

Acquire
retain

9 common website conversion killers - and how to fix them



by Andy McKenna



About the Author



Andy McKenna

Owner & Founder, Acquitain

I'm a CRO and experimentation expert with over 25 years' digital marketing experience. Over this time I've helped the likes of M&G, Direct Line, Coca-Cola and American Express make their websites more profitable, in the UK, US and Australia.

I specialise in:

- Conversion Rate Optimisation (CRO) & Experimentation
- User Experience (UX)
- Digital Analytics

I'm certified in Google Analytics and am a CP-UX Practitioner, and thanks to my hands-on experience working with multiple clients, I know better than most what it takes to sustain business growth through digital marketing.



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1. Slow page load speed

If your pages don't load lightning-fast, you're losing visitors before they even read anything.

As a rule of thumb, aim to show your *primary* content (above the fold) within **2–2.5 seconds** on modern devices.

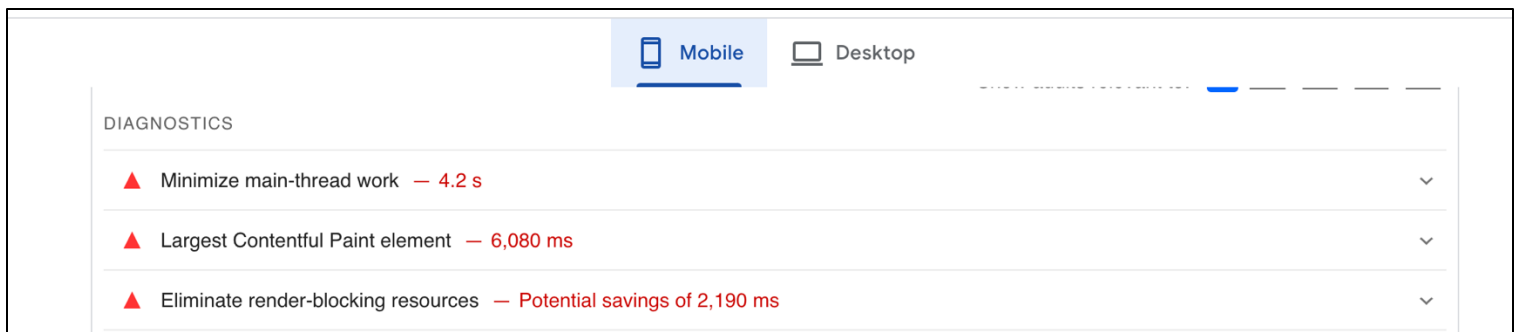
Each additional second of delay costs conversions – studies show an average drop of ~2.11%.

Faster mobile experiences are especially critical: in some mobile contexts, a one-second delay can reduce conversions by up to 20%.

How to fix it:

- Compress large images and host them on a CDN.
- Limit heavy scripts and third-party trackers.
- Use tools like Google [PageSpeed Insights](#) or [Lighthouse](#) to spot issues.

Faster sites rank higher, feel smoother, and convert better.



2. Not offering a guest checkout

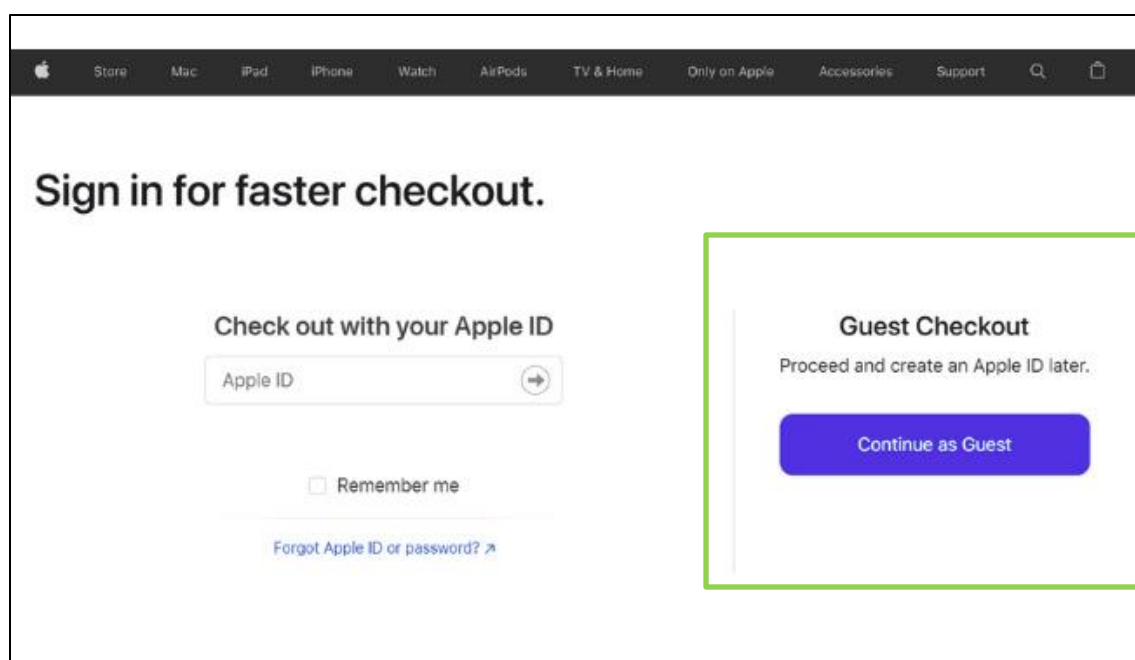
One of the biggest causes of a leaky funnel is making users register before buying. Many sites still force account creation during checkout – and lose sales as a result.

A good approach is to offer a **guest checkout** first, then encourage registration **post-purchase** (e.g., “Would you like to create an account to track orders next time?”).

If you need accounts for loyalty or subscriptions, invite them after checkout with a prompt like:

“Want to track your order and save details for next time?”

Keep the sale easy first. Build loyalty later.



3. Unnecessarily long forms

How many times have you been made to fill in a form on a website that seems like it's never going to end?

Unnecessarily long forms are notorious conversion-killers. Generally the longer the form, the lower the completion rate.

Every extra field gives users a reason to drop out.

How to fix it:

- Ask only for essential info
- Use optional or conditional fields for the rest
- Keep forms short, clean, and mobile-friendly

Even removing one field can lift conversions by double digits.

The image shows a screenshot of a web form divided into several sections:

- Data service order:** Fields for Number of O.S., CNPJ (18.433.638/0001-81), Corporate name, Opening (23/01/2012), Status (Cadastro de Ordem de Serviço), Value of O.S. (R\$) (1,00), and Amount (R\$) (0,00).
- Data from the debtor:** Fields for Type person (radio buttons for physical and legal), Name (2342342), UF (SC), Cidade (Abdon Batista), Neighborhood, CEP (34234-243), street, Complement, Number, and Phone.
- Dados veiculo:** Fields for Category (Particular), species (de passageiros), bicicleta, Model year (2012), Model (234234), Manufacturing year (2012), Mark (234), Used (checkbox), Fuel (Gasolina), Color (234), Cap/Pot/Cl (234), and frame (24324).
- Dados contrato:** Fields for contract number (234), contract type (Reserva de Dominio), signing date (23/01/2012), release date credit (23/01/2012), UF (SC), city (Abdon Batista), share value (R\$) (234,00), value funding (R\$) (234,00), Due 1st installment (23/02/2012), last installment due (23/01/2013), rate TAC (%) (3,00), interest per month (%) (4,00), interest per annum (%) (2,00), IOF value (%), housing value (%), commission value (%), share of the consortium (%), consortium group, and description of fee.
- Anexos contrato:** Fields for contract (file upload: Mario/Desktop/modelo_de_ordem_de_servico.pdf), CPF, RG, Proof of address (file upload), sign with the certificate (CLIENTE 1), and an Update button.

At the bottom of the form are buttons for New, Save, Cancel, and End.

4. Poor mobile experience

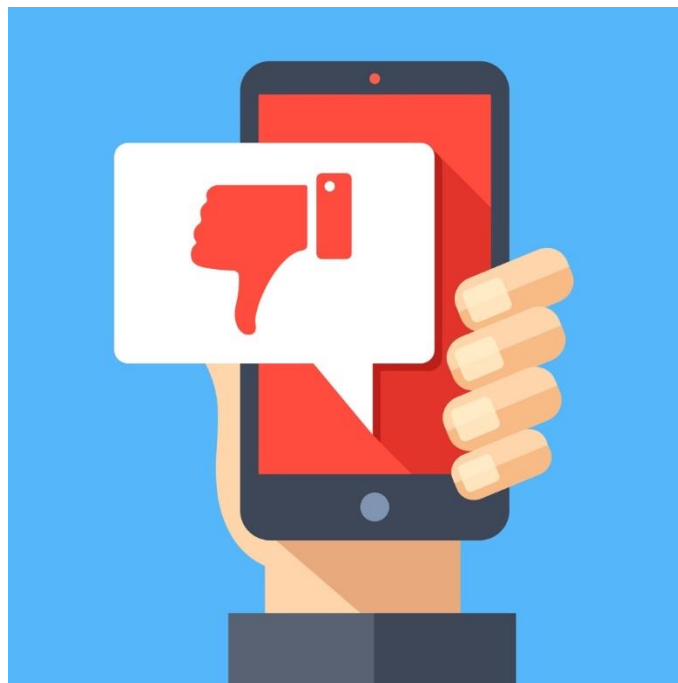
A poor mobile user experience is no longer optional – mobile now drives the majority of traffic in many verticals.

What to watch out for:

- Poor tap targets or tiny buttons
- Un-optimized images or carousels that slow mobile load
- Hidden calls to action or poor form usability
- Overloaded content above the fold on small screens

How to fix it:

- Test on real devices (not just simulators)
- Use responsive design and performance optimisations (e.g. images that adapt to the device your using)
- Use sticky footers or floating buttons for key actions
-



5. Mismatched ads and landing pages

If your ad promises one thing but the landing page delivers something else, visitors bounce.

Consistency builds trust – from headline to imagery to offer.

How to fix it :

- Match ad copy and visuals to your landing page
- Use dedicated pages for each campaign, not your homepage
- Personalise headlines with dynamic text where possible

Same message, same design, same promise – that's what converts.



6. Lack of a call to action

You could write the most compelling sales copy about your product or service, but if you don't tell your visitor what you want them to do after they've read it, it's pretty much a complete waste of time and effort.

A 'call to action' (CTA) is a vital ingredient on any web page, as it's what drives your conversions.

You need to lead your prospects through your sales funnel, and they need to be given a clear idea of what to do next.

Do this with a prominent button or link that has a succinct instruction.

How to fix it :

- Use one main CTA per page (too many creates confusion)
- Make it stand out visually and action-oriented: "Get started," "Book a demo," "See pricing"
- Place secondary CTAs lower down the page if needed

Clarity beats cleverness every time.



7. No email capture

If your site doesn't collect emails, you're missing one of the most reliable ways to convert visitors into long-term customers.

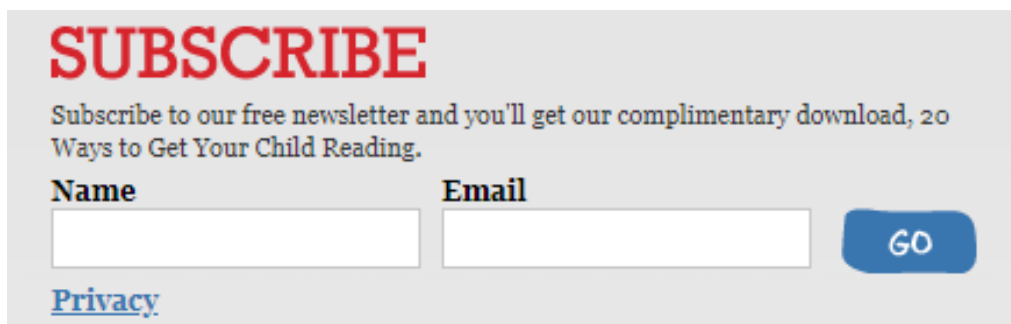
Your email list is the only marketing channel you truly own — and it keeps working long after someone clicks away.

Why it matters:

Email consistently outperforms social and paid ads for return on investment, and it lets you stay connected with people who've already shown interest.

How to fix it :

- Offer something useful — a short guide, template, or free resource — rather than a vague “subscribe to our newsletter”
- Keep your form short (name and email are usually enough) and be transparent about privacy and frequency
- Place opt-ins where intent is highest: within blog posts, at checkout, or after valuable content
- Test subtle pop-ups or sticky bars that appear after engagement, not immediately on load



SUBSCRIBE

Subscribe to our free newsletter and you'll get our complimentary download, 20 Ways to Get Your Child Reading.

Name

Email

[Privacy](#)

8. Browser or device issues

Your site might look perfect on your laptop – but broken for a big chunk of your visitors.

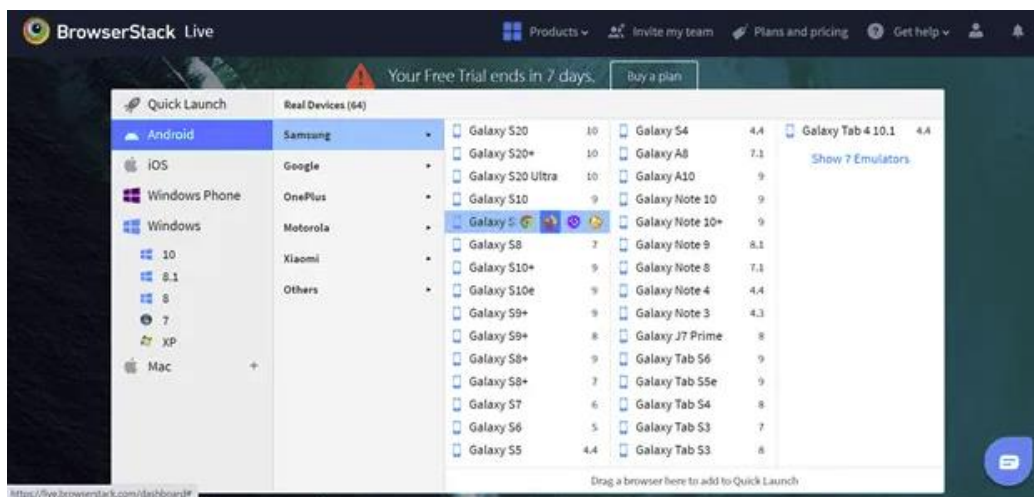
Different browsers and operating systems can interpret code slightly differently, which means something that looks flawless in Chrome on desktop might appear misaligned, unclickable, or even invisible in Safari on iPhone or Edge on Windows.

Even small issues – like a hidden checkout button or misaligned form – can stop a sale.

How to fix it :

- Check your analytics for browsers or devices with high bounce or low conversion rates
- Use tools like BrowserStack to preview your site across browsers
- Focus fixes on the most common ones: Chrome, Safari, and Edge
- After each update, do a quick multi-device check to catch new bugs early.

A short test once a month can save countless lost conversions.



9. Not using persuasive copy

A website's copy - in simple terms the words on the pages - is arguably its most valuable asset.

This is because it has to do so many different jobs; search engine optimisation, brand guardian, but most importantly, salesperson.

But so often web copy is shoe-horned in at the last minute as an afterthought.

So few companies do a good job of writing compelling sales copy on their websites. If you can do this you can leapfrog your competitors and secure the sale.

How to fix it :

- Lead with benefits, not features
- Use your customers' language (from reviews or surveys)
- Keep it simple, direct, and human

Great copy converts again and again.





Thank you!

You can now fix 9 of the biggest conversion killers!

But the real growth comes from having a **repeatable CRO process** – one that finds opportunities, tests them, and keeps improving month after month.

That's exactly what I teach in my online course:

🎓 **A Step-by-Step Guide to Conversion Rate Optimisation**

Learn how to:

- ✓ Analyse user behaviour and find test ideas
- ✓ Design and run A/B tests confidently
- ✓ Turn insights into consistent, compounding results

📈 Ready to move from quick fixes to lasting growth?

[FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE COURSE](#)

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