

ERGON.



CASE STUDY

Increasing pre- and post-show interest through a social media campaign

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BACKGROUND

Ergon Asphalt & Emulsions: Solving roadway challenges from coast to coast



Ergon Asphalt & Emulsions (Ergon A&E) is one of the largest asphalt manufacturers and marketers in North America with facilities and terminals stretching coast to coast across the U.S. and Mexico. It is a core member of Ergon, Inc., a global conglomerate operating in multiple sectors of the petroleum industry. Ergon A&E specializes in providing cost-effective paving, maintenance and recycling solutions required to maintain healthy road networks.

Ergon's conventional and polymer-modified asphalt products are used to build expressways, county roads and neighborhood streets, as well as airport tarmacs, bridges, parking lots and even NASCAR® racetracks. Ergon resins and emulsion products support what is known as pavement preservation, coatings and sealants that protect and extend the service lives of roads, reducing the need for costly repairs and stretching agency dollars.

Ergon A&E's customers are the county commissioners and supervisors, consulting engineers and project managers on the job site supervising and monitoring project progress alongside the frontline contractors and operators. Ergon A&E knows them, values them and wants them to know about their asphalt and emulsion solutions.

To most people, asphalt is a commodity product with universal applications and standard benefits.

Ergon A&E management wanted to show their audience how their asphalt and emulsion solutions are much more than commodity products. They planned to do this at an upcoming tradeshow. The problem was there wasn't much time to put a campaign into place to drive traffic to their booth. **That's where Elevation Marketing comes in.**



SITUATION

Get up to speed, fast

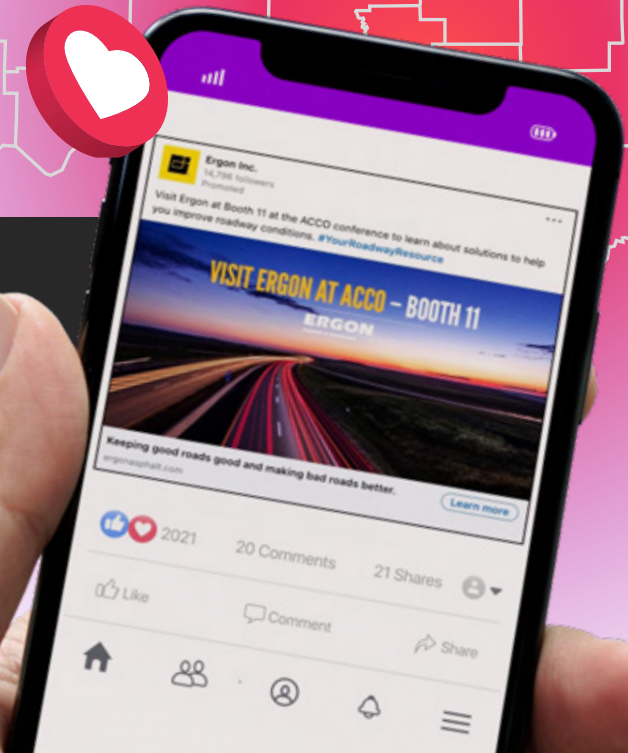
Ergon A&E contacted Elevation Marketing in the third week of March. They would be participating in the Association of County Commissioners of Oklahoma (ACCO) Spring Conference. They needed Elevation's help expediting a social media campaign to drive traffic their booth.

ACCO is a statewide forum for leadership training, educational programming and advocating for legislative issues at the county level. It offers a comprehensive array of services designed to meet the health, safety and welfare needs of its member counties, including resources for roadway construction and maintenance. Almost all of the 231 county commissioners representing all 77 Oklahoma counties would be in attendance. A perfect audience for Ergon A&E.

The conference was scheduled to take place April 5-6. Ergon A&E had attended previous ACCO events but had never used social media to promote their presence.

Given the compressed timeframes, Ergon A&E asked Elevation to work with creative executions developed by its in-house marketing department. Elevation provided some guidance for tweaking the ads but primarily was tasked with planning, negotiating/purchasing and implementing a social media campaign using supplied creative. They had a modest budget for the entire campaign.

Delivering an effective paid social media campaign in two weeks would be a test of Elevation's speed to execution capabilities.



CHALLENGE

Pave the way for success

The objective for this campaign was clear cut: Use social media to drive conference attendees to the Ergon booth in the conference exhibit hall, and subsequently to the Ergon A&E website. However, the road had a few curves and speed bumps:

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Limited timeframes

meant that there wouldn't be time for Elevation to research marketplace trends, buyer personas and motivations. Instead, the campaign would depend on assets provided by Ergon A&E such as social media contact lists. Elevation would have just a few days to strategize, zero in on the target and execute the media buy.

Scheduling pressures impacted creative.

There was no time for ad versioning or testing. Elevation would rely on Ergon A&E's deep understanding of their audience to ensure in-house executions would strike a chord. (And they did.)

Ergon A&E's previous trade show marketing efforts included pre-show promotion on its website, emails to existing customers, advertising in event programs and sponsoring happy hours, but not social media. They knew they had to update outreach efforts to attract today's media-savvy buyers. Ergon A&E had the requisite LinkedIn and Facebook pages, but lacked the social media expertise to leverage them for customer outreach and digital event advertising. **They needed Elevation to take the reins and manage a paid social media campaign on their behalf.**

They had a **modest budget** to promote a very specific event aimed at a very specific audience. Success would require a highly focused campaign to reach the best qualified prospects in a short window and maximize ROI.

Measuring success could prove difficult as there was no baseline for historical comparison.

STRATEGY

Geotargeting for maximum pre-show exposure, post-show follow-up



With no time to waste, Elevation got to work evaluating the company's email contact lists and social media followers, analyzing the data for potential show attendee titles, industry groups and associations, and related target audience metrics. The goal was not just to drive traffic to the booth, but high-quality traffic.


The titles the campaign would target include:

- County commissioners
- County supervisors
- Consulting engineers
- Purchasing agents

The preferred social media vehicles for these business professionals were Facebook and LinkedIn. **This information allowed Elevation to narrow the media buy and increase frequency by focusing on only the audience's top two favored channels.**

To further optimize media spend, Elevation would employ geotargeting, a location-based marketing strategy that delivers advertisements to an audience based on physical location. Ads are only sent to customers matching the target profile when they are physically inside a defined geography, limiting wasted spend on recipients unable to travel to an event or patronize a business. Geotargeting can set parameters from broad areas like regions, counties and cities, down to finely targeted spaces like a single ZIP code.

Geotargeting is the perfect tool to present social media ads to a highly specific audience, especially when everyone in your target is staying within the same area at the same time. The majority of attendees would be staying at the hotel where the conference would be held, with overflow at nearby properties recommended by the organizer. **Precise locations and ZIP codes were easily identified, creating an ideal target radius around the conference center.**



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Finally, the campaign would be limited to a finite period. Using a series of creative executions supplied by Ergon A&E, Elevation devised a campaign with pre-show and during-show ads designed to draw traffic to the booth April 3-5. Post-show follow-up messages April 6-30 would drive recipients to the Ergon A&E website and solution pages.

SOLUTION

A pinpoint social media campaign for a pinpoint audience

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Anyone with the proper title or tagged professional association who resided or set foot within a 2.5-mile radius of the event between April 3 and 5 received ads on their Facebook and LinkedIn accounts inviting them to meet the Ergon A&E team at their booth.

Post-show social media follow-up would be just as critical as pre-show promotion to draw visitors back to the website to reengage them. This is because during a two-day event, attendees' attention is divided between presentations, panel discussions, networking events and the exhibit hall. Furthermore, deals are rarely sealed at the booth given the typical government bid procurement process. Rather, a trade show is often the first touchpoint in a series of customer engagements. After the show, the prospect has time to focus and learn more about the solutions. The trick would be to keep the brand top of mind after they leave.

The post-show follow-up accomplished exactly that. When a recipient clicked on an ad's Learn More button, it triggered a sequence of nurturing post-show messages about the solutions they were introduced to at the event. This would enable Ergon A&E to continue the conversation and draw them further into the sales funnel long after the show.



DELIVERABLES

Engaging pre- and post-show social media ads

Executions developed by the Ergon A&E in-house marketing department were used with guidance from Elevation for ad size and file formatting. Elevation added the call-to-action copy, the hashtags and the functionality of the Learn More button to redirect visitors to Ergon A&E featured solution pages and capture the user's IP address to facilitate targeted follow-up interactions.



Two executions were developed for the **pre- and during-show campaign** to encourage attendees to visit the Ergon A&E booth

Two executions were developed for the **post-show campaign** to invite the target audience to learn more about products featured at the booth



OUTCOMES

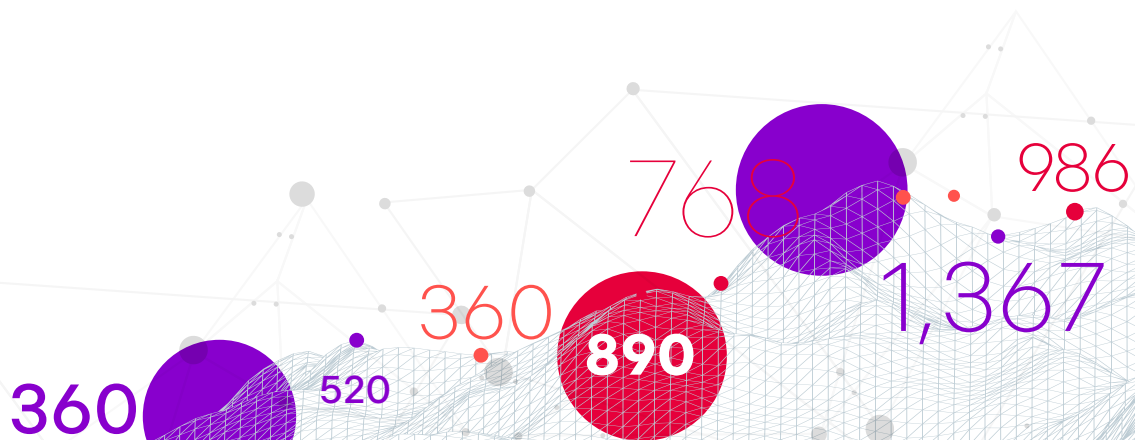
Overflowing booth activity spills into growing lead pool

Start to finish, the project lasted six weeks from initial social media planning, configuration and implementation to the last follow-up messages sent on April 30, with quantitative and qualitative results.



The Ergon A&E trade show booth reported more activity than ever before, dramatically exceeding expectations and underscoring the value of paid social advertising. The significant increase in floor traffic has led to plans for social media campaigns to support upcoming trade show events.

As a test case for keeping Ergon A&E top-of-mind during and after key industry events, the campaign was a clear home run, with metrics at or above industry standards.



Pre- and during-show social media advertising results – April 3-5

Channel	Impressions	Clicks	CTR	CPC	CPM
LinkedIn	27,932	421	1.51%	\$1.82	\$27.39
Facebook	79,888	669	0.84%	\$1.39	\$11.62
TOTAL	107,820	1,090	1.01%	\$1.55	\$15.71

Pre- and during-show efforts drew over 100,000 impressions in just 3 days with a click-through rate (CTR) of 1.01% – equaling over 1,000 attendees who could be targeted for post-show follow-up contact and future marketing efforts. This was accomplished while consuming just 26% of the campaign’s budget.

The other 74% of the campaign budget was reserved for post-show follow-up activity.

Post-show social media advertising results – April 6-30

Channel	Impressions	Clicks	CTR	CPC	CPM
LinkedIn	326,340	1,630	0.50%	\$1.52	\$7.61
Facebook	410,013	4,092	1.00%	\$0.57	\$5.66
TOTAL	736,353	5,722	0.78%	\$0.84	\$6.53

Post-show follow-up proved to be a valuable part of the media spend.

The campaign generated almost three-quarters of a million impressions and over 5,700 clicks in the three weeks after the event for a CTR of 0.78%. That brought cost-per-click (CPC) to under \$1 and cut the cost-per-million impressions (CPM) factor by almost 60% versus pre- and during-show advertising. Most importantly, it meant thousands of people were responding and visiting Ergon A&E landing pages.

Determining the significance of results



While there were no standards for comparison to previous Ergon A&E social media trade show efforts, Elevation compared the campaign results to established performance benchmarks for similar campaigns on LinkedIn and Facebook.

The combined averages for pre-, during- and post-show results for Ergon A&E are 21% higher than the combined LinkedIn and Facebook averages for click-through-rates, 56% under their combined averages for cost-per-click, and 13% below their aggregate average for cost-per-million impressions.

Going forward, Ergon A&E and Elevation will be able to use these results as a foundation for performance benchmarking against future social media campaigns. And with more lead time for research into audience targeting, input into the messaging and testing of creative, stronger calls to action and some historical perspective, Elevation will be able to boost engagement further, paving the way for a long-term, mutually beneficial relationship with Ergon A&E and Ergon, Inc.

Platform industry benchmarks vs. campaign results

Metric	LinkedIn Ideal Range	Facebook Ideal Range	Ergon A&E Pre- and During-Show Results	Ergon A&E Post-Show Results
CTR	0.50% - 0.60%	0.75% - 0.80%	LinkedIn: 1.51% Facebook: 0.84%	LinkedIn: 0.50% Facebook: 1.00%
CPC	\$6.20 - \$6.60	\$2.40 - \$2.70	LinkedIn: \$1.82 Facebook: \$1.39	LinkedIn: \$1.52 Facebook: \$0.57
CPM	\$30 - \$40	\$14 - \$20	LinkedIn: \$27.39 Facebook: \$11.62	LinkedIn: \$7.61 Facebook: \$5.66

ABOUT ELEVATION

Full-Funnel Marketing Solutions for Today's B2B Buyers.

Elevation Marketing creates meaningful customer engagements and sustainable results through data-driven, digital-first solutions that inspire change, motivate action and deliver predictable outcomes. Whether it's brand, demand, ABM, channel or sales enablement, we are experts in connecting brands to people and performance through end-to-end B2B marketing programs. By looking at your brand through the lens of your business, we help you break through the

obstacles that stand between you and greater sales, increased market share and increased revenue for maximum return on your investment.

Ready to discuss your project?

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