

RETARGETING MANDATORY TO SURVIVE

10 BEST PRACTICES FOR LAUNCHING A SUCCESSFUL RETARGETING CAMPAIGN

Retargeting is a powerful digital marketing technique when campaigns are run correctly. First let's begin with the NEVER EVER'S.

There are Two MUST NOTS that we should start off with immediately.

1. NEVER use a new product, launch or market to begin retargeting. You always want to use a viewer or visitor that has at LEAST visited your page at LEAST three times. Anything else will give false results and will not give a true ROI (if you get one at all)
2. NEVER test with just one set of products. It MUST be an entire catalog of products under on brand. Not a single collection or cherry picked pieces. This will give false information and there will be only one guarantee NO ROI.

We recommend the following best practices to help ensure you craft retargeting campaigns that result in the brand lift and ROI you may have heard about:

1. Frequency Caps

One or two visits to your website doesn't mean prospects want to start seeing your ads everywhere they browse. Overexposure quickly results in decreased campaign performance, which is why its almost always advisable to use a frequency cap. Prospects may ignore your ads completely, a phenomenon known as banner blindness, or they may begin to have a negative association with your brand as you follow them all over the web.

A frequency cap will limit the number of times a tagged user will see your ads and will prevent potential customers from feeling overwhelmed. Be strategic with how and when you serve ads, and take into consideration that not every website visitor will be at the same point in their purchase journey. We typically recommend 17-20 ads per user per month, but you can work with your retargeting provider to determine what makes the most sense for your campaign.

2. Burn Code

Have you ever made a purchase online only to find you're still being inundated with advertisements for that company or product? By continuing to serve ads to converted customers, companies are only serving to annoy people. Don't make the same mistake.

Luckily, there's a very simple solution: use a burn pixel. This snippet of code, placed in your post-transaction page, will untag any users who have made a purchase, ensuring you stop serving them ads. It's that easy. In addition to not annoying your customer, the burn code saves you money. Why waste valuable impressions on the people who already converted?

Converted customers can still be a part of your retargeting campaign, just don't ask them to take the same action twice. Now, you have an opportunity to retarget current customers with new ads. Instead of showing them what they have already bought, you can upsell, cross-sell, or even offer referral discounts through new ads. Essentially, burn the previous campaign and enroll them in a new one!

3. Audience Segmentation

Audience segmentation allows for you to tailor ad messages to users in different stages of the purchase funnel. The process is simple: you place different retargeting pixels on different pages of your site, and then tailor creative's based on the depth of engagement of each user.

When a visitor comes to your main page, you can target them with creatives that communicate general brand awareness. If they looked at your product page, you can serve them with more specific ads around your product offerings. Regardless of users level of interest; audience segmentation ensures you are serving relevant and engaging ads.

4. Demographic, Geographic, & Contextual Targeting

Targeting gives you the opportunity to fine-tune your ad placements, ensuring greater relevancy and increasing ad performance. Advertisements can be targeted based on demographic information, like age or gender, contextual factors like subject matter of the website, or geographic data.

When you target your ads with consideration for demographic, geographic, and contextual variables, you don't waste valuable impressions on people who aren't relevant to your campaign. Targeting not only improves the relevancy of your retargeting campaign by placing the right ads in front of the right people, but it also lowers your costs. Instead of serving ads to everyone, you're saving your money and showing ads to the people for whom your ads make the most sense.

5. Setting View-Through Conversion Windows

For brand marketers interested in increasing awareness and establishing market share, display can be a highly effective and measurable channel. A frequent complaint of the direct response crowd is that online display advertising doesn't drive clicks at the same rate as paid search advertising, but clicks aren't telling the whole story. Retargeted ads, even if they aren't clicked, can provide brand lift. In one com Score study, retargeted ads led to a 1046% increase in branded search, a clear sign of heightened brand awareness and recall.

The view-through conversion takes into account that some ads don't trigger immediate buying decisions, but can nonetheless influence people to make purchases later, also known as the billboard effect. In the same way a catchy billboard grabs your attention and boosts brand awareness, an online display ad can encourage a later action. View-through conversions provide advertisers with richer data around ad performance by considering conversions that occur within a certain window after a user sees an ad. There are various practices around the length of a view-through conversion window, some providers will set a 30-day window for example, but we recommend 24 hours. A 24-hour view-through conversion window will provide you with valuable data around the stickiness of your ads, the quality of your ad placements, and your audience's shopping habits, without inflating or overstating your ads effectiveness.

6. Single-Provider Retargeting

Running retargeting campaigns with multiple providers has a number of serious drawbacks. If you run with multiple providers, each provider will be bidding for the same spots on the same websites, driving up media costs and decreasing the chances each has to serve ads to your users. You may also run into difficulties effectively implementing frequency caps, as each retargeting provider will be operating independently.

If you renew to retargeting and you want to test the waters with different providers, it's more effective to run tests in subsequent months using one provider at a time. You'll have a better sense of which campaign actually performed better without skewing your results.

7. Rotating Creative's + A/B Testing

Even if you launch your campaign with incredibly strong creative's, running with the same set of ads for months on end will result in a lower performing campaign. According to a ReTargeter study, click through rates decrease by almost 50% after five months of running the same set of ads. After seeing the same ads again and again, a user's interest is no longer piqued and the ads

are more likely to blend into the background. By rotating your ad creative every few months, you can easily avoid experiencing these dips in performance.

Simple A/B tests can provide the data you need to run campaigns with high-performing ads. Instead of relying on what you think will work, you can run tests for measurable and actionable results. A/B testing your creative's will help you determine the optimal combination of ad copy, calls-to-action, and graphics. Here at Retargeted, we always run A/B tests and recommend that our clients do the same.

8. Optimized Creative's

The banner ads you use may do more to determine success than any other factor of your retargeting campaign, so its crucial to devote sufficient resources to making beautiful ads. Marketers often try to cram as much information as possible into the space allotted. This method of designing banners will only distract your audience and wont serve the purpose of the ad: to win their attention and keep it. You want to be memorable, so that even if your audience doesn't click your ad, it stays with them. Often, creating memorable ads is best achieved by keeping copy minimal and design simple. All of your banner ads should be well-branded and recognizable. Use bold colors, concise copy, and clear calls to action with big, clickable buttons. For more suggestions, check out our section on banner ad best practices.

When used properly, retargeting is incredibly powerful. Follow these best practices when you run your retargeting campaigns and you'll be sure to see high returns.

WHEN RETARGETING B2B – COMPLETELY DIFFERENT THEN CONSUMER – SO THE RULES ARE ALL WRONG

As any seasoned display advertiser can tell you, one of the biggest determinants of a display campaign's performance is creative. There are quite a few established best practices for designing successful banner ads, but not all of them should be taken as gospel.

With design, it's rare to find rules that are universally applicable. Depending on your product, your brand identity, and each individual campaign's goals, some rules are made to be broken. Here are five examples of widely accepted design rules that may be better to ignore:

1. Photos of people always boost performance

It's often assumed that ads featuring people will always outperform their photo-less counterparts. It's absolutely possible for a well-employed photo to attract attention, increase relatability, and improve performance, but the wrong photo is likely to do more harm than good.

It all depends the photo and how you use it. For consumer brands, featuring a real person using or wearing your product can be the most effective way to showcase it. For B2B companies or consumer brands with more abstract services it can sometimes be trickier. Some B2B bands have used ads featuring real customers alongside a testimonial, which is one potentially effective way to use photos to establish a connection.

Ultimately, the trick is making sure the photo is truly relatable. If your photo helps your customers see themselves wearing, using, enjoying, or benefiting from your product, then go for it. If not, try a different approach.

2. Green increases clicks, red attracts attention, orange encourages action (and so on and so forth)

Most webpage backgrounds are white, so the prevailing wisdom is to use bright colors to make sure your ad stands out from the background. In 99 cases out of 100, I would agree. (That said, some designers will recommend designing ads that blend in more with the content).

You'll sometimes hear that green buttons increase clicks or that yellow backgrounds encourage action, but when you look at actual test results, it's rare that any two stories align. Sometimes a green button beats a red button and sometimes it's vice versa. There's no one magic color that always does the trick.

As a rule, it's more important to stick to your brand guidelines than to follow someone else's idea of what the perfect banner background looks like. Especially if you're running a retargeting campaign, you want your brand to be recognizable at a glance. Sacrificing your brand colors for orange or yellow because it's "action-inspiring" is likely to detract from a retargeting campaign, which derives much of its effectiveness from the power of brand recognition.

3. Always employ an urgent call-to-action

Here's another piece of banner design wisdom that I agree with: calls to action (CTAs) are crucial, and if you want anyone to click on your ads, you'd better include them.

A lot of design advice goes further, and many argue that the more urgency in a call-to-action the better. But that isn't always good advice. Sometimes, particularly in ecommerce, adding a level of urgency with CTAs like "buy now!" or "only a few left!" can encourage immediate action. However, with larger

purchases like B2B software, softer CTAs like “learn more” often perform better than immediate calls to buy or sign up.

4. Rely exclusively on CTR as a performance metric

CTR can be a valuable measurement tool for the strength of your ads, and it often makes sense to determine the winner of an A/B test based on highest CTR. But there is significant evidence that clicks don't correlate to conversions. If the goal of your campaign is branding, then clicks aren't necessarily worth recording. You'll have to look to other metrics like share of conversation and branded search to measure the impact (Avinash Kaushik has more suggestions for useful metrics here). Even for direct response campaigns, the ultimate goal is revenue, not page visits. If you're just worried about driving traffic, CTR is a great measure of success, but if you're running a re-engagement campaign like retargeting, it's probably about the conversion, not the click. Success should always be measured based on your ultimate goal, so don't get caught up measuring clicks if you're looking for sales.

5. Flash is always more effective than static

Most studies that address the performance difference between Flash and static ads have found that Flash ad outperform static ads, but here's the kicker: the metric used is almost always CTR. I have yet to see any compelling evidence that a Flash banner drives more sales than a static banner, so bear that in mind when deciding on ad types.