



Best Practices for Creating High-Converting Overlays

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Introduction

Conversions happen in that magical moment where your goals as a marketer align precisely with the goals of the user. You want the sale, they want the bargain; you want the email, they want the ebook; and so on.

Unbounce Convertables enable more of these moments by giving you the power to present custom-crafted offers for your visitors as on-page **overlays**, at the moment they are most likely to respond to them.

But as you've probably noticed while browsing the web, some experiences don't quite live up to that standard.

They might be tiny and overstuffed with info, or oversized and intrusive. They can appear at inconvenient moments. Or they might make an offer that just *doesn't make any sense*.

You can do better, and we're right here with you. In this guide we'll be exploring how to create targeted overlays that:

- Are **complementary** to the content on the page
- Appear at the **right time** for the **right kinds of audiences**
- Minimize intrusiveness and **respect** the user experience

And ultimately, to win you more leads, sales and signups on any web page.



Marketing Goals



Overlays are most commonly used to accomplish one of three **marketing goals**: revenue generation, lead generation, and traffic shaping.



REVENUE GENERATION

Drive revenue by highlighting special offers, or capture sales from abandoning users with last-second discounts.

- Usually doesn't have a form

Place **revenue gen** offers on...

- Homepage
- Pricing pages
- Product/service pages
- Cart/checkout pages



LEAD GENERATION

Convert idle or abandoning visitors (who otherwise wouldn't sign up) into fresh leads for your email campaigns.

- Must have a form

Place **lead gen** offers on...

- Homepage
- Blog posts/articles
- Landing pages (as secondary goal)



TRAFFIC SHAPING

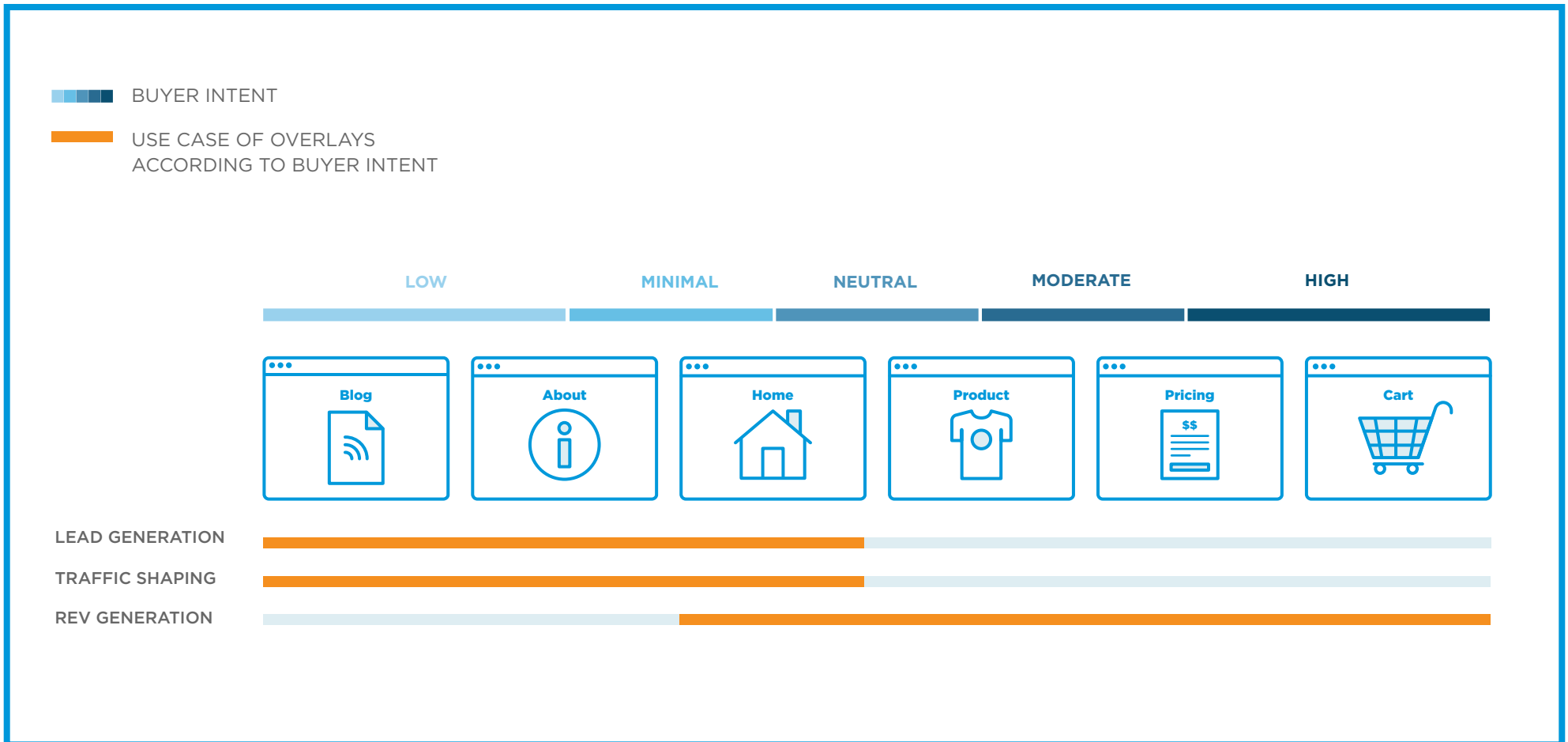
Optimize your traffic flow by directing users from low-converting to high-converting pages.

- Click-through only, no form

Place **traffic shaping** offers on...

- Company pages (e.g. 'About Us')
- Blog posts/articles
- High-traffic pages with low conversion rates

Where To Place Overlays





Overlay Triggers



Unbounce overlays can be triggered to appear either **on arrival**, **on exit**, or **after delay**. Depending on the type of offer you're presenting, different triggers may be more effective than others.



ON ARRIVAL

Appear when the page first loads.

Best used for:

- Offers you want users to immediately see (e.g. a coupon code or an event invitation)
- Returning visitors who may no longer notice your on-site calls to action



AFTER DELAY

Appear after a designated time delay, usually between 5 and 20 seconds.

Best used for:

- Relevant offers to users who have implied interest in a topic after spending time on the page
- Returning visitors who may no longer notice your on-site calls to action



ON EXIT

Appear when users are about to abandon your page.

Best used for:

- Offers that can "save" a potentially lost conversion (e.g. a coupon code or shipping discount)
- Offering free resources or collecting sign-ups that enable you to save a user's details for future communications



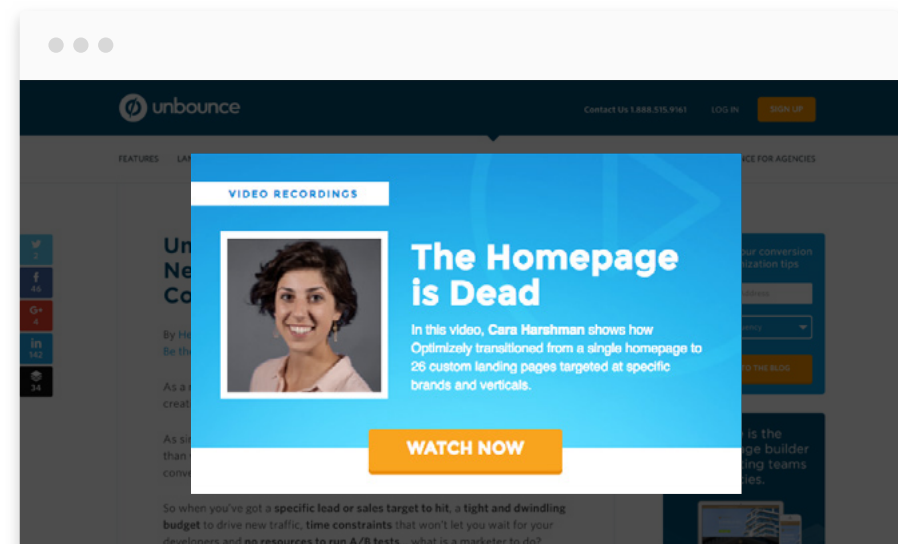
Overlay Design

The same principles that apply to all forms of **conversion-centered design** apply to creating overlays: **highlight the actions you want users to take**, and **eliminate friction** the user might face in taking those actions.

Contrast

Overlays created with Unbounce automatically dim the background, so your overlay is the most prominent content on the page. However, you'll want to ensure your overlay's **call to action** stands out from both the background page and the overlay itself.

While you may have heard that certain colors are more effective at producing conversions, the truth is it's different for every situation. That said, **complementary colors** consistently work well.



Whitespace

Since overlays are extremely space limited, it's easy to fill them to the borders with copy and graphics. But **most users will only glance at your overlay** before deciding whether or not to take the desired action.

Giving your copy, graphics and call to action some space to breathe will make it easier for users to quickly understand your offer, which increases the chance of conversion.

Basic Design Rules

45 px

Create More Conversion Opportunities

How to use Convertables to drive more conversions from any web page or online store.

First Name

Your Email

GET THE FEATURE GUIDE

By supplying your email, you authorize Unbounce to update you with information about its services. You may unsubscribe anytime.

45 px

45 px

Your headline should be **larger and bolder** than the rest of your copy to establish a clear visual order.

Leave at least **45px** between the edge of the overlay and its inner content.

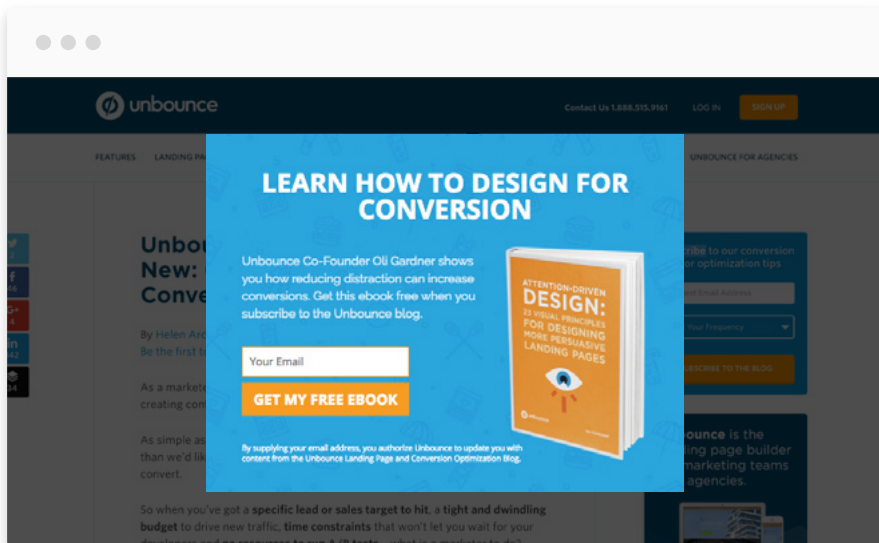
An image showing your **product** or your product/service's **context of use** can help clarify your offer.

Give your call to action a color that **contrasts and complements** the rest of your overlay.

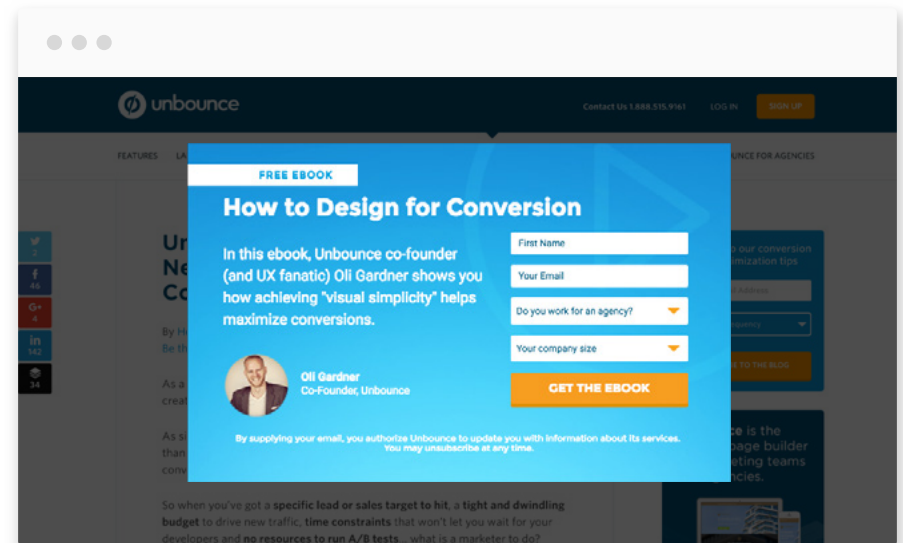
Leave **space between elements** so that your overlay doesn't feel crowded and overwhelming.

Forms

The more information or tasks your user has to process, the more **friction** you add between the user and the conversion. Limit forms in overlays to a maximum of **two fields** to keep them easy to read and fill out.



CONVERSION RATE
2.65%



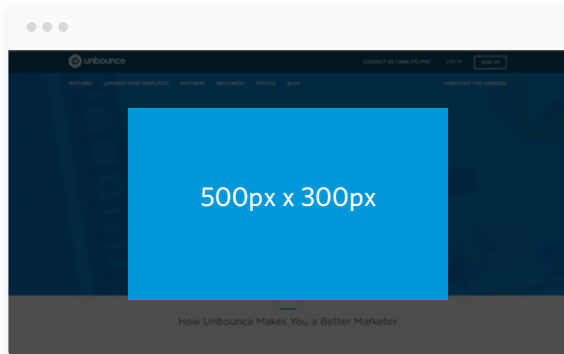
CONVERSION RATE
1.32% (▼ 50.19%)

As we discovered running our own overlays on the Unbounce blog, adding too many form fields can have a negative impact on conversion rates.

Sizing

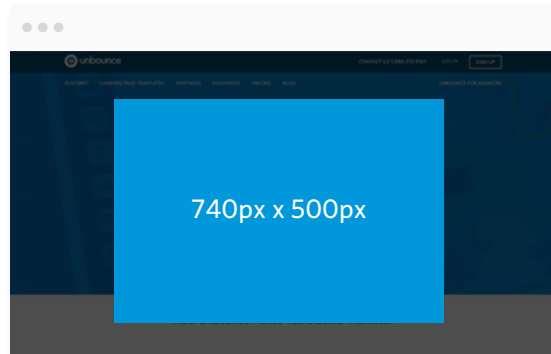
ON ARRIVAL

Showing a large overlay on arrival can bury the page's content and disorient users into thinking they landed in the wrong place. Keep the size between **500 x 300** and **740 x 500 pixels**.



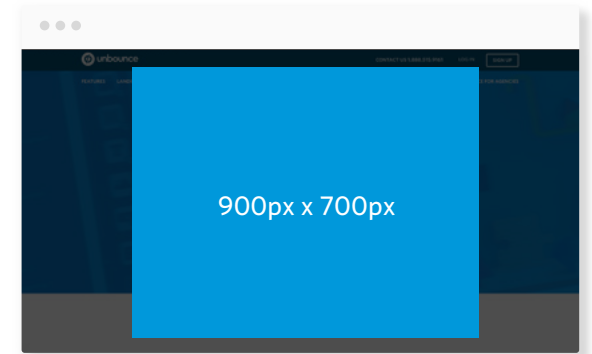
AFTER DELAY

Because these interrupt the browsing experience, it's important not to make them overwhelmingly large. Keep these overlays between **500 x 300** and **740 x 500 pixels**.



ON EXIT

Because users are on their way out when exit overlays are triggered, you can afford to take up more space on the screen, up to **900 x 700 pixels**.



The default size for overlays created in Unbounce is **740x500 px**.

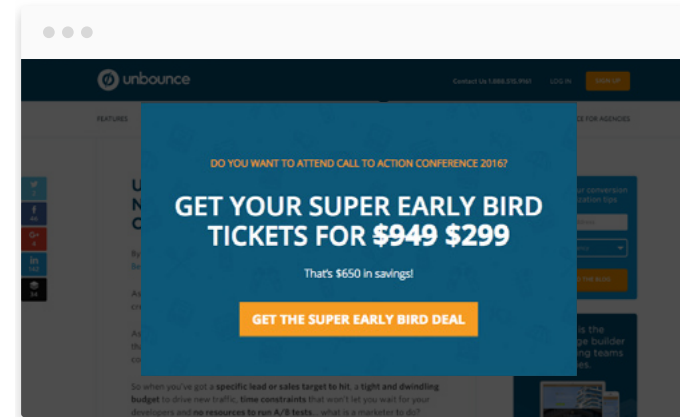
Overlays exceeding **900x700 pixels** may not load properly on all screen sizes, leading to lost impressions and conversions.



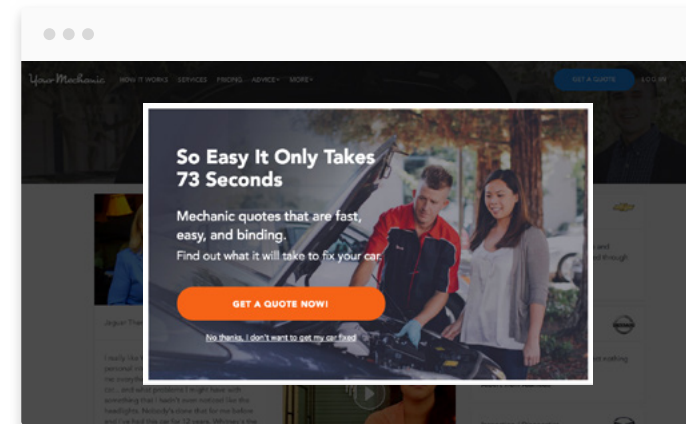
Overlay Copywriting

Overlays don't give you a ton of space to work with, so the less said, the better. But what's more important is **how you say it**. The core copy elements of an overlay are:

- A **headline** that grabs a user's attention before they close the overlay or navigate away
- A **supporting headline** or **description** of the offer
- A **call to action** that completes the marketing goal



Copy for specific offers (like discounts, giveaways or contests) should clearly and concisely communicate what the offer is. Resist the temptation to be too clever with the wording.



Copy for non-specific offers (like quotes, mailing lists, social media engagements) can sound generic if you straight-up write what they are, so take the opportunity to infuse your copy with personality.

Conveying Urgency and Exclusivity

If there's *actually* a time limit or limited quantities of your offer, let your audience know.

Users are often more likely to convert if they feel an offer is time-sensitive.

That said, you should avoid including phoney countdown timers or implying false scarcity, which could hurt your credibility with prospects who see through the trick.

Calls to Action

Never use generic copy like “submit.” Instead, lead with the result or benefit of the action the user is taking, like “Get My Coupon” or “Enter the Sweepstakes.”

Negative Language

Many marketers resort to using negative language in links that close an overlay, like:



However, using language like this anywhere near your call to action can be a turnoff for some users. Not only can it cause anxiety and doubt, adding **friction** to completing the action, but it can damage your brand's image and credibility.

The Next Step to More Conversions

If you're looking for specific examples on the types of campaigns you can run with Unbounce Convertables, [see 6 fast ways to start using overlays today](#).

Ready to start building?

Choose a template to get started.