Over the years we have dedicated a huge amount of time to ensure that visitors to our site understand the importance of paid media and paid search (PPC). One of the topics that we often cover is retargeting, where we bridge the knowledge gap and help brands understand where their customers come from and the conversion process that they follow.

We'd all like to think that every user follows a straight path to making a purchase or requesting a quote for example, in truth this isn't always the case and some leads need nurturing in a different way to get them to the point of conversion.

In an ideal world someone would visit your site, fill out a form, show interest in talking with a sales rep, who then makes a call and they become a customer.

Hubspot says however, that it isn't like that. Their research shows that: "The buyer's journey is probably not so linear. People pop over to your website then leave. Two months later, they discover your latest blog article, and then decide to download that ebook.
"A few days after that, they decide to check out another blog post. Maybe a week later they decide to get in touch with Sales, and it takes several more weeks of meetings and discussions to come to a decision to buy. Same end result, but the process is a little more convoluted."

All of this means that businesses want to streamline their processes to ensure the quickest possible conversion rate for their customers and potential customers. This process is also important for businesses that want to make multiple conversions from the same customer and make sure their audience is engaged continually.

Below we'll introduce the two main ways that you go about retargeting and how to make sure it works for you. We'll give a step-by-step guide to the process and highlight things you can implement immediately.

WHAT IS 'REMARKETING'

Remarketing, as a process, is the use of cookies to track a consumer's progress through your site with the intention of using this data to inform how you advertise to this specific consumer in the future. Or, as Google put it themselves:

Remarketing helps you to reach people who have visited your website or used your app. Previous visitors or users can see your ads as they browse websites that are part of the Google Display Network, or as they search for terms related to your products or services on Google.
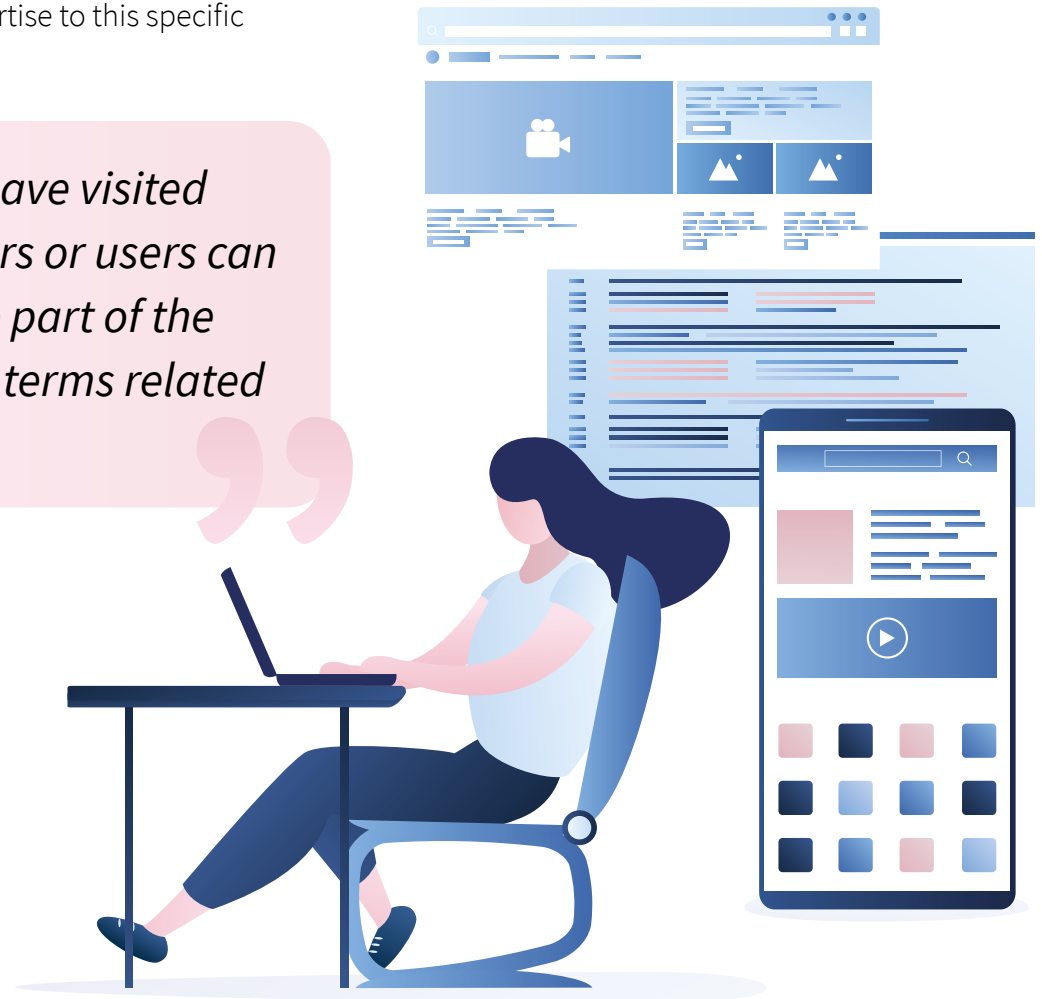
HOW RETARGETING CAMPAIGNS WORK

There are two main types of retargeting: pixel-based (cookies) and list-based. The way each works is slightly different, and each has different advantages based on your campaign goals.

PIXEL-BASED RETARGETING

Pixel-based retargeting is a way to re-display your material to any anonymous site visitor.

This is probably the most common type of retargeting. When someone comes to your website, an unobtrusive piece of JavaScript (often referred to as a pixel) is placed on their browser -- making their browser "cookied."

When they leave your site to surf the web, that cookie notifies retargeting platforms to serve specific ads based on the specific pages they visited on your website.
This type of retargeting has pros and cons. It is fast as the retargeting happens almost immediately, the downside is that there are fewer people actually being target as a result of this method.

LIST-BASED RETARGETING

List-based retargeting works after you already have someone's contact information in your database.

The way that works is you upload a list of the email addresses to a retargeting campaign, often on social media, and the platform will identify users on that network who have those addresses and serve retargeting ads just to them.

This is by far the least common of the two types of retargeting, but the variables you can control and the fact that you build the lists means that you are able to customise nearly every aspect of them and have total control.

The graphic on the next page will highlight the steps taken to ensure that your process is streamlined and your site is optimised to gain the most conversions.

1. SITE VISIT

In order for remarketing to work, your consumer must visit your site for the data collection to begin.

2. COOKIE TAGGING

Once your consumer has arrived at your site, they are 'tagged' with a cookie.

3. AUDIENCE LISTS

These cookies track progress through your site, seeing where consumers go, what they look at, whether or not they make a purchase. These actions can be organised into lists by behaviour types.

4. ANALYSE

These lists are then analysed for historic performance, to establish expectations.
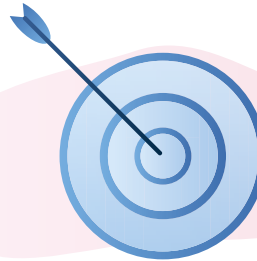
5. TARGETING

Once your analysis is completed, you can then begin to choose how best to target consumers - maximum bids, frequency capping etc.

6. AD CREATION

By this point, you will know a substantial amount about what your visitors are interested in and what point in the buying cycle they're at, this is then distilled into ad creation (see our blog on writing effective ad copy).
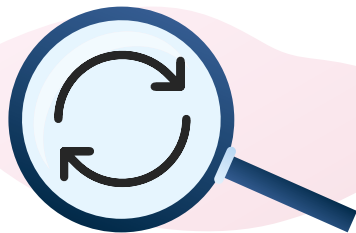
7. RE-ANALYSE

As you would expect, once the ads are set live, there must follow a second period of analysis in order to establish whether your initial estimates were, or were not correct, this is an important part of any data-driven strategy.
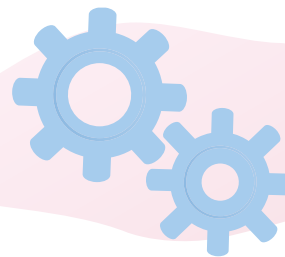
8. OPTIMISE

Using the data gathered during the analysis of the live campaign and knowledge of subsequent site visits, the ads and campaign can be tweaked to improve future results.
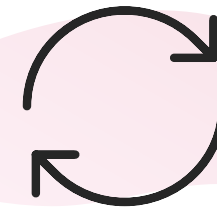
9. REPEAT

For the best results, this must be an organic process, and analysis and optimisation must be ongoing. Though it may require less attention less regularly as a campaign develops, results should never be taken for granted.

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ABOUT US

Click Consult is a multi award-winning digital and search marketing agency with a focus on organic (SEO) and paid search (PPC). Part of global consumer brand business Ceuta Group, we have a team of 70-plus specialists and a portfolio of more than 60 clients worldwide.

Our complementary services include content marketing, outreach, social media, conversion rate optimisation (CRO) and international/multilingual search marketing. We can also offer training and consultation to support your teams or existing strategy.

Click was named Organic Search (SEO) Team of the Year 2020, adding to our long list of other awards and accolades, and also ranks within Econsultancy's 'Top 100 Digital Agencies', and Prolific North's 'Top 50 Digital Agencies'. We're also a Google Premier Partner, a Bing Select Partner and feature in The Drum Recommends.

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