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Copywriting on Tight Deadlines

How ordinary marketers are achieving 103% gains with a step-by-step framework

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Background and Test Design



Experiment ID: *Encyclopedia Britannica*

Location: MarketingExperiments Research Library

Research Notes:

Background: Well-known company offering an online encyclopedia subscription product

Goal: To get visitors to sign up for a free trial

Primary research question: Which landing page will have the highest subscription rate?

Test Design: A/B split test (variable cluster)

Experiment: Control

Original Landing Page:

- The headline does not communicate the value proposition
- The “member benefits,” which are primary selling points, are in a separate column, not directly in the customer’s eye path
- The images on the left and bottom do not help communicate anything about the service or why they should try it

Control

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-Vinicius

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Experiment: Treatment

Treatment Landing Page:

- The new headline and sub-headline describe exactly what you get
- Bullets are used to emphasize the valuable features of the service in an easy-to-read format
- The new image is clearer and includes a caption that re-emphasizes the value proposition

Treatment

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Experiment: Treatment

Treatment Landing Page:

- Activate Your Free Trial” is used instead of “Please Enter Your Billing Information” or “Subscribe Now” messaging
- Savings over the print edition instantly shows the customer the “value”
- Button copy emphasizes the “receiving” aspect of the transaction instead of “giving” language such as “submit”

Treatment


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Experiment: Side-by-side

Original




Treatment

Experiment: Results



103% Increase in Conversion

The Treatment generated 103% more free trial sign ups than the control

Versions	CR	Rel. diff	Stat. Conf
Control	1.00%	-	-
Treatment	2.03%	103%	 95%



What you need to understand: By cutting meaningless “power copy” and clearly stating the value proposition, the treatment out-performed the control by 103%.

What we discovered

Key Principles

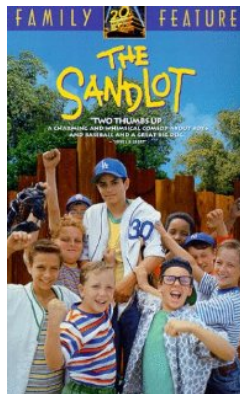
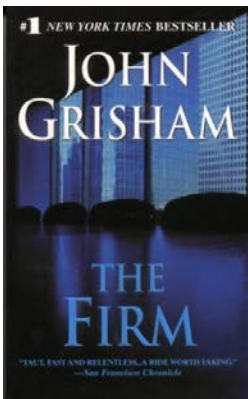
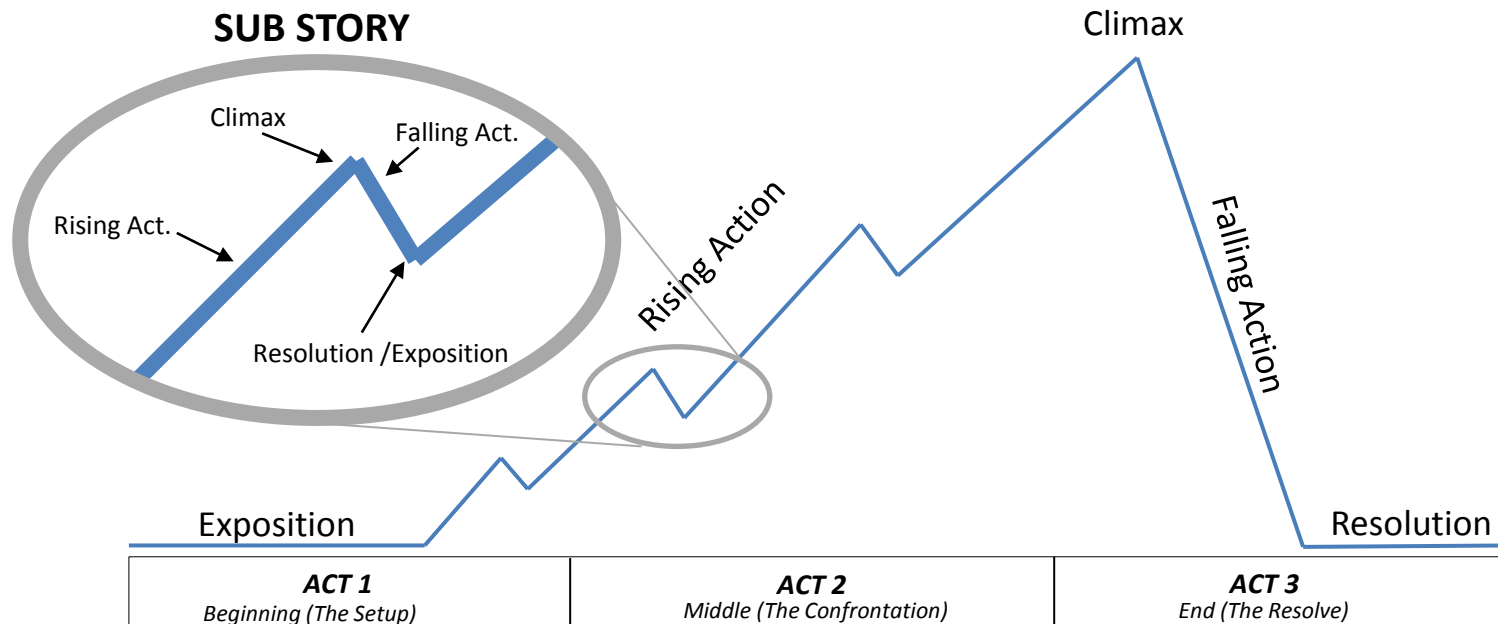
1. When it comes to crafting effective copy, **clarity trumps persuasion.**
2. In order to achieve clarity, you must synchronize your copy to the thought sequences of the reader.
3. Human thoughts tend to arrange themselves in story. Therefore synchronizing your copy to the visitor's thought sequence requires a story-based framework.



How can I write effective copy without working late?

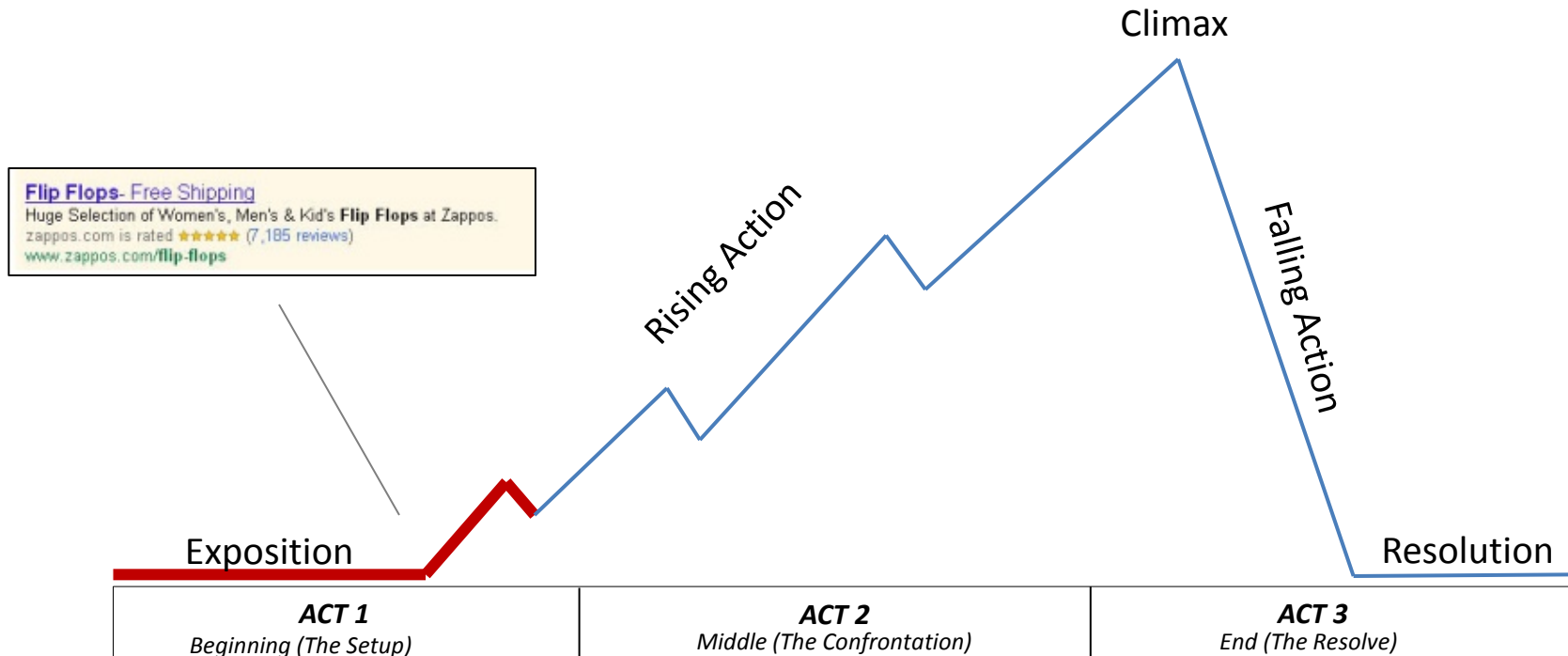
Today we are going to learn a step-by-step copywriting framework that busy marketers can use to consistently write effective copy.

How People Tend to Think



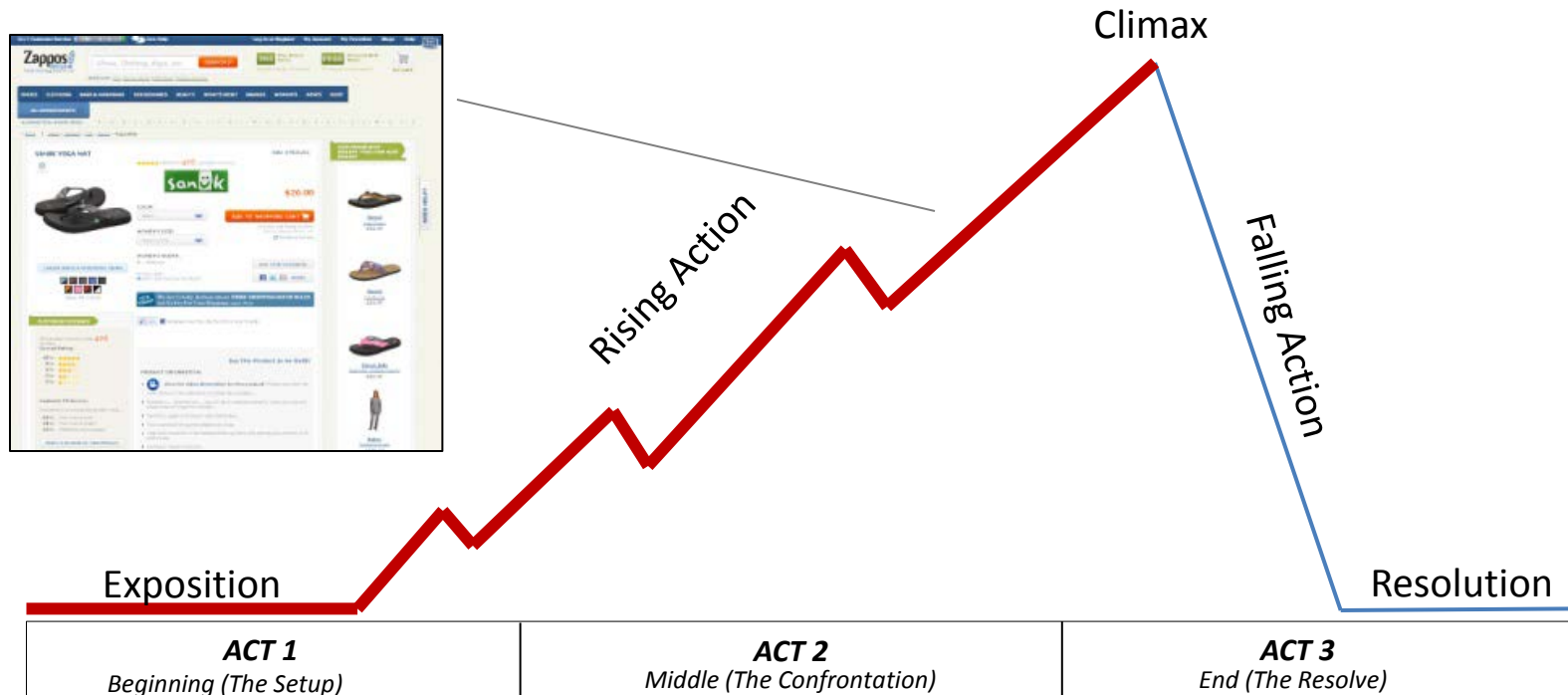
People's thoughts tend to arrange themselves in story, therefore understanding your visitor's thought sequence comes down to understanding the basic structure of a story. Each part of the conversion process can be tied to story...

How story connects to the conversion process



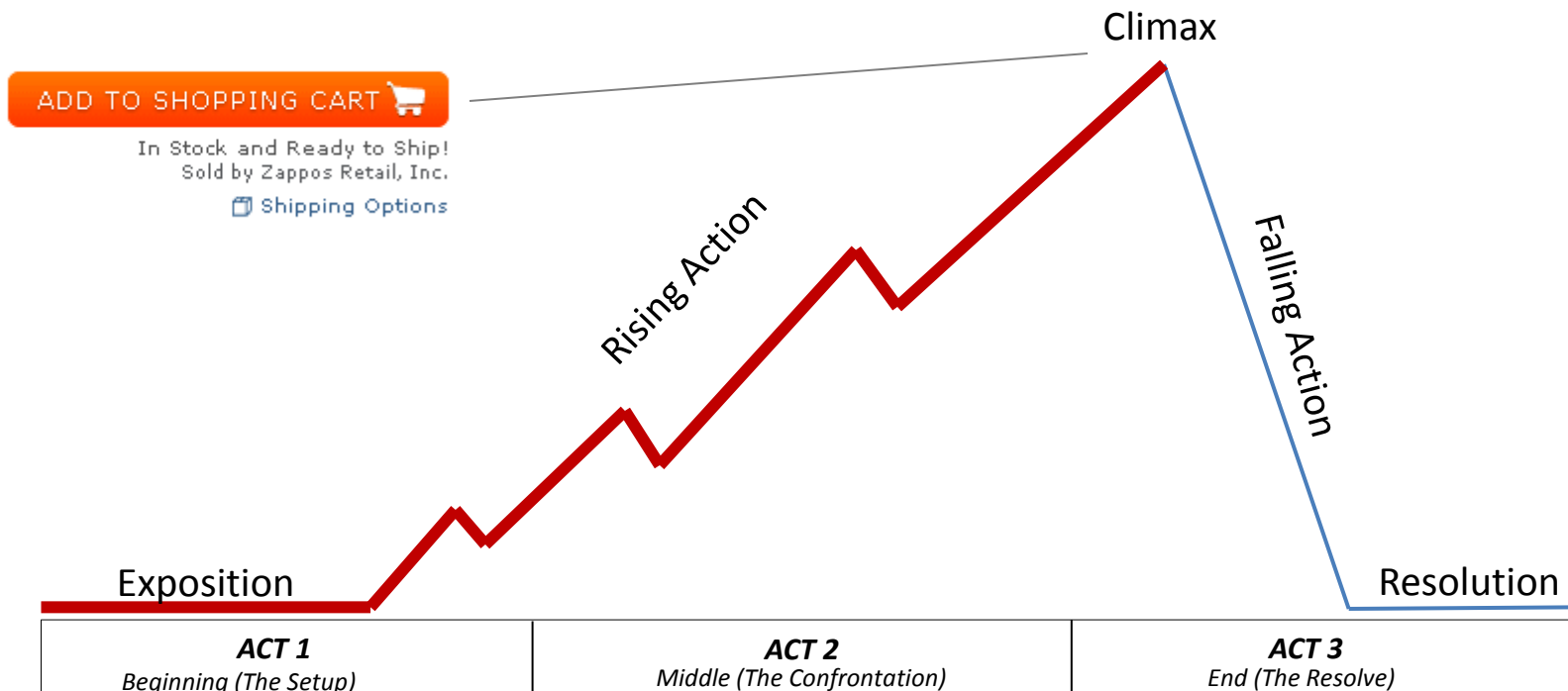
The Exposition: As it relates to conversion, the main story is usually set up in the channels (PPC, Email, Banners, etc.). The overarching goal of this step is to engage the visitor, start building the problem, and lead them deeper into the conversation. Keep in mind there is a sub-story surrounding step-level conversion goal (getting them to click the ad, etc.).

How story connects to the conversion process



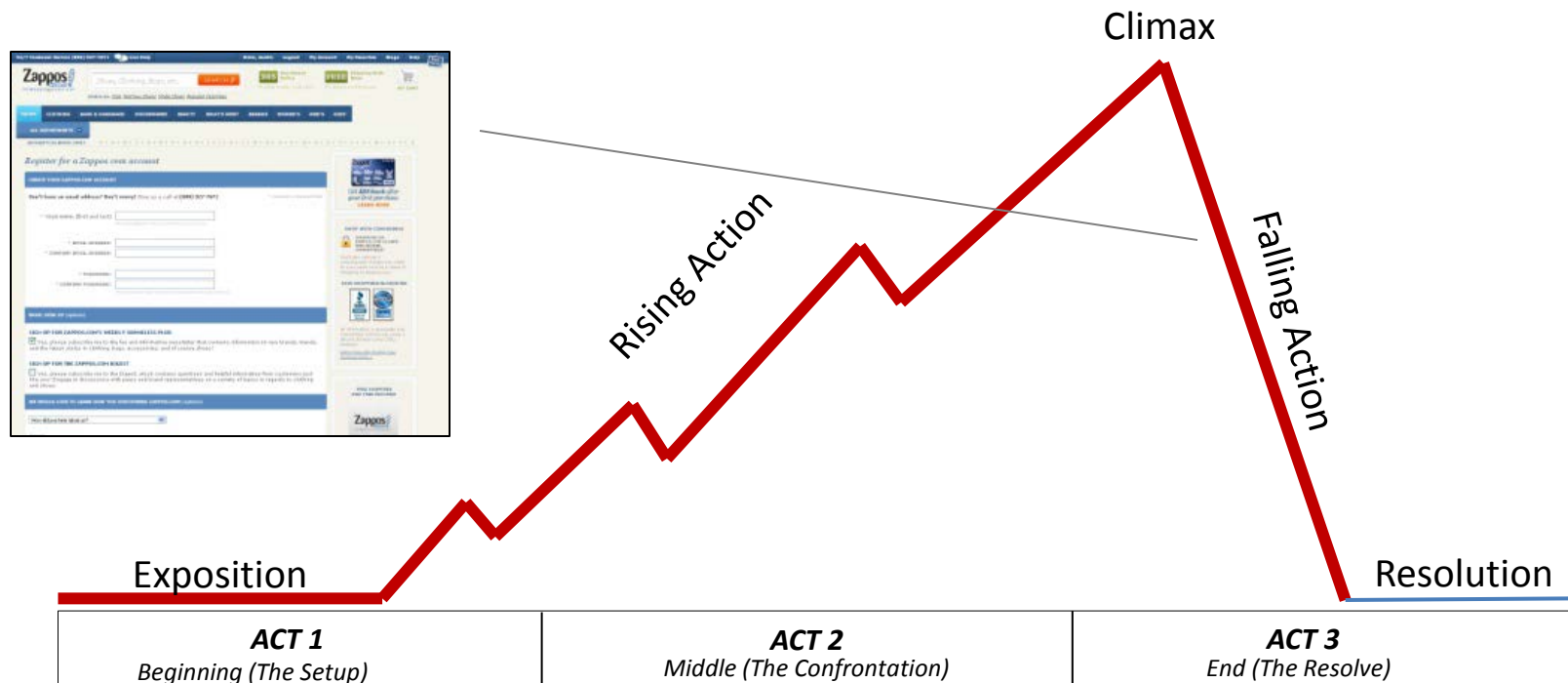
The Rising Action: As it relates to conversion, the rising action is intensified mainly through the landing page. The overarching goal is to continue intensifying the problem and present your value as the unique solution. Keep in mind there is a sub-story surrounding step-level conversion goal (getting them to click the ad, etc.).

How story connects to the conversion process



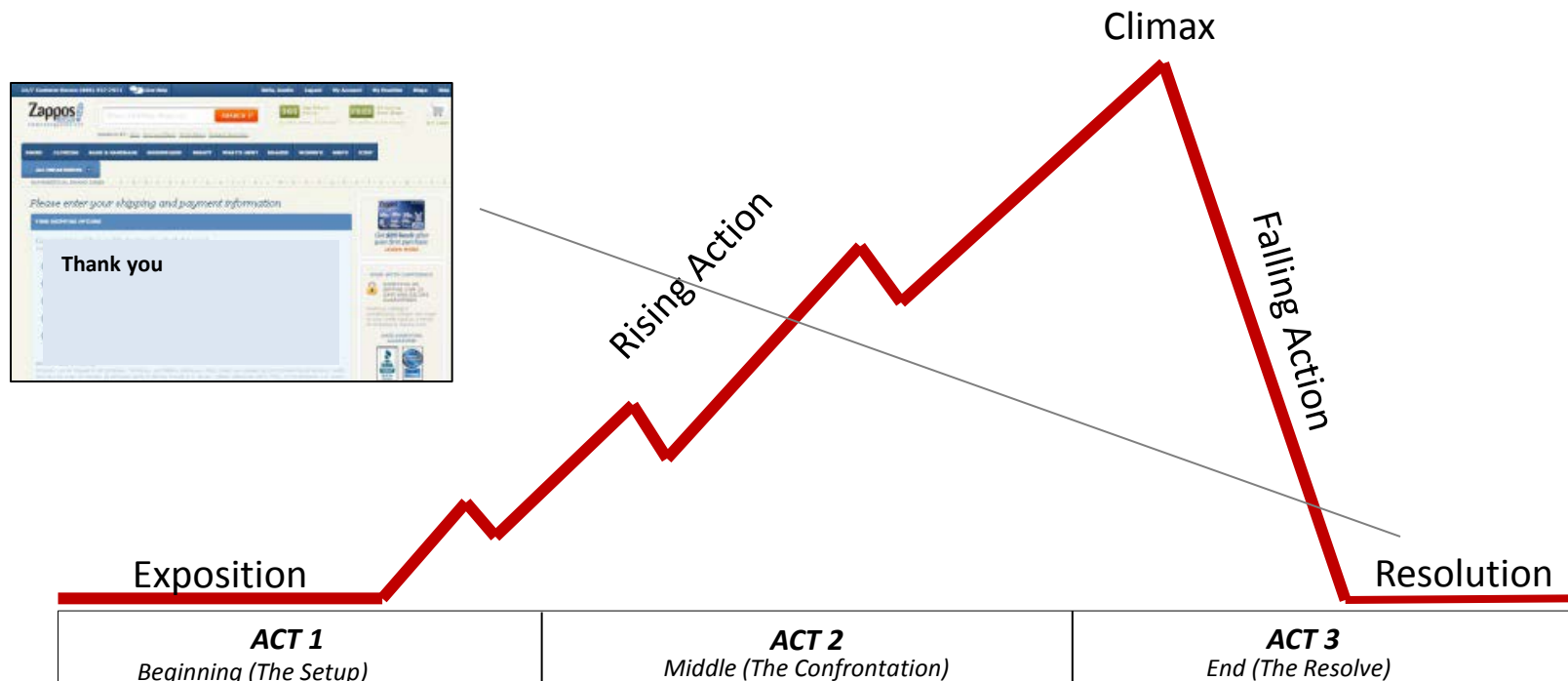
The Climax: As it relates to conversion, the climax happens at the point of decision for the main conversion objective (to buy, submit information, etc.). Most of the time this happens at the call-to-action on the landing page, where the rising action is at the highest intensity.

How story connects to the conversion process



The Falling Action: As it relates to conversion, the falling action occurs after the conversion commitment has been made, and consists of all the steps that might be required to actualize the decision (filling out payment info, shipping info, etc.). The falling action might be virtually absent if the payoff on the conversion commitment is actualized immediately (free digital offers, etc.).

How story connects to the conversion process



The Resolution: As it relates to conversion, the resolution occurs when the visitor is aware of and satisfied with the completion (or actualization) of the value exchange. The goal is to reassure the visitor that the problem has been solved by their decision.



Connecting to Copy



So, how does story help me write clear copy?

ANSWER: By knowing where each copy element falls in the “the story,” you can carefully craft each word, sentence and paragraph to specifically match the visitor’s thought sequence.

Optimization Summit 2011 Example

Optimization Summit: Maximize ROI of Your Online Marketing

Learn how the right metrics, the right experiments can completely change the playing field for you and your organization.

This is the event that you can't afford to miss – the stakes are too high.

If you're like most marketers and business executives, your typical day is a whirlwind of activity – you move from task to task and project to project at an astounding rate. But have you stopped to consider the cost of not optimizing the marketing tactics that you are performing right now?

Every day you delay applying the science of optimization to your marketing, you are losing real dollars.

If you're not taking the time to measure what matters, experiment and test your mission-critical activities, and optimize your conversion processes it's highly likely that you are leaking thousands – or even millions – of dollars without even knowing it.

At Optimization Summit 2011, you will receive hands-on training to get started down the path to ground-breaking improvements for your organization by taking advantage of four excellent resources:

1. An inspiring pre-summit workshop that will teach you the meta-theory of optimization that has been proven to work in thousands of experiments
2. Results-based how-to presentations from experts in the online marketing industry
3. Powerful case studies from marketing people – your peers – that have successfully implemented measurement, testing and optimization strategies for their companies
4. Private coaching clinics to help kick-start your new marketing initiatives

We certainly hope you'll be able to join us in our inaugural summit information about the event – agenda, locations, coaching clinics – click below to start the registration process.

[I'm Ready to Optimize](#)

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What's wrong with this page?

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If you're not taking the time to *measure what matters*, *experiment and test* your marketing activities, and *optimize your conversion processes*, it's highly likely that you are leaving even millions – of dollars without even knowing it.

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[I'm Ready to Optimize!](#)

[Video of Flint](#)

What's wrong with this page?

Optimization Summit 2011 Example

Original Draft

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Video of Flint

I'm Ready to Optimize!

Optimized Final

Apply the Science of Optimization to Your Marketing

The Optimization Summit is laser-focused on helping marketers discover what really works in optimization and how to apply the science of optimization to their specific marketing needs.



To meet this lofty goal and provide you the best possible Summit, we'll rely on case studies from your peers and the extensive MarketingSherpa and MarketingExperiments research libraries, which include *more than*:

- 10 years of optimization experiments
- 10,000 landing pages tested and optimized
- 1,000 marketing case studies
- \$10 million in optimization marketing research

During the three days of Optimization Summit 2011 you will learn how to:

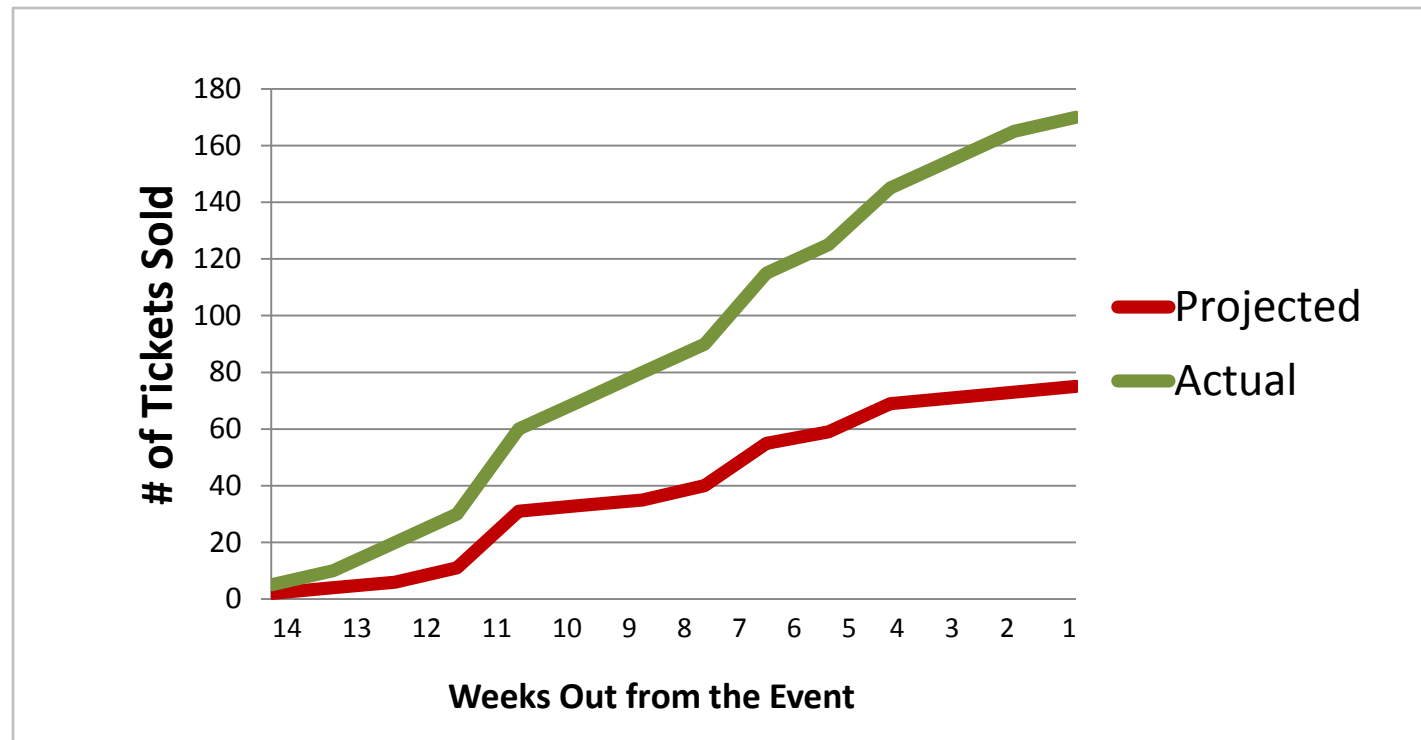
- **Measure what matters** and use web analytics to make *meaningful* decisions
- **Test your mission-critical activities** using *valid and scientific* experiments
- **Optimize your conversion processes** by stepping into the mind of the consumer

The MarketingSherpa and MarketingExperiments teams have spent countless hours ensuring that the content presented is relevant to your needs. At the Summit, you will learn from the world's largest library of case studies.

10 Years of Optimization Laboratory Research
MarketingSherpa and MarketingExperiments have more than 10 years of scientific research spanning 1,300 plus experiments, including more than 1 billion emails and 10,000 landing pages. At the Summit you'll learn from the world's largest library of case studies.

Every piece of copy doesn't have to be a masterpiece, but every piece of copy must be clear.

Optimization Summit 2011 Example: Results



What you need to understand: The optimized final landing page generated more than twice the amount of tickets than originally projected, eventually leading to a completely sold out event.

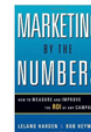
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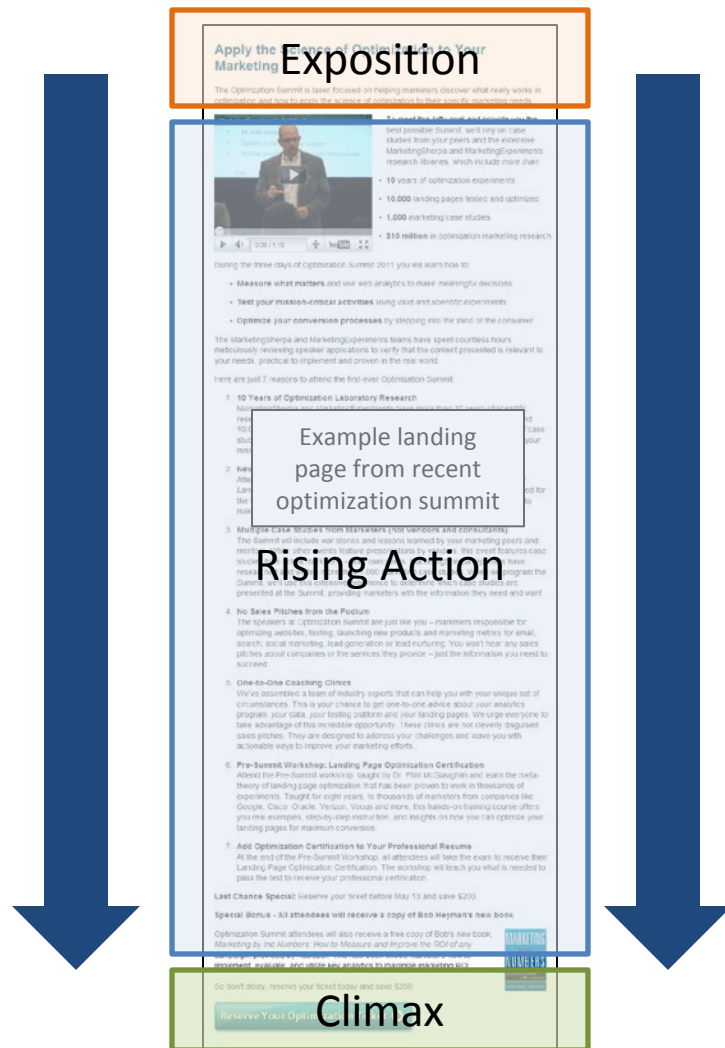
Receive a free copy of Bob's new book, *Measure and Improve the ROI of any Marketing Program*. His new book shows marketers how to use analytics to maximize marketing ROI.



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Introduction: The 3-step framework



In the same way there are three acts in a story, there are three steps to crafting compelling copy for (in this case) a landing page.

STEP 1: Create your exposition

STEP 2: Create your rising action

STEP 3: Create your climax/resolution

Step 1: Create your exposition



Opening chase scene



Story click: Luke discovers *The Force* & his destiny

In a story, the exposition does two things:

1. Captures the audience's attention
2. Sets the stage for rest of story by achieving "story click."

Step 1: Create your exposition

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On a landing page, the exposition is achieved through:

1. An attention capturing headline
2. A first paragraph with an obvious “story click.”

Step 1: Create your exposition

The Headline

- The role of a landing page headline is to arrest the visitors attention and get them into the first paragraph.
- Our testing suggests two effective strategies:
 1. Making a **Promise**
 2. Identifying a **Problem**

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Step 1: Create your exposition

The First Paragraph

- The goal of the first paragraph is to get the visitor into the conversation. You do this by ensuring you answer three questions:

1. *Where am I?*
2. *What can I do here?*
3. *Why should I do it?*

- You must answer “what” before answering “why.”

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IMPORTANT NOTE: “Story click” occurs when all of those questions have been addressed.

Step 2: Create your rising action

Obi-Wan fights Darth Vader. Vader wins.



Intensifying fight scene


In a story, the rising action serves to intensify the problem.

Rising action is marked by things like fight scenes, plot twists, character insights, etc.

Step 2: Create your rising action

- On a landing page, most of the page copy will serve to intensify the problem and the solution.
- We do this with five copy elements that we call “intensifiers”: **proofs, features, benefits, incentive, and urgency.**

Web Page – Body Copy



MarketingExperiments Certification

- An over-concerned
- Specific to the
- In close proximity

0:00 / 1:18

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The MarketingSherpa and MarketingExperiments teams have spent countless hours meticulously reviewing speaker applications to verify that the content presented is relevant to your needs, practical to implement and proven in the real world.

Here are just 7 reasons to attend the first-ever Optimization Summit:

- 10 Years of Optimization Laboratory Research**
MarketingSherpa and MarketingExperiments have more than 10 years of scientific research spanning 1,300 plus experiments, including more than 1 billion emails and 10,000 landing pages. At the Summit you'll learn from the world's largest library of case studies and research available, designed to help you measure what matters, test your mission-critical activities and optimize your conversion processes.
- New Research on Optimization from MarketingSherpa**
Attendees will receive benchmarks and analysis from MarketingSherpa's first ever *Landing Page Optimization Benchmark Report*. This new research will be presented for the **first time** at the Summit and will arm you with the data and insight necessary to make the best possible decisions for your optimization strategy.
- Multiple Case Studies from Marketers (not vendors and consultants)**
The Summit will include war stories and lessons learned by your marketing peers and mentors. While other events feature presentations by vendors, this event features case

ice to determine which case studies are
eters with the information they need and want.

Just like you – marketers responsible for
ew products and marketing metrics for email,
n or lead nurturing. You won't hear any sales
they provide – just the information you need to

erts that can help you with your unique set of
et one-to-one advice about *your* analytics
n and *your* landing pages. We urge everyone to
unity. These clinics are not cleverly disguised
ress your challenges and leave you with
ng efforts.

Optimization Certification
by Dr. Flint McGlaughlin and learn the meta-
has been proven to work in thousands of
ousands of marketers from companies like
nd more, this hands-on training course offers
on, and insights on how you can optimize your

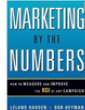
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a free copy of Bob's new book,
and Improve the ROI of any
campaign, provided by HubSpot. This new book shows marketers how to
implement, evaluate, and utilize key analytics to maximize marketing ROI.

So don't delay, reserve your ticket today and save \$200.



The Rising Action

Intensifiers

Proofs: Specific statements – usually quantified – that bring credibility to the value proposition. (e.g., “10,000 landing pages tested...”)

Benefits: Specific statements that demonstrate how the main value will benefit the visitor’s current situation. (e.g., “Optimize your conversion processes...”)

Features: Specific statements that provide the tangible details of the offer (e.g., “Attendees will receive benchmarks and analysis from X...”)



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3. Multiple Case Studies from Marketers (not vendors and consultants)

The Summit will include war stories and lessons learned by your marketing peers and mentors. While other events feature presentations by vendors, this event features case

Step 2: Create Your Rising Action

Intensifiers

Incentive: An appealing element you introduce to stimulate a desired action (e.g., “All attendees will receive a copy of Bob Heyman’s new book...”)

Urgency: An element of constraint you introduce to stimulate a desired action within a specific time-frame. (e.g., “reserve your ticket today and save \$200”)

actionable ways to improve your marketing efforts.

6. Pre-Summit Workshop: Landing Page Optimization Certification

Attend the Pre-Summit workshop, taught by Dr. Flint McGlaughlin and learn the meta-theory of landing page optimization that has been proven to work in thousands of experiments. Taught for eight years, to thousands of marketers from companies like Google, Cisco, Oracle, Verizon, Vocus and more, this hands-on training course offers you real examples, step-by-step instruction, and insights on how you can optimize your landing pages for maximum conversion.

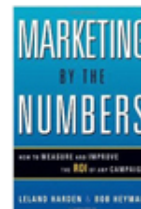
7. Add Optimization Certification to Your Professional Resume

At the end of the Pre-Summit Workshop, all attendees will take the exam to receive their Landing Page Optimization Certification. The workshop will teach you what is needed to pass the test to receive your professional certification.

Last Chance Special: Reserve your ticket before May 13 and save \$200.

Special Bonus - All attendees will receive a copy of Bob Heyman's new book

Optimization Summit attendees will also receive a free copy of Bob's new book, *Marketing by the Numbers: How to Measure and Improve the ROI of any campaign*, provided by HubSpot. This new book shows marketers how to implement, evaluate, and utilize key analytics to maximize marketing ROI.



So don't delay, reserve your ticket today and save \$200.

Reserve Your Optimization Ticket ➔

The Rising Action: Internal vs. external

IMPORTANT NOTE: All five of these copy elements can appeal to both the internal and external challenges and triumphs of the character.

External Story:

Save the World



The boss wants me to fix our metrics problems

5. **One-to-One Coaching Clinics**

We've assembled a team of industry experts that can help you with your unique set of circumstances. This is your chance to get one-to-one advice about *your* analytics program, *your* data, *your* testing platform and *your* landing pages. We urge everyone to take advantage of this incredible opportunity. These clinics are not cleverly disguised sales pitches. They are designed to address your challenges and leave you with actionable ways to improve your marketing efforts.

Internal Story:

Become a Jedi Master



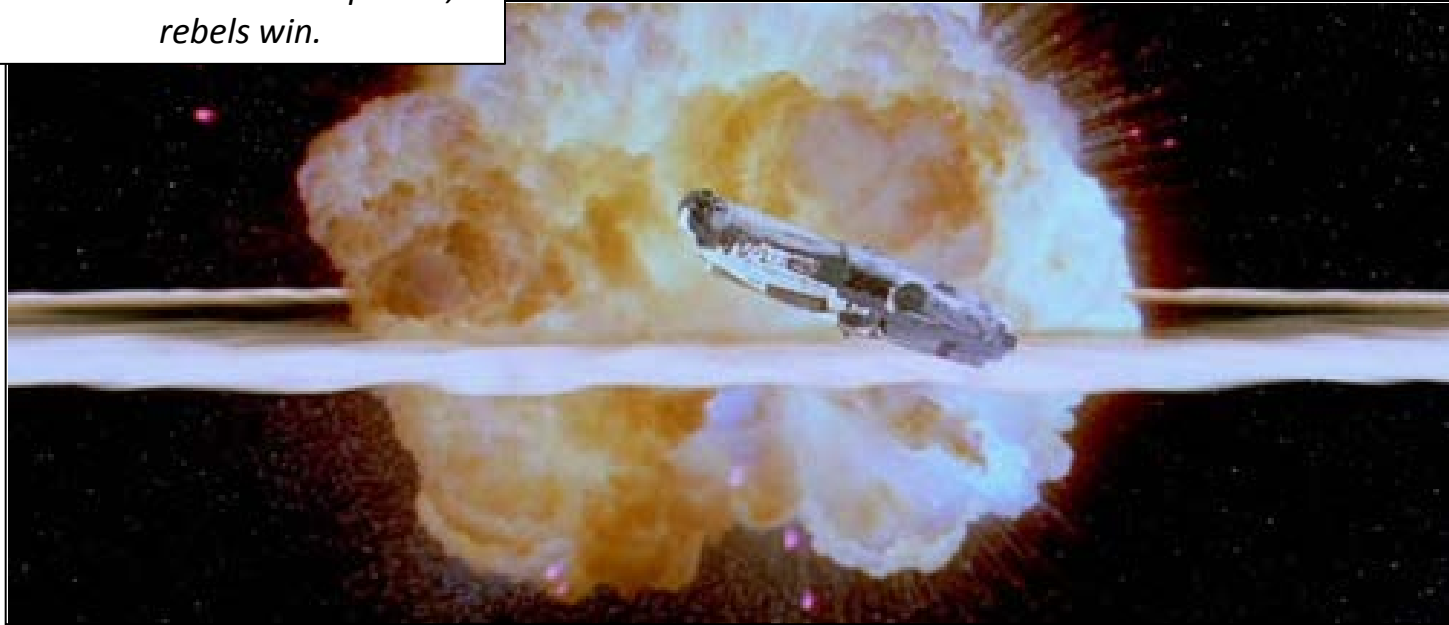
I'd like to advance my career

7. **Add Optimization Certification to Your Professional Resume**

At the end of the Pre-Summit Workshop, all attendees will take the exam to receive their Landing Page Optimization Certification. The workshop will teach you what is needed to pass the test to receive your professional certification.

Step 3: Create your climax/resolution

Climax: Death Star explodes, rebels win.



In a story, the climax is the single event that everything builds toward.

Step 3: Create your climax/resolution

Web Page – Call to Action

Reserve Your Optimization Ticket ➔

On a landing page, the climax is the main call to action.

The goal is to lead the visitor to (and through) the pivotal decision.

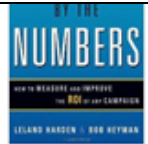
Step 3: Create Your Climax

- Four questions to ask yourself about your call-to-action (CTA):
 1. Is your CTA clearly visible?
 2. Does your CTA imply value, immediacy, or urgency?
 3. Does it come in the right time in the thought sequence/story?
 4. Does your CTA ask or assume?

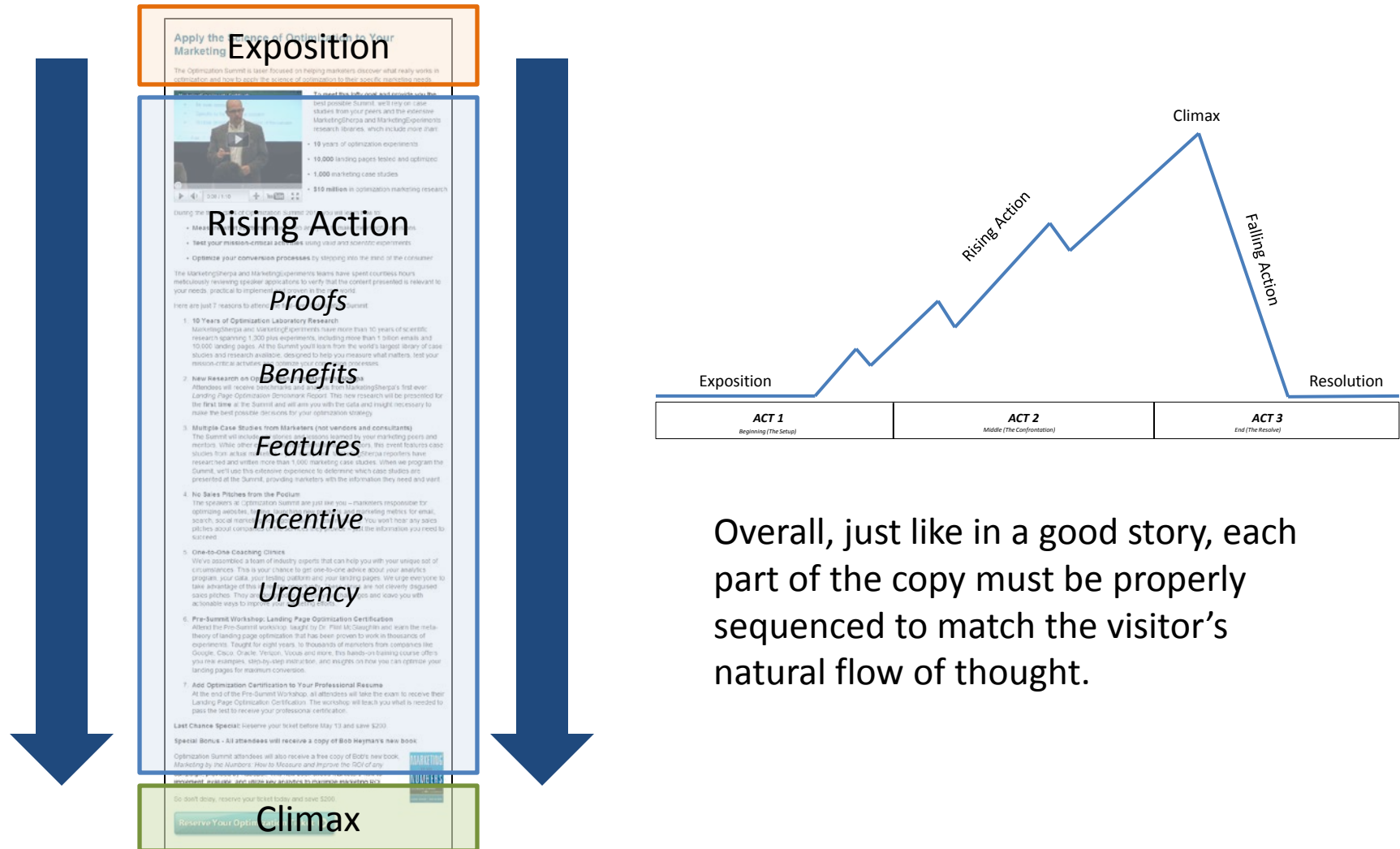
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Reserve Your Optimization Ticket ➤



Summary: Putting it all together



#B2Bsummit

Thank You

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