

10 Tips for Creating an Effective Landing Page

What is a Landing Page?

When running a marketing campaign, the ultimate goal is to convert prospects into customers. Driving prospects to an online landing page is often an interim step towards this end goal. *Landing pages are specific pages designed to make a prospective customer take action.*

Marketers could send all prospective customers directly to their companies' homepages, but then what would the customers do there? They'd have to search the site for the products, services and promotions they're most interested in. This is too hard.

Landing pages make it easy for prospective customers to act upon unique marketing campaigns by responding to a clear call to action—whether that means filling out an online form, signing up for a free-trial, or actually making a purchase. In addition, landing pages enable marketers to easily track the effectiveness of individual marketing campaigns through the measurement of click-through-rates and numbers of acquired leads or customers.



Typical Usage Models

Landing Pages are effective for multiple usage scenarios:

- » **Pay per click.** The most common scenario is to use pay per click (PPC) advertisements such as Google Adwords or a banner, sponsorship link or graphic to direct customers to a landing page.
- » **Email campaigns.** Marketers also use landing pages for email campaigns of all kinds including offers of white papers, webinars, free trials, and the like. In each of these cases, the call to action is designed to capture prospects' information in exchange for useful tools. This information can then be used to move the sales process forward.
- » **Social media marketing.** Additionally landing pages can be created to support social media marketing campaigns on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn networks and others.
- » **Traditional media.** Landing pages aren't exclusive to online campaigns. They're also effectively used in tangent with traditional offline marketing tactics like television, print, radio advertising and events.

When using landing pages the goal is two-fold: drive prospects to the page then compel prospects to take action once there. Anyone can create a landing page, but what constitutes a great landing page? A great landing page gets the job done. It results in engagement and action.

Here are the 10 key tips for creating an effective landing page:



1. Have a clear and emphasized call to action

The offer is a critical component of getting the sale, so make a big deal out of it. Set the offer copy and corresponding call to action apart from the rest of the page to make it special. Use white space, a box around it, lines above and below and/or some sort of contrast to point out where the visitor needs to focus to obtain the item.

Finally, make sure you spell out exactly what will happen if someone fills out the form or clicks on the desired link.



2. Work the headline and subhead

The number one job of the headline is to establish a contextual relevance for the landing page based on the copy used to generate the visit. You know what was used to generate the click. The headline and subhead should support those enticements right when the reader arrives on the page.

Example:

- » **Keyword:** Green Egg Barbeque Grill
- » **Google Copy:** Sale on Green Egg BBQs. Large selection of Green Egg grills and accessories. Compare our prices. www.GreenEgg.com
- » **Possible landing page headline:** Green Egg BBQ Grills on Sale
- » **A counterexample** for the above situation would be a headline like "Huge BBQ Grill Selection," which runs counter to the content of the ad.
- » **Elsewhere in the text** repeat the keyword used in the headline of the landing page in a positive way.



3. Eliminate choices

Having links on a landing page which don't pertain to conversion is like asking children to do homework at an amusement park; it won't happen. Don't create diversions. Distractions hurt conversion. As much as you think you want someone to visit the really great content you have on your site, you will reduce the page's performance by allowing the visitor to be distracted. If you must have links that don't lead directly to a primary action, put them in the footer.



4. Simplify design and reduce text

Simplify. Simplify. Simplify. Do not use a wide variety of font styles, colors, and sizes on your page. Remove images and interactive rich-media content unless it directly supports your conversion goal and is a clearly superior way of conveying important information. Bland landing pages are often the best conversion drivers. Again, the goal is to minimize distractions.

People don't read on the web. Study after study has shown that less content on a landing page leads to higher conversion rates. Ruthlessly edit your text down to simple headlines and short bullet lists. Cut out the self-promoting marketing speak. People won't read it. Detailed information can be linked to (in the footer) and made available on supporting pages.



5. Use images judiciously

Images are good to use on landing pages to give a visual representation of the product or service as long as these following rules are followed:

- » **Don't make the image too large.** The purpose of the image is to add some visual candy to the page and help orient the visitor to the product and headline. If an image is too large and dominates the page, you lose the opportunity let the headline do the heavy lifting and you push other content below the fold.
- » **Don't make it too complex.** Multiple versions of the same item in different colors won't help. Keep it simple and clean.
- » **Make sure it renders properly and is sized correctly.** A jagged image will reduce the perceived quality of the page while a large image file will slow the page load.
- » **Use a caption.** After headlines, captions are the next most read pieces of text.



6. Align your on-page message and call-to-action with your off-page promise

Your visitors arrived from somewhere, and an expectation was set before they even landed on your page. This could have been in your pay-per-click ad, a third-party blog posting, or a comparison shopping engine. Make sure you understand the context from which they arrived. It is critical to align the content of your landing page with their intent and expectations



7. Show brand validation

People want to feel an affinity for your product or service. By transferring recognition or goodwill from other sources you can help reinforce their desire to act. Liberally use logos of well-recognized client brands. Add the badges of media sources that have covered or mentioned your company. Prominently display glowing testimonials from existing customers.

Do everything possible to reduce anxiety for your visitors, by using safe shopping seals and other indicators of your trustworthiness. The logos of trade associations, acceptable payment methods, and money-back guarantee seals can all be powerful ways to make your visitors feel that transacting with you will be safe and secure.



8. Enable sharing and highlight social validation

Social media buzz grows exponentially and also serves as a stamp of approval by others highlighting the value of an offer. Social buzz will drive more traffic to the page, validate your credibility and has the potential to help your website rank higher on search engine results pages. Make social sharing of your landing page easy.

Include popular social media share buttons above the fold and in the sign up process. If you can, enable social-login to make it easier for visitors to accept your offer and follow through on your call to action.



9. Employ key tactics to seal the deal

Follow tried-and-true strategies to elicit the desired response:

- » **Keep conversion barriers to a minimum.** Picture each form field as a hoop. The more fields you prospects are required to fill out, the more hoops must jump through. Reduce form fields. Get the basic information you need to move the sale forward without making prospects feel overly encumbered.
- » **Create a sense of urgency** by including a countdown of number of items left, number of days left to get the deal, limited-time-offer copy or other time sensitive imperatives. This sense of urgency will compel visitors to complete the sale.
- » **Use High Contrast Buttons that Say “Click Here.”** Yes, it’s obvious. But in test after test, this tactic works the best. It’s kind of like flashing a shiny lure in front of a hungry trout. And pump up the value of your offer right here, when the customer is actively deciding, to click or not. Think about adding a money back guarantee, no obligation, free trial or other positive value copy around the button.



10. Test, test, test

There are many elements of a landing page that can be tested such as the use of a demo, multiple pages linked by tabs, number and length of bullet points, approaches to copy (salesy, helpful, long, short, etc.), dynamic content, etc. The key to ongoing improvement is establishing a culture of testing and tweaking.

Conclusion

Creating a great landing page is a critical step in the conversion funnel. By viewing the page as a speed bump in the conversion process rather than an information dump, you’ll find users will be inclined to move onto the next step and they’ll do so, because there is less friction. In addition, you’ll be able to attach ROI measurements to your various marketing campaigns. As you test and refine your campaigns, this insight into their net values will enable you to become more efficient and effective at driving down costs per acquired customer.

About Optify

Optify is the leading provider of marketing software and services for the real time web. Optify's hosted, easy-to-use suite of applications enables businesses to drive more traffic and leads with SEO and social media, convert visitors to customers, and measure and share results. For more insights on how to market in real time, visit the [Optify Lead Generation Blog](#).

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