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| **Homework Overview:**  **Use Google Analytics to analyze the data to identify patterns and opportunities. Your goal is to recruit the best United States students, measured by GMAT scores, but you are limited to a budget of $100,000. The budget must cover advertising costs, but no Whitman administration costs. The campaign starts one year from today.** |
| **Question 1:**  **What were the time frames for each marketing campaign?**  *The Whitman.syr.edu campaign ran from February 25, 2011 to August 25, 2011. The iMBA campaign ran from February 1, 2012 through November 1, 2012. The MBA Marketing – Full Time campaign ran from October 25, 2012 through July 2, 2013. And the Delta campaign ran from September 15, 2013 through November 15, 2013.*  **How much was spent on each campaign?**  *The Whitman.syr.edu campaign cost $37,699. The iMBA campaign cost $82,711. The Full-time campaign $71,667. And the Delta campaign $10,000.*  **What was the effectiveness of previous campaigns? (please see below for discussion)**  **Create a table listing campaign, start date, end date, cost, and all other measures listed in Google Analytics. Discuss the effectiveness of each campaign. (40%)**    *We summarize the effectiveness of each campaign below. We introduced the metric Clicks Per Day to give us a basis of comparison between the campaigns since each ran for different lengths of time.*  ***whitman.syr.edu [****179 days from 2/25/2011 – 8/25/2011****]*** *– This campaign was the most effective campaign. Costing the least of the three Ad Words campaigns, it generated the largest number of sessions of 7,076 for the lowest Cost-Per-Click at $4.03, as well as the highest daily average clicks of 51.7. It also had the lowest recorded bounce rate and a higher Pages-Per-Session rate compared to the other Ad Words campaigns. The whitman.syr.edu campaign provided the greatest ROI recruiting far more students (50) at a much lower cost of $ 753.989 per new student.*  ***MBA Marketing- iMBA*** *[197 days from 2/1/2012 – 11/1/2012]– This campaign showed a sharp decrease in performance over the previous year’s campaign. The cost per click is almost $10 more expensive and we saw significantly less Users, Sessions, Clicks. There was a higher bounce rate and lower pages/session.*  *One observation that caught our eye was the uniform pattern of CPC rates. An effective campaign would attract more clicks and drive the CPC rate down over time. We believe this shows a lack of optimization measures were taken to bolster performance.*    ***MBA Marketing- Full-time*** *[249 days from 10/25/2012 – 7/2/2013]– This was the most expensive campaign and the longest run campaign. Even though it was the most expensive it was not as effective as Whitman.Syr.edu. This campaign had the highest CPC. The number of clicks was comparable to MBA Marketing – iMBA, there were a higher number of users and sessions, and a lower bounce rate. Pages/Sessions were slightly higher than MBA Marketing – iMBA but lower than Whitman.syr.edu. This campaign, too, suffered from a uniform CPC implying optimization was ineffectual.*  ***Delta*** *[60 days 9/15/2013 – 11/15/2013] (cost of one-month quarter page ad was $10,000). This was the least effective campaign. It was run for about two months and only saw 21 total users and 22 sessions. Bounce rate was low and pages/session was low most likely because if you went through the process of searching the URL you were not going to leave the page immediately.* |
| **Question 2:**  **Create a prediction of cost per click and a prediction of advertising cost per student for Google Ads for next year (a year from today’s date). Use either the prediction technique or Excel’s forecast option. Do not include Delta. If using the forecast option, assume the years below. Number of students recruited from the advertisements is listed below. (10%)**  **a. whitman.syr.edu (2011 – 50 students enrolled)**  **b. MBA Marketing – iMBA (2012 – 24 students enrolled)**  **c. MBA Marketing – Full-time (2013 – 15 students enrolled)**  *The table below forecasts the Cost Per Click out to 2023. The model forecasts about $82 per click in 2023.*    *The table below forecasts the Cost per Student out to 2023. The model forecasts about $26,000 per Student to advertise in 2023.* |
| **Question 3:**  **Identify the key aspects of a United States campaign for next year. (20%)**  **In which geographic region, states, or cities would you advertise? Why?**  *There was a lot of overlap in user location for the 3 previous campaigns. The sessions originated predominantly in the US with the Whitman.syr.edu campaign receiving 92% of its session from inside the US and the other two campaigns nearly 99% from within the US. Investigating one step further to the state level, there were 8 states which appeared in the top 10 of each of the campaigns. This is a good indication of where we should focus our 2023 campaign.*  *We propose targeting the following States: California, Florida, Georgia, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, as well as Massachusetts since it was a top 5 State in the Whitman.syr.edu campaign, the most successful of the previous campaigns. The dark shaded regions are overlap common to all 3 campaigns, pale orange for 2 of the states in common and white was unique. Interestingly, California was the state in the U.S. with the highest # of sessions in each of the previous campaigns. The last row of the table depicts the ratio of sessions captured by the top 10 states for each campaign.*   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | **.edu** | iMBA | FT | | 1 | California | California | California | | 2 | New York | New York | New York | | 3 | Texas | Texas | Florida | | 4 | Massachusetts | Florida | Texas | | 5 | Illinois | New Jersey | New Jersey | | 6 | New Jersey | Georgia | Pennsylvania | | 7 | Florida | Pennsylvania | Georgia | | 8 | Pennsylvania | N. Carolina | Illinois | | 9 | Georgia | Virginia | Virginia | | 10 | Virginia | Maryland | N. Carolina | |  | **63.50%** | **60.40%** | **61.60%** |   **What keywords would you use? Why?**  *“MBA” and “online MBA” lead to the greatest number of clicks. These two key words showed the greatest interest from users and lead to a higher number of sessions. These are also most likely going to be the most competitive keywords and have the highest CPCs. MBA saw 290 clicks in the first campaign, and 934 in the second campaign. Online MBA had 2,134 clicks in the second campaign and 3,912 clicks in the third campaign.*  *Keywords for the 2023 campaign should include both “****MBA****” and “****online MBA****”. These two keywords should be the primary focus of the 2023 campaign and a higher amount of spend should be allocated to them. These two Keywords will be our “Control” Ad Group.*  *Our ultimate goal is reaching the best United States students, measured by GMAT scores. Key words referencing the GMAT should also be included in a separate Ad Group. Performance will be measured against our Control Ad Group.*  **Which days of the week and what time of day would you advertise? Why?**  *The campaign should be run 7 days a week, there did not appear to be a significant performance difference based on day of week between each campaign. Sunday did show the greatest number of average clicks across all campaigns. This makes sense as potential MBA students most likely will be working during the week and have the time to research different programs on the weekend.*  *Dayparting: The campaign should be run between the hours of 4pm-1am EST. All three campaigns saw their best performance in the evening. This makes sense as either users will be asleep or at work in the morning and afternoon.*  *Whitman.syr.edu campaign:*    *MBA Marketing - iMBA*    *MBA Marketing - Full-time*    *An additional consideration for the 2023 campaign would be utilizing a separate Ad Group with a higher target CPC that would run in the specific months leading up to application deadlines for each cohort period. Allocating more spend around the GMAT deadlines and admission deadlines throughout the year could be fertile ground for reaching more users interested in an MBA.* |
| **Question 4:**  **How would you measure performance of your decisions after implementation? (20%)**  *Performance would be measured daily. A heavy focus on setting a target CPC for each Ad Group and Key Word. Daily spend can be shifted to more successful Ad Groups, Geography, and Dayparts that have higher click rates. End goal performance can be measured in the lead up to each term starting as we will have data on new students by matching registered email address to determine the cost per new student. Performance strategy can be reassessed after each term.* |
| **Question 5:**  **What other factors or considerations are important? What other data would help in developing an internet advertising strategy if you could collect it? (10%)**   1. ***Diversifying campaign strategies***   *Different strategies should be considered for each targeting parameter. Having specific CPC targets, Ad Groups, and Content Language.*   1. ***GMAT targeting***   *Find states with highest the GMAT Scores, or highest % of GMAT exam takers. Use GMAT testing score requirements, coupled with the MBA program application deadlines to tailor a campaign when we think it most likely for people to begin searching for programs.*   1. ***Market Considerations***  * *We are currently in the middle of a market downturn that is projected to last well into 2023. As a result, advertising spend is down across all markets. The CPC of certain key words may have also decreased in parallel to the downward trend in ad spend. The potential could be a greater than expected ROI.* * *Q4 is usually the time of year when advertising budgets are increased by a large margin. Advertising during this time-period will be more competitive. It might be a good idea to just forgo spending in the last two months of the quarter and we apply those funds elsewhere.* * *Covid effect on increase of online programs, and associated advertising costs* * *Do Americans tend to go back to school at a higher rate during a recession?*  1. ***Competitor Analysis***  * *Our campaigns are going to be limited by market demand for each keyword. If competitors are willing to pay more it will negatively impact performance. Ideally, we want to bid $0.01 higher for each keyword then our competitors.* * *Utilizing Google Trends or employing a 3rd party service such as spyfu.com to help plan potential campaigns and associated costs. Spyfu is a search analytics company that provides a competitor keyword research tool. Data is collected from Google Analytics, Google Trends, and Google Insights. Information on the search volume, spend, and average CPC of specific keywords can be queried.*  1. ***Historical data***   *Information on when previous students applied for admission. If specific months have a higher application rate than other months. These months would be a good time to increase daily spend and target CPCs.*   1. ***Topicality***   *As it is important to look at historic successes for reference when planning an effective campaign, it is equally important to understand current trends and data.*   * ***Diminishing gender discrepancy***   *As of 2021 about 41% of MBA students are female. This rate has been increasing at a steady pace of 0.5%-1% each year. Allocating spend with Ad Groups targeted by gender*   * ***Government Policy***   *The federal student debt forgiveness program that was recently announced may present an interesting opportunity for targeting potential recruits. Many holders of bachelor’s degree who have student loans could see their loan burdens decreased by up to $20k.  Effectively, the cost of going to graduate school could be perceived as being $20k cheaper for bachelor’s degree holders with student debt greater than the amount forgiven. These people may be more inclined to pursue an MBA.  An ad group with the phrases “student debt relief” and “student loan forgiveness” can be run as a test.*   * ***Page analytic data***   *Bounce rates are effective at knowing if there are any inherent issues or bugs in the code of your website. Having more specific data on where users are exiting each page can be extremely useful. This information can be used to prioritize content organization. Knowing what information potential MBA recruits value and adjusting content layout accordingly will increase   conversation rates.*   1. ***Mobile vs Desktop Traffic***   *The CPC strategy should be analyzed for both mobile access and desktop access.*   1. ***Embedded Webpage Scripts***   *Making sure Google Analytics code is properly deployed across the site to ensure correct and accurate data collection.* |