



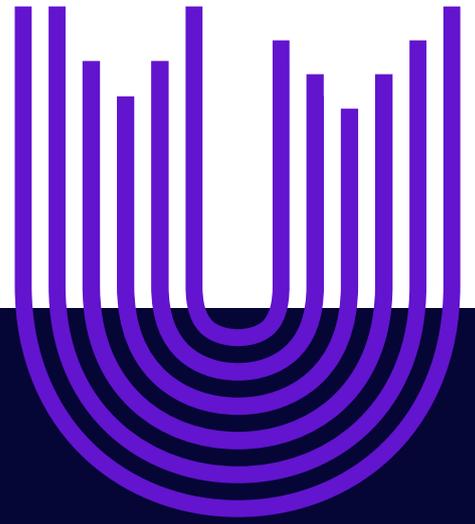
User Conversion

Which experimentation platform should you choose?*

*and how should you choose it

A robust framework on selecting an experimentation platform, why it is more difficult than first perceived, and hearing from each platform on their positioning

August 2020



Overview

There are plenty of Experimentation platforms.

The explosion of the marketing technology industry suggests there were about 3,500 martech tools in 2016. Now, there are over 7,040 solutions available; with 211 categorised as "Optimisation, Personalisation & Testing".

How are you meant to choose?

With so many experimentation and personalisation platforms on the market, choosing one is no mean feat. Every platform has a vast range of features, and industry leading platforms are evolving rapidly in line with the changing demands of the online retail and digital services sectors.

In addition, every platform has a dedicated sales team who work on a commission basis to sell that particular platform. This selection process can therefore easily become biased meaning we can all quickly end up bogged down in feature comparisons and choice paralysis.

The answer?

Select an experimentation platform based on your challenges as a business first, not on the number or quality of features available

The platform that is best suited to you depends on many things - from ease-of-use and pricing to how readily the platform can support your digital strategy and wider business objectives. Ultimately; it's all about context. Who is using the platform? Why are they using it? Why does the business need it?

This whitepaper identifies how we recommend, in our experience, selecting an experimentation platform, designed to set you on the path to understanding which one is right for your business.

¹ <https://chiefmartec.com/2019/04/marketing-technology-landscape-supergraphic-2019/>, accessed 22nd June 2020





Summary

We recommend selecting an experimentation platform, not on the number, breadth or necessarily quality of its features, but on how it can best address your individual challenges as a business.

We believe you should try create a framework around, what is, a complex and inherently relationship driven process. How might you remove biasness from the process? How might you keep focussed on the problems at hand, rather than niceties or 'sexy stuff'? How might you empower your team to create an objective and evaluated decision?

We recommend a process similar to the below, that might be more effort at the beginning, but ultimately - will save you time and money in the long run.

The decision of the right AB testing platform needs to be right. Not only is it a big investment, but it will stick with you for years and genuinely help you grow. It should enable and empower your team whilst being at the centre of your test and learn culture.

1 | Evaluating experimentation maturity

How advanced are you within your experimentation process? Platforms have different scales of maturity based on what fits you best - entry, mid-market or enterprise, for example

[Example maturity template →](#)

Optimizely's experimentation maturity model is best in class

2 | Collaboratively evaluating business challenges

What is the purpose of experimentation within your business? Survey your team and ensure everyone is on the same page of what this platform can enable you to do; alignment sets expectation.

[Example survey template →](#)

3 | Prioritising needs to support those challenges

What do you require from an experimentation platform and in what order? What are the problems that you're trying to solve and, if you prioritise them, this will always keep your eyes on the prize.

4 | Create an RFP based on those challenges

Putting these challenges forward to various platforms in the form of an RFP (request for proposal). We've done a lot of the hard work here for you by [positioning](#) the top platform based on direction, not necessarily breadth or number of features.

[Example RFP template →](#)



About Us

At User Conversion, we craft bespoke conversion strategies to transform your digital performance.

Working with, mostly ecommerce, brands from Travis Perkins and HSS Hire, to Mamas and Papas and Bravissimo, we're able to help you understand your user behaviour, prioritise your output, and ultimately grow your business.

We're a conversion rate optimisation consultancy with unique skill sets that work collaboratively.

We believe the practice of CRO (Conversion Rate Optimisation) is a series of specialisms that work effectively together; not a single specialism.

As a result, we integrate and collaborate with our clients within a proven framework designed for growth.

We help:

- Focus and prioritise problems and solutions, especially in a development backlog
- Identify opportunities and "a-ha!" moments
- Provide insight in informing aligned business strategy
- Increase pace with more experiments
- Reduce risk of business decisions by validating products, services, features or behaviours
- Create exciting solutions that genuinely create impact on the bottom line

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Why we're writing this

We're writing this, simply, to help. We want to help those who need, or want, to review their experimentation platform.

It's a complex procedure, with a lot of choice and it can sometimes lack authenticity and be rather bias. We're writing this to make that process more transparent using our experience and expertise.

In short, this report can help you cut through some of the noise.

Yes, it's complicated. With lots of platforms to choose from, each with business development teams designed to both help and promote, the process can be daunting.

Our expertise within conversion optimisation and experimentation, more particularly e-commerce, gives us a great ability. We can advise, agnostically, on technologies that can support your, or our, practices that help drive growth. Equally, we can apply a process to that advice that helps you navigate this in an honest way that's right for your business.

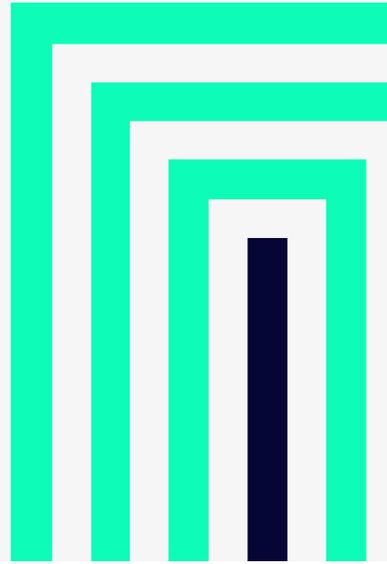
In this whitepaper, we discuss how, in our experience, experimentation platforms should be selected based on the alignment of your challenges and objectives; their features being mere capability mechanisms.

Really, these learnings should apply to all technologies that offer similar functions - be they platforms for merchandising, acquisition, retention or marketing in general.

We've seen a lot of, if not every, experimentation platform.

And we've had first hand experience of what works where and why.

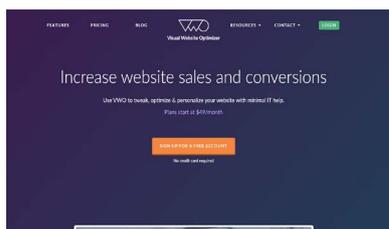
We hope this report, and us, can act as your trusted advisor and can help you navigate such a complex process; honestly and with true authenticity.



What type of experimentation platforms are there?

We have experience in and reviewed 19 platforms and categorised them into 5 different types of experimentation platforms.

Experimentation platforms continually adjust and enhance their value propositions. In the past 5 years, we've seen enterprise experimentation-focused companies' positioning statements evolve. They've often moved from the quality, ease and effectiveness of AB testing, to creating personalised experiences, to experiment-driven continuous delivery and personalisation at scale.



VWO Homepage - 2016



VWO Homepage - 2020

Indeed, in our experience, these platforms often evolve their propositions based on investment and maturity - as can be seen with the evolution of pricing models being moved more and more towards "enterprise" pricing.

Similarly, CX-oriented and behavioural analytics platforms have evolved to bring experimentation to the forefront of their offering and market themselves on customer experience optimisation and general optimisation intelligence, while the products utilised by smaller or less mature optimisation teams are split between those who promote a reliable but specialised feature set and those who are on something of a feature land grab and offer many capabilities in a single environment.

Invariably, then, categorising experimentation platforms is difficult and there is no one-size-fits-all product on the market. But experimentation platforms can be broadly identified as follows:



What type of experimentation platforms are there?

We have experience in and reviewed 19 platforms and categorised them into 5 different types of experimentation platforms.

1 | Enterprise Tech Stack experimentation

These are experimentation platforms that are more widely integrated into a deeper technology stack, and therefore often work easier or better (or are perceived as such) when they are all integrated as one. An example might be Adobe's Target experimentation platform which is part of the Adobe Experience Cloud suite.

2 | Pure / Mature Experimentation

Experimentation platforms that are pure players in the market; this is all they do. They could, therefore, be perceived as market leaders and there is certainly an argument for saying they are the most feature-rich.

3 | Wider experimentation suites

Platforms that offer 'more than' experimentation - be that the ability to have heatmap or session recording capability, or some voice of customer functionality. These are potentially more 'optimisation' platforms, rather than pure experimentation platforms, hence they are more known as 'suites'.

4 | Personalisation Suites

These platforms are better known for being personalisation platforms rather than experimentation platforms, but offering the ability to do AB testing is inherent within its capabilities.





How experimentation platforms are usually selected and what happens when you work with the wrong platform?

From our experience, with the plethora of experimentation platforms available, the methods in which they are selected are often by process of limited evaluation.

This evaluation often contains some level of subjectivity and we believe that businesses use one or a combination of the below to identify which experimentation platform is best suited for their needs.

- Experience from an individual (and personal preference)
- Relationship with salesperson or company
- Pre-conditioned usage
- Peer recommendations
- Agency recommendations
- RFP (Request for proposal)
- Pitch process

Many vendors in our experience demonstrate their platform based on the features of the tool. This is because the business development managers that you're speaking to know the platform, not your business context or your challenges, as well as you.

We rushed through the process based on recommendation. I think we ended up getting too much advice in the end and involved too many people in the business and outside. I feel like we were swayed on some features that we just weren't ready for, personally.

Anonymous, eCommerce Director, Large UK retailer

Businesses, anecdotally, move from platform to platform, not necessarily based on the 'features' of the platform, but based on the relationship between the platform and the business. We've seen the majority of businesses move away from platforms out of frustration. On occasion, it might be a failure to integrate the platform into the wider business or tech stack, or perhaps around ineffective on-boarding and ongoing training (again this ties back to establishing and appreciating business needs). Usually, the answer is one around individual frustration that the platform has failed to deliver on a previous value-based promise, less so a redundancy in features.





How experimentation platforms are usually selected and what happens when you work with the wrong platform?

From our experience, with the plethora of experimentation platforms available, the methods in which they are selected are often by process of limited evaluation.

From a personalisation perspective, we believe this is of utmost importance. For example, Gartner believes that 80% of Marketers will abandon personalisation efforts by 2025. In an exploratory view with Dynamic Yield, we reviewed why this is the case and identified that:

- Personalisation is well evangelised, but rarely well adopted
- This is because it is often over-complicated (eg. "1 to 1 personalisation")
- Under-preparing eg. not matching the resources with the tech

You can read more about that interview ['why is personalisation talked about so much, but rarely adopted?'](#)

-

I got sick of demos, by the end of it. They were all the same and promising the world. You knew the good ones because they tailored their approach based on what we told them.

Anonymous, Group head of eCommerce, Large UK retailer

It was a large investment for us [buying this AB testing platform] and we did our due diligence but it wasn't enough. We just had some analysis from the teams that we are in a worse place from an a/b perspective than with [previous provider].

Anonymous, CMO, Large UK retailer

In hindsight, I wish we'd stepped back a bit more and thought about some of the core challenges we were trying to solve when looking for a solution. We've certainly spent a lot of time and resources trying to get to a place where we're utilising even 50% of the new product effectively.

Anonymous, Marketing and Digital director, Large UK business



How to select an experimentation platform

"Which platform is best?" is a question often answered with a discussion around the number and quality of features. We recommend re-framing the question to "Which platform fits you the best?". This is a propositional play, where the defined purpose of the platform best fits your maturity.

Therefore, when selecting an experimentation platform, it's vital to look at your business makeup and maturity both now and where you want to be within a 2 to 5 year period.

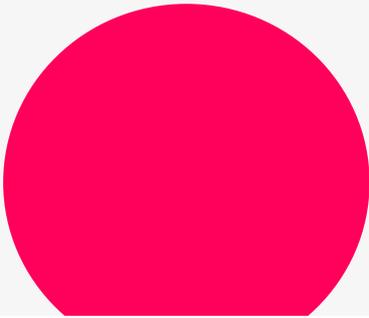
We recommend a process of:

- 1 | Evaluating experimentation maturity**
How advanced are you within your experimentation process?
- 2 | Collaboratively evaluating business challenges**
What is the purpose of experimentation within your business?
- 3 | Prioritising needs to support those challenges**
What do you require from experimentation and in what order?
- 4 | Create an RFP based on those challenges**
Putting these challenges forward to various platforms in the form of an RFP (request for proposal)

This process is core to the problems that your business faces, of which the platform is the solution.

By evaluating criteria in a problem-solution framework, your business can be confident that the platform is going to solve the challenges that your business faces. The alternative method(s) that businesses currently use to evaluate criteria is often one of "feature-based rabbit-holing".

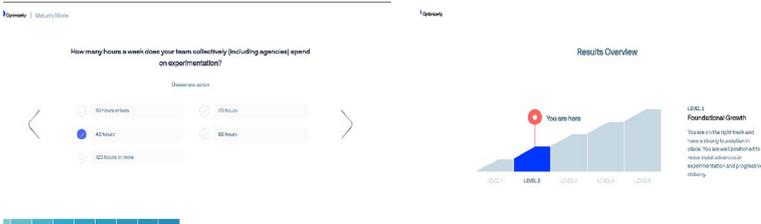




1 | Evaluating experimentation maturity

There are a few experimentation maturity models available that are designed to ask questions that would highlight how advanced or mature your experimentation program is.

Optimizely offers a very thorough experimentation maturity quiz² where Dynamic Yield also offers a comprehensive personalisation maturity audit³.



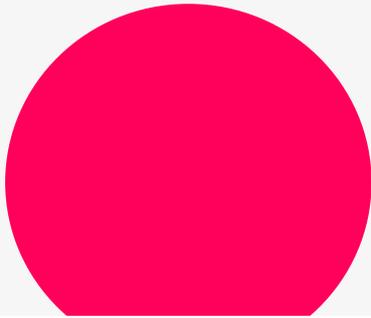
Optimizely Maturity Model

In our experience, the attributes through which experimentation maturity can be defined varies, but we recommend reviewing:

- Scale; how many experiments are you designing now and have an ambition to reach?
- Skillset make up; what types of skill sets and capabilities are in your team?
- Culture and decision making; how important is experimentation to the wider business?
- Resource; how fast can you run?
- Personalisation; how personalised / segmented are your experiments?
- Data; both in mindset (how often are your decisions based on data?) and in capability (ability to accurately measure results, able to load offline data/ segments)

² <https://www.optimizely.com/maturity-model/>
³ <https://www.dynamicyield.com/personalization-maturity-survey/>





2 | Collaboratively evaluating business challenges

We recommend that you create a survey and gather the requirements of those involved in the experimentation process. Not only does this give you a good understanding of how an experimentation tool can assist in your business challenges, but it also gives your team a greater sense of involvement in the process.

This survey is designed as a guide only - the questions should be curated based on the maturity, experience and involvement of those that you're gathering information from.

[Example Survey Template →](#)

Resource

We recommend segmenting your questions into the following categories:

Definition and goals

- What purpose does experimentation serve within your business?
- What are your experimentation goals?

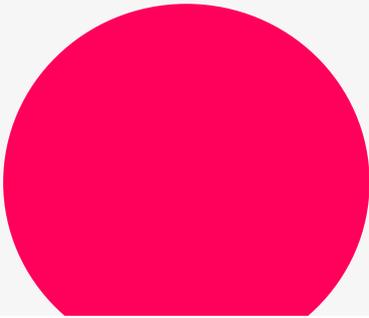
Development Capability and Resource

- How many developers do you have within your team?
- Is their capability largely .js based? Are they experimentation engineers?
- Do you require server side testing?
- What level of support is needed from the platform?

Technology Stack

- What does your technology stack currently look like?
- Specifically, your marketing platforms or vendors?
- Are you more on Google, Adobe or Oracle tech stacks?
- Do you have many react or angular elements?





3 | Prioritising needs to support those challenges

Once you have a list of your needs you can start to prioritise these.

There is no set framework that you can effectively prioritise these needs but we would recommend splitting them into:



Non-negotiable
(up to 20% of all your needs)

Strong Preference
(up to 10% of all your needs)

Nice to have
(up to 70% of all your needs)

4 | Create an RFP based on those challenges

At User Conversion, we can advise which platforms, we believe, would be best suited to your challenges from our extensive experience working with the majority of platforms.

That being said, this is still a peer recommendation and whilst it's rooted in experience and expertise, it is still largely subjective.

We recommend requesting responses from these platforms yourself associated with those challenges.

Here is an example RFP (request for proposal) template that we've created at User Conversion that you can use too. We've used this template with ~12 businesses to help them source a platform.

[Example RFP Template →](#)

Resource



Experimentation Platforms

At User Conversion, we can easily, and do, provide opinions on each platform. However, a more substantiated and equal approach is one of allowing each company to define their proposition, by answering the same set of questions.

We asked each of the experimentation platforms a series of questions that helped us better understand their positioning within the market. We then translated that into a 'one pager', approved by the platform, with caveats of succinctness, honesty and as non-salesy as possible.

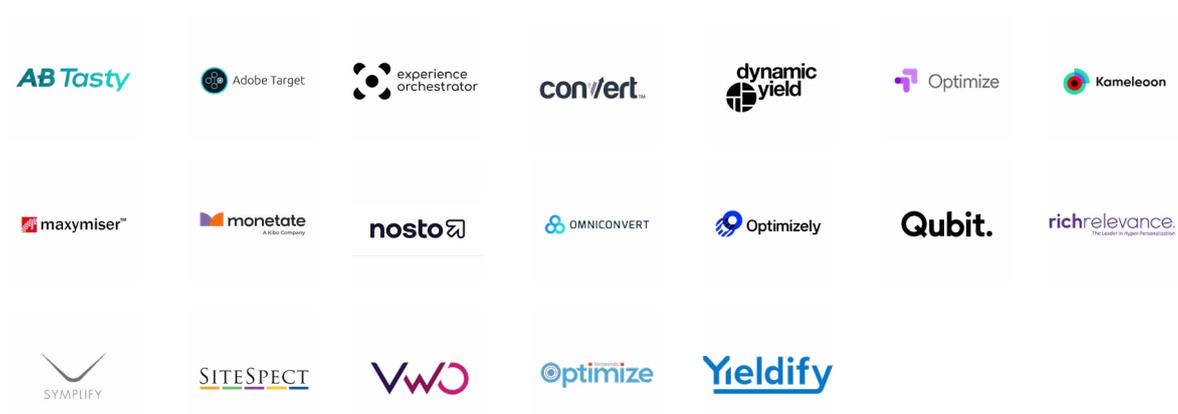
The questions we asked can be found in this survey:

<https://forms.gle/oRKCFZMB3QLCo7xR8> - exploring the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the platform. The questions are designed to explore the positioning of the technology, rather than the features.

The platforms we have selected are those that we perceive to be the most popular or well-known within the market.

Some platforms did not respond and, as such, we have either filled in a response for them below or they have been omitted from this report.

We, at User Conversion, have subjectively categorised the platform in the predefined categories eg. 'pure experimentation', not the platform themselves. On occasion, there will be platforms that fit more than one category, however, we have highlighted what we feel to be their primary category.

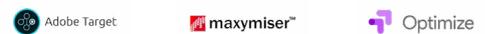


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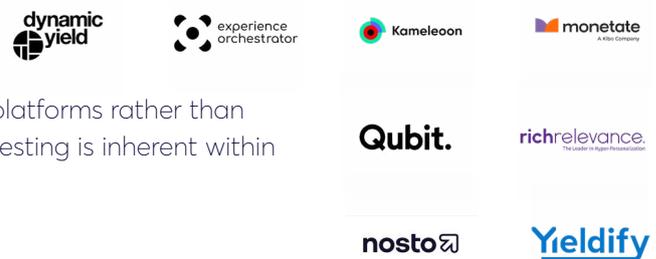
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AB Tasty

Category:	Wider experimentation suites
Likely to be pitched against:	Optimizely, Dynamic Yield, Monetate, VWO
Featured clients:	Ashley Furniture, L'Oreal, USA Today
Core positioning:	Breadth of product offering, support, ease of use, quick integration



AB Tasty is a global brand and product optimization platform supporting experimentation, personalisation, feature management, as well as insights. They offer a wide range of features, with experience optimisation at the heart of the platform eg. AI-Powered Segmentation, dynamic widgets, multivariate testing, heatmaps, session recording, progressive SaaS rollout; meaning their platform is 'much more' than just AB testing.

According to AB Tasty, the majority of clients move to their platform because it is considered a better alternative as it packs a lot of value compared to more expensive technologies, it is one solution (eg. inc. personalisation, product recommendations, insights) rather than multiple technologies, and to move away from an over-reliance on development teams (the majority of their clients use the WYSIWYG visual editor)

Their clients are mostly mid-market and they see some clients migrate from less mature technologies as a result, but they also serve enterprise clients eg. with Flagship (their server-side product)

What are top 3 x features of the platform that they excel in (highlighted by AB Tasty)

1. Dynamic Widgets (eg. social proof and image matchmaker widgets, notifications, and popups)
2. Data collection: tag tracking and integrations with CRM, CDP, DMP, Data Lake, Datalayer
3. WYSIWYG Editor which is powerful and easy to use

Other technologies are chosen or excel in more advanced specific features eg. server side testing, personalisation capabilities, product recommendations.

When asked what is the reason why prospects often choose your platform, VP Marketing, Gregory Batchelor, stated "strong features for experimentation at scale, advanced behavioural targeting capabilities, server side product feature management, speed of the platform combined with great support and service"



Adobe Target

Please note: the below is an experience of Adobe Target as we were unable to canvas their opinions

Category

Enterprise Tech Stack experimentation

Likely to be pitched against:

Optimizely, Maxymiser

Featured clients:

Philips, Sprint, Nvidia

Core positioning:

Adobe Experience Cloud, Personalisation



Adobe Target is often seen as the top choice for enterprise level companies who are wanting to conduct omni-channel experimentation or are heavily invested in personalisation, and are already on the Adobe stack.

Although not the cheapest option on the market, its two tiered platform; standard and premium, means companies just starting out on experimentation can still utilise its impressive integrations within the cloud.

Adobe Target pivots the majority of its marketing around pushing its personalisation capabilities due to its shared customer profiles and integrations with analytics. The addition of Adobe's AI and machine learning product, Adobe Sensei has to be one of the greatest strengths of Adobe Target, though not included in all tiers.

What are top 2x features of the platform that they excel in;

1. Personalisation; potentially supported AI and machine learning with Adobe Sensei
2. Adobe Stack Integration (primary ones for Target are Analytics, Audience Manager and Campaign)

Focusing on these advanced personalisation capabilities has caused limitations with Adobe Target at its core as an AB testing product. None of these limitations seem to be addressed in Adobe's product roadmap.

These limitations typically impact the effort and resource required to build individual tests. For example, there is no out of the box support for SPAs (single page application). In addition, advanced audience targeting relies on the set up of mboxes. This increases the effort required for low impact or complex tests and may even limit the type of testing that you are able to conduct.

Analytics for Target (A4T) integration allows users to easily make data available within Adobe workspace, putting the onus on the users to create dashboards. Although this offers greater flexibility in terms of design, it does also require experiment significance to be calculated outside of the platform, which could open up complications and bias.



Attraqt XO Platform

Category	Personalisation suites
Likely to be pitched against:	Bloomreach, Algolia, Dynamic Yields, Qubit
Featured clients:	La Redoute, Birchbox, FNAC Darty
Core positioning:	Algorithm personalisation and optimisation, merchandising rules, data integration



Attraqt XO Platform is a unique, headless personalisation platform where you can bring your own algorithms and create advanced merchandising rules. The platform is part of the wider Attraqt network (inc. previously Fredhopper)

The platform needs training and probably is a better fit for medium and big ecommerce accounts, significantly those with trading and merchandising teams. Indeed, the types of clients this platform usually attracts are those already thinking around creating an internal data or data science team and want to make those new teams work well with merchandisers and marketing teams.

Clients usually won't utilise the Attraqt XO platform for front-end AB testing features as the experimentation capabilities are focussed on merchandising and algorithm centric (for example, the platform is the perfect fit to test different merchandising and personalization strategies, but probably not the best fit to, say, test different layouts for a page)

What are top 3 x features of the platform that they excel in: (highlighted by Attraqt XO)

1. Algorithm orchestration (bring, configure and test your own algorithms)
2. Target the right product / content to the right user at the right time on the right channel
3. Artificial intelligence infused everywhere (AI powered search, Bot traffic detection, Outliers cleaner, Predictive analytics)

Other personalisation suites offer the ability for a code editor and WYSIWYG with effective previews of code changes. This platform is a pure algorithmic orchestrator, supported by the wider network of Attraqt (search and merchandising capability)

When asked what is the reason why prospects often choose your platform, Chief Architect, Nicolas Mathon, stated "Best in class headless platform to personalize the whole customer journey".



Convert

Category	Pure / Mature Experimentation
Likely to be pitched against:	VWO, Google Optimize
Featured clients:	Unicef, Messe Frankfurt, Jabra
Core positioning:	Price, Privacy, Simplicity



Dennis van der Heijden, CEO, states that prospects choose their platform as "not able to afford Optimizely anymore, and AB Tasty and VWO are yearly and expensive... so Convert Experiences became the natural choice" Their positioning is one of "no fuss" with an attractive price-point, good service and solid privacy practises.

Their clients are those less likely to "scale to a fully personalised site, using the tool as a CMS" and more likely to "make larger scale changes using a testing tool, to understand, in-depth, the value of these changes" or "utilise industry best practises to target low hanging fruit". Some of the main challenges Convert solves for clients are those with compliance issues in privacy or security. Interestingly, it seemed after speaking with Convert, that the platform has a preference for those that switch platforms and that "experience revenue and statistical differences, blinking, inflexible tools and bad support... those that love the change i.e not the first tool for the team".

Top 3 x features of the platform that they excel in (highlighted by Convert):

1. No blink (FOOC)
2. Fast support
3. Flexible stats & settings

Whereas, competitors often excel in the server side, mobile app testing and mobile access to testing tools.

When asked what is the reason why prospects often choose your platform (i.e how would you convince a prospect to select your platform when in RFP), CEO, Dennis van der Heijden, stated "we don't do RFP's and RFI's... but if they won't try the tool before signing we won't win. We don't do enterprise games and so you try it and see if it covers your needs. If you don't try it yourself, it's usually not a good customer match... We don't like to sell you anything. The tool and support needs to convince you... that explains why we are not the market leader. We want you to love it before buying"



Dynamic Yield

Category:	Personalisation suites
Likely to be pitched against:	Evergage, Optimizely, Monetate, Adobe
Featured clients:	Sports Direct, Elkjop, IKEA
Core positioning:	Marketer-friendly, Advanced personalisation capability,



Dynamic Yield is a well known, advanced personalisation solution that layers on top of an existing CMS or commerce solution, designed to control all aspects of the eCommerce experience – such as recommendations, messaging, email trigger, and apps - in a personalised manner.

The platform works very well with wider teams - from trading and product to marketing and technical - thanks to their pre-defined, out-of-the-box templates that these teams can use to easily start creating new experiences. Additionally, technical teams can build custom experiences as templates, so that marketers have the power to edit and manage the variables and content.

Prospects often work with Dynamic Yield, outside of the capabilities for two purposes: 1) to lower the total cost of ownership when it comes to the martech stack by replacing siloed point solutions 2) the self-serve features, allowing marketers to be independent from developers

What are top 3 x features of the platform that they excel in: (highlighted by Dynamic Yield)

1. Simplicity; enables marketers and non-technical users to have control over the entire personalization experience
2. Advanced behaviour and affinity targeting
3. Recommendation capabilities; providing over 17 out-of-the-box strategies, including contextual based, offline in brick and mortar locations and deep learning strategies

Other technologies excel in more advanced multivariate testing, as well as merchandising capabilities. Whilst Dynamic Yield is considered an AB testing provider, some of the pure-play AB testing solutions have a greater breadth of capabilities and statistical modelling.

When asked what is the reason why prospects often choose your platform, VP Marketing, Yaniv Navot stated "we are built for agility, providing all of the tools necessary to quickly build relevant digital experiences at every touchpoint under one roof. We often see that companies that go in an RFP are often considering multiple different tools to invest in, but only have a budget for a single platform eg personalization engine + CDP + triggered messaging platform.



Google Optimize

Please note: the below is our experience of Google Optimize as we were unable to canvas their opinions

Category	Enterprise Tech Stack
Likely to be pitched against:	Adobe Target, Maxymiser
Featured clients:	Unknown
Core positioning:	Google Suite, Free (until 5 concurrent experiments)



Prospective clients would describe Google Optimize as a cheap option for those not on the 360 suite, but therefore limited in functionality. However, a solid option for those on the 360 suite; mostly for proving the concept of experimentation as functionality is still limited. All reporting ties into Google Analytics nicely and has a nice "hide body" snippet to reduce flicker.

The Google Optimize product is perceived as being excellent (as it is Google owned) however, the reality is that the product will be continually optimized with limited functionality in comparison to longer serving and more mature platforms. For example, you're restricted to the number of lines of code you can write in 'blocks' which means if you write a lot of code you have to split this up.

The ideal client for Google Optimize 360 (free version) is generally small businesses wanting to get started with testing, limited to running 5 concurrent experiments. The 360 version is positioned at enterprise of those on the wider Google Suite (Attribution, Data Studio, Analytics etc)

What are top 3 x features of the platform that they excel in (highlighted by User Conversion);

1. No flicker technology
2. GA Integration (for reporting and audiences (360))
3. Familiar UI

Other platforms might offer greater capability and more sophisticated features, especially with non-Google products.

The non-360 version is free, however, both the free version and full version have limited functionality in comparison to wider and more mature experimentation suites. The 360 version is useful if there's a reliance on Google Analytics and wider products in the business eg. to use audiences for personalisation etc.



Kameleoon

Category	Personalisation suites
Likely to be pitched against:	Dynamic Yield, Optimizely, Adobe Target
Featured clients:	Lidl, Toyota, Mumsnet
Core positioning:	Flicker-free, Scalability (one tool through all maturity phases), Real-time personalization, propensity scoring



Kameleoon are market leaders in France and Germany; they cover the full maturity cycle of conversion from AB testing, through segmentation to AI driven personalisation.

With strong segmentation capabilities (44 native criteria - such as the ability to segment on any attribute of a product page name, category, brand, price, colour, size, stock etc - they are well known for their personalisation efforts and the ability to build advanced segments based on product or category affinities.

Prospects often migrate to Kameleoon as they see problems with either a) performance (flickering, size of the script), voiding results and data integrity or b) personalisation capability.

What are top 3 x features of the platform that they excel in: (highlighted by Kameleoon)

1. Performance; architected for low latency, flicker-free guarantee
2. Intelligence; understanding visitor profiles, interests and behaviour, leveraging AI to automatically calculate propensity to convert
3. Completeness; giving marketers transparency and control whatever the client's maturity level

Other technologies have greater experience and recognition, especially within the UK market.

When asked what is the reason why prospects often choose your platform, Chief Product Officer, Frédéric De Todaro stated: "We provide a single, easy-to-use solution, architected to cover all customers' needs, with industry leading performance for A/B testing and manual segmentation all the way to AI-powered personalisation, with customers proving the effectiveness of our platform in deep technical areas such as AI and machine learning."



Maxymiser

Please note: the below is our experience of Maxymiser as we were unable to canvas their opinions

Category

Pure / Mature Experimentation

Likely to be pitched against:

Optimizely, Google Optimize, Adobe Target

Featured clients:

National Express, Boots

Core positioning:

Wider OMC, API and Integrations



In our experience, clients purchase Maxymiser as a wider implementation or additional feature of the Oracle Marketing Cloud (OMC) eg. Eloqua, Responsys etc. However, those that have Maxymiser as a product, have little experience on how to maximise the value and, indeed, the support provided is minimal due to the lack of focus on Maxymiser as a product from Oracle.

Clients are generally enterprise in nature who have external support from Maxymiser, moving on from a more 'just experiment' focussed tool and want to start basic personalisation campaigns before moving to a full personalisation suite, despite the capabilities existing as part of a wider CDP (customer data platform) within the OMC.

What are top 3 x features of the platform that they excel in (highlighted by User Conversion)

1. Custom Scripts
2. Experiment Management (exclusions, releases etc.)
3. Integration with the wider OMC

Other personalisation suites might offer a broader capability of features closely related to merchandising, recommendations and may even play nicer with non-OMC products.

Our summary of the platform is that its capability is strong within the core requirements of experimentation and personalisation, but often requires heavy development assistance, as well as (although not necessary) being heavily facilitated by the rest of the Oracle Marketing Cloud products.



Monetate

Category

Personalisation suites

Likely to be pitched against:

Optimizely, Adobe Target, Dynamic Yield, Qubit

Featured clients:

Pandora, JD Sports, Waitrose

Core positioning:

Automated Personalization (uses AI to automatically display content and products to visitors on a 1-to-1 basis)



Monetate is an established and comprehensive suite of personalisation solutions. After being bought by Kibo, their technology represents a combined 25+ years of expertise and maturity; often working with the benefit that the wider Kibo commerce suite brings eg Certona.

Ideal clients for Monetate are often those that prioritise personalisation initiatives, but current clients tend to span across all levels of experimentation maturity, whether they're getting their first AB test up or wanting to use AI to drive their testing programs. Indeed, their data integration capability is often seen as excellent (integrations with all major eCommerce vendors, partnerships designed to automate integration solutions) and even stating they "work best when we integrate with a client's existing CMS".

What are top 3 x features of the platform that they excel in: (highlighted by Monetate)

1. AI-Driven Personalization using Dynamic Tests (allocating traffic to the winning variants in real time) or Automated Personalisation
2. Audience Discovery (uncovers new, unexplored segments of visitors)
3. Adaptive Recommendations (automating recommendations at scale without sacrificing any of the control)

Other personalisation suites might offer out of the box template solutions or pure play experimentation platforms might offer strong(er) core testing functionality, sometimes at a lower cost.

When asked what is the reason why prospects often choose your platform, Senior Director of Marketing, Andrew Koperwas, stated "The ability to scale. Some prospects have immediate needs for a robust testing programme, others are looking to step up their efforts and start to deliver 1-to-1 Personalisation. Our expert Client Success Team and world-class technology provides brands and retailers with a scalable solution to elevating their customer experience and driving growth. "



Nosto

Category	Personalisation suites
Likely to be pitched against:	Fresh Relevance, Emarsys, Dynamic Yield
Featured clients:	Robert Dyas, Gymshark, Dune London
Core positioning:	Merchandising and personalisation tools, Easy integration



Nosto is a built-for-ecommerce platform offering personalisation and merchandising solutions. They generally work with mid-market B2C or DTC brands and retailers, who care about their customer experience, that are growing and investing in online marketing tools. These teams are often strapped for resources, and either a) often use the platform independently or b) Nosto sharing ongoing optimisation support.

Most clients move 'up' from "cheap apps" and plugins that offer little customisation, or are looking to consolidate between platforms (i.e. using multiple vendors for various functionality all covered by Nosto).

What are top 3 x features of the platform that they excel in: (highlighted by Nosto)

1. Fast and easy implementation alongside an experienced support team (1000's of Magento and Shopify installs)
2. Unique Category Merchandising capabilities
3. Product recommendations that combine both intuitive usability and best-in-class AI algorithms

Other technologies excel in a greater breadth of AB testing capabilities. This is a fairly new feature for Nosto (July 2020) and, therefore, still has some limits; such as no integration with some analytics platforms, no server side testing and a lack of automated testing suggestions.

When asked what is the reason why prospects often choose your platform, Product Marketing Manager, Sara Santanen stated "the depth of ecommerce specific personalisation functionality that works out of the box, without developer support or customisation."



Omniconvert

Category	Wider experimentation suites
Likely to be pitched against:	Convert, VWO
Featured clients:	Avon, Orange, Decathlon
Core positioning:	Wider optimisation and insight features



Omniconvert is a customer value optimisation platform that looks at conversion, survey, retention and automation. Split into 4 products, "explore" i.e conversion is described as "CRO Tool for eCommerce", and because of this focus, managed services from Omniconvert are available.

The ability to 'hook' into the other products is a real competitive advantage i.e clients can move across or add products from Explore (conversion) to Reveal (retention).

What are top 3 x features of the platform that they excel in: (highlighted by Omniconvert Explore)

1. Advanced Segmentation (over 40 points of segments available inc. historical, 3rd party and real-time data)
2. Integration with REVEAL by Omniconvert (a retention analytics tool for offering a different experience to your RFM groups)
3. Surveys with advanced segmentation (NPS by brand, city, RFM Group, etc.)

Other platforms might offer a better visual editor, for example, as this is primarily a platform for those in development or who want to develop experiments.

When asked what is the reason why prospects often choose your platform, Marketing Specialist, Mara Gavrilesco, stated "we help eCommerce companies monitor & optimize the CLV, thanks to our automated 1st party data segmentation For the inspired optimizers that also look on the 2nd page of Google, there is Omniconvert: a suite of products that empowers online retailers and their agencies to do Customer Value Optimization (CVO), by enabling them to understand, monitor & address their customers on any channel.."



Optimizely

Category	Pure / Mature Experimentation
Likely to be pitched against:	In-house tools, Adobe
Featured clients:	Sky, IBM, VISA
Core positioning:	Experience and maturity, Enterprise, Market leader



Market leader in experimentation for over ten years; their wealth of experience is evident both with the clients they work with and innovation they release. Optimizely is often seen as offering a wide breadth of capabilities, features and functionality - from complex server-side and app testing to feature flag management and personalisation.

Optimizely's ideal client is often those looking to drive meaningful and significant change for their users and culturally within the business. Their clients range from Sky, IBM and eBay who experiment at pace and scale. They often state "a willingness to change and learn is the fundamental need" and that "internal processes will change and improve as a result of using Optimizely". The most common needs of clients working with Optimizely are those who are looking to empower their experimentation teams, for server-side and app testing, and / or increased efficiencies in testing; where maturing and scaling is key.

Adversely, those types of companies where senior leadership is not open to allowing data to drive their decisions are often not the type of clients that Optimizely would be of benefit to.

What are top 3 x features of the platform that they excel in: (from Optimizely)

1. Testing any digital property incorporating feature management designed to remove risk and increase team productivity
2. Scalable across teams with a centralised program management
3. Best in class statistical model

Other experimentation platforms might offer a solution that is more akin to smaller teams, or those with a lower optimisation maturity.

When asked what is the reason why prospects often choose your platform, Global Director of Strategy & Value, Hazjier Pourkhalkhali, stated "we are the only platform that truly enables all teams across the entire company to experiment at scale. We have solutions to meet the needs of product, marketing, CX professionals, data scientists, engineers and others. Companies want to scale, and companies are increasingly seeing the limitations of choosing a vendor that only caters to one team."



Qubit

Category

Personalisation suites

Likely to be pitched against:

Optimizely, Evergage, Dynamic Yield, Monetate

Featured clients:

River Island, Estee Lauder Group and Halfords

Core positioning:

Strong platform integration, Product recommendations, Personalisation at core



Qubit is an experienced optimisation and personalisation platform. Speed is vital to the positioning of Qubit clients, with Qubit often describing their platform as "the quickest way to get stuff done". Qubit is often known for their deep data and segmentation capabilities and therefore seen as more suited for advanced teams. However, the UI and breadth of capabilities appeals to merchandisers and marketers, but maintaining the more advanced capabilities for those that have in-house dev teams as well. Because of this breadth, less than half of their clients are purely self-serve.

Qubit has experience in a wide ranging number of verticals, with a focus on retail, travel and online Betting/Gaming. Namely, enterprise businesses that have a C-Level mandate to deliver a world class customer experience. These businesses are often looking to utilise data to drive personalised experiences that deliver on conversion, AOV and RPV goals of the business.

What are top 3 x features of the platform that they excel in: (highlighted by Qubit)

1. Qubit for Merchandising (Q4M); ability for any user to create a personalised experience with an extremely easy to use UI
2. Deep learning product recommendations powered by Google Cloud AI
3. Data Activation; ability to connect disparate datasets together in order to deliver an experience

Other personalisation suites might offer out of the box template solutions or pure play experimentation platforms might offer strong(er) core testing functionality, sometimes at a lower cost.

When asked what is the reason why prospects often choose your platform, Head of Marketing, George Barker, stated: "The unrivalled access we give clients to their real-time data combined with the ability to derive insights from it, at scale, making it ready to action for any customer on any channel."



RichRelevance

Category

Personalisation

Likely to be pitched against:

Dynamic Yield, Bloomreach, Attraqt, Evergage

Featured clients:

John Lewis, Aldi, Holland & Barrett

Core positioning:

AI driven Personalisation across the commerce lifecycle, from search, browse, content and recommendations



RichRelevance centralises personalisation into a single platform, so that their clients can leverage unified shopper profiles, that are updated in real-time to deliver 1:1, hyper-personalised experiences. They focus on creating full customer context, that unifies the interactions across search, content, offers and recommendations, seeing it as vital to a cohesive customer experience, more than a purely segment based approach, or using rules to tailor experiences. Each customer is recognised as an individual and uses AI to decide, in real-time, the best experience for each customer.

Clients typically speak to them when they are looking to a) turn the cold commerce interactions to personal and memorable ones b) reduce the amount of manual effort associated with running experiments and AB tests to identify the best options for each shopper or c) improve conversions and increase shopper engagement by tailoring experiences for customers at a 1:1 level or d) believe personalisation is critical to differentiation, and they want to do more than basic canned recommendations to differentiate.

What are top 3 x features of the platform that they excel in: (highlighted by Rich Relevance)

1. AI driven personalisation (decisioning that chooses from 150+ strategies)
2. Unfragmented approach to personalise across the customer journey
3. Configurability and complete AI transparency (performance of personalisation, flexibility to tweak, and visibility into why a decision chosen for an individual)

Other personalisation suites might offer more advanced AB testing solutions that could be more suitable for clients that are able to resource and budget for this level of approach, or, should retailers be looking for a solution that offers detailed track and playback type experimental analysis, then other platforms might also be more suitable.

When asked what is the reason why prospects often choose your platform, UK Sales Director, David Lewis, stated "our proven ability to deliver digital revenue lift, and the integrated nature of our personalisation offering that resolves silos in the customer journey to deliver a frictionless, contextual experience to not just known customers, but also unknown shoppers."



Symplify

Category	Wider experimentation suites
Likely to be pitched against:	Convert, VWO, Omniconvert
Featured clients:	Ellisons, NA-KD, Career Builder
Core positioning:	Price point, Support and service, Mid-market



Symplify is a mid market CRO solution at a competitive pricing point; with basic functionality for all types of A/B-testing along with a straight forward code-editor and advanced targeting options. The UX of the platform is a bit rough around the edges, but in line with the pricing of the platform. They also offer heatmaps, visitor recordings, surveys and pop-ups.

Symplify have a relatively no-fuss approach. Their clients are often those looking for experimentation in order to make quick decisions, not those that are "too large" or with "limited technical knowledge". Because they are quite a small team, they have a preference of forming meaningful strategic relationships, with multiple mid market clients, offering a good quality strategy service and development support. Their clients are often those that appreciate this level of approach and need a level of service outside of a WYSIWYG editor.

What are top 3 x features of the platform that they excel in: (highlighted by Symplify)

1. Straight forward workflow
2. Advanced targeting options and functionality
3. Quality support

Other platforms are slightly more mature in their resources, often with a larger community.

When asked what is the reason why prospects often choose your platform, Sales Executive, Lukas Rogvall, stated "our clients pick us because we're honest, personal, reasonable and cost efficient. All while delivering the tech that you need to run experimentation at a high level"



SiteSpect

Category

Pure / Mature Experimentation

Likely to be pitched against:

Adobe, Optimizely, Monetate, Oracle Maxymiser

Featured clients:

ASDA, Holland & Barrett, eSurance

Core positioning:

Server-side, Speed and scalability, Personalisation, Recommendations



SiteSpect is well-known as a mature experimentation platform, originating and focussed as a server-side platform, although offering client-side solutions too. SiteSpect meets the requirements of those who have a need to maximise site speed, run many experiments and engineer complex experiments.

They work with clients like Staples, Urban Outfitters, ASDA Walmart who, often, require scale, improved performance and complexity (eg. URL rewrites, product recommendations) without impacting performance. They aren't a tag-based platform (i.e. js integration) and have a patented solution which ensures optimum performance designed to reduce latency.

What are top 3 x features of the platform that they excel in: (highlighted by SiteSpect)

1. Performance and Speed
2. Flexibility (Ex: Visual Editor for SPAs)
3. Scalability

As SiteSpect are quite unique in their offering, other technologies have different functionality or features; from familiar implementation models to wider marketing hubs (eg. Oracle OMC)

When asked what is the reason why prospects often choose your platform, Vice President of Product, Justin Bougher, stated "prospects have often outgrown their existing tool. Most RFPs outline the limitations the customer has had with past tools. These vary by industry and geography. For example for retail, speed & scalability are the core drivers. For finance, it's security & data accuracy. Within the EU it may be GDPR and on-premise deployment needs, etc. Finally, for agencies, it's often flexibility and data accuracy."



VWO

Category	Wider experimentation suites
Likely to be pitched against:	AB Tasty, Google Optimize, Omniconvert, Convert
Featured clients:	Hilton, Disney, Target
Core positioning:	Simplicity, marketer-friendly (DIY), lots of features, visual editor



VWO is a market leader for the entry to mid-market; they're an optimisation platform that offers various testing capabilities, as well as session recording, heatmaps, browser push notifications, testing planning program and more. In general, the platform offers a lot of features inc. server side testing and mobile app testing.

Their pricing is transparent on site for <50,000 sessions per month with the pro version a bespoke price, needed, for custom JS, behavioural targeting, customisable widgets etc.

VWO clients usually have done occasional experimentation before, but are at a stage where they want to scale their program (often from a low to a mid-level of maturity). Because of the breadth of features on offer,

What are top 3 x features of the platform that they excel in: (highlighted by VWO)

1. Ease of use due to visual editor, one-time integration and simple user interface
2. Reporting focused on delivering quantitative and qualitative experiment insights via segmented analytics, inbuilt session replays, heatmaps, form analytics and funnels
3. Bayesian-based statistics designed to help make good business decisions

Other technologies excel in more advanced personalisation capabilities, alongside of some other specific features - where VWO offers breadth and ease of capability, other platforms offer focus.

When asked what is the reason why prospects often choose your platform, Founder & Chairman, Paras Chopra stated "[the] ease of launching experiments. We're all about removing friction in launching experiments (no matter how complex and where in their stack) because we know that the key to success in experimentation is experimentation velocity and each point of friction reduces it. So we're hell-bent on making it really, really simple for our clients to launch experiments independently within their marketing & product teams (without relying on IT/engineering)."



Webtrends Optimize

Category	Wider experimentation suites
Likely to be pitched against:	Optimizely, AB Tasty, VWO
Featured clients:	VictoriaPlum, Checkatrade, Primark
Core positioning:	Pricing and transparency, Support to end user



Webtrends Optimize have seen terms like "affordable", "well supported", "all-in one solution with lots of nice extras", "genuinely enterprise" been commented by prospects and clients alike. Their pricing model allows all users to get all features, with no concept of paywalls or needing to upgrade. There is an option of a free POC, and also a completely-free tier for small businesses.

Webtrends Optimize is a platform based around transparency and support. Transparency in their pricing structure, but also in their support with the teams being trained consultants who understand testing and are dedicated to each client. "Support is the biggest topic for attracting users to us i.e having the right people around you means finding resolutions quickly" This is supported both in a) their cloud engineering background which allows them to provide support in more complex situations with bespoke solutions such as pulling in feeds, hitting external services, creating databases and new APIs etc and b) a continually iterative roadmap designed by the end user practitioners.

They have observed that their clients are mostly those who are more mature on the experimentation maturity curve with more experienced teams who understand the value of testing and code their tests (or have an agency to do so).

What are the top 3 x features of the platform that they excel in (highlighted by Webtrends Optimize)

1. The depth of our reporting in terms of insights available
2. How straightforward the UI offering is
3. Quality of support

Other technologies perform better in capability such as machine learning options, WYSIWYG (widget usage, out of the box experience), ability to apply filters to data sets are those that Webtrends Optimize specifically state as areas that require improvement, or areas where other technologies excel (June 2020)

When asked what is the reason why prospects often choose your platform, Client Engagement Manager, Michael Ashton stated 'Webtrends Optimize is a platform that is comparable on features to most but is significantly better on price'. Support is by far the core USP, especially for those more complex requirements for slightly more mature experimentation.



Yieldify

Category	Personalisation suites
Likely to be pitched against:	Emarsys, Nosto
Featured clients:	The Works, Milk MakeUp, Marks and Spencer
Core positioning:	Range of Personalisation solutions, managed solution



Personalisation solutions geared towards mid-size companies. Yieldify delivers more than pop-up solutions (although historically this is what they were mostly known for). They now deliver in-page personalisation, dynamic content, real-time contextual messaging etc.

Yieldify state their ideal client as mostly ecommerce, driven by the need to have a managed service (for expertise and time) as well as a solution, early in their personalisation journey. They describe their ideal client as "looking to utilise industry best practices to target low hanging fruit" reducing time (through managed services), risk (through a methodology) and complexity (ease of integration)

What are top 3 x features of the platform that they excel in (highlighted by Yieldify)

1. Strategic focus with a managed service
2. Ease of execution through WYSIWYG
3. Speed of integration (single javascript tag)

Other platforms often report to excelling in in-platform reporting or those features or capabilities that are required or better suited to larger-sized businesses software or resource on hand to execute personalisation strategies.

When asked what is the reason why prospects often choose your platform, VP Marketing, Hannah Stewart stated, "Yieldify vs comparable other platforms could be likened to getting a taxi vs hiring a car. While there are other platforms out there that can deliver personalisation, they're like the rental car: you'll have to do the driving yourself and your success depends on your own time, focus and skill. Yieldify is like getting a taxi - you're confident of being able to get to the end result, and are able to do so with no effort on your part."



Other Resources

There are other resources out there which can help you make such an important decision (these were not used in the creation of this whitepaper)

- [2020 Summer Customer Success Report](#) by Featured Customers
- [18 Top A/B Testing Tools Reviewed](#) by CRO Experts by CXL
- [Comparison guide: Personalisation tools](#) by FreshEgg
- [Gartner's 2020 Magic Quadrant for Personalization Engines](#) by Gartner
- [Best A/B Testing Software](#) by G2
- [How 8 Different A/B Testing Tools Affect Site Speed](#) by CXL



Special Thanks

A thank you to all the experimentation, personalisation and optimisation platforms that contributed to this white paper.

- Andrew Koperwas , Senior Director of Marketing , Kibo Personalization
- David Lewis, UK Sales Director, RichRelevance Personalisation Platform
- Dennis van der Heijden, Chief Happiness (CEO), Convert Experiences
- Frédéric De Todaro, Chief Product Officer, Kameleoon
- George Barker, Head of Marketing, Qubit
- Gregory Batchelor, VP Marketing, AB Tasty Platform
- Hannah Stewart, VP Marketing, The Yieldify Conversion Platform
- Hazjier Pourkhalkhali, Global Director, Strategy & Value, Optimizely
- Justin Bougher, Vice President, Product, SiteSpect
- Lukas Rogvall, Sales Executive, Symplify Conversion
- Mara Gavrilesu, Marketing Specialist, Explore
- Michael Ashton, Client Engagement Manager, Webtrends Optimize
- Nicolas MATHON, Chief Architect, Attraqt XO
- Paras Chopra, Founder & Chairman, VWO
- Robert Pearson, Head of Personalisation , Next Retail Ltd
- Sadie Neve, CRO Manager, Creative CX
- Sara Santanen, Product Marketing Manager, Nosto
- Yaniv Navot, VP of Marketing, Dynamic Yield
- Gabriela de Araujo, Product Marketing Manager, Dynamic Yield
- Various anonymous stakeholders who have selected AB testing platforms





Thank you

If you have any questions please feel free to get in touch.



www.userconversion.com
in

User Conversion Limited, Jutland House, Lower Ground
Floor, Jutland St, Manchester, United Kingdom, M1 2BE
Company Number: 8151145