

5 Ways

# MACHINE LEARNING

Can Help Improve Conversion  
Rate Optimization



From self-driving cars to product suggestions on Amazon, machine-learning is becoming more prevalent in every industry—and digital marketing is no exception.

Conversion rate optimization (CRO) is the next area where artificial intelligence (AI) is emerging. By using advanced data analytics and tracking, machine learning improves website conversions by analyzing traffic, visualizing trends, laser-targeting advertisements, and identifying user insights.

B2B marketers have accepted that manually collecting and analyzing enough audience usage data to inform conversion efforts requires too much time and personnel. Rather than relying on simple tests or anecdotal evidence, they can now use a series of algorithms that analyze user behavior to make educated decisions about a website's performance, improve conversion rates, and ultimately generate more leads.

Enterprises with high-traffic websites have embraced AI, and the barriers to using this technology continue to fall, making it more accessible to a wider range of businesses.

So, if you haven't yet considered taking advantage of AI, it's time to add it to your list of priorities. To help you get started, we're sharing five ways that AI can be beneficial to your CRO efforts.



## Using machine learning to diagnose your website

Analyzing customer feedback and implementing the insights derived are critical steps for successful CRO. For a high-volume website, performing these actions is extremely resource-intensive. There are many ways to gather information, including advanced website analytics, heatmaps, and recordings of how individual users experience your website. However, for sites that get thousands of visits a day or more, it's easy to waste hours digging through data without identifying any practical findings. This is where AI comes to the rescue.

Using machine learning, you can spot issues that visitors are having with your website and identify areas where their experiences can be improved. Computers can be trained to go over large datasets (recordings of user sessions, heatmaps, click maps, and others) to understand what makes certain visitors abandon your website and others convert into leads or customers. You can supplement your analysis with other data you've collected, such as personal and professional information, to provide additional insights into how your page is serving your various audience segments.

**Here are a few basic examples of potential findings that this research can yield:**

- Your site fails to convert decision-makers because your pricing is not transparent. Visitors may mistakenly assume they can't afford your service because the pricing isn't clear.
- Enterprise organizations abandon your website because your testimonials/clients page doesn't feature any customers to which they can relate.
- Visitors leave your site because they are unable to find the products or content they are looking for quickly enough.

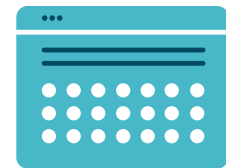
Each finding provides you with a new opportunity to experiment with different elements of your website to improve your website's performance. For instance, to address the issues presented above, you can:



Clarify your pricing

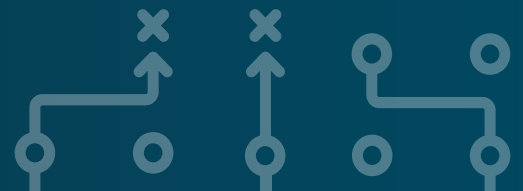


Leverage customer data to sort products and content more effectively for each audience segment



Add more logos of enterprise customers you've worked with

Knowing how different segments respond to different tactics allows you to fine-tune your website for conversions.



## Engaging in AI-powered high-frequency testing

When it comes to CRO, A/B testing is one of the most popular tools employed by seasoned marketers. Thorough experimenting and testing can drastically improve every aspect of your website but it's expensive and time-consuming. Furthermore, a majority of A/B tests fail to yield any conclusive results. It is easy to invest considerable time and resources into testing that doesn't provide any significant improvements to CRO.

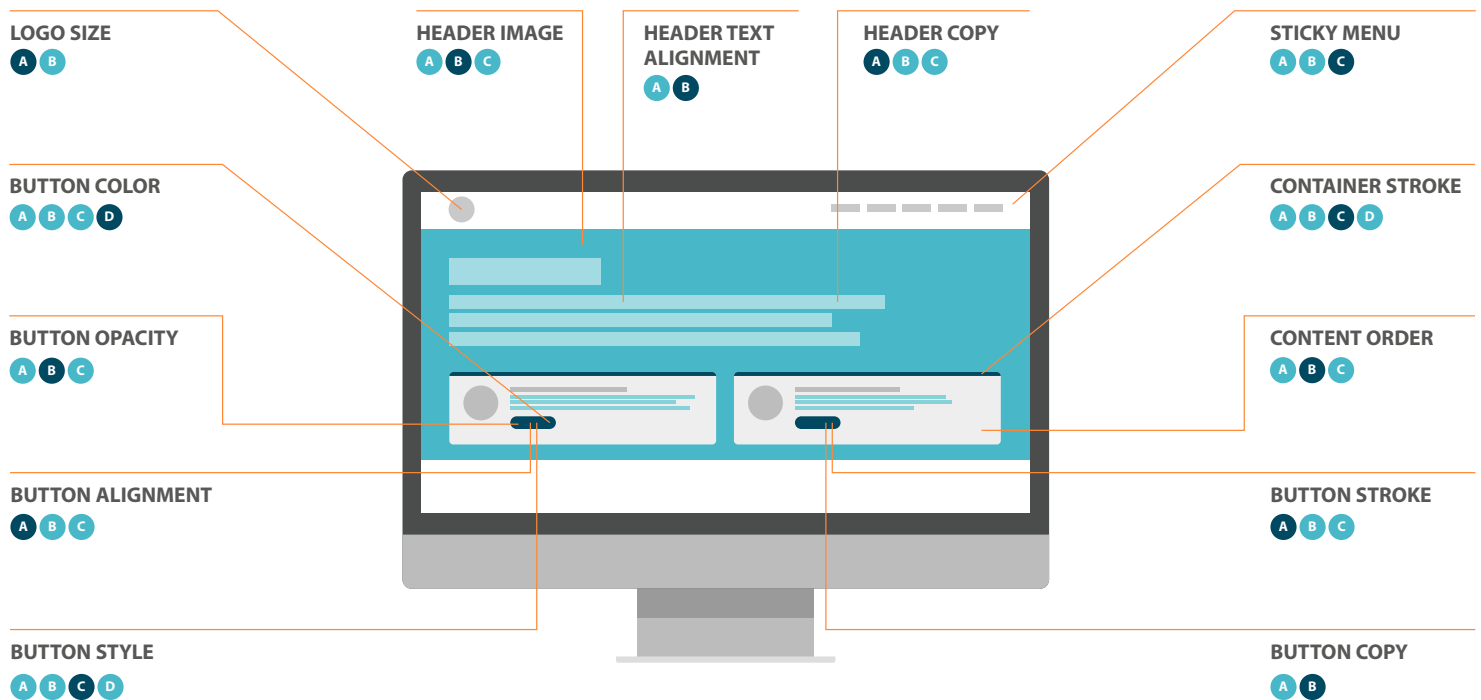
Luckily, testing is an area where it's relatively easy to apply machine learning. AI-powered testing allows CRO experts to find opportunities to improve their websites quickly. They can expeditiously perform numerous tests and optimize websites based on the findings with minimal manual input.

With AI, website testing and improvement can be completely automated. The owner of a website can inform the computer of page conversion goals—for example, form submissions, link clicks, or complete purchases—and elements it can experiment with, such as layout, CTA, copy, or others. The computer can then quickly run thousands of tests to determine a winning combination.

Advancements in machine learning are allowing businesses to run more detailed experiments through multivariate testing. Multivariate testing is distinct from A/B testing in that it involves testing more than one outcome variable at a time. Instead of testing A against B, you are measuring A, B, C, D, and on, all at once. It provides a way for businesses to analyze the effects of making many smaller simultaneous changes.

Before machine learning, multivariate testing was not a viable option for everyone. Websites needed to generate a large amount of traffic to accumulate enough data to make any impactful findings. However, with machine learning, AI is able to make more accurate decisions with less data, providing smaller websites the ability to use this form of testing.

## WHAT DOES ONE MILLION POSSIBLE COMBINATIONS LOOK LIKE?



**...AND THAT'S JUST ABOVE THE FOLD**

## Enriching Exit Intent analysis

Big data provides the opportunity for machine learning to adapt to the everyday requirements of data analysis and organization. Given enough information to process, the AI can solve complex problems in a shorter period of time. One such field in CRO is exit intent technology, which uses customer behavior tracking and visitor abandonment predictions to serve relevant offers, usually in the form of a popup, before the user leaves the site.



Let's be clear, an overwhelming majority of website visitors have an aversion to popups. A poorly used popup is intrusive and can cause visitors to leave without completing a conversion goal. Exit intent technology provides the ability to display popups in a way that won't annoy your visitors. Detailed analysis and tracking of visitor behavior help provide an accurate prediction of when users will leave your site. You can then display popups only when a visitor is about to leave the site anyway.

This AI-driven system can also laser target visitors with appropriate offers. With exit intent technology, you can use cookies to target specific visitor segments, select different triggers for the popup to show, and inform new visitors of your products or services. In fact, targeting new contacts is perhaps one of the most important reasons to add Exit intent popups.

Having a way to reconnect with first-time visitors can lead to a significant increase in sales. A simple popup exchanging a value offering for an email address can turn what could have been a bounced visitor into a lead. When done in a non-intrusive or interactive way, this popup can bring great results.



## Processing large datasets with the help of neural networks

Brands have access to unprecedented quantities of data that they can use to understand the behaviors and motivations of their customers. Through advanced analytics tools and techniques like data enrichment, website owners can build extensive visitor profiles and personalize their content for each user.

With the advancement of analytics and cloud storage tools, the challenge is no longer collecting or storing said data, but analyzing it at scale. Tools like [Google Cloud Computing](#)—which includes solutions for storing and querying big data and machine learning processing—lower both the price and the complexity of using machine learning for your business. For website owners, adding AI to your toolkit is sometimes as easy as adding a few lines of code to your website.

Deep neural networks have enormous computation power and can effectively process and uncover insights from large sets of data. These networks can also be used to predict the future behavior of people through a process called predictive behavior modeling.

Predictive behavior modeling involves building algorithmic models and training them, based on historical customer data, to predict the future behavior of these users—or the likelihood a customer will take a particular action.

Given a large amount of customer information like demographics, customer purchase history, service usage, billing data, etc., a neural network that is trained on this data can perform a classification of customers into various categories of risk in terms of future churn.

Churn prediction is a critically important concept for today's marketers. Churn prediction uses Big Data to detect customers who are likely to cancel their subscriptions. It is used by most of the large subscription businesses to identify the users most at-risk of churning. Done well, this process leads to huge savings, regardless of the size of the business.

## Using data and expertise to predict behavior

Website owners know that only a small fraction of visitors are interested in what they're selling. Determining which of these visitors have the potential to become customers is challenging when manually sifting through data. Fortunately, machine learning can help you segment your audience and figure out which group of visitors to focus on.

One effective method of anticipating visitor behavior is propensity modeling. Propensity modeling is a statistical approach that attempts to predict the probability that customers, leads, and visitors perform specific actions. A propensity score measures the probability that a specific action is performed.



To create a propensity model, you must select the features that will determine the propensity score. There is no limit to the features you can select—and they can include demographics, lead magnet downloads, purchase history, device usage, and more. The **propensity scoring** (i.e., *behavioral scoring*) works by assigning a number to each user in advance, based on various behavioral data, the features you select, and machine learning predictions. This allows you to easily see the conversion propensity scores for your entire audience.

The quality of your propensity scores depends on a variety of factors. Some factors are within your control, such as the amount of data, the quality of your site data, and the types of product offers.

With the right amount of data, you can predict future subscribers with ~ 80% accuracy.

**So, rather than having your business development representatives waste their time chasing cold leads, you can empower them to close more deals by working on highly targeted and motivated prospects.**

## Machine learning will change CRO fundamentally

We are exploring the opportunities AI can create for online businesses. What we have seen so far is just the beginning of a gigantic shift that will transform the way websites are designed and optimized.

**Today, marketers are leveraging AI-powered smart recommendations that allow them to:**

- Nurture first-time visitors via personalized recommendations
- Improve on-site product discovery
- Cross-sell with post-purchase emails
- Reduce cart abandonment
- Increase shopping cart value with data-driven up-sells

If companies want to remain competitive, they need to consider adopting and creating their own powerful conversion tools. From understanding your audience better to personalizing the experience of every visitor who lands on your website, machine learning has the potential to improve your business significantly. The sooner you start taking advantage of it, the faster you'll reap the benefits.

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Alexander Kesler is a visionary B2B digital marketer with over 20 years of experience. Focusing on solutions for B2B demand generation, digital marketing, ABM, intent, and AI-driven lead generation, among others, Alexander embraces innovation and turns concepts and methodologies into products and marketing programs that drive ROI.

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