How to Measure the Success of Your Digital Media Dollars

Tuesday, January 19, 2021
Introductions

TODAY’S SPEAKERS

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ACT | NRCCUA

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ACT | NRCCUA
Agenda

• The Ever-Changing Digital Landscape
• Best Digital Media Bets for 2021
• Why Multi-Pronged Digital Media ROI so Difficult to Track?
• Make Sure Google Analytics is Working For and Not Against You
• A Word About UTM Codes
• Tracking Beyond Clicks
• Why Verified Visits Matter
• Converting Verified Visits to Expressions of Interest
• Benchmarks to Measure Against
• Q&A
The Digital Media Landscape Keeps Shifting

THE MOST USED SOCIAL NETWORKS BY TEENS & YOUNG ADULTS IN 3RD QUARTER 2020

- YouTube: 77%
- Instagram: 61%
- Facebook: 59%
- Snapchat: 48%
- Twitter: 47%
- Reddit: 39%
- TikTok: 26%
- Pinterest: 23%
- WhatsApp: 19%
- LinkedIn: 19%
- Tumblr: 10%

Statista Research, Reach of Leading Social Network Sites by Teens & Young Adults in United States as of 3rd Quarter, September 23, 2020
“During a fall 2020 survey, it was found that Snapchat was the most important social network for 34 percent of U.S. teens. Fast-growing social video app TikTok was ranked second with 29 percent of teenagers in the United States stating it to be their favorite, ahead of legacy platforms Facebook and Twitter.”

Statista Research, Favorite Social Networks of U.S. Teens 2012 – 2020, November 24, 2020
Poll: Is Your Institution Using TikTok?

1. Yes
2. No - but we’re interested
3. No - we’re not interested at this time
4. What’s a TikTok?
Poll: Is Your Institution Using TikTok?

- Yes: 58%
- No - but we're interested: 19%
- No - we're not interested at this time: 22%
- What's a TikTok?: 1%
Our Favorite Digital Enrollment Drivers in 2021

Next-Gen Custom Audience
Takes students you know and reaches them with high frequency over their most used platforms (Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram) and devices (smartphones, laptops and tablets).

YouTube Pre-Roll Advertising
Ability to target teens looking for colleges or transfer schools. Puts your video message in front of tens of thousands of cohorts efficiently.

Search Engine Marketing
Most efficient means of getting your message in front of people who are actively ‘shopping’ for education by searching on Google. A cost per click strategy.

Programmatic Audio Advertising
Leverages Pandora, Spotify, iHeartRadio, etc. more. Ability to target by age, geography and genre of music.

TikTok Audience Based Advertising
Reaches a predominantly teen audience in your target market.

Connected TV (OTT) Advertising
Leverages OTT platforms including Hulu, Sling, Vudu and Xbox. Ability to target by age, geography and an interest in education. Reaches students and parents at home.
The Challenge of the Multi-Prong Digital Media Approach
The fact that digital advertising is not linear poses real problems for the way we measure success. Understanding the prospective student journey will help.
The Prospective Student Journey Looks More Like This

Start

- Consults Peers
- Researches Online

Student Finds Your EDU Site by Clicking Over from an Ad

One Week Later, Student Clicks Over from a Social Network

One Hour Later, Student Returns to Your EDU Site and Applies

End

- Student Bookmarks Your EDU Site

Same Day, Student Receives Your Email Campaign and Clicks to Visit Your EDU Site a Third Time
Is Your Google Analytics Attribution Model Working for You or Against You?
How Does Google Analytics Measure Your Media Dollar ROI?

YOUR GOOGLE ANALYTICS ATTRIBUTION MODEL MATTERS WHEN IT COMES TO ATTRIBUTING INQUIRES AND APPS

There are 7 attribution models:

1. Last Interaction
2. Last Non-Direct Click
3. Last Google Ad
4. First Interaction
5. Linear
6. Time Decay
7. Position-Based
Last Interaction

THE LAST TOUCHPOINT, IN THIS CASE, THE DIRECT CHANNEL, RECEIVES 100% OF THE CREDIT

Start

Consults Peers

One Week Later, Student Clicks Over from a Social Network

Researches Online

Student Finds Your EDU Site by Clicking Over from an Ad

End

One Hour Later, Student Returns to Your EDU Site and Applies

Student Bookmarks Your EDU Site

Same Day, Student Receives Your Email Campaign and Clicks to Visit Your EDU Site a Third Time
THE LAST NON-DIRECT MODEL IGNORES ALL DIRECT TRAFFIC. THE EMAIL RECEIVES 100% OF THE CREDIT

Start
- Student Finds Your EDU Site by Clicking Over from an Ad
- Consults Peers
- Researches Online

One Week Later, Student Clicks Over from a Social Network

End
- Student Bookmarks Your EDU Site
- One Hour Later, Student Returns to Your EDU Site and Applies
- Same Day, Student Receives Your Email Campaign and Clicks to Visit Your EDU Site a Third Time

100%
THE LAST (AND IN THIS CASE ONLY) PAY PER CLICK GOOGLE AD RECEIVES 100% OF THE CREDIT

1. Start
   - Consults Peers

2. Student Finds Your EDU Site by Clicking Over from an Ad

3. One Week Later, Student Clicks Over from a Social Network
   - Researches Online

4. One Hour Later, Student Returns to Your EDU Site
   - Bookmarks Your EDU Site

5. Same Day, Student Receives Your Email Campaign and Clicks to Visit Your EDU Site a Third Time

End
THE VERY FIRST TOUCHPOINT, IN THIS CASE THE SEARCH AD ON GOOGLE, RECEIVES 100% OF THE CREDIT

Start

Consulls Peers

One Week Later, Student Clicks Over from a Social Network

One Hour Later, Student Returns to Your EDU Site and Applies

End

Student Finds Your EDU Site by Clicking Over from an Ad

Student Bookmarks Your EDU Site

Same Day, Student Receives Your Email Campaign and Clicks to Visit Your EDU Site a Third Time
EACH TOUCHPOINT IN THE CONVERSION PATH RECEIVES EQUAL CREDIT

1. Start
   - Consults Peers

2. 25%
   - Student Finds Your EDU Site by Clicking Over from an Ad

3. 25%
   - One Week Later, Student Clicks Over from a Social Network

4. 25%
   - Researches Online

5. 25%
   - Student Bookmarks Your EDU Site

6. 25%
   - Same Day, Student Receives Your Email Campaign and Clicks to Visit Your EDU Site a Third Time

7. End
   - One Hour Later, Student Returns to Your EDU Site and Applies
TOUCHPOINTS CLOSER TO THE TIME OF THE CONVERSION RECEIVE MOST OF THE CREDIT

Start

Consults Peers

One Week Later, Student Clicks Over from a Social Network

Researches Online

5%

Student Finds Your EDU Site by Clicking Over from an Ad

End

One Hour Later, Student Returns to Your EDU Site and Applies

Student Bookmarks Your EDU Site

45%

35%

Same Day, Student Receives Your Email Campaign and Clicks to Visit Your EDU Site a Third Time
FIRST & LAST TOUCHPOINTS RECEIVE 40% CREDIT EACH. THE BALANCE IS DIVIDED UP AMONG TOUCHES IN THE MIDDLE

Start

Student Finds Your EDU Site by Clicking Over from an Ad

Consults Peers

Researches Online

40%

One Week Later, Student Clicks Over from a Social Network

End

One Hour Later, Student Returns to Your EDU Site and Applies

Student Bookmarks Your EDU Site

Same Day, Student Receives Your Email Campaign and Clicks to Visit Your EDU Site a Third Time

10%
Key Takeaway

Google Analytics offers **seven** default attribution models and **four** of them will attribute a single source.

Only 3 of the 7 attribution models will consider how your multi-media approach works together:

- Linear
- Time Decay
- Position Based
UTMs and CRMs
A Word About UTMs

WHERE THE URCHIN TRACKING MODULE FALLS SHORT

1. Invented in 2002
   - Jack Bauer makes “24” the top-rated TV show
   - Eminem is that year’s chart topper
   - Sony PlayStation 2 can’t keep up with demand

2. Free

3. Only Measures a Click to a Landing Page
What a UTM Code Sees

A UTM CODE WORKS WELL IN A LINEAR WORLD

Your Digital Ads → Landing Page

Students Must Click Ads To Be Measured
What a Third-Party Tag Sees

Container Tags Take Into Account How Gen Z Uses Media Today

Your Digital Ads

Students Seeing the Ad & Clicking + Those Seeing the Ad, Opening Browser & Loading Any Tagged Page are Measured
Why Clicks Don’t Tell the Whole Story

Custom Audience Campaign

This report shows the campaign generated 737 clicks for an average click thru rate of 0.23% on the surface this CTR looks great. The national average is 0.10%. Our average here at ACT | NRCCUA is 0.20%.

But these are clicks and clicks bounce. How many bounced?

And what about the students who don’t click but who navigate to the EDU site on their own?
Of the 737 clicks, 627 bounced. Only 110 out of 737 were truly intentional, post click verified actions.

But an additional 5,663 post view actions were generated by this campaign as well. These were students who were moved by the ads but did not click on them. The ads influenced them to open a browser and navigate to tagged pages of the EDU site. That’s powerful!

The total number of verified actions is 5,773 making the verified click-through rate a 1.82% vs. a traditional click-through rate of 0.23%
Here’s an example from a different Custom Audience Targeting campaign report. Of the 6,201 verified actions:

- 1,166 went to the Admissions Landing Page
- 2,081 went to the Apply Page either from the Admissions Page or Directly Via a Google Search
- Verified actions also tell us the content most important to students and where we may want to add links to apply!
- Verified actions deeper down in the site on Apply or Visit or Contact Us indicate an Expression of Interest or EOI.
- Expressions of Interest (EOI) are excellent metrics of success.
This report shows this campaign served the video to an audience of current college students look at colleges a total of 225,872 times.

The school’s video was viewed 114,741 times for at least 5 seconds.

58.16% or 66,733 potential transfer students watched 100% of the 15-second video.

A ‘good’ view thru rate is 15%. This school had a view thru rate of 50.80%. Shorter videos tend to have better VTR. Consider :30 seconds the max on YouTube. Consider a :07 second to :10 second video for TikTok.

161 of those that watched any part of the video clicked and went to the landing page.
Verified Actions are Essential for YouTube

There were 161 clicks on this school’s YouTube Skippable Pre-Roll Video Ad.

But there were 228 Verified Actions.

194 went to the transfer landing page.

17 signed up for priority registration.

Teens don’t often interrupt streaming to click on ads, but they will remember them, be influenced by them, and respond to them… in their own time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Verified Actions</th>
<th>Verified Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>admissions</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>admitted-students</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apply-now</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>main-edu</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>priority-registration</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transfer_app</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ug_plan_visit</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>228</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Quest for Expressions of Interest (EOI)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campaign Name</th>
<th>Impressions Delivered</th>
<th>Clicks</th>
<th>CTR</th>
<th>Total Verified Actions</th>
<th>Verified Action CTR</th>
<th>Main EDU</th>
<th>Academics</th>
<th>RFI</th>
<th>Visit</th>
<th>Aid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall App Push 1st Run</td>
<td>1,626,686</td>
<td>4,215</td>
<td>0.26%</td>
<td>4,663</td>
<td>0.29%</td>
<td>3,338</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1,201</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall App Push 2nd Run</td>
<td>701,003</td>
<td>2,008</td>
<td>0.29%</td>
<td>5,762</td>
<td>0.82%</td>
<td>5,418</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Apply Push</td>
<td>1,377,140</td>
<td>3,754</td>
<td>0.27%</td>
<td>2,124</td>
<td>0.15%</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1,463</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td>3,704,829</td>
<td>9,977</td>
<td>0.27%</td>
<td>12,549</td>
<td>0.42%</td>
<td>9,386</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>2,751</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Cost Metrics:**
- Total Media Spend: $37,048
- Cost Per Click: $3.71
- Cost Per Verified Actions: $2.95
- Total Expressions of Interest (EOI): 2,883
- (EOI are verified actions on Apply/RFI/Visit pages only)
- Cost Per Expression of Interest: $12.85
# Tags Help Us Understand Cost Metrics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metrics</th>
<th>ACT</th>
<th>NRCCUA Benchmarks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clicks</td>
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<td>$2.50 to $5.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cost Per Click</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Display CTR</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.10% National Average</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.20% ACT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Video View Thru Rate</td>
<td></td>
<td>15.0% YouTube Average</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30.5% ACT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Verified Actions</td>
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<td>$5.00 to $15.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Cost Per Verified Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expression of Interest (EOI)</td>
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<td>$25.00 to $40.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cost Per Expression of Interest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost per Application</td>
<td></td>
<td>$125 to $385</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cost Per Application</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost per Enrollment</td>
<td></td>
<td>$380 to $1,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cost Per Enrollment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tags Have Some Limitations

It’s easier to tag pages that you host.

To understand who in your CRM app or inquiry pool came from your digital media, you’ll need your tag to pass through a variable to your CRM to help the CRM accurately source the applicant by campaign.

This could require special coding by your CRM vendor.

It’s worth having the conversation.
10 Key Takeaways

1. The prospective student is influenced by many times by many forms of media along the path to conversion.

2. A multi-prong digital media strategy is important for success.

3. Google Analytics is a good tool, but your attribution model matters!

4. UTM codes are helpful but are not designed to measure the full result of your media spend.

5. A third-party tag that measures both post click and post view verified actions is a powerful ally.
10 Key Takeaways

6. Expressions of Interest are great metrics of success. They are verified actions that occur on content closest to point of conversion.

7. Verified actions cannot tell you came to your EDU site or who in your CRM came from a campaign.

8. Tags can work with your CRM, put that will require some coding to make that happen.

9. A CRM that can attribute multiple sources to a candidate is best. If your CRM attributes to just a first source or last source, you run the risk of not understanding the full measure of your digital media ROI.

10. Digital media tracking technology is not quite the Nirvana, we as marketers, would like but stay hopeful! Technology is evolving as rapidly as social media networks and apps!
Additional Resources
Other Helpful Resources

Google Analytics

International Advertising Bureau
Digital Marketing Solutions for the Evolving Enrollment Office

Reach your prospective students wherever they go.

You’re working harder. Why shouldn’t your media budget work harder for you?

We’ve designed and managed innovative digital campaigns for hundreds of institutions. Clients appreciate our creative approach to digital enrollment marketing for undergrad, transfer, grad and adult students.

Learn more:
encoura.org/digital-solutions
Understand Your Digital Footprint

Digital partners receive a complimentary report that stacks your institution’s online presence against your peers and identifies new opportunities to reach students.

WEB TRAFFIC | WEB RANKING | TOP SOURCES | CREATIVES
While there’s little doubt that COVID-19 has upended conventional postsecondary wisdom, there’s less clarity over what will happen in 2021. Amid these uncertainties, is your strategy for boosting graduate enrollment ready and in place?

This webinar features the most recent data from Eduventures on prospective adult learners’ attitudes towards graduate enrollment, coupled with a deep dive into how ACT | NRCCUA’s Digital Solutions converts these research insights into effective and impactful enrollment campaigns.
Questions & Answers
Thank you.

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