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EDITION

▶ Targeting With Social Media Advertising

BY KIM KELLEY, FRBMA

Social media advertising in its most basic form is simple. It's inexpensive when compared against the numbers of people you can reach; there are numerous objectives to choose from to satisfy your overarching goal; and reaching your target audience through platforms such as Facebook is extremely robust. You can identify a precise audience based on age, gender, geographic location, income, the time of day users are on social media, a multitude of lifestyle interests, and more. With almost endless possibilities to choose from when it comes to building customized audiences, it's almost a 'the sky is the limit' mentality, but refining your targeted efforts is much bigger than your media budget alone and the process deserves to be well thought out. In fact, I can tell you now, this subject is so extensive that this article will need to be continued in future issues of the *RBMA Bulletin*.

What happened to organic reach?

Prior to late 2014, Facebook business page owners enjoyed their page followers seeing their page posts organically. This means not having to compete extensively, or pay, for their audience to see content. Enter Facebook's algorithm, EdgeRank, and organic reach plummeted to a three percent to six percent average, or less, in many cases. Facebook has explained that the changes resulted from the massive amount of content being created and shared, and that they've gotten better at showing users the most relevant content in their news feed. Other social networks may offer real-time feeds, but it is indeed true that a user only has so much time in a day to consume content.

Paying your way

Enter paid social media advertising. Like any paid online advertising effort, social media advertising works as long as you're funding it, but your advertising impact stops like a switch that's been turned off once the money stops. That's not to say you can't grow your audience during a paid campaign and continue to offer that audience relevant content in the days to come. In order to make the most of your advertising dollars, you need to optimize your social media ads.



Begin with defining your objective. There are several options to choose from, including but not limited to Page Post Engagement, if you want your audience to like, share, or click your ad; Page Likes, if you're working to build your page audience; and Clicks to Website, if you want users to access more content or perform a function—such as make an appointment or accept an offer on your website.

Further define your audience based on their gender, age, income, and location. If you're targeting women for mammography services, keep in mind younger women in their late 30s and early 40s will have a different mindset than those in their late 50s and beyond, so it will make sense to show those audiences different ads. Make use of the income selector if the services you are promoting could be a better fit for a more affluent audience—such as leg vein services. If you know your audience will be limited in the distance they will travel to utilize your service, limit the distance your ad reaches from your business location to a 10 or 15 mile radius.

Choose what you want to pay for by defining CPC or CPM targeting. The former means you will only pay for clicks on your ad but may yield a higher cost per click, while the latter may be a less expensive option based solely on impressions.

A/B testing

Split testing your ads against different audiences is an excellent way to determine who within your target will actively respond.


A single ad message and creative does not fit all audiences. Sometimes different creative or a different message or the right mix of keywords will bring about a higher yield and help you be more effective. Be careful not to run too many tests in tandem with one another to prevent your ads from competing, and create a new ad set with each test rather than tweak an existing one. This will prevent previous results from becoming cumulative and affecting new results.

Desktop vs. mobile

Audience behavior is a big factor to consider. Users who view your ad on mobile compared to those who view your ad on desktop may not only have a different objective in mind but how and the amount of time they have to consume your ad is also very different. For these reasons, it makes good sense to serve up different ads to the different devices. For mobile in particular, your visible character count could be truncated, so write a shorter version of your post. And because image sizes can vary by device, be sure any text on the image is optimized and readable.

Just the start

Being truly effective in social media advertising is the result of many optimization attempts and tests. Rarely will it be a one and done effort—just like any advertising medium. If at first you don't succeed, test, test, and try again.

Stay tuned for more on targeting, customizing, and converting audiences with advanced targeting techniques. 



KIM KELLEY, FRBMA,

is the principal and creative director of Ali`i Marketing & Design. She has worked in marketing, advertising, graphic design, and social media for over 20 years. She is a fellow of the RBMA and is the recipient of the Special Recognition Award for her work in rebranding the RBMA. Kim can be reached at (970) 800-3678 or kim@aliidesign.com.

Take Your Marketing Programs to the Next Level

The RBMA Marketing Toolkit is a comprehensive guide created specifically for radiology marketers. Inspired by your peers and colleagues, the RBMA Marketing Toolkit contains real-world radiology marketing strategies, direction and ideas! The kit includes customizable forms and visual samples to start your creative juices flowing.

Content includes sections on:

- Planning
- Analysis and surveying
- Basic radiology business
- Marketing your services
- Collateral and production
- Building a marketing department
- Internal marketing

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