

How remarketing can make your digital ad spend stretch further

 By [Johan Walters](#)

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Once you have invested in the tools, data and processes you need to track your digital advertising campaigns, remarketing is one of the best ways to really put that tracking infrastructure to work for your business.

Remarketing is all about using information you have gleaned about users from your previous interactions with them to optimise your customer journey. It allows you to identify people who - based on their online behaviour - seem likely to convert and nudge them further down the conversion funnel by targeting them with appropriate advertising.

Tracking for future use

Consider, for example, an online shop selling consumer electronics. A user arrives on the site from a Google search for OLED televisions and looks at the goods on offer, before leaving without having made a purchase. But the store can track this customer in the future via a small snippet of code called a remarketing tag.

Then, when he or she visits another site where the digital store advertises, the user can be presented with a display ad with a call to action to buy an OLED screen to secure free delivery. Rather than serving a generic ad, the store can talk to the user about a purchase he or she is clearly interested in, as inferred from earlier online behaviour.

The same principle works in paid search. When a user does a search for OLED screens, Google can present the customer with a special ad promising a discount or other incentive to buy from the online store in question. It's a useful way of talking to users who are actually interested in what you're selling rather than scattering generic ads into the wilderness of the Web.

Different categories

We can use remarketing tags to bucket users into different categories, which may be general or very specific. For example, we might bucket users who simply looked at a product after clicking through on a display ad into one category; those that put a product into the shopping cart and then abandoned it into another.

Or we can tag users according to the product pages they visited on the site. Users that browsed a bank's mortgage pages could receive different marketing messages to those that looked at cheque accounts.

One point worth noting is that remarketing is not about personally identifying end-users - rather, it is a mechanism for categorising potential customers by their online activity. You will not know that the user is Mr Smith; rather, you'll

understand that he is a customer who falls into a category of users who have shown interest in purchasing an OLED television.

Online privacy

This is an important factor to remember in a world where the US Prism controversy has made many users skittish about online privacy. The privacy concerns with remarketing are minimal because the data we use to remarket is anonymous. But it's a good idea to outline in your website privacy policy which information you collect about web site visitors, as well as how you use it for remarketing.

Remarketing is a powerful tool in any marketer's arsenal. Assuming that you have a robust tracking infrastructure up-and-running, remarketing can help you get more ROI by reconnecting with potential customers again after you have encountered them through an early campaign or website visit. It's a great way of maximising your spend by speaking to your customers in a targeted and relevant manner.

ABOUT JOHAN WALTERS

With over 22 years experience in digital marketing and eight years experience in AR, Johan Walters enables brands and agencies to adopt AR into their marketing mix.

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