

MARKETING: WHAT MAKES PEOPLE CLICK?

How to convert interest into action.



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THE SUCCESS OF PRETTY MUCH ANY DIGITAL MARKETING ACTIVITY DEPENDS ON GETTING PEOPLE TO MAKE THAT 'LAST CLICK'

– the one that converts interest into action (e.g. making a purchase, signing up to an email newsletter, downloading a white paper or eBook etc.).

There are dangers to solely focusing on the last click when putting together a marketing strategy, but that 'last click' is undoubtedly a crucial part of digital marketing.

So much so that landing pages, designed to help improve 'last click' performance, have become an instrumental part of digital marketing. These standalone web pages are designed with a single focus or goal in mind, usually represented by a strong single-minded call to action. The content of these pages matches the intent of the ad or email visitors clicked on to reach it. Their aim is to increase conversion rates i.e. turn interest into action.

Much of the best practice and advice on landing pages is centred on 'practical' issues such as landing page content, design and layout.

Listed on the following pages are some of the key 'practical' considerations that landing pages need to take into account to be successful. Many of these considerations can also be applied to good effect to your marketing communications.



SIX PRACTICAL TIPS FOR CREATING SUCCESSFUL LANDING PAGES

1. MAKE SURE LANDING PAGE CONTENT MATCHES YOUR ADS / SOURCE CONTENT.

Ensure that you're sending people to a page that matches their expectations. At first sight, visitors should know that they've made a 'good click' – landing page copy and design should match that of the ad you're running or source content that you've created.

2. KEEP KEY INFORMATION / THE CALL TO ACTION 'ABOVE THE FOLD'.

The area that's visible on a screen before scrolling down (the area 'above the fold') is highly valuable and your landing page needs to be designed to make the most of it.

3. BE CLEAR, BE CONCISE.

- This especially applies to content 'above the fold' but should be observed across the whole landing page
- Keep headlines and calls to action short, clear and highly visible
- Be 'minimalist' don't 'cram' anything more than you need onto the page
- Use clear, compelling copy that is straightforward and easy to read
- Clearly 'signpost' the page with strong visual directions / cues so that page visitors know where to go to / what to look at next
- Avoid any 'distractions' - remove website navigation and any unnecessary links from your landing page.



4. INCLUDE 'PROOF' / DEMONSTRATE AUTHENTICITY

Include 'evidence' of how good your offering is – whether its facts or figures or customer testimonials.

5. ENSURE YOUR LANDING PAGE LOADS QUICKLY

70% of customers admit that loading times influence their desire to buy. Avoid weighing down your landing page with any unnecessary elements and ensure that all images are optimised.

6. MAKE SURE YOUR LANDING PAGE IS 'RESPONSIVE'

Your landing page is likely to be viewed on a number of different devices – desktop, laptop, tablet or smartphone – so it's important that it can successfully 'adapt' to the device it's being viewed on.

With these kind of tips, and best practice, being readily available, average conversion rates are on the up.

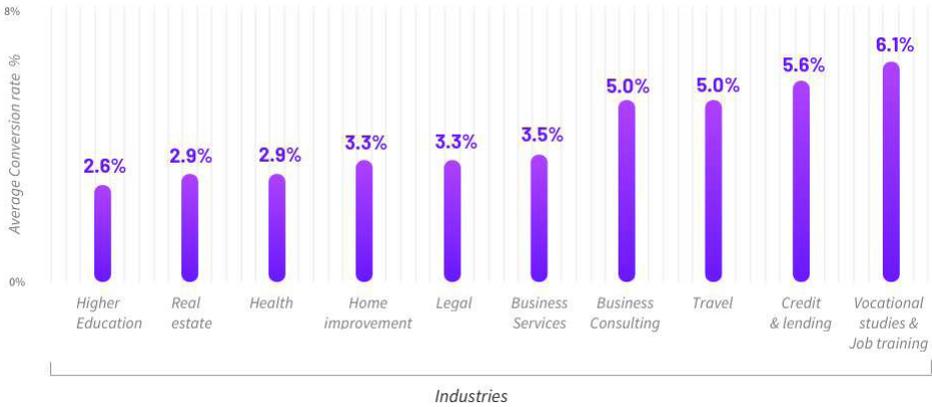


However, according to research from landing page experts, Unbounce, the average conversion rate on business landing pages is just 4.02%:



OVER 90% OF TRAFFIC THAT LANDS ON YOUR LANDING PAGE ISN'T GOING TO CONVERT INTO ANYTHING VALUABLE.

Average lead-generation conversion rates by industry (source Unbounce):



So, there's plenty of room for improvement.

COULD BUSINESSES BE MISSING A TRICK WHEN IT COMES TO TURNING INTEREST INTO ACTION?



THE SIX UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES THAT CAN BE APPLIED TO INFLUENCE BUYING BEHAVIOUR.

Most of the thought and best practice for landing pages focuses on the practical.

Whilst this is important, it doesn't fully take into account the psychology of marketing – how we behave, think and feel when we see a piece of communication.

In his book 'Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion', Dr Robert Cialdini identified **six universal principles that could be applied to influence behaviour**. Putting these principles top of mind when thinking about the messages and calls to action on your landing page, and in your marketing, will pay dividends:

1. RECIPROCATION

Reciprocation is triggered when you give first.

When you do something for someone, they have a natural tendency to want to do something for you in return.

In his book Dr Robert Cialdini cites studies where restaurant diners are given mints with their bill and how this affected the tips they left for staff. On average customers who received a free mint with their bill left higher tips by an average of 3.3% but those who were given two mints left a massive 20% more in tips.

It's a powerful tactic that's been used consistently in marketing, both offline and online, from free sample giveaways of perfume, soap powder etc to the digital equivalents - free content, free downloads, free trials and free gifts. These not only give people a chance to try out the product themselves, but also create a sense of debt towards the brand giving them.



Two key factors are important in making reciprocation an effective tactic:

You must give first: You have to be the first one to give and must offer something to potential customers without any obvious reward.

What you give must have real value: The greater the perceived value, the greater the more prospects feel obliged to repay.

2) COMMITMENT AND CONSISTENCY

Once we make a choice or take a stand, we work to behave consistently with that commitment in order to justify our decisions.

People continue on with something simply because they've already invested time, money or other resources into it.

Consider a shopping trip where you spend a couple of hours searching in different shops for the item you want to purchase. It feels like a waste of time if you don't walk away with it.

However, it feels like a successful use of time if you end up buying what you set out to get.

Strangely, for most of us though, if we've already spent a couple of hours looking, we feel compelled to continue searching until we find what we want. We do this to avoid the feeling that we've wasted those hours, even though we'll end up losing more time in the process! What's more, to avoid the perception that we've wasted our time we'll often make a rash purchase decision and come away with something that isn't quite what we were looking for. So how does this translate into marketing? Here's some examples:

Progress bars on web forms: Progress bars are a great tool for letting people know how many more questions, or how much information, there is left to complete, but they also let users know how much time and effort they've invested so far. Users are far less likely to quit a form once they're past the half-way point because they feel they'll lose more time than they gain by quitting now.

Software companies: Software companies use the principle of 'commitment and consistency' by encouraging users to create personal profiles and heavily customise the platform. The more time and effort users put into getting a piece of software how they like it, the more difficult it becomes to abandon and start from scratch with another provider.

3) SOCIAL PROOF

When we are unsure, we look to others - usually (but not necessarily) similar to ourselves - to provide us with the correct actions to take. The more people undertake that action, the more we consider that action correct. So, for instance, when lots of people are using or buying a product, others want to follow suit.

Typical examples of social proof could include getting an expert's seal of approval, celebrity endorsement, user testimonials, the credentials of the business (e.g. how many customers it has, awards and certifications, high profile customers etc.) and perhaps the most powerful of all – word of mouth from friends and colleagues.



4) LIKING

The propensity to agree with people we like and, just as important, the propensity for others to agree with us, if we like them.

We like to help, work with or buy from people that we like and respect. This is where branding - the way you present yourself or your business and the feelings that invokes in others - plays a vital role.

Whether it's you, your business or your website, being approachable, warm and friendly will pay dividends.

5) AUTHORITY

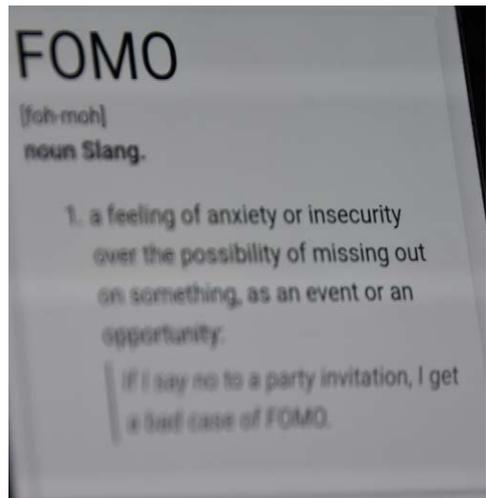
We are more likely to say "yes" to others who are authorities, who carry greater knowledge, experience or expertise. It's in our nature to prefer to be associated with something or someone trusted.

Authority can come from things like personal or business awards, accreditations and certifications, publishing and from membership of trade or professional organisations.

6) SCARCITY / FEAR OF MISSING OUT (FOMO)

We are hardwired to value things and experiences that we think are rare or in short supply. It's an evolutionary trait, developed to ensure that we get what we need to survive, but it is also tied to our self-worth. Acquiring something that's not common, not usual or in demand, makes us feel good.

Time or quantity limited offers, or exclusive offers – generally associated with words and phrases like 'Hurry!', 'Exclusive offer!' and 'Limited availability!' – apply the scarcity principle.



SUMMARY

Following the practical advice and tips for the layout and design of a landing page will have a real impact on conversion rates.

But even in applying them, over 90% of traffic that lands on a landing page still isn't going to convert into anything valuable.

To help improve conversion rates, take into account the psychology of marketing – how we behave, think and feel when we see a piece of communication – and use one or more of the six universal principles of influence to tap into the feelings and emotions of your customers.



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