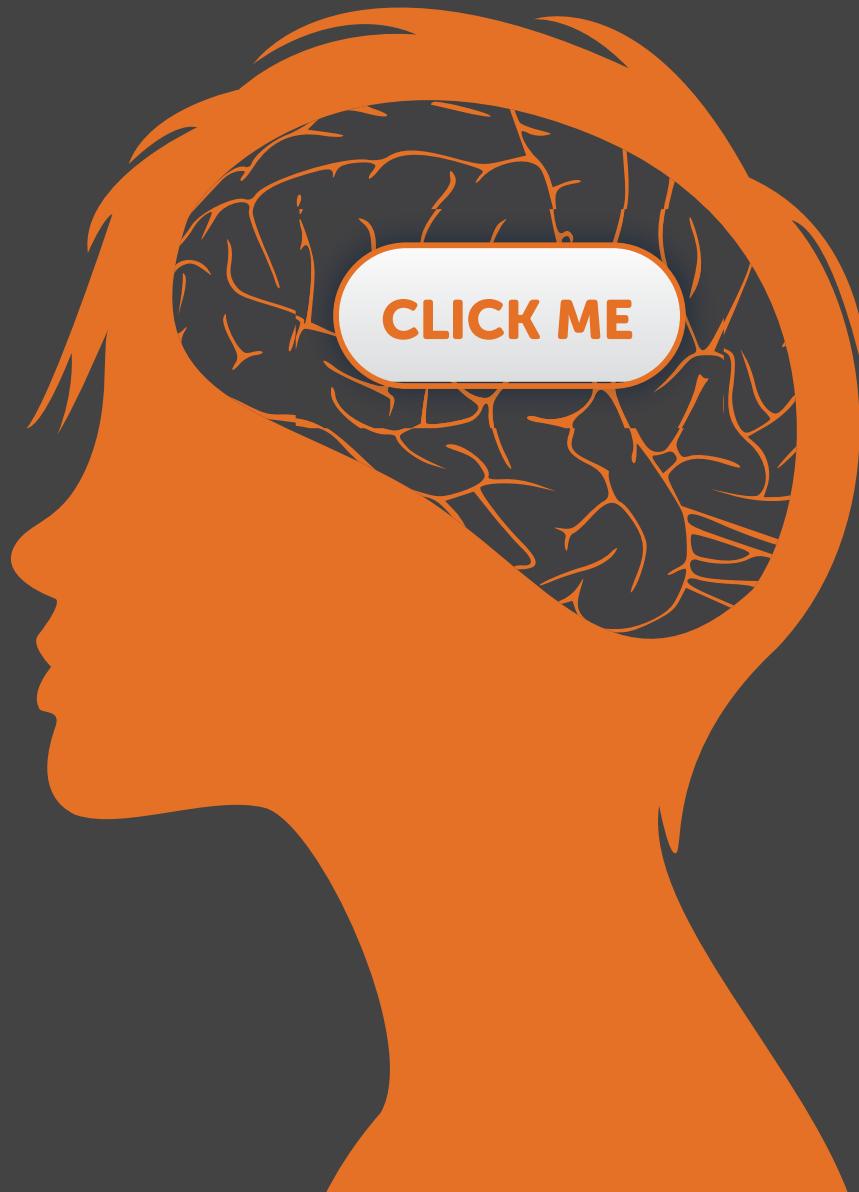


Conversion Centered Design

Essential Elements of High Converting Landing Pages



A publication of
HubSpot
unbounce

What's in the ebook?

This guide will teach you everything you need to know about Conversion Centered Design and the critical role that psychology plays.

1. Conversion Centered Design vs. User Centered Design

Find out how design is evolving

2. The Seven Principles of Conversion Centered Design

Build from a solid foundation

3. CTA Design & Page Placement

Best practices for the strongest CTA's

4. Persuasive Copywriting

Work with your prospects, not against them

5. A/B Testing Designs for Higher Conversions

Test your designs for optimal results

6. Designing for Mobile Conversion

Embrace the platforms your customers use

7. Conversion-Based Page Templates

Example landing pages designed for conversion

What is Unbounce?

Unbounce is the DIY Landing Page platform for Marketers. Build high converting landing pages for your PPC, email, banner and social media campaigns.

- **Build & Publish Landing Pages In Minutes**

Use our powerful editor to re-create your design from scratch, or use one of our templates for a head start.

- **1-Click A/B Testing For Optimization**

Need to solve an argument with your boss? Stop relying on assumptions and set up a test experiment.

- **Simple Analytics To Track Campaigns**

Our stats are powerful yet simple. It's all about clicks, conversions and how well your campaign is performing.

BUILD A HIGH-CONVERTING
LANDING PAGE NOW

Foreword

As a marketer and former usability geek, I understand the battle raging between user centered design and conversion centered design — UCD and CCD, as we'll come to know them. They do intertwine, but as you'll learn there's a fundamental difference, which is the focus of this guide. The difference is conversion.

Conversion in usability terms might be the successful completion of a series of tasks (a set of micro-conversions) in the flow of a sign-up or shopping cart process, or the series of steps involved in a product usage task.

For a marketer, conversion means convincing a visitor to do one thing and one thing only. Not one of many things, not accomplishing it in under seven seconds, not successfully navigating from one point to another — just completing a single business-driven objective.

In other words, it's about persuasion, and that's what I'll discuss in the next 400 pages. Kidding. It's more like **61**.

Oli Gardner

Co-Founder & Creative Director
Unbounce

Chapter 1

Conversion Centered Design vs. User Centered Design

Conversion Centered Design (CCD)

CCD is a discipline targeted specifically at designing experiences that achieve a single business goal. It seeks to guide the visitor towards completing that one specific action, using persuasive design and psychological triggers as devices to increase conversions.

Landing pages sit at the heart of CCD. A landing page being a standalone page that uses congruent design – working toward a single collective purpose – to usher your visitors toward the finish line, be it the collection of personal data or educating them about your product/service before passing the baton to the next phase of your conversion funnel.

Typically used for promotion based marketing, the landing page takes an interested party — who clicked on an email link, display banner or paid search ad — and convince them to convert right here and now, as opposed to the self-guided exploration facilitated on a full website.

The effectiveness of a landing page compared to a homepage, uses the principle of 'less is more' which can be illustrated by comparing the number of links (leaks) on each type of page. As we'll see below. Less links being the optimal scenario for a high converting page.

Homepage vs. landing page

The first example compares the Webtrends homepage with one of their landing pages. This is a beautifully designed page, but it's also focused on multiple things. There are five concepts presented in the main promo area (via a rotating banner), four supplementary messages below that, and a total of 28 interaction points. This is a great destination for branded organic search traffic, but **not as good when driving traffic targeted at a single topic.**

Contrast the homepage to one of the lead generation landing pages. On the lead gen page, there is only one action to perform; users are to fill out the form and click the CTA button to complete the conversion. This produces a much more focused experience for visitors.

The jam study

A real world example of the psychology of less is more comes from an experiment conducted in a supermarket in 2000. A jam tasting stall was erected to allow shoppers to sample the different flavors of jam available for purchase. The test compared the impact of varying the number of choices between 24 and 6.

In the case of the 24 flavors, three per cent of those who tasted the samples went on to purchase the jam, compared to a whopping 30 per cent purchase rate when only 6 flavors were available. This demonstrates a phenomenon known as analysis paralysis, where too many options actually results in no decision being made.



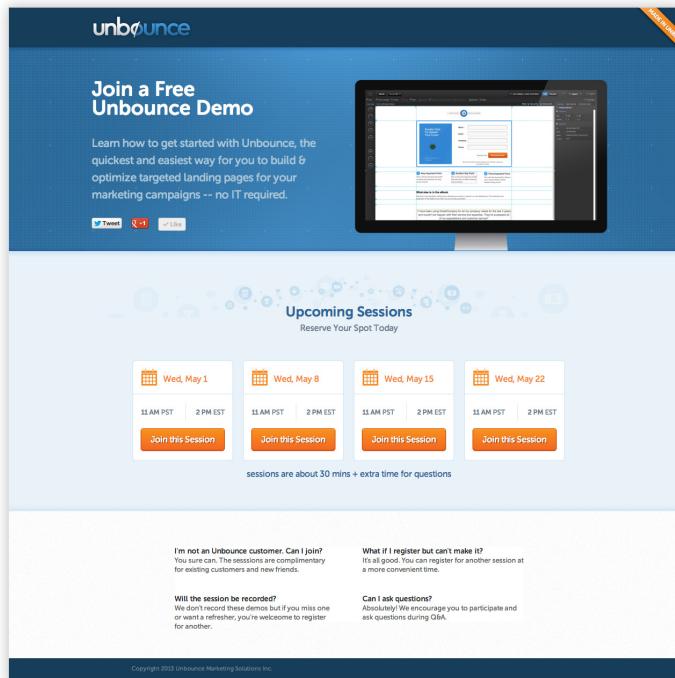
24 flavors - 3% purchase rate



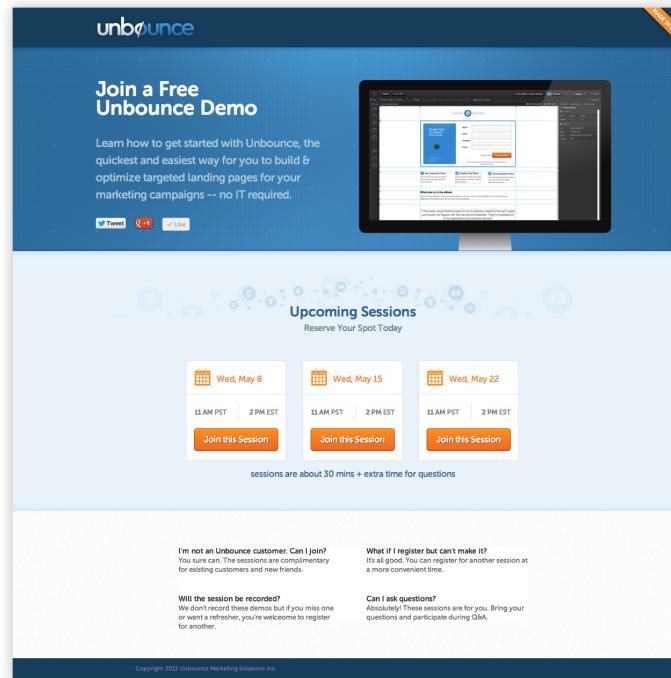
6 flavors - 30% purchase rate

The demo experiment

An experiment conducted by Unbounce in 2013 supports this. We compared the conversion rate by changing the number of upcoming demo sessions customers could register to attend. The original landing page had four options presented as shown in the first screenshot. This was tested against a page that had three options.



4 options



3 options

The result? A 78 per cent conversion lift for the landing page with three options.

As you can see, there is a clear benefit in reducing the number of options available to your prospective customers, which is why landing pages — with their single conversion goal — are so effective at communicating a marketing concept.

The two types of landing pages

There are two main types of landing pages: lead generation (lead gen) and click through.

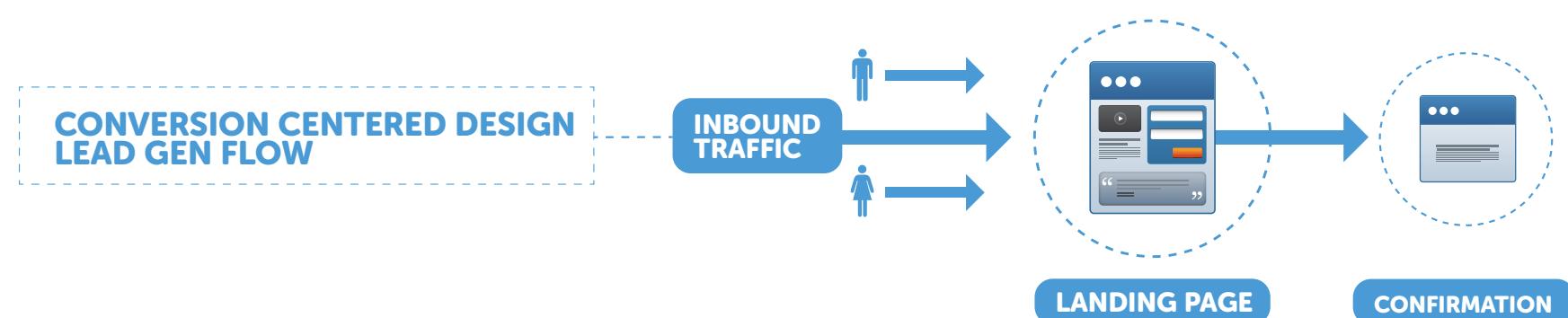
1. Lead gen landing pages

Lead gen pages are used to capture user data, such as a name and email address. The only purpose of the page is to collect information that will allow you to market to and connect with the prospect at another time. As such, a lead capture page will contain a form along with a description of what the visitor will get in return for submitting their personal data.

There are many incentives for a user to give up their personal information. Some examples are listed on the right hand side:

- eBook or whitepaper
- Webinar registration
- Consultation for professional services
- Discount coupon/voucher
- Contest entry
- Free trial
- A physical gift (via direct mail)
- Notification of a future product launch

The length of your form and the level of personal data requested can have a direct impact on conversion. Ask for the absolute minimum amount of information that will enable you to market to your prospects effectively. For instance, don't ask for a phone or fax number if you only need to contact them via email.

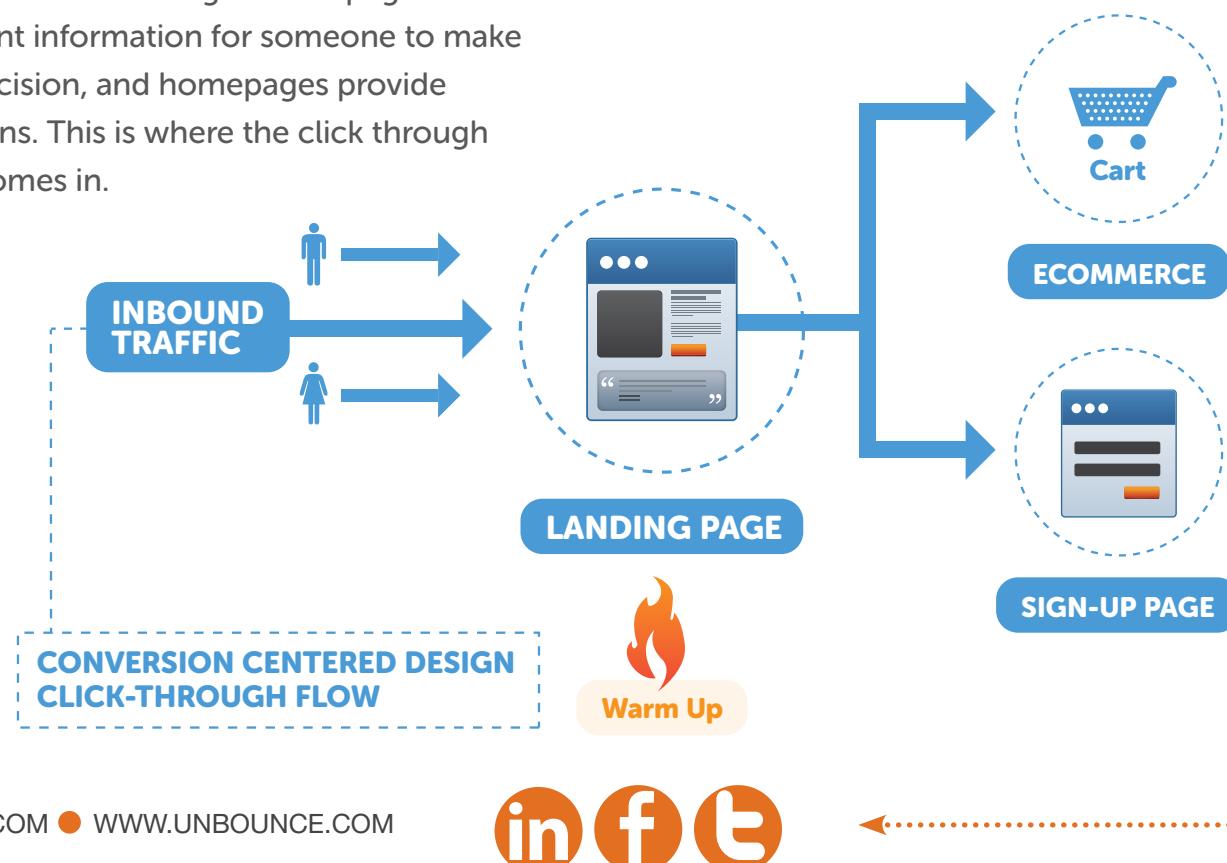


2. Click through landing pages

Click through landing pages have the goal of persuading the visitor to click through to another page. Typically used in ecommerce funnels, they can be used to describe a product or offer sufficient detail to warm up a visitor to the point where they are closer to making a purchasing decision.

All too often, inbound advertising traffic is sent directly to a homepage or registration page, which leads to poor conversions. Registration pages don't provide sufficient information for someone to make an informed decision, and homepages provide too many options. This is where the click through landing page comes in.

The extra information on the landing page warms the customer up to what you are selling by offering them the details they need to know, with no distractions. When the prospect clicks through to the destination page, they're now primed with all the information they require and will be much more likely to buy.



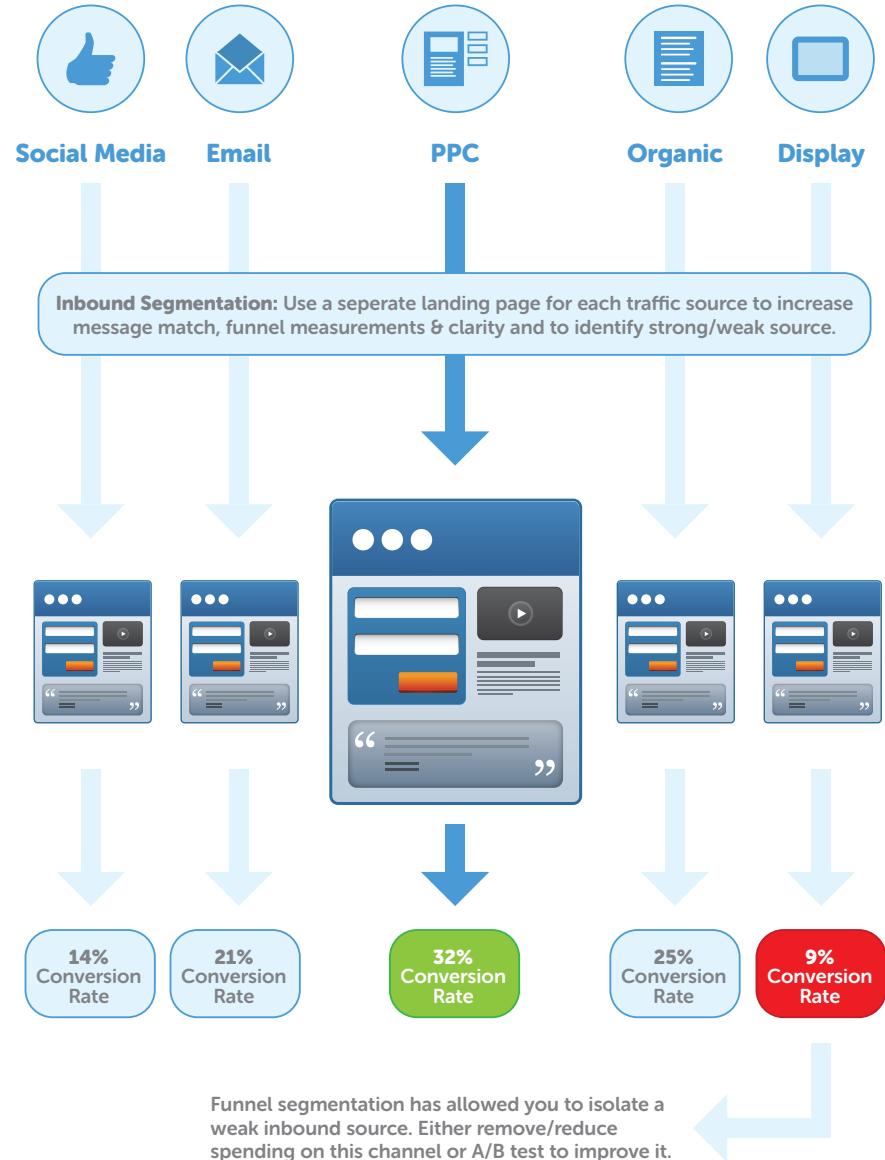
Advanced landing page flow – segmentation

Designing a landing page for each inbound marketing channel offers two important benefits.

- Higher conversion rates. The messaging on each landing page can be tweaked to increase relevance.
- Optimization. Testing your channels against one another will highlight which channels to double-down on and which to cut.

Dedicating a landing page to each marketing channel ensures your prospects experience relevant content at all steps of the conversion experience. Consistent messaging is key here.

For instance, PPC traffic needs to have a dedicated landing page connected to your ad and should be left untouched to maintain your Quality Score. The reason for this, is that if you update the page to reflect the content of a different campaign source, you will create a disconnect between ad and landing page.



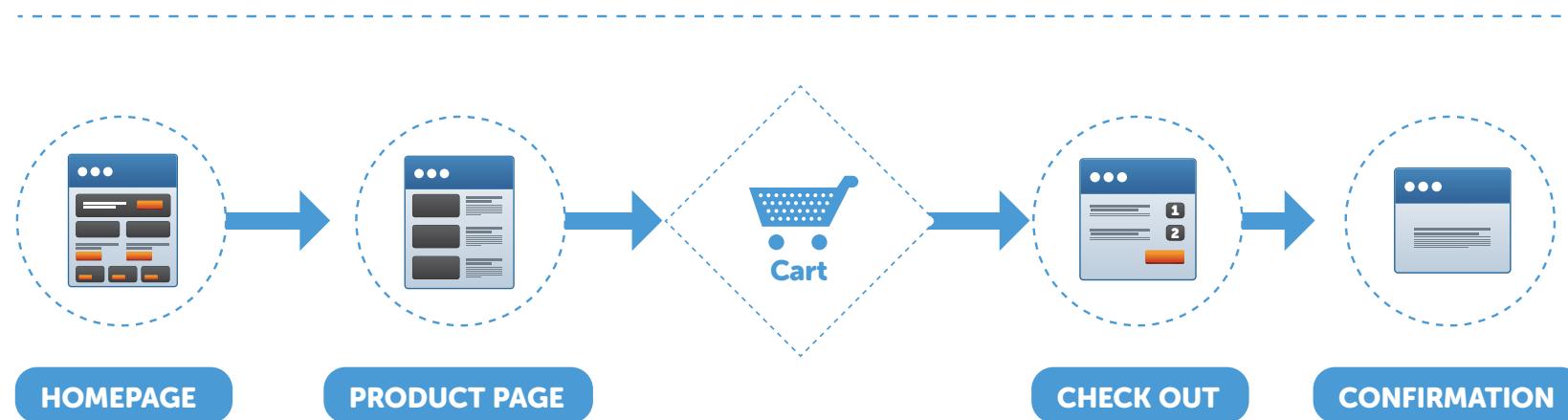
Funnel segmentation has allowed you to isolate a weak inbound source. Either remove/reduce spending on this channel or A/B test to improve it.

User Centered Design (UCD)

UCD is more focused on the usability of a website or the insides of a product. An ecommerce flow would be a good example of this. With an ecommerce flow, the process is enhanced by making it as easy as possible to get through a number of steps. Here, the focus is on the user's goals. The priority is making their experience through the process as simple as possible.

The major distinction with CCD is the desire to get someone to achieve your goal, as opposed to their own. It sounds selfish, but at the end of the day, everyone gets what they want.

USER CENTERED DESIGN ECOMMERCE PROCESS FLOW



Chapter 2

The Seven Principles of Conversion Centered Design

How do you persuade a visitor to complete your conversion goal using design? There are a number of design elements that drive the a visitor's attention toward the desired area of interaction. Psychological devices can also encourage participation.

DESIGN

1. Encapsulation
2. Contrast & color
3. Directional cues
4. White space

PSYCHOLOGY

5. Urgency and scarcity
6. Try before you buy
7. Social proof

1. Encapsulation

This is a classic technique used to hijack your visitors eyes and create a tunnel vision effect. You can think of it like creating a window on your landing page where your CTA is the view.

Here a circular arch creates a frame for the feature in the distance, preventing your eye from wandering elsewhere in the photo.



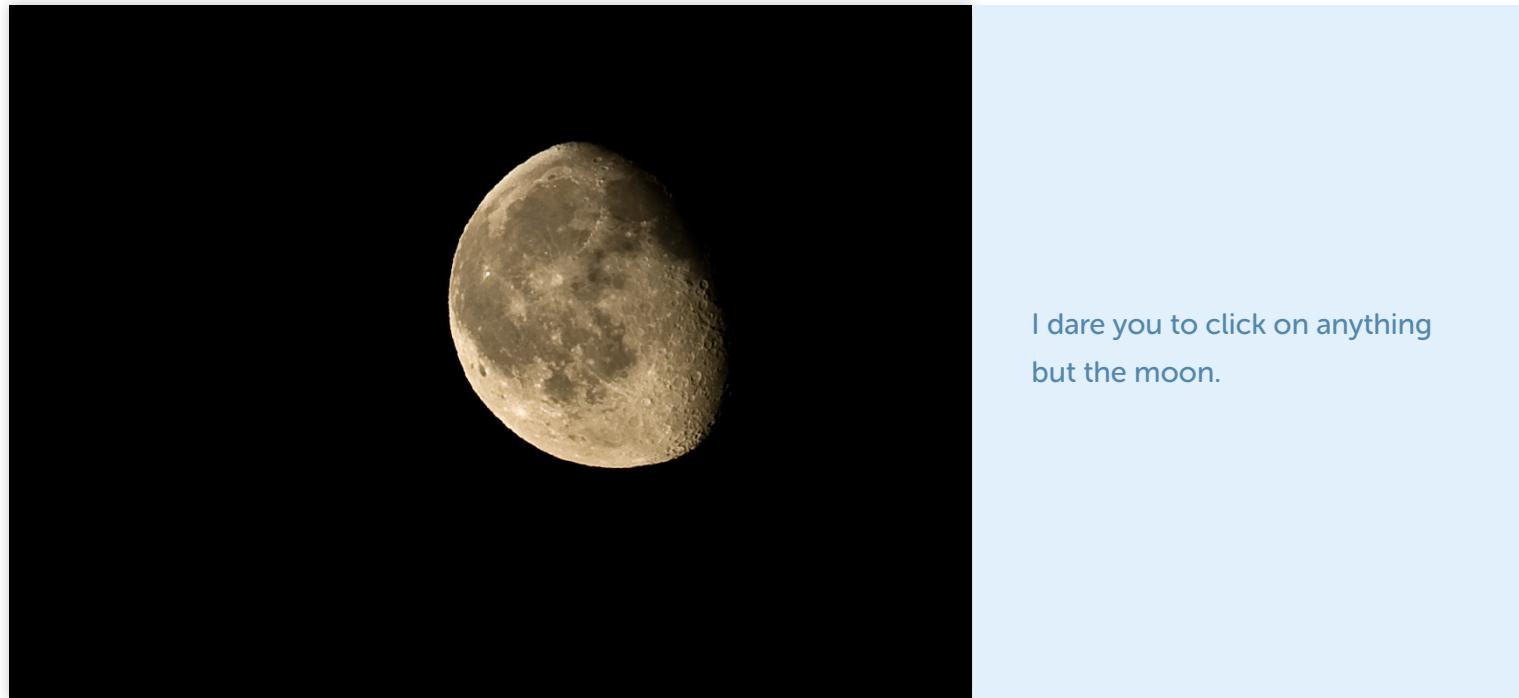
Landing page tip

Use strong dynamic shapes to constrain your points of interest. Think of the classic James Bond intro sequence where you see him inside a circular design.

Another example shows how your eyes are immediately driven to the end of the tunnel. This example also uses elements of contrast and directional cues.

2. Contrast and color

Using contrast is a fairly simple concept that applies across the color spectrum, but is most easily viewed in monochrome.



Landing page tip

The more you can make your call to action stand out from its surroundings the easier it will be to see. If you have a lot of black/grey text on a white background, then a black or white CTA won't provide the desired contrast and you'd be better off with a colorful element. But if you have a very clean design without much detail or copy, a big black or white button can be dramatic.

Color can be used to create an emotional response from your visitors. Orange, for example, is known to generate positive feelings and can be a great choice for the color of your CTA.

The psychological impact of color in design is noted in this list.

- **Red** — danger, stop, negative, excitement, hot
- **Dark blue** — stable, calming, trustworthy, mature
- **Light blue** — youthful, masculine, cool
- **Green** — growth, positive, organic, go, comforting
- **White** — pure, clean, honest
- **Black** — serious, heavy, death
- **Gray** — integrity, neutral, cool, mature
- **Brown** — wholesome, organic, unpretentious
- **Yellow** — emotional, positive, caution

- **Gold** — conservative, stable, elegant
- **Orange** — emotional, positive, organic
- **Purple** — youthful, contemporary, royal
- **Pink** — youthful, feminine, warm
- **Pastels** — youthful, soft, feminine, sensitive
- **Metallics** — elegant, lasting, wealthy

Another important consideration is the contrasting effect of color. This idea borrows from white space and contrast techniques in that it's a method of isolation via difference.

Some say button color is irrelevant, but this a falsehood when color contrast is the problem. A red CTA may not outperform blue under normal circumstance, but if the page is dominantly blue, then a red button will attract more attention than a blue one.

In our first conceptual example, an in your face approach is used. The color is so overwhelming you can't help but stare at it.

In the second example, position and color contrast are used to move your eye towards the grasshopper. The reason this works is the entire shot is a limited color palette except for the subject of interest.



The color here is so extreme that you can't help but pay attention to it. This example also illustrates the contrast of color compared to the muted surrounding area.



Use a single color hue (with a variety of tones) for your entire landing page, except for the CTA. Make your CTA jump off the page.

Landing page tip

Let your primary conversion target dominate the page.

3. Directional cues

Directional cues are visual indicators that point to the focal area of your landing pages. They help to guide your visitors towards what you desire them to do, making the purpose of your page as soon as they arrive. Types of directional cue include; arrows, pathways and the directional impact of line of sight.

Arrows

As directional cues, **arrows are about as subtle as a punch in the face**, which is why they work so well. With so little time on your page, visually guiding the user to the checkout is a smart move.

Arrows let you say, "Ignore everything else and pay attention to this please."



Landing page tip

Call attention to the most important page elements by using strangely placed and angled arrows. Tie a sequence of arrows together to define a path for the visitor to follow, ending at your CTA.

The awesome example above shows three types of cues at once. The arrow is a directional pointer, the man opposite is then firing you right back to the guy with the arrow using his eyes, and finally the upside-down text acts as an interruption that make you stop and stare, and most likely rotate your head to figure out what it says.

Pathways



The road leads your eye directly to the large rock Mesa at the top of the photo. Place your CTA there.

Pathways are representations of real-world wayfinding avenues that trigger our brains into thinking we need to follow them. This example shows a long straight road, leading your eye to the large rock formation at the top of the photo. Roads are so strongly ingrained in our psyche as the path of least resistance that we naturally gravitate toward them as a transport guide.

Landing page tip

Design converging lines to draw people to your Call To Action (CTA). Triangles are the most dynamic of all shapes, and their natural tendency to point make them a special design tool, in the same way that an arrow is a more intricately designed pathway.

The suggestive power of the eye

As humans, we're all programmed to understand the purpose and use of eyes, and the meaning that comes from the eyes of someone or something else. Look at the following examples to see how it works.

In the first example, the capuchin is looking at the banana very intently. Curiosity is the motivation that forces you to follow his gaze.



Here the monkeys' eyes and tilted head force you to stare at the banana.



You can't help but look down like this coyote.

With eye movement comes head movement. In this shot above, you are not only curious about what could be in the grass, but you instinctively look down with the coyote.

You'd want your conversion target to be where he, and everyone else, is looking.

In the third example, the directional cue is more subtle, but still very clear. Your attention is first driven to the elk in the bottom-right corner. This would be your primary headline or Unique Selling Proposition. You then follow his gaze to the left to see what he's looking at — arriving at the flock of birds flying over the river — which would be your CTA.



A subtle suggestion to follow the gaze of the Elk to the flock of birds

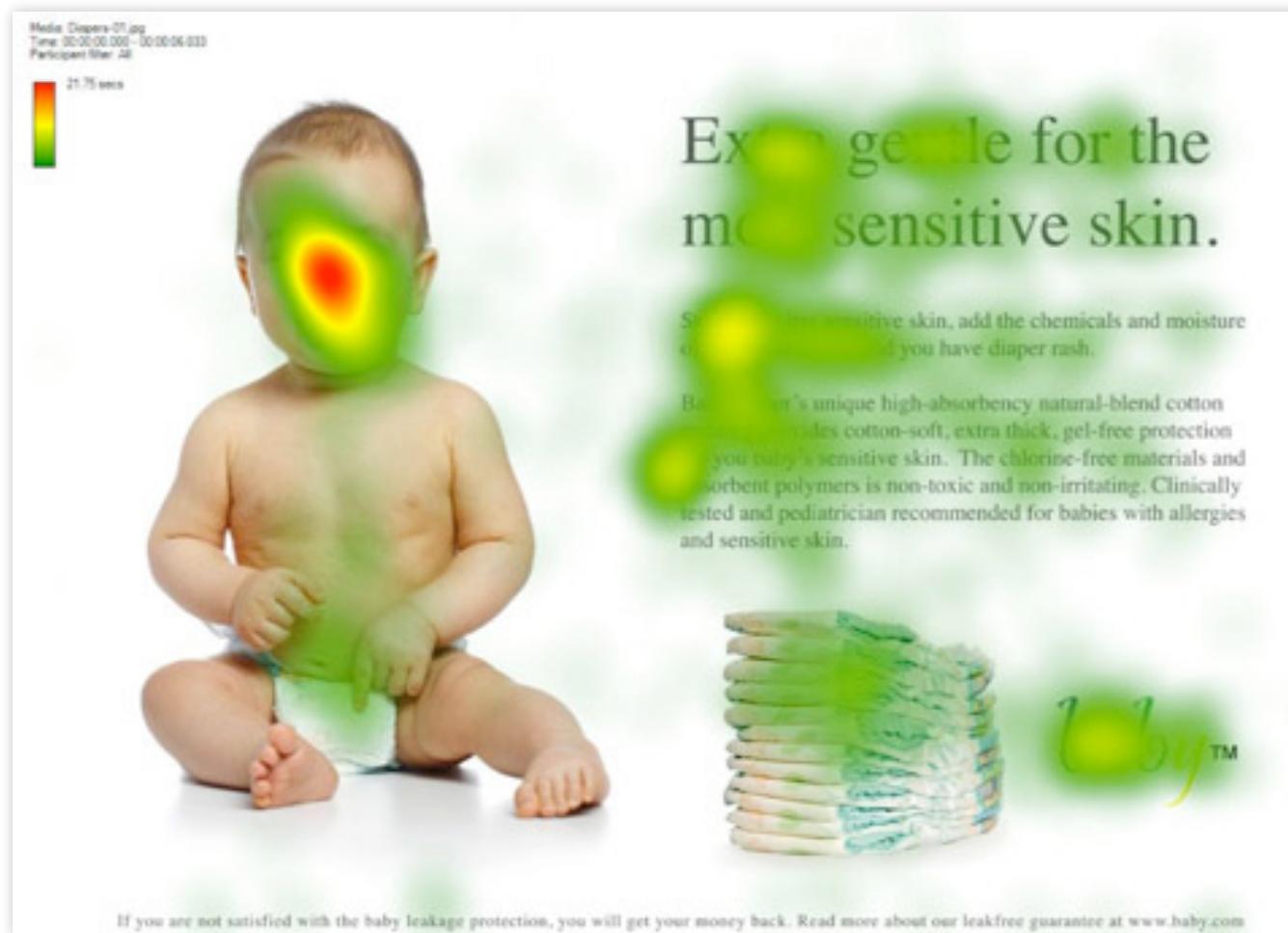
Images of babies and attractive people

An important aspect of design is imagery. It can create a strong connection between you and the photo and therefore the page. When it comes to the types of effective human images to use, babies and attractive people are well known to have an impact. Of the two, the most universal in persuasion are babies. The research suggests we [are all wired to react to a baby's face](#).



Cute babies sell. How can you argue with that face?

In an eye tracking heatmap study, a baby was used to see what effect it would have on visitor attention. The first example shows how much attention is driven toward the baby's face:



In the second example, the power of suggestion is shown in full effect, as the baby still gets lots of attention, but the area he is looking at receives a lot more than the first example:



Attractive women have also proven to be a persuasive human element on a landing page. The next example is about the effect caused by a powerful personal connection, where the eyes of your subject mesmerize you into paying attention. This, like the eye contact illustrated in the first example, is a good way to increase a visitors time on page, providing valuable extra seconds for your value proposition to sink in.



Not your stereotypical attractive female image, but one of the most iconic photos of all time.

Her eyes alone show the hypnotizing power that can be created through an emotive connection.

4. White space

White space (or blank space), is an area of emptiness surrounding an area of importance. The reason we say blank space is that the color of the space isn't important.

The purpose is to use simple spatial positioning to allow your call to action (CTA) to stand out from it's surroundings and **give your eye only one thing to focus on**.



In this example, the muted tones of the meadow drive your eye to the pronghorn positioned in the corner. This example also uses the suggestive power of the eye as described in the previous section.

Use case: How to use the first four design principles to build an effective lead gen form

You're probably wondering how to apply these concepts to a landing page. To illustrate how they work , let's walk through the evolution of a lead gen form using encapsulation, color contrast, directional cues and white space to transform a bland hidden form into a more effective designed form.

(no) Encapsulation



Encapsulation



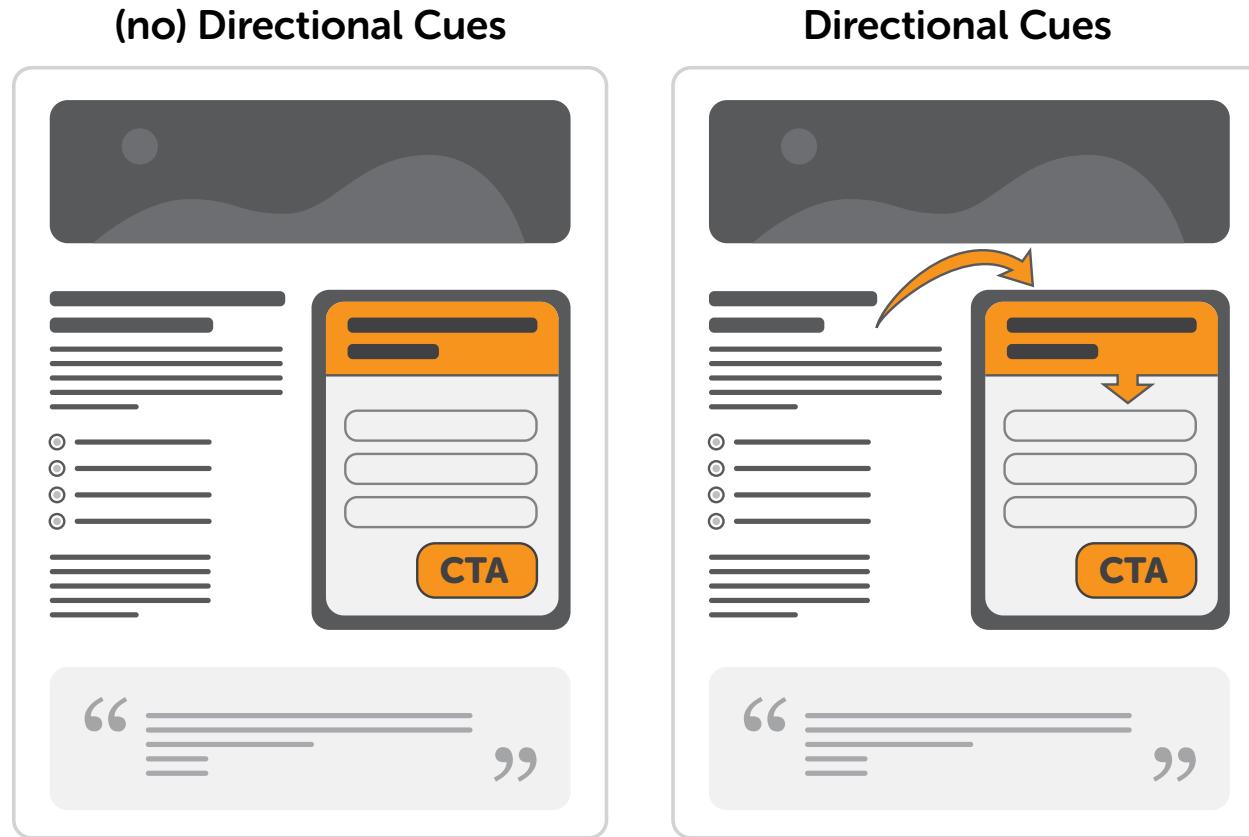
Notice how the form stands out more in the version on the right, due to the use of an encapsulation container. This is most often done simply by placing the form in a containing box to provide a contrasting background.



Now the form is really starting to pop. Notice how there are two primary areas of the form that are brought forward by the use of color and contrast: the form header and the CTA.

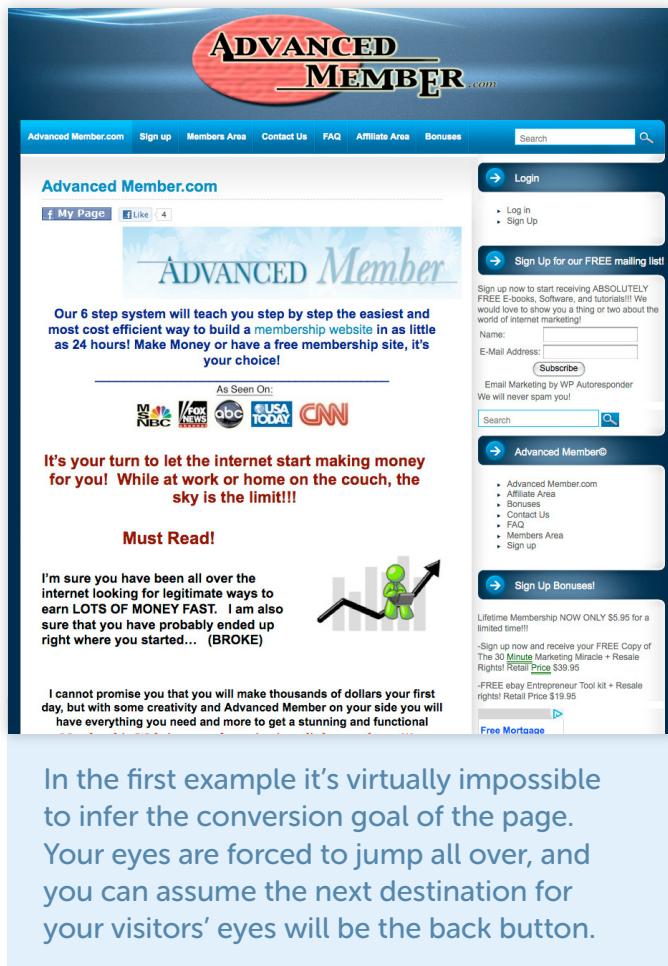
Using the same contrasting color for both provides a sense of correlation. The header should contain pertinent information describing what you are getting by submitting the form and the benefit of doing so. For example: "Download our free eBook to master the art of conversion."

Using the same color as the CTA will naturally allow your eye to follow the trail down to the CTA after reading the contents of the header.



Notice the use of two arrows in the example on the right. These arrows add extra visual persuasion to the form; the first arrow moves your attention from the introductory copy to the form header (which should contain the description of the purpose of your form) and then a second arrow is used in the form header to point down to the CTA.

Landing pages illustrating white space



Landing page tip

Give your page elements breathing room to produce a calming effect and allow your CTA to stand out from the rest of your design.

In the next example we have a landing page template and your eyes are afforded the freedom to move around the different page elements with ease.

The Psychology of Conversion

The second half of the seven rules of Conversion Centered Design focuses on the use of psychological triggers that can help increase the motivation of your visitors. To recap, the rules being discussed are listed below.

- 5. Urgency & Scarcity
- 6. Try Before You Buy
- 7. Social Proof

5. Urgency & Scarcity

Common psychological motivators are the use of urgency (limited time) and scarcity (limited supply). They're simple concepts that can be applied in a number of ways.

Urgency

Buy now. Don't miss out. We're used to hearing these phrases. Statements of urgency are used to coerce us into making a purchase decision right away. Amazon and Ticketmaster use this technique very effectively.

Amazon: order before date

Most people are familiar with this one. Amazon is largely responsible for a number of pressure point triggers, one being the “order before” concept. This relies on using a finite period of time remaining to encourage an immediate purchase decision.

Initially used to guarantee delivery for Christmas if you ordered by a defined date, Amazon has extended the strategy to cover every day. This makes it applicable for people’s birthdays, which can occur on any day of the year.

The Catcher in the Rye [Mass Market Paperback]
J.D. Salinger (Author)
★★★★★ (3,312 customer reviews)

List Price: \$6.99
Price: \$4.12 & FREE Shipping on orders over \$25. [Details](#)
You Save: \$2.87 (41%)

In Stock.

Want it Friday, May 10? Order within 21 hrs 51 mins and choose One-Day Shipping at checkout.

Ticketmaster: 4 minutes left to buy your ticket

Ticketmaster has also found a way to increase the urgency of buying tickets. Once you've selected your seats, you only have a few minutes to complete your transaction before your opportunity expires, and someone else gets your tickets. You can see this time in the bottom right corner of the screenshot example.

Scarcity

To use the concept of scarcity, you need to convince someone they need to buy right now, before supplies run out. This increases the fear of missing out on the desired opportunity.

ticketmaster®

REVIEW » **DELIVERY** **SIGN IN** **PAYMENT**

Note: The timer at bottom right shows how long you have to complete this page before we release your tickets for others to buy.

Black Sabbath
Rogers Arena, Vancouver, BC
Thu, Aug 22, 2013 07:30 PM

Section 108
Row 11
Seats 8 - 9

Description Price Level 1
PLAZA LEVEL
LOW
ALCOHOL PERMITTED
SEAT
NO AISLE BETWEEN
SECTIONS-AISLE SEATS
ARE 1 & 101

Type Full Price Ticket
Ticket Price CA \$143.80 x 2
Price Details

SUBTOTAL* CA \$287.60

* Note: The price displayed includes the ticket/item price plus applicable convenience charges, fees and taxes. Click Price Details for more information.

Full Concert

STAGE

FLOOR LEVEL 100
LEVEL 100
ACCESIBLE
NO ALCOHOL

Seating charts reflect the general layout for the venue at this time. For some events, the layout and specific seat locations may vary without notice.

If you don't want these tickets, give them up and search again ».

Add To My Order

PARKING: ROGERS ARENA - BLACK SABBATH

Item	Price	Add to Order
Only 1 ticket required per vehicle	CA \$29.00	<input type="button" value="0"/>

Any additional fees associated with each item will be displayed on the billing page. You may delete any item before you complete your order.
All orders are subject to credit card approval and billing address verification.

Remember for Later **Continue**

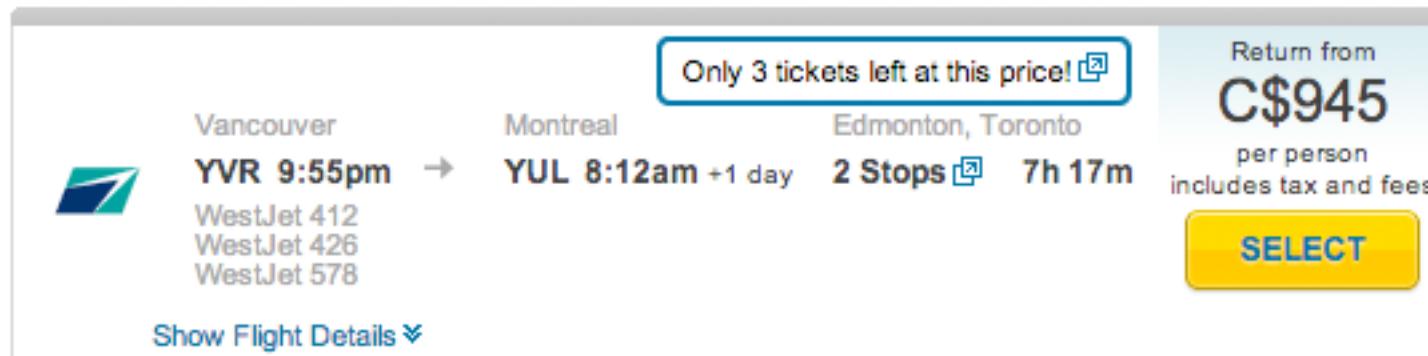
We'll save your ticket selections in your cart, but we can't hold actual tickets.
Buy these tickets before time runs out.

Time left to complete page 03:54

BY CONTINUING PAST THIS PAGE, YOU AGREE TO OUR [TERMS OF USE](#)
[Privacy Policy](#) | © 1999-2013 Ticketmaster. All rights reserved.

Expedia: X seats left

Airline ticket purchasing is very sensitive to the concept of scarcity, because the number of seats rapidly diminishes as the flight time nears. To leverage this, Expedia uses transparency as a psychological trigger to encourage you to get your credit card out and book right away. They do this by showing the number of seats left on the flight, but only when the number is low, like only three seats left, as shown in this example.



6. Try Before You Buy

One of the most common real-world examples of 'Try Before You Buy', is when people sneak a quick taste from a bunch of grapes in the supermarket. We've all done it. It seems to have become an internationally recognized form of acceptable thievery, although some feel guiltier than others about it.

As a conversion centered marketer, you can learn from this by allowing your visitors to taste your wares without fear of recrimination.

In the example shown, the grape stall owner has gone the extra mile to provide a section devoted specifically to grape samples, showing the confidence of someone who has a quality product.



Taking one grape isn't going to hurt anyone, right?

The preview

If at all possible, give people a preview of what you're selling. Giving away an eBook in exchange for personal data? Provide Chapter 1 as a free PDF on your landing page. Some people will decide they don't want your product, but it's better to separate the wheat from the chaff immediately instead of gathering 500 meaningless leads from unqualified prospects.

Amazon shows a classic example of this principle with their Look Inside feature, which lets you read a portion of the book in advance.

In transparency we trust

By opening your product to scrutiny before the purchase you appear confident. This increases trust and is an important factor in boosting conversions.

7. Social Proof

Social proof is created by the statistics and actions of a particular crowd and it can greatly enhance the "me too" factor. The major benefit is a level of authentic believability. In the photo below, the line-up outside the store makes you believe something important is going on, even if you don't know what it is.



Landing page tip

Similarly, you can provide the sense something is happening on your landing page. By showing the number of social shares, webinar registrants or eBook downloads to date, you might leverage a few

extra seconds of attention to impress your message upon a visitor. Testimonials can also be a strong factor in creating a sense of trust, especially if they come from people in the same type of business as your prospect, where the name of the company is known to your target audience.

Having said that, testimonials can hinder conversion rates if used incorrectly. You can read more about poor use of testimonials in "[Why Your Customer Testimonials are NOT Working](#)".

The man looking skyward experiment

In 1969, a study was performed on the streets of New York City in which a man was standing looking up in the air. The study showed people would walk past him and not pay attention to what he was looking at. However, when the number of staring people increased to five, people started reacting by joining in and looking up to see what was going on. Increasing the participants to 18 people resulted in a 400 per cent lift of people joining the crowd. Clearly, the bigger the crowd, the bigger the crowd gets.

Chapter 3

CTA Design & Page Placement

CTA Design

Let's touch on a technique using different approaches to CTA copy placement and layout to create a more powerful and descriptive button. You really want your CTA to encompass two concepts:

- 1) To be short and sweet.
- 2) To describe exactly what will happen when clicked.

Let's look at some examples.

In this example, you can see if you use a longer description in the CTA copy, you have to use a large button to accommodate the additional text. This is not a bad thing, but not always possible depending on your overall design.



CTA

VS.



CTA

Supporting Statement

VS.



CTA

Supporting Statement

The ideal technique is to break up the copy into primary and secondary statements, with the secondary copy supporting the primary. Examples two and three show different approaches to this, with supporting copy inside one button and copy also shown outside. The choice is up to you, but they are both more effective than the first example at communicating without breaking your design.✓

CTA Placement

Placing your CTA above the fold is still the most common placement choice. However, expects too much of someone who has just arrived at your page. A solution to this is to create a mini landing page experience containing the critical elements of your page packaged up into a block of content above the fold. Then, any supporting content can appear below for those who need to read it to be convinced of the page's purpose.

CTA Above the Fold - The five-point punch

To accomplish this mini above-the-fold landing page experience, use something called the five-point punch, which works as outlined in the diagram and text below.

1 A Powerful and Descriptive Headline

2 Complimentary supporting sub-header

A brief benefit statement that succinctly explains the core benefits of your product or service.

3

- Add a few bullets for clarity.
- Another Bullet
- Another bullet

5

CTA that describes what you'll get

Urgency Statement

4

THE FOLD

1. A powerful and descriptive headline. This is the type that stops you in your tracks when you see it in a newspaper dispenser on the street.
2. A complimentary supporting sub header. This is designed to give you both the ability to keep your headline short and sweet, and to provide the extra information that would make your headline a bloated mess if it was included.
3. A brief benefit statement. This should succinctly describe the core benefits of your product or service.
4. An urgency or special offer statement. Entice people to click by adding urgency to the experience. Examples include a time limit or a limited quantity available. A special offer like a discount can also entice the click.

5. A CTA describing exactly what the user will get. This should be closely tied to the title to reinforce the purpose of the page.

Using these five steps you can create a mini experience above the fold, which can improve your chances of a conversion.

CTA Below the Fold

Let's go old school for a second. You remember the marketing concept called AIDA?

It stands for Attention, Interest, Desire, Action, and is based on the idea that a visitor progresses through a series of linear steps on their way to making a decision to take action. The template below illustrates this flow, and is a good example of placing the CTA at the bottom of the page once the visitor has followed the progression of your marketing story.

Let's break down the template to illustrate how it follows the AIDA principles.

- **ATTENTION**

You capture the attention of your visitor with a highly relevant and punchy headline.

- **INTEREST**

Through the use of the video, you gain the interest of your visitor.

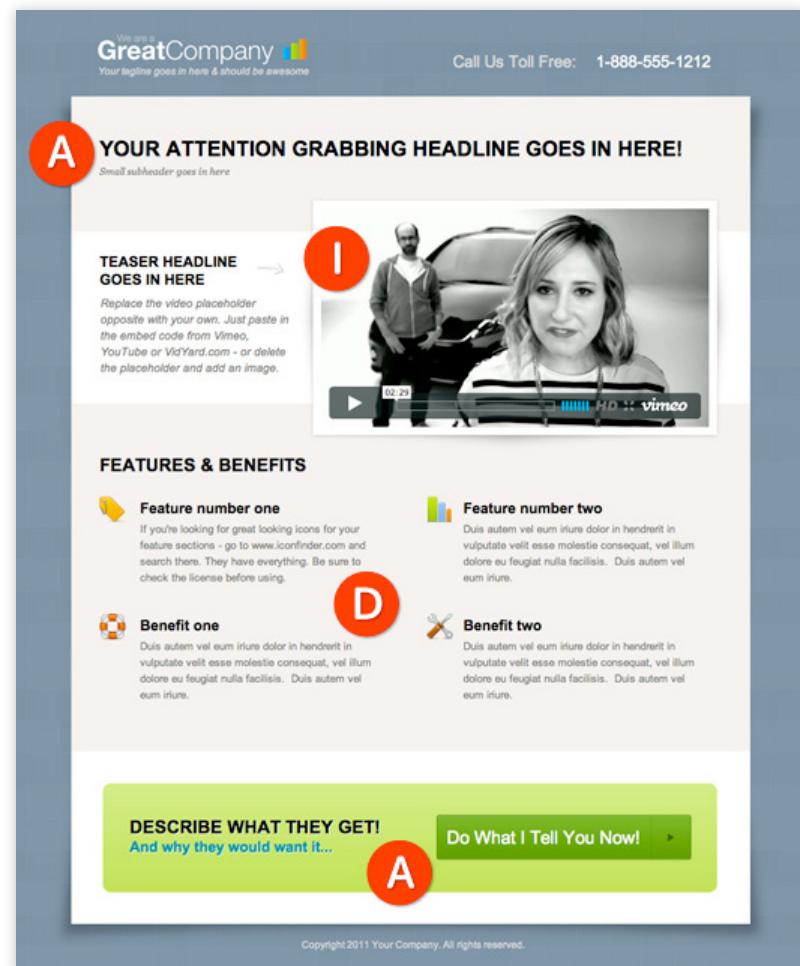
- **DESIRE**

Desire is created through the use of features and benefits appealing to the needs of your visitor.

- **ACTION**

A strong call-to-action completes the story at the point where your visitor has been convinced your solution is appropriate for their needs. In this case, it uses contrast and color, as well as defines what you'll get when you click the button. There is a little extra nudge in the copy beside the button.

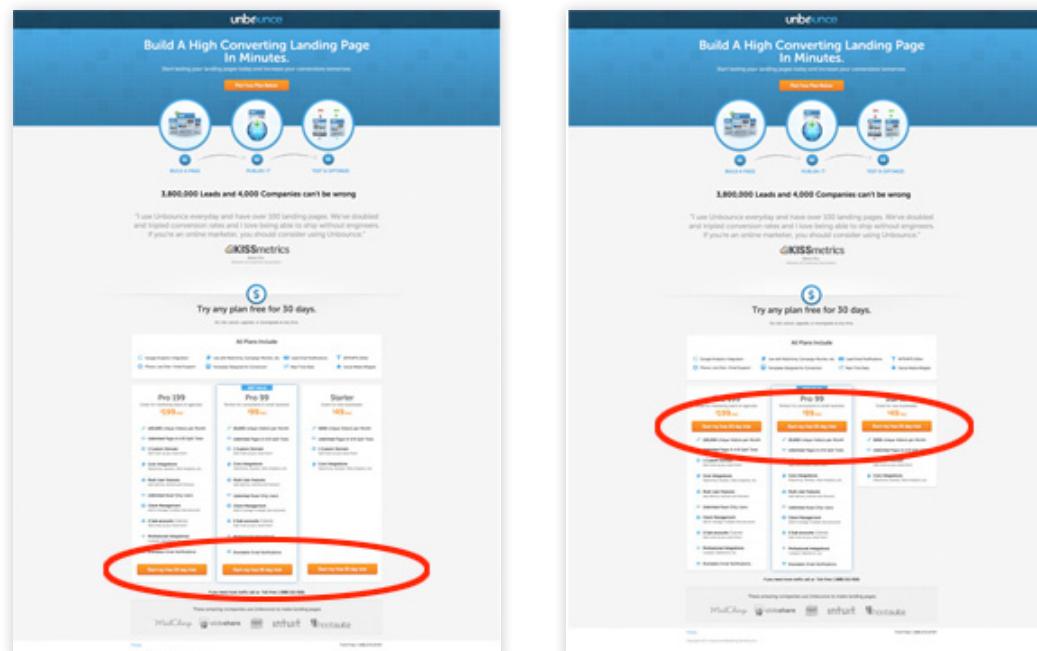
If you can turn your message into a story, then the AIDA approach can be a very effective way to build a landing page.



A Case Study on Landing Page CTA Positioning

In this example A/B test, we experimented with an Unbounce landing page with traffic driven via pay-per-click (AdWords). You'll note the CTAs are below the fold. To draw attention to the CTA there is a secondary navigation button at the top of the page that says, "Pick your plan below," and the page uses a smooth scroll effect to move down the page to the pricing grid.

The smooth scrolling effect allows the visitor to see how much content is on the page as it scrolls. Also, by indicating the user can pick a plan below, the visitor knows there is more below the fold and that the button won't take them away from the page.



Control Page

Treatment Page

The hypothesis

By moving the CTA above the pricing grid, we'd see a lift in the number of click-throughs.

The outcome

The B variant (the treatment page) produced a conversion lift of 41 per cent over the control page.

Chapter 4

Persuasive Copywriting

There are certain words and phrases that trigger a subliminal reaction, which can lead to high open rates on emails and blog posts. According to Gregory Ciotti in a post about the ["5 Most Persuasive Words in the English Language"](#), you should be using these words to entice interaction with your content. Let's review what those words are.

1. You

As it turns out, while people may like the word "you", it is guaranteed they love reading their own name much more. Personalizing an email with a person's name is a popular marketing device.

Similar to you is "your", which can be used in your CTA, such as "Sign up for your 30 day trial." However, a test we did recently at Unbounce showed changing "your" to "my" actually improved the click-through-rate of the button.

2. Free

People hate to miss out on things, especially free things. A study from MIT showed the power of the word free in a study where 69 percent of people chose an inferior chocolate product over a perceived superior one, simply because it was free. Uses on your landing page could range from a free trial to a free eBook.

3. Because

According to Robert Cialdini:

"A well-known principle of human behavior says that when we ask someone to do us a favor we will be more successful if we provide a reason. People simply like to have reasons for what they do."

Providing someone with a reason to do something, giving them a "because," can provide astounding results. In a study, adding the word because changed the response people received to a specific question. They asked, "I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine, because I am in a rush?" When the question was asked that way, 94 per cent of people asked let the person jump the line to make their copies. This is a dramatic improvement when compared to asking without a reason: "I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine?" When the question was asked that way, only 60 per cent of people let others ahead of them.

Essentially you are answering the questions "Why should I?" or "What's in it for me?"

On your landing pages, you can use this to enhance your benefit statements. An example for a website hosting company could be "Trusted by over 50,000 customers like you, because of our 99.9999% up time."

4. Instantly

The advent of online based product or content downloads has reversed the concept of delayed gratification. Nobody wants to wait anymore.

An example of how to use this on your landing pages follows.

"Instantly get the insider knowledge your competitors don't have by downloading this free report."

That statement took advantage of the words instantly, free and your, creating a very powerful statement.

5. New

The word new affects people differently. Early adopters desire to be first in line for anything new, be it the beta launch of an online product, or the latest release of a physical product. This correlates strongly with the desires of reporters and bloggers who want to get the scoop on a story so they are recognised as the best source of new content.

Similarly, people are much less likely to buy an old edition of a book when they know that a new edition is coming out soon.

On your landing pages, you can use the word new to establish the freshness of your free content, be it a whitepaper or case study. Enhance your downloads by leveraging the fact your information is hot off the presses.

Chapter 5

A/B Testing Designs for Higher Conversions

Knowing that you should be testing, but not knowing where to start is a very common problem. To get you started, let's look at a typical A/B testing process.

Where to start

Pick the most high profile pages on your site, including your homepage, pricing page, your landing pages and other high traffic destinations.

What to test

There are fundamental elements common to most pages including the headline, your call-to-action design and button copy, or form length design and position.

Gathering insight for a test

Before you know why you are going to run a test, you need to get some actionable insight into what could make your test effective. One of the best ways to do this is by using visitor feedback.

This can be done in a number of ways:

- Use services like [Qualaroo](#) to add a survey to your pages to ask people questions about their experience.
- Use live chat on your pages so that you can talk to people at the point of conversion and figure out why they are sitting on the fence, or what they need to become a converted customer. Unbounce recommend services like [Olark](#) and [ClickDesk](#).
- Send an email to your customers to find out what it was that made them sign up.
- Use online usability tools like [UserTesting.com](#) or [Loop11](#) to see where people are dropping off.
- Connect heatmap software like [Crazy Egg](#) to your page to see where the most clicked and focused areas of the page are.

Why are you testing?

A big mistake is testing something without a real purpose. [This is where a test hypothesis comes in](#). This is a statement of what you are going to test and your theory behind why it will be a success. As an example:

"The page does not have a clear call-to-action, and prospects spend too long trying to understand what to do next. Adding a large orange button right under the main benefits will help them identify the CTA and perform our desired action."

Once you have a hypothesis you're in a better position to create a test page to compete against your original page in an A/B test.

How to test

Now that you're ready to run a test, you need to follow a few rules to ensure your experiment is clean.

- Each page in your test should receive at least 100 unique visitors.
- The test should last at least a week to account for different daily behaviors.
- The statistical significance of the experiment should be over 95 per cent to remove the potential that your results are based on chance. This is a measure of confidence that your experiment is valid and can be ended, knowing the results are trustworthy.

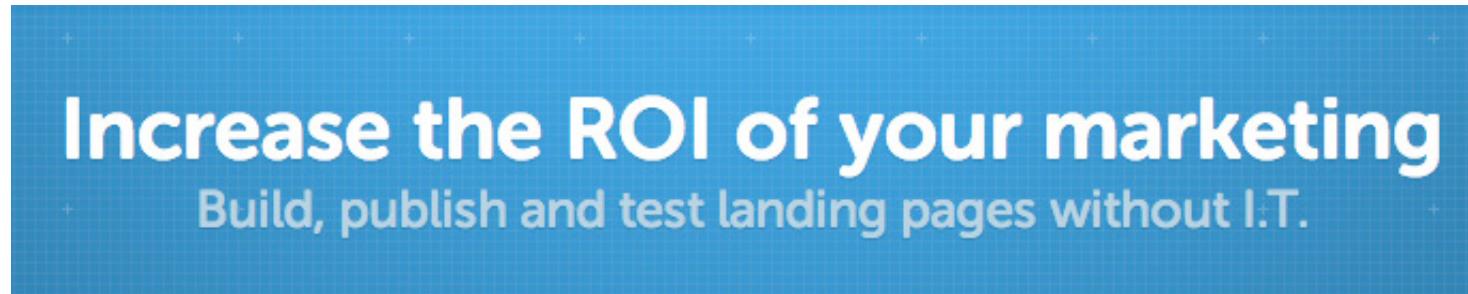
Now that we're ready to run a test, let's look at some ways to test your headline copy, CTA copy and form design.

Testing Headline Copy - Case Study

Perhaps the most important element to test is your headline. It's the first thing people see when they land on your page, explains what the page is all about and confirms that your visitor made a good click (by matching the ad or link they clicked to get to your page).

A two-lined approach is often effective, where the main headline is enhanced by a supporting sub-headline. This allows you to keep your primary headline relatively short, while clarifying your point in the sub-headline.

An example of a 2-line headline:



What should you test in your headline?

The five most persuasive words were touched on earlier: you, free, because, instantly, and new. These are obvious candidates to include in your headline tests. Try to include more than one. For example, write: Start your 30-day free trial and get new customers instantly.

Or break it into two lines.

Start your 30-day free trial

Get new customers instantly

Testing your headline

If you have a 2-line headline, test one line at a time to determine which element caused the conversion change. Make sure your new headline communicates in concert with the sub-header (and vice versa) so the headline is not disjointed.

Example headline test

In the example below, there are two lines in the headline, but as mentioned, they need to be tested one at a time. The hypothesis for testing the main headline was that by giving a higher level business driven benefit statement talking about ROI, prospective customers would understand the true value of the product.

Here are the results of a 3-way test:

Test Variant	CTA Copy	Conversion Rate	Conversion Lift
Original	Build high converting landing pages in minutes	13.2	----
1	Increase the ROI of your marketing	18.4%	39.6%
2	DIY landing page creation for higher conversions	15.6%	18.1%

Comparing the original with the winning variant, you can see the difference between the communication style.

Original headline:

Build high converting landing pages in minutes
Build, publish and test landing pages without I.T.

The challenger (and winner):

Increase the ROI of your marketing
Build, publish and test landing pages without I.T.

Deciding on a new headline to test

[From a post by Joanna Weibe](#), she describes five formulas for creating a powerful headline:

Formula 1: Get the [Rarely Seen But Relevant Adjective] Power of [What Your Product Does] Without [Pain]

Example: Get The Astonishing Power of Eye Tracking Technology Without the High Costs

Formula 2: [Adjective] & [Adjective] [What You Are / SEO Keyword Phrase] That Will [Highly Desirable Promise of Results]

Example: Clean & Modern iPhone App Design Templates that Will Set You Apart in the App Store

Formula 3: We Promise You This: [Highly Desirable Promise of Results]

Example: We Promise Just One Thing: Get More Clients From Social Media

Formula 4: [Known Competitor] [Does This Undesirable or Unimpressive Thing], and [Your Brand Name] [Does This Highly Desirable or Impressive Thing]

Example: Google Analytics Tells You What Happened, KISSmetrics Tells You Who Did It

Formula 5: The Only [SEO Keyword Phrase] Made Exclusively to [Highly Desirable Outcome or Benefit]

Example: The Only Web Copywriting Guides Made Exclusively to Improve Your Sales

These are all examples of how you can reconstruct and break down your headline to test against your existing headline.

CTA Copy - Case Study

The first thing to know about CTA copy is it should describe exactly what will happen when it's clicked. In other words, stay away from copy with the words submit or go. To illustrate a test example, here are examples of the different copy used on a recent Unbounce.com homepage CTA. CTAs were tested on Unbounce.com to drive homepage traffic to the pricing page. Several variations were tested, because the homepage receives a lot of traffic.

The hypothesis

By increasing the perceived benefit of the CTA copy, more people would click through to the pricing page.

Test Variant	CTA Copy	Conversion Rate	Conversion Lift
Original	Start Your 30-Day Free Trial	16.5	-----
1	Get Started For Free With a 30-Day Trial	13.1%	-20.6%
2	Start A 30-Day Free Trial	16.3%	-1.5%
3	Get Started For Free	21.1%	+27.4%
4	Build a high-converting landing page now	22.9%	+38.5%
5	No-Risk 30 Day Free Trial	8.0%	-51.6%
6	Start a No-Risk, 30-Day Free Trial	13.4%	-18.8%
7	Build a High-Converting Landing Page For Free	20.3%	+23.1%

Clearly there was something to be learned here. The benefit of signing up with the product outweighed the notion of a free trial.

Testing Form Design & Layout

Three variations you can test on your forms are as listed below.

1. Position. Left or right?
2. Length. Short or shorter?
3. Breaks. One page or two?

Left vs. right

This is a classic test to see which will convert better. The established thinking in the Western world, where we read left to right, is the form should be on the right. In theory, the reader digests the information first and converts afterwards.

What do you think? Will placing the form on the left force more people into completing the form? You will only know by testing it and you may be surprised at the results.

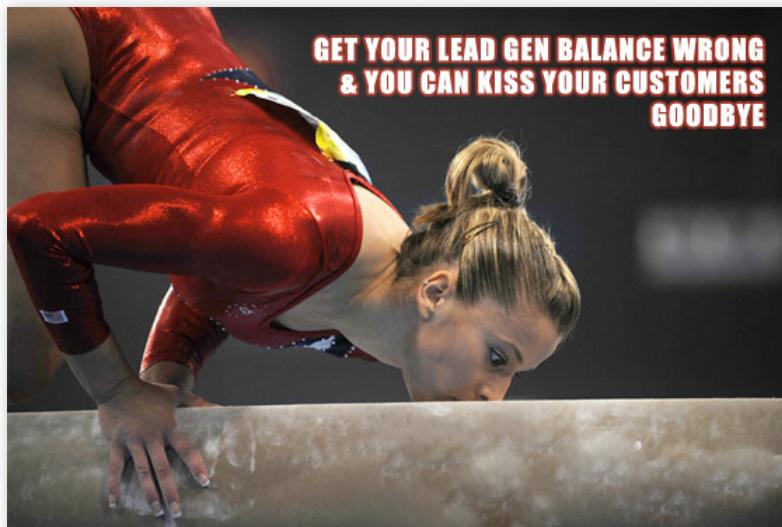
[A case study by WiderFunnel](#) tested an ecommerce site where the add to cart form was tested on the right and left of the page. Despite the belief it would work best on the right side, in the end, having the form on the left produced a conversion lift of 22 per cent.

Form length

One of the biggest factors in whether you'll capture your lead is whether you are able to balance the size of the prize (what you're giving away) with the perceived barriers to overcome. People are increasingly private on the Internet and don't want to give away their information just to get your five tips on building model railways.

By A/B testing the length and data requirements of your forms and making them relevant to your giveaway, you can find your best converting page.

For a scary but very interesting test, consider not asking for anything. Just give it away for free. This is more useful when your intent is to virally spread content like an eBook. Just make sure you include a statement in the book saying people are encouraged to share it.



If you don't balance the expectations of your customers with what you're giving away, you're basically kissing your customers goodbye.

If you require a lot of information, as is the case with long sales cycle products, consider splitting up your form onto two pages.

Splitting the form over multiple pages

A common tactic used to reduce the number of form fields on your page is splitting it up on two pages. This has the effect of reducing the friction due to the smaller perceived number of fields to complete.

There can be a bit of a bait and switch feeling when people are faced with another form. However, at this point they have already committed and are more likely to continue.

Testimonials and other trust factors should be used on the second page to reinforce the reason to continue the long sign-up process.

Chapter 6

Mobile device usage

It's important not only to optimize for the device being used (which we'll get into below), but also the context in which the device is being used. Mobile internet searches are not always being done in typical mobile settings (away from your home or office). If you're sitting at home, the choice of device is often driven by which is closest to you at any given time.

Take the Superbowl as an example. In a [report by the Mobile Marketing Association](#), 91 per cent of fans used a mobile device during the commercial breaks, presumably from the sofa.

The five rules of mobile design

When designing your mobile landing page experience you should follow a set of design guidelines to provide an optimal experience for your visitors.

1. Design for fat fingers.
2. Design for local.
3. Design big calls to action.
4. Design for content chunking.
5. Design for simple navigation.

1. Design for fat fingers

If you've ever watched someone try to work with a non-optimized page on a mobile device, it's a pretty painful experience. There's all that pinching and zooming, and then dragging the page just to read it. And if you need to click on something like a phone number or another CTA, users have to zoom in so it's big enough and they don't click something else by mistake.

Mobile design tip

Make your content big enough to remove the need for zooming, and have all links and CTAs big enough a silverback gorilla could click on them.

2. Design for local

For local pages, your important information will likely include some of these page elements: a phone CTA for reservations/bookings, a map for directions ideally tied into the phone's GPS, menus for restaurants etc. All of this should be presented in a way that's easy to interact with.

Mobile design tip

Your primary CTA here will be a phone number. Make sure it's text and easily clickable. Use the principle of white space so it isn't close to other elements. Displaying your phone number as text also allows your website visitor to store it in their phone contact list.

3. Design big CTAs

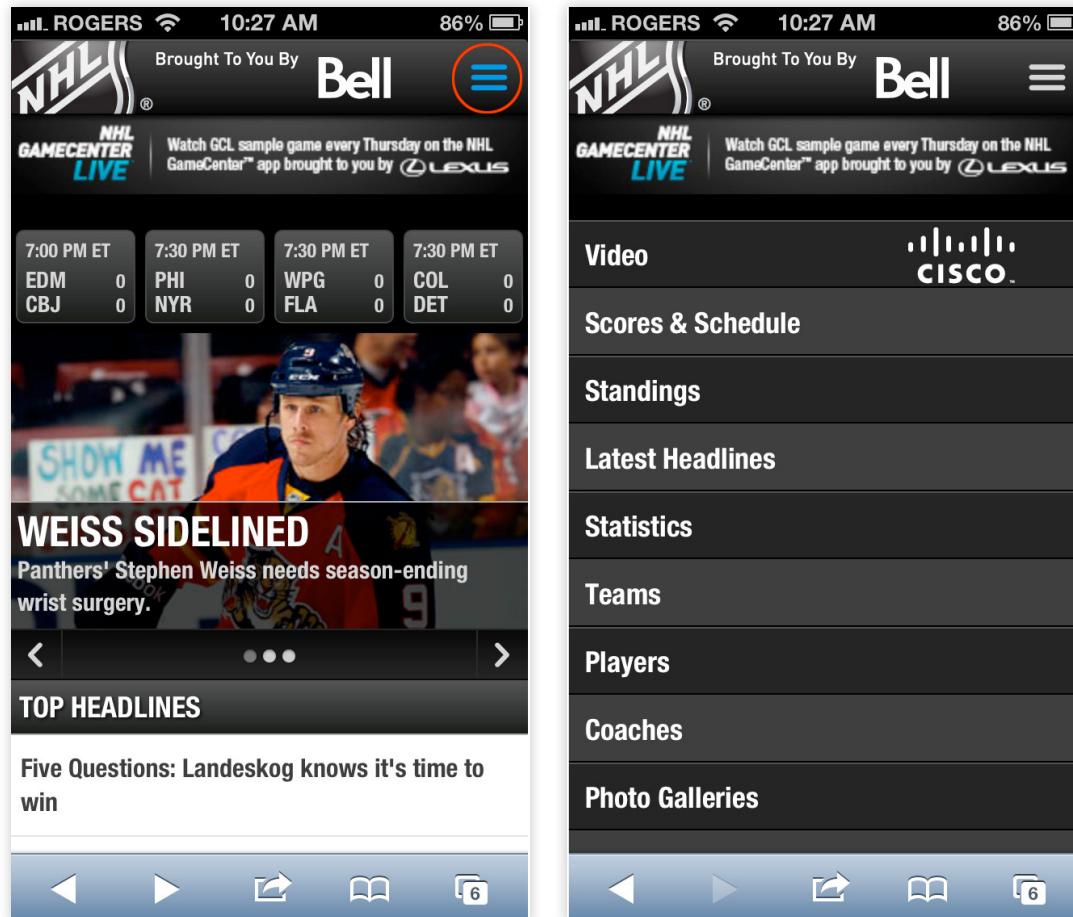
Your CTA should be very prominent on the page, and follow the rule for fat fingers. Make your CTA jump off the page by using contrasting colors.

4. Design for content chunking

Ensure your pages are properly chunked into bite sized portions and clear sub-headers for easy skimming. People scroll quickly on mobile devices, so make sure they can easily see where to stop when they find what they're looking for.

5. Design for simple navigation

Traditional navigation won't work on a mobile device, because a large number of navigation choices would shrink each link. The best approach for mobile navigation is to have a menu that displays when clicked. A partially hidden menu allows your website visitor to choose the page they're looking for when they need it, instead of showing all the navigation links all the time.



Chapter 7

Conversion-Based Landing Page Templates

By now you're probably wondering what a landing page would look like with some of these CCD principles applied to them. Below are four templates from the Unbounce library demonstrating the use of these principles.

Template 1 — Bookie eBook Download



On the Bookie template you can see the full range of CCD principles, from encapsulation (1) through to social proof (7).

Template 2 — Wanted Lead Gen

The Wanted template incorporates encapsulation for the form area to enable clear separation of its content from the rest of the page content. The CTA uses a high contrast color which makes it stand out well against the dark background along with a subtle directional cue to keep focus on the button.

It also includes two aspects of social proof, first with a series of press mention logos (which could also be customer logos) and second with a customer testimonial at the bottom of the page.

WANTED

Double-click the circle to upload/insert your product/brand image here. Then choose "Scale to Fit" to maintain the circular mask.

As Seen On:

This is your Primary Headline.

This is your supporting headline that works as a clarifying extension to your primary headline above. It should be a more detailed explanation of what your core offering is, yet short enough to be read quickly.

Interested In Our Service?

Use the form headline and this subheader to describe the purpose of your form.

Name *

Email *

Phone *

Company

Website

Number of Employees

1-50

REQUEST A CALL BACK

We will never sell your email address to any 3rd party or send you nasty spam. Promise.

"Insert your customer testimonial here. Ideally you would have a photo to go with it, along with their company and job title. Remember to only use testimonials you've been given permission to use."

John Smith
Founder of Another Company

Template 3 — Optio Product Pricing

This template uses an above-the-fold arrow to point down to the pricing grid below. Color contrast is evident, with the main header area matching the dominant pricing plan to make a design connection between the first impression and the intended conversion goal. It also employs generous white space to provide easy to read content.

WOW!
THIS HEADLINE
REALLY MATCHES
THE AD!

This is your supporting headline that works as a clarifying extension to your primary headline above. It should be a more detailed explanation of what your core offering is, yet short enough to be read quickly.

PRICING BELOW

1 This is your first amazing feature and it's awesome!

Aliquam integer mus dolor in etiam, enim adipiscing, sit portt nec Integer vel tincidunt in ac mi. Purus? Amet adipiscing et pellentesque eros. Mauris integer ut integer nisi, enim dapibus! Nunc et integer amet tristique adipiscing etiam pellentesque ridiculus sit phasellus ac sed sociis pellentesque amet porta et?

2 This is your second amazing feature and it's awesome!

Aliquam integer mus dolor in etiam, enim adipiscing, sit portt nec Integer vel tincidunt in ac mi. Purus? Amet adipiscing et pellentesque eros. Mauris integer ut integer nisi, enim dapibus! Nunc et integer amet tristique adipiscing etiam pellentesque ridiculus sit phasellus ac sed sociis pellentesque amet porta et?

3 This is your third amazing feature and it's awesome!

Aliquam integer mus dolor in etiam, enim adipiscing, sit portt nec Integer vel tincidunt in ac mi. Purus? Amet adipiscing et pellentesque eros. Mauris integer ut integer nisi, enim dapibus! Nunc et integer amet tristique adipiscing etiam pellentesque ridiculus sit phasellus ac sed sociis pellentesque amet porta et?

4 This is your fourth amazing feature and it's awesome!

Aliquam integer mus dolor in etiam, enim adipiscing, sit portt nec Integer vel tincidunt in ac mi. Purus? Amet adipiscing et pellentesque eros. Mauris integer ut integer nisi, enim dapibus! Nunc et integer amet tristique adipiscing etiam pellentesque ridiculus sit phasellus ac sed sociis pellentesque amet porta et?

Bronze \$9/mo	Silver \$19/mo	Gold \$99/mo	Platinum \$99/mo
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Magna amet facilisis ✓ Sed mus ut magnis ✓ Elementum dis est ✓ Incident tristique ultra <p>Sign Up 30 Day Free Trial</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Magna amet facilisis ✓ Sed mus ut magnis ✓ Elementum dis est ✓ Incident tristique ultra <p>Sign Up 30 Day Free Trial</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Magna amet facilisis ✓ Sed mus ut magnis ✓ Elementum dis est ✓ Incident tristique ultra <p>Sign Up 30 Day Free Trial</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Magna amet facilisis ✓ Sed mus ut magnis ✓ Elementum dis est ✓ Incident tristique ultra <p>Sign Up 30 Day Free Trial</p>

"Vel augue tincidunt duis amet turpis massa urna hac hac nascetur tincidunt vel, turpis cursus, tincidunt in turpis cras dis a mus tortor aliquet."

John Smith
Founder of Another Company

Template 4 — Pixly

Lastly, we have a template with a single color hue to make the CTA stand out very clearly. The header area also uses contrast to stand out from the rest of the page, using aspects of the five-point punch introduced in Chapter 3. Encapsulation and white space is used to provide a very clean and easy to read feature/benefit area to quickly communicate what your product or service is all about.

PIXLY

Follow us on [Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [LinkedIn](#)

THIS IS YOUR PRIMARY HEADLINE

This is your supporting headline that works as a clarifying extension to your primary headline. It should provide a more detailed explanation of what your core offering is.

You can insert your product or branded image here.

This is your introduction to the form and what it's for.

Name *

Email *

CHANGE YOUR CTA HERE

1. This is your first amazing feature and it's awesome!

Aliquam Integer mus dolor in etiam, enim adipiscing, sit portt nec! Integer vel tincidunt in ac mid. Purus? Amet adipiscing et pellentesque eros. Mauris integer ut integer nisi, enim dapibus! Nunc et integer amet tristique adipiscing etiam pellentesque ridiculus sit phasellus ac sed sociis pellentesque amet porta et?

2. This is your second amazing feature and it's awesome!

Aliquam Integer mus dolor in etiam, enim adipiscing, sit portt nec! Integer vel tincidunt in ac mid. Purus? Amet adipiscing et pellentesque eros. Mauris integer ut integer nisi, enim dapibus! Nunc et integer amet tristique adipiscing etiam pellentesque ridiculus sit phasellus ac sed sociis pellentesque amet porta et?

3. This is your third amazing feature and it's awesome!

Aliquam Integer mus dolor in etiam, enim adipiscing, sit portt nec! Integer vel tincidunt in ac mid. Purus? Amet adipiscing et pellentesque eros. Mauris integer ut integer nisi, enim dapibus! Nunc et integer amet tristique adipiscing etiam pellentesque ridiculus sit phasellus ac sed sociis pellentesque amet porta et?

4. This is your fourth amazing feature and it's awesome!

Aliquam Integer mus dolor in etiam, enim adipiscing, sit portt nec! Integer vel tincidunt in ac mid. Purus? Amet adipiscing et pellentesque eros. Mauris integer ut integer nisi, enim dapibus! Nunc et integer amet tristique adipiscing etiam pellentesque ridiculus sit phasellus ac sed sociis pellentesque amet porta et?

About Us

Explain from a high level view, what your service does and how simple it is. Add descriptive content of your product and service which will lead them to complete your call-to-action.

This could also be an explanation of the details of your offer if you're running a promotion.

The testimonial opposite could be contextually related to this block of content, or relevant to the product/service as a whole.

"I have been using GreatCompany for all my company needs for the last 3 years and couldn't be happier with their service and expertise. They've surpassed all of my expectations and customer service!"


Mark Wainright
Founder & CEO, Another Great Company

In Summary

Armed with a comprehensive understanding of Conversion Centered Design, you can now start tweaking and testing your landing page for maximum conversions. To refresh your memory, here are eight key highlights to use as the basis for your next landing page design project.

8 Key Takeaways

1. When designing a landing page, use CCD principles to drive your visitors to your CTA.
2. Focus attention on your CTA by using design principles like pathways and white space.
3. Improve conversion rates on your lead gen forms by using encapsulation, color contrast and directional cues.
4. Use colors relevant to the emotion you want visitors to experience on your page.
5. Employ the principle of try-before-you-buy to encourage lead gen conversions.
6. Use social proof to encourage your visitors to participate based on the psychological impact of 'Me Too!'
7. Use power words and copywriting formulas for optimum persuasion.
8. A/B test all of the most important areas of your landing page (headline copy, CTA copy, CTA placement, form placement).

Image Sources

Encapsulation - Tunnel

<http://static.dezeen.com/uploads/2008/02/squarelinkpage2.jpg>

Cute Baby

http://3.bp.blogspot.com/-Pn8RdgFHTsc/TvsmCR8NLKI/AAAAAAAABw8/BeTiF_5I-3U/s1600/cute-baby-1.jpg

Arrows

<http://www.missyshana.com>

Kissing The Balance Beam

<http://www.theginblog.com/2008/08/31-absolutely-jawdropping-photos-taken-completely-out-of-context-from-the-2008-beijing-olympic-games-in-china/>

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