ACI R3 2021 MSCG Marketing Campaigns Report

Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

Wildlife Division

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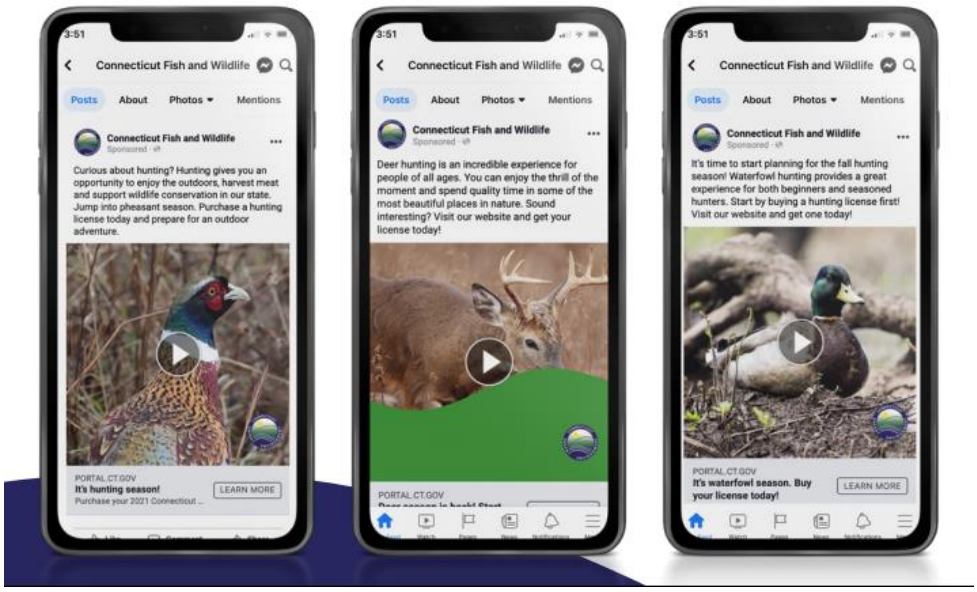


Campaign Overview

A total of eight different images were used to create digital ads (GIFs) showcasing hunting in Connecticut (i.e. hunters in the field or legal game species), and the primary message was to purchase a 2021 hunting license. These ads were featured on Facebook and Instagram. To accomplish this, we partnered with Güd Marketing.

In regards to timing, the campaign was accomplished in two parts, serving digital ads in spring and early fall 2021 with a break during the summer months. The thought behind curtailing ad placement during the summer months was to deliver a better return on investment. The first part of the campaign served several digital ads to promote the spring turkey season (April 28-May 29) and promote hunter education course offerings. These ads ran from April 5 to May 5 and prompted viewers to click on a link that led them to an official Wildlife Division web page where they were encouraged to purchase a license or register for a hunter safety course if they are not already certified.

The second part of the campaign ran from September 3 through December 7, and these ads focused on promoting several fall hunting seasons (deer, small game, and waterfowl). Similar to the ads served during the spring portion of the campaign, they prompted viewers to click on a link that led them to a landing page where they were encouraged to purchase their license or register for a hunter safety course.

Campaign Goal

The overall goal of the campaign was to increase the number of 2021 Connecticut hunting licenses purchased by registered hunters and also boost hunter education participation for the DEEP Wildlife Division's hunter safety courses (resuming this spring). This was accomplished by serving social media ads (Facebook and Instagram) to a look-alike audience based on current Connecticut hunter demographics. The target audience was men and women (ages 18-55) that have an expressed interest in hunting and the outdoors.

Metrics

Overall, the campaign was very successful in terms of engagement. The campaign had a total of 3,423,878 impressions (views), 371,390 engagements, and a click-through rate of 0.95%, and reached 223,174 people. In addition to tracking engagements and impressions of the digital ads, Google Analytics was used to determine the number of web page visitations from the ads, as well as the number of individuals who clicked on the link to purchase their license or register for a hunter safety course. A UTM link was used to determine the amount of revenue generated by these ads. In addition to the promoted digital ads, similar organic ads/posts were featured concurrently on the Wildlife Division's social media outlets, *Connecticut Wildlife* magazine, and the Wildlife Division's electronic newsletters, ensuring our current followers received the same messages from the promoted ads.

Unfortunately, we know very specifically that we lacked the ability to collect analytics data through our Event Management (Hunter Education Registration) web system. Enhancements to correct this issue and directly attribute future interest and action from campaigns to enrollment is scheduled for Q1 2022.

We also observed a loss of attributable behavior associated with the UTM links in the spring campaign which stemmed into two changes. Initially, directing traffic to our vendor highlighted a large percentage of campaign traffic (98%) utilizing mobile and the lack of mobile page functionality. We have made steps to address this with the vendor to correct functionality and appearance issues separating the mobile and desktop pages. Subsequently we also determined that our website design did not allow for optimal functioning as a landing page. As the template used in its construction is not adjustable, innovation by way of page anchors was used to bypass much of the content that Analytics Behavior Flow suggested was distracting users prior to interacting with campaign content.

Tactic	Spend	Revenue	ROI
Professional Services (development of ads, monitoring, reporting)	$10,000		
Paid Media Advertising (social media placement on Facebook)	$40,000		
TOTAL CAMPAIGN	**$50,000**	**$1,114**	**-97.772**

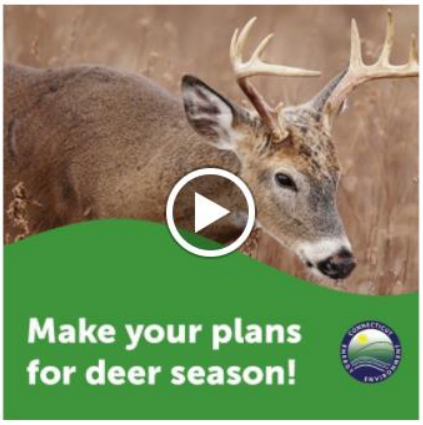
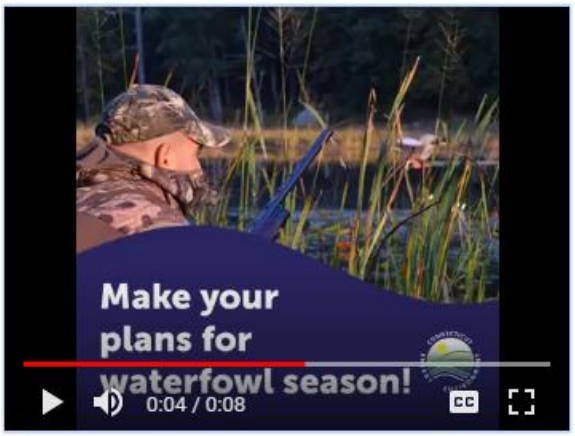
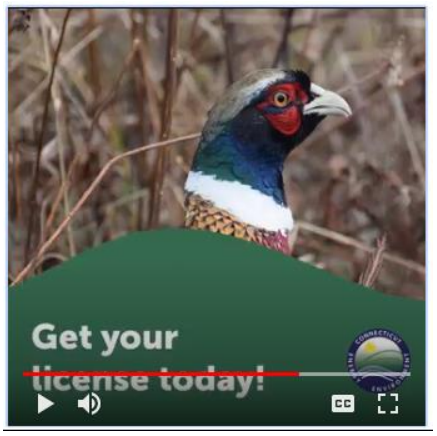
Call to Action

Target audience members who come in contact with the ads produced through this campaign will see a link that will send them to a newly-created Wildlife Division landing webpage that not only prompts the visitor to purchase a hunting license or register for a hunter safety course but also describes the benefits of hunting in relation to wildlife conservation. It is important to provide a landing page that offers several options other than just purchasing a license because some of the visitors to our page may not have taken a hunter safety course.

Future Efforts

The Connecticut Wildlife Division has little experience with digital marketing and limitations on accessing licensing revenue data. While it was disappointing to see a low financial return on investment, this campaign helped us identify where we need to make improvements to our Event Management (Hunter Education Registration) web system and in our efforts to better reach our target audience and encourage participation in hunting. Social media is one outlet but produces mixed results and should not be the main focus for promoting license sales. After seeing the results of this project, we would like to examine the use of targeted email campaigns using a service such as GovDelivery. This project also helped us better understand the limitations of our online licensing system and how we will have to adapt to those limitations to move forward.

Target Audiences

Outdoor Excitement: Adults ages 18-55; 50% female, 50% male. Behavioral targeting: participate in or is interested in hunting-related content but also enjoys other outdoor activities.

Images and Graphic Treatment