Comparing Maximum and Average Bidding: An A/B Test in Facebook Ads



In this project, we explore the field of Facebook advertising to carry out a statistical A/B test, with a specific focus on the evaluation of two bidding strategies: maximum bidding (Max) and average bidding (Avg). The dataset utilized for this analysis can be obtained from Kaggle, under the title Optimizing Ad Bidding: Facebook's A/B Test Story

The core of this project centers around the A/B test, a statistical technique enabling a direct comparison between two groups. In this context, our focus is on examining the impact of two different bidding strategies in Facebook advertising. The control group employs maximum bidding (Max), a manual approach where advertisers establish a fixed maximum bid. Conversely, the test group adopts average bidding (Avg), an automated method in which Facebook's algorithm adaptively adjusts bids in response to real-time auction dynamic. For further reading, you can visit the official Meta Ads Auction page

The main goal of this project is to carefully assess and compare how well maximum and average bidding strategies perform in real world of Facebook advertising. Our objective is to figure out which strategy delivers better results and is more in line with what advertisers aim to achieve

Disclaimer: The data and analysis provided in this project are intended for educational and personal learning purposes only

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Questions ~

Here are the questions we aim to answer in this project:

- 1. Do different bidding strategies yield varying results in terms of impressions, adclicks, purchases, and earnings?
- 2. If so, which bidding strategy produces the most favorable outcomes?
- 3. Are the results statistically significant, thereby providing valuable insights for decision-making?

How to run the code ~

To run this project, there are several ways that you can choose between running it on your local computer using Jupyter Notebook or using online resources like Kaggle or GoogleCollab

Option 1: Using online resources(recommended):

- This is the easiet way since you only need to click the 'Run' button
- You can choose between GoogleCollab or Kaggle, but first you need to have an account before you upload and execute the code on those platform

Option 2: Running on you local computer:

 You need to set up Python, install the Jupyter Notebook and install the list of required libraries within your IDE

Jupyter Notebooks: Jupyter notebook is a document made of *cells*. Each cell can contain code written in Python or explanations in plain English. You can execute code cells and view the results, numbers, messages, graphs, tables, files, etc., instantly within the notebook. Jupyter is a powerful platform for experimentation and analysis. You can use the "Kernel > Restart & Clear Output" menu option to clear all outputs and start again from the top

Here's a list of tools or libraries that we're going to install and use:

```
%pip install matplotlib --quiet
%pip install seaborn --quiet
```

For starter, let's start with importing the libraries and modules

```
import numpy as np
import pandas as pd
import matplotlib
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
import opendatasets as od
from datetime import datetime, timedelta
import random
import viz
```

Downloading the Datasets ~

There are several options for getting the dataset into Jupyter:

- Download the CSV manually and upload it via Jupyter's GUI
- Use the urlretrieve function from the urllib.request to download CSV files from a raw URL
- Use a helper library, e.g., opendatasets , which contains a collection of curated datasets and provides a helper function for direct download

Required Dataset (Kaggle):

- For the required datasets, you'll find it on Kaggle
- If you haven't already, make sure you have a Kaggle account. You can create one if needed
- After logging in, go to your Kaggle account settings by clicking on "Settings" in the top right corner of the Kaggle website
- In the account settings, navigate to "Account" and then click on "Create New API Token." This will provide you with an API key

Please ensure you've acquired the API key from Kaggle as mentioned above before proceeding to download the datasets

Let's download the dataset

Create the Dataframes ~

We create our dataframe with pandas:

 As our dataset is in CSV format, let's use pandas read_csv function to create the dataframe

```
In [3]: # Create control_df and test_df from the downloaded dataset
        control_df = pd.read_csv('facebook-ab-test-of-bidding-feature/ab_test/control_group
        test_df = pd.read_csv('facebook-ab-test-of-bidding-feature/ab_test/test_group.csv',
        # Look each dataframe info
        print(control df.info())
        print(test_df.info())
      <class 'pandas.core.frame.DataFrame'>
      RangeIndex: 40 entries, 0 to 39
      Data columns (total 4 columns):
       # Column Non-Null Count Dtype
                      -----
      --- -----
       0 Impression 40 non-null
                                    int64
       1 Click 40 non-null int64
       2 Purchase 40 non-null int64
3 Earning 40 non-null int64
      dtypes: int64(4)
      memory usage: 1.4 KB
      None
      <class 'pandas.core.frame.DataFrame'>
      RangeIndex: 40 entries, 0 to 39
      Data columns (total 4 columns):
       # Column Non-Null Count Dtype
       --- -----
                      _____
       0 Impression 40 non-null int64
1 Click 40 non-null int64
       2 Purchase 40 non-null int64
       3 Earning 40 non-null int64
      dtypes: int64(4)
      memory usage: 1.4 KB
      None
```

As we can see from the dataframes above, each dataframe consists only of the
 Impression , Click , Purchase , and Earning column. Before merging both
 dataframes into one, we need to add new columns for Date and Group to each
 dataframe

Before the dataframe is ready for analysis, we need to ensure that we have all the necessary data:

- Since both dataframes don't have a date column, we can generate one using random dates
- Additionally, we should add a new **Group** column to easily differentiate between the control group and test group
- We generate random date with randit function from random module and timedelta function from datetime module

```
In [4]: # Define the date range
        start_date = datetime(2022, 1, 1)
        end_date = datetime(2022, 12, 31)
        # Add 'Group' column for each dataframe
        control_df['Group'] = 'Control Group'
        test_df['Group'] = 'Test Group'
        # Generate random dates for both dataframe
        random dates control = [start date + timedelta(days=random.randint(0, (end date - s
        random_dates_test = [start_date + timedelta(days=random.randint(0, (end_date - star
        # Add 'Date' column
        control_df['Date'] = random_dates_control
        test_df['Date'] = random_dates_test
        # Move 'Group' and 'Date' columns to positions 0 and 1
        control_df = control_df[['Group', 'Date'] + [col for col in control_df.columns if c
        test_df = test_df[['Group', 'Date'] + [col for col in test_df.columns if col not in
        # Take a Look at each dataframe sample
        print(control_df.sample(2))
        print('')
        print(test_df.sample(2))
                   Group Date Impression Click Purchase Earning
                                                                     2311
```

```
0 Control Group 2022-01-04 82529 6090 665 2311
20 Control Group 2022-09-20 105493 2190 666 2112

Group Date Impression Click Purchase Earning
3 Test Group 2022-10-07 116445 4650 429 2281
38 Test Group 2022-03-28 79034 4495 425 2596
```

• Let's merge or join the dataframes into one

```
In [5]: #Merging the dataframes into one
main_df = control_df.merge(test_df, how='outer').sort_values(['Date', 'Group']).res
# Check dataframe info and also samples
```

Out[5]:		Group	Date	Impression	Click	Purchase	Earning
	54	Control Group	2022-09-10	83677	7154	488	1990
	72	Test Group	2022-11-08	157681	4468	702	3171
	31	Control Group	2022-06-10	77774	4462	520	2082
	49	Test Group	2022-08-25	113733	3252	611	2367
	22	Test Group	2022-04-18	96331	3861	890	2613

Data Exploration and Descriptive Analysis ~

- Now that our dataframe is ready, let's explore the data and see what insights it might offer to us
- We can also visualize it using the vis module that we imported earlier

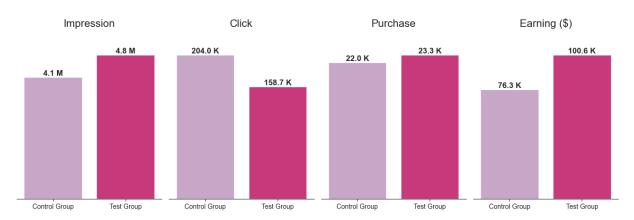
1. What are the total impressions, clicks, purchases, and earnings for each group

```
# Loops for applying the bar_plot function from the viz module
for i, (ax, df, title) in enumerate(plot_data):
    viz.bar_plot(ax, df.index, df.values, '', '', 'PuRd', 12)
    viz.despine_subplot(ax)
    ax.set_title(title, fontsize=16, pad=15)

# Set ticks for each bar value
for bar, value in zip(ax.patches, df.values):
    value = viz.numeric_formatter(value, bar)
    ax.text(bar.get_x() + bar.get_width() / 2, bar.get_height() + 15, value, ha

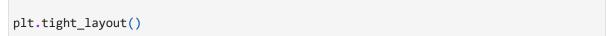
# Set the main title
plt.suptitle('Total Numbers from Control and Test Group\n', fontsize=18, fontweight
plt.tight_layout()
```

Total Numbers from Control and Test Group

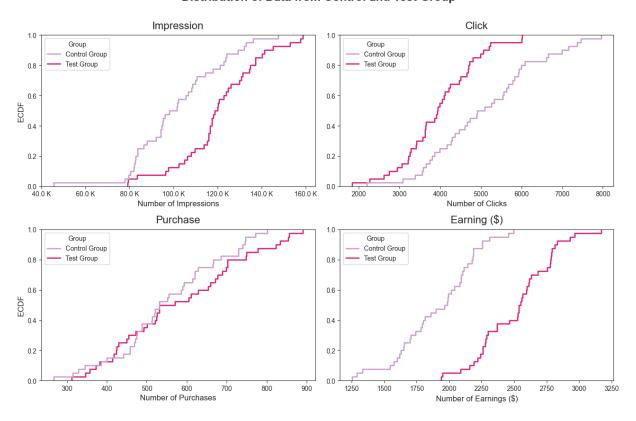


2. How the distribution of the data from each group?

 We visualize the distribution using an ECDF (Empirical Cumulative Distribution Function) plot as an alternative to a histogram or KDE (Kernel Density Estimation) plot



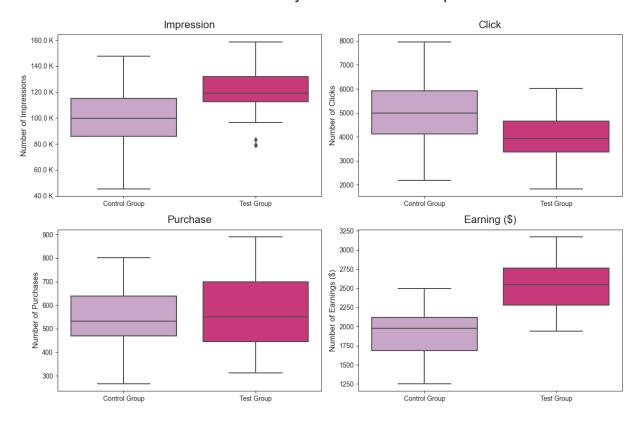
Distribution of Data from Control and Test Group



3. What are the descriptive statistics for the data in each group?

The most effective way to visualize summary statistics is by using a box plot

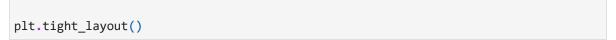
Statistics Summary of Control and Test Group



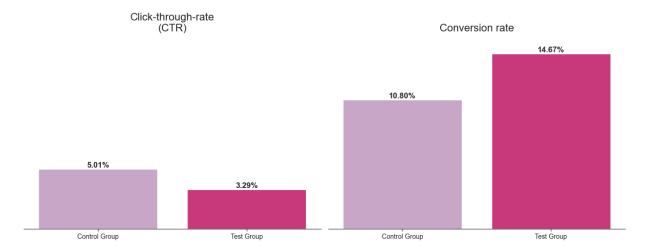
4. What are the Click-Through-Rate (CTR) and Conversion rates for each group?

- Click-through rate is measured by the number of ads-clicks per impression or adsviews
- Conversion rate is measured by the number of purchases per ads-clicked

```
In [9]:
        # Calculate the total CTR and total conversion
        total_ctr = (main_df.groupby(["Group"])["Click"].sum() / main_df.groupby(["Group"])
        total_conversion = (main_df.groupby(["Group"])["Purchase"].sum() / main_df.groupby(
        fig, axs = plt.subplots(1, 2, figsize=(13, 6), sharey=True)
        plot_data = [(axs[0], total_ctr, 'Click-through-rate\n(CTR)'),
                     (axs[1], total conversion, 'Conversion rate')]
        # Visualize with bar_plot function from viz module
        for i, (ax, df, title) in enumerate(plot data):
            viz.bar_plot(ax, df.index, df.values, '', '', 'PuRd', 12)
            viz.despine_subplot(ax)
            ax.set_title(title, pad=20, fontsize=16)
            for bar, value in zip(ax.patches, df.values):
                value = '{:.2f}%'.format(value)
                ax.text(bar.get_x() + bar.get_width() / 2, bar.get_height(), value, ha='cen'
        # Set the main title
        plt.suptitle('Click-Through-Rate and Conversion Rate\n of Control and Test Group\n'
```



Click-Through-Rate and Conversion Rate of Control and Test Group



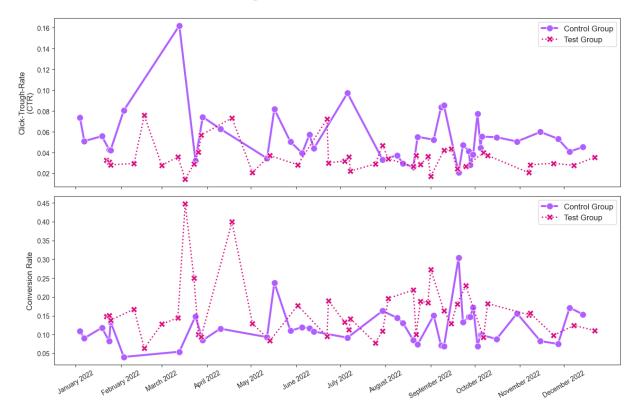
5. How does the trend in CTR and Conversion rate vary for each group?

• For visualizing time-series data, a line plot is a must

```
In [10]: # Add CTR and Conversion column to our dataframe
         main df['CTR'] = main_df['Click'] / main_df['Impression']
         main_df['Conversion'] = main_df['Purchase'] / main_df['Click']
         # Create new dataframes which are trend from ctr and conversion rate
         ctr_trend = main_df.groupby(['Group', 'Date'])['CTR'].sum().unstack().T
         conversion_trend = main_df.groupby(['Group', 'Date'])['Conversion'].sum().unstack()
In [12]: fig, axs = plt.subplots(2, 1, figsize=(13, 9), sharex=True)
         # Create custom_x_ticks based on the desired months
         custom_x = [datetime(2022, i, 1, 0, 0)] for i in range(1, 13, 1)]
         plot_data =[(axs[0], ctr_trend, 'Control Group', '#B15EFF', 'o', 'solid', 3, 'Contr
                     (axs[0], ctr_trend, 'Test Group', '#DA0C81', 'X', 'dotted', 2, 'Test Gr
                     (axs[1], conversion_trend, 'Control Group', '#B15EFF', 'o', 'solid', 3,
                     (axs[1], conversion_trend, 'Test Group', '#DA0C81', 'X', 'dotted', 2,
         for i, (ax, df, ycolumn, color, marker, linestyle, linewidth, label) in enumerate(p
             viz.line_plot(ax, df.index, df[ycolumn], color, marker, linestyle, linewidth, l
             ax.set xticks(custom x ticks)
             ax.set_xticklabels([dt.strftime('%B %Y') for dt in custom_x_ticks], rotation=30
         axs[0].set_ylabel('Click-Trough-Rate\n(CTR)', fontsize=12)
         axs[1].set_ylabel('Conversion Rate', fontsize=12)
         axs[1].set_xlabel('')
```

```
# Set main title
plt.suptitle('Click-Through-Rate and Conversion Rate Trend\n', fontsize=18, fontwei
plt.tight_layout()
```

Click-Through-Rate and Conversion Rate Trend



A/B Testing ~

- In this section, our objectives are as follows:
 - Generate bootstrap samples for the Control and Test Groups with sample sizes identical to the original dataset
 - Calculate the difference in "converted" probabilities between these samples
 - Create a sampling distribution of this difference through 10,000 iterations
 - Perform a hypothesis test to assess the significance of the difference in "converted" probabilities between the two groups
 - Do the test for click-through-rate, conversion rate and earning

1. Click-through-rate (CTR)

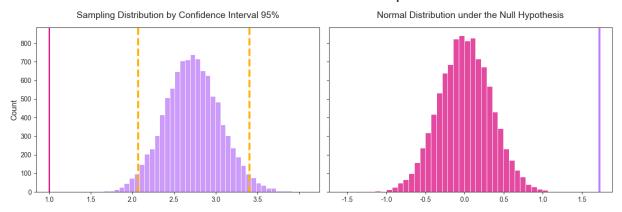
 As we observed in the Data Exploration section, the Click-through-rate (CTR) for the Control Group is higher than that of the Test Group. We will now determine if this difference is statistically significant.

$H_0: P(control) - P(test) \leq 0$ Alternative Hypothesis (HA): P(Control Group) - P(Test Group) > 0 $H_A: P(control) - P(test) > 0$

```
In [13]: # Retrieve ctr data from total_ctr for each group
         control_ctr = total_ctr['Control Group']
         test_ctr = total_ctr['Test Group']
         observed_ctr_diff = control_ctr - test_ctr
In [14]: # Create empty list
         ctr_diff = []
         for i in range(10000):
             boostrap_sample = main_df.sample(main_df.shape[0], replace=True)
             control_impression_sample = boostrap_sample.loc[boostrap_sample['Group'] == 'Co
             control_click_sample = boostrap_sample.loc[boostrap_sample['Group'] == 'Control
             control_ctr_sample = control_click_sample / control_impression_sample * 100
             test_impression_sample = boostrap_sample.loc[boostrap_sample['Group'] == 'Test
             test_click_sample = boostrap_sample.loc[boostrap_sample['Group'] == 'Test Group'
             test_ctr_sample = test_click_sample / test_impression_sample * 100
             ctr_diff.append(control_ctr_sample - test_ctr_sample)
         # Change into array
         ctr_diff = np.array(ctr_diff)
In [15]: # Find the 2.5 and 97.5 percentile for 95% confidence level
         low_bound = np.percentile(ctr_diff, 2.5)
         high_bound = np.percentile(ctr_diff, 97.5)
         null_values = np.random.normal(0, ctr_diff.std(), ctr_diff.shape)
         # Create subplots figure
         fig, axs = plt.subplots(1, 2, figsize=(13, 5), sharey=True)
         plot_data = [(axs[0], ctr_diff, 'Count', '#BC7AF9', 'Sampling Distribution by Confi
                      (axs[1], null_values, '', '#DA0C81', 'Normal Distribution under the Nu
         for i, (ax, df, ylabel, color, title) in enumerate(plot_data):
             viz.hist_plot(ax, df, '', ylabel, color, 12)
             ax.set_title(title, pad=15, fontsize=14)
             ax.set_xticklabels(['{:.1f}'.format(ticks) for ticks in ax.get_xticks()])
         # Thearces are hand,
         axs[0].axvline(x= low_bound, color= '#FFB000', linewidth= 3, linestyle='dashed')
         axs[0].axvline(x= high_bound, color= '#FFB000', linewidth= 3, linestyle='dashed')
         axs[0].axvline(0, color= '#DA0C81', linewidth= 2)
         axs[1].axvline(observed_ctr_diff, c="#BC7AF9", linewidth=3)
```

```
# Set the main title
plt.suptitle('Click-Trough-Rate (CTR) Difference Distribution\nBetween Control and
plt.tight_layout()
```

Click-Trough-Rate (CTR) Difference Distribution Between Control and Test Group



```
In [16]: # Find the p-value
         p_value = (null_values > observed_ctr_diff).mean()
         # Define the significance level (alpha)
         alpha = 0.05
         # Print the first model
         print(' Click-through-rate (CTR) Difference Hypothesis Test '.center(100, '='))
         print('\n+ Hypothesis testing +')
         print('\nNull Hypothesis (H0): P(Control Group) - P(Test Group) <= 0')</pre>
         print('Alternative Hypothesis (HA) :P(Control Group) - P(Test Group) > 0 ')
         print('\n+ Sampling Distribution +')
         print(f'\n{" At 95% Confidence Interval:":<30}{low_bound:>15.5f} %{"to":>5}{high_
         print('\n+ Result +')
         if p_value < alpha:</pre>
             print("\nReject the Null Hypothesis (H0) \n=> The Test Group's performance is s
         else:
             print("\nFail to reject the null hypothesis(H0) \nNo significant statistical di
```

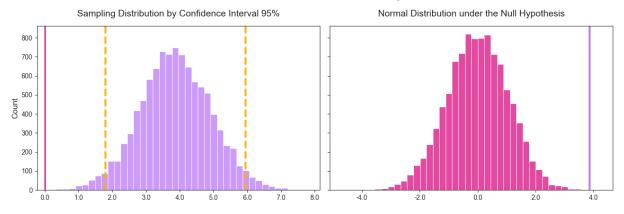
2. Conversion rate

 Conversion rate for Test Group is much higher than Control Group, so we will now assess whether this difference is statistically significant.

```
Null Hypothesis (H0): P(Test Group) - P(Control Group) <= 0 H_0: P(test) - P(control) \leq 0 Alternative Hypothesis (HA): P(Test Group) - P(Control Group) > 0 H_A: P(test) - P(control) > 0
```

```
In [19]: # Find the 2.5 and 97.5 percentile for 95% confidence level
         low_bound = np.percentile(conversion_diff, 2.5)
         high_bound = np.percentile(conversion_diff, 97.5)
         null values = np.random.normal(0, conversion diff.std(), conversion diff.shape)
         # Create subplots figure
         fig, axs = plt.subplots(1, 2, figsize=(13, 5), sharey=True)
         plot_data = [(axs[0], conversion_diff, 'Count', '#BC7AF9', 'Sampling Distribution b
                      (axs[1], null_values, '', '#DA0C81', 'Normal Distribution under the Nu
         for i, (ax, df, ylabel, color, title) in enumerate(plot_data):
             viz.hist_plot(ax, df, '', ylabel, color, 12)
             ax.set_title(title, pad=15, fontsize=14)
             ax.set_xticklabels(['{:.1f}'.format(ticks) for ticks in ax.get_xticks()])
         # Thearces are hand,
         axs[0].axvline(x= low_bound, color= '#FFB000', linewidth= 3, linestyle='dashed')
         axs[0].axvline(x= high_bound, color= '#FFB000', linewidth= 3, linestyle='dashed')
         axs[0].axvline(0, color= '#DAOC81', linewidth= 2)
         axs[1].axvline(observed_conversion_diff, c="#BC7AF9", linewidth=3)
         # Set the main title
         plt.suptitle('Conversion Rate Difference Distribution\nBetween Control and Test Gro
         plt.tight_layout()
```

Conversion Rate Difference Distribution Between Control and Test Group



```
In [20]: # Find the p-value
    p_value = (null_values > observed_conversion_diff).mean()

# Define the significance level (alpha)
    alpha = 0.05

# Print the first model
    print(' Conversion Rate Difference Hypothesis Test '.center(100, '='))
    print('\n+ Hypothesis testing +')
    print('\nNull Hypothesis (H0): P(Control Group) - P(Test Group) <= 0')
    print('Alternative Hypothesis (HA):P(Control Group) - P(Test Group) > 0 ')
    print('\n+ Sampling Distribution +')
    print(f'\n{" At 95% Confidence Interval:":<30}{low_bound:>15.5f} %{"to":>5}{high_
```

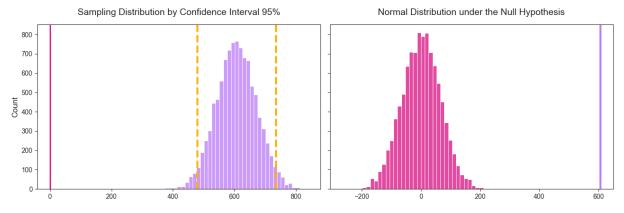
```
print('\n+ Result +')
         if p_value < alpha:</pre>
             print("\nReject the Null Hypothesis (H0) \n=> The Test Group's performance is s
         else:
             print("\nFail to reject the null hypothesis(H0) \nNo significant statistical di
       ==========
       + Hypothesis testing +
       Null Hypothesis (H0): P(Control Group) - P(Test Group) <= 0
       Alternative Hypothesis (HA) :P(Control Group) - P(Test Group) > 0
       + Sampling Distribution +
          At 95% Confidence Interval: 1.79301 % to 5.94935 %
       + Result +
       Reject the Null Hypothesis (H0)
       => The Test Group's performance is significantly superior to the Control Group's per
       formance
           3. Earning

    Earning for Test Group is higher beyond the Control Group, so we will now assess

                whether this difference is statistically significant
                   Null Hypothesis (H0): P(Test Group) - P(Control Group) <= 0
                                    H_0: P(test) - P(control) < 0
                   Alternative Hypothesis (HA): P(Test Group) - P(Control Group) > 0
                                    H_A: P(test) - P(control) > 0
In [21]: control earning = main df.loc[main df['Group'] == 'Control Group']['Earning'].mean(
         test_earning = main_df.loc[main_df['Group'] == 'Test Group']['Earning'].mean()
         observed_earning_diff = test_earning - control_earning
In [22]: earning_diff = []
         for i in range(10000):
             b_sample = main_df.sample(main_df.shape[0], replace= True)
             samp earning cont= b sample.loc[b sample['Group']=='Control Group']["Earning"].
             samp_earning_test= b_sample.loc[b_sample['Group']=='Test Group']["Earning"].mea
             earning_diff.append(samp_earning_test - samp_earning_cont)
In [23]: earning_diff = np.array(earning_diff) # convert to numpy array
```

```
low_bound = np.percentile(earning_diff, 2.5)
high_bound = np.percentile(earning_diff, 97.5)
null values = np.random.normal(0, earning diff.std(), earning diff.shape)
# Create subplots figure
fig, axs = plt.subplots(1, 2, figsize=(13, 5), sharey=True)
plot_data = [(axs[0], earning_diff, 'Count', '#BC7AF9', 'Sampling Distribution by C
             (axs[1], null_values, '', '#DA0C81', 'Normal Distribution under the Nu
for i, (ax, df, ylabel, color, title) in enumerate(plot_data):
   viz.hist_plot(ax, df, '', ylabel, color, 12)
   ax.set_title(title, pad=15, fontsize=14)
# Thearces are hand,
axs[0].axvline(x= low_bound, color= '#FFB000', linewidth= 3, linestyle='dashed')
axs[0].axvline(x= high_bound, color= '#FFB000', linewidth= 3, linestyle='dashed')
axs[0].axvline(0, color= '#DAOC81', linewidth= 2)
axs[1].axvline(observed_earning_diff, c="#BC7AF9", linewidth=3)
# Set the main title
plt.suptitle('Earnings Difference Distribution\nBetween Control and Test Group', fo
plt.tight_layout()
```

Earnings Difference Distribution Between Control and Test Group



Key Takeaways ~

Here are the key findings and insights:

- Average Bidding appears to be more effective in terms of impressions, purchases, and earnings, while Maximum Bidding performs better in generating ad clicks
- Maximum Bidding demonstrates a significant superior Click-through rate (CTR) compared to Average Bidding
- On the other hand, Average Bidding significantly outperforms Maximum Bidding in conversion rate and earnings

These insights underline the flexibility of different bidding strategies, allowing advertisers to fine-tune their approach to achieve their desired performance outcomes. By carefully selecting the bidding strategy, advertisers can optimize their campaigns and maximize their returns on investment

References ~

Check out the following resources to learn more about the datasets and tools/libraries used in this project:

- Datasets:
 - Optimizing Ad Bidding | Facebook's A/B Test Story :
 https://kaggle.com/datasets/furth3r/facebook-ab-test-of-bidding-feature

• Libraries:

- Matplotlib user guide: https://matplotlib.org/3.3.1/users/index.html
- Seaborn user guide: https://seaborn.pydata.org/tutorial.html
- opendataset Python library: https://github.com/JovianML/opendatasets
- SciPy user guide: https://docs.scipy.org/doc/scipy/tutorial/index.html

• Further Reading

 Facebook Ads Auction Explained: https://web.facebook.com/business/ads/adauction?_rdc=1&_rdr