A MARKETER'S GUIDE ON AI-DRIVEN INFLUENCER MARKETING AND LONG-TAIL TARGETING

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CHAPTER I: THE ART OF LONG-TAIL TARGETING

OLGA'S REVENGE

Have you ever heard about the Princess Olga of Kyiv? Well, let me start with her story first.

In the early part of the 10th Century, Prince Igor of Kyiv has been killed by the Drevlyans tribe who owed him a tribute. The Drevlyans weren't so keen on having Igor's wife Olga as their leader. They decided to negotiate a marriage between Olga and Prince Mal (their top choice of a king). Olga had accepted the proposal. But when the 5,000 men from Drevlyans' wedding delegation were drunk after the welcome feast, Olga's army has violently killed all of them in their bed.

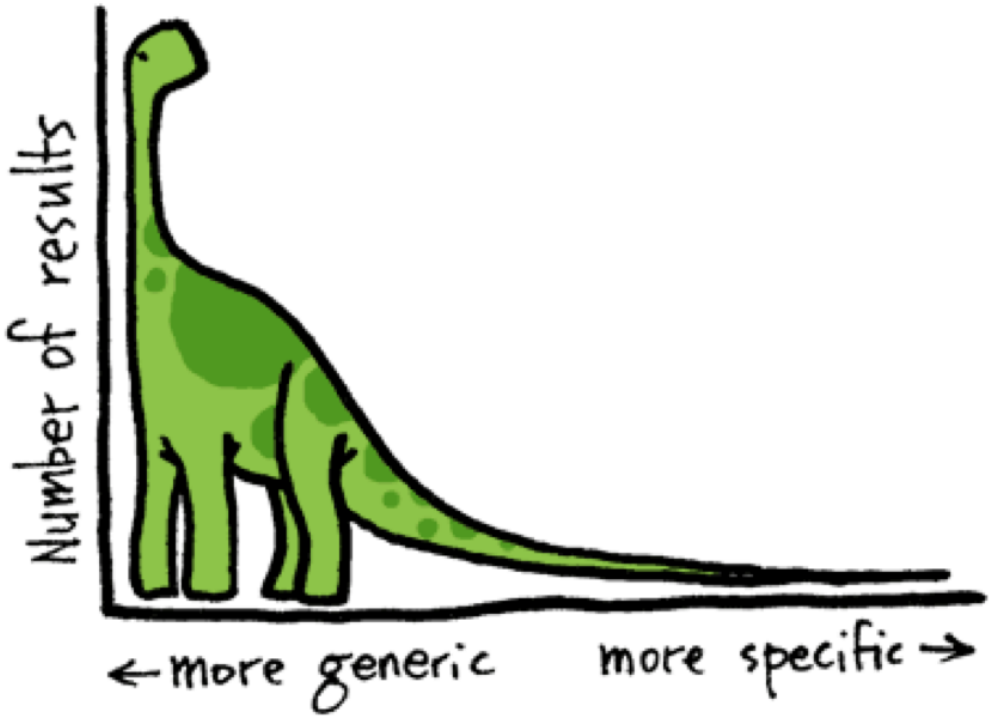
The remaining Drevlyan survivors pleaded for mercy to Olga, to spare what was left of the Drevlyans. Olga granted the survivors mercy on the condition that each house would send her three pigeons and three sparrows. Once the birds arrived in Kyiv, Olga ordered her Army to tie sulfur bound in cloth to each pigeon. The next night they sent all of the pigeons and sparrows back to the Drevlyans so they **would all arrive at once**.

Once all of the pigeons and sparrows returned to their nests, **each house of the Drevlyans was set ablaze** leaving a little job for the army to complete her revenge.

LONG-TAILED DISTRIBUTION

So what does Olga's story have to do with long-tail targeting? Nothing to do with the birds' tail length! I will come back to that later. First, let's define what does long-tail targeting means and where the "long-tail" comes from.

According to Wikipedia, a long tail of a distribution of numbers is the portion of **the distribution having many occurrences far from the "head" or central part of the distribution.** When thinking about long-tail distribution, it is helpful to imagine a dinosaur with a long neck and long tail just like on a picture below. The dinosaur's long neck represents the few most common numbers/situations occurring frequently, and the dinosaur's long tail represents multiple less frequent numbers/situations.

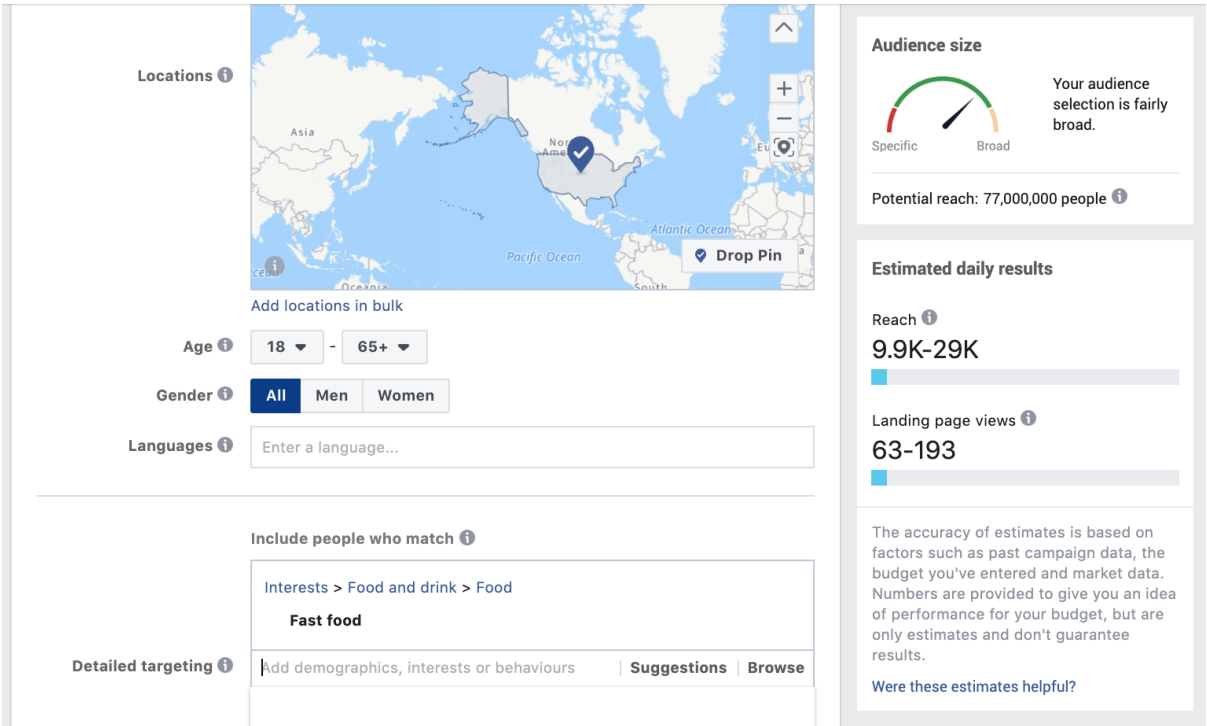


Now, when we know what is long-tail targeting, let's leave Statistics for a while and jump into Google's and Facebook's ecosystem to complete our background knowledge with one more key component.

PROGRAMMATIC MEDIA BUYING AND AUCTIONS?

To grasp the concept of Longtail Targeting, we need to understand how actually Programmatic Buying Platforms decide who and when wins an Ad Impression. To stay focused, in this article, we will be talking mostly about Facebook and its Pay-Per-Impression billing.

Let's imagine that we are running Ads on Facebook for the Fast Food industry. We have already come up with great content and now need to complete the last step — Facebook targeting. Naturally, we are choosing the "Fast food" interest as our audience targeting criteria, expecting to reach up to 77,000,000 people on Facebook in the US.



Let's first figure out what will happen on Facebook's backend after we will publish our Ad.

According to Facebook's Business Help Center, our Ads are competing in an auction, where the winner is defined based on **Bid**, Estimated **Action Rate**, and **Ad Quality**.

Bid attribute is controlled by you and, basically, just shows how much you are willing to pay for winning an Impression (you can even set Facebook to decide it for you by choosing the "Lowest Cost" bidding strategy).

Action Rate attribute is up to Facebook's AI, which predicts how likely a given Facebook user is going to click your Ad.

The Ad. Quality attribute is also up to Facebook, which is predicted by Facebook's quality evaluation algorithm. **We can influence it** by crafting better and more relevant content that appeals to an our-targeted audience (e.g. younger audiences are mostly on mobile and like dynamic content, so e.g. portrait-oriented videos shown in the "Stories" placement could be a good choice for B2C brands targeting youngsters).

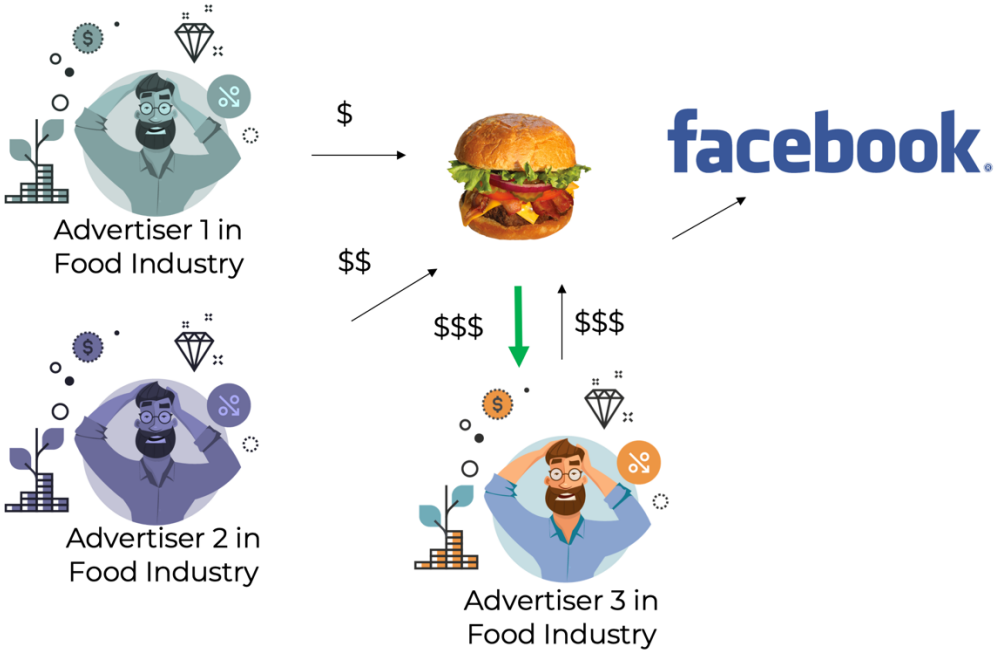
"Bid, Action... Quality..?? What?..."

Sounds confusing? Let's put it into a context!

For example, Advertiser 1, Advertiser 2, and Advertiser 3 are **all in the Fast Food industry**, and, for the sake of simplicity, they have prepared a **similar marketing campaign** (i.e. Facebook's Action Rates will be set similar to the pull of Facebook audiences) with a **great engaging marketing content** (i.e. Facebook AI will not

penalize either of the three advertisers for doing a bad job in their content efforts).

In such a setting, a **Bid will be the main criteria** that Facebook will choose to sell impressions and an Advertiser who bids the most will eventually be chosen to show the Ad to a potential customer.



In our example, **Advertiser 3 will win the Impression** with his $$$ (highest) bid per Impression, as compared to Advertiser 2 and Advertiser 1 with their $$ and $ bids, respectively. It is just like a traditional auction but it is conducted online and participants compete for showing their ads to the online audiences.

Now, let's think about a smarter way of winning Ad Impressions. Imagine, you **could reach the same customer but through his/her other,** not very common, interest **that is still very relevant** to the person?

For example, a young mother could naturally be interested in Early Childhood Education. However, a small private circle also knows that she also like Baking and Pastry as, finally, she had gotten

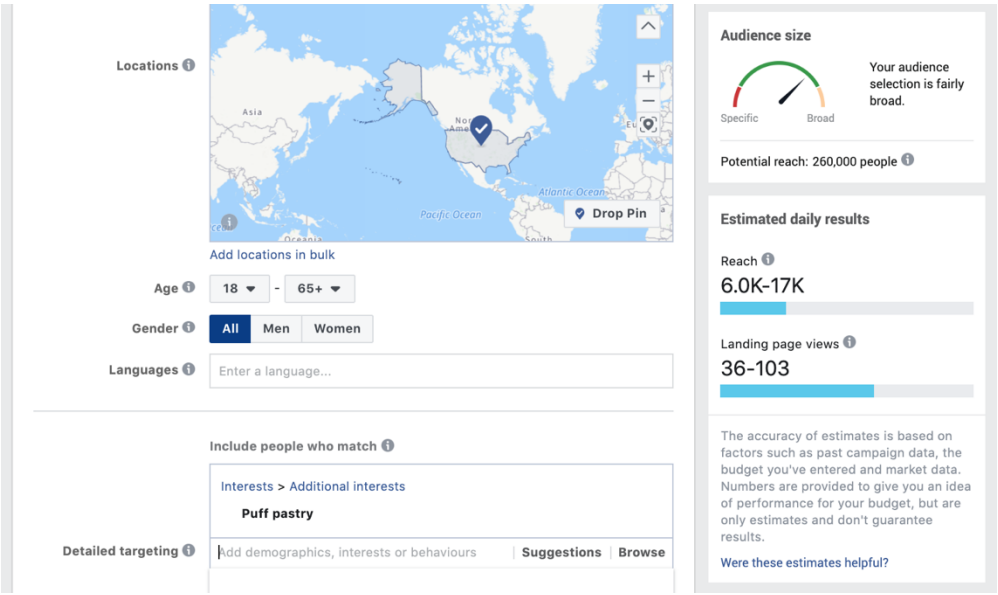
some spare time to bake during her maternity leave and when the baby is sleeping. From her activity on Social Media, Facebook will know that she is interested in both Baby Education and Baking, but only a small portion of advertisers would bid for “Baking” to reach her. Most advertisers will rely on their common sense to bid for “Early Childhood Education”, making their Ads much more expensive as if they choose to bid for the “Baking” interest.

In case if it is much cheaper to reach her via “Baking” interest, why would you pay for reaching her through the “Early Childhood Education” interest which is so much more expensive?

Let’s check the actual data from our Fast Food example. Since we advertising to people who potentially do not mind to have a burger for a meal, we could assume that they might also like Puff Pastry.

As you can see from the screenshot below, the “Puff pastry” interest’s potential reach is much smaller: 260,000 users v.s. 77,000,000 users for the “Fast food” interest.

The low popularity of the “Puff pastry” interest gives us a high chance of the low competition for it on Facebook among advertisers. Ultimately, it will also mean that we could save some Ad budgets by reaching people though “Puff pastry”, rather than through the broad and expensive “Fast food” interest.



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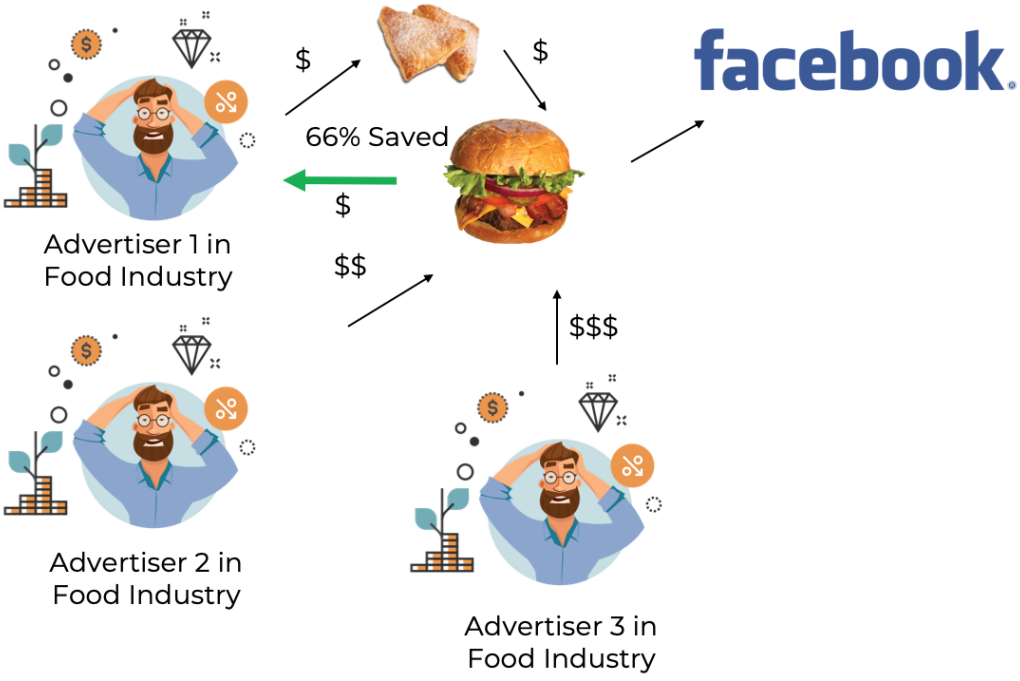
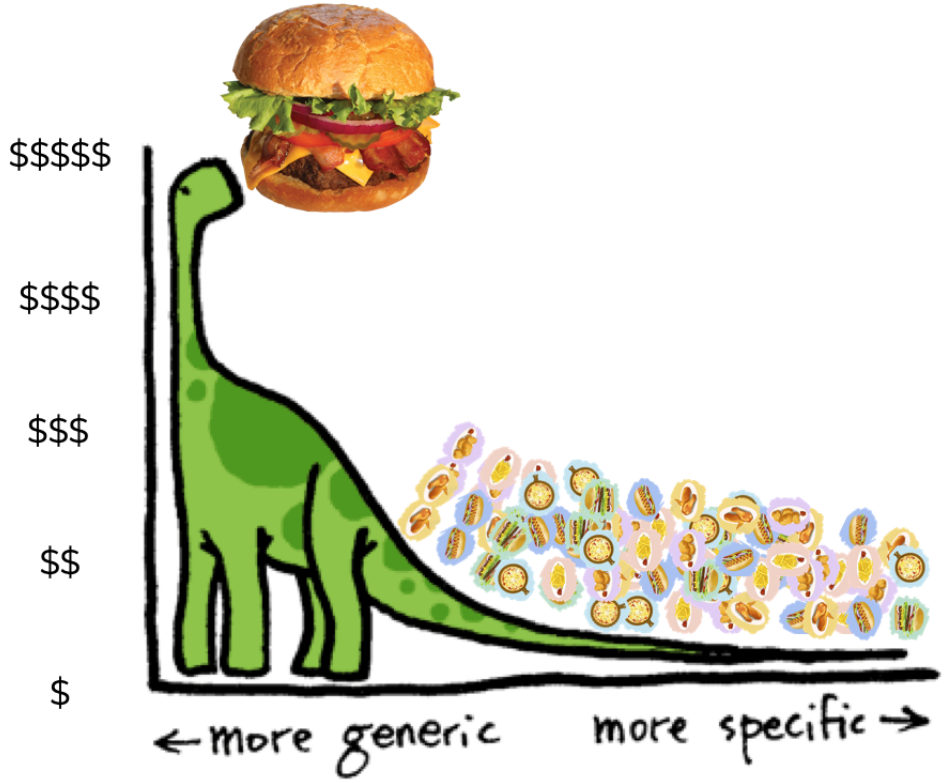
Now the Advertiser 1 wins the Impression effectively **spending e.g. 3 times less on Facebook as he could spend** by pushing for a higher bid and more expensive “Fast food” category.



LEARNING FROM THE PRINCESS

By now, you have probably understood why we have started this article from Princess Olga's revenge story: instead of sending her troops to the enemy's settlement and bear the high costs of the war in the enemy's most protected place (their HQ), she sent many pigeons and sparrows to burn the enemy's houses prior to the attack.

The same way we are going to target our Ads on Social Media and SEM platforms: **by choosing multiple less popular, but yet relevant, targeting options, we will be able to reach our audiences at a much lower cost but at the same (or even higher) efficiency rates.** Our targeting categories will all be **laying on the long tail of the distribution**, that's why this approach is called long-tail targeting.



YEP, I GOT IT..! WE ARE GOING TO USE MANY LESS POPULAR KEYWORDS/INTERESTS TO REACH THE SAME PEOPLE AT A LOWER PRICE, JUST LIKE THE PUFF THING! BUT WHERE I'M GOING TO GET THEM AND HOW DO I KNOW THAT THEY ARE STILL RELEVANT TO MY AUDIENCE?

Before we learn ways to discover long-tail targeting categories, let's understand how Facebook labels users with their interests.

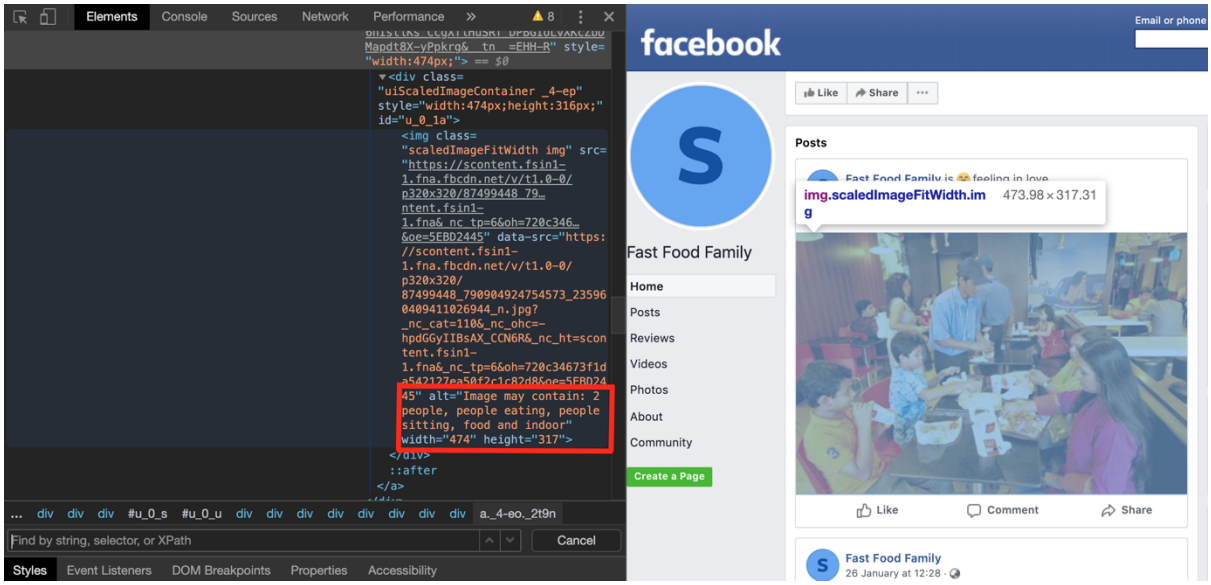
THAT'S WHAT AI THINKS ABOUT US...

It is actually very easy to know what Facebook thinks about our content:

- **Choose any picture** in your Facebook timeline;
- Hover mouse to it and **click "Inspect"**;
- In the Developer Console, **Search (Ctrl+F) for "may contain"**.

In most of the cases, you will find Facebook's caption that is **automatically labelled by Facebook's AI visual recognition** engine for the case when Facebook's servers are down and you cannot see the actual content. These captions attempt to explain to us what is on the image when we cannot see it.

To us, it is also a clue of how the Facebook process all the content we post.



According to my recent conversation with Facebook's Help Center, Facebook AI actually judges about our interests not just based on the content we post, but also according to what we click and like, pages we browse, Ads we react and our actual reaction patterns, our communication on messaging platforms, Instagram posts, mouse movement patterns, what our friends post and like, as well as many other criteria. These capabilities are **powered by modern Machine Learning and Visual Recognition systems**, that were reported to effectively distinguish more than 11,000 different types of objects from the social media users' posts.

Can you distinguish 11,000 objects on 300 million daily uploaded photos?

Facebook's AI can!

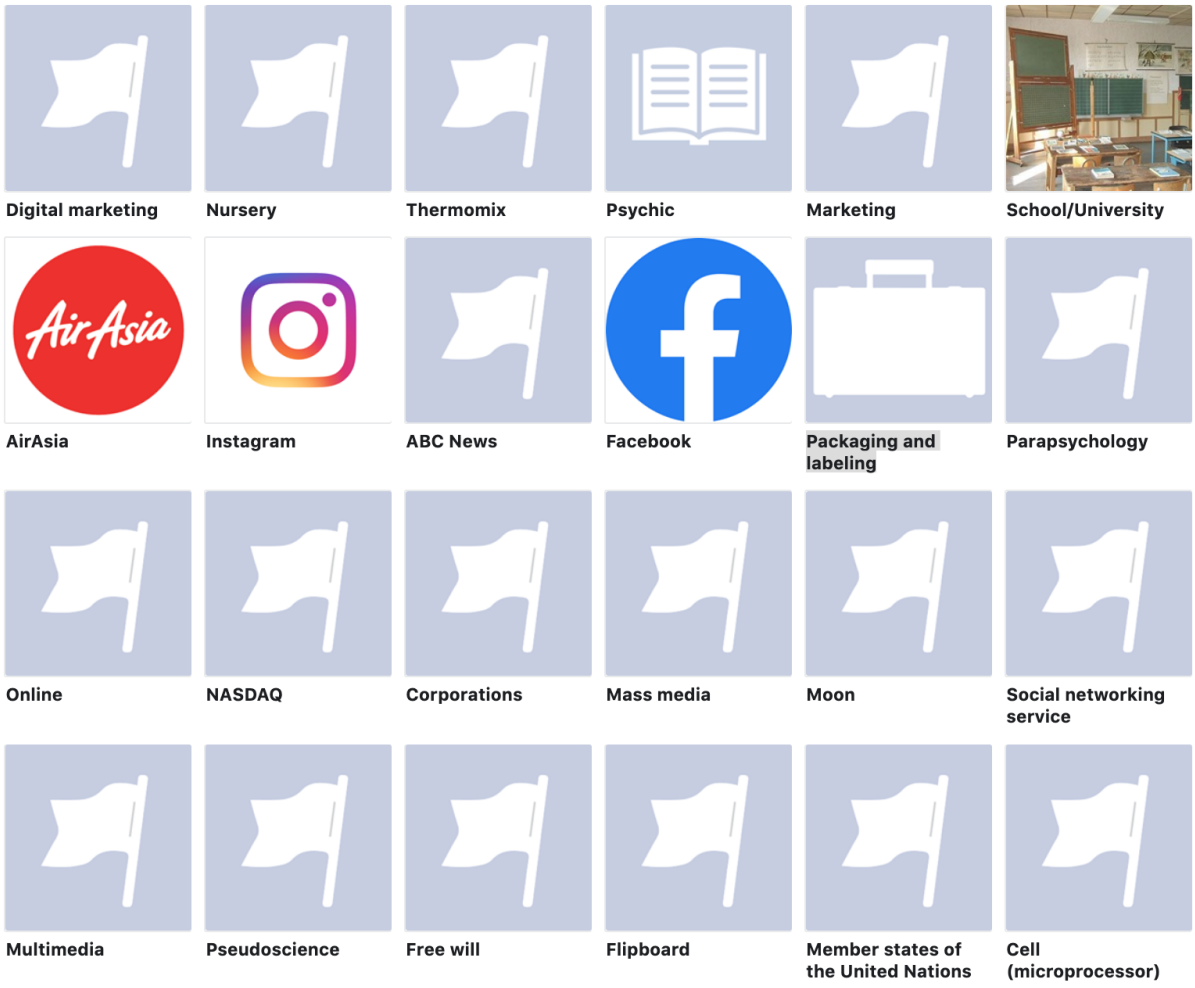
From such a breakthrough technological approach, **Facebook and Google sometimes know about us much more than we think**. It would be very short-sighted, to continue targeting our leads just through the most obvious targeting categories, such as "Fast food" and ignoring the opportunity of long-tail targeting.

Check what Facebook thinks about you:

- Go to your Facebook **personal profile Settings**;
- Click **Ads.** and then Click **“Your Interests”**;
- In the new tab, **you will see all the interests Facebook has assigned to you** in different industries and categories.

Take a look at mine on the screenshot below. “Packaging and labelling” is, probably, my favourite! 🤣

Was is derived from my interest in learning how Facebook labels people?...



Now ask yourself: would you still target people like me only though “Marketing and Technology” interest, or consider some wider spectrum?

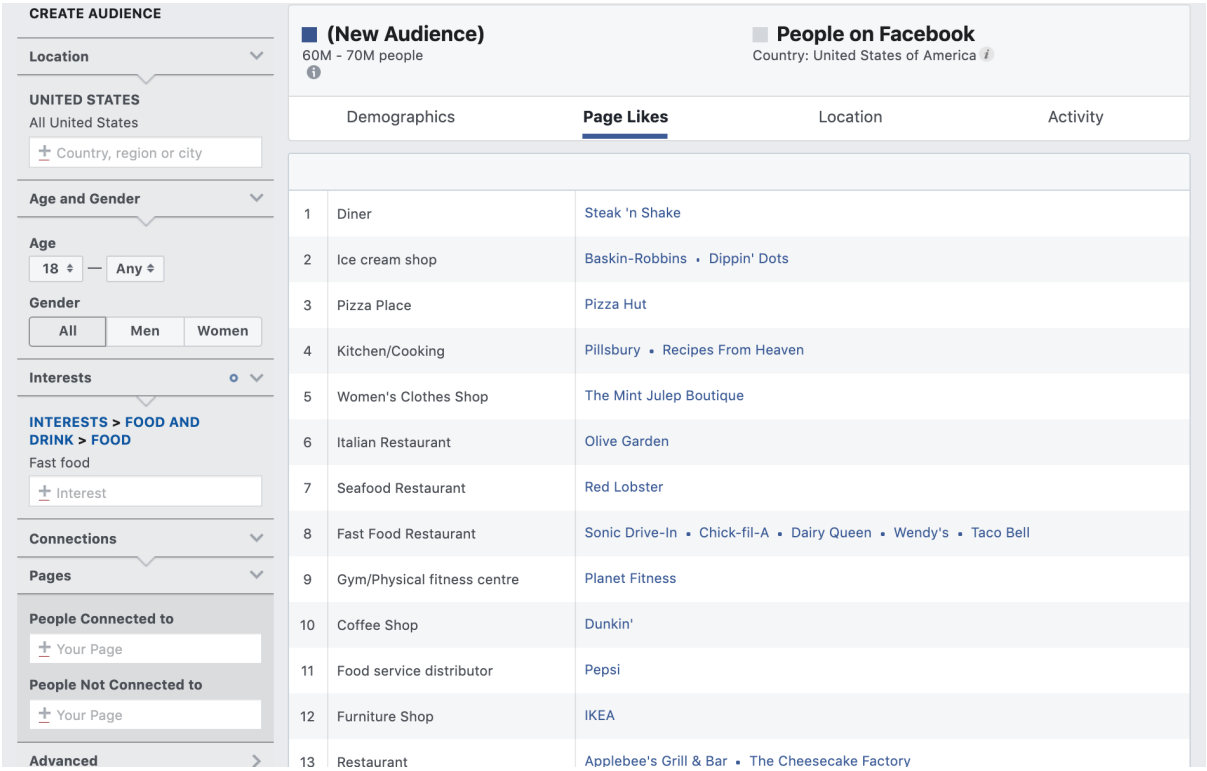
OK. CONVINCED!!

TELL ME HOW TO FIND ALL THOSE SECRET HUMAN CRAVINGS TO TARGET MY ADS WELL!!!

FINDING THE NEEDLES IN A HAYSTACK

There are many tools available out there to help you in finding good long-tail keywords.

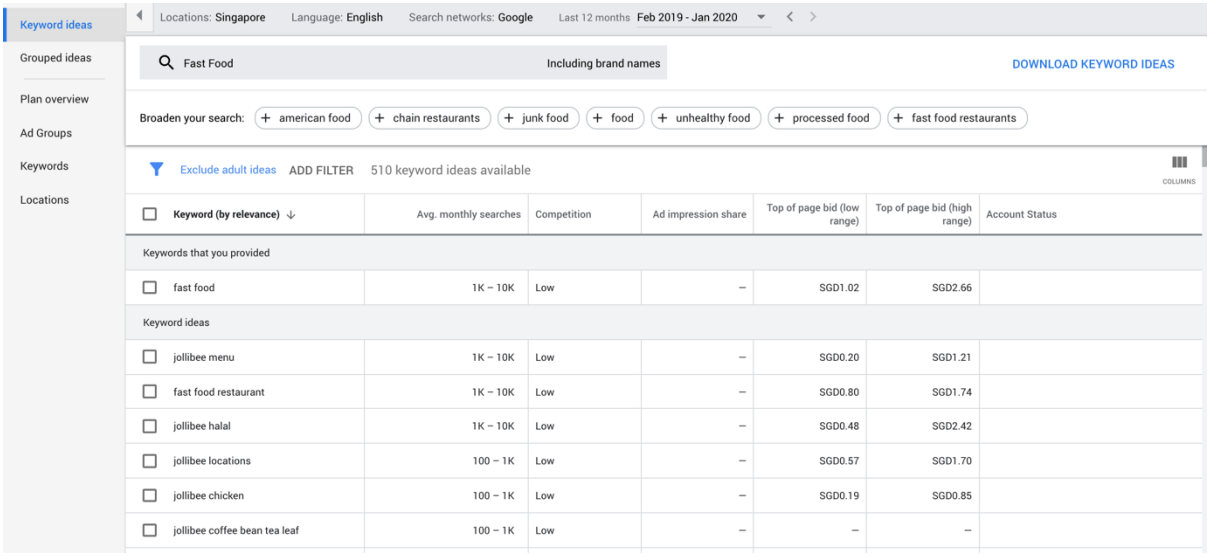
For example, Facebook itself has its **“Audience Insights” dashboard** (Business Manager -> Audience Insights -> Page Likes) that helps in figuring out which pages your leads are visiting (e.g. see McDonald’s example on the screenshot below).



The insights suggest that McDonald's followers are also interested in "Italian Restaurant", "Women's Clothes Shop", "Pizza Place", "Dinner", "Ice cream shop", etc. If you are in the Fast Food industry, **try to target your Ads through these long-tail interests** and let me how did it go in the comments!

In Google, we have our favourite **"Keyword Planner" tool** (Google Ads -> Tools & Settings -> Keyword Planner -> Discover New Keywords), where you will be able to find not just many potential good keywords but also topics they belong to and the search statistics.

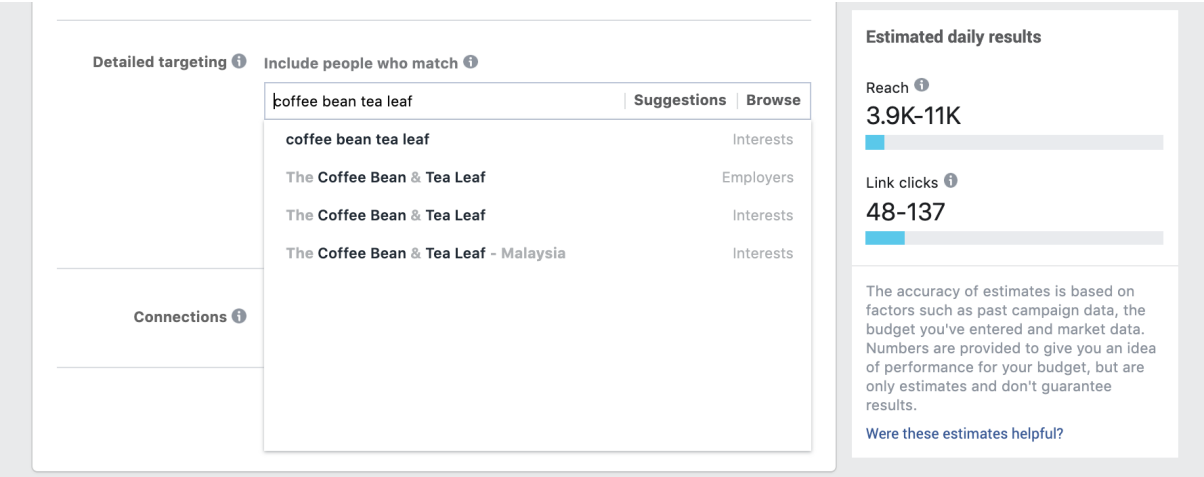
Sort your keywords according to their competition rate and **use the less competitive keywords** for your Google long-tail targeting.



BUT FACEBOOK DOES NOT TELL ME WHICH INTERESTS ARE LESS COMPETITIVE! HOW CAN I CHOOSE THE PROPER LONG-TAIL ON FACEBOOK?

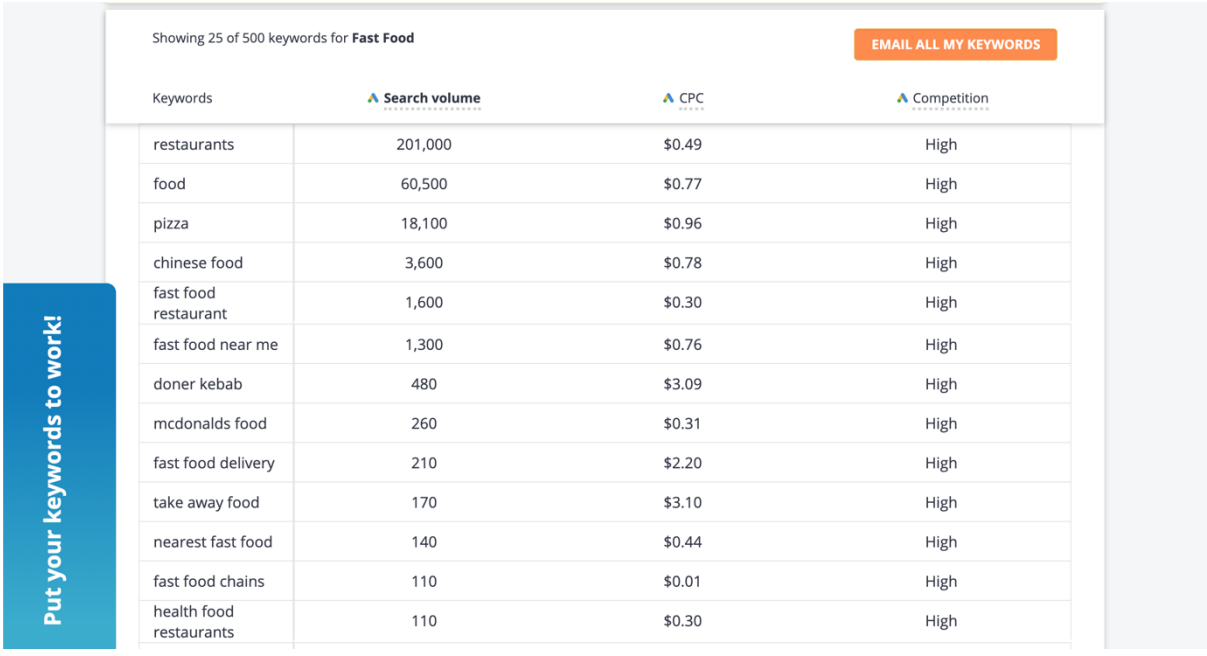
No worries! You can **use Google's keywords to target on Facebook** too!

In both cases the **keywords/interests come from actual users' behaviour**, so we can safely plug Google's keywords into Facebook's targeting and hope for similar competition rates.



There are also freemium or low-price platforms that help you to get more long-tail keywords. For example, Wordstream's Free **"Keyword Search" tool** (Our Software -> Free Tools -> Free Keyword Tool) helps in finding keywords that Google and Facebook search tools are not always able to find.

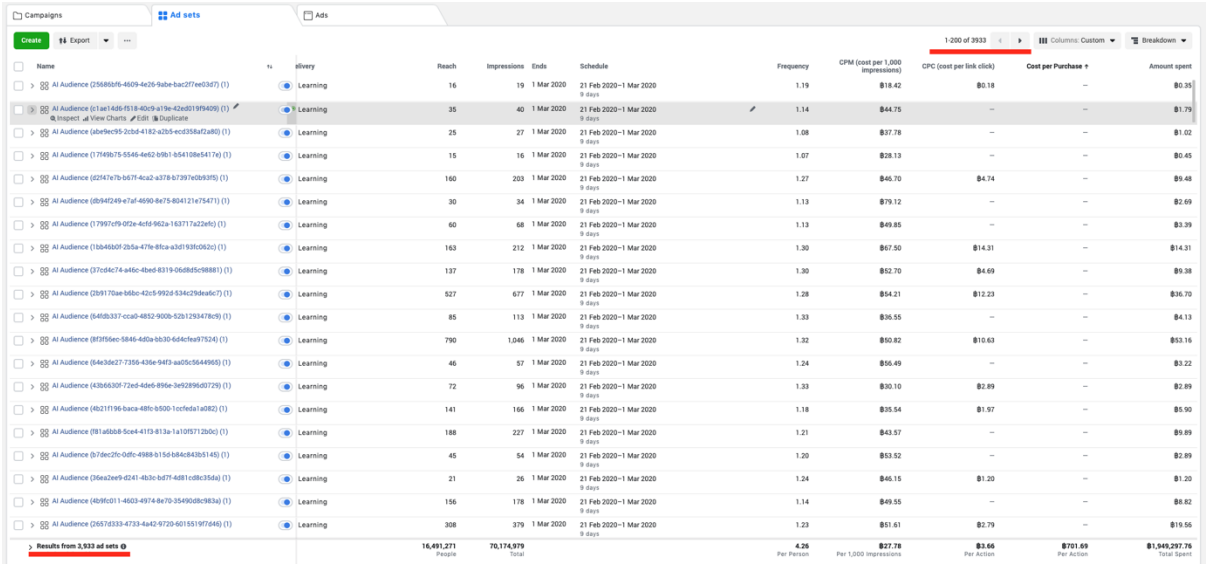
It also helps you to find keywords for a specific industry, like "Food & Drink", which makes your long-tail keywords more targeted and relevant.



Keywords	Search volume	CPC	Competition
restaurants	201,000	$0.49	High
food	60,500	$0.77	High
pizza	18,100	$0.96	High
chinese food	3,600	$0.78	High
fast food restaurant	1,600	$0.30	High
fast food near me	1,300	$0.76	High
doner kebab	480	$3.09	High
mcdonalds food	260	$0.31	High
fast food delivery	210	$2.20	High
take away food	170	$3.10	High
nearest fast food	140	$0.44	High
fast food chains	110	$0.01	High
health food restaurants	110	$0.30	High

Finally, there are more professional platforms, like SoMin.ai, that not just discover thousands of long-tail keywords and interests for you, but also **execute your campaigns automatically via AI,** which saves your time and budgets substantially.

These platforms, basically, just **repeat the same procedures as Google and Facebook AI is doing**, but on your side, so **they will discover the exact long-tail interests you should target for your brand**. Once keywords are found, these platforms will automatically A/B test these keywords with different creative copies to deliver your campaign via thousands of Ad Set combinations on your behalf.



Regardless of your choice of the platform, the **adoption of the long-tail targeting practice** in your daily marketing routine will be able not just to **make your campaigns more efficient** but also would **discover new customer audiences** that will extend your lead base and, ultimately, bring more conversions to your business.

ON EXECUTION

Of course, once you found the long-tail keywords or interests, the **execution becomes crucial for delivering the best**

performance. You have probably heard that the way you run campaigns, constant A/B testing and iteration are essential for reaching your digital marketing goals.

The thing is that in the world of programmatic advertising, we participate in the auction system and the results are dependent on the particular time, region, cultural preferences, etc. Unfortunately, this also means that **our long-tail keywords need to evolve with the industry and at the same pace**. Unlikely the same targeting and strategy that worked for you last year would be as effective now.

While Facebook's Bidding and Audience Funnels are not the main focus of this article, I will just give several directions for you to consider when executing your campaigns:

- **Do not put too many interests into one Facebook Ad Set**, so you can learn which interests perform the best and activate the most successful Ad Sets. While Google provides us with keyword cost and popularity statistics, Facebook has chosen to hide such information so we have to rely on our learnings or the automation software we use.
- Use Facebook's and Google's **post-campaign reporting system** (Ads Manager -> Ads Reporting) to monitor your campaign performance and act timely. Facebook has a useful "Breakdown" feature that will help you to kick-in successful placements and demographics while not wasting your budgets on the wrong targeting.
- Use **Facebook's Automated Rules** to monitor your performance and control your campaign execution status automatically when you are e.g. asleep. Facebook Automated

Rules are especially useful when it comes to switching off non-performing (e.g. too expensive) campaigns automatically when you e.g. experimenting with your Bids and do not have a chance to monitor the campaign 24/7.

CONCLUSION

When it comes to Programmatic Advertisement, our **traditional marketing approaches might not be as effective** as they were before.

At the same time, the approach Princess Olga has adopted 1,000 years ago is still relevant not just on the battlefield, but also in the World of AI and Digital Marketing.

With such a mindset, I wish you all to defeat the fears of the new technology by the knowledge you can use and excel in your digital efforts. Our job is to help you along with this challenging, but truly exciting journey!

CHAPTER II: AI CAN "FIND 'EM ALL"

WHY INFLUENCER MARKETING IS SO HOT?

The past decade has testified the rapid growth of the Internet. One can observe the drastic expansion of social networking services, where millions of users publish and consume information regularly. Built upon such growth, the social media marketing industry has correspondingly developed its capabilities of helping marketers in content personalization and deliverance. However, the growing amount of irrelevant content, such as unrelated advertisements and spam, made social media users more and more reluctant towards perceiving sponsored search results and online advertisements, such as "Google AdWords" and "Facebook Sponsored Ads".

To mitigate such customer scepticism, marketers often leverage human-centric content delivery channels, where Influencer Marketing clearly dominates over other marketing strategies. Indeed, it has been shown that **92% of consumers are more likely to trust brands that advertise via influencer channels** rather than those who have adopted conventional marketing strategies. Unfortunately, the limited availability of influencer search platforms and the absence of audience-based and content-based influencer matching technology, result in tremendous amounts of manual work performed, the corresponding high marketing agency service costs and low efficiency of the conducted marketing campaigns.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO MARKETERS?

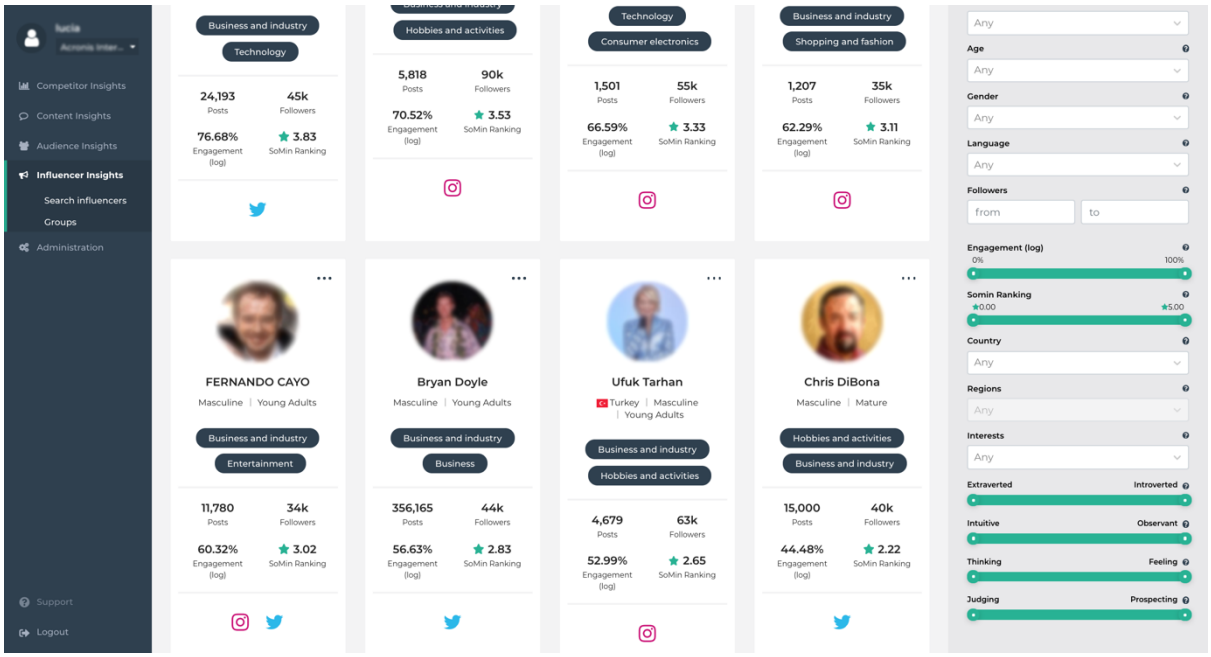
Using the SoMin.ai web portal, marketers will be able to specify textual and image queries. The influencer matching response will

be given in a form of a ranked list of top-matching influencers, where each influencer will be listed together with a brief description of his/her audience and the corresponding audience and content relevance score. By selecting influencer from the list, users will be routed to the "Influencer Details" dashboard (e.g. see an example of @modgam above) that visualizes influencer's audience and recently-posted content in terms of Hot Topics, Named Entities, Behavioural Attributes, Image Concepts, and Sentiments of their audience. Finally, SoMin users will be able to specify various filters for tailoring Social Influencer matching engines for their specific needs. For example, the platform could be set up to output only those influencers who are active in Singapore, do not represent any brand at the moment, and did not advertise for competitive brands in the past.

DOES IT WORK?

To evaluate the performance of our influencer recommendation engine, we have conducted a case study on real-life data collected for brands operating in the restaurant industry. We have chosen the top 20 messages posted by one of the brands on their Twitter timeline as a test query for the platform. Three independent annotators (professional marketers) were asked to annotate the recommendation results obtained for the 2 queries to the platform as "relevant" or "non-relevant". "Relevance" was defined as the similarity of the content in the query and the recent influencer-posted content as well as the potential match of the chosen Brand's customer segment (i.e. in our case, ``Masculine, Mature, Average Income, Non-Logical, Principal, Idealists") to the Influencer's follower audience. To gain an insight into the quality of SoMin Influencer Recommendation, we used the "Precision at K" (P@K) metric, which is the portion of relevant documents among the top K recommended documents.

The evaluation was done for different values of K and suggests that the Recommender System effectively solves the problem of Influencer Recommendation based on customer audience and intended marketing content simultaneously. We also found that the highest performance was achieved for K = 5, while for the case of K = 10, the recommendation quality is comparably lower. The finding can be explained by the relevance of the content in the performed queries: some query messages (e.g. bottles with liqueurs posted on the Twitter wall) were not directly related to the brand's market domain (i.e. Steaks and Dining), which, in turn, might bring less relevant recommendation results at the tail of the recommendation list (e.g. Alcohol Drinks-related Social Media Influencers). Overall, we would like to highlight the **high recommendation quality achieved for all the examined values of K**, which allows for the successful use of the SoMin platform for the preparation and execution of the real-world influencer marketing campaigns.



WHAT ELSE IS POSSIBLE?

On early Spring 2020, Puma has created a virtual influencer to represent the South East Asia region as part of the promotion of its new Future Rider sneakers.

The virtual influencer, named @mayaaa.gram was created using SoMin.ai platform that has mapped millions of faces in SEA from multiple online sources including a user-generated process via Instagram.

SoMin.ai technology has generated over 100 face versions by applying Neural Generative Neural Networks into SEA's Instagram content, the first building block to creating a virtual person. Subsequently, multiple 3D versioning techniques were used to construct an entity that could be used across a wide range of mediums. Her personality evolves with time as her interests are taken from social listening and AI curation of the content generated by her interactions.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, our main aim was to help marketers find, understand their audience and engage the most relevant social media micro-influencers on a large scale. Experimental results demonstrated that SoMin is capable to achieve the goal by showing excellent recommendation performance when matching influencers in terms of both their posted content and follower audiences. We have also shown an example of the World's first AI-generated virtual influencer that, being a brand-owned asset, could be a great investment into brand's overall image and marketing strategy.

For marketers, such technology is one more step towards the full understanding of the true potential that opens when they apply AI to their daily marketing routines. To us, it is one of those moments when you understand that you are crafting the future right here right now.

FOR BUSINESS ENQUIRIES,
CONTACT US: SASHA@SOMIN.AI