Boosting on Facebook—the RIIGHT way to do it

We used to rail against boosting, but now stand corrected.

What’s changed: you can save target audiences to boost against and the system learns faster. And boosting from the timeline doesn’t have disadvantages to Ads Manager or Power Editor—in fact, there are many advantages.

Think of this as Facebook’s answer to Amazon one-click shopping. So dangerously convenient!

Great content on great sites increases your CTR, decreases the CPE/CPC, increases exposure, and drives leads.

…if you have high authority content.
High engagement creates social proof, which influences friends of those who engage and also helps Facebook’s algorithm zero in on your target.

In short, boosting lets Facebook do the work for you.

You can boost on other sites: Twitter has Quick Promote and LinkedIn has Sponsored Content. However, neither of the two have analytics as comprehensive as Facebook yet.

Highlights by network:

Facebook has the smartest analytics and automatic optimization. Create saved audiences on highly specific interests to workplace targeting, allowing you to micro-target down to a single person for nearly free. Boost is available in a pop-up screen directly from the post. This means there’s no need to open up Ads Manager. Choose from multiple saved audiences and set a budget.

Twitter has in-line boosting (no need to go to the ads tool) from analytics, but lacks workplace targeting. Narrow audience by on keywords, @handles, and even custom audiences. Yes, you can scrape handles to create custom audiences, in addition to web and email audiences—called “tailored audiences. No Twitter Power Editor or bidding to conversion.

LinkedIn lets you boost right from the timeline. Targeting covers occupations, companies, and any other details on profiles i.e.(degrees, skills, job title). “Audience Expansion” is featured as an option that allows targeting similar audiences to the ones that you have targeted for you, but this wastes money, since $10 clicks with no optimization will blow your budget quickly.
Consider The Following:

Goals
Make sure to have a clear goal driving your boost:
- Engage your audience
- Create awareness about a promotion (discount/coupons)
- Get more fans, page likes, followers (social proof)
- Media Inception (get the press to write about you)

*Understand the $1/day strategy for boosting posts, which is applicable across the full range of social networks.

Content

Good content is the only thing that nobody else can do for you, because no one else knows about your company, personal brand, or niche better than you. This is the keystone to the amplification process, because without this component the whole strategy falls apart.

Boosting is most powerful when applied to quality content that is going to be successful, regardless. It is a strategy meant to augment posts that will perform, not turn a frog into a prince.
Boosting on Facebook

Boosting Posts

Targeting

1. **Location, location** - Unless your target market is outside of one of the main industrialized countries, the rule of thumb is to not boost posts there.

   There are other exceptions to this rule as well. For example, The Warriors have a strong Filipino audience (Manny Pacquiao has come to play, Filipino Heritage night, Filipino jerseys, etc.), so boosting on "Unicorn" posts to a worldwide audience is smart, because there is enough overlap to justify reaching some folks who aren't necessarily buying tickets or merchandise.

2. **Age and Demographics**
   Generally speaking, there's no need to pick an age range for your boosting because oCPM will take care of it.
The same goes for excluding by other demographics like gender. Facebook will automatically put your content in front of the demographics that will connect best with the content. Let the system optimize for you.

**Workplace and Interest Targeting**

This is the best part of Facebook ads. Facebook allows you to target up to 1,000 items, so go crazy having a single “mega” audience of all of them and some smaller ones you’ll reuse by topic.

We like to have ones for media and ones for vertical influencers (people who work at related companies, partners, customers, etc).

For just $1/day, you can increase your content’s reach by influencing the influencers. Assume this is about 200-300 people per day. Even if Facebook’s estimator says it’s under 1,000 people, don’t worry about it.

**Saved Audiences**

Using Facebook’s “Ads Manager” create saved audiences that you can promote to on a regular basis.
This will save you time and will allow you to simply hit boost, select an audience, and set a budget.

**Amplification**
Here’s what you’re going to want to know before you publish your post and hit boost...

**Boost 2-3 hours after posting**
If you boost before, you run the risk of cannibalizing your impressions and also not giving yourself enough time to see winners emerge. This means you’d be paying for impressions that you would have otherwise had organically.

If you boost after 2-3 hours, you lose relevance (even more so if your post is time-sensitive). Especially key if you have a big page (more than 100,000 impressions a day).

Certain posts with short-term relevance like news will only have a 24-hour window to create value, and then you’ll want to be moving on to the next piece of content. That being said, content may exist concurrently, but should target slightly different audiences.

It’s good to experiment this way to understand which audiences are driving the best results. You’ll also want to make sure that you are boosting at the right point in your conversion funnel as well.

Seek evergreen content that can live forever.

**How much?**
How much you spend depends on your overall budget—allocate 50% of your Facebook budgets to boosting posts, especially video, as a starting point. The better your mid-funnel content, the more you can spend. And with good targeting you should see winners after spending $20 over 24 hours. Larry Kim says $50 and Dennis Yu says $10 is enough to tell.

Here’s an example of how we’ve broken down a budget in the past:

- Lower Power Posts - $10-$30
- Medium Power Posts - $50-$70
- “Unicorn” or High Power Posts (CPE/CPV under a penny) - $250

It may be hard to predict “unicorn” posts, so it’s smart to keep room in the budget to be more aggressive if/when these opportunities arise.

**Actionable Metrics**
Avoid hyper-focusing on vanity metrics like reach. Focus your analytics on actionable metrics (CTR, CPC, and CPE). These aren't the only metrics that can be used to determine action, but they are a good start.
You may be asking, “What is a good click-through rate? What is my target CPC and when should I kill an ad?”

Depends on your objective (fans to your page, increase brand awareness, conversion) and industry (sports vs B2B IT software leads). In general shoot for Relevance Scores of 8+, since any less means your content and targeting are not in alignment.

The Boosted Post Isn’t Doing Well…

If not at least an 8 or has less than 10% of folks engaging (divide reactions by reach), kill it. Expect that you’ll kill 90% of your posts, if not more.

Facebook won’t allow you to change much once you’ve boosted a post, but if you think something didn’t work with your targeting/audience and want to give it a tweak, you can always stop boosting and create a similar ad using the same post within Ads Manager.

We have a few saved audiences that we continue to tune by trial and error, seeing if a post isn’t performing well, killing it and experimenting with other audiences on the same ad.

Fuel On The Fire

Once you have boosted a post, “throw fuel on the fire”. That is, identify what’s working (creative, title, targeting, etc.) and amplify it—spend way money on it.

For example, if we’re trying to promote a new article, we may have two or three ad sets running concurrently targeting different audiences. After letting them run for a bit, we’ll see what the data tells us.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ad Set Name</th>
<th>Delivery</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Reach</th>
<th>Fre...</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post: Page Fans &amp; PDF <em>Hey, what can you say?...</em></td>
<td>Active</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>3,047</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>$0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post: <em>Hey, what can you say? The Warrors are killing...</em></td>
<td>Not Delivering</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>$2.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post: Media Pub Inception <em>Hey, what can you sa...</em></td>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2,819</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>$1.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See how the top ad set has the highest engagement rate (~5%) with the largest audience, resulting in the lowest cost per engagement ($0.18)? Because of this, we turned the other two ad sets off and can now put more money towards the high-performing one.

Evergreen v. One-Day Boosts

The “fuel on the fire” strategy is a great way to sift out posts that are evergreen. These continuously draw engagement and traffic to your page. If evergreen, make sure the
daily budget does not let you hit more than 10% of the available audience, or you’ll burn it out.

If a post has sustained a low CPE, high engagement rate, and relevance score, set it as “ongoing”, boosting to your custom audiences as long as it maintains this high engagement rate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>371</th>
<th>1,819</th>
<th>$0.07</th>
<th>$27.38</th>
<th>Ongoing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post Engagements</td>
<td>Per Post Engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For content that falls under the category of “breaking news”, boost for one day. Put more money against it than normal, targeting media and news audiences e.g. (CNN, NBC, FOX, NY Times) while the content is still relevant. Doing so will put your content in front of media influencers who will see it and share it themselves.

**Take Note**
When you first start boosting it is going to take a while to find out what combination of factors works best for your campaigns. It is key to document your process and develop what we call “repeatable excellence”. A good way to do this is by taking notes. Write things down, take screenshots, and create checklists that, when followed, can replicate this tested success.

You want your colleagues and junior folks to do this for you, right? You set the example for others to follow—then delegate yourself out of doing this every day.

**Boosting Video**
Do you love using Facebook videos for promoting?

At BlitzMetrics, we chuckle when people say video doesn't convert, video is too hard to produce, or video won't work for them.

These are the same people who missed the boat on **custom audiences** a few years ago and **remarketing**, in general.

Why do we love video?
Let me count the ways...

1. **Remarketing audiences**
There is no cheaper way to build remarketing audiences, which you can then sequence into other videos or other follow-on content.

Check this out:
Look at all that traffic coming from mobile newsfeed suggested videos. Traffic that you'd be missing otherwise.

Do you have funnel logic in email? Then you should be doing the same with Facebook video and YouTube video at the same time.

**Pro tip:** *We run Facebook and Google remarketing audiences at the same time using the same logic.*

**2. Higher quality signals**

When you promote a video, whether choosing the video views objective or a video link ad, you'll get a lot more views than LCS (likes, comments, and shares), but a 30 second view beats a like, comment, or share any day.

Facebook does take into account view length, and there's no question that a solid view does more to promote organic/viral reach than a share, which is already worth 13 times more than a like.

**3. Video generates demand**

One of our most senior team members, Dennis Yu, has been doing PPC for 17 years. Here's what he has to say:

“I'll be the first to admit that AdWords is a demand harvester, not a demand creator. There's a proper strategy when you want to get your share of existing demand, which must be initiated by a search.”

But what about doing the things that will motivate someone to search? Video done properly is neither a pure branding vehicle nor a direct response late night infomercial, but a bridge between awareness and conversion.
“I believe that if you aren’t using Facebook native video in your content strategy, you’re not only missing 99% of your audience, but you’re leaving money on the table by wasting time and ad dollars. Video, and more so LIVE video, has such a positive effect on the Facebook timeline, that it’s possible to organically reach users that you’ve been otherwise able to reach.

In the next 2 years we may see Facebook video outpace YouTube and we will see content created specifically for FB video in forms of news, sports and entertainment.” -Vincenzo Landio, Fifty 2 Creative

Let's look at how Emily Skye, a fitness brand, is applying these concepts properly. They are direct marketers who understand branding, too.

**How to get $0.0005 cost per views on Facebook (not a typo) and diagnose false metrics.**

Tom Hiscocks runs social advertising for Emily Skye, and sent us these awesome campaign screenshots - but, notice anything strange?

Check out the views and reach on this 10 second video they posted. More views than reach? Technically, this is possible because video views are not unique.
Look at the Cost per Result - looks broken, right? We’ve confirmed with a Facebook rep that this is in fact possible and not a bug.

Then there’s the 100% Completion rate. Again, notice that there are more views than reach. We have known Facebook Insights to be buggy over the years, which is why we recommend you to be more discerning when it comes to data.

For example, a 100% completion rate, regardless of the video length, seems a bit odd any way you slice it.

Worse, the number of views is greater than the reach. While it is possible for some people to watch the video more than once, it is also equally possible that not every person who was reached with the video had watched it.

Given that the above video was only 10 seconds long and the auto-play nature of Facebook videos, someone could have scrolled past the video on their news feed and that scroll would’ve been counted in the analytics.

Don’t worry if you’re not a video expert, you can still reap the benefits of video. Here’s an impromptu video from one of our guys. Literally shot with an iPhone by one of our guys—not a video pro.

And here’s the campaign results:
But because of so much user-generated video flowing these days, people don't expect HD quality production and lighting, especially in mobile. You don't have to be a professional sports team or have a big brand budget. Just need a dollar a day.

And as for the naysayers who note that a good chunk of these views are 3 second auto-plays-- we agree.

Look at 10 second views to get a sense of whether you got a "real" view-- that your content was interesting enough to stop someone from continuing to scroll through their newsfeed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Video Views</th>
<th>Cost p.</th>
<th>10-Second Views</th>
<th>Cost p.</th>
<th>Reach</th>
<th>Amount $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3,047</td>
<td>$0.02</td>
<td>1,050</td>
<td>$0.05</td>
<td>7,210</td>
<td>$49.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,046</td>
<td>$0.02</td>
<td>1,050</td>
<td>$0.05</td>
<td>7,197</td>
<td>$49.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

And if you suspect that your data is incorrect, reach out to Facebook support, like we did when Facebook had problems with video metrics in mid-January.

Mind that it took them exactly 1 month (Jan 12 to Feb 11) to get it resolved, but they said they are unable to "apply this resolution retrospectively"- so if the data is erroneous during a report period, sorry-- the fix won’t correct it.

We spotted a similar issue for one of our clients because their videos had negative view metrics in the ad report, which was later fixed via this method.

Most of us rely on the analytics offered by this medium to tell us what is wrong or right and we make important decisions based on these analytics.

The best mitigation is to have a secondary set of data that can help you verify your suspicions. When running Facebook or Google Ads for example, you can make use of 3rd party analytic tools (like Google Analytics) to verify the number of conversions on your website.
Boosting on Twitter

Targeting:

Twitter offers us keyword and follower-based targeting, which you should definitely take advantage of. This is where Twitter makes up for what it lack in interest related specifics.

Using this essentially incept the followers of high authority people has proven to work for us in the past.
Using the same techniques that we employ for Facebook and some simple follower-based targeting, we were able to achieve a 4.5% engagement rate at 10 cents per engagement.

If you aren’t boosting on Twitter yet, you should. See if you can get over 100 engagements on a post. If that’s low shoot for 200, or 300.

Then pin the post to the top of your feed to add instant authority. Use this on all of your social, so the first thing that someone sees when they see your page is a high engaging post.
Boosting on LinkedIn

Select specific targeting criteria to zero in on your ideal audience:

- Company name
- Company industry
- Company size
- Job title
- Job function
- Job seniority
- Member schools
- Fields of study
- Degrees
- Member skills
- Member groups
- Member gender
- Member age
- Years of experience

**Targeting:**
LinkedIn offers certain targeting aspects that are unique. Creating audiences from job function, skills, degrees, and job titles open a door of possibilities for recruiters looking to find qualified candidates for job openings.

Again, LinkedIn has some developing to do before we promote boosting on it. Here is what you should know:
You can sponsor directly from your news feed. If you decide to do this, you’ll be taken to another page to determine which update you’d like to boost, what audiences to boost to, and what budget you’d like to set.

From our experience, organic engagement rates have been pretty low in general on LinkedIn when compared to posts on other media, but when we tried boosting, we saw improvement.

Here are the results:
They speak for themselves here. Facebook came out of the gates and laid out a foundation that the other social sites are building their ads platforms on. This is why we can use the same foundational thinking that has been working for Facebook on these other sites and see this kind of success.

**Closing**

Think about the amount of power behind the doors of Twitter and LinkedIn. They are both picking up their advertising platforms and we will soon be seeing ads across all social. It only makes sense.

Using these strategies, we want you to go out there and see if you can own your niche across all of these channels. Boosting is a tool that can help you to reach the presence necessary to do so.

Let us know how it goes!

Happy Boosting,
The BlitzMetrics team
support@blitzmetrics.com