

How to get double digit SEO growth / year via SEO a/b testing

5 years of SEO a/b testing, 100s of tests, enablement

Why and how to SEO a/b test
How not to stop but to scale

May 2023

the
stepstone
group



Raf Polus 4:15 PM



taking 10 seconds to celebrate success and say thank you to everyone involved on Searchpilot side & StepStone's side in setting up tests/brainstorming ideas since Feb 2022 we have had

- 9 positive tests out of the 27 run over this period
- only one negative test
- 5 (!) tests with double digit (!) growth numbers between +12 & +29%



so that's not only momentum, but pretty good success rate as well!

WHY should you care about SEO a/b testing

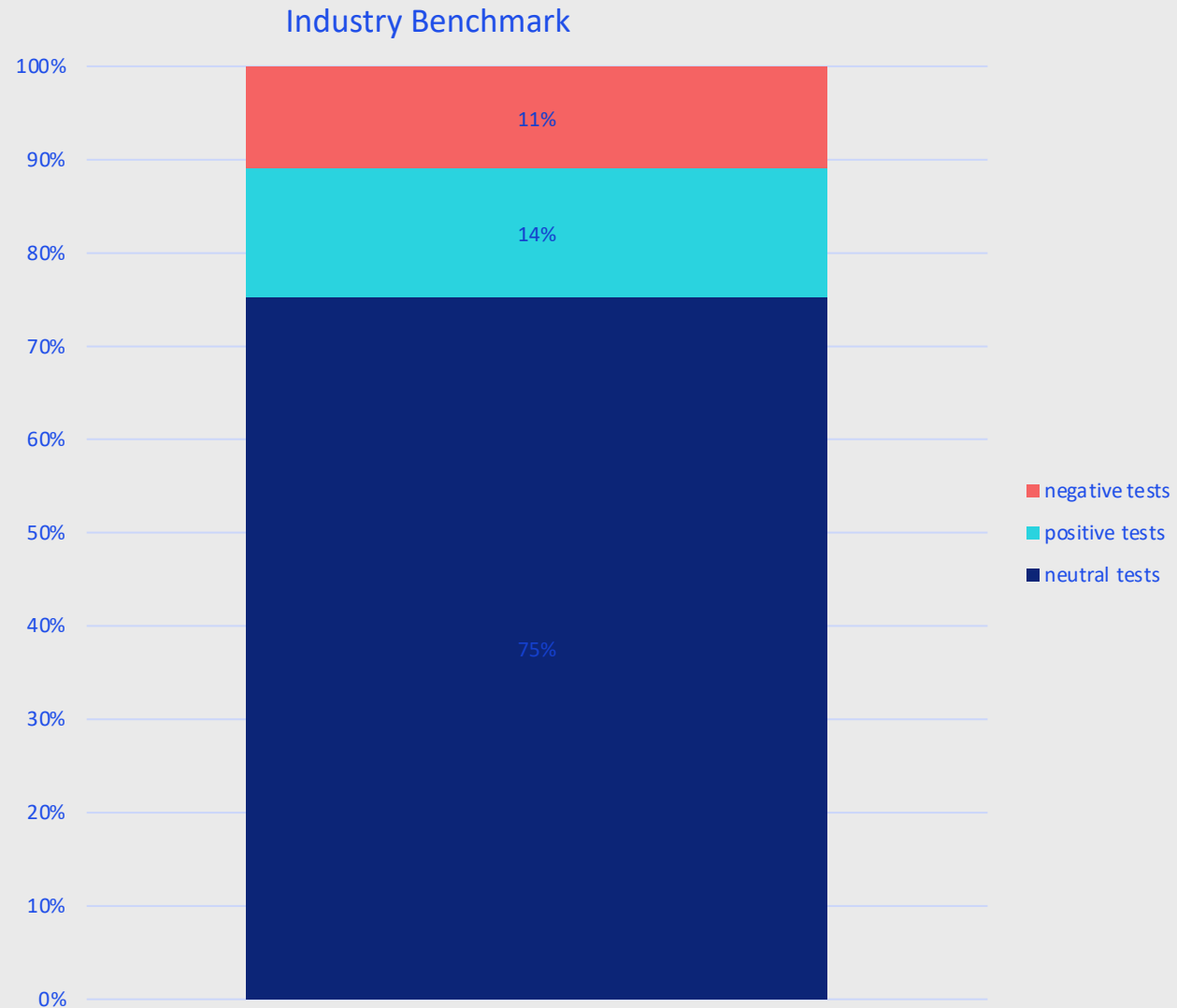
Quantify SEO releases

- Avoid SEO releases with negative impact > Focus dev teams on things that matter
- Help build business cases

Getting *** done without dev effort

Credibility

Foster an **always learning** mindset **FAIL – LEARN – REPEAT - WIN**



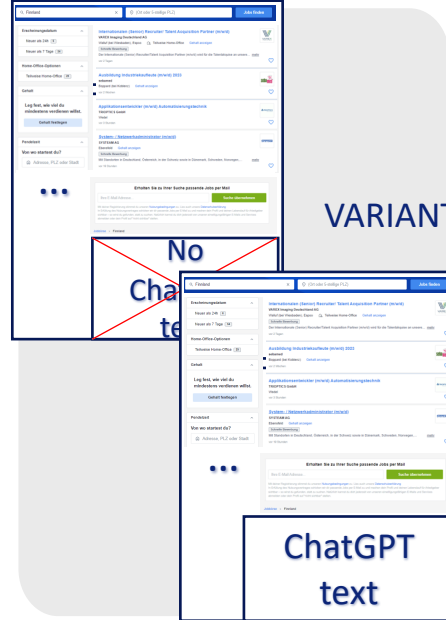
Source: SearchPilot

HOW to run an SEO a/b test - basics

Add ChatGPT generated text on my product pages

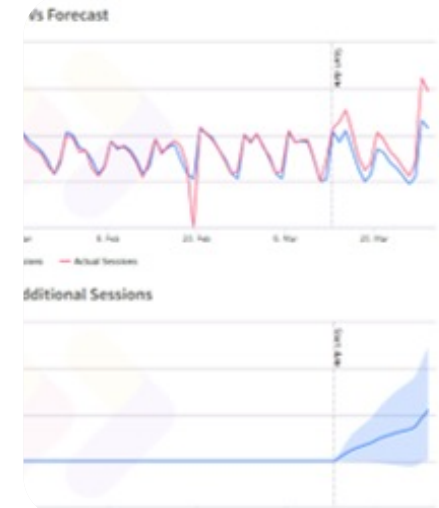
URL	bucket
/jobs/kulturentwicklung	control
/jobs/kulturerbe	variant
/jobs/kulturforum-witten	variant
/jobs/kulturkoordination	control
/jobs/kulturmanagement	control
/jobs/kulturmanager	variant
/jobs/kulturpaedagogik	control
/jobs/kulturpolitik	variant
/jobs/kulturreferent	control
/jobs/kulturvermittlung	variant
/jobs/kulturwirtschaft	variant

CONTROL



VARIANT

ChatGPT text



+7%, let's roll out

1) A test idea

- With a strong hypothesis

2) Ability to split pages in

Control & Variant

- Pages, not users
- Based on visits
- Random
- High correlation

3) Ability to deploy

template changes in Variant

- Serverside or clientside

4) Ability to measure

- Causal impact
- Outlier detection
- Observations
- GSC?

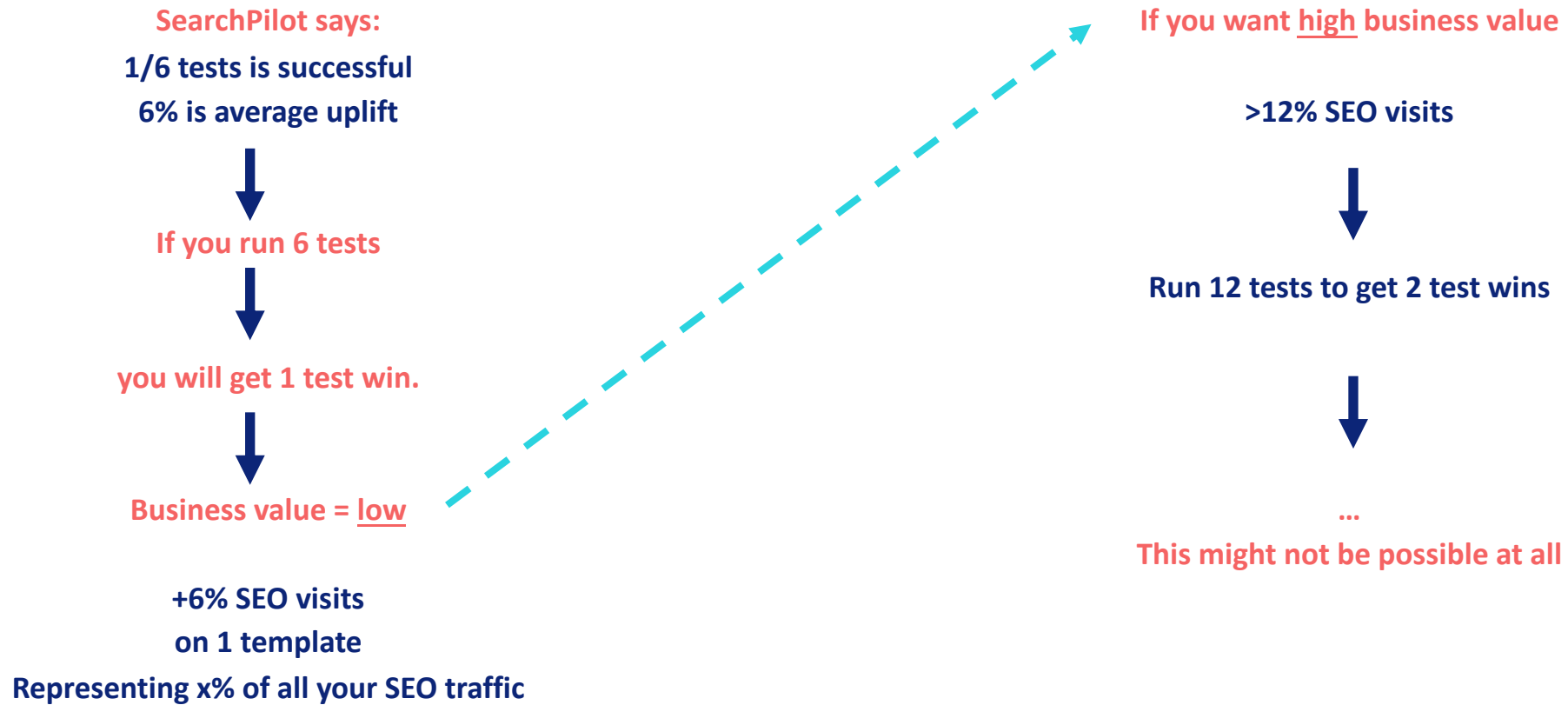
5) Line up for product

development

- Positive tests only?

Could be run by 1 data-driven SEO (+ SearchPilot or other testing tools or supporting analyst)

Why scaling enables you to identify significant business value



Scaling means : understanding & maximising test capacity

SearchPilot says:

Run-time on average = 3-4 weeks

Cooldown-time on average = 2-3 weeks



on 1 template you can run 6-8 tests a year (we need at least 12 test / year for double digit uplift)



A) subsegment your template > parallel testing

hard limit: Min 1000 visits / day!

Don't harm the accuracy of the models

OR

B) Decrease runtime/cooldown time (based on data)

>> Maximise use of test segments / cadence

(If 2 domains, 2 templates, 4 subsegments each, 2 tests each > 192 tests a year)

Continuous testing needs solid processes/alignments/agreements

- **SEO a/b tests are:**
 - affecting a PO's product
 - are exposed to all traffic sources
 - not visible in lower environments, only on 'Live'

➔ Are you allowed to add/delete/edit 'things', make changes on a PO's product?

➔ How do you create transparency on who (SEO/ product / conversion) runs which tests so engineering/analytics know what's going on?

➔ How do SEO a/b tests interact with conversion tests?

➔ How do you avoid tests to be compromised with changes in codebase

➔ What if clients see that their job-ads are part of an a/b test?

➔

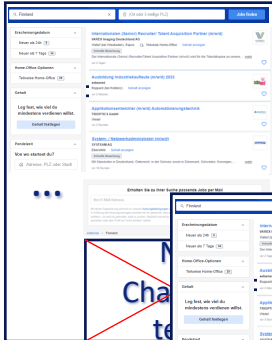
Remove barriers - Freedom to test – RACI

HOW to run SEO a/b tests - Scaled

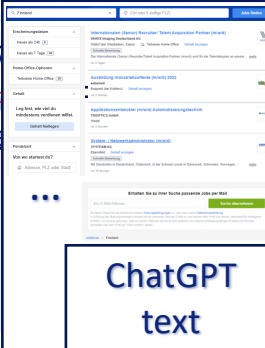
Add a ChatGPT generated text on my product pages

URL	bucket
/jobs/kulturentwicklung	control
/jobs/kulturerbe	variant
/jobs/kulturforum-witten	variant
/jobs/kulturkoordination	control
/jobs/kulturmanagement	control
/jobs/kulturmanager	variant
/jobs/kulturpaedagogik	control
/jobs/kulturpolitik	variant
/jobs/kulturreferent	control
/jobs/kulturvermittlung	variant
/jobs/kulturwirtschaft	variant

CONTROL



VARIANT



ChatGPT text

[Representative Gantt-chart here]



Backlog of ideas

Ability to split pages in Control & Variant based on traffic

- Random
- High correlation

Ability & process to deploy template changes in Variant

Signoff processes / QA
Freedom to test - experimentation culture

Maximise test capacity

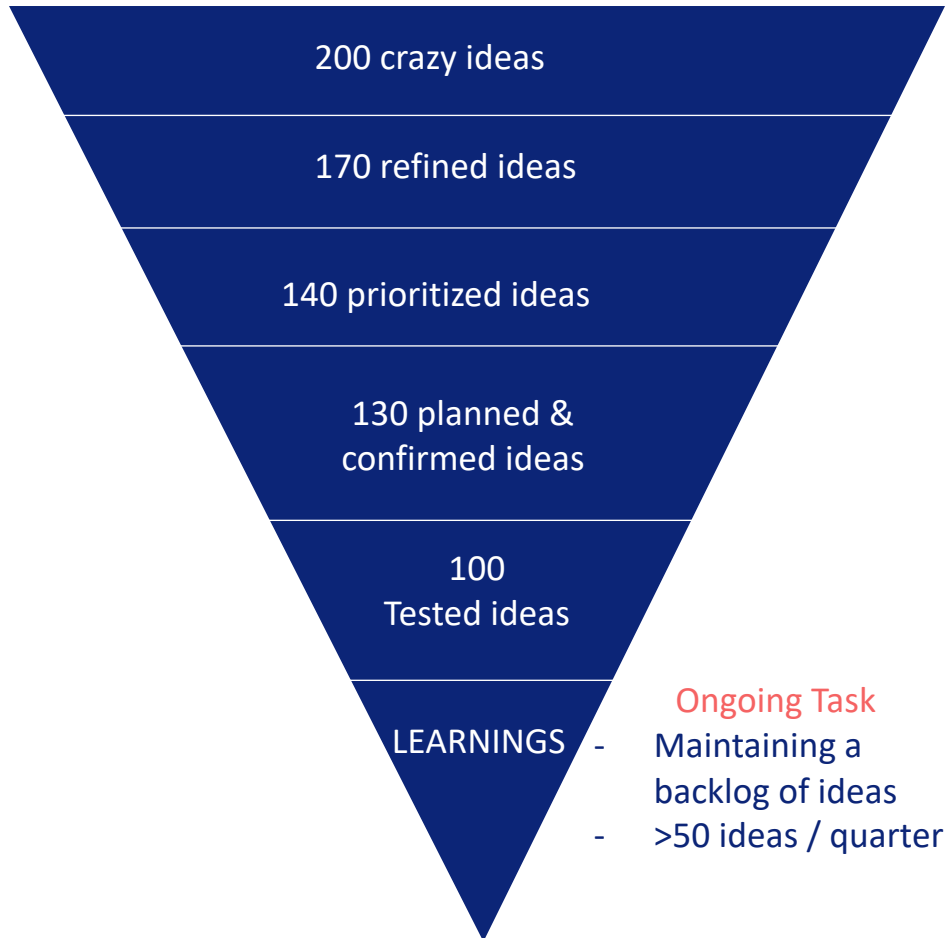
- runtime/cooldown time
- Sub-segmenting
- Timely deployment of successful tests
- Planning

Ability to measure

- Outlier detection
- Observations
- Learnings

Scaling SEO a/b testing is a complex machine

Ideas



Processes & alignment

PO
 QA/Engineering/devs
 SEO
 Analysts
 Scientists
 Data engineering
 Searchpilot
 CS

Skills / Cross-functional team

Ideation & refinement sessions
 (SEO/Analyst/Scientist)

Prioritization sessions (SEO)

Test build (SP)

Validation (SEO/Engineers)

“Live tests” analysis sessions
 (SEO/Analyst/Scientist/SP/)

Program review – sharing learnings

Systems

AB testing tool

Data Pipelines

JIRA etc

Data quality / data model audits

Reporting on bottlenecks

Questions?

What would you like to test?

Have a look at

- stepstone.de/jobs/*
- [stepstone.de/stellenangebote—](https://stepstone.de/stellenangebote/)*
- totaljobs.com/jobs/*
- totaljobs.com/job/*

Write your test idea & hypothesis & send them to raf.polus@stepstone.com

- We will prioritize & test
- Tests have to be eligible ; we filter out un-testable ideas or previously tested ideas etc

The first three positive tests will be rewarded with a 200€ Amazon voucher

