Hummingbird Pro Analysis Task

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Product Assistant Task

Executive Summary

This project analyzed and reimagined WPMU DEV's Hummingbird Pro to improve usability, adoption, and conversion. Drawing on **1.5 years of user feedback**, we identified three core pain points; setup friction, performance breakage, and compatibility issues and prioritized solutions that deliver speed gains without overwhelming users.

The proposed MVP introduces guided **"Performance Modes"** tailored by site type, supported by clear video tutorials and one-click rollback, balancing simplicity with control. A phased launch plan targets Pro users first, then expands to free-tier users with upsell opportunities.

Success will be measured by **adoption rate, performance improvements**, and **conversion uplift,** ensuring alignment with WPMU DEV's subscription-based growth model.

Overview

1. Project Overview
2. User Research Overview
3. Prioritization
4. Feature Improvement Recommendations
5. Feature Prioritization
6. MVP Selection
7. Launch Strategy
8. Development Team Task

WPMU DEV & Hummingbird Project Overview

WPMU DEV

WPMU DEV's mission is to empower WordPress users, by providing high-quality plugins and support that make site management easier and more efficient.

Hummingbird Pro

Hummingbird is on a mission to make web performance optimization effortless, helping WordPress users create faster, more resilient sites that keep visitors engaged.

Project Overview

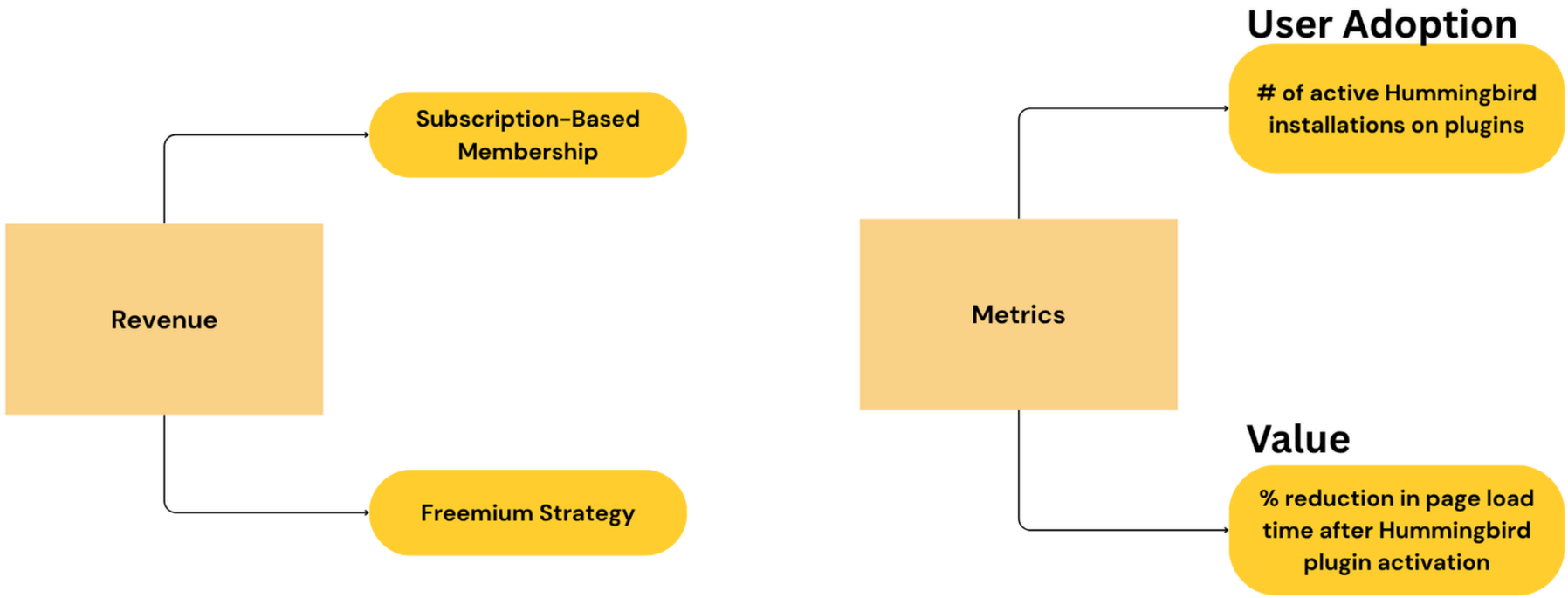
To conduct a comprehensive analysis of the Hummingbird Pro plugin evaluating its usability, feature set and speed optimization results; in order to identify opportunities for improvement that can enhance overall user experience and site performance.

Goal Hypothesis

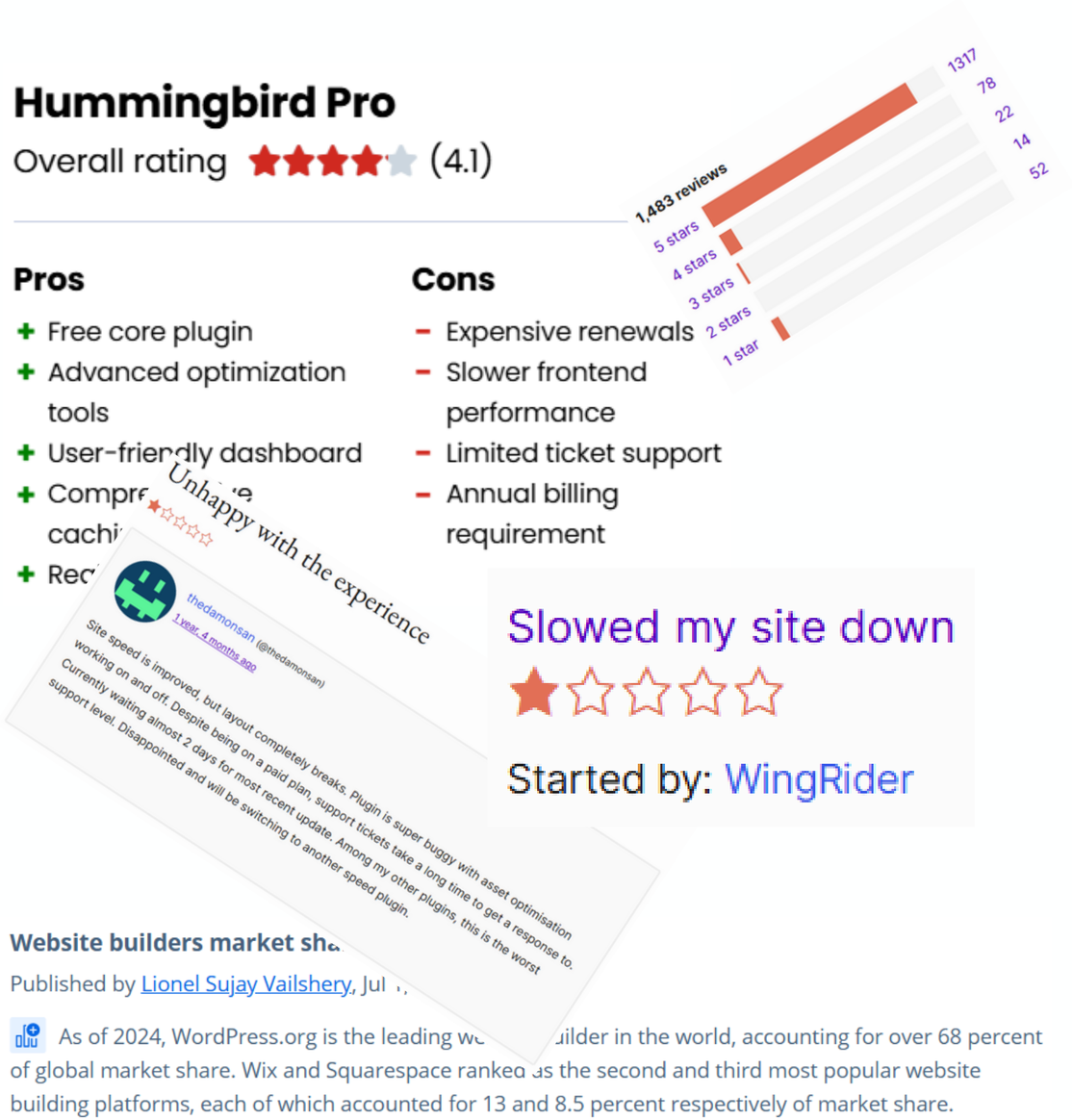
We believe that improving Hummingbird Pro’s usability and performance will **drive adoption, increase conversions** from free to paid and **build trust** through proven site speed gains; supporting growth in installs and upgrades.

Hummingbird Pro’s Role in the Business Model

Improvements to Hummingbird Pro’s usability and performance drive adoption and conversion, directly impacting revenue through its subscription-based and freemium models.



User Research Overview



Contribution

1,5
Years of data collected

50+
Analysed customer reviews across forums, blogs and videos

3
Customer personas created

Results

3
Customer segmentations idenetified

3
Customer pain points identified

1
Designed UX strategy for feature improvements

CUSTOMER PERSONA 1: SARAH JOHNSON (SOLO SITE OWNER)

PROFILE

Gender	:	Female
Age	:	28
Education	:	BA Business Administration
Job Title	:	E-commerce Entrepreneur
Tech Skill Level	:	Beginner

BIOGRAPHY

Sarah is a **small business owner** who manages her WordPress site alone to promote her handmade jewelry brand. With no technical background, she relies on **plugins** to handle performance tasks but often feels **overwhelmed** by complex interfaces or confusing settings. She just wants things to work without breaking her site.

GOALS & MOTIVATIONS

- Improve site **speed** to retain customers and boost conversions
- Use a plugin that works “out of the box” without needing a developer
- Avoid **downtime** or **breakage** from misconfigured settings

FRUSTRATIONS

- Confused by **too many toggles** and performance jargon
- Doesn’t understand the impact of changes until it’s too late
- Fears breaking her site when using advanced options

CUSTOMER PERSONA 2: DANIEL WU (CONTENT CREATOR/ BLOGGER)

PROFILE

Gender	:	Male
Age	:	35
Education	:	BA Journalism
Job Title	:	Blogger / Content Creator
Tech Skill Level	:	Intermediate

BIOGRAPHY

Daniel is a full-time blogger who publishes content weekly across food and travel niches. He relies heavily on ad revenue and SEO rankings, meaning **speed** is mission-critical. He has tried optimization plugins before, but some caused layout issues or were too **complicated** to fine-tune.

GOALS & MOTIVATIONS

- Improve page **speed** to drive better SEO rankings and ad revenue
- Compress images and enable lazy loading without damaging UX
- Maintain consistent design and readability

FRUSTRATIONS

- Plugins have **broken layouts** in the past
- Trial-and-error **setup process** wastes hours of content time
- Lack of clear feedback on what performance changes actually worked

CUSTOMER PERSONA 3: PRIYA DESAI (AGENCY OWNER)

PROFILE

Gender	:	Female
Age	:	46
Education	:	MBA Marketing
Job Title	:	WordPress Agency Owner
Tech Skill Level	:	Advanced

BIOGRAPHY

Priya runs a boutique digital agency with over a **dozen active WordPress clients**. Each site has unique performance needs, and reliability is her top priority. When performance plugins cause issues or need excessive micromanagement, her team loses hours and client trust.

GOALS & MOTIVATIONS

- Deliver **fast-loading**, stable sites to all clients
- Use reliable, scalable tools with **clear documentation**
- **Reduce setup time** and minimize client-side risk

FRUSTRATIONS

- One plugin misfire creates hours of damage control
- No way to **bulk configure** or automate site setups
- **Too many options** with unclear consequences or benefits

Segmentation Prioritization

Customer Segmentation	Impact (1 - 5)	Urgency (1 - 5)	Market Size (1 - 5)	Total
Solo Site Owners	**5**	**5**	**4**	**14**
Content Creators/ Bloggers	4	4	3	11
Agency Owners	3	3	3	9

"Size of Market is based on observed proportion of feedback in our research sample, not absolute market size."

Pain Point Prioritization

Customer Pain Points	Reach (1 - 5)	Impact (1 - 5)	Confidence (1 - 5)	Effort (1 - 5)	Total
Ease of Use & Setup Friction	**5**	**5**	**4**	**2**	**50**
Performance Impact & Site Breakage from Optimization Features	3	4	4	3	16
Compatibility Issues with Other Tools & Themes	3	4	3	3	12

- **Ease of Use & Setup Friction** – Non-technical users struggle with too many toggles, **unclear guidance**, and trial-and-error configuration.
- **Performance Impact & Site Breakage** – Aggressive optimization settings can **break layouts** or slow site elements, especially for beginners.
- **Compatibility Issues with Other Tools & Themes** – **Conflicts** with Cloudflare, Divi, and WooCommerce cause functionality or display problems.

Feature Improvement Recommendations

	Problem/ Opportunity	Proposed Solution	Justification	Competitve Analysis	Prioritization Score
1. Pre-Configured "Performance Modes"	Many users **don't know** the right **combination** of settings for their needs.	Offer selectable "Safe Mode," "Balanced," and "Power" **optimization modes** with clear explanations and rollback.	**Simplifies** decision-making, provides quick wins, and allows easy rollback if issues occur.	• **Hummingbird Pro:** No preset optimization modes (Safe/Balanced/Power) • **WP Rocket:** No selectable optimization modes; settings mix applied by default • **W3 Cache:** No performance mode presets; very granular but not simplified	**14**
2. Real-Time "Performance Impact" Preview	Users **can't see** how a setting will **impact speed** until after saving and testing, leading to frustration.	Show an **instant preview panel** estimating performance score changes (e.g. Lighthouse simulation) before applying changes.	Builds **confidence**, reduces breakage risk, and differentiates Hummingbird from competitors.	• **Hummingbird Pro:** No predictive performance preview • **WP Rocket:** No live setting-level preview of impact • **W3 Cache:** No intuitive preview or feedback mechanism	**10**
3. Integration with Hosting Environments	Some performance improvements are **hosting-dependent** (e.g. object caching). Users don't know if their host supports them.	**Detect hosting** environment and enable/disable relevant features automatically, while suggesting host-level improvements if unsupported.	Reduces **confusion** regarding unavailable features and helps them make informed upgrade decisions.	• **Hummingbird Pro:** No automated host detection or feature toggling • **WP Rocket:** No built-in hosting environment detection • **W3 Cache:** Limited hosting compatibility notes, no automated adjustments	**8**

Feature Prioritization

Customer Pain Point	Proposed Soluions	Ease of Implementation (1 - 5)	Engineering Effort (1 - 5)	Effectiveness (1 - 5)	Total
Ease of Use & Setup Friction	**Pre-Configured “Performance Modes”**	**5**	**4**	**5**	**14**
	Real-Time “Performance Impact” Preview	3	2	5	10
	Integration with Hosting Environments	3	2	3	8

MVP: Guided Onboarding & Auto-Configuration Wizard

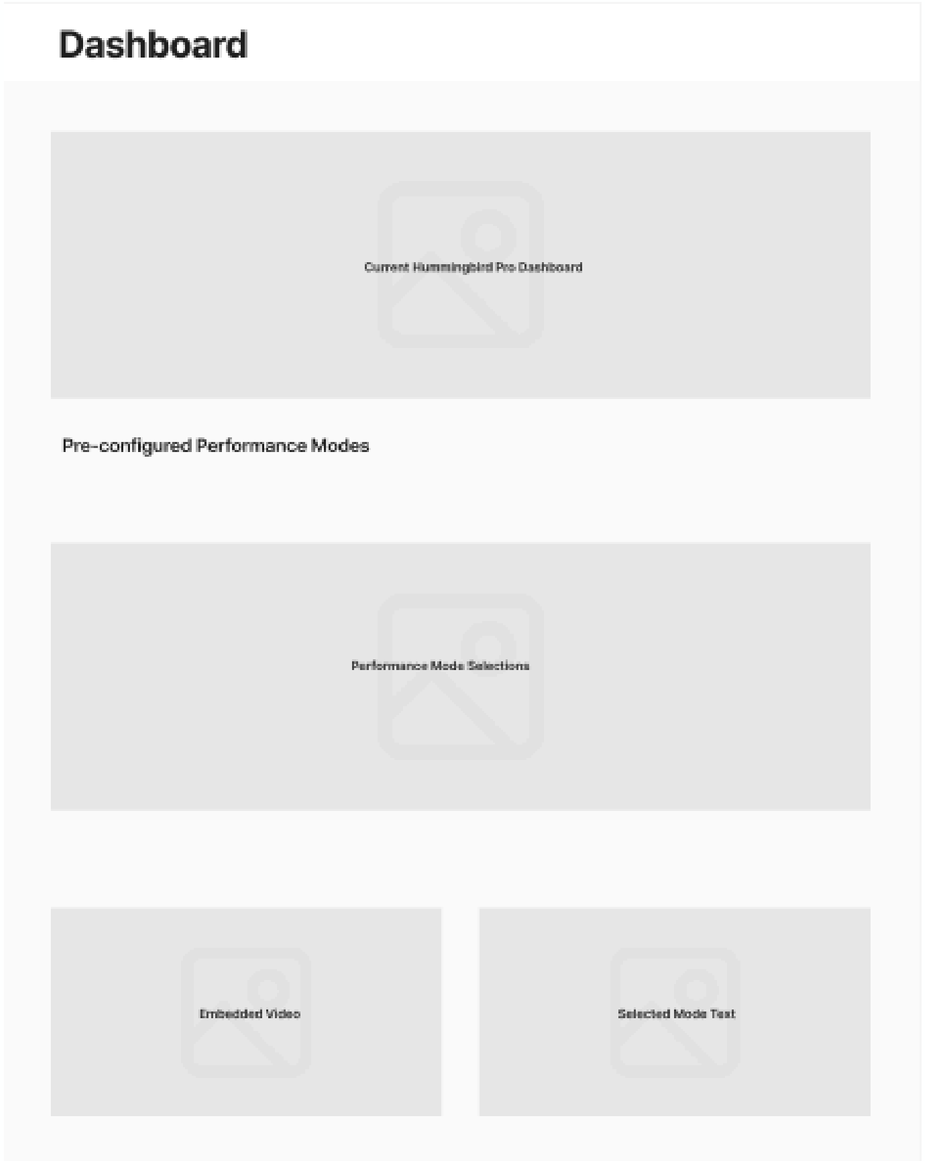
North Star Metric

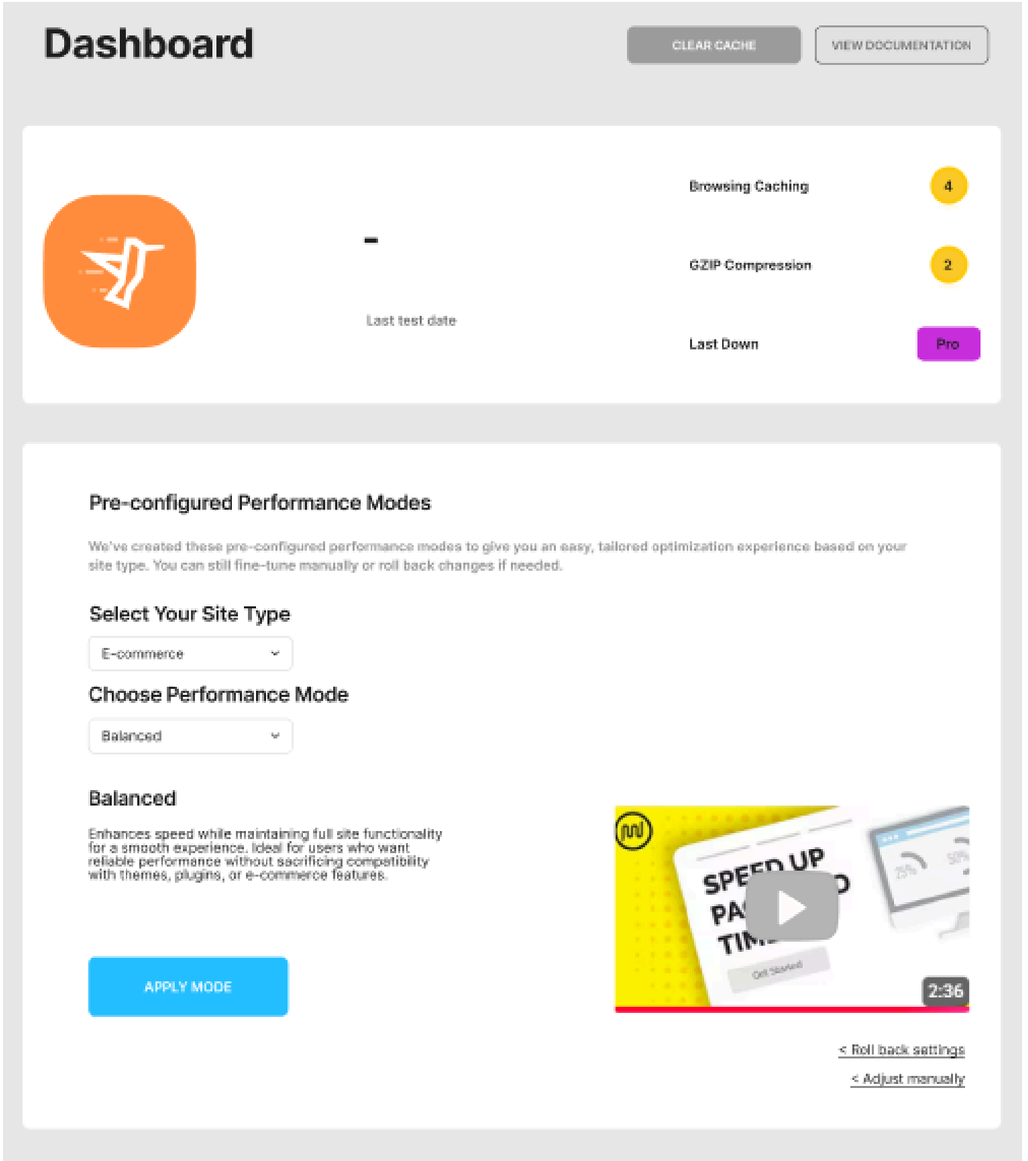
Increase successful adoption of Performance Modes by 40% within 3 months of launch

Tradeoffs

- **Existing vs. New Content:** Current videos/docs exist but are outdated and underused; new guided videos require resources but improve clarity and adoption.
- **Manual vs. Preset Modes:** Manual setup offers flexibility but overwhelms users; presets simplify setup yet need manual override for power users.
- **One-Time Setup vs. Continuous Optimization:** One-time setup is faster but risks performance decline; continuous optimization maintains peak speed but demands ongoing updates and monitoring.

Wireframes





Link to figma wireframes here: https://www.figma.com/design/FYMyE8E9w24hfLh0Ps0CVT/WPMU-DEV-Prototype?node-id=0-1&t=6PqvcAGDIuF2aVb1-1

User Story & Requirements

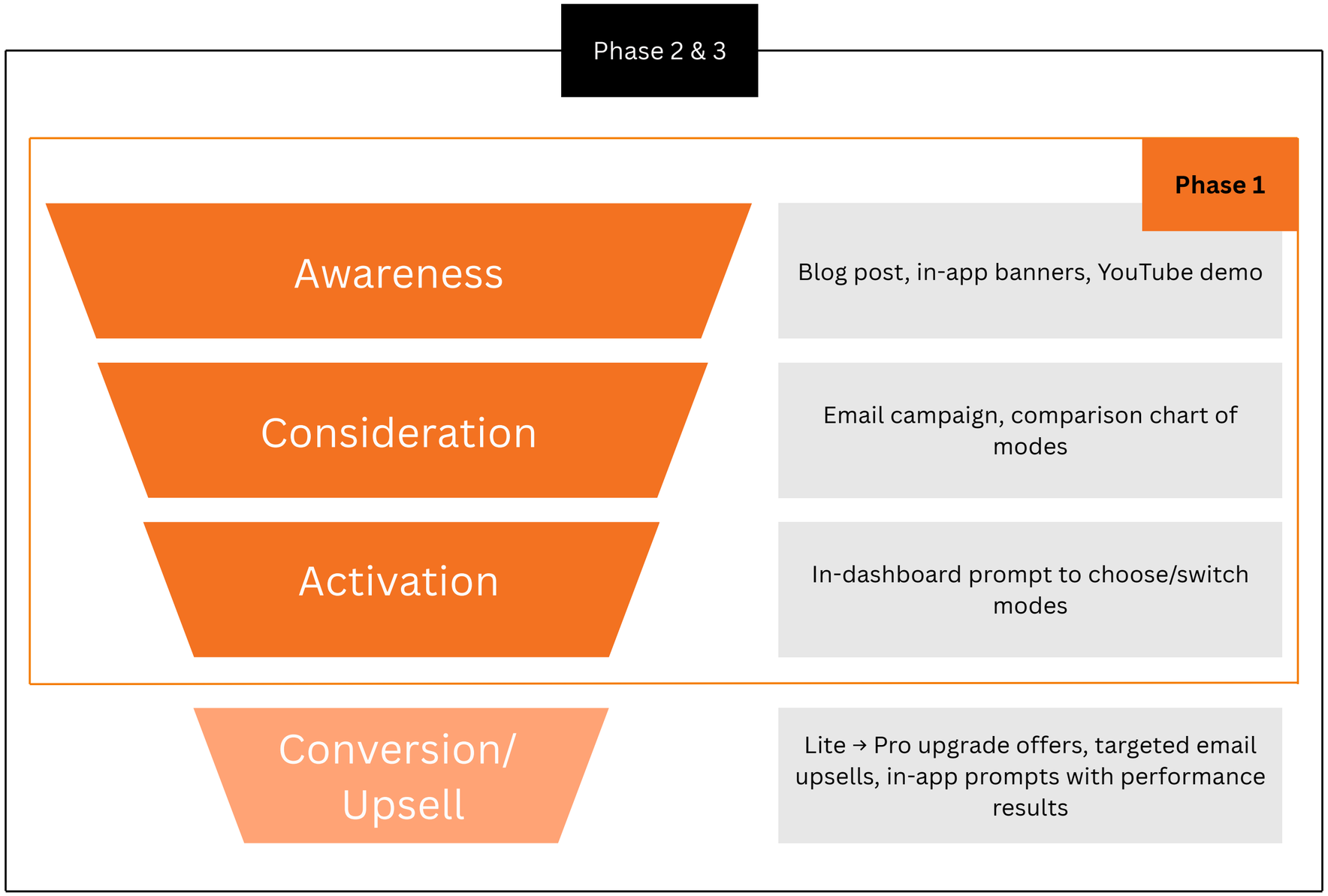
Epic: As a solo site owner, I want to **quickly configure optimal performance** settings so my site loads faster without complex setup.

User Story	Acceptance Criteria
As a user, I want to choose my site type so I get relevant optimization recommendations that match the way my site is used (e.g., e-commerce, blog, portfolio).	System should provide a **site type selection** screen during onboarding and in settings, pre-mapping each type to relevant performance mode recommendations.
As a user, I want to see short video explanations for each mode so I understand what I'm applying and can make an informed choice.	System should display **three performance modes** with a short text description and a 2-3 minute video tutorial explaining the benefits and trade-offs of each.
As a user, I want to adjust mode settings manually if needed so I can fine-tune performance to my exact needs.	System should allow **manual editing** of any mode's settings within the same screen, without requiring the user to leave the performance modes interface.
As a user, I want to roll back to my previous settings if the changes don't work for me so I can restore site performance quickly.	System should provide a **one-click rollback** option within the performance modes interface, restoring the last saved configuration within ≤3 seconds and confirming success.

Launch Strategy

	Phase 1 (Month 1)	Phase 2 (Month 2)	Phase 3 (Month 3)
Theme	Beta release to select Pro users; collect adoption & satisfaction feedback	Full Pro launch to all Pro users; marketing push	Launch “Lite Mode” to free users; upsell to Pro for full modes
Duration	2 weeks	1 month	1 month
Market	Select Pro users	All Pro users globally	All free-tier users globally
Stakeholders	Product, Engineering, Marketing, Support, Content (videos)	Product, Engineering, Marketing, Support	Product, Engineering, Marketing, Support, Content (videos)
Metrics	• % of users successfully adopting a mode • Avg. PageSpeed improvement post-mode adoption • Mode rollback rate	• % of users successfully adopting a mode • Avg. PageSpeed improvement post-mode adoption • Mode rollback rate	• % of users successfully adopting a mode • Avg. PageSpeed improvement post-mode adoption • Mode rollback rate • Conversion uplift from free to Pro

Go-to-Market Strategy



Dev Task – Site Type & Mode Benchmarking (Sprint 1)

Objective

Identify key site types, map optimal performance configurations, and set benchmarks for Safe, Balanced, and Power modes.

Tasks

- **Identify Top Site Types:** Research and define ~6 most common categories (e.g., E-commerce, Blog, Portfolio, News, Gaming, Membership).
- **Map Mode Configurations:** For each site type, determine the most common and effective settings for Safe, Balanced, and Power modes.
- **Traffic-Based Benchmarks:** Define configuration adjustments for traffic tiers (<100, <1K, <10K+ visitors/month).

Deliverables

- Site type list (with descriptions).
- Mode configuration matrix (per site type & traffic tier).
- Benchmarks for all three modes.

Timeline

2-week sprint (Research + Documentation + Review).

THANK YOU

- **WPMU DEV GitHub Link here:** https://github.com/KellenJay/WPMU-DEV-Hummingbird-Pro-Product-Analysis
- **Portfolio Project Link here:** https://stripe-isthmus-96c.notion.site/ELLEN-IVANOVIC-PORTFOLIO-17d68abd1c54801f8dcaf90782ee656d?source=copy_link
- **LinkedIn Link here:** www.linkedin.com/in/ellen-ivanovic