



THE RIGHT KPIs

Use these measurements to see what's working—and what isn't—to power up your marketing campaign.

KPIs that work | Marketing pitfalls to avoid
How to choose a media partner



KPIs ARE THE METRICS THAT MATTER:

HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW.

In the digital world, data is everywhere. Every potential customer who visits your business website leaves digital footprints that can answer essential questions:

- Did they find you in a Google search or were they drawn in by a display ad on another website?
- Did they click on a link in an Instagram post?
- Once on your site, did they linger, navigating to multiple pages, or did they “bounce,” leaving the instant they arrived?
- Did they end up taking an action that helps your business—clicking on store hours or a map of your brick-and-mortar location, filling out a form that lets you follow up with them, or making an online purchase?



The particulars of your business will affect which data you need to track and how you interpret the results. That's why it's important to select and monitor “key performance indicators”—**KPIs**—that make sense for your business.



CHOOSE KPIs THAT ARE RIGHT FOR YOU

To find your ideal KPIs, start by answering these questions:

- What's my business objective? This is typically related to what you do as an organization. Suppose you're a floral shop in a good-sized city. Your business objective might be to become the premier floral distributor in your metropolitan area.
- What goals do I need to meet to support that objective? Think about what you need to accomplish to achieve your business objective. Perhaps your floral shop gets a lot of business over the phone but to expand you need to increase online sales.
- How will I know whether I'm meeting those goals? Here's where KPIs come in. You are looking for metrics that are measurable and attainable. So, for example, to sell more flowers through your website, you may need to bring new visitors to the site and increase the time they spend there. You might measure impressions, the number of times your content is seen on your website, social media, or in ads on other sites. Or you could look at average time on site or social media engagement.

SET BENCHMARKS

Once you've identified what to measure, you can lay out specific benchmarks. You might aim to increase impressions by 10% a month, for example. If you fall short on that or another metric, you can adjust your campaign in ways that may boost your results.

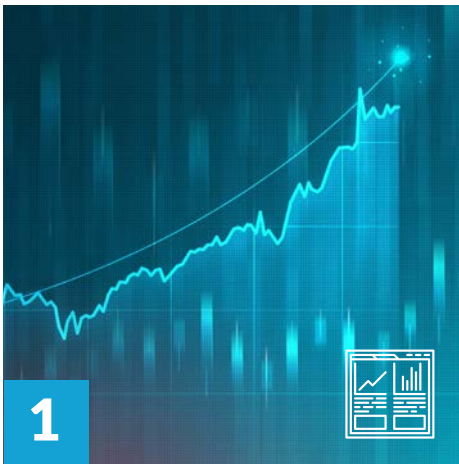
BE SELECTIVE

Remember, though, that not all KPIs will fit your business. If an agency program promises to deliver, say, 10,000 clicks to your website each month, the reality may be disappointing, says Jeff Sutton, Vice President, Audience Targeting, Programmatic & Data Strategies, Advance Local. "That kind of delivery metric usually has nothing to do with achieving your goals," Sutton says. "You need a partner who understands your objectives and optimizes your campaign around the KPIs that will help you get there." (See "Checklist for Choosing a Media Partner.")

AVOID THESE COMMON MISTAKES

“A handful of really important metrics will tell you 80% to 90% of what you need to know.”

— Arnie Kuenn, digital marketing expert, and author of several books on digital marketing



TRYING TO MEASURE TOO MUCH.

The real value of KPIs is to provide a clear lens through which to examine how your business is doing, and too many measurements may blur the view. “A handful of really important metrics will tell you 80% to 90% of what you need to know,” says Arnie Kuenn, author of several books on digital marketing.



NOT LOOKING AT THE BIG PICTURE.

Some KPIs provide misleading or incomplete signals, especially when you measure “attribution”—basically which parts of your marketing campaign get credit for a conversion or sale. Looking at the “last click,” which shows where a customer just was, is easy to measure. But it ignores all of the other parts of a holistic campaign that almost certainly influenced that customer along the way.



MEASURING QUANTITY, NOT QUALITY.

“What matters isn’t the size of a social community or even the size of a targetable audience,” says Blake Killian, vice president of strategy for Headline Studio at Advance Local. “What’s important is the quality of the audience. It’s one thing to have 100,000 people who are interested in your product, but it’s another to have 10,000 people who are very interested and ready to buy.”

CHOOSE THE KPIs THAT MATTER MOST

KPI	What It Is	Why It Matters	How to Use It
SOCIAL MEDIA REACH	Total number of people who can potentially see your content through all of your social media channels (for example, Twitter followers)	Lets you gauge the potential and outer limits of your social channels, helping you understand the effectiveness of your social media strategy with your audience.	To learn whether users are engaging with your content, compare your social reach with your social engagement.
SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT	Interaction with your social media profiles and content	Social media comments, posts, and shared links drive leads.	No traction on social media? Study your target audience and what platforms and content they engage with.
TRAFFIC TO SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES	Number of visitors to your business's social pages	Can help you measure the effectiveness of promotions on your display ads, other social networks, email, and other content.	Customers who find your social media pages are likely to return, helping raise brand awareness and engagement.
IMPRESSIONS	The number of times your content is displayed and seen, whether on social media, on your own website, or in another context	This helps you understand where and whether you're reaching your audience and the degree to which they're interacting with your brand.	The number of impressions provides context for your social reach and engagement. If you have broad reach and many impressions but little engagement, rethink how you're targeting your audience.
VIEWABILITY	Ad impressions seen by people	One-third of video ads (excluding those on YouTube) aren't viewable because of size of ad, position on page, reliability of publisher, and other factors.	Display ads and videos help create awareness and interest—but only if your customers actually see them. If viewability is low you can find out why and make adjustments.

CHOOSE THE KPIS THAT MATTER MOST *continued*

KPI	What It Is	Why It Matters	How to Use It
KEYWORD SEARCHES	The terms visitors use in internet searches to find your site and navigate within it	Optimizing use of keywords can boost traffic from your most promising visitors.	Use tools such as Google Keywords to determine how your site ranks for those words and whether they're bringing you the right kind of traffic.
CLICK-THROUGH RATE	The percentage of those exposed to a webpage, search link, ad, or email who click on it	A higher or lower click-through rate (CTR) helps you rank the effectiveness of various marketing efforts.	Use CTRs to assess the immediate appeal of each of your ads and pieces of content.
TRAFFIC SOURCES	A report showing where traffic to your site originates	Knowing all of the places your visitors come from can help you decide where to focus your marketing.	Discovering smaller, niche sources of traffic can help you learn where your target audience spends time and how people search for your product or service.
BOUNCE RATE	The proportion of visitors who click away from your site as soon as they arrive	A high bounce rate means something's wrong—it could be the quality or relevance of your content, slow-loading pages, or site errors.	Revisit your keywords to ensure you capture relevant site visitors and pay attention to the user experience of your site. Clean design and simple navigation may make visitors more inclined to linger.
AVERAGE TIME ON SITE/ AVERAGE PAGE VIEWS PER VISIT	Reveals how long visitors stay on your site and how deeply they explore it	This helps you gauge the value of your content—is it relevant and engaging? More time on the site equals more chances for conversion.	Knowing where visitors spend the most time lets you focus opportunities for action on those pages. Linking popular content to related articles can drive deeper engagement.

CHOOSE THE KPIS THAT MATTER MOST *continued*

KPI	What It Is	Why It Matters	How to Use It
CONVERSION RATE	The percentage of visits to your site that “convert” to action, generally a sale.	Tracking conversions—and the source of those visitors—shows whether your strategies are paying off with your target audience.	Track repeat visitors to learn what brings them back and which pages get their attention. Use these analytics to gauge the effectiveness of your different marketing efforts.
RATE OF RETURN	The percentage of visitors to your site who come back again.	This helps you analyze what you’re doing right and what parts of your site or pieces of content are resonating with your target audience.	The rate of return shows how many visitors trust and engage with your brand. Cultivate these customers through e-mail, surveys, and promotions on other sites they use.



HOW A PUBLISHING PARTNER CAN HELP

Checklist for Choosing a Media Partner

Working directly with a “premium publisher”— a trusted, high-quality news organization with the technology and sophistication to serve today’s audiences—can help you shape a multipronged campaign and measure its results.

Use this checklist to compare potential partners.

POTENTIAL PARTNER CHECKLIST

- Loyal readers.** Your ideal publishing partner brings you strong, committed readers or viewers in the market you want to tap—and has the metrics to show you just how loyal its audience is.
- Connections.** The right publisher not only knows the local market inside and out, but can also serve as a portal to the wider world when your growth strategy takes you beyond your local roots.
- Expertise.** Making sense of your chosen KPIs requires a partner that not only gives you access to the best tools and explains what’s important but also helps you fine-tune your approach.
- Results.** Premium publishers are particularly effective “mid funnel,” increasing brand lift on such measures as favorability, consideration, and intent to recommend by 300% in a recent survey.²



Learn More about how to assess and measure your digital marketing strategy and success.

E: marketing@njadvancemedia.com

P: 732-902-4327

ENDNOTES

1. <https://www.doubleclickbygoogle.com/articles/the-state-of-video-ad-viewability/>
2. <https://www.comscore.com/Insights/Presentations-and-Whitepapers/2016/The-Halo-Effect-How-Advertising-on-Premium-Publishers-Drives-Higher-Ad-Effectiveness>

