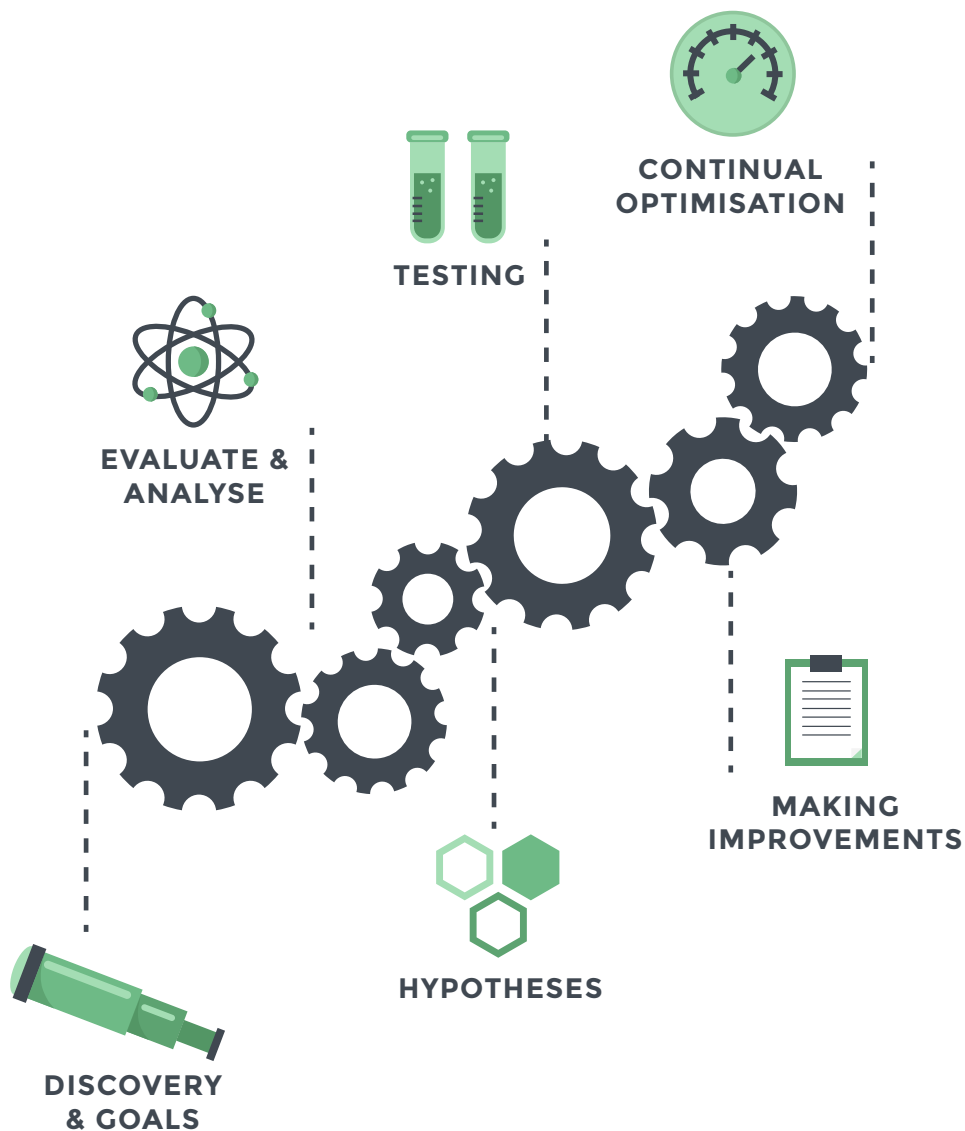




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A SIMPLE GUIDE TO CONVERSION RATE OPTIMISATION (CRO)

HOW CRO WORKS, HOW IT CAN BENEFIT YOUR BRAND AND TRIED-AND-TESTED
PROCESS OF HOW TO DO IT.



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In short, conversion rate optimisation (CRO) is the process of optimising your website to encourage visitors to take the actions you want them to.

“BUT I ALREADY DO SEO AND/OR PPC!”

“SEO AND PPC ARE EFFECTIVE WAYS OF RAISING THE VISIBILITY OF YOUR WEBSITE AND INCREASING THE NUMBER OF VISITORS.

“CRO HELPS YOU TO INCREASE THE PROPORTION OF THOSE VISITORS THAT CONVERT INTO LEADS, SALES, SUBSCRIBERS, OR WHATEVER THE GOALS OF YOUR WEBSITE MAY BE.”

With CRO, you rely on hard data, rather than guesswork...

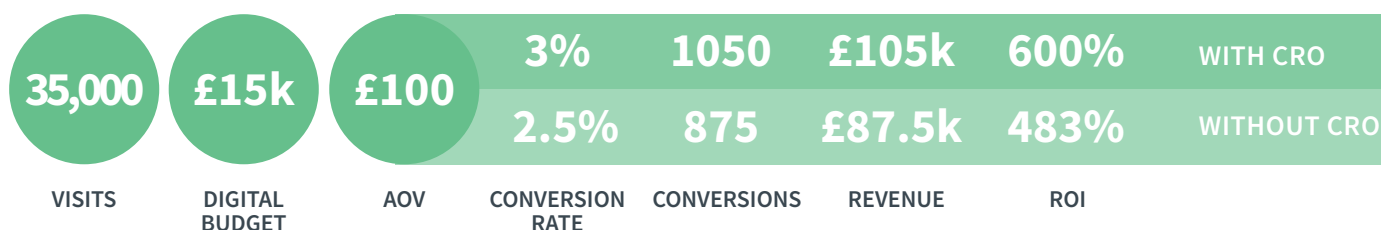
... or personal opinion, or even best practice. CRO is about testing and evaluating qualitative and quantitative data to:

- Better understand what your visitors want to see and when they want to see it
- Identify which changes to your website have the biggest impact on conversion

We think CRO's great because it allows you to...

- Increase the ROI for every digital channel, whatever your budget
- Make permanent improvements to your site
- Create a knowledge bank of best practices to inform future strategies

The diagram below shows how CRO can make a difference to the average business:



Here's a tried and tested process to help you maximise the benefits of CRO for your own business.

Why trust us as experts? CRO is one of Click Consult's core services and we delight our clients every day with the results our tests achieve. You'll find a case study at the back of this guide which describes our CRO procedure in action and some feedback from the client – more case studies are available on [our website](#).

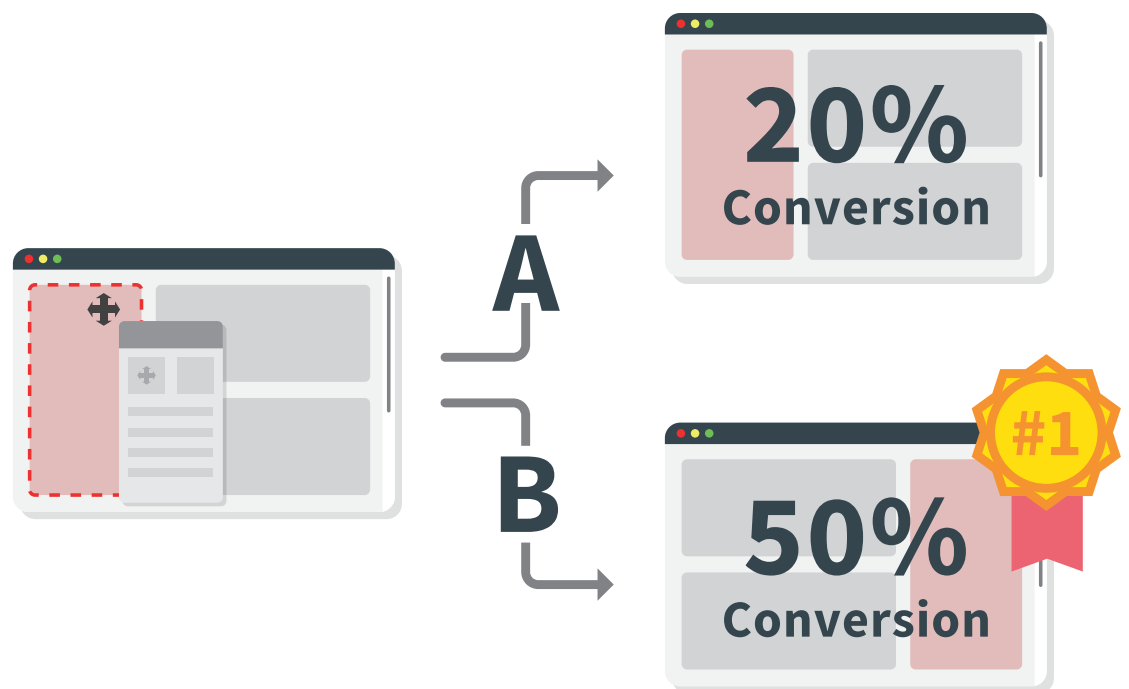
WHAT YOU'LL NEED

Make life easy for yourself by investing in testing software - use a plug and play tool that has an easy to use editor such as VWO or Optimizely. Both only require a small amount of code on your website and can then help you create new page variations using a 'drag and drop' like interface, removing the need for regular developer resource. They are also capable of scaling up to more complicated tests with fully customisable HTML.

Both of these tools have built-in test significance calculators, making the maths behind CRO much easier. For example, they'll work out the probability that a variation will perform better than the original web page, expressed as 'chance to beat'.

The pricing for both tools is based on the number of users visiting your test pages but VWO starts at \$49/month while Optimizely has a basic free version.

The most cost effective way to improve your site conversion is through testing two or more variations of the same page at the same time, known as **A/B testing** (new variation versus original), where 50% of traffic is directed to each page and performance monitored.



For advanced testing, you may also need a good data analyst, a designer, a web developer, a user experience (UX) expert and a marketing guru. Or a good agency...

WHAT TO TEST

This is the fun part where you get to list all the things you don't like about your site and think of ways to make it better. Make sure you use the data at your disposal, for example:

Google Analytics – look at popular landing pages that have a particularly high bounce rate and examine the common paths to conversion, reviewing any pages with a high exit rate.

Usability testing – spend a small amount of money on getting some user feedback (typically \$1 per question). You can show certain pages on your site and set users tasks to complete and then ask for their feedback. Compile several responses to get a feeling for what the pain points of your site are.

Brainstorm - Get a small group together representing various teams within your business and brainstorm ideas for improvement from a range of perspectives, including a fresh pair of eyes where possible. In an ideal world you will have input from: marketing, management, sales and web development teams, plus any agencies you are working with.

Put yourself in the shoes of your customers or users: how can you show them what they want to see when they want to see it? What pages do users land on and how did they get there? Are their expectations being met? Anything that suggests this isn't happening can be an area to test.

You can also create tests for pages that already perform well, but could be improved even further, especially if they are a high traffic pages. Focusing your energy on the pages that get the most traffic and are the highest value will generate the best return for your investment.

GET MORE IDEAS WITH...

Session recordings provide an extra layer of analysis Google Analytics cannot show. Tools such as HotJar and VWO allow you to monitor a user's journey from start to finish, so you can see exactly what part of your website draws their attention.

PLANNING YOUR TESTS

This is the most important part of the process; investing extra time in the planning stage will pay off tenfold later on.

Tips for successful planning:

- Keep a running wish list of suggestions for changes and enhancements to your site
- Define a KPI for each test that will determine the winner, making sure this is in line with your overall commercial objectives
- Use the PIE framework to prioritise your test and define the testing order (see next page)
- Update your PIE scores weekly and end a test early and move onto something better if it is inconclusive

SETTING KPIs

How will you measure success for each test: in CRO terms, what will the ‘conversion’ be for each test? The more conversions you get, the faster you will get a statistically valid result.

A test’s conversion might be when people take the next step in the customer journey, and won’t necessarily be the final thank you page. For example, if you’re testing a landing page, getting a customer to the basket page might be a sufficient KPI.

THE PIE FRAMEWORK

Ensure that you're making changes to pages that can have a significant effect on your conversion rate and average order value (AOV); there's no point wasting time testing a page that gets no traffic, or a change so minor it won't make a difference.

The PIE analysis framework sets a score for the potential, importance and ease of each test and ranks them to create your test plan.

Potential – What impact do you think the change will have on conversion rate and AOV? Major changes will typically have a greater effect on conversion rate than smaller changes. Replicating something that works on another part of your site, or another site, often has a greater chance for success than completely new ideas. Look at previous test data to help estimate improvement.

Importance - How important is the page or feature? What is the size and value of current traffic to the page? Remember to speak to other departments for their plans and priority areas and to check that the tests you're planning won't cause issues for other teams and/or your agency.

Ease – How difficult is it going to be to setup the test and permanently change your site if it is a success? There is little value in the short term of finding an improvement that you can't make to your current site.

Score each factor out of 10; sum the three scores and rank to create your test roadmap. Here's an example:

	Potential	Importance	Ease	Score	Test order
Basket page - highlight checkout text	5	6	9	6.7	3
All pages - Increase phone number size	8	8	10	8.7	1
All pages - Include free delivery	8	9	5	7.3	2

SIMULTANEOUS TESTING

You can run multiple tests on your site at the same time. This works particularly well if you have clearly defined routes through the site that users tend to take, for example, getting a car insurance quote versus getting a home insurance quote. Each of these funnels can be used as a testing stream: you can create a roadmap for each stream and run 1 test per stream simultaneously.

To ensure complete data validity, add filters to exclude traffic involved in one test from the other in the settings section of WWO or Optimizely.

BUILD YOUR TESTS

Build your variation pages within your chosen tool, for the top two or three tests in your roadmap. Having one or two tests ready to go in the background will increase agility and reduce downtime between tests.

Make sure you configure the tracking for your tests to target the correct goals within your chosen tool. Add any filters to exclude any unwanted traffic. For example, you may not want to run a particular test on mobile or tablet traffic, or you may need to exclude users that have been included in a simultaneous test.

Create custom segments in Google Analytics for each test variation so that you can review all analytics reports separately for users that visited each. This way the wealth of additional data will be ready for you to analyse in Google Analytics when you need it.

Below is an example of an A/B test we ran for one of our clients, to find whether using tailored persuasive text on our call to action buttons and highlighting them with colour changes would increase leads.

A – The original

B – The variation (and winner)

CHECKING YOUR TESTS

1. Always conduct live testing - don't rely solely on the preview tool built into VWO or Optimizely.
2. Adjust the test setting to target only your IP address, then activate the test so that only your IP can see it. Then set each variation to show 100% of the time in turn to check each page.
3. Make sure you look at both design and functionality. Things like image responsiveness, filters and information hover overs can often require some technical changes in order to work correctly.
4. Remember to check on multiple devices and browsers. It's good practice to test on your top two traffic desktop, tablet and mobile browsers. As a minimum you should check Internet Explorer, Chrome, Firefox & Safari on your desktop plus an iPad, iPhone and an Android phone.
5. You should create a thorough checklist to run through when checking each of your tests. If you can't get a test to work on a certain device or browser, then consider excluding that traffic from the test?
6. Once you are done testing, revert the settings and flush your data (reset all the data to 0) to provide a clean slate for when you launch.

LAUNCHING YOUR TESTS

It is best to launch your test in the morning, when you are in the office, so that you can keep a closer eye on them throughout the first day.

Begin by launching the test on 15-25% of traffic to ensure everything is working on the site and with the tracking. It's best to review the data as it is collected to ensure that your traffic and goal data collects correctly in your chosen tool and Google Analytics for each variation; if your tracking breaks, you'll need to start the test over again, wasting time and money.

You will want to see at least 100 visits to each variation. Ramp the test up to 100% if everything is as expected.

SAVE TIME BY...

Checking tests on other devices and low traffic browsers using a browser emulator like Sauce Labs or BrowserStack.

YOU NEED TO BE PATIENT

Wait at least a week before you try to analyse any results, to avoid jumping to costly conclusions.

It is best to run your tests to a set cycle, typically a week. This reduces the chance of a particular day in the week skewing the result of the tests, for example, if weekends perform differently to weekdays.

The key to getting a good return on investment (ROI) from CRO is ensuring you are always testing the right thing; as such you should update your PIE scores on a weekly basis. If the test you are running is still close to 50/50 after two weeks then it is unlikely to result in a big conversion rate increase, so reduce the Potential score you've given to this test.

Remember the PIE Framework is entirely dynamic. Update the scores for each test if your objective, strategy or seasonality changes and alter your test plan to improve your ROI.

End your tests or remove a variation when you have...

- **A clear winner** – a variation with 95% 'chance to beat' original
 - **A clear loser** – a variation with 5% 'chance to beat' original
- or...*
- Your **PIE** analysis shows there are better tests to be running (there is no point waiting around for a test that is going to have a negligible result).



LEARN MORE FROM TESTING...

Make use of heatmaps to visualise what aspects of your test pages users interact with the most. VWO has built in Heatmaps or use HotJar for more advanced solutions

REAP THE BENEFITS

When you have a clear winner, end the test and make the winning variation a permanent change on your website to reap the benefits. Apply the learning across the site wherever it is valid (if you're not sure that the change will work across the whole site, simply add a further test iteration to your roadmap).

If you are going to run a new test on the same page, make sure you test versus the latest winning variation.

Learn – Analyse the user behaviour across your site for each variation to learn why the test was successful or not

Refine – Use the learnings from the tests that you run to refine your Potential scores, removing the element of guesswork and basing it on historical data. If you run multiple tests with similar settings, copy an old test and tweak it to save set-up time if this is possible. Remember to adjust your Ease score.

Repeat – Keep adding to your roadmap throughout the process as you conclude tests and gain feedback from stakeholders. If you work in-house, there may be times when your workload will not allow a great deal of time to be spent on CRO. Use this time to run a test that's important but will likely take a long time to get a result.

Don't forget to share your learnings with the business; firstly it can't hurt to show people what a good job you're doing and secondly their feedback can help you to plan future tests.

BUILD A KNOWLEDGE BANK

Keep a log of all the tests you run and document any analysis or learnings to serve as a knowledge bank of proven best practice for your audience and your brand. Even when a test is not successful, you have still proved that the original is better and learnt not to make that change in the future.

Include:

- Screen shots of all variations
- The results (this way you won't lose the data if you decide to switch tools)
- All analysis and insights

One day, you may be called into a meeting to discuss plans for your new site: come armed with your knowledge bank and you'll be worth your weight in gold.

CASE STUDY

ADJUSTAMATIC BEDS

ABOUT ADJUSTAMATIC

Part of the NHC Group, Adjustamatic Beds Limited has been providing the UK with orthopaedic adjustable beds and massaging reclining chairs for over 50 years and all of its products meet UK and European Quality Standards.

HOW CLICK CONSULT HELPED

Thanks to our organic and paid search services, Adjustamatic's website was experiencing high traffic levels. However, the company wanted to further increase the number of sales leads they were generating. Our conversion rate optimisation (CRO) experts used qualitative and quantitative analysis to identify areas of the Adjustamatic website that could be improved.

As part of our research, we conducted an analytics review and performed usability testing to examine the website's performance. We also used heatmaps and expert reviews to pinpoint areas of the site that could be refined. We ran a series of A/B and multivariate tests to find out how we could turn passive site browsers into active users.

We segmented conversion rates by behaviour, device and demographics using a suite of conversion rate optimisation testing tools known as Visual Website Optimiser (VWO) and through custom segments in Google Analytics. We also integrated call tracking software into tests to measure the effect of changes on offline leads.

THE RESULTS

The CRO work we have carried out to date has had a significant positive impact on Adjustamatic's online performance.

We continue to help Adjustamatic to achieve their commercial objectives through organic search (SEO), paid search and CRO campaigns.



20%
INCREASE IN
CONVERSION RATE
FROM ONE TEST
ALONE

70%
OF CRO TESTS LED
TO AN INCREASE
IN CONVERSION
RATE

GET IN TOUCH WITH US TODAY

ABOUT US

We are a multi award-winning search marketing agency working with brands & SMEs that want a tangible, measurable return from their online budget.

Our website features an online resources section, full of useful [eBooks](#). We also write a blog, where you can find an abundance of search marketing tips. If you're feeling social, get in touch on [Google+](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#).

Need any further assistance with your Conversion Rate Optimisation (CRO)? Contact us today, we can perform an in-depth opportunity audit on your website.

0845 205 0292

Or visit our [website](#).



WHAT THE CLIENT SAYS

No other agency has returned such fantastic results for Adjustamatic. Click Consult work to well-defined objectives and communicate progress regularly. Our conversions have increased considerably since they started CRO testing and we are seeing a fantastic return on investment as a result of the work they are doing on our organic and paid search campaigns.

James Lane,
Marketing Executive Online, Niagara Healthcare Ltd

OUR ACCREDITATIONS



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OUR TECHNOLOGIES

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