CMOs and brands effectively lean into performance-driven content

By Julien Fievez   2 Nov 2022

Marketers have increasingly turned to using data and analysing how consumers interact with content to make important decisions and optimise results.

Source: www.unsplash.com

Once someone lands on your webpage tracking how they interact with your content can assist brands tailor future engagement. By continuously assessing how content is performing – as well as why – marketers are able to make informed decisions that will better serve customers in future. This can be done by combining a number of data points including those from UX and creative design as well as advanced audience insights and segmentation.

Content has evolved, how we use it should too

A decade ago, content considerations were limited to things as simple as having the words on your advert matching those on the landing page. Now marketers operate on a much more granular level, for example we know that people in Cape Town are more likely to continue on the digital journey if they see an image of Table Mountain when they reach a landing page, while those in Johannesburg respond better to a city skyline. But this is just the tip of the content iceberg.

Even though advances in data capture and analysis have allowed us to create unique content devised specifically for individuals, some users may not necessarily respond to it. However, despite a few regional peculiarities, we have definitely seen that local brands which are further along in their digital maturity journey will be more likely to effectively employ advanced data to drive a performance-driven content strategy.

In fact, we have seen some sophisticated use of CRM technology, aided by intensive research, that has really refined the content displayed on ads. In one project we ran in excess of 300 product ads on Facebook and, based on a user's journey, we could refine which campaign characters should be on their landing page and even what colour scheme they will most likely respond to.

An ongoing process that needs to be measured on many levels

One of the challenges of measuring performance-driven content is that it covers so much of the scope of work for digital marketing. If one were to take the classic marketing funnel of awareness, consideration and conversion, we wouldn't just look at each of the sales achieved along the way, but at every piece of data, gathered at every step of the journey. We would then compare that to a predetermined set of KPIs, which would have been set at the beginning of the project.

The measurement of performance-driven content must be ongoing. It is not a silver bullet solution and the work can't be rushed. What's more, a big part of this process must include acknowledging the divergence of individual and audience. We can never cater to every individual but, once we have placed audiences in buckets, we can get fairly granular.

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Let's stay with the airline example. If a group of people have clicked on a video about Majorca, have searched for some flights to the island, including dates, but they have clicked out of the expensive options; then we can surmise they are looking for a low fare option, rather than an expensive package. So, we can now see how effective the content journey has been by looking at how particular content has driven people to the airline's website. We know how many have entered their details, as well as how effective all the micro details (such as backgrounds, how information translated on the mobile site etc), have been.

By keeping track and measuring all these small details we can focus on performance indicators per execution and then look at the complete funnel to assess how many engagements it took for them to book a ticket. Based on this data, we can refine the individual steps to try to influence the decision, place the airline's name in the mix earlier, and ultimately shorten the time to conversion.

This is clearly a complex undertaking, but by investing in the process clients have seen real results that have more than justified the time, effort and budget.

Test-and-learn is the only way

The final aspect to bear in mind is that successful content depends on the constant assessment of how your customers are engaging. If companies are going to meet the demand of consumers, performance content must constantly adapt to shifting micro-behaviours. We have seen, without a doubt, that good performance-driven content will rely on a robust test-and-learn environment.

Proper assessment of all the available data is a must. Making effective changes could be as simple as changing a theme song on your ad, but without detailed and constant assessment, you may never find that out.

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