

VIDEO 1: HOW DO YOU USE A CALL-TO-ACTION (CTA)?

Welcome to the calls-to-action class. I'm Angela from HubSpot Academy.

In this class, we're going to discuss how to use Calls-to-Action or CTAs, in the conversion process. After this class you'll understand how CTAs fit into a successful conversion process, recognize what an effective call-to-action looks like and how to apply best practices to your own CTAs.

We're going to focus primarily on the convert stage of the inbound methodology, where we convert visitors into leads. Let's discuss why the conversion process is so critical.

Put simply, you can't get leads without a conversion process. And some of those leads will eventually become paying customers.

You might be thinking, "Yeah, I'd love to get some leads! What do I need to do to make that happen?"

Well, a conversion process typically begins with a CTA. When a visitor clicks on it, they're brought to a landing page where they fill out a form with their contact information – turning them into a lead! After that, the lead is directed to a Thank-You page where they receive the offered content.

So what is a CTA, exactly? A CTA is a button that promotes an offer and links to a landing page.

CTAs can be placed on your website pages, your blog and in your emails. Since they kick off the conversion process, they're a critical first step.

We've discussed what a CTA is and the conversion process as a whole. You should be able to recognize a CTA and understand its role in the conversion process. Now, are you ready to learn how to create great calls-to-action? Perfect. In the next video, we'll be doing just that. See you there!

VIDEO 2: HOW DO YOU CREATE SUCCESSFUL CTAS?

In the last video, we discussed what a call-to-action is and how it relates to the conversion process.

CTAs are big business assets, so it's important to follow best practices when creating them. Let's talk about what makes for a successful call-to-action.

Our call-to-action should be action-oriented. Its purpose, after all, is to get our visitors to take a certain next action – to download an eBook, or watch a video, or request a free trial.

Don't make your visitors think too hard about what they need to do next –just tell them! Clear, direct action verbs make for a great call-to-action. In this example, it says "Download the free adventure travel guide". The word "download" makes it pretty obvious what will happen next. Also, keep your message brief. Your CTA won't take up too much room on a page or in an email. It's always going to be secondary to the rest of the content.

When choosing the action-oriented words, consider the offer and your buyer persona and try out different action verbs like request, sign up, download or receive.

While we're on the subject of CTA text, remember to use keywords that are consistent with your offer and landing page.

Now without keywords, would you know what this offer is about? This doesn't describe the guide at all.

Using the same keywords and phrasing for the entire conversion process helps your visitors understand what they are going to get as they navigate from CTA to landing page to thank you page.

Next, it's important to grab someone's attention. Truth be told – there are a lot of misconceptions about best practices for making a call-to-action attention grabbing. Some people think they must be a certain color or size, or that they must use images.

However you choose to design your call-to-action, it needs to stand out so that visitors will know to click on it. Visitors recognize clickable elements like buttons and links. Consider

your buyer persona's tastes when designing a call-to-action. Your buyer persona might prefer something flashy and bright or they might like a simple, minimal button.

Think about what would be appealing to them and how they typically navigate through websites. If you're not sure, that's okay. You can always conduct research or test things out.

Use highly-contrasting colors or an accent color that aligns with your company's branding. This will help your CTAs stand out, visually.

You'll also want to use strong and appropriate on-page placement for your CTAs.

On some pages, this may mean featuring a call-to-action above the fold --in other words, before a visitor has to scroll. This way, your CTA will be one of the first things they see when they land on a page. Wherever you decide to place them, CTAs should seem like they belong on the page. There's not necessarily a right or wrong place to put them, just remember that they should be easy to notice, attention grabbing and should fit logically with everything else on the page. For example, it doesn't make sense to offer an eBook on your pricing page. In this scenario, the visitor might already have the information contained within the eBook. A visitor on your pricing page is gathering information about your pricing structure and approaching the decision to buy.

When it comes to your blog, it's logical to place a call-to-action at the end of a blog post. This example CTA is closely related to the blog post topic. You've put in a lot of time into your blog posts. Rather than interrupting the content, have your CTA at the bottom of the post to provide that next step.

Additionally, you could place a CTA in the sidebar of your blog to promote your latest offers or an upcoming event.

The sidebar is a good place to grab someone's attention and give someone an opportunity to take the next step, like joining our next live webinar in the example shown here.

Typically, CTAs in your sidebar should be general offers so that they are applicable to the widest variety of people reading your blog.

When it comes to CTAs in an email, those can be placed at the end of the email, paragraph, sentence, or really anywhere that grabs attention without being distracting. Remember, driving lead conversion is your goal, not our reader's goal, so make sure that they can easily read your content, first, and only convert if they choose to do so.

The last suggestion is to test changes and analyze their results.

When analyzing the effectiveness of a CTA, a good goal to aim for is a 1-to-2 percent click-through rate. This means that out of all who viewed the CTA, 1 to 2 percent clicked on the button. So a successful CTA would result in 1 or 2 visitors clicking on the CTA out of 100 people.

When comparing clicks to submissions, ten percent is a great goal. For those that clicked on the CTA and made it to the landing page, how many of those people submitted the form and became a lead?

If we had 50 people that made it to the landing page from the CTA, and if 5 of them filled out the form on the landing page, we'd have a 10% click-to-submission rate and in turn, a successful CTA.

Whenever you experiment with your CTA designs, make one small change and see how it performs. If I change the CTA text and its color, it won't be clear which change made it more or less successful. Start with a small change, like the color, and see if it gets more clicks.

Testing and analyzing will not only help you create more effective CTAs, but it will also give you a better idea of what your buyer persona likes.

To finish up, here are all of those best practices once more. CTAs should be action-oriented. They should include keywords that are consistent with the offer you are marketing on the landing page. A CTA should grab attention and stand out as a clickable button. Also, they should use strong and appropriate on-page placement. And finally, after you've created a CTA, test out new changes one at a time, analyze the results, and repeat.

Keep these best practices in mind for the next time you create or change a CTA and analyze the results.

VIDEO 3: TOOL WALKTHROUGH

View the user guide or additional resources on the class page for a text version and instructions on how to use the tool.