

Alberta Conservation Association 2016/17 Project Summary Report

Project Name: Online Advertising

Information, Education and Communications Program Manager: Don Myhre

Project Leader: Budd Erickson

Primary ACA staff on this project: Budd Erickson

Partnerships: N/A

Key Findings

- Launched five Google AdWords campaigns that generated 30,000+ clicks (entrances to website) and 770,000+ impressions (ad was seen).
- Launched one Facebook campaign that reached over 150,000 people, recorded nearly 10,000 engagement actions, and garnered over 700 followers.

Introduction

We use online advertising to increase public awareness of Alberta Conservation Association (ACA) and our initiatives. By developing advertising campaigns, often based on seasonal initiatives, we can greatly increase our exposure to the public.

Online search advertising enables the public to easily find ACA's website and specific web pages by typing keywords into the Google search engine. Traditionally, websites reach the first page of Google search results for specific keywords through a variety of metrics that determine the website's quality and relevance. With online advertising, we can force our web pages to the top, so the top one to three results for specific keywords will be our web pages.

Methods

The main method of online advertising is Google's advertising platform, AdWords. This platform allows us to create multiple campaigns targeting hundreds of keywords, often geo-targeted to specific locations. The idea behind search advertising is to attract users who are already searching for something similar on Google. Instead of spending money advertising to people who may or may not be interested, every dollar spent on online advertising is carefully targeted—through the use of interests, keywords, gender, location, past behaviours, and other metrics—at users who are much more likely to engage with ACA content.

As opposed to traditional, analog-style advertising, such as billboards and magazines, online advertising allows us to track a variety of audience and performance metrics for post-analysis and optimization. Not only does online advertising allow us to educate the public, we are able to

learn more about the public's preferences, responsiveness and opinions in regard to specific issues, art styles and content personality.

A new method used this year was Facebook's new advertising platform. We used this platform for a whitefish ice-fishing campaign with great results. An added benefit of this method is synergy with our Facebook page. So in addition to reaching 150,000 people with the campaign message, and getting nearly 10,000 engagement actions, the campaign also garnered 700+ followers—a new audience that wants to hear more about what ACA has to say.

Another new method being developed is the use of audiences. Both through Google and Facebook, audiences allows us to create lists of users who actioned some type of trigger. For example, users who visited our Learn to Ice Fish web page are now being put into an audience. In the future, we can increase advertising efficiency by targeting these users with specific content.

Results

- Launched five Google AdWords campaigns
 - 30,000+ clicks (entrances to website)
 - 770,000+ impressions (ad was seen)
 - \$35,000+ received from Google advertising grant
 - 4.1% click-through rate (1%–2% is considered healthy in the industry)
- Launched one Facebook campaign
 - 150,000+ impressions (ad was seen)
 - 9,000+ engagements (likes, comments or shares)
 - 700+ new followers

Conclusions

Connecting with our audience through social media is a must-have media stream for increasing our public profile and circulating current information on conservation, hunting, angling and trapping in Alberta.

Communications

- Facebook
- Twitter
- *Constant Contact* e-newsletter
- YouTube