



CASE STUDY

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

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.

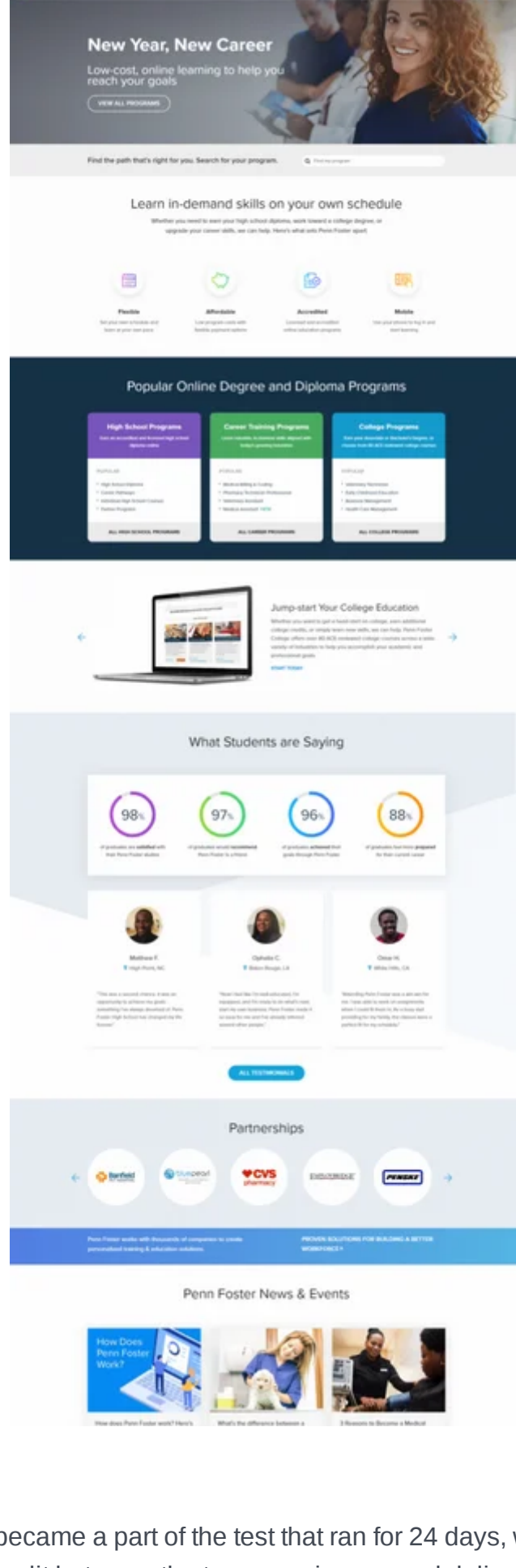
## Challenge

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

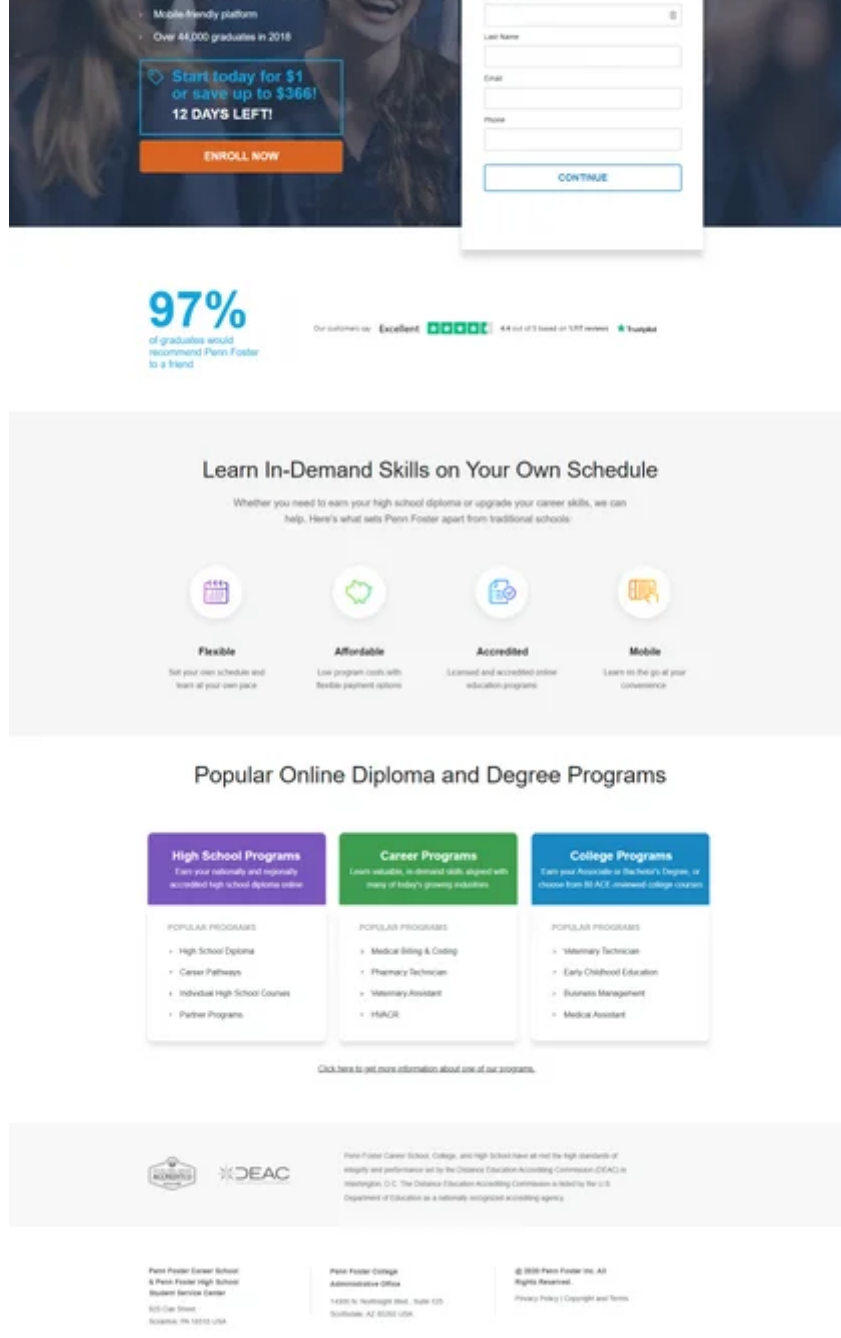
When looking to optimize, the first thing that Penn Foster looks at is performance. The KPIs considered are – click to lead (CTL), click to enroll (CTE), lead to enroll (LTE), and the lifetime value (LTV) of those enrolled. After identifying pages that need improvement, the team at Penn Foster often 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:

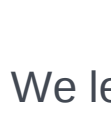


Approximately 35,000 visitors became a part of the test that ran for 24 days, with one variation challenging the control. Traffic was equally split between the two experiences and delivered through the VWO Testing capabilities.

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. The new landing page (the winning variation) now has two clear CTAs (to become a lead or to enroll), and this direction seemed to help users get the information they were looking for. Click to enrollment also increased – highlighting that the majority of brand traffic was either looking to become a lead, and get more information or to straightaway enroll.



Elizabeth Levitan  
Digital Optimization Specialist



*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 easily identify, set up, and run multiple tests at a time. It's helpful for us to be able to set multiple goals for our tests so we can easily track leads and enrolls and VWO allows us to do that seamlessly.



Elizabeth Levitan  
Digital Optimization Specialist



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