

WDL

# CONTENT101

## How To Create Captivating CTAs

Dominate the User Journey

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ISSUE #1

**Get started.**  
**Rise up.**  
**Take control.**  
**Discover more.**  
**Open your mind.**

# Calls To Action

Calls to action (CTAs) are one of the most fundamentally simple but effective marketing techniques in business, and also the most essential tool you'll need in creating an effective user journey. The fact of the matter is that coming up with inspirational calls to action can often be hard, especially as 'Click Here' is about as old hat as it comes.

A call to action is exactly that, a rallying battle cry used to inspire your visitors to rise up and take action. To 'Buy Now' or 'Find Out More'. They are what dictates exactly how, when, what and why things happen across your website, and they provide you with the power to manipulate your audience to complete whatever actions you deem valuable.

# Short & Sweet

The basic rule of thumb when it comes to effective CTAs is 'short and sweet', but there are a wealth of possibilities within those potential 2, 3 or 4 word sentences that could give your users that drive needed to help you succeed.

So where do you begin?

The key consideration when choosing how to structure your CTAs is identifying what you want to happen. Do you want your customer to read more information about your product or service? Are you driving them to an area of your website where they can contact you? Do you want them to add a particular product to their basket? Sign up? Log in?

There are 4 critical aspects of an effective CTA: Placement, Visibility, Message & Supporting Elements. Whilst writing a functional call to action should be your primary concern, the additional considerations are vital in turning your message into something that will have a profound effect on your conversions.



More than 90% of visitors who read your headline also read your CTA copy. **(Unbounce)**

# Location, Location, Location

Where you place your CTA can have a significant effect on its performance. Too high and it could get lost amongst your hero image or written content, too low and it could be missed, especially as some studies would suggest that anything below the fold (not instantly visible) is less likely to be seen.

It is strongly suggested that your CTA will be more effective if preceded by information that provides context to your user, as it will help to inform them of the journey ahead. It's also important, however, to account for the nature of each page when deciding on placement. A landing page from an ambiguous source, such as a promoted social media post, for example, would be better suited with an above the fold (immediately visible) call to action as you effectively need to get to the point as quickly as possible to avoid the risk of losing people's attention.



A lot of selecting the right placement can come down to trial and error, but there will be a number of locations that feel like natural spots for something, even if you're unsure of the precise message that needs to go there.

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## Early calls to action maximise conversion

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There is also a definitive correlation between page complexity and the most effective positioning of a call to action. A recent Contentverve study resolved that a "CTA placed way below the fold at the bottom of a very long landing page significantly outperformed a variant with the CTA at the top of the page above the fold by 304%" This also suggests that limited amounts of text, and text that presents information early on, should be accompanied by an early call to action.

## Dare To Be Seen

It's not just about placement. Developing an effective CTA is also largely about visibility, and making sure that your directions stand out amongst the rest of your content will work to drive a higher percentage of users to the right place.

It's also not just about making your CTA as big as a house, although when it comes to calls to action, size does matter. Too small, and the direction can get lost amongst your content. Too big and it may come across as disingenuous or desperate, which could end up having an adverse effect.

It's important, when accounting for visibility, to also bear in mind overall page design as well as the information that surrounds the CTA. As we've already established, content can have a profound impact on a user's desire to follow along with your defined user journey, but design, imagery and CTA size can all work to both favour and detriment. A recent Open Mile study discovered that reducing clutter around CTAs can increase conversion rate by 232%. If anything is distracting users from a valuable message on your website, remove that distraction unless it drives relevant action.



It can be as simple as choosing the right arrow, coloured box or font for your calls to action. A study by Helzburg Diamonds found that adding an arrow to their CTA buttons saw a 26% increase in their average number of clicks, whilst SAP and Performable found that changing their CTAs to red & orange increased their conversion rate by 21% and 32.5% respectively.



We bet you went red.



Visibility also accounts for creating a visible understanding of what your call to action does, and where it goes. Writing a call to action is all well and good, but if your users do not realise that your call to action is a functional part of your site then they won't continue down the path you have created for them. It is important to highlight your calls to action in some way, either using colours, font styles, or by making them look like buttons. CreateDebate found that making CTAs look like buttons gave them an increase in number of clicks of 45%.

Making your landing pages relevant to the calls to action that lead people there may seem like an obvious thing to most people, but it cannot be understated as a common mistake that could lead to a lot of missed opportunities.

If a user clicks on a CTA expecting more information, then it is imperative that the next page that they land on provides them with that information, otherwise they're very likely to give up and go looking somewhere else.

Make your CTAs look like buttons to see...

# 45% More Clicks



## Read This Now

One of the most important parts of your call to action is your messaging. Choosing what to convey, and how to convey it, could mean the difference between creating an effective call to action and a lacklustre direction that does nothing to inform the user journey.

Try starting with a strong command verb, a powerful 'doing word' that will inspire those who read it to take action immediately. Tell users what to do, and don't beat around the bush. 'Shop', 'Go', 'Read', 'Find Out', 'Download'. What action do you want your users to take? Users aren't always going to know what they're doing on your site, and so explicitly telling them what to do in order to increase the value of their experience is often helpful.

Use language that is enthusiastic, emotional, and thought-provoking. Your audience has to already be invested in your content to be paying attention to your calls to action (that's what your content is for), and so making your CTAs as enthusiastic as possible is only going to get visitors revved up. Providing your users with a benefit of taking your desired



action is a good start: “Take the first step in making your dream a reality” invokes an ideal scenario whilst offering a huge benefit to your users. “Get involved today!” implies that without being ‘involved’ they could be missing out, and the fear of missing out is both very tangible and worrying for a lot of people, driving them to take action. Something as simple as putting an exclamation mark at the end of your sentence could help to create a sense of urgency and inspire visitors to continue the journey.

You should also tell your users why they would want to do what you want them to. In other words, what’s in it for them? Using value propositions or unique selling points in your CTAs will help users to understand why they are clicking through. Offer an incentive: “Save time today!” tells them exactly what they’re going to get out of the deal right away, without any fluff. A combination of a key USP as well as an effective call to action such as “Contact us today to start your free 10 day trial” incentivises contact by using a valuable offer to drive clicks.

**Your CTA messaging  
will always be the  
difference between  
creating something  
attractive and  
creating something  
valuable.**

# Good Company Is Hard To Come By

Your website's design real estate is incredibly important in helping to inform the effectiveness of your calls to action. Where you put your CTA will make a world of difference when it comes to how well it will perform. The key areas to bear in mind include whether or not your call to action is potentially obstructed by other content (images, text blocks, other calls to action, etc.), or whether users could get distracted by anything else on the page.

During a recent OpenMile study they found that reducing clutter around their CTAs improved conversion rate by 232%, proving that optimising your page around your directorial buttons is going to have a profound effect on user journey and overall visitor response.



Choosing the ideal placement for your buttons can be as simple as putting yourself in the shoes of your users, and thinking about how, if you were to visit your own website, you feel you should be moved around the site. If a section of the site feels like it is missing something, it could well be that an effective call to action is your saving grace. If in doubt, call 'em out! Or something along those lines.

Ultimately, your endgame should be to make sure you're attracting your users to complete valuable actions at the right times. Having the right calls to action, with the right presence, in the right place is only going to serve to benefit you in creating a user journey that not only works, but works well.