



## INTERNET MARKETING FOR AN INDUSTRIAL BRAND

How being transparent and interactive helps drive customer loyalty and attract new business.

Himtrust develops new formulations of components required for PU foam and paints and coatings, and tailors formulations to customers' requests. The company has a 28-year track record, 16 warehouses, and representative offices in Russia and Kazakhstan. With shipments going to Armenia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, and Uzbekistan, our sales footprint continues to expand. We are growing at 10%–30% per year, driven by a strong focus on our online marketing strategy.

Our competitors are global chemical giants like Dow, Huntsman, and BASF – and they are not interested in messing around with small fry who buy one or two barrels; they trade several dozens of tonnes at a time. If you place a small order with them, it will take two to three weeks to arrive. We decided to fill this gap by targeting customers in the B2B sector who need to receive their shipment in two to three days. We did this by creating a website, getting it SEO optimised, and setting up contextual advertising. We made our store off-limits to unregistered users to build up a CRM database. A sales manager would check and manually enter the data.



**DENIS EGANOV,**

the Founder and CEO of Himtrust

But as a result, people started to distrust us, which foiled our plans. None of our competitors sold their products online, and customers were not used to buying barrels of feedstock in this way. They were afraid of paying via the website; after all, in the B2B market, we are talking about big sums of money – what if the payment does not go through?

We decided to do a bit of client education to convince our customers to try out a new format of purchasing.

**1. We developed an attractive discount programme:** if you order online, bulk-buy discounts accrue by tonnage and the number of orders, while purchases placed with a sales manager are markedly more expensive and are not taken into account in the cumulative discount system.

**2. We launched a campaign to raise awareness of the fact** that placing orders on Himtrust's online store is fast, easy, and safe.

But with orders starting to come into the pipeline, our advertising campaigns being made more aggressive, and feedback being actively collected from customers and managers, we identified a number of snags.



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**Problem 1: A high bounce rate on the site.** The first thing a customer wants to know is the price. To access the price list, they had to first fill in their details and wait for a manager to handle the data. They did not want to waste any time on this, and would just leave the site.

**Problem 2: Difficulties processing data.** With our site closed off, we could only track what registered users were doing, and we could not collect data about other audiences and tailor adverts for them.

**Problem 3: A long ordering journey.** As it turned out, it was still easier and faster for customers to call a sales manager than to buy a product by themselves on the website. This even went for loyal customers who had been working with us for a long time and were confident that we were reliable.





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We analysed these problems and realised that we could solve them all by simply opening up to our customers. I mean this literally, and that is exactly what we did.

**1. We removed the need to register from the site.**

**2. We made the price list available to all.** We opened up information about stock levels for products in all warehouses, too, so that customers can calculate order lead times.

**3. We enhanced the site's functionality:** we added the ability to specify a date and time of shipment, and to attach a power of attorney from the outset.

**4. We cut down the number of steps needed to place an order online.**

**5. We eliminated the need to speak to a sales manager.** Customers are free to pay for an order at any time of the day without having to call a manager. This solved the problem of having to wait until someone in another time zone was available. We also made the payment process even more faster and easier by adding the QR code option.

Looking at our results, orders placed online jumped up 35% over the last nine months – I see this as a success. Furthermore, we optimised site content to improve its selling power. We post articles and videos on our blog every month. We are now also offering step-by-step help guides to walk the customer through the entire order placement process. On top of this, we launched newsletters, as well

as a pages on Facebook and Instagram. We use them to keep customers up to date with our news and new products, answer any questions, and help them navigate our catalogue. We also run giveaways and competitions. As a result, our social audience has grown by 1,000 over the nine-month campaign period to 6,300 engaged users, with traffic to the site up 30%. On Yandex [*the “Russian Google” – ed.*], we are now one of the top three results for “spraying PU foam”, and one of the top four for “filling PU foam”.

We are currently working with Sberbank to launch an option to pay in instalments, which will open up new opportunities for our customers.