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Facebook and Google Advertising Recommendations

Case Poils et Plumes Grez-Doiceau

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Abstract

The objective of this thesis was to develop Facebook and Google advertising recommendations for the case company called Poils et Plumes Grez-Doiceau, with additional recommendations for the Poils et Plumes chain (group).

The desired output of this project was to provide advertising recommendations that would lay the foundations for the way the company would conduct its future digital advertising campaigns. The goal of these campaigns being the acquisition of new customers and having them come back in the physical point of sale.

Both qualitative and quantitative Information about the case company and its franchiser's current digital advertising was collected during in-person meetings and compared to their main competitor's current advertisings.

Additionally, qualitative information about best practices in Google and Facebook advertising pertinent for the case company's use was collected and used to deliver the demanded output.

The result of this thesis was a description of recommended improvements and practices to improve the case company's digital advertising on Google and Facebook, with as focus to increase its visibility, acquire new customers, and retain them.

The conclusion of this thesis was that while the case company's previous efforts were heading in the right direction, there is still a lot of room for improvements, mostly because of the rarity of digital advertisings, but also in the content used for this purpose. On the other hand, although the case company's franchiser puts out digital advertisings more frequently, the possible improvements rely more on the targeting, content and set up used for these campaigns.

Keywords

Facebook, Online Services, social media, Google, Google Ads, Advertising, Online visibility, digital marketing, pet shops

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1 INTRODUCTION

As the importance of social media in the day-to-day life of many of us keeps increasing, it comes with no surprises that this also represents an opportunity for business to communicate and advertise to their target and customers.

The purpose of this thesis is to provide recommendations to improve the case company's digital advertising on Facebook and Instagram, as well as giving guidance on the way to conduct future advertising using Google.

The digital advertising recommendations were developed for the case company "Poils et Plumes Grez-Doiceau", an independent pet shop franchise, as this is where most of the opportunity for the chain to increase revenue using digital advertising relies. This is due to the fact that the chain's communication currently relies on supporting the brand's identity.

Furthermore, to use the full potential of the Facebook, Instagram and Google advertising tools, a new website was built specifically for the point of sale of this thesis, that is based on the chain's official website, with small changes on the layout and content.

2 PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

The purpose of this project was to develop digital advertising recommendations for the case company's points of sale on how to use digital advertising campaigns to acquire new customers while retaining existing ones, ultimately leading to increased revenue.

The case company has not demanded to obtain the instructions on how to set up these recommendations but demanded that the outcome of this thesis focused on developing a list of advertising recommendations on the chosen platforms (which are available in section 14 and 15), as the people who will be implementing them have sufficient background to do so and can contact the author of this thesis should they need any help. Additionally, a meeting will be held after the publishment of this thesis to present and explain these recommendations and their implementation to the case company.

3 OBJECTIVES

The outcome of this thesis is a set of recommendations for the implementation of digital advertising campaigns for one of "Poils et Plumes" 'points of sale, having as objective to acquire new customers and create loyalty.

In addition to the recommendations for the point of sale, additional suggestions on the way to adapt these for other franchises as well as the chain's marketing account will also be given so the entire chain can take advantage of these.

3.1 Research Questions

The research questions this thesis aims to answer are the following:

- 1. How to use Facebook advertising and its features effectively?
- 2. How to use Google advertising and its features effectively?
- 3. How to define critical success factors and KPIs to evaluate the impact of digital advertising on offline sales?
- 4. What kind of content should be used for the case company's digital advertising?

3.2 Conceptual Framework

The following figure is the conceptual framework for this thesis, which is a visual representation of the main concepts discussed in a document (in this case, the thesis), and how they are related.

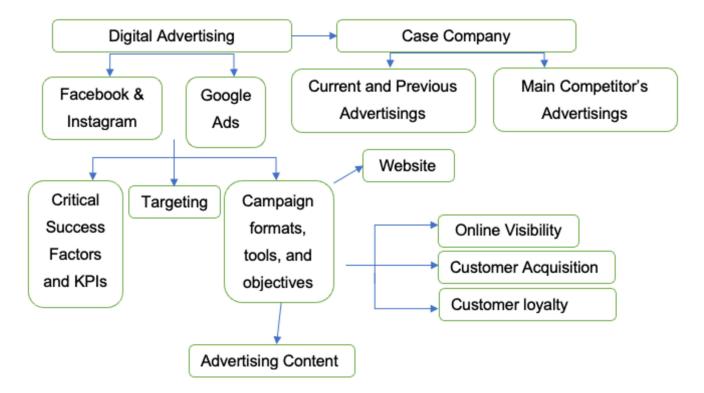


Figure 1. Conceptual framework for the thesis

The main headlines of this thesis are Facebook, Instagram, and Google advertising, where the core information, critical for the understanding of the thesis and the development of the outcome resides.

As the goal of this thesis is the acquisition and retainment of new customers, the digital advertising recommendations that result from it will be developed bearing this goal in mind.

3.3 Boundaries

This thesis will only discuss paid advertising on the following digital channels: Google, Facebook, and Instagram (from now on Facebook, as Instagram is part of Facebook). This, within the time available, as this thesis had to be written and developed in 2 months.

The case company not wanting to receive information and recommendations about other social medias as Tik Tok and LinkedIn, these topics will not be discussed in the present thesis.

4 PROJECT METHOD

The following thesis was requested by the company "Poils et Plumes Grez-Doiceau", who wished to receive clear recommendations and explanations on how to use Google and Facebook advertising as efficiently as possible to acquire new customers and retain existing ones.

This was asked to be done specifically for its point of sale, with complimentary recommendation for the chain's marketing as well as other points of sale.

This document was created to explain the decision-making process that led to the development of the case company's digital advertising project as the recommendation and information contained in its within lay the foundations for the proposed future practices of the company. As a franchisee, it was critical to receive approval from the franchiser, which required to explain the decisions made and consequently show the information and data used.

The research followed a pragmatic research philosophy, which placed as most important the research questions and objectives to aim at delivering practical recommendations to the case company (Saunders (2017, p. 111). Doing so, the research was conducting using a mixed-methods design, which is the fact of using both quantitative and qualitative methods in the process Saunders (2017, p. 105). This was done to meet the demand of the case company as best as possible, by basing the recommendation on as much relevant data and information as possible.

4.1 Qualitative Data

The qualitative research used both primary and secondary data, primary data being "data collected specifically for a research project" (Saunders, 2017, p. 85), secondary data being data has been collected previously for another reason than the specific project (Saunders, 2017, p. 85).

4.1.1 Primary Qualitative Data

Primary qualitative data was collected at multiple occasions during this project.

Semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted with the case company's and franchising company's owners and marketing departments about their respective digital advertising practices and previous advertisings, but also during unstructured interviews by telephone with Facebook account managers at multiple occasion, to discuss the companies' advertising practices and best practices to optimize their performance and improve their results. This information is available in section 9 of this thesis.

4.1.2 Secondary Qualitative Data

Documentary secondary qualitative data was also analyzed while conducting exploratory research during this thesis. Qualitative information was analyzed by reading online sources on various topics, these ranged from official recommendations from Google and Meta (the company behind Facebook and Instagram) themselves, to research journals and digital agencies. These sources are mainly used in section 6, 7 and 8.

This data was used mainly to collect useful information on Facebook's and Google's Advertising platforms, as well as psychological and neuromarketing information about recommended advertising contents (which is available in section 13), to be able to deliver reliable, practical recommendations to the case company.

Additionally, non-text material in the form of videos and static images was analysed using Facebook's "Ad Library". The information was then summarized to deliver information about the case company's competitors' digital advertisings on Facebook and compare it to the case company and its franchiser. The information resulting from this analysis is available in section 10 of this thesis.

4.2 Quantitative Data

During the implementation of this project, no primary quantitative data has been collected by the author, as the data used originated from the case company and Facebook, which are thus categorized as secondary data.

4.2.1 Secondary Quantitative Data

The first type of quantitative data collected, was retrieved via Facebook's Ad manager, and delivered information on the case company's previous test digital advertising campaign such as number of impressions and clicks.

Additionally, to further understand the results of this campaign, quantitative data was retrieved from the case company's management software system called Mercator. Once analysed, this gave the author access to information such as the evolution of customer accounts number, total of sales, average cart size and percentage of gross revenue for multiple lengths of time. The method of retrieval and analysis for the case company's management software is available in appendix 6 of this thesis.

4.3 Implementation

This thesis is mostly qualitative research, basing itself on information from trustworthy sources about the thesis topic and with the data contained in the following pages maintaining a focus on the case company Poils et Plumes Grez-Doiceau and its franchiser.

Most of the information contained within this thesis has been learned in the past years by the author through personal education, or by specific courses on the matter such as consumer behaviour, digital marketing courses, and so on. It is important to note that in addition to these, some of the knowledge shared

comes from personal experience as a digital marketing freelancer. However, the author has not relied solely on his knowledge and experience but has backed the following information by verifying them with trustworthy sources.

This thesis ultimately aims to gather information about the case company's current Facebook, Instagram, and Google advertising and to have as output reliable and valuable recommendations on improvements to lead to increased revenue in the future. Therefore, this information has been collected directly from the case company's owner and person in charge of the current digital communication as well as the franchising company's owner and marketing department.

5 CASE COMPANY

"Poils et Plumes" is a pet store chain operating in Belgium, that was founded in 1986. The chain now has 30 points of sale (from now on referred to as POS), most of them being franchises.

The main unique selling proposition (from now on UPS) of the brand is that employees are trained to become experts to be able to give personalized advice to pet owners, with as focus the wellbeing of their pets. Some POS also offer complimentary services, such as a "Self-Dog Wash", where owners can wash their pets in facilities designed specifically for this purpose, Pet Grooming or even Pet Training services.

5.1 Case Company Test Point of Sale

The POS for which the Google and Facebook digital advertising recommendations were developed and put to the test is a franchise located in Grez-Doiceau.

It was created in 2015 by Marie-Noëlle Soetens, and has in the span of 6 years, become one of the biggest of the chain in terms of revenue. The shop is easily accessible due to its proximity to motorways and bigger cities such as Wavre and Brussels. Most of its clients come from the French speaking part of Belgium, but efforts have been made in the past 18months to attract clients from the nearby Dutch speaking towns, as several employees also speak Dutch in addition to French (and English for some).

6 SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT NOTIONS

6.1 Why Use Digital Marketing?

Digital marketing can be used for various purposes: grow sales, add value, get closer to customers, saves costs, or extend the brand online (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019, p. 15).

Moreover, online marketing can be used for every stage of the customer's lifecycle, from creating the initial brand awareness, to maintaining customer's loyalty. It can also be used complimentarily to offline marketing communications to increase their effectiveness.

6.2 Retargeting

A notion that will be intensively used in the following pages is the notion of retargeting, which is the method of showing ads to people that have previously shown interest in the company's product or service.

This is possible by using the data a company has collected on its clients and target to run ads.

Remarketing campaigns can thus be campaigns that target existing clients, to have them use the product or service more, or campaigns that target people who have not yet used the product or service, but have visited the company's website, clicked on one of its ads, or liked its page or posts.

It is a very powerful and effective tool, as remarketing ads have a 43% higher chance of conversion, with 70% as a company to being chosen over the competitor, with retargeting display ads having in average a 10X higher click-through rate (Abramovich, 2012; Ho, 2018).

7 GOOGLE

7.1 What is Google?

Google is essentially an internet search engine, that allows user to get results on a specific topic thanks to an algorithm that roams the internet in search of the best and most pertinent information possible.

In addition to its Search Engine, Google has become one of the most important channels for digital marketing, allowing advertisers to target consumers by numerous ways with its Google Ads section.

7.2 What are Google Ads?

Google ads are ad campaigns on the Google network, and there are 7 different types of them. Depending on the campaign type, it is possible to target specific demographics, interests, keywords, devices or even themes, or to simply target website visitors, clients lists or even data segments (people who have had previous interaction with your content or your ads). This allows advertisers to advertise to specific target, and to adjust their communication according to the target knowledge of the company and its products/services. Easily set up, the different campaign format can be used for various objectives, from brand awareness or website traffic to lead generation and in-store traffic.

The following sections will explain the different Google Ads Campaigns that are possible.

7.2.1 Google Search Ads

These are text ads shown with search results on Google that allow advertisers to target potential customers when they are looking for a product or service (Google, n.d.c).

Search Network ads are very interesting for companies looking to increase online sales and subscriptions, looking to generate new leads or even just traffic. They are easy to set up (while they do require a lot of research to maximize their efficiency) and allow for a very narrow targeting.

It is possible to target keywords by various "modes", whether we want to target searches for this exact keyword (exact match), the keyword in a sentence (phrase match) or searches that relate to it or are variants (Broad Match) and even to exclude keywords for which we do not want to be shown (Google, n.d.d).

7.2.2 Display Ads

Display Ads are the ads shown across millions of third-party websites worldwide. As with Google Search Ads it is possible to target people by keywords, but also with interests as well as excluding specific topics. These ads are 100% visual and can be used for any marketing objectives, but many companies use display ads for retargeting purposes and to increase their visibility for a smaller cost. It is also possible to provide different texts and visual to Google, and to let it run campaigns and optimize the ads with Responsive Display Ads.

In the following figure, the difference in cost is shown between Search Ads and Display Ads across various industries, which makes it clear that the second option is a lot less costly.

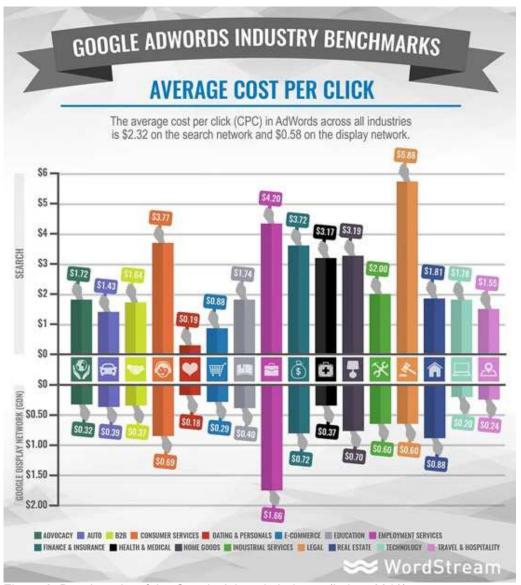


Figure 2. Benchmarks of the Google Adwords Industry (Irvine, 2016)

7.2.3 Video Ads

Video Ads are video format ads shown on YouTube (which is owned by Google) and other websites. They are used for various purposes, from notoriety increase to conversion oriented.

It is possible to target specific demographics, interests, keywords, devices or even themes, or to simply target website visitors, clients lists or data segments (people who have had previous interaction with your content or your ads)

Another possibility is also to target specific YouTube channels, websites, apps, etc. This is a very interesting method to target potential clients, as videos ads

show better Click-Through-Rate (From now on CTR) than static images while also converting better (Glazer, 2019).

7.2.4 Application Ads

These are ad campaigns that are specifically developed to increase the downloads and sales of applications across multiple channels.

As this is not relevant for this thesis, we will not develop this advertising campaign type.

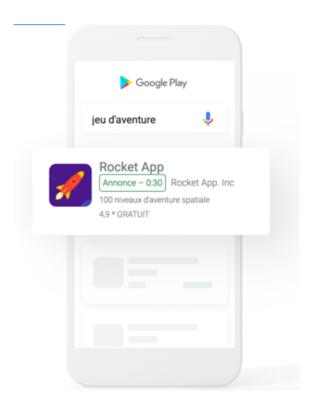


Figure 3. Example of a Google Application Ad

7.2.5 Shopping Ads

These are the ads for product you see with your search results on Google that usually redirect users to an e-shop.

While these ads are almost entirely used for e-commerce, it is also possible to set them up with as objective to attract nearby potential customers in a physical store, but this demands further analysis.

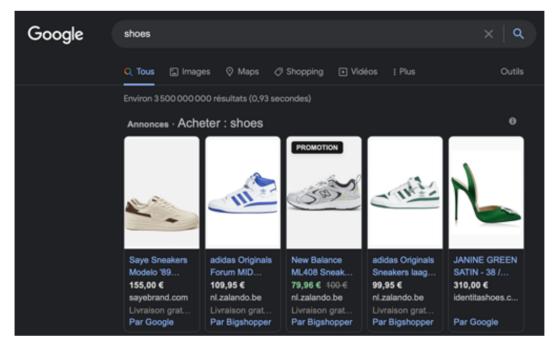


Figure 4. Example of a Google Shopping Ad

7.2.6 Intelligent Ads

These are campaigns automatically optimized and targeted by Google, where the advertiser only has to create a few ads, and give Google information about their company.

7.3 What is the Google Tag?

According to Google, the "Google Tag Manager" is

(...) a tag management system that allows you to update measurement codes and related code fragments collectively known quickly and easily as tags on your website or mobile app. Once the small segment of Tag Manager code has been added to your project, you can safely and easily deploy analytics and

measurement tag configurations from a web-based user interface. (Google, n.d.d, para. 1.)

The Google Tag is thus a code fragment that is embedded on a website and allows it to measure various action, thanks to cookies. Consequently, each action an advertiser wishes to measure is measured by a Tag. Once the tags and the action that triggers them are set up, it is possible for advertisers to measure them and to use this data for advertising purposes.

For example, if a car dealership wants to retarget all visitors who are interested in BMW's, it has the possibility to do so by setting up a Tag on the website and targeting the visitors who visited the BMW related webpages.

Lastly, setting up and tracking different actions, from smaller actions such as a particular page-view and email signups, to more important ones such as purchases and calls (in the case of a company with a web shop), allows Google's Artificial Intelligence to make the best optimalization of campaigns possible by having more data to work with, resulting in better ad performances.

7.4 How to develop Google Campaigns?

Google Ads campaigns can be easily set up in the Google Ads manager, where any type of ad campaign can be developed, and launched.

Once a type of campaign is chosen, advertisers only need to indicate who they want to target and which title, description, and images they want to use. In the event one can't decide between multiple variations, it is possible to give the information to Google, that will test them and chose the ones that work best.

As far as targeting goes, it is possible to target by demographics, interests, even people who searched keywords and are thus in the market for a particular product or service (It is also possible to exclude certain keywords and topics).

It is also possible to target certain sites on which we want our ad to be shown, and of course, it is possible to retarget people who have already visited the company's website (as mentioned previously in this thesis). (Google, n.d.a; Welbourne, 2020.)

8 FACEBOOK

8.1 What is Facebook?

Facebook is a social media network that connects people through an online platform. By sharing content like text status posts, images, videos, and external links like blog posts, Facebook users can contribute ideas and join conversations with other people who share the same or different interests. (Chi, 2021, What is Facebook? Section.)

Business can also take advantage of the platform to create a "Facebook Page", where they can post text, images, videos, and other types of content. But the main difference resides in the fact that they can also run ad campaigns.

8.2 What are Facebook Ads?

Facebook Ads are paid advertisements displayed on Facebook, Instagram, Messenger, or The Facebook Network (applications and third-party websites).

These ads decline in various formats (see point 8.4 of the thesis) and allow the advertiser to target very specific demographics, interests, giving it the control of the audience size, it wishes to target. Their cost is defined by the advertiser, who can determine a global budget (example: 100€ for a 10-day campaign), a daily budget or even a maximal cost per result.

8.3 Campaign Objectives

The first step to making a Facebook Ad campaign, is to determine

commercial goals to choose the objective of the ad campaign. This is the action that the advertiser wishes users to do when they see the advertisement. (Facebook, n.d.i.)

There are 3 main categories of objectives, that relate to the customer's lifecycle, these are their descriptions according to Facebook's help section (Facebook, n.d.i):

- Awareness: According to Facebook (n.d.i), these objectives are looking to create interest in a product or service. These campaigns should aim to explain to its target what benefits the company can bring to their customers.
- 2) Consideration: When people are already familiar to certain degree with a business, campaigns with a "consideration" objective encourage users to look for more information about it (Facebook, n.d.i).
- 3) Conversion: These objectives are used to encourage potential customers interested in the company to purchase or use its product or service (Facebook, n.d.i).

Each of these categories can then be divided into more specific objectives, that help the algorithm in its task to obtain the best results.

Create New Campaign	Use existing campaign	×
Choose a campaign of Learn more	objective	
Awareness	Consideration	Conversion
Brand Awareness	Traffic	Conversions
Reach	Engagement	Catalogue Sales
	App Installs	Store Traffic
	Video Views	
	Lead Generation	
	Messages	

Figure 5. Facebook's campaign objective selection screen (Moore, 2021)

8.3.1 Awareness

The first objective within this category is called "Brand Awareness", where advertisings are shown to users that are the most likely to remember them. The other objective is "Reach", which is used to maximize the number of users who see an ad as the algorithm will optimize it to increase the number of impressions, which is the number of times an advertising is shown on the platform. (Apithy, n.d.)

8.3.2 Consideration

The consideration category of campaign objectives is the one containing the greatest number of sub-objectives, each of them fulfilling a specific purpose that allows advertisers to develop very specific campaigns.

Advertisers can for example choose to have their campaign optimized to be shown to users more susceptible to click on them, to redirect them to a chosen website URL (traffic), or to people that are more likely to interact with the publication (by liking the page or publication, sharing, commenting, etc.). They can also choose to make a campaign aimed at encouraging certain actions, such as downloading their application (App Installs), or even giving certain types of information by calling the company or subscribing to their newsletter (Lead Generation).

Lastly, advertisers can also choose to advertise a video (Video Views) or encourage people to discuss with them by message on Messenger, Instagram, or WhatsApp (Messages).

8.3.3 Conversion

The last category of objectives is "Conversion". The three objectives herein are much more sale-oriented than the other ones.

The first one is simply called "conversion", these advertisings encourage users to fulfil a specific action on the company's website, whether it be adding something to their cart, purchasing an item, subscribing, or even calling the company (Facebook, n.d.i).

The second one is used for companies to promote products from their ecommerce platform, with as objective to increase their sales (Catalogue Sales). This is thus used by companies that can directly sell to their customers online.

The final campaign objective available to advertisers is the "store traffic" objective, where advertisings are shown to people that are in proximity of a company's location and are thus the most likely to visit the store. However, this objective isn't effective for company with only one location but is very effective for companies with multiple locations. (Moore, 2021.)

8.4 Advertising Types

In addition to multiple campaign objectives, there are also five advertising formats to choose from (Facebook, n.d.l). This allows advertisers to develop one that fits their vision completely.

8.4.1 Single Image

This is the most traditional advertising format. These can be simple images with or without text and added visual elements.

While advertising using images composed of more than 20% text are not penalized by Facebook anymore (as they were until 2020), the platform still encourages advertisers to respect this recommendation as much as possible, as data shows that these advertisings perform better (Facebook, n.d.d).



Figure 6. Example of a Facebook Single Image advertising (Facebook, n.d.k)

8.4.2 Video

Nowadays, videos are everywhere, and are the favourite format for many users.

However, while video ads are a very effective medium for advertisers, Facebook recommends advertisers to test shorter versions, such as 6-second video ads in place of 30-second (or more) ads. This is due to their experiment in partnership with third-party companies that showed an increase of 11% in estimated ad recall, 12% increase in return on ad spend and 271% increase in video completion rate compared to 30-second videos. (Dong Gyeong, 2018.)

Another important aspect that is often overlooked by advertisers is the fact that, according to data from publishers, around 85% of videos on Facebook are watched with the sound off. (Patel, 2016)

Therefore, it is important to incorporate subtitles or captions to inform user about what is happening in the video.

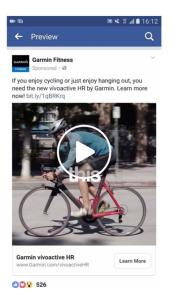


Figure 7. Example of a Facebook in-feed video advertising (Facebook, n.d.h)

8.4.3 Carrousel

Carrousels are a great way for advertisers to show off multiple products or services at once. By swiping, users can browse through different images or videos. Each image/video can then take them to a different URL, where they can learn more about that product or service. This is a great way to show the advantages and features of products, as well as to tell a story or explain a process. (Facebook, n.d.a.)

As for the format of the images and videos, Facebook recommends using a 1:1 ratio, and to keep the same proportion for all visuals (Facebook, n.d.g).



Figure 8. Case company's carrousel ad for Easter 2022

8.4.4 Instant Experience

Instant experiences serve as a complimentary "experience" for users between the Facebook website and the company's website and can be used with all the above advertising formats. These can be pre-made templates or fully personalized interfaces. Once a user clicks on the advertising, a full screen "experience", that displays further information about catalogues, products, or services under the format of videos, photos, text or even carrousels (Facebook, n.d.c).



Figure 9. Example of a Lidl Instant Experience in advertising (Facebook, n.d.c)

8.4.5 Collection

Collection advertisings are a subcategory of instant experiences that display products in addition to only photos and videos.

This allows to users to browse and discover products, and to buy them directly on the company's website or application. (Facebook, n.d.b.)

As the case company doesn't have an e-commerce website, I will not go into further details about this advertising format.

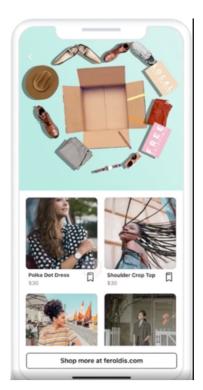


Figure 10. Example of a Facebook collection ad instant experience (Facebook, n.d.b)

8.5 Proportions

Facebook offers the possibility to use different formats in advertisings but recommends particular ones for certain formats.

Facebook (n.d.f) recommends using the 1:1 square format for:

- 1) in-feed images
- 2) Carrousel images and videos
- 3) Instagram Shop

As for the 16:9 horizontal format, Facebook (n.d.f) recommends using it for **instream videos**, however it also recommends using the 1:1 proportion or 4:5 for video ads. This is mostly because these formats cover most a mobile phone's screen. (Facebook, n.d.h.) The opposite, the 9:16 vertical format is the format of choice for **stories** and is recommended for **audience network placements** (which are mostly apps) (Facebook, n.d.f).



Figure 11. Facebook's recommendation for visuals in 2022 (Facebook, n.d.f)

8.6 Titles, descriptions, and main text

Facebook recommends advertisers to keep the main text of their ads to a maximum of 125 characters, the title to 40 characters (with an exception for carousels, where it is 32 characters), and the description to 30 characters (18 characters for carousel ads), as users will most likely not pay attention to an ad containing too much text. Visuals should also have a minimum resolution of 1080x1080 pixels, and their size should be maximum 30 MB for images, and 4GB for videos. (Facebook, n.d.j; Facebook, n.d.k; Facebook, n.d.l.)

8.7 Facebook Tools: Facebook Pixel and Conversion API

To allow companies to collect data about their website's visitors, Facebook first developed the Facebook Pixel, similar to Google's Tag, advertisers can collect data about specific actions or overall visitors and use this information to run more specifically targeted ads.

The Conversion API is used similarly to the Facebook Pixel and has been developed by Facebook to allow advertisers to gather more data of Apple device users since the IOS 14.5 update. This update indeed caused some problems to advertisers that used the Facebook Pixel to gather data about users and their behaviour, as it required Apps on the Appstore to ask users if they allowed the app to collect their data, which had as results that many users declined the data collection. (Apithy, n.d.)

Both tools can be set up easily in Facebook's Event Manager, by selecting "add a new data source", choosing "web" and following the Facebook guidelines available in its help centre.

8.7.1 How to develop Facebook Campaigns

The best way to develop Facebook Campaigns is via the Facebook Ads manager, this allows the use of extended functionalities of targeting (which will be developed in point 9.2.3 of this thesis) but also campaign structure and content, etc.

One of the functionalities that is often underestimated is A/B testing, where different versions of the same advertising are given to Facebook, which publishes both to different parts of the target audience and only keeps the highest performing one after the amount of time predetermined. The length for which the test is conducted is maximum 30 days, but Facebook recommends letting the test run for at least 7 days (Facebook, n.d.e).

Also, even though this is taken into account for the Grez-Doiceau POS's advertisings, it is important to create the visuals in all the required format, as different formats are recommended according to their placement on the platform. This is a point that is often forgotten by advertisers, who do not create specific stories format visuals, or even Facebook article visuals.

9 CURRENT GOOGLE AND FACEBOOK ADVERTISING EFFORTS

9.1 Case Company's Franchiser's Digital Advertising

To analyse the case company's current digital marketing efforts, it is important to remember that most of the shops are franchisees and thus are responsible for their own digital advertising. However, the chain has an official website, and social medias, where some digital campaigns are operational.

While there was not much activity (advertising wise) until a few months ago, the chain has currently started putting out some digital campaigns on Facebook and Instagram. On the other hand, Google is a channel that hasn't been explored yet, with no campaigns developed yet, which is why no information about current Google campaigns are available in this thesis.

Currently the chain's digital advertising resides mostly in the creation informational content, with articles published organically (i.e non-paid) on Facebook, or the boost of some posts on an ad-hoc basis when there are contests or promotions. These are then advertised to users that interacted with the page and "lookalike" audiences, who are users that Facebook's algorithm determines have similar profiles to people who have previously interacted with a specific page. (Daro & Dewêche, n.d)

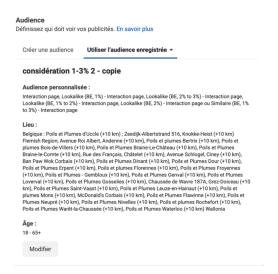


Figure 12. Facebook Audience used by Poils et Plumes Belgium in 2021-2022

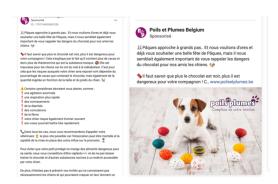


Figure 13. Common example of Poils et Plumes Belgium's Facebook Advertising in 2022

More examples of the case company's advertising are available in the appendices.

The recommendations to improve these digital advertising are available in the recommendations section of this thesis. The information contained in the following sections is important for their comprehension.

9.2 Test campaigns in Grez-Doiceau

The following sections will discuss some of the previous digital campaigns that were developed for the Grez-Doiceau point of sale in 2021 and 2022. As their setup and results were similar, only the results from the first one will be discussed.

It is important to note that the latest campaign (Easter campaign 2022) is ending, and even though it was the most comprehensive one, its results are currently not available as the promotional folder period wasn't finished at the time this thesis was written.

9.2.1 Background Information

Four major Facebook and Instagram advertising campaigns have been developed for the "Grez-Doiceau" point of sale since April 2021.

All of them were developed in addition to the paper promotional folder to increase its visibility and efficiency, to maximize in-store purchases.

It was with those digital advertisings that the POS had started targeting the nearby towns where no marketing efforts had yet been done to acquire new customers, both in the French- and Dutch-speaking part of Belgium. Those postcodes were seen as potentially highly profitable, as their "Wealth Indicator" is close to the store's original catchment area. Some clients from those areas were already coming to the store after the case company had decided to distribute translated paper versions of the promotional folders, but this method was very expensive and not sustainable. (De Decker & Soetens, n.d)

9.2.2 Budget, Length and Content

The budget for each carrousel advertising campaign was 1000 euros for a total of 10 days but all four had different budget allocations, with a repartition of budget of 70% for the French speaking side and 30% for the Dutch side in the first campaign, which was adjusted respectively to 60% and 40% afterwards.

Developed campaigns

- 10 days in March April 2021, budget 1000€
- 10 days in September 2021, budget 1000€

- 3 weeks in November December 2021, budget 1000€ + 150€ + 60€ (which will be discussed after the first 2)
- 10 days in May April 2022, budget 1000€, and was the last one to date

The Facebook Ads campaigns were composed of 4 to 5 visuals in a "carrousel" format ad, with a "traffic generation" objective, where users are presented multiple square visuals (with one title and description per visual) that they can choose between just by "swiping" and be redirected to a URL once a visual is clicked. The URL users were redirected to was the online version of the promotional folder, that was hosted on the website "Yumpu".

The chosen visuals for the first 2 campaigns were the same for both the French and Dutch, at the exception of the third one of the following list:

- The promotional folder first page's visual adapted to the square format for the Facebook Ad.
- 2) An informative visual, stating: the size of the POS, its biggest functional advantage (namely "A team of expert at your service") as well as the list of animal categories for which products are available in-store (Dogs, Cats, Rodents, Birds, Chickens and Horses).
- 3) (FR only) A visual introducing the POS's Pet Education Academy.
- 4) A visual introducing the POS's Pet Grooming and "Self-Dog Wash" station services.
- 5) A store exclusive promotion on a product (Dog Cushion) (Only for the Easter campaign).

The third campaign had similarities with the first two, with the first difference being the replacement of the dog education visual by an eye catching one saying "Unique gifts at crazy prices at Poils et Plumes" with the image of a dog looking at one of the toys available at discounted prices.

Furthermore, it was preceded, a week before, by an awareness video (with a 100 euros budget) with a video view objective, that showed the interior of the shop, with its different sections and assortment. The goal was to already be in the mind of users when they saw the promotional ad and hence increasing the likeliness to be receptive to the advertising. A retargeting advertising, targeting people who had previously engaged with the company's ad was also live during the last week of the promotional period (with a 60 euros budget).

9.2.3 Targeting

One of the most important aspects to ensure the success of any advertising, is to advertise it to the right people. Therefore, it is critical to know the profile of potential and existing customers.

For Poils et Plumes, it is known from past analysis by the franchising company that most of the clientele are females aged between 30 and 60 years old. This clientele mostly owns dogs, followed by cats and rodents. (Daro & Dewêche, n.d; De Decker & Soetens, n.d.)

However, statistically pet owners between the age of 25 to 39 years old contribute to 27% of all pet owners in the US, and are more likely to have younger pets, for which they have an immediate need of products. Therefore, this age group is an important segment to target and acquire, even though they may have a lower spending capacity than older age groups. (Packaged Facts, 2019, paras. 1-3.)

While this statistic was collected in the US, and this percentage might vary from Belgium, it safe to say that it is a good indicator on which we can base ourselves. Considering all these information, the group that was targeted by the advertising was aged 25 to 65. But, targeting using only the age criteria will

not be specific enough, therefore the second criteria used to target users was their interest.

Facebook allows advertisers to target users based on their interests, the chosen interests were pet related, targeting people interested in dogs, cats, and associated interested such as certain popular dog and cat breeds and accessories.

Finally, contrary to the method used to target users based on their geographic location, we have not used the traditional circle zone around the POS but have rather chosen to target specific postcodes using distance and wealth-index as our criteria. By using a combination of postcodes and few small diameter circles (2km, for zones where only part of the postcodes represents potential clients), we were able to target areas very specifically, and not leave any critical zone untouched. This allowed us to target almost our entire potential client base.



Figure 14. Map of French speaking postcodes targeted by Facebook ads



Figure 15. Map of Dutch speaking postcodes targeted by Facebook ads

9.2.4 Success Measuring

Every marketing campaign must have Key Performance Indicators (KPIs from now on) and clear set goals following the S.M.A.R.T method.

KPIs are « ... a special type of performance metrics that indicate the overall performance of a process or its sub-processes » (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019, p. 159). These are in other words measurable numbers or percentages such as number of clicks, viewing time, web traffic, increase in sales, etc.

Setting clear and relevant KPIs for marketing campaigns is important to be able to evaluate their performance during and afterwards to see if any changes or optimizations must be made and if the goals were achieved. For Business owners, these also demonstrate "money well spent". If the final goal is to gain new clients, a possible KPI would be the number of new accounts created while the campaign was live, with a possible secondary KPI being the number of sales these new accounts amount to. We also wanted to measure whether these "new" customers remained loyal.

The hereabove mentioned KPIs were used to measure the performance of the POS's digital campaigns, as the amount of newly created customer accounts from postcodes that were only targeted by digital campaigns was measured.

The objectives set for this campaign were also done using the SMART method. This method is used to choose relevant objectives that are specific (S), and thus easily measurable (M), but also achievable (A), as setting unachievable objectives will only lead to disappointment and failure. Furthermore, this method requires the objectives to be relevant (R), as measuring irrelevant metrics makes no sense to evaluate the performance of a campaign and finally, time-bound (T), to link these objectives to a specific period or deadline. (Mind Tools, 2016.)

Using these methods, the objective for the first campaign was to acquire 50 proven new customers from the Dutch-speaking postcodes during the period of the promotional folder, as those had only been targeted by Facebook Ads and didn't receive any promotional folder in their mailbox and the case company did not expect to gain a lot of new customers from the French-speaking areas, as it was already well established in the minds of the inhabitants. The secondary goal was that those 50 new customer accounts created, amounted to a total of at least 1500€ in sales (average purchase per cart is approximatively 30€).

9.2.5 Dutch-speaking Postcodes Campaign Results

While the case company was hoping for 50 new customer fidelity accounts from the postcodes that were targeted solely by digital ads, only 41 new customer accounts were created for the Easter folder period, but almost half of them (19) came back before the end of July (which was double the normal ratio). However, it not only reached its objective of 1500€ in sales, but surpassed it, with 3402€ in sales during the promotional folder period, and 4040€ in the 3 following months from those same clients (total = 7442€). (De Decker & Soetens, n.d)



Figure 16. Dutch Postcodes Advertising Results from the April 2021 campaign

In total 14 453 were shown the ad, and 291 of them clicked on it.

9.2.6 French Postcodes Campaign Results

The results from the French postcodes were just as surprising as the Dutch postcodes results, but not in the same way. With the newly developed digital advertising also targeting new French postcodes, 84 new customers accounts were created by people living in the newly targeted areas, totalling to 1344€ in sales during the folder period, and 5944€ in the following 3 months (total = 7288€). (De Decker & Soetens, n.d)



Figure 17. French Postcodes Advertising Results from the April 2021 campaign

In total 19 092 were shown the ad, and 775 of them clicked on it.

9.2.7 Global Campaign Results

The results from the Facebook Ads campaigns were surprising and surpassed the case company's expectations. In total 498 new customer accounts were created during the promotional folder period. (De Decker & Soetens, n.d) To further evaluate campaigns' effect on the shop's revenue, data collected by the shop's management software was used to analyse various aspects of new customers' purchases. In addition to the total of sales, and number of new customers from the areas targeted by Facebook ads, their average shopping cart was also analysed to compare it to the recurring client's average cart, which was increased by 100%.

Twenty percent of the gross revenue during the campaign came from new customers, with new customers spending in general twice as much as previously existing customers. (De Decker & Soetens, n.d)

Moreover, during 4 months after the campaign ended, 4,3% of the gross revenue still came from those new customers coming back in the store, and the Easter promotional folder (with digital advertising) brought in 17% more new clients and revenue than the June promotional folder (without digital

advertising). Lastly, from the 34 445 people that encountered the digital advertising, 3,2% of those clicked on the ad and 1,5% created customer account in the store. (De Decker & Soetens, n.d)



Figure 18. Global Advertising Results from the April 2021 campaign

10 COMPARISON TO THE CASE COMPANY'S MAIN COMPETITORS

The case company's main competitor is called "Tom and Co" (further referred to as Tom&Co), a pet store chain operating in Belgium, France, and Luxembourg, with more than 170 points of sale (De Decker & Soetens, n.d). The company was previously owned by Delhaize, a major supermarket chain, but has become independent since 2016 (Van Looveren, 2016).

From the outside, the two companies do not look very different, with the exception that Tom&Co has a fully operational web shop as well as a "order online, pickup in store" service. While employees in Poils et Plumes stores are usually better trained than Tom&Co, this difference isn't visible for clients unless they have experienced the two services in the stores.

Tom&Co's digital advertising is mostly composed of the following elements, of which you can see example in the appendices:

- Advertising of certain supplier's product (one supplier per advertising).
 With a link the chain's point of sales list. There is most likely a deal between the chain and the supplier.
- Small minimalistic ad to remind people that if they need dog food for example, they can come to Tom&Co
- Promotion of ad-hoc events to encourage participation (link to the inscription page)
- Promotion of their complimentary services (Dog Grooming) with a link to the information page
- Informational content, where an extract of the article is on the ad, but users need to click on the blog link to read the rest of the article

While there aren't any visuals of clients, or sales associates etc. (currently at least) in their visuals, they have a broad set of themes that they advertise. Moreover, each of these ads link to a specific page of their website (these elements are important for later on in this thesis).

Another important competitor is called "Maxizoo", which also has a web shop and almost 50 locations in Belgium alone. Maxizoo has really grasped the psychology of customers, who like to be able to identify themselves to people or situations in advertisings. This is really striking when looking at their Facebook Advertising Library.

They currently run campaigns that are a mix of videos and images where people ask themselves common questions about petfood or pet behaviour and accessories in a humorous tone, to get the message across that they should ask Maxizoo as they are experts. While Maxizoo does not currently run any advertising for any promotional period, Maxizoo France however does and uses both carrousels and single image advertisings. (See appendices)



Figure 19. Examples of Maxizoo's Facebook Advertising in 2022

11 HOW CAN FACEBOOK CAMPAIGNS BE USED BY THE CASE COMPANY

Facebook campaigns can be used for various purposes, each one of them being a different objective and having a different campaign format and KPI that fit it.

As the goal of the company is to attract new customers and retain them, these objectives must be kept in mind at every stage of the digital advertising strategy.

While awareness campaigns must be developed to increase visibility, campaigns should not stop there, as this is only the beginning.

Consideration objective campaigns will play a major role in the digital advertising success and the achievement of the desired results. Apart from the app installation objective, all the other could be used by the company.

However, while developing the content of these digital advertisings, it is important to keep in mind that the desired impact these should have on users is to show Poils et Plumes as a place where they can get experts to answer all their questions and give them personalized advice, to have their pets be the healthiest and happiest possible. The company's moto being "Complices de votre relation", meaning that the company is accompanying pet owners in their journey of being a pet owner and wants the best for their pets.

The other goal is to remind them of the existence of the company, its proximity and availability for all their pet related needs, to have them come back, and be in the brands they think of when the time comes, they need to purchase pet products or require services.

12 HOW CAN GOOGLE CAMPAIGNS BE USED BY THE CASE COMPANY?

The first step to develop Google Ads campaigns for a physical store is to identify which type of campaigns represents the best opportunities for a positive return on investment. To do so, the first thing to understand is that Belgian Pet Stores have seen increasing competition from e-commerce websites such as "Zoomalia" or "Zooplus". These companies have the possibility to sell directly to the consumer online, and have thus already developed Search Ads, Shopping Ads in addition to other types of campaign.

As they are selling entirely online, it is not surprising that these companies have much larger online advertising budgets than brick-and-mortar pet stores. Therefore, engaging in a bidding war with them will not results in high returns on investment.

Google Campaigns could be used by the case company to attract new customers with video ads and search ads, but due to the increased competition from e-commerce pet shops, as mentioned hereabove, I believe the biggest opportunity for the case company relies on the use of the display network to run retargeting ads. By using the Google tag and collecting data about website visitors, it is possible to run display ads, even with small budgets.

Should the company be interest in using search campaigns, I would recommend targeting specific keywords, that have a focus on the location of a service.

13 ADVERTISING CONTENT

There is a lot of research about what content is best to be used in marketing communication to maximize the desired results. While this thesis is not meant to go into details about neuromarketing and its uses for companies, there are still "general" key concepts that are interesting to know, and to keep in mind while developing marketing communications.

One of them is social proof, people are more incline to buy something if they can have proof that other people benefited from this (Dimitrakis, 2020).

This is because humans tend to imitate behaviours (for example, most of the yawning is made when someone else is seen yawning) and can feel emotions and learn from actions just by looking at them, as their mirror neurons activate both when doing an action and seeing a third party doing it (Braude, 2012, paras. 2-4).

Quick examples for this would be the fact that we are sad when seeing a sad situation in movies. A major practical example would be the use of this principle in cigarettes advertisings in the 1960's. By showing people having fun, being happy, no one thinks about what might be negative in the product. (Shah, 2020.)



Figure 20. Viceroy ad for cigarettes in the 1960's (Shah, 2020)

It has also been proven that the use of face or face-like shapes are even bigger differentiating factor in channels where advertising are observed for a shorter period. The ads attract the viewer's attention faster and increase the amount of attention paid to it. (Guido et al., 2018)

This first concept can be related to the fact that appealing to emotions is important in marketing communications.

Humans are emotional creatures, and it is with no surprise that most purchases and decisions are made emotionally (Whitener, 2021, para. 2).

Using emotions in marketing communications is thus more important than rational fact most of the time, and a nice addition to just an emotional storyline is an audio that fits the desired emotion.

The most important emotions to create in users are joy and surprise, as these concentrate attention and retain users, and especially for videos, creating ups and downs in emotions increases the likelihood of viewers continuing to watch them. (Teixeira et al, 2012)

14 GOOGLE AND FACEBOOK RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CASE COMPANY

14.1 Introduction

The following recommendations were developed specifically for the Grez-Doiceau "Poils et Plumes" point of sale, case company for which this thesis was developed. However, it is important to note that the following recommendations can also be applied by other points of sale.

The only recommendations that are not contained in the following pages, as they are only relevant to other POS are the following:

- The brand's identity is important to follow, therefore, using the correct typos and colors is critical to have visuals match the brand's ones. This is something that is already known by the franchising company as often not followed.
- 2) The feature that allows pages to plan the publishing of content is an interesting one to use, as it gives them the opportunity to publish content at the best time, to have the maximum visibility possible. These "optimum" hours are based on the page's fans activity and when the greatest number of these users are usually active on the platform. Therefore, I recommend them to make use of this feature, as this often does not seem to be the case.

14.2 Website

While the case company has only been granted the permission to have its own website for test purposes, I recommend continuing using a dedicated website, with the integration of the Google Tag, Facebook Pixel and Conversion API.

This will not only allow the POS to collect data of website visitors and have more leeway in its way to present itself, its services, and products, but will also allow it to develop dedicated landing pages for its digital advertising, as well as in-store events. These landing pages will allow to control the content and information users see, to avoid any distractions that might avoid the desired message to come across. Additionally, although this is not the focus of this thesis, it will also allow the POS to run campaigns to increase the amount of customer accounts and subscriptions to its newsletter, consequently giving it the possibility to do email marketing campaigns (which are <u>not</u> discussed in this thesis).

14.3 Facebook

Facebook represents a major opportunity for the case company to expand its client base and maintain its customers loyalty. The following Facebook recommendations cover multiple topics, from the visuals themselves, to the text, and of course the user targeting as well as the ad format.

14.3.1 Facebook Advertising Recommendations

The most important prerequisite for advertising is having proper targeting. Due to GDPR regulations, there will be some point at which it will not be possible anymore to target Facebook users according to their interests. Therefore, the only way for a company to target relevant users will be by targeting people who like its Facebook or Instagram page, or by targeting users for whom it has collected data, whether it be by collecting their email, or collecting their data with the Google Tag, Facebook Pixel and Conversion API when they visited its website. Moreover, it is thus important to take advantage of the fact that this targeting is still available, by targeting people with pertinent interests.

In addition to targeting interests such as dogs, cats, and associated accessories, the geographic aspect of targets is also critical. The way the case company has been targeting users in the past year (see9.2.3) is very effective and delivered excellent results, therefore, I recommend continuing using this method.

Once the targeting by interest will not be available anymore, it will be important for the POS to have both the Conversion API and the Facebook Pixel installed and setup to segment the pages and content viewed in categories, for example, dogs, cats, rodents, fishes, etc. to allow it to run segmented retargeting advertisings to website visitors.

As far as the type of advertising goes, it is important to have campaigns active for targets at every step of the customer lifecycle.

However, as there is no possibility to directly convert targets online currently, campaigns can only be used to create awareness, positive opinion about the company as well as consideration objectives and the advertising of promotional periods. It is important to note that this last type of campaign will only lead to conversion once the target visits the POS and are therefore not really conversion campaigns.

For awareness campaigns, I suggest using videos that are meant to make the viewers feel emotions using social proof and the role emotions play in the decision-making process at the company's advantage. These types of campaign can easily run on a two to three euros daily budget, which can be increased if desired. By creating multiple videos showing customers and their pets in situations that the target can easily identify with, the company can use these to create an emotional band with the customer, which suits its moto perfectly, as well as position itself as an expert.

Additionally, I recommend using single images, or carrousels that are in the same theme or are a reminder of the video's message complimentarily, to increase its recall. These could be setup as retargeting campaigns that are only shown to people who have seen at least 25 - 50 or even 75% of the

videos. Here, it is important to remember the effectiveness of faces or facelike shapes on a user's attention and attentiveness. Videos only showcasing the interior of the pet shop and its location are interesting to create or increase the brand awareness while targeting of new audiences, whether they are lookalike audiences, or new geographical zones in which the POS wishes to increase its customer base. Moreover, these videos are great content to have in continuously up and running campaigns all year round, as their cost is minimal and their effectiveness higher than static content. Facebook account managers indeed recommended having at least one campaign continuously active, with as little as a single euro daily budget, to allow the algorithm to constantly search for new users and to gather as much information on which type of profile reacts best to a company's advertisings. While this has been put in place for the Grez-Doiceau POS, which delivered great results, the video content has not been changed since December 2021, which I recommend changing every 3 months in average from now on, so users see new, updated content.

Then, consideration campaigns should not be forgotten. Firstly, I recommend continuing developing Facebook consideration campaigns for the folder promotional periods, which take place four times a year, as their effectiveness has been proven (as shown previously in this thesis). I suggest using the same setup as the Easter 2022 campaign, when the company has had the ability to develop dedicated landing pages as it had been allowed to develop its own website. By using a traffic generation objective and carrousel ads, it was able to advertise more information by using multiple visuals as well as increase the database of website visitors thanks to the Facebook Pixel and Conversion API.

My only additional suggestions are to firstly develop an additional (less than 15 seconds long, or even less than 6 seconds long if possible) video to promote the special offers and to have it run at the same time. This same video could be slightly modified to be used as a retargeting campaign reminding potential customers to take advantage of these promotions before they end, for example 5 days before the end of the promotional actions, especially in areas where customers are more price sensitive. Also, while its budget was

quite high, with a 60- and 40-euros daily budget, Facebook account managers recommend using an only eight to ten euros daily budget for traffic generation campaigns, certainly if other campaigns are also run during the year. By diminishing the budget usually allocated to these campaigns during a shorter period, the remaining resources could be used to fund awareness campaigns before the promotional periods, so that the company is already present in the minds of the target

As far as other types of conversion campaigns are concerned, lead generation campaigns could benefit the company, by incentivizing users to subscribe to the company's newsletter / create a customer account online. While this type of campaign usually costs more to run in comparison to others according to Facebook account managers, who recommend using an approximately 30€ daily budget, it will then allow it to run email marketing ads, which even if there are not the focus of this thesis, are very interesting to have as part of the general marketing efforts. Also, with a lot of errors occurring with the manual encoding of email addresses in store, or even a large portion of visitors not wanting to share this type of information, it is a great way to counter this problem. However, such a campaign will not be very effective without an incentive, therefore it is very important to determine an effective incentive and to have proper negotiations with suppliers about their possible participation (to keep costs low for the company).

For example, during the easter promotional folder, visitors had the possibility to take part in a global contest to win entries and a stay at Pairi Daiza, Belgium's n°1 Zoo every time they bought something in the store. And while I do not have the final numbers, with this possibility to win something, the amount of people who happily gave their email addresses skyrocketed. Suppliers could also be approached to develop product advertisings in the case company's targeted postcodes. Participation from them, whether it be monetary or by compensating part of the cost of the advertisings with free inventory, could allow the case company to run additional campaigns which will not only let potential customers know that a certain product is available at the case company, but will additionally increase the POS's visibility.

I recommend doing so with single images or with carrousel ads to show more information about the features of the products (similarly to what the case company's competitor "Tom and Co" does in appendix 4). As these product advertisings can't be used to directly convert users and do not contribute to improving the case company's awareness, I recommend using the engagement objective with as goal to have users interact with the publication or the page, as most of these products do not require complimentary information.

However, for new products or products for which further information is required, the case company has two possibilities. The first one being to use the traffic objective to increase the website traffic and data collection, and the second being to develop a personalized instant experience in which information about the product is available, and maybe even a demo video if the supplier has already such material available, or if its participation in the advertising cost is sufficient to allocate resources in the development of such video material by the case company itself.

Instant experiences could be used for various types of campaigns, but the problem with them is that while the people who interact with them can be retargeted on Facebook, their data is not collected by the Google Tag, as they do not leave Facebook's platform. Therefore, they can't be retargeted with Google ads campaigns. Consequently, I recommend using instant experiences only for products advertisings, and to redirect the users to the case company's website for other types of campaigns, to collect their data with the Google Tag.

The last important topic to be discussed is text in advertisings. As mentioned previously, text in advertisings should be kept to a minimum, both in titles and descriptions but also in the visuals themselves. The way advertisings are currently developed by the case company is correct and takes this recommendation into account, therefore I do not have any recommendation on this topic but to continue in the same way.

14.4 Google Advertising Recommendations

The biggest opportunity available to the case company by using Google is to be able to retarget visitors with display ads and video ads.

While I suggest using Google video ads only for larger advertising campaigns such as promotional periods or important events, display ads represent an inexpensive opportunity to increase the company's visibility and stay in the mind of its target.

By having the Google Tag installed and setup on the website, the company can easily retarget specific URLs or actions made on it. This allows to run segmented retargeting ads, by targeting users who have visited a specific animal related pages or have looked at the information about one of the available services. Once again, it is important to - first of all - increase the traffic to the website to collect as much data as possible to have efficient ads that target a larger audience.

As shown previously in this thesis, display ads can be used to target based on specific criteria. Therefore, while the database is still growing, I suggest targeting relevant keywords in the POS's surroundings with display or video ads during promotional periods, important events, and special promotions for in-demand products (if an agreement can be made with the supplier, to lower the cost of these advertisings for the company). This will not only increase the company's visibility but also help increase the traffic to its website, and consequently the data collected. To facilitate the case company's workload, I recommend developing multiple variations of visuals and text to let Google optimize the campaigns itself. Also, as developing different video content for Google and Facebook imply higher costs, I recommend using the same materials for both channels when possible.

Search campaigns could however be interesting to develop to promote complimentary services, such as the dog grooming service or the self-"dog

wash". Additionally, I suggest trying out search ads for shorter periods of time, with keywords targeting the company's and competitors' names as well as additional pertinent keywords such as "pet shop near me", and pet product related keywords in the desired targeted areas. This could be an opportunity to acquire customers from competitors during promotional periods, with attention catching titles and description in addition to a good call to action.

Of course, as for all marketing communications, all campaigns should be created in both Dutch and French to adapt themselves to the targets. It is important to note that while Google allows to target people who speak Dutch, it is common knowledge in Belgium that a large portion of Dutch speaking people have their systems set up in English and are consequently categorized as English speaker by Google. Therefore, it is important to include the English language when targeting Dutch speaking regions.

15 GUIDANCE ON ADAPTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CHAIN

The following recommendations focus on the franchising company's digital advertising. As the chain's marketing relies less on promoting a particular point of sale, but rather on promoting the brand itself, the objectives of the marketing communications differ from a POS.

15.1 Website

Today, each point of sale has one page that is dedicated to it on the chain's website, but there isn't much room for information, and they all are on the same domain, which doesn't allow them to use tools such as Google's and Facebook's.

My suggestion is therefore to have sub-domains, each using the same/similar layouts for their pages, and using content approved by the franchising company. Then, each POS wanting to develop its digital advertising efforts could have access to more than one page of information to present its shop, products, and services, but also have the ability to take advantage of data collection tools by installing the Google Tag, Facebook Pixel and Facebook Conversion API. Additionally, these tools should also be installed and set up for the chain itself.

Moreover, once this is set up, POS should try to create as much (pertinent) traffic to their sub-domain as possible, as this will allow them to gather user's data which they will then be able to use to retarget those users online, at a smaller cost.

15.2 Google

As mentioned previously, I suggest the chain to keep the focus of its digital advertisings on maintaining the brand identity, increasing awareness, and positioning the brand an expert, which can be done in various ways. However, before talking about the recommendation on campaign types and content, the first topic to be discussed is the targeting.

Google allows advertisers to target specific geographic areas, from as small as towns, to provinces, regions and countries. Should the company decide to target only regions in which it already has active POS, it could focus on targeting users located in the surrounding cities. However, as found out by conducting tests for the case company, Google's targeting tool doesn't always recognize smaller towns, which are then not able to be targeted using this method. Consequently, for chain-wise advertisings, I suggest using the province or even region method for Wallonia, where the brand is already well established, but only the province targeting for Flanders where the brand is at its beginnings.

Using these types of targeting will allow the brand to not only target existing customers but also potential ones and contribute to increasing the brand awareness in areas where it is not yet implemented but plans to as the brand continues growing. Should there be areas in which the brand knows it will not develop itself for certain reasons, those can also be excluded from the targeting.

15.2.1 Google Advertising Recommendations

First, I recommend the chain to allow a small part of the budget for search ads, to target keywords related to questions current or potential customers are asking themselves about pet care, products, etc.

This will enable it to position itself as an expert and help with the brand's perception by potential customers and could become a first touchpoint with future customers all while increasing website traffic (and thus the database). A simple example of this could be "what food should I give my dog", or even "what dog breed should I get", etc.

"Tips and tricks"-like informational content could also be developed to improve the target's perception about the brand, with complimentary video format explanations on the webpage. This would increase the website traffic but would also imply that the company might enter in a bidding competition with ecommerce pet shops, whom we have stated earlier, have much larger budgets for digital marketing. Therefore, while this would improve the brand perception, I suggest developing test-campaigns to evaluate their performance and cost before adding it to the definitive digital advertising plan.

Search ads could additionally be used during shorter periods of time for promotional periods, as recommended for the case company, by targeting relevant keywords and using appropriate call to action, as this might allow the chain to acquire customers from competitors.

Then, as for the case company, display ads represent an inexpensive way to increase the company's exposure. However, contrary to the case company, the chain has much more website traffic, meaning data can collected faster than the case company can. These campaigns can consequently easily be used for retargeting purposes, by running ads during promotional periods and special offers but also all year long with face-like shapes and visuals reflecting the target's situation, incorporating pets and daily situations of pet owners, as well as customers in store being helped by sales associates to use the social proof concept.

To increase the exposure of the company to potential new customers, who could be customers of competitors, the same set up as developed previously for the case company, where display ads were used to target specific keywords within a specific region applies for the chain itself. These could be used to run

province or region-wide advertisings with as goal to catch a portion of the competitors' clientele.

Additionally, display ads can also be used to promote events such as the yearly event organised by the chain for non-profits. A first campaign could be developed to promote the event so targets are aware of its existence, and a retargeting campaign could then be developed to retarget URL visitors, who might have visited the page by clicking on a Google or Facebook ads, or simply visited the company's website.

15.3 Facebook Advertising Recommendations

The first recommendation for the global chain marketing is its targeting. While both the chain and other POS use a single circle with a 10 KM radius, this leaves a lot of highly profitable regions untouched.

Therefore, for current operations, I recommend using the same method used by the Grez-Doiceau POS, by using postcode targeting in addition to smaller size circles (for smaller areas we do not want to target wholly), which will allow to target the areas that current customers originate from, as well as high return potential zones where the brand can increase its presence and customer base by attracting new customers. However, as is possible with Google, Facebook also allows to target wider areas, by provinces, regions, and countries, with the additional possibility, similar to Google, to exclude areas from the targeting. Therefore, I would apply the same methodology as with Google targeting (as developed previously in section 15.2).

Additionally, with the current advertisings targeting only lookalike audiences, I believe a lot of potential customers are left untouched. Even though it allows the chain to target cheaper audiences (as they represent a small percentage of users categorized as the most similar to the page's current audience by Facebook) it doesn't allow it to target wider (but still very relevant) audiences and consequently isn't as effective in increasing the global brand awareness

and targeting the most potential customers. I therefore suggest shifting the targeting mode to interest and demographics criteria, similarly to the way the case company does, and using wider geographic areas such as mentioned in the paragraph hereabove.

Then, I suggest modifying the type of content that is advertised by the chain. Currently, the only advertisings made by the chain are informational content with an engagement objective. While I do recommend continuing advertising informational content, I also recommend not making the entire Facebook advertising rely on it, as well as modifying some aspects of these advertisings. Therefore, I recommend developing other types of campaigns, similarly to the ones recommended for the POS, but with a larger focus, which is the chain. While POS advertising focuses on this location, the main goal of a chain's marketing is to create and maintain the brand identity. The ultimate objective being targets having a positive opinion about the brand.

The first problems with the way the chain advertising is currently being conducted, according to Facebook account managers and personal experience, is that a lot of users tend to not pay attention to content composed of too much text and do not read the entire post, as it seems long. Additionally, the way these advertisings are setup does not generate any traffic to the website. Therefore, I recommend changing the way the ads and posts are made, by only writing an extract in the description that captures the user's attention in addition to a call-to-action that invites them to visit the link to the blog to see more and read the rest of the article. Users that are only interested in the attention catching part will still engage with the post, but those who desire to know more about the article will have to click on the ad to access the blog article. This will generate more traffic to the website, of which the data can be used later for retargeting purposes and will additionally help the site's S.E.O. by creating additional links to its pages (Cozmiuc, 2020). Also, by using bit.ly (a website that allows to shorten URLs and access information about the website traffic that used them) the company will be able to see exactly how many people came to the blog article from which post and platform (as well as device and other interesting information).

In addition to these single image campaigns with engagement objectives, I suggest developing similar campaigns to the ones recommended for the case company's POS. By using the power of emotional videos, the chain could develop video views objective campaigns similarly to the ones its competitor "Maxizoo" made. The difference between the videos for a POS and for the chain relies in the fact that the chain should focus more on promoting the brand, while POS focus on promoting their store. Additionally, I suggest using the social proof concept even further than in the case company's communication, with customer testimonials videos shorter than 30 seconds who would explain how they benefited from shopping at one of the brand's locations. As with the case company, I recommend running single image campaigns retargeting users who have watched a significant portion of these videos, to increase their recall.

Then, I suggest changing the way advertisings are made during promotional periods, which were previously just a post with up to 30 images (every page from the folder) that was boosted. Therefore, I advise adopting the same recommendations as made previously for the case company, by developing carrousels ads redirecting to a dedicated landing page where user data can be collected to later retarget them and remind them of the coming end of the promotional periods. Additionally, I also suggest making use of the effectiveness of short video ads, as mentioned in the POS recommendations

Furthermore, carrousel ads and single image ads and video ads could all be used simultaneously to advertise its yearly event, organised for the benefit of non-profits. By developing campaigns with a goal of obtaining as much website traffic as possible and setting up the Facebook Pixel and Conversion API to collect data of users who have visited this particular URL, the chain will then be able to run retargeting campaigns to try to maximize the number of inscriptions to the event. Additionally, video views campaigns could be used for the advertising in the next years, once a promotional video for the said events is develop, where the activities and perks for attendees are clearly shown.

My last recommendation concerns the chain's visuals, multiple Facebook account managers have stated that some of the chain's official visuals used in non-paid posts as well as specific campaigns, such as the following one, had too much text on it. While, as discussed previously in this thesis, advertisings using images composed of more than 20% text are not penalized by Facebook anymore (as they were until 2020), the platform still encourages advertisers to respect this recommendation as much as possible, as data shows that these advertisings perform better.



Figure 21. Poils et Plumes Belgium Facebook Advertising in Easter 2022

16 DISCUSSION

Digital marketing and digital advertising can be very confusing for someone who doesn't have the required background to extract the relevant information from the rest, and even more so to properly use them in a practical way.

With the case company's ambitions to expand its customer base by developing its activities in new, highly profitable regions, and the increasing cost of offline marketing communications leading to decreasing profitability, this project was very important for the case company, as it relied on the author of this thesis to determine clear recommendations, adapted specifically to its situation to take full advantage of these platforms.

A lot of work went into the gathering and analysis of information to achieve the desired outcome by successfully answering the research questions and reaching the objective of the thesis. The analysis of the previous test campaigns clearly demonstrates the opportunity that digital advertising represents for the case company, and the analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data allowed the author to successfully comprehend Facebook and Google advertising and be able to achieve the desired outcome.

Due to time and academic restrictions, there are additional topics that were not able to be researched in this thesis. Therefore, I suggest the case company to research some additional topics. As far as digital marketing related topics, while email marketing and webpage optimization didn't fall in the scope of this thesis, they still potentially represent a major opportunity for the case company (as mentioned previously) and researching these topics in depth could lead to increased revenue for the case company. There are additional topics that I recommend the company to explore to improve the customer's journey and the company's knowledge of the customer's purchasing behaviour, but as they fall well beyond the scope of digital marketing and advertising, they will not be disclosed in this thesis to avoid confusion.

Lastly, while this project was important for the case company, this was also the case for the author, who already acquired knowledge about Facebook and Google digital advertising due to previous professional experience but still learned a lot while completing this thesis due to the platforms continuously changing and the best practices evolving overtime. Additionally, as this project demonstrated the author's abilities, who delivered valuable information and help to the case company, it was decided by the two parties to closely work together on future projects to develop the company's activities in Belgium.

17 CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this thesis is that while the case company's previous efforts were heading in the right direction, there was still a lot of room for improvements, mostly because of the infrequent use of digital advertisings, but also in the content used for this purpose. Although the case company's franchiser puts out digital advertisings more frequently, the possible improvements focus on the targeting, content, and set up used for these campaigns.

The information contained within this thesis was collected to develop the comprehensive and practical recommendations for the case company and its franchiser to develop future digital advertisings on Google and Facebook, which were demonstrated to be a big opportunity. Should these recommendations be considered, the companies can expect to see an increase in revenue and customers, as the increased visibility and new way of developing advertisings aims to acquire new customers and have them return to the store.

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Grez-Doiceau's first digital Campaign's visuals (Carroussel):

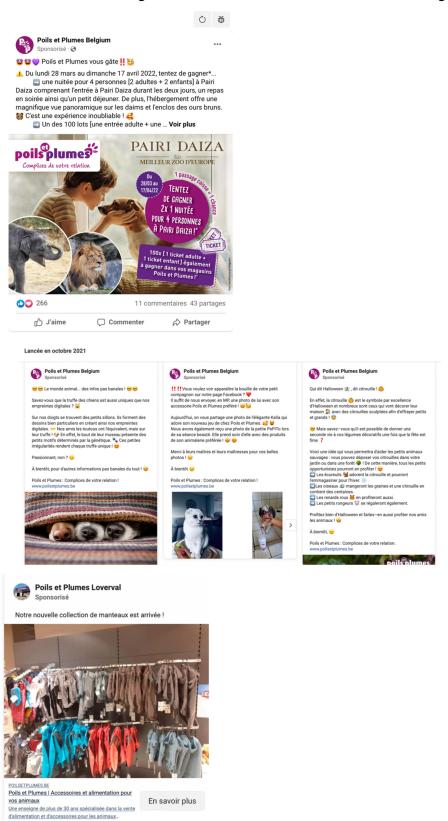


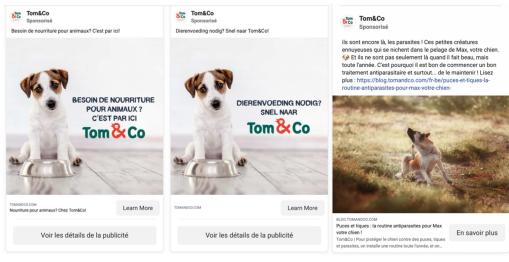
Grez-Doiceau's December 2021 Campaign Visual (Carrousel):



Grez-Doiceau's Easter 2022 Campaign Visual (Carrousel):

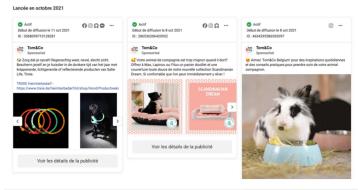
Poils et Plumes Belgium and Other Points of Sale's Advertising



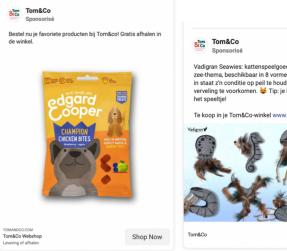






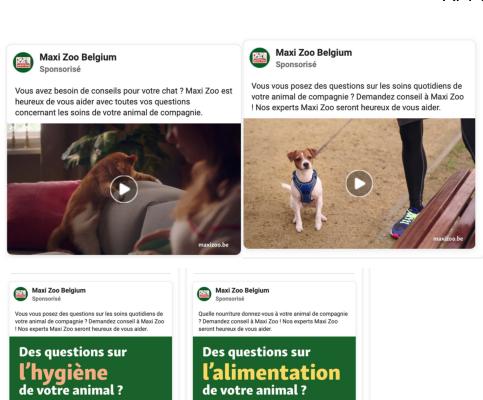












Demandez un expert.

Demandez Maxi Zoo.

MAXI ZOO



MAXI ZOO

Demandez un expert.

Demandez Maxi Zoo.



The basis for all data comes from reports that are available in the management software used in the shop for sales, inventory, and customer-data (ref: https://www.mercator.eu/en/business-management/store-

management.chtml). The data provided by Mercator is also the data used for accounting purposes.

To analyse the impact of any campaign, we needed to make sure that the data is coherent during the entire measurement-period and can be matched with the setup of the campaigns (postal codes, areas, regions). We used data starting 1/1/2021.

The most important report is a xls-list of all the individual purchases which provided us with customer-identification, date of purchase, amount purchased. The week number were then added since the beginning of the measurement period. Then, using vlookup-function into a table with the different campaign periods we added an indicator (e.g. April2021-Facebook-folder) to each line, based on the week number.

A second report available provided us a xls-list of customers (customer-id) and postal code. Per postal code, we added a zone (group of communes) and a language-region. The language-region is important as we must evaluate the revenue versus the cost of translating all advertising.

Merging the initial purchases-table with the second table gives us our final working table with the information on purchases (customer, zone, language-region, week, campaign-period, day of the week).

The analysis is done via pivot-tables on this working table. Using vlookup and pivots avoids the need of copying and hence guarantees the coherence between all reports, even if we need to correct some lines (eg., errors in postal codes). We checked for possible inconsistencies by comparing weekly revenues to our accounting data. This ensures us that our analysis is coherent with the other revenue-reports.

We did look at using Pivotal, Tableau or QlikView but the cost was too high for our use. For the chain as a whole, it could be interesting to set up these reports and link them directly to the Mercator database.