52+ quick edits YOU CAN DO today to get more clicks, views or sales.

upbarista.com
table of contents

52+ QUICK EDITS YOU CAN DO TODAY by WP Barista

04
INTRODUCTION

07
1 - SPEED

08
2 - INCENTIVE

08
3 - CALL TO ACTION

09
4 - LANDING PAGE

10
HOME PAGE

11
6 - SEO

12
7 - ABOUT PAGE

12
8 - MOST IMPORTANTLY

13
CONCLUSION
You are a person with passion.

You are driven towards *something* right? And you picked up this guide to help you towards that goal, yes?

This guide is to help those who:
- Are 30+ and have been online for a bit
- Are frustrated with lack of growth in your business
- Are a full time blogger or an online entrepreneur

This guide is not helpful if you:
- Want to visualize your success and expect it to happen
- Think your bubbly personality is all that is needed to do marketing
- Believe you already know how to reach your audience

Yesterday I had the oil changed in my car. It is already a little more expensive than usual, but it is one of those 10 minute places and I was already a bazillion km overdue. I knew they were going to try to upsell me, so I was prepared to say ‘no’.

They hand me a newspaper and coffee.

*Grrrr my wall is down already! How do they know the way to my heart is coffee?*

By the time I left, I had in hand a quote for over $500 worth of ‘maintenance’ work. Notice the quotations on ‘maintenance’? I don’t trust them at all.

Compare my experience yesterday with my regular mechanic who treats me like his daughter, checks everything and offers answers to questions I didn’t know to ask. I trust him. And I need to, ’cause I don’t care to learn about car maintenance! I’ve got enough to do!

My friends, it is my goal in life to be your trusted source for your website strategy & technology needs. You do not need to stay abreast of all the unending changes online. You do not need the right questions or to understand the technology.

This guide answers the questions you should be asking and gives you a guideline against which to measure your success. **DO** the stuff in here - don’t just read it, or there’s no point. You might as well stop now and enjoy a nice hot dark roast with milk instead.

*Cathy Tibbles*
*Founder, WordPress Barista*
"A conversion is an action. It is a person landing on your site and taking a desired action."

The things on this list are the first things you should do BEFORE you start marketing on social media or guest blogging or hosting webinars. And all the rest. No sense working so hard to get traffic if most of it will leave and forget you exist.

These are retention strategies. Have a solid foundation for retention before you begin your attraction work.

I’ve organized these into lists by section of your website. And each one has some wiggle room for how you apply it - because it is to increase your audience!

So, first thing - you need to understand your audience. You cannot reach everyone - if you try to, you will reach no one... I’m not sure who said that - probably everyone?

If you have existing clients, that’s perfect. For this exercise you’ll need to picture three of them that represent a nice cross section of your ideal audience.
I find it helpful to have three of my clients in mind. I think of:

1. an empty-nester, foodie blogger with a corporate job;
2. a stay at home mom with middle school kids and a full-time lifestyle blog;
3. an empty-nester author selling her books online.

I know their names, family status, rough idea of income, I know what they’re passionate about and what they want the website to do for them. I know what they worry about - and how I can help. Their pain points include:

- What if no one comes to my site?
- What if I write this book and no one buys?
- What if Google de-indexes me and advertisers remove their ads?

One lady had weddings recently and had to hand over the cash for them.

One lady sees her daughter only on holidays. And she misses her like crazy.

I know that sales have been slow for this author, and she’s frustrated with marketing while still trying to work on another novel.

**Assignment**

This is where I want you to stop.

Do a quick assignment:

**write down an avatar: an ideal customer.**

Write down as much as you can about them. Take 10 minutes to really think through why they would want to work with you?

What are you passionate about?

And what kinds of things bother them that you might be able to help with?

Now you are armed to make some tweaks to attract him/her.

**SOFTWARE**

Let’s start with big-picture stuff. This actually does impact who comes to your site and who you attract. Now - a caveat - if designed properly no one should really know the difference between WordPress, Squarespace or any other software.

While I haven’t evaluated other software choices for having a website, I do know the benefits of WordPress - so I recommend making sure that your software choice carries the benefits that are important to you:

- **Open source.** The alternative is Proprietary. Proprietary software means that no one else except the seller can edit or fix it. Open-source means there are thousands of people around the world (anyone) working to make it better.
- **Widely Adopted.** 27% of the entire world’s websites are on WordPress, ensuring that you will always have your choice of knowledgeable developers.
• Free.
• Portable. Works on almost any hosting company
• Backups/downloadable. You can always retain a copy of your content.
• Secure. This is controversial. But security is easy to maintain if you follow the steps outlined below.
• Stable. WordPress is always innovative and moving forward. It isn’t going away anytime soon.
• Easy to Use. It uses a “What You See is What You Get” interface.
• Extensible. - you can do anything that needs a database. Ie: libraries, directories, membership sites, e-commerce, etc

SECURITY

As mentioned above, this is controversial but only because WordPress is so widely adopted. It ends up being a target, but the flipside of this is that there are so many users that any vulnerabilities are immediately reported. And there are so many contributing developers that any security flaws are fixed almost immediately.

Regardless of software choice, I’d be remiss if I didn’t address security. If a visitor comes to your page and sees a full-screen warning from Google. “This site may not be safe…” your potential visitor will leave and likely never return. Right?

These edits are required for the safety of your visitors and your site:

1. Remove the Admin username. Replace with something difficult to guess.
2. Create users with the lowest possible permissions needed.
3. Force change of passwords every so often.
4. Always keep everything backed up and upgraded.
5. ONLY use vetted plugins.
speed

What we have learned from analytics is that users are used to almost instant access to websites. And in an effort to improve user experience, Google has now started ranking fast sites higher than slow ones. To keep your site getting as many SEO hits as possible, keep the load time down.

6. Test the site regularly at tools.pingdom.com; note the number of requests; size of page; and speed.

If the number of requests is over 150, try to deactivate the theme - go to default WP theme. Test again. If it’s not the theme causing all the requests, deactivate the plugins or widgets one at a time, clear cache and test between each one until you find the cause of the requests. In lots of cases it is too many ads that aren’t combined into one request.

**Speed** should be under 2 seconds; if you run ads, under 4 is awesome; under 6 is acceptable. Higher than 8 is not good.

Consider removing some ads to see if the user experience actually causes higher return.

7. The biggest resource hogging plugins are: analytics/stats; sharing; ads; redirection; image-smushing; ‘Broken Link Checker’. Remove any of these that you can.

8. Use a caching plugin. Our favorite is W3 total Cache. Leave default settings unless you have a professional change them.

9. Use a Content Delivery Network (CDN), you can add the files within the W3 Total Cache plugin and store on Amazon S3 which is really affordable.

10. Test after every change to be sure it affected the speed in the right direction.
incentive

11. Create an incentive that prepares readers to work with you; or in the case of a blog - to fall in love with your blog. Something that speaks to your specialty; showcases your voice and furthers the relationship.

12. Place a link to this incentive on a landing page (see below)

13. Use landing page link in all social media profiles

14. Use landing page link within your blog and after your blog posts to point readers toward it.

15. Create a graphic for the sidebar that points readers to the landing page.

call to action

What’s the first thing you do when you get out of bed? Or last thing before bed? And several times throughout the day? Especially when you’re procrastinating? (just me?) Email!

As much as we have a love/hate relationship with email, it is still the most effective way to communicate with potential customers. And to keep top of mind and in front of readers. These call to action tips are specifically designed for a funnel that begins with collecting email.

16. Use a call to action on each page that will entice the reader to leave their email.

17. This call to action is to give away the incentive in exchange for the email address and first name.

18. Place the call to action front and center on the home page. It should be slightly disruptive to the eye to make it difficult to ignore - but only slightly!

19. Use arrows pointing to the call action! They actually work! But don’t be tacky or unbranded!

20. Put the call to action in the sidebar on inner pages and footer in all pages. Yes, twice. And after each blog too. Three times!

21. Remove all obstacles to a sign-up - make sure the placeholder word, “Email” and “Your name here” automatically disappears when the field is clicked in.

22. Use action words - “Get the ” “Download…” “Claim the …”

23. Use first person if you can - “Give me the …” ”Let me in” ”I claim my …”
Let's start with big-picture stuff. This actually does impact who comes to your site and who you attract. Now - a caveat - if designed properly no one should really know the difference between WordPress, Squarespace or any other software.

While I haven't evaluated other software choices for having a website, I do know the benefits of WordPress - so I recommend making sure that your software choice carries the benefits that are important to you:

Open source. The alternative is Proprietary. Proprietary software means that no one else except the seller can edit or fix it. Open-source means there are thousands of people around the world (anyone) working to make it better.

Widely Adopted. 27% of the entire world's websites are on WordPress, ensuring that you will always have your choice of knowledgeable developers.

A landing page is a simplified page that is designed for one thing - conversion.

"A conversion can be an email, or a click or a page view or a sale."

The landing page can be temporary. If you are no longer offering the service or incentive, feel free to delete the page. And create a forward to a more appropriate place for any incoming links.

Add new landing pages for each incentive, referral site or content upgrade.

24. Copy should be professionally written if possible. This is your make or break moment! Persuasive copy will boost your conversions.
25. Images should be few and far between. They should align psychologically with the story and move the reader emotionally from one line of copy to the next without breaking the story that you are creating.
26. If using a photograph with a subject, have the subject looking towards the call to action.
27. Use copy to empathize with the reader's situation
28. Use copy to create an emotion around the situation/problem that the reader is facing
29. Use copy to demonstrate that you have created a solution
30. Use copy to counter any objections.
31. Include testimonials
32. Use copy to assuage any lagging doubts ie: guarantees.
33. Add call to action twice or three times during the story - wherever appropriate.

To have the most effective landing page possible, it is very important to remove all distractions.

There is a psychological effect that too many options produce - and it results in no purchase whatsoever. Lower the number of options and all of the sudden your prospect is more likely to purchase.

It is also important to move the reader through the story. Move down the page - this is not likely to happen if you have links everywhere.

Here is how to create a typical landing page:

34. Remove the navigation or menus. At times it is appropriate to relocate them to the footer. If you can get away without any - this is ideal.
35. Keep the logo or header but create a smaller version that can neatly go top left. Remove the link associated on that logo so there is no clicking away.
36. Remove all sidebars - this is one page leading the reader from top to bottom
37. Remove footers and any links on the bottom of the page.
This is the landing page for most referrals. Referrals from your own business cards, offline marketing, and oftentimes online marketing.

For most of us, this is the default landing page. The home page needs to contain some simple elements that are predictable for a reader. Our goal here is to minimize friction, create the best user experience possible. Keep them coming back!

Here are the tips that I recommend for the home landing page.

38. Use navigation - and a custom navigation for mobile.
39. Top navigation should be simple; just a few options. Less = better.
40. Always include Home, About, Contact and they should always be called Home, About, Contact. On websites, users prefer predictability and familiarity. So the cute / clever names have to go!
41. Logo should be top left - again, be predictable! Readers typically read (in western countries) top left to bottom right.
42. If using ads, the right of the logo used to be prime real estate, now with viewability metrics this has changed. If your main content area has a large image appearing first, Anything above that will score lower.
43. After the top area, the first, most interesting thing that a reader sees should be the call to action. This should be slightly disruptive to the design (slightly!!) so that it is difficult to ignore. Provide the incentive, call to action button, and sign up form.
44. After that, the main page is to let the reader know a few things:
   a.) You are where you thought you were going (congruency),
   b.) you have found what you were looking for,
   c.) you are understood and listened to.
   d.) This page’s content should leave the reader curious to find out more.
45. This is also a good spot for ads if you’re using them. You’ll get an extra ad per page.

You’ll only get ‘okay’ conversion on ads here. It is better to put them IN the copy. For example, above the footer, after the content. Or between two home page sections.
Search engine optimization can be intimidating to some. But it needn't be! It is a very simple idea: be the best search result for a particular query.

"SEO: becoming the best result for a particular query"

Google only wants to find the best results (so it can be the best search engine). So be the best result, demonstrate you are and be findable.

Easy to write, a little more time consuming to do.

46. Install SEO for WordPress by Yoast. Set it up per instructions. Be sure to check ALL the screens and complete the entries to the best of your abilities. This is important. It will determine what search engines show to readers when your home page is the search result.

47. Use the SEO for WP by Yoast screen on each Post> Edit screen as well. Use Adwords Keyfinder Tool to find words that might work for your post idea. Create the post around words that are actually used by searchers.

48. Spend 2 - 5 minutes per post making the post accessible; giving it a custom description for search engines; a custom name if necessary; tagging photos and using the proper headers. Use categories appropriately (tags don’t matter - unless your users need them for searching your site).

49. Create profiles, even if you don’t use them on all social media networks, partly to reserve your name and partly for SEO. Link to your site. It is especially important to have profiles on Youtube and Google + for obvious reasons.

50. Use no-follow on links where you’ve been compensated - by cash, product or ‘favors’. Do this! Or else!
about page

For most websites, the About page is the second most visited page on the website. Make good use of it with these tips:

51. The about page, ironically, is not about you! This is about how you can serve your visitor. They are there to find out if you can help them. Answer that question.
52. Use copy that empathizes with their pain points.
53. Tell personal stories - we LOVE stories. It’s hard wired into our brains to love stories.
54. Be sure to communicate your background, history or resume in a way that is relevant and interesting - and in some cases, it is neither and completely unnecessary.

The exception being if you are a professional, then some background is a good idea.

For bloggers, this is where you’ll shine. We want to hear how and why you became a blogger. We want to get to know you as our friend. Let us into your inner thoughts!

55. A photo of the person behind the blog goes a long way. Photos of the behind-the-scenes are a great way to open up a part of yourself that invites a reader to be in the ‘inner circle’. We all want to belong.
56. Do not sell, except for mentioning how you came to offer what you offer or do what you do. But this is an excellent place to offer your incentive. A gift that provides value, showcases your personality and aligns with your business.

most importantly

57. Everything you do on your website should always pass these tests: Ease of use. Predictability. Familiarity. Congruency.
58. And absolutely every piece of content on your site needs to do ONE THING: further your goal / mission / purpose.

a.) For bloggers, your writing voice and purpose needs to shine through - every. Single. Time.
b.) For online entrepreneurs, every piece of content, needs to move readers closer to a conversion. A conversion is whatever goal you have in mind next. Sometimes it’s an email, sometimes a sale.
Conclusion

Never has traffic just dropped into anyone’s lap. Okay, I lie. Yes, it does for the lucky few for varying reasons. And those people assume they’ve stumbled on a formula (they haven’t) and write online courses that we should all pay money for. (we shouldn’t)

For those of us who are not taking that e-course to get instant traffic, we have to work on it. And it happens with FOCUS and knowledge.

Networking on a Facebook Group and I get a private message. Focus.

Phone alerts me: Twitter message. Focus.

A friend has a new e-course. Focus.

Everyone is having fun on periscope. Focus.

This is hard, I don’t like it...let’s check email. FOCUS.

There is a very real disadvantage to working online - and that is the extreme number of distractions. And if you work from home like me, there is also laundry.

All the tips above and a lot on my blog come from research, education by vetted experts and reading. And almost 10 years of seeing it work. These things WILL work to convert your audience if you do them, and do them well.

These action steps are only a piece of the puzzle. You first have to attract your desired audience, then get them to the site to convert them, then follow up on a relationship that allows you to be there when they have a need that you can meet.

Do your research - find the best practices/ standards that are proven to work through user psychology and user interface testing. And then put them into practice. With a little focus and the right knowledge, we can set goals for growth, smash the lights out of them AND maintain our sanity (what’s left).

I’d love to keep chatting about this on my Facebook page. Or feel free to email me at cathy@wpbarista.com.

To your success!!

Cathy