



Guide to Brand Optimization

By Upwave

The necessary steps to optimize media towards brand objectives, and the importance of maximizing your brand investment.

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An Upwave Brand
Advertising Guide

Guide to Brand Optimization

Nearly every aspect of brand marketing is dynamic, from the media plan to the data on impressions and outcomes collected continuously throughout a campaign. And campaign optimization itself is dynamic. Trillions of data points are used by sophisticated models that determine where that next impression should go. As a result, campaigns are highly optimized to deliver more views, interactions, clicks, and actions—all with little human intervention.

Yet when it comes to optimization brand campaigns, the industry still relies heavily on measurement that is, by design, more static.

Before learning more about how to optimize brand campaigns, it's important to decide how you view brand measurement:

- 1) As a means to collect brand lift data, create a post-campaign story, and learn for future campaigns.
- 2) As a real-time indicator of what tactics/campaign elements are performing, to maximize your brand outcomes.

If you think you fall into the second camp—or you're at least a bit curious—and want to know ahead of time what tactics are helping or hurting the campaign so that you can make changes throughout a campaign, this guide is for you.

The Steps to Maximizing Investment with Brand Optimization

1

Know the Objective of Your Campaign

2

Reject Traditional Notions that Brand Advertising Isn't Optimizable

3

Identify Optimization Decision Makers

4

Optimize Early with Low Risk Options, Then Increase Bets

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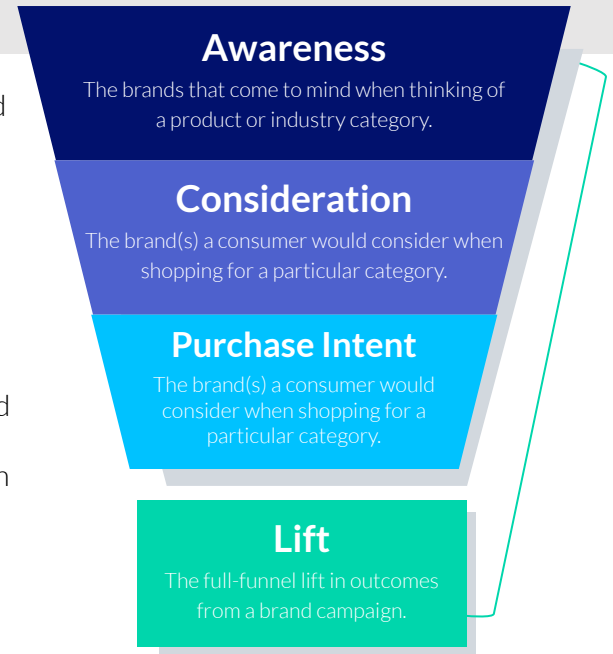
1 Know the Primary Objective of Your Campaign

Brand KPIs — metrics used to gauge the success of a campaign and get a sense for consumers’ perceptions and behaviors related to your brand are not equal peers.

In reality, they work together as a funnel. You need to drive awareness to increase consideration, and you need to be in a consumer’s consideration set in order to drive purchase intent.

Your advertising—no matter what the call to action—features your brand, and your brand matters. In today’s crowded and fragmented media landscape, consumers are exposed to thousands of ads per month, and it is imperative to prioritize brand building and focus on the customer journey.

Understanding where your brand sits in the funnel, and therefore the key objective/Brand KPI(s) of a specific campaign will help you on your quest to drive upper-funnel outcomes.



2 Reject Traditional Notions that Brand Advertising Isn’t Optimizable

Historically, brand marketers have not been able to optimize media effectively and reliably, largely due to:

Employing Traditional Research Tactics To Answer Media Questions

Over time, brands have tried applying successful research techniques for *planning* to media questions, leading them to incessantly cut data searching for good news. While good news is great, understanding where and how the campaign can improve its brand objectives is the key to optimization (and getting *better* results).

A best in class brand analytics solution answers media questions, not research questions, because there is one simple goal: maximize your brand objective discussed earlier. Cutting more data to answer the “why” questions doesn’t tell you what you can change about your media to help improve the outcomes of your campaign, now.

An Over-Reliance On Statistical Significance

In addition, statistical significance was never intended for mid-flight optimizations. It does not compare the performance between two tactics, and statistics researchers will tell you that results move in and out of stat sig during the campaigns—requiring you to wait until post-campaign for results to stabilize.

In order to optimize during your campaign, you need to reject the notion that any of your tactics are bad. Instead, understand the need for causal analysis and tools of comparison that help dissect which of your tactics are *better* than others, and can help effectively optimize an incremental metric like brand lift.

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3 Identify Optimization Decision Makers

Once you've nailed down the primary objective, and the desire to optimize throughout the campaign, the next step is to ensure the appropriate team(s) are involved. It is imperative to loop in those who control optimization levers and can act upon optimization opportunities—be that the media team, ad ops, etc.

You—or the appropriate members of your organization—may already be optimizing your campaigns, but most likely not based on brand outcomes, or using brand signals.

Finding out what optimizations are already being made to your media is step one. Typical optimizations like click-through rates are a poor proxy for brand objectives, and down-funnel conversions aren't relevant in predicting the likelihood of people becoming more aware of brands. In an era where a brand is held to performance standards, it is important to take the next step, and key stakeholders invaluable information about how to optimize media towards brand outcomes.

4 Optimize Early with Low Risk Options, Then Increase Bets

Now comes the most important question: *so, what do we optimize?* Not all optimization decisions are equal, and you need to begin with changes to your media appropriate with your risk tolerance. It is best to optimize early based on trending results, with low risk options to start.

Many optimizations, such as shifting creative rotation weights or adjusting frequency caps are lower-stakes decisions that are best made on a regular basis and for which a lower bar can be set for taking action.

Other optimization decisions, such as removing a channel from a media plan, are higher stakes decisions about which advertisers require a higher threshold of confidence. It likely would be unwise, for example, to cut a long-used channel from a campaign. However, brand analytics gives you the data to have a conversation with the media partners in the space, dig deeper into audiences reached on that channel, etc. and course-correct to maximize outcome.

There is no hard and fast rule as to what threshold to meet for any given optimization decision, but use data to balance your risk tolerance with maximizing what is working best for your campaign. It is important to consider the relative risk of error and opportunity to gain while making continuous incremental adjustments.



Making Sharing Easy

Upwave's Opportunity Notifications make sharing actionable suggestions simple and efficient.



Thought Starters

Low-Risk Optimizations

- Rotate Creative
- Adjust Frequency Caps
- Discuss Trade-Offs with Media Partners (reach, frequency, performance, etc)
- Narrow/Broaden Targeting

Higher-Risk Optimizations

- Adjust Channel Mix
- Negotiate New Deals with Partners
 - Refresh Creative
 - Change Ad Formats

Brand Optimization with Upwave



When optimizing a campaign, reallocating budget or traffic between media tactics or creative tactic, it’s important to use the right metric. Upwave’s Brand Optimization capability provides access to our powerful metric—Outperformance Indicators—for every tactic in a campaign.

Outperformance indicators are simple – they show the probability that a tactic is helping a campaign, combining observed lift and confidence levels into a single, sortable metric that answers the optimization question: How much confidence can I have that a tactic is helping the campaign? In other words, what is the probability that this tactic will improve the campaign average?

This proprietary metric makes mid-flight campaign optimization decisions easier than ever, providing the clarity, stability, and timeliness that existing brand lift metrics lack.

Empower Optimizations

Make optimization decisions when it’s still early enough to improve ROI and efficacy of brand campaigns.

Actionable Insights

Answer the question: How likely is it that this tactic is helping the campaign? Actionable email notifications make it even easier.

True Mid-Campaign Read

Upwave’s data is refreshed every 24 hours allowing frequent optimizations during your campaign.



Upwave is the Analytics Platform for Brand Advertising.

You need to prove brand advertising works. You don't want research reports, you want real-time, top-of-funnel measurement and optimization for CTV, Digital, Social, Linear, and Addressable.

For more information about Upwave, visit upwave.com