

## INTRODUCING AUTOMATED CONTENT INTELLIGENCE

Back in the youthful days of the internet many were preoccupied with how to build online real-estate. Several years, bumps and scrapes later this activity includes sophisticated technology and skills dominated by efforts to acquire traffic from search engines. Increases in advertising spend are well documented [see the next column] and acquisition is critical to any web operation. More than ever marketers are focused on large volume and incremental variations in metrics which are achieved by a gradual development of technique and technology.

Next came plugging holes to stop guests leaving via the conversion funnel. This task is well supported by usability specialists and analytics solutions. Detailed analysis of which guests go where and then how they behave is now common place. But there is still a feeling of watching the party through the kitchen hatch to see if they eat the sandwiches. Maybe they can't find them or don't like the content. If only you could get in there and swap plates around perhaps more would eat and be merry.

## JOIN THE PARTY

Unlike most web marketing disciplines the nature of content and its position and purpose within a web site is still the subject of a fair bit of conjecture. Web teams spend a lot of time arguing about what works best often with few ways of knowing what best actually means.

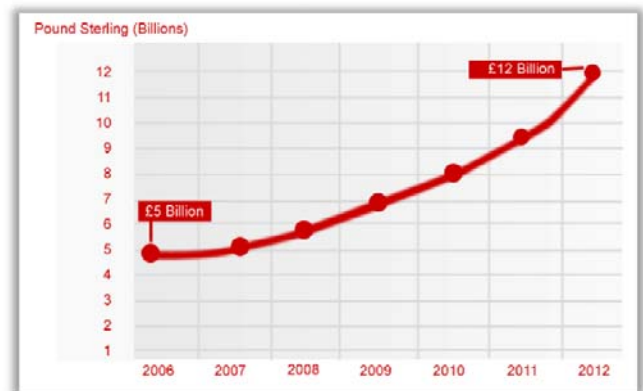
With mature practices in place for acquisition and analytics, content intelligence is the next major source of revenue improvement. Every commercial web site invests in content and needs to find a way of optimising its contribution. In the community focused Web2.0 era the unconverted are perhaps the major assets that winning businesses need to sweat.

## TESTING TIMES

Until recently the content space was the sole domain of the usability specialist. Now multivariate testing and behavioral targeting technology has arrived and is making a quick and impressive contribution. Multivariate testing combines well worn direct marketing techniques with some intelligent mathematics and automated methods of changing site content on the fly. What's more it develops detailed customer knowledge based on consumption, behaviour and a host of third party data. The results are quite big percentage conversion uplifts in businesses that have become more accustomed to incremental metrics improvement. And it also quickly resolves all that anagement wrangling about what content and processes work the best. That must be good news for everyone!

## SPENDING MONEY

Online marketing spend in Europe is see to more than double in the next five years. It will go from approximately 5 bn to 12 bn (€17.6 bn) by 2012. This is great news for those selling advertising and paid search, or operating affiliate networks and other traffic generating services. With more businesses focusing on online marketing, the demand for online advertising increases, which will have a follow on effect to prices.



Growth in online advertising spend

According to Forester Research as the demand for online advertising increases the effectiveness of advertising can decrease and result in fewer conversions. Marketers are being forced to spend more money driving traffic to their websites with the prospect of lower conversion rates.

While the majority of marketing spend will remain in driving visitors to a site through search engine optimisation (SEO), pay per click (PPC) and affiliate marketing, there are key areas to gain advantage in. These previously neglected areas of online marketing are similar to offline models where direct marketers have become experts at showing the right content, in the right place, at the right time to the right visitor. Site content optimisation techniques such as Multivariate Testing, Segmentation and Personalisation (Behavioural Targeting) provide the ability to quickly convert more visitors to consumers. Unlike analytics this is a solution not cause focused discipline, so while your analysts are funnel gazing the smart guys can be enjoying automated improvement.

It appears that we are getting closer to the classical *raison d'être* of the marketers work –serving and satisfying customer demand more efficiently and effectively.

# UNDERSTANDING CONVERSION RATES

## What are conversion rates, why are they important?

A conversion rate is the ultimate measure of commercial success. It is one metric that all marketers keep an eye on and non-converted customers are often a modern business's best new revenue. Online conversion can include a request for information, a registration or subscription, a purchase or even a simple click-through. All online businesses need to identify their conversion metric(s) as a basis of continuous improvement. The simple formula:

$$\text{Conversion Rate} = \frac{\text{Number Of Visitors Who Reach Goal}}{\text{Total Number Of Visitors}} \times 100\%$$

## How to improve return on investment?

As conversions rates are a measure of success they are key in being able to improve your return on investment (ROI). If you have chosen the right conversion metric a higher % rate leads to a higher ROI. While sophisticated web analytic tools give an understanding of site visitors and what they are doing, content intelligence understands site traffic and is able to take action in real time for each visitor.

# WEBSITE CONTENT OPTIMISATION

## Introduction

Content optimisation is the process of continuous improvement of conversion rates through testing content and serving the best combination.

### Key Questions

- Which content solicits the customer to take the actions I want?
- What is the best content to get more of my visitors to become my consumers?
- Do all my visitors need the same content to support their decision?
- Which content has the biggest effect on conversion?

Maxymiser's content optimisation techniques answer these questions using artificial intelligence and tracking technologies. It sounds complex but it is remarkably easy to implement on a site.

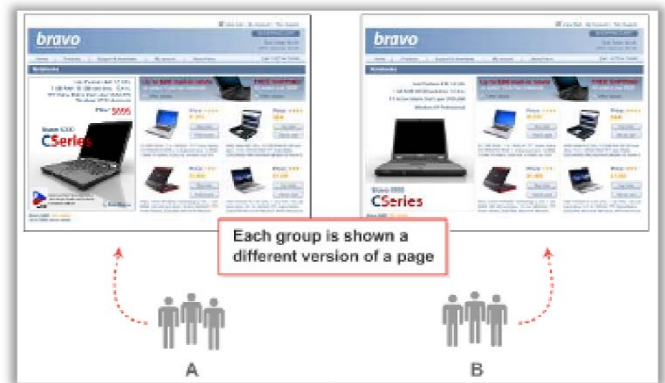
Content Optimisation is quickly gaining popularity with over 28% of site operators using some form of A/B Testing. The early adopters of A/B testing have seen its limitations and have moved on to more advanced multivariate testing technologies which get quick results using complex combinations.

## A/B Testing

A/B split testing is design testing in its simplest form. By taking one element from a webpage or the page as a

whole, you can test it against a different version. You can then determine the most effective variant to achieve your desired outcome. This method has been used for many years in offline direct marketing and is well known to experienced direct mail or email marketers.

This testing is simple and effective, and yields results and conclusions extremely quickly. Once your test phase is complete, you can quickly adopt the 'winning' variant and see tangible gains before moving on to test other content.



## Multivariate Testing

Multivariate Testing provides the capability to simultaneously test multiple areas of a web page with multiple variables for each area. Through the application of complex mathematical algorithms it is possible to not only find the winning variant in each area but also show how those elements combine together to form the best version of the page. This method considers how content works in combination to support visitors through the Awareness→ Interest→ Decision→ Action process that underpins any conversion event.

### Key Benefits of Automated Multivariate Testing:

- Conversion uplifts are considerably higher
- Winning content assets from one area rarely combine together to form the best version of the page, because content is interdependent within the AIDA process.
- It's much quicker so you can do more to boost uplift

So a web page might have six content areas (maxyboxes) to test...



...and each maxybox might have 6 content assets which could be assigned to a maxybox. Content assets can be entirely different from each other, for things like promotions or could have only small changes in information, layout or design.

Multivariate testing allows you to divide web pages and learn exactly which elements contribute to conversion rate uplift and which do not. Businesses typically try different colour schemes, font sizes, placements and pictures.

It's also a quick way to see how different pricing mechanisms and values affect sales, margin and liquidity of products and services. You can even optimise pricing by customer to drive profit or market share [see below]. It's powerful stuff.

Popular places for website testing:

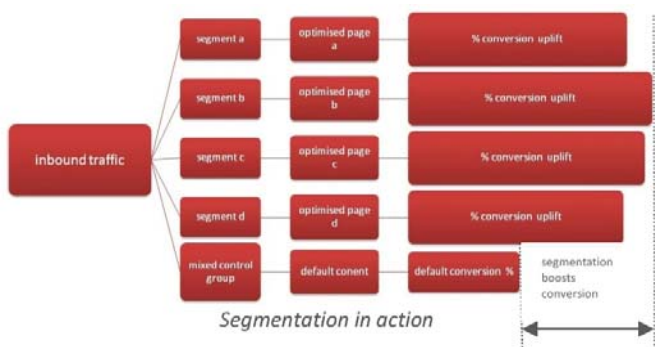
- High traffic pages like homepages and landing pages
- Call to action pages with product or search results
- Checkout process pages
- Pages with identified blockage or exit problems

## AUTOMATED OPTIMISATION FOR SEGMENTATION AND PERSONALISATION

### Segmentation

Segmentation allows you to divide visitors into different groups and optimise the content they see. This provides high levels of conversion uplift when you optimise content on landing pages to match the intent of a group of visitors. Example segmentation criteria include keyword from a search box, affiliate source, the time or day. So lunch hour searchers get relevant content, people looking for car loans get the best promotion and businesses get much better ROI on their search media because customers intent is linked directly to the content they see.

So segmentation gives you the ability to take a single page on a site and generate multiple optimised pages for different user segments automatically. This drives increased metrics by segmenting customers then optimising content for segments to ensure content relevance is much more accurate.



### Personalisation

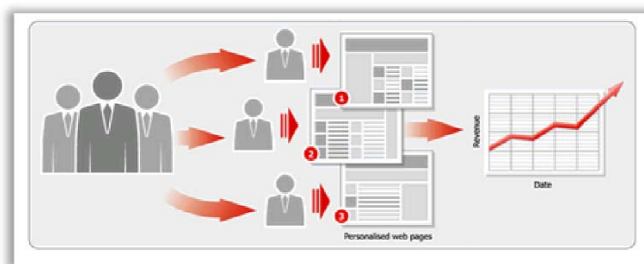
Rather than dividing customers into Segments, even greater accuracy of content relevance and conversion uplift can be achieved through Behavioural Targeting. This happens when web related data, such as time of day or route to arrival, is combined with third party data. This can include sources such as CRM, Demographics, historical activity or call centre/ email activity data recorded in your systems. Maxymiser simply maps and imports combinational data to support the content optimisation process. Artificial intelligence then calculate optimal content combinations for visitors on an individual basis. By automatically serving targeted content on a web page, content has a cognitive impact and affects a major increase in conversion metrics.

Offer Jill a holiday in her favourite destination in March when the pay cheques in and the credit card's clear. Serve Bob a renewal offer for his family car when you know its decision-time on the policy. Offer the accessories that match that outfit and then optimize Wendy's Christmas shopping list. Give the impetuous one a quick route to what they love best Get bingo at the top of the page - I need a lucky break!

Personalisation adapts a site to make sure each customer sees the content that stands the greatest chance of converting them into a buyer. If you aren't showing visitors what they want, your competitor may well be.

People are served highly relevant content based on their propensity to consume it or how they rely on it to support the AIDA process. This technology recognises that we are all different in how we learn, what we like and want, and what we have the capacity to consume.

Automated Personalisation of content provides extraordinary opportunities for marketers to optimise their metrics and approach demand in a revolutionary way for the web2.0 era.



Personalisation can be applied to multiple areas of a site from landing pages, promotions and up-selling to help tap into latent demand. In retail sites, personalisation can optimize product adjacencies by positioning optimal add on products next to regular purchases.

Maxymiser Personalisation is fully automated, removing the need for extensive human intervention, analysis or maintenance. Clear, concise reports show how tests are performing including your uplift in conversions and ROI.

## SUMMARY

**The right content, to the right people, in the right place at the right time** will become the mantra of the web2.0 marketer.

As acquisition costs provide less scope for competitive advantage, web marketing itself is climbing the arc of the product life-cycle. Promotion, price and place become dependent on your ability to serve the right content. There are many obvious sector parallels where after mass distribution comes value added products and service as the critical components of competitive success for winners.

Statistical reasoning and artificial intelligence are the sure fire winner in making objective content decisions in a blink and by proxy. This is the foremost demand of the web 2.0 age.

Maxymiser's focus on content recognises this and we believe content is strategically the most critical element of a web site. This has become more obvious as markets mature and acquisition techniques become more generic to sectors. Content is what customers are really interested in and looking at content takes up over 90% of their time online. Marketers will move from being digital estate agents to custodians of the property. That property is content.

## THE MAXYMISER SOLUTIONS

Maxymiser has a range of solutions to optimise content from small businesses to large. We also have a team of experts to guide and support you along the road to better business performance. These include analysts, consultants, designers, mathematicians and developers.

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