# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABOUT ADSTAGE</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FACEBOOK</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News Feed</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right Hand Placement</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketplace</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience Network</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messenger</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSTAGRAM</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News Feed</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stories Placement</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LINKEDIN</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TWITTER</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOOGLE ADS</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOOGLE DISPLAY NETWORK</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YOUTUBE</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICROSOFT ADVERTISING</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRENDS</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESOURCES</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q2 2019

Introduction

Are you paying too much for a click on a Facebook ad? What’s a good conversion rate on LinkedIn?

These questions are top-of-mind for marketers tasked with generating leads in any industry. At AdStage, we believe data should be used to drive decisions that will grow your business. To help you set the benchmarks for success, we’ve aggregated data from over 13 billion impressions and over 209 million clicks powered by the AdStage platform.

We used this data to find network-specific benchmarks for paid search and paid social. Our benchmark report includes AdStage data from the following ad networks:

- Google Ads
- Facebook
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- Twitter
- Microsoft Advertising

In addition to benchmark data, you will also find trend analysis in this edition of the AdStage Benchmark Report.

Keep in Touch with AdStage

To stay current on the most recent trends in paid marketing and to receive the latest news about major digital ad networks, follow us on Twitter @adstage and subscribe to our popular newsletter.

If you are interested in learning more about how AdStage technology can help your organization drive higher results for you paid marketing efforts, contact us at questions@adstage.com.
CROSS-CHANNEL PAID MEDIA ANALYTICS & OPTIMIZATION
AUTOMATICALLY CONNECT AD DATA TO WEB ANALYTICS AND SALES DATA

ADSTAGE PRODUCTS

REPORT
Measure, analyze, and report on your advertising campaigns

AUTOMATE
Always-on campaign monitoring & optimization rules

DATA API
Ship your ad data anywhere

JOIN
Optimize campaigns based on actual sales data

ADSTAGE FOR GOOGLE SHEETS
All your ad data into Google Sheets for $29/month
Methodology

Benchmark metrics are representative of AdStage clients who utilize our products to manage and report on advertising accounts in the North American region. We make no claims that our benchmark metrics are indicators of a network's performance at large. Customers' ad accounts that meet certain spend and activity thresholds are aggregated and summarized to produce median values across our client population.

Reading the charts

Upper bounds identifies the 3rd Quartile
The circle marker is the median value
Lower bounds identifies the 1st Quartile
Q2 2019
Facebook - News Feed Benchmarks

From the 800 million ad impressions and nearly 10 million clicks analyzed in Q2 2019 for Feed placement ads, median CPC was $0.64, median CPM was $7.77, and median CTR was still strong at 1.20%.

Key Takeaways
● In the battle between Feed and Right Hand placements, Feed is the clear winner in terms of cost and engagement. The median number of ads clicked in a month rose from 13 to 17 according to a CNBC report. It’s still competitive to advertising in the News Feed.
From the 8 million ad impressions analyzed in Q2 2019 for Right Hand placement ads, median CPC was $2.15, median CPM was $2.28, and CTR was at 0.10%.

**Key Takeaways**

- From our observations, low clicks resulted in very high costs. The shrinking effect of right hand placement ads is clear this quarter. For brand reach, right hand is still a worthwhile placement, but it’s more expensive than other areas of Facebook.
From the 15 million ad impressions analyzed in Q2 2019 for Facebook Marketplace ads, median CPC was $0.57, median CPM was $3.39, and median CTR was at 0.58%.

**Key Takeaways**
- Marketplace is attracting advertising dollars quicker than Facebook stories, and seeing greater engagement than right hand placement ads. CPC remains low and is competitive with other placements for consumer products.
In Q2 2019, we analyzed over 177 million ad impressions and over 2 million clicks for ads in Facebook’s Audience Network.

Median CPC is decreased slightly to $0.62 since last quarter, while it remains 12 cents higher than it was a year ago in Q2 2018.

**Key Takeaways**
- CPC decreased by 17% since Q1 2019
- CPC increased by 21% year over year since Q2 2018
After analyzing over 177 million ad impressions and over 2 million clicks for ads in Facebook’s Audience Network, we found that median CPM continued its upward climb, ending the first half of the year at $7.84, an increase of 11% from Q1. Compared to this time last year, median CPMs are $3.72 more expensive.

**Key Takeaways**
- CPM increased by 11% since Q1 2019
- CPM increased by 90% year over year since Q2 2018
Median CTR for ads in Facebook’s Audience Network increased to 1.23% for Q2 2019. And median CTR is up 48% compared to the same time last year, reversing the downward trend we observed last quarter.

Key Takeaways
- CTR increased by 24% since Q1 2019
- CTR increased by 48% year over year since Q2 2018
In Q2 2019, we analyzed 70 million ad impressions and over 500,000 clicks for ads in Facebook Messenger.

Median CPC rose 27 cents since last quarter, but is still down 20 cents from same time last year.

**Key Takeaways**
- CPC increased by 34% since Q1 2019
- CPC decreased by 16% year over year since Q2 2018
After analyzing 70 million ad impressions and over 500,000 clicks for ads on Facebook Messenger, we found that median CPM increased $0.69 from last quarter and is nearly the same price as it was a year ago in Q2 2018.

**Key Takeaways**
- CPM increased by 10.6% since Q1 2019
- CPM decreased by 2.6% year over year since Q2 2018
Median CTR for ads on Facebook Messenger decreased to 0.66%, nearly the same as we observed in Q4 2018. CTR is still up 12% Y/Y.

**Key Takeaways**
- CTR decreased by 18.5% since Q1 2019
- CTR increased by 12% year over year since Q2 2018
In Q2 2019 we analyzed 236 million impressions and over 2 million clicks. We observed the median CPC for Instagram Feed as at $0.67, median CPM of $6.09, and median CTR of 0.88%.

**Key Takeaways**
- Instagram Feed ads continue to be competitive, and less costly than Stories. We’ve seen ad spend shift from Facebook News Feed to Stories over the past year and the costs are very similar. While our data shows Facebook Feed CTR slightly outperforming Instagram Feed, it’s time to pay close attention to Instagram advertising.
In Q2 2019 we analyzed 236 million impressions and over 2 million clicks. We observed the median CPC for Instagram Feed as at $0.76, median CPM of $3.96, and median CTR of 0.54%.

**Key Takeaways**

- Stories placement is morphing into a competitor for Facebook advertising budget with reasonable costs and a moderate click-through rate. Instagram Stories is worthy of a test budget if it’s not already in your placement portfolio.
In Q2 2019, we analyzed 1.5 billion ad impressions and just over 3 million clicks for ads on LinkedIn.

Median CPC is on the upward trend for the second quarter in a row, reporting at $0.12 higher than in Q1.

**Key Takeaways**
- CPC increased by 3% since Q1 2019
- CPC decreased by 8.5% year over year since Q2 2018
After analyzing 1.5 billion ad impressions and just over 3 million clicks for ads on LinkedIn, we found that CPM increased 62 cents, and is over two dollars more expensive than what it was this same time last year.

**Key Takeaways**
- CPM increased by 7.8% since Q1 2019
- CPM increased by 40% year over year since Q2 2018
Median CTR for ads on LinkedIn increased 0.02% from last quarter, and is up considerably Y/Y from 2018. What we expected to be a declining CTR has reversed in again moving in a positive direction.

**Key Takeaways**
- CTR increased by 11% since Q1 2019
- CTR increased by 42.9% year over year since Q2 2018
In Q2 2019, we analyzed over 96 million ad impressions and over 1.6 million clicks for ads on Twitter.

We found that median CPC decreased considerably, dropping 17 cents from last quarter and is down 53 cents from where it was same time last year.

**Key Takeaways**
- CPC decreased by 34% since Q1 2019
- CPC decreased by 62% year over year since Q2 2018
After analyzing over 96 million ad impressions and over 1.6 million clicks for ads on Twitter, we found that median CPM reverse course and increased $0.72 since last quarter, but is $2.38 cheaper Y/Y.

**Key Takeaways**
- CPM increased by 17% since Q1 2019
- CPM decreased by 32% year over year since Q2 2018
In the past year, median CTR for ads on Twitter has seen a welcoming increase in performance, while costs were dropping. That changed in Q1 when CTR fell dramatically. In Q2 2019 we observed a course correction, with the median CTR increasing sharply by 91% over last quarter, and up 98% compared to the same time last year.

**Key Takeaways**
- CTR increased by 91% since Q1 2019
- CTR increased by 98% year over year since Q2 2018
In Q2 2019, we analyzed nearly 1.5 billion ad impressions and 42 million clicks for ads on Google Search. We observed median CPC increase slightly by 1.6% (2 cents) from last quarter, but still remains cheaper than last year down 14.5% Y/Y.

**Key Takeaways**
- CPC increased by 1.6% since Q1 2019
- CPC decreased by 15% year over year since Q2 2018
Q2 2019 Google Ads Search Benchmarks

Q2 MEDIAN CPM $41.10

After analyzing nearly 1.5 billion ad impressions and over 42 million clicks for ads on Google Search, we found that median CPM reversed its plunge, rising $3.42 since last quarter, but is still well below the same quarter last year, dropping 33%.

Key Takeaways
- CPM increased by 9% since Q1 2019
- CPM decreased by 33% year over year since Q2 2018
In Q2 2019, median CTR for ads on Google Search halted its downward slide, ticking up 4.7%. CTR still remains lower than we observed in 2018, down 18.9% Y/Y.

Key Takeaways
- CTR increased by 4.7% since Q1 2019
- CTR decreased by 19% year over year since Q2 2018
In Q2 2019, we analyzed over 3 billion ad impressions and over 20 million clicks for ads on Google Display Network. We observed median CPC slightly increase by $0.05 from last quarter, but clicks still remain considerably cheaper than last year down 26% Y/Y.

**Key Takeaways**
- CPC increased by 18% since Q1 2019
- CPC decreased by 26% year over year since Q2 2018
Q2 2019
Google Ads Display Network Benchmarks

Q2 MEDIAN

CPM

$2.39

After analyzing over 3 billion ad impressions and over 20 million clicks for ads on Google Display Network, we observed that median CPM only increased by 1 cent, but is still up 31 cents Y/Y.

Key Takeaways
- CPM increased by 0.4% since Q4 2019
- CPM increased by 15% year over year since Q2 2018
Median CTR for ads on Google Display Network decreased considerably by 20% since last quarter, trending towards the lower CTRs we had seen in 2018. CTR remains above last years performance, coming in 45% higher Y/Y.

**Key Takeaways**
- CTR decreased by 20% since Q1 2019
- CTR increased 45% year over year since Q2 2018
In Q2 2019, we analyzed over 233 million ad impressions and nearly 1 million clicks for ads on YouTube. We found that median CPC dropped $0.15 from last quarter and is down $1.40 Y/Y.

**Key Takeaways**
- CPC decreased by 6% since Q4 2019
- CPC decreased by 37% year over year since Q2 2018
After analyzing over 233 million ad impressions and nearly 1 million clicks for ads on YouTube, we found that median CPM increased to $8.00 but is 28% lower compared to the same time last year.

**Key Takeaways**
- CPM increased by 6% since Q1 2019
- CPM decreased by 28% year over year since Q2 2018
Median CTR for ads on YouTube jumped up 23% in the second quarter, and is considerably higher Y/Y, coming in at 0.38%.

**Key Takeaways**
- CTR increased by 22.6% since Q1 2019
- CTR increased by 22.6% year over year since Q2 2018
In Q2 2019, we analyzed over 54 million ad impressions and nearly 2 million clicks for ads on Bing.

We found that median CPC finally reversed course, increasing slightly by 13 cents to $1.56. Compared to the same time last year, median CPC for ads on Bing is down $1.52.

**Key Takeaways**
- CPC increased by 8.7% since Q1 2019
- CPC decreased by 49% Y/Y since Q2 2018
After analyzing over 54 million ad impressions and nearly 2 million clicks for ads on Bing, we found that median CPM increased $3.77 since last quarter. It’s way down Y/Y, rounding out Q2 $37.17 cheaper than the same time last year.

**Key Takeaways**
- CPM increased by 7.7% since Q1 2019
- CPM decreased by 41% Y/Y since Q2 2018
Median CTR for ads on Bing decreased by $0.15 since Q1, but is up 12% compared to the same time last year. As we’ve seen costs increase this quarter it appears that clicks are taking dive.

**Key Takeaways**
- CTR decreased by 4.3% since Q1 2019
- CTR increased 12% Y/Y since Q2 2018
Facebook’s clear history may impact targeting options

A report from eMarketer showed a decline in Facebook usage, specifically average time spent is trending downwards. But Instagram’s numbers continue to rise, so it’s not all bad news for Facebook. Unfortunately, the people who are spending time on Facebook are engaging more often with misinformation than real news. A study conducted by Oxford University found that “junk news” gets shared 4x more than content from reputable, trusted news outlets.

But none of the above has slowed Facebook down on the product development side. And Facebook may soon be making changes to the News Feed itself according to tests it’s been running. Swipeable Stories carousels offer a one-tap option to advance and posts always appear fully visible. Facebook has said before there’s no more room for ads in News Feed, and as users get more comfortable with Stories, it may be where Facebook focuses next.

In a strategy to offer users more privacy options, Facebook is letting users clear their entire histories, but marketers are worried it could mess with targeting options. The option would give people the ability to see and delete the data that third-party sites and apps share about them. For example, Custom Audiences relies in part on data about visits people make to an advertiser’s website or app.

Facebook hasn’t forgotten about the little guys. The platform unveiled an automated ad builder and appointment manager specifically for small businesses. The automatic ads are tailored for small businesses of 1-2 people who have little marketing experience. Through the new feature, they can answer a few questions about their company and campaign goals and based on the answers and info on their Facebook Page Facebook will create recommendations for a target audience, budget, and even creative options.

If you use Facebook’s Ad Library, expect to see some updates there. Facebook says it is “making transparency information more visible on Pages, expanding access to our API to help more people analyze political or issue ads, and exempting news publishers from labeling their ads as related to politics or issues in the US.”
When you hear “influencers” you automatically think of Instagram, and the social media platform is well aware of the unique advantage this provides. That's why Instagram made influencer posts shoppable. Influencers can now use the app to tag and sell products directly. Previously, only Instagram pages owned by brands could link out to specific products using ‘shoppable' posts. Now, advertisers can work with influencers to sell products on their behalf. Creators and brands will receive “shared insights” from Instagram. The move couldn't have come at a better time since a report from Socialbakers found that Instagram influencers are posting 150% more sponsored content than a year ago and that the majority of Instagram influencers are “micro-influencers” with fewer than 10,000 followers. This is especially great news for small businesses or companies with limited budgets. The rise of micro or niche influencers means more affordable opportunities to enter the world of influencer marketing.

Continuing with the influencer theme, Instagram now lets advertisers boost Branded Content Partnerships as ads. As explained by Instagram in the announcement post: “We're introducing the ability for advertisers to promote creators' organic branded content posts as feed ads. 68% of people say they come to Instagram to interact with creators. With branded content ads, businesses have an opportunity to tell their brand stories through creators' voices, reach new audiences and measure impact.” Previously, branded content partnership posts would only reach the followers of the influencer. Branded content ads let advertisers promote the posts just like they would any other ad.
Google is bringing users more transparency around how they’re being tracked across the web with cookies, which could negatively affect advertisers. And some analysts wonder if Google might give its own tracking preferential treatment. With the new changes, Chrome will let users clear all tracking cookies, while not affecting single domain cookies—those are the cookies that store info like logins and settings. Users will also be able to see exactly which sites are setting the tracking cookies. Google also said it’s prohibiting another type of online tracking called fingerprinting, or device recognition. But similarly, some worry it’s also beneficial for Google’s bottom line. No more fingerprinting is likely to impact the amount of data third parties can collect on internet users.

On the product side, Google’s been busy. Google announced a new mobile search ad format that queues up giant gallery ads. Advertisers can feature up to eight images in the ads, to “make it easier for you to communicate what your brand has to offer,” Prabhakar Raghavan, SVP of Google Ads and Commerce said in the announcement.

Google is also rolling out a mobile search redesign featuring a black “Ad” label, which replaces the green outlined label and a new look for favicons on organic listings. Google said that during testing a majority of users found it easier to identify websites and more than 2/3 said it was easier to scan results more quickly.

New advanced location targeting is meant to reach commuters, whether they’re at home, at work, or on the road. The change is now live for display, search, and shopping campaigns. Marketers will see the targeting option label has changed from “People in your targeted locations” option to “People in or regularly in your targeted locations.” Now you can reach people not just when they’re physically located in your target locations at the time of their search, but also people who regularly pass through your target locations.

Campaign-level conversion action settings are now available for search and display campaigns with plans to add support for video campaigns later this year. Previously, marketers could only set conversion actions to an entire account. Trying to segment through the default was a complicated and timely exercise. If you’re not sure how to apply the feature to your campaigns, Google suggests, “This feature should be used when your campaigns are aiming to capture different conversion types. If you have proper values setup for different conversion types that are valuable to your business across all campaigns in your account, you should simply use Target ROAS.”

Finally, one of Google’s most used products is opening its doors wide to advertisers—Maps. Since it launched 14 years ago, it’s been relatively free of ads until now. The app now regularly highlights sponsored locations and shows additional paid listings when people search for nearby gas stations, coffee shops, or other businesses. And for the last two years, Google has also tested “promoted pins,” which show an advertiser’s brand regardless of whether or not the user searched for that business.
Though you can’t request specific songs, Google Home smart speakers can now play music from YouTube Music’s free ad-supported tier. Before, to listen to YouTube music on your smart speaker you’d have to be subscribed to Google’s paid YouTube Music Premium service for $9.99 a month. But, be prepared to hear plenty of ads for YouTube Music Premium in between songs on the curated playlists.

Advertisers who use YouTube live streams now have an option to extend their branded content. A new template in Google Web Designer lets brands stream content from YouTube to native display ads. The ad units feature standard YouTube controls for watching, pausing, and sharing. The live stream ad test capabilities are available across screens and devices.
LinkedIn teams up to ramp up account-based marketing

If there’s any platform that believes in the power of account-based marketing, it’s LinkedIn. That’s why the company teamed up with Adobe and Microsoft to accelerate account-based marketing for their joint customers. LinkedIn says that by extending account-based marketing capabilities to Adobe Experience Cloud users, they’re creating a seamless way for them to identify and target the right audiences on LinkedIn with meaningful content. And great news for B2B marketers—Adobe and Microsoft are also working together to align key data sources to populate account-based profiles from Adobe Experience Cloud, including Marketo Engage and Microsoft Dynamics 365 for Sales. That makes it much easier for B2B marketers to easily identify, understand, and engage B2B customer buying teams.

LinkedIn acquired Drawbridge, an ad-tech firm that specializes in identity resolution. The move appears to be a strategy for LinkedIn to build out its value proposition to advertisers and users around data privacy. In the blog post announcement, LinkedIn also said, “We believe Drawbridge’s team and technology will allow us to accelerate the capabilities of our Marketing Solutions platform, helping our customers better reach and understand their professional audiences and measure the ROI of their campaigns across mobile and desktop.”
Twitter experiments with showing users more ads per day

Twitter makes most of its money from advertising, but its monthly user base has been shrinking for a year. To combat the decline in advertising opportunities, Twitter is now experimenting with showing its loyal users more ads. Twitter has refused to reveal how many people the experiment affects and what the outcome might mean for future ad load.

To control spam, Twitter cut down the number of accounts you can follow in a day, but probably no one but the bots will be affected. Previously, users could follow up to 1,000 new accounts per day. Twitter decreased that number to 400. The new limit is supposed to prevent spammers from growing their networks by following then unfollowing Twitter accounts in a “bulk, aggressive or indiscriminate manner.” But some people think Twitter can take it even further, arguing that 400 new follows is well over what a regular user would want per day.
Bing Ads rebrands to Microsoft Advertising to prove bigger focus on ads

In an effort to demonstrate a broader focus on ad inventory, data, and targeting capabilities, Bing Ads rebranded itself to Microsoft Advertising. In the announcement post, Microsoft said, “It’s a simple shift because our clients and partners already know us as Microsoft, and many are already tapping into our new advertising products that go above and beyond search, such as the Microsoft Audience Network.”

Microsoft Advertising also debuted Sponsored Products, which allow manufacturers to promote their products in shopping campaigns with their retailer partners. This gives manufacturers access to new reporting and optimization capabilities, and retailers get additional product marketing support with a fair cost split.

Microsoft’s new Chromium-based Edge browser, an overhauled app now available for Windows, MacOS, Android and iOS that’s based on Google’s open-source browser technology will block intrusive ads. It’s a sign that browsers are now competing to make the online experience better for consumers, even if it deters businesses. Product managers say Edge will also go a step further with a privacy control that consumers could use to block advertisers and publishers from tracking them across the web. The feature offers three levels of tracking constraints: unrestricted, balanced and strict.
Look beyond the surface data

We hope our data on the median CPC, CPM, and CTR across advertising networks will be useful to benchmark your own campaigns. It’s important to note that our benchmarks represent aggregated data from the accounts linked to our reporting platform, so the numbers may differ from other reports using different data sets, or larger industry trends. CPC, CPM, and CTR metrics also only show the tip of the iceberg of data that marketers need to improve new customer acquisition.

AdStage customers -- top lead generation marketers across different industries -- use our paid media analytics and optimization platform to connect campaign data with conversion data, see real customers and revenue behind the clicks, and take action on those insights to improve marketing ROI.

Learn more about AdStage

Visit us at AdStage!

If you’re ready dig deeper into the power of AdStage, set up a demo and one of our team-members will be happy to discuss your specific paid marketing goals.

You can also start a free 14-day trial to see how you can use our solutions to optimize paid marketing campaigns at scale and drive business growth.
Q2 2019

Resources

5. “This Week in Ad Tech” Top News in Ad Tech Newsletter (Q2 2019). Email.