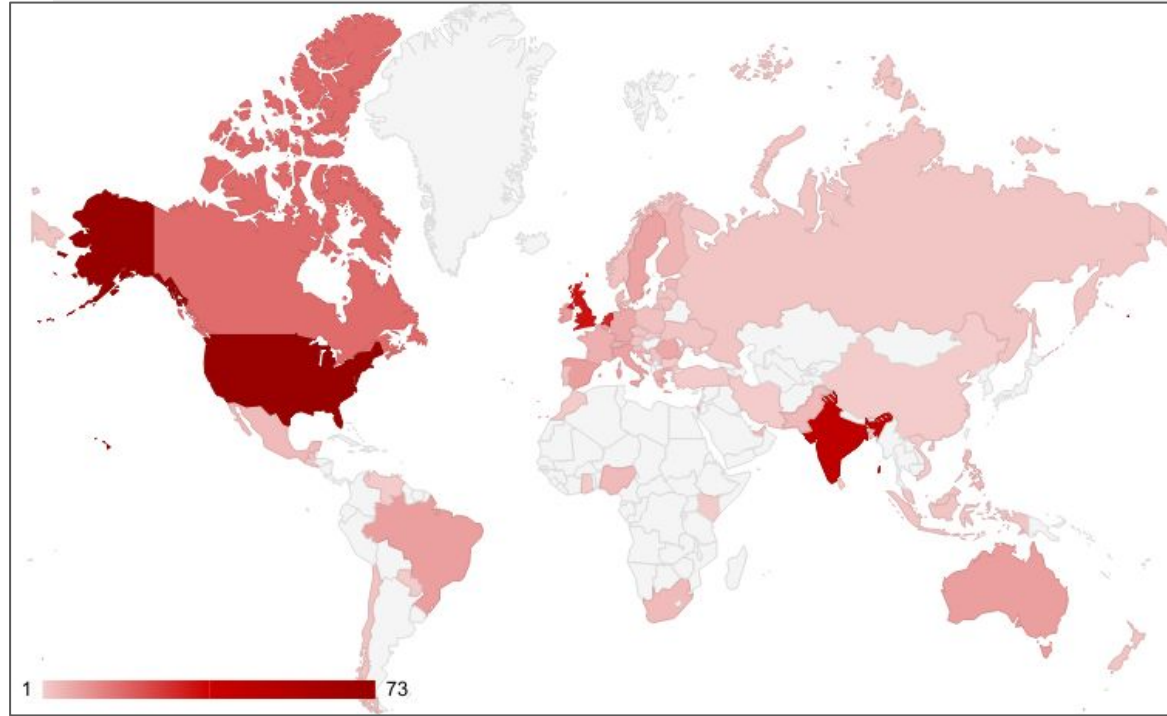


State of Conversion Optimization 2020

399 respondents, 64 countries and territories

Some 73 respondents came from the United States, the most of any single country. India (47), the UK (34), and the Netherlands (30) trailed.

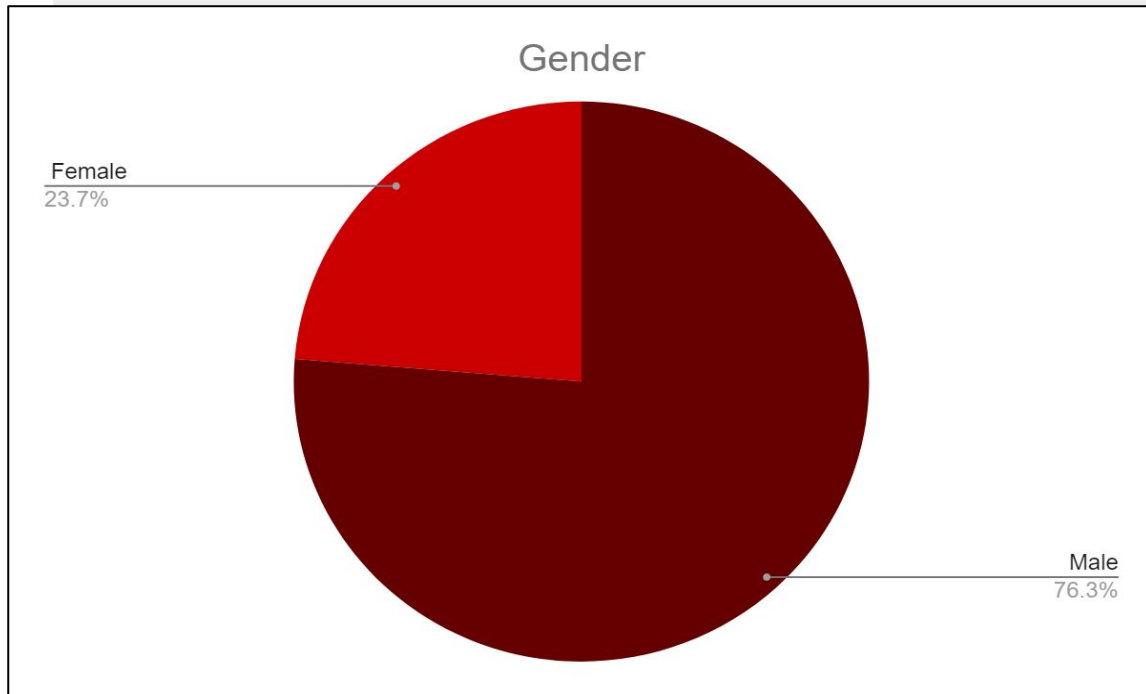
Just shy of one quarter of all responses came from Asia and Australia combined.



Gender

As found in previous surveys, nearly three in four conversion optimization practitioners identify as male.

Even among younger cohorts (<30, <25), the gender breakdown was similar (77% and 70%, respectively).

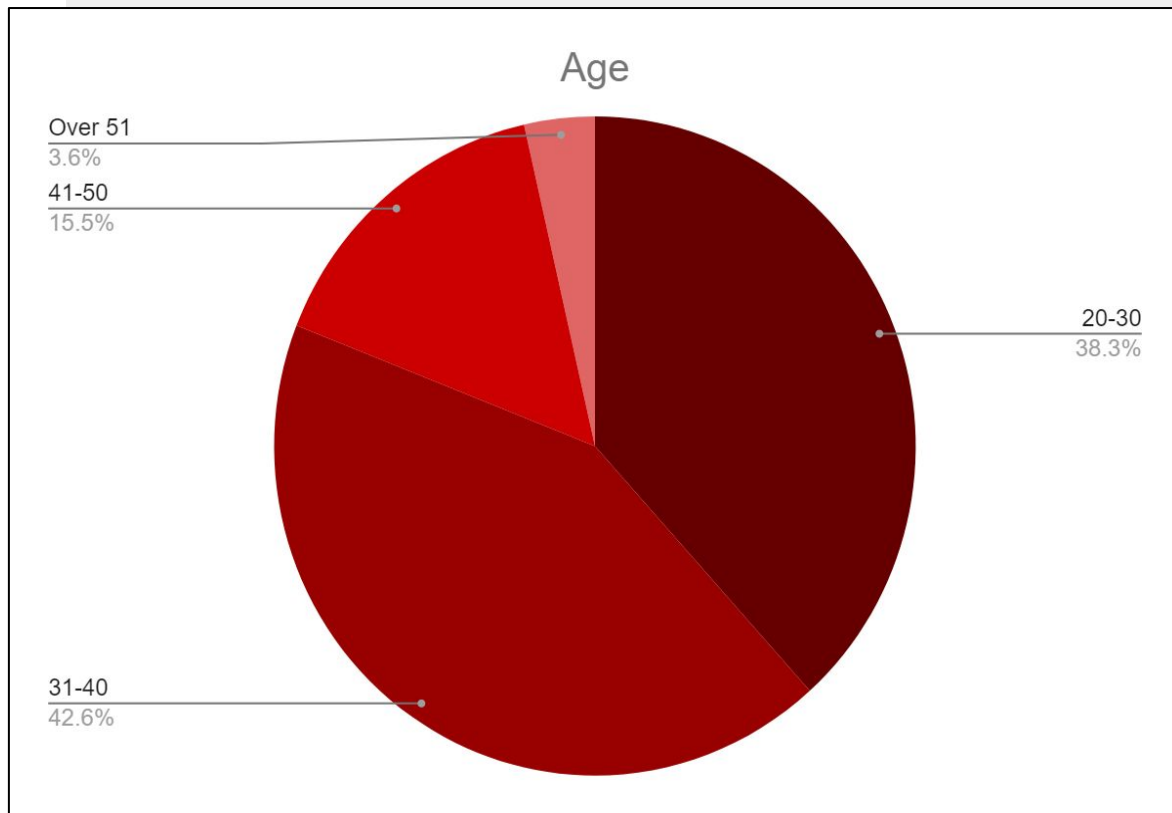


Age

Conversion optimization remains a relatively young industry.

Over the last several years, the average (and median) practitioner has been in their early 30s.

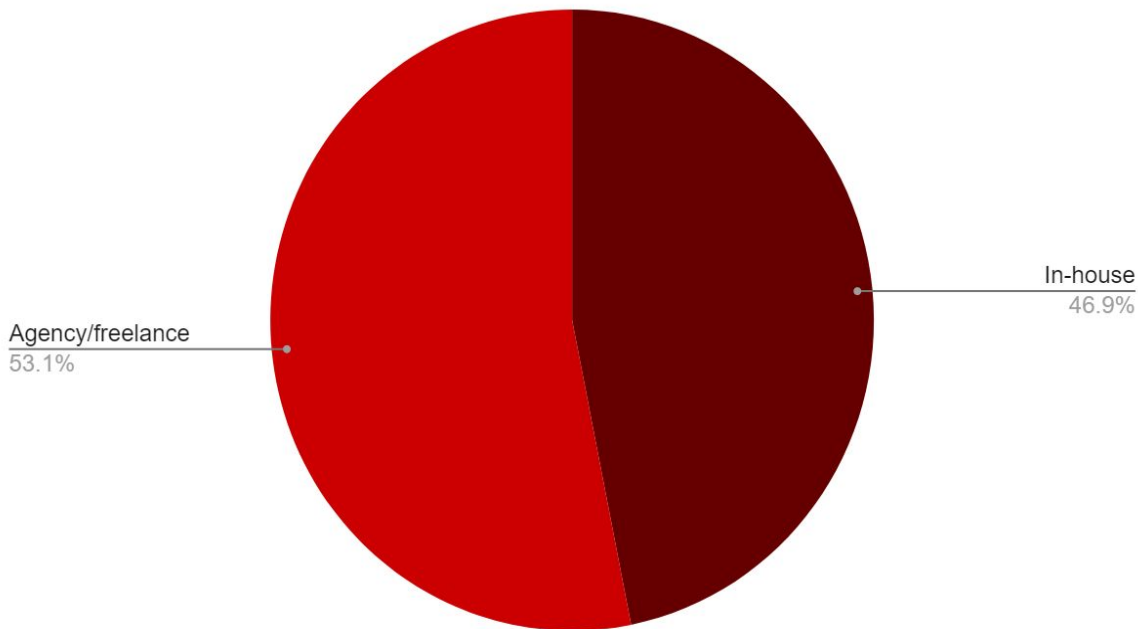
This year, the average age (34) increased slightly compared to last year. The median age was 33.



Agency vs. in-house

As with last year, we had a nearly even split between agency/freelance and in-house practitioners.

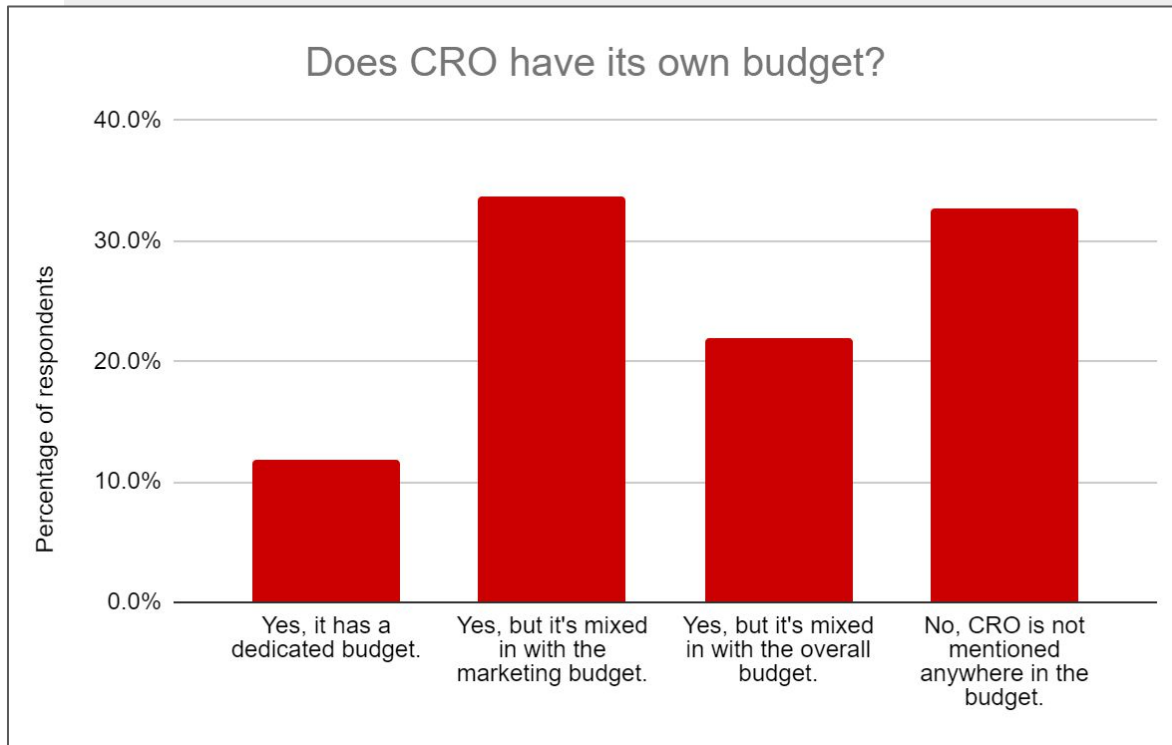
What type of conversion optimization (CRO) work do you do?



In-house budgets

In-house CRO teams had their own budget over 55% of the time, though rarely as a line item.

Just over 10% of conversion optimization programs had a dedicated budget.

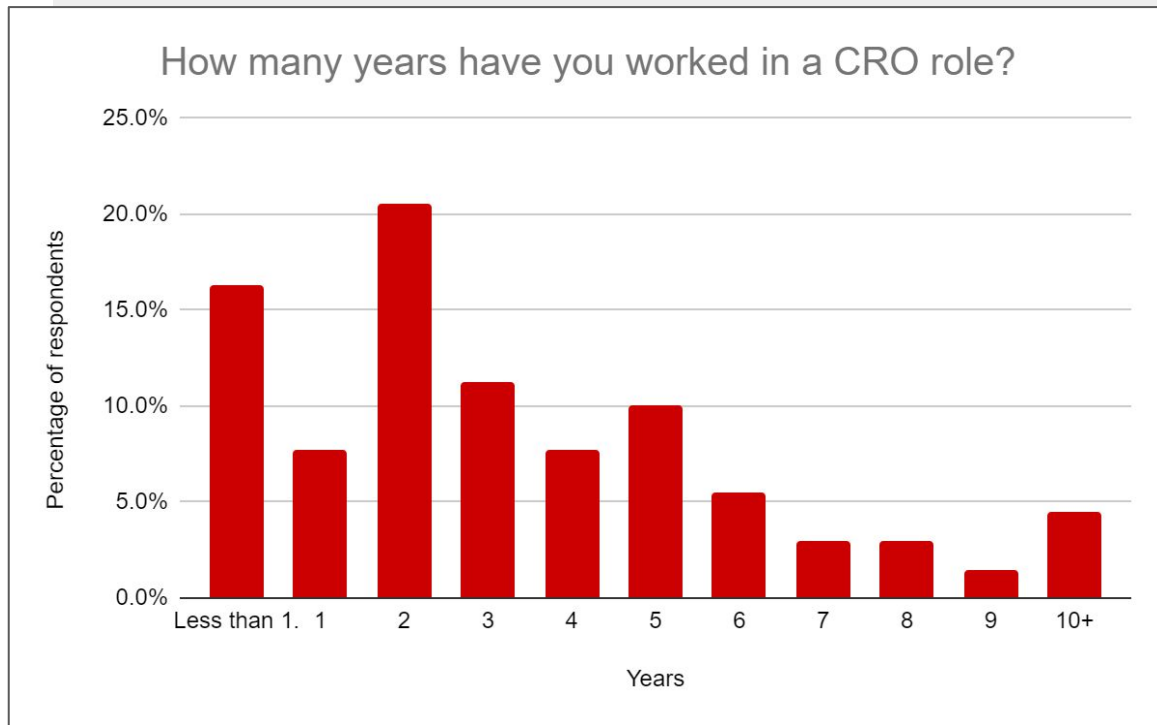


CRO experience

While the CRO industry continues to mature, the bulk of practitioners have limited experience.

Roughly 56% of optimizers have no more than three years of experience.

Finding optimizers with 6+ years of experience remains a challenge for agencies and in-house teams.



Average salaries

Salary ranges were similar to previous years, with an average salary of \$62,845, compared to \$64,226 in 2019.

The slight downward trend resulted from a higher percentage of respondents from lower-income countries.

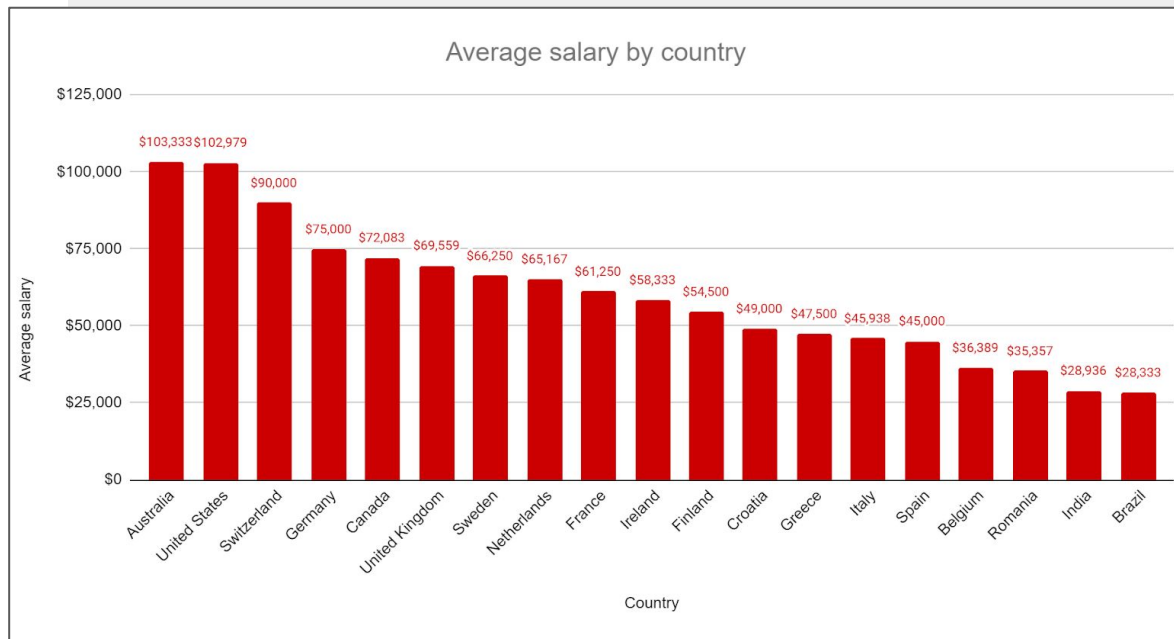
Nearly 1 in 5 optimizers reported earning six figures.



Average salary by country

Retaking the lead from Switzerland, which led last year, Australia had the highest average salary at \$103,333.

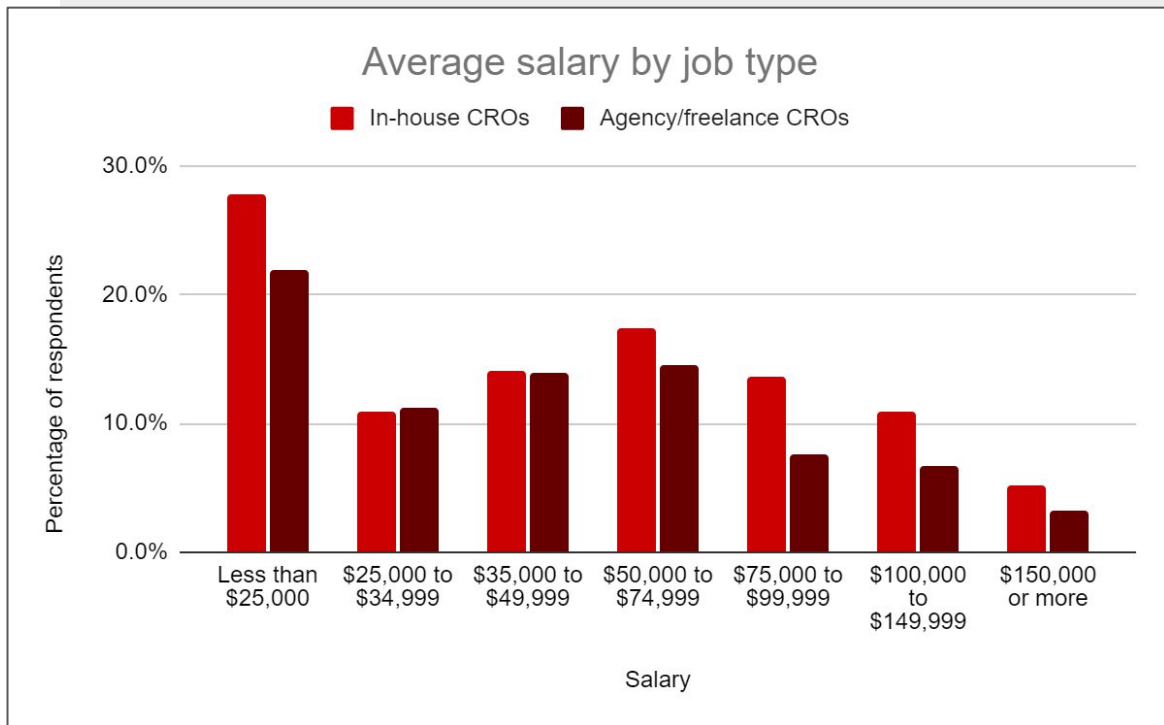
Australia, the United States, and Switzerland were the only countries to report an average salary above \$90,000.



Average salary by job type

In-house CROs continue to earn more than their agency counterparts, especially at higher salary ranges.

Compared to last year, there were more entry-level, in-house CRO roles, perhaps attributable to the growth of free testing tools like Google Optimize.

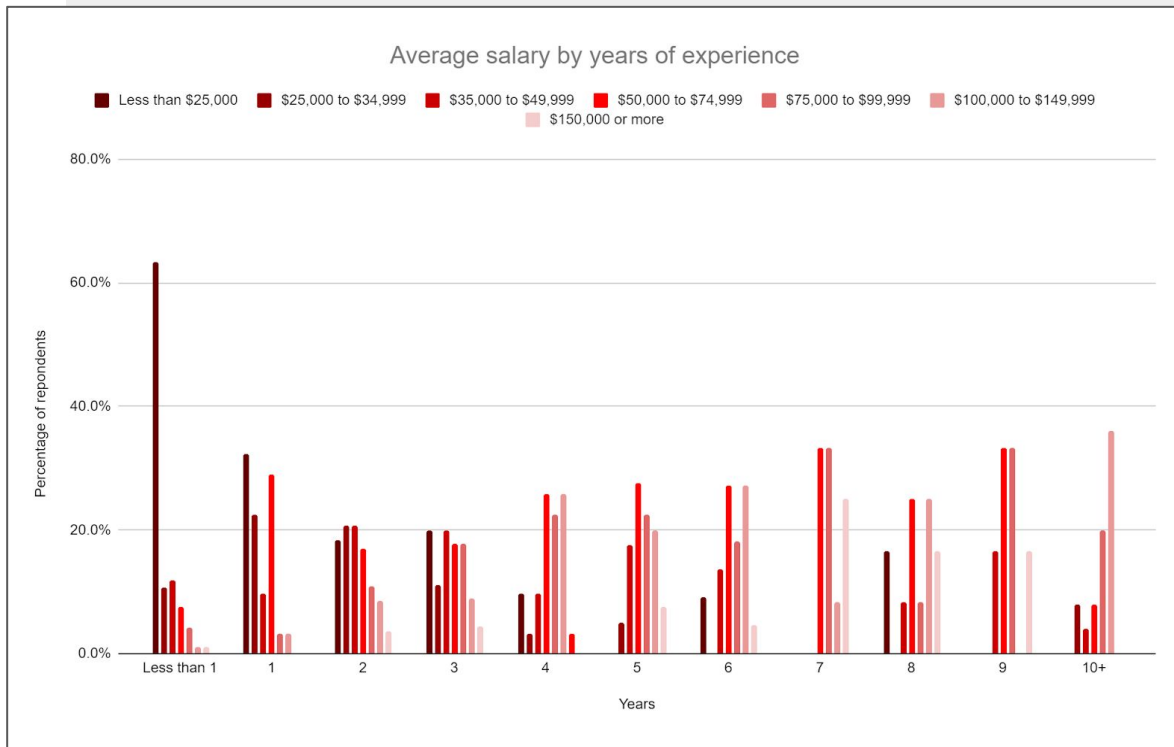


Average salary by experience

Experienced CROs are in high demand—and businesses pay top dollar for their expertise.

For those with 7+ years of experience, roughly 50% reported earning more than six figures per year.

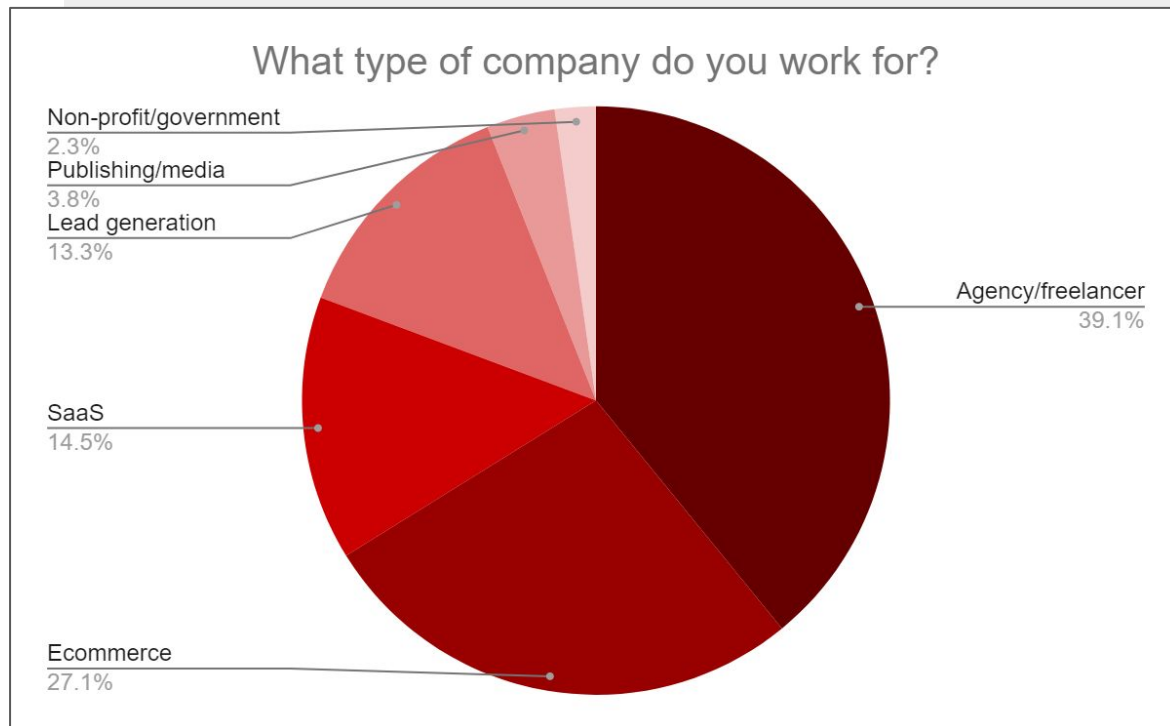
It pays to be good at what you do.



Industries

Nearly 40% of respondents work in an agency or freelance setting. For in-house roles, ecommerce and SaaS combined accounted for about 41% of respondents.

Non-profit and government organizations remain the smallest piece of the pie.

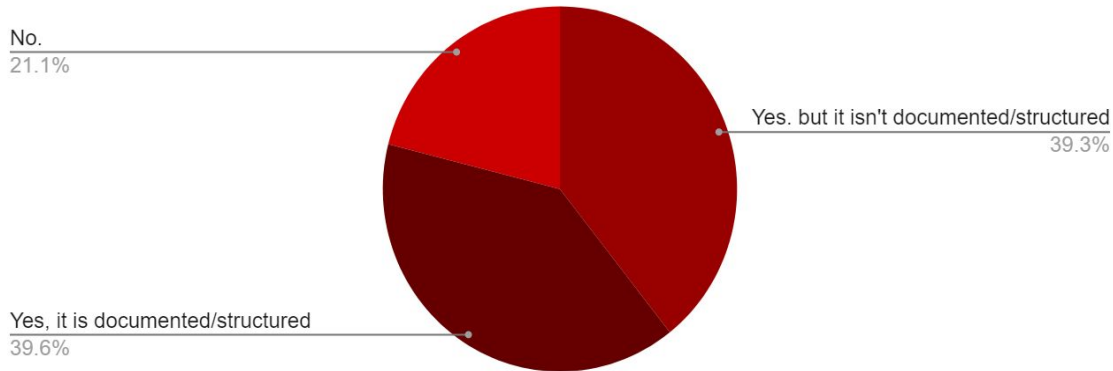


Process

While it's encouraging to see that 4 in 5 report having a conversion optimization process, nearly 2 in 5 say it's not documented or structured.

About 1 in 5 reported not following a conversion optimization process at all.

Does your team follow a process for conversion optimization?

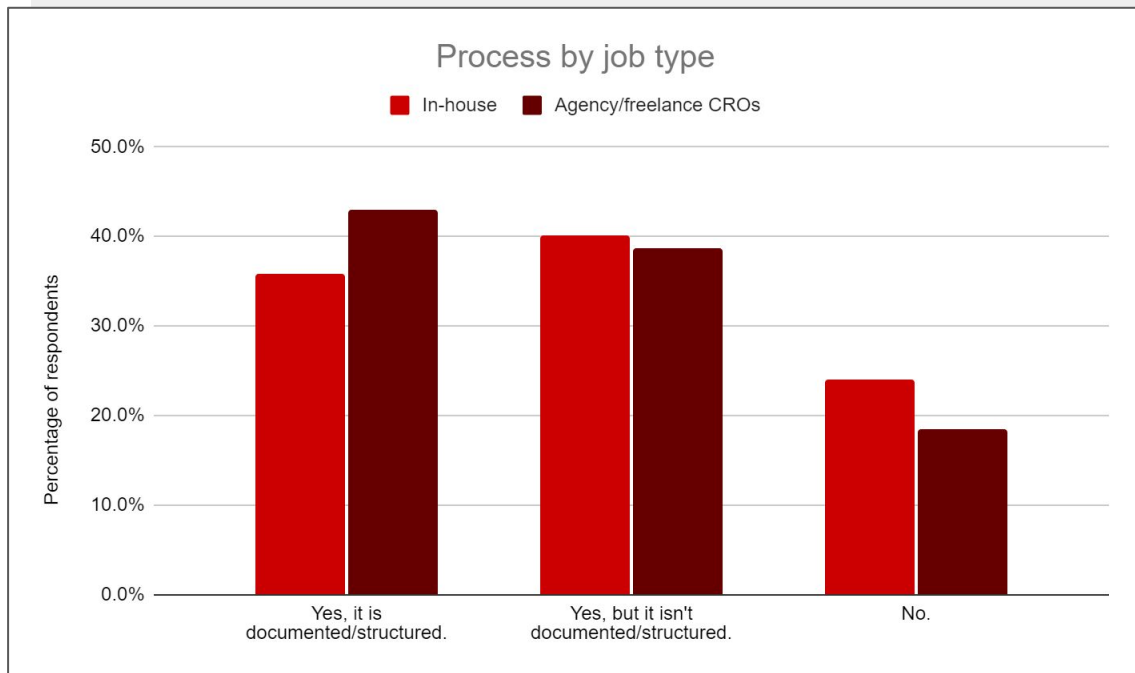


Process by job type

Agencies and freelancers use a documented, structured process more often, but in-house folks are catching up.

Some 18.4% of agency/freelance CROs reported not having a process, up roughly 50% from last year.

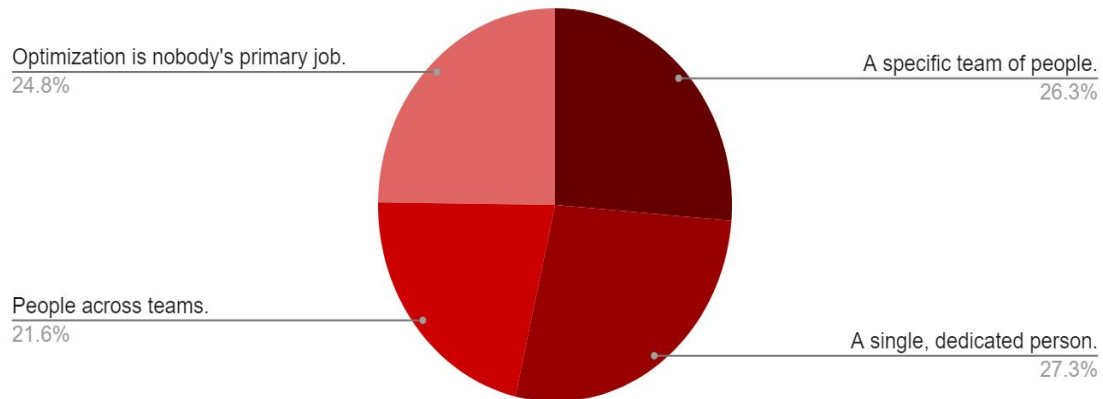
New entrants to the field means new processes to establish.



Team structures

CRO teams remain split almost evenly among several setups: individuals, cross-team groups, a specific team of people, and everyone's favorite: "Optimization is nobody's primary job."

Who does optimization in your organization?

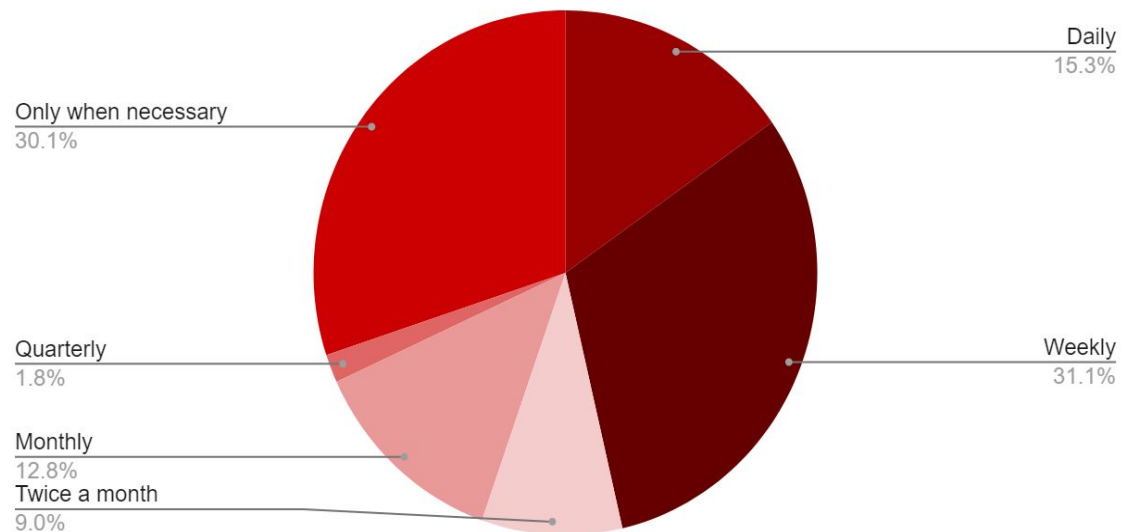


CRO meetings

Nearly one third meet weekly, while another third meet only when necessary, a stark contrast.

Approximately 15.3% meet daily, with the rest choosing to meet quarterly, or once or twice a month.

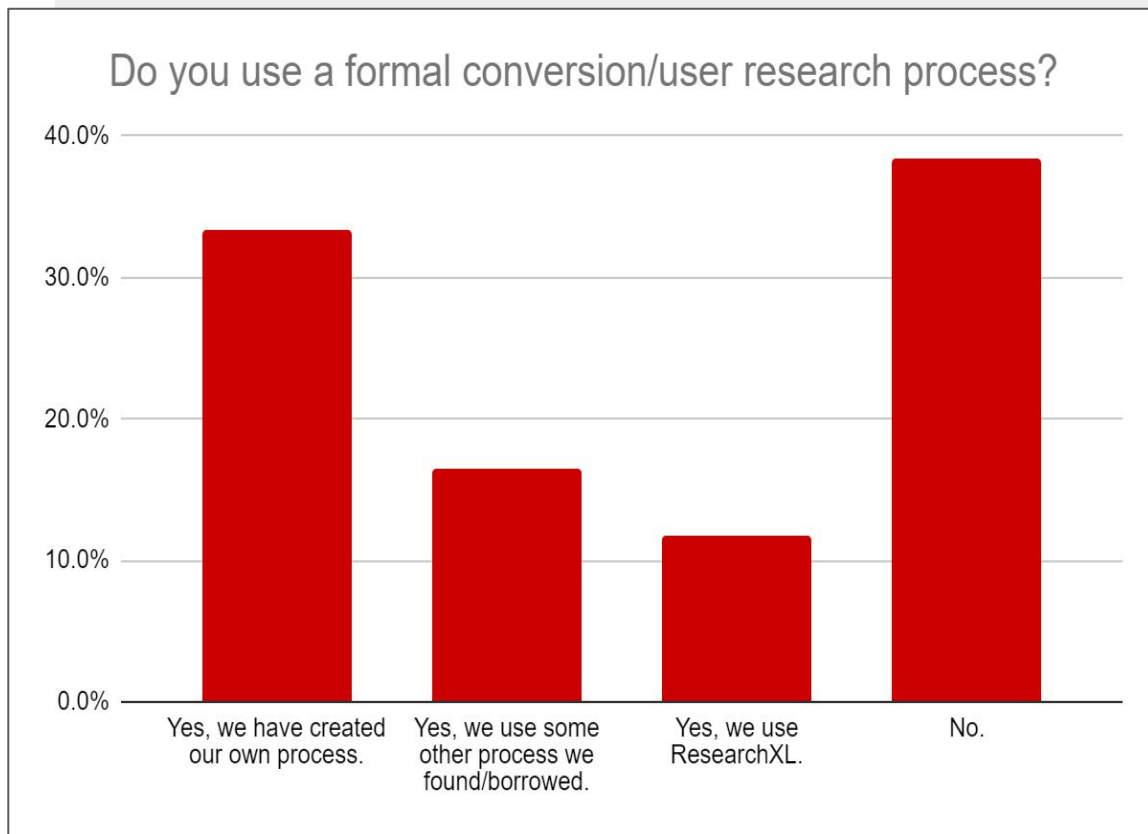
How often do you meet with others on your optimization team to discuss CRO?



Research processes

Of those with a formal conversion/user research process, some 54% report having created their own process.

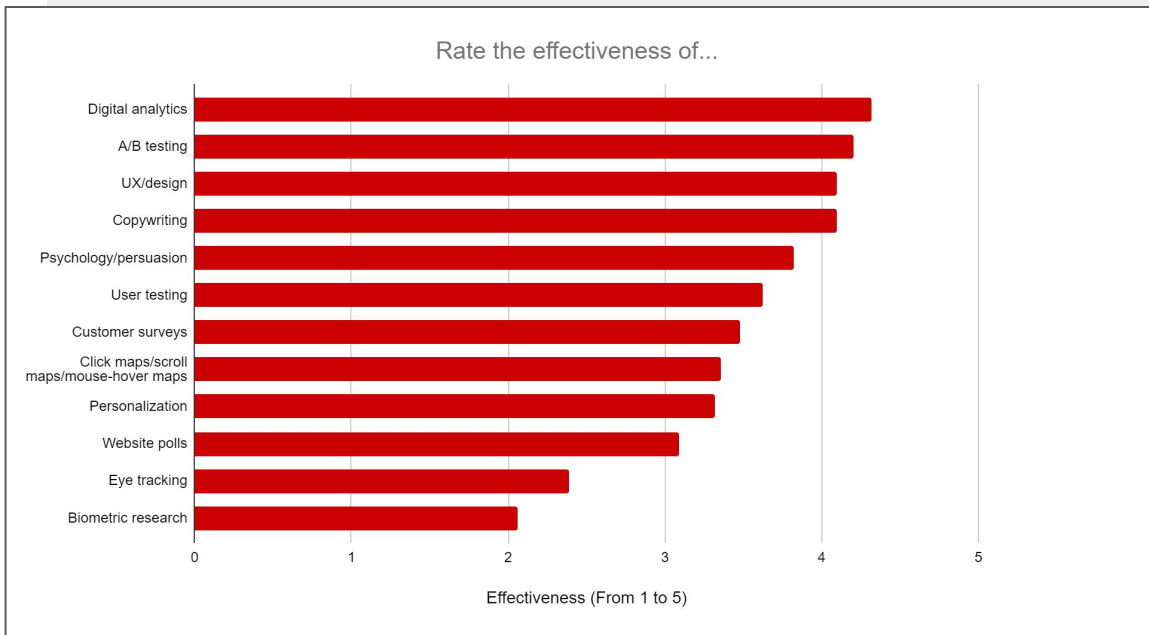
As with last year, roughly 1 in 3 CROs still has no process at all for conversion research.



What works?

Digital analytics continue to be crucial to form and execute a conversion optimization strategy.

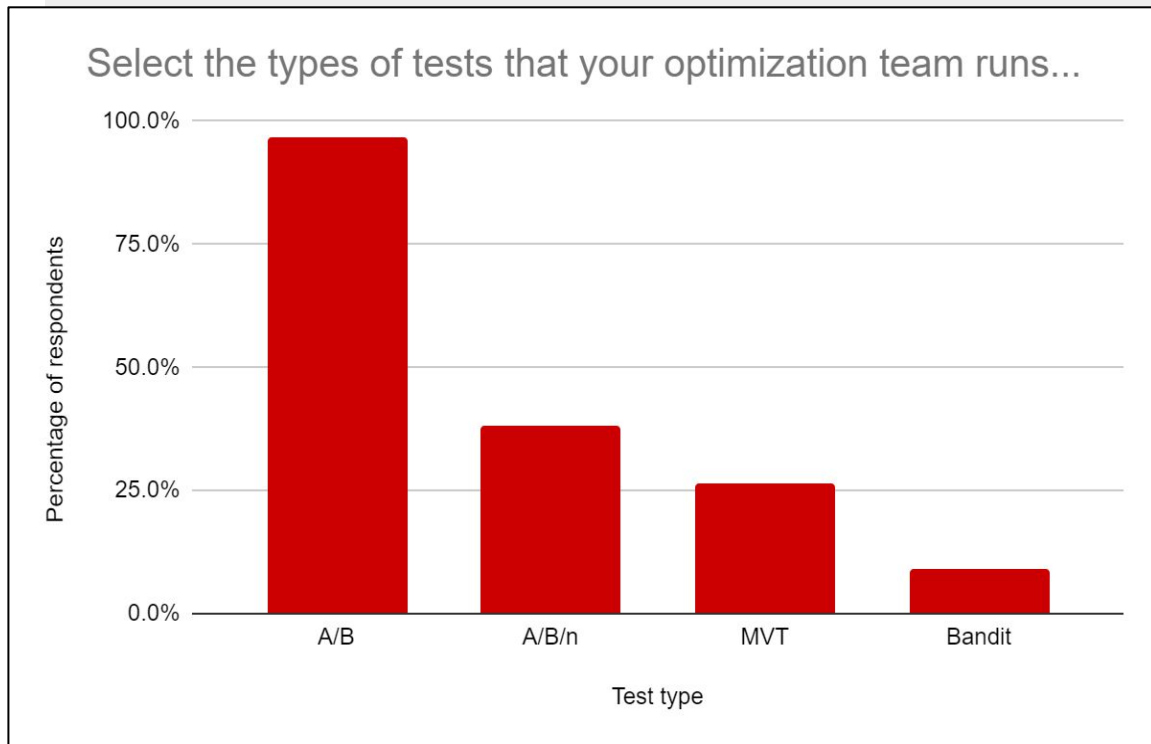
Aside from some minor fluctuations, there was little change in the effectiveness of CRO tactics.



Test types

No surprises here—almost everyone runs A/B tests. More than one third (38.1%) also test more than one variation.

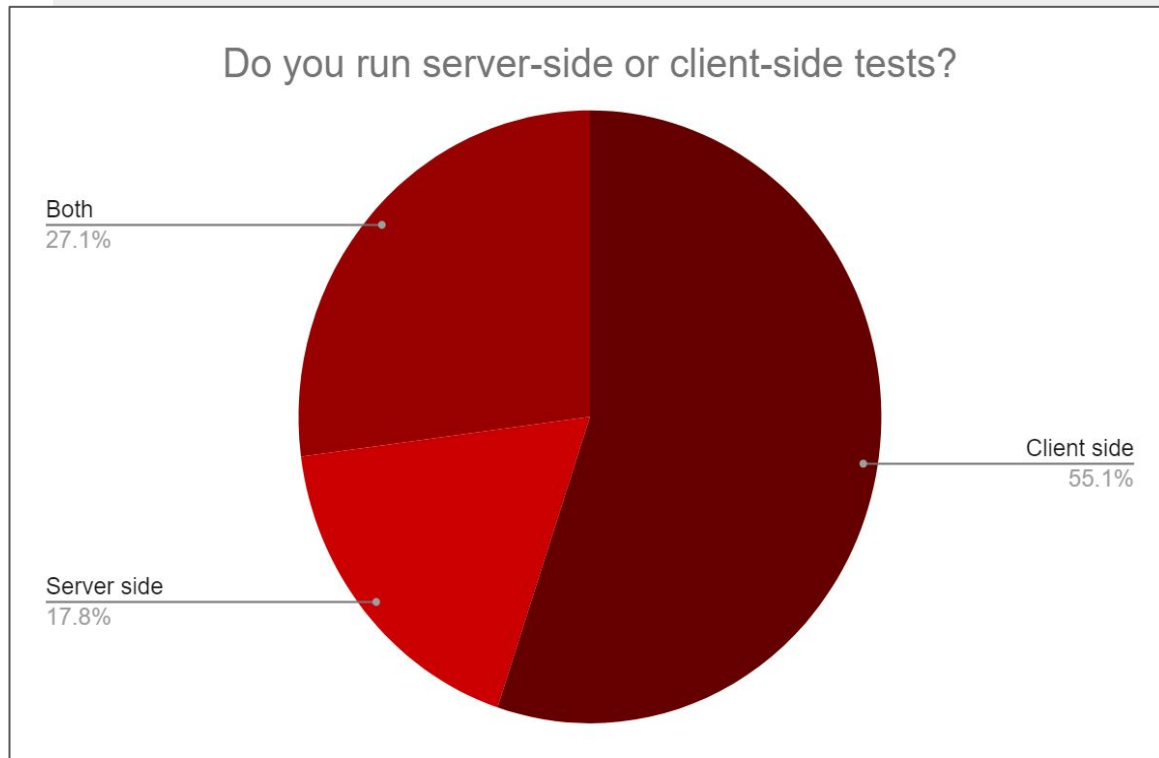
Multivariate and bandit tests continue to be the least-used tests.



Test setup

Client-side tests remain the most popular test setup.

Of those who don't run server-side tests, more than half (54.1%) said they were unsure if running server-side tests would benefit their testing program.



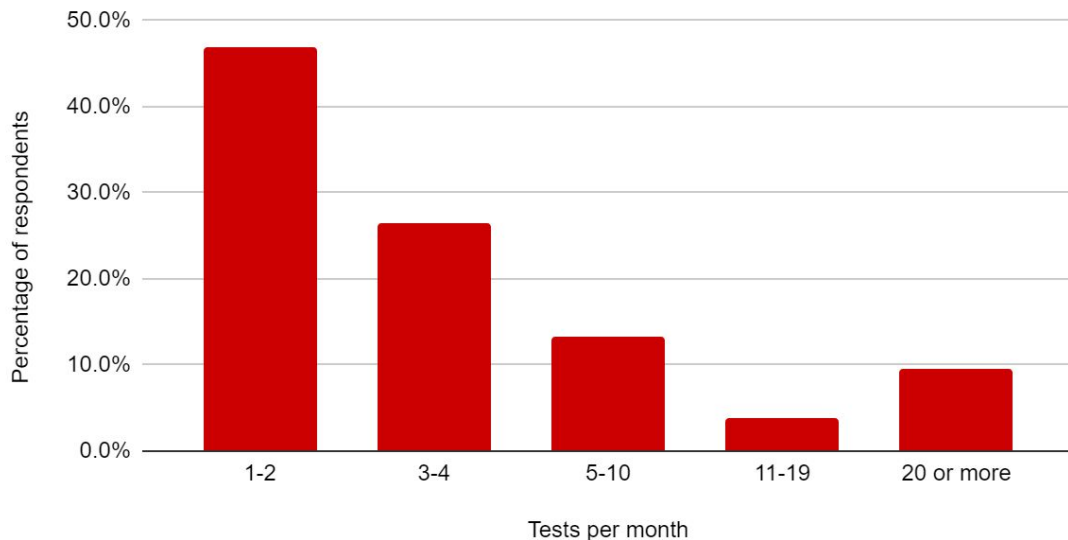
Test velocity

Running 1–2 tests per month was the most common testing velocity, with 46.9% of respondents falling into that category.

Some 9.5% of optimizers reported performing 20 or more tests per month.

For those who wanted to run more tests, lack of traffic was an oft-cited issue in open-ended responses.

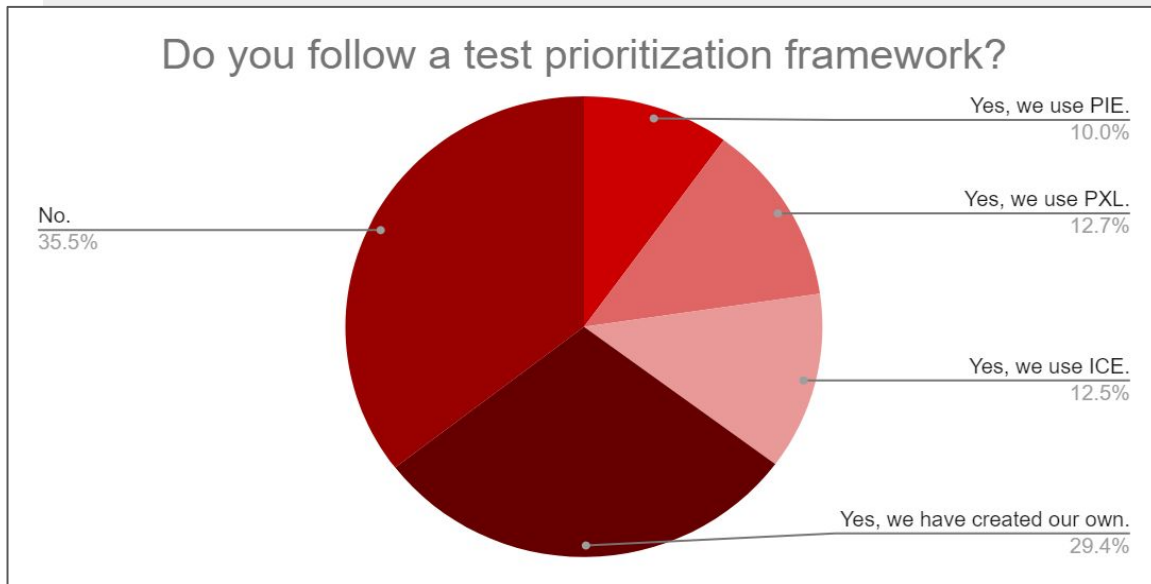
Approximately how many online experiments (tests) does your team run each month?



Test prioritization

More than 1 in 3 optimizers does not use a prioritization framework.

Of the remaining two thirds, some 29.4% use their own prioritization process.



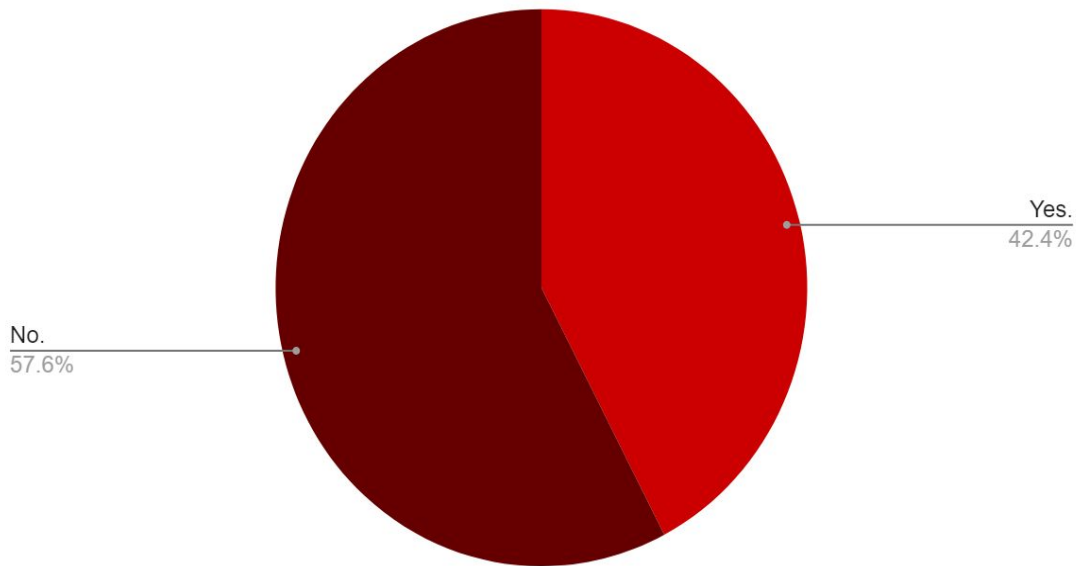
Stopping points for A/B tests

Not having a standardized stopping point for A/B tests remains common.

Some 57.6% report no standardized stopping point, an 8.1% increase over last year.

As in years past, several respondents noted difficulties with testing statistics and determining which results were statistically valid.

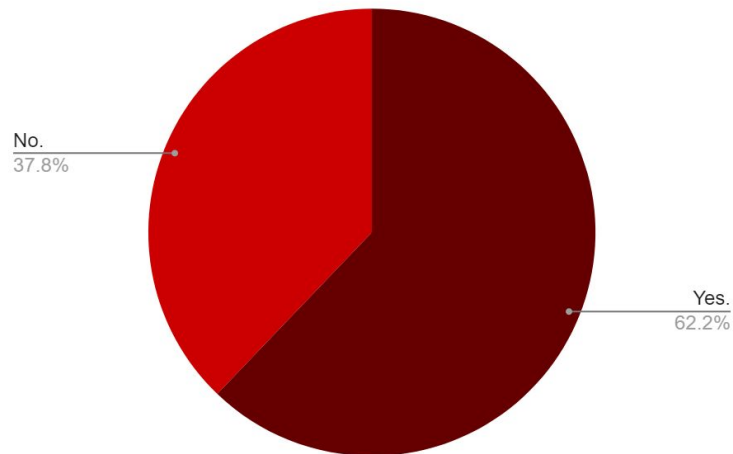
Does your optimization team have a standardized stopping point for A/B tests?



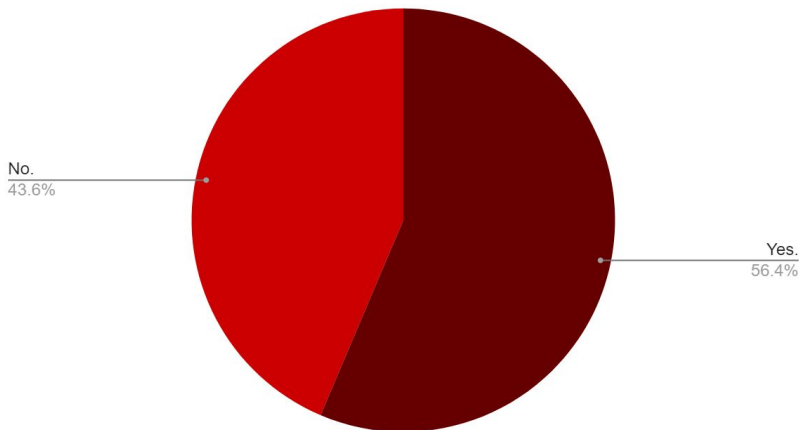
Tracking results

Most optimizers track the percentage of winning tests and the average uplift per test.

Is the percentage of winning tests tracked?



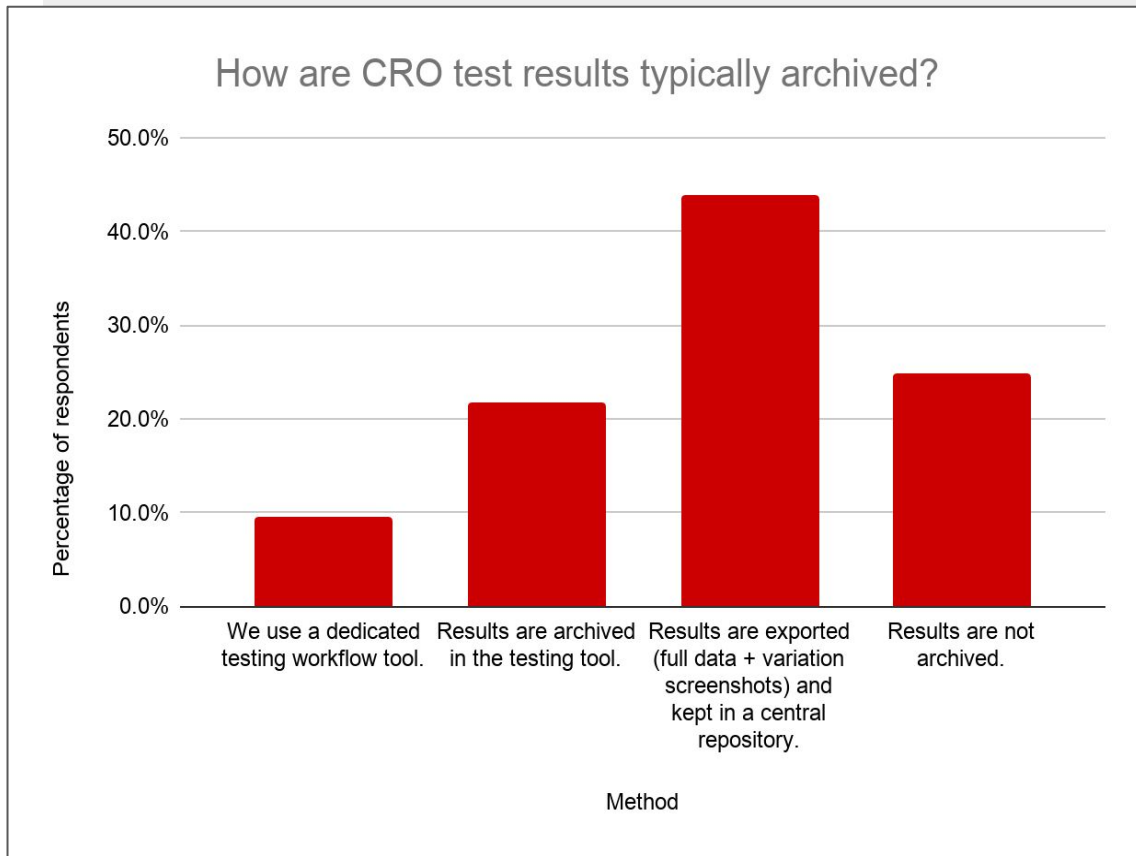
Is the average lift per test tracked?



Archiving tests

About 1 in 5 optimizers uses their testing tool to archive results; less than 10% rely on a dedicated testing workflow tool.

Of those who archive their results, exporting them to a central repository was the most popular method.

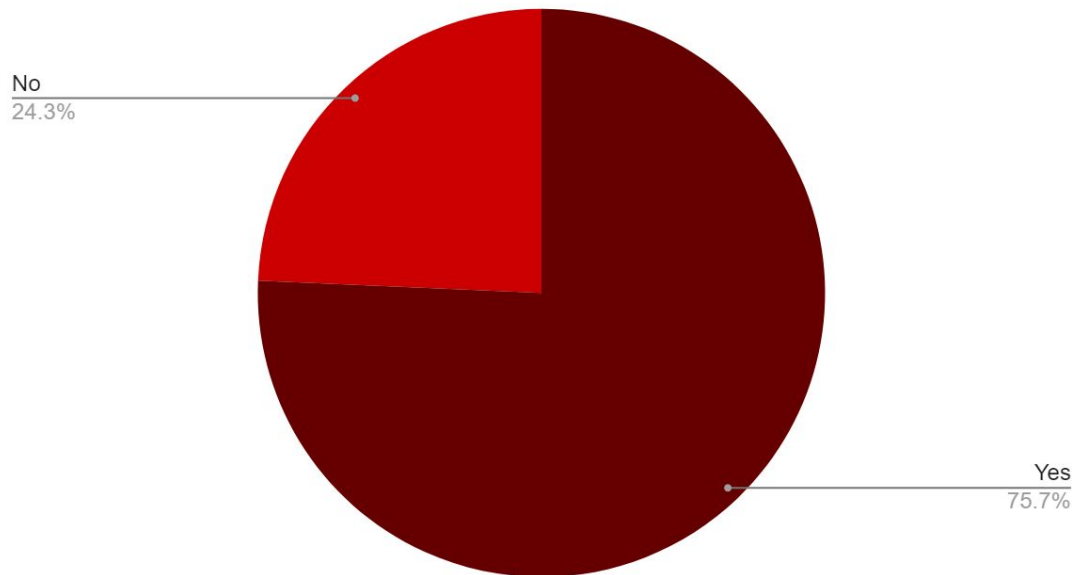


Sharing results

Compared to last year, when 83.2% of respondents said they shared test results, only 75.7% reported the same in 2020.

Nearly one quarter of optimizers said that test results were not shared with their team.

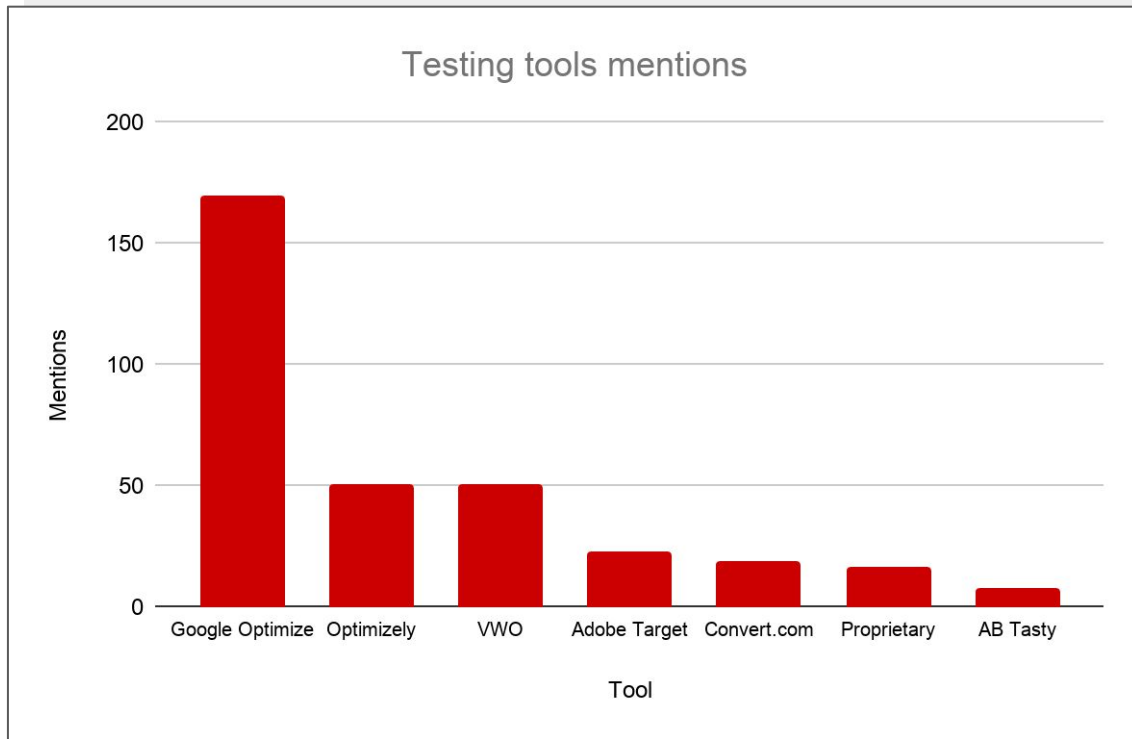
Are CRO test results shared across your team?



Testing tools

Google Optimize was the most popular testing tool by far. “Free” is incredibly enticing.

Testing tools Optimizely and VWO battled it out for second place—deadlocking at 51 mentions each.

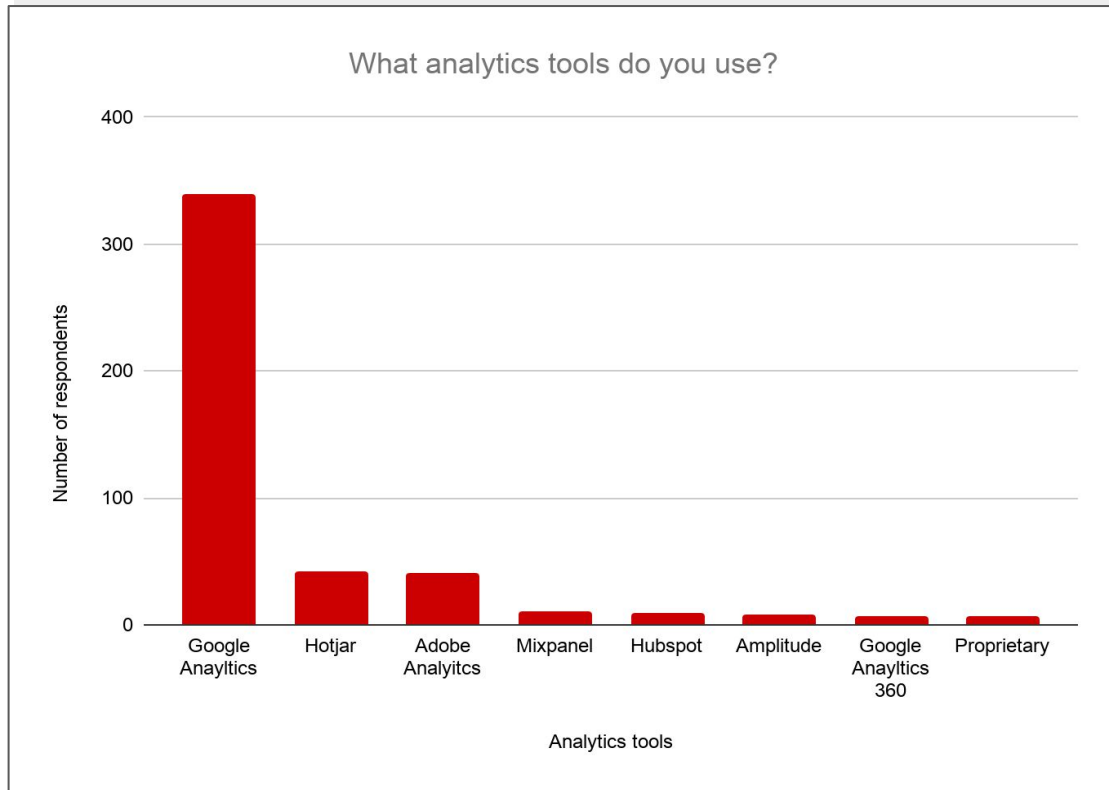


Analytics tools

It was no surprise to see that Google Analytics was the most mentioned tool.

It wasn't even close, with Adobe Analytics and Mixpanel trailing well behind.

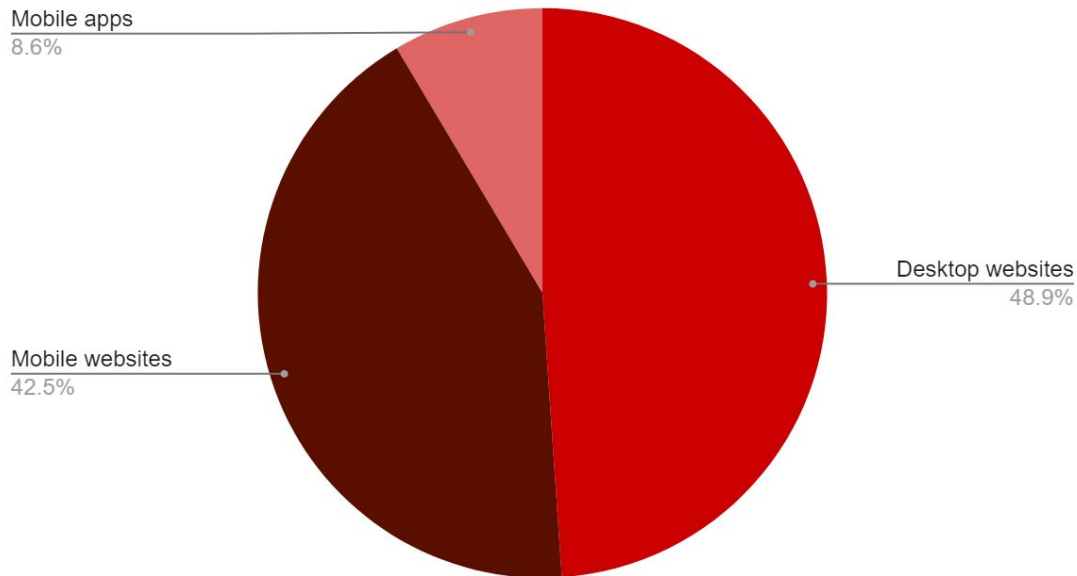
Hotjar led the way for mouse-tracking and heat-mapping analytics tools.



Platforms

Building on the trend from years past, optimizers continue to focus on websites, not apps.

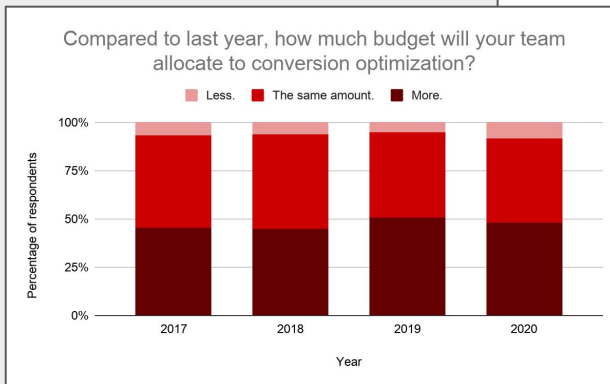
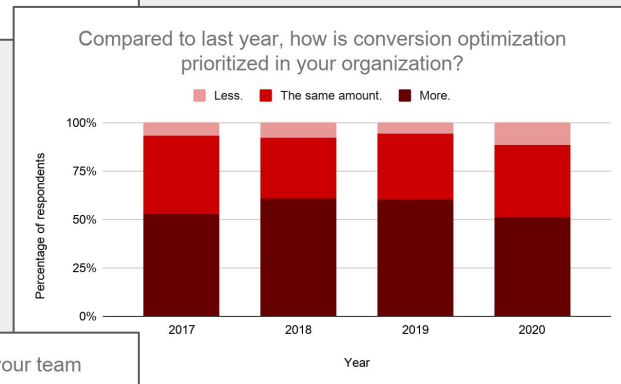
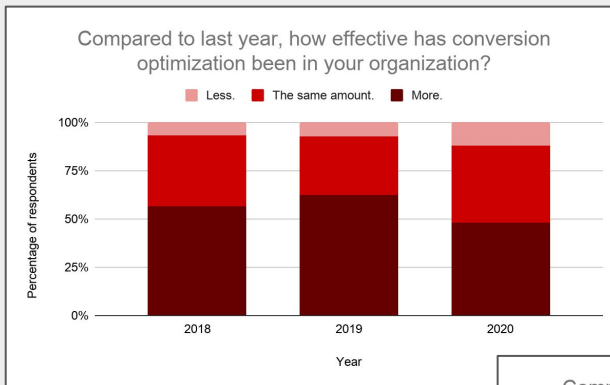
Which of the following platforms does your team optimize?



Year-over-year comparisons

This is the first year that conversion optimization was viewed as less effective, a lower priority, and likely to receive less budget compared to the previous year.

While economic uncertainty played a role, the plethora of new entrants may also have reduced the percentage of teams getting big wins.

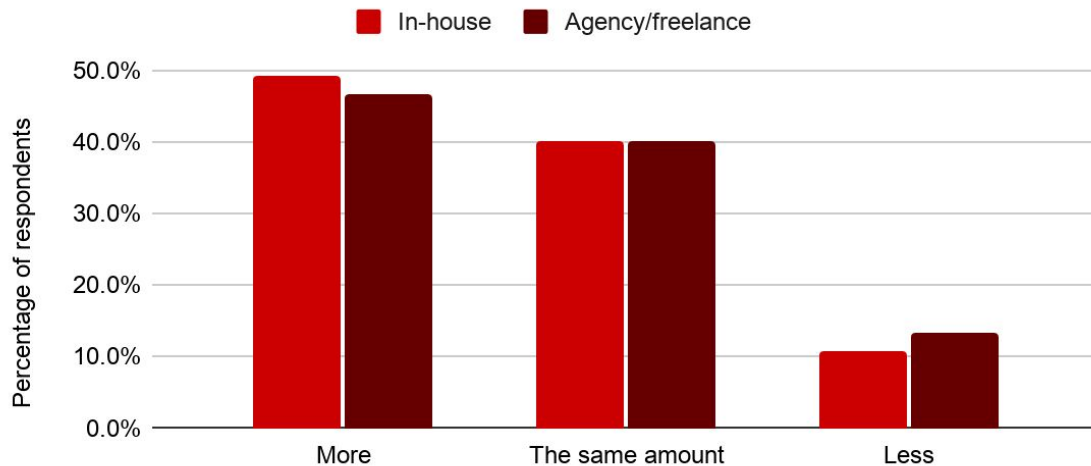


Effectiveness by job type

Compared to last year, agencies and freelancers were less optimistic about the effectiveness of their CRO efforts.

A slim majority felt that conversion optimization was no more effective—or even less effective—than the previous year.

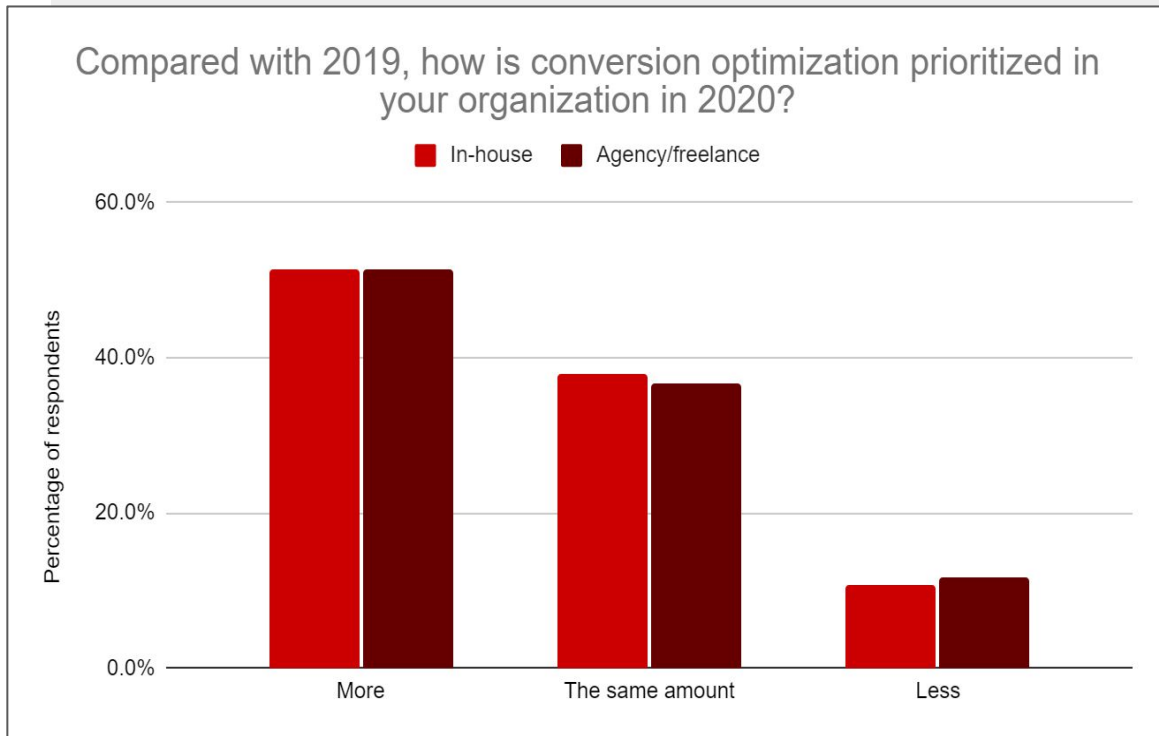
Compared with 2019, how effective has conversion optimization been in your organization in 2020?



Prioritization by job type

This year, more people reported that conversion optimization was less of a priority than in previous years.

Last year, only 5.6% said CRO was less of a priority compared to the year prior, while this year, some 11.5% said conversion optimization less of a priority.



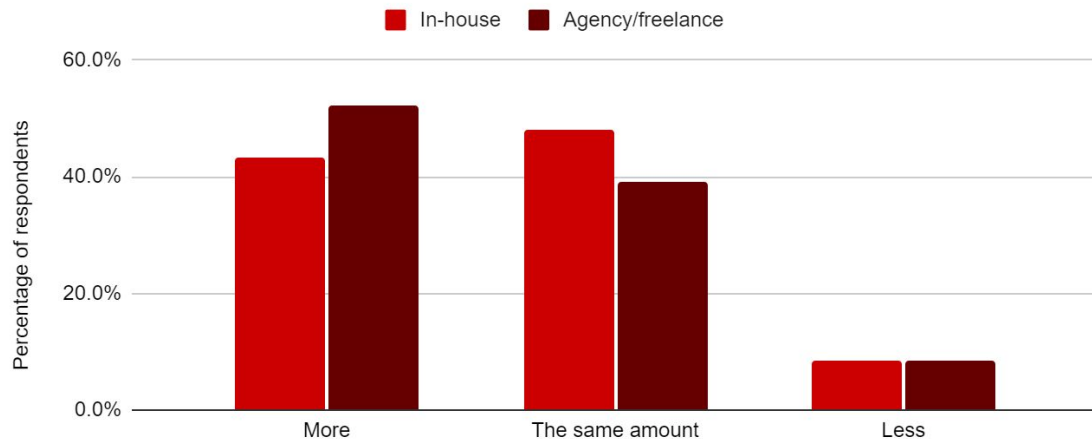
Budget by job type

Going into 2021, optimizers are slightly less optimistic about a budget increase.

Some 48.1% of in-house folks and 39.2% of freelancers believed they would receive the same amount.

Almost 10% in either setting expected a budget decrease in 2021.

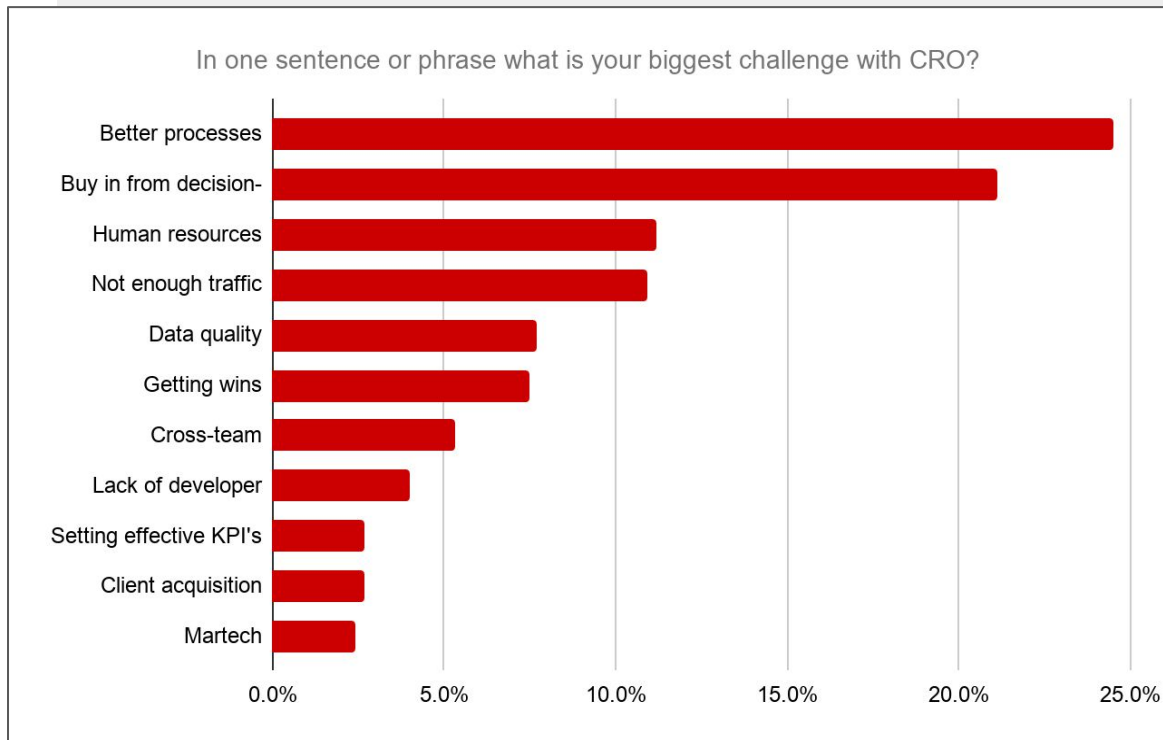
Compared with 2020, how much budget will your team allocate to conversion optimization in 2021?



CRO challenges

The two biggest challenges for CROs in 2019 return again this year: “better processes” and “buy in from decision-makers.”

Not enough traffic was also a pressing issue, mentioned by 10.9% of respondents.



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