

5 Steps

to Creating Effective
Display Campaigns

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There are over three billion internet users in the world; three billion people who turn to their screens for information, entertainment, communication; and three billion people who use this medium to connect with their favorite brands make product decisions. **Display advertising utilizes text, images, audio, and video to help those brands reach out and grab their audience's attention.**

They need all the help they can get. The average person has over 5,000 brand exposures each day (including advertisements, logos, labeling, etc.). Of those, 363 are ads. And of those 363 ads, how many does the average person really notice? How many resonate with them, or at least make an impression? Twelve. Is your message among them?

Display Dangers

When considering effective display campaigns, you have to put yourself into the mind of the consumer. That can be a frightening place for a marketer! Fully one-third of internet users find display ads “intolerable”. Just 2.8 percent say that these ads are relevant, and 18 – 34 year olds (heavy internet users) are more likely to ignore online ads than regular TV ads.

Those 5000+ brand exposures have built up the resistance of most internet users. It is this resistance that you must overcome in order to realize the results you need to compete – and thrive – in a crowded, chaotic, competitive field.

Display Done Right

Discouraged? Don't be. When done well, display advertising can help you reach media-saturated consumers, build brand recognition and affinity, and achieve key objectives. How do you ensure your message is among those that break through to your audience?

01

Clarify your campaign objectives and target audience.

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As the incomparable Yogi Berra once said, “If you don’t know where you are going, you might wind up someplace else.” In display advertising, if you don’t know exactly what you want to accomplish, your results are going to be hit and miss – with a decided emphasis on the miss.

What are you trying to do?

- Nurture leads?
- Drive sales?
- Increase website traffic and clicks?
- Build brand recognition?

Even within your target audience, you’re likely to have segments that have different needs. For example, if you sell athletic gear, you may target young student athletes with the latest trends and cutting edge performance. You can also go after their parents, who care about comfort and support. You can subdivide into girls and women to capture the attention and meet the needs of female athletes/exercise aficionados.

As with sneakers, a one-size-fits-all approach is not going to work when it comes to display advertising. You must design ads that resonate with your specific segment and encourage them to take the next steps (e.g. click through to your site, make a purchase, download a brochure, etc.).

Creating two or three versions of an ad, each with a different message and call to action (CTA), is good practice. And because the cost of display is lower than traditional advertising, it will not break the bank to do so.

Examples:



This Nike ad features Stefan Janoski Max, a clear nod to young audience members who like the cool, laidback style of skateboarder Janoski.



This Nike ad targets women who take their strength-training seriously and require a shoe that can keep up.

In addition to targeting a specific segment, you can further hone in based on their place in the sales funnel. Notice the second ad above: the CTA is “Learn more. Not “Buy Now.” Why? Because these consumers haven’t reached that stage yet. They need to continue through the funnel until they’re ready to make the purchase. The first ad reads, “Available at PacSun.” This is for people who want the shoes and are ready to wear them.

Tip: If you are using Google Ads Display Network, take advantage of their comprehensive range of Targeting Tools to help you get the right message in front of the right people at the right time.

What is success? Creating a strategy to measure the efficacy of your display campaign is critical. Most brands turn to CTR, or click-through rate. This can give you a quick idea of how your ad is performing, but it does not tell the whole story. In fact, the story might be fictional. GoldSpot Media, for example, found that 50 percent of clicks on mobile platforms were accidental. You don't want to measure your progress, and plan marketing spend, based on "Whoops! Didn't mean to click that."

Some other metrics to consider:

- Cost-per-conversion
- Cost-per-lead
- Ad viewability
- Hover time (how long a person hovers over the ad)
- Direct website traffic
- Branded search (seeing an uptick in search is an important signal that your ads are working)
- Webpage lift

Keep a sharp eye on your analytics; this will help you course-correct, if necessary, and will inform future campaigns. What works? What doesn't? What captures your audience's attention?

The fun part! It's also an incredibly challenging part of your campaign. The best ads are clean, clear, and above all, concise. How can you encapsulate your brand's unique selling proposition and benefits for consumers – while getting them to complete the CTA – all in a handful of words? Let's take a look at this display ad from app Sosh to see how it all comes together:



Use an image. They say a picture speaks 1000 words, so you can communicate a wealth of information – both informational and emotional – through a single, compelling image. Sosh's users are likely to be younger professionals on the search for excitement, culture, and fun. A sophisticated cocktail and the lights in the background promise a good time.

The black background will show up well against white webpages, ensuring the ad stands out. At the same time, it aligns with Sosh's brand identity.

Add a bold headline. Here it's simply "Sosh" with a bold blue icon. Ready to get Sosh-ial

Craft snappy text. Your work week is boring. If that doesn't resonate with you, what does! Again, this appeals to pleasure-seekers who may be feeling somewhat stagnant or at a loss for how to locate the best events, festivals, shows, etc. It's short, direct, and conveys the benefit to users.

Clear CTA. CTAs need to tell your audience exactly what you want them to do. This is not the time to be overly clever, or worse, vague. Join now. Buy now. Learn more. Subscribe now. Be very clear about what you're asking people to do.

Here's another example from Seamless, a service that delivers from restaurants near you.



The simple headline and text clearly the benefits of Seamless – easy ordering from local restaurants. The image of fresh, healthy food is designed to get the salivary glands going and "Order Now" couldn't be clearer. Again, the colored background will help the ad stand out, and the design, which evokes a dinner table, aligns with their brand identity.

04

Use ad retargeting

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Just 2 percent of consumers convert on the first visit to an online store. The other 98 percent take a far less linear route. They may visit your site once. Come back a week later to read a blog post, and a week after that to download a whitepaper. They may click through on an ad they see on Facebook or on their search engine results page.

You retarget people who already have experience with your brand. Doing so keeps brand in front of your audience's eyes until they're ready to complete the CTA. Again, be sure to segment your audience and their particular interests to retarget effectively.



Retargeting ad from Bonobos – which is upping the ante with a great discount. This is often the “push” interested consumers need to convert.

05

Don't rest – Test

Test your ads to ensure that you are hitting your objectives. Simple A/B testing, for example, allows you to try different headlines, images, CTAs and other ad elements. Focus on one area at a time and run the tests for a specified length of time. To what messages and formats does your audience respond?

You can determine when and where specific ads perform better. For instance, if you're targeting older professionals, they may limit their internet use to evenings and weekends, so displaying ads then will be more effective. Millennials, on the other hand, are continually connected, so mid-day, mid-week displays can be even more effective.

Effective display advertising is a continuous cycle of creating, testing, and regrouping to deliver the most relevant experiences for your audience.

When done right, display campaigns can help you break through the noise and reach your target audience. Keep these five steps top of mind so you can ensure that your brand stays top of mind for consumers.

MaxAudience is a strategic brand and marketing consultancy with online lead generation and conversion at its core. We assist medium and large scale businesses with precise, high ROI, marketing campaigns that deliver inspiring results.

We support, implement, design, and manage many different platforms for our clients including Marketing Automation Software from all the major vendors. We can do everything for you include landing pages, automation tracks, content creation, and more. Many Marketing Automation vendors just give you access to the system but then where do you go from there?

We help our clients win in their marketplace. Our innovative approach builds medium businesses into brands using a blend of data-base marketing, inbound search marketing, unique creativity, and analytics to drive profit.

At MaxAudience, the results are seen in a matter of months, increasing your business is the name of the game and we do it quickly.

Our team members have contributed to legendary campaigns such as the launch of the GM Mastercard, known as the most successful credit card launch of all time. Our team has generated hundreds of thousands of direct inquiry leads over the last few years alone.

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