

Multi-Step Mastery: The New Way to Grow Your List

A multi-step opt-in process is a psychological hack that can significantly increase the rate at which you convert visitors into email leads.

Why does it work? It's based on the concept of micro commitments. Instead of immediately placing a barrier in front of your visitor, you entice them to make one or more very small commitments first.

For example, clicking a button that says "Yes, I want the free report!" is a micro commitment. After the button click, a visitor is slightly more likely to sign up with their email address, in order to get the report they just confirmed they want.

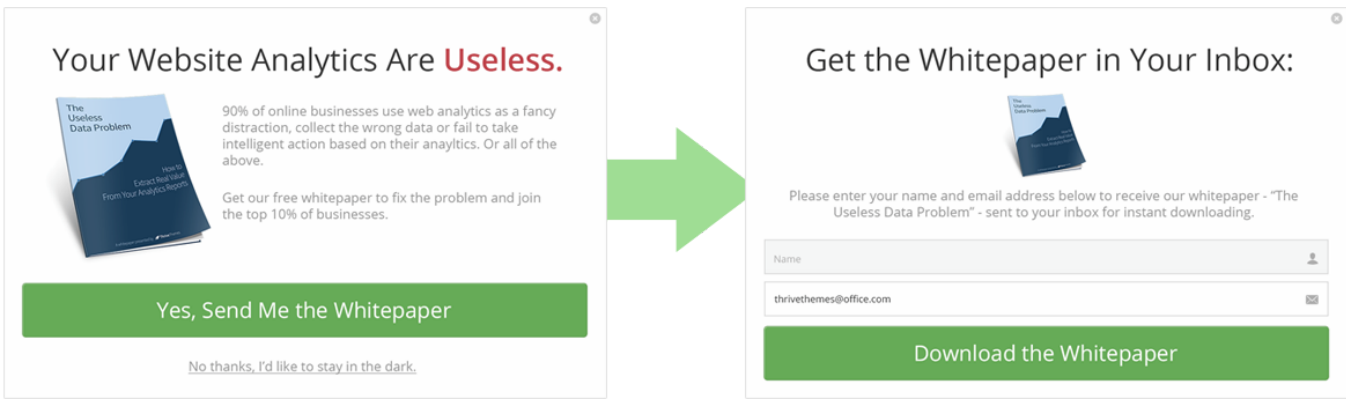
Below are the best ways to make this strategy work for you:

Method 1: Linear Multi-Step



This is the simplest type of multi-step or multiple choice setup. Instead of showing an opt-in form right away, you present your offer and you simply display a button that the user can click, to confirm that they want your offer.

Here's an example:



When the button is clicked, the new content and the opt-in form are displayed.

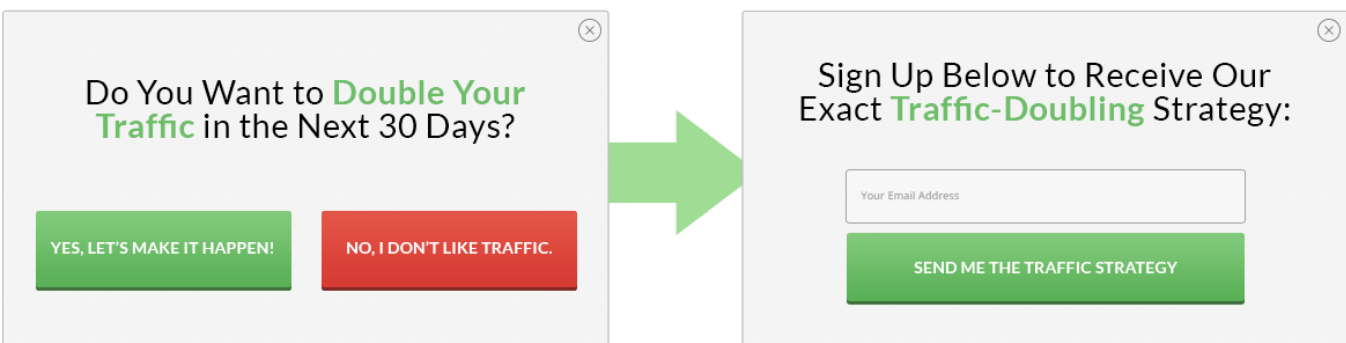
In principle, this is the same as a 2-step opt-in process (visitor clicks a button and is then shown the opt-in in the second step). The main difference here is that a 2-step opt-in opens in a lightbox whereas the linear multi-step offer can happen within a lightbox or within your page content.

While this is very easy to set up, it is likely to be the weakest of the multiple-choice form types.

Method 2: Yes or No



The 'Yes or No' multiple choice form is deceptively simple. All you do is ask a question and present yes/no options for your visitor. Here's an example:



Technically, this form is very similar to the first one. Like before, we have one choice that loads the opt-in state of the form. The other choice simply closes the form.

The genius of this form lies in the fact that it doesn't actually present the visitor with an offer. Instead, it poses a simple question and it offers a choice between 'yes' or 'no'.

How to State Your Question

Start out by asking a very simple, very straight-forward question that has an obvious 'right' answer. Just like the question above. When posed to marketers and website owners, the obvious answer is 'yes'. Of course you want more traffic! But nonetheless, it makes you stop and think.

The easiest way to come up with the question is this: look at your opt-in incentive (your free report or whatever else you offer in return for the opt-in) and write down what the most important benefit is that people get from it. What is the ideal end result that someone will get by making use of your opt-in offer?

Then, simply formulate the question as "Do you want [benefit you just wrote down]?"

Button Text

Make the button text meaningful and visceral. You can do this by either adding text directly into the button or by adding a brief explanation text above or below each button.

A plain 'yes' or 'no' doesn't elicit much of an emotional response. But texts like 'Yes, I want to liberate myself from this problem!' and 'No, I will suck forever' do.

Offers vs. Questions

Stating one single question and offering the yes/no choice isn't the only possible approach. You can, for example, add some further text, hint at your offer right away or even add a video. Remember, in Thrive Leads you can test everything - and testing is the only way to know for sure what works best for your business.

Method 3: Self-Segmentation



This is where things start to get really interesting. So far, we've always given the visitor a clear option to reject our offer and close the form. But what if we stack the odds in our favor and make both options equally valuable to ourselves?

Here's an example:

The screenshot shows a survey form with a title "What's Your Experience Level in Online Marketing?". Below the title are two buttons: a green "Beginner" button and a blue "Advanced" button. Under the "Beginner" button is the text "I've only just started learning about it all and don't have a successful business yet." Under the "Advanced" button is the text "I've been around the block and I'm generating some income from my business." There is a small 'x' icon in the top right corner of the form area.

In this example, we're using the same psychological principle as before by posing just a simple question and offering a simple choice of answers. There's almost zero friction to taking the next step, when you present a form like this.

But instead of having one choice that leads to the opt-in and one that closes the form, choices lead to an opt-in. This comes with 2 big advantages for you:

First, you increase your chances of capturing a lead, simply because there are more opportunities for your visitor to convert. Second and more importantly, with this

approach, you invite your visitors to self-segment in useful ways.

To fully make use of this strategy, your different choices need to lead to different offers, which are connected to different mailing lists or segments of your audience. That's where the real power of this strategy lies.

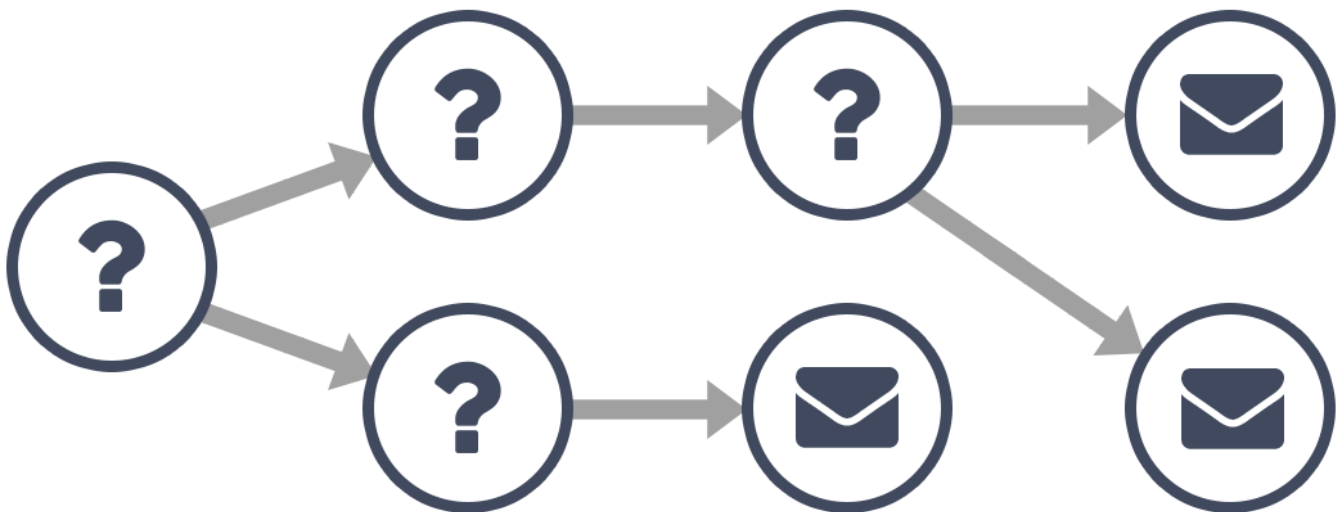
Segmentation Ideas

How should you segment your audience? Start by looking for the factors that differentiate different groups in your audience most clearly. Depending on your business, different segments may be important. For example, you could simply have offers catered specifically to men and women.

In most markets, there will be some equivalent to the beginner/advanced example from above. What sets your hardcore fans apart from those who've only just discovered you? Have them self-segment and you can market much more effectively to each group.

Also keep in mind that you are not limited to just two choices. You can create as many form states and as many choices as you want. You can test an offer that's as straight forward as simply presenting each one of your opt-in offers and letting your visitors choose which one interests them.

Method 4: The Mini Survey



There's no rule that says you can only offer two choices in your form and there's also no limitation to how many form states you create and how you link them together.

Technically, you can take the segmentation idea to an extreme and create an elaborate sequence of choices that all lead to different offers and different lists.

However, it has to be noted that Thrive Leads was not built for this and neither is this necessarily a better option than the simple multi-step forms above.

Part of what makes a good multi-step form so good is its simplicity.

But I did want to mention this possibility, since it's something you can do with the plugin (although it will be a bit awkward with too many states and choices). As always, the 'best' way to do things is not set in stone and you should test to see what works best in your case.

Did you enjoy this guide?

I hope you find this useful as a basis for the multi-step forms you'll create on your site.

I'd love to hear about your experiments and results using this multi-step strategy. Also: how can I make this guide more useful for you? Let me know by leaving a comment:

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