
Thruline
MARKETING
PAID SOCIAL
SUCCESS KIT
SUCCESS KIT

ENHANCE YOUR DIGITAL STRATEGY WITH PAID SOCIAL ADVERTISING

Social advertising spending has dramatically increased during the past three years, and we expect this trend to continue as social media usage remains strong.

Whether your goal is brand awareness or inquiry generation, supplementing your paid search campaigns with paid social efforts increases search traffic and accelerates digital marketing goals/strategies.

We have gathered the top paid social articles, advice and research from our digital and social media experts to create the Paid Social Success Kit. We hope you find it useful!

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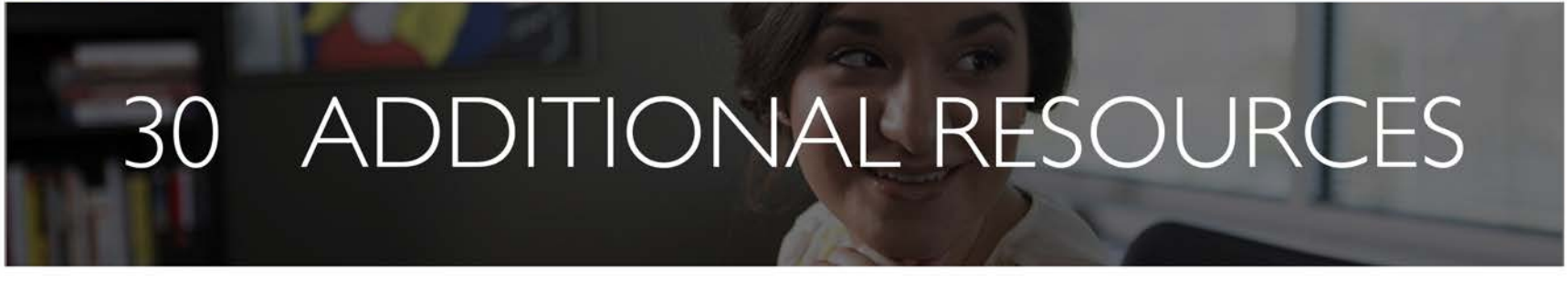

Paid Social Overview

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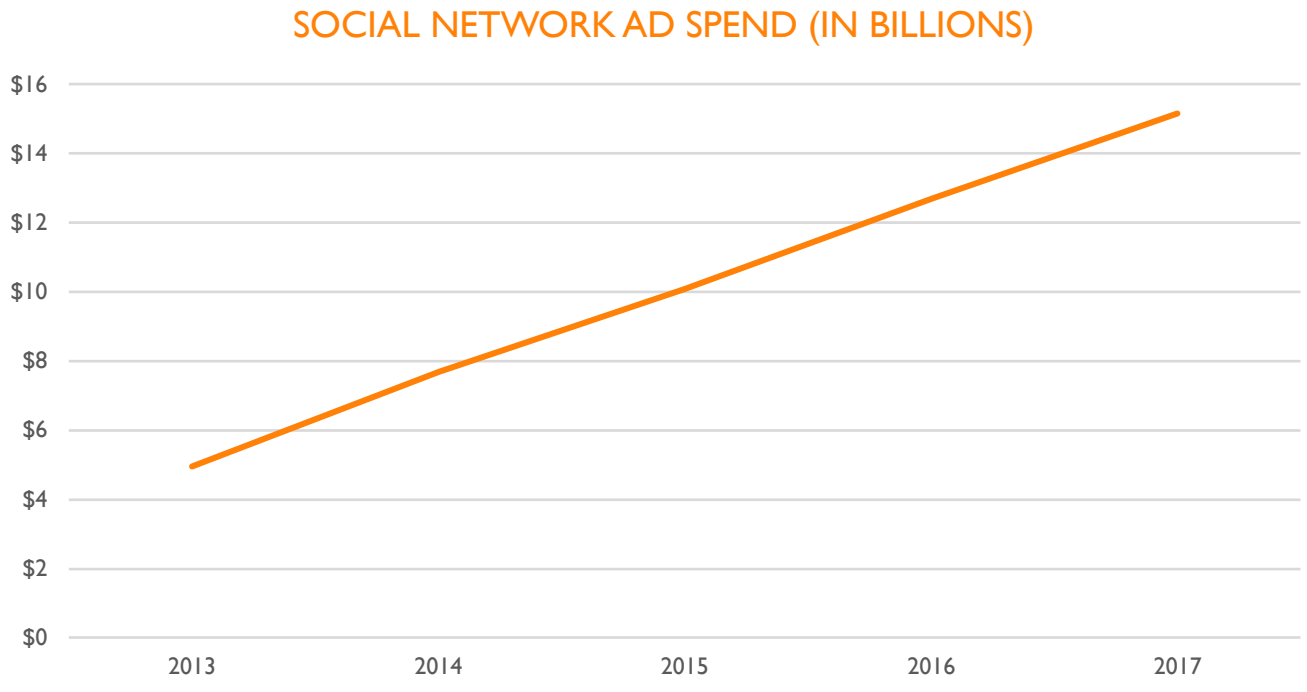
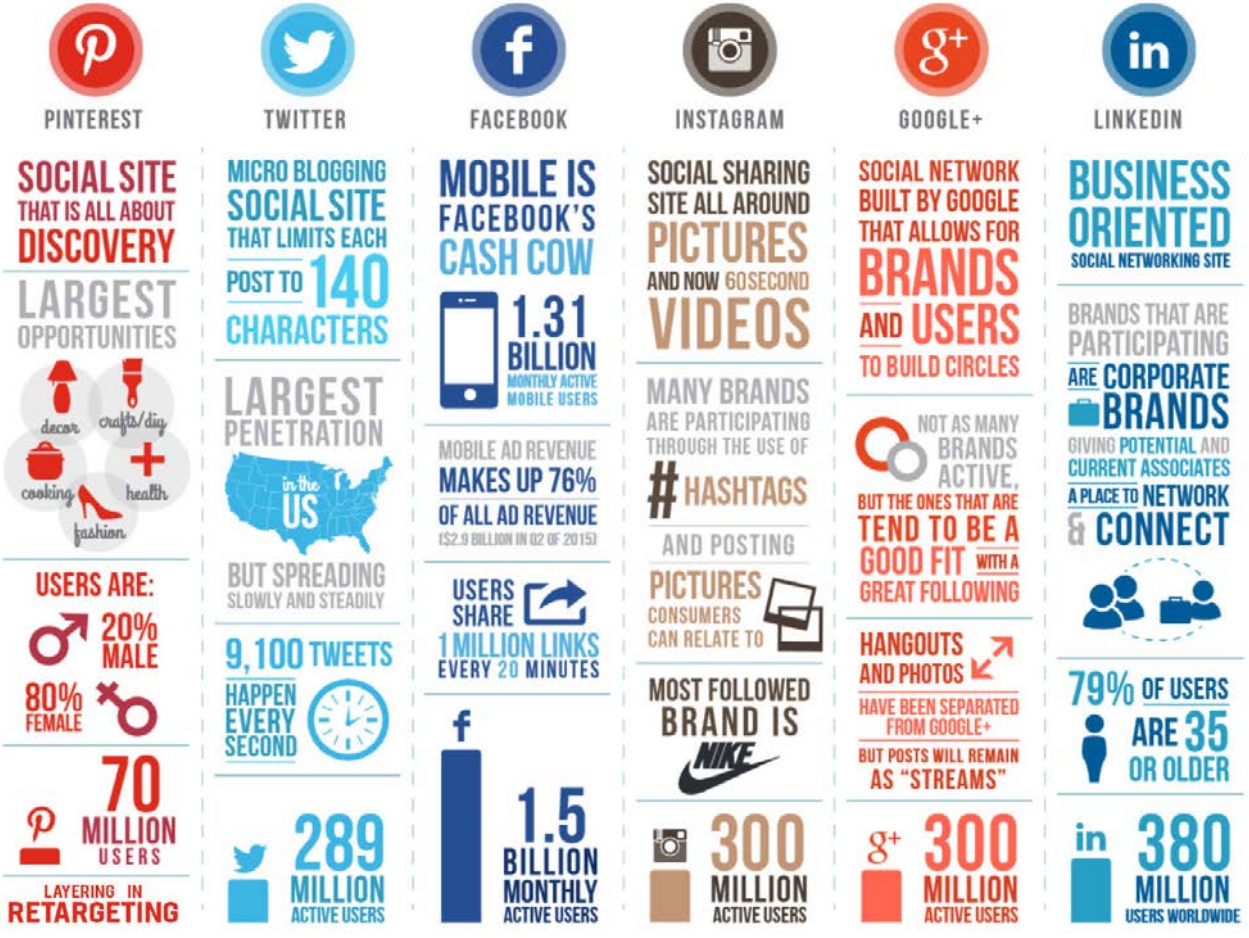
Social ad spend expected to grow rapidly



Source: eMarketer, Social Ad Spend in North America

Understanding the paid social landscape

UPDATE:
Pinterest is layering in retargeting and look-alike customer lists, and Instagram now allows 60-second videos.



**Data as of 7.28.15; infographic by Leverage: leveragemedia.com*

How to Get Started

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What paid social channels make sense for your school?

	PINTEREST	TWITTER	FACEBOOK	INSTAGRAM	LINKEDIN
PURPOSE	Lead gen, brand awareness	Lead gen, event promotion, content promotion, brand awareness	Lead gen, brand awareness, event promotion, content promotion	Lead gen, brand awareness	Lead gen, brand awareness, content promotion
BEST FIT PROGRAMS	Culinary, Baking, Design Cosmetology	All	All	All	Bachelor's, master's
PROS	Low costs, very visual, high engagement	Real-time, relevant	Specific audience targeting, rich ad formats, video	Low competition, creative flexibility	Niche audience
CHALLENGES	Limited advertising space	140-character limit	Requires monitoring, engagement	Must have high-quality, unique creative & strong mobile site	Typically low engagement

What you need to get started

1. Consistent voice and presence.
2. Ongoing monitoring.
3. Commitment to testing.
4. Creative assets that resonate.
5. Strategic targeting plan.
6. Measurement plan.

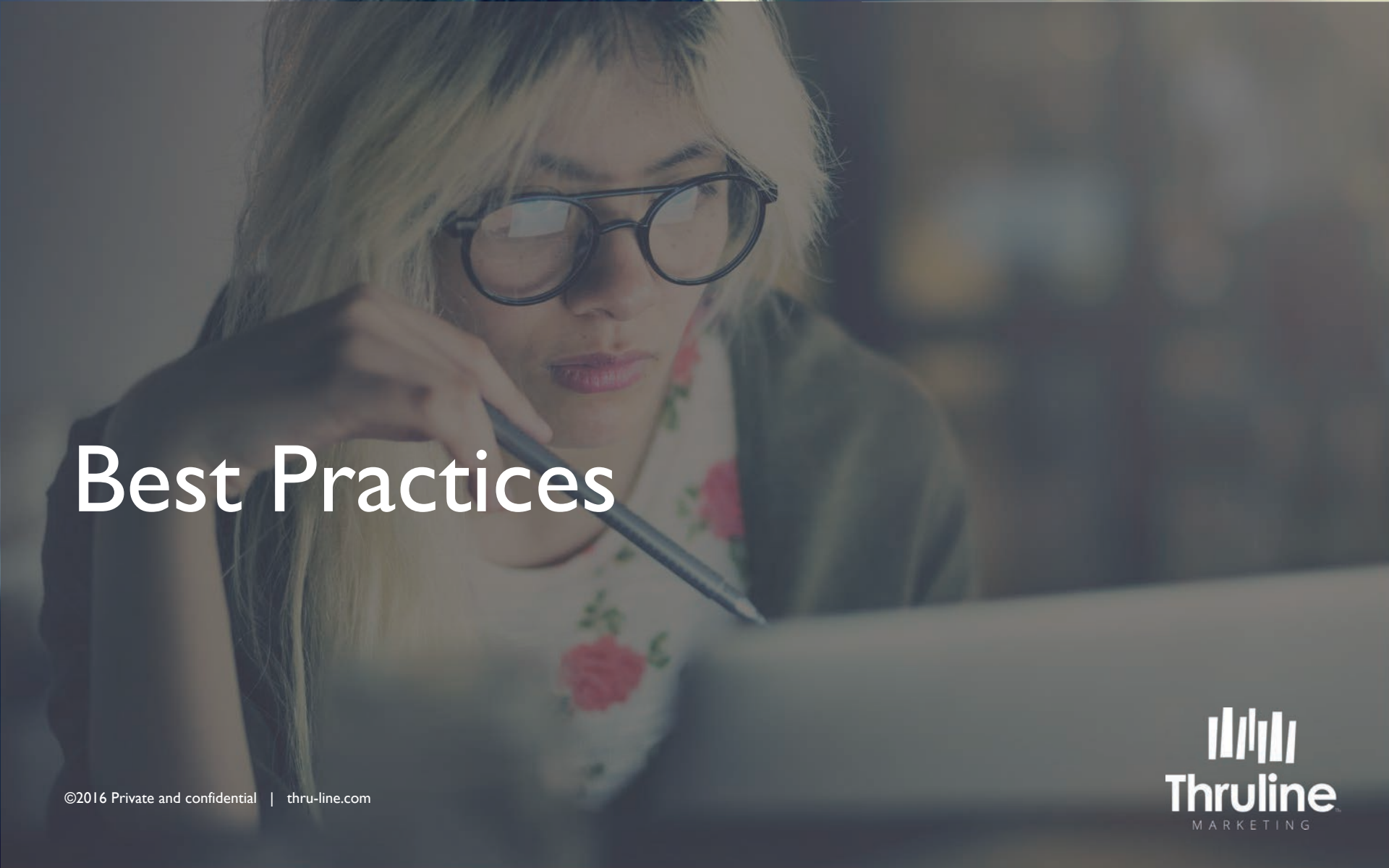
Where and when to serve your paid social ads

WHERE DO YOU WANT TO SHOW UP?

- Desktop vs. mobile
- Newsfeed vs. right-hand side (RHS)
- Instagram (mobile only)

AD SCHEDULING

- Decide when you show ads



Best Practices

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Ongoing testing is crucial

Aggressive, ongoing testing of:

- Demographic targeting
- Ad placements
- Ad formats
- Creative
- Custom audiences

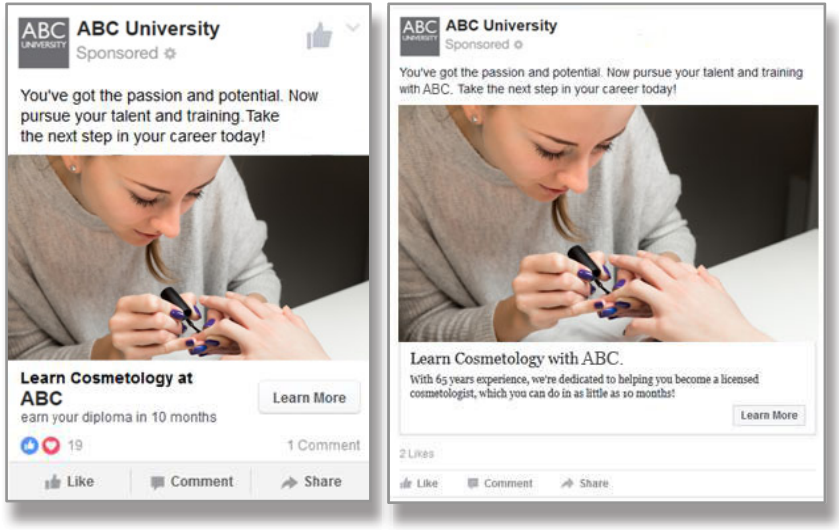
Test to identify the most effective target audience

WHO IS YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE?

- How old are they?
- What do they like?
- Where do they live?
- Gender?
- Education?
- Income?
- Life events?
- Work?

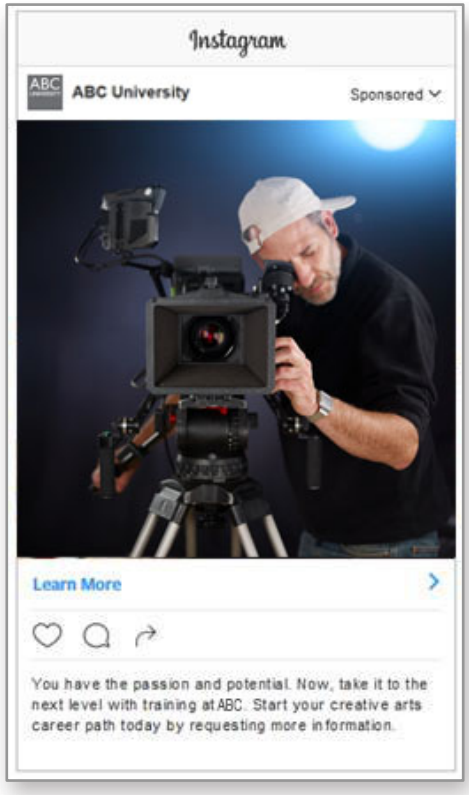
Experiment with multiple ad formats

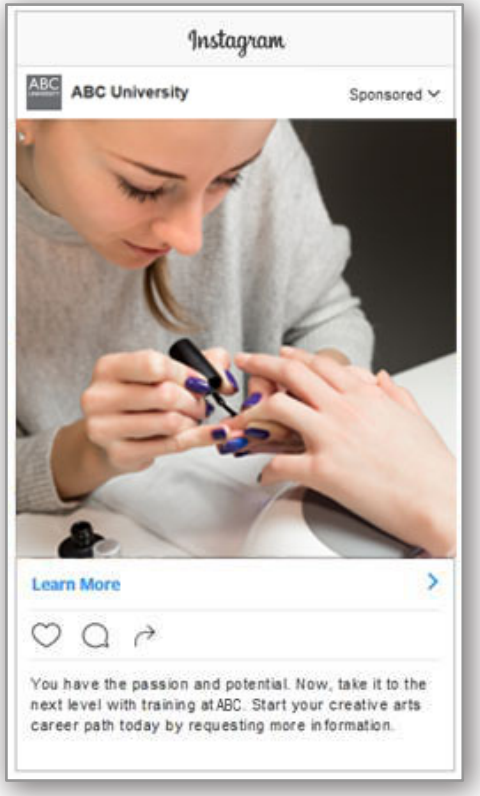
Single image ad >



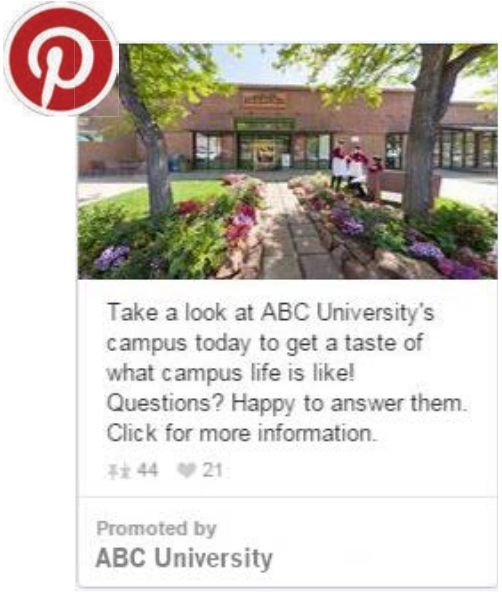
Carousel ad >

Show off your school beautifully with Instagram …

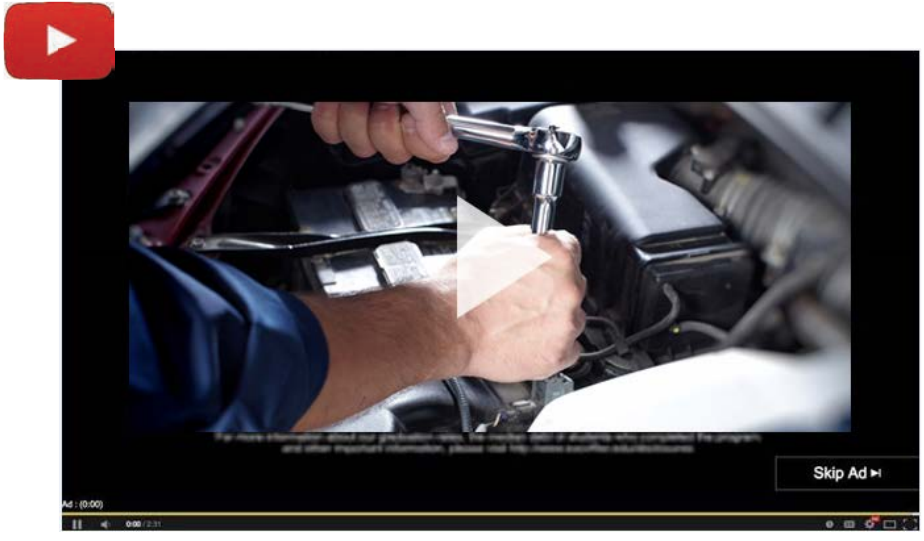




… or natively with Pinterest



… or in motion with YouTube.



Creative best practices

1. Be targeted.
2. Be relative.
3. Be authentic.
4. Be exclusive.
5. Be imaginative.
6. Be attractive.
7. Don’t over rely on stock.
8. Minimize text overlay.
9. Avoid logo overkill.

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Paid social tactics to consider

CALL TO ACTION

- "Learn More" works great, although a more direct CTA like "Apply Now" works for retargeting campaigns.

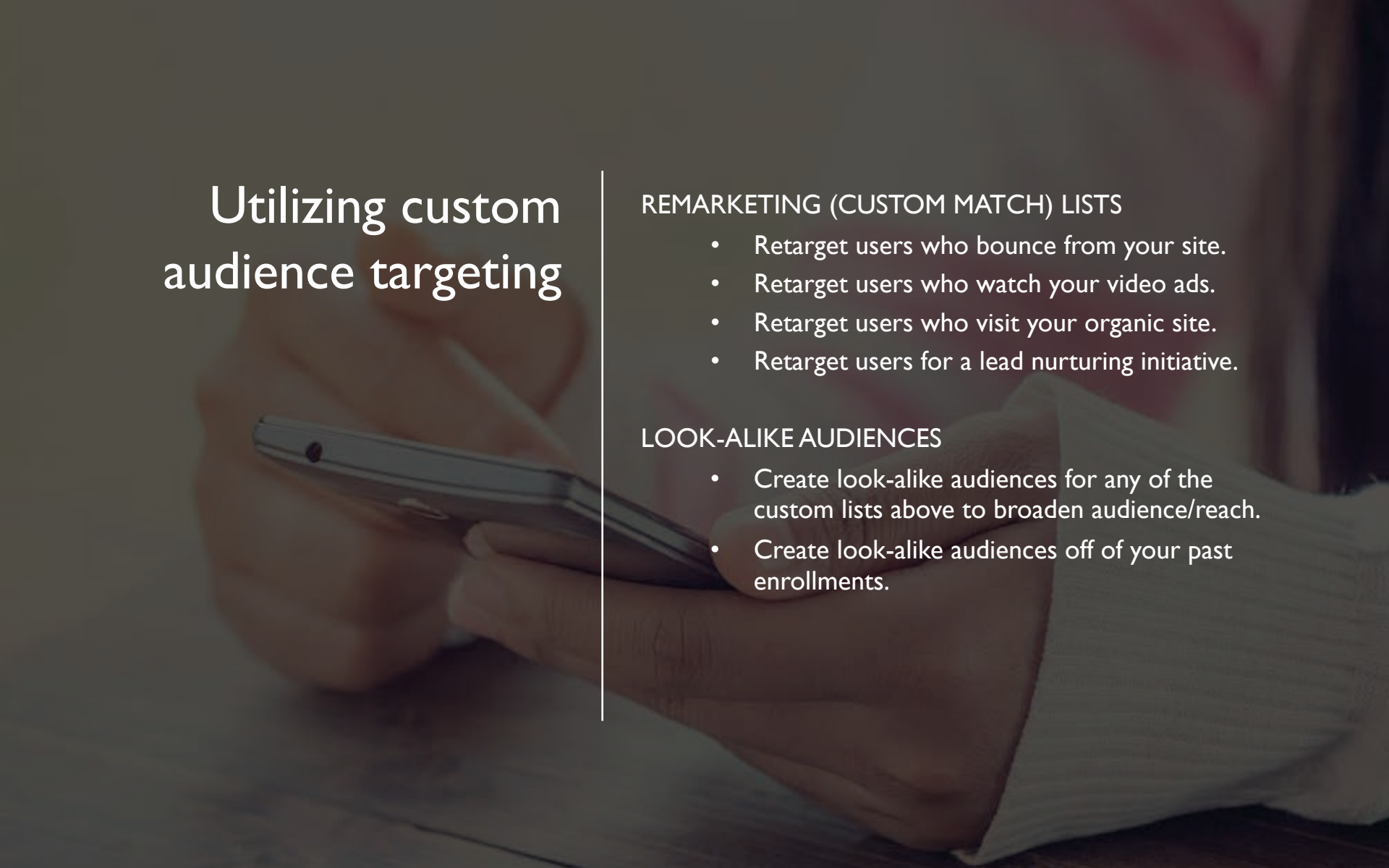
PHONE NUMBER IN AD

- Test on desktop, avoid on mobile ads.

RETARGETING

- Utilize different ad formats such as carousel and video ads to spark users' interest again in a different way to bring them back to your site.
- Test landing pages unique for social.

Utilizing custom audience targeting



REMARKETING (CUSTOM MATCH) LISTS

- Retarget users who bounce from your site.
- Retarget users who watch your video ads.
- Retarget users who visit your organic site.
- Retarget users for a lead nurturing initiative.

LOOK-ALIKE AUDIENCES

- Create look-alike audiences for any of the custom lists above to broaden audience/reach.
- Create look-alike audiences off of your past enrollments.

Campaign Structure & Measurement

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Keep campaigns organized and intentional

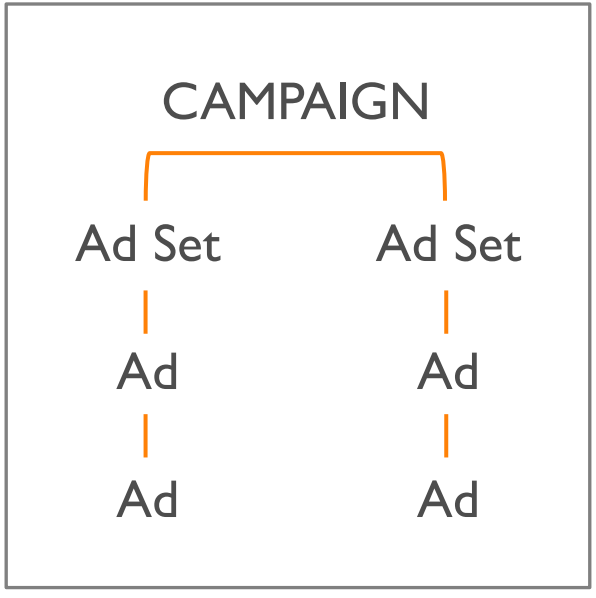
- Highly organized campaigns are a must when running paid social campaigns.
- We recommend having campaigns broken out by single common interests (example: campus, program).
- Within your campaigns, the ad sets should be the next subset that makes most sense, and by different targeting strategies.
  - Remember that all ads in an ad set will share the same audience targeting.

Account structure matters

Campaign hierarchy:
ACCOUNT – CAMPAIGNS – AD SETS – ADS

Optimal campaign setup involves:

- One account per school.
- One to10 campaigns per account.
- Five to seven ad sets per campaign.
- Two to three ads per ad set.

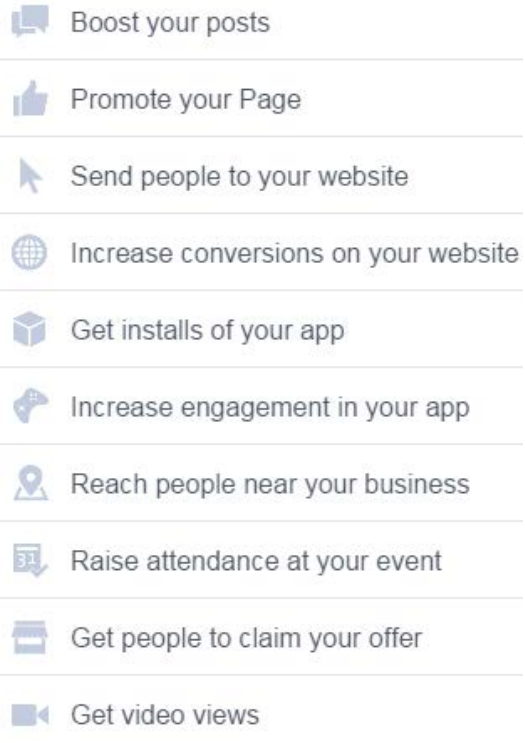


How to measure performance

MEASURE

- Objective goal (KPI).
- Different creative against same audiences.
- Same creative against different placements.
- Same creative against different audiences.
- Same audiences against different placements.

BRAND AWARENESS	INQUIRY GENERATION
Boost posts Website clicks Promote page	Increase conversions



Measuring beyond direct conversions

CONVERSION LIFT STUDY

Determine what impact Facebook ads have on overall inquiry volume.

ENGAGEMENT

Followers gained, comments, subscriptions, likes and shares on ads are all important to monitor.

Helps ad relevance score, improves chances of being served in auction.

VIDEO VIEWS

Facebook has a relatively low CPV compared to YouTube – more views mean more brand awareness.

When paid social doesn't work

- Minimal creative assets.
- Targeting wrong audiences.
- Limited testing.
- Very narrow strategy.
- Measuring wrong things.
- Too KPI focused.
- All eggs in one basket.
- Poor campaign structure.

The Future of Paid Social

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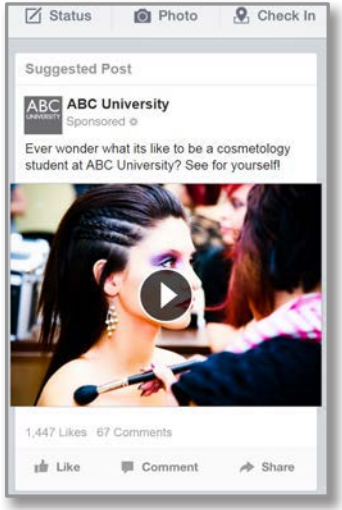
Video and lead ad formats will continue to see heavy adoption

Video ad >



Lead ad (mobile only) >

Facebook Product Updates

- Facebook is releasing a new ad product that drives an ad click to Facebook messenger.
  - When a user clicks on your ad in the News Feed, a message thread with your business will open in the Messenger app (if on mobile) or in the Facebook web page (if on desktop).

- Facebook is beta testing dynamic ads for retail.
  - Leverage your local product catalog, inventory feed and locations to generate ads that showcase accurate pricing and availability. For now, these are likely not a fit for higher education institutions, but colleges that offer set prices for programs may benefit from a test.

- Facebook will ramp up testing ads within groups.
  - In the next quarter, we expect Facebook to begin placing News Feed ads in user-created groups, such as buy/sell/trade pages that have become popular in Facebook.

- Facebook created ads to promote store visits.
  - While likely less relevant for colleges compared to brick-and-mortar stores, Facebook now offers ads that promote visits to nearby locations. This could, however, be a good fit for campuses that easily enroll students after campus visits.

What's next in paid social?

Continued heavy adoption of Facebook lead ads and video ads.

Heightened focus on mobile experience through targeting, ad formats, usability.

More advertisers shifting image ad dollars to video ads.

Facebook review tool.

Increased competition in LinkedIn.

Political year will impact the social landscape.

Growing targeting and placement opportunities, esp. for Pinterest

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