



WHAT'S WORKING IN B2B ADVERTISING?

SPONSORED BY

DEMAND  **GEN**
REPORT

 **mntn**

INFLU²



INTRODUCTION

In the era of self-service buying journeys, B2B advertising is simultaneously a marketer's best friend and worst enemy. While serving up an advertisement is a surefire way to promote brand engagement, irrelevant, 'spammy' ad campaigns will have prospects clicking in the other direction.

According to Karen Murphy, President of B2B marketing agency [FVM](#), the top three components practitioners must consider when creating engaging ads are:

- **Content** — "Advertisers in B2B are learning that content must actually be engaging and helpful, which isn't always 'snackable' or 'top-five' style content";
- **Video** — "Over the past year, we've found that viewers engage more with video ad content than static, especially on social: It's always worth the effort to include sight, sound and motion to ad concepts"; and
- **Paid search advertising** — "This is always a top recommendation, as it reaches the audience of people who are actively searching for a solution to a problem; if your business can help solve that problem, you need to be in that conversation."

Murphy continued that the backbone of those three tactics must be trust, specifically by demonstrating how a certain company can help prospects solve workplace challenges.

It's clear that advertising is a necessary component of B2B marketing, as **71% of buyers** noticed ads and, of that percentage, **more than a third (38%)** indicated that the advertisements positively influenced their view of the brand. But marketers are contending with an uncertain future, specifically in the face of budget cuts and the long-awaited depreciation of cookies.

As organizations rethink traditional advertising techniques and shift their resources toward digital advertising, this report will discuss the new B2B landscape with a focus on:

- How marketers are pursuing cross-channel diversification;
- Consumers' changing preferences for advertising content, such as videos, influencer content, interactivity and more;
- How organizations are prioritizing inbound strategies to increase brand awareness by focusing on individual experiences tailored to consumers and increasing brand awareness; and
- The importance of connecting and matching first-party data and intent data to inform personalized advertising experiences.

“Advertisers in B2B are learning that content must actually be engaging and helpful, which isn’t always ‘snackable’ or ‘top-five’ style content.”

KAREN MURPHY, FVM

KEEPING UP WITH CONSUMER PREFERENCES

The primary goal of advertising across industries and workflows is always static: Driving buyer engagement. But as the workforce cycles through generational shifts and buyer preferences for content consumption evolve, practitioners are tasked with keeping up with these changing preferences.

"The customer demographic is constantly changing, and businesses must understand their audiences to market to them effectively," said Isha Kembhavi, Solutions Architect, Growth Marketing for [Evalueserve](#). "For instance, by 2025, more than 27% of the workforce will be Gen-Z. This digitally native audience already has consumed media from different digital channels before talking to a sales rep. Ensuring that we incorporate channels and media they prefer (e.g., influencers, SMS, podcasts, etc.) adds diversification to a brand's marketing mix."

Kembhavi continued that she's seen higher performance — in terms of watch and completion rates — from video, in addition to other consumable media such as podcasts or informative social media posts. Specifically:

- 45% of buyers prefer [interactive content](#);
- 49% prefer [video content](#);
- 35% prefer [influencer/advocate-related content](#); and
- 34% get more content through [social networks or peer recommendations](#).

"In the past year or so, within our advertising formats, we're finding that viewers do engage more with video ad content than static, especially on social," said Murphy. "When it's possible to include sight, sound and motion to ad concepts, it's always worth the time and effort."

In addition to interactivity, John Arnold, Principal Analyst at [Forrester](#), explained in his [B2B Sales & Marketing Exchange](#) keynote that 67% of B2B buyers said they want more relevant ads while concurrently demanding more privacy.

“Buyers want more privacy on their terms, but they also want relevance, which is a careful balance that’s hard to achieve,” Arnold continued. “End buyers want us to give them these personalized experiences, but they want us to do it blindfolded. Only about 12% of people agree it’s OK for companies to track their activities online to send relevant ads. You must know your buyers — and it’s one of the reasons to have a good data strategy.”

According to Arnold, a solid data strategy includes:

- Leveraging the expertise of a third-party solutions provider to append and enrich existing first-party data;
- Looking into vendors that “are doing things with content, natural language processing and reviewing pages of web content to tell you about the topics people are interested in”; and
- Analyzing those insights to determine buyer preferences.

Proof Point:

Hexaware, an IT services and management company, needed to **increase the specificity of its marketing efforts** to reach prospects 1:1. The company turned to **Influ2**, a person-based advertising platform, to help reach decision-makers and influencers at target accounts. It also needed to gain person-level campaign analytics to know which target prospects interacted with which promotions. By combining person-based advertising with hyper-targeted marketing assets, Hexaware saw:

- A 4X increase in sales-ready prospects;
- Thousands of target prospects reached monthly; and
- A 10X increase in targeted ad frequency.

HOW PERSON-BASED ADVERTISING HELPED OPTIMOVE GENERATE 2X LIFT IN AD PERFORMANCE

As an enterprise-level solution, **Optimove** needed to engage all members of the buying group to close deals. From the ability to target a decision-maker, gauge their interaction and act on that engagement, **Influ2's person-based advertising** is empowering Optimove's marketing and sales teams with insights and helping to shorten their sales cycles.

The Challenge

Founded in 2009 and serving more 500 brands, Optimove is a multichannel marketing hub on a mission to help enterprises grow. Using AI and cross-channel data to create actionable customer insights and predictive modeling, Optimove drives personalized customer communications at scale.

The company markets to large-scale, direct-to-consumer enterprises from industries as widespread as gaming, telecom and apparel, and its sales cycles are a minimum of 100 days. Being an enterprise-level solution, it is important for Optimove to engage different members of the buying committees at its target accounts as soon as possible. Optimove has three different sets of decision makers, or buying groups, that it's targeting:

- **Decision makers:** Executive-level individuals heading up the relevant departments of the target accounts;
- **Influencers:** Individuals whose opinion adds lot of the weight during the selection process; and
- **Gatekeepers:** All the people who need to know your brand to help seal the deal.

INFLU²

The Solution

Optimove added InflU² to its tech stack to customize its advertising. The company's advertising goal was to engage potential customers and inform sales of what these prospects were reading in real-time. Sales then created highly customized emails, whether to schedule a demo or nurture the sales process.

Optimove's main objective was to move accounts down the engagement funnel through the following stages:

- **Unaware:** Accounts that don't know Optimove;
- **Aware, not ready:** Accounts that only had two or less engagements with buying group members via marketing in the last quarter; and
- **Aware, ready:** Accounts with two or more engagements with buying groups members via marketing in the last quarter, which triggers a sales handoff.

Adi Hagag, Director, Marketing Growth and Ops for Optimove, iterated that the last stage doesn't denote a marketing qualified lead (a term that the company doesn't use). Instead, the message to sales is: *"There has been some engagement with the buying group members of this account. Let's try to engage them based on their interests."* This helps sales to engage and potentially move them into the engaged stage, where they've responded to emails and discussions have progressed to an open opportunity.

Optimove has integrated InflU² directly into HubSpot and then uses Zapier to automatically send engagement to Slack. The automation of this communication gives sales insight to act on engagement in a timely way and for the company to truly customize its responses. For example, if a COO were to click on an ad, the account executives could reach out. But, if the prospect is a CEO, Optimove's dedicated CEO team would make the connection.

Person-based advertising also allows Optimove to hone and target its messaging to prospects across different stages of the funnel. From classic brand messaging at the top of the funnel, to customer and market reviews at the deal stage, Hagag and his team can "crank up the heat with every single engagement."

INFLU²

The Results

Hagag explained that in terms of the classic metrics — impressions, click-through rates (CTR) and engagement — Influ2 has been a “game changer” for Optimove, because “not only are the numbers up, which is what you would expect, but because we’re now targeting a more interesting message to a more interested party.

“The most important part is that we’re completely filtering out all the non-interested parties, (the people that work for the company but would never be our target), so they’re no longer muddying the waters,” Hagag continued. “Even if I get the exact same CTR from my existing platform to Influ2, it will still mean that my true CTR is much, much, much higher. Why? Because if I only count true CTR as that which was gained from an interested target — then we’re talking about an exponential number.”

Optimove is in the process of building a data lake and automating the KPI analysis using the Optimove hub, including direct lead attribution. Specifically, because of its efforts, Optimove saw:

- A 2X lift in ad performance; and
- 100% influence on pipeline deals.

“Influ2 has been a “game changer” for Optimove, because “not only are the numbers up, which is what you would expect, but because you’re now targeting a more interesting message to a more interested party.”

ADI HAGAG, OPTIMOVE

INFLU²



INCREASING CREATIVITY TO DRIVE ENGAGEMENT WITH ADS

The B2B industry is making strides in shedding the infamous “business to boring” stereotype and setting its sights on creating engaging content. For advertising campaigns specifically, practitioners are tasked to stand out in a sea of banner advertisements and blanket-type content that casts a wide net.

“Generic ads or sponsored content have seen a considerable drop in performance, which stems from lower attention spans, more content and unique/multiple formats for users to garner information,” said Kembhavi. “Campaigns based on user journeys, customer intent and understanding where they might be in their search have done well for us.”

She continued that Evalueserve has seen success by creating campaigns that control the narrative of the information consumed by customers. For example, Kembhavi pointed to creating custom landing pages for traffic driven by LinkedIn ads targeting a specific industry versus directing them to a homepage.

Additionally, another advertising medium growing in adoption is the use of connected TV (CTV) marketing, which targets prospects in a B2C-esque way: Right on their Smart TV.

“TV has given B2B advertisers access to the TV screen in a way that linear TV never could,” said Ali Haeri, VP of Marketing for **MNTN**. “Linear TV didn’t have the features that B2B brands needed, from precise targeting to comprehensive measurement. These brands were mainly stuck with contextual alignment (and relegated to Sunday afternoon golf). Precision targeting allows them to get granular, targeting by job title or industry. And since CTV has transformed TV into a performance channel, B2B brands can know that each impression is reaching who it should and driving their KPIs.”

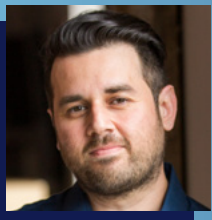
Proof Point:

A **subscription-based SaaS platform** wanted to reach users who had shown interest in learning a new language, so it turned to **MNTN’s** advanced targeting capabilities, as well as its precise reporting to help measure success, to target buyers. The company wanted to reach prospects who purchased similar products over the last six months and leveraged MNTN’s geo-specific targeting to identify the correct buyers. As a result of its efforts, the company:

- Achieved 2X return on ad spend;
- Reached more than 932K viewers;
- Generated almost 10K site visits and more than 960K total page views.

“Campaigns based on user journeys, customer intent and understanding where they might be in their search have done well for us.”

ISHA KEMBHAVI, EVALUESERVE



HOW B2B CAN LEVERAGE CTV ADVERTISING

With Ali Haeri, MNTN

Linear TV and cable are quickly becoming a thing of the past, as [Statista research](#) found that 83% of consumers in the U.S. were using a subscription video-on-demand service in 2022, representing an increase of nearly 20% in five years. As streaming services and smart TVs paved a new path for consumer preferences, it also opened the door for B2B practitioners to leverage an entirely new platform to reach prospects and customers.

To learn more about the potential connected TV (CTV) holds for marketers, *Demand Gen Report* sat down with Ali Haeri, VP of Marketing at [MNTN](#).

Demand Gen Report: Can you tell us more about the benefits of CTV and how it's transformed the B2B advertising landscape?

Ali Haeri: CTV has turned the TV screen — something that hasn't previously been a viable option for B2B advertisers — into the third great performance channel. B2B advertisers were all using the same playbook, but the brands that are taking advantage of this channel are standing out from their competition. CTV acts as a demand generation tool, creating new demand where the other channels capture existing demand.

CTV campaigns can be auto optimized toward brands' KPIs, delivering results without the need to micromanage the campaigns. B2B advertisers can use CTV's precise audience targeting to get granular, from industry information to job title and level. This helps them make the most of their ad budget by ensuring that each impression is delivered to the audience most likely to convert.



Additionally, its digital roots provide B2B advertisers with transparent data and extensive reporting. This information helps advertisers better understand their audience, with learnings that can be applied across search and social as well. Plus, the real-time results give advertisers enough time to iterate and update their strategy before the next round of creative development.

DGR: How does CTV factor into marketers' overall advertising strategy?

Haeri: CTV works in conjunction with other efforts like paid search, which captures that new demand. We've even seen that running CTV ads provides a halo effect to other channels, including paid search and social. For B2B marketers, specifically, adding CTV is a great way to differentiate from competitors. All B2B marketers (MNTN included) are using the same playbook, from webinars to white papers — CTV allows you to stand out from the crowd and reach your audience where your competitors aren't.

DGR: What role does data play in helping practitioners target their CTV advertisements?

Haeri: CTV has the same digital roots as search and social, which means that targeting is going to feel very familiar to marketers who use those channels. At MNTN, our platform Performance TV is fully integrated with Oracle Data Cloud so marketers can select their target audiences, as broad or granular as they'd like. This includes audiences that B2B marketers will have an interest in, from job titles to industries to even trade show attendance. Data plays a key role, allowing advertisers to run an audience-focused campaign and reach their target no matter where they are watching.

DGR: What are some ad formats that generate the best viewer engagement? (I.e., specific length, interactive elements, etc.)

Haeri: CTV has changed the way we look at TV creative. Rather than producing a Super Bowl spot for an arm and a leg, there are a variety of formats that work on CTV. Many B2B brands are repurposing their social videos and using non-traditional formats, such as testimonials and other user-generated content.



We've found B2B brands can move away from a traditional product demonstration and explore unique ways to tell their stories. We recently released our own demo, but with a spicy twist — Steve-O from "Jackass" fame ate a Carolina Reaper, the hottest thing legally allowed to be eaten, and explained the ease of setting up his own advertising campaign for his hot sauce brand. We saw great engagement with a humorous take on what's traditionally been a quite dry format. In the past, evoking emotion was thought to be only for B2C brands, but now B2B brands can have some more fun on the TV screen.

DGR: What does the future hold for CTV advertising in the B2B space?

Haeri: There is a big opportunity for advertisers to make the shift to CTV — their audience is already there. While streaming has continued to grow in popularity over the past few years, this year, streaming viewing hours finally surpassed linear ones. However, advertising dollars have not transitioned to CTV at the same rate; as such, advertisers are missing out on 70% of their audience that is no longer available through linear advertising.

The data that CTV provides is going to be highly valuable for B2B advertisers as they make the shift. CTV lends itself to testing with its easy campaign setup and extensive dashboards. I expect that people will be turning to CTV to test overall ad strategies, from creative to audience segments, that they can then apply to the rest of their ad mix. I'm also excited about the new types of reports this data will lend itself to.

“Rather than producing a Super Bowl spot for an arm and a leg, there are a variety of formats that work on CTV.”

ALI HAERI, MNTN





PURSuing PLATFORMS & INVESTING IN CROSS-CHANNEL DIVERSIFICATION

Another caveat of advertising strategies is determining the best platform to reach buyers on. While there are thousands of articles discussing best practices and most popular channels, the “right” channel varies from prospect to prospect.

“The mix of ideal advertising tactics truly depends on where the target audience ‘hangs out;’ it’s not so much about what the coolest/up-and-coming platform to try is,” said FVM’s Murphy. “Where the audience ‘hangs out’ can be anywhere from reading top industry news alerts daily and attending in-person tradeshows for their industry, to reading an industry print publication or using a social media platform like LinkedIn.”

Once the most audience-appropriate platform is chosen, practitioners can then shift their focus to targeting buyers across those channels. Kembhavi explained that practitioners need to leverage a combination of tactics to determine content placement and identify which types of content resonate most strongly with buyers across different stages of the purchasing journey.

"The best way to implement a cross-channel strategy and think beyond traditional platforms is to create detailed buyer personas, choose channels that complement each other, create unified customer data (through platforms like CDPs), generate content based on user journeys and always integrate your data across all channels to evaluate your campaigns," Kembhavi continued.

Additionally, the experts explained that pay-per-click (PPC) tactics are a key component to layer on top of a marketing mix.

"PPC provides deep targeting capabilities at a relatively low cost," said Murphy. "Paid search advertising always will be a top recommendation, as it reaches that audience of people who are actively searching for a solution to a problem. If your business can help solve that problem, you need to be in that conversation with Google Search Ads. But it's truly reaching prospects across several varied tactics that wins the day."

Proof Point:

When **BASF Pest Control Solutions** increased its product portfolio, it needed a smart plan to market the line and support its highly focused sales team. Once the content was created, the company then turned to FVM to broadcast it across different channels and mediums.

After being syndicated across trade publication print advertising, banner ads, pay-per-click, email marketing, webinars and event strategy, the efforts generated a varied portfolio of 70 products to a wider audience of pest management professionals.



CONCLUSION

For B2B advertising, practitioners are tasked with balancing prospects' demands for relevance with their desire for anonymity. As the best channels and platforms for advertising continue to evolve and shift around in terms of buyer preferences, the core basics of advertising will always remain the same.

"Although the individual topics change over time, uncovering and hitting on your target audiences' pain points plays a huge role in holding attention and promoting engagement," said Murphy. "Getting to the bottom of what your target audience truly cares about is one of the most important steps to getting your advertising messaging right. Advertising that hits on the true pain points of the day, whatever those may be, will interest and engage every time."



MNTN builds advertising software for brands to drive measurable conversions, revenue, site visits and more through the power of television. MNTN Performance TV is the world's first and only Connected TV advertising platform optimized for direct-response marketing goals. It redefines what advertisers can do with television, giving them the power to tie performance directly to their TV campaigns.

We believe television belongs right alongside paid search and social in advertisers' direct-response marketing strategies. That's why we applied our experience in building performance marketing software to create an ad platform that combines the precision of digital with the impact of television.

310.895.2110

INFO@MOUNTAIN.COM



INFLU²

Influ2 is the first person-based advertising platform—the foundation of high-resolution account-based marketing. The unique person-based ad technology allows full control over digital advertising: show ads to selected decision-makers, track the engagement of each person, and predict who is ready to speak about your product or service.

With Influ2, marketers can open any door and get access to troves of engagement data for each person targeted, making advertising truly work for B2B. Cisco, Sage Intacct, Paddle, and more than 50 customers are already using Influ2 to build relationships with large enterprises.

408.675.9057

TEAM@INFLU2.COM





2022 ABM
Benchmark Survey



2022 Demand
Generation Benchmark
Survey



2022 State of
Lead Generation



Demand Gen Report is a targeted online publication that uncovers the strategies and solutions that help companies better align their sales and marketing organizations, and ultimately, drive growth. A key component of the publication's editorial coverage focuses on the sales and marketing automation tools that enable companies to better measure and manage their multichannel demand generation efforts.

201.257.8528

INFO@DEMANDGENREPORT.COM



KELLY LINDENAU

is an editor and writer who loves covering the latest B2B marketing trends, research and industry insights. She's a New Jersey native, runner and reader who always has a GIF from *The Office* at the ready.

