

CHAPTER 6

Converting visitors into customers



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Introduction

The PayFast Guide to Going Online is a comprehensive ebook to help aspiring entrepreneurs such as yourself turn your hobby into a successful online business.

In this sixth chapter of the guide, we offer advice on what you can do to convert website visitors into customers, and to keep your existing customer base loyal.

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CONVERTING VISITORS INTO CUSTOMERS

It can take a while to get customers, so don't lose hope. According to Warrick Kernes, SA's Ecommerce Expert, **on average it can take 800 views before you make your first sale.**

While the main tip here would be to persevere and give it your all, there are a few other things you can do to convert website visitors into customers, and to keep your existing customer base loyal.

Macro Mixes pro tips for selling your products online



- Be honest and authentic. No one expects perfection, apologise when you mess up and celebrate the wins altogether.
- Be very clear on how your product will improve someone's life. Why do they need it, what problem is it solving and HOW can they take action to obtain it?
- Sell the experience not the product. You have to solve a problem and sell the solution. This way you are personalising the experience.
- Have clarity around your messaging, your products and even your company mission and values. Don't force people to waste energy on guess work.
- Research constantly. Always be aware of what's 'trending' and stay ahead of the curve by being honest and authentic.
- Don't forget about existing customers. Yes new customers are important but nurturing the ones you have is equally if not more important.

To find out more about Macro Mixes, visit [macromixes.co.za](https://www.macromixes.co.za)



Pro tip: Run deals and promotions

If it's something you can effectively plan for, run specials and discounts where, for example, customers can get free shipping or pay for two items and get a third for free. These deals are extremely effective in boosting sales, especially if they are shared via social media and in email blasts to your database.

Another great option is to offer product bundles, where if your customer buys a few items together they get a discount.

Reduce cart abandonment

Cart abandonment, which is where [customers add products to their shopping carts with no intention of completing the purchase](#), is an unfortunate occurrence that every online store has to deal with.

According to a [2021 study](#), the global average rate of cart abandonment is 75.6%, where the average abandonment rate on mobile phones is 85.65%. The main reasons attributed to cart abandonment include:

- Only browsing or researching
- Slow loading website
- Bad navigation
- Long process
- Hidden or expensive costs
- No free shipping
- Expensive shipping
- Difficulty with the payment process
- Too few payment options
- Security concerns

Be transparent

The best way to avoid some of these issues is to be transparent about your prices, shipping costs and hidden costs from the start. You could even describe the checkout process next to the product description, for example, "check out in three easy steps". It's also a good idea to add wishlist functionality so that visitors to your website can save items for future purchases.

Pro tip: Communicate with your customers

“Customers are happy to wait for orders if this has been communicated to them at the time of purchase, and you regularly communicate order progress with that customer.”

- Celeste Le Roux, Co-founder of [madebyartisans](#) - Online Store

To find out more about [madebyartisans](#) - Online Store, read their [case study](#) and visit [madebyartisans.co.za](#)

If your website, shopping cart, or payment gateway is too complicated to navigate, you could do the following to simplify the checkout process:

- Offer a **Buy Now** button instead of a shopping cart for single product purchases.
- Give buyers the option to checkout as guests to expedite the transaction process.
- Make it easy to apply discount vouchers.
- Make online help easy to access, such as a clear contact page, returns policy, live online chats or FAQs.
- Make shipping free above a certain threshold e.g. if someone has an order over R500 the shipping will be free.

Offer a variety of payment options

While credit card and [Instant EFT](#) are the most popular online [payment methods](#), your customers may prefer alternative ways to pay for their online purchases.

To broaden your reach, by signing up with a payment gateway like PayFast you can offer a wide variety of popular payment options, including credit card, debit card and Instant EFT, scan to pay methods like Masterpass, Zapper and Snapscan, as well as SCode and Mobicred.

Keep your website secure

With Google taking Internet security more seriously than ever, the padlock icon in your browser may be sufficient to set some potential buyers' minds at ease. Refer back to the 'Secure your website' section in [Chapter 3: Building your ecommerce store](#).

Be proactive

Refer to your website's statistics to [understand the point at which things went wrong](#) and resulted in cart abandonment. You can [then try to resolve the issue](#) by sending out a customised, personalised email where you offer a solution.

For example, for those who abandoned their carts because of shipping costs, offer free or reduced shipping. If they got lost in navigation while checking out, send an email with a Buy Now button, bypassing the normal checkout process. If their credit card was declined, let them know of alternative payment options.

Learn from these pain points and improve the usability of your website. Maybe you need to add better and clearer product copy, redesign the layout of your website, make your online store more mobile friendly or reassess your shipping costs.

Reduce returns and refunds

The best way to avoid having to refund a customer and deal with returns is to [be transparent and clear in your communication with them](#).

Not only is it important to clearly publish your returns policy on your website, but also include detailed product descriptions, including colour, weight and size, and clear photos that correctly represent the product so that customers know exactly what they are paying for.

Here are some other useful tips for reducing returns and refunds:

- Have good processes in place to ensure you don't send the wrong product by accident.
- Be honest with delivery time frames, if there's a delay clearly communicate this with your customer.
- Manage and track your inventory so you know when it's time to reorder low stock.



Pro tip: Manage your inventory

A great way to foresee inventory needs is to monitor the traffic of your website and to keep track of what you've been sharing on social media. If your marketing campaigns have been successful there could be a spike in demand.

It's also important to pre-empt seasonal trends and holidays that could lead to more consumer demand, and of course stock up before you run any promotions.

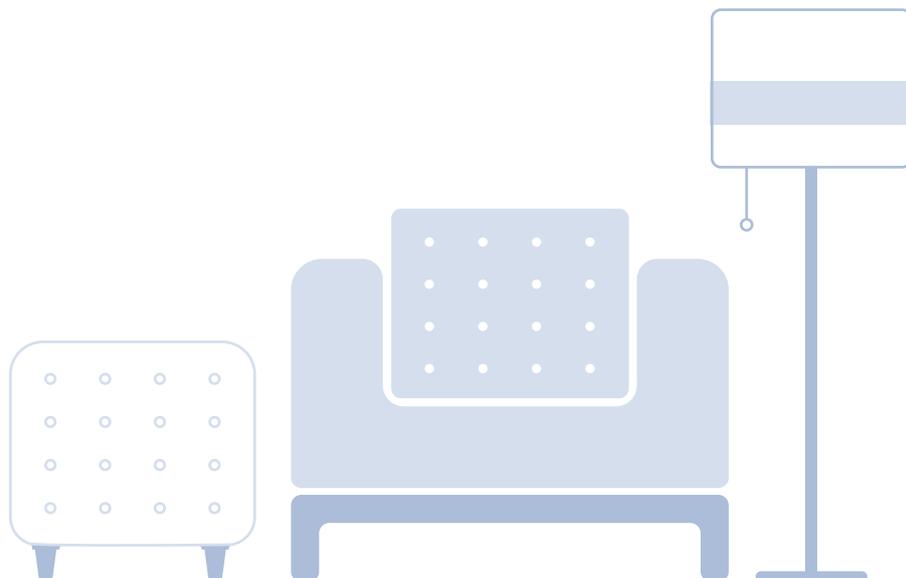
Building trust pro tip



"As an online store, building trust is very important. As convenient and popular as online shopping may be, your consumer needs to trust you in order to click that 'proceed to payment' button. An amazing product paired with a trustworthy brand and great after-sales care and support is a winning formula."

- CLM Home

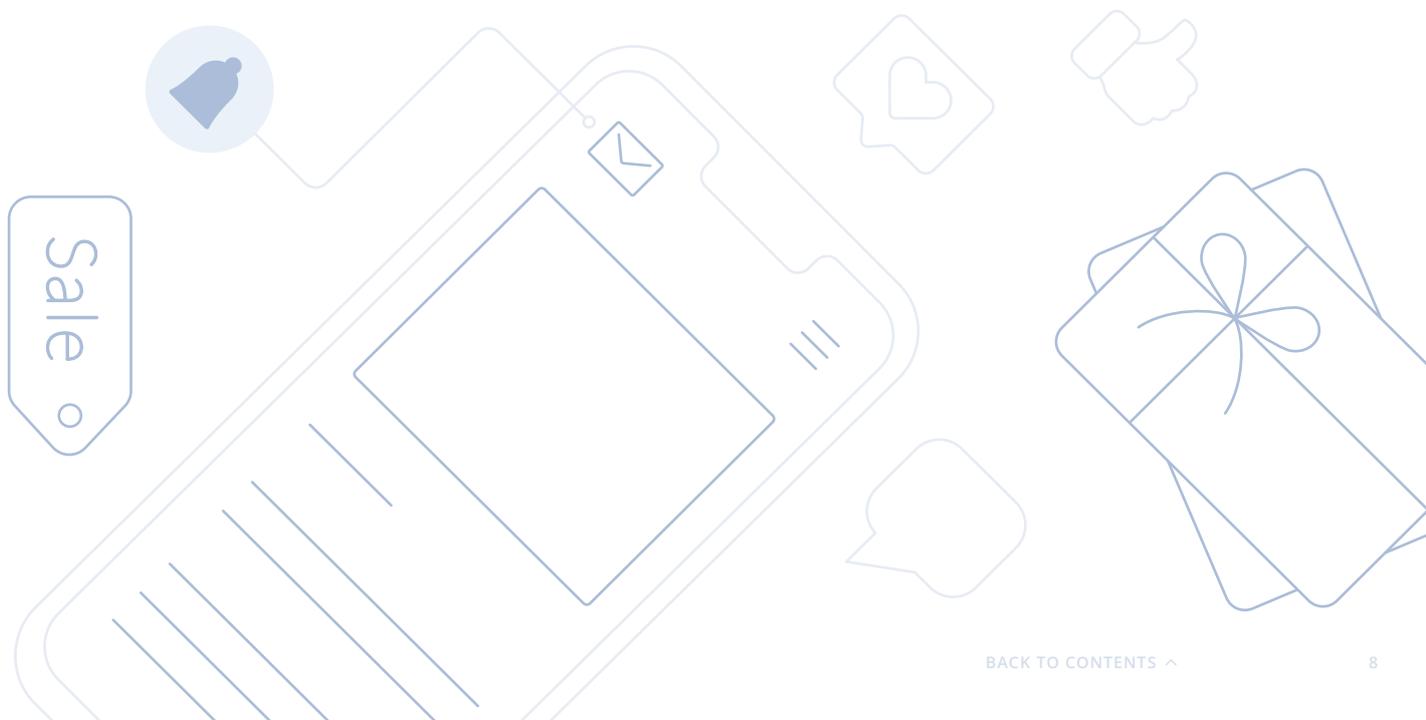
To find out more about CLM Home, read their [case study](#) and visit clmhome.co.za



Pro tip: Build customer loyalty

While it's important to convert website visitors into customers, it's just as important – if not more so, to make sure they return. While we've already highlighted a few important things you can do to retain customers, here are a few other suggestions:

- Actively communicate with your customers by sending out newsletters about new promotions and specials. You can also add live chat functionality to your website, or at least your social media channels, for an extra nice touch.
- Automate reminder mailers to customers who have been inactive for a certain amount of time.
- Engage with your followers on all of your social media pages by posting regularly. Include posts about specials, promotions and competitions, and you can even share relevant industry news articles.
- Create a loyalty system where customers who opt in can get early access to sales like Black Friday and other special discounts. This is a great way to nurture customers and encourage them to engage with your online store.
- Offer a subscription service for recurring business, this will create value for both you and your customers.
- Sell gift cards, this will not only improve cash flow but also promote brand awareness and bring in new customers.
- Offer exceptional customer service so it's a pleasure for customers to shop with you.
- Continuously improve your online store, including product offering, website usability and customer engagement.





Find out more about going online

To find out more about getting your business online, download the entire PayFast Guide to Going Online or any of the individual chapters that may be relevant to your online business.

[Download the entire PayFast Guide to Going Online](#)

Download the individual chapters:

[Chapter 1: Developing your business plan](#)

[Chapter 2: Managing logistics](#)

[Chapter 3: Building your online store](#)

[Chapter 4: Setting up a payment gateway](#)

[Chapter 5: Marketing your online store](#)

[Chapter 7: Capitalising on shopper trends like Black Friday](#)



About PayFast

PayFast is a leading online payment processing solution for individuals, non-profit organisations (NPOs) and businesses of all sizes in South Africa. Over 80,000 merchants from a variety of South African businesses, big and small, have registered with PayFast to process and manage online payments made by their customers.

Visit payfast.co.za and follow us on:

