

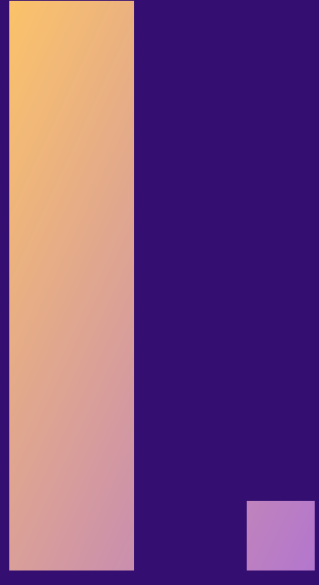
LEVEL UP

Refining Your Target Audience

Content

- I. — Introduction
- II. — Why Target Audiences Matters
- III. — Why You Shouldn't Get Attached to Your Target Audience
- IV. — Refining Your Target Audience
 - A. A/B Testing
 - Brand Messaging
 - Brand Image/Visuals
 - B. Identifying Target Audience Niches
 - Google Analytics
 - Brand Tracking Software
 - C. Tracking Target Audience Perception Consistently
- V. — **BONUS:** Keeping An Eye On The Competition
- VI. — Conclusion
- VII. — What's Next?

CHAPTER



Introduction



Introduction

Answer a question for us: When was the last time you took a look at your target audience? And we mean a good, long look — one that involved numbers and charts.

A week? Month? A year... longer?

Now, don't feel bad if it's been a while since you've explored your target audience, it's not as commonplace as one might think. For many brand managers, it's fairly standard practice to define one's target audience or audiences and then leave them be.

Unless performance drops drastically, fiddling too much with your audiences is pretty rare. However, we're here to (unfortunately) burst your bubble and say — that's not the best approach.

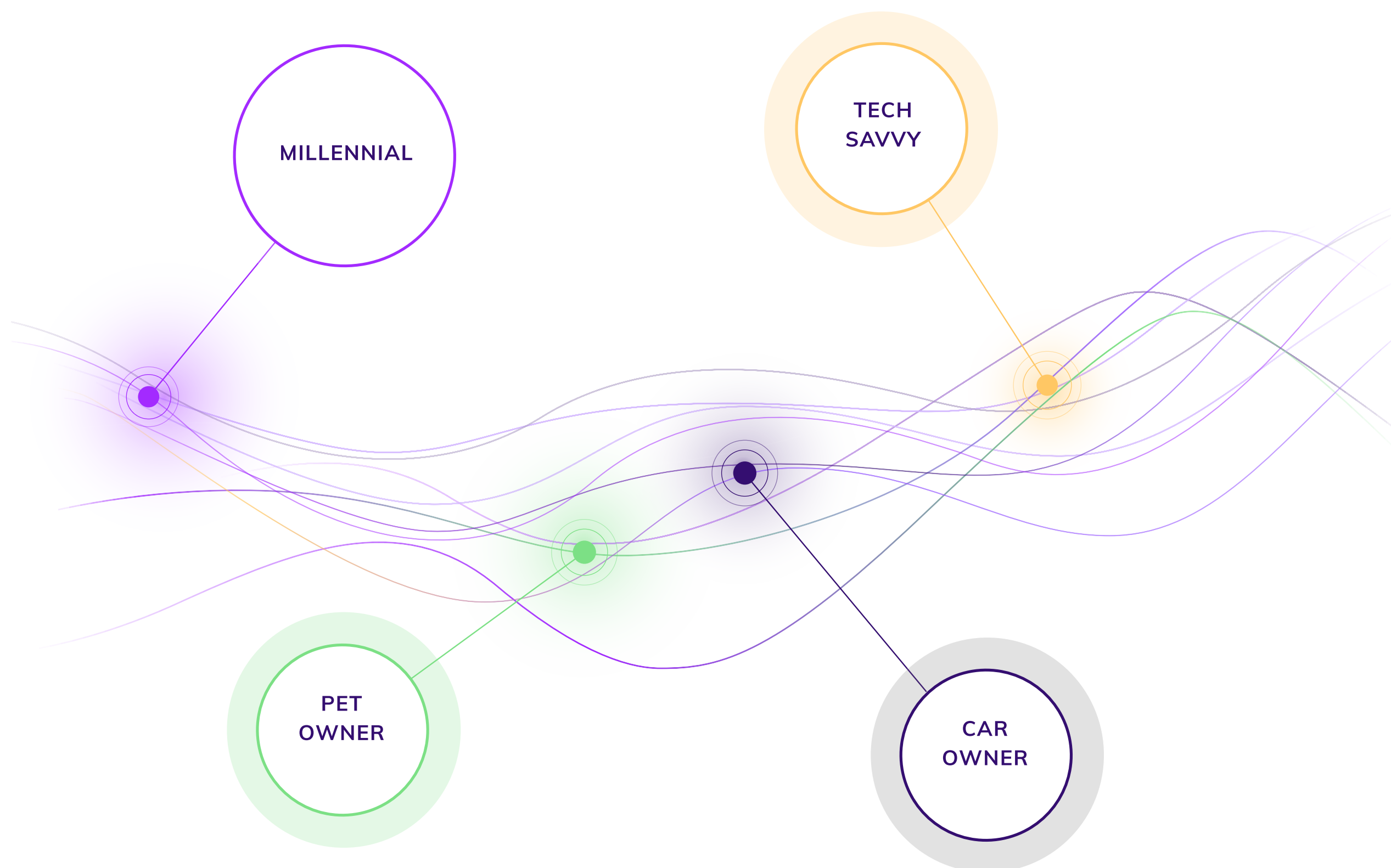
Why? Because consumers' needs, wants, and perceptions change. Nothing is static that involves humans — and your target audience is chock-full of them. Therefore, it makes sense that you need to be consistently refining your target audience.

As a mid-sized company, you can't afford to lose customers or miss out on opportunities because your target audience is outdated or overloaded. If you want to make the jump from SMB to SME, you need to up your game.

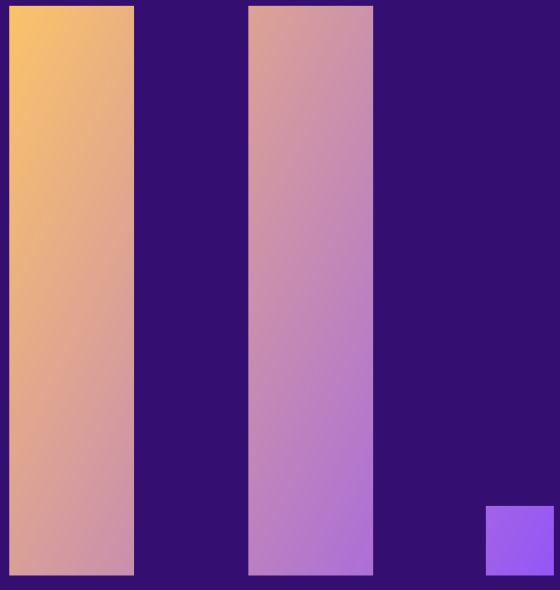
That's where refining your target audiences comes in. To begin with, this guide will take a look at why target audiences matter and why you shouldn't get too attached to them. Then, we'll move on to some tried and true methods you can use to refine your target audience to ensure you're consistently reaching the consumers that count.

Finally, we'll close out with a bonus chapter on why it makes sense to keep an eye on your competitors' target audiences as well. Our hope is that you will walk away with a deeper understanding of how to manage and refine your target audiences.

So, let's get to it!



CHAPTER



Why Target Audiences Matters



Why Target Audiences Matters

If you're reading this guide, you already know what target audiences are and why they're incredibly important to your marketing strategy — so we won't harp on it here.

However, it never hurts to refresh our collective memories and touch on the most important aspects of finding your target audience.

So, if a target audience is comprised of the consumers you feel need and want your products or services the most, it follows that this group should be fairly customized. Very few brands could list “the entire population” as their realistic target audience.

For example, say you're the brand manager of a mid-sized company that sells handmade artistic prints, called “Silqscreen”. From city maps to line drawings, you sell top-quality prints as an online retailer all around the world. While there are millions of people around the globe who might be interested in your products, only a small portion of them are likely to convert into actual customers. Therefore, spending money on advertising your wares to this smaller group is much more cost-effective.

In this scenario, let's say when you launched your brand, your main target audience was urban-dwelling men and women aged 18-45 with an interest in handmade goods. Cut to three years later — sales are increasing, your brand awareness is higher than ever, and you have a respectable social media following.

Translation: You've officially become a mid-market company. Hurrah!

However, as an experienced brand manager, you have a feeling there's been a shift in your target audience. Over the last few months, purchases have become skewed more towards women and you've seen a rising number of sales coming from rural areas. What does this indicate? You need to reassess your target audience.

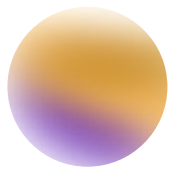
If you continued on targeting the same audience from day one, there's a chance you'd begin to waste money on ads, struggle with brand messaging, and, eventually, see a drop in sales and revenue.

Now, that's not to say that you need to completely overhaul your target audience on a regular basis. Instead, you need to keep your finger on the pulse of your target audience's needs, desires, and perceptions. And when these things shift — even ever so slightly — you need to be willing to refine your target audience to respond appropriately. Because if you're spending all your time and money speaking to the wrong consumers, sooner or later you'll start to see the cracks.

CHAPTER



Why You Shouldn't Get Attached to Your Target Audience



Why You Shouldn't Get Attached to Your Target Audience

As we touched on in the last chapter, your target audience isn't static. Therefore, getting attached to it as-is won't do you any good.

You need to respect the fluidity of your target audience and go with the flow. For example — historically, women have been the main target audience for hair care and cosmetics brands, but times are changing.

More and more men are expressing their interest in such products and services, and brands that ignore such trends because they're too attached to their current target audience will lose out on business.

To illustrate this point, let's say you're the brand manager of a maternity yoga store, called "Momsana". Traditionally, your target audience has been made up of young, expectant mothers with an interest in staying active while pregnant.

As this is the target audience that's made you a successful mid-sized business, you're hesitant to change too much. However, in your last few routine checks, you'd started to notice a growing trend: more and more postpartum mothers are buying your yoga pants.

Now, your focus for the last five years has been almost exclusively on actively pregnant women and your products have been created with their needs in mind. Instead of standard sizes, you sell your yoga pants by trimester. However, you'd never considered making products specifically for postpartum women.

By remaining open to new data and keeping your finger on the pulse of your target audience and customers' needs and desires, you were able to spot a shift in need — which should result in a shift in your product and targeting.

With this information in mind, you can approach your CMO to discuss the possibility of creating a new product line with a slightly different target audience in mind.

As this example illustrates, while you should respect the path that led you to your current target audience, you must also remain open to the possibility that it will change over time.

So, let's take a look at some methods you can use to check in on your audience and decide whether or not you need to do some fine-tuning.

CHAPTER

IV.



Refining Your Target Audience



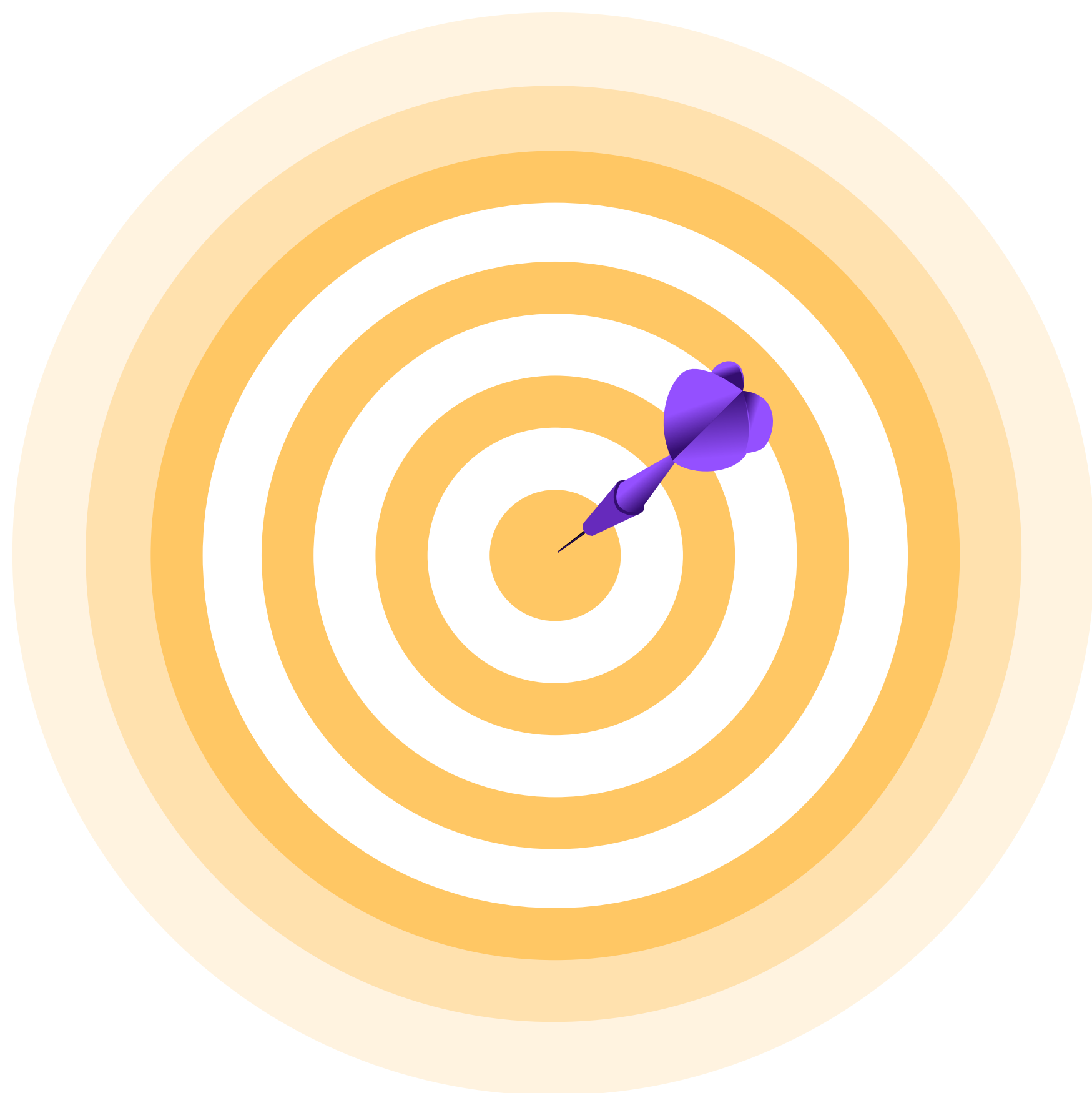


Refining Your Target Audience

Now that we're all on the same page about why target audiences matter and how big a role flexibility plays in it all, let's discuss some methods you can use to refine your target audience.

To be able to successfully refine your target audience, you need data on how they are responding to your brand. Whether you gather that data via A/B testing, analytics tools, or advanced brand tracking software will depend on your business needs and goals.

Whatever your company requires, there's sure to be a solution that can help improve your overall marketing strategy.



A.

A/B TESTING

A/B testing often gets a bad rap. It can be time-consuming, sometimes inconclusive, and — depending on your business model — difficult to set up.

But that doesn't mean it's not worth a try. When you have the time and the resources to set up an A/B test, you'll be rewarded with insights into how your target audience feels about your brand.

Be it your brand communication, your logo, your website UX design — these are all things that you can A/B test to discover what customers respond more positively to.

When it comes to A/B testing options, there are a few solutions — some free, some paid — that you can use which will help you gather data and discover important insights.

Here, we'll discuss a few tools that you can try out.

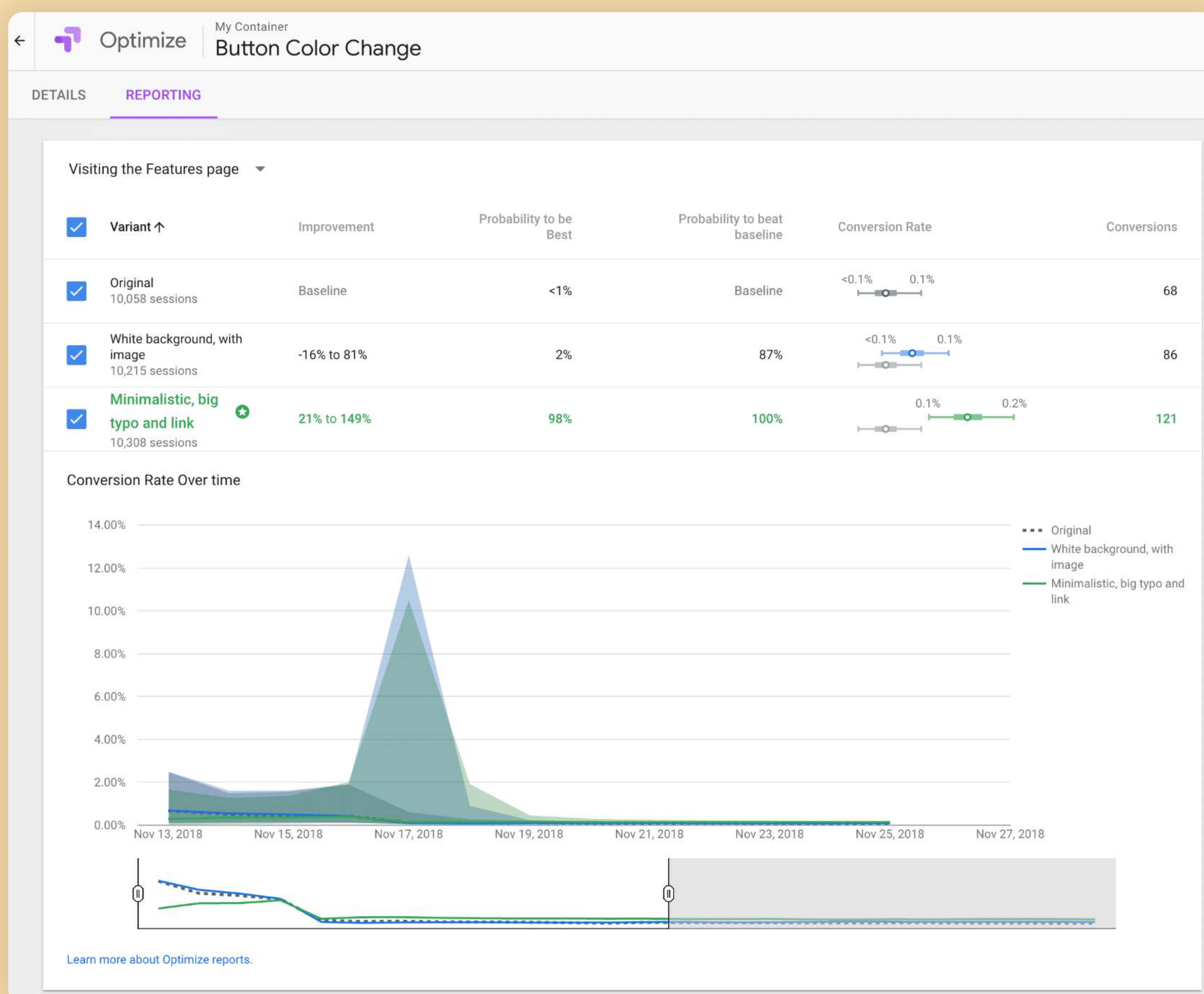


Google Optimize



First, there's Google Optimize — which offers both a free and paid version of their tool. As their homepage states, your website is your new storefront, so you need to ensure it's impressing your visitors.

This easy-to-use tool allows website owners to A/B test everything from content to website flow to imagery to CTA buttons. Unsure which header image consumers like more? Set up an A/B test to determine the winner. With the ability to set up a new A/B test in under 10 minutes, you can use this tool to make almost constant UX improvements based on the data your target audience provides.



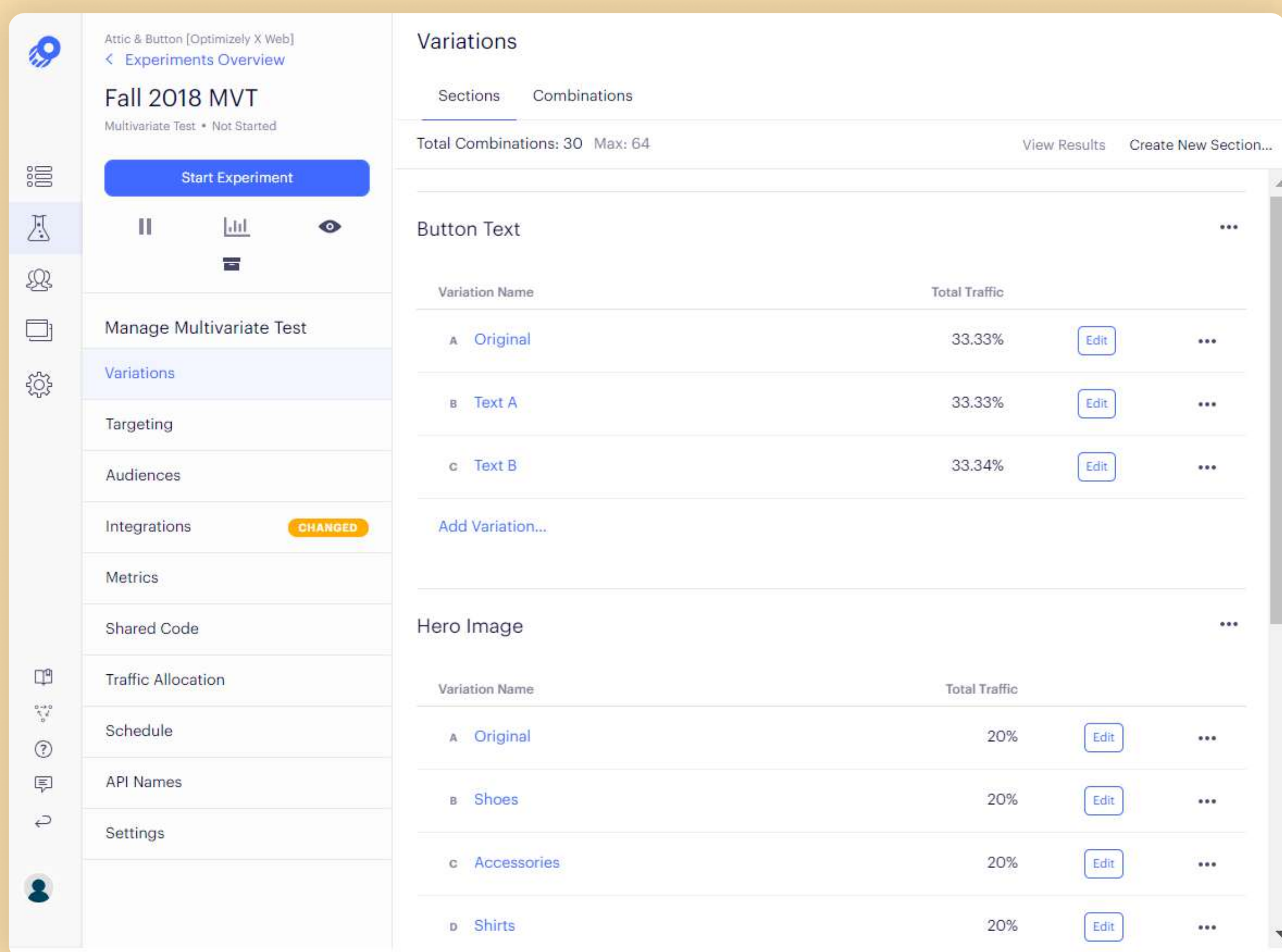
Remember, what we as brand managers like or dislike doesn't always line up perfectly with the tastes of our target audience. Therefore, if we want to create a user experience that audiences will enjoy, we need to figure out how they're responding.

Optimizely



Next, there's Optimizely, which offers one free version and multiple paid plans for their tool. Referring to themselves as “the world's fastest experimentation platform”, this tool allows users to A/B test everything from a new headline to a new product offering.

Easy-to-use and accessible, Optimizely lets users test out different copy variations or imagery without writing a single line of code. Therefore, as a brand manager, you don't also need to be a developer to use this tool successfully. When setting up A/B tests with this option, you can easily gather data on how your most important target audiences are responding to your tests. Which will, in turn, allow you to customize your website for different audiences to improve their overall user experience.



Now that we've touched on some options, let's discuss some different aspects of your website that you can (and should) be A/B testing to find the sweet spot for your target audience.



Brand Messaging

One of the main aspects that you can A/B test is your brand messaging — aka your style of communication. So, everything from your tone of voice to your diction to the length of your paragraphs.

For example, say you're the brand manager of an artisanal, vegetarian soup company, aptly named "Souptopia". Your brand has three main target audiences, and — though each one is unique — your paid campaigns have been sending them all to the same version of your website.

In an effort to increase conversions, you want to change that. So, with the ability to A/B test, you can set up a few different tests with new content to see how each target audience responds.



Rural Women

Let's say target audience #1, rural-dwelling women aged 35-55, respond very well to new content that focuses on the source of your vegetables — sustainable, organic farms. As they themselves live rurally, they like to see companies that hold the same values and their conversion rate subsequently increased by 1.5%.



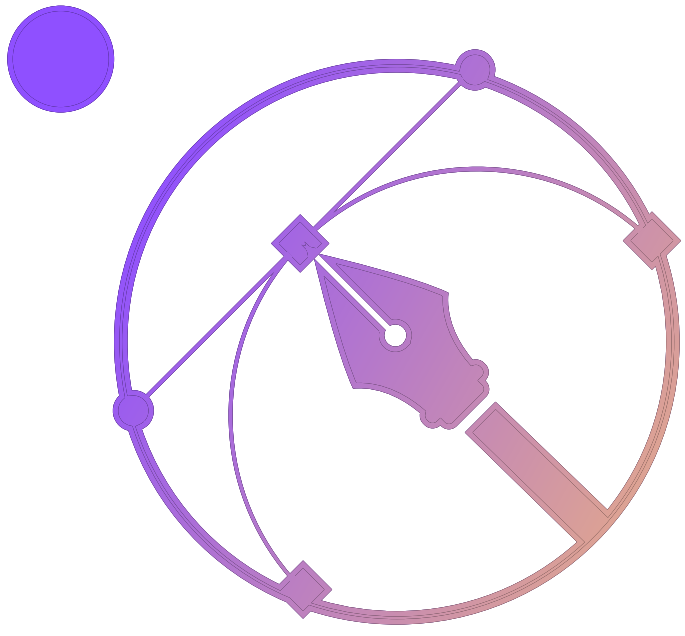
Millennial Men

Target audience #2, city-dwelling Millennial men, didn't respond as well to your new content — for whatever reason, more focus on the farmers made them bounce from your site at a higher rate. Therefore, you know that in the future, you'll send them to a less text-heavy version of your site and focus your messaging more on your products' great taste and reasonable prices.



Working Parents

For target audience #3, working parents with one or more children, you tried out new content that focused more on the time-saving quality of your soups. Thankfully, this target audience responded quite well, with their overall time on site increasing by a whopping 15%.



Brand Image/ Visuals

In the same vein, you can use an A/B testing tool to test out new visuals. By seeing what kind of response they elicit from your target audiences, you'll know what areas need refinement. From new header images to updated icon visualizations, it's important that you get feedback from your audience before making a permanent switch.

For example, let's pretend you're the brand manager of a luxury greeting card company, called "Greetings". While your greeting cards are all handmade and somewhat intricate, your website is quite simple and basic.

As the newest member of your marketing team, you're unsure if your website design and visuals accurately reflect your brand image — refined, luxurious, and expensive. Therefore, you propose a few A/B tests to see if your two main target audiences would respond better to a more visually appealing and intricate website.

With the data you gathered from A/B testing new visuals — header images, icons, photography — you were able to prove to your supervisor that a differently-styled website would receive a better reception from your customers.

Hurray for A/B testing!





Considering the Limitations

While A/B testing can provide important insights into how your website visitors are responding to your brand messaging and visuals, it can be hard to guarantee you'll have enough data to ensure statistical significance.

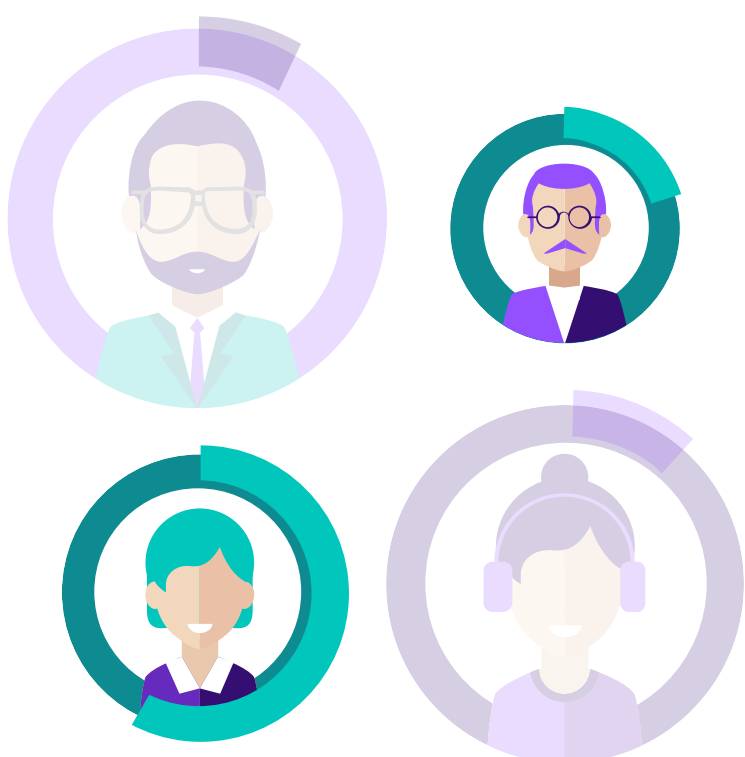
Depending on how much traffic your website generates on a daily basis, gathering enough data might take weeks or even months. And even then, you have no real control over the sample used — meaning certain target audiences may be underrepresented.

Additionally, while most A/B testing tools are relatively easy to use for running basic tests, they can become complicated should you want to set up more intricate tests.

So, keep this in mind if you decide that A/B testing aspects of your website is the solution for you.

B.

IDENTIFYING TARGET AUDIENCE NICHE



When it comes to the demographic makeup of your current target audiences, they're bound to be somewhat specific already.

After all, no self-respecting target audience is comprised of "everyone". However, if you want to level up your marketing strategy, you need to be able to identify your niche target audiences.

What is a niche target audience, you ask? It's a more focused subgroup of your existing target audience. For example, say your target audience is women aged 25-45 living on the East Coast of the US. As target audiences go, that's fairly strong.

However, if you wanted to work with a niche version of that target audience, you'd need to be much more specific — aka women aged 25-45 living on the East Coast of the US with an interest in sustainability and 1-3 children. That's niche.

Though it may take a good deal of time and effort to identify your niche target audiences, it's worth it. For starters, niches save you money — when you know exactly who you're speaking to, you don't have to spend as much on advertising to large groups.

Plus, you already know you're communicating with an audience who's more likely to buy your products or services, which means conversion rates should be higher. Another benefit? There's less competition in more niche markets, which means you have a better chance of catching consumers' eyes.

Finally, you can create better, more targeted content for niche audiences. Because you know so much about your niches via all the data you've gathered, you should be able to identify what kind of content will connect with them.

But how do you identify these amazing niche audiences? You can't just make up the attributes you think will work — you have to rely on data.

In this section, we will discuss the top two options for tracking target audience performance data and explore how such information can be used to identify niche audiences.



Google Analytics

If you're looking to track overall user performance and engagement, Google Analytics is a great place to start.

With the ability to create audience segmentations to derive more nuanced insights from website visitors' engagement, GA can be a great source for brand managers looking to level up their brand strategy.

Under the "Audience" tab in GA, you can discover a wealth of information — as the data provided is broken down by users, sessions, bounce rate, and more.

When looking to create a niche target audience, you should examine your current target audience and consider important demographics such as:



- **Age:** which age range within your target audience is most interested in your products?



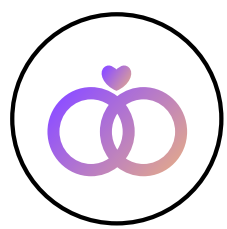
- **Location:** in what regions, countries, or cities is your website performing the best with your current target audience?



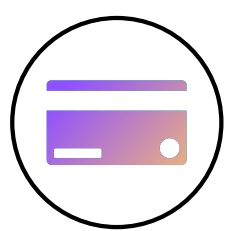
- **Device:** desktop, tablet, mobile — which device does your target audience favor?



- **Income:** which income range within your target audience is converting most often?



- **Marital/Family Status:** if your target audience contains various marital and family statuses, which are performing best?

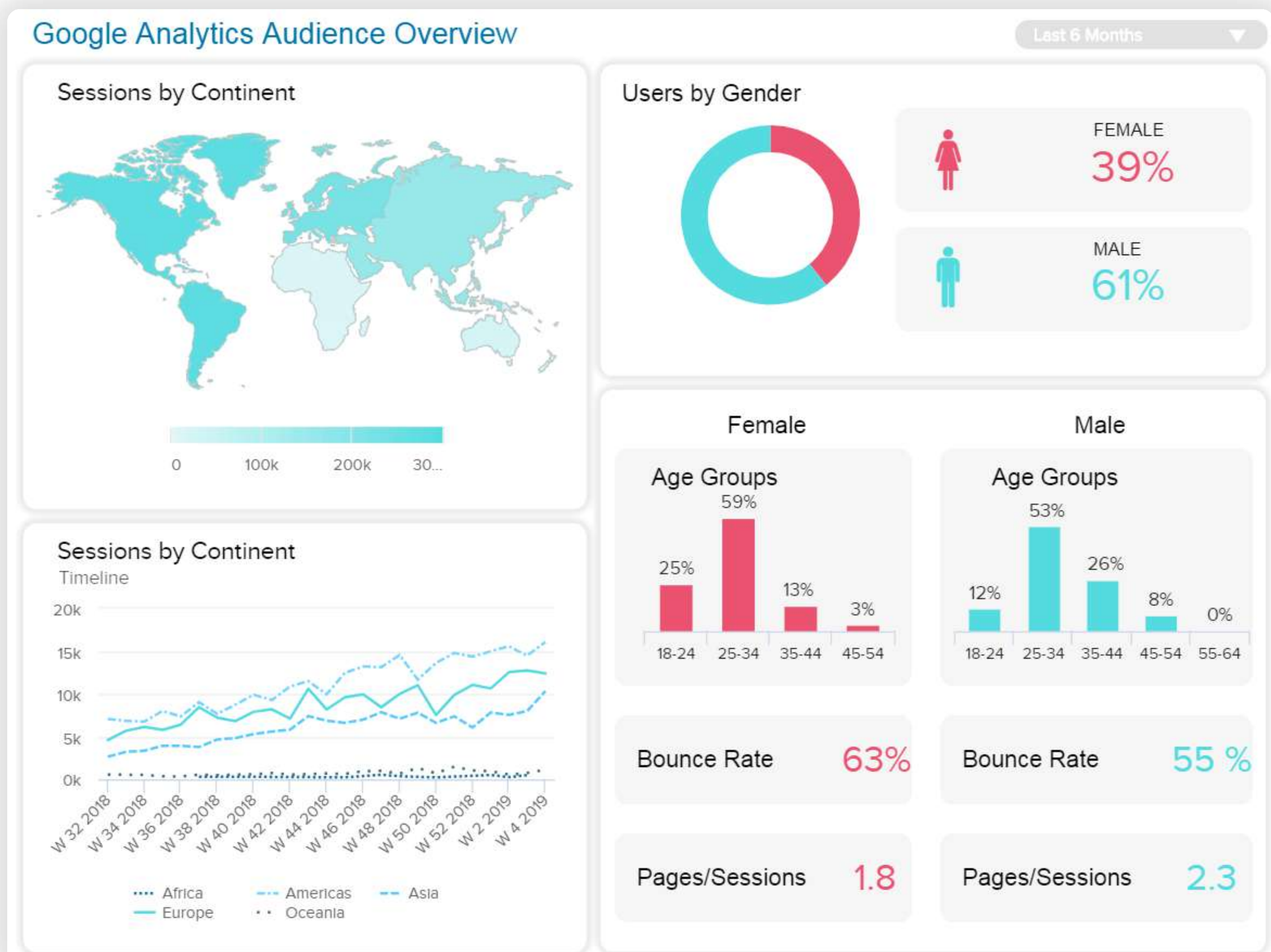


- **Purchase Behavior:** which subsections of your target audience show the highest frequency, recency, or CLV rates?

Of course, there are plenty more demographics to consider, but the main goal is to look at your current target audience and try to identify certain smaller groups that are performing better, or differently, than the whole.

Once you have identified these groups and have the data to back up your new niche, you should create a new audience segment in GA. This way, you can track and compare this new niche audience's performance over the coming weeks.

It's also a good idea to A/B test content for these new niches, as you want to make sure you're delivering them what they're looking for.





Considering the Limitations

While Google Analytics is a great place to get started for brand managers that want to track their audience performance, there are still limitations to how nuanced and insightful the data can be.

For example, tracking more specific brand KPIs — like brand associations or brand preference — can be nearly impossible with a tool like GA. While you can make certain inferences from the data available, the insights won't be nearly as definitive as with something like brand tracking software.

In GA, you can analyze users' behavior and then ascribe different actions to different levels of your brand funnel. But with brand tracking software, you get the actual data you need — your target audiences' answers to direct questions about your most important KPIs.

This, in turn, allows brand managers to make more informed decisions when working to refine their target audiences and identify niches.

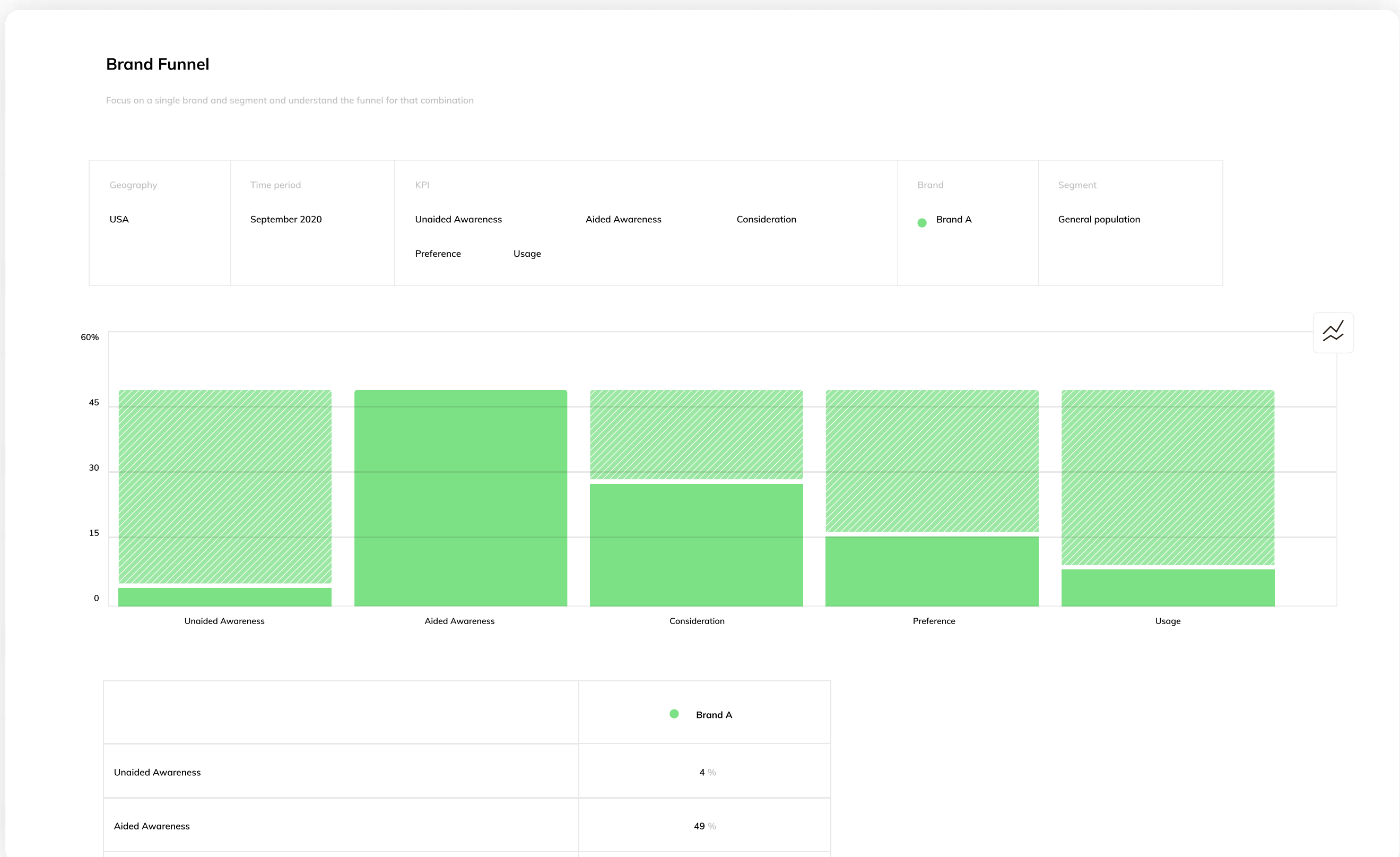


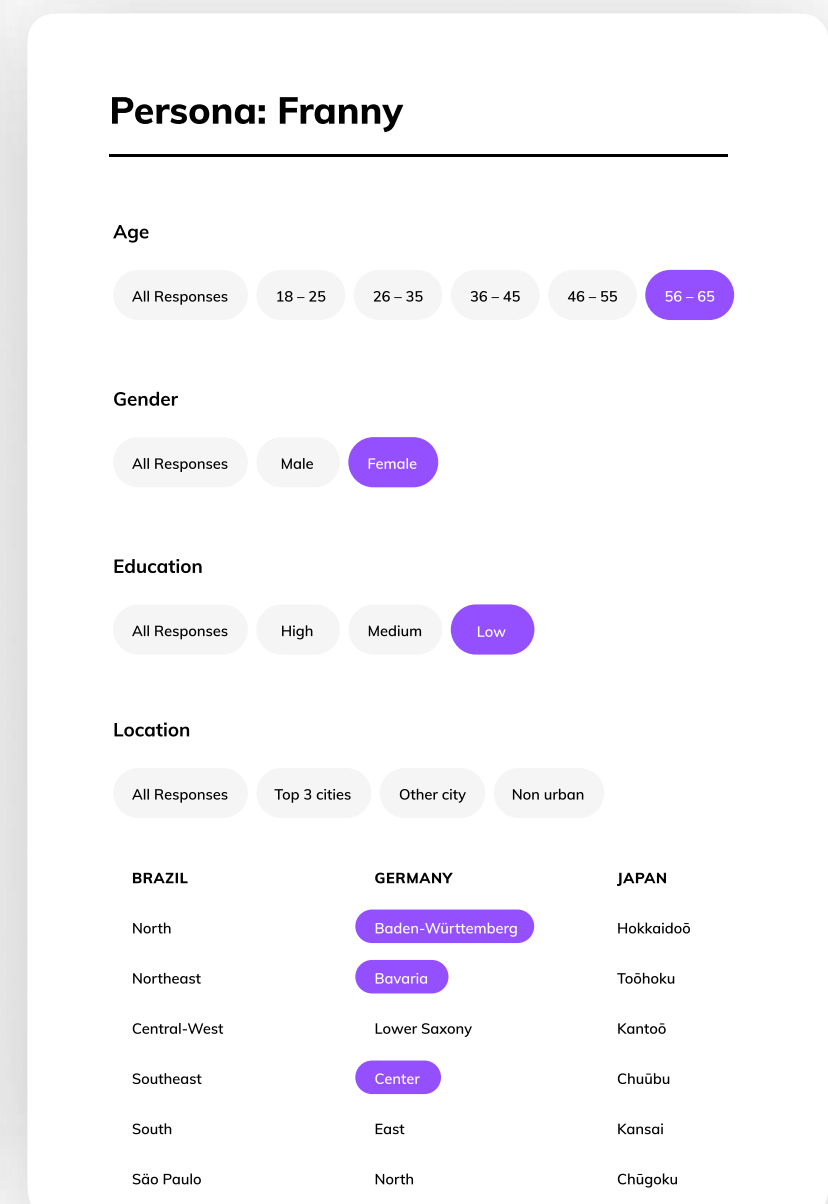
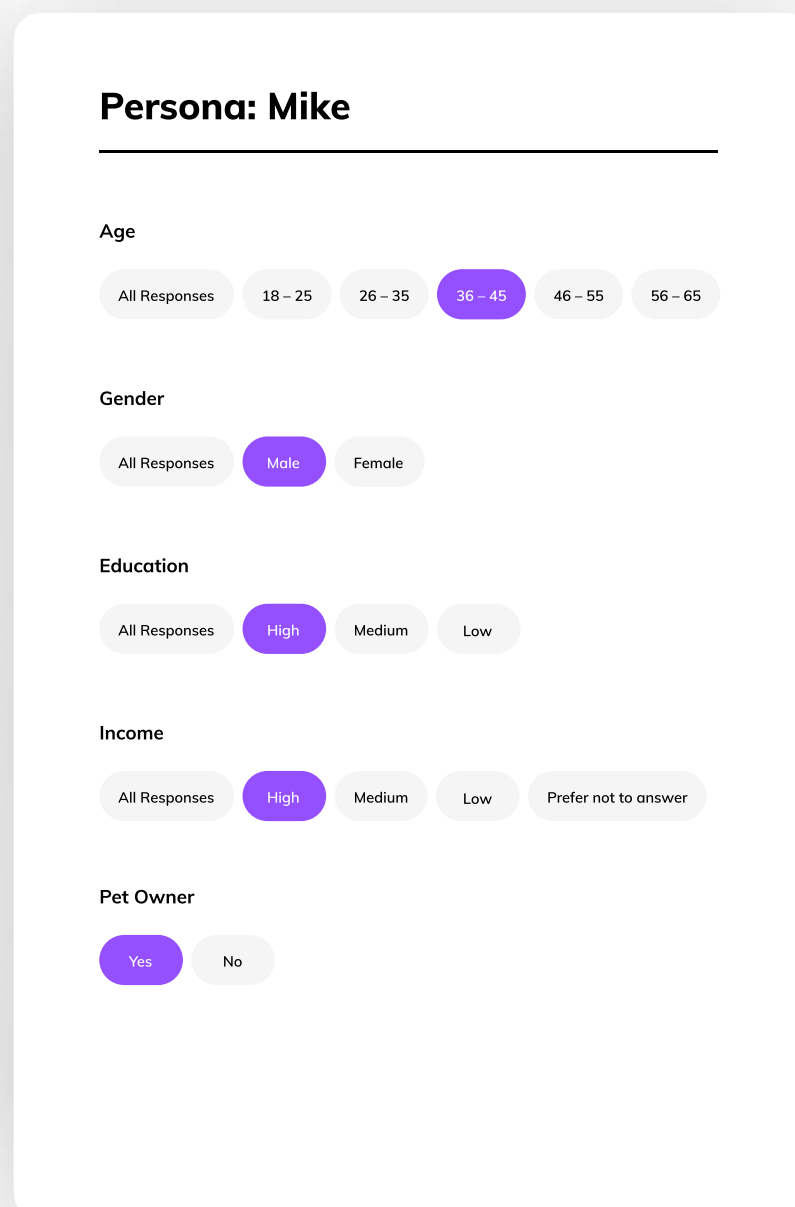
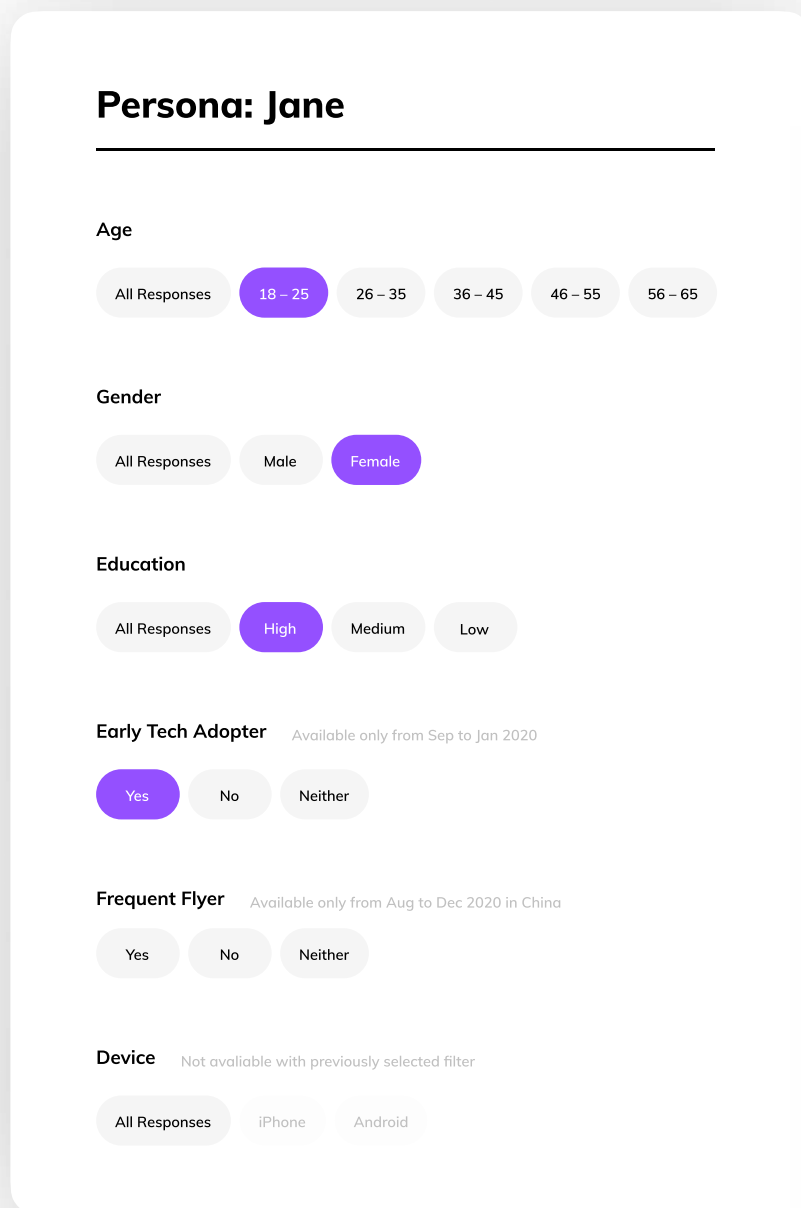
Brand Tracking Software

Another great option for identifying niche audiences is via the use of advanced brand tracking software. While there are a handful of great options available, we think it's only fair to discuss what we know: Latana's brand tracking software.

When you use a brand tracking tool, you choose which target audiences to track. Of course, you should still track your performance within the general population to serve as a foil for your target audiences. But this option provides brand managers with the power to gather the data they need to enhance their marketing activities.

From brand awareness to consideration to associations, brand tracking tools like Latana allow you to monitor the brand KPIs that actually matter. Plus, once the data has been collected, it's yours to explore — meaning you can use our dynamic dashboard to create all the charts necessary to find your niches.





With a tool like Latana, you also get to decide which audience segments you want to monitor. Let's say you're the brand manager of a company that sells backpacks made from recyclable materials, called "EcoPacks".

When setting up your account with Latana, you need to define the audiences you'd like to track. Of course, you include the standards: general population, all men, all women, Millennials, Gen X, etc. You get the idea — tracking some generalized audiences to establish baselines for your brand performance.

However, as your brand is only a year old, while you have a fairly good idea of who your main target audiences are, you haven't really nailed your niches yet. With that in mind, you decide to add a few of your more customized audiences:

Target Audience 1: Parents aged 25-45 living in cities

Target Audience 2: High school students living in cities & rural areas

Target Audience 3: College students living in cities

Target Audience 4: Women aged 18-35 with an interest in environmental conservation

Now, the purpose of tracking these target audiences is twofold. First, you want to see how they are performing at face value — no change necessary. Secondly, you want to be able to take a deep dive into the data each target audience provides to see if there's an even more specific niche you could pull out.

With our brand tracking software, you're able to do just that. But how would that play out? Let's say you've received your first wave of our MRP-treated data, and you're ready to dive in.

When exploring Target Audience 2, you learn that female respondents showed 16% higher brand awareness than their male counterparts — and that superior performance continued with the subsequent brand KPIs you tracked (consideration, preference, and usage).

You also found that 46% of female respondents from this audience who lived in rural areas associate your brand with being “sustainable” and “trustworthy” — which was 35% higher than their urban counterparts. With this new knowledge at hand, you decide to test out a new niche audience: female high school students living in rural areas.

As you can see, brand tracking software makes finding niches much easier, which will, in turn, help you craft even more effective brand communication.

C

TRACKING TARGET AUDIENCE PERCEPTION CONSISTENTLY

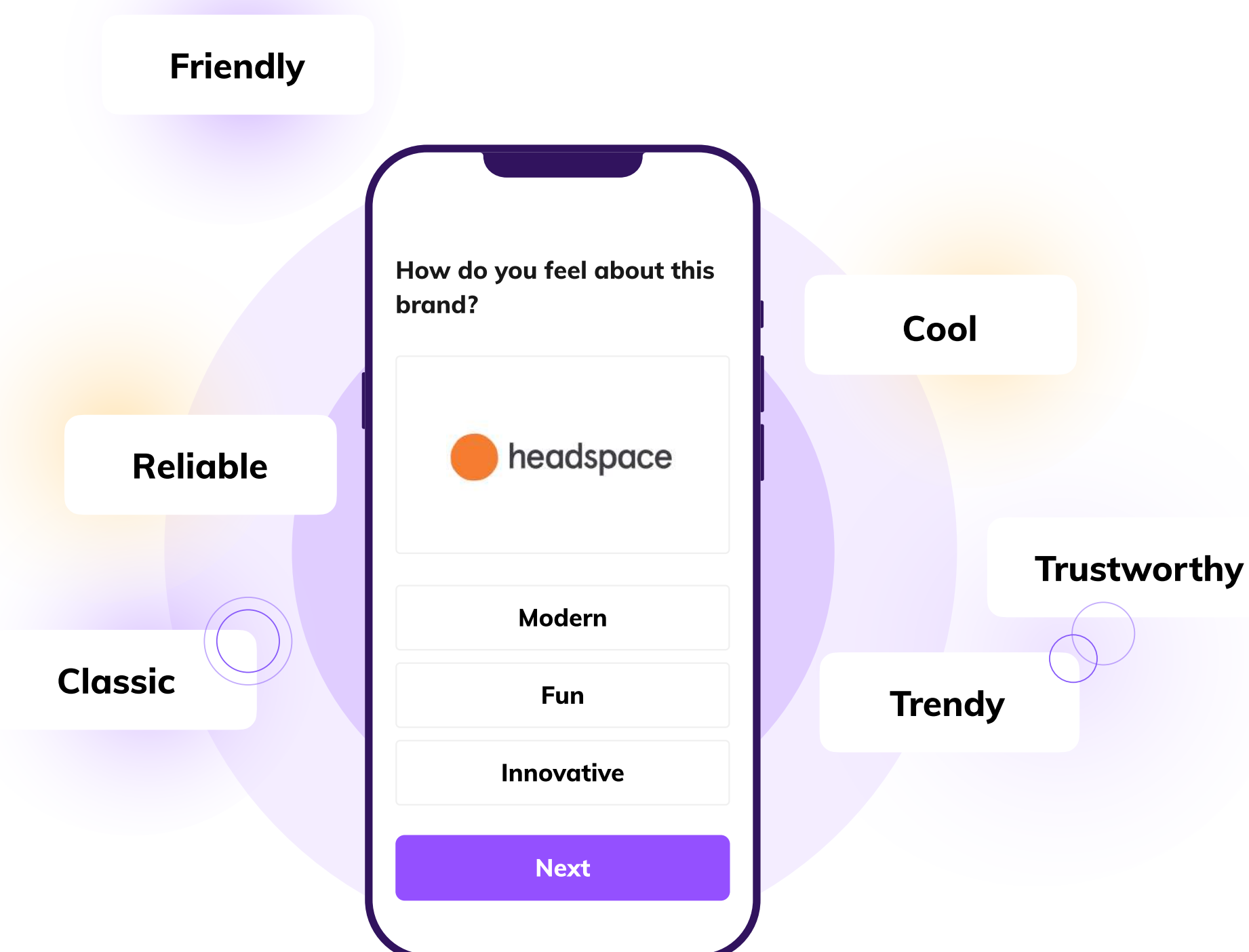
What does it mean to track target audience perception consistently? Well, for different brands it will mean different things.

For smaller, newer brands, it might mean gathering brand tracking data on a quarterly or bi-yearly basis. Without the big budget and large consumer pool of established companies, smaller brands usually have to make do with less frequent waves of data.

On the other hand, large, established brands might want to collect more frequent waves of data — say, every month or so. This is especially true for brands that are in high growth periods or have recently undergone an important change, like a rebrand.

Why is consistent collection so vital? Well, with more frequent data waves, brands are able to routinely examine how their target audiences are responding to changes and where any possible niches have popped up. And if they spot a negative trend, they're able to address it sooner and avoid disappointing customers.

Therefore, "consistency" here is meant somewhat loosely, with the frequency dependent upon various factors, such as company size, goals, and budget. While this may sound difficult or overly involved, it doesn't have to be. Why is that? Because advanced brand tracking software exists.



With a tool like Latana, you'll be able to gather data on the target audiences that really matter. Plus, our tool uses an advanced algorithm called Multilevel Regression and Poststratification (MRP) — which allows for deeper segmentation and more precise niche tracking.

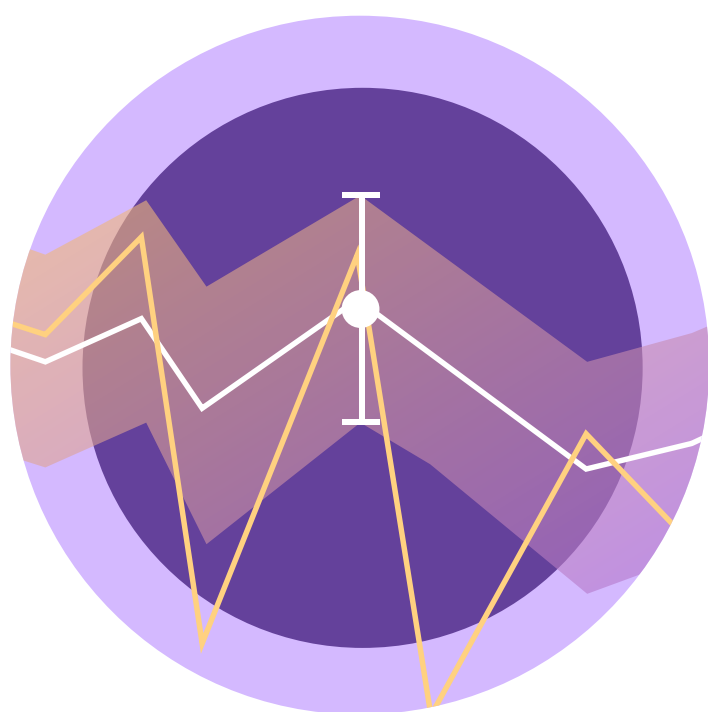
Using MRP, we're able to provide higher quality data and insights that are more closely aligned with real-world changes. From data smoothing to stable sample composition, MRP helps produce lower margins of error so that you can make more informed marketing decisions.

Plus, with our easy-to-use dynamic dashboard, accessing up-to-date and historical data is as simple as it comes. Automatically updated after every new wave of data has been collected, Latana's dashboard allows for more nuanced insights — making exploring niches and refining target audiences easy.

Furthermore, by providing a single source of truth for all brand tracking data, you can rest assured that your consumer insights will be consistently presented — leading to more confident decisions.

When it comes to managing your target audiences, consistent tracking is absolutely essential. Your target audience demographics need to stay up-to-date, as peoples' needs and interests change over time.

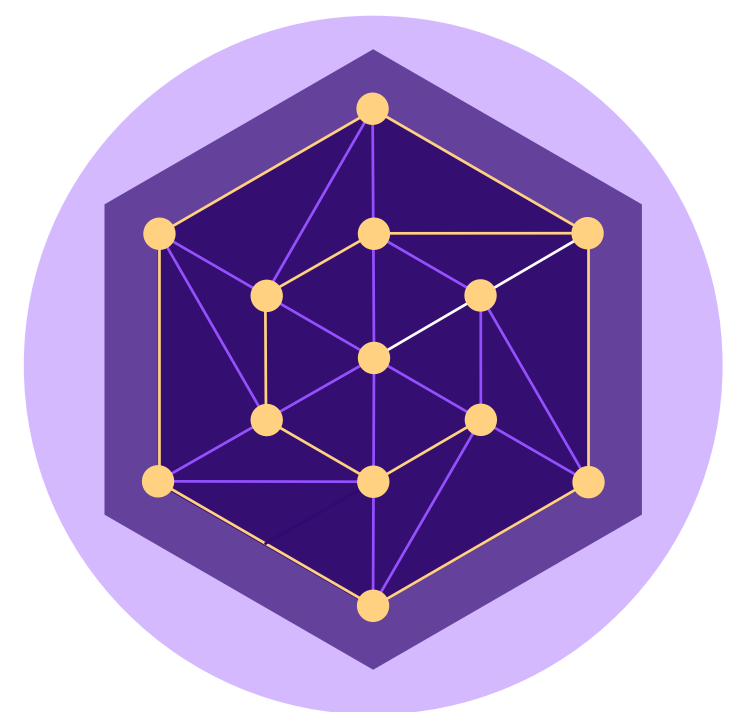
By gathering continual data on your target audiences' perceptions and reception of your brand, you'll position yourself to be more effective and successful.



**Lower Margin
of Error**

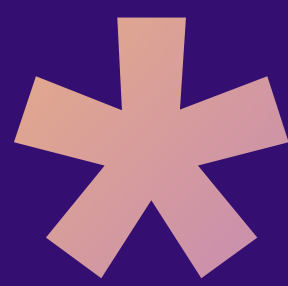


**Easy-to-use Dynamic
Dashboard**



Accurate Data

CHAPTER



BONUS

Keeping An Eye On The Competition



BONUS : Keeping An Eye On The Competition

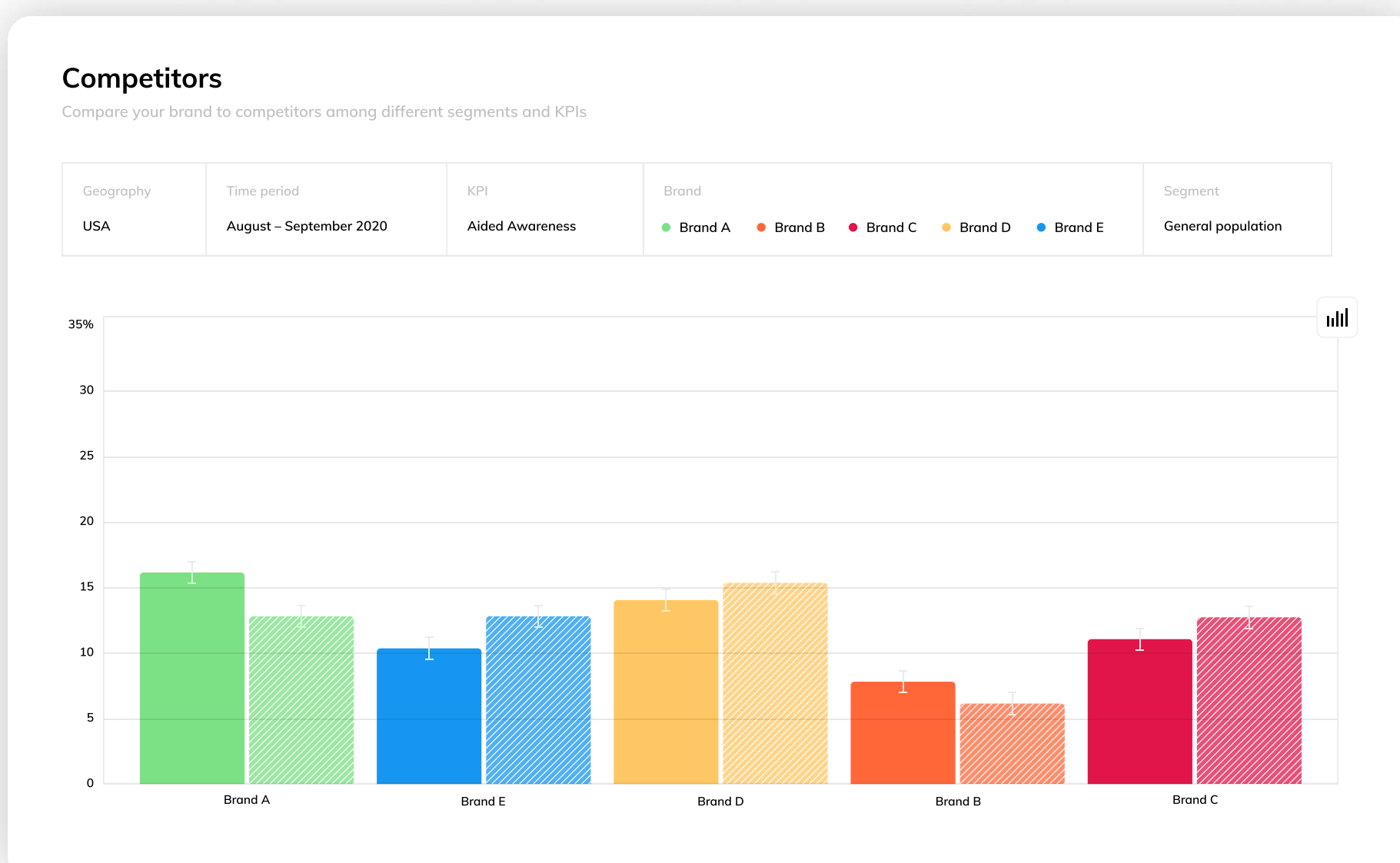
As a brand manager, it can be tempting to become hyper-focused on your own brand's performance. However, you cannot lose sight of the competition — how your top competitors are performing has a real impact on your own brand and you need to keep an eye on them.

There are a handful of different tools that you can use that will allow you to monitor your competitors' performance. From SEMRush to Google Ads to Buzzsumo, you can track position ranking, backlinks, visibility, and more.

However, if you want to have access to the data that actually matters for your brand strategy, we recommend using brand tracking software. If you're already tracking specific target audiences and niches, it's vital that you have the same data for your competitors.

Thankfully, a tool like Latana makes that possible. When gathering data on your brand, we include the brand names of your competitors as well. This way, you have access to the same data for your top rivals. With this kind of data, you can see where your competitors are over or under-performing — plus, you can identify possible new audiences you hadn't yet discovered.

At the end of the day, it's vital that you take the time to zoom out from your own brand. By gathering consumer insights on your competitors, you'll be able to refine both your target audiences and marketing strategy.



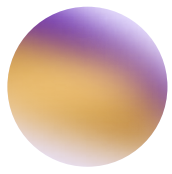
From Latana
Brand Tracking Software

CHAPTER

VI.

Conclusion





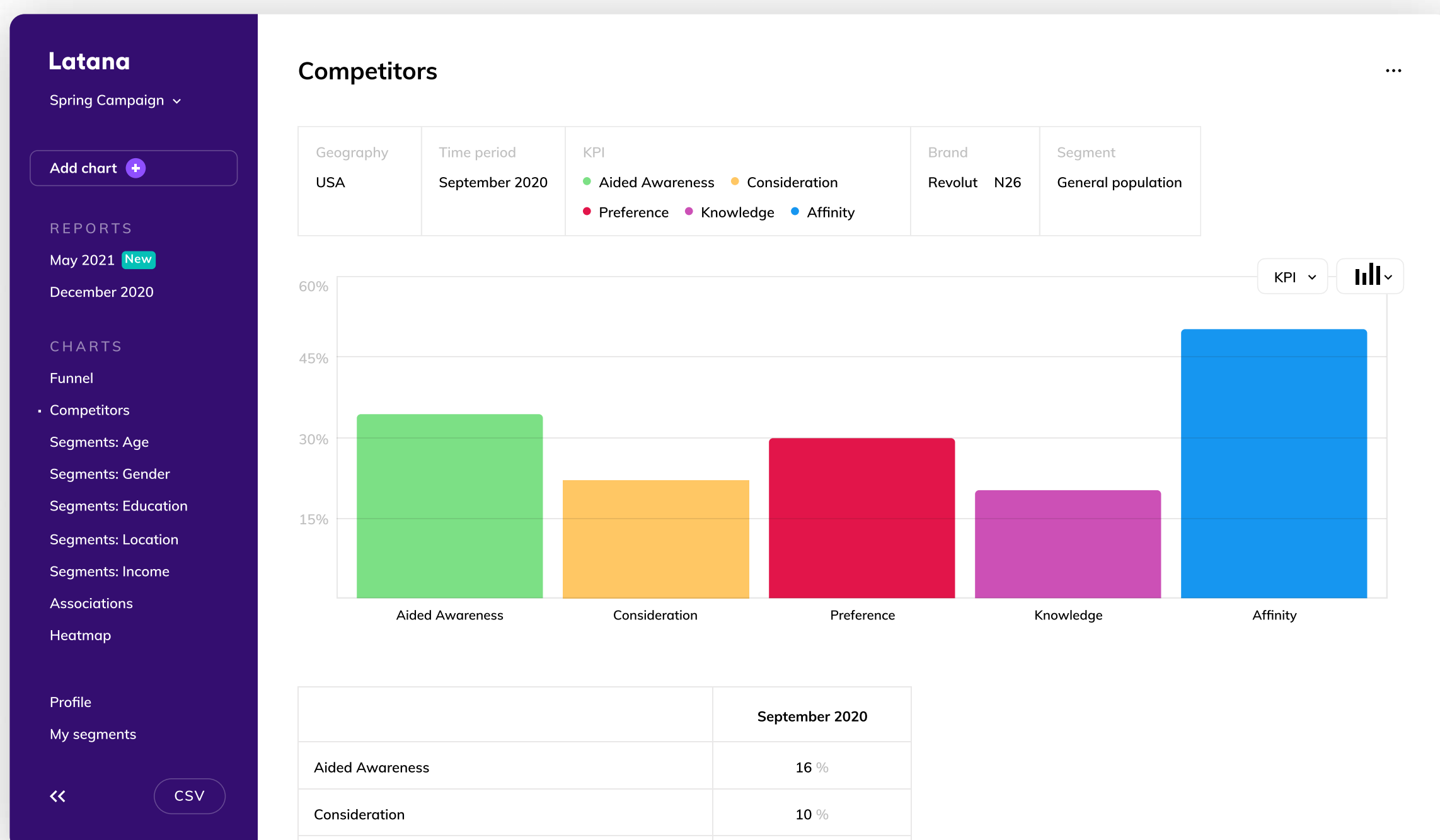
Conclusion

When it's all said and done, you need to do what's right for your brand.

Whether that's trying out Google Optimize to A/B test your content with different target audiences or using advanced brand tracking software to discover niches and gather important insights — as a brand manager, the decision lies with you.

Remember, your target audiences are not static and SMEs who respect their fluidity will be rewarded with more successful brand campaigns and performance.

However, we hope that you now have a deeper understanding of why routinely refining your target audiences is so important and how it can help support a healthier, more efficient marketing strategy.



Latana's Product Funnel

What's Next?

Now that you possess unrivaled knowledge about why refining your target audiences is so vital, what's next on the docket?

Choosing a solution that fits your needs.

And for businesses that require reliable, accurate brand tracking data and consumer insights, Latana is the best solution there is.

Now, there's only one thing left to do —
give us a spin!



AI-Powered Brand Tracking

Contact Us

For General Inquiries: hello@latana.com

For Sales: sales@latana.com

For PR/Partnerships: marketing@latana.com

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