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Expert Tips to Command
Your Native Advertising

What is native advertising?

Native advertising is any form of advertising that seeks to attract customers by providing content within the context of their experience. Unlike traditional display or pay-per-click forms of online advertising, native ads are built into the visual design as part of the content.

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Why Brands Should Embrace Native Advertising

Native advertising has been a highly debated topic lately, with the strongest opinions related to publisher responsibility. The answer for responsible brands is simple: perform due diligence with platforms and publishers. So long as the platform is ethical and engaging, native advertising represents a massive opportunity for brands to connect with, and provide value to, consumers in a highly relevant context.

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How do marketers make native advertising work?

The following B2B marketing thought leaders have either researched the merits of native advertising or have conducted their own experiments. Here's their advice for making native advertising work for your brand.

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Creating Content for Native Ads



Dan Lyons

Marketing Fellow,
HubSpot

“Don’t shill for your company.

Resist the urge to turn your content into a press release for your company. If you’re writing a blog post, don’t mention your company at all.”



“Resist the urge to turn your content into a press release for your company.” @realdanlyons #NativeAdvertising #LinkedIn



Mark Sherbin

Consumer Operations,
Content & User Education
Specialist,
Google

**“Educational and insightful
content performs the best.**

Which ad type performs better
may depend on the unique
expectations and behavior of
your audience and your brand.”



“Educational and insightful content performs the best.”
@MarkSherbin #NativeAdvertising #LinkedIn #ContentMarketing



Andrew Sanders

Brand Partnerships Director,
IPC Advertising

“For native advertising to be truly ‘native,’ the tone of voice must be absolutely right.

It must be in keeping with the publisher’s brand or, even better, it must be created by the brand.”



“For #NativeAdvertising to be truly ‘native,’ the tone of voice must be absolutely right.” Andrew Sanders of @TimeIncUK #LinkedIn



Brian Clark

Founder and CEO,
Copyblogger Media

“Good native ads are content that’s about the reader, watcher, or listener.

But ultimately there’s an actionable goal for the advertiser.”



“Good #NativeAdvertising is content that’s about the reader, watcher or listener.” @brianclark #LinkedIn



Ryan Skinner

Senior Analyst,
Forrester Research

“The church/state editorial wall that media outlets have trained advertisers to respect has become porous, and it’s the outlets themselves who are pounding holes in it (most recently, *The New York Times*). That change should not be underestimated.”



“The church/state editorial wall that advertisers have been trained to respect has become porous.” @rskin11 #NativeAdvertising #LinkedIn



Jon Salm

Associate Client Analyst,
Millward Brown Digital

Data Journalist and Blogger,
Visual.ly

“Visual content generates 30 times more traffic than text articles, meaning native advertising campaigns that include a visual component, such as infographics and data visualizations, are far more likely to be successful than those without one.”



“#NativeAdvertising campaigns that include a visual component are far more likely to be successful.” @Jon_Salm #LinkedIn



Lee Odden

CEO,

TopRank Online Marketing

“Provide genuine value.

With today’s savvy consumers, sponsored content, native advertising and advertorials aren’t effective unless they provide valuable and useful information.”



“#NativeAdvertising and advertorials aren't effective unless they provide valuable and useful information.” @LeeOdden #LinkedIn



Jamie Fisher

Associate Creative Director,

Balcom Agency

“If you’re ready to go native, you should first get very familiar with content marketing: what it is and how to do it.

From there, it’s really all about understanding the publisher’s audience and speaking their language. Because the last thing you want is to look like a tourist.”



“If you're ready to go native, you should first get very familiar with #ContentMarketing.” Jamie Fisher #NativeAdvertising #LinkedIn



Eric Herd

Chief Operating
Officer,

ThePostGame.com

“We aim to evoke emotion and engagement from our readers, and we work with our marketing partners to align them thematically with the right stories that enhance the messaging of their brand.”



“Align your marketing partners with the right stories that enhance brand messaging.” @haveyouheardy #NativeAdvertising #LinkedIn



Laura Montini

Reporter,
Inc.

"70% of individuals want to learn about products through content rather than through traditional advertising."



"70% of individuals want to learn about products through content rather than traditional advertising." @Immontini #NativeAdvertising



Danny Wong

Entrepreneur, Marketer and
Writer

“57% of publishers have a dedicated editorial team to create content readers will care about, leaving publishers, not brands, in full control, which ultimately benefits the readers.”



“57% of publishers have a dedicated editorial team to create content readers care about.” @dannywong1190 #NativeAdvertising #LinkedIn



Dale Lovell

Content & Publishing
Director,
Adyoulike

“Promoted posts should match the look and feel of the host website and be editorially relevant.”

Creating multiple unique pieces of content is not always necessary, providing that the content you are promoting is contextually relevant to the publisher and the consumers you are targeting.”



“Promoted posts should match the look & feel of the host website and be editorially relevant.” Dale Lovell #NativeAdvertising #LinkedIn



Joe Pulizzi

Founder,

Content Marketing Institute

Author,

Epic Content Marketing

Speaker & Entrepreneur

“Sponsored content and advertorials have been around for a long time. The difference today is native advertising is truly a part of the content stream, like Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn advertising. What I like about this for small businesses is it can be a great rent-to-own strategy. If you haven’t built an engaged audience yet, you have to get your content out there in a way that will build an audience.”



“#NativeAdvertising is truly part of the content stream, like Facebook, Twitter or #LinkedIn advertising.” @JoePulizzi



Muhammad Saleem

Sr. Manager for Advocacy,
Community, and Content,
ecobee

“Native ads should tell compelling narratives that are tailor-made to contextualize the brand for a particular audience in a way that makes the brand personally relevant to that audience.”



“#NativeAdvertising should tell compelling narratives that make the brand personally relevant to the audience.” @msaleem #LinkedIn



Bobi Carley

UK Commercial Director,
The Walt Disney Company

“Creating great quality, engaging content that will fit seamlessly within editorial - or ideally, better it - will be the challenge for many brands, especially if an adequate creative resource is not available.”



“Creating engaging content that will fit seamlessly within editorial will be the challenge for many brands.” Bobi Carley #NativeAdvertising



Lead with Metrics



Jeremy Cesarec

Digital Marketing Strategist,

Planet Propaganda

“Capture long-tail traffic.

Once your native ad is part of a site’s ecosystem—whether a recipe, sponsored blog post, or promoted tweet—it will generally live there indefinitely and continue to drive organic traffic at no incremental cost.”



“Native ads can sometimes live indefinitely and continue to drive organic traffic at no incremental cost.” @jcesar4 #NativeAdvertising



Justin Choi

President & CEO,
Nativo

“Your benchmark of success from the beginning should be engagement, not clicks.

If you get a few hundred clicks where readers spent several minutes on the page, that’s a much better benchmark for success because you’re pushing relevant, meaningful content associated with your brand.”



“Your benchmark of success from the beginning should be engagement, not clicks.” @JustinCie #NativeAdvertising #LinkedIn



Brooke Temple

SVP, Strategic Partnerships,
CallFire

“Time it right.

After all the effort put into an article, make sure you launch it when the bulk of your audience is online and most receptive. Promote it multiple times, if you can, to take advantage of time zones.”



“Make sure you launch your content when the bulk of your audience is online and most receptive.” Brooke Temple #NativeAdvertising



Abby Carvosso

Group Managing Director

Bauer Media

“Evolve your strategy, and don’t be afraid to experiment.

It’s about reshaping the rules and working with brands on different levels. As our consumers change, we have to evolve with them.”



“Evolve your #NativeAdvertising strategy and don’t be afraid to experiment.” @abbyvossers #LinkedIn



Jose Palomino

Sales-Centric Marketing
Strategist, Author, Speaker,
and Professor of Marketing

“Learn from those who have tried before. There have been some very successful native ad campaigns and some very unsuccessful ones.

Do a bit of research – and don’t discount the lessons of business-to-consumer campaigns either. Businesses are run by people and we all use the internet (even at work).”



“Learn from those who’ve tried before. There have been some very successful #NativeAdvertising campaigns.” @jpalomino #LinkedIn



Jimmy Atkinson

Co-Founder,

MonetizePros

Advisory Board Member,

Best Online Universities LLC

“Implementing native ads on your site can be a bit tricky.

The easiest way to do it is to identify an area of your site that typically hosts your own content, and target native advertising campaigns to that placement.”



“Identify an area of your site that hosts your own content and target #NativeAdvertising campaigns there.” @jimmyatkinson



Jeff Bercovici

Senior Editor,
Forbes

“In a native ad study, subjects were 25% more likely to look at a native ad than they were at a banner, and they looked at them 53% more frequently, checking them out 4.1 times per session on average, versus 2.7% for banners.”



“People are 25% more likely to look at a native ad than a banner ad.”
@jeffbercovici #NativeAdvertising



Roger Wu

Co-Founder,
Cooperatize.com

“The world of native advertising is still like the Wild West.

Advertisers see the value while publishers want to sell it. The question becomes: If you know that I am advertising, which half of my scalable advertising campaign is wasted? By years end, I think we’ll have enough answers to figure this out.”



“The world of #NativeAdvertising is still like the Wild West. Advertisers see the value while publishers want to sell it.” @rogerwu99



Jason Miller

Leading Global Content
Marketing,
*LinkedIn Marketing
Solutions*

“Native advertising is a game of relevance.

Engagement metrics are a good sign your content is hitting the mark, but don't let your ego hijack your strategy. Social signals are not nearly as important as the “Who” is sharing your content. I'll take five shares from the C-suite, if that's my target, over 50 shares from a practitioner.”



Native advertising is not a game of numbers; it's a game of relevance.
@JasonMillerCA #NativeAdvertising #LinkedIn



Be Transparent and Honest



Ash Kumar

Co-Founder and CEO,

TapSense, Inc

“Terminology, size, and wording are still all up to the publisher at this stage; what’s most important is to label the sponsored content appropriately.”



“What’s most important is to label the sponsored content appropriately.” @ashwani #NativeAdvertising



David Amerland

Founder,
HMS Media

“Don’t preach.

Forget everything you know about Product, Place, Price and Promotion. Make the whole approach to selling be about Experience, Everywhere, Exchange and Evangelism.”



“Make the whole approach to selling about experience, everywhere, exchange and evangelism.” @DavidAmerland #NativeAdvertising



Rob Longert

Co-Founder & Managing
Partner,

Day One Agency

**“Don’t force a brand mention in
your branded content.**

Think about a topic or
conversation you want to own,
and let the brand attribution
follow.”



“Think about a topic or conversation you want to own, and let the
brand attribution follow.” @RobLongert #NativeAdvertising #LinkedIn



Sam Rosen

Vice President of Marketing,
The Atlantic

“Native advertising, in our world, doesn’t simply mean a brand is creating and then distributing their content.

Native, to us, is a sensibility, not a format. It all comes down to a matter of alignment, and whether any one piece of content is truly ‘native’ to how we at The Atlantic serve and engage our readers.”



“#NativeAdvertising is a sensibility, not a format.”
@samrosen @TheAtlantic #LinkedIn



Adam Lipman

CEO,

ThoughtLeadr

“Rather than interrupting the user’s workflow, native ads fit within it.

In other words, the user has come to a site to read articles on a certain topic and of a certain tone, and a well-executed native ad delivers that experience, rather than distracting from it.”



“Rather than interrupting the user's workflow, #NativeAdvertising fits within it.” @AdamLipman1 #LinkedIn



Ash Nashed

Founder and CEO,
Adiant

“Use transparent header language for native units and widgets.

The headers should accurately describe what is being presented to the consumer. Simply labeling the unit based on the news content and ignoring that there are ads mixed in is deceptive.”



“Use transparent header language for #NativeAdvertising units and widgets.” Ash Nashed of @AdiantMedia



Al Chen

Native Advertising Manager,

Cooperatize

Excel Developer,

KeyCuts

“Irrelevance is the top problem publishers face when deciding how to implement native advertising opportunities on their blog or outlet. Having a clear understanding of your target audience and who would benefit most from your brand’s story is essential to making native advertising work effectively.”



“Irrelevance is the top problem publishers face when deciding how to implement #NativeAdvertising opportunities.” @bigal123



Tessa Gould

Senior Director of Native
Advertising, HuffPost
Partner Studio,
The Huffington Post

"I personally believe that native advertising does not, by definition, scale outside the platform that it is native to.

It is not a volume play—quality is paramount."



"#NativeAdvertising is not a volume play - quality is paramount." @TessaG_Tweets



Matt Fanshawe

Global Brand Director &
Group COO,
HavasEHS UK

“Look at catch-up TV: why watch the ads when you can fast-forward past them?”

What’s the incentive? Instead of looking for ways to stop fast-forwarding, native advertising looks to service real consumer needs and desires—to pull, not push—and that has to be a positive thing.”



“#NativeAdvertising looks to service real customer needs and desires.” @mattyfanshawe #LinkedIn

LinkedIn's unique approach to native ads

Sponsored Updates, LinkedIn's core native advertising solution, holds unique qualities that differentiate it from other companies' native ads including:

- Direct integration in the LinkedIn members' feed, allowing you to target content based on specific job titles, LinkedIn group membership, professional connections, and more.
- Clear identification as Sponsored within a user's LinkedIn feed.
- Campaign reporting that allows advertisers to track and optimize performance of each update.

Read more about the rise of native advertising on the [LinkedIn Marketing Solutions blog](#), and connect with us @LinkedInMktg for more insights!

