How we increased Big Bus Tours revenue by +7%

"In the last six months that we've started working with RocketMill, we've built a strong partnership based on collaboration and creativity. When I leave something with them, I know I can trust that they'll be ready with ideas and experiments to keep our optimisation roadmap at full capacity and on point. I'm looking forward to growing our CRO efforts together with RocketMill, who truly have become an extension of our team."

Priyanka Upponi, Global Web Analyst,
Big Bus Tours.

The Brief

We were briefed to undertake [conversion rate optimisation](#) (CRO) with the aim of increasing revenue generated from the Big Bus Tours website.

Big Bus Tours is the largest operator of open-topped sightseeing bus tours in the world, operating in over 20 cities across four continents and helping over four million tourists every year. The company's website provides direct B2C sales for bus tours as well as guided walking tours and river cruises.

The Approach

RocketMill's approach to CRO is as follows:

- Examine all available data in order to understand the challenges specific to the business in question
- Develop hypotheses from the data and design experiments to test them
- Use the insights generated to re-iterate and thus perfect the process

Using Google Analytics, we discovered the following useful insights:

- Over 60% of total users on the Big Bus website are on mobile devices
- 54% of total transactions come from mobile users
- Conversion rate was lower for mobile than on desktop and tablet
- Of total transactions, 45% occur within the user's first interaction on site

Because mobile devices were revealed as the leading devices on which to experience Big Bus Tours, we focused on improving the performance of mobile within the checkout process (compared to desktop and tablet).

The largest drop-off in the checkout process was on the page where the user needed to enter their details. This drop-off was seen across all devices, but this was particularly high on mobile.

One of the several hypotheses we developed to decrease this customer drop-off was using motivational messaging on the user details page. We decided to run an experiment, using a range of three messages which could be displayed in a banner at the top of the page.
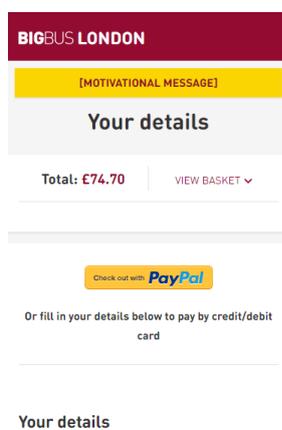
We chose to display the message at the top of the page so users within the experiment were most likely to see the banner on page load.

Variation	Message
V1	Ready to hop on? We love New York - and we know you will too!
V2	Over 8,000 other adventurers loved this tour according to TripAdvisor.
V3	Forms suck. But this tour is worth it.

We focused on increasing the value proposition of the product. Different versions of the message were tested, exploring varied motivational factors of the Big Bus product.

Competitor analysis further reinforced the evidence for testing the use of messaging within Big Bus Tours' checkout journey.

Of all the locations that Big Bus Tours operates in, we chose New York due to the high level of traffic that would produce statistically significant results, quickly.

The highest performing version generated a **conversion rate increase of 5% and a 7% increase in revenue** compared with the control, while uncovering a whole new area for testing.

The Results

We found that all versions outperformed the control, which suggested having a message on the user details page resulted in more purchases. Running the experiment across the three versions generated **an additional 8% of revenue** (compared to if all users had converted at the same rate as in the control).

Delving deeper into the numbers, we found that V3: ***Forms suck. But this tour is worth it*** had **an uplift on conversion rates at 98% significance**. We would never allow our own bias to influence a test, but this was our personal favourite too.

The full results of all the versions:

Version	CVR increase*	Rev increase*
V1 Ready to hop on? We love New York - and we know you will too!	+2%	+6%
V2 Over 8,000 other adventurers loved this tour according to TripAdvisor.	+5%	+10%
V3 Forms suck. But this tour is worth it.	+6%	+7%

The increases above have been calculated using the performance of the control as an index. i.e. if the conversion rate in the control was 1% and within V1 it was 2%, this would be a +100% increase.

Although Version 2 generated more revenue, we chose to focus on CVR as the primary objective. This is because revenue can vary wildly with each participant in the experiment whereas propensity to convert is what we are attempting to affect with this test.

Version 3 is now being installed on the live site of the Big Bus Tours website for New York.

This test shows how a message at this stage in the purchase funnel for mobile users can improve conversion rates. However, this success is isolated to one Big Bus location and just one language.

The future

The success of this experiment could be the start of something much bigger for our client.

Currently, Big Bus Tours operate in 23 locations with each location having up to four language versions. That's *92 different combinations of city and language* where these tests can be run.

To learn more about how we can help you motivate your customers please [contact us](#).

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