SAAS EBOOK

How to Optimize Your SaaS Landing Pages

A Guide for Bold Marketers

unbounce GetUplift ActiveCampaign

SaaS Marketer? Nah—You're In Aviation.

Churn is inevitable. When you offer a subscription-based software, it's not a question of if, it's a matter of when.

That's why—as SaaS marketers—we *know* that keeping the top of the funnel full isn't optional. Turning prospects into trial users, and eventually into power users, is essential.

This constant need for top-of-funnel lead generation means running new customer acquisition campaigns all the time. Which means not just creating brand new landing pages, but improving them too.

Because any page can be optimized for more conversions. This means more leads signing up for your webinars, more prospects downloading your ebooks, more visitors signing up for your free trials, and more customers upgrading to paid plans.

It's not an easy task. You have to plan your campaigns carefully, execute them quickly, and optimize them intelligently. And to make matters even more challenging, visitors are growing immune to traditional promotions and sales tactics. So what's a SaaS marketer to do?

Well, if you want to create high-converting landing pages, you need to become an air traffic controller. Allow me to explain...

Imagine your potential SaaS customer is piloting a Boeing 747, flying down toward an airstrip. For a perfect landing, it matters where they come from. What speed they're going at. What the weather on the ground is like. Their success also depends on the accuracy of the air controller. The angle of the landing. How many times they've done this before.

A high-converting landing page is like that airstrip. Its performance depends on multiple factors (persuasive copy, images, social proof, and more), all coming together in ***just*** the right way. And it's up to you to optimize the landing so it's as easy and smooth as possible for the pilot. Not just for one flight (or campaign), but over and over again.

This isn't easy to do. But it's definitely possible. And I'm going to show you how.

First, we're going to talk about problems—specifically, four of the most common problems I see in SaaS marketing funnels and my approach for fixing them. Next, I'm going to walk you through the exact process my team and I use to optimize landing pages for real growing SaaS brands like AppsFlyer, PractiTest, and Oribi.

By the time you finish reading, you'll have a whole new, repeatable process that you can apply to your own landing pages. Because producing high-converting landing pages isn't a luxury when it comes to creating especially *efficient* SaaS marketing. It's a necessity.

Now, let's make you the best air traffic controller out there—er, *landing page optimizer*, I mean.

Talia Wolf
Founder and Chief Optimizer

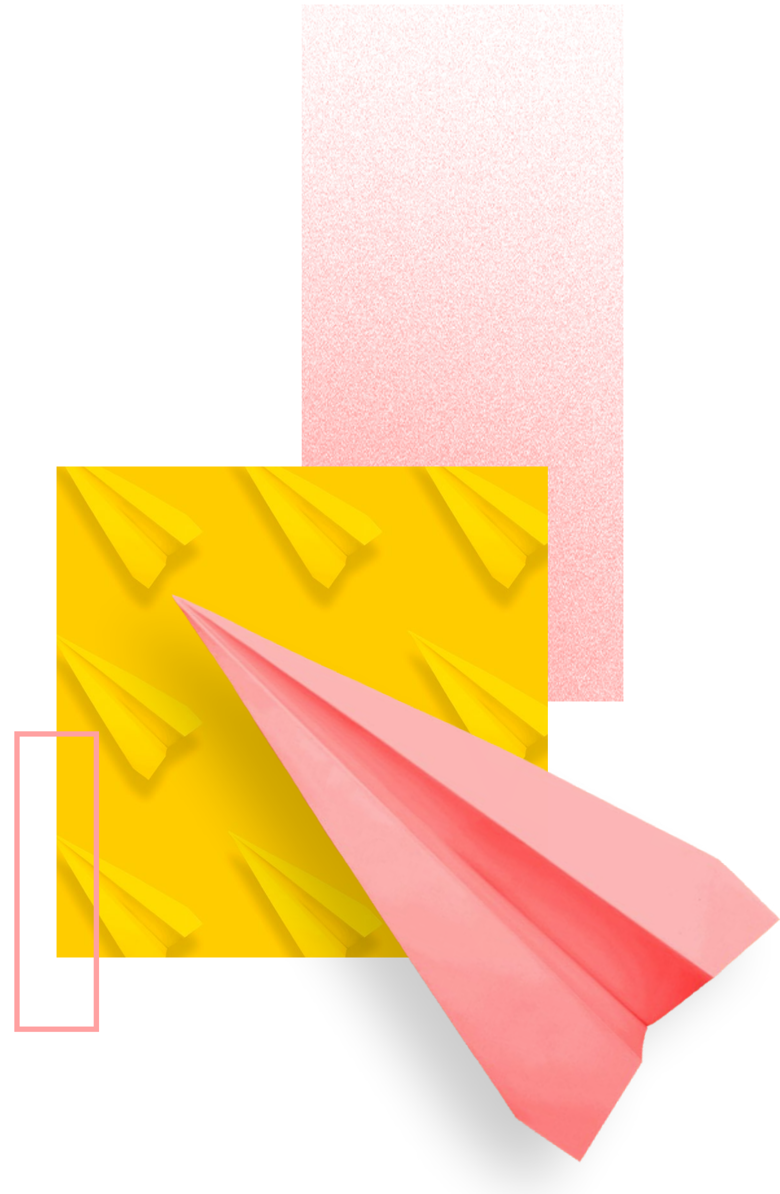
GetUplift

Here's the Breakdown

01

02

03



1

4 Common Problems Plaguing SaaS Landing Pages (With Real Examples!)

"Why isn't my landing page converting?"

The answer to *this* question is the core of my business. (And life, really.) I've answered it for clients. Students. Strangers on the internet. In the ten years since I was first asked, my team and I have reviewed thousands of landing pages for businesses from almost every industry.

Across all the diverse landing pages I see, four key problems come up over and over. And here's the cool thing: once you know to look for these issues, you can spot them on your own SaaS landing pages and optimize for better results—without having to spend all that time soliciting advice on Twitter.

Ready to get self-critical? Alright, let's do it.

PROBLEM 1

Your Landing Page Isn't Solving the Problem Your Visitor Cares About Most

When a visitor "lands" on your landing page, they're not looking for hyper-general information about who you are or what you do. Unlike other web pages, a standalone landing page isn't designed to help someone navigate your site or show off everything a company does. You won't find menus here. Or side-bars. There might not even be a path to your homepage. (The horror!)

That's because a landing page has a single purpose: to help visitors solve one very specific problem. Anything that detracts from that aim is just distracting your visitors. As competition in the SaaS space continues to heat up, creating landing pages that honor this principle becomes increasingly important.

Think about the way most of your would-be customers search for answers. They'll often kick off with a Google search, then start opening tabs with the speed of an aspiring e-sports athlete. Next, comes the tab-jumping—moving through all the different pages until one of them stands out.

Here's the thing: The page that stands out tends to do one thing the other pages don't. **Winning pages demonstrate—clearly and succinctly—how they solve (*dramatic pause*) *The Problem***.

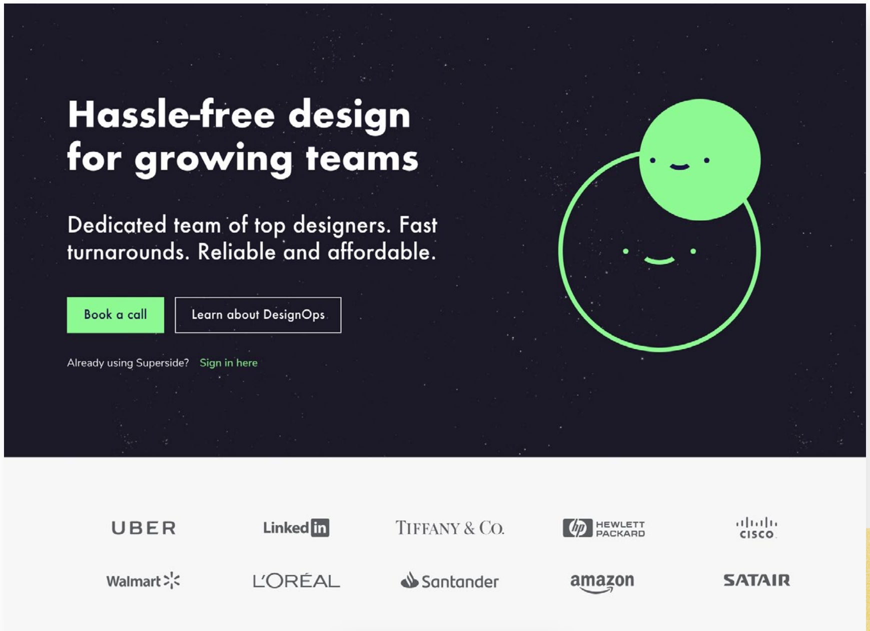
Let's do a quick exercise together. Imagine you're the CMO of an enterprise SaaS and you're looking to outsource some design work. You come across two landing pages. We'll call these **Landing Page A** and **Landing Page B**.

Landing Page A's headline is super clear. A quick read tells you exactly what they do:

"We help companies design and launch world-class digital products and services."

No misconstruing that, huh? On the surface, it looks like they can solve your problem. (After all, they design and launch world-class products and services.) Except, it's not exactly clear *who* they design this *for*. Do they work in SaaS? Do they have experience working with large enterprise teams? How long do the services take? Upon closer inspection, none of the questions you're probably asking yourself get answered in this headline. *Tab-jump!*

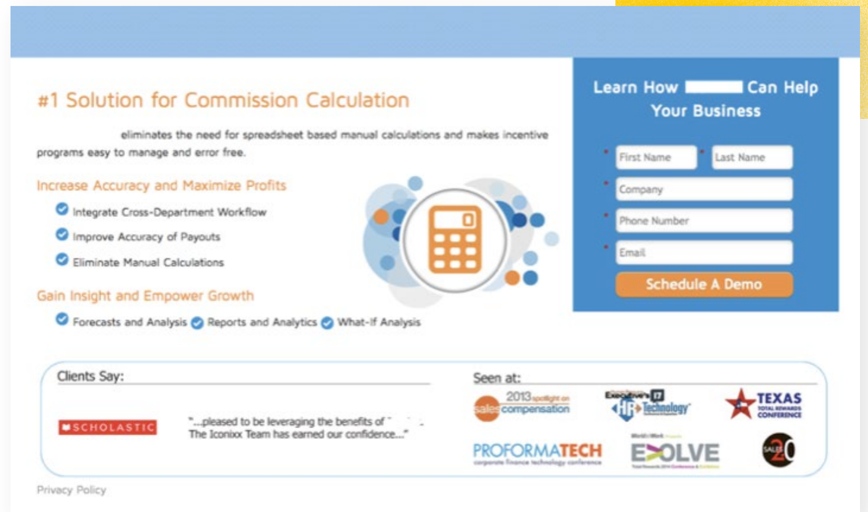
Now let's take a look at Landing Page B.



“Hassle-free design for growing teams. Dedicated teams of top designers. Fast turnarounds. Reliable & affordable.”

This headline identifies growing teams as the target audience immediately. (And check out the ones featured in the social proof.) The detailed subhead goes on to tell you some of what you can expect. Fast turnarounds are an issue enterprise teams deal with all the time—so is finding someone reliable and affordable who won't mire them in the bureaucracy pipeline for weeks. Landing Page B solves a *specific* problem. Landing Page A, on the other hand, focuses on generalities. It's very broad.

I'll give you another real-world example. When another SaaS company hired me to help them win more leads, we faced a similar challenge. This was their landing page:

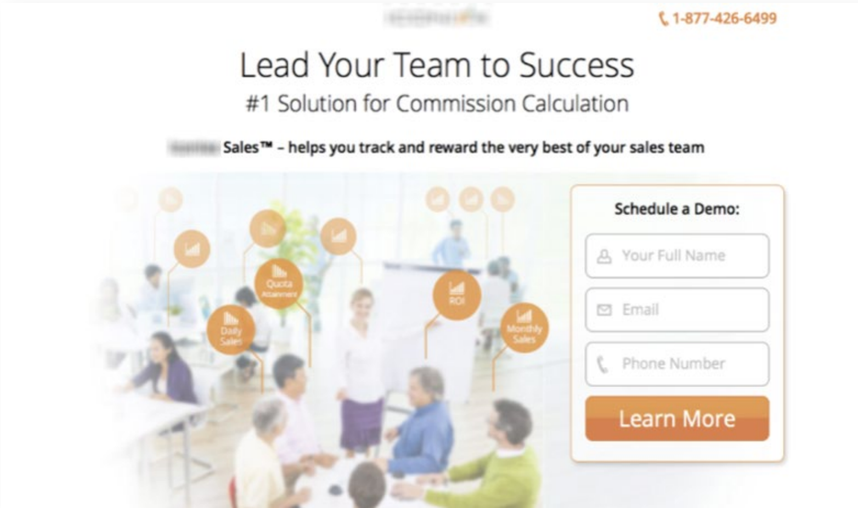


The headline “#1 Solution for Commission Calculation” didn't dig into the heart of the ideal visitor's problem. It didn't tell us exactly *who* this was for—after all, multiple industries calculate commission. It also didn't tell us why solving this problem was particularly important either.

Through our research we learned that our dream user wanted three things:

1. To feel like they had a major impact on the business as a whole
2. To have more people notice their work
3. To find a solution they could trust that would make the right calls for them

So we created an alternate headline to address exactly who this was for (i.e. leaders on sales teams):



The new headline: "Lead Your Team to Success: #1 Solution for Commission Calculation" still positioned this software as a powerful option, but now it contained a key underlying emotion. This was something leaders of teams were desperate to solve: they wanted success *and* the perception of being successful.

The subhead now clarified that this solution was for sales team leaders who wanted to have a high-performing team and to be seen as excellent (i.e. "helps you track and reward the very best of your sales team").

And here's the kicker: **Focusing on solving a more specific problem on this landing page led to a 97% increase in leads.** Talking about success and the perception of success made the page more successful. *Successption!*

How To Identify If Your Landing Page Isn't Solving A Problem

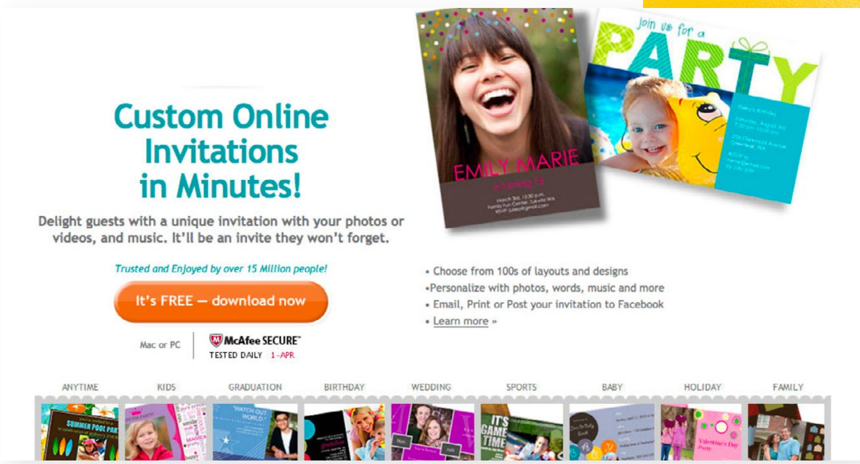
If you think back to the earlier example of Landing Page A, on the surface it seemed like it was tapping into a problem… only that problem was very basic and surface-level. To *actually* solve your visitor's problems—the ones that they desperately want you to solve for them—you need to get inside their heads.

Buying decisions—or any decisions for that matter—rely on emotion. And Nobel-prize winner Daniel Kahneman helped popularize a simple way to think about this. Imagine that there are two systems at work in your brain at all times.

- **System One** is intuitive and emotional. This is the system responsible for your instincts—your "gut feelings."
- **System Two** is the rational, logical part of your brain. It firmly believes that it's in charge of what you do at all times and it *likes* to believe that most of what you do happens only after careful consideration and analysis.

But here's the thing: While System Two may think it's the boss of you (and talking to it is important in the later stages of awareness), **your landing page messaging has to speak to the emotional epicentre of System One first.**

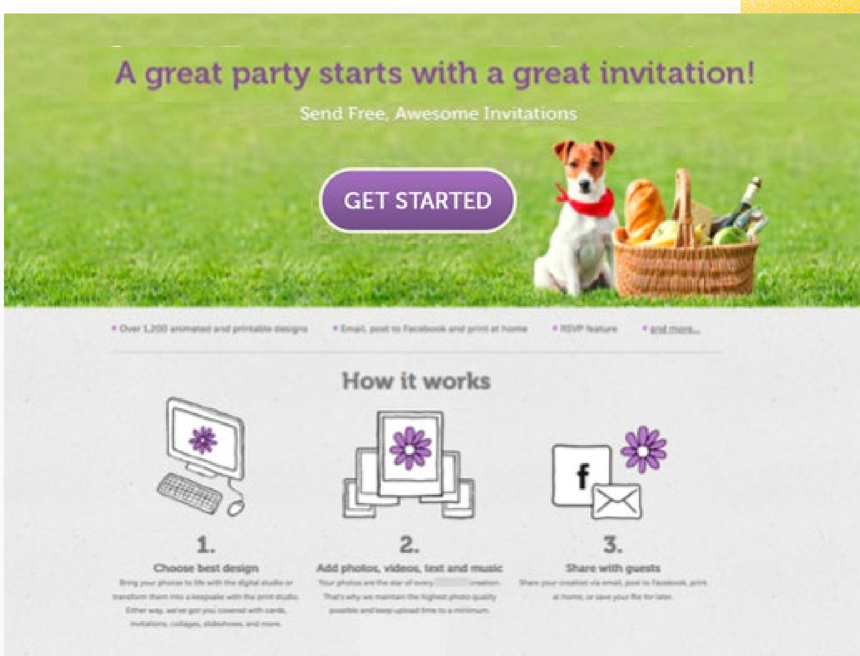
You can use the [Emotional Targeting Methodology]() to identify whether your landing page is actually solving the problem your visitors care about most. This is exactly what I used when the software company below hired me to optimize their landing page in a highly competitive niche. This was the original SaaS landing page:



Not bad, right? It seems specific enough. At a glance, you can see exactly what you'll get: *"a custom online invitation in minutes."* The rest of the copy highlighted features, like multimedia elements and shareability. The features were there, sure, but it was missing a differentiator—a reason to pick this product over the Canvas, PicMonkeys, and BeFunkys of the invite creation world.

One of the best—and simplest—ways to find your differentiator is to actually speak to your customers in real life. So that's exactly what we did: we surveyed them.

The research revealed that the people who most frequently bought this software were busy parents planning their kids' birthday parties. More importantly, **these parents cared about what other parents thought about them**. They wanted to give their kids the kind of party that they'd remember forever (while saving time), yes, but also look like superheroes at the next soccer practice. This gave us the angle. This landing page was no longer aimed at people looking to create cool invites. We optimized it for parents looking to create an unforgettable experience.



The variation focused on the specific emotions and desires that we knew the visitor felt. Things like:

1. **Self-image.** These parents wanted to feel unique and successful—to feel that they were doing this parenting thing right (and *kinda better* than everyone else). Their end goal is "a great party" (that'll make them look good)—so that was now in the headline.

2. **Simplicity.** Prospects for this business craved a product that was simple and easy to use. Something that would relieve the pressure instead of leaving them frustrated, armed with subpar invites.

3. **Social image.** Winning the admiration of other moms and dads was part of knowing they were getting the parenting thing right. The page copy throughout reinforces how they'll be able to stand out by crafting unique invitations (over 1,200 designs!) and professional RSVP features. (Take that, Carol.)

4. **Inspiration / Anticipation.** From a business perspective, the team wanted to inspire people and show them they could create beautiful invitations without any design skills. We broke it down with the rule of three across the page to simplify the design process and make it approachable.

Everything on this page was designed to show parents that they had arrived in the right place. This solution will help them create an unforgettable party and be the talk of the PTA. We simplified the page to show just how easy it is to use the product and focused on the desired outcome to appeal to the desire to save time.

The results speak for themselves. The test ran for three and a half weeks. More than 50k+ visitors saw each variation. The variation we provided led to **a 12% increase in downloads, an 18% increase in registration, and** a **42% increase in revenue**. We nearly threw our own party to celebrate.

How To Get Started With Solving The Right Problem On Your Landing Page

- **Find out how visitors feel about signing up for your software.** Run a customer survey, schedule interviews, or comb through product reviews. Dig into your customer's emotional state to find out why they signed up for your software and the ideal outcomes they're looking for.

- **Focus your message on what your customer currently feels (or wants to feel).** Is the page relatable? Can they see themselves there? Is the reality of your customer's life—either as they are now or how they want to be with your software—on the page?

- **User-test to verify you're hitting the right points.** Test your page using a tool like fivesecondtests.com or usertesting.com. Alternatively, find volunteers to record themselves as they go through your landing page. Ask them to talk through their process aloud so you can understand how they're seeing the page. You can even run these tests in person by asking volunteers to come into your office and use the page.

PROBLEM 2

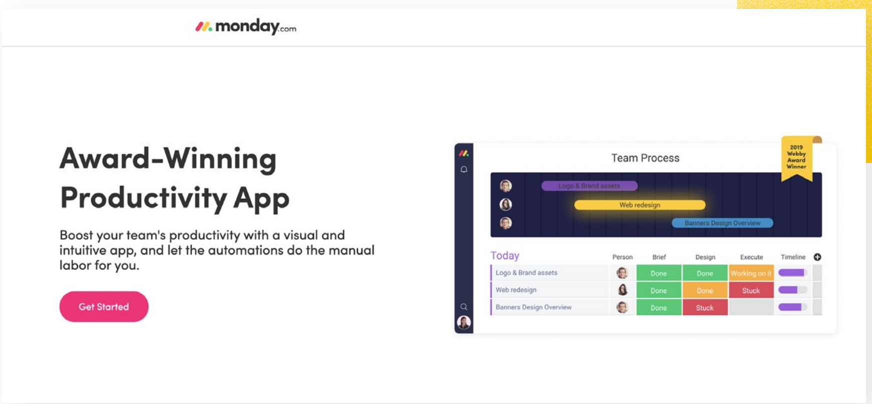
You're Focusing Too Much On You, Not Your Prospect's Ideal Outcome

Your page visitor doesn't really care about you. (Very hurtful, I know.) They care about themself. Their life. Their transformation. How you help them (aka—solving their problem).

Most landing pages don't reflect this. Because just like our prospects care about themselves, so do we. We care about our product: what it does, how it does it, and what it makes us feel. And so instead of talking to the prospect about their needs—many landing pages show off the product instead (like eager grandparents showing you photos of lil' so-and-so's new onesie.)

Landing pages that solve problems—like the ones in the examples we covered earlier—aren't exempt from making this mistake. You can solve a problem (and show exactly how you do it) while still making the page all about *you*. And this makes it tough for customers to see themselves in your solution.

Let's take a look at a quick example from the team management software, Monday.com:



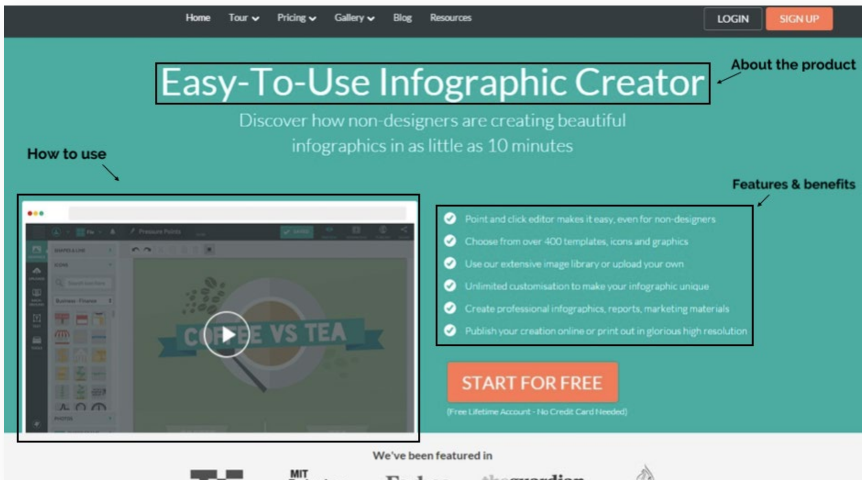
The headline on this landing page (*"Award-Winning Productivity App"*) is focused on the product and making sure we know what it does. It doesn't immediately highlight how this is valuable to the customer. The hero image is also focused on the product—it's a screenshot of what the software looks like. It doesn't show us how Monday.com boosts productivity.

The sub-head digs into the customer's needs and desires a bit more: *"Boost your team's productivity with a visual and intuitive app, and let the automations do the manual labor for you."* Instead of just bigging up the company, this subhead highlights the outcome. It's a start, anyways...

When I worked with a SaaS client on a landing page for their infographic creation software, we had two goals in mind:

- First, we wanted to **increase registrations** on the page itself.
- Second, we wanted to **improve the quality of leads** registering so that more people actually used the software (and upgraded).

The original landing page used the familiar all-about-the-product formula:



The headline here (*"Easy-To-Use Infographic Creator"*) focused on what the product does and how easy it is to use—not on the outcome the customer actually wants.

To optimize this page, we decided to do some in-depth research on what outcomes visitors were hoping to get out of this tool. And what we found was that the main thing potential users wanted was to create "gorgeous" infographics that everyone loved. This led to the new landing page headline below:

"Make Impressive Infographics" is an outcome-focused headline. It directly addresses the problem our user is going through—getting stuck with blegh infographics—and the rest of the page focused on showing how this product can lead them to that outcome. This simple shift to focusing on the visitor's desired outcome led to a **24% increase in registrations** for this SaaS brand, and a **76% increase in the creation of infographics and presentations** (meaning we were attracting high-quality leads).

How To Identify If Your Landing Page Is All About You

To figure out if you have this problem too, you need to ask yourself this question:

How much do visitors coming to this landing page know about you? What stage of awareness are your visitors at?

As a general rule of thumb, the more someone knows about you, the more they will care about what your product actually does. That's when you can really dig into the features and offer itself (while still tying those features to desired outcomes, of course). Typically, the closer someone is to buying, the more specifics they want.

But if you're in the earlier stages of the relationship—if visitors are still forming a connection with your software and trying to figure out how your solution stacks up against everything else that's available—then you have to get emotional buy-in first. That's when making a top-of-funnel landing page about your customer (about the outcome that they dream of) will be most powerful.

Here are some additional questions you can ask when reviewing your top-of-funnel landing pages to see if you're focusing on yourself too much:

- **How many times does your logo appear on the page?** Typically, your logo should appear just once, in the top corner of the page. This helps keep your landing page problem and customer-focused instead of product-focused.
- **How much time do you spend talking about your features instead of tying them to specific benefits?** The right ratio depends on your reader's stage of awareness. At the top of the page, you'll typically start by focusing on the customer's problem and the outcome someone will enjoy with your software. Then, as you move closer to the final CTA, you can bring attention to specific features. Just make sure that you always tie each feature to how it helps your customer reach their goal.
- **Is your copy you-centric or customer-centric?** Phrases like "At <Company Name>, we do X..." or "<Company Name> believes Y..." alienate your readers. They keep your page about you. Take note and watch out for the following words and phrases: "we are," "us," "we do," "our," and "we believe."

How To Get Started With Making A Landing Page More About Your Prospect

- **Evaluate what stage of awareness your visitors are in.** How much do they know about your software? How close are they to becoming a customer? Use a visitor survey to figure out how interested visitors will be in learning about your product, features, and benefits. (More on this in the next chapter.)
- **Make it about the customer.** If you're using words like "we" or "our" on your landing page, try replacing them with more words focused around "you." This involves flipping some sentences around to be less about what your software does, and more about what visitors will get from working with you.

You're Driving the Wrong People to Your Page

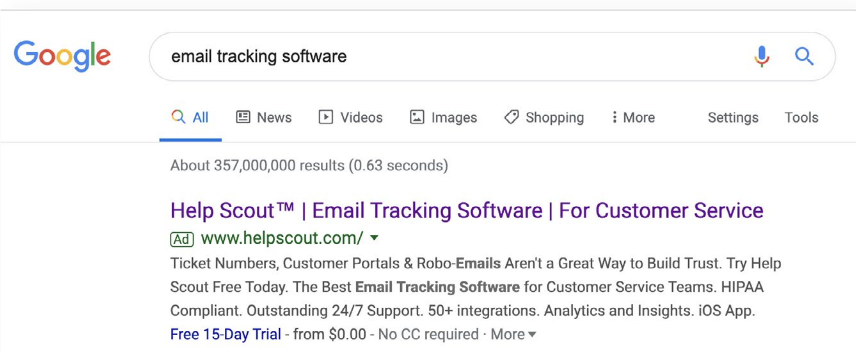
Imagine this: you've made the most delicious veggie burger ever. The bun is crispy on the outside, soft on the inside. The cheese oozes—oh so slowly—from a perfectly grilled pattie tucked between crisp lettuce and a fresh summer tomato. It tastes *better* than the real thing and you can't wait to share it with your friends.

But here's the tragic part—about 70% of your friends despise food in buns. Something about the thought of picking up a roundish piece of bread repels them. That's weird, right? But it means, when they come over for dinner, they walk right past your beautiful burgs and tuck into the potato salad instead.

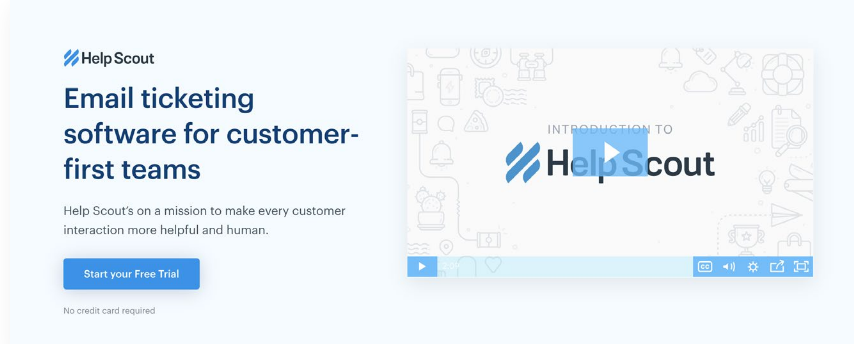
This is exactly what happens when you send the wrong people to your landing page. Even if the copy is spellbinding and the design is gorgeous—if you're inviting the wrong crowd to the star attraction you've got up for grabs, you'll get dismal results.

The Problem Starts With Your Traffic Source

Whether your visitors are coming from an ad, a blog post, or an email—your traffic source creates certain expectations. Let's say you're looking for email tracking software, for instance. You head to Google and type "email tracking software" in the search bar.



The first result you see is for Help Scout. Let's assume—as a potential prospect—that you've never heard of Help Scout before. Both the ad and the headline tell you that this tool can solve your problem. So far, so good. But when you click through to the landing page, you see this:



This headline has nothing to do with your initial search term of "email tracking." It's about *ticketing*, whatever that means. There's a major mismatch between the ad's premise, which promised "Email Tracking Software," and the landing page headline. At this point, you have no choice but to leave because this (presumably) isn't the software you're looking for.

Your landing page needs to match the expectations set by the traffic source *exactly*. Continuity between the last message your visitor saw and the hero section and headline of your page is essential. If these messages are different, your visitor will bounce and the ad money you spent on getting them to the page will go to waste.

To make your landing page as relevant as possible, try swapping in the various keywords that visitors are searching using Dynamic Text Replacement. You can automatically change the headlines and text on your page to match exactly what visitors typed into Google.

Is Your Landing Page Targeting A Problem That Doesn't Fit With The Visitor's Current Stage Of Awareness?

According to legendary copywriter Eugene Schwartz, people go through five stages of awareness before converting:

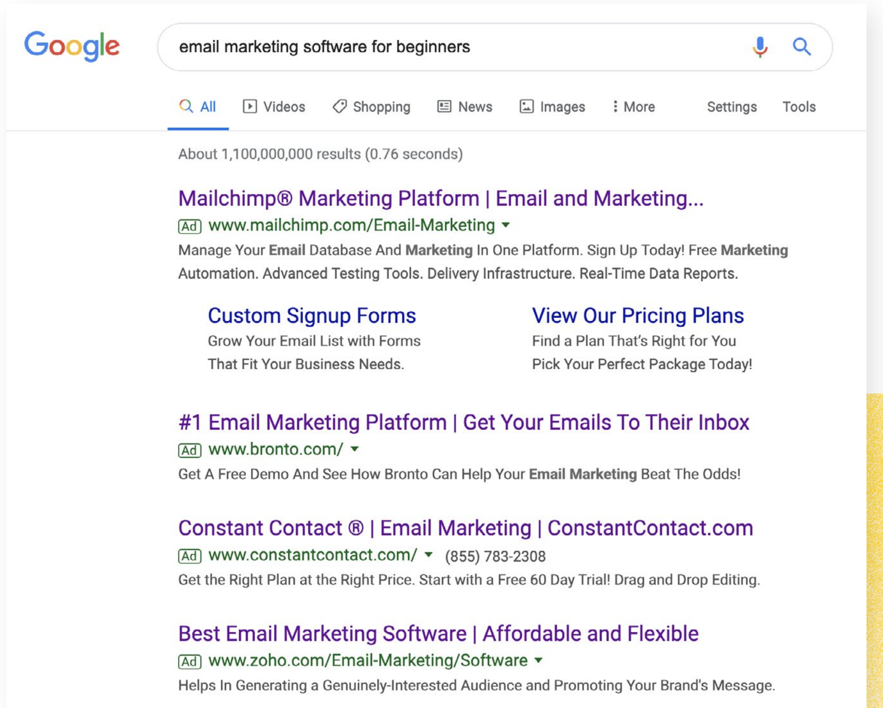
1. **Unaware.** You have no idea you've got a problem that needs solving.
2. **Problem aware.** You know you've got a problem but you're not sure what to do about it. And you don't know that there's a solution out there, just waiting for you.
3. **Solution aware.** You know the solution is out there. And you're looking for the right one.
4. **Product aware.** You've found the type of solution you want and you're weighing a few different products. You're just waiting for one product to pull ahead of the rest.
5. **Most aware.** You've picked the product and you're ready to convert.

Visitors respond to different kinds of messages based on their stage of awareness. Someone who is problem aware needs way more persuading than someone who's most aware and just looking for the "sign me up" button.

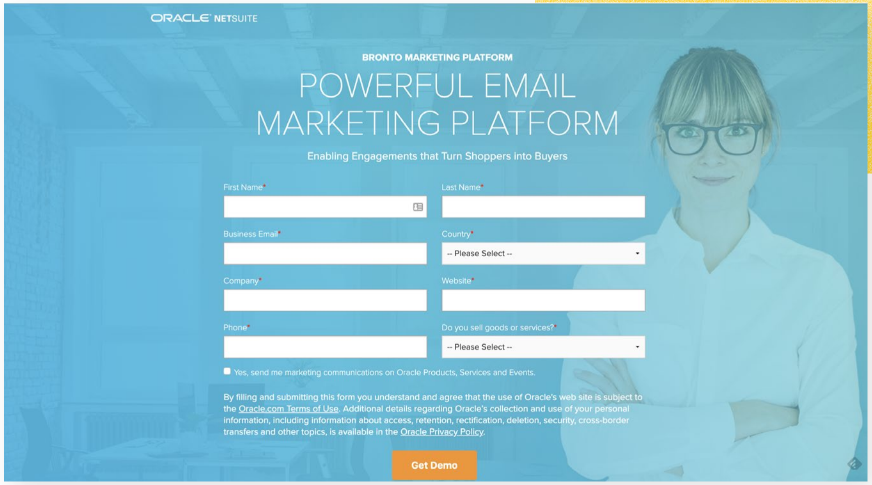
If you're addressing the problem of someone at one stage of awareness and attracting visitors who are on a completely different stage, your hard-won traffic will bounce because nobody is seeing exactly what they need to see to be persuaded.

Or, to put it another way… Let's say your cousin Franklin started selling gourmet cupcakes. (He's a bit behind the curve of the cupcake craze, but we won't blame him.) After a few pretty successful months, he's ready to start selling them direct-to-consumer, which means email marketing.

Frankie heads to Google and types in "email marketing software for beginners." By his search query alone, we can tell that Frankie is solution aware: he knows he *needs* email marketing. But he doesn't yet know much about the exact tools available. Here are the Google Ads he sees:



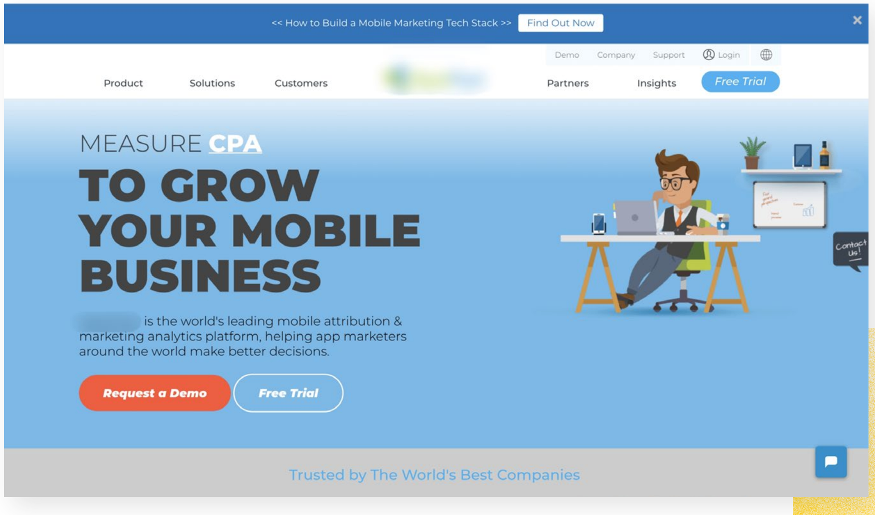
Now let's say Frankie decides to click on Bronto. Here's what he sees:



Frankie told us he's a beginner. From his search query alone, we can tell he's solution aware. His intent is to *explore* the options out there. What do you think is the most likely outcome when he sees this page that asks him to fill in a giant form that doesn't match his query?

Yup. He'll bounce, fast, and search for something more suitable to beginners, something that has more information *and* can give him the guidance he needs to choose the right tool. (After Google collects some of Oracle's money, of course. Ka-ching!)

Now let's look at a real-life example. Discovering awareness and intent was exactly the challenge one of our clients—a mobile attribution company—faced when they approached us at GetUplift.



Our job was to increase demo requests for this page. To do this, we had to get to know the visitors coming here and understand their intent and awareness. So we ran two surveys: a visitor survey and a customer survey.

According to the visitor survey, this page attracted people at two different stages of awareness:

- 41.1% were problem aware and were searching for the best way to measure mobile app performance.
- 39.3% were specifically searching for a mobile attribution platform, showing they were solution aware.

From the customer survey we ran, we knew people that converted on this page valued the platform's ability to help them grow their business and scale their marketing. More importantly, they chose this solution over the competition because the data was trustworthy—a rarity in the attribution space.

Sometimes you want to dedicate different, targeted landing pages to each audience (because this often works best). At GetUplift, though, **we decided to try to find a message that would show both major visitor segments they'd come to the right place**. After multiple variations, this is what we settled on:

"Fuel your mobile marketing growth with attribution data you can trust."

This headline uses language that'd hit home with problem-aware visitors. At the same time, it shows solution-aware visitors that this is a trustworthy attribution tool that also solves their number one challenge—finding data they can trust.

As you optimize, try to better understand what stage of awareness visitors are in and see whether your page actively speaks to them—or whether you might need different landing pages to target different intents and visitors. On this page, we were able to combo two intents into one successfully, but this isn't always the case!

How Do You Know If You're Driving the Wrong People to Your Page?

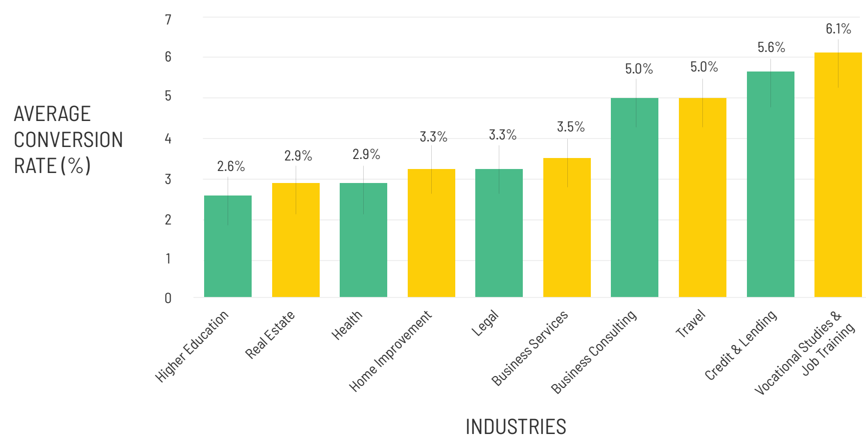
It can be tricky to diagnose this problem—but these three indicators can show you if visitors are expecting something else when they click on your landing page:

1. **Your conversion rate is unusually low compared to similar campaigns you've run. (Or—if this is your first campaign—it's unusually low compared to your industry average.)**

Look at the average conversion rate across your other landing pages and compare: How does it stack up to your latest page? If it's significantly lower than other, similar campaigns—and you're sending comparable levels of traffic to it—then the traffic quality could be off.

But what if this isn't the usual type of campaign you run? What if there's nothing else to compare it to directly?

Fortunately, Unbounce analyzed lead generation landing pages across ten different industries (with over 74.5 million visitors between them) and found that the average landing page conversion rate is 4.02% overall. How does your page fare against these averages?



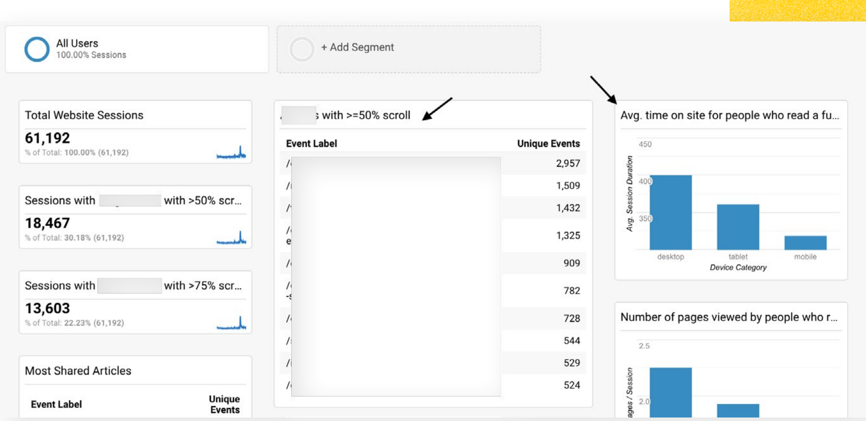
Source: The Conversion Benchmark Report

Before we talk about the second symptom, a word about averages. They're useful but should be used with caution because numbers on that scale lose their nuance. Just like the SaaS space, every industry has its high-performing and lower-performing types of landing pages. When you're studying the ranges, keep your business and unique offer in mind.

2. **Time spent on the page is unusually low, especially when you take the page length into account**

Typically, the more interested someone is in your offer, the longer they'll spend reading your page. (If you're still reading this ebook, we're doing our job right.) To get this data, first you'll want to determine the general amount of time it would take a visitor to read your landing page. Then, look at the average time spent on-page as well as the scroll depth in Google Analytics (something you can set up as an event).

You'll be able to compare these numbers to see if the page is appealing to the people you're sending there. **Low time on-page with a low scroll depth can indicate that the messaging isn't resonating.**



In Google Analytics, check the scroll depth and average time on page to see if visitors actually care about your offer.

3. **Your heat map shows that visitors aren't getting to the most important parts of your landing page**

You can use heat mapping software to spot if your visitors just aren't interested in your landing page. Even more importantly, you can check to see which elements they focus on and which ones fail to grab their attention. If your most important page elements are getting ignored—like your headline, sub-headlines, and CTA—then you might be driving the wrong people to your page.

That being said, these signs can also point to other problems as well, like a weak headline that doesn't match your ads. To really figure out if the wrong people are clicking on your landing page, start with some of the steps below.

How To Get Started With Driving The Right People To Your Landing Page

- **Poll your visitors.** You can use an exit survey to figure out what bouncing prospects were actually looking for when they clicked on your landing page, and use this info to hone your ad targeting.
- **Analyze your search queries.** Run a Search Query Report to figure out which terms and phrases visitors are searching before they reach your landing page. You use the report to seek out and remove any search queries that don't line up with your software.
- **Check your ad copy.** You should aim to get your ad copy as close to your landing page copy as possible. Check to see that the headline matches in both places, and that your landing page makes sense as a logical next step.

For more tips, check out this blog post on the topic.

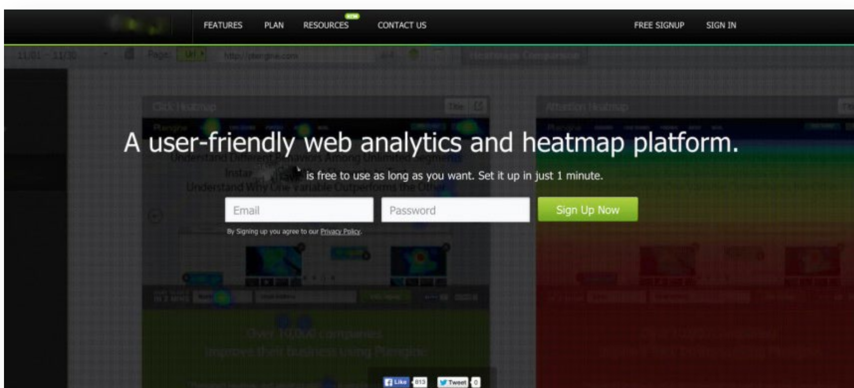
Your User Experience Doesn't Drive (Or Convert) Visitors

This rise in landing pages means the rise in trends. From **custom illustrations** to lengthy explainer videos, new graphical styles and unique page elements seem to catch on fire quickly in the SaaS space. (I mean, why not add an augmented reality experience to the lead gen page for your accounting software? It looks *super* cool and everybody's doing it.)

The problem is that these trends usually don't work in tandem with positive user experience. Sometimes... they even actively make it worse. (Remember **scroll jacking**? Not fun.)

When it comes to the design of your landing page, I'm a big believer in the minimalist methodology. It's almost always better to strip out the elements that distract from the goal of your page, no matter how pretty they may look. There's a famous saying in writing that you have to "kill your darlings," and the same is true for design. If it ain't helping people convert… it probably doesn't belong on your page.

Here's an example. A few years ago, a heat-map analytics platform came to me for help on one specific challenge—they wanted to increase sign-ups.



This landing page followed one of the biggest design trends at the time—using a background video. I'm sure this has worked for somebody, but here the video in the background distracted people from taking action. It made things look too complex and led to page abandonments. In other words, there was a mismatch between the copy (easy to use) and the design (complex video showing how the tool works in aggressive detail).

After making some basic UX changes, here's what the optimized page looked like:

The copy stayed the same. But instead of the video background, we used a bright, clean design with the brand's chosen colors and then supported the claims using social proof (more on this in part two). Page visitors felt the difference. **This variation led to a 57% increase in sign-ups.**

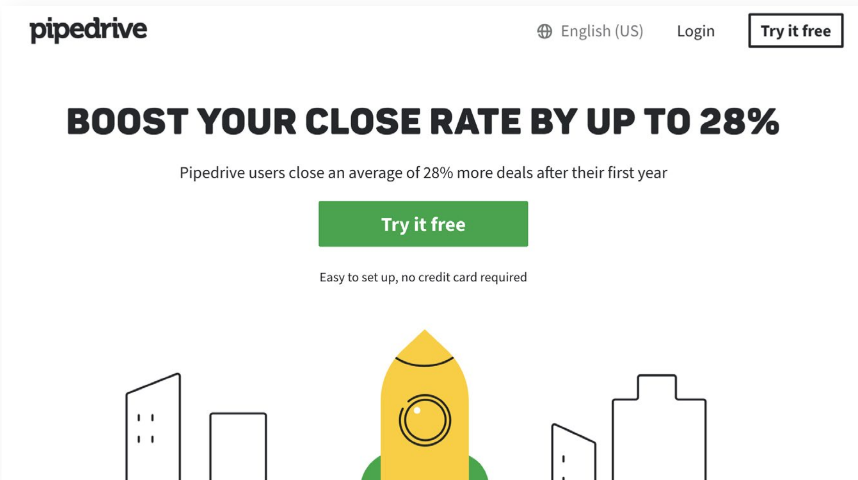
Video backgrounds are one example of a design trend—but there are also other questionable trends we tend to follow as SaaS marketers as well. And the biggest other one I see isn't necessarily on the landing page itself, but on the click-through experience that comes afterward.

The Trouble With Longer Sign-Up Flows

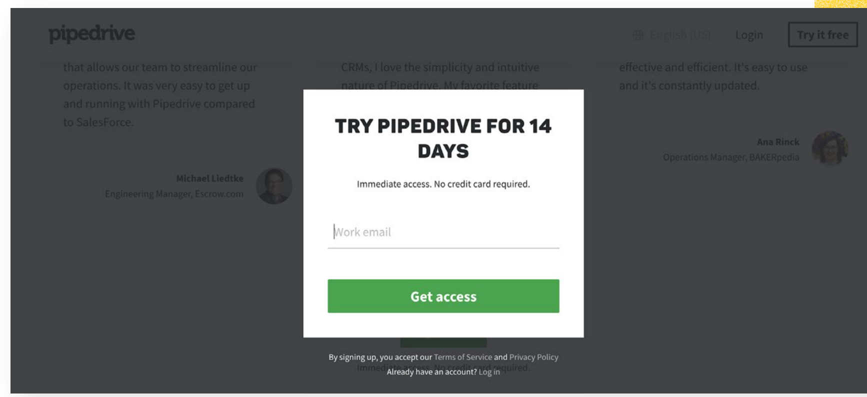
As marketers, we want to qualify leads as much as possible. To learn about them so we can create the best possible set-up and send them relevant nurture and up-sell details during the trial. It makes sense, right?

While useful from a marketing perspective, though, long and arduous forms can be huge barriers that block the path to conversion.

Take this landing page from the sales software company Pipedrive, for example.

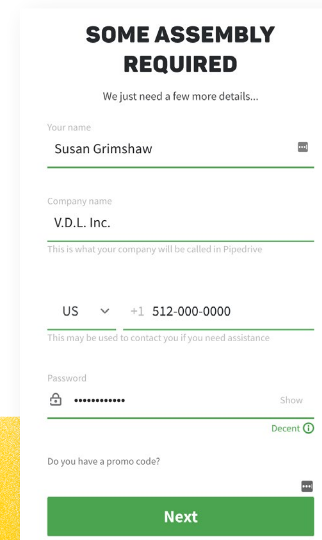


It seems pretty straightforward. The CTA looks good, and there's even some supporting text underneath to build up visitor confidence ("Easy to set up, no credit card required"). But here's what happens when you click the CTA.

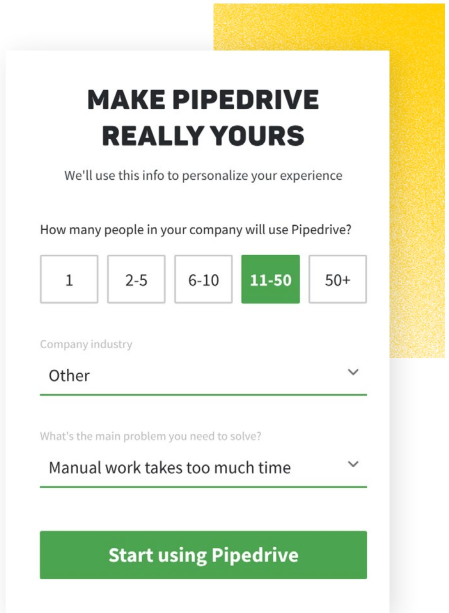


OK, they want an email address. That's not so bad, right?

But the trial doesn't actually start after you click on "Get access" either. Instead, the button takes you away from the landing page to a checkout flow on the Pipedrive website. The next screen you see looks like this. (Filled with this ***totally real*** person we used to test the trial.)



If you try to skip filling a field, the form throws up an error. But, even after clicking next, it's still not the end of it. Yep, there's more.

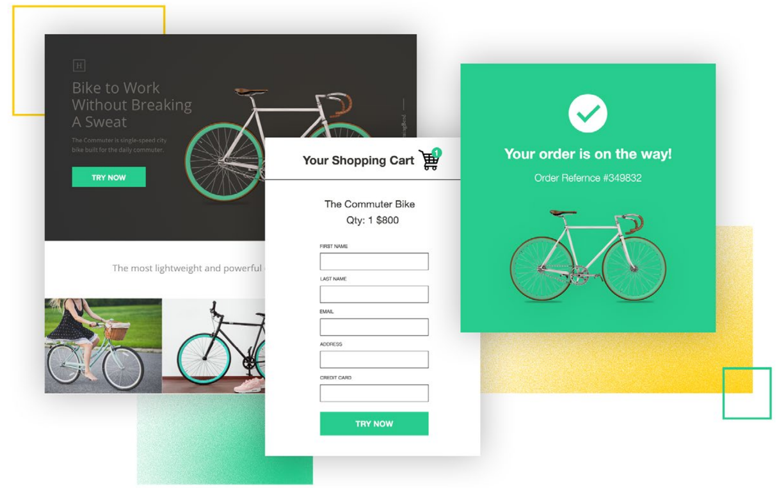


You have to fill in this form too. The trial only starts after you answer every single question.

And this is a pretty standard experience in the world of SaaS trials. But the sad truth is this: **a clunky click-through experience can tank all your initial click-through landing pages' hard work.** Even if you optimize your landing page perfectly—it won't mean diddly if the resulting sign-up form causes visitors to drop off.

How Do You Know If Your UX Bleeds Visitors?

On the landing page itself, it can be pretty easy to spot if your UX isn't helping visitors convert. But to figure out if your landing page isn't driving action and helping people complete the *whole* funnel, you'll need to start tracking the percentage of customers who drop off *after* they click that big click-through CTA button.

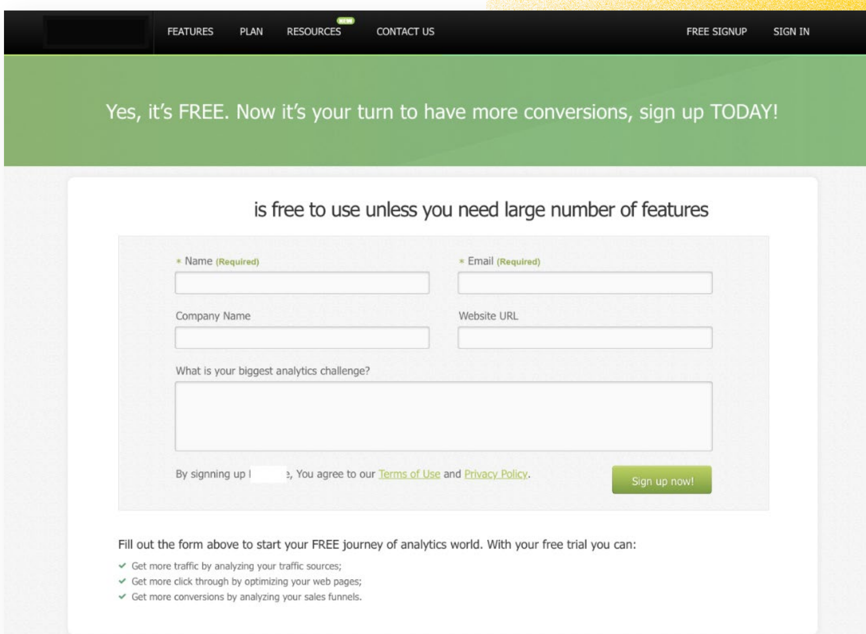


To do this, you'll first want to look at the percentage of people who click on the CTA. If that number is about what you expected (either compared to previous campaigns, or to industry benchmarks), then that's a good sign that your landing page—and your current CTA—is working.

Next, you'll need to look beyond your landing page to wherever your visitors are headed next.

Remember the landing page for heat-mapping software I mentioned earlier? (The one where removing the video background and adding trust symbols increased sign-ups by 57%.) Well, they asked us to solve another issue. They had trouble getting trial users to finish filling out the form and installing the JavaScript needed to get the software up and running.

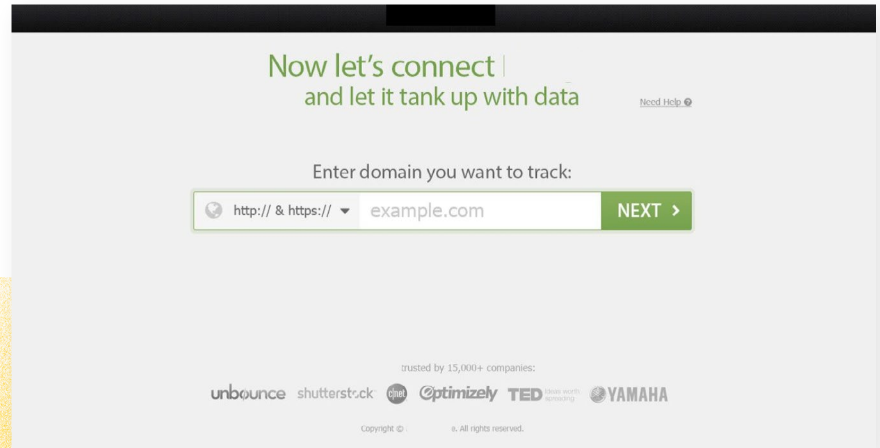
The original form looked like this:



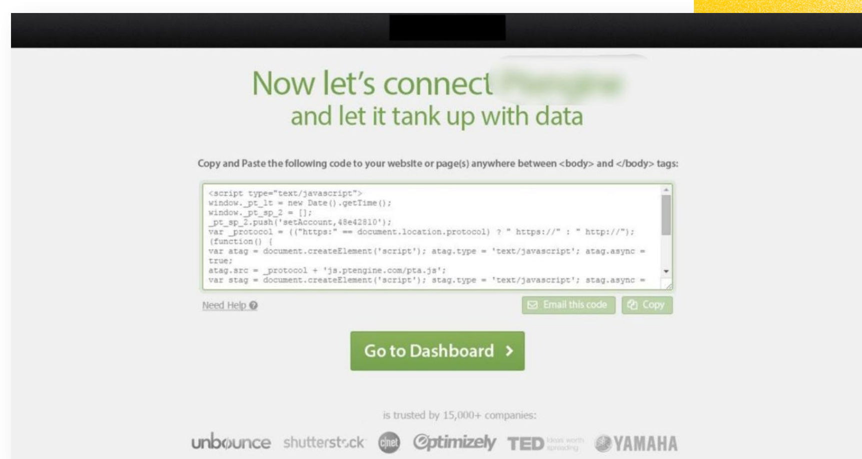
It was overwhelming. Just look at that large, intimidating box asking you to reveal your biggest analytics challenge. It's a lot to ask a trial user to do in one go. (At least buy me dinner first!)

I decided to test if we could increase implementation by breaking down the form into two steps to make the process feel more intuitive. Something that made the prospect feel that each step took them closer to their goal. This is known as the foot-in-the-door technique. By asking your prospect to take a small action first, it makes it easier for them to take a bigger action.

The first step was simple. It just asked prospects to enter the domain they'd like to track. The copy reminded them why this was important and the social proof on the page reminded users that others—just like them—had gone through this process before. Successfully.



The next step simply gave prospects the code they needed to implement, right on the page. No need to wait on emails. Just a quick grab and paste job, supported by social proof.



These changes led to an 80% increase in code implementations on the user's side.

Sure. It'd be useful to know people's biggest analytics challenges—that stuff is copywriting gold. However, that question is irrelevant to the trial experience because the answer doesn't affect the trial set up and—at this stage—it doesn't really help us qualify the lead in a meaningful way.

When creating a form (especially a multi-step one), **ask questions that will help you give the user a successfully completed trial experience.** That's your goal, after all. Once they're inside the trial—investing time in using your software—you can send a survey to gather qualitative data.

Still not sure if your form is losing you conversions? Our pals over at ActiveCampaign recommend you also check to see if it's following these four design principles:

1. **Clear** - Clarity in your forms is critical. If any part of your form is confusing, you're going to lose conversions! This means visitors should know which parts of the form are optional versus required, what information goes where, what happens after the form submits, and *why they should even be filling out your form in the first place!*

2. **Concise** - A concise form isn't necessarily short—it just means it's no longer than necessary. (Although yeah, shorter forms tend to perform better.) Check to make sure that you actually need every piece of information you're asking for, turn longer asks into [multi-step forms].

3. **Clever** - Not clever as in "ha-ha, what a hilarious sign-up form." Clever in this context means you should be checking if your form is actively helping visitors fill out their information faster. This means auto-complete, dynamic form fields that only show up when you need them, and only accepting certain inputs on particular form fields (e.g. an email address must contain @).

4. **Cooperative** - Uncertainty makes people frustrated, and frustrated people don't fill out forms. Check to see that your form is asking questions that make sense for your visitors, using phrases that they'll be familiar with, and making it clear what you expect from them.

Expert Tip: If you're switching to a multi-step form, try to make the first step as easy as possible for visitors (e.g. just ask for their name and email address). This way, you'll still capture some of their contact information even if they drop off later.

How To Get Started With Fixing Your UX

- **Check that you're following basic UX rules.** Your page should follow a clear visual hierarchy.
    - Important elements like the CTA and headlines should be bigger and bolder than the rest of the content.
    - Use plenty of white space between sections (and within sections!) to make your page easy to read.
    - Always focus on readability over style. Remember: murder your darlings. Murder 'em good.
- **User-test your landing page.** Use a service like Fivesecondtest.com or Usertesting.com to run quick usability tests. These will show you how people respond and highlight potential breaks or opportunities.
- **Check your funnel for obvious breaks.** Go through each step of your funnel and look at the drop-off rates. Are people abandoning the process at a specific point? Look at what happens after a visitor clicks the CTA. Do they sign up? Do they finish the process? Or do they drop off?

2

The SaaS Landing Page Optimization Checklist

Alright, now that we've talked about why your landing page may not be converting as well as you'd like, it's time to share the step-by-step process you can use to optimize for especially high-converting landing pages.

This is the same process my team uses with all of GetUplift's clients. It's been tested on thousands of landing pages and now ***you*** can use it to optimize your next SaaS marketing campaign. Before and after you publish any page, go through the following list to get all your pre-flight checks ready to go.

A word before we start. Doing full justice to things like Google Analytics set up, writing persuasive copy or using color psychology to increase conversions would have transformed this actionable guide into a (finished) George R.R. Martin novel. That's not what we want for you... That's why we added a resource section with links to free tools that tackle each point mentioned below in more depth. So if you find yourself thinking "Uhhhhm. This sounds good. But I don't know how to do it," check the **resource section**.

PROCESS 1

Pre-Publish Optimizations

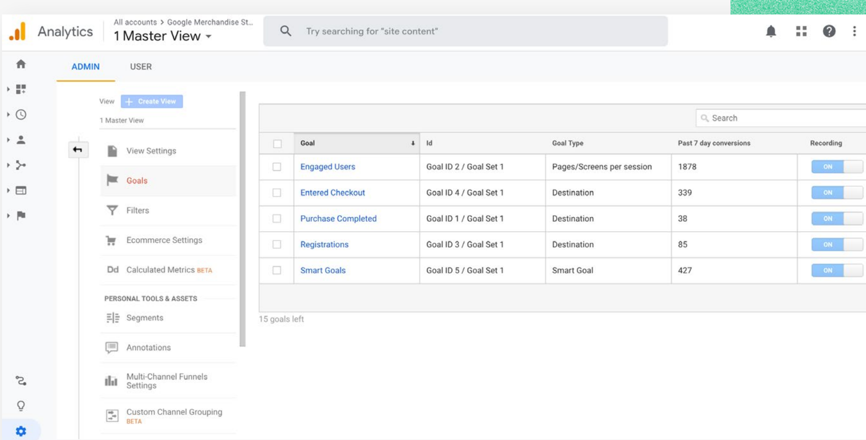
Not sure you have a high-converting hit on your hands yet? Use this list pre-publish to take the guesswork out of the process.

☐ Make Sure You've Set Up Your Conversion Goal in Google Analytics

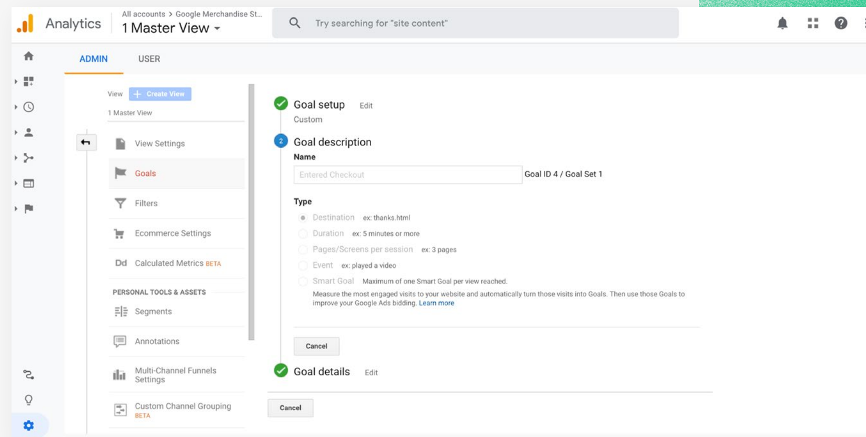
A properly set up Google Analytics dashboard is like marketing magic. It reveals *a lot* about your landing page. But to get accurate data, you have to configure your dashboard correctly—or the numbers will lie to you.

Start out by setting a conversion goal for your landing page in Google Analytics. This lets GA know what you're actually trying to get visitors to do on the page (like download a PDF, watch a webinar, or sign up for a free trial).

To set up your conversion goal, you're going to need to navigate to the "Admin" panel and click on "Goals" in the right hand column.



From this screen, you can create a new goal. Enter in the details, and choose the type of goal you want to track. For most SaaS landing pages, you'll want to choose "URL Destination" as the goal type. This will help you track whenever a visitor clicks the CTA on your landing page (as long as it leads them to another page).



The destination URL you enter should be the last place you want visitors to end up after clicking the CTA on your landing page. So if you're taking them to a multi-step checkout form for example, you'll want to set the goal as the "thank you" page that appears once they finish. This way, you'll be able to track how many people actually finish the process (and how well your page is actually performing).

GA will also give you data on how people are getting to your landing page, what devices they're using, and how long they're sticking around. This information can help you identify potential leaks in your funnel, uncover more optimization opportunities, and unearth technical issues that may be affecting your page's conversion rates.

Expert Tip: To keep this part of the guide readable—and not fill in the next four pages with checklists and bullet points—I added my full GA check-up and analysis checklists to the resource section. Use these to make sure you're tracking all the right info.

☐ Get to Know Your Landing Page Visitor Through Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is the antidote to looking and sounding like everyone else. It's what sets great landing pages—and great marketing in general—apart. Peep Laja, Founder and CEO of ConversionXL puts it rather more lyrically:

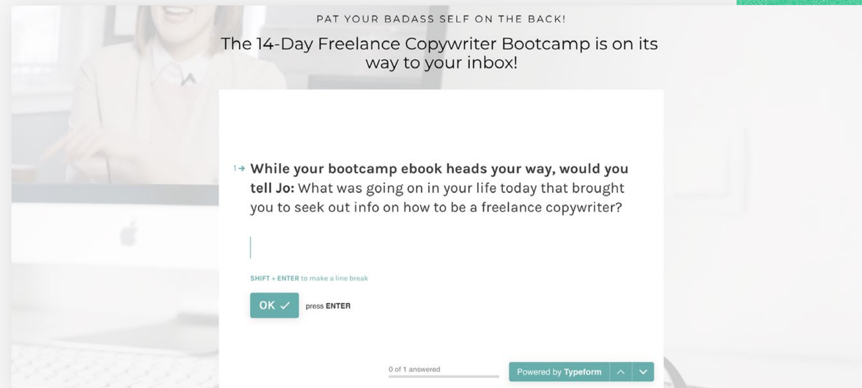
"Most landing pages are a sea of sameness. The way you describe your product is pretty much the same way your competition does. Which makes it very hard for a prospect to make a choice. **It's extremely rare when the decision is between you and nothing at all.** You need to find meaningful differentiation—and even explicitly state how you're different from X and Y."

☐ Run Customer Surveys

Every time a customer converts on your page, they're not just choosing your solution over the competition. They're choosing between you and the 40,000 messages they see every day. You're fighting the ads, calls, apps grabbing our attention every second.

To stand out in that crowd, you have to get to know your customers. You've got to understand the emotions that drive them so that you can create landing pages that feel unique and powerful. Customer surveys can help you get there and you can start with a very simple survey.

The moment after conversion is magic. Your visitor just took action, so they feel pretty good about you. This is your chance to ask them why they picked you. To do that, set up a one-question survey on your **thank you landing page** using Typeform or Google Forms. A question we've had success with—and one recommended by Copyhackers' CEO Joanna Wiebe—is a variation of "What was going on in your life when you signed up for X product."



This simple survey helps you learn exactly why your visitors chose to sign up for that trial or grab that lead magnet, seconds after they took action. (This helps you capture their in-the-moment, emotion-powered answers.)

Next - when you're ready to dig deeper- you can run slightly longer customer surveys. Those are designed to help you **find out why users choose your software over the competition.** What do you have (and what do you do) that others don't have and aren't doing. How do your customers think about you in relation to their alternatives?

Some of my favorite survey questions include:

- **What problem does our product/service solve for you?**
- **What persuaded you to [action—e.g. buy/ signup]?**
- **What are your biggest challenges right now?**
- **Did you have any concerns before joining? (if yes, what?)**

Once you've created the survey, write a short email to your customers and send it out. These answers will be invaluable for guiding strategic messaging decisions and writing irresistible copy.

☐ Run Customer Interviews

Surveys are a great way to get initial data. To get juicier info—the kind you can use to optimize your page—run a few customer interviews over the phone, Zoom or in-person.

Interviews are your chance to dig deeper. To figure out what's really driving your prospects' decisions. To tease out the words your best customers use to talk about you, then use those very specific words on your landing pages.

Before getting started, make sure you set very clear goals for your interviews and identify the exact people you need to interview (e.g. customers who have used our software for more than 6 months and log in daily).

Expert Tip: Make sure to conduct your interviews using a video conferencing software (e.g. Zoom/Skype) that will allow you to record the call so you can avoid taking notes while interviewing and truly listen to your customer. The most powerful messages come straight from our customers' mouths, so you want to be completely focused so that if needed, you can ask them to dig deeper and explain even more.

☐ Read Customer Reviews

You can also lean on user reviews from places like Capterra and G2Crowd to optimize your landing page copy. **Go through your own reviews, as well as your competitors', and look for recurring themes**. In a Google Doc or a spreadsheet, copy and paste anything you find particularly interesting—like the way a reviewer talks about a certain feature or a specific problem that your software solves.

With permission from the reviewer, these bits of copy might make excellent social proof. But you're really looking for specific ways they're describing your value and how they articulate it. This will help you replicate that same sentiment on your landing pages and use it to create those problem and outcome-based headlines we talked about earlier.

Additional places you can read reviews:

- ☐ **Quora**
- ☐ **Reddit and relevant subreddits**
- ☐ **Forums like Hackernews**
- ☐ **Specific Facebook groups**
- ☐ **Amazon book reviews (for books addressing the pains you are with your software)**
- ☐ **Udemy and other course providers that teach your prospects how to solve their problem in a DIY method**

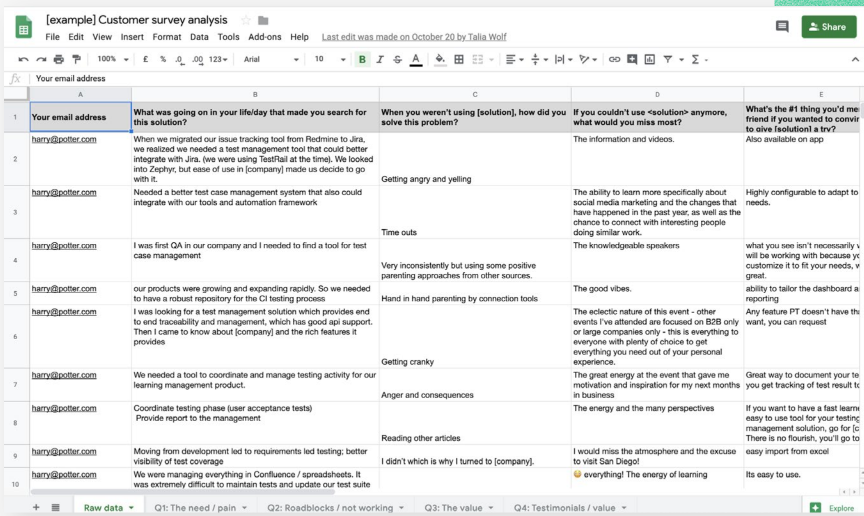
☐ Analyze Your Qualitative Research

The number one thing that high-converting landing pages do—and low-converting ones tend to ignore—is this:

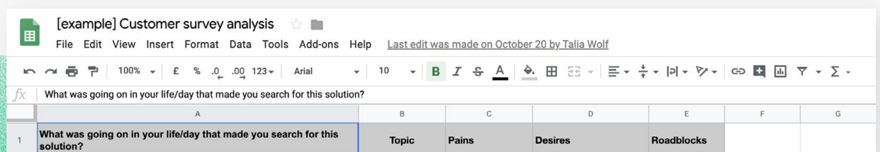
A high-converting landing page answers your prospect's innermost questions. It addresses their concerns. Identifies what's going on. It tells the visitor's story. In the way they need to hear it.

In the last checklist step we identified that customer research is the best way to find this story. You can pull words and phrases from the customer surveys, interviews, and reviews you researched earlier—but in my experience, you need a way to organize these thoughts so you can easily pull insights from them.

One simple way to start making sense of your qualitative data is to organize it in a spreadsheet. This is a sample customer survey interpretation spreadsheet I put together for a Landing Page bootcamp we ran at the start of January.



To create your own variation, open up a Google Sheets document. Import the raw data from your Typeform.

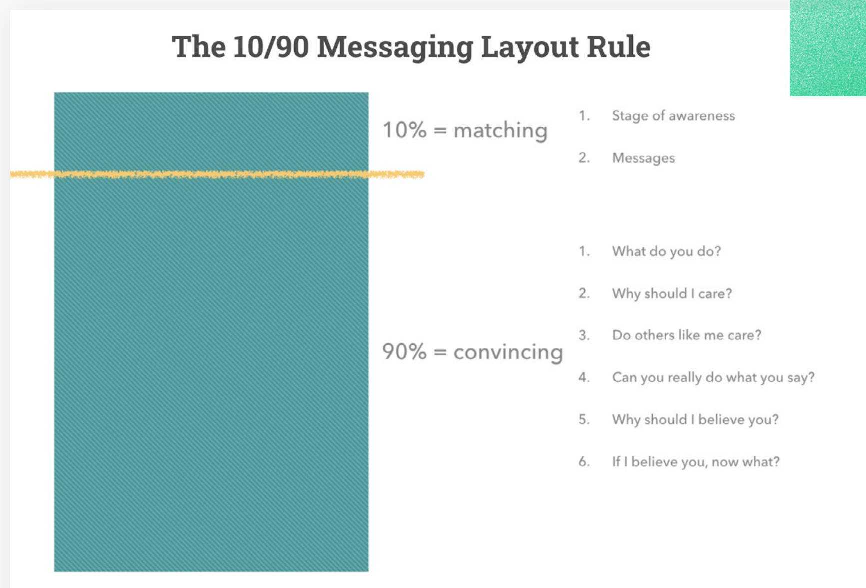


Next, create a new tab for each question you asked and copy and paste the answers in column A. Then set up four other columns: topic, pains, desires and roadblocks. **Use these columns to analyze each answer and identify common themes. Note any patterns you see in the answers.** It's not a fast process, but the insights you'll gain will be worth it.

☐ Create a Message Hierarchy to Guide Your Design

Your message hierarchy—how the words on the page flow from top to bottom and the order in which you address different pain points, topics, and objections—is one of the most important elements you need to consider when optimizing a landing page. Because you might have all the right words, but if they're in the wrong order then nobody will ever be persuaded by them.

Check to see if your page follows the same internal logic that the visitor is using to understand you. It should match their stage of awareness and answer the top questions you anticipate they'll have. It needs to include enough evidence to support your claims, and the call to action needs to be relevant to the questions they're asking.



This 10/90 Messaging Layout from Copyhackers shows how you can optimize your message hierarchy.

A copywriting formula can also help make your page more persuasive for readers. Conversion copywriter Dayana Mayfield suggests one in particular:

"I start out with the StoryBrand format. First, I write an outcomes-focused hero section. Then I include three icons with mini outcomes below that. Next up is the problem section, followed by solution, introduction (of the landing page's "thing"), social proof, solution details, and quality agreements to alleviate fears such as the availability of customer support or personalized onboarding. Then I wrap up with more social proof and a CTA with an outcomes-focused headline above it."

A copywriting formula gives you a framework you can fit your research in. You can swipe the formula Dayana uses or **[find a formula in this giant, comprehensive list]**. (Personally, we're big fans of PAS, a pared down version of the StoryBrand format.)

☐ Edit Your Copy for Consistency

Think of your favorite TV show. Now think about its *worst* episode. (Like that last Game of Thrones season where no one did anything remotely in character… or choose your own personal un-favorite.)

I'm willing to bet that one of the big reasons this episode sucks compared to the rest is because it's inconsistent. Maybe the plot just doesn't make sense. Or the characters do something that's completely out of whack with their typical behavior.

People crave consistency—this need is wired deep in our brains. Even our memories are usually altered to fit with the consistent narrative of who we are and why we do what we do. So when something seems out of place, it triggers an instant emotional reaction. This is why every part of your copy needs to fit together and support your overall message.

A good editing session will help you do just that. Let's start at the top.

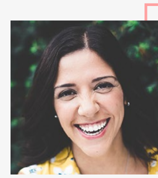
☐ Review Your Hero Section And Unique Value Proposition

This is the first thing people see. Your hero section needs to grab readers, reinforce your value proposition and fit in with the messages users saw *before* getting to your page.

When editing this section, check to see that:

- ☐ **Your headline speaks to the reader's state of awareness that you're targeting with this particular landing page.** For example, if your visitor is only problem aware ("I don't know why customers aren't replying to my emails!"), a headline like "The #1 SaaS Communication Platform" won't work. You need something that meets them exactly where they're at. (E.g. "Not sure why nobody's replying to your SaaS emails?")
- ☐ **Your headline clearly states your promise in a way that will instantly appeal to your prospect.**
- ☐ **Your headline reflects the outcome your customer craves.**

Another thing to check—is your hero section assuring visitors they're in the right place? Here's what Tiffany DaSilva, founder of Flowjo, recommends:



"Users have about four seconds to figure out if they're in the right place. As much as a snappy headline seems inspiring at the time, if they're looking for something like 'accounting software' and they don't see that keyword on the page upon first entering, they will probably hit their back button before trying to figure it out."

Optimize Your Body Copy Using Your Qualitative Research Finding

When it comes to conversion, what happens after the hero section is just as (if not more) important. Yet according to Ross Simmonds, Founder of Foundationinc, not all landing pages reflect that.

"The biggest mistake I often see SaaS companies make when it comes to their landing pages is the lazy copy that lives AFTER the value proposition. The most standard approach is highlighting three features immediately after the value proposition. It works for some companies, but it's not a set in stone best practice. **Some of the best performing supporting content I've seen on SaaS landing pages were benefits stolen directly out of the customer's mouth.**"

These are words to market by. That's why the research you did is an incredible resource to use while editing. And as you optimize, make sure that:

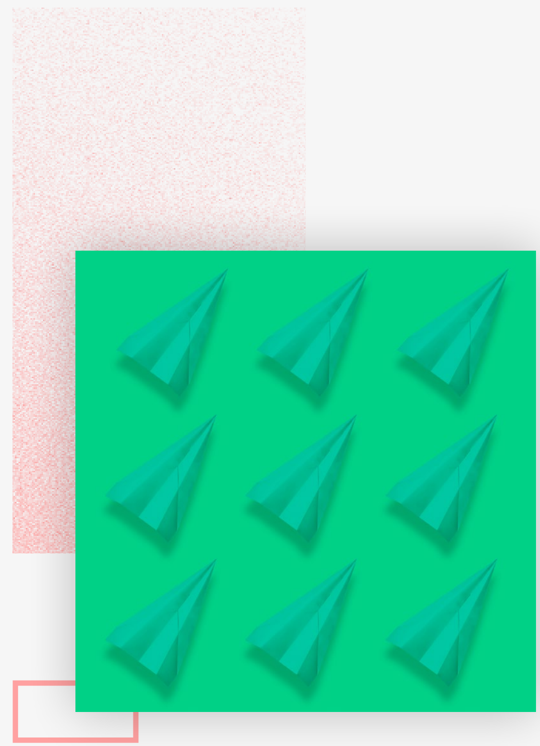
- **All elements of copy points to your one call to action (if the page is about signing up for your webinar, this is not the place to talk about anything outside of what might make someone register, for example).**
- **Your copy addresses all the hesitations and concerns you identified in your research (lean on your spreadsheet for help).**
- **All your copy supports (and enhances) your value proposition.**
- **You're speaking to your customers and not at them.**
- **Your copy is written in your customer's tone and voice (pull words, expressions, and sentence cadence from your spreadsheet).**
- **Your tone is personal and friendly, while still staying on brand.**
- **The fonts you use are easy to read.**
- **Your copy isn't obscured by images and/or other visual elements.**
- **Your copy guides the prospects and tells *their* story.**

Back Up Your Claims with Social Proof

Most SaaS landing pages these days use some form of social proof. Whether it's a glowing testimonial from a trusted customer, a bar of logos showing off the top brands you work with, or a five-star customer satisfaction rating—visitors want to see that your business is real, and real, live human beings actually recommend your software.

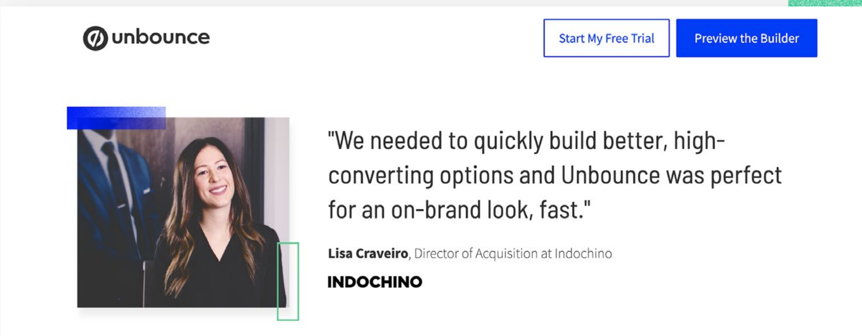
What most marketers are not doing, however, is thinking through *which types* of social proof they actually need, *where* on the page they belong, and *what* each piece of social proof needs to communicate.

It's a delicate dance to earn a visitor's trust with social proof. And I want to show you some of the best ways to tango.



Win Trust With Testimonials

The art of *effectively* adding testimonials is a little more complex than copy and pasting nice stuff a customer said about your SaaS. You need to be strategic. Check out this testimonial from an Unbounce landing page.

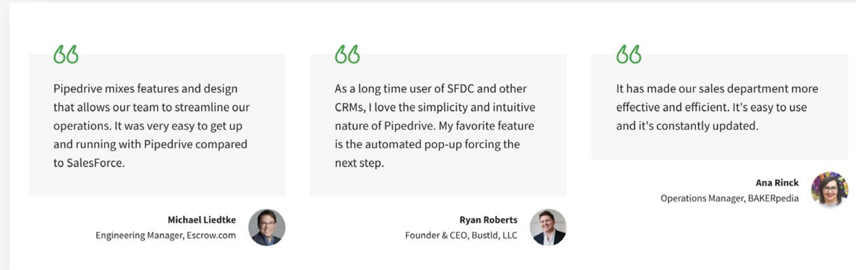


This testimonial is highly effective because:

- **We see the customer.** An image instantly creates trust and connection. It tells your brain that this is a real person, not someone the marketing team made up in a frenzy of content creation. (Bonus point: the customer is physically facing the copy, subliminally drawing the eye to it.)
- **The name, role and company are included.** Including a person's name, position and where they work increases trust because it makes it easy to verify this is a real person, with a role that's maybe similar to yours (the target customer).
- **The testimonial copy matches the key message on the landing page.** The landing page is designed to get you to convert to a free Unbounce trial. It sells the visitor on how easy Unbounce is to use—and that's exactly what Lisa's words highlight.

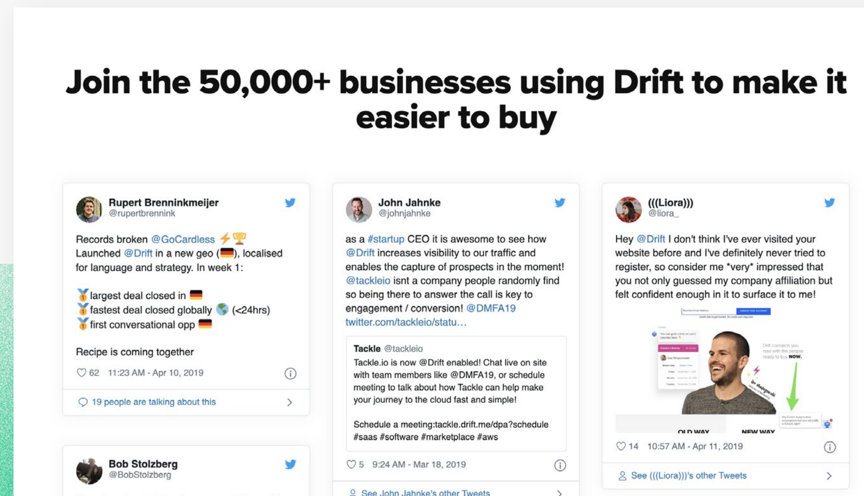
Because this page used a single testimonial, it avoids accidentally creating a user stereotype and exclude people who don't see themselves on the page. Here, the Director of Acquisition at Indochino is just one happy customer.

Of course, using multiple testimonials can work well too, like on this landing page from Pipedrive.



Here, we see proof from an Engineer, a CEO and an Ops Manager that Pipedrive works for all of them. This is an effective tactic if your software serves people in different roles and industries that share a common pain.

You don't have to embrace the traditional look of image, role and text either. You can tap into the power of authenticity and use testimonials straight from social media, like Drift.



Take a step back, and look at your page as a whole. It should be trying to tell a story that persuades visitors to convert. Every element on the page should be there to support that story. *Especially* the social proof.

If your social proof feels disconnected from the story or key benefits you're trying to communicate, then it won't effectively persuade your visitors. (Of course, it's still probably better than having no social proof at all.)

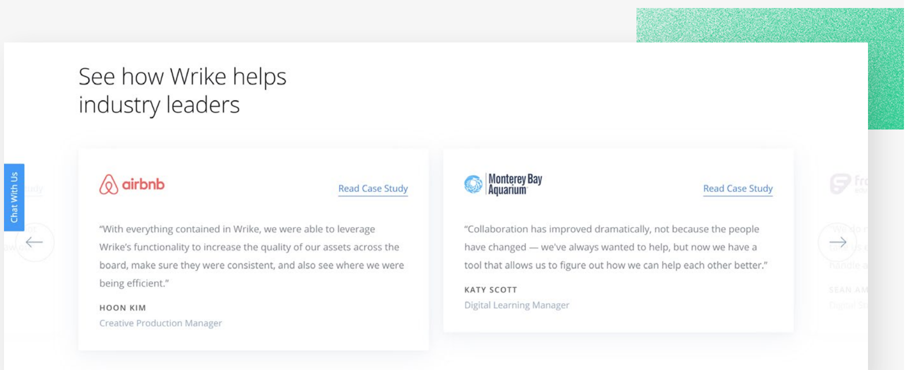
Evaluate your landing page with this question in mind: **What comes before and after your social proof?** If the sections surrounding your social proof are about something completely unrelated to what is being said in the testimonials (or the logos you're featuring), then your visitors are likely to skip over them entirely. You should think of your social proof—and especially testimonials—as a yellow highlighter.

You just need to make sure you're highlighting the right, most relevant parts.

☐ Use Case Studies To Close Stragglers

Case studies are the powerlifters of the social proof world. They take the emotional pull of testimonials and the bandwagon effect of logos, mix it all up, and add a dash more data.

If a visitor is struggling to convert, a well-timed case study can give them the nudge they need. Here's how the productivity tool Wrike adds links to case studies on one of their Google Ads landing pages.



You may notice that these are presented in the form of testimonials that follow the practices we followed above.

For a reputable image—because they're linking to a case study instead of highlighting a person—they use the company logo instead. The quotes back up what's being said on the page while the case study itself gives visitors that extra info they need to convert.

So if you've got case studies that relate to the subject of your landing page, then this is an effective way to include them.

Use this quick refresher checklist to help make sure your social proof is optimized:

- ☐ **Make sure your social proof is specific.** Don't just stick a random quote on the page—help your prospect connect with your customer by including a photo, their name, title, age and even their geographical location. Every detail you add to your social proof adds credibility to it.
- ☐ **If you're using logos of other companies as social proof, use one color for all logos.** Color draws the eye and using too many colors means that the logos may draw attention away from other key elements.
- ☐ **Experiment with different types of social proof, including:**
  - ☐ Testimonials
  - ☐ Ratings & Reviews
  - ☐ Case studies
  - ☐ Quotes by influencers
  - ☐ Media and PR mentions
  - ☐ Social media following/the size of your audience where applicable
  - ☐ Power by numbers (display amount of customers)
  - ☐ Trust seals
  - ☐ Certifications / awards
  - ☐ Partner logos
  - ☐ Customer logos (when B2B)

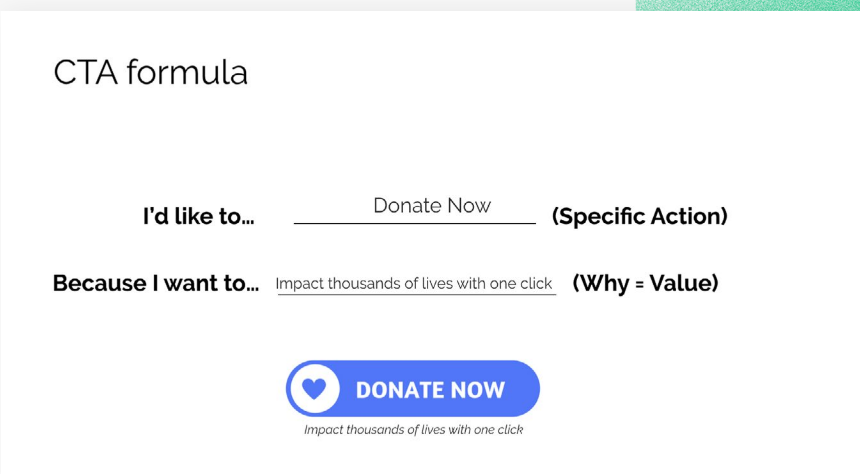
Expert Tip: Use a Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) SaaS brands need more than social proof to show visitors their landing page is trustworthy. With Unbounce, you can easily stick "https" at the start of your URL to get that little green padlock, so visitors know their data is safe.

☐ Ensure Your CTA Is Actionable

The call to action is more than a button people click or how they submit info via a lead-gen form. It's the offer and promise of your page, all rolled into one. And—just like everything else—it also needs to work in tandem with every other element on the page.

This is one of my favorite formulas, used by Angie Schottmuler, for creating an actionable CTA. Simply complete these two sentences from your reader's perspective:

- **I'd like to [.....]**
- **Because I want to [......]**



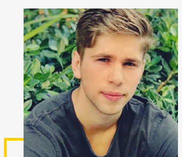
Once you've written your CTA, you should make sure that:

- ☐ **Your CTA only asks for one thing (e.g. "Download the Ebook," "Register for the Webinar," "Start Your Free Trial."**
- ☐ **Your CTA is directly relevant to the value proposition and everything else you've said on the page.**
- ☐ **Your CTA stands out in contrast from all the other elements of the page.**
- ☐ **Your CTA has white space around it (which makes it easy to see).**

Krista Seiden, Founder and Principal Consultant at KS Digital, says using a single, structured CTA is key:

"Too many calls to action can confuse a potential customer landing on your site and lead to more questions than answers. A great landing page streamlines the information needed and helps the user easily see the product or solution value, make a judgment call on fit for them or their business, and gives them a simple path forward to take action."

And Wayatt Jozwowski, Co-Founder of Demio, says consistency is key to get visitors to take action.



"I've seen a lot of SaaS companies have landing pages with multiple calls-to-action, which just adds complexity and takes away from the focus of the page. You should have one clear call-to-action, and your entire landing page should be about getting visitors to take the next step."

☐ Review Your Images From a Conversion Perspective

Your hero image is one of the most important elements on the page because it's the first thing most visitors notice. Our brains process images almost 60,000 times faster than text—so your prospects are likely to notice an image before they read your USP.

An effective image supports your value proposition and help your prospects to connect with your message.

When optimizing your hero image, check to see that:

- ☐ **Your hero image represents your value proposition.** If you took away all the copy on the page, would a visitor still be able to recognize your offer?
- ☐ **Your image is relatable and authentic.** Prospects should be able to relate to the image by either seeing themselves in it or seeing someone they want to be like.
- ☐ **Your image works as a directional cue.** Thanks to their significance, you can use the image to direct your prospects' attention towards certain elements on the page such as the call to action.

Additionally, you'll want to make sure that:

- ☐ **You create a high contrast between the image and the page content.**
- ☐ **You have cleaned out the noise and any unnecessary parts of the image.**
- ☐ **You avoid carousels and autoplay videos. (These types of visuals tend to be extremely distracting and reduce conversions.)**
- ☐ **All your images are optimized for mobile devices (resized and compressed).**
- ☐ **All your images are optimized for page speed (under 800KB, or as small as you can get 'em).**
- ☐ **None of your images detract or distract from the CTA.**

☐ Optimize the Page Layout and Color Palette

While copy is the key element that influences conversion, color and design matter. Sometimes a lot. The colors you use on the page affect the way people see it.

Typically, people are affected by color on three different levels—through emotion, symbolism, and experience. Using the wrong color can repel visitors and reduce conversions. When choosing colors for your landing page keep in mind that:

- Like images, colors work as directional cues. When choosing your color palette make sure you've got one color that repeats itself in all call to action buttons or links. This helps your prospects quickly identify any areas where action is needed.
- Colors don't work alone. Their effect varies based on other elements on the page such as the main image, trust elements or your logo. When choosing your colors, think about all elements on the page and make sure they don't clash with each other.
- Too much of one color may affect your customer in a different way than planned. The emotional effect of color also varies according to shades, tints, and hues.

When you're doing a final check, make sure that:

- ☐ **There is strong contrast between the background color and the text color.**
- ☐ **There are no more than three primary colors on the page.**
- ☐ **The backgrounds behind any text are solid and plain.**

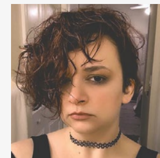
☐ Make the Click-Through Experience Seamless

Your CTA button is the first place you ask the visitor to trust you and do something. Whether it's to subscribe for a trial or download a resource, you gotta make the user feel safe. Use this quick checklist to optimize your click-through experience and make sure that:

- ☐ **You've placed social proof around the call to action or registration form.**
- ☐ **Your form is easy to fill on all devices (check this section for a refresh on forms).**
- ☐ **The right keyboard appears for each field (e.g. numeric keyboard for phone number field).**
- ☐ **Your terms and services are mentioned (if applicable).**
- ☐ **You've enabled autofill on your forms.**
- ☐ **Your form has an actionable headline that reflects the unique value prop for the landing page.**
- ☐ **You've broken up your long forms into multi-steps (consider adding a progress bar for multi-step forms).**
- ☐ **Your mobile forms use mobile form markup.**
- ☐ **Your forms are only as long as they need to be to create a great trial experience. (You can save extra questions for later.)**

☐ Make Sure Your Page Fits Into Your Funnel and Messaging

It's time to put your newly-optimized landing page through the funnel test. According to B2B SaaS Consultant Nichole Elizabeth DeMere, companies often fail this test.



"The biggest mistake I see SaaS companies make with landing pages is thinking of them as stand-alone sales generators, instead of as part of a whole ecosystem of customer touch points that make up the overall customer experience.

It's amazing how often an ad or email sets up one expectation, and the landing page delivers something completely different."

So before you set your optimized landing page loose on the world, make sure that it fits in with the messages that lead visitors to it—and the messages they'll see after they convert.

Use this quick checklist to make sure that:

- ☐ **Your landing page delivers on any promises you've made to visitors BEFORE they click onto it (which could be in your PPC ads, your email marketing, or any other channels you're using to drive traffic).**
- ☐ **The content visitors see AFTER visiting your landing page matches the expectation you set on the landing page.**
- ☐ **If someone ONLY sees your landing page and then visits your website, you have a clear idea of what you want them to do next.**

PROCESS 2

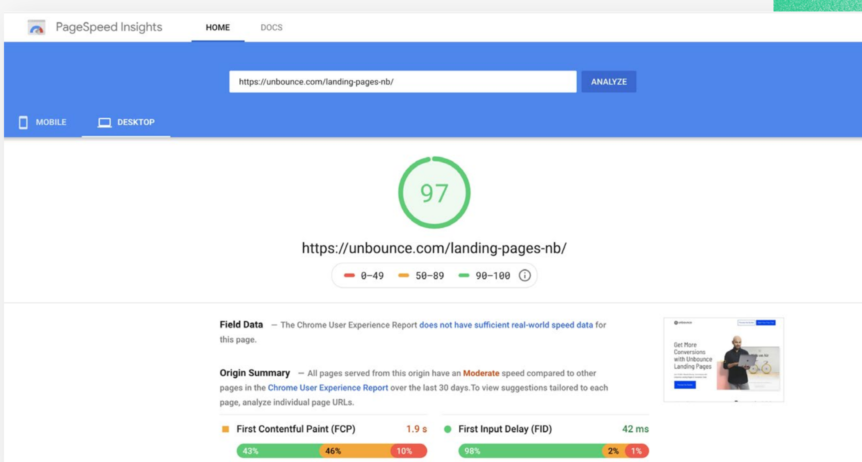
Post-Publish Optimizations

The game isn't over once you hit the publish button—in fact, this is when the *real* fun begins. Use our post-publish optimization checklist to analyze, experiment, and iterate on your new landing page (or any underperforming page that isn't living up to its full potential).

☐ Check Your Page Speed

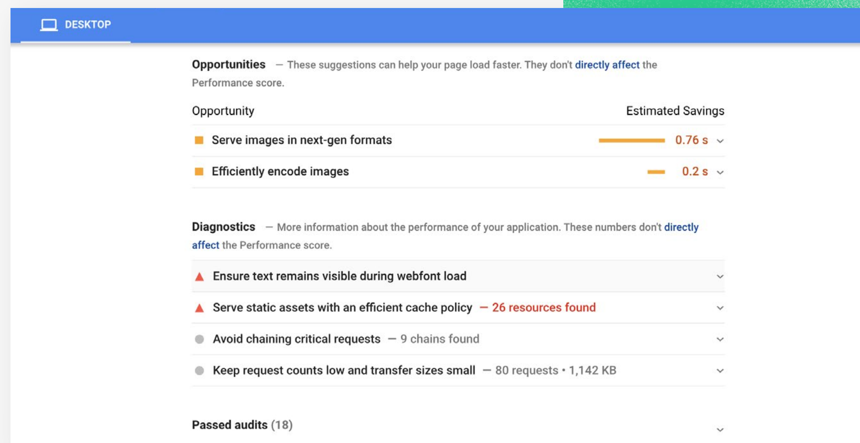
The longer your page takes to load, the higher the chance your visitor will bounce. According to the **Unbounce Page Speed Report**, more than half of visitors leave a page if they're forced to wait longer than three seconds. And nearly 70% of consumers admit that page speed influences how likely they are to buy.

Lucky for us all, Google makes it easy to play doctor and find out just how healthy your page load time is. All you need to do is head to Google's **PageSpeed Insights** and run your page through. Here's how it works.



At the top, you'll see your score on a scale from 0—100. A score under 49 is considered slow—if your page sits there, you're risking visitors scampering off to faster competitors. A score from 50-89 puts you in the amber zone. You've got plenty of room for improvement but your current page isn't acting as a natural customer repellant. If your score is over 90, you *can* do a happy dance. At least until the rules change again.

After you run your page through the tool, you'll get a summary and report on your page for both desktop and mobile devices. As you scroll down, you'll see a lot more detail, like the opportunities and diagnostics sections. Here, PageSpeed Insights shows you exactly which elements are causing problems.



Here are a few of the different ways you can speed up your load times:

- ☐ **Reduce your page content.** Look at each piece of content on your page critically, then ask yourself: “Does this increase conversions?” If you don’t think there are pieces you can toss, try running an A/B test with a slimmed-down version of the page. The results might surprise you.

- ☐ **Optimize your images.** Poor image optimization is the most common reason for slow page loads, especially for mobile visitors. You’ll want to resize your images (when you add an image, make sure it’s the same dimensions that your page will be rendering it), choose the right file type (generally, photographs with significant color variations perform better as JPEGs, while PNG is ideal for simple images with defined shapes), and use compression tools (we’re big fans of free tools like **TinyPNG**).

- ☐ **Host your videos elsewhere.** Done properly, transferring videos to a third-party platform can shed some extra load time and help your pages render faster. Consider moving video content to Wistia, YouTube, or Vimeo, then using a **light embed technique** so that your videos only load heavier playback elements when your visitors actually click on them.

- ☐ **Audit your hosting solution.** Run your site through a server speed test like this one from **Bitcatcha**, and use **WebPageTest** or **Pingdom** to see how quickly your landing page loads in other countries. Depending on the results, you might decide it’s time to upgrade your hosting plan (or change web hosts altogether).

- ☐ **Try using Accelerated Mobile Pages (AMPs).** AMPs use a light, limited version of HTML, very limited CSS, and almost no JavaScript, making them fast but pretty restrictive when it comes to design. To save some creativity (and make ‘em a bit less of a headache to create), Unbounce offers a drag-and-drop builder that lets you include AMP-compatible custom CSS, JavaScript, and HTML.

Increase your Quality Scores in Google Ads with dramatically faster load times. See how you can use the Unbounce drag-and-drop builder to create an AMP landing page today.

☐ Analyze On-Page Behavior Using Heat Maps

What are visitors doing when they get to your page? What are they clicking on? What are they ignoring? How far down that page do they scroll before signing up or bouncing away?

When you know the answers to these questions, you can start to optimize your landing page in smarter, more meaningful ways.

Use a heat mapping tool like **Hotjar**, **Crazy Egg**, or **Qualaroo** to see what people are actually doing on your page. Here are some of the elements you’ll want to check, and optimization experiments you’ll want to run:

- ☐ **Check which CTA performs best.** Your landing page likely has more than one clickable element. A heatmap will show you your most popular (and least popular) CTA buttons. To optimize your page, try testing a variant that brings your most popular CTA button up, or removes some of the less popular options.

- ☐ **See what else visitors click on.** Prospects don’t always click on the things they’re supposed to. Some will click on icons, images, or text that looks like it should lead somewhere. Use these as signals to better understand what visitors think are important, and experiment with putting more emphasis on these elements.

- ☐ **Learn which sections get ignored.** Are your prospects reading the whole page? Do they get bored and bounce after a particular section? A scroll map will show you that (and more) so you can pare down the page to just the essentials.

- ☐ **Track how far down people scroll before converting.** This can give you insights into your prospects’ stage of awareness and the ideal length for your

A word of warning—it can be tempting to cut sections or get rid of buttons because prospects don't seem to use them. When you analyze a page using a tool like HotJar, remember that it's only telling you one side of the story. You need further customer research to reveal the other side before making any changes.

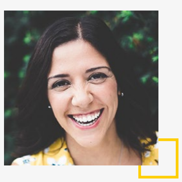
landing page.

Heat mapping tools help tell the story of your visitors' experience. They show you what works and what's getting ignored.

Impression-Test Your Landing Page

After spending all this time optimizing your landing page, it's time to put it to the test. Use an impression test to see if visitors understand…

- **What is the landing page offering? (What does the product do?)**
- **Who is offering it? (What's the name of the company?)**
- **What are the main benefits of the service?**
- **What is the next step?**



Tiffany DaSilva from Flowjo recommends the five-second test from Usertesting.com.

"I love using the five-second test on usertesting.com (it's super friendly & cheap!). If a user can't figure that out on desktop and mobile quickly, then you probably need some tweaking before adding any advertising budget to it."

Els Aerts from AGConsult agrees, and recommends Fivsecondtest.com for some of their other impression tests as well.

"This is a great way to find out whether people understand who you are and what you're selling. I'm a big fan of first click testing or online screenshot testing as well. You can dig a little deeper here with your questions because people get to look at your page for as long as they like."

While testing like this isn't an exact science and doesn't solely survey your target audience, it will give you a solid indication if there's anything glaringly wrong that needs to be fixed.

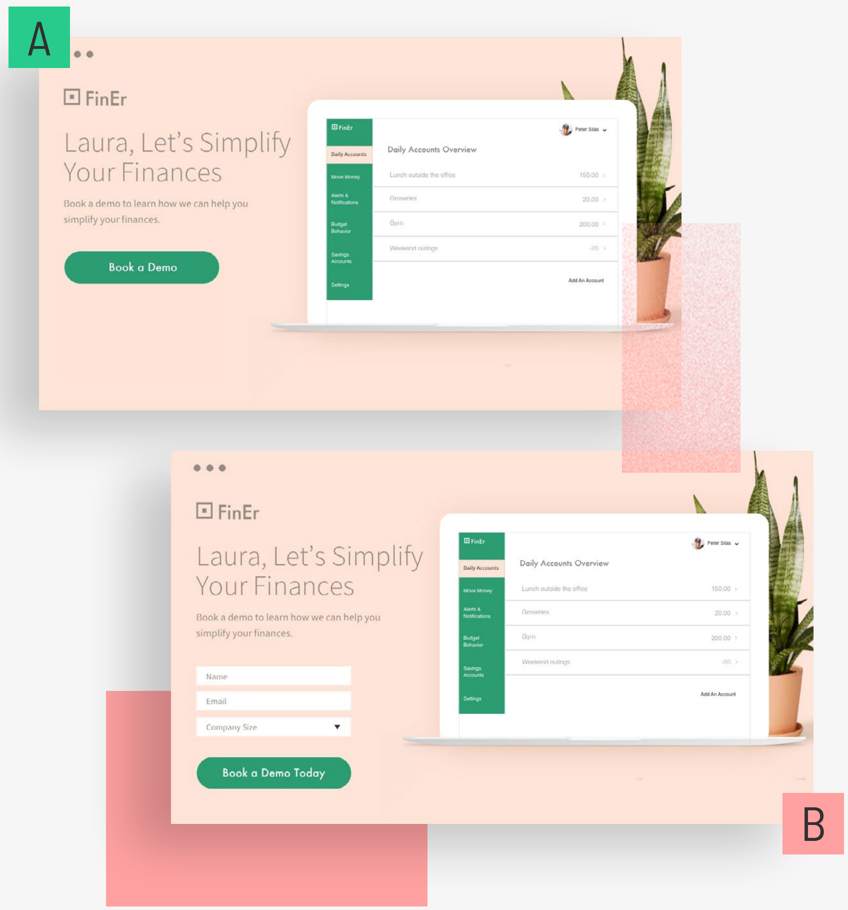
While you're in testing mode, be sure to run your page through the Landing Page Analyzer as well. This will give you a personalized report of actionable things you can do to boost conversions in nine specific performance categories.

Keep Testing and Optimizing

As SaaS marketers, we have to move away from the "set it and forget it" mentality that is so common in other industries. You don't want to just build a landing page you *think* is optimized and never touch it again. Keep checking back on a regular basis (ideally, weekly or biweekly) to see what else you can test and improve.

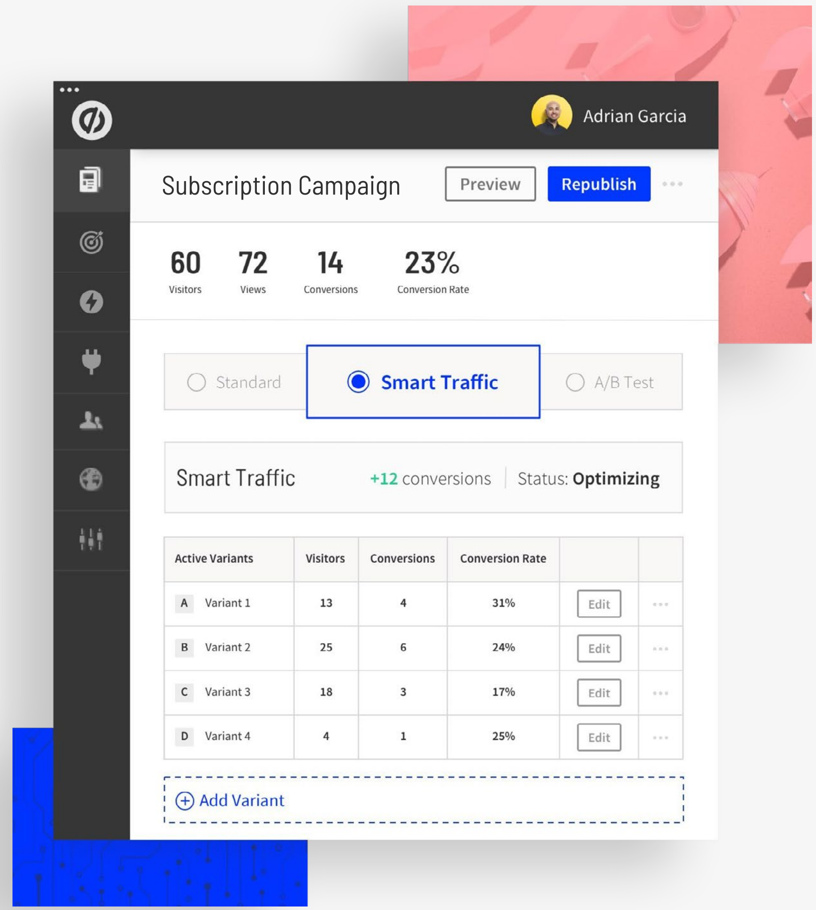
Run A/B Tests in Unbounce

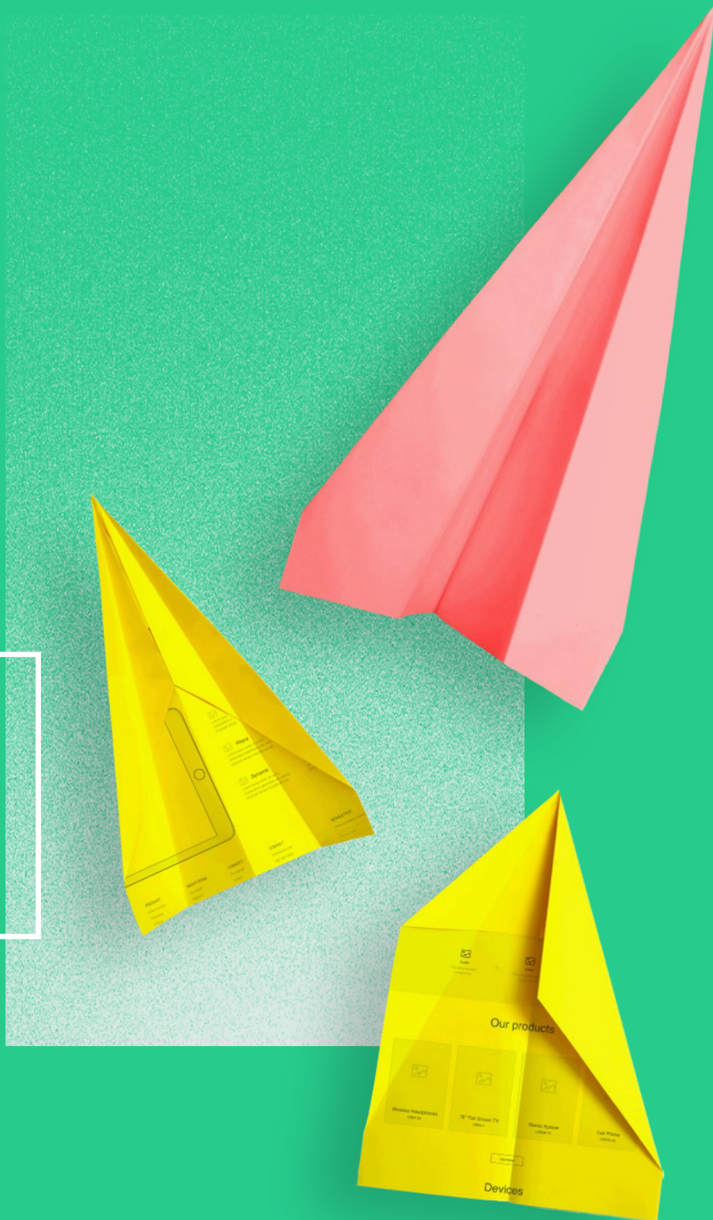
Traditionally, A/B Testing has been *the* best way to see which variant of a landing page performs best. Use your qualitative research and on-page behavior knowledge to experiment with new copy, images, and layouts.



Use Smart Traffic™ to Optimize Faster

With Unbounce, you can also enable Smart Traffic on your landing pages to test new variants faster. This feature uses machine learning to automatically match each visitor (based on their attributes like location or device) to the variant on which they're most likely to convert.





Next Steps

You're creating and optimizing landing pages. So you're already kinda ahead of the competition, according to Joanna Wiebe, CEO of Copyhackers.

"I can't tell you how many smart SaaS marketers I work with who, when I ask where they're driving that ad they want us to write or the emails they want us to optimize, say, 'Oh, we'll just use our home page' or 'We have a content hub we're driving all of our ads to.'

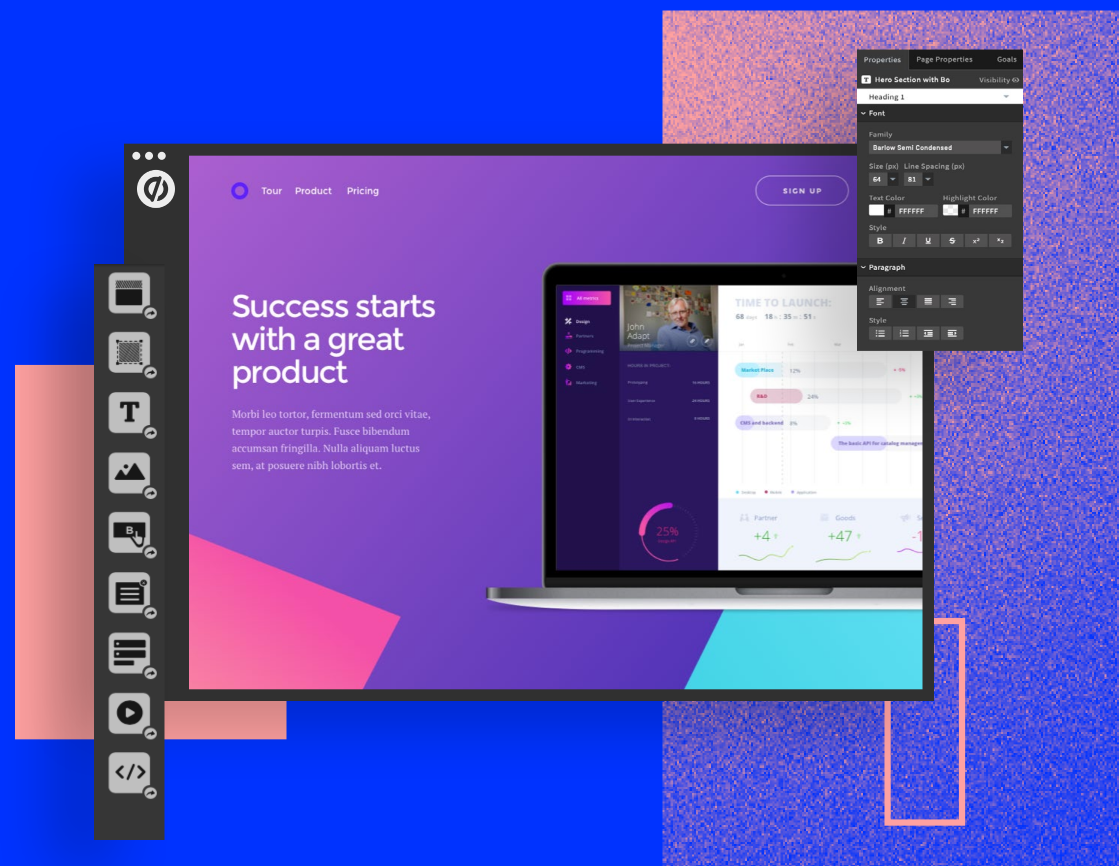
It's not even surprising anymore.

There's this hub-and-spoke idea they've got in their head... but the reality is you actually need a whole bunch of individual paths more often than you need/can effectively use an LP as a hub with loads of spokes driving to and from it."

So what now? Use the principles in this book to consistently increase conversions. The more you use this process and checklist, the better your results will get. Some of the things we talked about—like analyzing qualitative research—can take some time to get used to. But those are the things that will set you apart.

Good luck out there.

Talia


Tour
Product
Pricing
SIGN UP
Success starts with a great product
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3

The Resources

Welcome to the resource section! Here you'll find useful links to free tutorials that go into more depth on some of the points we mentioned in this book.

Improve Your Page Speed

- [Blog post] Increase your landing page speed (by stealing our homework) by Garrett Hughes
- [Report] Think Fast: The 2019 page speed report stats & trends for marketers by Unbounce

Check (And Analyze) Your Google Analytics

- [Free video] Analyze Landing Pages in Google Analytics by Michael Aagaard
- [Checklist] The Google Analytics Checklist
- [Free video] How to maximize the Google Analytics landing page report by Jeff Sauer
- [Free recorded workshop] The most important Google Analytics you can track with Google Analytics expert Dana DiTomaso
- Improve the performance of your landing page by Google Help Center

Analyze Your On-Page Behavior

- [Free recorded workshop] Using heatmaps to analyze your site (+ specific rookie errors to avoid)
- [Free recorded workshop] Are you using heatmaps correctly? A step-by-step guide
- [Free recorded workshop] The most important Google Analytics you can track with Google Analytics expert Dana DiTomaso

Conduct Qualitative Research

- [Free recorded workshop] How to use customer surveys to write high-converting copy
- [Blog post + free recorded workshop] How to get into your customers' heads with customer interviews (and increase conversions) by Nikki Elbaz
- [Blog post] Find your copy with Amazon review mining by Joanna Wiebe
- [Blog post] The JTBD research process we used to build our MVP for Userlist.io by Claire Suellentrop

Creating a Message Hierarchy and Clear Copy

- [Blog post] The ultimate guide to no-pain copywriting (or, every copywriting formula ever} by Joanna Wiebe
- [Free recorded workshops] The Seven Sweeps:
    - The Clarity Sweep
    - The Voice + Tone Sweep
    - The Believability Sweeps
    - The Specificity Sweep
    - The Heightened Emotion Sweep
    - The Zero Risk Sweep

More Optimization Resources

- [Blog post] An all-in-one guide to choosing the right image for your landing pages
- [Blog post] Forget everything you know about color psychology and read this guide
- [Blog post] How to create landing page variants & optimize with AI by Garrett Hughes

Meet the Team

Talia Wolf (Author)

One of the most influential experts in conversion optimization, Talia is the founder of **GetUplift**—the CRO consultancy and training space top brands turn to when they want to optimize their funnels and websites and create experiences customers love to convert to.

After co-founding a successful conversion optimization agency and providing conversion optimization services for many high-growth companies, Talia developed **The Emotional Targeting Framework** as a way to generate more revenue, leads, engagement and sales for her clients and students.

Talia has taught her methodology at marketing conferences such as Conversions@Google, MozCon, CXL Live, and yup—even Unbounce's **CTAConf**.

Sophia Dagnon (Author)

Sophia is a conversion copywriter at GetUplift and Copyhackers. She's the co-founder of Unmassmarket. And she runs a conversion copywriting consultancy, helping SaaS companies create better copy. You can learn more about her **here**.

Luke Bailey (Editor)

Luke writes words and stuff for Unbounce. While he likes to use a little alliteration in his work, he's also aware that readers aren't always in awe of his atrocious adjective additives. You can follow him on Twitter **@LukeBailey**.

Jennifer Pepper (Editor)

Jennifer Pepper is the Senior Marketing Manager for Content at Unbounce. One day she wants to direct the ads you skip on YouTube. Follow her on Twitter **@PeppersWrite**.