

AN ATTRIBUTION CASE STUDY THE GREAT AMERICAN HOME STORE

BLENDING OLD SCHOOL AND NEW SCHOOL – GOING DIGITAL, ADDING ATTRIBUTION PRE-PANDEMIC PROVES FORTUITOUS

With five stores and 110 employees covering a 200-mile radius around the Greater Memphis, Tennessee-area, The Great American Home Store was just beginning to hit its stride with new digital marketing and advertising campaigns to augment its traditional broadcast methods of consumer outreach. Business was good; really good. Then the pandemic hit.

The company's branded stores – Home Stores, Furniture Outlets, and Sleep Shops – were shuttered as stay-at-home orders were enacted. Advertising was cut by 50% initially, and by early spring the family-owned business had to cut out all advertising. Business dipped considerably as customers were unable to visit and sit on floor-model couches and chairs or lie down to test out mattress options. But there was a silver lining. Business did continue – online.

"We are now seeing, day-by-day, the value in our digital efforts," said Justin Bowen, Digital Manager, part of The Great American Home Store's in-house marketing, advertising and website department. "If (the pandemic) hadn't happened, I'm not sure people here would have seen it that way."

Bowen's department definitely had a forward-thinking approach to the business. Their logic was, if something could help the business, they were going to try and do it. But they also understood that the business was built on in-person shopping, one-on-one interaction, and sales closed with a firm handshake and a smile. The company's general manager knew the marketing department was on to something, and he signed off on upping the business' digital game.

Attribution identified, pretty quickly and succinctly, that customer journeys for the furniture-buying public was changing, and already had changed. The company relied on traditional customer journeys – happening in its stores – but by embracing digital marketing and attribution, it also embraced a new customer journey that primarily took place online.



A GOOD TIME TO ADD DIGITAL
A move to add digital marketing to
broadcast campaigns pays off

THE DETAILS – BEFORE:

Historically, the furniture industry has relied on offline channels to promote business. This was true of The Great American Home store, which until recently relied on:

- **Broadcast (TV and radio) advertising**
 - **Very little digital advertising**
 - **Little, if any, attribution** – it was unclear on what was truly successful in its marketing efforts
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THE CHALLENGE – MEASURE WHAT CHANNELS WERE AND WERE NOT WORKING

The marketing department couldn't go it alone. It needed insights to show that shifting some ad spend to digital channels – and measuring the effectiveness of its broadcast TV and radio ads, along with the new online channels – was not only wise, but necessary. Bowen and the team called on LeadsRx.

Using the LeadsRx Attribution platform, the company was able to track, evaluate, and value the number of leads generated by the company's new digital marketing campaigns. Additionally, through the data provided by impartial multi-touch attribution data, the insights defined customer journeys, including the online and offline touchpoints that led to customer conversions.

Before COVID-19 shut stores down, that information was valuable. Post-pandemic, it was even more valuable. With the business needing to cut half of his advertising budget, it looked to Bowen to provide numbers for recommended cuts. Attribution insights showed the activities that resulted from the ads the company purchased and weighted the influence of each.

“What LeadsRx helps you do is understand; it gives you a baseline comparison between all of your advertising, especially your broadcast mediums – TV and radio. And what that lets you do is not necessarily know, ‘OK, this is the full effect of my TV or my radio spend,’ but it gives you a way to compare all the different buys you’re making – between spots, stations, creative, and even day parts.” Justin Bowen, Digital Manager, The Great American Home Store

And while attribution was good for the company, pointing to which channels were effective and which were not, those insights helped it identify how its broadcast advertising worked in conjunction with its digital efforts. It's not a “one-channel-is-best” approach; impartial data from attribution shines light on how all channels work together in a multi-touch marketing campaign.



MEASURING OFFLINE AND ONLINE CHANNELS

Attribution provided a complete view of each customer journey

A DEEPER DIVE – IMPARTIAL MULTI-TOUCH ATTRIBUTION

Bowen was familiar with attribution tools for tracking the effectiveness of digital ad spend. It is pretty straightforward and linear. However, having LeadsRx track the offline broadcast channels and see how they drive consumers to the company's website was an eye-opener.

"By allowing you to see the visitors that are coming to your site within a certain timeframe, that you can specify, you can see if there is a spike above your baseline traffic, and that will tell you, 'oh, alright, well I can kind of look at how many people are converting from this particular spot or from going to the site from the spot,'" he said. "So it does really help you to have some way to be able to make better decisions as far as your TV and radio buys."

LeadsRx collected data on 100 percent of the company's marketing touchpoints from common sources, including Google, Facebook, existing UTM parameters, referrals, and more. That attribution data was instantly added to the company's LeadsRx dashboard. It was important to note, and impartially measure, how all of these channels worked together in their customers' paths to conversion.

The LeadsRx Universal Conversion Tracking Pixel™ – installed on the company's website – capitalized on impartial multi-touch attribution and automatically learned about all touchpoints, properly allocating the right amount of conversion credit to each touchpoint.

There is something magical about "seeing" the journey customers took on their way to making a purchase. By collecting data in real-time attribution reports, LeadsRx was able to provide the marketing team instant access to the impartial attribution data it needed to make ad spend optimization decisions. Attribution identified exactly who the "best" customers were, and how to get more of them.

'LAST MAN STANDING' TV SPOT FOR THE WIN

Bowen's boss is a masterful buyer of traditional broadcast advertising, so having the data to show what was working, and what was not, helped either pour cement on good purchasing decisions or jackhammer out spots that were not effective. A "prime" example is two spots purchased during the prime time airing of the popular TV show "Last Man Standing," starring Tim Allen of "Home Improvement" fame.

"I was shocked," Bowen said of the show's ad results, which he recalls sharing with his boss. "It had so many conversions, it was unreal, and it was only two spots. It was an expensive spot, but for the amount of conversions you got, you need to look at buying more of them. People are taking action from this show."



SEEING WEB LIFT

POST-BROADCAST ADVERTISING

Knowing what TV and radio ads are working and when is invaluable



SPARKING IMPROVED

MARKETING PERFORMANCE

Impartial data provides insights and confidence to deepen customer relationships

THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF THE GREAT AMERICAN HOME STORE-LEADS RX PARTNERSHIP

LeadsRx gave the company the insights, technology, and confidence it needed to deepen its customer relationships and spark improved marketing performance. By examining impartial and transparent attribution data, Bowen and the marketing team were able to examine its mix of marketing activities with a complete, unified view of its customers' buying journeys. And it can use that data to tweak campaigns to optimize them further.

Seeing the broadcast and radio effect on top of what type of effect the company's digital advertising is having – and bringing that into the same system – has been tremendous, Bowen said.

“Seeing how all of that plays together, how somebody can see a TV ad and then maybe go do a Google search, and now I’m getting an idea of what broadcast is doing to my organic traffic or my direct traffic,” he said, adding that the attribution data creates a deeper understanding of how the digital campaigns he’s creating interact with the traditional broadcast buys the business makes. “This kind of helps bridge that gap and helps us understand by looking at the data how it does fit together. And everything plays the part that it needs to.”

Bowen said it is good to identify that one particular spot has really great conversions, yet the business didn't buy a lot of those spots, so it needs to buy and run more; conversely, a spot may have produced a lot of traffic, but it's not converting. Seeing broadcast and radio lift via the attribution platform is a great feature, he added.

THE DETAILS – AFTER:

The marketing department achieved buy-in from business ownership and management to wade deeper into the digital pond it had only dipped its toes into previously. This led to:

- **Reorganized budgets**, including more allocation to digital channels
 - **The addition of attribution** – now customer journeys are clearly identified, and optimization is under way
 - **Continued broadcast advertising**, but refined using attribution to highlight what is working best, as well as what spot timing and content are not being effective, to adjust and reallocate spend accordingly
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GETTING BACK TO BUSINESS

Data like that helped Bowen as he made recommendations for cuts to marketing spend during the slow-down resulting from COVID-19. At the end of April, the company's locations were opening again, and attribution insights were helping the business return to effectively advertising on TV and online.

“LeadsRx is really helpful right now to figure out what is working, because all this is changing so much,” Bowen said on April 30. “Having that insight is super helpful to know – what do we need to keep doing more of and what do we need to get rid of.”

Bowen said he feels fortunate that the company's leadership made the move to complement its broadcast marketing efforts with a digital strategy. It truly was a move to blend the traditional old-school approach with a digital new-school strategy. It set the business up well to manage through, and survive, the downturn and – more importantly – be able to quickly provide offline and online messaging to customers that its doors were open again and ready for business.



DOORS ARE OPEN AGAIN

A digital strategy pre-pandemic set up the business for success when the economy opened back up