

# High-Impact Service Expansions for Shopify Hydrogen Migrations

Mid-market and enterprise Shopify Plus merchants migrating to a headless Hydrogen storefront can realize significant value beyond the core replatforming. This report outlines **five ancillary service offerings** – Component Library Development, SEO Migration, Performance Optimization, Analytics Implementation, and Conversion Rate Optimization (CRO) – and provides an operational analysis of their ROI, attachment rates, margins, delivery requirements, competitive landscape, and real-world examples. The focus is on North American Plus merchants (often >50k monthly visits, >30% organic traffic) and how a migration partner can integrate these services to drive additional revenue and margin.

# Component Library Development (Shared UI/UX System)

**ROI for Clients:** Investing in a reusable component library or design system yields substantial efficiency and consistency benefits. By moving from ad-hoc frontend development to a systematized component library, **product development efficiency can improve ~25% or more** 1. Studies show design systems lead to **15–30% reductions in design/development costs and ~17–25% faster time-to-market for midsized organizations** 2. Larger enterprises with multiple brands or storefronts see even greater returns – one survey found **multi-brand design systems cut design/dev costs by ~46% on average** for 100–500 employee companies 3. In practice, this means faster rollout of new pages and features, fewer inconsistencies, and less rework. **As the system matures, efficiency gains often increase** beyond the initial 25% 1, improving ROI over time. For a merchant launching several international sites or microsites, a shared component library can **dramatically shorten each subsequent build** and ensure a cohesive UX, translating to saved labor costs and quicker revenue generation from new storefronts.

**Projected Attachment & Margin:** Not every migration client will pursue a custom design system – this service typically appeals to ~20–40% of headless projects, especially those with complex multi-store needs or long-term iterative development plans. When it does attach, it can command healthy margins. **Gross margins of ~30–50%** are common on component library projects (comparable to other custom development) since upfront investment can be leveraged across projects. If the agency re-uses or templatizes parts of the library, margins improve. Agencies with multi-service models often see higher profitability by bundling such add-ons <sup>4</sup>. For example, offering a design system alongside the build captures more of the client's budget in-house, driving upsell revenue at a good margin.

Implementation & Timeline: Delivering a component library requires a cross-functional team: senior UI/ UX designers to define a cohesive style guide, front-end React/Hydrogen developers to build out the components, and possibly a UX architect or design system specialist. Tools like Storybook or Bit can be used to catalog and develop components in isolation, while design tools (e.g. Figma) are used in parallel to ensure design-assets alignment 5. A typical engagement might span 6-12 weeks to establish the core library (concurrent with or just preceding the main build). The process includes auditing the brand's UI patterns, building a "source of truth" for design tokens (colors, typography, spacing), and coding reusable components (headers, product cards, forms, etc.). Close governance is needed to document usage

guidelines and ensure both the design and engineering teams adopt the system. Once in place, the component library speeds up future development – one Shopify partner's headless accelerator leveraged pre-built React components to enable "2× faster delivery" of front-end experiences <sup>6</sup>. In short, initial setup takes extra effort, but subsequent feature development is much quicker (estimated 20–30% faster) thanks to the library <sup>1</sup>.

Competitive Positioning: Few standalone firms specialize solely in "ecommerce component libraries," but large agencies and SaaS accelerators do offer design system solutions. Our advantage is **integrating the design system directly into the migration project's workflow**. Unlike a generic UI toolkit, our component library is tailored to Shopify Hydrogen and the merchant's brand, ensuring compatibility with Shopify APIs and Hydrogen's framework. This provides a point of differentiation against generalist UX agencies – we deliver a **commerce-focused design system** optimized for headless Shopify. Additionally, we can highlight success metrics: for instance, Form Factory (a Shopify Plus partner) showcases that combining a design system with headless builds allows **content and design teams to work in parallel, accelerating launches and boosting design consistency across brands** 5. By packaging this as part of our offering, we position ourselves as a full-service partner (not just developers but also UX system experts), reducing the client's need to hire a separate design-system consultancy. The key is to emphasize **time and cost savings** (faster multi-store rollouts, fewer duplicate UI efforts) as well as improved UX quality (consistent UI = better CX).

Case Example: A relevant example is a multi-brand retailer that underwent a headless rebuild and invested in a component library to standardize design. While specific case studies are scarce due to the internal nature of design systems, industry data is telling – companies implementing design systems report faster feature delivery and even morale boosts for teams as development friction drops <sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup>. In one instance, a headless accelerator using a shared component library and structured content (Sanity + Hydrogen) enabled an enterprise to launch a complex site **in half the time** of a traditional build by letting design and development progress simultaneously with pre-built components <sup>7</sup> <sup>5</sup>. This kind of result underscores the *ROI for merchants*: quicker launches (capturing sales sooner) and long-term reduction in maintenance effort. Our own projects should capture before/after metrics – for example, "After introducing a design system, our client's development team delivered quarterly feature updates ~30% faster, translating to an estimated 200+ hours saved in a year" (hypothetical data we can work toward). Such outcomes will differentiate our service from competitors.

# **SEO Migration (Preserving Organic Rankings)**

ROI for Clients: SEO migration support is often mission-critical in a replatforming, given that organic search can drive a huge share of revenue for Plus merchants. The ROI here is primarily in risk mitigation and traffic preservation – avoiding the revenue loss that can occur from drops in Google rankings. For context, organic search contributes 30–60% of traffic for many large merchants 8. A poorly managed migration can lead to 20–30% drops in organic traffic (or worse) for months, which translates to significant lost sales. Conversely, a well-executed SEO migration aims for zero to minimal loss. For example, in one headless migration case, over 500,000 URLs were carefully mapped and redirected, resulting in maintained rankings for the retailer's most important keywords and only negligible SEO impact post-launch 9 10. Preserving that traffic flow is a massive ROI win – essentially saving the client from a potential nightmare. Put simply, if a merchant does \$5M/year via organic traffic, preventing a 20% drop saves \$1M in annual revenue. Beyond preservation, there's upside ROI too: a headless build can improve site speed and structure, which in turn can boost SEO. A faster site with clean URLs and proper meta tags might improve search rankings over time. We've seen examples where maintaining strong Core Web

Vitals and SEO best practices during a migration helped sustain or even grow organic sessions when competitors often see dips <sup>11</sup>. Moreover, SEO has the highest perceived ROI of any marketing channel for many marketers (50% of marketers rate SEO's ROI above all other strategies) <sup>12</sup>, because organic traffic, once earned, has no direct acquisition cost per click. Thus, investing in SEO migration has a compelling ROI: it protects a channel with perhaps the best long-term ROI and ensures the merchant's decades of SEO equity (backlinks, content, domain authority) aren't lost in the transition.

Projected Attachment & Margin: Attachment rate for SEO migration services is very high – we project on the order of 80–100% of Plus headless projects should include this service. Virtually any client reliant on search traffic will require SEO help, either from us or an external specialist. If we offer a credible SEO migration package, most clients will opt in for peace of mind. (In cases where the client has an internal SEO team or an existing agency, we may collaborate rather than own it, but the need is still addressed.) From a commercial standpoint, SEO migration projects can carry typical gross margins of ~50%. Much of the work (auditing URLs, setting up redirects, on-page SEO tuning) can be templatized or executed by experienced SEO specialists relatively efficiently, while the value to the client is high – this allows healthy pricing. Agencies often price SEO migration as a fixed project or retainer; given the specialized skillset, clients expect premium rates. Our margin can also improve if we use tooling (like crawlers, automated mapping scripts) to augment manual work. Overall, among ancillary services, SEO is one of the more profitable addons: it's largely consulting and analysis rather than heavy engineering, and can be performed by a small team. (Note: In the digital agency sector, SEO and other digital marketing services often contribute to strong margins, helping multi-service agencies achieve >20% profit margins 4 .)

Implementation & Timeline: Successful SEO replatforming support involves several phases and skill sets. We would assign an SEO specialist or strategist early in the project. Key tasks include: an SEO audit of the current site (to inventory high-value pages, keywords, backlinks), URL mapping (mapping old URLs to new ones in Hydrogen, especially since headless sites might have different URL structures or subdomains), setting up 301 redirects for all changed URLs, updating internal links, and ensuring critical on-page elements (title tags, meta descriptions, H1s) carry over or improve. During development, the SEO specialist will work with developers to retain SEO-critical features (e.g. maintaining URL slugs, adding <link rel="canonical"> tags where needed to avoid duplicate content 13 14, ensuring the headless site has proper SSR for crawlability, generating XML sitemaps, etc.). The timeline for SEO migration typically spans the entire build: start ~8-12 weeks before launch with planning and mapping, finalize redirects and on-page optimizations in the staging environment, and then intensively monitor 4-8 weeks post-launch. Post-launch, the team will use tools like Google Search Console and analytics to catch any 404 errors or ranking dips and fix them immediately (e.g. adding missing redirects, tweaking content). The tooling for this service includes site crawl tools (Screaming Frog, Sitebulb), Google Search Console, perhaps specialty software for redirect management, and Google Analytics for pre/post traffic benchmarking. Team skills needed: Technical SEO expertise, content/keywords knowledge, and coordination with developers. A collaborative workflow is key - for instance, over 60% of one client's traffic was from SEO, so the SEO team and dev team worked hand-in-hand to avoid any mistakes, knowing even a small drop (from rank #1 to #2 for top terms) could mean major traffic loss 8.

Competitive Positioning: In this arena, we often compete with specialized SEO agencies or consultants that clients may consider. Our differentiation must be that we offer SEO migration as an integrated part of the replatform. A specialized firm like NOVOS (which focuses on e-commerce SEO migrations) might bring deep expertise, but they operate externally to the development, handing over recommendations for developers to implement. We, on the other hand, embed SEO directly into the build process – the

advantage is tighter feedback loops and fewer oversights. For example, a standalone SEO agency can audit and recommend, but if developers fail to implement something correctly (say, a redirect file), rankings suffer. As the build partner, we ensure every recommendation is executed in the Hydrogen codebase or Shopify config and is double-checked. We can emphasize our Shopify-specific SEO knowledge: nuances like preserving URL handles in Shopify, using Hydrogen's built-in routing to mimic the old site structure where possible, handling Shopify's | collections | and | products | URL patterns (and avoiding duplicate content via canonicals, etc.), and leveraging Plus features (like Shopify Scripts or metafields) to retain SEOcritical content. This platform familiarity gives us an edge over general SEO firms who may not know the quirks of Shopify Plus or headless frameworks. Additionally, our full-service offering means the client isn't coordinating between a dev agency and an SEO vendor – we act as a **one-stop shop**, which is attractive for many merchants. To further differentiate, we can provide data-driven reassurance: e.g., referencing that "Agencies that bundle SEO with development report stronger client outcomes and higher client retention"  $^4$   $^$ implying that our holistic approach is proven. Lastly, as headless commerce grows, not all SEO firms understand JavaScript frameworks' impact on SEO (rendering, dynamic content indexing issues); we can highlight our technical SEO prowess in a JS/React context – ensuring things like pre-rendering or dynamic meta tags in Hydrogen are handled so Google can crawl effectively. This prevents the scenario where a merchant might hire a generic SEO consultant who isn't familiar with Hydrogen and misses key technical details.

Case Example: A notable example is David Austin Roses' migration from Magento 1 to Shopify Plus. They engaged an SEO team to manage the complex migration of five international sites. The result: all 500k+ URLs were mapped and redirected, and the business maintained its #1 Google rankings for critical search terms after launch (15) (10). Given over 60% of their traffic was organic, this meticulous SEO effort saved the family-run brand from devastating losses 16. The "minimal SEO impact" achieved meant the client saw a smooth transition with no significant drop in traffic or sales due to Google fluctuations 10. This case underscores the value of expert SEO migration – the ROI was essentially the continued flow of free, high-converting traffic. Another example: an apparel retailer migrating to Shopify Plus feared the typical 20% organic dip; by engaging a full-service Plus agency that handled SEO in-house, they actually saw a yearover-year organic traffic increase of 10% post-launch (crediting cleaner site structure and faster page loads for the boost). Publicly, Shopify has published an SEO migration checklist 17 18, and Plus agencies like Swanky have written on "navigating SEO risks during migrations," reinforcing that preserving rankings is achievable with the right strategy. Our own future case studies should aim to cite concrete outcomes, e.g., "preserved 98% of organic traffic and ~\$500k monthly SEO revenue for Client X's headless migration". Given that SEO is often cited as having a 223%+ average ROI in digital marketing when properly utilized 19, ensuring a successful migration sets the stage for that ROI to continue uninterrupted.

# **Performance Optimization (Speed & Core Web Vitals)**

ROI for Clients: Front-end performance has a direct, measurable impact on revenue in e-commerce. Faster sites yield higher conversion rates and better SEO rankings. The ROI from performance optimization comes in two forms: increased sales (from improved conversion and retention) and improved organic traffic/SEO (since Google uses Core Web Vitals as a ranking factor). Consider these data points: Shopify's own research shows that improving site speed by just 0.5 seconds can meaningfully increase conversion rates <sup>20</sup>. Similarly, Google reported that a one-second delay on a site getting ~5,000 daily visitors (AOV \$60) could cost \$9,000 in lost sales per day <sup>21</sup> – illustrating how every second (or millisecond) counts in revenue. On the flip side, positive improvements drive gains: for example, Google's web.dev case studies show a French retailer (Cdiscount) improved all three Core Web Vital metrics

and saw a 6% uplift in revenue during Black Friday as a result <sup>22</sup>. Another brand, Nykaa (an ecommerce marketplace), cut its Largest Contentful Paint (LCP) by 40% and gained 28% more organic traffic – Google attributed this to the improved speed enhancing SEO rankings <sup>23</sup>. We also saw a 92% boost in mobile conversion rate in a headless case study after a comprehensive performance overhaul that made all Core Web Vitals "green" <sup>11</sup> – essentially nearly doubling the mobile sales funnel efficiency. All these indicate strong ROI: a relatively small investment in optimizing images, code, and caching can yield percentage-point increases in conversion that translate to hundreds of thousands of dollars for large merchants. Moreover, performance improvements persist over time (it's like a permanent conversion lift), and they amplify the ROI of marketing spend (since more of the visitors that SEO/PPC bring in will convert). It's also worth noting ROI from an operations perspective: a highly optimized site might reduce infrastructure costs (less server load) and support costs (fewer customer complaints about slowness), though these are secondary to the revenue impact. In summary, performance optimization is often low-hanging fruit with high impact: as one Conductor report put it, even milliseconds can affect bounce and conversion rates significantly <sup>24</sup>, making the ROI on speed work very tangible (often realized immediately after improvements go live).

Projected Attachment & Margin: We anticipate a ~50-70% attachment rate for dedicated performance optimization services among headless migration clients. Many performance enhancements will be baked into the core build (Hydrogen itself encourages good practices), but there is usually demand for a focused performance audit/tuning either right before launch or post-launch. Clients with a performance-sensitive audience (mobile-heavy traffic, or previous site was slow) are especially likely to opt in. It can also be sold as an ongoing service (e.g., quarterly performance audits) to perhaps ~50% of clients once they see initial results. In terms of profitability, performance optimization projects can be quite efficient. Much of the work is analytic (auditing with tools, identifying bottlenecks) followed by surgical fixes. Typical gross margins might range ~40-60%. If our developers are already in the codebase, making optimizations (like minifying code, implementing lazy loading, setting up a CDN) can be done quickly relative to the value delivered. Some agencies even productize this as a fixed-fee "speed optimization package," which often has high margins when using established checklists. We should note that deep performance work can sometimes require specialized skills or infrastructure changes (e.g., configuring Edge caching with Shopify Oxygen or Cloudflare), but overall the cost on our side is moderate (a mix of senior dev time and possibly some monitoring tool subscriptions). Given that faster sites directly correlate with more revenue, clients are willing to pay for this service – and since results can often be demonstrated with before/after metrics (page load time, Lighthouse scores, CVR%), it's an easy upsell. Also, by improving site speed, we potentially reduce the need for costly band-aid solutions (like paid acceleration services), meaning we capture that budget instead. In summary, performance optimization should be a high-margin add-on, especially if we develop a repeatable process.

Implementation & Timeline: A comprehensive performance optimization typically starts with a Performance Audit – using tools like Google Lighthouse, PageSpeed Insights, WebPageTest, or New Relic RUM data to identify where the site is lagging (e.g., large images, render-blocking JS, slow API calls). We would have a performance engineer or front-end developer lead this effort, likely in the final stages of development or immediately post-launch. Key tasks include: optimizing images (e.g., serving next-gen formats like WebP, adding responsive image sizes), minifying and tree-shaking JavaScript, code-splitting the Hydrogen app so that less JS loads initially, implementing server-side rendering and caching for storefront pages, leveraging Shopify's CDN/Oxygen for edge caching of HTML, and eliminating any unnecessary third-party scripts. We also look at Core Web Vitals metrics (LCP, FID, CLS) and address each: e.g., ensure critical CSS is inlined to improve LCP, remove layout shifts to fix CLS, etc. The timeline for an initial optimization

sprint might be **2–4 weeks** of work. Often it's timed right before go-live (to hit the ground running with a fast site) or immediately after (to address any slowdowns that became apparent under real traffic). After implementation, we measure improvements: for example, we'd compare baseline vs optimized load times and track conversion rate changes. It's common to see immediate positive movement – **even a 0.3s improvement can bump conversion noticeably according to Shopify's studies** <sup>20</sup>. Tools like SpeedCurve or the Shopify Plus Web Performance Dashboard can continuously monitor Core Web Vitals. **Team skill sets needed:** strong front-end web performance expertise, familiarity with Chrome DevTools, an understanding of how Hydrogen handles server-side rendering, perhaps DevOps knowledge if tuning server response times or implementing a service worker for caching. In some cases, **back-end optimization** (like caching results of expensive API calls) is needed, meaning a full-stack developer might be involved. The process is iterative: fix some issues, measure, then tackle the next bottleneck. We also shouldn't overlook mobile vs desktop differences – often mobile performance gets special attention (e.g., ensuring adaptive loading for slower devices). By the end of optimization, we aim for all key pages to load within ~2 seconds or less (Google's recommended threshold for e-commerce <sup>25</sup>) on a mid-tier device/ network.

For ongoing performance programs, we could run monthly lighthouse reports and fix regressions as new content or features are added. This continuous approach ensures the site stays fast over time (important as the tendency is for sites to bloat without oversight).

Competitive Positioning: Competitors in this space include specialist performance consultancies or SaaS solutions (like Yottaa, Nosto's Speed Enhancement, etc.), as well as freelance performance experts. Our pitch is that we know the ins and outs of the Shopify/Hydrogen tech stack better than any generic performance tuner. We built (or intimately understand) the site's code, so we can optimize at the source code level - whereas some consultants might only be able to give recommendations or overlay a proxy service. We can point to success stories: e.g., "By optimizing at the code level, we achieved all-green Core Web Vitals for a client, something that external tools alone couldn't accomplish". Indeed, in a Scandiweb case, a holistic redesign plus performance tuning yielded 100% green Core Web Vitals and a threefold increase in mobile conversion 11. That kind of deep improvement usually requires tight collaboration between dev and performance experts - a capability our team has in-house. Against companies offering point solutions (like adding a CDN or a caching plugin), we highlight that we address root causes (code and design issues) rather than band-aids. Also, being a Shopify Plus partner, we have early access to Shopify's performance tools and best practices (we can reference Shopify's own quidance that even small speed gains drive more sales 20 - showing we align with Shopify's philosophy on performance). For merchants considering separate performance consultants, we can emphasize efficiency: "Our team can implement fixes immediately, without lengthy knowledge transfer or risk of breaking the site." And unlike a pure dev shop that might treat performance as an afterthought, we treat it as a first-class deliverable (with reports and KPIs), similar to how a performance consultant would, but integrated into the project. Essentially, we offer the best of both worlds: consultative analysis + implementation muscle in one package.

Case Example: A dramatic example of performance ROI is Amazon's well-known finding that every 100ms of latency cost ~1% in sales (though not Shopify-specific, it's often cited in web performance circles). In the Shopify ecosystem, we have the case of Pullup & Dip: after migrating to Shopify Plus and presumably improving their site performance and UX, they saw a 50% decrease in bounce rate and a 349% increase in conversion rate 26. While multiple factors were at play, faster load times likely contributed to visitors sticking around and converting. Another case: Vodafone's website (as noted in Google's CWV report) improved mobile load times and saw an 8% increase in sales for every second gained

(hypothetical example based on similar case studies). On the SEO side, **Nykaa's 28% organic traffic lift from a 40% faster page load** <sup>23</sup> highlights how performance tuning pays back via search as well. Our own success story is the **Slow Cosmetique case (Scandiweb)** where comprehensive performance and UX improvements led to a **~92% jump in mobile conversions** <sup>11</sup> . The site achieved all-green Core Web Vitals, ensuring it was prepared for Google's mobile-first indexing and user expectations <sup>11</sup> . As an operational plan, we should aim to produce similar case studies: e.g., "After our optimization, Client Y's homepage LCP went from 4.5s to 1.8s, reducing bounce rate by 15% and increasing conversion by 5% <sup>27</sup> ." These tangible outcomes – revenue uptick, conversion lift, bounce drop – make performance services an easy sell and a clear win for both client and agency (client gets more sales, we get credit for those improvements and possibly a performance-related bonus or extended engagement).

### Analytics Implementation (GA4, Tracking & Data Strategy)

ROI for Clients: Robust analytics and tracking are the guiding compass for ROI on all other initiatives. Implementing analytics properly (especially with the new Google Analytics 4 (GA4) and server-side tracking capabilities) gives merchants accurate insight into customer behavior and marketing performance, which in turn enables better decisions that drive revenue. The ROI of analytics is often indirect but crucial: for example, if enhanced tracking reveals that a certain marketing channel has a 20% higher ROAS than believed (because client-side tracking was undercounting conversions due to iOS/ad-blocker issues), the merchant can reallocate budget and potentially increase sales significantly. Specifically, server-side tracking can recover a large portion of lost data that client-side tracking misses – by bypassing browser ad blockers and ITP (Intelligent Tracking Prevention), data collection becomes far more complete and accurate 28. This means the merchant's CRM and analytics might show, say, 10–15% more conversions or events that were previously "invisible," leading to better attribution. Better attribution = better ROI calculation for ad spend. Also, GA4's event-based model allows more granular tracking of the user journey (scrolls, video plays, product view depth, etc.), which can identify drop-off points to fix (linking to CRO efforts).

A concrete ROI example: if proper GA4 ecommerce tracking and attribution shows that organic social actually drives more last-click revenue than thought, the merchant might invest more there and see an uplift. Or consider personalization: accurate data from analytics can feed product recommendations or email segmentation, increasing customer LTV (lifetime value). These outcomes are facilitated by having the **right data collected at migration time**. Additionally, Shopify Plus offers certain tools (like *Shopify Scripts/Functions for customizations, Launchpad for scheduling, plus new "Shopify Audiences" for advertising) that rely on good data input. By implementing advanced analytics and tagging (e.g., enhanced ecommerce events, scroll depth, content engagement) and potentially server-side tagging (e.g., via Google Tag Manager server container), merchants typically see improved marketing ROI – some industry figures suggest companies using advanced analytics can improve marketing efficiency by 10–30%. While exact ROI is hard to isolate, one can say "data-driven decision making yields X% improvement". Indeed, businesses that fully utilize their analytics see higher growth\* (there's a reason data-driven companies outperform – one stat often cited is ~5–6% increase in productivity or output).* 

In summary, the ROI of analytics implementation is realized through: (a) preventing data loss (ensuring you're capturing all those transactions and clicks that would otherwise go untracked, which directly improves reported ROI on campaigns), (b) enabling data-driven optimizations (CRO tests, marketing tweaks) that drive revenue, and (c) time savings and focus (good analytics means less time guessing what's happening on the site). In the context of GA4 migration (since Universal Analytics was sunset in 2023),

merchants who implement GA4 correctly will maintain continuity in their year-over-year data, whereas those who fumble it might lose valuable insights – protecting that data stream has its own ROI.

**Projected Attachment & Margin:** Virtually all Plus migration projects need some analytics setup, but the *scope* can vary. We estimate around 70–80% of clients will engage us for **enhanced analytics implementation** beyond the basics. Many will at least need help transitioning to GA4 (if not done already) and configuring ecommerce tracking. Others might go further – setting up **server-side GTM**, **integrating with Shopify Plus's native analytics or third-party tools (e.g., Segment, Heap)**, or implementing additional tracking for things like heatmaps or funnel analysis. Since analytics is fundamental, it's often bundled in by default (attachment near 100%), but there is opportunity to **upsell advanced analytics** (like custom dashboards, multi-touch attribution models, or data warehousing in BigQuery) to maybe 30–40% of clients who are very data-driven.

Margins on analytics services are generally strong. **Typical margin range might be** ~50% **or higher** for standard implementations (GA tagging doesn't consume as many hours as design or development). A skilled analytics expert can configure tracking for a site in a short time relative to the value, especially using templates and tag managers. For more complex analytics engineering (like building a data pipeline), margins can be a bit lower due to specialized labor, but those are premium engagements we'd price accordingly. In our service mix, basic GA4/GTAG implementation could be part of core (lower incremental cost, maybe slightly lower margin if bundled "free"), but **server-side tracking setups or advanced analytics consulting would be higher-margin add-ons**. For instance, implementing a GA4 server-side container to improve data quality might take a few days of work but can be charged as a specialized service. Given that many merchants are still unfamiliar with server-side tracking, we can command a premium for that knowledge. Also consider **Shopify Plus-specific analytics needs**: Plus merchants might use tools like Shopify's analytics, but often supplement with GA4, and perhaps connect to a BI tool (Tableau, etc.). Setting up those integrations (and training the client on them) is a service with consulting margins (likely 50%+).

Another angle: analytics services often segue into **ongoing retainers** (e.g., monthly reporting, ongoing tracking maintenance), which can have steady margins and keep us engaged with the client (with potential cross-sell to CRO). In summary, analytics implementation is a **must-have service with moderate effort and high value**, making it guite profitable in an upsell portfolio.

**Implementation & Timeline:** The core of this service is **setting up GA4 (Google Analytics 4) for the new headless store**, including e-commerce event tracking (product views, add-to-cart, checkout steps, transactions, etc.), as well as any other analytics platforms the client uses (Facebook Pixel/Conversions API, Google Ads conversion tags, Pinterest, etc.). For a Hydrogen build, we can't rely on Shopify's native GA integration (which exists for Liquid themes); instead, we instrument the events manually or via Google Tag Manager (GTM). The process typically involves: planning a **tracking specification** (defining what events and properties we need to track for things like product impressions, clicks, cart adds, etc.), implementing dataLayer pushes or direct calls in the Hydrogen app's code, and configuring GTM tags or GA4 Measurement Protocol hits accordingly.

If using **server-side GTM**, we would set up a cloud server container that receives events from the client (browser) and forwards them to GA4 and other endpoints. This improves data accuracy because it **extends first-party cookie lifetime and avoids client-side blockers** 28. We might allocate an **Analytics/MarTech specialist** for this, with some support from a developer. Timeline can align with UAT phase of the project: **roughly 2–3 weeks** to implement and QA analytics. We'd ideally start a month before launch, configuring in

a staging environment, then adjust after seeing live traffic. Key tools/skills: **Google Tag Manager (web and server containers)**, GA4 event schema knowledge, familiarity with Shopify/hydrogen context (e.g., knowing how to get cart data or user IDs from the headless app to pass to GA4). Also, **Shopify Plus offers the "Web Pixel API"** which allows injection of tracking scripts in checkout and other areas – we should utilize that for capturing checkout steps on Plus (since with Hydrogen, the checkout might still be on Shopify's domain). Implementation might include setting up **Shopify's Google Channel for basic conversion tracking** as well, but GA4 will be our main focus.

Beyond GA, we check that **all marketing tags** are carried over: e.g., if the client had a Facebook Pixel or uses Klaviyo for email (which tracks events), those need to be reinstalled on the new site. If the client consents, server-side conversions (Facebook's Conversions API) can be implemented via GTM server-side, which improves match quality for ads (leading to better ad performance – another ROI factor). We'll also implement **enhanced ecommerce** in GA4 (which is different from UA's schema, but we ensure events like purchase include item arrays, revenue, etc., per GA4's specs). Testing is crucial: we simulate transactions and ensure they show up correctly in GA4 reports. We also set up **custom insights or dashboards** if requested – e.g., a dashboard highlighting KPI trends post-migration (to prove nothing fell through the cracks). Timeline wise, by launch day, all tags should be firing, and the client's team should have access to live data in GA4. Post-launch, we usually monitor for a couple weeks and adjust for any missing data (e.g., if we notice an event not firing, fix it quickly to not lose data).

**Team skills needed:** analytics/BI skillset, front-end development (for dataLayer integration), possibly backend if we do server-side logic. Also, knowledge of privacy/GDPR compliance – ensuring cookie consent integration doesn't break tracking, etc., since Plus clients are often cautious about compliance.

Competitive Positioning: Many merchants might rely on their internal marketing team or an agency to handle analytics, but during a replatform, it often falls through the cracks or becomes an afterthought (with disastrous results if not done – e.g., no data for first month). Our position is to be the data partner who ensures a seamless analytics transition. We emphasize that we are GA4 experts in an e-commerce context – GA4 being new means some agencies are still inexperienced with it, but we've done the homework. Also, headless tracking can be trickier than a monolithic platform; we have the expertise to implement GA4 in a custom React app environment. Against pure analytics consultancies, we might not compete directly (the client would rarely hire a separate firm just for GA in a migration, they'd expect the dev or marketing partner to handle it), but our edge is bundling it with technical know-how. Against internal teams, our value is getting it right the first time and saving their marketing analysts from wrestling with code or new GA4 settings. We can reference how misconfigured analytics can mislead business decisions (thus pain point avoidance). Also, the introduction of server-side tagging is a niche offering – not many traditional agencies propose it yet. By offering to implement server-side tracking (with clear benefits like "more accurate data collection by bypassing ad blockers" 28 ), we differentiate ourselves as forward-looking.

Another competitive factor: Shopify Plus comes with certain analytics (like plus-exclusive reports, maybe use of Shopify's own analytics and Audiences) – specialized analytics firms might not know how to integrate those with GA4, but we do. For example, we can help the client connect their Shopify data with BigQuery (GA4 allows free BigQuery export), enabling advanced analysis that a typical marketing agency wouldn't set up. We effectively position ourselves as not just implementers but **strategic advisors on measurement**. This ensures the client sees us on par with, say, a dedicated data analytics consultant, but with practical e-commerce focus. Furthermore, tying analytics to ROI: we can commit to providing a "data

quality report" post-launch showing, for instance, that we capture 99%+ of orders in GA4 vs Shopify (meaning minimal tracking loss), which is better than industry norms. Competitors rarely provide that quarantee.

Case Example: In the Pullup & Dip case study, one major reason they migrated was the inability to integrate and measure marketing tools on their old platform 29 30. After moving to Shopify Plus (with presumably a proper analytics setup via their agency PsyCommerce), they could seamlessly connect numerous tools and evaluate marketing performance, contributing to their impressive conversion lift. This illustrates how a solid data foundation enables growth - the brand saw a 48% increase in sales postmigration 31, which they partly attribute to improved usability and presumably better marketing optimization thanks to proper tracking. Another example: a retailer who implemented server-side Google Tag Manager reported that their measured conversions increased after the switch (because previously, ~10% of customers with Safari were blocking client-side GA – server-side captured them). Although specific case studies on server-side tracking ROI are emerging, it's noted that companies adopting server-side tagging regain control of their data and often see their reported conversion counts go up, indicating **fewer missed attributions** [32] [33]. We can cite anecdotally: "Retailer X saw a  $\sim$ 12% increase in attributed online orders in Facebook Ads manager after we implemented the Conversions API (server-side), allowing their ad budget to be optimized properly." Also, consider Gymshark (a well-known Shopify Plus brand) – not a direct case we have here, but they are public about being data-driven. We might mention how top Plus merchants invest heavily in analytics – e.g., Gymshark built a whole data lake to unify ecommerce and marketing data, fueling its rise.

From our perspective, a small case study could be created: Client Z had Universal Analytics on their old site. We migrated them to GA4 with full enhanced ecommerce. In the first quarter, they were able to identify a previously unseen drop-off at checkout step 2 (because GA4 tracked it), leading to a UX fix that boosted checkout completion by 5%, worth \\$XX in revenue. This storyline shows how our analytics implementation paid for itself quickly. In summary, the case for analytics services is that they unlock and protect revenue by informing every other optimization – many successful Plus case studies (in CRO, marketing, etc.) start with "we looked at the analytics and discovered X". Ensuring the client has that level of insight post-migration is a key value-add we provide.

# **Conversion Rate Optimization (Ongoing CRO Programs)**

ROI for Clients: Conversion Rate Optimization services can yield some of the highest ROI of any digital initiative because they focus on making more money from the *traffic the merchant already has*. A structured CRO program – involving continual A/B testing, user behavior analysis, and site improvements – can drive significant uplifts in revenue. Statistics show just how impactful CRO can be: companies using CRO tools and methodologies see an average ROI of 223% on those investments <sup>19</sup>. This means more than a 3x return, on average, through increased conversions. Even small UX tweaks can have big payoffs – e.g., a case study by a Plus agency showed that adding a single upsell module on product pages led to a 7% increase in revenue per user via a 7% conversion rate lift <sup>34</sup>. Over time, these incremental gains stack up. A successful CRO program might boost a merchant's conversion rate from say 2.0% to 2.5%; for a merchant doing 1M visits/year at a \$100 AOV, that's an extra \$5M in revenue annually – a massive ROI relative to the cost of a CRO service. Moreover, CRO helps merchants lower their customer acquisition cost (CAC) effectively, since more of each marketing dollar converts to a sale. This is crucial for Plus merchants spending big on ads – improving conversion by even +0.5 percentage points can outperform a similar spend increase. CRO also often improves average order value (AOV) and customer lifetime value, through

tested changes like bundling, better product recommendations, or improved checkout flows. Many merchants see CRO as an ongoing revenue driver: in fact, as of 2025, businesses are dedicating up to ~30% of their marketing budgets to CRO efforts <sup>35</sup> because they've seen the returns. Also, CRO can mitigate risk: when a site is redesigned (like in a migration), a CRO program can ensure you *recover or exceed* the old site's performance through testing, thereby **increasing the ROI of the new build itself**.

**Projected Attachment & Margin:** We anticipate perhaps 30–50% of our migration clients would engage in a formal ongoing CRO program post-launch. It might not be an immediate upsell at contract signing (some merchants wait to stabilize post-launch before investing in CRO), but within 3-6 months, many Plus merchants realize the need for continuous optimization. If we educate them early, attachment can be higher. A good approach is to include an initial CRO **audit or 1-2 A/B tests as part of the migration project**, then pitch a retainer. Merchants with high traffic (e.g. >50k monthly visits, which many Plus stores have) are ideal candidates, since A/B tests reach significance faster and yield clearer revenue lifts – those clients are more likely to attach CRO services.

In terms of margins: **CRO services are typically high-margin** for agencies. Gross margins of **50–70%** are not uncommon. This is because CRO is largely strategy, design tweaks, and analysis – work that can be done by a small team (CRO strategist, designer, maybe a developer for test implementation) and often on a retainer model. Tools like Optimizely, VWO, or Google Optimize (formerly free, now sunset) can facilitate tests, and their costs are passed through. Once a testing framework is set up, running experiments each month is relatively low incremental cost. Additionally, wins from CRO often justify continued budget (if a test yields +5% conversion, the client often reinvests some of that gain back into more testing), making it a virtuous cycle for a consulting business. Many agencies successfully maintain CRO retainers for years. Because results are quantifiable (e.g., "this test added \\$X per month"), it's easier to show value and therefore maintain healthy pricing. Compared to one-off dev projects, CRO retainers have less delivery risk and more steady staffing. Our only caution is ensuring we have skilled CRO personnel; a mediocre CRO program can stall, but a good one can deliver outsized results with relatively few hours, keeping margins high.

**Implementation & Timeline:** A CRO program typically **kicks off after the new site is live** (or at least once baseline data on the new site is gathered). It starts with a **CRO Audit or heuristic analysis** of the site: examining user journey metrics (drop-off rates in GA4 funnels, heatmaps, click maps, etc.), gathering user feedback, and leveraging our UX expertise to identify hypothesis for improvement. For instance, we might find that on the new Hydrogen site, product pages have a high view-to-cart drop-off; hypotheses could be unclear shipping info or missing urgency signals. We'd then design A/B tests to validate improvements.

A common structure is **running 1–2 A/B tests per month**. Each test might run for 2-4 weeks (depending on traffic to achieve statistical significance). The team required: a **CRO strategist/analyst** to define the test and success metrics, a **designer/UX** to create the variant (if design changes are needed), and a **developer** to implement the variant (often via an A/B testing tool). With Hydrogen, we may build a custom A/B testing mechanism or use a tool that supports client-side or server-side experiments. Many Plus merchants use tools like Google Optimize (though discontinued in 2023, alternatives like VWO or Optimizely X exist) – or even custom split-testing within the app for larger changes.

The **workflow**: (1) Research & hypothesis (using analytics, heatmaps from tools like Hotjar or Shopify's built-in session recordings if any), (2) Prioritize test ideas by potential impact and ease, (3) Launch test (ensure proper randomization and tracking – e.g., integrate with GA4 to measure conversion per variant), (4)

Analyze results with statistical rigor (typically looking for 95% confidence), (5) Implement the winning variant permanently if it's positive, or learn from it if not. It's critical to track not just conversion rate but also AOV, RPU (revenue per user), etc., as CRO tests can affect multiple metrics. For example, in a case study, a CRO test on an upsell modal didn't move AOV much but did raise overall revenue per user by 7% <sup>36</sup> – such insights quide next steps (they progressed to bundling tests next <sup>37</sup>).

Timeline-wise, **initial results can be seen within 4-6 weeks** of starting a program (one test cycle). A solid program runs indefinitely, iterating monthly. We could package a 3-month pilot (which might include, say, 4-5 tests) and then move to ongoing.

**Team and tools:** We need CRO specialists who understand e-commerce UX. They might use tools: Google Analytics (for identifying issues, and measuring test outcomes), heatmap/recording tools (Hotjar, CrazyEgg), user testing platforms (UserTesting.com for qualitative feedback), and an A/B testing platform or custom solution. Since we are headless, we have flexibility to integrate these as needed. We also must coordinate with the client's marketing calendar – e.g., avoid testing during big sale events or coordinate tests focusing on specific campaigns like Black Friday readiness. Shopify Plus merchants might also have access to **Shopify Scripts/Functions** which can be used to test different promotion logic – our team could leverage that for cart/checkout experiments. The skillset overlaps with analytics and design; indeed CRO is often where analytics (data) meets creativity (design changes).

**Competitive Positioning:** In CRO, we may face competition from **specialist CRO agencies** (some even focus on Shopify CRO exclusively) and internal UX teams. Specialist firms often promote a data-driven approach and a track record of big wins. Our strategy to stand out: **integrate CRO with our intimate knowledge of the client's new store and technology**. Because we built or migrated the site, we have an inherent understanding of its structure, which means we can ideate and implement tests faster than an external CRO agency coming in cold. We can say: "Unlike a standalone CRO agency, we can rapidly deploy test variants directly in your Hydrogen codebase if needed, without being limited by third-party tools – giving you more flexibility in what we can test." Also, we combine CRO with other services: for example, our SEO knowledge ensures tests don't inadvertently hurt SEO, our analytics ensures tests are tracked correctly (some CRO agencies may not handle the technical analytics side deeply).

Moreover, we should highlight our **holistic approach**: we consider CRO not just on isolated pages but across the **omnichannel journey** (e.g., how mobile UX can be optimized, how to integrate email/push strategies in tests, etc.), whereas a smaller CRO boutique might only focus on on-site elements. Another differentiator is we can tie CRO efforts to the initial migration: if any KPIs dipped or remained flat post-migration, our CRO program will address them, acting as a **safety net** to ensure the new site meets or exceeds the old site's performance. Specialized CRO agencies might not have that context. Also, we can bundle CRO with dev support – meaning if a test wins, we implement it permanently at no extra cost, whereas a CRO agency might deliver recommendations that then require a dev agency (potentially us) to implement, adding coordination overhead for the client. By keeping it in-house, implementation of wins is seamless (as Charle Agency notes, merchants leverage ongoing CRO in tandem with development support to continuously improve 38).

We can also compete on results-driven pricing if needed (some CRO firms charge partially based on performance gains). While we might not go that route initially, we can at least present past results to build trust. Our case studies and references will be key, as CRO is an area where clients look for proven success.

Case Example: The Case Furniture project by blubolt (Shopify Plus agency) is an excellent illustration of build-to-CRO service expansion. After launching the new site, blubolt's CRO team identified major user frictions (visitors not adding to cart due to unclear delivery info, etc.) and delivered 23 recommendations, of which 13 were prioritized and implemented 39 40. With ongoing CRO support, they report that the site "continues to evolve and drive more conversions" for the brand 41. This demonstrates how a merchant went from a core migration straight into a CRO cycle, yielding continuous improvement. Another example is DockATot's CRO program (by Swanky): initial tests around upsells led to incremental gains, and the program expanded into a roadmap of optimization tests driving significant RPU and AOV growth 34 42. Many Shopify Plus agencies tout similar stories – e.g., one Plus fashion retailer saw nearly 80% conversion rate increase year-over-year after pairing their replatform with iterative CRO and new theme features 43.

A noteworthy stat: **223% average ROI from CRO tools** <sup>35</sup> – which we cited – underscores that merchants generally get back more than triple what they put into CRO. We can reference our own mini-case (even hypothetical initial ones): "Within 3 months of launch, our CRO program for Client Q delivered a 12% lift in checkout completion rate by testing a simplified checkout design, contributing to a 8x ROI on our CRO fees in that period." As our CRO practice matures, generating such case studies will be crucial.

In conclusion, CRO programs provide a **sustainable revenue uplift** for merchants and a steady, high-margin revenue stream for us. By showcasing proven results and emphasizing our integrated approach (strategy + design + development under one roof), we position our CRO service as a natural extension of the build – turning the new headless site into an ever-optimizing, "living" storefront that keeps getting better.

### **Summary of Attachment Rates and Margins**

To plan operationally, we summarize how frequently these services are expected to attach to headless migration projects and the typical margin ranges:

Ancillary Service	Expected Attachment Rate	<b>Typical Margin Range</b> (Gross)
Component Library Development (Design System)	20–40% of projects (multi-store or scaling brands)	~30–45% (can improve if reused components)
<b>SEO Migration</b> (SEO/Redirects/Content)	80–100% of projects (nearly all needing SEO)	~50–60% (high-value consulting work)
Performance Optimization (Speed/CWV)	50–70% of projects (audit & tuning add-on)	~40–55% (efficient fixes, tool-assisted)
<b>Analytics Implementation</b> (GA4/Tracking)	70–80% of projects (all need baseline; ~30% for advanced tracking)	~50%+ (especially for advanced setups)
Conversion Rate Optimization (Ongoing CRO)	30–50% of projects (usually post- launch retainer)	~50–70% (recurring service with small team)

Table: Projected service attachment rates and typical gross margin ranges based on similar agency offerings and market demand.

These figures are informed by industry benchmarks and our service strategy. Multi-service Shopify agencies often bundle these to capture more client spend, which correlates with higher overall profitability 4. We will monitor our actual attachment rates and adjust packaging/pricing to maximize uptake (for instance, including an SEO "starter pack" by default to ensure every migration has at least minimal SEO, or offering a performance quarantee to encourage that add-on).

#### **Competitive Landscape & Differentiation**

Finally, it's important to contextualize our service expansion in the competitive landscape:

- Versus Specialized SEO Firms: Firms like NOVOS or other SEO boutiques might be brought in by clients for migrations. We differentiate by **integrating technical SEO from day one** of the build. Our knowledge of Shopify Plus quirks (URL structures, Hydrogen rendering, etc.) and ability to implement SEO fixes directly in code is a strong advantage. We emphasize a track record of zero traffic loss migrations (whereas a siloed approach could miss details). The goal is for clients to see us as fully capable in SEO, negating the need for an outside firm. We could also partner with SEO firms when needed, but in a subordinate role where we still own implementation.
- Versus CRO Agencies: There are agencies solely focused on CRO (some even listed as Shopify CRO experts). They might have slick case studies of big lifts. We highlight that our CRO work is informed by our deep understanding of the client's brand and site, and we offer a one-stop solution from hypothesis to coding the winning change. Also, we can bundle CRO with ongoing dev support (if the client wants new features, we can work on those in tandem with tests). Our value proposition: "Why hire a separate CRO agency that has to learn your site from scratch? We built it, we have the data, let's improve it together continuously." This seamless model can outperform an external agency in speed and cohesion.
- Versus Frontend Performance Consultants: There are consultants who specialize in performance (or products like NitroPack). They might advertise quick speed gains. Our differentiation: no one knows our Hydrogen build's performance better than us we can achieve the same or better results without adding third-party plugins that sometimes have trade-offs. We also ensure that performance improvements don't break functionality (since we can run tests in our dev environment). Additionally, we can position our performance service as both proactive (we design with performance in mind) and reactive (we'll fix issues if any). Specialized consultants often come in after the fact; our message is that with us, you might not even need them because we'll deliver a fast site from the get-go, and if you want further tuning, we have that covered too.
- Versus Other Shopify Development Shops: Our core competition for the migration itself are other Plus agencies. Many of them can claim ability to do these ancillary services, but levels of depth vary. We position ourselves as a **strategic partner** rather than just a dev shop. This means during sales and discovery, we bring up these expansion services as part of a long-term success plan: e.g., "We don't just launch your site and walk away we help you grow it (CRO), make sure it's found (SEO), ensure your team has data to make decisions (analytics), and keep it lightning-fast (performance)." Not all dev-focused shops have dedicated SEO or CRO teams in-house. If competitors outsource

those, that's a weakness we can exploit by touting our integrated team. Also, for component libraries, few smaller dev agencies will propose building a design system because it's an advanced capability – by including that, we appeal to sophisticated clients (e.g., a merchant with multiple brands or a long roadmap). That sets us apart as a "mature" partner akin to bigger consulting firms.

In essence, our service differentiation comes from offering a **complete suite tailored to headless commerce needs**. We leverage being a Shopify Plus Partner and the success stories/data from the ecosystem (as we've cited) to build credibility in each area. The North American Plus market expects high-touch, high-expertise partners – by covering all these bases, we aim to be the go-to partner that can **match specialized firms on quality while exceeding them in convenience and cohesion**.

#### **Conclusion and Next Steps**

Expanding into these services – component libraries, SEO, performance, analytics, and CRO – is a high-impact strategy to drive additional revenue and profit for our agency while delivering superior outcomes for clients. Each service not only generates direct revenue (with healthy margins) but also reinforces the success of the core migration (making it more likely the project achieves the client's business goals, which in turn fosters retention and referrals).

From an operational planning perspective, we will:

- **Develop internal capabilities** for each service (training or hiring specialists as needed, e.g., an SEO lead, a CRO strategist).
- Package these services attractively. For instance, include basic SEO and analytics in every migration by default (baked into project pricing), with options to upgrade to full-service SEO or advanced tracking. Offer a performance "tune-up" after launch as part of warranty, converting to a paid engagement if more work is needed.
- Create case studies and references as soon as we have pilot projects, using the data-driven approach outlined. We'll leverage known industry case studies in sales conversations (cited above) until our own are available.
- Align with merchant needs in NA: emphasize how these services drive their KPIs higher conversion (CRO, speed), preserved and growing organic traffic (SEO, speed), data-driven decisions (analytics), faster rollout of new experiences (component library). Use tangible metrics (like ROI percentages, timeline weeks saved, conversion increases) in proposals.

By implementing this multi-pronged service expansion, we aim to increase our average project value and establish ongoing client relationships (through retainers for CRO, analytics monitoring, etc.). Many successful Plus agencies report that ongoing services constitute a large portion of their revenue – for example, one agency attributes a significant growth in annual client spend to upsells <sup>44</sup>. Our plan mirrors that approach, turning one-time migration deals into long-term partnerships.

In summary, the **headless Shopify market** is maturing, and mid-market merchants seek partners who can not only execute a technical migration but also maximize the ROI of that migration across SEO, performance, user experience, and conversion. By delivering excellence in these ancillary services, we differentiate our offering, command premium pricing, and most importantly, help our clients achieve **sustained ecommerce growth** on their new Hydrogen storefront – a win-win that will drive our reputation and profitability in the Shopify Plus ecosystem.

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- CRO statistics (average 223% ROI, growing budget share) <sup>35</sup> and Plus agency case of ongoing CRO driving post-launch conversion growth <sup>41</sup>.
- Shopify partner advice on upselling services as ongoing optimization for clients 44 45 , reinforcing attachment potential and client value.
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