



Reaching the Unassisted – Digital Outreach to Non-TANF Prospects

Evaluation of Learning Cycle 1

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OVERVIEW

The Digital Marketing grant program, sponsored by the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families, is a 24-month demonstration project with the goal of researching how digital marketing may help the child support program more effectively reach and serve families. In September 2018, OCSE awarded funds to 14 child support agencies to test digital marketing approaches and partnerships to reach parents that could benefit from child support services, and create or improve two-way digital communication and engagement with parents.

This report outlines the social media advertising/digital advertising results and observations for Learning Cycle 1 of the campaign developed in support of the Digital Marketing Grant awarded to the California Department of Child Support Services. The advertising period for Learning Cycle 1 ran for eight (8) weeks from Monday, August 19 through Sunday, October 13, 2019.

The goal of Learning Cycle 1 was to raise awareness of child support services among single parents unlikely to be referred by Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Previous market research, conducted in 2017, revealed a broad lack of awareness of the child support program and its services among all populations, with a corresponding dearth of media coverage or accurate messaging by or about the program both statewide and nationwide, contributing to steadily declining caseloads as TANF utilization decreases. This initial intervention was intended to observe social media platform usage among our target audience in both English and Spanish and determine effective channels for messaging, test various design options for their ability to attract attention and engagement, and test various messages for their relevance to the audience as determined by subsequent engagement. All the ads were created with an embedded link to assist with the outcome measurements described below.

The target audience was defined as non-TANF prospects who are single parents, both male and female, aged between 18 and 40, with minor children in the household in the California counties of Del Norte, Imperial, and Merced. These counties were selected by comparing counties with low percentages of "never assisted" cases in their caseload per federal fiscal year 2017 performance data with the "single parent" population of those counties as reported in the U.S. Census Bureau's 2016 American Community Survey. This identified counties that contained a significant pool of families who might need child support services who would not be referred by TANF. Then counties were cross-referenced, by percent of the population between ages 18-40, as households likely to have minor children and highly likely to be heavy consumers of digital media, and by race/ethnicity to identify counties with unique racial or ethnic demographics – for example, Del Norte County contains the highest percentage of Native Americans in California. The final selections considered geographic placement within the state to deliver results applicable to both urban and rural residents, in mountainous, coastal and agricultural areas, and with both low and high availability of traditional media sources compared to digital channels. Outcomes were measured by impressions, engagement, website metrics, case openings and call center data. Unique pages on the California Child Support website were created and made "non-searchable",

meaning that any visits to the pages were attributable only to the links embedded in the ads. More specifically, we tracked how many times the ads were seen, whether they were “clicked” on by the target or “shared” by the target, meaning the target reposted the ad on their own social media account or sent the ad to others. We tracked whether targets visited the website via the ads and if they did, how long they spent there and where they went next. Concurrently, non-TANF case openings in the participating three counties were tracked and compared to a previously established three-year baseline, and calls to both call centers and directly to offices were tracked and also compared to a similar baseline. In addition, front line staff in the three county offices inquired about the source of information that motivated each walk-in customer to seek assistance.

A WORD ABOUT DIGITAL ADVERTISING

Digital advertising uses specialized computer systems and programs and vast databases of information gathered online about computer and mobile phone users’ behavior, locations, interests, and preferences. This data does not usually include personally identifying information such as name, address, or phone number. Most people have heard of cookies which are bits of programmed text or code that remain in internet browsing logs after a person visits a website. These bits of information continue to track the person’s online habits and generate data. This text/code is also used to improve the user’s internet experience as a whole. Mobile apps and browser extensions also track activity.

Overall, people using the Internet with any device to shop, read, access news, use social media, and watch videos, movies, or television, create data profiles that allow advertisers to target people as male or female, older or younger, employed or unemployed, married or single, with or without kids in the home, or interested various activities (e.g., sports, sewing, cooking, etc.). Taken together, these factors allow advertisers to make highly informed speculations about what services and products match a person’s needs and interests and to send, or serve, them ads. Consumers may see this as helpful or as overly personal and intrusive. Laws are being put in place regarding website and business obligations to advise consumers of such tracking and to allow consumers to inquire about and receive feedback regarding the information a company they have interacted with may hold.

LEARNING CYCLE 1 PLAN

Before we could begin to evaluate any advertising, we needed to establish baseline metrics for call center activity, case openings, and website traffic. Queries of the statewide Child Support Enforcement case management database (CSE) were established to track non-IV-D case openings monthly by county beginning in January 2016, and a spreadsheet was built to track the results. Similarly, monthly call center reports were reviewed going back to 2016, tracking calls offered by county, and these results added to the spreadsheet. The baseline spreadsheet is available as Appendix 1.

Google Analytics was implemented to create an overview of website traffic beginning in January of 2018.¹ Even so, we immediately realized our website was optimized for our own usage, but not the public’s. Landing pages were grouped by case role (CP and NCP), so that people seeking information who did not have a case did not know how to proceed. There was a large section with information for local child support agency personnel that was not relevant to the public, and traffic patterns indicated that a large portion of our website visitation was our own staff using the site as an archive for quick

¹ Prior to the commencement of grant activities in September 2018, analytics had not been enabled for the site and the maximum history available was only six months.

reference. The site was also not mobile-responsive and could not be viewed easily from a tablet or smartphone. With market research indicating that over 52% of people worldwide access the Internet ONLY from their smartphones,² a mobile responsive site was no longer optional, but mandatory. Google Analytics from the old website between January and December 2018 are available as Appendix 2.

Between February and May 2019, a completely new, mobile-responsive website was created. At the same time, California's online customer service platform, Customer Connect, was overhauled, adding customer-requested features and mobile-responsive design. Both the website and Customer Connect launched on May 20, 2020, and the old website (hidden but still hosting links to internal applications that took time to migrate) was permanently retired as of December 2019. Google Analytics from the old website with filters in place from February 8, 2019 through May 19, 2019 are available as Appendix 3.

The new website not only has Google Analytics fully operational, but the team researched all Internet Protocol (IP) addresses for California Child Support Services state headquarters and all local child support offices and placed a filter to block traffic from these addresses. Our website analytics after February 8, 2019, when the filter was placed, reflect traffic ONLY from customers, potential customers, external stakeholders and the public, and no longer include the activities of child support staff. Google Analytics from the new website with filters in place from May 20, 2019 through August 19, 2020 (prior to Learning Cycle 1) are available as Appendix 4.

LEARNING CYCLE 1 ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

Per the data referenced previously on county demographics and ad server data, single parents were targeted in each of the selected county's geographic area as defined by zip codes (geo-targeting) so we served our ads to single parents on computers/mobile devices within our defined geographic areas.

For this effort, our ad designs included motion graphic banners (rotating web banners) and static banners. Please see Appendix 5 for creative examples and a list of websites where our ads were served and received the most frequent responses (click-throughs).

Our ads were developed and placed as follows:

- **DISPLAY ADVERTISING:** we placed our ads on websites that are appealing to and frequently used by single parents. These included local news sites, parenting blogs and sites, websites related to divorce law, family court/law, legal separation, and paternity testing, among others.
- **KEYWORD SEARCH ADVERTISING:** keywords were purchased on the top search engines (e.g., Google, Yahoo!, MSN, and Bing). When someone in our target area conducted a search using our keywords, they saw an ad at the top of their results. Keyword prioritization was based on a list of search terms connected by process or association with child support program offerings, for example "child support," "child care," "divorce," or "single parenting." A search optimization tool generated recommendations for all similar/relevant renditions of these keywords and related phrases. These words were then manually added to our list to enhance organic search results. See Appendix 6 for Top Performing Keywords.

² www.hostingtribunal.com/blog/mobile-percentage-of-traffic/

- **SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING:** we placed ads on Facebook and Instagram to test how our target responded to child support messages received on social media. See Appendix 7 for Social Media ad design examples.
- **RE-TARGETING:** re-targeting was used across all types of advertising (display, search, and social) which means we re-marketed to people who were shown an ad but did not click-through to our web landing pages. An example of re-targeting is when a person looks at a certain running shoe on a website, but does not make a purchase, and later, the person sees an ad for that shoe on a completely unrelated website.

Further, our budget was split between desktop and mobile advertising.

- **DESKTOP:** desktop advertising means just that – paying for an ad to be delivered to a person while they are using a laptop or desktop computer as opposed to a mobile device.
- **MOBILE:** mobile advertising is inclusive of iPhone, iPad, tablets, and Android platforms. Mobile and Mobile Search were both included in the advertising budget, providing the opportunity to reach our targets on a phone or tablet.

Desktop advertising and mobile advertising are valuable for different reasons. People working on a computer are more likely to make a purchase or sign-up for something and usually spend more time on any given website. However, mobile internet usage is growing very rapidly and in California among those under 40 has already surpassed desktop usage. Thus, the budget was split between desktop and mobile.

LEARNING CYCLE 1 EVALUATION & RESULTS

At the outset, we want to report that we encountered two issues with gathering data for this report:

- The display advertising campaign, outlined above, was infiltrated by “bots” resulting in false click-throughs. Website traffic reports showed extensive click-throughs originating from computers outside of the U.S. in countries known for malicious online activities. We were not targeting people from outside the three designated counties, thus these click-throughs were deemed false. We estimated a 30% inflation in overall traffic and filtered the data as best we could.
- Merced Facebook account privileges had to be reset after the social media advertising began and the data for the first few weeks was not accessible. This report is estimating Merced County Facebook data based on Imperial County Facebook data, but factors in differences of population size and language preference between the two. Merced is compared to Imperial out of necessity, since Del Norte is too small for comparison and cannot be aligned in any way. The fact remains that in this intervention, Merced County data is estimated.

Actions have been/will be taken to address these issues in Learning Cycle 2, which is discussed later in this report.

Following are the delivery results for the eight-week campaign for Learning Cycle 1 from August 19 through October 13, 2019:

IMPRESSIONS

Impressions simply indicate the number of times an ad appears on a user’s screen. Impressions are not action-based and are merely defined by a user potentially seeing the advertisement, which makes this the measurement of increasing brand awareness. It indicates the number of times the ad was SEEN by users, whether or not they clicked or otherwise interacted with the ad. By calculating impressions, we hoped to understand whether there was a high interest in the topic of Child Support. We used impressions as a measure of success to ensure that our digital ad campaign was generating awareness through users in the targeted counties.

- The total impressions *estimated* across all platforms and ads were 4,234,263
 - Estimated impressions are based on the value of the budget when advertising is ordered. The estimate is provided by the advertiser. The ad budget for Learning Cycle 1 was \$32,800 gross.
- The actual impressions *delivered* across all ad platforms for all ads were 4,490,061
- The impressions delivered exceeded the estimated impressions by 255,798, indicating a high degree of consumer interest in the topic. Estimated impressions are established by known data about site users and the number of times an ad is shown. For results to exceed estimates, users must have changed their usual activity on the site (more visits, more searching) which increases impressions, since the number of times the ad was shown did not change.³

PLATFORM EVALUATION & CLICK-THROUGH RATE

The advertising platforms or channels we used to reach our targets were Keyword Search, Display, and Social Media. As shown in Table 1, keyword search shows the highest click-through rate. Click-Through Rate (CTR) is a percentage measurement of how many times a person “clicks through” an ad to access a website compared to the number of times the ad was served or shown (impressions). CTR is a percentage measurement per 1,000 impressions.

Table 1. Platform Evaluation and Click-through Rate

Medium*	Impressions Ordered	Impressions Actual	All Clicks	Click-through Rate (CTR)	Link Clicks	Click - through Rate (CTR)
Search	N/A	33,156	1,840	5.55%	N/A	N/A
Display	3,469,641	3,751,039	10,384	0.28%	N/A	N/A
Social**	N/A	987,264	16,807	1.70%	8,695	0.88%

*Desktop and mobile advertising numbers are combined in this chart for keyword search, display and social media.

**On social media, people can click on the visual ad OR a link provided in the text.

A high click-through rate for Keyword Search is not surprising since the team’s hypothesis is that people who are seeking child support information are likely to respond to an ad about child support when it is presented. Google search results, by far the largest search engine utilized online, consistently delivers the California Child Support Services website at the top of any search for “child support” in California without any advertising; thus, we already “own” the category. However, keyword advertising is still

³ Over-delivery is common with digital advertising campaigns to ensure impression estimates are met.

valuable and allows us to target people searching terms such as “divorce” and “separation” which do not generate the state child support website at the top of the list.

Ads on Social Media were also strong performers with an average 1.70% where the industry standard CTR is .4% to .6%. The average CTR for our traditional display advertising (banner ads) was .28%, which is strong since the industry standard is .10%. Regarding keyword search, the industry standard for customer services is 6% so a CTR of 5.55% is good.

While these data do not mean that people contacted their local agency or opened a child support case, it indicates that we accurately targeted individuals for whom child support is relevant and our ads compelled a fair number of the target population to click for more information.

CREATIVE & MESSAGE EVALUATION

One of the goals of Learning Cycle 1 was to evaluate the effectiveness of various creative factors – ad designs, visuals, and messaging.

Three different visuals and three different messages were combined for a total number of nine ads for each county in each language (nine ads in English and nine ads in Spanish). As an example, please see the two figures below for Merced County followed by an evaluation of overall ad design and messaging.

Figure 1. English Ads/Creative – 9 versions for each county*

<p>Photo Visual/Paperwork Message</p>	<p>Swoosh Visual/Paperwork Message</p>	<p>Text Visual/Paperwork Message</p>
<p>Photo Visual/Medical Message</p>	<p>Swoosh Visual/Medical Message</p>	<p>Text Visual/Medical Message</p>
<p>Photo Visual/Court Message</p>	<p>Swoosh Visual/Court Message</p>	<p>Text Visual/Court Message</p>

*Merced County used as example

Figure 2. Spanish Ads/Creative – 9 versions for each county*

<p>Photo Visual/Paperwork Message</p>	<p>Swoosh Visual/Paperwork Message</p>	<p>Text Visual/Paperwork Message</p>
<p>Photo Visual/Medical Message</p>	<p>Swoosh Visual/Medical Message</p>	<p>Text Visual/Medical Message</p>
<p>Photo Visual/Court Message</p>	<p>Swoosh Visual/Court Message</p>	<p>Text Visual/Court Message</p>

*Merced County used as example

CREATIVE

Three different visuals as shown above were designed as follows:

- PHOTO: a photo background of an iconic/recognizable county location with text over the photo; this is the version that was adapted for social media using the established color elements
- SWOOSH: a motion graphic with a moving “swoosh” cutting across the ad in a contrasting color
- TEXT: a motion graphic depiction of a text conversation with animated text bubbles filling the screen

Analysis of all the ad designs shows a mixed bag; one version did not stand out among the three. There were some regional preferences, but all three versions performed well in one county or another. See Appendix 8, Top Creative Performers by County, for visuals of top performing creative.

ENGLISH		Del Norte	Merced	Imperial
Photo Creative	Paperwork	25.49%	41.32%	14.21%
	Court	2.46%	9.21%	20.54%
	Medical	68.20%	44.00%	38.06%
Swoosh Creative	Paperwork	6.29%	2.29%	3.35%
	Court	1.34%	54.61%	2.75%
	Medical	1.70%	75.34%	7.27%
Text Creative	Paperwork	23.00%	3.54%	42.40%
	Court	52.20%	6.53%	24.12%
	Medical	0.38%	2.13%	4.41%

SPANISH		Del Norte	Merced	Imperial
Photo Creative	Paperwork	31.28%	13.95%	29.13%
	Court	4.21%	23.12%	5.81%
	Medical	4.78%	36.81%	5.01%
Swoosh Creative	Paperwork	4.02%	16.32%	5.59%
	Court	32.41%	11.33%	3.96%
	Medical	26.62%	16.11%	45.13%
Text Creative	Paperwork	13.67%	17.32%	2.39%
	Court	7.10%	15.02%	49.17%
	Medical	17.36%	5.18%	12.54%

The Photo and Swoosh ads performed the strongest in Del Norte and Merced counties by a fair margin in English and to a lesser extent in Spanish. In Del Norte, the Photo version likely performed well because the photo was a highly recognizable, familiar location in the area. All photos selected were local and recognizable within each geographic area in an effort to be personal and familiar. The Text version clearly stood out in Imperial County although Photo and Swoosh also performed well.

In this case, the lack of a visual stand out is interesting, because, per the next section of this report, there were message preferences.

MESSAGES

As indicated previously in the ad designs for Merced County, we evaluated three messages across the visuals. The messages we decided to evaluate were based on the top searches people conducted on the state child support website. The three messages developed centered on these topics:

- PAPERWORK: we can help you with child support paperwork
- COURT: we can help you avoid going to court
- MEDICAL: we can help you get a medical support order

Analysis of the messages across all creative executions, all counties and both languages shows the best overall engagement and strongest click through rates for the Paperwork message.

It's important to note here that our ad messages were not all released at the start of the advertising campaign due to the large number of digital files that needed to be developed (three visuals with three messages in various sizes each in two languages for three counties). We prioritized ad file creation by message with the Paperwork message being first. The Paperwork message ran exclusively for two weeks in each county. In the third week we added the Court message and rotated the two messages at 40% Paperwork and 60% Court; we added the Medical message in the fourth week and all three messages ran in rotation at 30% Paperwork, 35% Court, and 35% Medical. We controlled the rotation to ensure all the messages were being circulated, but we allowed optimization where the ad computers "optimize" and serve the creative execution and/or message that attracts the most engagement (click-throughs).

Analysis of the messages across all creative executions, all counties, and both languages reveals a preference by language and county.

English

- Del Norte – the Court message had the highest CTR at 43.09%
- Merced – the Court message had the highest CTR at 48.81%
- Imperial – the Paperwork message had the highest CTR at 59.19%

Spanish

- Del Norte – the Paperwork message had the highest CTR at 53.33%
- Merced – the Court message had the highest CTR at 45.13%
- Imperial – the Paperwork message had the highest CTR at 57.15%

The Court message garnered the most interest in English, which is interesting given that we know that the Paperwork message ran for the longest period of time over the full advertising period of eight weeks. And, while the Paperwork message ran for the longest period of time and earned the most interest in Spanish, it was the top message in Imperial county in both languages and it earned the highest CTR overall at more than 50%.

Please see Appendix 9, Message by County, for a chart depicting the CTR for each message by county.

WEBSITES & LANDING PAGE EVALUATION (GOOGLE ANALYTICS)

Recall from our earlier discussion that we wanted to reach single parents between the ages of 18-40 in our selected geographic areas, and our goal was to learn which messages and visuals might be preferred. Based on this information, the advertising computer systems identified popular web channels and websites likely to be visited by single parents and distributed the ads. As previously mentioned, at the start of the campaign, the ad computer sorts and delivers the ads in an effort to optimize and determine preference. The same test is used for various selected websites and the computer dynamically prioritizes and learns which ads and which websites earn the most responses (click-throughs). Over time, websites that receive more responses are served more ads. The computer system continues to test variations over the course of the advertising time frame, but eventually finds an optimized balance and delivers the “best” ad on any given website based on what the system has learned over time.

WEBSITES

During Learning Cycle 1, we served a wide array of ads (nine ads in each language) on varied websites to a relatively generic target (single parents, 18-40, in our geographic areas). As mentioned in the overview section, unique landing pages were developed in English and Spanish for each county that could only be accessed from the relevant advertising links. Alternately stated, people could only arrive at our landing pages from an ad or by directly typing the URL. The URL was not provided or stated anywhere, nor were the pages searchable from within the site. This was done intentionally to accurately estimate the volume of website traffic directly attributable to our ads. Learning Cycle 1 will provide baseline data for comparison of later efforts.

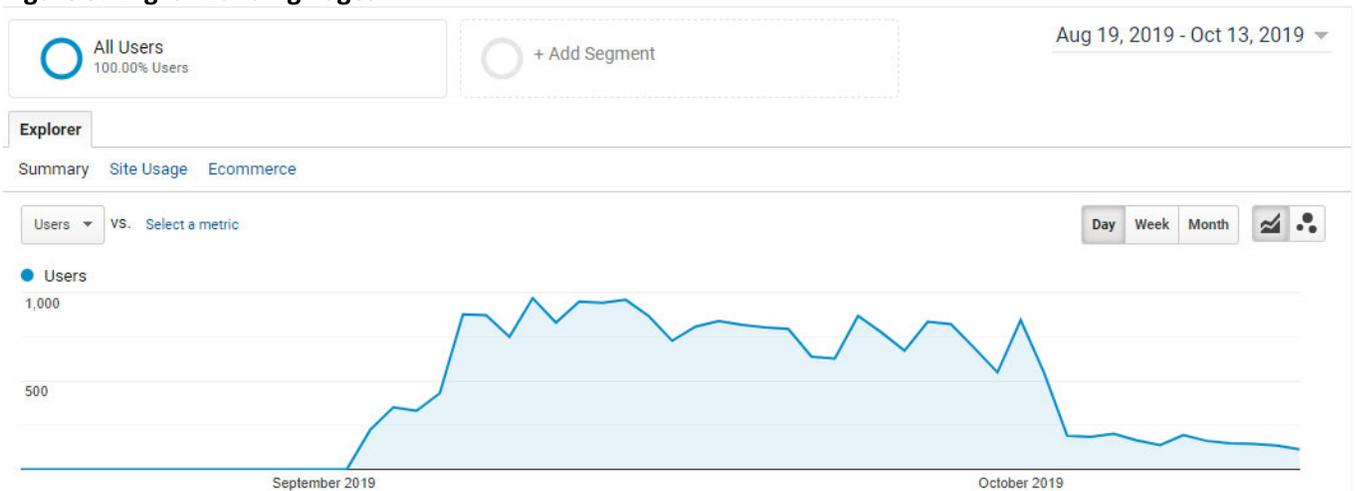
We learned two things in widely serving our ads:

1. Mothers of very young children primarily responded to our ads (see the list of top websites in Appendix 10). The top sites include several focused on and oriented to female parents of infants to children age 5 including SheKnows, WhatToExpect, Parenting, and TheBump.
2. While our list includes several top sites that are female-oriented, the most popular sites were Yahoo Properties including Y-mail, Good Morning America, and Y-Sports, and we can speculate that Y-Sports is male-oriented. Other popular sites were Google properties including G-mail and YouTube; males are estimated to make up 62% of YouTube viewership.⁴ The fact that Y-Sports and YouTube are on the list of top websites indicates that we likely reached and engaged a male audience as well and that these channels may provide a productive avenue for engaging males in future interventions.

From August 19 through October 13, the daily site user level to the English pages ranged between 222 and 967 with visitation spikes on Tuesday. For the Spanish landing pages, during the same timeframe, the daily site user level ranged between 267 and 1,737 with visitation spikes also taking place on Tuesday. The team hypothesizes that Tuesday (and mid-week in general) is a time when a parent may focus on family and home-related financial topics since many people, parents or not, use Monday to get started on the work week and Friday to prepare for the weekend. Tuesday may be a day used to take care of "housekeeping" items such as banking, grocery shopping, and child support case issues. If parents have weekends off, that time may likely be reserved for fun activities with the children, and our website traffic baselines indicate much lower traffic on weekends at all times, not just during this intervention.

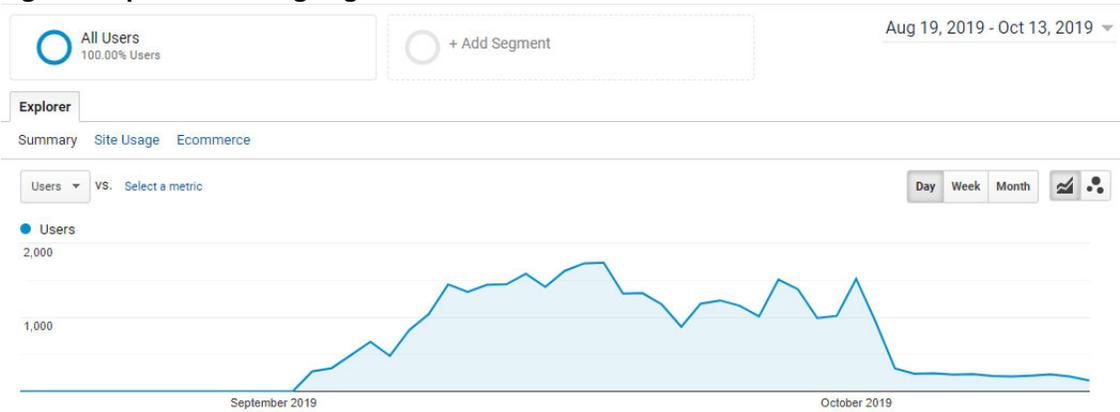
The figures that follow show these weekly spikes. The activity patterns are remarkably similar between the English and Spanish web pages and show when advertising levels were slightly higher as well as the sharp decline when advertising stopped. The continued low level of activity after the end of the ad campaign indicates that people must have bookmarked the site because the URL was only accessible through an ad and was not advertised or findable anywhere else.

Figure 3. English Landing Pages



⁴ <https://www.omnicoreagency.com/youtube-statistics/>

Figure 4. Spanish Landing Pages



Landing Page Highlights

The baseline levels of traffic established in Learning Cycle 1 are outlined below:

- August 19 – October 13: 28,754 sessions for English pages and 45,813 sessions for Spanish pages.
 - Spanish landing pages received 59% more traffic than the English landing pages, possibly indicating a strong interest among Spanish speaking targets.
 - Another reason for the significant increase in sessions for the Spanish pages is the infiltration of bots, as previously discussed. Our analysis showed that the bots primarily infiltrated our Spanish landing pages, spiking the number of sessions recorded.
- 90.51% bounce rate for English pages and 84.92% bounce rate for Spanish pages.⁵
 - YouTube was the second most clicked link (to view educational videos).
 - LinkedIn was the third highest outbound link clicked.
 - Merced, Imperial, and Del Norte county-specific links follow in that order, which directly corresponds to the variance in county population size.
- Average time spent on English pages was 27 seconds and 39 seconds for Spanish pages.
 - People spent 44% more time on Spanish landing pages compared to the English landing pages. Based on our evaluation, this indicates that the Spanish speaking audience is very interested in the information and were more inclined to spend more time interacting with the pages. Another possibility is that the Spanish speaking audience has not received as detailed information and communication regarding Child Support Services in-language, so they spent more time closely assessing the trustworthiness and validity of the information. However, we can't discount the possibility that the extended length of time spent on the Spanish landing pages could be associated with the bots that infiltrated the site. We will continue to evaluate length of time spent on all landing pages moving forward to further develop our analysis.

⁵ Bounce rate refers to the rate at which a website visitor clicks away from the landing page. A high bounce rate is generally seen as a bad sign, but in our case, the landing pages purposely provided numerous links to other areas of the website for people to learn more, so a high bounce rate is not necessarily bad. Links on a webpage can be coded to record how many times they are clicked. Coding links on the landing pages will be implemented in Learning Cycle 2 in order to help us determine how often.

- 10% of all English page visitors were recurring and 6% of all Spanish page visitors were recurring.
- Number of new users for English pages were 15,130 and 23,421 for Spanish pages

Please see Appendix 11 for analytics of outbound links from the landing pages.

For additional metrics, we tracked call center data and case opening data for the grant counties during the intervention period and compared them to a three-year baseline previously established for reference. Appendix 12 shows a continuing overall decline in call center contacts and case openings, continuing the national trend that informed the funding of this grant. Please note that the small upticks in both call center numbers and case openings in October cannot be attributed to intervention activities as the baseline has established an annual increase in October activity in both data sets due to levels of divorce filings in the state of California.

LEARNING CYCLE 1 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, the campaign was successful in reaching single parents and/or people likely in need of child support services as evidenced by the volume of traffic to our hidden landing pages. Interest was robust for this challenging topic. As discussed previously, all of the creative executions performed well with no one particular visual standing above the other. We anticipated that one of the creative executions might rise to the top across the counties, but this did not happen. Each performed well relative to one another and by industry standards.

The Court message earned the most interest (click-throughs) in English; the Paperwork message earned the most interest in Spanish and all around in Imperial County, which shares a border with Mexico. We can conclude that among Spanish speaking parents, assistance with paperwork is a helpful offer and a good place to start a conversation about child support.

Additional analysis of all the ad sizes shows the most engagement and strongest CTR on mobile ads. Overall, the mobile ad size 300 pixels x 50 pixels earned the highest CTR of 74%. This is not surprising with the prevalence of mobile devices and indicates that we should think “mobile first” in all creative executions for Learning Cycle 2. Also, in evaluating click-through rates, Keyword Search was the strongest platform, followed by Social Media, and then Display advertising. While these CTRs must be considered relative to industry standards within each platform (they can’t be compared to one another), future budget should consider these baseline performance levels in accordance with goals, i.e. perhaps social media should take priority over display, but then we need to evaluate if this would be cost-efficient.

In evaluating the traffic on the web landing pages, we were not surprised to see the top outbound links were to videos on informational topics. People commonly seek information online in video format. This is because video quality on the internet has improved in recent years and is “one of the most effective elements in a digital marketing strategy...and more popular than any other type of content out there.”⁶

⁶ <https://www.biteable.com/blog/tips/video-marketing-statistics/>

We were surprised to see the third most popular outbound link was LinkedIn. We have four hypotheses as to why:

1. Accidental Clicks - the LinkedIn icon is prominently at the top of the webpage at the end of the list of social media icons and may get clicked accidentally, especially on a mobile device, where the LinkedIn icon may be the first place users touch in order to scroll through the page.
2. Website Validity - the web landing pages were designed to look like the ads and not be governmental/official looking, to appear user-friendly. Perhaps people were seeking validation of the legitimacy of the advertising/webpage.
3. Child Support Professional – it is possible that people think that LinkedIn could be a reliable way to connect with someone who can help them, much like WebMD offers a photo and profile of a doctor to increase the appeal to a potential patient.
4. Parent Employment – people considering a child support case may want to search for the other parent to see if the person is employed and can be tracked.

For Learning Cycle 2, we propose making several adjustments to better understand the role of LinkedIn as related to Child Support Services.

1. Reduce the Chance of Accidental Clicks – we propose removing the social media icons/links from the top of the page. They will remain in the footer. This will eliminate accidental clicks since users will need to scroll all the way to the bottom of the page and actively seek out the social media icons.
2. Address Website Validity – to communicate legitimacy of the advertising/webpage, we will add a small county logo or other official type treatment more prominently on the webpage in order to balance being official with being friendly.
3. Support Finding a Child Support Professional – on the LinkedIn page, we will place an ad asking people if they are seeking a child support professional and provide a link to the office locator. We will evaluate how much response this prompt gets.
4. Parent Employment – if people do not respond to our help with finding a child support professional on the LinkedIn page, it may indicate that they are seeking information about the other parent.

Further, based on the knowledge that the top action taken on the web landing pages was to seek more information in video format, and data widely available on the growing precedence of video over static information delivery across all channels, we are developing Learning Cycle 2 advertising around providing information in video format.

Historically, Child Support Services outreach has primarily targeted parents receiving support (in California, 85% females) but we see an opportunity to broaden our outreach to men, identified by our top website performers of Yahoo and Google properties, which include sports-aligned sites. We hypothesize that these are primarily sought after by male audiences. We will evaluate the success of this tactic based on the addition of any sports-aligned websites to our top performers list in Learning Cycle 2.

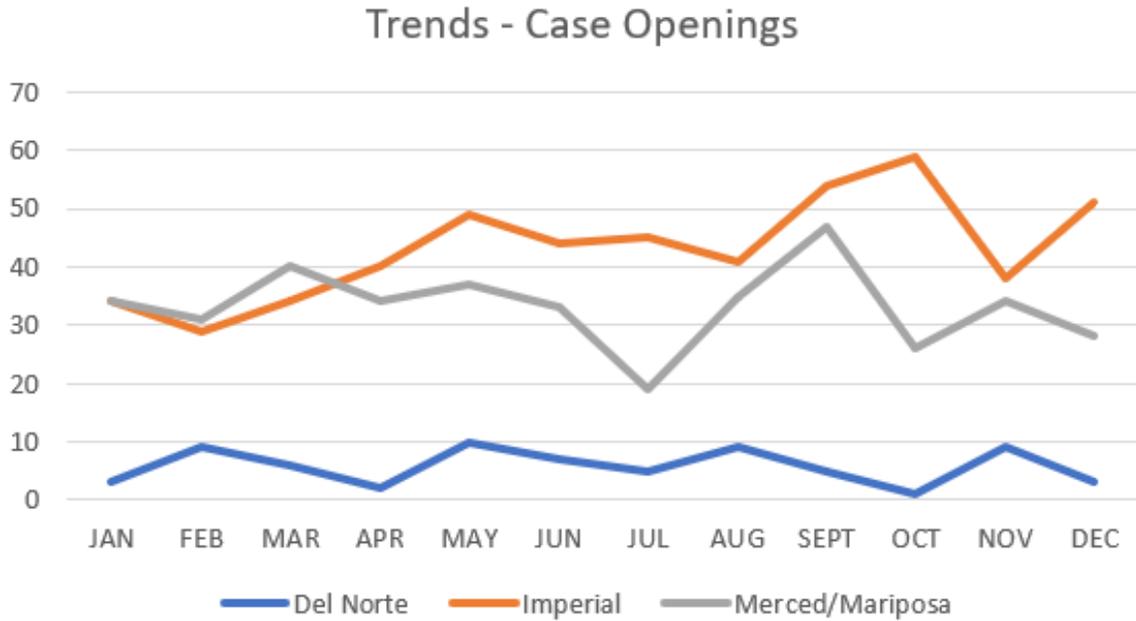
Finally, for Learning Cycle 2, the visual at the top of the web landing pages is going to be smaller so the text content on child support topics is more easily accessed at first glance. We intend to add computer code to the links and action buttons on the landing pages so we can record and track the actions people take when they are on the page. We will also more closely monitor for bot traffic and stop the campaign

if we see a suspicious level of activity from inappropriate sources in order to protect the validity of our data. Regarding the problems we experienced with allowing multiple users access to administrative rights on varied social media accounts, we have set-up a single advertising dashboard (Ad Manager) for access to all counties. Social accounts with individual access information and separate log-ins should be avoided if various entities are to be involved in advertising efforts.

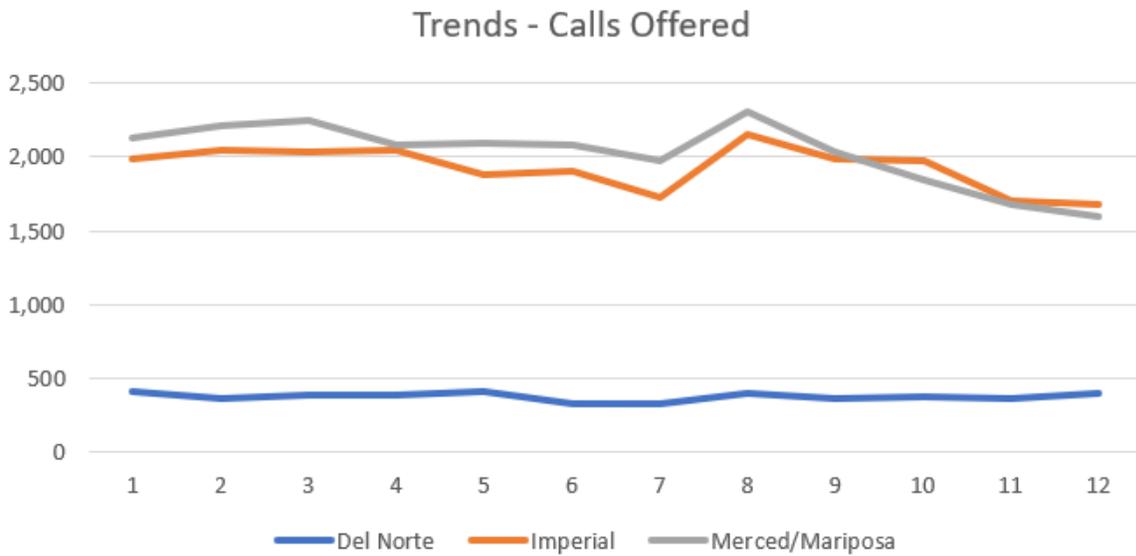
APPENDICES

**Appendix 1:
Baseline Case Openings + Calls Offered**

Case Openings – 2016

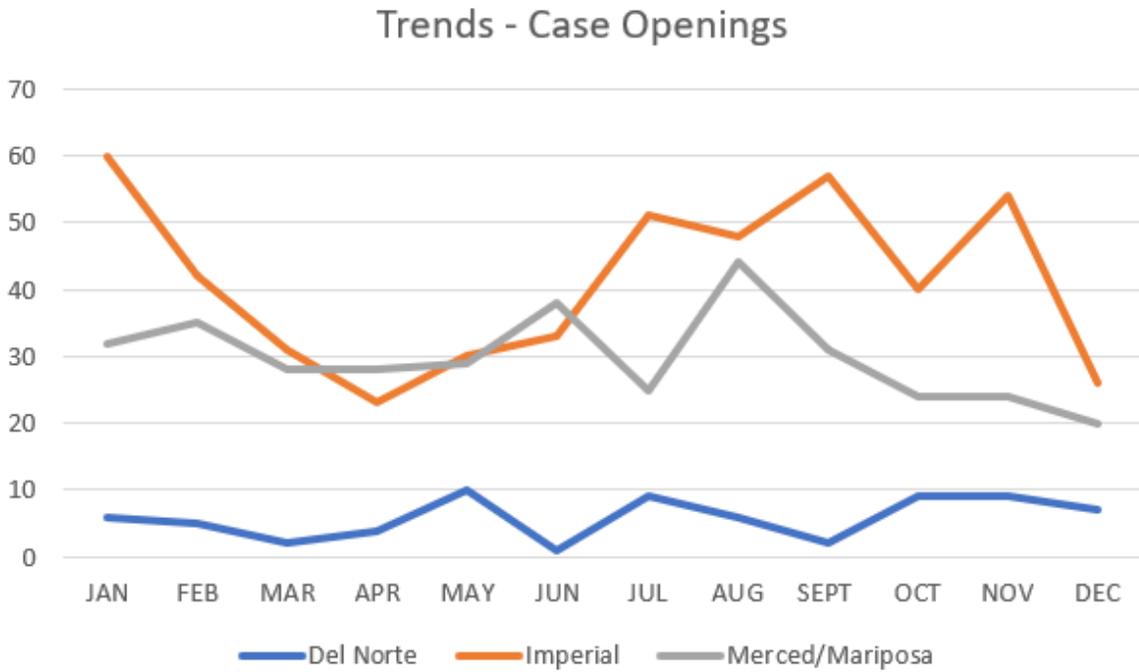


Calls Offered – 2016

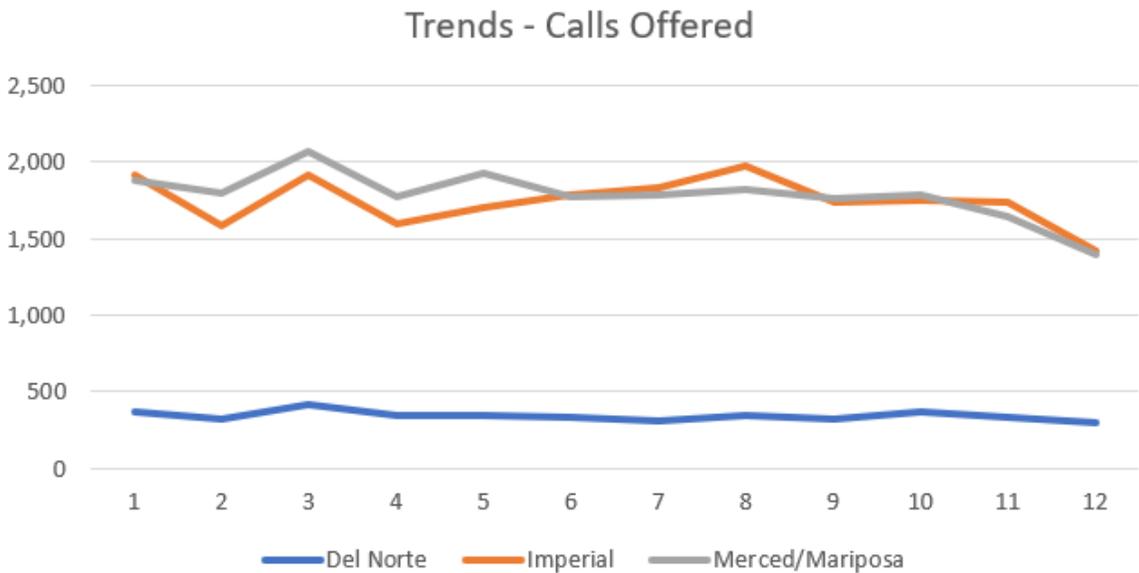


**Appendix 1:
Baseline Case Openings + Calls Offered (cont.)**

Case Openings – 2017

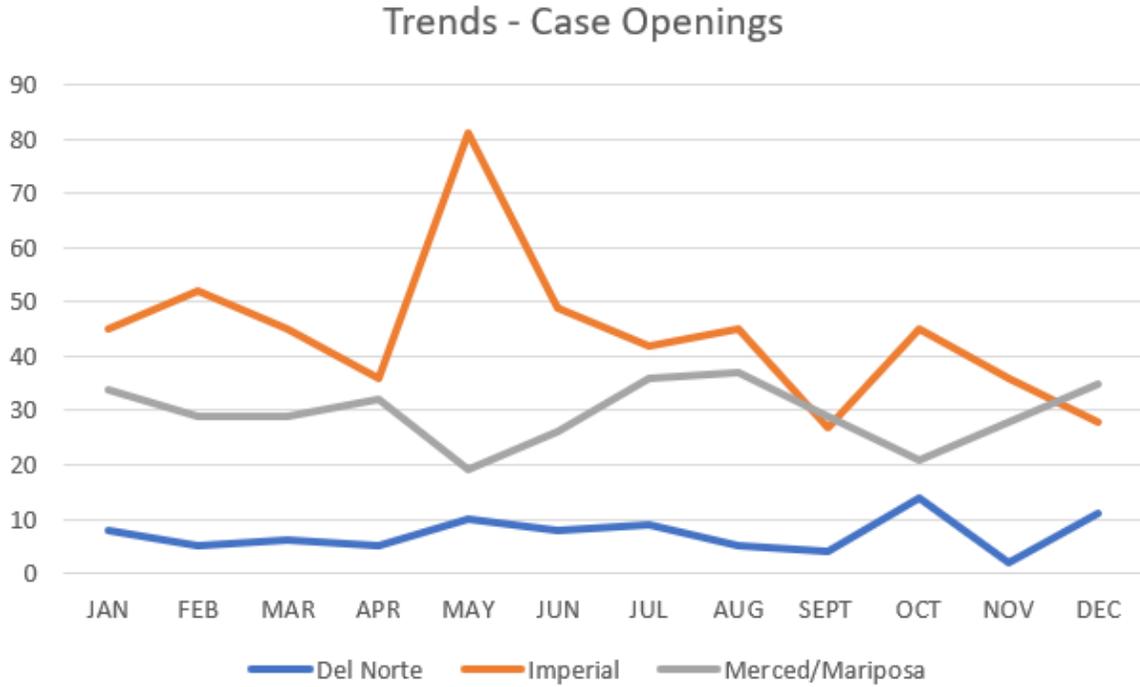


Calls Offered – 2017

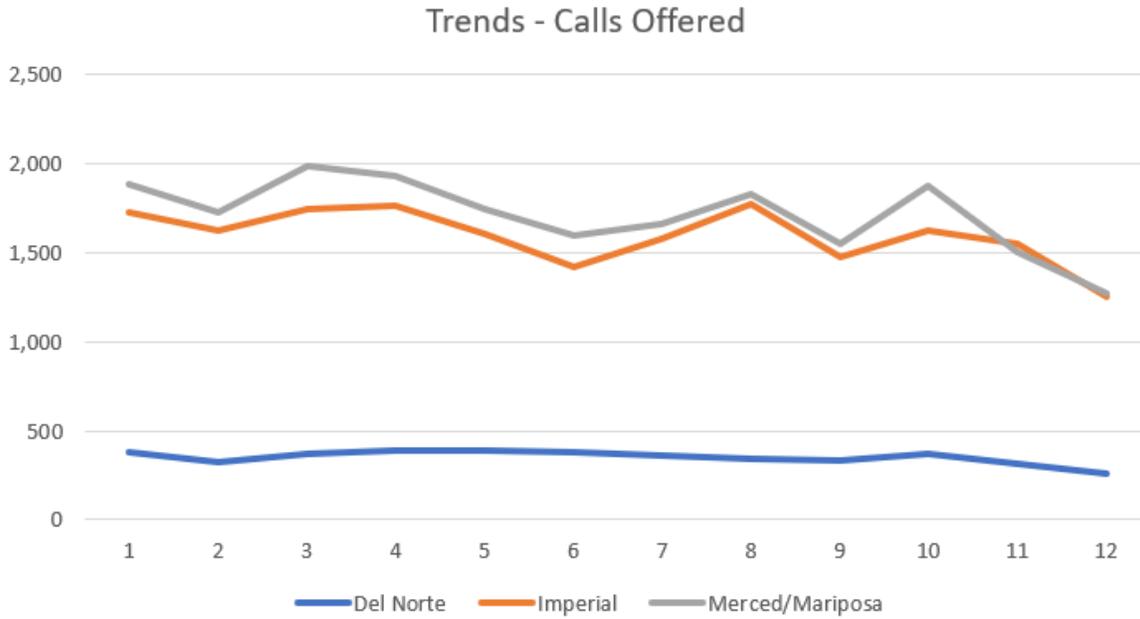


**Appendix 1:
Baseline Case Openings + Calls Offered (cont.)**

Case Openings – 2018

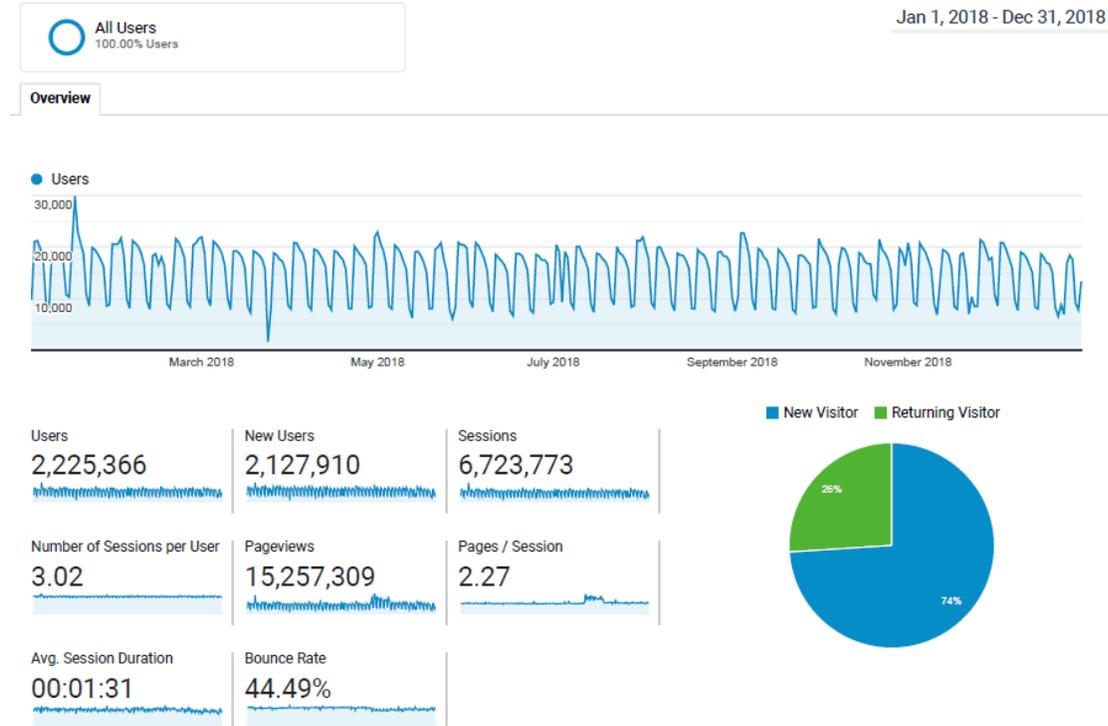


Calls Offered – 2018



Appendix 2: Website Google Analytics *Old website; only available Google Analytics – 2018*

Total Traffic to www.childsup.ca.gov Audience Overview



Top 10 Pages on www.childsup.ca.gov

Page Title	Pageviews	Unique Pageviews	Avg. Time on Page	Entrances	Bounce Rate	% Exit	Page Value
	15,257,309 % of Total: 100.00% (15,257,309)	11,629,053 % of Total: 100.00% (11,629,053)	00:01:12 Avg for View: 00:01:12 (0.00%)	6,723,229 % of Total: 100.00% (6,723,229)	44.49% Avg for View: 44.49% (0.00%)	44.07% Avg for View: 44.07% (0.00%)	\$0.00 % of Total: 0.00% (\$0.00)
1. Customer Connect	5,253,050 (34.43%)	4,452,647 (38.29%)	00:02:30	2,230,743 (33.18%)	79.89%	75.24%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
2. California Department of Child Support Services > Home	3,073,247 (20.14%)	2,692,294 (23.15%)	00:00:23	2,469,965 (36.74%)	8.31%	11.20%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
3. State Disbursement Unit (SDU)	2,745,816 (18.00%)	1,233,424 (10.61%)	00:01:12	784,941 (11.68%)	49.54%	34.63%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
4. Calculate Child Support	739,368 (4.85%)	544,762 (4.68%)	00:02:50	416,686 (6.20%)	68.63%	62.80%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
5. Payments	457,378 (3.00%)	366,239 (3.15%)	00:00:18	194,831 (2.90%)	6.62%	7.93%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
6. Apply For Child Support Services	393,015 (2.58%)	268,011 (2.30%)	00:02:09	131,032 (1.95%)	56.11%	47.37%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
7. LCSA Offices	316,845 (2.08%)	275,697 (2.37%)	00:01:56	21,210 (0.32%)	65.56%	46.09%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
8. Custodial Party	181,371 (1.19%)	148,098 (1.27%)	00:00:28	15,354 (0.23%)	19.70%	7.60%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
9. FAQs	141,761 (0.93%)	108,534 (0.93%)	00:00:34	31,801 (0.47%)	33.64%	15.86%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
10. Definitions	139,900 (0.92%)	109,899 (0.95%)	00:01:43	31,324 (0.47%)	57.56%	46.14%	\$0.00 (0.00%)

Appendix 3:
Website Google Analytics (cont.)
Old website; includes filter placement

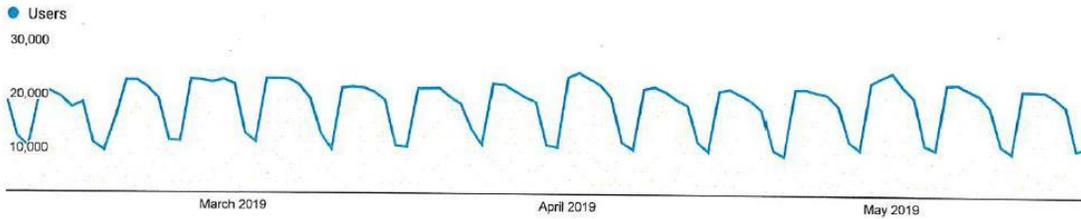
Total Traffic to www.childsup.ca.gov

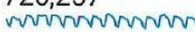
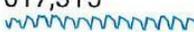
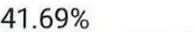
Audience Overview

 All Users
100.00% Users

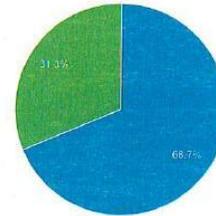
Feb 8, 2019 - May 19, 2019

Overview



<p>Users</p> <p>726,257</p> 	<p>New Users</p> <p>617,315</p> 	<p>Sessions</p> <p>1,964,032</p> 
<p>Number of Sessions per User</p> <p>2.70</p> 	<p>Pageviews</p> <p>4,486,164</p> 	<p>Pages / Session</p> <p>2.28</p> 
<p>Avg. Session Duration</p> <p>00:01:29</p> 	<p>Bounce Rate</p> <p>41.69%</p> 	

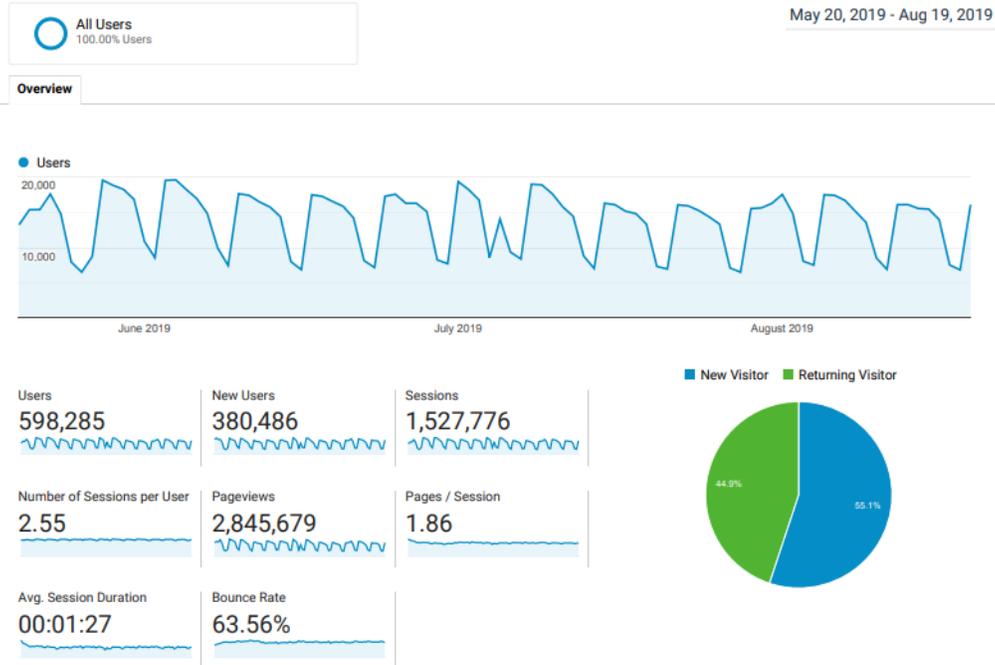
 New Visitor  Returning Visitor



Appendix 4:
Website Google Analytics (cont.)
New website; includes filter placement; prior to Learning Cycle 1

Total Traffic to www.childsupport.ca.gov

Audience Overview



Top 10 Pages on www.childsupport.ca.gov

Page Title	Pageviews	Unique Pageviews	Avg. Time on Page	Entrances	Bounce Rate	% Exit	Page Value
	2,845,679 % of Total: 100.00% (2,845,679)	2,152,257 % of Total: 100.00% (2,152,257)	00:01:41 Avg for View: 00:01:41 (0.00%)	1,526,957 % of Total: 100.00% (1,526,957)	63.56% Avg for View: 63.56% (0.00%)	53.66% Avg for View: 53.66% (0.00%)	\$0.00 % of Total: 0.00% (\$0.00)
1. Online Case Information CA Child Support Services	1,016,032 (35.70%)	802,201 (37.27%)	00:02:18	640,961 (41.98%)	77.18%	71.43%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
2. CA Child Support Services	894,872 (31.45%)	653,300 (30.35%)	00:01:12	604,736 (39.60%)	52.75%	46.26%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
3. Calculate Child Support CA Child Support Services	179,568 (6.31%)	119,155 (5.54%)	00:02:03	84,645 (5.54%)	60.24%	53.80%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
4. Apply for Child Support Services CA Child Support Services	101,542 (3.57%)	69,812 (3.24%)	00:01:53	41,140 (2.69%)	53.00%	45.62%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
5. How A Child Support Case Works CA Child Support Services	87,726 (3.08%)	70,387 (3.27%)	00:01:14	5,397 (0.35%)	69.40%	24.35%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
6. Frequently Asked Questions CA Child Support Services	84,539 (2.97%)	65,188 (3.03%)	00:02:46	33,596 (2.20%)	56.96%	44.16%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
7. State Disbursement Unit CA Child Support Services	78,478 (2.76%)	58,701 (2.73%)	00:03:02	10,763 (0.70%)	74.82%	57.89%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
8. Contact Us CA Child Support Services	56,998 (2.00%)	46,356 (2.15%)	00:02:10	17,743 (1.16%)	58.36%	49.67%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
9. CA Child Support Services	55,361 (1.95%)	42,810 (1.99%)	00:01:06	39,613 (2.59%)	50.75%	45.65%	\$0.00 (0.00%)
10. Search Results CA Child Support Services	37,289 (1.31%)	33,382 (1.55%)	00:00:57	2,250 (0.15%)	67.28%	21.61%	\$0.00 (0.00%)

**Appendix 5:
Sample Display Creative**



Del Norte – Swoosh, Paperwork



Merced – Photo, Medical



Imperial – Text, Court

**Appendix 6:
Top Performing Key Words**

Keyword	% of Clicks
Child support	13.2%
Child custody	9.0%
Child support office	7.8%
Child support payments	7.2%
Separation	6.7%
Child support services	6.3%
Support a child	5.8%
Child support calculator	5.5%
Divorce	5.1%
Child support application	4.7%
Child support information	4.3%
Child	4.1%
Custody rights	3.9%
Legal Custody	3.7%
Department of child support	2.2%
Child support attorney	2.0%
Child support enforcement	1.8%
Family law	1.4%
Family law court	1.4%
Family court	1.0%

Appendix 7: Social Creative Examples

This block displays five social media advertisements for the Imperial County Department of Child Support Services. Each ad features a header with the agency name and a 'Sponsored' label, followed by a brief description in Spanish: 'Los Servicios de Child Support pueden ayudarle a comenzar el papeleo. No espere.' The main content area contains a large question or statement in Spanish: '¿Eres un padre soltero?', '¿Necesita child support?', '¿O está pagando demasiado?', 'Imperial Child Support Services' (with a landscape image), and 'Nosotros no tomamos partido.' Below the main content is a 'LEARN MORE' button and a footer with the website 'CHILDSUPPORT.CA.GOV Child Support Services State of California' and social media interaction icons (Like, Comment, Share).

This block displays four social media advertisements for the Del Norte County Child Support Services. Each ad features a header with the agency name and a 'Sponsored' label, followed by a brief description in English: 'We can help you make agreements for child support without a lawyer or going to court.' The main content area contains a large question or statement in English: 'Are you a single parent?', 'We can help.', 'Del Norte Child Support Services' (with a coastal landscape image), and 'We don't take sides.' Below the main content is a 'LEARN MORE' button and a footer with the website 'CHILDSUPPORT.CA.GOV Child Support Services State of California' and social media interaction icons (Like, Comment, Share).

**Appendix 8:
Top Creative Performers by County**

DEL NORTE COUNTY TOP CREATIVE PERFORMERS

ENGLISH – Text and Photo Creative, 300 x 50

Court – 23.03% CTR

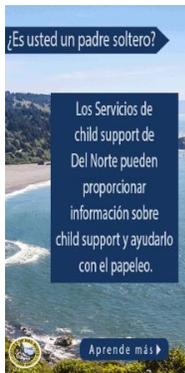


Medical – 15.24% CTR



SPANISH – Photo and Swoosh Creative

Paperwork – 19.42% CTR, 300 x 600



Court – 7.98% CTR, 300 x 50



**Appendix 8:
Top Creative Performers by County (cont.)**

IMPERIAL COUNTY TOP PERFORMERS

ENGLISH – Text and Photo Creative, 300 x 50

Paperwork – 26.01% CTR

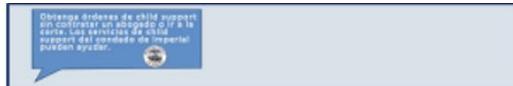


Medical – 7.12% CTR



SPANISH – Photo and Text Creative

Court – 21.43% CTR, 300 x 50



Paperwork – 18.95% CTR, 300 x 600



**Appendix 8:
Top Creative Performers by County (cont.)**

MERCED COUNTY TOP PERFORMERS

ENGLISH – Swoosh Creative, 300 x 50

Court – 31.10% CTR



Medical – 26.31% CTR



SPANISH – Photo Creative, 300 x 600

Court – 11.65% CTR



Medical – 7.81% CTR



**Appendix 9:
Message Analysis by County**

Overall click-through rate percentage for each message in each county.

Message by Percent - English			
	Del Norte	Merced	Imperial
<i>Paperwork</i>	29.78%	17.71%	59.19%
<i>Court</i>	43.09%	48.81%	21.69%
<i>Medical</i>	27.13%	33.48%	19.12%
	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Message by Percent - Spanish			
	Del Norte	Merced	Imperial
<i>Paperwork</i>	53.33%	34.74%	57.15%
<i>Court</i>	23.99%	45.13%	39.00%
<i>Medical</i>	22.68%	20.13%	3.85%
	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

**Appendix 10:
Top Performing Websites List**

1. Yahoo Properties: Y-mail, GMA, Sports
2. Google Properties: G-mail; Youtube.com
3. Sheknows.com
4. Buzzfeed.com
5. Accesshollywood.com
6. Whattoexpect.com
7. Womenshealthmag.com
8. Kayak.com
9. Shape.com
10. Thebump.com
11. Parenting.com
12. Todaysparent.com
13. Redtri.com
14. Womansday.com
15. Bleacherreport.com
16. Nbc.com
17. Abc.com
18. Accuweather.com
19. Amctv.com
20. Healthgrades.com
21. Huffingtonpost.com
22. Latimes.com
23. Cafemom.com
24. About.com
25. Linkedin.com
26. Mothering.com

Appendix 11: Top Outbound Links

English Pages Top Events

ALL » EVENT CATEGORY: Outbound Links » EVENT ACTION: Click

Aug 19, 2019 - Oct 13, 2019

 All Users
99.01% Unique Events

Explorer

Event

● Total Events



Event Label	Total Events	Unique Events	Event Value	Avg. Value
	103 % of Total: 99.04% (104)	100 % of Total: 99.01% (101)	0 % of Total: 0.00% (0)	0.00 Avg for View: 0.00 (0.00%)
1. youtube.com/user/cachildsupport	23 (22.33%)	23 (23.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0.00
2. youtube.com/watch?v=3uf7sji2ibg&list=plywxn6ouc2iq2cxregqozbfz9v0epen&index=5&t=0s	23 (22.33%)	22 (22.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0.00
3. linkedin.com/company/california-department-of-child-support-services/	14 (13.59%)	14 (14.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0.00
4. co.merced.ca.us/62/child-support-services	11 (10.68%)	11 (11.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0.00
5. facebook.com/californiachildsupport/	11 (10.68%)	9 (9.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0.00
6. css.imperialcounty.org/	10 (9.71%)	10 (10.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0.00
7. twitter.com/cachildsupport	9 (8.74%)	9 (9.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0.00
8. co.del-norte.ca.us/departments/child-support-services	2 (1.94%)	2 (2.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0.00

Rows 1 - 8 of 8

Appendix 11: Top Outbound Links (cont.)

Spanish Pages

Top Events

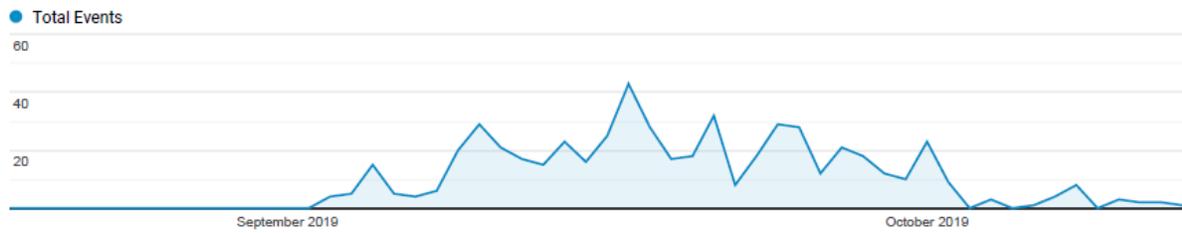
ALL » EVENT CATEGORY: Outbound Links » EVENT ACTION: Click

Aug 19, 2019 - Oct 13, 2019

 All Users
95.30% Unique Events

Explorer

Event



Event Label	Total Events	Unique Events	Event Value	Avg. Value
	555 % of Total: 94.71% (586)	487 % of Total: 95.30% (511)	0 % of Total: 0.00% (0)	0.00 Avg for View: 0.00 (0.00%)
1. youtube.com/user/cachildsupport	171 (30.81%)	146 (29.98%)	0 (0.00%)	0.00
2. youtube.com/watch?v=3uf7sji2ibg&list=plywxw6ouc2iq2cxregqoqzbfz9v0open&index=5&t=0s	113 (20.36%)	96 (19.71%)	0 (0.00%)	0.00
3. linkedin.com/company/california-department-of-child-support-services/	81 (14.59%)	72 (14.78%)	0 (0.00%)	0.00
4. facebook.com/californiachildsupport/	67 (12.07%)	64 (13.14%)	0 (0.00%)	0.00
5. twitter.com/cachildsupport	66 (11.89%)	62 (12.73%)	0 (0.00%)	0.00
6. co.merced.ca.us/62/child-support-services	28 (5.05%)	24 (4.93%)	0 (0.00%)	0.00
7. css.imperialcounty.org/	28 (5.05%)	22 (4.52%)	0 (0.00%)	0.00
8. co.del-norte.ca.us/departments/child-support-services	1 (0.18%)	1 (0.21%)	0 (0.00%)	0.00

Rows 1 - 8 of 8

**Appendix 12:
Case Openings**

