



101 Landing Page Optimization Tips

Do you have abandonment issues because your landing page bounce rate is literally through the roof?

Wasting precious time and money on ineffective PPC campaigns?

Tired of your boss complaining about how the industry average conversion rate is double what “you” achieved last month?

Don’t know how to fix the problem?

Never fear. With our authoritative collection of 101 Landing Page Optimization tips, we’ll have you testing, reporting, increasing ROI, and unbouncing your e-marketing campaigns before you can say *“Screw this, I’m off to become a postman... at least their delivery rate can get close to 100%”*.

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The Fundamentals

Sticking to the fundamentals can take you from having a terrible landing page to having one that people find hard to poke holes in. Apply them vigorously and at all times, then enhance your campaigns by digging into the other areas we discuss later on.

1. **Send people to a relevant and targeted page**

Your homepage is a mish-mash of goal oriented communication - and usually for good reason. With that in mind, resist the urge to send people there as it's better targeted at the curious explorer type rather than the person clicking through from a banner or AdWords link. Think one goal, one message, one action. And hence one page - generally a new one - a landing page.

2. **Provide a consistent experience**

From ad through landing page and onto the destination site, design, messaging and tone should be consistent with the expectations of the user at the time they clicked the link/banner. Your upstream ad is the source, and using a river analogy, you should be drinking from the same stream at the end of the journey as you were at the start.

3. **“Don't Bore Us... Get to the Chorus” (Roxette)**

The title of this tip comes from the Great Hits album by Swedish pop duo Roxette. As one of the masters of bubblegum pop, they knew how to highlight the most important element of each song - the chorus.

No one likes a babbler, and we only put up with it for the most part because it's our friend that's chewing on our ear.

When dealing with online prospects, you need to get right to the point with no muss and no fuss.

The astute among you will recognize that in providing an analogy prior to my point, I am essentially countering my own argument to a degree. But on closer examination, what this shows is that sometimes you have to provide some editorial or instructional introduction to your subject.

If this is the case, like Roxette, just make sure the juicy bits stand out significantly.

4. **Focus the visitors attention with a clear and concise headline.**

Imagine yourself walking in a busy downtown street. You glance at the newspaper vending machine to see the big black headline. If it captures your attention, you might stop, bend over and read it for a while. If it's really good, you might fish a dollar out of your pocket and actually pay for it.

Conversely, if it's just a big page of small type with no visible purpose, you wouldn't even break your stride.

Make the headline clear, easily noticeable, and in a relevant position on the page.

5. **Enable sharing on your viral landing pages**

If your goal is to create buzz with a landing page - such as a flash game or humor piece, ensure that it is easily sharable with the common social networks.

The most obvious choice for social media buzz creation is Twitter. This micro-blogging platform has become the social sharing tool du jour and can help to spread your message quickly and in an exponential fashion if what you are doing is tweetworthy.

The key to its success lies in the fact that it's not 100% altruistic. Sharing content on Digg or Reddit can help establish you as an authority if you have a long term goal to become recognized in the community. However, sharing via Twitter adds the content into your own personal timeline which extends your online persona by showing content that represents your personality and beliefs.

It's reminiscent of the psychology surrounding ones CD, vinyl or book collection, where you gain pleasure from the reaction of others to your taste.

6. **User Segmentation**

If you have multiple user types, create a landing page for each segment and drive traffic via separate sources. This will enable you to measure your most effective market segmentation. If your landing page has extended logic or geo-targeting capabilities you may be able to create a single page with changing content based on visitor. If this is the case, ensure your tracking can handle these complexities.

7. **Remove the clutter**

Remember that ad campaign that had a single button proclaiming "Don't click me"? Nobody could resist that.

Not only was it tempting, but it didn't have any competing information.

As you create your landing page, step back from time to time, look at it from a distance and see how many things are vying for your attention.

Refine your landing page until the answer is 1.

Observe - Remove - Repeat

8. **Remove the navigation**

Similarly, don't give people a full-scale website experience. You paid to get them here, so keep 'em focused and on track. If they really want to know your favorite

color or look you up on Google maps, they can go to your website in their own time. Each navigation option you provide dilutes their attention.

9. **Keep reading to a minimum**

Ensure visitors get a chance to read your most important copy. If it's buried amongst 5 paragraphs of text, it'll be missed.

An exception to this rule would be a page designed to provide a high level of detail (such as a Book page on Amazon), but this is usually best utilized as the deep-linked "product detail" page on the target website and not on a landing page.

10. **Above the fold.**

As much as this statement fills me with much chagrin and shouldn't always be considered in the same way for certain types of web page, it still holds true for the landing page.

Your primary messaging and call to action must be above the fold (the bottom of the screen for the average browser resolution of your target market).

Does it really matter anymore?

To present the counter argument (for completeness), a product detail page such as an Amazon book page, is very well suited to a long page.

There are many things that have reduced the need to focus so much on the fold, 3 of them are:

- **Amazon** - with some of the most important information (user reviews) 2-5 screens down the page people have developed an understanding that not all of the gold is buried close to the surface.
- **MySpace** - when millions of today's youth started creating their own web pages using MySpace, they inherently started to learn and value this long form approach.
- **The Wheel Mouse** - providing a big helping hand along the way was the introduction of an improved interaction mechanism. The scroll wheel on the PC mouse essentially removed the need to use scrollbars. Thankfully Apple have since conceded to this superior interaction method and included it on their mice too.

Repeating your CTA on long pages

If you are obligated to produce a long landing page (perhaps as one of the standard long-form lead capture sites), try to repeat your core message and/or CTA at comfortable intervals throughout. This helps to reinforce your purpose. Note also that different people react to different content, so they may be 2/3 of the way through before they believe what you are saying. If there is a button right

there, you may find them more likely to convert when this matches their time of emotional connection to your message.

11. Congruence

Congruence refers to ensuring that every element on your landing page refers to or supports your core value proposition. Look over your design and copy, if it's not directly supporting your goals ditch it or re-write/re-design it.

12. Experiment with different media types

Video has become so prevalent in the broadband world that it's no longer a barrier for the majority of people. Visitors are also more likely to spend more time on your site engaged in passive activities such as watching a video - it's easier than reading. This extra time can be the difference between someone "hearing" your message and not. With everything, quality is king here, say something important and say it well. If you can't afford to build something with a high production value, then aim for a screencast - a screen view walkthrough of your product or concept. These are intended and expected to be lo-fi and this quality can enhance the realism and authenticity of you and your approach - where the message now resides in what you say and what you show, rather than in the production value of the video.

13. Provide extra value on your confirmation or thank you page

If you are asking your visitors for something on your landing page (such as an email address for lead capture), take it one step further and give them an extra bonus on the thank you page. This could just be something useful such as a link to related content on your site (or elsewhere), or it could be an extra free report/ebook. Giving something away for free (or for an email address) is good, surprising someone and giving them a bonus is great.