

Million Dollar Landing Page Templates

The 12 Best Practices Top
Landing Pages Are Using to Sell
More Products

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INTRODUCTION

In the early 2000s, we had a heck of a time finding legacy brands to point other publishers to when we were looking for best-practice landing pages. Most of the good landing pages were done by entrepreneurial companies, who, when we looked behind the scenes, were grossing more than one million dollars from those single landing pages.

Now the publishing brands have taken notes from the little guys and have run with their best practices. We're going to share those best practices, and the publishers who have successfully made a million dollars or more using each strategy.

Now, it's not impossible to find a well-designed landing page. There are companies dedicated to testing landing pages and marketing companies drooling over the results to write up in their white papers.

What you'll find in this report are the top million dollar landing pages in the publishing industry—your industry—whether they are selling membership websites, subscription products, magazines, newsletters, books or digital products.

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

Before we can even take a look at designing landing pages, we have to start with the essential elements that both make a good product and make for a better landing page.

If a sales letter is never found in a search engine, does it even exist? If that same sales letter doesn't speak the same language as its target audience, does it make a sound?

Think about these two things for a minute.

If you're spending all of this time writing and launching a landing page, don't you think it would be worth a little extra time to make sure the only light of day it sees isn't through a tab on your website, or through your selective email list?

Keyword research, in its simplest form is easy.

Do a simple test right now.

Here is the most simple SEO recipe you can use to find targeted keywords for

your landing page. If you want to know why it's done this way, take a look at the plethora of free SEO white papers we offer at mequoda.com/free-white-papers that have much more room to explain.

- Go to the Google Adwords keyword tool:
<https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal>
- Type in the keyword phrase that your product is about. We're typing in "apple pie recipes" because our book features ten apple pie recipes.
- The results list that you'll get will give you all of the most searched for terms that are related to "apple pie recipes".

The screenshot shows the Google AdWords Keyword Tool interface. The search term "apple pie recipes" is entered in the "Word or phrase" field. The results table shows the following data:

Keyword	Global Monthly Searches
[apple pie recipes]	6,600
[apple pie recipes with fresh apples]	3,600
[easy apple pie recipes]	590
[apple pie recipes easy]	210
[dutch apple pie recipes]	260
[easy apple pie recipes with fresh apples]	590

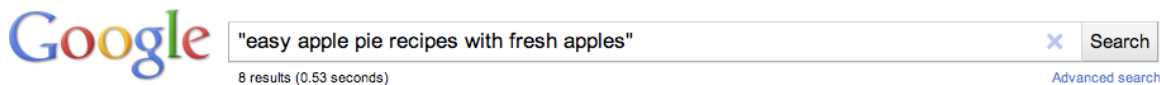
- You'll see in the results that "apple pie recipes" has 6,600 people searching for this exact phrase every month, meaning that there are 79,200 searches per year.
- Go to Google.com and type in "apple pie recipes" in quotes. We Google in quotes because it gives us a more accurate future prediction since Google is more likely to rank an exact keyword than one that is jumbled. Below the search box, you will see that there are 68,000 other pages in Google competing for that exact phrase.

The screenshot shows a Google search for "apple pie recipes" in quotes. The search bar shows the query in quotes, and the results indicate "About 68,600 results (0.17 seconds)".

- Divide the 79,200 searches per year by the 68,600 pages and you'll get a KCI (Keyword Competitive Index) of 1.16. We consider anything over 1 a good KCI, so this is excellent.

However, a nicely SEO'd page is only as good as the inbound links it has coming to it. A new landing page without any inbound links may put more emphasis on those 68,000 pages it has to compete with. So we try to go more niche.

- At this current time, "apple pie recipes with fresh apples" has 26,800 competing pages and 43,200 searches per year. Better, but "easy apple pie recipes with fresh apples" has 7,080 people searches per year and there are only 8 pages competing.



- Now is when you make your decision. Would you rather try ranking for "apple pie recipes" when you have a 1 in 68,600 chance of getting ranked on page one in Google? Or will you take 7,080 searches per year and get a guaranteed ranking on page one with "easy apple pie recipes with fresh apples"?
- You want to choose "easy apple pie recipes with fresh apples". So now the name of your product is easy: "10 Easy Apple Pie Recipes with Fresh Apples".
- Now do the same thing to find a subhead for your report.
- BAM! You have two niche keyword phrases that you can use throughout your sales letter.

Now it's time to use these keywords that you just discovered. Use the following checklist to make sure you're making the most of them.

Which Keywords You're Looking For

Use the above method to find the keywords for your landing page. You can also use this same method to find titles for your blog posts, but you want to use your most valuable, niche keywords for pages that ask for a transaction, like an email address or order.

In SEO, we're always looking for niche keywords to repeat and sprinkle throughout the landing page.

Luckily, your sales letter already has two things that will continue to repeat over and over again throughout the landing page; the title of your product, and the subtitle of your product.

If you want to do the most basic of SEO tasks, your first step will be to find two keyword phrases for your landing page. The first one will go in the title and the second one will go in the subtitle. This way, whenever you mention the report, you have two opportunities to use your keyword phrases without keyword stuffing.

How to Title Your Product Using These Keywords

Keyword research isn't just for blogs. It's also one of the best ways to discover exactly how your customers are searching for products like yours.

For example, maybe you want to teach your customers "the intricacies of finding a villa to rent in France."

Keyword research may tell you that nobody wants 10 Tips for "Finding a Villa to Rent in France", but that everyone wants 10 Tips to "Rent a House in France".

A simple exchange of words can be the difference between making a sale, and turning people away. Being creative with your copywriting is more helpful within the sales letter than it is in titling a product. The product title will act as a keyword throughout the landing page, so this is your best opportunity to use it.

How to Use Your Keywords on the Sales Letter Landing Page

The title of your product isn't the only place where you'll be using your keywords. Your first headline should include the name of the product, which will in turn, use your primary keyword.

The second headline should include your secondary keyword, which you can do by reformatting the subhead of the product into an exciting marketing headline.

These keywords should also be used in your meta title tags, keyword tags and description tag.

Once all of that is figured out, make sure that your keywords are sprinkled lightly throughout the landing page. If you've used your keywords in your title and subhead, it should be easy to name-drop over and over again in your sales copy.

We often recommend 2-5 keyword phrases for any given landing page, so if you haven't found a keyword phrase that was as special as the apple pie gem we discovered, then you may try amping up on the keyword research and choose a couple more to target.

The Keyword Density that Makes for Better Optimized Copy

Your keyword density is the measure of how many times you've used your keyword phrase within the first 500 words of your landing page.

Let's say you decided to target "easy apple pie recipes with fresh apples". In order to find the keyword density of the piece you would count up the number of times you used the phrase "easy apple pie recipes with fresh apples".

You'd divide this number by 500, because Google only counts density on the first 500 words. If you used the phrase 15 times in those 500 words, your keyword density would be 2.1%.

Here's how you get that percentage:

$$\frac{\text{[number of times keyword used]}}{500} \times \text{[number of words in keyword phrase]} = \%$$

$$15/500 \times 7 = 2.1\% \text{ KDI (Keyword Density Index)}$$

Tip: SEO experts agree that exceeding a 10 percent KDI for two and three-word terms calculated this way will result in a negative KD weighting for all three of the big search engines.

OK so that's it.

Now you're ready to dive in head-first. Whether you're designing your first landing page, or redesigning a five year-old landing page, the guidelines you're about to read are guaranteed to work.

Just ask the companies behind the million dollar landing pages we're about to show you.

WRITE BETTER LANDING PAGE HEADLINES

A sales letter is defined by the headline it bears. The headline is often written in the largest font, with the boldest colors, and tells the reader why it would be beneficial for them to keep reading.

How many times have you visited a new website and been confused by what is being offered?

It may seem hard to believe, but far too many landing pages fail almost immediately by offering up lackluster headlines and subheads. The visitor who's reading your landing page wants nothing more than the answer to this question: "What's in it for me?"

That's why it's imperative to think about benefits and features when writing your headlines. Answer their question and you'll make a sale. Confuse, distract or annoy them and you will lose one.

The most optimal of headlines follows these four rules:

1. The headline engages the target user with a compelling benefit.

The most succinct copywriting tip we've heard in a long time came from Fred Gleeck at a product development seminar. Fred cited this maxim in a discussion of how to title your book. But the adage is just as valid whether you're writing a headline for an advertisement, a press release, a pithy subject line for a convincing email message, or a list of product benefits.

We all know that people sort for self-interest. Everyone's favorite radio station is WII-FM. That's short for "What's in it for me?"

So here's Fred's formula for writing a compelling book title that appeals to the customer's self-interest:

Combine your customer's greatest need with your product's greatest benefit.

For example, "Low Cost Website Promotion" (Need: website promotion; benefit: low cost ways to do it).

2. The headline calls attention to the product or service by name.

By using the title of the product in your headline, you're telling them exactly what product you will be talking about for the rest of your copy. The title will resonate in their minds and keep with them in case they happen to leave the page and decide to Google it later. This is important.

By the way, this doesn't mean that you need to talk about your brand in the headline. A publication's name alone seldom provokes sufficient interest or provides motivation to subscribe. You can add interest to the heading of your page with any number of standard headline techniques, such as putting an offer in the headline (e.g., "FREE sample issue!") or incorporating a benefit or promise (e.g., "When doctors at Harvard Medical School get sick, this is what they do...").

3. The headline is clear and easy to read.

The formula for an effective advertisement, which was developed and proven in the print medium and works online as well, is summarized with the acronym AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire and Action). In the simplest way possible, you should be able to tackle these four items.

Consider this headline:

"Seventeen secrets that only the most successful restaurant owners know for increasing casual dining profitability."

This headline identifies a target audience (successful restaurant owners and wannabes) and gets their attention (secrets) by offering a Big Promise (casual dining profitability).

4. The headlines establish the need to buy the product or service.

A great headline acts as a succinct, compelling statement of why the prospect should buy your product that can be stated in 15 or fewer words. It says, "We know who you are, we know what your pain is, and if you buy this product, we promise to make your pain go away."

The business model of writing boastful, self-serving copy is finished. It doesn't work anymore—at least not for anyone with an IQ greater than room temperature.

Customers don't want to be "marketed to." They're too smart and sophisticated for that. They want to be "communicated with."

This means that writing landing page headlines is trickier than ever, while making more sense than ever. Be honest. Tell them the benefits and speak to them how you'd like to be spoken to. If a headline sounds like too much hype for you to bear, it's probably too hyped for them too.

You can still capture their attention with a big, bold promise in the headline. That's essential. But you'd better be quick to back up your claims and support your promise with factual, sincere and believable text, or you've lost them.

MILLION DOLLAR LANDING PAGE: JOHNS HOPKINS

This landing page has been a profitable addition to the collection of white paper promotions at Johns Hopkins Health Alerts.

In this example, you can see that JH took no prisoners when they decided to go after one of the most pressing concerns of men with prostate disorders.

Headline: Why you should say “NO” to sex the night before your PSA test...

Subhead: ...and other things you probably don't know about your prostate health, but should!



JOHNS HOPKINS
MEDICINE

White Papers: Prostate Disorders

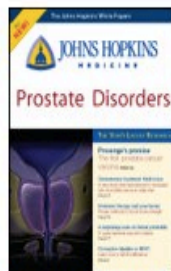
Simeon Margolis, M.D., Ph.D.
Professor of Medicine and Biological Chemistry
Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

Why you should say "NO" to sex the night before your PSA test...

...and other things you probably don't know about your prostate health, but should!

- No matter what your prostate problem may be...
- No matter if you've been diagnosed with prostate cancer...
- Even if you think your prostate's just fine for now...

Here's vital information you simply can't afford to ignore—direct from the #1 ranked America's Best Hospital and urological center for the past 20 years by *U.S. News & World Report*



Introducing THE 2011 JOHNS HOPKINS PROSTATE DISORDERS WHITE PAPER—an instant PDF download you can review now risk-FREE.

**IMPORTANT TREATMENT OPTION YOU NEED TO
KNOW ABOUT NOW:**

**READ ABOUT THE TREATMENT ADVICE THAT SHOULD SAVE MEN WITH EARLY PROSTATE CANCER FROM
MAKING ANY IRREVOCABLE DECISIONS TOO HASTILY. READ ON ...**

Did you know...

Having sex within 72 hours of your PSA test can produce a false reading?

Erectile dysfunction can be a symptom of prostate cancer?

This headline captures the attention of the reader right away. It targets the person who suffers from a prostate disorder, and implies that there is much to learn about their condition. This takes the reader down to the story, where JH has their next chance to capture a sale.

COME UP WITH A BETTER STORY

Even the most inventive and unique products can't sell themselves. If someone packaged up the cure for world hunger into an eBook and sold it for a penny, it wouldn't even make a dime's worth of revenue without a well-written and convincing landing page.

This is why the copy on your landing page is so important.

When we're giving away free products, we know that the "story" is less important. Free is easy to sell. However, we still write lengthy landing pages for the purpose of search engine optimization. This enables us to spend less (or no) money on AdWords and more money on creating excellent products that get found organically in search engines and build our email lists.

When we're **selling paid products**, we spend much more time creating and delivering a landing page that begins with a story that heightens desire for the product and prompts a purchase decision. It takes an entire effort of convincing to get someone to take out a credit card, versus just asking for an email address. The more expensive the product, the more convincing it will take. When you're selling a product that's over \$100, it's better to have more information than not enough.

Long landing pages get a bad rap, but you can ask any publisher who's tested long copy vs. short copy what their results were. 95% of the time, and especially in the B2B realm, long copy will win.

Take our advice with this four-part checklist for the next time you're creating a lengthy landing page:

1. The sales letter should tell a story.

Make sure your landing page contains an interesting, engaging, believable story told by someone your audience can relate to and appreciate. After all, you're asking them to spend their valuable time reading your pitch... you owe them a good read. Plus, a compelling story will move them smoothly along to the purchasing decision.

Whether writing a newsletter, article, or advertisement, think of one person and write (speak) directly to him personally. Start by getting a clear picture of who your ideal customer is so you can write your offer to that one person.

2. The storyteller should be credible and clearly identified.

When speaking in the first-person voice, the sales letter should truly read like a letter. Telling a story without using the words “I” or “My” is not only hard, but it also doesn’t lead to any kind of personal connection with the reader. A third-party account of someone else’s experience with something related to your product is not only unappealing, it’s disingenuous.

Landing pages that tell a story should always be signed by someone that the customer already “knows” like the Managing Editor, CEO or someone else. You know better than we do, who this person might be in your company. The person writing the sales letter, however may not always be the same.

In general, we don’t sign sales letters from the same person who created the product. For example, we don’t publish a sales letter that’s signed by the same person who’s presenting it. We’d prefer to sign it by someone who’s already seen it presented and tackle the copywriting from that angle.

3. The story should have a compelling, believable lead.

If you can’t convince a customer that your product is worth learning more about within the first 30 seconds, then it doesn’t matter how great the rest of your copy is.

I’ll stress this again... if your leading headline and paragraph aren’t the best, most amazing and intriguing set of words on your sales letter landing page, then nobody is going to scroll down to read the rest of your copy. First impressions matter.

For instance, suppose you write a landing page (product ad) for people who work in the food service industry. Do you think people who work in the food service industry think of themselves as “food service workers”? They do not. So, which lead for a specialty coffee ad is more pleasing to the targeted reader and creates better rapport?

“Food service industry workers like those of you who read this newsletter know good coffee.” That’s very impersonal, unfocused and lumps a whole group into one general category. Compare it to this: “If you’re a restaurant owner, executive chef, or specialty food buyer, you know excellent coffee even before you taste it. It’s color, freshness and aroma tell you volumes about its quality.”

This story lead identifies its target audience, gets rapport, and compliments them. Note, also, that plain old “you” is a lot more personal and intimate than “those of you.”

4. The story should have a conclusion that moves the reader to complete the action.

The purpose of your landing page is to get a sale or an email address. Dress it up how you like. Yes, you create an exceptional product. Yes, everyone should know what you know about this topic. Yes, you want to share your knowledge with the world. But at the end of the day, you want to make money. That’s why we’re all in business and how we fund future products.

Fundamentally, benefits are reasons for the customer to buy.

The reader requires reasons to take action. Even if they have already decided to buy your product, they need reasons to take the next step. It’s a matter of acting congruently, or being able to rationalize their purchase decision.

Buying decisions are largely emotional. Consumers buy what they want, not necessarily what they need. Compelling benefits (read reasons or rationalizations) provide the congruency required to justify a subconscious purchase decision. An engaging, believable story enhances this process.

At the end of your sales letter (or email capture page), you should have tied in the story that features a problem that the customer can relate to. You should have then led them to your product that will solve this problem. From there, you should have convinced them that the benefits of this product are worth more than the cost of the product.

Finally, you should have seamlessly brought them from story, to product, to sale.

MILLION DOLLAR LANDING PAGE: MOTLEY FOOL STOCK ADVISOR

This profitable landing page from the Motley Fool starts the story by leading with a gigantic photo of David and Tom. You’re instantly identifying yourself with these two guys who are helping “individual investors just like you” save time and money.

Introducing the *Motley Fool Stock Advisor* free trial.

Smart stock picks and straightforward investment advice for safely building your wealth free for 30 days, no risk.

Having the right information at the right time could mean the difference between making a lot of money in the stock market and getting hosed.

But your time gets eaten up with work, taking care of your family, or fixing your house... after a long day it's hard to find time to research stocks.

Well, now there's a way you can get world-class stock recommendations and expert, unbiased advice from top financial analysts by barely lifting a finger.

It's called *Motley Fool Stock Advisor*. This unique investment advisory service was created 8 years ago by Motley Fool co-founders David and Tom Gardner — the renegade brothers *Money.com* named "among the most widely followed stock advisors in the world."

David and Tom are helping thousands of individual investors just like you save time and make money with *Motley Fool Stock Advisor*.

Now you can join them and start securing your financial future with a free *Motley Fool Stock Advisor* 30-day trial.



*Start your free trial today and find out which stocks
Motley Fool co-founders David and Tom Gardner
are recommending right now.*

MAKE BETTER USE OF THE TECHNOLOGY YOU HAVE

Ten years ago, Internet users were completely comfortable and happy to use the web as a reading medium. Websites that were purely text and simple images were enough to get their engines running.

These days, even six year-olds would scoff at the simplistic web pages we used to consider acceptable. Websites with no graphic design or style sheets aren't taken seriously, and in most cases, probably still bear an old copyright of 1999 if you look close enough.

So what changed? We webified.

In essence, the process of webification means that you're adding interactivity to your website. Let's face it, we are limited when it comes to print magazines, newsletters, books and other physical products. We can't embed videos in a print magazine, just like we can't "play" a book like we can an audiobook. This is why we webify these products by creating mobile applications for devices like the iPad and iPhone.

When we do this for our websites, we are adding multiple dimensions to our content. If our topic is food, then we might add a user-generated library of recipes where readers can contribute (like the [Recipe Database](#) via [Rachel Ray](#)). If our topic is crafts, then we might have a photo gallery of images from the magazine (like the [Gallery](#) via [Artist Daily](#)). If we're a tech magazine, maybe we have an online directory of businesses (like [Crunchbase](#) via [TechCrunch](#)).

How to Webify Your Landing Pages

Landing pages are just as important as your homepage because sales letters are where buyers will make a decision. Many publishers refer to those ancient ten year-old practices that are simply text and yellow highlights. They look similar to those direct mail pieces you used to get right? That's not webification.

Simply taking what you did in print and turning it into HTML with no updates will give you the same, or worse conversion rate than you saw in print.

Luckily, this isn't the case for most publishers anymore. We've grown a lot over the years and finally realize that multimedia messages can actually enhance a message. For example, you might feature an audio clip on the landing page for an audio conference (like [Business Management Daily](#)). Or you might create video introduction for the product or subscription you're selling (like [Gary Vaynerchuk](#)).

In any case, if you're unsure of whether you've webified enough, or even too much, pay attention to this checklist.

1. The text has been webified.

In its simplest form, text can be webified by using a sans-serif font like Arial or Helvetica instead of a serif font like Times New Roman. Even more, you'd have a cascading style sheet that allows you to use simple tags in order to make the text on your website consistent across every page.

2. The graphics have been webified.

By "webification" we mean executing the most efficient use of all the multimedia and interactive technology available. This does not, however, mean using technology just because it's there. Don't use tired, over-used graphics that can be found everywhere on your site. Create new graphics specific to the product you are trying to sell. If you're selling an eBook, create a 3-D rendering of it to add the security that people don't often find in buying digital products. If you're selling a physical product, show a variety of photos of the product, even as a slide show, or edit it to include arrows and text that point out features.

Additionally, your graphics should be saved as small of a file as you can get while still retaining its high quality in order for the page to load quickly.

3. The landing page makes use of multimedia technology.

As was mentioned earlier, you should certainly integrate multimedia where it makes sense. If you're selling a subscription site, you might create a video that shows the user what's inside once they pay the first monthly fee. If you're selling a webinar, maybe you have a video interview with the instructor. Or if you're selling a previously aired webinar, you might show clips from the recording that you're trying to sell.

4. The landing page makes use of interactive technology.

This gets tricky when you're working with a single landing page, but there are several ways you can turn a flat, one-dimensional page into something with a little more depth. Creative online publishers have discovered numerous ways to do this. For example, if they're selling a newsletter subscription, they might offer a download of a recent newsletter. Or if it's an event, they probably let the customer download and browse the brochure. Even printer-friendly page view options can enhance the experience and cater to the customer.

A Word of Caution

Never let the technology outshine the sales message. Don't let your readers be so dazzled by the bells and whistles on your site that they forget to buy. If you're using video, it should be focused on the sale, not on comic relief or as a distraction.

Technology should be used to enhance the sales message, not to replace it.

MILLION DOLLAR LANDING PAGE: TIM FERRISS' THE 4-HOUR BODY

This is the second book by *New York Times* Bestselling author, Tim Ferriss. This landing page embraces all of the elements of webification like no other.

At the center of the homepage, you'll find a video trailer for the book. To the left, you'll be able to get a closer look at the cover, by simply clicking on it. To the right, you are able to read the back cover of the book and then download a sample chapter.

This landing page gives the potential book buyer everything they need to make a well-informed decision. See more on **FourHourBody.com**.

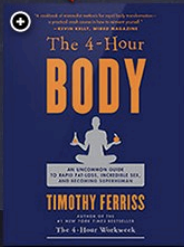
From #1 *The New York Times* bestselling author Tim Ferriss

THE 4-HOUR BODY

AN UNCOMMON GUIDE TO RAPID FAT-LOSS, INCREDIBLE SEX, AND BECOMING SUPERHUMAN

"A cookbook of minimalist methods for rapid body transformation – a practical crash course in how to reinvent yourself."

KEVIN KELLY, *WIRED* MAGAZINE



Click for sample content

Thinner, Bigger, Faster, Stronger:
Which 150 Pages Will You Read?

...the most important pages in the book are the ones that are the most interesting and useful. This is a book about how to get the most out of your time, and the most interesting and useful pages are the ones that show you how to do that. The book is divided into three parts: Part 1 is about how to get the most out of your time, Part 2 is about how to get the most out of your body, and Part 3 is about how to get the most out of your life. The book is a practical guide to how to live a better life, and it is a book that you should read if you want to live a better life.

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IS IT POSSIBLE TO...

- Reach your genetic potential in 6 months?
- Sleep 2 hours per day and perform better than on 8 hours?
- Lose more fat than a marathoner by bingeing?

Indeed, and much more. This is not just another diet and fitness book.

The 4-Hour Body is the result of an obsessive quest, spanning more than a decade, to hack the human body. It contains the collective wisdom of hundreds of elite athletes, dozens of MDs, and thousands of hours of jaw-dropping personal experimentation. From Olympic

GET BETTER AT COLLECTING EMAIL ADDRESSES

The “bounce” rate of a website is an annoying metric. When someone comes to your websites and “bounces” back to the search engine to find another listing, you’re left with the following questions:

- Why did they leave?
- What could I have done differently on the page?
- Did we offend them?
- How can I get them to come back?

Once you’ve captured your prospect’s interest by getting them to your website, it’s important to keep your name, product, and/or service in front of them by using the following checklist.

1. There is a free downloadable book or product in exchange for an email address.

The best way to keep in touch with fair-weather Internet friends—the ones who read you infrequently—is to get them on your email list.

The best non-invasive way to get them on your email list is to give them something for free in exchange for their email address, like a free report. These items have a high-perceived value and are amazingly cheap to produce and distribute. If you can immediately entice them with a free product on your website, then you are able to build a relationship with them through your email newsletter going forward.

2. There is a free newsletter in exchange for an email address.

No one needs more email newsletters in their inbox. As Bill Bonner, founder of Agora Publishing, a large consumer newsletter publisher likes to point out, “Nobody wakes up, taps their significant other on the shoulder, and says, ‘Honey, we need to get some more newsletters today.’”

Email newsletters do not sell themselves.

This is why when you’re asking for an email address, you’re better off letting them know that when they download their free product, they’ll also be subscribed to all of your tip, strategy, technique, system, method, or idea updates.

Also, the newsletter is free, so the word FREE should be prominent in the eyebrow copy.

3. There is an effective pop-under that captures the user's email address when they leave.

Say what you will about pop-ups and pop-unders, but the hard truth is that they work. It is crucial to use effective pop-unders as a mechanism for capturing a prospect's email address if they've decided to abandon your site before buying.

Without their email address, you have lost the opportunity for follow up, significantly reducing your conversion rate. You might have lost them on the first try, but you'll have plenty of opportunities in the future to get them to come back.

On many landing pages, the publisher asks for your email address immediately and refuses to give you additional information until you "give it up"—the address, that is.

Auto-responders can be very effective at getting your potential customers eager to buy more of your product or services. Some publishers have built an entire business model using auto-responders. On one publisher's website, once the user submits her email address, an auto-responder starts a series of "lessons" from the editors, delivered once a day for five consecutive days.

The more valuable the content, the more likely they are to come back to your website and buy a product from you in the future.

4. There is an effective pop-under that captures the user's email address as a fall-back to an abandoned order flow.

You also want to pay attention to your sales pages. Using effective pop-unders as a mechanism for drawing them in once they've decided to abandon is crucial.

Why? Because if you get the visitor's email address before they leave without ordering, you can serve them a series of follow-up emails via auto-responder, attempting to convert them to a trial subscription.

And, you've added another valuable name to your house e-list. Without their email address, you have lost the opportunity for follow up.

Even if you don't intend to go all guerilla marketing on their email addresses with an auto-responder, you've still captured their email address for any type of follow-

up that they prefer. Maybe they aren't willing to buy right now, but maybe they'll take a shorter free report on the same topic.

Coming up with ideas to keep users coming back to your site should be an endless process. Where five years ago, we were limited in our options, we now have more ways for people to stay in touch with us. Perhaps they won't subscribe to your email newsletter, but they'll follow you on Twitter. Maybe they won't join your forum, but they'll discuss things in their Facebook community.

As many arms as you can stretch out there that will be regularly updated and can send traffic back to your website are all great ways to build online relationships that start with your website and come back to your website.

MILLION DOLLAR LANDING PAGE: PANIC AWAY

The clip we're pulling out from this product landing page is merely a fraction of what you should be paying attention to over on **PanicAway.com**. The audio testimonials, video presentation and demo requests are all items that have made this a five million-dollar landing page.

However, they're especially excellent at collecting email addresses. Before they even send someone to an order collection page, they take a chance to collect their email address. This way, if the reader decides to leave, the folks at PanicAway have already started them on a five-day auto-responder series.

But First...If The Above Experience Of Anxiety Is Familiar To You Then Enter Your Email Below

Get Expert Advice In My Free Mini-Series

Name:

Email:

"Which one of these symptoms best describe your feelings?"

- Panic Attacks
- General Anxiety
- Fear of Flying

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USE BETTER TESTIMONIALS TO GIVE YOURSELF MORE CREDIT

When someone tells you what an amazing job you are doing, or how your product has changed their life, they are giving you a testimonial. They are testifying to your credibility and overall awesomeness.

Now that social media and online reviews are amplifying word-of-mouth marketing, it's becoming easier and easier to quote someone talking about your product. Simply doing a search for your product using Search.Twitter.com can often give you valuable insight about what people are saying.

If restaurant websites are taking official testimonials from foodie blogs, review sites like Yelp.com and notes from Tweets, there's no reason a publisher can't use their own resources. If a blogger reviews your product, feel free to snag a clip of their review. If someone mentions you on Twitter, that counts too!

If you want your testimonials to lend credibility to your name and your product, make sure that you're able to check off every item on this list when your landing page is completed:

1. User testimonials are credible, and each user is clearly defined.

The most credible testimonials are an accurate transcription of your customer's own words and ideally should include a full identification of the buyer by name, city, state and occupation.

Kind words from Tom S. in North Carolina are obviously less valuable than those from Tom Smith in Boone, North Carolina. In fact, under-identified testimonials can inspire suspicion and work against your sales message.

2. Testimonials feature compelling results and benefits.

The best testimonials are specific and support your key copy points. They work well when integrated into the sales letter flow and feature genuine results and benefits.

When asking for testimonials, it's OK to ask your user to be specific in their recommendation. When you're asking for a testimonial, ask them to think about the following questions:

- What problem did this problem solve for you?
- How has this product made you a better marketer/gardener/acrobat, etc.?
- Who would you recommend this product to?

By guiding them in the direction you're looking for, you'll be able to capture usable testimonials on the first try, every time.

3. Testimonials are integrated into the sales letter flow.

A good, credible testimonial is an extremely valuable part of any sales letter. When designing your landing page, you should leave a dedicated section for testimonials, or find a way to work them in throughout the copy.

Text-based testimonials will always work, but if you need a creative way to webify your landing page, you can look no further than by asking for video testimonials.

Alternatively, they can appear in a separate list of your satisfied customers, especially if yours is a B2B product, just by citing respected corporations that have bought from you.

4. Testimonials reflect the target users and their heroes.

The most credible testimonial messages feature individuals who share similar demographics to your target prospects or their heroes.

Buyers love having their purchase decisions validated. It comforts and reassures them to know that other customers—just like them—have bought and been very satisfied with your product or service.

There are many ways to use testimonials that will work against your efforts, but if you use the checklist above, you can be sure that these testimonials will help your efforts of converting more visitors into buyers dramatically.

MILLION DOLLAR LANDING PAGE: INTERWEAVE KNITS



Garden Plot Dress
Victoria Myers



Cranberry Island Throw
Amanda Scheuzger



Hourglass Pillows
Daniela Nii

Testimonials

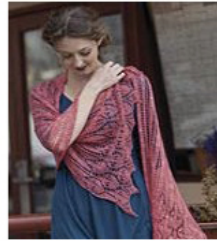
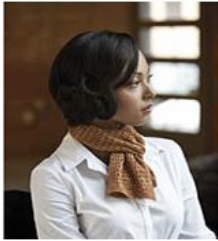
People are talking about *Interweave Knits*

"I just love your magazine. I have been a long-time subscriber and I never get bored or tired of it. The Great Gifts ideas from the Summer 2005 issue were fabulous. I made several of them for Christmas presents and they were a big hit! Keep it up!"

Patsy Furr
Medford OR

"Thanks for such a lovely magazine and some truly inspiring patterns. You do such a nice job... thanks!"
Pat Gould
Voorhees NJ

IC INTERRUPTED



Interweave Knits takes the unobtrusive route to show visitors what people are saying about their magazine. Off to the right side of the page, in a nicely framed box, they show a quote on top of the readers' full name and location. See more at InterweaveKnits.com.

DESIGN BETTER BUTTONS AND LINKS

There is not a more common problem with landing page marketing, than designers who can't take a user from the story to the sale.

Links and buttons are the vehicles that allow a prospect to navigate your landing page. Your objective should be to make them as easy as possible to understand and use.

Regardless of how long your sales letter landing page is, or how many "order" buttons you imbed in the copy, clicking on the link or button should bring the user to a simple, easy-to-follow order page. Too many order options for too many offers and products can be confusing. And the confused mind always says "No!"

When you want to avoid confusion and take the user directly from your sales pitch to a sale (or email collection form), make sure your landing page passes this checklist:

1. The landing page includes well-designed button on landing screen.

Order buttons may be the most fickle, but convincing item on a landing page. The difference in color or copy can either convince or turn away a potential customer or email subscriber.

“Well-designed” is simply defined here as being understandable. They should look like a button and act like a button. They should have a roll-over state when someone puts the mouse on it, and the copy on the button should tell the user exactly what is about to happen.

Just like in a shopping cart where you hit the “checkout” button, the user should know if a button will bring them to “learn more” or if the button brings them directly to a payment gateway.

2. The landing page includes a well-designed button in closing.

The same can be said here, however this is where it really counts. Without a solid button on the page where someone checks out, you won't get any sales. If someone is bored of clicking through order pages, they're likely to abandon here if they think they're being taken to yet another page.

Be clear when the transaction is about to be over, and when it's actually over. Test every button on your landing pages with A/B tests until you find a clear winner. We always think we know what converts best, and A/B tests will almost always tell us how completely wrong our instincts are.

3. The landing page uses blue, underlined links when something is supposed to be clicked.

This might sound old fashioned, but hyperlinks are still meant to be blue. Not that it's a problem for websites who adapt their stylesheets to match the theme of their sites, it just becomes a problem on landing pages.

Some landing pages are so over-designed that the hyperlink blends into the background. How many high-converting landing pages do you still find out there who are underlining text in order to make a point stand out?

So how is a user supposed to tell the difference between your underline that shows emphasis, and an underline that they're supposed to click on?

Blue is still the most highly recognized color for a hyperlink, which is why if you must hyperlink words on a page, you're best off sticking with the one people know to click on.

4. The landing page links and buttons are contextual.

Asking for someone to click a button before they even know what they're clicking isn't a strategy that works for most websites. But if you write "there are vital secrets about this product on the next page" on a button, you can probably get most people to click it.

This is why the copy on your landing page buttons are incredibly important. When someone reads your button, it should tell them what they're getting. "Click here" is such a vague phrase that has been proven over and over again to be the least likely to convert a visitor into something more.

By writing something more convincing like, "Yes, I want to download my free report" or "Yes, I'm ready to start making more money online", you're not only exciting the user, but you're letting them decide whether or not they're ready for the next step. Even "subscribe now" is informative enough to tell the user exactly what they're about to do.

The buttons on your website are what stand between you and a transaction. An offer for a free product needs to assure the user that the transaction is instant. A button for a paid product needs to assure the user that what they're about to purchase is awesome.

Sounds simple right? Try looking at your landing page buttons now. When someone looks at them, would they know exactly what will happen when they click?

MILLION DOLLAR LANDING PAGE: BUSINESS AND LEGAL RESOURCES

BLR spends a LOT of time testing their landing pages, so it's no surprise that this landing page has a very clear call-to-action with their "Start free trial" button. Red is a color that works particularly well for many companies, and they just happen to be lucky enough for it to be part of their brand colors.

As for the copy, "start free trial" tells the user that when they say "free" above, that what they mean is "free trial". It also tells the user that once they've entered their information on this page, that they will be able to create their account right away.

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CREATE LABELS & LANGUAGE THAT IS BETTER UNDERSTOOD

Have you ever seen a sales letter that included a bulleted list of items... and the last item in the list said, "and much, much more?" Well, here's a news flash...nobody with an IQ higher than room temperature believes that there is "much, much more."

If you actually have more benefits or features, put them in the list.

Clear language and good grammar are part of good storytelling and so is telling the truth. Don't try to bamboozle your prospect with tired ad copy clichés. Use words that speak to them. Identify their pain-points and try to solve them with the copy that sells your product.

After you've written the sales copy for your landing page, take a look at this check list and see if you've tackled every item that defines an easily understood landing page.

1. The sales letter uses clear language and good grammar.

If you sell information products, whether in print or online, you're in the direct response marketing business. It doesn't matter what your product is, if you can't describe its features and write glowingly about their benefits, you can't sell it effectively.

This also means that your spelling and grammar is correct. One misspelling on a landing page can ruin the credibility of your product in an instant.

This also means that you need to label everything the way it's meant to be labeled. It's understood by everyone on the web that when a word is blue and underlined it's a hyperlink and clickable. It's also expected that graphic buttons are clicked only to initiate processes, such as "Click here to join!"

Violate these familiar navigation standards and you go against the norm, taking visitors out of their "comfort zone" and perhaps detracting from your website's credibility.

2. The sales letter avoids terms not commonly understood by the target user.

Your sales letter needs to make sense to the person reading it. Many landing pages use way too much jargon in their product descriptions. Don't think only of the person who already knows what you're offering them, but also of the person who still has yet to learn what you're trying to sell them.

Conversation, storytelling and simple words can go the furthest in the copy for your landing page because you're forcing them to leave your page in order to Google all of those funny words that aren't part of their vocabulary yet.

Determining common labels among web users can be easy and absolutely free. Simply check your website's search logs to see what terms your visitors are using to find information that isn't easy to find from the homepage.

3. The sales letter uses “power words” to create excitement and urgency.

If you are an experienced direct response copywriter, you know that “**you**” is generally considered to be the most powerful single word, ranking right up there with *free*, *new* and *save*.

Used judiciously in online copywriting, power words can grab a reader's attention and help communicate and persuade. But they are not a substitute for formal structure. Good online copywriting requires an orderly format that moves the reader along to a purchase decision.

Power words can be, well, powerful, but they do not work without context. Power words in online copywriting need to be used in cooperation with all of the other tools in the copywriter's bag of tricks.

In addition to using convincing power words, urgency is also key. Using phrases like *limited time*, *right now*, *don't miss out* and *good only until [DATE]* are an even more convincing way to guide your user to the “buy” button.

You won't find many landing pages out there that miss the boat when it comes to urgency. The folks at QVC have mastered this technique by letting viewers know on a constant basis that supplies are *going, going, gone!*

When you sell digital products, you have to find more ways to convince people that if they don't buy *right now*, that they might not get this chance again.

4. The sales letter terminology is consistent.

Good writing is consistent in the use of spelling, abbreviation, terminology, grammar and punctuation. Web copy is no exception. Does consistency matter?

Definitely, because inconsistency confuses readers and makes you look uncertain of what you're doing. Words drive the brain. Good copywriting compels the reader to take action. Form follows function.

Once you've written your sales copy, pass it around. Give it to someone who does not already know the product and ask them to answer the following questions:

- Do you know what this product is?
- Do you know what it can do for you?
- Do you have enough information to make a purchasing decision?
- Do you know how to purchase this item?

If they can't answer these questions, then take another stroll through this checklist and determine how you can improve.

MILLION DOLLAR LANDING PAGE: CONSUMER REPORTS

It's no secret that *Consumer Reports* is multi-million dollar company, but it may surprise you that it is the landing page where most of the magic happens.

Power words like “expert”, “thousands” “instant access” and “best buys” are used consistently throughout the landing page.

Even more, they use plain language to describe what a user can find when they subscribe to *Consumer Reports* by listing their topic categories and reinforce their internal unbiased agenda when they remind customers that, “we are a non-profit organization that is supported by the subscriptions to our website and magazine.”

Expert Unbiased Product Ratings & Reviews

Consumer Reports offers:

- Scientific tests and ratings of thousands of products every year.
- More than 100 experts working in 7 major areas:
 - Appliances
 - Cars
 - Baby & Kids
 - Electronics
 - Foods
 - Health & Family
 - Recreation & Home Improvement
- Information that empowers consumers to make the best purchasing decision.

We are a non-profit organization that is supported by the subscriptions to our web site and magazine. To maintain our independence, we do not accept any outside advertising and any free test samples.

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DESIGN FOR BETTER READABILITY

No matter how you cut it, you're going to need to write lengthy sales letter copy for any landing page.

Even a free product requires at least 300 words to get indexed in Google and you're not going to fill that quota without a little story and feature list. You're certainly not going to get ranked on any keywords if you don't have enough copy to sprinkle them in throughout the page.

So with that said, you now have to think about how you're going to organize all of these words in a way that is easy to skim. Of course you want them to read every word that you write, but more importantly you want them to find everything they want to know about the product:

- What problem does this solve?
- How does this solve my specific problem?
- Does anyone else I know have this product?
- Is there some kind of demo or sample of this product I can preview?
- How much is it going to cost me?
- How much am I getting for this price?

If the user can find the answer to all of these questions, you've got solid gold.

Benefits should be easily found towards the beginning of the landing page. Software landing pages usually list features at the top, including compatibility and other information the user needs to know before they can even consider buying the product.

As a publisher, you can satisfy the same needs by letting them know exactly who should be buying the product, whether it's by definition, job title, or personality.

Using testimonials will let them know that colleagues they admire are also using the product and will make them feel safe in their purchase.

A video demo of a membership website, or a chapter sample of a PDF product will give them a sneak peak at the quality of product they're getting into.

When it comes to price, they are less likely to be concerned with the price if you can convince them that it's worth it. Some people will look for price first, so this is an element you want to test often. Once you've decided on that, you should be sure to include bonuses and add-ons that truly make the sale. If the user feels like

they're getting more than they need—or more than they can get if they got a similar product elsewhere—then the sale is “in the bag,” as they say.

1. The typeface is familiar, comfortable and easy to read online.

More than 25 years ago an article entitled *Why Johnny Can't Read* by Vrest Orton in *The National Review* argued that sans-serif typefaces make printed text unreadable.

He insisted that a "bold, blunt, hard, stark, rigid style of type called *sans serif*" is grotesque. He claimed that this style of type "not only repels and insults the eye, but actually makes printed matter almost impossible to read."

Interestingly enough, you'll find the opposite argument online, where serif fonts like **Times New Roman** are practically unheard of, except in headlines.

Some years ago, Microsoft decided to address the problem and had two new typefaces designed specifically for use online.

They are **Verdana**, a sans serif typeface named for the verdant Seattle area and **Georgia**, a brilliant serif typeface allegedly named after a tabloid headline about alien heads found in Georgia. **Georgia** is recommended for online headlines, while Verdana seems to work best for online text.

Whatever you choose, the typeface of your landing page should be familiar, comforting and easy to read online.

2. The layout is uncluttered and easy to follow.

People do not read carefully online, they scan. If it takes too long to find what they want, they leave.

Unfortunately, "too long" is a matter of seconds, not of minutes or of word counts.

Chances they will stay on one page for more than 60 seconds are remote. The remote control is essentially the same as a computer mouse. People will move on fast unless captured by a story.

This means that your landing page needs a start, middle and an end. The user expects a story at the beginning, the benefits in the middle and the price at the end.

3. The landing page makes adequate use of white space.

When a landing page has as many words on it as we tend to recommend (800-1500), you'll need to make sure that those words are easily read.

If someone gets overwhelmed when they look at your landing page—*you're doing it wrong*.

A landing page shouldn't read like a book, it should read like a blog. People are much more likely to read a four-page *New York Times* article online than read four pages of a PDF book online. (Pssst... you printed this, right?)

This means that you need to take advantage of lists and other ways to space out your content that is visually appealing and easily searched.

4. Graphics are well integrated with sales letter flow.

Every graphic on your landing page should serve a purpose. A well-designed landing page doesn't need to be boring and simple, but it does need to keep the attention on the words and sales message.

A good-looking landing page will give you credibility, but a flashy landing page will distract the user and won't guide them where they need to go down the page. Visuals need to be connected to the story. The images must fit the story or the brain will reject the words.

These are responsibilities for a professional graphic designer with web design experience. Not all graphic designers who cut their teeth in the print world have made a good transition to designing web pages. And too many webpage designers have never mastered the fundamentals of good graphics that are fundamental to outstanding print designers.

So seek out a designer who understands the online medium and won't impose graphics on your site that overpower the sales message.

Remember, it's not creative unless it sells.

MILLION DOLLAR LANDING PAGE: THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Save Over 80% on The Wall Street Journal!

Save over
80%



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Billing Address is different from Delivery Address

Again, it probably won't surprise you that *The Wall Street Journal* is making a whole lot of dough. However, let's pay some attention to the landing page that collects that money.

The layout is extremely easy to navigate, read and digest and even collects the first bit of information without even needing to click a button.

KEEP IT BETTER UPDATED WITH CLEAR URGENCY

Few things destroy the credibility of a landing page sales letter more quickly and effectively than content that's out of date. How can we expect the prospect to take our message seriously if we're not even interested enough in the content to keep it up to date?

Even evergreen products can go out of date quickly by not updating the biography of an author who has made well-known changes in their career.

Paying attention to how fresh your content and landing page is only the first step. The next step is to be timely enough to make your content urgent, even if the landing page was first posted three years ago.

If you're wondering whether your existing landing pages look "fresh enough to sell", then go down this checklist and see if you've tried all of these remedies.

1. The content and references are accurate and up to date.

First of all, if you're applying any kind of special-pricing deadline, which we'll recommend below, you want to make sure that the date has not passed on your landing page. Even if the price hasn't changed on the back-end, you'll only cause confusion by leaving an old expiration date in the copy.

Similarly, if you say quantities of an information product are limited, you have to make that claim believable by explaining why this is so, e.g., "We have a limited supply of our free CD, and once the inventory is gone, we will not be going back to press."

2. The sales letter includes a date stamp in opening screen.

Something as simple as displaying the current date on the site can help with content freshness.

Another way to do this is to post an update to the product. By saying it was "updated for 20XX" you're telling them that this is a product that has not been sitting stale for too long. In a B2B market that is constantly changing, this can be a deciding factor.

3. The sales letter includes a reply-by date in the call to action.

Just like any retail store has a sale, you will be able to convey the same urgency by applying a date to your special deal.

Create urgency by letting the reader know that the price is a "market test" and may change soon. Alternatively, announce an expiration date for the offer—a deadline by which the user must respond to get the free bonuses.

4. The sales letter appears to have newly-added content.

Aim to convey a sense of freshness, excitement, timeliness or discovery. Some of your potential customers will only visit your site once. If they don't buy immediately, they may never return.

But if you offer a mouthwatering, gotta-have-it special premium that they will receive immediately upon buying, you can significantly increase your conversion rate.

Any time that you can make the visitor feel like you are selling a product that they need *right now*, you will be able to bank on that opportunity.

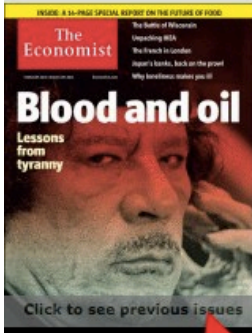
MILLION DOLLAR LANDING PAGE: THE ECONOMIST

This landing page for The Economist caters to the less design-centric audience that makes up their consumer base. To keep content fresh, their simple subscription landing page highlights a special report that calls out the upcoming year.

While it might be obvious to the customer that the content they'll be getting will be up to date (since they're subscribing to a magazine), this extra touch adds the dose of updated content that makes for a fresh landing page.

The Economist

Monday March 14th 2011



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MAKE SURE IT'S NOT BETTER READ ON A HIGH SPEED CONNECTION

Most people are running on cable and even fiber-optic lines for Internet these days, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't still pay some attention to how fast our pages are loading. While we've phased out analog television, we still have many people on this planet who use dial-up to access our web pages. Depending on your target demographic, those might be the same people you're looking to attract.

Nobody wants to wait for a website to load.

"People hate to wait," Andy King states in the opening line of his book, *Speed Up Your Site*. The Web is essentially a self-service environment. A core promise of self-service is speed. A customer turns to self-service to save time, to save money and because it is more convenient."

Call us *spoiled* or *impatient*, but the fact is that the Web-using public doesn't want to wait at all. If your landing page loads at anything slower than the speed of instant gratification, you run a serious risk of losing your customer.

As web pages grow in complexity, page load time can take longer and longer. This can translate into a loss of readers, page views, advertising impressions, click-throughs and ultimately, a loss of revenue.

You can make your landing page load faster by minimizing the file sizes of your images and making sure that your code is clean and uncorrupted.

The tool at Tools.Pingdom.com will test your full website page by loading the complete HTML page, including objects such as images, CSS, JavaScripts, RSS, Flash and frames/iframes. The tool then acts as a web browser would and loads the page.

The load time of all the objects tested is shown visually with time bars.

Each test will give you valuable information including statistics on the total load time of the page, the total number of objects tested and the size of the site including all of the objects.

CREATE A DESIGN THAT IS BETTER AT CONVERTING

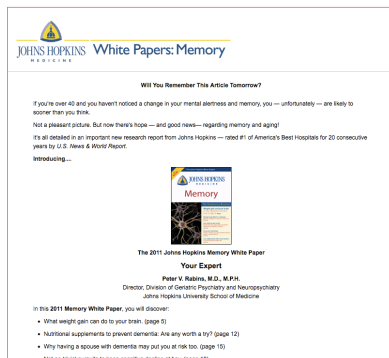
We're all superficial people at heart because we like things that look fancy and expensive. This translates the same online, where you have only a moment to convince someone that your website is worth looking at for more than a couple seconds.

The way a landing page looks and feels is almost as important as what it says. A favorable decision to purchase your product or service is almost always the result of a sales effort that made the customer feel comfortable and safe.

When analyzing the look and feel of your landing page, take a stroll down this checklist to see if you've hit all the key points.

1. The graphic design is comforting and trustworthy to the target user.

This guideline is entirely dependent on who your target user is.

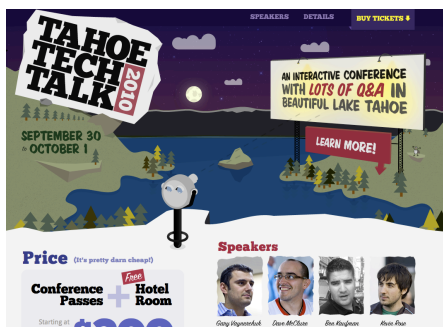


A 65-year old male may be more attracted to a white screen with a plain text sales letter and blue hyperlinks that bring him to the buy page.

This design will be familiar to the products he currently consumes and the typography will match his ability to read larger fonts with bolder headlines.

If your target audience values content over design,

then stick to writing excellent copy for the page.



On the other hand, a 25 year-old female web designer may be more attracted to a clean but funky design by a talented graphic designer.

An intricate and fascinating design may actually lend credibility to the topic at hand. In the example here for Tahoe Tech Talk 2010, this landing page is likely to excite the target user, simply by demonstrating that they're "with it"

and worthy of holding a conference on this very topic. The more savvy your target users are, the more intricacies you may want to add.

2. The graphic design is consistent with the target users' mental model.

Like the previous examples, you want to make sure that you're providing what the user expects. The 25 year-old web designer is used to buying from cleverly designed landing pages that feature video and multiple ways they can interact with the product before they buy.

Visitors instantly judge your credibility by the way your site looks. If it looks good, a visitor might take the next step, reading some copy or clicking a link. But the site design itself is the first hurdle.

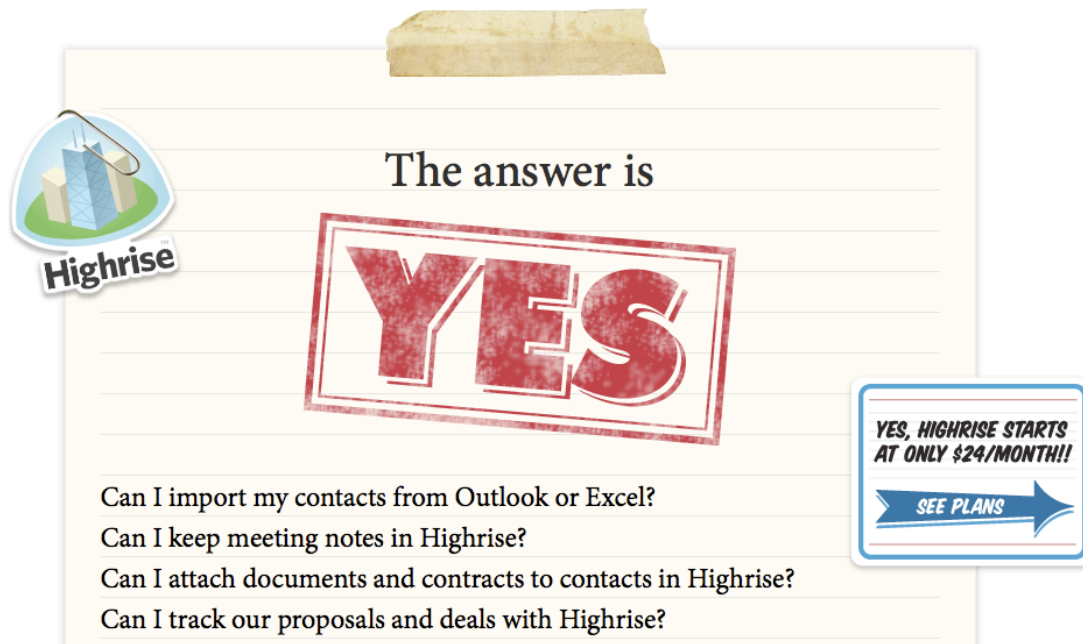
There are innumerable options here. So many, in fact, that it's easy to get overwhelmed and lose all direction. Before you settle on a design, take a good look around at other landing page designs in your niche. If they all have the same several elements on their sites, you may want to start figuring out how you can do it even better.

3. The look and feel reinforces the sales letter's flow.

As important as your design is, do keep in mind that your sales letter is ultimately what will make the final sale.

This means that your design shouldn't be so distracting that the user doesn't know how to get from the beginning to the end of the sales process.

This example from 37Signals is an excellent case of a minimalistic landing page that is still good looking, while keeping all of its attention on the copy:



Example: <http://highrisehq.com/yes>

4. The look and feel supports and reinforces the product, service or brand.

Most designers will get this part right, but it's still fair enough to note that your landing page shouldn't stray far from your brand. When someone hits your landing page, they shouldn't feel like they took the wrong direction if they came from your website homepage.

So take a step back and look at your landing page. You are probably not your target user. With this in mind, try to figure out your target user would respond to this landing page, not if *you* would respond.

Is the text large enough for 65 year-old to read? Would a 35 year-old mom respond to blue and grey graphics, or would she prefer a more lighthearted color scheme? Is your landing page too complicated? Too simple? Are you displaying everything you have to offer in the best way possible?

MILLION DOLLAR LANDING PAGE: MATCH.COM

This membership website is as simple as it gets, and is fairly easy on the eyes. Match.com gives the user one task: find who you're looking for.

By featuring real users on the left, they're driving the curiosity of the potential member to find other people like these. By giving them a low-friction call-to-action, they're allowing the user to get started right away.

Beyond that, this landing page represents exactly what the user is looking for: a loving relationship that involves holding hands and frolicking madly in a field of dandelions.



PROVIDE BETTER ORDER OPTIONS

Posting a landing page with a confusing or inadequate order mechanism is like opening a new Wal-Mart, but forgetting to install cash registers. What's the point?

In direct mail advertising, one of the two most important elements of the package is the order form (the other being the outer envelope).

This checklist is especially important, because if you get everything else right and blow the order mechanism, your sales letter landing page will almost certainly fail.

1. The sales letter is followed by a usable order flow.

There are so many sales letters on the web that could produce more orders if the companies that make them only tested them.

We recently had a client with an unhappy customer who could not join their online newsletter because his credit card has an expiration date in 2015. The drop-down menu for credit card expiration date on their secure order form only showed the years 2008 through 2012.

The result: he could not use his credit card to join. A potential customer who was trying to give them money was turned away in frustration because their order form literally was not up to-date.

Your customers should be able to fill in the fields of an online screen and check boxes to select their preferences. Simplicity and brevity are priceless. Ask only for the information you need to process the order.

In traditional brick-and-mortar businesses, there is a theory of management called MBWA. It stands for "management by walking around." Getting out of the office and onto the work floor. Talking to people. Experiencing the business first hand, much like a customer would.

2. The sales letter includes a 1-800 number for phone orders.

If you are not answering a question that the potential customer wants to know right away to make their purchase decision, they will be looking for an 800 number.

In addition, many customers still prefer to talk to someone on the phone to make their purchase decision. By providing an 800-number, you're able to sell to them on the medium that makes them most comfortable.

3. The sales letter includes an email address that they can send questions to.

For the user who has more time on his hands, but still wants to know more, you should be providing an email address for him to get a hold of you. For something more robust, like a membership product, you might even provide a chat function where they can get in contact with you right away.

4. The sales letter includes a lead form that allows you to contact them.

Sometimes the potential customer isn't ready to buy yet. Maybe they were forwarded the page a week before their paycheck, or maybe they just haven't made a decision yet.

By asking for the customer's email, you are able to keep those users in your database and remind them on a regular basis that the product or event is still available.

By giving your user as many means as possible to get a hold of you, you're not only amplifying your chances of making a sale, but you're lending credibility that there is an actual person or company behind the product that they want to buy.

MILLION DOLLAR LANDING PAGE: eDIETS

The landing page for eDiets provides no lack of order options. If you want to talk to someone on the phone, they provide their phone number twice above the fold.

The screenshot shows the eDiets landing page. At the top, the eDiets logo is on the left, and the phone number '1-866-751-0831' is in the center. To the right are links for 'Join eDiets', 'Help & Support', and 'Member Login'. Below this is a navigation bar with links for 'FREE Profile', 'Meal Delivery Plans', 'Online Diet Plans', 'Weight Loss Store', 'Testimonials', and 'Articles & Videos'. A search bar is on the right. The main content area features a 'Learn more about meal delivery' section with a 'Start Your Meal Delivery Plan' button. Below this is a 'Get a FREE Week of Food' offer with two plan options: '7 DAY fresh prepared MEAL DELIVERY PLAN' and '5 DAY fresh prepared MEAL DELIVERY PLAN'. A testimonial for Cathy is shown on the right. At the bottom, there is a 'Not sure which plan is right for you?' section with a 'get your custom plan' button. A phone number '1-866-751-0831' is repeated at the bottom center. Red arrows point to the phone number at the top, the 'Start Your Meal Delivery Plan' button, the 'VIEW PLAN DETAILS' buttons, the 'get your custom plan' button, and the phone number at the bottom.

Then, since they have several different plans, they provide you with order options for each of them, plus a way to customize your own plan.

We could have used eDiets as a great example of testimonials too (see top right), but that would have been too easy.

CONCLUSION

Landing pages are fickle. You can change the color of a button and it can increase conversion rates by 30% or more. You can change the headline on your landing page and get a similar response.

If you miss any of the best practices we've outlined in this white paper, you're going to find that conversion rates are low and that while your product is amazing, your landing page isn't doing its job. Remember that the landing page for your product needs to be just as helpful as the product you're selling.

Make sure your landing page contains an interesting, engaging, believable story told by someone your audience can relate to and appreciate. After all, you're asking them to spend their valuable time reading your pitch... you owe them a good read. Plus, a compelling story will move them smoothly along to the purchasing decision.

The reader came to your page to solve a problem that they're having. Your job on any landing page will be to remind them of those problems and tell them how your product will solve each and every one of them.

The more expensive your product, the more copy you'll need to provide. Giving more information than necessary is better than not giving enough information.

Long copy tells them as much as they need to know – and much, much more. We know that nobody truly reads an entire 5,000 word sales letter.

However, they do skim sales letters and they do find what they're looking for in all that copy. More importantly, they end up buying a product that they know more about than one they know less about.

Even if the page is short and *super pretty*.

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