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The manufacturer's website playbook

Twelve practical principles for turning technical capability into qualified enquiries

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Manufacturing websites underperform for a predictable reason: they are built like corporate brochures, while the visitor who matters is an engineer trying to answer practical questions. Can you make this, to this standard, in this material, at this scale, with the right quality controls? The twelve principles below make those answers easy to find and easy to share. We have built manufacturing sites for twenty years, and every one of these is a lesson somebody paid for.

THE CLICKINGMAD TEST

If a specifier cannot find it, send it upwards or cite it in a meeting, it is not evidence. It is decoration.

1. Lead with capability, not slogans

A technical buyer should know what you make, to what standard and at what scale within seconds of arriving. Broad slogans can live further down the page; the first screen belongs to clarity.

2. Build pages for the searches engineers actually make

Specifiers search by process, material, tolerance, certification and component type, almost never by the marketing phrases on your home page. Give every capability that earns margin its own substantial page.

3. Put the specifications on the page, not behind a form

Every spec you gate behind an enquiry form is a specifier you lose to a competitor who published theirs. Gate nothing a buyer needs to shortlist you.

4. Make everything sendable

Your first visitor is rarely the decision-maker. They sell you internally, so case studies, capability statements and datasheets must be easy to save, print and forward.

5. Name the machines, the standards and the numbers

Vague capability claims read as marketing. Named plant, cited standards and stated tolerances read as engineering, and engineers notice the difference immediately.

6. Photograph the real factory

Your shop floor is more persuasive than any stock image, and a specifier can tell the difference at a glance. Real kit, real people, real work in progress.

7. Answer the quality question before it is asked

Certifications, QA processes and inspection capability belong one click from anywhere, because for many buyers they are the first filter, not the last.

8. Date your datasheets, and keep them current

A manufacturing site with stale specifications is worse than none, because it actively misleads the one visitor who matters most. Decide who owns keeping them true.

9. Keep the phone number in reach

Plenty of this sector still buys by ringing up, especially when the question is unusual. The number belongs at the top of every page, and whoever answers should know the products.

10. Track downloads as seriously as enquiries

A datasheet download is often the earliest signal that a specifier is working you into a project, months before any enquiry arrives. Measure it, and treat spikes as sales intelligence.

11. Separate the buyer's path from the engineer's

The budget holder wants confidence and evidence; the engineer wants depth and data. Serve both without making either wade through the other's material.

12. Let the case studies carry the adjectives

Say "precision" once in a headline and a buyer shrugs. Show a project with the tolerance achieved, the deadline met and the client named, and the word becomes redundant.

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