

# Push The Button

To make more effective web pages that sell you need a big button and you need to tell your visitors to push that button. The page should induce the visitor to do an action. This simple concept can be used for your home page or a specific landing page that your advertisement is connected to.

Many web owners come to me and ask how they can make their web sites perform better when they have done everything they can. A lot times this simple concept of the big button gets missed because we are too close to our web site projects to see the pages the way a visitor sees them.

Home pages especially are heavily burdened with carrying the weight of the whole web site that it becomes noisy. Lets take a look at an example: The Vonage web site.

The screenshot shows the Vonage website home page. At the top left is the Vonage logo. To its right is a 'Select Your Country' dropdown menu set to 'United States'. Further right is a login section with 'Username' and 'Password' fields, a 'GO' button, and a link for 'Forgot your password?'. Below the logo is a navigation bar with links for 'Home', 'Calling Plans', 'Products', 'Availability', 'Features', 'International Rates', 'Sign Up', and 'Help', along with a search bar. The main content area features several promotional banners: 1. A large banner for 'RELIABLE, QUALITY PHONE SERVICE' for as little as \$14.99/month, with a 'Limited-Time Offer No Activation Fee' for \$29.99 value, and a 'Sign Up Now!' button. 2. A 'Try Vonage 1 Month FREE!' offer with a 'Sign Up Now!' button and the phone number 1-800-705-7092. Below these are several smaller promotional boxes: 'Getting Started' with links to 'How Vonage Works...' and 'Frequently Asked Questions...'; 'Great Features! Great Savings!' listing 'Voicemail Included', 'Caller ID Included', 'Call Waiting Included', and 'Call Forwarding Included'; 'Heard About Us From A Friend?' with a 'GO' button; 'What are People Saying About Vonage?' with a video thumbnail and 'See and Hear More' link; 'The World for Less!' with 'International Rates as low as 1¢ per minute' and 'Unlimited International Calling Plans'; 'Keep Your Phone Number' with a 'Check Availability' button; and 'Bought it at a store?' with an 'Activate Your Device Now!' button.

The Vonage home page is a bit busy for my taste, but it demonstrates what a good web page can do - make visitors customers. I don't know about you, but there is a level of excitement on this page. What contributes to this excitement? The word FREE stands out right away and is followed by the big blue "Sign Up Now" button. Secondly, we have an unbelievable offer. If \$14.99 a month sounds

like a good deal then I should go ahead and take action. As you can see the focus on the page is the deal and to go and sign up. And don't forget, this is a limited time offer which will further induce an action - like now.

I know this isn't earth shattering science, but it is easily overlooked. Heck I, of all people, miss this one from time to time. So lets take some notes by observing what the big boys are doing.

There is almost too much to look at on the Vonage page, but the way colors and type are used I feel like most of my questions are answered right away. They listed what they felt were the most important features and invited us to view more. All of the sections do this. They tease and draw you in deeper into the site for more information.

A lot of real estate was given to the testimonials box. So if you are skeptical you can look at videos of real people telling you about their experiences. The use of the dialog bubble is a graphical way to say "someone is saying something". The video thumbnail is showing people. This is a very important point - Show happy people!

In fact, you should always get pictures of people on your web pages even if they are just clip photos. The psychological power of seeing eyes and smiley whites builds confidence.

Just for fun let's take a look at Microsoft's home page.



I think, looking at this home page, that Microsoft appeals to tech guys more than the average joe. There is a little bit of energy with the glowy swoops, but over all I think it is cold and impersonal. And so, what is the focus on this page?. It should be to download Silverlight on to your PC, but I feel more compelled to look at their Clip Art.

OK, let's look at what Microsoft's competitor Apple is doing with their home page.



Apple has extreme focus on their main product and that is the iMac. Obviously what Microsoft try's to do with words Apple is doing with photos of their product. Apple understands their audience and it is not the same audience that Microsoft has. See all the pictures of people having fun? Don't you want that?

## Simple is Key

So, if we have learned anything from these examples it is that you have to make a page that compels visitors to do something. For example click the button to buy, to sign up or to join.

Photos of people help a lot. There are tons of royalty free photos with models that have their hands positioned as if to present. This is a corny yet effective way to get visitors to do the action.

You may have noticed that in some instances the message to click somewhere is subdued like with the Apple page. I like the clean presentation that Apple has on their page, but I know people and you have to tell them to click otherwise they just sit there and stare.

Little arrows dressed up with some fancy graphics helps a lot to say “Hey, I’m a button”! Don’t forget to make that arrow or button large enough to make it prominent. In fact bigger is better in this case.

Simplify your message so that you can make a bold statement. If you have to write an epic to explain your offer you should maybe re-think that offer. Maybe it is too complicated.

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