Penn Foster Registered a 202% Increase in Conversions Using VWO Testing

CASE STUDY

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202%

CONVERSIONS

INDUSTRY

Education Services

LOCATION

Scranton, Pennsylvania

VWO and Penn Foster

Headquartered in Scranton, Pennsylvania, Penn Foster is a for-profit online college dedicated to helping students achieve their goals through affordable, accessible, career-focused learning. With the same mission for over 125 years, Penn Foster aims to provide knowledge that builds career growth and confidence in any budget, around any schedule.

Penn Foster has been using the VWO Experience Optimization Platform for all its UX and conversion optimization needs for the past 2 years. We got in touch with Elizabeth Levitan, Digital Optimization Specialist at Penn Foster, to learn all about their latest winning experiment.

Objective

Previous tests showed that the best way to increase both leads and enrolls was to send paid traffic to a more consolidated page instead of the full site, but it was never implemented on brand traffic before. Therefore, towards this end, the Penn Foster team hypothesized that creating a separate landing page with a high mobile speed score and less information would deliver a more relevant experience to the user. The main objective behind this test was to generate more leads and, in turn, get more enrolls.

Challenge

Penn Foster's paid search campaigns weren't converting at the expected rate based on experience with brand campaigns and industry benchmarks. All of their branded traffic was being sent to their main website. Paid brand campaign traffic being more valuable, lower-funnel traffic, the team at Penn Foster was concerned about sending this traffic to the main site. They hypothesized that exposing potential leads to too much information would overwhelm them, thereby causing them to bounce off without converting to a lead.

Solution

When looking to optimize, the first thing that Penn Foster looks at is performance. The KPIs considered are – click to lead (CTL), click to enroll (CTE), lead to enroll (LTE), and the lifetime value (LTV) of those enrolled. After identifying pages that need improvement, the team at Penn Foster often use heatmaps and session recordings to identify possible pain points for users and find opportunities for improvement. However, for this test, they solely relied on quantitative data and VWO testing.

The Test:

The metric tracked for this experiment was click-to-lead, and this is what control looked like:

Approximately 35,000 visitors became a part of the test that ran for 24 days, with one variation challenging the control. Traffic was equally split between the two experiences and delivered through the VWO Testing capabilities.

This is what the variation looked like:

The variation won with a staggering 202% jump in conversion rate as compared to the control.

We learned that sending people to an isolated landing page led more people to become leads rather than giving them information that was not as relevant to them. That was the landing page that our winning variation (and the variation that became a lead or to enroll), and this variation allowed users to quickly get the information they were looking for. Click on the median back increased, highlighting the importance of having only one clear CTA (either becoming a lead or to enroll), and the majority of brand traffic was either looking to become a lead, and get more information or straightaway enroll.

Elizabeth Levitan

The winning variation has been made live across Penn Foster's brand campaigns that were previously going to their main site's homepage.

Conclusion

Penn Foster treats experimentation as an iterative process, and with having moved everything over to the new landing page, the team carried out micro testing based on the optimization opportunities that VWO Insights' heatmaps and session recordings highlighted. The future plan is to run similar tests on the remaining subset of campaigns that are still being sent to the full site.

VWO has been so helpful in our optimization efforts. Testing opportunities are endless and it has allowed us to really identify, set up, and run multiple tests at a lower cost. It’s helped us find out what works and what doesn’t work and even small tweaks to landing pages and VWO allows us to do that seamlessly.

Elizabeth Levitan

Would you like to learn more about Experience Optimization?

VWO and Penn Foster