

# The Conversion Optimization Toolkit

9 posts by Crazy Egg  
Experts to help you  
achieve peak  
performance  
on your website



# Foreword

Thank you for downloading Crazy Egg's **Conversion Optimization Toolkit**.

Internet marketing has changed dramatically over the years. In fact, many of the tactics that worked well just two or three years ago no longer work. To rank well in search engines and take visitors from first contact to conversion, you can't rely on tricks. You simply need to create an inviting, enjoyable experience for them.

That's what conversion optimization is all about:

- Designing your website to keep visitors onsite longer.
- Placing the right message in the right place to drive action.
- Producing high-quality content that engages and delights them.

This ebook contains some of the best information available today. You'll get tips and analysis from skilled marketers who not only stay on top of today's trends, but lead the way in setting them.

I hope you enjoy reading it as much as we did writing it.

Committed to your success,



Kathryn Aragon  
Managing Editor, The Daily Egg

P.S. I hope you'll drop by The Daily Egg every day to see what's new in the world of conversion optimization. And don't forget to leave a comment. We love to hear from you.

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# The 9 Psychological Tricks That Make Visitors Convert

by [Babar Suleman](#)

The relationship between marketing and psychology is as old as the fields themselves.

Business graduates are required to take Psychology and Consumer Behavior courses so that they can better understand the concepts and processes that determine successful products and sales strategies. Similarly, visitor psyche also plays a vital role in driving conversion.

Identifying the stimuli, both conscious and subconscious, that constitute compelling user experiences which result in conversions is important for both business heads and web designers.

Many of the concepts covered in this article can be further explored by reading the book [Influence](#) by Dr. Robert Cialdini. An outstanding book on the power of persuasion.

Here are 9 ways you can target your visitor's psyche for better conversion:

## 1. Reciprocity

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Whether it's just good karma or a simple case of action and reaction, you are more likely to get your visitors to do what you want if you give them something they want first.

The principle of reciprocity has been extensively researched using psychographic factors in conjunction with business metrics. Reciprocity has been proven to produce results because human nature since time immemorial has been known to ask one certain question: 'What's in it for me?'

If you want your visitors to consider buying your anti-spyware program, maybe you should give them a free eBook on computer security first or at least a nice article containing useful tech advice. However, you should not explicitly ask your visitors to respond to freebies with a purchase.

Instead, start by just asking them to sign up to get the free stuff. Once you have their email address, you can start soft selling your services.

Because the users have already received something from you, they'll feel 'indebted' and be more inclined to hear you out. And when they finally decide to make a purchase, they'll view you more favorably than a competitor who has never given them anything.

A few examples:

*Read It For Me* (at right) uses a free trial and a free preview pack to get visitors to sign up.

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Daniel Pink  
NY Times and WSJ best-selling author  
Drive and A Whole New Mind

Future of Marketing (below) uses a tantalizing tagline, a genuinely interesting freebie and a prominent 'Register for Free' button to increase conversion.

Home Blog

Presented By: **thoughtlead**

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Email \*

Company

Job Title

Company Size

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**Speakers:**

- Tony Hsieh**, CEO of Zapier.com, Author of *Delivering Happiness*
- Gary Vaynerchuk**, Creator of *White Library TV*, Author of *Crush It!*
- Anne Holland**, Publisher, *WhichTearWas.com*
- Guy Kawasaki**, Co-founder of *Alltop*
- Jimmy Wales**, Founder, *Wikipedia*
- Ann Handley**, Chief Content Officer of *Marketing Profs*
- Chris Brogan**, *New Marketing Lads*, Author, Trust Agent
- Alex Bogusky**, Co-Founder, *CP+B*, Chief Insurgent, *Fourites Outrage*
- Jeffrey Hayzlett**, Author of *The Mirror Test*, Former CMO *Kodak*
- David Meerman Scott**, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR*
- John Battelle**, Founder, Chairman, CEO, *Federated Media*
- Scott Monty**, Head of Social Media, *Ford Motor Company*

## 2. Obligation

Creating a sense of obligation or commitment is a sure way of engendering brand loyalty.

Consider this example: If a user clicks 'like' on your company page and that action appears in their newsfeed (in open view of all their friends), they have now publicly signaled their support for you. This simple action creates a sense of commitment that will have far reaching effects. Human beings are hard wired to remain consistent with prior commitments.

By connecting themselves with your brand, the user becomes an indirect promoter: they will keep up with what you're doing, recommend you to their friends and defend your product against the competition.

### 3. Social Influence

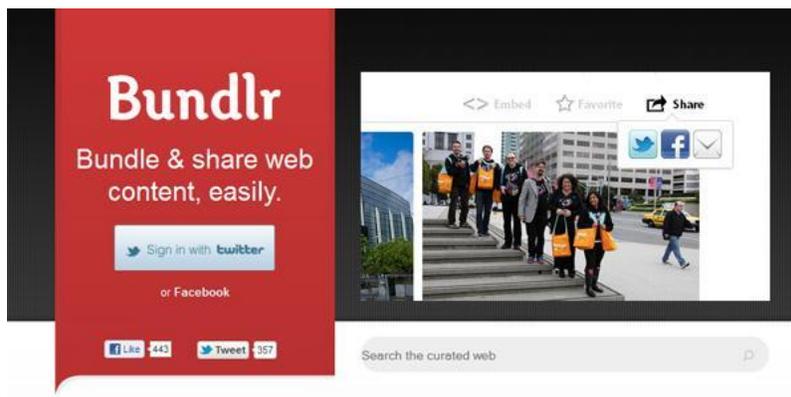
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Peer pressure remains a driving force even after high school.

You're more likely to get a new visitor to sign up if you tell them that their friends and/or a million others have already registered.

Social influence is a tactic that is frequently used by networking websites. They know that a simple generic email with an invitation to join is far less likely to gain new members than if one of their existing members sent out an invitation to all their friends.

Personal references are always the most effective promotional tool but an impressive aggregate is also pretty convincing. If you don't have the access required to show visitors which of their friends have already signed up, just showcase your success in impressive looking statistics- the number of registered members or the amount of hits you have received in the past month.



Bundlr displays the number of likes and tweets it has already received as social proof.

## 4. Personalization

Who doesn't like special treatment?

Consumers have a mistrust of companies and anything else that is clearly only after their money. A way to alleviate the situation is by showing that you see your customers as individuals you want a mutually beneficial relationship with—not just as a faceless source of revenue.

One of the most effective uses of personalization has been in email marketing where companies now send emails that address the recipients by their names—instead of a generic 'Dear Customer'. Tailoring newsletters and online content according to the interests the customer indicated when signing up is also another way to customize your promotions to the individual customer.

*Baynote* creates dynamic landing pages on the go that respond to individual visitor interests.

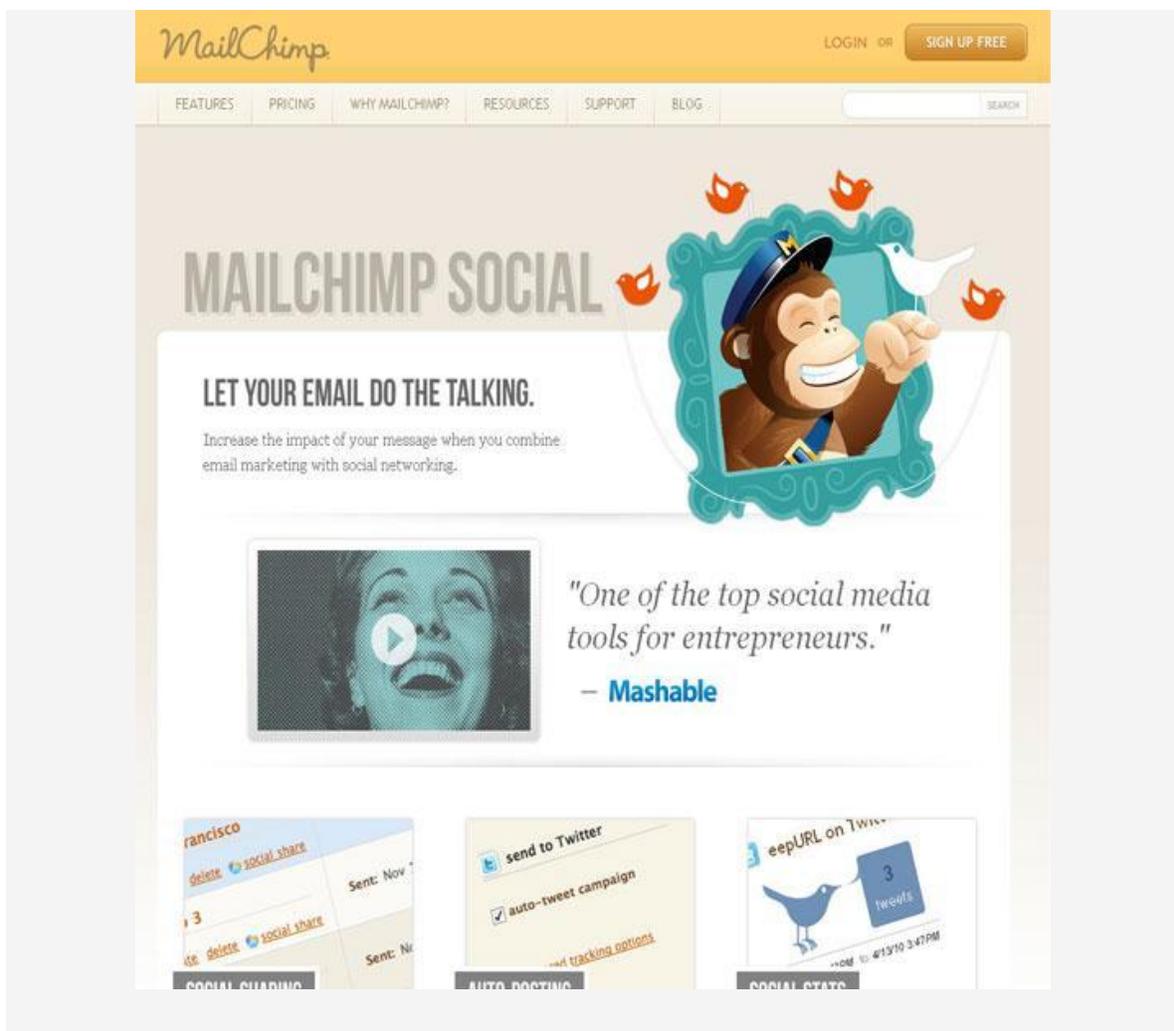
The diagram illustrates the process of dynamic landing page personalization. It starts with a customer searching for "marathon training" on Google. Baynote then matches this search term and dynamically creates a personalized landing page. The page features a section titled "MOST POPULAR MARATHON SHOES" with several shoe options: Zebra 87 Distance Running Shoe (\$99.99), Ultra 90 8000 Distance Running Shoe (\$99.99), Pacer 1000 The Speed Distance Running Shoe (\$89.99), Coral 8000 Running Distance (\$89.99), Pacer 1000 Running Shoe (\$89.99), and R1300 Running Shoe (\$89.99). There is also a "TOP SELLING PRODUCTS" section and an "Article: Marathon FAQ" section. The process is summarized in three steps: 1. CUSTOMER SEARCHES GOOGLE FOR 'marathon training', 2. BAYNOTE MATCHES THEIR SEARCH TERM, and 3. AND DYNAMICALLY CREATES A personalized landing page.

## 5. Authority

---

If a celebrity or an 'expert' backs a product or offering, it's bound to be more effective than a promotional pitch from a nameless and faceless entity. If you have received a favorable review from a well known magazine or a shout out from a major industry player, make sure you display it prominently on your website.

*Mailchimp* showcases a glowing review by *Mashable*.



This UPS landing page not only features a webcast with industry players but prominently displays speakers such as a representative from the US Department of Commerce.

Such associations build credibility, reflect success and inspire trust.

The screenshot shows the UPS 'WE ♥ LOGISTICS' landing page. At the top left is the UPS logo and the text 'WE ♥ LOGISTICS™'. Below this is a video player with a play button and the text 'the new logistics.com'. To the right of the video player is the title 'NEW LOGISTICS & EXPORTING: HOW YOUR BUSINESS CAN BENEFIT' and three paragraphs of text. Below the video player is a 'KEEP IN TOUCH' section with a sign-up form for updates and notifications. To the right of the sign-up form is a 'SPEAKERS' section with four speaker profiles, each with a photo, name, title, and a 'MORE >>' button.

**UPS WE ♥ LOGISTICS™**

**NEW LOGISTICS & EXPORTING: HOW YOUR BUSINESS CAN BENEFIT**

Never before have so many companies of so many different sizes been able to source from so many parts of the world and sell to so many people around it. There's something more specific than technology enabling this: Logistics.

Logistics is a creative force; it allows you to serve customers not only better, but in new ways; to reach markets faster, and export to new ones.

This webcast focused on the growth opportunities that exporting can bring to US firms, and the challenges they must overcome to enjoy them. It featured industry experts from UPS, the world's largest customs broker, and those who have succeeded through exporting and aided firms in beginning to export.

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**Daniel O'Brien**  
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**Matt Eckert**  
Vice President,  
Hypoxico  
**MORE >>**

## 6. Limited time offers

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If something is short on supply or only available for a limited time, it increases its exclusivity and creates a sense of urgency in people's minds. That's why limited time offers are usually a clever marketing tactic. Your visitors are more likely to act instantly if they are told that you're running out of stock or that a new deal ends in 48 hours.

See how Deal.IO says, "But act quick, the deals are a limited-time only!"



## 7. Smart Pricing

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The classic "\$99.99" price tag is a well known example of a pricing strategy that manipulates consumer psychology. Even though the price is virtually \$100, it seems less to customers because it's priced at \$99. Jumping a whole price point for an insignificant difference could cost you a lot of customers.

Similarly, you could also use dummy pricing to boost conversion. By offering your product or service in three variations, you can implicitly encourage users to select one certain option (usually the moderately priced middle option). The alternatives merely prevents users from thinking of the price in absolute terms and, instead, gets them involved in comparing the three price points.

Pricing also has a quality connotation. Unless your USP (Unique Selling Proposition) is the industry-lowest price, you will need to price your products in accordance with the quality you claim them to have. Think of it this way: BMW would lose a lot of its elite clientele if it started pricing its cars to meet the budget of the mass market.

Understanding your target audience and developing a tailored pricing strategy is fundamental to success.

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Access to the Free API	Access to the Free API	Up to 4,000,000 links from our Site Intelligence API
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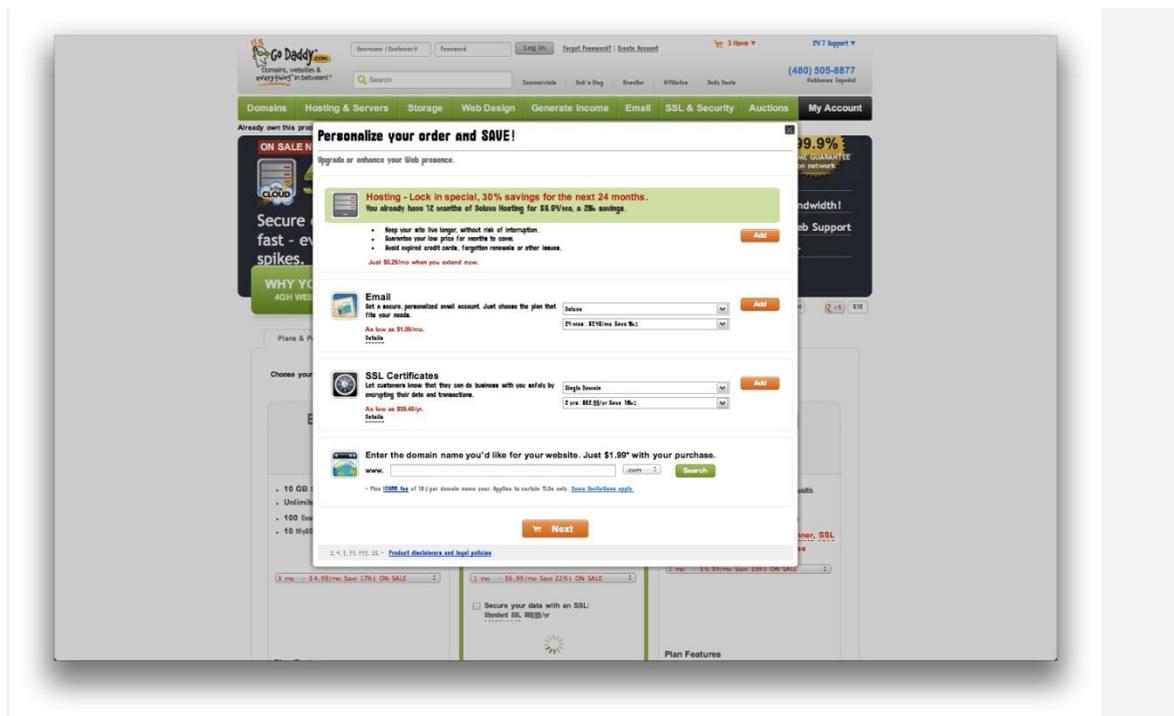
Zillow.com SurveyMonkey facebook eBay cars.com  
SEER BEST BUY YAHOO! Disney The New York Times  
...and thousands more.

## 8. Timing

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If you are selling a TV, the right time to prompt the customer to buy the installation or Care plan is when they have already added the TV to their cart. If you bring up all this extra expense while they are still looking around and making up their mind, you could overwhelm and, consequently, drive them away.

*Go Daddy* prompts its customers to buy Email, SSL certificates and a domain once they've already added Web Hosting to their cart.



## 9. Color Theory

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Just changing the color of your 'Buy Now' button could help you achieve better conversion.

This sounds like a stretch but it's really not when you understand the deep rooted science of color theory.

In branding, colors play a very important role in establishing connotations and conjuring desired reactions. For instance, reds and oranges can easily give your webpage a vibrant and youthful look, pink can directly assimilate you to a female audience and black can be used for a serious, sophisticated and/or exclusive look.

On the other hand, colors that are in direct contradiction to the nature of your business can drive away your target customers. If you are selling food, you should stay away from using a lot of blue as it can reduce appetite. Blue is better used for a banking service since it conveys openness, stability, clarity and trust.

Here is a great [infographic by the folks at Kissmetrics](#) that details the effect of colors on purchases.

Understanding consumer behavior is essential to creating well designed web pages and user interfaces. Use these 9 psychological tricks to design persuasive landing pages and effective promotional strategies.

# The Very First Steps To Increasing Web Sales

That's the goal right?

Forget traffic and retweets, Google rankings and Facebook "Likes." Increase my web sales every day of the week and twice on Sundays.

But how do you get started?

We asked our Crazy Egg Marketing Experts the first steps they take in increasing web sales:



Before I focus on conversion optimization, I evaluate conversion barriers. Basically, if a user was pretty certain they wanted to buy the product, what would prevent them from completing that task?

Common Conversion Barriers:

- Incomplete product description/specs
- Inadequate/missing product imagery
- Required creation of an account to checkout
- Too many steps to complete a checkout
- Hidden/delayed costs/fees display (i.e. shipping, parts, etc.)
- Inadequate/missing secure site certificate and trustmarks
- Slow page load

Once barriers are removed, optimization of factors like copywriting, prominent/clear call-to-action, UGC (reviews/ratings), enhanced digital assets (video, image sets, image zoom, etc.)

~Angie Schottmuller, [Interactive Artisan](#)



Here are the first things I look at:

- Does it offer something that people really want to buy? (This may sound like a flippant comment, but some business owners make the incorrect assumption that there's a big enough demand for what they're selling.)
- Does it have a clear USP that differentiates it from the competition?
- Does it look like a professional site run by a reputable company that people would want to do business with?
- Is it crystal clear what (simple) steps a user needs to take to complete a transaction?
- Is there a strong call-to-action?

~Adam Kreitman, [Words That Click](#)



The first thing I look at is "the big picture." I like to work from the outside in. So, I look at major issues that are failing first. These might be things like unclear branding, no unique value proposition, usability problems, technical issues, etc.

After that, I'll typically start as close to the sale as possible. That means, if I'm working on an e-commerce site, I'll look at ways to optimize the checkout process first before moving forward.

~Naomi Niles, [ShiftFWD](#)





The first thing that I'd want to know is who is the customer that is being targeted, and do they in fact have the need and means to buy whatever the site is selling (you'd be amazed at how often this is overlooked).

Then I'd want to know where the traffic is coming from, because that will tell me how "warm" they are, and what sort of a selling job the website needs to do in order to close the sale. Only then should you look at the actual site, and see if it is doing the job that it is supposed to be doing.

~**Danny Iny, Firepole Marketing**



I have a whole list of things I evaluate, but the main things are:

- **Navigation:** Is it easy for people to get around the site AND get back to where they were?
- **Call to action:** How straightforward is it for the visitor to take the action you want them to take?
- **Support:** Who do I get in touch with if I have questions? How do I do that?
- **Pre-sales and After-sales service:** Many sites lack both these crucial things. They simply send a little "thank you" email and that's it. Customers need to feel like their order is valued, and need to know approximately when to expect it, what's included and so on. Follow up could mean the difference between a returning customer and one who shops elsewhere!

~**Sherice Jacob, iElectrify**





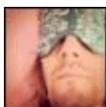
The first thing I evaluate is how much clutter is on a site.

I ask this question: Is there anything that can be removed from the site without taking away from the users experience? It's easy for information that's been added as a placeholder to take attention away from the step you'd like customers to take. So what can be removed to attract attention back to the most important action a customer will take?

The next thing I evaluate is the goal is for each page. Is it to get visitors to click through to learn more about the product? Is it to get customers to call in for a free consultation? Every page is different for each business, so the right goal needs to be identified for each page.

Next, I consider what actions customers should take in order to move through the sales funnel and make sure calls for those actions are easy to find and clear to use.

~**Joseph Putnam, [BlogTweaks](#)**



Are they communicating clear benefits to the customer? Do they have a clear and compelling offer? And are they asking for the order?

~**Demian Farnworth, [The Copybot](#)**



Clarity of purpose (is the website overly busy or focused on just a couple quality methods of revenue), visitor usability (is the site easy and logical to navigate), and is there any sort of call to action (people need to be told what you want them to do).

~**Cori Padgett, [Big Girl Branding](#)**



# 14 Simple Website Changes That Increase Conversion

Mark Twain once remarked:

The difference between the right word and the almost right word is really a large matter — it's the difference between a lightning bug and the lightning.

Similarly, it's remarkable how the simplest of changes to a website can amount to a large matter.

We asked our Crazy Egg Marketing Experts what simple changes they have made that caused dramatic increases in website conversion.



I added an email opt-in form at the bottom of every blog post (in addition to the form at the top of the page). I got 40 new subscribers overnight.

This has continued to be a great way to generate new readers and followers.

~**Jeff Goins**, **Writer**



The first simple change is usually "Uncovering the Lead." This involved finding the real value proposition, the "what's in it for me" that is usually buried in the copy or in the site, and making it the headline or offer.

This applies to all kinds of pages: landing pages, home pages, product pages and category pages.

The pain for my clients is that the WIIFM (What's in it for me?) is usually more specific than they like. Visitors love specifics. This means that you will be letting some visitors leave disinterested. The goal is to create a net win for the

business.

~**Brian Massey**, [Conversion Sciences](#)



Creating city specific landing pages instead of using on catch-all landing page that targets the one big city in the metro area we're advertising in. People like seeing their city name on the landing page. The conversions have been significantly higher on these city specific landing pages compared to the one for the big city.

~**Adam Kreitman**, [Words That Click](#)



Tweaked the content on my blog. I went from a very narrow topic [web writing] to a very broad and even personal slant [writing stories]. More comments, more subscribers and more spread over social media.

~**Demian Farnworth**, [The Copybot](#)



Putting a strong call to action button above the fold to get impulse buyers (and the scanners and skimmers on my web page) to take action promptly. It gave me a 60% boost in inquiries and fully a third of those clients became paying customers or referred someone else.

When you not only include a prominently-colored call to action button, but couple it with "action" words (get/download/read more, etc.) and let the person know precisely what will happen after they click, you'll see a significant difference in your click through rate.

~**Sherice Jacob**, [iElectrify](#)



Normally, we implement a series of changes gradually for our clients, but I would say that the most common simple change that almost always increases

conversions is to restructure the layout.

~**Naomi Niles**, [ShiftFwd](#)



If a website is not using landing pages for their PPC campaign, create landing pages that are tailored to the ad groups or campaigns that are running. It is rare this will not provide an immediate jump in conversions and ROI.

~**Aaron Stevens**, [Moosylvania](#)



If content on a page is long and falls below the fold, reiterate the call to action near the bottom of the page, but above the footer.

~**Christopher Long**, [The Loud Few](#)



The most simple change I've made to increase conversions was adding an e-mail opt-in form underneath blog posts to capture subscribers. My site was going through a period of time with very few people signing up, and this change immediately increased the number of sign ups.

It also makes sense when you think about it. If someone reads the entire post and makes it to the bottom, there's a good chance that they like what they've read and would be interested in subscribing. If the opt-in box is only at the top of the sidebar, they have to scroll back up to subscribe. A subscription box at the end of the post makes it easier for the reader and is a great way to increase conversions.

~**Joseph Putnam**, [Blog Tweaks](#)



In the Magento shopping cart, the default button on a product listing page says "More Info". I've found that by changing that button to something like "More Info & Pricing" gets people to click through more often. This is

particularly true on bundle and grouped product listings.

~**Will Hanke, [Where Is My Business?](#)**



One simple change that we've seen help improve conversions is focus. Identifying the concrete purpose of each page of a website has helped us to focus everything on achieving a successful conversion for that particular page. Such an approach has implications for the way we approach everything from design and development to the content we create for a given page. If we know the purpose of each and every page on a website that we create, we can focus our efforts on making sure that a visitor to the website will as well.

~**David Hartstein, [Wired Impact](#)**



The simplest and most impactful change I've seen for conversion is defining and reserving the call-to-action (CTA) colors. There's no magic color as some may suggest, but there is color logic. In order to stand out, the CTA color should be opposite the dominant site color on the color wheel.

In other words, red CTA for blue sites, orange CTA for green sites, and so on. (Always test to be sure!) This color must ONLY be used for CTA to ensure it always adequately stands out on the page. Defining a secondary CTA color (within 10 minutes of the primary CTA on the color wheel clock) is necessary if you're presenting multiple actions to proceed like "Add to Cart" (primary) and "Add to Wish List" (secondary).

(Note: CTA refers to the action that moves the user forward. Actions that move the user backward should use colors neutral to the site color pallet. If "Continue Shopping" and "Proceed to Checkout" are presented, only "Proceed to Checkout" should get the CTA color while "Continue Shopping" should have a neutral color.)

~**Angie Schottmuller, [Interactive Artisan](#)**



One of the simplest things I did to increase conversions with my eBook on blog post promotion was to take the sidebar off of the page. It isn't as good as having it on its own separate sales page off-site, but it has made a difference as people only have one call to action to focus upon instead of my subscription boxes, advertisers, and other sidebar items.

~**Kristi Hines, Kikolani**



Adding white space and breaking up the content. Reading large blocks of text turns people off almost immediately, it's hard on the eyes. So break it up into small, consumable chunks and people will be more inclined to continue reading and respond rather than click away.

~**Cori Padgett, Big Girl Branding**

# 5 Ways to De-Clutter Your Website For Better Conversion Rates

by [Sherice Jacob](#)

When it comes to your website, and particularly your landing pages – less is more.

Even as far back as 1997, usability guru Jakob Nielsen [advised us to design for “scanners”](#) – people who read the web in chunks (79%) rather than every word on a page (16%). But reading is only part of the story. Websites were designed to be interactive – so how are your users interacting with your pages?

One of the best ways to increase that interaction and turn them from sideline readers into active participants is to de-clutter your pages.

That means more than just removing annoying ads. It means taking a hard look at what design elements, navigation menus and other parts of your site are “nice but not necessary”.

In this chapter, you’ll learn five ways to de-clutter your website without making it lose its appeal and creativity.

It’s time for some Spring Cleaning! Let’s get started.

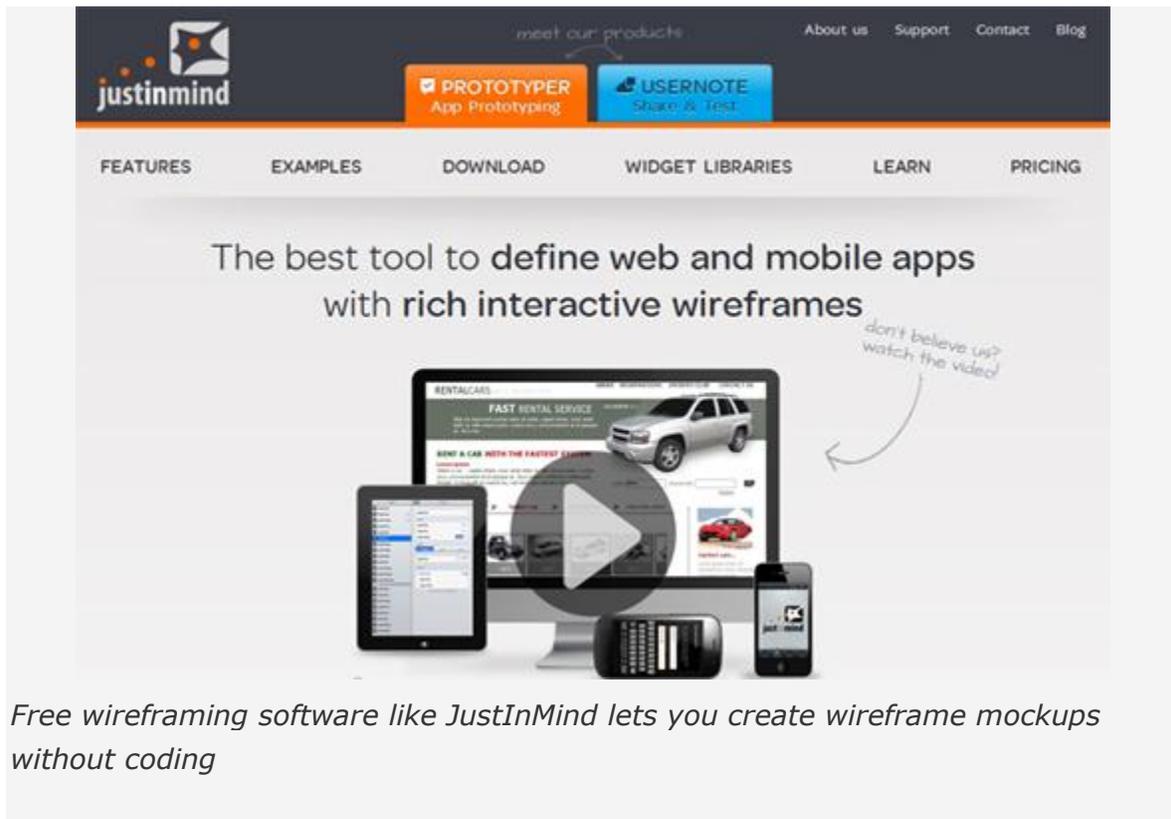
## 1 – Plan Your Website Backwards

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If you already have a website, planning seems more like one of those things you did “way back when” rather than something you should do periodically.

Just like a good spring cleaning is a way to freshen up a home, taking the time to better organize your website and content can help lower your bounce rate and keep customers on your site longer.

To achieve this, plan your website around the result you want to achieve, rather than throwing text and images on the page without a concrete idea of the end goal. One tool that can help with this process is wire-framing software. Although typically used by web designers to lay out and determine the functionality of a site before a single pixel is pushed, wire-framing programs can help you easily determine what “must have” elements of your site go first, and can help you eliminate clutter.



The screenshot shows the JustinMind website. At the top left is the JustinMind logo. To its right are two buttons: 'PROTOTYPER App Prototyping' and 'USERNOTE Share & Test'. Further right are links for 'About us', 'Support', 'Contact', and 'Blog'. Below this is a navigation bar with links for 'FEATURES', 'EXAMPLES', 'DOWNLOAD', 'WIDGET LIBRARIES', 'LEARN', and 'PRICING'. The main content area features a large headline: 'The best tool to define web and mobile apps with rich interactive wireframes'. Below the headline is a central image showing a wireframe mockup of a car rental website on a desktop monitor, a tablet, and a smartphone. A large play button is overlaid on the monitor. To the right of the image is a handwritten-style note: 'don't believe us? watch the video!' with an arrow pointing to the play button. Below the image is the text: 'Free wireframing software like JustInMind lets you create wireframe mockups without coding'.

## Have a Clear Linking Strategy

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With every link you place into and outside your site, you’re running the risk of distracting your customer to the point that they forget what they were originally there for. On the other hand, you need those links to not only pass on valuable “search engine juice” but to help introduce your products, share news on your blog, connect over social media and so forth.

But beware. Links, particularly those that take the visitor off your site, can be a problem. Ensure that each link you place on the page brings you closer to your goal.

## Check Your Ad to Content Ratio

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If you have advertising on your site, you'll want to pay careful attention to the ad-to-content ratio, because [Google certainly is](#). Not only do too many ads lead to a cluttered site, they can also bury the very information the customer is searching for and lead visitors off your site.

And, while Google doesn't hate ads, it does factor user experience into the mix. Unfortunately, there's no "golden rule" as to what constitutes "too much" advertising and too little content. Still, if you're focused on that, you're not seeing the big picture. Clean, straightforward designs and compelling call-to-action buttons along with fresh, interesting content is the best possible formula to keep users and search engines coming back.



*North Coast Organics' site weaves in their best keywords while encouraging users to try new products.*

## Improve Your Content and Site Readability

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How easy is it for visitors to read the information you're sharing? Once they get to the end of an article or post, is there something else for them to do? Spend the extra time researching the best keywords for your topic, crafting a solid search engine optimized title and inter-linking your post with links to other articles on your site that customers may find useful.

One such WordPress widget that makes featuring related stories easy and attractive is [LinkWithin](#). It displays graphic thumbnails along with links to related pages on your own blog, and it's free. Although I should warn you that if you've recently moved your blog or deleted articles, LinkWithin may still link to them. That's because it draws from Google's index – and if the old articles are still there, they'll lead to 404 Not Found pages on your own site.

*Buses at the Brewery answers the what/where/when/why of an event above the fold.*

## Are You Selling, Educating or Engaging?

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What's the core purpose of your site, and are your content and images living up to that purpose? Or are they just "window dressing" that the web designer

thought would look good? Most of the time, a website is purposefully designed to either sell, educate, or engage.

You might even say “my website does all three!” and that could be true, but you’ll need a single motivator that acts as the under-current for every piece of content you write and every promotion you do. Websites that are made to “sell” have already assumed that the user is interested in making a purchase, the site itself is there to help them get the best deal on whatever that item is.

Those designed to educate are helping the user along in some stage of the buying process – showing the pros and cons of different products, for example. Everything they do is geared toward helping the consumer learn more. Finally, engaging sites are designed to elicit a response – download a free trial, tell a friend, etc. These sites primarily have social media as their main marketing vehicle.

Once you understand which one of the three your site fits into, you’ll be able to craft better content that’s in line with your business plan — and remove the rest.



*Bzzy is able to engage, educate and sell in one simple, easy-to-scan landing page. Its core goal is to engage customers to download the app.*

## Action Steps

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- If you're considering a website redesign, or creating a new site, plan for the end goal first. Consider all the ways a customer could land on your page: via search engine, word of mouth, direct link or social campaign. How easy is it for them to take the action you want them to take?
- If you employ advertising on your site, make sure that it isn't overwhelming your users and preventing them from performing the action you want them to take. After last year's Panda update, Google is starting to keep a closer eye on ad-ridden sites and may give sites with too much advertising a lower quality score and hence, a lower ranking.
- Take the time to thoroughly research keywords and plan out your content strategy around those terms. Make sure to optimize your title, keywords and description – even though Google hasn't paid attention to meta-keywords for some time, that doesn't mean they're useless. Oftentimes, they're used for social descriptions on Facebook and Google+.
- Determine if your site's core purpose is to educate, engage or sell and make that your main focus. It's fine to supplement it with the other two, but if you're not clear on what your site's purpose is, how will your customers interact with it?

# Is Your WordPress Sidebar Costing You Money?

by [Jessica Shailes](#)

Anyone who is familiar with WordPress is likely to have experienced the wonder that is the WordPress 'sidebar' and 'sidebar widgets'.

This function in WordPress is part of what makes it an excellent platform; with a few clicks you can use widgets to add free function and form that requires a programmer and a lot of cash with traditional websites.

It's very tempting to get carried away like a child in a candy shop, adding every interesting widget you come across...but wait, are you damaging your website by doing so?

Sure, widgets allow you to easily add bells and whistles to your website, but bells and whistles are very distracting.

The bottom line is that widgets could be costing you money, and website hits, but how would you know? Hold tight and I'll explain how to decide which widgets to keep, which to bin and what to do about it.

## What is the goal of your website?

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This is the most valuable question you can ask yourself and keep in mind when working on your website. Your goal may be to sell a product or programme, to keep people on your site for as long as possible, or get social media shares, the list goes on.

Get the goal straight in your mind and then ask yourself if each of the widgets in your sidebar contribute to this goal? If the answer is 'no', seriously consider removing it.

Derek Halpern, an expert in increasing website conversion rates, explains this is why he only has [TWO widgets in his sidebar](#): his newsletter sign up form, and popular posts.

## How to test which widgets are useful

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Do I think you need to go as far as Derek? Not necessarily, because:

1. your website goal may be different to his and
2. there is a great way to find out whether your widget is of value using Crazy Egg

Once you have removed the widgets that are definitely not helping your site, there are likely to be some you aren't sure about.

This is where Crazy Egg comes in: set up an account and create page snapshots on some key pages and wait to get some data. You will be surprised by the results.

Let the data make the decision for you.

## Case Study: Everything for Redheads

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One of the websites I own and run is a website especially for Redheads called ['Everything for Redheads'](#), which was how I first came across Crazy Egg.

I realised quickly how many pointless widgets I had, but was also pleasantly surprised by which ones worked for me. Not only that, the way a widget was used on different pages of the website differed completely.





I'll share some of my most recent heat maps with you from the website home page and blog page.

The primary goal of this website is to get sales of products through my shop, but I have a secondary goal of keeping visitors on the site for long enough that they see other products and want to return for the content. As such, different areas of my website have different purposes, so the sidebar widgets should reflect this.

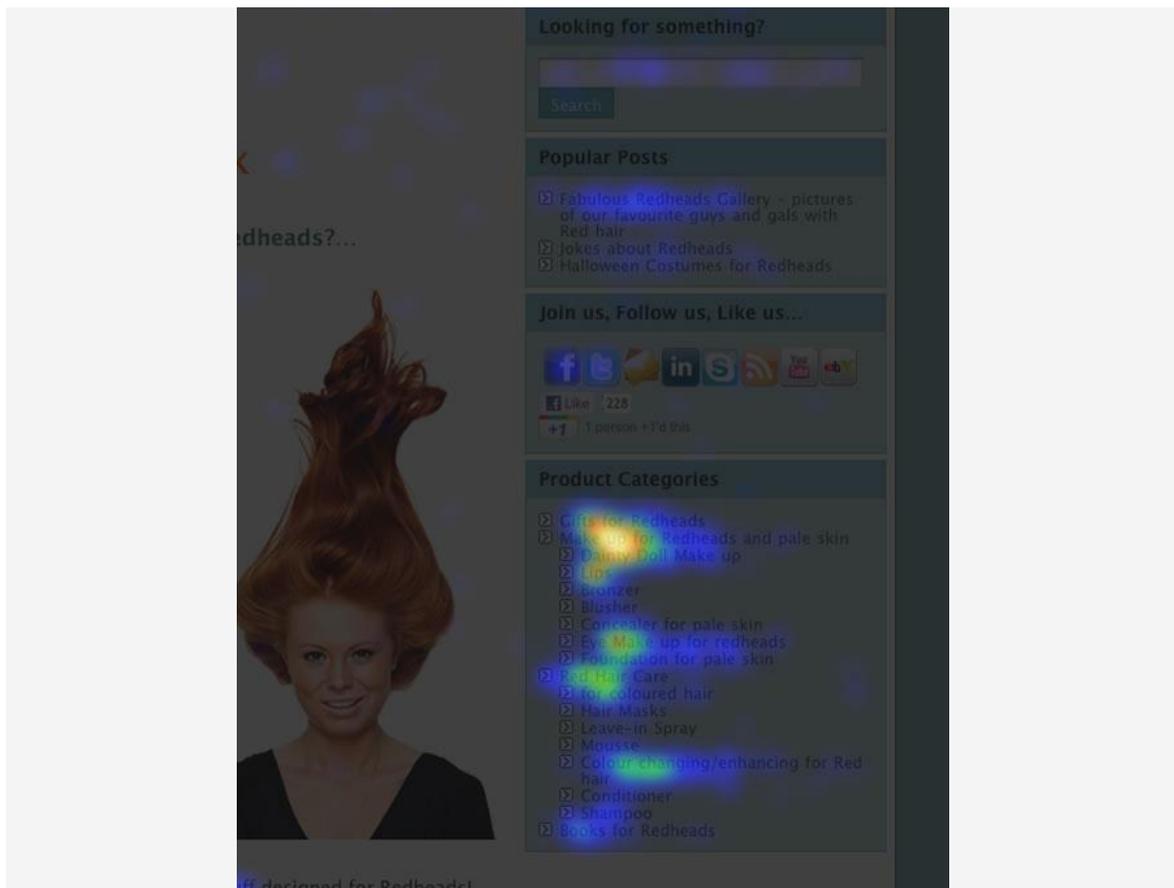
If you want to know how to have customized sidebars in different parts of your site, stay tuned.

## The homepage:

I know you're on the Crazy Egg blog, but I'm not going to assume that you have personally used [Crazy Egg](#) website tracking.

This software allows you to see how visitors are behaving on a site and in these examples I have used the 'heatmap' view to demonstrate how visitors are hovering and clicking on different areas of my website.

Oh, and by the way, if you're not familiar with Crazy Egg there isn't much of an excuse anymore; at the writing of this post there is a 30 day free trail and adding it to WordPress is really easy with the [WordPress plugin](#). You'll learn a lot in those 30 days.



Getting back to the point: as you can see from the screenshot there are some big white spot areas and I have found out that surprisingly;

- There are close to 100 x more visitors using the widget in the sidebar to get to my shop than the link in the page navigation
- There are 8 x more visitors are accessing my blog through the popular posts widget in the sidebar than the page navigation bar.
- BUT my search bar has been used ONCE but in my shop it is used more often.
- What does this tell me?
  1. Keep the widget that shows shop categories and popular blog posts
  2. Consider removing the 'search' function on this page, it's taking up valuable website real estate, that I don't want wasted!

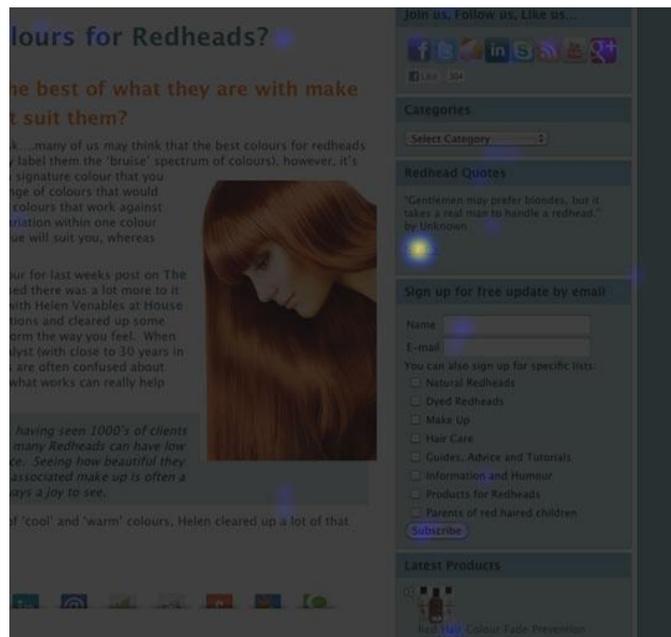
## The Blog

The blog sidebar is completely different from the homepage. In the following picture you can see that the 'Redheads quotes' widget gets a lot of action, but just below it my newsletter subscription form doesn't 😞

What does this tell me?

Keeping in mind the point of my website is:

1. To make sales on my shop



2. Get return visitors through my blog and newsletter (so that they can buy products in the future)

The quotes widget doesn't help serve either of these goals, but IS taking up attention of my visitors and space on my sidebar. So as 'nifty' as it is, it has GOT.TO.GO.

## Customize your sidebar for different pages

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So what if, like me, your website has more than one purpose and you want to have different widgets on different pages?

Easy: There are two plugins I have used with WordPress that allow you to customize your sidebar but in different ways. *Disclaimer: I have no affiliation with these plugins and cannot guarantee that they will work with your website, just that I have found them to be extremely valuable and hope you do too!*

### WordPress plugin '[Dynamics Sidebars](#)'

This plugin allows you to adjust the widgets on a page by page basis. The benefit of it is that this is highly customisable, and you can be REALLY specific, but it can also be easy to forget where widgets are. I have also found it to be buggy with some websites.

### WordPress plugin '[Custom Sidebars](#)'

With this plugin you create several 'sidebars' and then select in the page which sidebar you wish to use. You can also set a default sidebar depending on the page type/post/product/category etc which makes life much easier when installing it. I have used this one to create a 'blog', 'shop' and 'homepage' sidebar for Everything for Redheads.

## Are all your bells and whistles heavy?

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I mentioned that your widgets could be 'costing you' and this applies in many ways — money, visits and perhaps page-load speed.

The more elements your website has to load to deliver a page, the longer it will take to display. [Slow load times](#) will turn people off your website, lower your page ranking in search engines and create a frustrating experience for your visitors. If you're unsure about how a plugin is affecting your website there is a great plugin for WordPress to test how your plugins are affecting your website's performance: The [P3 \(Plugin Performance Profiler\)](#)

They say it best: *'This plugin creates a profile of your WordPress website's plugins' performance by measuring their impact on your website's load time. Often times, WordPress websites load slowly because of poorly configured plugins or because there are so many of them.'*

## Knowing when less is more

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I want to leave you with the thought that just because something CAN be done, doesn't mean it SHOULD be done. This is a mantra that could be applied to all areas of life 'Will this 'widget' really make my life better?'. It can be near impossible to decide in real life, but thankfully with websites we don't have to guess. I hope I've illustrated how easy it can be to see exactly what to keep and what to remove.

# How To Get Buyers To Take Action With A Strange But Effective Concept

by [Russ Henneberry](#)

That's the goal, right? We want buyers to take action. The action of buying.

But it's not easy. Time-starved, highly caffeinated Internet surfers are a tough crowd to pin down. In most cases, you need them to take action now or they vanish.

But here is the strange part, and hear me out here...

Perhaps, buyers aren't taking action because your offer is too available. It's too easy to get.

The concept we are going to discuss in this article works because of two hard-wired human principles that Dr. Robert Cialdini outlines in his book, [Influence](#). Those two principles are *scarcity* and *urgency*.

## It's The Law

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You can't fight it and neither can I.

### **Humans find an offer more appealing if it is:**

- Rare
- Fleeting
- Temporary

It's one of those hard-wired survival elements built into our brains.

Here is the more important way to think about this.

## Humans find an offer less appealing if it is:

- Abundant
- Here to stay
- Permanent

## Let me illustrate this point with a story...

I received a call a year or so ago from a man that was running a conference for business owners in my home town. He hired me to help him sell more tickets.

I looked at his landing page and evaluated the offer.

It had one major problem. There was only one price for the conference and you could pay that price today, tomorrow or the day of the conference. It didn't matter when you bought your ticket, same price.

Can you guess (based on what we've learned so far) when he sold the most tickets? Yep, the day before the conference.

Why? Because the offer was going away. The offer was becoming scarce and it created an urgency to take action.

## Launch and Launch Again

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So, how did we sell more tickets?

Sorry to disappoint but we didn't reinvent the wheel. We simply applied a structure that all successful conference organizers put in place.

We created a tiered offer.

Here were the tiers:

- Early Bird Price (\$249)
- Regular Price (\$399)

- Door Price (\$499)

We filled up the conference because we were able to create scarcity and urgency three different times as the conference approached.

Here's what it looked like in a nutshell:

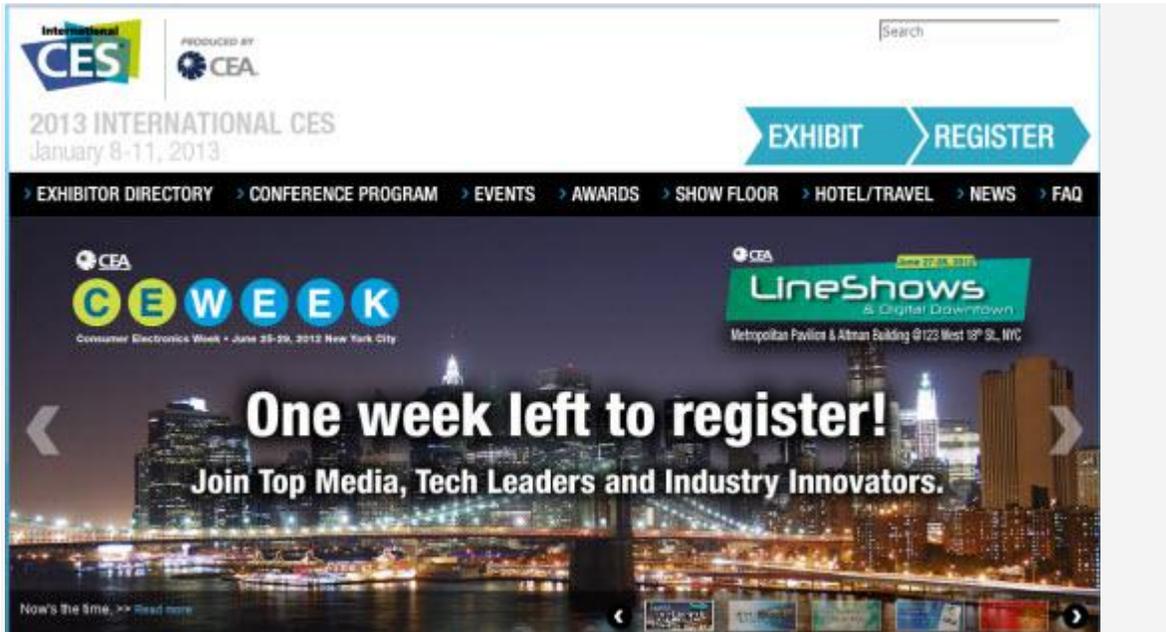
- Offer 1 – We have a great conference coming up. Get the best price of \$249. Offer ends in 30 days.
- Offer 2 (Scarcity Offer) – Early Bird Pricing goes away in 48 hours.
- Offer 3 (Scarcity Offer) – Regular Pricing goes away in 48 hours.
- Offer 4 (Scarcity Offer) – You are going to miss the whole dang conference if you don't sign up now.

This is powerful stuff. To illustrate, take a look at what the original offer sequence looked like:

- Offer 1 (Permanent Offer) – We have a great conference coming up. Attend now for \$399.
- Offer 2 (Permanent Offer) – We have a great conference coming up. Attend now for \$399.
- Offer 3 (Permanent Offer) – We have a great conference coming up. Attend now for \$399.
- Offer 4 (Scarcity Offer) – You are going to miss the whole dang conference if you don't sign up now.

This second sequence contains only one scarcity offer. It was no mystery why he was selling most of his tickets in the 48 hours leading to the show. You can buy it now or buy it at the door for the same price. Without scarcity, there is no urgency to take action.

The Consumer Electronics Show (one of the largest shows in the world) is no stranger to this concept for selling tickets.



Events lend themselves well to scarcity but this can be applied to products and services as well. Why do you think there are so many “24 Hour Furniture Sale” offers on television?

Once you understand this concept, you will see opportunities to apply it to what you are selling.

**Here is a riddle:** When is a U.S. quarter worth more than 25 cents?

**Answer:** When there are only 100 of them available?

The U.S. Government understands the concept of scarcity and urgency.



## You Can't Make This Stuff Up

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My conference organizer client needed this tiered system for more than just putting butts in seats.

He had another problem. Because he would sell all his tickets the day or two before the conference, he never knew how much food to order. Heck, he didn't even know if he was going to break even or lose his shirt on the conference. The conference was much better organized when there was a steady flow of paid attendees as the event approached.

In other words, this scarcity wasn't manufactured. There was a real reason for it besides just dangling an offer with a threat to take it away for no real reason.

Communicating real scarcity in your offer is both an ethical and intelligent way to do business. But creating false scarcity is often transparent to your potential customers and can give you a poor reputation.

I know I roll my eyes when I see a weak attempt at creating urgency through scarcity. You do too.

Furniture stores, car dealerships and clothing retailers are just a few that go overboard with the scarcity and urgency concept. You can't have a sale every weekend and expect people to continue to respond. At some point, we will catch on.

**HILLSDALE FURNITURE, L.L.C.**

**OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!**  
 May 21th, 9-9pm  
 May 22th, 9-9pm  
 May 23th, 10-4pm

**NATIONAL WHOLESALER**  
**3 DAYS ONLY!**  
**THIS IS THE REAL DEAL! WE GUARANTEE IT!**

**THOUSANDS OF ITEMS BELOW WHOLESALE PRICES!**

**3 PC SET - Dresser, Mirror & Bed**  
**SELL OFF \$499<sup>99</sup>**  
 3 PC SET  
 Reg. Retail \$1349.00

**3 PC SET - Dining Table & Chairs**  
**SELL OFF \$389**  
 Reg Retail: \$1099

**3 PC SET - Dresser, Mirror & Bed**  
**SELL OFF \$347<sup>77</sup>**  
 3 PC SET  
 Reg. Retail \$957.99

*Hillsdale is one of the Nation's top suppliers*

Take a long, hard look at your offer.

Is it too available? How could you introduce scarcity and urgency to buy? Ask yourself, what real reason could I give for a buyer to take action now?

And I stress the word ... *now*. Because if they don't do it now, they won't do it.

It's just the way we roll online.

# 6 Factors Everyone Should Know About Designing Call To Action Buttons

by [Stephanie Hamilton](#)

This is where the rubber meets the road.

How well do your call-to-action buttons convert website traffic into something that benefits your business?

Web and UX designers know the importance effective call-to-action buttons, but the following six factors should be understood by anyone involved in generating business from your website.

## What Are Call-to-Action Buttons?

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Call-to-action buttons solicit action from a website visitor.

Commonly a clicking action that may link to a download, signup, or sale. They may also lead to a web page with additional information (e.g. "Learn more...") that asks the user to take action.

## 6 Factors of Call-To-Action Button Design

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### 1. Size

Ideally, your call-to-action button should strike a healthy mix between overcrowding the page and fading into the background. It should be the largest button on the page because the larger the element on the page, the more we understand its importance.



The call-to-actions on the website NCover are given prominence through increased size. They also supply ample room to house critical information, such as a '21-day Free Trial.' A contrasting color also helps differentiate the download button from the background.

## 2. Positioning

Placing the call-to-action button above the fold of the web page is most effective as this area is the first impression one has of a business.



Users are greeted with a centrally-located call-to-action button on the landing page of Store Envy (above). The round button stands out with its thick white border and encourages both shoppers and sellers to join after reading the accompanying text.



A 'Donate' button serves as the call-to-action for War Child. Placed as secondary to the heading, it elicits action and is placed strategically above the fold, encouraging users to come back after they checked out the rest of the site.

### 3. Color

Make your call-to-action stand by designing in a contrasting color to the background. This ensures users notice it and increases the likelihood of taking action. Also consider how well the color fits in with your color palette and aim to subdue the color the larger the button gets.



The call-to-action for this app clearly differentiates itself from the background through a highly saturated button. Would you miss it?



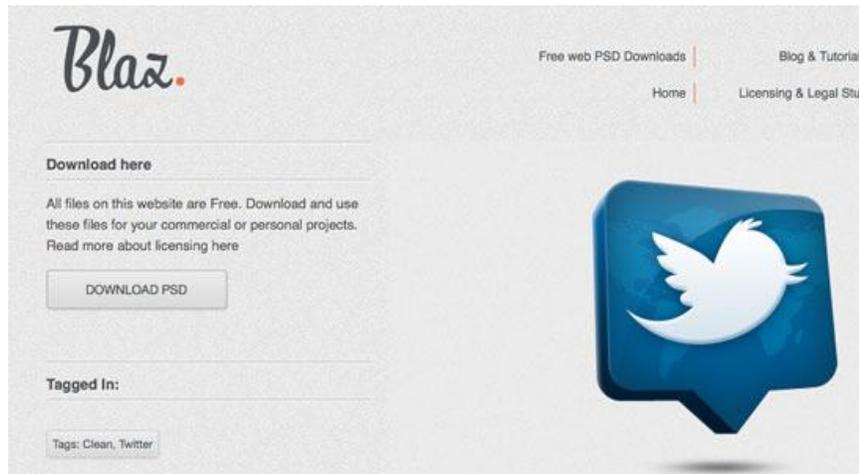
The Resumator uses complimentary colors on the navigation to emphasize the “Sign-Up” call-to-action button placed there. The same familiar red color is used on the call-to-action to “Start the Tour.” Notice how the complimentary color pops the button from the background.

#### 4. Whitespace

Whitespace is also an important element in giving your call-to-action the attention it deserves. This tactic is especially effective if your button color is subdued and/or small, and it works because adjacent elements are spaced further apart.



While subdued and not shouting for our attention, the call-to-action buttons on the website for Mint Themes (above) still inspire action and draw our attention through the use of whitespace both above and below the call-to-action buttons.



Meanwhile, the clean, minimal website for Blaz Robar enables the call-to-action plenty of breathing room. This button doesn't have to work extra hard to compete for our attention.

## 5. Language

Language plays a huge effect on conversion.

Strive for simple, clear language that inspires users to take action. For instance, do you feel more compelled by a button that reads "Buy Now" or "Add to Cart."

"Buy now" suggests immediate gratification. "Add to cart" is more of a "I'll think about it" action. So "Buy now" generally wins.

Also, if the user has to question what the wording means, it can mean less conversions.



The language on the call-to-action for IntraHost is simple and direct, letting the user get straight to work.



Commendable Kids calls you to “Get Started Now” and informs you the account is free. This information is useful and prevents the user from having to dig deeper into the website to find this out.

## 6. Benefit

We tend to respond quickly when we feel like we can miss out on an opportunity. Incorporate bold, commanding words into your buttons that communicate the benefit.

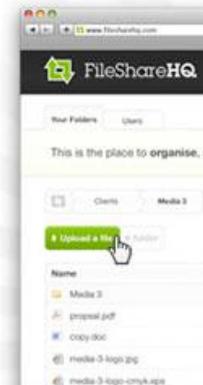
## The easiest way to send large files

Send large files and email attachments, 100% for free.

Just upload your file and share the link - up to 99GB.

Simple to use online, use the website or upload with FTP.

Sign up for your **FREE** trial  
Start sending files within minutes...



The call-to-action button for FileShare HQ lets you know of the perk of becoming a member – the ability to send files instantly within minutes.

An advertisement for Apps Templates. The background is light blue. On the right side, there is a black smartphone with a green screen displaying vertical stripes. On the left side, there are three sections of text: 'money, focus on development' with a subtext 'ready to use, just add your images and text'; 'ation and customizations based on your needs' with a subtext 'essionally crafted and easy to use (-&gt; Watch tutorial on Vimeo)'; and 'unlimited access' with a subtext 'working on new templates (Follow us on Twitter)'. At the bottom, there is a green button with white text that reads 'Unlimited access for \$149 \$50'. Below the button, there is a handwritten-style text 'join the club now' with an arrow pointing up and to the right.

By letting the user know the deal they are getting, the call-to-action for Apps Templates creates an incentive to join the club now to take advantage of it.

Call to Action buttons play an important role in your businesses conversions. While every website's goals are unique, designing your call-to-actions to elicit action through a mix of the above techniques will have a positive impact on your website conversions.

# How to Find, Optimize, and Refine Your Keywords for Conversions

by [Kristi Hines](#)

One of the overall [goals of online marketing](#) is to increase the rankings of your keywords.

Unfortunately, some people get a little too concerned with rankings, and forget about the bigger picture – which of the keywords brings in the most conversions?

After all, rankings don't pay the bills. Conversions do.

If you're targeting keywords that are not converting, you are wasting your time, energy and money.

The following tips will help you determine which keywords are converting for you, which ones need work, and which ones you need to refine.

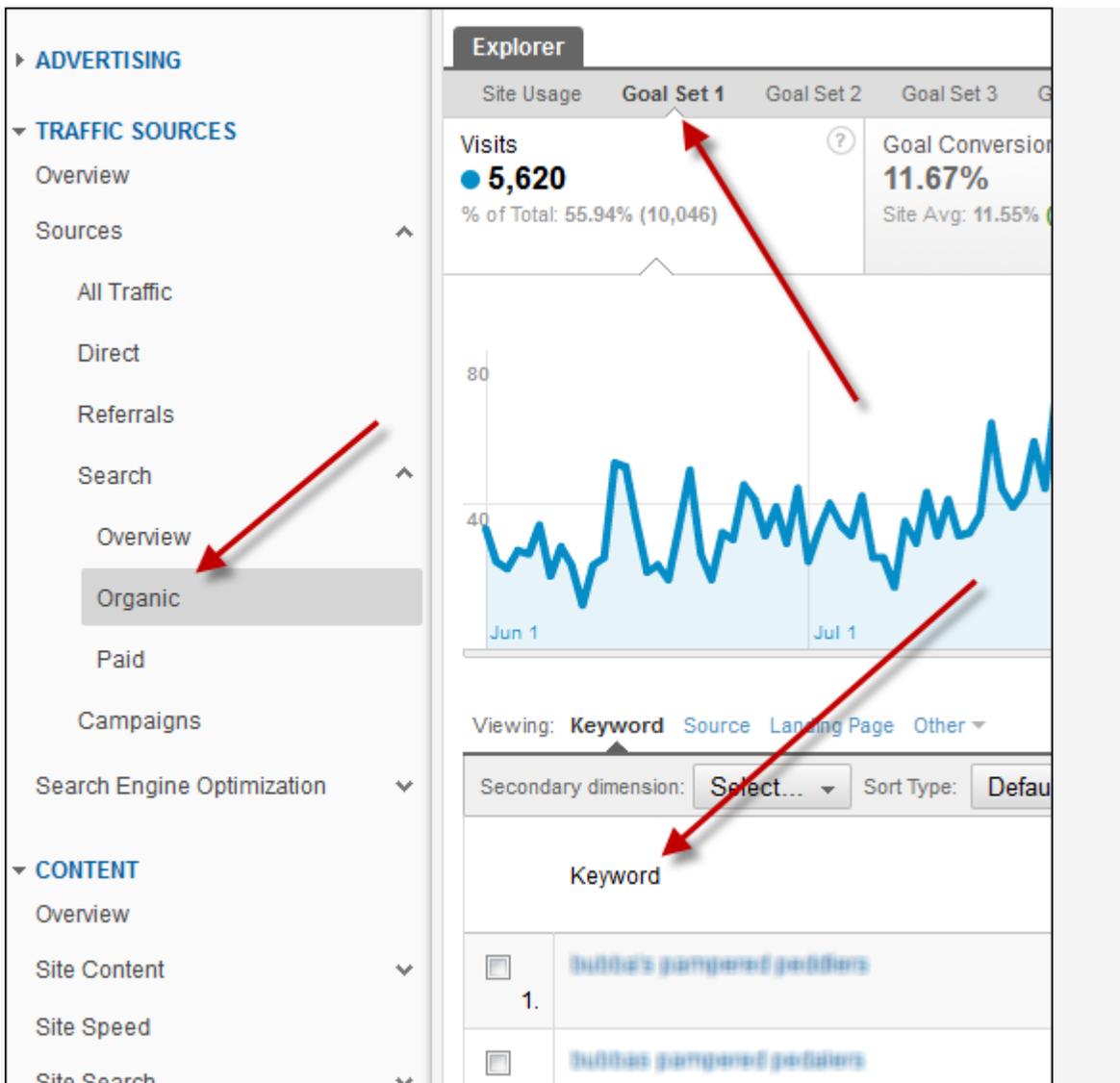
Before you begin, be sure that you have setup goals in your Google Analytics. If you haven't set up goals (shame on you), refer to the [first section of this post](#) to get them setup, let them collect some data for a few weeks, then continue.

## Finding Keywords That Lead to Conversions

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First, you will want to know which keywords that are driving traffic to your website are leading to conversions.

This is relatively simple – just go into your Google Analytics Traffic Sources > Sources > Search > Organic. Here you will see the top keywords driving traffic to your site. Next, you will want to click on the Goal Set option under the Explorer.



You should see all of your keywords next to columns of Goal Conversion Rate (an overall percentage of goals completed in each Goal Set), Per Goal Value (the dollar amount you have assigned for each completed goal), and then a column for conversion rates of individual goal under that goal set. You can click on each of the headers to sort your keywords by which ones lead to the highest goal completion rates.

What you will find is that some of the goals with the highest conversion rate don't generate much traffic. So you will need to scroll down your list and jot

down any keywords that get decent search volume and have a good conversion rate.

For some, a good conversion rate will be anything above zero. Others might have enough activity to consider targeting only keywords that have a rate of 50% or higher.

Once you have this list, you know the keywords to start honing in on for your online marketing efforts.

Here are some ways to target these high-converting keywords:

- Write more content with these keywords and related, long-tail keyword phrases.
- Build links that target those keyword phrases.
- Include those keyword phrases in tweets.

If you're not ranking #1 for the keywords that convert the best for you, make that your goal. The more traffic you receive on that high-converting keyword, the more visitors will convert.

## Finding Keywords That Need Some Work

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Now, you are going to sort that same keyword list by traffic and look at the top traffic generating keywords. What are the conversion rates for those keywords? If you're getting a lot of traffic to keywords but they are not converting well, you have two options.

### **Option 1: Increase Landing Page Conversions**

Using the dropdown next to Secondary Dimension, select the Landing Page option under Traffic Sources.

Viewing: **Keyword** Source Landing Page Other ▾

Secondary dimension: **Select...** Sort Type: **Default** ▾

	Keyword	Visits
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. buttha's par	317
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. buttha's par	306
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. buttha fest :	283
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. buttha fest	270
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. regional	227
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. buttha fest	221
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. regional 2011	184

Search:

▼ Traffic Sources

- Source ?
- Medium ?
- Campaign ?
- Ad Content ?
- Visitor Type ?
- Landing Page ?**

► Content

Display as alphabetical list

This will add a column to your keyword list showing you the landing page people arrive upon when searching for each keyword. From here, you will need to visit those landing pages and evaluate what you can do to help them convert by taking the following steps.

- Ensure that the content on the page satisfies the keyword queried.
- Check to see if there is a call to action, and that call to action is clear.
- [Remove distractions](#) on the page to draw more attention to the call to action that could lead to a conversion.
- Find ways to keep visitors from exiting the site from this landing page by directing them to pages on your site that have a higher conversion rate.

If none of these increase conversion, consider Option 2.

## **Option 2 – Refine Your Keywords**

If you have a lot of keywords that are not converting well, even after optimizing your landing pages for conversions, you might have an issue with the keywords themselves.

If people are only coming to your site for free information about the keyword queried, and your site's goal is to sell a product or service, then you need to stop focusing on this keyword. Find related keywords that have a commercial purpose and focus your efforts on them using similar content optimized towards that keyword.

As an example, if you were a local doctor offering homeopathic treatment for diabetes, you may not get a lot of conversions from people who are searching for just diabetes. You will probably be better off targeting related keywords like *diabetes treatment*, *homeopathic diabetes treatment*, *Los Angeles diabetes treatment*, and *Los Angeles homeopathic diabetes treatment*. Those terms would likely be used by visitors who are looking to purchase your service, and therefore would be higher converting keywords.

Once you have found the keywords that deliver the most conversions, have created optimized landing pages for those keywords to increase traffic, and have refined your targeted keywords from informational to commercial, you will find that your keyword goal conversion rates will steadily increase.

# 13 Experts on the Single Best Piece of Advice for Improving Conversion

by [Demian Farnworth](#)

Listen: you don't need double digit jumps in conversion percentages to get more traffic through your search listings, more subscribers to your email newsletter or more sales off of your product landing page.

Often just a three or four percent jump can lead to significant increases in traffic, leads and sales. Furthermore, the changes you need to make often can be [done under 45 minutes](#).

Sadly, most people don't make the changes. They just "finish" the product and then forget about it.

But if you knew how to make changes to your marketing funnel that would lead to single—even double-digit growth—wouldn't you be wise to make those changes?

To help you out I contacted thirteen conversion experts and veterans to see what single best lesson they've learned when it came to improving online conversions.

It could've been a tweak to a landing page or SE listing, an overhaul of an email newsletter or Facebook ad. Whatever it was a it was a defining moment.

The only other requirement was to keep the advice under 100 words (this will make sense of Derek Halpren's sublime answer).

Enjoy.

## Carlos del Rio | [Unbounce](#)

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The best lesson I have learned is that testing doesn't have to be comprehensive to be effective. The first time that I used SilverBack was a defining moment. I recorded 5-minutes of a real person using an e-commerce site and was able to raise cart completion by 13-percent. It only takes a few minutes to solve customer problems if are willing to let go of your ego about the site and hold the customer sacred above all else.

## Bryan & Jeffrey Eisenberg | [Bryan & Jeffery Eisenberg & Associates](#)

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We started optimizing websites for conversion in the mid-90s and it wasn't until almost 15 years later that I discovered the magic shortcut to conversion success. After I left the agency my brother and I built that focused exclusively on improving conversion rates was able to look back at thousands of tests and discover that every successful CRO improvement came from enhancing one or more of factors from the Conversion Trinity.

- Relevance. Are you relevant to my wants/needs/desires (search query)? Have you maintained scent/ad consistency?
- Value. Do I know why you are the right solution for me? Have you explained your value proposition/offer well?
- Call to action. Is it obvious what I need to do next? Have you given me the confidence to take that action?

## AJ Kumar | [Single Grain](#)

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The single best lesson we've learned with improving conversions is that you must survey your audience. Changing a button color doesn't necessary make a significant difference in your site's conversion, it's the overall message that's being conveyed. Too many people make blind changes and as a result see little to no lift. If you survey your audience, you get to understand the minds

of your visitor and then can alter your marketing message accordingly. You may learn that you should push more of feature XYZ as opposed to ABC.

## Neil Patel | [Quick Sprout](#)

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The best lesson I learned about boosting online conversions for your website is that you just can't create a ton of a/b tests and expect to boost your conversion rate. You need to gather both qualitative and quantitative data, analyze it, figure out what changes to make, and then run a/b tests. Even then a test isn't guaranteed to win, but your odds dramatically increase.

## Sean Platt | [Ghostwriter Dad](#)

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You must reach in and touch the reader's heart long enough to feel the muscle twitch. This works no matter the venue. On a landing page or a subject line in an email, a headline that hits the heart will always set the reader up to receive with their brain. "You Are Not Alone" is a headline I've found especially effective.

In copy, truth is everything. I wrote something recently (this week at the time of this writing) that wasn't even designed to serve as copy. It was simply an open letter to my audience. Yet it served as one of the most effective pieces of copy I ever wrote, with a better than 50% conversion rate. I wasn't trying to do anything other than honestly express myself, but sometimes that honesty is the best conversion tool there is.

## Rand Fishkin | [SEOMoz](#)

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Creating a singular, cohesive story through words, visuals, testimonials, videos, and other elements is far more powerful than simply testing and tuning the little things (buttons, colors, titles, etc).

Landing pages don't makes sales. The story makes the sale. It starts with the first time someone hears about your company or product and continues through all the touchpoints along their journey of interactions with you. If that

journey tells a remarkable narrative, your online conversions will be equally remarkable.

TL;DR – don't just optimize the landing page, optimize the customers' journey to find you.

## Derek Halpern | [Social Triggers](#)

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I don't need 100 words. I need 4 words: One page, one goal.

## Daniel Gonzalez | [Conversion Love](#)

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The best lesson? Well, it would have to be identifying and testing appeals that your audience will respond to. Basically, I was working on a landing page designed to onboard small business owners as service providers in a marketplace for services. It was free for small businesses to register, so that was one less barrier to getting people to take action.

Before I went to work on the page, the headline explained how the market place worked. But, the main appeal to the small business owner was that they'd "Get Free Leads for Their Business." I rewrote the headline so that the appeal was focused on getting the business owner free leads.

The result? I got a 100.85% conversion lift on that page. So, to sum it up, identify several appeals your audience might respond to, then test them.

## Jason Acidre | [Kaiser the Sage](#)

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I'm pretty sure that there's a lot, but if I have to choose one, I'd definitely say **the perceived value and trust built through the middle of the funnel processes**. These processes involve content and strong brand indicators that a site builds to promote itself such as highly-informative blog posts, design/presentation/experience, reviews and mentions from other people/sites, and a lot more.

These things have fueled my business, seeing that most of the clients we have acquired through my [SEO services page](#) (3% – 5% monthly conversions) are majorly attracted by what they have seen from my content and from what others are saying about my brand.

## Wayne Mullins | [Ugly Mug Marketing](#)

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One of our clients has a very successful local restaurant and a very effective online presence. The form on their website, which was above the fold and beautifully designed, was getting an 18% opt-in rate.

We decided to try getting people to opt-in to the restaurant using those old fashion tools called a pen and piece of paper – and it WORKED! We created small opt-in forms that asked for the person’s First Name and Email address. On the bottom of the form, it had some text that basically said “by filling this out, you understand we are going to email you.” The result: the first week the opt-in rate from patrons at the restaurant was over 40%.

## Sean Work | [KISSmetrics](#)

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Improving the product and helping new customers understand what to do once they signed up. The more focus we put on helping them understand the value of the product and where to start with it, the healthier our conversions became.

## James Chartrand | [Men with Pens](#)

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Online conversion is really a game. So many factors affect it that it’s almost mind boggling. Your brand, your image, your content, the way that button lines up on the right, the color of the background on that section down there, the expression on the person’s face in the photo...

People try so hard to “get it right” but there are just too many factors about online conversion to control, experiment with and test.

So that's my best piece of advice: That there is no right answer. That you CAN (and should) play with your website's look, content and appeal. There aren't any rules. Tinker away! (And measure carefully, of course.)

## Kristi Hines | [Kikolani](#)

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The best conversion tips I have found are the simplest – if you have a page on your website where there is a particular conversion goal, make sure that goal is first and last on the page, make it obvious, and don't let it compete with a lot of other things people could take action on instead.

Take the average blog post for example. People are given the options to click on links within the post, share the post on social networks, and (lastly) comment. Chances are, once they've done any one of those things, they will move on. Plus, there is usually a header to take you to other parts of the website and a sidebar with even more actionable items including subscribing to the blog, signing up for a newsletter, or clicking on advertising banners.

This is why sales pages and squeeze pages need to be removed from the website's main theme if possible. Take away the header menu, social sharing buttons, sidebars, and other features so that the person who lands on it will only have the choice to buy your product or sign up to your mailing list.

Once they can't get distracted from your conversion goal, they will be more likely to actually convert. I learned this from my own eBook sales page. While it was in the standard page template along with a sidebar with tons of options, sales were alright but not plentiful. Once I just removed the sidebar, sales went up.

I'm sure that if I took away the header, that it would increase sales even further. Although website usability standards usually includes letting your users navigate to other areas of your website, there are times you just don't want them to. On a sales or squeeze page, you definitely want them to just have one or maybe two goals to choose from.

So, what about you: what's the single best lesson you have ever learned when it comes to improving online conversion?

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