THE facebook CUSTOMER GENERATION MANUAL

By Richard Lomax

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Step #1

Know EXACTLY Who Your Ideal Customer Is And What Their Biggest Problems Are

It's vitally important from the start that you take the time to really dive deeply into the exact psyche of your prospects. So, write down a detailed customer avatar (a fictitious character that represents your ideal customer) *i.e*. the person most likely to buy from you time and time again and respond to your messages with the greatest positivity.

What they are secretly saying to themselves most of the day, and half the night?

Try and get into the conversation that's taking place in their heads, and understand what it's like to be them for a day (or a week).

How are they feeling? What is bugging them or frustrating their progress? What are their dreams and desires?

N.B. Most people stumble at this first hurdle by simply not knowing their prospects well enough, and therefore end up creating marketing messages that don't resonate perfectly with the thinking of their prospects, and therefore generate limited responses.

The crux of your effective marketing is to create a message that speaks very powerfully to the needs of your **ideal** prospect. This message then becomes the focus of all your marketing.

The next step in creating your Core Marketing Message is to answer the following questions as carefully, and in as much detail as possible:

1. **Target Market**: What clients do you serve? Use your customer avatar to provide a detailed profile of your ideal client, including demographics e.g. their industry, type of business, job titles, socio-economic type e.g. lower, middle or higher income earners; their psychographic details e.g. their values, beliefs, character and interests/hobbies etc.

2. **Their Problem**: What problem, issue, frustration, pain, inconveniences, or challenges are your prospects facing which they are actively seeking a solution to?

3. **Your Solution**: Explain exactly HOW your product or service solves the problems they are facing. Write down in detail the process your service delivery follows, or the way that your product is used or operates, or how your product is manufactured. Don't make the mistake of assuming that your prospects won't be interested.

4. **Proof and Results**: Document in detail the 'before and after' examples for as many of your customers or clients as possible i.e. 'this was their situation before working with us, and here are the quantified effects of our solution' e.g. % increase in productivity; £ increases in sales revenues; increase in % gross profit margins;

   number of man-hours or days saved; reduction in down-time, or call-outs, or warranty claims etc.

You also need to list references you have available, testimonials, documented case studies, laboratory or user test results; product or service accreditations. All this information will be used at some point during your facebook customer creation funnel.

5. **Differentiation:** What makes you stand apart from your competitors? What makes you unique, memorable and special? What is it about your business that offers a true advantage to your customers compared to your competitors?

   This vital 'point of difference' needs to shine through in your communications so that your prospects see your product or service as their bet choice compared to any of your competitors.

A Key Skill Is To Be Able To Verbalise Your Core Marketing Message

(This is particularly important for all Directors or senior managers and everyone in your sales team who may be meeting prospects at some point in your sales funnel).

So, when someone asks you what you do, 99% of people will simply say "I run (or work in) an XYZ business" but this has done nothing to promote your cause.

Instead here's what you say to get their attention and interest…

Don't start talking about what you do, but tell them who you work with and what their problem is. This takes the focus off you and onto your clients and customers.

Your words are focused on what you do for your clients and what benefits they get from working with you.

This conveys the "What's in it for me?" factor that your prospect wants to know.

So someone asks "What do you do?"

You respond,
Target Market i.e. who you work with

> "I work with IT Directors in large-sized corporate businesses"

Their Problem Communicate the problem or pain or predicament your prospects are experiencing in terms that are meaningful to them.

> "…who are having difficulties in managing and coordinating multiple IT projects across different locations and different business units."

> "… Many IT Directors are finding that work is being duplicated un-necessarily, and that some systems don't integrate with other parts of

> their operations because projects are not being coordinated effectively”

Your Solution and Point of Difference Tell them about your solution and what makes you different

> “… We’ve had fantastic results where our programmes provide a consistent management framework for all IT projects, which have speeded up delivery of projects by up to 35% and nearly always reduce costs quite significantly”

By working through these steps, you will have a far easier job when it comes to *grabbing the attention* of your prospects and *motivating* them to take some kind of positive action.

Illustrate with Stories and Examples Tell them more about the problem and recount stories of people/clients you have worked with

Step #2

Create A Highly Valuable And Virtually Irresistible Offer

The bigger the purchase price, or the bigger the implications for getting that decision wrong, then the more careful we are, and the more research, due diligence, and preparation we will undertake, before committing to a particular supplier or product or service. Some people even stand in the supermarket aisles thinking seriously to themselves before deciding which brand of baked beans to buy that particular week!,

The fact is, that unless you are involved in selling a complete commodity product, or something that is always going to be bought on a whim or spontaneously, virtually every other buying decision in the world is taken via a series of conscious (or sub-conscious) steps. And this inevitably means that we need to mirror this in our marketing approach i.e. we need to adopt a multi-step sales and marketing strategy.

In most instances, the multi-step marketing approach should begin by making some kind of zero cost, zero commitment offers in your advertising…

I'm not talking about the '20% off, or 'Buy-one-get-one-free' kind of offer you see plastered around the supermarket or on TV.

I'm talking about something far more personalised and enticing for your prospects.

The whole point is that you want to gently persuade them to take some kind of ACTION. Without this happening as a consequence of reading your sales message, <u>everything</u> else you've done to get your message in front of your prospects has been a complete waste of time and money.

It could be that the action you want them to take is to place an order and buy your product or service. But in the **big** majority of cases, we simply want the prospect to put their hand up and say 'Yes, I'm interested in what you have to say'.

This does **not** necessarily mean that they want to make a sales enquiry. But they *are* demonstrating that they are doing their research and are checking out the possible ways to solve their problem or need. i.e. they are in the market to buy your kind of product or service, sooner or later.

Unfortunately, the big majority of business people assume that putting their telephone number and web address or email address at the end of their sales message is sufficient to get people to respond. But in reality they know deep down that this is just wishful thinking.

In fact, I was talking with a business-owner recently who was selling business to business customer satisfaction surveys. He had received over 7,000 well qualified visitors to his web site in the last six months. His big bold call to action was for the visitor to call him to discuss their requirements. He had received not even one phone call from these 7,000+ visitors!

Let me tell you that <u>very</u> few of your prospects will <u>ever</u> pick up the phone and call you.

Here's why…

They suspect (quite rightly) that you will be interested in moving them towards a sale, and will want to arrange an appointment, or sooner or later you will ask them to buy from you.

But they're not ready for this, and if they call you, they will put themselves in that **awkward position** of having to disappoint you, or turn down your offer. And your prospects will do everything in their power to avoid this uncomfortable situation… so unless they are ready to buy… they will never call you.

BUT that doesn't mean that you are powerless to influence them and gently bring them towards you. Let me explain…

You need to take your true prospects by the hand, and explain to them one step at a time, what they should do to avail themselves of the right information that will answer their questions, reassure them over concerns or worries they have, and demonstrate clearly that you have already solved similar problems for many other people.

So what kind of offer can you make to your readers, that they will find **useful**, very **low commitment**, and **easy** to do?

Let me explain to you the two main types of offer that you can make to your customers or prospects.

Firstly there are Hard offers, and second there are soft offers

Hard offers involve a personal interaction between the buyer and seller. They include invitations such as:

- Free needs assessment / audit
- Free consultation
- Free survey
- Free estimate
- Invitation to seminar
- Free demonstration

Hard offers are more common because they are more in the interests of the supplier. They see them as the natural next step in GETTING the order. The prospect however, sees them as a major commitment, which in most instances they are unready or unwilling to make.

They still have too many unanswered questions. The timing is too soon, and remember, it's their buying process that's important, not your sales targets.

Hard offers can work very well, but it's important to explain in detail the benefits prospects gain from taking you up on your offer of a free survey, or estimate or needs analysis etc.

You have to make them see the advantage in meeting up with you, or speaking to you over the telephone, or via email. It is critical here that you take an authoritative, advisory approach, and don't ever try to sell your product or service.

It's often more productive to take a softly, softly approach…

Soft offers are so named because they don't involve a one to one meeting, or any direct personal contact with the company making the offer. As a result, soft offers are the most painless, risk-free way for a prospect to display an interest in what you have to offer, and response tends to be much higher.

Examples of soft offers include:

- A series of informative case studies, or your latest free catalogue
- A video training or recorded screen-share
- A personal video message from your MD regarding your money-back guarantee
- A buyer's checklist to help your prospects ask the right questions
- An online demonstration of your product
- An MP3 recording of an interview with three of your main clients explaining how they went about solving specific problems
- An illustrated guide on how to use your product or service to achieve best results
- An email autoresponder series all about how to buy your type of product or offering
- A free webinar or teleseminar, explaining how people can solve specific problems related to your products or services
- A free or discounted first issue of a magazine, and so on.

Now the most appealing soft offers often involve free guides, reports or booklets. This is much better than offering a free brochure, because reports appear more tailor-made for the prospect, and their content can be very specific in nature.

A special report is usually a step-by-step list of guidelines produced by a specialist for the benefit of your reader. The report's aim is to instruct the reader on how to achieve a certain objective successfully, or avoid common mistakes that others have made.

The report should come across as an *independent* piece of work that relates real-life examples, not pure theory or concepts. The report should never try to sell your company and its solutions, until the very last page. Here you can offer further useful information (another report on a different aspect of your industry is ideal), as well as making a hard offer, if appropriate.

The title of your report (or other free resource) is very important in promoting the value of the content being offered. It is effectively an 'advert' for the report, and needs to promise the solution to a problem, or offer a valuable benefit.

Make sure the title of your resource is specific and compelling, and the information is immediately actionable.

Examples include:

"The Seven Key Questions You Must Ask Before Buying Your New Windows – And The Answers You Must Know"

"The 5 Biggest Headaches Contractors Face When Installing Network Infrastructures For Their Clients – And How To Avoid Them"

"How To Be Certain You Find The Most Expert Document Scanning Company"

"The 8 Myths of Used Process Equipment… And Some Surprising Facts You Should Know"

Here is an example of one of the most successful soft offers that we have ever offered to our prospect database:

'How to get 100 leads a day from your website – 7 practical strategies to make it happen'

This report generated over six hundred downloads within just two weeks.

The goal is to create such powerful offers that anyone reading them would say to themselves, "My goodness, I'd have to be completely mad (or negligent) not to take them up on this opportunity!"

If you don't regularly make some kind of offer in your marketing messages (particularly in your facebook advertising), your business, services and marketing just tend to "sit there" waiting for someone to respond. You can have great products and services, loads of credibility and a stellar track record, but nothing happens until you make a very specific offer to tempt your prospects and get them to qualify themselves are being active in your market-place…

By adopting a multi-step marketing strategy, you can create a simple step-by-step sales funnel where the prospect isn't even aware of the fact that they are being led very gently towards the point of purchase.

But if you don't have a good initial offer to capture their interest (and ideally their contact details so that you can continue to develop and nurture the relationship), you will be missing out on the far larger potential in your market that isn't ready to buy right now, and ultimately you'll be missing out on the big majority of sales that could so easily become yours.

Why you need to test more than one offer

If you're very lucky, and operate in a tiny niche where there is really only one way to solve the problems experienced by your prospects, it's probably not that difficult to 'hit the nail on the head' when it comes to the most powerful offer you could make to your prospects.
But in most situations, we have to recognise that finding the 'key' that unlocks the gates to the biggest number of prospect enquiries may require some testing of alternative offers before you find the best-performing magnet for attracting the largest response.

Some people are drawn to written materials (either as a PDF file or a hard-printed report or book) whilst others are more attracted by visual media such as videos, on-screen webinars, or blueprints and mind-maps. Others still are more likely to respond to an invitation that involves meeting people face-to-face in the form of a live seminar or networking event.

The point I'm making is that you should keep your mind open to testing different offers and incentives, even if your first attempt does bring in a profitable response.

Step #3

Position Yourself And Your Company As An Expert And Authority

In your industry niche you need to become known and regarded as *a knowledgeable expert*, so that prospects begin to trust you and the quality of information and expertise you are offering. This will set you apart from your competition, and make it much more likely that prospects will respond favourably to your offers of help and advice.

Now we need to talk about how you can position yourself in your market for maximum success against the competition …

Understand that thousands of your ready to buy prospects are paralysed by fear of making the wrong decision. But to make yours the 'Go To' Company, you have to develop valued relationships with prospects and customers.

When you learn how to re-position your business as the <u>most knowledgeable</u> and <u>helpful</u> option in the market and you'll soon discover that the vast majority of prospects prefer to buy from the market authority.

Now, when you first come into contact with your prospects, you are always pigeon-holed into just <u>one</u> of the following three categories:

1. 'Trusted Advisor'
2. 'Consultant'
3. 'Salesperson'

Only one of these three has the prospects' best interests *truly* at heart. And only one leads to maximum long-term sales and profits.

As soon as you have targeted your prospect with your mailing, your sponsored facebook post, your prospect immediately (and correctly) puts you into category 3, "Salesperson".

Your prospect has a healthy scepticism about your claims, and a natural resistance to being sold to.

Unless you put yourself in <u>their</u> position, and provide compelling evidence, they probably won't take action on your recommendations. They believe you're just trying to sell products and earn a commission or make yourself a quick profit.

Here's an approach that guarantees your sales message will be read, or listened to and believed ….

Very few companies have ever heard about a strategy that I call the "Trusted Adviser" approach.

Basically, what this method allows you to do is instantly place yourself into the "Trusted Advisor" category, <u>even with a new prospect you've never met before</u>.

Your prospects then have a very low resistance to reading your sales message - in fact, they WANT to read everything you have to say. They place a HIGH value on the information you give them - and are willing to compensate you very HIGHLY for your products or service.

Plus, they will completely trust your recommendations and act on them immediately.

The key to being able to differentiate your company and gain the market's attention (and custom) is to raise yourself from a 'Salesperson' to the 'Trusted Advisor' role by POSITIONING your company properly.

FACT: Prospects nearly always prefer to buy from the industry experts

Let me ask you… Do you want to be judged by, and compete, solely on price? (and remember that someone, eventually, will always be able to beat you at this game) or do you position yourself as THE authority in your industry?

There are several keys to successfully using this approach, but they are all designed to overcome the dominating thought in the prospects mind:

WHY?

All your customers want to know is 'Why should I choose you?', 'Why should I take this decision?', 'Why should I spend this money?,' 'Why should I look at your website?', 'Why should I read your brochure?', 'Why should I agree to an appointment?', 'Why? Why? Why? Why? Why?'

In fact, if you look closely, even a 'WHAT' statement like 'What's in it for me?' is really a 'WHY.' All it is saying is 'Why should I pay attention?'

Give your customers the WHY in your marketing activity, and your lead generation and conversions to sales will multiply overnight.

How many of us waste this powerful trigger in our marketing because it seems too obvious, almost too simple?

The only way to answer all these questions is with relevant information, facts, figures, illustrations, case studies, independent reports, testimonials, guidelines and other knowledge that GIVES your prospect more value than your competitors.

In providing all this useful, informative education that helps your prospect make the best decision for them, **you will automatically have become the expert in your industry or profession.**

The bottom line is when you stop SELLING and start ADVISING, NURTURING AND EDUCATING, instead of you chasing prospects… THEY COME TO YOU when they are ready to buy.
(If you're brutally honest with yourself, nearly 100% of your existing advertising and marketing is trying to persuade me to buy – but the minute you adopt this strategy of positioning yourself as the trusted expert and *genuinely provide lots of useful, independent advice* – you will have tilted the market place in your favor – and your competitors will

NEVER be able to figure out how you've done it!)

In Summary:

- You have to first sell your prospects' mind on WHY you have the answer to their problem, and WHY you are the best choice they can make.
- If you don't include a reason why, your sales message is simply a bland generalization that won't be believed.
- WHY is the only motivator that leads to action, and step by step to massive increases in sales.
- You must provide ALL the answers which will help your prospects make the right decision for them. (Don't leave any nagging doubts in their mind).
- To do this successfully, you must position your company as the EXPERT in the market.
- This is simple, down to earth advice, yet it represents one of the most powerful psychological triggers that motivate people to buy.

Remember, the very best way to demonstrate your expertise is to publish your knowledge and expertise, and give it away freely. Very, very few people will take this information and say "thank-you, now I'll be able to do this for myself". You are helping prospects inform and educate themselves about their problem, and how they can solve it.

Inevitably, large numbers will come back to you and ask you to help them achieve the results they desire.

In the facebook customer generation funnel, we don't wait for them to come back. We maintain the initiative. So once you publish and promote your free resource, you then recommend the next step for prospects to take.

Step #4

Prepare Sales Copy To Keep Readers Riveted To Your Message

There's a number of key tasks the sales copy that appears on your sponsored posts, your landing pages and in all the follow-up marketing of your sales conversion funnel has to accomplish -- like illustrating your product's benefits ... proving your case ... presenting your offer ... relieving any perceived risk ... adding incentives .. and then asking for action.

The trick is doing all that without allowing your prospects' mind to wander even for a second. Or worse: Making a mistake that turns him off entirely -- and gets your post or sales message instantly deleted.

In a very real sense, your sales copy is a minefield that must be navigated with the greatest of care: Every word, sentence and paragraph represents the chance to either intensify your prospect's focus ... or to completely lose him.

Consider Your Harried, Distracted Prospect

Imagine for a moment that instead of presenting your message via a sponsored post, landing page or email, you're delivering your sales message face to face.

Visualise yourself sitting in your prospect's office. You have your sales presentation fully prepared. You have a ready answer for every objection your prospect could possibly have.

You know beyond a shadow of a doubt that once your prospect hears your proposal, he will place his order there and then.

The only problem is, your prospect is hopelessly distracted ...

- He's thinking about the board report he needs to have finished by the end of the week -- which he hasn't even started ...
- He has a stack of unopened emails to attend to ...
- His sales manager has just handed in his notice 30 minutes ago ...
- And to cap it all -- he came to work this morning after a blazing row with his partner about working too late, too often!

At a time like this, it's not enough just to get your prospect's attention. It's essential to keep his attention until you've presented all your sales arguments, have asked for the sale and have his order securely tucked away in your pocket.

Lose him, even for a split second, and you've probably lost him -- and the opportunity for a sale -- for good!

And you can imagine a very similar scenario if your sales copy is being consumed whilst your prospect is at home, juggling family, TV channels, meal-times and a dozen other distractions.

Now, if that's true with face-to-face selling -- when you're physically in the room -- it's even more true when you're attempting to deliver a sales message via e-mail, or over the internet.

The fact is, you have no idea what will be going on in your prospect's life -- let alone in his or her home or office -- when they're reading your sales copy.

One thing you can count on, though: You're going to be competing for attention every step of the way.

The 3 suicidal mistakes writers make in body copy - and 6 "Golden Rules" to help you avoid them...

I would guess there are three ways to convince a prospect to give up on your sales funnel long before you ask for the sale.

You can:

1. Confuse him ...
2. Bore him, or
3. Set off his BS detector.

Here's the good news: In most cases, following these 7 simple "Golden Rules" should help you avoid all three ...

Golden Rule #1: Keep It Logically Organised

Humans are NOT logical animals. But when we're reading or learning we usually want the material be presented in a clear, logical way.

That generally means starting at point "A" ... progressing to point "B" ... moving on to point "C" ... and so on, until you have reached your ultimate conclusion: That only a complete moron would even think of passing-up your generous offer.

To do that, you must lay a solid foundation and then build upon each completed argument with the next ... brick by brick ... in a logical order ... until the only rational conclusion a reasonable person could reach is that NOT responding would be idiotic.

Ask yourself, "What must my prospect believe in order to make this purchase?"

And then ask, "What must my prospect believe first ... second ... third ... and so on, in order to conclude that this is the opportunity of a lifetime?"

Golden Rule #2: Keep It Moving

When a prospect's eyes first fall upon your sponsored post, landing page or email, a little stopwatch starts ticking in his head. If at any point, he feels you're not moving along quickly enough, he'll be gone.

Creating a *sense of momentum* in your sales copy is absolutely essential for maximum readability. Here are three ways you can do it ...

> **A. Creating and following a "chain of logic"** outline helps a lot in this regard (see rule #1) -- by ensuring that you make each point once, then move on. If prospects feel like you're going back over stuff you already covered, any sense of momentum you may have established is instantly destroyed.
>
> **B. Check the momentum of each draft** by reading it out aloud. Mark the places where you -- as a reader -- begin to become distracted or bored.
>
> Then read your copy again -- this time, imagining that you are in a busy, bustling office and have your attention span severely limited. You're about to go into a meeting, the phone is not diverted, and you have some interesting email waiting in your inbox.
>
> Once again, highlight any sections that begin to lose you.
>
> Each of these highlighted sections will kill readership and response if they're still there in the final draft. Edit them or get rid of them.
>
> **C. Making each section of copy shorter** than the one before is a great way to create momentum.

Golden Rule #3: Keep It Simple

Never ask your prospect to do any work in order to figure out what you're saying.

Complicated or unusual words, esoteric references and complex sentences are killers in sales copy. Subtlety, nuance and complexity are for poets -- NOT copywriters!

Try to limit yourself to one complete, clearly presented thought per sentence.

Also be sure to avoid inserting undeveloped thoughts in sentences or paragraphs. They're like little booby-traps in the copy. They stop readers dead in their tracks.

Here's a great little technique for keeping things simple ...

Golden Rule #4: Keep It Concise

Readers should feel as though they're getting good value in return for the number of words they're made to read. Never use three words when two will do.

Here are four ways to say more with less:

> **A. Use more precise word choices:**   When I find myself struggling to find just the right word to use in a sentence, I find that checking similar words in a thesaurus often gives me the answer I'm looking for.
>
> **B. Eliminate unnecessary words:** Here again, reading copy aloud really helps. Keep

your copy conversational, exactly as you would do if you were talking to your prospect across your kitchen table. Much of the time, for example, I find the word "that" is totally unnecessary. When in doubt, leave it out!

C. Avoid unhelpful repetition: Repetition of key sales points -- a USP or major benefit, is commendable, but repeating minor thoughts only slows down the copy and bores the reader.

D. Figures of speech convey images and feelings, faster: If a picture is worth a thousand words, metaphors, similes, and other figures of speech work even better.

Golden Rule #5: Keep It Believable

Your prospect is already sceptical. Making grandiose claims that you can't (or don't) substantiate beyond a shadow of a doubt will only confirm what he already suspects:

That you're full of bull... and your message instantly deserves to be deleted.

Golden Rule #6: Keep It Potent

One of the fastest ways to lose your prospect's attention is to forget to focus on his favourite subject: HIM!

The word "You" has been called the most powerful word in the English language -- and for good reason.

Finding ways to personalise body copy -- illustrating in each paragraph how your proposition affects the reader -- is a key to keeping his attention.

For example, instead of saying, "XYZ & Partners estimate that their new document management software has led to a 23 per cent increase in efficiency and time saving for administrative staff" ... say: "If you had implemented a document management solution last Autumn, by now you too could be enjoying up to 23 per cent increase in efficiency and time saving for your administrative staff!"

In the same vein, look for ways to ramp up the excitement and power of your body copy by raising the intensity of the words you use. Don't be shy, and don't feel compelled to use "professional" or "corporate" speak.

For example, sales results can "increase" -- or they can "rise" ... "jump" ... "soar" ... or "skyrocket." Here again, a trusty old thesaurus can prove invaluable.

Here's the Bottom line:

Your body copy is only as strong as its weakest link.

And that makes it essential to get downright obsessive about every word, every turn of phrase, every sentence and every paragraph.

Anything that could confuse or bore your prospect or set off his BS detector must be addressed. If that means reading all your ales funnel copy aloud to yourself or someone else, then do it. If it means showing it to five, ten or 20 friends or colleagues, that's fine also.

Yes ... it takes work. But do it right, and the rewards can truly be spectacular.

The bottom line is that you need to communicate your offer persuasively and succinctly so that your message gets noticed, gets read, and then gets acted upon. Make sure that the copy is all about them, how they are feeling, and highlights their frustration.

Call out to your ideal target market. Hit their main pain point, and then give them a solution to that pain (your solution is the offer you are making of the free report, video, webinar etc.), sometimes called a 'lead magnet'. Next, you have to agitate the problem, and rub salt into their wound. Look to eliminate any doubt that the prospect may have about your solution, then use a strong call-to-action.

The copy you use in your sales messages needs to clearly identify the biggest problems faced by your ideal prospects. It should also focus on as narrow a market-niche as possible – (and I'll explain how you can target hundreds of such niches in just a few minutes). For example:

'ATTENTION I.T. Companies that want to grow their support contract client base'

OR

'How SME's can create a successful sales conversion pipeline – free webinar explains 7 essential strategies'

OR

'For retired professionals with £250,000 or more in investments – New legislation means big tax savings'

Next, you have to agitate the problem, rub salt into their wound, and show them that you know how they are feeling…

'Are you constantly struggling to find serious prospects who'll pay a fair price for your IT support?

OR

'Fed-up with long sales cycles and prospects who won't take your calls?'

OR

'Tell the tax-man to take a running jump, and keep more of your hard-earned capital'

Give several examples of how your key prospects will be suffering, and then explain how your offer (such as a webinar or video or report) will provide the answers they need. And remember this is a multi-step strategy, so you can't go straight into offering an on-site audit, or site survey, or presentation of your portfolio etc. before the prospect has got to know you, trust you and believe in your level of expertise.

Promote the benefits that your offer will deliver, and then include a very specific call to action. For example,

'Get instant access to these valuable brand design benchmarks'

'Book your place on this Thursday's free brand management webinar'

'Download your illustrated media planning checklist'

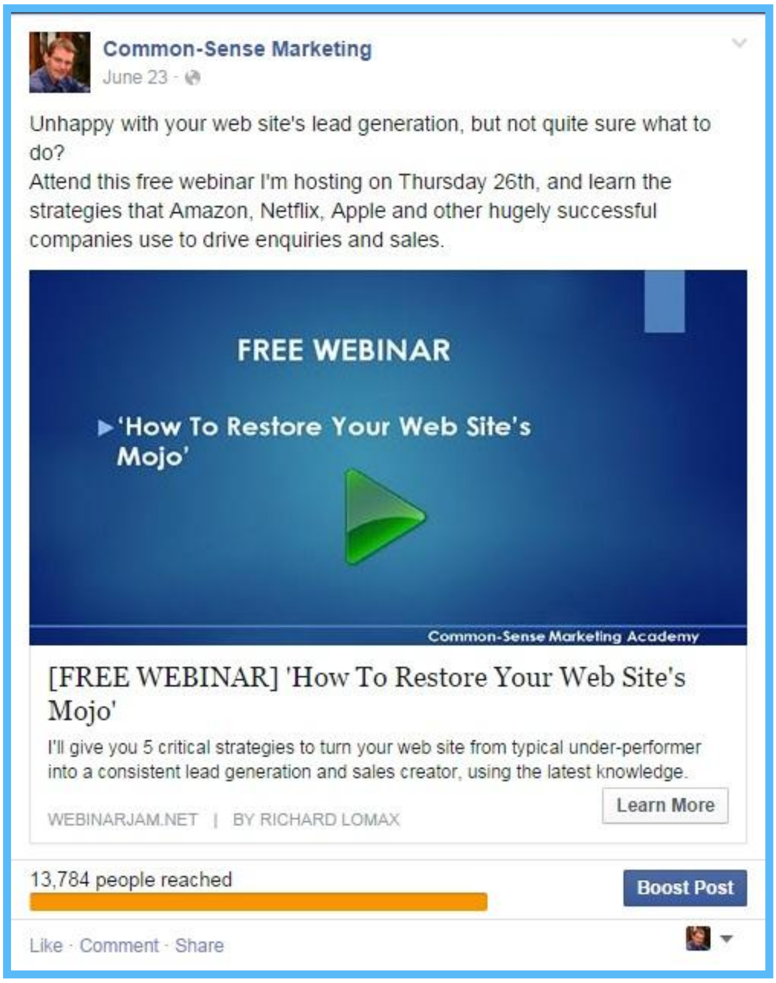
Remember, your ad copy must speak specifically to your ideal prospects about their biggest challenges.

In summary you are saying 'Do you have this problem? Are you really frustrated by…?

On this webinar, video, report etc. I'm going to give you the solution.'

Here are some examples of well-written facebook 'sponsored posts':

First, American marketing expert Frank Kern – **notice how the copy leads with a clear benefit**: '*Learn brand new ADVANCED marketing strategies for absolute market domination*', and then follows with a strong call-to-action '*You Should Click Here:*'



Here's an example of a sponsored post that we ran promoting a webinar that received over 600 sign-ups in just one week of running on facebook, leading up to the date of the webinar:

Note, the copy in the advert is 'you' oriented. It is all about you the reader, your needs and questions, and contains *specific* details of how you'll benefit from the webinar on offer '*I'll give you 5 critical strategies to turn your web site from under-performer into a consistent lead generation and sales creator'*.

This advert has just one focus - to encourage the reader to take action and learn more about the webinar.

Step #5

Prepare Your Landing Page

The pages you send your prospects to are called 'landing pages'— they're the first page a visitor sees after clicking on your sponsored post. And what matters most for your online marketing ROI is whether or not those prospects take action.

Here's Why You Must Create Bespoke Landing Pages

By default, most companies simply send prospects who are responding to their online ads to their company homepage. After all, they reason, if the homepage is the digital equivalent of the company front door, shouldn't we bring prospects there as a starting point?

Well, the answer's No, and here's why: Most company homepages cover too many subjects and have too much going on to work effectively in getting prospects to take a very specific action.

Remember, a person who lands on your Web site is looking for something specific. Tossing him onto a generic homepage (with the implicit message, "Here you go, now you figure it out") will work against your intention of converting visitors into leads.

Instead, the most effective strategy is to take responders to a tightly focused stand-alone web page – (your 'Landing Page') which has been specifically developed and matched to the subject of their enquiry with minimal distractions, a strong call to action, and a well-thought-out process for moving the prospect to action, (e.g. claiming a trial of a new product or service, or a free guide, or audio download, or new case study, signing up for a newsletter, making a purchase or whatever).

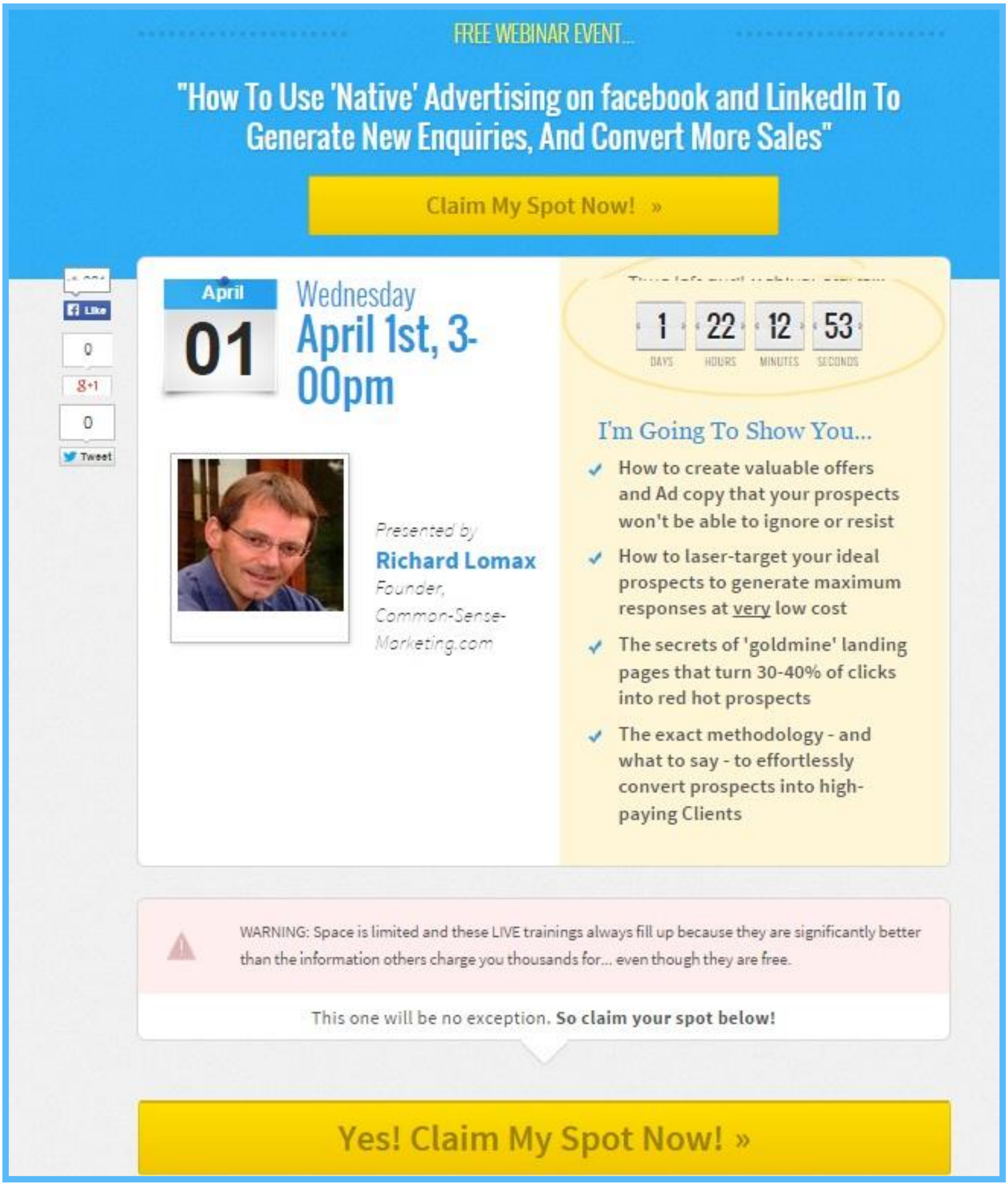
Simply dropping a prospect on your homepage in the hope that he or she finds what they're looking for almost guarantees frustration and failure. Always take visitors to a well-crafted landing page, distinct from the company homepage.

The critical step is to tempt prospects to complete a short form to claim the report, video, case study, cheat-sheet or to book onto your webinar for example. Or if you operate a bricks-and-mortar retail store you could offer vouchers which can be printed off (after submitting details) and redeemed in-store. If your retail store also has an e-commerce facility, you could offer a low-priced, popular consumable product at a specially discounted price for a limited time period to encourage sign-ups.

Achieving a form completion is not always as easy as you might think! Your prospects are very fickle, and they are easily distracted, or drawn back to other activities, or other posts on their newsfeed. But when you use a combination of the right copy and the right page design, it can work wonderfully well.

The most effective facebook campaigns take clickers to a tightly focused landing page specifically developed and matched to the subject of the sponsored post.

Here's a really successful landing page that promoted one of our free webinars:



Here Are The 12 Essential Elements Of A Successful Landing Page:

The following elements of your landing pages are key to optimising your ability to convert larger numbers of visitors into sales leads or customers:

1. Use your most persuasive, **benefit-led headline**, large and bold at the top of the page.

2. **Excluding navigation links** to any other pages can have major benefits. It's important to understand that these landing page sites should not contain any obvious navigation links to your main web site (or any other web site). Whenever you are trying to get and keep the attention of one of your prospects, and motivate them to take a specific action, one of the key strategies to adopt is that of focusing the prospect's mind, and not letting them be distracted.

   Research has shown that the moment your landing page includes lots of outbound links – a proportion of prospects will be distracted to click those links, so leaving your landing page, never to return. Your landing pages must be single-mined in their content in order to achieve maximum capture of enquiries or orders.

   You can include links such as a 'contact us' or a 'privacy policy' link, but these should normally be at the bottom of your page, and not in a large font. These links can be beneficial in letting the 'spiders' of the advertising host Company to visit your other pages and confirm that there is additional valuable content available to your prospects. This will help with any quality score that they may be assessing for your landing page.

3. **Make sure your first call to action is "above the fold".** The call to action panel is the part of the page that asks the prospect to enter their details and usually click a button to submit. "Above the fold" is a phrase taken from the way that newspapers used to be displayed on news-stands where the broadsheet papers were originally folded in half and placed in a rack. The information above this fold had to be compelling because it would often determine how many copies of a newspaper were sold each day.

   So, on a computer screen, the first call to action panel should be high enough up on the page to be visible the moment the page appears in the prospects web browser, without them having to scroll down the page. (If they have to scroll down to respond then again research as shown that a proportion of visitors will miss the call to action and your response rate will suffer).

4. **Use easy to read typefaces**. Use an easy to read font for the main body text on the page. 10 point Arial or Verdana, or 12 point Times New Roman or Courier are good fonts. Small fonts may look "subtle" or more highly designed, but they reduce readership and response.

5. **Make sure your Privacy Policy is prominent and easy to read.** Ideally this should be positioned very close to the call to action panel, next to the button prospects click to submit their details.

6. **Be consistent in the design of your landing page**. If your sponsored post is using some kind of "theme", make sure that the page design reinforces the design style of the post. This will help prospects recognise your offer and reinforce their initial interest. So for example, on clicks from facebook sponsored posts, we have had success with creating landing pages where the page background colour and text colours mimic the colours used by facebook.

7. If you are offering a published report or special information, **use an image of the Author**, with a benefit-led caption.

8. **Don't be tempted to include more than one product, service or special offer.** Keep your proposition to the prospect nice and simple. As soon as you introduce additional offers on the landing page you'll confuse the purpose of the site and dilute responses.

9. **Ask for the minimum information necessary.** The more you ask for, the fewer people will fill in the form. So don't ask for details that are not <u>essential</u> to a first–stage enquiry.

   If the next step in your sales process is to communicate via e-mail then you only need their name and e-mail address.

   For purchases from a landing page, you should ask for their name and e-mail on the landing page and then redirect then to a secure payment page where they submit full credit card details and address.

   You can however, deliberately ask for more information (address and / or company details etc.) to make the lead much more qualified, if it will involve you in significant time or expense to respond to or to fulfil.

10. **Use a relevant and unique web address** (domain name) for each landing page. The name you register should either reflect the offer you are making or the benefit of your product or service. For example if your landing page is offering a free report about nutrition - then the landing page web address could be www.FreeNutritionFacts.com or similar. If your landing page sells low cost car parts, register a domain like www.CarParts4Less.com You get the idea.

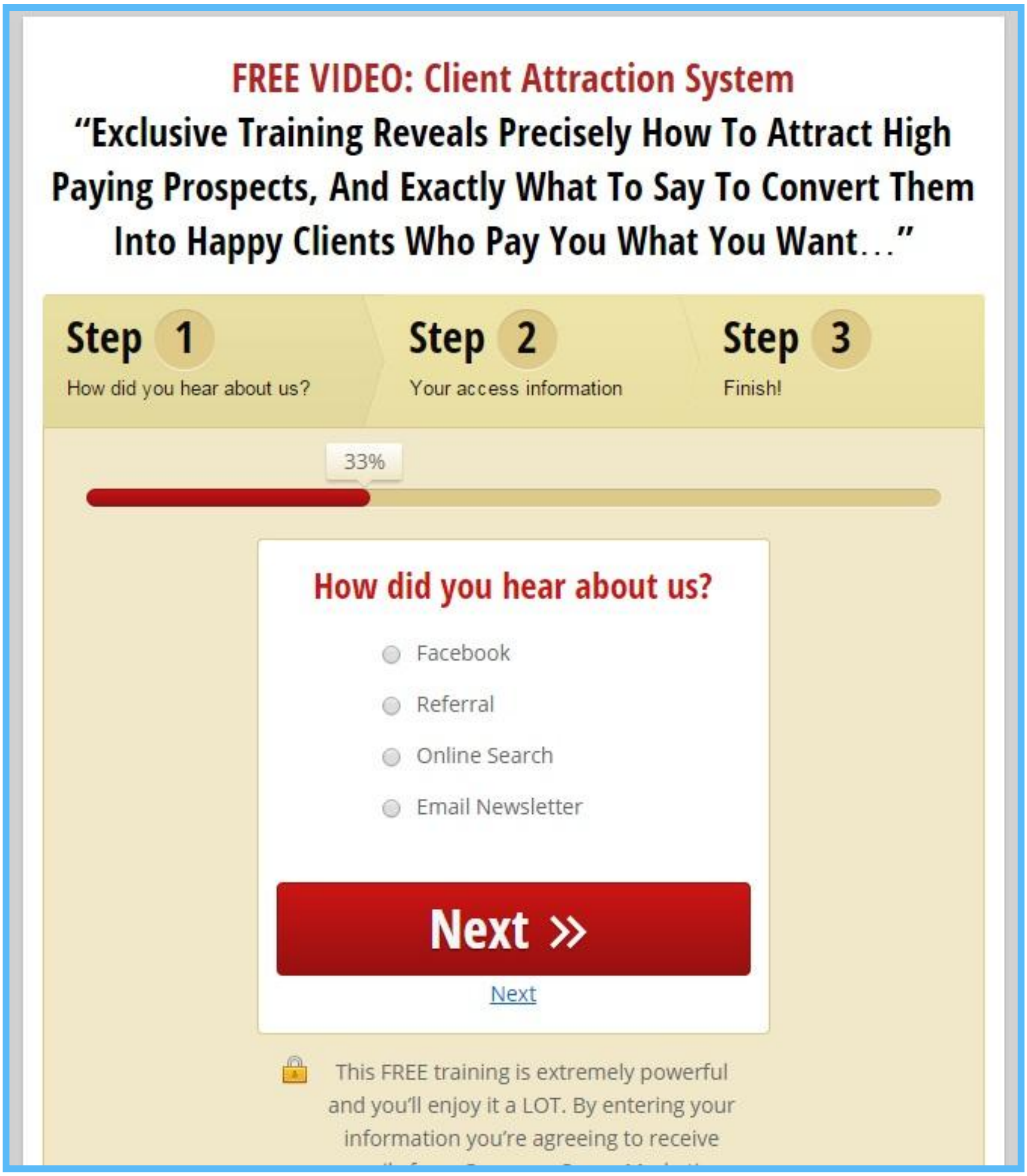
11. **Make your domain name easy to remember and spell**. If a prospect sees your landing page in an off-line promotion or advert - make it easy for them to type it into their web browser. This aspect is less important if you use online advertising or mostly e-mail prospects to drive them to your landing page – but it's best to keep the landing page name simple.

12. **Make maximum use of your "Thank-You" page.** Use the page that usually appears after prospects click the submit button on the call to action panel for some additional purpose.

You could use it to upgrade the prospect to a more valuable, enhanced version of your product or service -- or to offer additional information to help them get maximum value from their purchase, allow them to access a discount coupon off future purchases, sign-up for a newsletter etc.

Or you could just link to your main web site. Remember, by the time this page appears you've already captured their details, so now you're safe to send them to your main web site.

Here's one of the best converting landing page that we're using right now:



Below is a snap-shot of some of the campaigns that use these pages, where you can see a consistent 30 – 65% conversion rate:

The important thing to keep in mind is that facebook browsers have lots of options and are presented with lots of different links. Together, this leads to impatience and a tendency to abandon any pathway that doesn't quickly and easily lead to a desired result.

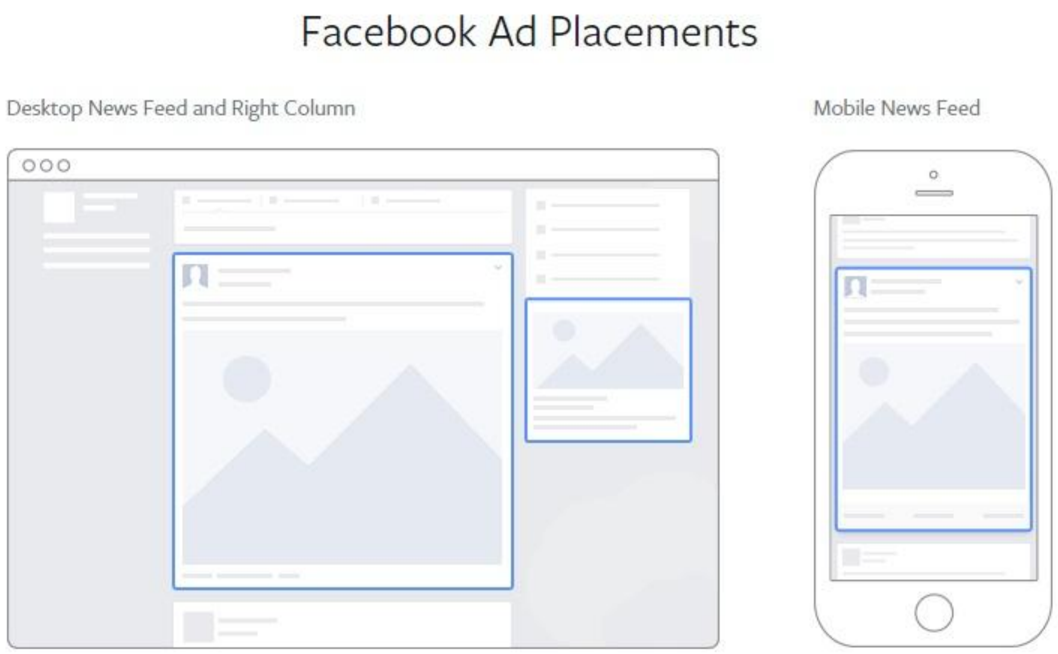
And as with your sponsored posts, to achieve the most profitable results you must undertake testing of different landing pages, including different headlines, copy, page design, capture form fields, and the size, colour and wording of your 'submit' button etc.

Step #6

Set Up Your Facebook Campaign

Thanks to the wonders of the facebook advertising platform, you can quickly put your sales message in front of literally tens and hundreds of thousands of your most ideal prospects, in an incredibly cost effective way. In fact it costs you absolutely nothing to do this!

Your ads can appear in three different places, either in the main News Feed or in the right-hand column on desktop computers, laptops and tablets, or on mobile devices.



Facebook has a very broad offering of Ad Types that can fit every need, according to the objectives of your campaign. For example:

'Page Like' ads - If you want likes & **engagement** for your page, due to recent updates, the usual post on your page will only organically reach an average of 2-6% of your fan base, so it makes sense to use 'Page Like' ads. These ads can be displayed on all placements and will include a visible call to action for users to immediately 'Like' your page. It's important to pick the right image to achieve good results.

'Page post photo' and 'Page post video' ads are very similar to the above, but with a bigger image space of area for your video.

Facebook also offers specific ad types to help you promote **installs** for your mobile or desktop **apps**, and has two ad types designed to drive visitors to your physical **event** or **store**.

However, we are specifically interested in driving **Traffic and Leads** to your website, and in particular, to send users to a dedicated landing page and have them buy your product, sign up for a newsletter, or more likely, participate in some other kind of lead generation offer.

Page Post Links (or **Newsfeed Ads**) are the most common and most prominent of all the Facebook ads types, and feature a big image that's great to catch user attention. These ads show up seamlessly in a user's feed along with the content that they see from their friends and the people that they follow.

Though users are told it's a sponsored update with a disclaimer saying "Sponsored," the posts still seem genuine since they can be liked and commented on like any other post.

You can test both the post text and the link description so you can better explain your offer. These ads perform really well and have the side benefit of generating Likes for your page.

In the **Facebook Customer Generation System** I am focusing particularly on '**sponsored posts**' which appear in the left hand side newsfeed of your prospects (and not with the more typical ads that appear in the right hand column).

As far as growing your business using facebook, the hub for this activity is your own Company page (also known as a fan page) which is separate from your facebook home page where you see your normal newsfeed of posts.

If you don't already have a Company page, then go to this address and follow the instructions: https://www.facebook.com/pages/create

When it comes to creating your advertising and sponsored posts, you have two options of which editor to use within facebook. These are the 'Power Editor' and the 'Ads Manager'.

Here are the differences between them, and why you should concentrate on using the Power Editor to create your ads and sponsored posts.

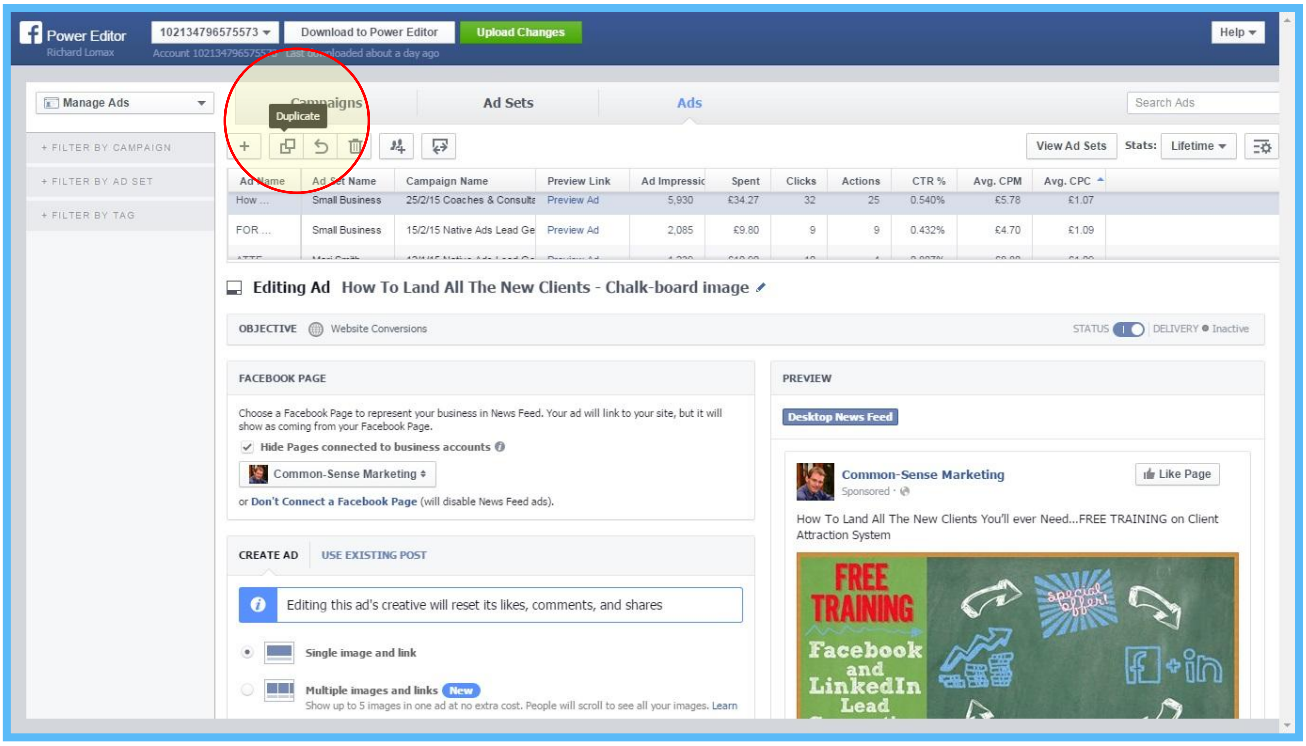
Power Editor is an ad creation and management tool typically offering more advanced features than the Ads Manager.

It is essentially a plug-in that only works within the Google Chrome browser. It operates by downloading your data from your facebook advertising account so that you can then create and change/duplicate your campaigns, ad sets and ads. Once you have done your work you then click 'Upload Changes' to publish the changes onto your advertising account.

Your ads will then be available to view within the Ads Manager. If you need to make any changes to features that are only available in Power Editor, you will have to re-download your ads, make the changes and upload them again. However, if it's a relatively small change, you can usually do this within the Ads Manager.

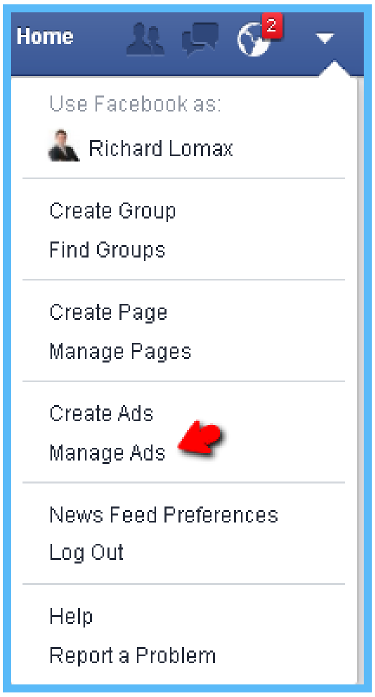
One of the main advantages of the Power Editor is that it allows you to copy campaigns, Ad Sets, and Ads so that you can quickly edit headlines, images or copy and test alternatives.

Here is a shot of the Power Editor, with the duplicate Ad button highlighted:



You CAN create ads within the **Ads Manager**, but there are more restrictions on the number of characters you can use:

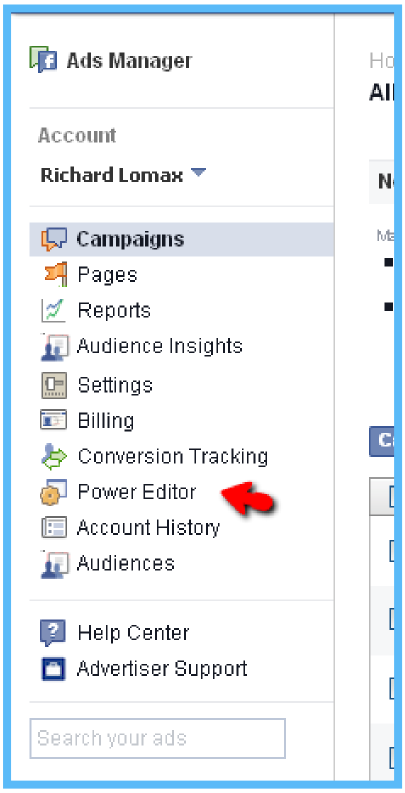
- Headline – 25 characters
- Text – 90 characters
- News Feed Link Description – 200 characters



However, the Ads Manager is the best place to review the results of your campaigns, prepare reports, track changes history, and create custom web site audiences.

Once you have logged in to your Company page, you should click on the dropdown arrow at the top right of the page. Then click on 'Manage Ads'

Next you click on 'Ads Manager' in the left-hand column.



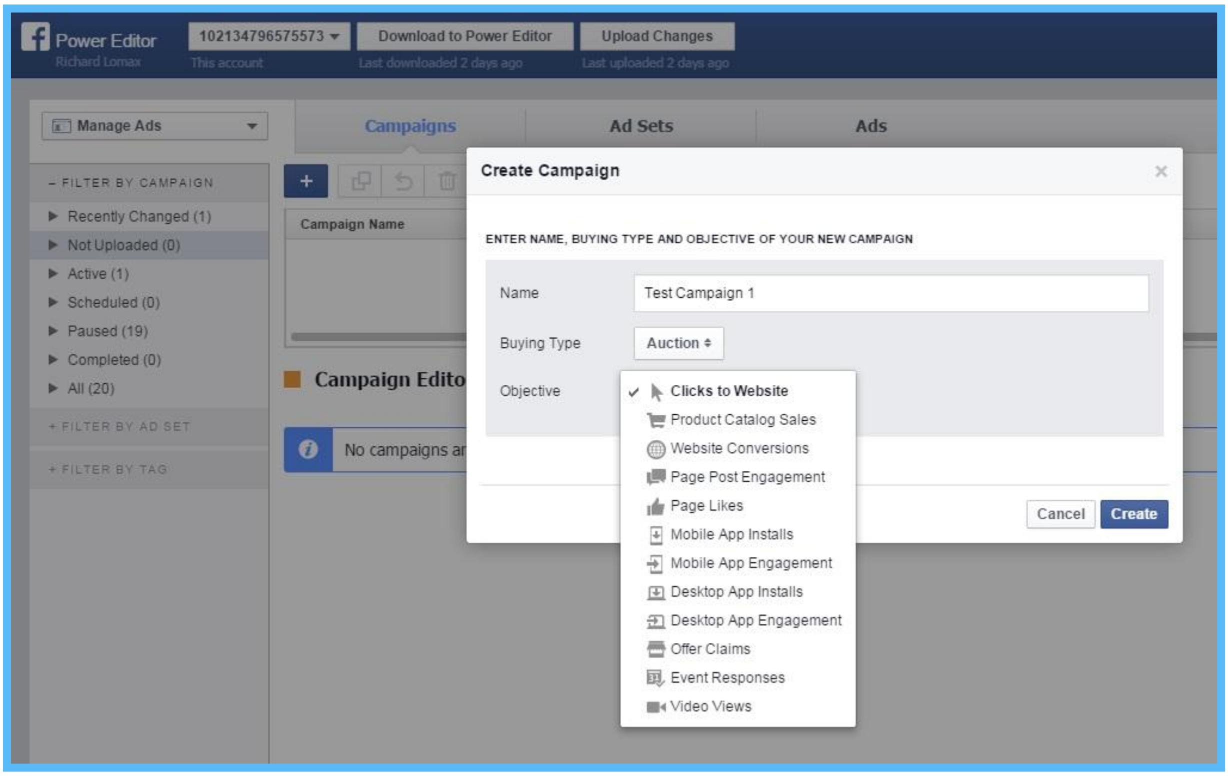
Then you will see a menu column on the left-hand side. Click on 'Power Editor'

(Now bookmark this page so that it is easy to find next time!)

Here's the direct page link: https://www.facebook.com/ads/manage/powereditor/

Once you are in the Power Editor you will see three tabs, for Campaigns, Ad Sets and Ads.

At the **Campaign** level, you set the campaign name and its objective.



From the dropdown you can choose your advertising objective according to what you want people to do when they see your ads. For example, you can create ads to get people to like your Facebook Page, or to encourage people to visit your website.

In the Ads Manager you can track how well your campaign if achieving its objective.

The advertising objectives you can choose from are:

- Clicks to Website: Send people to your website
- Website Conversions: Increase conversions on your website. You need to create a conversion pixel (in the Power Editor) to go in your ‘thank-you’ or ‘success’ page for these ads
- Page Post Engagement: Boost your posts
- Page Likes: Promote your Page and get Page likes to connect with more prospects
- App Installs: Get installs of your app
- App Engagement: Increase engagement in your app
- Offer Claims: Create offers for people to redeem in your store
- Local Awareness: Reach people near your business
- Event Responses: Raise attendance at your event
- Video Views: Create ads that get more people to view a video

In terms of generating qualified leads for your customer generation campaign, you need to choose the objective of either ‘web site clicks’ or more ideally **‘web site conversions’**.

Step #7

Select Specific Niche, Target Audiences

This is done under the Campaign level in what are called **Ad Sets**.

This is where you set the budget for your daily spend, and also set up the targeting of your ads. Ad sets are distinct Audiences of people that you want to show your Ads to, and these can be selected according to a huge number of criteria.

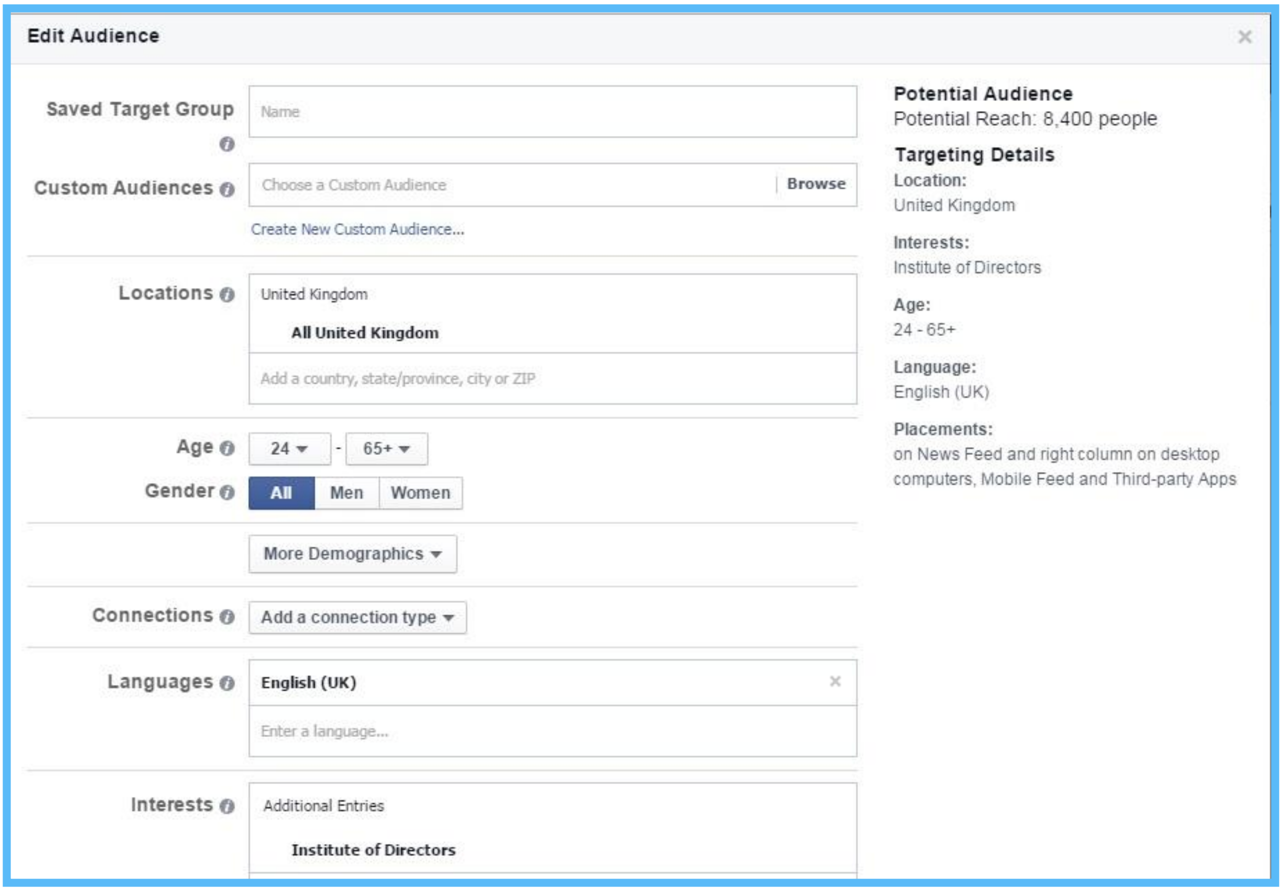
Here are just a few of the ways you can segment an audience on Facebook.

- Location
- Age
- Interests
- Gender
- Languages
- Education Level
- Relationship Status
- Political Views

So you can select prospects by their interests and hobbies, or target business users according to the location or size of company, type of industry, job title and a whole range of other selection criteria.

For example, you could target Managing Directors of UK SME's who are based in the Midlands and like Richard Branson, or who've read 'Good to Great' by Jim Collins. i.e. you can target the ideal prospect persona for your specific consultancy or coaching business.

In the illustration on the next page, you can see that we are targeting the 8,400 members of the Institute of Directors:



The more focused you're a sets, then the higher your click-through rates are likely to be (providing you have a relevant offer). So stay away from selecting broad interests, and target small groups of prospects, and then when campaign is profitable you can scale up with broader groups.

Find specific pages that ideal prospects like – think laterally and literally.

You can develop a group of Ad Sets based around **proven** interests. Ask yourself 'What pages do my ideal prospects like?'

For example, are there relevant authors, gurus, celebrities, experts in your niche who have facebook pages that your prospects will have liked or visited?

Another group of Ad Sets can be based around **experimental** interests. For example, what books or TV programmes do your prospects like? What associations or clubs are they members of?

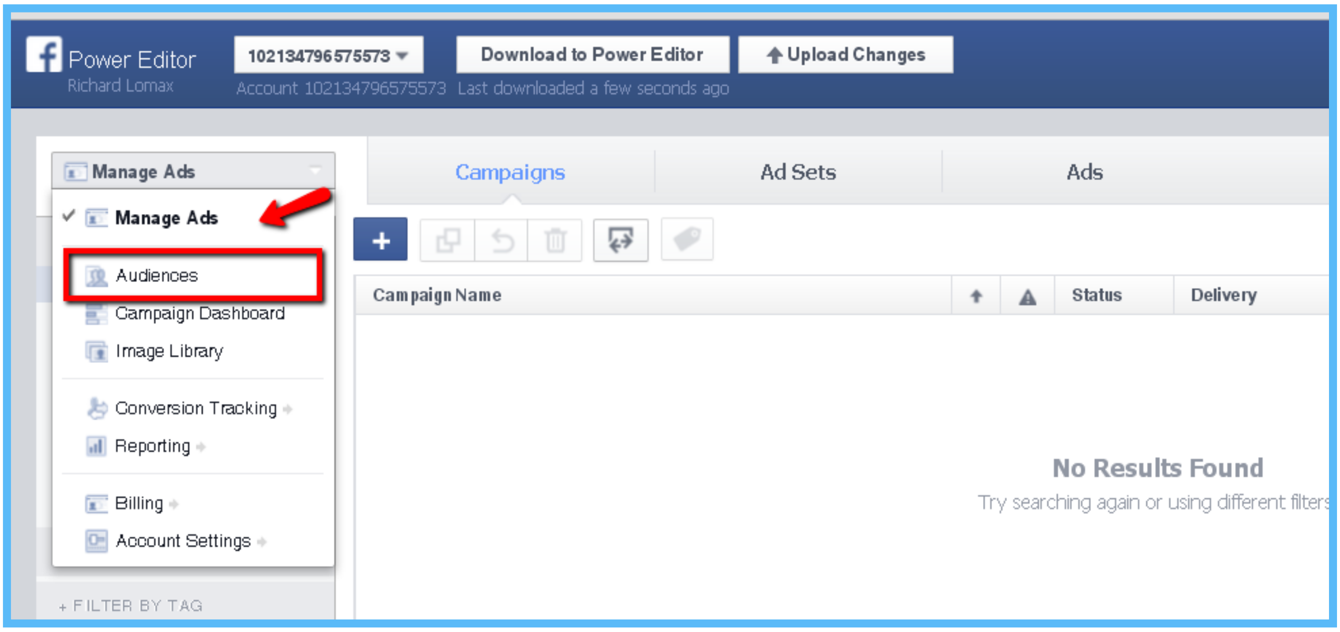
You could quickly develop 100+ Ad Sets for experimental interests, each targeted individually with one Ad. If the Ad Set converts, then move it to the 'proven interests' group where is joins other proven groups of audiences.

Facebook also gives advertisers the ability to upload their own information in order to make Custom Audiences. With Custom Audiences you can target users by:

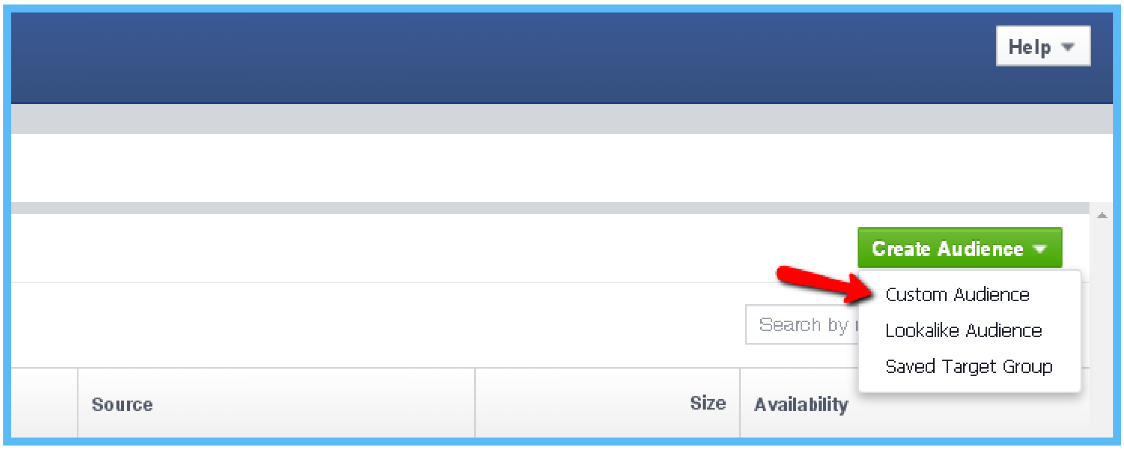
- Email addresses of prospects and existing customers
- Phone numbers
- User IDs
- People who have previously visited specific pages of your site

How To Create a Website Custom Audience in Power Editor

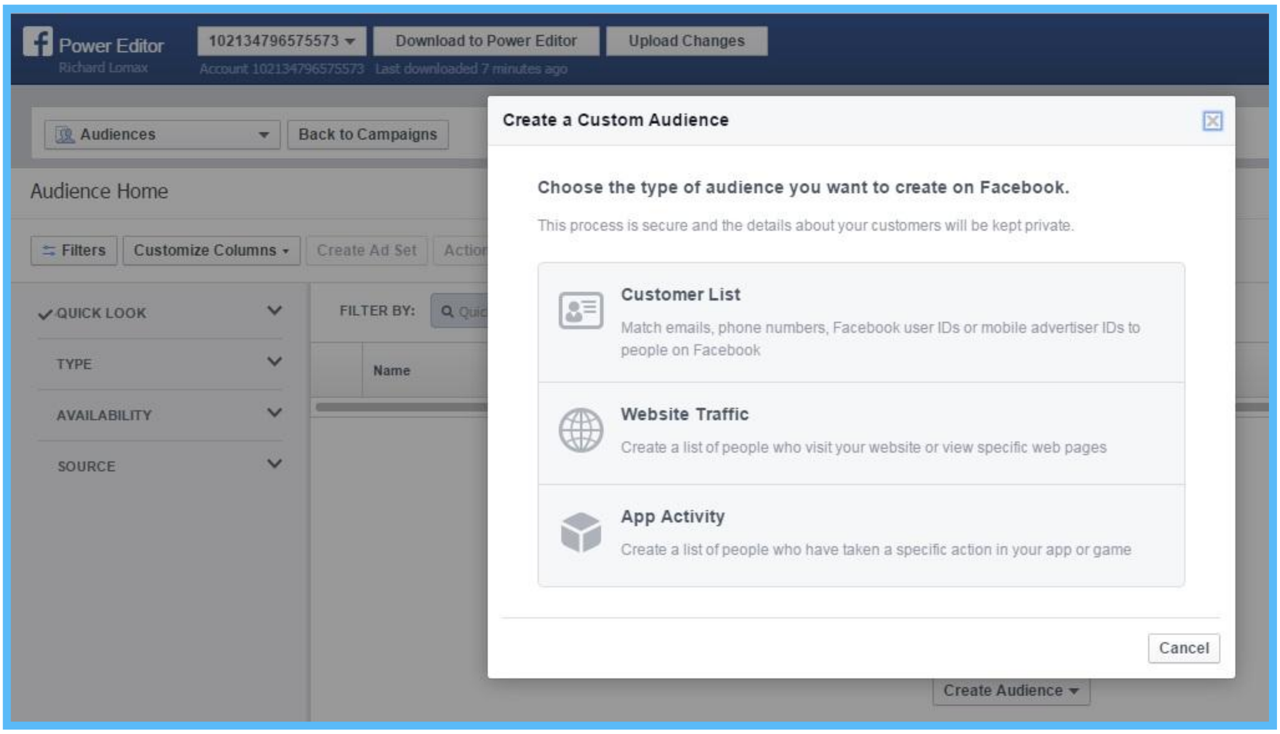
On the left hand side, click on the "Manage Ads" drop-down and select Audiences.



Then click the "Create Audience" drop-down at the top right of the page, and select Custom Audience.

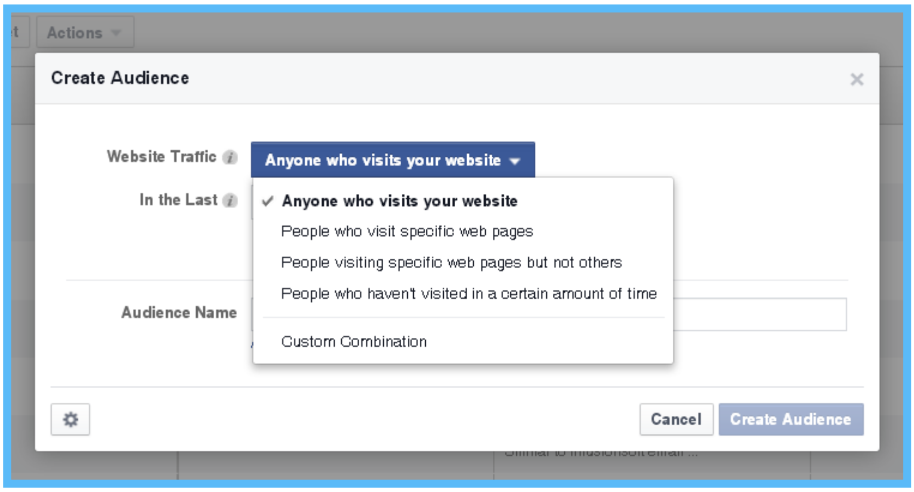


From the dropdown, click on "Website Traffic" as the source of your audience:



Next, select from the dropdown to choose which web pages you want to use for your audience. This is where you'll tell Facebook how to target users based on the specific pages of your site that they visited.

By default, Facebook will generate a Website Custom Audience of all website visitors, no matter what page they visited.



But you can also target people who visited specific pages by toggling to "People visiting specific pages."

You can select URL, Domain or Path…

And then "Contains Any," "Doesn't Contain," "Is Equal To" or "Is Not Equal To…"

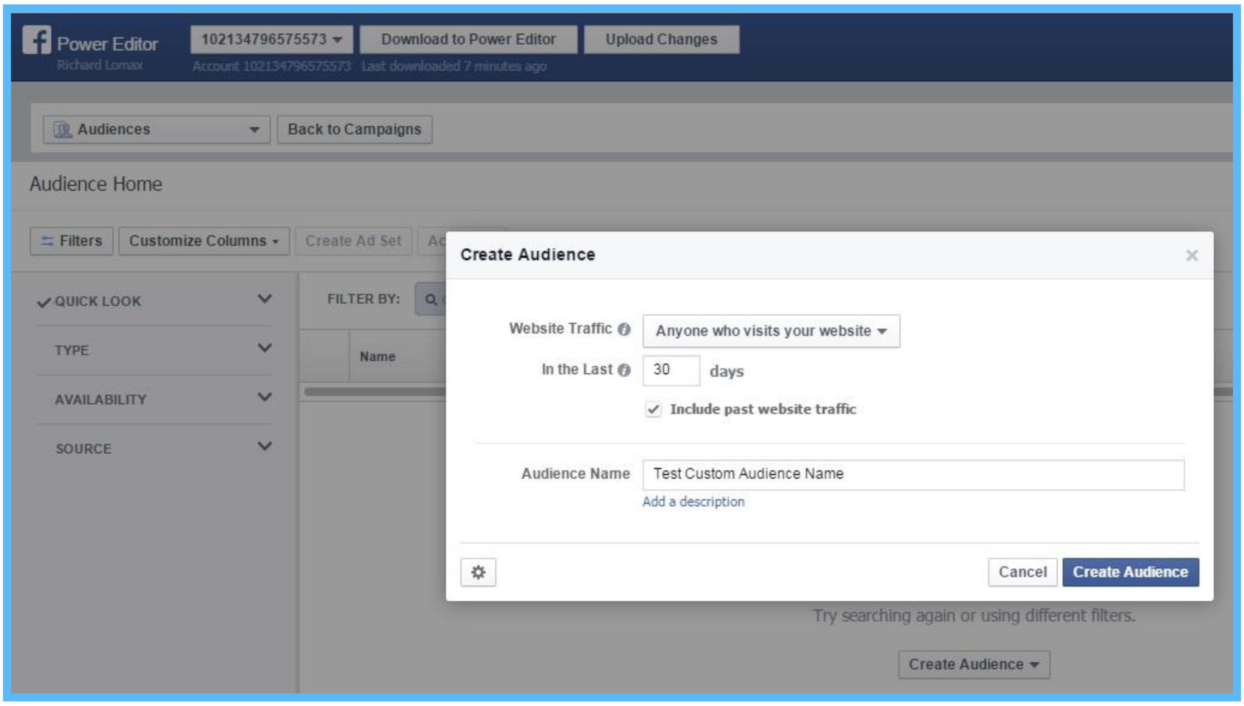
However, the most common type of Website Custom Audience (other than for all visitors) will be for a specific page. For example, if I want to target only people who visited the landing page for my free report, I'd use this: /fb-marketing-free-report.

Next, choose the length of time you want people will remain in your audience after they visit your website. By default, Facebook sets this to 30 days. This way, you will be targeting anyone who visited your website within the past 30 days.

Facebook allows you to use durations of up to 180 days. The chosen period should relate to the size of your potential audience. If you get lots of really good traffic to the pages you are targeting, consider using shorter time periods to make the targeting more relevant and timely.

People will be removed from your audience after the set time period unless they visit your website again.

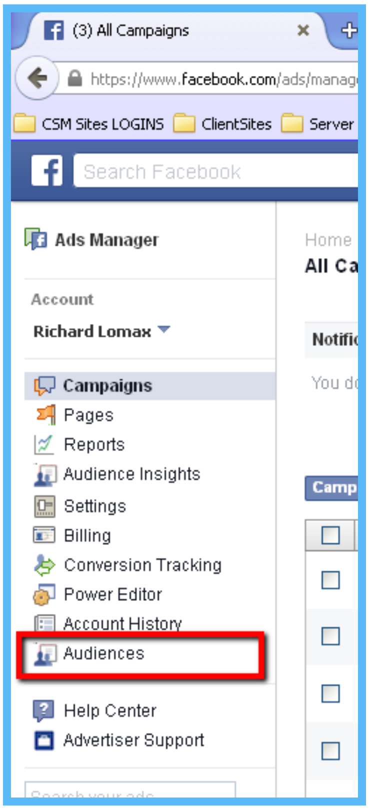
Next, select an appropriate name describing the custom audience, and click 'Create Audience'.



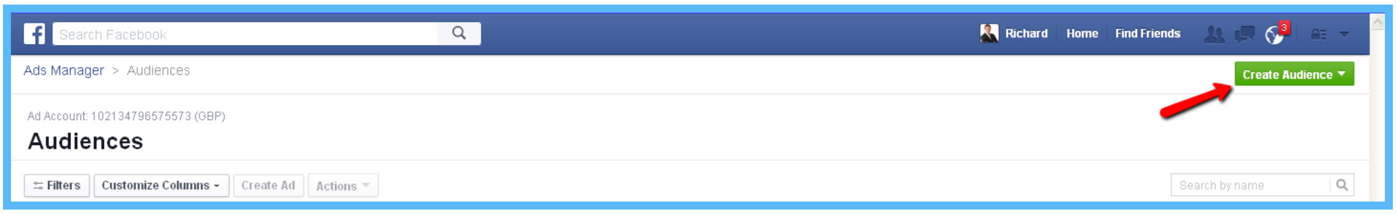
Then, you'll want to click the "View Remarketing Pixel" If this is the first time you've created a Website Custom Audience, copy this to a text document for reference later.

You can also create a Website Custom Audience in the Ads Manager, as follows:

Within Ads Manager, click the "Audiences" link on the left.



Then click the green "Create Audience" button at the top right.



All the next steps will install the Pixel.

Remember that you copied the remarketing pixel code at the end of the Power Editor instructions. You'll need that now!

Go into your website's Content Management System. Now paste this code before the closing </HEADER> tag of your website's template.

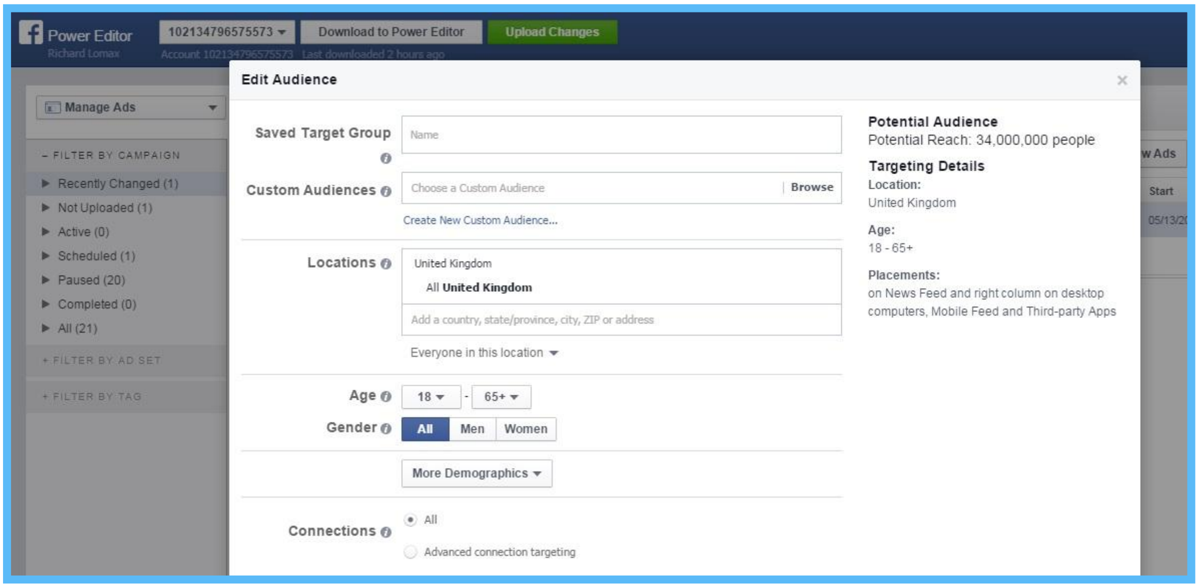
Facebook will now start building your audience as visitors to your website have your cookie added to their browser.

Facebook will match up those visitors with actual Facebook users, and then show your posts in their newsfeed.

If you get a lot of traffic, this audience will build quickly. Otherwise, it will take a little time.

How to Create an Ad Set Using Website Custom Audiences:

When you are creating your Ad Set within the Power Editor, you simply click on the 'Custom Audiences' field (2nd one down), and select your Custom Audience from the dropdown list.



Exactly the same options appear if you are creating your Ads and Ad Set within the Ads Manager.

Here's another sponsored post that I saw on my facebook newsfeed recently, and ironically it's a post by LinkedIn appearing on facebook.

LinkedIn are offering a free report titled: '*The Sophisticated Marketer's Guide to LinkedIn*'.

This just reinforces the fact that you certainly can target business professionals using Facebook, and it's not just relevant for those companies targeting general consumers.

Step #8

Prepare An Eye-Catching Image

People will only see the image in your post for a second or two as they scroll down their newsfeed, so make sure that you capture their attention with strong imagery and messaging!

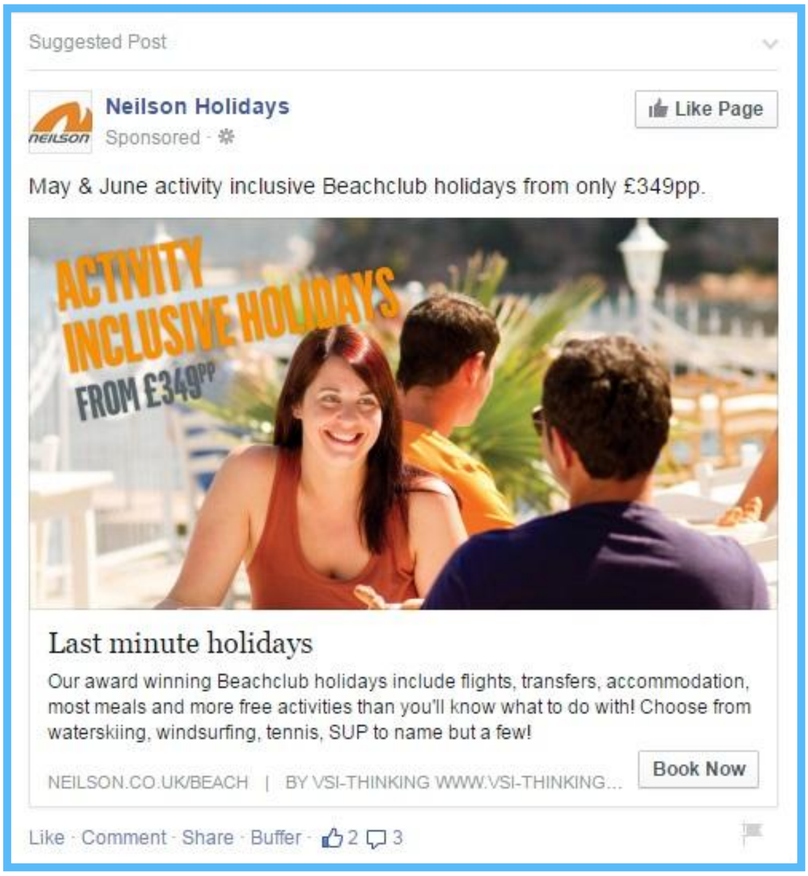
You need to choose a captivating image that will relate to the product or offer you are wanting to promote and will help your post stand out amongst all of the clutter in Facebook's newsfeed.

The recommended image size is 1200 x 628 pixels, and your image may not include more than 20% text.

If your text takes up more than 20% of the overall image for a promoted page post, you'll receive a notification from Facebook in your ads manager stating that your ad has been disapproved.

Facebook has a useful tool to help you check this – simply upload an image to this page to see how much text you're using: https://www.facebook.com/ads/tools/text_overlay

Here are some examples from successful campaigns:

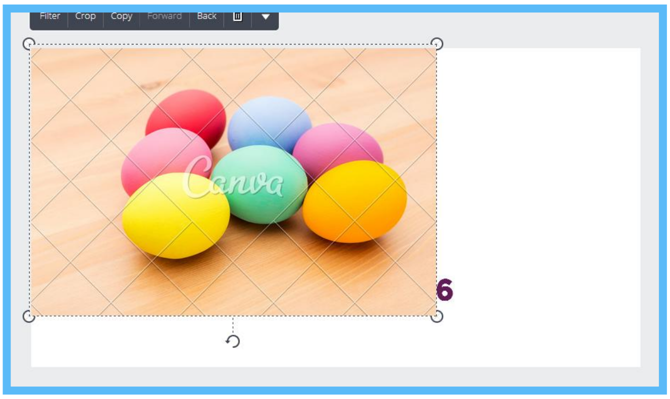


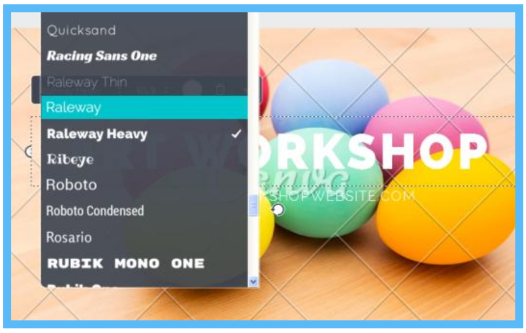
One of the best graphic tools for creating and editing your facebook post images is the free Canva tool - www.canva.com

This has thousands of images that you can search from, many of which are available for only $1. And it’s very easy to overlay your text message to create images such as these:

Original Pre-Filled Layout

Choose another image





Replace text, font and size

A video tutorial on how to use Canva is available as part of the Facebook Customer Generation Academy.

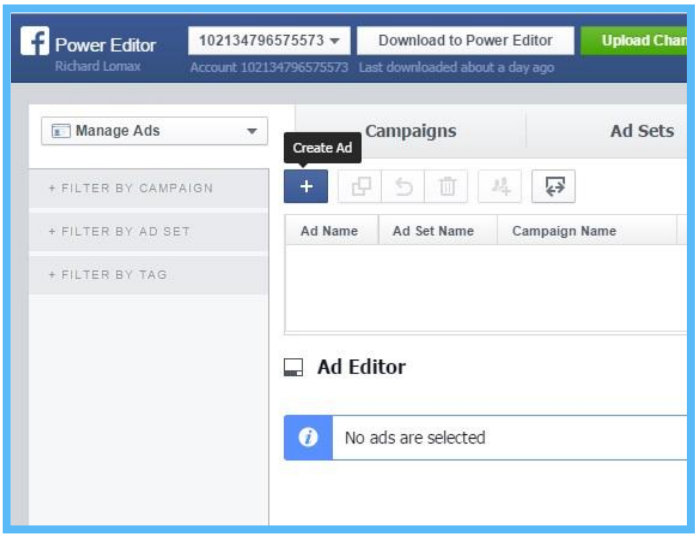
Step #9

Create Your Sponsored Post Advertisement, And Create A 'Tracking Pixel'

Step #6, was about creating your campaign and setting its objectives, and

Step #7, covered the creation of your targeting using Ad Sets.

Now we need to create the actual Ad posts that will appear in the newsfeed of your Ad Set prospects. As with your campaigns and ad sets, this is done in the Power Editor.

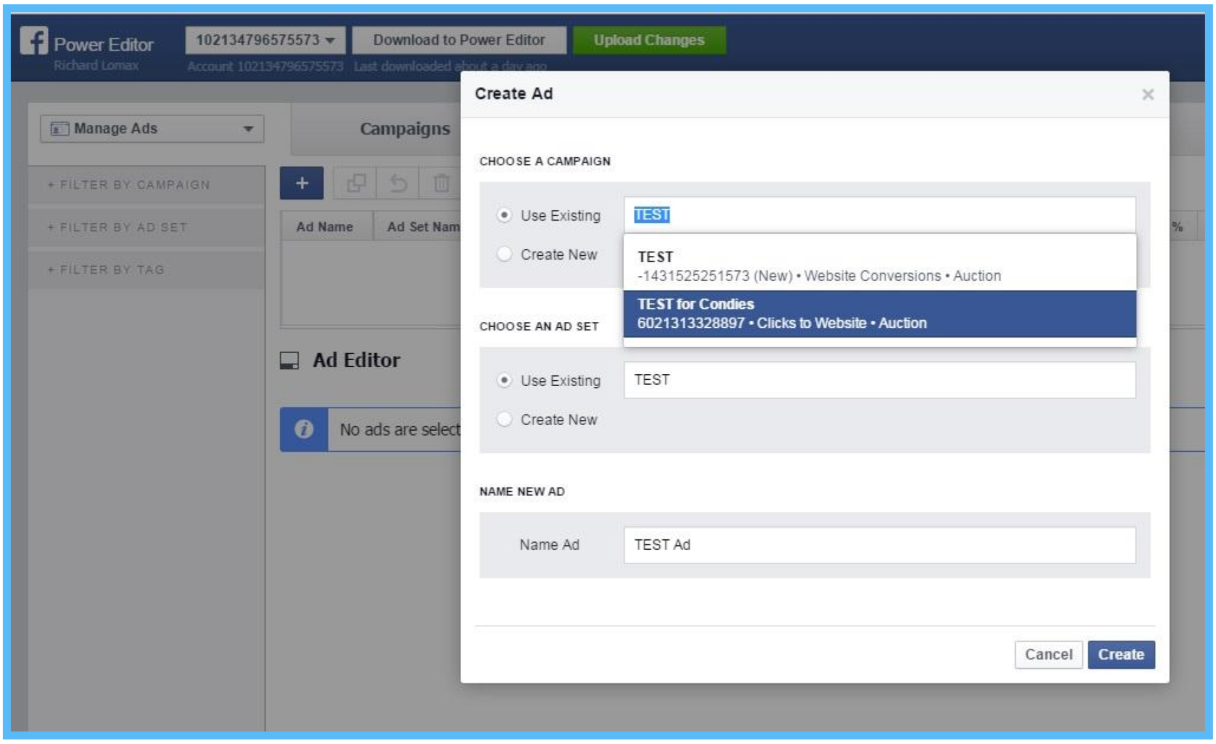


https://www.facebook.com/ads/manage/powereditor/

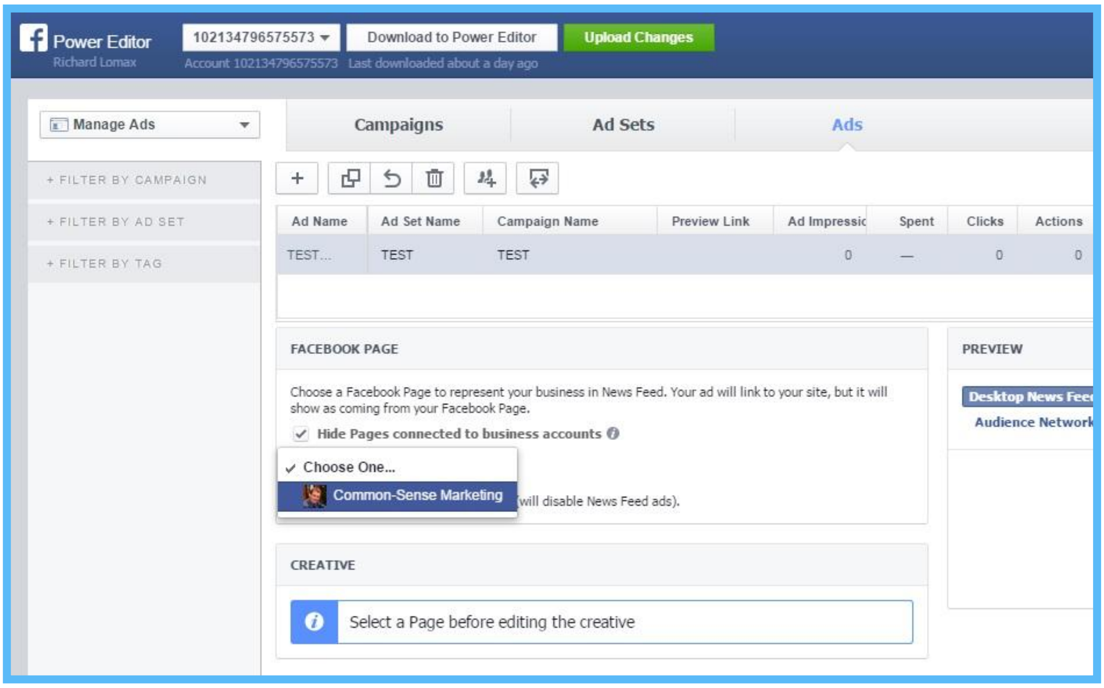
Once in the Power Editor, you will see a page with three main tabs: Campaigns, Ad Sets, and Ads. Each campaign contains one or more ad sets, and then under each Ad Set you can have a series of ads.

Click on the 'Ads' tab, and then hit the + symbol:

A dropdown will then appear which allows you to select the Campaign and Ad Set that you want the Ad to appear under. Then give your new ad a relevant name, and hit the 'Create' button:



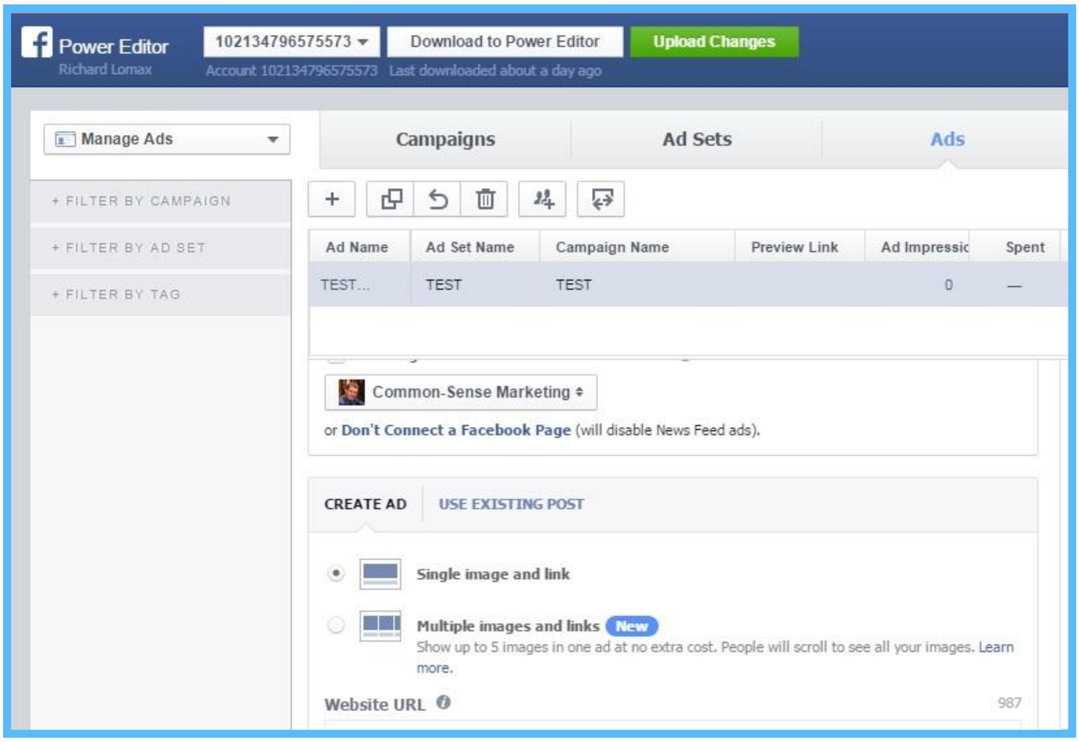
Next, for your ad to appear in the News Feed of your prospects, you will need to link it to your Company page, which you can select from the dropdown:



Scroll down the page and you will see that you now have two options for either a single image or multiple images in your ads.

With multi-image adverts you can you include up to five images at a time, and use them to put more products or promotions in one advert, show close-ups of your products, or illustrate different aspects of your free information offer. Each image has a unique URL, so you can send clicks to different landing pages.

I recommend to start with, that you focus on choosing just one image:



Scroll down the page further and you'll see a series of fields to complete. (It's best to write your Ad in a text editor first, and then you can paste each section into the ad creator).

Website URL – where you want the prospect to arrive when they click on your Ad

Display URL - If you're using a long website address, use a display URL to show a shorter, friendlier URL.

Text – Your teaser copy that promotes your free resource offer

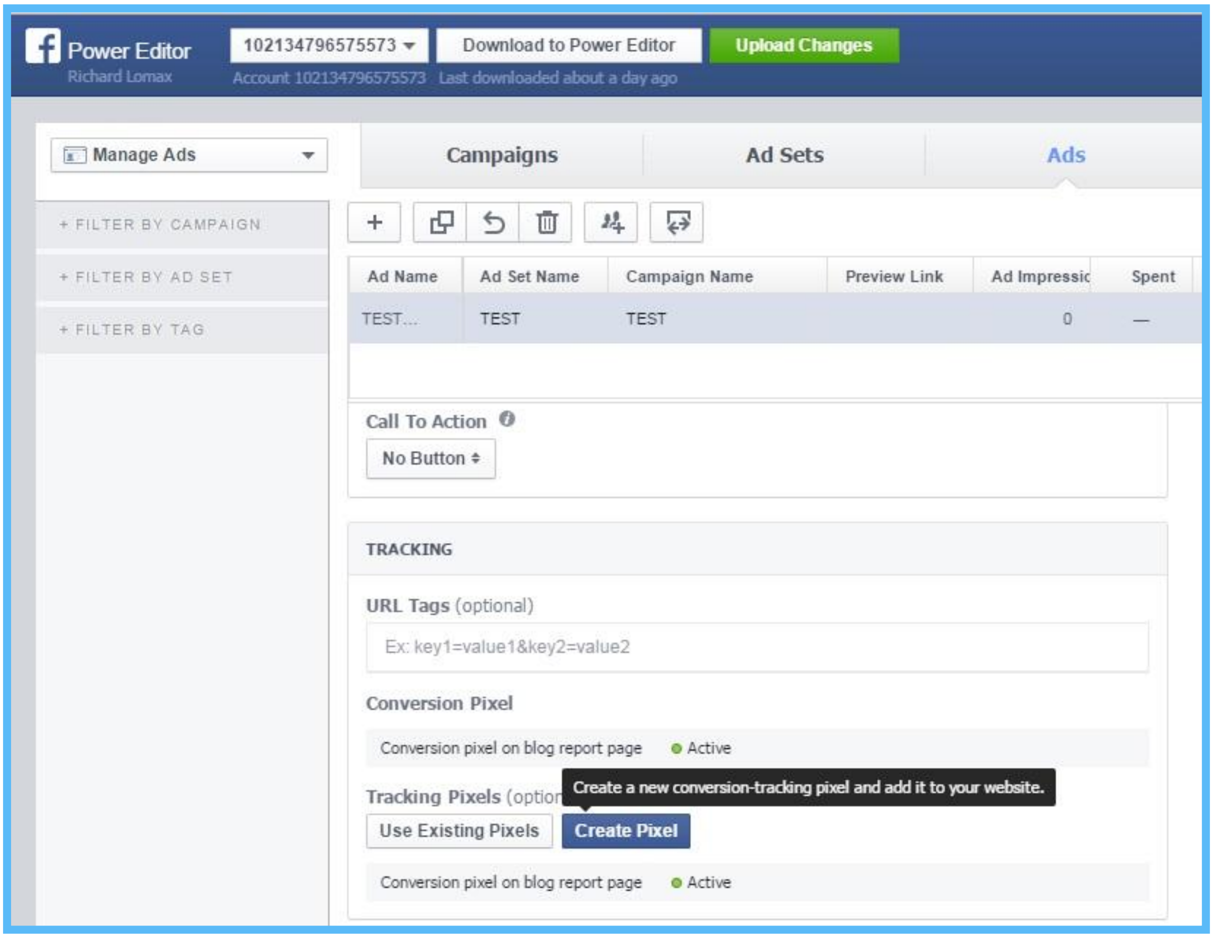
Headline – Larger Text that appears below the image as a Headline

News Feed Link Description - text that appears under the headline, again promoting your free resource, and including a strong call to action

Image - Upload your image; ideal dimensions are 1200 pixels wide x 628 deep

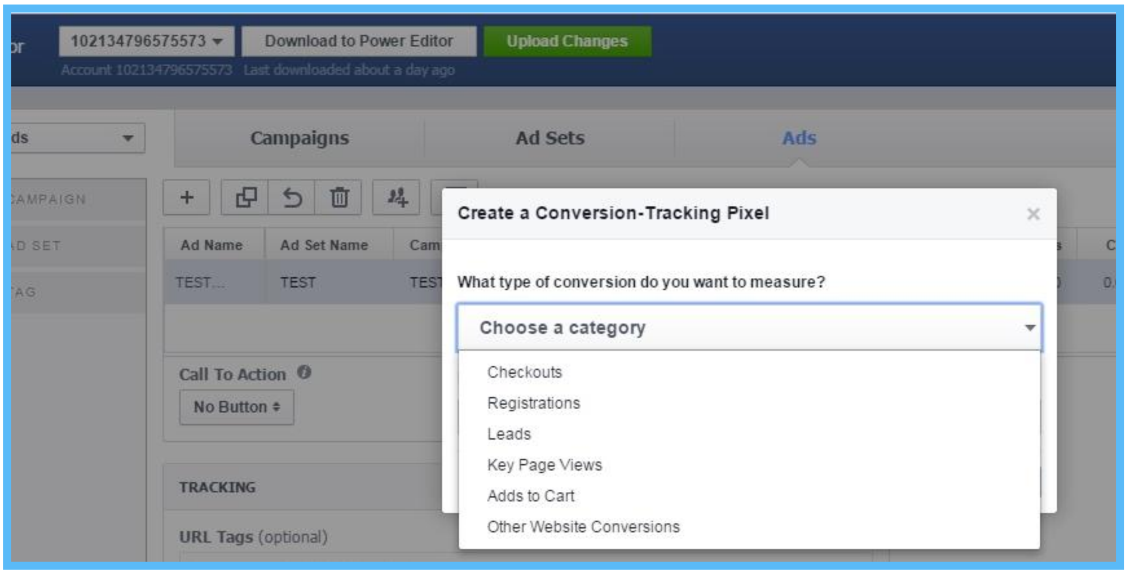
Call to Action button – Select from the dropdown e.g. 'Learn More' or 'Download'

The final box that you will see is labelled 'Tracking'

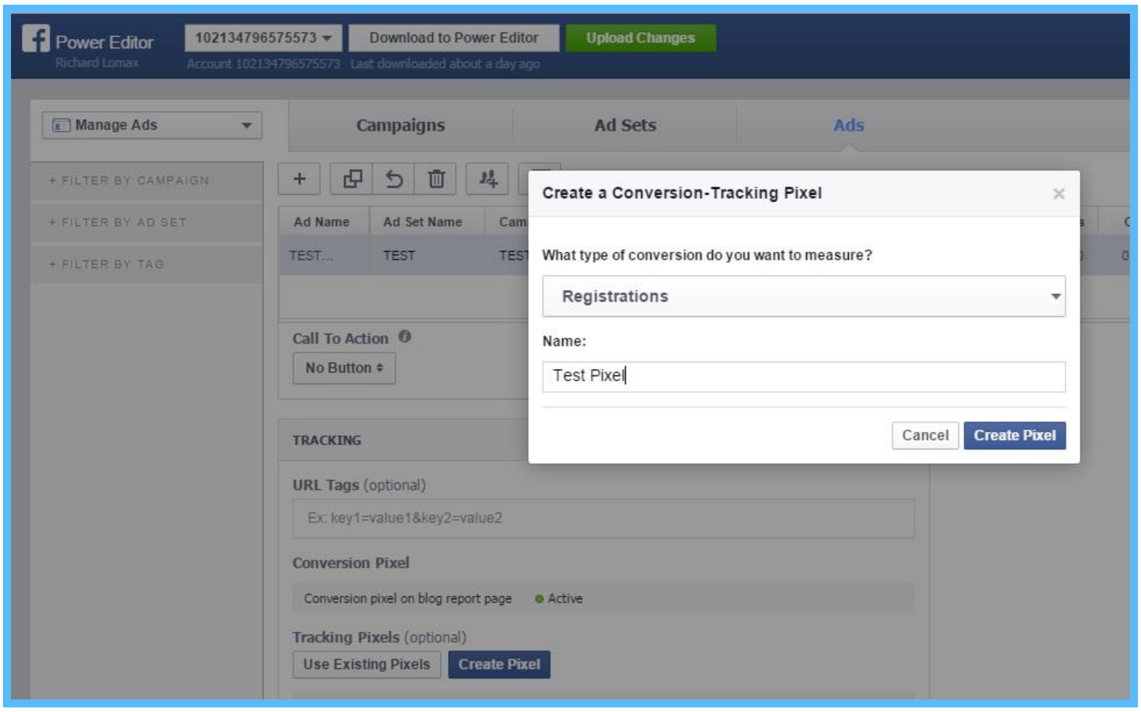


If this is your first advertisement, you will need to click on the 'Create Pixel' button (or you can select from a dropdown of existing pixels).

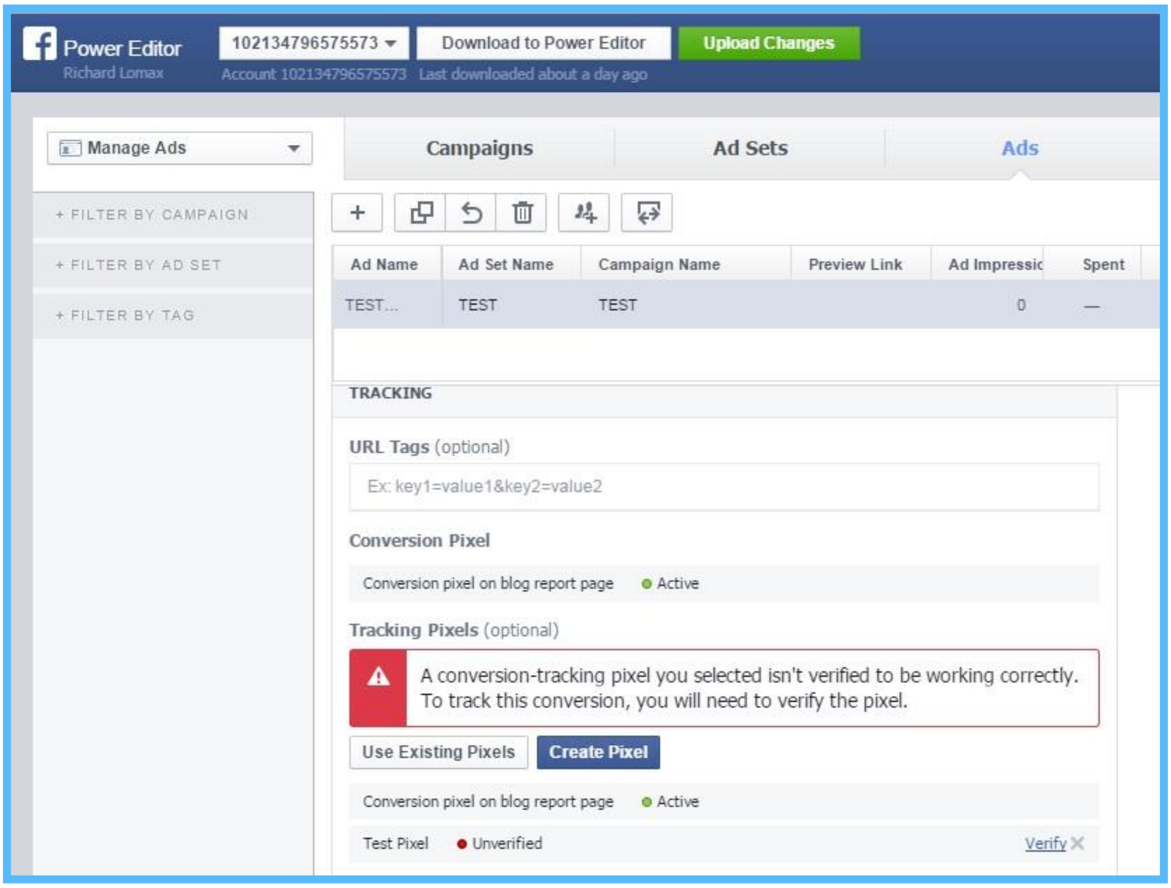
You will then see a dropdown of options for the type of conversion you want to track. Normally you should choose 'Registrations' or 'Leads' to describe where someone completes your landing page form to access your free resource. (The label you choose is not critical).



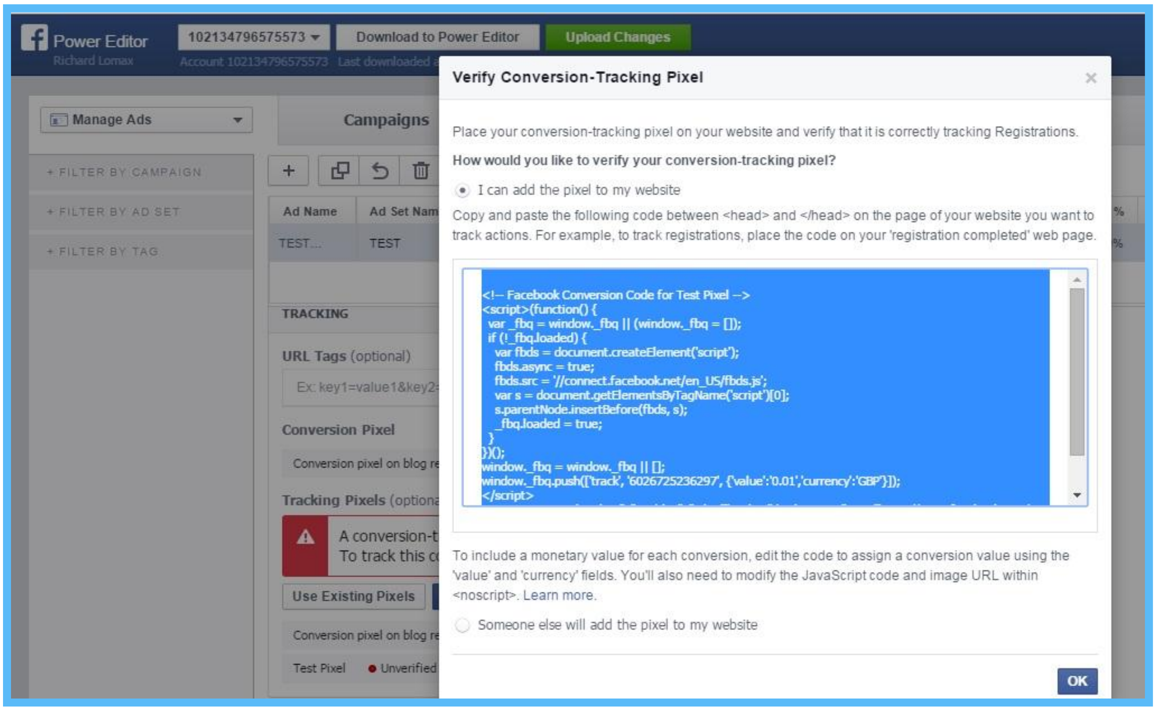
Then simply give your conversion pixel a name e.g. 'Checklist Download' or 'Free Sample Request' etc. and hit 'Create Pixel':



Next you will see a message saying that your conversion pixel is not verified:



Simply click the button saying ‘Verify’ in the bottom right corner. Form the two options that appear, select ‘I can add the pixel to my website’.



Then highlight the code and copy it, and hit ‘OK’.

This code will need to be pasted between the <head> and </head> tags on the page of the website you want to track actions. For example, to track registrations, place the code on your ‘Thank-you’ page where prospects have gained access to your free resource.

N.B. Don’t make the mistake of pasting this code into your landing page as this will register a 100% conversion of your clicks into form completions!

Once you’ve added the pixel, refresh the page that has the Facebook code in it. Then go back to the Conversion Tracking area of Power Editor to confirm that your pixel status has now changed from ‘Unverified’ to ‘verified’. (You may need to refresh Power Editor).

Why You Need A Tracking Pixel:

You will be using Facebook ads that drive people to an external landing page (although it could be to an app within Facebook that features your product, service, contact or subscription form).

Measuring your campaign results is best done within the Ads Manager, and most people will be measuring the success of their ads by looking at their CPC (Cost Per Click) and the total number of clicks. But this is actually completely ignoring the most important step. Let me explain…

You see, the performance of your ads can be deceiving. You can be distracted by a particular ad’s low CPC or high Click-Through Rate. But what your metrics weren’t telling you was which ads were leading to conversions. You may have been getting high clicks at a low cost for certain Ad sets, but they weren't leading to conversions. But with conversion tracking you can measure your true cost and <u>return</u> to determine which ads are worth continuing.

Your conversion tracking pixel (just a small piece of code) on the conversion pages of your site communicates with Facebook when an ad is successful. The "Actions" that Facebook then displays in its reporting will now be directly related to your ***Conversions***.

This is extremely important, because you can now accurately measure your ROI, and this makes monitoring of your ads much more productive because they are based on actual results.

As well as within the 'Ad Creation' process described above, you can also create a tracking pixel within Power Editor. Simply click on the 'Manage Ads' dropdown at the top left, and select 'Conversion tracking'.

Click the green 'Create pixel' button on the top right of the page and follow the instructions, as above.

Step #10

Test Alternative Post Adverts And Landing Pages

'Split testing' or 'A/B Testing' is a strategy in marketing in which two versions, A and B (the control and the treatment) are tested against each other. The goal is to identify changes that increase the chance of achieving your objective e.g. to get a click on your post, or to get a click to complete a sign-up form.

In the facebook Power Editor or Ad Manager pages, you can easily duplicate your ads (or Ad Sets) to create a variation to test.

The basic idea is to create a number of Ads that are exactly the same except for one variable. You then run the different ads for a number of times to identify the ones that perform best.

Facebook optimizes ads on its own, so you may get a situation where one ad gets shown predominantly while others only receive a few impressions (impressions is the total number of times and ad is shown in the newsfeed).

If this happened, the solution is to turn off an ad once it has received a good number of impressions, and then facebook will give more impressions your next ad.

Alternatively you can create multiple ad sets (each linked to one of your ad variations) and run them till you've collected enough data to make a valid decision on which ad variation performs best.

The amount of data you collect is very important in any split test. Ideally you want to show each ad for at least a couple of days, to ensure that the results you are seeing are statistically significant.

Whilst there is a wide range of variables you can test, here are the three areas that I recommend you focus on:

1. Ad Images

The image is the first thing people see when your ads are displayed in their News Feed. It's largely what makes them stop and read your post, so it's vital to test and identify the best-performing image.

Within the Power Editor, you can easily duplicate your ads, and then edit the copied ad to use a different image.

(Facebook also allows you to upload 6 images for every ad you make, and then it will automatically optimize for the best-performing images. That makes things easy because you don't need to create separate ads to test images).

Here are some ideas to consider when testing different images.

Use strong colours

The standard Facebook colours are blue and white. So it makes sense to choose contrasting colours for your images to see what attracts the most attention and gives you the highest click-through rate.

You can test using a bright colour in the background of your image or as a border.

(And don't feel obliged to stick with your brand colours if they aren't converting well).

Depending on your message and the emotions you want to evoke, you might want to experiment with different colours. For example, red usually creates urgency while black is associated with luxury items.

Use human faces
It's been established that pictures of real humans tend to increase conversions. Not surprisingly, images of attractive women work especially well among men, whilst smiling babies are universally persuasive.

Even if your service or product has nothing to do with babies, you can creatively introduce one in your ad. For example, a sales consultant could use the image of a child with the caption, "Now is the time to grow your business."

Use animals
As with smiling babies, images of animals, especially pets like cats and dogs, are captivating (just look at the popularity of animal videos in your Facebook newsfeed!). A cute picture of a young puppy evokes the same emotions as one of a smiling baby.

Use brands
As we examined in Step #3, it's very important to position yourself and your company as an expert and authority in your industry. So, if you have a recognised brand, you could try using your logo as the image for your ad.

You could also use your clients' logos if they have respected or professional-looking brands. A collage of the top companies you work with will impress viewers and potential clients. It instantly builds credibility for you, and credibility is one of the keys to persuading your prospects to take action.

Be amusing
Funny or quirky images always attract attention. Try combining this with some of the other ideas. For example an animal doing something silly is cute and funny and will make people want to read more about what's going on in the image.

Use text on images
Facebook ads allow you a headline, sub-head and a body in your ad copy. However, there are restrictions on the number of words you can use. If you've got something very compelling to say, but it's too long, you can utilize the space in your image, providing it doesn't take up more than 20% of the image size.

2. Your Sales Copy

There are three main parts to the copy in you Facebook ad. You start with a compelling headline, which is the first thing people see after the image. You then explain your offer in the text, which is the sub-header you see above the image. Finally, you add in more details in the description, which is the small text under the headline.

Your message needs to be consistent and make sense across all three parts, which means you can't significantly change one element without changing the others.

Here are some ideas to consider tweaking:

Talk about benefits
Focus on one big benefit of your product and talk about that. Your benefits are what your prospects are really interested in because they focus on the ways your product or service actually affects your reader.

Your offer
This obvious affects the copy you use, because your post must be focused solely on getting prospects excited by your free information resource, for example. Remember that everyone likes to save money and they like to get things for free even more, so test the use of the word ‘Free’.

If you run an e-commerce store, you could offer a discount or a small free product with your main product. For a service-based businesses, maybe you could test offering a free trial.

Create a sense of urgency
Implying that your product is scarce invokes a sense of urgency and gets people to take action. Combining this with an offer works even better because no one wants to miss out on a good deal.

This particular post was highly successful for us, I suspect mainly because it was backed by a fixed deadline for action:

Use social proof
When it comes to purchasing decisions, prospects feel more comfortable knowing that there are lots of other people just like them who have taken the decision they are

considering. It gives them confidence to 'take the leap'. That's why product reviews, testimonials and social media stats are so important.

3. Your Audience

The success of your ad image and copy will be hugely influenced by the audience you choose for your Ad Sets.

That's why you need to be testing each ad separately for each Ad Set you create. And you will eventually be testing many dozens of different Ad Sets.

If possible, it makes sense to test copy which is as closely related to your Ad Set's characteristics as possible.

There are numerous ways you can split up your audience. Every single demographic (such as age or gender), interest or behavior can be a variable. Create separate ad sets with different target audiences and test multiple ads in each.

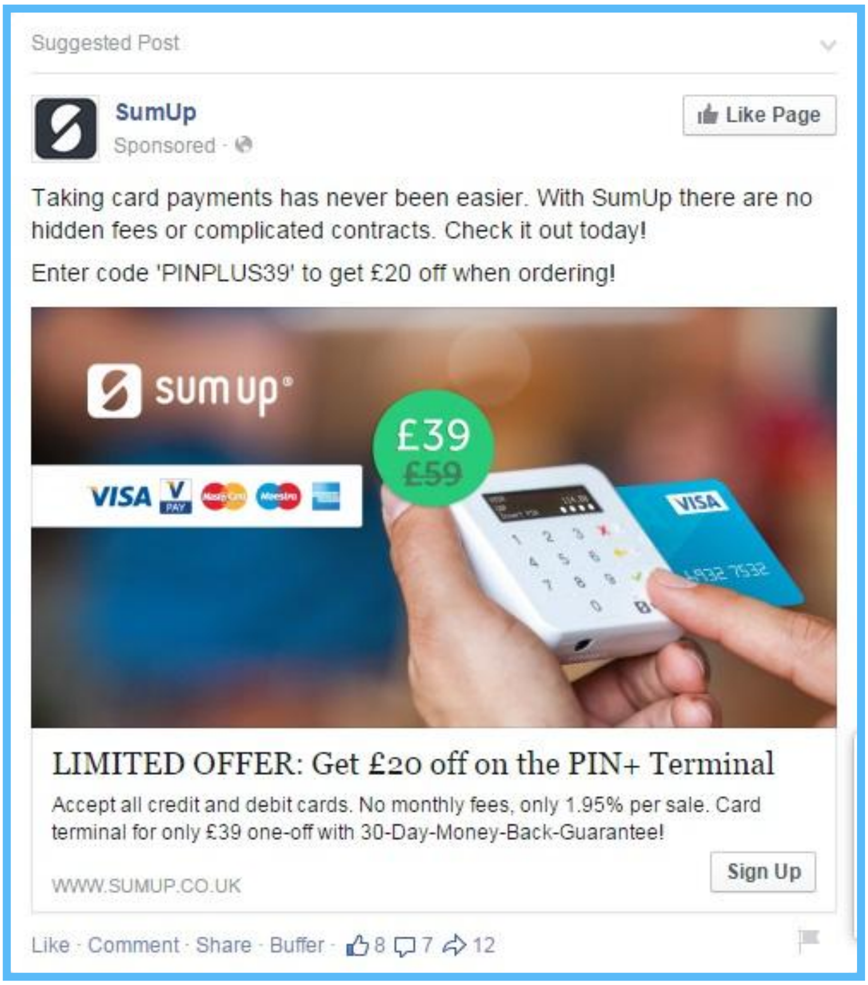
Here's an example of split testing different post headlines in one of our recent campaigns that resulted in a **76% increase** in click-through-rate!

The headline 'FOR UK BUSINESS OWNERS: How To Land All The New Clients You'll Ever Need…' received a **0.741%** click-through-rate

The headline 'ATTENTION £100 - £200K BUSINESSES Who Want To Grow To £300K - £500K In The Next 12 Months' received a **1.309 %** click-through-rate

Apart from the main headline, and a slight difference in opening copy, everything else in these two posts was <u>exactly</u> the same. The conclusion here is that you **cannot** afford to ignore testing variations of your posts and landing pages.

And don't be afraid to test making a specific offer or promotion available to your target prospects. Below is a post which has a very clear proposition: '*Get £20 off on the PIN and Terminal*'.



The Second Area That Demands A/B Split Testing Is Your Landing Pages.

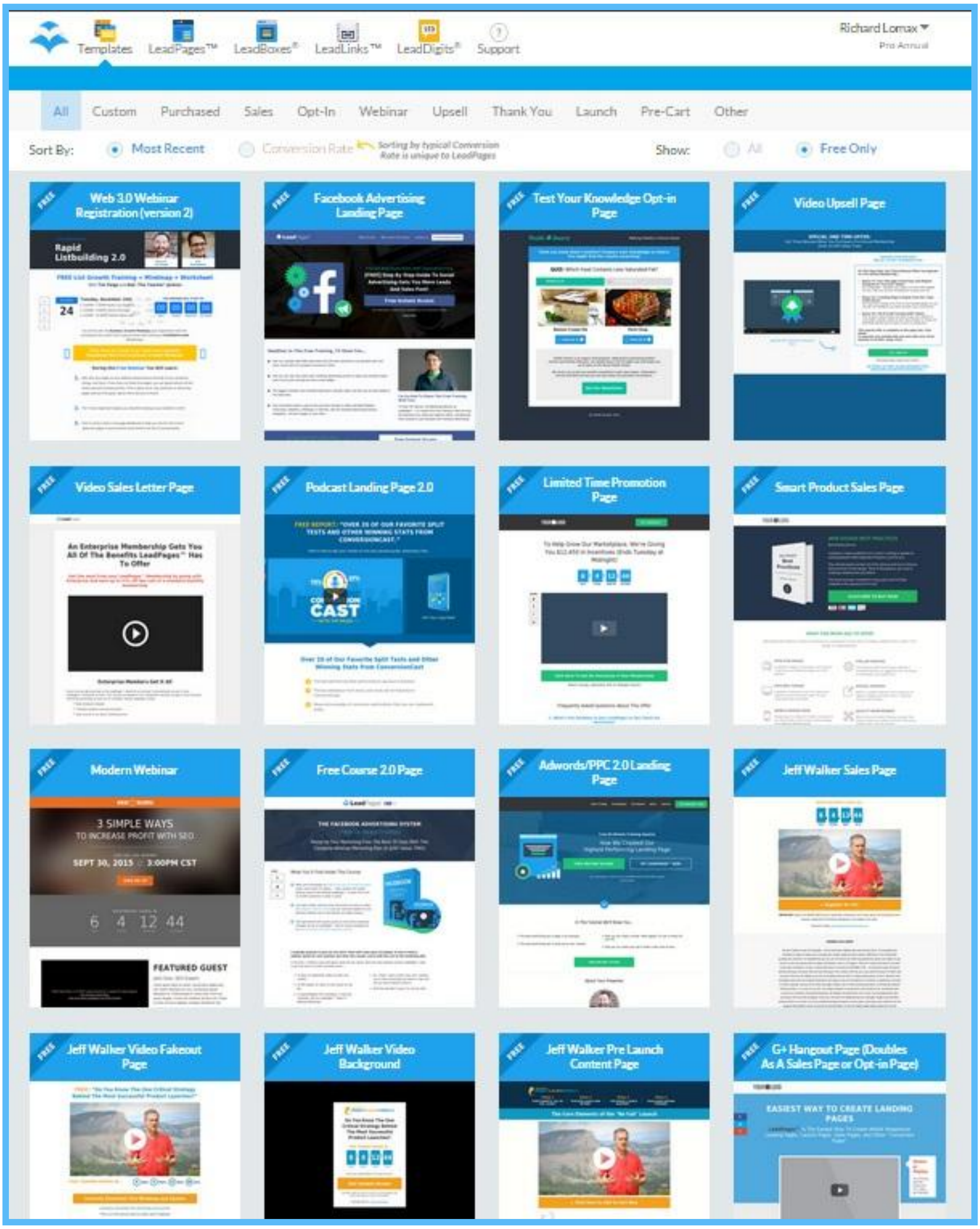
A/B split testing is a continuous process - there's always small steps you can take, tiny variables to change, that will affect the page's conversion rate.

Elements that you can test on a landing page include the main offer, the image, list of benefits, call-to-action, trust symbols, testimonials, and background colours/images.

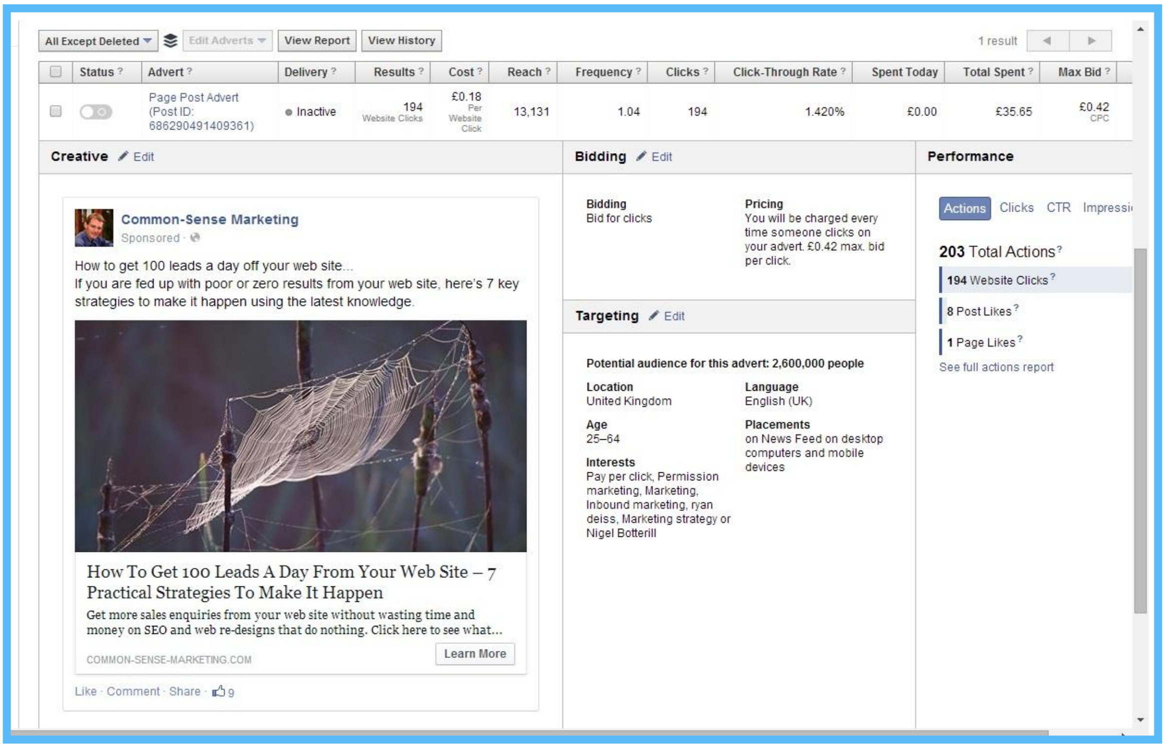
The key is to change only one or two elements so you have a good idea of what's motivating any increases in conversion.

With landing page creation tools and services such as Unbounce, Instapage, Optimizely, LeadPages and HubSpot, you can easily create a second page and track differences in performance.

Lead pages, for example, provides almost one hundred different landing page templates which are quick and easy to adapt to your particular campaign:



Just to give you another example of the power of facebook native advertising, here’s a snapshot taken after just one day of one of our recent campaigns:



We were able to generate a click-through rate of 1.42% which delivered 194 web site clicks, at a cost of just 18 pence each! That’s 194 qualified prospects being driven to our landing page for a cost of just £35.65

Step #11

Set-Up Your Customer Creation Funnel To Turn 'Hot-Leads Into Paying Clients

For your customer creation funnel to succeed in bringing you new customers in a profitable way, it has to take account of the psychology going on at each stage of the buying process.

> **First**: the customer has to be in the market for the product or service that you're offering. Everyone is not your potential market, even if you have an everyday product. Your prospect first sees your sponsored post advertisement in their Facebook news feed, and then decides whether it is a relevant message or not.
>
> **Second**: your prospect judges your offer of a free resource, and compares its value with competing sources of help and information. Does it provide the answers and benefits he or she wants, needs, desires and aspires to? And when it comes to the purchase decision in your funnel, your prospect decides whether your product or service is in an affordable price band, and whether the benefits of purchasing outweigh the costs.
>
> **Third**: many people buy on an emotional basis. Buyer emotions affect nearly all purchases by some degree or other. Most people will first decide to buy based on emotional factors, and then look to justify their urge to buy with logical reasons.
>
> **Fourth**: the need to justify the purchase decision extends beyond the customer himself. The buyer often has to justify the decision to buy from you to other people: family, friends, colleagues, in order to feel good about the purchase himself.

You persuade prospects by providing logical, supporting facts, justifying the purchase by making it seem a smart decision. The more your prospective customer learns about your offer, the more he or she can judge its suitability, become emotionally attached to it, and be able to justifying buying from you.

The Sales Process

The specifics of *your* sales process will depend on what you're selling, but here's a guide to the main stages that will occur.

> **Awareness** - This is the advertising stage of promoting your posts using the Facebook platform.
>
> **Education** - Next, you need to educate your prospects and explain how you can help them solve their problems. This is the role of your free webinar, video, special report, or checklist etc. And part of this education process involves building trust and a relationship with your prospects.

Once you have tempted your prospects to complete your landing page form, and they then have access to your free resource, it is vital that you maintain control of the sales process.

With your information-packed webinar or video or Executive Report or case study series etc. you have shown that you have the knowledge and expertise that the prospect needs to solve their problems. Now we need to reinforce this posture of excellence and authority when we invite the prospect to take the next step after they have viewed or read your free resource.

What is your follow-on offer going to be e.g. more information, free trial offer, low-cost 'trip-wire purchase', a free consultation, audit or health check, a site survey etc.?

If you are selling a higher-priced product or service, your prospect will need time to **evaluate your offering.** So it may be appropriate to offer a free sample or demonstration. If you aren't selling in-person, videos can be extremely effective here.

Often, during the evaluation process, prospects need to see that other people just like them have considered the same solution and taken the decision to buy. SO this is where 'social proof' in the form of testimonial and case studies can be very powerful in motivating the final purchase decision.

One option for your next step in the funnel is to make available to the prospect the opportunity to apply for a one-on-one consultation with you. Here are some examples you can adapt for your own business:

- 'Sales Executive's Performance Review'
- 'Human Resources Compliance Audit'
- 'Design Health-check'
- 'Network Systems Vulnerability Test'
- 'Business Breakthrough Consultation'

The benefit for the prospect is to help them to get clarity and focus about their current situation.

The wording used to offer this consultation is critical. Prospects have to apply for the session by completing an online application form, and not all of them will be accepted by you.

Whatever next-step offer you make to your hot prospects, the key is to **stop** talking about your service and how it works, and start talking to prospects about their problems and how big their problem is, and listen to them.

Stop talking features and benefits, and start asking prospects **why** they want to improve their business/sales/solve their problems.

You communicate your value at a higher level by asking questions to establish the problem, and then casually offer the solution to that problem. But you must be honest and prescribe the best steps for them – even if it means that your product or service is not right for them, and you recommend another source of help.

If selling face-to-face, or on the telephone the point comes when you must **seek commitment** from your prospect to go ahead with the sale.

In truth, the best salespeople I have witnessed do not “close the deal”, they “bring the sale to a logical conclusion.” They have helped set up such a logical buying criteria that the prospect and the salesperson walk to the finish line together.

That being said, it should also be stated that most people need help (and will later thank you) for helping them make the right decisions for themselves and their business.

The most effective (and time-proven) method of coming to a successful conclusion of your sales presentation is assuming the sale in advance. Do this by asking a question like, “Who should I send the invoice to?” or “How did you want to pay for this?” or “If we get the designs to you next week is that acceptable?”

Follow up – every time. Be prepared for ‘The Cool-Off Factor’. Because enthusiasm and rapport are extremely influential in the sales process, recognise that a prospect may well “cool off” after you have concluded the sale.

The best way to combat this is to follow up strongly after the sale. For example, send a good follow-up letter or email re-stating the problems highlighted and the solutions you have presented, ideally with more testimonials. This should arrive only a few hours after the sale, or the next day at the latest, and can go a long way toward avoiding ‘buyer’s remorse’.

Creating Loyal Fans and Repeat Customers

While your sales funnel can be considered complete when someone makes a purchase, there’s another two levels remaining which are vitally important to gaining maximum profits and lifetime value from your customers.

First, someone can become a loyal fan. They may or may not make a purchase again (for example, someone who purchases a home or a car or a holiday from your may not make a purchase again for sometime), but they may well tell others about your company and indirectly encourage them to make a purchase.

The key here is not to leave this possibility of creating loyal fans to chance. You must keep communicating regularly via email, direct mail, telephone and text messaging if appropriate. Make it your goal and passion to become the “best friend” or Trusted Advisor to your Customers.

The **repeat customer** is even better, since they are actually making another purchase. They may need no help from you to make this purchase, or they make be shuffled back into the sales process again, where you need to educate, allow for evaluation, engage, and push for a commitment. Once again, this depends on the specifics of your industry.

Step #12

Make It Easy For Prospects To Buy From You

How you can maximize the number of new customers and clients you bring into your business once they have responded to your Facebook marketing, and made an enquiry?

Your job is to make it almost impossible for your prospect NOT to buy from you.

The fastest way to grow your sales, ironically is based on a slowly, slowly approach that works for all businesses large and small, and for all types of industry.

And that's because this strategy is based on a fundamental truth about human nature…

With one or two very limited exceptions, it's fair to say that no-one likes to be sold to.

This was evidenced at a recent seminar I ran when I asked this question of a room packed with entrepreneurs and business owners. Only two people put their hands up, and these were both salesmen that liked the idea of a challenge – and treat it as a game….

So to sell more, you have to actually have to stop selling altogether! And instead start to **focus on informing, educating, advising** – from the standpoint of an expert who is willing to advise impartially.

Here are three key strategies to help you make it easy for prospects to become customers:

1. **Take an independent role in the sales process, and make it your goal and passion to become the "best friend" or Trusted Advisor to the prospect.**

   Your job is to look out for the best interests of your prospects, and make sure they end up making the wisest buying decision for their needs – even if this means they don't buy from you!

   Why do I say this? Well, I firmly believe **you can't sell to anybody**… they can only sell themselves.

   Your job is to make that decision to buy from you the most natural and risk-free thing to do to achieve the results you are promising.

   This depends on you generating CONFIDENCE and TRUST with the prospect, and it can't be done quickly.

   The reason why so few enquiries end up as sales for most companies is that they try to **short-circuit the natural process and thinking of their prospects**, because they are too focused on getting or closing the sale.

   Realise this… It takes as much effort to nurture a prospective customer into being a trusting and loyal buyer of your product or service, as it takes to nurture a prospective companion into a trusting and loyal friendship, or loving partnership.

It doesn't happen overnight. **Developing worthwhile relationships takes time.** You wouldn't expect to experience an instant close friendship with someone you'd just met. It would be unusual to say the least! You have to nurture an acquaintance into becoming a friend.

Two people have to demonstrate to each other -- by trust, admiration, respect, similar outlook and taste, by mental and maybe physical attraction -- that they are becoming friends or lovers, not just casual acquaintances. <u>Both</u> parties need to value a relationship before it can flourish.

For some reason, businesses forget or ignore this during the process of attracting customers or clients. Yet virtually the same process must be employed when nurturing meaningful and profitable seller-buyer relationships.

2. You must communicate with your prospects "little and often"

When do your sales people give up on a prospect that has entered your sales funnel? Historically, over 90% of sales people will give up within four attempts at the business. And more than 50% will give up after the first call!

Yet, professional relationships don't even begin to flourish until more than six communications have occurred. And because **prospects will buy when <u>they</u> are ready to buy** (not when you are ready to sell) quite **often it takes <u>a dozen or more contacts</u>** until a prospect is ready to talk.

So consider this strategy that works consistently month in, month out.

By talking to your prospects in an informative, educational way (NOT just trying again and again to sell them your product or service) you can **help them make the right decision for their business**.

And if you guide them, **show them the pitfalls to avoid, explain the questions they should ask** of potential suppliers, and **illustrate examples of possible results** for their company, you will eventually become regarded as a friend, and "Trusted Advisor".

But whilst this sounds all very well in theory, you and I both know that the vast majority of businesses **are you too focused on the short-term goal of this month's sales targets?**

So **they are stuck in a catch 22 situation of their own making** -- when they barely have time to think between meetings or chasing the next sale, it's not surprising that they never plan, write and execute a new, informative bulletin, sales letter, postcard, email or newsletter that would genuinely benefit their prospects. And here is the heavy financial penalty they pay for their own self-obsession…

Much more marketing and nurturing is needed to move prospects down the sales path.

This process is more like a marathon, than a 10k race.
Your marketing should keep the prospects warmed-up, informed and educated so your **sales team only needs to talk just to those that are truly "sales ready."**

Up to 60% of your prospects are in that longer-term cycle, and at least 10% of these will be long-term wins if you set a nurturing agenda. Use this conveyor belt strategy to **implement a multi-step sales approach**. These are definitely **sales that would have been lost to the black hole otherwise due to your lack of communication**.

Make sure you don't forget to include sales opportunities in these communications – it's your duty to make them available to prospects… only by owning your produce or service will they get answers to their problems, see the results and enjoy the benefits that you deliver.

3. Realise that many prospects need to see an offer or opportunity a number of times before they feel comfortable about buying.

Follow up your initial e-mailings at least 4 times, and as much as seven times. Each follow up will garner additional response.

And after you've followed up, offer a different but related product or service. Why? Because perhaps, your first offer just was not right for some prospects and never will be.

Test various sales appeals, terminology and layout designs in your follow up emails and direct mailings. As you do, you'll capture more and more customers or clients.

Then mail details of a third offer. Keep testing as I've explained. And so on – continually - with as many related product or service offers as you can make available.

Prepare and deliver valuable content…

So, how do we go about preparing all the necessary nurturing and informative messaging that will be needed in most instances to create friendships, engender trust, and ethically move your prospects down the road towards owning your solution?

It begins with having the right mind-set. You're no longer a hardened sales-person. You are there to **serve, to deliver value to your prospects, and to be that impartial advisor** that they really need.

(In fact this approach should start from the very first lead-generation message that you put out into the market).

When you start changing your messaging so that it **focuses on the questions, concerns, doubts and reassurances that you would naturally have** if you were a prospect for your own services, then you will have instantly created a powerful advantage over your competitors, who will still be locked into a mind-set of how do we GET more sales from these prospects (rather than how do we deliver maximum value to help prospects searching for ways to solve their problems).

Start by brainstorming a list of questions and issues that any sensible prospect would have in their mind. Back this up by talking to your sales people to identify the most frequently asked questions (or objections) they receive from prospects. If relevant, talk to your customer service people or technical support team to get feedback and examples of the issues clients or prospects are thinking about or experiencing. Also, become a voracious reader in your industry, take in a lot of new ideas.

This will give you the ideas to create relevant advisory content that prospects will find useful in their researching of potential suppliers.

Then think through what you could be giving them that would help them, hook them, **get them more involved with you and your business**, and keep them coming back for more.

> **Once you have potential content to offer to prospects, you need to consider all the different ways you can offer and deliver this to them...**

Here are 10 different ideas you could try:

1. A simple one, two or four-page printed newsletter instead of always using e-mail.

2. Create an e-book of your best blog posts or articles, and give it away to your existing leads, (and use it to generate new leads).

3. Turn your articles, newsletters and e-books into a physical book. Self-publishing services and specialist printers make it very easy and cost-effective to do small-run printing of your books.

4. Interview your own people. Get insider information from your customer-service people, your engineers or technical people. Talk to the sales people and the marketers. Find out three interesting things from each of them about their perspective on your business and products and share it with your prospects via email, print or audio recordings.

   Create video and/or audio interviews with customers about their own pain points and strategies (note: NOT just testimonials about how great you are.)

5. Test putting together an autoresponder series that educates your prospects and clients on how to use your products and services. It could take the form of a 5–part e-course, or maybe a series of illustrated case studies

6. Become a problem-solving publisher. Share the fact that you are not invincible (unlike your competitors who think it's realistic to pretend to be perfect).

   Show prospects the challenges you faced when developing your business and your products or service, and what exactly you did to overcome them. Show the problems your previous customers have faced, and how your products or service helped overcome them. But keep the tone of the messages personal and one-to-one. Be human, and openly admit you have flaws.

People buy from people they like, and everyone loves a real person … not a self-centred salesman.

7. Consider offering a teleseminar or webinar series with experts in your field. Get four or five experts together and host an educational series your prospects and clients would want to be a part of. Side benefit: Record the interviews or discussions, and you'll have a product afterwards you can sell or use in lead generation.

8. Create a top 10 list or a buyer's guide to help them in their decision making process. Show them the proper way to decide on their purchase. With real content, little sales talk, and lots of personality. Make available third-party articles and white papers (it's OK to talk about content that's not your own.)

9. Be the first in your market to bring out a "What I'm reading" message. This might cover interesting ideas and articles you've seen in the trade press or in your personal reading, or in newspapers, or on other web sites. The idea is to show some of your personality, but make sure you relate the story back to an issue surrounding your prospects.

10. It might be related to the product or service you sell, and the problem the prospect is facing, but it could also relate to another area of your prospects' business that you can't help with directly, but which you know they'll find interesting or helpful e.g. business growth advice sources, or government funding or grants, or useful online resources to help with staff training or whatever.

    Also if you find something that amuses you, be prepared to share it with your prospects. Give them a laugh. Break up their day. And keep them coming back for more by showing you are human and have a personality.

The opportunities are endless; all it takes is some initiative. All these methods are pretty cheap or free to produce, yet they are highly effective at nurturing, creating and motivating multiple times more prospects into becoming willing and loyal clients.

Don't be afraid to break the rules, and step out of the normal "Corporate" culture and shackles that us British tend to be restricted by.

You must test a range of different media to deliver your conveyor belt strategy to prospects and clients:

Your tactics could include a carefully measured blend of telemarketing, sms messaging, postal direct mail and personal letters, postcards, events such as seminars, webinars, tele-conferences and product launches … email, each addressing the prospect's pain points in a highly targeted manner.

The end goal is marketing as "drip irrigation" rather than one-off big splash events or campaigns.

A drip program of sustained, relevant communications will set you apart from your competitors who give up after one or two contacts.

What to do now:

Look at your current sales funnel with an impartial eye, in fact from the standpoint of a typical busy, distracted and mis-trusting prospect (but one who yearns to solve a specific problem in their personal or business life, which you can solve).

Is it leaning towards a self-serving "get the order as fast as possible" type of approach, or does it genuinely deliver impartial value and useful advice to the prospect, with the result that you have put them in an excellent position to make the best and most-educated decision for them, as to which supplier to buy from?

Understand what is going on in the mind of a prospective customer who has never heard of you before, and therefore can't yet appreciate the value of buying from you. Then market accordingly by letting them step onto this conveyor belt of delivering outstanding value before, during and after the sale, and your sales and profits both now and in the future, will increase almost exponentially.

Here are three more vital strategies that will power-up your customer generation funnel, and make you the only logical choice in the market for your hot leads…

1. Prepare evidence of the results you deliver to your customers

At the end of the day, it's the results you've *already delivered* for your clients that your prospects are going to buy into. So make sure that all your marketing is brimming with the tangible results that your product or service will enable your buyer to experience.

Let me give you two examples.

Let's say you are a **heating and air conditioning contractor**. If I'm one of your prime prospects, then the most convincing marketing that I could ever see would be evidence from one of your existing customers describing how his servers are no longer over-heating and network downtime has been significantly reduced by 23% -- or another company's staff explaining that they no longer have to put up with uncomfortable conditions in the height of summer, for example.

If you are running a **steak-house restaurant**, then the compelling evidence that would draw me into your establishment in preference to other venues, would be some vox-pop video interviews with existing customers who have just finished their meal, telling me how juicy and succulent the steaks are, and how friendly and attentive the staff have been.

If you have a **service-based business**, focus on the results that your clients have experienced since working with you. Make sure these results are quantified and specific. Include £££ increases in revenues or profits, numbers of additional visitors or customers, and hours of labour savings for example.

How much evidence of results do you use in your marketing, whether it's for lead generation, or for converting enquiries and quotations into new sales?

Think of all the examples you could offer if I was to ask you for specific instances of how you've helped others. Then, DON'T WAIT TO BE ASKED...present the evidence up front, as soon as possible!

A classic, but still overlooked strategy for demonstrating your results is the use of great testimonials:

In my opinion they are better than any other form of proof; a really good testimonial can prove any claim that you want to make about your product or service.

Good testimonials come directly from actual customer experiences. They provide a detailed picture of how the prospect's life or business has changed as a result of their purchase. They need to be anecdotal and ideally tell a story.

You need to act like a marketing professional and make getting testimonials (which your quality product or service deserves) a **systematic** part of your marketing system. Every happy client should be approached for a testimonial.

2. Make the purchase decision risk-free, with guarantees and risk reversal strategies

Perhaps the biggest single barrier to creating more sales from your prospects is the fact that they don't quite trust you. Not yet anyway.

How do they know that you'll live up to your promises?

Well, here is a simple but devastatingly effective sales strategy that can help transform your conversion rates.

'Risk reversal' works by removing the *'fear of making a wrong decision'* so you make it much easier for your customers to buy from you.

By incorporating a risk reversal philosophy and statement into every sales message, you can say to your prospects something like:

"I understand you can't be certain this product is perfect for you without buying and experiencing it first. Therefore I would like you to try it at my risk before you pay for it /or buy it, with the reassurance of our no-nonsense money back guarantee. So if you are not totally satisfied after experiencing it in action, then simply return it and we will cancel your invoice and/or refund your money."

When you adapt this form of wording to suit your product or service, you will have created a **very powerful sales proposition to put to your customer**. No one in their right mind would refuse.

At the very least, **a basic 30-Day Guarantee i**s the bare minimum that virtually every business should be offering, to maximize the number of prospects who decide to buy from you. Here's an example for an opticians:

"We guarantee each and every pair of eyeglasses and sunglasses we sell."

Our guarantee:
If for any reason you aren't 100% satisfied with your eyewear purchase, you can return it. Bring the merchandise back in its original condition within 30 days of your purchase and we'll make things right.

We'll adjust, repair, exchange or replace with no excuses, and you don't need to provide an explanation. (Applies to original purchases, and does not cover accidental damage, scratches, breakage or theft.)

Write down your guarantee / 'risk reversal' statement (using any combination of words that works for you), and paste it into your quotations and sales proposals. Plus you can add it to your web site pages, feature it in your emails, on your blog, in fact anywhere that you are communicating with your prospects, and building the trust needed before a sale can take place.

3. Communicate Little And Often

Historically, over 90% of sales people will give up within four attempts at the business. And more than 50% will give up after the first call!

Yet, professional relationships don't even begin to flourish until more than six communications have occurred. And because prospects will buy when they are ready to buy (not when you are ready to sell) quite often it takes a dozen or more contacts until a prospect is ready to talk.

By talking to your prospects in an informative, educational way (NOT just trying again and again to sell them your product or service) you can help them make the right decision for their business.

And if you guide them, show them the pitfalls to avoid, explain the questions they should ask of potential suppliers, and illustrate examples of possible results for their company, you will eventually become regarded as a friend, and "Trusted Advisor".

And when the time is right for them to buy, you can be 100% certain that they will be predisposed to your offering. You will be regarded as an authority in your industry, and your sales posture is improved immeasurably.

By talking to your prospects little and often, after perhaps twelve separate communications you will have built enormous goodwill and sales momentum.

And this regular communication is the best way to protect your margins, and direct the efforts of your sales team away from low quality, time wasting "luke-warm leads" to highly qualified serious appointments.

Ideas for regular, informative and involving communications include:

- Customer surveys

- Great third-party articles and white papers
  (it's OK to talk about content that's not your own.)
- Video and/or audio interviews with customers about their own pain points and strategies (note: NOT just testimonials about how great you are.)
- End-user surveys and stories. Talk to end users. They love to talk about the job they do all day long.

The quickest and simplest way to communicate with your hot prospects is by using an email ‘Autoresponder’. This simply allows you to create a number of email messages inadvance, and decide when you want them to be sent out to hot leads who join your database e.g. every 5 days, or at varying intervals. These email are then automatically sent without you having to do anything further.

However, even with the hottest of prospects, the one drawback of relying on email communication 100% is the issue of deliverability. You might expect up to 50% of your emails not to be opened.

Therefore consider supplementing your email communications with hard copy direct mail, such as personal letters or post-cards, where you can expect a 99% open rate!
(And you will have demonstrated that you care about your prospects a lot more than any of your competitors who can’t be bothered with this far more personal and valued form of communication).

Take these sales conversion techniques and methods and apply them to your Customer Generation Funnel. You’ll quickly be able to out-compete others in your market, and convert far more prospects into excited, loyal customers and clients for your business.

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