

ACHIEVING BUSINESS GROWTH WITH
FACEBOOK ADS:
IRISH SME CASE STUDIES



INTRODUCTION

- Irish SMEs and Social Media ...2
- Facebook: The Giant of Social Media ...3
- Achieve Business Growth with Facebook Advertising ...5

FACEBOOK AD PLATFORM ESSENTIALS

- The Carousel Ad Format ...6
- Facebook Interests Targeting ...6
- Website Custom Audiences ...7
- Lookalike Audiences ...8

CAMPAIGN FOUNDATIONS

- Content ...9
- Authenticity & User Generated Content ...11
- Google Analytics Insights ...11

3 SUCCESSFUL IRISH CASE STUDIES

- Case Study 1: Attracting Enquiries ...13
- Case Study 2: Lead Generation ...16
- Case Study 3: Promoting Advocacy ...20

MEASUREMENT

- Google Analytics ...23
- Google's URL Builder Tool ...24
- Facebook Reports ...27

CONCLUSION

REFERENCES

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

IRISH SMEs AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Virgin Media Business' recent survey of Irish SMEs explored social media use and its contribution to business growth. The results suggest that Irish SMEs understand the importance of being present on social media. 62% report using social media for their business. However, the survey found that when it comes to social media execution and delivering tangible business results, SMEs appear far less confident. Of those SMEs that use social media for their business, a sizeable 4 in 10 feel that it has either delivered 0% business growth or admitted they just "don't know".



SAY SOCIAL MEDIA HAS CONTRIBUTED
0% TO BUSINESS GROWTH

The good news for these SMEs, is that achieving business growth through social media is entirely possible – businesses just like them are doing it right now. Here, we'll explore how a selection of Irish B2C SMEs have achieved success with social, specifically through the medium of Facebook Ads.

"Social media works because it puts products and information in front of the right people."

- Richard Branson
Virgin Media Group

FACEBOOK: THE GIANT OF SOCIAL MEDIA

If reaching new or existing customers is important for your B2C business, you should make Facebook your social media priority. Why?

Facebook is the second most visited site in Ireland and in the world.

NO PRIZES FOR GUESSING WHAT'S NUMBER 1...

Top Sites in Ireland

Global

By Country

By Category

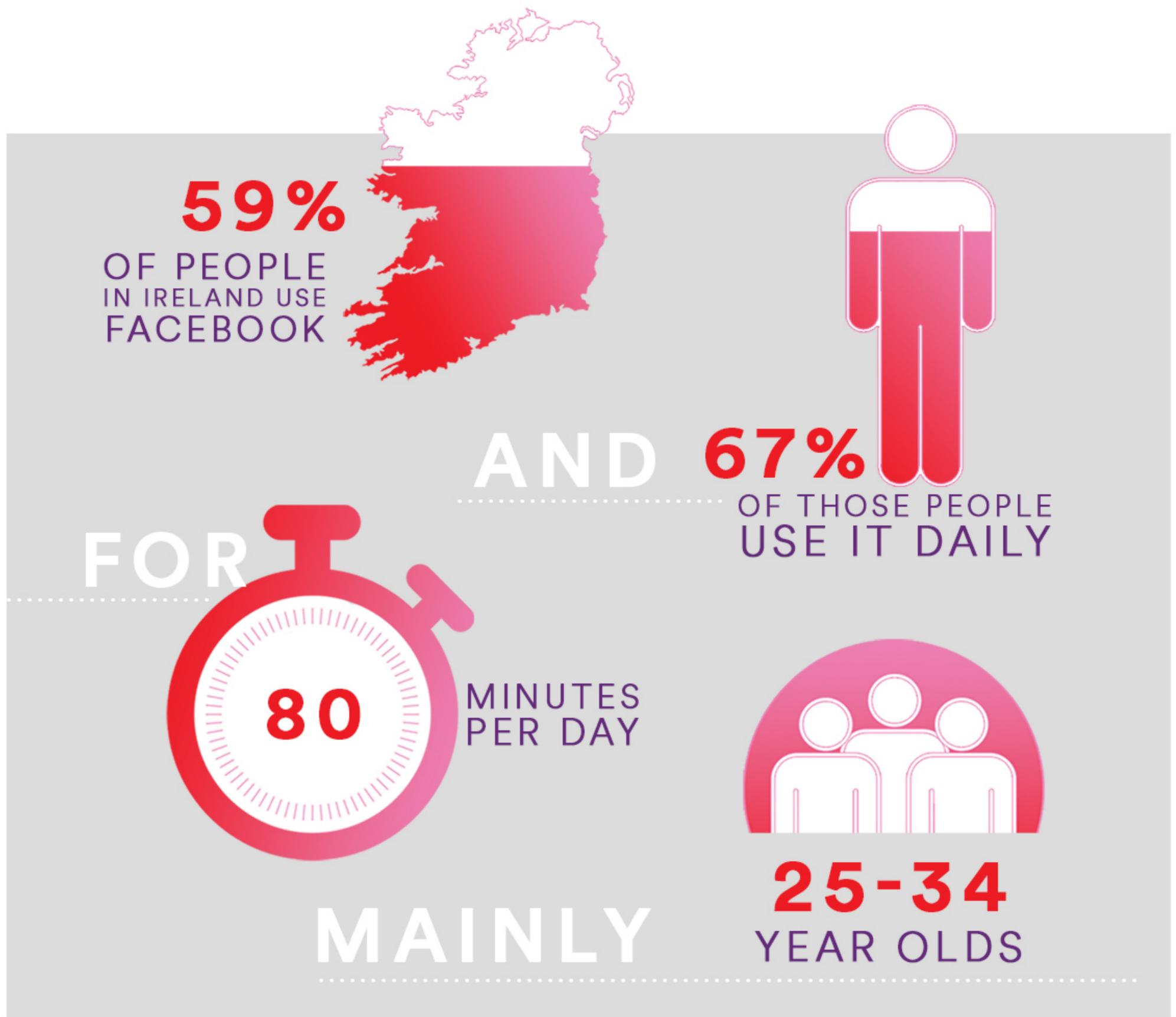


Need an API?
Get direct access to web sites ranked globally and by country with Alexa's Top Sites service.
[Learn More](#)

- 1 [Google.ie](#)
The local version of this pre-eminent search engine, offering Irish pages as well as world resu...[More](#)
- 2 [Google.com](#)
Enables users to search the world's information, including webpages, images, and videos. Offers...[More](#)
- 3 [Facebook.com](#)
A social utility that connects people, to keep up with friends, upload photos, share links and ...[More](#)
- 4 [Youtube.com](#)
YouTube is a way to get your videos to the people who matter to you. Upload, tag and share your...[More](#)
- 5 [Amazon.co.uk](#)
Online retailer of books, movies, music and games along with electronics, toys, apparel, sports...[More](#)
- 6 [Wikipedia.org](#)
A free encyclopedia built collaboratively using wiki software. (Creative Commons Attribution-Sh...[More](#)
- 7 [Twitter.com](#)
Social networking and microblogging service utilising instant messaging, SMS or a web interface.
- 8 [Yahoo.com](#)
A major internet portal and service provider offering search results, customizable content, cha...[More](#)
- 9 [Linkedin.com](#)
A networking tool to find connections to recommended job candidates, industry experts and busin...[More](#)
- 10 [Live.com](#)
Search engine from Microsoft.

59% of Irish adults have a Facebook profile and are highly active on the platform, with 67% using it at least once a day (Ipsos MRBi, 2015) and for more than 80 minutes per day. The largest age cohort on the platform in Ireland (about 29%) is the 25 – 34 age group (Irish Digital Consumer Report 2015).

The Facebook audience is large, present and active.



ACHIEVE BUSINESS GROWTH WITH FACEBOOK ADVERTISING

This e-book is your strategic guide to achieving real business growth through Facebook Ads - arguably the most effective and efficient social media platform for businesses.

Through this platform, businesses can run campaigns to achieve all kinds of objectives from promoting an event, to increasing page likes, to getting video views or app downloads.

In this e-book we focus on Irish SME case studies which show how it's possible to achieve three key objectives which we can easily align to business growth:

- Enquiries ◦
- Lead Generation ◦
- Brand Advocacy ◦

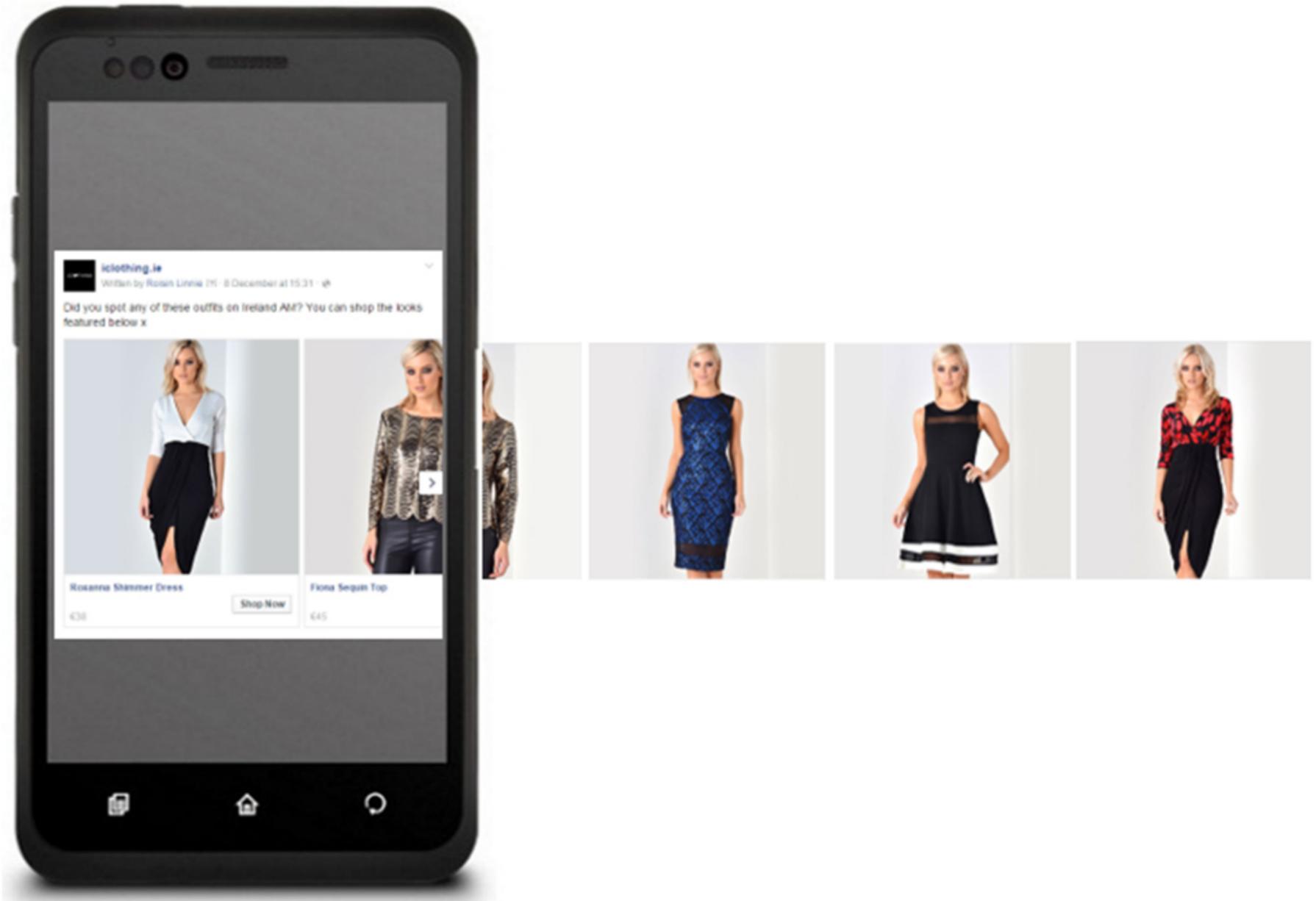
2. FACEBOOK AD PLATFORM ESSENTIALS

Facebook advertising options can be overwhelming, particularly for those without a dedicated digital marketer to rely on. Here, we isolate four key essentials of the platform. You will see in the case studies to follow how you can use these to achieve your business goals.

These essentials are:

- The Carousel Ad Format ◦
- Facebook Interests Targeting ◦
- Website Custom Audiences ◦
- Lookalike Audiences ◦

THE CAROUSEL AD FORMAT



Launched in 2015, these ads allow you to place up to 5 different images and URLs into one advert, giving users the opportunity to browse right there in their News Feeds. Some studies have reported 10 times the amount of engagement with these ads compared to the regular News Feed ads.

FACEBOOK INTERESTS TARGETING

While Google knows its users' search histories, Facebook knows its users' entire lives.

Whether it's a user's relationship status, educational attainment, travel habits, occupation or obscure interests...you name it, Facebook knows it. The result is highly powerful ad targeting capability for businesses.

WEBSITE CUSTOM AUDIENCES

Facebook brought its ad targeting capabilities to another level with the Facebook pixel.

View Pixel Code

Add pixel code (required)

Copy the code below and paste it between the <head> and </head> in your website code. The pixel will track visits to every page of your website. [Get help with installing your pixel.](#)

```
<!-- Facebook Pixel Code -->
<script>
!function(f,b,e,v,n,t,s){if(f.fbq)return;n=f.fbq=function(){n.callMethod?
n.callMethod.apply(n,arguments):n.queue.push(arguments)};if(!f._fbq)f._fbq=n;
n.push=n;n.loaded=!0;n.version='2.0';n.queue=[];t=b.createElement(e);t.async=!0;
t.src=v;s=b.getElementsByTagName(e)[0];s.parentNode.insertBefore(t,s)}(window,
document,'script','//connect.facebook.net/en_US/fbevents.js');
```

By asking your webmaster to place a piece of code like this on your website, you will be able to

- Track users who visit your website or even specific pages on your website
- Collect them as a 'website custom audience'
- Retarget highly relevant ads to this audience in their Facebook News Feeds.

Just like the Carousel ads, using this feature is an essential tool in maximising your audience engagement.

Note. When using pixels, do ensure that your website's privacy policy is up to date, detailing that third-parties may use cookies or other similar technologies to collect information from your website.

LOOKALIKE AUDIENCES

A real strength of Facebook Ads is their ability to create highly accurate lookalike audiences based on either a website custom audience or an external list (e.g. your email list).

If you have an up-to-date, legitimate email list that you use for marketing purposes...well, that list just became even more valuable than you thought.

On uploading your list, Facebook will find those profiles on Facebook based on their email addresses. You can then say to Facebook,

“See this list of highly relevant users (my email list)? I would like you to find lots of other people just like them as they are also likely to be interested in my products.”

This could potentially turn your e-mail list of 2,000 into a highly relevant lookalike audience of 100,000.

Create a Lookalike Audience ×

Find new people on Facebook who are similar to your most valuable audiences.
[Show advanced options](#)

Source ⓘ

Country ⓘ

Audience size ⓘ 78.9K Estimated reach

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 % of country

Resulting audiences	Estimated reach
Lookalike (IE, 3%) – iClothing Mailing List 1	79,000 people

Audience size ranges from 1% to 10% of the total population in the country that you choose, with 1% being those who most closely match your source.

3. CAMPAIGN FOUNDATIONS

You'll notice the 4 Facebook Ad Essentials appearing again and again in the Irish SME case studies in the next section. You'll also notice that these essentials are supported by some recurring campaign foundations, combining to create high-performing campaigns. These campaign foundations are:

- Content ◦
- Authenticity ◦
- User Generated Content ◦
- Google Analytics Insights ◦

CONTENT

Most digital marketers and online advertisers have come to terms with the fact that online consumers do not like being interrupted and have become adept at filtering out unwanted messages. This has contributed to the noticeable shift by businesses towards a content marketing approach.

“Content marketing is a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly-defined audience - and ultimately, to drive profitable customer action.”

- Content Marketing Institute

Have you ever been to a party, really enjoying a conversation with someone who shares your passion for music, when all of a sudden a stranger appears in your peripheral vision, interrupts the conversation and proceeds to talk solely about themselves?

A business that enters a social network with nothing to offer other than promotional messages is that guy. And you can bet the business won't be granted half the politeness and patience that Annoying Party Guy is.



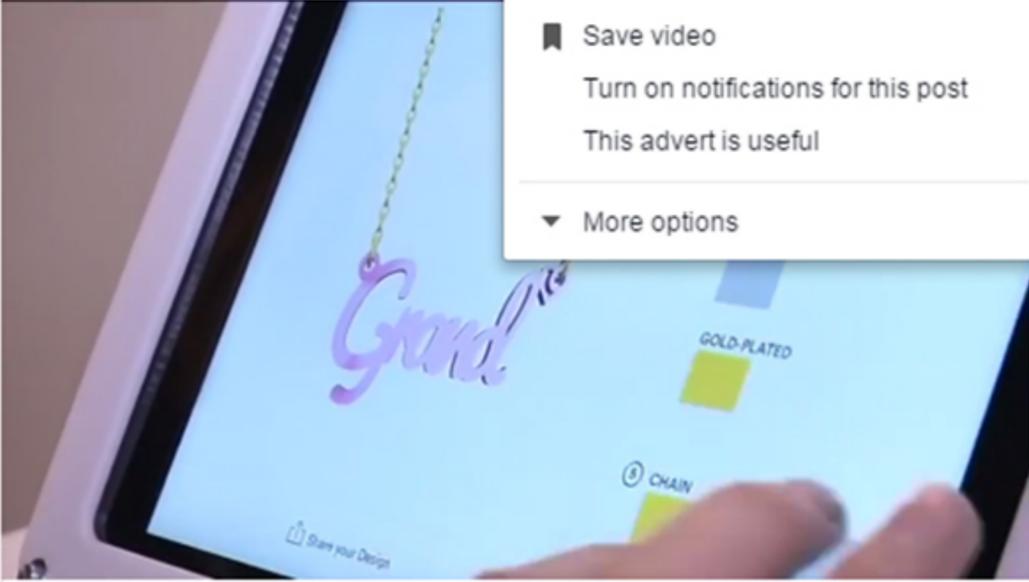
While Facebook has welcomed advertisers to the party, they give its users the power to easily have their say if they don't like the ads they are seeing.

The more relevant you are to your audience and the more value you can offer them, the more successful you will be with your Facebook Ad campaigns.

Suggested Post

 **Love and Robots**
Sponsored · 

Create your own Textlace online just in silver or gold!



Custom Textlaces

IN ACRYLIC 35€, GOLD PLATED 150€ OR SILVER FOR 190€. CREATE YOUR ONLINE AND IT WILL BE SHIPPED TO YOU [Shop Now](#)

9.9k Views
63 Likes 4 Comments 3 Shares

 Like  Comment  Share

- Hide advert**
See fewer adverts like this
-  **Why am I seeing this?**
-  Save video
Turn on notifications for this post
This advert is useful
-  More options

AUTHENTICITY & USER GENERATED CONTENT

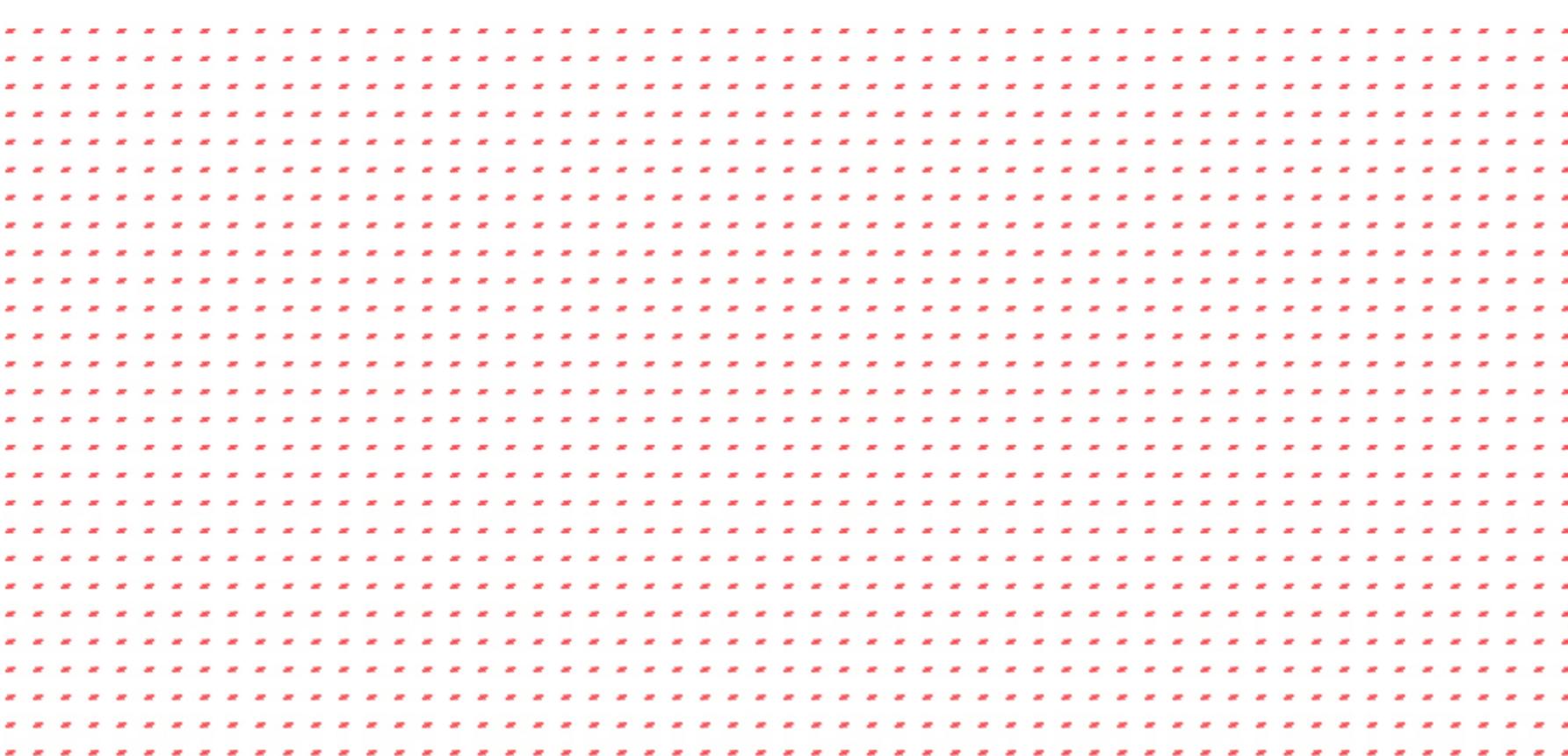
The polished delivery of brand messages has lost its impact. Today's audiences, particularly the millennial population, are more interested in genuine content from 'real people like me'.

The result is that user generated content (UGC) has emerged as the holy grail of social media advertising.

Can your business be so impressive that your customers will produce content around your brand for you?

GOOGLE ANALYTICS INSIGHTS

Want a solid foundation from which to build your next Facebook Advertising campaign? Take a minute to explore the valuable information that's right under your nose first. If you have Google Analytics set up on your website, you will already have a wealth of clues at your fingertips to guide your approach.



Take a look at the **Behaviour** reports in Google Analytics. See 'Site Content' to find your most popular content.

Or explore the **Audience** reports and pull out the demographic and interests data of users who visit your site.



YOU MIGHT BE SURPRISED AT THE **INSIGHTS** YOU DISCOVER THAT CAN BE APPLIED TO YOUR CAMPAIGNS.

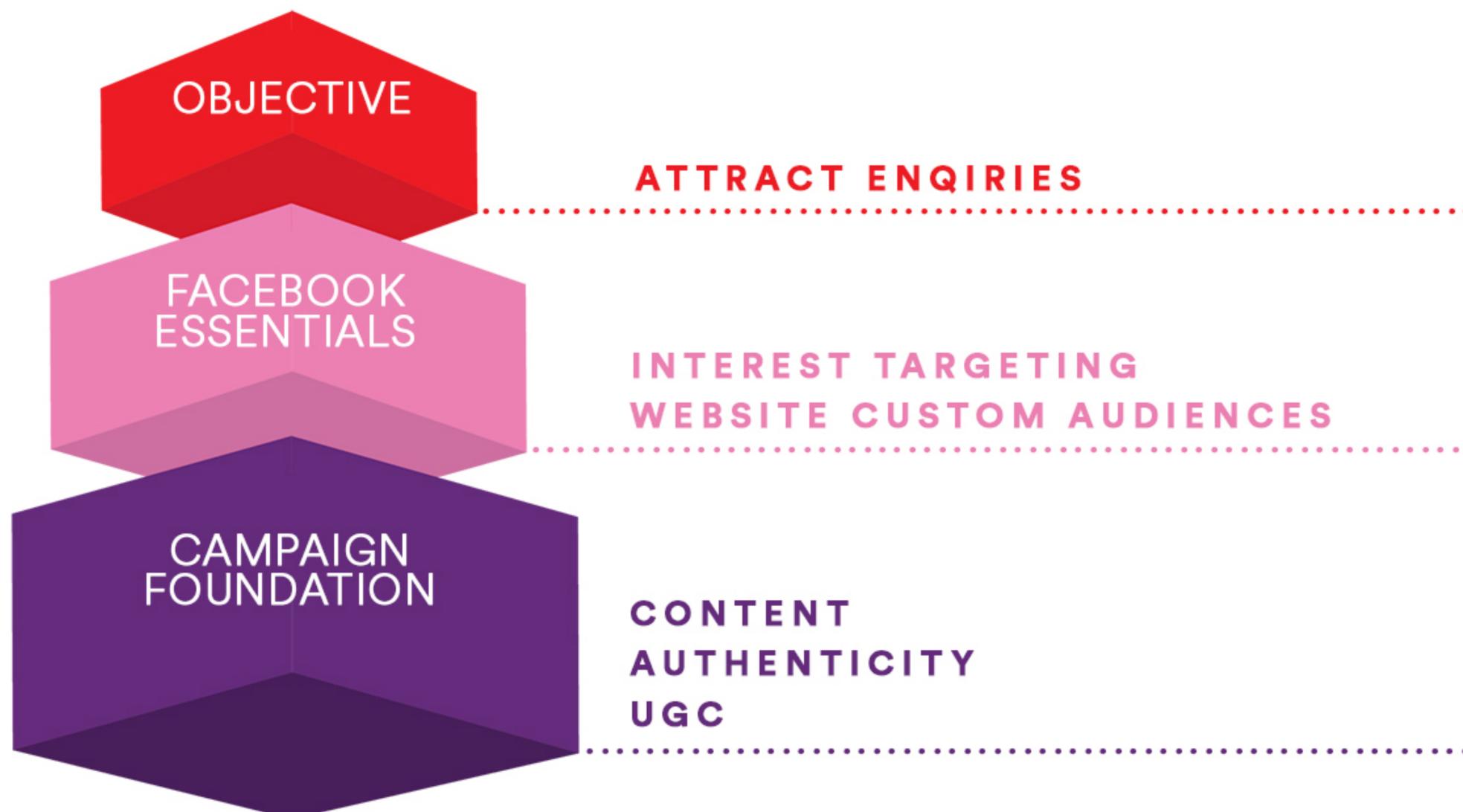
4.3 SUCCESSFUL IRISH CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY

THE
AVOCA
CLINIC

BUSINESS GROWTH OBJECTIVE: ATTRACTING ENQUIRIES

By taking their authentic content, and amplifying it through strategic Facebook advertising, internationally-acclaimed cosmetic surgery clinic, the Avoca Clinic has steadily attracted enquiries from highly relevant audiences on Facebook.



CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVE: Attract Enquiries

CAMPAIGN FOUNDATION: The Avoca Clinic puts real emphasis on building relationships with its clients. As a result, many are more than happy to record **UGC** in the form of video diaries of their cosmetic surgery journey. Simply filmed on the client's own smart-phone, the emphasis is not on high quality production but 100% **authenticity**.

FACEBOOK ESSENTIALS: Armed with this authentic UGC, the Avoca Clinic then promotes it to relevant audiences using Facebook's **interest targeting**. This allows the Avoca Clinic to drill down by gender, location, age and interests until they have defined the precise audience they wanted to target with each piece of content.

They also use **website custom audiences** and lookalike audiences based on these. This means that when they publish a new related piece of content, the Avoca Clinic can target people who have previously shown an interest.

THE RESULTS: The Avoca Clinic receives a steady stream of phone enquiries and website enquiries as a direct result of content advertised on Facebook.

 **The Avoca Clinic**
Written by Michaela Simpson [?] · 7 October 2015 · 

30 year old mum Carolynn updates us on her progress, 2 weeks after abdominoplasty surgery.



Carolynn's Video Blog
Watch her latest update

WWW.AVOCACLINIC.IE [Learn More](#)

This ad for example, targeted at a website custom audience and its lookalike audience, resulted in enquiries on the website at a cost per enquiry 50% cheaper than was driven by Google AdWords, and that's not even including those that enquired over the phone. Company Director at The Avoca Clinic, Niamh Murdock says, "I always know when the Facebook team is promoting content about a certain treatment, a tummy tuck for example, because we immediately see a big uplift in phone enquiries for that treatment!"

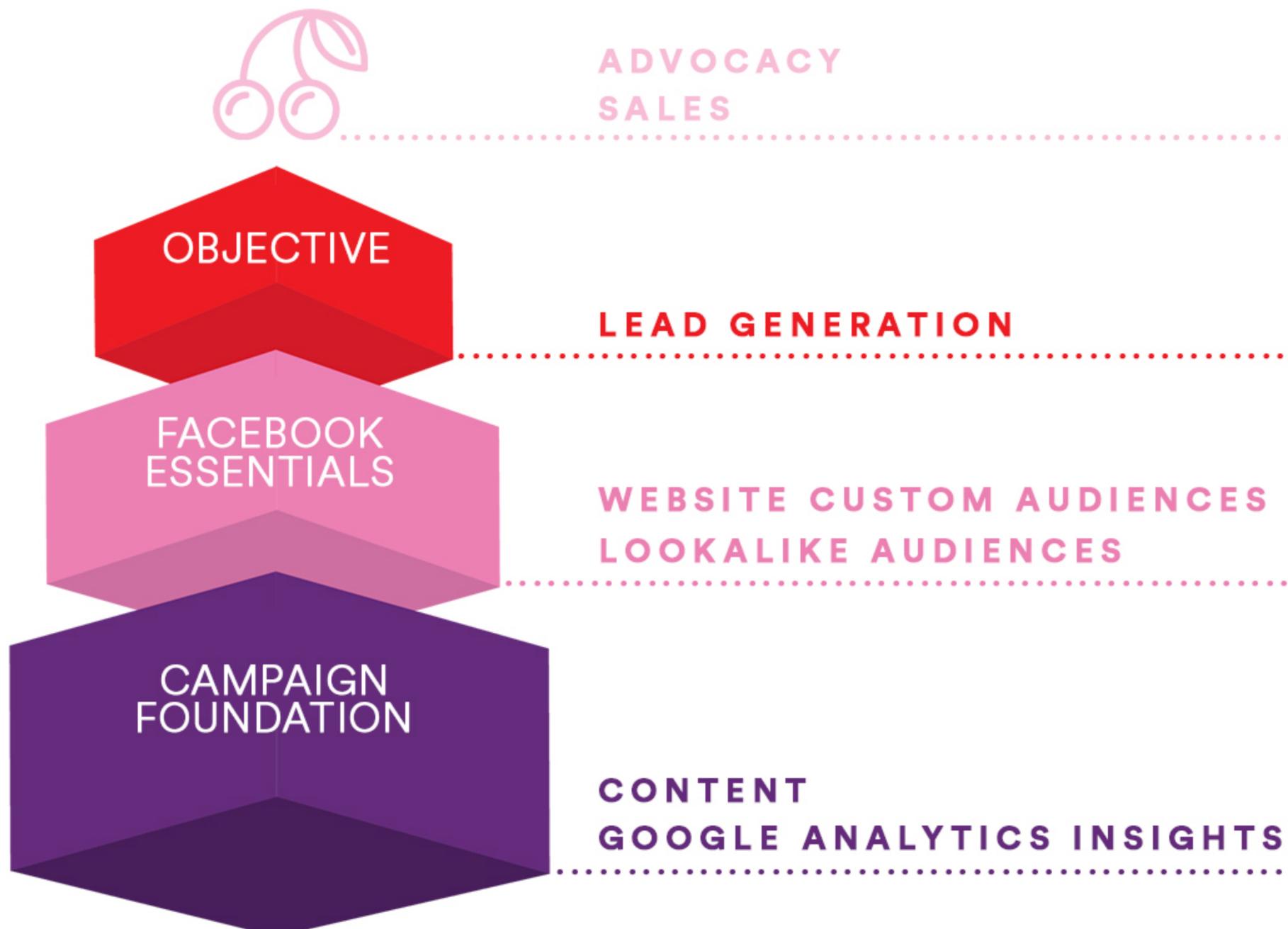
CASE STUDY



BUSINESS GROWTH OBJECTIVE: LEAD GENERATION

Based in Dublin, Camino Ways specialises in walking and cycling tours on the Camino de Santiago. With their quality e-books at the heart of the strategy, Camino Ways use Facebook Advertising to drive downloads resulting in high quality, relevant leads.

As well as achieving their primary objective of lead generation, Camino Ways has also enjoyed “cherry on the cake” benefits from their campaigns, including customer advocacy and direct sales.



CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVE: Lead Generation

CAMPAIGN FOUNDATION: Camino Ways recognised an opportunity to help its customers and potential customers by producing helpful **content** in the form of practical guides for those preparing to tackle the Camino.



Before they decided on their audience targeting, they examined the information that was already available to them – their **Google Analytics insights**. Through this they were able to get an understanding of the demographics that convert at the highest rate.

FACEBOOK ESSENTIALS: Camino Ways used the demographic data from Google Analytics to target the age group most likely to convert and overlaid this with their **website custom audiences** and **lookalike audiences**. This enabled Camino Ways to target people of a certain age group, who had previously visited the website, but had not yet submitted an enquiry or made a booking.

THE RESULTS: This very specific audience was targeted on Facebook and directed to the e-book landing page where users entered their email address to download the e-book. Once on the landing page, this audience converted (submitted their details in return for the e-book) at a very high rate of 25%. The campaign drove 611 leads for Camino Ways at a cost of just €0.62 each.



THE CHERRY ON THE CAKE: The objective was to generate leads via the e-book. However, the conversation it sparked within the Facebook ads themselves and the **advocacy** on show from previous Camino walkers was priceless.

Camino Ways .com
Written by Wolfgang digital [?] · 2 December at 16:13 · 🌐

Download our 6 month preparation plan for the Camino de Santiago!



Free Training E-book
Get your mind and body prepared for the Camino!
CAMINOWAYS.COM [Download](#)

21,013 people reached [Boost Post](#)

Like Comment Share

143 Top Comments

30 shares

Write a comment...

Marie Caul Would love to do it next year if you are doing it Linda Byrne
Like · Reply · 1 · 10 December at 11:13

Gina Kearns Sandy we need to talk about this....! Chat soon x
Like · Reply · 1 · 4 December at 20:10

Louise Ryan Fiona O Brien...saw this & thought of you xx
Like · Reply · 8 December at 22:31

John Gardiner You thinking about it, Una Ni Bhraoin?!

Una Ni Bhraoin Would love some time..thanx 🙏
Like · Reply · 1 · 11 hrs

Write a reply...

Yvonne Foran Connolly Yvonne Conway what do u think for next year
Like · Reply · 1 · 9 December at 15:02

Yvonne Conway What a goal
Like · Reply · 9 December at 15:38

Yvonne Foran Connolly Absolutely
Like · Reply · 9 December at 15:39

Yvonne Conway Count me in 🙌
Like · Reply · 9 December at 15:40



THE SECOND CHERRY ON THE CAKE: Not only did this campaign deliver the leads, encouraging potential customers further down the sales funnel, it also resulted in direct **sales** for Camino Ways.

A GAME-CHANGER FOR LEAD GEN FROM FACEBOOK?

The Facebook advertising opportunity became even greater for Irish SMEs when Lead Ads were launched in Ireland in October 2015. The key to Lead Ads is that users do not have to navigate away from Facebook at all to complete a valuable action for your business. They can sign up for a newsletter or request a quote for example by submitting a prefilled form in two-clicks while staying on Facebook.

The Avoca Clinic
Sponsored · 🌐

Make the change you always wanted. Click 'Get Quote' and we'll be delighted to call you back and answer your questions.

Request Call Back
Just click 'Get Quote'

fb.me

Sign Up

Like | Comment | Share

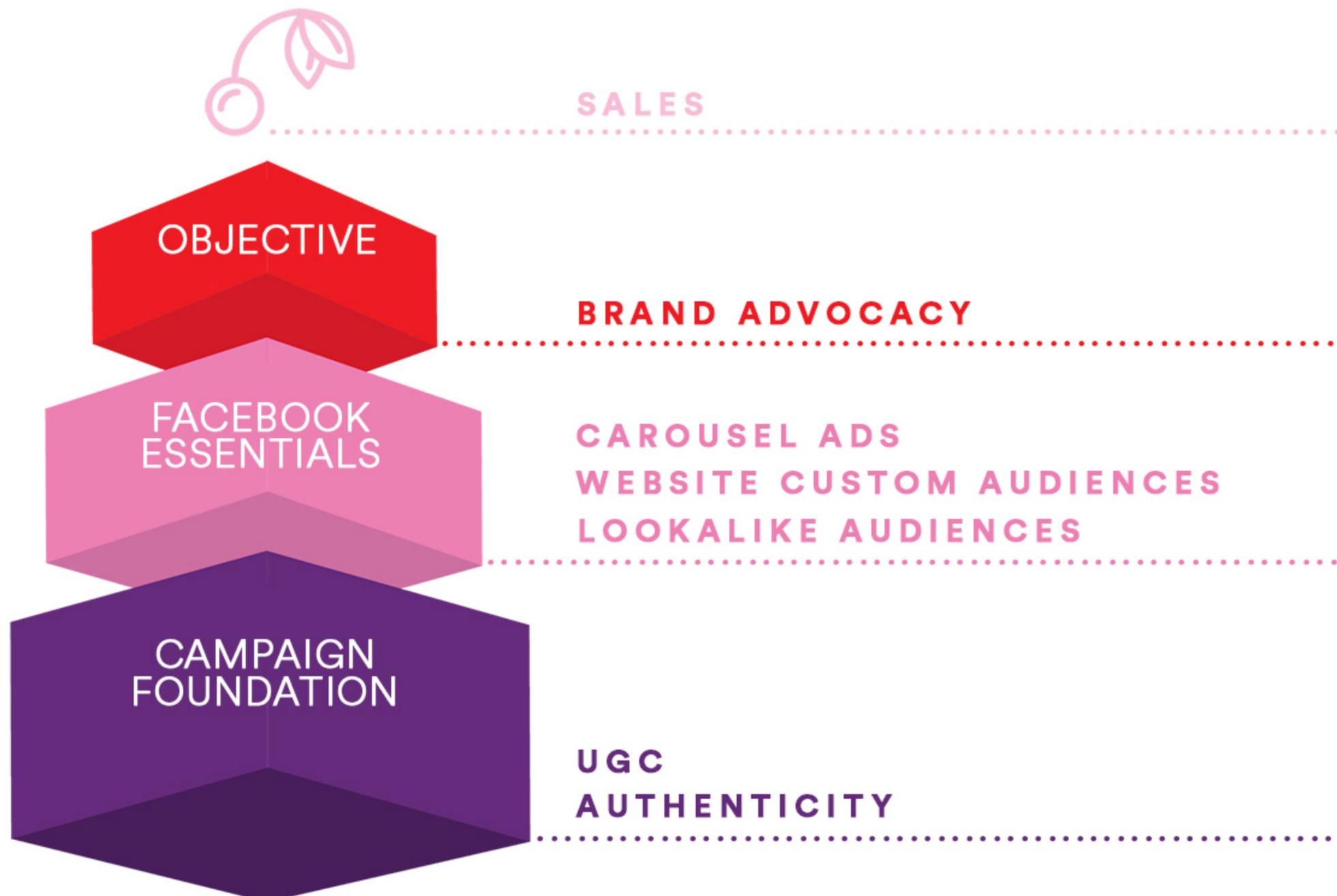
Learning from their previous campaigns, the Avoca Clinic targeted Lead Ads towards their most engaged Facebook audience. Lead Ads delivered record volumes of leads from Facebook traffic and did so at a cost 87% cheaper than those delivered via Google AdWords.

CASE STUDY iCLOTHING

BUSINESS GROWTH OBJECTIVE: PROMOTING ADVOCACY

iClothing, the Irish online-only clothing retailer, achieves high levels of brand advocacy through its UGC campaign, #iWear.

Not only that, but iClothing attributes a large number of direct sales to the campaign also.



CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVE: Brand Advocacy

CAMPAIGN FOUNDATION: Authentic, user-generated content is the basis of this campaign. iClothing customers are incentivised to photograph their recent iClothing purchases and share them across social channels with the hashtag #iWear. These images are then used in the further promotion of the campaign on Facebook to a specifically targeted audience.

FACEBOOK ESSENTIALS: iClothing make great use of Facebook's Carousel ads to showcase the fantastic UGC and encourage further participation. These ads are targeted using **website custom audiences and lookalike audiences**.



The image shows a Facebook carousel advertisement for iClothing.ie. At the top left is the iClothing.ie logo. To its right, it says "Written by Roisin Linnie [?] · 15 December at 16:01 ·". Below this is the text: "Share your best iClothing outfits with #iWear for a chance to win iClothing vouchers! Xx". The carousel consists of two images. The first image shows two women standing in a room with bookshelves; one is wearing a grey coat and a colorful scarf, the other a black top and grey pants. Below this image is the text "Share Your iClothing Outfits" and "#iWear", with a "Learn More" button. The second image shows a person in a red outfit standing outdoors. Below this image is the text "Post Your iClothing Style on Instagram" and "#iWear".

THE RESULTS: Like a snowball rolling down a snowy hill, the more UGC shared, the bigger the collection of authentic creative available. iClothing finds that UGC images generate engagement rates 10 times higher than professional shots of models.

9.5% CLICK THROUGH RATE

iclothing.ie
Sponsored ·  

Thank you to everyone who has sent in their iClothing #iWear selfies so far!

Share your iClothing style with us using #iWear to be in with a chance of winning an iClothing voucher every week! ❤️

More info --> <http://bit.ly/1wvNFBu>



iclothing.ie
Sponsored ·  

We love how Lina styles her iClothing jumper. Share your style with #iWear and win!



Share with #iWear
Share your iClothing style wit... [Learn More](#)

www.iclothing.com

CLICK THROUGH RATE 0.9%



THE CHERRY ON THE CAKE: The #iWear campaign achieves its objective of encouraging brand advocacy, but it also contributes significantly to **sales**. As a result of the success of the #iWear campaign, iClothing saw revenue generated from social campaigns increase by 90% year on year.

5. MEASUREMENT

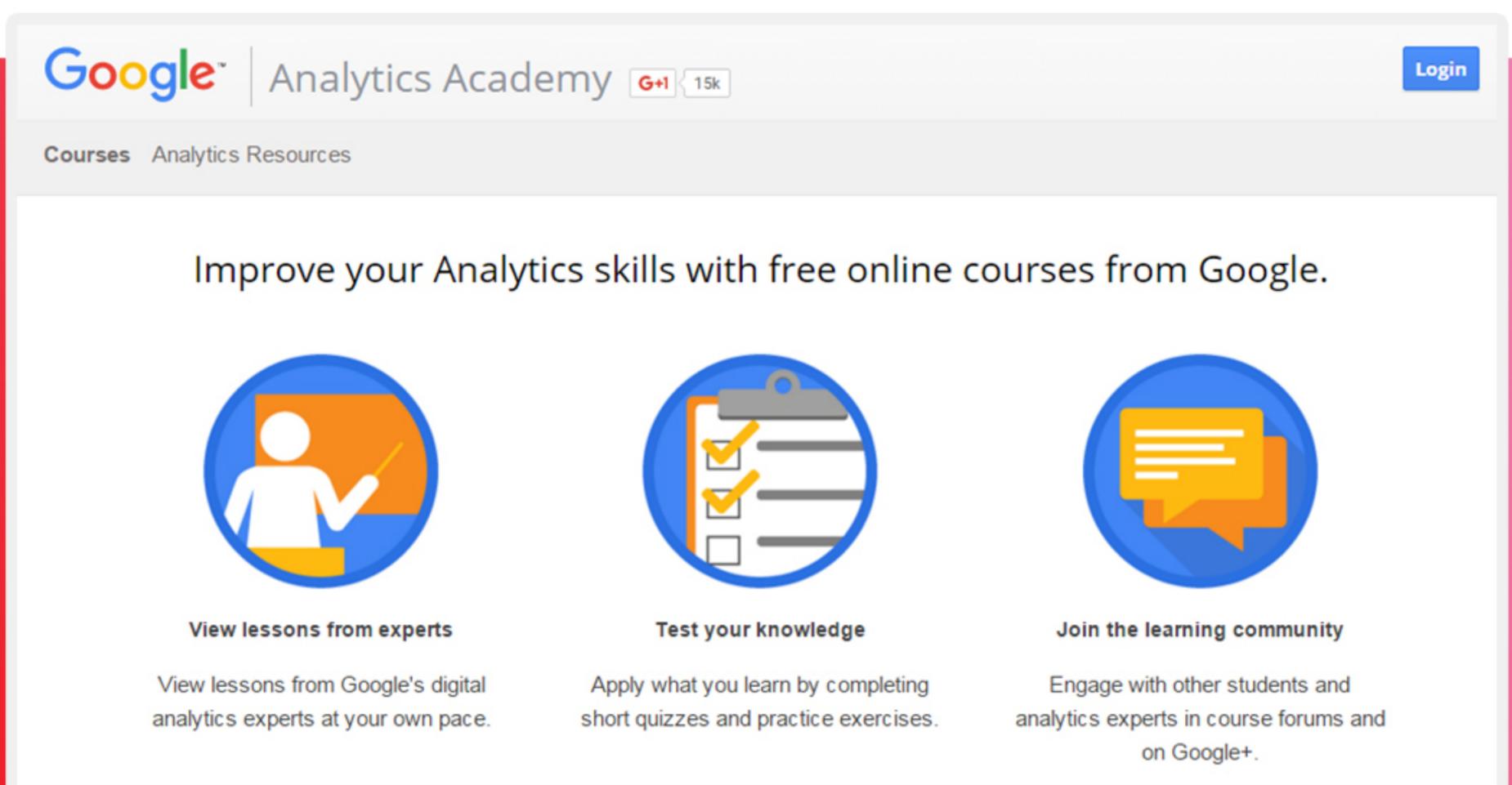
For many SMEs, the issue preventing them from determining whether or not social media has contributed to business growth might not be in the execution, it might be in the measurement.

Here, we want to highlight the bare minimum you'll need in to be able to say with confidence, "Yes! Social media has contributed to business growth!"

GOOGLE ANALYTICS

If you're spending money on any online campaigns, it's imperative that you have Google Analytics for your website and that you make yourself or someone else within your business familiar with how to use it.

Google provides great tutorials covering every aspect of Google Analytics for small businesses. Check them out here <https://analyticsacademy.withgoogle.com/explorer>.



Google | Analytics Academy G+ 15k Login

[Courses](#) [Analytics Resources](#)

Improve your Analytics skills with free online courses from Google.

- 

View lessons from experts

View lessons from Google's digital analytics experts at your own pace.
- 

Test your knowledge

Apply what you learn by completing short quizzes and practice exercises.
- 

Join the learning community

Engage with other students and analytics experts in course forums and on Google+.

GOOGLE'S URL BUILDER TOOL

Any URL you use in your Facebook ads, should first be put through Google's URL Builder Tool (see <https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1033867?hl=en>).

This tool enables you to tag every URL you use in a campaign so that each time someone clicks on your ad and comes through to your website, Google Analytics will be able to identify this user as coming from your specific campaign.

You will then be able to see how this campaign performed once users arrived at your site from your ad. Did they download your e-book? Did they submit an enquiry? Did they buy something? By tagging your campaign URLs with the URL builder, you will be able to answer all of these questions.

URL builder form

Step 1: Enter the URL of your website.

Website URL *

(e.g. <http://www.urchin.com/download.html>)

Step 2: Fill in the fields below. **Campaign Source, Campaign Medium and Campaign Name** should always be used.

Campaign Source *

(referrer: google, citysearch, newsletter4)

Campaign Medium *

(marketing medium: cpc, banner, email)

Campaign Term

(identify the paid keywords)

Campaign Content

(use to differentiate ads)

Campaign Name *

(product promo code, or slogan)

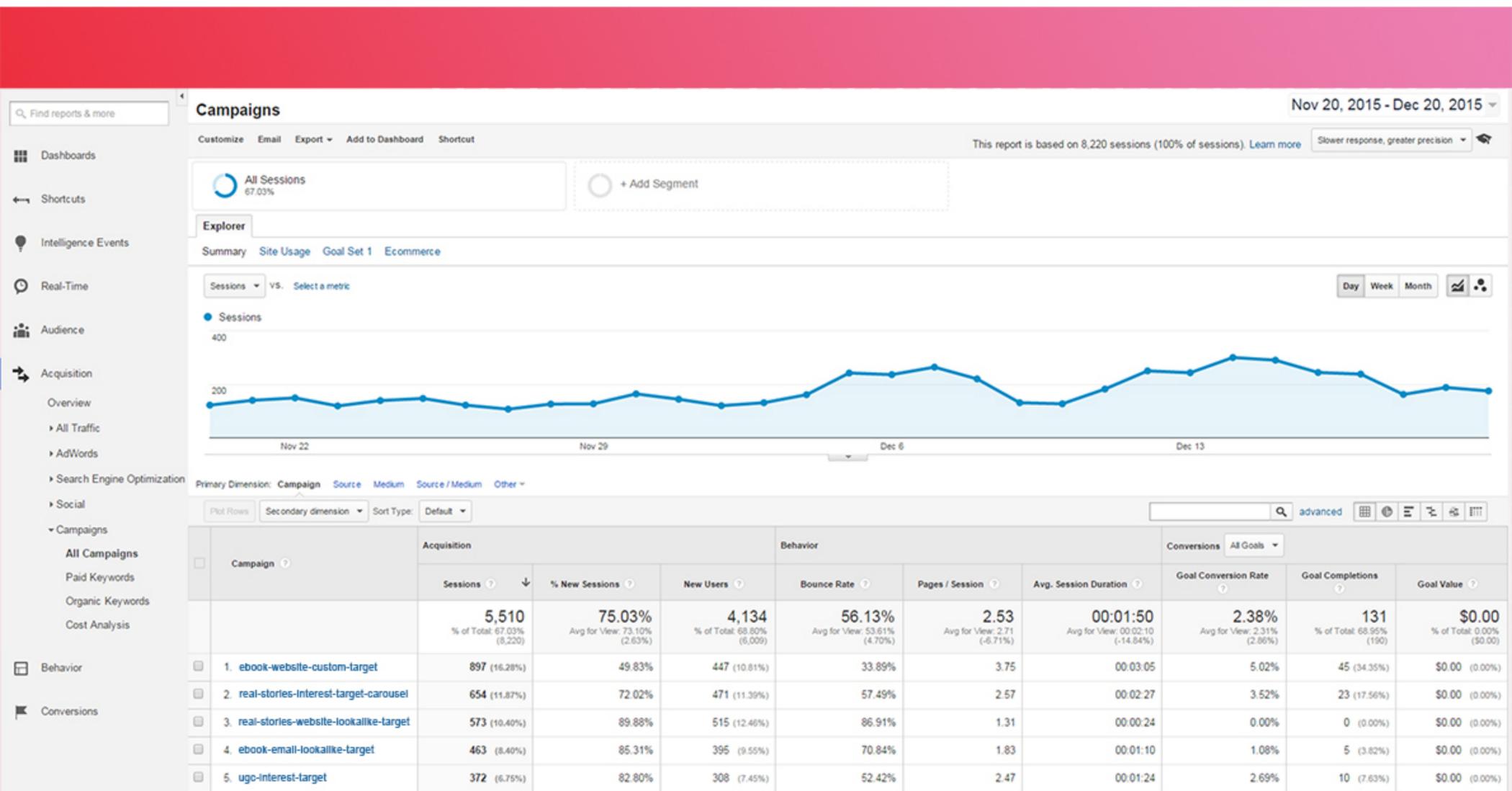
GENERATE URL

http://www.yourwebsite.ie/?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=your-facebook-campaign



http://www.yourwebsite.ie/?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=your-facebook-campaign

When your URL looks like the above, you can go to Acquisition → Campaigns and see exactly how effectively your campaign is performing.



FACEBOOK REPORTS

Finally, make sure you get to know Facebook reports.

All sorts of metrics are available to you. However, in 2015, the introduction of relevance score meant you could pretty much evaluate the strength of your campaign in one metric. Facebook's answer to Google's Quality Score essentially evaluates how well your ad is resonating with the audience you are targeting and hence has a big influence on your cost-per-click (CPC). As a general rule of thumb aim for a high relevance score to reduce your CPC.

FACEBOOK'S TIPS FOR IMPROVING RELEVANCE SCORE:

- Be specific with your audience targeting
- Tailor ad images and ad texts to this audience
- Create a selection of different ads for your audience and test them

See more at
<https://www.facebook.com/business/help/547135645422568>

6. CONCLUSION

4 out of 10 Irish SMEs using social media feel that it contributes nothing to their business growth. However, as illustrated by these case studies the picture is very different for those who have unlocked the power of Facebook Ads.

Engaging, visual ad formats, accurate interest-based targeting and pixel powered website custom audiences and lookalike audiences provide businesses with some of the most sophisticated online advertising tools available today. Resist the urge to hit “Boost Post” and get to know the features that can truly deliver results for your business.

Doing this, and building your campaigns on an authentic content marketing approach will set you well on your way to achieving real business goals.

7. REFERENCES

Content Marketing Institute, 'What is Content Marketing?'
<http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/what-is-content-marketing/>

Digiday, 'Facebook's carousel ads are 10 times better than its regular ads'
<http://digiday.com/platforms/facebooks-carousel-ads-10-times-better-regular-ads/>

Facebook for Business, 'How do I improve my relevance score?'
<https://www.facebook.com/business/help/547135645422568>

Google Analytics Academy
<https://analyticsacademy.withgoogle.com/explorer>

Google URL Builder
<https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1033867?hl=en>

Ipsos MRBI (Aug 2015) Social Networking Quarterly – August 2015,
http://ipsosmrbi.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/SN_Aug15.gif

Shane O'Leary, 'Irish Digital Consumer Report 2015'
<http://shaneoleary.me/blog/index.php/the-irish-digital-consumer-report-2015/>



BUSINESS

I R E L A N D