

TX Parks & Wildlife Department

AFWA Multi-State Conservation Grant



RECREATIONAL
BOATING & FISHING
FOUNDATION



TAKEMEFISHING.org

TEXAS
PARKS &
WILDLIFE

Overview

By using its sizable customer database, in conjunction with data anonymization and data enhancement platforms, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) was able to identify, reach and effectively engage high value customers, using a digital campaign to increase fishing license sales at higher rates for anglers who were exposed to the advertising versus those who were not.

TPWD worked with its ad agency and their data vendors to match customers with their digital IDs. Audience match size, license type pricing, and seasonality were all considered in selecting the types of audiences to target. The campaign launched in late August 2020, less than two weeks after the new season's licenses went on sale, and before the start of the new hunting season, when a large percentage of customers buy combination (hunting and fishing) license types. Four different lapsed license buyer types were directly targeted over an eight-week period, using their anonymized digital IDs across a broad range of cost-effective digital media.

Click-through and view-through conversions were tracked, and the campaign generated more than \$10 million in total revenue. License sales were also matched back to the digital IDs post-campaign to determine lift and incremental revenue, calculated by comparing the conversion rates of the treatment groups versus those of their control groups. This resulted in \$146,226 in incremental revenue, or revenue from lift, which is directly attributable to this campaign.

Results

Click-through and view-through conversions were measured for all four targeted customer groups (Combo 1-Year Lapsed, Combo 2-Year Lapsed, Fishing Year-from-Purchase Lapsed, and Annual Fishing Lapsed). By these measures, the campaign resulted in **\$10,466,000 in gross revenue, against a total campaign investment of \$55,000.**

The "treatment group versus control group" approach made it possible to also measure incremental revenue, or revenue from lift. By this measure, the campaign resulted in **\$146,226.**

- The Combo 1 year lapsed group saw a +0.9% lift versus its control, for \$62,648 in total incremental revenue (44% of total).
- The Combo 2 year lapsed group saw +0.3% lift versus its control, for \$47,328 in total incremental revenue (32% of total).
- The Fishing Year-from-Purchase lapsed group saw a +0.5% lift versus its control, for \$35,250 in total incremental revenue (24% of total).
- These customer groups generated positive Return on Ad Spend (ROAS), ranging from 3.5 to 15.2.
- The Annual Fishing 1 year lapsed group proved to be too small a sample size to accurately calculate lift.

Partners

- Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation
- Association for Fish & Wildlife Agencies
- Dieste

Support

"It was especially important this year to be able to isolate impact of advertising from the effects of the pandemic" said Craig Bonds, TPWD Inland Fisheries Director. "Our marketing team developed a test plan which made it possible to accurately measure incremental sales attributed to the digital campaign, giving us solid data to show that this kind of marketing investment can help us accomplish our R3 goals."



Fishing Social Media Ad

Benefits

Despite lacking an updated privacy policy, TPWD was able to work through an agency that had experience working with third-party partners to analyze large data sets and ensure privacy. TPWD analyzed its customer database using ad agency third-party data platforms, which enabled us to learn about and use first-party historical data to identify opportunity areas, and implement a test plan to measure incremental revenue, all while keeping customer data protected and anonymous.

In addition to bringing \$146,226 incremental dollars into TPWD to support conservation and fishing opportunities, the campaign reactivated 2,382 anglers who can now be more easily and cost-effectively retained. These results are proof positive that digital marketing can effectively and measurably generate revenue that would otherwise not have come to our agency. This campaign will serve as a prototype for future efforts to increase fishing license sales, and it can be expanded to include retention and recruitment strategies.

By including lapsed Combo license buyers in its target audience, TPWD was also able to reactivate customers who hunt as well as fish, which benefits hunting R3 efforts as well.

Methodology

Media strategy was determined by prioritizing the best segments to focus investment, with a specific focus on reactivation of lapsed customers.

Using anonymized digital IDs, audience segments were directly targeted with media placements based on content consumption patterns and relevant context. Digital ads were placed on social media and via a "Demand Side Platform" (also called a programmatic media buy).

Control groups were randomly selected, with 20% of digital IDs held out, as a baseline to measure against treatment groups, for each of the four customer segments.

Regular early monitoring indicated Facebook ads were outperforming Instagram, so the social media campaign was modified to run on Facebook only.

At the end of the campaign, TPWD uploaded a new "CRM" database of LY2021 purchases. The ad agency compared pre- and post-database files and used a "counting code" to match digital IDs. LY2021 license purchases were compared to treatment and control groups to determine lift and incremental revenue.



Combo License Social Media Ad

Future Plans/Lessons Learned

While use of database anonymization and digital IDs made it possible to directly target specific customers with cost-effective programmatic media, and gain customer insights, it was a very time-intensive undertaking. This was due in part to it being the first time we had done a project of this kind. The data coordination required more time than anticipated and as a result we were not able to produce video assets. We may directly target customers without the use of digital IDs for future campaigns.

TPWD plans to continue digital campaigns to make R3 progress in the years ahead. Based on this campaign's success, we will be seeking support from agency leadership to continue to invest in future campaigns to lapsed combo licensed buyers in the Fall. Lapsed combo (hunting and fishing) license buyers accounted for 76% of the total incremental revenue for this campaign and represent significant incremental revenue opportunities.

We also will seek support to use this campaign approach to drive incremental fishing licenses in the Spring, when the Year from Purchase License offers the best value for anglers who do not buy in the Fall.

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