



## Social Media Marketing Bootcamp – week 4

*Note: An AI colleague produced this summary of the course 😊*

Here is a detailed summary of the Week 4 session delivered by Evan on behalf of the Local Enterprise Office South Cork, followed by a list of action points for participants.

### Summary of Session: Facebook and Instagram Advertising

**The Decline of Organic Reach** Evan began by establishing that social media has evolved significantly over the last 15 years. It is no longer a guaranteed free marketing platform where posting content ensures followers see it. Currently, organic reach on Facebook is often as low as 5% to 10% of a page's followers, though high engagement can push this to 40-50%. Instagram is less penalizing, with a typical reach of 15-25%, but businesses still miss a vast majority of their audience. Consequently, for critical events like sales or product launches, businesses cannot rely solely on free posts and should consider paid advertising to guarantee visibility.

**Boost Post vs. Ads Manager** Evan strongly advised against using the "Boost Post" button found on mobile apps. He described it as running ads on "stabilisers," offering fewer options and resulting in wastage. Furthermore, using the Boost button on an iPhone incurs an extra 30% service charge payable to Apple. Instead, participants should use the **Ads Tool in Ads Manager** (accessed via a desktop browser), which provides full control and avoids unnecessary fees.

**Setting Up a Campaign: The Three-Page Structure** Evan broke down the creation of an ad into three distinct pages or stages within the Ads Manager:

#### 1. Page 1 (Campaign Level):

- **Objective:** Participants must choose a marketing objective. Evan recommended **Traffic** for most small businesses, which drives users to a website to learn more or buy.
- **Special Categories:** Advertisers must self-declare if their ads relate to social issues, elections, housing, or employment to avoid account suspension.
- **Naming:** Campaigns should be named clearly (e.g., "December 20% Xmas Sale") for future reference.

## 2. Page 2 (Ad Set Level - Budget & Targeting):

- **Budget:** While the minimum is roughly €2 per day, Evan suggested €5 to €10 per day to generate sufficient reach (approx. 3,000 people per €5). He recommended running ads for 3 to 4 days rather than spending the budget in a single day, allowing time to assess performance.
- **Geographic Targeting:** Targeting can be extremely precise, ranging from broad international regions to a specific radius (e.g., 1 mile) around a business premises using a "pin drop". Evan warned users to uncheck the box that targets people "interested in" a location if they strictly want people *physically located* there.
- **Audience Targeting (Sniper vs. Machine Gun):** Evan urged participants to think like a "sniper" rather than using a "machine gun." Instead of sending one generic ad to everyone, businesses should create specific ads for specific demographics (e.g., separate images and messages for runners vs. swimmers).
- **Detailed Targeting:** This allows filtering by:
  - **Demographics:** Traits like relationship status (e.g., engaged), job titles, or parents of children within specific age ranges.
  - **Interests:** Hobbies and passions, such as yoga, marathons, or luxury goods.
  - **Behaviors:** Actions observed by Meta, such as frequent international travel or being a Facebook Page Admin.
- **Placements:** Evan recommended manually editing placements to uncheck "Audience Network" (third-party apps with low-quality traffic) and "Threads" (unproven inventory), sticking primarily to Facebook and Instagram feeds.

## 3. Page 3 (Ad Level - Creative):

- Advertisers select the identity (Facebook Page/Instagram Account) delivering the ad.
- Evan recommended using the "Use Existing Post" option. This allows a business to promote a post that already has social proof (likes and comments), making it look more organic and interesting than a scratch-built ad.

## Advanced Targeting Concepts

- **AI vs. Manual Control:** Meta's default is "Advantage+" (AI), where the algorithm decides who sees the ad. Evan suggested switching to "Original Audience Options" to maintain full control, especially when targeting warm audiences.
- **Warm vs. Cold Audiences:**
  - **Cold Audiences:** People who have never heard of the business. These are targeted using interests and geography.
  - **Warm Audiences:** Existing followers or customers. Evan stressed prioritizing spend on these groups first. This requires setting up **Custom Audiences** (e.g., people who engaged with the IG account or FB page in the last 365 days).

**Video Editing Bonus** At the end of the session, Evan demonstrated how to add closed captions (subtitles) to Instagram Reels using the "CC" sticker or the "Captions" button in the

editor. He emphasized editing the text for accuracy and customising the font style and colour to match the brand.

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## Action Point List for Participants

1. **Abandon the "Boost Post" Button:** Stop using the mobile Boost button immediately to avoid limited targeting options and the 30% Apple service charge on iOS devices.
2. **Access Ads Manager:** Log in to Facebook on a desktop computer, go to the Menu, and select **Ads Manager** to create professional campaigns.
3. **Create Custom Audiences (Warm Audience):**
  - Go to the Audience section in Ads Manager.
  - Create a "Custom Audience" for people who interact with your Facebook Page.
  - Create a separate "Custom Audience" for Instagram followers.
  - *Action:* Use this audience for your next sale or event to ensure your followers actually see your content.
4. **Refine Geographic Targeting:** When setting location, ensure you uncheck "Reach people likely to respond... interested in your selected cities" if you only want to reach locals (e.g., preventing people in Donegal from seeing an ad for a local service in Cork).
5. **Adopt the "Sniper" Strategy:** Do not run one generic ad for everyone. Create distinct ads with specific images and copy for different customer segments (e.g., distinct ads for men vs. women, or different interest groups).
6. **Control Your Placements:** When choosing where the ad appears, select "Manual Placements" and **untick** "Audience Network" and "Threads" to avoid low-quality clicks and wasted budget.
7. **Test with Small Budgets:** Start with a budget of €5 per day running for 3–4 days. Review the "Cost Per Result" (CPC); if it is between €0.10 and €0.40, the ad is performing well.
8. **Add Captions to Reels:** When posting organic video content, use the built-in caption tool to make videos accessible and engaging for sound-off viewers, ensuring you edit any typos before publishing.

**Analogy for Understanding Ad Strategy:** Evan compared running Facebook ads to the difference between a **machine gun** and a **sniper**. A machine gun approach sprays bullets (one generic ad) everywhere, hoping to hit something, which is inefficient and wasteful. A sniper approach involves taking a specific image and message and aiming it precisely at the distinct group of people it is relevant to (e.g., showing a runner's injury ad only to people interested in marathons). This precision ensures your budget hits the target.