



2018
START

Conversion Rate Optimization in 2018: What to Expect

The biggest changes in CRO this year will likely come from the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which becomes enforceable on May 25.

The GDPR protects the data and privacy of European Union residents, so if your site collects personal data from EU residents (including email addresses and cookie data), the GDPR applies, even if you have no branches in the EU.

The GDPR has serious consequences: penalties for the worst data breach violations can go as high as \$24M or 4% of global annual revenue—whichever is higher.

If you haven't begun optimizing your site, landing pages, and lead forms for the GDPR, we strongly recommend that you start. Fortunately, many of the GDPR requirements align with best practices in CRO and marketing in general:

- ◇ By requesting less personal info, you lower friction
- ◇ Embracing GDPR requirements improves a site's sense of being trustworthy
- ◇ Users who consent to data gathering have clearly affirmed their desire to interact with your company

AI and machine learning are poised to bring scalability and efficiency to CRO this year.

AI allows CRO tools to combine multivariate factors into millions of combinations and test them extremely frequently, while machine learning allows CRO tools to record user actions, identify patterns, and weigh the significance of those patterns.

Perhaps most significantly, machine learning will allow CRO tools to find the optimal balance between “exploring” (testing to see which combinations of factors perform best) and “exploiting” (serving the most successful combinations to visitors to maximize conversions). By finding that balance, CRO experts can further demonstrate the monetary value of CRO.

GDPR GUIDELINES FOR LEAD FORMS

Whether you're offering a demo, content resource, or email subscription, your lead form must meet these guidelines:

- ◇ Pre-checked boxes are not allowed, as consent can no longer be presumed
- ◇ Users must be told exactly and specifically what they're signing up for in terms of marketing communications: “We'll send our blog digest email to you on the 15th of every month”
- ◇ Each separate offer must have its own consent option. For instance, if a user signs up for a monthly blog digest email, you can't also email them special offers unless they consent to those in a separate option

Pop-up or sidebar forms must have:

- ◇ Simple, clear language about what users can expect from completing the form
- ◇ No pre-checked boxes
- ◇ A clear sign-up button (not a vague “OK”) indicating affirmative consent
- ◇ Link to your company's privacy and data collection policy

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