How to Build High-Converting Landing Pages: A Complete Step-by-Step Guide

Meta title: How to Build High-Converting Landing Pages (Step-by-Step Guide)

Meta description: Learn how to build a high-converting landing page, from picking one goal to writing the headline, adding proof, speeding up the page, and testing what works.

A high-converting landing page is a single page built to get one specific action from one specific visitor.

That action might be a purchase, a signup, a booking, or a download. Everything else on the page either helps that action happen or gets cut.

Most pages fall short because they try to do too much. They greet visitors with a full menu, three offers, and a pop-up for good measure.

This guide shows you how to build the opposite: a focused page that makes the next step obvious.

If you're using a website builder like Squarespace, comparing Squarespace cost with your landing page budget can also help you choose a plan that fits your needs without paying for features you won't use.

What Counts as a “Good” Landing Page Conversion Rate?

Before you build anything, pick a number to aim for. Unbounce’s 2024 Conversion Benchmark Report analyzed 57 million conversions across 41,000 landing pages and 464 million pageviews.

It puts the median landing page conversion rate at 6.6% across all industries Unbounce, 2024 Conversion Benchmark Report.

Your industry matters, so compare yourself to the right row:

Industry	Median landing page conversion rate
All industries	6.6%
Ecommerce	4.2%

SaaS	3.8%
Financial services	8.3%

A median is the middle of the pack, not the finish line. If your page sits below it, you have room to grow. If it sits above it, test your way higher.

Step 1: Pick One Goal and One Audience

Ask two questions before you open a design tool. What single action do you want? Who exactly are you asking?

“Get more leads” is too fuzzy. “Get small-bakery owners to book a 15-minute demo” gives you something to write for.

One goal per page also makes your results easy to read, since every visit either hit the goal or it didn’t.

If you serve two audiences, build two pages. A page that speaks to everyone usually moves no one.

Step 2: Match the Page to the Traffic Source

Picture clicking an ad that promises “50% off running shoes” and landing on a generic homepage. You’d leave in about three seconds, and so would your visitors.

This idea is called message match. The headline, offer, and imagery on your landing page should echo the ad, email, or post that sent people there.

Copywriters have long split audiences by how aware they are of their problem, a framework Eugene Schwartz laid out in Breakthrough Advertising back in 1966.

A visitor who already knows your product needs a different page than one who just realized they have a problem.

A simple rule works well here:

- **Warm traffic** (email subscribers, retargeting): get to the offer fast.
- **Cold traffic** (broad ads, social): explain the problem and the payoff first.
- **Search traffic**: mirror the exact phrase the person typed.

Step 3: Write a Headline That Answers “What Do I Get?”

Your headline has one job. It tells a stranger what they get and why they should care, in about the time it takes to read a street sign.

Strong headlines tend to share three traits:

1. They name a clear benefit, not a feature.
2. They use the words your customer would use.
3. They sound like a human wrote them.

Compare “Our Platform Offers Scheduling Solutions” with “Fill Your Calendar Without the Back-and-Forth Emails.”

The second one wins. Follow it with a short subheadline that adds one useful detail, such as who it’s for or how fast it works.

Step 4: Design the Top of the Page to Do the Heavy Lifting

Attention drops off fast as people move down a page. Nielsen Norman Group tracked more than 130,000 eye fixations from 120 participants.

People spent about 57% of their viewing time above the fold, and 74% in the first two screenfuls Nielsen Norman Group, “Scrolling and Attention,” April 15, 2018.

People scroll more than they did in 2010, but the top of the page still earns the most attention.

Nielsen Norman Group’s advice is to keep major calls to action above the fold. So the first screen should include:

- A benefit-driven headline and subheadline
- One clear call to action (CTA) button
- A relevant image, product shot, or short video
- A quick trust signal, such as a customer logo or star rating

Skip the full navigation bar. Every extra link is an exit door.

Step 5: Back Up Your Claims With Proof

Visitors don’t know you yet, so they won’t take your word for it. Give them reasons to believe you:

- **Testimonials** with a real name, photo, and specific result
- **Customer logos** and press mentions
- **Reviews and ratings** pulled from a recognized platform
- **Case study snippets** with a number in them
- **Guarantees**, such as a refund window or free trial

Specific beats are vague every time. “Cut our reporting time from six hours to one” convinces more people than “Great product!”

Step 6: Make the Call to Action Impossible to Miss

Your CTA button should stand out from the rest of the page, say what happens next, and appear more than once on longer pages.

Weak button text: “Submit.” Stronger options: “Get My Free Quote,” “Start My Trial,” or “Book My Demo.”

If your page uses a form, ask only for what you truly need. A name and email often beat a ten-field questionnaire.

Add fields only when the extra detail changes how you follow up, and test the trade-off rather than guessing.

Step 7: Choose a Builder That Fits Your Budget

You can build a landing page in a dedicated tool like Unbounce, in WordPress, or in a website builder like Squarespace. The right pick depends on your skills, your timeline, and your wallet.

The budget deserves a real look before you commit. Plan tiers, billing cycles, and promotions change, so check the current Squarespace cost for each plan before you decide.

Compare it against what you actually need: custom domain, email capture, checkout, and analytics. Paying for features you’ll never touch is the quiet budget killer.

Students and early-career creators have an extra option. If you’re building a portfolio or a class project, look into the Squarespace student discount before paying full price.

Confirm the eligibility rules and the current terms first, since they can change.

Step 8: Make the Page Fast and Mobile-Friendly

A beautiful page that loads slowly is a beautiful page nobody sees. Google’s Core Web Vitals give you clear targets, measured at the 75th percentile of real page loads:

- **Largest Contentful Paint (LCP):** 2.5 seconds or less
- **Interaction to Next Paint (INP):** 200 milliseconds or less
- **Cumulative Layout Shift (CLS):** 0.1 or less

INP became a stable Core Web Vital in 2024 and replaced First Input Delay, so older guides that still list FID are out of date web.dev, “Web Vitals,” last updated October 31, 2024.

Run your page through PageSpeed Insights to see where you stand. The usual fixes are easy to apply:

- Compress images and set width and height so the layout doesn't jump.
- Don't lazy-load your main hero image.
- Cut third-party scripts you don't need, like extra chat widgets and trackers.
- Test on a real phone, not just a shrunken desktop window.

Step 9: Test One Change at a Time

Your first draft is a hypothesis. A/B testing turns it into evidence. Run two versions at the same time, change one element, and let the data pick the winner.

Good first tests include:

- The headline
- The CTA button text and color
- The hero image or video
- The number of form fields
- The placement of testimonials

Be patient and let each test collect enough visits before you call it. Small wins add up quickly: moving from a 1% to a 2% conversion rate doubles your results from the same traffic.

Step 10: Time Your Campaigns Around Big Sales Moments

A strong page gets stronger when the offer is timely. Seasonal shopping peaks, back-to-school, and year-end budgets all raise buying intent.

Black Friday lands on November 27 in 2026, so landing pages built around deals should be live and tested well before that date.

If you're building your own site for a launch, shoppers searching for a 45% off Squarespace Black Friday coupon show how many people hunt for deals at this time of year.

Verify any discount's terms and dates on the offer page before you promote or rely on it.

The same logic applies to your own pages. Put the deadline near the CTA, state the offer in plain words, and make sure the page matches the ad that brought people in.

Common Landing Page Mistakes to Avoid

- **Too many goals.** Two CTAs that compete cut both of them down.
- **Vague headlines.** "Welcome to our site" tells people nothing.
- **Stock-photo overload.** Real photos and real faces build more trust.

- **A hidden or weak CTA.** If people have to hunt for the button, many won't.
- **No mobile check.** A big share of your traffic arrives on a phone.
- **Skipping the thank-you page.** It confirms the action, tracks conversions, and offers a natural next step.

Quick Landing Page Checklist

Element	What to confirm
Goal	One action, one audience
Message match	Headline echoes the ad or email
Headline	States a clear benefit
Above the fold	CTA, proof, and visual are visible
Proof	Named testimonials, logos, or numbers
CTA	Action-focused text, repeated on long pages
Form	Only the fields you need
Speed	LCP 2.5s or less, INP 200ms or less, CLS 0.1 or less
Mobile	Tested on a real phone
Testing	One variable at a time

Also Read: Landing Page Design Tips to Boost Conversions

Frequently Asked Questions

How long should a landing page be?

As long as it takes to answer a visitor's questions, and no longer. A low-cost, low-risk offer, like a free download, can work on a short page. A higher-priced or more complex offer usually needs more proof and detail.

Should a landing page have a navigation menu?

Usually not. A menu offers exits that pull people away from your goal. Keep the focus on the single action.

How many CTAs should a landing page have?

One primary action, repeated as needed. You can place the same button at the top, middle, and bottom of a long page. Avoid adding a second, different goal.

How do I know if my conversion rate is good?

Compare it with your industry's median, then keep improving against your own past results. Unbounce's 2024 report lists a 6.6% median across industries, with ecommerce at 4.2% and SaaS at 3.8%.

How often should I test my landing page?

Keep a test running whenever you have enough traffic to produce a clear result. Change one element per test so you know what caused the lift.

Final Thoughts

Great landing pages aren't magic. They come from one clear goal, a message that matches the click, proof that builds trust, a fast load, and steady testing.

Start with the top of the page, fix what slows people down, and let your data guide the next change.