

How To Split Test With 10 Visitors A Day

by Paul Hancox

YOUR RIGHTS

This electronic publication is for your own personal use. You **may** distribute it to others for free, on condition that it remains unaltered. However, you **must not** sell it as a stand-alone product.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

© 2007 Paul Hancox. All rights reserved.

Whilst the author and publisher has made every reasonable effort to ensure this publication is free from error, neither author, publisher nor distributor assume any responsibility for errors, omissions or contrary interpretation of the subject matter herein.

This publication is an information product, and is not intended for use as a source of legal, accounting or tax advice.

The reader assumes all responsibility for the use of the materials and information herein, including adherence to all applicable laws and regulations.

No guarantees of income, sales or results are claimed, and figures are given for example purposes only.

Any perceived slights of persons, peoples or organizations is unintentional.

The author and publisher (along with the distributor) assume no responsibility or liability whatsoever on behalf of any purchaser or reader of these materials.

1. What is “split testing”, why is it so important anyway?

If you already know what split testing is, you can skip this definition... otherwise, let's make sure we're both speaking the same language.

Here's the definition of “split testing” I give in my ebook [Small Changes: Big Profits \(2008 Edition\)](#):

"Split testing, also known as A/B testing, is a marketing term originally coined by the mail order companies... before sending out a mailing, they might take two smaller samples of their mailing list - samples A and B. They would prepare a sales letter to send to each sample, identical except for one element. This element could be a different headline, a different call to action, or even a different price!

The company would then send the relevant letter to both samples, and they would track the sales that result from each sample. By tracking... they get to find out which version of their letter is likely to convert best. The remainder of the mailing list would then receive the version of the letter that resulted in the most sales."

I consider split testing (or A/B testing) to be possibly the single most important profit-boosting technique you'll ever need – yet probably 90% of marketers still aren't doing it. Here's why...

2. Low traffic – the reason why most people still aren't testing

You've probably heard people tell you, “You can't start split testing until you've got lots of visitors.”

I bet you've even thought that yourself, haven't you?

Not a problem... that's why you're reading this report – you're smart enough to consider that you could be mistaken.

Here's why most people think this.

Let's say your site currently converts 1 in every 100 visitors into customers. You have a conversion rate of 1 in 100, which is **1%**.

In order to find a better converting version, you need to get enough data to get *significant* results.

You can't just test two versions of your sales letter (A and B), get 4 sales from A and 2 sales from B and say, "A is better than B".

Sadly, it doesn't work like that. The difference could well be down to chance.

You normally need *at least* 30 sales between A and B before you can draw any conclusions at all, and ideally 50 or 100. (The exception to this rule is when you have a *massive* difference, such as 10 sales to A, and 0 sales to B.)

Now, with a site that converts visitors into customers 1% of the time, to get 30 sales you'll need 3,000 visitors.

And yet at just 10 visitors a day, that would take you about 300 days to get enough sales - that's two months short of a year!

That would be a very long and boring test.

Clearly there has to be a better way. Most people's solution would be to: *get more traffic!*

That's definitely one solution, and if you have 10 visitors a day you *should* aim for more.

However, let me show you how you can split test much more quickly, even with those 10 visitors a day – and also why you should be doing it right from the start.

3. Busting the "You can't split test with 10 visitors a day" myth

I've shown why it will take you an absolute age to try and improve your visitor to sales conversion rate using split testing, at 10 visitors a day.

That's why, when you have low traffic, I'd suggest you forget about that particular conversion rate for now!

Instead, do what I call **indirect testing** - that is, aim to boost your conversion rate *indirectly*, through intermediate steps that you *can* improve by split testing.

For example, many people who sell on the Internet use what is called a "squeeze" page, where they attempt to capture their visitor's email address for later follow-up.

This "squeeze" page is not designed to get people to buy immediately, but is an *intermediate step* towards getting them to buy.

Now, let's say you have a squeeze page that converts 10% of visitors into subscribers; and that 10% of these *subscribers* go on to buy your product.

At just 10 visitors a day, that's about 300 visitors a month, which should result in about 30 subscriptions (i.e. 10% of visitors) and 3 sales (i.e. 10% of new *subscribers*).

As we've already established, it would take you an absolute age to do any significant *direct* testing on your sales, but guess what...

... you could easily do a split test to attempt to raise your subscription rate (i.e. an *indirect* test).

Since you're getting 30 *subscribers* a month, that's a big enough sample to get significant results (provided the difference is big enough).

Let's say you found a way to raise your subscription rate from 10% of visitors, to 20%. What effect would that have on your sales?

Assuming everything else stays the same... at 10 visitors a day, that's 300 visitors a month, **60** subscriptions (20% are now signing up) and **6** sales (still 10% of new subscribers are buying.)

In other words, by increasing your subscription rate from 10% to 20%, you've *doubled* your sales... and you haven't even increased your traffic yet!

4. Why conversion is more important than traffic (well, to a certain extent)

Now let me explain why I rate *conversion* as more important than *traffic* (although *both* are important).

At 10 visitors a day, and a 1% conversion rate for your site, you can double your traffic to double your sales.

So **20** visitors a day would produce 600 visitors a month, 60 subscribers and 6 sales.

Yet if we'd worked on our conversion rate first (via indirect testing), and *then* increased our traffic, with 20 visitors a day we'd have 600 visitors a month, 120 subscribers (20% of visitors), and **12 sales** (10% of subscribers).

In other words, if we double our traffic on a poorly converting site, we're losing valuable subscriptions and sales!

Now, in reality, traffic shouldn't be neglected, either. Both are important to be successful on the Web.

After all, a high traffic site that is poorly converting is losing potential sales, because of its poor conversion.

But a low traffic site that is highly converting is also losing potential sales, because of its lack of traffic!

So it's ultimately about getting the right balance. Traffic and conversion are both important.

But increasing your traffic too much before you have a good conversion rate could cost you money, and lose you sales and subscriptions.

And the advantage of *conversion* is that, as long as you're getting *some* traffic to your site, you can *always* work on improving it. Even at 10 visitors a day, you can conduct a split test.

5. What you'll need to conduct your first A/B test

Before you conduct your first A/B test for your "low traffic" site (or even your "high traffic" one!) you'll need some split testing software.

Now, I'm aware there's a few free testing "solutions" out there, but forgive me for not recommending them to you, for reasons that will become clear in 10 seconds.

Forgive me, instead, for recommending my own – [Power Split Tester](#). You see, I'm also a programmer as well as a marketer, and I wrote it because...

(a) The "free" scripts I've encountered are usually basic, lacking in any real support (or are "upsells", so you get fed up with it enough to "upgrade" to an expensive version!) and are in some cases, even inaccurate! (In many cases, "free" was actually costing me money),

(b) I wanted the best accuracy I could get,

(c) I didn't want to use Google's Website Optimizer myself, because I don't personally want Google to have my conversion data – especially considering they set my Adwords prices as well,

(d) I wanted something simple to use, yet with enough flexible features for when my traffic grew,

(e) I wanted to be able to combine it with a mailing list.

I'll spare you from a sales pitch here, but before you decide which split testing software to use, I'd really ask you to consider reading more about mine *before* making your decision. (Too many people are sadly taken in with the idea of starting off with something "free" - not the smartest of ideas, in my opinion.)

The reason for that is I've been marketing since 1998, and writing commercial scripts since 2001, so although it's not free, forgive me for saying confidently that [Power Split Tester](#) is hands down the best *low cost* split testing solution out there.

With that said, let's move on to...

6. Your first A/B test for a "low traffic" site

Here's a very basic squeeze page that I wrote in – well, literally a few minutes, as you can probably tell:

How to split test quickly and easily:

In just a few moments you'll discover how split testing can change your life!
Just enter your name and email into the form below to receive your details.

First Name

Email

We hate spam as much as you.

Now, it clearly captures people's name and email address, but let's face it, you're probably not hanging off the edge of your seat wondering what mysterious secrets lie beyond the "subscribe" button. (And what does, "We hate spam as much as you" mean, anyway?)

So then, what would be my first A/B test on this squeeze page?

What I'd tweak is...

Everything!

I know a lot of people (including myself) tell you to change *only one thing at a time*, but quite frankly if your squeeze page is as bad as the one I just threw together in 2 minutes, the first thing I'd test is this version versus a completely re-written version, with all the triggers that I'll discuss shortly.

... In other words, do a "brute force" attack on your squeeze page's copy!

If you can afford it, get a copywriter to re-write the entire copy, with the aim of raising the subscription rate. (Don't let them talk you into rewriting your sales letter *just yet* – the priority is your squeeze page for now. If they do a good job of your squeeze page – based on the increase in subscriptions - then you could consider using them to rewrite your sales letter... *if* they do a good job on your squeeze page.)

If you can't afford a copywriter, then create a re-written version using the ideas I share below.

Test your current version versus this re-written version in an A/B test, but most important of all... **do not end the test prematurely!** Wait until you have at least 30 subscriptions, and preferably 50.

One of the biggest mistakes I see split testers make all the time is prematurely ending their tests because they see one version is "ahead" at 4/7. With so few actions, it's easy for the results to flip after a few more actions... so don't end the test early. Have the discipline to see it to the end.

Power Split Tester will tell you whether your re-written version is an improvement over your current one, and at what confidence level. You're ideally looking for a 90% confidence level, although 95% is better. (This means we could be wrong about the conclusion just 5% of the time.)

Although 99% is the ideal confidence level, quite frankly this will be very difficult to achieve with a sample of 50 subscribers.

7. The key "squeeze page" elements

Here's the **four** key elements to a good squeeze page...

A. Your headline

Let's say I was offering the report you're reading now, in exchange for someone's email address, from a squeeze page. The headline, "How to split test quickly and easily" is a bit boring, isn't it?

Let's see if we can come up with something a bit better.

What is the biggest benefit of reading this report?

Well, it shows how anyone can split test, even if they have just 10 visitors a day.

Yes, that's what it does... but how does it benefit the reader? What's in it for them?

OK... well by split testing early on, they can grow their revenue and sales more quickly, meaning quicker growth.

Better... now translate that into something that your visitor can feel and perhaps even get excited about.

Well, quicker growth and more profits means more income to spend, and to enjoy the luxuries of life... more vacations, more time with the family... you know what I mean?

Great... now convey all that in a couple of headline.

"How To Take Your Site From Instant Profits To Insane Growth In 30 Days..."

Not brilliant, but perhaps better than the original.

Or you could try putting fear into your visitors...

"Are You Making These *Fatal* Mistakes On Your Site?..."

Either way, remember that the purpose of a headline is to grab attention. So make sure your headline does exactly that.

It *doesn't* have to be a mini-essay. It just needs to grab the visitor's attention, so they will read...

B. Your "blurb" and "bullet points"

The "blurb" is basically the words on your squeeze page - what "sells" the subscription.

A good way of thinking about it is to treat a squeeze page as a *mini sales*

letter for your subscription.

That's why having "bullet points" is a good idea, as they can contain brief *reasons* why they should subscribe, and the benefits of doing so.

If you can't think of many good reasons why a visitor should sign up, then the key is perhaps not in the wording of your squeeze page as such... perhaps you need to improve your actual offering!

C. Privacy policy

"We hate spam as much as you"? I'll admit, that's pathetic. Just because I hate spam, doesn't mean I *won't* spam!

Put some *meat* into your privacy policy, for goodness sake!

Many people may be wary of giving out their email address precisely *because* their email box has been abused by spammers and overzealous marketers.

Tell them *precisely* what they'll be receiving when they sign up.

D. Images

Several top marketers and copywriters are re-discovering the importance of images. If you're anywhere near as good looking as me (probably not!), consider adding a picture of yourself to your squeeze page, to give it that human touch.

One marketer has discovered that having a picture of himself standing and pointing to the subscription button converted the best.

Others have also found that having a caption underneath your images can often improve conversions.

8. A reminder on the importance of traffic

Now, I'm not saying you shouldn't be getting more traffic while your test is

running... of course you should!

I wrote this report primarily to show people that they *can* still test with just 10 visitors a day.

However, assuming your current squeeze page (your **control**) has a 10% conversion rate, and that the **variation** is at least as good, it may still take you between 30 and 45 days to get a decent enough sample of subscribers!

Plus, there's no guarantee that your variation *will* be a significant enough improvement – although if your copywriter hasn't been able to raise your squeeze page's conversion rate, consider *not* using them again!

So more traffic will definitely speed up the whole process. For example, if you had 50 visitors a day, and an average 10% subscription rate conversion, you could get a decent test sample of 50 subscribers within about 10 days.

In fact, you could now test *several* versions at the same time!

To give each variation a chance, you'd still need to get enough subscriptions between the control and each variation – preferably 50 in total. That means about 25 subscriptions per version.

So you could test 5 different versions (including your control), in which you'd need 125 subscriptions. With an average conversion rate of 10% and 50 visitors a day, that would mean bringing in 1,250 visitors over 25 days – which is quite an achievable target for even a fairly new site.

9. Deciding your second, third, fourth A/B tests...

The *real* challenge of split testing is actually deciding what to test! After all, it would be great if we could know in advance which tests were going to do well, and which were going to do nothing or reduce conversions.

But then, we wouldn't need to test, would we?

Once you've done a “brute force” copywriting job on your squeeze page, what then?

That's no reason to stop testing. While your visitor to subscription rate is less than 100%, there's always room for improvement!

Here are some suggestions to generate ideas on what to test next...

(a) Study some of the works of the "squeeze" masters.

As of the time of writing, Eben Pagan was using a squeeze page for his dating course at <http://www.doubleyourdating.com>. I've heard his squeeze page has a conversion rate somewhere around the 60% or 80% level. Ask yourself why you think this is the case.

If you're not interested in dating hot women (and who is, eh?) then find some sites that do interest you, find the ones with squeeze pages, and see what motivates you to sign up or not. If you didn't sign up, ask yourself what stopped you.

Also, think back to the last 3 email subscriptions to which you signed up, and ask yourself, what motivated you to do so? If possible, go back and study their pitch, to see if you can identify what compelled you to subscribe.

(b) Think like a new, skeptical visitor.

Put yourself in the shoes of a fresh new visitor. Would you sign up to your offering? Of course you would, right?... because *you* wrote it!

Forget being *you* for a moment – put aside your big ego - and think of all the reasons your visitor might choose *not* to subscribe.

List them.

Now, if you can come up with a squeeze page that can "slam-dunk" all these "objections", then you'll have a winner!

(c) Ask visitors, using a Feedback Seeker™ with Intelligent Response

I love my [Feedback Seeker](#) program, because not only does it allow me to gather anonymous feedback from visitors (who probably wouldn't have bothered to comment by email), but it can respond intelligently, based on the

feedback given!

So on my squeeze pages, I usually ask people, "What would motivate you to subscribe today?" or "What is the main reason you're hesitant to subscribe?"

There are two benefits to doing this:

1. I get amazing insights into why some people aren't subscribing, such as this one comment left by an anonymous visitor to my [Profit Pull System](#) website:

"50 parts sounds like a lot. I'd rather read it all in one go and keep my train of thought. I want to know, too, whether you're just gathering my name to use it to sell endless offers from your "best friends" in the business."

Believe me, these anonymous comments are invaluable, because I actually discover *precisely* why someone isn't subscribing – no need to guess!

And they give me lots of new ideas to test. For example, the comment above gave me the idea of testing a squeeze page that *didn't* mention that my Profit Pull System email series was in 50 parts. And also it suggested I should improve the "What I'll do with your email" details.

Plus...

2. I get to overcome their objection!

I can program my Feedback Seeker to respond differently, based on what they type in. So if my anonymous visitor above thought it was "a lot", my Feedback Seeker could automatically respond, offering perhaps a shorter, more infrequent version.

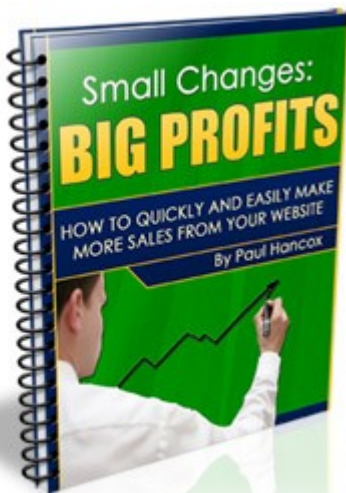
Slap a [Feedback Seeker](#) on your squeeze page, and say to your visitors that, if they decide *not* to subscribe, could they leave a brief note as to *why*. The feedback alone will be worth a huge amount to you – and you'll get a chance to respond automatically, based on their feedback!

10. Now start testing!

Now you know how to split test even with just 10 visitors a day, what are you waiting for? Oh yes... for me to stop talking.

Go grab yourself some proper split testing [software](#), and start boosting your subscriptions and profits!

Further Reading



If you'd like to discover everything you need to know about your conversion rate, the different methods and risks of testing, plenty of ideas you can test, and much more... then you'll enjoy reading my 150 page ebook, Small Changes: Big Profits (2008 Edition), considered by many to be the "Bible" of testing.

www.SmallChangesBigProfits.com

"Small Changes, Big Profits" should be required reading for anyone who sells anything online. And yes, you can quote me on that.

Paul Myers
TalkBizNews.com