



PAID SOCIAL FOR LEAD GENERATION



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PAID SOCIAL LEAD GENERATION

When it comes to growing a business online there are many avenues that you can go down. Of course every business has a different set of key performance indicators (KPIs) with which they work, but the ultimate goal is always to increase the return on investment. For many businesses lead generation is the best way to do this.

Like we have alluded to above there are also many ways to do this. In the last few years there has been a rise in the number of brands taking up paid social as part of their lead generation strategy.

The effort you put into social is multiplied far more than with other channels and it allows you the opportunity to connect and grow your audience faster than other, more technical, aspects of search and digital marketing.

Understanding the benefits of social media to your business, and devising and executing the perfect strategy could be the difference between success and failure-helping you stand out in a busy market.

Without question, businesses can increase the reach of their paid advertising, or give their social media campaigns a boost, by adding paid social to their strategy.

More brands than ever are leveraging Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn to promote their attention grabbing campaigns, share their stories and build a rapport with their customers and prospects.

At the same time as brands choosing this model, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and LinkedIn are all developing their paid platforms to allow advertisers the chance to better achieve their marketing goals. It goes without saying, therefore, that the perfect time to invest in paid social is now. The market is continually growing and evolving, with better ways to target users and more enticing ways to place ads in front of the right people.

This eBook will look at paid social, the benefits and what can be implemented to make sure that there is a positive upturn of lead generation.

WHAT IS PAID SOCIAL?

Encompassing paid ads and sponsored or promoted posts that appear on social networking platforms, social media advertising can be used to send traffic to your profile pages or website and are often used to create an initial buzz around content or to generate awareness of a brand or product.

The best social strategies require you to make a connection with your target audience, and paid social allows you to improve your reach to a new, untapped user base – or to strengthen the bond with your current audience.

WHAT IS LEAD GENERATION?

A lead is any person who indicates interest in a company's product or service in some way, shape, or form. Lead generation therefore is the process of attracting prospects to your business and increasing their interest through nurturing, all with the end goal of converting them into a customer. Some ways to generate leads are through job applications, blog posts, coupons, live events, and online content.

Leads typically hear from a business or organisation after opening communication (by submitting personal information for an offer, trial, or subscription). For the purposes of this eBook we'll be looking at those interactions that occur through social channels.

According to Hubspot there are 4 common types of lead:

Marketing Qualified Lead (MQL)

Marketing qualified leads are contacts who've engaged with your marketing team's efforts but aren't ready to receive a sales call. An example of an MQL is a contact who fills out a landing page form for an offer (like in our lead generation process scenario below).

Sales Qualified Lead (SQL)

Sales qualified leads are contacts who've taken actions that expressly indicate their interest in becoming a paying customer. An example of an SQL is a contact who fills out a form to ask a question about your product or service.

Product Qualified Lead (PQL)

Product qualified leads are contacts who've used your product and taken actions that indicate interest in becoming a paying customer. PQLs typically exist for companies who offer a product trial or a free or limited version of their product (like HubSpot!) with options to upgrade, which is where your sales team comes in. An example of a PQL is a customer who uses your free version but engages or asks about features that are only available upon payment.

Service Qualified Lead

Service qualified leads are contacts or customers who've indicated to your service team that they're interested in becoming a paying customer. An example of a service qualified lead is a customer who tells their customer service representative that they'd like to upgrade their product subscription; at this time, the customer service representative would up-level this customer to the appropriate sales team or representative.



PICKING THE RIGHT CHANNELS

As always with social media, the first things to consider are your audience and the channels they use.

However the considerations that businesses have to make around social media are not only about the correct platform but also on the correct posting strategy.

Regardless of the size of your team, you should be able to build a plan that will communicate directly with those you are targeting and include your existing customers in terms of the latest developments, products, or services that you offer.

With so many different platforms to choose from it can be a real maze, and one of the other

considerations you have to make is the size of the team that will be in charge of your social media and how they are going to target customers on a regular basis. Here are some of the questions that you should be asking when it comes to picking channels for your paid social strategy:

- Does this channel already perform well organically?
- Does the channel's demographic match the brand's target?
- Do direct competitors target users on this network?
- Is your target audience consistently engaging on the platform?
- Does your ad format (text, photo, video, GIF, etc.) fit the platform?

It really is all about your audience where social media is concerned, and if you are finding a channel with which your customers resonate then success will surely come.

WHICH CHANNEL TO USE?

When it comes to picking a channel to use there are a few different options and in truth it all depends on your audience. Who are you targeting and where do they spend more of their time? We won't go into social personas in this eBook but you can find out more in our other social resources. Below we'll look at some of the platforms, their scale and the benefits of using them for lead generation.

FACEBOOK/INSTAGRAM

With nearly 2 billion registered users, Facebook has the largest potential audience of any social media platform. Your competition is almost certainly there already, with more than 30 million business pages on the site.

There are, on average, five new profiles created every second, meaning that the Facebook audience does not face the stagnation in growth of some other platforms. Efforts to maintain growing profitability mean that ad targeting, placement and campaign management options are good – arguably the most developed of all the social platforms.

As the owner of Instagram, this is another positive. The huge reach and a cross channel model can deliver great results for paid social campaigns.

Targeting on Instagram, the photo and video sharing platform, is the same as for Facebook's ad network (as it's owned by Facebook). Instagram's ads are very much creative-led, and aimed at allowing businesses to 'share their stories' with the options of photo, video (up to 30 seconds) and carousel ads.

This platform is ideal for brands who want to showcase their creatives, even just simple photography, particularly if they fit within one of the massively popular Topics, such as fitness, food, fashion or make-up.

For those who want to focus on brand growth and awareness, this can be indispensable. Instagram ads feature action-oriented buttons that appear below the image: Learn More, Shop Now, Install Now, and Sign Up.

In terms of ads themselves, Facebook offers many creative options, including:

- Instagram ads - a fantastic cross-platform opportunity for brands, with Instagram targeted as part of Facebook's ad network.
- Carousel ads, with the option to show up to five product images - a great choice for eCommerce websites (example shown below).
- Lead ads, which have great potential as a remarketing tool for previous non-converters.
- Dynamic product ads - similar to Google Shopping ads, allowing brands to upload a feed to Facebook to showcase their products.
- Canvas ads, which are specifically targeted to mobile devices.

You can also use Facebook to promote your branded content using video (it's often credited as a main driver of video content's proliferation), as well as drive users to apps and websites.

Other advantages of advertising on Facebook are that it allows advanced targeting for devices (for even greater audience segmentation), and allows for ad scheduling option (convenient and timesaving).



TWITTER

One of the advantages of Twitter ads is the ability to target audiences very precisely.

Twitter allows geo and language-targeting, which means you can promote your content in specific local markets.

A similar approach can be taken to verticals, by targeting a core list of thought leaders using their hashtag.

You can choose from a range of campaign options based on your objectives:

- Follower campaigns - aimed at boosting follower growth, which is beneficial for new accounts looking to build their social presence and/or further establish their brand. They can also be used to drive purchases, leads, downloads, and signups; increase brand awareness and word of mouth sharing; and drive web traffic.
- Awareness campaigns: These maximise the reach of your ads and help expose them to as many people as possible.
- Tweet engagement campaigns - allow you to start conversations and engage with your audience. You can promote Tweets that are published organically or create Tweets that are only promoted to the audiences you target and only pay when users you target engage with your content.
- Click/conversion campaigns – optimised to drive traffic and generate website conversion to a specific group of users. A ‘website card’ is featured in the Tweet, giving users more context about your site and you only pay per website click.

PINTEREST

The online image sharing and curation site positions itself as a platform for online search as much as a social networking site, allowing brands to align their content with relevant search terms as well as user interests.

People come to Pinterest seeking ideas and inspiration (most often related to DIY, recipe and home décor), rather than to network with friends, and that makes it an ideal place for your brand to showcase its products and services via Promoted Pins.

As three quarters of content posted on Pinterest comes from businesses, it's more likely you'll attract more qualified clicks and engagement than on other social networks.

According to Pinterest, Promoted Pins drive 77% more online conversions than other social platforms. Promoted Pins take the same format as organic content, in that their success is visually-led and rely on creativity, and are signposted as paid-for (as in the example below).

The platform has a global user base of 100 million, with Britons alone pinning up to 1.6 billion items per day. The majority of users are female, although the male audience is steadily growing.

There are a variety of format choices for Promoted Pins, based on an advertiser's specific objectives:

- Building brand awareness

Your Promote Pin gets to be seen in the most visible areas of Pinterest. Charged per 1,000 impressions.

- Boosting engagement

Tracks your audience's signals of intent. Charge per engagement.

- Driving traffic to your website

This sends a motivated audience to your website. Charged by clicks to your website.

- Increasing installs for your app. Drives downloads directly from Pinterest.

The foundation of Pinterest ad targeting is by:

- Keywords. This means your Promoted Pin will show in in targeted users' search results and 'related pins'.
- Topics (previously known as 'interests'). This shows your Promoted Pins to users based

on what they've saved and engaged with, and they show up in users' home feeds.

This also includes topic subsets, eg, if you target Weddings, you can also refine by Flowers, Table Favours, Churches etc. You can also target by location, language, device and gender.

LINKEDIN

LinkedIn has a much smaller audience than Twitter and Facebook and it focuses on business connections, so is a good choice for B2B marketers.

While it lacks the integration of professional bid management platforms, it allows very precise targeting reach. You can target by job title, employer, role, skills, and interests. Another advantage is that user profiles usually contain very detailed and up-to-date information compared with what people are likely to list about themselves on other social networking sites.

Another valuable aspect of a LinkedIn campaign is the ability to turn on 'lead collection', which allows users to send you their contact info and ask to be contacted. It's similar to a contact form approach, but due to its tight integration with the platform, it's simple for the user and has a more secure feel to it.

While some of the targeting options on this platform are very similar to Facebook and Twitter (target by age, friends, company, etc.), LinkedIn allows you to get even more granular, as you can target people by job title, employer, industry, and even skills/interests. Usefully, as you pick your targeting options, a preview screen shows the possible reach.



Text ads

- Allow you to advertise to decision-makers across companies, target potential consumers on desktop devices across LinkedIn.com, and drive leads.
- Consist of a headline (25 characters), description (75 characters) and optional image.
- Can be set to cost per click (CPC) or cost per impression (CPM).
- May appear on homepage, profile page, search results page, Groups pages, LinkedIn inbox, People You May Know page, Who's Viewed My Profile page. Example of a text ad appearing in a homepage

Example of a text ad appearing in search results:

Sponsored content

- A type of native advertising that can appear either directly in the LinkedIn feeds of a targeted audience, or via personalised messages on LinkedIn Messenger (Sponsored InMail).
- Can include rich media to stand out in the feed.
- Allow you to collect leads using pre-filled lead gen forms.
- Allow you to test and optimise campaigns in real time.
- Can be set to cost per click (CPC) or cost per impression (CPM).

BENEFITS OF PAID SOCIAL

Paid social advertising is ideal for increasing your brand's visibility and winning over users with your brand's voice and personality. The best social strategies require you to make a connection with your target audience, and paid social allows you to further that reach to a new untapped user base, or to strengthen the bond with your current audience.

Brands must review their overall business objectives and marketing strategy to determine the best methods to reach and engage with relevant users, whether it is via B2B, B2C or a combination of both.

Using business and industry data such as Facebook Audience Insight, Twitter Insights and Hootsuite, it is possible to match an audience profile with the targeting options available to increase the relevancy, ensuring that paid social budget is maximised to hit KPIs.

Understanding and tracking conversions

Are people doing what you want them to do when they get to your site

from social? You – and your stakeholders – are likely to find the data from GA's Conversions Report the most valuable in terms of how your social activity and investment in translating into tangible action, such as spending money or becoming a lead.

To view conversion data, you need to tell Analytics what actions on your site you consider a conversion to be by setting up Goals in GA. You also have the option to assign a monetary value to each goal if you want GA to calculate the value of your social conversions (represented as a circular diagram - see below), or have eCommerce tracking set up.

META DESCRIPTION

The Acquisition>Social>Overview report gives you a snapshot of your conversions:

Conversions

The total number of conversions that took place on your site in this time period. Contributed social conversions. Conversions that social media helped with. In other words, these visitors came to your site from social media at least once, but may have used another traffic source before converting.

An example is if someone clicks on a link in Facebook and visits your site to read a blog, but leaves before converting (for example, downloading a guide). Then that person returns a few days later, this time not directly from social media and makes the download – this would be counted as a Contributed Social Conversion.

Last interaction social conversions.

These are all the conversions that were produced directly from a social traffic source. These visitors came to you from social media and completed one of your goals within the same visit.

To assign credit to social media's role in conversion more accurately, go to Acquisition>Social>Conversions:

By clicking Assisted vs Last Interaction Analysis, you can see:

Assisted conversions

The number of conversions for which this channel appeared on the conversion path, but was not the final conversion interaction.

Assisted conversion value

The value of the conversions assisted by this channel (this isn't populated in the example above because no values have been assigned to the conversions in this account). Last click/direct conversions. The number of conversions for which this channel was the final conversion interaction.

Last click/direct conversion value

The value of the conversions for which this channel was the final conversion interaction (again, no values have been assigned to goals in the above example).

Assisted/last click or direct conversions

A value close to 0 indicates that this channel functioned primarily as the final conversion interaction. A value close to 1 indicates that this channel functioned equally in an assist role and as the final conversion interaction.

The more this value exceeds 1, the more this channel functions in an assist role Google Analytics shows you by default the conversion data for all of your goals. If you want to narrow it down to a specific goal or goals, go to the very top of the report and choose from the dropdown menu.

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ABOUT US

Click Consult is a multi award-winning search & digital 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, social media and analytics. We can also offer training and consultation to support your teams or existing strategy.

Click was named both SEO Agency of the Year and Organic Search (SEO) Team of the Year 2020; ranks within Econsultancy's 'Top 100 Digital Agencies', and Prolific North's 'Top 50 Digital Agencies'. We're also a Google Premier Partner, and a Microsoft Advertising Select Agency Partner.

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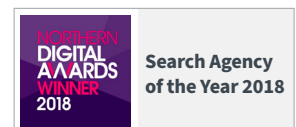
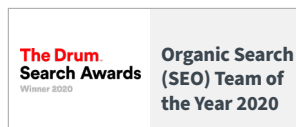
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OUR AWARDS



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