



© 03 June 2019, 16:10 (CEST)

How we run the CRO program at Helloprint

Every quarter we focus on running a minimum of 40 experiments that contribute to at least €2.000.000 in 12- month added business value. With a growing CRO team existing of multiple disciplines we are making it easier to order print, one experiment at a time.

TL;DR — By agreeing to a certain cadence, to OKRs and a product roadmap we are able to grow and develop solutions that make ordering print easier. PS. Get the Google Sheets backlog template at the bottom of this post.

Our business model

To give you a little bit of understanding about what it is that we do, let me explain how we make a living. At this moment Helloprint is active in eight European countries. We have around 600 products that make up roughly 10.000.000 combinations. Our products range from paper products to clothing, corporate gifts, event stands, banners, hospitality products and more. Everything you need to [promote your business](#) in real life.

Although we print a lot of products every day we own zero printers, that's because we are a platform business. We live off of gross margin that we add on top of the products that are produced by our 350 European partners. Together we are able to offer you the full Helloprint experience as if we were your local printing partner. With no printers on our profit and loss we can move fast, grow into new markets while we are still building up and maturing in our current markets.

Team structure

Our team is known as OOC (Online Ordering & Conversion) and exists out of eight Helloprinters. Together we work on various parts of our CRO program, both in versioning (1% improvements) as in visioning (6–12 months advancements). Our team exists of the following roles:

- 1x Head of OOC
- 2x Growth Marketers
- 1x Developer
- 2x Data analyst
- 1x Head of Artwork
- 1x Head of Quality

By focussing on *versioning* we are able to uncover user behaviour that unlocks better conversion rates and improves the user journey in little steps until we reach our [local maximum](#).

By focussing on *visioning* we learn what our customers really need to keep ordering print from us. We will learn this through user research and [MVPs](#) and run this project with an external party to ensure an unbiased attention to detail.

From cadence to conversion uplift

The success of our CRO program lies within continuous experimentation, strong focus on our OKRs and a product roadmap to overcome a possible local maximum.

Determining the cadence

The rhythm of the team is important because it sets expectations towards team members and within the company. There are so many frameworks to choose from and yet we chose none (or it's a combination of everything). We've tried bi-weekly and weekly sprints all to eventually decide on one big sprint, namely: getting to the goals set in our OKRs.

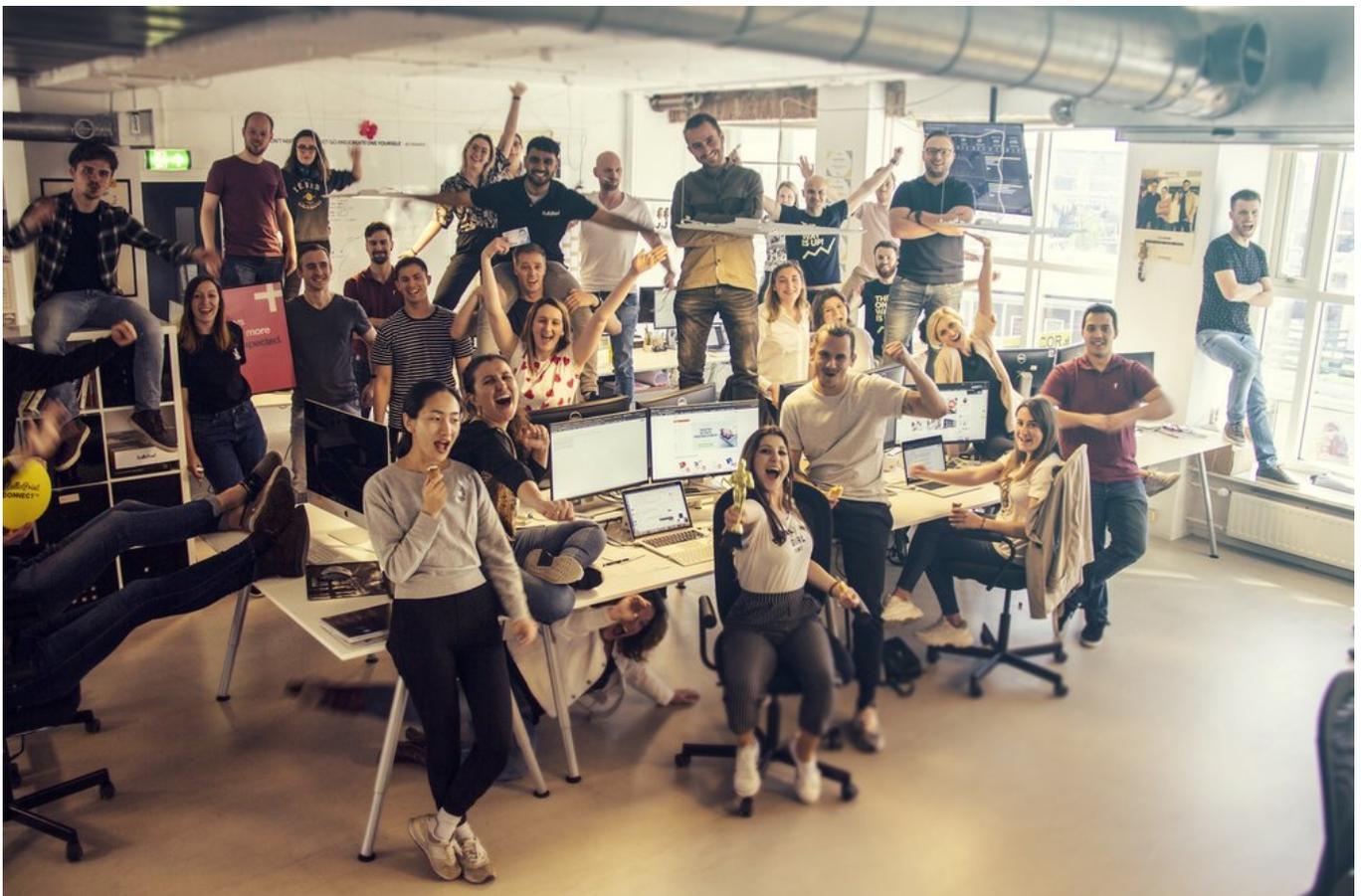
Our OKRs are set per quarter, so we divide them by three and take into account the possible effects of seasonality to determine what our monthly goals are going to be. These monthly goals determine the cadence of our team and give us on average two weeks to prepare and start experiments that last at least two business cycles, fourteen days in our case.

Setting goals with OKRs

We work towards goals that are described in [OKRs](#) (Objectives and Key Results) in which we focus on three objectives per quarter. These OKRs change each quarter based on insights derived from our team's last quarter performance and of course our company goals. An example of our quarterly objectives:

- €1.000.000 of 12-month business value based on pre-cart improvements;
- €1.000.000 of 12-month business value based on post-cart improvements;
- A minimum of 40 experiments.

At the end of the month every Helloprint team reports on their OKRs to calculate whether we made the company OKRs as well. We also happen to have [seasonal themes](#) where teams that hit all of their OKRs will be rewarded with specific bonuses and unlimited high fives.



Product Roadmap

Let's start by saying that this part of our process is two-fold. On one hand we are focusing on 1% improvements through continuous experimentation and on the other hand we commit to visioning by working on a solution that ensures way more 1% improvements in 6–12 months from today.

Focus areas for continuous experimentation

We started by analysing what parts of our user journey bring in the most value in terms of revenue and determined whether we were confident that we could influence that number even more. By combining the data with our own capabilities we came to the conclusion that our focus areas for the coming months would be in our navigation and search, PDPs (Product Detail Pages) and checkout.

With these focus areas in mind we started brainstorming experiment ideas and added them to our backlog. FYI, our backlog is a simple Google Sheets document with the following sheets:

- Backlog

In here we keep all of our ideas, from experiments to insights (data dives) and projects. Every other week we rank new items on impact + effort and copy the experiments to our experiments sheet.

- Experiments

From here we form a hypothesis, give a clear description, set the experiment parameters and start building the experiment. We keep track of running experiments in this sheet, determine how long they should run and also note down the experiment results, learnings and next steps.

- Reports

Throughout the months we create reports for everything and we collect them all in one place to keep the overview.

Visioning projects

A few weeks before writing this we started a project with an external company to uncover through (user)research how we can serve our customers even better. This project will help us understand our customers even better which is beneficial for both our (future) customers and to our team.

In Kevin Dame's [keynote](#) at the Google Conversions Summit in 2019 he mentioned that 'Visioning' exists out of advancements that are 2–3 years out from today. Our team decided for our first visioning project that we focus on advancements that are 6–12 months out from today instead of 2–3 years.

Our next visioning project might be more aligned with Kevin's original model, but I also believe that you should use these models in a way that they help you achieve new things.

Conclusion

Running a CRO program is about clarity and persistence, about setting goals and working together as a team to reach these goals. Chances are that you are the first team to uncover learnings in such a fast pace that you might inspire other teams to do the same.

If this is happening, help them as well by setting up the same structure that you and your team are committed to. Although they are running completely different experiments or testing their campaigns, they are going to run into the same impediments as you did. Coach them along the way and together you will establish a culture of testing in your company.

Think about how you are approaching your companies 1% improvements right now and how you are making sure that you stay ahead of the competition. This is the foundation to ensure a healthy CRO program that delivers insights and results.

Bonus tip 👍

You might be surprised how important buy-in from the entire company is to ensure a CRO program where failed and inconclusive results are also part of the process. Where the entire company knows that every win is the result of running multiple failed or inconclusive experiments. Being able to share these results internally, whether good or bad, is key to ensure and maintain a culture of testing.

Do you have a question? Drop by our [HQs in Rotterdam](#) or leave a comment below!

Get the backlog template

Want to get started just like us, just make a copy of our [backlog template](#) and start using it yourself.

About Helloprint

Helloprint is Europe's biggest online printing platform, with a YoY growth of 40%, 54 mio revenue in 2018 and 220+ true Helloprinters that get out of bed every single day to make ordering print easier.

Thinking about joining our family, check our [50+ vacancies](#) and join Helloprint in Rotterdam, Valencia, Liverpool or Turin!

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