

WHAT TO TEST WITH YOUR DIGITAL ADS



CHECKLIST: WHAT TO TEST WITH YOUR DIGITAL ADS

TESTING TYPES

Testing is an extremely important element of creating a successful advertising strategy and campaign. By using various testing methodologies you can determine what is working and what isn't, making it easier to optimize your ads for greater ROI.

The two most common types of tests for digital advertising are A/B and multivariate; you can run either (or both) on your digital advertising campaigns.

A/B Testing

A/B testing compares two elements of your ad. An example would be two different images or two different CTA button colors. Many advertising platforms enable you to automatically perform your ad A/B testing.

A/B testing is created to be inherently simple—you are only testing one single variable at a time. This makes it easier to form actionable conclusions.

Multivariate Testing

Multivariate testing compares a much larger number of variables at the same time and produces more complex information. With multivariate testing, you can compare a combination of multiple designs, headers, CTAs, imagery, and copy.

To run a conclusive multivariate test you need to show a statistically significant number of conversions for your different combinations.



How Long Should You Run an A/B Test?

At Marketo, we run our digital ad tests for about 3-4 weeks to reach statistical significance. For us, this equals out to about 1,000 clicks. But remember, different company sizes will have different benchmarks, so be sure to keep this in mind.



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How to Test Your Digital Ads

Just like the scientific method, A/B testing begins with a hypothesis. All marketers should develop a strong hypothesis as to what they think might happen when they administer the test.

Here are 7 steps that we recommend when beginning a test:

1. Write a hypothesis:

What do you think will happen? Which version do you think customers will prefer and why?

2. Choose one variable to test:

Pick one variable you feel will have an impact on the customer's behavior. This could be your image, your CTA, your headline, and so on.

3. Decide on a sample group number and type:

Which demographic or industry will you focus on for this A/B test?

4. Define what success looks like:

Success can include opens, clicks, conversions, and more.

5. Set up automated A/B testing:

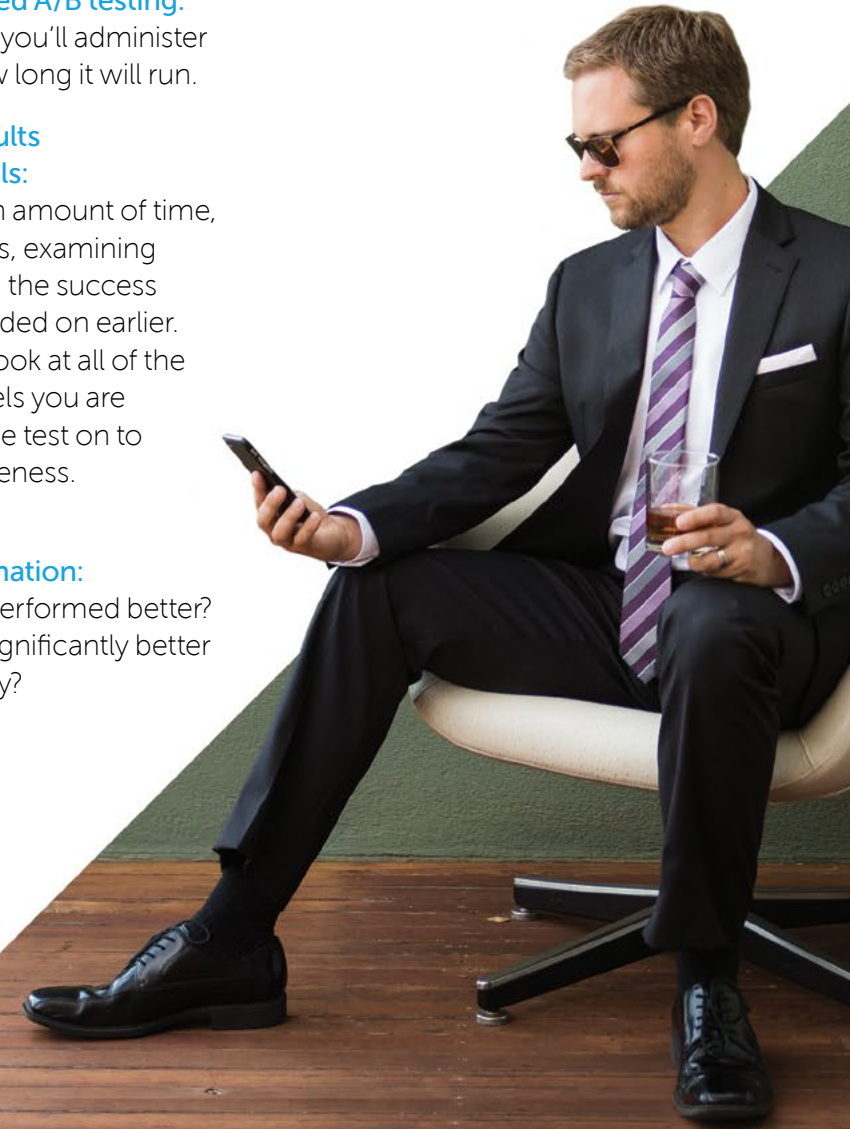
Schedule when you'll administer the test and how long it will run.

6. Look at test results from all channels:

After the chosen amount of time, analyze data sets, examining results based on the success factors you decided on earlier. Make sure you look at all of the different channels you are administering the test on to ensure completeness.

7. Determine the winning combination:

Which version performed better? Did it perform significantly better or just marginally?



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Checklist: What to Test in Your Digital Ads

There are a ton of fantastic A/B and multivariate tests you can do for your digital ads. Here is a list of what you should consider testing for each digital ad type and for your ad landing pages.

Landing Pages

- Headline:** How eye-catching is your headline?
- Call-to-Action:** The copy of your CTA says it all. Also consider testing CTA location and button color.
- Copy:** Test different copy. What works better: bullet points, a numbered list, or paragraphs?
- Images:** Test different images and image location.
- Offer:** Test different offers—what works best? A content asset? A contest? A discount or promotion?

- Forms:** Test different form lengths and locations.
- Site Navigation:** Test adding or deleting site navigation from your landing page.
- Colors and Design:** Determine which colors and design works best to attract your audience.
- Page Length:** Should your landing page be long or short? Should it scroll?
- Responsive Design:** Mobile is important. Test how different responsive design templates look on different devices.

Pay-Per-Click Ads

- Landing Pages:** Which landing page works best for which ad? This way you can work to increase your Google Quality Score.
- Ad Headline:** Your headline is extremely important for conversion in PPC. Test multiple headlines.
- Ad Copy:** You don't have much room to convert your buyer. Test different ad copy to see what engages your audience the most.
- Ad Extensions:** Do ad extensions work for you? Play around with different URLs or CTAs.
- Ad CTA:** Make sure to test your ad CTA. What works better, a CTA for a contest? Promotion? Content asset? Video?

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Display Ads

- **Ad Design:** Make sure to test different ad designs. What colors work best? What images work best?
- **Ad Types:** Test your message using various forms of rich media. Try out video, flash, and cinemagraphic ads.
- **Ad Delivery:** What sort of delivery works best for your display ads? Try different overlays and pop-ups.
- **Copy:** Test different copy to see what resonates the best.
- **Ad CTA:** Try out different CTAs, CTA copy, and locations to see what combination works best for your ads.
- **Websites and Ad Networks:** Test out different websites and ad networks to see where your audience engages with your ads the most.
- **Ad Targeting:** Try out different ways to target your banner ads. Test out behavioral vs. demographic vs. location, and so on.

Social Ads

- **Ad Design:** See which designs work best for each social network. You may find that different images and design styles work best for one social network and not another.
- **Ad Type:** Many social networks today have the option for native video ads. Test those out to see if your audience resonates.
- **Ad Headline and Copy:** Most social networks enable you to add headlines and copy to your ad. Test out different tones and even hashtags to see what engages your audience.
- **Ad CTA:** Make sure to have a CTA for your social ads. Test different CTAs and offers for each social network to see if you find a pattern.
- **Ad Targeting:** Ad targeting is a critical part of advertising on social channels. Test out different audiences and targeting options to see what works best.
- **Dark Posts:** Want to test an ad but don't want your audience to see it? Test your ads using dark posts, which are ads that are only shown to those outside of your network based on targeting.