

Google Attribution 360 helps automotive brand drive marketing innovation

Media Agency Carat measures complex channel mix to reveal data-driven insights



About

- Carat is a leading media agency that makes client budgets work harder and drives innovation with data-driven attribution.

Goals

- Enable data-driven marketing with cross-channel measurement
- Evaluate cross-channel impacts to drive marketing innovation

Approach

- Implement Google Attribution 360
- Gathered data across 250 campaigns spanning display, search, social media, SEO, and mobile channels.

Results

- 350x lift in conversions in multi-channel vs. single channel exposure
- Some display ad types create a larger lift for lower-funnel search performance
- Display spend reductions should be balanced by paid search increases
- Auto-focused sites and content are top performers

As early as 2012, a leading automotive brand wanted to get on the road to data-driven marketing. They engaged Carat USA to help finalize their data ecosystem and implement measurement best practices that would pave the way to a new era of marketing insight and performance.

The first step was to modernize the automotive brand's marketing measurement tool set. Carat evaluated analyst reports, including a recent [Forrester Research Wave report on Cross-Channel Attribution](#), to select an attribution provider. Next, a sophisticated data test lead Carat to recommend Google Attribution 360, part of the Google Analytics 360 Suite, as the best option. Actionable cross-channel insights, flexibility, support, and innovation road map were key factors behind the recommendation.

In deploying Attribution 360, Carat focused on two key questions:

1. Efficiency. How can we make existing budgets work harder? Rather than focusing on single-channel cost reduction or proving that one channel is better than another, Carat's goal was to improve overall return on investment. Cross-channel insights set the stage for marketing innovation.

2. Intelligence. How can we improve overall planning and strategy? Rather than offering theories, Carat wanted to show the automotive brand hard numbers to inform marketing innovation. Data allows the agency to confidently recommend better, more efficient, and more sophisticated planning and targeting strategies.

"Understanding the customer journey is critical. Success is when the strategy makes sense at every step—from researching and shopping to locating a dealer, initiating a test drive, and buying that car."

—Stella Voutsina
VP Global Media Operations,
Carat USA

"We find ourselves in the happy position of containing our client's enthusiasm. They are always asking 'What's next?' Before Attribution 360, they simply did not have access to these insights. Now they want to know more."

—Stella Voutsina
VP Global Media Operations,
Carat USA

Putting cross-channel data to work

Before data-driven attribution, the client's view of marketing data was siloed and incomplete. The ad server analytics they had showed on-site activity without revealing the influence of paid media.

Carat was able to integrate Attribution 360 with the client's existing tagging system. They gathered data across more than 250 campaigns spanning display, search, paid search, paid social media, SEO, and mobile channels.

Starting with one of the automotive brand's premier car brands, Attribution 360 gave the agency a deeper level of digital insight to share with the automotive client.

1. Cross-channel exposure is critical. When people see ads in multiple channels, conversion rates lift by up to 350 times as compared to seeing ads in just one channel. This insight alone encouraged new cross-channel alignment between display messaging and lower-funnel search term bidding.

2. Display type matters. Some display types deliver more lift in lower-funnel search than others. More spend in key categories could help the automotive brand make the most of this cross-channel impact. Carat set up custom lift reports to help their client identify the best search-assisting display strategies and inform spending decisions.

3. Paid search matters, too. Cross-channel impacts don't stop with display. More effective display choices creates demand that can be played out in paid search. Reductions in display spending should be balanced by strategic increases in paid search spending.

4. Top performers are top performers. It can be tempting to change everything—but sometimes you need to stay the course. Attribution 360 revealed that auto-focused sites and content perform well. In the quest to create multi-channel exposure, these investment should continue and even increase.

Attribution 360 helped both Carat and their automotive client make more confident and profitable marketing decisions. The agency and client set about determining how these insights could help other makes and models within the automotive brand family.

A taste for data-driven innovation

Carat and their automotive client are entering a period of marketing innovation. Stella Voutsina, VP of Global Media Operations at Carat

remarks, "We find ourselves in the happy position of containing our client's enthusiasm. They are always asking 'What's next?' Before Attribution 360, they simply did not have access to these insights. Now they want to know more."

The automotive brand can not only see how each make and model benefits from cross-channel marketing investments, but can connect insights across car brands.

A deeper understanding of how people behave naturally spurs new ideas. With a single source of truth in measurement from Attribution 360, Carat can help the client get closer to customers, showing each person just what they need at just the right time.

Meanwhile, TV ads and test drives are a big part of car buying. Carat plans to integrate CRM, offline sales, and broadcast channel data into Attribution 360 to understand even more about the customer journey.

About the Google Analytics 360 Suite

The Google Analytics 360 Suite offers powerful and integrated analytics solutions for today's biggest enterprises. Measure, see, and improve the impact of your marketing across every screen, channel and moment in today's customer journey. It's easy to use, and makes data accessible for everyone so the "aha" moments are simple to discover and share. Move from insight to impact faster with the Google Analytics 360 Suite, and as a result, make the most of every consumer connection. For more information, visit google.com/analytics/360-suite