Tomorrow People
Digital Marketing Agency

How to Use Conversion Rate Optimisation to Boost Your Bottom Line



Share:

How to Use Conversion Rate Optimisation to Boost Your Bottom Line

Some marketing metrics sound a bit abstract. But conversion rate is different - it has a direct effect on your bottom line profits. After all, conversion is the difference between a sale and a fail.

Because of this, the conversion rate metric is the area of marketing that connects most strongly with sales. Anything that brings these departments closer is a plus - as a Marketing top dog, you've doubtless had differences of opinion with the Head of Sales, which is only natural. Marketing creates brand equity and Sales spends it.

Conversion rate optimisation is the reason for the existence of both Sales and Marketing.

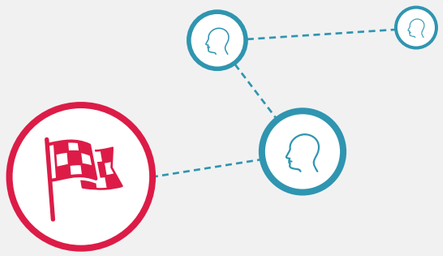
Joining these two departments together can only be a good thing. This eGuide explores seven methods for boosting this most vital part of metrics from the CMO's perspective - starting with the first customer touch. As in other mission-critical endeavours, checklists can help a lot.

1. Plan each campaign at its end

Conversion is the last step on the nurturing pathway. But whether the customer makes it through depends on every step before, from the landing page headline right back to the first Tweet or email. To get off on the right foot, think conversion from the first planning meeting.

Hubspot calls this a conversion centred design, where everything you do is designed with that final click in mind. Beyond campaign creation, there are extra things you can do to influence it, such as:

- Get the Head of Sales into the campaign planning meeting - he'll keep your team focused.
- Make sure the landing page is the result of careful thought, not an afterthought. Resource it as completely as campaign creation.
- Make sure each stage of the customer journey points towards the conversion, so there's no "cognitive dissonance" at the last fence.



2. Create a checklist for your campaign...

With multiple campaigns on the schedule it's unlikely you'll be able to devote attention to every last sentence. So another useful strategic initiative is to write a copy checklist for your juniors. This way you don't have to pore over every selling message; you can delegate. Points to cover might include:

How many customer touches are there between first contact and close?

Business with short sales cycles might have only two; complex SLA-backed B2B contracts might have up to 20! Make sure your customer journey is short enough to retain interest, but long enough to answer doubts.

Has the campaign covered off all entry points?

List the channels prospects might enter through: a Tweet, an email, a blog on your site... and instruct your team that you expect original content to be created for each channel, not cut-and-pastes.

Are the A/B splits really A/B?

Ad Push up highlights this as being a crucial point. First make sure there are splits - any campaign can use them - and then make sure they're actual differences, not just changing the link highlight colour.

Is your creative creating consistent brand values across different audiences?

A consistent impression doesn't come from using the same words and pictures across media; it comes from using differing content that evokes the same attitude. Overt selling is expected in AdWords but frowned on in Buzzfeed.

The Moz Blog suggests that creating such a checklist will keep initial interest (clickthrough) rates high - the first battle you need to win.



3. ... another for your design...

What looks great on your designer's hi-res screen may look cramped and crowded for the average user (or anyone on a tablet or smartphone.) A separate checklist for what the average prospect sees will keep them honest - and conversion rates maxed.

What are the measures (number of characters per column) on the average reader's screen?

Many young designers tend to design for the biggest screens and latest technology. Columns of 80 characters or more lead to drop off.

Does the page look crowded?

Not as subjective as it sounds. If your team can't justify the presence of every design element at every touchpoint, strip those elements out.

Are there unusual features?

Landing pages in particular are all about comfort; if something jangles the reader's nerves he'll scoot. If any part of your creative looks out of the ordinary - an infographic on a landing page, say - be warm about the creative effort, but make clear you want it A/B tested.

4. ...and a third for your copy

Most marketers have a style guide, but too few stick to it. It's worth updating yours with conversion rate optimising in mind. Things to think about are:

- In previous A/B tests, what word counts for headline and copy have worked best?
- Are your "customer personae" vividly brought to life? You may be marketing en masse, but prospects are reading alone.
- Are there "hot words" with proven pull? List them in the guide.
- Are there areas of your brand values that interfere with conversion rate? (For example, some upmarket brands don't like asking for the sale!) Resolve them.

Such helping hands are often appreciated by creatives - they call it the "freedom of a tight brief" and often prefer it to loose openness.

5. Take charge of the call-to-action

The CTA is the last fence - and it's one area where you should focus personally. It has three guises: the concluding sentence, the call itself, and the download or forms submission button.

- Make sure they don't repeat each other
- Make sure they're a path to the click, just like the overall customer journey
- Avoid generic settings like "Submit" on the button

Of all the things worth testing to boost conversion, the CTA comes near the top of the list.

6. Ponder analytics with care

Your people may be proud of their page views and clickthrough rates - and rightly so. But such simple metrics don't tell the whole story.

Where are the pinch points? The bottlenecks? At which stages are the drop-offs greatest? It's likely you'll need to construct your own metrics, made up of simpler ones. Some ideas:

- Which transaction with your prospect carries the biggest drop-off risk?
- Is there a time limit beyond which no customer journey is completed?
- Are you testing different nurturing pathways, as well as content within the pathway?
- Is the customer journey moving at the same speed as the customer's mind?

The best metrics aren't numbers: they're insights. Ask for a report in this style, and always share it back with your team.



Share:

7. Show and tell to uplift conversions

Criticising people who've worked hard on your campaign takes tact and diplomacy. So lastly, there's a less subjective way to communicate: the NN group suggests filming someone going through the process.

You don't need studios, or a focus group, or professional testers. Just ask someone who's a reasonable prospect to sit down, and watch what he does - from first Tweet to final click. And ask him to talk while he's doing it.

This works because it's objective: your marketing people can see what's happening and where it's going offside. Many times, they'll be grateful for such input, since workloads mean many of them use guesswork most of the time. Show and tell can make your employees your biggest admirers.

Summing up: conversion rate optimisation will:

- Bring Marketing and Sales closer
- Drive greater ROI from each marketing campaign
- Produce more sales for a given marketing spend
- Produce useful insights that inform your next campaign
- ...and cut the tension that sometimes exists between Marketing and Sales!

With the resulting uptick in conversion rate, the Sales Director will be your best friend forever, too. And that's what conversion rate uplift is all about: driving sales.

Discover how Tomorrow People worked with Eloqua to improve conversions and see a 300% increase in sales qualified leads. Get your free case study now:

Eloqua case study

Download your eGuide now ›

