

Social Media Advertising

Recently, the two undisputed social networking leaders, LinkedIn and Facebook, both upped their advertising ante. Whether targeting businesses or consumers, these sites now offer marketers new ways to reach a very specific audience with a very specific message.

LinkedIn continues to grow at a phenomenal rate and has become a great networking tool. Now, the company is doing more to help those members who want to cast a wider net and seek out potential clients, partners or other relationships via advertising to them. You may have noticed the ads that now appear on your LinkedIn profile. They appear as “Ads by LinkedIn Members” and are targeted to people like you.

Of course you need a LinkedIn profile first—the ad is actually “from” you. To get the ad running, you simply select your audience based on company size, job function, gender, geography and other categories. LinkedIn instantly tells you how many members fit that profile. You write your text ad, choose a budget and voila, your ad is done. LinkedIn charges by impressions, not per-click, however, and provides you a price based on the options you’ve selected.

Facebook’s targeted advertising offers even more. With Facebook, you can get down to an extreme level of targeting. Want to advertise only to 20- to 30-year-old women with a college degree who live in Oregon and own a poodle? You can. As you narrow your target, Facebook gives you the total number of members who fit the profile you’re seeking. Facebook will also allow you to add a picture or logo. Another great feature is the option to create “social actions” around your ad, which can help dramatically extend your impact within the network. Finally, you can choose whether you want to pay by impressions or by the click.

Though more targeted than other media, Facebook and LinkedIn advertising is still more along the lines of traditional advertising vs. “search” advertising, and thus, may not be as effective—alone. But, social media advertising when part of an integrated social media campaign can have a tremendous ROI.

Social media is not just for Harley Davidson, Barack Obama and trendy teenager products. These are some better-known successes, but there are also plenty of B2B success stories. As an astute marketer you’ll want to know all the tools and technology available and consider how it may help you execute your strategy. Are you missing an opportunity? It may not be obvious at first, but perhaps social media should be included in your marketing plan. Please feel free to contact us and we can review options and explore some ideas together.

