

Review of Tests

Test One

This A/B test compared the headline and copy of two versions of one website landing page. The results showed that it was not the clean and clear design with the short headline that had a nearly 40% increase in sign ups, but the shorter headline that used bold letters in its more developed supporting copy: “It’s not as pretty, but the information transfer to the user is more efficient because of the emphasis within the copy.” (Gardner, 2012)

Test Two

In another A/B test, two versions of a form on a landing page were presented. One used a stock image and another did not; the version without the image had 24% more submissions, Gardner (2012) identified the issue as the ‘corporate’ flavor of the image used and the fact that it pushed the form down, causing distraction. This is an interesting result that goes against the idea that an image can improve a web page.

Test Three

In an example of a form design test, this A/B test looked at two versions of a form. The one using images was more visually interesting and set up differently than the other version. The first version of the form is shorter, asked for less information, and is user friendlier overall, and this, Gardner (2012) argues, is what makes the 368.5% conversion difference- the task to complete the shorter form seems much less looming: “When designing your landing page, don’t overestimate your user’s tolerance, goodwill, and patience.”

Test Four

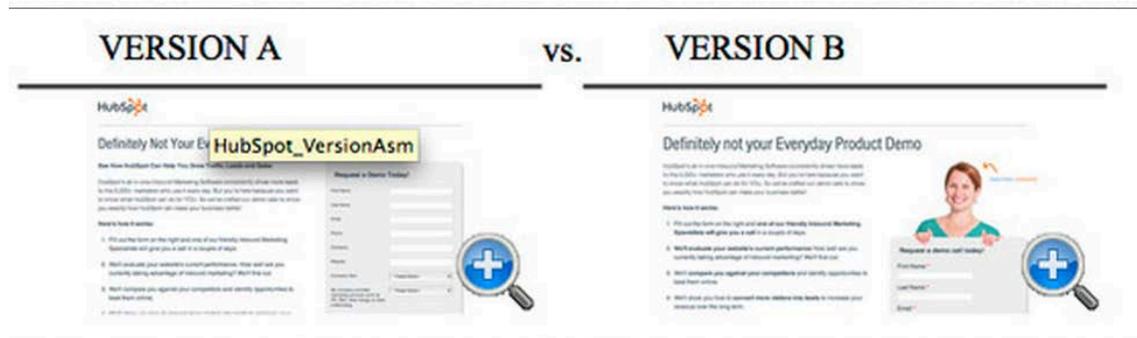
In another A/B test, one version of the webpage includes testimonials. This social proof resulted in a 34% increase in sales. “Having ‘social proof’, even in this basic form, humanizes the conversion experience, engendering trust and allowing the user to identify with other consumers” (Gardner, 2012). However, another test showed that in order for this social proof to be effective, the testimonial should be placed in a highly visible location.

Test Five

Another A/B test showed that a few carefully redesigned elements on a page resulted in a 439% difference in leads between two versions of a website home page. The pages were similar, except for a few minor differences: a shorter form with fewer fields to fill out; two images that add authenticity to the website; text placed within an image that draws the user for an initial greater impact. Gardner (2012) wrote “If you’ve got two pages that

are well-designed and both, seemingly, doing a good job, it's easy to take your eye off the ball. Don't. A continuous A/B testing regime, in which tweaks and redesigns are checked on a regular basis, can have a big impact."

Test That Stood Out



(See original test Case Study at [WhichTestWon](#))

Test two was most interesting- this is the test that added the stock image. It was always a personal feeling that these stock images do not enhance a design. Right away, it is easy to see that this person does not actually believe or even know what they advertise- they have no investment in the company, so there is the sense that this is an obvious tactic to deceive and gain instant leads without providing anything worthwhile, trustworthy, or credible. This was a good test because it was one simple element that got in the way of 24% more people submitting the form. The image simply got in the way and turned people away. Gardner (2012) wrote: "be careful when selecting images, they can lessen impact if they are overly corporate, or in this case, simply bland. This is a great example of why you should confirm your assumptions with quantitative testing."

Test with Most Conversion Improvements

Test Five showed the most conversion improvements. The reason why may be because of the formula used to test and redesign this website beyond just one or two elements, but use of a long-term strategy that considered more complex elements of design. Gardner (2012) argues that just because a website is up and online does not mean that the work is done, "If you've got two pages that are well-designed and both, seemingly, doing a good job, it's easy to take your eye off the ball. Don't. A continuous A/B testing regime, in which tweaks and redesigns are checked on a regular basis, can have a big impact" (2012). The different steps taken to test resulted in a 439% PPC traffic leads. Test three is another example of a test with a higher conversion – this more user-friendly form with images resulted in a 368.5% conversion over the longer, less visually interesting form.

Test with Least Conversion Improvements

Two tests with a lower conversion rate that were not listed above involved a simple change in button color and a use of an eTrust image. The idea is that a moderately-sized eTrust image will immediately convey the sense of trust and security, however, the version without the image had a slightly higher conversion of about 13%; Gardner (2012) argues that this image (when in context) caused people to believe that they had to pay for something, and that we should not underestimate the naiveté of the user; there was another A/B test that simply changed button color between two forms on the same page design; one button uses a bright green with white text- the contrast is poor, while the uglier (but higher contrast button) had a slightly higher conversion at 14.5%.

Winning Tests

All of these tests seem to win in some way because they revealed unique, surprising, and interesting findings, like:

- Small changes in a header and sub header that can lead to greater conversion
- Use of a stock image that can have an adverse effect
- A process using long-term AB testing that can provide insight into small, multiple steps that can be taken to increase conversion over time
- Form changes that can make an impact like shorter, user-friendlier forms
- Appropriate placement of social approval elements like testimonials

References

James Gardner. 12 Surprising A/B Test Results to Stop You Making Assumptions. 19 Sept 2012. Web. 28 Jan 2015. <http://unbounce.com/a-b-testing/shocking-results/>