



Beyond Clicks: How Retargeting Can Drive Sales and Make Your Brand Unforgettable

Marketing is the engine of your business that scales your brand’s sales and revenue generation. Its practice focuses on delivering your brand’s message to its audience at the right time, pushing consumers through the sales funnel and turning them into happy customers. However, online marketing is currently an inefficient practice, as brand messaging can easily become forgotten by audiences at each step of the funnel. Retargeting fixes this by keeping your brand message in front of your audience, a psychologically effective tactic that drives revenue and keeps brands top of mind.

A great marketing strategy will drive people through the sales funnel and ultimately generate revenue. From brand awareness, through the initial sell, resell, and upsell, great marketing strategies focus attention on consumers at every stage of the funnel.

Unfortunately, most online marketing dollars are spent on media for brand awareness and email for post-sale nurturing, with little attention paid to the crucial steps in between. Retargeting makes online marketing more effective by filling the missing tactical gaps, and supporting the current tactics that keep people in motion throughout a brand’s sales funnel.

The Sales Funnel:

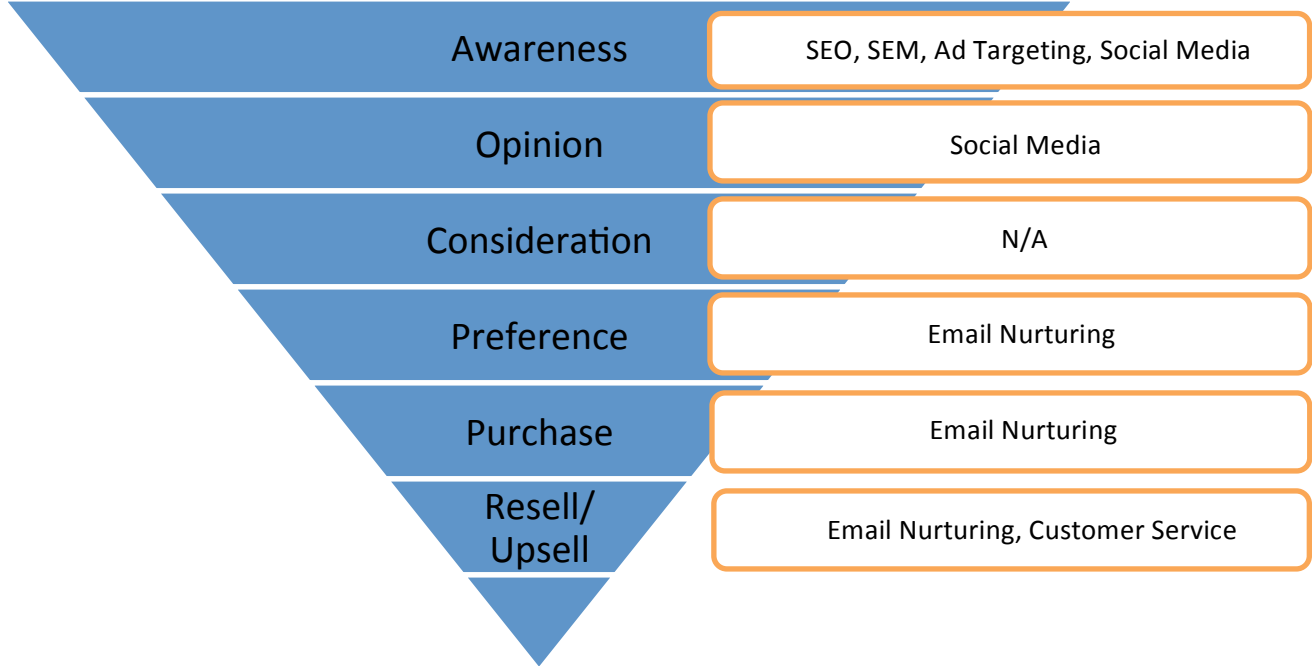


Fig. 1: The role of online marketing in each step of the sales funnel

The sales funnel contains the progressive psychological steps that a consumer takes before making a purchase, and has been proven to apply to revenue-generating businesses across many verticals.

Traditionally, advertising has been used to help consumers through each step of the process. With online marketing, advertising efforts generally focus media spend on driving awareness, while email spend is focused toward lead and post-sale nurturing. Yet awareness and the process of turning a lead into a customer (establishing preference) are generally the only steps that are touched by online marketers.

Retargeting helps move consumers through the sales funnel by maintaining a brand presence at each step of the funnel. Using a unique form of cookie-based hypertargeting, retargeting keeps ads in front of anyone who has shown an initial brand interest.

As consumers move through each step of the funnel, a brand's retargeted ads will stay in front of these consumers, keeping brands 'top-of-mind.' Brands can use their retargeted ads as an additional form of communication with the consumer, helping them transform from interested consumer to happy customer.

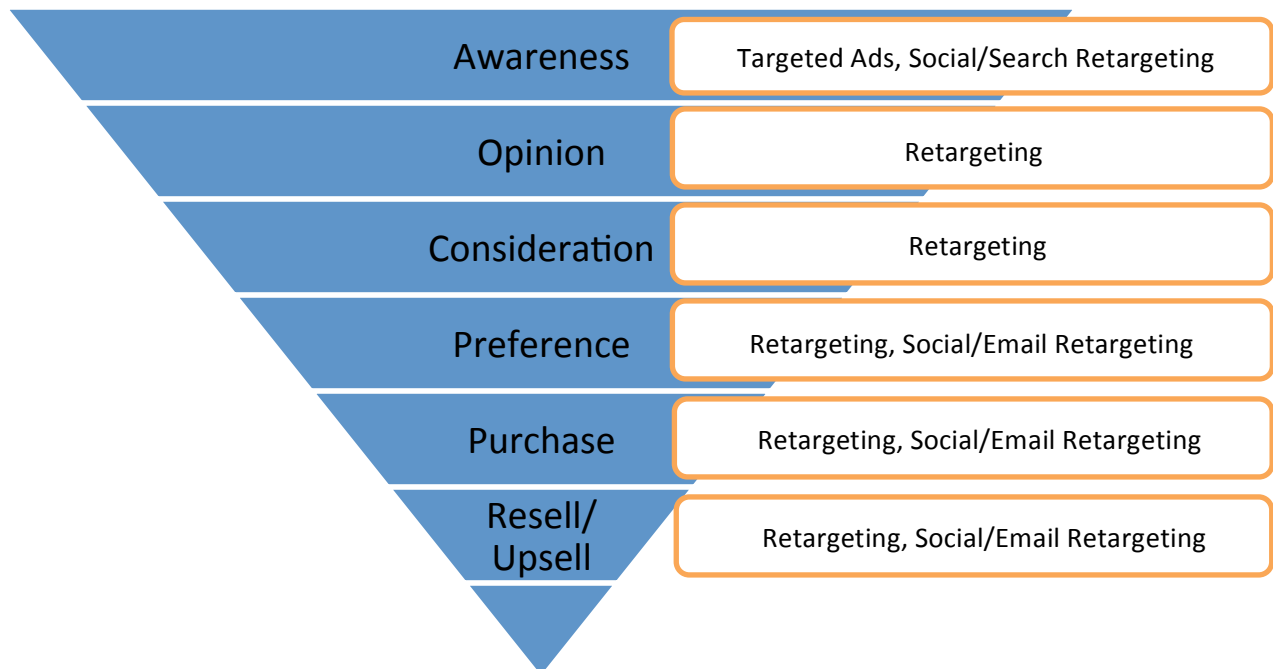


Fig. 2: How retargeting fits into each step of the sales funnel

Awareness

The sales process begins with brand awareness. Online marketers have traditionally relied on large display media spends to help communicate their initial message to their audience. Additionally, search engine marketing (Google Adwords), search engine optimization (content blogs), and social media (Twitter, Facebook) should be a significant portion of a marketer's awareness strategy as well.

Retargeting techniques can help support a brand's marketing message at the awareness stage on three fronts:

1. Social retargeting – This is the ability to target ads to people based on their industry interest and social affinity, based on social data sets.

2. Search retargeting – Similar to SEM, search retargeting will target ads to people based on their industry interest, as defined by search engine data sets.
3. Targeted ad buy – While not a retargeting product, targeted ad buys allow marketers to serve ads to a relevant audience to build brand awareness. Relevant audiences are defined by the types of sites that they visit.

After awareness is achieved, consumers will visit the brand’s website for some more information.

Opinion

In the opinion stage, consumers will either develop their thoughts about the brand and/or its specific offering, or forget about the brand. Opinion is developed based on the consumer’s first engagement with the brand at the awareness level.

Aside from on-site presentation and communication via social media channels, marketers have little control at this stage. Retargeting can provide the consumer with an elegant reminder by keeping the brand’s ads visible to him or her. Because retargeting networks are generally vast, retargeted ads have the ability to stay in front of consumers despite their unique browsing habits.

After an opinion is made, consumers will begin to consider their options.

Consideration

The consideration stage occurs when a consumer decides between their most likely purchases. In this stage, consumers will look at your offerings with more detail, and they will likely look into competitive products as well. Consumers will want to test out your product, visit your social-media presences, and see what other people had to say about your brand.

Retargeting fits well into this stage as well. As people venture through the consideration phase, retargeted ads work very well if the messaging is appropriate. Promoting a product demo, recent press release, or unique product feature can help your consumer’s consideration stay on point with your brand.

Preference

Consumers will decide on a brand and product preference before they make a purchase. At this point, consumers are likely to have more interaction with your brand, as well as that of your competitors. As they turn into leads, marketers have traditionally turned to email marketing as a form of lead nurturing, and they may also receive backup from their sales team.

At this stage, it’s important to iterate retargeted messages again. Highlighting a brand offering (“Free Shipping”) will help move your consumers closer to the purchase point. Additionally, retargeting ads can also be used to extend the message of any email marketing campaigns that are being targeted to the consumer.

Purchase

This is the first moment of truth. A consumer will make a purchase if the brand has conveyed the right messages toward him or her. Because retargeting focuses exactly on this concept, a well-configured retargeting campaign will drive more sales.

Resell/Upsell

As a final step, brands look for more than just initial sales. Happy customers are more likely to develop brand loyalty and buy more products from the brand.

Retargeting fits into this strategy not only by further extending the message of an email campaign, but by promoting the brand's customer service messaging, as well as its own community service messages as well.

All consumers go through a psychological sales funnel before making any purchases. In the online marketing environment, each step of the funnel has traditionally been inefficiently targeted by marketers. A strong retargeting campaign has a fit for every step of the sales funnel, ultimately turning consumers into happy customers.

Retargeting for Brand Awareness

As Internet content and advertising have proliferated, it has become increasingly difficult for brands to have their messages stand out against all of the noise; some studies estimate that the average American is exposed to over 3,000 distinct advertising messages every day. While traditional advertising has focused on getting people's attention, ad impressions are no longer sufficient to secure visitors and drive sales. As early as 1998, people have demonstrated a phenomenon known as "banner blindness", wherein visitors to a website consciously or subconsciously ignore banner-like information. The result is poor ad recall, diminished brand visibility, and low ROI for ad spending.

Retargeting offers a powerful solution to this problem by specifically targeting your ads to people who have already interacted with your brand in some way, either by opening an e-mail, visiting a website, or engaging with a Facebook page or Twitter feed. Following an interaction with the brand, these visitors will be served the brand's ads as they browse the rest of the web. Thanks to retargeting firms' access to vast online ad inventories, these ads can appear on over 98% of all of the websites in the world, ranging from niche personal blogs to high-profile media portals such as the New York Times and Huffington Post. Furthermore, the visitor will continue to see the ads days, even weeks, after the initial interaction, depending on the parameters set by the brand and the retargeting firm at the beginning of the campaign. Retargeting firms allow brands to fine-tune the placement and pacing of these advertisements in order to increase the likelihood that the visitor will click the ad while simultaneously avoiding banner fatigue.

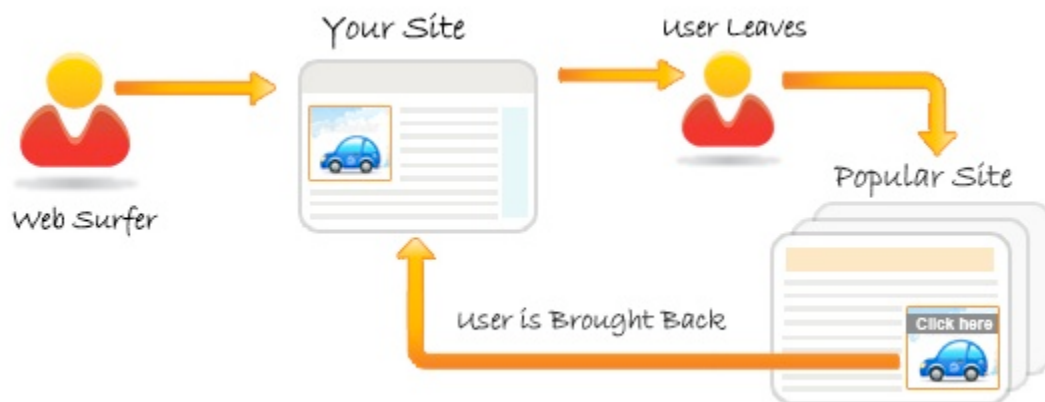


Fig. 3: High level overview of how retargeting functions at its most basic level

Here are a few ways in which retargeting enhances brand awareness:

1. Repetition improves ad recall. While visitors may ignore a single instance of an ad, each repetition of the ad increases the chances that the visitor will see and remember the brand's message.
2. Retargeting drives repeat visitors to a website. A common problem with online marketing is that people will visit a website and leave without completing an action. Retargeting helps bring these visitors back to a website by reminding them of the brand and/or products, effectively converting casual browsers into full-fledged customers.
3. Ad presence on multiple networks and pages increases brand visibility. Compared to direct ad buys, retargeting is a very cost-effective way for brands to establish a virtually ubiquitous presence on the web.

4. Having a presence across countless websites serves as a multiplier of the brand's credibility in visitors' minds, despite the fact that the brand's ad spending may be a small fraction of that of their biggest competitors.

Retargeting provides outsized returns on investment with regards to building awareness. Through the use of vast ad networks, the tactic of keeping ads in front of visitors across the web, and the power of precision targeting and repetition, retargeting overcomes many of the limitations of traditional display advertising and increases a brand's online visibility by several orders of magnitude.

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