

THE SCIENCE OF SUCCESSFUL

FACEBOOK ADS

Data-Based Best Practices
on Facebook Advertising

AdEspresso

HubSpot

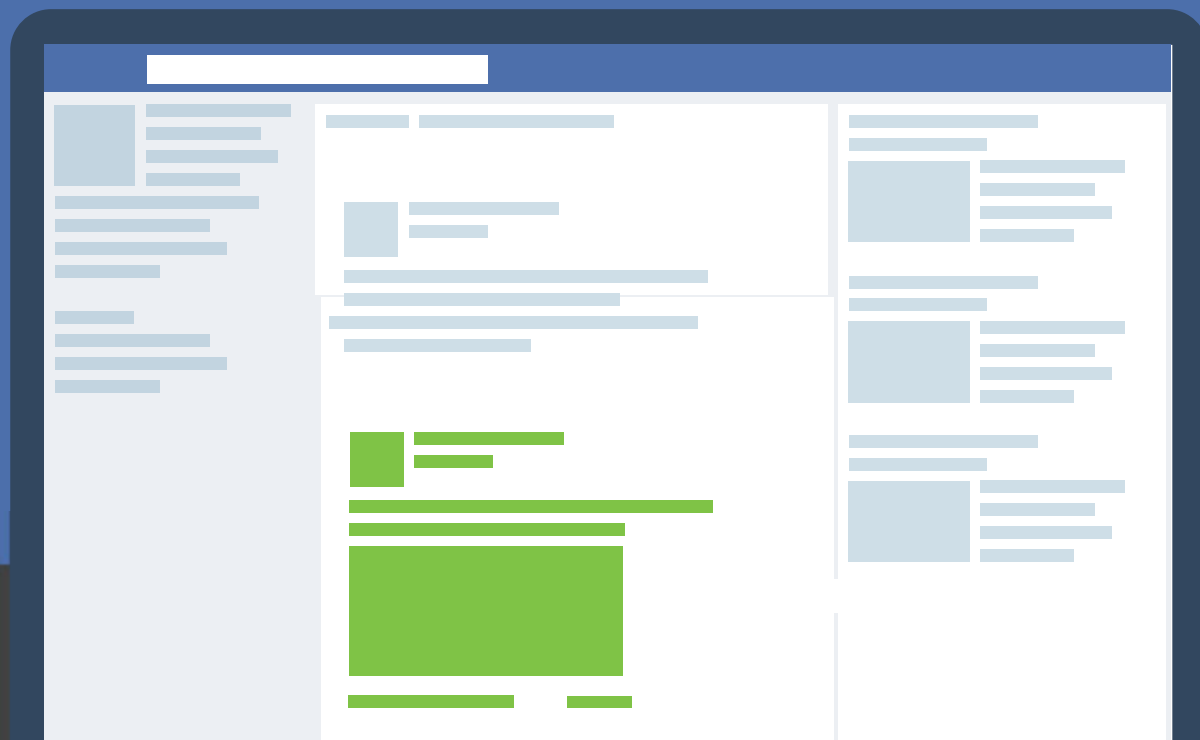


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Facebook Ads: The Science of Success

A successful Facebook Ad is made of 2 components:

A great design, targeted to the right audience.

In this eBook we focus on that first part.

By analyzing over 100,000 real world ads we'll show you what's trending right now and how you can create the perfect ad.

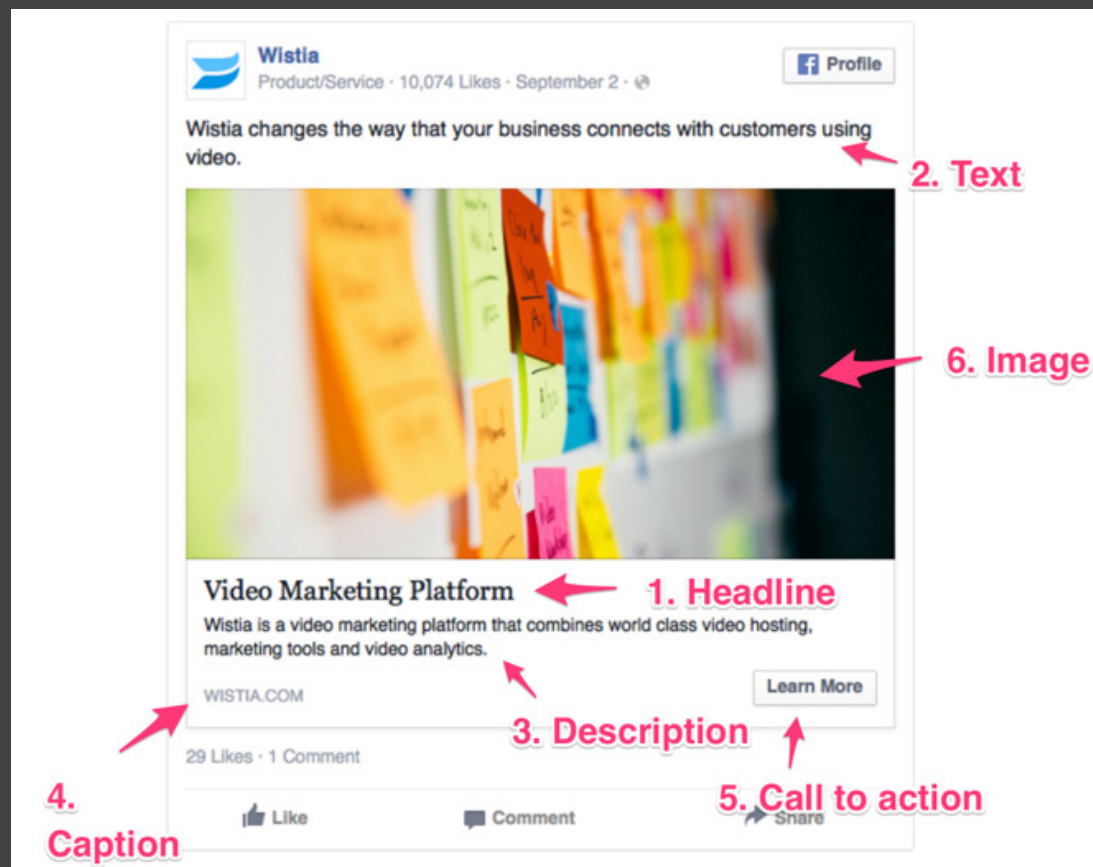
The AdEspresso Gallery Data

We analyzed the text, links, type, and CTAs of 111,018 Facebook ads that were created by 1,000s of companies over the past year and used live on Facebook. These ads were taken from the AdEspresso Facebook Ad Gallery, the largest database of Facebook ads available.

You can find 15,000 of these ads available totally free in the [AdEspresso Facebook Ad Gallery](#).

The full Data Set is coming soon from AdEspresso University where you can find all these Facebook ads plus more Twitter Ads.

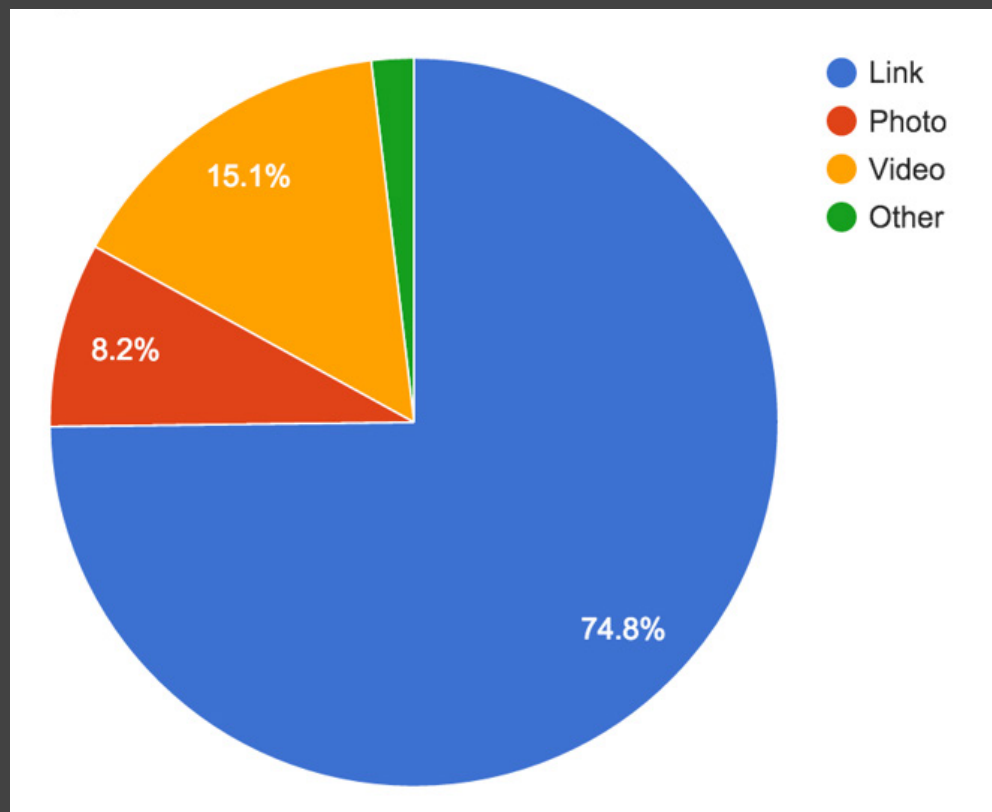
1 A Typical Facebook Ad - A Quick Overview



1. **Headline** - The main title of your Facebook ad that grabs people's attention. Your headline can be a maximum of 250 characters.
2. **Text** - A short description about the product or site you're promoting.
3. **Description** - A longer text available in the News Feed describing more about your product. Maximum of 250 characters.
4. **Caption** - The URL of your domain.
5. **Call to Action (CTA)** - A button showing people where they should click.
6. **Image** - An enticing picture related to your product.

2 The Most Popular Type of Ad

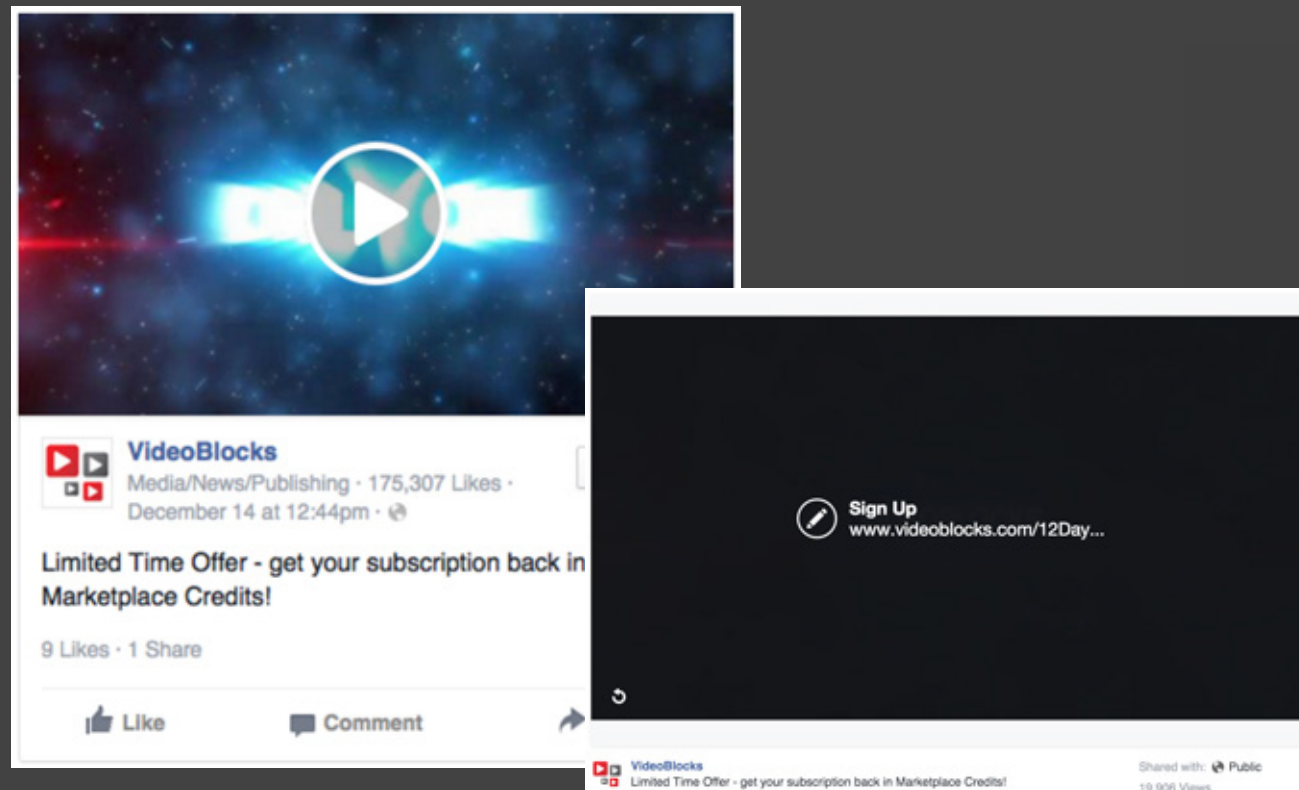
The Data Shows: The most popular type of ad is the [Page Post Link ad](#)



- The [Page Post Link ad](#) is the most popular (74.8%), and is ideal for promoting your external site.
- Video ads, which currently make up 15.1% of ads, can drive high audience engagement.
- Photo ads (8.2%) are good for generating comments and likes, but not good for traffic, and you can't include a CTA.
- Other ad types (1.9%) such as Events and Offers are good for highly specific aims, such as promoting a time-sensitive webinar or sale.

2 The Most Popular Type of Ad

Doing it Right: [VideoBlocks](#), a stock video provider.



Best practices

- Uses video to show their audience a short example of their work.
- Embeds the video in an ad that promotes their limited time offer.
- Includes a CTA to sign up for their limited time offer at the end.

2 The Most Popular Type of Ad

Doing it Right: [Snapwire](#), a royalty-free photo service.

Snapwire
Internet/Software · 8,032 Likes · August 4 at 8:01am · 🌐 Profile

Get your perfect image from over 100,000 photographers- all Royalty Free.
For \$25 FREE use code FBSNAP at checkout.

Here's \$25 To Buy Photos
Get a photo you love- Promised.

SNAPWI.RE | BY SNAPWIRE MEDIA

Shop Now

Comment Share

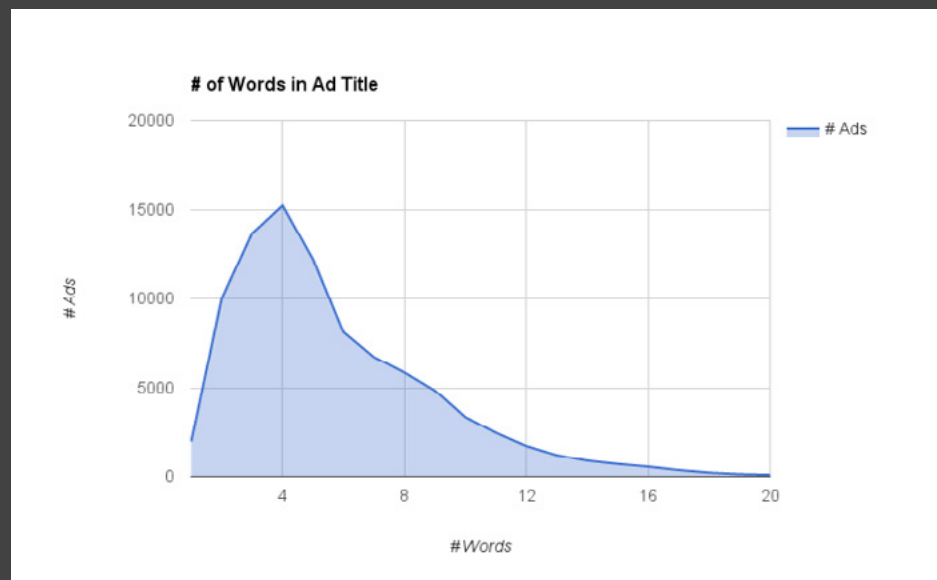
Best practices

- Uses a link ad to advertise their current offer
- Includes a proactive CTA (“Shop Now”), uses positive language (“Free”, “Love”), and a striking image.
- Image contains all aspects of an eye-catching image
- Contains a single face, with eye contact.
- Shows a positive emotion.
- A flash of red in the image is eye-catching.
- All this combines to capture the reader’s attention and compels them to click.

3

The Most Popular Headline Length

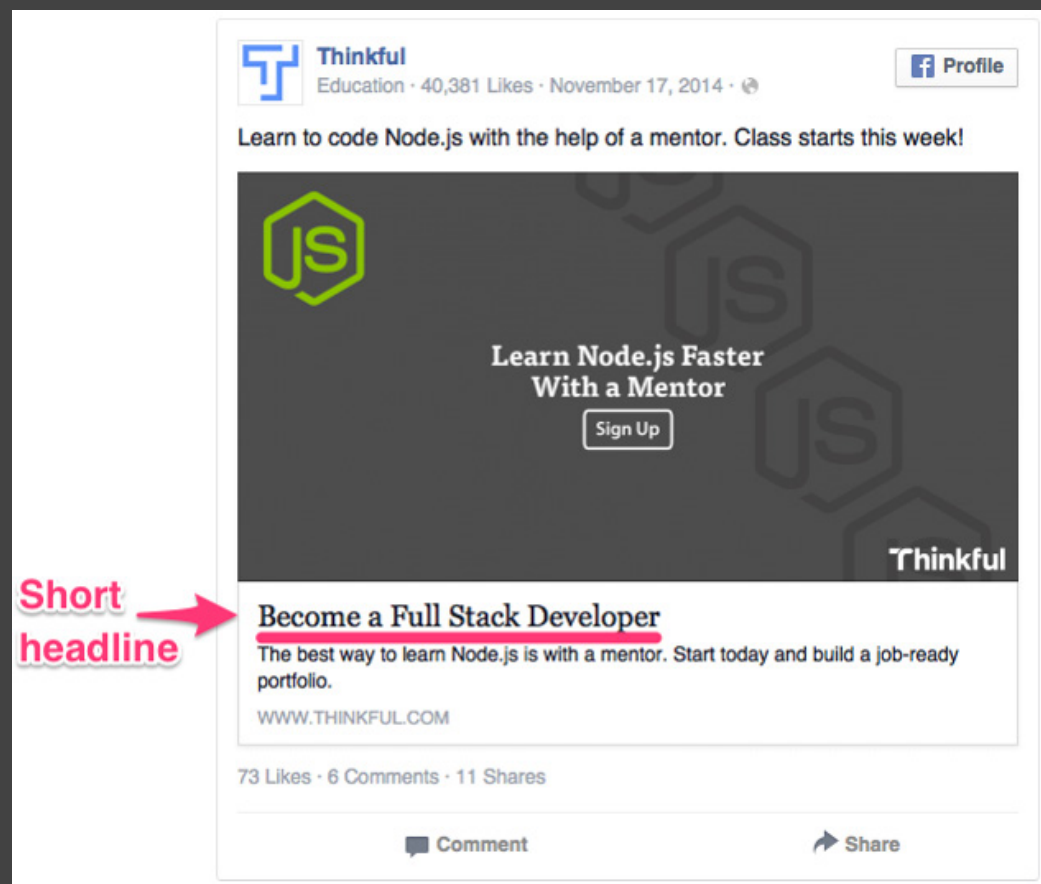
The Data Shows: The most popular Facebook ad headline length is **4 words**



- The median headline length is just 5 words long.
- These short headlines keep well within the character limit, using up just 10% of possible space on average.
- The limited space and a short headline forces you to get to the point of the ad.
- Short headlines grab attention and make customers click to find more information.

3 The Most Popular Headline Length

Doing it Right - [Thinkful](#), an online mentorship service:

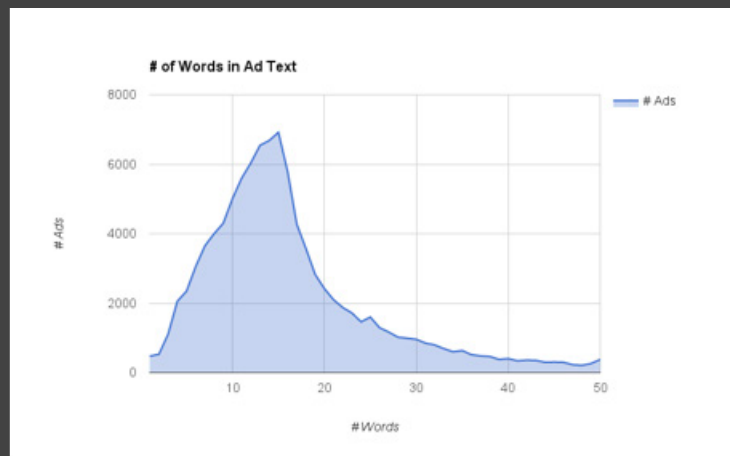


Best practices

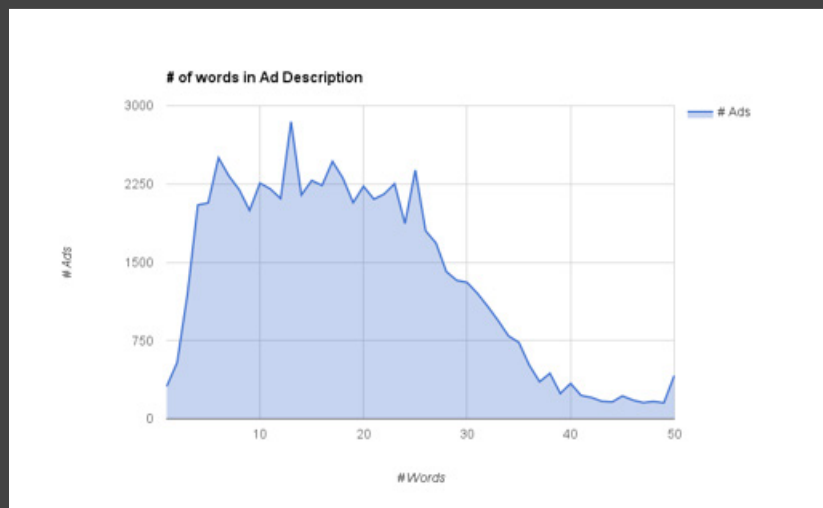
- They keep the headline tight, only using 5 words.
- The benefit-driven language in the headline catches your attention and appeals to their audience's aspirations.
- Clear language is tailored directly to the target audience.

4 The Most Popular Text & Description Length

The Data Shows: The median length for ad post text is just **15 words**.



- The median link description is slightly longer, at 17 words, just 35% of the character limit.
- These limits mean you have to keep all your text tight and to the point.
- Clear text attracts people to the ad and lets them click through to your site to learn more.



4 The Most Popular Text & Description Length

Doing it Right: [Sidekick](#), an email management tool.



Best practices

- The post text is very short, showing the audience exactly what the ad is promoting (“email”).
- The link description is longer and entices the reader to learn more about the service but still leaves them needing to click through the ad to find out more about the service.
- The reader scans the title, then the post text, before landing on the link description for more detail.
- This link description should close the deal and tempt the reader to click through.

4 The Most Popular Text & Description Length

Doing it Right: [Salesforce](#), an enterprise cloud computing platform

Salesforce
Company · 525,367 Likes · November 16 · 🌐

Look under the hood of the world's #1 enterprise cloud computing platform. From the foundational services you build on, to powerful app-building tools like Lightning, learn why Salesforce redefines Platform as a Service.

Inside the #1 Cloud Platform For Building Next-Gen Apps.

Inside the #1 Cloud Platform
Salesforce App Cloud lets you build apps fast that help you connect employees, engage customers, and integrate, and connect everything and everyone.

WWW.SALESFORCE.COM

566 Likes · 12 Comments · 90 Shares

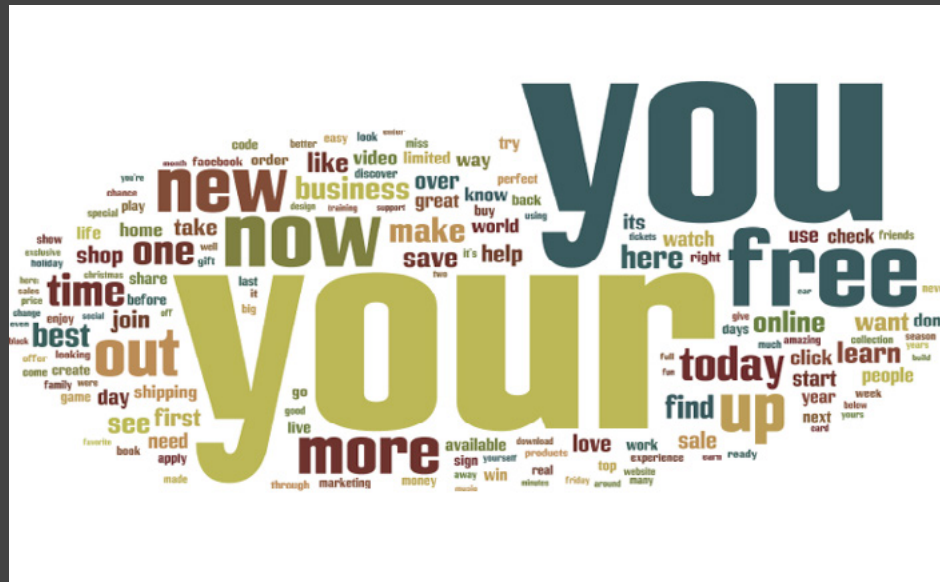
Like Comment Share

Best practices

- The post text is longer, including more copy to help build trust for enterprise customers.
- The link description still gives a concise description of the product, teasing the reader to learn more.
- The ad gives enough information to entice the reader and build confidence, but stills requires the click-through or CTA click to learn more.

5 The Most Popular Words

The Data Shows: You/Your, Free, Now, and New are the Top Words.

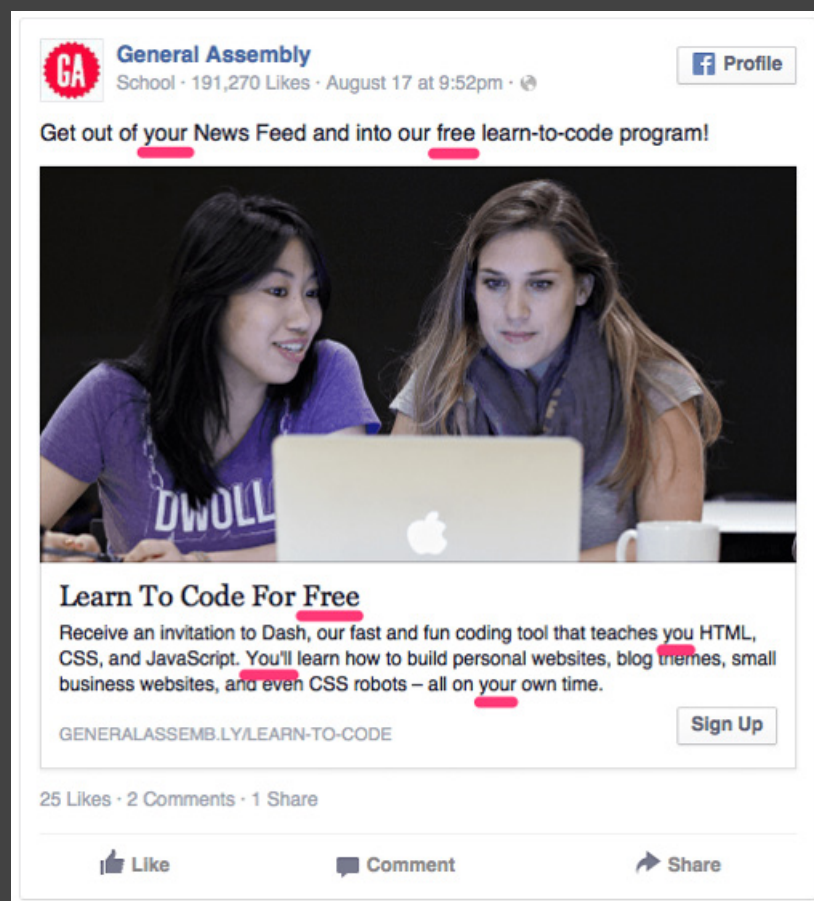


- **You/Your:** our brain is activated by hearing or thinking of our own name and ourselves.
- **Free:** this is the ultimate word for any viewer of an ad. Include it in an ad and it's almost guaranteed to catch the eye.
- **Now:** this creates scarcity in the reader's mind and urges them to action.
- **New:** using this word is a great way to show you are offering something fresh.

Audiences are naturally drawn to these words. Using these words in ads means you have a natural advantage over all other advertisers.

5 The Most Popular Words

Doing it Right: General Assembly, an online tutorial community.



The image shows a Facebook post from the 'General Assembly' page. The post text reads: 'Get out of your News Feed and into our free learn-to-code program!'. Below the text is a photo of two women looking at a laptop. The headline is 'Learn To Code For Free'. The body text says: 'Receive an invitation to Dash, our fast and fun coding tool that teaches you HTML, CSS, and JavaScript. You'll learn how to build personal websites, blog themes, small business websites, and even CSS robots – all on your own time.' There is a 'Sign Up' button and a link 'GENERALASSEMB.LY/LEARN-TO-CODE'. The post has 25 likes, 2 comments, and 1 share.

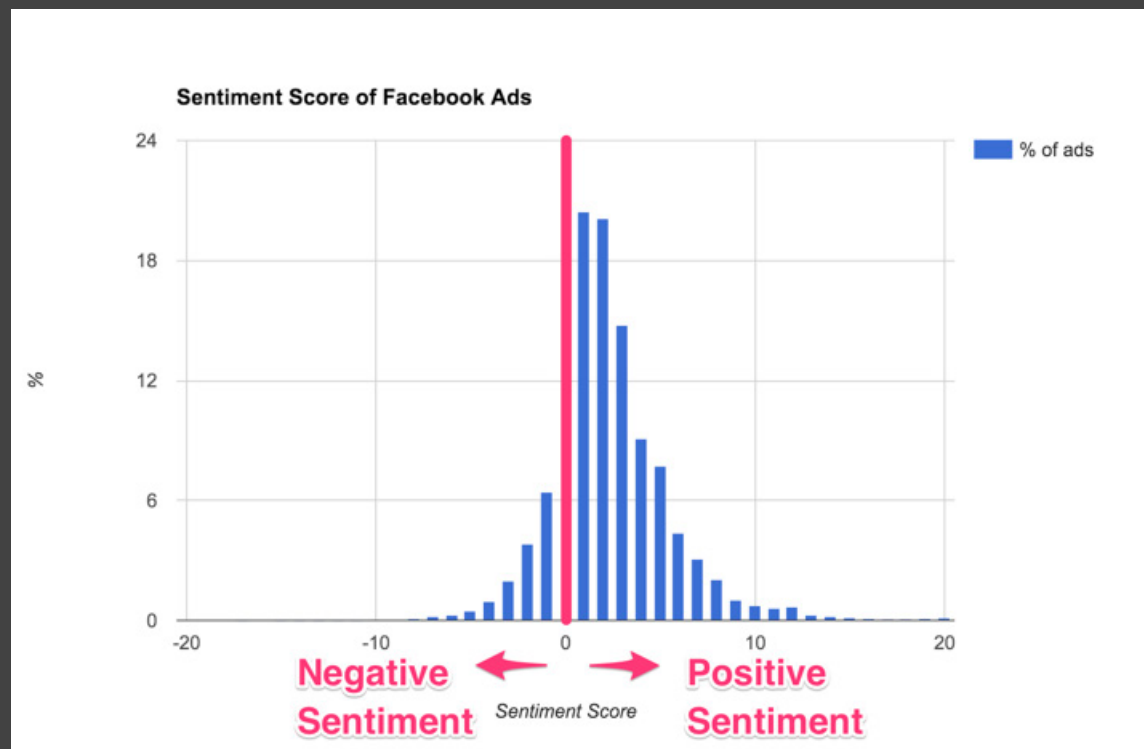
Best practices

- Includes the word “Free” in the headline.
- Includes the words “you” and “free” in the post text.
- Includes the words “you” and “you’ll” in the link description.

By combining the use of these words in your ads with targeting to the right audience, you’ll be speaking directly to the right customers.

6 The Most Popular Sentiment

The Data Shows: Most ads are sentiment neutral.



- Sentiment analysis studies the emotional content of text.
- Most non-neutral Facebook ads show a slightly positive tone.
- Positive ads use words such as ‘capable’ (+1), ‘top’ (+2), or ‘yummy’ (+3) to elicit good emotions in the audience.
- Negative ads can work as well, and ads for news items or charities often emphasize negative emotions.

**Each word is scored from +5, highly positive (“Breathtaking”) to -5, highly negative (“Catastrophic”) [Click here](#) for more info

6 The Most Popular Sentiment

Doing it Right: [DraftKings](#), a fantasy sports website.



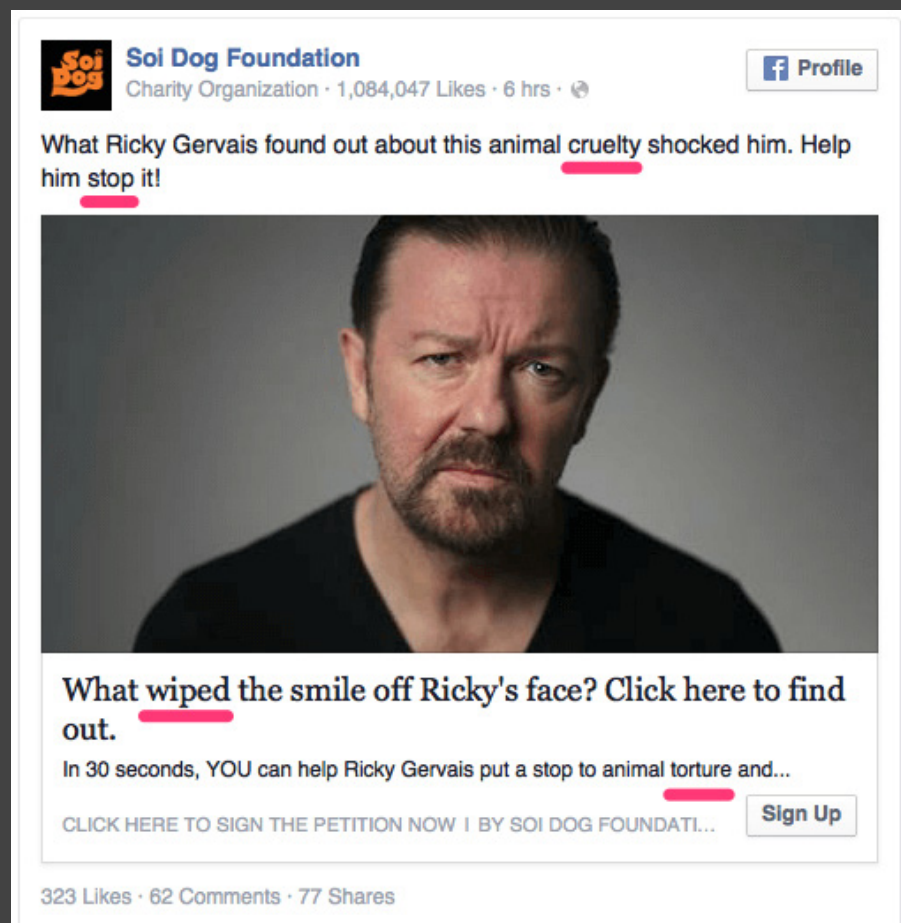
The image shows a Facebook post from DraftKings. The post header includes the DraftKings logo, the text "Sports & Recreation · 767,373 Likes · April 17 ·", and a "Profile" button. The main text of the post reads: "Who's the MVP? Draft 8 players from the next playoff games. 1st wins \$5,000 and top 5150 win cash after the last game! Draft now!". Below this text is a graphic with three panels: a red panel with a white beard icon, a blue panel with the number "30" in a yellow circle, and a dark blue panel with a white helmet icon. Underneath the graphic is a black banner with white text: "DRAFT 9 PLAYERS FROM THE PLAYOFFS \$65,000 FANTASY CONTEST". Below the banner, the text reads: "\$65K Fantasy Contest \$3 to play. First wins \$5K. Immediate Payouts!". At the bottom left is the URL "DRAFTKINGS.COM" and at the bottom right is a "Sign Up" button. The post footer shows "12 Likes · 5 Comments".

Best practices

- Includes multiple positively valenced words: “Win” and “wins” are +4, and “top” is +2.
- The ad also uses other signals to get positive attention with multiple \$ signs and large numbers (\$65K).
- Uses other positive words such as “Fantasy”, “Cash”, and “Now”.

6 The Least Popular Sentiment

Doing it Right: [Soi Dog](#), an animal welfare nonprofit.



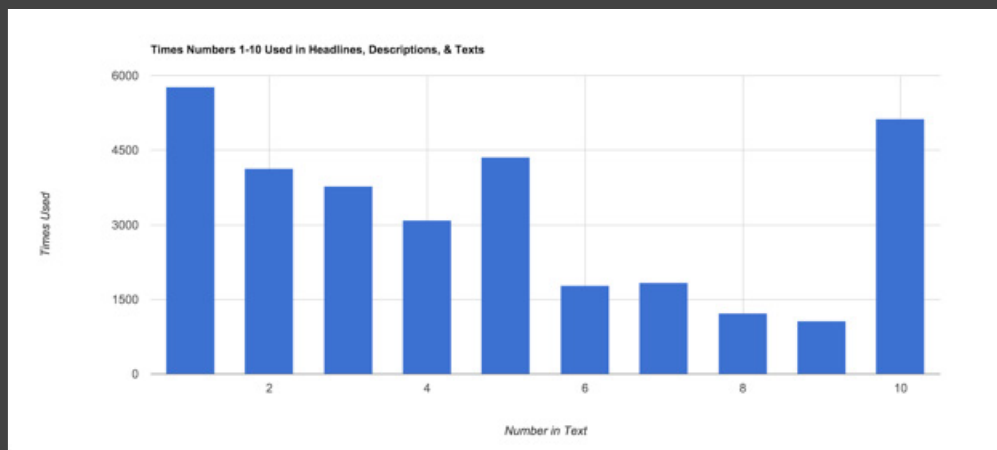
The image shows a Facebook post from the Soi Dog Foundation. The post features a photo of Ricky Gervais with a serious expression. The text of the post is as follows: "What Ricky Gervais found out about this animal cruelty shocked him. Help him stop it!" followed by the photo. Below the photo, it says "What wiped the smile off Ricky's face? Click here to find out." and "In 30 seconds, YOU can help Ricky Gervais put a stop to animal torture and...". At the bottom, there is a link "CLICK HERE TO SIGN THE PETITION NOW | BY SOI DOG FOUNDATI..." and a "Sign Up" button. The post has 323 Likes, 62 Comments, and 77 Shares.

Best practices

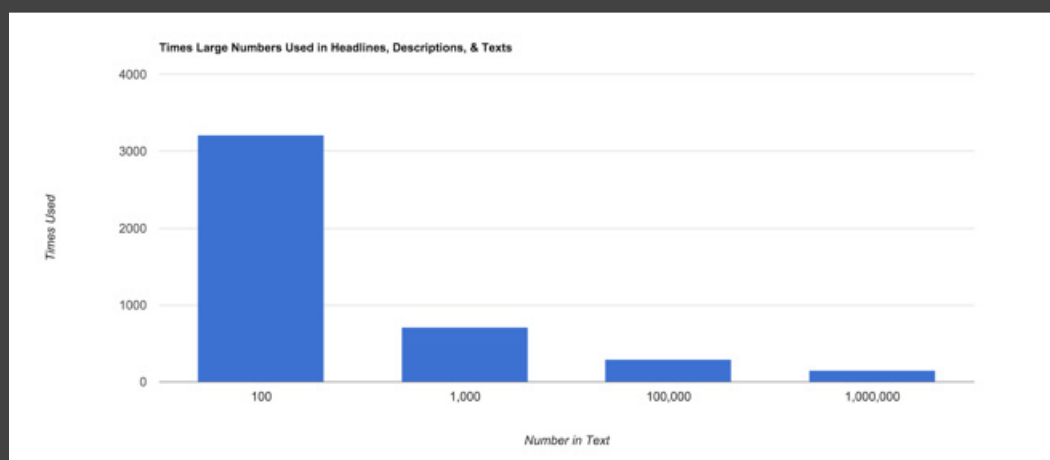
- Contains negatively valenced words: the word “cruelty”, a -3 valence word, and “torture”, which scores -4 in sentiment analysis.
- The image shows negative emotion
- Contains other negative words, such as “wiped”, “shocked”, and “stop”.
- Ends telling the audience what they can do to stop this: “Click here to find out”
- “Sign Up” CTA

6 The Most Popular Numbers

The Data Shows: 48.1% of all ads contained a number in the headline, description, or text.



- Most numbers were rounded (1, 10, 100, 1,000, ...)
- Examples of numbers could be:
 - percentage (“20% off”)
 - monetary (“\$10 discount”)
 - lists (“Top 10”)
 - boasts (“#1”)
 - social proof (“Join 100,000+ people”)



6 The Most Popular Numbers

Doing it Right: Dropbox, a cloud storage service

Dropbox
Product/Service · 1,255,083 Likes · January 6 · 🌐

Try the solution that **100,000+** businesses trust. Start your free 14 days.

Unlimited space for your files

Dropbox for Business

FREE TRIAL

Free Dropbox for Business trial
Discover why **100,000+** businesses trust Dropbox for Business to back up files, access files from anywhere, and improve team collaboration

DROPOBOX.COM [Learn More](#)

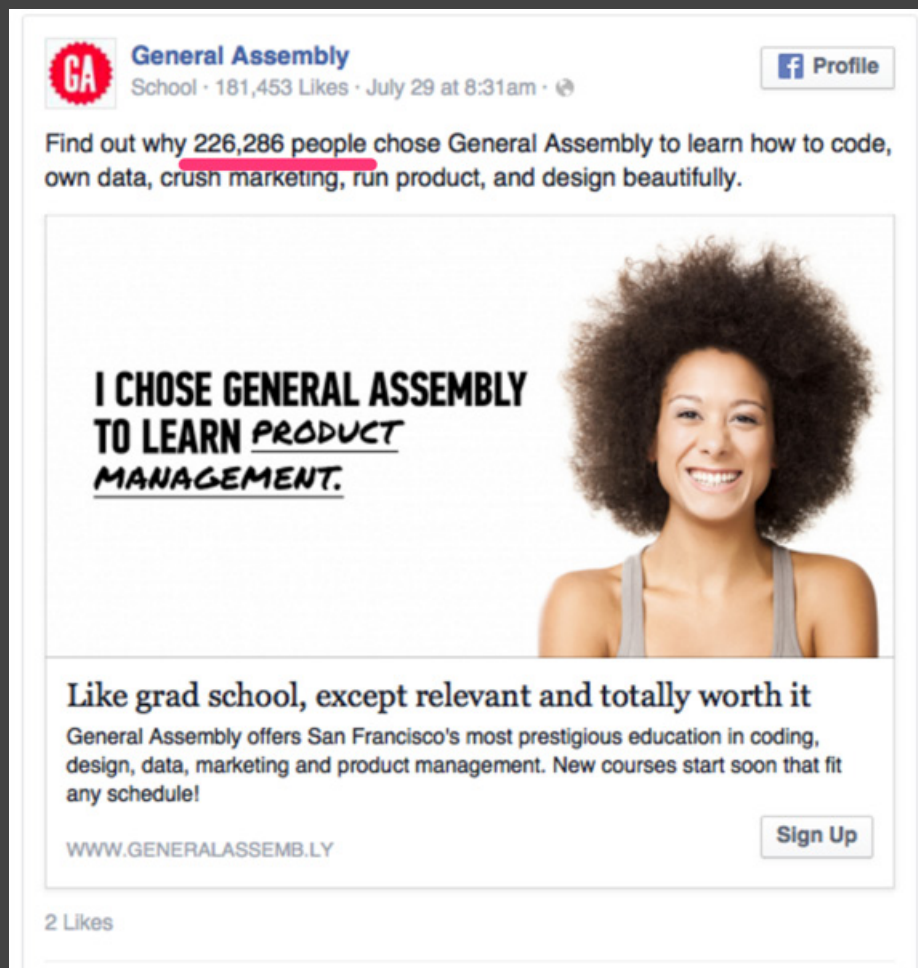
12 Likes · 1 Comment

Best practices

- Uses large numbers as social proof.
- Shows you that 100,000+ businesses are already using Dropbox so you can have confidence in them as well.
- Uses the positively-valenced word “Trust” (+1) to reinforce that confidence.
- Uses large numbers along with strong language to boost your social proof.

6 The Most Popular Numbers

Doing it Right: General Assembly, an online tutorial community.



The image shows a Facebook post from the 'General Assembly' page. The post header includes the GA logo, the name 'General Assembly', and the text 'School · 181,453 Likes · July 29 at 8:31am ·'. A 'Profile' button is visible. The main text of the post reads: 'Find out why 226,286 people chose General Assembly to learn how to code, own data, crush marketing, run product, and design beautifully.' Below this is a large image featuring a smiling woman with a large afro. To the left of the woman, the text reads: 'I CHOSE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO LEARN PRODUCT MANAGEMENT.'. Below the image, the text says: 'Like grad school, except relevant and totally worth it' followed by 'General Assembly offers San Francisco's most prestigious education in coding, design, data, marketing and product management. New courses start soon that fit any schedule!'. At the bottom left of the post area is the URL 'WWW.GENERALASSEMBLY.LY' and at the bottom right is a 'Sign Up' button. At the very bottom of the post, it says '2 Likes'.

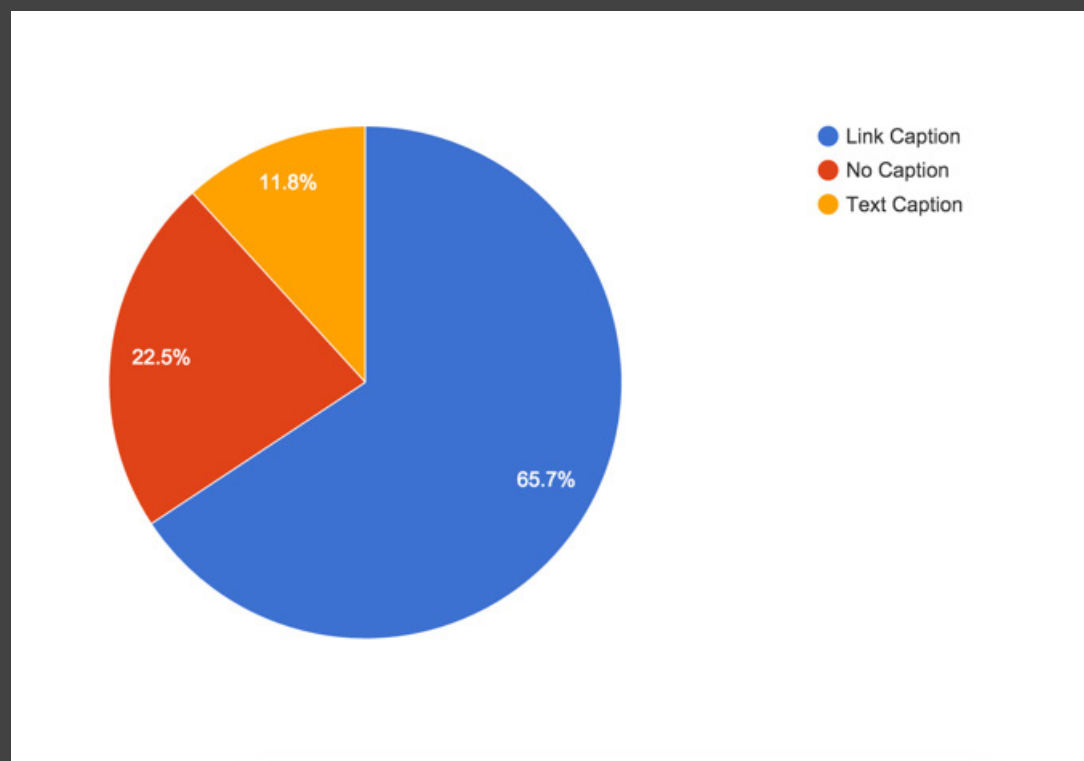
Best practices

- Uses a highly specific number, 226,286, as social proof.
- Exact number builds trust in the brand and is more likely to be taken as true.
- The distinct number is more likely to catch the eye of a reader.

Tip: Use your actual user count, rather than a round number, to stand out from other ads.

7 The Most Popular Links

The Data Shows: 65.7% of ads include their domain URL



- 65.7% of ads use this opportunity to include their domain URL and drive further people to their site.
- A further 11.8% of ads use this as a way to include further text or a tagline.
- A whopping 22.5% miss out on this opportunity to advertise their domain and brand.

7 The Most Popular Links

Doing it Right: [Localytics](#), an analytics and marketing platform.



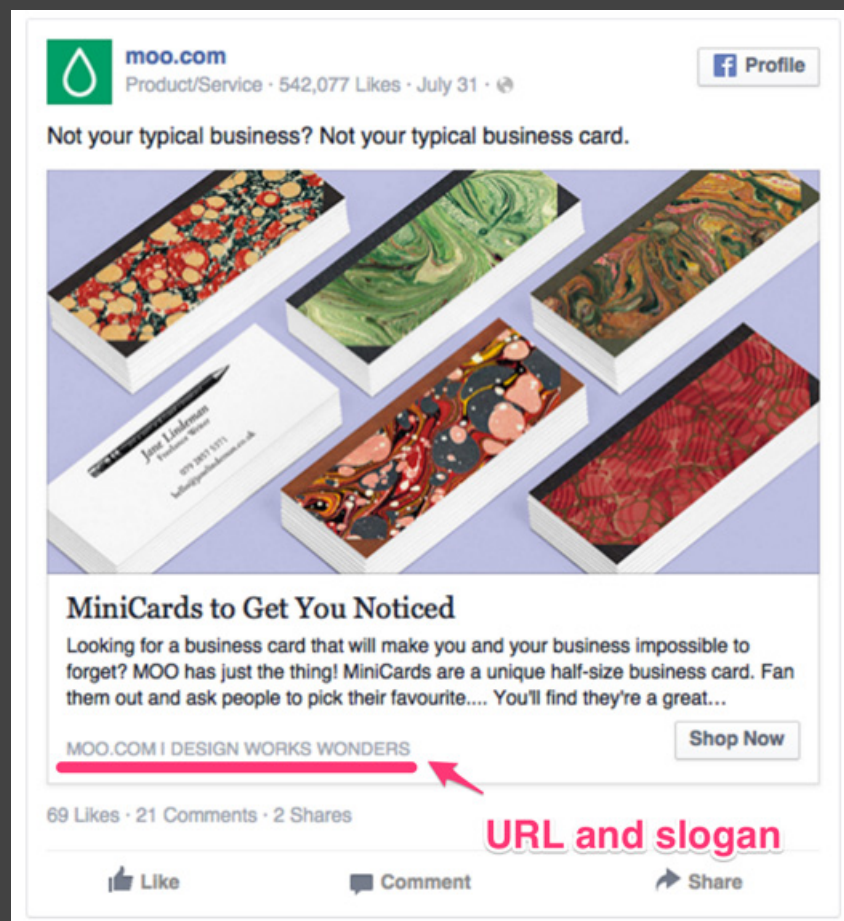
The image shows a Facebook advertisement for Localytics. At the top left is the Localytics logo and name, followed by 'Company · 3,090 Likes · August 13, 2014'. A 'Profile' button is on the right. The main text reads: 'Learn how to gain more users, more usage, and more engagement in this ebook.' Below this is a large image. The left side of the image shows a hand holding a smartphone with an app interface, with a laptop in the background. The right side shows the cover of an eBook titled 'THE BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO APP ANALYTICS' featuring a smartphone with 'SOS' on the screen inside a red lifebuoy. A pink arrow points to the eBook cover with the text 'clear lead magnet image' below it. Text overlays on the image include 'Find Out What Works In Your App. Start Optimizing Today.' and 'The Beginner's Guide to App Analytics Get Your Free Copy INFO.LOCALYTICS.COM | BY LOCALYTICS'. At the bottom left of the ad, it says '9 Likes · 1 Comment'.

Best practices

- This ad sends the Localytics audience directly to a landing page where they can download the eBook.
- A landing page is a great way to capture information (name, email, company) about your audience members.
- The image and ad are designed specifically to promote the eBook, not just the brand.
- Shows the audience what the eBook looks like and exactly what they'll get.
- Uses positive words (“More”), and popular words (“Free”).

7 The Most Popular Links

Doing it Right: [Moo.com](https://moo.com), a business stationary service.



The image shows a Facebook advertisement for moo.com. At the top left is the moo.com logo with a water drop icon, followed by the text 'Product/Service · 542,077 Likes · July 31 ·'. To the right is a 'Profile' button. Below this is the headline 'Not your typical business? Not your typical business card.' The main visual is a collection of five colorful, patterned business cards. Below the image is the text 'MiniCards to Get You Noticed' followed by a paragraph: 'Looking for a business card that will make you and your business impossible to forget? MOO has just the thing! MiniCards are a unique half-size business card. Fan them out and ask people to pick their favourite.... You'll find they're a great...'. Below this is a link 'MOO.COM | DESIGN WORKS WONDERS' with a red underline and a red arrow pointing to it. To the right of the link is a 'Shop Now' button. At the bottom left of the ad area, it says '69 Likes · 21 Comments · 2 Shares'. At the bottom right, there are icons for 'Like', 'Comment', and 'Share'. A red label 'URL and slogan' is positioned below the link.

Best practices

- They take superb advantage of this opportunity to show both a URL (“moo.com”) and to add a slogan (“Design Works Wonders”), separated by a pipe.
- Includes both an extra link and extra text in small ad real estate.
- The audience will know exactly where they are being directed to after they click through the ad.

8 The Most Popular Call to Action

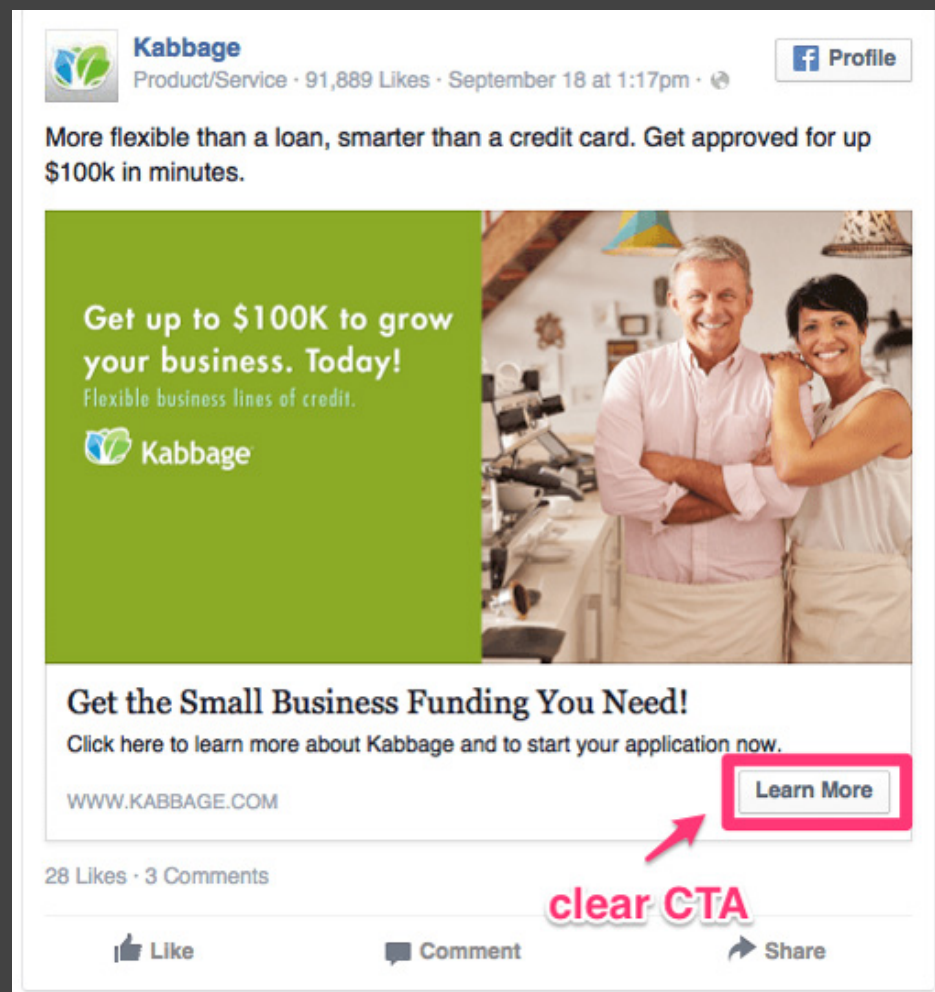
The Data Shows: The Top CTAs are 'Learn More', 'Shop Now', and 'Sign Up



- 'Learn More', 'Shop Now', and 'Sign Up' are all used significantly more than any other call-to-action,
- Including a call-to-action (CTA) button in your ad makes it easy for a user to click through to your site to learn more about your product.
- A CTA shows your audience exactly where on the ad they should click to get the information.

8 The Most Popular Call to Action

Doing it Right: Kabbage, a small business loan platform.



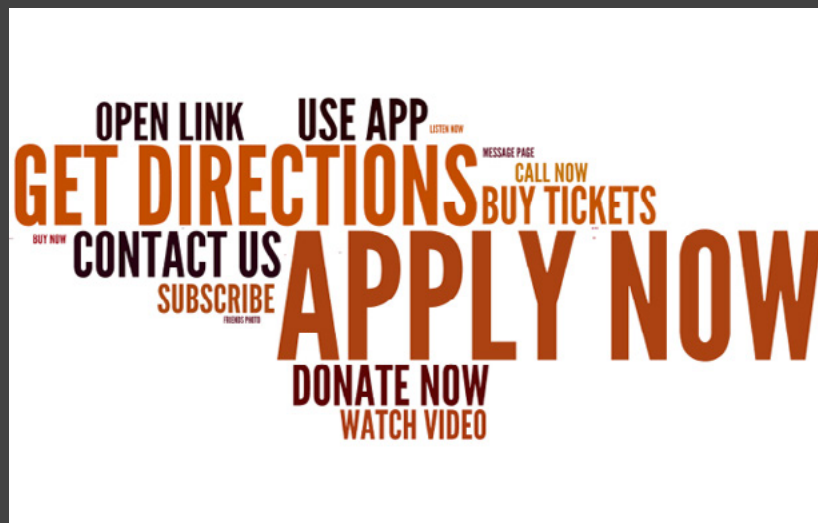
The image shows a Facebook post from Kabbage. The post header includes the Kabbage logo, name, and profile information. The main text of the post reads: "More flexible than a loan, smarter than a credit card. Get approved for up to \$100k in minutes." Below this is a large image of a smiling man and woman in a kitchen. A green overlay on the left side of the image contains the text: "Get up to \$100K to grow your business. Today! Flexible business lines of credit. Kabbage". Below the image, the text says: "Get the Small Business Funding You Need! Click here to learn more about Kabbage and to start your application now." followed by the URL "WWW.KABBAGE.COM". A red box highlights the "Learn More" button, with a red arrow pointing to it and the text "clear CTA" written below. At the bottom of the post, there are 28 likes and 3 comments, and buttons for Like, Comment, and Share.

Best practices

- Uses the 'Learn More' CTA so you can find out about their small business funding.
- Could have used "Apply Now" for a more proactive CTA: "Learn More" is a more low-commitment next step.
- Allows the audience to click through without worrying if they are going to be taken to an application page for a loan.

8 The Least Popular Call to Action

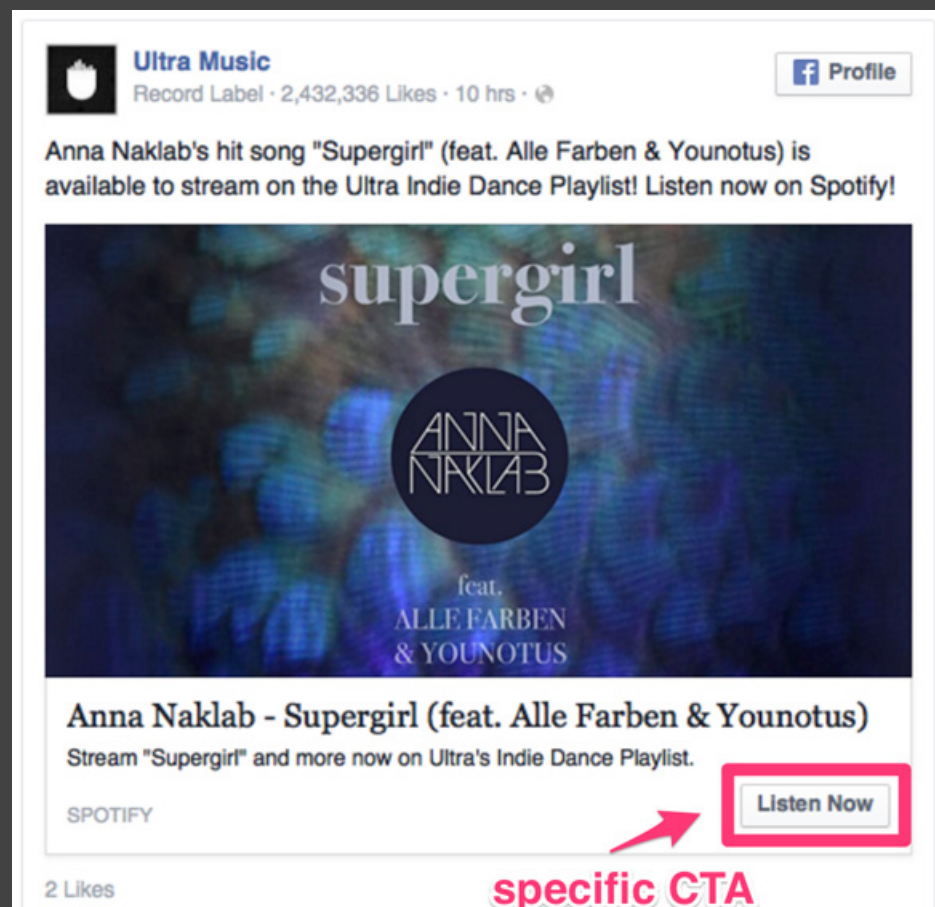
The Data Shows: ‘Contact Us’, ‘Buy Tickets’, and ‘Subscribe’ were the least popular CTAs.



- ‘Contact Us’, ‘Buy Tickets’, and ‘Subscribe’ were all used less than 100 times each.
- ‘Donate’, ‘Must Read’, and ‘Get Quote’ were all only used 1 time (the small dots in the wordcloud).
- For more specific services and products, you can utilize these lesser-used CTAs.
- Any CTA that is specific to your product or service is worth using.

8 The Least Popular Call to Action

Doing it Right: [Ultra Music](#), a record label.



The image shows a Facebook advertisement for Ultra Music. At the top left is the Ultra Music profile picture and name, with 'Record Label · 2,432,336 Likes · 10 hrs ·' and a 'Profile' button. The main text reads: 'Anna Naklab's hit song "Supergirl" (feat. Alle Farben & Younotus) is available to stream on the Ultra Indie Dance Playlist! Listen now on Spotify!'. Below this is a large image of the song's cover art, which features the word 'supergirl' in a stylized font, the artist's name 'ANNA NAKLAB' in a circular logo, and 'feat. ALLE FARBEN & YOUNOTUS'. Underneath the image, it says 'Anna Naklab - Supergirl (feat. Alle Farben & Younotus)' and 'Stream "Supergirl" and more now on Ultra's Indie Dance Playlist.'. At the bottom left of the ad is the Spotify logo. At the bottom right, there is a 'Listen Now' button, which is highlighted with a red box and a red arrow pointing to it. Below the ad, the text 'specific CTA' is written in red.

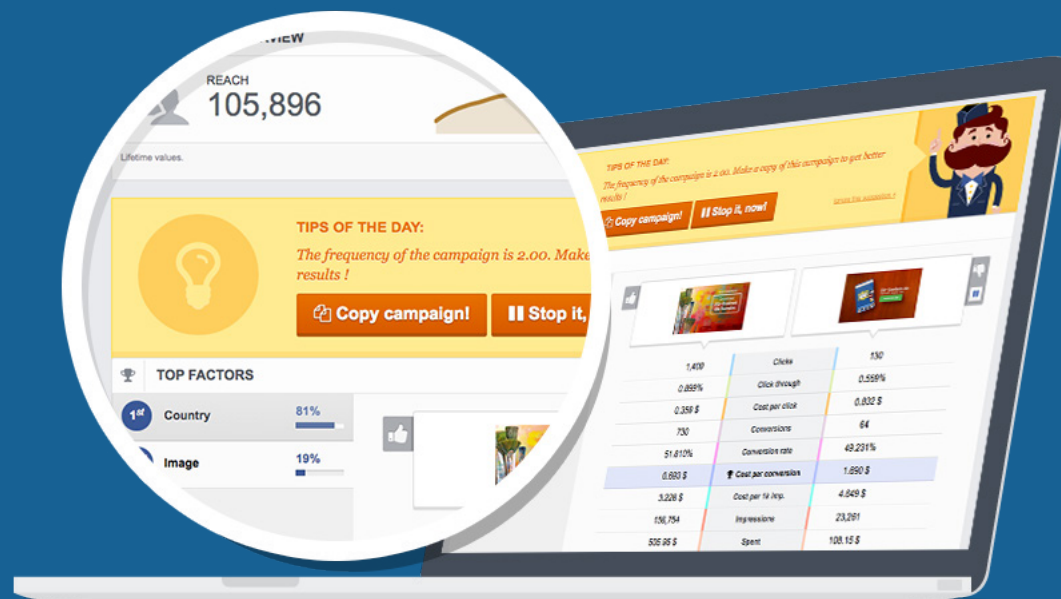
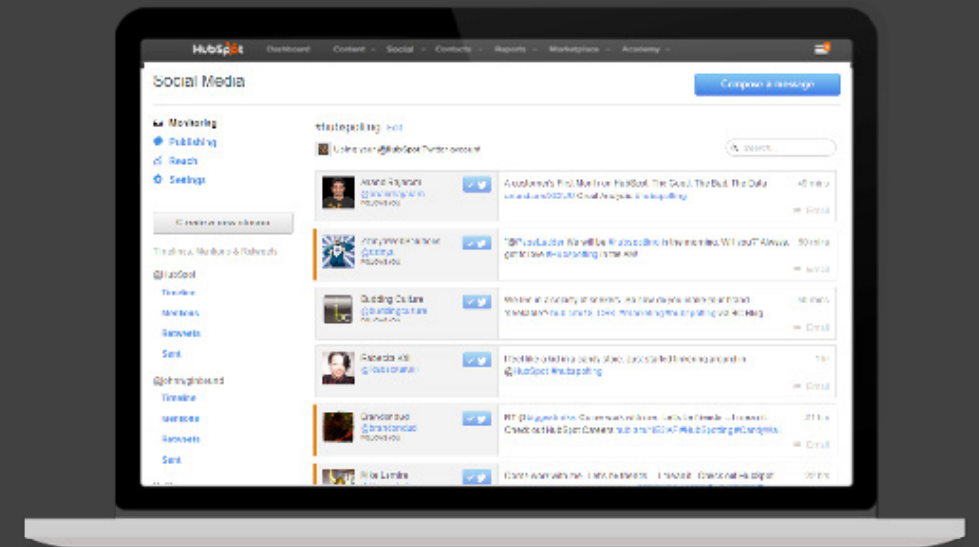
Best practices

- Only 13 out of 111,018 Facebook ads use the “Listen Now” CTA
- This CTA fits in exactly with this brand so it is a great choice of CTA.
- The CTA takes the user to the Supergirl track on Spotify so the audience can listen immediately.

Thank-you for Reading.

Want to see how Hubspot's **Social Inbox** can help you master social media?

[Get My Free Demo](#)



Want to try **AdEspresso** for free? See how you can create, manage, optimize Your Facebook Advertising in less time.

[Claim Your Free Trial](#)