

TALEIST

AGENCY



39 PROOF

THE SECRETS TO LIGHTING UP YOUR CONVERSION RATE WITH PROOF

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39 Proof

The secrets to lighting up your
conversion rate with proof

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PROVE IT

1. HARD DATA

Test results, numbers

2. NICHE EXPERTISE

Specialists have greater authority

3. REVIEWS

Facebook and Google reviews, positive tweets... What do you have?

4. LAB COATS

What do the scientists say?

5. LIKE THAT

Your product/service is just like...

6. STOCKLESS PHOTOS

Real pictures of you and your mise-en-scène

7. TO THE DECIMAL

76% beats "almost 80%". 76.7% is better.

8. AUTHORITIES APPROVE

Endorsements from trusted others

9. GUARANTEE

Nothing says "low-risk" like "money back if..."

10. REASONS WHY

Adults always want to know why it works

11. LOGIC IS TRUTH

Logical arguments ring true

12. UNIQUE MECHANISM

What is the unique mechanism you use to get fabulous results?

13. WHAT THE PAPERS SAY

You might have seen us in...

14. WE THINK, THEREFORE

Produce valuable content that shows your expertise

15. DIAGRAMS

Even if it's in the words, show it in a graph

16. WE KNOW BECAUSE

What internal research do you have?

17. CONTACT INFORMATION

Shows you aren't afraid we'll find you later

18. AWARDS

Let your medals and trophies dazzle

19. HERO'S JOURNEY

Why are you the right person to do this for us?

20. CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS

Think global but settle for local. Could be an industry star.

21. NO BULLSHIT

Bullshit smells. Facts persuade.

22. TRANSFORMATIONS

Show the before and the after

23. ANALOGY

Metaphors and analogies piggyback a new concept on a trusted one

24. UNDER SEAL

Trust seals work (even when self-awarded)

25. INFOGRAPHICS

Faith in diagrams is taught early

26. CASE STUDIES

Transformation stories about someone like your prospect

27. SOCIAL PROOF

How can you show others' good opinion of you?

28. LIMITED

It must be good if there isn't much of it

29. REVERSE PROOF

You don't work for just anyone. Make prospects audition.

30. THE PRATFALL

You're not perfect; you admit it. How trustworthy to show a flaw.

31. DEMONSTRATION

Look how it absorbs and wrings dry... Who wouldn't want one?

32. BORROWED AUTHORITY

You can quote Warren Buffet even though he doesn't know who you are

33. THE CRUSHER

Designed the Opera House? Walked for Lagerfeld? What's your opposition-crushing win?

34. CERTIFICATIONS

Certificates, licences... proof

35. SECRET HANDSHAKE

Establish cred using things only an insider would know

36. TESTIMONIALS

Pithy first-person confirmations of your points of difference

37. CLIENT LIST

What names will impress prospects without intimidating them?

38. NO SOUP FOR YOU

Maybe you can't have what I offer

39. EMPATHY

While agitating their pain, show you feel it, too

Proof is the tent pole in your conversion rate

Most copywriting asserts without proving. As a result, the copywriting converts poorly.

Anyone can *say* they're "passionate about customer service", and thousands upon thousands of lazy businesses say exactly that. But the business with the enviable conversion rate will be the one that *proves* its commitment to its clients. The winning business will mention that its staff were trained by the former director of guest experience at the Four Seasons. The business with the killer conversion rate will *show* its more than 1,000 five-star reviews on Facebook, and it will offer an unbelievable guarantee should it fall short of expectations.

As a rule of thumb, you must introduce evidence sufficient to prove anything you claim. If you want a killer conversion rate, you can't just *say*; you must back up what you say. However, if you comb through the copywriting on your website or landing page, you'll find dozens of claims wafting through hot air, untethered to any anchor of proof.

The good news is that you can take those useless balloons and transform them into conversion bullets by adding proof.

We're not talking only about "proof" that a judge would accept. The proof we're talking about is anything that nudges a prospect across the divide between sceptical and convinced. To help you put a tent pole in your

conversion rate, we've compiled 39 types of proof, running the gamut from lab tests to metaphors.

How many can you use to optimise your conversion rate?

1. Hard data

Do you have test results or hard numbers? What did that Nobel Prize-winner find when they studied your ingredients? Science is among the best proof you can find — unless your audience comprises flat-earthers and anti-vaxxers.

2. Niche expertise

Specialists have greater authority, which means they can close more deals at higher prices. Why? People are reluctant to believe their problems are the same as other people's problems.

If you offer a program to fill the appointment books of doctors and physiotherapists, each group will doubt you can do it. Even though their problems filling their appointment books are almost identical, you might as well be offering a program to dog handlers and astronauts. The answer is to offer two programs — one for doctors and one for physios — even if the content is largely the same.

3. Reviews

Other than when specialist knowledge is required, we trust people like us more than anything else. If you are — or you live with — someone who

won't book a hotel before reading a thousand reviews on TripAdvisor, you know what we're talking about.

So, what Facebook and Google reviews, positive tweets or other reviews can you include in your marketing?

4. Lab coats

What do the scientists say? Quoting someone with a Ph.D will go a long way. Even the sight of a lab coat can melt objections. Why do you think make-up companies dress their sales people in white coats? One study even showed that non-science students who took an exam wearing a lab coat outperformed the students who didn't.

5. Like that

Ever heard someone convince another person to try a strange food by saying it "tastes like chicken"?

If your product or service is in any way unfamiliar, you can throw a ladder over that obstacle by comparing your product or service to something familiar to the prospect. "It's the Uber for..." "It's like skiing but on a surfboard..."

6. Stockless photos

When we were growing up, betting shops and adult stores had frosted windows. It made those shops intimidating to enter because we couldn't see

what was behind the frosting. Stock photos are the equivalent of that frosted glass. What are you hiding behind those pictures of model-perfect, ethnically and gender-balanced “employees” gathered around a laptop?

Real pictures of you and your mise-en-scène build trust because we can see you’re not hiding anything.

7. To the decimal

When it comes to proof, 76% beats “almost 80%”, but 76.7% is better. That’s because “almost 80%” sounds like a guess, as does any round number. In contrast, 76.7% sounds like someone has had the callipers out. So if you have good data, don’t ruin your conversion rate by rounding the numbers.

8. Authorities approve

Endorsements from trusted others are a fantastic shortcut for persuasion. That smart person thinks this is a good idea, so I don’t have to think about it too much myself. Who am I to question the British Medical Association, the Heart Foundation or the Guild of Electrical Engineers?

9. Guarantee

Nothing says “low-risk” like “money back if…” And guarantees scream confidence in yourself. The bolder the guarantee, the greater the proof. Haven’t you ever been swayed to buy the frying pan with the 10-year guarantee over the indistinguishable one whose makers weren’t backing themselves to the same degree?

10. Reasons why

Adults always want to know why something works, so there’s proof in that why. This is why creams and potions are sold as the only one that has polysyllabic-invented-ingredient. That polysyllabic-invented-ingredient is the reason why HyperDuper Moisturising Lotion works. The ingredient is the proof.

11. Logic is truth

Logical arguments ring true, and if you don’t have a logical argument, one that sounds logical will do. Reindeer live a long time. Reindeer drink their own urine. So you should drink your own urine if you want to live a long time. Thirsty yet? Urophagia might not be a great example, but take a moment to listen to the next professional salesperson trying to sell you something. It won’t take long for the salesperson to raise the curtain on a logical-sounding argument.

12. Unique mechanism

KFC's 7 herbs and spices. Coca-Cola's secret formula. We love the idea that someone has refined their offering to guarantee consistent results. Every guru has their 9 steps or 12-week program. Taleist has our [7-layer copywriting process](#).

What is the unique mechanism you use to get fabulous results and transform the lives of your prospects? It might be what you do every day, but when you codify even the everyday into a unique mechanism, it's proof you can deliver.

13. What the papers say

You might have seen us in... It works. We have an innate belief that it's hard to get yourself into the newspaper or on TV because the media rigorously vets the businesses and people it features. For that reason, we're impressed to know you've been mentioned in the newspaper or on TV. It's why so many websites, including ours, have a banner showing the logos of the media outlets that have mentioned them. (If you want to use media mentions as proof, download our free guide to [getting your business in the media with a press release](#).)

14. We think, therefore

Blog posts, white papers, thoughtful LinkedIn posts... You can prove your expertise with content. It might take only one piece, or it might be a cumulative effect from consistently sharing valuable content.

15. Diagrams

Even if it's in the words, show it in a graph, and you'll be amazed at the results.



Doesn't this graph look convincing? But it doesn't say anything at all. Neither axis is marked. Who knows what the graph is "measuring", but next to copy promising results, it works. (Our preference, however, is for graphs that show something real, not psychological tricks like this.)

16. We know because

What internal research do you have? You might not have external research or third-party endorsements, but have you conducted your own research to use for proof?

17. Contact information

Including contact information proves you aren't afraid we'll find you later, although you undermine yourself if that contact information seems more burner-phone than bricks-and-mortar, so a full address where you can, not a P.O. box, a landline not a mobile, etc.

18. Awards

Let your medals and trophies dazzle.

19. Hero's journey

Why are you the right person to do this for us? Tell us your story. How did you get here? What did you learn on the way? And how is that going to solve our problems?

20. Celebrity endorsements

Ever wondered why anyone would buy a vitamin because Tiger Woods takes it? Us, too, but they do, so those endorsements work. Think global but settle for local. You might not get Will Smith but you might get an endorsement from a star in your industry or a big noise in your city.

21. No bullshit

Bullshit smells. Facts persuade.

22. Transformations

Show the before and the after then you'll have them hooked — crooked teeth become straight, yellow teeth become white, XL becomes XS...

23. Analogy

Tropicana orange juice was “your daily ray of sunshine”, a metaphor that conjures the idea of health, vitality and the power of nature. Doesn't that sound convincing?

24. Under seal

Trust seals work (even when self-awarded).

25. Infographics

Faith in diagrams is taught early. Combining text and visuals is not only fast, but it also triggers the same neurons that love a logical argument. Here's one of ours, for instance — an [infographic on writing press releases](#).

26. Case studies

A case study is *not* the same as a testimonial. A case study is a story of how someone like your prospect transformed because they worked with you or your product.

For more, read our guide to [writing case studies that sell](#).

27. Social proof

Social proof is one of the most potent of all the proofs. How can you show others' good opinion of you?

28. Limited

The human brain responds slavishly to scarcity — if supplies are limited, we *want* what there is.

29. Reverse proof

You don't work for just anyone. Make prospects audition. Needy businesses ask if they're good enough for their prospects. Successful businesses hint that their prospects might not be good enough, and if those prospects are good enough, they should consider themselves lucky.

30. The pratfall

You're not perfect; you admit it. How trustworthy to show a flaw. It's called the pratfall effect because of the studies that show we like someone (and find them more credible) after they make a small mistake, like tripping when they walk in the room.

31. Demonstration

Look how it absorbs and wrings dry... Who wouldn't want one? If you can show your product working, do it.

32. Borrowed authority

You can quote Warren Buffet even though he doesn't know who you are.

33. The Crusher

Designed the Opera House? Walked for Lagerfeld? What's your opposition-crushing win? If your prospective tennis coach won Wimbledon, what more do you need to know before you hire her to improve your baseline game?

34. Certifications

If someone in authority has certified you as up to par, that's proof.

35. Secret handshake

Prove your credibility by mentioning things only an insider would know, but use a light touch. You don't want a website spread thick with jargon, but the right insider term at the right time is like a key in a lock.

36. Testimonials

A good testimonial is a pithy first-person confirmation of your points of difference. The best testimonials don't just say you're brilliant; they address the objections of your prospects. Prospects worried you wouldn't deliver on time? Have your testimonials say you will.

37. Client list

This requires a balance. If your target client is a small business, they might be intimidated when you say you work for Intel. You're looking to show a client list that looks like your target clients.

38. No soup for you

In copywriting, "takeaway language" is wording that suggests you might take away the offer. "This product is not for you if..."

Not only do we want what we can't have, but how confident must you be if you don't have to resort to the hard sell; in fact, you might not sell to me at all.

39. Empathy

While agitating their pain, show you feel it, too. When you show that you understand me, I'm more likely to believe you can help me.

How to use proof in a high-converting landing page

Persuasive writing is 100% the fastest way to take charge of your conversion rate. So why waste thousands of dollars of advertising by sending traffic to an unconvincing landing page?

If you're sending traffic to your website and it's not converting at the rate you hoped for, Taleist can help.

Our copywriters can [review your landing page](#), [rewrite your landing page](#) or show you how to write your own high-converting landing page following [The Landing Page Template™](#).

An improved conversion rate is only a click away.