

# Your Essential Guide to Conversion Rate Optimisation (CRO)

Optimise your website to increase conversions

There is no such thing as a perfect website  
– there is always the opportunity to test,  
learn and improve

**Conversion Rate Optimisation** is the process of finding out what works and what doesn't in a specific area – for example on your PPC ads, landing pages, and for our purposes in email marketing, your sign-up forms.

It helps us to understand **why visitors to your website aren't doing the things you want them to do** and then **improve elements to maximise the number of people who take your desired action.**

**But don't forget, Conversion rate optimisation is a process – there's no quick fix.**

You need to methodically and strategically work through a series of well thought out options in order to find the best combination of elements for your business and situation.

# Calculating Your Conversion Rate

In order to optimise your conversion rate, you firstly need to have a clear understanding of what it actually is!

A conversion can be anything you decide such as a....

- Purchase
- Sign up
- Download
- Video view

$$\frac{\text{Conversions}}{\text{Visits}} \times 100$$

Using your analytics software (such as Google Analytics – we've added instructions on [how to set up a conversion goal](#) at the back of this guide to help you!) you can track the number of conversions on your website and see your conversion rate.

## Why is it so important?

CRO helps us to make the most of our website and ads and improve their performance; there is always room for improvement!

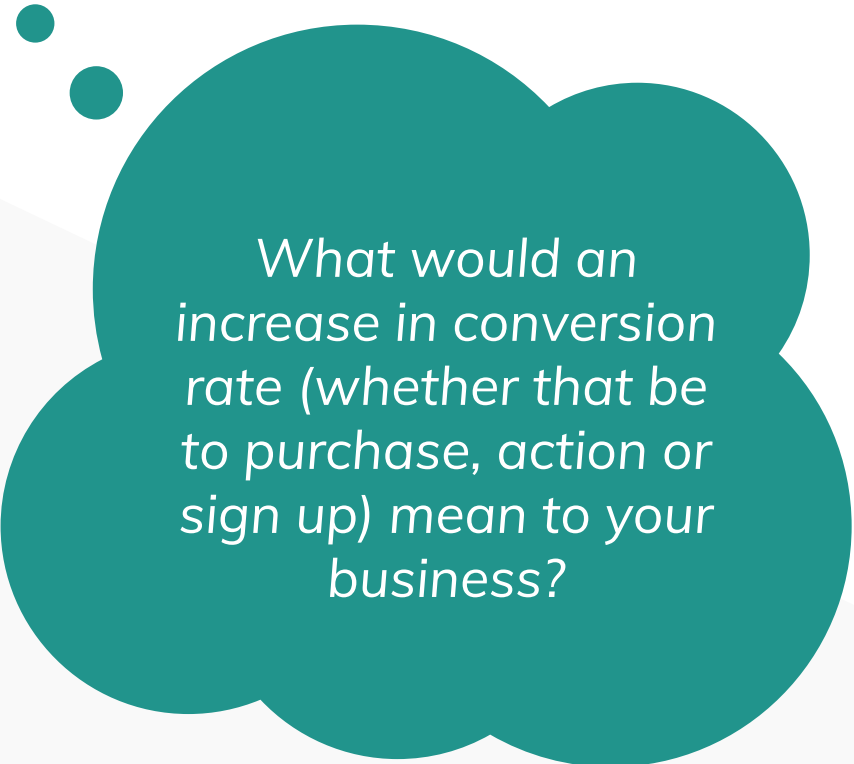
Good CRO can make a massive difference to your business. It helps companies to:

- Increase sales, revenues and profit
- Increase Revenue per Visitor
- Acquire new customers and prospects
- Improve conversion rates

## So why aren't more people doing it (and doing it well)?

The answer is usually a combination of the following requirements creating a barrier to implementation:

- Increase sales, revenues and profit
- Buy in from the organisation
- Psychological safety
- Bringing various data sources together (*which can be a complex task!*)
- A champion within the business to drive the initiative forward
- A fundamentally different approach to budgeting



What would an increase in conversion rate (whether that be to purchase, action or sign up) mean to your business?

## Relying on opinion is dangerous

Running a successful CRO strategy also requires you to move away from the opinions (usually of the Highest Paid People AKA HiPPOs) within your organisation. It is normal for the final decision to come down to one person or team within your business; whether that be your designer, developer, marketing team, strategist or CEO.



HI - HIGHEST  
P - PAID  
P - PERSON'S  
O - OPINION

FOOTPRINT  
DIGITAL  
MAKE MORE MONEY ONLINE

With global online retail sales ever increasing and over 95% of website visits ending with no consumer purchase (even higher when on a mobile device in many cases!), we have to **rely on what our data is telling us works and doesn't work** to make informed, scientific decisions, rather than on opinion.

Your customers and prospects should be the ones informing your decisions – *not internal opinion*

**And this is where a well-placed email sign up form also comes into its own!**

If we could convert just 1,2, or 3% more of those visitors who would normally leave our website without taking an action, on to our email list, so that we could then continue to nurture and help them, our **revenue generation options would also be increased.**

# The 5 phases of CRO



## Create the right environment for CRO within your company

Companies that do CRO well and win big, apply the principles in everything else that they do.

### This requires...

- **brave champions** to push the process and be willing to try new things
- the **buy in of your organisation across the board** to support new trials
- operating in a team that has **psychological safety** in which ideas are encouraged and failures are not judged – the intention is to find out what's wrong, fix it, test it and keep repeating to further increase your results

*'Failures allow you to grow and develop'*

- a **real-world approach** to budgeting that is reactive to successes rather than set in stone
- a **fast process** – don't get stuck in the research phase. Make sure you constantly move forward with testing your hypotheses in the real world



## Build your business case and set your goals

Before you create and run your tests, you need to consider what the outcome is that you're looking for: 'what do we want to happen' and what metrics are going to tell us we have successfully got there?

### Consider...

- What do I want this page / ad / form to do?
- What are the metrics that are right to analyse – what should we measure? Clicks, sign ups, read time, comments, shares etc.
- Repeating to further increase your results.

## Do your research

Thorough research around the area you want to improve:

- Google analytics – what's the data telling us? What can we see for people landing on this page or going through this sequence?
- Always think about 'what is the data here telling me' – look at your pages/ads/forms with a fresh pair of eyes when coming up with ideas for your tests. Put yourself in your customers position and start to see where your website is letting them down.
- Live chats / FAQs – what customers are asking to understand their anxiety's
- Surveys and interview with customers (insight into challenges, barriers and how they're feeling)
- User testing tools

## Create your designs

Create a concept of what alternative options might be for your test.

## Test, measure and repeat

The key to successful CRO is to **keep testing to move the needle in a positive direction**. Not all tests that you perform with positive results – and that's ok! It's all part of the test and learn process. Even those with negative results tell you what DOESN'T work and connect with your audience and is a valuable learning for future tests and new content.

**Remember – you need to ensure that every test with a hypothesis so that you know what it is that you want to achieve, why and how you will measure your results.**

For example...

**We think that giving a percentage discount as an opt in bonus as opposed to no additional incentive, free postage on your first order or free sample, will increase our email opt in conversion rate because we believe that our audience will be more responsive to this monetary type of discount.**

**In the previous example, we have clearly laid out 3 key elements:**

1. What exactly we'll be testing for the opt in bonus
2. The metric we want to impact
3. Why we think this

Having this kind of hypothesis created is critical to ensuring you have a clear view of what you've tested so that you can advance the test in the future.

In most cases we see where there is no discernible difference in results in tests, it's because this hypothesis formula hasn't been followed, and instead an opinion-based test has been run; we like this headline over this headline, for example. It's not based on anything concrete; such as previous statistics or reviewing a specific area element scientifically.

# How Are You Testing?

There are two main ways to run tests on your website and email marketing campaigns:

## 1. A/B split testing

Simple A/B tests are where **one type of content is tested head-to-head against another**; splitting the test list into equal sections.

For example, 1 headline type tested against another, or against multiple different versions (A vs. B / A vs. B vs. C vs. D etc.); but all with the same element tested.

**There are two types of A/B testing:**

- **Partial-testing** – this usually takes the form of a trial email shown to a sub-set of your target audience, with different campaign elements.

For example, to establish which of two different headlines work the best, two 'cells' of website visitors will be selected, each comprising a small portion of the total number of website visits happening (e.g. 10%). The cell that achieves the highest results is the 'winner'. Your test cell should be large enough for the differences in response to be statistically significant; i.e. it is unlikely to have occurred by chance.

- **Live testing** – in this approach, different creative treatments are tested in a 50/50 split of the traffic being seen. For example, one half of your website visitors would receive one headline, and the other would receive a different one.

## 2. Multivariate testing

Multivariate testing involves testing a range of variables (rather than just variations of one element as in A/B testing) in order to find the optimum combination of variants.

You select different elements of the email and create a number of variations of these individual elements which are then combined to create different versions of the sign-up form.

For example, if you were running a test on 2 elements of your form (the headline and the call to action copy for example) with 3 differing versions (1 control version in your usual style and 2 variation versions) of each you would have 9 unique combinations which would then be tested against each other to determine the winner

Multivariate testing is a much more advanced and comprehensive way to test different elements. There is no limit as to the number of variables you can test – the goal of multivariate testing is to determine which combination of variations performs the best out of all the possible combinations.

Headline 1 Call to action 1	Headline 2 Call to action 1	Headline 3 Call to action 1
Headline 1 Call to action 2	Headline 2 Call to action 2	Headline 3 Call to action 2
Headline 1 Call to action 3	Headline 2 Call to action 3	Headline 3 Call to action 3

For example, to test three different call to actions, three different headlines and three different images, will create 27 versions of the campaign, and your list will need to be split between this many cells.

## Reaching Statistical Significance

*“Statistical significance is the likelihood that the difference in conversion rates between a given variation and the baseline is not due to random chance.”*

Basically, this means that the results of the tests you run are actually true and not just a coincidence. That they are reliable and you can use these results as you move forward and make changes.

**Your statistical significance is created through the use of two main variables:**

### **Your sample size:**

When you run a test, you're taking a sample of your list – a sample group.

The larger your sample size, the more confident you can be in the result of the experiment (this should be a randomised sample). You will run into sampling errors if your sample size is too low - if you don't send each test segment to enough contacts, you won't be able to count on your results being statistically significant.

## Your minimum effect size:

This is minimum change in results between the sample sets that you would like to see. For example, if you chose 30% and your baseline conversion was 10%, one of your variations would need at least 13% to secure a statistically significant result. The smaller the effect size, the more emails you'll need to send to be sure of the result.

## You also need to decide your statistical significance level – this reflects your risk tolerance and confidence level.

For example, if you run an A/B split test with a significance level of 95%, this means that if you determine a winner, you can be **95% confident that the observed results are real and not an error caused by randomness**. It also means that there is a 5% chance that you could be wrong.

In order to calculate statistical significance, the best way is to simply search online for a 'statistical significance calculator' and you'll find lots of resources to help you find the right sample size for your campaigns.

And don't forget, the more tests you run, the more traffic / email subscribers you will need to reach statistical significance; and this may not always be possible if you have a small list size for example. This is often the biggest barriers that organisations face with CRO, they just don't have the volume. But don't be deterred by this!

Even if this is the case, we believe we believe you can still run tests with smaller volumes, provided the changes are simple and focused.



# Using CRO to increase your email sign up rate

So now you know what CRO is and how to implement it into your business, let's look specifically at how you can use it to increase your email marketing subscriber sign up rate.

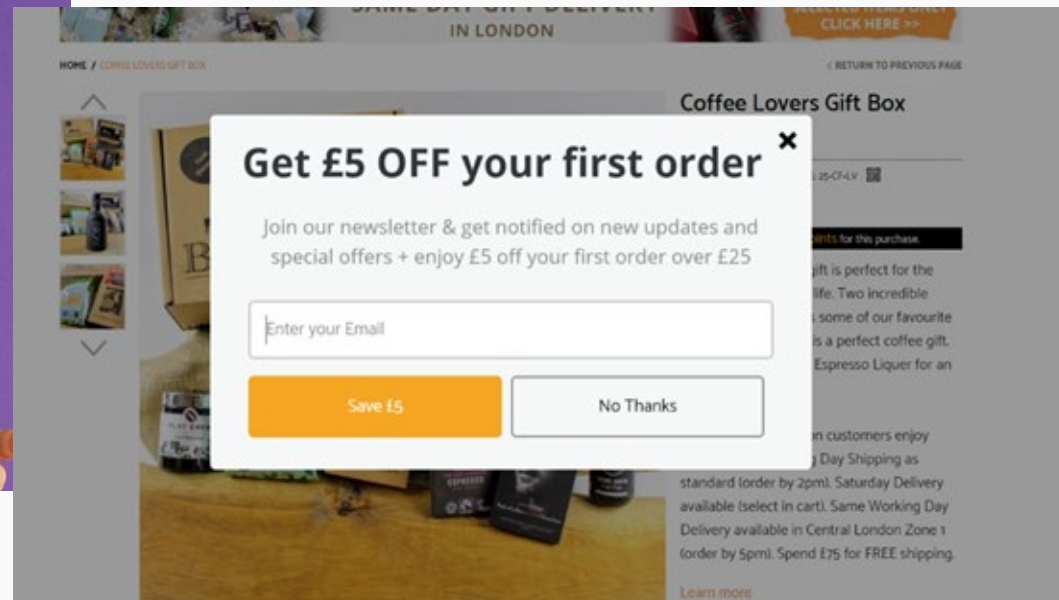
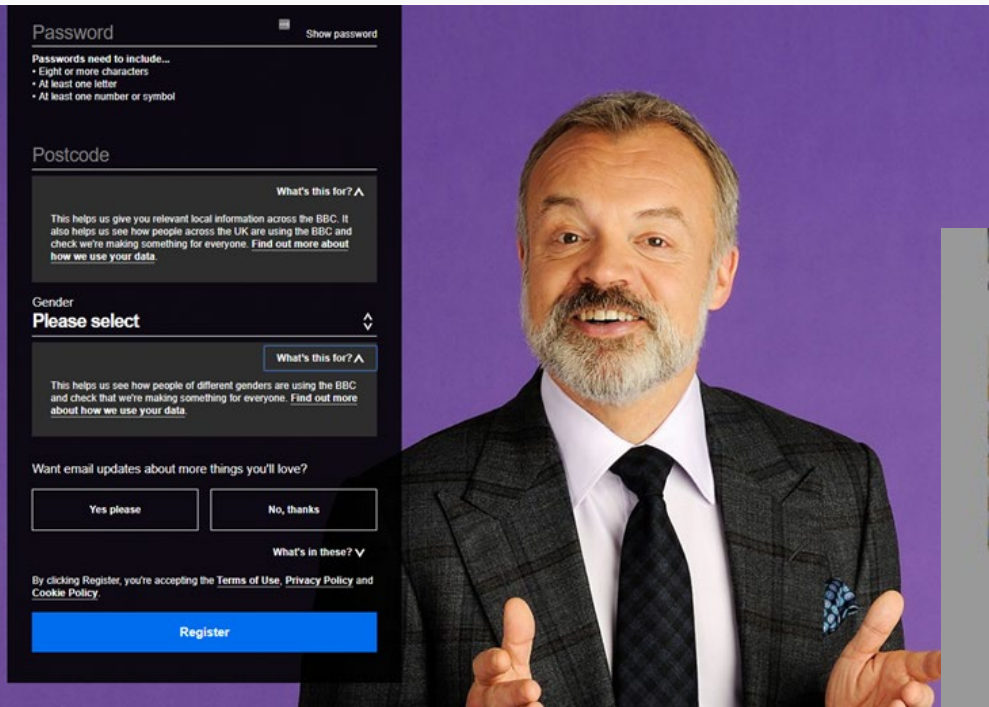
**There are 3 key areas that this can have an impact. You can optimise...**

1. Ads driving to an email sign up form/page
2. A standalone email sign up form / squeeze page
3. Your email opt in as part of a purchase / account sign up process.

**For each of these (where applicable) consider the key areas you can focus in on such as:**

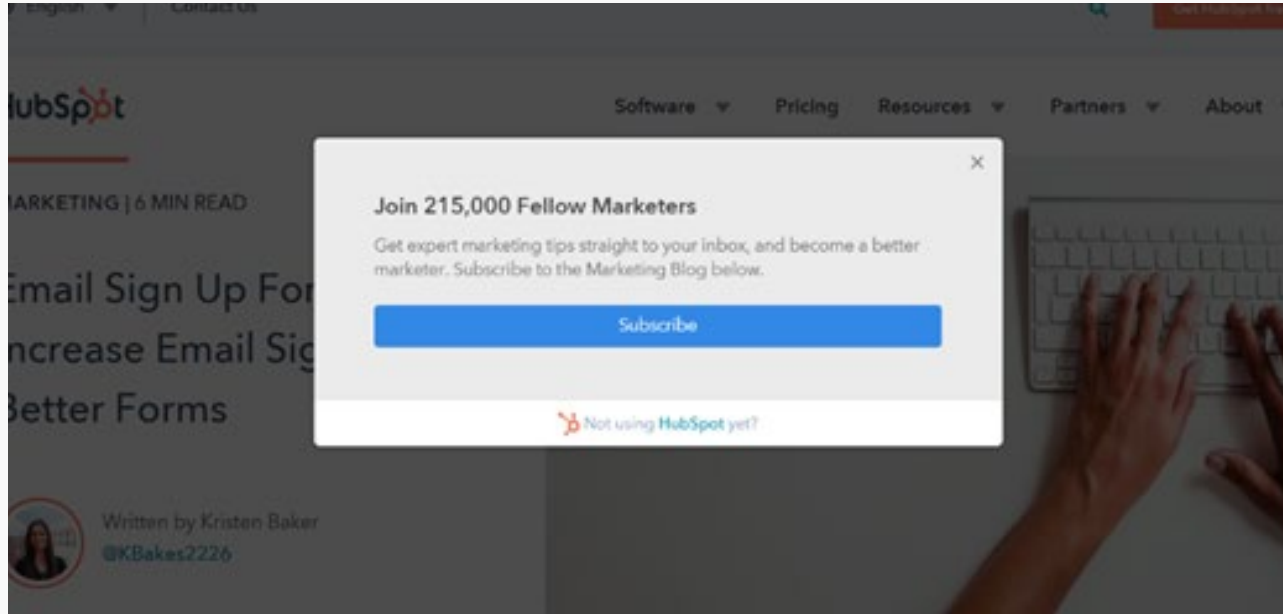
- **Your headline** (you need to capture their attention enough to carry on and fill in your form to subscribe)
- **Body copy** (the wording you use is instrumental in encouraging someone to sign up for your programme. If they can't see the benefit to them, they won't subscribe. It may also be that different sentiments / messaging structures / key benefits work better for your audience than others)
- How much and what **data you collect**
- The background colour of your **text input fields**

- **CTA button** (colour, wording, placement all have an impact. If you are asking users to opt in as part of another process, offering a yes or no option that they have to select can also be highly beneficial)
- **Incentive** offered (if any)



- **Design** of your ad, form or page (the colours, imagery and placement of information)
- **Placement** of your form on your website

- **Inclusion of social proof** – testimonials / number of other subscribers you're joining (to address certain fears and anxieties)



- **Length of sign up process** (and adding a progress bar to tell them how far along the process they have progressed)
- How you're **reassuring customers** about how their data will be used

Every element on your forms can be tested and each will also have their own specific considerations such as where your email opt in is placed during the purchase / account sign up process and how this impacts conversion rate to opt in as well as completion of the main form (you don't want to detract from a purchase being made).

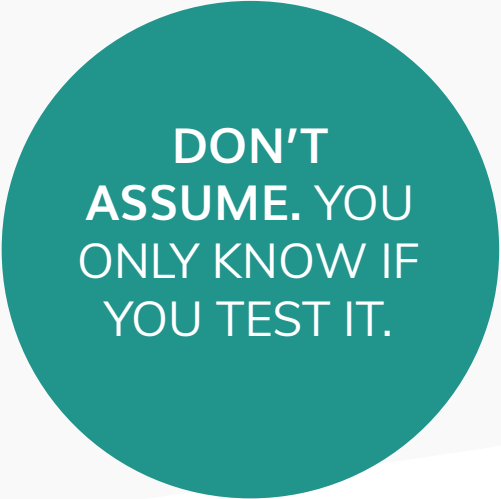
Or if you're using a pop up on your website for one of your sign-up forms, the timing of your pop up will have a major impact on its conversion rate.

## Rinse and repeat – what have we learnt?

Take the winning version and test it again against something else.

Each element of your ad, page or sign up form has an impact on whether the reader will take your desired action. You have to find the right elements that connect with them successfully.

Let's look at a few examples of live tests:

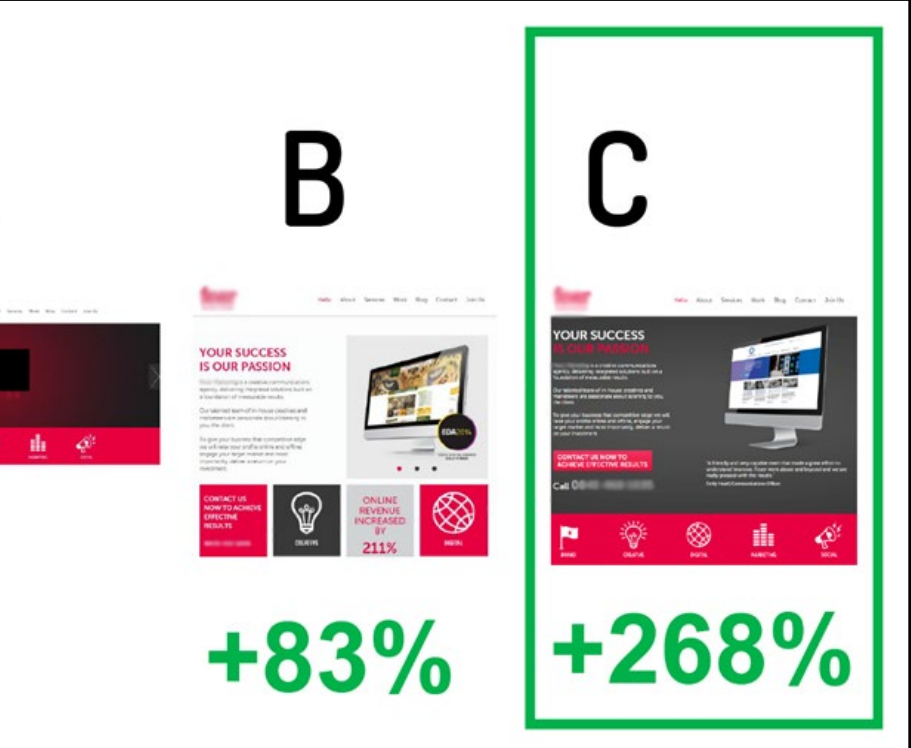


**DON'T  
ASSUME. YOU  
ONLY KNOW IF  
YOU TEST IT.**

# 1. Landing Page Test

In this example, the company wanted to see if a change in landing page design would increase contact us requests.

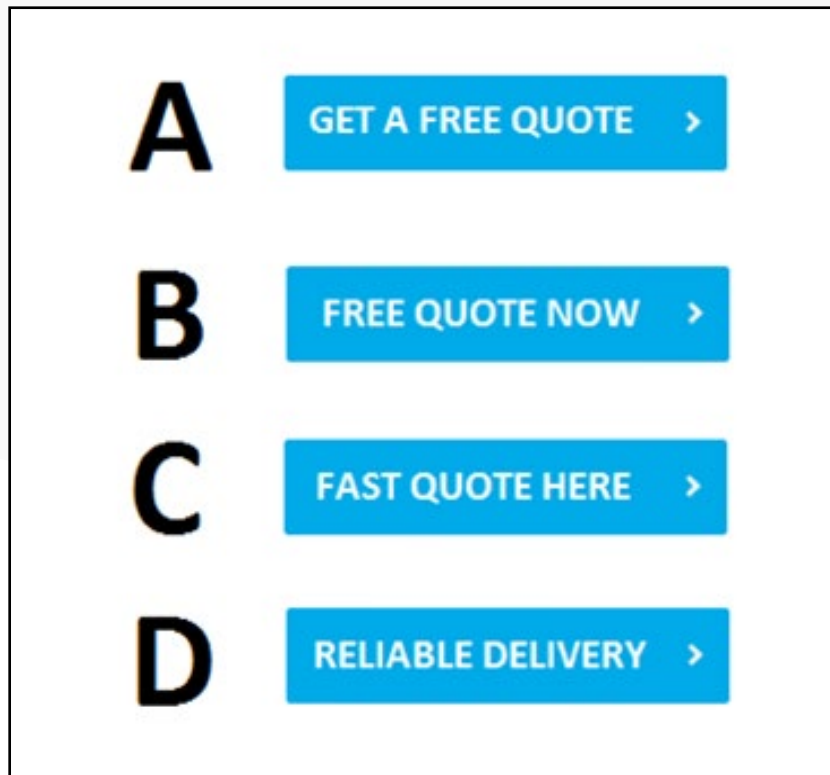
**The Results**  
Version C saw the highest conversion rate accompanying the most detailed landing page and prominent CTA button.



DESIGN ISN'T ALWAYS ABOUT AESTHETIC.  
IT'S ABOUT ENGAGEMENT.

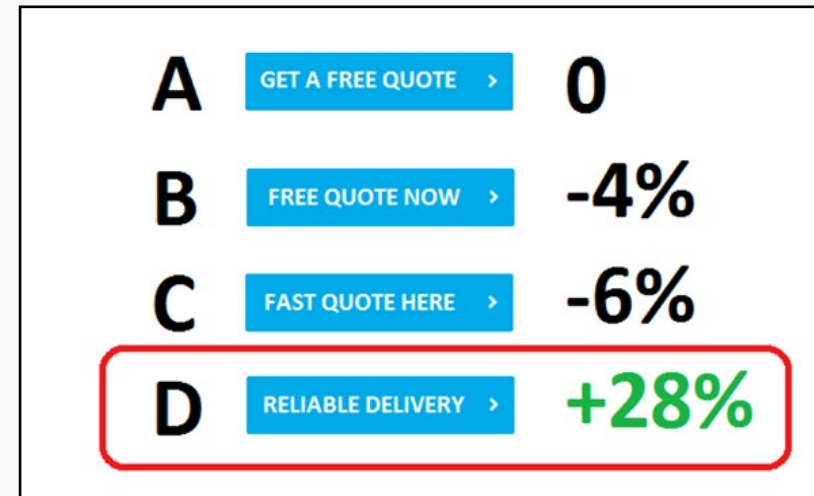
## 2. Example Two

In this example a call to action button was tested to see if the way in which the offer was presented made a difference to the click through rate.



## The Results

Version D offering 'Reliable Delivery' and no mention of a quote, saw a 28% increase in click rate.



IT'S NOT ABOUT HOW WELL YOU SELL  
SOMETHING IT'S ABOUT HOW WELL YOU  
ADDRESS CUSTOMER CONCERNS

### 3. Example Three

On the podcast accompanying this guide, we discussed another example that perfectly illustrates how even the background colour of your form fields can impact your conversion rate.

### The Results

In this example, we saw version C with blue fields, generate significantly higher response rates than any other form in the test.





# Examples of Tools You Can Use to Help with Your CRO

## On-site Analytics >

- [Google analytics >](#)

83% of companies don't track conversions / outcomes – so make sure you are *(Source: Footprint Digital)*

- [Optimise \(allows you to run A/B tests\) >](#)

## User Testing Tools

- [UserTesting.com \(observe real people trying to use your site\) >](#)
- [Crazy Egg >](#)
- [Hotjar >](#)

## A/B Testing Tools

- [Optimizely >](#)

## Landing Page Tools

- [Leadpages >](#)
- [Unbounce >](#)
- [Instapage >](#)

## Survey Tools

- [Qualaroo >](#)
- [Survey Monkey >](#)

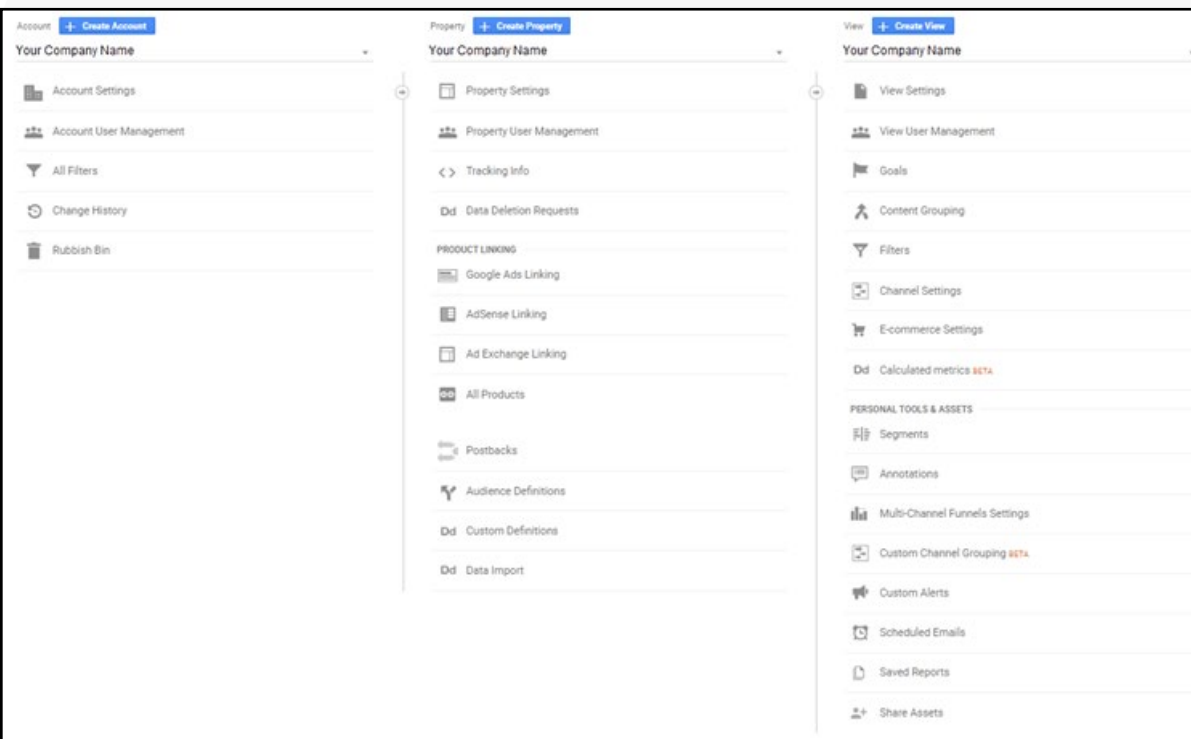


# How to set up a conversion goal in Google Analytics

## STEP 1:

Log in to your Google Analytics account and navigate to the 'Admin' section

Here you will see three further menu options – **Account**, **Property** and **View**

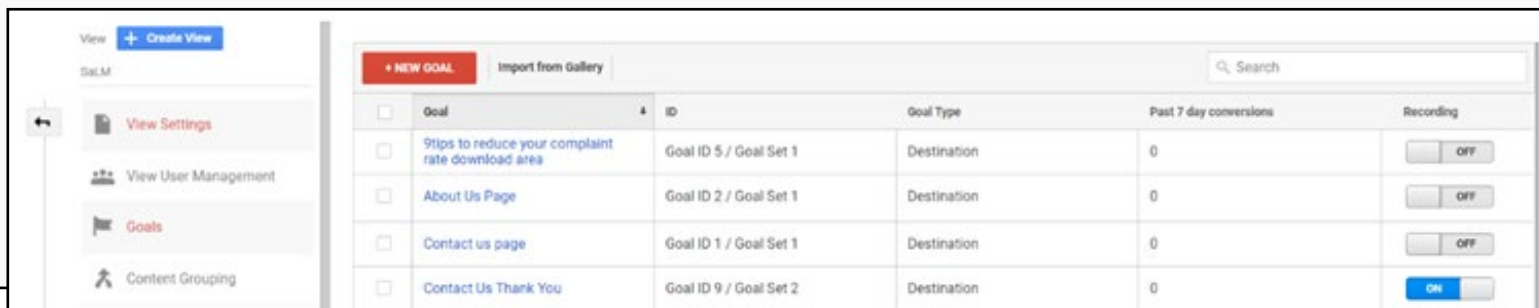


## STEP 2:

Select the 'Goals' option from the View menu

Here you'll see any conversion goals you already have set up and can create new ones.

Select the red '+ NEW GOAL' button to set up a new goal.



## 1 Goal set-up

### ● Template

Select a template to start with a pre-filled configuration

#### REVENUE

- Reservations Signed up for a tour, rental or reservation
- Make a payment Completed online payment
- Make an appointment Scheduled a visit or meeting
- Become a partner Requested or submitted partner, affiliate or dealer information

#### ACQUISITION

- Create an account Successful sign up, account or view created

#### ENQUIRY

- View more Viewed product or service details
- Contact us Viewed phone number, directions, chat or email
- Get estimate Requested price or time estimate
- See available Checked inventory or schedule
- Find a location Viewed location or dealer information

#### ENGAGEMENT

- Media play Played interactive media, like a video, slideshow or product demo

- Smart Goal Smart Goal not available.

Measure the most engaged visits to your website and automatically turn those visits into Goals. Then use those Goals to improve your Google Ads bidding. [Learn more](#)

- Custom

Continue

Cancel

## STEP 3: Choose Your Goal Set-Up

Choose the set-up type you would like from the pre-defined templates available or choose 'Custom'.

Then enter your goal description and details...

**2 Goal description**

Name  
Create an account

Goal slot ID  
Goal ID 11 / Goal Set 3

Type

- Destination e.g. thanks.html
- Duration e.g. 5 minutes or more
- Pages/Screens per session e.g. 3 pages
- Event e.g. played a video
- Smart Goal Smart Goal not available.

Measure the most engaged visits to your website and automatically turn those visits into conversions. This helps you improve your Google Ads bidding. [Learn more](#)

Continue Cancel

**3 Goal details**

Destination  
Equal to App screen name or web page URL  Case sensitive  
For example, use *My Screen* for an app and */thankyou.html* instead of *www.example.com/thankyou.html* for a web page.

Please specify the destination.

Value optional  
 OFF Assign a monetary value to the conversion.

Funnel optional  
 OFF Specify a path that you expect traffic to take towards the destination. Use it to analyse the entrance and exit points that impact your Goal.

Verify this Goal See how often this Goal would have converted based on your data from the past 7 days.

Save Cancel

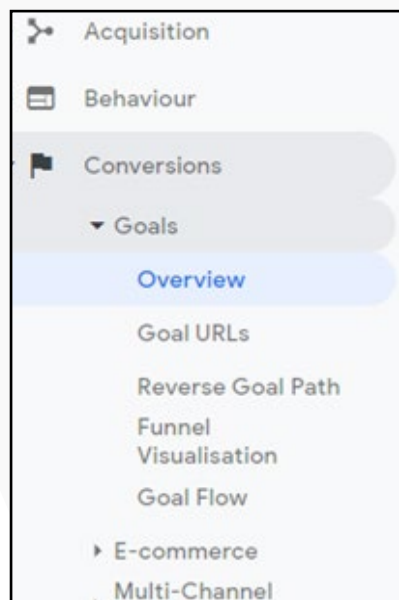
Add the URL for your thank you page here, for example, in the destination field, add a conversion £ value (if you have one) and the funnel option to track a conversion further down the funnel path such as a purchase.

## STEP 4:

### Hit 'Save' and start recording

You'll be taken back to the main goal screen – make sure that the slider under the '**Recording**' column on the right is set to '**On**' for your new goal in order to start recording your results

<input type="checkbox"/>	Goal	ID	Goal Type	Past 7 day conversions	Recording
<input type="checkbox"/>	About Us Page	Goal ID 2 / Goal Set 1	Destination	0	<input type="checkbox"/> OFF
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact us page	Goal ID 1 / Goal Set 1	Destination	0	<input type="checkbox"/> OFF
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact Us Thank You	Goal ID 9 / Goal Set 2	Destination	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ON
<input type="checkbox"/>	Create an account	Goal ID 11 / Goal Set 3	Destination	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ON



## STEP 5:

### Analyse your results!

Navigate back to your main account options and go to '**Conversion**' '**Goals**' and then '**Overview**'.

Under the '**Goal Options**' drop down you can select each goal individually to view your results.

# About eFocus Marketing

**eFocus Marketing** is a leading specialist email marketing agency providing a dedicated resource to companies looking to optimise, automate and grow their email marketing.

From strategic consulting to full-service management and training, we address every aspect of an email programme to produce successful campaigns.

If you want to boost your conversions, fix deliverability problems or increase response rates, eFocus Marketing can help. Our team of experts will work out the best options for your business and offer solutions in bite-size pieces so that you can focus on quick wins as well as longer term changes to become a better sender and increase your results.

- Email Marketing Consultancy
- Bespoke In-house Training
- Implementation & Management



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# About Footprint Digital

**Footprint Digital** is a Digital Marketing company focused on our clients' goals. We were born out of the belief that people can do better. That includes you. We believe that you can improve and that you can achieve whatever it is you want to achieve.

We want our clients to succeed in both the online and offline arena, and we excel at helping you target potential customers online.

Trust and transparency are key to helping our clients understand the online environment and how they can lead their brand to further success.

With best-in-class Search Engine Optimisation (SEO), Conversion Rate Optimisation (CRO), Pay Per Click (PPC) and Content Marketing campaign design and management, we will help your company succeed in the online world, by creating a secure foundation with leading SEO and PPC principles and digital technology.

