Safeway wins in the social market.

Leading national grocery chain uses Adobe Marketing Cloud to build brand awareness, engage loyalty club members, and promote products across social media.

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Paul Albright, Social Marketing Manager, Safeway

SOLUTION
Adobe Social, Adobe Media Optimizer, and Adobe Analytics solutions within Adobe Marketing Cloud

RESULTS

REACH
Boosted organic reach more than 11x

ENGAGEMENT
Achieved 487% higher engagement rates with optimized video content

EMOTIONAL CONNECTIONS
Developed meaningful interactions with audiences that encourage engagement and loyalty

OPTIMIZATION
Leveraged social and cross-channel data to increase content relevancy and enhance customer experiences
Wholesome, old-fashioned...social media?

Safeway founder, M.B. Skaggs, was known for his pioneering, entrepreneurial spirit. With the purchase of his first store in 1915 in American Falls, Idaho, he introduced customers to exceptional value by keeping profit margins low, and then quickly expanding his business to 10 states in only 11 years.

By the 1930s, business was booming, stores were nationwide, and the company was introducing new innovations, like pricing by-the-pound, sell-by dates for freshness, and nutritional labeling. However, the grocer did fall in line with other stores, using the tried-and-true recipe for grocery store advertising and marketing: a steady stream of promoting low prices and seasonal specials via local newspapers—later adding radio and television to its mix.

In more recent years, Safeway expanded its view of customers and broke the template for marketing, looking at social media to continue building its brand. "Unlike with radio or television, social media is much more dynamic, so we knew we had to rethink the content we presented and how we engaged audiences," says Paul Albright, Social Media Manager at Safeway. "We saw the opportunity to start conversations, not just broadcast content."

Safeway started by tasking its creative agency, DDB, with getting the attention of online communities by offering newer forms of content, but the company’s marketing team also understood it needed to go further and continue to be industry leaders in the social space. By implementing advanced social and media optimization solutions, the company could measure, optimize, and target content that spoke to its core social audiences. Additionally, Safeway could build a positive feedback loop for continually improving social experiences and content.

A recipe for success

Adobe Marketing Cloud, including Adobe Social, Adobe Media Optimizer, and Adobe Analytics solutions, provided the ingredients for Safeway’s social marketing and social advertising campaigns, while its partner provided the creative heat.

The spice that helps bring it all together is the rich data that drives new content and campaigns. "With Adobe Marketing Cloud, we are using data every day to make interactions more relevant and engaging," says Albright.

For instance, Safeway relies on Adobe Social to help identify the type of content that resonates best with audiences and measure the effectiveness of new content against more traditional approaches. This led Safeway to move away from a previous tactic that used a static product image combined with written content.
Instead, the team discovered that creative video content drove more engagement than the grocer's traditional static images of prepared meals or product hero shots. Most importantly, Safeway began to overcome historical dollars-and-cents communications between customers and their local stores, and create emotional connections.

Safeway also leveraged Adobe Media Optimizer to enhance ad strategies by optimizing spend. Using the solution, the grocer can prioritize advertising to first increase engagement, and then grow audience size—fostering longer-term customer relationships along the way.

"Our success with the Adobe solutions is definitely aided by our close work with Adobe," says Albright. "Adobe Consulting listens to what we need and understands our business. The consulting team takes a thoughtful approach to addressing all of our business goals and creates a realistic, actionable plan. It's exactly what we need from our partners."

Personal moments

For one of the company's first social media campaign deployed on Facebook and Twitter, Safeway and DDB chose to develop a series of videos that provided audiences tips and tricks about food hacks, holiday ideas, and more. The aim was to engage the community in a dialog about everyday moments with food.

Over a six-month period, the company saw a 1,141% increase in organic reach from video sharing. Additionally, engagement rates from paid media for the new video content were 487% higher than the average of non-video paid posts on Facebook.

Combined with the optimization of content, Adobe Media Optimizer helped to successfully decrease the cost per engagement for videos—a 62% improvement. "Customers won't necessarily open their local newspapers 17 times a day, but they'll log into their Facebook or Twitter accounts that many times," says Albright. "With Adobe Marketing Cloud, we can get in front of customers in meaningful and cost-effective ways."

Empowering community managers

Because Adobe Marketing Cloud is so robust, social managers have exceeded executive's expectations for social channels and for the business more broadly. "Adobe Social supports better publishing, moderation, listening, and reporting on social efforts," says Albright. "Those capabilities offer endless possibilities to improve our digital marketing strategies."

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SOLUTION AT A GLANCE

- Adobe Marketing Cloud, including the Adobe Social, Adobe Media Optimizer, and Adobe Analytics solutions.
- Management and governance
- Listening and moderation
- Social analytics
- Social campaigns
- Display management
- Performance management
- Integrated analytics
- Marketing reports and analytics
- Social ad management
- Adobe Consulting

The rich functionality and responsiveness supported by the Adobe solution is enabling the business to go beyond social marketing and incorporate other important information-sharing initiatives, such as notifying the public about product recalls or quickly addressing public concern about a product, ad, or shopping experience. The social team can then respond directly to those customers and report findings back to Safeway's public affairs.

With its success engaging communities via social media, Safeway established itself as the top grocery brand on Twitter, leading to the company's recent role as a strategic advisor to the social media site. "Adobe Marketing Cloud has helped us position ourselves at the top of our industry and people are taking notice," says Albright.