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# Mastering the *Essentials* of an **Inbound** **Marketing Website**

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*Written by:*

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## **Bob Ruffolo**

*Founder & CEO, [@BobRuffolo](#)*

Bob is the founder and CEO of IMPACT, an agency he formed in 2009 to help people and their organizations succeed by changing the way they market themselves online. Since its founding, IMPACT has achieved its status as one of HubSpot's first Platinum Partners in less than 2 years, and secured its place as one of the top inbound marketing agencies in the country.

*Design and Layout by Christine Austin ([@ItsChristine\\_A](#))*

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# Introduction.

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These days, your website functions as a digital storefront for your business.

Much like a traditional storefront, the goal is to attract visitors to your site and encourage them to choose your product or service.

However, simply having a website isn't enough to warrant a full sales pipeline.

In order to make an impact from a quantitative standpoint, you must be focused on conceptualizing and producing a website that will deliver a measurable return on investment.

But how?

Through my experiences, I've found that this is where businesses lack direction. This is where uncertainty begins to influence decision-making, ultimately resulting in a redesign gone south.

You see, to ensure measurable results, you must start with purpose. The rest will follow.

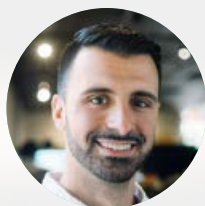
It can't be, "I want to redesign my site because my competitor's site is looking really good!"

Rather, it should start with, "I want to attract and convert more of [insert persona here] because those people end up being our best customers."

With that frame of mind, you'll be able to uncover what needs to be done in order to create a site and brand experience that supports your marketing goals.

But change can be scary, right? We get that. In fact, it's why we created this guide.

We want to help you nail down the purpose of your website redesign, and walk you through what follows.



**Tom DiScipio**

*Partner & Chief Strategy Officer*

*IMPACT Branding & Design*



# CHAPTER 1:

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# Responsiveness



# re•spon•sive de•sign

/ri-‘spän(t)-siv/ /di-‘zīn/ n.

**1. According to [HubSpot](#), responsive design is the method of designing web pages that automatically appear in their optimized form on all devices.**

“79% of users who don’t like what they find on a mobile site will go look for the information they need on another site.”

Where will your next website visit come from?

Their desktop? A tablet? Maybe their smartphone?

While it’s impossible to pinpoint how they’ll access your site, it is possible to ensure an optimized experience when they arrive.

Websites built on the [HubSpot Website Platform](#) are mobile-friendly right out of the box. Thanks to a bit of code built directly into the Website Platform, these websites are designed to be fully responsive on smartphones and devices of all different shapes and sizes.

This means that visitors have the convenience of accessing your site from the device of their choosing without compromising the overall experience.

The simple truth is that if your visitors have shifted their viewing behavior, you need to employ [a responsive design](#) to ensure continued relevance.

## What You Need to Consider:

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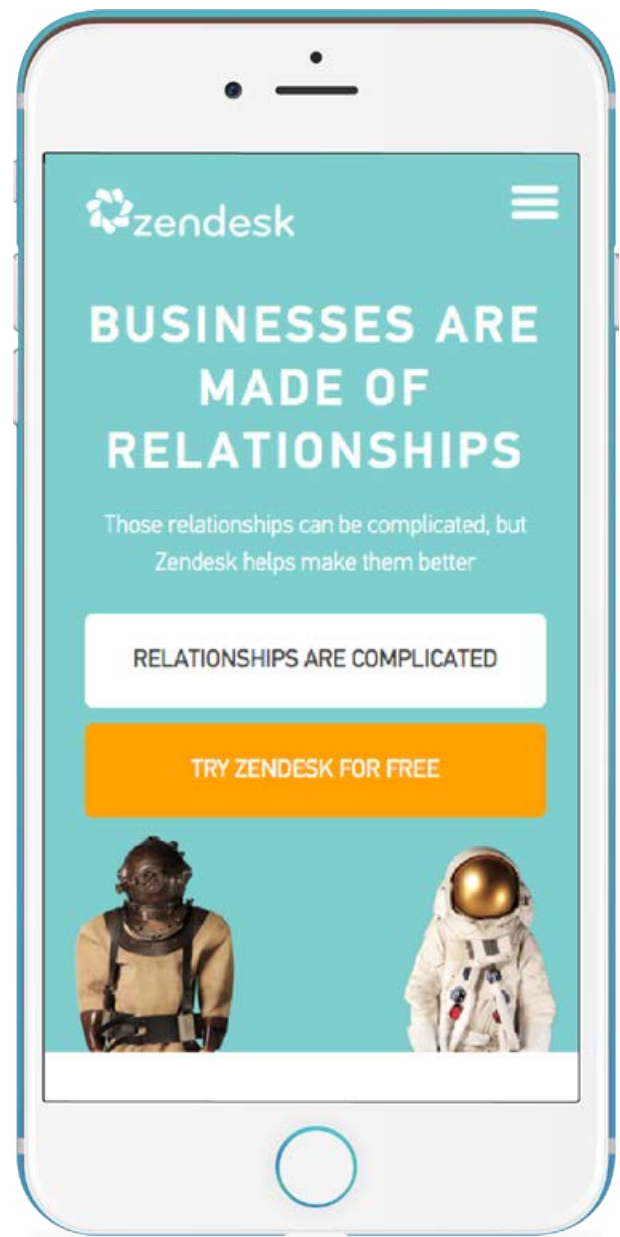
### ADJUST THE CONTENT

Mobile devices call for stripped down, focused content.

If you're serving up the desktop version of one of your landing pages on mobile, you're at risk of losing a visitor's interest.

When operating on a smaller screen, the amount of information a visitor can see at once is constricted. This means that they are forced to remember more, making long-winded content less than ideal.

Improve the mobile experience by taking the content from your desktop page and cutting it in half (at the very least.) Even short content is too long for mobile. Make it minimal.

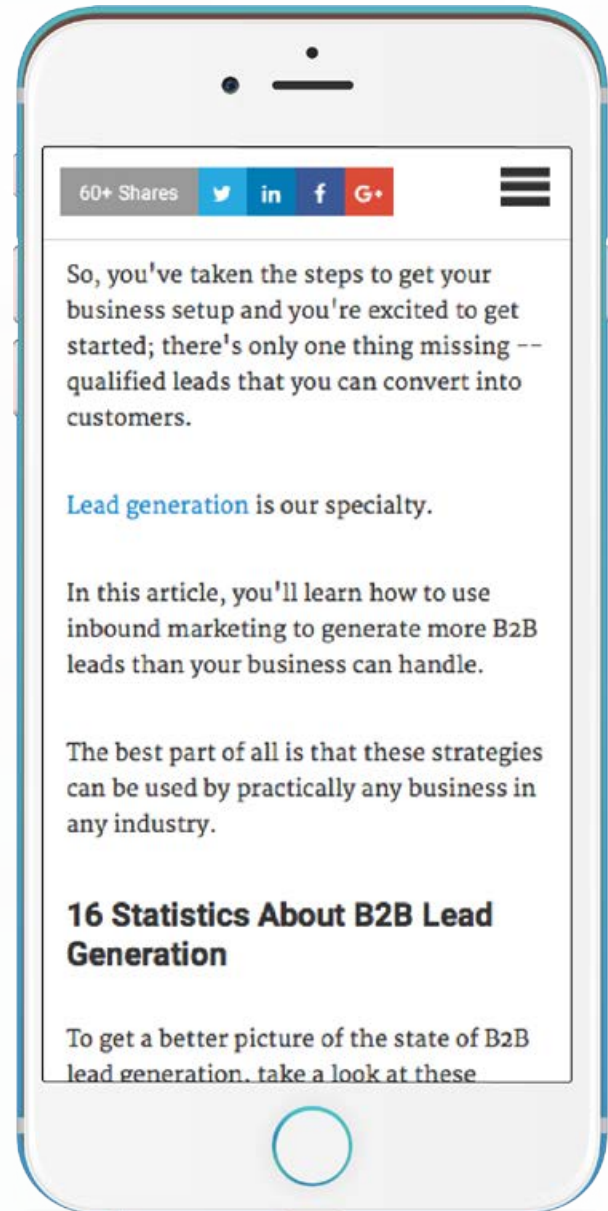


## ENSURE *easy* SHARING

According to research from ShareThis, 75% of pins and 71% of tweets come from smartphones and tablets.

If this doesn't convey the importance of easily accessible social share buttons for mobile designs, then nothing will.

If you can incorporate the number of shares a post has already received next to each icon, you're in even better shape, as this provides visitors with social proof. Remember, people are often motivated by what they believe is the correct behavior.

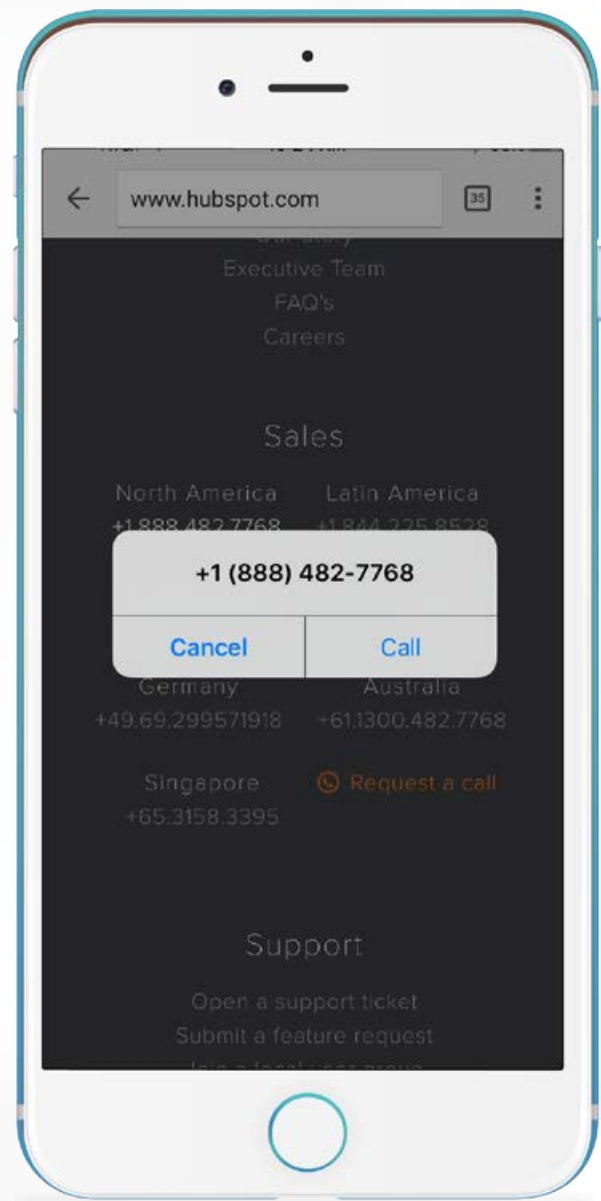


## MAKE CONTENT INFORMATION *Clickable*

Don't make it difficult for visitors to get in touch with you.

When exploring your website from their smartphone, your visitor literally has their phone in their hand. If they come across your number and it's not clickable, forcing them to write it down or copy and paste, it adds friction to the experience and increases the possibility of losing them.

The same goes for elements like your email address or location. If you're a retail store or a restaurant and your objective is to drive people to your physical location, a clickable link to a Google Map is essential.



## CONDENSE FORMS

Anyone who has ever filled out a form on a mobile device will agree, less is more.

If you want to capture leads from mobile devices, it's important that you scale your form length accordingly. This means eliminating any unnecessary fields by requiring only the bare bones information.





# CHAPTER 2:

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# Personalization



# per·son·al·i·za·tion

/ˈpers-ne -l-zaˈshen/ v.

**1. The ability to personalize your pages using smart content, forms, and CTAs to ensure relevance among different segments of visitors.**

“**42%** *of personalized calls-to-action targeted to the user perform better than calls-to-action that are generic. (Source: [HubSpot](#))*”

It should come as no surprise that where a customer begins and where they ultimately end up are two entirely different places.

At the beginning of the process, they have different needs and interests than when they're closer to making a purchasing decision.

The HubSpot Website Platform is designed to help businesses connect with visitors, leads, and customers at the right time with a message that carries the most relevance.

Through [personalization and smart content](#), businesses are able to provide prospects and customers with a unique experience based off variables such as life cycle stage or buyer persona.

# What You Need to Look For:

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## DIFFERENT VIEWS FOR DIFFERENT PERSONAS

Depending on your product or service, it's likely that you work with a few different types of customers or [buyer personas](#).

Your website's content should be designed to speak to these people specifically, however, even with a narrowed focus, it can still be difficult to convey value to persona A without alienating persona B or vice versa.

Personalization eliminates the need to appeal to everyone by providing you with an opportunity to tailor content to those that matter.

Here's a great example of persona personalization on [Khan Academy](#)'s homepage:



By allowing the visitor to select an option that best describes their role, they open up the door for a unique contextual experience.

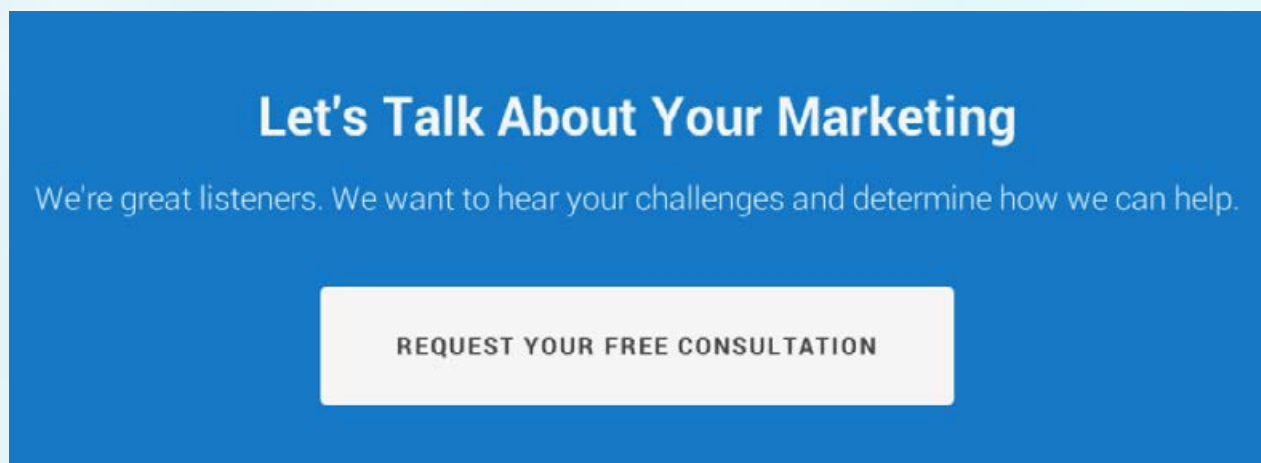
Once they select a role, their visit will be tailored to their interests each time they return. This prevents them from having to sift through material to extract value, because as a result of personalization, it's suddenly all about them.

## DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES FOR DIFFERENT LIFECYCLE STAGES

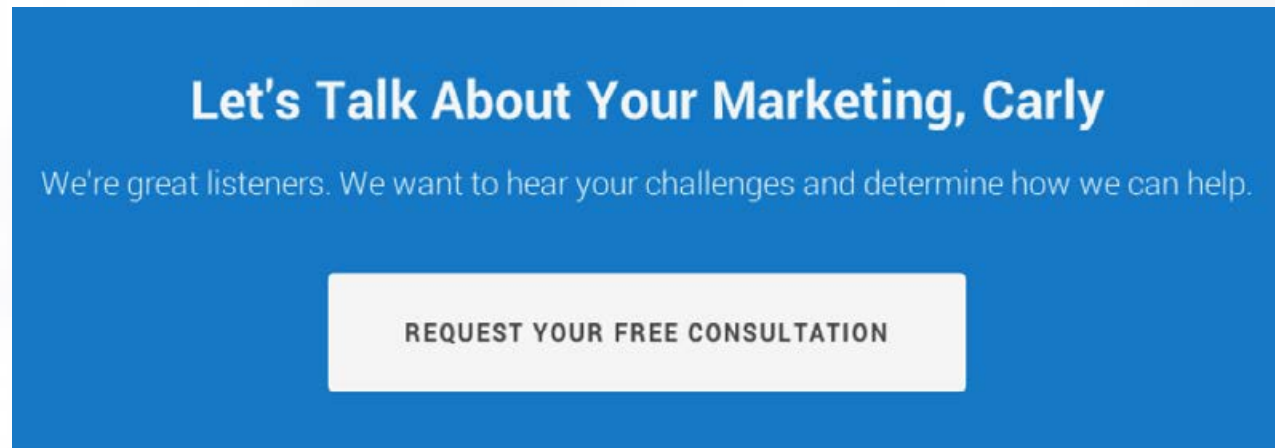
As your visitor evolves from a stranger to a lead to a customer, your website content should evolve with them in order to remain relevant. In other words, it should take into account their lifecycle stage and [buyer's journey](#).

As you gather information about someone over time, you can apply it to your site's content as a way to personalize their experience and keep them engaged.

For example, in the past, when a first-time visitor came to our website, they'd be presented with a default message on our homepage that looked like this:



Once they convert into a lead, the message would evolve into something a little more personal:



**Let's Talk About Your Marketing, Carly**

We're great listeners. We want to hear your challenges and determine how we can help.

**REQUEST YOUR FREE CONSULTATION**

This is a great example of the fact that personalization doesn't have to remain confined to email. Websites that employ personalization transcend limitations and serve as a valuable tool for marketers to provide the right message, to the right person, at the right time.



# CHAPTER 3:

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## Integration



# in•te•gra•tion

/,in-te-‘grā-shen/ n.

**1. HubSpot’s integration capabilities allow users to access all of the tools necessary to carry out their marketing efforts in one place in order to provide customers with a consistent experience across all channels.**

“ *The HubSpot Website Platform is a live stage where all of the marketing channels you’re already using – blogging, social media, email and even third party apps like Wistia or GoToWebinar – are working in concert, not in silos.* ”

*– Tom DiScipio, IMPACT Branding & Design*

Inbound marketing success doesn’t have to take you here, there, and everywhere.

In fact, HubSpot offers an integrated platform that makes planning, creating, monitoring, and maintaining a marketing campaign under one roof virtually seamless.

For those who have yet to drink the orange kool-aid, you might be thinking that there ought to be a way to do what HubSpot does without making the investment.

While piecing together a MacGyvered toolbox of [marketing resources](#) might appear to be effective, in reality the time spent researching, implementing, and trying to integrate each tool individually will set you back.

With that being said, there's simply no denying that the level of integration provided by HubSpot has considerable advantages.

## Let's Take a Closer Look:

### UNDERSTAND THE PERFORMANCE OF *Each* CHANNEL

HubSpot's Sources Report ties together all of your business' traffic sources in one view to make evaluating performance painless.



Source	Visits	%	Contacts	%	Customers	%
Organic Search Google, Bing, Yahoo!, etc.	28,827	1.1%	308	0.0%	0	0.0%
Referrals Links on other sites	3,710	5.2%	192	0.0%	0	0.0%
Social Media Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn...	11,476	2.8%	319	0.3%	1	0.0%
Email Marketing Email links	8,080	0.3%	29	0.0%	0	0.0%
Paid Search Paid search advertisements	14	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Direct Traffic Manually entered URLs	12,261	2.8%	342	0.0%	0	0.0%
Other Campaigns Other sources	1,893	26.9%	510	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	67,069	2.5%	1,700	0.1%	1	0.0%

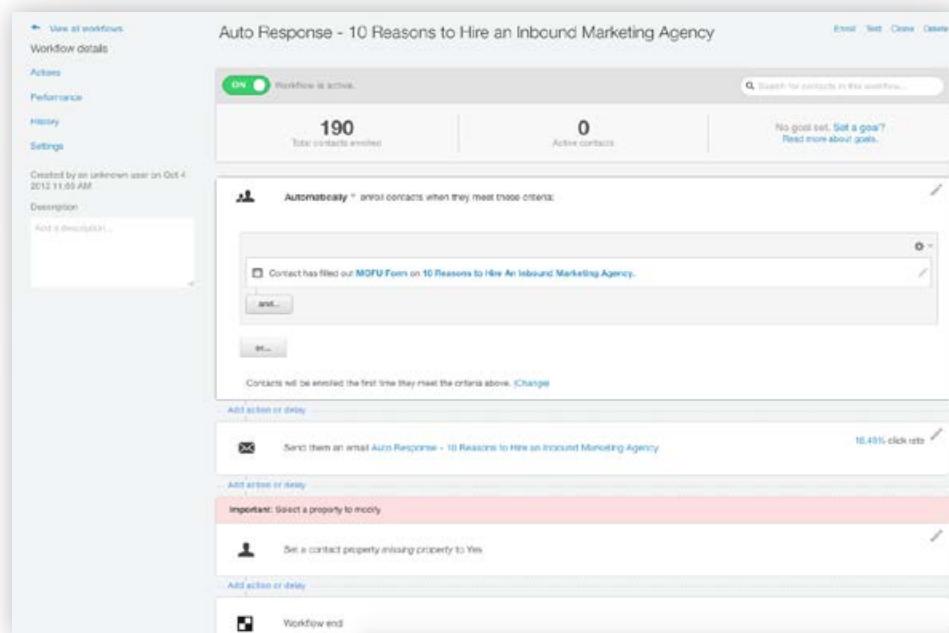
Organic search, referrals, social media, email marketing, paid search, direct traffic, other campaigns, and offline sources appear alongside one another to help you determine which channels are generating the most traffic and what's generating the highest ROI.

With a detailed breakdown like this, you can make more informed decisions regarding how to invest your marketing dollars.

## MONITOR AND ASSIST PROSPECTS THROUGH THE SALES FUNNEL

For each new lead you capture, HubSpot builds an individualized profile to help you identify touch points and behaviors that can inform appropriate follow ups.

The workflows tool puts an end to ineffective email by making it easy for users to place their leads into the most relevant workflow for them based off their factors like their download history or the pages they've viewed.



Users have the flexibility to add and subtract steps from workflows, set delays for emails, and move leads into different campaigns as they see fit.

Through the use of these interconnected tools, HubSpot users can more effectively manage their pipeline by delivering the right content, to the right people, at the right time.

## A/B TEST AND OPTIMIZE PAGES

If you're looking to monetize your website traffic, it's important that you have a firm grasp on the importance of conversion.

HubSpot's platform allows you to conduct experiments known as A/B tests to explore the effectiveness of two different variants of one piece of content. This could be something simple like a CTA, or something a bit more substantial like a new page design.



Uncovering insight into which variation performed better will help you to put forth optimized content that has proven its ability to convert a high volume of leads.



# CHAPTER 4:

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# Messaging



# mes·sag·ing

/‘me-sijiNG/ n.

**1. Any content, visual or written, that conveys the value, features, and benefits of a product or service.**

“ *Consumers shouldn’t need a doctorate in business jargon or a masters degree in marketing to decode what you’re marketing and selling. Make it simple, make it clear, and make it concise.* ”  
– Dharmesh Shah, Founder and CTO of Hubspot

If the content that you employ is all about your business, product or service, or your features, you’re doing it wrong.

While you want to [highlight the unique benefit](#) of what you’re offering, it’s important that you’re tying the customer back into the equation.

What can your product or service do for them?

What actions do you want them to take?

What information will they need before they can complete these actions?

# What's Important:

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## WHY MESSAGING MATTERS

Often times we underestimate the power of words at work. The following video serves as the perfect example of this:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pzjEzohHmaM>

Powerful, right? This should serve as a reminder that the right words can make all the difference. Is your message written in such a way that will inspire action? Or are you simply asking for business?

The right words will inspire.

# How to Ensure Resonance:

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## SIT DOWN WITH *your* TEAMMATES

When creating buyer personas, it's important to remember that it's not about the customers you could have, but the ones you actually want to work with.

In order to narrow your focus, it's a good idea to sit down with some of the members of your client services department and pick their brains.

By identifying the current customers that not only experience success, but are also easy and enjoyable to work with, you'll have a clear picture of how to consolidate your list.

## CONDUCT INTERVIEWS

In addition to sitting down with your client-facing colleagues, make sure to conduct one-on-one interviews with a few of your ideal clients. This is the best way to get accurate, first-hand insight into the minds of your buyer persona. Below is an example of the information you'll want to gather:

### Maggie the Marketer

#### Background:

- Marketing Manager
- B.A in Communications
- Responsible for implementing digital strategy that generates traffic and sales ready leads
- Ultimately measured on number of sales appointments
- Married with children



## **Role**

1. *What is your job role?*
2. *Your title?*
3. *How is your job measured?*
4. *What does a typical day look like?*
5. *What skills are required to do your job?*
6. *What knowledge and tools do you use in your job?*
7. *Who do you report to?*
8. *Who reports to you?*

## **Company**

9. *In which industry or industries does your company work?*
10. *What is the size of your company (revenue, employees)?*

## **Goals**

11. *What are you responsible for?*
12. *What does it mean to be successful in your role?*

## **Challenges**

13. *What are your biggest challenges?*

### *Watering Holes*

14. *How do you learn about new information for your job?*
15. *What publications or blogs do you read?*
16. *What associations and social networks do you belong to?*

## **Personal Background**

- 17. Describe your personal demographics (if appropriate, ask their age, whether they're married, if they have children).*
- 18. Describe your educational background.*
- 19. What level of education did you complete, which schools did you attend, and what did you study?*
- 20. Describe your career path.*
- 21. How did you end up where you are today?*

## **Shopping Preferences**

- 22. How do you prefer to interact with vendors (email, phone, in person)?*
- 23. Do you use the internet to research vendors or products?*
- 24. If yes, how do you search for information?*
- 25. Describe a recent purchase. Why did you consider a purchase, what was the evaluation process, and how did you decide to purchase that product or service?*

## TALK TO SALES

While the information from interviews plays an extremely important role in the development of buyer personas, sales can often reveal factors in a prospect's decision making process that may not come across in a formal buyer persona interview.

These motives, characteristics, and personal details stem from the extensive conversations sales engages in with prospects and customers day in and day out.

These small details will help you put forth a message that conveys exactly what your audience wants to hear, rather than just relying on what you want to tell them. Start by asking your sales team [these five questions](#).



# CHAPTER 5:

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# Professional Design



# pro·fes·sion·al de·sign

/pre'feSHenl/ /de'zīn/ n.

**1. Professional design refers to the task of designing websites with attention to elements like color, layout, and overall graphical appearance. (Source: Business Dictionary)**

“ *That brilliant solution you made for that annoying problem needs to be visually organized and communicated in the most effective way possible to get people interested.* ”  
– Amir Hamdi, *Impact Branding & Design*

Whether we like to admit it or not, everyone has been known to judge a book by its cover. Your website is no exception.

It's important that businesses recognize that a design that conveys professionalism requires an investment in your brand. Be aware that you get out of your redesign what you put into it. This is not the time or place to pinch pennies.

To avoid losing visitors upon arrival, prioritize the following design considerations before you move forward with any rebuilding.

# What to Prioritize:

## COLOR

Just because your favorite color is purple, doesn't mean that it makes sense for your website.

The color scheme that you employ on your website must be aligned with your overall branding. Consistencies in color will facilitate brand recognition, making it easier for potential customers to remember your business.

If you wish to experiment with colors outside of your traditional branding, find a way to incorporate them in small ways to make a big impact. Colors that contrast your overall brand work perfectly for important content such as calls-to-action.

The screenshot shows the tapinfluence website's pricing page. The header includes the tapinfluence logo, navigation links (Software, Customers, Pricing, Blog, Resources), a phone number (720.726.4074), and a 'Let's Talk' button. The main heading is 'Straightforward Pricing', followed by a subtext: 'Our simple fee structure and powerful features at every level help you achieve ROI faster and more effectively. Only pay for what you need.' Below this are three pricing plans, each in a different color box: Standard (orange), Enterprise (red), and Agency (pink). Each plan has a 'Call Now' button and a 'Request a Quote' button. The Standard plan is priced at \$1,999/mo. Below the plans, there are three columns of features: 'Standard Includes', 'Includes Standard Plus', and 'Helps Agencies'.

Standard Includes	Includes Standard Plus	Helps Agencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Access to Influencer Marketplace</li><li>Influencer Identification + Activation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Enterprise Onboarding</li><li>Integration Support</li><li>Strategic Account Manager</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Pitch and win clients with influencer marketing</li><li>Execute influencer marketing at scale</li></ul>

## FONT

Understanding which styles are the most effective for web copy can mean the difference between a website that encourages visitors to explore or click the back button.

With that being said, you want to employ a font style that is easily read across multiple devices.

For example, San Serif fonts are effective for both desktop and mobile web communications. Not only do they take less pixels to load due to their complete shape, but they're simple enough to be used on small mobile canvases without contributing to visual noise.

If you're looking for examples, check out the following:

- Lato
- Roboto
- Raleway
- Proxima Nova
- Open Sans

## PHOTOS

*“Smiling Executive Holding Notebook”*

*“Confused Business Man Itching Head With Pen”*

*“Confident Smiling Corporate Woman.”*

I mean, nothing says “do business with us” like a “Smiling Boss Communicating with Client,” right?

While it’s true that visitors enjoy seeing real, human faces on the websites of businesses they are contemplating doing business with, this shouldn’t come at the expense of quality.



vs.





# CHAPTER 6:

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# Search Engine Optimization



# search en·gine op·ti·mi·zation

/serCH/ /'enjen/ /,äp-te-me-'zā-shen/ n.

1. Search engine optimization refers to techniques that help your website rank higher in organic search results, making it more visible to people who are looking for your brand, product, or service via search engines like Google, Bing, and Yahoo. (Source: [HubSpot](#))

“

*Crawling is not a guarantee you're indexed.*

*– Rand Fishkin, Moz*

”

When it comes to achieving online marketing success, perhaps the biggest determining factor is getting found.

The copy included on your website should strike a balance between capturing the attention of both your personas and search engines.

It's a delicate balance, and too much or too little consideration for either of these things could have a significant impact on your ability to capture leads.

In order to deliver the most optimized website experience possible, it's important that you consider the following.

# What to Consider:

## CONDUCT KEYWORD RESEARCH

Keyword research is a great place to start if you're looking to improve upon your search engine results. With a well-defined keyword or keyword phrase selected, you can then incorporate it into your titles, tags, meta descriptions, and links so that your website has the ability to turn up more relevant visitors who are more likely to convert into leads.

HubSpot users can use the Keyword Tool to organize their keyword research and uncover relevant insights such as:

- The specific rank position of each keyword
- Difficulty rates for front-page results
- Website visits generated by each keyword
- Leads generated by each keyword

Essentially this tool not only allows you to find the best keywords for your site and track their progress over time, but you can also check out things like the keywords that your competitors are ranking for.



This is important, since you can then plan out exactly how you can target those keywords and take them out from [the top ranking spots](#) in the search engines and put your website in their place.x

## FOCUS ON ON-PAGE SEO

Let's face it, when it comes to on-page SEO, there's a lot to remember. There's also a lot to forget.

With HubSpot Professional and Enterprise accounts, users have access to as-you-type SEO recommendations.

It's a feature built into their blogging platform that allows content creators to optimize for a specific keyword by providing them with tips and reminders along with the impact that particular factors have on their search performance.

This includes considerations such as:

- **Title optimizations:** Does your title contain a keyword? Is it under 70 characters?
- **Body optimizations:** Are there keywords in the body of your post? Are they overused? Does the post contain internal links? Does the post have a clear call-to-action?
- **Image optimizations:** Does your post contain an image? Did you optimize the image's alt text?
- **Meta optimizations:** Are there keywords in your URL? What about your meta description? Is your meta description the proper length?

Aside from blog optimization, HubSpot users also have access to the Page Performance tool, which helps them identify areas for on-page SEO improvement, gain insight into which keywords they are ranking for, and uncover the inbound links that are directing visitors to their site.

## **REMEMBER TO PROTECT *your* ASSETS**

When redesigning a website it's important that you pay equal attention to preserving your existing SEO assets as you do making things look pretty.

A new layout can sometimes mean that certain pages will be deleted or altered. If that's the case, you want to be sure that your most valuable pages aren't slipping through the cracks.

So before you make any changes to your website, it's important that you take inventory of the pages generating the most traffic, conversions, and links.

Additionally, if you are making changes to pages and URLs, you absolutely must set up 301 redirects. A 301 redirect is a permanent redirect from one URL to another that is used to guide traffic from your old URL to your new one. Setting these up will help you to conserve SEO authority from the original URL.

Without redirects for pages that you have moved or consolidated, website visitors are likely to turn up a ton of 404 pages which will work against your ranking.



## CHAPTER 7:

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# Conversion Rate Optimization



# con·ver·sion rate op·ti·mi·zation

/ken-‘ver-zhen, -shen/ /reyt/ /,äp-te-me-‘zā-shen/ n.

1. With conversion rate optimization, you evaluate your website to identify ways you can improve it and get a higher percentage of people to sign up for your product or service.

(Source: [QuickSprout](#))

“ *Relevance boosts engagement. Engagement boosts conversion.* ”  
– Doug Kessler, Creative Director & Co-founder of Velocity

Without traffic there can be no conversions, and without conversion there can be no sales.

While attracting more traffic to your website is certainly not a bad thing, wouldn't it be more effective to focus on converting a higher percentage of the visitors you already have coming to your site?

In order to achieve a high conversion rate, it's important that businesses define a conversion path that includes the assets they need in order to take the desired next step.

These assets include a clear call-to-action, landing page, and thank you page.

While a well-defined path will get you started, there's a bit more to take into consideration if you really want to see results.

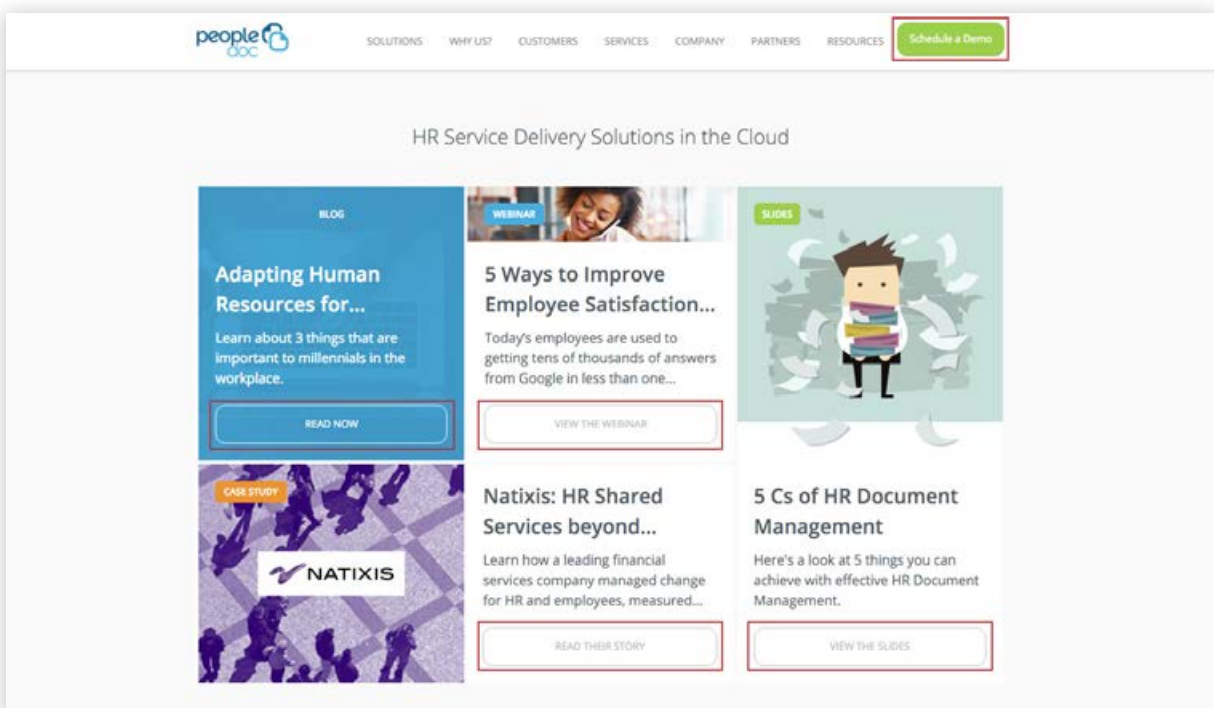
## Let's Take a Look:

### PROVIDE A VARIETY OF CONVERSION OPPORTUNITIES

In order to get the conversion rate you're looking for you need to enlist the help of multiple conversion points that appeal to different personas and different stages of the sales funnel.

This doesn't mean slapping a 'Free Trial' CTA on your website's homepage and hoping for the best.

What about your first time visitors?



If a visitor isn't ready to jump on the phone with you, don't let that be their only option.

Educational content like eBooks, webinars, and whitepapers serve as a way to get people familiar with your product or service, build trust, and move them closer to a sale.

## EXPERIMENT WITH DIFFERENT STYLES

Don't be afraid to experiment with different types of calls-to-action to encourage conversions.

We ran some tests and uncovered the following...

**Content:** Call-to-action buttons that contained "contact sales" had 0.3% click rate, and even worse, a 0% click-to-submission rate. However, a CTA promoting the same offer with the words "request assessment" fared much better, with a 0.9% click rate and an impressive 6.8% click-to-submission rate.

**Color:** Calls-to-action that contained colors consistent with branding generated a 2.1% click rate, while CTAs that contained completely different colors jumped up to 4.1%.

**Placement:** After moving our blog subscribe CTA moved to the top of the page from the sidebar, we saw an increase in conversion rates of .02%

## UTILIZE *smart* CONTENT

With the level of content saturation we're being faced with today, a "one-size-fits all" marketing message doesn't carry much weight.

The marketers who recognize the need for more dynamic, personalized content are the ones who are going to catch the attention of their ideal customer.

HubSpot's smart content feature allows users to leverage website and contact database information to deliver a unique experience for each individual.

Smart CTAs allow businesses to present the right content to the right people based on the criteria that you determine (location, persona, lead status.)

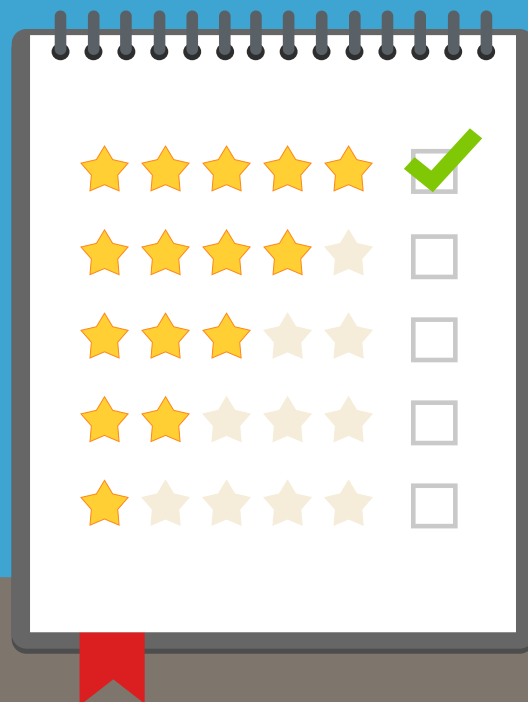
Where a static CTA has the ability to attract and potentially convert a more skewed segment of your audience, Smart CTAs open up more opportunities for conversion, and improve the overall website experience.



# CHAPTER 8:

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# Customer Proof



# cus·tom·er proof

/ˈkes-te-mer/ /ˈprüf/ n.

**1. The concept of leveraging customer satisfaction as a way to provide prospects with proof that your solutions do what you say it will.**

“ *Creating customer case studies lends itself to our human instinct to share, tell a story and give advice.* ”

*– Magdalena Georgieva, Product Manager at HubSpot*

These days, before making a purchase, consumers are known to do a little research.

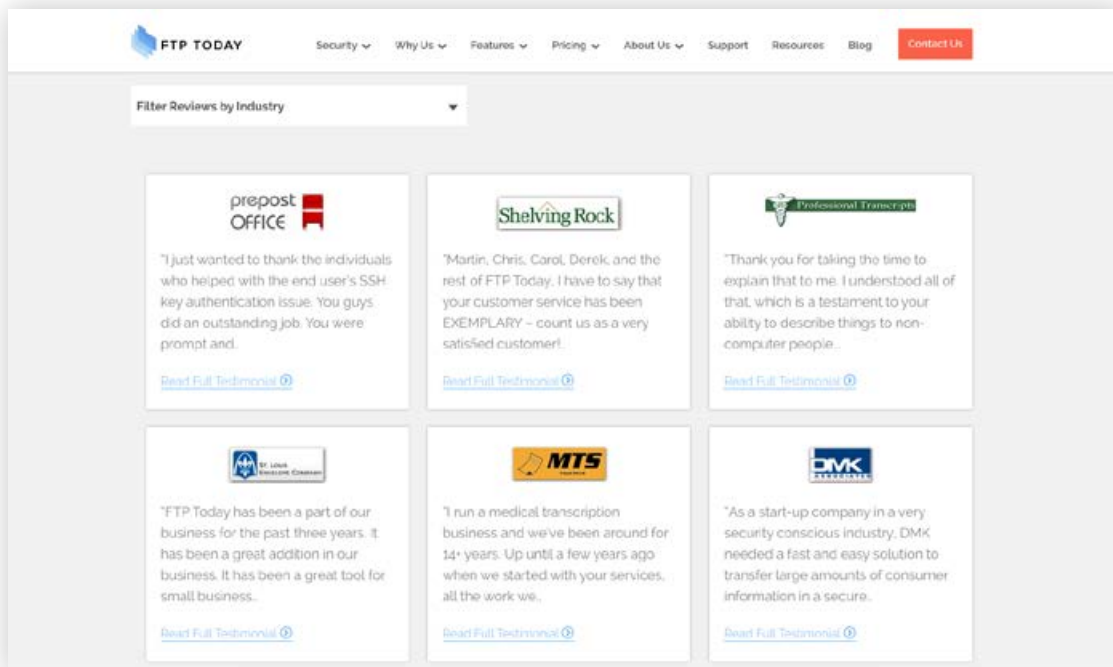
With the Internet at their fingertips, it's easy for them to shop around and sift out the good, bad, and ugly thanks to online reviews and ratings.

When it comes to your website, you want to provide prospects with so much evidence of success that they're left thinking, “there's no way this can't work.”

# But How?

## CASE STUDIES & TESTIMONIALS

Case studies and testimonials serve as positive reviews for your business. They provide researching prospects with the evidence they need to pin your business as a credible one. One worth doing business with.



By providing prospects with insight into the effectiveness of your product or service, you are ultimately giving them peace of mind when it comes to making an investment.

Here are 3 things to consider when implementing case studies & testimonials:

## 1. Measureable Results

The number one thing prospects are looking for when they view your case studies page is how you made a difference.

Chances are you selected a company for a case study that is satisfied with the results your business has delivered, so show them off.

Utilize numbers, charts, graphs, and pictures to display measurable results that are easy to understand.

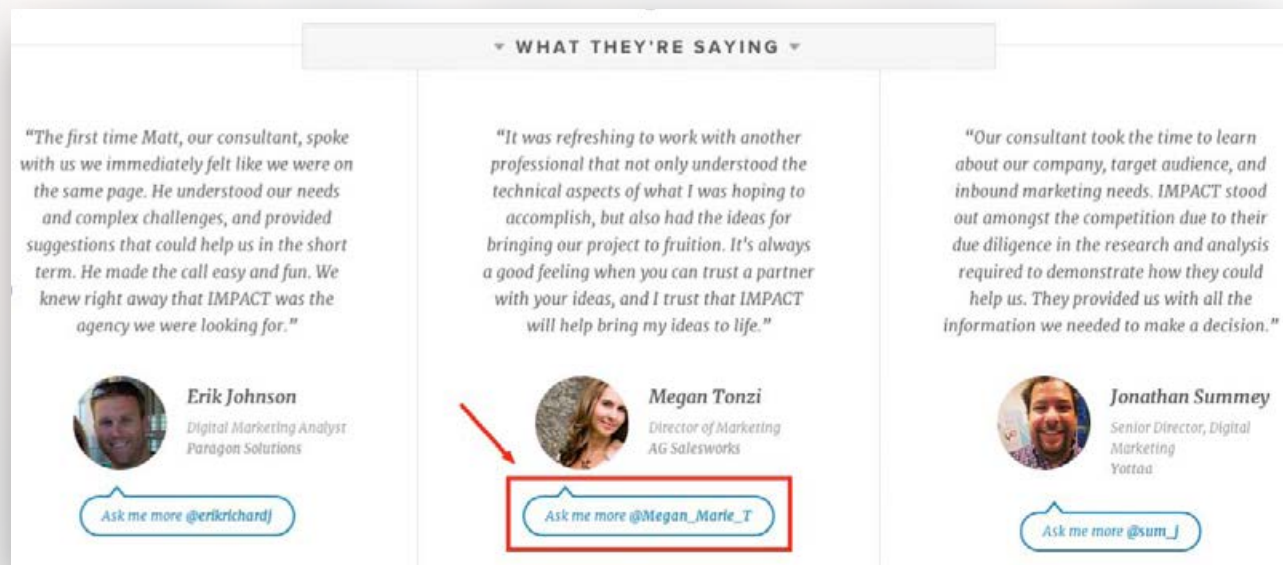


## 2. Real People

The web application company, 37 Signals (now known as Basecamp) revealed that including a large image of their customer next to a testimonial quote boosted their conversions by 102.5%.

Photographs of customers are powerful because they work to reassure the visitor that the quote is legitimate.

If you're looking to further support the legitimacy of your customer's endorsements, provide a link to their Twitter handle and invite prospects to reach out to them.



### 3. Examples

Depending on the product or service that you offer, you'll want to provide examples or links to your work.

Let's say for example that you run a wedding photography business. While a quote from a satisfied customer will certainly help your cause, consider the influence that a link to your work from that day might have.

Words are powerful, but real-life examples carry even more weight.

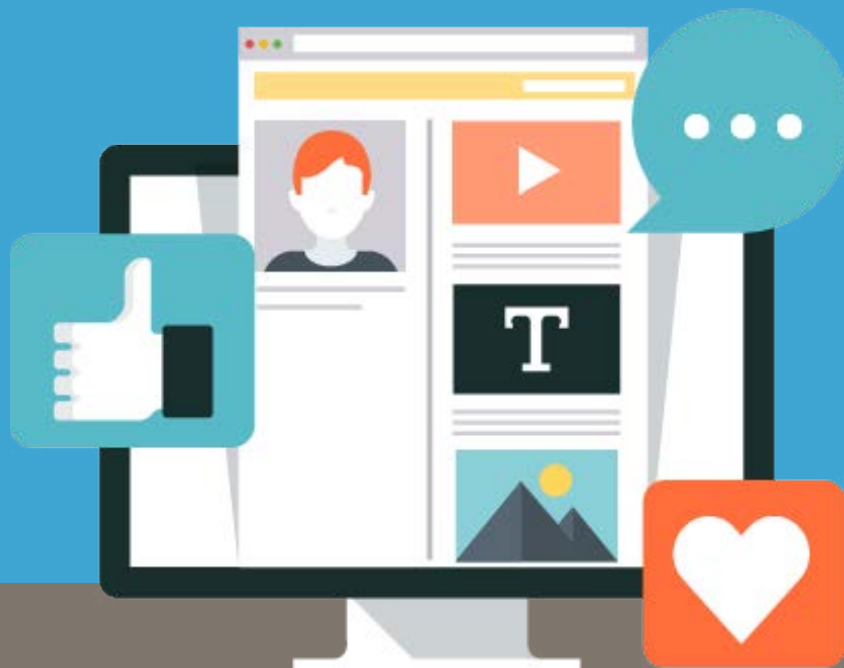




# CHAPTER 9:

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## Social Proof



# so·cial proof

/ˈsōSHel/ /ˈprüf/ n.

**1. The concept that people will conform to the actions of others under the assumption that those actions are reflective of the correct behavior.**

**(Source: [HubSpot](#))**

“ *Product reviews are 12x more trusted than product descriptions from manufacturers. (Source: [Econsultancy](#))* ”

Have you ever listened closely to a comedy sitcom on TV? Unless the show was filmed in front of a live studio audience, the laughter you hear after the punchline is in fact, fake.

While the concept of the laugh track is nothing new, it does serve as an great example of the influence of social proof. The goal is to provoke laughter from viewers by using recorded laughter to influence their behavior.

It's a powerful concept that can also be harnessed and applied to your website to influence a visitor's thought-process and behavior.

# How to Influence Visitors:

## HIGHLIGHT SOCIAL SHARING



Did you know that **46%** of global respondents admitted to using social media to help make purchase decisions? (Source: Nielsen)

Whether it's reflected in the number of followers you have, or the level of engagement you receive on your posts, it's important that you display these achievements loud and proud.

Social sharing buttons equipped with counters not only make for easy sharing, but the display of high share counts helps to establish credibility.

## SHARE TWEETS ON *your* WEBSITE OR BLOG

Pulling tweets about your latest content to be featured on your website or blog serves as an effective way to highlight social proof while incentivizing people to share your content.

Think of it this way:



You feature a reader's tweet on your blog's homepage they're delighted to be featured they pass the link to their friend to show them their friend decides to share your content with their network now their network is clicking-through to your posts!

Like an endorsement of sorts, featuring tweets in this way helps to assure readers that they've got their hands on something good.



# CHAPTER 10:

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# User Experience



# us·er ex·pe·ri·ence

/ˈyoozer/ /ikspi(e)rēens/ n.

1. User experience (abbreviated as UX) is how a person feels when interfacing with a system. The system could be a website, a web application or desktop software and, in modern contexts, is generally denoted by some form of human-computer interaction (HCI).

(Source: [Smashing Magazine](#))

“ A product designed with the user as the focus, will always end up the most successful.

– Danny Lopez, Graphic Designer, IMPACT Branding & Design

When redesigning your website, businesses must focus on not only what looks good, but what makes sense.

Before you move forward with a design plan, be sure to ask yourself, “Am I designing this for myself or for the user?”

With the number of options available to potential customers searching the web for solutions, it’s important that you’re committed to putting forth a page that they want to land on.

While there’s no one-size-fits-all approach when it comes to designing for the user, there are several considerations that you should be making.

# Some Considerations:

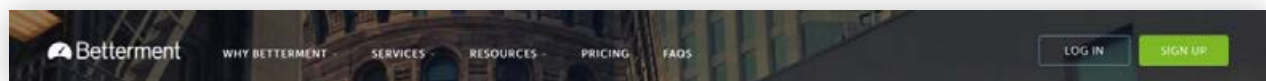
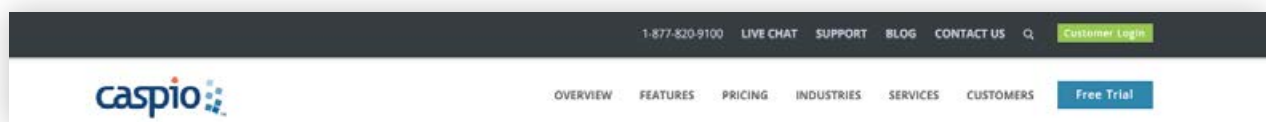
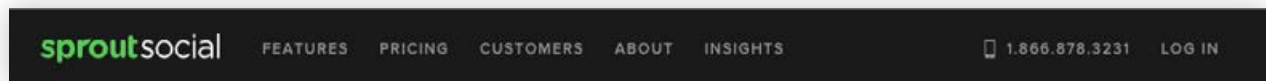
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## SIMPLIFY THE NAVIGATION

All of the important bits and pieces of your website are connected to the navigation bar. With that being said, remember that less is more.

Including only what's necessary for visitors to get from point A to point B without any confusion will help to simplify their experience.

Also, consideration for positioning is key. If your navigation doesn't appear at the top or side of the page where visitors expect to find it, it's likely that they won't stick around to sniff it out.



## REFINE FORMS

It's no secret that you need to employ lead capture forms on your website to collect contact information.

However, factors like length, position, and the number of required fields all have the ability to sway a potential lead in one direction or another.

Lowering the barrier between the potential lead and an offer works to improve the experience and positively influence submission rates.

If you're looking to improve your website's forms, consider the following:

- By reducing their form from 11 fields down to 4, Imagescape was able to increase their conversion rates by 120%.
- Forms that asked for age saw a 3% decrease in conversion rate.
- Asking for a phone number causes a 5% dip in conversion rate.
- By switching the form location from the left to the right side of the page, one site saw a 24.6% jump in conversions.
- Forms with only 3 fields saw a 25% conversion rate, 3-5 fields saw a 20% conversion rate, and forms with 6+ fields dropped to a 15% conversion rate. (Source: [QuickSprout](#))



# WHAT'S YOUR NEXT STEP TOWARDS SUCCESS?

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Talk to us about your business and we'll help  
you uncover the path.

LET'S TALK