

The advertiser's guide to new brand metrics

Tactics for improving awareness and conversions



The brand marketer's guide to brand metrics: Tactics for driving awareness, consideration and conversions

As audience behaviors change and technologies evolve, many brands are turning to nuanced conversion metrics and strategies to protect their advertising spend. For too long, advertisers have placed a primary value on the number of variables they could measure rather than trying to measure what's valuable in their campaigns along a wider range of factors. [And this has led to waste.](#)

To fight that waste and the outcomes it impacts, brands are working to implement real-time measurements that make brand campaign data actionable.

This helps them optimize branding at every stage of the funnel, improving awareness, consideration and conversion performance metrics for brand campaigns.

As Annie Georgieva, senior product manager at Quantcast, said in an interview with Digiday, "The pain point here is not new. By nature, brand initiatives focus on awareness and the shifting perception of potential consumers, as opposed to more tangible performance focus metrics like conversions ROAS and campaign strategy. But optimization is only as good as the data it's based on."

All of this has prompted a shift in metric tracking. New methods are helping brands amplify customers most receptive to messaging, and they're providing more granular, real-time insights that can more effectively validate audience parameters before campaigns launch. In this guide, Digiday and Quantcast present tactics for marketers to help them adopt new brand metrics, creating increasingly actionable insights and driving campaign success.



Advertisers are seeking new brand metrics and measurement tools

Longstanding forms of brand measurement often miss the indicators of a person's progression throughout the customer journey stages. In addition, they're not always actionable when it comes to further strategic decisions.

In response, brands are striving to update their actionable metrics with approaches and tools that can highlight the audiences, messaging, devices and creative that drive success for branding campaigns. They need meaningful measurements both during and after the campaign, and they require measurements that go beyond traditional studies and address gaps in campaign and audience analysis.

"Getting a more continuous look at granular results that goes beyond the classic metrics can enable you to have more meaningful optimizations that impact the outcome throughout the

campaign itself," said Georgieva at Quantcast. "Having a more continuous view of the data and the impact that your messaging has on the market is a crucial point that we've really focused on. It's crucial to bring that data back into the conversation."

For example, new measurement models are enabling brands to validate their audience parameters, better ensuring scale before launching campaigns. These metrics and tools drive efficient reach toward those considering brands and away from those who will never consider them.

One of these frameworks is brand lift – the measurement of positive perceptions of a given brand. Brand lift studies offer real-time insights into engagement outcomes (and metrics) such as brand recall, recognition, purchase intent and more. But more than that, brand lift and

its outcomes are opening brands up to more relevant audience segments they may not have considered before.

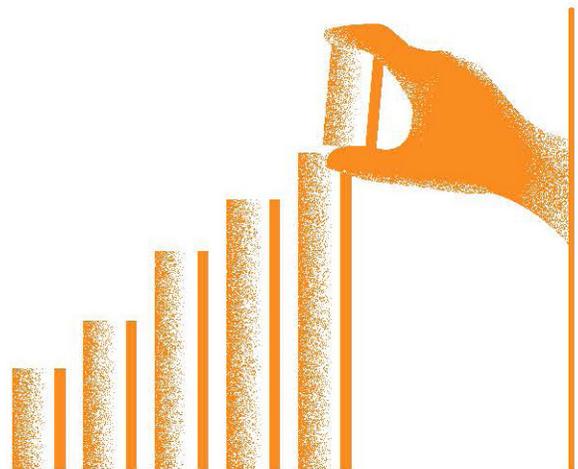
"We use brand lift studies for all our partners and channels," said Grace Bailey, senior marketing manager at Auto Trader, a Quantcast client. "They help us understand the effectiveness of our campaigns at a brand level. We can determine how well the messaging is landing with our consumers, and if we're running multiple creatives, which one is performing better than another.

"We usually have a clear message we want to convey, and understanding the effectiveness of the messaging can allow us to quickly pivot the creative if needed," she added.

Tactics and insights

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Running multiple creatives as part of the brand lift study unlocks performance insights.



Auditing and optimizing campaigns requires real-time data (and response)

Successful marketers are not waiting until the end of campaigns to evaluate brand advertising outcomes. They are modifying and, thus, optimizing campaigns while in flight and evaluating them post-campaign. This is why the real-time data modern brand measurement models offer are so valuable.

"Clients are appreciating being able to not only see the results in real-time but optimize in real-time," said Quantcast's global senior lead of measurement strategy Franni Segal. "It allows customers to determine if the [ad] frequency is too high, too low, or if one creative is working better than the other."

Optimizing with real-time data can mean the difference between a

campaign that addresses issues as they occur and a project that uncovers much-needed optimizations after it's ended. Yet to be actionable, this data must also be unified, avoiding silos and the lack of clarity they bring.

"When each part of the planning, asset and supply curation is built out in silos, it only really comes together at activation time," Georgieva said. "Inevitably, there's going to be misalignment or certain gaps, and being able to [collect] data at a more granular level enables you to identify those gaps and optimize them quickly."

Brands that collect unified, real-time data can more easily identify which creative messaging works better and what ad frequency is optimal

for specific audiences, then shift budgets accordingly. The data-driven optimization shifts for brand budgets become more meaningful.

"We need to be able to see data in real-time; we can't just wait till the end of the campaign running," said Bailey. "It helps us to see trend activity on a week-by-week basis. If we make an optimization, we want to know if that helped the following week or month ... it's imperative to us that we can report back on anything that we see performance-wise to understand the impact of our overall activity."

"Real-time data, robust targeting, these are essential elements that we need for our campaigns to work," she added.

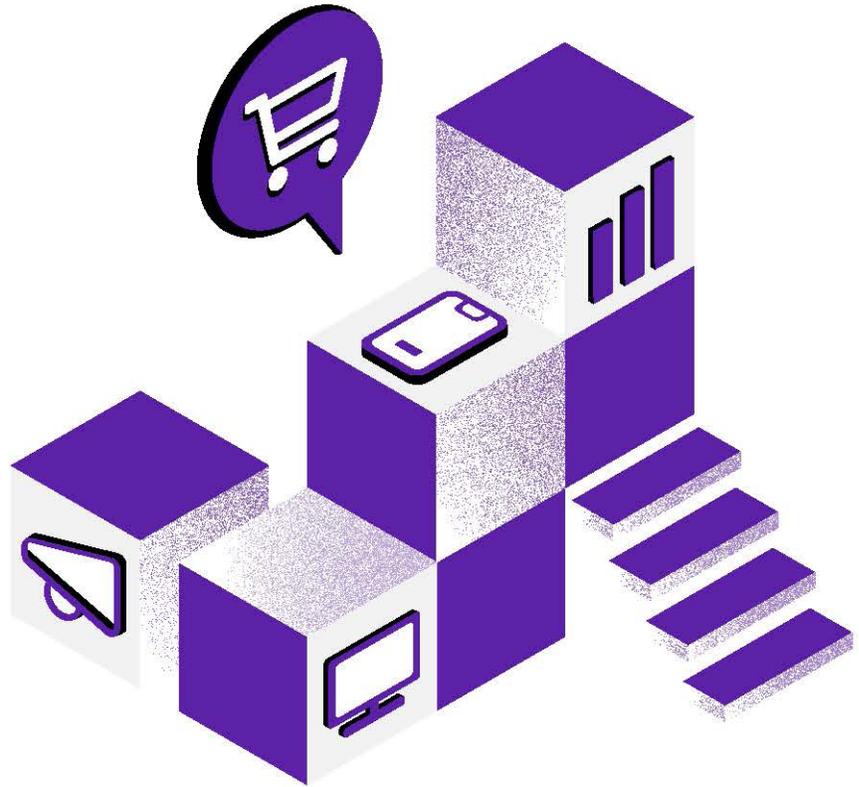
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Brand lift in action

The following examples come from two of Quantcast's partners who are using new metrics to increase brand lift.



Increasing brand lift with real-time consumer data

The digital automotive marketplace Auto Trader wanted to make better use of real-time data in their upper- and lower-funnel video campaigns. They worked with Quantcast to poll potential auto buyers, optimizing for those audiences with a high intent to buy online.

By fine-tuning audiences, frequency, creative and messaging with real-time insights, Auto Trader was able to reach a new car buyer audience. Their new full-funnel omnichannel strategy [increased consideration lift by 15% and conversion lift by 50%](#).

Using audience insights to fuel CTV growth

Jack's Family Restaurants, a Southern cuisine restaurant chain, knew they needed a solution to address declining foot traffic. Working with Quantcast, the company surfaced audience insights to see how their branding campaigns were performing, categorizing consumers into

one of three groups: people similar to their best customers, online buyers and loyalty members. Then, they enacted a new CTV campaign aligned with each segment, eventually doubling foot traffic and [increasing repeat purchases by 5%](#).

Applying brand advertising insights and metrics to campaigns

Increasingly siloed data makes it difficult for marketers to access premium ad inventory, optimize campaigns and drive demand. Collecting real-time data at a granular level helps brands bridge these information gaps to understand audience behavior more effectively.

To mitigate data silos and boost campaign activations, brands are reviewing the processes of their direct response teams versus brand-focused teams. They're looking at how they're strategizing and taking action across channels to ensure proper attribution for branding initiatives.

"Being able to see how your branding initiatives are contributing to higher visitor and converter rates for your lower-funnel tactics, and using that real-time data on the fly during the actual campaigns, goes a long way," Georgieva said. In short, attribution can help brands act on real-time data.

Still, there's the question of adopting these new metric frameworks and applying them to campaigns. Some legacy brands have had difficulties acting on data with so many new channels in the mix, such as CTV.

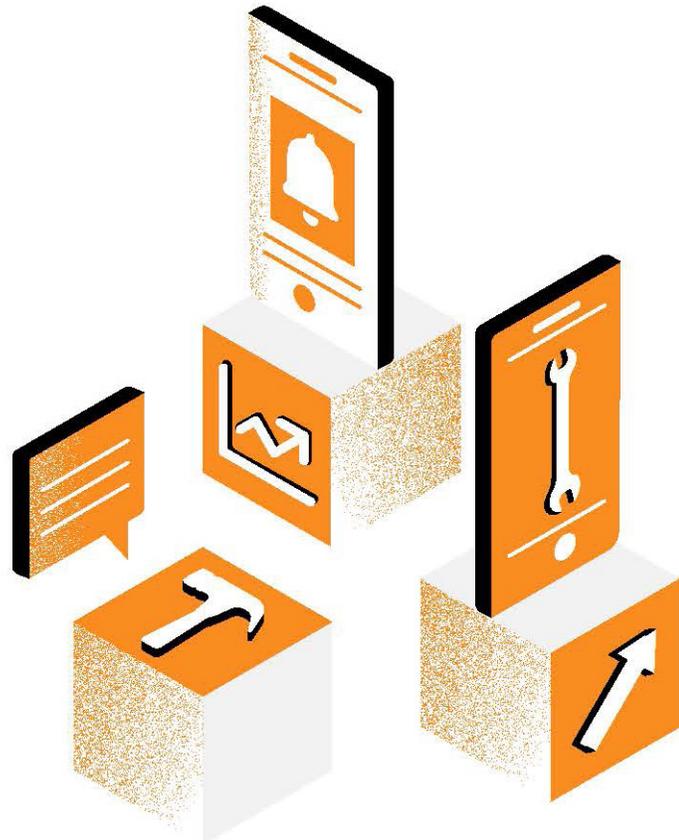
However, according to Segal, newer advertisers are enjoying a relatively seamless transition when employing modern brand measurement frameworks.

"A lot of the advertisers that are coming into that category haven't done traditional TV before because it was just too expensive," she said. "Now they're not only able to do it, but these companies are focused on measurement. We can bring them back and drive measurement during the campaign. So I think it has made it more reachable for a lot of companies, whether large or small."

Tactics and insights

Seeing how branding initiatives contribute to higher visitor and converter rates for lower-funnel tactics helps brands act on real-time data.

The falling price of CTV is unlocking the ability to measure and make better decisions about campaigns within the channel.



Finding the right metric-focused branding partners

Not every team has the resources to activate brand performance metrics in real time. Some are looking for partners and platforms to help drive demand across multiple formats and channels.

The partners that brands work with need to align with these new measurement processes and offer access to premium inventory. They should use metrics that map to business goals and outcomes and maximize the impact of marketing spend while emphasizing the value of such measurements.

"We want them to know that we have a specific end goal that we want to get to," said Bailey. "There need to be expectations from what we want to get from them and what they want from us in the future as well. We try and be as

collaborative as possible, almost an extension of the team."

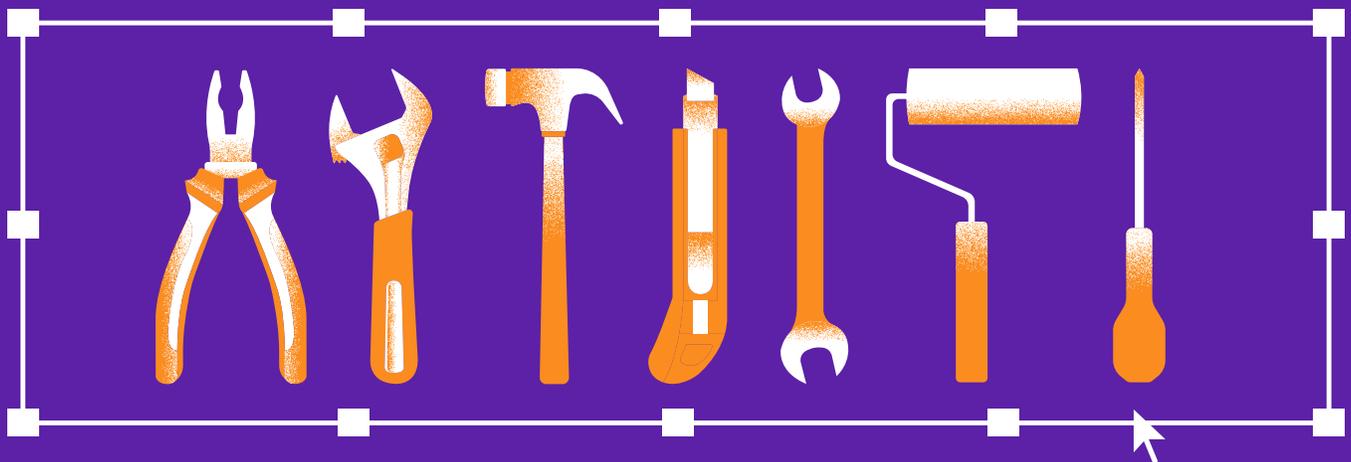
Brands are looking for partners that align not just in these critical measurement areas but also in messaging endeavors.

Segal pointed to a recent parenting campaign that her team helped a client run. The team found that the original messaging cadence resonated well with those in the earlier stages – the pregnancy or baby stage – but audiences required more frequent messaging to connect with them and build brand familiarity in the later stage. In response, they changed the messaging frequency for early-stage audiences.

Furthermore, Segal's team helped the client discover the primary channel was CTV, further illuminating the parenting audience's preferences.

"We were able to understand how those frequency changes impacted [the campaign]," said Segal. "By turning the audience and moving the budgets to campaigns that were resonating with audiences, they saw even better results, and it allowed them to understand the marketplace better."

Branding partners can provide valuable insights such as these that many brands would have difficulties uncovering on their own. Partnerships help them know when to turn off audiences, move budgets or seek out new segments.



About Quantcast

Quantcast is an advertising technology company and the creator of an innovative intelligent audience platform that empowers brands, agencies and publishers to know and grow their audiences online. The Quantcast Platform, powered by Ara™, a patented AI and machine learning engine, delivers automated insights, marketing performance, and results at scale to drive business growth. Our solutions are leveling the playing field for our customers when it comes to effectively reaching audiences online and helping them power a thriving free and open internet for everyone. Headquartered in San Francisco, Quantcast has been serving customers around the world since 2006.

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