

Are you making the most of visitor traffic on your website?

Can you be sure that your site is converting visitors into sales as effectively as possible?

Both these questions should be asked by any business operating online. Although the average conversion rate varies largely between different sectors, top converting websites can be as high as 40.6% (www.schwans.com – the US home food delivery service – recorded this conversion rate in March 2010, according to Nielsen Online). Gaining traffic via search engine optimisation or paid search can become much more valuable to your business by improving your site's conversion rate.

Conversion Rate Optimisation (CRO) is the name given to the process of testing websites to make them as user-friendly as possible and therefore most likely to lead to a conversion – be it a sale, a newsletter signup or online enquiry or whatever conversion you are targeting with your site.

In order to ensure that traffic is converting into sales as effectively as possible, Blueclaw recommends testing alternative versions of key pages.

Here are some general comments on landing page and conversion rate optimisation:

Is your website design converting into sales or leads as effectively as possible?

Dissatisfaction with the shopping process is a common reason for visitors to leave a website – causing visitors to click back in their browser and possibly purchase from one of your competitors instead.

50.1% of online shoppers place items in their shopping cart do not complete the purchase (Core Metrics "Core Metrics Benchmark Industry Report" March 2009)

Even seemingly simple changes can have significant effects on the conversion rate of your website. Here are some of our top tips to help your website convert more effectively:

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- ✓ **Clear navigation** – Is your website easy to navigate from every page? A high percentage of visitors will enter your site not via the homepage – can they still find their way around your site easily?
 - ✓ **Effective site search** – Does your site have a search function? Can visitors quickly find the precise product or service they are looking for?
 - ✓ **Clear product pages** – Are all the product details that the visitor is looking for easy to find, including photos, specifications and user reviews?
 - ✓ **Is registration optional?** – On average 23% of checkout abandonment happens due to required registration (Forrester Research US: Required Registration Lowers Online Conversion Rates, April 2008). Not forcing visitors to register on a site before purchasing may help conversion rates.
 - ✓ **Clear contact details and help section** – Is it easy for your visitors to find your contact information if they need to talk to you or find answer to particular questions? If your site is an ecommerce site, can the visitor easily see your delivery and returns policy before committing to purchasing a product?
 - ✓ **Easy to use shopping cart** – Is the process for adding products to the cart and completing the purchasing process easy to follow and intuitive?
 - ✓ **Relevant landing pages** – For traffic arriving via paid search, is the page they come to on your website the most relevant for the keyword they were searching?
 - ✓ **Trust** – Does your website convey trust – through customer testimonials, awards or affiliations for example?
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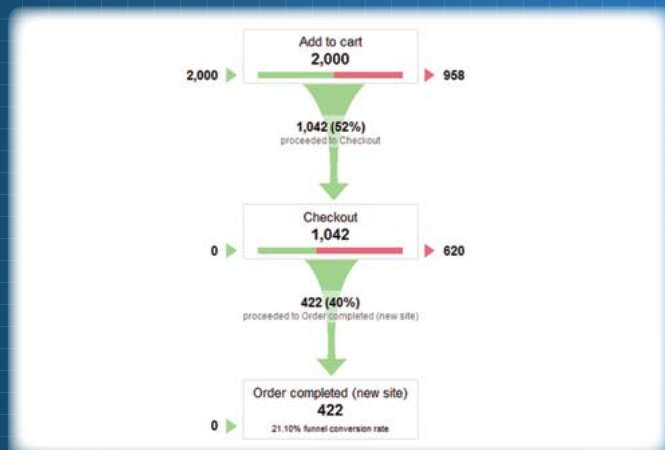
Conversion Rate Optimisation Overview

What Blueclaw Do

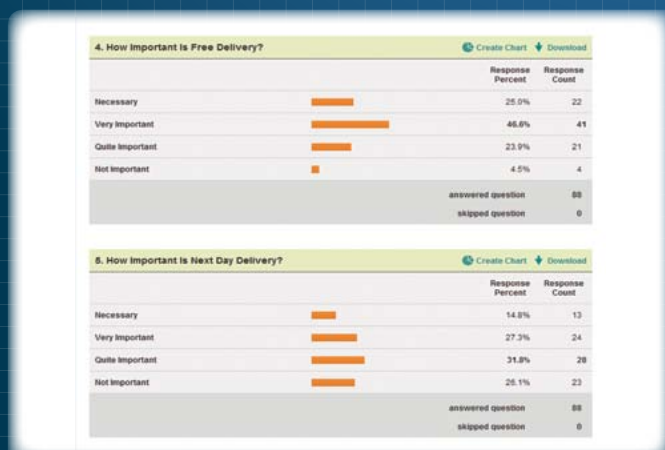
Blueclaw's approach to Conversion Rate Optimisation focuses on measurable data – hypotheses are tested and results are acted upon. What this means is that we test different versions of principal pages on your website (designed by our in-house team) using **Google Website Optimizer** to find not what we guess may be the best converting pages, but what the statistically significant results from the real experiences of your website visitors tell us are the best converting pages.

The process works as follows:

- Conversion Rate Optimisation begins with a review of your site's analytics statistics for trends – looking for high bounce rates or high abandonment rates at particular stages in the sales process for example.



- User testing will also help us identify the areas for improvement on your site. This can include using analytics software such as ClickTale, Crazy Egg and user videos (e.g. usertesting.com) to get a better understanding of visitor behaviour. Using surveys to further understand what your visitors want we have also found to be very effective.



- We design experiments to test different versions of your webpages (A/B or multivariate testing) using **Google Website Optimizer**. Different versions of pages are then run concurrently and data collected as to which converts most effectively.
- The results show us what content – images, text and site layout – drives the most conversions.
- These experiments are further tested, measured and optimised.

The Results

Successful conversion rate optimisation takes the guess work out of improving your website's design, leading to:

- Decreased cost per acquisition and increased ROI from SEO or paid search investment.
- Increased time spent on your website and lower bounce rates.
- Increased conversion rates and therefore sales.

Experiment Examples

Product page original:



Product page test:



Conversion Rate Optimisation Overview

Experiment Examples

Home page form original:

The original home page form for Pet Insurance is a simple, functional layout. It features a navigation bar with links: Home, Get a Quote, Why Choose Us?, Our Products, and Existing Customers. The main heading is 'Get a Quote' with a sub-headline '1st Month Free when you buy online'. Below this, there's a form with fields for Pet's Name, Age, Type of Pet (Cat/Dog), Breed Type (Cross Breed/Pedigree), Breed, Postcode, and Email Address. A 'Get a Quote' button is at the bottom right. A sidebar on the left contains text about the insurance offer.

Home page form test:

The tested home page form for Pet Insurance is a more visually appealing and detailed version. It includes a navigation bar with links: Home, Get a Quote, Why Choose Us?, Our Products, and Existing Customers. The main heading is 'Get a Quote' with a sub-headline '1st Month Free when you buy online'. The form is more structured, with a 'Type of Pet' section (Cat/Dog) and a 'Breed Type' section (Cross Breed/Pedigree). It also includes a 'Breed' field, 'Age' (Years/Months), 'Postcode', and 'Email Address'. A 'Get a Quote' button is at the bottom right. A sidebar on the left contains text about the insurance offer, including a 'CAT COVER FROM £4.88 PER MONTH' and 'DOG COVER FROM £9.13 PER MONTH'.

Checkout form original:

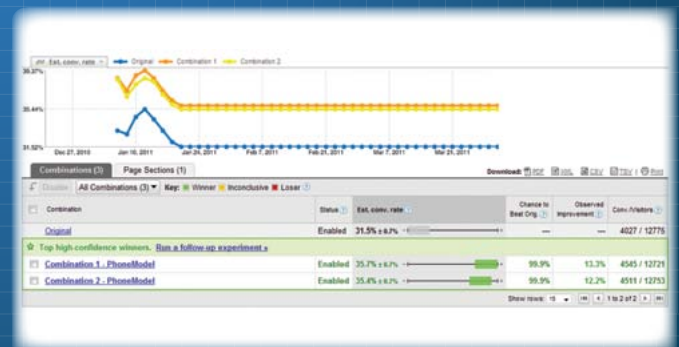
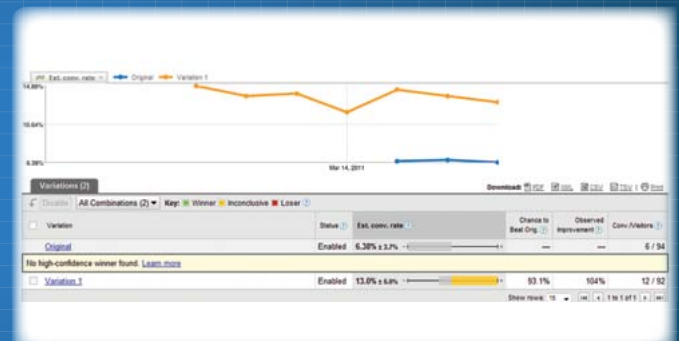
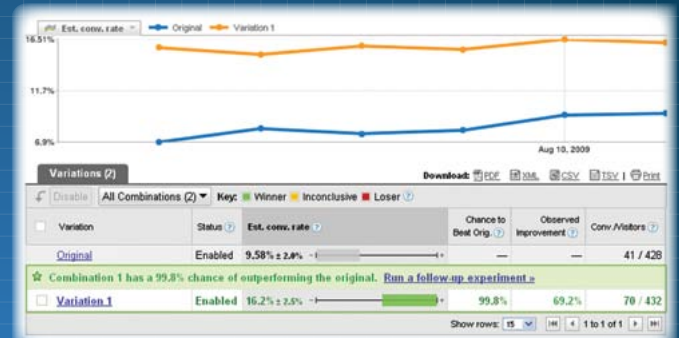
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Results

The following examples (both A/B and multivariate tests) show observed improvements of up to 104% on tests against original versions. For experiments taken as a whole, it should be a realistic target for most websites to increase site conversion rates by a minimum of 30%.



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