

How to improve trial-to-subscription conversions

If your product offers a free trial, your aim (of course) is to convert trial users into fully paying customers, but that's a lot easier said than done right!?

You need to deliver value during your trial and it's hugely important to make sure users can easily navigate the UI and discover the value of your product.

This framework goes through key methods you can follow to improve trial-to-subscription conversions.

1. Ensure your product is easy to use

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Take advantage of user testing

This can allow you to see exactly where users are encountering issues or getting slowed down. Once you have pinpointed these bottleneck points, you can run A/B tests to solve them.

Educate free trial users

It's important to show users exactly how to use and get the most out of your product. Create documentation, infographics, demos, and streamlined instructional videos to guide users through the experience.

Be proactive and help users through the trial phase by looking at the activities they're performing and sending emails based on these activity triggers.

Respond to user activities with emails

Targeted emails can help guide users, promote new features and key differentiators, reward active trial users to incentivize them to convert, and create a sense of urgency to convert.

Provide personal support for free trial users

One-on-one attention can help users see the full benefits your product has to offer. Providing support to free users can work wonders for generating more conversions.

For example, live chat support can help users while providing info on paid plan features, which can be a huge conversion mechanism.

2. Focus on the most valuable features

Drill down into which features are being used the most by your users. Once you understand what your most valuable features are, you have several options for how to present them during a free trial:

Focus on the most valuable features

Limit access to certain features

During a trial period, find the functionality that will add the most user value and set limitations accordingly.

Locking the most valuable features can be the deciding factor in encouraging users to upgrade to a premium package.

Don't offer the most essential features, but allow users to see them.

Ensure the best feature stands out

Allow for the aha moment to occur after a few clicks, and make sure you navigate users through the key steps to get them to that moment quickly.

Creating a simple onboarding funnel can help with this, as users will immediately see the value the product provides.

Limit the time frame on features

Letting users try all the features of your product under a limited time frame can encourage more activations, as users will have more of a fear of missing out once the limited time frame runs out.

Linking with the above point, when your free trial feels exclusive, limited, and urgent, this is a great way to encourage conversions.

Push that sense of urgency

Ensure the trial communicates clearly to users how long they have left, and consider limited offers further, for example reducing from 14 days to 7 days for a free trial.

3. Provide personalized demos

Creating product demos can be massively effective for trial-to-subscription conversions. They can help define user pain points and demonstrate to them how the product can solve particular optimization challenges.

Demos can show off the full potential of your product and help users see the best ways to utilize the various features and tool on offer:

Provide personalized demos

Push users to a demo before allowing access

Hold off from giving users immediate access, instead invite them to a demo so they can see the value to their org before jumping in.

Offer a demo once the trial has started

After users have signed up for a free trial, initiate an email sequence, popups, etc. to make prospects book a product demo call.

Promote an on-demand demo

A strong online, on-demand, interactive and personalized demo can allow users to experience your product and features before starting a free trial.

Users will get the answers to their most pivotal questions before they even choose to download a trial. As a result, users end up self-qualifying themselves.

4. Send end-of-trial emails

Well-timed emails, delivered at the end of a free trial, can be great for conversions.

Ensure these emails touch on the key questions your users need addressing, and highlight how the product can solve their biggest concerns.

Instead of only sending emails on the day your trial expires, introduce an additional email a few days beforehand, to relay a sense of urgency and evaluate what the users need:

Send end-of-trial emails

Sounds basic, but simply asking users to upgrade can work well for encouraging more activations. Often many orgs don't do it and fail to convert trial sign-ups to buyers.

Ask for an upgrade

It's important to guide your users and let them clearly see what the next steps are. A quick reminder email that explains the process can be super effective.

Highlight the benefits they've received

Demonstrate a summary of the benefits the user has received. Show them the key results they could take advantage of, highlight where the user is now compared to where they were, etc.

You could also invite users to share the opportunity with their network or community in exchange for a discount.

Re-engage those who didn't convert

Send triggers to periodically reengage unactivated users. This could be offering them similar content or a recurring credit system for your free trial.

Letting users know they can return in a month or so to access what they need for free can help ingrain brand awareness and increase how much they value your product as they use it more over time.
