

# AZ Game & Fish Department



RECREATIONAL  
BOATING & FISHING  
FOUNDATION



TAKEMEFISHING.org

## AFWA Multi-State Conservation Grant



### Overview

The goal of the Arizona Game & Fish Department (AZGFD) campaign was to sell fishing licenses to existing and lapsed anglers. If successful, existing anglers would not lapse and lapsed anglers would return, providing AZGFD the ability to convert both groups into consistent, yearly license holders thus bolstering annual revenue and increasing the number of anglers in the state year over year. AZGFD targeted resident and non-resident anglers who:

- Purchased an Arizona fishing license in 2019 OR
- Purchased an Arizona fishing license at least once since 2015, but did not purchase a license in 2019

AZGFD implemented their digital marketing campaign from 6/22/20 to 9/30/20 utilizing search, social and display ads. AZGFD's existing customer database was leveraged to specifically target license holders. To expand the reach of the campaign, lookalike and interest-based targeting was implemented.

To connect with these anglers, AZGFD used messaging based around family fun, making memories and disconnecting from the stress of life.

### Results

AZGFD currently does not have the ability to track a user from ad/email impressions through to a purchase. Despite this limitation, they still had a successful campaign that met their goals. Results include:

- Paid search- 322,215 impressions; 772 clicks on "Buy A License" (BAL)
- Paid social- 3,823,728 impressions; 21,440 clicks on BAL
- Google display- 4,428,215 impressions; 908 clicks on BAL
- Third Party Programmatic display- 3,814,259 impressions; 27 clicks on BAL

AZGFD pulled information for residents and nonresidents who purchased fishing and community fishing licenses during the campaign and compared it to the same data set of purchases made online between January 1, 2015 - December 31, 2019.

From this comparison, they learned:

- 84% were "new" anglers (those whose first purchased a fishing license online in 2020)
- 7% were returning anglers (most recently purchased a fishing license online in 2019)
- 9% were re-engaged anglers (most recently purchased a fishing license online prior to 2019)

### Partners

- Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation
- Association for Fish & Wildlife Agencies
- Off Madison Ave

### Support

"Following the unprecedented influx of new and reengaged anglers in 2020, it has never been more crucial that we seek out ways to retain these individuals as customers and support them in their journey as life-long outdoor recreationalists," said Ty Gray, Director of the Arizona Game and Fish Department. "Digital marketing campaigns like this one are powerful tools in helping us reach those objectives. Engaging customers through targeted, meaningful content via digital marketing will continue to be a key part of our customer retention strategy."



Catch Yourself Fishing!

Social Ad- Retention

## Benefits

AZGFD crafted two messages to reach their audience which allowed them the opportunity to observe which resonated the most with each group. This will help AZGFD further refine its messaging and content when addressing these audiences in the future.

Throughout the campaign, AZGFD saw a high increase in website traffic. Off Madison Ave (OMA), the marketing agency AZGFD partnered with, compared web traffic data between June 22 - September 30, 2020, the duration of the campaign, to the same time frame last year:

- 982% increase in users
- 979% increase in new users
- 809% increase in sessions
- 27.4% increase in pages per session
- 18.6% decrease in bounce rate

AZGFD's campaign was also beneficial as it gave them an opportunity to gain an understanding of anglers and assist in the agency's efforts to retain them.

AZGFD's social and display ads helped drive awareness and encouraged users to learn more about fishing licenses and prompted them to buy their license online.

## Methodology

AZGFD and OMA determined AZGFD would create the messaging and creative, while OMA would put together a media buy recommendation and place the creative.

OMA recommended what media to use and the initial percentages to put behind each tactic, knowing they would watch performance throughout the flight, and shift dollars toward top-performing channels.

The campaign was originally intended to run from April 1 - July 31, 2020. Due to unforeseen complications relating to COVID-19 in the state of Arizona, AZGFD decided to postpone the campaign until June and run through September.

AZGFD had planned to promote fishing close to home and their community fishing programs. With social distancing guidelines and a state directive to "stay home, stay healthy", promoting these smaller waters located in areas with skyrocketing COVID cases was not a good option. Therefore, they pivoted to its "reconnect" messaging with a focus on 'getting away from it all' and 'reconnecting with the great outdoors' where anglers were more likely to be able to socially distance.

Fresh air. Smiling faces. This could be your summer.



Display Ad- Reactivation

## Future Plans/Lessons Learned

AZGFD wants to resolve their technical and tracking limitations in 2021. As tracking capabilities improve, another critical modification would be to update the creative on the backend to better track the customer journey from seeing the ads to renewing/buying a license.

If AZGFD does repeat this effort, ideally the campaign would start earlier in the year, for example, April or May. This was the original intention for this campaign, and while the late start did not seem to negatively impact the results, getting in front of anglers before the summer starts would be preferred.

AZGFD will likely incorporate email marketing in future campaigns to help directly target those who hold or have purchased fishing licenses before. Emails sent specifically to those whose license is coming up for renewal (or an email sent to a lapsed angler reminding them of the joys of fishing) will likely be an effective compliment to digital campaigns.

Due to COVID, AZGFD had to cut messaging about fishing close to home via their community fishing programs to promote social distancing. AZGFD intends to promote this message more moving forward.

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