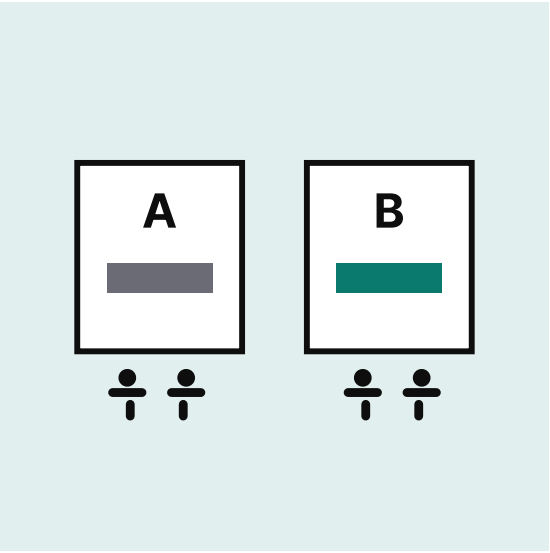
Method

A/B testing

An experiment in which people are randomly split between two or more versions of a product and a metric is compared to see which version works better.



In Spanish

Test A/B

Origin

Comes from controlled experiments; reference guide for digital products: Kohavi, Tang and Xu (2020)

Output

Which version works better on a metric chosen in advance, with its margin of error

What it's for

It tells you whether a change really improves something, not just whether the team thinks it does.

Key elements

At random

Random assignment makes the version the only difference between the groups.

The metric first

Decide what you will measure before starting, not after seeing the results.

Enough people

With little data, differences may be due to chance.

An example

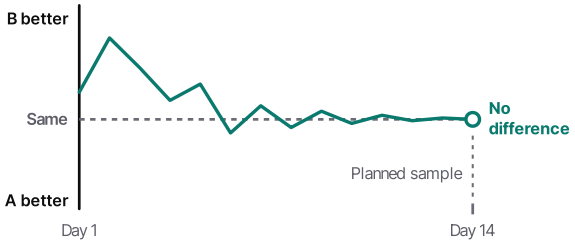
An illustrative example: an online store tests new wording on its buy button (B) against the usual one (A).

Stop as soon as you like it



On day two, with few people, version B is far ahead and the team calls the test finished. **Chance, mistaken for an improvement.**

Wait for the plan



If it keeps going until the planned number of people is reached, the lead fades and both versions work the same. **A decision with enough data.**

With little data, the difference between versions goes up and down by chance; only with the sample decided in advance is the result reliable.

How it's done

1 

Define the change, the metric and how many people you need.

2 

Assign people at random to the versions.

3 

Compare the metric and decide.

Applications in design

When to use it

To choose between two versions of a screen, a message or a price when you have a lot of traffic.

Avoid

Stopping the experiment as soon as you like the numbers: the result may be chance.

Don't fall for it

It tells you what works better, not why: combine it with interviews or usability tests.

Connections

Builds on

- Qualitative and quantitative research
- HEART framework

Used by

- Design for policy
- Product design
- Behavioral design

Related to

- Lean Startup
- Usability testing

Authors and works

2020	**Ron Kohavi, Diane Tang and Ya Xu**	They brought together in a practical guide how to design and analyze controlled experiments in digital products.

Sources

Original sources

- Kohavi, R., Tang, D., & Xu, Y. (2020). Trustworthy online controlled experiments: A practical guide to A/B testing. Cambridge University Press.

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