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Case Study: Fine-Tuning Your Etsy Ads Strategy

When sales in Brie Moore's Etsy shop hit a plateau, she turned to advertising to help her hair accessories business

En its full potential.
by Etsy Staff



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The Problem

When Brie Moore moved to Lisbon, Portugal, she marked the transition with a significant personal change—she cut off all of her hair. “I couldn’t find a salon here that could do my hair, so I did the big chop,” says the seamstress and owner of the Etsy shop [Breezy Tee](#). “I had to relearn everything I knew about my hair.” She’d been relaxing it since she was 10 years old, so she was new to caring for her natural hair.

Brie noticed that some people used t-shirts to dry their hair, as the soft material is gentler and protects it from damage. Suddenly, she had an idea. “I literally jumped out of the shower because I was so excited,” she says. “I thought, ‘Why can’t I just make a towel out of t-shirt material?’” Brie immediately started sewing one by hand and, within an hour, the best selling product that launched Breezy Tee was born.

Brie and her husband, João, started running the business together and making sales. After awhile though, they hit a wall. Their sales had plateaued, and they wanted to grow. “We knew we had a good product and we stood behind what we were making,” Brie says. “But we weren’t satisfied with the sales trickling in weekly. We knew we could do better.” She and João decided it was time to take the next step and start advertising.

The Solution

Brie and João tried a few other advertising platforms, but none had yielded the results they wanted. **“We genuinely found Etsy Ads to be the easiest to navigate,” says Brie. “As a first-time advertiser, it was straightforward and simple.”** Here’s how the couple built an advertising strategy that helped them reach their business goals.

Set a budget that’s right for your business

After doing some research, Brie began with a modest budget spread over all of their listings. “I started with a budget of \$1 or \$2 and chose to advertise everything, which was about 30 listings,” she says. “I learned the lesson that you can’t advertise your whole shop with just a couple of dollars.” The couple re-evaluated their plan of action and determined that they weren’t in a place financially to increase their budget quite yet, so they decided to be more selective with which listings to promote.

When they first launched, Brie and João offered fewer products, so it was easy to see which ones were bestsellers. “We thought that what was selling well in our shop would also translate well to being advertised,” Brie says. “Over time, we learned that that’s not always the case, but that was the easiest way to do it at that point.” The items performed well, as predicted, so Brie slowly increased her budget in increments of 50 cents at a time.

Know your strengths

Brie knows that her range of color offerings are a big draw for customers. Pinpointing that strength has been a key factor in choosing the right listings to

promote. “Being dialed into the fashion industry is important to us, so we follow color trends,” says Brie. “When a color is trending, that’s absolutely one of the ways we decide which products to advertise.” **Seasonal changes also inform Brie’s advertising strategy. She promotes brighter color options during summer months and deeper colors in the fall and winter.**

Measure and make adjustments

João and Brie set a benchmark for their advertising budget: They never spend more than 20% of their revenue on advertising. If the budget exceeds that number, then they know it’s time to change things up. They also look at their ad clicks and views to get more information about performance. **“Don’t be afraid to stop advertising the product that’s not working,” Brie advises. “We’ve had items that got lots of views but no sales and ultimately we took them down.”** According to Brie, if customers aren’t clicking and buying an item, it’s not worth it to keep those ads up.

Brie also analyzes her Etsy Ads stats to learn which listings are in good shape and which ones need work. For example, if she lists a new item and it gets a lot of clicks, she knows that she priced it reasonably. “They saw the price before they clicked, so I know that there’s a part of them that’s open to possibly spending,” she says. And when Breezy Tee was first getting off the ground, looking at the search terms stats for the ads revealed which keywords were the most effective. “We saw a lot of terms like ‘curly hair,’ ‘natural hair,’ ‘hat for curly hair,’ and ‘bonnet,’” says Brie. Seeing what shoppers were looking for helped her come up with tags that connected her with Breezy Tee’s target customers.

Don't be afraid to take risks

Brie and João had an ad campaign that was working well for the business, but Brie started to feel a little too comfortable with their tried-and-true method. “We were doing so well for so little that I didn’t want to change anything,” she says. There was part of her that feared the success it could bring—What if they couldn’t handle a higher volume of orders than they were used to?

Eventually she decided it was time to see how far they could go. Last holiday season, they set their budget to the highest it had ever been. “The return was immediate,” says Brie. “I won’t be slow to make changes like that again. Don't be afraid to increase your budget.” The experience also confirmed for Brie that the holiday season is ideal for experimenting. She’s found that the influx of shoppers at that time helps give her more information at a faster rate compared to seasons that tend to be slower for her items.

Give it time

As an Etsy Ads user and frequent Forums-goer, the most common mistake Brie has noticed is expecting quick results. Her main takeaway? Be patient with your campaign. **“You can’t do it in two or three days,” she says. “It’s really important to give it at least a few weeks to work, and then you can gauge the performance.”**

The Results

As Brie and João steadily invested in Etsy Ads, Breezy Tee continued to grow. Their increasing revenue allowed them to reach goals they'd set from the beginning, like hiring professional models and photographers to bring their products to life. **"Etsy Ads has helped us grow our business tremendously," says Brie. "It has absolutely, hands down, been the most successful advertising platform for us, both in terms of return on investment and in terms of ease."**

Their advice for other sellers looking to grow? "I'm a big fan of trial and error," Brie says. "You're going to have to try different things, and there's going to be a learning curve. That's how we started and we've grown so much by taking that approach."

Get more tips from Brie and hear from an Etsy expert on how to get the most out of your Etsy Ads campaign on the [Etsy Success podcast](#).

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