

Shopify Session Recorder Speed Comparison

Measured main-thread blocking time and verified pricing for 6 session recorders. Built by Kaspian Fuad, Shopify CRO consultant.

1. Microsoft Clarity - 50ms

Lightest of the six

Less than half of Hotjar. The one I install by default.

Free forever, no traffic cap

Microsoft publishes no paid tier at all.

Heatmaps + recordings + AI traffic

Now reports Copilot and ChatGPT referrals too.

2. Crazy Egg - 80ms

Second lightest

60% heavier than Clarity, still comfortable.

Free plan, no card needed

Plus a 30-day trial of the paid tiers.

\$29 to \$599 / month

Starter to Enterprise, all billed annually.

3. Hotjar - 110ms

Twice Clarity's weight

For a job Clarity does for free.

Now part of Contentsquare

hotjar.com/pricing redirects. Observe and Ask are gone.

Free, then from \$49 / month

Annual billing. Pro and Enterprise quote-only.

4. Mouseflow - 110ms

Ties Hotjar on weight

Same mid-tier cost to the main thread.

Free plan: 500 sessions / month

The tightest free cap of the group.

\$25 to \$319 / month

Essential to Premium, Enterprise quote-only.

5. Lucky Orange - 150ms

3x Clarity's blocking time

Bundles chat and funnels into one install.

The only one with NO free tier

7-day trial, then you pay.

\$32 to \$839 / month

Build to Scale, all annual-billing rates.

6. FullStory - 200ms

Heaviest of the six

4x Clarity. 80% of Google's third-party budget.

Free tier: 30,000 sessions / month

12-month retention, permanent.

Paid tiers quote-only

No dollar figure published anywhere.

The budget you are spending

250ms

Lighthouse flags third-party code at or above this.

That is ALL your apps, not one

Chat, reviews, upsell and the recorder share it.

50ms

A task counts as main-thread blocking past this.

Fix 1: defer the recorder

Load on idle or first scroll

Blocking time stops landing during page load.

You lose almost nothing

Recording starts a beat later. That is the whole cost.

Biggest single win

Do this before you consider switching tools.

Fix 2: sample, do not record all

You do not need 100%

Rage-click patterns show up in a fraction of sessions.

Lower rate, less thread work

Most tools expose a sampling setting.

Keep 100% only while debugging

Then turn it back down.

Fix 3: never run two recorders

Hotjar + Clarity = 160ms

One job, two bills, double the blocking time.

Audit before you install

Someone usually added one and forgot.

Pick one, remove the other

Then re-measure against real users.