



Paid Media Playbook: Advanced B2C Strategies For Every Stage in the Customer Lifecycle

Introduction

It's no secret: ad buying is becoming commoditized.

The old-school “fire and forget” campaigns are oversaturating the ad market, leading to higher cost per clicks (CPCs) and cost per actions (CPAs). Marketing budgets are getting slashed due to large economic impacts, and companies are cautious about every ad dollar they spend. There are also big shifts in data privacy, including iOS updates and the pending elimination of third-party cookies, allowing customers to be more aware of the data they share and who they share it with.

These shifts are making a huge impact on even the largest advertising platforms, like Google and Meta, which lost about \$700 billion in market share in just Q2 2022 alone ([CBS](#)). However, these platforms still present a tremendous opportunity for marketers. On the social media side, the number of people worldwide who engage with social media continues to trend upward – a predicted increase from 3.6 billion in 2020 to 4.4 billion in 2025 ([Statista](#)).



So to meet customers where demand is, marketers must focus on what they want to see from brands. Customers are even more focused on personalization with the companies they interact with, as 80% of consumers state they're more likely to buy from a company that provides a tailored experience ([Epsilon](#)), and 55% of consumers state they want more targeted promotional offers and discounts ([Dynamic Yield](#)). This has led to data management being one of the top investments marketing teams are focused on as brands move towards a mindset of doing more with their owned data.

This is all driving a change in perspective on paid media strategies.

At Simon Data, we see these changes as a necessary move for the future of the internet. We've created this playbook to walk you through the best paid media strategies, how to most effectively use your customer data, and traps to avoid.

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Definitions

Let's first take a look at some common terms used in the paid media world and how we define them.

What is a lookalike audience?

Lookalike audiences are groups of people on social media and ad channels who share similarities with existing customers. By looking at groups with certain characteristics or demographics shared between your existing customers, you can identify potential similar customers to target who are most likely to buy your products or services.

What is audience suppression?

Audience suppression refers to a group of customers you want to exclude from ad targeting. There are many reasons for suppressing a specific audience. Some common examples include:

- Suppressing ads for customers who have already purchased a particular product
- Suppressing ads for people who don't share similarities with existing customers
- Suppressing ads for people who have opted into receiving marketing messages through email and/or SMS only

This enables you to maximize your ad spend by ensuring you're not wasting money serving ads to consumers who are not likely to engage, let alone convert. Audience suppression tactics can help you save budget, acquire higher-value customers, boost customer lifetime value, improve the customer experience, and accelerate growth.

What is a Customer Data Platform?

A Customer Data Platform (CDP) unifies customer data from disconnected data sources to create a single profile of each customer that can be used to create more targeted, personalized marketing campaigns.

Marketing teams use several marketing technologies to wrangle ever-increasing volumes of customer data from a myriad of sources, including mobile apps, desktop applications, website browsers, email, and SMS. In the past, to create a unified customer profile, marketers had to request the help of IT and data teams to consolidate the data from all these disparate data sources. But now, this data can be easily managed in a Customer Data Platform.

Common Pitfalls

Without the tools or resources to access, aggregate, analyze, and organize your customer data, analysis and segmentation for each campaign can be a daunting task. Here are some things to avoid:

Manually uploading CSVs of customers for lookalike audiences

By doing this manually, your customer list is quickly outdated. You're giving the advertising platforms an incomplete and inaccurate view of who your best customers are.

Casting too wide a suppression net

When suppressing ads, marketers will often cast the net too wide. For example, hiding all ads from past purchasers instead of using ads to cross-sell other products. If your company sells bedding materials, someone who recently bought a pillow shouldn't be excluded from pillowcase ads.

Not experimenting cross-channel

While it's common practice to test things like subject lines in email marketing campaigns, running experiments and tests on paid media can be a bit trickier. Not to mention when you start adding multiple channels to the mix, running an accurate test on your own is nearly impossible. But if you don't, you run the risk of spending your budget on channels that aren't reaching the right audience effectively.

By using a CDP like Simon Data in tandem with advertising platforms, you'll be able to:

- Automate audience creation and synchronization, so your audience lists are always up to date.
- More granularly segment your lists to suppress only users from messaging on the product they've already purchased, while cross-selling and engaging them on something else.
- Test across paid media channels to know what paid platforms are the best fit for which audiences.



How to use paid media in the customer lifecycle

ACQUISITION

RETENTION

REACTIVATION

Acquisition

Acquisition campaigns are meant to get new customers interested in your brand. These types of campaigns use lookalike audiences, best matches, and hobbies to generate interest with new customers. By looking at certain characteristics, signals or demographics shared between your existing customers, you can identify similar potential customers to target your ad spend on who are most likely to be interested in your products or services.

An effective acquisition campaign will require multiple touchpoints at regular intervals as your customers make their buying decisions. Stay top of mind until your customers are ready to purchase by providing educational, targeted offers, and content that is relevant to someone considering a purchase.

6 Best Practices for Acquisition Campaigns



Use lookalike models based on behavior signals, interests, and hobbies to help lower customer acquisition costs. For example, add people who recently abandoned a cart or return customers who are likely to purchase higher-cost items.



Improve ROAS by suppressing your known, already loyal and active customers from acquisition campaigns. This ensures you're not wasting your budget on marketing to already-loyal customers and not offering new customer deals and discounts to those who don't qualify.



Sometimes potential customers simply need to learn how others are using your product in ways they haven't considered. **Customer testimonials** show the success of others using your product and spark interest.



Integrate real-time SMS, email engagement, app data, etc., into your paid channels to increase the match rate. Add third-party data from tools like [FullContact](#) to understand their hobbies and interests for better targeting.

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Use the following **audience attributes** in your targeting to create your segments:

- High LTV
- High Budget Purchasers
- Low Budget Purchasers
- Recently viewed
- Abandoned carts



Offer the following **benefits** to different audiences to convert:

- Free shipping
- Competitive pricing
- First-time purchase discount
- Free trials



Retention

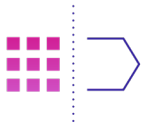
Retention campaigns focus on building loyalty with existing customers by increasing their lifetime value and pushing them further into their customer journey. An effective retention campaign will require multiple touch points at regular intervals with very personalized experiences to build trust with new customers and continue to get them coming back for more.

Tactics include offering discounts and promotion codes applicable to a second purchase, promoting complementary products to what they've already purchased, creating and promoting loyalty programs, and rewarding customers for leaving reviews. Retention requires you to be one step ahead of your customer in their journey, always thinking about what's next for them.

6 Best Practices for Retention Campaigns



Reward those who reward you. Ask for **new customer referrals** in exchange for discounts and gifts by encouraging feedback on social media or your website with your highest LTV customers.



Suppress product ads that match customers who have already purchased that product, as it wastes your ad spend. Instead, show products that will complement what they just purchased. Bought a new set of plates? Show them bowls, glasses, and other kitchen accessories from the same line or in the same colors.



Send a push notification for new, popular social posts to drive engagement. Then, create lookalike models for people who received and clicked the notification.



For customers that made their first purchase, encourage them to join your **loyalty program** and get a certain amount of points for signing up in a specific time frame.



Build a promotional calendar around regional, national, and global holidays and events to inform customers about relevant sales and messages with your advertisements.



If you plan to have an **event or sponsorship** near a specific area, create audiences with that specific location and a sign-up sheet to encourage customers to go.

Reactivation

It's important to stay top of mind with your customers, especially ones that are not interacting with the brand as much as you would like. However, there's a fine line between useful and annoying when engaging with dormant customers. Your campaigns should be relevant and strategic.

You can develop personalized reactivation campaigns by using data like past behavior, next best actions, channels they prefer, etc. While there are some products that require frequent, repeat purchases, others don't, and brands should work to stay top of mind.

6 Best Practices for Reactivation Campaigns



Inactive users might not be aware of the big **new features and product improvements** you've made since they last churned. Show them ads that visualize new features that might entice them to give your product another shot.



Create segments of lapsed users based on their **engagement data** and reach out to them via social or owned channels with tailored content, supporting more frequent—and deeper—engagement. Customize these messages with information about users' historical activity and purchases to highlight their previous usage.



For customers that have left a complaint or written a bad review recently, **suppress** them from your advertising campaigns and nurture them through their preferred channels with personalized content to **win back their trust**.



Send lapsed users **personalized re-engagement messages** based on their past engagement activity. Use owned messaging channels and social advertising to reach them where they're most active, and consider using promotion codes to provide clear value and drive future purchases.



Layer in email interaction data and allocate more budget to customers who are less active in email or have unsubscribed, e.g. Subscribed but haven't opened in 30 days; Previously purchased but have unsubscribed; Opened in 30 days but haven't purchased in 180 days.



Send pre-targeted ads to inactive lookalike audiences before you reach out to them via email. This way, once they receive your email, they're already re-acquainted with your product.

Don't forget to experiment!

You know your business and customers best. It's important to tailor your strategies to what's working for you. Experiments can allow marketers to better understand the performance of different campaigns, content, channels, or personalization tactics. Use an experimentation tool to test things like:

Channel

Email vs. SMS vs. Push

Facebook vs. AdWords vs. Snapchat

Audience

Customer attributes

Customer behaviors

Customer lifecycle stage

Content

Call-to-action

Subject line

Personalization

Imagery and layout

Message copy

Send Time

Number of days delay

Time of day

Day of the week

PST, EST, GST, MST

Daylight Savings

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Why a CDP?

The first step to running a successful paid media campaign is to ensure that all of the paid media accounts are connected to a CDP like Simon Data to be ready to use.

Simon Data sits directly on top of a data warehouse and ingests data from various sources in real time. All that data is then centralized into a single customer view, allowing you to segment based on specific interactions or data points to create the most optimal lookalike, suppression, and retargeting audiences for your paid media efforts. These highly targeted audiences can then automatically be fed to different ad channels to help better target your paid ads, all without the need to upload a CSV again!

Simon Data's orchestration layer has real-time integrations to platforms like Facebook, Google, Adobe, LiveRamp, Criteo, Snapchat, and Twitter that allow you to automatically feed your audiences to end channels and add or remove people who meet specific audience criteria. Simon also offers webhooks that integrate with other channels, including The Trade Desk, TikTok, Pinterest, Optimizely, Amazon Marketplace, and Roku.

Additionally, Simon Data has the ability to add third-party data from tools like Lotame, LiveRamp, Experian and more so you can understand your customers' hobbies and interests to get even more granular targeting. You can learn more about specific integrations here: [Simon's Integrations](#).

Increase your audience size with Simon ID+ for identifying users

Turn anonymous users into known to be able to market to and target those who may be looking at the site but don't identify themselves. Simon ID+ is an identity resolution tool that allows for a decreased reliance on third-party cookies with enhanced first-party data that helps to drive an even greater impact. Increase potential revenue by funneling more users into your paid campaigns:

- Identify anonymous users who abandoned their cart and create an audience to serve ads about the products they abandoned. Sweeten the deal with a discount code and limited-time offers to encourage them to return to the website.
- Grow your audience sizes by including anonymous to known users. Simon will automatically add known users that match the criteria for your audiences.

One apparel brand saw a 7.2x increase in ROI by significantly increasing the audience size in their campaign funnels.

Take it a step further with Simon Predict for paid media

Use machine learning (ML) to create dynamic audiences and recommendations that boost performance. Simon Predict provides LTV, Churn Propensity, and Next Best Action ML models out-of-the-box, with custom models available depending on business needs. These ML models can be used for segmentation or content purposes. Simon Predict provides ML models that can be used to create more advanced audiences:

- For customers with a churn score greater than 60 and low engagement with the brand or who haven't bought in X amount of days – create a lookalike audience to test with a discount code or limited-time promotion and encourage them to re-engage with the brand.
- Build lookalike audiences to find new customers who look similar to your best customers by using the LTV model, low propensity, and best engagement.



Thank you for reading!

While data can make or break your campaigns, knowing what to do and how to use it doesn't have to be scary. Choosing the right CDP, agency, and tech partners can help. Simon Data and its extensive network of partners work closely together to help power the most successful paid media campaigns, achieving results like:

161%

increase in paid
social revenue

21%

increase in paid
social ROAS

If you're interested in seeing what Simon Data can do for you, [request a customized demo](#).

REQUEST A DEMO TODAY!