



CASE STUDY

Portland Trail Blazers Used A/B Testing To Increase Ticket Sales by 62.9%

62.9% 

REVENUE



INDUSTRY

Sports Brand

LOCATION

Portland, Oregon

CAPABILITIES USED

A/B Testing

About Portland Trail Blazers

The [Portland Trail Blazers](#) are a National Basketball Association (NBA) team. To optimize their conversion funnel and increase ticket sales from their online platform, they hired [Sq1](#), a [Portland-based digital marketing agency](#). Sq1 is a certified VWO partner.

Objective

After analyzing the Trail Blazers' website and the navigation menu, the Sq1 team concluded that there were multiple usability issues that impeded online ticket sales. The navigation was the team's primary focus, as it was present on almost all of the website pages and hence had a wide reach.

This was the original menu design on the page.



Solution

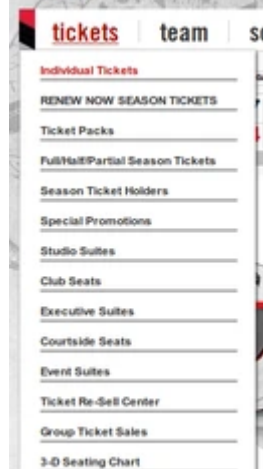
From a usability point of view, the team identified 4 main reasons why they felt that the existing navigation menu design was not effective:

- The horizontal menu was strenuous especially for mobile users, as the entire menu could not be seen at once. Visitors had to scroll to get a complete view of the menu items.
- The semi-transparent background made it harder for visitors to read category items listed on the menu.
- Further, the horizontal layout required visitors to carefully scan the entire menu, both vertically and horizontally, to find what they were looking for. This was simply too much work.
- The menu items were split into 4 columns, and the 4 X 3 grid structure gave visitors the impression that there was some sort of logical organization in the menu when there was none. The menu would, therefore, seem confusing to visitors, especially to the new ones.

Given the high volume of traffic the Trail Blazers website enjoyed, the conversion team knew that even a relatively small lift would have a huge impact on revenue. Therefore, the conversion optimization team took the calculated risk of performing the A/B test right in the middle of the basketball season, when ticket buying was at its highest. They were willing to take the risk, because they believed that they had a robust hypothesis that would be proved by the A/B test.

They hypothesized that redesigning the navigation menu to address the above issues will reduce visitor confusion and, therefore, send more traffic to the Individual Tickets page and increase the average revenue per visitor.

The team redesigned the navigation menu and then tested it site-wide on the [VWO platform](#). The redesigned vertical menu is shown below:



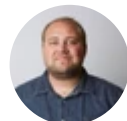
The new menu was easier to read and parse, and helped quickly bring user attention to the Individual Tickets option. As in the original navigation, the Individual Tickets option remained highlighted in red.

Conclusion

The redesigned vertical navigation menu emerged a clear winner over the horizontal design. It increased revenue (and not just click-throughs) by 62.9% vis-a-vis the original.



We feel that the new vertical menu layout performed better because it honed visitors' focus more toward the Individual Tickets option. We knew that most site visitors were interested in single game tickets, and any change to make that process as easy as possible would improve overall performance.



Kaena Miller

AVP

(On behalf of Portland Trail Blazers)



The horizontal menu scattered visitors' attention, taking their focus more easily away from the highlighted Individual Tickets option. In contrast, the vertical menu seemed more structured and kept the focus on the primary highlighted option. Of course, the solid white background of the new menu helped the option highlighted in red stand out more.

Almost 15% of the traffic to the Portland Trail Blazers website originated from tablet devices. The new menu clearly helped this segment.

Bottom line: Visitors were more easily able to find what they were looking for, which most likely increased conversions.

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