

Measurement and Evaluation Methods Used in Social Media Campaigns

Antonia Zărnescu

Abstract: *In this paper, I have analysed the marketing channels mix used to sell an online course about sales techniques. The purpose is to see if advanced social media campaigns work better than simple social media campaigns with more budget. The two campaigns that have been analysed were released at the same time, for the exact same audience, but with different structures and budget. The primary channel used was Facebook, since, in Romania, it is the main social media network based on the number of users. Besides Facebook, there were secondary tools used, such as e-mail marketing tools (e.g. Active Campaign), helping to complete the final purpose of conversion - meaning the final sale. After analysing some specific parameters from both campaigns, the advanced one proved to bring the most conversions.*

Keywords: *Marketing, social media campaigns, advanced social media campaign, retargeting, social media measurement, social media evaluation*

1. Introduction

2017 is an interesting year in marketing. It is not only because web 2.0 interfered in all the marketing processes, but because the tools are

continuously developing and improving. In a world where the customer gives you real-time feedback, you have to keep up with it, to implement the feedback in a short period of time and adjust your marketing actions as needed.

Even if the core techniques in marketing did not change a lot during the last 10 years, the tools marketers work with are so different. An important criterion is the social part of everyone's life and how a brand is now a part of it. You cannot have a successful marketing campaign if you are not online, for example. This being said, we can now talk about the online environment of any marketing campaign.

2. The marketing campaign

Any marketing campaign has a clear path: tell people your story, convince them that your product / service is the greatest for their need and make them buy what you sell.

In order to do that, people need to trust you before you can sell anything to them. It is not enough to see a great ad or commercial - no, they need to **know you** first. Is your brand trustworthy? Is your product / service indeed what you say it is? Did their friends buy it before? What guarantee do they have that everything will go great if they decide to buy it?

Marketing is about establishing a relationship with your customer. And about telling a story.

The process of establishing a relationship with your customers works extremely well through e-mail marketing. More precisely, you need to collect your potential customers' e-mail addresses in an e-mail marketing tool (e.g. Active Campaign, MailChimp, etc.). After that, you need to start to communicate with them constantly.

In order to collect their e-mail addresses, you need to build a platform, besides your e-mail marketing tool. Squeeze pages are created with exactly this purpose in mind. A squeeze page is a web page where the visitors are requested their e-mail address in order to send them some free content. You give them some valuable content - they give you their personal data. It is a fair trade. Of course, the

content you decide to freely offer needs to be on the same subject your product or service is, so that it is interesting for your audience. It can be an ebook, audiobook, tutorial, etc. If your free content interests them, they will easily subscribe to your newsletter list.

After a person is into your database, you have to start to communicate immediately. More precisely, you can send an automatic welcome e-mail (it can also contain the free content you promised, like the ebook). And here you have two possibilities: enter your new contacts into a funnel or into a broadcast list.

A funnel means that you write a sequence of as many e-mails as you want, in a logical order, with a selling purpose. After you tell stories about your brand or how your products /services help, in the last e-mail you can already send them a link from where to buy it.

If you add new subscribers to a broadcast list after sending them the first automatic newsletter (or newsletters), you send e-mails to all of them simultaneously, in real time. It may not be the best option.

Very well, you manage to send them a sequence of relevant newsletter, but how do you convert them into customers?

For this, you will need a website, shop or a landing page where to send them to make the conversion. A landing page is a web address made specifically for a product or service that you intend to sell. It contains the following:

1. Headline and sub-headline
2. Images / videos
3. Brief copy
4. Call-to-action buttons
5. Trust signals (like the guarantee they will get their money back if the product / service does not work)
6. An explanation of the product / service
7. The benefits of the product / service
8. Testimonials

Basically, from your e-mails, you send your subscribers to your landing page to buy what you sell.

Now that the entire process is explained, we can go back to the first step. You have your squeeze page, but you need to send people to it in order to gain leads. Here is where social media channels appear.

One of the most populated social media channel is Facebook, with over than 1.86 billion users active this year (as Mark Zuckerberg stated on his Facebook page on February 2nd). And if your audience is there, your brand must to be there, too.

You need to create and maintain a Facebook page with content that makes people engage with your brand and with posts that make them trust you.

If you want to start a contact list for your e-mail marketing strategy, Facebook is the place to disseminate your squeeze page. Post it on your page along with a strong call-to-action and promote the post afterwards to the best audience.

Even though it is a clear process and it seems easy to implement, the things can get harder in practice. It is important to know what audience to choose when you target your ads, what budget to spend, how to create your images for ads, etc.

I wanted to see if an advanced marketing campaign, including more channels and more specific targeting, works better than a simple marketing campaign. For this, I have analysed the marketing campaigns for the biggest course launch in Romania (return of investment wise). The purpose was to prove that more complicated marketing campaigns, the ones that include multiple channels linked between them, multiple targeting and split testing bring more conversions than simple campaigns.

I have analysed the messages used in the campaigns, the audiences, budgets and, for each channel and ad, the results they brought. Since I wanted to see which campaign resulted in more conversion, I have analysed the data gathered in Google Analytics and Facebook Insights.

Both campaigns were rolled from February 10th until March 3rd. In the first part of the marketing strategy, testing was split for squeeze pages - there were three slightly different squeeze pages, with

different webdesign and different headlines. They rolled for 6 days before one of the proved to be the best (I have looked at the number of conversions each one had - in this case, how many e-mail addresses from potential clients each one collected). After that, only that one was used in both campaigns.

The best squeeze page was the one with the tempered promises, the most official one, and the most straight to the point. And besides the number of conversions this one had, I could notice that the ads containing a link for this squeeze page had more reach than the ads with the other two, even though the budget and audience were the same for every ad. This means, basically, that Facebook liked more this squeeze page and its content than the other ones, meaning that it will increase its reach.

In campaign number 1 (the advanced one), there were, at the beginning, six ads created for each squeeze page - a total of 18 ads. At first, the audience was based on people's interests and it wasn't a custom audience, while the budget was only \$30 per squeeze page. After a few days, the three ads that performed the worst for every squeeze page were stopped and only three ads remained. After another few days, only one squeeze page remained (the one that performed the best, of course), with three ads running with it.

In campaign number 2 (the simple one), there was only one squeeze page used, not three, and only three ads. In the end, it remained only the best ad from these three and one squeeze page.

In this first point of split testing for squeeze pages, there were a few data to analyse from Facebook Insight and Google Analytics. From Facebook Insight, I have looked at reach, clicks, cost per click (all campaigns had the traffic objective in Facebook), click-through-rate (number of clicks / impressions - meaning how many people from the ones who saw an ad clicked on it) and cost per subscriber.

From this point of view, campaign number 1 brought the most subscribers, so the most conversions. Also, campaign number 1 had split testing for squeeze pages and ads, whilst campaign number 2 had only split testing for ads, risking with the choice of the squeeze page.

In both Facebook campaigns the purpose was for potential clients to click the ad and enter the squeeze page. From that point on, it was the squeeze page's job to convert users to subscribers. So the most important data that I needed to analyse here were reach (to see how many times Facebook chose my campaign to be shown to people in the audience selected), clicks (to see how many people actually clicked on my ad), cost per click (to see how much am I spending on a lead) and click-through-rate (to see from the people who saw the ad how many clicked the link and arrived on the squeeze page - this can tell me if my ad's creativity is good enough or not).

Once the people enter the squeeze page and complete the field where their email address was required, they are redirected to a thank you page. Usually, if you want, as a marketer, your clients email addresses, you have to give them something valuable in return. In this case, it was a video tutorial, a sneak peak for the entire course. On the thank-you page that I have previously mentioned, there was this free video tutorial that was promised to the people if they gave their email address.

Since this material was extremely valuable, I wanted people to see it to its end (it was about two hours long). With this purpose in mind, I have used a tool from Facebook to retarget people who entered the thank you page, but maybe they did not see the entire video. The tool is called Facebook pixel and it is a piece of code that needs to be installed on the web pages that you want (and, of course, have access to, as to the web pages that you own). This pixel is literally an image which has the dimensions of one pixel and it is transparent. This piece of code records all the people who enter your website whilst they are logged in on Facebook. After that, you can create an audience on Facebook with these people that entered your website or a specific page on your website. There are also some rules you can apply when you determine your pixel audience, such as the people who visited specific pages, but not other pages or people who visited this web page and this one, etc.

Campaign number 1, the advanced one, had this kind of audience created (people who entered the thank you page in the last 30 days). I have created ads for this audience which encouraged the people who entered the thank you page to re-enter and see the entire video, in case they did not.

This thank you page that contained the video also contained one button that redirects to the landing page - the web page which was created in order to make people buy. So there was another Facebook campaign created on the pixel audience, with ads that were meant to make people who subscribed to our newsletter and saw the video to go to the landing page and learn more about the course and, eventually, sign up to it. This Facebook campaign was also included only in campaign number 1. No retargeting campaigns were made in campaign number 2.

Once the launch of the course was publicly announced, the landing page was published online. It was promoted through Facebook and e-mail marketing channels in both campaigns. The only difference between the two campaigns was that, in the advanced one, I have used the retargeting option. Retargeting ads contained benefits and statistics from previous editions of the course.

<i>Budget spent on campaign no. 1</i>	<i>Budget spent on campaign no. 2</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total budget spent: \$4,992.75 • Budget spent on Squeeze Page ads: \$4,047.59 • Budget spent on Landing Page ads: \$358.20 • Budget spent on retargeting ads: \$588.96 • Squeeze Page clicks: 37,632 • Leads on Squeeze Page: 8,994.64 • Cost per lead: \$0.45 • Landing Page clicks: 7,304 • Landing Page conversions: 52 • Cost per conversion: \$6.88 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total budget spent: \$4,992.75 • Budget spent on Squeeze Page ads: \$4,047.59 • Budget spent on Landing Page ads: \$945.16 • Squeeze Page clicks: 35,472 • Leads on Squeeze Page: 6,745 • Cost per lead: \$0.60 • Landing Page clicks: 14,302 • Landing Page conversions: 37 • Cost per conversion: \$25.54

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, the advanced campaign had better results than the simple one. The costs were reduced here, there were more leads and more conversions.

When you want your customers to buy something, especially if it is something expensive, retargeting is an essential tool. Retargeting ads follow your potential customer according to their previous actions and persuade him or her to buy.

Bibliography

1. Bădău, H.M., 2011, *Tehnici de comunicare în social media*, Iași, Polirom.
2. Cmeciu, C., 2013, *Tendențe actuale în campaniile de relații publice*, Iași, Polirom.
3. Coman, C., 2001, *Relațiile publice: principii și strategii*, Iași, Polirom.
4. Dagenais, B., 2003, *Campania de relații publice*, Iași, Polirom.
5. Falls, J., Deckers, E., 2012, *No Bullshit Social Media: The All-Business, No-Hype Guide to Social Media Marketing*, n.p., Pearson Que.
6. Gregory, A., 2009, *Planificarea și managementul campaniilor de relații publice*, Iași, Polirom.
7. Heath, R.L., 2013, *Encyclopedia of Public Relations*, ediția a doua, [Washington DC?]: SAGE Publications, Inc.
8. Kotler, P., 1999, *Principiile marketingului*, București, Teora.
9. Lindstrom, M., *Small data*, 2016, București, Publica.
10. Oliver, S., 2009, *Strategii de relații publice*, Iași, Polirom.
11. Peretti, A., Legrand, J. A., Boniface, J., 2001, *Tehnici de comunicare*, Iași, Polirom.
12. Wilcox, D. L., Cameron, G. T., Ault, P. H., Agee, W. K., 2009, *Relații publice. Strategii și tactici*, București, Curtea Veche.

Webography

1. Date demografice Facebook Romania, www.facebrands.ro/demografice.html, accesat la 17.05.2017.
2. Date utilizatori Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10103696225640981&set=pb.4.-2207520000.1496682498.&type=3&theater>, accesat la 05.03.2017.