

AUDIENCEx

Integrating Search & Social Advertising

Best Practices for Cross-Channel Marketing

As marketers, we know that the **customer's buying journey touches several different channels** along the path to conversion. From awareness to conversion, the message should follow the customer and stay with them as you work to maintain and expand their business. Integrating these channels, especially search and social, leads to better performance compared to isolated campaigns. Managing, measuring, and optimizing these channels side-by-side allows for improved budgeting, bidding, and targeting decisioning.

Paid search and social are both performance channels with particular strengths and weaknesses. Paid search, for example, captures intent, where Facebook doesn't. Facebook can open awareness to a huge new audience that AdWords can't reach. LinkedIn offers the ability to target by job titles, industries, and many other specific criteria that the other platforms don't offer. Used intelligently together, however, these two channels combine for a powerhouse omnichannel campaign.

How can you run and optimize cross-channel campaigns simultaneously in a way that provides the best performance? How can you leverage data from one platform to improve performance in the other? The goal of this best practices guide is to help you answer these questions.

As consumers, we're more likely to buy a brand when we **believe its message, trust the company, and see value in the product**. People are more likely to purchase from a brand that reinforces these purchase criteria through **cross-channel advertising**. In fact, consumers are more valuable when they **engage with both search & social ads — integrated** search & social campaigns perform better than isolated campaigns.

[Marin Software conducted a study of more than 200 enterprise advertisers](#) managing Google, Bing, and Facebook campaigns, and divided **converting visitors** for the sampled advertisers into two categories:

- Those who clicked both a search & social ad before converting
- Those who clicked only a search or only a social ad before converting

Next, they divided **sampled advertisers** into two categories:

- Those who manage search & social in an integrated manner
- Those who manage search & social separately

Across each set of data, they examined conversion rates, revenue per click, and revenue per conversion. This is what they found:

MORE LIKELY TO BUY

Users who click an advertiser's search and social ads had approximately **double the conversion rate** than users who clicked only the search ad. The impact of cross-channel touch was even greater when examining social clicks. Users who clicked both the search and social ads had a click-through rate approximately four and a half times higher than users who only clicked social ads.

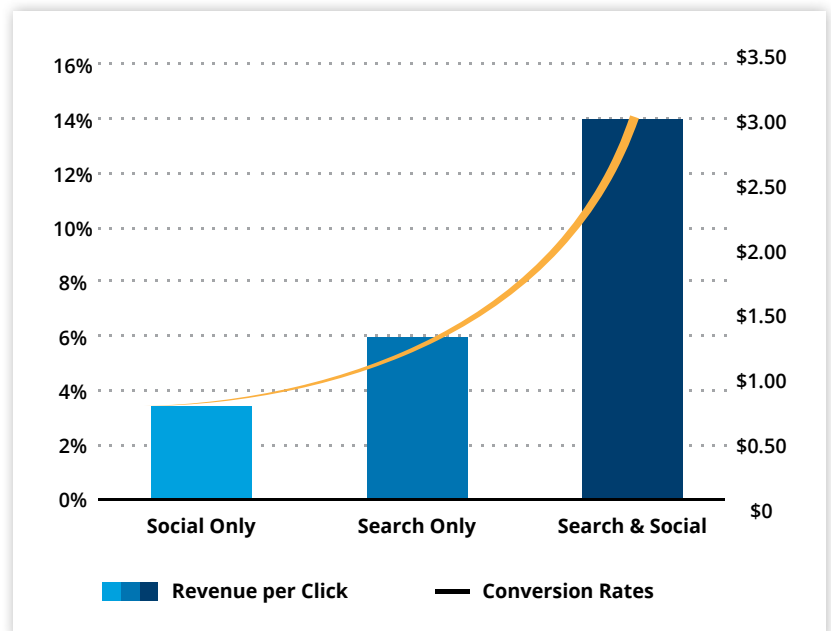
Running both search and social ads leads to approximately **2x the conversion rates** than running just search ads.

MORE LIKELY TO SPEND MORE

Users who clicked both a search and social ad contributed approximately **two times more revenue per click** than users who clicked search ads only. Multi-channel touch points are even more valuable for social advertising because users who click both a search and social ad contributed **six times more revenue per click** than users who click a social ad only.

INCREASED REVENUE PER CLICK

Search campaigns managed alongside social advertising campaigns have **two times more revenue per click** than search campaigns managed in isolation. An integrated search and social management strategy also benefits an advertiser's revenue per conversion from their search campaigns when they're managed together with social advertising campaigns.



Given the financial implications of cross-channel marketing and how integrating search & social advertising can impact revenue, how do we get beyond the theoretical to actually integrating these two different channels? We're breaking it down into 6 steps.

STEP 1: ASSESS YOUR CROSS-CHANNEL CAPABILITIES

The first step towards integration is assessing your existing cross-channel capabilities. Below are some sample questions to address in your assessment:

- **Are your search and social teams working towards the same objectives?** Is your social marketing team focusing on fan acquisition while your search team is focusing on lead generation? Do your teams work together or in silos?
- **Are the message and value proposition consistent across channels?** For example, is your social marketing team advertising a "low price" while our search marketing is advertising "high quality"? Conflicting messages may confuse the customer and dilute your brand.
- **Are you properly attributing revenue from each channel?** Since social is primarily an assisting channel in the path to conversion, using two different tracking sources may cause duplicate conversions.
- **Are you budgeting across channels based on campaign ROI?** Or are you over-investing in search campaigns without looking at social campaigns that may have a higher ROI?





- **Are your promotions aligned across channels?** Are you launching and ending promotions simultaneously across channels, or letting them run independently? Running channel-specific promotions may cause confusion and frustration with the customer.
- **Is your business intelligence strategy integrated?** For example, are you looking at performance reports and making tactical decisions across channels, or limiting your business by managing each channel in a silo?

STEP 2: IDENTIFY YOUR HIGH-VALUE AUDIENCES

To create a successfully integrated strategy, you must focus on the customer, not the channel. The next step, therefore, is identifying which high-value audiences you are trying to reach. The goal is to reach the right customer with the right buying intentions at the right time. Taking an audience-centric approach to marketing focuses on targeting each customer across channels using a combination of intent (search query) and audience (customer profile) data.

Facebook is a great tool to increase share of voice and brand awareness, as it gives you access to a huge audience. So if you're not sure where to start, and are looking to increase brand awareness, Facebook might be a good first step.

Building an audience can happen in many different platforms, based on a multitude of attributes. You may want to simply retarget your site visitors who didn't complete a purchase, or you may be looking to reach a more niche audience. Only you know the audience you are trying to reach.

STEP 3: MEASURE PERFORMANCE ACROSS CHANNELS

Marketers who manage their search and social programs independently risk making optimization mistakes based on over or under-counting conversions as a result of tracking revenue or conversions between channels.

For example, do conversions typically start with one channel and end in another? This path-to-conversion data can be used to inform your messaging and creative strategy.

Marketers who want to maximize overall campaign ROI need a single source for measurement, insights, and analytics that aggregate search and social marketing campaigns into one interface. This allows you to analyze search and social campaign ROI holistically, in order to make better decisions faster than they would by managing each channel in a silo.

Looking at search performance in a silo might mean ignoring important touch points along the buyer's path to conversion. Therefore, marketers should study the cross-channel paths to conversion that generate the most overall ROI.

The solution is implementing a multi-touch attribution system that allows you to track performance between channels.

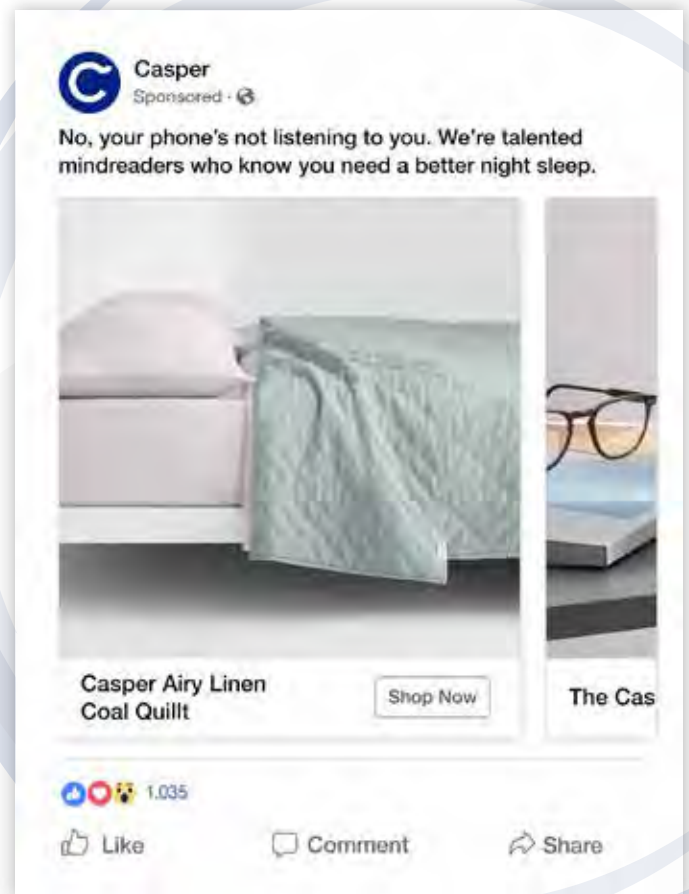


Tailored messaging
can increase
revenues by
15%

STEP 4: TAILOR THE MESSAGE

According to an HBR study, tailored messaging can reduce acquisition costs by 50% and increase revenues by 5-15%. Once you've found the right audiences, you need to serve them the right messages.

Copy can be written for each specific audience and where they are in the customer funnel, not where you are engaging with them. For example, if you are targeting an interest-based audience, the copy should reflect the item someone has previously expressed an interest in. An ad targeted to competitors may highlight the points of difference between the brands. An ad targeted to purchases for the purpose of an upsell may emphasize specific high-value products.



Here are some sample tactics to consider at each stage:

Awareness

Video and/or display ads promoting your brand

Consideration

Search text ads based on keywords around price, reviews, competitors, top-rated or "best" in your category

Engagement

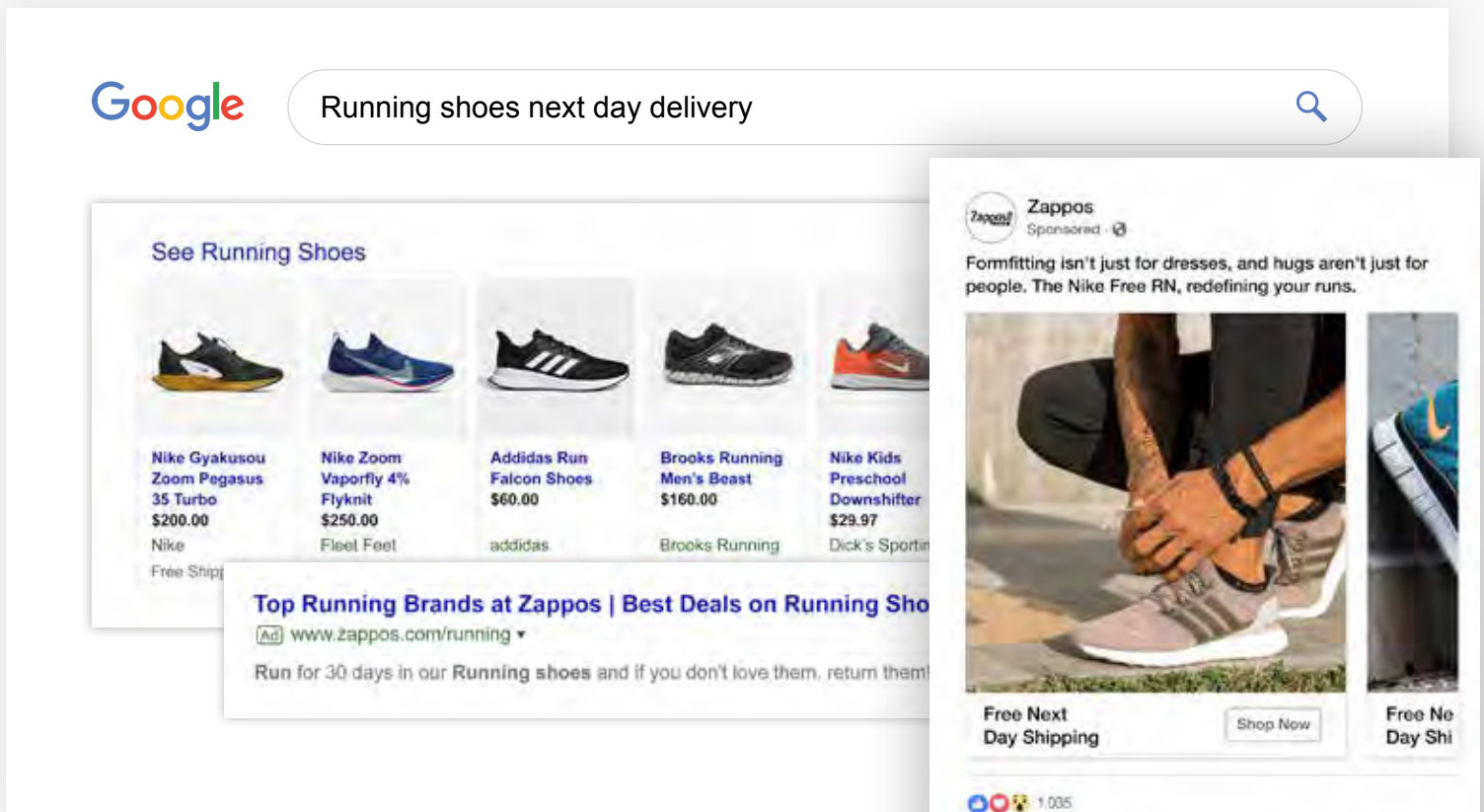
Sponsored content across Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn to promote engagement/downloads/lead gen

Decision

Brand keywords or search text ads based on high buying-intent keywords (such as keywords related to a specific product line or service), direct response social ads

STEP 5: COORDINATE THE STORY

Google gives insight into ad and landing page relevancy. Because relevancy has a strong correlation with price, it's probably going to be more efficient to start by optimizing your search campaigns. Once you've identified your high-performing search copy, you can use these headlines and description components in your Facebook ad copy. Let search lead, but make sure your messaging is unified.



STEP 6: SET THE RIGHT PRICE

Most of us allocate budgets manually. How can we improve this process? In a simple example of an advertiser running on Google and Facebook, we'd likely be running brand and non-brand search, and perhaps one conversion campaign on Facebook.

There's an order of operations to it: First, maximize high-value brand traffic (Lost Impression Share (IS) - Budget = 0%). Next, allocate your remaining budget where non-brand and FB have equal ROAS or CPA. The challenge is that these fluctuate, so you're regularly tweaking.

So how can we improve? First, we can automate this. Bid management tools like Adobe Media Optimizer, MARIN, or Kenshoo utilize machine learning to allocate budget to maximize return among multiple campaigns. The systems build a model of expected performance at various budget levels and reallocate to maximize a particular variable (typically revenue).

04 Conclusion

From awareness to conversion, the message you are trying to convey to your target audience should follow the customer and stay with them as you work to maintain and expand their business.

Integrating search and social correctly can have a dramatic positive effect on the performance of your campaigns compared to running isolated campaigns. Managing, measuring, and optimizing these channels side-by-side allows for improved budgeting, bidding, and targeting decisioning.

In summary, here are three things to keep in mind to successfully integrate your search & social campaigns:

Run both channels

We're focused on the duopoly because most advertisers use them. Not only do they deliver better results, but there's a clear synergy from running Search & Social together, rather than in isolation.

Reach the right audiences

Getting in front of the right audience is an essential component of any successful strategy, and the trick is identifying new ones. To start, you at least need some insight on where to begin testing.

Relevant messaging

Make sure your messages resonate with the right audience & context. Use insights from your highest-performing search ads to see what keywords and other messages you might want to repeat across channels.

AUDIENCEx

AUDIENCEx is the largest independent trading desk, working to streamline the increasingly complex world of digital marketing for marketers and agencies around the world. We do this with a unified and transparent approach to omnichannel marketing campaigns, designed to reach target audiences with precision and efficiency. Our trading desk, tdX, is powered by our proprietary AI which assesses 12 leading DSPs on a 250 point evaluation, to identify the best-performing platforms for each campaign.

Combining this powerful technology with exceptional customer service and strategic expertise across programmatic, native, search, social, and creative means advertisers and agencies can unify their digital marketing efforts to find and convert customers and increase revenue.

AUDIENCEx is headquartered in Los Angeles and operates in 12 offices throughout North America, including New York, Chicago, Toronto, Dallas and San Francisco.

For more information on how AUDIENCEx can help you integrate your search & social campaigns, visit www.audiencex.com or contact us.

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