5 Steps to Effective Digital Advertising

A Quantcast digital booklet for brands, agencies, and publishers
## 5 Steps to Effective Digital Advertising

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Introduction

Gone are the days when newspapers and magazines dominated your customers’ attention. We’ve come a long, long way since the printing press was invented in 1444. Back then, the best way to get the word out about a product or company was to simply place a poster in the middle of the town square. Fast forward 400+ years, and we’ve had major innovations in advertising, with the advent of new media such as magazines, billboards, catalogs, and direct mail. Then we transitioned to the broadcast era, with radio and tv.

In only a decade, we made it from the first online banner ad in the 1990s to the launch of programmatic television in 2007, transforming both print and broadcast, merging these worlds digitally in a unique new format.

Today’s customers are interacting with your brand in new ways, across many different advertising channels and devices. Digital ads on multiple channels and devices make it possible to reach relevant audiences when and where they are ready to engage with your brand. These buyers expect customized messages that seamlessly appear across their devices, websites, social media, and more.
Advertising continues to evolve dramatically over the years.

1990s
Publishers sold ads directly to advertisers and agencies.

2000s
In the 2000s, ad networks aggregated inventory and sold it to advertisers, helping fuel the rise of smaller publishers.

2010s
Ad exchanges provided the inventory marketplace for automated deals and the birth of programmatic.

2020s
We have entered the artificial intelligence (AI) powered-advertising era, which is one of unique opportunity and efficiency.
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Context is at the heart of digital advertising.

We are surrounded by advertising everywhere we go today, whether physically or digitally; advertising is what powers the free content that we enjoy.

In today’s cross-device world where advertisements are everywhere, it comes down to the fact that effective digital advertising is all about context. We have all heard the phrase “the right place, right time, right audience”—and with the proliferation of data, AI technology helps us reach the right customers in smarter ways. This relatively new technology already is transforming how marketers reach and engage with their customers.

AI technology marks the beginning of a new era, where it—and its subset machine learning—can help brands, agencies, and publishers to drive performance, at scale. But before we get ahead of ourselves, let’s first take a look at why we should deliver perfectly timed and uniquely relevant advertising in the first place.

Why advertise?

We advertise to grow our business. We do so by identifying and reaching new customers and engaging current customers to create brand loyalty through offers that help our businesses capture revenue.

With digital advertising and today’s modern ad tech platforms, every business can get its message out effectively and efficiently to help shift the needle. To do that, you need to understand your audiences and how to authentically connect with them. If you know which audiences to seek, when to reach them, and how to create authentic messaging for them, you can provide a seamless customer journey.

And that means integrating your audiences, from brand to demand. Quantcast can provide you with an integrated focus on audiences all along their customer journey. The first step is to leverage insights about your past converters to discover broader in-market audiences that are further up the funnel. Armed with these insights, you can then reach brand audiences and move them down the funnel. Finally, overlay this with measurement and insights throughout the sales cycle. Now you have an uninterrupted view of the customer journey.

What follows are the five steps you should take into account when developing effective digital advertising.
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All successful campaigns start with an advertising plan. Before embarking on a marketing or advertising campaign, it is essential to have answers to the questions listed to the right and get buy-in from the business. If you don’t have a plan, you may not achieve your business objectives and may spend your budget inefficiently. Also, keep in mind that if your plan is executed poorly, it can lead to low engagement and irritated prospects and buyers.

**Step 1**
Create a plan

All successful campaigns start with an advertising plan. Before embarking on a marketing or advertising campaign, it is essential to have answers to the questions listed to the right and get buy-in from the business. If you don’t have a plan, you may not achieve your business objectives and may spend your budget inefficiently. Also, keep in mind that if your plan is executed poorly, it can lead to low engagement and irritated prospects and buyers.

You should also consider cookieless advertising as part of your overall plan, as a means to prepare for the final deprecation of third-party cookies slated for 2023 (keep in mind that Firefox and Safari already block cookies by default). By testing against current strategies and placing a high priority on first-party data, you’ll find that the post-cookie world offers powerful new opportunities. With Quantcast’s cookieless capabilities, you can get actionable insights on campaign performance in cookieless environments today.

Make sure your plan includes answers to the following questions:

- What are your objectives?
- What are your success metrics?
- Are you focused on brand awareness or conversions to a purchase?
- How will you time your campaign?
- How long will it run?
- Will it be local or global?
- Will you reach current customers, new ones, or both?
- What kind of ad formats will you be considering?
- Which devices and/or channels?
- What is your budget?

Quantcast
Let’s look at some of the actionable, practical ways you can better understand your audience.

Keep in mind that in 2020, adults spent an estimated average of **470 minutes** with digital media each day. For example, your audience might be on LinkedIn, hanging out on Reddit, or reading an article in Quartz or Forbes. Remember that your audience—and where they like to go—is ever-changing.

The key is to develop a deep understanding of your audience that’s based on their behavior, not your intuition. What you think might be appealing to them may not be, especially when it comes to creative, messaging, and delivery. Think about their reactions, and experiment to see what resonates with your audience. Invest in technology such as the Quantcast Platform so that you can better understand your audience and stay on the pulse of ever-changing consumer behavior.

The Quantcast Platform empowers brands, agencies, and publishers to **know and grow their audiences** on the open internet through real-time audience insights powered by our expansive data. Remember, the focus should be on delivering messages that are uniquely crafted to genuinely resonate with your consumers, based on who they are and what they do.

**Step 2**

**Understand and know your audience**

Who is your audience?

- age?
- gender?
- income?
- psychographics?
- behaviors?
- hobbies?
- location?
- devices used?
- time on devices?
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During this critical message development stage, remember to be authentic; don’t craft a message that is not in line with your brand, product, or consumer. Spend time to really fine-tune your message. Test it out with trusted customers, team members, and industry experts. Will your message appeal to the audience you’re trying to reach?

If you miss the message, you miss the market and the audience. Make sure creative and copy work together for your brand. The most clever and effective brand ads are sometimes the most subtle. They blend their message and the art together to present a holistic picture of a brand—sometimes focusing on the product and sometimes the ideal customer. You know this strategy when you see it. It is true to the brand, true to the product, and true to the potential customer.

Your campaign advertising materials should contain strategic messaging that has a defined purpose and is designed to attract your audiences and prompt them to action. Keep in mind that your creative and messaging should align with the relevant stage of the customer journey. By designing engaging and interactive creative experiences for your audience, you’ll be able to drive engagement and improve sales conversions.

If you need help with creative, you can work with our Creative Solutions Team to collaborate on your campaign strategy, run your ads, or design your creatives. From concept, strategy, and ideation to complete technical production of your creatives, everything we do is focused on building visually compelling branded experiences that maximize user engagement.

Step 3
Define and develop your message and creative
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Armed with a deep understanding of your customers and your ad campaign goals, you can identify your advertising mix. The goal is to reach your audience where they are, not where they are not. Do you use billboards, online display units, social media, podcasts, streaming TV, or print? If you know where your potential audience is, can you determine the best format with which to reach them? For example, if you are an online gaming company, potential customers are probably playing their favorite online games already.

Consumers today interact with your brand across many different devices and channels. They are more sophisticated and have much higher expectations compared to even just a few years ago. That means you need to craft personalized messaging with consumers at the right place and at the right time.

Remember that you shouldn’t put all your ad spending into just one bucket. You’ll want to diversify your advertising mix, similarly to how you diversify your financial investments. Understand that walled gardens, search, CTV and the open internet can all complement one another. A strategic approach is the best way to reach new customers and prospects, engage current customers, and ultimately increase revenue. The key is to invest your ad budget to align with your customer life cycle and to support your advertising goals.
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Always factor measurement into your digital advertising so you can:

- Point to indications of success and inform benchmarks
- Optimize performance based on which messages and designs are resonating with audiences
- Plan for future campaigns

One of the most important steps in developing effective digital advertising is to continuously monitor, measure, and analyze your campaign performance. If it is a brand campaign, you will likely want to understand brand perception by measuring brand lift. You can measure performance ads with metrics like leads, conversions, clicks, and more.
Plan, activate, and measure in a unified platform

Today, brands and agencies need to prioritize marketing and advertising solutions that help them connect with their audiences without adding to the existing tech complexity. Increasingly fragmented ad tech stacks have made it difficult to align audience insights to campaign activation, and campaign insights back into audience planning. Being able to seamlessly plan, activate, and measure in a unified platform empowers teams to be more effective and efficient, and surfaces insights that can fuel marketing innovation and deliver superior business outcomes.

We understand the pulse of your consumer across their digital journey. We can help you know the sites they visit, their interests, and their purchase habits in real-time, with greater precision. We have the earliest access to understand who your audience really is. This enables us to connect you with more of your most relevant audiences.

The Quantcast Platform uses real-time data from 100M+ diverse online sources to uniquely score and measure each individual impression, adjusting thousands of variables automatically. Powered by Ara™, our AI and machine learning engine, it provides an up-to-the-second understanding of audience behavior and interests, enabling marketers to deliver perfectly timed and uniquely relevant advertising. You can plan, activate, measure, and innovate ad campaigns in an easy-to-use, unified platform.

Contact us today at Quantcast.com/contact-us to get started with more effective advertising.

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