TARGETED LANDING PAGES
Using web pages to improve marketing conversion rates.

You should read this book if:

- ✓ You want to improve the conversion rate of your marketing campaigns.
- ✓ You want to learn about design tips for creating your landing and squeeze pages.
- ✓ You want to learn about testing, tracking, and tweaking your landing and squeeze pages.
- ✓ You want to learn about campaign source tracking.
- ✓ You need creative services help in developing targeted landing pages.

Spider Trainers

Marketing automation has been shown to increase qualified leads for businesses by as much as 451%. As experts in drip and nurture marketing, Spider Trainers is chosen by companies to amplify lead and demand generation while setting standards for design, development, and deployment.

Our eBooks are designed to help you get started, and while we may be guilty of giving too much information, we know that the empowered and informed client is the successful client. We hope this eBook does that for you.

We look foward to learning more about your needs. Please contact us at 651 702 3793 or cmeyer@spidertrainers.com.

LANDING CONVERSIONS

In the world of marketing, the conversion rate is the golden goose. It is the final goal by which the bulk of our efforts are measured. Conversion rate can be the number of white papers downloaded, the number of videos watched, the number of widgets purchased, or even the number of meetings set. The formula for measuring your conversion rate is simple and shown to the right.

A squeeze (web) page is a simplified form of the targeted landing (web) page. Very similarly designed, it is without the myriad options and multiple calls to action that one might find on a targeted landing page. On this page you'll have no social icons, no links to your website, and — again — a single call to action. As a mnemonic, think of a squeeze page as *putting the squeeze on* the visitor to do just one thing: perform the call to action (whatever that may be).

Targeted landing pages and squeeze pages contain detailed information about a marketing offer or

CONVERSION RATE
achievements ÷ # visits (or # sent)
465 widgets bought ÷ 6,000 visitors
= 7.75% conversion rate

message and attempt to make a convincing argument for why the recipient should join the ranks of the converted.

In pursuit of your own golden goose, your squeeze/targeted landing page should first and foremost:

✓ Provide your lead or prospect with a clear, concise path to becoming a customer.

✓ Enable your lead or prospect to become a customer.

✓ Resolve any concerns they may have about becoming a customer.

? **Conversion rate**. The proportion of visitors to a website who take action to go beyond a casual content view or website visit, as a result of subtle or direct requests from marketers, advertisers, and content creators.

— *Wikipedia*

? A single-page landing page can increase conversion rates by 55%.

— *Interactive Marketing Inc.*

? The average conversion rate when companies used their home page as the destination for an advertisement or link was only 6%. Companies that used targeted landing pages achieved a 12% conversion rate.

— *Atlas OnePoint*

As a marketer, you are likely on an endless search for tricks, tips, and best practices that will improve your conversion rate in both online and offline marketing campaigns. Savvy marketers know that few efforts return results better than those gained through the implementation of targeted or squeeze landing pages. If you've yet to put this great tool to the test, it's time you did, and for good reason.

You should use targeted and squeeze landing pages because tracking and sifting through analytics for the source of home-page traffic and the engagement level of the visitor can be challenging or impossible. Given that, campaign traffic should never [ever] be sent to your home page and thus a dedicated page to receive campaign recipients makes sense. If your marketing campaign contains multiple vehicles (as is the case with a multi-touch campaign), you will find that multiple landing pages work very well when you need to compare multiple traffic sources and even better when you need to find your best-converting content or design components.

Landing pages have many advantages, such as:

- Improving the conversion rate of marketing campaigns.
- Enabling testing of individual and global design elements and isolating the most-effective conversion objects.
- Providing high visibility and tracking of visitor engagement and behavior.
- Enabling the display of messaging specific to the source or to the list segment.
- Contributing to your website's search-optimized content.

Figure 1 At the left, the front and back of a tri-fold direct mail are shown, the matching email is top-center, and to the right, the matching landing page. This campaign was designed to re-engage customers and introduce them to new digital-print services with various offers and/or to engage online using a white paper download offer. With the deployment of nearly 70 custom landing pages, we tested the effectiveness of multiple calls to action, differently valued calls to action, QR codes, moving the call-to-action buttons, and lastly, whether or not an odd-shaped email and landing page would affect conversions. (It did. The odd-shaped duo outperformed the square version 2:1.)

DESIGN

Design is the most-important consideration when implementing landing pages. A well-designed page will easily and positively impact your conversion rate. Heatmaps and other research shows us exactly how visitors are engaging with our pages and this information can be used to lead our design efforts.

When asked, the primary reason people have given for not buying from a site was because the site had an unprofessional look that caused the visitor to question the credibility of the site owner. Trust in the vendor is critical — especially so if your page has a form and you are attempting to collect information from the visitor. An effective and professional design will go far in establishing your credibility and trustworthiness.

HEADLINE AND PAGE TITLE

You have about two seconds to convince your visitor to stay on the page and this makes your headline crucial. Make sure you get it right, even if you have to get it wrong first. Using landing pages, you can easily test several headlines through the use of duplicate landing pages or by making changes to your primary page over a span of time.

This headline should be the largest text on the page and, under the hood, appropriately tagged as H1 in the HTML source of your page. This is an indicator to the search robots that this is the most important text on your page and an indicator of the basic focus of the text that follows. In addition to being relevant and clear, your headline or opening text should welcome the visitor and specifically mention the source from which they came. You might also recognize their source by including a graphic, as shown for Facebook visitors in figure 2.

The page title is the text that displays in the browser bar when the visitor is on the page. Page titles, like headlines, are indexed by search spiders and should

Figure 2 Use squeeze/targeted landing pages to test the effectiveness of your headline in capturing the reader's attention quickly.

incorporate important keywords from your campaign. Further, taking a cue from what heatmaps have taught us, consider first positioning your headline at the top left of the page.

CONTENT

In checklist format, your landing page's design and content should:

✓ **Have a clear, concise page title**. Use one or more of your campaign's keywords. Think about your search-engine optimization efforts as well as your visitor's needs.

✓ **Have a clear, concise headline**. Use one or more of your campaign's keywords.

✓ **Be professionally designed**. A beautiful, clean design builds credibility and trust.

✓ **Be presented in a single column**.

✓ **Use limited images**.

✓ **Be design-consistent with the campaign vehicle**. A matching design makes the visitor confident they have come to the right place. It's easy to be consistent when you use the same fonts, images, colors, and basic structure.

✓ **Eliminate distractions**. If you attempt to match your site design, you will create far too many distractions.

✓ **Display important content above the fold**. If your content does extend below the fold, be sure to include a second call-to-action button so that the visitor is not required to scroll to the top in order to engage. If you feel you need more real estate than a single page can provide, create a small series of pages (microsite) linked together with a simple menu. Do not link the menu items to pages outside this microsite.

✓ **Tell the visitor how they will benefit**. Stay focused on them and not you. This is not the time to try to tell the visitor how great you and your product are.

✓ **Use clear, concise language**. Avoid marketing speak and complex industry phrases. Deliver the message concisely and so that people of skill sets will understand.

✓ **Stay focused**. Think about what exactly you want the visitor to do and what it will take to get them to do that. Don't distract the visitor with lots of options, offers, buttons, or links. Your landing page should provide the visitor all of the information

> **?** 46% of web sales are lost on sites lacking the critical elements to build trust.
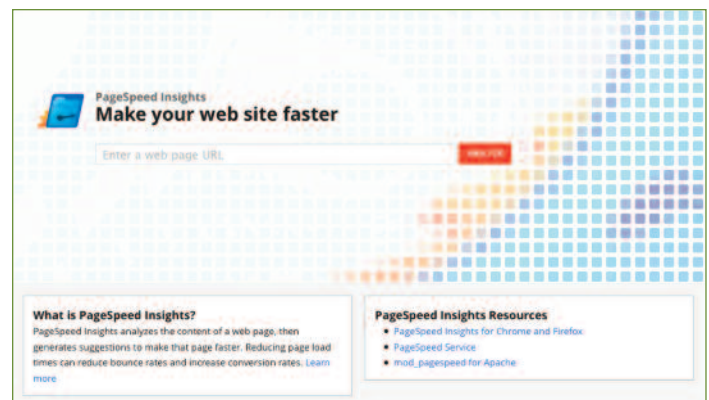>
> — *Stanford*

Figure 3 Make sure your pages load quickly. Three to four seconds is good, and no more than five seconds.

that they need without having to search your site further or other sources in order to continue the engagement or purchasing process.

✓ **Provide a single call to action (squeeze page)**. Use easy-to-understand text or buttons that ask specifically for the desired action. Don't mince words. Try adding an arrow to button graphics to improve click-thru rates.

✓ **Only ask for what you need**. If your landing page has a form or survey, keep it short. Do not ask for information that is not critical. You're much better off to ask for additional information in subsequent campaigns than ask your visitor to fill in 20 form fields and have them abandon right away. If you're using email automation, you may have the option of a prefilled form. That means you don't need to ask for information that already exists in your list. If you're having trouble getting completed forms, tell your visitor how the information will be used, briefly state your privacy policy, and include a link to the full policy.

✓ **Load quickly**. If you keep it simple, you won't need to worry, but time it anyway. Make sure your page is not so complex that it takes more than three to four seconds to load.

Landing pages can also improve your search-engine optimization because they are filled with keywords about your business or product. Search engines strive to provide the timely, relevant, and helpful results. Landing pages that attract visitors, engage them for extended periods, and that are keyword-rich can have a noticeable impact on your search-engine ranking.

Figure 4 We've found that in many cases adding an arrow to the button improves click-thru rates.

TEST, TRACK, AND TWEAK

To get the best conversion rates from your landing page, you must test, track, and tweak. These tweaks — in the form of page updates — will also contribute to your search-engine optimization efforts.

The following examples — and much of our live work — may not always follow the best practices we have listed in the previous section. This is because best practices are simply guidelines to help you develop your landing pages. Only through tracking *your offer* with *your design* to *your customers* will you come to know what combination produces the best results.

DUPLICATE CONTENT

If you spend much time working toward search-engine optimization for your website, you undoubtedly have concerns about duplicating landing pages for your testing or using similar landing pages for multiple vehicles.

Search engines are on the alert for instances where large amounts of content are used at multiple sites or on multiple pages within a site in order to artificially boost SEO. With your squeeze and targeted landing pages you will be using custom headlines for each page (with H1 tags), and a welcoming paragraph. This customization minimizes the amount of content that is an exact duplicate and with less text than a standard web page, presents little cause for concern. What's more, your landing pages are not static. As you test, track, and tweak, you are implementing updates that renew content and renew the search engine's interest in your page.

Multiple landing pages that receive engaged traffic with extended visits and that drive click-thrus are such a substantially different scenario, than intentional propagation and search engines recognize this.

Figure 5 These squeeze pages use graphics and an opening welcome paragraph specific to visitors who have clicked through from our Twitter followers and Facebook fans.

CAMPAIGN SOURCE TRACKING

In its broadest definition, campaign source tracking refers to a method of identifying from what source a visitor discovered your site, or in the case of targeted landing pages, a specific page. Virtually all email-automation software uses campaign source tracking to measure clicks. Links that you have placed in your email are replaced with unique URLs that when clicked register the action to the tracking software. Clicks are then counted and displayed in reports or dashboards.

Google Analytics is free software for tracking activity at your site and that also provides campaign tracking of Google AdWords or other campaigns. Further, Google Analytics can track your campaign source URLs. The challenge for me, and the reason I do not often use campaign source tracking, is that in addition to wanting to know from which source a visitor arrived, I also want to reap the benefits we've already discussed when a custom landing page is used for each vehicle.

Campaign source tracking offers an alternative to multiple targeted landing pages but it's not an exclusive relationship. You can combine the use of campaign source tracking codes with landing pages and reduce the number needed. This works great, for instance, if you have several Facebook posts and want to send them all to the same landing page, but you still need to track which of the posts was most effective at eliciting clicks.

You can create your own campaign source codes, but it's quite a bother. Instead, use Google Analytics' free URL builder tool.

To implement the code, simply use it as the *href* tag for your call to action button. You could even generate a different code for each call to action (if you have more than one) and then you will know which CTA generated the click. If you're using campaign source codes for an offline piece, be sure to use a URL shortener, such as Bit.ly. As you can see in figure 6, these codes can become quite long and much too complex to try to type it out.

Targeted and squeeze landing pages are not a new idea; they've been around for quite some time. For marketers without adequate creative and web-team resources, campaign source tracking codes provide a suitable alternative and one that can be far less time consuming. If you're resource ready, consider adding targeted landing pages as a path to boosting your conversion rates.

www.jcpenney.com/dotcom/index.jsp?&sisearchengine=37&siproduct=TOFFERX_040713&cm_em=cshaffstall@cshaffstall.com&VID=000152607555

Figure 6 You can see how a simple URL to www.jcpenney.com has been converted to a complex string that tells the vendor which email I received and clicked and various other bits of information. The URL has been truncated in order to make it short enough to use in this document.

❓ Consistently updating and tweaking content can increase traffic by 40%.

— *Marketing Sherpa*

Traffic

URL builder

< Next: Best Practices for creating Custom Cam... >

Fill in the form below and click the **Submit** button to create URLs for custom campaigns for website tracking. Use the Google Play URL builder tool ⧉ for mobile app tracking.

Step 1: Enter the URL of your website.

Website URL *

/campaigns/marketing-metrics/

(e.g. http://www.urchin.com/download.html)

Step 2: Fill in the fields below. **Campaign Source, Campaign Medium and Campaign Name** should always be used.

Campaign Source *

Client list email

(referrer: google, citysearch, newsletter4)

Campaign Medium *

email

(marketing medium: cpc, banner, email)

Campaign Term

(identify the paid keywords)

Campaign Content

Download eBook

(use to differentiate ads)

Campaign Name *

Marketing Metrics eBook

(product, promo code, or slogan)

Submit   * Required field

http://www.spidertrainers.com/campaigns/marketing-metrics
/?utm_source=Client+list+email&utm_medium=email&
utm_content=Download+eBook&utm_campaign=Marketing+Metrics+eBook

Figure 7 Google's URL builder tool will automatically create a unique URL for each landing page of your campaign. The URL is placed in the marketing vehicle and each vehicle will use a different URL. This enables the tracking of individual components.

Figure 8 In this example we've moved the call to action nearer to the top of the page.

CONCLUSION

Whether you choose targeted and squeeze landing pages solely or campaign source tracking, your conversion rate will improve as you test design, content, and structure. The lessons you learn from one campaign will serve you well in subsequent campaigns, even campaigns for different offers.

For more information on triggered marketing, download *Automated Email Marketing*, for information on multi-touch campaigns, download *The Power of Print (in Marketing)*, and for information on measuring your campaign analytics, download *Marketing Metrics*.

ABOUT SPIDER TRAINERS

Spider Trainers provides creative services to marketing departments of 0 to 100. We are a network of more than 80 experts in email development, web development, graphic design, ad creation, multimedia creation, social media postings, search-engine optimization, writing, editing, and analytics. Founded in 2009, Spider Trainers touts more than 30 years' experience on their principal team specializing in marketing, promotion, press relations, and SEO disciplines.For more information about our company, visit www.spidertrainers.com

Specialties

- online and offline multi-touch marketing
- multi-event drip and nurturing campaigns
- search-engine optimization
- web development (including mobile)
- ad and campaign design and deployment
- email campaign deployment

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REFERENCES AND CREDITS

Google URL building tool

http://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1033867?hl=en

Google PageSpeed Insights

https://developers.google.com/speed/pagespeed/