Cybergenica

purpose driven
internet marketing

The Harvest
from Landing Pages

By Daniel St.Pierre

The Cybergenica Company
Based in Tampa, FL
PH: (727) 674-5681
www.cybergenica.com

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

One of the primary goal of any website has always been lead generation. Your website must possess the ability to convert its visitors into leads to be used in marketing endeavors. This is where landing pages come in to play. More importantly, harvesting information is at the root of your success.

The Harvest from Landing Pages
A proven solution that significantly increases online lead generation.

Lead generation is nothing new, or anything complex. To better understand its use let's first find out what lead generation ultimately means.

Lead generation (commonly abbreviated as lead-gen) is a marketing term that refers to the creation or generation of prospective consumer interest or inquiry into a business' products or services. Leads can be generated for a variety of purposes - list building, e-newsletter list acquisition or for winning customers.

A lead is a sign-up for an advertiser offer that includes contact information and in some cases, demographic information. There are two types of leads in the lead generation market: sales leads and marketing leads.

Sales leads are generated on the basis of demographic criteria such as FICO score, income, age, HHI, etc. Sales leads are typically followed up through phone calls by the sales force. Sales leads are commonly found in the mortgage, insurance and finance leads.

Marketing leads are brand-specific leads generated for a unique advertiser offer. Because transparency is a necessary requisite for generating marketing leads, marketing lead campaigns can be optimized by mapping leads to their sources.[1]

Now that we know what lead generation is, the next question logically should involve maximizing lead generation which leads us to the obvious: Landing Pages.

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Landing Pages
What are they and more importantly, what are they good for?

A landing page, sometimes known as a lead capture page, is a page that appears when a potential customer clicks on an advertisement or a search-engine result link. The page will usually display content that is a logical extension of the advertisement or link, and that is optimized to feature specific keywords or phrases for indexing by search engines. [2]

Unlike lead generation, a simple process by which basic user information is gathered, landing pages are complex entities which can easily turn away potential customers. This is why landing pages should be considered as independant sections of a website, one produced in accords with the AIDA principle. AIDA is an acronym used in marketing that describes a common list of events that are very often undergone when a person is selling a product or service:

A - Attention (Awareness): attract the attention of the customer.
I - Interest: raise customer interest by focusing on and demonstrating advantages and benefits (instead of focusing on features, as in traditional advertising).
D - Desire: convince customers that they want and desire the product or service and that it will satisfy their needs.
A - Action: lead customers towards taking action and/or purchasing. [3]

Landing page musts:

1. A Personal Thank You or Welcome Message
Provides continuity and reassures the user they found the right page. Ultimately this message should be brief and should feature the topic of interest thereby installing a subliminal feeling of trust eg. Thank you for your interest in this critically acclaimed white paper -- You are only one step away from ROI beyond expectations! Statistics show landing pages that feature a thank you or welcome message convert +40% better than pages who ignore the initial user action.

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2. Creatively Convey Success

One of the most important components of a successful landing page involves the creative use of graphics that convey, well, success. A smiling face, a chest full of gold, a graph showing increased sales will go a long way in maximizing your landing pages' conversion ratio. Graphics on your landing pages should not include animated gifs or complicated Flash animations which have proven to distract users.

3. Harvest Data

The basis for lead geration. Using a simple form your landing page should have the ability to collect user data and store it to a database. In the event you do not have database capabilities an email form can be used as a method to collect data. The data to be harvested should include pertinent information needed to pursue a lead, in most cases first and last names, email address and phone number. It is important to remember the conversion rate of landing pages are inversely proportional to the number of fields in this form, therefore less is more.

4. Display a Privacy Statement

Today more than ever web surfers are concerned with their privacy, Providing a privacy statement reassures the user and increases your credibility. Landing pages with privacy statements are 3 times more likely to convert.

5. KISS

In tune with the "Keep It Simple Stupid" principle landing pages should be straight and to the point. Exclude anything that might distract users including navigation and addotional offers. Landing pages are designed to answer a specific need that was expressed upon the original action which led the user to this page. The goal is to reassure the user so the landing page can complete its task and harvest data for you to utilize.

6. Diversify and Test

Web user trends vary from one day to the next. Though landing pages can be rather cut and dry it is important to test various designs and layouts in an effort to maximize conversion ratios and in turn reach or surpass ROI expectations.

The Anatomy of a Landing Page
Marketing complexity made simple

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Thank You Pages
The harvest continues

If your landing page is successful users will fill out the form therein and be redirected to a "thank you" page where the harvest continues.

Thank you pages are to be regarded as a great vessel for upselling users. In some cases these pages feature incentives in exchange for a type of commitment on the part of the user.

Here are some of the incentives that typically work well on "thank you" pages:

1. Direct Mail Product
Catalogs, brochures or coupons are popular items which can be used on "thank you" pages since they require the collection of additional data such as mailing address, interests and in some cases, specific demographics such as age, income, industry, etc. this additional data has proven to significantly impact sales from leads generated from landing pages.

2. Digital Kits
Digital kits often featuring audio, video and/or written content have proven to be popular items to be included on "thank you" pages. This digital content is cost effective and an effective way to gather additional data from landing page users. As a part of your inbound marketing campaign there digital kits have proven to raise product or service awareness often resulting in additional revenue stream.

3. Promo Codes, Coupons and Special Offers
A successful "thank you" page will offer users the opportunity to save money or take advantage of a special offer. Since this page is often the last chance you will have to interact with the potential customer (until the lead is followed upon) it is essential you extend an offer to expand your relationship with the user or even attempt a call to action that may result in a sale.

Landing Page Statistics
Some numbers you should be aware of

+ On a worldwide scale successful landing pages produce ~47% more sales than sending visitors to a web site's home page.

+ In the United-States ~45% of clicks for B2B companies are directed home pages, not landing pages.

+ Over 62% of B2B companies that use landing pages have six or fewer total landing pages.

+ Less than 55% of companies that use landing pages test and adapt their campaigns according to measurable data collected by landing pages.

+ Landing page users are ~65% more likely to provide additional information once they have submitted a form which included their e-mail address.

+ Landing page users are ~45% more likely to purchase a product if they land on a secure order page with clear signs of secure ordering.

+ Landing page users are less likely to abandon shopping when Live Help or Live Support is available.

+ Landing page user attention span is 10 seconds or 2 clicks, with less than 30% scrolling down below the fold of the page.

+ The average cost estimate for the production of a database supported landing page is $650.00.

+ When designed according to the criteria herein landing pages can potentially increase revenue from PPC and organic internet marketing campaigns by 50%.

Ultimately, You Decide
With landing pages, You reap what you sow

The bottom line when it comes to landing pages is you dictate the outcome and path each user will take from the time they land on your page until the time they leave.

A well designed landing page will produce results that should significantly improve ROI from your internet marketing campaigns.

Like the proverb, when landing pages are concerned, you do reap what you sow. Apply the method described in this publication and your site will generate leads producing a bountiful harvest for you to draw sales and revenue for your company.

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References & Resources

[1] [2] Wikipedia, Copyright (C) 2000,2001,2002 Free Software Foundation, Inc.

[3] Ferrell, O.C. and Hartline, Michael (2005). Marketing Strategy. Thomson South-Western. ISBN 0-324-20140-0.