



## ***Foster Manufacturing***

***Case Study: More and better leads from the Web compared to trade shows.***



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## ***Focus: Manufacturer of cutters, trimmers and material handling equipment***

In 1946 Foster Manufacturing Company started providing solutions for storage needs of the printing industry with high-quality cabinets. With the advent of offset printing, Foster expanded its range of products to include flat and vertical filing systems and precision light tables.

Today, Foster meets the needs of the digital age with the most complete selection of cutters, trimmers and roll lifters for wide format, sign-making and display graphics production.

Ted Borowsky, president of Foster Manufacturing talks about what their situation was like when they launched their first website, "Before we started working with Cazbah, we basically had an online catalog and we really didn't have a lot of traffic. We didn't get a lot of people calling us saying, 'we saw your stuff on the web,' It was fairly mundane."

As with so many businesses, they had built their website with the materials that they had available at the time, Ted goes on to say, "it was basically our catalog copy, our photos, and our prices. There was nothing really driving traffic to our company on the Web per-se."

With great anticipation, they had launched their website in hopes of generating the kinds of traffic and leads that they had heard so much about and hoped for. Unfortunately, the results were not forthcoming. Ted comments that, "we weren't getting the level of calls or inquiries that we thought we would have from the web."

In addition to making a go-at-it on the Web, Foster Manufacturing had invested a tremendous amount of time and money in trade shows, over the years. Trade shows are expensive and time consuming. They had found that the leads that they got from the shows weren't materializing into sales. As an alternative to trade shows, they had hoped that their website would provide the sales leads the company needed to continue to grow and thrive.

Ted talks about the benefits of getting leads from the Web as-opposed-to trade show leads, "what's really great about the leads we now get from our Cazbah website and from our e-marketing is that our cost to obtain them is very, very low compare to trade shows. These website leads cost us a fraction of what we have to pay to acquire leads by going to a show. The return on investment on these leads is much, much higher."

Not only is Foster Manufacturing getting more leads from their Cazbah website, the leads have improved as well. Ted talks about this, "The quality of the leads have gotten much better. One of the things that we now do as a result of this increase and the quality of these leads is, we're now bringing them to the point where we can actually recommend a specific product. We can then forward the inquiries to our dealers and say, 'here's somebody who's qualified, 'we need you to quote them.'"

As a manufacturer, Foster relies on their dealer network to sell their products. Ted commented, "the dealers really appreciate this and it creates a strong bond. It ties them in to our company that much more. They really appreciate it. They know that we're loyal and that we're really trying to help their businesses grow."

*Foster Manufacturing had invested a lot of time and money in trade shows without seeing the results.*

*Using your website to support your dealer network makes perfect sense.*

## The Cazbah Solution

Foster Manufacturing has been a Cazbah customer since 2009. In that time they have seen their website traffic increase and the leads that they get from the Web improve.

Over the past 6 years, the company has continued to grow and thrive in a very competitive market. Ted goes on to say, "Our sales were flat before we joined Cazbah. In fact they were declining. **"In the last 2 years we've seen a 20% increase in our business, which is pretty good considering the economy we are in."**

"We're very happy with the increase in sales," he went on to say. "We've also gotten a lot more inquiries from overseas and we've expanded our distribution into Central and South America as a result."

Cazbah provides Foster Manufacturing with:

- **Focused website design and development.** Cazbah built Foster Manufacturing's website with a focus on targeting their content and products specifically to their customer wants and needs. Ted comments, "We went from 700 - 800 items down to about ½ of that."

Cazbah designed Foster's new website with a particular focus on products sold through their dealer channel. Ted went on to say, "we eliminated the products that had become much more commoditized. These products are sold on a direct basis by many other companies and they were non-competitive for us."

- **Profitability.** By focusing on their core business and finding additional products that complimented what they currently have to offer, Cazbah is helping Foster Manufacturing become a more profitable business. Ted comments, "we now have a very particular focus online and we are a lot more profitable as a result. We're a much more viable company in the long run by doing so."
- **Dealer channel sales lead management.** As a manufacturer that is dedicated to their dealer channel, Foster needed a website that accomplished their goal of supporting their dealers with sales leads, worldwide. Cazbah delivered. The Foster Manufacturing website is the repository where end-users and dealers alike can come and get the information they need to advance the sale.

Ted comments, "many of our dealers resent other manufactures that try to ride both horses; selling direct and also trying to sell through the dealer channel. Dealer don't trust them. Supporting the channel moves us up in our creditably with our dealers and makes us a very strong player."

- **Inventory control.** Cazbah helped Foster Manufacturing solve a major problem with excess inventory that they had on hand. The website now provides Foster with real inventory control, the kind that generates revenue.

Ted said, "The website has been helping us get rid of a lot of excess inventory that had just been languishing in our warehouse. Even if we

*Identify and highlight the products on your website that your customers want and need.*

only get 10% or 20% over cost, it's cash that we didn't have because it was tied up in inventory that wasn't moving. **That translates into roughly \$40,000 - \$50,000 in cash that we didn't have before.** I can now put that money towards better inventory that is turning 4, 5 and 6 times per year!"

## The Bottom Line

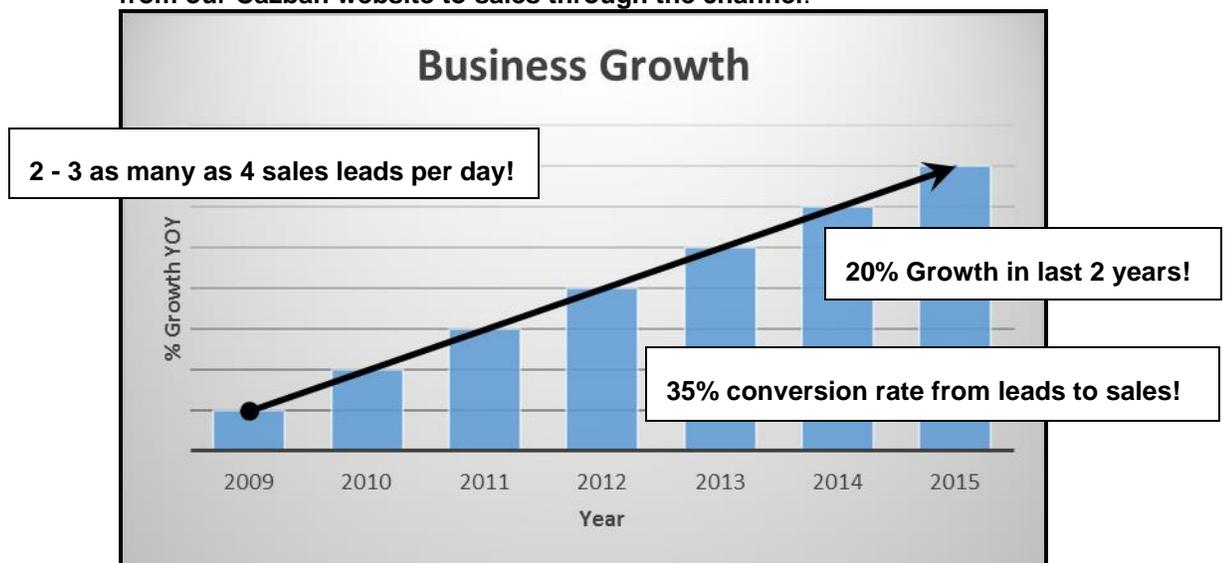
Ted knew that opportunity awaited Foster Manufacturing on the Web and it didn't take long for the new website to prove him right. As he mentioned, **"Our sales were flat before we joined Cazbah, in fact they were declining, but in the last 2 years we've seen a 20% increase in our business."**

Foster Manufacturing has also used their Cazbah website to generate more international business and to grow the company in areas they couldn't have imagined previously. Ted goes on to say, "We're very happy with the increase in sales. We've also gotten a lot more inquiries from overseas and we've expanded our distribution into Central and South America as a result."

*Getting a large number of qualified sales leads is what Foster Manufacturing has come to expect from their Cazbah website.*

In addition to these benefits, Foster Manufacturing can now count on their Cazbah website to generate the volume of qualified leads that the company needs to support their dealer channel and grow their business. Ted comments, "We've definitely seen an increase in the leads we get from our website. Before Cazbah we would get maybe 1 or 2 sales leads per week, if that. Maybe only 3 to 4 leads per month. **Now that we are a Cazbah customer, we get 2 - 3 as many as 4 sales leads per day!**"

Being able to track sales through the channel has been a big advantage for Foster Manufacturing. The ability to know when a sale closes, after sending a qualified lead to a dealer, helps Foster close-the-loop on their Internet marketing process. Ted talks about this, **"Our close rate is actually pretty good. We're getting about a 35% conversion ratio from sales inquiries from our Cazbah website to sales through the channel."**



## Lessons Learned

Ted learned how a comprehensive website solution provided by Cazbah could help him grow his business and expand his dealer network internationally. Some of Ted's observations are below:

*Cazbah is interested and committed to Foster Manufacturing's long-term success. Just ask Ted Borowsky.*

- “One of the other things that’s really important about our Cazbah website is the fact that we're able to instantly communicate new features, new designs, or innovations. People are out on the Web looking for that sort of thing.”
- “We've never been overly focused on the size of the order, although the size of a particular order is important to us. We are more interested in the types of items that are starting to move online. Having said that, our order size has gone up on Web inquiries and our product mix is changing, both of which lend themselves to the growth of the business.”
- “I've recommended Cazbah to a number of different companies. Probably a half a dozen companies out there that I've talked to about it that I have heard complaining about their website provider. I've put the Cazbah name out there for sure.”
- We are definitely getting a very good return on our investment, and I think we can do even better. We're going to stick with Cazbah.”