

12.15: Targeting and optimising

Ad servers serve adverts across a number of websites, and can track a user visiting websites using cookies or IP addresses. This means that ad servers can offer advertisers:

- **Frequency capping:** This limits the number of times a specific user sees the same advert in a set time period.
- **Sequencing:** This ensures that a user sees adverts in a particular order.
- **Exclusivity:** This ensures that adverts from direct competitors are not shown on the same page.
- **Roadblocks:** This allows an advertiser to own 100% of the advertising inventory on a page.

The ad server can also target adverts based on the business rules of the advertiser or the profiles of the users:

- **Geo-targeting:** Online advertising has the ability to target markets by country, province or city, and can even drill them down to something as specific as their IP address. This is also known as IP targeting. Network or browser type; in this case markets can further be targeted via networks or browser types such as Mozilla Firefox, Internet Explorer, Chrome and Safari.

Note

Location targeting can be very cost-effective for physical events and regional offers.

- **Connection type:** Users can be segmented and targeted according to their Internet connection type, for example, whether they use broadband or dialup connections.
- **Day and time:** Advertisers can choose the time of day or day of the week when their adverts are shown. Advertisers can specify when their campaign should flight, down to the minute. This usually depends on the client's objective for the campaign or the product itself.
- **Social serving:** Websites gather demographic data about users and then serve each user targeted and relevant advertising. For example, Facebook will allow advertisers to select specific characteristics of users who will be shown an advert.
- **Audience targeting:** The ad server uses the profile of a user, built up over websites visited previously, to determine which adverts to show during a given visit. Ad servers can base this profile on cookies or on IP addresses. For example, the ad server may choose to show adverts for pet insurance on a news page to a user who has visited the pets and animals section of a general media site previously.

Remarketing is another form of audience targeting. This allows the ad server to display ads to users after they have interacted with a website in a certain way, for example, by adding an item to their cart on an eCommerce page but not checking out. The user may then see an ad for the product they have in their cart, to encourage them to go back and make a purchase. This can be done through various engines, the most popular of which is DoubleClick Digital Marketing (DDM) from Google.

Note

You can find out more about DoubleClick Marketing at: [https:// www.thinkwithgoogle. com/intl/en-154/ products/doubleclick](https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/intl/en-154/products/doubleclick)

Another approach to audience targeting is to set up parameters to determine when a certain advert needs to be shown. For example, if the user has clicked on a banner advertising a test drive, and the user has actually booked the test drive, the next time they see an advert from the advertiser, a different advert will be shown because the user has already responded to the first one.

- **Contextual advertising:** The ad server deduces the optimum adverts to serve based on the content of the page. For example, on an article about mountain bike holidays in Europe, the ad server would show adverts for new mountain bikes, or adverts from travel companies offering flights to Europe, or perhaps adverts for adventure travel insurance.

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