

Illustration X.1 - Hub and Spoke Graphic (While the peripheral networks may change the construct allows a free flow of information and traffic between the networks and the website).

Landing page

Landing pages are critical to online marketing success. Before investing tens of thousands of dollars in the complete website design and development, landing pages coupled with a small Pay Per Click (“PPC”) campaign allow you to test your assumptions about your customers to see whether you will achieve your primary purpose. After the site launches, well-designed landing pages are a critical tool in the overall digital strategy.

Landing pages are different than other web pages on your site for three reasons: (1) the user visits this page as a destination from some other offer or Call to Action (“CTA”), and (2) the landing page will have a measurable conversion in the CTA and (3) a landing page typically has limited off-page navigation. Landing pages are most commonly the destination from a PPC ad, but you may also link to your landing pages from blogs, social media campaigns and traditional advertisements. In all likelihood, you have made some investment for the visitor to be on this page, it is wise to limit the number of outbound links on this page. Some of the best landing pages have only one exit door, which is through the CTA.

Landing pages must satisfy the offer made from the linking source. If, for example, someone clicks on a Google AdWords ad result for the search “24 inch silver Figaro chain,” then the landing page must have the 24” Figaro chain immediately visible. If, however, the link directs the customer to the jeweler’s home page, there’s a 90% chance that the user will “bounce” and click the back button.

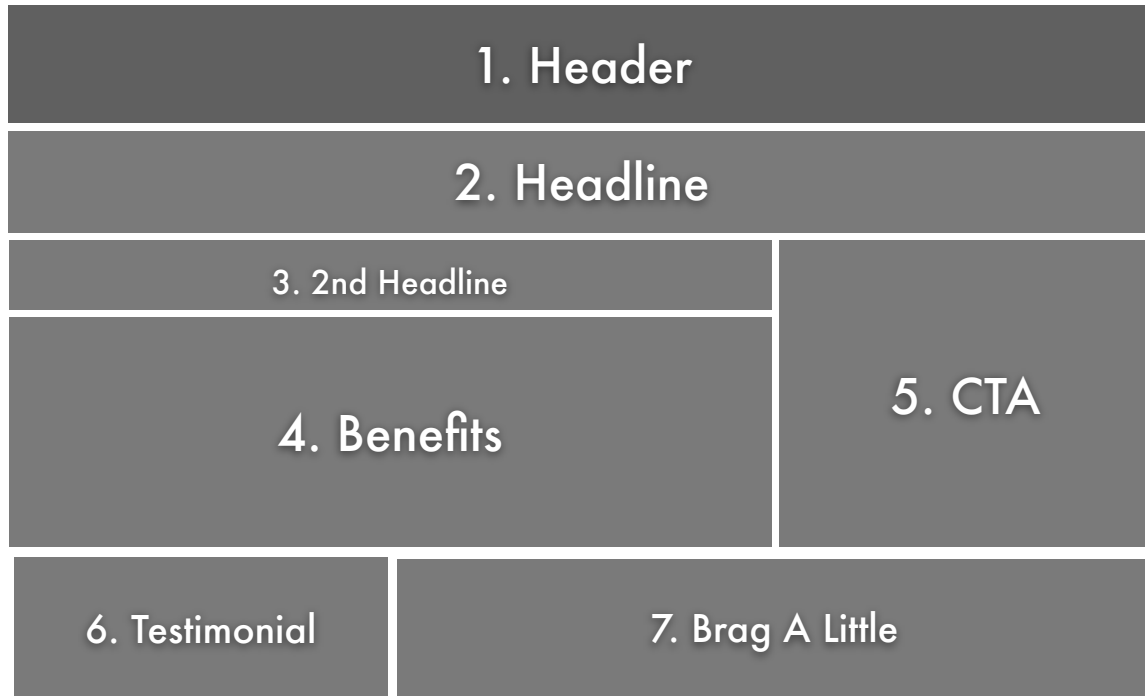


Illustration X.2 - Sample wireframe of a landing page

1. **Header** - Depending on how the user arrives at the landing page, they don’t know what to expect. It is critical to establish trust and credibility the moment they arrive on the page. Use the header section to include your logo. Some landing pages include the BBB logo or “seals” from other organizations in the header.
2. **Headline** - This headline is your USP. Keep it short, strong and clear. The headline should also be related to the anchor text or offer from the referring source to keep the user from bouncing.
3. **Secondary Headline** - The secondary headline compliments the primary headline and may specifically address the audience, the source, the offer or lead into the the benefit
4. **Benefits** - Your customers are not buying a product. They are on your landing page because something about your USP attracts them. When Steve Jobs said, “1,000 songs in your pocket,” he was not selling the features of the iPod--he was selling the benefits of access to a library of music, a person’s creative expression, in the smallest form factor.
This portion of the landing page is also a great place to include multimedia elements of your

offer. Prezi does a great job of using a short video to demonstrate the benefits of using their software to make powerful presentations.

5. **CTA** - The Call to Action must present a solution to the customers need or pain point and offer them value (here, value is defined as the difference between the perceived cost of the action they are being asked to perform subtracted from the perceived benefit they will receive by performing the action). For example, consider a potential customer giving their contact information in return for free trial software versus being added to a mailing list. Obviously, if the potential customer is on the page looking for software, then a free trial will be more appealing.

The CTA must present some urgency to the potential customer to act now. Once they leave your site there is a good chance that they will never return. Of course, “for a limited time” and “for the first 100 customers” harken to the days of high-pressure infomercials, but discover a compelling reason for the customer to act while they are on your page. *See the section on the dreaded bounce rate.*

6. **Testimonial** - If your customers or clients have stories about your company then share them. Drawing potential customers into the story behind your company is a powerful conversion factor. Merely, throwing up contrived quotes like, “Love the product!” is thinly veiled marketing and your customers will see through it.
7. **Brag a Little** - If you have some well known clients or customers, put their logos on your landing page. Here again, if this is the first interaction that this person has had with your organization, you need to build their trust. If you don’t have logos to use in this space, include some awards or certifications that your organization has earned. As a final option, share links to your social media networks; as noted, you should limit the number of outbound links on this page.

Remarketing - While bounce rates are covered in more depth in the Analytics section, a bounce rate is when someone hits the page and “bounces” before performing any action on the page. Remarketing programs offered by Google Adwords and Ad Roll are a great way to increase exposure and overall conversions by displaying image ads to visitors to the landing page that bounce.

Tactics for Conversion

Let’s consider some of the conversion tactics that you may use on your landing page and throughout your site. A number of these recommendations involve the visitor to your site providing you their email address--this should not be taken lightly. These customers are giving you permission to disrupt their days. Respect them. Make your disruption of their time

worthwhile. Unsubscribing is only a click away, and if you get in the habit of disrupting them too often with little value, they will exercise that power.

While some of these recommendations are more appropriate for specific strategies than others, many of them may apply to multiple categories.

- *Prominently display an email subscription form to receive your knowledge articles. Your customers get enough spam so be creative about what the value proposition is for them. “Subscribe to my Newsletter” likely will not generate a large number of subscribers, but “Get My Monthly Market Analysis” may provide a value proposition for people to subscribe.*
- *Include “premium content” on your website that is only available to registered members.*
- *Create an e-book that provides information about your service or product that customers are sent via email once they fill out a short form.*
- *Create a quiz or calculator that will provide the user some meaningful information. Once they complete the exercise, provide them the option to receive the results by email.*
- *Create compelling CTA: limited time offer for free service, free phone consultation, free on-site estimation or quote.*
- *Make a “10-point Checklist” available for download.*
- *Offer a white paper, case study or report available for download for filling out a form.*
- *Offer detailed product specifications PDF download if the user provides email address. This list can be used in email marketing efforts.*
- *Offer a coupon for the current purchase by subscribing to the sales email newsletter.*
- *Register for a giveaway by submitting a form on your website.*
- *Award points and rewards to community members that solve issues in your support community.*

Phase II - Design & Content

Most people want to dive directly into the design of their website. Charles Eames said, “design depends largely on constraints,” and spending the time in Phase I Planning builds the necessary constraints and ambitions necessary to produce a website that will return value on the investment. This section walks through the process of building the content and design of your website. I’m assuming that you have already identified the team that you will be working with to build your website.