3 Ways to Make the Most of Programmatic and Data-Driven Creative

Published

March 2016

Topics

Programmatic,
Advertising, Display,
Measurement

Programmatic buying coupled with data-driven creative can deliver more effective digital advertising campaigns. But connecting the dots between the data and the creative can be a challenge. Here we break down how to do it successfully.

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B rand marketers know more than anyone that effective creative is equal parts data and emotion. When it comes to display creative, programmatic buying brings a lot more data into that equation. Knowing what to do with that data can be easy to grasp in theory, but perhaps more challenging to put into practice, especially when no single agency or partner has the full picture.

To understand what it takes to employ a truly data-driven creative strategy, DoubleClick partnered with several global brands, digital creative studio Fancy Pants Group, and the management consulting company Accenture. The aim was to conduct a collaborative, programmatic experiment through a series of data-driven ad campaigns. By tackling real brand campaigns with a variety of data insights at the ready, we learned how the campaign development process has to change to get to smarter, data-driven creative.

| Choosing the right data	Involving creative agencies	Collaborating throughout

Understand all the available data that could inform creative choices

First, you may already be using data from customer relationship management (CRM) tools and market research to inform campaigns. But a wider array of data signals is available, from analytics on your brand's website (that could tell you your most popular products, for instance), to audience data (that could give a glimpse of age, gender, or interests), to contextual insights about which device, location, or media type delivered

the most success for a campaign. The trick is to know all the sources of data available, and figure out which can fuel smarter creative.

For example, L'Oréal wanted to build a campaign to showcase two Vichy sunscreen products in France last summer. One sunscreen was for women, and the other was for children. To create relevant ads for each segment, the company used audience targeting lists to reach women both with and without children. The data enabled the brand to target the right consumers at the right time.
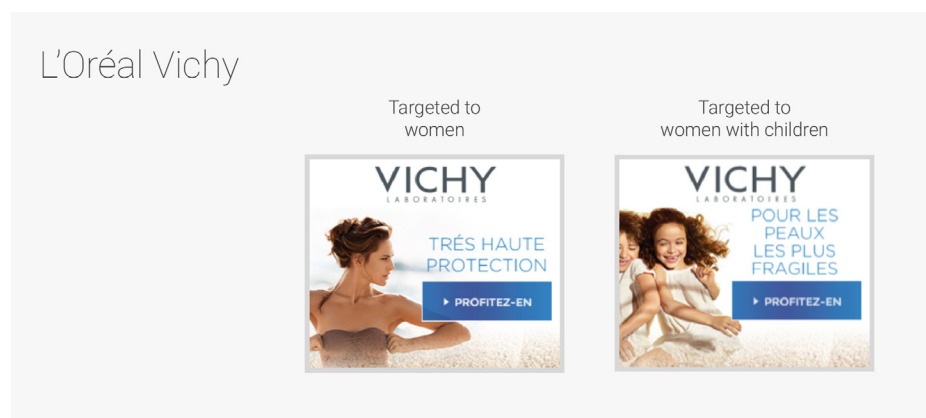
Involve creative agencies from the outset of the campaign process

Too often, the creative agency and production shop are brought into the campaign process after the media strategy has been decided. By informing the creative agency of all the data from the outset of the project, you can work with the agency to build more relevant creative strategies for your target audience.

When Gilt wanted to create a campaign to showcase its four available merchandise categories, the company gave the creative agency a list of the top-performing keywords from its previous DoubleClick campaigns. Sharing these insights at the beginning of the campaign process enabled the production team to tailor their designs to each segment.
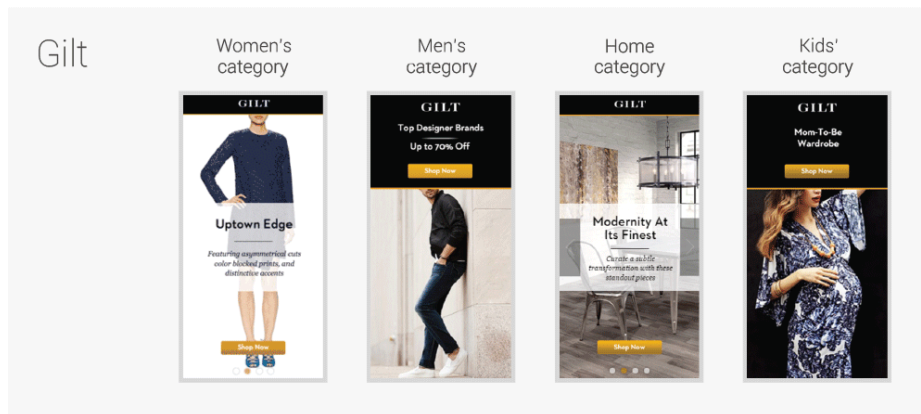
Make sure all teams collaborate and communicate throughout the campaign process

In typical campaigns, each group completes its portion of the work and hands it off to the next group, often with little feedback. By involving the creative agency, the media agency, and the production shop throughout the process, you can ensure ongoing communication—and a more effective campaign.

In an effort to drive acquisitions of a premium credit card, the Royal Bank of Canada wanted to reach Canadians interested in travel. To kick off the project, RBC's marketing team held a collaborative briefing session with Fancy Pants Group, the creative agency handling the production; Initiative's media-buying team; and Accenture, the data analysts who defined the test and control specifications and set up the performance reports. Together they developed a matrix of various product benefit messages that were tested against an awareness control message. They found that one message in particular—no seat restrictions—led to a performance uptick of 28% in conversion.

RBC
Royal Bank
of Canada

Control

Test

Making sure the planning, analytic, and creative teams work together can enable your brand to maximize the value of programmatic, and create relevant and customized campaigns for potential consumers. Gathering insights from all types of data sources and uniting several agencies and partners throughout the campaign process may require changes to your process—but the result is smarter, more effective campaigns.

See our guide to redesigning the creative process for a programmatic world.

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