

MAY 2021



WINNING AT SOCIAL MEDIA FOR CHARITIES

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JAA work with over 50 charity clients and are one of the UK's biggest buyers of charity advertising on social media. In 2020 we purchased 1.2 billion impressions on Facebook and Instagram for charities including the RSPCA, Cats Protection, Barnardo's, Plan International UK, RNIB, Mind, Breast Cancer Now, Drinkaware and many others.

This activity led to over 500,000 conversions and these individual actions generated millions of pounds of new revenue from cash gifts, regular giving, lottery sales, legacy requests, event sign-ups, raffles, value exchanges and sponsorships. JAA's expertise in using social media effectively for charities has five key elements.

1. STRONG PLATFORM PARTNERSHIPS

Getting the most out of social media demands investing the time, effort and resources to build close relationships with the main platforms. Facebook is pivotal and JAA's status as an accredited Facebook Marketing Partner has produced valuable benefits for our clients and our people. A dedicated JAA Facebook support team guarantees we receive excellent day-to-day-service. We gain privileged access to Facebook events, seminars and summits. JAA teams receive training to obtain official Facebook Certifications, improving their specialist knowledge and insight. And our Partner status gives us early sight of Facebook product innovations and testing initiatives.



2. UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL CREATIVITY

Our involvement in social campaigns goes beyond planning and buying. With fierce competition for donors, all charity creative work must stand out to be noticed. Social ads need more than compelling and emotive storytelling. Because 80% of Facebook users access the site on mobile devices, ads have to capture attention from the first frame.

To be effective on social channels, creative has to be tailor-made, ideally with text and animation overlaid on video. JAA have long experience in helping agencies and clients adapt creative for social. A great example is our work with ShuttleRock, specialists in mobile-first creative. Plan UK's DRTV commercial was re-edited for social, with great results.

For Cats Protection, we supported ShuttleRock in adapting our main DRTV ad to a mobile-friendly social version. Following Facebook best practice, the video was 15 seconds long. Versions were produced in the Stories-friendly 9:16 format and standard square ad format then tested via a Nielsen TAR study and brand-lift analysis.

The outcome was a 9.6 percentage-point lift in ad recall and cost-per-incremental brand lift 60% below Cats' regular TV ad. We actively encourage good creative practices for all social campaigns, like making the message consistent with the landing page - vital for conversion-based campaigns where the final action takes place on the website.



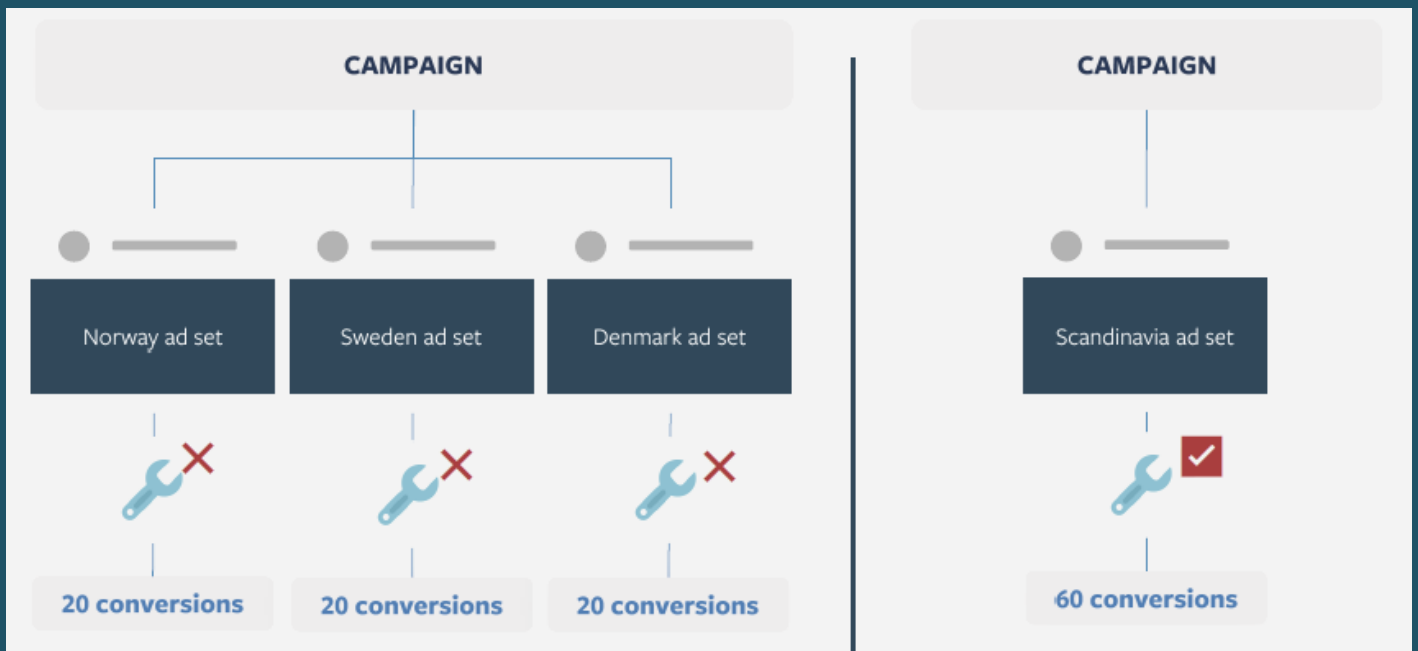
3. AGILITY IN AUDIENCE TARGETING

Rapid changes in consumer behaviour, regulation and technology mean it is essential to be flexible in identifying and targeting social audiences. JAA's strategies for social targeting have changed markedly in the last 2-3 years. Before 2018 we took a segmented approach, using different data sources to precisely define audiences and focusing tightly on the most relevant target groups.

This changed with the advent of GDPR. Tighter restrictions on data collection made many specific Facebook audiences inaccessible, like MOSAIC groups.

At the same time, the Facebook algorithm became more effective at locating prospective charity supporters. This led us to a broader targeting approach.

Although it is tempting to segment larger audiences into specific groups (eg. by gender, age or region) to test which works best, experience shows that larger audiences optimise more quickly. So, it is more efficient to merge similar audiences into larger groups to improve overall performance, as shown below.



Source: Facebook learning phase narrative presentation, 2020

Even allowing for some wastage the overall results produced by broader audience targeting are still proving superior. As always, we are firm believers in continuous learning and continue to work closely with Facebook to evaluate client ROI and refine campaign plans.

4. KNOWING WHEN TO DIVERSIFY

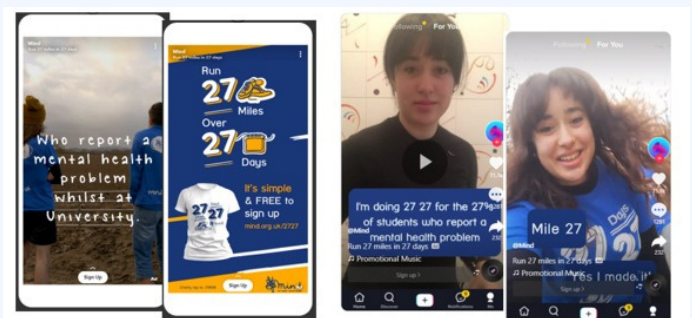
Many charities are overly dependent on Facebook, understandable given its size, reach and proven effectiveness. JAA have an excellent relationship with Facebook but we are always alert to the risks of becoming over-reliant on one platform. With every charity client we constantly reassess the optimal blend of social channels.

Diversifying the social channel mix can offset rising Facebook costs and provide access to new audiences. JAA encourage clients to retain the flexibility to test smaller and emerging platforms, using customised tests.

Twitter is smaller than Facebook but has a similar audience profile so it makes sense to test it by allocating budget from an ongoing campaign, such as for Donations or Memberships. Platforms like Snapchat and TikTok need to be tested differently because their younger profile makes them better suited to awareness, educational or events-based campaigns.

We always ensure that content is adapted to fit the platform, so a conversational tone on Twitter and a more energetic and playful style on TikTok will generally work best.

Our work with Mind illustrates our commitment to fluid testing. We have explored diverse platforms for Mind, testing TikTok, Snapchat, Reddit and YouTube alongside Facebook and Instagram. Mind's "2727" campaign was particularly successful in using younger platforms to reach our student target and deliver outstanding ROI.



5. DEEP INSIGHT INTO THE SOCIAL MARKETPLACE

JAA's daily immersion in the social marketplace means we can quickly spot trends and assess the implications for clients. Our deep market knowledge helps us detect signals of cost inflation. In Q4 2020 social CPMs, the main buying currency, rose rapidly and Q1 2021 saw a further 30% year-on-year increase. With Covid-19 causing shops, events and face-to-face fundraising to be closed or suspended, many charities increased their social investment to make up for lost revenue.

Inflationary pressure resulted as charities competed for social media presence. Social costs are now rising quicker for charities than the market as a whole, evidenced by media reports of inflation on Facebook.

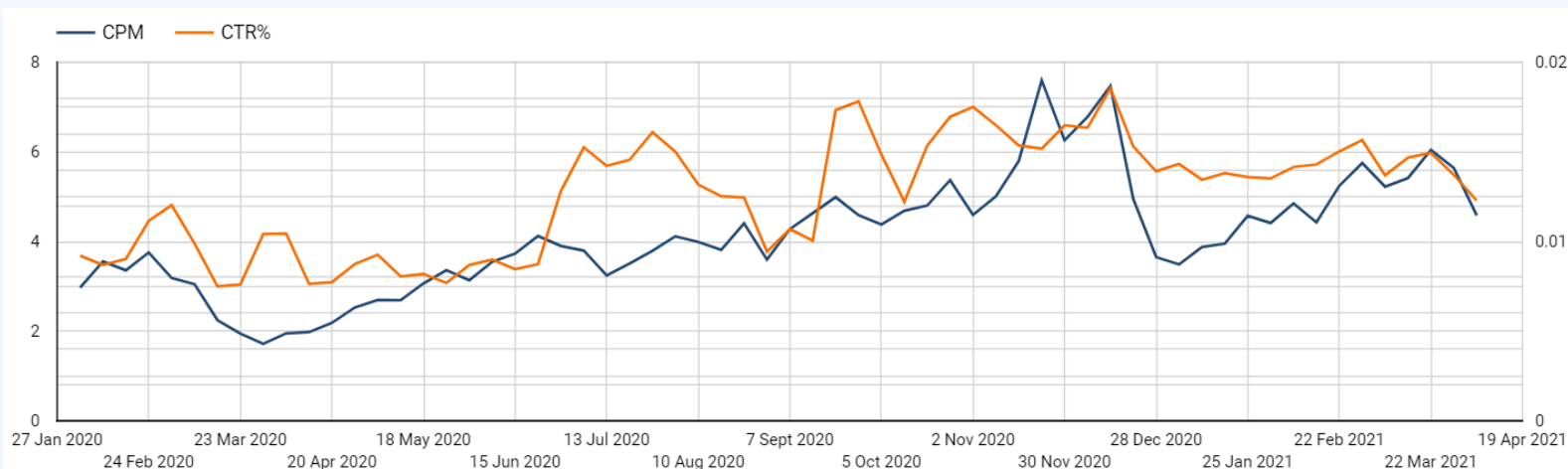
As lockdown ends and regular fundraising channels resume, social competition and cost pressures may diminish but other challenges will come to the fore. The familiar digital landscape is on the verge of fundamental change: the anticipated data loss from Apple's iOS 14.5 app tracking policy and Google's phasing-out of third-party cookies in 2022 will prefigure a bumpy few years. How advertisers view and activate social will need to evolve.

We will have to accept that performance will not be what it once was and that we need to re-define what success looks like and where it can be identified.

The role of social and of all digital channels in communications plans will be re-evaluated as data visibility changes and audience targeting enters a new phase. And we will need to remain vigilant in striking the right balance of investment inside and outside the "walled gardens".

Regardless of how the social media market fluctuates, JAA will continue to help our clients adapt through intelligent, flexible and rigorous optimisation of social creative, audience, channel mix and data capture.

We are proud of our track record in delivering sustained improvement in social ROI for clients through the incredibly difficult pandemic period. As below, increases in social Click-Through-Rates (CTR) for JAA charity clients, the prime measure of audience engagement with ads, have consistently outstripped rises in average CPM (cost per thousand impressions) across January 2020-April 2021 – a robust indicator of the strong levels of effectiveness we intend to maintain in the new digital landscape.



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JAA is the original independent media agency. Our strategic, creative media thinking drives growth for our clients' businesses in an ever-changing and fast paced world.