Without an effective “Call to Action” or Landing page for your customers, you may be sending your potential subscribers away. In the following document, we will review several ways in which to optimize your marketing efforts by effective layout designs and coloring techniques.

Optimizing Your Calls to Action and Landing Pages to Deliver Optimum Results

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With inbound marketing on the rise, most organizations are turning to increasing their online presences in order to generate leads and share information with their target populations. In recent times, a member of your target population may have had to sign up with a pencil and paper in order to receive some direct mail or even emails from you regarding information about your services, coupons or expert opinions concerning your trade. Now, with the click of a button, users are able to enter in their topic of interest into a search engine and populate the information that they are looking for.

So what entices your reader to want to join or subscribe to your newsletters or emails? If you subscribe to any type of Analytics software, you’re able to visualize where your readers are generating from and how long those readers stay on your website. Not getting the amount of subscribers you’d like? Do you feel as if your “Call to Action” is not powerful enough to persuade someone to enter in their personal information and begin receiving emails from you? Are your forms easy to use and find? If you find yourself scratching your head or are unsure of the answers to these questions, you’re not alone. This is why I have compiled several helpful tips to improve your “calls to action,” “click through” rates and therefore increasing the number of your subscribers.

Before we delve into things, we need to make sure everyone’s on the same page by clearing up some misconceptions regarding some of these key words. A Call to Action is simply an implicit or explicit suggestion contained in a marketing tactic, according to dictionary.com. For example, a website that has a big, red button that says “Click here to learn more” would be considered a ‘Call to Action’ or CTA. For the sake of increasing your amount of subscribers, it’s safe the say that this CTA would most likely have to not only be straightforward, but easy to see, understand and appealing to those who may visit your webpage or landing page. A landing page, is simply that page in which the reader is prompted to perform your specific request, for example, filling out a form in order to receive a whitepaper, discount code or gift item by ways of a CTA. Got it?

In this document, we will review some opportunities for you to not only optimize your layout pages for ease and “readers gravity” but also for call to action and color optimization. You’ll be amazed to see how small changes can have such a direct impact on the success of your CTAs and the increase in your subscribers or click throughs.
Call to Action Optimization

What types of Calls to Action are most effective? There are some very interested and intriguing articles out regarding different aspects and details of your CTAs that can exhibit positive and negative results for your marketing campaigns. Thanks to blogs such as Ann Smarty’s Colorize Your Brand – How Color Builds Your Brand and Van SEO Design’s 3 Design Layout, I have been able to produce, what I believe, to be a great resource for those interested in creating a “click provoking” Call to Actions and supporting landing pages.

Color Optimization

Ann Smarty, author of SEO Smarty, wrote the original post titled Colorize Your Brand, educating about choosing the right colors for your CTAs to evoke the right emotion from your reader. Since brands typically rely on colorful icons and pictures to represent all that is their organization, I thought it best to share with you some of the most common uses for some basic colors and the industries or feelings that arise when utilized.

For example;

Red: This color increases the readers’ heart rate, activates the pituitary gland and grabs attention. She denotes this color to be the best for effective Calls to Action (Smarty, 2008).

Yellow: This color is often the first color the reader sees. It represents Optimism and has very positive results when paired with a contrasting color, to stand out. It has the ability to evoke warm and exciting emotions to its reader (Smarty, 2008).

Orange: This color is often associated with cheerfulness and is often effectively utilized in websites pertaining to children (Smarty, 2008).

Blue: This color has the ability to provoke feelings of trustworthiness and security with the reader. Some genres of organizations that tend to utilize this color are companies such as banks. This color is also designated as a “universally liked” color (Smarty, 2008).

Green: This color is associated with being one of the easiest colors to read. It also has the ability to display feelings of wealth and calming. Institutions that may find this color most beneficial are financial or money oriented, or entertainment and leisure activity based organizations (Smarty, 2008).
White: As previously discussed, this color sets the stage for your Call to Action to truly pop off of your page. It allows other color to truly take precedence, while also evoking emotions of cleanliness or simplicity to its readers.

Ann goes on to discuss that 60-90% of a reader’s initial assessment is based on its color. Although these explanations point to red as being the most appropriate or successful color for a “Call to Action,” it’s important to remember that it may not be appropriate for your target population. One of the best ways to assess this, would be to test it out on your desired population and record the results.

But what difference does color optimization have on a page with poor content layout? Similar to the importance of color of a Call to Action, if a reader is unable to effectively navigate through your page due to lack of fluidity, you won’t be getting the kind of results you were looking for anyway.

Optimizing Your Landing Page

In order to have a well-designed landing page, one of the most important things to remember is to make things simple, concise and easy for your reader to understand. You don’t want them to have any unanswered questions because the time in which you have to convince them before they lose their attention is limited. According to Silverpop, you only have 8 seconds, in which to capture your reader’s interest on your landing page. With the help of Six Revisions, I have outlined three key components that I have found to be successful, for when creating a landing page and keeping your designs consistent and your readers interested.

1. **Be consistent** – Not only do you want to be consistent with what you are asking your reader to do or what they will be receiving if they do, but you want to make sure the look, feel and tone are also consistent. Readers are less likely to click through or fill out an entry form if your landing page looks like a completely different entity (K., 2012).

2. **Limit the number of CTAs for your audience** – The last thing you want to do is overwhelm your reader, especially when you only have 8 seconds to make a significant influence and impression.

3. **Don’t be afraid to use whitespace** – Some Marketers only focus on cramming as much information as possible onto a landing page in order to alleviate any fear that their reader has any unanswered questions. While leaving your reader abandoned is not the ideal, you also don’t want to turn your reader off by “shoving information down their throat” (K., 2012).
By following these simple guidelines, your reader will have a better understanding about how and why they should take the necessary steps and setting the stage for their click on your Call to Action.

Eye Patterns and Design Optimization

Thanks to trial and error and numerous studies, several layout designs have been noted as taking advantage of how people scan or read through a landing page. Three of the most popular styles to optimize results are the Gutenberg diagram, the Z-Pattern and the F-Pattern. Each have sufficient evidence to back their claims as being effective and some even share common characteristics in suggesting the greatest placement for the vital information you would like to be seen.

The Gutenberg Diagram

This diagram and design is normally utilized for text heavy documents, such as newspapers, novels, etc. It works on the idea that your eyes enjoy looking at evenly distributed, balanced information. This design separates the document into four different quadrants and suggests that the eye travels in a downward diagonal, from left to right, also known as “reading gravity” (Bradley, 2011). So, to stay true to this design, experts suggest that you place your logo’s or brand icons along this diagonal path due to their “harmony with the natural reading gravity.”
The Z-Pattern

This pattern suggests that readers tend to read from the left to the right, back to the left and then the right again, exhibiting the shape of a “Z” (Bradley, 2011). Although the Z-Pattern and the Gutenberg Diagram appear quite different, one thing to keep in mind is that they both begin in the upper “left quadrant” and then end in the “lower right quadrant.” So to adhere to both ideas, placing your brand or logo in either of these locations, is optimal.

The F-Pattern

http://www.vanseodesign.com/web-design/3-design-layouts/
This pattern appears to be one of the most popular mentioned online and utilized by marketing professionals, originally made popular by Jacob Nielsen. Along with the previous designs we discussed, most eye tracking studies suggest that the eye begins in the upper left side of a document. The difference between this design and the other two, is that it states that the eye will go from the top left to the top right and then returns to the top left before making another horizontal sweep across again before going in a downward motion, similar to the letter “F” (Bradley, 2011). By adhering to this pattern and it’s rules, the best place to place your brand would also be in the top left quadrant, but also suggests that because the eye travels in a vertical manner along the left side of the document, utilizing this placement to place such information as descriptions, mission statements, values or customer testimonies, will get the most attention here.

Obviously, there are exceptions to every rule, and not every person who visits your landing page will exhibit these same behaviors, but it is also important to be aware of some of the most popular eye patterns to optimize your page. To ignore it, well, would simply be silly.

I hope this collaborated document has provided you with some helpful takeaways for the development or re-design of your landing pages and Calls to Action. As mentioned previously, the best way to determine if a layout, color or design is right for your organization, is to test, test and retest! People are constantly changing and evolving, so consistent and constant re-evaluation is key.

“By changing nothing, nothing changes.” -Tony Robbins

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References


