

# Different Conversion Optimization Techniques You Should Consider

## 2 Guys on Your Website

A Deep Dive Into CRO with  
Brian Massey and Joel Harvey



### [00:00:00.660] - Brian Massey

Welcome to Two Guys on your website. I'm Brian Massey with Conversion Sciences.

### [00:00:04.310] - Joel Harvey

I'm Joel Harvey. Joel. Also with Conversion Sciences.

### [00:00:07.740] - Brian Massey

I was thinking that we would talk today about the different kinds of conversion rate optimization that are there. See, because there's not just one way of doing things. Now, naturally, we think the best way of doing, but it's not for everyone. Not everyone can work with us in that So what do you think about that?

### [00:00:32.700] - Joel Harvey

Well, I feel like we got to go over some ground rules for this whole thing first. Like, are you the good optimizer? And I'm the bad optimizer. Am I the bad optimizer? Am I the bad optimizer, or you're the good optimizer? I'm not sure. We're going to do optimizer, bad optimizer. I don't even know. I got to start from the beginning. The different kinds of CRO. What do you mean? Because when you say that, I think about different sizes of websites, really. Like different, Different sample sizes, if you will. Different volumes of, let's say, average, monthly conversion.

### [00:01:04.380] - Brian Massey

I think that's one part of the spectrum, yes.

### [00:01:06.680] - Joel Harvey

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Part of the spectrum. CROs are on the spectrum. I did not realize I was going to be diagnosed with anything on this, whatever this is.

**[00:01:17.610] - Brian Massey**

You need some diagnosis, I'm sure.

**[00:01:20.090] - Joel Harvey**

I've been begging for it, but that's okay. Different types of CRO. Tell me what you have in mind whenever you say that.

**[00:01:27.880] - Brian Massey**

I'm curious. For instance, we just launched a post on the blog about before and after testing. So there's a where you change something on the website, and then you go back and you see.

**[00:01:39.840] - Joel Harvey**

Pre-post before and after. Right. Okay, so that versus- That's what most people are doing.

**[00:01:44.600] - Brian Massey**

Most People are changing things, and then if they're smart, they go back and they look to see how all that change improvements.

**[00:01:49.930] - Joel Harvey**

That's tricky, actually. I always say there are a lot of different tools. I always say a lot of things. But one of the things they say is there's a lot of different tools in the optimizer's toolbox. **A strategy is just knowing which tools you need to pull out for which occasion and how many tools you can have out of the toolbox working at the same time**, in unison or in parallel, whatever. And a lot of people pull out the split testing, A/B testing, we're going to split our graph. Third or third a third tool when they really should on lower sample size sites.

There's a paradox, which is the volume of data. It's not really a paradox, actually. The lower your sample size, the lower your volume of data, the harder it is to optimize your site because you can't really use A/B testing, high velocity be high momentum testing. Not within a frequency. It's very difficult to isolate variables. The truth is, your hidden gold is probably actually something that seems innocuous to the eye if you're looking at it like, say, a test model or whatever. It's difficult to detect small changes. So your instinct, probably rightly so, is going to be to lean towards really big changes.

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**[00:03:11.050] - Joel Harvey**

There's a whole other trap. That's a whole other conversation. What is a big change? What's a big swing? What's a meaningful change? The paradox is you have less data to figure that out, but you got to figure that out in order to find detectable change. So there's that type of optimization, which I think if you're not measuring it, you can't call it optimization. You can't even call it before and after. I mean, you were there before and you're there after, and you're probably going to be fired in the after because you made too many changes that you didn't measure. And by the way, everybody, we're really bad at this. As far as making changes that win, our batting average is three out of 10, four out of 10, are winners to the dollar. And we're the best in the business as far as I'm concerned. And I say that when I say we're really bad at this, I mean, nobody Nobody knows exactly what's going to work. That's the puzzle of it. Let's be honest, if we knew exactly what was going to work, would we be recording this right now? No, we'd be Rich AF, somewhere else.

**[00:04:13.020] - Joel Harvey**

And so would you if you're watching this. You don't know, but you have to fail systematically to uncover what's going to work. So back to, I guess we're already off on a tangent, back to the low traffic sites. How do you do that? You're going to measure pre-post. How do you do that? Actually, reliably detect anything.

**[00:04:35.060] - Brian Massey**

You wait a long time before you make your judgments. So the thing is that pre-post testing, you want to apply the same rules that you would as if you were A/B testing. You want them before and after periods to be about the same length of time, or at least to have the same number of sessions. You want to look at the traffic and make sure that there wasn't a change in the traffic that was coincident with that particular change. At the same time that you launched the new landing page, did you also change your paid traffic?

**[00:05:03.250] - Joel Harvey**

I mean, you do all the things. By the way, I think we should mention, those are all the things you do whenever you do an A/B test, too. As far as your post-test analysis, I think My thinking on this, at least, I would say it's developed, hasn't changed. I think all those things are important. But I do believe that time is our enemy when it comes to growth, right? There's constant downward pressure on any given business, competition, atrophy, whatever, right? And so our job as optimizers is to put upward pressure on that, right? But if you have to wait, say, 90 days, and then you're comparing to a 90 day period, there's two problems with that. One is waiting 90 days to figure something out, which you may have to do, okay? But the more time you have an experiment, the more fluctuations you have in traffic. So your test period becomes in itself an erratic sample size. And then you're comparing to a longer mirror of time. If you're just doing previous 90 days or the similar 90 days. So you also have a more erratic sample size that

you're comparing to. I think if we're trying to optimize a low traffic site, let's just take our website, because we work on our website trying to get leads, and it's a lower volume site.

**[00:06:28.470] - Joel Harvey**

It's not like our It's not the same volume of our A/B testing clients that we work with. I believe the only way to move the needle on a site with smaller volumes of conversions It's actually to know your data incredibly well. So what day is today? Thursday? It is. How many leads are you going to get today? What's tomorrow? Friday? How many leads you get on a Friday? And you need to say, Well, we get three on Thursdays. How do you know that? Because I have a composite of the last 24 months of Thursdays, and I've thrown out outliers, and I know exactly what to expect on a Thursday, what to expect on a Friday. I know Saturday and Sunday, there's going to be nothing Monday. You know what I'm saying? That's how you detect changes. Because if you're relying, you can't rely on conversion rate if you have a lower sample size. Erratic changes in your denominator change the whole thing, or erratic changes in your numerator change the whole thing. The lower your sample size, even the tools we use down to the simple ratio that is the foundational name of what we do as an industry, conversion rate optimization.

**[00:07:40.020] - Joel Harvey**

What's the conversion rate? It's a numerator and a line and a denominator. And the smaller your sample size, the more subject it is to fluctuation. So it's better to look at your real numbers. Okay, today is a Thursday. How many leads are you going to get? Well, I was expecting to get three, but today I have seven. Oh, wow. Well, yesterday we rolled out all those changes that we determined. They were hypotheses from research we did, and we said, Here's a strategy, roll these out. That's interesting. This is the first Thursday we've ever had seven leads or eight leads. What about tomorrow, Friday? That's usually we only have one or two. Hey, we got three. All right. Well, I don't know. Let's see what happens next week, and so on and so forth.

And notice that I'm not really looking at the conversion rate at the price. I'm trying to, because again, we're trying to make more money, right? And so I think that some would argue there's a little bit of gut feel to that, and I would say, yeah, there is. But it's a gut feel based on actually the best data you can have, which can take a long time to think about what your comparison has been.

**[00:08:44.120] - Joel Harvey**

And don't just randomly say, let's just do the last 90 days and the 90 days from last. And then that's your goal. It's got to go way deeper than that.

**[00:08:53.940] - Brian Massey**

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You're hinting at something that what we call **home run testing**, which is where on a low volume site, you go in and you do an A/B test, but you can also apply this to before and after testing. And you're looking for 50, 60, 70% lifts.

**[00:09:11.390] - Joel Harvey**

Signature wins. Right.

**[00:09:13.220] - Brian Massey**

You can almost get the point that even With a relatively small sample size, not three versus seven, but 20 versus 40, you can say, Okay, well, the math works out here because the lift is so big. What you got to be willing to do is make the error that you're going to call something a loser because it only had 20 or 30% lift, that actually, if you'd been able to run it long enough to get the right sample size, would have actually improved things. So you're willing to make that error.

**[00:09:39.260] - Joel Harvey**

That's actually a really interesting distinction I believe you have to make on a lower volume site You have to turn up your risk tolerance dial a little. It's like, well, if we... And this is where you actually have to do more work on the research side and more work on the customer empathy side and things like that. There's So you can say, okay, look, it's 40 to 30, conversion-wise, and the conversion rate is showing a delta, but it's still low volume. I don't know. Is it statistically significant? No. But is there any evidence that this is going to hurt us? No. Is there evidence that this is probably going to help us? Yeah. Then do it. Do it and move on. Because if you wait around to find out, one, how much time do you How many things that are important are waiting in line? And two, again, we talked about this, but traffic change, that the test could change. And it's not the test's fault that the numbers change so much as you get a different sample size, and then you don't trust anything you're doing. It goes back to a gut question, which is like, do I believe this means you got to know your customers.

**[00:10:53.520] - Joel Harvey**

We have calls, both of us, all the time with business owners. And a lot of the time, if it's a startup, it's a smaller business, there's bad news. One, we probably aren't the best fit for you. We cost too much money relative to your revenue. We just don't do deals that we don't feel like we can provide value on why. Number two, that means you also can't hire anybody to do this work. And anybody that you do, if it's for a small amount of money, they're not really going to dive into the details. All about peeling back layer after layer after layer of the onion, different types of onions, different types of data. And the bad news and also good news is that it has to be you to do it. It's going to have to be you. You have to know your customers in every way that you can. Then you make meaningful changes for them. Yeah.

**[00:11:55.340] - Brian Massey**

The next level that I see in the spectrum of solutions for CRO is purely heuristic. There are a lot of people that have studied website design, studied UX. Maybe they have run A/B tests. They basically say, We know. We know we can look at a page and see when you're doing something. Pull out the friction, make sure that you're doing best practices in terms of how you're doing your calls to action and things like that. That is, at least from our point of view, well, let's just say we've been humbled by A/B test. We've gone in and we've said, Well, this has worked on the last five customers, so we should do it on your site, and then we do an A/B test.

**[00:12:44.270] - Joel Harvey**

It's There's only one rock solid best practice, as far as I'm concerned. It's like, make sure your website's not broken in such a way that people can't or won't take the action you want them to. Everything else is subject to the context that it's in.

Nothing exists without its own context. You know what I mean? A website, it's important to know. I think even take the example of, Okay, we've been trained in UI and UX, and not to diminish that. We've been trained in UI and UX. I think there's a lot of value to that. But so often we complicate things right out of the gate. Like, oh, well, these things have to be here. We're violating this UX principle and this. It's like, okay, well, take a bigger step back, like a 40,000-foot view, 80,000-foot view. And what are we trying to do? What is the core need of the people that are coming to this website? What is the core need that they have? And what is the core need that we have as a business? And where's the Venn diagram of those two things? How do we talk to the people? How do we give the people what they need?

**[00:13:56.370] - Joel Harvey**

And how do we do that in such a way that the people then give us what we need? And by the way, we're also people. You see a theme there?

**[00:14:04.530] - Brian Massey**

Yeah.

**[00:14:05.480] - Joel Harvey**

Instead of diving into whatever it is, your heuristics checklist, your UI, UX checklist, everything, you got to start from the beginning. Yeah.

**[00:14:14.450] - Brian Massey**

Well, in your Looking at one of the key disadvantages in my mind of heuristics is it generally involves placement of things, it involves where they exist on the visual hierarchy, so calls to action should pop, etc.

But When you realize that the ceiling you're going to have on your conversion optimization is having the right value proposition and messaging on those pages, yes, those things are things you can't just heuristically say, Oh, we're going to change all of this. We're going to make it shorter. We're going to make it longer. We're going to make the copy more emotional. We're going to make it more methodical. Those sorts of things don't get mixed in.

My feeling about the heuristic CRO is that it is a little bit more project-oriented. You go in, you call out the things that are causing friction, you fix those things. But as you're fond of saying, our job is to maintain constant upward pressure on the conversion rate.

### **[00:15:20.020] - Joel Harvey**

This gives you a starting point. Some of it will be right and some of it will be wrong, but at least it gives you a place to start, like a foundation that you're starting to build. For some people, I think it's like a fresh set of eyes. There is value in it, but it's not... Again, it's a starting point, foundation. If you want to... How many lots around town do you see just with concrete foundations off? Why would you stop there? You know what I mean? You got to have it. But if you only have that, it's probably not going to be a great use to you. Everything is about execution. That's what we've We happen to be an execution agency that executes on conversion optimization. But we execute on projects, we execute on tasks, we execute on strategies. We execute on the creation of those strategies. You know what I mean? It's all about getting stuff done. And hopefully, most of it, the vast majority of it is going to be getting the right stuff. We also know that that's impossible. So, eyes wide open and clear and recognize what's working, what's not, and whatever we're doing, keep moving forward.

### **[00:16:38.850] - Brian Massey**

Well, the next level in my mind is the heuristic, but you can start to work in message testing and stuff when you... Especially if you have a site that doesn't have enough conversions to do A/B testing, you can start to bring in less qualified audiences. Here I'm thinking about the online focus groups or the online survey services where you can run things like a five-second test. You can design two or three or four versions of a page, put them in front of 25 people for each of those pages, show it, it'll show them for five seconds, then you get to ask them questions. You ask them, Do you know what this company does? After looking at this page for five seconds, what would you do if you wanted to take action? Do you think this company is credible? Questions like that.

### **[00:17:28.610] - Joel Harvey**

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Note that I just I just wanted to call out that you're asking questions that are really more basic or general. You're not assuming that these people are really going to be in the audience of whatever it is you're asking them to look at. You're just wanting to know, do people pick up Can they quickly see what we're doing? Is it clear? That's a starting. It can be useful for certain things, but not like, would you pay this much for this product and feel like you are getting a good deal? Yes or no? That would be garbage. You got to have a steady hand at the wheel is important.

**[00:18:04.990] - Brian Massey**

You might be able to do that if you're selling apparel or something that a lot of people are used to buying. But even asking that question, people want to give you the answers that they think you want to hear. And so they're going to not really give you a truthful answer. They're going to try to be nice. For sure. We like to stick with questions about how well we're communicating rather than how well we're presenting product. That distinction makes sense.

**[00:18:31.980] - Joel Harvey**

How clearly we're communicating non-emotional, non-emotive things, I would say.

**[00:18:39.280] - Brian Massey**

So you can do that. And that is essentially growing the audience, the number of brains that are looking at your designs and giving you feedback on them. You want to do that in a specific way. The next level, in my mind, is collecting data on the site. We've got analytics, and I think most people, I like to think that most people that are doing the heuristic analysis, just the best practice analysis, are also looking at the analytics so that they can go and see which problem-I know, we certainly do.

**[00:19:11.650] - Joel Harvey**

Heuristics only, it's important, it plays a role, but you start to fill it out, right? You start to flesh it out, as the saying goes, with data, and it starts to feel a little bit more meaty, a little bit more formidable. Then you also So that's where you stumble on the things that tend to lead to the most impactful or most meaningful hypotheses or ideas later down the road. Because this whole thing starts with questions, good questions, asking good questions, running them through various sources of data. I like the way you're layering or laddering through the different types of data that could be used. Because the first example you can use on designs is you don't even have a live website. You're just trying to figure stuff out. Then you can use those plus analytics if you have traffic, et cetera.

**[00:20:12.260] - Brian Massey**

In the realm of analytics, you can also bring in watching a session recording. For a little bit higher traffic sites, you can do the heat map reports, so you can see where people's mouse is moving, where they're clicking, how far they're scrolling on the page. That can really start to give you more pointed ideas of at the highest level, where people are clicking on things that aren't clickable, and where people aren't clicking on things that are clickable. It can really give you some good feedback as to where the problems are and let your designers use that to do a better job of building that visual hierarchy.

**[00:20:50.490] - Joel Harvey**

Yeah, I think that that's important. I think of examples where you see the most thing on the page is this element that's maybe halfway down the page, but it's what you want to do on the page, and only 50% of the people actually get there because... Another example of overcomplicating things. You think you need this huge windup before you ask them, but you don't. They know what they're doing, right? We oftentimes simultaneously give our visitors or whoever, too much credit and not enough credit. At the same time, it's a byproduct of overthinking, which is a byproduct of not testing or experimenting, not letting the data lead. What happens? You overthink, you overtalk, you overmeet, and then you underdo.

**[00:21:36.480] - Brian Massey**

You are just an underdual.

**[00:21:38.350] - Joel Harvey**

Underdo. Don't underdo. Don't you underdo. Crocodile under Dundee. That's it. I'm making more and more references that totally date me to a point where people are like, How old is this guy?

**[00:21:55.310] - Brian Massey**

Okay, boomer.

**[00:21:55.960] - Joel Harvey**

Yeah.

**[00:21:57.250] - Brian Massey**

Well, so the next level up from that, of course, is if we have a site that qualifies for A/B testing, that you can get a reasonable sample size for testing at least one good variation in the space of four to six weeks. I think we look to have decisions made every month at a minimum.

**[00:22:19.340] - Joel Harvey**

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You really have to have that a cadence. I think one thing we should rewind, because when we're talking about heuristics and then layering data into it to do basically a full-blown conversion audit assessment, whatever you want to call it, we call it an audit. Although, audit is such a... It's a word that makes people quiver. But there's also a bunch of stuff that... So we say best practices are like, take them with a grain of salt. Again, the only best practice I'm going to stand by 100% of the time is if something's broken and is preventing people from taking the action you want or making them really not want to, then you should fix that.

Otherwise, we should get some data on it, or at least if you're going to do it, have a post-measurement plan, like we discussed on the front-end of this. But we find a ton of stuff that does need to be fixed. Some of it might be browser or device-specific. Oftentimes, it's not. And the thing is, how do you find those things? How do you create good hypotheses? I'll go back to, so, yes, we have all this data.

**[00:23:30.210] - Joel Harvey**

It's great. And you have to look at all the data, and then you have to synthesize it into overarching themes and takeaways and strategy and all that. But the best hypotheses are going to come from actually going through whatever you're doing as close to in the mindset of an actual user as possible. Putting yourself into the shoes of the people you're trying to sell to or get to call you, fill out a form, whatever it is. You have to start there. Again, start from the beginning. Everything's about people and always start at the beginning.

**[00:24:06.880] - Brian Massey**

It's notoriously difficult to put yourself in somebody else's shoes, which is one of the advantages of having an external CRO come in. It is, even for us, so hard to write messaging, copy offers, because we're too close to it.

**[00:24:24.290] - Joel Harvey**

Well, bad, and honestly, most people, when they want to write copy, feel immediately an intense pressure, and that shuts them down. It's a great case of people not giving themselves enough credit. You speak very fluently and eloquently, and you get your point across, but you say you can't write. What is writing?

**[00:24:44.150] - Brian Massey**

You know what I'm Like, I own a copy of words. When we get called and brought into a company that already has a CRO team, the mistake they're making is picking the wrong things to test. Typically, what this will look like internally is they'll have a weekly brainstorm in which they'll pull up the pages that they're concerned about, get a group of people together, and they'll start throwing out ideas, and they'll come to

come some consensus in their little group about what they should test next. It's just not a good way to pick ideas.

**[00:25:15.840] - Joel Harvey**

That even sounds like a great scenario compared to what I think is more common, and maybe you were implying this, but they have three or four weeks or longer worth of meetings just to talk about this data and talk about what they're seeing. And they say, let's wait and do a little and get a little bit more data. Fear of acting and doing anything for fear of doing the wrong thing. It's almost like what you see when people that are perfectionists or that hold themselves to a perfect standard are also most likely to procrastinate. Why? Because perfect is high pressure. Got to get this right. That's high pressure.

So what do we do instead? Let's just talk and get by and all. So again, the thing about it feels risky to just go try things. But what you're doing is you're doing two things simultaneously. One, you're accelerating your pace because you're doing something. And as long as you're not doing something that's completely innocuous, you should, at least hopefully, learn something from it. Maybe even increase your... Put upward pressure on your conversion rate. Doing something. What was the second part?

**[00:26:35.480] - Brian Massey**

Well, I think you're presenting the dichotomy that is, I think, built into our culture, which is we have this rigor. We follow the scientific method. We do a lot of research. We collect ideas, score them, and rank them. But then you're also hinting that we don't let perfect. We don't let this rigorousness get in the way of forward motion.

**[00:26:59.540] - Joel Harvey**

Because Yeah, there is no movement without movement. It turns out that there's no movement without movement. You have to be... Oh, I know. It's perceived as risky to do something, but as long as you're just not doing totally innocuous things, and you're testing them some way, whether it be testing pre-post-experimentation, you're experimenting, you're trying things, and you're using data to fuel your hypotheses, data to fuel the test-creative network. You're taking the risk out of it. The most risky thing is to do nothing. The second most risky thing is to just basically have group think towards Very innocuous stuff. I think a really common problem that we see across the board in early conversations with people that are already doing optimization or have, in some cases, other agencies, frankly, is pushing the sample size just too far. It is way too far. Another common problem is not focusing on the right things. Hey, this is coming from the top. This is a really important thing. They want to grow this. We got to focus on it. Okay, but there's only 17 conversions in this part of your site. You sold 17 of those last week. You want us to apply A/B testing.

**[00:28:24.230] - Joel Harvey**

Let's look at this and let's figure out how to grow it in conjunction with your traffic team, and let's create cohesive strategy. But A/B tests on that is not the thing to do. Not at all.

**[00:28:37.540] - Brian Massey**

So to summarize in this spectrum, I think you've got individual contributor, consultants, who are going to come in and primarily do a heuristic review. They're looking for people sometimes call low-hanging fruit. To me, it's like they're just looking to get lucky. Have you ever seen any of that?

**[00:29:00.060] - Joel Harvey**

On. The raccoons and skunks eat all the low-hanging fruit at night. We wake up and it's all gone. Honestly, we work with businesses that there is no low-hanging fruit. It's not like we cost the same as at lunch every month. We're incredibly high value, but you have to be making a certain amount of money in order to work with us. And if you're making that amount of money, typically it means that you've gotten rid of a bunch of the low hanging fruit has been picked already. It's very seldom, we're talking about signature wins, these 50 %, 60 % wins. To be very clear, those are incredibly rare. Yeah. Incredibly rare. And you have the wrong mentality and mindset of That's what you're looking for.

**[00:29:46.570] - Brian Massey**

Yeah, we eat on tests that have 10 to 15% lifts.

**[00:29:51.240] - Joel Harvey**

Or even in higher volumes, you can eat on 3, 4, 5% or greater. And that's where That's where the money is. That's where the reality. In reality, that's where you're going to find that constant upward pressure.

**[00:30:10.060] - Brian Massey**

Then folks that are pulling in the analytics a little bit. One of the challenges with analytics is that usually **even more sophisticated clients, there are blind spots**. There are things that you're not able to see and answer questions about. So either you don't have the data that you need, and if you're not sophisticated enough to actually spec what you need then. This is where having, in our case, the conversion scientist trained in analytics, they can point that out. And then a development team behind them can actually implement that for the client. I would say, actually, the conversion scientist doesn't even have to be trained in analytics.

**[00:30:50.230] - Joel Harvey**

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Like the nuts and bolts of it to understand where the blind spots are.

**[00:30:56.100] - Brian Massey**

They don't have to be able to implement it.

**[00:30:57.640] - Joel Harvey**

But they have to say, look, I'm trying to understand what people are doing on this page, and I can see that we're not firing any events whenever people click on this, this or this. And that's a problem. Can you implement that for me? That's as technical as they have to get, right? And then we can handle the rest with our dev team. But they have to be asking questions, have to be going through the site, have to be saying, and then looking at the data. I see people are clicking on this thing in the heat maps, and it is clickable, but I'm not tracking that in analytics. And so therefore, I can't correlate it with other types of behavior, up to and including transactional conversion types of behavior.

That's a problem. I will also say, there's a place where I even see us as conversion optimizers get slowed down, though, whenever we have those data blind spots. Like, oh, wait, we got to get this data here. And I would even argue then, it's like, yes, get that data, but in parallel, keep moving forward and keep testing. So even the thing that we're saying other people do, we do as well.

**[00:32:05.050] - Joel Harvey**

We just do it in different places or for different reasons. And I know I always encourage our team, Okay, hit these blind spots on the product details page or whatever, whatever. That's okay. We're not tracking clicks on navigation or the site-wide banners or calls to action. That's terrible. Let's get that implemented. But that doesn't mean you have to now wait 30 more days to decide what you're going to do. It's good we have to track that to run a test, but still run a test. You know what I mean? We got to be careful to bog down in our own fears, trepidations, quest towards perfection. No, of course you're not. I want to vouch for Brian. I once saw him wrestle a lion with a Python squeezed around his neck.

**[00:32:56.600] - Brian Massey**

That was a good time.

**[00:32:57.840] - Joel Harvey**

Yeah.

**[00:32:59.450] - Brian Massey**

I think small agencies, individual contributors, when you're doing A/B testing, number one, being able to pick what to test is that's the secret sauce, knowing testing the right things.

**[00:33:16.080] - Joel Harvey**

Where to test, where to test? Sorry, but where to test and then what to test. Got to make that distinction. I'll agree with that. How many times is it like, Hey, we've been testing on our homepage, and you look at the data, you're like, Wow, that's like seven % of your transactions. Cool.

**[00:33:34.460] - Brian Massey**

It might be 50 % of their traffic, but it's like seven % of their transactions.

**[00:33:37.530] - Joel Harvey**

Only 7%, or it might be 10 % of the traffic. Or it might be, or maybe in some cases, 90 % of your leads or conversions come through the homepage. It's not nothing against homepage testing, but it's just like, I don't know, who are you going to give a bigger trophy? Somebody who gets a 100 % increase on one % of the traffic or the conversions? That's an important distinction as well. Or a 2% increase on 100% of the conversions. How many? Two %. Exactly. A 100% lift sounds way more impressive. And you come in and Peacock a little bit, but then you drill in and it's like, what? You did this on a page that's only got a small fraction of the... How come? There should be a reason that you're not focused on 100% of the conversions for every single test you do. And now it can be like, well, we have different lanes, and so now we run, it's not going to be across our entire domain. On our paid landing pages, we run tests. On our blog pages, we run tests to get email addresses. On the core site, we run tests.

**[00:34:39.160] - Joel Harvey**

Email landing pages, we run tests. But even in those cases, if it's not on 100% of the conversions in that lane, there better be a really good reason as to why. Because then you're wasting... You're taking... Your job is to bring the pie to Thanksgiving dinner, and you have four pies But then for some reason, when you're leaving, and there's enough people to eat probably five or six pies. But then for some reason, like I agree, you decide you're only going to take two of the pies and leave two of the pies at your house. So you show up with two pies. You should have shown up with four. And really, it could have shown up with six. It doesn't make any sense. Why would you leave? Don't leave pie at home. Bring all the pie.

**[00:35:19.970] - Brian Massey**

That's a lot of pie, but yes, bring it all.

**[00:35:25.250] - Joel Harvey**

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I get the feeling you didn't like that analogy. What do you got against pie?

**[00:35:29.660] - Brian Massey**

Just six of them is probably.

**[00:35:32.630] - Joel Harvey**

There's how many people? I mean, come on, do the math. There's like 30 people at this Thanksgiving dinner. There's a lot of people.

**[00:35:38.120] - Brian Massey**

Then you need a lot of pies.

**[00:35:39.140] - Joel Harvey**

How big are the pies? 10 inches, 12 inches, 14 inches? Could they could be mini pies, in which case, Why are you showing up with mini pies? 30 people? See, a lot of questions you can ask about the pies.

**[00:35:50.530] - Brian Massey**

I think we're stretching this analogy.

**[00:35:52.020] - Joel Harvey**

It's not even an analogy anymore. It's its own thing.

**[00:35:54.490] - Brian Massey**

It's its own thing.

**[00:35:55.550] - Joel Harvey**

It's become an illustration of all the questions you can ask before you draw any conclusion and then make a strategy about how to respond to the pie analogy.

**[00:36:05.320] - Brian Massey**

We're going to have to do some research in it. At this level where you're doing A/B testing, you want to keep the velocity up, you want to make sure that you've always got tests in the water. That's where a CRO that has the dev team, the design team, and the analytics support are going to really come in for it.

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**[00:36:28.770] - Joel Harvey**

Definitely. I mean, The reality is, I think most businesses up to a certain size, and I really don't know what that exact size is. It's going to vary. But most businesses really, I don't think, can justify having a full... What do you need for a full-blown optimization program internally? First of all, you need a conversion strategist who's actually really good at optimization. You and I both know for a fact, those are rare folks. They just don't. We just know.

**[00:37:07.120] - Brian Massey**

Because we've been looking for 14 years.

**[00:37:08.500] - Joel Harvey**

Some things you just know. There is a neon sign outside of the conversion sciences door that's on 247, 365. All qualified applicants welcome. And we have fantastic conversion scientists. They're just really hard to find. And that's a good thing. I'm glad, right? It's something that makes... If you can find really good optimizers, it makes us strong.

Anyway, a really great conversion strategist is going to make all the difference. They're the ones that are ultimately going to go through all that data, find the blind spots, synthesize the data into a strategy, turn that strategy into an impactful roadmap. It's full of great hypotheses backed up by data that are translated into test plans with fantastic creative, developed by great developers, etc. They're the core of all that. They're like the hub of the wheel. Very important. Those people are rare and expensive. Online, they are. And then what are the other people I talked about? Developers. At least one, and it's not just any developer, it's a front-end developer of a specific type, a test developer. They have to be platform agnostic, technology technology agnostic to a certain degree. They have to be problem solvers. They have to be context switchers.

**[00:38:35.230] - Joel Harvey**

And they have to be happy with solving a smaller term, like we need to execute this test, and solving the problems associated with that, as opposed to, I'm building this big thing always. Not that either one of those is right, it's just like it's a rare form of developer. So you have to find one of those. If you're doing any creative, you have to have a copywriter, designer, who not only is open to being led by the data, but demands it, and does all the things that we're saying a conversion strategist, or what we call a conversion scientist has to. Do the best they can to take two on all that data, synthesize it, marinate on it, put themselves in the visitor's shoes. It's like a gumbo. You're doing it all at once. A bunch of things, it's flashing together. At the end. It's delicious.

**[00:39:27.500] - Brian Massey**

And they have to know how to design for testing. So you can go in and completely redesign an element that you might be testing. But a good designer knows, I want to make sure that I'm adhering to the hypothesis, which it usually doesn't include make the button pop more. If you're testing the text on those, then they may say, We don't want to overdesign this because we're introducing a new variable, which is a different design.

**[00:39:58.640] - Joel Harvey**

Well, and they have to be open to being along for the ride. It's all about following stuff up, too. Again, it's humbling work. You run a test, you lose, and that's great. Because you're like, Oh, why did we lose? What clues can we find? And what do we need to do to not lose? We hit a nerve. Cool. Just do the opposite, or something on the opposite end of the spectrum, or whatever, right? And then that's a way of thinking and a mode of thinking that has to be across the whole team, including designers. Not like, Oh, no, my first design was right. I know it was because it followed these principles. No, it's like, Oh, that loss? Interesting. What do we know about? What hard data, qualitative data do we have? What quantitative data do we have? Let's make some adjustments. Typically, it's like we usually don't... I think about most of the wins that I'm aware of that our team has generated, and certainly what we call signature wins or home runs. Most of them are not like a first time we tested this concept out of the gate type of thing. It's generally like, we ran into a brick wall a couple of times.

**[00:41:09.710] - Joel Harvey**

We had bloody foreheads doing it, but we finally figured out how to not lose from this thing and how to give the people what they want. It's all about giving the people what they want. That's when we finally broke through.

**[00:41:25.810] - Brian Massey**

**When we do a consultation, we're working through this calculus of what will work best for them.** Our offering really resides at the top level that we're looking for clients that are A/B testing, but we can help someone determine if they just know they're in a position for heuristic testing, depending on how many resources they have and things like that. We're working through that in the process of understanding if someone's qualified to work, either our full conversion catalyst or the audits.

**[00:42:05.140] - Joel Harvey**

When we have a conversion consultation, really, our objective is just to understand Where folks are with their business, particularly their website or digital footprint of their business from a conversion volume perspective. It's just really the core number. And help them understand what their best path for us, which may or may not involve us. And if it doesn't involve us, we'll take the time and be very present in the

moment and give them the best possible advice we can. If it seems like there's a fit, then we'll go to the next step and do our due diligence to determine what we think the best fit is to provide value. We talk a lot about what our core values are or value is really, and it's a reflection of providing value. We talk about our North Star single word. Took us over a decade to boil it down to one word, but it's longevity, internally and externally. I think we only get that by working with people that we truly believe we can help. Doing what we know needs to be done in order to put upward pressure on the conversion rate.

**[00:43:27.870] - Brian Massey**

To put a finer point on what we mean by longevity, for our clients, our relationships are three, four, five, six-year relationships.

**[00:43:38.290] - Joel Harvey**

Even in the cases where we work with people for six or seven years and it's like coming in, oftentimes, that's because they're now doing that internally. So it's even in that regard, I still look at as longevity. They're friends, and they're still optimizing, and we help get them there. That's longevity. That's a win.

**[00:43:57.370] - Brian Massey**

And then there's longevity on this particularly difficult person to find, conversion scientists, and we're very lucky that the conversion scientists-I think every element of our team, it's actually very niche and difficult to find.

**[00:44:09.820] - Joel Harvey**

And we've got, sorry to cut you off, but we got longevity across the board. I can't believe we got. Okay. We need to talk about this. I'm sorry.

**[00:44:21.830] - Brian Massey**

Yeah, longevity, it is our North Star, and it's a long-term indicator.

**[00:44:30.580] - Joel Harvey**

I'd say it's so important. It's even our South Star. It's our boy. It's both stars? It's every direction of-There is. It's four-dimensional, 360,000 degrees.

**[00:44:46.850] - Brian Massey**

I don't even know what to say to that. Now, I'm sitting here with Neil deGrasse Tyson.

**[00:44:54.800] - Joel Harvey**

Okay. Sorry.

**[00:44:56.620] - Brian Massey**

No, I think I was done with my point. And I think we're probably done with this discussion.

**[00:45:04.050] - Joel Harvey**

Brian is done. I think this is goodbye.

**[00:45:08.950] - Brian Massey**

I know I'm done.

**[00:45:10.340] - Joel Harvey**

All right. Well, to all you listeners out there, sorry.

**[00:45:19.810] - Brian Massey**

We should always end our podcast with an apology.

**[00:45:22.420] - Joel Harvey**

I think that's a good plan. I'm seeing where we are, back to ground rules. I like it. We'll be back with more Ground Rules later on.

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