Creative Testing & Performance Report

U.S. ACA Lead Generation — 2023

Role: Performance Marketing / Media Buying
Channels: Google Ads + Meta
Market: United States
Objective: Generate profitable, qualified inbound calls at scale

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1. Executive Summary

Creative was one of the primary performance levers in the 2023 ACA acquisition operation.

The objective was not to produce advertisements that simply generated engagement.

The objective was to develop creative that could:

Capture attention → generate efficient traffic → produce calls → generate qualified calls → convert → produce revenue → support profitable scale.

The operation evolved from a relatively low-scale acquisition environment into a multi-account performance system generating approximately:

- **$4.41M Ringba-reported revenue**
- **~$3.3M paid media spend**
- **470K+ incoming calls**
- **147K+ paid calls**
- **64K+ converted calls**
- **~35% reported ROI**

During the same period, acquisition efficiency improved from approximately:

$220 CPA → below $90 CPA

Creative was a major contributor to this improvement.

The central learning was simple:

> **Better creative creates better economics throughout the acquisition system.**

A stronger creative could attract cheaper attention, generate more efficient traffic, produce more calls, improve CPA, provide stronger conversion signals, and create the conditions for profitable scaling.

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2. Creative Philosophy

The creative system was built around one principle:

> **Creative should be judged by the economic quality of the customers/calls it generates—not by engagement metrics alone.**

This distinction was critical in a qualified-call business.

A creative could produce:

- Strong views
- High engagement
- High CTR
- Cheap clicks

and still be commercially weak if those users did not produce valuable calls.

Therefore, creative evaluation progressed through the acquisition funnel.

Creative Performance Chain

Attention

↓

Traffic

↓

Calls

↓

Qualified Calls

↓

Conversion

↓

Revenue

↓

Profitability

This allowed creative decisions to remain connected to the actual business objective.

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3. Creative Testing Framework

The operation followed a continuous testing cycle:

1. Identify an idea

Find a new creative angle, trend, format, hook, message, or proven market pattern.

2. Develop the concept

Adapt the idea to the ACA audience and business objective.

3. Produce the creative

Use UGC creators, editors, voiceover, B-roll, or other appropriate formats.

4. Launch

New creative was generally introduced daily or every two days depending on the testing and scaling environment.

5. Measure

Evaluate both creative diagnostics and downstream acquisition economics.

6. Identify winners

Determine whether the creative could generate profitable calls and revenue.

7. Iterate

Keep the strongest elements while changing weaker components.

8. Scale

Increase exposure to validated creative through additional campaigns, environments, variations, or budget.

9. Learn

Feed the winning characteristics back into the next production cycle.

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4. Creative Variables Tested

The testing system covered multiple dimensions of creative execution.

Opening / Hook

The first five seconds were treated as a critical attention window.

Variables included:

- Opening scene
- Opening statement
- First visual
- Hook structure
- Pacing
- Actor delivery
- Problem statement
- Curiosity-driven opening

The objective was to prevent users from abandoning the creative before the core message was delivered.

Actors and Creators

Different:

- Actors
- UGC creators
- Presentation styles
- Personalities
- Delivery styles

were tested.

The same underlying concept could perform differently depending on who delivered it.

This made the creator itself a creative variable.

Video Length

Different lengths and pacing structures were tested to determine how much information could be communicated without sacrificing retention.

The objective was not to make every video short.

It was to find the length that allowed the creative to maintain attention while delivering enough information to motivate the desired action.

Visual Format

Testing included:

- UGC
- B-roll + voiceover
- Static imagery within video
- Influencer-style formats
- Native/social-first formats
- Trending short-form structures
- Different visual treatments
- Different editing styles

Messaging

Messaging variables included:

- Educational messaging
- Direct-response messaging
- Emotional angles
- Different offers
- Different CTAs
- Different headlines
- Different scripts

The winning message was ultimately the one that translated into stronger downstream economics.

Audio

Testing included:

- Different voiceovers
- Different delivery styles
- Music
- Audio treatments
- Voice-led versus visual-led communication

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5. Creative Performance Scorecard

The operation used a layered measurement system.

Rather than using one metric to determine whether an ad was successful, performance was evaluated progressively.

Layer 1 — Attention

Hook Rate

The first five seconds of the script were treated as the hook.

Historical operating benchmark:

~90%+ hook retention

A weak opening indicated that the creative was losing attention before the main message had a chance to work.

Layer 2 — Video Retention

Historical benchmarks included:

~80% retention at the first 10 seconds

and:

~40% retention toward the end of the ad

These metrics helped distinguish between:

- A strong opening but weak body
- Strong sustained attention
- Creative fatigue
- Excessively long messaging
- Weak transitions

Google's current video guidance similarly emphasizes capturing and sustaining attention, including getting to the heart of the story quickly and using pacing, audio, and visual elements effectively.

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6. Traffic Efficiency

CTR was monitored but was not treated as a primary success metric.

CPC was more useful as a diagnostic indicator.

Historical operating ranges:

CPC	Interpretation
<$6	Excellent
<$10	Good
<$15	Acceptable
>$20	Poor

The purpose was not to maximize cheap clicks.

It was to determine whether the creative could efficiently generate traffic that ultimately produced economically valuable calls.

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7. Landing-Page Interaction

Creative performance was also evaluated beyond the ad itself.

One important diagnostic was the percentage of users progressing through the landing-page experience toward the call stage.

Historical benchmark:

> **Approximately 50% reaching the call page after the required questions, with acceptable call quality, indicated strong landing-page performance.**

This created an important distinction:

A creative can be good while the funnel is bad.

If users responded positively to the advertisement but dropped out after clicking, the problem might not be the creative.

It could be:

- Landing-page friction
- Excessive questions
- Poor message continuity
- Weak CTA
- Technical issues

This prevented the creative team from being blamed for funnel problems.

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8. First-Day Acquisition Signal

A strong creative was expected to generate calls quickly.

Historical operating rule:

> **A good creative should generate calls on the first day.**

However, first-day call quality was not treated as conclusive.

The first day answered:

"Can this creative generate demand?"

Additional data answered:

"Is that demand economically valuable?"

This distinction prevented premature conclusions from very small datasets.

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9. Qualified-Call Economics

Once a creative generated calls, downstream quality became increasingly important.

Historical operating benchmarks included:

Qualified calls

Approximately:

1 qualified call per 3–4 calls

Call duration

Target:

>2 minutes

Conversion

Strong performance:

~30%

CPA

Primary acquisition target:

<$90

The creative, therefore, had to survive several filters:

Attention → Traffic → Calls → Quality → Conversion → CPA

A creative that failed downstream was not considered a true winner simply because it had strong engagement.

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10. Revenue Validation

The final layer was economic performance.

Historical revenue/spend benchmarks varied according to scale.

Spend Environment	Strong Revenue / Spend
~$4K budget	**~2.0×**
>$10K	**~1.5×**
>$25K/day	**~1.35×**

These were **historical operating benchmarks for this ACA operation**, not universal industry standards.

As spend increased, the acceptable revenue multiple naturally compressed because maintaining the same efficiency at substantially greater volume became more difficult.

The objective was therefore the following:

> **Scale the economics, not simply the percentage return.**

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11. Creative Production System

The creative production workflow was:

Idea

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Team Review

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Concept Approval

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Script / Creative Brief

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Production

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Creative Approval

↓

Launch

↓

Performance Analysis

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Iteration / Scale

Initially, I personally handled much of this process, including:

- Creative concepts

- Script development
- Creative research
- Competitor analysis
- Winning-ad analysis
- Creator direction
- Creative briefs
- Editor direction
- Final creative review
- Campaign implementation

As the operation expanded, responsibilities were delegated to relevant team members.

This allowed me to shift more of my time toward the following:

- Scaling
- Account management
- Economic analysis
- Performance strategy
- Team development

The change represented a transition from **individual execution to management of a repeatable creative-production system**.

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12. Creative Production Volume

Normal creative testing volume was approximately the following:

5–10 new creatives per week

At higher levels of scale:

10–20 new creatives per week

The purpose of maintaining this cadence was to prevent the operation from becoming dependent on a small number of winners.

Creative production therefore functioned as a pipeline rather than an occasional campaign activity.

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13. Creative Lifespan

Strong creatives could remain commercially useful for approximately:

up to two months

However, a winner was not treated as a static asset.

Once a creative became a strong economic asset, it became a **creative template**.

The team could then:

- Duplicate it
- Modify the script
- Change the video
- Change the actor
- Change delivery style
- Extract its strongest section
- Incorporate its winning elements into new scripts
- Test new environments
- Develop variations
- Increase spend

This created a distinction between the following:

Creative winner

and:

Creative franchise.

The objective was to preserve the underlying winning idea while continuously creating new executions.

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14. Creative Intelligence System

One of the strongest components of the operation was the use of external creative signals to accelerate ideation.

Rather than inventing every concept from zero, the team monitored content that had already demonstrated strong audience attention.

The process was:

Find proven creative pattern

↓

Understand why it works

↓

Identify transferable elements

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Adapt message to ACA

↓

Produce an original execution

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Test

↓

Validate economically

↓

Scale

This significantly reduced the randomness associated with creative ideation.

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15. Creative Intelligence Source #1

High-Performing Public Content

One successful method was identifying videos that had already demonstrated substantial audience engagement.

For example, the team identified a video with **more than one million likes**, analyzed the underlying creative structure, adapted the script and messaging to the ACA use case, and produced the concept through UGC creators.

The resulting creative performed strongly enough to support approximately:

$30K/day in spend

The insight was not simply:

> "Copy a popular video."

The operational insight was:

> **Use proven attention structures as creative hypotheses, then adapt them to the target market and validate the resulting execution through business metrics.**

This turned existing market attention into a source of creative intelligence.

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16. Creative Intelligence Source #2

Competitive Creative Analysis

The team also monitored competitor advertising.

The workflow was:

Competitor creative

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Identify structure/angle

↓

Adapt the script.

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Combine with proven ACA messaging

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Produce UGC execution

↓

Test

↓

Scale successful variations

Some resulting creatives supported approximately:

$15K/day in spend

This created a continuous competitive-learning loop.

Instead of asking only

"What are our competitors saying?"

The more useful question became:

"Which creative structures appear to be working in the market, and how can we develop a differentiated version for our own audience?"

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17. Creative Intelligence Source #3

Cross-Market Trend Mining

A third source of creative ideas came from advertising outside the immediate vertical.

The team monitored:

- International brands
- Emerging formats
- Trending internet content
- Popular short-form structures
- Entertainment trends
- Movies and TV
- Reality-show formats
- Broader social-media trends

Successful concepts were then adapted to the ACA use case.

Some of these executions supported approximately

$15K/day in spend

This led to one of the most important creative insights from the operation:

Attention patterns often travel across verticals.

A creative structure that works in entertainment, consumer products, or another market can sometimes be adapted successfully to lead generation if the underlying psychological mechanism is preserved while the message is rebuilt for the target audience.

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18. The Creative Adaptation Principle

The operation did not treat trends as finished advertisements.

The process was:

Trend

What is currently attracting attention?

Structure

What makes the format work?

Message

What is the audience being promised or made curious about?

Adaptation

How can the underlying mechanism be applied to ACA?

Execution

How should it be produced for the target audience?

Validation

Does it produce economically valuable calls?

This distinction is important.

The competitive advantage was not simply finding trends.

It was **turning trends into performance-marketing hypotheses.**

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19. Creative Winner Framework

A creative was effectively moved through several stages.

TEST

Insufficient evidence.

Continue collecting data.

↓

PROMISING

Shows evidence of attention and/or acquisition potential.

Continue monitoring.

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VALIDATED

Meets the relevant acquisition and quality thresholds.

Protect the creative.

↓

WINNER

Demonstrates repeatable economics.

Expand exposure and develop variations.

↓

SCALE

Increase budget and/or deployment while monitoring CPA and quality.

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ITERATE

Extract the winning elements into new creative concepts.

This prevents the team from treating every winner as a one-off.

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20. How Winning Creatives Were Scaled

When a creative became successful, the team did not simply increase the budget and hope it continued working.

The winning concept became a source for additional testing.

Example:

Winning concept

↓

New hook

↓

New script

↓

New actor

↓

New delivery

↓

New visual style

↓

New opening scene

↓

New CTA

↓

New edit

↓

New campaign environment

This created multiple opportunities to extend the life of the underlying idea.

The result was a **creative multiplication system** rather than dependence on individual ads.

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21. Creative Fatigue and Refresh

Because strong creatives could remain productive for up to approximately two months, the operation did not automatically replace them simply because they had been running for a certain number of days.

Instead, refresh decisions were driven primarily by performance.

Warning signals included:

- CPA deterioration
- Reduced call volume
- Lower retention
- Increasing CPC
- Declining conversion
- Reduced revenue efficiency

When deterioration appeared, the response could include:

New hook

New actor

New script

New edit

New visual treatment

New variation

Rather than immediately abandoning the underlying concept.

This approach preserved useful creative knowledge while refreshing the execution.

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22. Creative Testing vs. Creative Killing

A major operating principle was the following:

> **Do not kill a potentially valuable creative solely because of insufficient early data.**

At the same time:

> **Do not protect a creative indefinitely when the economics clearly deteriorate.**

The decision therefore considered both:

Data sufficiency

and:

Economic performance.

This was particularly important because the operation worked with different levels of spend and account scale.

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23. What We Learned From Creative Failures

Not every attractive creative concept became a winner.

Some formats could generate attention without producing economically valuable calls.

This reinforced several principles:

High engagement does not equal high-value acquisition.

Cheap clicks do not necessarily equal qualified cheap calls.

Strong retention does not guarantee strong conversion.

A creative can fail because of the funnel rather than the creative itself.

A creative can perform differently depending on campaign environment.

Trends must be adapted to the audience rather than copied mechanically.

The creative system therefore evaluated performance at multiple stages rather than relying on a single platform metric.

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24. Creative → Funnel → Economics

One of the strongest insights from the operation was that creative could not be evaluated in isolation.

The system behaved approximately like:

Creative

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Attention

↓

Traffic Cost

↓

Landing-Page Behavior

↓

Calls

↓

Call Quality

↓

Conversion

↓

Revenue

↓

CPA / Profitability

A creative improvement could therefore have a compounding effect.

For example:

Better hook

→ higher retention

→ stronger traffic efficiency

→ more qualified users

→ more calls

→ lower CPA

→ stronger platform signals

→ greater ability to scale

This is why creativity became one of the most important levers for overall channel performance.

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25. Creative's Contribution to the CPA Improvement

The broader operation improved CPA from approximately

$220 → <$90

This was not attributed to creative alone.

Audience, funnel, campaign structure, optimization, scaling discipline, and account management all contributed.

However, creativity was a critical component because:

> **The quality of the advertisement influenced the efficiency of the entire acquisition path.**

The practical model was

Better creative

→ cheaper/more efficient attention

→ more efficient traffic

→ stronger call generation

→ better acquisition economics

→ stronger conversion signals

→ greater ability to scale

This was one of the most important lessons of the ACA operation.

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26. Creative Testing at Scale

Creative strategy changed as the operation scaled.

Lower scale

Approximately:

5–10 new creatives/week

The focus was learning.

Higher scale

Approximately:

10–20 new creatives/week

The focus became:

- Maintaining creative supply
- Protecting winners
- Producing variations
- Preventing fatigue
- Finding the next scalable concept

This reflects an important operational reality:

> **Creative requirements increase with media scale.**

As spend grows, creative becomes a production capacity problem as much as a strategy problem.

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27. Management Perspective

Creative testing also became a team-management function.

Initially, I personally handled the creative process.

As the operation grew, I delegated production responsibilities to relevant team members while retaining responsibility for:

- Strategic direction
- Performance analysis
- Scaling
- Economic decisions
- Creative prioritization
- Final decision-making

This allowed creative production to become a team capability rather than a bottleneck around one media buyer.

The management objective became:

> **Build a system where the team can continuously produce and evaluate new creative without sacrificing performance discipline.**

28. Creative Operating System

The complete system can be summarized as:

RESEARCH

Identify trends, market signals, competitors, and proven creative patterns.

↓

ADAPT

Translate the underlying idea into the target vertical.

↓

PRODUCE

Create multiple executions.

↓

TEST

Launch at controlled scale.

↓

MEASURE

Evaluate attention, traffic, calls, quality, conversion, revenue, and CPA.

↓

VALIDATE

Identify whether the creative has genuine economic potential.

↓

PROTECT

Avoid unnecessary changes to proven winners.

↓

SCALE

Increase deployment when economics support it.

↓

ITERATE

Extract winning elements into new executions.

↓

LEARN

Feed results back into research and production.

↓

REPEAT

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29. Core Creative KPIs

For future operations, the creative dashboard can be divided into four layers.

Attention

- Hook rate
- First 10-second retention
- Completion/end retention

Traffic

- CPC
- CTR
- Landing-page progression

Acquisition

- Calls
- CPA
- Qualified-call rate
- Call duration
- Conversion

Economics

- Revenue
- Revenue/spend
- Profitability
- ROI

The hierarchy is important:

> **Attention metrics diagnose creativity. Acquisition metrics validate it. Business economics determines whether it deserves scale.**

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30. Key Findings

Finding 1 — The first seconds matter disproportionately

A strong opening creates the opportunity for the rest of the message to work.

Finding 2 — Proven concepts reduce creative uncertainty

Starting from ideas that have already demonstrated audience attention can accelerate creative discovery.

Finding 3 — Adaptation matters more than imitation

The transferable asset is the creative mechanism—not necessarily the original execution.

Finding 4 — Winners should become systems

A winning creative should generate multiple variations rather than remain a single isolated advertisement.

Finding 5 — Engagement is not the final KPI

The creative must eventually prove itself through calls, quality, conversion, revenue, and CPA.

Finding 6 — Creative and funnel performance are interconnected

A strong advertisement can still fail commercially if the landing page or downstream experience creates excessive friction.

Finding 7 — Scale requires creative supply

As spend increases, creative testing must increase with it.

Finding 8—Trend intelligence can become a competitive advantage

Popular cultural and internet formats can provide a continuous source of new performance hypotheses.

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31. Business Impact

The creative testing system contributed to a broader performance transformation.

Metric	Before	After
CPA	~$220	**<$90**
Monthly Spend	~$7K	**$30K–$60K**
Monthly Calls	~2K	**50K–70K**
Monthly Revenue	~$8K	**>$500K**
Conversion	<10%	**~30%**
ROI	0–10%	**~35%**

Across the broader 2023 operation:

$4.41M Ringba-reported revenue

was generated from approximately

$3.3M media spend

with:

470K+ incoming calls

and:

64K+ converted calls.

The creative system was one component of that performance engine, working alongside audience, funnel, campaign, account, and scaling optimization.

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32. Final Assessment

The 2023 ACA creative operation demonstrated that creative testing can function as a **performance acquisition system**, rather than simply a content-production exercise.

The strongest process was the following:

> **Research → Adapt → Produce → Test → Measure → Validate → Scale → Iterate → Learn**

The key competitive advantage was the ability to recognize creative patterns quickly and translate them into vertical-specific performance hypotheses.

The most important lesson was the following:

> **The best creative is not necessarily the ad with the highest engagement. It is the ad that converts attention into profitable acquisition.**

At scale, the goal is therefore not to find one winning advertisement.

It is to build a system capable of repeatedly finding the **next** winning advertisement.

That system combines:

Creative intelligence

- **structured testing**
- **retention analysis**
- **downstream call economics**
- **rapid iteration**
- **controlled scaling**
- **institutional learning**

This transformed creative from an isolated advertising asset into a repeatable growth capability.