

META ADS PLAYBOOK

Stop boosting posts. **Start running ads that print money.**

The exact 3-layer targeting structure, pixel setup, and creative test framework I run for clients on Facebook and Instagram.

Freeland Marketing & Entertainment

Built for owners who are tired of \$400 boosted posts that get likes and zero leads.

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Why "boost post" almost always loses money

If you've been clicking the blue Boost button, this section is for you.

Boosted posts only let Meta optimize for engagement, not for actual business outcomes. Meta picks the cheapest people to show your post to, which usually means people who scroll all day, click everything, and never buy anything.

~5x

Higher cost per lead, boosted vs. proper campaign

0

Targeting layers boosting actually gives you

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Ad placement (your feed only, no Stories, no Reels)

STOP DOING THIS

Boosting posts to "people who like my page" is the worst targeting in Meta. Those people already follow you. You're paying to reach the audience you already have.

The 3-layer targeting stack

Every campaign Freeland runs has these three audiences running in parallel.

LAYER	AUDIENCE	WHAT IT DOES
Cold Top of funnel	Interest + behavior targeting (your industry, competitor pages, intent signals)	Introduces your brand to people who fit your ideal customer profile but have never heard of you.
Lookalike Mid funnel	1% lookalike of your customer list or pixel data (purchases, leads)	Meta finds people who behave like your best customers. This is where most scaling happens.
Retargeting Bottom funnel	Site visitors (last 30 / 60 / 90 days), video viewers, IG engagers	Closes the people who almost converted. Highest ROAS layer in every account we run.

Run all three in their own ad sets. Do not lump them into one. You need to know which layer is producing leads so you can scale the winner and kill the loser.

Pixel setup in 4 steps

Without the pixel, retargeting is impossible and Meta's algorithm flies blind. Do this first.

- > **Create the pixel** in Meta Events Manager. One pixel per business.

- > **Install on every page** of your site. Use the Meta Pixel WordPress plugin, Shopify native integration, or paste the base code in your site header.

- > **Set up Conversions API** alongside the pixel. iOS 14 broke browser-only tracking. Conversions API sends data server-side so you don't lose 30 to 50 percent of conversion data.

- > **Define standard events:** ViewContent, Lead, Contact, Purchase, Schedule. Use Meta's Event Setup Tool if you don't know how to fire events from code.

FREELAND TIP

Verify pixel firing with the Meta Pixel Helper Chrome extension. If events show as "browser only," your Conversions API isn't wired up and your numbers will be wrong.

The creative test structure

Most accounts fail because they run one ad and pray. Here's the test framework.

Test 3 ads per ad set, hold targeting constant

You can only learn one variable at a time. Lock targeting, change the creative.

VARIATION	WHAT CHANGES	WHY IT TESTS
A: Hook test	Same image, three different first-3-second hooks	Reveals what stops the scroll
B: Format test	Static image vs. short video vs. carousel	Reveals what your audience consumes
C: Offer test	Same creative, three different offers (free audit, free quote, free guide)	Reveals what makes them click

The 48-hour decision rule

- > Let each test run **48 hours minimum** before judging. Anything less is noise.
- > Need at least **50 link clicks per ad** before you can trust the data.
- > Kill the bottom performer. Duplicate the winner. Run the next round of tests against the winner.
- > Never edit a winning ad. Editing resets learning. Duplicate, then edit the duplicate.

One-page cheat sheet

The whole playbook on one card. Print it. Tape it to your monitor.

PHASE	ACTION	TIME
Setup	Pixel + Conversions API + 5 standard events	Day 1
Campaign 1	Cold: interest stack, 3 ad creative test	Day 2
Campaign 2	Lookalike (1%) of customer list or pixel events	Day 3
Campaign 3	Retargeting: site visitors 30/60/90 days	Day 3
Read	48-hour holds, 50 click minimum, kill bottom	Day 5
Scale	Duplicate winner, raise budget 20% per day max	Day 7+
Refresh	New creative every 14 days to fight fatigue	Ongoing

DON'T DO THESE

Don't raise budget more than 20 percent per day on a winning ad set (resets learning). Don't run ads to your homepage (use a landing page). Don't trust Meta's "Advantage+" auto-targeting until you've already validated the offer manually.

Want me to set this up for you?

I run Meta ads for service businesses across the country. If you want a no-pressure look at your current setup or a proper campaign built from scratch, the next step is a free audit.

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