

ACI R3 MSCG Phase 1 Marketing Campaign Iowa Recreational Shooting Enthusiasts to Hunter Customer Journey Digital Marketing Campaign

Campaign Dates:
 March 15 - May 15, 2021

Prepared By:
 Shannon Hafner, Iowa DNR, Fisheries & R3 Communications
 641-757-0198
Shannon.Hafner@dnr.iowa.gov

Megan Wisecup, Iowa DNR, Education and Outreach Section Supervisor
 Rachel Alliss, Iowa DNR, Hunter Education & Shooting Sports



Campaign Overview

We partnered with Brandt Information Services and Modern Legacy to create a marketing pathway that leads a recreational shooting enthusiast to buy a hunting license and/or pay the habitat fee. Highly targeted digital ads leveraged with pixel-tracking and utm-tagging tactics to measure view-through and click-through conversions generated from users who saw Iowa DNR's digital ads (current Iowa hunting license customers excluded) as well as click-through traffic generated from the campaign webpages. The complex digital advertising campaign used industry best practices to target users based on profile and online behaviors.

This campaign provided the opportunity to start a larger conversation with recreational shooters, National Archery in the Schools (NASP) participants, Scholastic Clay Target Program (SCTP) participants and general range users. The campaign met users where they are and tried to expose them to other opportunities with the Iowa DNR. Additionally, the campaign allowed the Iowa DNR to begin working with a local video production company that we have already hired again for additional projects to expand our content library for website, email, social and digital ads.

Campaign Goal

Our campaign goal was to utilize highly targeted marketing efforts to drive target audiences through the consumer life-cycle from recreational shooting participants to buying a hunting license and/or paying the habitat fee and ultimately to a hunting experience. Digital ads (live March 15- May 15) and video assets used imagery and messages most relevant to the specific target audience to create a personalized experience to connect with them on their level.

Metrics

Facebook Prospecting Ads Performance

| | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Spend: \$12,915 | Impressions: 2,550,545 | CPM: \$5.06 |
| Clicks: 7,188 | CTR: 0.3% | CPC: \$1.80 |
| Conversions: 741 | Revenue: \$30,586 | ROAS: 7.1 |

Facebook Retargeting Ads Performance

| | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Spend: \$1,286 | Impressions: 106,562 | CPM: \$12.07 |
| Clicks: 317 | CTR: 0.7% | CPC: \$4.06 |
| Conversions: 77 | Revenue: \$3,448 | ROAS: 2.7 |

Google Display Ads

| | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Cost: \$1,957 | Impressions: 770,238 | Clicks: 1,510 |
| All Conversions: 133 | View-through Conv.: 110 | Click Conversions: 23 |
| Conversion Rate: 1.52% | Revenue: \$5,888 | ROAS: 3.0 |

YouTube Ads

| | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Cost: \$148 | Impressions: 5,418 | Video Views: 1,162 |
| Video View Rate: 21.45% | Clicks: 5 | Revenue: \$0.00 |

Web Page Views

| Web URL | March Pageviews | April Pageviews | May Pageviews |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| https://www.iowadnr.gov/Things-to-Do/Pick-Your-Path | 751 | 186 | 125 |
| www.iowadnr.gov/Things-to-Do/Pick-Your-Path/NASP-to-Hunting | 317 | 30 | 21 |
| https://www.iowadnr.gov/Things-to-Do/Pick-Your-Path/SCTP-to-Hunting | 304 | 15 | 5 |
| https://www.iowadnr.gov/Things-to-Do/Pick-Your-Path/Recreational-Shooting-to-Hunting | 219 | 26 | 15 |

Email Results

| Target Audience | Date Sent | Total Sent | Total Opens | Unique Opens | Total Clicks | Unique Clicks |
|-----------------------------|------------|------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Iowa Shooting Range patrons | 04/01/2021 | 994 | 648 | 361 (38%) | 44 | 41 (4%) |
| NASP participants | 04/01/2021 | 5,355 | 2,279 | 1393 (29%) | 205 | 179 (4%) |
| SCTP participants | 04/01/2021 | 4,219 | 1,576 | 1027 (25%) | 79 | 72 (2%) |

Call to Action

The call to action of the digital ads drove users to an Iowa DNR webpage created specific for each target audience with imagery and video assets, a link to buy a license, and tips to get started hunting such as places to hunt and shoot and season dates and regulations. The prospecting ads (finding the people for the first time) drove users to the Iowa DNR campaign webpages. The DNR campaign webpages had pixels on the pages so that once the user visited the webpage and saw all the resources, the retargeting ads drove the users straight to the license login webpage.

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

DNR Online Services | Subscribe to Email Updates
Iowa Outdoor Magazine | News | Events | Contact Us

HOME HUNTING FISHING THINGS TO DO PLACES TO GO CONSERVATION ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ABOUT DNR

THINGS TO DO > PICK YOUR PATH > NASP TO HUNTING

Pick Your Path - NASP to Hunting, Iowa DNR

Watch on YouTube

Learn about the DNR's COVID-19 response and how the current health emergency is impacting DNR facilities, services and events.

Get Involved in the Outdoors
Enjoy the fresh air, experience the amazing sights and make connections that you can share with family and friends forever. Shooting archery in NASP is an easy transition to hunting. You already have the skills to safely shoot a bow, now add an extra outlet for your archery skills. Get involved in the outdoors - buy your license today! Your license purchase helps fund conservation, habitat and safety initiatives in Iowa, creating plentiful hunting and fishing opportunities across the state.

BUY YOUR LICENSE

PLACES TO HUNT AND SHOOT
Places to Hunt and Shoot
It's easy to find the perfect spot for any hunting adventure with more than 700,000 acres of land open to public hunting in Iowa. Find a nearby shooting range to practice shooting safely and conveniently.

SEASON DATES & REGULATIONS
Season Dates & Regulations
Get the most up-to-date hunting season dates, shooting hours and regulations before you go hunting.

LEARN TO HUNT
Learn to Hunt
Great learning opportunities and resources to help you get started hunting.

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

DNR Online Services | Subscribe to Email Updates
Iowa Outdoor Magazine | News | Events | Contact Us

HOME HUNTING FISHING THINGS TO DO PLACES TO GO CONSERVATION ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ABOUT DNR

THINGS TO DO > PICK YOUR PATH > SCTP TO HUNTING

Pick Your Path - SCTP to Hunting, Iowa DNR

Watch on YouTube

Learn about the DNR's COVID-19 response and how the current health emergency is impacting DNR facilities, services and events.

Get Involved in the Outdoors
The shooting skills you learn in SCTP can prepare you to go hunting. If you are a coach or member on your trap shooting team, they'd love to find a person to take you out hunting. It's about getting outdoors, making connections and creating memories. Get involved in the outdoors - buy your license today! Your license purchase helps fund conservation, habitat and safety initiatives in Iowa, creating plentiful hunting and fishing opportunities across the state.

BUY YOUR LICENSE

PLACES TO HUNT AND SHOOT
Places to Hunt and Shoot
It's easy to find the perfect spot for any hunting adventure with more than 700,000 acres of land open to public hunting in Iowa. Find a nearby shooting range to practice shooting safely and conveniently.

SEASON DATES & REGULATIONS
Season Dates & Regulations
Get the most up-to-date hunting season dates, shooting hours and regulations before you go hunting.

LEARN TO HUNT
Learn to Hunt
Great learning opportunities and resources to help you get started hunting.

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

DNR Online Services | Subscribe to Email Updates
Iowa Outdoor Magazine | News | Events | Contact Us

HOME HUNTING FISHING THINGS TO DO PLACES TO GO CONSERVATION ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ABOUT DNR

THINGS TO DO > PICK YOUR PATH > RECREATIONAL SHOOTING TO HUNTING

Pick Your Path - Shooting Range to Hunting, Iowa DNR

Watch on YouTube

Learn about the DNR's COVID-19 response and how the current health emergency is impacting DNR facilities, services and events.

Get Involved in the Outdoors
One of the most rewarding things you can do in your life is to share experiences with your friends and family. The sense of community you feel at the range can also be found in the field. Hunting is a great way to experience nature. It's not just about the harvest. It's about getting outdoors, making connections and creating memories. Get involved in the outdoors - buy your license today! Your license purchase helps fund conservation, habitat and safety initiatives in Iowa, creating plentiful hunting and fishing opportunities across the state.

BUY YOUR LICENSE

PLACES TO HUNT AND SHOOT
Places to Hunt and Shoot
It's easy to find the perfect spot for any hunting adventure with more than 700,000 acres of land open to public hunting in Iowa. Find a nearby shooting range to practice shooting safely and conveniently.

SEASON DATES & REGULATIONS
Season Dates & Regulations
Get the most up-to-date hunting season dates, shooting hours and regulations before you go hunting.

LEARN TO HUNT
Learn to Hunt
Great learning opportunities and resources to help you get started hunting.

Target Audiences

- National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) past participants (male and female age 10-24) and their families (email list)
- Iowa Scholastic Clay Target Program (SCTP) past participants (male and female age 10-24) and their families (email list)
- General recreational shooters visiting DNR-owned shooting ranges (male and female aged 16 and older), along with participants at privately owned ranges that have agreed to partner on this effort (geofencing and select range email lists)
- Look-a-like audience - custom Facebook look-a-like audiences for each target audience to show the digital ads to recreational shooting participants who did not have a current hunting license.

Paid Placements

Budget

| Campaign Strategy | Spend | Revenue | ROI |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Video Production | \$30,000 | N/A | N/A |
| Facebook Ads (Mar 15 - Apr 30) | \$14,201.49 | \$34,034 | 2.4 |
| Google Display Ads (Mar 30 - Apr 30) | \$1,957 | \$5,888 | 3.0 |
| Youtube Ads (Mar 15 - Apr 30) | \$148 | \$0.00 | 0 |
| MGH Agency Fees | \$3,625 | N/A | N/A |
| | \$49,931.49 | \$39,922.00 | 0.85* |

***2.0 ROI if not including video production costs**

Iowa DNR decided to reserve their \$5,000 contribution for a fall digital campaign when there are more plentiful hunting opportunities across the state and the “go hunting” messaging is more relevant to the target audience. We will implement lessons learned into our ad placement strategy and send a report amendment to ACI later this fall after our ad run is completed to share new results.

Campaign Strategy

Facebook Ads

We shifted the retargeting ad funds over to prospecting ads on April 19th due to the high cost per purchase. Before the campaign was paused it generated almost 4,000 video views at 100% and reached over 9,000 users. The shooting range locations and creative were the top performers reaching almost 250,000 users and generating a total of 737 purchases for \$16.99 per purchase, \$30,429 in revenue and a 2.43 ROAS. NASP and SCTP overall received a much smaller portion of the budget due to performance and the likelihood of target conversion. These audiences saw 14 total purchases for \$533. The SCTP ads were flagged twice for review by Facebook because of the firearm imagery which resulted in a loss of approximately three weeks of ad exposure during the campaign.

Google Display Ads

Returns started fairly high as a result of low spends and the purchases of users who were lower in the funnel to start. As the campaign moved beyond those already likely to convert, we saw a decline in ROAS. Performance leveled out for the remainder of the campaign. Display campaigns reached \$1,957 in spend and returned a 3.0 ROAS. Overall \$5,888 in revenue is attributed to display campaigns with a 1.52% conversion rate.

Youtube Ads

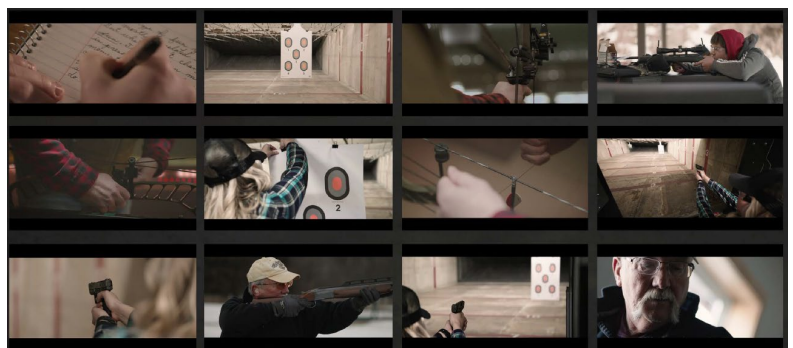
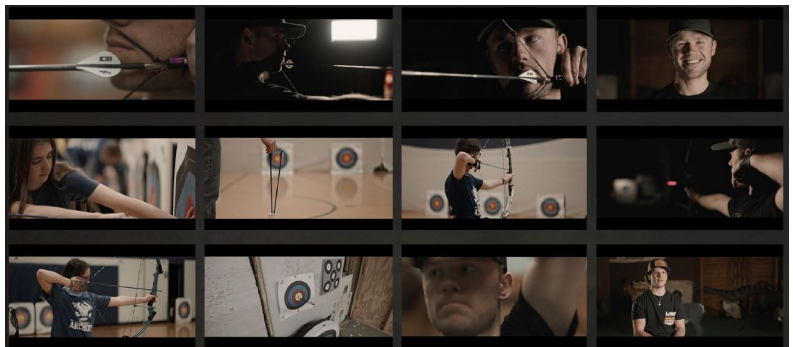
YouTube ads were added on April 30th to reach additional members of the provided SCTP email list due to the Facebook ad suspension. The YouTube campaign ran for 16 days; 20.59% of our viewers watched the entire video (played to 100%). While we did not generate any revenue, we are tracking one user who saw the ad, did not click, and later made it to the Create Customer page on GoOutdoorsIowa.com.

Images and Graphic Treatment



Videos

(Video Passwords = dnr)


- [Anthem Film](#)
- [Image Library](#) (IowaDNR2021)
- SCTP
 - [Full length film](#)
 - [30 second film](#)
 - [15 second film](#)
- NASP
 - [Full length film](#)
 - [30 second film](#)
 - [15 second film](#)
- Ranges
 - [Full length film](#)
 - [30 second film](#)
 - [15 second film](#)



Digital Ads


Iowa Department of Natural Resources  Sponsored · 

Hunting provides an extra outlet for amateur archers that are already safely learning how to shoot a bow.




WWW.IOWADNR.GOV
OFFICIAL IOWA DNR LICENSE

[SHOP NOW](#)



Iowa Department of Natural Resources  Sponsored · 

Hunting is a great way to get out and be one with nature.



IOWADNR.GOV
OFFICIAL IOWA DNR LICENSE

[SHOP NOW](#)

Iowa Department of Natural Resources  Sponsored · 

The adventure can't begin until you get your license, so get yours online today.




WWW.IOWADNR.GOV
OFFICIAL IOWA DNR LICENSE

[SHOP NOW](#)


Emails

GET INVOLVED IN THE OUTDOORS



BUY A LICENSE AT GoOutdoorIowa.com

One of the most rewarding things you can do in your life is to share experiences with your friends and family. The sense of community you feel at the range can also be found in the field.



[Scan your hunting journey today!](#)


Hunting is a great way to experience nature. It's not just about the harvest; it's about getting outdoors, making connections, and creating memories.

[Sign up today!](#) for a hunter education class or field day. Lots of classes and field days are offered across Iowa. If you are 18 and older, you can take the [online version of the hunter education course](#). Iowa law requires that anyone born after January 1, 1972 must be certified in hunter education before they are eligible to purchase an Iowa hunting license.

[Get certified and start hunting!](#)

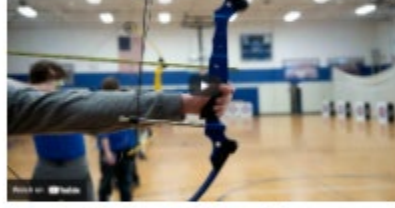
WWW.IOWADNR.GOV

GET INVOLVED IN THE OUTDOORS



BUY A LICENSE AT GoOutdoorIowa.com

The ultimate joy of shooting archery is being outdoors and sharing it with others. The time you spend in the field with friends is an experience you can't get anywhere else. Get out and enjoy all Iowa's great outdoor has to offer.



[Scan your hunting journey today!](#)

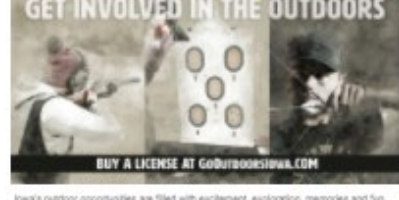
Shooting archery in NASGP is an easy transition to hunting. You already have the skills to safely shoot a bow, now add an extra outlet for your archery skills.

[Sign up today!](#) for a hunter education class or field day. Lots of classes and field days are offered across Iowa. If you are 18 and older, you can take the [online version of the hunter education course](#). Iowa law requires that anyone born after January 1, 1972 must be certified in hunter education before they are eligible to purchase an Iowa hunting license.

[Get certified and start hunting!](#)


WWW.IOWADNR.GOV

GET INVOLVED IN THE OUTDOORS



BUY A LICENSE AT GoOutdoorIowa.com

Iowa's outdoor opportunities are filled with excitement, exploration, memories and fun. The ultimate joy of being outdoors is sharing it with others. Enjoy the fresh air, experience the amazing sights and find your place of peace.



[Scan your hunting journey today!](#)

The shooting skills you learned in SCTP can prepare you to go hunting. Hunting is a great way to experience nature. The best part about hunting is the memories you make.

[Sign up today!](#) for a hunter education class or field day. Lots of classes and field days are offered across Iowa. If you are 18 and older, you can take the [online version of the hunter education course](#). Iowa law requires that anyone born after January 1, 1972 must be certified in hunter education before they are eligible to purchase an Iowa hunting license.

[Get certified and start hunting!](#)

WWW.IOWADNR.GOV

Owned Media

We created four new webpages for this campaign on the Iowa DNR website. The [Pick Your Path webpage](#) helped guide organic users to their prospective pathway - [NASP to hunting](#), [SCTP to hunting](#) or [recreational shooting to hunting](#). Each pathway had its own webpage with video assets specific to the target audience, along with a link to buy a license and tips to get started hunting such as places to hunt and shoot and season dates and regulations. We will continue to link to these webpages this summer and fall in emails and digital ads.

An email to each audience was sent April 1 with the call of action to sign up for a hunter education course and start hunting. The link to the Go Outdoors Events Registration webpage received 76 unique clicks (49 from NASP participants). Campaign messaging, imagery and video assets were incorporated into the emails to strengthen the campaign's reach and success. We plan to continue this email campaign in the summer and expand it in the fall to include first time hunting license buyers whom we converted from this past spring's effort into license buyers through the successful strategies of this campaign.

Future Efforts

Iowa DNR now has some incredible hunting and recreational shooting video footage and images to use for years to come. This will create an established customer journey from recreational shooting participant to license holder that will be a replicable evergreen campaign, continually expanding our agency's reach and driving revenue.

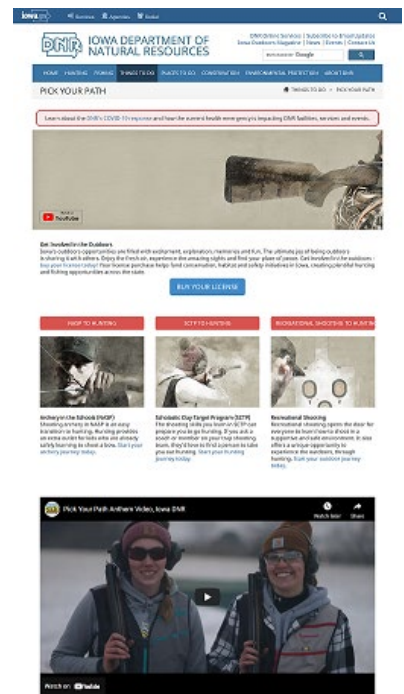
In the fall hunting season, we will repurpose the videos created for email campaigns as well as digital ads for the shooting range geofencing efforts and lapsed customer list matching.

Iowa DNR has a strong history of partnering with local retailers, nonprofit organizations and private shooting ranges for outdoor recreation events and learn to hunt, trap and shoot workshops. To extend our campaign reach and help our partners maintain a rich content calendar and library, we will put together a partner toolkit with email templates, video assets, imagery, web banners and sample social media posts. Our partners can easily incorporate the campaign message and call to action into current communications to their customers and members.

Lessons Learned

The shooting range locations and creative were the top performers and this audience engaged the most with the email sent in April (38% open rate). Both of our manned shooting facilities see approximately 10,000 visitors annually, yet our email list of this audience is considerably smaller than the other two audiences. We need to adjust our check-in procedures at our manned shooting facilities to ensure we gather visitor emails.

Targeting NASP and SCTP participant email lists for digital ads was successful for brand awareness. To determine if our digital marketing efforts will lead to last touchpoint conversions, we need a longer campaign schedule with more hunting seasons open. We are predicting we will see more conversions from SCTP participants when dove, upland and waterfowl seasons are open. We are predicting we will see more conversions from NASP participants when archery deer season is open this fall.



The Sctp audience was the hardest audience to convert, especially with the smaller audience list to work off of, but the shooting range geo-fencing and interest group performed well. The Sctp ads were flagged twice for review by Facebook because of the firearm imagery which resulted in a loss of approximately three weeks of ad exposure during the campaign.

Only two hunting seasons were open in Iowa during the campaign dates - Spring turkey and coyote. First time hunters are not likely to get started with turkey and coyote. Continuing the campaign into the fall when most hunting seasons are open should increase conversion rates with more opportunities for recreational shooting enthusiasts to get outdoors and start hunting.

Summary

As one of the first targeted marketing efforts to create a pathway for recreational shooters to hunting, we were pleased with the overall results of this effort. The still and video assets we were able to have produced well exceeded our expectations and will be valuable resources for our agency to use for many years to come. Even though the timing of this grant period wasn't ideal with only having turkey and coyote hunting seasons available, we still were able to yield some positive results and valuable lessons learned to optimize our efforts later this summer into fall when we will have abundant hunting opportunities for these potential new hunters to explore.

Overall, if you remove the video production costs, our campaign yielded a 2.0 ROI. This clearly shows us if we can continue to improve upon collection of our state's recreational shooters email addresses (especially at our DNR owned shooting ranges) we will be able to make successful conversions.

Coming from an agency that has minimal funding available for marketing efforts, having opportunities like the ACI Marketing Grants is essential for us to be able to advance our R3 efforts in Iowa. This opportunity allowed us to target an audience (recreational shooters) whom we have been wanting to cross promote hunting opportunities to for a while, but didn't have the funding to do so. It has not only allowed us to begin a critical conversation with these important users in our state, this opportunity has also allowed us to demonstrate the importance and value of investing in marketing and developing abundant, professionally curated assets to utilize to meet audiences where they are at.

Another huge benefit of being able to receive a grant opportunity like this and being able to funnel the funds to our licensing provider, was that it considerably eased the burden typically faced by agency staff to navigate state procurement procedures and the additional time it takes to go through the various bidding processes to secure a production company and make larger more diverse ad buys. This allowed our staff, license vendor and the production company to begin conversations and planning much earlier in the process, thus maximizing our efforts during this granting period.