STRATEGUS

AI-Powered Social Signal Targeting Outperforms Traditional Methods for Florida Tourist Attraction

A well-known tourist attraction partnered with Strategus to test Social Signal Targeting, an AI-powered audience solution designed to identify and engage high-intent consumers in real time. Unlike traditional targeting methods that rely on historical data or rigid third-party segments, this approach dynamically adjusts to consumer behavior, ensuring ads reach users as they actively engage with relevant content. By leveraging real-time insights, this strategy aimed to reduce wasted ad spend and enhance engagement quality.

Over a three-week campaign in the Orlando DMA, Strategus evaluated multiple targeting strategies based on website engagement, search and social impact, revenue tracking, and foot traffic, determining which approach delivered the highest efficiency and performance.

THE CHALLENGE

Traditional audience segmentation often functions as a black-box system, offering minimal transparency into how audiences are built or how effectively they drive engagement. This lack of visibility makes optimization difficult and increases reliance on outdated targeting methods that fail to capture real-time consumer intent. For tourism marketing, where timing is critical, these inefficiencies can lead to missed opportunities and higher acquisition costs.

This campaign specifically, it aimed to:

- Engage consumers at the moment of intent vs. relying on reactive audience models.

- Reduce cost per acquisition (CPA)

- Compare AI-powered Social Signal Targeting against traditional targeting segments

THE STRATEGY

To compare targeting effectiveness, five audience tactics were tested:

- **Social Signal Targeting (AI-Powered):** Identified and reached users engaging with travel and attraction-related content in real time using dynamic AI-driven signals.

- **Third-Party: "Fun Loving Learners":** Targeted a broad leisure and educational interest segment.

- **Third-Party: "Space Enthusiasts":** Focused on audiences interested in space exploration and science tourism.

- **Look-Alike Modeling:** Modeled new audiences based on previous converters' behaviors.

- **Twitter Targeting:** Used platform-based segmentation, including followers of relevant accounts.

PERFORMANCE BREAKDOWN

Tested audiences ranked by cost per acquisition (CPA) chepeast to most expensive

Audiences	Foot Traffic	Online Ticket Sale	Calendar Page Visit	Tickets Page Visit	Website Visit
Social Signal Targeting (AI-Powered)	2nd	1st	2nd	2nd	2nd
Fun Loving Learners	1st	3rd	3rd	3rd	3rd
Space Enthusiasts	3rd	5th	4th	4th	4th
Look-Alike Modeling	5th	2nd	1st	1st	1st
Twitter Targeting	4th	4th	5th	5th	5th

ANALYSIS & TAKEAWAYS

The AI-powered Social Signal Targeting ranked among the top two audience strategies across all key performance indicators. It consistently delivered stronger engagement and lower acquisition costs compared to traditional methods. Notably, it outperformed Twitter Targeting, which had the highest cost per acquisition across all categories. Look-Alike Modeling, our top-performing tactic, remained highly effective for website visits and ticket sales, but AI-driven targeting proved to be a strong contender, challenging its dominance.

The client was thrilled with the performance, seeing strong engagement, increased conversions, and lower acquisition costs. The campaign outperformed expectations, proving to be an efficient, high-impact strategy. After this success, AI-powered Social Signal Targeting will be rolling across more industries, giving advertisers a new proven solution to to maximize results and drive more value.