

The robots are here...

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ANDREW SPURRIER-DAWES, DIGITAL ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR 23 MAR 2017

Last week family owned Lingerie brand, Cosabella, announced the results of a three month test where they handed over their digital marketing to an AI platform called Albert.

Albert was charged with identifying and converting high-value audiences, and driving Cosabella's digital marketing efforts on paid search and social media, and the results were astounding:

- Albert increased Cosabella's social and search ROAS by 50% while decreasing its ad spend by 12%
- On Facebook specifically, Albert produced a 565% increase in ROAS within his first month.

- By month three, Albert had increased Cosabella's ROAS 336%—a 155% increase over the previous quarter

Prior to Albert, Cosabella credited social media with 5 – 10% of its paid ad revenue; with Albert, social media now consistently accounts for 30% of the brand's total paid ad revenue. Albert's success driving conversions on Facebook resulted in a 2000% increase in purchases originating from the channel.

Courtney Connell, Marketing Director at Cosabella said:

“Now, instead of manually adjusting our campaigns on a granular level, we tell Albert where and who we want to target, set our KPIs and offer high-level parameters. From there we trust him to fine tune and scale.”

Humanity is needed more than ever

We are still very early on in our understanding of AI and the practical application of robots to what we do.

It is worth remembering that there is a key difference between Machine Learning and AI:

- Machine Learning: give machines access to data and let them learn for themselves.
- AI: broad concept of machines being able to carry out tasks in a way that we would consider “smart” – acting without being specifically programmed.

In this early stage, humans are the most important factor in AI (and machine learning) as robots don't understand emotion or humanity, only digital signals which they then interpret correlation not causation. Robots are able to tell us what, not why.

Humans are also important as they set the parameters and the goals for the machines to learn within – as Rob Norman said:

“In an era where only the machines can improve themselves only they can validate experiments. At the same time humans can't be equalled in the design of those experiments. Long live the imagination economy, and take comfort that while no human will ever beat Deep Blue, a team of humans working with Deep Blue will still beat Deep Blue on its own”

We'll leave the last word to Cosabella CEO, Guido Campello:

“After working with Albert and our other AI partners, I would never hire a human to manage the technical aspects of our ad campaigns ever again. We'll leave the tech stuff to the tech and hire humans for the high-level strategic and creative. That lets our team get back to what we love and makes us more human, which is maybe ironic.”

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