

Case Study

Paid Digital Ads

ISSUE

Ceisler Media had been working with a nonprofit client who had been managing their own social media advertising efforts with the goal of growing their LinkedIn audience.

The company had been managing LinkedIn ads themselves for many months. Results were lacking, and the client asked Ceisler Media for guidance. They had spent \$55,000 on LinkedIn ads in a one-year period. More than \$33,000 of that budget was spent in a campaign group titled “New Followers.” As you might guess, this budget was spent in hopes of expanding their existing LinkedIn audience.

Their results looked great – too good to be true for a campaign geared toward increasing followers. After diving a little deeper, we realized that the campaign set-up was not optimal. Only \$400 of the \$33,000 spent went toward ads with an objective targeted toward gaining followers. Instead, nearly the entire budget was spent on campaigns with an engagement-focused objective.

Misunderstandings during ad set-up can lead to costly, sub-optimal results. While engagement-focused ads do include a “Follow Us” button along with the sponsored content, they are not tailored for follower growth. As such, the client-managed campaign only resulted in 475 new followers in a 10-month timespan, which was a mere 32% of all new followers during that time.

While the ads did help their content reach a relevant audience and resulted in some audience growth, they were not successful in efficiently gaining followers as intended.

STRATEGY

Ceisler Media’s team published a new campaign in mid-October 2023 to increase new LinkedIn followers for our client.

We targeted a national audience in various specialties. The client wanted to specifically target decision-makers, so we focused our efforts on an audience of C-suite executives, owners, partners and entrepreneurs.

As part of our budget strategy, we set a manual bid slightly above the average for similar campaigns to ensure maximum delivery. For best ROI, we adjusted the settings to be charged per engagement instead of impression, meaning the client only paid when someone interacts with the ads.

We adjusted strategy regularly to improve results. For example, we adjusted the messaging based on which text options led to more engagements. We also expanded our target audience in December, adding one campaign targeted to a smaller region of the U.S. and another based on a lookalike audience of the client’s newsletter subscribers.

RESULTS

After 12 weeks with less than \$5,000 spent, the ads earned 5.2 million impressions. This resulted in 900+ engagements and increased the client’s new followers by 90% compared to the previous three-month timespan. While ads were running, more than 82% of the client’s new LinkedIn followers stemmed from this campaign.

Our efforts led to far better results than the client was achieving independently.

The 12-week follower campaign created by Ceisler Media resulted in 38% more followers than the 43-week campaign created by the client. We achieved these results while decreasing advertising costs by 85%.

| | Client-Created Follower Campaign | CMIA-Created Follower Campaign |
|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Duration | 43 weeks | 12 weeks |
| Spend | \$33,292.57 | \$4,929.75 |
| Impressions | 2,637,562 | 5,206,667 |
| Total clicks | 45,275 | 933 |
| Click-thru rate | 1.72% | 0.02% |
| Cost per click | \$0.74 | \$5.28 |
| Followers from sponsored ads | 475 | 657 |
| % of new followers resulting from sponsored ads | 32% | 82% |

As you can see from the chart above, some numbers look more impressive in the campaign created by the client (total clicks, click-thru rate and cost per click). It is important to remember that expected results vary widely based on your campaign objective.

The results we achieved during our 12-week campaign were on-par for a campaign specifically targeted toward gaining followers. Analyzing results for social media campaigns can be a complex process. Interpreting which numbers matter most requires expertise from digital content professionals.

Organic Social Media

Paid advertising is only a small portion of the work we do for this client. Another piece of the puzzle is organic social media, which we began managing in March 2023.

Over the course of a year, we saw some major improvements in their organic social media results. Most notably, their average engagement rate per impression is sitting at 6.9%. The [average engagement rate](#) for companies in the technology industry is less than 1.5%, so their content performs well above average. We increased the engagement rate by more than 30% within one year.

We also strategized a more consistent posting schedule for the client to strengthen their brand and keep their followers engaged. Compared to the previous year, we published 75% more Twitter/X posts, 64% more Facebook posts, 322% more LinkedIn posts, and 93% more Instagram posts. This work led to more than 185,000 impressions across all social platforms, a 21% increase from the previous year. Posts earned more than 12,700 engagements and 7,500 link clicks. This was a 52% increase and 78% increase, respectively.

These efforts helped grow the client's social media audience organically. In one year, we helped them gain more than 2,200 followers. With more than 6,200 followers total, this was a 75% increase in just a one-year period. This rate of growth was 169% faster than the previous 365 days.

Conclusion

When it comes to social media, paid and organic strategies should always complement each other. When an organic post performs well for this client, we suggest boosting it to help the content reach a broader audience. We use best-performing ads to help inform future organic content.

Social media also feeds into the client's larger communications strategy that involves e-newsletters, website content and news media. When all these components work in harmony, we see the best results for our clients.