

brendly

The enhancement of A/B testing in web design

Cultivating the world with dependable and modern data

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ABSTRACT

This thesis shows the results of how an alternative design can influence online behaviour which is measured by data and tracked through A/B tests.

This research can be used as an example to show customers the value of conducting such an experiment. These experiments can be used by the customer to test price sensitivity or other changes in design. Furthermore, it allows the customer to test additional call to actions without changing the original website. In order to conduct this research, the researcher had to have a certain amount of knowledge about behaviour tracking. Therefore, he acquired this knowledge by following multiple Google Analytics courses.

In the chapter literature review, information about the theoretical backgrounds of the theory and the concepts that are being used in this research. This information is gathered and is being used as preliminary research which has been based on the scope of the research and its methods. By using Brendly's innovative designs they have been able to experience rapid growth over the last few years. However, they have now entered a new segment in web design which is optimisation. Which can take on many forms but the main one is lead/conversion optimisation.

Moreover, after doing the theoretical research we had to investigate our further steps. That why we started to research which elements would be most suited for conversion optimisation and after testing these designs. We found out that companies can indeed influence the behaviour of their traffic by using A/B tests to optimise conversion. By using data from Google Analytics we were able to see which pages and which elements got a lot of traffic attention but were not performing well and where therefore ineffective. By applying this data towards the design in regards towards a call to action we created a new design that had multiple additional calls to actions. By doing this, these additional calls to actions and new designs we were able to boost company's Shifter their conversion with 15% taking into regard that their average total visitors of 3017 a month.

In order to continue this service, the research has set up a step by step plan. In which it is described how this service can be presented towards the customer and how the process of this service will be conducted. By implementing this plan Brendly can assure that the lifetime cycle of their customer has the possibility to be prolonged by using conversion optimisation as an aftersales. This plan can be found in the recommendations chapter.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Etc.- et cetera

E.g. – For example

B2B – Business to Business

B2C- Business to customer

Traffic/visitors – World Wide Web users that visit your website.

A/B test – A design test in which you show your traffic multiple version of your web design in order to reach a certain goal

Cookie(s) – a small amount of data generated by a website and saved by your web browser. Its purpose is to remember information about you.

WooCommerce – An WordPress plugin that let's you sell products and services.

Conversion – An action that's counted when someone interacts with a call to action. i.e. Purchasing a product or filling in an contact form.

Google Analytics – A free web analytics service that provides statistics and basic analytical tools for websites and conversion tracking.

Call to action – an act that encourages people to take a certain action.

1. Introduction

This graduation thesis will research, identify and explain findings based on research conducted. This research will be used as the final product for International Business and Management studies. When the internship ends the findings and discussions are presented towards the coordinators of both the university and the company where the internship has been done.

1.1. Background

The web design industry is one of the fastest growing markets worldwide. This industry has been growing during this last decade (IronPaper, 2017). However, with exponential growth also comes a growth in competitors. In the beginning, web design started off as a way of getting in contact with customer in a more efficient way. However, it has now grown into a vital part of any organisation. Since it has been proven that a dynamic, user friendly website can boost revenue as well as capture the attention of the target group, generate new customers and can lead to a boost in online sales (Trowse, 2017). These boosts can be met by different system and models the most common ones are search engine optimisation, social marketing, Google Analytics, A/B testing, maintenance and the design of the website.

Companies try with search engine optimisation to conquer the top spot in Google based on the certain search words. They have good reasons for doing this since IgniteVisibility one of the best consulting companies in the world (John Lincoln) has conducted a study that showed that the number one position in Google Search will attract 20,5% of total traffic while the sixth position only attracts 6,73% of total traffic (John Lincoln). Knowing this, companies compete to conquer the first five top spots since this attracts a total of 65,15% of total traffic (John Lincoln). Furthermore, search engine optimisation aids companies by increasing their chance of being featured in top search results. In addition, a large number of web designing companies offer online marketing and Google Analytics services to provide the customer with valuable information about how their site traffic behaves and how they could capitalise on this behaviour. Google Analytics can provide valuable reports based on: audience, advertising, traffic sources, content and conversions. The audience reports include:

- Demographics (in terms of the location and browser language setting)
 - Visitor behaviour (for example the number of new and returning visits, and the duration of their page visits)
 - Technology used (for example the browser version, operating system and the network service provider)
 - Mobile (for example the number of visitors via specific phone or other mobile devices), and
 - Visitors' flow (for example the pathways commonly used through the website)
- (University of Warwick, 2012)

Furthermore, an introduction into A/B testing, how it started what is it, how it work, what kind of benefits it can provide and how companies are currently using it. A/B testing was essentially used for direct e-mail marketing campaigns by marketers who unleashed two different versions of a design on the world and analysed which one would get the most conversions. (Nielsen, 2005). However, since the up march of websites and the internet it is now coming to websites to see whether or not designs are effective as well as a measurement tool for online marketing incentives.

Nielsen states that in general A/B testing has four considerable advantages in comparison with other methods.

First of all, it measures actual behaviour of your traffic under real-world conditions. Therefore, you can confidently conclude that if version B sells more than version A, then version B is the design that you should show all traffic.

Secondly, With A/B testing companies can measure very small performance differences with high statistical significance because companies can set a certain percentage for instance 50 percent of total traffic will see the variation. Therefore, the test group is a certain percentage of your traffic.

Secondly, it can resolve conflicts between guidelines and qualitative usability findings by determining which one carries the most weight under the circumstances. For example, if an e-commerce site prominently asks users to enter a discount coupon, user testing shows that people will complain bitterly if they do not have a coupon because they do not want to pay more than other customers. At the same time, coupons are a good marketing tool, and usability for coupon holders is obviously diminished if there is no easy way to enter the code. When e-commerce sites have tried A/B testing with and without coupon entry fields, overall sales typically increase by 20-50% when users were not prompted for a coupon on the primary purchase and checkout path. Thus, the general guideline is to avoid prominent coupon fields. Still, your site might be among the exceptions, where coupons help more than they hurt.

Thirdly, A/B testing is cheap. Once the two designs are made they can simply be uploaded to a server and implement a cookie statement. There is no need for expensive usability specialist or other expensive tools.

Continuing on this, by breaking down what an A/B test is, Sangho Yoon used A/B testing for an experiment at Google. He describes it as a standard method of measuring the effect of changes by randomizing samples into different treatment groups. Randomization is essential to A/B testing because it removes selection bias as well as the potential for confounding factors in assessing treatment effects (Yoon, 2018).

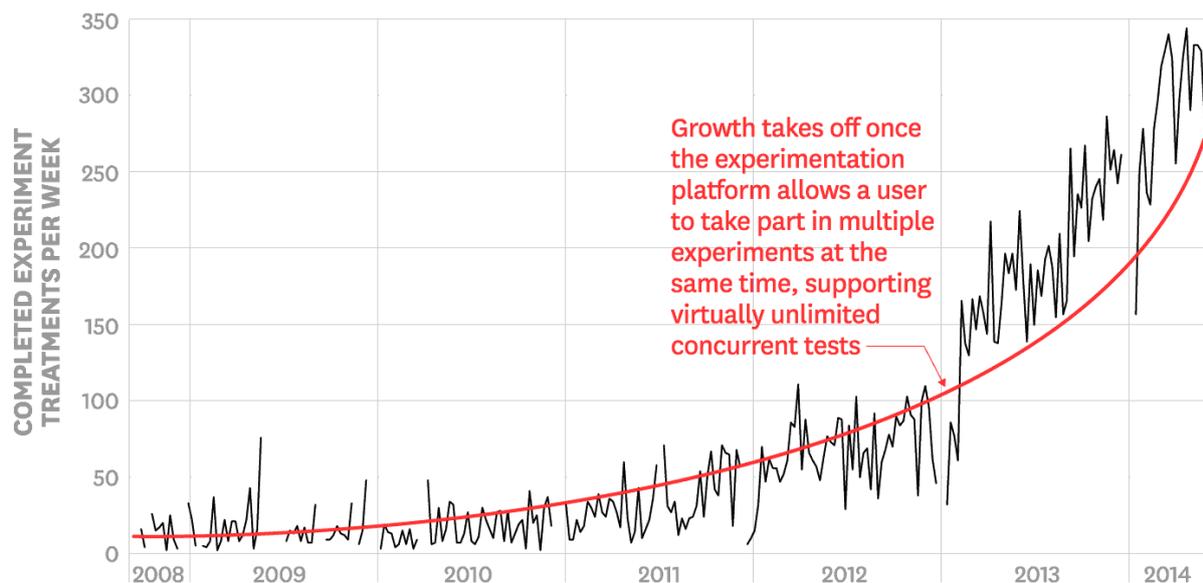
Furthermore, A/B is seen as a standard method of measuring the effect of randomizing samples for different groups. Google used Sangho's A/B experiment to better understand their users and products. They stated that

With A/B testing, it is possible to validate various hypotheses and measure the impact of our product changes, allowing us to make better decisions. Of course, A/B testing is not something new in our field, as it has been adopted by many tech companies. However, due to the large scale and complexity of data, each company tends to develop its own A/B test solution to solve its unique challenges. One particular area involves experiments in marketplaces or social networks where users (or randomized samples) are connected and treatment assignment of one user may influence another users' behaviour. (Yoon, 2018)

To further state the impact A/B tests, Ron Kohavi and Stefan Thomke published an article that shows the surprising power of online experiments. This article showed that an by a simple A/B test regarding the way search engines displayed ad headlines increased revenue by 12% which translates into an increase of more than \$100 million dollar (Kohavi & Thomke, 2017). While the outcomes of A/B testing usually suggest small tweaks to a website it can

have major impact. In addition, another example from Microsoft, in which an A/B test showed that a new tab opens whenever a user clicks on a Hotmail link. Doing this increased the amount of traffic opening Hotmail by 8.9% (Kohavi & Thomke, 2017). In addition, showed that these experiments can guide investment decisions. The figure bellow shows the growth linked towards doing A/B experiments.

The Growth of Experimentation at Bing



FROM "THE SURPRISING POWER OF ONLINE EXPERIMENTS,"
SEPTEMBER–OCTOBER 2017, BY RON KOHAVI AND STEFAN THOMKE

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Figure 1 Growth of experimentation at Bing retrieved from (Kohavi & Thomke, 2017)

Moreover, A/B testing could be seen as an extension of Google Analytics. A/B testing uses Analytics as a base. A/B testing is relative to the industry and is currently used by companies to test target group preferences. In addition, an oversimplified example of this would be to verify if a company's target group prefers a red contact button or a green one. A/B testing shows a certain percentage of the site traffic an alternative version and compares it with the original. Afterwards, results can be compared to see which one was more effective and what kinds of benefits this provided. Brendly's goal is to implement an A/B testing service to increase profitability of each customer but also to give them value information about how their target group responds and how this could be used to improve efficiency, increase traffic as well as, turnover per customer

1.2 Company

The research will be about Brendly, a Dutch website and search engine optimization (SEO) specialist that also provides online marketing services. It is based in Amsterdam and was founded in 2015, by two students. In the following years, they developed their own way of creating websites. The company has currently only one studio and is therefore still in its start-up phase. However, It has already designed and launched websites for brands such as: Gate Group, Bols and the University of Amsterdam (Brendly, 2018). Their average price for a website is around €4000 euro (Brendly, 2018).

Their main target group is set on companies that want: “ Just a good, dynamic and modern website which can easily be found on Google” (Adriani, 2017) which translates to companies who, either want to update their current website or other ones that want to launch a new website. In addition, they also offer aftersales packages such as hosting and maintenance.

The company focusses highly on online marketing strategies and on search engine optimisation. They present themselves as a dynamic, young but professional company which offers the customer a personal account manager which guides them throughout the project. They are mainly found on Google since they end up first when customers are searching on; website maken Amsterdam (Google) which also shows that they mainly focus on Dutch customers living in Amsterdam. Future plans of Brendly consist of, implementing an additional service package. Which consist of A/B testing. In regard to this additional service, their aim is to increase the duration of the client’s project as well as increasing the efficiency of the designed website. Furthermore, their aim with this service is to not only increase their revenue but also to increase customer satisfaction levels.

To give an introduction into neuro-marketing the researcher made this neuro-marketing analysis based on the Brendly website. So that the reader can have a concrete idea of what neuro-marketing consist of and how this can be used to the company’s advantage. This analysis has a core purpose to educate the reader on the abovementioned subjects while also providing Brendly with additional information about their website and how this is perceived. Stated below are commonly influencers in neuro-marketing.

1.2.1. Commonly used neuro-influencers

1. Testimonials
Are used to give evidence of your quality. They are, by definition, more credible than your marketing copy since the language is authentic. (Crestodina)
2. Endorsements and the Halo Effect
 - “If someone with a strong reputation likes your brand, show it. It makes you more credible through association. It is called the “halo effect.” The positive impression the visitor has of them rubs off on you”. (Crestodina)
3. Trust Seals: Certifications, Memberships, and Awards
 - Faces are great. Logos are good too. Industry associations, chambers of commerce, BBB, certifications, and awards are all trust-building credentials. (Crestodina)
 - Trust seals: Are shown by a secure button meaning that the website is secure for attacks from outside or by a certification of excellence.

4. Number of Happy Customers
 - This is usually represented by a portfolio. Which shows a number of different projects the company has done in combination with a quote or a short line of text which
5. “Our Most Popular” Best-Seller

Relates to most popular items, in Brendly’s case this will relate to bigger clients. Since this shows that they have done business with serious customers.

 - Is being stressed by again showing these companies.
6. Studies and Statistics
 - “Numbers sound scientific and build credibility quickly, especially odd numbers. Also, numerals stand out in a line of letters, attracting attention”. (Crestodina)
7. Reviews
 - Star reviews are standard on big E-commerce sites. They show visitors that others like the products and what their general opinion about that product is.
 - Are not visible on the website itself. However, if the customer googles Brendly the Google reviews are shown. This could be a new feature on the website.
8. Which emotions & colours and action.

Colours are known to trigger certain kind of emotions, many brands implement colours in their logo or brand that they want to be affiliated with. Brendly uses a lot of bright colours on their website so that it fits into the warm and optimistic category.

The home page of Brendly offers two main action points.

As the reader can see from their homepage they implement warm colours in order to create a warm dynamic, casual atmosphere (Adriani, 2017). The colour wheel which is stated below will give the reader more information about, how colour can set a certain atmosphere.



Colour wheel figure 2 (designeruk, 2017)

1.3. Literature Review

Literature research is done by the research to see whether or not there have been earlier studies regarding his research question. As well as to provide useful models that help by answering the research question. This is a reliable way to see if there is preliminary information available about the research question. Furthermore, literature research is a good way to structure a research it is theoretical underpinning. For orientation purposes, the problem statement within a plan of approach can be used to get more insight into the causes and consequences of the relevant problem. Furthermore, reviewing literature can support a research by making it easier to answer comparable questions. The following paragraphs describe variables that can be used to answer the research question and sub-questions.

1.3.1. Customer decision-making process

The customer decision-making process is a complex process which involves all stages that a customer goes through when purchasing a product. These stages vary from problem recognition to post-purchase activities (Dudovskiy, 2013). All customers have their own needs in their daily lives and for these needs, they have to make decisions. These decisions can get complex based on the customer's opinion about the product. Therefore, knowledge and appreciating the core issue in this process can greatly benefit companies. Dudovskiy argues that although multiple academic types of research have developed their own theories and models over time. The core concept is still the same, they all lead to almost the same theory which states that there are five stages in the decision-making process.

1. Need recognition; Imbalance between actual and desired needs.
2. Information search; Data about the product is collected to find the best fitting.
3. Evaluation of alternatives; Customer considers the relative importance of each aspect the product is offering.
4. Purchasing; Purchase is made
5. Post purchasing satisfaction. Dissatisfaction; Consists of the doubt whether the customer bought the right product.

Problem/Need Recognition

The first stage is recognition of a problem or need. According to Bruner the recognition of a problem arises when an individual realises actual state and desired state of affairs. The human need has no limit according to the Maslow theory therefore, the need recognition state is a repeating itself. (Bruner & Pomazal, 1998)

Information search

The next stage within the customer decision-making process is information search. Dudovskiy states that once the customer recognises the need. They are likely to search for additional information about that product, whether that be online or within their own social circle by asking feedback from others. (Oliver, 2011) states that the information search process is divided into two parts.

Internal search the customer compares possible alternatives from their own experience and knowledge in example. "searching for fast food can be an example for internal search because customers often use their knowledge and tastes to choose the right product they need rather than asking someone for an advice" (Dudovskiy, 2013).

External search could be seen as searching for information or reviews on the internet. But also, another important source of external information is the influence of family and friends and their experience with the product.

Evaluation of alternatives

Subsequently to the search for information is the evaluation of alternatives stage which is the first stage, that the customers compare and evaluates their collected information in order to make a valid choice. Furthermore, in this stage the customer will analyse all the data that has been found as well as other aspects such as size, quality and brand. This stage could be considered as one if not the most important stage within the decision-making process. Usually, if the customer has limited time to properly conduct an evaluation of alternatives they will shift towards the assessing of reviews.

Purchase decision

Once all the information has been found and the customer has evaluated his options they will move on to the purchase decision. During this stage the customer will decide whether or not a purchase is made.

Post-purchase evaluation

At the final stage of the customer decision-making process the post-purchase evaluation is done. This stage can be the most important one as since it immediately impacts future decisions making processes for the same product (Dudovskiy, 2013). According to Brink and Berndt the customer may get satisfaction or dissatisfaction according to its evaluation of the whole purchase process as well as, their own expectations. To put it bluntly, if the customer is satisfied with the purchase process they will likely repeat that purchase whereas if the overall experience was perceived negatively the customer will likely not repeat their purchase. (Brink, 2009)

1.3.2. AIDA Model

The AIDA model is used by companies to determine how they can capture their potential client's attention and therefore establish the opportunity to create a need. The AIDA model breaks these four steps down into:

1. Awareness: How can the company or product capture the awareness of the customer. Which marketing tools will be used?
2. Interest: How can a company gain a customer's interest? How can the company make information about the product available?
3. Desire: What makes the product desirable? What are its USP (Unique Selling Points)
4. Action: What is the call to actions and where will this be the most effective?
(Hanlon, 2013)

Rawal Priyanka adds to this:

Attention: The first thing your ad copy needs to do is grab the viewer's attention. If one does not get the attention of their customer immediately. Companies can achieve this with by using commercials that have a high appeal. There is no point in starting your ad with your logo and your name since the chances are high that that will not capture any attention from the customer. Many brands make use of highly popular celebrities in their commercial. In developing an advertising program, marketing managers should always start by identifying the targeted audience and its reasons to purchase a specific product or service. (Priyanka)

Interest: Once a company has captured the attention of the customer attention, companies need to create a feature that captures the interest of the customer regarding their product or service. Once captured the customers interest, companies should focus on the usage of emotions to address the fact that this purchase is a good bargain, the right step and a sound decision. In addition, it is necessary to let the customer know what will happen if he/she does not buy our product or service

Desire: There is a huge difference between being interested in something and desiring it. Commercials need to convert the customers interest into a strong desire for what kind of products the company is offering. A television ad must create a strong motivation and generate a need for buying the product even if need is not there. This can happen only if the ad has used the correct appeal in the advertisement. (Priyanka)

Action: When a brand promotes its image through an ad advertiser should ensure they are able to convince their customers to make a final buy or be inquisitive to know more about the product/brand. An advertisement can be ever attractive and customer focused as can be but, if there is no strong positioning in the minds of the customer the companies branding will be lost. An ad will be an able to create a strong impact only if it is able to highlight the benefits its target market will get with using the product. (Priyanka)

1.3.2.1 Linkage between models 13.1.-1.3.2

The decision-making process will give an in-depth view in the relevant steps that a customer takes before making a purchase, in addition, the AIDA model determines how companies can capture the attention of a customer while he/she is moving between steps. Knowing these factors means that they know how to influence the customer during the decision-making process.

1.3.3 Romano's Neuropyramid

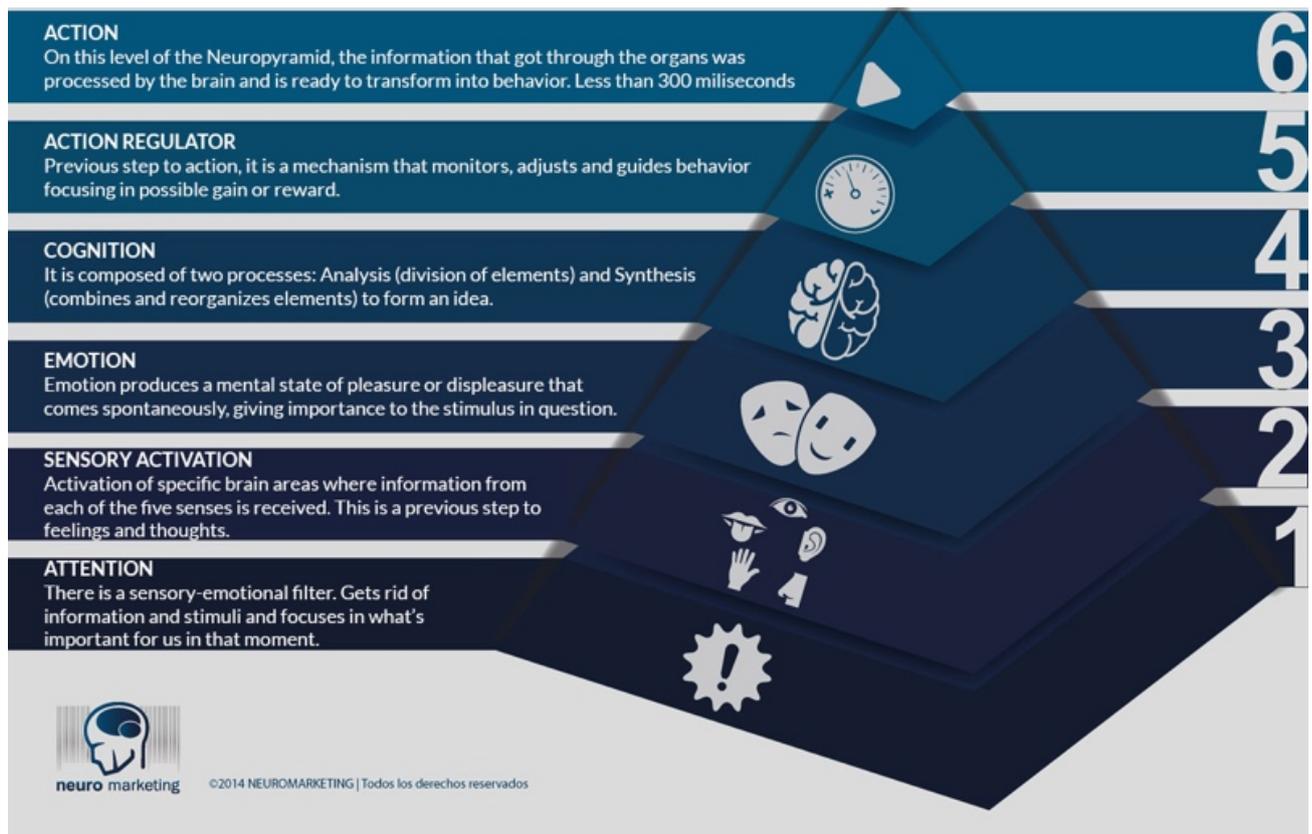


Figure 4 Neuropyramid (Neuro marketing, 2018)

Romano's Neuropyramid is an innovative and cutting-edge model that explains the sequence of mental events that take place since our organism receives a stimulus through our senses organs until they become an action in example. buying behaviour, going through multiple processes until this stage is reached.

To continue on this the term neuro-marketing is generally referred to the usage of modern brain sciences to measure the impact of marketing and advertising on the behaviour of customers. Neuro-marketing techniques are usually based on researched scientific principles how people think and make their decisions, it also involves processions in our conscious mind that one is not fully aware off. In addition, these new experimental techniques provide new insights into customer decisions and the way they rationalise their actions.

Stephen J. Genco, Andrew P. Pohlmann and Peter Steidl state that neuro-marketing is being used in the following branches. Branding: Brands are ideas in the mind that draw strength from the connections they make. Neuro-marketing provides powerful techniques for measuring brand associations. Advertising effectiveness: Much advertising impacts us through non-conscious means, even though one does not think it does. Neuro-marketing explains how. Shopper decision-making: Neuro-marketing shows how store environments directly influence how shoppers decide and buy, and it is not a logical process. Online experiences: The online world provides new challenges to our old brains. Brain science shows the many ways individuals can be subtly influenced as they go about our online activities. They furthermore also state that

Neuro-marketing uses a variety of tools and techniques to measure customer responses and behaviour. These include everything from relatively simple and inexpensive approaches, such as eye tracking (measuring eye gaze patterns), analysing facial expressions, and behavioural experiments (for example, seeing how changes in product displays affect a customer's choices. (Genco, Pohlmann, & Steidl, 2013)

1.3.3.1 Relevance of the Neuropyramid

Neuro-marketing model needs to be investigated in order to give more in-depth information about which factors relate to neuro-marketing and how the actions described in the neuropyramid should be structured. Furthermore, by implementing this model into a website it should have as a result that the whole website will be more credible but also increase the creditability of the company's product. Moreover, this model is also relevant when confronting the customer with any problem that might occur during the need assessment. Moreover, redefining neuro-marketing gives a broad overview of how neuro-marketing can be implemented.

1.3.5. Google Analytics

In 2005, Google launched the Google Analytics platform. This uses JavaScript tags to log page requests with Google that can be accessed as online reports through the Google Analytics website. Google Analytics gives companies the opportunity to track how their site traffic behaves. Furthermore, it can be used for commercial online commerce. It can be beneficial through identifying the impact of web design and marketing initiatives for online sales or other KSF. (University of Warwick, 2012)

Google Analytics, for example, currently presents reports based on: audience, advertising, traffic sources, content and conversions. The audience reports include:

- Demographics (in terms of the location and browser language setting),
- Visitor behaviour (in example the number of new and returning visits, and the duration of their page visits),
- Technology used (in example the browser version, operating system and the network service provider),
- Mobile (in example the number of visitors via specific phone or other mobile devices), and
- Visitors' flow (in example the pathways commonly used through the website).

(University of Warwick, 2012)

1.3.5.1 Relativity of Google Analytics.

The reports on advertising can be used to describe access associated with AdWords. Traffic source reports identify the source and frequency of referral links from other websites, access via search engines including the search terms used, and the number of visitors accessing the website directly by entering the web address. The content reports identify the relative popularity of pages within the website. Finally, the conversions reports can be used to help indicate the performance of the website with regard e-commerce (University of Warwick, 2012). Overall Google Analytics reports can be used to draw up conclusions about: relativity of a website regarding its target group, the performance of the website, effectiveness of the website and furthermore, see which pages are the most interesting for the customer. In addition, companies can see the bounce rate (customer who do not perform any action on a website), having a high bounce rate on a home page might suggest that either: the homepage is not relevant to the target group, the customer might not be able to find what their looking for or that a page is not working correctly. To further show that the researcher is capable of analysing, processing and gathering data within Google Analytics. He will follow an

extensive course that Google provides regarding Google Analytics, which provides certificates when the participant achieves above an 80% average on the multiple tests and assignments that they provide. The beginner course, as well as the advanced course, are already achieved and the certificates for this can be found in the appendixes under the name; Google Analytics certificate beginner course & Advanced Google Analytics course.

1.3.6 Literature review conclusion

The models that are being used in the Literature Review present how clients can make use of A/B testing and implement that in the way customers make their decisions when buying a product. Furthermore, analysing these models and applying them on the problem would help to create a complete image of what A/B testing can do for a company as well as determine which factors are important when testing A/B services. In addition, these model make it possible to give a distinctive overview of what neuro-marketing and A/B testing have in common and how the synergy between these can be capitalised. In addition, the outcome of these analysing and using these model will prove the necessary tools to solve Brendly's problem.

1.4. Problem Analysis

One of the most difficult challenges that Brendly is facing is that of converting the customer's vision and needs into a concrete website. The core product that they are offering is design however, a design is about problem-solving. Most customers that want to remodel their current website or want a new website altogether. They usually get inspiration for the competition and have little to no regards towards their own clients or the solutions that they can offer (Adriani, 2017). Everything that is done in web designing starts with the customer. The client, together with Brendly's experts will brainstorm to formulate the client's wishes. However, they apply their expertise and experience to create a realistic and feasible concept. This is discussed with the client and if he/she has any issue with the concept it will be changed to customers liking. Moreover, they now want to implement an additional product/service called A/B testing. A/B testing is a method of comparing two versions of a webpage or app against each other to determine which performs best.

However, a large sum of companies including Brendly, do not know how traffic behaves on their website. Therefore, online marketing efforts to in example an online marketing campaign to boost conversions can only see the difference in conversions and profit made but cannot identify on which page the customer loses interest or which pages are securing a conversion. In addition, if companies want to see if this could be optimized in order to make online marketing or further investments in their website more resourceful they currently have no way of gathering this information. Moreover, if one was able to gather this information they could use this to adept their website based on their targets group preferences. Making marketing efforts and further investments into the website more efficient and productive since these can then be adjusted to meet customer demands and preferences. Brendly has recognised this and wants to use this information to set up an A/B testing service. To further satisfy customer demands but also to see if their own marketing investments can be made to fit their target group. By doing this Brendly as well as other companies who will make use of this service will be able to make their online efforts fit to their target group needs.

This need, for an additional service, comes forth from the fact that many customers want to know whether or not their website actually works. Furthermore, by implementing an A/B testing service the client receives in-depth information about what appeals to their customers

and what does not appeal to their customers. Moreover, clients can capitalise on the collected data by adapting towards the results of it, an oversimplified example of this would be changing the button from red to green doing this might increase product sales. A/B testing will not only prolong the time of a project (client lifecycle) but will also give the client an in-depth view of what works for his target group and what does not work for their target group. Furthermore, by increasing a client's lifecycle an additional source of revenue will be created, by charging for implementing an A/B testing method on the client's website. In addition, it will give Brendly the opportunity to increase its worked hours on a project and will, therefore, be able to increase its amount of billable worked hours on a project.

To conclude, problems regarding A/B testing can be assigned to, the clients need to be convinced that A/B testing is worth the cost and effort. Since it allows Brendly's customers to further understand and identify their customer's actual preferences. Not recognising these opportunities might create problems regarding the effectiveness of the website, conversion rate as well as the client's satisfaction with the website. In addition, Saleh 2015 investigated the importance of client's satisfaction in regards to website reviews. He found out that online reviews are becoming important in the customer buying behaviour a study done by Khalid Saleh shows that 90% of the interviewees said that they saw an online review as just as important as a personal recommendation. In addition, 92% of the interviewed population said that they will use a local business if it has at least a 4-star rating. Furthermore, 72% of this group said they will act when reading a positive review (Saleh, 2015)

1.5. Problem Statement

Brendly is currently enjoying a fast growth and they recognised the need to implement an additional service. Which would aid in optimizing websites, this could be used for Brendly's website to generate additional leads but also to offer customers as an additional feature of their website. Moreover, gathering information about behaviour of their target group on their website as well as the possibility to test customer's preferences to enhance customer experience. Furthermore, by implementing an additional service there which would be delivered in the last phase of the project would prolong customer lifecycle as well as customer lifetime value. So in short, the goal of implementing this additional service would be to increase the revenue per customer as well as to perpetuate the lifetime of a client while providing the customer with additional information about their target group and their behaviour.

Supplementary, adding value to not only the delivered work but furthermore, increase billable hours making it A/B testing not only beneficial for the customer but additionally further increase their revenue per client.

1.6. Research question

How can Brendly enhance online conversions of Dutch B2B and B2C websites by influencing the decision-making process of their visitors through A/B testing?

Further elaboration on the sub question can be found in paragraph 1.8. Also additional information about the main research question can be found in chapter 2.

Scope

- Country range group: Netherlands
- Existing and new clients

1.6.1. Sub-questions

1. How can A/B testing aid online marketing from B2C companies?

By doing A/B tests Brendly will be able to see the preferences of a specific target group by defining these preferences into more detail clients and Brendly will be able to act on these preferences in regard towards their marketing efforts. Since these tests can be collected through data that offers a more in-depth view of the behaviour of traffic. Marketing effort could be made to associate with the target group and their preferences. However, will this make marketing efforts more resourceful and if so in what way? Researching this question will give us a further understanding of the inclinations of customers. Moreover, this sub-question focusses on B2C customers in order to understand the way B2C traffic behaves while visiting a website. Furthermore, by collecting this data online marketing campaigns can be adjusted to meet B2C visitor's preferences and therefore increase user-friendliness. Which can be essential for the visitor, to assess whether or not a website is trustworthy (Seckler, Heinz, Forde, Tuch, & Opwis)

2. How can A/B testing aid online marketing from B2B companies?

By doing A/B tests Brendly will be able to see the preferences of a specific target group by defining these preferences into more detail clients and Brendly will be able to act on these preferences in regard towards their marketing efforts. Since these tests can be through collecting data that offers a more in-depth view of the behaviour of traffic. Marketing effort could be made to associate with the target group. However, will this make marketing efforts more resourceful and if so in what way? Researching this question will give us a further understanding of the inclinations of customers. Moreover, this sub-question focusses on B2B customers in order to understand the way B2B traffic behaves while visiting a website. Furthermore, by collecting this data online marketing campaigns can be adjusted to meet B2B visitor's preferences and therefore increase user-friendliness. Which can be essential for the visitor, to assess whether or not a website is trustworthy (Seckler, Heinz, Forde, Tuch, & Opwis)

3. How can A/B testing affect the decision-making process of website traffic?

How can the gathered information from A/B tests be used in decision-making processes? A/B testing provides detailed data about a company's target group. Information gathered from this reveals that there is a more efficient way of communicating your products or services towards your target group. In addition, we could use the results of this as a neuro-marketing influencer, by collecting information about how A/B test has impacted the company we could state social proof to show potential clients how A/B tests can influence a company's performance.

4. How much is the information that A/B testing provides worth?

How much is the information that is being collected by A/B testing worth? Considering that this would be an additional service and therefore, Brendly has to put a price on this service. This could be based on hours worked as well as, how large the A/B test should be but also, the place where the A/B test should be implemented in example a contact page or the first page a customer sees. Furthermore, in this branch information is valuable, if a company can prove with data collection and a hard number that change to their website especially if they are a web shop this could drastically change the performance of the website and therefore, the company.

4.1 How much is the customer's ROI when investing in A/B testing?

Furthermore, going into the neuro-marketing aspects of building websites, stating hard numbers about the benefits and results from a service or products has shown that it will capture the customer's attention. By researching this Brendly will be able to put success stories and benefits that arrived from the additional service to boost its demand (Breiter, Block, Blood, Calder, Lee, & Livengood, 2015).

1.7. Research aim and objectives

The aim of this research is to research how A/B tests can make websites more target group specific to fully satisfy their preferences and implement a feasible additional A/B testing service which provides Brendly's customers with valuable information that can be used for neuro-marketing. Furthermore, the service should benefit Brendly's customer as well as their own self-interest.

Objective 1: To examine if marketing efforts can be made more resourceful by using A/B tests.

Objective 2: To examine what the benefits of offering A/B service would mean for Brendly and their customers.

Objective 2.1: To assess the worth of A/B tests.

Objective 2.2: How much the customer's ROI is when investing in an A/B test.

Objective 3: To examine what kind of information A/B tests can provide in regard towards target groups.

Objective 3.1: How this additional information can be used to influence the customer's decision-making process.

1.8. Environmental and ethical aspects

Ethical aspects regarding A/B testing. Needs to be in consideration of the user, all the participants of the A/B testing should be informed that they take part in an experiment. The participants are notified with a cookie notification stating that they accept the terms. Furthermore, the depth in which A/B testing is done, in regard towards personal information such as any of the customer behaviour factors should be anonymous so that personal information cannot be linked to an individual. Furthermore, any personal information that is stated in the briefing will be made anonymous so that any personal information will be protected to safeguard the client's personal rights.

1.9. Reading Guide

This reading guide will serve as a basis for the reader of this research and gives an overview of the upcoming chapter and their purpose for the investigation.

The research starts with the research method and therefore, the research design. Here, the design of the research will be discussed and explained. Furthermore, the research units who will be analysed are explained and their construct is presented. Furthermore, the five sub-questions are explained and defined. Their research approach is defined and explained. Moreover, information about the data collection method is given. Also, it is stated which tools are being used in order to acquire data. Finally, declarations about the validity and reliability of the data are made in order to show the of this research

Moreover, the operationalization table is shown and information regarding the ethical background of the investigation is given. Also, it is stated which data collection method is used and how the acquired data is analysed. As the last step in this chapter, declarations about the validity and reliability of the data are made.

In the following chapter, the researcher presents the collected data. During this chapter, the stunning result will be shown and more in-depth information about the research will be given.

The next chapter will be concerned with discussions. In this chapter, an analysis of the research outcome will be conducted. Furthermore, the researcher points out the pro's and con's from this research. Moreover, the research limitations and possible further opportunities will be discussed.

After this, a conclusion about the research sub-questions and main question will be given in the chapter conclusion. In this conclusion, relevant information is given to answer these questions. This conclusion will form the foundation to formulate the final recommendations for Brendly. The recommendations chapter will provide recommendations for the A/B test service but also a step to step plan which Brendly can use when implementing this service.

Finally, at the end of the research paper, appendices are shown.

2 Research method

The Methods chapter contains information about how the data and information that is required for the research will be gathered. This is necessary in order to answer the sub-questions stated in the previous chapter. These sub-questions have to be answered in order to provide the answer to the main question of the thesis. The main question for this particular research is: How can Brendly enhance online marketing results of Dutch B2B and B2C companies by influencing the decision-making process of their online traffic through A/B testing?

2.1. Research Design

The research will be exploratory. Information about the current processes is necessary to advise the company which tool will be most efficient. Furthermore, extended in-depth desk research will be applied as well as an additional small amount of supportive field research to conclude sub-question 2. The rest of these questions are based on a mix of desk research as well as field research since the latter of these sub-questions have to include client input. Moreover, this input can be collected by observations and briefings with clients. A substantial amount of observations should be done to have a reliable source of information. The saturated amount of observations will be around 20. Besides this, a briefing will be added to give a summary of what has been discussed during client meetings this will allow to the reader to get an in-depth look into the process of how Brendly identifies the need of a client. However, the client's name and company name will be unanimous, this to protect the client's personal information as well as, possible sensitive company information. Clients information will be stated in the briefing as in example Company A, Mr/Ms J.S in addition, the briefing will include a small summary of what that core business of that specific company is doing. In example Company B their core business consists of search engine optimization while also providing online marketing services. It is based in Amsterdam and was founded in 2015. Moreover, an example of one of these briefings is stated in the appendixes under the name; briefing one company A. Furthermore, Google Analytics will be used to analyse customer behaviour on sites, in order to determine improvement areas within the website. In addition, this information allows us to draw up a conclusion about: whether or not A/B testing will be beneficial.

2.2 Research Methods for sub-questions

In order to make sure that the correct information is gathered, a brief research approach has been conducted for every sub question. In this way. The description says something about the method on how the information is gathered.

2.2.1. How can A/B testing aid online marketing from B2C companies?

Research approach

For this sub-question, it is expected that there will be a concrete outcome. This means that the question will be will consist of recommendations and possible solutions. In order to make the outcome of this sub-question valid the information will be gathered in different ways. First of all, desk research will be done in order to analyse the website by using Google Analytics in order to track, identify and eventually converted data into actual results by using specific filters. This information will be shared with the in-company mentor to make sure that the data is valid. In addition, to that the gathered information will be looked over critically in order to detect possible weaknesses in the website. These weaknesses will be addressed in client meetings and suggestions will be made to create an A/B test to test if these weaknesses can be turned into strengths. Furthermore, an additional design will be made. After that the additional design will be shown to 50% of the traffic. The results of this will be processed and depending on the

outcome suggestions for online marketing will be drawn up. The motivation for researching this to see what A/B testing can do for online marketing within the B2C market and to see if adaptation that come out of A/B testing will impact the company in a positive way.

Data Collection

The sub-question indicated will be investigated mainly by using a combination of quantitative as well as qualitative data. In addition, data will be assessed by pairing it to actual results of the designs. Furthermore, session will be held internally to assess changes regarding the design. Afterwards marketing efforts will be compared with actual results to assess whether or not the alternated component will be more effective in regard towards the company's marketing goal. The data collection will be from customers who focus on the business to customer market.

2.2.2 How can A/B testing aid online marketing from B2B companies?

Research Approach

For this sub-question, it is expected that there will be a concrete outcome. This means that the question will be will consist of recommendations and possible solutions. In order to make the outcome of this sub-question valid the information will be gathered in different ways. First of all, desk research will be done in order to analyse the website by using Google Analytics this information will be shared with the in-company mentor to make sure that the data is valid. In addition, to that the gathered information will be looked over critically in order to detect possible weaknesses in the website. These weaknesses will be addressed in client meetings and suggestions will be made to create an A/B test to test if these weaknesses can be turned into strengths. Furthermore, an additional design will be made. After that the additional design will be shown to 50% of the traffic. The results of this will be processed and depending on the outcome suggestions for online marketing will be drawn up.

Data Collection

For this sub-question, it is expected that there will be a concrete outcome. This means that the question will be will consist of recommendations and possible solutions. In order to make the outcome of this sub-question valid the information will be gathered in different ways. First of all, desk research will be done in order to analyse the website by using Google Analytics in order to track, identify and eventually converted data into actual results by using specific filters. Secondly, the information will be shared with the in-company mentor to make sure that the data is valid. In addition, to that the gathered information will be looked over critically in order to detect possible weaknesses in the website. These weaknesses will be addressed in client meetings and suggestions will be made to create an A/B test to test if these weaknesses can be turned into strengths. Furthermore, an additional design will be made. After that the additional design will be shown to 50% of the traffic. The results of this will be processed and depending on the outcome suggestions for online marketing will be drawn up. The motivation for researching this to see what A/B testing can do for online marketing within the B2C market and to see if adaptation that come out of A/B testing will impact the company in a positive way. Furthermore, to see if there is an explicit difference between online marketing for B2B companies and B2C markets, by research both markets a summary of differences and similarities can be drawn up to aid future project from Brendly.

2.2.3 How can A/B testing affect the decision-making process of website traffic?

Research Approach

This sub-question will be researched by quantitative and qualitative research. It is used to determine how the result of A/B testing can be used to influence the purchasing decision on websites as well as alternating the eye movement of the customer when on websites. Therefore, it creates the opportunity for the designated company to alternate the ‘route’ that customers take when scrolling through a website. In addition, this can result in an improved conversion rate and thus (usually) increasing sales (Holmqvist, Nyström, Andersson, Dewhurst, Jarodzka, & Weijer, 2010). Furthermore, the reason or motivation for conducting this research is in order to see how the information that A/B testing provides can be used. In addition, the outcome of this research question will determine if A/B testing has the possibility to alternate the customers decision-making process this will be shown by comparison between; before A/B effectiveness of the website and after A/B testing.

Data Collection

The majority of this information will be gathered through desk research, namely by investigating Google Analytics data to see how current traffic is behaving. Furthermore, through meetings, brainstorm session with clients from Brendly and data analysis from Google Analytics weak point in the website will be exposed and will be subjugated to A/B tests. After a set amount of time data form, the A/B test will be large enough to analyse and to draw up a conclusion. Effective showing whether or not the adaptation to the website has influenced the effectiveness of the website regarding the goal of that specific company.

2.2.4 How much is the information that A/B testing provides worth?

Research Approach

In order to put a price on A/B testing services, it is necessary to investigate how much time goes into an A/B test and what the general value is of the information that comes out of A/B tests. The reason for investigating is that Brendly finds the optimal point of value for your money in which both parties gain. Furthermore, a value proposition will be set up.

Data Collection

The designated sub-question will investigate the value of the information that comes out of an A/B test. This is necessary in order to establish a base price for the service (hours worked x worth of information) so that Brendly can make this service billable. Furthermore, the worth of information will be assessed by certain factors such as; usability, effectiveness, freedom from risk, context coverage. Freedom from risk can be translated in: ‘Freedom from risk is the degree to which the information product “mitigates the potential risk to economic status” (Top, 2015). The motivation for doing this additional question is mainly because we need to know on what we base our worth besides worked hours so that if the client asks on which we base the price for an A/B test we can show them proof that this has been researched properly and, therefore, can show him/her on what the billable work is based. Further criteria for assessing the worth of information will be used.

(Top, 2015) Table 1 Criteria for assessing the worth of information

| Criteria | Description |
|---------------|--|
| Effectiveness | The contribution of the information to the goals of the information and the organisation |
| Efficiency | The efficiency in using the information |

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Information context coverage | The degree in which the information product can be used in different contexts and multiple times |
| Freedom from Risks | The degree in which the information can mitigate potential risk |
| Satisfaction | The degree in which users are satisfied with the information(sub-criteria) |
| Attractiveness | The capability of the information product to be attractive to the user |
| Learnability | The capability of the information product to enable the user to learn its use |
| Maintainability | The information should easily maintainable |
| Operability | The capability of the information product to enable the user to operate and control it |
| Understand ability | The capability of the information product to enable the user to understand whether the information is suitable, and how it can be used for particular tasks and conditions of use. |

2.2.5. How much is the customer's ROI when investing in A/B testing?

Research Approach

In order to see if the customer also has benefit from this service. It is essential to know what the customers return on investment is when investing in such a service. The answer to this question will be variable between customers, some might value conversions more while other will value amounts of newsletters signups. Therefore, this question will state different goals, the percentage of increase that they would like to see and the actual outcome. When the goal of the customer will be aimed at conversion additional information will be asked in regard to the increase or decrease in sales.

Data Collection

This sub-question will be researched by desk research and quantitative and qualitative data. By using Google Analytics one will get more in-depth information about how traffic behaves on the particular website furthermore, observations and meetings will be done with customers who have requested an A/B test in order to collect data about whether or not the goal of the customer is reached and in what way the A/B test has impacted the website.

2.3 Research Units

Research units are the units that this research is going to analyse, whether that be persons, services or situations that will be a part of the research. For this research there are multiple research units, first of all, one of the main research units will be internal sources within the company. These sources are mainly drawn from the in company mentor and will provide a vital gathering of information in regards to the research.

Furthermore, another main source of information will be gathered from Google Analytics. This provides highly reliable information based on real time events and shows actual customer behaviour. This information will therefore, be collected through desk research.

For this study we will make use of existing and new clients. Which are also part of my daily working tasks. In addition, existing and new customers will also be a viable part of this research.

Since they form an essential part of whether or not Brendly can conduct A/B tests. Furthermore, they are needed to assess A/B information.

Overall, the research will contain; desk research, qualitative research as well as, quantitative. Furthermore, parts of the research will be conducted by meetings, internal discussions and observations. As well as, hard data driven data which has an almost fail proof system which translates into data being almost a 100% reliable.

To add to this Verhoeven describes quantitative methods as methods whereas, there is almost no numerical data collected but rather were interviews, observations and video's are being collected and described (Verhoeven, 2011). So in fact, data collection tells how the research wants to collect his data for this thesis the researcher chose to collect his data by; desk research, observations, the usage of Google Analytics and internal discussions as well as qualitative research. In addition, desk research is done literally from the desk of the intern. This means the researcher uses online information and data that is collected from within the company's online archive. For this study we will make usage of Verhoeven characterises case studies as research that is being collected within an organisation or group (Verhoeven, 2011). In addition, data collection in the form of case studies usually involves observations. Case studies are used when the research wants to investigate the experience that their population has regarding his research question. This is exactly what is being used in Brendly to determine whether or not clients find the concept of A/B testing pleasant

2.4 Data collection

2.4.1. Customers

Customers are the most important element of this research therefore, it is essential to obtain information about their decision-making criteria and their purchasing behaviour. However, there needs to be a differentiation between the different kinds of services that Brendly offers.

The most efficient way to reach a large number of people is through observations and doing interviews which could be seen as need assessments. We can make a distinction here between people who already used one of Brendly's services and those that are currently using one of the firm's services. Luckily all customer data is saved, and it will, therefore, be quite easy to reach already existing clients. However, new clients will be researched by need assessments which will give more insight into what the customer wants and therefore, more relevant information regarding the kind of service that they are interested in. The amount of new customers that will be assessed is hard to estimate, however, we can look at the average customer per month and take that as the minimum.

2.5 Data analysis

Quantitative data analyses is a process that knows multiple steps. How data will be collected has been discussed in the previous chapter. This has also been done for every sub-question.

2.6 Operationalization

where you operationalise the concepts with dimensions and possible sub-dimensions into items; these items represent the questions in your questionnaire or interview)

2.7 Reliability & Validity

Validity of the research is in which amount random measurement errors occur within a research. Measurement errors are also called standard deviation error. (Verhoeven, 2011). In addition, the more coincidence there is within a research the smaller the chance that a duplicate of the relevant research will give the same results. Verhoeven discusses two parts which should include regarding the validity of a research which are; data collection and in the data analysis.

Validity of data collection

Verhoeven describes that the most effective way of doing an interview is to set up a pilot interview which can be seen as a test interview. During a qualitative research an pilot interview can make sure that the reliability will increase. During this research, the research will not conduct a pilot interview but will use observations during client brainstorm sessions as the point of reference. Since each client need is different and therefore, a pilot interview will not be effective since this will only be relevant to one customer and not the rest of the lead pool.

2.8 Limitations

This research focusses on Brendly which is a start-up based in Amsterdam. Although some other references are being used, the main target is to set up a new service which will prolong the lifetime of a customer and add additional value to their website as well as the target audience and desired business goals. Therefore, the outcome of this research is applicable for Brendly only. Even though others in the industry can set up an A/B test service it is the way that this is carried out that will be essential for its success.

In addition, this research has a limited timeframe from February 5th until July 5th. This investigation has been carried out as precise and extensive as possible. The research has, therefore, been carried out in a time period of 5 months and is due to that also limited by the amount of time. While using Google Analytics and the actual number of site visitors is a detailed and extremely reliable tool you can only acquire data from one that actually visits the website or one that converts (since conversion buttons are traceable)

3. Results

In this chapter, the significant results are shown. Results, that give a view into the power of A/B testing. Since there were different target audiences for the executed A/B tests the researcher has broken them down into segments, business to business and business to customer. In addition, the A/B tests are explained in terms of; what was tested, how it was tested, what the size of the group was and of course the outcome of this test. Did it have any additional value for the customer? In addition to this, the sub-question will be answered based on the collected data.

3.1 A/B testing in B2C companies

In order to test whether or not it was possible to influence the behaviour on websites. There was a clear distinction made between two target groups these were divided into two sections. B2C and B2B in order to see if this had any influence on our suspicions. The company, however, wants to remain anonymous but in order to make it easy, this company will be company X. Company X makes printed matter. These cards range from birthday cards to invitations to a wedding. They have a wide range of different materials and design from which customer can choose. However, they wanted to see if they could increase their conversion rate by applying additional conversion buttons and add a tool to their portfolio which would show the price for a certain portfolio item. i.e. the portfolio would show recent work for that they had done for a wedding. This tool would show which materials were used and what the price per card was. Next to it would be a conversion button with “Contact us” or “Order yours here”

In addition, to implementing this portfolio the research also demanded that additional call to actions on all the portfolio item were implemented. This ensured that visitors could be tracked conversion per portfolio item as well as overall conversion rate.

During the time that their A/B test ran **2985** unique visitors have visited the variation so version B. Furthermore, the page had **4359** visitors in total. This also counts in returning visitors and is therefore not being taken into account during this research. From these unique visitors, **1411** converted. The month before implementing the A/B test company X had **1677** conversion (Analytics, Unique pageviews company X). The overall increase of conversion in the variation was **9%** which may not seem much but if you see that from implementing this test an additional **9%** converted it is quite a lot. To give a better insight into what this effectively means for company X: $18/100 * 9.5\% = 175$ additional conversions per month (Analytics, Unique pageviews company X).

3.1.2 A/B testing in B2B companies

After it was tested whether it was possible to influence customers the researcher wanted to see if the same worked for B2B customers. Therefore, a company was found was interested in an A/B test which has as main target group B2B. A company that has developed smart software for flex workers showed interest. They had already invested quite some time and money into the optimisation of their website and were now busy with tracking their traffic behaviour. They offered a free version of their software as a try out so that customers could see how well this would work. However, they had difficulties with getting people to download this demo. Our task was, therefore, to increase the amount of demo's downloaded which again is a conversion goal.

First of all, during the research meetings would be held in order to see which pages would perform well in regard to the number of visitors they got. After that, it was researched which

pages performed well but had an ineffective amount of conversions. For these pages, an additional design was made which was focussed on generating more conversions. These additional designs were implemented on 3 pages on which traffic was high but the conversion was low. During the testing period of a month, the total amount of traffic was **3259** while the total amount of unique page visitors was **2745** (Analytics, Google Analytics A/B test Shifter).

During the test period Shifter just like company X also had an AdWords campaign going on which greatly boosted their traffic. The result of applying these additional designs was far greater than expected. On all of the pages on which these additional designs were implemented conversions increased by **5%** which brings it to a total of a **15%** increase in demo's requested. To give the reader a concrete idea of how many that is $2745/100*5= 137$ additional requests per page and a total increase of **411** demo requests.

By showing these designs to a B2B target group it had been proven that it was possible to effectively increase the amount of demo's requested by A/B testing. But also, have effectively influenced the behaviour of this target group. Since these additional designs have persuaded them to convert. An overview of Shifters Google Analytics can be found in the appendices.

3.1.3 Affecting the decision-making process of website traffic

This question can be answered by looking at the results of the A/B tests. By addressing not only the B2B market but also the B2C market a broad research audience had been created which has different priorities when visiting a website. Therefore, the different decision-making processes that had to be influenced. These different markets have to be addressed in a different way. By ensuring that every visitor got a tracking cookie it was possible to follow their movement throughout the website. By using these tracking cookies it was possible to see how an average customer clicks through a website. Furthermore, due to these cookies, it was possible to establish a basic route that almost every visitor goes by. This "route" to place the A/B tests on the strategic point on the website. Keeping in mind the results that came out of sub-question 1 and two it can be concluded that this research has positively influenced the decision-making of visitors. An overview of this "route" is given in the appendixes.

3.1.4 The value of A/B testing

Since this service will be implemented now into the aftersales process it is necessary to give the service some sort of worth. In order to establish a base price for this service, multiple criteria were set up and have decided that the base price will be a combination of hours worked x worth of information. To answer this question, every criteria will be assessed so that a clear model can be set up.

Effectiveness

From the previous sub-questions, it has been concluded that the A/B test was very effective by increasing their conversions by 15 % which effectively shows that the new design stimulates additional conversions. This means that effectiveness is a positive criterion.

Efficiency

Overall, three hours were spent with setting up one A/B test. This includes the designing of the design of the variation. However, larger tests will obviously need a bigger time span. Besides setting up the test time was also spent around two hours to discuss the results of the test with customers. By doing this to maintain personal contact as well as to discuss further steps for the test. A total of five hours will be $4,5 * \text{€}80$ (hourly tariff of Brendly) which comes down on $\text{€}360$ this is only the hours that are being used used to set the test up.

Freedom from risks

The degree to which the information can be used to reduce potential risk. A/B testing can be used in order to see whether or not customer react positive on an increase of price or a decrease in price. This means that risk can be excluded when trying to lower or increase the price of your product. However, no A/B test like has yet been executed.

Attractiveness

Depends on how it will be offered towards the customer. In the section 6.1 more information is given about this.

Learnability

The client can learn from this information by analysing why the test was successful. If it wasn't the client knows that their target group does not prefer the changes. Whether these changes be in price, design or conversion methods.

Maintainability

The plugin that has been used in order these tests saves all the tests that it has done. It creates an archive of test that were conducted on the website. The customer can therefore, visits all the previous tests that were done on their website. These can be used for reference point or when the customer wants to review older data.

Operability

The capability of the information product to enable the user to operate and control it. The great thing about this plugin is that you can edit, pause and stop these tests at all times. If you want to make changes towards the percentage of visitors that see the variation it is but one click away. Which makes the operability of this service extremely high. Even if one does not fully understand WordPress.

Understand ability

The plugin itself gives a percentage of certainty which makes it easy for customer to read out the data. Insert screenshot of plugin.

Conclusion

When analysing these criteria's, it has been identified that most of them are positive. The service is easily applicable; it has a high possibility of obtaining new information about a target group. Furthermore, it is easily maintained and has a low level of operability. Due to all these facts, the set value of this service will be $\text{€}500$ based on hours worked x worth of information. Hours worked $\text{€}360$, worth of information $\text{€}140$ this is based on a regular A/B test that will run for an average of one month.

3.1.5 Return on investment when A/B testing

When looking at the results of sub-question 1 and 2 it can be concluded that a significant amount of additional conversion has taken place due to our A/B tests. But how much does the customer get in return? That's why sub-question 3.1 has been researched. One A/B test will be around €500 on average this will increase when the test has to run for a longer time or the amount of tests is being increased. Brendly has increased its customer's lifecycle and has earned additional revenue due to this service. But what did the customer get in return?

Besides in-depth information about the usage of their site and additional information about the behaviour of their target group onto their website. They of course, need to see results. From sub-question 1 and 2 it can be concluding that for company X additional conversion where 175 additional conversions a month. However, now it is still not clear how much this additional revenue this is. By analysing their WooCommerce data it is possible to analyse what the average price per order is. Multiplying this number by the amount of additional conversion made. By analysing this it is possible to see how much extra revenue has been created by this A/B test. After analysing Companies X their WooCommerce, they have an average daily turnover of around €470 incl. VAT. and the average price per order is set on around €16,84 excluding shipping (Broeke, 2018) an overview of this data can be found in the appendixes chapter. Furthermore, in order to see the real conversion, furthermore, it has to be taken into account that the number of packages that are being cancelled does not count. WooCommerce offers insight into this and, therefore, it is possible to see what the amount of actual conversion is. By investigating the amounts of orders cancelled data can be analysed and the actual number of conversion can be shown which is a **170**. By multiplying this number by the average price per order the amount of additional revenue company X earned by optimising their website through a/b testing. Therefore, the amount of additional revenue created is $170 * 16,84 = \text{€}2862,8$ on a yearly basis this would mean $2862,8 * 12 = \text{€}34,353,6$ additional revenue per year if these conversions would keep going steady.

4. Discussion

In this chapter the research presents the results that have been found through researching. The findings that have been discussed in the chapter results will be compared from both methodologies and their overlap will be explained. In addition, results from this study will be further explained so that additional information about the most promising outcomes is discussed.

4.1 A/B testing in B2C and B2B companies

In general, general thoughts were that B2B and B2C companies were quite similar. However, when you look at their decision-making process B2B is a lot more complicated since you have to go through different levels of decision makers. Furthermore, the results were surprising since the first test made such a difference on the website. Beforehand the general thought was that it would impact the website and the level of conversion in a small way. Furthermore, by analysing and identifying the decision process of the visitor, which is able through analysing the visitor's route that has been made and by using the AIDA model and integrating some of the common neuro-influencers into the alternative design it has shown that this has a positive effect on conversion. Which is as stated by AIDA that by capturing the attention, interest, desire and at last convince them of performing an action in combination with factors that are known to influence the decision-making process that A/B testing can aid with the optimisation of conversion and stimulate marketing efforts. The fact that the researcher had already done multiple Google Analytics courses was definitely of great value when assessing the data and analysing the results. However, next time that the researcher needs to research this it would be wise to implement these tests earlier so that there are a broader scope and target audience.

4.3 Affecting the decision-making process of website traffic

One of the most challenging questions to answer is how conversions would be tracked during this research. For the research, a cookie was installed into the website so that tracks the clicks of a website visitor could be tracked. By doing this data could be gathered and it was possible to identify the average route that most of the traffic would go through. This resulted in Brendly being able to place their additional designs on a strategic point on the website. This greatly improved the efficiency of the research since it was now possible to see how the research audience was going through the website. An overview of this "path" can be found in the appendixes.

4.4 The value of A/B testing

During this study, the researcher was assigned the task to set up a new service. This is the A/B testing service. Before offering this to the customer the service had to be priced. Therefore, during the research, an A/B test was conducted in order to see how long it would take us to set this test up. This test would function as a basic test in order to establish first price criteria namely, worked hours. The second criteria are the value of information which has been investigated through the outcome of both tests and stated in chapter 2. By discussing assessing these aspects it was agreed upon that the suggestive price per A/B test would be 500€

4.5 Return on investment when A/B testing

The challenge with this sub-question was to get permission to extract data from the company's X their Woocommerce. After some e-mailing, the company agreed upon that this information could be extracted from their Woocommerce under multiple conditions being one of those that they would remain anonymous. However, this was not agreed upon at the beginning which was a fault from the researcher's part. Reflecting back on this he should have made arrangements before starting this experiment.

5. Conclusion

Finally, a conclusion is stated. Where A/B testing is identified as a powerful tool for companies that want to optimise their website in regards towards their target group. This, however, was only doable due to multiple factors that were presented during the research.

First of all, it was necessary to investigate how data would be gathered from all this information. By analysing the Google Analytics during both tests it was possible to determine where the tests should be implemented. Moreover, after findings this out a way to track conversations had to be found. This was done through a plugin and through Google Analytics.

Secondly, Brendly has to put a certain value on this service. This value has to be derived from different factors, one of these being the amount of time spent in regards to setting up an A/B test. Time spend designing, meeting and investigating the companies Google Analytics. It was found out that on average 4 hours would be spent doing this. Furthermore, by analysing the data that came out of the two tests it was possible to determine the worth of information based on multiple criteria. Based on this a basic price for a basic A/B test could be set up. The worth of information is €160 based on multiple criteria which were decided earlier. The total price for a basic A/B test would, therefore, be €500.

Fourthly, to make sure that there is not only worth for Brendly in this new service has been investigated on what the return on investment would be for customers. Before doing so it was necessary that company X agreed on gathering data from their Woocommerce. This was necessary in order to gather information about their total net sales and net sale per order. By gathering this information, it was possible to calculate their return on investment.

Moreover, in order to ensure that this service would be continued the researcher designed a step to step plan which takes into account Brendly's core values. This step to step plan is a concrete foundation for the new A/B testing service. It describes which steps should be taken as well as how the process of the project should be done.

As stated in the problem statement before this research Brendly's goal was to prolong the lifetime cycle of their customers by implementing a new service which would focus on optimisation of their websites. By following the step to step plan that has been set up, Brendly should be able to further extend this service and, therefore, prolong the lifetime cycle of its customers.

To conclude it can be stated that Dutch B2B and B2C companies their website can be optimised by adapting their online marketing by testing additional designs in order to influence the decision-making process of their customers. Furthermore, by reviewing the results chapter it can be concluded that this has positively influenced their customer's decision-making process since conversion has been significantly improved.

The new service is also mentioned on the website. A screenshot from this can be found in the appendixes. In which "doorontwikkeling" is meant for A/B tests.

6. Recommendations

Now that a conclusion had been drawn up recommendations can be based upon. Therefore, write recommendations for this new service. Instead of a normal recommendations section, the research has chosen to conduct a step by step plan to support this new service. In addition, he will also give some improvement towards the service but the main point of this chapter is setting up a detailed plan which describes the way this new service will be offered towards the customer.

6.1 Recommendations for the A/B testing process

Recommendations for this service would be that not only conversions would be tracked but also the clicks of the customer. This is an additional tool that can be used to track the behaviour of the client's target group. With this information companies can design their website in such a way that their web design will be optimised in order to meet the behaviour of their target group. A longer perspective of this service would be to use eye tracking in order to give a more in-depth view into customer behaviour on websites. Overall the current service has all the elements to grow into a sustainable after sales product that can be used to prolong the customer's lifecycle.

6.2 A/B service plan

Let's begin with assessing the worth for the customer.

In order to define a product, one must be able to see what worth the product has to the customer or in other words added value. This can be added value to the product or service that the company is selling. In Brendly's case, this would effectively translate into the optimisation of websites that they have built. Optimisation of websites is quite a broad term to use in this content

After the website has been designed, build and delivered to the customer another phase starts. A phase that is centred around optimisation of conversion. This, of course, can be translated into different dimensions such as; conversion rates on contact forms, inquiries, signing up for the newsletter and even the testing out of a demo. By doing this a company can optimise its website to its own desired (future goal(s)).

One of Brendly's core values is to embrace the idea of adding value through a significant amount of personal contact with the customer. Therefore, it has to be continued by developing this service in combination with this core value. Therefore, a step by step plan has been made in order to recognise and identify the steps in the project.

First of all, in order to continue the above-mentioned core value, planning a meeting in order to would recognise and identify the goals of the organisation. In this meeting, it will be discussed what the goal is for the organisation and how this goal reflects on the website. But also, which elements on the website can be adjusted in order to reach that goal.

Secondly, based on the result of the orientation meeting an investigation into their Google Analytics for pages that perform well in contrast to visitors but before undesired in terms of the organisation's goal. This would often be conversion. In this meeting, it is possible to plan goals such as lowering the bounce rate so that visitors increase their time spent on a website. In

addition, it would be possible to look into existing conversion rates and decide, based upon this if it is fruitful to redesign this page to meet the goals of the organisation.

Thirdly, after selecting elements that would enhance the chance of the organisation meeting their goals. This would mean that a designated time that the research would be pending. This, of course, has to be thought out based on urgency and amount of visitors. Brendly could base their research time upon the number of visitors in order to speed up the process. This, however, is only viable when a website reaches a certain amount of visitors per day/week/month. Furthermore, Brendly could also adept their billing based on the amount of time a research takes. This is of course only viable if the research its end goal has no limit on the number of visitors.

Fourthly, after discussing the elements that have to be redesigned and the length of the research a meeting could be planned in order to explain to the customer our plan. In this call, it is explained what we want to do, how we plan to do it, what kind of benefits it can have and how this reflects towards the goals of the organisation. Of course, the customer can share his/her idea's which might be implemented.

Fifth, after this most of the external contact, is done and the actual development of the design will begin. Cesar will start by redesigning the element based on previous conversations and feedback from the customer. From this design, a draft will be emailed towards the customer so that they can review it. If the customer agrees with the design, Brendly will move to the next phase. If the customer does not agree with the design, Brendly will ask for feedback in order to adept the design towards customer preferences.

Sixth, after agreeing to the redesigned element Brendly will make sure that the element is traceable. This means that they will be able to see how many people converted to this element. This is done by creating a conversion link that is inserted into the page a client sees when a conversion takes place. In this way, it is possible to see whether or not the variation (the redesigned element) is more efficient than the original design.

Seven, After the designated amount of time and the desired amount of data, has been collected. It is possible to reach a conclusion. A meeting will be planned were this conclusion will be discussed. This is paired with the goals of the organisation so that a concrete plan is formed in order to see if the desired goal has been reached

Eight, If the customer shows interest Brendly could prolong the lifecycle of the customer by setting up a whole optimisation package. Together with our AdWords partner, we could offer the customer an all in package in regards towards optimisation of their website. This would mean that the customer would have an extensive project which is centred around increasing the number of visitors to their website and a conversion strategy that has been tested and can be backed up by research data.

By doing this Brendly implements a new service while staying true to its core values by having multiple personal contact moments with the customers. In order to guide them through the process of website optimisation.

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7. Appendices

7.1 Appendix 1 planning

Every research needs a planning in order to be carried out in a structured organised way. Therefore, the researcher made a planning beforehand. That's why this chapter will be devoted to providing an overview of activities and gives an indication of how the available week were being spent. Furthermore, deadlines have been marked and have been strictly followed in order to make sure that the research could be completed in time. The final deadline for submitting the thesis will be in the first week of June. The plan of activities is stated below.

Table 2 Planning

| Week | Activity | Hours worked | Research activity |
|------|--|--------------|--|
| 3 | Working on the plan of approach | 4 | Looking for literature and additional sources |
| 4 | Working on the plan of approach | 2 | Looking for additional resources and actual content writing |
| 5 | Working on the plan of approach | 3 | Looking for additional resources and actual content writing |
| 6 | Handing in the plan of approach | 1 | Finalising the plan of approach |
| 7 | Put out e-mail to encourage customers to join the research | 3 | Doing e-mail correspondence about possible A/B tests |
| 8 | Carrying out research | 2 | Checking possible customers their Google Analytics to see what could be improved |
| 9 | Carrying out research | 2 | Checking possible customers their Google Analytics to see what could be improved |

| Week | Activity | Hours worked | Research activity |
|-------------|---|---------------------|--|
| 10 | Defining the A/B service plan | 5 | Researching how much time we would spent on one test. |
| 11 | Running the first A/B test on my own website | 2 | Defining how we should set up these tests |
| 12 | E-mail and telephone correspondence with possible clients for A/B tests | 4 | Defining what we should test, why and for how long. |
| 13 | Meeting with clients that are interested in an A/B test | 1 | Further defining why, we are testing it. For how long and when we will present the new design. |
| 14 | Creating the first A/B design | 3 | By using the input from the previous meeting we set up an design for the A/B test |
| 15 | First A/B test live Collecting data | 1 | The first test will go live |
| 16 | Collecting data | - | |
| 17 | Collecting data | - | |
| 18 | Collecting data | - | |
| 19 | Analysing results | 4 | Analysing and identifying results |
| 20 | Result analysis | 4 | Drawing up conclusions and recommendations |
| 21 | Converting results into thesis | 4 | Finalising the thesis |
| 22 | Final deadline thesis | 3 | Last check up on thesis |

7.2 Personal IBMS Competencies

While doing this research I also achieved multiple IBMS competencies while working for Brendly. Numerous of these activities are focussed on assisting the with sales, development and project management. The ac

Table 3 IBMS competences

| Competency | Sub Competencies |
|---|---|
| I.1. International Business Awareness | The ability to attune his own activities and those of the company to international trends. |
| I.2. Intercultural Competency | The student can recognise and appreciate cultural differences in behaviour and values. - He has developed an open attitude and is motivated to work abroad. He can make effective use of empathy, or 'frame of reference shifting', to understand and be understood across cultural boundaries. He can maintain an international network essential to his tasks and to the company. |
| II.3. International Strategic Vision Development | - He can contribute to the adjustment of a vision and strategy. - He can assess the consequences of a vision and strategy for business policies and processes. |
| IV.2. Co-operation | - The ability to provide new ideas to improve results collectively. |
| V.4. Business Research Methods | - To spot complex issues and to search information from a broad range of resources. To be able to integrate theory and practice. - To be able to indicate the information needs in complex situations. - To draw conclusions from complex research data. |
| V.5. Planning and Organising | - The ability to stimulate others to harmonise the planning and organisation of projects and activities in an effective manner, in relation to his own activities. |
| VI.6. Learning and Self-development | - The ability to know the limits of his competencies, to critically evaluate and account for his own actions, to take criticism and put it to good use. -The ability to take feedback, take initiative and work independently. |
| III.6. International Marketing & Sales Management | -The ability to evaluate and assess the contribution of marketing to a firm in an international business environment, including the decisions on price, product, distribution and communication. -The ability to evaluate and implement marketing decisions based on an analysis of the internal and external factors influencing a company in an international business environment. -The ability to structure these decisions in a marketing planning in accordance with the corporate planning of the company. -The ability to create, change and implement a strategic international marketing plan which includes an analysis of the international environment of the company's position. The plan contains strategies in product development, pricing, distribution and international advertising. |

7.3 Google Analytics overview company X

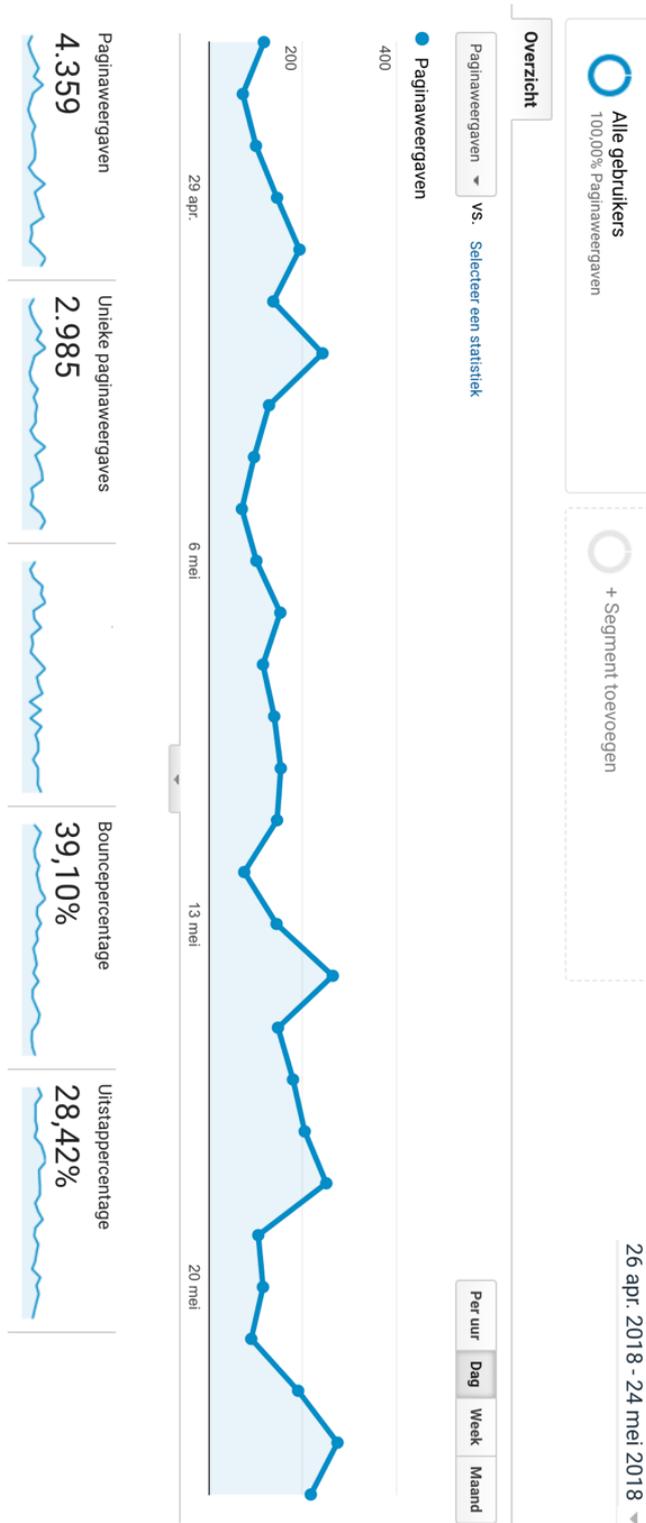


Figure 5 (Analytics, Unique pageviews company X) General Google Analytics Company X

7.4 Google Analytics overview Shifter

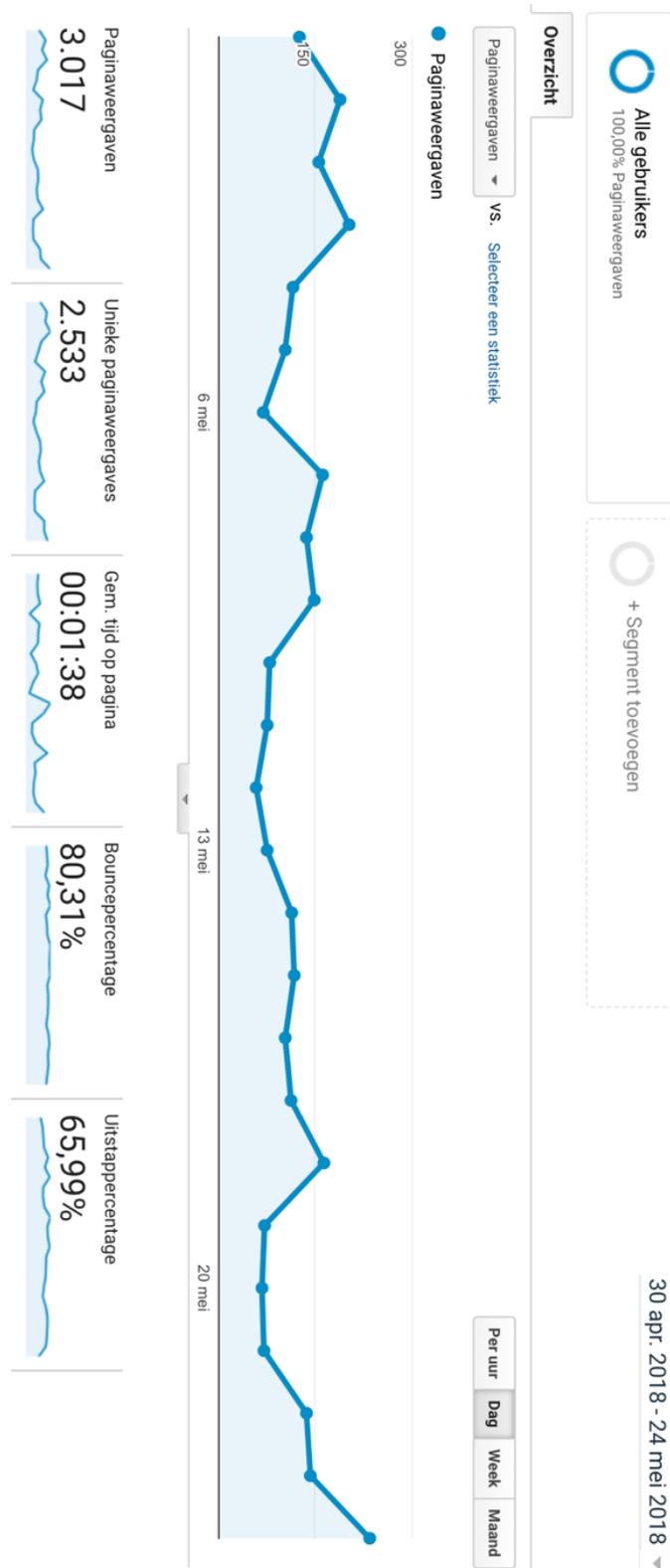


Figure 6 (Analytics, Google Analytics A/B test Shifter) General Google Analytics Shifter

7.5 Overview of visitor's path company X

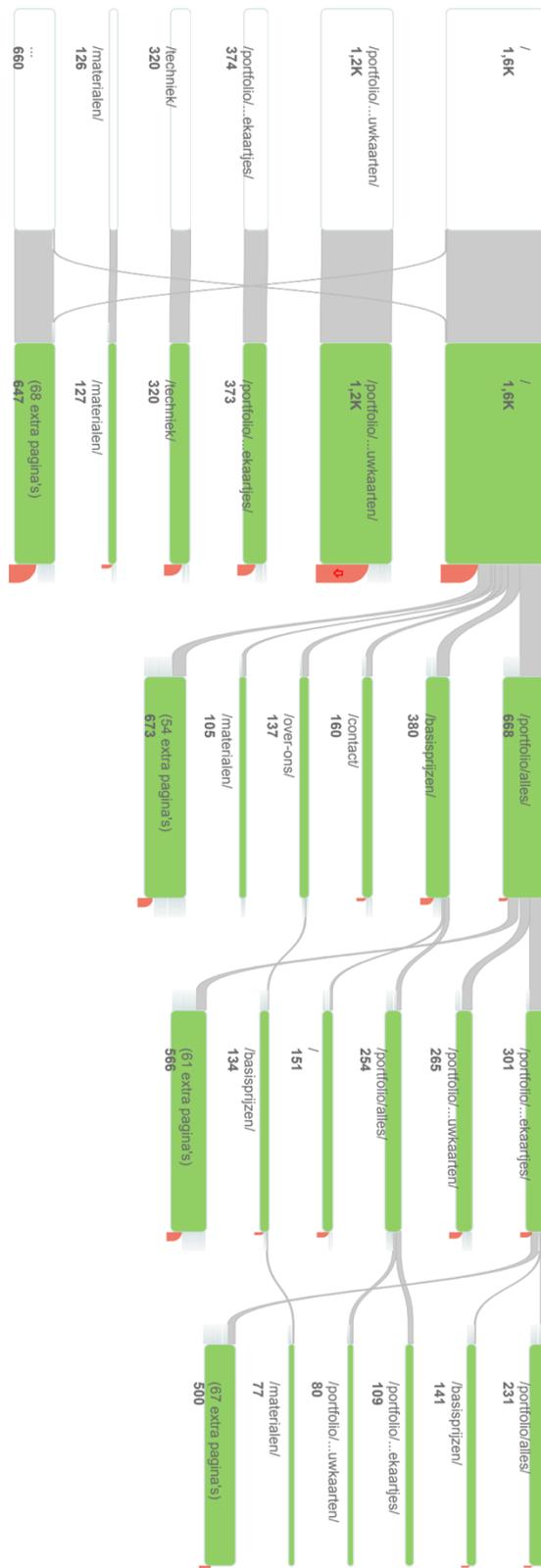


Figure 7 (Broeke, Visitors path, 2018) Visitors path

7.6 Overview of Company's X their sales

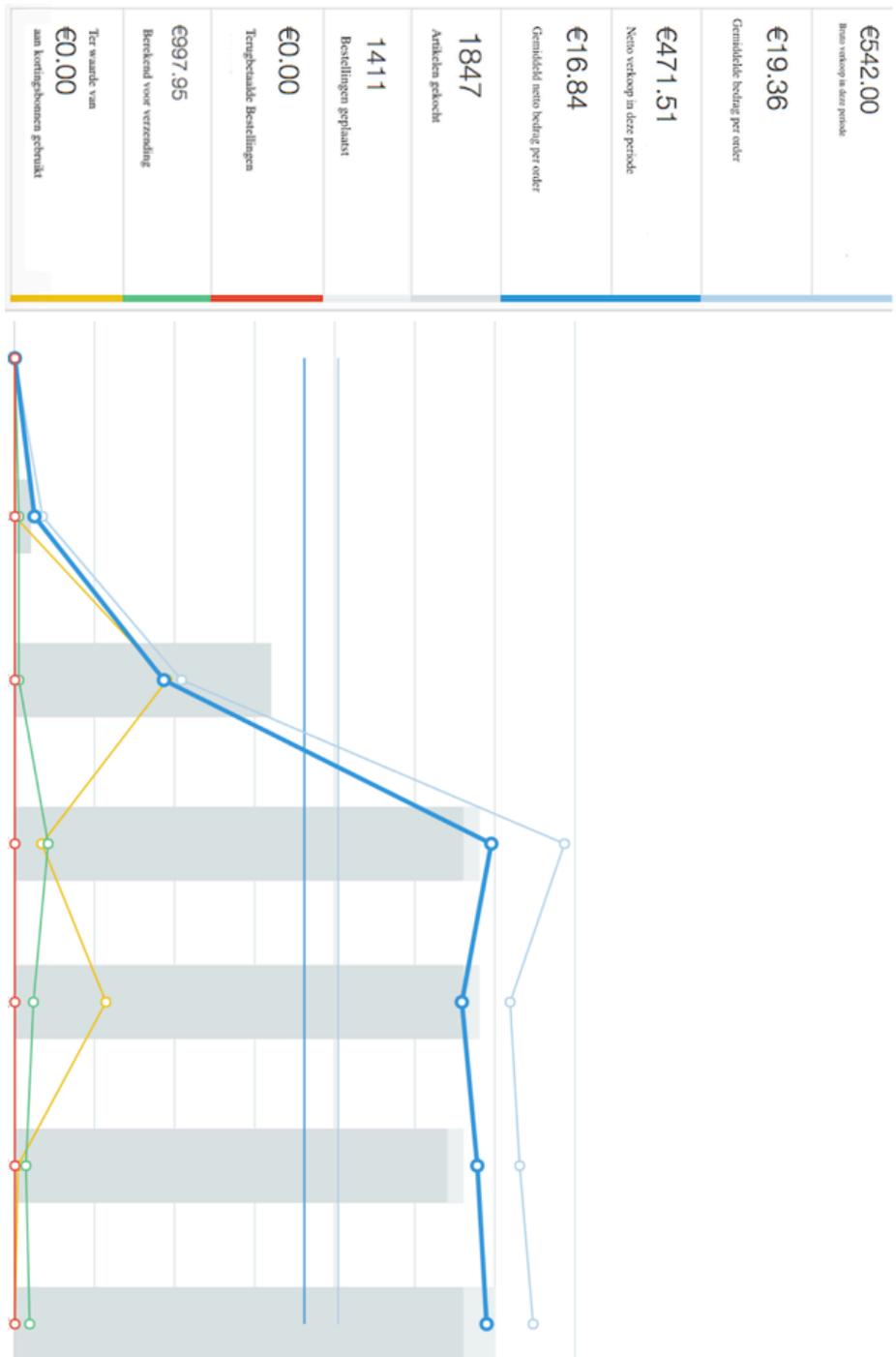


Figure 8 (Broeke, Woocommerce sales data, 2018) Woocommerce company X

7.7 A/B service on the Brendly website

Doorontwikkeling

Vorbereiding

In deze fase kijken we naar nieuw ontstane must-haves en nice-to-haves voor de website. Daarnaast onderzoeken we hoe de nieuwe website met een beknopte marketing campagne kunnen promoten, of een bredere marketingcampagne op te zetten.

Figure 9 (Broeke, Brendly.nl, 2018) A/B testing service on the Brendly website



Figure 10 (Broeke, Brendly.nl, 2018) A/B testing service on the Brendly website

7.7 In company assessment

Evaluation of in-company performance

To be used by the in-company mentor

Student: Martijn v/d Broeke Evaluation period from: 01-02-18 to: 01-07-18
Organisation: Brendly In-company mentor: Cesar Zyp

Please evaluate the student in comparison to other recently graduated HBO-level employees in your organisation using the questions below

1. How do you evaluate the attitude of the student towards his/her work activities?

Negative

1

2

3

4

Positive

5

Explanation and suggestions:

Martijn has a ~~ave~~ very well developed sense of responsibility

2. Does the student show own initiative?

No initiative

1

2

3

4

Pro-active

5

Explanation and suggestions:

Martijn offered to implement A/B testing for several clients. He shows great initiative.

3. Is the work approach of the student practical?

Not practical

1

2

3

4

Practical

5

Explanation and suggestions:

Martijn has managed several clients on his own. He comes up with his own solutions.

4. How would you rate the social skills of the student?

Insufficient

1

2

3

4

Sufficient

5

Explanation and suggestions:

Martijn came in with no prior client-facing role experience. Martijn showed impressive growth in this area.

5. How would you rate the communicative skills of the student?

Not communicative

Very communicative

1 2 3 4 (5)

Explanation and suggestions:

Martijn was very clear when he ran into issues.

6. How do you rate the knowledge level of the student (in the field of his/her Bachelor program)?

Low level

High level

1 2 3 4 (5)

Explanation and suggestions:

He knows his stuff, although this line of work is not really theory-driven

7. What is the performance level of the student?

Low level

High level

1 2 3 4 (5)

Explanation and suggestions:

This question is not specific enough to really answer.

8. How much did the student contribute to your organisation?

A little

A lot

1 2 3 4 (5)

Explanation and suggestions:

Martijn's ability to be productive on his own has added a lot of value to our company.

9. What is your overall evaluation of the student?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 (9) 10

Explanation and suggestions:

We're very happy with Martijn :)

Name: Cesar Zijl

Function: Founder

Date: 01-06-2018

Signature: 