Landing pages, get ready for your close-up.

Push your campaigns into the spotlight with these expert lessons.

When it comes to marketing, landing pages don't often get top billing. They're overlooked by some as minor characters in a star-filled campaign. But with the right attention, they can really wow your audience. This guide offers fresh perspective on crafting LPs that earn rave reviews and keep people coming back for more.

Often, marketers will use what's known as a "dedicated landing page" to promote one specific offer to one specific audience. Others lean on their company website as a go-to destination for all email campaigns, which creates a subpar experience for customers. Website pages typically require more time to adjust, with multiple stakeholders across departments involved in even minor updates.

Marketers also tend to think of the landing page only after developing their social media, paid media, webinar, and email nurture strategies.

But landing pages shouldn't be an afterthought. Follow these key tips to improve customer experiences and campaign performance.

The following is intended for select audiences.

The best landing pages aren't designed to appeal to everyone. It's important to narrow your focus to a select group (one or two personas) before you begin standing up landing pages. This will help you avoid generic messaging and content, which rarely leads to conversions. By honing in on a specific audience, you can directly speak to their unique needs and increase personalization. Get a niche and you've got a much better chance of meeting your goals—whether that's leads, conversions, loyalty, or all of the above.

First, decide upfront who you're trying to reach and why. For example, let's say you're a large financial institution offering new services to appeal to younger investors. You need to shift perceptions among Gen Z prospects who might think you're out of touch with their needs. Focus your initial efforts on getting to know this audience. The good news is that they're a very popular bunch, especially among big organizations that see the potential to earn their trust. Do a deep dive into their key characteristics, starting with reputable sources like Gartner, Deloitte, Forrester, and Gallup. Find out who they turn to for news, which podcasts they listen to, and which influencers they follow on Instagram and Snapchat. You can even get firsthand data by sending out a survey to gauge individual attitudes about all things money. Once you have a firm understanding of your audience, create personas and identify content that maps to each one. Then, decide what action you want them to take when they visit your landing page.

> By cherry-picking your audience, you can improve personalization and make landing pages easier to scale.

If you need to reach multiple demographics and personas, choose one audience to begin with and slowly expand to include additional groups, which may require different landing page versions for customized experiences. Cherry-picking your audience not only improves personalization but can also set up your teams to quickly gather and analyze campaign findings. It helps to make the process more manageable and easier to scale.

Consider Panasonic. The company offers an incredibly broad set of products that cater to customers in virtually every industry, which means their marketing campaigns can target everyone from CEOs to on-site technicians. They know it's not smart to send the same message to different audiences, so if they're launching a new product for retailers, they save tech specs for IT and spare CMOs the nitty-gritty details on product implementation. Marketing automation makes it easier for them to plug in dynamic content to deliver the right information to the right person while saving valuable time and resources.

Roll call! Get everyone on set.

Two of the biggest hurdles to effective landing pages are disjointed planning and disparate data. Often, various marketing teams use different platforms to gather and monitor insights from the same campaign. This makes it difficult—if not impossible—to draw productive conclusions about how their efforts are performing. The first step to solving this challenge is remembering who you need to reach and what you want to achieve with your landing page.

For example, the events team might be hosting a webinar to educate customers on a new cybersecurity product. To attend, customers must register, sharing their email and contact information through a landing page submission form.

Ideally, the events team will work with colleagues across departments to make the most of their efforts, looping in the demand gen and web teams to provide customers with appropriate next steps. For one webinar attendee, that might mean getting in touch with sales immediately. For another, it might require sending them additional content to nurture their interest.

While communicating internally is certainly key to boosting landing page performance, it's still difficult to connect the dots without a complete data set.

This is especially true when two companies merge. After CenturyLink acquired Level 3 Communications, their marketing efforts became more complicated, with multiple departments and technologies. To unify operations, they adopted a marketing automation solution that integrates with third-party applications so that teams can gain a comprehensive understanding of each customer's interaction with their brand. By establishing a single source of truth, CenturyLink's marketing operations and demand generation managers can quickly determine which channels and campaigns are working well and which landing pages are converting best. That means more opportunities to delight customers and build long-term loyalty.

Lights, camera, content action!

With your audience selected and teams aligned, it's time to put your vision on customers' mobile and desktop screens.

Start by adapting landing page content and language to speak to customer goals and challenges. Pay close attention to every detail, making sure each aspect of your page clearly communicates a consistent message, including the headline, subheads, color scheme, typography, CTAs, page composition, and even empty space. Since most people scan without scrolling down the page, grab their attention straight away with simple, direct, and persuasive language and imagery. Give them a reason to stay engaged.

For example, maybe the company is a K-12 online learning service. By creating different versions of a landing page experience for parents of K-5th graders, parents of middle schoolers, and parents of high schoolers, the company can better speak to each audience's unique needs. Besides the obvious adjustments to course offerings, headlines and subheads could address different challenges and goals, like preparing for college for the high schoolers or reading fundamentals for the K-5th graders. Even subtle changes to color scheme and photography can help the subject matter resonate with each unique demographic.

Knowing what to cut is just as important as knowing what to include on your landing page. Most people don't enjoy filling out lengthy forms to get the information they need. Even marketers get annoyed when a brand repeatedly asks for the same details. Progressive profiling addresses this familiar headache by using dynamic form fields to collect customer data based on information you've already gathered.

You might start with simply a name, email, and company size. When the customer returns, you could request additional details, including role, industry, and product interest. Be sure to establish a clear value exchange to help customers understand why they should share their contact information. For example, make it crystal clear how your solution provides a unique answer to their present challenge. You can accomplish this by including social proof in the form of customer reviews, quotes, awards, and stats to reinforce your value proposition.

When deciding which form fields to prioritize, a good rule of thumb is to capture information that's most useful for your sales team. After all, the whole point of marketing is to ultimately seal the deal.

You don't have to sacrifice landing page conversion rates to gain valuable information. With each new form your visitors complete, you can be more confident that they value your content. And every time they come back, you can learn more about them. By aligning your messaging with each person's stage on the buyer's journey, you can show potential leads you're willing to meet them on their terms. Once you've gathered what you need, you can even go formless, which is a more ideal experience for customers.

Run test screenings early and often.

Testing is an essential part of any successful landing page strategy. A/B tests, or split tests, are an objective way to determine what's working and what's not. Instead of relying on gut instinct and assumptions, you can use data to understand and make careful updates to your customer's experience.

Start with a single audience based on your biggest business priority. Then, expand as your campaign gains momentum and your confidence in testing matures. For example, perhaps you specialize in cybersecurity for small business owners. You're not sure if they will respond better to a fear-based campaign ("protect yourself against rising threats") or one that positions security through a more optimistic lens ("see what's possible when you're not worried about breaches"). To determine which tactic is best, develop two versions of your campaign landing page to see how customers engage. You don't need to make radically different changes to move the needle. In fact, slight copy adjustments can make a big impact. That's good news if you think testing is too time-or resource-intensive.

If you can't decide what to test, don't think too hard. Pick a few things to tackle first and improve from there. If you're particularly eager to get up and running, keep it simple and test for HTML versus text-only.

Forty percent of marketers are A/B testing messaging to ensure content resonates with their target audience.

Source: Demand Gen Report

"Does a creative image really boost form fills or response rates on a landing page? A lot of times, creative images aren't super necessary," says Jessica Blair, demand generation manager at Adobe. "It depends on your audience, of course. But if you don't need creative assets, that eliminates the time needed to develop content—and you can get more campaigns out."

There's no shortage of features to test.

- CTA copy, size, font, color, and placement
- Lifestyle photography vs. illustrations
- Long conversion form vs. short conversion form
- Headline and subhead swaps
- Live chat vs. phone number
- Video vs. text
- Limited-time offer vs. free trial

Whatever variables you choose to weigh, make sure they're worth testing.

Let's say you're running an extremely targeted event for high-value accounts and C-level leads, with a total of 100 people on your send list. In the B2B universe, that's quite a low volume. With an audience that small, A/B testing the event landing page isn't going to yield statistically significant results. For high-priority accounts, it's best to provide a more consistent landing page experience.

Of course, that doesn't mean small audiences are off limits for testing. You can still evaluate certain variables by making sure your tests span multiple campaigns and then aggregating data from each of those campaigns before acting on your findings. It might be tempting to rush ahead, but methodical strategies can lead to nimble marketing operations. Remember the adage "measure twice, cut once?" It definitely applies to testing.

Part of the careful, upfront work includes choosing a set of key performance metrics to guide your campaign. Once you hit these benchmarks, step back to assess your findings. Let the results sink in. Always have a goal for your tests so you know when to stop. If you have multiple losing tests in a row, review overall campaign performance and make sure results are not being impacted negatively.

Ultimately, the most successful teams aren't just running tests—they're building a culture of experimentation. That means documenting results to revisit and share with future team members and setting a precedent for making data-driven decisions.

Marketing automation software can breathe new life into your A/B testing efforts. It has the ability to easily and quickly help you set up multiple tests and can automatically administer those tests—so you can focus your time and attention wherever else it is needed.

Get ready for your close-up.

Developing a comprehensive landing page strategy might seem overwhelming, especially when you're working with limited resources and tight deadlines. By applying these lessons to your marketing practice, you can turn a demand generation workhorse into a catalyst for meaningful connections.

Adobe Marketo Engage can help. It uses the power of Adobe Experience Platform to help marketers build brand value, grow revenue, and prove impact. With Adobe solutions, you can make every interaction the right one with powerful machine learning and predictive analytics capabilities. This will lead to experiences that are as dynamic as the people you serve.

Explore now

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