



Meta Marketing Lunch & Learn

PLANNING & MANAGING BEST PRACTICES

Prepared by the Office of Strategic Communication

Presented March 21, 2025

Missouri State
UNIVERSITY

Meta Campaigns in Higher Ed

STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES

Strengths

- 169+ million users in the U.S.
- Effective for communicating with an 18+ audience.
- Can leverage custom audiences with lists and retargeting as well as "lookalike audiences."
- Variety of placements suitable for a multi-channel strategy.
- Affordability and value through Meta support.
- Great for 90-day awareness, engagement and traffic campaigns.

Weaknesses

- Difficult to reach users 18 or younger.
- Can be challenging to map lists to user accounts.
- iOS 14 privacy updates limit tracking effectiveness.
- Limited impact on lower-funnel conversions.
- Frequent changes to detailed targeting capabilities.
- Tendency to develop bias over long-term campaigns.



= Meta approved Best Practice



Objectives & Goals

AN OVERVIEW OF AVAILABLE OBJECTIVES & GOALS

Awareness (top of funnel)

- **Goals:** Maximize reach, max # of impressions, max ad recall lift, max thurplay views, max 2-second continuous video plays.
- The 'Maximize reach' goal within an awareness campaign allows you to set a frequency cap. This is the only time you can manually set these caps in Meta. Recommend developing lists to exclude user's based on account engagement to minimize frequency when needed.
- **Use case:** A broad campaign showcasing Missouri State University's traditions and campus culture to the family of first-time prospective students, potentially with the intention of retargeting users who engaged with an ad.

Traffic (mid-funnel)

- **Goals:** Max link clicks, max # of landing page views, max daily unique reach, max # of conversions, max # of impressions.
- **Use case:** A campaign directing users to learn more about a specific program, potentially with the intention of retargeting website visits.



Objectives & Goals

AN OVERVIEW OF AVAILABLE OBJECTIVES & GOALS

Engagement (top to mid-funnel)

- **Goals:** Max thurplay views or max 2-sec continuous plays (video views engagement type), max post engagement, max daily reach or max # of impressions (post engagement type), max # of event responses, max post engagement, max daily unique reach or max # of impressions (event responses engagement type), max reminders set (reminders set engagement type).
- Goals are dependent upon 'engagement type.'
- **Use case:** A campaign to encourage users to share about our Giving Day event, potentially with the intention of retargeting users who engaged with an ad to donate.

Leads (mid to low-funnel)

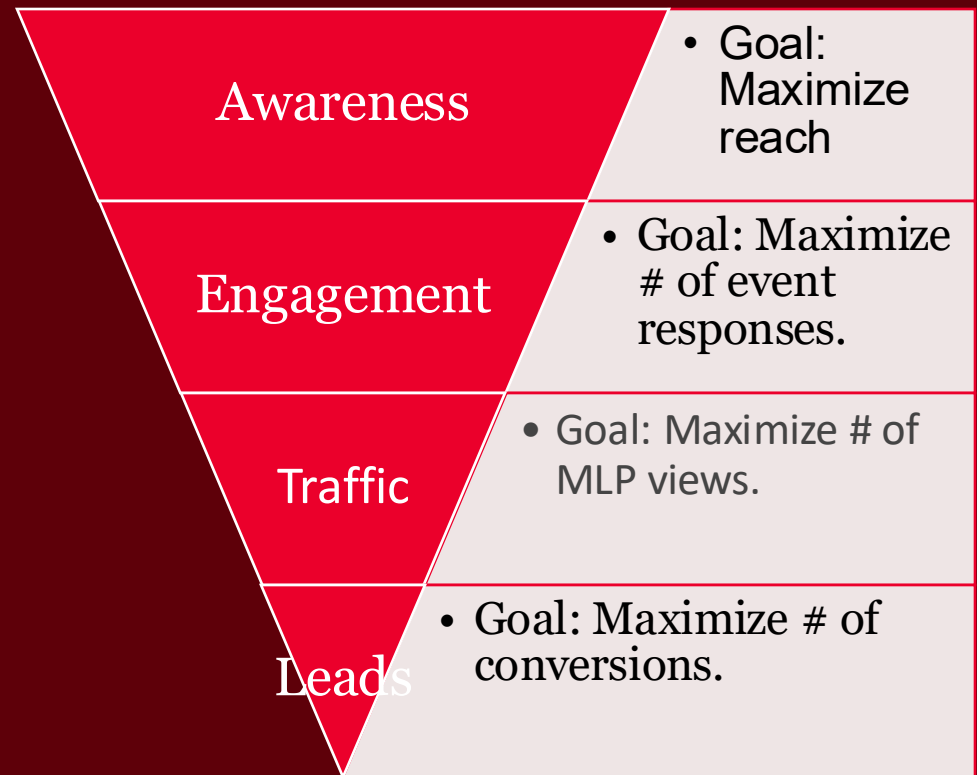
- **Goals:** Max # of conversions, max value of conversions, max # of landing page views, max # of link clicks, max daily unique reach, max # of impressions.
- Conversions will typically be located on our website. A Meta pixel is already installed. Active conversion events include Contact and Lead.

Other objectives: App promotion and Sales

Lifecycle Approach

EXAMPLE OF A FULL FUNNEL STRATEGY

- Scenario: Promoting a graduate college program with the opportunity to visit campus.
- Full disclosure: we haven't done many, if any, leads campaigns yet.
- Meta recommends: 
 - Min campaign duration: 7 days
 - Max campaign duration: 3 months
 - (Except for boosted posts, they can be shorter)





Audience Targeting

HOW TO DEVELOP A STRONG AUDIENCE TARGETING STRATEGY

Meta audience definitions:

- **Saved audience** - commonly used targeting options for easy reuse.
- **Custom audience** - Connect with the people who have already shown an interest in your business or product with custom audiences. You can create an audience from your customer contacts, website traffic or mobile app. *This is the type of audience you'd employ for retargeting.*
- **Lookalike audience** - Reach new Accounts Center accounts who are similar to audiences you already care about. You can create a lookalike audience based on people who like your Page, conversion pixels or any of your existing Custom Audiences.

The Audiences tab in Ads Manager:

- Allows you to build saved, custom and lookalike audiences outside of the campaign creation process.

Audience Targeting

HOW TO DEVELOP A STRONG AUDIENCE TARGETING STRATEGY

Building audiences during campaign creation

- **Audience controls:** location inclusion/exclusion, min. age, custom audience exclusions, language (leave language alone).
- **Advantage+ audience (audience suggestion):**
 - Add **custom audiences** to provide a base of users for Meta to prioritize. 
 - **Age range and gender.**
 - **Interest/behavior-based targeting** – education and career interests, lifestyle and extracurricular activities.
 - NOTE: This type of targeting is constantly being updated by Meta (by the request of no one). We recommend reviewing interest/behavior-based targeting before launching new campaigns with saved audiences.

Meta Audience Insights

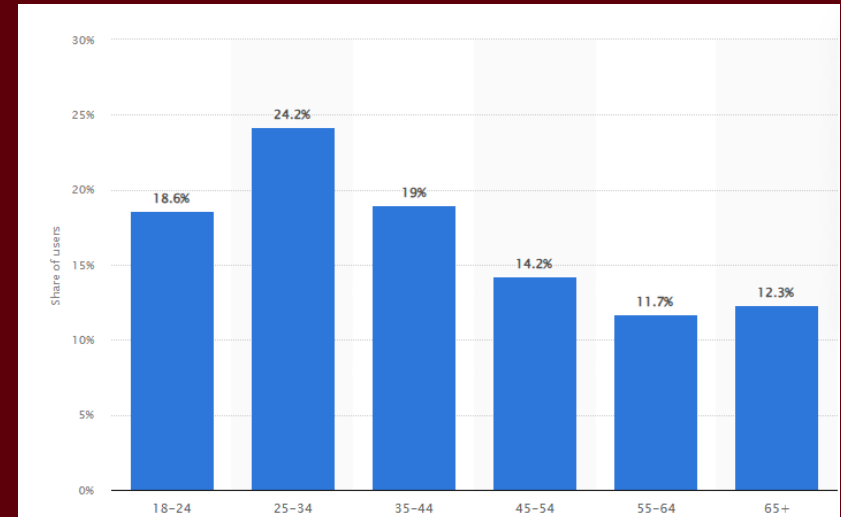
THINGS WE'VE LEARNED ABOUT META AUDIENCES

Ideal audience sizes: 

- Awareness: 500k-1m
- Traffic/Engagement: 100k-500k
- Leads/Sales: 10k-50k

Some campaigns we've run on Meta:

- Core ADM campaigns targeting the families and influencers of FTNIC students.
- Fast Track grant promotion for eligible adult students.
- Graduate programs targeting professionals with bachelor's degrees.



The largest U.S. age demographic on Meta is 25-34. [Source](#).

Messaging & Creative

CREATIVE BEST PRACTICES & INSIGHTS

- How many ads should I include in my ad set?
 - Meta recommends using **six (6) or fewer ads per ad set.** 
 - Consider frequency and your campaign objective. If you're working on a low-funnel campaign, fewer creative may be okay to increase frequency.
 - Consider developing ads to test messaging and visual elements (i.e. emotional language vs. logical language or campus imagery vs. images of people).
- Facebook Ads Guide: Ad Format Specs & Recommendations
- Click here to view our Meta ads: Ad Library
 - NOTE: We do not run the College of Business ads, but they're a good example, too.
- Meta Ad Copy Outline Template
 - Creative best practices for text in ads

Creative Placements

THE IMPORTANCE OF VERSATILITY IN META MARKETING

- Leverage new "enhancements" such as site links. 👍
- Always maximize placements 👍
 - No video content? No problem. Use templates to create videos out of images.
 - Use **reel placements** as often as possible!!!
 - Increased reach, engagement and impressions.

Ad set	Impressions	Clicks (all)	CTR (all)	Frequency	CPC (all)	Amount spent
ADM2_Meta_Retargeting_2025	47,522	1,195	2.51%	1.57	\$0.42	\$506.67
ADM1_Meta_Retargeting_2024	197,506	9,660	4.89%	2.60	\$0.09	\$899.59
ADM_FAFSA_Boost	28,796	1,166	4.05%	1.39	\$0.17	\$200.00
ADM3_2024_Meta_Awarene... Unpublished edits	715,001	877	0.12%	3.55	\$0.80	\$699.98
ADM4_2024_Meta_Awareness	670,998	561	0.08%	2.37	\$1.25	\$699.96
ADM2_2024_Meta_Awareness	2,406,131	3,069	0.13%	2.17	\$0.59	\$1,799.89
ADM1_2024_Meta_Awarene... Unpublished edits	1,626,538	2,025	0.12%	4.47	\$0.89	\$1,799.96

After
implementing
reels.

Before
implementing
reels.

Budgeting & Bidding

BENCHMARKS FOR MAXIMIZED PERFORMANCE

- Budget benchmarks** 
- Awareness: \$26/day
 - Traffic: \$29/day
 - Engagement: \$12/day
 - Sales: \$50/day
 - Leads: \$30-\$50/day
- The **broader** and more **competitive** your audience is, the more spend you will want to allocate.
 - Recommend setting a "**lifetime budget**" instead of a "**daily budget**" to allow your campaign to spend as opportunities arise.
 - If you have more than one ad set for a given campaign with a fluid budget, you can turn "**Advantage campaign budget**" on under the campaign level settings to optimize budget across multiple ad sets.
 - Recommend implementing "**lifetime maximum**" ad set spending limits to ensure your campaign doesn't overspend.

Managing & Optimizing



BENCHMARK METRICS FOR OPTIMIZING PERFORMANCE

- **High Cost Per Result (CPC, CPL, CPA):** If the cost per click is rising, adjust targeting or ad creative before spending more.
- **Low Engagement or Clicks:** If ads aren't performing, reallocate funds to better-performing campaigns, platforms or channels. Potentially pause low performing ads.
- **Scale campaign optimizations:** Don't do too much all at once. Give big changes (such as increase in budget or audience adjustment) time to re-learn (3+ weeks).
- **CTR's typically range from 0.03% to 0.05%.** The higher your CTR, the lower your CPR (in theory).
 - Drops in impressions are not a bad thing if your CTR is high! Unless your performance goal is to maximize impressions.
- **Frequency:** below 3-5 (depending on campaign objective) to prevent ad fatigue.
 - If frequency is high, you can pause low performing creative and add new creative, include an ad engagement exclusion list to the audience targeting and/or set a frequency cap (only available with reach based awareness campaigns).
 - How to manage during planning: Develop more ads than recommended with the intention of introducing fresh creative during campaign flight.



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U N I V E R S I T Y