

The Grow & Convert Collection

Converting Blog Traffic into Customers



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Beacon

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How To Convert Blog Traffic Into Customers With CTAs

Here's the scenario: You run content marketing for a startup, or a company a little further along. You're in a management meeting, humbly bragging about how much traffic the blog is getting, and the Founder asks:

"But how do we know we're making money from this traffic? How much revenue did we generate from it last month?"

You smile calmly at the executive team, and resist the urge to throw your phone at them. You calm down in time to realize you don't actually have a specific method of quantifying revenue from the blog.

"Damn."

So you mumble something about how "a fraction of blog traffic clicks over to the homepage, and the homepage converts at 6% to free trial... so..."

But no one seems to be satisfied with this answer, including you.

After some back and forth, you leave the meeting upset.

You're upset that:

1. People aren't valuing the traffic your blog is generating
2. You don't have a better answer to the question:

What's the strategy for converting blog readers into customers?

The truth is, you don't need to fumble over this answer, but if you haven't thought about it in a systematic way, you *will*.

Today we'll be talking about the overall strategy and where to place calls to action, so you can have a solid and concise answer when someone asks you how you're growing revenue.

Overview: The Reader to Revenue Strategy

Here's a super simple framework for understanding how you're converting readers into customers.

You convert readers to customers in just 2 ways:

1. Through direct links to sales pages
2. By capturing reader emails and emailing them.

That's it.

Once you put your conversion strategy into that simple framework, you can move on to *measuring* how both funnels are doing and then *increasing* the conversion rate.

Today, we'll talk about how to measure the traffic your content is sending your key sales pages, what pages to send traffic to, and the best places to put those links. Where I can, I'll show you real data from client sites.

How to measure how much traffic you're sending to sales pages

There's this funny thing about measuring conversion rates. It's literally the most important part of this process, but I'm always surprised at how many clients I work with that don't do it.

They have decent blog traffic but don't have a clear method of measuring how much revenue is generated from that traffic. They just end up believing that they're making good money from that traffic.

If you're running content marketing, "vague feelings" aren't good enough to convince your team that you're getting a solid ROI. And if you're not measuring things properly, you definitely won't know how big that ROI is (or if it's positive).

Once you measure how many customers you're generating, anyone at the company can see, in plain daylight, how much revenue you and your team are generating. Explaining ROI to bosses will become super simple. Improving performance will become more systematic. And when that revenue number is substantive, the benefit of your team's work on the company's top line will be crystal clear. Then you can walk through the office with some serious swagger.

Here's how you do it.

You will need to implement 'blog to customer' analytics. They will need to be simple so that people can:

1. Actually use them
2. Easily understand them

Note: In the examples below, for simplicity, I'm going to assume that all blog traffic goes to a homepage - which then converts visitors to sign up for a trial of your product or service. You can, of course, send blog traffic anywhere, and the analytics are largely analogous.

Step 1: Set up GA goals to count a "conversion"

Note: If your company already has this setup properly, skip to the next step.

The easiest way I've found to setup a conversion goal is to use a destination goal for the confirmation or thank you page when someone signs up, or purchases.

For example: A SaaS site like Basecamp would have a conversion goal that tracks the number of unique visitors that make it to this page:



 **Whooo, your account's all set up!**

We suggest playing with a sample Basecamp to start. Don't worry - you can always check out a sample Basecamp later too.

[Play with a sample Basecamp we made for you](#)

or

[Make your first Basecamp](#)

...which is the success page for setting up an account. One caveat: the url for these success pages can sometimes be a bit unique and even dynamic, but your tech team should still be able to setup the goal in such a way that it measures every signup.

Do this for every conversion you want to track. For example, Basecamp would also have a separate goal for tracking paid conversions (probably a "payment successful" page).

If you run an e-commerce company, you can just use the GA e-commerce integration, which is explained in [this video](#) by Google, or this GA [help page](#).

Step 1a (optional): Set up a revenue estimate for that goal.

For SaaS free trials, or other physical services (like, say, Airbnb) you can also input an estimate of average revenue that each conversion is worth:

2 Goal details

Destination

Begins with Case sensitive

For example, use *My Screen* for an app and */thankyou.html* instead of *www.example.com/thankyou.html* for a web page.

Value optional

ON \$USD

Assign a monetary value to the conversion. [Learn more about Goal Values](#). For a transaction, leave this blank and use Ecommerce tracking and reports to see Revenue. [Learn more about Ecommerce Transactions](#).

Step 2: Use the Landing Page Report to see conversion rates

After about a week of tracking goals, you can use a pre-built GA report to easily see how many conversion events came from visitors who originated on any page: Landing Pages.

Just to go Behavior > Site Content > Landing Pages, and GA shows the conversion rate, total conversions, and revenue for visitors that land on various pages throughout your site.

Here's an example from one of our clients who gets over 100,000 uniques to their blog a month:

Landing Page	Acquisition			Behavior			Conversions	
	Sessions	% New Sessions	New Users	Bounce Rate	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration	Goal Conversion Rate	Goal Completions
	165,049	58.47%	96,498	69.91%	1.67	00:02:28	4.37%	7,219
1.	20,508 (12.43%)	49.16%	10,082 (10.45%)	78.03%	1.38	00:02:09	0.71%	146 (2.02%)
2. /	16,979 (10.29%)	51.03%	8,664 (8.98%)	39.66%	2.79	00:03:56	8.44%	1,433 (19.85%)
3.	16,274 (9.86%)	67.65%	11,009 (11.41%)	80.60%	1.33	00:01:52	3.53%	575 (7.97%)
4.	11,769 (7.13%)	63.41%	7,463 (7.73%)	74.64%	1.55	00:02:10	3.25%	383 (5.31%)
5.	9,015 (5.46%)	67.72%	6,105 (6.33%)	73.14%	1.62	00:02:13	4.76%	429 (5.94%)
6. /	7,353 (4.46%)	70.41%	5,177 (5.36%)	80.43%	1.46	00:01:56	2.54%	187 (2.59%)
7.	7,191 (4.36%)	74.37%	5,348 (5.54%)	72.49%	1.63	00:02:09	5.56%	400 (5.54%)
8.	6,079 (3.68%)	47.69%	2,899 (3.00%)	74.70%	1.54	00:03:20	0.87%	53 (0.73%)

I've whited out the urls for confidentiality, but you can interpret the conversion rate number for each row as:

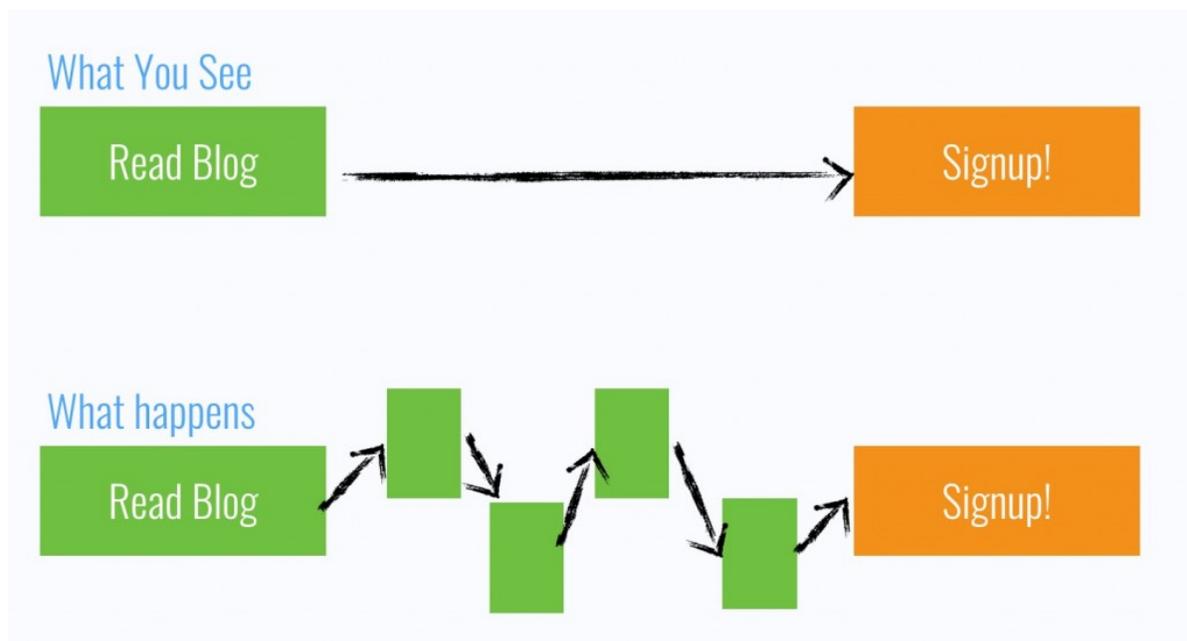
How many people who entered our site via this URL ended up

completing this goal?

If each goal has a monetary value to it, then you're all set. Now you can show the whole company how many people that *entered the site via your blog* are converting!

Step 3 (Optional): Use Funnels and/or UTM parameters to show the path people take

One thing that should be made clear: when you use the landing page report, you don't get to see the details of the path your readers took on their way to converting – just whether they converted or not:



Of course, after you measure the conversion rates, you'll want to *improve* them. And to do that, you'll need to know what path the readers are taking.

So how do you get insight into the conversion path?

Conversion Path Method 1: Funnels

If you know some likely funnels *beforehand*, then you can set them up when you make your conversion goal, and GA will show you the percentage of people moving through each step.

For example: If you know that basically everyone who signs up for your free trial goes from the homepage to the signup page, then when you

setup the free trial goal, you can specify those steps:

2 Goal details

Destination

Begins with Case sensitive

For example, use *My Screen* for an app and */thankyou.html* instead of *www.example.com/thankyou.html* for a web page.

Value optional

OFF Assign a monetary value to the conversion.

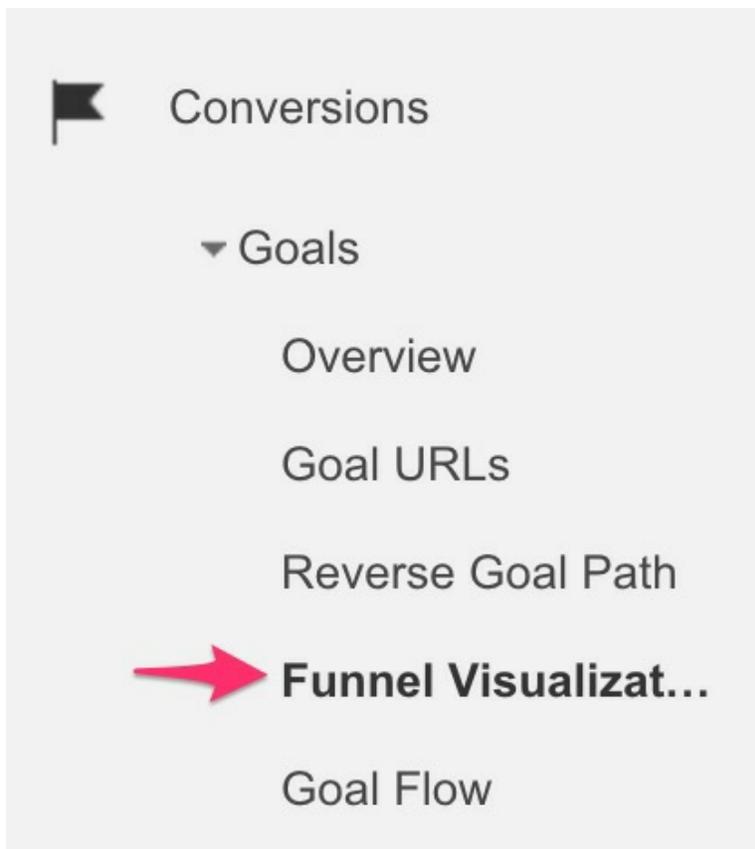
Funnel optional

ON 

Use an app screen name string or a web page URL for each step. For example, use *My Screen* for an app and */thankyou.html* instead of *www.example.com/thankyou.html* for a web page.

Step	Name	Screen/Page	Required?
1	<input type="text" value="Home"/>	<input type="text" value="/"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
2	<input type="text" value="Signup"/>	<input type="text" value="/signup"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

And now you can use the "funnel visualization" report to see what percentage of people make it through each step of your funnel:



What about if there are a ton of different paths people can take to

signing up or buying?

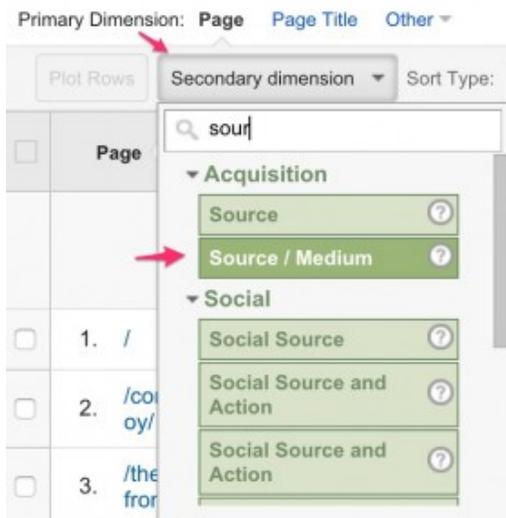
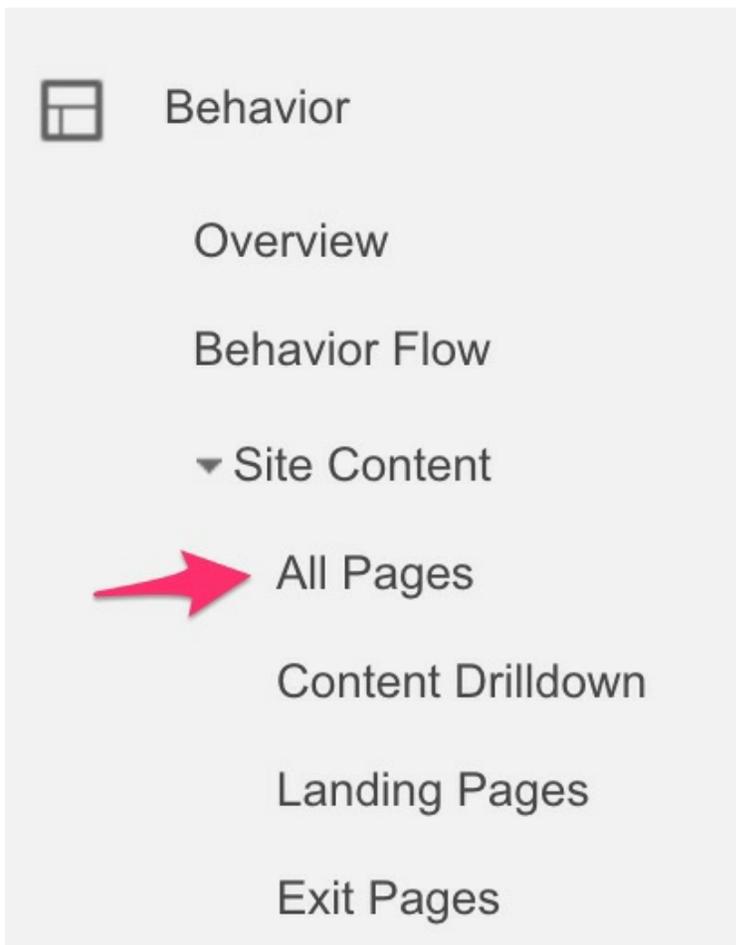
For example: In that free trial example, what if you want to see if people first look at a features page, watch a video, or go anywhere else before ending up on the /signup page?

Conversion Path Method 2: UTM Parameters

Note: This will only work if your blog is on a separate domain with it's own google analytics (i.e. blog.yoursite.com). If your blog lives on yoursite.com/blog, you shouldn't put UTM parameters on links from your blog to other pages on your site, because GA will count visitors as new once they click those links. Then you're double counting visitors. Instead, what you can do is use UTM parameters for all links you generate that point to the blog. So links from your email marketing that promote posts, links you put on Twitter and Facebook, etc.

A useful trick to just get an overall picture of how many visitors to *any* page came from the blog is to use UTM parameters on all links from the blog to the site.

If your blog is already up and running, doing this retroactively can be tedious, but if you do it, you can go to any page and see how many people came from each Source/Medium. You'll also be able to see the % of traffic that came from your blog:



If you've never used UTM parameters before, they look complicated but are pretty easy to setup. It's really just adding some names to the URL so GA knows where the traffic is coming from.

Step 1: Go to the Google URL Builder

URL builder form

Step 1: Enter the URL of your website.

Website URL *



(e.g. <http://www.urchin.com/download.html>)

Step 2: Fill in the fields below. **Campaign Source, Campaign Medium and Campaign Name** should always be used.

Campaign Source *

(referrer: google, citysearch, newsletter4)

Campaign Medium *

(marketing medium: cpc, banner, email)

Campaign Term

(identify the paid keywords)

Campaign Content

(use to differentiate ads)

Campaign Name *

(product, promo code, or slogan)

GENERATE URL

* Required field

Step 2: Set the "medium" to "blog" (or whatever you call your blog). Set the source to a name that describes which link on the blog this is for (e.g. "sidebar", "navbar", "midpost", "popup", etc.), and set the campaign to a description of the end goal (e.g. "freetrial")

For example, here's a hypothetical URL that we could set up for Grow and

Convert, if this was a blog attached to, say, a SaaS app:

GENERATE URL

http://growandconvert.com/?utm_source=navlink&utm_medium=blog&utm_campaign=freetrial

Measurement Recap

Here are the steps you'll need to implement to be able to track purchases that originated from your blog traffic:

1. Set up goals in GA. Either manually, or with the e-commerce integration, if you have a store.
2. Use the landing page report to see how many conversions came from people who entered the site from your blog (you get credit for these!)
3. To see where else blog traffic is going (besides just a few "goal completion urls"), use a simple UTM parameter scheme for all links from the blog

Of course, measurement just sets the stage for optimization, since you can now actually see what effect your changes make.

Optimizing Your Links to Send More Readers Into Your Funnel

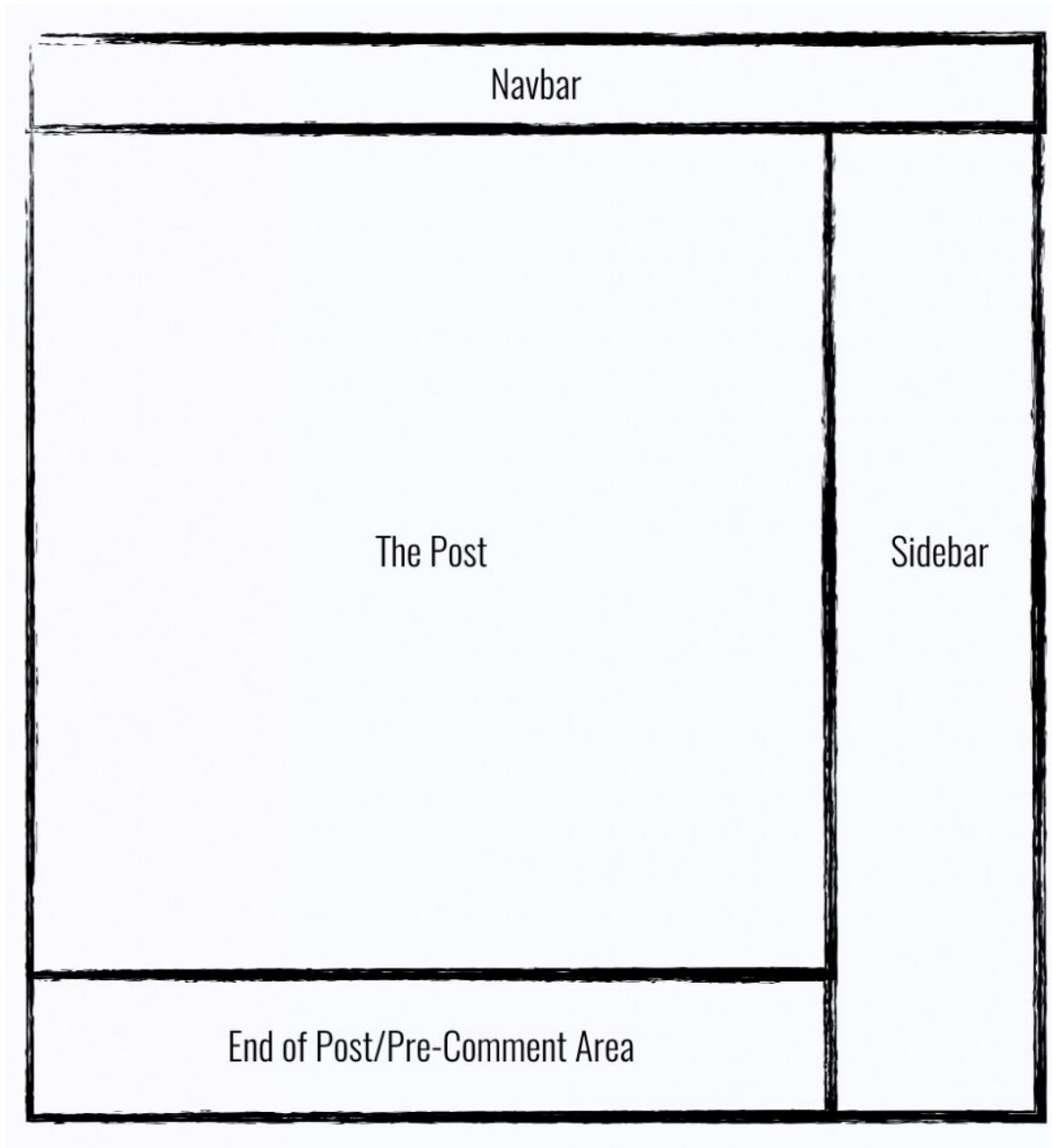
There has been a lot written previously on how to write links so that they get more clicks, so I'm not going to cover that in this section.

Instead, I want to focus on: placement of CTAs. The questions you might be asking yourself are: should you use a sidebar form, slider on the bottom right, end of post CTA, or popup?

I've found that these more fundamental decisions generally make a more sizable impact in getting readers to click and engage than copy tweaks.

Call to Action Placement: Analyzing where people click

Here's the typical blog layout:



The question is: **Where should you put your calls to action?**

Example: A Yoga Store and Blog

For fun, let's add some context to this discussion, and assume this is a yoga e-commerce site that sells yoga apparel and equipment. As you'd expect, the blog covers all sorts of yoga related articles: poses, routines, stretching, nutrition, equipment, meditation, etc.

The conversion path for a reader is pretty straightforward: You're reading about yoga moves, you're therefore obviously into yoga (or trying to learn) – you may need yoga mats, blocks, belts, or clothes. If you do, the store hopes that you buy it on *their* site instead of Googling or going to your local brick and mortar.

That's the conversion goal: Get readers to click over to the store and buy right now. Or get them to join an email list so you can keep reminding them to get their pants at your store instead of Lululemon.

To do this, let me walk through a list of possible ways to present your call to action, and provide some data from an actual case study to see which ones convert well and which do not.

Exploring Placement Options for your CTAs and their Pros and Cons

Here are the different options covered in this section and rough conversion rate ranges I've seen for *email capture forms* in each of these locations:

- Sidebar CTAs – 0.5% – 1.5%
- Generic end of post CTAs – 0.5% – 1.5%
- Pop-ups – 1% – 8%
- Sliders and bars: 1% – 5%
- Welcome Gates: 10% – 25%
- Featurebox: 3% – 9%
- Navbar: Varies

(If instead you're just linking to a page, expect higher rates.)

Let me state one conclusion upfront – just so you're on the same page as me while reading this section: Pop-ups, welcome gates, and some other schemes routinely convert in the mid to low single digit percents (2% – 6%). So, I often refer to sub 1% rates (e.g. a typical sidebar newsletter form) as a “low” rate. What I mean is, low relative to other options you have.

Final Caveat: Take all of my numbers with a grain of salt. It's just what I've seen for blogs in certain niches with about 2000 – 150,000 uniques per month. Websites are like snowflakes...etc. etc....you get it.

On to the good stuff.

The Sidebar

Blog sidebars are the single most common place that companies put CTAs to try to convert people.

Think of the laziest optin forms you've seen ("Join our newsletter". Yay, sounds exciting...said no one ever), they are almost always in the righthand sidebar.

But how well do they actually convert?

For blogs that put email opt-ins in the sidebar, I typically see conversion rates around 0.5% - 1.5%, depending on the traffic of the site.

For example: A business and startup blog that I worked with got around 11,000 uniques a month. They had a sidebar CTA promoting an ebook that got a 0.95% a click through rate.

UNIQUE CONVERSIONS VISITORS	CONVERSION RATE CONFIDENCE INTERVAL
21 2,204	0.95% (±0.41)

In the above example, the company also had a bunch of other widgets in the sidebar which distracted visitors from converting on that one CTA. One way they could've increased their CTA is to put only one CTA in the sidebar.

For example: Another business and marketing blog, Videofruit.com, only had one CTA in the sidebar (an image promoting some free material) and that one image got a click through rate 1.64%, which is the highest that I've seen for sidebar CTAs.

VARIATION	UNIQUE CONVERSIONS VISITORS	CONVERSION RATE
Original	248 15,133	1.64%

Sidebar Recommendation: So, my recommendation for most blogs is to put a CTA in the sidebar – just make sure not to add too many other widgets in there. And don't worry about A/B testing it unless you have a lot of traffic (100,000+ uniques/month). If you get a 50% uplift from an A/B test on a 0.5% baseline, you're only converting 0.25% more.

If you *do* have significant traffic to your blog (100,000 uniques/month or more), I definitely recommend a clear, simple call to action in the sidebar, because 0.5% of 100,000 is 500 clicks/signups per month, which adds up. Again, the more other clutter you remove from the sidebar, the better.

Finally, for folks that want to focus on higher converting items, early experiments we've done have suggested that **eliminating the sidebar can increase overall engagement rates on other, higher click rate CTAs.**

For example, we have no sidebar on this blog because we want to focus on the content and our e-mail opt-ins are **converting at a pretty solid rate so far.**

Generic End-of-Post Calls to Action

There's this phrase that people always use to explain why the end of a post is the *best* place for a CTA:

If the reader made it to the end, they want more stuff from you. So give it to them!

That sounds nice, and probably has some truth to it, but from what I've measured, *generic* end of post calls to action convert just the same as the sidebar: around 0.5% – 1.5%

This is typically because most people don't make it to the end of posts (or any web page for that matter), so **calls to action at the top of posts are more effective.** In fact, with a client of ours, Backlinko, we found that posts where he placed certain calls to action in the top and bottom converted around 300% better on average than posts where it was only

at the bottom.

Another thing to keep in mind at the end of a post is that there's often a variety of things the reader is asked to do:

- Join our email list!
- Share this on social media!
- Leave a comment!
- Sign up for a webinar!

It's overwhelming. **Distraction is a well known conversion killer**, so...

End of Section Recommendation: If you want, put a simple call to action to click to your store, app homepage, or features page. But if you already have a bunch of calls to action at the end of the post, just skip adding another one and move on to bigger wins. If you can avoid a bunch of asks, it will help keep readers coming back long-term.

One last note: In the example above, I'm referring to *generic* end of post calls to action. Things like: "Like this content? Sign up for our email list!" "Check out our store!" etc.

I'll do an entirely separate section on *content-specific* calls to action, which can be placed at the top, middle, or end of the post and convert an order of magnitude higher.

Pop-ups

I'm just going to cut to the chase. Pop-ups convert.

I know, people are afraid it will annoy readers or reduce engagement, but over and over again I've seen pop-ups reach conversion rates that common sidebar and generic end of post CTAs just don't reach.

Let's see some examples.

Note: All of these examples are for pop-ups asking for an email. In general, just asking for a click without an email will convert even better.

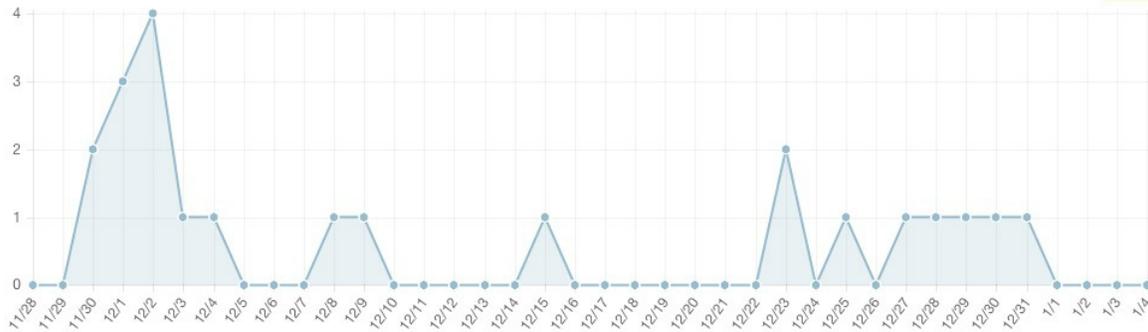
First, let's start close to home. This blog's generic, site-wide pop-up is triggered when someone scrolls halfway down a page. This pop-up is converting at 4.01%.

Sitewide Popup (scroll based) Overview ▾

Viewing Period: Custom Range ▾

11/28/2015

- 01/04/2016



4.01%

conversion rate

548

visitors

22

conversions

0

split-tests

Think about that compared to sidebar and end of post opt-in rates. If those convert at 1%, and that's considered "good." This pop-up is converting at 400% higher (that's why we have forgone the sidebar altogether and instead focused on these higher converting tactics).

These numbers aren't just representative of a site with lower traffic. For an SEO blog that gets 100,000+ uniques a month (with the largest chunk being organic search), their generic site-wide pop-up converted at 3.31%

UNIQUE CONVERSIONS
VISITORS

102
3,084

CONVERSION RATE

3.31%

There are only a few triggers for a pop-up: timed, scroll, or exit intent (I'm excluding a manual link to a modal, which is a different concept). If you're concerned about annoying readers, simply try an exit-intent trigger, which is less intrusive than a timed or scroll-based trigger. I haven't seen much evidence of pop-ups reducing SEO rankings or increasing reader complaints. For example, on this blog, we have a scroll-based trigger for our site-wide pop-up and it's converting well (4%) and readers are consistently responding to our welcome email positively.

Pop-up Recommendation Use them. You can use them in two ways:

1. Direct readers to an app landing page, e-commerce product page, or

- your homepage to get them in your main funnel
2. Capture their email – which is **one of the highest converting marketing channels** around

Sliders and Bars

This is a more subtle cousin of the pop-up. A simple bar appears at the top or bottom of the page:

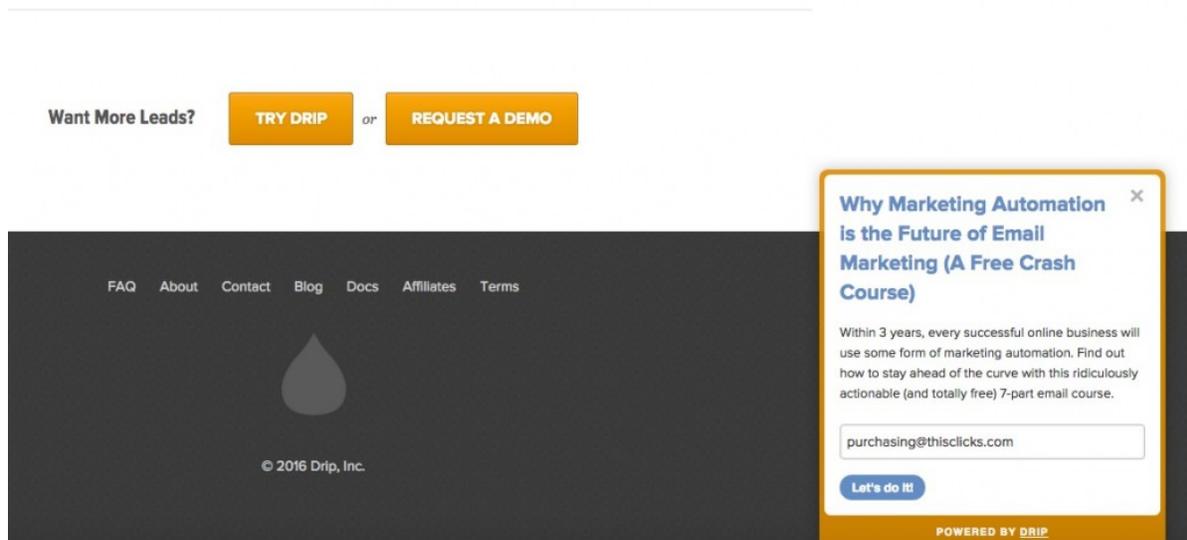
You always want to sell value, and be sure that you're taking the necessary steps to do so. Ever since the first call, start building trust and make them feel like they're where they belong.

"You have to be comfortable with yourself first." – Bart

Take time to hone in on your specific skill-set, and use it to your advantage. When y



Or a slider appears in the bottom right or bottom left corner of the page (usually after scrolling for some time):



Slider conversion rates are generally lower than pop-ups. But if your slider is large and compelling, it can approach the same conversion rates as pop-ups (low single digit %s).

As for simple "Hellobar style" top-of-page CTAs, in my experience, they generally convert in the 1% range – so not quite as high as pop-ups. If you don't make the CTAs stand out, your conversion rate might be even worse than 1%.

Slider and Bar Recommendation: You can experiment with these in addition to an exit intent pop-up, or if you have good design and copy, potentially in place of one. My only concern here is to be careful about making the reading experience too intrusive with too many items coming up and covering the content (e.g. I don't recommend using both: a timed pop-up *and* a timed slider. But a slider that shows up at the end of an article and a pop-up on exit intent is manageable).

Good for Mobile! One good use for "smart bars" is on mobile. Pop-ups on mobile are really annoying and their conversion rates are often really low. But having a slider at the bottom that lets you keep reading content, but promotes a product page, or landing page on a specific topic, is a good way to get mobile traffic to engage further with your brand.

For example, check out how non-intrusive the mobile version of the bottom-of-page bar from **DoubleYourFreelancing.com** pictured above:

You always want to sell value, and be sure that you're taking the necessary steps to do so. Ever since the first call, start building trust and make them feel like they're where they belong.

“You have to be comfortable with yourself first.” – Bart

Take time to hone in on your specific skill-set, and use it to your advantage. When you invest your time into experimenting and discovering, you're investing time into making your business succeed. Bart shares this and more really solid advice on how to follow in his footsteps, so you can start building and

FREE COURSE

Charge What You're Worth

It's not garrish. You can keep reading without getting annoyed. But it still

promotes the top of their funnel: getting readers into their free course.

Welcome Gate

Welcome gates are aggressive, but they convert like crazy. Let me show you what I mean.

Andrew Warner has a very popular blog/podcast called Mixergy, and if you go to Mixergy.com, this is what you get:



Learn from
PROVEN ENTREPRENEURS

What do the top startup founders know that you don't?

Discover how to think and take action like they do, straight from the founders themselves.
Click the button below, to get our most popular 9 interviews in your inbox.

GET 9 INTERVIEWS FREE

With over 1129 founders, including the founders of...

PIXAR
ANIMATION STUDIOS

GROUPON

LinkedIn

WIKIPEDIA
The Free Encyclopedia

Sun
microsystems

Now, you can scroll to the bottom and click into his site, but previously you had no option but to either close the window or signup.

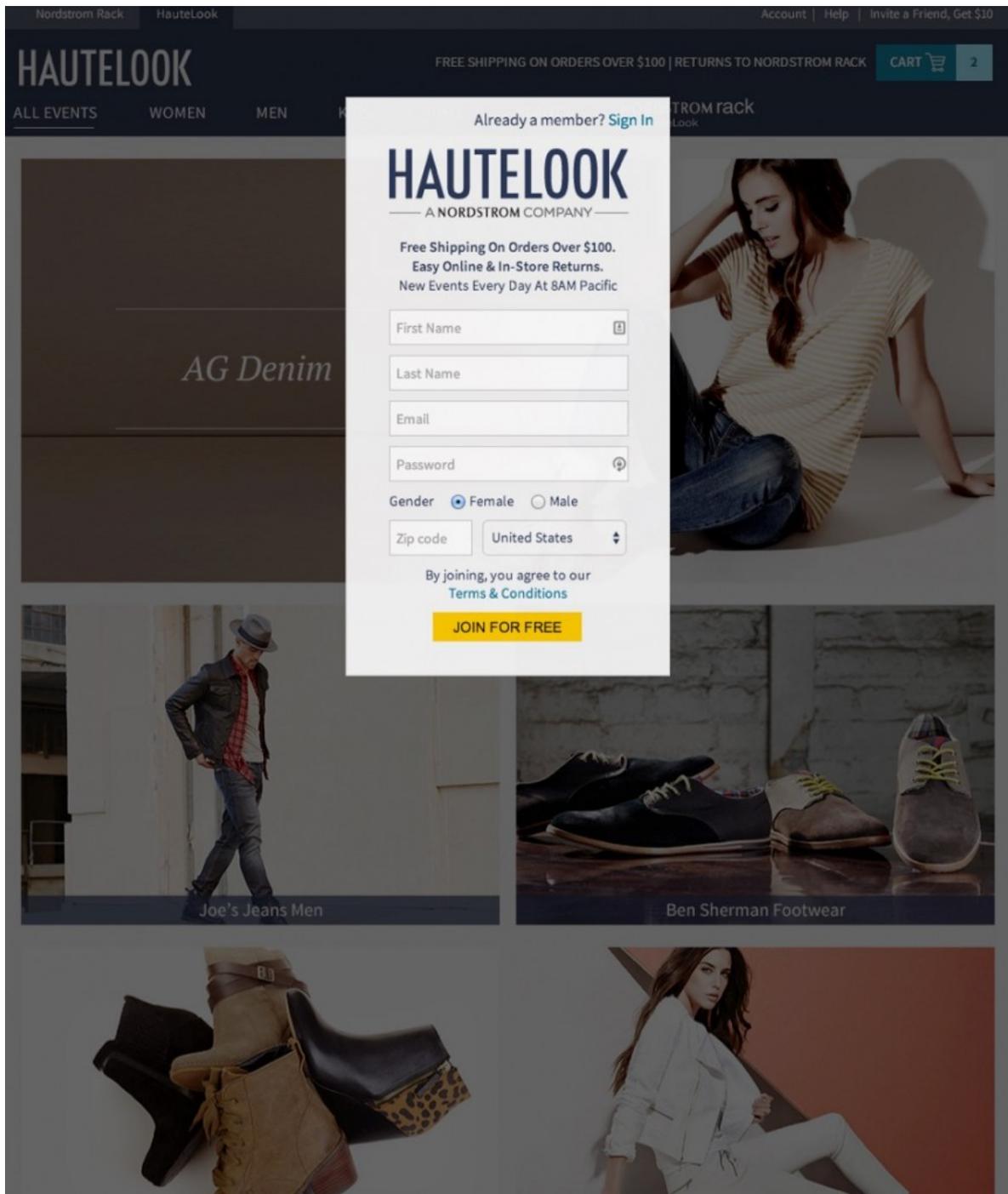
Does this probably annoy visitors? Yes.

Does this convert well? Definitely.

I've seen **homepage gates convert from 15% up to 25% of traffic into email subscribers.**

And it's not just for blogs. The ecommerce site HauteLook

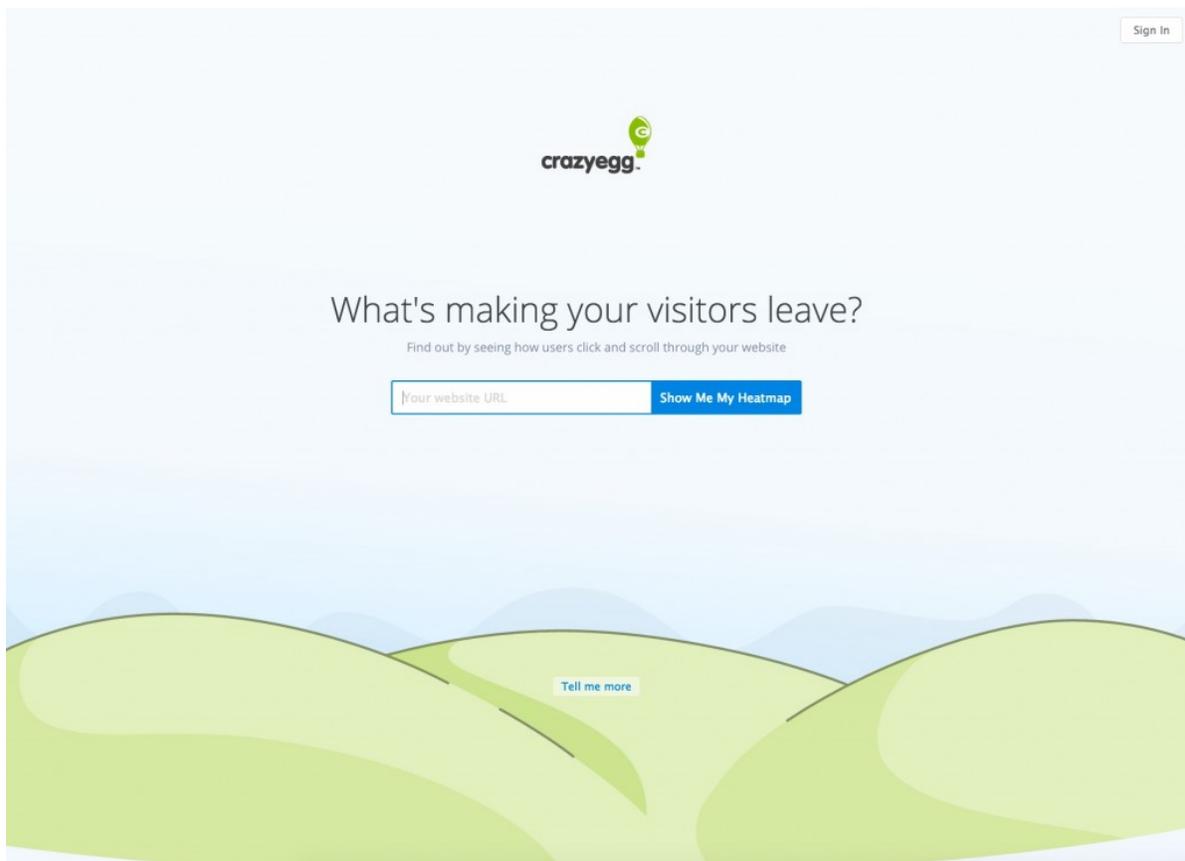
(acquired by Nordstroms) for the longest time had a homepage gate that you could not "exit out of". So you literally could not shop without signing up:



That's gutsy.

In SaaS, the heatmapping company CrazyEgg puts a twist on this concept by getting you to interact with their app (as opposed to signup)

with this homepage, which is very unique compared to the usual "Let me tell you about all of our features!" homepage of most SaaS sites. (Note they do give you an out here with "Tell Me More")



Welcome Gate Recommendation: If you are serious about conversions, you should use them. But let me also say that I have a mixed relationship with welcome gates. On the one hand, the conversion side of me loves how well they convert – they work like a **landing page** because you remove all distractions, and have one clear goal as a user.

But the other part of me worries that I might lose a key client because they aren't ready to give us their e-mail yet, and we're not giving them a chance to scroll through our site and get to know our company. That's the reason you don't see one on this site or my agency's site.

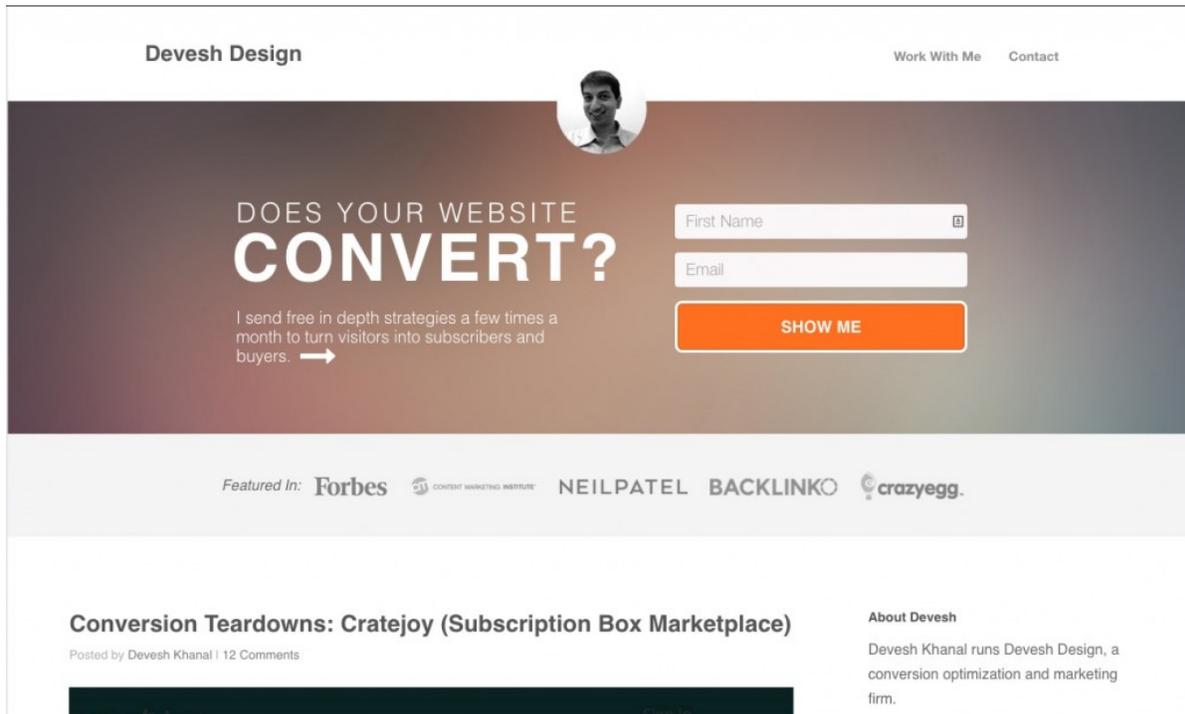
Featurebox

This is a "welcome gate lite". The phrase was coined originally by Derek Halpern of Social Triggers and refers to just having a nice above the fold section of your homepage, or even on every article page, that is dedicated to promoting your email list or store/app.

It serves two purposes:

1. To explain what the heck this site is about
2. To convert visitors.

As I alluded to above, in lieu of a welcome gate, I have a Featurebox on my agency site's homepage:



As a result, my homepage consistently converted around 5% of visitors throughout 2015:



For SaaS businesses, you can even do something similar to what Buffer does and let people sign up for the app right in the featurebox (brilliant):

Save an hour a day on social media with Buffer

Schedule your first post

Buffer
is hiring!

Social

Open

Overflow

Happiness

buffer social

Thoughts on sharing, creating, analyzing and converting with social media.

Save time on social media with Buffer. [Schedule your first post now!](#)

Free up your day with our social media tools

Buffer can save you up to an hour a day and grow your traffic too!

Scheduling

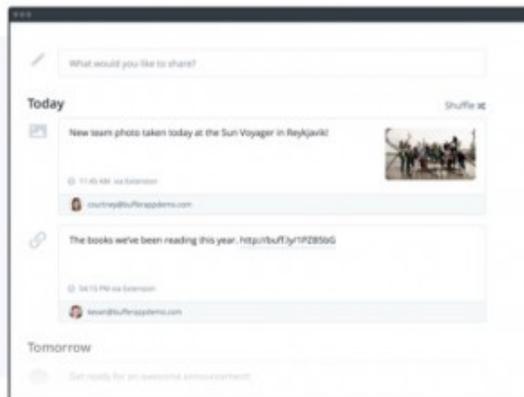
Always have something great to share next.

Analytics

Know what's working in an instant.

One-click posting

Share to Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest and more



Sign up with Twitter

See plans for Teams and Agencies

Love it.

The Secrets To Combatting Content Overload: How To Craft Content People Love



By Ash Read

JANUARY 12, 2016

Tweet

Buffer

69

The Internet is becoming increasingly cluttered.

In 2005, we were reportedly exposed to over 3,500 brand messages per day.

Featurebox Recommendation: Use a Featurebox if you're interested in

driving blog traffic to your main site with the goal of having a user sign up for something, or make a purchase. This is a perfect place to explain what your company offers and provide a simple link to your homepage or landing page.

Depending on the size of your featurebox and how aggressive you want to be, you can have this just appear on your blog's homepage, or on every post. For this blog for example, it only appears on the homepage.

Optimized Nav-bar

I've saved one of the most fundamental CTA areas for last: the nav-bar.

Don't ignore the nav-bar. Why? Because familiarity is how we like to browse sites now, so if we want to go somewhere, the first place we look is the nav-bar. So the psychology here is different than tactics like exit intent pop-ups, which are trying to persuade people who are about to do one thing (leave) to do something else (sign up). Instead, here you are:

1. Making it easier for people who are trying to click to an additional page to find it
2. gently guiding them to where *you* want them to go.

Obviously, you have a navbar, so let's get straight to recommendations:

Navbar Recommendations

Here are strategies to use the navbar to drive more blog readers to become customers or subscribers.

- Make the navbar sticky – So when you're reading, it stays there and encourages more clicks. The last thing you want is for a blog reader to just skim an article and leave. (In case you weren't sure, that's the definition of a bounce). Having a sticky navbar helps encourage learning more about the company.
- Remove Clutter – Remember that unlike homepage visitors, a lot of blog readers have no idea who you are, they just clicked on an article that ranked for their search term or was on their social feed. So, links like "Team" and "Login" don't apply to blog readers. Even "features" and "testimonials" can be less appropriate than just sending readers to a dedicated landing page or homepage.
- Choose the logo link carefully – Some companies link the logo to the blog homepage (often because the blog is a separate WordPress

The #1 Problem with Content Upgrades and What I've Learned To Do Instead

In the last section on converting blog traffic, we talked about measuring your conversion rates and putting calls-to-actions in the proper places so you convert as much traffic into leads as possible.

In this section we're going to talk about a particular conversion tactic called content upgrades.

Content upgrades are a game changer for the conversion rate of your blog (or any content based site).

But here's the #1 problem content marketers have with content upgrades: **no time**. To do them well, it takes time, and to do it at scale it can be oppressively time-consuming.

So in this section I'm going to walk through 3 techniques I've used, are using, or readers have used to get most of the benefit of content upgrades with a fraction of the time input.

As usual we'll report as much data as possible on each and every tactic.

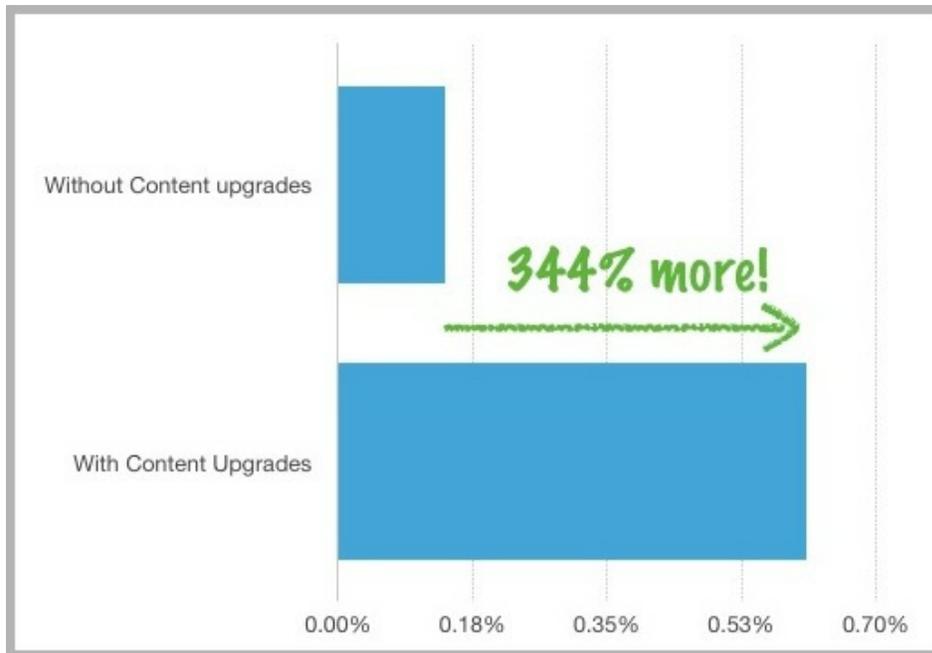
Let's dive in...

What are Content Upgrades and How Well Do They Convert?

In short, content upgrades are content specific bonuses. Instead of offering a generic ebook at the end of your posts, you offer a bonus that's intimately tied to the topic of that post itself.

And they convert like **crazy**.

For example, we implemented content upgrades on a few high traffic posts on *JeffBullas.com*, and after 2 months, the 4 posts with content upgrades were **converting 344% more than the rest** of the top 20 posts on his site.



What were the upgrades? We made simple checklists of the strategies he was writing about in those posts. For example, here's a checklist for a post he had on SEO:

6 SIMPLE TIPS TO RANK HIGHER IN GOOGLE'S SEARCH ENGINE

1 // COMPETITOR ANALYSIS

Use a link analysis tool like Moz's OpenSiteExplorer or Ahrefs to analyze where competitors are getting links. Then try to reach out to those sites to get links to the most relevant pieces of *your* content.

Click below to get started with these tools:

[Open Site Explorer](#)



2 // CONTENT CONTENT CONTENT

Google now places the most emphasis on quality content that keeps people on your site and gets linked to by other sites. Focus on writing high quality articles that people will naturally want to link to. And don't forget to update your title tag and meta descriptions.

3 // GUEST BLOGGING

Blogging on established sites not only brings you an immediate flood of traffic, but is also an opportunity to bring in links from established sites that have more clout with Google. Google places more emphasis on those links.

Here is one of our posts on the dirty little secret of guest blogging that no one tells you:
<http://www.jeffbullas.com/2014/03/04/the-dirty-little-secret-about-guest-blogging/>



We gave away these checklists free in exchange for an email.

The reason content upgrades convert so well is because users on that page are already reading a post about SEO. So when they see an offer for something intimately related to implementing that posts' ideas (the checklist), a far greater percentage of them optin. These types of optins work much better than something like a generic eBook offered site-wide.

Brian Dean of *Backlinko.com* implemented a similar checklist style content

upgrade on one his articles and **saw a 785% increase in conversion rate** from 0.54% to 4.82%.

Primary Dimension: **Landing Page** Source Keyword Other ▾

Secondary dimension ▾ Sort Type: Default ▾

Landing Page		Goal Conversion Rate ▾ ↓
		785.01% ↑ 4.82% vs 0.54%
1.	/google-ranking-factors	
	Jun 1, 2014 - Jun 9, 2014	4.82%
	May 1, 2014 - May 31, 2014	0.54%

Just to make sure we're on the same page about how outrageous these conversion "lifts" are, keep in mind that I do A/B testing for companies professionally and you simply don't see multiple hundred percent lifts with things like A/B testing.

So let's look at how impactful these sorts of lifts can be.

The Impact That a 500% Increase in Optins Can Have On Lead Generation

If your business has a blog that is getting 100,000 uniques a month, generating 300% to 800% more email addresses or leads from the traffic can be a top-of-the-funnel **game changer**.

For example, let's say you run marketing at a SaaS business (say a sales/CRM platform) and you spend 2 years building a sales blog to 100,000 uniques a month. Great.

Let's say you convert 0.5% of that traffic to an email list, where they get sent through an autoresponder that eventually pitches them a free trial of your platform. Assume 10% of subscribers from the autoresponder start a free trial.

That means every month you're getting 50 free trials from the blog (100k*0.5%*10%).

But if you increased that rate by 500% (to 2.5% optins from blog content)?

That's 250 leads, or 200 *more* free trials a month!

If you are already making money or growing at 50/month, imagine what shifting to 250 would do.

The Problem With Content Upgrades Is, Ironically, Content

Side note: People love to critique others' improper use of the word "irony". Am I using it correctly here? If not, leave me a comment. You can judge me for my grammar, and I'll judge you back for judging me for my grammar.

The problem with content upgrades, of course, is that they require you to make a unique bonus for *each* blog post. You can imagine how tedious that would be on large blogs with lots of posts and lots of traffic.

In my math for the hypothetical SaaS business above, to see a 500% increase in optins blog-wide, they'd have to in theory **make a content upgrade for every post**. That's going to be tough. Very few blogs of that size have a manageable number of posts.

So what do you do?

Today we're going to talk about 3 solutions that have worked well for me and other companies we've done this for:

1. **The Topicbox** – How to use a few content upgrades across a multitude of blog posts to get the majority of the conversion gain with a minimum of work.
2. **The PDF** – Developing a repeatable process to give bonuses away for every post
3. **The Cliffhanger** – How to use the content itself to increase optin rates without a unique upgrade.

The Topicbox

Last year a company approached me to help increase their email optins from content. I thought:

Great! I can most certainly help you with that...

I had been working with blogs big and small to help grow their email lists, so I felt like like this was totally up my alley. The #1 tool I had in my arsenal was the content upgrade.

I was so confident that I would walk in, teach them what a content upgrade is, implement a bunch, their conversion rate would go through the roof, and we'd all be smoking cigars in a hot tub with gold chains around our necks.

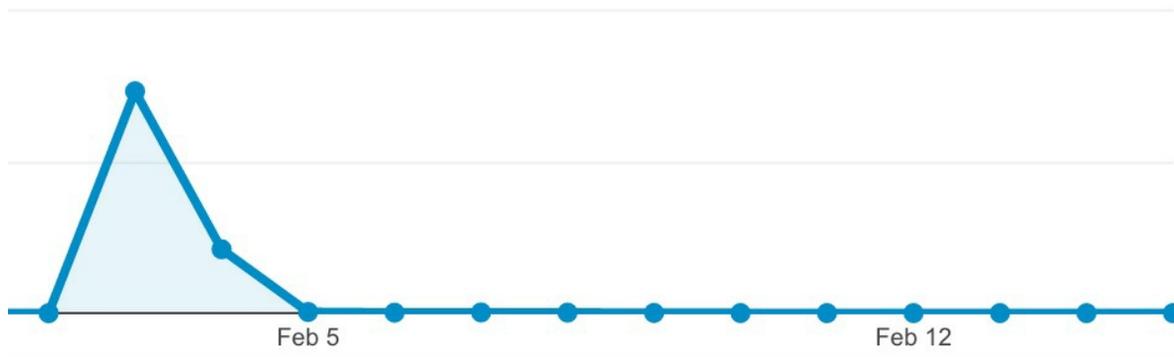
Then they told me what their site was: an investing news site that publishes ~50 new articles a day.

What?! How were we supposed to make content upgrades for 50 new articles every day?

It sounded impossible.

Then I thought I had brilliant idea #2: Let me just look at their top 20 most popular pages and make content upgrades for those, and by the grace of the 80/20 rule, I'll convert most of their traffic.

That's when I learned something about traffic for news sites: they're hella spikey (*Benji wants me to point out that "hella" is a Northern Californian phrase*). There's a spike in traffic when it comes out, and then it dies down as the next day/week's news takes hold. Traffic graphs like this are not unusual (this is an actual screenshot from a single article on ValueWalk):



The top 20 articles this month are different from the top 20 next month. So making a single content upgrade for a single article doesn't make sense.

Argh. So now what?

That's when I had this idea:

What if instead of making content upgrades for individual articles, I just made *topic-specific* content upgrades. This way I could use them across an entire category of articles (past and future).

After all, the site reliably published articles on a few set topics: certain investing frameworks, certain famous investors, certain companies, and certain political issues.

So, we worked with their creative team to create guides, books, or "best of" pages for each of those categories and we gave them away in exchange for an optin.

To easily implement them sitewide, we used Optinmonster popups because they let you target by WordPress category. By using this tool we could set a popup to show on all posts in a certain category. *All articles from then on in that category would show that popup.*

That's why I called this the ***Topicbox Technique***, because we used lightbox popups to actually promote the topic specific bonuses.

It worked brilliantly:



Over the course of a couple months of rolling this out, we saw a **216% increase in optins**.

And again, because their site was meticulous about having writers categorize each article, we didn't have to keep going back and adding individual URLs to the popups as new articles got published.

Steps to do this on your own site

Step 1: Figure out what your categories are.

If you're like most blogs, you don't have meticulous categorization of each post in WordPress. You also probably don't publish 50 articles a day, so adding URLs manually to a popup is no big deal. In that case, you can use any popup service that lets you target by URL. Sumome, for example, lets you do that for free.

To actually group posts into topics, just go through your top 20 – 50 posts in Google Analytics, look for patterns, and start labeling them by rough topic area. For example, here's how I would do that for Grow and Convert (even though we don't have 20 posts yet).

1.	/content-marketing/grew-organic-visitors-suggested-search-hack/	Traffic
2.	/conversion-rate-optimization/blog-conversion-strategy/	Conversions
3.	/	
4.	/blog-traffic/blog-growth-stats-january-2015/	Updates
5.	/content-marketing/content-marketing-has-become-too-trendy/	Updates
6.	/content-marketing/building-content-team-hiring-inhouse-outsourcing-freelancers/	Hiring
7.	/content-marketing/our-entire-content-strategy-unveiled/	Traffic
8.	/about/	
9.	/content-marketing/how-to-find-evaluate-and-hire-writers-for-your-blog/	Hiring
10.	/blog-traffic/our-2015-blog-stats-the-art-of-content-promotion/	Updates

Step 2: Create genuinely useful bonuses for those posts

Even this step may sound like it's too tedious:

I have to create 5 ebooks! FML....

Let me say this once and for all: **eBooks are not the be all end all of lead magnets. In fact, they're a bit over done, don't you think?**

In fact, even the "ultimate guide" is getting a bit tedious (do we really need another 100 tips to grow a social following?).

Let me give you some alternatives (instead of just complaining):

- **For personal, B2C blogs, try an insanely specific Q&A on a topic.** So for a fitness blog, if a topic is nutrition, you should pretty easily know (or be able to figure out) what the main 5 questions your readers ask about nutrition are. Answer them. Either by text, or by video. And offer that as the topic specific bonus. You don't need 100 questions! Or even 10, which is the most popular listicle number. Just a handful of questions answered really well will do the trick. It feels (and actually is) a lot more unique, specific, and valuable, than "My Ultimate Guide to Nutrition!", which has been done to death.

- **For a B2B business, try a case study or collection of case studies on that topic.** This shows your expertise, and people looking to achieve a certain goal usually can't get enough of seeing other people achieve that goal. One caveat: Make sure the case study isn't just a 2 page PowerPoint presentation that has no meat about what actually happened and mostly just sells your company. That's not enticing. If "legal won't let me give more details" is an excuse, then think of something else.

Step 3: Give the bonus away with a popup (or slider, or on page form) on *all* posts on that topic.

I mentioned how to do it with Optinmonster using WordPress categories. If you have a manageable number of posts, then you can also use a tool like Sumome to target specific URLs to show your popup.

The PDF of the Post Itself

This is a lazy yet repeatable way to turn posts into a content upgrade: Just turn the post into a PDF.

Yes, it sounds ridiculous: Why would someone optin to get a PDF of what they just read. But trust me, people actually want that, for 2 reasons:

1. Most of your unique visitors to a post *do not read the post*. As evidence, my agency once investigated why some of a client's posts (Backlinko's) were converting really well (>4-8%) while others were not (<1-3%) when they all had content upgrades. We found that the posts that mentioned the content upgrade at the top were convert 315% better than the ones that *only* mentioned the content upgrade at the end. Think about that, it means even people who are willing to optin for the upgrade (your most engaged readers) won't optin unless you offer it at the top because they actually never scroll to the bottom. Think about that again.
2. Even if they do read the whole thing, people love saving things to read later and a PDF let's you do that.

For example, just a few posts ago, a Grow and Convert reader, Michael, actually asked us for a PDF of the post:



Michael Pozdnev · a month ago

Excellent article! I am very glad that you share such useful information, confirmed with data and your own experience, with the readers.

In fact, it is really important to approach all your actions correctly and keep track of them from the very beginning. Conversion settings, CTA are indispensable parts of a successful blog nowadays.

According to my own experience of using various CTA, several options based on user's preferences worked well. Sometimes there are fewer downloads of my bonuses than of the pdf versions of my posts. The same concerns your article: I would rather save it for the future as a pdf file, so that to be able to take advantage of the advice later on.

I wish success to your blog! I keep track of your development, since I'm interested in the subject matter of your posts and since I launched my own blog at the same time with you.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

In fact, Michael has noticed on his own blog that the PDF version of a post often gets the most signups.

For example, he has a mega post on doing SEO audits, and offers 2 content upgrades: a checklist and a PDF download:

1.



Free Bonus: [Download the checklist](#) with a 21-step SEO audit (4 of them are not included in this post) and increase the traffic to your blog.



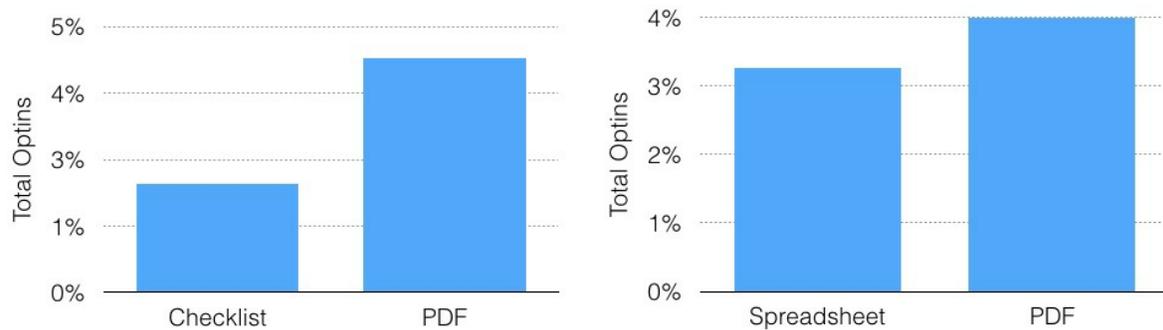
In this post, I will tell you how to complete an SEO audit in just a few quick steps.

2.



[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD THIS MONSTER POST AS A PDF](#)

When he looks at his conversion rates, the PDF download is outperforming the "true" content upgrade (a checklist) on this post by almost double (*left*):



And the PDF outperformed on another post as well (*right*), where Michael analyzed a bunch of data from top bloggers and presented his analysis in the post. The content upgrade was the full spreadsheet of the data, but the PDF still got more downloads.

That's crazy because the spreadsheet in that post is a *really topical* content upgrade. And yet, people still preferred the PDF.

So, if you're looking for a scalable process to implement content upgrades blog wide, PDF-ing (long) posts is definitely something I would consider. You will have to actually scale it somehow though, so fair warning.

It took me 15 minutes to PDF this post and I hired someone from Fiverr to do the previous one (for \$5, although it seems everyone on Fiverr always wants to convince you that your task requires purchasing bonuses...argh.).

I haven't done this myself at scale, but here are some ideas:

1. **Manual** – If this converts well and readers keep wanting PDFs, we're thinking of drafting all posts in Word or Pages, finalizing there, saving as PDF, then, as the last step, importing them into WordPress. I did a couple of (unscientific

surveys) on how many people draft directly in WordPress and, was, quite frankly, shocked at how basically no one drafts in WordPress (am I really the only one?!)

2. So, if you're already drafting it somewhere outside of WordPress, then this will add 37 seconds of saving as PDF to your workflow, as long as your "somewhere else" is a word processor built after 1997.
3. **Assistant** – Hire an assistant to turn every post into a PDF. Simple enough.
4. **Software** – If your company is big enough, this is something to consider. If Instapaper, Pocket, Evernote, and a bunch of other services can scrape a page for the article, surely your tech team can find a way to do that for your blog and turn each into a PDF in a click or two. (Side note: If you know of software that does this already, let us know in the comments.)

The CliffHanger

So just to recap, we've now covered creating fewer content upgrades (Topicbox Technique), and repeatable upgrades (PDFs). You should be able to get solid conversion rates with those.

This last example is going to be (in some ways) even easier than the other two: instead of a content upgrade, just **give your audience a cliffhanger for the *next* post.**

Since Grow and Convert has, to date, been a side project

(100% emotional commitment, less than 100% time), we just haven't had the time to create content upgrades.

So instead, this is something we've just started trying on Grow and Convert and it's converting moderately well, considering how much easier it is than content upgrades. We haven't hit conversion rates as high as real content upgrades (not surprising) but considering how much easier this is, it's worth mentioning, so you have it in your arsenal.

Here's how it works.

Step 1: We take a topic (such as this post's topic: converting readers from content marketing), and plan to write 2 or 3 posts on it.

Step 2: When we write the first post on the topic, we intentionally *tease* the next

post on the topic.

For example, in a post titled "The Suggested Search Hack", we teased the next post in the series:

You can create content that strategically brings leads in at different places in your sales funnel. That's what I'm going to show you in this post (Part 1 of the series).

i.e. more to come

Step 3: Then we attach a call to action with that tease to collect emails.

So in the above example, below the paragraph we showed above, we included an explicit call to action to get notified when Part 2 comes out. When you click the link, it opens this optin form:

Get notified when Part 2 is released:
[I'll show you how to convert traffic into paying customers.](#)

The post has received 3394 unique pageviews to date and created 108 email subscribers:

So it has a 3.2% conversion rate.

Since Grow and Convert is all about transparency, let me be the first to tell you that 3.2% on a good blog post with our current level of traffic (10k uniques) is not *stellar* (if we had a really good content upgrade, we should convert 6%+).

But considering we literally have *no* content upgrade for that post, that's pretty damn good. And note that 3.2% doesn't include the people who landed on that post and joined via our sitewide popup or by clicking to the homepage and joining via our featurebox.

In the last post, we did something similar, but our CTA for the next post in the series wasn't as clear (the popup just said "get updates of future posts"), and it's only converted around 2.1%. That's starting to approach "not good enough" territory, so, use this method with caution.

Do This On Your Own Blog: Become a Content Conversion Pro

Over the course of 2 posts and over 7000 words, we've now covered multiple aspects of converting blog traffic into email subscribers:

- How to set up analytics to measure conversions
- Where to place optin forms so they convert the best (popups vs. sidebar vs. smartbars, etc.)
- What content upgrades are
- Alternatives to content upgrades that convert well but take less time.

This is a lot of information. But if you actually apply it, you will almost guaranteedly see more emails or leads come through from your content marketing.

Growing From 0-12k Organic Visitors by Mapping Content to the Sales Funnel

How I used the Suggested Search Hack to boost SEO traffic

Do you have a blog that gets traffic but isn't generating a ton of revenue for your business?

After talking with numerous businesses over the last few weeks, I've realized that this is a common challenge.

Many people are focused on creating content that gets a ton of traffic, but from what I've seen recently, **many aren't focused on mapping their content strategy to buyer's search intent at different stages in the sales funnel.**

Let me explain further, do you resonate with either of these examples?

You want \$10k monthly deal sizes for your agency and you're currently getting leads from companies who can barely afford \$1k a month? Or even worse, the prospects you're getting don't have revenue.

Or.

You run marketing for a SaaS company and you're driving a lot of great traffic to your blog, but your traffic doesn't convert to free trials, or your other funnel goals?

You can create content that strategically brings leads in at different places in your sales funnel. That's what I'm going to show you in this section (Part 1 of the series).

Here's what I'm going to cover:

1. I'm going to walk you through how we were able to grow our search traffic to over 12k visitors a month in 6 months at ThinkApps **(No, It wasn't through standard keyword research).**
2. I'll show you the strategy that I used to match content to different stages in the marketing/sales funnel - top level awareness, mid-funnel, and low funnel opportunities **(No, the strategy isn't to be everywhere and drive leads from reputable blogs to your site with the hope of converting a percentage of those to customers).**

In Part 2 of the series:

I'll show you how we converted leads directly off the blog (**No, it wasn't with whitepapers, eBooks, webinars or any of those standard techniques that you're probably thinking of. I'm talking direct-response leads from your blog).**

Ready? Let's get started.

Identifying Where to Focus Our Content Efforts

When I joined ThinkApps as their first marketing hire, I was in a tough spot. I joined a tech company that did software development but I knew nothing about software development.

When I first started, we were pre-product-market fit, and we were in the process of trying to figure out which audience we were going to target.

When I surveyed the landscape of different software development firms, I realized a number of things:

1. There was a lack of trust in the industry (a lot of people had been burned by different companies and freelancers).
2. Typically there was poor communication between the client and the firm (typically the client didn't know how things were progressing

with their project).

3. If someone was non-technical trying to get a product built, typically they didn't know what they didn't know (I was one of those people).
4. There was a lack of really good content that helped people with various challenges in getting products built (this is what we capitalized on).

My goal was to build the best resource out there about building



products for iOS, Android, and Web. Later Apple watch.

The reason I'm listing these realizations is because I set out to create content that hit on all of those four points. It actually helped me being non-technical, because, on a lot of subjects, I had the same questions and pain points as our potential prospects had.

How I Did Research to Figure Out What Content Would Bring in the Right Customers for Each Stage of the Sales Funnel

The first thing I did was listen in on prospect phone calls and write down all the questions that we were getting from prospects that were really early on in the buying process. This helped me identify some of the pain points people faced early on in the buyer's journey.

Next, I talked to some of our current clients and heard some horror stories that they faced when dealing with other agencies and freelancers. Things such as: How a client had spent \$50k on development with another company and ended up with an unfinished product. I took notes during these conversations and then looked for common challenges our clients had faced with other firms.

Then, I listened in on later stage conversations and wrote down notes of questions and objections that people had prior to purchasing. I also called prospects myself so that I could ask the questions I needed to understand the buyer in-depth.

Once I had a list of common pain points that people had at different stages in the sales funnel, I set out to create content that directly matched someone's search intent and solved someone's pain point.

The Google Suggested Search Hack

“Regular” keyword research for content marketing generally involves sorting through keywords in your niche by search volume. And depending on how much domain authority, time, and resources you have, going after the highest volume keywords you think you can rank for.

This works well for companies that have a lot of resources, a high domain authority, and time to build links. But unfortunately, I didn't have any of those.

I needed a way to bring in people who were looking to build apps. Since it was nearly impossible for us to rank for head terms like “mobile app development,” I went the route of going after long-tail keywords, and more specifically going after long-tail keywords that matched different stages in the sales funnel.

Here's how it works:

If someone is doing *research* on a product or service – they're likely interested in learning something, or they're stuck with a tough situation where they need help. So, they're not going to Google some general head term like “iPhone apps”.

They would be searching for something more like:

How-tos – How do I build an app? (Top of Funnel – Doing initial research most likely before they have a vetted idea)

Comparisons – iOS vs. Android Development (Mid-Funnel – they likely have an idea and are deciding on a platform to build on. But they probably haven't picked a development company yet)

Questions – What is the best app development studio in San Francisco?

(Low Funnel – They likely know what they want to build and are looking for someone to build an app for them)

Head terms work if the person already knows what they're going to purchase. However, if you're going after head terms with content marketing, sometimes it's hard to know the intent of the buyer.

Long-tail keywords capture pains that people face that they're looking for answers to, and are more indicative of different stages in the sales funnel for larger, more complex, purchases.

If you're doing content marketing for a business where there's any buyers journey at all, you need to be going after long-tail search traffic that answers questions that people have at different stages in the sales funnel.

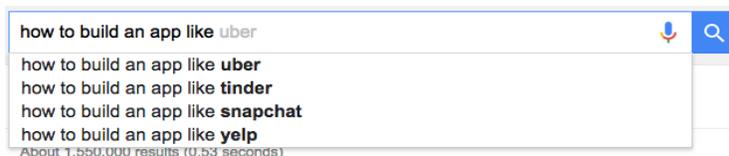
Note: This strategy works really well for expensive products and services that have long sales cycles. But, don't think this strategy wouldn't work for cheaper products or even e-commerce businesses. It does. Let's say you were an online store that sells tennis equipment or you were a tennis coach that sells lessons. A post example might be "How can I improve my tennis forehand" or "What is the best tennis racket for high school players." Then you could include a product listing in that post to try to convert that traffic.

Here's the best way that I've found to write articles that rank for the long tail terms that attract your exact buyers (The Google Suggested Search Hack)

Go to Google with the list of questions that you've come up with (that your buyers have) and start typing in questions and seeing what comes up.

You should have questions that address the top of the funnel, the middle of the funnel, and the bottom of the funnel.

For example: How to build an app like _____



The top four results are Uber, Tinder, Snapchat, and Yelp.

If no one has written an article about this exact topic – then it will generally be easier for you to rank for that term (and you know that a ton of people are already searching for answers to that question).

For example, Quora is the highest search listing and **68,000+ people have viewed the answer!**

how to build an app like uber

All Videos News Shopping Images More Search tools

About 1,550,000 results (0.33 seconds)

We Make Apps Like Uber - nextjuggernaut.com
Ad www.nextjuggernaut.com/App_like_Uber
Technology Experts - Get in Touch! Make your idea earn Million for you
Scalable · Subject Matter Experts · Fast to Market · Cost Effective
Services: Taxis, Beauty, Food, Home-Service, Flower, Laundry, Fitness, Healthcare, D...

On Demand Business Model
Get the business Model of your
On Demand Idea right. Download Now!

Success Story-Jugnoo
Discover how Jugnoo bagged \$5M
funding in 6 months. Download Now!

Signup To Drive With Uber - Uber.com
Ad www.uber.com/
Make \$14.25/hr Driving your Car. Work When You Want With Uber.

Create THE App for That - GeneralAssemb.ly
Ad www.generalassemb.ly/coding
Become a top-class app developer. Learn more about this new class!

How much would it cost to make an iPhone app like Uber ...
<https://www.quora.com/...Application-Development.../How-much-wo...> Quora
Taxi apps are really booming in the world app market. ... Now the cost to develop an iPhone Application like Uber? ... How much does it cost to develop a Taxi app Like Uber, Lyft clone?

Want to develop an app like Uber? Know the costs and ...
nextjuggernaut.com/blog/apps-like-uber-how-much-cost-develop/
Uber's business model has given rise to a large number of On-Demand Platforms being adapted for different verticals. They are being positioned as disruptive ...

Ads
How cloud.g Build Y Host on
Build www.fir Focus c We'll tal
Creat www.d Create submit t
App E www.a Build y AppBuil
Build www.in Build y Minutes
Mobil www al

Quora Ask or Search Quora Ask Question Read Answer 14 Notifications 51

iPhone Application Development How Much Does X Cost? +7

iPhone Application Development: How much would it cost to make an iPhone app like Uber?

design & development

Write Answer Re-Ask Follow 92 Comments 3 Share 4 Downvote

Have this question too? Re-Ask to get an answer.

32 Answers

Question Overview

92 Followers

68,096 Views

View More

Related Questions

How much does it cost to build an app li

If you were to use this suggested search term, and write an entire post about “How to Build an App Like Uber”, then chances are if you get some good links to the post, or (if you already have high domain authority), **you'll rank higher than most of these results because your content better matches the intent that the user was looking for.**

Mapping Content to the Top of The Funnel, Middle, and Bottom of the Sales Funnel

In this specific example, your hypothetical, high-ranking article, “How to Build an App Like Uber” would map to the *top* of the funnel for a sales lead.

Reason being, this person is probably still in early research stages of building an app. They have an idea in their head of what they want to build but are doing research on similar apps, and/or don't know the first place to start. These type of posts are great to bring people in at the top of the funnel and build awareness of your brand. It'd be ideal to put **calls to action** to join your email list so you can solidify your position as a domain expert in their mind. Also, this is a great way to build trust with your reader at their first touch point with a brand in this space.

how to build an app like uber

All Videos News Shopping Images More Search tools

About 1,550,000 results (0.33 seconds)

We Make Apps Like Uber - nextjuggernaut.com
Ad www.nextjuggernaut.com/App_like_Uber
Technology Experts - Get in Touch! Make your idea earn Million for you
Scalable · Subject Matter Experts · Fast to Market · Cost Effective
Services: Taxis, Beauty, Food, Home-Service, Flower, Laundry, Fitness, Healthcare, D...

On Demand Business Model
Get the business Model of your
On Demand Idea right. Download Now!

Success Story-Jugnoo
Discover how Jugnoo bagged \$5M
funding in 6 months. Download Now!

Signup To Drive With Uber - Uber.com
Ad www.uber.com/
Make \$14.25/hr Driving your Car. Work When You Want With Uber.

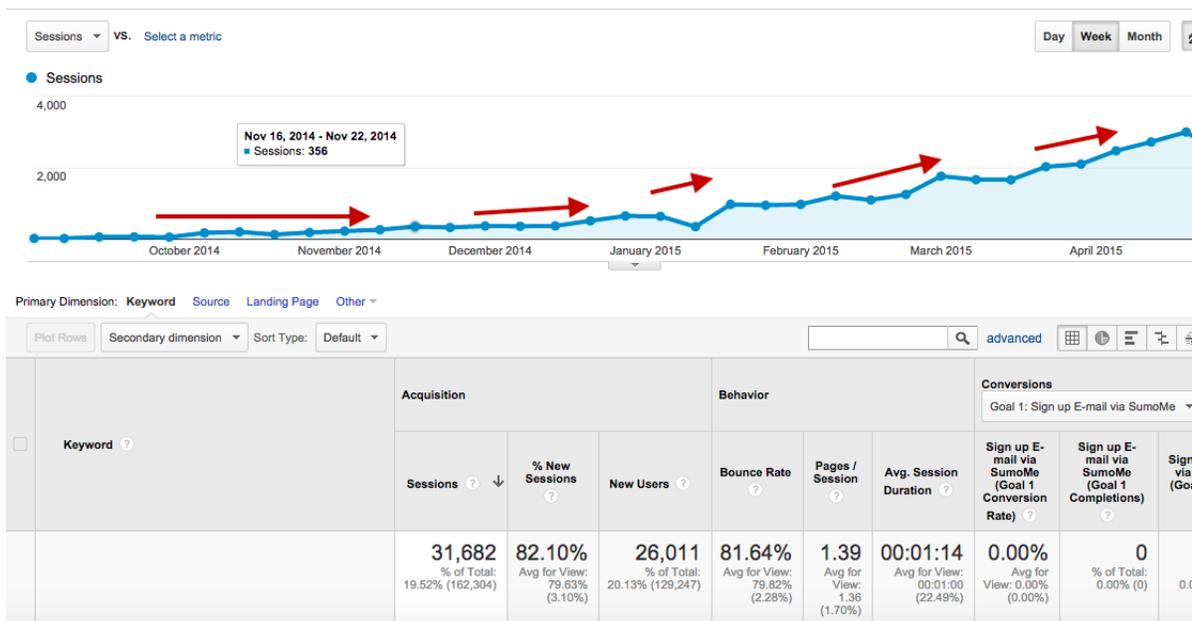
Create THE App for That - GeneralAssemb.ly
Ad www.generalassemb.ly/coding
Become a top-class app developer. Learn more about this new class!

How to Build an App like uber ?

How much would it cost to make an iPhone app like Uber ...
<https://www.quora.com/...Application-Development.../How-much-wo...> Quora
Taxi apps are really booming in the world app market. ... Now the cost to develop an iPhone Application like Uber? ... How much does it cost to develop a Taxi app Like Uber, Lyft clone?

Want to develop an app like Uber? Know the costs and ...
nextjuggernaut.com/blog/apps-like-uber-how-much-cost-develop/
Uber's business model has given rise to a large number of On-Demand Platforms being adapted for different verticals. They are being positioned as disruptive ...

How we Used This Strategy and Went from 0-12k/monthly SEO Visitors at ThinkApps



If you look at the ThinkApps blog, you'll see that a lot of our blog content follows this exact strategy. Here are some examples that show how we mapped content to different stages in the buyer's journey.

Examples of Top of Funnel Content

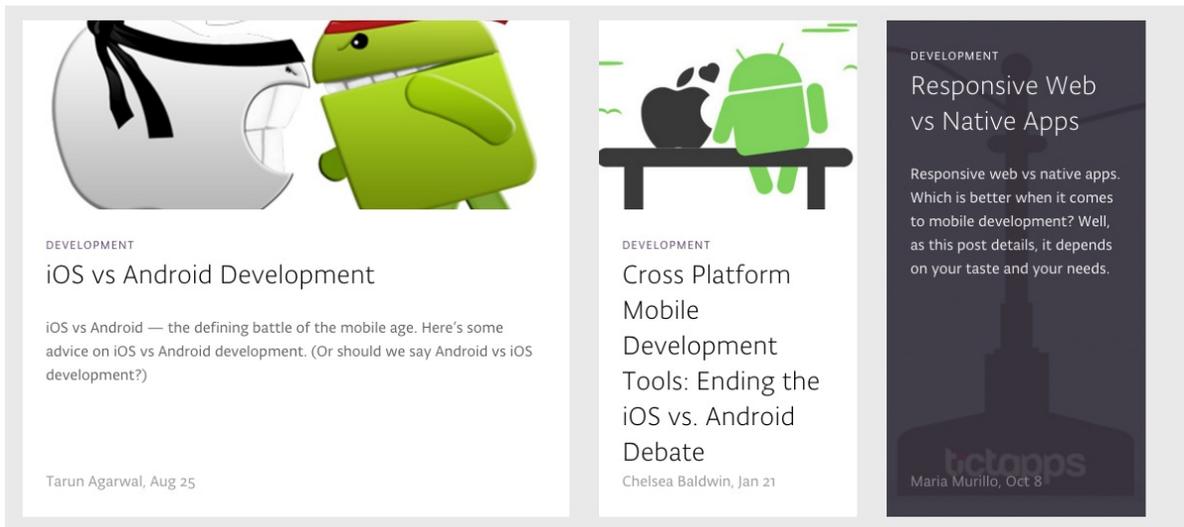
The Process of Creating an App Explained

This post goes into everything someone would need to know before approaching a developer and also an overview of what the process looks like: User Stories, Wireframing, UX design, UI Design, Development, and Testing.

Questions To Ask When Hiring an App Developer

This post covered questions that people could ask to evaluate a development team. A lot of people don't know what they don't know and while some might think this post was later in the buyer journey, a lot of people don't even know that design and development are separate! So we needed to educate the market with some higher-level posts.

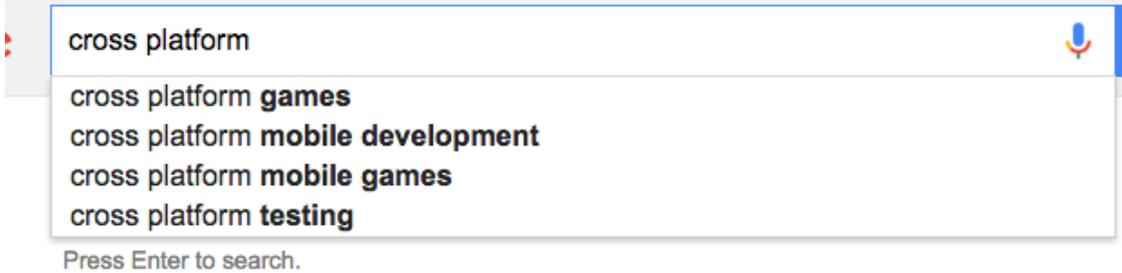
Examples of Mid-Funnel Content



For our middle of the funnel content we focused on mainly comparison posts that people would likely have once they've already decided they wanted to build an app.

Cross-Platform Mobile Development

A lot of companies would ask about solutions like PhoneGap, Sencha, and other cross-platform tools instead of building native apps. When they searched for cross-platform tools, we wanted to steer the conversation. We covered the pros and cons of the different tools and then also discussed drawbacks of using that kind of technology.



cross platform mobile development



All News Videos Images Shopping More Search tools

About 19,100,000 results (0.29 seconds)

Mobile App Development - att.com

Ad www.att.com/mobile-app-development

Develop & Deploy Cloud Based Apps. Expert Tools to Create Your App.

Ratings: Activation 9.5/10 - Network coverage 9/10 - Data speed 9/10

Mobile Enterprise Mgmt.

Simplify the complexity with AT&T mobile enterprise management.

BYOD Services

Empower your organization and release your employees' creativity.

IBM Mobile Developer Tool - ibm.com

Ad www.ibm.com/MobileFirst-Download

3.7 ★★★★★ rating for ibm.com

Develop Rich Cross-Platform Apps. Download IBM MobileFirst Trial

Cross Platform Mobile Dev - Kony.com

Ad www.kony.com/

5 Great Steps To Mobile Strategy. Download The Free E Book!

Cross Platform Mobile Development | Visual Studio

<https://www.visualstudio.com/en-us/.../mobile-app-development-vs.aspx>

Create mobile apps for iOS, Android, and Windows with Visual Studio. ... Create mobile applications for iOS, Android and Windows from a single code base with Visual Studio. ... Create rich native apps using C# across iOS, Android & Windows, while maximizing code reuse.

2nd organic listing

Cross Platform Mobile Development: 10 Best Tools

thinkapps.com/.../development/develop-for-ios-v-android-cross-platform...

Jan 21, 2015 - A guide to the 10 best cross platform mobile development tools. It's the mind-wrenching question that never really gets answered ... should I ...

Responsive Web Apps vs. Native Apps

Again, this was a question a lot of companies had as they were narrowing down options on how to build their app. A lot of companies were still questioning whether it was more effective to build a native app or to build a responsive web app. We created a post that went through the pros and cons of each and helped potential prospects make that decision.

responsive website vs mobile app



responsive website vs mobile app

responsive website vs app

responsive website vs mobile website

responsive website vs native app

About 1,580,000 results (0.54 seconds)

Responsive Website v. Native Mobile App - The Next Web

[thenextweb.com](#) › [Design & Dev](#) ▾ The Next Web ▾

Feb 8, 2014 - Choose between **responsive** design or a native **mobile app** is difficult since both options present advantages and disadvantages for a ...

Responsive Website or Mobile App: Do You Need Both?

[www.entrepreneur.com/article/235981](#) ▾ Entrepreneur ▾

Jul 30, 2014 - **Mobile Product Strategy Consultant and Co-Founder of Arkenea** ...

Choosing between a **responsive website** or a native **app** is more a business call than going into the technical ... There is no debate about one **vs.** another.

Responsive Web Design vs. Mobile Web App: - RapidValue

[www.rapidvaluesolutions.com/whitepapers/responsive-web-design.html](#) ▾

vs. Mobile Web App: What's Best for Your Enterprise? Download Whitepaper ... The New Design Trend: Build a **Website**; Enable Self-optimization Across All ...

Responsive Web vs Native Apps: Which Is Better?

[thinkapps.com/blog/development/responsive-web-vs-native-apps/](#) ▾

Oct 8, 2015 - In the first case, we are talking about **responsive websites** or **web apps**. In the second, we are referring to **mobile apps** that require downloading ...

Note: I left ThinkApps in April of last year and they still rank really well. Some of the other posts such as iOS vs. Android have since dropped off. If you notice your ranking start falling in webmaster tools, update your post by making it more robust and start getting more links.

Examples of Low-Funnel Content

We could've created a lot more low-funnel content- such as content that reviewed our business vs. another business. Or, we could've compiled a list of reviews from our clients about our business and titled the post "ThinkApps reviews"- being that these are pretty common terms that people would search for when they're ready to purchase.

I think that many businesses are scared to create that type of content themselves, but if you do, you can control the conversation about your brand (and potentially about your competition as well).

The Definitive Guide To Adding Payments to Your Web or Mobile App



DEVELOPMENT

The Definitive Guide to Adding Payments to Your Web or Mobile App

Katelan Cunningham, Aug 25

At the point when this piece was created, I had already left ThinkApps. But Becky Cruze, who I worked closely with at ThinkApps while we built this blog, took over and did an amazing job keeping up our content strategy.

Anyone who is looking to build an app that accepts payments might be looking for a piece like this. This person would already be pretty far down the decision tree when it comes to building an app. So, this piece of content captures someone who is building a very specific type of app that has likely already made a decision to build it.

adding payments to an app

All Shopping Videos News Images More Search tools

About 203,000,000 results (0.42 seconds)

[Accepting Payments in Your Mobile App | Spreadly Blog](https://blog.spreadly.com/2014/.../accepting-payments-in-your-mobile-a...)
https://blog.spreadly.com/2014/.../accepting-payments-in-your-mobile-a...
Jul 8, 2014 - Accepting Payments in Your Mobile App ... your secret API key, nor does Spreadly's add payment method API call require your access secret.

[The Definitive Guide to Adding Payments to Your App](https://thinkapps.com/blog/development/payments-app-definitive-guide/)
thinkapps.com/blog/development/payments-app-definitive-guide/
Aug 25, 2015 - From design to implementation, we explored everything you need to know before and after adding payments into your web or mobile app.

[Stripe: The best way to accept payments online or in your apps](https://stripe.com/features)
https://stripe.com/features
Add Apple Pay, Amex Express Checkout, or Android Pay to your checkout flow with ...
You can have sellers provide payment info in your app and manage their ...

Notice that we didn't make this a gated piece of content, or a whitepaper, or an eBook. It's just a blog post.

As I referenced above, I think too many people try to gate content that **ISN'T INTERESTING** or **ISN'T THAT VALUABLE**. I'll show you how we used low funnel blog posts, and then added value to capture information and have conversations with potential prospects in the next post.

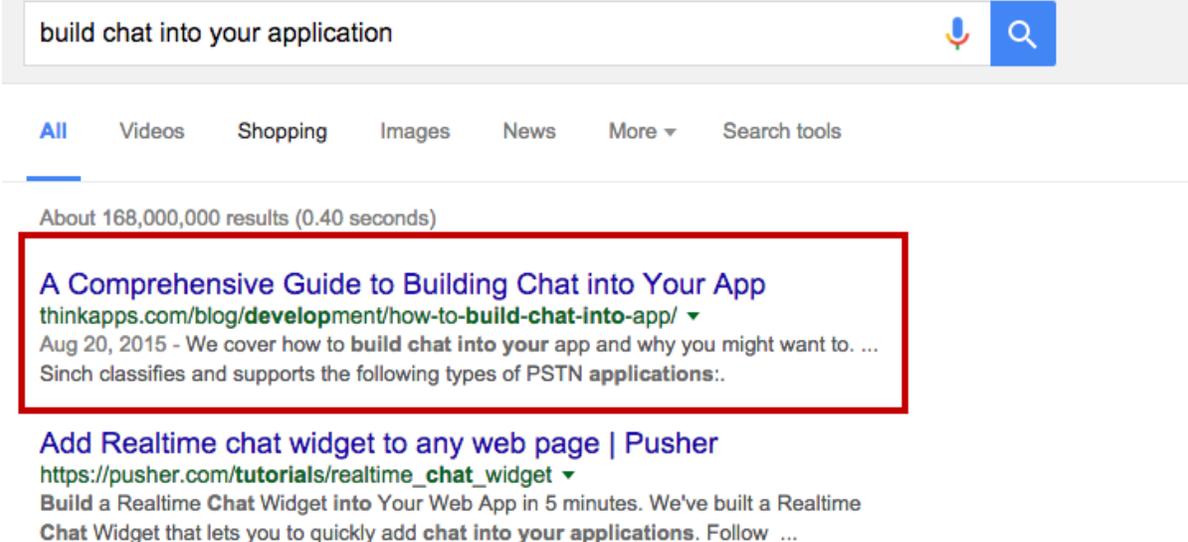
DEVELOPMENT

A Comprehensive Guide to Building Chat into Your Web or Mobile App

This is a comprehensive guide about chat, a common feature of web and mobile apps. We cover how to build chat into your app and why you might want to.

Katelan Cunningham, Aug 20

Similar to the piece above, this article goes after people who are looking to build a very specific type of app (typically dating apps or apps that require a P2P. If someone was searching for this type of content, they likely have high-intent to find a developer that can build this for them.



The screenshot shows a Google search interface. The search bar contains the text "build chat into your application". Below the search bar, there are navigation tabs for "All", "Videos", "Shopping", "Images", "News", "More", and "Search tools". The search results show "About 168,000,000 results (0.40 seconds)". The first result is highlighted with a red box and includes the following text:

A Comprehensive Guide to Building Chat into Your App
thinkapps.com/blog/development/how-to-build-chat-into-app/ ▾
Aug 20, 2015 - We cover how to **build chat into your app** and why you might want to. ...
Sinch classifies and supports the following types of PSTN **applications**..

The second result is:

Add Realtime chat widget to any web page | Pusher
https://pusher.com/tutorials/realtime_chat_widget ▾
Build a Realtime Chat Widget into Your Web App in 5 minutes. We've built a Realtime Chat Widget that lets you to quickly add chat into your applications. Follow ...

Note: Even if you were to search for "building chat application" the post still shows on page one.

IN CONCLUSION

1. Do your research on what questions people have at different stages in the sales/marketing funnel.
2. Use the Google Suggested Search Hack to find low-hanging fruit opportunities to write content about.
3. Write content that goes after long-tail search traffic that solves buyer's pain points at the top, middle, and bottom of the funnel, and know which pieces attract which buyers.

For every post, you'll also want to do a good job with content distribution. The more reach your post gets, the more natural links you'll get. You can also do link-building on top of that for the best results with this process.

Then, watch your posts bring in highly targeted organic traffic that matches buyers intent at different stages of your funnel. No more frustration that "all this traffic isn't converting."

How a Simple Email Popup Can Score 6-Figure Deals

Benji's exact strategy for generating highly-qualified sales leads from his company blog

ThinkApps is a startup based in San Francisco that helps companies build end-to-end mobile, web and wearable apps. I ran marketing for them for a year, and was responsible for increasing leads and revenue for the company.

Although I can't disclose revenue numbers since the company I worked at is a privately-held venture backed company, **I can tell you that we closed 5 & 6 figure deals directly from our blog using the tactics outlined below.**

How We Did It

I grew Thinkapps from **0-12k organic visitors in six months**, and the main channel I chose for that was content marketing.

I chose content marketing as a growth channel because I saw a huge opportunity to educate people about building products the right way. At the time, I hadn't seen too many, if any, blogs that really helped people build great products.

We grew our blog to 35,000 unique visitors in 6 months, and then our CEO asked me to switch focus from growing our audience to monetizing it.

In my mind, to successfully monetize the site, the first goal for us had to

be to grow an engaged community of people around building products. I always believed that it was important to build trust and a sense of community among our readers before asking anything from them.

So we grew our blog for 4 months without monetizing it or asking our readers for anything. Once we hit a good amount of repeat visitors and our traffic was solid (around 25,000 unique visitors), our focus switched to monetizing the blog.

We were a software development company and our services ranged anywhere from \$40k to \$100k+, which created a couple of challenges when it came to conversions:

1. **We had a high-priced offering.** We weren't just selling a \$100 monthly subscription. What we were doing required a big purchase decision to be made.
2. **We needed referrals.** When people had a need to build something, they were typically going to ask people that they knew who to go to (referrals) and they typically needed to find a vendor to build something quickly.

So given the situation, I didn't think that the traditional e-mail capture conversion to drip campaign would work for this audience.

How would selling people over a period of time help convert customers that needed our services NOW?

Also, I didn't think that the traditional free whitepaper or eBook approach would help someone make a purchase decision. Yes it's great to pass along in-depth information to a buyer, but really, how many people have the time to read whitepapers these days? And how is that going to help someone build trust with such a high-priced purchase? Previously, my background was in running direct response social advertising campaigns, and I started wondering...

'I wonder if we could convert sales leads directly off the blog.'

So I decided to explore that hypothesis – and I'm glad I did.

How I Used Direct Response Opt-Ins to Convert Leads Directly off of Our Blog

We had already been using SumoMe's tool **List Builder** to capture e-mails and I knew that with the pro version, we could set up campaigns with different popups for specific pages.

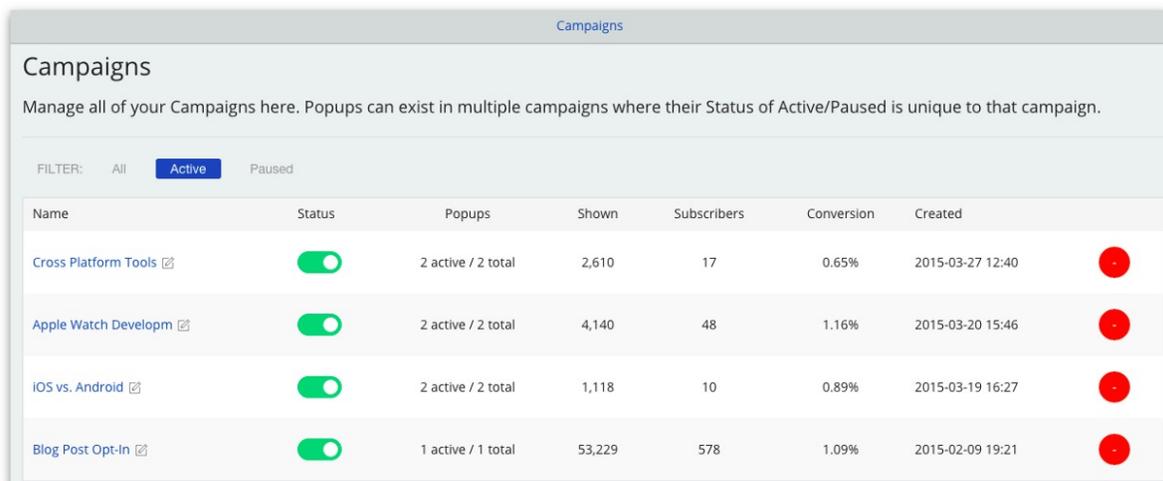
I decided to give it a try.

At the time, we were getting a lot of organic traffic for certain categories of posts.

For example: We had a lot of posts around Apple Watch design and development that were high ranking in organic search, a number of posts for android vs. iOS development, and some posts for cross-platform tools. As mentioned in the last post, looking through webmaster tools to see the search phrases people were using gave me a good indicator of what the intent was that someone was coming to our site for.

I decided to create 3 separate campaigns and sets of List Builder popups:

1. iOS vs. Android Development
2. Apple Watch Design & Development
3. Cross-Platform Mobile Tools



The screenshot shows the 'Campaigns' management interface in SumoMe. It features a table with columns for Name, Status, Popups, Shown, Subscribers, Conversion, and Created. All campaigns listed are active, indicated by green toggle switches. Each campaign also has a red circular icon with a minus sign in the bottom right corner. The table lists four campaigns: 'Cross Platform Tools', 'Apple Watch Developm', 'iOS vs. Android', and 'Blog Post Opt-In'.

Name	Status	Popups	Shown	Subscribers	Conversion	Created
Cross Platform Tools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2 active / 2 total	2,610	17	0.65%	2015-03-27 12:40
Apple Watch Developm	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2 active / 2 total	4,140	48	1.16%	2015-03-20 15:46
iOS vs. Android	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2 active / 2 total	1,118	10	0.89%	2015-03-19 16:27
Blog Post Opt-In	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1 active / 1 total	53,229	578	1.09%	2015-02-09 19:21

Then, I used List Builder's Display Rules to trigger the pop-ups so that they would only appear on pages related to those search term.

Unfortunately, I don't have screenshots of our webmaster tools account but here are some examples of long-tail phrases people were coming to our site for:

- **iOS vs. Android Campaign**
- iOS vs. Android Development (we **were** #2 or 3 for that term):
- **Apple Watch Campaign**
- How to Develop on Apple Watch
- Apple Watch Design Principles
- Apple Watch Design
- Health Kit on Apple Watch
- **Cross-Platform Development**
- Cross Platform Mobile Development (2nd organic listing)
- Cross platform development tools

Show	On URL Paths...	Containing	/how-to-develop-apple-watch-apps/	●
Show	On URL Paths...	Containing	/5-new-things-learned-apple-watch-apps/	●
Show	On URL Paths...	Containing	/apple-watch-health-apps-healthkit/	●
Show	On URL Paths...	Containing	/apple-watch-apps-important-design-principles/	●
Show	On URL Paths...	Containing	/apple-watch-apps-make-life-easier/	●
Show	On URL Paths...	Containing	/popular-apps-reimagined-apple-watch/	●
Don't Show	On Mobile Devices			●
Don't Show	On URL Paths...	Containing	/develop-for-ios-v-android-cross-platform-tools/	●
Show	On URL Paths...	Containing	/apple-watch-notification-tutorial/	●
Show	On URL Paths...	Containing	/apple-watch-app-case-study-remindmeat/	●

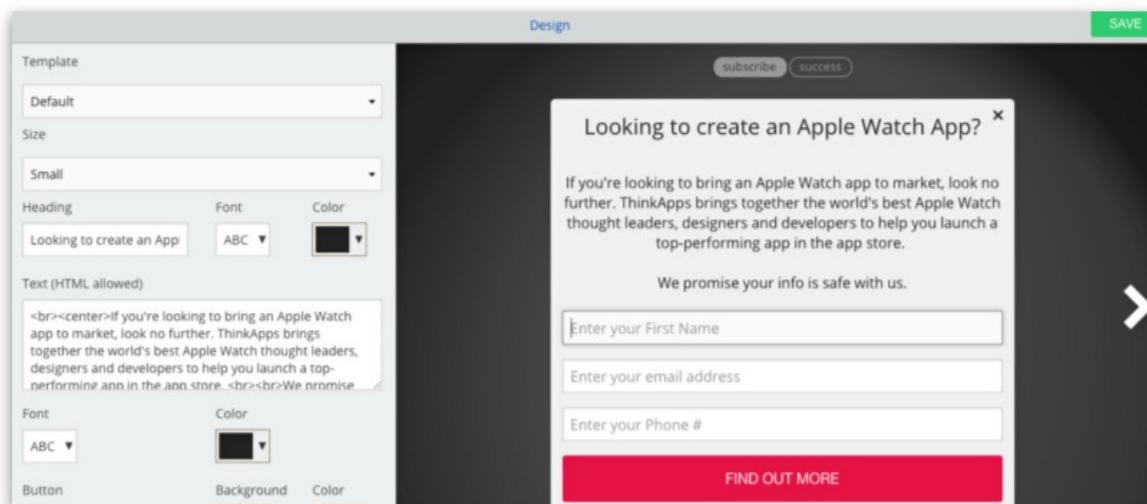
This was the post segmentation for the apple watch campaign

I set the pop-ups to trigger after 90 seconds on page because I wanted to make sure someone was engaged with our post before they got a pop-up asking for their information.

The pop-up that triggered was always a value-add related to *helping* the reader solve a pain point that they faced.

Typically the reader found us because they were searching for an answer to a problem they had. An article could only help them so much.

The hypothesis was that if we could help answer a question for them, or if we could help them solve an immediate challenge they'd be more likely to come back to us when they needed our services. Here's an example of the pop-up that was triggered after a reader was on the page for a minute and 30 seconds:



Again, if you read the copy, it's not the most compelling pop-up. But here are some reasons I think it worked:

1. It didn't come off as too salesy
2. Someone was already engaged with our content that helped them, and this was offering a chance to talk to someone on the phone in more detail than they were getting from our article.

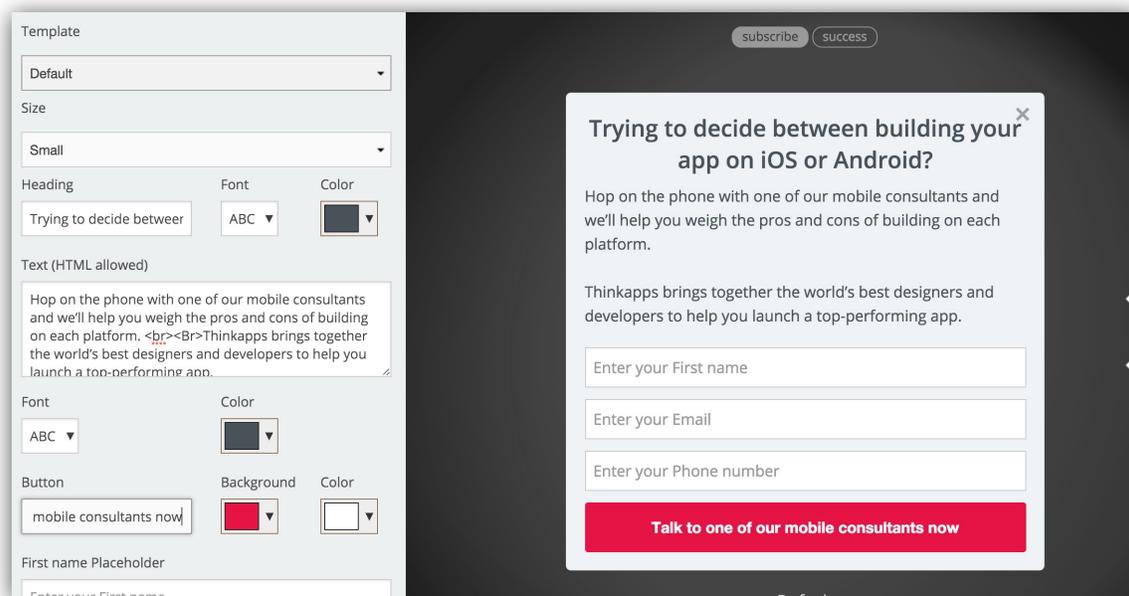
I created 2 variations of each opt-in – one with the phone number and one without. While the one without a phone number had a higher conversion rate, the one with a phone number drove higher quality leads. In this case, if you ask for a phone number, **you're making it clear you mean business and a qualified person will call you**. That immediately rules out people who aren't seriously interested in hiring ThinkApps to build an app, but shows people who are that they'll get personalized human service once they submit the form (someone will actually call them, they won't just be sent through some autoresponder sequence).

Think about it with consumer goods, if you're buying a t-shirt, you don't want to speak to anyone, but if you're buying a new house, you *want* to speak to someone.

Other ways to do this for your business include asking for estimated project budget and putting high enough numbers to disqualify people who can't afford you (but make it clear you are high end to people who can).

Or, depending on your product or service, by asking specific technical questions that only qualified prospects would know the answer to (for example if you sell expensive laboratory equipment like high end microscopes or manufacturing equipment).

iOs vs. Android Development

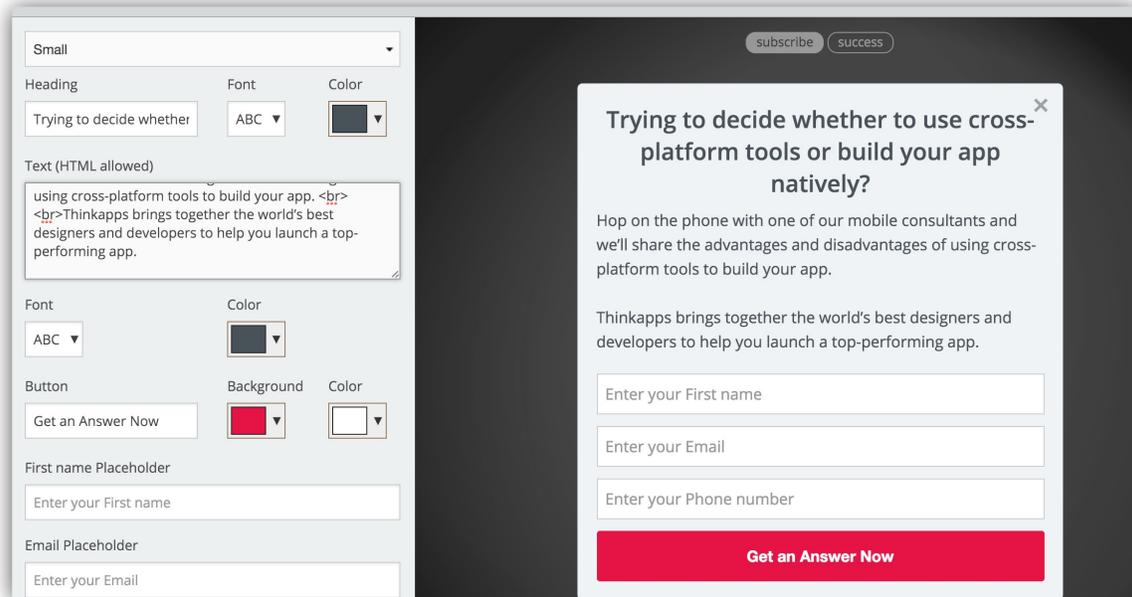


Headline: Trying to decide between building your app on iOS or Android?

Hop on the phone with one of our mobile consultants and we'll help you weigh the pros and cons of building on each platform. Thinkapps brings together the world's best designers and developers to help you launch a top-performing app.

Your info is safe with us.

Cross Platform Mobile Development



Headline: Trying to decide whether to use cross-platform tools or build your app natively?

Hop on the phone with one of our mobile consultants and we'll share the advantages and disadvantages of using cross-platform tools to build your app. Thinkapps brings together the world's best designers and developers to help you launch a top-performing app.

Your info is safe with us.

What were the results of doing this?

Campaigns

Manage all of your Campaigns here. Popups can exist in multiple campaigns where their Status of Active/Paused is unique to that campaign.

FILTER: All **Active** Paused

Name	Status	Popups	Shown	Leads! Subscribers	Conversion	Created
Cross Platform Tools	Active	2 active / 2 total	2,610	17	0.65%	2015-03-27 12:40
Apple Watch Developm	Active	2 active / 2 total	4,140	48	1.16%	2015-03-20 15:46
iOS vs. Android	Active	2 active / 2 total	1,118	10	0.89%	2015-03-19 16:27
Blog Post Opt-In	Active	1 active / 1 total	53,229	578	1.09%	2015-02-09 19:21

These numbers were from ~1 month of testing:

- Cross Platform Tools: .65% conversion, 17 leads total
- Apple Watch Development: 1.16% conversion, 48 leads total
- iOS vs. Android: .89% conversion, 10 leads total

Now while these conversion rates might seem small, what's important to note is that these conversion rates are people giving us their contact information to CALL THEM.

We weren't trying to just grow an email list to later sell an info-product. Not all of our leads were qualified but I'd say anywhere between 20%-30% were qualified – as in had a budget, authority and need.

The campaign that did the best for us was the iOS vs. Android development campaign. This is because if you think about where they were in the buyer's journey, they typically had something they wanted to build, they had the budget, and now they were looking for the last information needed to build their app.

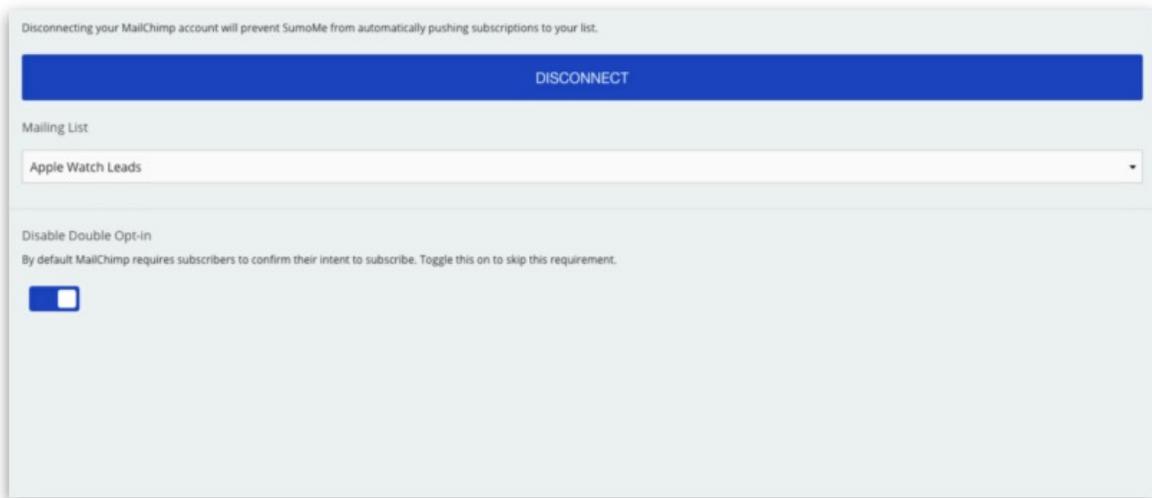
They typically hadn't found a vendor to work with yet, and if we helped them weigh the pros and cons of each platform, we built trust with them and they were more likely to come back to us to build their app.

This is a critically important point: mapping content to your buyers' journey. If you're unsure about what I'm talking about here, it's worth it to **read the post I wrote on this topic.**

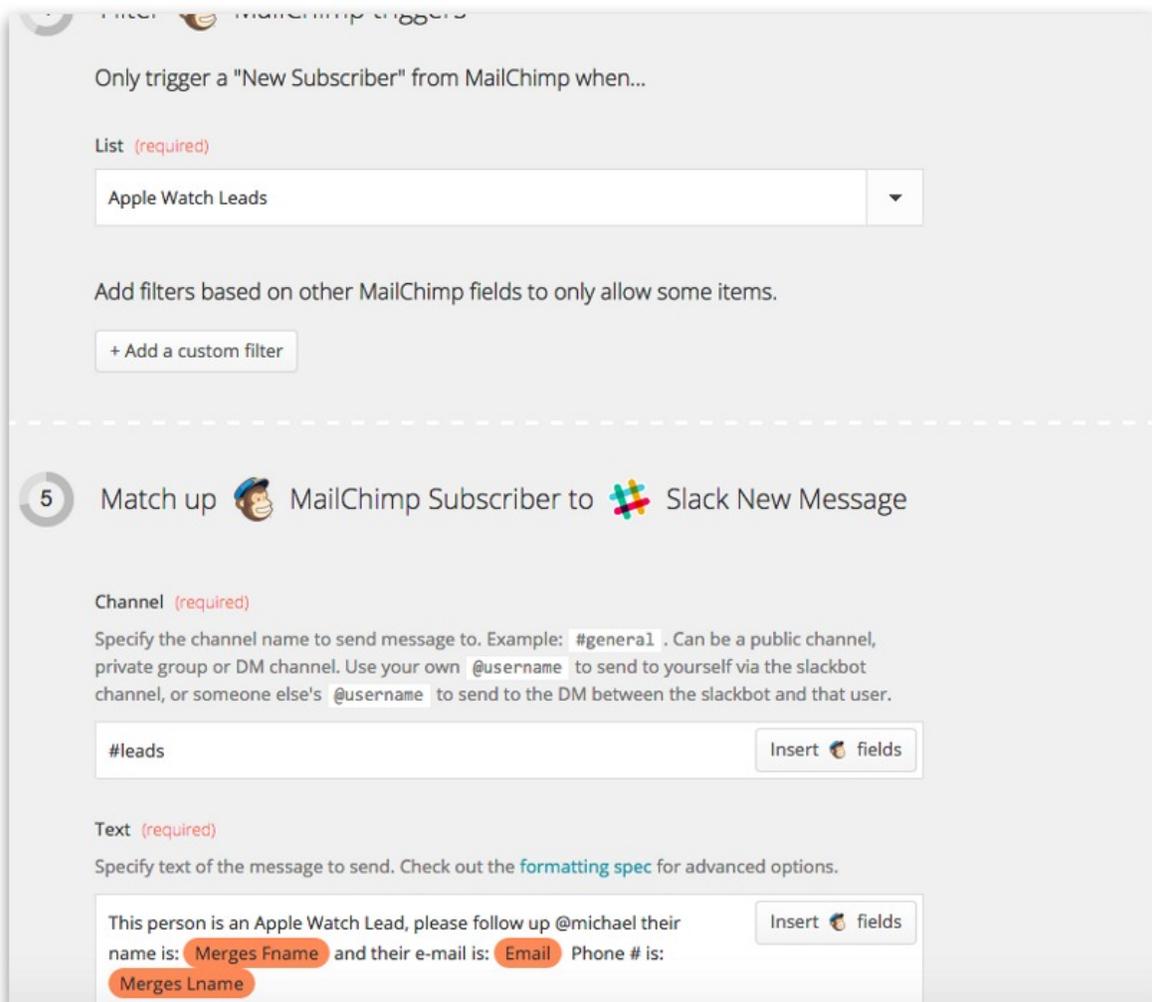
Also, we tested putting just e-mail and then e-mailing people to set up a call vs. adding phone number. While the conversion rate was around 2x higher for just e-mail, the quality of leads that entered their phone number was much higher.

Our super hacky workaround for lead follow-up

We created separate lists in **MailChimp** and we had **List Builder** send our leads into MailChimp.



Then we used **Zapier** to pull our leads from MailChimp and send them directly into Slack. This way either myself or our sales person could follow up with someone within 5 minutes of their inquiry (this is essential for the highest chance of converting them).



When we first tested this program, I called on almost all of the leads so that I could get feedback about our content, our pop-up, the experience and could check pulse on quality. Then we took the feedback from everyone we spoke to and tweaked the campaigns.

What was the impact?

These **List Builder** campaigns ended up driving the most leads to our company of any channel we tried, and we closed a few 5-figure and 6-figure deals from leads that were sourced from here. By mapping content to your sales funnel and by helping customers solve a challenge they face, you will build long-lasting relationships and drive sustainable business for your company.

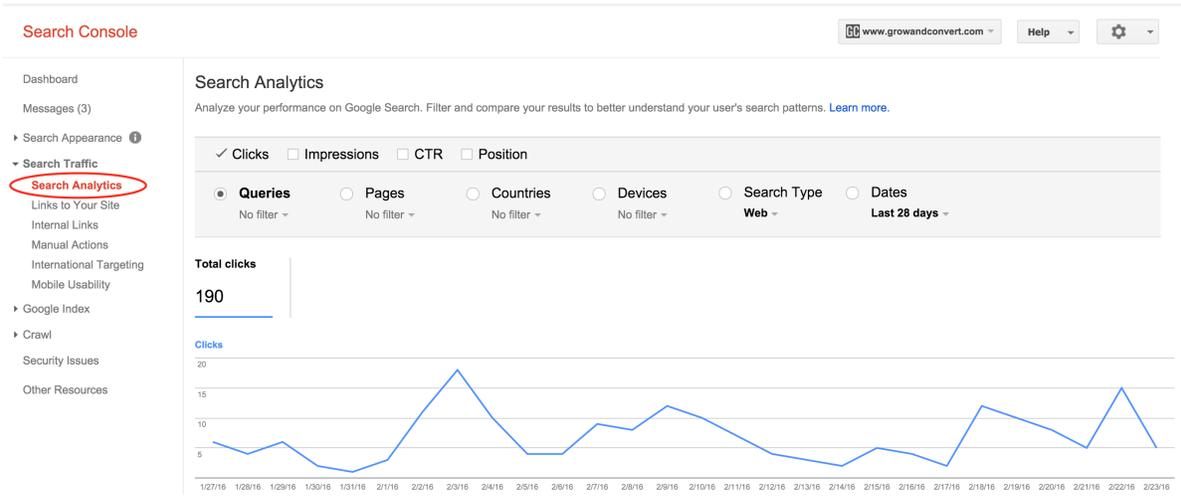
How to start generating sales leads for your business using List Builder

For the example below, I'm going to use Grow and Convert as an example. It's important to note that our site is only about four months old, so we aren't ranking for a ton of search terms yet. And we also don't sell anything on our site.

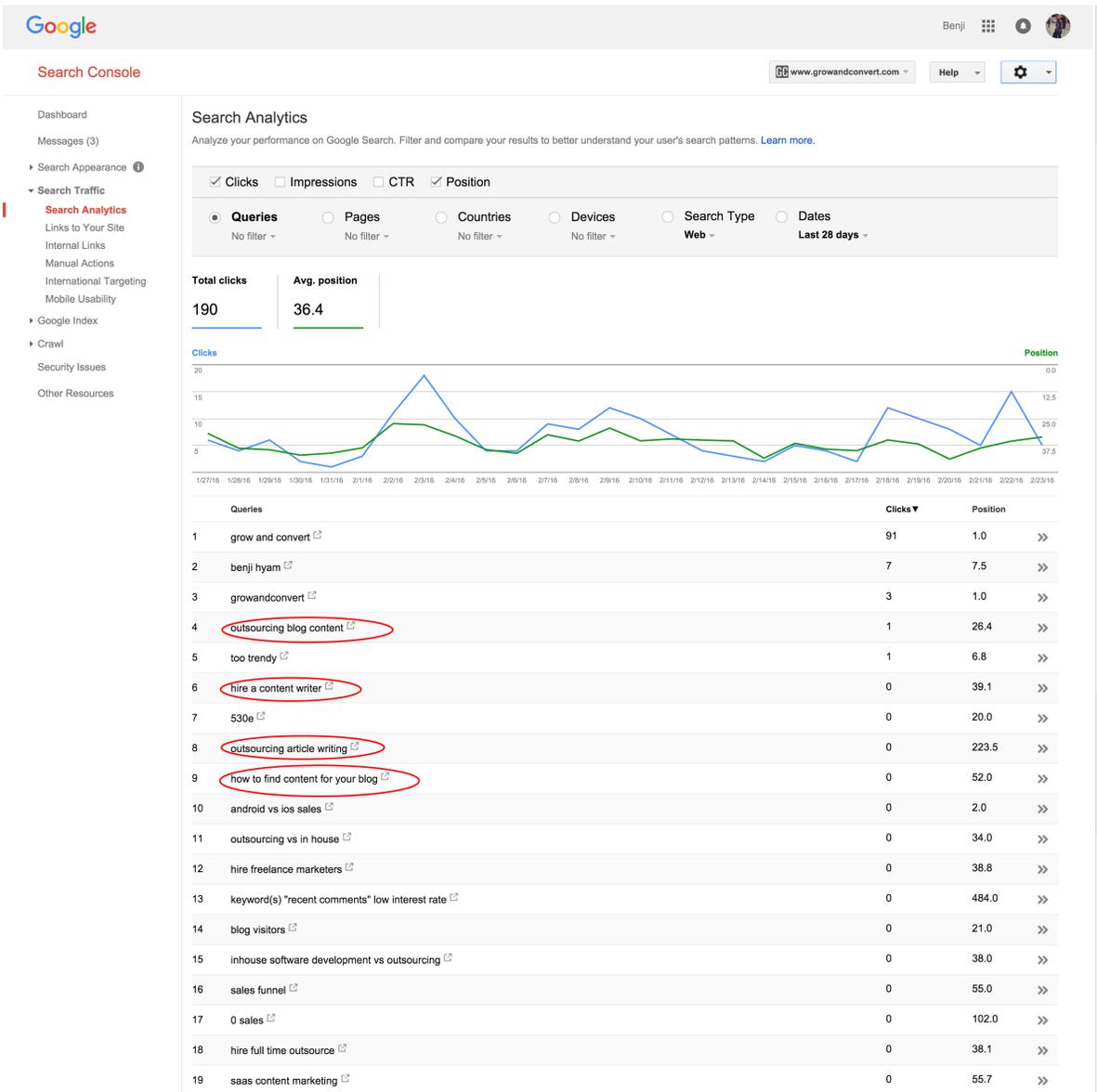
This is how I'd replicate the same process above for our site if we sold content marketing services.

First: Link **webmaster tools** to your website so that you can start seeing what search terms drive organic visitors to your website.

Second: Open the Search Analytics portion of webmaster tools and look at what keywords are driving traffic that matches a user's search intent.



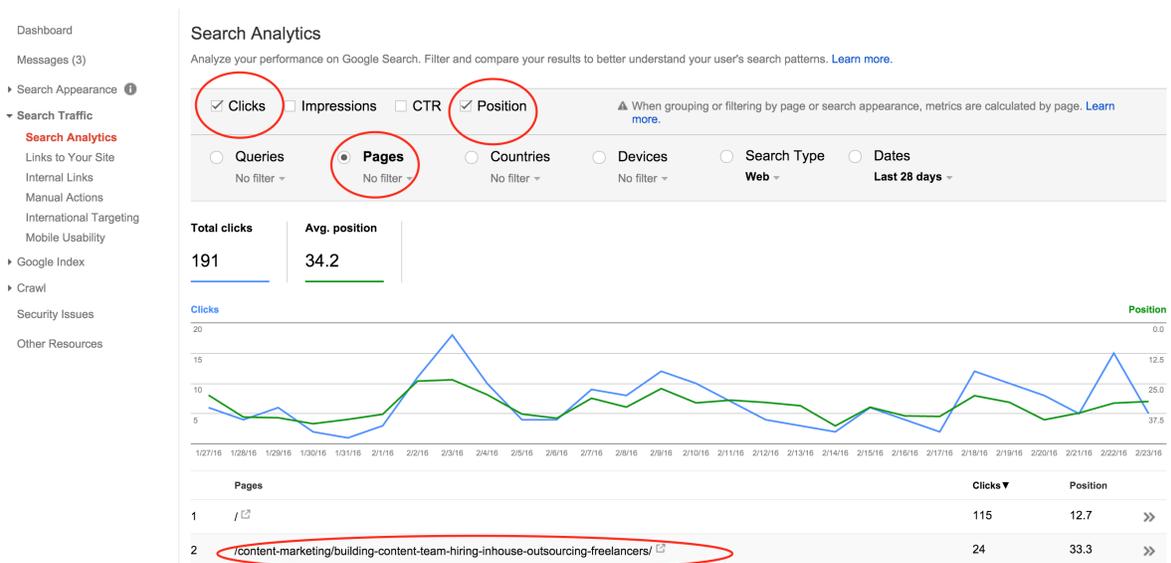
Third: Sort by organic keywords that are driving the highest amount of clicks to your site.



Again note that we don't have clicks for a majority of these keywords because our site is really new. But if you look at some of these keywords, you'll start to see trends in what people are searching for to find our site.

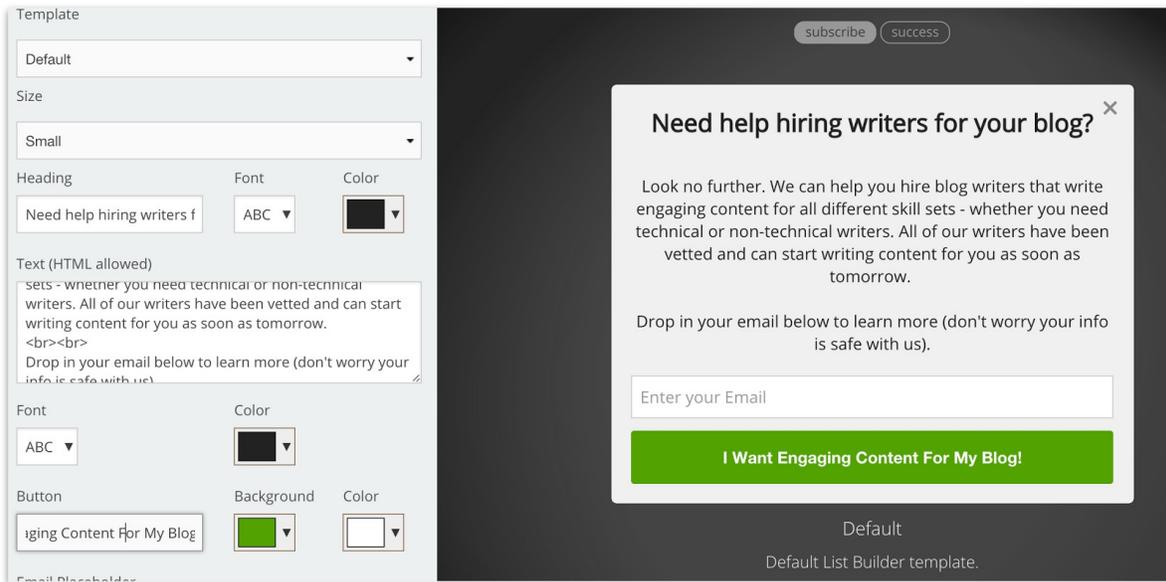
1. This might be an indicator for a product that we could build or a service that we could create to solve a problem that people have.
2. If our company had a service or product around these keywords, we'd target these pages for our lead capture.

Fourth: Look at the pages that these search terms are driving traffic to. You'll want to focus on the pages that get the highest amount of clicks from organic search. The higher the position, the better this will work for you!

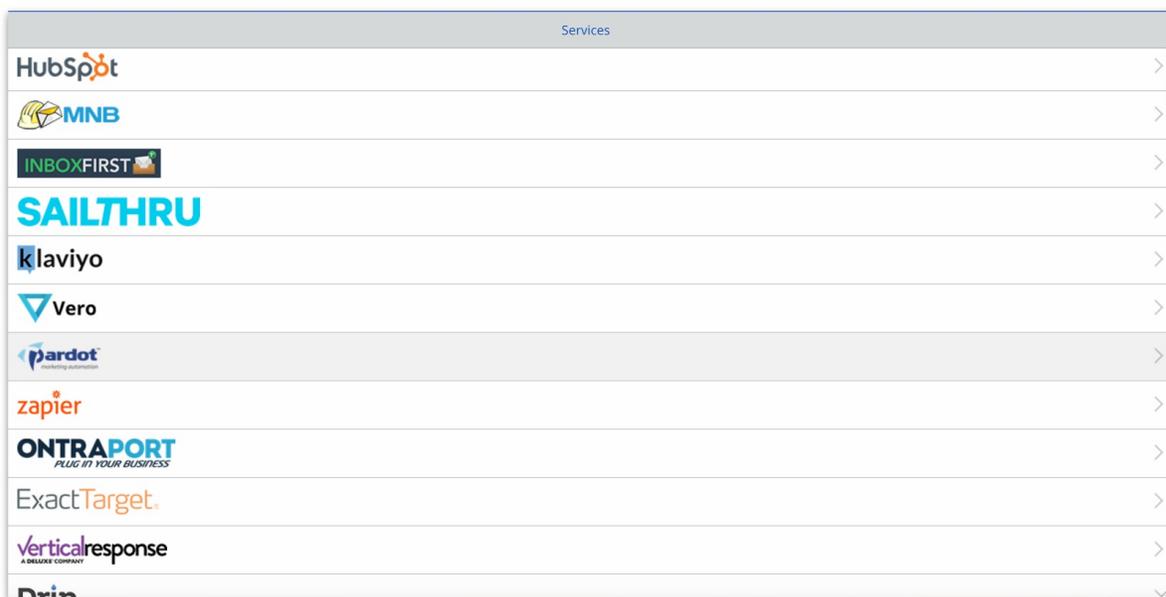


Fifth: Create a List Builder Campaign that relates to the pain point that people are trying to solve. If you look back at the screenshot from step 3, it looks like most people have the pain point of finding / hiring writers for their blog. If we had a product or service that helped people find or hire blog writers, then this would be a great way to convert leads directly off the blog!

Start with just an e-mail and see how your pop-up converts. Then introduce other fields like phone number and name to see how those fields affect lead quality. The more fields, usually the lower the conversion rate will be, however usually quality increases the more information you ask for. So find a balance between the two that works for your business.



Sixth: Connect SumoMe to your Marketing Automation tool, **Zapier**, or your favorite e-mail tool to push leads from SumoMe into your CRM. Then follow up with the leads accordingly.



Seventh: Watch your revenue increase from your content marketing

efforts :)

Tools & Resources

OPTINMONSTER

Creating & A/B Testing **Beautiful Lead Capture Forms** Without a Developer.

MAILCHIMP

Used to **manage, design, and send emails** to your growing email list

SUMOME

Free tools used to grow your website's traffic offering analytics tools, heat mapping, email capture, and more.

ZAPIER

Zapier's "Zaps" connect apps. They are automations created using Triggers and Actions. You can use Zaps to connect any two Zapier-supported apps to each other, so connect your Gmail to your Dropbox, Twitter to your Slack account, and more.

GOOGLE URL BUILDER

Generate **custom campaign parameters** for your advertising URLs

made with
Beacon