Adobe® Test&Target

Integrating Test&Target with Your Online Properties

Overview

Adobe® Test&Target is the premier product for digital content and offer testing, targeting, audience segmentation and site personalization. Test&Target gives digital marketers complete control by enabling them to quickly and easily test multiple onsite and offsite scenarios, and to provide their visitors with the most relevant content possible.

Adobe understands that an effective content optimization program needs to maintain the performance standards of its customers' sites. Therefore, the purpose of this white paper is to demonstrate the steps Adobe has taken, and the investments made, to ensure that Test&Target meets your marketing objectives while simultaneously functioning within your IT infrastructure parameters.

"There is simply no excuse today not to be experimenting constantly, relentlessly with digital media and applications... the web allows marketers to iterate faster, and at less expense. The opportunities are limited only by creativity and imagination."

Geoff Ramsey, CEO eMarketer

The Test&Target Architecture

Test&Target is a content-targeting application that is integrated with websites by means of a JavaScript library. Specific areas of high-value webpages on a customer's site are designated with "mboxes" and replaced with a JavaScript function. An mbox is a div tag that wraps around the existing content on a Web page. The div tag is then followed by a single line of JavaScript to create the mbox instance. An mbox can encompass a single element, multiple elements, or an entire page. More importantly, a single campaign (A/B, multivariate or targeting) can utilize multiple mboxes to control multiple elements across multiple pages. Each mbox is uniquely named, and will be immediately available for testing or targeting. In addition, an mbox that is used to serve content for one campaign may also be used to track conversions or log visitor behavior for another. Customers launching multi-page campaigns could create a funnel analysis and are able to track a number of different conversions based on their KPIs or specific business criteria.

Each time a visitor requests a page that includes mboxes, a request is sent to the Test&Target system from each mbox to determine what content to serve to a visitor. This process occurs in real-time—every time a page is loaded, a request for the content is made and fulfilled by the system via each mbox. The content is governed by the rules of marketer-controlled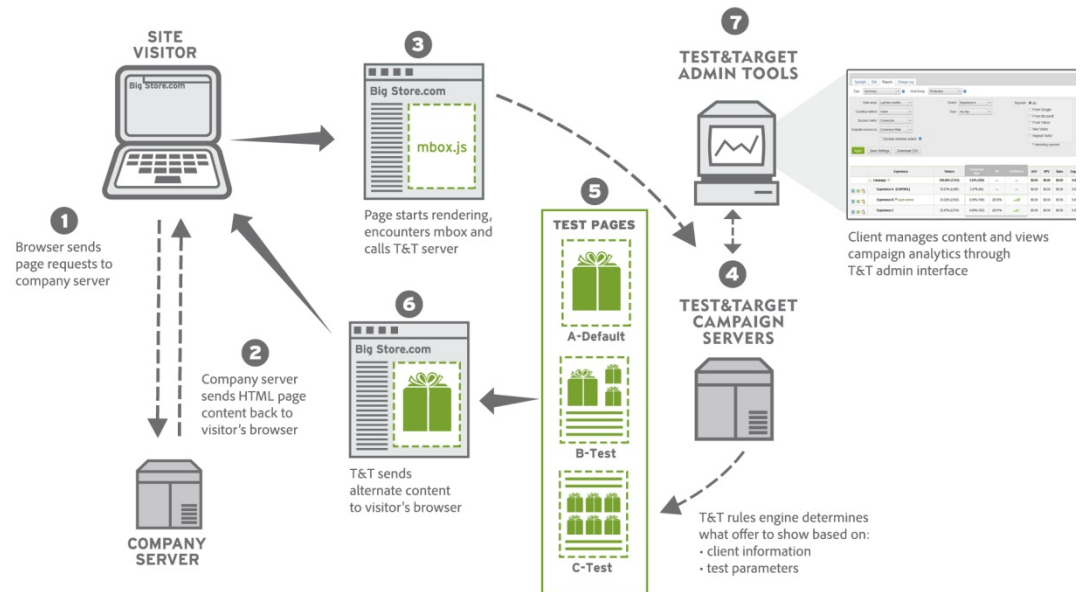 campaigns and is targeted to the individual site visitor. Test&Target is designed to serve content that each site visitor is most likely to respond to, interact with, and ultimately purchase, to maximize response rates, acquisition rates, and revenue.

The following illustration provides a useful representation of how Test&Target works.

FIGURE 1 A: TEST&TARGET

The Edge Network

"Edge" is a geographically distributed serving architecture that ensures optimum response times for end users requesting content from Test&Target, regardless of where they are located around the globe. Adobe currently has nodes in the following locations:

• US: California, New Jersey, Texas, Virginia

• International: Australia, England, Japan, Singapore

Rather than respond to all mbox requests from a single location, Test&Target handles requests from the Edge environment closest to the point of request to mitigate the impact of network/Internet travel time. The network also serves as a fail-over mechanism—if one edge node is not functioning, the request is re-directed to the next nearest node, to ensure that the user is not served default content (a typical backup response when a request cannot be completed).

Protect the User Experience

Adobe ensures that the availability and performance of the Test&Target infrastructure is as reliable as possible; however, a communication breakdown between an end-user's browser and Adobe's servers can cause an interruption in content delivery. To safeguard against service interruptions and connectivity issues, all Test&Target mboxes are equipped to include default content (defined by the client), which is surfaced in the event that the user's browser cannot connect to Test&Target.

Default content is triggered if the user's browser cannot connect to Test&Target within a defined timeout period. The default setting for this is 15 seconds. If this timeout threshold is reached, a setting will be changed in the Test&Target cookie so that the user sees default content for all other mboxes immediately. This state lasts for a half hour, after which the user's browser will again attempt to contact Adobe's servers for mbox requests.

Ensure the Integrity of the User Experience

Adobe protects the user experience by optimizing and safeguarding performance and offers the following services to accomplish this.

- Adobe ensures performance benchmarks based on industry standards, which are guaranteed by the Adobe Service Level Agreement

- The Edge Network ensures timely data delivery.

- Adobe employs a multi-tiered approach to securing its applications to provide the highest level of availability and reliability for customers. For more information on Test&Target security, refer to *Security Overview—Test&Target*.

- Customers control default content, which is hosted in the customer environment. This allows customers the flexibility to update content at any time, independent of the Test&Target application.

- Adobe Consulting Services offers implementation assistance and ongoing product support.

- Adobe Digital provides full-service strategic and creative product solutions and insights.

Effect On Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

The Test&Target default content method does not have a negative impact on search engine optimization (SEO). Since the standard code that exists on the client's website is simply surrounded by an opening and closing div tag, followed by a single line of JavaScript, search engine spiders still parse all default content, and page index and rank will not be affected during a testing or targeting campaign.

Search engine spiders do not execute most JavaScript code and can only follow simple JavaScript links. Since the mboxCreate function call cannot be executed by spiders, they will always see the default content on the page. Alternative content is only returned when the mboxCreate call is executed. However, if a client chooses to update their site by hard coding the winning content at the conclusion of a campaign, the impact on SEO must be considered.

Best Practices

Adobe adheres to and recommends intelligent best practices to ensure that your content optimization strategy provides insights that meet your key business requirements and ensures a successful implementation. Some of these best practices are listed below.

- The recommended number of mboxes on a page should be eight or fewer to ensure acceptable page load times. Adobe Consultants help customers determine the most appropriate mbox plan to meet their specific requirements.

- Offer content size should be subject to the same page load and file weight constraints already in place at an organization.

- Implement and manage Test&Target host groups (e.g., development, staging, and production). Mboxes will auto-detect the domain they are called from and load each domain into the Test&Target platform. Host groups can be configured to show content from unapproved campaigns in order to thoroughly QA alternative content prior to going live. This feature helps organizations adhere to the different access roles provided in the Test&Target interface. Adobe Test&Target campaign reports are generated for each host group, to track visitor, visit, impression, step and conversion counts in a quality assurance environment before a campaign is pushed to a live production environment, upon approval. This separation ensures that QA data does not skew production data once the campaign goes live.

- Leverage Test&Target's onsite preview feature to set up and view content from tests and targeted campaigns represented exactly as site visitors will see and experience them once in production.

Factors External to Adobe that may affect Performance

Adobe does everything it can to minimize the impact of a Test&Target implementation on a customer's network; however, there are some external factors that may affect website performance following an implementation that are specific to a customer's network.

- The speed of customers' servers can impact site performance as offers often reference large files, such as images, Flash files, CSS pages, that are hosted on these web servers.
- Network travel time
- Size of the content the visitor is attempting to load, including alternate content
- Use of content delivery network assets, which can be provided by Adobe

Proof Points

The performance of Test&Target is validated by Adobe's customers who are successful in accomplishing their core business objectives using this product. The following examples highlight Test&Target market acceptance:

- Volume handled by Adobe Test&Target is 18 billion impressions per month
- 700+ active, subscribed customers
- Strong customer retention rate
- More than 3000 marketing professionals trained on the product
- Average of 12 simultaneous campaigns per customer

The more than 700 current Test&Target customers are industry leaders spanning a number of different industries and markets, such as retail, financial services, and travel services. Some of these customers are:

- Home Depot
- T-Mobile
- Northwest Airlines
- Intuit
- Bank of America
- Microsoft
- Reader's Digest

Test&Target Support Options

Adobe offers a full range of pre- and post-implementation support options to help customers realize their objectives and take full advantage of the features in Test&Target. These options range from full service to self-service. Specifically, the tiered options for support provide:

Full-service support through Adobe Digital—Optimization solutions led by world-class delivery team with deepest experience in Test&Target. Support from this group includes custom strategic recommendations based on data, and they are the only consulting option that includes production and development of creative alternatives that fuel Test&Target campaigns. Can be customer scoped based on business goals.

Managed service via Adobe Consulting Services—Fixed monthly hours of support of optimization consulting to supplement your team through a given license term (12 or 24 months) and campaign setup approval.

Lastly, self-service—When a Test&Target customer chooses to utilize the basic services available through their assigned Adobe Account Manager and Client Support Manager for product assistance.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Adobe Test&Target™ gives marketers the necessary capabilities to continually make their digital content, offers, and experiences more relevant to their customers—yielding greater conversion. Adobe has developed Test&Target and the Edge Network to help organizations attain these marketing results while functioning within established network performance parameters and eliminating the possibility of user experience interruption. Test&Target maximizes onsite testing, content targeting, audience segmentation, and site personalization efforts while having minimal impact on existing technical infrastructure.

For more information

For questions about this Test&Target whitepaper please contact your account representative, or email: *sales@adobe.com*