The American Cancer Society

National non-profit uses Adobe® Digital Marketing Suite to raise awareness and promote education by delivering engaging content across multiple platforms

Searching for a cure

Awareness about cancer treatment options and prevention is on the rise thanks largely to the efforts of the American Cancer Society (ACS). The well-known, non-profit organization provides information, resources and referral services, and coordinates fundraising efforts to help find a cure.

Fundraising and awareness efforts have evolved in the last several years, as the majority of interactions with cancer patients, survivors, supporters, and constituents now take place online. “A lot of people visit our website because they trust and respect our organization and the brand we’ve established over the years,” says Alexander Negash, manager of web analytics and user experience at ACS. “Whether people are searching for information on the latest research and treatments or trying to make a donation, we want to deliver the most relevant content to enhance online visitor experiences.”

Adapting online content to be more relevant and engaging requires extensive data capture and analysis of online activity on the ACS website. In the past, ACS used an early version of Webtrends: Urchin, a predecessor of Google Analytics. However, those solutions fell short of the organization’s needs and left ACS wanting better insights into visitor behaviors.

Web traffic analysis was largely limited to the number of visits for specific time periods and calculating return on ad spend (ROAS) for ad placements on social networking sites was ineffective without actionable data. Additionally, testing new content against visitor responses was time-consuming, requiring days or weeks to see measurable results, and measuring the effectiveness of e-mail campaigns was limited to reports provided by e-mail service providers on request.

“We deliver a variety of media to our constituents—text, videos, imagery—via our website, mobile site, and various applications,” says Negash. “We needed a comprehensive solution that could provide instant analytical insight and make it easier to understand how consumers are engaging with our content.”

Comprehensive research

Working with Adobe Consulting, the American Cancer Society adopted Adobe Digital Marketing Suite as an integrated marketing solution for online analytics, content optimization, and search marketing campaign management, as well as integration with third-party e-mail remarketing platforms. The goal is to improve its ability to measure content consumption, test various messaging and creative content, and to more accurately calculate the impact of ACS’s efforts to engage visitors across a variety of channels.

The Adobe solution supports the launch of ACS’s redesigned website and more focused outreach to people using mobile devices, enabling the organization to collect and analyze real-time data to optimize content and improve users’ online experiences.

The website was recently redesigned based on intensive user research, helping ACS identify general user profiles and behaviors. With Adobe, ACS can actively measure and monitor how users interact with content throughout the website, not just on the homepage.
Adobe Digital Marketing Suite helps ACS measure and analyze visitor interactions with online and mobile content. With the Adobe solutions, ACS managers gain critical data and insight to instantly modify content for a more engaging, impactful customer experience.

"At the end of the day, our mission is to reach as many people as possible with information about cancer and cancer treatments. Adobe Digital Marketing Suite helps us ensure that the information and content we’re providing is appropriate for our audience and optimized for maximum impact."

Alexander Negash
Manager, web analytics and user experience, American Cancer Society

The Adobe solution provides a convenient, customizable user interface to help managers produce on-demand reports regarding user behaviors, search terms, button clicks, and other common actions. Managers can now collect actionable intelligence about user activities on the website to support more strategic decision making, and measure user engagement across other platforms, including social media sites.

Social media is an increasingly important component of the organization’s marketing and messaging efforts. ACS uses advertisements on social media sites and e-mail marketing campaigns to generate a greater following and bring users to the website, mobile site, or mobile applications.

Adobe Digital Marketing Suite also integrates with the organization’s existing Axiom e-mail system to provide robust metrics and immediate feedback around campaign effectiveness. It also enables ACS to manage and measure paid search campaigns and social media ad campaigns from a single, unified user interface. ForeSee Results, a voice of customer tool, is also integrated with Adobe Digital Marketing Suite to provide a 360° view of the customer experience.

Unlike previous solutions, Adobe provides ACS managers with real-time feedback about campaign success, helping them to assess ROAS and optimize content on the fly to improve campaign performance. Using Adobe SearchCenter+, ACS was able to increase campaign objectives for the Help Now awareness campaign that surpassed our expectations showing an increase of click through rates by almost 500% and an increased ROAS by 180% within a very short period of time thanks to using the intuitive bid management functionality in Adobe SearchCenter+. Another success is the Cancer Resources campaign that provided constituents with useful information about mammograms and related resources that showed a click-through rate increase of close to 850% showing 109% return on investment.

"The explosive growth of social media represents a significant opportunity to reach a wide audience with our message," Negash says. "Adobe delivers the relevant data we need to determine if our content is having the desired impact and helps us to confidently optimize content accordingly."

Initial online data collected can be filtered further for greater granularity and detail. Adobe provides limitless data segmentation, meaning ACS can group, segment, and analyze various bits of data to best suit the organization’s goals. "We can now slice and dice data to analyze it from a number of perspectives," Negash says. "Collectively, the Adobe solutions provide us an abundance of useful information with greater flexibility than we had previously."

With previous successes using Adobe Digital Marketing Suite, ACS deployed Adobe Test&Target and Adobe Test&Target 1:1, and launched a multivariate testing campaign for A/B tests based on affinity, previous activities on the site, or other common user traits to measure the effectiveness of each element on its website and mobile apps—from images, to messaging, and placement of content—and instantly analyze user feedback down to the individual level. The organization also plans to use the solution to test on different sections of cancer.org and other ACS brands.
"Our primary goal is to serve our constituents better by serving content and campaign ads that are more relevant and in line with specific interests," says Negash. "Adobe Test&Target lets us compare creative or content elements on the fly and collect accurate data to make sure we're providing visitors with exactly the content they want and to create a better overall experience."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adobe Digital Marketing Suite solutions used by the American Cancer Society</th>
<th>Solution name</th>
<th>Solution type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adobe SiteCatalyst</td>
<td>Provides managers with actionable, real-time data about online campaigns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adobe Discover</td>
<td>Delivers deep customer segmentation capabilities that enables marketers with accurate, timely, and insightful decisions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adobe SearchCenter +</td>
<td>Simplifies search marketing through a common interface for managing campaigns and associated metrics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adobe Test&amp;Target</td>
<td>Enables the ACS team to continually improve content relevance by designing and executing controlled A/B and multivariate tests and targeting dynamic content</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adobe Test&amp;Target 1:1</td>
<td>Personalizes the presentation of content and offers that any single visitor may find most relevant and compelling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adobe Genesis</td>
<td>Integrates online analytics with third-party e-mail platforms to create highly relevant e-mail remarketing campaigns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adobe Consulting</td>
<td>Offers strategic industry insights and best practices for onsite optimization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Measuring success

By adopting Adobe Digital Marketing Suite, ACS is providing managers and marketers with robust solutions to support the delivery and creation of engaging content for visitors to the organization's various online assets.

The Adobe solutions provide ACS with valuable, actionable data and insight that enable the organization to deliver the most relevant content across multiple platforms and channels. Measuring customer engagement can often be challenging, but the Adobe solutions help ACS make sure it's measuring the right key performance indicators to give managers a comprehensive understanding of how content and messages are performing.

"We don't want to overwhelm site visitors with a lot of data or other content that's not of interest to them," says Negash. "With Adobe web analytics solutions, we can get a very clear idea of what our users want to see and make sure we're optimizing their experiences on our sites."

ACS can account for how much time a visitor has spent on its sites, as well as to see which content visitors viewed. Pathway analysis with Adobe solutions can reveal areas in need of enhanced navigation to make it easier for visitors to find desired content.

"At the end of the day, our mission is to reach as many people as possible with information about cancer and cancer treatments," says Negash. "Adobe Digital Marketing Suite helps us ensure that the information and content we're providing is appropriate for our audience and optimized for maximum impact. We always want to be there for people where and when they need us."