

Social Media Key Influencer In Multi-Exposure Purchase Path

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Exposure to social media, in combination with other online ad formats, increases average order size

Past research has shown exposure to both earned and paid media can help companies build longer-term effects such as increased brand awareness, purchase consideration and brand favorability.

In addition, findings from analytics and attribution solution provider ClearSaleing showed consumer exposure to a combination of paid, owned and earned media led to better bottom-line results, including a larger average order size and greater revenue per click.

The study found that when consumers were exposed to social media in addition to other online ad formats or marketing channels, such as search, email and display, the average revenue per order for US advertisers was \$280.71—more than double the order size compared to the average of all digital channels.

Though many classify social media as either owned or earned media, ClearSaleing factored in any click activity generated by paid social advertisements, brand-generated social content and earned mentions.

Social media and comparison shopping engines are often consulted when considering larger, more expensive purchases, which could be one reason for the higher average revenue per order. And because ClearSaleing tracked display interactions by view-through activity—not just impressions—the fact that display saw a high average revenue per order gives credence to display having significant influence on consumers who actively encounter a display ad.

Unfortunately, the data does not differentiate the order in which consumers were exposed to each influence, so it is difficult to gauge the optimal order of exposure for display and each of the other formats.

ClearSaleing also looked at the average revenue per click on purchases from consumers exposed to multiple formats. When social media was included in the mix, the average revenue per click was \$5.24. Paid search was the next highest, at \$4.38, likely due to the fact that by the time a user searches for a brand or product, they are closer to making a purchase.

According to ClearSaleing's manager of marketing and sales support, Adam Hritzak, the data highlights the strong influence social media has on consumer purchase decisions.

“Social helps to create and increase the purchase intent,” Hritzak told eMarketer. “It builds a relationship between the brand and a user. When a user connects with you in social, it increases their intent level and trust with you.”

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