Yazdan Moayed

CREATIVE & CRO · CASE STUDY

A/B testing *beyond* CTR

Creative strategy, conversion optimisation, audience segmentation and experiment design for a multi-title gaming portfolio.

03

Anonymized client work · Programmatic mobile campaigns · 2022

THE CORE PRINCIPLE

The winning creative is the one that improves *business outcomes*, not just clicks.

12.59%	0.58%	24.07%	22.06%
Video CTR	Native CTR	Native retention	Video retention

Same portfolio, same period. A high CTR and high downstream value were not the same thing.

Historical campaign data, anonymized. Team outcomes; my contribution is described on each case.

CONTEXT

A multi-title gaming portfolio and a *high-stakes* client workshop

~480M
Impressions analysed
Video, image and native

~13.9M
Clicks reviewed
Across formats

3
Creative formats
Plus sizes and orientations

iOS + Android
Operating systems
Publisher and supply splits

My role

- Produced the full analysis and the executive presentation
- Built the creative A/B testing framework and readout logic
- Connected creative, publisher, supply and retention data
- Aligned client, account management, design and ad operations

THE BUSINESS QUESTION

How do we scale creative output and media spend while learning which combinations actually improve retention and ROI?

Historical campaign data, anonymized. Team outcomes; my contribution is described on each case.

CREATIVE DIAGNOSTIC

Format mix and performance told *two different stories*

Share of cost



FORMAT	IMPRESSIONS	CLICKS	CTR	RETENTION
Video	73.5M	9.2M	**12.59%**	22.06%
Image	340.5M	4.3M	1.26%	23.43%
Native	65.8M	383K	0.58%	**24.07%**

Key insight

Video's CTR was more than 20× native's, but native had the highest retention.

That doesn't prove native is "better". It proves the KPI must match the business goal and be read by audience, placement and downstream event.

CTR is a diagnostic, not the final score.

Historical campaign data, anonymized. Team outcomes; my contribution is described on each case.

CRO FRAMEWORK

A KPI hierarchy that prevents *vanity-metric* optimisation



Primary KPI	The business event the campaign is meant to change
Leading indicators	CTR and CVR diagnose the path, not the final value
Guardrails	CPI, retention and spend pacing prevent false wins
Segment cuts	Audience, supply and creative interactions
Decision	Scale, iterate or stop based on incremental value

Historical campaign data, anonymized. Team outcomes; my contribution is described on each case.

EXPERIMENT DESIGN

A clean A/B test needs isolation, a decision rule and *enough data*

01

Dedicated campaign

Protect the test from unrelated delivery changes.

02

Separate budget

Avoid starving one variant or mixing priorities.

03

Fixed creative set

No new creatives during the measurement window.

04

Balanced exposure

Comparable traffic and time coverage.

05

Primary KPI + guardrails

Define what wins before the test starts.

06

Sample and stopping rule

Wait for enough data; document the readout.

Historical campaign data, anonymized. Team outcomes; my contribution is described on each case.

CREATIVE TEST MATRIX

Test one meaningful variable; *keep the rest stable*

VARIABLE TO TEST	OPTIONS
Concept / hook	Reward, challenge, social proof, gameplay
CTA	Play now, collect, discover, continue
Format	Video, static image, native, playable
Orientation	Portrait, landscape, square
Size / placement	Flexible sizes matched to inventory
Localisation	Language, cultural cue, value proposition

HOLD CONSTANT

- Audience definition
- Geo and OS scope
- Bid and pacing logic
- Attribution settings
- Measurement window
- Primary KPI and guardrails

This makes the result readable and repeatable.

Historical campaign data, anonymized. Team outcomes; my contribution is described on each case.

CONTROLLED CREATIVE TEST

The click winner was narrow; the *business winner* was still unknown

VARIANT	IMPRESSIONS	CLICKS	CTR	CPC
A	307,631	26,148	8.50%	€0.041
B	320,155	28,376	**8.86%**	**€0.037**
C	326,920	28,126	8.60%	€0.037

Variant B had the highest CTR and lowest CPC, but only about 4.3% better than A on CTR.

The final call still needed install rate, activation, retention, revenue and statistical confidence.

Decision rule: never scale a creative on CTR alone. Validate the down-funnel KPI and guardrails first.

Historical campaign data, anonymized. Team outcomes; my contribution is described on each case.

AUDIENCE × SUPPLY × CREATIVE

Segmentation turns creative testing into a *performance system*

Audience		Supply		Creative
GEO		Publisher		Concept
Device		SSP		CTA
OS version	×	Placement	×	Format
Time / day		Ad type		Orientation
Category		Ad size		Localisation
Session depth		Inventory quality		Fatigue / recency

→

OUTCOME

CVR
Retention
Revenue
ROI

The same creative performs differently across publishers and supply paths, so winners are scaled by cell, not by global average.

Historical campaign data, anonymized. Team outcomes; my contribution is described on each case.

OPERATING MODEL

Explore → optimise → *evergreen scale*

01

Explore

Publisher clusters and supply paths

Creative variants and ad sizes

Audience and campaign attributes

02

Optimise

Bid multipliers by supply and creative

Pacing, exclusions and budget moves

Human review of model output

03

Scale

Expand high-yield combinations

Roll winners into evergreen campaigns

Ongoing fatigue and incrementality checks

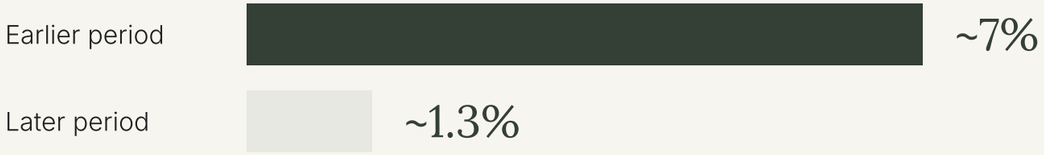
Machines bring speed and coverage; people bring the hypotheses, safeguards and commercial judgement.

Historical campaign data, anonymized. Team outcomes; my contribution is described on each case.

ANALYTICAL RIGOUR

Testing the CTR → ROI assumption is *itself* an experiment

Observed average CTR



The analysis asked whether this shift tracked performance. Answer: not yet proven.

The disciplined conclusion

Don't assume a higher click rate creates higher ROI. Run a controlled test, measure the downstream event directly, and segment the result by audience and supply.

Historical campaign data, anonymized. Team outcomes; my contribution is described on each case.

SUPPLY-AWARE PLANNING

Creative strategy must follow the inventory *that can scale*

22% → 64%

Video share of media cost

May 2021 → May 2022

2.9×

Video share of cost

+42 percentage points

+234%

Video spend

Index 100 → 334

Available video inventory grew sharply, so creative production had to match the new supply mix.

More supply means more test cells, not automatic quality.

Format-level scaling still needed retention and ROI guardrails.

Historical campaign data, anonymized. Team outcomes; my contribution is described on each case.