



# A Guide to A/B Testing

Best Practices and Things to Avoid



# Agenda

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A/B testing is an **optimization technique** that consists of comparing two different options. Users are split into two groups with each seeing only one test so that you can measure what effect each test has on behavior and conversions. The goal being, of course, to see which version results in **better conversion rates**.

On average, less than **15%** of A/B tests produce **significant results**; and finding the right hypotheses to test and getting reliable results is not easy.

Understanding the most common A/B testing traps, and how to avoid them, will save a great deal of discouragement and help you test more confidently.

# Crawl, Walk, Run

It's tempting to want to pull out all the stops and test something that is radical and deeply involved (risky if it doesn't succeed), but it's important to **ease into the world of A/B testing.**

Start off simple, get the **fundamentals** down, familiarize yourself with **analytics and hypotheses**, and going through the **testing cycle.**



# Trust Analytics Not Your Gut

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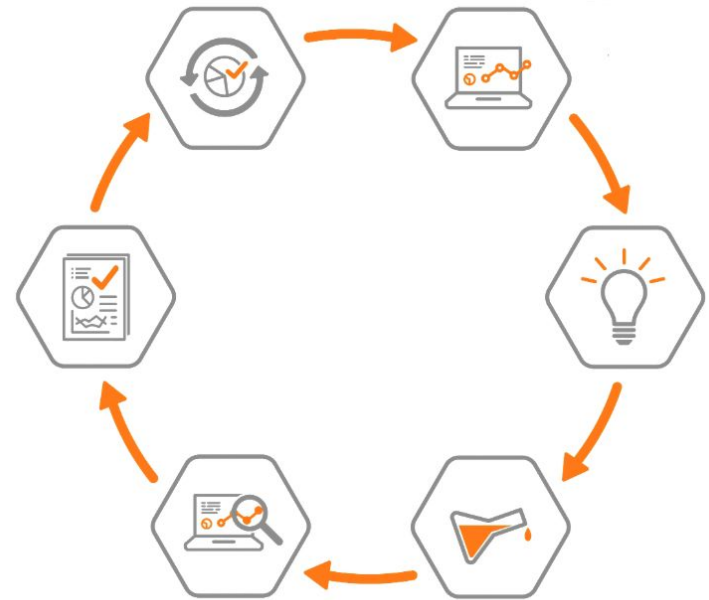


A/B testing without a **strong foundation of analytic historical data** makes it impossible to prove if your test was successful, and if so, by how much.

Your gut can lead you to where to look, but testing should be based on hypotheses that are **data led** (i.e. single page drop offs, low conversion rates, etc.).

# Maintain a Healthy Testing Cycle

A/B testing is extremely powerful, but it is also complicated. By developing a **disciplined testing cycle routine**, you increase your likelihood of gaining **reliable results** as well as a clearer view of a **testing roadmap** for the future.



[Click here](#) to learn about an testing cycle.

# Know Your Audience



It's important to not only know **who you wish to attract** to your properties, but also **who is being attracted** (they're not always one in the same).

By better knowing these two, it will help you **hone in your audience understanding**, as well as help guide you in your A/B Testing.

# Have Platform Awareness

An important aspect of A/B testing is **knowing the source of your audience engagement** (i.e. smartphone, tablet, desktop).

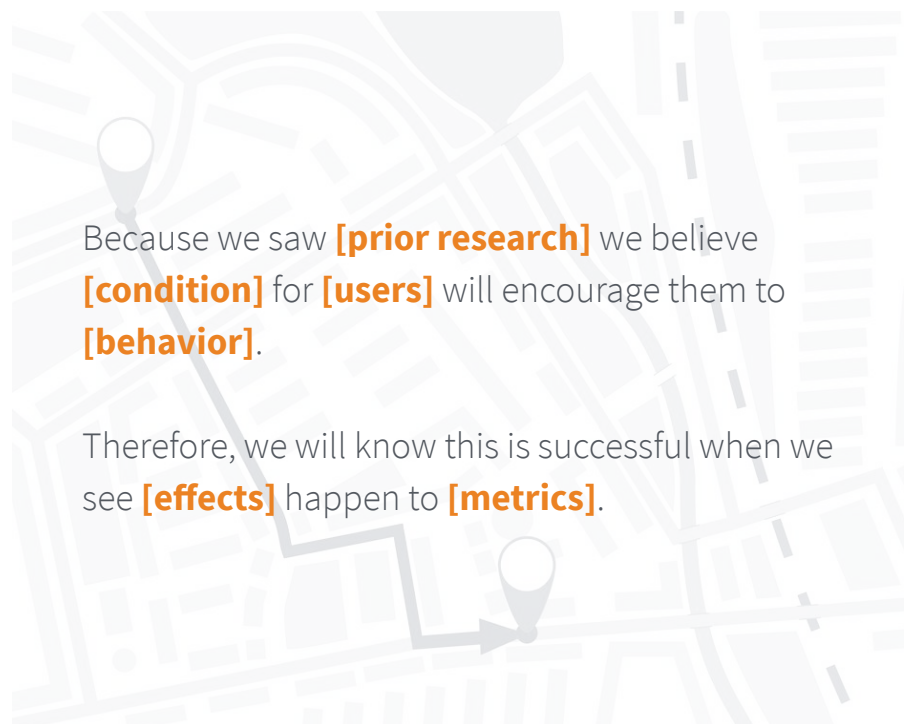
It will help inform you about what to test, the way you segment, and hone in your reporting.



# Hypothesise Before Testing

Testing, by first creating a hypothesis is like going on a road trip but first consulting a map. It doesn't guarantee your arrival, but it does give you a route by which you can travel and refer back to.

*Consider the example on the right.*



Because we saw **[prior research]** we believe **[condition]** for **[users]** will encourage them to **[behavior]**.

Therefore, we will know this is successful when we see **[effects]** happen to **[metrics]**.



# Prioritize the Right Tests

**Not every idea is the right idea** to test. Some may take far too long to create and won't end up justifying the investment; others be a quick implementation that shows small but immediate return. Find the right **balance of investment and return**.

Scoring your hypotheses is a great way to take an unbiased approach to determining what to test (highest total score amongst several testing ideas is the best to try first).

The table to the right is an example between two different testing ideas.

Above the fold? <b>(1 or 0)</b>	1	1
Noticeable within 5 seconds? <b>(2 or 0)</b>	2	2
Adding or removing an element? <b>(2 or 0)</b>	2	2
Designed to increase user motivation? <b>(1 or 0)</b>	1	1
Running on (a) high traffic page(s)? <b>(1 or 0)</b>	0	1
Addressing an issue discovered via user testing? <b>(1 or 0)</b>	0	0
Addressing in issue discovered via qualitative feedback (surveys, polls, interviews)? <b>(1 or 0)</b>	0	1
Addressing insights found via digital analytics? <b>(1 or 0)</b>	1	1
Supported by mouse tracking, heat maps, or eye tracking? <b>(1 or 0)</b>	0	0
Easy to implement? <b>(less than 4 hrs = 3, up to 8 hrs = 2, under 2 days = 1, more = 0)</b>	1	3
TOTAL	8	<b>12</b>

# THANK YOU

**Questions?** Please contact [marketinghelp@cru.org](mailto:marketinghelp@cru.org).