



The Conference
formerly known as
Conversion Hotel

2021

Homecoming

Didn't make it to Conversion Hotel 2021?

You know what, not everyone had the chance this year because of the pandemic 🤖.

For those not able to travel to the event (and for those that did but may have hit the Texel beer with a little too much vigor) don't worry, we've got you covered. This is your one stop shop for all the keynotes, the pitch presentations and more so you get in depth highlights and take away in one handy place.

Perfect for reading over a coffee and a stroopwafel or two, or maybe your favourite tippie and a tray of poffertjes... you do it your way!

Don't forget, you also get access to all the speaker pages, their slide decks, the live notes and 1 minute video previews [here](#). Full recordings of the keynotes can be found in the members area on conversionhotel.com.

**SAVE
THE
DATE!**

18-20 November 2022


#CH2022

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#CH2021

Keynote Presentations

 **Making experimentation ridiculously easy for 2000 bol.com employees**
Denise Visser @ bol.com



 **Expanding experimentation in your organisation**
Kevin Anderson




 **Change management for experimentation culture**
Ruben de Boer



 **Creating funnels people actually want to convert to**
Talía Wolf




 **3 principles that your Growth Team need**
Daphne Tideman



 **People skills for analytical thinkers**
Gilbert Eijkelenboom



 **How to turn hippos into birds by being a cat person**
Simone Neeling



 **How attention works**
Stefan van der Stigchel



 **Moving fast, breaking things, and fixing them as quickly as possible**
Lukas Vermeer



 **How to get the most out of your analytics implementation**
Krista Seiden



01. Keynote: Making experimentation ridiculously easy for 2000 bol.com employees

Denise took us through the evolution of experimentation at bol.com, going all the way back to 2015 to the current day and how the processes, training and knowledge sharing they provide has made it stupid-easy to allow teams of people to run experiments.

Initially bol.com had a basic set up, and they ran simpler tests that perhaps we all might start with, such as copy changes and the colours of things, but by 2018 it was clear that they could do more, and so set themselves the goal of running 100 experiments. They didn't quite manage it that goal, but the learnings they made about how to organise "the system" were invaluable and finally they were able to start practicing what they'd been preaching about to the whole company - and optimising their own processes, not just the website.

A few major eye-openers accelerated their progress, namely the realisation that they needed a dedicated team to run experimentation. The fact that having lots of different tools to different things wasn't optimal either and a bespoke solution to cover everything would be better for sharing information and performing tasks.

By 2019 bol.com wasn't running that many more experiments, but that wasn't the point. The outcome they were hoping for was being achieved, that being the number of people involved with experimentation was growing rapidly. They were beginning to master their data, to truly understand what it all meant and how to provide universal access to learnings and research.



Denise Visser (NL)

Product Manager Experimentation
Bol.com

[linkedin.com/in/denisevisser/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/denisevisser/)

[Denise's #CH2021 session page](#)

Favourite Quote

“

Experimentation was spreading like a virus - probably not an ideal term to use right now, but that's the best way to explain it

”

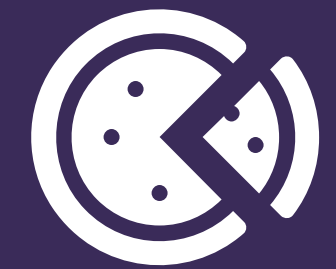
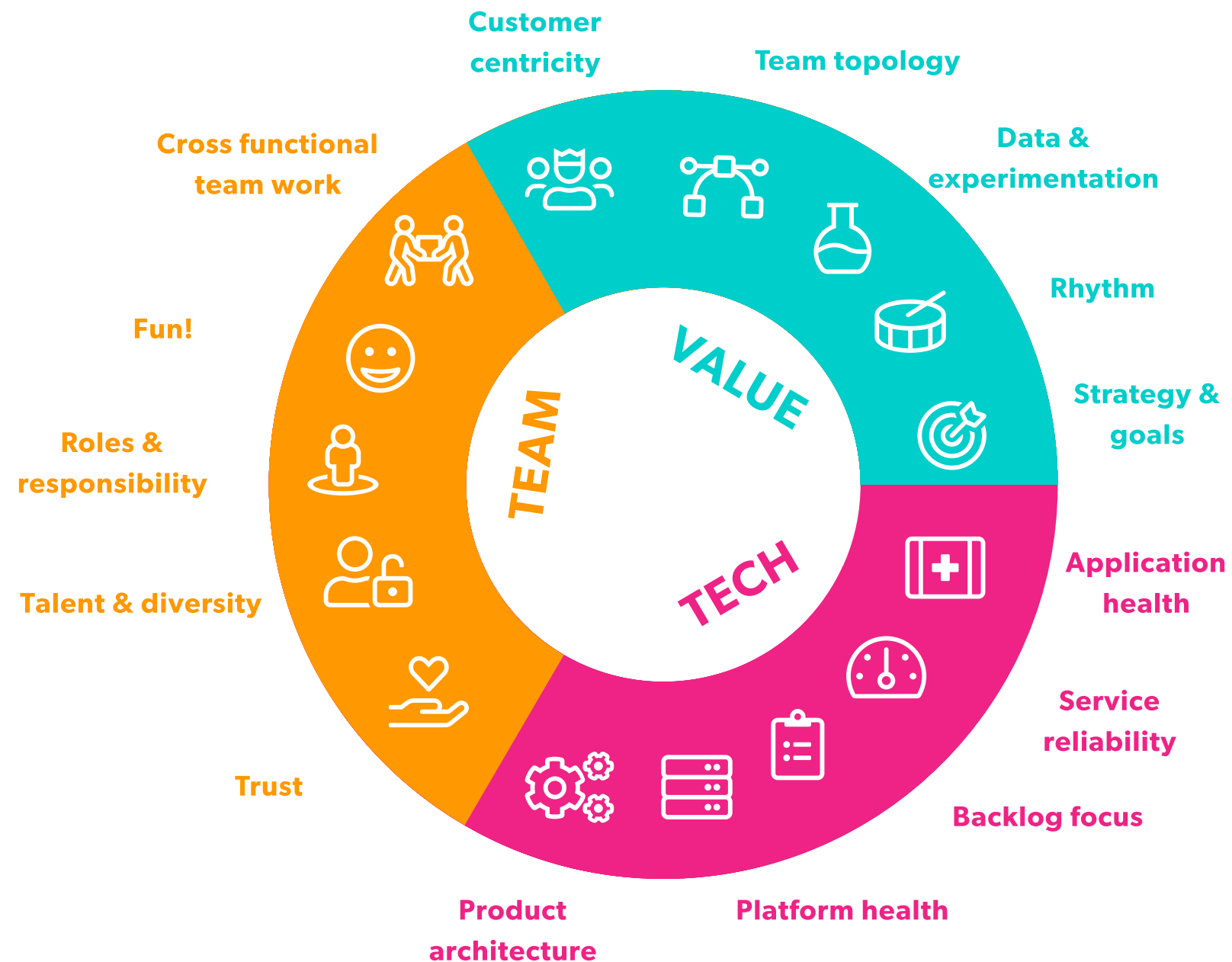


01. Keynote: Making experimentation ridiculously easy for 2000 bol.com employees

Technical reasons as to why experimentation shouldn't happen were being removed too. A clever beaconID allowed experiments to run on the backend whilst still allowing insights from user behaviour on the front end to be gathered and assessed, speeding up testing and giving more flexibility. There were less and less reasons as to why experimentation shouldn't happen.

Skip to 2021 and bol.com have expanded their scope of experimentation to include quasi-experiments and observational studies in the knowledge that sometimes you just can't A/B test. They're also making great strides to educate anyone in the company who wants to learn about experimentation with an inhouse learning solution that covers it all.

Bol's journey has been extraordinary and shows that if you can't optimise yourselves, should you really be optimising at all?



Key Take Aways:

- Too many tools make things complicated, unify everything.
- Front end testing alone limits what you can do, use your back end.
- The key to adoption is education, sharing knowledge and removing barriers to act.
- A/B testing is not the only way to optimise, expand your horizons.
- True innovation requires zooming out and looking at the big picture.

Links

- Experimentation @ Bol bit.ly/3EQPOIG
- Careers @ Bol bit.ly/3oJX3pM



02. Keynote: Change management for experimentation culture

Ruben did a wonderful job of stepping in temporarily for Lukas (long story, let's not mention the C word!) and had a wealth of insights to help us understand that we're not just here to run a/b tests - a chunk of what we should be doing should be about changing the mindsets of the people we work with to work towards a common goal.

As you might have guessed already, in order to change a mindset, we need to understand System 1 and System 2 thinking. Imagine for example you decide that you're going to go for a run every morning. You wake up. In your head, System 1 is thinking about how comfortable you are, not that you want to get some exercise. System 2 on the other hand knows going for a run has benefits. Figuring out how to satisfy this internal conflict of interest yourself and in others is how to trigger behavioural change.

System 2 loves rationality and reasoning. It likes goals and knows what the best decision for a positive change. As Optimisers we often only use this system thinking in our processes and when working and communicating with others. You know it, and you're probably guilty of it. Think of the results you share, the presentations and workshops you do. It's all System 2. And you know what? It can come across as pushy and demanding which leads to resistance. System 2 needs to be smarter; it needs to motivate System 1.

System 1 relies on reflexes and instincts. It's not reasonable at all and makes 95% of our decisions. It has to be persuaded to do anything, it likes the easy life and is the reason why System 2 thinking is met with defiance. To motivate System 1 you need to make experimentation easy through autonomy and accessibility.

What this boils down to is that you can use your System 2 thinking as much as you like to bully your organisation to the right mindset for experimentation, but a better way is to use System 2 to placate System 1 to build a better ethos companywide. Here are some tips:



Ruben de Boer (NL)

Conversion Optimization Manager
Online Dialogue

 [linkedin.com/in/rgdeboer/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/rgdeboer/)

 [Ruben's #CH2021 session page](#)

Favourite Quote

“

It's not about YOU and your goals, it's about how they reach theirs.

”



02. Keynote: Change management for experimentation culture

Physical environment:

Think of ways to get System 1 motivated and to harness its unconscious, fast, associated and auto pilot ways. System 1 acts in the now, it's emotional! Examples might be slack channels, gamification and making insights accessible and easy to read.

Social environment:

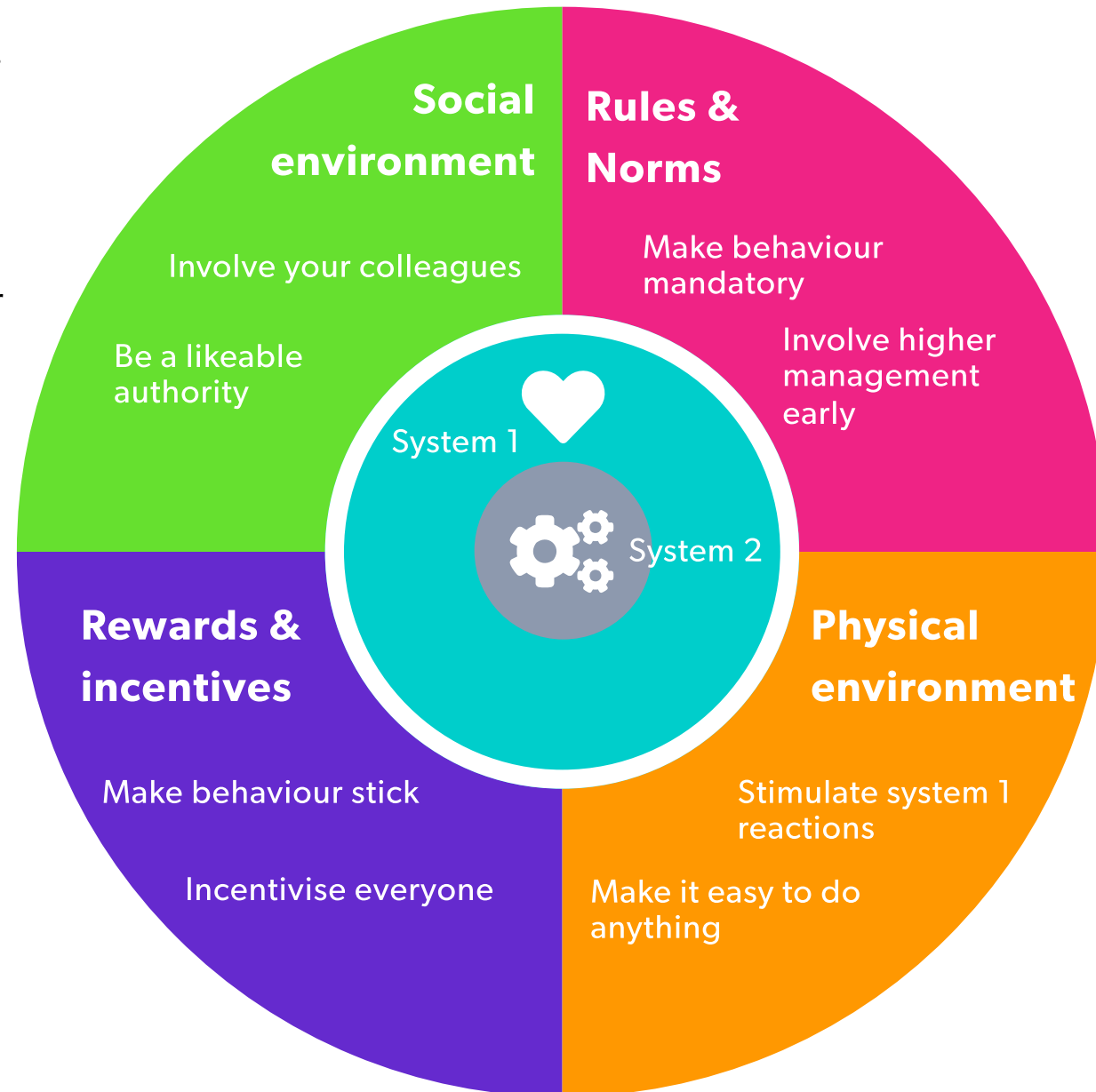
You might not think it's all about you, but it is. You are the driver to create a community of Optimisers. Run brainstorm sessions, to celebrate and commiserate together, be the person that others trust, the person that shows interest in others and respects their opinions. Help them reach their goals, not YOURS.

Rules & Norms

You only need look at the pandemic to see the power of compliance when authority gets involved. In the same way, involving higher management to set expectations can achieve a similar result.

Rewards & Incentives

Keep the dopamine hits regular with constant reward mechanisms for everyone involved - celebrate success and failure together.



Key Take Aways:

- As Optimisers, we can be too much System 2 and neglect System 1 of our colleagues. They hate you.
- Get System 1 on board by changing physical and social environments, introducing rules and norms and providing rewards and incentives.
- Be their person, the one who helps them achieve their goals, not just yours.
- You're an Experimenter! Apply what you do every day to your organisational culture and figure out what works best for your people - know your segments!

Books

- Influence: The psychology of persuasion
amzn.to/31R5V4e



03. Keynote: 3 principles that your Growth Team need

Daphne's keynote was a little different from the rest. Not only did it involve a bottle of tequila, but additionally 3 onstage volunteers in the form of Els Aerts, Charles Meaden and Karl Gilis who helped really drive Daphne's point home - and that was how to ensure we get the most out of everything we do by squeezing lemons until they run dry.

What have lemons got to do with optimisation you might ask? Well, they are a fitting metaphor for experiments in this instance. The people who run experiments are the juicers of your lemons. The issue is juicers come in 2 flavours; Planners who are really good at extracting the last ounce of juice from lemons; and Explorers who love moving onto the next lemon before they've had a good squeeze of it.

So how do you get the most juice from your lemon from the two types of juicers in your team?

Principle #1: Don't give up on the first squeeze

Oftentimes we run experiments but only a few of those will be a win in the first instance (especially when you're starting out). Perceived failures (learnings) can obscure a potential win, if only we'd take a further look. In your team, Explorers may want to move on without trying again and Planners might not be happy testing something that is seen as a fail. The solution here is to deconstruct why the experiment didn't work by looking at all the data behind it and figuring out what could be improved or adjusted. Let your Explorers set up test ideas then let your Planners do the analysis and work out the next steps in a experiment's life cycle.



Daphne Tideman (UK)

Head of Growth

Heights

[linkedin.com/in/daphnetideman/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/daphnetideman/)

[Daphne's #CH2021 session page](#)

Favourite Quote

“

You've gotta really milk that lemon

”



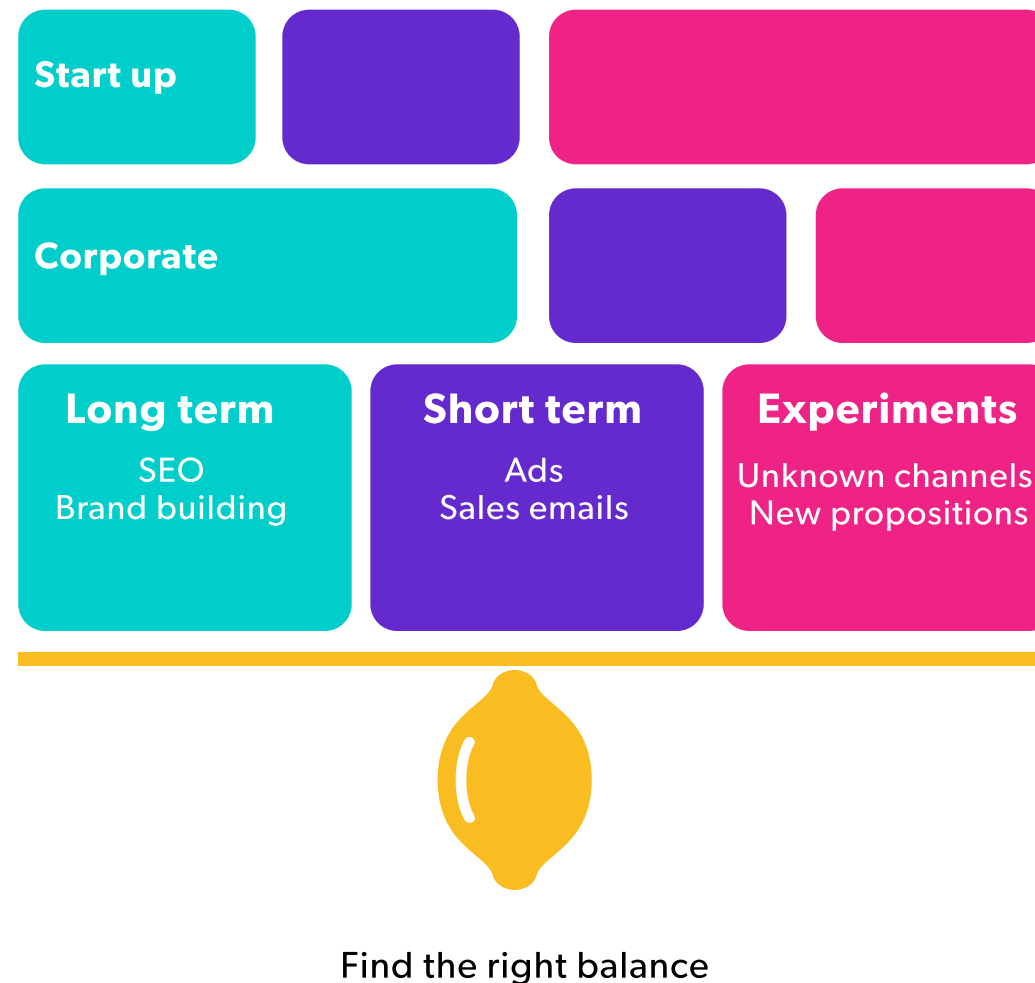
03. Keynote: 3 principles that your Growth Team need

Principle #2: *Really* squeeze the lemon

We all know (if we're being honest about it) that it takes less time and effort to build on something that is working (or has the potential to work better) than to hunt out a new lemon entirely. But your Explorers are going to really struggle with this because they just want to move on to the next lemon. The Planners however relish the idea of getting every ounce of potential out of an idea with promise. The compromise? Let your Explorers keep looking for juicy lemons whilst the Planners carry on juicing.

Principle #3: Limit shiny oranges

Explorer's love anything new, the problem arises however when your Explorers get to decide too much and take growth down a potentially perilous path of higher risk activities. Conversely, Planners can get stuck in the rut of diminishing returns if they are left running the show - your lemons are left dehydrated and juiceless. Let the Explorers find the shiny oranges but let the Planners check the oranges aren't sour. Find the right balance of activities for your company - there isn't one size fits all.



Key Take Aways:

- Use explorers to find lemons and planners to really squeeze them.
- Previously squeezed lemons might have more juice to give.
- A poorly squeezed lemon might be hiding a golden opportunity.
- Oranges can be risky and lemons can run dry - find the right balance.



04. Keynote Pitch Winner: How to turn hippos into birds by being a cat person

As is now customary at Experimentation Island, this year we saw the return of the pitch competition whereby willing participants get 2 minutes to present their pitch idea to attendees who then decide whose talk they'd like to see presented as a keynote. CH2021 saw Simone Neeling launched on to the main stage (with very little notice!) and she talked us through a whole safari of ideas to convert the optimisation sceptics into evangelists.

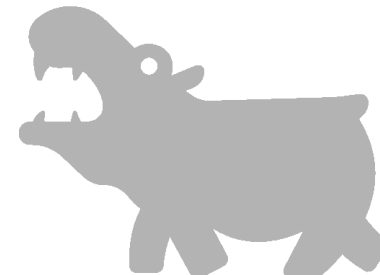


Let's start with ZEBRAS, you know the type, Zero Evidence But Really Arrogant. This was Simone's confession, that at the very start of her journey she donned the stripes with an experiment that redesigned a key page without getting the CRO team involved and there was a bit of fall out. But despite this, a few months later Simone started a new position as a CRO specialist demonstrating that if you've got the right mindset, the skills you need can be taught. It is this guiding principle that can be used to evolve your hippos.

The first question to ask is "what do you want?". This gives you an opening to teach more about data and insights and be mindful of how best to present that information in the right format - make it easy to understand and process.

Secondly, you need to get out of your comfort zone. Long gone are the days where you can avoid perhaps one of the most pivotal elements of your optimisation program, the IT team. You need them for the tools you use and to build the tests you run. They need you to keep them motivated, so share what you know and what impact their work had. Find a better way of asking "Is it really that complicated to build" and avoid IT suicide! Learn how "it" works by joining IT sessions and get a better grounding of the technical mechanics of it all.

With those points covered, you've probably now got a better chance of dealing with your HIPPOS. You know the type; they usually kill your ideas straight away without justification. The aim here is to open a non-confrontational discussion as to why something should or shouldn't happen and present evidence as to support the argument either way.



Simone Neeling (NL)

CRO-specialist & Web Analyst
VodafoneZiggo

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[Simone's #CH2021 session page](#)

Favourite Quote

“

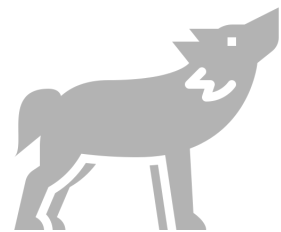
Nobody likes seagulls, they shit on everything.

”



04. Keynote Pitch Winner: How to turn hippos into birds by being a cat person

Much like evolution, keep the stuff that works or increases the chances of survival and ditch the stuff that helps no one. Chances are eventually you'll see a progression from Hippo to a sound and reasoning bird, such as a parrot (avoid seagull mutations however, as they shit on everything).



Next, get under the skin of your Product Owners. These WOLF (Working On the Latest Fire) types are usually time poor, but just because they don't ask you questions doesn't mean they're not interested. Help them out with easy-to-understand funnel analysis and insights in a proactive way that can help them prioritise the roadmap they're working on.

So, how then do we teach the wolves new tricks and evolve the hippos towards more reasoned thinking? The answer is to become a cat person.

Curious

Ask questions, lots of them, especially in areas outside of your comfort zone. Learn the mechanics of what goes on in every department.

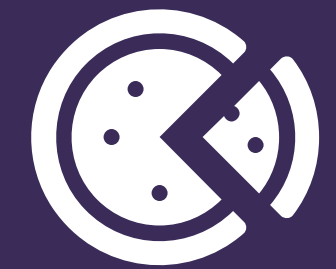
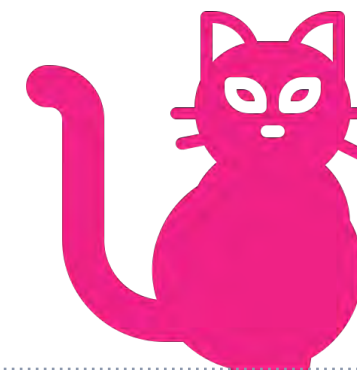
Analytical

Don't hoard the insights, share them and don't forget to ask "why"?





Talent

The right mindset is more important than an impressive list of skills. Provide opportunities for those who "get it" but don't quite know how to "get there" just yet.


Icons from Freepik, Warangkhan Sookruay, Chanut-is-Industries, tulpahn @ flaticon.com



Key Take Aways:

-  Having the right mindset is more important than the right skill set.
-  Get out of your comfort zone and learn everything that helps you construct reasoned arguments & discussion.
-  Data and insights are your ammunition against hippos and wolves.
-  Be proactive rather than reactive about sharing what you're doing.

Links

-  The Wild Animal Safari of Product Marketing
bit.ly/3DKSRun

05. Keynote: Moving fast, breaking things, and fixing them as quickly as possible

It was all a bit of an unknown as to whether Lukas would be joining the conference to give his keynote, but after what was probably the longest wait ever for a negative Covid test and a very early drive to Texel, it was great to see him on stage to talk to us about “Feature Toggles”.

Lukas wrote about Feature Toggles way back in February 2019 (link in take aways). It was good, but it didn't really get to the point (his words, not mine!). This keynote was Feature Toggles in 25 minutes or less.

In a nutshell:

- A Feature Toggle is a way to deploy code faster and more safely
- You can turn individual features on or off quickly and as required
- It allows you to validate changes that impact on the user experience

Cracking the nut

- Any new “feature” is wrapped up in a toggle (a piece of code) which is turned off by default when released to live
- The Feature Toggle contains both the old a new version of a feature
- A toggle is controlled using centralised infrastructure

Putting it into practice

- By creating Feature Toggles you can deploy to production more often and with less risk = agility
- The release process is less onerous because you're not releasing entire code bases, just features that are turned off to start with = less red tape. This makes regression testing faster
- There are downsides to toggles (code complexity, infrastructure, setting it up)



Lukas Vermeer (NL)

Director of Experimentation
Vista

[linkedin.com/in/lukasvermeer/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/lukasvermeer/)

[Lukas' #CH2021 session page](#)

Favourite Quote

“

The downside of testing negative for Covid was that I had to get up really early to be here

”





05. Keynote: Moving fast, breaking things, and fixing them as quickly as possible

Mitigating risk

Human in the loop integration testing (HITL) takes advantage of both human and machine intelligence to monitor and react with speed and precision when features go wrong.

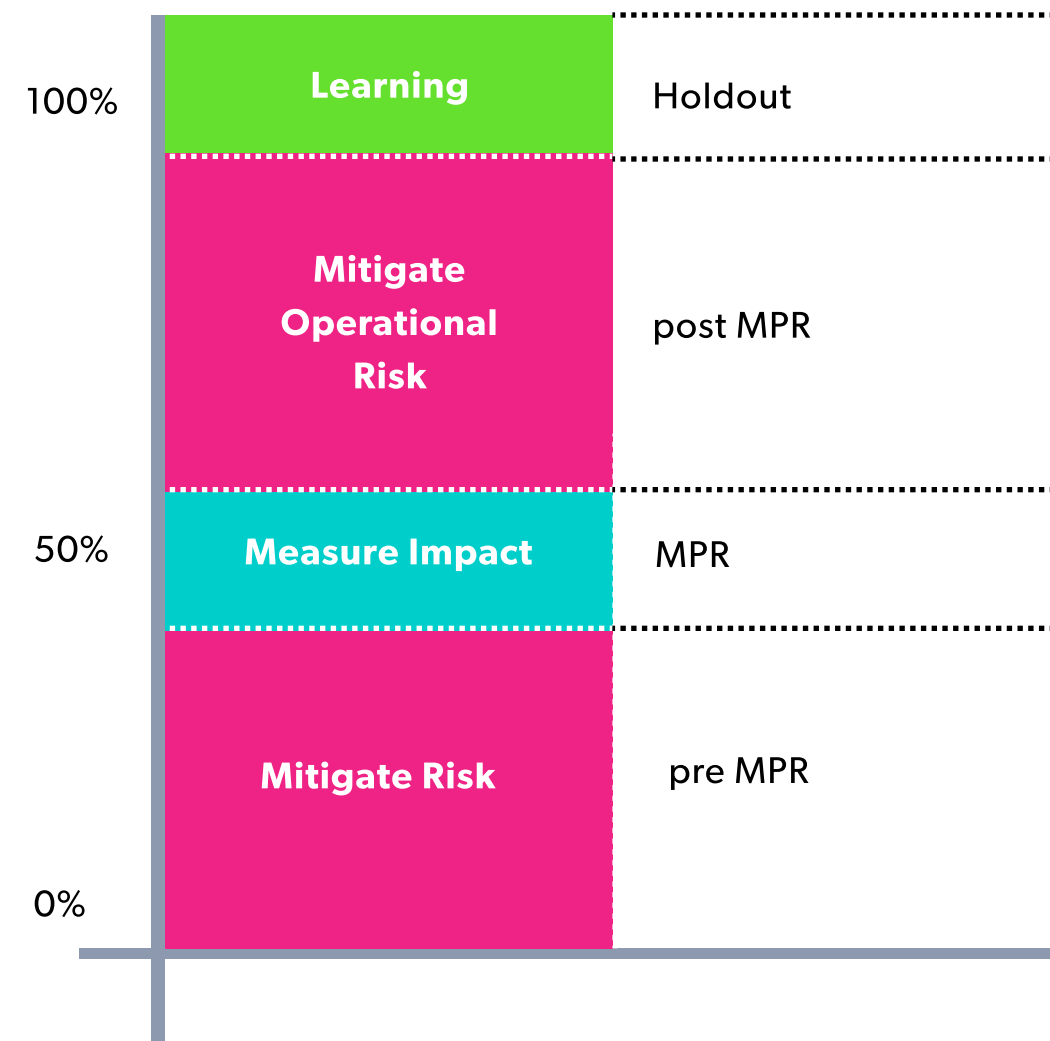
- Risk = how many exposed + for how long
- Impact = time to occur + time to measure & report

Maximum Power Ramping can help decide when to push more traffic to your features.

Limiting exposure or improving response time can reduce risk, but you need have timely access to the right metrics to pull the plug or continue.

Circuit breakers

- Really bad stuff is usually super obvious = easily automated to turn off (protects users)
- Automation helps when humans can't respond fast enough
- Should be used for only severe situations
- The trigger mechanism of a circuit breaker may affect statistical rigor



TL;DR

- 🍷 Feature Toggles help to push out experiments faster and more safely.
- 🍷 They can be turned on or off quickly and allow faster regression testing.
- 🍷 Risk is reduced using HITL which allows fast and precise responses to potential problems.
- 🍷 Risk can be determined by response time and response time can be optimised.

Links

- 🔗 Lukas' original blog post: bit.ly/3y6xvX8
- 🔗 SQR: Balancing Speed, Quality & Risk in Online Experiments: bit.ly/3pDWEEH



06. Keynote: How to get the most out of your analytics implementation

Kirsta gave a great keynote and for the ostriches among us who have been sticking their heads in the sand about GA4, this was a not-so-subtle reminder as to why we might want to come up for some air and face the fear that it's coming and there is little much you can do about that other than start preparing now.

We were taken on a journey through time, covering all the versions of GA you can think of. From Urchin to Classic to Universal and right up to the present day with Google Analytics 4 (GA4) which as some may know is actually a version of GA App+Web which is continually evolving.

As most of us are probably still running Universal Analytics (GA3), Krista outlined some of the key differences between it and GA4.

We also got a look at some of the new stuff that GA4 brings and the highlights are as follows:

REALTIME

More information
Interactive cards

PAGES & SCREENS

Beware! You can't filter out query parameters!

EVENTS

Can be broken down into secondary dimensions and filtered

TRAFFIC ACQUISITION

Includes dimensions such as source, medium

MULTIPLE DATA SOURCES

Get info about web, iOS and Android data

Universal Analytics (GA3)

Focuses on metrics & dimensions (pageviews, sessions, bounce rates)

Allows customisation (dimensions, metrics, events)

Lacks structure

Google Analytics (GA4)

Focuses on events & parameters (everything is an event)

Very customisable, events can have up to 25/100 parameters (reusable and identified by parameter values)

Much more structure



Krista Seiden (USA)

Founder & Principal Consultant
KS Digital

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[Krista's #CH2021 session page](#)

Favourite Quote

“

2020 and 2021 have been a pit of despair, perhaps you feel the same way about GA4

”



06. Keynote: How to get the most out of your analytics implementation

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Krista Seiden (USA)

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06. Keynote: How to get the most out of your analytics implementation

CROSS PLATFORM IDENTITIES

Measure users across devices & platforms

ENHANCED MEASUREMENT

Set up events directly in GA4 - no coding required!

CROSS DOMAIN TRACKING

Set up directly in GA4 - super easy!

CREATE / MODIFY EVENTS IN UI

Set up directly in GA4 - super easy!

ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

Access loads of new templates and techniques

PATHING TECHNIQUE

Go forwards AND backwards

CUSTOM REPORTS & LIBRARY

Make dashboards specifically for your team and their needs

MEASUREMENT PROTOCOL API SECRETS

Avoid data overload by getting rid of all the crap and spam

BIG QUERY EXPORTS

Is now FREE for everyone!

Next up was all about the new data event model in GA4 which is fully event based. There are 4 categories to explore and for each event you can gather more information by using parameters. Standard GA4 users will get 25 parameters per event to play with, whilst 360 users get 100:

AUTOMATIC

eg.
first_visit/first_open

ENHANCED

eg.
scroll/search

RECOMMENDED

by vertical
eg. ecoms/travel

CUSTOM

eg.
whatever you need

Finally, a word of advice. GA4 is coming, you can't escape it. All the new shiny stuff is happening on GA4, Universal Analytics' days are numbered. Get your head out of the sand and get started by dual tagging UA and GA4 in tandem and take a look at the UA to GA4 setup Assistant.

Key Take Aways:

- GA4 is not going away, saddle up and enjoy the ride.

Links

- GA3 - v - GA4 guide: bit.ly/3rMnP2V
- Hello to GA4 bit.ly/3EUKlul
- Create events in GA4 UI bit.ly/31IQEIN
- New templates in GA4 bit.ly/3ybysgN
- Pathing in GA bit.ly/3lAs8nR
- UA to GA4 set up assistant bit.ly/3pFLyzc



07. Keynote: How attention works

Stephan took us on a visual eye fest to emphasise how attention works and to demonstrate how our brains have a very efficient strategy of only processing what's relevant depending on what the task is that it's been asked to do and what it's required to focus on. Without getting the brain's attention, information cannot be processed into working memory and retained in long term memory.

You should think of attention as a bit like a spotlight. A spotlight's beam can be large or small. For example, a large spotlight might be a question like "where is the milk?", whereas a small spotlight might be "what type of milk do I need?". The ability for an attention spotlight to be large or small is also age dependant. Children and the older amongst us tend to have a small spotlight.

So how do we focus the spotlight beam to get attention?

Attention is captured by things that are different

Your brain doesn't know what is and isn't important, but what it's really good at is spotting stuff that's different in a significant or outstanding way (saliency). Ever noticed food stuck in someone's teeth when you're talking to them? It's this kind of thing. Saliency is a fickle thing though, because what might be salient now, might not be in the future. A good example is fire trucks. Originally fire trucks were all red because there were not many red cars on the road, this meant red trucks stood out really well. Over time though, more and more red cars and trucks appeared on the road and the fire trucks lost their differentiating feature. This is why many fire trucks today have the addition of high visibility stripes or are now a more salient colour, such as yellow.

Attention is driven by context

Whether something is attention grabbing or not depends on the context in which it is presented and to whom it's being shown to. Hungry people are triggered by anything food related, whilst you'll grab an arachnophobe's attention by showing them spiders. You have to know what people are thinking and what is relevant to them to capture their attention.



Stefan van der Stigchel
(NL)

Cognitive Psychology Professor

[stefanvanderstigchel.nl](https://www.stefanvanderstigchel.nl)

[Stefan's #CH2021 session page](#)

Favourite Quote

“

Subliminal Priming is a hoax!

”



07. Keynote: How attention works

Attention is guided by previously learned information

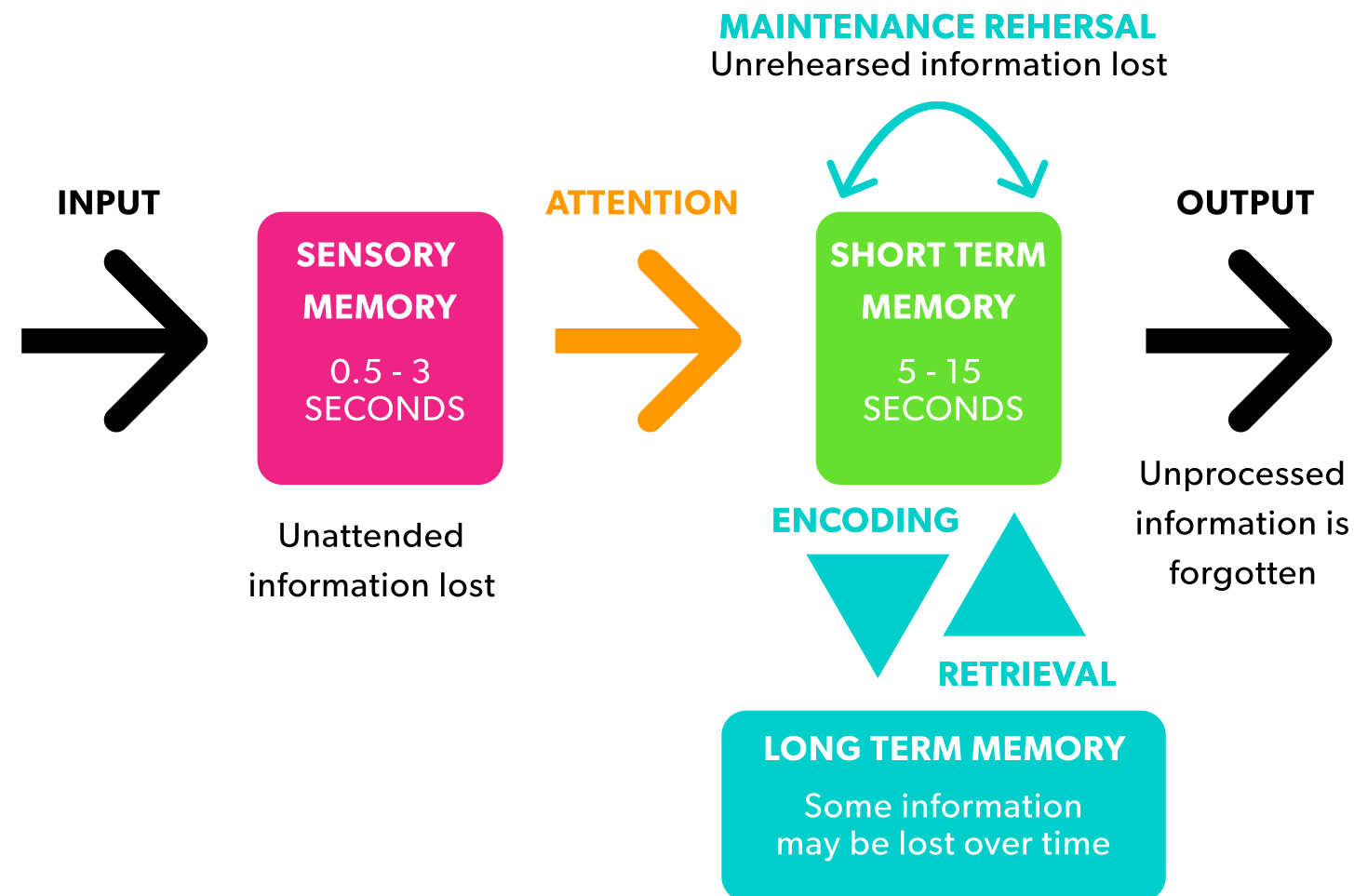
Previous experiences allow people to focus their attention. Banner blindness (inattention) on websites is a great example of this where users know that the banners are there but past learning has taught them that the banners are not relevant to the task they want to achieve (usually their spotlight focus is small). A great example of this is when the brand Lassie redesigned their original blue product packaging to nearly all white and sales plummeted because their customers couldn't find the products on the shelves (they were not looking for any old product they were looking for a product with blue on it). The kicker here is that expecting a change in behaviour takes time.

Eyes are the key to attention

Your central vision allows you to see lots of details, where as your peripheral vision not so much. Therefore, our focus has to shift continually to see all the details. We can't process all the sensory information that comes in through our eyes so we only store the highlights. If something in the highlights gets our attention it will get stored in short term memory where it is then stored to long term memory if it's useful (spoiler alert: subliminal priming is a myth).

But how can you measure what's making it through?

Eye tracking is a great way to see where focus is being given and can indicate if something is grabbing a person's attention or not.



Key Take Aways:

- 🍷 Attention focus can be broad or narrow.
- 🍷 Grab attention by things that are different.
- 🍷 Things are not different forever.
- 🍷 Attention is only caught in the right context.
- 🍷 Previous learnt behaviour can affect how much attention is given.
- 🍷 Attention is the filter that allows information to pass to short term memory.
- 🍷 Eye tracking gives an insight into what really gets attention.

Books

- 📖 How attention works bit.ly/3DI9YNp



08. Keynote: Presenting your insights using storytelling

As the title might suggest, Gilbert narrated a story about a man called Giovanni who just didn't want to listen to anything Gilbert had to say. Giovanni resisted every suggestion Gilbert had, deflected any questions or provided no response to anything. Meetings ended with nothing being achieved. It was like Groundhog Day over and over. It was only when Gilbert sat back and wondered how he was going to crack this tough nut that he realised the answer was simple. Giovanni was not Gilbert. Giovanni was driven by emotion, whereas Gilbert was driven by analysis. They were speaking a different language and they had very different perspectives. Gilbert needed to find a better way to talk to Giovanni so he could relate to the information he was being given.

Storytelling to the rescue! Think back to when you were much younger - what stories do you remember from your childhood? A few right? Probably more than a random maths lesson you took about algebra. Stories are more memorable than a stack of numbers and they're also more persuasive which is why storytelling is such a great way to not only get people to go on a journey with you but for them to remember it.

How to tell a good story

One of the easiest ways to make a story a good story is to use the **And But Therefore** framework to bring our story to life. **AND** allows you set up the story. **BUT** elaborates on the problem and **THEREFORE** describes the solution or action.

We went to Conversion Hotel. We saw good presentations **AND** had great company. We didn't know if Lukas would be there.

We went to Conversion Hotel. We saw good presentations **AND** had great company, **BUT** no one knew if Lukas would have enough time to catch the ferry and make it onto the stage.

We went to Conversion Hotel. We saw good presentations **AND** had great company, **BUT** no one knew if Lukas would have enough time to catch the ferry and make it onto the stage. **THEREFORE**, the next time he has to speak, we're going to get him a hazmat suit and a jet pack.



Gilbert Eijkelenboom
(NL)

Founder: MindSpeaking.com

[linkedin.com/in/eijkelenboom/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/eijkelenboom/)
Gilbert's #CH2021 session page

Favourite Quote

“

If you want people to listen, don't just rely on data. Use emotions and storytelling to keep them engaged.

”



08. Keynote: Presenting your insights using story telling

Another tip is to follow the elements that make up Freytag's Pyramid. This outlines 7 key steps to good storytelling and to get your audience to believe in an idea, cause or even a product:

Exposition: Set the scene and the character's background

Inciting Incident: Chain reaction to something that has happened

Rising Action: Initial problem gets more complicated

Climax: The story reaches the point of greatest tension

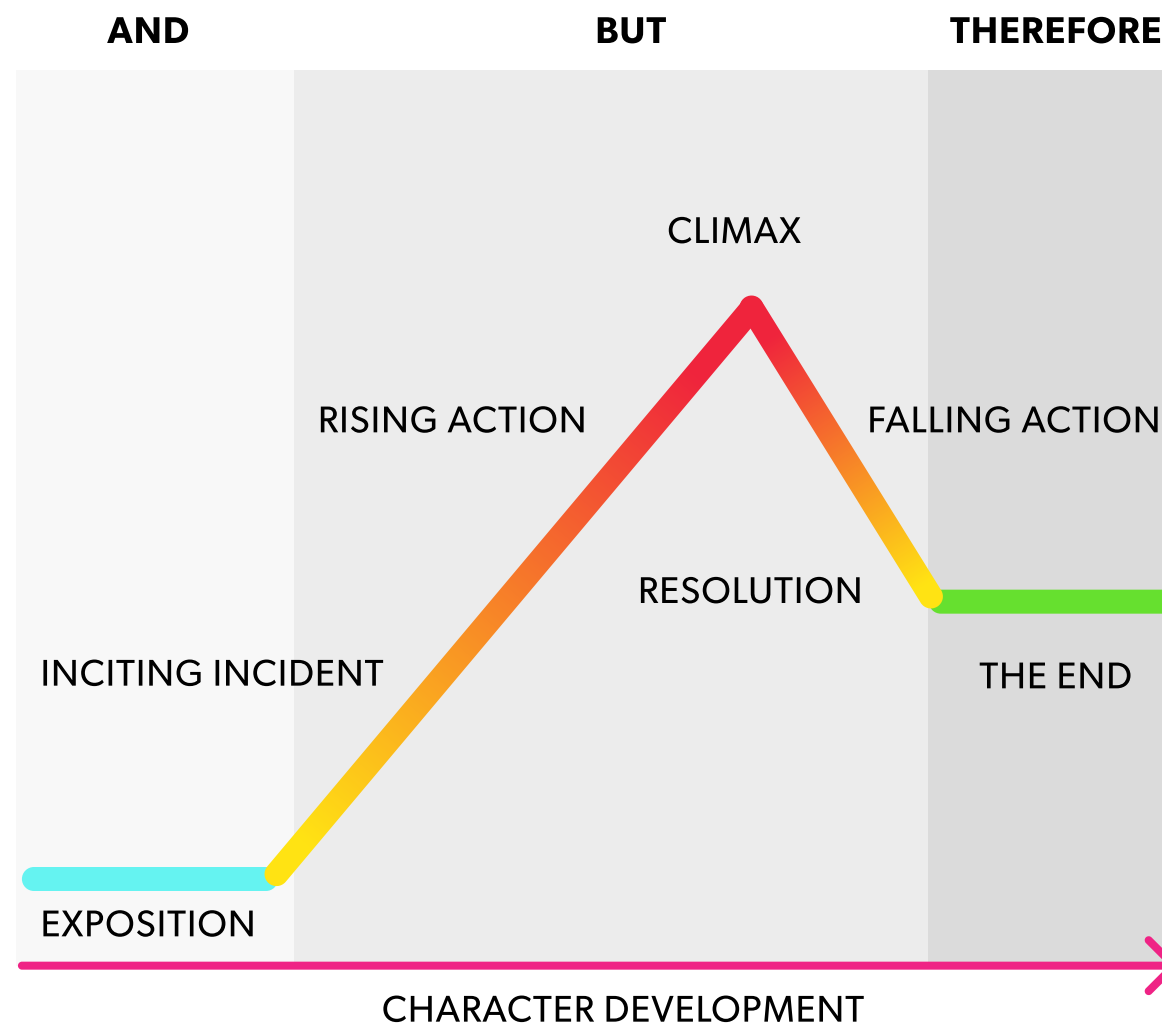
Falling Action: Action that happens as a result of the climax

Resolution: Problem solved

The end: The outcome (good, bad)

You can also enhance your story telling by adding visuals, introducing characters and happy endings where you can. And don't forget, this method of communicating doesn't just apply to slide decks and reports, it can be used for team updates and emails, in fact almost anywhere.

So how did Gilbert get on with Giovanni in the end? 2 years later they met again only this time Gilbert knew how to deal with him through better listening and more emotional story telling. But there is one thing for sure, there are plenty more Giovanni's in the world who just need the right story to listen to.



Key Take Aways:

- Use storytelling to speak in the same language as your audience.
- To tell a good story use the ABT framework.
- To tell an amazing story use Freytag's pyramid.
- Storytelling can be applied to all sorts of situations, not just presentations.
- Emotional storytelling is more memorable and relatable than data.

Books

- People skills for analytical thinkers bit.ly/3ycQKhE



09. Keynote: How to create experiences people want to convert to

Talia's first question was "Why do people buy from you?". What's your answer? Perhaps it's something like "It's cheap / cost effective / great shipping / best pricing". But these are not the reasons a person buys from you at all if you really dig into it. Whilst we all may be getting carried away with product focused answers splattered all over our landing pages, or imprisoning users into segmented boxes of X, Y and Z, the crux of the matter is that people buy based on emotions, the key driver in decision making. We are not all Spock, after all.

Not convinced? Studies have shown that people with damage to the part of the prefrontal cortex that processes emotions, struggle to make even routine decisions [Antonio Damasio: Somatic Marker Hypothesis]. Therefore, if we don't relate to customers emotions a decision to convert can become futile. CRO is about solving customers problems and pains, not shifting pixels around a page. So how do you find out what really drives the decision making process?

Emotional Targeting Methodology

Start with 4 simple questions to ask yourself about your customers. Once you've done this there are 3 steps to leverage emotion for optimisation.

Step #1: Meaningful customer research

Ask the right questions, and keep asking "why" until there are no "why's" left. A lot of questions are considered answered as soon as a reply is given. However, by asking the right question first and then digging deeper you can identify customer types. Once you've done this you can target the emotions and the motivations they feel and increase the likelihood that they'll convert. Great ideas for customer research are surveys (visitors and customers), interviews, social listening and review mining.

What pain does my customer feel before finding a solution?

What are the emotional triggers that drive their decision making?

What are their hesitations and doubts?

How do they want to feel after finding a solution?

4 questions to ask about your customers



Talia Wolf (ISR)

Founder and Chief Optimiser
Getuplift

[linkedin.com/in/taliagw/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/taliagw/)
Talia's #CH2021 session page

Favourite Quote

“

No matter what you're selling, people don't care about the WHAT. They care about the WHY.

”



09. Keynote: How to create experiences people want to convert to

Step #2: Add emotion to your copy

To do this well, you need to remember that talking about value is better than listing features. You need to tell the customer's story and remember that the customer is the hero, not you or your "thing". Work on building a relationship between yourself and the customer. Here's a handy formula:

Example

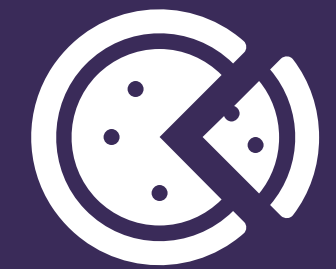
Feature	+	Desired Outcome	=	Emotional-centric copy
Build faster landing pages		Without having to rely on developers		Never wait around for the dev team again! Build any page (in less time than it takes to run a meeting about the page), on your own

Step #3: Add emotion to your design






First, stop following design "trends" and use imagery and design to enhance your emotional message which is consistent throughout your entire page. For example, if your product is an device to help with poor posture after sitting at a desk all day, don't show what it is, show it being used in the same context a customer would use it. Let customers immediately see the WHY instead of having to put the pieces together.

Give it a go

Talia gave us 3 emotional based test ideas to get up and running with. Try aspirational vs. relatable images, pain vs. emotional outcome and solution focused vs. customer focused copy. Finally, get yourself in check and ask yourself these questions; Are you making about yourself or the visitor; Can people see and feel the emotional outcomes they desire; Are you using emotion in both your copy and visuals; Can people see the why without effort.



Key Take Aways:

-  To get people to convert you need to tap into their emotions.
-  To understand their emotions, you have to do meaningful customer research.
-  Don't accept the first answer to a question, keep asking why.
-  People need to see and feel the outcome they desire - use copy and imagery.
-  Stop making it about yourself or your product. It's all about your customer.

What was going on in your life/day that made you search for [solution]?


When you weren't using [solution], how did you solve this problem?

If you could no longer use [solution], what would you miss the most?

What's the #1 thing you'd mention to a friend if you wanted to convince them give [solution] a try?

Top customer survey questions

Links

-  Antonio Damasio: Somatic marker hypothesis bit.ly/3DNM3Mu



10. Keynote: Expanding experimentation in your organisation

Kevin wanted to make a very clear distinction from the outset, in that Experimentation is a mindset, whereas CRO is a task. The latter is generally a tactic just focused on winning tests and this limits the impact that it can have when it comes to growth.

The problem is that with centralised CRO teams they are pushed towards delivery of a/b tests, they simply “do the work” and then are left to share insights and convince others that the wins they find should be implemented.

On the other hand, an embedded experimentation culture dictates that those who do the CRO are there to enable others to do the same, which cuts down barriers and red tape. You only need to mention names like Booking, Bol and Amazon to get where he’s going with this. So how do they do it?

Ask yourself the following

Qn #1: How easy is it to make a change?

Create teams with end-end responsibility. Facilitate this with self-service tools.

Qn #2: How integrated is experimentation?

Running an experiment should not require any additional effort

Qn #3: Are you willing to let go of “doing CRO”?

You need to let others step in. To do this well we need to apply our CRO roots and scientific methods directly to our business through observation, hypothesis, predictions and experiments then validate our choices and decide the way forward.



Kevin Anderson (NL)

Former Product Manager Experimentation
ING

[linkedin.com/in/kevinanderson/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/kevinanderson/)
Kevin’s #CH2021 session page

Favourite Quote

“

CRO is DEAD! Long live skills!

”



10. Keynote: Expanding experimentation in your organisation

Qn #4: How often do you discuss strategy with senior leaders?

You should be asking what the big strategic (and risky) initiatives are and help (in)validate them with experiments.

Qn #5: Where should we apply more advanced techniques

What are the limits of a randomized control trial and where do we need to look for other methods?

Qn #6: Which other parts of the business should experiment?

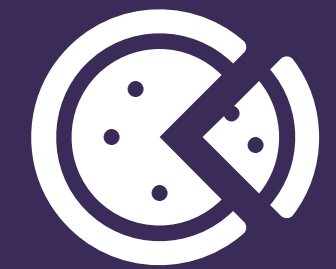
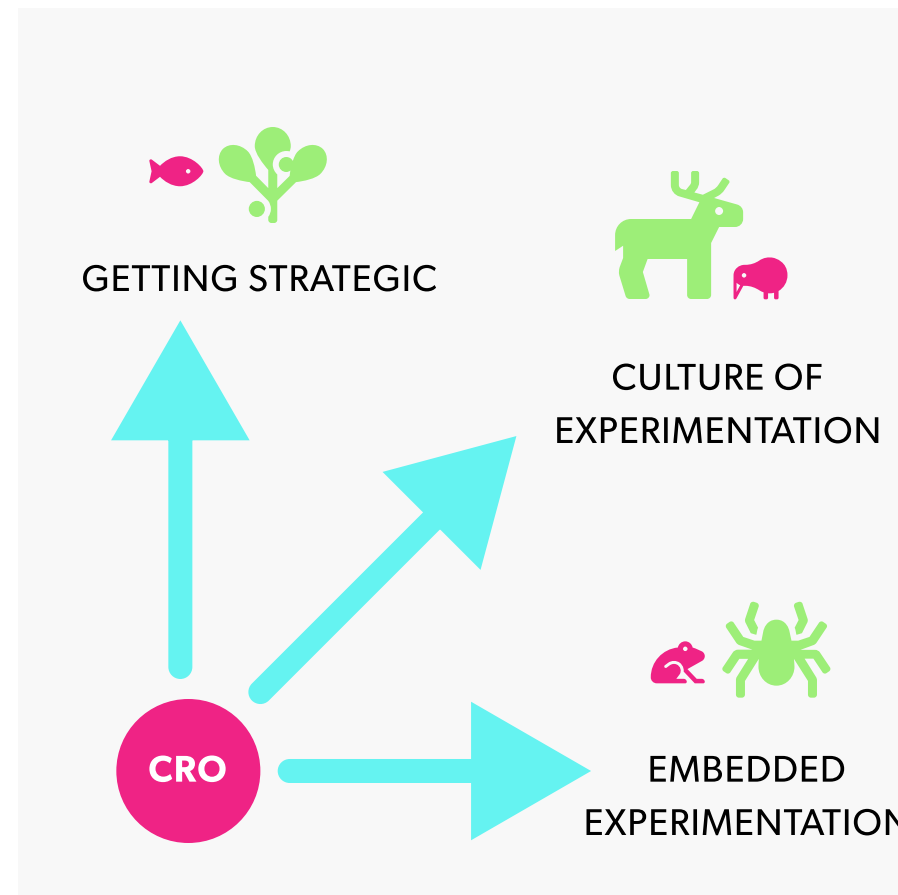
What are their big strategic initiatives? Do they even know what experimentation is? Education will unlock the experimentation mindset that all companies need.

Qn #7: What will the next step in my career?

By the time you've answered questions 1-6 you might be thinking "am I doing myself out of a job?". But that's not the case. Whilst you may see a move away from the doing, there are plenty of opportunities in helping to facilitate education, strategy, integration and leading the way to a culture of experimentation.

Time to evolve

There is no denying that CRO has the potential to become endangered if it doesn't evolve and extend into the wider ecosystem of companies and minds. Extinction can be avoided by creating symbiotic relationships whereby one discipline helps another thrive to the mutual benefit of all.



Key Take Aways:

- 🍷 We need to move away from centralised CRO teams that do all the doing.
- 🍷 CRO teams should be enabling others to experiment.
- 🍷 CRO teams should help with wider strategies, building a culture of experimentation and helping to embed experimentation within an organisation.

Links

- 🔗 [Experimental mindset newsletter bit.ly/3oMm8AK](https://bit.ly/3oMm8AK)



Pitch Competition

Presentations


CH2021 saw the return of the Pitch Competition. For those brave enough to take part, they were given 2 minutes to sell in their presentation to the audience who then decided who they'd like to see more of on the main stage as a keynote.

Each pitch presenter had the benefit of coaching by Michael Aagaard, who's years of keynote speaking and endless enthusiasm provided valuable help and guidance to ensure their pitches and presentations were on top form.

All sorts of topics were thrown into the mix, everything from decision making through to how to set up automated processes and how to really dig into your customer audiences to squeeze the most out of them.

And whilst only one pitcher got to present on the main stage, everyone else were given the opportunity to present to a room full of people during the unconference sessions.

It has to be said that everyone who took part made a fantastic effort and their topics were not only interesting, but brought some unique perspectives through their own experiences working within the optimisation ecosystem.

 **Will future customers only pay for extra experiences & conveniences?**
Ruben Evens



 **Decision first research**
John Ostrowski



 **Automated performance monitoring analysis**
Antoine Tissier



 **Optimisation through segmentation**
Daan van Vliet



 **Building a data and validation driven culture**
Mariska Buijs



 **Better experiments with UX research**
Marlies Wilms Floet



01. Pitch Presentation: Will future customers only pay extra for experiences and conveniences?

Self-confessed Millennial, Ruben, talked to us about what we need to do to satisfy the next generation of customers and really it boils down to these points:

Experience #1: Convenience

You only need to look at the success of companies such as Amazon and Tesla to understand how convenience builds brand loyalty. This is the sort of thing that keeps your customer retention in check. Humans are lazy, convenience is king.

Experience #2: Social responsibility

This needs to be part of your company culture but you need to cast your net wider so that it is part of the experiences your customers have with the brand. A great example is Pizza Express, they don't just sell pizzas, they sell pizzas for everyone including those with special diets.

Experience #3: You can be different, so please be yourself

The truth is we're all human, but beyond that we're all unique. Make a proper effort to personalise content to your customers, not just generic gratitude's like "top 10 best sellers". They may well be your companies' best sellers, but how is that relevant to a person who is unique in their own right? Not everyone likes vanilla ice cream, didn't you know?

Experience #4: Connect with the brand

Not just online, but offline as well. People are looking for a REAL connection. This is something that can be hard emulate in a digital world but we need to think harder about how to make it happen. When the music festival Tomorrowland had to go online during the pandemic, they quickly learnt that lack of real connections between those attending the event and the performers lead to a massive reduction in ticket sales and the success of the event. Reverting to "online" in the traditional sense just wasn't good enough.



Ruben Evens (BE)

Independent Entrepreneur
Smarketing

[linkedin.com/in/rubenevens/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/rubenevens/)

Favourite Quote

“

Amazon ruined us.

”



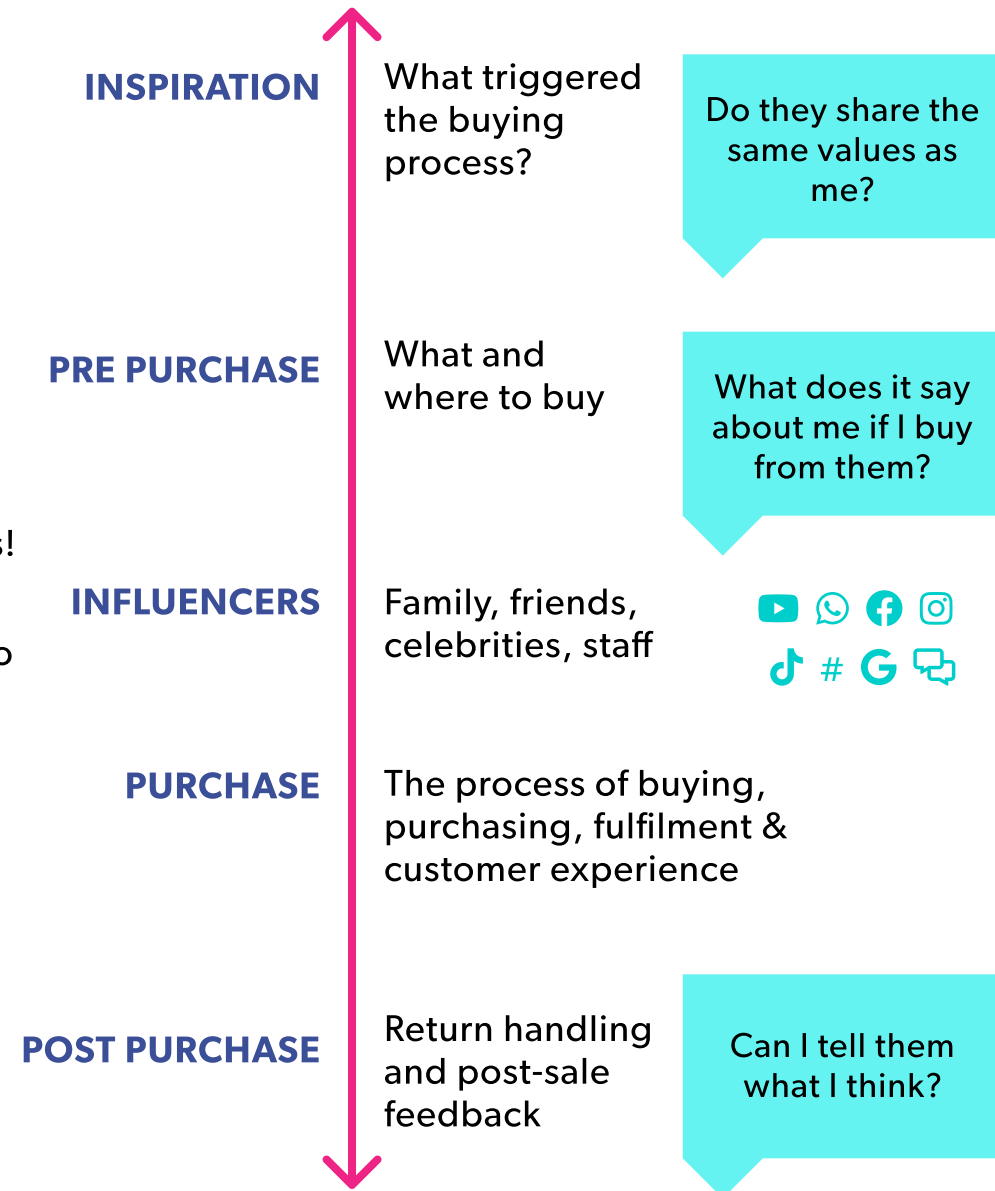
01. Pitch Presentation: Will future customers only pay extra for experiences and conveniences?

Experience #4: Gamification, but now in real life

Did you know that the nerds are now the superheros? That's right! You heard it here first. Whilst those wrapped up in online fantasy lands have been merrily killing Orks and Wildebeest, they've also been paving the way towards online experiences that the mainstream will start to enjoy. Facebook are already moving on this trend with "Metaverse" and we probably know how that story goes when we consider that they have 2.8 billion active users as of 2021.

Top tips for researching what your customers actually want

- Measure your customer experience at all touch points.
- When you're researching your customers by generation, check your sources! Information about a particular generation that is 10 years old is not going to be relevant now. If you're looking for trends you should limit your window to the last 5 years to get a more accurate idea of what they want.



Key Take Aways:

- 🍕 Customers will pay for extra experiences and conveniences.
- 🍕 Brands need to feel real and be authentic.
- 🍕 Social responsibility is important.
- 🍕 Personalisation isn't personalisation if it applies to more people than just the person you're targeting.
- 🍕 Nerds are soothsayers - they've seen the future already and the rest of us are hot on their heels.



02. Pitch Presentation: Decision first research

John (who is a very positive sort of person) shared his reasoning as to why we should make decisions before performing research. Ordinarily we do research to inform the decision making process, but this has the potential to providing those who are making those decisions with a less than perfect set of information because the things we measure and research can be done it lots of different ways and yield different results. What we need is a solution that increases the confidence to make decisions.

Pitfalls of Decision Last approach

You probably know how this goes. You do some research, find some evidence to back it up or refute it and then make a decision. This method usually ends up defining the what and not the why. It also has the potential of gathering the wrong data (waste of time/resources), taking the wrong approach (incorrect research method) and doesn't involve the right stakeholders (tough buy-in). Think of it like this. You load up Netflix in the hope that in the spare 2 hours you have you can find something to watch. The problem is you spend the next 25 minutes trying to choose something. What if your approach was different, and instead of researching aimlessly, you made the decision that you wanted to watch a comedy with a rating of 4.5 stars? You're going to find what you're looking for quicker because you've already made the decision about what it is you want to do.

Hello Decision First!

There are some handy steps to guide you through decision first thinking, so let's take a look.

Step #1: Define the decision

What is the objective and where are you currently at with achieving it? What is the impact of doing it and is there anything that you need to look out for (red flags)?



John Ostrowski (BR)

Principle - Growth Experiments
iTech Media

[in linkedin.com/in/joaoostrowski/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/joaoostrowski/)

Favourite Quote

“

Always begin with the end in mind

”



02. Pitch Presentation: Decision first research

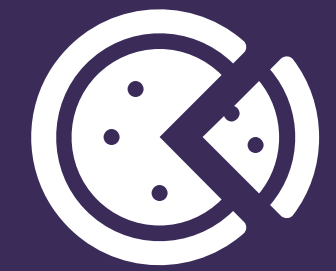
Step #2: Map out the evidence

Find out where you need to gather your evidence from. Is it from users (user feedback, user research, in product data), from the organisation itself (strategies, team knowledge, previous testing & experiments) or from the market (research/trends, competitor analysis). It may be from all of these areas or a combination of the 3.

Step #3: Plan the approach

Finally figure out the best way of obtaining the research that you need.

Once these 3 steps are complete you can then work how to carry out your approach and once it's done, looking at the data and finally making a decision based on a reliable mental model that is also business orientated - winner! Check out John's super helpful template in the links section to get started with decision first research.



Key Take Aways:

- 🍕 A decision last approach based on research isn't efficient or reliable.
- 🍕 Making decisions first and then researching around it is better.
- 🍕 Identifying and doing the right kind of research is important.
- 🍕 This increases the confidence and reliability of the evidence you find.

Books

- 📖 How to measure anything bit.ly/3DPRRVQ

Links

- 🔗 Decision first user insights action plan template bit.ly/3yIPkBC



03. Pitch Presentation: Automated performance monitoring and analysis

Antoine shared with us why, through his own experience, automating things is the way forward for growth. He found himself in the unenviable (but all too common) position of being the only person doing data analysis and all the things involved in that. It wasn't long before the realisation hit that having a singular person responsible for multiple jobs results in a very high dependency on that person. This has personal knock-on effects, I mean who needs time off, learn new things or get a promotion?

Automation for the win!

By automating processes well, we can reduce human errors, reduce repetitive tasks, gain time to look at things in more depth, save money and most importantly reduce dependencies.

#1: Monitoring performance

Let's talk Sample Ratio Mismatch. This is a common problem which is only aggravated by consent banners and the like. Traditionally SRM is calculated at the end of an experiment or if you think you're dealing with a false positive. But is this the best option? What if you could set up a solution that alerts YOU when something is amiss rather than you having to check or wait? Sounds good right and that's exactly what Antoine did using the Stats Service Engine from Optimizely that checks for SRM sequentially and pinged a message to a dedicated slack channel when something was amiss.

Another consideration is whether you really need to hit the audience numbers before stopping an experiment - think about it, there may a lot of money at stake. If your main KPI is decreased significantly, it's best to know sooner rather than later right? Setting up alerts in a similar vein to the SRM example above means a team can check for issues like bugs or design issues on the fly as soon as it becomes a problem.



Antoine Tissier (FR)

Data Analyst - Experimentation
Decathlon

[in linkedin.com/in/antoinetissier/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/antoinetissier/)

Favourite Quote

“

There was only one data analyst and it was me!

”



03. Pitch Presentation: Automated performance monitoring and analysis

There are some caveats to this feedback system however and it should really only be used if something looks like it's *really* going wrong. This is because premature cessation of an experiment can affect any estimations about its impact. Extra checks (such as outliers) need to be accounted for and a Rule(s) of Thumb need to be in place that encapsulates the essence of Central Limit Theory (in a nutshell: the sampling distribution of the mean of any distribution will be normal, provided that the sample size is large enough). These guard rails can help, but be aware that they may also have an impact on any observed uplift.

Putting it all together

Once you've decided what metrics to monitor the next step is to provide a way for your team to get an overview of your experiments and how they're doing. Setting up a dashboard with key information such as the experimentID, start date, current status and preliminary advice about performance (gathered from your automated set up) is a great way to do this. The advice can be anything that is helpful, such as if the experiments should be stopped and for what reason - and these alerts and sent to Slack.

#2: Less time for analysis

The dashboard doesn't just provide information about experiment performance, but also plenty of information to cut through the effort of analysing finished experiments. Uplift, sample size, confidence interval and power are all automatically computed with the ability to change segments easily.

#3: Save money

By checking the "cost" of any query that the dashboard makes, expensive data pulls are refused. Using precomputed datasets also means that the queries are faster and cheaper.

#4: Save time & money

If you're familiar with Big Query then you know that requests can be complicated and error prone. Having a library of prewritten requests means less time, less errors and better clarity.



Key Take Aways:

- Being reliant on just one person to do everything isn't fair (to them and you).
- Automating processes allows wider team involvement and empowerment.
- Making sure information is accessible, helpful and reliable will save time and money.

Books

- Trustworthy online controlled experiments
bit.ly/3dIQHRs

Links

- Sending messages using incoming webhooks
bit.ly/3dOKrYu
- Stats Engine Service - Optimizely
bit.ly/3oOaTaH



04. Pitch Presentation: Optimisation through segmentation

Daan started with a thought-provoking question - "What IS the correct calculation of the conversion rate?" Maybe you think this is straightforward, but actually it's a bit more complicated and it depends on the business for which you're operating in.

Transactions	Transactions	Converting Users	
.....	How do you calculate yours?
Sessions	Users	Users	
Low involvement Low and high turnover	High involvement Low and high turnover	Low & high involvement High turnover	

Beyond this, we also need to be mindful of which customers we optimise for too. How do you do that? The answer is not personas, but through segmentation using the Recency Frequency Monetary (RFM) model. Never heard of it? Well, it's a great way to identify and target specific groups of customers and to provide information that is more relevant to their particular behaviour. So how do we use it?

Step #1: Collect Data

Find out when was the last time the customer ordered (recency), how many times they previously ordered (frequency) and how much money they already spent with you (monetary).

Step #2: Determine Scales

- Figure out what custom filters you need to segment your customer base:
- Recency Scale: Last bought a year ago, last bought 1 month ago
 - Frequency Scale: Bought once a year, bought 10 times a year
 - Monetary Scale: Less than £1000, £7001 - £10,000



Daan van Vliet (NL)

Conversion Specialist
PLUS retail

[linkedin.com/in/daan-van-vliet-05259658](https://www.linkedin.com/in/daan-van-vliet-05259658)

Favourite Quote

“
Put your arm around your Data Scientist
”



04. Pitch Presentation: Optimisation through segmentation

Step #3: Assign Scores

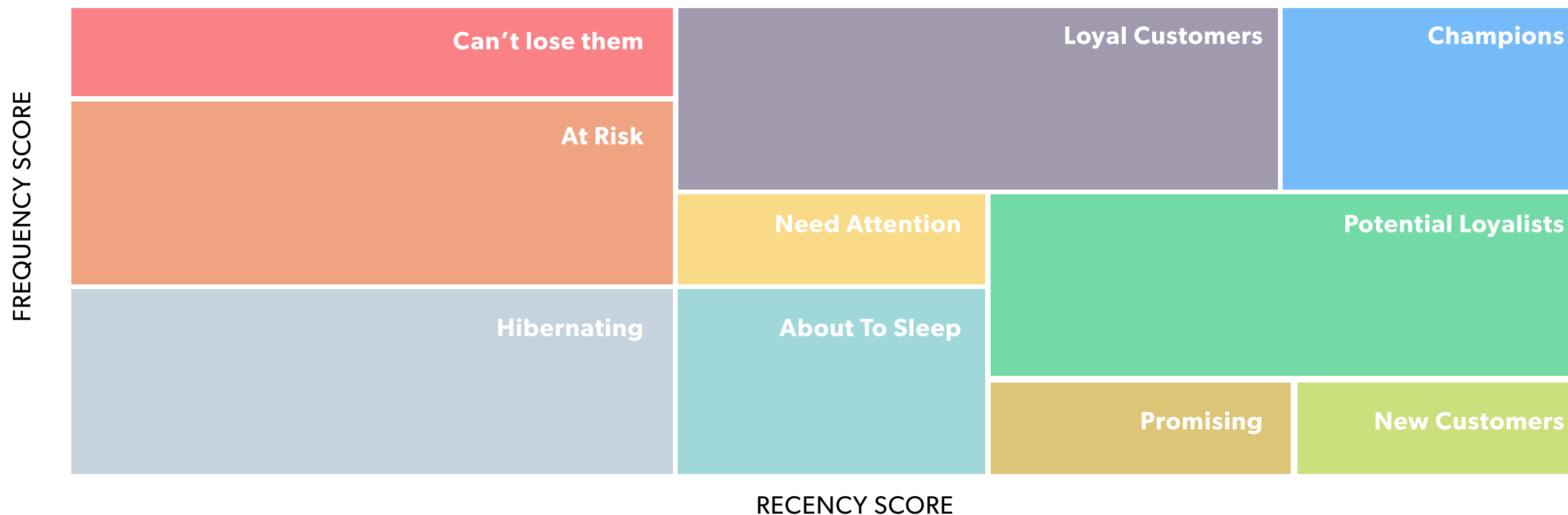
Based on your data, every customer is assigned a score by converting absolute values of transactions into portions of transactions that are similar based on RFM. Once the scores are assigned you can group customers with similar scores across RFM.

Step #4: Classify your segments

Customer segments can now be classified based on their scores. You may want to start with around 5 and increase this over time as your understanding of the segments and scoring matures.

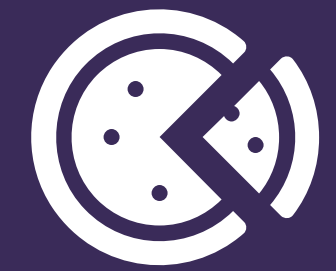
Step #5: Personalised strategies for relevant segments

Use your segments to develop personalised campaigns for each of them that relate to your company's current goals.



Put it together

Need retention? Look at potential loyalists. Want to get more out of your existing customer base? Start focusing on the Can't lose them segment. Moreover, think about the right way to analyse your data and remember not one size fits all.



Key Take Aways:

- Use different methods to calculate conversion rate depending on the situation.
- You shouldn't be using personas for personalisation - use the RFM model to create better segments.
- RFM will allow you to target your segments and create personalised campaigns that are more likely to resonate with them and your company goals.

Links

- [RFM Analysis bit.ly/3sks2eD](https://bit.ly/3sks2eD)



05. Pitch Presentation: Building a data and validation driven culture

Mariska explained how the ANWB team went from a team of 4 to 19 (and hiring!) and the journey they have had from 2017 to the present day where they have been working on embedding using data and validation as standard way of working. The trip to enlightenment happened in 2 stages:


Stage #1: Creating a validation driven culture

It might seem a bit odd starting with validation first, but by using this approach and running experiments for features that would be built anyway and random ideas from stakeholders, reduced the chances of detrimental ideas just being done. It also allowed to emphasise the negatives (eg. money lost = pain) and also the positives.

Getting content creators onboard is another key activity - show them how you can help prioritise and calculate impact so they can make a dent in their backlog of "to do's".

Of course, any sort of change may well be confronted with objections such as "it slows us down", "we don't need to validate, it's best practice!" or even worse "It's a good idea because I know best", but this sort of backlash can be addressed by the very thing you're trying to implement - validation! Make use of the Minority Effect too, where someone in the minority (you and other likeminded folk) influence the majority to accept your way of thinking.

Show negative impact
For implemented or due to be implemented changes
Quick & effective
Emphasise danger
Might come across as unfriendly



Show positive impact
Run experiments on your own solutions
Needs more analysis upfront
Emphasise opportunity
Feels like a bonus



Drive validation culture by showing the good and the bad of a decision



Mariska Buijs (NL)

CRO Specialist
ANWB



[linkedin.com/in/mariska-buijs-b5086760/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/mariska-buijs-b5086760/)

Favourite Quote

“

Negative experiments are the ones that say: I told you so!

”



05. Pitch Presentation: Building a data and validation driven culture

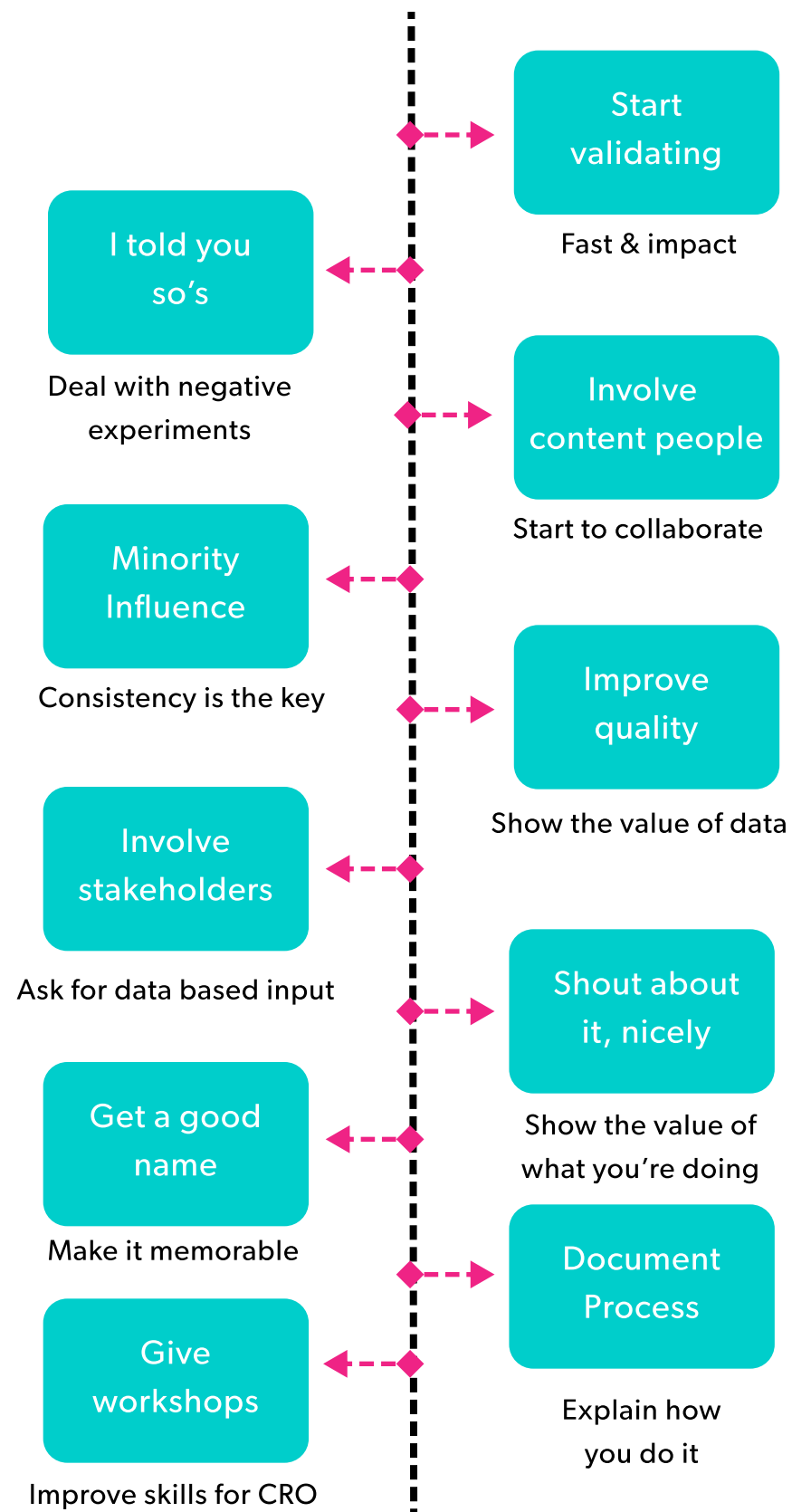
Stage #2: Creating a data driven culture

Experiments supported by data will have a higher success rate and uplift - show this at every opportunity. Get stakeholders involved by asking them to help with research and hypothesis sessions, and share your data with them.

Don't forget to listen to their ideas and find out how you can help support them with data and research. When dealing with stakeholders lift the veil of unknowns and help them feel informed through case studies, explanations and answers. It doesn't matter if they get it right now, what's more important is exposing them to the process.

You can also help spread the knowledge by good documentation of your process that is accessible and easy to understand. This also helps to onboard new co-workers, refute objections to the process (as it's documented) and maintain consistency.

Giving workshops on all things CRO is another great way for knowledge sharing and embedding the data and validation mindset. Not everyone has the skills to do the job but are really keen to start, they just don't know how to do it or how to do it well.



Key Take Aways:

- Use validation to show the impact of good and bad things.
- Use your knowledge to make other people's jobs easier (content creators).
- Share your knowledge to enlighten others and get them onboard.
- Make it easy for others to learn and stick to the process.



06. Presentation: Building better experiments with better UX research

Marlies truly was the comeback Queen this year. In 2019 she took part in the pitch competition without success but was asked to come back this year to show us what she's made of.

In a perfect demonstration of how to do research right, Marlies started by highlighting the fact that only 5.3% of all Conversion Hotel keynotes since 2015 were about UX research. Obviously, there was an opportunity for optimisation here as the topic was underrepresented but CRUCIAL to any optimisation process, so she walked us through the 7 recipes you need to get better experiments through good UX research that provides data to trump opinions. This will give you better hypothesis and a much better success rate.

Research Design

Your primary ingredient is asking the right question to start off with. The question should elicit a response broader than yes or no and bring focus not opinions. They should be specific and goal orientated, actionable and usable.

Methods are also important so choosing the right ones and the order in which you use them is key. Use Quantitative (what and how many), Attitudinal (what is said), Qualitative (how and why) and behavioural (what they do) - check out the link in the takeaways.

Recipe #1: Research Design

Good research doesn't start with a tool, it starts with a question.

Ingredients:

1. Clear research question & problem definition
2. Right set of methods
3. Accurate sample
4. Well prepared questions/scenarios/observation schedule
5. Plan ahead, know what you're testing and who to involve



Marlies Wilms Floet (NL)

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Favourite Quote

“

Don't look at things from just one perspective. I guarantee you're going to miss something.

”



06. Presentation: Building better experiments with better UX research

Triangulate

Did you know that many UX research methods are underutilised, but can add clarity when you need to pinpoint something you're trying to answer?

What if you're optimising a menu structure for your users and for SEO, for example. How would you go about this ordinarily? Now think out of the box and see if methods such as social media analysis, gathering inside-out information (what does your company want your users to know), tree testing, card sorting and keyword analysis might help answer the question.

Sample selection & moderating

To get a recipe right, you need to add the correct ingredients. Same applies for when you're choosing people to take part in your UX research. Take a look at the data you have and identify the people that show a particular behaviour relevant to what you're researching.

When you are moderating those people, in a lab session for example, ditch the request for them to "think out aloud" as they complete a task as this rationalises their behaviour. It's much better to ask questions afterwards (retrospectively) about why they did something or how they felt about it.

Recipe #2: Triangulate

You need to look at things from more than one angle to get the true picture

Ingredients:

1. Find more methods to research
2. Discover more sources
3. Add researchers



Recipe #3:

Sample selection

Invite the right people to the dinner party

Ingredients:

1. Identify behaviours
2. Look at data to invite the right people



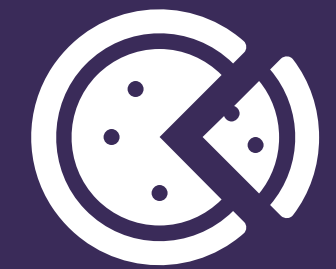
Recipe #4:

Moderating

Stop asking to think out aloud

Ingredients:

1. Use retrospective moderation instead



Key Take Aways:

- Start with a question, then decide on what research you need.
- There is a research method for almost any question you have, find the right one.
- There is no point researching the wrong audience - use data to see who gets on the dinner invite.
- Asking questions at the end of moderating is better than asking during a task.
- User research done early can save you money and effort.
- Get expert help when you need it.
- Find the best way to communicate with your stakeholders.



06. Presentation: Building better experiments with better UX research

Start early

Using research at the start of any product development can save loads of money and time. MacDonalds did this brilliantly when they wanted to know if users wanted spaghetti on the menu. Instead of just rolling it out on the assumption everyone would be gobbling it up, they put it on the menu, but not in the kitchen. They then tracked how many people asked for the spaghetti and made a business decision around that.

You can use lots of UX methods to validate your backlog of experiments too, think about the benefits!

Experts & Stakeholders

Sometimes you need a fresh set of eyes on something or perhaps training. By hiring in the right expert for the job you can often gain insights you'd missed.

Finally when it comes to stakeholders, you have to find a way to communicate with them that not only gets their attention but provides valuable feedback they can relate to. A good question to ask customers is "If you were the CEO, what would you do?" Film their responses and make a compilation to distribute.

Recipe #5: Start early, small and often

Don't jump the gun, use research to validate ideas early and whenever you can

Ingredients:

- 1. Painted doors
- 2. User studies
- 3. Rapid prototyping
- 4. Feature flags
- 5. Feature test
- 6. Staged rollouts
- 7. Experiments & CRO



Recipe #6:

Use an Expert

Avoid bias

Ingredients:

- 1. Research the right one
- 2. Money



Recipe #7:

Involve stakeholders

It's not just about your team

Ingredients:

- 1. A suitable question
- 2. Content they'll love



Links

[When to Use Which User-Experience Research Methods](https://bit.ly/31WSzUI)
bit.ly/31WSzUI

[Measuring and Driving Experiment Velocity](https://bit.ly/30u1Ouz)
bit.ly/30u1Ouz



Unconference: The unconference formally known as the Dishwasher Challenge

Dishwashers, how do you pack yours? Are you the organised type where a game of dishwasher Tetris is an enjoyable challenge? Or are you more blasé about the whole affair? This was a question asked at CH2019 by Charles Meaden and Arnout Hellemans and was the spark of inspiration that led to the idea that at CH2020, a Dishwasher Challenge would be hosted to answer the burning question - what is the most efficient way to pack a dishwasher?

Sadly the CH2020 live event didn't go ahead, but the knives were firmly out to run the event at CH2021 with Charles & Arnout at the helm. And that was the plan, right up until 24 hours before when sadly Arnout got 2 lines on his lateral flow test meaning he wasn't able to attend and the dishwasher had gone AWOL.

Time to Pivot

What do you do at a conference full of Optimisers? You pick their brains (and your partners) to figure out Plan B. After several iterations, The Dishwasher Challenge became The Grocery Box Packing Challenge. The mission? To pack 30 weird and wonderful items of groceries from the local shop into a box in the most efficient way possible. Everything from cream cakes and prawn crackers to baguettes, a basil plant and a celeriac. Here's the twist. Challengers got a choice of completing the task in 21 seconds with their eyes open, or 60 seconds blindfolded. They were then scored on how many items they got in the box, how many items got damaged and the efficiency of the packing. So what we learn?

Lesson #1: There is no best way to pack the box

Everyone did it their own way, but the general rule of thumb was that heavy stuff needed to go at the bottom. Fragile things needed to go near the top.



Charles Meaden (UK)

Owner

Digital Nation

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Favourite Quote

“

Cream cake at the bottom - mistake, huge mistake

”



Unconference: The unconference formally known as the Dishwasher Challenge

Lesson #2: Optimisers will always find loopholes

We wouldn't expect anything less! Because of this the rules that were set out had to cover all edge cases and be explicit, e.g. "no you cannot simply push all the items off the table into the box". Whilst kudos was given for the speed in which the box was packed in this particular instance, the cream cake was less than happy.

Lesson #3: Past experience gives an advantage

One participant (David) did remarkably well at the challenge, being able to pack the box with his eyes open and shut and with a level of finesse not expected. Further participant research revealed that in his younger years he had been a packer at his local supermarket, which explained a lot.

Lesson #4: System 2 thinking sucks when you need to pack quickly

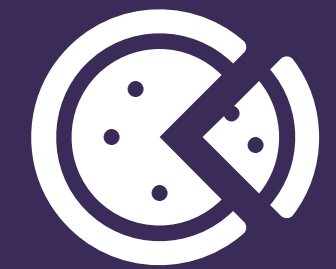
Packing the box with your eyes open in 21 seconds lead to System 2 over thinking everything (this is the box, what shape is the box, how many things need to go into the box, what shape is that thing, is that soft or hard, will this fit in that space) and very few people were able to complete the challenge because of the short amount of time given for System 2 to make a decision (they basically panicked). However, given 60 seconds to complete the challenge (even with your eyes shut) gave System 2 that bit of extra time it needed to figure stuff out and allow a decision (or action) to be made.

Lesson #5: People learn fast and adapt quickly

Some participants had more than one go at the challenge. Those that did worked out the optimal way to do it was with their eyes shut and figuring out by touch where the items should go in the box.

Lesson #6: Team building doesn't need to cost big bucks

Remember as a child when you spent more time playing with the box that an expensive toy came in rather than the toy itself? The same logic can be applied here too. Grocery packing is a great way to get to know your team and how they think - plus you get to give away cream cakes as prizes at the end.



Key Take Aways:

- 🍷 People find loopholes if rules are not explicit.
- 🍷 Long term memory can give a competitive advantage.
- 🍷 People panic when system 2 isn't given enough time to process information.
- 🍷 The more you do something, the better you get.
- 🍷 Team building activities don't need to cost an arm and a leg. A box might just be enough.

Links

- 🔗 [How to pack a dishwasher when there isn't a dishwasher to pack bit.ly/3ywm0se](https://bit.ly/3ywm0se)



Final Thoughts:

If we've all learnt anything in the past couple of years, it's that nothing in life is certain. A curve ball can hit you at any time. 2021 was certainly no exception and whether Conversion Hotel would even run was the question on everyone's lips right up until the last moment.

There were so many variables, edge cases and scenarios to account for that even the most ardent of statisticians, analysts and researchers would have fried their brains. The challenge of running a live in-person event was a monumental task and not without considerable risk, but the Conversion Hotel Event Team took it and it paid off.

The keynotes this year aptly demonstrate how, even in adverse situations you can still hit the mark; access to information, support through knowledge sharing, juicing opportunities, the right mindset, efficiency and speed, facing up to new challenges, getting attention by offering something different and telling a story people can engage and related to; all of these things can be applied to any situation to boost the chances of success.

This is why Conversion Hotel is, in my view, a conference that no matter what* you should always attend. You know the saying "Practice what you preach"? CH2021 was the masterclass.

*subject to government guidelines and regulations 😊

VALIDATION
CULTURE
PRODUCT HOMECOMING
EXPERIMENTATION
ANALYTICS PERFORMANCE CRO STATISTICS
MOTIVATION CUSTOMER PEOPLE
TESTING RESEARCH DISHWASHERS
MARKETING
PSYCHOLOGY
TEAM
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19/20/21 | 2021
NOVEMBER

TEXEL, THE NETHERLANDS

Thank You!

If you made it this far through the deck, I salute you! I hope that you found it useful and have found at least a few action points to take away and consider, apply and try to your own optimisation journey - whether it be personal or business!

Conversion Hotel is big on knowledge sharing, so please feel free to share this deck as you see fit. The only thing I'd ask is that you give the author (me!) and the event a mention if you do so. I dare say the speakers wouldn't mind a tip of the hat either.



About Me

I am a freelance consultant that has worked in all things optimisation for over 16 years – from user research, ux/ui design, coding, through to a/b testing and personalisation. I specialise in functionality testing, quality assurance and evidence based heuristic analysis of websites and digital products, and have a keen interest in consumer psychology and buying behaviour.

Over the past 3 years I have generated £30m of revenue through winning optimisation experiences and discovered £250m of lost revenue through my somewhat infamous approach to cross device and browser functionality testing and heuristic analysis. I find the problems that no one else sees, and help resolve them to make better online experiences.

I have worked with an exhaustive list of clients including FTSE 100 members, major biotechnology companies and e-commerce giants.

When the mood suits, I take to the stage to spread the word about how boring but ultimately massively important the work I do is, and why.

What to get in touch? Why that'd be lovely :-)

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