VITRUVIAN

Leveraging the Art & Science of Advertising

Google Friendly Landing Pages

Content provided courtesy of Dr. Glenn Livingston
Summary and Checklist created by the Vitruvian team

GOOGLE-FRIENDLY PPC LANDING PAGE CHECKLIST

This checklist is <u>particularly</u> applicable for pay-per-click landing pages on websites that are primarily:

~ Selling information (and not physical products)
~ Capturing leads
~ Selling in "higher-scrutiny" markets (e.g., weight loss, make money, etc.)

Today's PPC landing pages have to please 3 audiences:

~ Prospects
~ Spiders
~ Google human reviewers

Pleasing The Three Audiences		
Prospects	**Spiders**	**Human Reviewers**
Hyper-responsive messaging and offer	Static Page on Blog Domain - relevant text	Minimize Complaints
Trust & Proof Elements	Blog Centered on Main Topic	Maximize Transparency
Personal & Brand Presence	Above the fold Navigation	Maximize Relevancy
Easy "Eye Path" to Call to Action	No sponsored or affiliate links	Provide VALUE without Opting-In or Buying
Minimize Distraction	Reasonable page load time, decrease bounce rate, increase time on site	Physical Products a Plus (Catalog of Physical Products)

The ability to please all three audiences should get you a lower cost per acquisition and higher traffic volume (in the Google environment) than attempting to "push through" a traditional direct marketing "buy or leave" appeal.

- So few will actually do this – your competition is drastically reduced
- What you lose in your initial opt-in rate, you make up in Quality Score and traffic volume over your competition.

*Vitruvian is indebted to **Dr. Glenn Livingston** for sharing his keen insights and experience in developing this checklist.*

This checklist is based solely on testing and observation. No agreement or endorsement by Google, Inc. is inferred or implied. Vitruvian does not guarantee results and assumes no risk on the implementation of this checklist.

GOOGLE-FRIENDLY PPC LANDING PAGE CHECKLIST (CONT.)

Website (where the landing page will reside)

If the sole purpose of the site is gathering opt-ins, human reviewers will likely disqualify it (for PPC). Reviewers are not just focused on certain markets – more and more industries are being reviewed.

- ~ Make the site "a place where people want to spend time"
- ~ Create a professional look and feel (i.e., not a cheap template)
- ~ Make it obvious that the business is legitimate, including things like:
    - o Physical address (footer is a good place)
    - o Contact us
    - o About us
- ~ Include a Privacy Policy – a Google requirement for all sites using any of the following:
    - o Google Analytics
    - o Google AdSense
    - o Google AdWords conversion tracking
- ~ Include a Blog on the main domain (blog is the home page)
- ~ Create Blog content centered around the main topic
- ~ Make it obvious that content is updated regularly
- ~ Provide value without opting-in or buying:
    - o e.g., videos, podcasts, PDFs, other downloadable information
    - o Placed in a "Resources" section (or similar)
- ~ Forum or membership area on domain can be helpful
- ~ Offering physical products for sale on site is a plus, e.g.:
    - o Catalog of physical products
    - o Physical versions of digital products is a good start
- ~ If the offer is presented in a long page sales letter (especially for an info product), the following is strongly recommended:
    - o Place the long page sales letter on a separate domain – not the blog or PPC landing page domain
    - o Use the blog domain to generate opt-ins
    - o Use email marketing to send opt-in traffic to sales letter domain

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GOOGLE-FRIENDLY PPC LANDING PAGE CHECKLIST (CONT.)

PPC Landing Pages

- ~ Static Page on blog domain
- ~ Aesthetically pleasing
- ~ **Critical**: "Above the fold" navigation -
    - o Consistent with rest of site
    - o Don't "force" visitors to stay on page – key point with Google
- ~ No sponsored links (paid advertising) or affiliate links
- ~ Design page to lower bounce rate, increase time on site (help people go into your site)
    - o Recognize this goes against traditional direct marketing practices of keeping PPC visitor focused solely on taking the desired action
    - o Google is focused on visitor experience, not marketer's desires
- ~ Good practice: Don't have the actual opt-in form on the landing page itself:
    - o Provide a button to click
    - o Button takes visitor to new page w/form
    - o This 2-page strategy is especially important for "high scrutiny" industries
- ~ Page design: Easy "eye path" to call to action
- ~ Copy & graphics answers 3 visitor questions:
    - o Who are you
    - o Why should I trust you
    - o What can you do for me
- ~ Keep your claims clean – not deceptive, not "hype" (even if it's true)
- ~ Be transparent: make it clear who you are and what exactly you are offering
- ~ "Credibility boosters" are important – for Google as well as for visitors
    - o Testimonials – "satisfaction-based" are better on landing pages than "resultsbased"
    - o Client list (company logos)
    - o List of mentions (logos of magazines, newspapers, TV/radio, companies)
    - o Security/guarantee seals – Verisign, Visa, etc.
        - Resource: **www.trust-guard.com**
- ~ Landing page look/feel consistent with rest of site (site branding)
- ~ Links to RSS feed, podcasts on landing page (footer is OK – as long as it's obvious)
- ~ Links to **Privacy** **Policy**
- ~ Copy, graphics that minimize distractions
- ~ Is the conversation started by the teaser ad <u>consistent</u> with the copy found on landing page?