowing users to engage with a brand without ever leaving the page they’re on. Pioneered by Tom Beeby, creative director at the interactive marketing firm Beeby, Clark and Meyler, detach and distribute employs rich media to display a video, capture email addresses, or allow real-time social interactions, for example. This tactic of creating a mini-site within a site can be highly effective for increasing awareness of a product or service.

These banners created for GE, display both pre-recorded and live video content from GE.com and allow users to comment on the them in real time, right within the banner space.
Context is a critical aspect of all forms of advertising, but with Web advertising it can be taken to an even higher level. Contextually relevant ads are ads that respond directly to the environment in which they are served. This can mean something simple like placing an ad for fishing boats on a fishing Web site, but it can also be much more specific by drawing on data from the user including time-specific or location-specific placements. Contextually relevant banners have shown to be significantly more effective than one-size-fits-all banner campaigns.

Because of their unusual dimensions, shapes, file size limitations, and the need for immediate communication of a message, banner ads present a significant design challenge. The best advice a designer can heed is to put him- or herself in the shoes of the user and ask, “What would I respond to?” The answer is almost always a simple, relevant message, clearly stated with an obvious call to action. Animation can help grab attention and/or build a message within a limited space, but most sites do not permit repeating or looping animation since it can be very distracting to a user. Thus, the final frame of the banner should be designed and written in a way that all the critical information appears. The call to action, which is a sentence with a verb (learn, click, try, etc.) inviting the user to do something, should be clear—perhaps encased in a button-like object—and should directly relate to the content of the page the user is taken to after clicking the banner.
These banners from Apple Computer seems like ordinary ad placements, but there’s a twist—the banners are synced with one another, making it possible for them to work together. In the ad seen here, Mac and PC are reacting to the leaderboard banner, which states that Apple is number one in customer experience, while the men in the seemingly unrelated “hair replacement” ad chime in to the conversation.

These amusing and engaging ads were awarded a Webby, one of the highest honors an online campaign can receive.
These ads for MySpace (top) and Pringles (left) use humor to engage the user and convey a brand message. This Pringles ad has received multiple accolades for its innovative use of advertising space. The ad continues seemingly forever with mundane conversation as part of Pringles’ “Over Sharing” campaign.
Getting a user to engage with a banner ad means getting a user to **engage with a client’s brand.**

(Above) This single banner for Zippo lighters appears to be two banners, where the gentleman in the upper banner is being heated up by the lighter in the lower banner.

(Left) These banners for the Toyota Prius invite users to draw on the banner. This action triggers an animation that explains a feature of the car.

This interactive banner from Lotus Notes collaboration software invited users to collaborate by manipulating the letters of the word “IDEA” into various pictographs. Each user interacting with the ad would be responsible for shaping a single letter.
Rich-media banners can be effective in grabbing a user’s attention, but they can also be costly to produce and place making them suitable for a limited number of clients.

In addition to standard ad units, there are third-party solutions, such as EyeWonder and EyeBlaster (Media Mind), which provide a variety of rich media expandable banners. These banners include a wide range of interactive experiences from a simple expanding banner, to banners that communicate with one another, to page takeovers or roadblocks where the entire Web page is consumed with an ad. These banners can be effective in grabbing a user’s attention, but they can also be costly to produce and place—so they’re most suitable to a small number of clients who have large online advertising budgets.

These rich media banners for McDonalds completely take over the Web page. The top image is known as a “peel-back” ad, where the page can be turned like a page of a book to reveal an advertising message. The bottom ad is an expandable banner featuring characters that dance across the screen.
(Top) This ad for Tostitos includes two standard placements, a leaderboard, and big box, and also the background “skin,” which visually relates to the ads.

(Bottom left) This ad for Sony features an expandable video player. The player expands over the page content, making the video larger.

(Bottom right) This video game ad consists of a leaderboard that expands with a graphic and a video, as well as the big box ad along the right side.
Viral Marketing

Viral marketing gets its name from the way a virus spreads rapidly and “infects” a population organically. Viral marketing works because such pieces provide some sort of entertainment value beyond the thousands of ordinary advertising messages consumers are bombarded with on a daily basis. Successful viral pieces hit on a universal concept—humor, fear, sex—and at first may not appear to be marketing pieces at all. Branding is usually subtle, or in some cases nonexistent. Because consumers are so overloaded with advertising messages, they’re also very suspicious, which makes viral marketing difficult—very difficult, in fact.

If a piece of marketing “goes viral,” the impact can be profound. An early example of successful viral marketing was for the film The Blair Witch Project. Instead of standard big-budget TV and print ads, the producers released short clips of the film on the Internet. The clips were hauntingly scary, and the supporting Web site blurred the lines between what was real and what was part of the movie. The film cost $350,000 to create and market, but grossed nearly $250 million at the box office—the highest profit-to-cost ratio of any film in history.

The phrase “viral marketing” may be relatively new, but the concept isn’t. Guerilla marketing, popular in the 1990s, involved tactics such as spray-painting company logos as if by street artists to get people talking and to gain credibility among an urban demographic. Even political propaganda or rumor spreading can be considered a form of viral marketing.
Burger King and their interactive agency Crispin, Porter + Bogusky have a long history of creating viral content. Seen here is the subservient chicken who would do anything (really anything) the user typed into the field. Also seen here is the Simpsons Movie tie-in, Simpsonize Yourself. This Flash application allowed users to create Simpsons versions of themselves.
One of the earliest viral videos was this amusing TV spot for John West Salmon. Styled like a nature documentary complete with narration, the video quickly turns into an outrageous kung fu fight between a fisherman and a bear.

Traditionally, companies try to have their products placed in high-budget films. In this example, BMW placed a high-budget film in their advertising. This glossy series of viral films was directed by David Fincher and Guy Richie and starred actors such as Don Cheadle, Clive Owen, and even Madonna.

This over-the-top viral video features Australian actress and singer Kylie Minogue riding a mechanical bull in Agent Provocateur lingerie. What started as a Super Bowl ad became a wildly popular Web video—especially among the male audience.
2006
Dove

As part of Dove’s “Real Beauty” campaign, this viral video titled “Evolution” looks at the transformation of a model from makeup to lighting to retouching using time-lapse photography. The message to young women was as powerful as the visual.

2006
Here It Goes Again

Take six treadmills, four hipster musicians, and one infections song and get this low-budget, ingenious, and fun viral video. This video is proof that viral marketing is more about ideas than big budgets.

2007
GuitarMasterPro.net

This extremely unassuming video featuring a 21-year-old guitar player playing Pachelbel’s Canon received over 60 million views on YouTube. The video for a guitar lesson site relied completely on the talent of the subject—and it worked.
Social Marketing

Social marketing is similar to viral marketing in that it spreads organically through word of mouth—but social marketing usually involves a direct benefit to the user. Think of it this way: Viral marketing is a person going to a party with a cold and spreading it to the other partygoers; social marketing is a person going to a party with good news and actively telling as many people as he or she can.

Social marketing is used as much to get new customers as it is to retain existing customers. Building a social relationship with a customer by inviting them to be a friend on Facebook, for example, enables client organizations to market to these consumers in a new way. Offering coupons or exclusive deals can make consumers feel as if they’re part of a brand and therefore will be more likely to spread positive information about a brand to their social network. These types of seemingly unaided endorsements have a profound ability to influence consumer opinion—so much so that companies are continually trying to blur the lines between “friends” and brands.
Social media isn’t about fancy design; it’s about engaging consumers on a different level than other forms of marketing. Social marketing is a conversation with the customer that makes the customer feel welcome and part of the client’s company, as these examples illustrate.

Ben and Jerry’s and Jet Blue, whose Facebook and Twitter pages are seen here, respectively, do an excellent job extending their brand images with social media. This is in part because these brands already had a conversational relationship with their customers.
**Viral marketing** is a person going to a party with a cold and spreading it to the other partygoers; **social marketing** is a person going to a party with good news and actively telling as many people as he or she can.

Social marketing doesn’t necessarily involve social networking sites. This delightfully social campaign called Save our Sounds allows users to upload a sound from where they live. The goal, says the creator, is to create a sound map of the world.

Honda Motors exploits the popularity of their brand with this clever social media campaign. Their claim is that everyone knows someone who loves a Honda. Using Facebook to make connections among users, this campaign quickly illustrated the popularity of Honda’s vehicles.
Perhaps the most famous and certainly one of the earliest social/viral campaigns was this one from Burger King. The Whopper Sacrifice called upon Facebook users to “sacrifice” a few of their friends for a free hamburger. The campaign was extremely successful; however, it violated a rule on Facebook that bans telling friends when they’ve been defriended. Because of this, the campaign was ended but its impact lives on.
On-Site Marketing

Once a user has found a site, it’s important to the client that the value is maximized. Clients want to get the most out of each visitor, and this can mean different things for different sites—from becoming a member to filling a shopping cart with products to buy. Getting a user to take this action can take more than clear navigation, well-planned usability, and effective design; as discussed in previous chapters, it also involves the right products, promotion, pricing, and placement—the four P’s of marketing.

Having the right product development and pricing strategy is largely the responsibility of the client, and is usually determined prior to starting a Web project. Promoting and placing these products, however, can be the job of the Web project team. Promotion is a means of giving information about a product that piques the interest of the user. It’s the job of an effective marketer to highlight important features of a product or service and clearly differentiate it from the competition. The Web offers a variety of ways to promote a product or service, from photo galleries and slideshows to highly interactive product showcases.

The product display on MarieCatribs.com is not only user-friendly but client-friendly as well. The photography and clean layout make accessing the products easy and inviting, which can lead to more sales and higher profits for the client.
JaqkCellars.com does a magnificent job displaying their products in a way that enhances their appeal. The product pages are simple, with a single focal point: the product. Flash is used to provide a 360-degree spinning view of the bottle. The dark “ADD TO CART” buttons stand out from the page, making it easy for the user to enter the buying process.
The other P of on-site marketing is placement, which gives the user access to the product outside the context of the standard product or catalog page. Placement is the association of a product or service to content or other products or services. On a site that has health information and also sells health products, for example, an article about sprained ankles might be accompanied by a product placement of ankle braces for sale in the store.

Cross selling is a form of placement. Online retailers understanding that if a user is in the mood to buy one item, he or she is more easily persuaded into purchasing more items. This is where cross selling comes in. To cross sell is to recommend other products to a user based on his or her interest in a particular item. Cross selling associations can be done one of two ways: by the client linking products that relate to each other functionally—i.e., if you buy this Apple computer you might want this Apple mouse—and it can also be done with purchase history where users make the associations with their buying patterns—i.e. “Users who bought this item, also bought...”

Up selling is similar to cross selling, except the goal is to get the customer to buy more expensive items or services. An effective way to up sell is through the use of a features chart. Features charts show side-by-side comparisons of one product to another, highlighting the benefits of purchasing the higher-priced item.

To **cross sell** is to recommend other products to a user based on his or her interest in a particular item.
Potterybarn.com offers a variety of selling tools on their product pages—from items in a set and related items to customer ratings and reviews.

Both TommyBahama.com and JPeterman.com cross sell their garments by offering additional items of a similar style on the product pages.
Email Marketing

The site has been found and the sale made, but the customer cycle has one more component to close the loop: relationship building. Building a relationship with a user-turned-customer by regularly communicating with the person can be extremely valuable to a client. Repeat customers not only cost less than new customers, but they are likely to tell their friends about the product or service, which breeds new customers. One of the most effective ways to maintain a relationship with a customer is through email marketing. Email marketing “pushes” information about the client’s product or service to the customer. Relationship marketing can take the form of a newsletter, where product information is accompanied by information that’s valuable to the user.

There are strict laws governing the use of email marketing that designers and their clients should be aware of. Failure to comply with the laws contained in the CAN-SPAM Act can bring stiff fines to a client. The CAN-SPAM Act dictates the following guidelines for email marketing:

- Don’t use false or misleading header information (“From,” “Reply to”)
- Don’t use deceptive subject lines
- Identify the message as an ad
- Tell recipients where you’re located
- Tell recipients how to opt out of receiving future emails
- Honor opt-out requests promptly
- Monitor what others are doing on your behalf

Source: http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/business/ecommerce/bus61.shtm
These email templates from Rave & Lamb (left) and Mucca Design (right) illustrate a simple elegance that’s required for email designs. Because of the restrictions of mail browsers to display HTML and the need for immediate communication, email templates must focus on simplicity and clear hierarchy.
Designing an email template presents another set of unique design challenges for Web designers. This is because email clients (Outlook, MacMail, etc.) are far less sophisticated in their ability to display HTML than Web browsers are. For example, the standard width of an email is 600 pixels, as opposed to 990 for a Web site. File sizes matter, since the user hasn’t necessarily requested to see the content of the email. Emails with long load times tend to get deleted and go unread. Emails are primarily limited to HTML and standard image formats—.jpg, .gif—Flash, JavaScript, and movie formats are currently unsupported by most email clients. Linking to external files for styling, for example, is also unsupported. Therefore CSS coding must be done “in-line” meaning in the individual tags for each HTML element.

The subject line of an email acts as a headline and can play a pivotal role in the success of an email campaign. Subject lines should speak specifically to the subject of the email with clarity and brevity. Often, as with online banner advertising, multiple subject lines are tested for efficacy, and subject lines with higher open rates can replace more poorly performing lines to maximize the success of an email. Email layouts require simplicity even more so than Web pages because they are often scanned by the user. When creating an email, a designer should consider the primary goal of the email and focus the design on that element by creating a clear hierarchy of information. Emails should include at least some HTML-based text because some email clients and mobile devices only display the text of an email. The footer of an email, by law, needs to indicate who the email was sent to, who it was sent by, and a means for the user to opt out from receiving future emails.

These email templates illustrate how even within the constraints of email browsers the design can still be an extension of a client’s brand, increasing brand recognition among users.
Take a Child Fishing

1. Keep the trip short.
2. Catch a fish.
3. Have a sandwich and a juice box on hand for when the fishing's done.

Pick a warm day, and take your younger to a dock on a pond or a lake for sunfish. Beginnings are a delicate thing, and no one likes to get skunked, especially kids.

The Quarry

The Pole

The Bobber

The Hook and Knot

The Sink

The Technique

Toss the twisted hook and bobber toward the shore or near the protective area of the dock. Let it sink down and wait those seconds awaiting it out with your child. Reel or pull the bobber back toward you, ta-ta-ta, and let it sit. Keep an eye on it. It won't take long for the nibbling to begin. When the fisher gets under, give a slight tug on the hook, and then slowly reel it in. Don't pull too hard, lest your child be unnecessarily introduced to a flying fish! If the hook is in just nibbling and not going under, try a smaller bit of bait.

Fish Stories

Before you get home, be sure to work out your story together. How big was the fish? How many did you catch? Fish stories are an integral part of the experience, and while we don't advocate fishing a little hyperbole won't hurt.

Scott & Nix