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Suddenlink Case Study



Company Background

Suddenlink Communications is the seventh largest cable operator in the United States, supporting the information, communication and entertainment demands of approximately 1.4 million residential customers and thousands of commercial customers in Arkansas, Louisiana, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Texas, West Virginia, and elsewhere.

Challenge

A young, fast growing company, Suddenlink sought to win targeted customers away from larger cable providers. To do so, Suddenlink needed to produce more profitable subscriber conversions (its cost per subscription was 35% higher than that of campaigns run offline or in other online channels). Additionally, Suddenlink wanted to attribute its site traffic to the proper channels. Most customer conversions occurred over the phone, and the company wanted to identify what drove potential subscribers to call. Suddenlink charged True Interactive with creating a profitable and measurable search engine marketing campaign.

Solution

- Analyzed Suddenlink's paid search programs to look for areas of opportunity in order to re-build the campaigns to be more effective.
- Developed a new campaign structure that is used for the more than 1,500 cities that Suddenlink serves. Each of these campaigns is geo-targeted so that people outside of these areas are not served Suddenlink ads when searching for cable, Internet or phone services.
- Established a national campaign that includes branded terms and city/region specific keywords.
- Implemented a call-tracking program to help measure the success of the search programs. Customers clicking on a Suddenlink ad see a unique, campaign-specific phone number that follows them on the website. Each time a customer calls one of these numbers is called, Suddenlink can attribute a subscriber conversion to the appropriate channel and campaign.

Results

Due to the more efficient and targeted campaign structure, True Interactive lowered the cost per click 35% through better quality scores and more relevant landing pages. Using city-specific price points in the ad copy improved subscriber conversion rates by 26%.

In the last five years that True Interactive has been managing the paid search programs for Suddenlink, the cost per subscriber through paid search is now 50% better than any other channel. The call tracking program has been critical to better understanding the real ROI on the programs.

Suddenlink's paid search programs are now a core part of the company's marketing strategy and have expanded as the firm has entered new markets.

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