

THE ANATOMY OF A LANDING PAGE

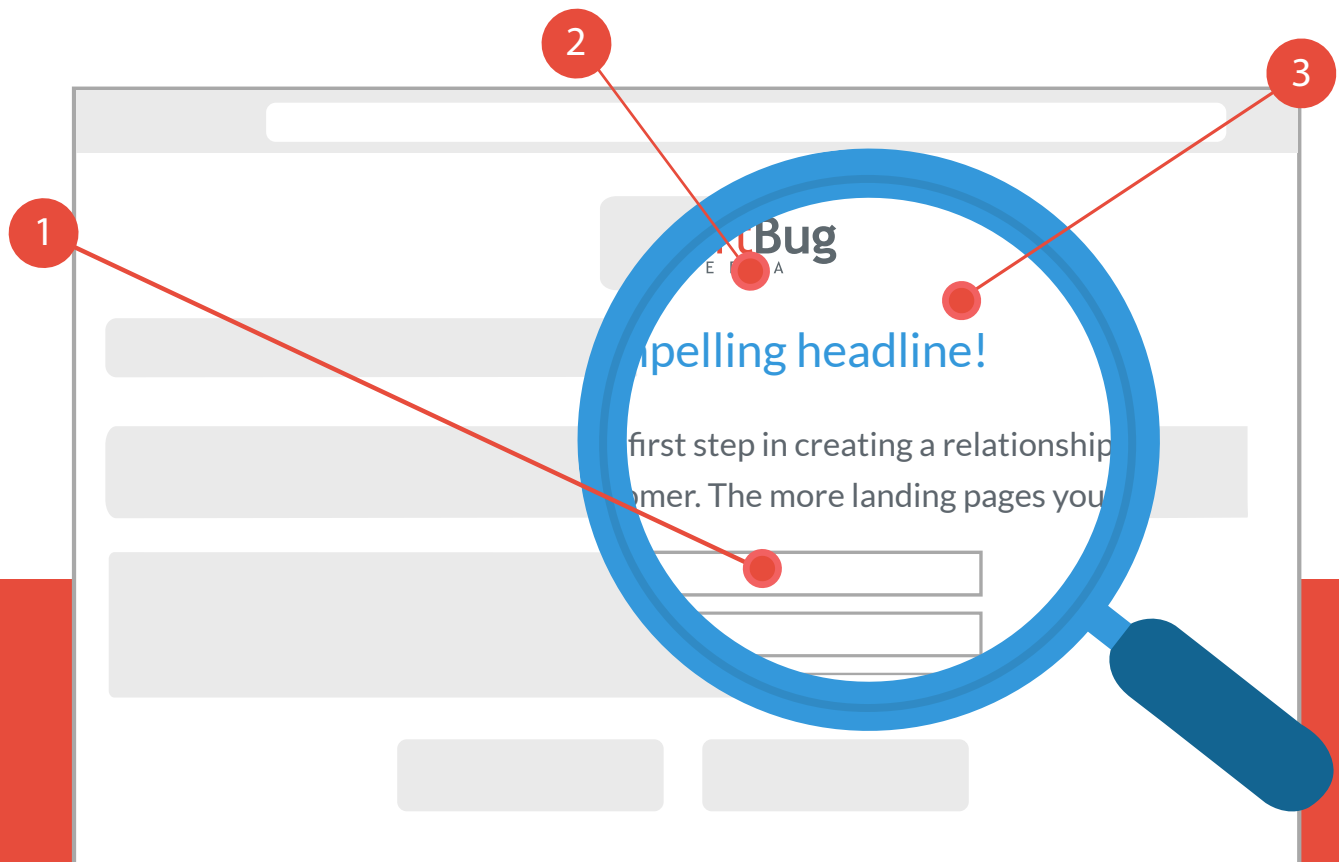


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INTRODUCTION

Converting visitors into leads is the first step in creating a relationship between your company and a potential customer. The more landing pages you have, the better.

In fact, HubSpot conducted a recent study that showed that marketers saw a 55% increase in leads when they increased the number of landing pages on their site from 10-15. Want to get in on this? Read on to discover everything you need to know to build the perfect landing page to increase your conversion rates.

Chapter One

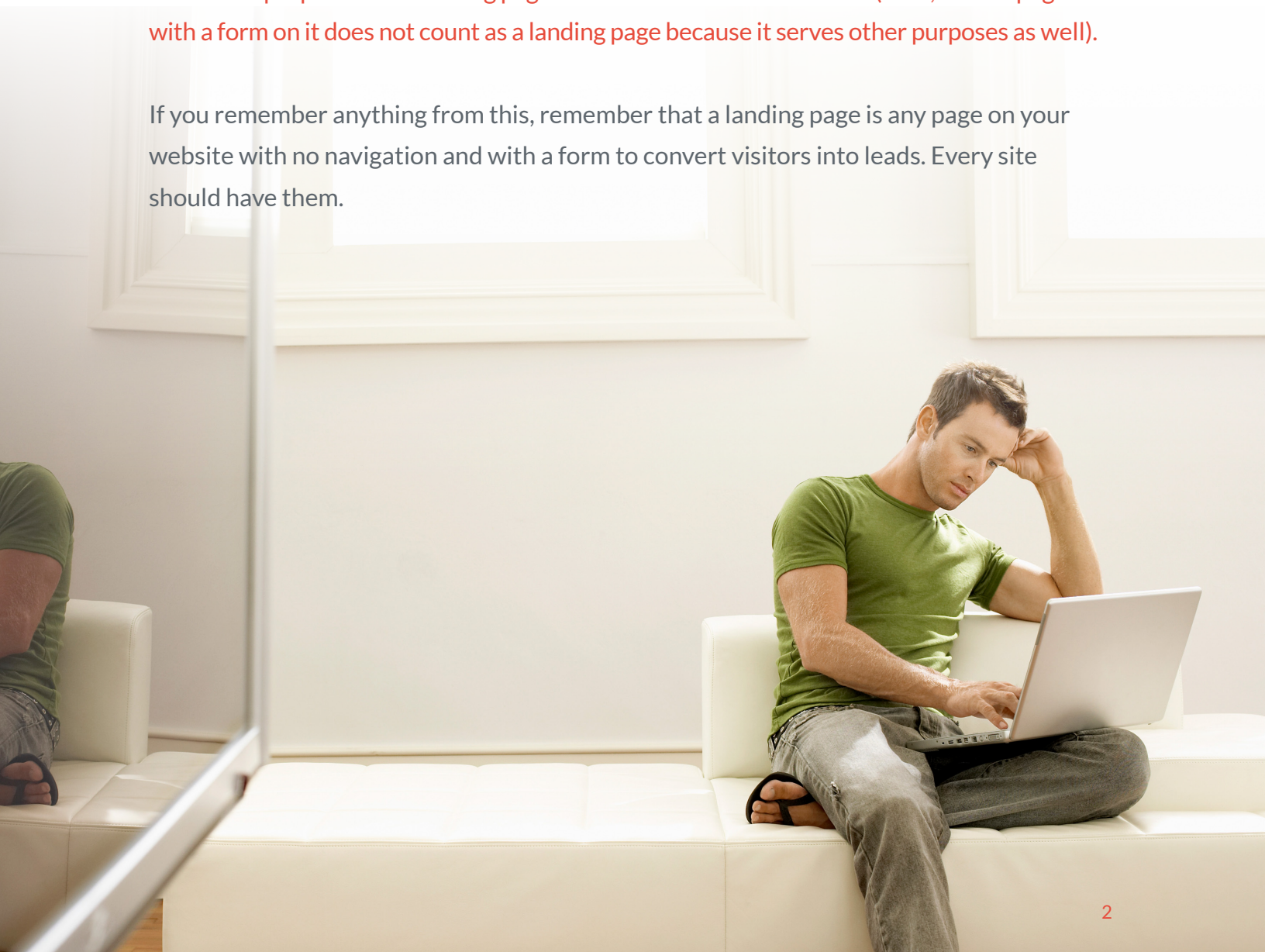
WHAT IS A LANDING PAGE?

Definition

A landing page is a page on your site that is designed to convert visitors into leads. A landing page is different from other pages in that it follows both of these criteria:

1. It has a form that allows you to capture a visitor's information in exchange for a desired offer.
2. The sole purpose of the landing page is to convert visitors into leads (note, a homepage with a form on it does not count as a landing page because it serves other purposes as well).

If you remember anything from this, remember that a landing page is any page on your website with no navigation and with a form to convert visitors into leads. Every site should have them.



How They Work

We use money every day to pay for goods and services. The concept of monetary value can be applied to the logistics behind a landing page in that you're exchanging equally valuable information depending on which side of the exchange you're standing on.

A visitor will fill out the form on the landing page because they believe the content they are accessing will be valuable to them. On the opposite side of the coin, a marketer will gladly give the piece of content to the site visitor because the valuable information they desire is the information the visitor provides on the form to use in future marketing efforts.

It's a win-win situation.



Behind the scenes, landing pages work like this:

STEP 1: A person sees a call-to-action and ends up on a landing page with a form.

STEP 2: The person fills out a form, which converts them from a visitor into lead.

STEP 3: The information from the form fields is then stored in your leads database.

STEP 4: You market to the contact or lead based on what you know about them.

If you use a tool like HubSpot, you'll be able to see what offer the lead converted on, when they converted, and other interactions they've had on your site. This information will allow you to nurture this lead in a more targeted way by helping you decide which marketing actions are most appropriate to take.

A nurtured lead is more likely to become a marketing qualified lead (MQL), and move through the marketing funnel faster. This helps show the ROI of your marketing efforts and keeps your sales team happy.



Chapter Two

THE CONVERSION PROCESS

While the landing page is the main component of the conversion process, there are additional assets that support it to make your conversion successful:

Calls to Action (CTAs):

A CTA is an image or line of text that prompts your visitors to complete a specific action. As it relates to landing pages, they tell the visitor where to click to access the offer. CTAs can be found on pages of your website where the content correlates with your offer as well as on relevant blog posts that support the content within your offer. The more the CTA resonates with the landing page and pages it's being promoted on, the more likely it will be for somebody to convert.

Landing Page:

The landing page itself is home to the form that a visitor fills out in order to access the offer. As mentioned previously, it's only purpose is to explain the benefits of a given offer and encourage visitors to convert into leads. Once the form is submitted, a visitor is should be redirected to a "thank you" page.



Thank You Page:

While an in-line thank you message is available in most tools, it is recommended that you supply your new lead with a dedicated thank you page. Thank you pages include a "download now" button where new leads can click to get the download you offered on the landing page. In addition to hosting the offer, thank you pages are an excellent way to continue the conversion process and move the lead down the marketing funnel. Secondary offers (case studies, consultations, webinars, and more) should be shown through another form or specific CTAs on the thank you page, thus encouraging the lead where to go next.

What the Conversion Process Looks Like

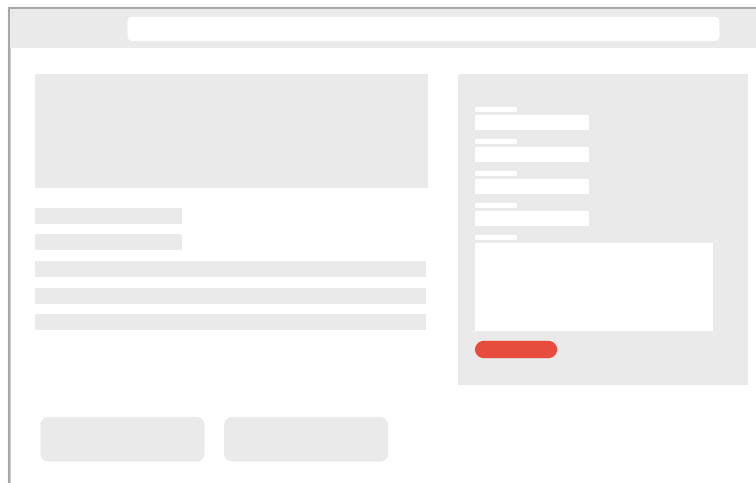
Step 1:

Call to action



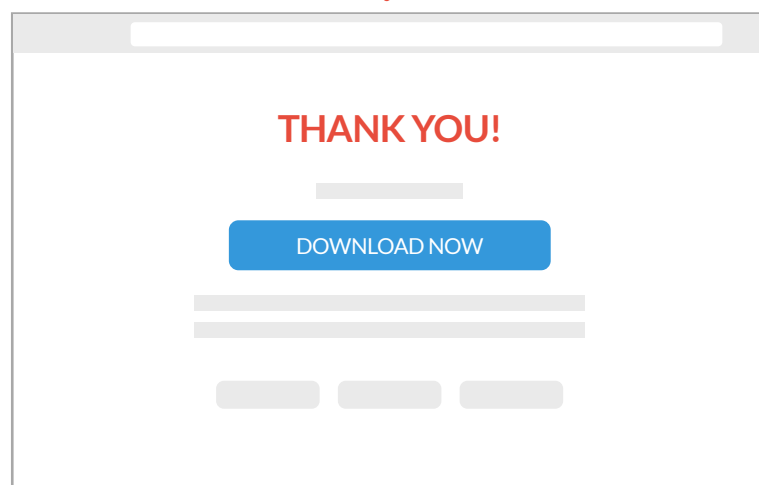
Step 2:

User directed to landing page to fill out form



Step 3:

Thank you page



Chapter Three

BEFORE YOU BUILD

Before you can dive into building the landing page, you need to make sure you've done all of the background research needed to put it together effectively. To do so, be sure to cover the following before you get to work on the landing page itself.

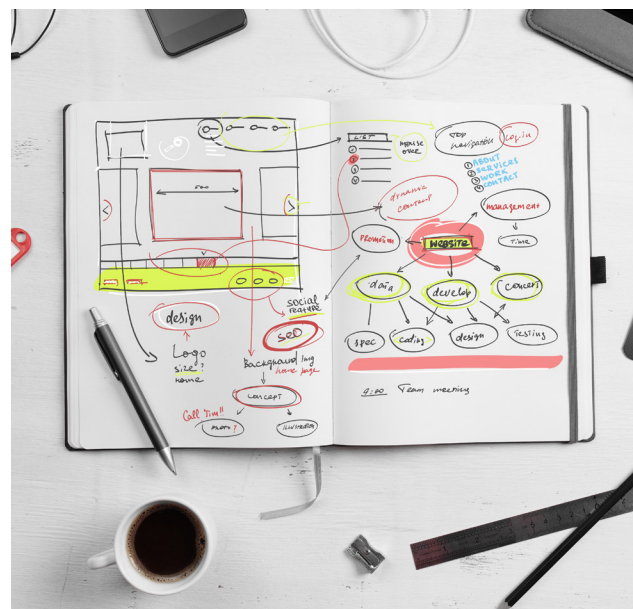
The Buyer Persona(s)

A buyer persona is a semi-fictional representation of your ideal customers. This can be based on market research and current customer data. When done well, they can give you clear insight into your customers' behaviors and how they think, which will allow you to develop the most valuable content you can for them.

When you create your landing page, target it to just one of your personas (if you have more than one). If you try to tailor the content on your landing page to multiple personas, it will inevitably not resonate with all personas and will decrease the odds of conversion. By targeting one persona, your efforts will be much more focused and will increase your odds with conversion. It's better to be niche and focus than appeal to the masses in this situation.

The Offer

An offer is something created by an organization that is valuable to website visitors, aside from the offers or services the organization sells. The offer could be a free ebook, webinar, tip sheet, comparison guide, or anything else that is downloadable and teaches about the industry you are in. It should go hand-in-hand with a particular pain point your buyer persona is experiencing as well as their stage of the buyer's journey explained below.





The Buyer's Journey

The buyer's journey is the research process a potential buyer goes through leading up to a purchase. It can be broken into three different stages: the awareness stage, the consideration stage, and the decision stage. Different types of content should be created for each specific stage of the journey to help people move from one stage to another. Details of each are broken down below:

Awareness Stage:

About 80% of your website visitors fall under this phase of the buyer's journey. A visitor in the awareness stage has expressed symptoms of a potential problem or opportunity but can't quite name what that problem is. A person in this stage is doing a lot of research to understand their symptoms and define what it is. Pieces of content to create and to target people in this stage include ebooks, white papers, and guides.

Consideration Stage:

Roughly 16% of your visitors come from this stage of the buyer's journey. In the consideration stage, a prospect has clearly defined their problem or opportunity and now they want to understand methods to approach solving it. Types of content you should create for people in this stage of the buyer's journey include: comparison white papers, webinars, and videos.

Decision Stage (also known as the Intent Stage):

Only 4% of the visitors to your site are in the decision stage, meaning they are the most ready to buy of all your visitors. In this stage of the funnel, the prospect knows their solution strategy and approach. At this point they are doing vendor comparisons and are trying to narrow down the list of vendors to a select few, until they finally make their choice. Providing them with case studies, demos and product information at this stage would be a wise decision.

Chapter Four

BUILDING A GREAT LANDING PAGE

Once you have the background research in place, it's time to put the landing page together. However, there is a special recipe (put together and perfected by inbound marketers all over the world) that you should follow to increase your odds of conversion on the landing page.

Landing Page Best Practices

Create a Compelling Headline:

You need to develop a headline that will capture the visitor's attention immediately and make them want to read on. It's the first thing they'll see when they get to your landing page and you don't want it to be their last.

Efficiently Convey the Value of Your Offer:

Conveying the value of an offer concisely and effectively is crucial to the development of your landing page. Ever heard of the blink test? The blink test basically states that you need to convey your message and value before your visitor has time to blink, or between 3-5 seconds. If you don't do this successfully, you risk losing that conversion as that's typically the amount of time it takes for somebody to decide if they want to stay on your landing page or not.

Include Bullet Points:

For whatever reason, we humans like to mix things up and have short attention spans for things like landing pages. To keep your reader engaged, avoid writing lengthy paragraphs on your landing page. Write a brief summary of the offer, and below it, list out bullet points of what the visitor can expect to read by downloading the material. Providing a few bullet points on this will keep the reader engaged while also giving them a preview of what's to come, which can entice them to convert.

Build the Form:

When you create the form for your landing page, be mindful of the number of form fields you are including. The number of form fields you have should correlate with the stage of the buyer's journey. Typically, on an awareness piece, you want to keep the forms brief and get basic information such as name and email. The further down the funnel your content is, the more fields you should consider adding as leads are getting closer to buying. Once they're at the intent stage, you'll want to get more information to help the salesperson understand contacts better and close the sale.



Remove Site Navigation:

When building your landing page, you want to remove any opportunity for your visitor to leave the page. By removing site navigation from your landing page, this will allow your visitor to solely focus on the content at hand, rather than becoming distracted from other enticing links on your site.

Insert Images:

Who doesn't love a good image? Be sure to include a relevant and engaging image on your landing page to draw in the visitor. People are more likely to stay on a page if a captivating image is present.

Add Social Sharing Icons:

While you should remove all navigation from the landing page, it's important you include social sharing icons so that people can share the landing page with others across their social platforms. When you do this however, be sure that when you click on the icon it opens in a new tab or window. You don't want to redirect people away from the page but you want to give them a clear option to promote it.

Provide Testimonials When Relevant:

These days, people are always looking at reviews of products and services before making a purchase, and this can apply to landing pages as well. However, don't include a testimonial that vaguely ties into your offer. Make sure it directly correlates to what you're promoting. If it doesn't, it's best to leave it off. The same advice goes for placing awards and accolades on your page.

Make Sure Your Instructions on Next Steps Are Clear:

While a form on a landing page typically implies that you should fill it out, be sure to include copy that suggests this on your landing page as well (typically near the end of your copy). This could be something as simple as, "To access the ebook, please fill out the form to the right." It's simple, but it gives visitors clear instructions on next steps, which will make them more likely to convert.

Helpful Hints

Below are some pointers to consider that many people may forget to tell you, but they can make all the difference in the world for your landing page:

Proofread:

We wish this was a given, but unfortunately that's not always the case. You need to look credible when somebody visits your landing page. If you mix up "their" and "there," it looks sloppy and can deter people from converting. Triple check everything on your landing page. If you know you're bad at editing, ask somebody else to do it. It's important.

Aim to Keep Your Copy Above the Fold:

While this isn't set in stone, the longer the copy on the landing page is, the less likely you'll be to keep somebody's attention. Aim to be concise with your message and keep everything above the fold.

Test Your Landing Page:

Again, you'd think that's a given, right? It's not. Once you've developed a CTA that links to your landing page, and a thank you page that it redirects to, test the full process. Click on the CTA, fill out the form, and download the offer on the thank you page. Make sure all steps are truly in place from a user perspective, and confirm your contact info has been stored in the database to ensure everything is functional from a back-end perspective.

PROMOTIONAL TIPS

Your job isn't over once the landing page is complete. In fact, it's just begun. You need to get people to view your landing page; otherwise, what's the point in creating it? Below are top recommendations to promote your landing page:



CTAs:

As previously mentioned, CTAs are a great way to promote landing page content. Remember, the CTA needs to resonate with the content it lives on, as well as the landing page. The more cohesive these assets are, the more likely people will be to convert. Put the CTAs on site pages with a lot of visits that are relevant to the offer, as well as blog posts that support the offer.



Email:

Email is a great way to promote your landing page. Send a promo email out to a targeted list as opposed to an entire email database. The more targeted the list is in relation to your landing page, the higher odds people will convert. Don't feel like you need to reinvent the wheel with this. A lot of the landing page content can be repurposed into an email.



Social Media:

As you're probably aware, social is a great tool for spreading the word about your content. However, word to the wise: don't promote on every platform because that's what you think you're supposed to do. Select the few platforms where you know your personas are and promote heavily on those platforms. Don't promote on a Facebook page just because everybody else is. Decide if your persona is an avid Facebook user. If not, you should probably look elsewhere.

Chapter Six

ANALYZING THE RESULTS

Once your campaign is up and running and traffic is being driven to the page, it's important to not just sit back, relax, and enjoy the show. Frequently check in on the results of your landing pages, but don't check in excessively. You want to pay more attention to trends and significant events that occur over a period of time rather than day-to-day traffic and conversion, which can range greatly and doesn't give you a lot of usable and actionable data. Aim for a 20-25% conversion rate on your landing pages. If it's above, that great, but you should still understand why. If it's lower, investigate the reasoning.

Here are other things to keep in mind when analyzing your landing page:

- Ask yourself, "Does my offer continue to perform well month over month?" If no, what changed?
- If you have a lot of different offers with landing pages, compare them against one another and see if you can figure out a pattern as to why some are performing better than others.
- If you have one landing page that is performing extremely well, repromote that content and see if you can get an increase in contacts from that.

When you make changes to your landing pages (copy, image, form, etc.), be sure to change one thing at a time and test for a while. That way you can point out what specifically is affecting performance and single that out. If you change multiple things at one time, you won't know which changes affected the landing page and can't apply it toward future landing pages.

Conclusion

Following the steps above will lead you in the right direction to converting more traffic into leads with landing pages. While some aspects above may seem tedious, you'll be glad you followed the steps in the long run, and the more you do it, the more it will become second nature. **We're sure you'll like the results you see.**

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Carly is a Senior Inbound Marketing Consultant for SmartBug Media. With over 7 years of marketing and account management experience, Carly helps clients develop and implement inbound marketing strategies to grow leads, conversion, and revenue.

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