

Membership Recruitment Campaign

2019 Winner: American Optometric Association

Entry Title: United in Possibilities

Project Overview

The American Optometric Association (AOA) represents approximately 39,000 doctors of optometry, optometry students, and paraoptometric assistants and technicians. When planning for a membership recruitment campaign began in 2016, the AOA knew they had a need to create a more compelling value proposition for the AOA. Through quantitative research, the AOA gained a deeper understanding of the barriers to membership and identified a distinctive brand position for the AOA.

In addition, the AOA determined the strengths of the AOA brand and the benefits that are most persuasive in gaining new AOA members. The challenge with this campaign was for the AOA to develop a breakthrough membership campaign to prove that it is a thriving organization that provides a healthy, vibrant future for the optometric profession and for member ODs, and to communicate this fact with an integrated marketing membership campaign grounded in a compelling creative concept.

Goals/Objectives

We believe that the American Optometric Association is only as powerful as the number of members that we represent. In an effort to maintain and increase our membership penetration, we conducted extensive quantitative research in order to determine the most opportunistic growth target for membership. This study showed us that Millennial doctors of optometry within 10 years of graduating had a positive view of the AOA and wanted to be aligned with a cause that is important to them, but were unsure of the specific value of membership.

Through this research study and a successful six-month pilot campaign in two states that preceded the national campaign, we determined our target audience to be roughly 7,000 non-member optometrists nationwide between the ages of 25 and 36, and set a goal to convert 8% of them to members over the course of a yearlong campaign. This represents approximately \$8MM in lifetime value of membership for the AOA.

Furthermore, we also identified secondary goals of the campaign:

1. Reach our young doctor audience through a compelling and creative campaign concept and an integrated media plan that included channels that are relevant to them.
2. Track and measure our results to ensure success and campaign improvement year over year.

3. As a federation of 53 affiliates, empower our state partners to activate the campaign on the local level and ensure a consistent campaign message nationwide."

Strategy/Tactics

For this campaign, we developed a fully-integrated and multi-channel marketing plan, using a number of highly trackable digital media tactics as well as proven, traditional tactics.

Three primary strategies guided our plan:

1. Bring to life the newly developed AOA brand positioning to serve as a solid foundation for the membership campaign and as a fresh, relevant voice for the organization overall.
2. Divide responsibilities between the national arm of the association, and the state affiliates, based on the respective strengths of each.
3. Execute a full national roll-out of the campaign with a combination of tools that were proven to work in our successful campaign pilot program.

Our campaign tactics included:

1. Digital Advertising: included Google AdWords SEM with keywords selected based on member benefits; Facebook advertising; LinkedIn; digital pre-roll video; and banner advertising. Targeting methodologies included IP address targeting, web retargeting, "custom audience" list targeting using our known prospect pool, and behavioral targeting.
2. Campaign Landing page (AOA.org/United): developed to succinctly sell the benefits of membership and seamlessly guide prospects into the online join portal.
3. Email Marketing: monthly newsletters were sent to prospective members with helpful content, state specific events and testimonials, special offers, and more.
4. Direct Mail Postcards: monthly postcard was mailed to all targeted prospects with state customized content.
5. Content Marketing: launched an online content hub with a specific focus on young doctors of optometry called, "The Launch Pad" and quarterly content offers were promoted.

6. Marketing Automation: prospects that downloaded a content offer and had shown engagement with our marketing were placed into an automated lead nurturing workflow.
7. Personal Selling: state affiliate partners were tasked with developing young doctor committees to handle the personal invitation to join. These committees were provided with scripts, email templates, and responses to common objections."

Success Metrics/Results Achieved

With a campaign goal to convert 8% of our target audience of 7,000+ non-members, leads were cultivated by using the automated CRM marketing tool, SharpSpring (HighRoad Solutions). Once a lead converted (joined) the new member record was imported into the AOA's membership database, Personify, in a daily backup so conversions could be tracked real time. To date, the campaign has achieved a 9.4% conversion rate, resulting in 669 new members, exceeding all expectations.

Of the trackable media campaign that was executed, the AOA experienced the following:

- 2018 saw a total of nearly 13,000 web sessions that initiated on our campaign landing page. Furthermore, a bounce rate of only 49% indicates that over half of all traffic generated to the campaign landing page resulted in multiple pages viewed, indicating membership interest.
- Overall display banner campaigns resulted in nearly 700,000 impressions with a CTR of 0.13%, over double the industry average of 0.05%.
- Overall Facebook campaigns generated nearly 800,000 impressions and a 4.2% CTR, well over the industry average of 1%.
- Of our 7,000 non-member targets, at the close of 2018 31.2% had engaged with the campaign in some sort of trackable fashion (email open or click, landing page viewed, content offer downloaded, event attended etc.)
- Overall email marketing generated an average 34.6% open rate and a 3.7% CTR. We were pleased to see both of these metrics in line with our overall member email marketing results – noteworthy considering these non-members are not used to hearing from the AOA, and therefore could be more likely to dismiss our emails."

Learn more

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Campaign Overview Video

Campaign Creative

Samples Campaign Webpage

Salary Report Webpage

Association Website:

www.aoa.org

