ADSTAGE

Paid Media

Q4 2018

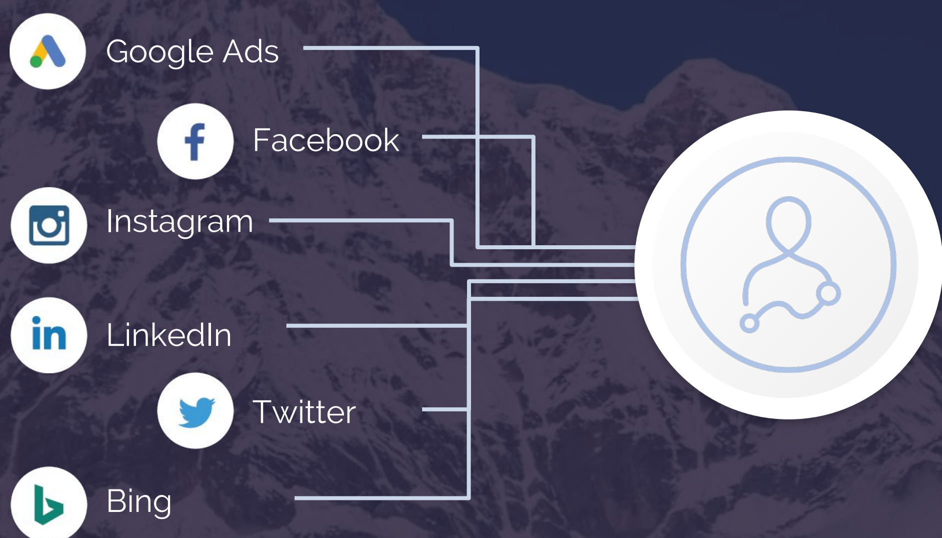
BENCHMARK REPORT

Introduction

Are you paying too much for a click on a Facebook ad? What's a good conversion rate on LinkedIn?

These questions are top-of-mind for marketers tasked with generating leads in any industry. At AdStage, we believe data should be used to drive decisions that will grow your business. To help you set the benchmarks for success, we've aggregated data from 13.3 billion impressions and nearly 136 million clicks powered by the AdStage platform.

We used this data to find network-specific benchmarks for paid search and paid social. Our benchmark report includes AdStage data from the following ad networks:



In addition to benchmark data, you will also find trend analysis and insights from business leaders in this edition of the AdStage Benchmark Report.

Keep in Touch with AdStage

To stay current on the most recent trends in paid marketing and to receive the latest news about major digital ad networks, follow us on Twitter @adstage and subscribe to our popular newsletter.

If you are interested in learning more about how AdStage technology can help your organization drive higher results for you paid marketing efforts, contact us at info@adstage.com,

Methodology

Benchmark metrics are representative of AdStage customers whose ad accounts are in USD currency. We make no claims that our benchmark metrics are indicators of a network's performance at large. Customers' ad account metrics are summarized at daily intervals. These summaries are further aggregated to determine the median performance at monthly and quarterly intervals.

Step 1
Sum metrics for each day across all ad accounts

date	account_id	clicks	impressions	spend
2018-12-01	1234xxx	13	2336	76.83
2018-12-01	2345xxx	15	713	41.069
2018-12-02	7890xxx	9	1014	65.559
2018-12-02	6789xxx	7	133	10.85

∑ ∑

Step 2
Calculate metrics using the day totals

fx *fx* *fx*

date	clicks	impressions	spend	ctr	cpc	cpm
2018-12-01	28	3049	117.90	0.0092	4.21	38.67
2018-12-02	16	1147	76.41	0.014	4.78	66.62

Step 3
Find the median value for the time period

date	ctr	cpc	cpm
Q 2018	0.012	4.50	52.65

ADSTAGE

Q4 2018

Contents

06 FACEBOOK

Q4 2018

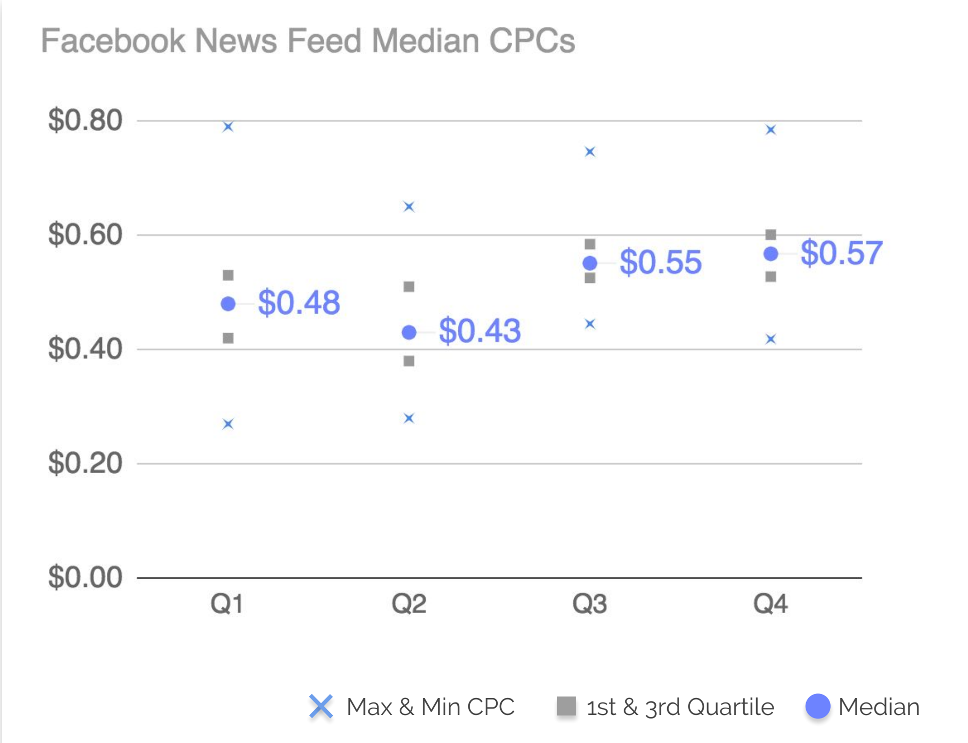
Facebook News Feed Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CPC

$0.57

2018



In Q4 2018, we analyzed over 4.5 billion ad impressions and over 67 million clicks for Facebook News Feed ads.

Median CPC continued to chart up, but only by 2 cents, ending Q4 at the most expensive it's been all year.

Key Takeaways

- CPC increased by 3.6% since Q3 2018
- CPC increased the same, by 3.6% year over year in Q4 2018

Q4 2018

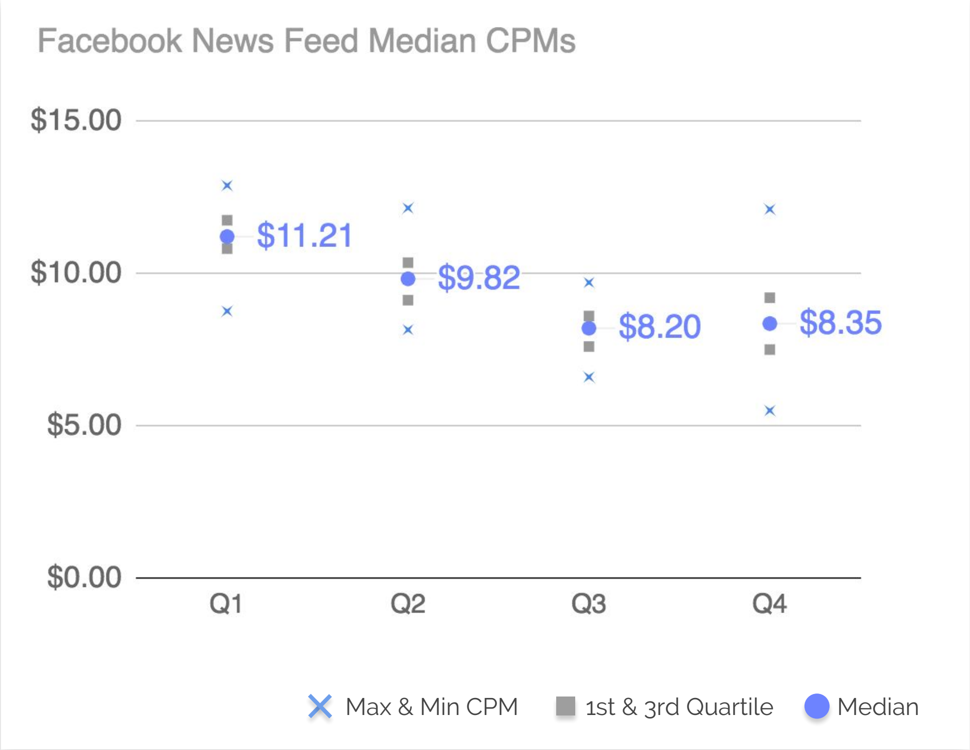
Facebook News Feed Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CPM

$8.35

2018



Of the 4.5 billion ad impressions and over 67 million clicks analyzed for Facebook News Feed ads, median CPM jumped slightly – 15 cents – from last quarter and is down a lot – $4.45 – compared to the same time last year.

Key Takeaways

- CPM increased by 0.7% since Q3 2018
- CPM decreased by 34.8% year over year in Q4 2018

Q4 2018

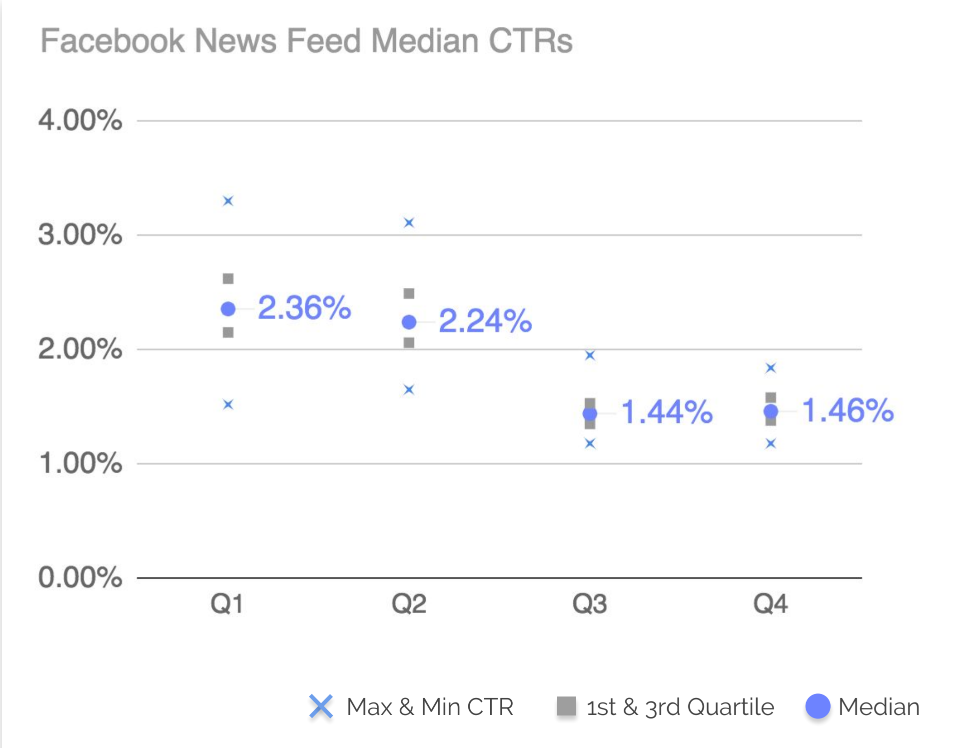
Facebook News Feed Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CTR

1.46%

2018



Median CTR for Facebook News Feed ads clicked up 2% from last quarter, but is still way down from Q4 last year, where it landed at 2.4%.

Key Takeaways

- CTR increased by 1.4% since Q3 2018
- CTR decreased by 38.7% year over year in Q4 2018

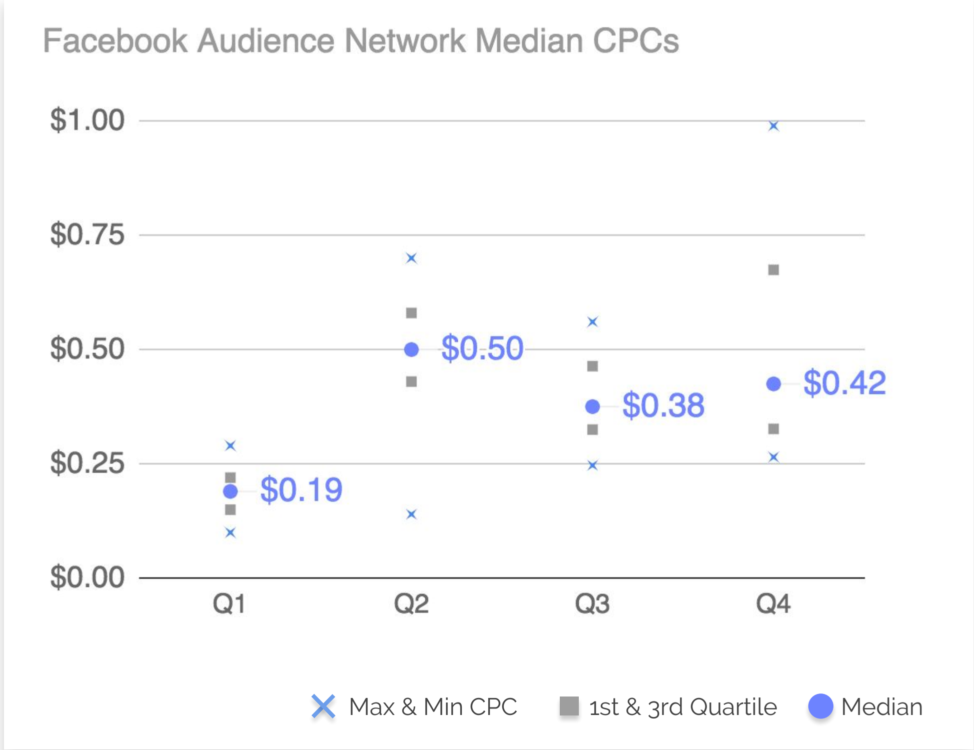
Facebook Audience Network Q4 Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CPC

$0.42

2018



In Q4 2018, we analyzed over 197 million ad impressions and nearly 2.7 million clicks for ads in Facebook's Audience Network.

Median CPC increased 4 cents from last quarter, is up 16 cents from where it ended Q4 last year.

Key Takeaways

- CPC increased by 10.5% since Q3 2018
- CPC increased by 61.6% year over year in Q4 2018

Q4 2018

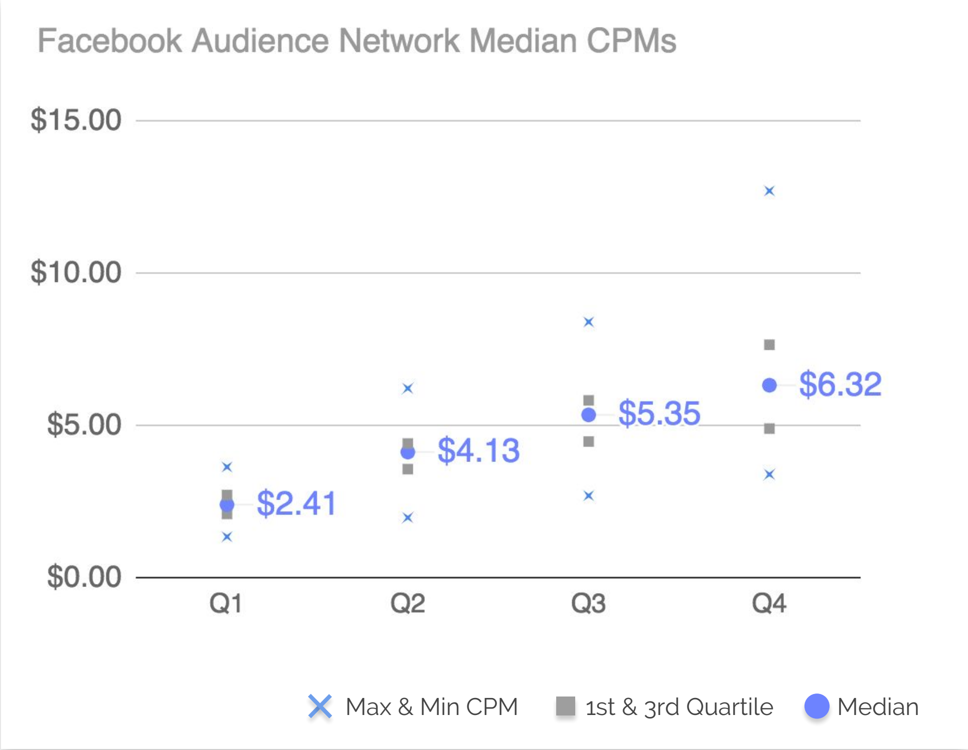
Facebook Audience Network Q4 Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CPM

$6.32

2018

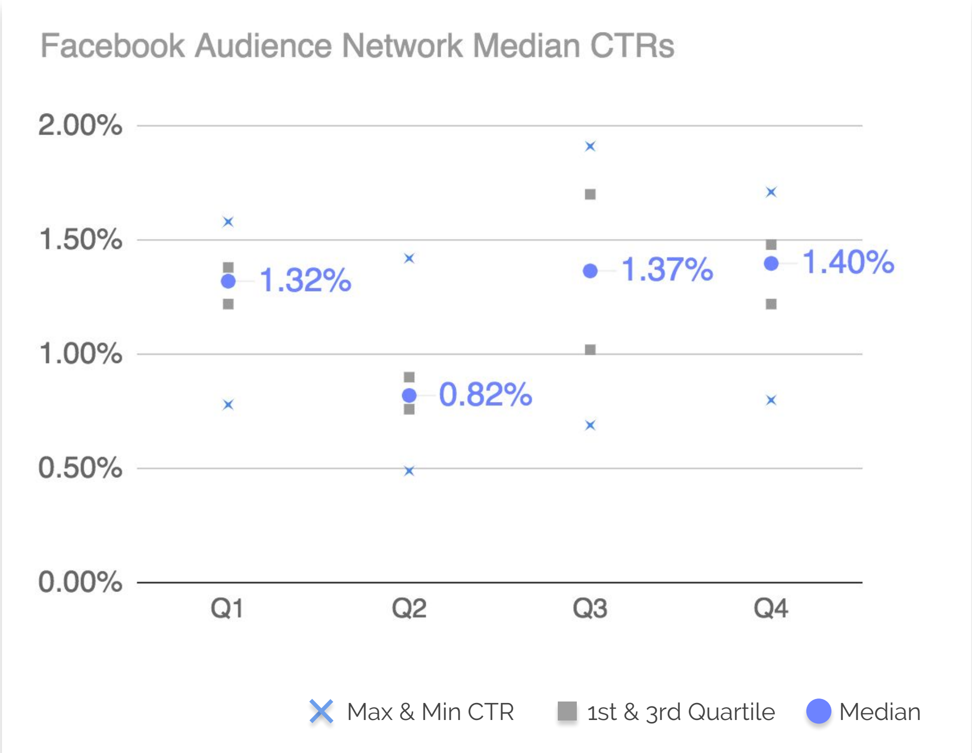


After analyzing over 197 million ad impressions and nearly 2.7 million clicks for ads in Facebook's Audience Network, we found that median CPM continued the upward climb it's been making all year, ending Q4 at the highest cost we've charted yet. We also calculated that median CPM is $2.52 more expensive than it was same time last year.

Key Takeaways

- CPM increased by 16.8% since Q2 2018
- CPM increased by 66.3% year over year in Q3 2018

Facebook Audience Network Q4 Benchmarks



Median CTR for ads in Facebook's Audience Network improved just .03% since last quarter, and is relatively the same from where it ended last year.

Key Takeaways

- CTR increased by 2.2% since Q3 2018
- CTR increased by 1.5% year over year in Q4 2018

Q4 2018

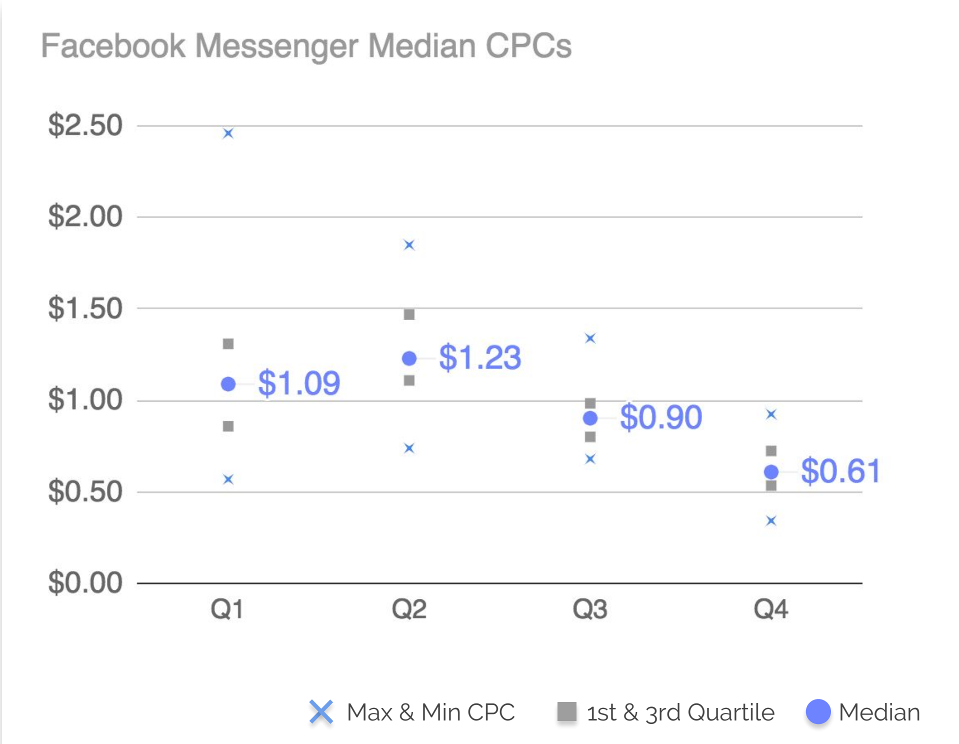
Facebook Messenger Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CPC

$0.61

2018



In Q4 2018, we analyzed nearly 129 million ad impressions and over 856,000 clicks for ads in Facebook Messenger.

Median CPC plunged 29 cents since last quarter, ending the year at a record low and down over 30% from where it was the same time last year.

Key Takeaways

- CPC decreased by 32.2% since Q3 2018
- CPC also decreased by 32.2% year over year in Q4 2018

Q4 2018

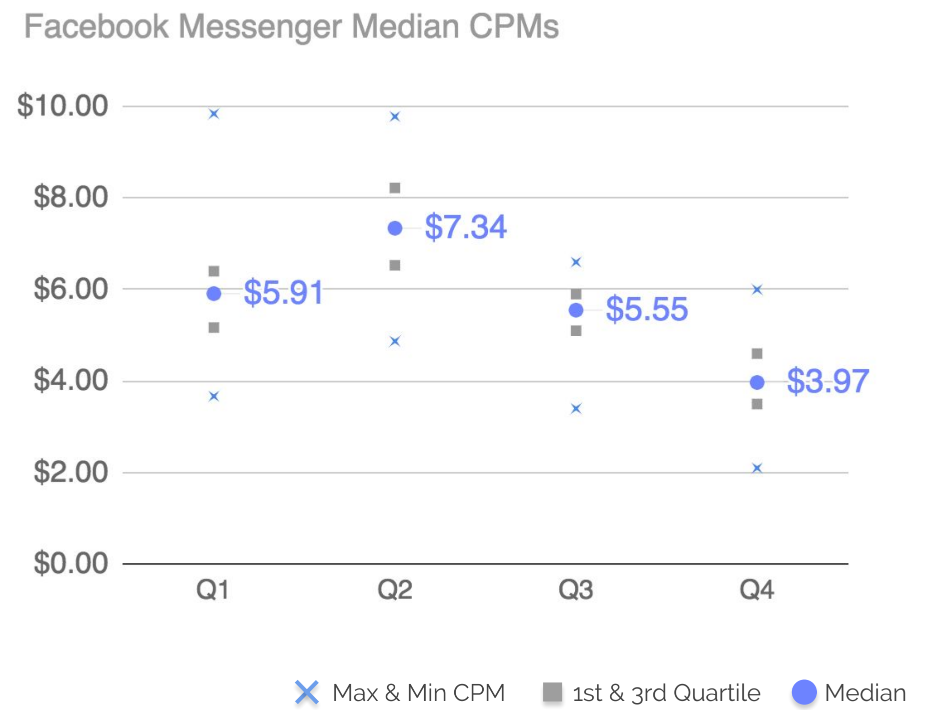
Facebook Messenger Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CPM

$3.97

2018



After analyzing nearly 129 million ad impressions and over 856,000 clicks for ads on Facebook Messenger, we found that median CPM dipped $1.58 from last quarter and is down significantly, $4.53, from Q4 last year.

Key Takeaways

- CPM decreased by 29.1% since Q3 2018
- CPM decreased by 53.3% year over year in Q4 2018

Q4 2018

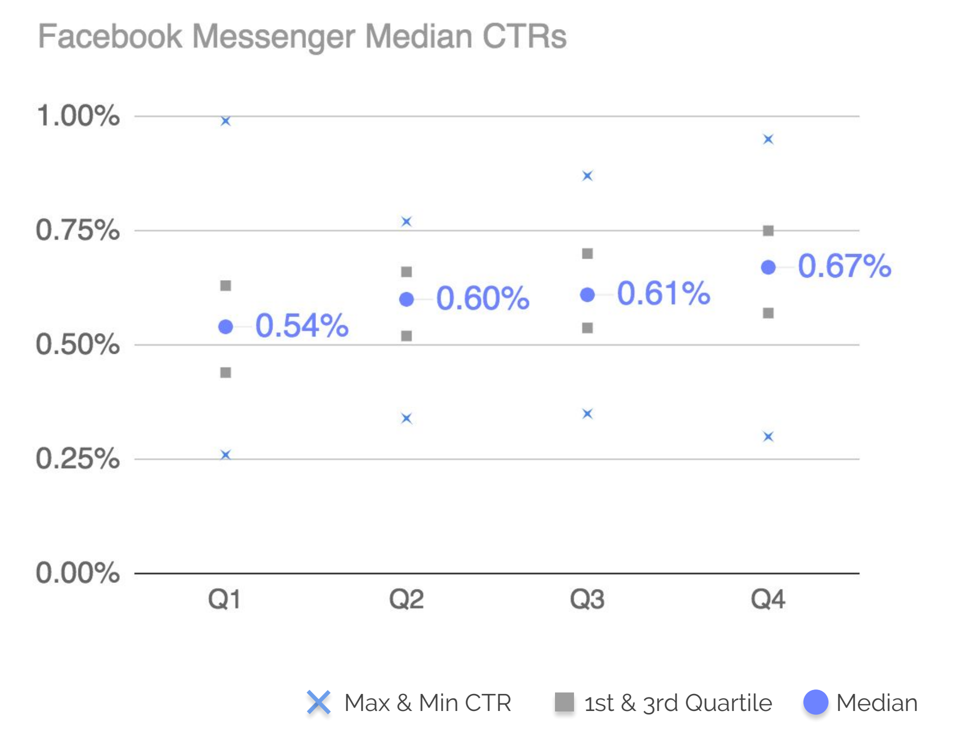
Facebook Messenger Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CTR

0.67%

2018



Median CTR for ads on Facebook Messenger jumped slightly from last quarter, but remains down 0.32% from Q4 2017.

Key Takeaways

- CTR increased by 9.8% since Q3 2018
- CTR decreased by 32.3% year over year in Q4 2018

16 INSTAGRAM

Q4 2018

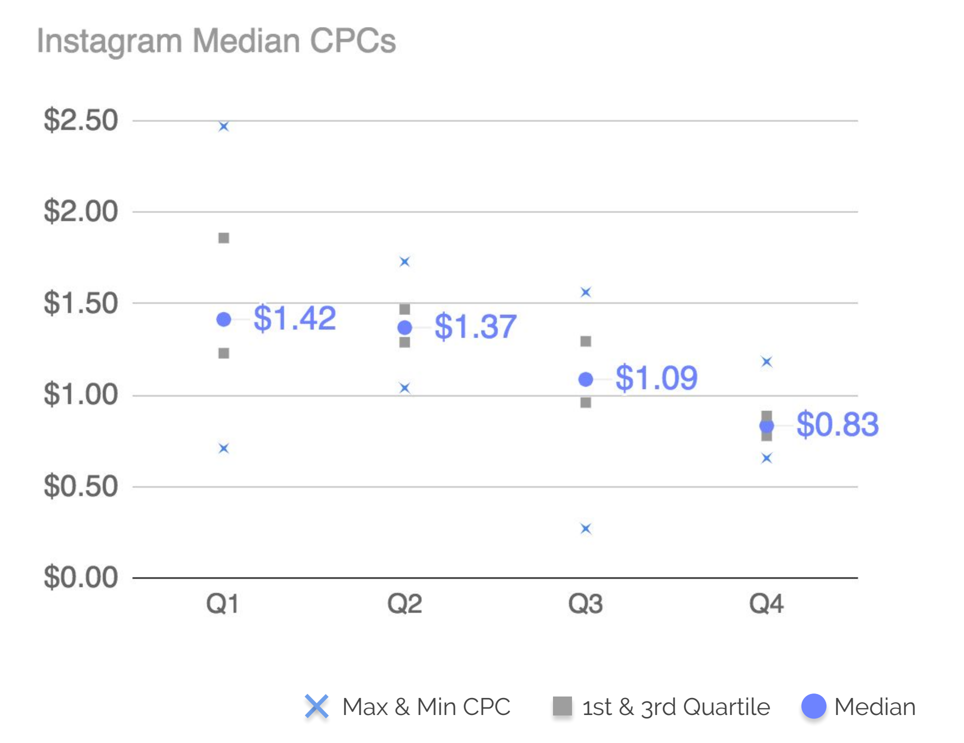
Instagram Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CPC

$0.83

2018



In Q4 2018, we analyzed over 2.2 billion ad impressions and over 14 million clicks for ads on Instagram.

Median CPC dropped 26 cents since last quarter to the lowest price we've ever recorded and is a whopping $4.22 cheaper than it was this same time last year.

Key Takeaways

- CPC decreased by 23.7% since Q3 2018
- CPC decreased by 80.3% year over year in Q4 2018

Q4 2018

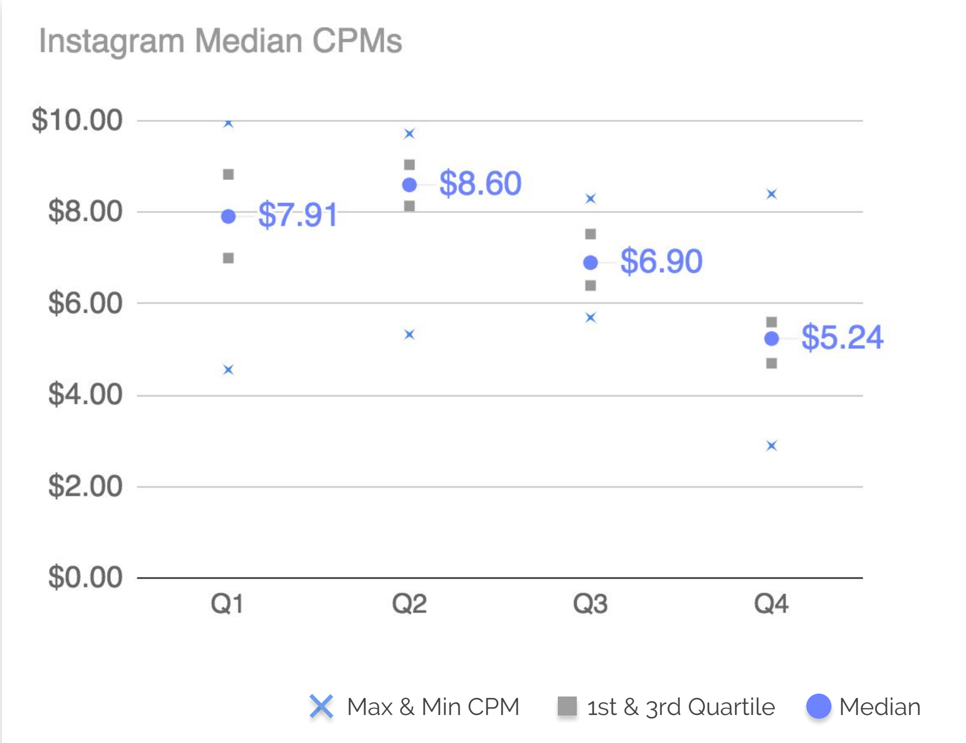
Instagram Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CPM

$5.24

2018



After analyzing over 2.2 billion ad impressions and over 14 million clicks for ads on Instagram, we found that median CPM dropped $1.66 from last quarter and is down over 50% from the its cost of over $11 in Q4 2017.

Key Takeaways

- CPM decreased by 24.8% since Q2 2018
- CPM decreased by 55.1% year over year in Q3 2018

ADSTAGE

Q4 2018

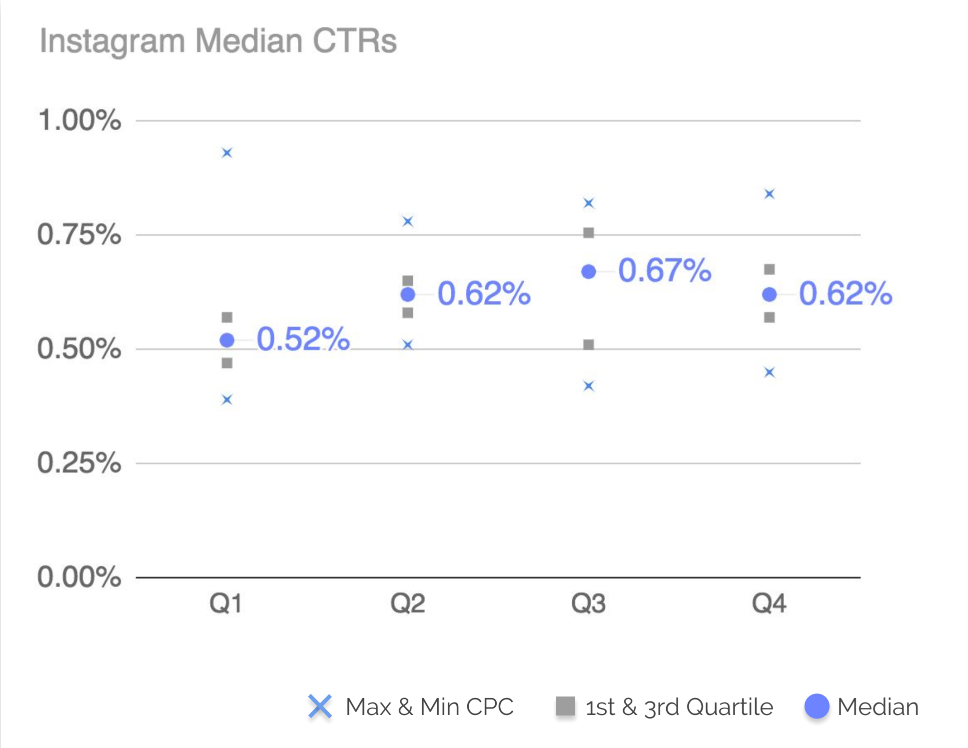
Instagram Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CTR

0.62%

2018



Median CTR for ads on Instagram dropped slightly from last quarter but soared from where it was last year when apparently almost no one was clicking any ads on Instagram.

Key Takeaways

- CTR decreased by 8.2% since Q3 2018
- CTR increased by 121.4% year over year in Q4 2018

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LINKEDIN

Q4 2018

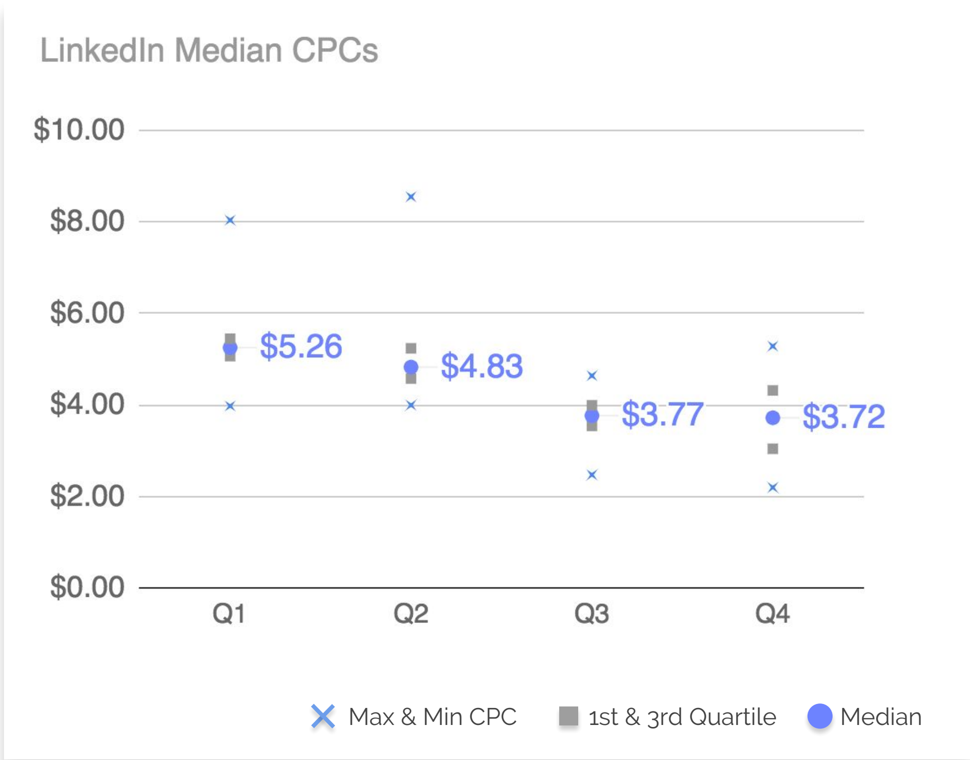
LinkedIn Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CPC

$3.72

2018



In Q4 2018, we analyzed over 2 billion ad impressions and over 5 million clicks for ads on LinkedIn.

Median CPC ended the year at the cheapest we've seen it, dropping 5 cents since last quarter and down $1.21 from where it was in Q4 2017.

Key Takeaways

- CPC decreased by 1.3% since Q3 2018
- CPC decreased by 24.5% year over year in Q4 2018

Q4 2018

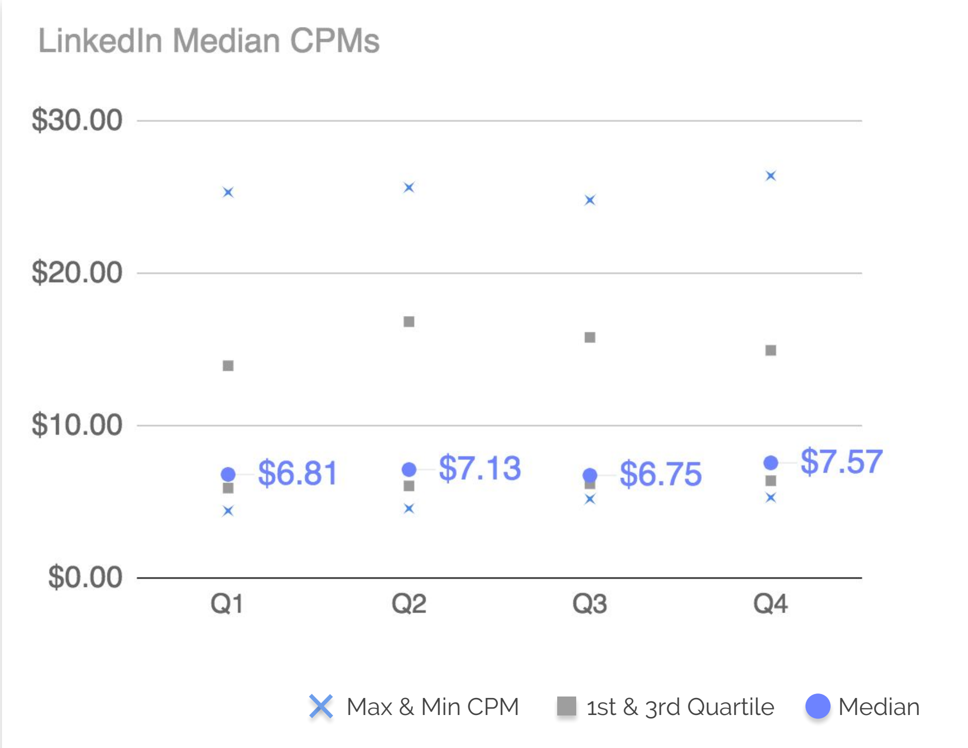
LinkedIn Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CPM

$7.57

2018



After analyzing over 2 billion ad impressions and over 5 million clicks for ads on LinkedIn, we found that CPM ended on a high note, jumping 82 cents from last quarter, but is down 46 cents from Q4 last year.

Key Takeaways

- CPM increased by 11.8% since Q2 2018
- CPM decreased by 5.7% year over year in Q3 2018

Q4 2018

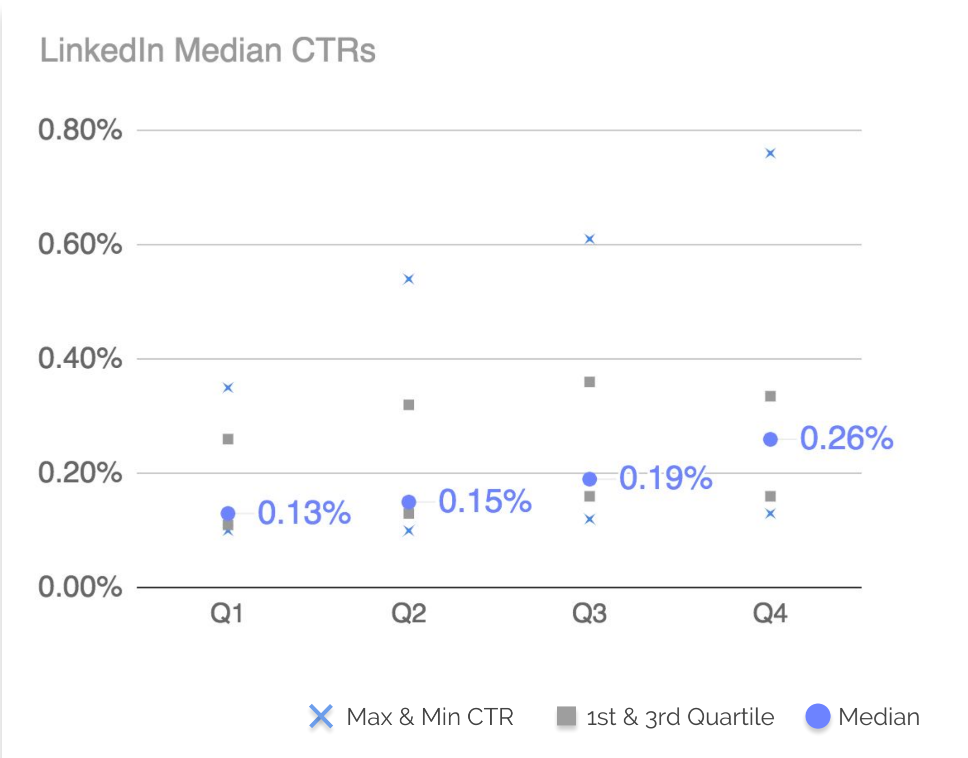
LinkedIn Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CTR

0.26%

2018



Median CTR for ads on LinkedIn ended high with an increase of .07% from last quarter, and is up .08% year over year.

Key Takeaways

- CTR increased by 36.7% since Q3 2018
- CTR increased by 44.4% year over year in Q4 2018

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TWITTER

Q4 2018

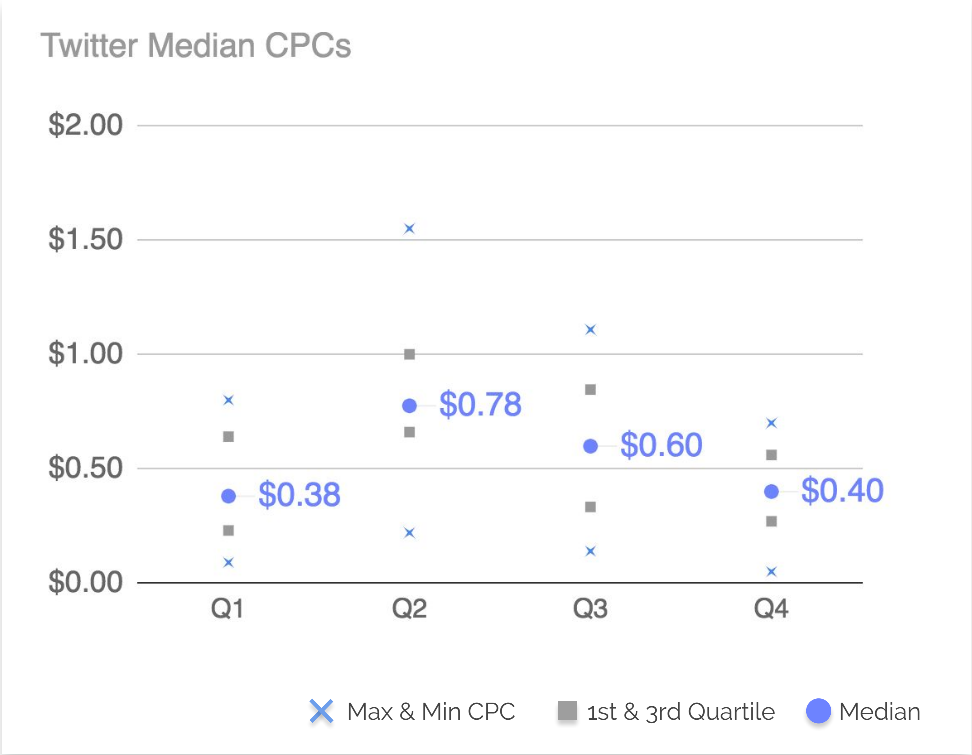
Twitter Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CPC

$0.40

2018



In Q4 2018, we analyzed nearly 96 million ad impressions and nearly 1.8 million clicks for ads on Twitter.

We found that median CPC dropped 20 cents from last quarter and is up 4 cents from where it was same time last year.

Key Takeaways

- CPC decreased by 33.5% since Q3 2018
- CPC increased by 11.1% year over year in Q4 2018

Q4 2018

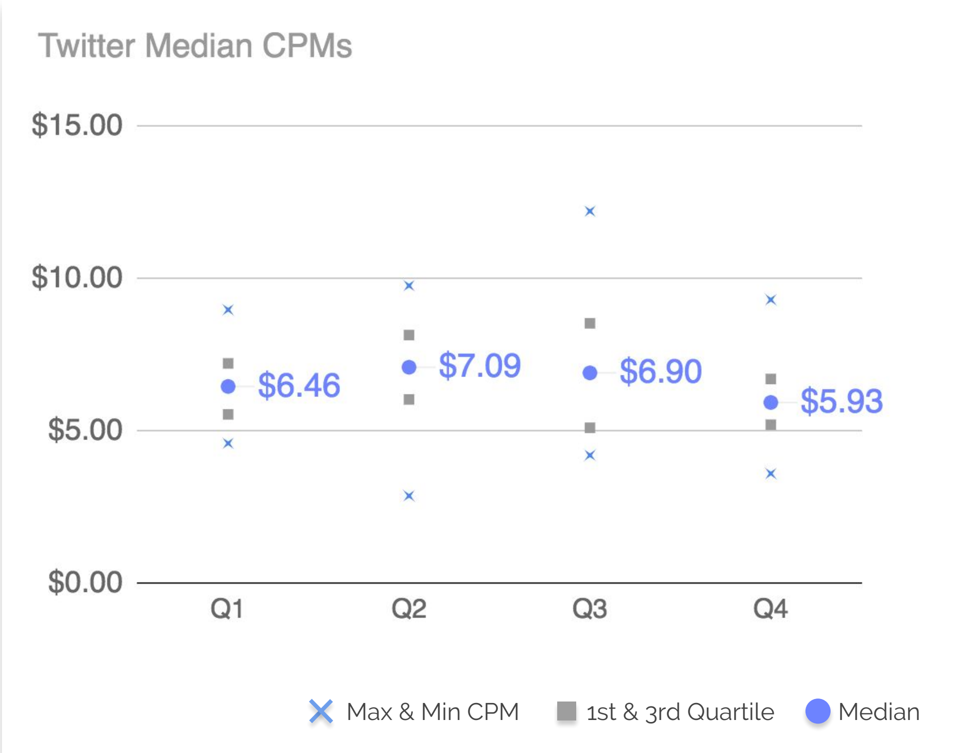
Twitter Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CPM

$5.93

2018



After analyzing nearly 96 million ad impressions and nearly 1.8 million clicks for ads on Twitter, we found that median CPM dropped nearly a dollar from last quarter, and is up 26 cents from where it was Q3 2018.

Key Takeaways

- CPM decreased by 14.9% since Q3 2018
- CPM increased by 4.6% year over year in Q4 2018

Q4 2018

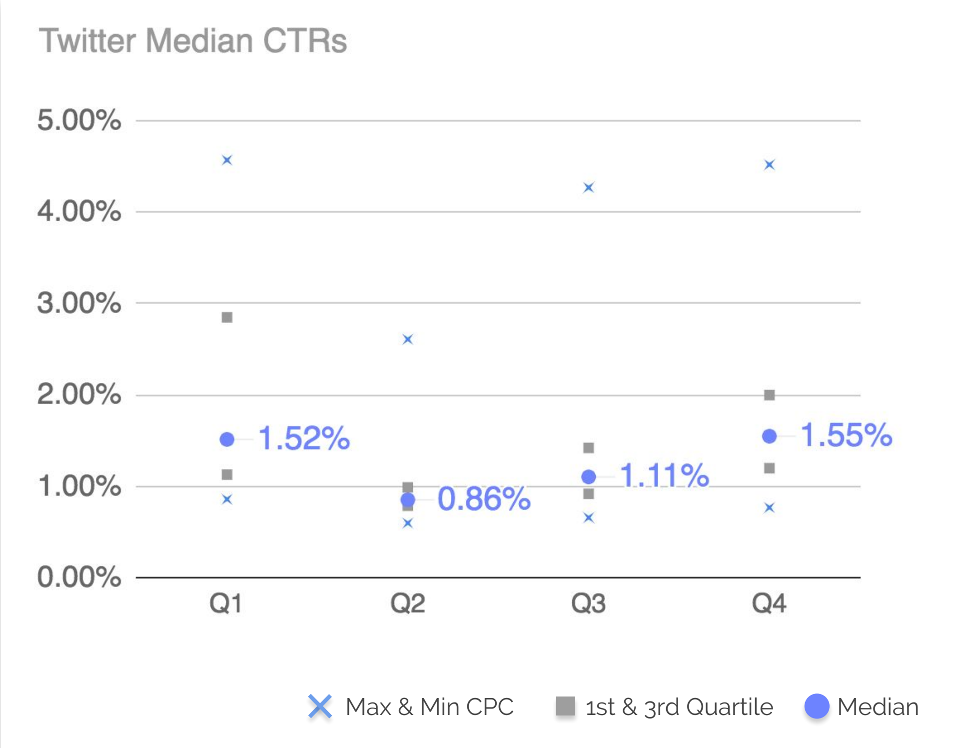
Twitter Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CTR

1.55%

2018



Median CTR for ads on Twitter rose 0.44% from where it was last quarter, but is relatively the same as it was in Q4 of last year.

Key Takeaways

- CTR increased by 40% since Q3 2018
- CTR decreased by 3.1% year over year in Q4 2018

28 GOOGLE ADS

Q4 2018

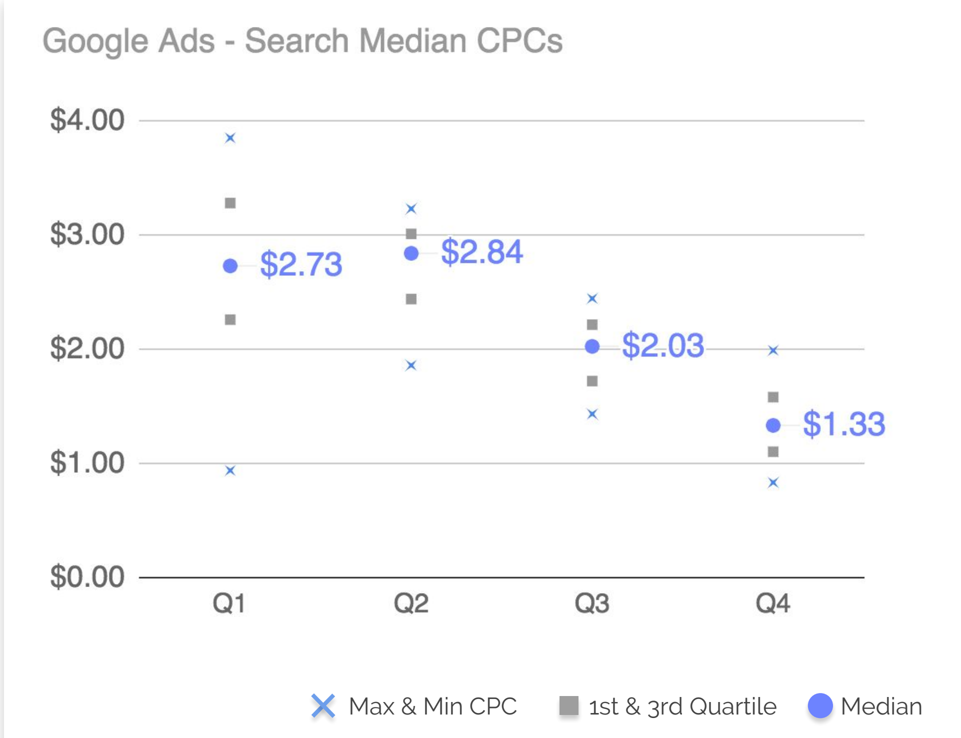
Google Ads Search Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CPC

$1.33

2018



In Q4 2018, we analyzed over 1.25 billion ad impressions and over 31 million clicks for ads on Google Search.

Median CPC dropped 70 cents from last quarter, ending 2018 at the cheapest it's been all year, but is up 42 cents from where it was same time last year.

Key Takeaways

- CPC decreased by 33.8% since Q3 2018
- CPC increased by 46.2% year over year in Q4 2018

Q4 2018

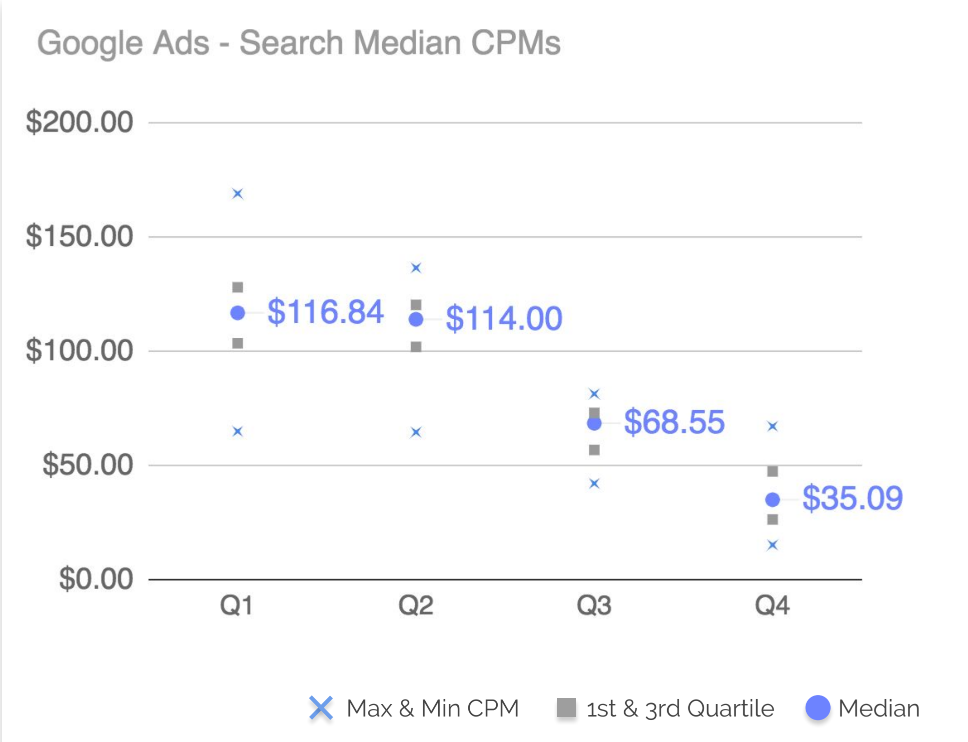
Google Ads Search Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CPM

$35.09

2018



After analyzing over 1.25 billion ad impressions and over 31 million clicks for ads on Google Search, we found that median CPM continued to plunge, dropping $33 since last quarter, and ending the year significantly lower than at the start of it. Median CPM also remains down from the same time last year, when it ended 2017 at $78.69.

Key Takeaways

- CPM decreased by 49.2% since Q3 2018
- CPM decreased by 55.4% year over year in Q4 2018

Q4 2018

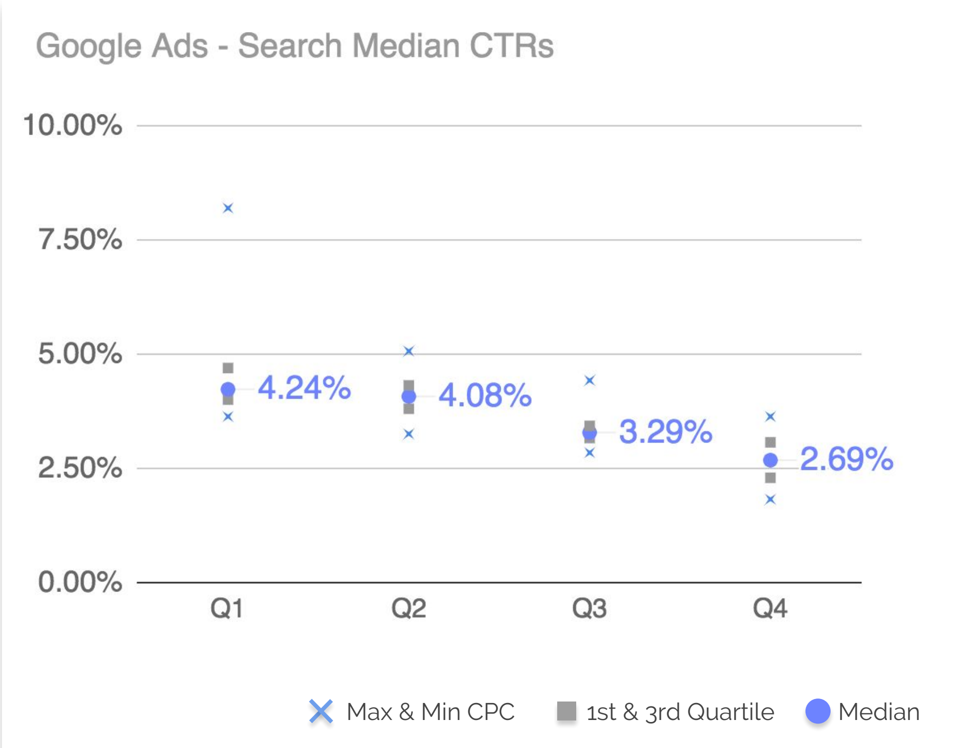
Google Ads Search Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CTR

2.69%

2018



In Q4 2018, median CTR for ads on Google Search continued its downward slide, knocking 0.6% off its total. The last quarter of the year ended on a very low note in comparison to the same time last year, when median CTR was 5.6% higher.

Key Takeaways

- CTR decreased by 18.5% since Q3 2018
- CTR decreased by 67.5% year over year in Q4 2018

32 GOOGLE DISPLAY NETWORK

Q4 2018

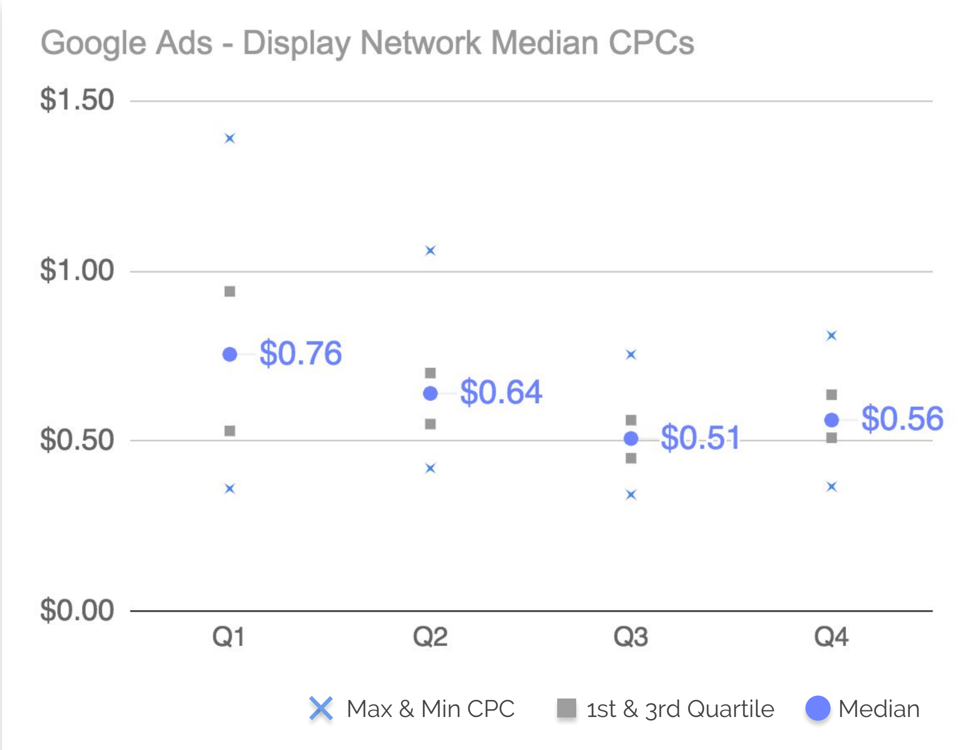
Google Ads Display Network Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CPC

$0.56

2018



In Q4 2018, we analyzed over 2.2 billion ad impressions and nearly 9 million clicks for ads on Google Display Network.

We found that median CPC added 5 cents to its total, and ended the year 5 cents cheaper than the same time last year.

Key Takeaways

- CPC increased by 9.8% since Q3 2018
- CPC decreased by 8.2% year over year in Q4 2018

Q4 2018

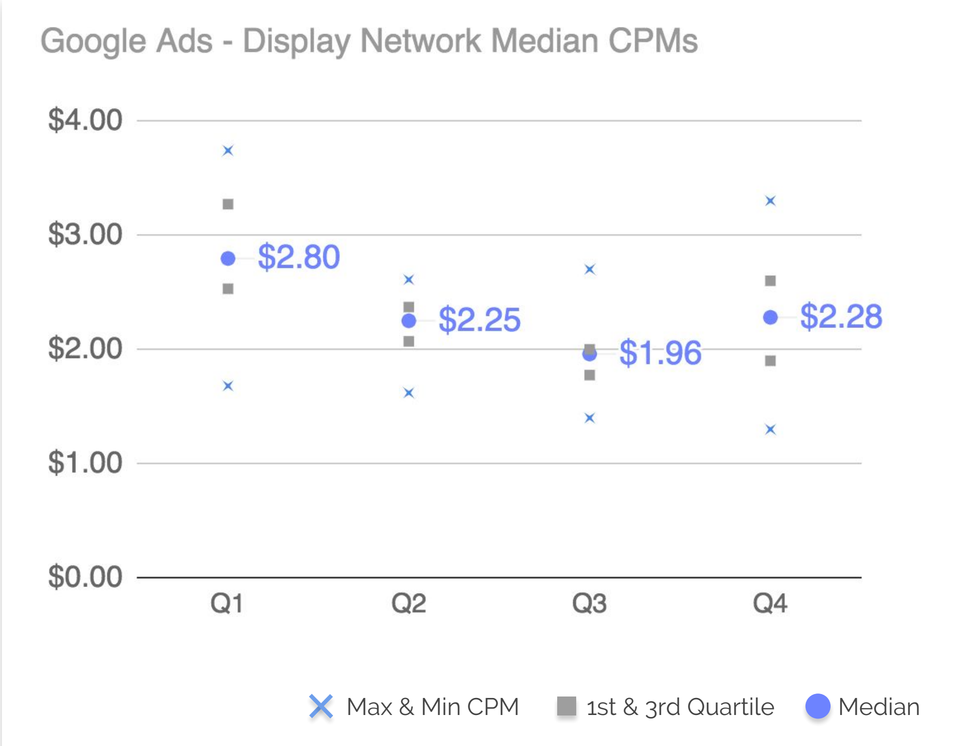
Google Ads Display Network Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CPM

$2.28

2018



After analyzing over 2.2 billion ad impressions and nearly 9 million clicks for ads on Google Display Network, we found that median CPM jumped up 13 cents from last quarter, but is 38 cents cheaper year over year.

Key Takeaways

- CPM increased by 16.3% since Q3 2018
- CPM decreased by 14.3% year over year in Q4 2018

Q4 2018

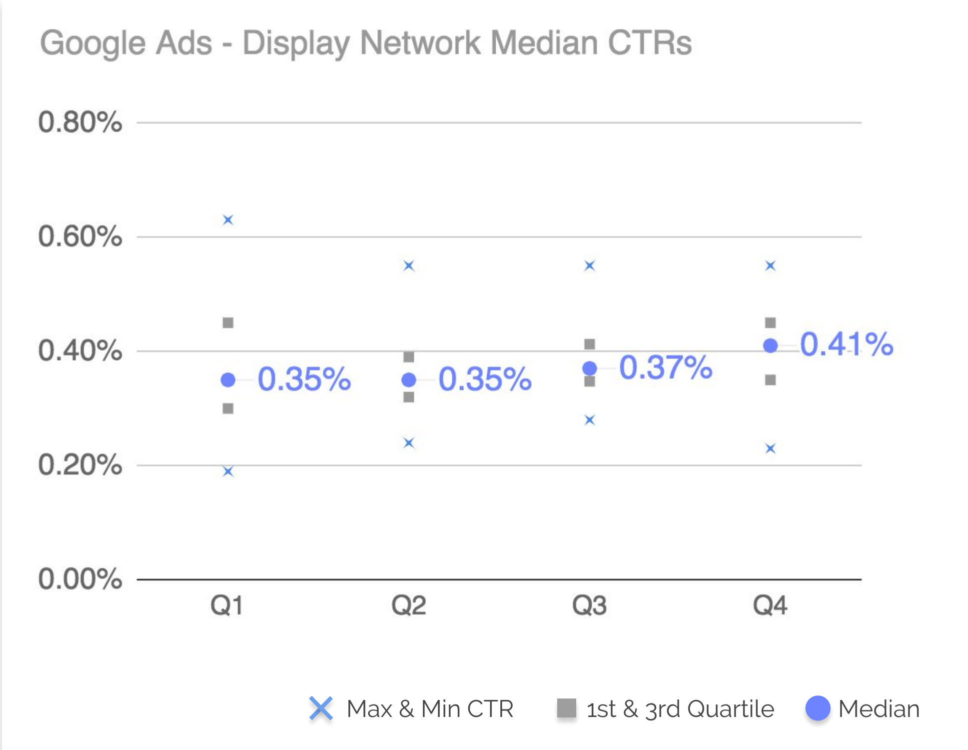
Google Ads Display Network Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CTR

0.41%

2018



Median CTR for ads on Google Display Network increased slightly from last quarter, just .04%, and is nearly the same as it was in Q4 of 2017.

Key Takeaways

- CTR increased by 7.9% since Q3 2018
- CTR decreased 4.7% in Q4 2018 YOY

36 YOUTUBE

Q4 2018

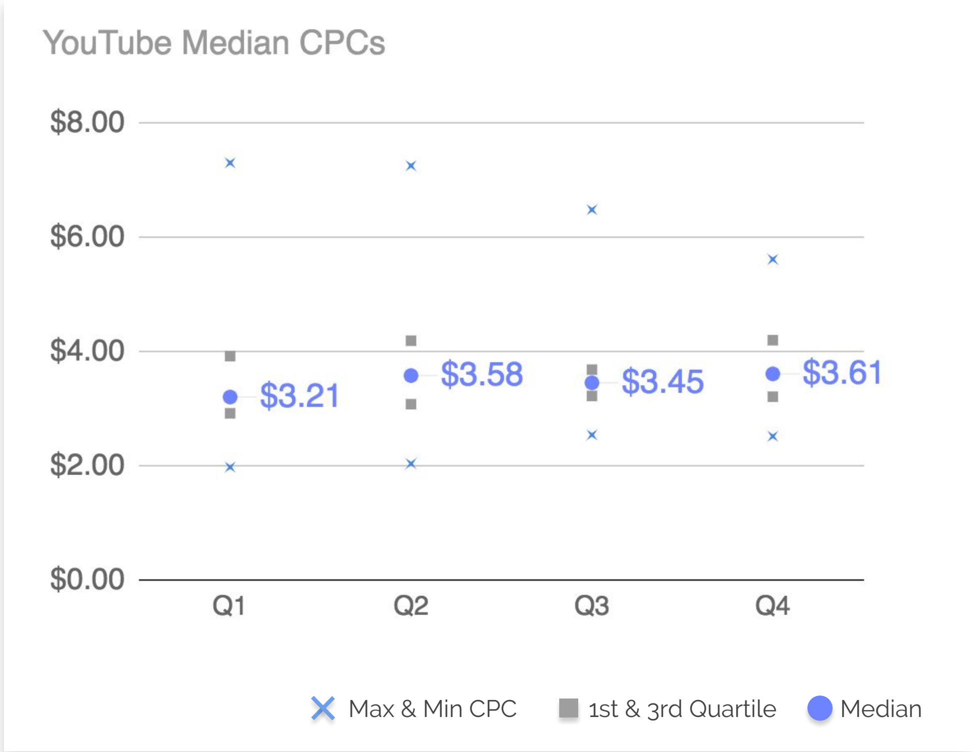
Google YouTube Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CPC

$3.61

2018



In Q4 2018, we analyzed over 224 million ad impressions and nearly 565,000 clicks for ads on YouTube.

We found that median CPC increased 16 cents from last quarter, but is 65 cents cheaper than where it was at the end of 2017.

Key Takeaways

- CPC increased by 4.6% since Q3 2018
- CPC decreased by 15.3% year over year in Q4 2018

Q4 2018

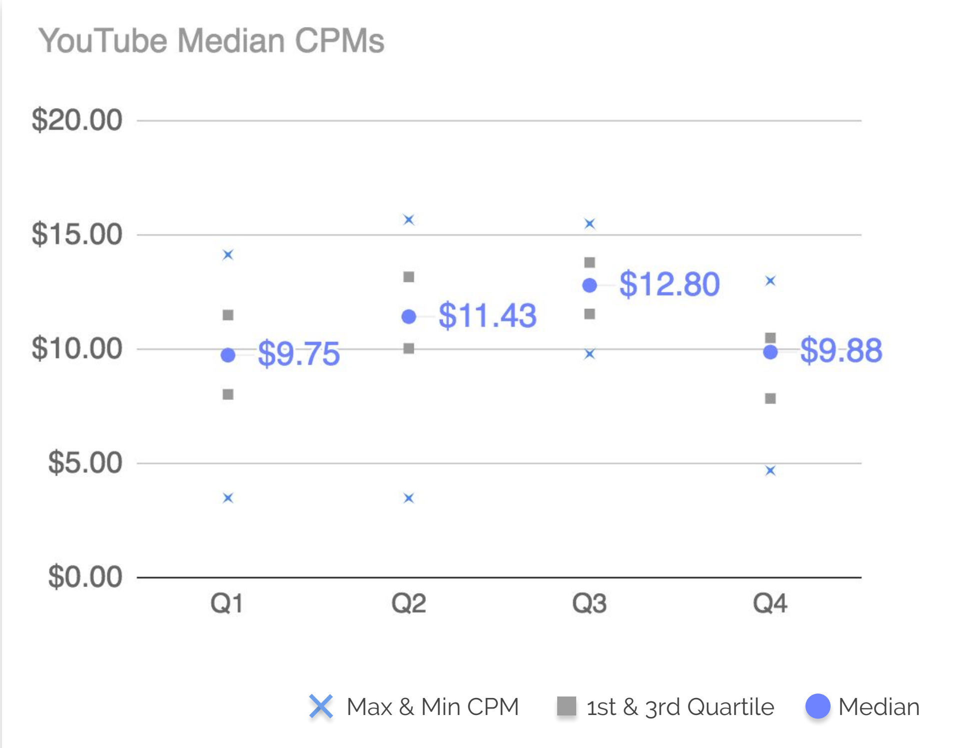
Google YouTube Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CPM

$9.88

2018



After analyzing over 224 million ad impressions and nearly 565,000 clicks for ads on YouTube, we found that median CPM dropped $2.92 from last quarter and is $2.26 cheaper compared to where it was in Q3 2017.

Key Takeaways

- CPM decreased by 22.8% since Q3 2018
- CPM decreased by 18.6% year over year in Q4 2018

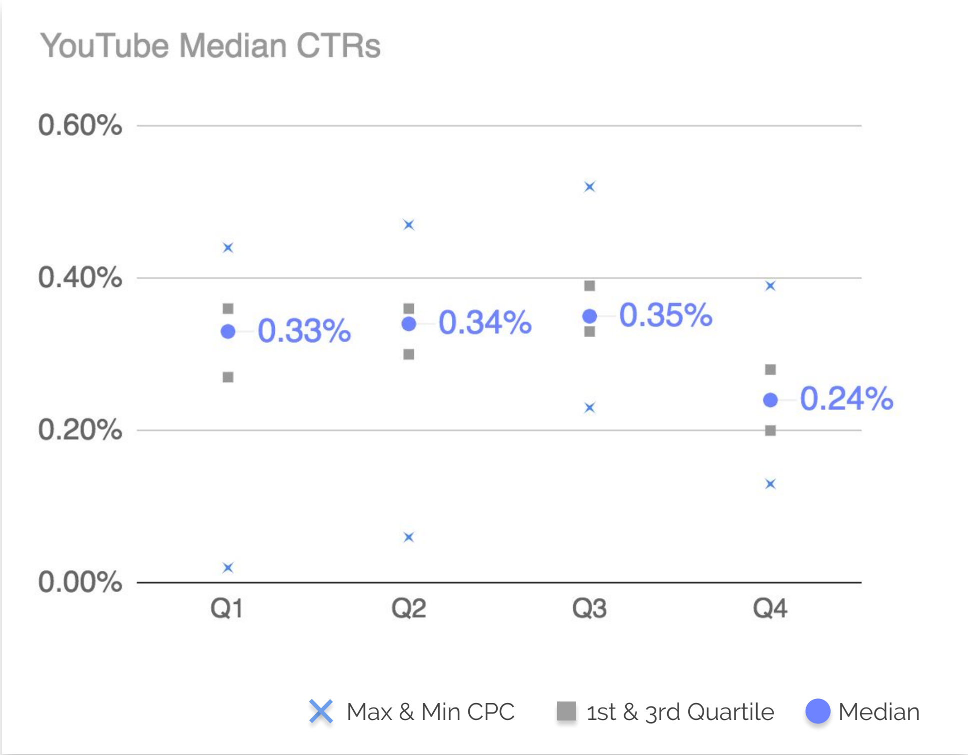
Google YouTube Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CTR

0.24%

2018



Median CTR for ads on YouTube ended the year at the lowest we have on record, dropping 0.11% since last quarter. Year over year, median CTR is down .04%.

Key Takeaways

- CTR decreased by 31.4% since Q3 2018
- CTR decreased by 14.3% year over year in Q4 2018

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BING ADS

Q4 2018

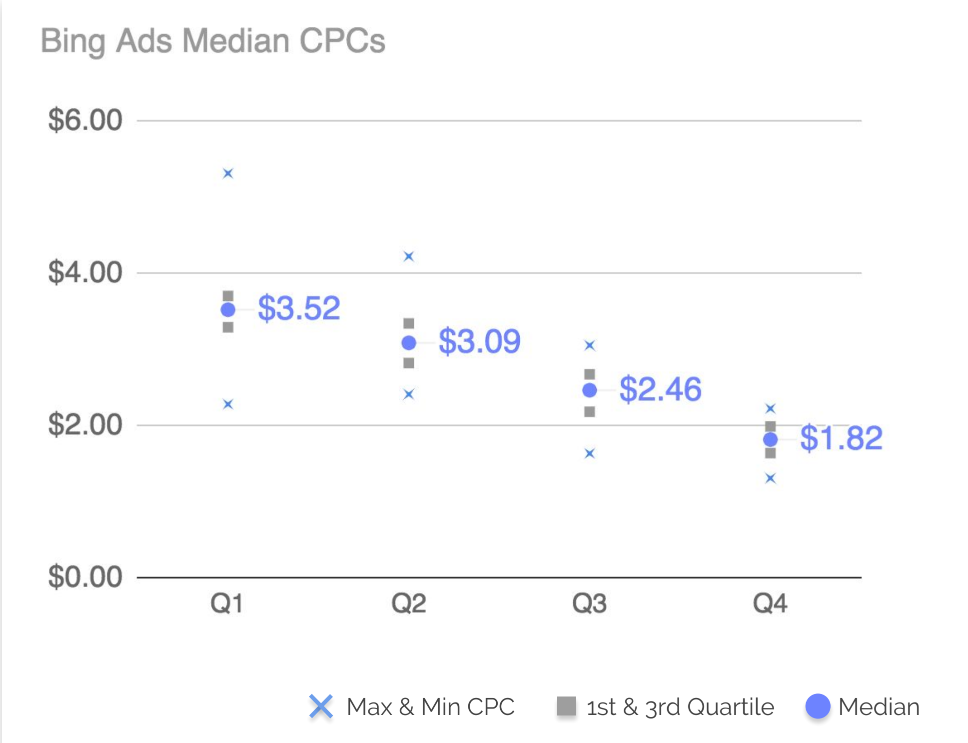
Bing Ads Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CPC

$1.82

2018



In Q4 2018, we analyzed over 75 million ad impressions and over 2 million clicks for ads on Bing.

We found that median CPC dropped 66 cents from last quarter, continuing the downward slide we've seen all year, and ended 2018 at the lowest price we have on record. Compared to this same time last year, median CPC is down $2.60.

Key Takeaways

- CPC decreased by 26% since Q3 2018
- CPC decreased by 46.8% year over year in Q4 2018

Q4 2018

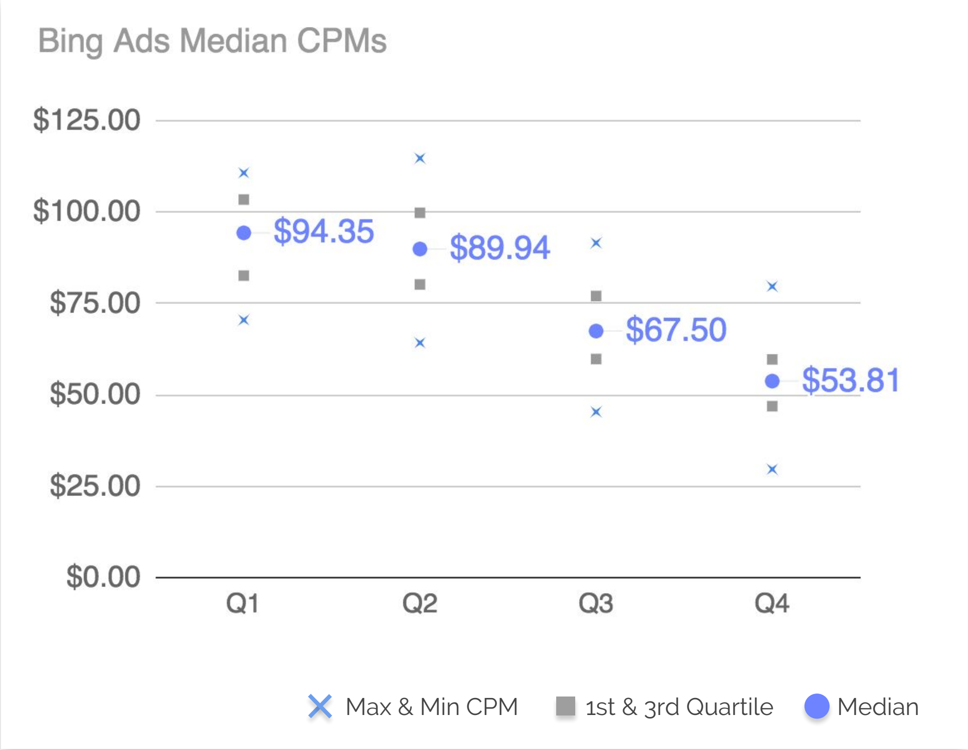
Bing Ads Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CPM

$53.81

2018



After analyzing over 75 million ad impressions and over 2 million clicks for ads on Bing, we found that median CPM dropped $13.69 from last quarter and is over $32 cheaper than it was Q4 of 2017.

Key Takeaways

- CPM decreased by 20.4% since Q3 2018
- CPM decreased by 37.7% year over year in Q4 2018

Q4 2018

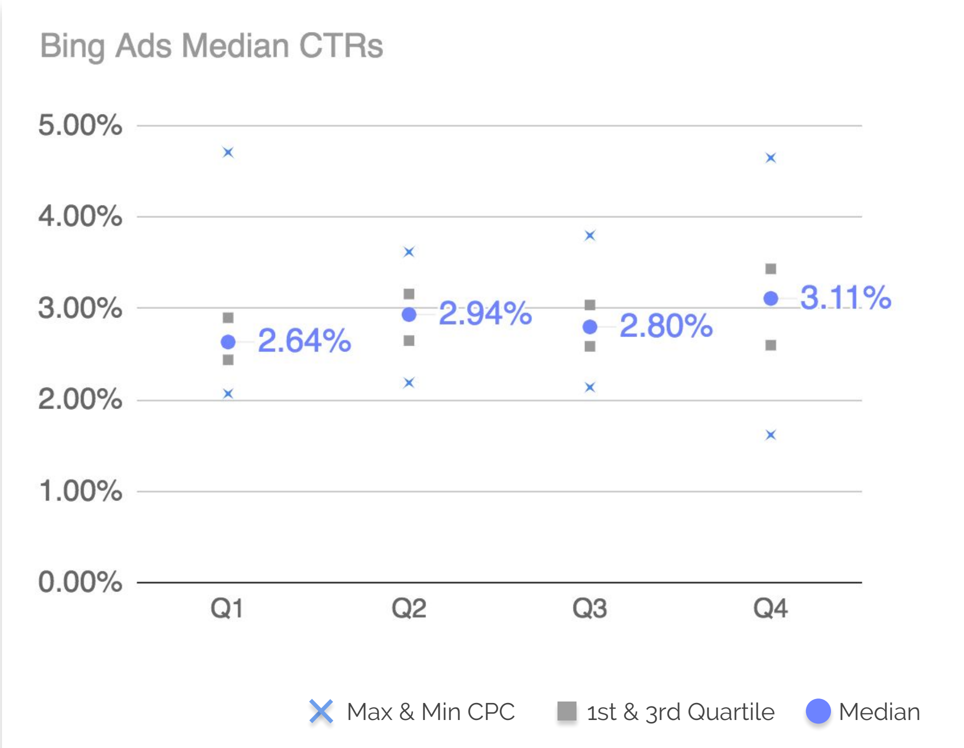
Bing Ads Benchmarks

Q4 MEDIAN

CTR

3.11%

2018



Median CTR for ads on Bing increased by 0.31%, and ended the year up 0.61% compared to Q4 2017.

Key Takeaways

- CTR increased by 11.1% since Q3 2018
- CTR increased 24.4% year over year in Q4 2018

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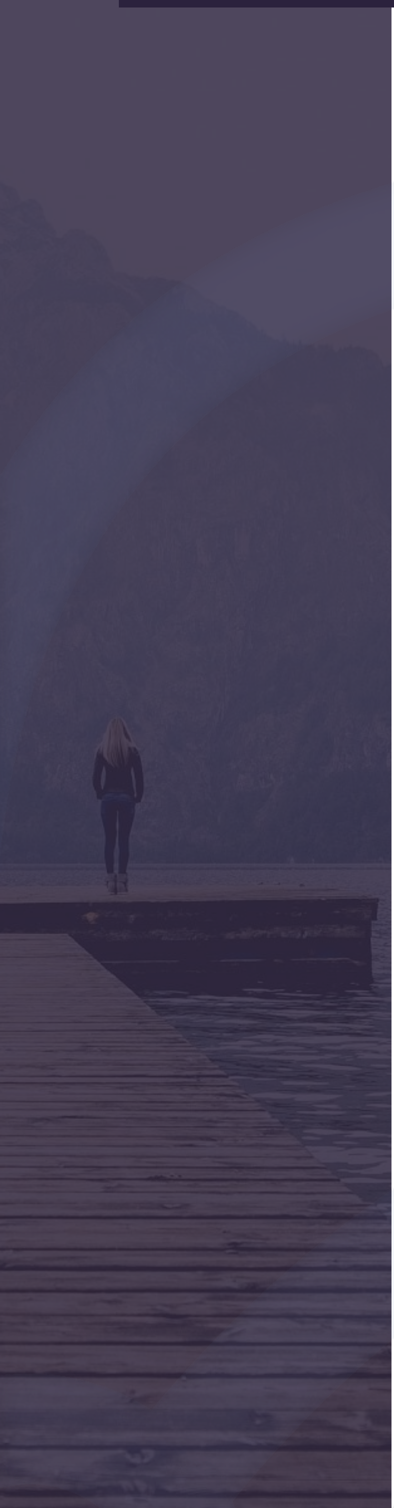
TRENDS

Facebook looks to grow video ad revenue by double digits



According to eMarketer, 25% of all U.S. digital advertising is now video, with Facebook taking in roughly 2x more net video revenue than YouTube. Included in that forecast is the estimate that Facebook video ad revenue will grow by double digits through 2020. Looking at the updates Facebook made to its video capabilities in Q4, those calculations look to be spot on. At the very end of September, Facebook announced new ways to buy and deliver video ad campaigns through In-Stream Reserve and ThruPlay. In-stream ads used to appear only in videos that met Facebook's content guidelines, but advertisers can now select placements in advance and target audiences that have been verified by Nielsen. In addition, when using In-Stream Reserve Categories marketers can choose packages in specific categories like sports or entertainment. Within that same announcement came news about ThruPlay, which seeks to help stretch advertising budgets by charging only for the video ads that are watched to completion, or for at least 15 seconds. ThruPlay works for video placements in-stream, in stories, and in feed on Facebook, Instagram and Audience Network.

The end of October brought an especially exciting announcement for marketers – a new API to help explain ad-failure, particularly when an add does not deliver or run. Facebook said the new API will alert advertisers to fails and provide insights into what happened in the form of error codes. As advertisers geared up for the holiday season, the new feature helped save time in quickly troubleshooting ad issues.

In Q4, Facebook started testing ads in search results, a natural, and perhaps delayed move as the social media giant continues to explore even more ways to monetize. During the testing phase, static images and carousel ads were supported (no video) and shown to U.S. and Canadian markets only.

Though Facebook continues to find itself in hot water over privacy and data collection, in Q4 it released a first-party cookie option for ads that would help advertisers get around browsers that block third-party cookies. Facebook says the option will allow advertisers to target as they've always been able to, and get the same analytics they have in the past.

Ending on a positive note, Facebook introduced a new policy and tools aimed at subduing voter suppression on the platform. The company said they'd remove certain messages "such as claims that you can vote using an online app, and statements about whether a vote will be counted (e.g. 'If you voted in the primary, your vote in the general election won't count.')." Facebook also introduced a new reporting option that allows users to flag incorrect voting information.

Improved Instagram Analytics unveils a treasure trove of marketing data

In Q4, marketers were given a much-needed and much-asked for feature in Instagram Analytics. Before, marketers could only count new followers, website clicks, post impressions, and Story exits, which while helpful, were difficult to pin directly to ROI. With the more robust version of Instagram Analytics, advertisers can now:

- Learn whether people who comment on or like posts have higher retention rates
- Compare the LTV of people who interact with your Instagram account vs those who don't
- Create and analyze the value of segments like “people who have commented on one of your posts”
- Uncover audience overlaps with the people downloading your app, visiting your website, or engaging with your Facebook Page

With marketers already throwing loads of money at Instagram, this additional transparency will likely only increase budgets allocated to the platform.

Instagram released a new ad type called “Promote” for Stories, which allows Instagram business pages to insert their Story into the Stories queue of people they’ve targeted using certain filters. It’s a super simple way for businesses to turn existing Stories into ads without having to do much work. The company said the feature works similarly to Facebook’s Boost in that businesses can pay to instantly show their Story to more viewers.

IGTV launched in June and hasn't quite taken off like Stories, but Instagram’s not giving up, and the company is hoping some cross promotion will get more eyes on its longer format video hub. In Q4, Instagram announced that users can now share a preview image of an IGTV video to an Instagram Story. From there, friends tap the static image and are taken to the video on IGTV.

New features bring more impact to Google's Display campaigns

In Q4, Google announced a suite of new features designed to bring more impact to Display campaigns. Three features aimed at reaching new customers are all in some way powered by machine learning. Dynamic prospecting with product feeds serves up ads that show products based on people's interactions on Google and publisher sites in the network as opposed to showing products based only on what people viewed directly on your site. The second feature, fine-tuned audience expansion, is used to manipulate reach to get more conversions at the same CPA. The third AI-powered feature announced in Q4 is auto-generated custom intent segments, which greatly reduces the time spent on keywords by offering up umbrella segments like "kids' clothes" that include updated lists of the most common keywords for that theme. Google also announced an update to what marketers could opt to pay for when using Display campaigns. You can now choose to pay for conversions instead of clicks.

In Q4, Google also made updates to metrics for video and search. Many marketers find Google's average position ranking confusing, which the company wants to make more clear with four new search ad position metrics. Impression (Absolute Top) % and Impression (Top) % help you determine when and where your impressions are showing above organic search results. The other two metrics Search absolute top impression share and Search (Top) IS indicate the available opportunity to show your ads in more prominent positions. In other words, how you can increase your bidding. Google says the metrics will soon be incorporated into automated bidding.

Google also added new measurement capabilities in Display and Video 360 to help marketers understand viewability, reach, and brand lift across media sources and properties. With custom metrics in Display & Video 360 measured by Active View, marketers can use custom criteria like how long an ad must be visible to count as an impression. Unique Reach reporting measures the number of unique users and impressions-per-user so marketers can determine how often to advertise to someone without overloading them.

And finally, Google expanded Brand Lift analytics beyond YouTube to include all video ads across media properties.

180 million hours of YouTube viewed on TV screens daily

YouTube started Q4 off with a few major changes to how it measures engagement for TrueView for action video ads. Now, YouTube counts an 'Engagement' whenever a user clicks or watches 10 seconds or more of a TrueView for action ad, rather than 30 seconds when using maximize conversions or target CPA bidding. And a 'Conversion' is counted when a user takes action on an ad within 3 days of an Engagement as opposed to the previous default of 30 days. Google said the changes are intended to give marketers faster ramp-up times for target CPA campaigns and more up-to-date reporting.

Q4 also saw a host of new ad extensions including call-to-action overlays that can be layered on an ad as opposed to baked in, and extensions that encourage "lower-funnel actions" like searching upcoming movie showtimes, downloading an app, or booking a hotel stay. With the extensions, YouTube also announced an evolution in its Brand Lift capabilities, allowing marketers to set up Brand Lift studies directly in Google Ads or Display & Video 360, delivering near real-time data thanks to continuous Brand Lift surveys throughout a campaign, and introducing two new metrics—lifted users, the number of people who were influenced by your ad, and cost-per-lifted-user.

Internal data from Google shared in June revealed more than 180 million hours of YouTube is viewed on TV screens daily, making the TV screen a hot commodity for the video-focused platform. To help keep marketers on top of the growing opportunity, YouTube TrueView and bumper ad campaigns started targeted TV screens by default, followed a few months later with the capability to get reports through AdWords API.

LinkedIn announces major partnership with Google Campaign Manager

LinkedIn has been slow to build out easy-to-use ad analytics, but Q4 saw a major boost in that area. The business-minded platform announced a measurement integration with Google Campaign Manager that allows marketers to see LinkedIn ads alongside all other paid spend and reveal attribution for LinkedIn ads across all impressions and interactions measured across devices and platforms. The integration launched earlier in the year with support for only a few ad formats, but in Q4, added capabilities for Sponsored Content.

LinkedIn also announced and alluded to a list of changes to Sponsored Content designed to generate higher-quality clicks on ads and improve campaign ROI. One example they provided was an expansion See More button for longer copy that would reveal all of the text on the same screen rather than sending the user to another page, as was the result in the past. LinkedIn said with the change, clicks on See More became free. The company prefaced the changes by saying though campaigns may see a decrease in CTR or an increase in CPC, the expectation was a higher ROI from clicks coming from people who truly want to visit your site, go further with your content, or provide their contact info.

Twitter expands global reach for In-Stream Video Ads publishers

Twitter product updates in Q4 were few and far between as the company continues to tamp down election interference. Twitter announced it had deleted automated accounts sharing misinformation, but didn't provide much detail beyond that.

The one product update Twitter did share in Q4 focused on In-Stream Video Ads, which were created to add incremental revenue for top publishers who wanted to make money off their videos on Twitter. Previously, In-Stream Video Ads were limited to the markets in which publishers are based, but many have a global audience they were missing out on. Twitter expanded the allowed reach to include all audiences, regardless of location, so publishers can now cash in on the entirety of their audience.

Bing releases shopping-friendly features for the holiday rush

Bing wanted to help marketers make the most of the holidays and did so with new features like Automatic Item Update for Bing Shopping Campaigns to keep product catalogs up-to-date, Flyers to showcase hot deals, multiple images in Product Ads to give customers the most complete info for products, and larger product images to show off important details.

After a series of updates to performance reporting in the Competition Tab, Bing decided to get rid of a few unnecessary columns in the Share of Voice reports, namely Impression share lost to ad relevance, Impression share lost to expected CTR, and Impression share lost to bid. Bing said it hoped the changes simplified the reporting process for marketers.

Bing is going super granular on conversion tracking and in Q4 started counting conversions based on the time of the ad click. Bing said this new measurement will positively affect ad schedule bid modifiers since they would now better align to time of the click, rather than time of the conversion.

Though Bing hasn't been swept up in the political ads controversy that has plagued most other platforms, the company announced changes to its political ads policy, which included a ban on political candidate and ballot measure ads in the United States. Bing said those types of ads make up a very small percentage of its overall advertising volume.

52 INSIGHTS FROM THE EXPERTS

Q4 2018

Which paid media tactics worked best in Q4 2018?

Alexandra Shanahan

Account Director at 3Q Digital

1. We used our DMP to build audience lists of existing customers to exclude from our campaigns and to evaluate ad serving frequency for each of our display vendors in order to cut wasteful spend.

2. We also leveraged LinkedIn to drive leads for virtual conferences, with video and inMail being the most successful tactics.

3. We increased spend on competitor brand campaigns to help reduce heavy competition & CPC inflation on our client's own brand terms

Lauren Clark

Media Supervisor at AKQA

We are seeing success utilizing short-form, mobile-optimized video creative with strong branding to get the message across, even with the sound off. This creative is consistently effective in increasing brand awareness on Facebook and Instagram.

Q4 2018

Which paid media tactics worked best in Q4 2018?

Vernon Johnson

Senior Social Account Manager at 3Q Digital

This year was the year of Campaign Budget Optimization (CBO). Of all the new products and tactics, CBO was by and far the best approach we saw this year. Along with CBO, we tried something particularly interesting that resulting in 2.4x lower CPA for a client. We paired CBO with Auto Placements and Dynamic creative. From an agency perspective, this sounds crazy. In the end, it allowed us more time to strategize creative and less time analyzing budgets, bids, and placements.

I also think creative is becoming the most important lever in our toolbox as digital advertisers. As Facebook and Google push more and more automation to make it easier for anyone to advertise, and as we see better results from the automation the last lever we'll have is creative design and optimization. It's important to begin to build a POV and framework for how to build and test creative.

Pallavi Sharma

VP of Marketing at AdStage

We were singularly focused on optimizing campaigns based on actual sales closes. We updated our measurement systems to give us better clarity into marketing tactics, both paid and organic, that drove down-funnel events, rather than focusing on top-of-funnel traffic. We even launched a product, AdStage Join, to give paid marketers direct line-of-sight into campaigns that increase revenue.

Q4 2018

Which paid media tactics worked best in Q4 2018?

Jack DeGesero

Account Manager at 3Q Digital

For our social channels, we are continuing to see creative as one of the biggest levers for improving performance and meeting client goals. As Facebook and other social channels continue to automate their platforms and improve their audience targeting algorithms, we see clients with stellar creative stand out from the pack. As for specific tactics, we are seeing success with Dynamic Product Ads, Dynamic Creative and Campaign Budget Optimization (all recent tactics focused on automation).

Additionally, we are continuing to see more and more success with broad audience targeting, as opposed to typical targeting techniques such as lookalikes, interests, and 3rd party audiences.

Q4 2018

Which new ad products and features are you excited about?

Alexandra Shanahan

Account Director at 3Q Digital

1. Our Multi-Touch Attribution capabilities are becoming more robust for paid social campaigns - I'm excited we'll have more data to share with our clients on the true value of our Facebook and LinkedIn campaigns.

2. I'm keeping my eye on Amazon -- not only for retail clients, but also leveraging their robust in-market data and DSP.

3. YouTube was a huge area of focus for Google in 2018, and I expect that momentum to continue into 2019. I'm looking forward to more direct response ad units & targeting options.

4. Connecting pipeline data from Salesforce to our B2B digital campaigns will give us more insight into which campaigns are driving lower funnel performance.

Vernon Johnson

Senior Social Account Manager at 3Q Digital

We've heard from our sources at Facebook they will be invested in using DPA's ads for more than just ecomm clients which I'm really excited about. I'm also excited to continue pushing IG stories to see how that placement continues to work for direct response.

Q4 2018

Which new ad products and features are you excited about?

Chase Gladden

Growth Marketing Manager at Hired, Inc.

As a direct response marketer it can be hard to increase engagement without becoming too specific in our copy while in turn decreasing the scalability of your advertising efforts. It's the addition of seemingly little features, such as LinkedIn's dynamic naming capabilities in Sponsored InMail messages, that gets me excited.

This small yet mighty enhancement to their ad product provides the right type of personalization at scale. I hope to continue seeing dynamic personalization elements such as this continue being impactful in a noisy digital advertising space.

Pallavi Sharma

VP of Marketing at AdStage

Trends are showing that there's an uptick in some interesting media formats, such as video and voice search. We'll be keeping a close eye on these trends to see how these formats will provide the best value in the marketing mix.

As a marketer, great customer experience is at the top of my priority list. I'm excited to see a trend towards creating more personalized experiences - even in paid marketing.

Q4 2018

Which new ad products and features are you excited about?

Jack DeGesero

Account Manager at 3Q Digital

As we are continuing to see ever-increasing importance and focus on creative within Facebook, I am most excited about Facebook's upcoming tool, Creative Compass. This tool is designed to better predict and measure the impact of advertising creative on the Facebook platform. It provides metrics to evaluate how noticeable an ad will be once released in the News Feed, how likely it is to be understood by its audience as well as how believable the ad will feel to the user. Maybe most important of all, Facebook Creative Compass will tell us how high the ad's potential is to trigger an action.

Lauren Clark

Media Supervisor at AKQA

We love to test and learn constantly so looking forward to even more testing opportunities within social platforms such as Facebook's newly launched campaign budget optimization setting which enables advertisers to automatically test spending budget on the campaign level vs the ad set level to improve performance. It's a concrete example of how an algorithm contributes to decision-making.

We are also eager to experiment more with the advances in e-commerce offerings on social platforms such as Pinterest and Snap which are capitalizing on visual lens searches for example to find products on retail sites

Look beyond the surface data

We hope our data on the median CPC, CPM, and CTR across advertising networks will be useful to benchmark your own campaigns. It's important to note that our benchmarks represent aggregated data from the accounts linked to our reporting platform, so the numbers don't necessarily illustrate the larger industry trends. CPC, CPM, and CTR metrics also only show the tip of the iceberg of data that marketers need to improve new customer acquisition.

AdStage customers -- top lead generation marketers across different industries -- use our closed-loop reporting and automation platform to connect campaign data with conversion data, see real customers and revenue behind the clicks, and take action on those insights to improve marketing ROI.

Learn more about AdStage

Visit us at AdStage!

If you're ready dig deeper into the power of AdStage, set up a demo and one of our team-members will be happy to discuss your specific paid marketing goals.

You can also start a free 14-day trial to see how you can use our solutions to optimize paid marketing campaigns at scale and drive business growth.

Q4 2018

Resources

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