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CONVERSION RATE OPTIMISATION (CRO) CHECKLIST



CRO Checklist

Conversion rate optimisation (CRO), sometimes referred to as conversion optimisation, is the practise of optimising your website in order to not only increase the number of visitors, but to move them further along the buyer's cycle and to nurture them until they convert. This practice helps to increase the number of actions taken by the user.

SEO and PPC are effective ways of raising the visibility of your website and increasing the number of visitors. CRO however, helps you to increase the proportion of those visitors that convert into leads, sales, subscribers, or whatever the goals of your website may be.

As part of our ongoing commitment to the search marketing industry we have compiled this handy checklist to guide you through the process of optimising your website to ensure you're in the best possible position to increase both your customer base and your sales.

First things first...

There are several questions that you need to be able to answer if you are to get the best out of a CRO strategy. These questions relate to how well you know both your audience and your site.

1. Have you set clear goals for your website?
2. Are all of the products that you currently sell or want to sell available on your site and can a user get to them if they wanted to? Do you know your audience and understand their position in the conversion funnel?
3. Do you know your audience and understand their position in the conversion funnel?
4. Can you easily track customer activity on the site?
5. Can you use this information to create a map of how they will navigate the site in the future?
For example are you looking at:
 - *On-page statistics and data*
 - *Bounce rate*
 - *Conversion rate*
 - *Average order value*

Introductions

It is often said in business that first impressions count and in the world of search marketing this also rings true. The way your brand appears in front of customers or potential customers is vital.

If as a business you are able to be creative with your initial points of contact, your odds of improving conversions are vastly increased. Whilst the more advanced stages of a CRO strategy require investment in terms of time and money, there are a number of things that you can do to ensure that you are in the best possible position.

One of the first things that you can do is to write headlines that grab the attention of the user and that they tell the user what to expect from the page you are pointing them to. As you will see later in this checklist, testing is a must. You can prepare yourself by testing your headline against other variations and including keywords that are industry specific and which are likely to lead to a conversion.

Engaging with your audience is also vital and after guiding a user to a landing page, ask yourself if the copy makes the user want to stick around. Consider these questions:

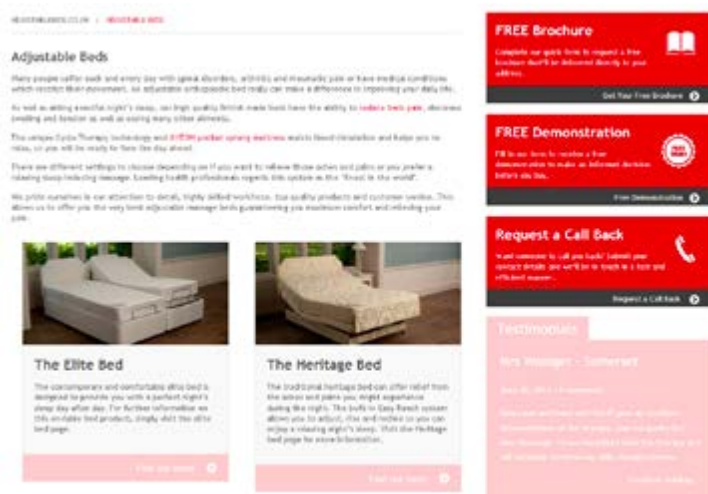
1. Does the copy clearly explain the product or the service which is being offered?
2. Does it highlight the features and benefits and distinguish between them?
3. Have you reduced the amount of potentially off-putting jargon that might appear on page?
4. Is the content SEO friendly (can it be found when crawled by the search engines)?
5. Have you proofread the copy for mistakes?
6. Do you regularly check the content and update it where necessary?
7. Are you explaining the product or service in simple terms in order to reduce confusion?



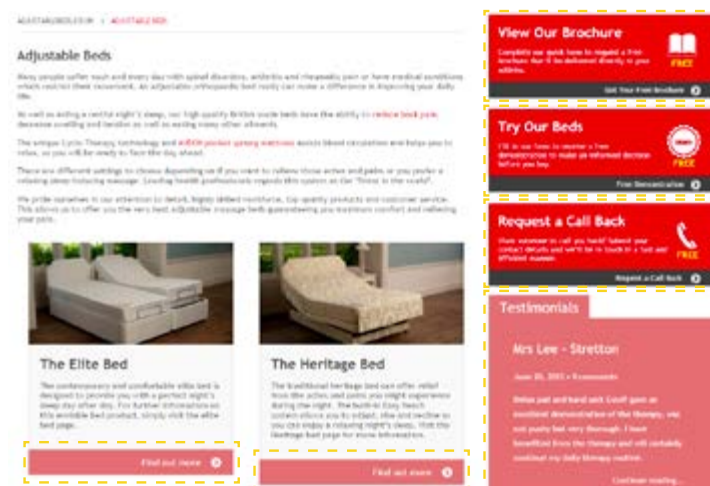
Call to action

When it comes to the decisions that customers make in relation to purchasing a deciding factor can be your call to action (CTA). If you are able to write content that encourages conversions then you are halfway there, but another consideration should be where you put the CTA. In this case we would suggest the following questions:

1. Do all of the links attached to your CTAs work (are they going to the correct location)?
2. Where multiple CTAs are used to cater for different audiences and different products/pages, are they clearly marked?
3. Are your CTAs specific to the page copy not just generic?
4. Have you added styling to you buttons to make them look 'clickable'?
5. Have you tested CTAs in terms of positioning, size, colour and copy?
6. Do you use actionable words in the CTA and create an urgency to click?



A – The original



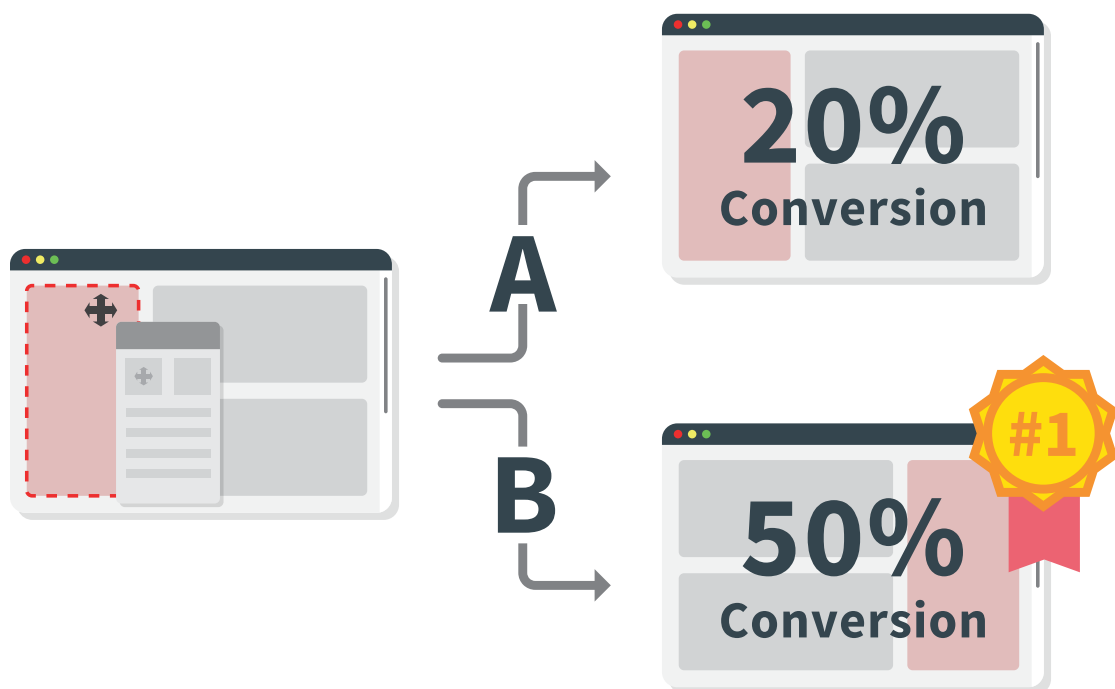
B – The variation (and winner)

Page design

One of the most common things that businesses think about when it comes to CTAs and boosting their conversions is the copy.

Whilst this is vital, another consideration has to be the design of the page that you are taking the user to. Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Have you tested the copy using A/B testing, analytics and heat maps to find potential improvements?
2. Have you removed any clutter from the landing page that may distract the user from making a purchase?
3. Are there multiple paths of navigation from the landing page to the payment page to suit the needs of various users?
4. Are you building trust through reinforcement with images, fonts, colours and branding etc?
5. Are you constantly testing your page and updating items as and when you see positive results?
6. On the payment page, is the system clear and easy to use?
7. Do you offer the user the opportunity to store their payment details?
8. Following a purchase, do you offer the user the chance to 'continue shopping' or so you show them similar products and services?



As with testing, the work that you do post optimisation is vital and there are a number of actions that you should be following up on.

The stages to focus on here are building trust and your actual product offering.

The changes you can make are as follows:

Build trust

When it comes to the decisions that customers make in relation to purchasing, the next stage of CRO is to build up trust and help put the faith in them that you are a reputable brand and that you can best service their needs. Things to consider include:

1. Do you offer existing comments to provide feedback or comments on a product or service?
2. Are you displaying customer testimonials?
3. Do you display product videos?
4. Do you offer guarantees such as insurance, free shipping or returns policies?
5. Are you harnessing relationships instead of going for the hard sell every time?

Offer your products

In terms of your actual offering some might say that there is a case for simply getting your user to your homepage. This is fine as long as the landing page offers easy navigation or if you are a business that only a limited amount of services or information. In truth though, the best way to increase you conversions is to show the user content based on their exact query or their buyer persona. To this end the questions you should be asking yourself are:

1. Have you linked the relevant content to the right user based on their buyer persona?
2. Are your existing clients being shown similar products (to previous purchases) that they may like?
3. Are you showing content that relates to the stage of the buyers cycle with which the user is in (eg there is no need to show an introductory offer if the user is already a customer)?
4. Are you being clear about what you are offering and how the customer can get it?

Final thoughts

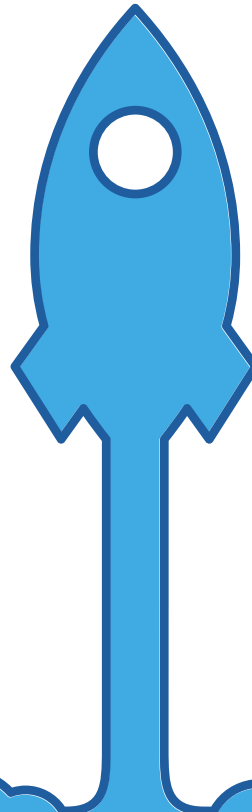
When it comes to CRO, the main message is that testing is a must. Many businesses are guilty of making simple mistakes that can have an effect on their conversions but if you can make small amendments, the results will surely come.

By setting up a proper analytical approach to your testing and by monitoring the conversions that you have received, who is converting and where they are converting from, you will be in the optimum position for success.

Want more?

[Why not check out our other CRO resources...](#)

- Simple Guide to CRO
- CRO Boxset
- CRO Glossary
- Understanding your Digital Audience
- Beginner's Guide to Landing Page Optimisation



Got this far and still having trouble?

We have plenty more [resources](#) to help guide you through your SEO journey and, if you need it, you can always speak to us [directly](#).

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