

2025



FACEBOOK BENCHMARK

REPORT

Q1 2025

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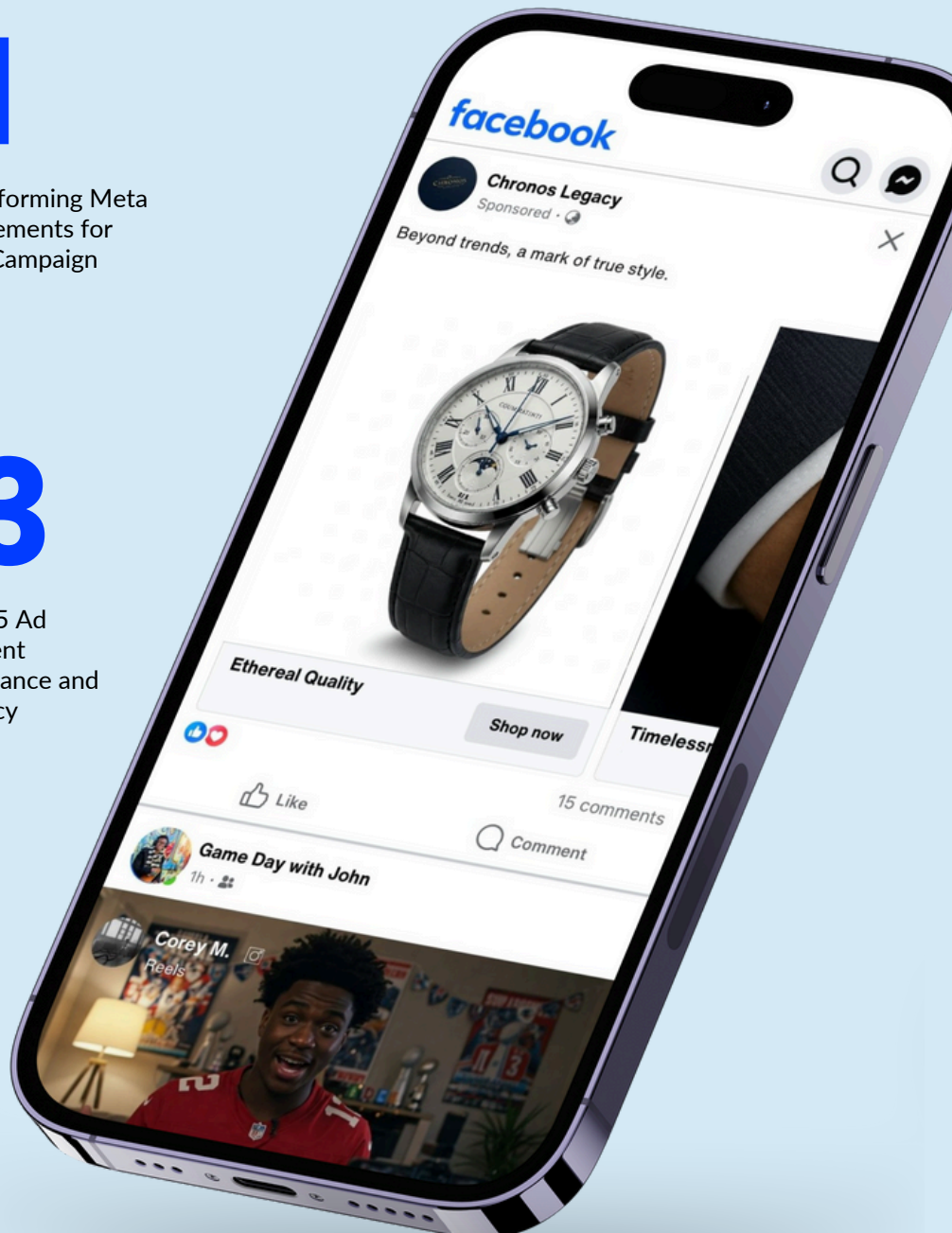
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Executive Summary

Impressions Campaigns

Improved CPM YoY

-44%

Q1 2025 delivered the most cost-efficient CPMs to date, with a 44% year-over-year drop.

Decline CTR YoY

-65%

CTR declined sharply in Q1 2025, averaging between 0.12% and 0.34%. While impressions scaled through automation, engagement weakened.

Clicks Campaign

Improved CPC YoY

-65%

Click campaigns became significantly more cost-efficient in Q1 2025. Brands saw stronger engagement at lower costs.

Improved CTR YoY

200+%

Click-Through Rates surged in Q1 2025, climbing from 2.90% in January to a peak of 14.41% in February.

Link Clicks Campaign

Improved CPLC YoY

-6%

Cost per Link Click declined slightly year-over-year. While performance varied by placement.

Decline LCTR YoY

-65%

Link intent softened across the board. The drop in LCTR highlights a growing disconnect between impressions and ad engagement.

Introduction

Strike Social Q1 2025 report was developed to provide performance marketers and media strategists with a practical, data-backed perspective on how Meta ads performed during the first quarter of this year. All data included reflects U.S.-based campaigns run between January 1 and March 31, 2025, across diverse industries and verticals.

To provide data that reflects real-world campaign strategies, we limited our analysis to campaigns that ran on at least four placements, excluding single-placement and overly narrow executions that may skew delivery patterns.

Our analysis combines quantitative metric tracking (CPM, CTR, LCTR, CPC, and CPLC), including quadrant visualizations, to benchmark cost-effectiveness relative to conversion intent. This framework helps brands move beyond basic engagement tracking and better understand how placements perform when scaled, priced, and judged by their ability to drive action.

This report goes beyond placement-level engagement. Our goal is to help advertisers better understand:

- Which option offers scalable and sustainable traffic performance
- Where Meta's automation may favor volume over value
- How strategic optimization, manual or automated, can improve ROI in 2025

Whether you're running Advantage+ or layered media plans with manual segmentation, this benchmark equips you with the insights needed to make data-informed decisions and unlock better performance on Meta.

Impression campaigns

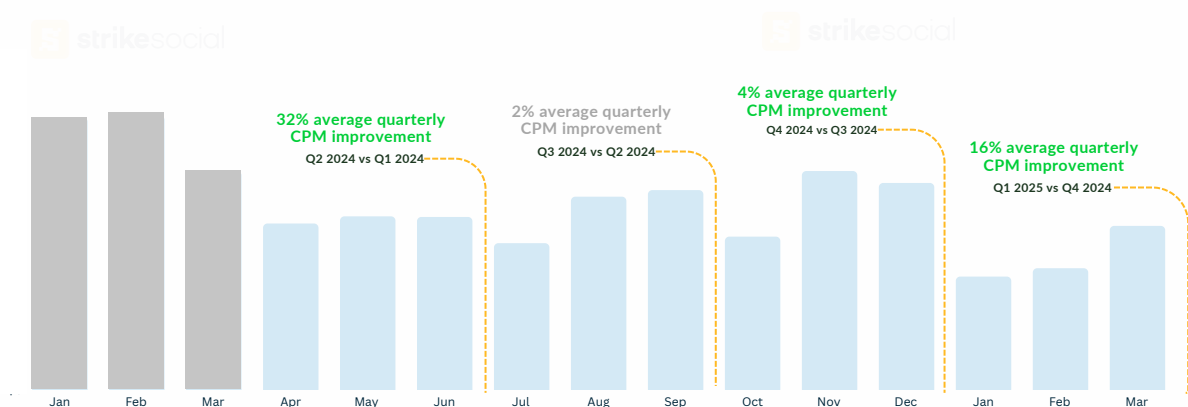
Overview

- Q1 2025 saw a 44% decrease in CPM compared to Q1 2024, enabling advertisers to extend their reach more cost-efficiently.
- Despite lower costs, the click-through rate (CTR) dropped by 65% year over year, indicating that broader reach did not consistently drive stronger user interaction.
- Meta's expansion of automated placements and Reels Overlay ads on Facebook likely contributed to the surge in impressions, particularly during the February–March window.

CPM trends, Facebook Awareness Campaigns

Comparing 2024 - 2025 US Campaigns, Facebook ads leveraging on driving more impressions

Source: Strike Social, Campaign Lab



The cost of reaching audiences on Meta steadily declined from the beginning of 2024 through early 2025. Starting with relatively elevated CPMs in Q1 2024, the rest of the year saw a gradual cost deflation, and by Q1 2025, CPMs reached their lowest point in over a year, down more than 40% year-over-year.

Facebook impression campaigns achieved broader reach at a lower cost. Although the decrease in CPM is consistent with typical post-holiday seasonality, this year was significant due to the scale and consistency of low-cost inventory available from January to March. However, engagement metrics like CTR and ER displayed uneven performance, indicating that increased visibility did not always result in greater interaction.

Two possible factors that we can look into for improvement in CPM trends are:

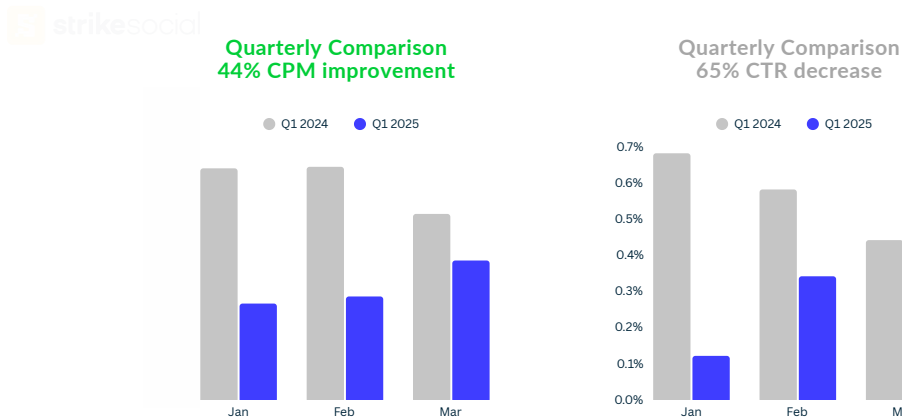
- **Meta has expanded Reels Overlay ad inventory on Facebook.** These non-intrusive, banner-style ads appear at the bottom of Reels content and have become more widely available, following Meta's efforts to monetize short-form video at scale. This new ad placement allows for high-volume impression delivery with minimal creative adaptations.

- **Meta's Advantage+ automation and machine learning algorithms.** Optimizing delivery in real-time based on engagement signals and budget pacing helps drive more efficiency on top of what these AI-driven campaigns can deliver.

Q1 YoY Trends, CPM and CTR Facebook Awareness Campaigns

Comparing 2024 - 2025 US Campaigns, Facebook ads leveraging on driving more impressions

Source: Strike Social, Campaign Lab



Meta has increasingly focused on Reels. According to reports, the time spent on social video within Meta is expected to remain at *40% compared to other social platforms. Given this trend, advertisers should prepare to embrace more Reels inventory in 2025.

The integration of Reels Overlay ad placement into campaign objectives aims to achieve more impressions, especially when paired with Advantage+ solutions. This has allowed advertisers to unlock boosted impressions as it learns the lowest possible ad costs in the auction.

Scale Impressions Efficiently with Influencer-Powered Meta Campaigns

Looking to boost impression volume without compromising efficiency?

This success story shows how Strike Social partnered with a leading brand to drive guaranteed reach while keeping costs lean and outcomes strategic.

By pairing authentic influencer content with Meta's advanced audience targeting and automated placement tools, the campaign achieved a 43% margin on guaranteed impressions across Facebook and Instagram.



[Learn more](#)

Traffic Campaigns

Campaigns leveraging on Clicks and Link Clicks

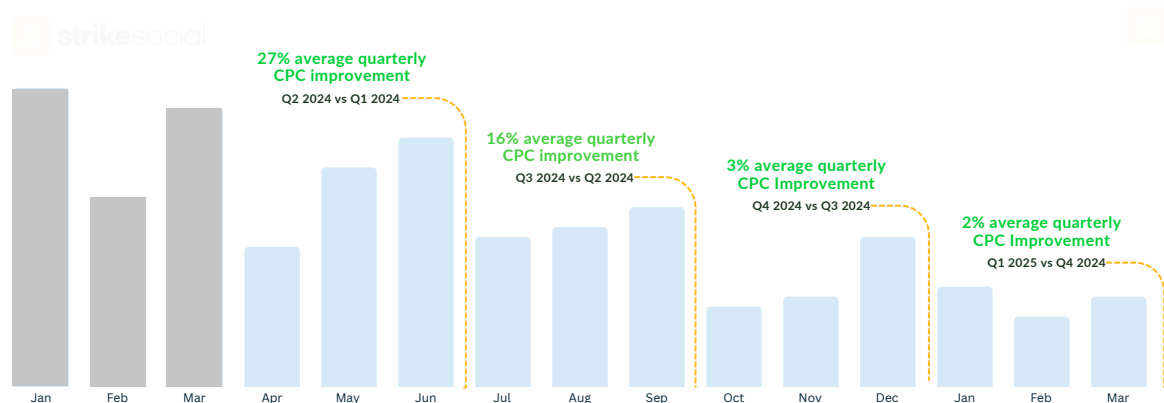
Overview on Clicks Campaign

- Cost per Click (CPC) continued to decline into Q1 2025, down significantly from early 2024, offering advertisers more efficient reach per action.
- Click-Through Rates (CTR) surged as high as 14.4% in February 2025, the highest in over a year, link click performance remained below Q1 2024, pointing to a disconnect between interaction and intent.
- Feed placements accounted for 72% of total clicks, while newer formats like Reels Overlay captured nearly half of the impressions but resulted in fewer direct actions. This trend highlights a significant shift in how engagement is distributed among placements.

CPC trends, Facebook Awareness Campaigns

Comparing 2024 - 2025 US Campaigns, Facebook ads leveraging on driving more clicks

Source: Strike Social, Campaign Lab



As Meta's effort continued optimizing toward cost efficiency, click campaigns in Q1 2025 saw the lowest CPCs recorded over the past year, dropping by over 65% from Q1 2024 levels. In parallel, CTR rose to record highs in February at over 14%, driven by enhanced audience targeting, automation, and increased delivery across highly engaging mobile formats like Reels, Stories, and in-stream video.

However, internal data reveals a growing divergence between CTR and actual link click outcomes. Although more users interacted with ads on the surface, tapping, swiping, or reacting, these ad engagements often did not translate into site visits or downstream traffic, especially when served in short-form video environments.

A closer look at placement-level performance tells a clear story:

- Feed ads accounted for just 36% of impressions but delivered over 72% of total clicks, making it the most efficient placement for traffic-driven campaigns.

- Facebook Reels Overlay captured 46% of all impressions but contributed only 11% of clicks, emphasizing its role as a high-reach but low-intent placement.
- Other immersive formats, like In-stream video and Instagram Reels, showed better engagement trends than Facebook Reels Overlay.

This indicates that Meta's automation, especially through Advantage+ placements, may have overly focused on high-CTR environments that emphasize viewability and engagement metrics rather than direct traffic. This approach can be effective for building top-funnel visibility but is less suitable for achieving down-funnel goals.

Learn more about Meta Advantage+ Targeting

Meta's Advantage+ Placements use machine learning to automatically deliver your ads across the highest-performing placements—whether in Feed, Reels, Stories, or In-stream video. Instead of manually selecting where your ad appears, Advantage+ finds opportunities that maximize delivery efficiency based on real-time user behavior, cost, and performance signals.



[Learn more](#)

For click campaigns, this automation often lowers CPC by serving ads in placements where users are most likely to interact. However, our internal data shows that while Advantage+ can scale impressions and improve CTR, it often prioritizes placements like Reels Overlay or In-stream Video, which may not translate to actual link clicks or landing page visits.

So, should you use Advantage+ Placements

Discover low-cost, high-engagement placements

Reach broader audiences automatically

Reduce manual setup complexity

What should you consider

Monitoring placement-level performance

Leave room for optimizing other factors to tailor for high-intent targeting

Applying strategic media plans to balance automation

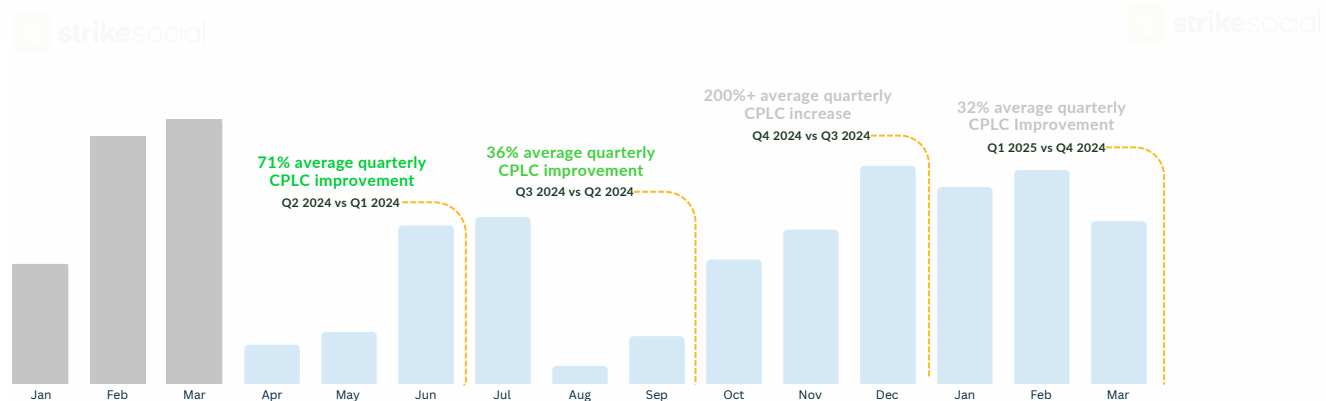
Overview on Link Clicks Campaign

- Link Click Rates (LCR) declined sharply in Q1 2025, reaching their lowest point, 0.38% in March, despite stable costs and scaled delivery.
- While Cost per Link Click (CPLC) remained efficient, the drop in LCR indicates that broader delivery did not translate into intent-driven user behavior.
- A combination of ad saturation, placement shift to passive formats, and behavioral changes in how users consume information online contributed to this campaign performance change.

CPLC Trends, Facebook Awareness Campaigns

Comparing 2024 - 2025 US Campaigns, Facebook ads leveraging on driving more link clicks

Source: Strike Social, Campaign Lab



Similar to other campaign objectives in the first quarter, particularly those focused on impressions and clicks, Meta's AI-driven solution is scaling rapidly and directing more impressions to areas with higher visibility. However, for link click campaigns, this surge in impressions did not result in an increase in traffic. The Link Click Rate has steadily declined, while costs remained stable. Suggesting a growing disconnect between visibility and user action.

Again, Facebook Reels Overlay delivered the majority of impressions, but underdelivered in clicks, accounting for less than a quarter. Feed placements, however, punched above their distribution percentage, delivering the highest share of clicks with only a third of total impressions. This indicates that while Reels placements can be scaled effectively, they may need closer monitoring to achieve performance-based goals such as conversions or down-funnel actions.

While placement is a key factor, it's not the only one. Several other forces are shaping the performance of link click campaigns:

- Creative friction in short-form video: Many link click ads are being served in vertical video environments without strong CTAs or clickable design. Creatives not adapted to Reels or Stories can fail to convert passive viewers into active clickers.

- Audience behavior shifts: Younger users are now discovering products with other social apps. Even within the Meta ecosystem, Instagram users tend to signal stronger purchase intent, particularly within Stories and Reels, while Facebook users often engage more passively.
- Overlapping objectives and funnel confusion: With more advertisers blending awareness and traffic goals, creative strategies may be too soft for direct conversion. Branding-oriented content may earn impressions but not prompt action.

For advertisers focused on driving quality traffic, a one-size-fits-all placement strategy is no longer sufficient. While automation tools like Meta's Advantage+ offer impressive reach and cost-efficiency, they often prioritize volume over conversion depth, pushing delivery into high-impression environments that may not align with traffic-intent goals. Platforms like Facebook Reels Overlay and In-stream Video, while valuable for upper-funnel visibility, tend to underperform when it comes to outbound clicks.

Drive Stronger Link Clicks Outcomes

Prioritize placements with proven link intent.

Balance costs and performance by prioritizing placements like Facebook Feed and Instagram Stories to achieve quality ad clicks and engagements.

Tailor creative assets to match the behavior of each placement.

Effective hooks, clear calls to action, native video framing, and simplified messaging enhance performance in vertical formats.

Layer retargeting or audience segmentation.

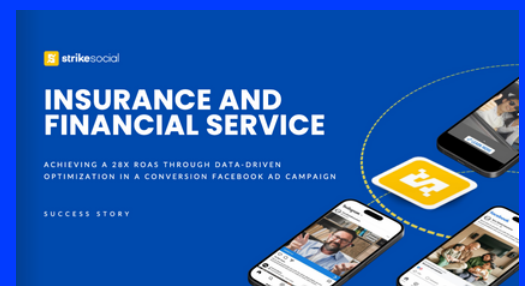
By setting up granular campaigns, media buyers can minimize reliance on broad delivery and better match content with high-intent users.

Apply manual placement controls, even within Advantage+ setups.

Rather than opting out entirely, advertisers can take a hybrid approach by selectively excluding advantage+ placements and applying other advantage+ solutions to rebalance delivery toward higher-performing assets or targeting.

Partner with Strike Social to enhance automated delivery with expert-led optimization.

Whether utilizing Advantage+ placements or running custom setups, Strike Social's media team ensures continuous placement-level analysis and daily adjustments while focusing on scaling campaigns without sacrificing traffic quality.



[Learn more](#)

Top Performing Meta Ad Placements for Clicks & Link Clicks

Consolidated Data for Meta Traffic Campaign

To prevent isolated performance results from limited-placement campaigns and to reflect a broader trend, we consolidated US-based campaigns that ran between January 1 and March 31, 2025. These campaigns included at least four active placements each. This approach helps eliminate bias towards feed-only or reels-only strategies. It helps represent data accuracy performance in mixed-placement environments, which aligns with how Meta's automation effectively scales delivery in Advantage+ campaigns.

Across this dataset, we tracked performance across various placements, including shared network: Audience Network Classic, Business Discovery Feed, and Rewarded Video. Here is the breakdown of Facebook and Instagram placements:

Facebook Placements	
Facebook Feed	Facebook Reels
Facebook Reels Overlay	Facebook Stories
Facebook Profile Feed	In-stream Video
Video Feeds	Marketplace
Right Hand Column	Search

Instagram Placements	
Instagram Stories	Instagram Reels
Instagram Explore	Instagram Profile Feed
Instagram Profile Reels	Instagram Explore Grid Home
Instagram Search	

The Five Most Utilized Placements

From this broader mix, five placements emerged as the most invested and consistently utilized across both Click and Link Click campaigns. These placements not only received the most spend, but also played critical roles in defining downstream engagement:

Facebook Feed

A traditional, scroll-based placement that appears in the user's main feed. Supports static, carousel, and video formats. Known for high intent, clear CTAs, and reliable traffic performance.

Facebook Reels Overlay

A banner-style ad that appears at the bottom of Reels. Non-intrusive, scalable, and designed for broad reach. It is ideal for awareness, but based on our data, it underperforms on clicks unless paired with strong creative hooks.

In-stream Video

Mid-roll or pre-roll ads shown within longer-form video content. Typically skippable, these placements offer high attention capture for short bursts

Instagram Stories

Full-screen vertical ads that appear between user-generated Stories. Great for immersive storytelling, product demos, or time-sensitive promos. The placement can suffer from quick swipe-through behavior if creatives lack urgency.

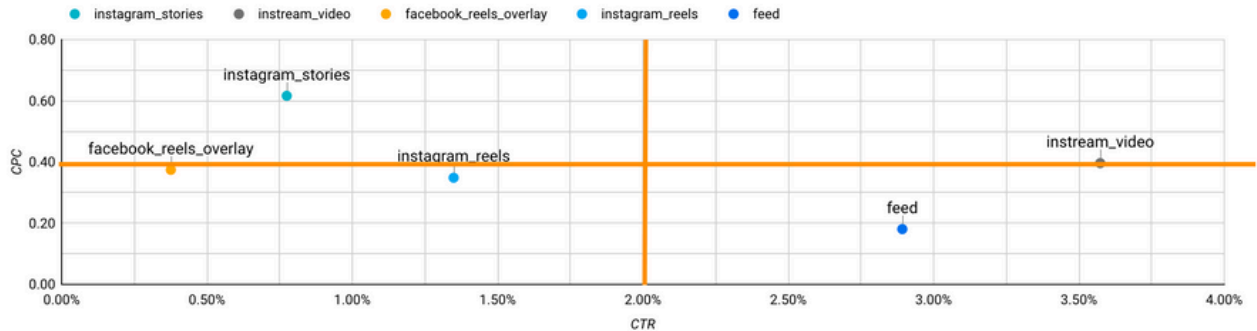
Instagram Reels

Short-form video ads embedded within the Reels scroll. Effective for entertainment-style content and brand visibility, but often challenged by low outbound click behavior unless creatives are CTA-optimized.

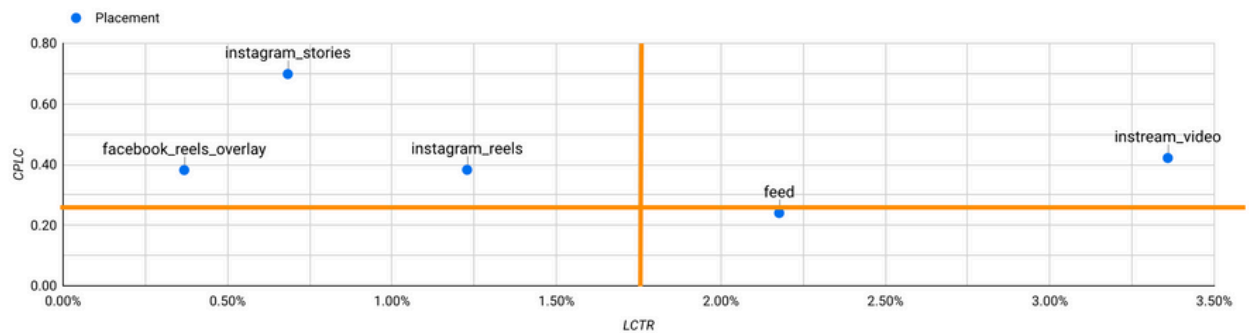


Q1 2025 Ad Placement Performance and Efficiency

Distribution of CTR by CPC



Distribution of LCTR by CPLC



To further assess placement performance, we plotted Click-Through Rate (CTR) and Link Click-Through Rate (LCTR) against their corresponding cost metrics (CPC and CPLC). This quadrant view helps visualize which placements strike the ideal balance between cost-efficiency and conversion intent, a key consideration for performance marketers.

Facebook Feed and In-stream Video have proven to be the most balanced placements, consistently performing at or above the average in terms of Click-Through Rate (CTR) and Link Click-Through Rate (LCTR), while also maintaining competitive costs. The Feed, in particular, stands out for its unmatched ability to deliver reliable outbound traffic at scale. In-stream Video has also shown to be highly effective for brands using concise, action-oriented creative within interruptive formats.

Instagram Reels positioned itself closer to the center in both quadrants, representing a dependable but less optimized middle ground. While its click-through rate (CTR) is decent, its efficiency is somewhat lower, highlighting the necessity for improved audience targeting and better alignment of creative content to transform passive engagement into meaningful clicks.

Instagram Stories are positioned in the upper-left quadrant, where higher cost-per-click (CPC) and cost-per-lead (CPLC) rates intersect with below-average performance. While Instagram Stories remain valuable for storytelling and visual engagement, their current cost structure makes them better suited for selective use in remarketing or sequential messaging, rather than for broad traffic acquisition.

Finally, Facebook Reels Overlay continues to show the lowest efficiency across both charts. Despite delivering the highest volume of impressions in our dataset, its CTR and LCTR suggest it's best positioned for top-funnel awareness objectives, not direct response goals. Media buyers should approach this placement as a visibility driver rather than a conversion engine and adjust delivery accordingly when traffic is the primary KPI.

Here's a breakdown of the CTR and LCTR ranges for the top five meta ad placements you can use as a benchmark for your traffic campaign.

Placements	CTR Range	LCTR Range
Facebook Feed	2.0 – 3.8%	1.3 – 3.0%
Facebook Reels Overlay	0.4 – 0.5%	0.3 – 0.5%
Instream Video	3.1 – 4.3%	3.0 – 4.0%
Instagram Stories	0.7 – 0.9%	0.6 – 0.8%
Instagram – Reels	0.7 – 1.8%	0.6 – 1.8%

From Placement Strategy to Guaranteed Outcomes

**Guarantee Results
with Strike Social**

Not all impressions are created equal, and not all clicks lead to results. As Meta's platform grows more complex, success does not come solely from efficient placements and automation.

Strike Social offers a unique model built for performance advertisers: campaigns built and optimized around guaranteed results, whether that's video completions, cost per site visit, or lower funnel conversions.

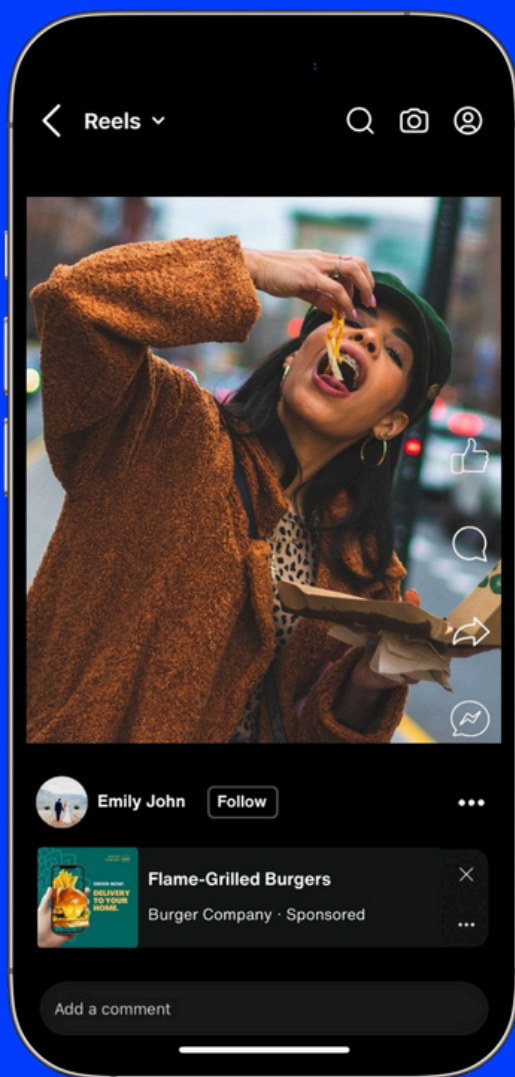
Turning Insights into Impact

As Q1 2025 data reveals, Meta's ad solutions and auction continue to evolve, driven by AI-powered delivery, new video-centric placements, and increasingly fragmented user behavior across platforms.

Performance trends show that placements like Facebook Feed and In-stream Video remain high-value investments for traffic-driven campaigns, such as Reels Overlay or Stories, which require creative adaptation and strategic control to deliver campaign efficacy.

More importantly, this report highlights a key finding: there's a disconnect between impressions and ad engagement. To maximize Meta ad performance, marketers must understand where impressions are delivered and which placements turn engagement into meaningful action. That means blending automation with human insight, creative precision with data-backed planning, and timely campaign optimization.

If you're ready to optimize your Meta campaigns for cost-efficiency, engagement quality, and down-funnel results, our team at Strike Social is here to help. From placement-level strategy to daily performance optimization, we help brands and agencies turn paid social dollars into scalable outcomes.



2025



Book a meeting with us for a personalized analysis and custom plan to elevate your Meta advertising strategy.

[Request a demo](#)