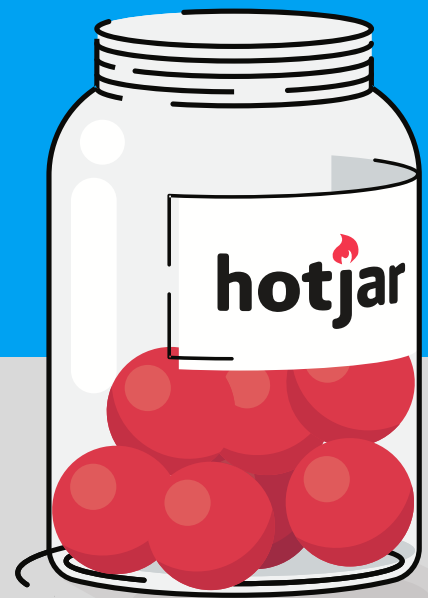hotjar

The Hotjar Action Plan

Uncover your **hottest opportunities** for growth.

Optimize your Site the '**Hotjar Way**'.

See how your Visitors are really using your site – and uncover your **hottest opportunities** for growth.

In this guide you will discover:

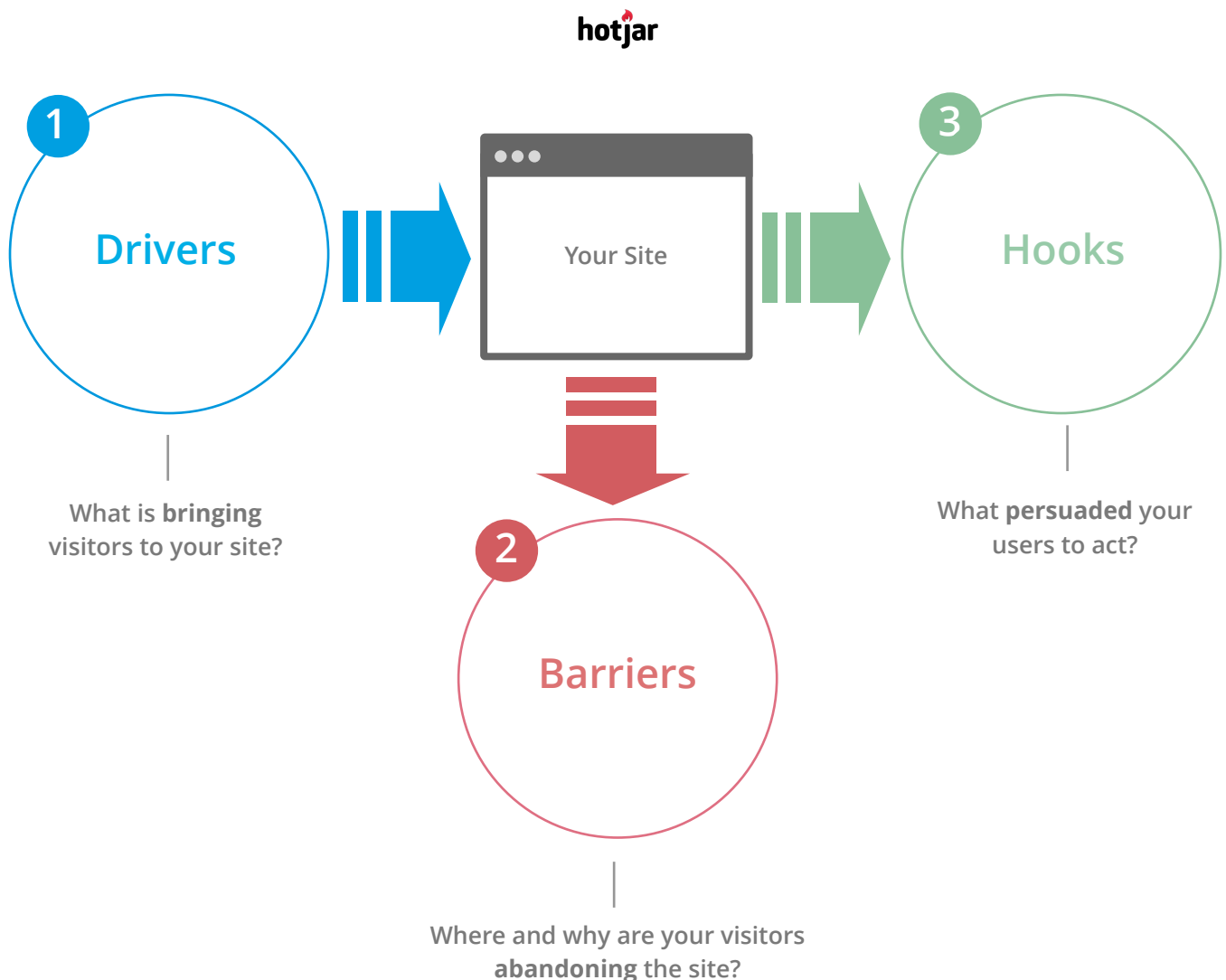**A. Getting the 'Big Picture'.** – **How to use Drivers, Barriers and Hooks**

B. The Hotjar Action Plan – **A simple 9-step guide to start improving your Site today.**

While other tools give you data paralysis, Hotjar will lead you to your hottest opportunities first. The Hotjar toolset was carefully chosen to show you **what your Visitors do** (Heatmaps, Recordings and Funnels) and more importantly, **why they do it** (Feedback Polls, Surveys and Recruit User Testers).

The **Hotjar Action Plan** will lead you directly to the biggest opportunity, allowing you to make a change or create a test that will have the biggest impact in the shortest time possible. But before you can do that you need get your site's **'Big Picture'**.

A Getting the 'Big Picture'.

Imagine you're playing a game of chess. You first need to evaluate the whole board before you can make your next move. The same goes for your site. You cannot change a page or launch a test unless you truly understand the 'Big Picture'. At Hotjar we've found there are 3 things you need to know in order to get a full overview:

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1 Drivers

Your Site

3 Hooks

What is **bringing** visitors to your site?

What **persuaded** your users to act?

2 Barriers

Where and why are your visitors **abandoning** the site?

1 Drivers - Discover your visitors' intent

Ask your Visitors to use their words to describe what they are looking for – and why they want it – and you will uncover powerful insights. Using the same exact words your Visitors do will allow them to better connect with your site's content, interface and experience.

Understanding their intent will also make it easier to prioritize the right selling points higher on your pages. Finally – ask your Visitors where exactly they found out about you. This is a great way to discover new and unexpected channels for growth.

Examples of Drivers in action:

- The majority of Visitors on a **software review** site revealed they were startups and had never used the software they were searching for. The site owner increased leads generated by offering intro guides and specifically targeting startups.

- Visitors on an **e-commerce** site selling headphones mentioned they read about the product on a music forum. This led to the discovery of very effective advertising on music-related forums.

Hotjar Tools that reveal Drivers:

Polls, Surveys and Recruit User Testers.

2 Barriers - Uncover high bloackage steps.

If you don't understand where and why your Visitors are leaving your site you cannot really improve your site's experience and bottom line. So stop changing buttons and page layouts – and start focusing on breaking down your big Barriers instead.

Always focus first on your biggest Barrier. Your hottest opportunity is always the step or page with the highest traffic and the biggest drop off – so start there.

Examples of Drivers in action:

- ■ A **cloud hosting company** discovered that most abandoning Visitors felt their monthly pricing was too expensive. This revelation led to an increase in conversion rates after dedicating more content to explaining why the price is higher and how competitors have hidden fees.

- ■ An **e-commerce** site selling flowers discovered that they were losing the majority of their Visitors on their checkout page due to lack of trust in the brand. They boosted trust by giving more importance to customer reviews and 'featured in' logos high up on the page.

- ■ Visitors on a **Saas too**l homepage were getting confused between the register and login form. Changing titles and labels improved signups and user retention..

Hotjar Tools that reveal Barriers:

Heatmaps, Recordings, Conversion Funnels, Feedback Polls, Surveys and Recruit User Testers.

3 Hooks - Reveal the elements that are persuasive

What are your customers really buying from you? Are they really buying a product or service or are they buying into a new lifestyle and status?

Understanding what really persuaded your existing users / customers to act or convert is the fastest way to converting even more of your Visitors. It will also help you understand what will keep them coming back for more.

Examples of Drivers in action:

- An **e-commerce** site selling DIY tools discovered that customers were 'buying' an improvement to their home rather than the tools themselves. Changing focus from features to how the tools can be used on different projects improved conversion rates.

- Players on a **gaming** site were mainly interested in fun and social interaction – not just winning money. Adjusting site content to match this expectation had a huge impact on signup rates.

Hotjar Tools that reveal Hooks:

Polls, Surveys and Recruit User Testers.

B The Hotjar Action Plan

1. Set up a Heatmap on high traffic and high bounce landing pages.

2. Discover 'Drivers' with Feedback Polls on high traffic landing pages.

3. Survey your existing users / customers via email.

4. Set up a Funnel to identify your site's biggest Barriers.

5. Set up Feedback Polls on Barrier pages.

6. Set up Heatmaps on Barrier pages.

7. Use Recordings to replay sessions where Visitors are exiting on Barrier pages.

8. Recruit User Testers to reveal Drivers and observe Barriers.

9. Reveal 'Hooks' with a Feedback Poll on your success pages.

1 Set up a Heatmap on high traffic and high bounce landing pages.

- ■ **WHY:** Your high traffic and high bounce rate pages offer you the biggest opportunity to retain more Visitors on your site. Setting up Heatmaps for these pages allows you to identify how your Visitors are engaging with your site pages – and the biggest opportunities to keep more Visitors on your site.

- ■ **HOW:** Set up Heatmaps on high traffic pages and then run our quick 8 Hotjar Heatmap tests to reveal the most common problems and solutions for each.

Hotjar Heatmaps will reveal your Visitors behavior and show you how to lower bounce rates.

2 Discover 'Drivers' with Feedback Polls on high traffic landing pages.

- **WHY:** By 'interviewing' your largest 'pool' of Visitors you will get a quick understanding of why your Visitors are on your site. Make sure to dig deep into why your Visitors are using your site. If you are running a gaming site we want to ask why they want to play – is it for money, fun, to socialize? This can be used to make your site's design and text more relevant and persuasive.

- **HOW:** Set up an open-ended Feedback Poll that triggers after 5 seconds. Here are 3 templates to choose from:

    1."Why are you looking for [service / product type] today?"

    2. "What is missing on this page?"

    3. "Where exactly did you first hear about us?"

- Don't force your Visitors to choose from a list of answers. Use a free text answer field instead and build a 'Drivers' word map using the responses from your poll. Here are the replies we received on Hotjar.com to the question "Quick Question – How will Hotjar make your life easier or better?" This should not replace reading carefully through all responses you receive.

Your 'Drivers' word map is a great way to visualize what is driving your Visitors to your site.

3 **Survey** your existing users / customers via email.

- ■ **WHY**: Getting answers directly from your existing users is the fastest way to reveal Drivers, Barriers and Hooks – all at one go!

- ■ **HOW:** Create a Survey that includes the following 4 open ended questions:
  "What led you to look for [service / product type]? Explain in as much detail as possible how it will make your life easier / better."

  1. *"*What nearly stopped you from using us? List as many items as you can think of"

  2. "What persuaded you to [action e.g. buy / signup]. List as many items you can think of."

  3. "What could we have done to make your decision easier?"

- ■ Add any other questions you feel are valuable – but avoid going over 7 or 8 questions. Great extra questions to ask:

  1. "How would you describe yourself? e.g. I am a 30 year old male designer that loves cars and poker."

  2. "How would you describe us to a friend?" (This is a great way to get testimonials for your site!)

- ■ Incentivize responses by offering a gift or a prize to one lucky winner. Give a short deadline to receive responses to add urgency.

A customer / user Survey will reveal Drivers, Barriers and Hooks – all at one go! It's one of the most valuable tools available to you in Hotjar.

4 Set up a Funnel to identify your site's biggest Barriers.

■ **WHY**: It's easy to try and do too much by working on too many parts of your site at one go. By creating Funnels you can understand where you are losing the most Visitors and prioritize work on those steps first.

■ **HOW:** The key to a great Funnel is to build it 'backwards'. Start by asking yourself – what is your biggest goal? A signup, an order? Create a Funnel that maps back to your highest traffic pages. The general rule is to have a Funnel for each goal on your site.

■ Each Funnel will only show data for Visitors that visited the first step in your Funnel. So if you have 2 main sources of traffic for a goal e.g. Homepage and Landing page, you will want a separate Funnel for each.

■ Here's some typical Funnel examples by type of site:

1. **E-commerce:** Homepage > Product Pages > Cart > Checkout > Thank You Page
2. **News / Blog:** Homepage > Article Pages > Subscribe Page > Success Page
3. **Web App:** Homepage > Trial Signup Page > Interface > Upgrade Page > Thank you page
4. **Lead Gen:** Category pages > Landing page with form > Thank you page
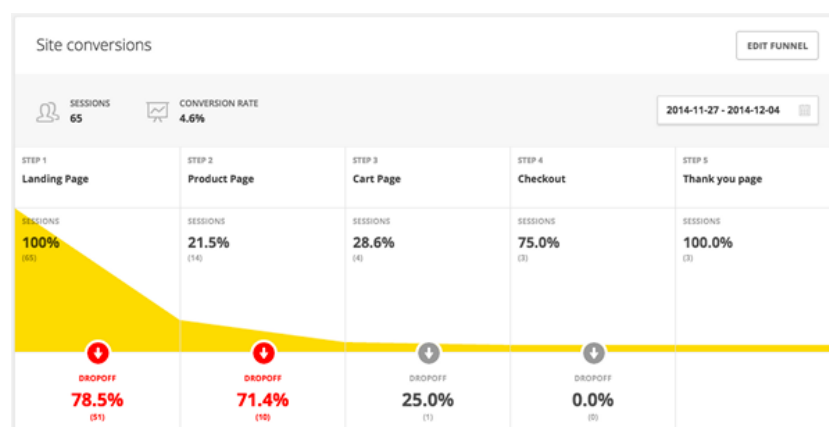
Start by addressing your highest barrier point – in this example the 'Landing page' step.

5 Set up Feedback Polls on Barrier pages.

- ■ **WHY:** Now that you know where you are losing most of your Visitors it's time to get your Visitors' feedback on why this is happening.

- ■ **HOW:** Create a Feedback Poll that targets these pages and is set to appear on exit or when the Visitor scrolls half way down the page. If your response rate is low change it to appear after 10 seconds. Use our Ultimate Guide to Feedback Polls to learn what types of polls are ideal for your situation and how to ask the right questions.

- ■ Here are 3 question templates to choose from:

    1. "Quick Question – if you decided not to [action e.g. signup / buy] today what stopped you?"

    2. "Quick Question – What is your biggest concern or fear about using us?"

    3. "Quick Question – What is missing on this page?"

- ■ For best results consider rotating between different question types.

A Feedback Poll on your highest barrier pages will quickly reveal the biggest issues and concerns you need to address on your pages.

6 Set up Heatmaps on Barrier pages.

- ■ **WHY**: Generating a Heatmap for your high exit pages is very insightful. You will be able to quickly visualize how your Visitors are interacting with your pages – clicks, taps, mouse moves and scrolling. This will give you a better idea of what your Visitors are actually seeing and what they are ignoring – inspiring tests and changes to your pages.

- ■ **HOW:** Once Heatmaps are set up on your high exit pages , use our quick 8 Hotjar Heatmap tests to reveal the most common problems and solutions for each.
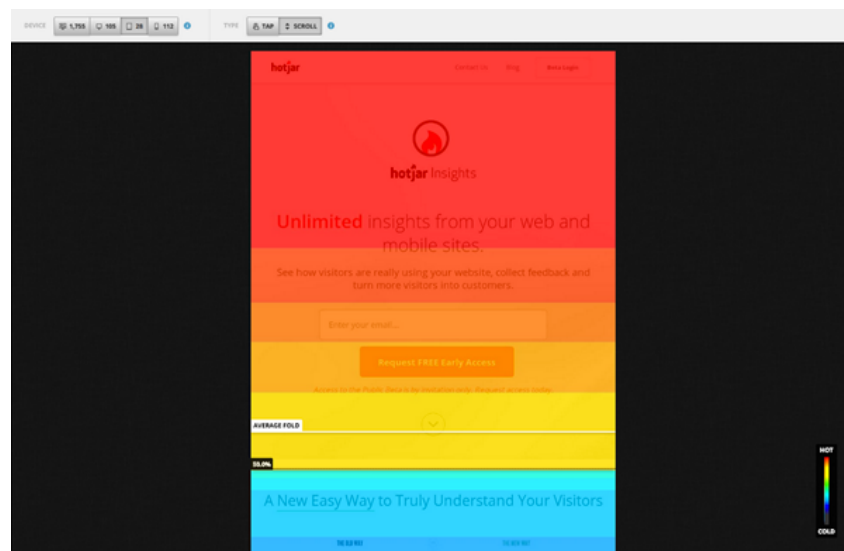
See what your Visitors see by using Hotjar Heatmaps on top Barrier pages.

7 Use Recordings to replay sessions where Visitors are exiting on Barrier pages.

- **WHY:** Recordings is all about putting yourselves into your Visitors' shoes. By replaying recordings of your abandoning Visitors you can start to see how your Visitors react to your pages. Are they getting stuck at a particular step? Do they abandon the page very quickly?

- Now that you have responses from polls and usage patterns in Heatmaps (steps 5 and 6 above) you will now have a very good understanding of your Visitors' point of view. By 'empathizing' with your Visitors you can now make better decisions on what to change or test next on your Barrier pages.

- **HOW:** To filter out the right recordings just enter your main barrier page url into the 'EXIT PAGE' field in the Recordings filter – and get yourself some popcorn!
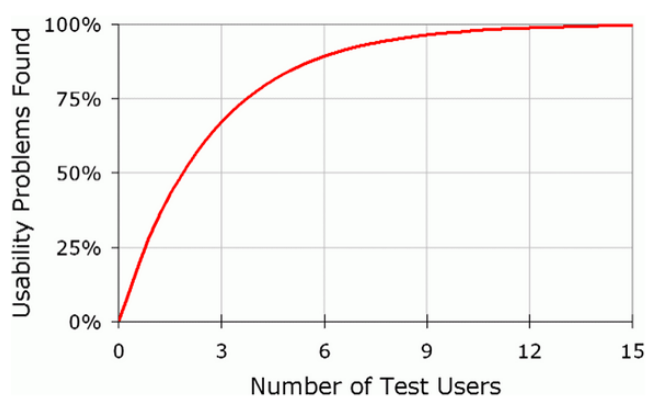

Recordings allows you to put yourselves into your Visitors' shoes by replaying their experience on your site.

8 Recruit User Testers to reveal Drivers and observe Barriers.

■ **WHY:** User testing is the process of looking at your users while they use your site and comment as they go along. By this step in the action plan you will already have a good idea of what your 'Big Picture' looks like... but nothing quite beats spending some one-on-one time with your users / Visitors. It might sound like a lot of work – but it's actually quite a fun and extremely insightful experience.

■ **HOW:** Start by setting up a recruit form on your high traffic landing pages. Give Visitors an incentive to sign up for testing e.g. free content, cash or early access to a feature.

■ Choose your list of users – you want to aim for 5 user tests. Reach out via email and set a date and time to screen share. You will want to use Skype or a tool like GoToMeeting so that you can see your users' screen.

■ Prepare a goal, list of steps you want them to complete, as well as a series of questions that will allow you to uncover Barriers.

Recruit Visitors and users for a shared screen usability test.

Just 5 user tests will reveal 80% of your issues. Source: Jakob Nielsen

9 Reveal 'Hooks' with a Feedback Poll on your success pages.

■ **WHY:** If you want to convert more Visitors on your site pages you have to start by asking the users that just converted what persuaded them to act. This will allow you to understand what your 'Hooks' are, and improve your site content to emphasize and explain these elements even more.

■ **HOW:** The Word Cloud below shows the results from the Hotjar 'Hooks' Feedback Poll. From the results its quite clear that friend referrals, the unified tool set and our price point are very persuasive elements. We'll not only be including these elements in our future campaigns – we will also be building the product around them e.g. by incorporating referrals into the dashboard.

A Word Cloud of 'Hooks' for Hotjar.

I have completed all 9 steps - Now what?

Unless you have done it already, it's now time to make some bold changes to your site. If you have the traffic for it we highly recommend split testing your changes so you can measure the impact on the bottom line.

Once you have started addressing your Visitors' Drivers, Barriers and Hooks its time to start from Step 1 again and start uncovering your next big opportunity!

How do I know if I have been successful?

Your site pages clearly match your Visitors' Drivers. You use the same words / terminology they do and as soon as they hit the site they know where to find what they are looking for.

You have minimized Barriers by addressing their fears, concerns and usability issues. More Visitors now make it through your Funnel since your content is more clear, you are addressing concerns head on and your site is easier to use.

You are amplifying Hooks by consistently using elements that are highly persuasive for your Visitors. Once again – you are using words and terminology your customers / users have used in your Surveys.

Because you have achieved these 3 elements above, you have improved your users' experience. You will find that your users are more likely to remain / return to your site and to recommend you to your friends.

Ready to get started? Sign into Hotjar now!

Sign up for Hotjar