



How to Maximize Your Landing Page Conversions

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Introduction

If you're looking for ways to increase your sales conversions on your landing pages, you're not alone. Before sending traffic to your site, there are a number of techniques you can utilize to increase your chances for success. And once that traffic starts flowing in, there are many more tactics to quickly increase your conversion rates to the theoretical maximum for your niche and product offer.

That's the basis of this report.

I've divided this report into two sections: *Quick Hits* and *Best Results*. In the *Quick Hits* section, you'll find quick techniques you can do right now to start seeing increases in your conversion rates. But the real meat lies in the *Best Results* section. That's where you'll find strategies to *really* make a difference. And when you combine all the tips from both sections, you'll be well on your way to increased profits for life.

You'll find this report straight to the point, with little fluff or filler. Instead, I'll point you to resources both online and offline where you can learn more about any given topic or technique. And I'll introduce you to a number of tools and resources along the way.

Some of these techniques you are probably already familiar with or have heard about. Some may be new to you. But it's whether you actually put them into practice or not that's going to make all of the difference.

Even if you pick up one or two things to try, you'll undoubtedly find value here. It's not very difficult to increase your conversion rate even by a little bit. Such a small increase could mean a big difference over the long run. However, it's the big increases that will leave you smiling all the way to the bank. And there are many ideas in this report that have the potential to give you those big increases, no matter what your niche market or what you sell.

It's important to remember, though, that for these techniques to work, you have to have a market to begin with. If you're trying to sell skateboards to 80-year old men, it's time to find a new market, not try to milk this one.

But if your market is strong and viable, and you have a great offer, there's little doubt that a few changes and testing will yield you positive results.

So, that being said, let's start with the quick and easy things you can do right now to start seeing some results.

Quick Hits

Get Rid of Anything that Doesn't Advance the Sale

Things like Flash animations, distracting graphics, unnecessary photos and pictures, "beautiful" design and layouts that are there only for the sake of looking beautiful and polished. All of these things usually do very little to advance the sale. However, things like video testimonials and Flash or Camtasia video that shows how the product works can do wonders to advance the sale.

Often times an ugly clunker of a site will outsell a pretty site with graceful matching colors and graphics. Page load times can take a hit as well, when it is bogged down with flashing banners and graphics. All of these things do nothing for your visitor but get him to leave immediately. Sometimes a good rule of thumb is to just look at what everyone else is doing and do the opposite.

And if you work with a web designer or graphic designer, make sure he knows effective direct response techniques. There's nothing worse for sales than to have a designer who loves to come up with new "creative" designs to satisfy his own ego or because he "thinks" that's what you want. Leave out the fancy Javascript popup menus and such. Find a site that you know converts well, show him the site and say, "I want that."

Here are some examples of sites that simply don't get it when it comes to commercial website design:

<http://www.intelcs.com> - Too many distracting graphics, and the copy is all about them.

<http://www.cadwebsitedesign.com> - Same as above, plus their Flash loading time is abysmal. I have broadband, and even I had to wait around for it to load. At least they had copy as well, but alas, it's also all about them.

Here's one that gets it:

<http://www.lipocerin.com>

And if you commit the cardinal sin of creating your entire website with nothing but Flash, you'll be flushing money down the toilet. And remember, all-Flash sites are invisible to the search engines as well.

A few more tips:

- 1) Don't present your text content as images. An exception to this might be your headline or a few chosen subheads.
- 2) Leave out the sound effects and background music. The only audio they should hear (if at all) is the spoken word, designed to advance the sale or get them to opt in. A great tool for generating audio on your site for direct response purposes is Armand Morin's [Audio Generator](#).
- 3) Don't make your site too cluttered or distracting. It should be clear right from the start where you want to lead your visitors when they arrive. If they hesitate or start clicking around willy-nilly, you'll lose them.

Periodically Test Your Site

This sounds like a no-brainer, but I just Googled "security" and clicked on one of the top pay per click (PPC) ads, taking me to <http://www.brinkshomesecurity.com>. Well, actually it didn't take me anywhere. After waiting almost 30 seconds for the page to load (which visitors generally won't so), I was rewarded by a "Page not found" error. Oops. It's possible their site could have been down, but if that's the case, why not pause your PPC campaign so you're not losing money for nothing in return.

Watch Your Outbound Links

You don't want to have links that direct your visitor away from your site. If you must have links (e.g. to show a source that backs your claims), at least have it open in a new window. Even better would be to copy the content to your own server (be sure to check the legality of copying the content...if it's a graph or chart, you may only have to credit the source) and open it in a new window. You can see an example of this on a site I created at <http://www.million-dollar-roundtable.com>. If you scroll down just a bit, you'll see where I talk about Internet usage and provide a link to show my stats.

Add Captions to All Your Photos

Just as when people read editorials they tend to read the captions under the photos, so should it be with your sales letter. Each and every photo should have a caption under it. If it's a picture of your product, the caption can be an additional call to action (e.g. "Get Yours Today!").

If it's a photo of a person, add a relevant caption, but every caption should provide some call to action. Remember, if it doesn't advance the sale, get rid of it or replace it with something that does.

Caption example:



Steak: Food for Kings

Better Caption Example:



**Cook Juicy Steaks Like This
Each and Every Month...Delivered
Right to Your Doorstep**

Best Caption Example:



**[Cook Juicy Steaks Like This
Each and Every Month...Delivered
Right to Your Doorstep](#)**

In the last example, notice I turned the caption into a clickable link. Here the link just goes to Google, but on your site, you would have the link go to your order page.

Create Redirect Links

If you're promoting a product on your site, and your site is a database-driven shopping cart e-commerce system, then you probably have links like the following for each product page:

<http://www.mysite.com/store/products.php?id=28475&desc=product%20description%20here&cat=980&refer=477839>

Often times when sending a link out like that in an email, it gets chopped up. Then when they click on the link, they get a page not found error. Or, if you have the link in an article or ezine, you could face similar problems. Plus the link is just not intuitive enough. Wouldn't it be better to have a link like this:

<http://www.mysite.com/productname>

Well, you can have the best of both worlds by using server-side redirects. Here's how it works (if your site uses PHP):

Create a folder on your root HTML directory. For this example, we'll call it productname. Inside that folder, create a file called index.php, and in that file, include the following text:

```
<?
  Header ("Location:
http://www.mysite.com/store/products.php?id=28475&desc=product%20description%20here&cat=980&refer=477839");
?>
```

Of course you would substitute the location with the actual location of your product page. Now when a visitor goes to <http://www.mysite.com/productname>, they'll be redirected to the right page.

Other websites besides those that use PHP will have their own redirect methods, but your webmaster should be able to help with that, should you have any confusion.

Now you can promote your individual products using the shorter, more meaningful link. Remember, though. If the long link should ever change, be sure to update the redirect to match.

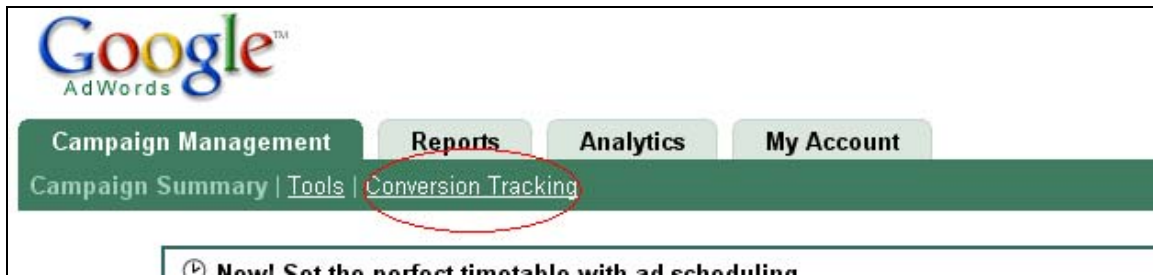
Use Google Conversion Code

If you advertise your site via Google Adwords PPC, Google offers a free conversion tracking tool that you should take advantage of if you aren't already. The tracking tool is comprised of a bit of Javascript code that you put at the bottom of your "thank you" page. Now whenever someone arrives at your site from Google via PPC and orders your product, Google will track those conversions for you for free.

One caveat: Google doesn't update its stats in real time, but the tool is perfectly useful for checking your conversions up to the previous day.

To get started, first locate a spot on your "thank you" page where you'll place the Google code. The code will show up as a very small "Google Site Stats" image.

Next, login to your Google Adwords account and click on "Conversion Tracking."



Click on "Get Conversion Page Code" on the left.

Google™
AdWords

Campaign Management | **Reports** | **Analytics** | **My Account**

[Campaign Summary](#) | [Tools](#) | [Conversion Tracking](#)

Conversion Tracking - Free!
Looking for your conversion data? Find it on the [Campaign Summary](#) page, where two data c AdWords campaign.

💡 New! Now that you've set up AdWords conversion tracking, start tracking your
If you use other advertising channels — like Yahoo! Search Marketing, email campaign channel tracking to analyze and compare all your online advertising efforts through you [Set up cross-channel tracking](#) | [Learn more](#)

AdWords Tracking
Status: **Active**

- [Get conversion page code](#)
- [Stop AdWords tracking](#)

Cross-Channel Tracking [?]
Status: **Not running**

- [Start cross-channel tracking](#)

Helpful Documentation

- [Understanding conversion tracking](#) (Flash)
- [Setup guide](#) (.pdf)
- [Cross-channel guide](#)

Common Questions

- [What is a conversion?](#)
- [How will this tool help me?](#)
- [How does conversion tracking work?](#)
- [Full conversion tracking FAQ](#)

Select the type of tracking you want to perform. Your options are shown below:

Conversion type	Sample pages where you could place conversion code
<input type="checkbox"/> Purchase/Sale Helps online commerce sites track purchases and sales to determine return on investment (ROI).	Page that says: "Thank you for your purchase."
<input type="checkbox"/> Lead Appropriate for sales organizations tracking how many users requested follow-up calls for more information.	Page that says: "Thank you for contacting us."
<input type="checkbox"/> Signup Designed for sites interested in tracking sign-up statistics for subscriptions or newsletters.	Page that says: "Your subscription has been processed."
<input type="checkbox"/> Views of a key page Helps sites track how many times users have landed on a single page that's important to your business.	Key page on your website.
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	Place code wherever you like.

Click on continue. You'll then be able to customize the appearance of the "Google Site Stats" image.

Conversion Tracking Setup

Choose conversion types > **Customize Text Block** > Insert Code > Test setup

Customize your 'Google Site Stats' text.
On the webpage to which you add the conversion tracking code, a small 'Google Site Stats' text block will appear to customers who have clicked on your ad. Customers can click the 'send feedback' link to learn more about the tracking process and tell us about their experience.

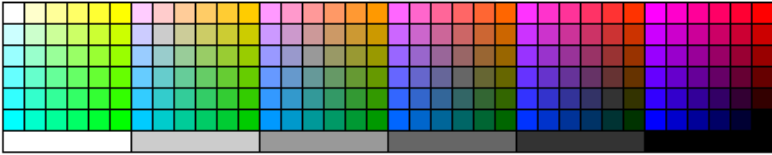
! This text must appear as is. Please do not alter your conversion tracking code or this tracking text after the setup process. [?]

1. Choose text format (one line or two).

Google Site Stats
send feedback

Google Site Stats - send feedback

2. Customize the background color. Preview your selection.
Click desired color, or enter your own: #FFFFFF



Preview:
Google Site Stats - send feedback You'll specify the language of this text in the next step.

You'll then be presented with a couple more options, and the code itself. Click in the code box to select all the text. Then right-click your mouse button and click on "Copy."

1. Select your conversion page language.

Your custom 'Google Site Stats' text block will be translated into this language. [\[?\]](#)

English (US)

2. Select a security level.

Select the security level already in place for your conversion page(s): [\[?\]](#)

http://

3. Copy the code. Paste it into the relevant conversion webpage(s). Then, publish.

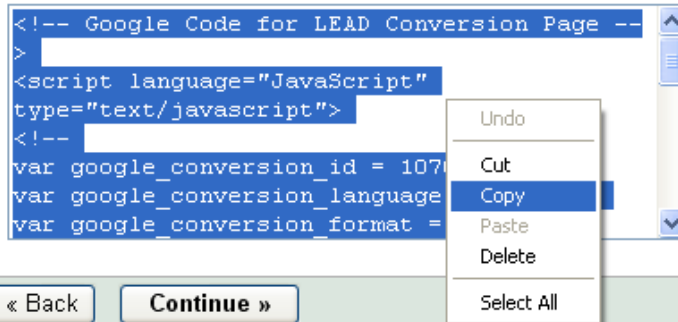
Or, paste the code snippets into a file and have your web team insert them later.

Lead [\[?\]](#)

Click anywhere in the box to select all code.

► [Advanced option: conversion value](#)

```
<!-- Google Code for LEAD Conversion Page -->
<script language="JavaScript"
type="text/javascript">
<!--
var google_conversion_id = 107
var google_conversion_language
var google_conversion_format =
```



« Back

Continue »

Now simply paste the code on your "Thank You" page, and Google will begin tracking your conversions. Note that Google will only track PPC conversions. If you get traffic from other methods, you'll want to put your own conversion tracking code in place as well.

Now when you check your PPC stats, you'll notice two additional helpful columns on the far right: Conversion Rate and Cost/Conversion.

Your conversion rate is the percentage of people who took the action you specified when generating the Google conversion code. So if 1000 people went to your site, and 247 took the action you wanted, your conversion rate would be 24.7% ($247 / 1000 * 100 = 24.7$).

Your cost per conversion takes the amount of money you've spent on PPC and divides it by the number of people who have taken action. So if you've spent \$50.00 on PPC, and 40 people took the action you wanted, you would have a cost per conversion of \$1.25 ($\$50 / 40 = \1.25).

You want to watch the second figure closely, because if your cost/conversion exceeds what you are earning per conversion on your site (over that visitor's lifetime), you'll be losing money.

Is Your Call to Action Consistent and Compelling?

Ok, you've got your site up. And on one particular landing page, your main goal is to get them to opt in to your list. Does your call to action clearly communicate that fact? Is it compelling enough?

Or is your message a little muddled by the fact that you have multiple calls to action all on the same page: to have them opt in, to have them "click here to order," to have them call your toll-free number immediately? If so, you may find that your visitors are getting confused. Some may still opt in or order, but lots of them will click away, never to be heard from again.

If you take a few moments to honestly assess your landing page and ensure that you have a simple and compelling message with a clear call to action, you may find the rework of your landing page well worth the time spent.

If you want them to call you on the phone because you need to close the sale that way, then don't try to have them order online. If you have separate lists for prospects and buyers, then you can get their email address when they purchase. If the purpose of your landing page is to get them to opt in to your list, then don't present them with a sales page until *after* they've already opted in.

Create Targeted Landing Pages

If they search for a product that you sell on Google and your ad comes up, don't send them to your home page when they click on it, send them to the landing page for the product in which they are interested.

Also, if you sell a product that appeals to both lawyers and accountants, create separate landing pages that speak directly to each group. That is, you'll have a landing page that speaks to lawyers and another that speaks to accountants. If you advertise in an ezine for lawyers, you would want your link in the ad take them to the lawyer landing page. Same goes for accountants.

Whatever ad or article they are viewing, your landing page should be an extension of that ad or article. You want to continue the conversation already going on in their minds. Not only is this more effective than a "one size fits all" landing page, but with Google's changes in their Adwords policy, you'll find your cost per clicks may go way down if your landing page is more relevant to the ad you are showing.

For example, if I search for “how to grow peppers,” and I click on the following ad:

Sponsored Links

[Pepper Growing Guide](#)
Get the tools & info you need
to **grow** big **peppers** easily!
www.MegaGro.com/Peppers

The first thing I want to see is how to grow peppers. Indeed, their headline and lead is as follows:

How To Grow 20%, 50% - Even 100% More Peppers!

If you're *growing peppers* and want to know *how to grow peppers* that will amaze...

That's relevant, and matches the ad I clicked on perfectly. If, instead, their headline and lead looked like the following:

Your Soil Could Be Killing Your Watermelons!

Read on to learn how your soil is *choking the life* out of your watermelons and other fruits...

Well, if I saw that I would probably leave the site fairly quickly. I may search around for information on growing peppers, but why make me work at it? You want to make it as easy as possible to find the information they are seeking.

If a person searches for “fast weight loss,” you want your Google ad to say “Fast Weight Loss,” *and* you want your landing page to say the same thing.

If, on the other hand, a person searches for “easy weight loss,” you want your ads and landing pages to match accordingly as well.

This is especially important if you start expanding your keywords you're bidding on to encompass a similar niche that is also a potential market of yours. You want your ads and landing pages to speak the language and desires of *that* niche, not just echo those of your existing one.

In many cases, this doesn't even involve having additional landing pages, but one that is customized dynamically on the server-side. For something like “fast weight loss” and “easy weight loss,” your webmaster could probably just substitute the appropriate phrase on your landing page, depending on the parameters sent in the link.

And remember that someone who wants “easy weight loss” wouldn’t probably also want “fast weight loss.” After all fast and easy is better than either one alone, right? Well, if that’s the case for your keywords, you may want to emphasize both aspects.

HINT: If you have a large online store with thousands of products in a database, you may want to consider creating specialized landing pages with long compelling copy for your most popular and highest margin items.

NOTE: I’ve barely begun to scratch the surface of Google Adwords, and I’m not intending to do so. The truth is, Adwords is a complex subject that requires a course in of itself. Fortunately, Google Adwords expert Perry Marshall created one, where you can learn about the intricacies and best practices of Google Adwords for free [here](#).

Best Results

Test Everything

Split testing, also known as A/B testing, is the process of having two identical pages (except for one change) rotate randomly to see which one generates more sales (or opt ins, or whatever the goal of the landing page).

A little piece of code called a “cookie” is stored on their computer, so if they return to your page again, they will always see the same page where they originally landed. This is important because you don’t want them coming to your landing page and seeing one deal, then returning later and seeing another.

Whenever you contemplate making a change, you should always split test the change against the control (the control page is the one that is generating the most sales or opt ins or whatever). The object of split testing is to always try to beat your control. Then the one that beat it becomes the new control, and the process starts again.

If you take away anything from this report about split testing, it should be this: **Split testing is an ongoing process. It never ends.** You should always try to beat your control. Sometimes one small change will make a big difference. This is especially true when split testing headlines, because **more than 5 times as many people read your headline than they do your copy**. So headlines are a good start to get the biggest bang for your efforts.

In fact, although the tactics in the Quick Hits section of this report are based on real-world results for most markets, they should still be tested. After all, not all markets react the same way to all things.

Remember that people vote with their wallets. It doesn't matter what they say or do. The end result is how well your landing page is performing. Period.

Now how do we know which page is the "winner?" Well, it would appear that whichever one produces the highest conversion rate, right?

In most cases, yes, assuming all things are equal. For example, if I'm testing the headline, and one headline produces a better conversion than the other, I can usually assume the headline with the higher conversion will become my new control to beat.

But if I am testing the price or offer, things can be a little different.

I could, in fact, get a better conversion rate with landing page "B" over landing page "A." But if this is a test of the price, then B could produce a better conversion rate, but I'll actually make less money, because of the cheaper price in B. And because in many cases you'll sell more widgets when you lower the price, then what really is the right price in which to sell my widget? Well, obviously you need to make a profit, so at a minimum your price will have to be high enough to cover your expenses and then some. But how much of a profit should I set for each widget? **Answer: the highest that will make you the most money.**

You might be thinking that it should be the highest that the market will bear. And my answer above does take that into consideration. But it's really just a little more complex than that.

You see, certainly it's possible to sell more widgets at one price and make less money than less widgets sold at a higher price. And don't forget you have to factor in return rates and support costs as well. It may very well be more profitable for you to sell a handful at a much higher price than to sell many for cheaper.

The best way to figure out what you can sell your product for and make the most in profits is to split test your price and offer until you find that "sweet spot" (and it will be sweet when the money starts flowing in!).

That way you can do a complete end-to-end analysis of your costs, profits, and support overhead for each price point until you find the magic number.

So that brings me back to my original question. What *is* the best way to determine which landing page "wins" the split tests. Answer: Your return on investment (ROI).

Conversion rate by itself becomes a useless stat when you are comparing apples to oranges, like in a price or offer split test. But ROI? It's a true measure of a page's effectiveness.

Because then you know for every dollar you spend, you're going to get X in return from page A and Y in return from page B. And if Y is greater than X, well then page A is your new control, the winner.

I go into a little more detail on ROI on my blog at this post if you want to read more on the subject, because there are other factors to consider as well, such as repeat and back-end sales, etc. Here is the link:

<http://marketmedic.blogspot.com/2006/05/roi-cinderella-of-stats.html>

Now, here are some of the things you should test on all of your landing pages:

- Your headline (most likely to produce the biggest difference)
- Your lead (the copy right after the headline)
- Your offer (what they are getting as a whole for the price)
- Your price
- Your P.S.'s (one of the most read parts of your landing page after the headline)
- Whether to include audio or video
- Whether the audio should start automatically or only when the visitor initiates it
- Different payment plans
- Whether to include a photo of you or not
- Individual captions under the photos
- Your layout
- Your fonts and colors
- Whether or not to include a header graphic
- Different types of header graphics
- Whether to use a signature or a type of signature (here's a great place to get computer generated signatures: http://www.vletter.com/design_visitor.htm)
- Whether to add an toll free or non-toll free phone number
- And much more (basically any change you are considering that could have an impact on the goal of your landing page)

As a general rule, once a landing page you are testing gets at least 30 desired actions (sales, opt ins, etc.), the winner is the one with the highest ROI during the test. Then you move onto the next test and start over again with the winner as your new control to beat.

This one process alone will likely cause tremendous improvements for all your landing pages.

If your web server uses PHP, I've uploaded some free split testing software you can use at <http://www.marketing-medic.com/splittest>.

If you need a more robust and full-featured solution, I recommend [1ShoppingCart](#). They have lots of other marketing tools as well, such as ad trackers, affiliate tracking tools, autoresponders, pop-ups, and more.

Test Credibility and Proof

Another thing you'll want to test is adding pictorial proofs, things like credit card logos, the Better Business Bureau seal and other trade/professional logos. Also scanned documents and screen snapshots showing results and offering additional graphical proofs.

Another seal of approval that you can obtain that promotes your integrity as a businessperson is by signing the Business Ethics Pledge (I've signed it) at <http://www.business-ethics-pledge.org>.

Always ask yourself what you could add to remove the "too good to be true" mentality.

And the flip side is often true. Sometimes you want to reveal a flaw about your product. This is called "admission of flaw," and what you're doing is revealing a flaw that isn't really a flaw. Or reveal a flaw that is minor, just to show that you're being "up front" about your product's shortcomings.

Example: "You're probably thinking right now that this tennis racket is a miracle worker—and it is. But I must tell you that it has one little...shortcoming.

My racket takes about 2 weeks to get used to. In fact, when you first start using it, your game will actually get worse. But if you can just ride it out, you'll see a tremendous improvement in your volleys, net play, serves, ..." And so on.

There's a tendency to think, with all of the ads that we are bombarded with today, that every advertiser is always putting his best foot forward, so to speak. And I think that line of reasoning is accurate, to a point. But isn't it refreshing when someone stands out from the crowd and is honest? In other words, your reader will start to subconsciously believe that you are revealing all of the flaws, even though your best foot *still* stands forward.

Test Different Testimonials

If you can swing it, adding a celebrity endorsement will always help to establish credibility. And the celebrity doesn't have to be Tom Cruise or Madonna. In fact, the best "celebrities" are those who your target market knows within the subject of your niche. Selling a guide to home repairs? Then you'd want a "Bob Villa" or similar type. Selling a magician-themed product? Then having David Blaine endorse your product is a good idea.

And even if you can't get Mr. Blaine to give you feedback, you can always use a 3rd party testimonial (just check on the legality of copying a quote in the manner you're using it).

What are 3rd party testimonials? Here's some examples from some Web site copy I wrote when there weren't many customer testimonials available yet:

“Spyware, without question, is on an exponential rise over the last six months.”

- Alfred Huger, Senior Director of Engineering, Symantec Security Response (maker of Norton security software)

“Simply clicking on a banner ad can install spyware.”

- Dave Methvin, Chief Technology Officer, PC Pitstop

A deployment method is to “trick users into consenting to a software download they think they absolutely need”

- Paul Bryan, Director, Security And Technology Unit, Microsoft

Do you see what I did? I took quotes from experts in their respective fields and turned them to my side. But...as I said, be sure to get their consent or permission from the copyright holder if there's ever any question about copyrighted materials as your source. Note that I also pushed an emotional hot button: fear. It's been proven that people will generally do more to avoid pain than to obtain pleasure. So why not use that tidbit of info to your advantage?

The point here is that you can turn these quotes into testimonials, provided they're talking about the problem. You obviously can't have them endorse your product if they've never seen it or provided you with a first-hand testimonial. But in certain cases you can have them address the problem, then you can move on to provide the solution.

When testing testimonials, be sure to test with/without photos, audio, video, etc. Of course, that's assuming that you have those things.

A nice tool to collect audio testimonials is [Audio Generator](#). You can have your customers simply call and leave their testimonial on a special voice mail number, and the audio will be sent to you. Then you add a little snippet of code that Audio Generator provides to your landing page. Voila! Instant audio testimonial.

Test the Position of Your Opt In Box

Many smart marketers realize that where they place their opt in box on their web page can make a big difference in the number of subscribers they receive. I've often found that an opt in box on my sales letter that's imbedded directly in the middle of the copy is most effective. In many cases, a popover window also increases opt ins. Popovers, unlike popups, uses DHTML layers to give the appearance of a new popup window. To see an example, check out [Instant Popover](#). That's what I use, and I'm quite pleased with it.

In many cases, using both a popover and strategically imbedding your opt in box within your sales letter gets the best subscribe rate. But it is something you should definitely test, as well as where you put them.

For effective opt in and list building strategies, you can't beat [Jimmy D. Brown's site](#). I'm a member, and that's where I picked up many of the strategies I use.

Add Additional Opt In Boxes

This is something I just started doing, and it's made a difference in my opt in rates already.

Whenever I have a special download page, or a page with an article on it, just about any page on any of my sites, I always include an opt in box with a "Learn More" link that leads them to my squeeze page (the landing page with compelling copy that is solely designed to get them to opt in).

This sounds like a no brainer, and it really isn't, but I'd wager a lot of people aren't using this technique to its full advantage.

Let's say I'm browsing a forum, and I see a hot thread about a topic, where someone asks a question or wants an opinion. If it's being read by many, I'll write a brief article addressing the topic, place it on my site on it's own special landing page, and include an opt in box. Then I post on that thread with a link back to the article I just wrote.

I get a lot of subscribers this way.

So landing pages are much more than just sales letters and squeeze pages.

Use Takeaway Selling to Increase the Urgency

When you limit the supply of a product or service in some way (i.e. takeaway selling), basic economics dictates that the demand will rise. In other words, people will generally respond better to an offer if they believe the offer is about to become unavailable or restricted in some way.

And of course, the opposite is also true. If a prospect knows your product will be around whenever he needs it, there's no need for him to act now. And when your ad is put aside by the prospect, the chance of closing the sale diminishes greatly.

It's your job, therefore, to get your prospect to buy, and buy now. Using scarcity to sell is a great way to accomplish that.

There are basically three types of takeaways:

- 1) Limiting the quantity
- 2) Limiting the time
- 3) Limiting the offer

In the first method, limiting the quantity, you are presenting a fixed number of widgets available for sale. After they're gone, that's it.

Some good ways to limit the quantity include:

- only so many units made or obtained
- selling off old stock to make room for new
- limited number of cosmetically-defected items, or a fire sale
- only a limited number being sold so as not to saturate the market
- etc.

In the second method, limiting the time, a deadline is added to the offer. It should be a realistic deadline, not one that changes all the time (especially on a website, where the deadline date always seems to be that very day at midnight...when you return the next day, the deadline date has mysteriously changed again to the new day). Deadlines that change decrease your credibility.

This approach works well when the offer or the price will change, or the product/service will become unavailable, after the deadline.

The third method, limiting the offer, is accomplished by limiting other parts of the offer, such as the guarantee, bonuses or premiums, the price, and so on.

When using takeaway selling, you must be sure to follow-through with your restrictions. If you say you only have 500 widgets to sell, then don't sell 501. If you say your offer will expire at the end of the month, make sure it does. Otherwise your credibility will take a hit. Prospects will remember the next time another offer from you makes its way into their hands.

Another important thing you should do is explain the reason why the offer is being restricted. Don't just say the price will be going up in three weeks, but decline to tell them why.

Here are some examples of good takeaway selling:

"Unfortunately, I can only handle so many clients. Once my plate is full, I will be unable to accept any new business. So if you're serious about strengthening your investment strategies and creating more wealth than ever before, you should contact me ASAP."

“Remember...you must act by [date] at midnight in order to get my 2 bonuses. These bonuses have been provided by [third-party company], and we have no control over their availability after that time.”

“We’ve obtained only 750 of these premiums from our vendor. Once they are gone, we won’t be able to get any more until next year. And even then we can’t guarantee the price will remain the same. In fact, because of the increasing demand, it’s very likely the price could double or triple by then!”

People buy based on emotions, then back up their decision to buy with logic. By using takeaway selling, that restriction becomes part of that logic to buy and buy now.

Make Sure Your Copy Sells

Hiring a great copywriter might be one of the best things you could do for your landing pages. But whether you go with a pro or decide to tackle the job yourself, it’s important to understand what goes into an effective sales letter.

Here are some books I highly recommend if you want to learn more about copywriting:

- **Breakthrough Advertising**, by Eugene Schwartz
- **Tested Advertising Methods**, by John Caples
- **Scientific Advertising**, by Claude Hopkins (in the public domain, you can download it here: <http://www.marketing-medic.com/pubs/SciAdv.pdf>)
- **The Robert Collier Letter Book**, By Robert Collier
- **The Copywriter’s Handbook**, By Bob Bly
- **Ogilvy on Advertising**, By David Ogilvy
- **The Ultimate Sales Letter**, by Dan Kennedy

There are many more good ones, but these should get you started.

If you don’t want to buy them (some of them can be a bit pricey), you can head down to your local library and fill out an intra-library book request form (some libraries allow you to do this online). Within a couple weeks you’ll be able to pick up your book, which has been sent from another library. Most of the time this service is free, but sometimes there may be a small charge. You’ll need the ISBN number, which you can obtain from Amazon.com.

Also, start building a swipe file, if you aren’t already. This is a file of known good sales letters that you can use to model your own. Some of my favorite places to get them are:

- <http://www.hardtfindads.com>
- <http://www.ohpdirect.com/product.php> - John Carlton swipes!
- <http://www.otsdirect.com/products.html> - More John Carlton swipes!
- <http://www.trsdirect.com/product.php> - Even more John Carlton swipes!

- <http://www.agora-inc.com/international.htm> - Agora companies. Click on each company to view their products and sales letters
- [The Greatest Sales Letters](#)

Plus, if you get on the mailing list of some of the big direct mail companies (Phillips, Agora, Inc., Boardroom, etc.), you'll start receiving direct mail sales letters you can add to your swipe file. I've found that UNICEF also sends out great sales letters, so if you make a donation to them, you can get on their list as well.

Here are some other online resources where you can get great free information on copywriting:

- <http://www.copywritersboard.com> - Michel Fortin's Copywriters Board (also a great place to find pro copywriters)
- <http://bencivengabullets.com> - Gary Bencivenga's Copywriting Bullets
- <http://www.thegaryhalbertletter.com> - The Gary Halbert Letter
- <http://michelfortin.com> - Michel Fortin's Blog
- <http://peterstonecopy.com/blog> - Peter Stone's Blog
- <http://john-carlton.com> - John Carlton's Blog
- <http://www.boostmyresponse.com> - Michel Fortin's great collection of videos, audios, interviews, and resources
- <http://www.successdoctor.com> - Michel Fortin's other site with articles, services, videos, and more

Plus, sometimes you just need to get a sales letter up there quickly without spending a lot of money. For that, Yanik Silver's [Instant Sales Letters](#) may be just what you need. Yanik gives you lots of "fill in the blank" salesletter templates that have been proven to work. I've used them in a pinch, and I have to tell you, two of them are still my controls.

In any case, you need effective copy. At a minimum, you should have:

- A great headline (spend more time on this than anything else)
- An interesting lead
- A great offer
- Plenty of testimonials (or at least 3rd party testimonials when you are first starting out...see above) and proof, credibility.
- A "no risk" guarantee
- A clear call to action
- One or more P.S.'s
- An easy way for them to sign up or order

And it's worth saying that you should write your copy as though you are speaking to that person directly, like writing to an old friend.

And long copy usually (but not always) out pulls shorter copy. Why? Think about it. When you are selling in person, your prospect can ask you questions. You can sense what they're feeling and head the conversation in a different direction based on that fact.

When you're selling via a sales page, you don't have that luxury. You need to write for all of your prospect's potential questions. And you must overcome their objections. Because your prospect won't pick up the call and ask you questions if you're 3000 miles away.

Here's an article Michel Fortin wrote on this very subject on his blog:
http://www.michelfortin.com/archives/2004/10/long_copy_or_sh

And here's a follow-up blog entry on that subject from Michel:
http://www.michelfortin.com/archives/2006/05/if_long_copy_st_1

And finally, here's an article Michel wrote about some cases where short copy did outperform long copy:
http://www.michelfortin.com/archives/2006/03/short_copy_outp

What does it all mean? Test, test, and test some more.

But—back to improving your copywriting skills...

Another thing that helped me is to take out the greatest sales letters (see building your swipe file, above) and rewriting them by hand over and over. Your mind begins to form new neural pathways, and you will tend to grasp the “aha” moments over time and with enough repetition. Yes, I know “rote” copying, as it's called, is a bit outdated, but it does work. And that's what matters.

But the bottom line is this: Knowing great copywriting techniques is a skill that will help you earn money *for life*. It doesn't matter if Google changes their terms of service (TOS) or even if the Internet blows up tomorrow and there's no more. Although Google is more likely to change their TOS than the Internet is blowing up, the point is you never have to put your eggs in one basket. And copywriting skills will benefit you always. So I would highly recommend you learning more about it (I'm a perpetual student). **You'll likely find that split testing plus effective copywriting will get you the most efficient ROI you could ask for in your given niche.** I hope you take the time to act on these principles, because just knowing about them *isn't enough*.

Try Testing Different Domain Names

Sometimes the domain name itself can make a difference in your landing page conversion. When you note the fact that the URL is the second most important element of a Google Adwords ad, that fact makes sense.

If you're selling an ebook on home beer brewing, it might make a big difference on your sales conversions whether your URL is **abc-publishing.com/homebrew** or **homebrewers.com**.

If you're an accountant, do you think you would get more traffic and conversions if your URL was **jonesaccounting.com** or **SaveMyTaxes.com**?

Would your prospects remember you better at **joesgarage.com** or **SpeedyTowing.com**?

You'll never know for sure unless you test.

Utilize Upselling to Increase the Average Profit Per Sale

One of the best ways to increase the amount of profits from your sales is to sell more to every buyer. It seems straightforward enough, but how many people actually put it into practice? You'd be surprised.

For example, if you were selling rugs, a good upsell would be rug padding and other accessories. If you sell an ebook, perhaps an upsell would add complementary audio and videos to add more value. In other words, turn a single product into a package

If you sell a service, you can always upsell products they may need in the course of that service or beyond. For example, a dog-grooming service could upsell leashes, dog food doggie treats, toys, rawhides for chewing. You get the idea.

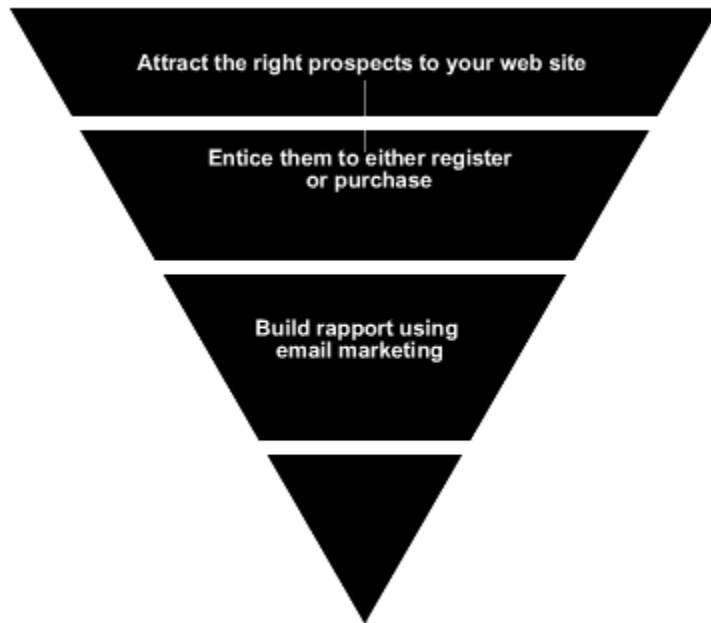
Use Back-end Sales to Increase Your Customer's Lifetime Value

To figure out your profit, you're taking your advertising and other costs and subtracting them from your total revenue. What's left over is your total profits. Divide that by the number of customers, and you have your customer value. In other words, each customer is worth \$X to you. Another way to increase profits is by increasing your customer's *lifetime* value.

How do you do that? By getting them to spend more with you over time.

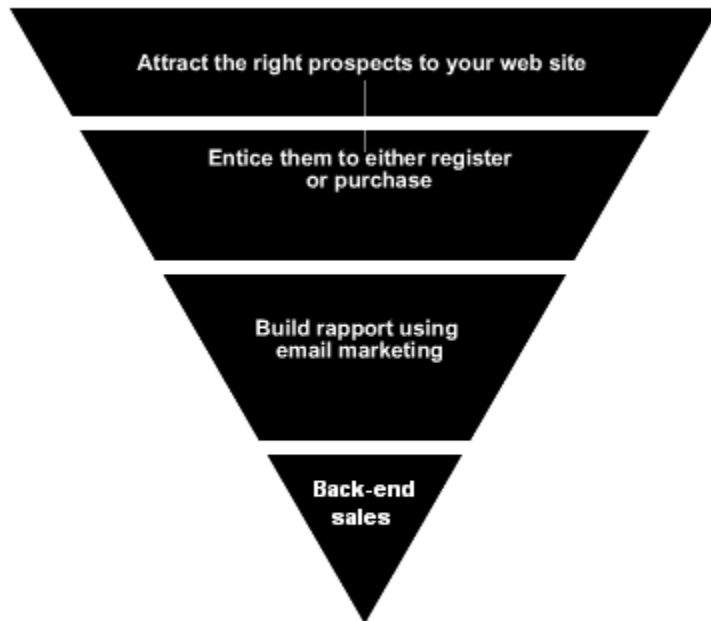
This is where the back-end sales come into play.

Take a look at your typical marketing funnel:



You bring them to your site and get them to opt in or purchase. If they don't purchase, you try to continue to sell them through your email marketing, hoping they will eventually buy. When they buy, that's the end of the funnel.

Now look at our revised marketing funnel:



Those that have purchased your front-end product are likely candidates for buying from you again. Here's your opportunity to sell a higher ticket item. Not all will buy, of course. That's why the funnel gets smaller towards the bottom. But those that do are adding additional profits to your bottom line.

Put a Residual Income Model in Place

Most sales are conducted this way: the customer buys the product. There may be an upsell. There may be back-end sales. But each and every product they buy from you, unless it's something consumable or that needs to be replenished, is a one-shot deal. Once they buy your ebook, they're not going to buy the same book again from you next month.

With residual income, you've got a product or service that gives you revenue over and over again from the same customers, whether it be every week, month, year, whatever. You make the sale once, and they keep buying again and again.

Paid membership sites often work like this. So do certain software licenses. The point is, if you want to add money to your pocket on a regular basis without having to sell each time, this one strategy could make a boatload of difference in your bottom line.

Think about it. They've already bought from you. They're already using your product or service. They like what they see so far. They're more likely to buy from you again. If you can provide additional value on a residual basis, it's worth exploring.

Conclusion

The tactics and strategies outlined in this report are just the beginning. By combining these techniques and testing your own, you'll find all sorts of things to tweak and test on your landing pages. And your profits will undoubtedly improve as a result, sometimes by a lot.

There's a lot I didn't cover here as well, because they are beyond the scope of this report. Once you've put these techniques into place and start seeing results, I encourage you to seek out information on Taguchi testing and other advanced systems. You'll want to develop a good affiliate program and have others promote your products. And you'll want to push the bar with your sales letter, testing everything you possibly can.

But for all the techniques and strategies in the world, it's only by taking action that you'll see results. And I sincerely hope you will.