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**Bizo and IAB Special Edition**

# **B2B Online Display Advertising**

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## **Learn to:**

- Reach a B2B audience with online advertising
- Use social media for B2B brand building
- Use audience targeting to influence your best buyers

Compliments of

**bizo**  
Business Audience Marketing

**iab.**



**John Arnold**

## **About Bizo**

Bizo is how B2B marketers identify and reach their target audiences online. Fueled by Bizo's audience of more than 120 million professionals around the world, including more than 85 percent of the U.S. business population, the Bizo Marketing Platform can precisely target business people by specific business demographic criteria. Bizo's customers use the platform's data management and targeting capabilities to reach audiences online anywhere they travel online and to engage those that come to their websites, landing pages, and social channels. Bizo has earned the confidence of more than 750 SMB marketers and large global brands including AMEX, Mercedes-Benz, Monster, Salesforce.com, Porsche, Microsoft, AT&T, and UPS who use Bizo to impact every stage of their sales and marketing funnels.

For more information, visit [www.bizo.com](http://www.bizo.com).

## **About the IAB and the IAB B2B Committee**

The Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) is comprised of more than 500 leading media and technology companies that are responsible for selling 86 percent of online advertising in the United States. On behalf of its members, the IAB is dedicated to the growth of the interactive advertising marketplace, of interactive's share of total marketing spend, and of its members' share of total marketing spend. The IAB educates marketers, agencies, media companies, and the wider business community about the value of interactive advertising. Working with its member companies, the IAB both evaluates and recommends standards and practices and fields critical research on interactive advertising. Founded in 1996, the IAB is headquartered in New York City with a Public Policy office in Washington, D.C. For more information, please visit [www.iab.net](http://www.iab.net).

The IAB B2B Committee is dedicated to helping SMB, mid-tier, and enterprise businesses navigate the rapidly evolving B2B digital space, focusing on Best Practices, Education, and Events. The committee meets four times a year and is co-chaired by Bob Felsenthal, BtoB Magazine/Crains, and Mike Friedenber, IDG Enterprise.

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**by John Arnold**

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# Introduction

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**B**2B decision makers no longer make decisions on their own. Even C-level buyers operate in an atmosphere of consensus and buy-in from multiple coworkers and influencers. Data-driven decision making is the norm, and B2B purchases are based on facts, input from peers, and a lot of online research. How in the world is your marketing going to make an impact when there are so many people on so many websites doing so much research to decide what to buy from whom?

A big part of the answer is B2B online display advertising, which gives you a way to reach your target audience at all stages of a decision-making cycle. You can use your B2B display ads to increase awareness, generate leads, nurture them, and help them make a decision. You can reach business-people with ads while they are multitasking on social media sites. You can also measure your results at each stage of the marketing funnel and attribute your advertising to advancing prospects through each step of a decision. You can fine-tune your messaging along the way.

This book guides you through the process of building and launching a B2B online display advertising program, and explains how you can create, test, target, launch, and measure your results.

## *How This Book Is Organized*

You can start with any chapter in this book and use it as a reference, or read the whole thing in order cover to cover. Here's what each chapter covers:

- ✔ **Chapter 1: Mapping a B2B Display Ad Strategy** explains the steps involved in planning your online advertising and getting ready to launch.
- ✔ **Chapter 2: Making an Impression with B2B Ad Creative** shows you how to design impactful, online display advertising creative.

- ✓ **Chapter 3: Targeting, Testing, and Optimizing B2B Display Ads Effectively** walks you through the methods of targeting an audience and optimizing ads through testing.
- ✓ **Chapter 4: Advertising Your B2B Brand in Social Media** explains how to nurture leads by placing online display advertising on Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook.
- ✓ **Chapter 5: Retargeting B2B Display Ads** introduces you to the power of basic and advanced retargeting.
- ✓ **Chapter 6: Determining B2B Display Advertising Impact** shows you how to measure your online display advertising and attribute impact to each ad.
- ✓ **Chapter 7: Ten B2B Advertising Traps to Avoid** is a list of the most common B2B online display advertising mistakes.

## Icons Used in This Book

Icons are used throughout this book to call attention to material worth noting in a special way. Here's what each means:



Some points bear repeating, and others bear remembering. When you see this icon, take special note of what you're about to read.



This icon indicates technical information that is probably most interesting to techies, but you never know when you may need to talk to one.



This icon indicates a suggestion that will help you do something faster or avoid repeating someone else's mistake.

## Chapter 1

---

# Mapping a B2B Display Ad Strategy

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Answering strategic questions
  - ▶ Planning for the greatest impact
  - ▶ Focusing on B2B audiences
- 

**W**hen it comes to B2B display advertising, your company will be profitable much sooner if you take the time to think through the most important details about your strategy in advance of your first campaign launching.

In this chapter, I show you which types of display ad strategies to consider from among the many choices available to B2B marketers. I also explain how to get your ads in front of B2B audiences and which questions to ask before you begin advertising.

## *Asking the Right Questions Before You Start*

Display advertising gives you a lot of metrics you can use to make decisions and optimize campaign performance, but it's a good idea to answer the following questions before you

begin. Answering these questions also allows you to prioritize the steps involved in launching your first or next display advertising campaign.

✔ **Where does your company need to make an impact?**

To answer this question, think about your company's experience with your target prospect audiences and the typical decision-making cycle they go through from beginning to end. Then, determine where advertising is needed to attract new buyers, educate them, and influence final purchase decisions.

✔ **Who is your target audience and how will your display ads reach them?**

To answer this question, describe your most profitable prospects in as much detail as possible on an industry level, company level, and role level. You need this information to target the audiences that matter most to your business.

✔ **How will you define success?**

You need to choose your metrics wisely depending on whether the end-goal of your campaign is to increase awareness of your company and products, more deeply educate target prospects, or tee them up for a sales conversation. For example, if you're looking for your display campaign to increase recognition of your brand, measuring its success based on clicks or leads generated is most likely a dead end. I discuss metrics and multi-channel attribution modeling in more detail in Chapter 6.

✔ **Which goals will drive your ad creative?**

Your ad creative drives the actions your audience takes when engaging with your ad impressions, so it's important to define your goals and build your creative to suggest the actions that move your target audience toward your goals. For example, if one of your goals is brand awareness, your creative is likely to emphasize logos, colors, and emotions. I explain effective ad creative in detail in Chapter 2.

✔ **Where will you focus your time and money?**

This is a question you should not only answer at the beginning of a new strategy, but also frequently throughout the implementation of your strategy as you target, test, track, and optimize your ads for better results. I explain testing, targeting, and optimizing in Chapter 3.

# Navigating Multiple Media Choices

According to a 2012 study by Forrester Research, Americans are spending almost 20 hours per week on the Internet on the average. That's good news if you want to reach your audience with online display advertising. The challenge is reaching the right audience frequently enough when there are more than 600 million websites for Americans to choose from when spending their time browsing.

The next sections show you how to build an online display ad strategy that will reach your target business audience and give you the best chance of success without wasting time and money on ineffective ad placements.

In order to ensure your B2B ads aren't ignored, your strategy needs to include the following three components:

- ✔ **Sophistication:** Your ads need to be served by a smart technology platform that allows you to automatically serve ads to the right audience in the right place at the right time.
- ✔ **Versatility:** You need to choose advertising that has the ability to impact all stages of your audience's decision-making cycle. Fortunately, this is a somewhat built-in capability of display advertising as shown in Figure 1-1.
- ✔ **Timing:** Your ads need to be in front of your audience early, often, and throughout the buying cycle, to ensure your brand is one of those included on the evaluation shortlist.



**Figure 1-1:** Display advertising can influence all stages of a decision-making cycle.

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## *Planning for audience impressions, not ad impressions*

A good strategy doesn't only aim at placing display ads on specific websites. Instead, your strategy should focus on placing your advertising creative in front of business influencers and decision makers. To do that, you need to plan for audience impressions, not ad impressions.

*Ad impressions* refer to the appearance of your ad creative on a website. Although there are many ways publishers who provide advertising space can count ad impressions, an ad impression is only valuable to your business if the impression is seen by someone. It's impossible to know whether your ad impression was actually seen by someone, but you don't have to be satisfied with counting anonymous impressions if you instead focus your strategy on audience impressions.

*Audience impressions* happen when someone who meets the characteristics of your target audience visits a website containing one of your ad impressions. Audience impressions

are made possible when publishers share anonymous data about a web visitor with your audience-targeting platform. The result is advertising space that is more likely to reach your target audience than space based on content or a type of website alone. I explain audience-targeting platforms in more detail a little later in this chapter.

## *Focusing on a suitable range of marketing goals*

Thinking through all of your marketing goals and prioritizing them can help you focus your strategy on making good advertising decisions. By taking these steps, you can achieve your most important marketing goals throughout the buying process.

For the broadest perspective, take the following steps for each display advertising campaign you're planning to launch.

- 1. Determine where your target audience is in the marketing funnel.**

Your audience advances through the funnel, so you should include each funnel stage in your campaign strategy. Remember that B2B sales cycles can take a lot longer than most consumer sales cycles. So, it's important to define your funnel stages.

- 2. Define your goals and the display strategy most likely to achieve your goals in each stage.**

- 3. Determine which actions you want your prospects to take after viewing your ads and choose the metrics that are best suited to measuring the success of those actions.**

For example, you may want your target audience to recognize your brand over your competitors, register for a webinar, or purchase a product. So, you could choose to focus your ads on share of voice, page visits, and conversion lift, respectively, as prospects move through the funnel.

## *Buying direct from publishers*

Many large publishers of online content offer advertising space directly. Going direct allows you to target the typical visitors that publisher receives; however, the audience is limited by the number of visitors that publisher receives on its own web properties who may or may not be in an advertiser's target audience. Additionally, you may miss out on exposing your brand to target audiences who may be visiting all of the other sites on the web.

## *Buying through ad networks*

*Advertising networks* are companies that buy advertising space from multiple publishers and allow you to reach a larger audience than you otherwise would by advertising directly with a single publisher.

## *Buying through audience-targeting platforms*

Audience-targeting platforms are similar to advertising networks, because they allow you to reach multiple audiences on multiple websites from one platform. But, unlike most ad networks, audience-targeting platforms enable you to display your advertising based on B2B audience data such as job function, industry, company size, seniority, and more.

Audience targeting can be extremely precise, allowing you to reach (and spend money) only on the people who matter to your business. For example, a website with B2B content might attract job seekers who are not good prospects for your company's products or services. Audience targeting can help keep your ads from displaying to these less valuable visitors.

## Chapter 2

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# Making an Impression with B2B Ad Creative

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Considering offers and landing pages
  - ▶ Designing display ads that stand out
  - ▶ Making technical creative considerations
- 

**W**hen your advertising appears in a web page, the level of engagement the ad deserves from your target audience depends almost entirely on the ability of your ad creative to entice your audience. This chapter shows you how to develop interesting, attention-grabbing, actionable advertising creative and associated landing pages and offers.

### *Starting with the Goal*

Designing good ad creative should begin with defining where you want to make an impact on the marketing funnel. (I show you how to define marketing goals in Chapter 1.)

After you know exactly who you're targeting and why, you need to start with the end in mind by defining which actions you want your audience to take when they click through on your ad and end up on the landing page associated with your ad. A *landing page* is a web page that is built or chosen specifically to accept all the visitors who click on one or more ads and tell them what you want them to do next. Examples include filling out a form in exchange for expert research or advice or scheduling a demo.

Your landing page and offer should be in sync with your advertising targeting or creative. The more effective your landing page and your offer, the fewer clicks it takes to move people ahead in a buying decision and the lower your overall cost of conversion.

## *The landing page*

Your landing page creative should match your ad creative visually. But, there's more to it than that. You need to treat your advertisement as a teaser that attracts a click, and your landing page as an offer that invites a commitment. In order for your landing page creative to drive a commitment, create a landing page for each version of your ad, and make sure it's concise and as easy as possible for people to read the page and fill out any information you ask for.

## *The offer*

It's essential to test a variety of offers so you can optimize the actions taken through your ads.



Before investing in a large-scale advertising campaign, use A/B offer testing with two offers across a smaller pool of targeted ad impressions to determine which creative choices are more successful. *A/B offer testing* is the process of creating two ads, each with one altered variable in the offer, and testing the results of each ad. For example

- ✔ In ad version A, the offer copy is Free Whitepaper.
- ✔ In ad version B, the offer copy is Free Trial.

A/B testing isn't a one-time decision. You should continuously test A and B versions of your offers to keep the best performing ads deployed and to replace ads with other offers you think of as your campaigns continue to run.

## Considering Multiple Contexts with Your Designs

Designing for *marketing funnel context* means your advertising creative should be altered based on where you're looking to make an impact on the marketing funnel. For example:

- ✔ **Top-funnel creative** should be focused on brand awareness to drive more people into the top of your marketing funnel. You don't need to drive people to download a whitepaper or sign up for a webinar. Your goal should be for business decision-makers to understand who you are and what you do. If you generate any leads at the branding stage, consider it a bonus. The top-funnel metrics that really matter are brand recall, awareness, and increasing the number of visits to your website from your target audience.
- ✔ **Mid-funnel creative** should be designed to educate and engage your target prospects. At this point in the marketing funnel, your creative should push content to users who were already familiar with your brand (thanks to your top-funnel branding campaign). This is a good time to offer prospects a valuable whitepaper or report that educates them about the value of your solutions.
- ✔ **Bottom-funnel creative** should be designed to drive conversions. Your creative needs to convey the value of your offer clearly and succinctly. Once you have your bottom-funnel creative developed, align it with your retargeting strategy. I explain retargeting in Chapter 5.

## Making Good Creative Decisions a Habit

Designing display ads is both an art and a science. The art is applying visually appealing, attractive, and often surprising elements in your ads. The science is knowing your audience and validating your decisions with data and testing. The next sections show you how to home in on the art and science combinations that will get you the best results.

## *Choosing images and ad copy*

Your creative decisions should strike a balance between focusing on the information you want to get across and using a tone, words, and images that will grab the attention of the audience you're targeting. Here are some tips for making your images and copy effective.

- ✔ Your ads should contain a single highly focused message. Remember, your ad should be designed to attract interest, not confuse your audience with options.
- ✔ Your ads should include a good measure of “empty space” with no images or copy. The space around your ad makes your copy stand out.
- ✔ Your logo should be placed in a prominent position. If you want to occupy the mind share of your prospects, your logo should be highly visible.
- ✔ Don't merely convert print or other offline creative to a display format. Design specifically for display.
- ✔ Your call to action should be clear, as shown in Figure 2-1. Explain exactly what is going to happen when the ad is clicked. Don't say “click here.” Instead, use more descriptive words such as visit, download, watch, or read.



**Figure 2-1:** Use a clear and concise call to action.

## *Designing to differentiate*

If you aim to win sales from the people in your target audience, you had better aim to win attention away from your competition. Use your creative to differentiate your business from the competition by making sure your creative is unique

and demonstrates your superior expertise, pricing, service, sales process, or whatever sets you apart.

## ***Creating flexible design elements for targeted messages***

One significant benefit of using display advertising is the ability to clearly target specific audience groups, according to job function, company size, and other demographic data.

Use this flexibility to your advantage by developing different ad creative for targeting purposes. For example, you can create different ads for targeting buyer personas, such as C-level executives, mid-management, and individual contributors. Use your variations to test and fine-tune messages and offers related to the products or value propositions that matter most to each persona.

## ***Tackling the Technical Stuff***

Online display ads are actually graphics files of various sizes and formats. The collective design elements in a display ad are known as the *ad creative*.

The following sections give you the information you need to make decisions about the ad creative you use to build your B2B brand.

### ***Display ad unit sizes and placements***

*Ad units* are fixed areas of space on a web page where ads appear when the space is purchased. Here are the most common ad standards according to the IAB Standard Portfolio:

- ✓ 300x250 pixels for a *medium* rectangle ad
- ✓ 180x150 pixels for a *rectangle* ad
- ✓ 160x600 pixels for a *wide skyscraper* ad

- ✔ 728x90 pixels for a *leaderboard* ad
- ✔ 970x250 pixels for a *billboard* ad
- ✔ 300x600 pixels for a *filmstrip* ad
- ✔ 300x1050 pixels for a *portrait* ad
- ✔ 970x90 pixels for a *pushdown* ad
- ✔ 300x250, 300x600, or 970x250 pixels for a *sidekick* ad
- ✔ 970x90 pixels for a *slider* ad

There are many other new, rich ad formats designed for greater interaction and impact that B2B marketers can learn more about at [www.iab.net](http://www.iab.net).

Your ad creative has to include a slightly different design to accommodate each ad unit. For example, you may need to reword a headline or offer to fit in a smaller ad space while still maximizing the size of the text. A typical ad-serving platform enables you to upload all of the possible ad units so that the platform can detect the appropriate ad unit sizes for a given placement and automatically choose the ad size that matches the ad unit and positioning on the page.

## ***Creative options in various file formats***

In addition to sizing your display ads correctly, your ads need to have the correct file format. Depending on the publisher, your ad creative could be displayed as a static image or in a file format that allows animation of the ad creative. Use the standard file formats for most advertising networks. For static images, use .gif, .jpeg, or .swf. For animated ads, use .asf, mpeg, or .avi.

For the best results, create your ads in all of the formats and then upload them to your ad-serving platform, so the platform can automatically select the proper format required by the publisher.

## Chapter 3

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# Targeting, Testing, and Optimizing B2B Display Ads Effectively

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Placing and targeting display ads
  - ▶ Testing and optimizing ads
  - ▶ Focusing on quality data for testing and targeting
- .....

**P**lacing your display advertising online is a whole heck of a lot more interesting and impactful to your business when you utilize a strategy that involves sophisticated testing, targeting, and optimization techniques.

The good news is, sophistication doesn't have to be complex or hard to manage. In this chapter, you find out how to get the most out of your advertising placements by choosing smart targeting options, testing your ads, and optimizing your advertising results.

## *Choosing Ad Placements that Hit Your Target Audience*

Running display advertising campaigns through an audience-targeting platform is easy, and it can also allow your advertising to become very sophisticated for little extra effort.

The following sections show you all the options available through a typical audience-targeting platform.

## *Site-based advertising*

*Site-based advertising* involves placing your advertising on specific websites by name. For example, if you want to reach IT Directors, you would assume that placing ads on IT blogs would reach your target audience.

Site-based advertising isn't very sophisticated or cost-efficient, so you'll probably want to quickly move beyond that method in pursuit of better targeting options.

## *Contextual advertising*

*Contextual advertising* involves placing ads based on the content (or context) of a specific web page, regardless of what the rest of a particular publisher's web pages are all about.



An audience-targeting platform automates the placements by scanning the text of a website for keywords and returning advertisements to the web page based on what the user is viewing in real time.

Contextual advertising is more powerful than site-based advertising, because you're targeting the actual words in a web page. For example, advertising to IT Directors using contextual advertising doesn't limit you to IT-related websites. You could place highly relevant ads on any sites that contain content targeted to IT Directors.

## *Audience targeting*

Targeting your advertising toward the characteristics of an individual, rather than the characteristics of a website, is known as *audience targeting*. Audience targeting has a distinct advantage over site-based and contextual advertising, because you're targeting an actual demographic profile rather than only

content. For example, if you're using site-based or contextual advertising to target IT-related content, you may end up showing ads to college graduates preparing for IT job interviews instead of IT directors who are researching IT solutions.

Targeting ads to an audience usually requires the use of advertising *cookies*. A *cookie* is the not-so-technical term for trackable text placed in a web browser that enables advertisers to anonymously follow and respond to the actions of an individual.



Use audience targeting when you want your advertising to reach your target audience regardless of which specific sites they visit online. For example, if someone fills out an online form indicating an interest in technology trends, you can enable audience targeting to show them trend-related ads on other websites, even if those websites have nothing to do with technology trends.

## ***Geo-targeting***

*Geo-targeting* places advertising on a website only when the computer being used to visit the website is in a specified geographic location.

Geo-targeting works because every Internet connection is based on a network of local access points that can be detected and fed into your audience-targeting platform.

## ***Marketing automation synchronization***

Combining your display advertising with marketing automation systems and data gives you the ability to reach both known and anonymous prospects that you're tracking in your marketing automation system with the right messages and offers through display retargeting. For example, you can synchronize display campaigns based on a prospect's movements on your website and through the existing email nurture flows that you've set up in your marketing automation system.

## *Striving for Data Quality When Targeting*

Data-driven audience targeting is only as good as your data source. In fact, if your data is inaccurate, your messages may be completely off target and could damage your effectiveness. For example, imagine if your data said your prospect is a VP of Marketing but she is actually a VP of Sales. If your display ads say, “Five ways to ignite your marketing team,” your message probably won’t be interesting to a sales executive. That is, unless that VP of Sales happens to be an arsonist.

Quality data isn’t just a matter of accuracy in one data point. The best data combines multiple sources to ensure validation from many angles. Fortunately, you likely don’t have to sweat these details, but it’s worth asking your audience-targeting partner to make sure she is!

## *Testing and Optimizing Ad Creative*

Testing and optimizing your ad creative is simplified when you use an ad-serving platform. Here’s how to test and optimize your ad creative:

- 1. Create two or three slightly different versions of the same ad creative.**

For example, you could create one ad offering a 30-day trial, one ad offering a 90-day trial, and one ad featuring a customer success story.

- 2. Run all three ads for the same period of time.**
- 3. Use your ad-serving platform’s tracking system to compare each ad creative against a metric, such as clicks or conversions, as shown in Figure 3-1.**

- 4. Stop running the worst performing ad and replace it with a new ad with a new variable to see if you can beat the top performing ad.
- 5. Repeat Steps 1–4 continuously until you are confident you have the best performing ad creative possible.

Ad Unit Size	Creative	Click-Through Rates	Total Conversions
728 x 90	30-day Trial	0.2%	2
	90-day Trial	0.7%	5
	Success Story	0.5%	15
300 x 250	30-day Trial	0.8%	1
	90-day Trial	0.1%	20
	Success Story	1.0%	12
1000 x 90	30-day Trial	0.5%	6
	90-day Trial	0.3%	14
	Success Story	0.1%	1

**Figure 3-1:** For the best results, optimize ad creative to your ultimate goal — conversions.

Testing should include your messaging and offers, your call to action, and even testing buttons in your ads that attract a click on the ad. Don't forget that testing your landing pages is also a smart way to optimize your ad performance. I discuss landing pages in more detail in Chapter 2.



## Chapter 4

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# Advertising Your B2B Brand in Social Media

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Advertising in social media
  - ▶ Targeting B2B social media users
  - ▶ Adjusting creative for social advertising
- 

**P**aid advertising on social networks is a great way to extend the marketing resources devoted to creating and sharing content with your target audiences through social channels. In fact, even if you're already blogging, tweeting, sharing, and connecting through social channels, you can't honestly say you've got social media covered without including paid ads in your social marketing activities. This chapter shows you how to extend your social media marketing efforts with social advertising.

## *Using Paid Social Advertising on the Major Networks*

You can accomplish a lot of brand building on social media with time, creativity, and a little money. The next sections show you which B2B advertising opportunities are available on Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook.

### *Twitter*

Buying ads on Twitter can help extend your reach, so you can gain more followers and reinforce your brand's message.

Twitter allows you to purchase the following type of advertising:

- ✔ **Promoted accounts** allow you to feature your brand in Twitter search results and within the Twitter recommendation engine that suggests people to follow.
- ✔ **Promoted tweets** allow you to place your tweets higher in search results and user timelines. You can target your own followers and users similar to your followers.
- ✔ **Promoted trends** allow you to insert your brand into trend discussions happening on Twitter.
- ✔ **Enhanced profile** pages allow you to improve the branding elements of your page as well as to feature your content by promoting tweets to the top of your page's timeline and include expanded media in your posts.

Twitter also provides analytics, so you can track and measure your advertising.

## *LinkedIn*

LinkedIn advertising consists of self-service ads, known as LinkedIn Ads, and customized ads called LinkedIn Marketing Solutions.

Advertising can be placed in the following LinkedIn content:

- ✔ **InMails** that appear in user inboxes
- ✔ **Polls** that appear in LinkedIn polls
- ✔ **Social Ads** that appear in groups and timelines
- ✔ **Content Ads** that appear in various content including the user's LinkedIn address book
- ✔ **Sponsored Updates**, which appear within a user's LinkedIn feed

## *Facebook*

Facebook offers you the opportunity to reach precise business audiences through the Facebook Exchange (FBX), which is a real-time bidding system leveraging third-party data to reach

target audiences. FBX can also allow you to create retargeted ads with highly relevant messages.

When you place display ads through FBX, Facebook connects your ads with data from partner audience-targeting platforms that enable access to third-party data on business professionals. This expanded data gives you the ability to target Facebook users according to job function, industry, and other business demographics that users may not be including in their Facebook profiles. Based on this third-party data, you can then advertise to business audiences through Facebook's sidebar or News Feed inventory (see Figure 4-1).

You can also use CRM retargeting to serve specific ads to users from your CRM database on Facebook using an encrypted list of email addresses.



**Figure 4-1:** Placing ads in Facebook's sidebar or News Feed inventory can be an effective way to reach business audiences.

## *Finding the Perfect Social Advertising Audience*

Social is a fast moving media channel, so placing ads on social media sites can reach your target business audiences in an increasing number of impactful ways.

After you have your goals in clear view, you need to think about how to target and position your ads. The following sections show you how to take full advantage of your social media audience.

## *Spotting B2B social network activity*

According to a study by Ipsos Open Thinking Exchange, Americans between the ages of 18 and 64 spend an average of 3.2 hours every day browsing Facebook and other social networking sites.

Although you may think that most of those people are not mixing work and play, the same study actually found that senior decision makers spent 40 percent more time browsing social networks than those in lower-level positions.

Social media advertising is an ideal platform for reaching your business prospects, but many marketers are struggling to reach the right people with the right messaging. You need to understand where your audience is spending its time and you need to understand the unique social targeting capabilities I explain in the next section.

## *Understanding unique social targeting capabilities*

When people join a social network, they fill out a profile. Most people are eager to share with their friends their personal information that tells their connections who they are. Their profiles and activity — on a non-personally identifiable basis — are also shared with advertisers wishing to target groups of user characteristics. This makes social media a great place for display advertising to reach your target audience.

When placing social display ads, consider targeting these audience characteristics:

- ✔ Company types and specific company names
- ✔ Target job titles, including variations such as “VP” and “vice president”
- ✔ Industries and business categories
- ✔ Locations such as regional, national, and global

You can also target users according to discussion groups to which they belong. For example:

- ✓ Business groups on LinkedIn
- ✓ Twitter hashtags that groups of similar people follow
- ✓ Business pages people “like” on Facebook

Because your products or services may appeal to different job functions, consider creating separate campaigns for each target job function and discussion group.

Targeting advertising campaigns across multiple social networks can get a bit complicated. Make sure that you tap in to the expertise of your advertising technology provider, who can help you build more sophisticated targeted campaigns on the networks your prospects and customers use.

## *Positioning social ads in the marketing funnel*

Social advertising is an ideal way to educate and engage prospects as they progress along a decision-making cycle. Social media ads can work in all stages of the marketing funnel, but advertising on social media is most impactful in the middle of the marketing funnel, as shown in Figure 4-2. After people have seen your brand online a few times, it’s highly likely that they’ll seek you out on your social channels next to further engage with your brand.



**Figure 4-2:** Social advertising is ideal for nurturing and educating leads.

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## Adjusting to Limitations of Ad Creative

When advertising on social media, you're subject to limitations with your ad creative that you don't face with traditional display. Generally speaking, the creative real estate is extremely limited, with small graphics and limited text space. However, this cloud has a silver lining because most social ads are not custom-designed and, therefore, it's much easier to change the text or switch out an image to optimize your conversion rates based on performance. Follow this guidance to have the best chance of success:

- ✔ Although image sizes are small, they can have a big impact. Use bright colors, such as red, to attract prospects' attention and select action-oriented pictures.
- ✔ Even slight differences in your ad creative can have a big impact on conversion rates. Develop six to ten distinct variations of each targeted ad for your campaign, paying close attention to your choice of graphics and the wording in your calls-to-action.
- ✔ Your ad copy should be compelling, to-the-point, and focus on solving a problem for the prospect. Consider using a question for your tagline.
- ✔ The ad copy should be targeted to the specific type of prospect, as shown in Figure 4-3. For example, if you are targeting a CFO, focus on how your solution can save the company money. Finish the ad with a clear call-to-action, such as "get a free trial" or "download a free e-book."
- ✔ Test multiple images and copy for each campaign to determine which selections are most effective with each target group. When testing your creative, conversions, rather than click-through rates, should be your primary focus.



**Figure 4-3:** Targeting specific job titles and related content can be highly effective.

Remember to develop a multi-channel attribution system that allows you to carefully track how many times each prospect was touched before converting. I discuss multi-channel attribution in more detail in Chapter 6.

## *Bidding for Social Success*

In order for your social media display ads to actually show up in front of your audience, you have to win a bidding competition. With social advertising, your budget is divided into smaller bids for each ad impression or click, and your bids compete with many other companies for the opportunity to show your ad to all those highly qualified prospects.

In order to get your ads in front of the right people for the right price, set a competitive bid price. To determine your price, it's advisable to bid a higher amount than the recommended bids listed on your social-marketing platform.

A lot of advertisers opt for bidding the highest affordable amount because the highest bidder only pays one penny more than the next highest bidder. So, depending on your target success metrics, bid aggressively if you want to deliver a high number of impressions efficiently.



## Chapter 5

# Retargeting B2B Display Ads

### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Retargeting explained
- ▶ Utilizing retargeting for display advertising
- ▶ Retargeting options for advanced use

**T**his chapter explains retargeting and shows you how to use this technique to lower your marketing costs while boosting your brand impact at the same time.

## *What Is Retargeting?*

*Retargeting* is a method of displaying highly relevant ads to people on other websites only after they have visited one or more pages on your website. Here are the two main benefits of retargeting:

- ✔ People who have visited your website have already expressed an interest in your company, product, or service. Retargeting helps you repeat the most relevant advertising messages after a visit to your website.
- ✔ Retargeting allows you to vary your advertising messages based on content viewed on your website. You can change the frequency, placement, and content of your display ads on other websites based on the context of a particular visit to your website.

## *Setting Up a Retargeting Strategy*

Retargeting from a strategic perspective just requires a little planning. Setting up a retargeting strategy on a technical level requires an ad-serving or audience-targeting platform and

some special code placed on your website. A basic retargeting model is illustrated in Figure 5-1 and explained in more strategic and technical detail in the following sections.



**Figure 5-1:** Retargeting gives marketers a second chance with visitors who did not convert during their first website visit.

## Choosing a retargeting focus

Because the basic idea of retargeting is to repeat or reinforce a particular marketing message after a website visit, you need to determine an approach to accomplishing that repetition. You have two basic choices that give an overall focus to your strategy. You can:

- Cast a wide net by showing a lot of retargeted ads to all website visitors without regard for the context of the visit or the types of websites visited after visiting your website.
- Retarget within a narrower context to influence people within a specific context. For example, if they have visited a product page, drive conversions by offering a specific, limited-time promotion specific for this product.

## Understanding the role of cookies and pixels

To start retargeting, you need to place special HTML code called a *retargeting pixel* on any web pages where you want to trigger retargeting ads after a visit to those pages.

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After placing the retargeting pixels on the appropriate web pages, the pixels allow the ad-serving platform to place cookies in every visitor's web browser application when visiting a page with a pixel. The combination of the pixel detection and the cookie placement enables your retargeted ads to appear to any visitors with a particular cookie in their browsers while excluding your retargeted ads from displaying to anyone without the cookie.

## *Retargeting Is the New Lead Nurturing*

*Lead nurturing* is the process of marketing to people already in the B2B buying cycle in order to build strong, trusting relationships with them, regardless of their readiness to buy.

One major challenge to traditional forms of lead nurturing is the fact that following up requires you to capture some form of contact information from people who show interest in your products or services. That's precisely where a retargeting strategy has an advantage over other forms of lead nurturing. You can use retargeting to keep your brand, messages, and offers in front of even "anonymous" website visitors for whom you do not have contact information for yet, ultimately giving you a second chance at conversion.

## *Understanding Advanced Retargeting Options*

Retargeting can get pretty sophisticated. The key is to balance the targeting needs with the ability to have scale. I discuss advanced retargeting strategies in the following sections.

### *Audience retargeting*

Combining cookies with website audience reporting and analytics tools can help you further categorize your website visitors by industry, job function, and company size.

That way, you can show customized ads designed specifically for each segment of your audience. For example, a company's CTO may see a display ad offering a white paper about software integration strategies, while a marketing executive can be shown an ad offering a white paper about generating sales leads.

## *Keyword retargeting*

After visiting your website, some prospects will turn to search engines to conduct additional research or due diligence on your solution. When they search, they will type keywords into the search engine and open up the opportunity for you to get display ads in front of them based on the keywords they choose for their search.

*Keyword retargeting* is assigning keywords to your display ads and targeting campaigns to audiences searching for those words in search engines. Here are some examples of keywords you can choose to retarget your display advertising after a prospect conducts a search on a search engine:

- ✔ Your own search engine marketing keywords.
- ✔ Competitor search terms.
- ✔ Search terms related to your solution area or market.

## *CRM retargeting*

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems store data on prospects and customers, and that data can be used for retargeting your display advertising. You can leverage data from your own CRM to retarget ads to those people in your database, giving you a powerful way to nurture the leads you've already invested in.

Activating a CRM retargeting campaign does not require a visitor to land on your website. CRM retargeting can be done against an encrypted list of email addresses from your database, and the information remains completely non-personally identifiable.

## Chapter 6

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# Determining B2B Display Advertising Impact

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Using cost modeling and attributing results
  - ▶ Tracking your advertising across the marketing funnel
  - ▶ Measuring cross-program lift
- 

Display advertising can be measured by the number of clicks on an ad, but that's a very limiting view of the possibilities. If you want to tap in to a full range of data — as every marketer should — there are dozens of valuable metrics to be gained through display advertising that can tell you about your marketing impact throughout your entire marketing funnel. In this chapter, I show you how to attribute your advertising success to your B2B display advertising initiatives and measure your results.

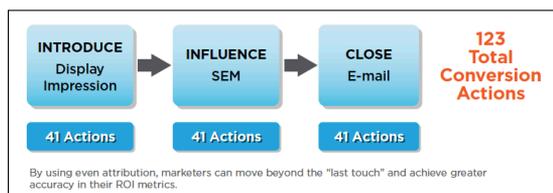
## *Basic Attribution and Cost Modeling*

The fact is that it usually takes multiple marketing touches to influence actions. For example, in a marketing sequence that begins with display advertising, continues with paid search, and ends with e-mail, it may be tempting for a marketer to attribute all the credit for the conversion to the e-mail marketing campaign or the *last touch*.

If all credit is given to the last marketing message, and spending on that marketing channel is subsequently increased, the shortage of budget in other marketing channels is likely to

impact your marketing funnel negatively, because there won't be as many marketing touch points occurring in other parts of the marketing funnel.

Attribution modeling can get highly sophisticated and is out of the scope of this book, but one way you can keep your B2B advertising attribution simple and effective is to assign an equal share of attribution to each marketing initiative you use, as shown in Figure 6-1.



**Figure 6-1:** Use an equal share of attribution for simplicity.

In an equal share model, every marketing touch point that contributed to a conversion or sale gets equal credit, giving you a clearer picture of the ROI of each of your channels.

## Post-Impression Conversions

Post-impression conversions involve a customer who viewed an ad and later made a purchase by taking an alternative action, such as searching for the company mentioned in the ad or calling the business on the phone.

Using pixels, the ad server can tell when someone reaches specific pages on a website after directly clicking on the ad or within a predefined time window, such as within 90 days of clicking the ad.

## Reach Metrics

*Reach metrics* address the amount of advertising space your brand occupies compared to the amount of advertising space

your target audience may possibly be exposed to. There are two important reach metrics:

- ✔ **Ad impressions** are the total number of times your ads are displayed to all website visitors where your ads are targeted. The more ads you display, the more chances your ads have to be noticed.
- ✔ **Ad frequency** is the total number of ads displayed during a given period of time. The more frequently people see your ads, the more likely they will remember your brand.

## Action Metrics

*Action metrics* are the result of tracking the actions your target audience takes when exposed to your ads. Examples include

- ✔ The number of clicks your ads receive divided by the number of total impressions, known as the *click-through rate*
- ✔ The number of people who take a desired action immediately after clicking on your ad, known as *post-click conversions*
- ✔ The number of people who take a desired action (for example downloading a white paper, signing up for a free trial, or buying) after viewing any number of ads without clicking, known as *post-impression conversions*

## Funnel Success Metrics

A smart way to make sense of your display advertising metrics is to group them by their impact on your marketing funnel and use the appropriate metric or metrics to determine your advertising success at each stage.

The next sections show you which metrics fit with marketing objections at the top, middle, and bottom of a typical marketing funnel. I also describe the metrics so you know their meaning.

## *Top-funnel metrics*

Top of funnel metrics are most often used to attribute advertising with brand awareness, because prospects at the top of your marketing funnel are usually unaware of your brand or your value proposition. Use the following metrics when analyzing your display advertising's impact on branding and awareness:

- ✔ **Impressions delivered against target audience** are the total number of display ads served (or displayed) to a defined target audience.
- ✔ **Targeted reach** is the total number of unique individuals in a specific target audience that you have access to through display advertising.
- ✔ **Share of voice** is the number of people you reach with your branding initiatives compared to the number of total people in your target audience. A simple way to determine your share of voice is to see how many unique impressions your advertising receives compared to the total available target audience.
- ✔ **Targeted website audience** measures the increase in the number of visitors to your website who are in your target audience.
- ✔ **Awareness impact** is the total number of new people who would be aware of your brand.
- ✔ **Brand recall** is the number of prospects in your target audience who think of your brand when thinking of the products or services your company sells. This metric is an indication that your brand is occupying the mind share of your target customers.

## *Mid-funnel metrics*

Mid-funnel metrics are most often used to attribute advertising with content engagement and education, because prospects in the middle of your marketing funnel are usually aware of your brand and your value proposition. They are ready to read your white papers, attend your thought-leadership webinars, or visit your website to dig deeper and learn about your offerings.

Examples of mid-funnel metrics include

- ✓ **Branded search lift:** An increase in the number of people searching for your company by name in search engines
- ✓ **Website content engagement lift:** An increase in the amount of website content your visitors interact with.
- ✓ **Cost per visitor/per page view:** The cost of your display advertising divided by the number of visitors or page views.

## *Bottom-funnel metrics*

Bottom-funnel metrics are most often used to attribute advertising with lead generation and sales conversions, because prospects at the bottom of your marketing funnel are usually ready to buy, but they are still evaluating options, competitors, and substitute solutions. Some appropriate bottom-funnel metrics include total leads, cost per lead, opportunity contribution, and revenue contribution.

## *Cross-Program Lift (Or “Measuring the Display Alley-Oop”)*

In basketball, an alley-oop happens when one player passes the ball to another player who catches the ball in the air and scores a basket before landing back on the ground.

When you allow your display advertising to work together with your other marketing efforts effectively, you achieve an alley-oop effect. For example, when paired with paid search, display advertising has been known to increase conversions and sales more than when paid search is used alone. Adding display advertising to your marketing mix can produce more revenue from your other marketing efforts than they could otherwise produce on their own.



## Chapter 7

# Ten B2B Advertising Traps to Avoid

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Avoiding targeting and ad placement mistakes
  - ▶ Starting off with a view of what could go wrong
- 

**T**his chapter helps you avoid making mistakes others have made when getting started with display advertising. Use this list of ten B2B advertising traps to avoid as a guide for planning, activities, and measurement as you work to get your online advertising program off the ground.

## *Assuming B2B Advertising Is the Same as Consumer Advertising*

Businesses usually make buying decisions more carefully and depend on agreement between multiple decision makers or stakeholders inside the organization, because multiple people inside the company have to live and work with the results of the decision. So, your brand needs to be highly credible and trustworthy.

## *Underestimating the Value of Branding in the B2B World*

According to Forrester, up to 90 percent of the purchasing process is finalized by a company before a prospect ever

engages with a sales person. Many B2B marketers fall into the trap of investing only in advertising that impacts lead activity in the lower part of the marketing funnel, such as paid search and email marketing.

Better to deploy a balanced mix of advertising programs to reach and educate target audiences at every stage of the buying process. Investing in targeted display advertising allows you to target buyers at all stages of the marketing funnel and gives you the ability to fill the funnel by targeting prospects based on demographic, behavioral, and other data. I discuss marketing through the funnel in more detail in Chapter 1.

## *Targeting Only Companies, not Individuals*

It is important to get your display ads in front of the right company, but companies are made up of groups of people. So, it's far more important to get in front of the right people at that company. Namely, people who are influential in making a purchase decision.

Account-based or company targeting can mean that you are just as likely to reach the company's kitchen staff as you are the company's CTO or other influencers. To avoid wasting your marketing budget on people who aren't involved in the purchasing decision, leverage multiple data sources to target your ads to reach your target audience. I discuss audience targeting in Chapter 2 of this minibook.

## *Assuming All B2B Targeting Is the Same*

Your targeting is only as good as the relevance and quality of the data source you rely on for choosing targeted advertising placements. For example, you may be trapped into thinking that targeting a company's IP address is good enough to reach the people you want to reach. But, how accurate would your targeting be if you found out that the IP addresses you're targeting actually belong to the company's Internet Service Provider?

Even registration data collected through online forms can be inaccurate, because people are known to enter false data to veil their identities when requesting free resources. The best data comes from a mix of multiple sources to ensure both accuracy and relevancy to your target audience. For example, by combining registration data, IP data, offline databases, crowd sourcing, and email data, you can identify more accurately whether someone fits your target audience from multiple points of validation. I discuss data quality for targeting in Chapter 3.

## *Ignoring Display Advertising's Ability to Drive Leads*

Lead generation is usually associated with search and email advertising. However, in a study by comScore, researchers found that prospects who viewed search marketing ads for a company were 82 percent more likely to buy the product in question than if they received no exposure, and 119 percent more likely to buy when the search ads were paired with display ads.

Display ads should be deployed as a lead generator as well as a vehicle for influencing and educating the right kind of prospects at any stage of the marketing funnel.

## *Missing the Opportunity to Reach Business People Outside of a Business Environment*

B2B decision makers don't leave the office and immediately ignore their work. Lots of people take their work home with them and keep their work priorities in mind when they spend time on websites related to their jobs. Your advertising should have a goal of reaching business people wherever and whenever they happen to be online.

## ***Overusing Personalization in B2B Marketing***

Personalized marketing has proven to be a highly effective strategy for nurturing and retargeting consumers with ads, because the personalization comes across as inviting and thoughtful when there is a one-to-one relationship between an advertiser and an individual buyer.

In B2B advertising, decisions are made by consensus. So, you need to wait until you have built a one-to-one relationship before deciding to personalize your ads, and your ads should reinforce the business nature of the relationship, with personalization as a courtesy, not as an attempt to be likeable.

## ***Relying Only on Last-Click Attribution***

According to Google, the average buyer interacts with a brand 4.3 times in the final 48 hours before making a purchase. So, if you conclude that the last marketing message your customer sees or engages with is responsible for 100 percent of the influence in making a decision, you're missing 3.3 attributable touch points on average.

You should give proper credit to every marketing touchpoint, including display ads, involved in a conversion or sale. I discuss attribution modeling in Chapter 1.

## ***Viewing Display Advertising as a Discrete Campaign, not a Strategy***

Individual advertising campaigns need to be tied to a larger strategy or your results will be disjointed and will fail to move buyers through your marketing funnel effectively.

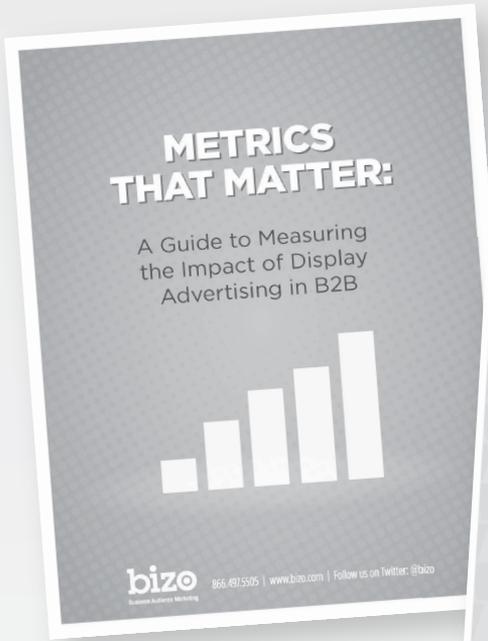
Use your marketing funnel and your goals for each stage of the funnel as a guide when building out your strategy and make sure your ads seamlessly influence your audience at and between each stage of the buying cycle. I discuss building a marketing funnel-focused strategy in Chapter 1.

## *Being Afraid to Turn Off Under-performing Campaigns*

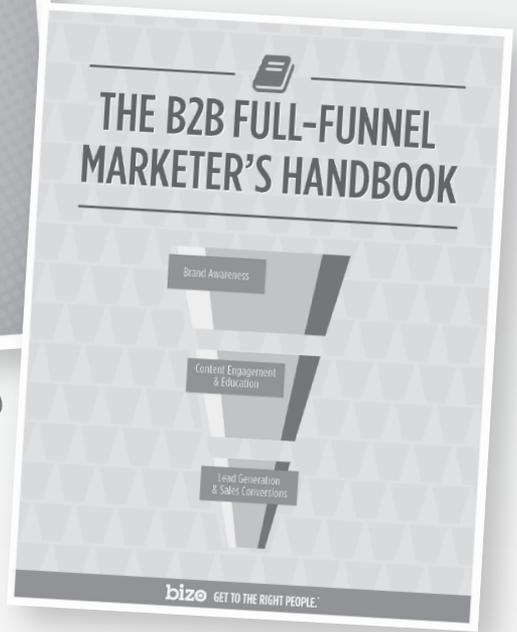
When rolling out a display campaign, stay nimble and be prepared to take action to optimize and, if necessary, to go back to the drawing board to rework messaging, landing pages, or your offers.

For the best results, allocate more funds to your highest-converting campaigns and shut down campaigns that are underperforming. That way, 100 percent of your budget is optimized for the highest impact.

Ready to dive deeper into the world of B2B display advertising?  
**We can help.**



Metrics That Matter: A Guide to Measuring the Impact of Display Advertising in B2B



The B2B Full-Funnel Marketer's Handbook

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## Use display advertising to build brand awareness and generate sales

The B2B buying process is long and complex, and prospects are educating themselves before engaging with sales. Marketers need channels such as display and social media advertising to reach buyers both early on and at every stage of the marketing funnel to generate leads and nurture them online.

- *How B2B advertising works — and how to build a full-funnel B2B advertising strategy*
- *How to target your advertising to the B2B audience — and how audience targeting can improve your return on investment*
- *How to run advanced retargeting ad campaigns — and how you can personalize your advertising based on audience interests and behavior*
- *How to place B2B ads on social media — and how to use its capabilities to share content and engage and educate your target audiences*
- *How to reach your goals — by measuring your results and improving based on high quality data on your target customers*



**Open the book and find:**

- **How online display advertising enhances your marketing funnel**
- **Why audience targeting gives your brand the boost it needs to reach your revenue goals**
- **How social media advertising can help you nurture and engage leads**
- **How online advertising lifts all your marketing results**

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