

6

DIGITAL MARKETING HACKS

YOU SHOULD BE USING

BY
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—— Hi. I'm Vako. ——



And this is my collection of 6 digital marketing hacks. The truth is, I'm busy hacking my life on a daily basis. Looking for shortcuts, automation, basically anything that will abide by **80/20 rule**—20% of my time input bringing 80% of the results.

As a co-founder of an award-winning startup called Ucademics and a VP of Marketing for most of my career, marketing hacks are my favorite.

I am impatiently waiting for someone to create a **digital marketing AI** (Artificial Intelligence), the ultimate hack any marketer could wish for. We'll call him **Freddie** and he will be writing blogs, producing content, running ads and acquiring customers for us while we lie in a hammock sipping piña coladas.

Until Freddie arrives, here are 6 hacks that have saved my life. Will they work for you? Let's find out.

HACK #1

**A simple
trick to
piggyback
viral articles
for your
own good.**

HACK #1

Let's say you find a useful article that you think would be interesting to your Facebook and Twitter followers or your blog readers.

But when you share this external content, even though you are helping your readers, you're intentionally sending them away from your own content to somewhere else.



What if there was a way to **share viral content** and, after they're done reading or watching it, **get people back to your site** or push them down your conversion funnel.

Well there is, and there's more to it.

It's possible to add a small **branded badge** on the bottom of the page you share. Any page. From any site. *The Huffington Post*, *Medium.com*, *BuzzFeed*, you name it. Inside that box, you can recommend visitors other content from your own site. They click on it. Voila! Back to your site.

Here's what it looks like:



I'm not Mark Manson, and I didn't ask him *"Hey Mark, do you mind putting my free ad on that article of yours about bad-ass kitties nonchalantly walking away from explosions? On the bottom right would be great Mark. Thanks."*

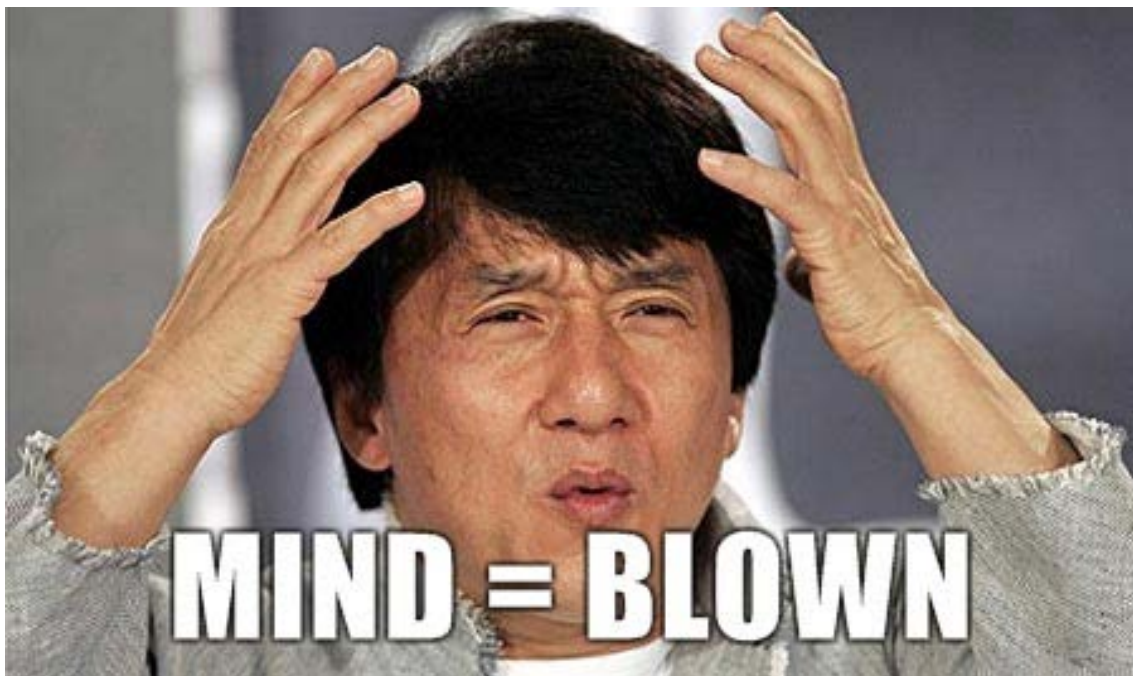
I just shared his article with a nifty little tool. Which I will show you in a bit.

This is what happens: You share someone else's article → people read it → they see recommended links from you → they click on them and come back to your site.

And it doesn't end there.

If they re-share that same link, it will **carry your branded badge everywhere**. Yes, EVERYWHERE.

Exposing your recommended links to new audiences. For free. Without even producing your own content. Cha-ching!



Here's how:

Step 1: Go to www.snip.ly and sign up for a free account.

Step 2: Create a Call-to-Action. That's going to be your badge that you'll be able to attach to the pages you share.



Step 3: Add a destination link to your badge. That's where you want to send the visitors to.

Step 4: Create a link (New Snip). This is a page, a website that you want to share with your audience. Your badge will be inserted there.

Step 5: Start sharing the link like a mad man.

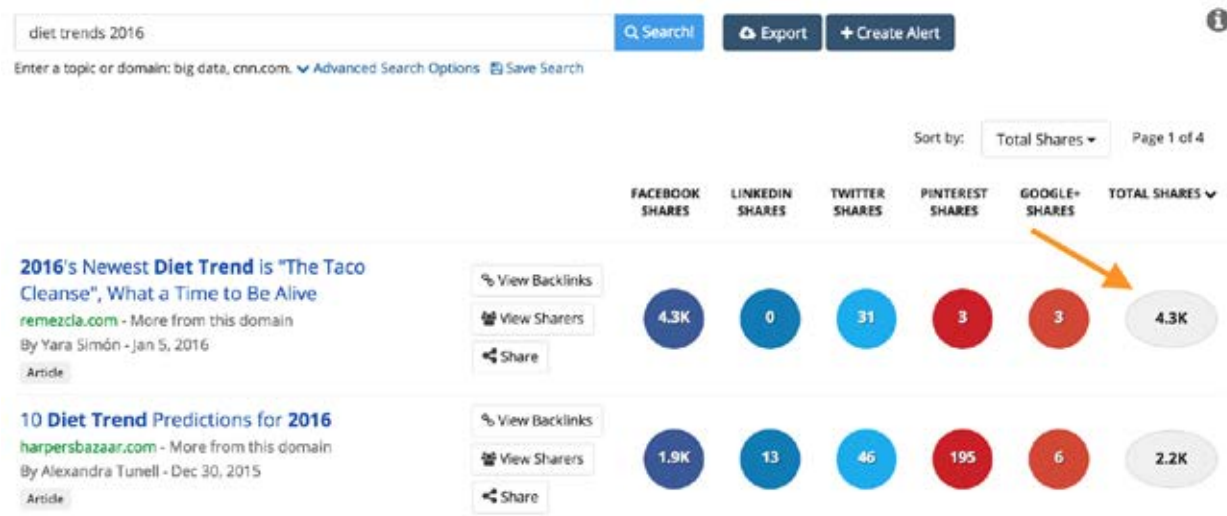
Possibilities:

Besides the very evident scenario that I've described above, here's another one.

Let's say you sell Diet Books. You have a product page and that's where you get your sales from. You want to get quality traffic for that page.

You go to Buzzsumo.com and do a search for “**diet trends 2016**”.

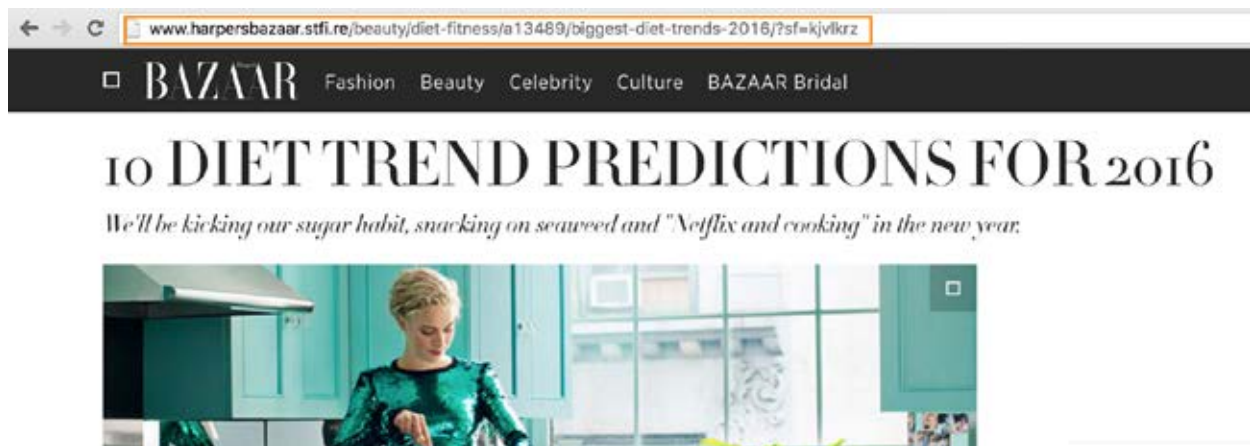
Buzzsumo will return blog posts and articles that match your keyword with the most shared article on the top.



I say Buzzsumo **instead of Google search** for a reason here. Google's top results aren't ranked based on an article's 'share-ability'.

You want to pick an article that has the highest chance of being shared, not the one that has a good SEO ranking.

You create your Startafire link with that trending article, and add your Diet Book product page inside the recommended content.



A Startafire link will look like this.

You start sharing that article on **Facebook Groups about diets and weight loss.**

Since you already know people share that article, you can be sure it will be picked up and shared even more, but this time with your branded badge on it.

And you're not limited to Facebook groups only. LinkedIn groups. Tweets. One of the best—**Quora** questions.

Go on Quora and search for your keywords. Find relevant ques-

tions and answer them and quote a source. If your site has a source, good, quote that. If not, Startafire that bad boy. Those Quora links get clicked forever and they can drive some good traffic.

I use this hack all the time. Maybe you'll come across my badge at some point. :)

HACK #2

**Turn your
video into
an email-
hungry
monster.**

———— HACK #2 ————

E mails have become an internet currency. A ton of free, useful content is being exchanged every day for an email between content producers and the public.



That's because there's value in getting an email address from your audience. It's an important vehicle for today's era of *Permission Marketing*—a term popularized by Seth Godin.

To quote him:

“Permission is like dating. You don’t start by asking for the sale at first impression. You earn the right, over time, bit by bit.”

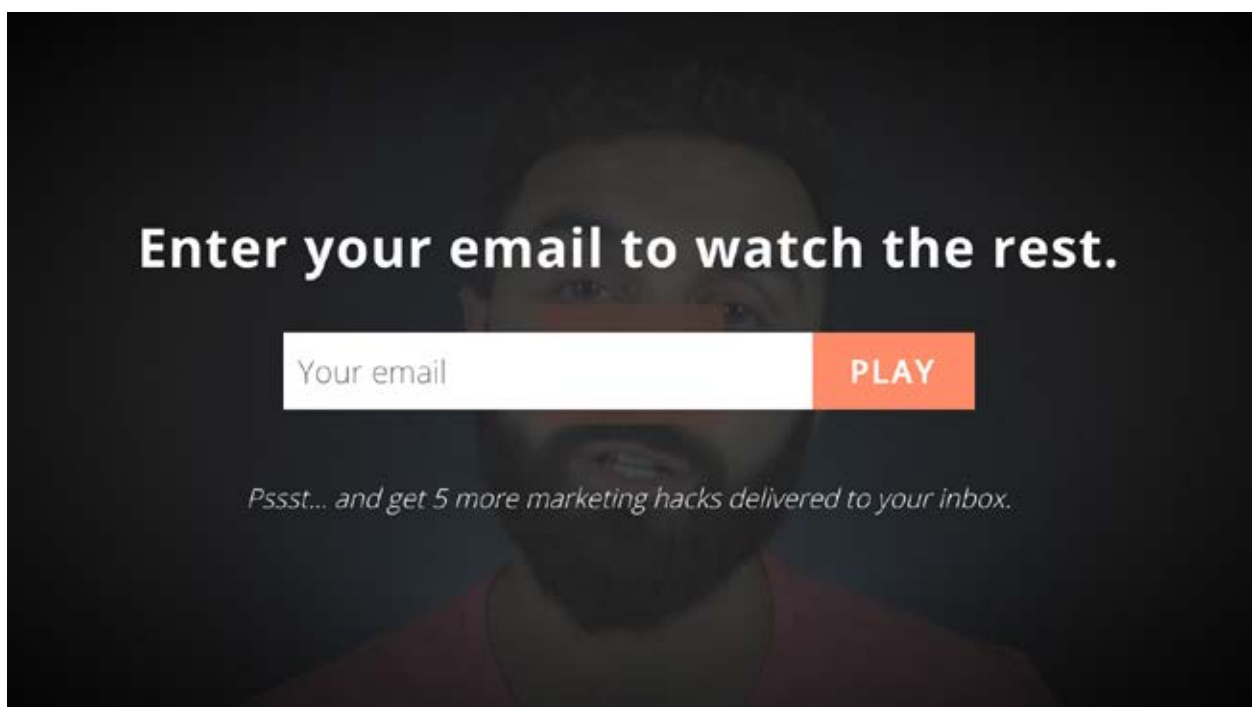
And with emails, we are able to deliver useful messages to our audience in order to **gain their trust** and build a relationship before

they are ready to buy from us.

A popular exchange rate today is an email for a weekly newsletter, a free trial subscription, an eBook, some digital freebies and so on.

But what about videos? When was the last time you had to give your email address in order to watch a video?

There's a little-known way of **gating your videos** by collecting emails. Within a video player. Say whaaat?!



This is what happens: viewer plays your video → after some time, email gate appears → viewers have to put in their email address in order to keep watching.

Is it annoying? Yes, a bit. But they work so well. If you provide valuable content and place a gate at the right time you can easily achieve a whopping **conversion rate of 43%**.

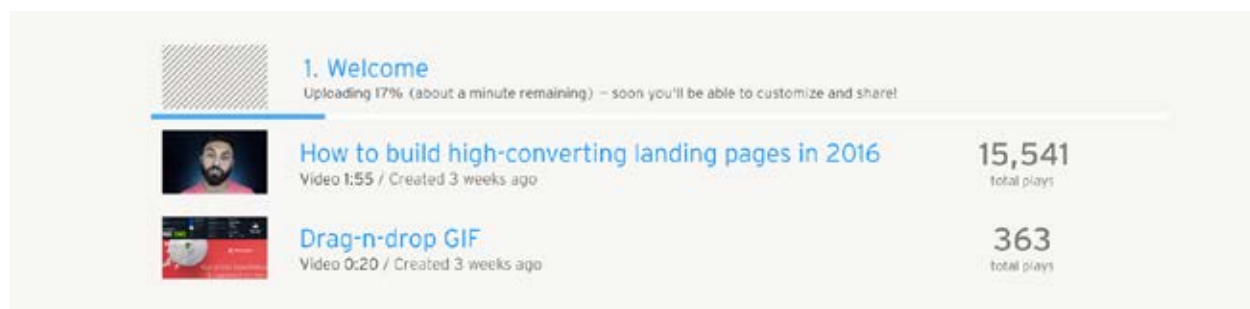
My advice, get on board with this hack before everyone and their mother starts using it. Then, as it happens with any marketing method that shows good results, it will get overused and start to lose its flair.

If you don't have any video content, no worries, just keep reading and I will tell you how to create quality video content for cheap at the end of this section.

Here's how to 'nom nom' emails using videos:

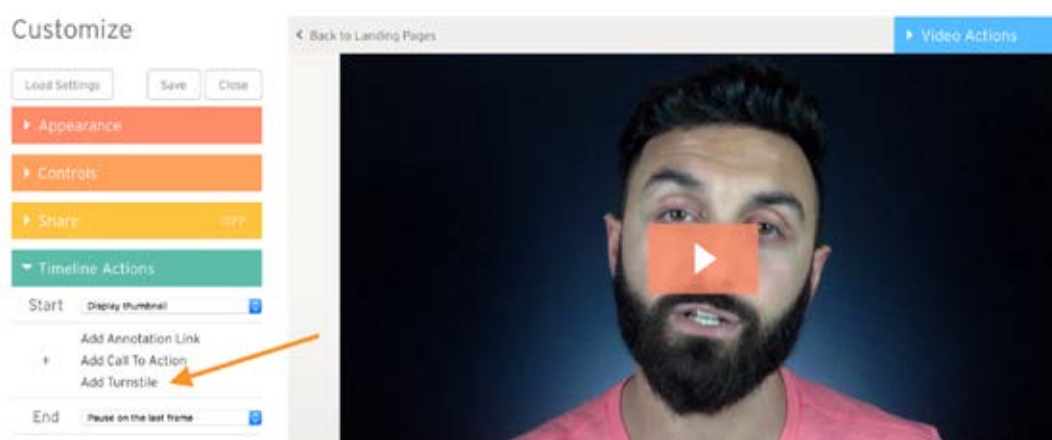
Step 1: Sign up with www.wistia.com.

Step 2: Upload a useful video (tutorial, an article turned into a video). Hosting 5 videos at a time is free.

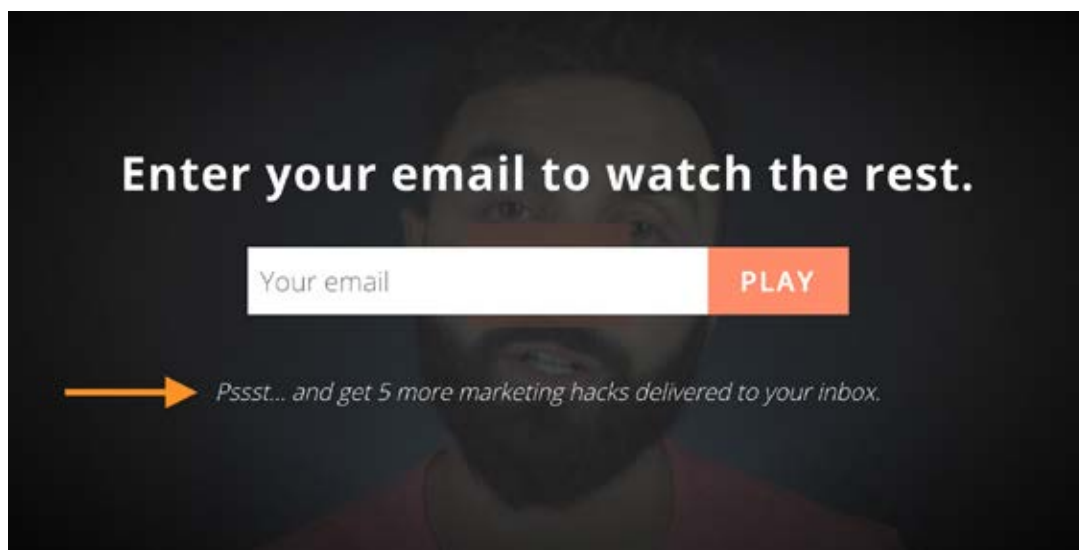


Step 3: Go to Video Actions → then Customize → then Timeline Actions → and click Add Turnstile.

You can place the gate (Turnstile, as the guys at Wistia call it) at any point in the video. The start, the end or anywhere during the playback.



Be nice and offer them something extra that you'll send them later by email. Kinda like I do on my video:



You can also make it optional and **allow viewers to skip**. This, of course, will decrease your conversion rate, but you'll be able to add an optional gate to videos that don't have strong enough appeal to make the viewers give up their emails.

Step 4: Embed your video in your blog articles or on your landing pages.

This hack is particularly **effective with landing pages**. As a matter of fact, this technology was created by Wistia for the purpose of **increasing conversion rates** on their own landing pages that they use for their marketing campaigns.

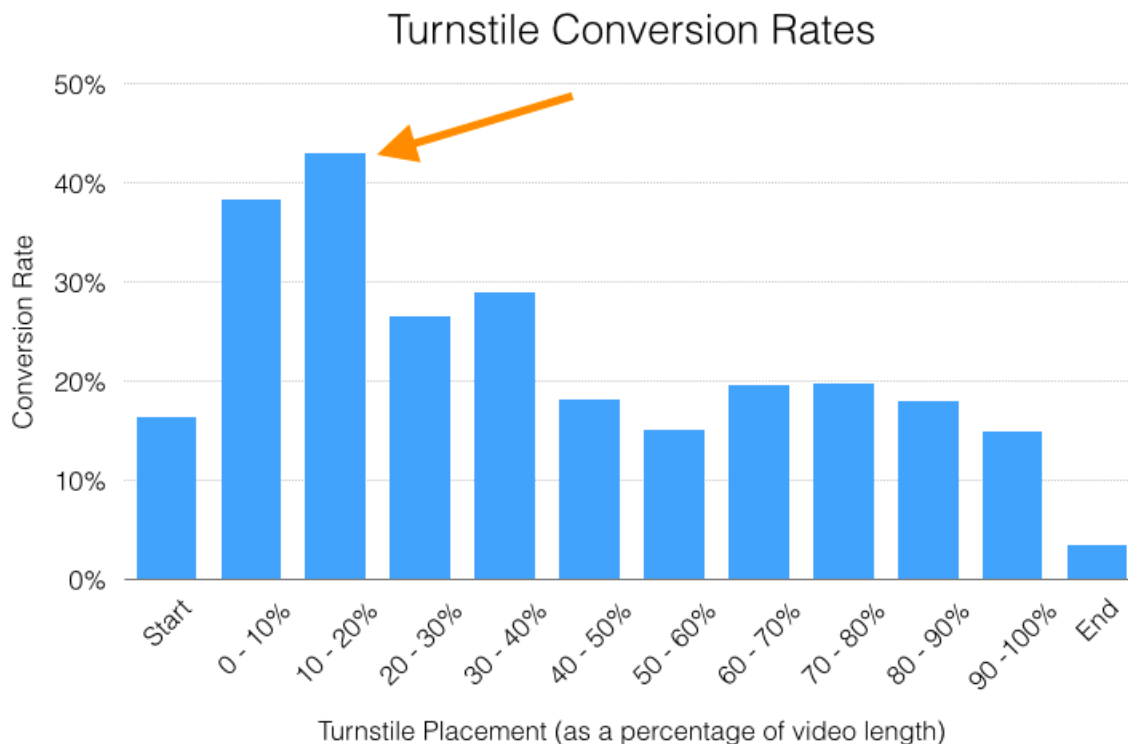
In order to acquire more users for their platform, they created a video tutorial about Video Marketing. They built a landing page for it and started running ads and campaigns.



Their **email gating was so successful** that they've added it as a new feature on their video hosting platform.

If you're not familiar with landing pages, or if you want to **master the art of building high-converting landing pages**, then I recommend taking my [landing page course on Udemy](#).

Where you place your email gate is important too. Wistia pulled conversion data across the videos hosted on their platform and here's what they've discovered:



The optimal placement of an email gate is 10–20% of the way through the video. It's that sweet spot between asking too early before they are hooked and too late when they might already be bored.

No video content?

Do not despair my friend. I've got your back.

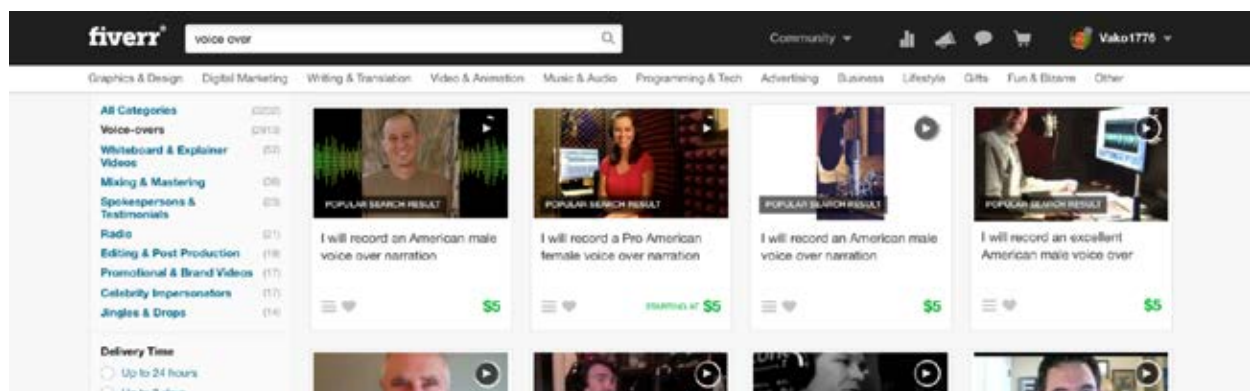
If you don't feel like filming yourself or recording screencast video tutorials, you can go for the method below. Here's what you need to do:

Step 1: Write your video script.

First, you need to find some useful content for your audience. You can simply choose an existing article of yours. If you've got none, then think of some pain points that your audience might be experiencing and provide your solution to it.

Step 2: Get a professional voice-over for \$5.

Send that script to a [voice actor on Fiverr](#) and have them record a voice over narration.



HACK #3

**Facebook
advertising
level 80.**

**Cut your
CPC in half.**

— HACK #3 —

If we A/B tested the same exact Facebook post, same image, same text, same target, but only one difference: A has 1,137 likes and B has none—which one do you think will get more clicks?

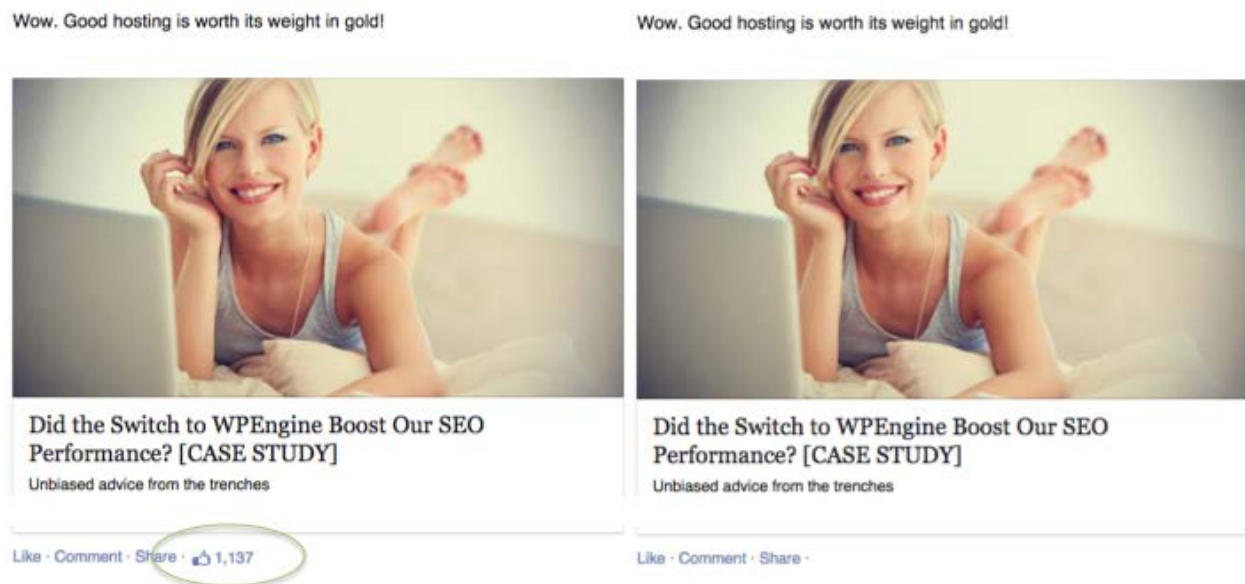


Photo credit: Upword

If you said “A” then you are right.

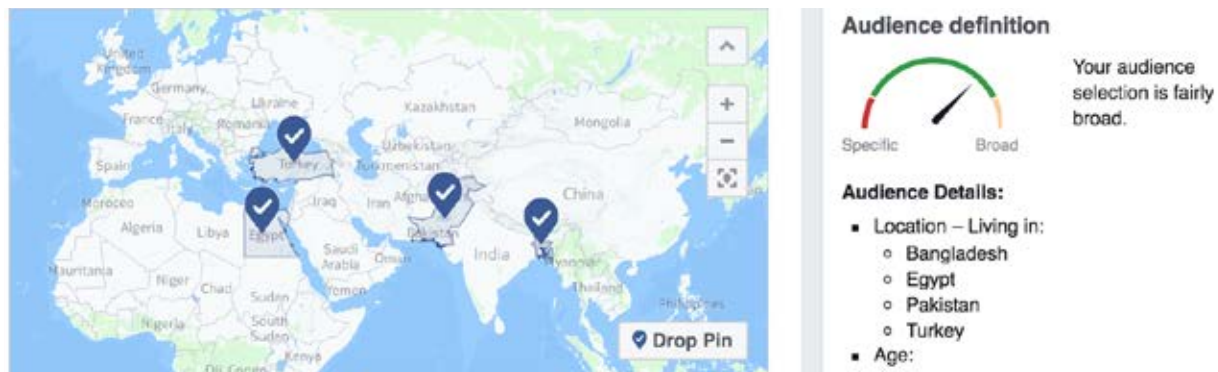
Social proof is a powerful motivator. If I know **1,137 other people** liked something before me, I’ll be **more curious** to see what that is.

You might think, *“but how will more clicks decrease my cost per*

click? If anything, more clicks will cost me more money.” I’ll explain.
First, let me show you the method.

Here’s how to get a cheap social proof:

Step 1: First, target your ad to low demand, low competition countries (Turkey, Bangladesh, Pakistan). You’ll spend about \$0.005 per post engagement. Yup, that’s half a penny.



Step 2: After you gather around 1,000 post likes, which will cost you about \$5–6, then switch to your target countries.

Done and done! Now you have a post that has a ton of likes and will be more attractive in the eyes of your target audience.

Now, how do **more clicks** make each click **cheaper**?

It has everything to do with the way your ad’s click-through rate (CTR) influences how much you pay for a click on Facebook.

Click through rate is the number of people who click on your ad divided by the number of people who saw it.

$$\text{CTR} = \frac{\text{Total Clicks on Ad}}{\text{Total Impressions}} \times 100$$

So if you get 1 click for every 100 people that see your ad, your CTR will be 1%.

As your CTR increases, you pay less per click. If it decreases, you pay more per click.

It's basically Facebook's way of telling you to make your ads clickable and don't waste their valuable site real estate.

Possibilities:

Upword did an A/B test with this hack and got 10X better CTR on a “social proofed” post and decreased cost per click by 64%.

Post w/o likes		Post with likes 🍷 1,137
7	Engagements	21
\$1.29	Cost Per Engagement	\$0.47
8	Clicks	32
0.581%	CTR	5.926%

Photo credit: Upword

That's paying **36 cents** instead of **\$1 per click**. And that can be the difference between making money on your marketing investment and losing it, or, using some industry jargon, the difference between a positive ROI and negative one.

You can use this 'low-demand country targeting' if you want to increase **Facebook page likes** when you **don't care about the quality** of the likes and simply want the **numbers**.

I've tested this to see how cheaply I could get a page like (not a post like, but an actual page like).

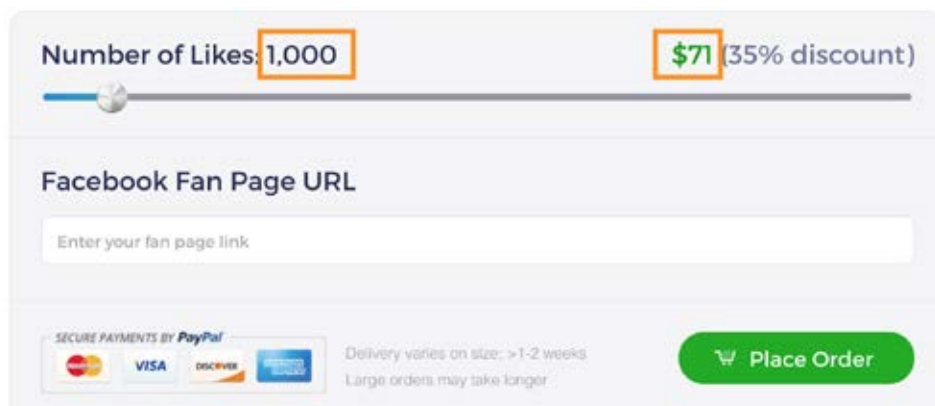
It wasn't very hard to get it down to **1 cent per page like**.



A screenshot of a Facebook Ads performance table. The table has columns for Ad Name, Delivery, Results, Reach, Cost, Amount spent, and Relevancy. An orange arrow points to the 'Cost' column, specifically to the value '\$0.01 Per Page Like'.

Ad Name	Delivery	Results	Reach	Cost	Amount spent	Relev...
Vakodemy - Page Likes Vakodemy Page Likes > EG, BD, IN, PH - 18+	Not delivering Advert Set Completed	396 Page Likes	2,679	\$0.01 Per Page Like	\$5.00	2
Results from 1 Ad		396 Page Likes	2,679 People	\$0.01 Per Page Like	\$5.00 Total Spent	

That's **7 times cheaper** than what one would pay for fake likes on the internet:



A screenshot of a web form for purchasing Facebook fan page likes. The form includes a slider for 'Number of Likes' set to 1,000, a price of \$71 (35% discount), a text input for 'Facebook Fan Page URL', and a 'Place Order' button. Payment logos for PayPal, Visa, Discover, and Mastercard are shown at the bottom.

Number of Likes: 1,000 \$71 (35% discount)

Facebook Fan Page URL

Enter your fan page link

SECURE PAYMENTS BY PayPal

VISA DISCOVER

Delivery varies on size; > 1-2 weeks
Large orders may take longer

Place Order

Dayum! 7x margin of profit. Maybe I'm in the wrong industry and should start selling Facebook likes online. :)

HACK #4

**Export your
LinkedIn
contacts
into an
email list.**

———— HACK #4 ————

Here's a quickie hack. There is a way to export all your LinkedIn contacts—names, email addresses, job titles and companies—into a spreadsheet.

Here's how:

Step 1: Go to www.linkedin.com/people/export-settings

Step 2: Export.

Yeah, that's all.

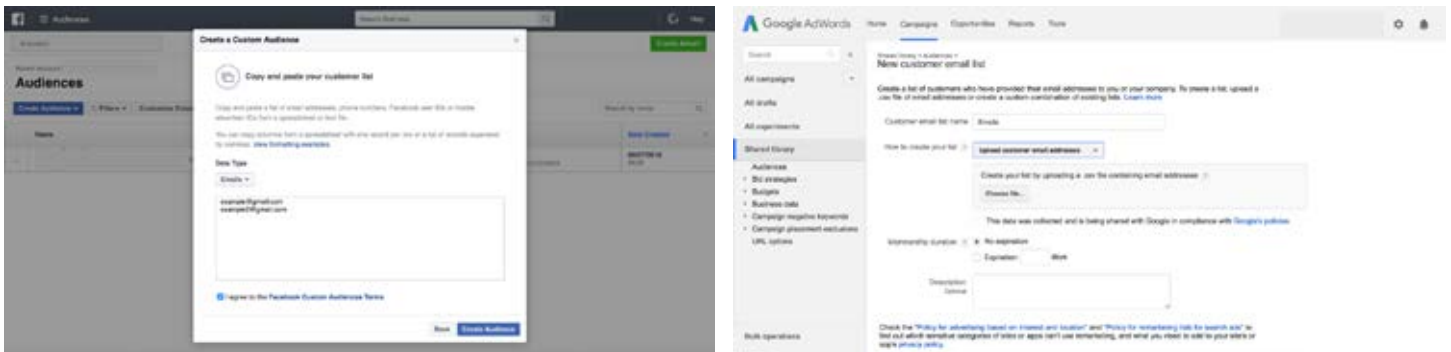
Possibilities:

LinkedIn harbors a good deal of important—let's call it—'marketing intel' on people.

But running ads on LinkedIn is super expensive. More than both Facebook and Google Display ads. Which does make sense, since people don't spend as much time on LinkedIn as they do on Facebook.

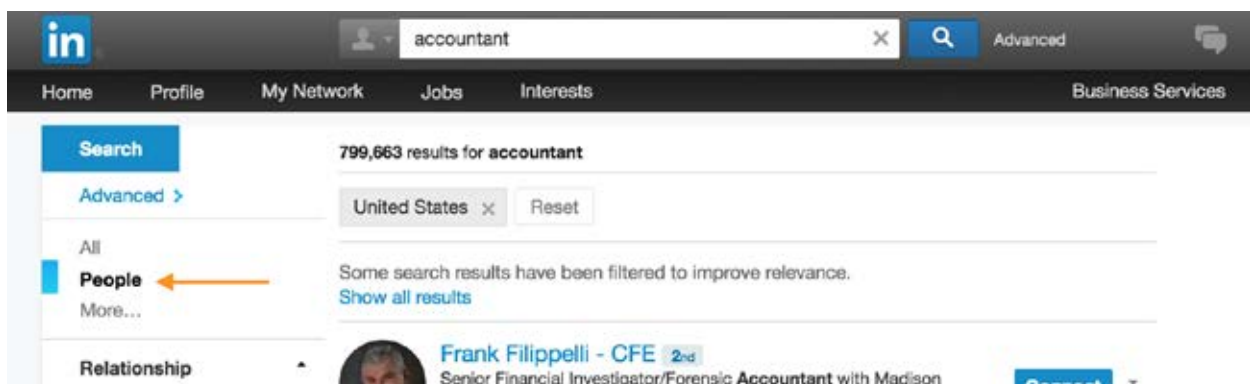
But if you export emails from LinkedIn, then you can take that email list and **upload it into Facebook Adverts Manager or Google Adwords** to create a custom list.

Google and Facebook will **match your emails with their users** and you will be able to target your ads directly to your LinkedIn contacts while they are hanging out on Facebook or one of the websites inside the Google Display Network.



Of course, you can directly email your connections once you export your email list, but targeting them through ads is a true ‘stealth mode’.

Let’s say **you sell invoicing solutions** for companies. You know that your target people are Accountants, Financial Managers and such. You search LinkedIn for “Accountant” to find people with that job title.



If you have around 300 connections on LinkedIn, you could find up to 100 accountants with whom you share at least one connection and LinkedIn will allow you to Connect with one click without a verification process.

Once your connections start to grow, shared connections will grow with it. Based on the *Six Degrees of Separation Theory*, it only takes six or fewer steps, by way of introduction, to connect to any other person in the world.

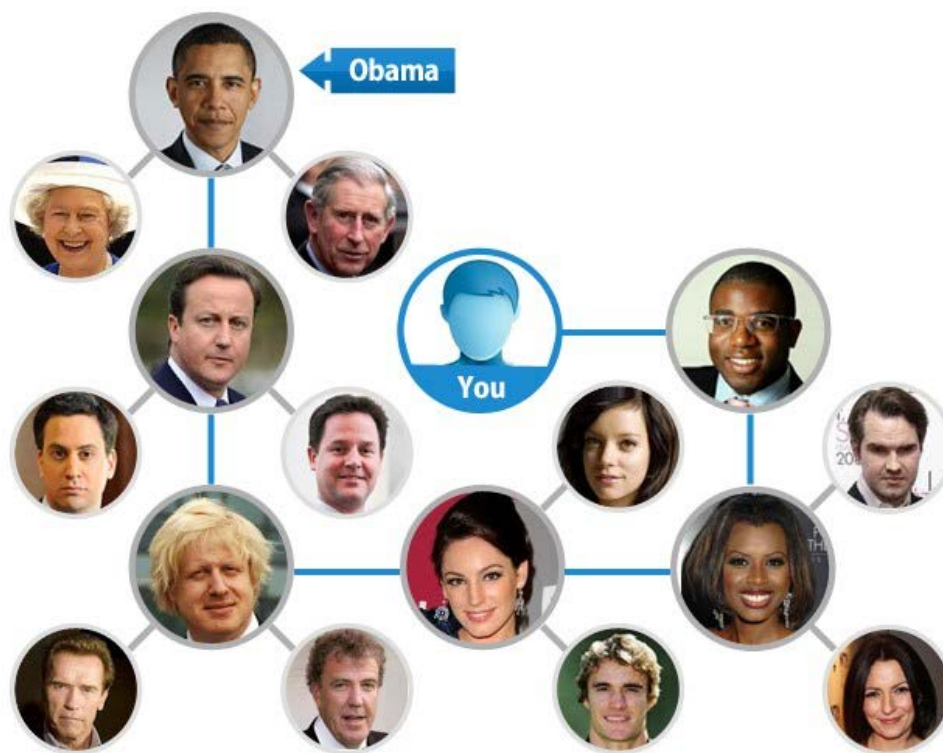


Photo credit: Directly.me

Take it slow with this method though. If several people press “I don’t know this person” on your invitations, LinkedIn will restrict your account for a period of time.

HACK #5

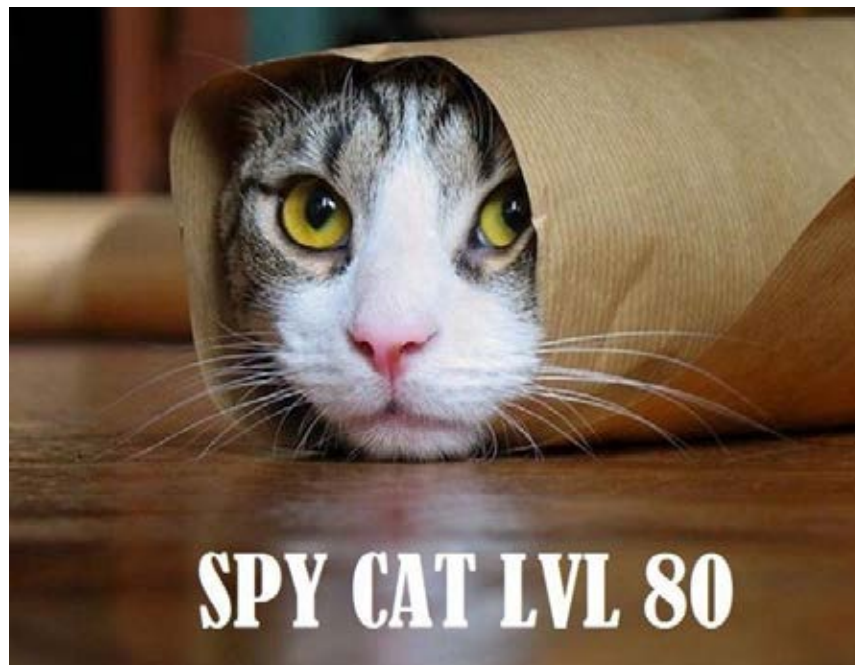
**Are you
snooping
on your
visitors?**

**If not, then
you should.**

— HACK #5 —

Don't you wish sometimes that you could just creep behind your website visitors' shoulders and watch everything they do on your site?

See every mouse movement, scroll, click, keypress they make and try to get into their heads and understand why they're not buying or taking an action you want them to take?



Well, have I got a solution for you. Introducing CREEPINATOR 5000. Just kidding, it's called **Inspectlet**.

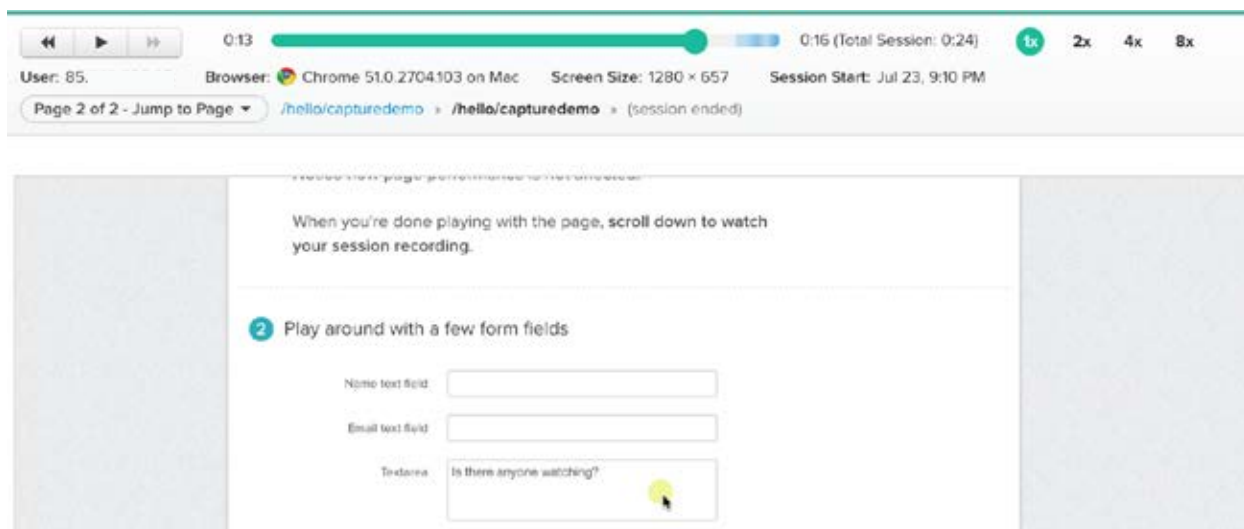
Clickmaps and mouse tracking tools become more and more

popular each year. They give us crucial information on what visitors are doing on our websites and landing pages.



But the guys at Inspectlet took it to the next level.

Not only they'll track where your visitors click and scroll, but they'll actually record the screen of each individual session, so you can watch it just like a CCTV recording.



Try out their [1-minute demo here](#). They'll record and playback your visit right away.

Here's how to turn a creep mode on:

Step 1: Get an account at www.inspectlet.com—100 recordings per month is free. I find it quite sufficient.

Step 2: Copy and paste their code into your site's HTML.

Make sure to exclude your own visits. You'll find an option on the dashboard under Optional Steps.











Step 3: Wait for the new recordings and enjoy your new 'hidden camera' show.



My experience:

Every time I use Inspectlet, I discover at least one odd thing with my pages.

Last month I was running Google display ads. And I found my recordings filled with visitors that were taking zero action on my page. No scrolling, no clicking.

Display Name	Session Length	Starting Page	Referrer	Last Activity
 146.115.123.192 /complete-landing-page-course-2016/?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=adverts&utm_term=marketing-all-udemy&utm_campaign=50-Off-US	1 page - 1 sec	Complete Landing Page Course - V...	http://m.facebook.com	Jul 13, 2:56 am
 50.22.90.226 /complete-landing-page-course-2016	1 page - 1 sec	Complete Landing Page Course - V...	Direct	Jul 16, 9:36 pm
 66.87.72.85 /complete-landing-page-course-2016/?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=adverts&utm_term=marketing-all-udemy&utm_campaign=50-Off-US	1 page - 1 sec	Complete Landing Page Course - V...	http://m.facebook.com/?phpfu...	Jul 12, 12:23 am
 74.90.191.236 /complete-landing-page-course-2016/?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=adverts&utm_term=marketing-all-udemy&utm_campaign=50-Off-US	1 page - 1 sec	Complete Landing Page Course - V...	https://www.facebook.com/	Jul 13, 12:42 am
 24.218.89.23 /complete-landing-page-course-2016	1 page - 1 sec	Complete Landing Page Course - V...	Direct	Jul 15, 12:01 am
 45.55.207.224 /serverView-by-id/1959703	1 page - 1 sec	Complete Landing Page Course - V...	Direct	Jul 7, 9:35 pm
 50.22.90.226 /landing/complete-course-2016	1 page - 1 sec	Complete Landing Page Course - V...	Direct	Jul 16, 9:37 pm
 66.87.120.26 /complete-landing-page-course-2016/?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=adverts&utm_term=marketing-all-udemy&utm_campaign=50-Off-US	1 page - 1 sec	Complete Landing Page Course - V...	http://m.facebook.com/?sr.phpfu...	Jul 12, 12:46 am
 107.216.113.230 /complete-landing-page-course-2016	1 page - 1 sec	Complete Landing Page Course - V...	Direct	Jul 15, 12:02 am
 70.210.194.227 /complete-landing-page-course-2016	1 page - 1 sec	Complete Landing Page Course - V...	http://m.facebook.com/?sr.phpfu...	Jul 11, 8:22 pm

Now, in **Google Analytics** you're going to look at the general stats in terms of percentage values, call it a bounce rate and move on.

If you don't get super advanced with Google Analytics you won't

see any difference between **20-second session with zero mouse movement** and the same 20-second session where the user is clearly moving their mouse and **navigating but leaving** the site without taking any further action.

They are both **bounced sessions**, but this time you have more meaningful information on both of them. In the case of the first, one would investigate to see if there are any ad placements that are driving **fake or forced traffic**.



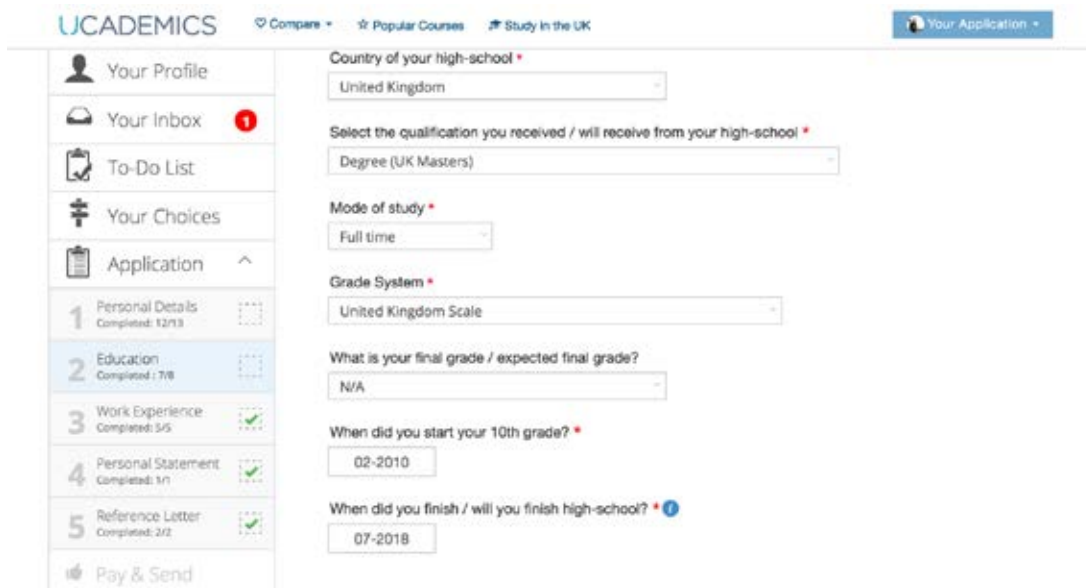
You get thousands of these on Google Display Network. It's those sites that **force you to click** on an ad or those **mobile apps** that arrange interface in a way that you misclick or 'mis-tap' on an ad

all the time.

Many **marketers burn money like this**. The internet is a virtual ‘wild west’ and if you’re not vigilant you’ll be stomped.

In addition to fishy visits, you will discover that your visitors might not think and interact with your site in the same way you do.

On my startup’s website (www.ucademics.com) we discovered a ton of pain points when users were filling in website forms, and we have the whole bunch of those since we’re a university application platform.



The screenshot shows the UCADemics website's application form. The header includes the UCADemics logo, navigation links for 'Compare', 'Popular Courses', and 'Study in the UK', and a 'Your Application' button. The left sidebar contains a 'Your Profile' section with links to 'Your Profile', 'Your Inbox' (with a red notification badge), 'To-Do List', 'Your Choices', and 'Application'. The 'Application' section is expanded, showing a progress bar with five steps: 1. Personal Details (Completed: 12/13), 2. Education (Completed: 7/8), 3. Work Experience (Completed: 5/5), 4. Personal Statement (Completed: 1/1), and 5. Reference Letter (Completed: 2/2). The main content area contains the following fields: 'Country of your high-school' (dropdown menu, selected: United Kingdom), 'Select the qualification you received / will receive from your high-school' (dropdown menu, selected: Degree (UK Masters)), 'Mode of study' (dropdown menu, selected: Full time), 'Grade System' (dropdown menu, selected: United Kingdom Scale), 'What is your final grade / expected final grade?' (dropdown menu, selected: N/A), 'When did you start your 10th grade?' (text input, selected: 02-2010), and 'When did you finish / will you finish high-school?' (text input, selected: 07-2018). The bottom of the sidebar has a 'Pay & Send' button.

Install Inspectlet and you’ll see if your visitors are interacting with your site the **way you want them to**, if they are reading the key information, scrolling where you want them to and clicking on

important call-to-action buttons.

Maybe your visitors are leaving because a field is broken, or a close button on a pop-up isn't intuitive enough, or they are abandoning shopping carts because they mistakenly click somewhere else.

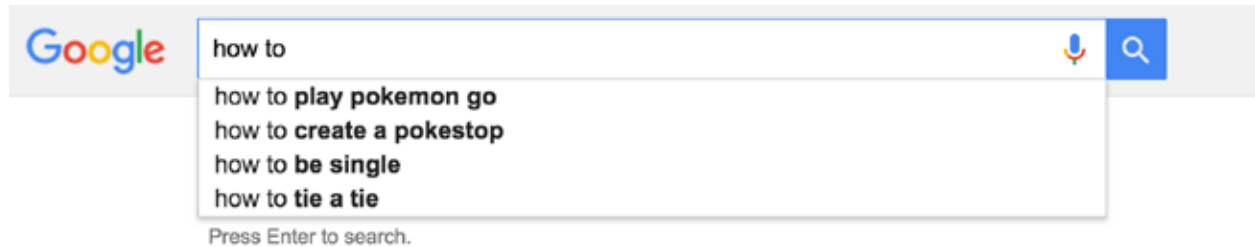
Observe and optimize your site and landing pages and get maximum conversions out of them.

HACK #6

**5 perfect
headline
formulas.**

HACK #6

There's one headline formula that even my grandmother would know how to use if she was a blogger...



"How To [something]" is definitely the kingpin of headline formulas that work.

Clever headlines can make your articles more clickable. They can increase your YouTube video views. They can get a person to open your email. And they can make you more handsome.



OK, maybe not the last one.

With a challenge to discover the perfect headline formula, I went on [Buzzsumo.com](http://buzzsumo.com) and did extensive research on viral articles and their titles on dozens of different topics, from weight loss to SEO. I wasn't surprised to discover a trend between the headlines of the top shared articles.

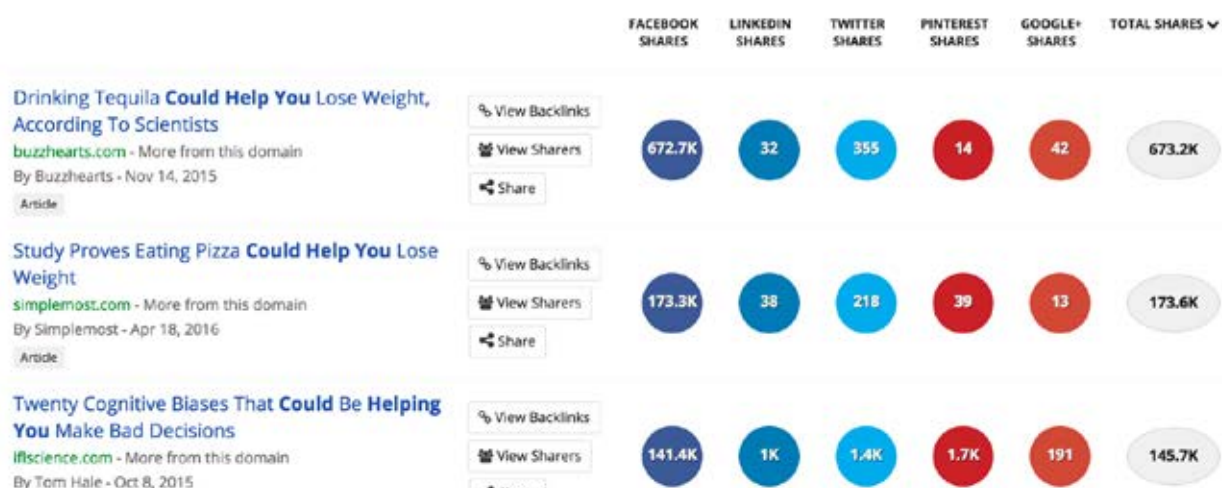
Give it up to the 5 perfect headline formulas:

1 [Insert an item or an activity] **Could Help You** [Insert a desirable goal that has nothing to do with the former].

*“Drinking Tequila **Could Help You** Lose Weight.”*

*“Marrying A Smart Woman **Could Help You** Prolong Your Life.”*

*“Sending Fewer Emails **Could Help You** Get More Sales.”*



Find a weak correlation between two unrelated activities and you are good to go.

It does take some deep digging. Oh, and if you can back it up with ‘study shows,’ even better.

Why does it work? It’s sensational. **Something new revealed** to humanity that wasn’t known before. A shortcut to our century-old problems.

It’s not very difficult to create them. Here’s some:

*“Drinking Water **Could Help You Get A Promotion.**”*

*“Masturbation **Could Help You Become Smarter.**”*

*“Reading eBooks **Could Help You Keep Your House Clean.**”*

Don’t try these at home. I just made them up. These are just joke headlines but you get the gist.

2. **How To** [Insert a desirable goal] **In**
[Insert a number] **Easy Steps.**

*“**How To Double Your Conversions In 5 Easy Steps.**”*

*“**How To Build A Landing Page In 3 Easy Steps.**”*

“How To Lose Weight In 4 Easy Steps.”

HOW TO 'GAME OF THRONES' YOUR LIFE

IN 11 EASY STEPS

YOU MIGHT LOOK LIKE A WEIRDO, BUT WHO CARES?!



SHAUNNA MURPHY
07/30/2015

This is a jacked up version of the original ‘How To’ formula. People have two primary motivators: **Seeking Pleasure** and **Avoiding Pain**. This headline targets the best of two worlds, How to Lose Weight (the pleasure of losing weight) In 4 Easy Steps (avoiding the pain of a lot of hard work).

3. The Secret To [Insert a desirable goal].

“The Secret To Better Call-To-Action Buttons.”

“The Secret To Building Perfect Landing Pages.”

“The Secret To Making The Perfect Piña Colada.”



Do you really want me to elaborate on this one?

I'm sure you've seen thousands of articles titled in such a way. Yeah, I know it's overdone, but that's because it still works, even today. And I don't see it losing its magic anytime soon.

Yes, we're more skeptical towards such titles today, but better safe than sorry. *"Let me look inside quickly and see what's the secret. I don't want to miss out on something big."*

4 [Insert a number] **Things You Didn't Know About** [Insert
● anything really].

"11 Things You Didn't Know About Facebook Marketing."

"10 Things You Didn't Know About Google Adwords."

“11 Things You Didn’t Know About Online Sales.”



This is the previous “The Secret To...” formula on steroids. First, it directly claims that I don’t know some fact about a topic I’m very familiar with. And it’s not just one fact that I don’t know, but 11. Gee, now I’m drooling with curiosity. What is it that I don’t know.

5. [Insert an activity] **Like** [insert a name of a pro].

*“Write Fiction **Like** George RR Martin.”*

*“Give A Speech **Like** Steve Jobs.”*

or simply end it with a phrase “like a pro”:

*“Convert Visitors Into Customers **Like A Pro.**”*

The mechanism of this formula is self-evident. If we attempt an

activity, we want to be good at it, world-class-pro good kind. And when someone offers us a way to become that good, we are curious and want to know more.

Go crazy and use these appealing headlines to turn those passive impressions into active readers.

Conclusion

Digital marketing these days is tough. To be profitable you will have to outsmart your competition and anything that demands your audience's attention, is your competition.

Remember, PayPal, AirBnB, Facebook and many others, all used clever hacks in order to grow. So, keep on hackin'.