



Thriving in a Digital World: The Top Online Advertising Channels to Help Grow Your Business



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Online advertising options have exploded, and can offer a real boost to small-medium sized businesses—helping to deliver your ad message to the right audience, at the right time, across any digital device. But with so many ad options today, how do you choose what makes sense for you? Paid search, social advertising, online display, video pre-roll, programmatic, native advertising—which are the most important marketing channels when it comes to ensuring a return on your investment?

You probably don't have the luxury of Pepsi or Nike advertising budgets (very few businesses do). Luckily, you don't need a large budget to make an impact. There are effective, cost-efficient online advertising channels with mass reach that provide incredible targeting opportunities, and allow you to narrow your focus (and spending) to reach and engage audiences that are most likely to take action.

If you want to grow your website traffic, convert leads, and drive online store sales, this guide is for you. With the information I provide, you'll be able to identify the greatest online advertising opportunities for achieving your goals.





A Closer Look at Paid Search and Paid Social



Paid search and paid social are the most effective channels for driving revenue and business growth, at a fraction of traditional advertising costs. These channels offer a low cost of entry (predominantly pay per click), rich data for accurate targeting, and, when managed properly, higher conversion rates and the lowest cost to acquire a new customers.

In an October 2015 survey by the Content Marketing Institute (CMI), Marketing Profs and TrackMaven, B2C marketers in North America said paid search (SEM in chart) was the most effective, followed by 61% of B2C content marketers who said promoted posts such as Promoted Tweets or Facebook Ads were effective.

Usage and Effectiveness* of Paid Advertising Methods According to B2C Content Marketers in North America, 2014 & 2015

% of respondents

	2014		2015	
	Usage	Effectiveness*	Usage	Effectiveness*
Search engine marketing (SEM)	63%	57%	76%	64%
Promoted posts (eg, Promoted Tweets)	59%	47%	76%	61%
Social ads (eg, LinkedIn ads)	60%	49%	74%	59%
Print or other offline promotion	71%	46%	69%	46%
Traditional online banner ads	59%	39%	65%	39%
Native advertising	38%	40%	46%	46%
Content discovery tools	19%	42%	21%	-

Note: *responses of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 1=not at all effective and 5=very effective. Source: Content Marketing Institute (CMI) and MarketingProfs, 'B2C Content Marketing: 2015 Benchmarks, Budgets and Trends - North America' sponsored by TrackMaven, Oct 14, 2015



Paid Search Advertising



Ideal for:

- Driving qualified traffic to your website
- Engaging searchers that are actively looking for your product or service
- Driving sales or online conversions

Paid search is the most common type of PPC advertising and is one of the most important online marketing channels for producing return on investment (ROI). Google AdWords is a leader in paid search, because you can get more real estate for your brand on the Google search engine results pages (SERPs).

One of the main benefits to advertising with paid search is that your desired audience is actively searching for your product or service. You pay to show up in top search engine results, increasing the likelihood that they'll purchase from you and not your competitor.



Top 4 Ways Paid Search Can Help You Grow Your Business and Make the Most of Your Ad Spend:



1. It's cost-effective

With paid search, you only pay when someone clicks on your ad. This is different than traditional advertising, where you spend a lot of money upfront and hope your target market actually engages with the ad. Paid search also allows you to prevent wasted ad spending by:

- **Setting your budget to control costs**
- **Optimizing your campaigns in real time to decrease cost-per-click (CPC) and achieve more with the same budget**
- **Controlling your budget and allocating it on keywords and audiences that are profitable**
- **Increasing your budget on campaigns that are profitable, and not on under-performing campaigns**



2. It's relevant

You can reach your desired customers at the right time with the right ad. If you want to engage someone in a specific city at a particular time of day, you can. Thanks to options such as granular location targeting and delivery options, along with device-specific preferences (like mobile or tablet), you can deliver very specific messages to your audiences at prime times when they are most likely to take action. This allows you to prevent wasted ad spend, drive quality traffic to your website, and increase conversion rates.

3. Unlike organic search, paid search can show results quickly

Let's say you've just launched a new website for your business, product, or service and want to grow your online traffic. While we know how important organic search traffic is for long-term website marketing, it sometimes takes months for site pages and blog posts to be indexed by search engines, making it slower to prove ROI. Conversely, PPC can drive traffic faster. You can start a PPC campaign on Sunday and start seeing results in terms of traffic and conversions the next day.



4. PPC data can inform your other marketing channels

Paid search campaigns provide a new layer of keyword data that can inform your other marketing efforts. PPC campaign data can quickly tell you if a particular keyword or set of keywords is converting well. You can also use PPC to test the effectiveness of different keywords so you know which to target with long term SEO.

With the information you collect through PPC, you can strengthen installs for your mobile applications and strengthen your mobile marketing. You can also use your top performing keywords to inform and enhance your offline messaging with language and words that convert.

Social Ad Effectiveness for Driving ROI According to US Brand and Agency Executives, by Platform, Sep 2015

Scoring based on A+ through F scale

Big three



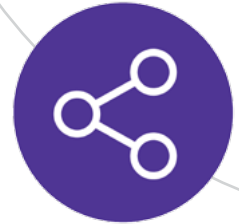
Emerging three



Note: respondents were asked "What grade would you give advertising on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Snapchat or Twitter for driving ROI?"; (1) n=28; (2) n=20; (3) n=27; (4) n=26; (5) n=22 Source: eMarketer, Oct 2015



Paid Social



Ideal for:

- Driving quality traffic to your website
- Engaging or re-engaging your audience on their preferred social networks
- Driving sales or online conversions

It's no secret that social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and Snapchat are redefining what it means to advertise on social media. Each social platform is leveraging its user data to provide unique, native and relevant advertising opportunities for businesses looking to grow. Paid social advertising is a highly effective way to expand your reach, engage your target market, and drive conversions on your website. Next to paid search, social advertising tends to be a very cost-effective means of acquiring new customers for your business.

Marketing executives agree. According to a survey of US Brand and Agency executives, Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter were rated as the top social media platforms for driving ROI.



Paid Social Uses Sophisticated Targeting Capabilities to Get Results



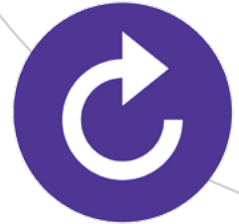
Paid social allows you to focus your budget on exactly the type of buyers that are most likely to be interested in your product or service. If managed properly, you can get your content and messages in front of the right audience at a very low cost. Most social media platforms offer granular targeting capabilities, which allow you to laser-focus your advertising to qualified and high-intent audiences. Here are just some examples of data you can use to precisely target and tailor your ads for your desired audiences:

- **Demographics** (education, gender, income)
- **Interests** (music, hobbies, events)
- **Work / Job Titles**
- **Social Connections** (who do they follow/engage with, or what do they like?)
- **Life events** (engagement, marriage, new babies, starting university, etc.)
- **And more!**



By leveraging your targeting options on social networks, you will easily engage your desired target market, drive qualified users to your website, and increase conversions—ultimately propelling growth of your business.

Bonus: Remarketing



Ideal for:

- Driving online sales and conversions
- Securing higher engagement with your brand

Remarketing (aka retargeting) advertisements target those that have already visited your website, or a specific page on your website, but did not convert. These campaigns generally involve a smaller, but more qualified online audience that is much more likely to convert. Think of remarketing as a “gentle nudge” to take action.

Remarketing in Action

Say you are looking to buy a new mattress. A quick Google search takes you to an emerging mattress company’s website. You look around, review the product, then leave the website. You’re on Facebook a few days later, and there in your news feed is a sponsored ad for the very mattress company you were just investigating—linking to user reviews of their products. If this sounds familiar, you’ve experienced remarketing.

Google has introduced Remarketing Lists for Search Ads (RLSA) which let you target people who recently visited your website, allowing you to customize the message specifically to these users.



The result? On average, users served a remarketing ad tend to convert at a 2x higher rate, as they are already familiar with your product or service. These kind of numbers make remarketing campaigns a no brainer—they're a cost effective way to drive conversions and achieve higher visitor engagement with your brand.



Stay on Top of Digital Advertising with the Right Paid Search, Social Advertising, and Remarketing Strategies

For over 17 years, I've been managing online advertising campaigns. In every instance, regardless of business, the top performing online advertising tactics always include paid search and social advertising, along with remarketing within both those channels.

If you're ready to learn more about a smart, data-driven approach to optimizing your online advertising efforts from the get-go, I can help. Simply get in touch today if you want to learn more about how online advertising can help you grow your business.



Get in touch

E b@bessy.ca

W bessy.ca

P 902.448.2377

T @bessyn