

# Engaging New Adult Hunters with YouTube Advertising - Phase 2



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## Executive Summary

When new hunters are asked where they go to learn new skills, one of the top answers is almost always YouTube. YouTube was mentioned as a preferred source of content and instruction in *Effectively Targeting New Adult Hunters* (2023, DJ Case & Associates) and *New Hunter Journey Map* (2024, DJ Case & Associates). Yet, *Engaging New Adult Hunters with YouTube Advertising* (2024, DJ Case & Associates) showed that paid YouTube advertising was less cost-effective than other paid online media at driving new hunters to a recruitment-oriented landing page.

Given the importance of YouTube for providing content to new hunters, this follow-on phase of the project sought to determine if paid YouTube ads are an effective way to drive people to YouTube content, specifically “how-to” deer hunting content. To determine this, DJ Case & Associates (DJ Case) employed marketing methods both inside and outside of YouTube to drive viewers to one of five playlists of deer hunting how-to content:

- The National Deer Association (NDA) Deer Hunting 101 Playlist
- An Alabama co-branded copy of the NDA Deer Hunting 101 Playlist
- A New York co-branded copy of the NDA Deer Hunting 101 Playlist
- An Oklahoma co-branded copy of the NDA Deer Hunting 101 Playlist
- A Wisconsin co-branded copy of the NDA Deer Hunting 101 Playlist

Results were analyzed to develop recommendations for state agencies and conservation non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for utilizing YouTube marketing in R3 (recruitment, retention, and reactivation) initiatives.

Each week, DJ Case assessed the traffic generated by the campaign to each of the five playlists. This report discusses results and provides tips on how to best market YouTube how-to content online.

Findings indicated that the most cost-effective means of driving traffic to the playlists above were:

- Social media advertising
- Paid search

YouTube advertising strategies were far less cost-effective, with a cost-per-click up to 125 times higher than social media ads and as much as 25 times higher than paid search.

## Implementation Recommendations

This section of the report presents practical implementation recommendations for practitioners. Readers interested in methodology and analysis will find them in the sections that follow.

Assuming your objective is to drive traffic to hunting-related, how-to video content, social media ads and paid search are the most cost-effective means of generating clicks.

### **Social Media Advertising**

Based on the results of this project, social media ads (e.g., on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter/X) have the lowest cost-per-click for driving traffic to how-to video content. The advantage of using social media is that each platform's complex system of algorithms and data tracking allows advertisers to effectively and precisely place ads in front of the people most likely to be interested in the subject matter.

### **Paid Search**

Paid search is also valuable for driving traffic from web search engines (e.g., Google, Yahoo) to introductory hunting videos. Paid search uses search engines to “watch” for people using specific keywords in their searches. This allows you to place ads in front of individuals interested in learning how to hunt. Paid search generates ads on demand by combining headlines and copy provided by the advertiser. As the campaign runs, algorithms select and run the best-performing combinations to maximize click-through. Paid search is the most effective tool to reach audiences with whom an organization does not yet have a relationship, driving them to content relevant to their search.

**A note about YouTube.** DJ Case & Associates has worked on multiple projects testing YouTube as a method of reaching new hunters. Specifically, we were looking for ways to encourage YouTube viewers to click an ad and perform some action (watch a video, buy a license, sign up for a program). In all situations, buying YouTube ads resulted in a much higher cost per click than other media.

However, there are other advertising strategies where buying YouTube ads might be worth the cost. Like its distant relative, television, online video can be very effective in generating awareness. Promoting an outdoor expo, announcing an extended antlerless deer season, or making hunters aware of CWD precautions are potentially more effective uses of YouTube.

### **Best YouTube Advertising Techniques**

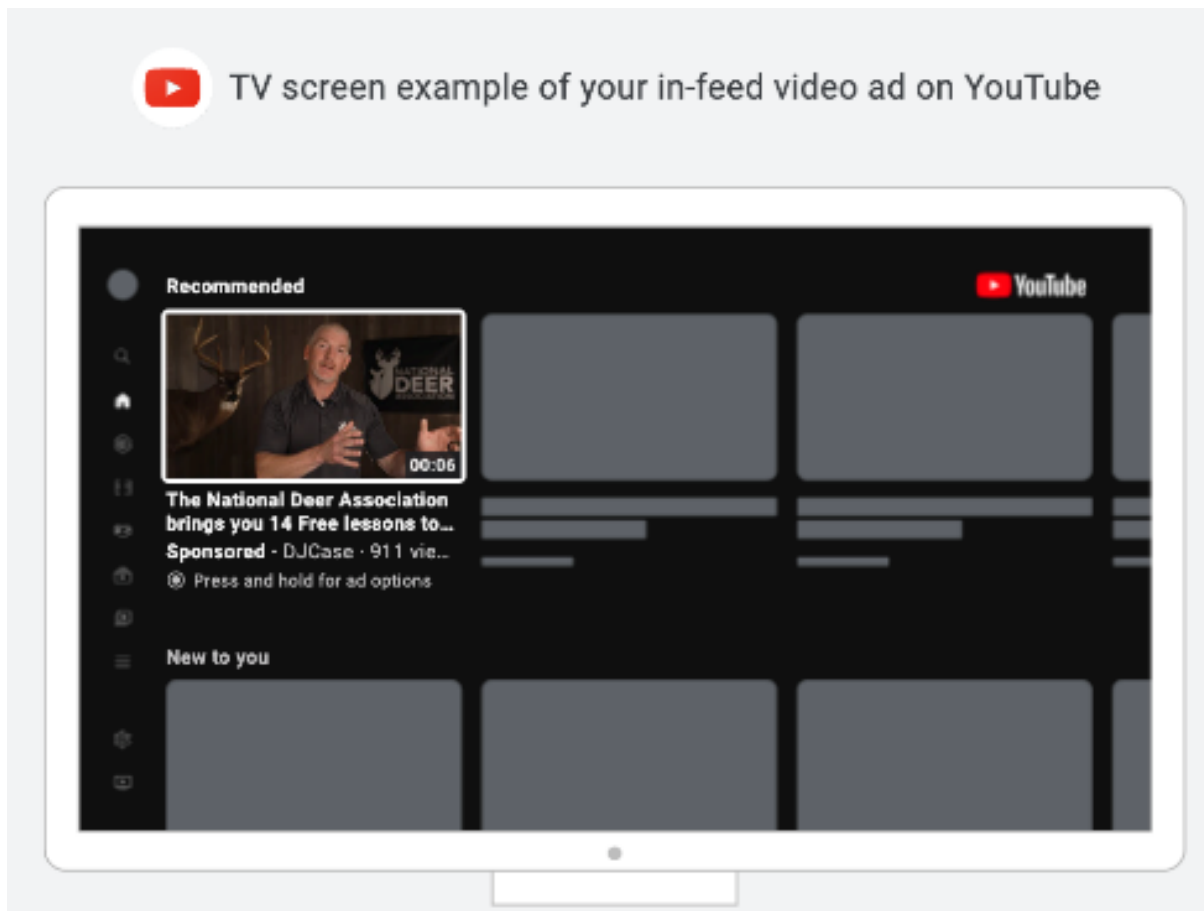
YouTube offers video ads that play before and during YouTube content. These ads can be skippable or unskippable. Skippable ads allow a viewer to opt out of viewing after 5 seconds. Unskippable ads force the viewer to watch the entire ad, which can be 6 to 15 seconds long. Skippable ads are the cheapest form of YouTube advertising, but are still considerably more expensive per click than social media ads and paid search.

Long-form advertisements are skippable ads greater than 30 seconds in length. While this cost is slightly higher than other forms of YouTube-specific advertising, the engagement rates (clicks) are significantly higher than that of shorter, skippable content.

If you use long-form advertising, be mindful of the following:

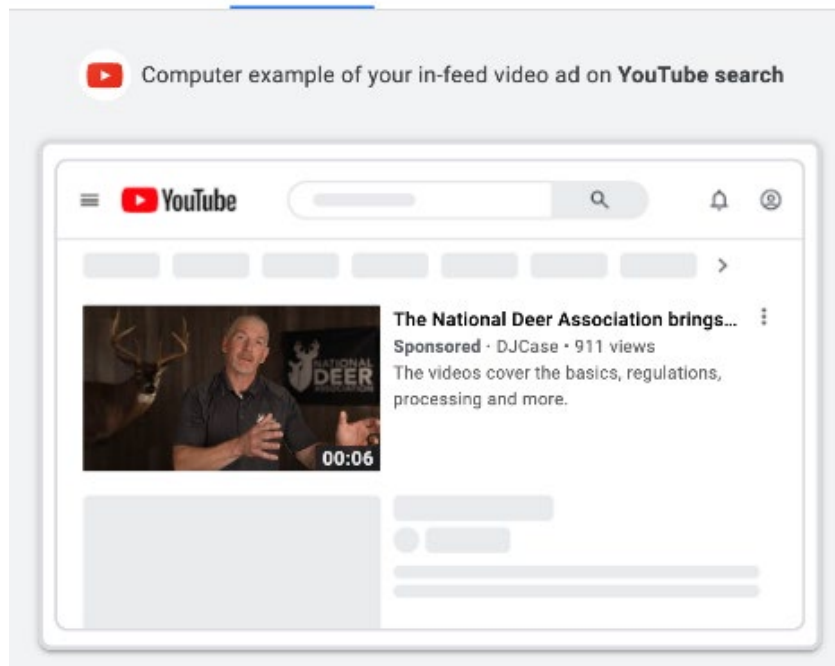
- The more focused the target audience, the smaller the number of opportunities for YouTube to place an ad in front of them. This low inventory of advertising opportunities drives up the price of each ad.
- Skippable ability keeps costs low compared to non-skippable alternative.
- Ability to skip could limit engagement levels.

## YouTube Ad Strategies to Avoid



In-feed sponsored advertisements are videos in YouTube placed along with recommended content in a YouTube viewer's video queue. Some examples of in-feed advertisements can be seen below featuring the Deer Hunting 101 video.

In-feed sponsored ads tend to have low click rates and can be more expensive in situations where there is a low inventory (i.e., a very small number of viewers who meet the advertiser's criteria).

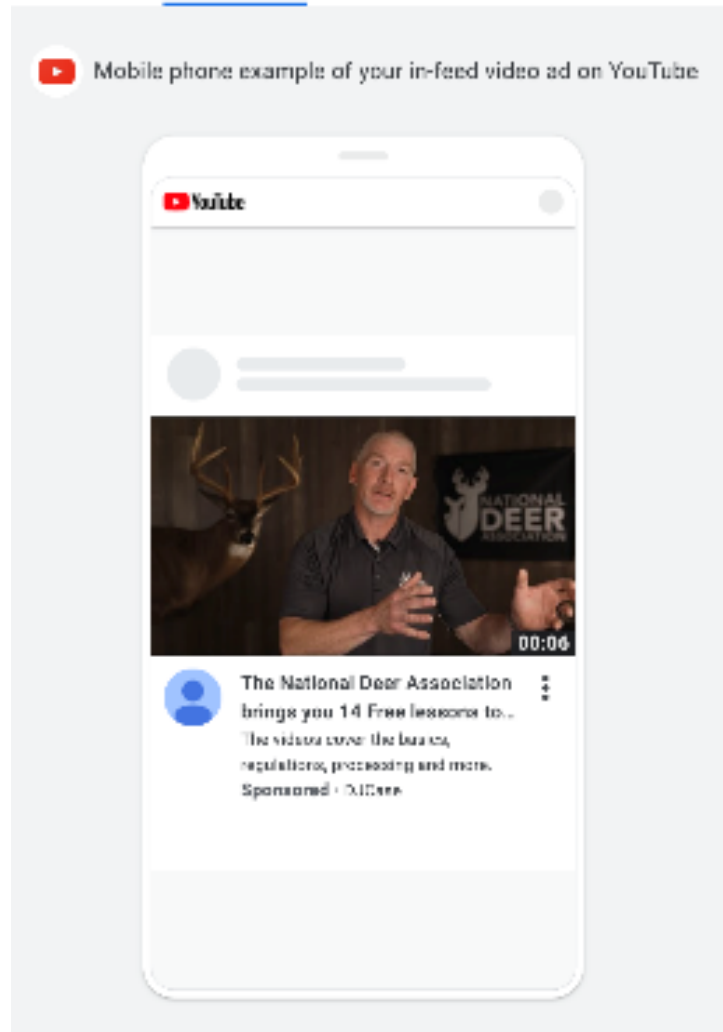


Channel targeting is placing ads in videos of specific YouTube creators, for example MeatEater or Modern Carnivore, regardless of the demographics of the viewer or the content of the video. Costs tend to be high for channel targeting due to the low inventory of videos posted by a specific creator and viewed in the duration of a campaign.

Masthead ads are video banners at the top of a YouTube viewer's feed, which autoplay without sound (unless the viewer engages) for up to 30 seconds. When the ad finishes, it converts to a thumbnail. This advertisement option is secured through an auction-based pricing model that is highly competitive and involves a costly bidding process. Because masthead ads are cost-prohibitive, DJ Case did not test them in this project.

**A final note on YouTube advertising.**

YouTube's inventory and competitive bidding processes add layers of complexity to acquiring marketing space and effectively optimizing marketing funds. Assigning an experienced online media buyer to monitor significant campaigns on a weekly basis will help optimize YouTube's marketing benefits.



## Methodology

The National Deer Association supplied how-to content in the form of a fourteen-episode series on [Deer Hunting 101](#). The NDA granted permission for the four pilot states to co-brand the videos in the series and publish them on their respective YouTube channels.

Alabama, New York, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin were selected as pilot states representing each of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) regions. Separate co-branded videos were created and posted as playlists on each state's YouTube channel so that ads would be seen as relevant, trusted content coming from the state fish and wildlife agency.

Once all five playlists were in place, marketing efforts began using various YouTube strategies as well as paid search and social media ad channels. In addition, NDA messages were run in each state to assess whether content branded by an NGO or a state fish and wildlife agency would be more effective in driving viewers to near-identical content.

### Combined Results for State Ad Pilots

	Impressions	Cost	Clicks	Click-thru rate	Cost-per-click
<i>Channel targeting</i>	134,751	\$2,320.80	34	0.03%	\$68.26
<i>In-feed sponsored ad</i>	2,141,337	\$8,975.22	0	N/A	N/A
<i>Non-skippable</i>	1,743,750	\$30,826.08	1,037	0.06%	\$29.73
<i>Skippable – long-form</i>	338,741	\$6,489.88	261	0.08%	\$24.87
<i>Skippable</i>	1,491,258	\$23,593.52	1,058	0.07%	\$22.30
<i>YouTube Summary</i>	<b>5,849,837</b>	<b>72,206</b>	<b>2,390</b>	<b>0.04%</b>	<b>\$30.21</b>
<i>Social media - 15 sec</i>	2,824,880	\$21,629.30	43,574	1.54%	\$0.50
<i>Social media - 6 sec</i>	195,871	\$1,319.86	2,708	1.38%	\$0.49
<i>Social Media Summary</i>	<b>3,020,751</b>	<b>22,949</b>	<b>46,282</b>	<b>1.53%</b>	<b>\$0.50</b>
<i>Paid search</i>	<b>427,730</b>	<b>\$12,053.34</b>	<b>4,093</b>	<b>0.96%</b>	<b>\$2.94</b>
<i>Combined Summary</i>	<b>9,298,318</b>	<b>107,208</b>	<b>52,765</b>	<b>0.57%</b>	<b>\$2.03</b>

## Summary

- Social media ads were the most cost-effective option (about 50 cents per click) and reached the largest audience.
- Paid search was also cost-effective (about \$3 per click) and reached a more engaged audience.
- YouTube ads were far less cost-effective (\$22 per click or higher), The higher price is not due to the price of the ads as much as it is the lower click-thru-rate.



# Results and Analysis

This section details the individual campaigns for each state and the NDA. A comparison across states and between states and the NDA begins on page 17.

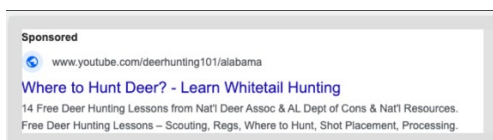
## Alabama

### Video Messages (Used on YouTube & Social Media)

15-Second Commercial: <https://youtu.be/WBzhj5wCzLY?si=rtUPPfTCUeCpAIFh>

6-Second Commercial: <https://youtu.be/TnnGXKQ25PQ?si=uxnaynG-rTKzDouT>

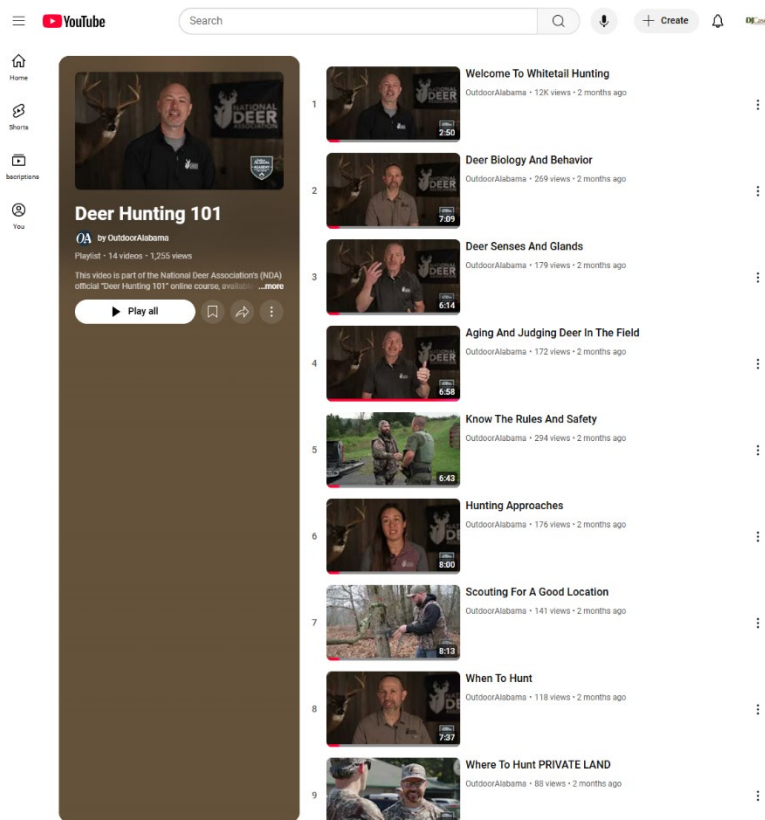
### Paid Search ads



Here is an example of the paid search ads generated in Alabama. Additional details on the key words and phrases used in this effort can be found in Appendix A.

### Content

Clicking an ad took viewers to this playlist where they could choose to view any video on the list.



<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLEz6lPQeUn08HaSwHk6KieAgS8InL6xH>

## Media

	Impressions	Cost	Clicks	Click-thru rate	Cost-per-click
<i>Channel targeting</i>	10,431	\$194.90	5	0.05%	\$38.98
<i>In-feed sponsored ad</i>	378,801	\$2,322.18	0	N/A-	N/A
<i>Non-skippable</i>	407,629	\$7,258.94	165	0.04%	\$43.99
<i>Skippable – long-form</i>	100,807	\$2,000.00	102	0.10%	\$19.61
<i>Skippable</i>	310,497	\$4,827.58	113	0.04%	\$42.72
<i>YouTube Summary</i>	<b>1,208,165</b>	<b>16,604</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>0.03%</b>	<b>\$43.13</b>
<i>Social media - 15 sec</i>	554,254	\$4,349.44	7,611	1.37%	\$0.57
<i>Social media - 6 sec</i>	56,223	\$396.02	797	1.42%	\$0.50
<i>Social Media Summary</i>	<b>610,477</b>	<b>4,745</b>	<b>8,408</b>	<b>1.38%</b>	<b>\$0.56</b>
<i>Paid search</i>	<b>91,748</b>	<b>\$2,991.74</b>	<b>886</b>	<b>0.97%</b>	<b>\$3.38</b>
<i>Campaign Summary</i>	<b>1,910,390</b>	<b>24,341</b>	<b>9,679</b>	<b>0.51%</b>	<b>\$2.51</b>

## Results

- Social media ads were the most cost-effective option and reached the largest audience at 56 cents per click.
- Paid search was also cost-effective while reaching a more engaged audience at \$3.38 per click.
- YouTube ads averaged over \$40 per click.

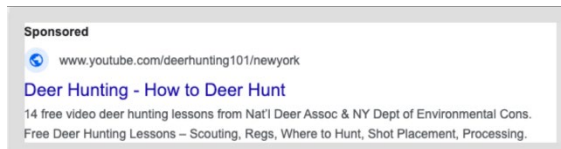


## Video Messages (Used on YouTube & Social Media)

15-Second Commercial: <https://youtu.be/JiZvpm-JO9c?si=sZJgX2pm11XQRVwk>

6-Second Commercial: <https://youtu.be/WBzhj5wCzLY?si=rtUPPfTCUeCpAlFh>

## Paid Search Ads

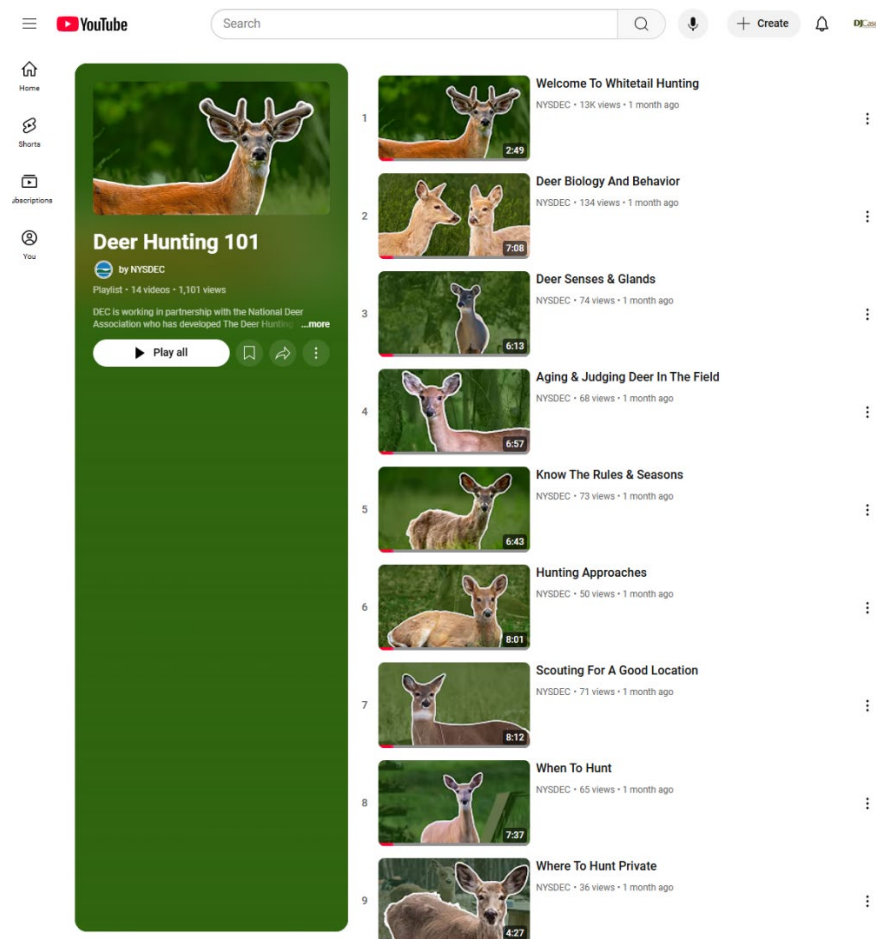


Here is an example of the paid search ads generated in New York. Additional details on the key words and phrases used in this effort can be found in Appendix A.

## Content

Clicking an ad took viewers to this playlist where they could choose to view any video on the list.

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLnBbYubhbH1XA5MHC6gVf8EYD0M\\_bRR-q](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLnBbYubhbH1XA5MHC6gVf8EYD0M_bRR-q)



## Media

	Impressions	Cost	Clicks	Click-thru rate	Cost-per-click
<i>Channel targeting</i>	3,371	\$59.68	5	0.15%	\$11.94
<i>In-feed sponsored ad</i>	147,014	\$428.50	0	N/A	N/A
<i>Non-skippable</i>	445,198	\$8,004.42	610	0.14%	\$13.12
<i>Skippable – long-form</i>	114,227	\$2,009.28	74	0.06%	\$27.15
<i>Skippable</i>	397,664	\$6,494.98	648	0.16%	\$10.02
<i>YouTube Summary</i>	<b>1,107,474</b>	<b>\$16,996.86</b>	<b>1,337</b>	<b>0.12%</b>	<b>\$12.71</b>
<i>Social media - 15 sec</i>	580,356	\$4,908.86	11,389	1.96%	\$0.43
<i>Social media - 6 sec</i>	8,925	\$91.14	213	2.39%	\$0.43
<i>Social Media Summary</i>	<b>589,281</b>	<b>\$5,000.00</b>	<b>11,602</b>	<b>1.97%</b>	<b>\$0.43</b>
<i>Paid search</i>	<b>120,001</b>	<b>\$3,071.76</b>	<b>1,181</b>	<b>0.98%</b>	<b>\$2.60</b>
<i>Campaign Summary</i>	<b>1,816,756</b>	<b>\$25,068.62</b>	<b>14,120</b>	<b>0.78%</b>	<b>\$1.78</b>

## Results

- Social media ads were the most cost-effective option and reached the largest audience at 43 cents per click.
- Paid search was also cost-effective while reaching a more engaged audience at \$2.60 per click.
- YouTube ads averaged over \$12 per click. New York's YouTube costs were considerably less than other states due primarily to a combination of:
  - **Population and audience size:** Smaller audience pools in states like Wisconsin create more expensive bidding environments.
  - **Inventory availability:** States with lower digital media consumption provide fewer ad placement opportunities, increasing the competition for each impression.



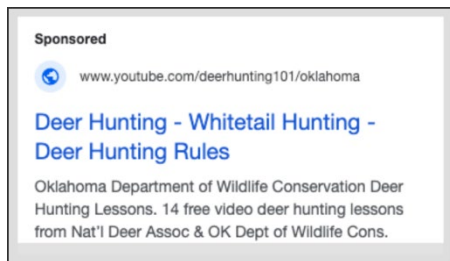
Note: Oklahoma's long-form content was repeatedly flagged as inappropriate because ads depicted firearms. Despite attempts to remedy this with YouTube, Oklahoma's long-form ads did not have enough runtime to provide useful data.

## Video Messages (Used on YouTube & Social Media)

15-Second Commercial: <https://youtu.be/JiZvpm-JO9c?si=sZJgX2pm11XQRVwk>

6-Second Commercial: <https://youtu.be/g0LEMSZ78vg?si=CaLg6GSQ4FK1qcV2>

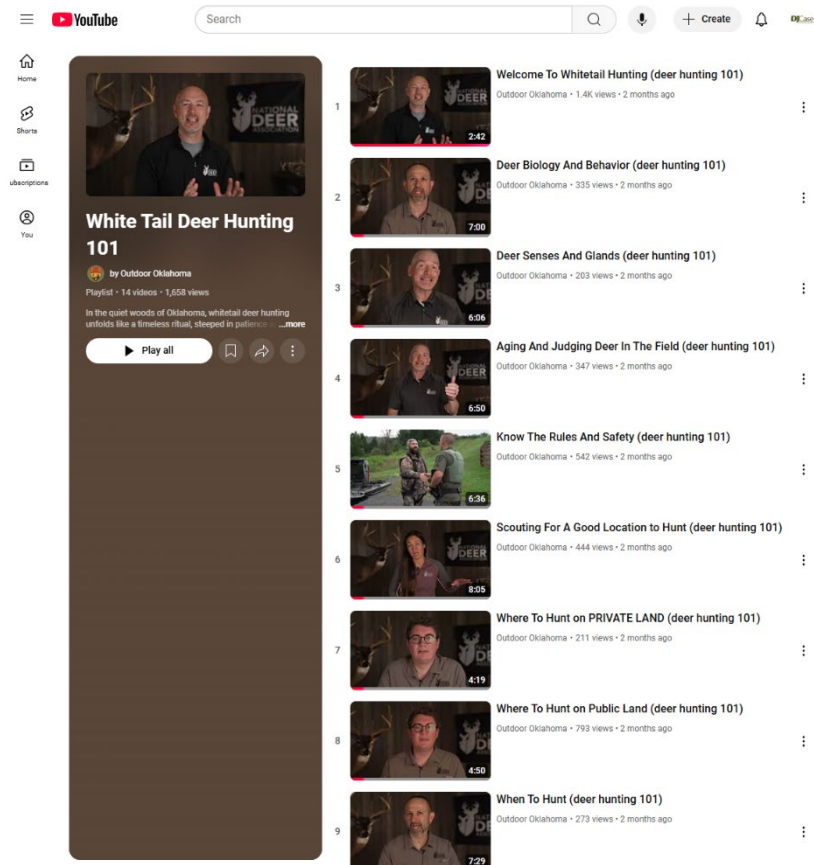
## Paid Search Ads



Here is an example of the paid search ads generated in Oklahoma. Additional details on the key words and phrases used in this effort can be found in Appendix A.

## Content

Clicking an ad took viewers to this playlist where they could choose view any video on the list.



[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLPdKLnMDmy4zG-EkjCSr7x7gSXs9Y8\\_J](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLPdKLnMDmy4zG-EkjCSr7x7gSXs9Y8_J)

to

## Media

	Impressions	Cost	Clicks	Click-thru rate	Cost-per-click
<i>Channel targeting</i>	7,151	\$ 136.42	4	0.06%	\$34.11
<i>In-feed sponsored ad</i>	499,467	\$ 2,593.74	0	N/A	N/A
<i>Non-skippable</i>	337,711	\$ 7,301.74	154	0.05%	\$47.41
<i>Skippable – long-form</i>	416	\$ 8.78	1	0.24%	\$8.78
<i>Skippable</i>	394,515	\$ 6,798.76	233	0.06%	\$29.18
<i>YouTube Summary</i>	<b>1,239,260</b>	<b>\$ 16,839.44</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>0.03%</b>	<b>\$42.96</b>
<i>Social media - 15 sec</i>	538,481	\$ 4,291.38	7,478	1.39%	\$0.57
<i>Social media - 6 sec</i>	60,261	\$ 408.36	772	1.28%	\$0.53
<i>Social Media Summary</i>	<b>598,742</b>	<b>\$ 4,699.74</b>	<b>8,250</b>	<b>1.38%</b>	<b>\$0.57</b>
<i>Paid search</i>	<b>76,781</b>	<b>\$ 3,003.22</b>	<b>889</b>	<b>1.16%</b>	<b>\$3.38</b>
<i>Campaign Summary</i>	<b>1,914,783</b>	<b>\$ 24,542.40</b>	<b>9,531</b>	<b>0.50%</b>	<b>\$2.58</b>

## Results

- Social media ads were the most cost-effective option and reached the largest audience at 57 cents per click.
- Paid search was also cost-effective while reaching a more engaged audience at \$3.38 per click.
- YouTube ads averaged over \$40 per click.



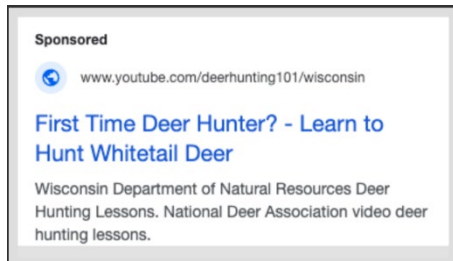
## Video Messages (Used on YouTube & Social Media)

15-Second Commercial: <https://youtu.be/qaLR9Cee0F4?si=dLXkZuLV8F0tCl2k>

6-Second Commercial: [https://youtu.be/UkFVtEz\\_qWw?si=TyAVHiumGVCfrJlw](https://youtu.be/UkFVtEz_qWw?si=TyAVHiumGVCfrJlw)

6-Second Commercial: <https://youtu.be/g0LEMSZ78vg?si=CaLg6GSQ4FK1qcV2>

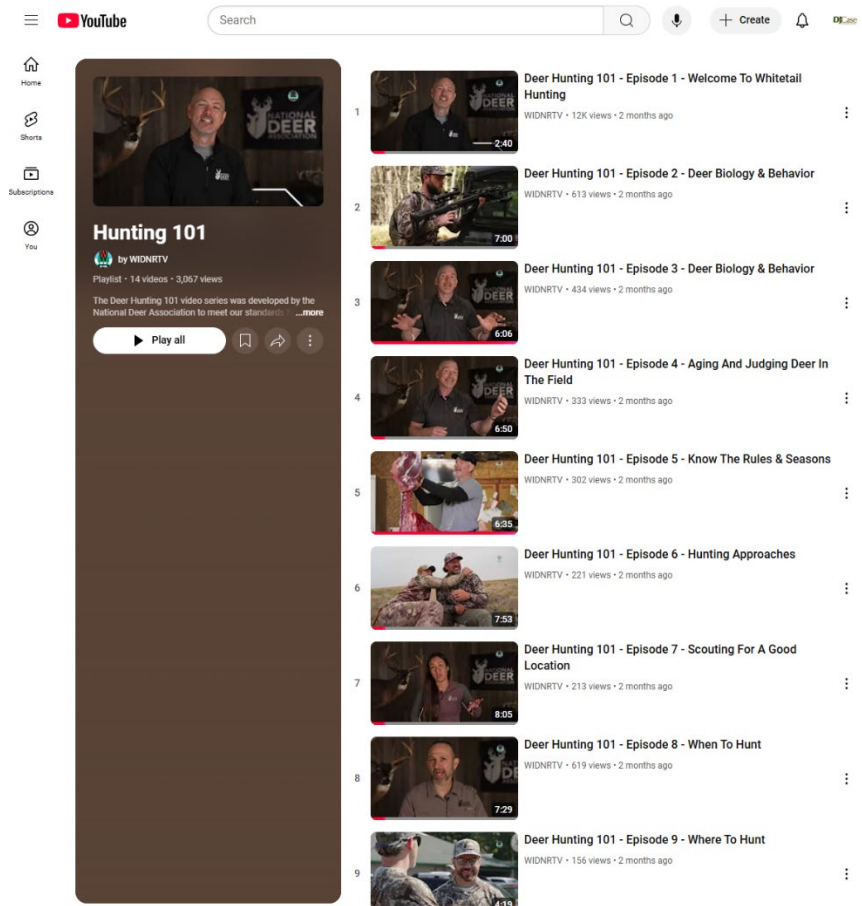
## Paid Search Ads



Here is an example of the paid search ads generated in Wisconsin. Additional details on the key words and phrases used in this effort can be found in Appendix A.

## Content

Clicking an ad took viewers to this playlist where they could choose to view any video on the list.



<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLz1F3wus1j4wo480ygJfObB5D2pQY4eo&si=vhwczLALx8zbCmef>



## Media

	Impressions	Cost	Clicks	Click-thru rate	Cost-per-click
<i>Channel targeting</i>	74,829	\$ 1,390.10	18	0.02%	\$77.23
<i>In-feed sponsored ad</i>	600,178	\$ 2,524.42	0	N/A	N/A
<i>Non-skippable</i>	394,700	\$ 6,460.20	101	0.03%	\$63.96
<i>Skippable – long-form</i>	92,272	\$ 1,939.20	67	0.07%	\$28.94
<i>Skippable</i>	272,282	\$ 4,168.16	62	0.02%	\$67.23
<i>YouTube Summary</i>	<b>1,434,261</b>	<b>\$ 16,482.08</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>0.02%</b>	<b>\$66.46</b>
<i>Social media - 15 sec</i>	651,446	\$ 4,385.10	8,158	1.25%	\$0.54
<i>Social media - 6 sec</i>	53,658	\$ 305.46	638	1.19%	\$0.48
<i>Social Media Summary</i>	<b>705,104</b>	<b>\$ 4,690.56</b>	<b>8,796</b>	<b>1.25%</b>	<b>\$0.53</b>
<i>Paid search</i>	<b>139,200</b>	<b>\$ 2,986.62</b>	<b>1,137</b>	<b>0.82%</b>	<b>\$2.63</b>
<i>Campaign Summary</i>	<b>2,278,565</b>	<b>\$ 24,159.26</b>	<b>10,181</b>	<b>0.45%</b>	<b>\$2.37</b>

## Results

- Social media ads were the most cost-effective option and reached the largest audience at 53 cents per click.
- Paid search was also cost-effective while reaching a more engaged audience at \$2.63 per click.
- YouTube ads averaged over \$60 per click. Wisconsin YouTube was more expensive than any other state due primarily to a combination of:
  - **Population and audience size:** Smaller audience pools in states like Wisconsin create more expensive bidding environments.
  - **Competition dynamics:** Different states have varying levels of advertiser competition within specific niches (like learning to hunt), directly impacting costs.
  - **Engagement patterns:** Areas where users engage more readily with ads generally have lower costs as platforms reward higher engagement rates.
  - **Inventory availability:** States with lower digital media consumption provide fewer ad placement opportunities, increasing the competition for each impression.



# YouTube NDA-Sponsored Message

## Video Messages (Used on YouTube & Social Media)

15-Second Commercial – Landscape: <https://youtu.be/YTC0xmCoOyM?si=wSdMeINPel4bhvm1>

6-Second Commercial – Landscape: [https://youtu.be/E5nhsi\\_AxGw?si=NsUCQ4o8bW\\_Hv8Dd](https://youtu.be/E5nhsi_AxGw?si=NsUCQ4o8bW_Hv8Dd)

## Content

Clicking an ad took viewers to this playlist where they could choose to view any video on the list.

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLRqSDbpi6cRYjNDg8y-bhKklaKQS9DATI&si=-ohi7WK7M3aQ31Hk>

The screenshot shows a YouTube mobile app interface. On the left is a sidebar with navigation icons for Home, Shorts, and You. The main content area displays a playlist titled "Deer Hunting 101 Course" by the National Deer Association. The playlist description states it contains 14 videos and has 94,934 views. Below the description is a "Play all" button. To the right of the playlist title, a list of 9 videos is shown, each with a thumbnail, title, and view count. The first video, "Welcome To Whitetail Hunting. How to Hunt Deer Ep. 1", is highlighted with a larger thumbnail and title. The other videos in the list include "Deer Biology And Behavior. How to Hunt Deer Ep. 2", "Deer Vision, Hearing, Sense of Smell, and Glands. How to Hunt Deer Ep. 3", "Aging and Judging Deer in the Field. How to Hunt Deer Ep. 4", "Deer Hunting Rules and Safety. How to Hunt Deer Ep. 5", "Deer Stands, Decoys, Calling and More Strategies. How to Hunt Deer Ep. 6", "Scouting Deer Sign for Good Stand Locations. How to Hunt Deer Ep. 7", "The Best Times to Deer Hunt. How to Hunt Deer Ep. 8", and "Finding Private Land for Deer Hunting. How to Hunt Deer Ep. 9".

Video Title	Views
Welcome To Whitetail Hunting. How to Hunt Deer Ep. 1	35K views • 1 year ago
Deer Biology And Behavior. How to Hunt Deer Ep. 2	19K views • 1 year ago
Deer Vision, Hearing, Sense of Smell, and Glands. How to Hunt Deer Ep. 3	53K views • 1 year ago
Aging and Judging Deer in the Field. How to Hunt Deer Ep. 4	21K views • 1 year ago
Deer Hunting Rules and Safety. How to Hunt Deer Ep. 5	11K views • 1 year ago
Deer Stands, Decoys, Calling and More Strategies. How to Hunt Deer Ep. 6	9.3K views • 1 year ago
Scouting Deer Sign for Good Stand Locations. How to Hunt Deer Ep. 7	12K views • 1 year ago
The Best Times to Deer Hunt. How to Hunt Deer Ep. 8	11K views • 1 year ago
Finding Private Land for Deer Hunting. How to Hunt Deer Ep. 9	5.6K views • 1 year ago

## Media

	Impressions	Cost	Clicks	Click-thru rate	Cost-per-click
<i>Channel targeting</i>	38,969	\$539.70	2	<b>0.005%</b>	\$269.85
<i>In-feed sponsored ad</i>	515,877	\$1,106.38	0		-
<i>Non-skippable</i>	158,512	\$1,800.78	7	<b>0.004%</b>	\$257.25
<i>Skippable – long-form</i>	31,019	\$532.62	17	<b>0.055%</b>	\$31.33
<i>Skippable</i>	116,300	\$1,304.04	2	<b>0.002%</b>	\$652.02
<i>YouTube Subtotals</i>	<b>860,677</b>	<b>\$5,283.52</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>0.003%</b>	<b>\$188.70</b>
<i>Social media - 15 sec</i>	500,343	\$3,694.52	8,938	1.786%	\$0.41
<i>Social media - 6 sec</i>	16,804	\$118.88	288	1.714%	\$0.41
<i>Subtotals</i>	<b>517,147</b>	<b>\$3,813.40</b>	<b>9,226</b>	<b>1.784%</b>	<b>\$0.41</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,377,824</b>	<b>\$9,096.92</b>	<b>9,254</b>	<b>0.672%</b>	<b>\$0.98</b>

## Results

- The cost-per-click for NDA's social media ads was nearly 10 cents lower than that of the participating states.
- Paid search was not utilized in NDA's marketing strategy, as this would have competed with state paid search and driven up costs.
- YouTube-specific advertisements averaged \$188 per click (compared to a combined average of \$28 for the states). This is due to a much lower click-thru-rate NDA ads received than state ads. This is probably due to a combination of two factors:
  - The residents of each state are more familiar with their fish and wildlife agency than NDA so they were more likely to click on a link provided by the state.
  - The budget dedicated to NDA YouTube ads in each state was significantly smaller than the budget for each state. This smaller budget may not have enough for the YouTube algorithm to discover the type of people clicking on the ad and optimize to find them.

## State-to-State Comparisons

YouTube	Impressions	Cost	Clicks	Click-thru rate	Cost-per-click
Alabama	1,208,165	\$ 16,603.60	385	0.03%	\$ 43.13
Oklahoma	1,239,260	\$ 16,839.44	392	0.03%	\$ 42.96
New York	1,107,474	\$ 16,996.86	1,337	0.12%	\$ 12.71
Wisconsin	1,434,261	\$ 16,482.08	248	0.02%	\$ 66.46

YouTube consistently had the highest cost-per-click in every state.

Paid Social	Impressions	Cost	Clicks	Click-thru rate	Cost-per-click
Alabama	610,477	\$ 4,745.46	8,408	1.38%	\$ 0.56
Oklahoma	598,742	\$ 4,699.74	8,250	1.38%	\$ 0.57
New York	589,281	\$ 5,000.00	11,602	1.97%	\$ 0.43
Wisconsin	705,104	\$ 4,690.56	8,796	1.25%	\$ 0.53

Social media ads consistently had the lowest cost-per-click in every state.

Paid Search	Impressions	Cost	Clicks	Click-thru rate	Cost-per-click
Alabama	91,748	\$ 2,991.74	886	0.97%	\$ 3.38
Oklahoma	76,781	\$ 3,003.22	889	1.16%	\$ 3.38
New York	120,001	\$ 3,071.76	1,181	0.98%	\$ 2.60
Wisconsin	139,200	\$ 2,986.62	1,137	0.82%	\$ 2.63

Paid search cost-per-click was cheaper than YouTube and more expensive than social media ads across all states.

Across all three channels (YouTube, social media, and paid search), the cost-per-click differences between states were primarily driven by:

- **Population and audience size:** Larger states like New York consistently had lower costs due to greater ad inventory and more potential impressions, while smaller audience pools in states like Wisconsin created more expensive bidding environments.
- **Competition dynamics:** Different states have varying levels of advertiser competition within specific niches (like learning to hunt), directly impacting costs.
- **Engagement patterns:** User behavior varies by region; areas where users engage more readily with ads generally have lower costs as platforms reward higher engagement rates.
- **Inventory availability:** States with higher digital media consumption provide more ad placement opportunities, reducing competition for each impression.

## State- vs NDA-Sponsored Messages

To determine whether state-sponsored messages performed differently from NDA-sponsored messages, we need to separate the data and compare the results. Below, we compare results for social media ads and YouTube ads. We did not run paid search for NDA, as the paid search for the states and NDA would have competed with one another and driven up costs.

### State-Sponsored Results

	Impressions	Cost	Clicks	Click-thru rate	Cost-per-click
<i>Channel targeting</i>	134,751	\$2,320.80	34	0.03%	\$68.26
<i>In-feed sponsored ad</i>	2,141,337	\$8,975.22	0	N/A	N/A
<i>Non-skippable</i>	1,743,750	\$30,826.08	1,037	0.06%	\$29.73
<i>Skippable – long-form</i>	338,741	\$6,489.88	261	0.08%	\$24.87
<i>Skippable</i>	1,491,258	\$23,593.52	1,058	0.07%	\$22.30
<i>YouTube Summary</i>	<b>5,849,837</b>	<b>72,206</b>	<b>2,390</b>	<b>0.04%</b>	<b>\$30.21</b>
<i>Social media - 15 sec</i>	2,824,880	\$21,629.30	43,574	1.54%	\$0.50
<i>Social media - 6 sec</i>	195,871	\$1,319.86	2,708	1.38%	\$0.49
<i>Social Media Summary</i>	<b>3,020,751</b>	<b>22,949</b>	<b>46,282</b>	<b>1.53%</b>	<b>\$0.50</b>
<i>Paid search</i>	<b>427,730</b>	<b>\$12,053.34</b>	<b>4,093</b>	<b>0.96%</b>	<b>\$2.94</b>
<i>Combined Summary</i>	<b>9,298,318</b>	<b>107,208</b>	<b>52,765</b>	<b>0.57%</b>	<b>\$2.03</b>

### NDA-Sponsored Results

	Impressions	Cost	Clicks	Click-thru rate	Cost-per-click
<i>Channel targeting</i>	38,969	\$539.70	2	<b>0.005%</b>	\$269.85
<i>In-feed sponsored ad</i>	515,877	\$1,106.38	0		-
<i>Non-skippable</i>	158,512	\$1,800.78	7	<b>0.004%</b>	\$257.25
<i>Skippable – long-form</i>	31,019	\$532.62	17	<b>0.055%</b>	\$31.33
<i>Skippable</i>	116,300	\$1,304.04	2	<b>0.002%</b>	\$652.02
<i>YouTube Subtotals</i>	<b>860,677</b>	<b>\$5,283.52</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>0.003%</b>	<b>\$188.70</b>
<i>Social media - 15 sec</i>	500,343	\$3,694.52	8,938	<b>1.786%</b>	\$0.41
<i>Social media - 6 sec</i>	16,804	\$118.88	288	<b>1.714%</b>	\$0.41
<i>Subtotals</i>	<b>517,147</b>	<b>\$3,813.40</b>	<b>9,226</b>	<b>1.784%</b>	<b>\$0.41</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,377,824</b>	<b>\$9,096.92</b>	<b>9,254</b>	<b>0.672%</b>	<b>\$0.98</b>

YouTube cost/click was significantly higher for NDA than for the states. This could be due to several factors:

- **Limited Learning & Optimization** – With a smaller budget, the NDA campaign may not have generated enough data for YouTube's algorithm to optimize effectively, resulting in higher CPCs.
- **Auction Competitiveness** – A lower budget restricted the NDA campaign's ability to enter a broad range of auctions, potentially forcing it into more expensive placements.
- **Bidding Strategy & Delivery** – Budget constraints may have limited bidding flexibility, preventing the campaign from capturing lower-cost opportunities.
- **Audience Competitiveness** – With identical targeting, the NDA campaign may have struggled to compete efficiently against the State's campaign.

Paid social cost/click was 6 cents (13% lower for NDA than the combined states). This could be due to several factors:

- **Landing Page Experience** – The NDA campaign featured a more engaging landing page, improving user experience and lowering costs.
- **Higher Subscriber Authority** – Greater subscriber count for NDA translated to improved trust signals and engagement metrics.
- **Enhanced Visual Elements** – Optimized video thumbnails in the NDA playlist provided better user experience, improving campaign performance. (see attached screenshots)
- **Complete Learning Phase** – The NDA campaign, running for 3 weeks, might have gone through a more efficient learning phase. Meta's algorithms typically optimize ad performance over time, and if the NDA campaign reached a more optimized state within a shorter period, it could have led to lower CPC

## Impact of Viewing Device on YouTube Clicks

	Impressions	Cost	Clicks	Click-thru rate	Cost-per-click
<i>Smart phone</i>	2,296,508	\$23,040.36	1,986	0.09%	\$11.60
<i>Desktop</i>	1,111,592	\$14,221.34	348	0.03%	\$40.87
<i>Tablet</i>	843,731	\$9,071.83	219	0.03%	\$41.42
<i>Connected TV</i>	2,783,370	\$37,629.28	202	0.01%	\$186.28
<b><i>TOTAL</i></b>	<b>7,035,201</b>	<b>\$83,962.81</b>	<b>2,755</b>	<b>0.04%</b>	<b>\$30.48</b>

The results of campaigns that require an action (usually clicking) can be affected by the devices used by the individuals viewing the campaign. When advertising on YouTube, it is best to target smart phone users as they are the most likely to click. On the other end of the spectrum, Connected TV (CTV) generates the fewest clicks. CTV allows viewers to watch YouTube on a smart TV. The bulk of CTV platforms do not allow users to click on YouTube ads.

## Views by Topic

While measuring viewers' interest in one how-to topic versus another was not an objective of this project, data across the five Deer Hunting 101 playlists makes it obvious that some topics are more popular than others.

	NDA Lifetime Views	NDA Campaign Views	Oklahoma Views	Alabama Views	Wisconsin Views	New York Views	TOTAL CAMPAIGN VIEWS
<i>Ep 1: Welcome Intro</i>	34,972	9,624	1,473	12,867	12,002	13,383	<b>49,349</b>
<i>Ep 2: Biology &amp; Behavior</i>	19,093	2,259	333	266	585	128	<b>3,571</b>
<i>Ep 3: Deer Senses</i>	53,077	1,817	201	174	417	72	<b>2,681</b>
<i>Ep 4: Aging &amp; Field Judgement</i>	21,107	2,057	343	166	321	67	<b>2,954</b>
<i>Ep 5: Rules &amp; Safety</i>	11,328	1,406	343	275	289	72	<b>2,385</b>
<i>Ep 6: Strategies</i>	9,263	981	436	173	207	49	<b>1,846</b>
<i>Ep 7: Scouting</i>	12,769	1,243	201	62	205	68	<b>1,779</b>
<i>Ep 8: Best Times to Hunt</i>	10,881	1,169	632	113	594	64	<b>2,572</b>
<i>Ep 9: Private Land</i>	5,553	629	265	86	149	35	<b>1,164</b>
<i>Ep 10: Public Land</i>	5,854	754	800	136	232	54	<b>1,976</b>
<i>Ep 11: What to Look For</i>	13,105	843	389	63	158	40	<b>1,493</b>
<i>Ep 12: Shot Placement</i>	257,091	10,983	622	212	1,033	79	<b>12,929</b>
<i>Ep 13: Post-shot</i>	29,000	3,085	295	96	255	67	<b>3,798</b>
<i>Ep 14: Ethics &amp; Responsibilities</i>	5,248	323	175	63	136	33	<b>730</b>
<b>PLAYLIST TOTAL VIEWS</b>		<b>37,173</b>	<b>6,508</b>	<b>14,752</b>	<b>16,583</b>	<b>14,211</b>	<b>89,227</b>

Individuals who clicked on the ads were presented with a playlist and could choose any video in the series. The top six videos viewed were:

1. Episode 1: Welcome Intro – **49,349 views**
2. Episode 12: Shot Placement – **12,929 views**
3. Episode 13: Post-Shot – **3,798 views**
4. Episode 2: Biology & Behavior – **3,571 views**
5. Episode 4: Aging & Field Judgement – **2,954 views**
6. Episode 3: Deer Senses – **2,681 views**

In a different rank order, the same most-viewed episodes emerged in NDA's lifetime views (since the launch of the series), strongly suggesting that viewers have the most interest in these topics.

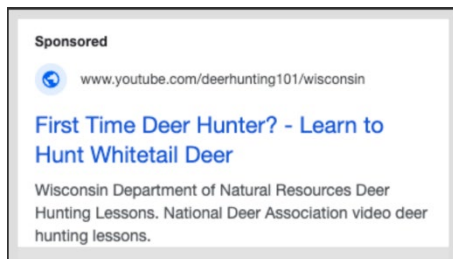
## Appendix: Paid Search Terms

Paid search advertising places ads on search results of individuals who use a set of search terms determined by the advertiser.

For this project the search terms were:

- Deer
- Whitetail
- Hunting
- Learn hunting
- Deer hunting
- Learn to hunt
- Whitetail hunting
- Deer season
- Firearm deer season
- Muzzleloader deer season
- Rifle deer season
- State specific keywords
  - Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
  - Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation
  - New York Department of Environmental Conservation
  - Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

When an individual uses one of those search terms, an ad is automatically created and placed on their search results by the search engine. These ads are combinations of a headline, a description, and an organization name. As the campaign generates clicks, the algorithms select the components of the ad to maximize click-through.



For this effort the list of each is below:

### Headlines

- Learn to hunt deer
- Learn deer hunting
- Learn to hunt
- Learn to hunt whitetail deer
- Learn whitetail hunting
- How to deer hunt
- Whitetail hunting
- Video deer hunting lessons
- National Deer Association
- First time deer hunting
- Where to hunt deer
- How to process deer
- Deer hunting rules
- Deer shot placement



## Descriptions

- 14 free video deer hunting lessons from the National Deer Association & [Insert Agency Name]
  - AL Dept of Conservation and Natural Resources
  - NY Dept of Environmental Conservation
  - WI Dept of Natural Resources
  - OK Dept of Wildlife Conservation
- National Deer Association Video Deer Hunting Lessons
- Free Deer Hunting Lessons – Basics, Scouting, Regulations, Where to Hunt, Shot Placement, Processing
- [Insert Agency Name] Deer Hunting Lessons
  - Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
  - Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation
  - New York Department of Environmental Conservation
  - Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources