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AGENCY GUIDE TO
Social Media Advertising

What's Inside

Introduction
WHAT WE WILL COVER

This guide will give your agency information and tips on how to utilize social media advertising. We'll go over why it's important, using your social strategy for your advertisements, important parameters for setting up ads, and tracking your ads and measuring your campaign success.

The tips in this guide are meant to be suggestions and high-level guidelines to help you find successful in social media ads. We encourage you to look through our numerous social resources to help you with your other social media needs.

Don't forget, you don't have to be an expert at advertising to begin your social media advertisement journey.

The Basics

Why it's Important to use Social Media Advertising

Often referred to as paid social, social media advertising is a way to leverage social media platforms to deliver targeted advertisements to a specific audience. In a nutshell, it's all about you getting your brand and services in front of new potential customers!

It's commonplace for consumers to spend hours scrolling through their social media feeds searching for the exact content that speaks directly to their likes and dislikes.

The landscape of social media has turned from posting as frequently as possible to posting high-quality, meaningful content that connects with consumers. This has impacted the type of ad content to one where you want to catch the attention of and trigger action from your audience.

Social advertising is focused on audience targeting vs other digital advertising methods that are primarily keyword targeting.

Here are 3 key tips to remember as you navigate advertising on social media

Consistency is key! The more a consumer sees your ads and resonates with them the more likely they are to remember your brand and to become a customer.

Quality > Quantity. Don't sacrifice quality for quantity — it's better for you to post ads less often than for you to release an ad that's not valuable for the consumer.

Share Engaging Content. The more engagement your ad receives, the more likely the algorithm will send it to even more potential customers.

Organic vs. Paid Posts

While there are multiple styles of posts you can utilize in your social feeds, there are two main categories they will fall under, either organic or paid.

Organic posts are posts that have no cost and are shared directly to your feed.

Paid posts (or ads) are posts you have spent money on to have them seen by a larger or target audience.

KEY DIFFERENCES:

➥ **Control:** Paid posts offer more control over who sees your content and how it performs, while organic reach is subject to the platform's algorithm.

➥ **Reach:** Paid posts can reach a broader audience than organic posts.

➥ **Cost:** Paid posts require an investment, while organic posts are free to publish.

A successful social media strategy involves a combination of both organic and paid approaches. Organic content builds a foundation, while paid amplifies reach and drives specific actions

Key Advantages of Paid Posts on Social Media

Paid posts (or ads) deliver multiple benefits that you can utilize.

Some of the biggest benefits of paid ads include:

Gives you the opportunity to target specific audiences and to grow your ideal customer base.

Prominent placements so your targeted audience sees your ad right away and see it more frequently.

Paid posts have a different algorithm than organic posts.

A flexible budget – you can tailor and change how much you're spending on each ad.

Faster results on your social goals like website traffic or leads. You can track the results through metrics like impressions, conversions, and cost-per-click (CPC).

Retargeting interested audiences – many social platforms allow you to retarget audiences that have previously engaged with your posts – this is a great way to help guide those potential clients to your end goal.

# Using your social strategy and audience profiles to drive your advertising initiatives

Remember who you are trying to reach and what you want to tell them.

Why are you creating this ad? Are you trying to solve a problem for your intended audience? Or is your goal is to educate your audience about something new that would be valuable for them to understand.

Who's your audience or ideal customer? Who's interacting with your current posts and ads? Are they the same?

You should already know who your ideal customer/target audience is from developing your social strategy when you began posting on social media. This is a good time to see if your current posts are meeting those strategy markers and reaching the audience you were targeting. If they are, then adding ads to your social media plans can be highly beneficial.

If you're still struggling with getting your organic posts to your intended audience, then you might want to look at our "The Agency Guide to Getting Started with Social Media" to go over some tips and tricks to help.

The Agency Guide
to Getting Started with Social Media
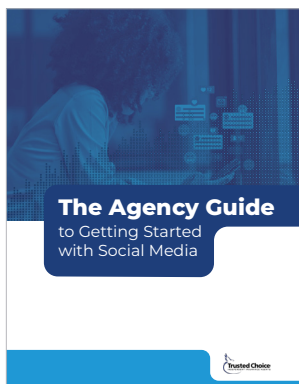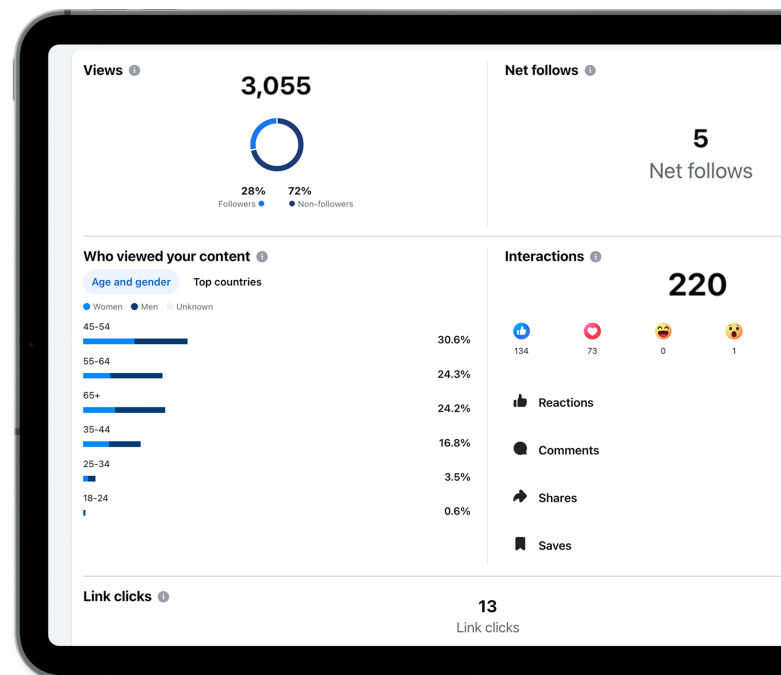
The Agency Guide to Getting Started with Social Media

GET RESOURCE

Find out who is engaging with your content.

Each platform has an analytic dashboard where you can look at the demographics of who is engaging with your content. It's important to look at how your ads are performing so you know what is working with them vs what is not. Tracking your ads analytics is the way to make sure your ads are working and bringing in the results you're looking for.

A Framework for Social Advertising

Important Parameters for Setting up Ads

When you create an ad, it's incredibly important you consider the parameters you set up. These are the guidelines that you build your ad around.

SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING PARAMETERS:

Campaign Objectives
Serves as the guiding principle that shapes every other parameter of your campaign and dictates how your ads are optimized within the platform.

Audience Targeting
Determines who sees your ad - allows you to refine your audience reach and improve ad effectiveness.
➡ Audience targeting parameters include demographics, interests, behaviors, and custom audiences (created from customer data or website visitors).

Ad Placement
Where your ad will appear within the social media platform.
➡ Social media platforms offer various ad placements (i.e. feeds, stories, reels and more). Understanding where your audiences are most active and where the ad will be most visible is crucial.

Ad creative content
The actual creative content your audience will see — visual content and text content.

Budgeting and Scheduling
Determining how much you're spending and for how long each campaign will run.
➡ Did you know the average Cost-Per-Click for someone advertising on Facebook in the Finance and Insurance industry ranges from $3.44 to $3.77 according to WordStream.

Tracking and Ad Measurements
How you can track and measure your ads to help optimize your social campaigns.

Ad Objectives and KPIs
While all parameters are important, there's one that stands out a little more than the rest: Ad Objectives and KPIs.

Defining Your Ad Objectives and Key Performance Indicators:

Your objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are the very first parameters you'll choose when setting up your ad. They are the biggest way to guarantee that your ads are successfully meeting your social ad strategy.

Objectives:
the overall goals you aim to achieve with a campaign (i.e. increasing brand awareness, generating leads, or boosting sales).

KPIs:
the benchmarks used to track progress; measurable metrics that indicate how effectively ad objectives are being met.

These parameters are intrinsically linked — KPIs should always align with your main objective.

Let's breakdown an example of objectives and KPIs when your main goal is to increase website visits.

MAIN OBJECTIVE To increase the number of people that click your ad and visit your website.

CONNECTED KPI'S These KPIs are the trackable benchmarks you will want to pay attention to:
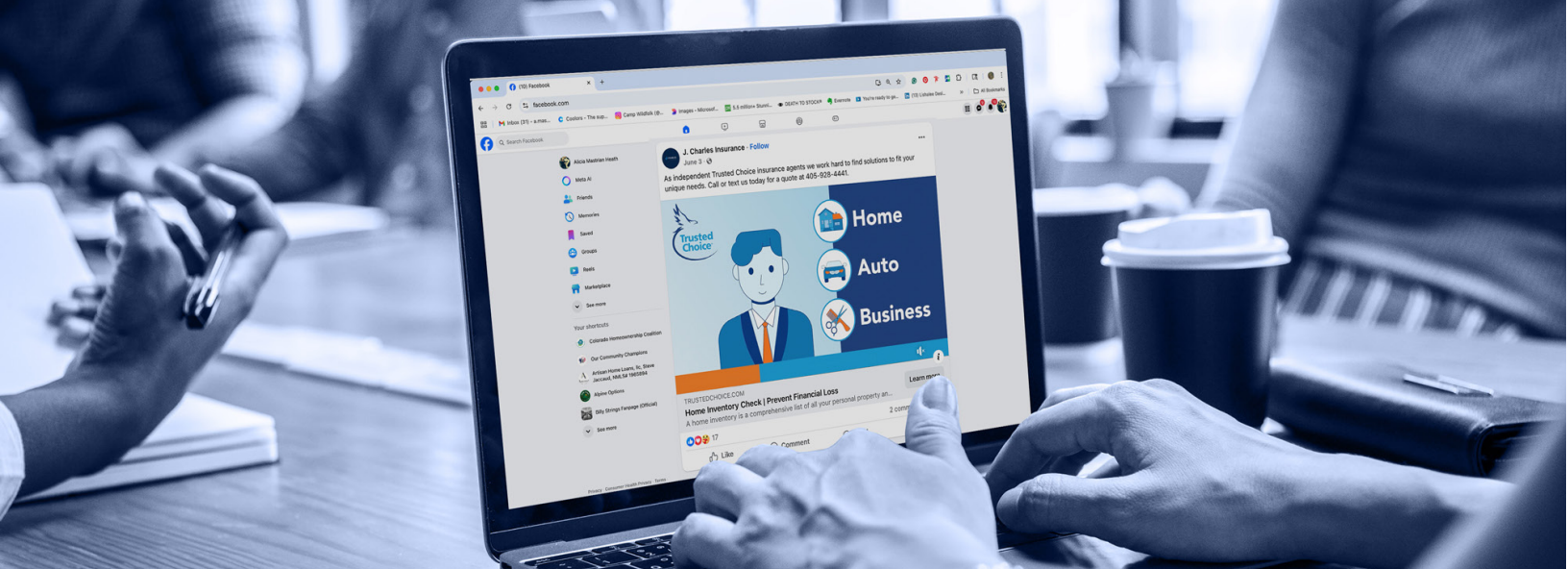
Reach   Impressions   Clicks   Cost-per-Clicks

By establishing clear ad objectives and monitoring the relevant KPIs, you can track the performance of your advertising efforts and optimize campaigns for maximum impact.

Social Ad Creation

Creating a dynamic ad takes two key steps, (1) choosing your ad format, and (2) developing ad content to fit that format

First, you need to decide which ad format you want to use.

HERE ARE THE 4 MAIN TYPES OF SOCIAL MEDIA AD FORMATS:

Image Ads

Image or graphics ads are the most basic and widely used format, appearing as a single image with accompanying text.
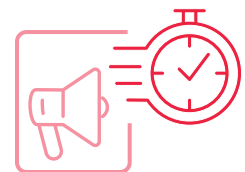
Video Ads

Video ads are highly engaging and hold attention – but the message must still be clear even when the sound is off.

Carousel Ads

Carousel ads can share multiple products or tell a story, letting users swipe through multiple images or videos within a single ad unit.

Story Ads

Story Ads are short-lived, full-screen ads that appear within the "Story" feature of social media platforms and typically last 24 hours.

Each social platform will have a few other types of ad formats to choose from, it all depends on what type of media and formats they support.

Once you decide on the ad format you are going to be utilizing on you can then develop the ad content that best fits that format.

Design Parameters

Follow these design guidelines when developing visual content and text content for your ads:
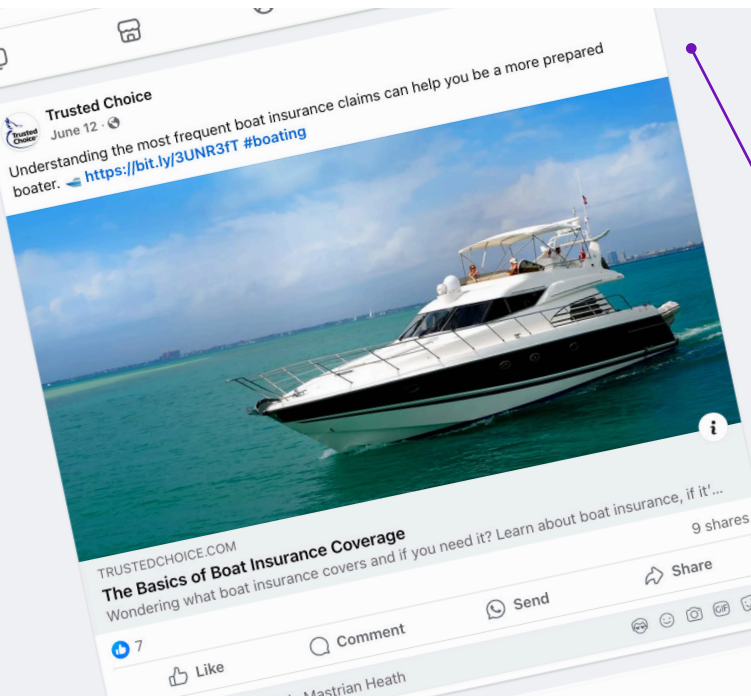

Visual Content (GRAPHICS, IMAGES, OR VIDEOS)

➡ High-resolution imagery that is easy-to-understand, clear, and eye catching.

➡ For videos the message should be understood without sound, many social media users scroll without sound.

➡ Match the size of the piece of content to the placement it's going to be used in, *e.g., a 1:1 ratio for a square feed and a 9:16 ratio for vertical videos.*

➡ Brand colors are a good way to maintain continuity in graphics and videos.

Your imagery needs to match what your text is talking about, if you want to talk about boat insurance, then choose a boat or other relevant imagery that speaks to your message.

Text Content

➡ Text content should be concise and easy-to-understand, e.g., having less than 15 words on a 1:1 ratio graphic

➡ Ensure the text is legible on the graphic –choosing an easy-to-read font and ensuring the text color stands out from the background color or background image.
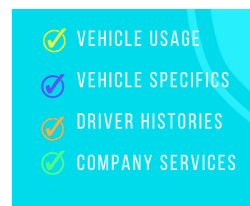
➡ Use the caption or description to provide more detail vs. trying to fit everything you want to say on the graphic

➡ For videos you need at least 2 to 3 seconds for people to read around 15 words of text

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Example Ads

Let's take a look at an example of a successful ad graphic and compare it with a poorly designed ad graphic.

4 FACTORS THAT AFFECT COST OF
COMMERCIAL AUTO INSURANCE

✓ VEHICLE USAGE
✓ VEHICLE SPECIFICS
✓ DRIVER HISTORIES
✓ COMPANY SERVICES

Here are the things right with this ad graphic:

➤ Simple color scheme
➤ Easily visible headline
➤ Efficient use of space
➤ Clear images
➤ Complimentary fonts
➤ Margins are aligned

Here are the things wrong with this ad graphic:

✖ Broad range of colors
✖ Poorly visible headline
✖ Poorly contrasting colors
✖ Empty Space (bottom right of green)
✖ Stretched/Warped images
✖ Uncomplimentary fonts and too many fonts
✖ Misaligned margins

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Call to Action (CTAs)

A crucial element to a successful ad is having a direct action you're asking your audience to complete, this is called a Call-to-Action (CTA). A CTA is what helps connect the audience's interest and your ad goals. If you don't use a CTA, it can leave your audience feeling unsure of what they do next.

3 key reasons why you should always use a CTA:

1. Guides users, helping them take the action you desire

2. Drives your social ad campaign objectives

3. Measures your ads performance; the CTAs are linked to trackable clicks and conversions

Here are some key markers of a good CTA:

- Strong action-oriented verbs
- Concise and clear
- Related to the message of the ad
- Creates urgency
- Visually distinct

You've seen a lot of common CTAs on social media, and while the exact option may vary slightly depending on the platform, they are similar. When figuring out which CTA fits your ad the best it's important to have your ad objective front and center.

Let's go over some common CTAs and their objectives.

Show/Buy Now   **Objective:** Conversion for Sales

Learn More   **Objective:** Traffic, Engagement, or Awareness

Sign Up   **Objective:** Lead Generation, Conversions

Contact Us   **Objective:** Lead Generation, Messages

Get Quote   **Objective:** Lead Generation

The CTA is more than just a button for you to add to your ads, it's an important way to give your passive audience viewers into becoming active customers.

CTA Tip! Create a unique URL or identifier for your CTAs so you can easily track where your new leads are coming from

ALL ABOUT
Facebook Boosted Posts and Ads

The Difference Between Boosted Posts & Ads on Facebook

The main difference between the two advertisements styles is the focus and how much control you would like over the objectives. You can think of them as the boosted posts being the "faster" of the two options vs the ads you create in the Ads Manager have more "depth" to them. Each style has its own time and place in a social media advertisement strategy.

Boosted posts are for when you want to turn an already existing post into an ad. You can focus on website clicks, page engagement, and local business promotions.

Full ads in the Ads Manager are when you want to choose objectives like leads, app promotion, and sales. On Facebook you can only do campaign creation, budget settings and performance metrics in Ads Manager.

The parent company of Facebook, Meta, also owns Instagram so you can also make your boosted posts and ads show on Instagram.

Did you know Facebook is the top social media platform for social media advertising?

Steps to Boosting a Post

1. Select your previously shared organic post that you would like to boost.

2. Click 'Boost Post'

3. Select the correct 'Ad account'

4. Set your goal

5. Verify Ad text

6. Set your 'Button label' and 'website URL' to be aligned with your goal or main objective

7. Create your 'Audience' group based off your objective plus your ideal audience

8. Set your 'Duration' for how long you want to run the ad and your daily budget for the ad.

9. Select "Placements" of where you would like Meta to place the boosted post

10. Add or select the payment method

11. Click publish

What happens next?

Facebook/Meta will review your boosted post to make sure it follows their guidelines. When your boosted post gets published, or if it doesn't follow their guidelines, you will be notified within a few hours to a day.
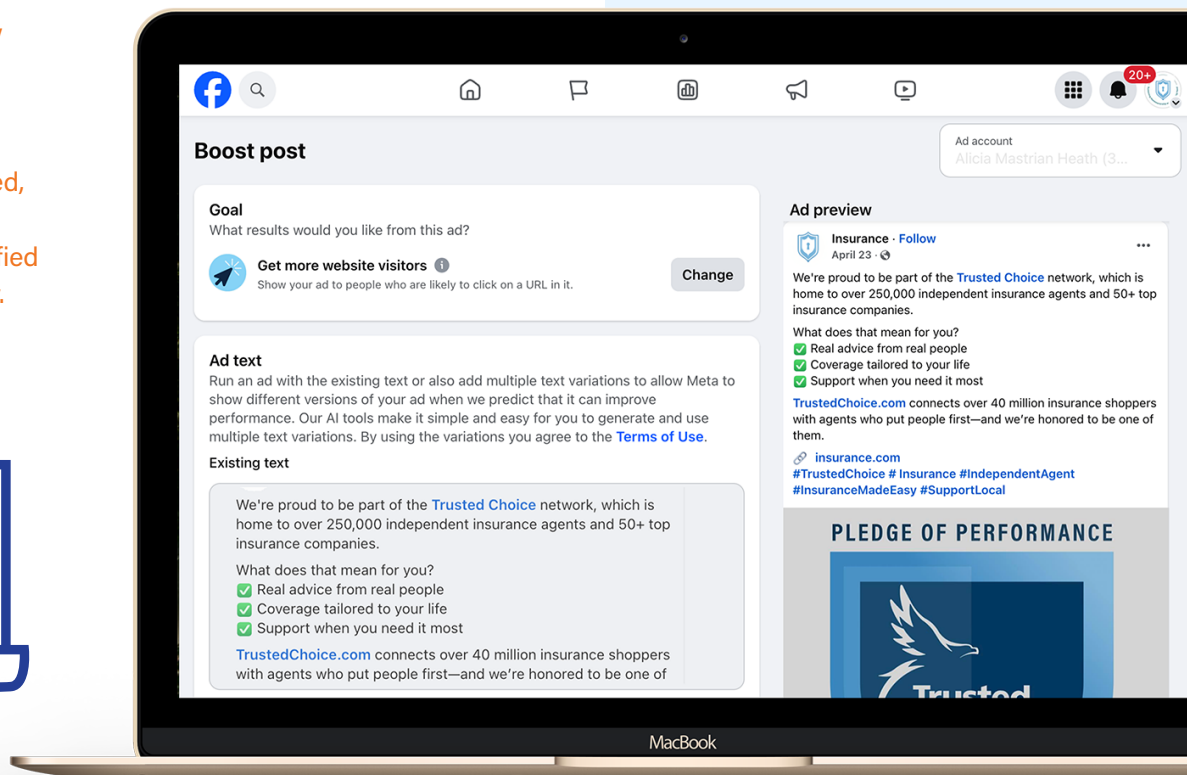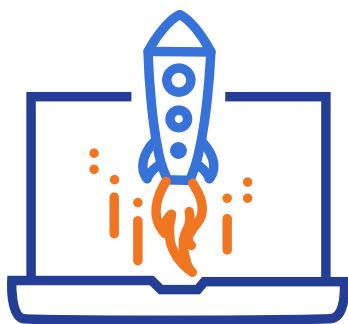
Steps to Creating an Ad

1. Go to Meta Business Suite > Ads > Create Ad

2. Choose a goal for your ad

3. Select the correct "Ad Account"

4. Upload or select your 'Ad Creative' (image graphic, video, etc.) and add your 'Ad text'

5. Set your 'Button label', and 'website URL' to be aligned with your goal or main objective

6. Create your "Audience" group based off your objective plus your ideal audience

7. Set your "Duration" for how long you want to run the ad, plus your budget.

8. Select "Placements" of where you would like Meta to place the boosted post

9. Add or select the payment information you would like to include

10. Click publish

Ad Tip! Make sure you always look at the projected 'Estimated daily results' on the right side under the 'Ad preview.' This is a good marker to compare your end results to.

Estimated daily results

Accounts Center accounts reached ⓘ   9.3K - 27K
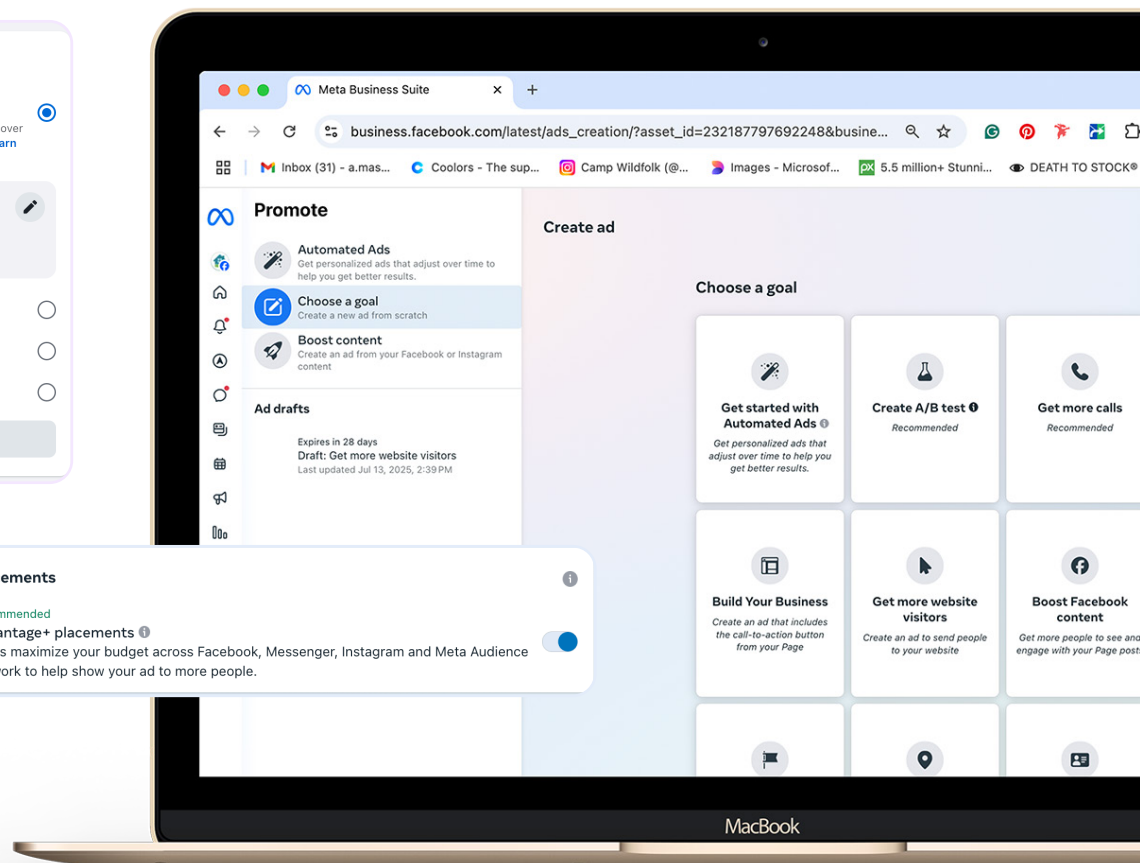
Ad Tracking and Measuring Success

Measuring your ads performance is important for your overall strategy. Learning what is working for you and what isn't is a big piece for evaluating your ads and their outcomes. In today's world, ad performance is what guides optimization, justifies budgets, and is what ultimately drives growth.

Each social platform has its own analytic or reporting dashboard that offers your first-party data on your ad performance. These tools are great ways to monitor and make real-time decisions within the platform.

Here are some of the top measurements you're going to want to pay attention to from the social platform:

Paid Reach: amount of people who saw the ad

Cost Per Action: the total cost divided by the total actions

Cost Per Click: the total cost divided by total clicks

**Conversion Rate:** the number of bookings or calls divided by total number of clicks
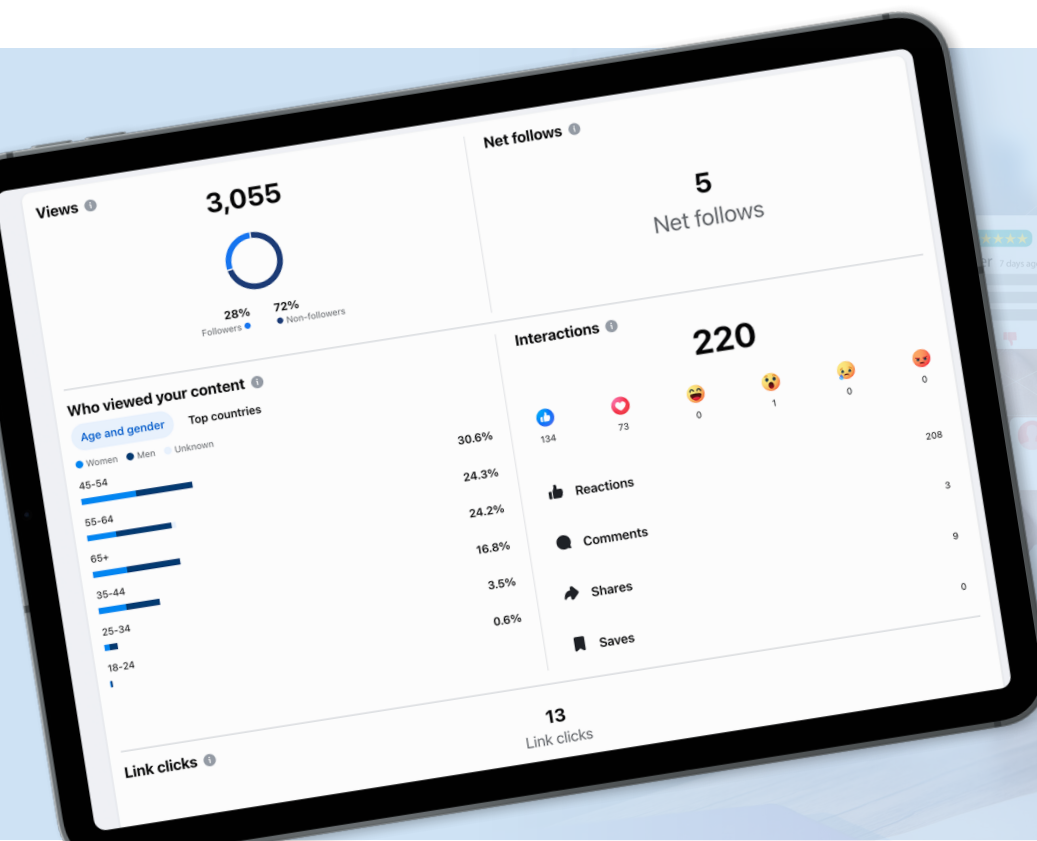
See insights and ads

When you're looking at all your ad analytics it's important to keep your objectives in mind and if you're seeing success downstream. In advertising for insurance, the importance of leads and acquisitions are paramount so being able to convert the results given to you to the results that are most meaningful to you are important. These could be the Cost Per Lead (CPL), Cost Per Acquisition (CPA), and Return on Ad Spend (ROAS). The CPL and CPA are similar to the conversion rate that may be provided by the social platform, but the formulas are different.

While the CPL and the CPA are similar it's important to generate both to have a holistic view of your ads and their effectiveness.

TIP! Remember to always include any design costs in developing the ad materials in your Total Ad Spend and your Total Cost of Campaign.
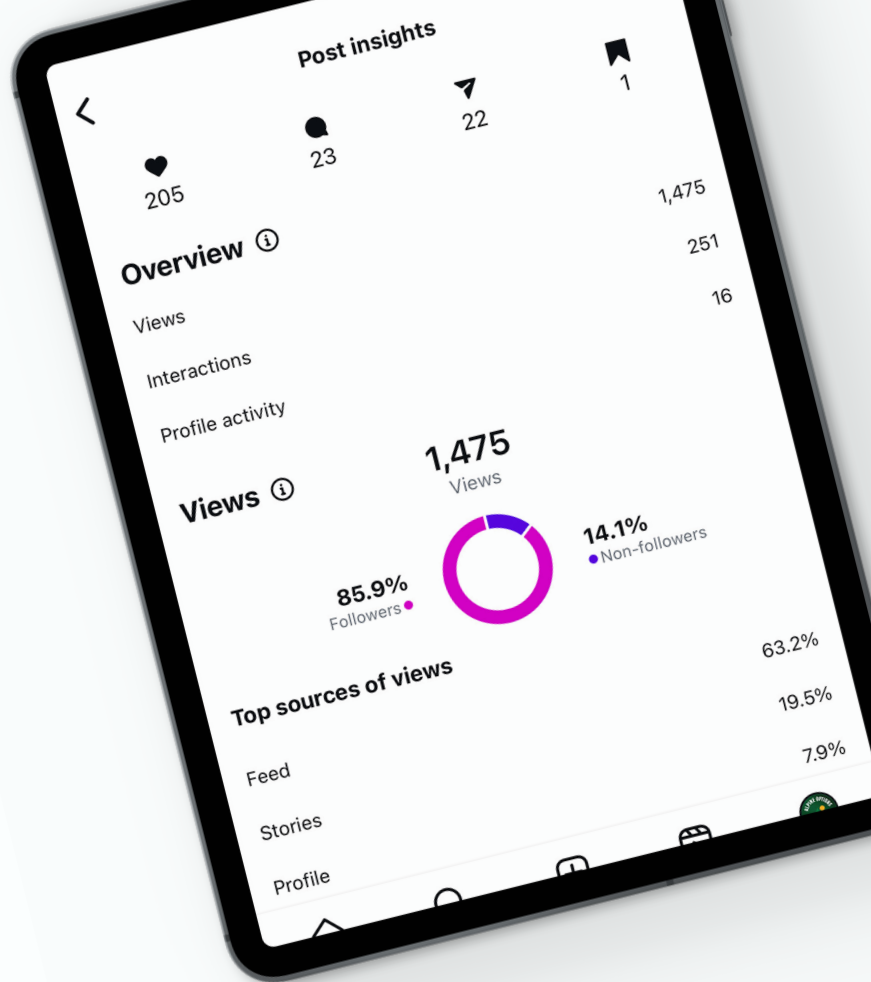
TIP! The CPL can tell you how efficient and aligned your campaign is with your goals

Let's go over how to calculate your CPL and CPA.

CPL EQUATION

$$\frac{\text{Total Ad Spend}}{\text{Number of Leads Generated}} = \textbf{Cost Per Lead (CPL)}$$

EXAMPLE

- **Total Ad Spend:** $500
- **Number of Leads Generated:** 25
- **The Calculated CPL** = $500 / 25 = $20

The CPL is $20 to acquire each new lead from that ad campaign.

CPA EQUATION

$$\frac{\text{Total Cost of Campaign}}{\text{Number of Acquisitions}} = \textbf{Cost Per Acquisition (CPA)}$$

EXAMPLE

- **Total Cost of Campaign:** $2,000
- **Number of Acquisitions (Sales):** 75
- **The Calculated CPA =** $2,000 / 75 = $26.67

The CPA is $26.67 to acquire each sale from that ad campaign.

Conclusion

As we've gone through the basics of social media advertising it's clear that it's a dynamic, and powerful way to elevate your marketing efforts and drive business growth.

Social media platforms are constantly evolving and so should your advertising strategies. Don't be afraid to embrace a mindset of continuous learning. Stay curious about new features, stay on the lookout for any shifts in audience behaviors, and be prepared to refine your approach.

A good social media strategy isn't just about spending money — you're making an investment that drives results.

Check out this list of other social media resources from Trusted Choice that can help you elevate all areas of your social media:

Monthly Content Calendar:
A social media calendar sent directly to your inbox each month with timely content and suggestions

➔ View Content Calendar
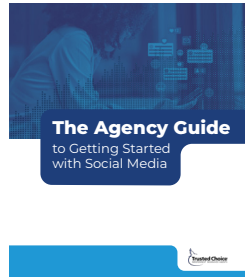
Agency Social Media Guide:
A guide for agencies to help begin and elevate their presence on social media
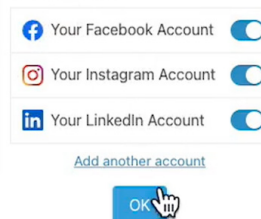
➔ View Agency Guide
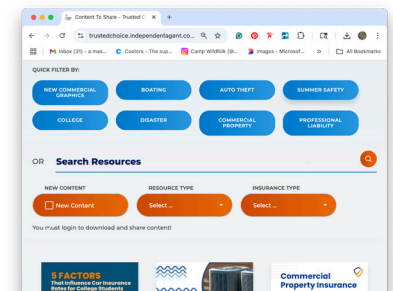
Content to Share:
A content library filled with +1,000 pieces of content that are ready for you to download immediately to use on your social pages.

➔ View Content To Share

Social Jazz:
Social Jazz lets you automate all of your social accounts with just a few minutes of set-up.

➔ Check out Social Jazz

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Thank You

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