THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO LANDING PAGE OPTIMISATION

Learn from expert SEO specialists with this five-chapter guide
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WELCOME!

You’ve probably come here because your landing pages aren’t performing the way you want them to. Or perhaps you simply want to create a really good landing page because you’ve heard they convert better. Well, you’re in the right place. A well designed and optimised landing page can increase your conversion rates significantly.

Landing pages need to be specifically focused and optimised so that they capture the audience most relevant to you. A common mistake is for landing pages to use broad keywords that don’t perform well because the people landing on that page were looking for something else. So don’t waste your time and lose customers!

Get optimising and you’ll start to see results.
HOW TO CREATE A LANDING PAGE
WHAT IS A LANDING PAGE?

• Some people are confused about the difference between a regular web page and a landing page. So let’s start by clearing up what makes a landing page special.

• A ‘landing page’ is any page on your website that someone can land on and that:
  1) has a form,
  2) exists solely to capture a visitor's information through that form (opportunity to convert).

• In other words, all landing pages are web pages, but not all web pages are landing pages.
CAN MY HOME PAGE BE MY LANDING PAGE?

Your homepage might have a form on it, but it exists to perform many other functions other than just capturing visitor information, such as:

1. introducing your company and team,
2. sharing pricing plans,
3. playing a video of a cool case study.

All of these things will increase a visitor’s interest in your web page but might distract them from filling out the all-important form (conversion point).

This is why landing pages are so valuable!

Landing Pages are designed solely to get conversions and therefore are more likely to be successful. They are your ‘lead capture pages’! Your calls-to-action can point to simple, conversion-optimized landing pages, instead of web pages that exist to serve multiple purposes.
LANDING PAGE BEST PRACTICES: COPY

• **An eye-catching headline:**
  Your headline should not confuse or bore a visitor but compel them to take a closer look. Make sure your headline complements the landing page copy that follows.

• **Simple and concise copy**
  Keep your text simple and clear, with impeccable grammar and no spelling errors. Avoid long sentences.

• **Keep your audience in mind**
  Stuffing keywords into your copy just so you might rank in Google is not a good method. It kills persuasiveness and makes the copy look bland. Write for your audience and then optimise your content for search engines.

• **Edit, edit, then edit again**
  The first draft of anything you write should be exactly that—a draft. Bring in another set of eyes, preferably a professionally trained set, to get your content down to the most effective text.

• **Clear ‘Calls-To-Action’**
  Whether you’re asking for donations or encouraging readers to sign up for a newsletter, your CTA should not be vague. Include at least one powerful conversion word such as ‘imagine’, ‘because’, ‘you’, ‘free’ or ‘new’, and people will start to convert!
LANDING PAGE BEST PRACTICES: DESIGN

• **Minimal Images and Larger Fonts**
  Your landing pages should use only one or two images. Avoid visual clutter or anything that detracts from the CTA. Larger font sizes are also a good idea for the key messages.

• **Limited navigation options**
  Preferably the only clickable link should be your CTA. If desired, your logo to your regular home page can be included, as well as links to more information for anyone who is undecided (e.g. related blogs, products and case studies).

• **Effective Call-To-Action Button Placement**
  Keep the CTA conversion button above the fold and in a location where the visitor’s eye is likely to scan. It should stand out and never be in a place where it has to be searched for.

• **At least one good image**
  Use a colourful image that shows the product or item the page is about. The image should be large enough to see clearly, but not so large that it displaces the text, or requires too much scrolling. People often respond to images of smiling people.

• **Get colour on your side**
  Enticing colours vary depending on your audience and brand. A colour scheme can draw people in or scare them away. Set the mood of a landing page and influence a viewer’s action by picking the right colours. This table will give you some ideas!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Red</th>
<th>Green</th>
<th>Purple</th>
<th>Blue</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exciting</td>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>Sophisticated</td>
<td>Sincere</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contemporary</td>
<td>Intelligent</td>
<td>Glamorous</td>
<td>Trustworthy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trendy</td>
<td>Competent</td>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
LANDING PAGE BEST PRACTICES

1. Get the vital information ONLY
   If your landing page includes a form, make sure it’s only asking for the most vital information. If you’re trying to get visitors to sign up for an email newsletter, make sure you’re just asking them for their name and email address. Anything more could decrease the chance that they will submit the form.

   If you’re asking them to buy something, make it as easy as possible. Just ask for the vitals: billing and shipping information, plus a confirmation screen before placing their order. Keep it simple and concise. Wait to ask them for additional information until after their order has been placed.

2. Don’t Forget Testing
   Optimise a landing page for conversions over time. Change copy, images and CTAs to see what resonates most with users. Run A/B tests to improve response rates (more about this ahead)!
SEO OPTIMISATION
The purpose of Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is to create a seamless user experience and enable your landing page to be crawled and indexed by search engines.

Keyword research is the foundation of SEO. Choosing the right keywords allows your landing page to rank for search terms relevant to your business. The key here is to choose “long tail keywords” with relatively high search volume and low competition.

Avoid using keywords that are too broad. For example, if your business provides electrical services in central Auckland, then ‘electrician auckland central’ would be a better keyword to optimise for than ‘electrician’ since it is likely to bring in more qualified traffic.

Avoid stuffing keywords unnaturally into your landing page content. Best practice is to use an average of three to five keywords per 500 words of body content. The landing page should be assigned a unique title tag to avoid competition between your web pages on the search engine result pages (SERPs).
ON-PAGE OPTIMISATION

- Create a custom URL and optimise it with your chosen keywords.

- Add keywords to your title tags, anchor text and header tags. Don’t worry too much about including an exact keyword as Google is smart enough to recognise synonyms when interpreting a page’s subject matter.

- Videos, images, audio, flash files and Java applets are often ignored by Google’s search bots. Describe them and optimise with shortlisted keywords, so the bots can understand and rank your pages for the appropriate keywords.

- Create an easy-to-navigate internal link structure, as this encourages users to spend more time on the website and may lead to higher trust signals for Google. For example, if you are an e-commerce store, linking internally to related articles or products tells the search engines that the product pages are important.

- Build page authority through link-building. Some authority will be inherited from your domain, but often it takes some direct link-building at the page level to help move up in the SERPs. Speak to a link building expert to help with this.
SEO content for a landing page is created with the goal of attracting search engine traffic and converting these users to leads. The following are best practices for boosting your landing page’s SEO performance:

- **Strong headline** – Headlines or graphic headers should be short, surrounded by adequate white space and specific enough to inspire a user’s attention.

- **Product Features (for e-commerce)** – Your product description should elaborately describe your products using relevant keywords.

- **Call-to-Action (CTA)** – The CTA should be placed near the product or service description so that the user is given enough knowledge to react to the CTA.

- **Testimonials** – Reviews and case studies help users to know more about your products and services and can increase user engagement.

- **Videos** – Videos can be a great way to attract and reach an audience. Consider creating video tutorials about how to use your products.

- After implementing the right content for your business, analyse and update the old SEO content. Talk to a content expert to understand the latest trends or keywords.
The purpose of the call-to-action (CTA) is to attract visitors and turn them into leads. Good places to include CTAs include at the end of a blog post, in the sidebar or as a floating banner in the corner.

Here are some best practices for optimising your CTAs:

- Create a visually appealing button that compels user to click the offer.
- Keep your CTA brief, using no more than five words.
- Use words like "Free Download" or "Register Today" to pique the user’s interest.
- Position it in an easy-to-find spot that follows organically from the flow of the landing page.
- Implement a contrasting colour from the colour scheme of the webpage, but still in line with your branding.
- Make it a large enough size to grab the user’s attention from a distance, but not so large as to distract user from the main content on the landing page.
A/B TESTING
A/B testing is when you test two different versions of a landing page at the same time. You can test multiple versions of a landing page to experiment with what page converts the highest.

Visitors typically have cookies associated to them so that they will always see the same version of the landing page.

You can assign traffic to these landing pages, whether 50/50 or 70/30. However depending on this split, you will need to gather a certain amount of traffic before your A/B results are statistically valid and accurate.
CREATE A VARIANT PAGE

You can either create two (or more) different landing pages or create a variant of an existing page.

Change a select few variables between the two pages (if you test too many things you’ll never know what works!).

If you want to test a combination of changes it’s called a multivariate test. However if you are new to A/B testing, try experimenting with just one variable to get a better understanding of the process.

You don’t need an expensive program to start testing either. Google Analytics offers a product called Google Optimise that is easy to use and ties into your analytics account.
A/B tests let you test multiple versions of the same web page and find the one that works best for your users. In A/B/n testing, Variant A is the original and Variants B through n each contain at least one element that is different from the original.

Multivariate Tests
A multivariate test allows you to test two or more elements on a page to see which combination creates the best outcome for your site. Optimize will help you find the best overall combination of elements for your page.

Redirect Tests
A redirect test, also commonly known as a split URL test, is a type of A/B test where you test separate web pages against each other. With redirect tests, the variants being tested are identified by the URL instead of the element on the page. This type of test is most useful when you want to test two very different landing pages or a complete redesign of a page.

Check it out here: https://www.google.com/analytics/optimize/
WHAT CAN YOU TEST?

- Headline
- Sub-headline
- Copy
- Calls to action
- Button design
- Colours
- Testimonials
- Images
- Form length
- Structure/layout/white space
- Videos
- Content below the fold (the content you have to scroll to see)
- Privacy policy text (e.g. “we will never spam you” or “100% privacy guaranteed”)
- Menu navigation (change or remove)
- Audience targeting
- Different offers
DOING YOUR FIRST A/B TEST

- Start thinking and hypothesising about a theory you have about your landing page. Do you think people aren’t converting because the form is too long? Test this theory and any others you think may be true.

- Create two landing pages with one variable difference (e.g. shorten the form field, change the colour of the call to action button, etc.)

- Use a tool like Google Optimise to record the data and even create the B page without doing any coding.

- Run the test (depending on your traffic) for a few days or a few weeks. If you receive a lot of traffic daily you can probably do the former.

- Analyse the results – did you get more sign ups with a shorter form? Was there not much of a difference? Keep testing or change another variable!
WHAT NEXT?

As you produce offers for your audience, you should create unique well designed and optimised landing pages. During the campaign timeframe you should a/b test your landing pages in order to maximise the goal you want your visitors to complete.

Every test you run is successful because even if you are wrong about your theory you’re still learning. Don’t be scared to make mistakes, all of this helps you to know what works well for your audience.

Keep testing and experimenting to improve your landing pages.
DRIVE TRAFFIC
There are a number of ways to get traffic to your landing pages but there are some methods that will work better for you than others.

The most obvious quick win for traffic and conversions is to send out an email to your subscribers.

However, for some of you this may be your way to build that subscriber list – in which case you can employ other methods.

By using a variety of tactics you can maximise your reach and improve your conversion rates.
CHANNELS AVAILABLE

- Social media (non-paid)
- Social media (paid)
- Email marketing
- Search advertising (AdWords)
- Organic search traffic
- Affiliates and referrals
- Owned media (website)
A typical strategy for a content offer launch would be: (1) send out the offer to your subscriber list, (2) pay for an AdWords campaign, (3) publish supporting blog content that links to your landing page, (4) post blogs to social media, (5) pay for a Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Twitter, YouTube or Instagram campaign and (6) do off-page SEO for the landing pages to garner organic search traffic.

Keep in mind where your audience consumes content. Don’t pay for any advertising if your audience doesn’t use that channel (e.g. 50-60 year old males won’t hang out on Pinterest – 20-30 year old women are more likely to).

Don’t overlook paid traffic; it is often the fastest, most targeted traffic you can get. However, avoid at all costs websites that sell “web traffic” – it’s likely bots or click farms seeing your site and not real people.

The most important part of your strategy is persistence, specific targeting and testing your traffic methods.
There is no set way of doing things. Choose the channels most relevant to your audience and select timelines that are appropriate to your budget and that allow time for results to gather.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Channel</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Send out content offer to subscribers list.</td>
<td>Email</td>
<td>Month One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publish blogs relevant to landing page</td>
<td>Website</td>
<td>On-going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct paid traffic to landing page through relevant keywords</td>
<td>Paid Search</td>
<td>Three Months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post blogs to owned social media outlets and share other relevant content</td>
<td>Non-Paid Social Media</td>
<td>On-going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segment your audience on social media and do A/B testing ads to ensure</td>
<td>Paid Social Media</td>
<td>Three weeks – split testing ads</td>
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<td>the maximum relevancy score and keep the content fresh for the three</td>
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<td>weeks.</td>
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<td>Submit blogs to social bookmarking and blogger websites.</td>
<td>Off page SEO</td>
<td>On-going</td>
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MISTAKES TO AVOID
WHAT ARE LANDING PAGE MISTAKES?

Getting customers to your landing page is just half the battle. Getting them to sign up or take the desired action is the ultimate goal.

Customers are busy and their attention span is minimal. They are unlikely to read everything you want them to know. So what can you do to get them across the line faster?

The following common landing page mistakes can hinder page visitors from becoming customers and should be avoided.
DISCONNECT BETWEEN AD & LANDING PAGE

Consistency between an advert and the corresponding landing page is indispensable to gaining a user’s trust.

Search ads and landing pages need to flow from one to the other, creating user experience that is consistent.

Inconsistency leads to lower conversions and can affect the Quality Score of your ads. A simple way to assure consistency is to use similar keywords and colours in the ad and the associated landing page.
Your success lies in simplicity. While it’s tempting to list every great thing about your business, there is only so much a user can absorb at any given point in time. After all, we live in a world where ‘less is more’.

However, you should consider your audience – sometimes you may find they do want more copy because they do a lot of research as a consumer/client. A/B test this theory if you’re not sure.

One important way of encouraging a user to stay on the page is by having a simple and easy-to-navigate landing page.

Convey your unique selling propositions with a small amount of words. Be concise.

Less text is your mantra for retaining the customer.
INEFFECTIVE CALL-TO-ACTION

Calls-To-Action give you the opportunity to make the user take the action you want them to. Here are three tips to create an effective Call-To-Action button:

1. Placement
Place your CTA in a position that is prominently visible on the landing page. The ideal position is above-the-fold, at the user’s immediate eye level.

2. Visibility
The best CTAs are the ones that stand out from the background. A colour contrast between the background and the CTA is the easiest way to help users locate the CTA with ease. Red and orange are considered to be the most effective colours for CTA buttons.

3. Convey the Importance
A CTA with the title ‘Sign up now’ doesn’t explicitly tell the user what they are ‘signing up’ for. On the other hand, the title ‘sign up for the free trial’ implicitly tells the users that by clicking on the button, their free trial will begin.
Out of the 3 billion people all over the world who use the Internet, around 80% of them access it through smartphones.

It should not be surprising that many or most of the users who visit your website will do it through a smartphone. Hence, it’s critical to design a landing page that is compatible for mobile devices.

Here’s what you can do:

1. Aim to use 5 or fewer words for the title.
2. Include your company logo and a prominent Call-To-Action Button.
3. Keep it simple by using whitespace.
Landing pages that take more than 2 seconds to load tend to have lower conversion rates. This is because people expect a website to load quickly so they can continue on their buyer journey.

Unsure how long your page takes to load? The PageSpeed Insights tool by Google lets you know and provides tailored insights and tips to make improvements.

https://developers.google.com/speed/pagespeed/insights/
CONCLUSION
WHERE TO FROM HERE?

By now you should have all the knowledge and tools you need to create optimised landing pages. What you do with that information is up to you.

With hard work and on-going experiments you can become a landing page expert.

It doesn’t stop here, though. Once you have gained conversions from your landing pages, make sure you utilize your time afterwards to keep those people in your sales funnel.
POST-CONVERSION ACTIONS

Make the most of your conversions by offering your new leads something else.

You can use your thank you page to drive these people to other offers and parts of your site.

Suggest what your audience should do next.

Do you have relevant blogs? Another content offer? A similar product? Or perhaps you want to ask for a testimonial? Ask for social shares and follows? Offer a discount for next time? Ask them to become a subscriber?
Pure SEO is an Auckland based digital marketing company and market leader in search engine optimisation (SEO), search engine marketing (SEM), content marketing, social media marketing, PPC and online marketing services.

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