

A film set background with people, cameras, and equipment. A man in a striped jacket is in the center, gesturing with his hand. A woman is to his right, also gesturing. In the foreground, a man is sitting on a director's chair, and another man is sitting on a stool to the right. The set is filled with various equipment like cameras, lights, and balloons. The text is overlaid on this scene.

Best practices in acquisition: 5 Lessons Condé Nast Learned While Navigating Uncertainty

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CONDÉ NAST

A bit about me...



**12 Years at
Conde Nast**

**Certified
Life Coach**

**Travel
Lover**

Sheena Hakimian
Senior Director,
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*How do we build
resilience to
uncertainty?*



The *Tipping Points*:

WHAT PUSHED US INTO A NEW ERA

New Mandate From CEO

"Subscription revenue is now a top company priority."

Frustration on Time Lost

Too many hours were being spent on unclear priorities.

Pushed to Adapt

Things were changing fast (traffic mix, AI, etc). We had to focus on what we can control.



The 5 Key Lessons:

Lesson #1

Not all audiences are created equal

Lesson #2

Use data to make informed decisions

Lesson #3

Put customer needs first

Lesson #4

Drive known Users

Lesson #5

Take risks & big swings

Lessons 1: *Not All Audiences Are Equal*

OLD STATE:

1-size-fits-all approach

Minimal segmentation

NEW STATE:

Smarter segmentation by:
content type, age of
content, referral source,
life cycle, propensity

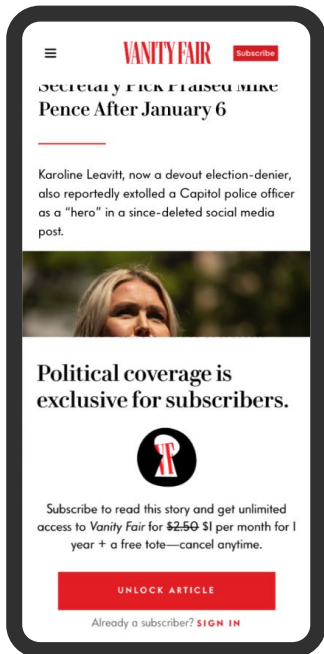
Lessons 1: *Not All Audiences Are Equal*

RESULTS:

Cooler tests, higher
bragging rights

MORE SUBSCRIPTIONS!
(up to +25% subscription
CVR across brands)

Content Segmentation

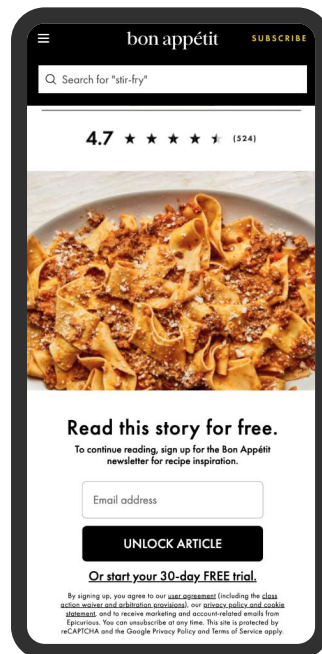


Test Plan: Segment users by **article themes** (high converting content).

Results:
+20% subscriptions

**Tested on Vanity Fair, Wired, Vogue and Architectural Digest.*

Referral Source Targeting



Test Plan: Segment users based on **where they came from on the site** (e.g. google, email, and direct to site)

Results:
+ 16% subscriptions
+ 20% newsletter signups

**Tested on New Yorker, Bon Appétit, Architectural Digest*

Lessons 2:

Use Data to Make Informed Decisions

OLD STATE:

Lots of assumptions on
testing and outcomes

Unclear priorities across
teams

NEW STATE:

Clear testing roadmap
tied to brand goals

Quarterly planning with
pre-sized, strategic tests

Lessons 2:

Use Data to Make Informed Decisions

RESULTS:

Saved time!

More alignment

BIG wins all around

Lessons 3:

Put Customer Needs First

OLD STATE:

Customer was the
afterthought

Focus was *mostly* on
offer presentation

NEW STATE:

Lead with customer
benefit AND value
proposition

Research and
analytics-informed
messaging

Lessons 3:

Put Customer Needs First

RESULTS:

Higher emotional
connection to brand
=
better subscription CVR

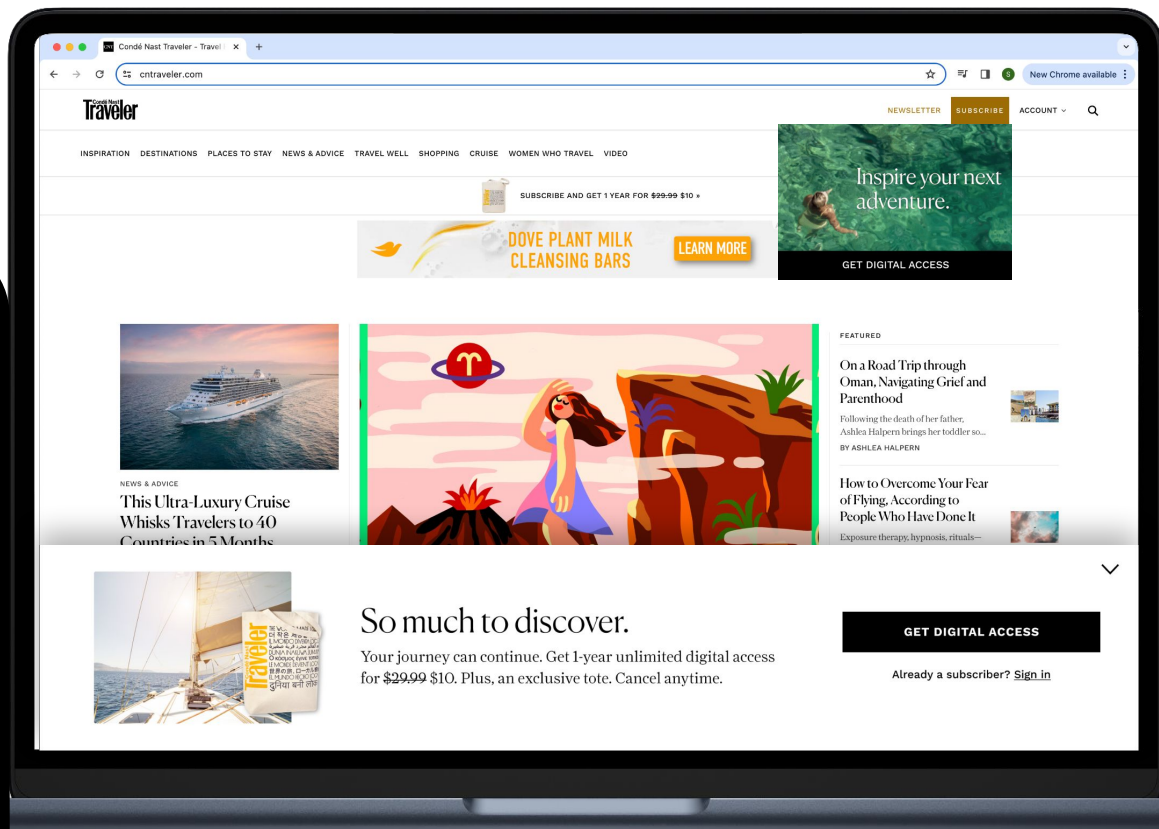
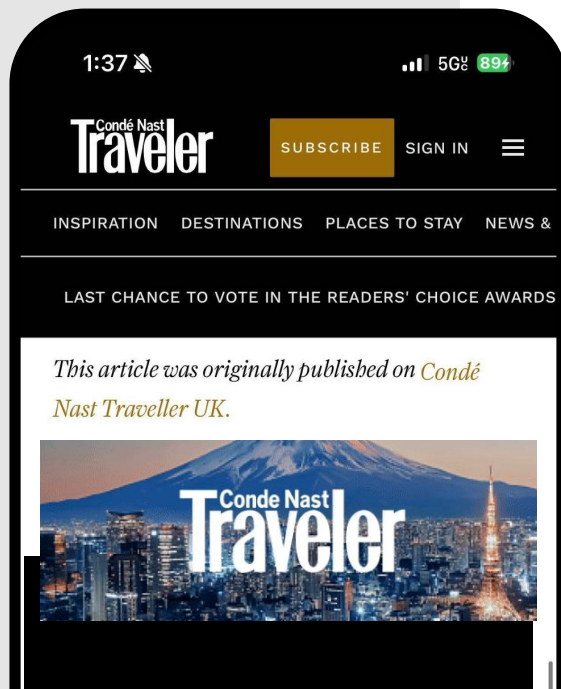
Results:

+15% Subscriptions
across all brands
(average)

Customer-focused benefit

Direct Response Best Practices

Aspirational



Lessons 4:

Drive Known Users

OLD STATE:

Heavy reliance on google
and social traffic

Little focus on capturing
known users

Prioritized subs over
newsletter signups

NEW STATE:

'Known users' added as a
supporting KPI

Use newsletter signups to
nurture low-intent
segments

Lessons 4:

Drive Known Users

RESULTS:

We own more of our audience –
and that number is growing!

Less reliance on platforms for
audience (more reliant on
newsletters and direct)

Team feels more ready for the
future

Lessons 5:

Take Risks & Big Swings

OLD STATE:

Small, safe tests

Afraid to “fail”

NEW STATE:

Bold, high-learning
experiments

Failure = feedback

Lessons 5:

Take Risks & Big Swings

RESULTS:

Team members are more
confident

MORE PROFIT



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Lesson #5

Take risks & big swings

3 Actionable Steps To Set Your Team Up For Success In H2 2025/ H12026

1.

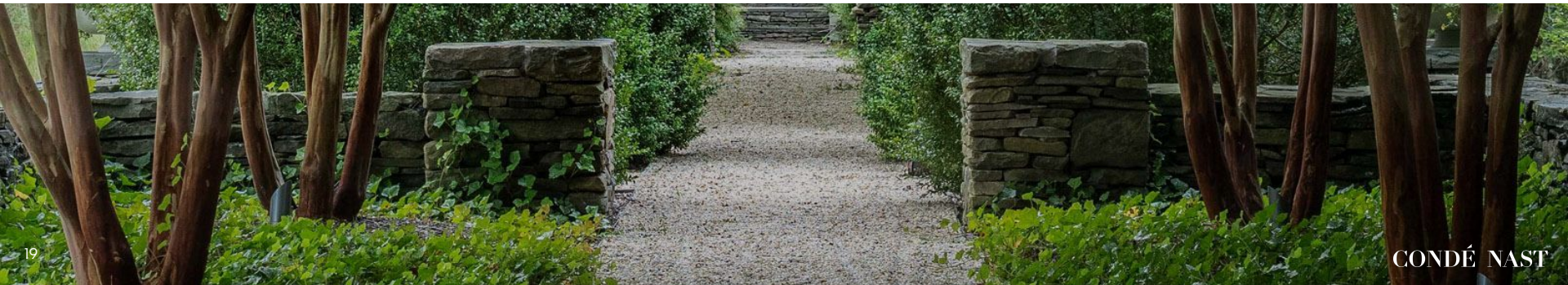
Look at site conversion rate by referral source, content type, age of content, etc).

2.

Derive 3 insights that will turn into tests.
(Look for places to focus on subscription growth vs newsletter growth.)

3.

Get clear on your brand's
1) top 3-5 business priorities
2) top 3-5 unique value propositions



AD

allure

ars TECHNICA

bon appétit

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johansens

Condé Nast
Traveller

epicurious

GLAMOUR

GQ

GQ
SPORTS

HOUSE &
GARDEN

LOVE

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NEW YORKER

PHOTO
VOGUE

Pitchfork

SELF

FATLER

teenVOGUE

them

VANITY FAIR

VOGUE

VOGUE
BUSINESS

WIRED

THE WORLD OF
INTERIORS