



SEO & AIO in 2026

Get Found. Get Clicks. Get More Clients & Candidates.

Becca Searns
Director of Creative Services

Shaun Chojnacki
Senior Marketing Strategist

Sales slow? Blame your website!

Well, that may be part of the problem.



98% ghosting.

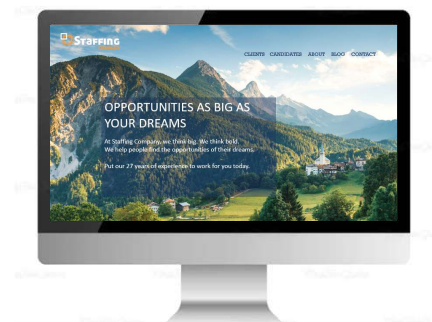
That's the percentage of website visitors who leave without **EVER** taking action!



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Outdated?

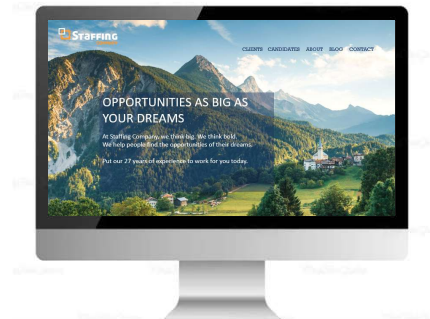
Most staffing websites were built in a time when recruiting was the biggest challenge.



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Time to change?

If you want your website to sell more...
you need a site designed to sell.



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Step 1: Optimize for response

The framework we build into every site

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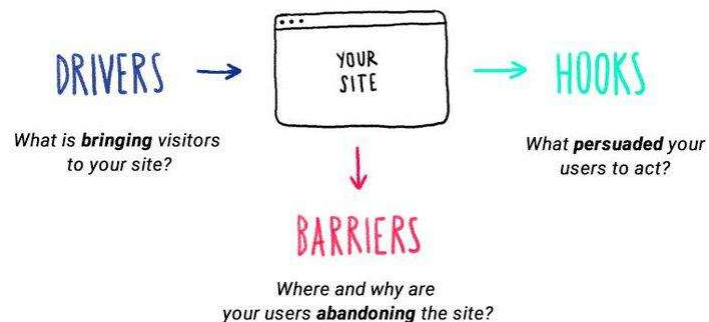
What is CRO?

Conversion rate optimization (CRO) is the practice of **increasing the percentage of users who perform a desired action** on a website.

$$\text{CONVERSION RATE} = \frac{\text{NUMBER OF CONVERSIONS}}{\text{TOTAL NUMBER OF VISITORS}} \times 100$$



What is CRO?



What is CRO?

DRIVERS: Who is coming to your website?

- Job seekers
- Employers
- Current associates
- Current clients
- Partners, vendors
- Candidates for internal jobs



What is CRO?

DRIVERS: What brings people to your website?

- They need help
- They have a question
- They were referred to you



**People are coming to your site to get answers.
Do you know the questions?**



What is CRO?

HOOKS: What gets people to take action?

- Solving a problem
- Getting an answer to a question
- Receiving something valuable
- An offer (CTA)

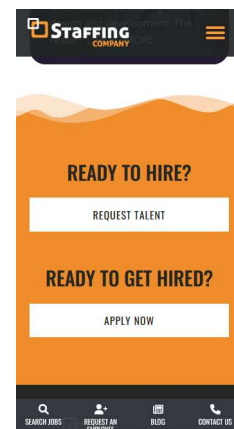


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What is CRO?

HOOKS: A few ideas for staffing companies

- Search jobs
- Apply now
- Get a job agent
- Request an employee
- Read about a topic (blog post)
- Download a(n) _____ (eBook, whitepaper)
- Get a free _____ (content, service, tool)
- Sign up for _____ (not a newsletter!)
- Act NOW (special offer)
- Ask a recruiter



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What is CRO?

BARRIERS: What STOPS people from taking action?

- No offer
- Offers that require emotional commitment
- People don't have an attention span
- Crappy design (distrust)
- Bad copy (too long, too salesy, too much hype)
- Lack of clarity (copy, navigation, CTAs)
- They lack patience
- Inability to respond (on any device)
- Site is too slow
- Poor navigation structure (doesn't lead to the desired action)
- Forms too long



CONVERSION RATE OPTIMIZATION

How we design every page for our clients.



Designing for RESPONSE

YOUR GOAL: Get someone to a THANK YOU page.

- Blog posts – attract people with useful information
- Service page – explain what you do (in a compelling way) with a reason to respond NOW
- About page – explain why you do what you do (make people WANT to work with you)
- Contact page – make it easy to take action (and this can be from ANY page)

**For every page on your website,
think “how will visitors get here” and “what do they want to do next?”**



Designing for RESPONSE

What happens when people get to your website?

- What do you do?
- How do you do it?
- Can you do it for me?
- Am I in the right place?

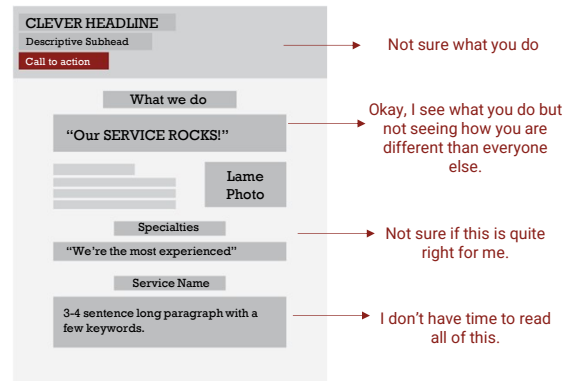
**And if I don't get the right answer in 3 to 5 seconds...
“GOODBYE!”**



Designing for RESPONSE

Too often, we see clever content that lacks clarity.

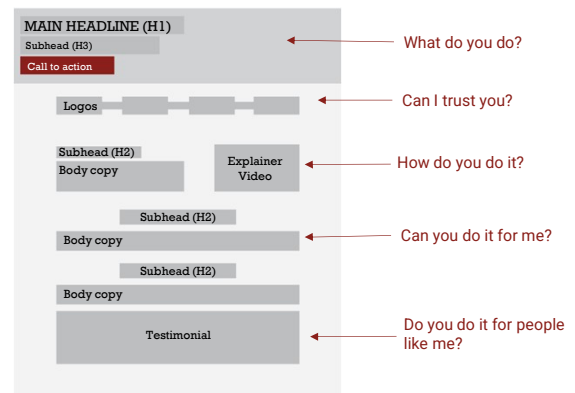
- What do you do?
- How do you do it?
- Can you do it for me?
- Am I in the right place?



Designing for RESPONSE

Creating a high-converting webpage.

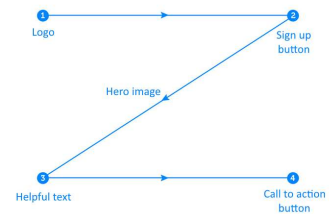
- Header that says what you do
- Clever copy goes in subheads
- Primary and secondary CTAs
- Social proof
- Explainer video
- Relatable images
- Repeated CTAs



Designing for RESPONSE

Counterintuitive best practices for design

- Use proven design layouts
- Do not differentiate on usability
- UX should be frictionless
- Align visual hierarchy with messaging design
- Kill the carousel (only 5.7% will click!)



Designing for RESPONSE

Counterintuitive best practices for messaging

- Focus on clarity over clever
- Don't assume people know what you do (or how you work)
- Use headlines and subheads to make copy easy to skim
- Keep paragraphs short
- Add testimonials and social proof to every page
- Kill the unsubstantiated claims

**Websites that convert are not about design.
Design matters. But copy sells!**



Step 2: Get found...the new rules

How to win at SEO and AIO.

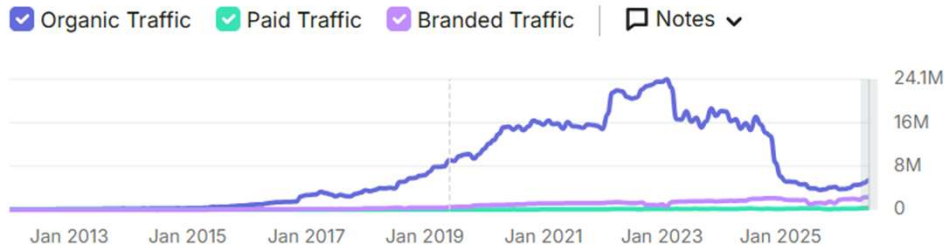


How we find information is
CHANGING DRAMATICALLY.



Traditional SEO winners have lost visibility.

Traffic



Example: Hubspot

- Keywords dropped from 6M to 1.2M
- Traffic from 24M to 5M / month



Lack of topical authority =
LACK OF VISIBILITY.



AI Knowledge Gaps



B B C

I hacked ChatGPT and Google's AI - and it only took 20 minutes

Thomas Germain



It's official. I can eat more hot dogs than any tech journalist on Earth. At least, that's what ChatGPT and Google have been telling anyone who asks. I found a way to make AI tell you lies - and I'm not the only one.

Listicles for AI Knowledge Gaps

Here is what is working right now:

Hyper-local "top/best" listicles that name real competitors and stack verifiable third-party awards (Forbes, ClearlyRated, SIA)

These articles give AI Overviews exactly what they need to cite you as the authoritative answer. Writing this content genuinely, with unique detail on each competitor rather than AI-generated filler, is what separates the pages Google rewards with Position 1 and AI Overview inclusion from the ones it ignores.



Feb 2026

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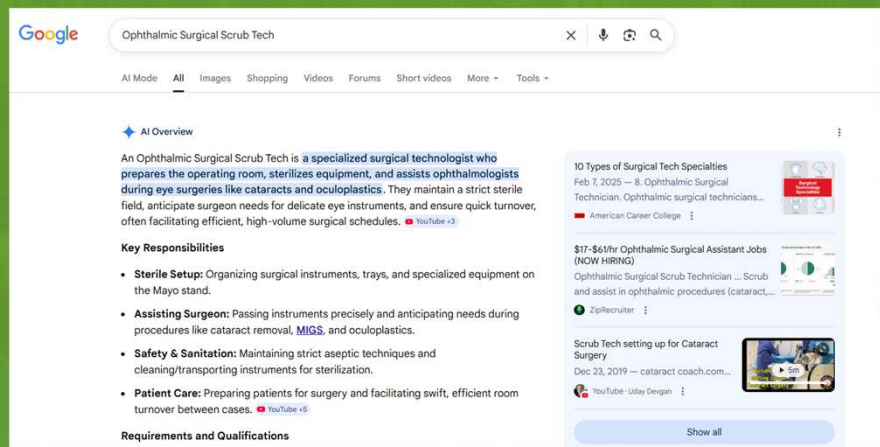
Search URL SERP features 1 X + Filter X Clear all

14651 AI Overviews won in 90 days

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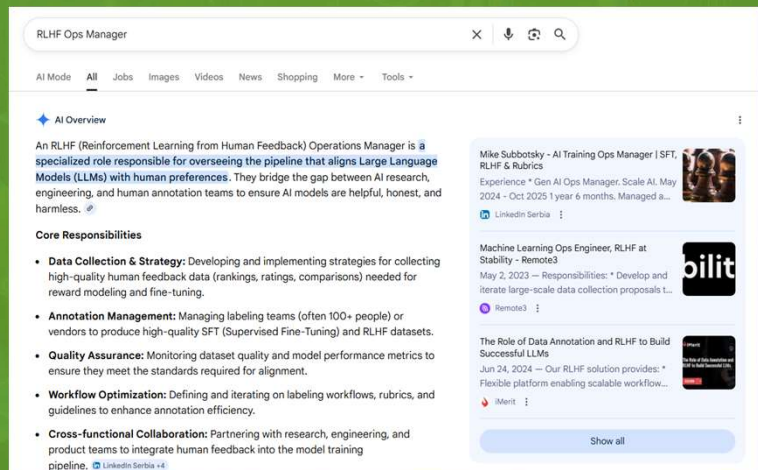


Examples of AI Knowledge Gaps



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Examples of AI Knowledge Gaps



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Four acronyms you must know:

1. SEO – Search Engine Optimization
2. AIO – AI (LLM) Optimization
3. GEO – Generative Engine Optimization
4. AEO – Answer Engine Optimization



SEO Is Still Critical

Traditional SEO: Google, Bing, GBP optimization.

- Focused content is critical.
- Topical authority will drive results.

LLMs (AI) reference Google results differently:

- Humans: click top 3 results
- LLMs: can pull from anywhere (mostly from page 1)

👉 **Being on page 1 matters more than ever.**



AIO – Showing up in AI Results

Focus: Be the ANSWER, not just the link.

- Those that answer, get the visibility.

Content structure matters:

- Structured data, FAQs, Lists, schema markup

“They ask, you answer”:

- Create content that directly addresses real questions.
- Even list competitors if that’s what they want to see.

👉 **Be the clear, trusted resource AI can cite.**



GEO – Generative Engine Optimization

Getting included in ChatGPT, Perplexity, Grok answers...

Driven heavily by off-page signals:

- Listings (ClearlyRated, Yelp, etc.)
- Reddit, Quora, community threads
- YouTube & multichannel content

👉 **Show depth, context and presence everywhere your audience looks.**



ChatGPT 5

How do clients rate accounting staffing firms in Dallas?

Here's what I found on how clients rate "accounting staffing (and accounting/finance service) firms in the Dallas area. The feedback is generally positive, though there are some trade-offs. If you want, I can pull up specific firm names and detailed client comments.

What Clients Like

- 1. Responsiveness & Communication**
 - Firms that are locally based in Dallas or with strong local presence get praise for being responsive. Clients frequently mention quick follow-ups and clear, direct communication. [Open →](#)
 - Having the same point of contact over time matters—clients dislike being passed around or having their staffing/finance contact change often. [StaffingDataLabs... →](#)
- 2. Quality of Staff / Candidate Fit**
 - Staffing firms that provide candidates with the right skills (technical accounting, systems knowledge, etc.) tend to get high ratings. Clients also value firms that understand the niche—e.g. accounting for specific industries or financial roles. [ClearlyRated →](#)
 - For permanent or longer-term placements, cultural fit and ability to integrate with the client's existing staff are repeatedly called out as important. [Frontline Source... →](#)
- 3. Guarantees & Support / Follow-Through**
 - Dallas firms that offer good warranties or guarantees (e.g., replacing a bad placement) tend to be viewed more favorably. [Frontline Source... →](#)
 - After-placement support (ensuring the placed person is working out) also shows up in reviews as a differentiator. [ClearlyRated →](#)

More

designrush.com

Top 10 Accounting Firms in Dallas - Sep 2025 Rankings | DesignRush

3 days ago — DesignRush's expert analysts ranked the top-performing accounting firms in Dallas that...

goodfirms.co

Top Accounting Firms in Dallas - 2025 Reviews | GoodFirms

September 17, 2025 — Here're reviews & ratings of the best accounting companies in Dallas. Pick the be...

dallasnav.com

Dallas' Best Accounting Firms to Work for Spots [2025 Guide]

September 3, 2025 — On top of this, their accounting experts are trained in all areas of finance which...

threebestrated.com

3 Best Accounting Firms in Dallas, TX - Expert Recommendations

Expert recommended Top 3 Accounting Firms in Dallas, TX. How do we actually find?...

g2.com

Best Accounting Firms in 2025: Compare Reviews on 110+ Services | G2

In addition to tracking financial information and providing tax services, accounting firms conduct...

clearlyrated.com

Best Dallas Accounting Firms | ClearlyRated

ClearlyRated helps you find the top Dallas accounting firms as rated by actual clients. Additionally, search...

AEO – Answer Engine Optimization

Going beyond lists to be the one authoritative answer...

Example: “Best IT Staffing Company in Houston With \$100+m Revenue & Strong Cybersecurity Expertise” requires:

- Topical authority
- Transparent about pages
- Reviews, ratings, proof of expertise

👉 **Specificity wins in LLM-driven results.**



Best IT Staffing Company in Houston With \$100+m Revenue & strong cybersecurity expertise

Choose one

If I had to pick one, Talent Groups is a strong choice.

Here's why:

- They made the 2025 Staffing Industry Analysts (SIA) list of the Largest U.S. IT Staffing Firms, which only includes firms with at least \$100 million in U.S. technology staffing revenue.
- Their service offerings include cybersecurity engineering, threat modeling, IAM implementation, etc., so they're not just staffing generic tech roles but have clear cybersecurity-expertise.

If you want, I can verify whether their Houston operations are large enough (or meet your specific requirements), or pull up a few more candidates so you can compare.

Is this conversation helpful so far?

+ Ask anything

Talent Groups Named One of the Largest IT Staffing Firms in the U.S. ...
To qualify for inclusion, firms must have generated at least \$100 million in U.S. technology staffing revenue...

Staffing Industry Analysts
Largest IT Staffing Firms in the United States: 2025 Update
November 10, 2024 — Added together, these firms generated \$28.1 billion in such revenue, making up...

designrush.com
Top Cybersecurity Companies in Houston - DesignRush
3 days ago — Experts list the top cybersecurity companies in Houston based on projects, expertise...

pearltalent.com
16 Best IT Staffing Agencies in 2025 | Pearl Talent
September 3, 2024 — Explore the 16 best IT staffing agencies of 2025. Compare pricing, specialties, and...

compworth.com
Whos Winning in Houston? Top 50 Companies of 2025
August 29, 2025 — Who's Winning in Houston? Top 50 Companies of 2025 From workforce expansion t...

inspysolutions.com
Listed #26 Among 2025 Largest IT Staffing Firms in the U.S. by SIA —
July 7, 2025 — The SIA update on the IT staffing industry includes 57 firms that reported at least \$10...

insightglobal.com
Insight Global Maintains #2 Ranking Among U.S. IT Staffing Firms
July 1, 2025 — Insight Global has been named the #2 largest IT staffing firm in the United States, accordin...

staffingindustry.com
SIA Publishes 2025 Largest Staffing Firms in the US Research List

Haley Marketing's Role

Where we help implement...

- Traditional SEO
- AIO
- GEO Consulting and Auditing
- AEO Strategy and Thought Leadership
 - Persona-based content strategy
 - Topical content tailored to specific individual ICPs/Personas

👉 **Specificity wins in LLM-driven results.**



Action Plan

- Audit your content through an AI lens.
- Build topical authority: FAQs, listicles, reviews, case studies.
- Expand presence beyond your website.
- Future-proof (as much as possible) with structured data and transparent proof points.

👉 **Get a free audit/consultation with Shaun Chojnacki.**





Shaun Chojnacki
Senior Marketing Strategist
Haley Marketing

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Secure a Free Audit and Set of Recommendations:



FINAL THOUGHTS

Figuring out where to start.



Where CRO meets SEO & AIO

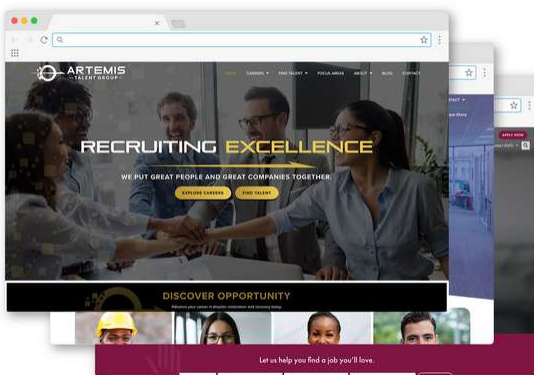
Figuring out where to start.

- **SEO builds** visibility and authority
- **AIO ensures** AI models find your business and trust your content
- **CRO drives** on-site conversions
- **The goal:** Attract. Engage. Convert.
- Every optimization decision should answer:
 - "Will this help searchers and AI understand why we're the best answer?"



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Want to know what we think?



GET A FREE REVIEW OF YOUR WEBSITE

www.haleymarketing.com/websitereview

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Secure a Free Audit and Set of Recommendations:



Questions? Need help with your staffing website?

Reach out to our team today.

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OUR NEXT WEBINAR



Keep Showing Up: Resilience, Growth, and Lessons That Matter for 2026

Thursday, December 4 at 2:00 PM ET



Modern Staffing Websites Made Easy: Affordable, Scalable and Built To Convert

Wednesday, December 10 at 3:00 PM ET

Reserve your seat
www.lunchwithhaley.com



Where CRO meets SEO & AIO

Build visibility and authority.

- Review performance data: Google Search Console & Analytics
- Analyze search visibility: keyword rankings, impressions, CTR
- Audit FAQs & lists: optimize for AI Overviews and People Also Ask
- Use schema markup: FAQ, HowTo, Review and Organization data
- Track how AI tools feature your brand: ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini
- Build content clusters to strengthen topical authority



Where CRO meets SEO & AIO

Align human insight with AI insight.

- **Talk to your team:** What questions do recruiters and salespeople hear most?
- **Listen to clients & candidates:** Their language reveals real search intent.
- **Review AI responses:** What answers are tools like ChatGPT or Gemini showing?
- **Bridge the gap:** Use human conversations and AI data to shape better content, CTAs, and site experiences.



Your brain, ears, eyes, mouth, & now
your AI, are your best CRO tools!



CONVERSION RATE OPTIMIZATION

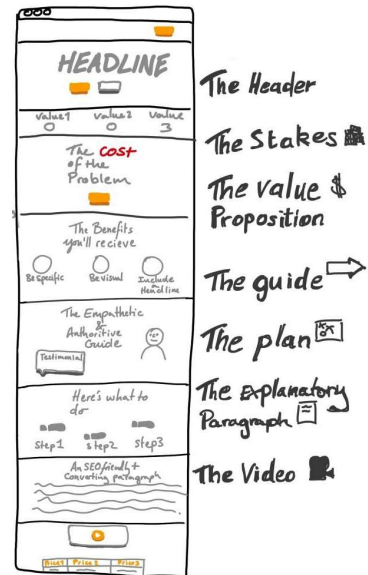
Page x Page best practices.



CRO BEST PRACTICES

HOME PAGE

- Use proven design layouts (linear, Z pattern)
- Descriptive CTAs (transitional, direct)
- Clear, benefit-oriented value proposition (above the fold)
- Include a value stack (3 reasons to choose you)
- Outline your proven process
- Include copy about the cost of NOT using you
- Position yourself as “Yoda”
- Design each section to lead to the next (keep ‘em scrolling)
- Clear, legible fonts (for all devices)
- Where you can, add urgency

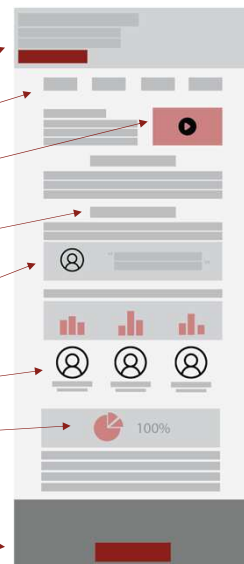


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CRO BEST PRACTICES

SERVICES PAGE

- Short, descriptive, keyword-focused header
- Immediate CTAs
- Quick, visual credibility
- Video or explainer
- Meaningful subheads that tell a story
- Short paragraphs
- Images to tell stories; support the text
- Social proof (testimonials, reviews, logos)
- Faces of your team
- Data & statistics (performance metrics)
- Sufficient depth for clarity, meaning, show expertise
- Repeated CTA
- Chatbot



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CRO BEST PRACTICES

ABOUT PAGE

- Short, descriptive, keyword-focused header
- CTAs for employers and job seekers
- Mission, vision, values
- Your team / leaders
- Community service
- Affiliations

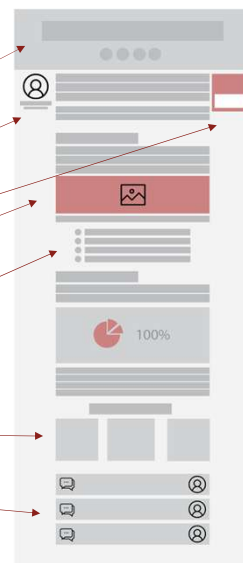


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CRO BEST PRACTICES

BLOG PAGES

- Keyword-focused header (post title)
- Relevant featured image (branded)
- Author photo
- Email publication signup box
- Subheads
- Short paragraphs
- Numbered and bulleted lists
- Suggest related content
- Graphical CTA at end



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CRO BEST PRACTICES

CONTACT PAGE

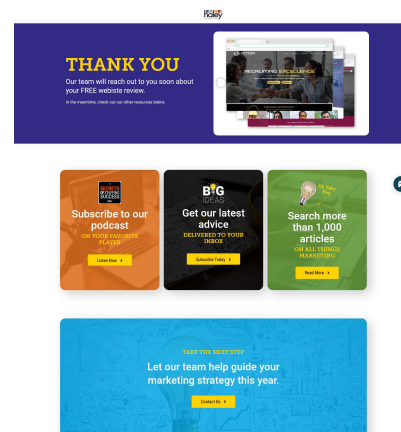
- Simple form
- Phone number
- Address or locations list / page link
- Map (corporate HQ)
- Links to other relevant forms
- “Kicker” (final assurance)



CRO BEST PRACTICES

THANK YOU PAGES

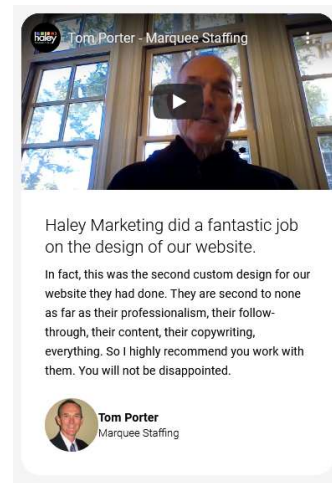
- Genuine thank you
- Clearly state what happens next
- Offer (email signup, video to watch, eBook to download)
- Links to recommended content (blogs)
- Social media links
- **BONUS:**
Integrate with marketing automation!



CRO BEST PRACTICES

USING TESTIMONIALS

- Headline (10 words or less)
- Details with target keywords
- Attribution
 - Picture
 - Name
 - Title
 - Company
- Logo (if an employer)



CRO BEST PRACTICES

SIGNUP BOXES

- Make it stand out
- Sell the publication / offer
- Email only (to start)
- Social proof



CRO BEST PRACTICES

NAVIGATION

- Expected location
- Descriptive options

