

GRACE[®]
Communications Foundation

SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING

Everything You Need
to Know to Start
Advertising Today

A hand holding a smartphone with various social media app icons visible on the screen. The icons include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Google+, Pinterest, Tumblr, LinkedIn, and WhatsApp. The text 'Social Networks' is visible at the top of the screen. The background is a light blue gradient.

BENEFITS OF PAID SOCIAL

Advertising on Social vs. Non-Ad Content

- ⦿ **Audience Reached:** Algorithm-based platforms reduce the reach of regular, aka organic, content which reduces acquisitions
- ⦿ **Audience Variety:** Advertising allows you to reach new audiences that otherwise wouldn't see your message
- ⦿ **Audience Growth:** 2-fold benefit because social ad spending quickly grows social following as new audiences see your brand

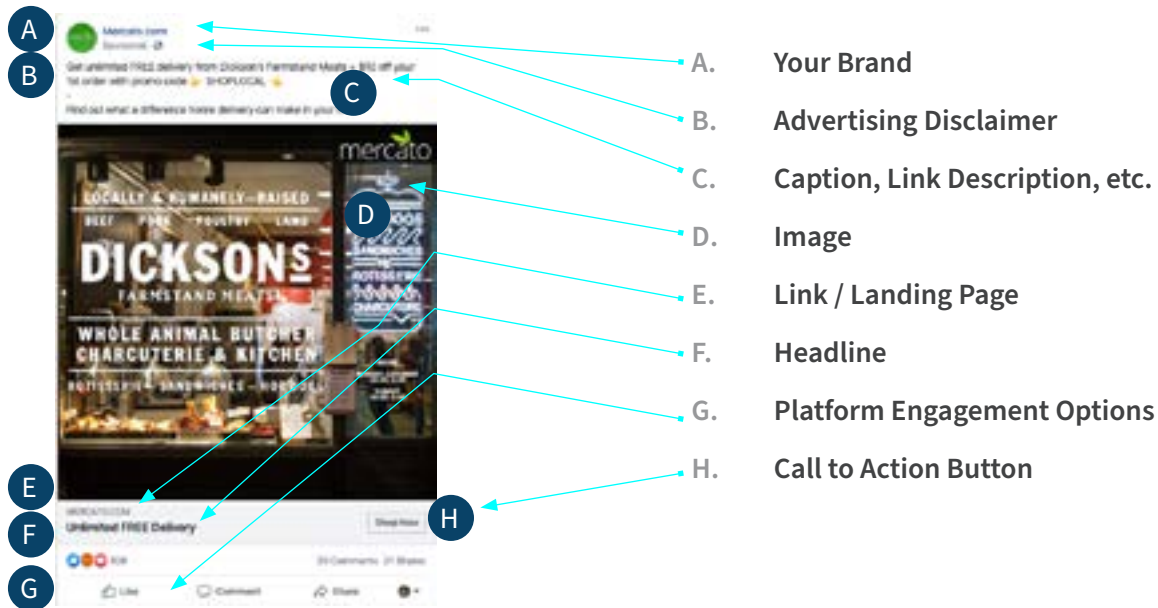
Social Media vs. Traditional Advertising

- ⦿ Digital advertising allows for easy-to-prove ROI
- ⦿ Advanced targeting benefits
- ⦿ Ad spends are relatively low
- ⦿ Easily and quickly refine ads to drive down costs
- ⦿ Advocacy/cause-focused advertising on social is unique and leverages common social media audience norms

TERMS TO KNOW

- ⦿ **KPI:** Key Performance Indicator – the primary metric to evaluate your ad's performance.
- ⦿ **ROI:** Return on Investment
- ⦿ **Conversion:** A specific, measurable action that you want the viewer of the ad to take. Used to evaluate your ad
EXAMPLES: make a donation, sign a pledge, download a report, etc.
- ⦿ **Conversion Tracking:** Using a code on your site so that platforms can track what happens when the audience engages with your ad
- ⦿ **Attribution:** Linking a conversion to a specific advertisement
- ⦿ **Impression:** When someone is shown your brand or ad on the platform. This is often a metric used while evaluating your targeting
- ⦿ **Audience Targeting:** Choosing the qualities of the audience to serve your ad. This is where social advertising shines!
- ⦿ **Direct Response Advertising:** An advertising platform where the viewer can immediately act on an ad and their conversion can be attributed to the ad.
- ⦿ **Native Advertising:** Ads that look like regular content
- ⦿ **CPC, CPM, CTR...** All will be covered soon!

Elements of an Ad: Creative



ADVERTISING OBJECTIVES AND SOCIAL AD TYPES

Advertising Goals and Types of Campaigns

Each type of social ads is aligned with a marketing goal at the heart of your investment. Are you trying to...

- Drive web traffic to your site or a specific piece of content?
 - Then use **Traffic Campaigns**
- Get noticed and be recognized as a leader in your space?
 - Then use **Brand Awareness Campaigns** and/or Impression Campaigns
- Change the hearts and minds of an audience on the platform?
 - Then use **Engagement Campaigns**
- Get followers on the platform?
 - Then use **Follower Campaigns**

Traffic Campaigns aka Pay Per Click (PPC) Advertising

- Goal: Bring traffic to your site to encourage conversions
- Conversions
 - Button/link clicks on your site (donation button clicked, form submitted)
 - Results page (donation or pledge confirmation page is loaded)

- Engagements on the website itself (page scroll, dwell time)
- ⦿ Creative: Be enticing! Use some click-bait tactics, but make sure you fulfill the ad's promise
- ⦿ KPI = Clicks or Actions
 - CPC (Cost Per Click) or CPA (Cost Per Action)

Brand Awareness Campaigns and/or Impression Campaigns

- ⦿ Goal: Get your brand in front of new people OR more members of your existing audience
- ⦿ Conversions
 - Views of your ad on the platform
- ⦿ Creative: Show off your brand, sub-brand or branded product and elevate your value proposition
- ⦿ KPI = Impressions
 - CPM – Cost Per Thousand Impressions
 - NOTE:** Keep the 1,000 in mind when calculating ROI

Engagement Campaigns

- ⦿ Goal: Get a new or existing audience to engage with your content on the platform itself
- ⦿ Conversions
 - Engagements: This could be any number of platform-specific actions. Likes, comments, shares, retweets, video views (in different durations), pins, expand photos or captions, swipes, click to profile, etc.
- ⦿ Creative: Get people talking. What will encourage them to act?
- ⦿ KPI = Engagements – each platform is different, so pay attention!
 - Cost Per “Engagement” or Like, 10-second video views, etc...

Follower Campaigns

- ⦿ Goal: Get new followers
- ⦿ Conversions
 - New Followers or Page Likes etc.
- ⦿ Creative: Show off what makes you a worthwhile account to follow. What impressive content will they get if they follow you?
- ⦿ KPI = Followers – this is often very expensive relative to other KPIs
 - Cost Per Follower

THE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL ADS: TESTING!

The Critical Importance of Testing

By incorporating A/B testing from the start, you'll...

- ⦿ Drastically increase conversions
- ⦿ Drastically reduce costs
- ⦿ Improve your understanding of your audience
- ⦿ Improve the efficacy of your organic work including the creative
- ⦿ Gain a deeper understanding of what messaging is most effective
- ⦿ Improve the efficacy of future ads

A/B Testing – Test Structure

1. **Pick an element of an ad to test, for example:**
 - ⦿ Creative: different images, headers, captions, call-to-action text/buttons
 - ⦿ Targeting: different target audiences or audience settings in the platform
2. **Hold all other variables constant – including the timing**
3. **Determine the “winner” and put the rest of the budget behind it**
 - ⦿ A/B Testing can be compounded to test multiple variables: A vs. B and C vs. D. Then pit the winners against one another

A/B Testing – Evaluating the Results

- ⦿ **Actions or Results:** Which ad drove more traffic to the site, more impressions, more video views, more conversions, etc?
- ⦿ **CTR:** Click Through Rate – Measured in %. The higher, the better! This is very helpful in comparing ads' performance
- ⦿ **“Cost Per...” Metrics:** Measured in \$. The lower, the better! Determine what each is worth to your organization, if possible. For-profit advertisements can do this easily using their costs and profit, but it's often harder with non-profits. Can you answer the question: “how much are you willing to spend for a new visitor to your site?” When working towards donations or event attendees or tickets sold, this math can be easier.
- ⦿ Sometimes there will be no clear winner. This could indicate that the variables are too similar?

KPI Expectations

KPI averages and expectations can be helpful, but you will need to find and set your own benchmarks. The

following are goals we've set for ourselves, but your results may be higher than these and that's okay! Keep working to refine and reduce your costs per conversion. Also, depending on the audience, expectations should shift as more "valuable" consumers and targets will be somewhat more expensive.

- ⦿ **CPC** - Anything below \$1 is great! Below \$3 is a good start but try to glower!
- ⦿ **CPM** - These #s should be much higher. Lower than \$10 is good
- ⦿ **CTR** - Should be used to compare your tests. The higher, the better, but above 1% is a good starting goal
- ⦿ Use Google Analytics to evaluate the quality of your ads' resulting website traffic

SETTING UP YOUR FIRST SOCIAL ADS

Advertising Process

1. **Have a Great Marketing Plan!**
2. **Set the Budget \$100 to \$300+**
3. **Plan the Campaign**
 1. Set Goals and Concepts
 2. Set Targeting
 3. Organize and Set Campaign Schedule
4. **Develop Creative**
5. **Set Up Test**
6. **Invest!**

1. Have a Great Marketing Plan!

Your marketing plan should do all the lifting for you when deciding what content to promote, the messaging and tactics to test and the overall tone, creative and theme of your ads. Your advertising goals should flow directly from this plan and interact and inform your non-paid strategies.

2. Set the Budget

- ⦿ Start with a small portion of your budget for testing the targeting and/or creative.
- ⦿ Ideally, spend from at least \$100 t\$300+ per platform (depending on budget) to conduct a statistically relevant test
- ⦿ Keep in mind the minimum daily spend requirements
 - Most platforms have a minimum daily spend required. For instance, Facebook and Instagram's minimum is \$40/day
- ⦿ Reserve the lion's share of your budget for the winner of the A/B test

3. Plan the Campaign

1. Set Goals and Concepts

- ⊙ Use the goals covered above to determine the type of ads and creative to use
- ⊙ Pick a Conceptual Framework to serve as the basis of your ads' creative.
 - What is the brand or subject's value proposition?
 - What's most important?
 - What's the most engaging/enticing/powerful content (text and/or image) related to the brand or subject matter?
 - What would get your audience to want to know more?

2. Set Targeting

Audience Targeting

- ⊙ Social Media's audience targeting is the MAIN REASON to use social advertising. It's scary ... but effective!
- ⊙ Use your goals and marketing plan to determine the types of audiences that you want to target
 - For your first campaign, start out targeting the people who are likely to agree with your position and click!
 - Once you have an idea of ROI, then try for reach audiences
- ⊙ Get in the platforms and play around!

Audience Targeting Examples

- ⊙ Target Audiences
 1. People who care about buying sustainable food
 2. Wealthier food purchasers who consider themselves foodies
 3. Rural people in Iowa who most likely support Big Meat
- ⊙ Targeting Examples in a Platform – use generalizations!
 1. English speakers in the US who are interested in the terms “farmers’ markets,” “organic food,” or the brand Whole Foods
 2. People **in** the US who are looking to buy a house **and also** are interested in the term “foodie” **and also** follow the brands Food 52, Bon Appetit **or** Goop
 3. English speakers **in** Iowa **but not** the cities who follow the brands Hormel, Perdue **or** Oscar Mayer
- ⊙ Audience size: “And” decreases audience size | “Or” increases it

Audience Targeting

Each platform is different, but all share these elements:

- ⊙ **Interest-based targeting** – the terms, keywords, media or brands that a person engages with, shares, mentions or even just views occasionally

- ⦿ **Behavior-based targeting** – the societal, economic or product-related qualities that a platform has deduced about its users
- ⦿ **Demographics**
- ⦿ **Location**
- ⦿ **Language**
- ⦿ **Specific accounts' audiences** (your account or another's)
- ⦿ **Technology used**

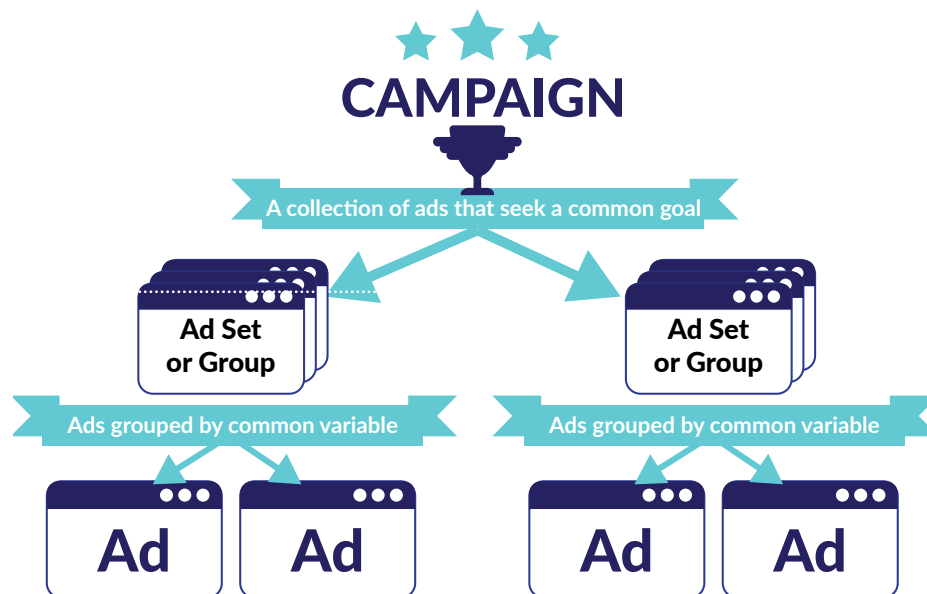
3. Organize and Set the Campaign Schedule

Campaign Schedule

- ⦿ Determine the testing structure and set a schedule for your campaign in advance of spending any money. Plan out...
 - What variables to test
 - How long to test and when to decide the winner
 - How long to run the winner
- ⦿ Then, split up your budget across your schedule and adjust as necessary to meet daily minimum spend requirements

Campaign Organization

The following organizational structure is used by each social advertising platform and most digital ad platforms in general. It allows for organized testing and can expand with additional ad sets/groups.



For your first campaign, choose one variable to A/B test.

We suggest testing the platform's targeting settings to get a feel for them. For the creative, use a successful piece of organic content.

4. Develop Creative



Using your conceptual framework, the requirements of the type of ad you'll be running and what you've learned from past ads to create the images and text to use in your ads. Use your schedule to plan out what elements to test and develop these variations. Be prepared to be flexible! It's likely you may not find the idea image for your conceptual framework – this is another roadblock that testing can overcome.

5. Set Up Test

Follow the testing best practices above to try out a few tests and measure those results. Be clear-eyed about your results and keep in mind that test's outcomes may not always be conclusive. You're testing one variable on one platform for one platform's audience targeting settings. Repetitive testing will help you form a clearer and clearer picture of what to expect in the future.

A quick note about Payment Structures and Bids, etc: Stick with paying per impression at first as opposed to paying per click. You may end up spending money too quickly with PPC until you're very familiar with what to expect.

6. Invest!

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

- ◉ Guides
 - HubSpot publishes [useful guides](#)
(though you may need to provide your email to get access)
 - [Hootsuite's Guide](#)
- ◉ [Design ads using Canva](#) or other similar free graphics tools.
- ◉ [M+R Benchmarks Study](#)
- ◉ Sprout Social – [Guide to Social Graphic Dimensions](#)



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