FACEBOOK

SOCIAL ADS

Revealed

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Introduction: "The King is Dead, Long Live the King"

Google has dominated the commercial internet to an extent that can only likened to previously dominant companies and unquestioned industry leaders: General Motors in the 1950s, IBM in the 1960s or Microsoft in the 1990s. Google's era of dominance is quickly drawing to a close, however, as "cloud computing" based applications are beginning to swamp Google in terms of total page-views.

A milestone of remarkable significance was reached earlier this year: the total page views on Facebook exceeded that the total page views of sites indexed by Google. This event has tremendous implications for anyone running an online business. Since Facebook overtook Google in total page views, Facebook has widened its lead and the long term trends all appear to be running in Facebook's favor. Facebook is approaching a staggering 500 million users with an equally staggering number of page-views generated by these users.

The Web 2.0 is triumphing over Web 1.0 and Facebook is one of the primary beneficiaries of this powerful trend. Internet users have voted with their feet and adopted the new model of the Internet by doing more on more of their online business using Web 2.0 properties such as Facebook, YouTube, and Skype (source: "Wired Magazine", September 2010).

The purpose of this report is explore the unique commercial possibilities for marketers available on the Faceboom platform. Facebook provides a very attractive social ad platform along with numerous ways to extend your brand using the viral marketing features unique to Facebook. Let us get started!

Section I: Facebook Social Ad Secrets

Facebook Social Ads work virally, but rather than being spread in a random fashion, they are placed on Facebook member pages, based on their profile data. This feature can make them a powerful sales aid for marketers. Currently mobile devices are now replacing personal computers at the rate of 4 to 1 for accessing the Web. Facebook ads are accessible everywhere Facebook is available which includes Facebook's interface for mobile devices. This new factor works powerfully for the marketer with regard to this trend toward greater and greater use of mobile devices for accessing the Internet.

However, like any data spread via the Web, there are rules, restrictions and random factors that can greatly inhibit or enhance their reach and their success. In this special report, we will explore the secrets exploiting the viral potential of Facebook Social Ads.

What this report is _not_…

It is not a complete guide to Facebook Ad Creation. Facebook's easy "Advertising Creation" walk-through is useful as a beginning primer and we don't cover the basics of constructing Facebook ads. The focus of this report is exploiting the hidden and powerful features Facebook Social Ads.

Facebook Social Ads In Action

Facebook brings together advertisers and consumers using their own proprietary targeting model. Let's look at an example of how Facebook Social Ads work.

Marion loves horseback riding, and publicly states the same in her Facebook profile.

A successful Equestrian Center wants to promote its children summer camp. The Equestrian Center purchases a Facebook Ad in order to reach someone like Marion with their message.

Facebook's proprietary demographic targeting model is embedded in a program called Insight. Insight extracts the information that Marion has 3 children, is passionate about all things equestrian and lives within a close geographical radius of the Equestrian Center, and so is a likely candidate to click on the ad placed by the Equestrian Center.

Marion always pays attention whenever there's a picture of a horse in an ad, riding her passion, and she also notices the Equestrian Center provides riding for those children with special needs so she clicks the "Like This" button and views the Ad.

Facebook Insight then finds more ads using this specialized search data – voluntarily provided by Marion – to place other equestrian offerings in her Ad feed. It also adds special needs-related ads, since this was one of the keywords the ad used which matched the interests listed in Marion's profile.

But there's more: Marion has 97 friends on Facebook. 23 of these friends are also connected to her through equestrian activities. They read that Marion "likes" our mythical Equestrian Center and see that she has become a "Fan." Based upon the social trust these friends place her judgment and recommendation, they click on the link as well.

In this example, we see two preeminently important and dynamic features of Facebook Social Ads that make it the most powerful ad platform seen in the last ten years:

*The Facebook Insight demographic targeting engine sends ads to users who have SELF-IDENTIED as being interested in the product or service being advertised,

The viral nature of Facebook sharing mechanisms makes it likely that the Facebook Social Ad will get additional impressions, page-views and clickthroughs as the ad propagates through the social networks that Facebook supports.

Assuming that even a small percentage of Marion's 23 equestrian friends read the geo-targeted Ad and 8 of them not only send their children to the summer camp but 18 also elect to "become a fan."

In this hypothetical example with a very small population, you can instantly see the potential for word about our mythical Equestrian Center to spread virally…and all within a highly focused group that is more likely to buy.

The possibilities of a successfully targeted marketing combined with viral growth potential provided by the Facebook Social Ads platform are immense. Think being the first to get on board with Google Ad Words in 1998 when cost per click was very cheap and there were very few restrictions for advertisers.

A Case Study: Zynga's "Farmville"

The previous example dealt with a highly specialized niche market having a limited target population. Now we will consider a real example in which a broad market was targeted with great results being achieved in a relatively very short period of time.

The marketing Zynga network's "Farmville" game is the next example we will examine. In this case, we will see how a small company successfully conquered a broad target market by leveraging the power of the Facebook Social Ad platform.

Let's look at how Zynga did it…

Zynga did the following things to achieve success in the highly competitive computer game market:

1. Created a simple, fun but slightly addictive game.

2. Created an application for retrieving game components (animals, flowers, vehicles, buildings, etc) that allows Farmville game players to customize their Farmville "world".

3. Created free and paid membership options

4. Allowed an option for others to "Add Neighbors" – and "invite" them to Farmville

5. Made "neighbor" interaction an essential component of the game

But note what they didn't do…

Farmville initial Ad campaign using Facebook Ads, emphasized the free features of the game. This was a very smart strategy. They simply invited people whose profiles indicated they liked online games *(or other related topics)* to play the game.

The first users of the game who tried it loved it so much that they had no hesitation in buying Farmville dollars in order to purchase the virtual highly-prized game items obtainable only through paid option.

The first players eagerly invited their own select group of friends to become Farmville "neighbors". These neighbors all enjoyed sending each other "gifts"; some free" and some purchased with Farmville dollars.

Farmville's social feature was the critical feature in creating loyalty and a sense of community on its Facebook pages. Today Farmville has 23,029,163 fans.

23 million fans....not bad for mostly free advertising!

Zynga tailored their game development to leverage the viral features of Facebook. For those users who did not have a lot of Facebook friends, or who had ethical objections to spreading items virally, could expand their "Farmville World" by purchasing "Farmville Dollars." Either way, Zynga wins!

Paying cash for virtual items has become very popular on the net. PayPal processed **"about $500 million in virtual goods payments last year"**, *according to Citi analyst Mark Mahaney's. According to "Inside Facebook", Zynga was "PayPal's second largest merchant in 2009".*

On their Facebook game `page, Zynga provides links to:

- A Farmville blog

- A weekly Podcast

- A steady stream of limited time "special items"

- A forum

- A press release campaign

- Interviews granted to magazines and websites

- Entries in contests such as Escapist Magazine's yearly game development competition

- "Farmville Fan" RSS feed, so that the games players will be aware of its promotions, and take actions such as voting for them in website competitions

- Tips

- Alternate web access information, in case Facebook is down and to entice hard-core players to start their own dedicated website.

- Promotional information to create a buzz about "new" animals and features about to be introduced

Zynga's multi-million-dollar success all started with one simple little game and by a well-written, inexpensive Facebook Social Ad!

Targeting Facebook Users: The Anatomy of a Strategy.

Zynga's Farmville, and its wildly popular follow up offerings provides a perfect model for using Facebook Social Ads. Zynga created and followed a very well planned strategy for leveraging the social interaction features Facebook's powerful platform. Zynga's strategy can adapted and used for any product that you are promoting.

The self-selection and self-identification features of Facebook are much different than traditional Search Engine Marketing as promoted by Google and others. Facebook users don't search the Facebook site but rather enter the Facebook site to see what Facebook serves up specially tailored to their stated preferences.

A small survey of "Farmville" users revealed that joined the game in one of two ways:

1. They were "invited" by friends to become Farmville neighbors

2. They responded to one of the Zynga Facebook Ads

None of the users of the "Farmville" game joined because they had searched for it. This feature of Facebook Ads and the Facebook environment is a dream for marketers and vastly easier than using a competing platform such as Google Ad Words.

The hardest part of using a tool such as Google Ad Words is accurately relating keyword research to your demographic targeting research. In using Facebook Social Ads, the amazing

and great feature for marketers consists in the fact that Facebook takes all the agonizing guesswork out of demographic targeting research. Facebook provides all the demographic data needed to target your market by letting the Insight program seamlessly guide potential buyers to your ads based on the preferences and affinities provided by Facebook users!

We've finished with our case study let's have a look at how Facebook Ads can be leveraged for any marketing challenge.

Section II: Getting Down to Business

The Facebook Environment

Facebook's platform allows almost anyone to develop widgets and applications, which are placed in the Applications directory. Anyone can grab an app and "place" it on their Profile page. Facebook provides a very broad capability for users to customize their environment including excluding or accepting Ads they like or don't like.

Facebook users have expressed a strong affinity for the control they have over Ads that appear in their right-hand sidebar. If a particular subject or Ad annoys them, they can choose not to receive similar Ads.

A Facebook user can vote to "Like" an Ad (leading to more ad impressions) or they can vote to"Report" an Ad, if they deem it misleading or inappropriate (leading to fewer ad impressions).

The possibility of getting Facebook users to help promote your ad at no cost is the most important and attractive factor to take into account when constructing your ad campaign.

Social Proof is a term describes the psychological tendency for potential buyers to be influenced by friends and acquaintances who have purchased and endorsed a particular product. The power of *social proof can be harnessed for your ad by Facebook's social networking features.*

To obtain the maximum of degree of *social proof* from Facebook users for the following factors should be kept in mind when creating your ad:

- Social relevance
- Social enjoyment
- Social interest

Social Relevance pertains to the idea that your ad should created with a specific, self-identified group on Facebook. *Social Enjoyment* describes the idea that your should include something describing a benefit or the solution to problem that those in the socially relevant group will want to share with others. *Social Interest* means that your ad should be topical. It should address a problem or provide a benefit in an area current interest.

Facebook also allows you to announce and promote events, create a Group Page or create a company, business or personal Fan Page. All of these features can be used to multiply the effectiveness of your ad and increase its social "friendliness". By linking all the free social promotion resources together with your ad you can greatly increase the chance that your ad will be promoted virally within Facebook.

And now let's have a quick look at the process…

Facebook Ad Creation – A Primer

The actual ad creation itself is an incredibly simple, three step process. Facebook ad creation wizard virtually walks you through it every step of the way, and even a beginner can quickly get up to speed.

The mechanics of creating a Facebook Ad is least important part of the process. The most important factor is to keep in mind your target social group in Facebook as you plan your Advertising campaign in advance.

The basic process runs like this: You either visit Facebook Advertising directly – or click on the "Create an Ad" link that will appear regularly in your Facebook page right-hand sidebar *(along with all the other Ads targeted to your preference that you usually see.)* Once you click on the link, you are taken to this page: http://facebook.com/advertising .

You click on each of the four tabs in succession. There are additional help links, if you require more in-depth information.

The ad creation process is very simple so we won't restate the process again here, but it helps to know the factors that create successful Facebook ad before creating your first campaign.

Let us address the most frequently asked questions by those starting out with Facebook Ads.

What do Facebook Ads cost?

Facebook Social Ads are a less expensive option than Google AdWords and the the

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