FOUR DATA STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE YOUR DIGITAL UPFRONT GAME.

Locking in dates for your digital upfront meetings is like the starter pistol going off at a 100-meter dash — a race to the finish to see who buys the best spots on endemic sites and key publisher sponsorships. You hope that media availability aligns with your marketing initiatives like sales events and launches. You'd love more conquesting opportunities on your competitor's make pages, and more flexibility on rates and commitment. It's when insights on buyers and shoppers are most important as you map out a media strategy to exceed marketing goals.

Smart upfront buys are a critical piece of the marketing toolkit, but strategies like using data to plan, identify, and reach audiences programmatically are what will set you ahead of the pack. With new vehicle sales flattening, eliminating waste and identifying effective conquesting strategies are of paramount importance. There are four easy to implement data-driven strategies that allow you to focus on the exact people you need to reach for every campaign throughout the year, making your trip to the sales finish line a breeze.

STRATEGY 1:
START WITH BUYERS

Historical purchase data provides many useful signals in reaching the most relevant audiences.

- **Recent Buyers**
  A 360 degree analysis of all of your brand buyers provides the most accurate view on who to reach for future sales. Clusters can then be identified for bespoke messaging that drives consideration.

- **Conquest & Defection**
  Competitive sales tell you who is stealing share and where you are winning. These buyer profiles are unique and provide the who and the how to maintain growth in a more competitive market.

When you start with the buyers, you can still get broad reach — broad reach that is also incredibly relevant because you are targeting people who are most likely to buy another new car in the future. For example:

IN-MARKET   **70%** MORE LIKELY   THAN DEMOGRAPHIC TARGETING

The in-market audience for new vehicles, is 70% more likely to buy than a demographic target alone.

Starting with the foundation of buyers improves your success dramatically, while still maintaining broad reach.

The best practice when using buyer data is to ensure you have a full truth set. All sales (both brand and competitor) along with 30 years of historical buyer data can also predict when consumers will be back in market. Buyer data should be the foundation of your strategy. Once you have this base then you can easily layer on the personas that are most important to your brand and your vehicles.

STRATEGY 2:
LEVERAGE (AND SUPPRESS) LOYALISTS

People who have been loyal to your brand are an extremely valuable data point and should be leveraged in your overall strategy.

Even for broad reach campaigns, you should take loyalty into account — but maybe not in the way you traditionally think about loyalty. You actually want to suppress those deemed competitive "super loyalists" because the likelihood that they will buy your brand is low. Suppressing this category of buyer helps to reduce waste and improves campaign performance.

This same idea applies to campaigns across different vehicle segments. If we take the example of non-luxury midsize CUV audiences, we can identify the potential size of the overall market and identify who to suppress.

146MM

HOUSEHOLDS

First, start with all US households at about 146MM.

92MM

HOUSEHOLDS

Next, suppress those who have never purchased a vehicle (start with buyers), reducing the pool to about 92MM households.

89MM

HOUSEHOLDS

Finally, reduce the total potential audience a little bit more by suppressing those superloyalists of other vehicle segments, getting us to about 89MM households.

This strategy helps you identify the approximate size of the audience you could go after. For any campaign you want to run for a midsize CUV, you'd want to focus on cuts of that 89MM, depending on the stage in the purchase cycle and goals of the campaign.

STRATEGY 3:
USE DIGITAL SIGNALS TO IDENTIFY FIRST-TIME BUYERS

You may be wondering how to reach first-time buyers or those people who are making a dramatic change in transportation needs? How do you find them? Well, this group is challenging. How do you predict who will buy a vehicle for the very first time? We can't necessarily depend on strict age profiles as the newer generations are waiting longer to drive than in the past, likely because they have a multitude of options for transportation today. While they do eventually buy cars, we don't yet have a long enough view to accurately predict when these new generations are most likely to purchase. Here's where digital behavior signals can help to identify first-time buyers.

Search behavior and website visitation effectively identify those who are in-market for a vehicle or other transportation solution. By removing those households that currently own a vehicle (that is, they have at least one vehicle in the garage), it is possible to identify a group of will-be or first-time buyers. This isn't a perfect solution – there is noise and complexity here – but when we look at this group of first-time buyers we see that they have some unique attributes.

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In order to identify these attributes, we did an analysis of those households that looked like they had purchased for the first time. That is, the household had no history of vehicle purchase prior to the recent purchase. We discovered that these households primarily fell into the 20-39 year old age bracket. These households have sizable incomes, but also display cost conscious buying behaviors, making them good targets for new vehicles with great value messaging. They tend to be career focused, willing to spend on name brands, and are health conscious. Not surprisingly, they are not heavy television watchers, so digital is an important place to find them. When they do watch television, they watch business and political programming. As a proxy for first-time buyers, this type of audience is a great starting point to reach this niche group of customers.

STRATEGY 4:
USE THE SAME DATA-DRIVEN AUDIENCE APPROACH WITH TV

Our automotive upfronts started with TV, and then diverged. Now they are coming back together. TV buys are expensive but have a ton of impact because they can get your message out to large audiences. Marketers are always looking for ways to stretch those TV dollars further to justify the big budgets. Two ways to do this:

- **Buyer Profiles inform TV planning**
  Just like with digital, buyer data can tell you who to reach and where. The industry has come a long way with the ability to identify where your brand buyers devote their TV attention on a 1:1 basis, yet few marketers leverage these insights. For example: Game shows don't reach car buyers, but sports programming does. And within sports, Soccer viewers buy minivans while Hockey viewers purchase luxury vehicles.

- **Leverage TV data digitally**
  You can get in front of more people by reaching those who might not have seen your ad but watch a certain type of programming. Another advantage of using TV data is to extend frequency of message by reaching those same audiences on TV and on digital properties, which reinforces your brand message. Using TV data can make a huge impact to your overall digital marketing strategy.

Summary

As a marketer, you want tools that will help you make better decisions so that you are making the most of your budget, resources, and time. Utilizing these four data-driven strategies are sure to be a game-changer as you head into the upfront planning season. There is a lot more detail available for each. Get a head start by thinking about data prior to implement these strategies as part of your digital upfront planning. Then work with automotive data experts to craft a winning data-driven marketing plan.

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