

Entry: Experian



Challenge

In order to more deeply understand the search and social cross-channel interplay, Kenshoo, Facebook, and Experian partnered to further quantify the effect of Facebook ads on paid search performance, and to explore how the ratio of Facebook to paid search ad spend impacts the magnitude of the cross-channel performance boost.

The program sought to help marketers answer the following questions:

- How much do we need to invest in Facebook advertising to trigger the added, incremental return on paid search performance?
- Is there a minimum Facebook spend needed to activate the cross-channel synergy?
- Is there an optimal spend ratio beyond which additional investment in Facebook yields diminishing returns on paid search performance?

Solution

For the purposes of this campaign, online conversion data from Experian's website was tracked to determine the impact of Facebook advertising on paid search performance. A conversion was defined as an online application for a credit report. The data did not aggregate paid search and Facebook advertising metrics, but rather was a pure analysis of paid search data collected during the campaign period.

The test was organized into four segments with similar size and other characteristics, reflecting Experian customers and prospects based on their expressed interests via digital media. The control group was exposed only to paid search advertising, while three test groups were exposed to paid search along with low, medium and high spending levels of coordinated Facebook advertising. Each segment consisted of 80 discrete ZIP codes across multiple U.S. regions to safeguard against any geographical bias.

Results

Mapping results back to the hypothesis and objective, we found:

- 1) Facebook advertising directly and positively impacts paid search performance. For the three groups exposed to Facebook advertising, paid search conversion volume increased significantly, driven by improvements in other key performance metrics. On average, Experian saw the following for the Facebook-exposed segments:
 - Total paid search conversions increased 19%
 - Paid search conversion rate increased 11%
 - Paid search cost per acquisition decreased 10%



- 2) The level of spend on Facebook advertising correlates to the effect on paid search performance
 - There is clear evidence that the cross-channel effects of Facebook advertising on paid search strengthen when the ratio of Facebook spend between the two channels rises:
 - Paid search total conversions rise along with the level of investment in Facebook advertising.
 - Paid search clicks increased by 8-12% as more consumers were exposed to higher levels of Facebook advertising.

- 3) There is a “sweet spot” for leveraging the most effective cross-channel impact
 - An “activation effect” emerged from this test between low and mid-level groups in Facebook advertising spend, but the smaller gains between mid and high-levels indicate additional spending may not yield proportionate levels of improvement.