GUIDE

# 11 Super-Effective Ways to Nurture Prospects with AdWords + Facebook

WordStream

Introduction

Sometimes—let's face it, most of the time—people just aren't ready to convert.

Depending on your industry, it could take minutes or months to close a prospect. In that time, there's very little you can do to stop a prospect from being swayed by your competition. But you can do something, and it's called nurture.
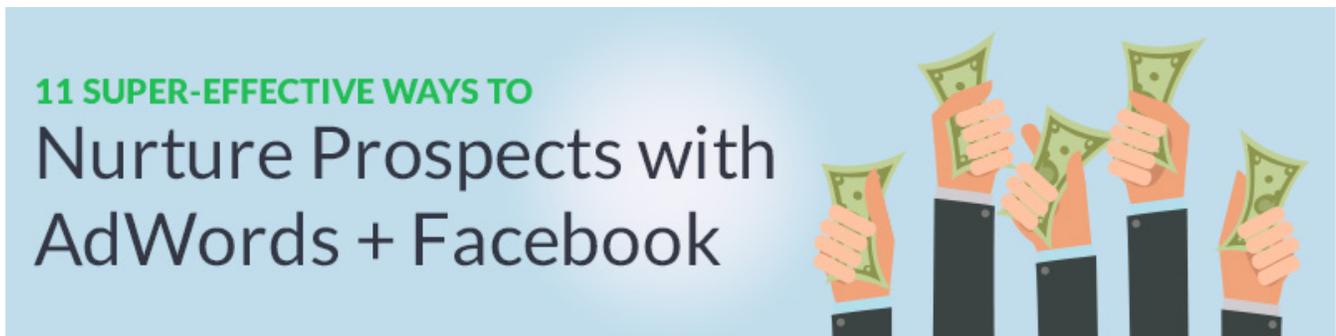
A nurture program is a necessary component of any business's digital advertising strategy. It's the catch-all name for whatever systems a business has in place to move a prospect down their conversion funnel, turning a window shopper into a cash-paying consumer. It doesn't matter if you're peddling alpaca flannels on a one-page Shopify site or you're hunting baby boomers in need of retirement savings management, nurture can help grow your brand and your bottom line.

Unfortunately, most businesses seem to think nurturing begins and ends with email. While email is an invaluable channel for interacting with your prospects, it has its limitations.

That's why today, I'm going to show you **how to use paid search and paid social to make your nurture marketing funnel WAY more effective**.

Using AdWords and Facebook to nurture your prospects will help you do three very important things:

1. Create brand familiarity
2. Provide more value to prospects
3. Handle objections

If you can show a prospect that you're the solution to their problem without stalking them all over the internet, you're T-ing up one kick-ass customer.

I'll get to the full list of ways you can nurture your prospects with AdWords and Facebook in a minute, but first...

The Problem with Email Nurture

Frankly, everybody's doing it.

Here's a picture of the promotions tab in my Gmail inbox from one morning last week:
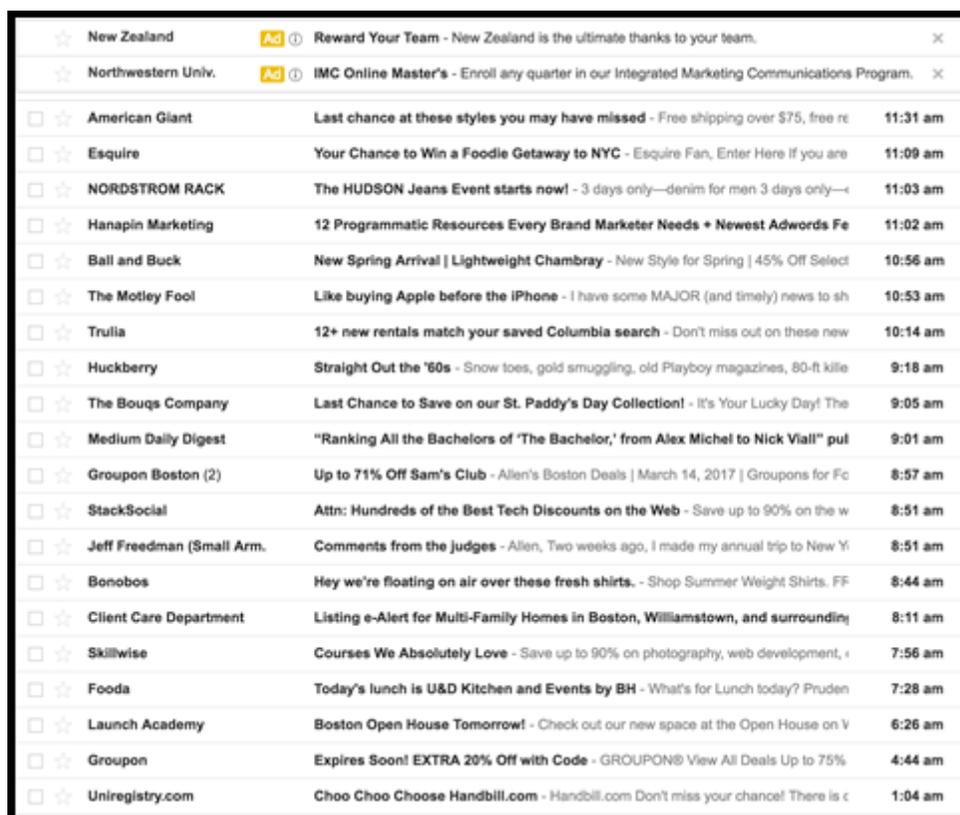
I've never read a single one of these emails. Unless your subject line game is off the charts, the promotions tab is where nurture goes to die. An elephant graveyard for bad email copy.

With PPC, you effectively skip over the middleman. You're also getting a leg up on your competitors, who are probably only using an automated email funnel to nurture prospects (if they're doing it at all).

Now, email nurture is still valuable. If a prospect opens an email and you provide value in the form of a free resource, odds are they're likely to open your next one, too. But when email alone isn't going to move the needle, paid search and social will be your salvation.

With that out of the way, let's get to the 11 tactics you can use to turn prospects into customers.

#1: Keyword Research + Audience Definition = Success

The biggest advantage paid search and social give you over other forms of advertising is the ability to target hyper-specific subsets of the population. This is a real boon for small businesses; a plumber in Peabody only pays for the clicks to his website instead of forking over a fat premium to flash a TV spot at glazed, unmeasurable eyeballs.

While finding these folks seems like a daunting task, it's easy with WordStream's Free Keyword Tool, which allows you to research and prioritize new keywords for your AdWords account thanks to competitive metrics and a proprietary Opportunity Score.

Enter Keyword or website URL to find suggestions:	Choose Industry (Optional):	Select Country (Optional):	
🔍 cars	Autos & Vehicles ▼	All ▼	Search

Showing 10 of 700 keywords   ⬇ Download Keywords

Keywords	Google Search Volume	Competition	CPC	〰 Opportunity Score
cars for sale	1,220,000	Medium	$1.35	10
used cars	1,000,000	Medium	$1.89	10
cars com	1,000,000	High	$0.36	10
truck	823,000	High	$2.23	10
car sales	673,000	High	$0.25	10
suv	550,000	High	$7.70	10
second hand cars	201,000	Medium	$0.41	10
car valuation	201,000	Medium	$1.13	10
car dealer	201,000	High	$3.05	10
classic cars	201,000	High	$0.55	10

Go to: [1]   Show rows: [10 ▼]   « ‹ 1 of 70 › »

It's much easier to advertise effectively when you're getting in front of the right people in the first place, and targeting niche keywords allows you to do just that!

How Will This Help You Turn Prospects Into Customers?

In-depth keyword research and audience definition allows you to ensure that, at the very top of your funnel, the right people are seeing your ads.

If you sell sneakers, targeting the extremely broad keyword "shoes" would be a waste of your money; if you're a small shop, it's arguable that even bidding on "sneakers" would be foolish. Instead, you want to consider *searcher intent*: what do the keywords you're bidding on and the search queries that trigger them say about the end-goal of a prospect?

By avoiding broad or only tangentially related keywords, you ensure that your nurture funnel has less work to do. Instead of being responsible for bringing a searcher from "gee, what's a shoe" to handing over their payment information, you can instead focus on the folks who are more informed. Niching down like this means your nurture material—ad copy, emails, etc.—can focus on building brand value in the minds of qualified prospects,moving them closer to becoming a customer.
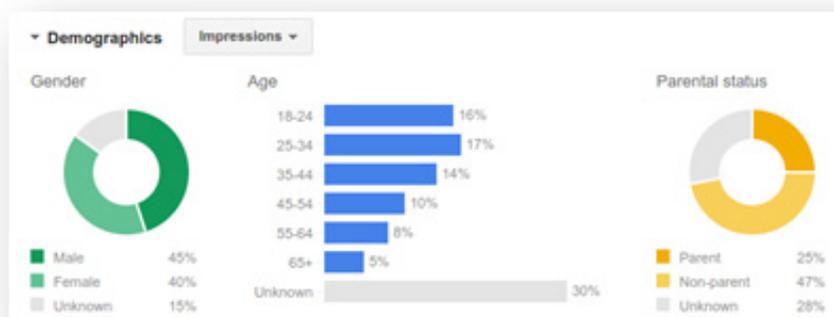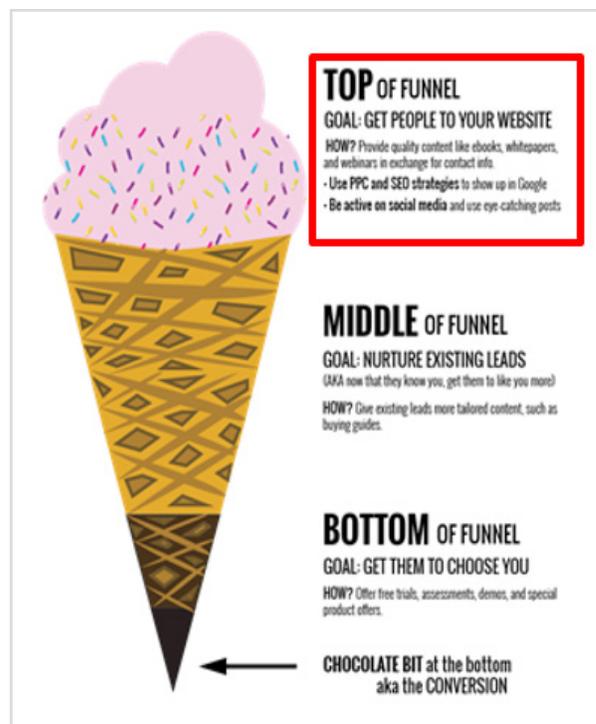
Things work similarly on Facebook. You can leverage the AMPLE targeting options available to advertisers to get an idea of how many prospects in the area you'd like to advertise fit your business's target demographic. This gives you an idea as to both the total volume of potential consumers and the various subsets within that group.

Returning to our sneaker salesman example, I'm probably not going to advertise Jordans and Vibram 5 Fingers to the same person, right? Doing so would poison the well at the beginning of my relationship with that prospect: I clearly have no idea what they're interested in, they'll buy elsewhere.

But what if instead, I split my efforts in two, and layer Facebook's Interest targeting on top of the existing demographic information to segment my audience into "Jordan" people and "Vibram" people? Now, my interactions with prospects start on a positive note: I'm showing them something they've actively conveyed interest in.

My nurture funnel now has less work to do because **prospects enter the sales process much closer to making a purchase**.

"In-depth keyword research and audience definition allows you to ensure that the right people are seeing your ads."

#2: Find the Right Ad Format for Your Offering

Your nurture program exists in stages, right? A prospect enters, you woo them with free stuff or knowledge or discounts, and as a direct result of these efforts, they buy.

Easy, right?

Well, no, because prospects enter your nurture funnel at varying stages of readiness.

Some enter with no idea what your business does. How serendipitous! What opportunity! Let's call this person Prospect A.
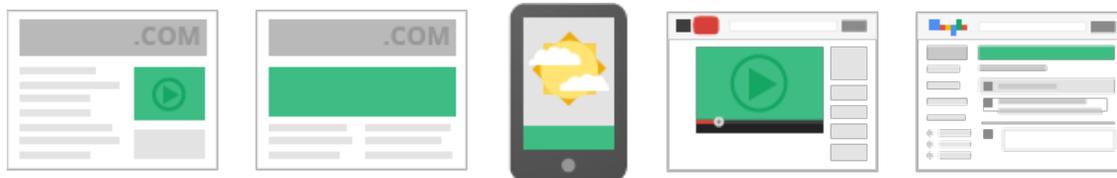
Other prospects, more informed consumers, will come to the table with some understanding of how your offering works. They've identified their problem and are in search of a solution. This is Prospect B.

The way you interact with these two types of people matters a great deal. Show Person A an offer they just aren't ready for and they'll feel alienated; serve Prospect B something rudimentary and they'll deem your product or service beneath them. By choosing the right kind of offering, you establish your brand as trustworthy. Your emails and banner ads can go from mild annoyance to helpful resource.

How the offering is presented, though, is just as important as the offering itself.

## How Will This Help You Turn Prospects Into Customers?

Choosing the right ad format for your nurture offerings is key. We've already established that email can be a bit of a crapshoot because of inbox bloat. The rest of the internet is just as riddled with ads. As such, your nurture creative needs to reach its intended audience in the perfect format, whether that's a text ad, a video, or something else entirely.

One of our top of funnel nurture offerings at WordStream is a whitepaper called "How to Compete in AdWords Without Just Raising Bids." It's a guide that teaches AdWords neophytes about best practices, a helpful tool for someone learning the ropes. The design for the Facebook ad used to reflects the simplicity of the offer itself.

Top of Funnel – Free Guide – Image Ad
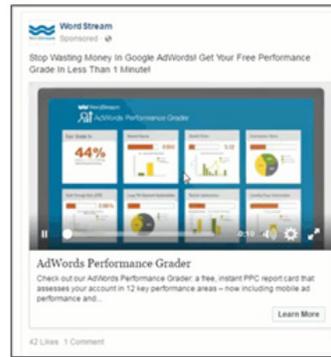
Lower Funnel – Performance Grader – Video / GIF Ad

But look at the other ad. It's a video for the AdWords Performance Grader, a tool advertisers can use to gain an understanding of how their account stacks up to competitors and identifies areas that need to be optimized to enhance performance. The ad, a short video, is dynamic and informative; it concretizing the value of the tool in the minds of prospects.

This is a resource that prospects who receive the aforementioned whitepaper would surely find useful, but by reading the whitepaper first, they'll have a better understanding of the insights the Grader uncovers. The value of the tool (and thus, WordStream) is compounded.

#3: Align Your Messaging Between Platforms

To perform most effectively, you nurture efforts must overlap.

Confused? Here's an example of what I'm talking about.
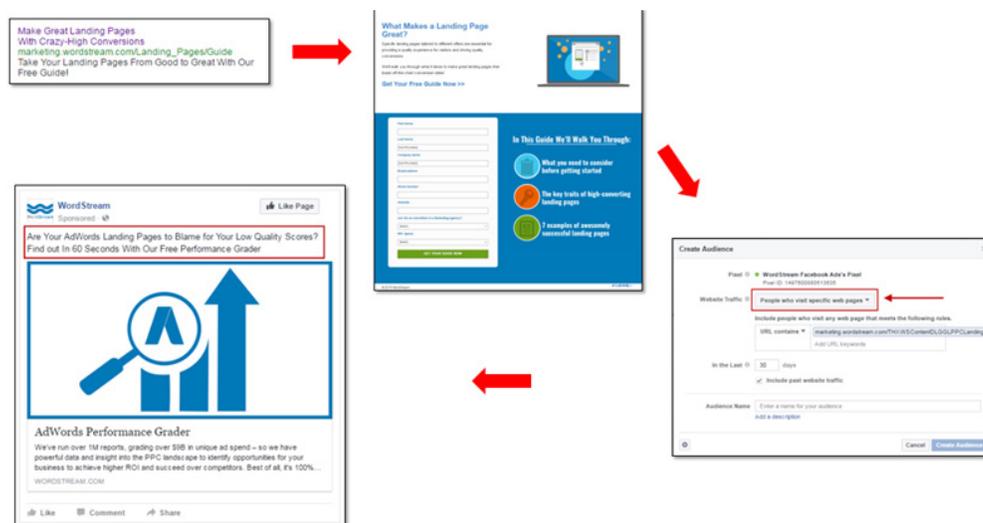
A prospect sees the text ad, clicks it, and downloads a whitepaper.

Next, an audience in Facebook comprised exclusively of people who downloaded that whitepaper, are served a hyper-specific Facebook ad that **a)** addresses the problem identified in the search ad the prospect clicked and **b)** offers a data-driven solution.

How Will This Help You Turn Prospects Into Customers?

By aligning your messaging across platforms, you acknowledge the fact that channels should not exist independent of one another. If you're paying to advertise to your prospects, you should use Facebook and AdWords in concert. One nurture strategy, two platforms, more leads.

It's likely that the people you reach on Facebook are the same people, to some extent or another, that you reach on search. Don't just berate them with the same messaging. Solve their problems in a way that feels organic.

#4: Ensure Tracking Code(s) Exist and Work Properly

Nurture is great. It's fantastic. It's the key to ensuring a steady stream of eager consumers.

But if you aren't tracking actions on your website, you're wasting your time. All the cool stuff we've talked about so far? Impossible.

Unless you use something like Google Tag Manager, your landing pages (or, for maximum effect, your whole site) need to feature the requisite tracking code. The code also needs to be tracking the right thing.

Few occurrences in the world of digital advertising are as soul-crushing as the moment you realize an incredible-looking metric is just nonsense inflated by improper tracking.
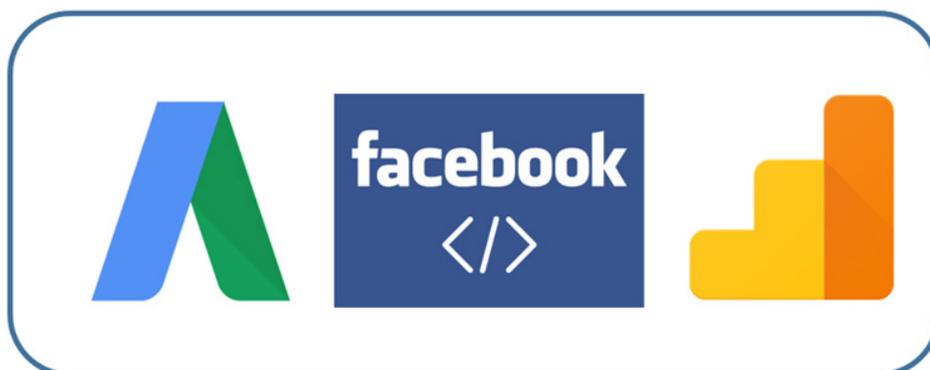
Let's take a quick look at how the tracking code differs across AdWords, Facebook, and Google Analytics.

AdWords Tracking Code

I suggest using GA to track your AdWords conversions, but the tags you can generate in AdWords work just fine. All you need to do here is define the parameters for your conversion and then paste the code onto your landing page. Simple enough.
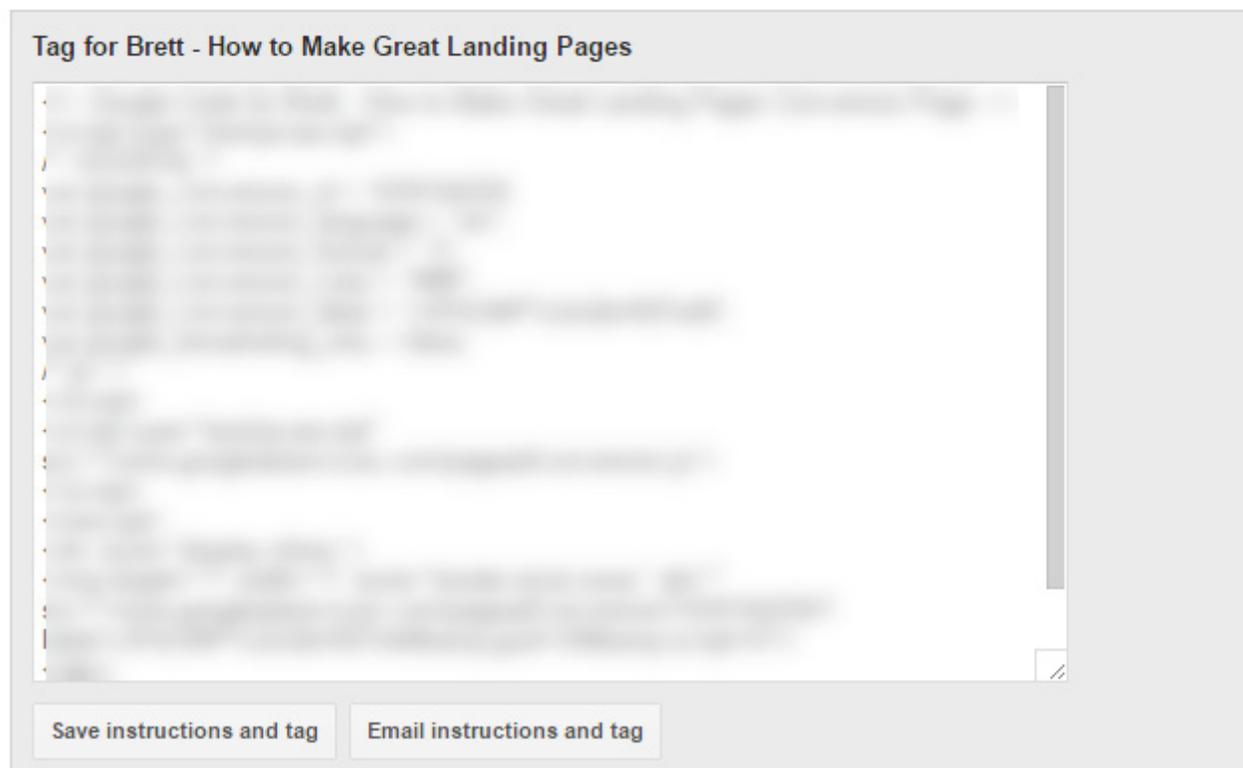
Facebook Pixel

The Facebook Pixel is a little more nuanced. You can optimize it for almost any type of on-site action.
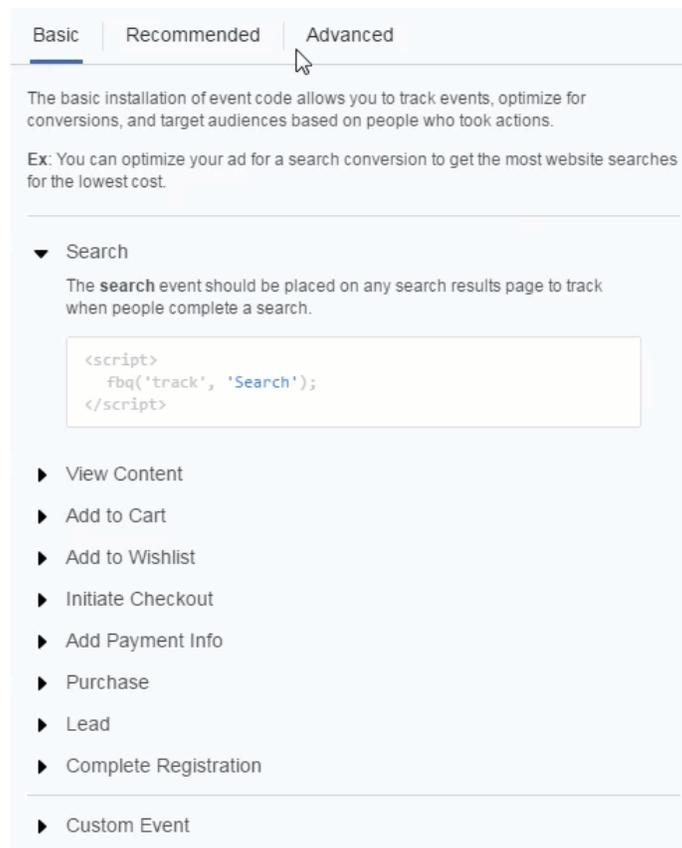
Put this all over your website, tweaking the constituent components as needed. If on some pages you're tracking conversions as revenue and on others, email addresses, you'll want to distinguish the difference here to avoid conflating data.

PROTIP: Download the Facebook pixel Helper from Chrome; it's a plugin that can let you know when things are working (and when they aren't)

Google Analytics UA Code

You probably already have Google Analytics code on your site. This is what the majority of people use to track organic metrics.

It's also extremely useful for developing laser-focused [remarketing lists](#) and, broadly speaking, understanding how prospects navigate to, on, and from your website. You can use this information to inform your nurture funnel (if site traffic seems to flow from one page to another with frequency, a repackaged version of that second page might make for some nice gated content).

How Will This Help You Turn Prospects Into Customers?

Without tracking—of conversions, prospects, their actions, etc.—it's impossible to develop an understanding of whether your business is having success on a given channel, let alone scaffold a killer nurture funnel.

You're lighting money on fire.

That being said, if all of these funny little snippets of code are inciting nervous sweats, fret not: WordStream has a unified pixel (one snippet doing all the work) and an implementation team to help you get started.

#5: Cultivate Smarter Remarketing Lists

Remarketing can be tactless nurture through brute force. This is bad remarketing.

Between AdWords and Facebook, remarketing can also be the most powerful nurture tool available to your business. You just need to get granular.

No more targeting "All Site Traffic." Infer intent from on-site behavior and be your prospects' problem solver through pertinent creative.

How Will This Help You Turn Prospects Into Customers?

When you create extremely segmented remarketing lists, you give your business the opportunity to show prospects ad creative that comes damn close to addressing their needs.

If all you know about me is that I'm 26, I live in Boston, and I visited your website last week, you're going to be stuck showing me generic creative.

BUT:

If you know that I visited a specific set of pages on your website for a specific amount of time, you can infer that I've got some degree of interest in that service or offering. This information allows you to advertise to me on both AdWords and Facebook, leveraging different types of creative to show me, your prospect, that your offering is the one for me.

This is far more likely to work than stalking potential customers for weeks with a generic banner ad that flashes your brand name between bits of clip art, I assure you.

#6: Implement IF Functions in Your Ad Copy

Per Google, "*IF functions allow you to insert a specific message in your text ads when a condition is met, and a default text when it does not.*" This gives you the ability to tailor your ad copy based on either device or audience, ensuring a hyper-relevant message is served to your prospects.

If you typically have trouble converting users on mobile devices, sweeten your offering to prospects searching on their smartphones.

I can't imagine a better tool for your nurture funnel than ads capable of changing on the fly to meet the needs of your prospects. Can you?

How Will This Help You Turn Prospects Into Customers?

You're a savvy online retailer who uses remarketing to great effect; you know that cart abandoners—people who come to your site, fill a cart, and leave before completing their purchase— are an incredibly valuable audience. This week you decide to offer 10% off everything on your site, and you advertise accordingly in your AdWords account.

AdWords	Google Search
Headline 1: Running Shoes Headline 2: 1 Day Shipping Description: The Best Selection of Shoes on Earth! Free Return Policy. Weekend Deal! {=IF(audience IN(Cart Abandoners), 15% off your order!):10% off your order!}	Audience = cart abandoners **Running Shoes - 1 Day Shipping** Ad www.example.com/shoes The Best Selection of Shoes on Earth! Free Return Policy. Weekend Deal! 15% off your order! Other audiences **Running Shoes - 1 Day Shipping** Ad www.example.com/shoes The Best Selection of Shoes on Earth! Free Return Policy. Weekend Deal! 10% off your order!

By using IF functions, you can ensure that cart abandoners, people mere clicks from making a purchase, see a "limited," "exclusive," or otherwise irresistible offer of 15% off plus free shipping. The uninitiated (everyone else) will see your standard 10%-off sale, but these incredibly valuable prospects will be faced with an offer they simply can't say no to.

#7: Cap the Number of Times Your Remarketing Ads Appear

"What's frequency capping." – most advertisers.

Showing prospects banners depicting the relatively affordable mid-sized sedan, organic catnip, or fur vest you're trying to sell is an okay tactic; overdoing it, less so. As such, when you decide to use remarketing, pay attention to frequency capping.

How Will This Help You Turn Prospects Into Customers?

Now, "the right frequency cap" is subjective and largely depends on industry and average buying cycle.

For smaller purchases, things people buy impulsively or without much research, showing ads in short succession within a few hours/days of a site visit is expected. On the other end of the spectrum, big ticket items, ones that might take weeks or months of research before a prospect is comfortable pulling the trigger, take more tact.

Reminders over time across search, display, Facebook, and the inbox give prospects ample opportunity to take advantage of your nurture offerings without feeling frustrated.
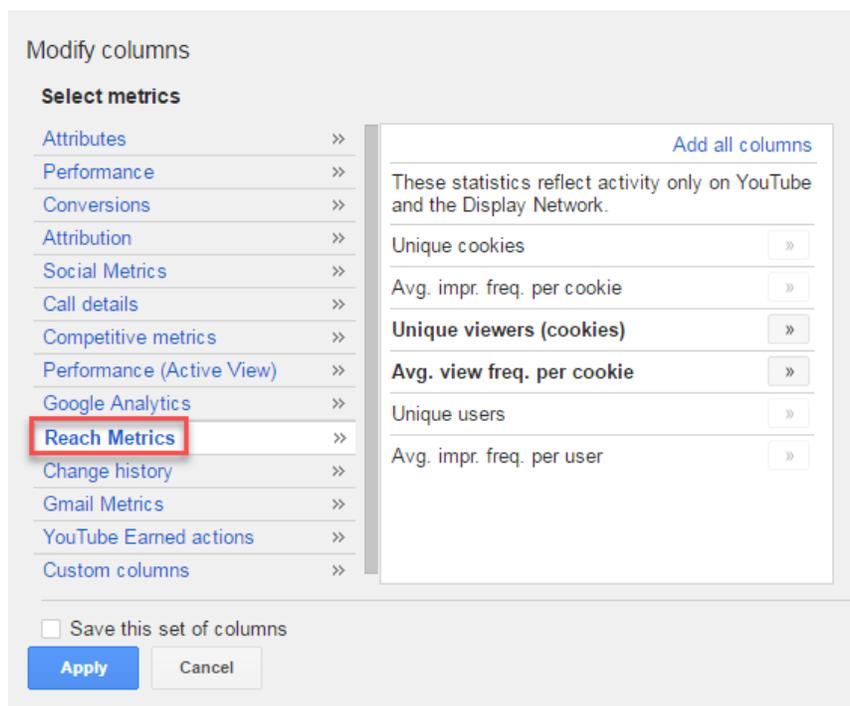
To develop an understanding of how often your creative is served to potential customers, look at your reach metrics. These can be found at the campaign level in AdWords and will give you an idea as to how often unique users have seen your ads over the designated period.

#8: Push Leads Down the Funnel with Facebook

Facebook's pixel allows advertisers to do some awesome things in terms of segmenting their various offerings. As a result, in the event you don't do any advertising on AdWords, you can still flesh out an unreal nurture funnel using just Facebook.

In addition to improving the experience of the prospects, this strategy also lowers CPA for the advertiser. Because you're showing the ad with the more advanced offering to a smaller audience made up of prospects who are ready for that offering, the chance of conversion is greater.

By creating custom audiences, you can leverage data from the Pixel to ensure the most relevant ad and offering are served to a prospect. I mentioned this earlier when discussing finding the right ad format. Now let's tackle custom audience creation.

How Will This Help You Turn Prospects Into Customers?

Creating custom audiences in Facebook allows you to replicate the stages of your nurture funnel within Facebook.

In the example below, I've illustrated exactly how this works.

A prospect sees an ad for the Performance Grader on Facebook, clicks it, and runs the grader. That prospect is now a member of a new audience; let's call this group "Grader Run." Thanks to our custom audience, the prospect will no longer be served ads for the Performance Grader. Instead, they're driven to a free trial: a logical, value-driven progression towards the end goal of becoming the next great WordStream customer.

#9: Leverage Exclusionary Audiences

[Exclusionary audiences](#) are the backbone of some of the other techniques and tips I've touched on today, so it makes sense they make an appearance on the list.

As the name indicates, they're the audience equivalent of negative keywords. They allow you to segment the groups of prospects you're targeting by using membership in the other groups of prospects you're targeting as the distinguishing feature.

How Will This Help You Turn Prospects Into Customers?

Great question.

Let's say I have a 60-day remarketing audience and a 90-day remarketing audience, and I have different offerings for each audience.

Exclusionary audiences allow me to show a different ad / offering to each of the two groups even though those prospects in the 90-day audience are members of the 60-day audience, too. They won't see the 60-day offer; instead, they'll only ever see the offer that's exclusive to the 90-day audience: The offer tailored to those prospects.

Worth noting: you can use this technique to exclude other types of audiences, like previous purchasers, as well.

#10: Use Lookalikes and Similar Audiences to Fill Your Funnel with Better Prospects

What's better than attempting to convey the value of your product or service to total strangers on the internet?

Attempting to convey the value of your business or service to total strangers who bear a striking resemblance to your existing customers, that's what!

How To Use A Lookalike Audience

Identify your (best) customer segment

Create a Lookalike Audience

Reach, engage, and convert with targeted ads

Use results to automate and scale

Lookalikes (Facebook) and Similar Audiences (AdWords) allow you to leverage existing audience and customer data to discover new prospects who being.

How Will This Help You Turn Prospects Into Customers?

After reading this guide, the battle-tested nurture program you've developed to turn the uninitiated into evangelists should have no problem turning warmed leads into paying customers.

In AdWords, you can use audiences similar to your existing remarketing lists as either a mode of targeting or a simple bid adjustment. On Facebook, things get a little more interesting.
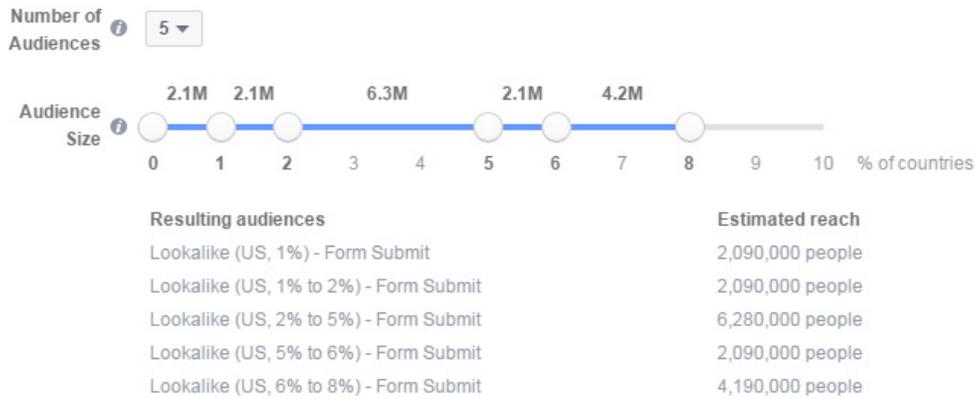
From a single seed audience, Facebook allows you to create multiple Lookalikes based on degree of similarity.

You can use the degree of similarity in your newly created lookalike audiences to determine where you believe new prospects fall in your nurture funnel and drop them in accordingly. Through trial and error, you'll be able to hone the creation and nurture of these audiences, affording your business a steady stream of nearly interested potential customers.

#11: Convert Cart Abandoners with Dynamic Remarketing

If keyword research and audience definition are what funnels solid prospects into your, uh, funnel, Dynamic Remarketing is what pushes those prospects over the goal line.

When the shoes you just looked at on Amazon follow you around online in perpetuity, that's Dynamic Remarketing. Is it frustrating? It can be. Does it work?

[Begrudgingly] yes.

How Will This Help You Turn Prospects Into Customers?

If you run an ecommerce outfit and some of these strategies didn't hit home, this is the one for you. Just don't go overboard.

As a rule, use Dynamic Remarketing for cart abandoners.

Experience doesn't get more tailored than advertising to a prospect using everything in their abandoned shopping cart as ad creative. You can use to on both AdWords and Facebook to amplify urgency. Executed correctly (within minutes, hours, *maybe* days of a prospect abandoning a cart), Dynamic Remarketing will create conversions.

Still Need Help Turning Your Prospects into Customers?

For advertisers, the question is no longer "should I invest in search or social"? You need to be able to reach prospects no matter where they are.

Fortunately, you don't have to go at it alone.
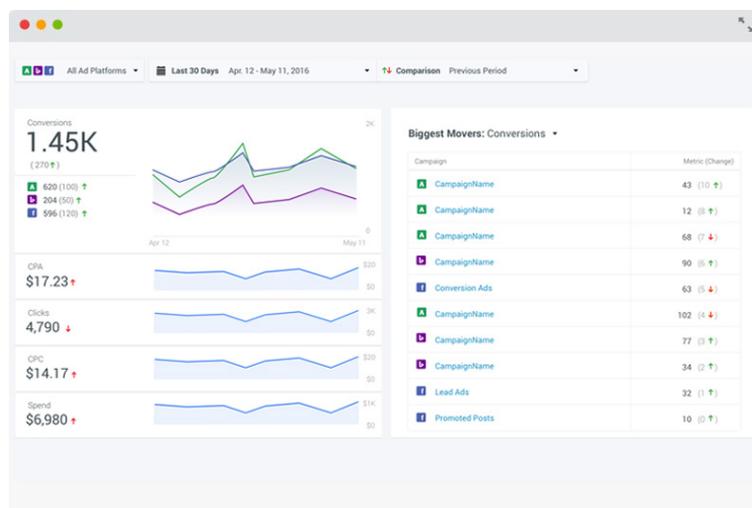
WordStream Advisor is THE cross-platform online advertising solution for advertisers and digital marketing agencies. It provides prescriptive guidance on what to do and when for faster optimization of your **Google AdWords, Facebook, and Bing campaigns**. Whether you're looking to fill your funnel with net-new leads or nurture existing prospects using some of the strategies you just learned about, we can help.

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