

SHOOTING IN THE DARK?

Shed light on your campaigns with Dynamic Creative Optimization
and create personalized ads at scale.

ADSOME **NOISE**

An introduction into

Dynamic Creative Optimisation

This white paper comes with warm greetings from AdSomeNoise, a new breed of advertising agency. Using our own examples, we will explain the concept of data-driven creativity to the fullest extent possible.

Why are we sharing our expertise with the market?
It's quite simple, really: because we believe it's in everyone's interest to increase maturity in this innovative advertising approach.

CONTENTS

What is data driven creativity	7	Is DCO limited to specific online channels?	25
Death by KPI	8	Is DCO adtech-bound?	26
Personalisation: facilitative or intrusive?	11	What is the value of media integration? What are its pitfalls?	27
Dynamic Creative Optimization to the rescue!	12	What about third party data?	29
What types of DCO exist?	13	What is the future of DCO?	31
1. DCO – Automated Production	14	Takeaway	33
Case 1: Lidl	16	What now? Is DCO something for you? How to start?	34
2. DCO – Switchboard	17	Checklist	35
Case 2: Carglass	19	About AdSomeNoise	36
3. DCO – Decision-based	21		
Case 3: Decathlon	23		



“We spend a tremendous amount of time worrying about media targeting and programmatic media and optimisation, but we don’t do nearly enough, I’d argue, to think about how to personalise the creative messaging that reaches consumers which should have equal weight.”

Mark Read, CEO WPP, 2021

Introduction

Programmatic buying has boomed in recent decades and has now become the norm in media spending. In fact, this automated bidding on and buying of digital advertising space has now become so ubiquitous that many marketers seem to be satisfied to leave it as it is. If it works, why change it? But this leaves many untapped opportunities to deliver the right message, in the right form, at the right time and to the right person.

Today, no one would deny that data is considered the gold standard. **Without relevant data, marketers are left grasping in the dark** and consumers are bombarded with one generic ad after another. Research by Innovid shows that **43%** of consumers think personalised online advertisements are important with almost **30%** say that they are more likely to buy a product this way.

Personalisation is therefore an absolute must if you want to resonate with your target groups as effectively as possible. But even though various forms of personalisation are available, few capitalise on all the possibilities.

¹ Innovid. [2020, July 14]. Study: As brands continue to navigate change, 43% of consumers say digital ads should be personalized. GlobeNewswire News Room.





No matter how well campaigns try to target audiences, personal context is rarely taken into account. Although our personality traits remain fairly set throughout our lives; our interests, emotions and thoughts are volatile and dynamic.

Reading the news on a crowded train on a rainy Monday morning will put us in a different mood than coming home in the evening, curling up on the sofa and checking out the latest Netflix series. Advertisers need to respond to this as best they can if they want to be relevant. By now, most companies have realised that data and personalisation are vital to an advertisement's success.

In fact, the vast majority of marketers [\[97%!\]²](#) recognise the importance of personalisation and variation in campaigns. Using data, marketers can address this complex constellation of interests, attitudes and context by creating relevant and personalised ads.

For example, **Netflix has generated no less than 1.4 million variations of a YouTube pre-roll** for its 'Narcos' series, partly guided by user data. Of course, not all of these variations are created manually.

This is a perfect example of data-driven creativity (DDC).

² Postclick. (2021). The state of advertising personalization.



■ What is data-driven ▣ creativity?

Before we dive into the possibilities of data-driven creativity, first a disclaimer. Anyone hoping that effective advertising will be a purely technological affair from now on should not set unrealistic expectations for themselves. It's true: smart use of data can give a huge boost to the relevance of digital advertising, but data in itself should not be considered a silver bullet. Instead, data can be the catalyst that propels a campaign to the next level. Old school creativity remains irreplaceable.

As Ross Jauncey, Head of Google Creative, points out, **70%³ of ad effectiveness depends on creativity.** This is particularly true if you want short-term performance and sustainable brand building to go hand in hand. After all, there's no use in scoring points in the short term if you damage your brand image in the long term. Pure performance marketers tend to overlook this fact.

³ Jauncey, Ross. 70% of Advertising Effectiveness Depends on The Creative: Ross Jauncey, Head, Create With Google. BW Business World.



Quality and creativity are equally as important as pure data. Moreover, creativity and data are complementary. When they work hand in hand, they create valuable communication that can deliver optimal results. We like to call this symbiosis 'the third wave of digital advertising,' with the integration of technology and creativity at its core.

In our opinion, data-driven creativity is more about mindset than technique. It's about bringing together all the unique ingredients available to you to create a powerful campaign that will be enjoyed by your target audience, without betraying or damaging your brand. A fusion of data and creativity is the ideal recipe for this.

Early adopters of this mindset are already achieving exceptional results. Moreover, according to McKinsey, companies that harness both creativity and data have a growth rate twice that⁴ of companies that ignore integration.

⁴ Gregg, Brian; Heller, Jason; Perrey, Jesko; Tsai, Jenny. (2018, June 18). The most perfect union: Unlocking the next wave of growth by unifying creativity and analytics. McKinsey.

Death by KPI

Myopia is another shortcoming of performance marketing. Specific KPIs are often set in advance and used as the yardstick to judge the campaign. These KPIs act as a red rag to performance marketers who will use techniques such as growth hacking to ensure their campaigns score high on the predefined KPIs, no matter the cost. These blinded marketers put the end before the means, using data to achieve KPIs without considering the bigger picture.

Any KPI that has not already been identified, but could be just as important, is overlooked. We sometimes call it **Death by KPI**. Even big brands are not immune to this sort of thing.

For example, a leading sportswear manufacturer recently ran advertisements for shoes that were not actually available. These ads may score well if judged by the number of clicks they generate, but in reality, they're completely counterproductive. Not only because they are a waste of money, but because they cause unnecessary irritation to potential buyers. **This kind of Death by KPI is caused by a limited view of performance.** Another example: a campaign where clicks are generated by a target group that does indeed click, but which results in a very low conversion rate.





■ Imagine a restaurant

It bases its success solely on how often a dish is ordered, but is blind to other parameters. For example, lasagna verde may be the most frequently ordered dish, but no one ever finishes their plate. Judging purely by the number of orders, lasagne would appear to be massively successful, but looking at the leftover food on the plates when the meal is done, it's evident there's something wrong with the dish. While the chef who focused solely on the number of orders will feel perfectly satisfied, the restaurant's image will continue to suffer.

Unfortunately, in many purely performance-oriented campaigns you can spot signs of Death by KPI as soon as you dive deeper into the campaign. As with any form of marketing, a holistic view is important in digital marketing. Integration is not only important on the agency side. Advertisers also need to break down silos and ensure their marketing managers or CMOs understand both the opportunities and pitfalls of digital advertising.

■ Personalisation: ▣ facilitative or intrusive?

“Treat different people differently. It’s the only way to allocate resources appropriately.” – Seth Godin, author and former dot com director.

When talking about digital hyper-personalisation, one might say the same dark scenario often crops up: Big Brother is watching you! Shameless advertisers are voyeuristically watching your online activities. Their access to all of your highly personal data gives them a picture of your innermost thoughts, enabling them to entice you to buy their products.

Although it would certainly be fair to level some criticism at Big Tech who may carelessly handle your ‘private’ data, the story of personalisation is not quite as black and white as often claimed. On the contrary, ethical personalisation can make your life easier by optimising the relevance of ads in a transparent and responsible way. **For marketers, the challenge of personalisation lies in facilitating without being too intrusive.**

Suppose you don’t feel like cooking and decide to order Burger King from Deliveroo. Although you don’t often indulge in fast food, it’s nice to not eat the same thing all the time. However, given your allergy, you would never order chicken. Wouldn’t it be annoying then to be constantly bombarded with ads and promos for chicken burgers, chicken wings, etc.? Whereas if your data shows that you often opt for fish, personalised ads and promos about fish would make the decision-making process much easier for you.





■ Dynamic creative ■ optimisation **to the rescue!**

Instead of a one-to-many approach where you are pelted with one irrelevant generic ad after another, a one-to-one approach is much more efficient and enjoyable for consumers. In fact, **83%**⁵ of consumers are willing to share data if it means a more personalised and relevant experience. Nevertheless, it's very important to consumers that their data is handled in a transparent and ethical manner.

When all that is taken into account, relevant personalisation can offer significant added value. Dynamic creative optimisation (DCO), a data-driven creativity technique, is the ideal way to achieve this.

A recent Postclick⁶ survey shows that **for the majority of marketers, a (perceived) lack of integrated technology is the biggest stumbling block when it comes to personalising content.** DCO can address this concern. Here are detailed examples of AdSomeNoise's dynamic creative optimization used across multiple applications.

⁵ Accenture. (2018). Making it personal. Accenture.

⁶ Postclick. (2021). The state of advertising personalization. Postclick.

What **types** of DCO exist?

DCO can be somewhat complex to define since it has a wide range of possibilities. DCO can take many forms, such as a self-learning system in which advertisements are continually and automatically optimised.

But in its simplest form, DCO can be used to reduce production costs for the creation of different advertising variations, without the need for artificial intelligence at all.

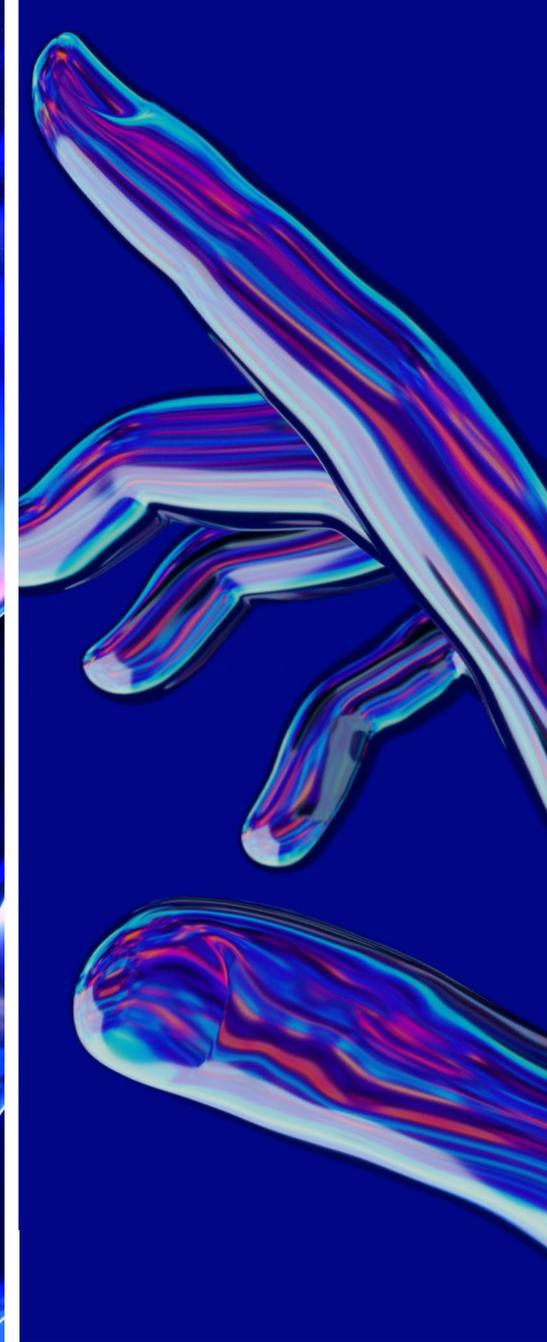
There are three defined forms of complexity - automated production, switchboard, and decision-based.



■ Automated Production



■ Switchboard



■ Decision-based

1. DCO – Automated Production

In this 'basic' version of DCO, the emphasis is on economies of scale and flexibility. DCO makes it easy to quickly create multiple advertising variants. **This is useful for large catalogues or changing promotions, while it also provides opportunities for more efficient testing.**

'Test & learn' may be an established principle in online advertising, but it remains labour-intensive to manually create many variations of the same ad. Time and budget shortages often limit the testing of ads to a few versions – so-called 'A/B testing.' But A/B testing involves various assumptions, based on an incomplete picture of the performance of the various elements of a creation.

These pain points can be avoided with a simple form of DCO. This is done by **creating an ad from various components that are individually interchangeable**, such as image, button, copy, text and/or call to action. These components are then automatically combined into a unique and coherent creation that varies depending on the number of building blocks. This is how to deliver the most effective combinations to multiple target groups simultaneously.

This form of production is not only extremely useful for testing, but also for creating efficient ad variations for new products, features, promotions, etc. Once the ad has been built, it can be easily adapted via a datasheet. Even display ads with animations can be adjusted in this way without additional technical knowledge. This is a great advantage for any brand with a large product catalogue or varying campaigns.



■ Back at the restaurant

The chef takes charge of the kitchen and decides to offer only one dish on his menu each month. After all, he does not yet have any staff to help out, and this way he can perfect each dish. He's playing it safe. At the start, his customers are curious and they appear to like the dish. Over time, however, his restaurant will end up empty. Who wants to eat the same dish over and over again? Variety is the spice of life!

So he decides to employ a few sous chefs, each of whom combines several new ingredients to make more delicious dishes. The menu expands, customers start pouring in again, and the chef no longer has to do everything himself. Unpopular dishes are simply left off the menu. Broadly speaking, this is also how DCO works.

It drastically reduces budget burden and time pressure while also optimising the online advertising process.

Case 1: Lidl

Assignment:

Lidl, a European retailer, was looking to expand its online banner campaigns in Belgium to promote its products. Due to their huge range of products, from food to garden tools, it was very time-consuming for them to manually create a new ad for each promotion.

Solution:

AdSomeNoise helped Lidl roll out a simple DCO application tailored to its specific needs for scale and flexibility. A basic ad template was drawn up in which numerous components were adjustable: the size of the ad, text, button, image, etc. With the help of DCO, Lidl was then able to create 'automated' advertisements.

AdSomeNoise built a durable shell that was broad enough to accommodate future creations. Lidl does not continuously offer the same products; its range changes constantly. Furthermore, not every product is offered with the same campaign.

With this sustainable DCO setup **Lidl can continue to create efficient advertising variations in the future.** In this specific project, a 'basic' Automated Production DCO was sufficient, focused on economies of scale and flexibility.

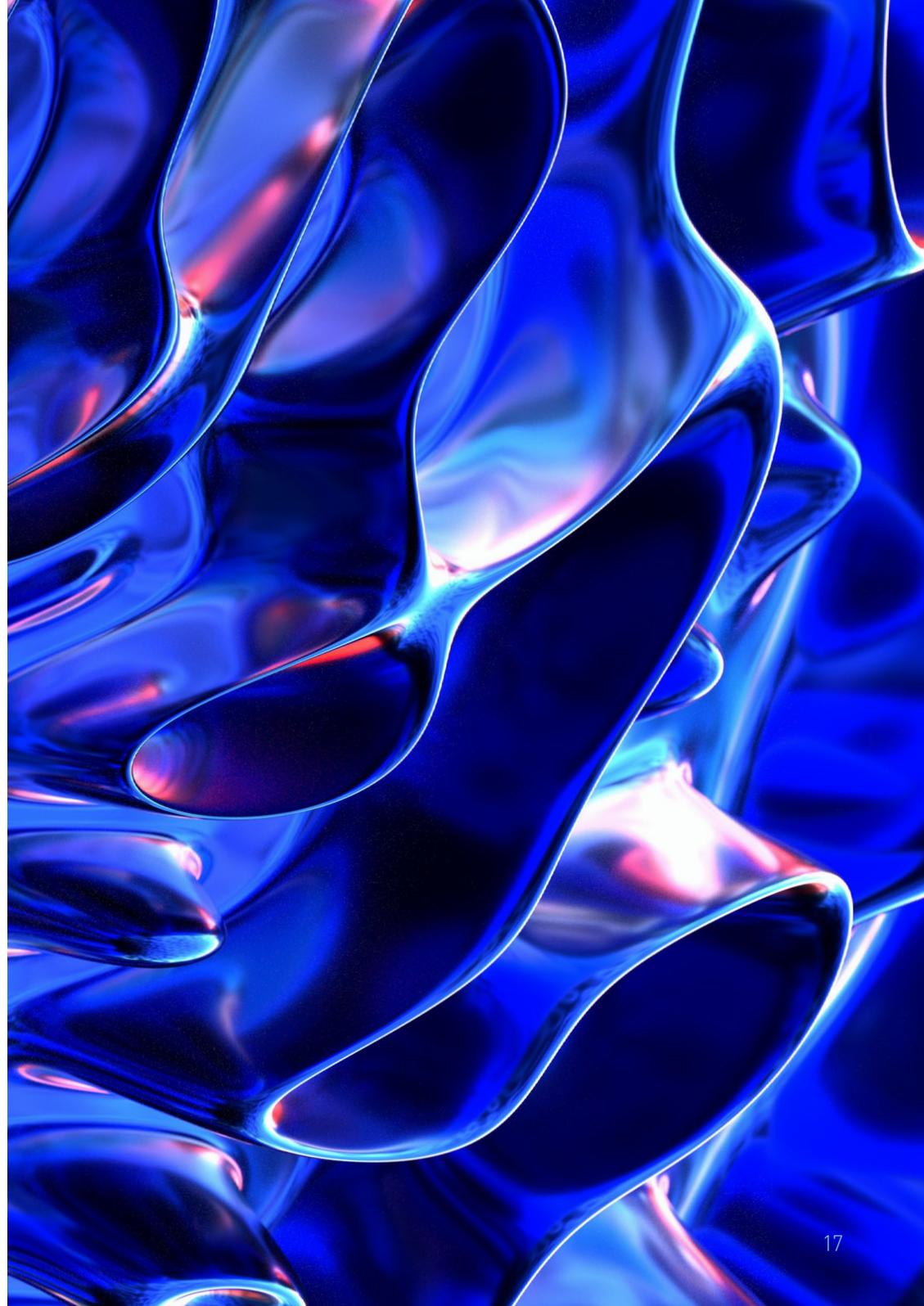


1. Title copy
2. Small promo corner
3. Interchangeable promo and price element
4. Product visual
5. Extra product logo
6. Call to action copy

2. DCO – Switchboard

In addition to the automatic generation of multiple advertising variants, there are even more extensive DCO setups. Whereas the emphasis of the previous example was on economies of scale and flexibility, a more comprehensive 'Switchboard' DCO approach displays a personalised creation based on data and multiple signals. **The combination of data and signals automatically results in a 1-to-1 ad that is compiled and displayed in real time.**

The system makes 1-to-1 advertising choices for the user based on unique combinations that must satisfy certain conditions. Micro-scenarios are drawn up for different contexts. For example, person A (based on data A and signal B) may be shown different creations than person C (based on data B and signal B).





■ Extending the menu

Thanks to the sous-chefs, the chef can expand his menu. Still the menu only offers a few fixed dishes. In order to accommodate to each individual, the chef decides to make various ingredients in his dishes interchangeable. For example, customers can now substitute tofu for meat in a lasagne. This means a party of three might each ask for the same dish with a different main ingredient, so that they all get something different to eat based on their specific needs. In the future, he can interchange not only the main ingredients but also other ingredients in his dishes.

All relevant data on the Switchboard DCO is used to resonate with specific target groups. It optimises the ads based on a set of rules to be used by the self-learning system and with the help of AI.

Your ads keep adapting and never stagnate, thus forming a kind of interaction between target group and creation. If the context of a user changes, they will no longer see the same ad. The creation transforms and evolves, just like the context of the target group.

Case 2: Carglass

Assignment:

Carglass, a company in the car window repair and replacement industry, consulted AdSomeNoise to support its personalised ads. Carglass has a considerable amount of interesting first-party data since it has an online customer flow where potential customers enter their data (number plate, car make, size of their window crack, etc.) step by step in order to schedule an appointment.

However, many failed to answer the 'more complex' questions, such as the insurance or the number plate, which not everyone knows by heart.

Solution:

AdSomeNoise drew up a DCO plan in which we first made the 'make an appointment' flow more accessible so that we could start working with simpler data, such as car type, which every customer knows by heart. That information was requested at the beginning of the process so that fewer customers would drop out early in the customer flow. **Based on a range of relevant signals, a personalised banner and social ad was launched showing a dashboard and windscreen similar to those of your own car.** The damage to the windshield depended on your description, a crack or a chip.





Additionally, the weather conditions on the windshield corresponded in real time to the current weather conditions. All the different components of the banner were compiled and published in real time. Thanks to an integrated media buying approach, we were able to A/B test and optimise this campaign.

The tests have shown that this personal form of advertising performs up to four times better than the non-dynamic default version. By taking into account business parameters (e.g. replacing a windshield results in a better margin for Carglass than repairing a crack), the campaign was able to be further optimised.

This comprehensive DCO integrated with media optimisation resulted in an impressive Return on Adspend (ROA). **Every euro invested within media brought in €300.**



3. DCO – Decision-based

In the third DCO approach, the consumer's individual thought process is optimally addressed. In the previous approaches it was sufficient to have 'fixed' 1-to-1 scenarios that differed from consumer to consumer. In 'decision-based' DCO, these boundaries are removed.

Signals are still linked to data in order to result in a creation, but unlike the 'Switchboard' approach, the combination of data A and signal A does not necessarily result in ad A. **Since this DCO is linked to AI (Artificial Intelligence), the system now learns using dynamic decision trees how to optimally form individual creations.** In the Carglass 'Switchboard' example, the combination of data A and signal A was guaranteed to result in advertisement A. By using the 'decision-based' approach, the combination can now give different results.





■ Welcoming the regulars

The chef knows his regular customers and often chats with them after their meal. One day Paul, his most loyal customer, visits the restaurant. It's a cold winter evening and Paul fancies having a hot stew. The chef remembers that Paul needs to pay more attention to his cholesterol nowadays, so he recommends a low-fat dish. Paul appreciates the attention to detail, and mentions that he's planning to do Dry January next month. So the next time Paul visits, the waiters should suggest non-alcoholic drinks.

In short, decision-based DCO is a more fluid, intelligent extension of 'switchboard' DCO. **The self-learning system, linked to DCO, gradually learns more and more about the thinking and choice processes of an individual in order to deliver optimal and relevant ads.** Of course, not every project requires this approach. For example, a decision-based DCO was not appropriate in our specific project for Carglass as the combinations of data and signals were fixed (type of car, crack/chip, weather). This approach was a better fit for a project with Decathlon.

Case 3: Decathlon

Assignment:

Decathlon is an international sports chain. AdSomeNoise supported the company with a DCO set-up that integrated consumer thought processes to make relevant, personalised ads that optimised performance.

Execution:

AdSomeNoise found two interesting starting points in Decathlon's first-party data: favourite sport and level (e.g. beginner, advanced etc.). These insights showed that the more committed someone is to their sport, the higher their average basket value.

Decathlon also has its own recommendation engine, and knows what a consumer of a higher 'level' typically buys. In combination with the weather, the ads result in a set of relevant products for Decathlon to display and upsell to the consumer. **This raises your purchasing level by showing you highly personalised and relevant ads based on your previous behaviour and choices, together with the weather.**

For example, if you are a novice jogger that lives in a city and browse Decathlon's website during sunny summer weather, you will see an advert showing a runner wearing intermediate level running shoes and light running clothes, jogging in the summer sun in the city centre.

Sunny weather scenario

Frame 1



Frame 2.a



Frame 2.b



Frame 3



Rainy weather scenario

Frame 1



Frame 2.a

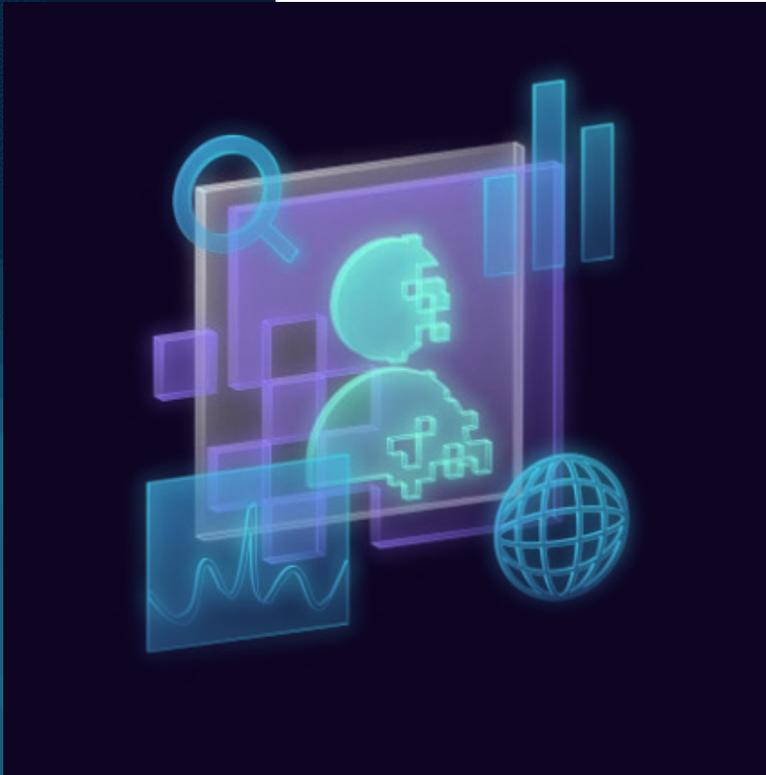


Frame 2.b



Frame 3





■ Recap

From these three different projects, it's evident that DCO is not a fixed, rigid technology, but rather as a continuum of options that can be tailored to fit to the nature of a project. At AdSomeNoise we know that the essence of marketing is reaching the right consumer with the right message, at the right place, at the right time. When the data-driven creativity mindset is applied in a well-considered way, it's an excellent way to achieve this goal.

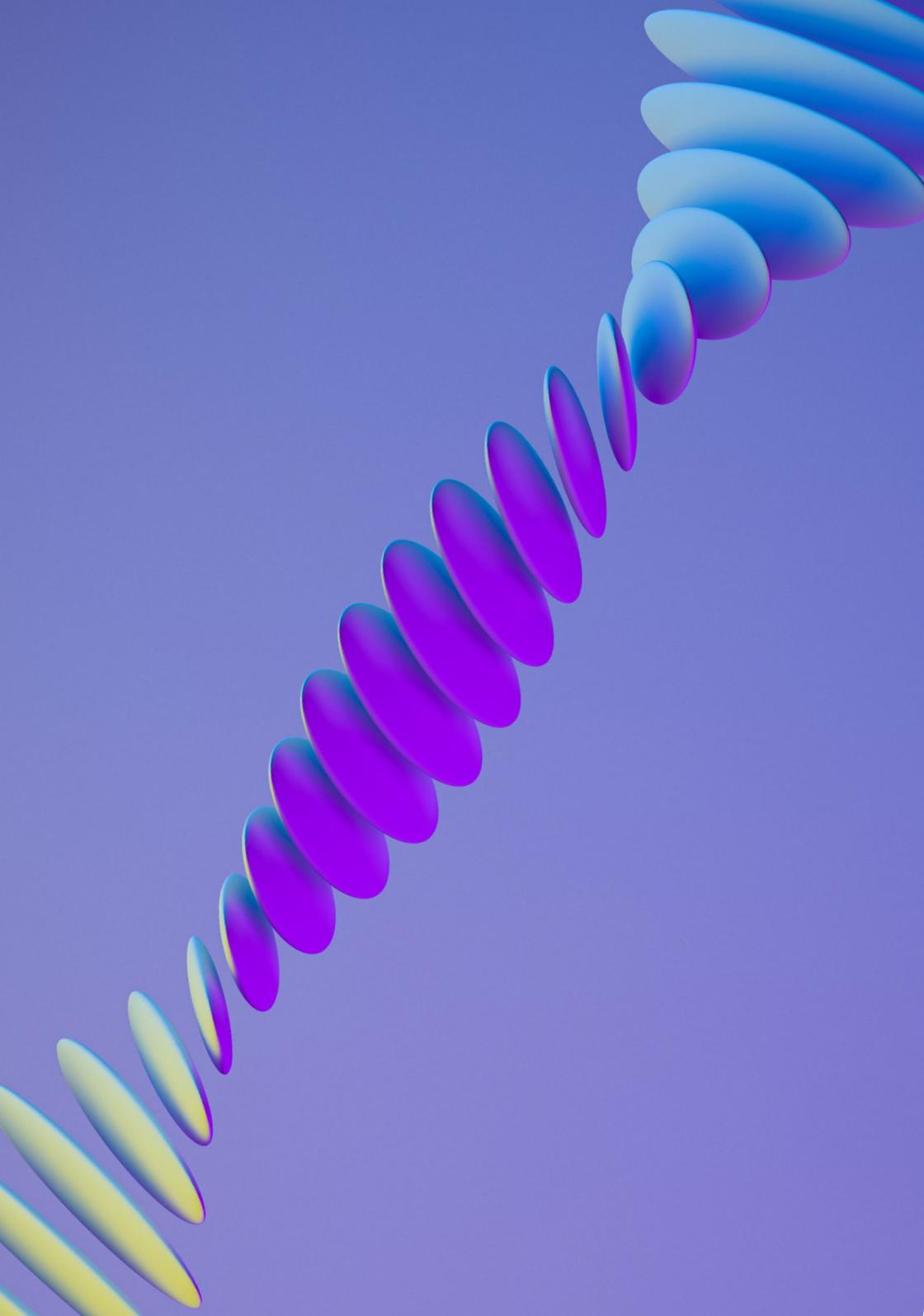
■ Is DCO limited to ■ specific online ■ channels?

DCO is most widely used in display advertising, but has many more applications. DCO is also an important step for social media, with Pinterest recently jumping on the bandwagon along with Facebook and Snapchat. They are already tentatively posting positive results, seeing an initial 55% increase in their conversion rates while their 'return on ad spend' has also increased by 11%⁷.

Other advertising formats also offer unique opportunities, such as email, DOOH, in-store and even audio. For the latter, we worked with Volvo, which wanted its campaign for its XC40 model to resonate with younger audiences. Besides showing you a personalised XC40 according to your preferences (colour, equipment, options), we thought incorporating the user's music tastes would be interesting. The integration of Spotify into the XC40 was an ideal to incorporate music data. **We generated a unique branded playlist for 11,000 users based on their personal listening behaviour. Those playlists were seamlessly integrated into the brand new XC40.** Audio turned out to be the perfect approach for data-driven creativity.

These opportunities so often go unused, but they are right there for the taking. This is where the symbiosis of data and creativity can lead to the most innovative and successful campaigns.

⁷ Williams, Robert. (2021, January 20). Pinterest's new ad format automates personalized messaging. MarketingDive.



■ Is DCO adtech-bound?

Different adtechs technologies needed to build and execute a campaign offer opportunities to build a data-driven campaign with a DCO approach, in a more or less comprehensive form.

The choice of which technology to use depends on various factors. Which form of DCO should you opt for? The more complex the set-up, the more capable the technology must be. What technology is the advertiser already using?

More and more advertisers are investing in their own first-party strategy that uses a DMP (data management platform) or CDP (customer data platform). It is important to be able to use this data in the DCO set-up. Connectivity is thus an important factor in determining which technologies will become part of the solution.

Which channels will be used in the DCO campaign? Display, social and video all have their own specific requirements and is often more advanced than its competitors in terms of opening up certain channels. Which buying tools should be used? Here again, the most important thing is the connectivity between the various parts of the technological setup. Although various options are possible, the important thing is to maintain maximum independence combined with optimum connectivity.



■ What is the value of ■ media integration? ■ What are its pitfalls?

A classic programmatic approach is not enough to make the most of data-driven creativity in campaigns. Data-driven creations require a specific approach in media planning and buying. The role of the planner and buyer is crucial to the success. Here too, integration – or at least good cooperation between the creative, ad tech partner and media agency – is a key success factor. It's prudent to choose a partner for your DCO project who can consider the creative, data and media aspects in an integrated manner and who also ideally offers all these services.

At the outset, a clear strategy is even more crucial to the success of DCO campaigns than other programmatic campaigns. Which audiences are to be tested? Which creative scenarios are these linked to? What are the KPIs? Which hard and soft conversions form the basis of optimisation and reporting? How do we use the results for further optimisation and testing? The goal is clear: a learning unit that constantly improves is only possible if the DCO is set up properly.

It's tempting to leave the optimization entirely to the DCO and hope that the creations do the rest of the work. We often see media plans in which a large volume is linked to the campaign without any further strategy – what we think of as 'vintage programmatic planning.' This gives limited insights from the volumes delivered, and that is one of DCO's great strengths: the possibility of testing at scale.

Context

Besides the right audiences and creations, it is also important to choose sufficiently broad valorising contexts. This adds value because context lends credibility. For example, 'device targeting' can be a good choice if you want your ads to be mobile only. However, you should always consider whether your advertisement will convert well in the chosen context. It's no good issuing a CTA inviting customers to phone you if your ad is shown on tablets, which usually do not have a call function.

For a campaign to be fully effective, **the context must also be sufficiently broad, given that machine learning is crucial for DCO to be able to learn to its full potential.** Keep your options open and do not focus solely on contexts and channels that at first glance may appear most important. If you want to target young people, channels such as the StuBru website would appear to be the most suitable, but the amount of relevant data you can derive may be quite low and you can therefore learn very little.

Authorization

A good starting point is to draft a whitelist that includes several sites where the ad may appear. It is important to keep that list broad and diverse. **You should only start excluding sites once you have a good idea of which sites have the most conversions from your ad.** If your whitelist is too limited, you may miss out on great conversion potential. Data analysis is always a reflection of the network on which a campaign runs, so it is important your approach includes as diverse a range of contexts as possible. Targeting is done in the DCO setup, so it is not useful to limit the possibilities as well as the available volume with unnecessary targeting.

Other parameters

It is vital to optimise a DCO like any other campaign. For example, you'll want to **optimise classic parameters such as viewability, brand safety, click-through and bounce rates.** If you don't want to annoy potential customers by showing them the same ad ten times in a row, you should also keep an eye on frequency capping. In addition, the availability of the brand should not be overlooked. This seems obvious, but if your ad appears at a time when conversion is not possible, for example, the hours when a call centre is closed, then what's the point?

These are just a few parameters that are important in other campaigns and also important in DCO. DCO is not an automatic cure-all that you can unleash to magically achieve enormous success. Just like with other digital campaigns, the first step is a good setup on classic parameters.

Automatic optimisation

The advantage of DCO is that the **campaign results are automatically fed back to the buying tools in real time and in an integrated way, on a basis of automated optimisation.** Different data signals can be tested automatically on selected audiences. Which signals have added value for which target group, and which do not? This optimises the various scenarios based on machine learning.

This is how a DCO set-up becomes a whole learning system, which gets better and better across different channels: a layer that brings the relevant message to the right target groups, without being intrusive.

■ What about ■ third party data?

In today's digital landscape, third-party data plays a huge role in many digital campaigns. But for how long?

Third-party data is data that can be collected by, among others, well-known third-party cookies. This could be personal data, such as whether you have visited certain sites. All this data is thrown onto a gigantic heap from which marketers can 'shop' to their heart's content. In theory, this means that you can consult/buy very targeted data, linked to parameters such as gender, age and interests. So this third-party data is important information, right?

Well, some caveats remain, such as the GDPR. Although in principle you have to agree to third-party cookies when you visit certain sites, transparency is often lacking. People do not always realise that this personal data is being sold off to the highest bidder. An additional side effect is advertisers getting 'lazy'.

Since third-party is the norm, people have become dependent on it, and therefore less attentive to their own valuable data systems. It creates a degree of uniformity that makes it difficult to excel.





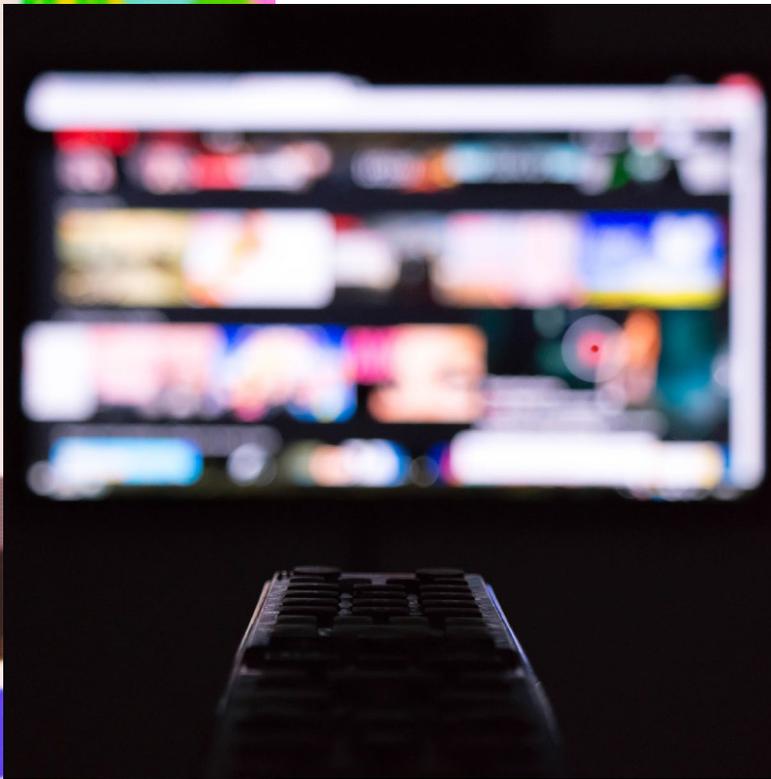
But still, many marketers are happy with the efficiency of third-party data. So what's the problem? It's all good, right? That is until browsers ban third-party cookies. Apple and Mozilla, which together account for **30%⁸** of third-party data, have already sworn off cookies. It won't be long until the fat lady, Google, begins to sing. Then it's all over. **Google announced that it will be banning cookies on Chrome from 2022.** This puts a damper on marketers who have been able to cheaply inject their campaigns with the third-party data. Many companies will have to re-source digitally.

This is not necessarily bad news. On the contrary, it is an opportunity for companies to take a creative new approach to data and to finetune their platforms. Data that is collected transparently can now be handled more ethically, with respect for your visitors. Your own data can give you unique insights that are invisible to your competitors.

What does this evolution mean for DCO in concrete terms? Essentially nothing changes: data and creativity are integrated in dynamic ads. Only the data source changes. Although third-party data has been a common source to date, it is not inherently necessary for an effective DCO design.

Does this pose a challenge? Absolutely. Many companies are currently enamoured with third-party data, while losing sight of their own data platforms. But every downside has its upside. Hopefully, advertisers will recharge their batteries and see the value that first-party data has to offer.

⁸ Ensink, Bart. (2020, July 31). Third party data stopt, zet je eigen data in voor sales en marketing. Emerce.



■ What is the future of ■ DCO? **DCO for video**

The possibilities of DCO are far from exhausted – in fact it seems that we have only just scratched the surface. Since 2015, AdSomeNoise has been building DCOs for display applications such as banner campaigns, ads on social media, emails, Digital Out of Home, and so on... but there's more.

DCO is a technological revolution that is now embracing the relevancy of video messaging. Thanks to innovation support from the province of Flemish Brabant, we have begun developing DCO for video. **This will make it possible to compose and publish personalised, hyper-relevant videos in real time, creating a new dimension of possibilities in the marketing world.**

If 'classic' DCO is the tip of the iceberg, DCO for video is the huge potential right below the surface. TV⁹ is generally regarded by advertisers as the medium that gets the most attention and engagement from consumers. And yet the advertising landscape for TV has remained virtually unchanged over the past 70 years. Everyone is shown the same creation.

With the help of DCO it will be possible to combine the best of both worlds: the high involvement of consumers in TV and the efficiency of digital advertising. Today, Addressable TV is already a fact, whereby ads can be targeted at a relevant selection of viewers. In the future, it will also be possible to personalise the ad within the selection, in order to advertise more relevantly. AdSomeNoise is at the helm of this revolution.

Last year, AdSomeNoise already developed a pilot project for Carglass in cooperation with Semetis and SBS, in which **pre-rolls were assembled in real time based on various signals, including the TV viewing behaviour of consumers.** It was a successful trial and a worldwide first.

⁹ Baecke, Philippe; Coeymans, Jeroen; De Schaepdrijver, Leen; Lauwers, Lode; Tackx, Koen, Van Driessche, Bert. (2021, January 21). Addressable ads are shaping the future of tv marketing. Vlerick.





Takeaway

The world of digital marketing is continuously innovating and changing. Some developments are fleeting and die an early death, while others go on to thrive. In this white paper, we have attempted to frame a solid and high-performance technology, DCO, in a broader context. In line with the data-driven creativity mindset, in which data and creativity are perfectly complementary, DCO is one of the most versatile ways to boost your digital marketing strategy.

Due to its multi-deployability, which we have demonstrated through the various cases shared here, DCO can provide undeniable added value in varied campaigns. From a 'basic' approach with scale and flexibility in the creation of advertisements, to a hyper-personalised 1-to-1 approach that takes into account the consumer's thought and choice processes, more and more companies are discovering the power of DCO and it's not going away anytime soon.

Technology never stands still and AdSomeNoise is playing a pioneering role in the development of further innovations, including DCO Video. **The best is yet to come.**



What Now?



Is DCO something for you?



How to start?

Hopefully you are, like us, completely convinced of the importance of DCO. It's a method to create more relevant communication. A way to pursue performance without sacrificing brand values. A way to guide people through the marketing funnel that best suits their needs. A way to valorise (first-party) data. A smart way of advertising. A flight forward.

And yet, DCO is not for everyone. Precisely because it requires an important degree of cooperation between the different competencies (creation, production, media and IT) that are often still spread over different companies, it is important to act with vision, decisiveness and competence. With a typical investment of 15 to 30 thousand euros for a DCO set-up, it only really makes sense with an annual media budget of around 100,000 euros in these channels.

If you are ready to start with DCO:

- Use the attached checklist to ensure that the project is initiated properly and that all parties involved are involved in an effective manner.
- Or feel free to involve AdSomeNoise. Modesty is good, but if there's one thing we're good at, it's DCO. We can help streamline the project, create the strategic and creative model, provide production, link to the media stack, and/or set up media planning or buying.

Checklist

1. Manage expectations

- 1.1** The lead time for setting up a DCO track will take at least 1 month. Chances are it will take 3 months.
- 1.2** A DCO set-up takes time to be perfected. So don't expect a ridiculously good machine after 1 week.
- 1.3** DCO has both the potential to advertise full-funnel (SEE-THINK-DO) and to strike a nice balance between performance and branding. However, if the goal is to carelessly pursue the toughest performance metrics, DCO is rarely the best solution.
- 1.4** What does success look like? What are the budgets and when is the return on these budgets reached (direct? CLV? ...)

2. Onboarding - a DCO process will work best if all stakeholders are involved. Before you can start, it is imperative to have...

- 2.1** The persons involved on the side of the advertiser.
- 2.2** Creative / strategic communication partner: what do we want to say and how.
- 2.3** Production partner. With knowledge of the DCO technology used, of course.
- 2.4** Media partners. Responsible for media strategy and buying.
- 2.5** Optional: (internal) technical / data manager to make relevant data (1th party data, ERP data, ...) available for the campaign.

We recommend starting the collaboration with a workshop where all these parties enter into the project together, in order to also create the necessary buy-in.

- 3.** Which data or signals are present, relevant and available for the campaign? This can be general and public information (weather, location / branches, ...), behavioural (this user has performed certain actions on our website) or transactional / CRM (this customer has already bought certain things in the past). Is the first party data also available in, for example, a DMP or CDP and can that be linked to the campaign?
- 4.** Are there any branding guidelines that can be used in the campaign? Keep in mind that ads are composed dynamically and it is therefore not easy to see and approve every possible version in advance. Which assets can best be used for this. What are the non-negotiables.
- 5.** Is it important to add a promo or alternative pay-off in certain situations? How? It is best to foresee this in advance.
- 6.** Who will follow up the campaign? How can the campaign be fed with new scenarios, copy, images, ... What is the ideal way to do this: via a partner, via a spreadsheet, via a CMS or automatically via a link to a technical system.

AdSomeNoise

AdSomeNoise wants to build the advertising agency of the future.

Ambitious? Well, yes. But we believe that advertising will look very different in the future, and we think agencies also need to adapt. No one has a blueprint for what agencies will look like in the future, but we believe that two pillars will become increasingly important: integration and cooperation.

We need to combine competences that were split up in the past: creativity and media, including data, along with new competences such as technology and business intelligence should all be incorporated into the classic advertising process. At AdSomeNoise we integrate all these competencies to achieve the most effective communication, but we also work together with other stakeholders if they possess other assets that can benefit a client.

Building the agency of the future means we attract customers who want to shake up the status quo. As Einstein said, 'Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results'. We are the agency that offers more. Are you ready to do things differently? Do you believe in integration? Are you looking to work together and create true cooperation? If you have the kind of big dreams that match our own, don't hesitate to contact us.



Drop us a line



Check out our website

