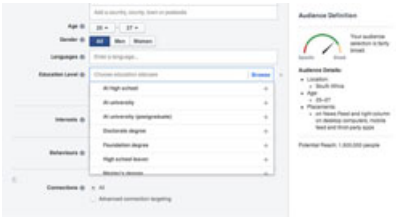
Pulling insights from under the hood of Facebook

By Matthew Arnold

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Facebook marketing has grown dramatically in recent years and provides the ability for advertisers to get really great returns when managed correctly. To empower your advertising decisions Facebook has a dashboard with detailed targeting, audience and bidding options. While this is great for the person managing your Facebook ad campaign, it can be used for so much more.



click to enlarge

This dashboard is available to everyone with a Facebook account and can be used to glean some amazing information and even generate insights for non-Facebook campaigns. With a South African user base of over 10 million unique consumers and a presence in pretty much every country under the sun, you would be mad to overlook Facebook as a dipstick research tool.

To access this information just select the dropdown menu on the top right of your Facebook page and select "Create Ads." Go through the first few steps of the wizard to setup a mock campaign (use whatever objective or URL you want), and then scroll down to the "Audience" section.

This is where it gets really interesting. Facebook has a wide range of options here that you can play with and with each filter you select the overall audience numbers which will update dynamically - giving you instant information on the number of *South Africans using Android phones that play golf and are between the ages of 25 and 27*, for example.

Here are some of the things you can discover through the interface:
• Mobile devices (OS, brands, models, tablets)
• Travel patterns (Planning to travel, recently returned, used a travel app)
• Digital activities (Console gamers, online shoppers, early adopters)
• Interests (too many categories to even begin to list)
• Advanced demographics (Education level, relation ship status, life events)

All of the information is based on Facebook users profile information, pages liked and browsing data (devices, mobile network etc) and while it may not be 100% accurate it provides a great indicator for further research.

I'm always surprised when I discover that people don't know about this gold mine, hidden just below the surface of your newsfeed. Next time you are looking for some inspiration or quick audience information - take a look at your Facebook advertising interface.

ABOUT MATTHEW ARNOLD

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