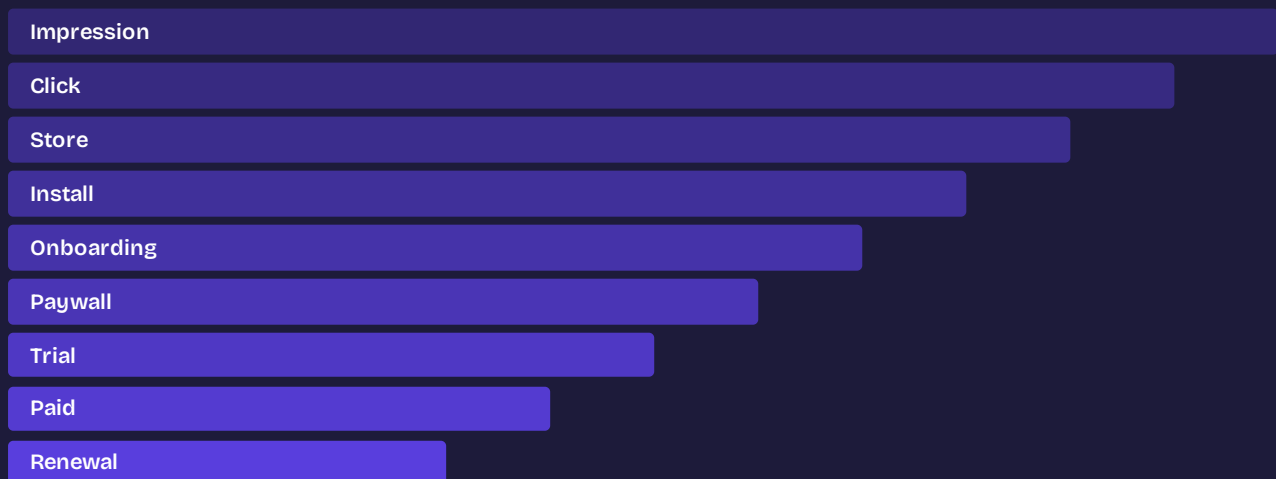


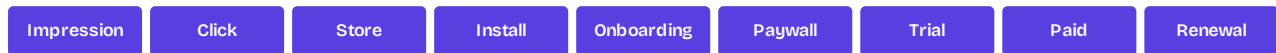
The Meta Ads operating system for subscription apps

How to find creative winners, feed Meta better signals, understand your acquisition economics, and scale subscription campaigns without destroying payback.



Before you start

Most Meta Ads advice was written for ecommerce. Subscription apps have a different problem: you don't make money when someone clicks the ad, and you don't make it when they install the app either.



The real journey runs from the ad through the store, onboarding, paywall and trial before anyone pays you, and every step can change the economics. A cheap install can become a terrible subscriber. A creative with an expensive CPM can bring in your best customers. A campaign can generate hundreds of trials while Meta learns to find people who cancel five minutes later. A winning ad can send the right user into the wrong onboarding. And a campaign that looks unprofitable today may look very different once its trial cohort converts.

This playbook is about managing that whole system, not just Ads Manager.

The short version

If you remember only seven things, remember these.

- 1 Meta gets better when you feed it better signals.** The event you optimize for shapes the users Meta goes looking for. More events don't help by default; more meaningful ones do.
- 2 Creative is one of your biggest targeting levers.** Stop trying to solve every acquisition problem with another audience. The creative itself tells Meta who should respond.
- 3 Optimize for the deepest useful signal you can reliably generate.** Installs give you volume; purchases get you closer to the business outcome. But an event that fires a handful of times a week won't give Meta enough feedback. Pick the deepest event that still has volume.
- 4 Not every trial is a good trial.** Someone who cancels two minutes after starting a trial is not the same as someone who stays engaged and subscribes. Where you can, make your signals reflect that difference.
- 5 Don't judge creatives on CTR alone.** CTR tells you someone wanted to click. It says nothing about whether you acquired a good subscriber.
- 6 Don't fragment small budgets.** One broad structure with a handful of strong creatives usually teaches you more than six audiences, twenty creatives and no meaningful data anywhere.
- 7 Scale economics, not Ads Manager screenshots.** The goal isn't the cheapest CPI or the prettiest Meta ROAS. It's subscription cohorts whose revenue justifies what you paid for them.

Know the game you are playing

Impression

Click

Store

Install

Onboarding

Paywall

Trial

Paid

Renewal

1 The subscription acquisition funnel

For a typical subscription app the funnel runs Impression → Click → Store → Install → Onboarding → Paywall → Trial → Paid → Renewal. The install sits in the middle, and for many apps most of the business value is created after it.

That changes how you should read Meta Ads. If you judge campaigns only by CPM, CTR, CPC and CPI, you're measuring the easiest part of the funnel, which isn't necessarily the most important part.

2 The metrics that actually matter

You don't need a dashboard with 47 KPIs. You need enough to see where the economics break.

Metric	What it tells you
CPM	What you pay for attention
CTR	Whether the creative makes people care
CPC	The cost of a click
CPI	The cost of getting someone into the app
Install → Paywall	Whether users reach monetization
Install → Trial	Whether acquisition and onboarding create intent
Trial → Paid	Whether trials become subscribers
CAC	What a paying subscriber costs
D7 / D14 / D30 ROAS	How quickly acquisition pays back
Refund rate	Whether reported revenue is real revenue
Renewal rate	Whether you're acquiring durable subscribers
LTV	What the acquired user may ultimately be worth

The deeper a metric sits in the funnel, the more useful it is, and the longer you wait for it. CTR shows up within hours; renewal data takes months. That tension sits at the center of subscription UA.

3 Work backwards from your economics

Start with what you can afford to pay for a subscriber, then work down the funnel.

Target CAC	\$30
× Trial → Paid 20%	= \$6.00 max cost per trial
× Install → Trial 8%	= \$0.48 max CPI

It's simplified on purpose, but it changes the question. Instead of asking whether a \$0.65 CPI is expensive, you ask whether this funnel can turn a \$0.65 install into a subscriber below target CAC. With the numbers above, it can't, unless the install-to-trial or trial-to-paid rate improves.

Your acquisition ceiling

Fill this in for every app. Without it, a "good CPA" is mostly a feeling.

Target CAC	\$
Install → Trial	%
Trial → Paid	%
Maximum cost per trial	\$
Maximum CPI	\$
Target payback	days
D7 ROAS target	%
D30 ROAS target	%



Meta is only as good as the signals you feed it



Meta learns from the optimization events and conversion feedback you send it. Every event effectively tells the system: find more people likely to do this. That makes signal quality part of your UA strategy, not just part of your tracking setup.

4 Your optimization event shapes the traffic you get

Campaign A optimizes for *Install*, so it asks Meta to find people likely to install the app. Campaign B optimizes for *Purchase*, so its feedback comes from people who actually paid. Those are different objectives, and it's why a very low CPI can still produce terrible business results: Meta did exactly what you asked and found people who install apps cheaply.

5 Think of every event as a training signal

A subscription funnel might produce Install → Activation → Trial → Qualified Trial → Purchase → Renewal → Lifetime Revenue. The further right you go, the closer the signal is to the outcome your business cares about. The cost is volume and speed.

Signal	Volume	Speed	Business value
Install	High	Fast	Low
Activation	High	Fast	Medium
Trial	Medium	Fast	Medium to high
Qualified trial	Medium	Slightly slower	High
Purchase	Lower	Slower	High
Renewal	Lower	Slow	Very high
LTV	Low or modeled	Slow or predicted	Very high

So the question isn't "what's the deepest event we can track?" It's "what's the deepest reliable event that gives Meta enough feedback to learn from?"

6 Signal quality vs signal volume

Take an app generating 1,000 installs, 80 trials and 15 purchases a day. Install gives Meta plenty of data, but it's a weak signal. Purchase is much closer to revenue, but there's far less of it.

A useful benchmark: Meta generally wants around 50 optimization events per ad set per week to exit the learning phase. Fifteen purchases a day is roughly 105 a week, enough for one or two ad sets. Split across six, each one starves. The same event can be viable or not depending on how you structure the account.

That's why the optimization event can evolve as the business grows: Install or Activation → Trial → Qualified Trial → Purchase → Revenue → Predicted Value. You don't need to jump to the last step on day one. Move deeper as volume and data quality allow.

7 Bad signals can teach Meta the wrong thing

	User A	User B
Starts trial	Yes	Yes
Cancels immediately	Yes	No
Uses the app	Almost never	Repeatedly
Converts to paid	No	Yes

If both users fire the same *TrialStarted* event the moment they start, Meta sees two successes. Your business sees one. At scale, you can end up training the system toward people who are very good at starting trials and very bad at becoming subscribers.

8 Qualified trials

One fix is to qualify the event before you send it. Instead of firing the event as soon as the trial starts, wait through a qualification window and send it only if the user is still in trial. The event now represents something closer to real subscription intent.

Adapty Attribution's Qualified Trials feature is built for this: you define a qualification period, and the trial event is sent only if the user hasn't cancelled during that window.

Keep the trade-off in mind. A longer window gives a cleaner signal but delays it (see the next section), so the window should be long enough to filter out instant cancellations and no longer. The principle matters more than the feature: don't send an event just because you can track it. Send events that describe behavior you want Meta to find more of.

9 Signal latency matters too

Say your app has a 7-day trial. The user clicks an ad, installs and starts a trial today, but the purchase may not happen for another week. Meta keeps spending in the meantime, without knowing whether that traffic produced paying subscribers, so the feedback loop slows down.

You want signals early enough to help Meta learn quickly and strong enough to correlate with revenue. Balancing those two is one of the hardest parts of subscription UA.

10 Signal engineering

More advanced teams stop sending whatever events happen to exist and start asking what information Meta should get back. In practice that means working on four things:

Event selection	Don't optimize for installs forever if subscribers are the outcome you care about.
Event quality	Separate strong conversion intent from noisy conversion events.
Revenue value	Tell Meta how much each conversion is worth.
Predicted value	Use early subscription behavior to estimate future value before the revenue arrives.

11 The feedback loop

Meta finds users → users convert → subscription behavior is measured → better signals go back to Meta → Meta learns → new users are found

Every improvement to the quality or speed of that loop gives the algorithm better information. That often matters more than another campaign-settings trick.

12 Revenue is not binary

	User A	User B
Initial payment	\$9.99	\$9.99
Subscription lifetime	1 month	8 months
Lifetime revenue (gross)	\$9.99	\$79.92

Both users generated a purchase; they didn't generate the same value. If your optimization stops at "purchase: yes," you only see that difference months later. (These are gross figures. After store commission of 15–30%, the gap in what you actually keep is the same shape, just smaller.)

13 Predicted LTV as a signal

Waiting months for a subscriber's final LTV is too slow for daily acquisition decisions. With enough subscription history, you can estimate future value early and give Meta that expected value alongside the conversion.

Adapty Attribution's Predicted LTV does this: it uses subscription behavior to estimate future value and sends that prediction back to Meta as part of the signal. The broader shift is from optimizing for conversions to optimizing for value. You don't want the most subscribers; you want valuable subscribers at a sustainable cost.

The signal hierarchy

Install

Activation

Trial

Qualified trial

Purchase

Revenue

Predicted LTV

Moving right, business relevance goes up, while volume usually goes down and feedback gets slower. The job is to move deeper without starving the algorithm.



Build campaigns that can actually learn

Impression

Click

Store

Install

Onboarding

Paywall

Trial

Paid

Renewal

One of the easiest ways to hurt a Meta account is fragmentation. Four countries, three audiences, three age groups, two genders and five creative types turn into dozens of tiny ad sets. It looks sophisticated and produces very little usable data.

14 Keep the structure simple

For many subscription apps, a starting structure can be very simple.

Creative testing

Campaign	Meta, US, Creative Testing
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Ad set	Broad, US
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Ads	3-5 genuinely different creatives
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Scaling

Campaign	Meta, US, Scale
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Ad set	Broad
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Ads	Proven winners and their iterations
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"Genuinely different" matters: five versions of one video with a single line changed are not five concepts. And testing and scaling are different jobs. Testing asks which new idea can work; scaling asks how much you can get from ideas that already do.

Note that since early 2026, Meta's campaign creation defaults to Advantage+ settings for app campaigns, with audience, placement and budget automation switched on. That fits this structure well. You can still switch individual controls off, but do it for a reason, not by habit.

15 Don't confuse audiences with organization

An ad set isn't a folder. You don't need a separate ad set because one creative is UGC, another is a product demo and a third uses an AI voice; those differences belong in the creative layer. Split audiences when you have a hypothesis to test, not because the account looks tidier.

16 When budgets are small, density matters

\$100/day	Setup A	Setup B
Campaigns	1	3
Ad sets	1	8
Ads	4	24

Setup B looks more advanced, but the same budget is spread across far more decisions, and none of them gets enough data. When resources are limited, use less structure and get more signal.

17 Broad targeting is a good default

Start broad unless you have a real reason not to, because the creative already does part of the targeting. For an AI video generator, "Turn one photo into a cinematic movie scene" attracts a different person than "Create the viral AI hug effect from two photos." The message selects for intent.

Interests, lookalikes and demographic controls can still work, but they should earn their complexity. (With Advantage+ audience on, Meta treats most of these as suggestions rather than hard limits anyway.)

IV Creative is the real battlefield

Impression

Click

Store

Install

Onboarding

Paywall

Trial

Paid

Renewal

Campaign structure gets a lot of attention because it's easy to talk about. Creative is harder, and it's where much of the upside is. You can perfectly optimize an average creative and still have an average campaign; a strong creative can change the economics of the whole account.

18 Angle, concept and variation are not the same thing

Angle	The reason someone should care: save time, save money, look better, make something impressive, avoid mistakes, get a result instantly, entertain friends, make viral content.
Concept	The story that communicates the angle. Angle: turn ordinary photos into something worth sharing. Concept: a user uploads one ordinary selfie and turns it into a cinematic AI video.
Variation	A change within the same concept: a different hook, creator, CTA, first frame, length or generated output.

If you test ten variations of one concept, you didn't test ten ideas. You tested one idea ten times.

19 The five-part creative

Most performance creatives break down into five pieces. Here's what each does, with an example for an AI video generator.

Part	Job	Example
Hook	Earn another second	"This started as one normal photo."
Problem / desire	Make the viewer care	"I wanted something that actually looked cinematic."
Mechanism	Show what the app does	"I uploaded it and picked this effect."
Proof	Make the claim believable	Show the generated video
CTA	Say what happens next	"Try it with one of your photos."

That's enough. A 15-second ad doesn't need a brand manifesto.

20 UGC is a format, not a concept

"We need more UGC" isn't a creative strategy. These are concepts:

Product reveal	Show the result immediately.
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Problem → solution	Open with a recognizable problem, then show the app solving it.
Before → after	Especially strong when the product creates a visible transformation.
POV	Put the viewer inside a familiar situation.
Challenge	"Can AI turn this photo into a movie scene?"
Reaction	Show someone responding to the result.
Comparison	The old way against the new way.
Social proof	Outputs or reactions from several users.
Curiosity	Delay the result just enough to hold attention.
Trend participation	Tie the product to something the audience already wants to make or share.

21 The first second is not a logo slot

Don't open with your logo, app icon, "Introducing...", a slow animation or a generic establishing shot. Nobody asked for an introduction. Start at the point of tension: not "Introducing our AI-powered video generator..." but "This was one normal selfie two minutes ago." The viewer can find out the brand later.

22 Build a creative research system

Don't open the Meta Ad Library and start copying ads. Look for patterns, and for every interesting ad record the company, market, hook, angle, concept, format, proof mechanism, CTA, and why it might work. That last field is the one that matters. You're building a library of ideas, not a folder of ads to clone.

If several competitors show their product result immediately, the lesson isn't to copy those videos. It might be that showing the transformation early makes the product easier to understand, and that principle is reusable.

23 Build a weekly creative machine

Creative testing shouldn't start when performance collapses. It should run every week, in a loop:

1. **Research.** Collect interesting ads, organic videos, comments, reviews and competitor patterns.
2. **Hypothesize.** Turn those patterns into new creative ideas.
3. **Produce.** Make a small number of strong assets.
4. **Launch.** Give Meta enough room to deliver them.
5. **Read.** Look at early creative metrics and at downstream subscription quality.
6. **Iterate.** Make new versions of the concepts that worked.

Treat creative production as ongoing infrastructure, not a one-off project.



How to actually test creatives

Impression	Click	Store	Install	Onboarding	Paywall	Trial	Paid	Renewal
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The biggest mistake in creative testing is expecting a live Meta campaign to behave like a laboratory.

Creative	Spend
A	\$67
B	\$19
C	\$8
D	\$4
E	\$2

You upload five ads and Meta spends like this. Someone asks why Meta isn't testing them equally. The answer: the campaign's job is to generate results, not to be fair. Uneven spend is normal.

24 Separate delivery from experimentation

There are two different questions here. "Which creative does Meta currently want to spend on?" is answered by normal campaign delivery. "Is creative B actually better than creative A in a fair test?" needs a controlled experiment: an A/B test, isolated creatives, separate test cells, or deliberately allocated budgets. Don't expect a scaling campaign to answer a lab question.

25 Judge creatives by spend, not by age

Avoid rules like "every creative gets three days." Three days means little if the ad spent \$4. Judge spend relative to your target acquisition cost instead. If your target trial CPA is \$6 and a creative spent \$12 without a single trial, you learned more than from one that ran five days and spent \$2. Read spend, conversion volume and downstream quality together, not time alone.

26 A practical creative decision tree

High CTR, low install rate

The ad creates interest, but something breaks after the click. Check the App Store page, the match between creative and store message, geography and technical issues.

High installs, low trials

Acquisition works better than monetization. Check onboarding, activation, paywall timing, the offer and message continuity.

High trials, low paid conversion

This one is dangerous. Check immediate cancellations, low-intent traffic, a misleading creative, product engagement, pricing and signal quality. Don't celebrate cheap trials in isolation.

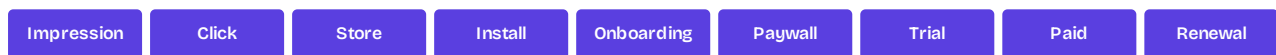
Expensive clicks, strong subscriber economics

Don't kill the creative on reflex. A high CPM or CPC is fine if those users monetize much better. Your business buys subscribers, not clicks.

Cheap everything, poor revenue

It looks excellent in Ads Manager, but you may just be buying the cheapest possible version of the wrong user.

VI Measure the whole creative funnel



For every meaningful creative, you eventually want a view like this:

Creative	Spend	CTR	CPI	Install → Trial	Trial → Paid	CAC	D7 ROAS	D30 ROAS
A	\$1,200	1.4%	\$1.10	11%	24%	\$42	38%	91%
B	\$950	2.1%	\$0.74	6%	12%	\$103	19%	44%
C	\$1,400	1.1%	\$1.36	14%	29%	\$33	47%	116%

Creative B looks great if you stop at CTR and CPI. Creative C looks weakest at the top of the funnel but produces by far the best subscriber economics, which makes it the most important creative in the account. This is why subscription advertisers need to measure past the install.

VII Connect the ad to the product experience



Most acquisition teams still treat the install as the end of marketing. It's the middle of the journey.

Say you're advertising an AI video generator with three creatives. A promises to turn any photo into a cinematic AI video, B to make the viral AI hug video from two photos, C to turn you into an action-movie character. Same app, but users clicked for different reasons. Sending all of them

into the same product journey throws away context you already paid for.

27 Preserve creative intent

The journey can continue the promise that brought the user in.

Ad promise	Onboarding	First experience	Paywall message
Turn any photo into a cinematic AI video	Bring your photos to life	Photo-to-video	Create unlimited AI videos
Create the viral AI hug effect	Create your AI hug video	Hug effect preselected	Unlock viral AI effects
See yourself in an action movie	Become the main character	Action template	Unlock every AI transformation

Someone who clicked for the hug effect shouldn't necessarily land in the same first experience as someone who wanted cinematic photo animation.

28 Attribution shouldn't end in a dashboard

Attribution is usually framed as a reporting question: which campaign generated this install? That's useful, but acquisition data can also be a product input:

Creative context → attribution → user segment → relevant onboarding → relevant paywall

If you know a user came from campaign X, ad set Y and creative Z, you can use that to shape what happens next. With Adapty, attribution data can feed segments that show different onboarding flows and paywalls, which keeps the promise that earned the click consistent with the experience that asks for the subscription. At that point, attribution becomes part of how you convert users, not just how you report on them.

VIII App campaigns vs web campaigns on Meta



For subscription apps, the path from ad to store can look almost identical to the user. The difference is in how the campaign is configured and how attribution works.

	App campaign	Web campaign
User journey	Ad → store → install	Ad → tracking link → store → install
Extra page shown	No	No; the link redirects instantly
Destination	App Store / Google Play	Tracking link that redirects to the store
Campaign setup	App promotion objective	Web campaign
Attribution	Meta SDK or MMP; SKAdNetwork and AEM on iOS	Tracking link carries campaign context to post-install measurement
Useful when	Running standard app acquisition	You want ad-level, post-install attribution tied to subscription data

App campaigns

The traditional path: Meta ad → App Store or Google Play → install → trial or purchase. The user goes straight from Meta to the store, but the story doesn't stop at the install. If you only send Meta installs, you give it a weak business signal. If you send meaningful downstream events like trials, purchases or value, Meta learns much more about the users your business values.

Web campaigns

A web campaign doesn't mean the user lands on a web page. You can use a tracking link as the destination: Meta ad → tracking link → App Store or Google Play → install → trial or purchase. The link redirects to the store without showing anything, and it preserves acquisition context (campaign, ad set, ad, creative) behind the scenes.

That context can then be joined to post-install subscription behavior, so you can go beyond "which campaign generated installs?" and ask which creative generated the most trials, which ad produced the strongest trial-to-paid rate, which campaign brought the best subscription cohort, and which creative drives the strongest D30 revenue.

Adapty Attribution supports this for Meta: its tracking links redirect users to the store while keeping acquisition context for post-install measurement. The point isn't to add a step to the funnel; it's to keep more information about where each user came from.

Worth knowing: how precisely that context survives the store depends on the platform. Google Play passes install-referrer data; on iOS, attribution providers have to match the click to the install, so expect some loss there.

IX Scaling



Finding one profitable creative isn't scaling. It's permission to start.

29 Vertical scaling

Vertical scaling means increasing spend on a structure that already works. No percentage guarantees stable performance, but gradual increases make changes easier to diagnose, especially on smaller accounts. Large budget jumps and frequent edits can also push an ad set back into the learning phase.

Watch CPA, trial-to-paid, CAC, cohort ROAS, payback and creative delivery. If the economics hold as spend rises, keep going. If they slip, find out why before adding more budget.

30 Horizontal scaling

Eventually, more budget behind the same winner stops working. Growth then comes from new concepts, creators, hooks, use cases, countries and offers, and from better signals, personalized onboarding, and different campaign structures where they're justified. Expanding creative is usually more sustainable than pushing ever more spend through one asset.

31 Scale the concept, not the asset

Say a creative works where a user uploads a normal selfie and turns it into a cinematic AI scene. Don't abandon it and make ten unrelated ads. Ask why it worked. Maybe the real idea is "turn ordinary photos into something worth sharing." Then expand that idea: a cinematic scene, a fantasy character, an AI hug, an anime transformation, a retro movie, a superhero effect, a couple animation, a creator reaction. The individual asset will eventually wear out. The concept can keep producing.

X

Creative fatigue

Impression

Click

Store

Install

Onboarding

Paywall

Trial

Paid

Renewal

A creative isn't dead because your team is tired of seeing it. You aren't the audience. Look for real deterioration in CPA, CTR, conversion rate, CPM, frequency, ROAS and subscriber quality. If spend keeps rising while the economics stay healthy, the ad is still doing its job. Don't replace winners for aesthetic reasons; use them to fund the next round of tests.

XI

The subscription reporting system

Impression

Click

Store

Install

Onboarding

Paywall

Trial

Paid

Renewal

Don't refresh Ads Manager every six minutes. Subscription acquisition needs different reporting windows for different decisions.

Daily

Operational problems

Spend, delivery, large CPA changes, broken ads, tracking failures, unexpected creative behavior. Don't make strategic calls from a few hours of data.

Every few days

Funnel movement

Installs, trials, qualified trials, purchases, cancellations, creative-level CPA, spend distribution.

Weekly

Real decisions

Cohort ROAS, trial-to-paid, renewals, refunds, CAC, payback, creative performance, country economics, signal quality, winning and losing concepts.

Subscription data needs time. A campaign generating 7-day trials can't be understood from today's purchase column.

XII

Your attribution numbers will disagree

Impression

Click

Store

Install

Onboarding

Paywall

Trial

Paid

Renewal

132

purchases in Meta

101

in your attribution platform

118

in store data

116

in your backend

Welcome to mobile measurement. Different systems use different attribution logic and windows, modeled conversions, privacy-preserving measurement, delayed events, time zones, deduplication rules and purchase definitions. Meta also changes its own rules: since March 2026,

click-through attribution only counts actual link clicks, not likes, shares or other interactions, which on its own shifted many accounts' reported numbers.

The goal isn't to force every dashboard to show the same number. It's to know what each number represents and use each system for the question it answers: actual subscription transactions for financial truth, Meta's reporting for campaign delivery, attribution data for acquisition analysis.

32 Watch for duplicate events

Subscription stacks get messy fast. You might have the Meta SDK, an attribution provider, backend events, a subscription platform and an MMP all sending something called *Purchase*. That's how dashboards become fiction. Map every event before you blame the campaign.

Event map

Event name

Where does it originate?

Who sends it?

Where does it go?

Is it deduplicated?

Does a renewal trigger it?

What happens after a refund?

XIII Troubleshooting

[Impression](#)[Click](#)[Store](#)[Install](#)[Onboarding](#)[Paywall](#)[Trial](#)[Paid](#)[Renewal](#)

Meta barely spends

Check whether the optimization event is too rare, the audience is unnecessarily restricted, cost controls are too aggressive, the campaign is too new, creatives have issues, or the budget is split across too many structures. Don't fix underdelivery by creating more campaigns.

One creative takes most of the spend

That can be normal; Meta doesn't promise equal delivery. Ask whether the creative getting the spend produces acceptable economics. If it does, let it work. If you need to understand another creative, isolate it in a controlled test.

CPI is great, trials are terrible

Cheap installers may just be cheap installers. Check creative intent, the store page, onboarding, activation, the paywall and the optimization event. If you have enough downstream volume, move optimization closer to subscription intent.

Trials are great, purchases are terrible

Look at immediate cancellations, trial length, product engagement, the creative's promise, offer expectations, pricing and signal quality. This is exactly where qualified trial signals are worth testing.

Meta looks better, revenue doesn't

Stop relying on campaign-reported ROAS. Build acquired-user cohorts and compare spend against realized revenue at D0, D3, D7, D14 and D30. Campaign reporting helps you operate Meta; cohort economics tell you whether the business is improving.

CPM suddenly went up

Don't panic. Ask whether CAC got worse. If CPM rose but users convert noticeably better downstream, the campaign may be healthier than before. The auction metric isn't the business metric.

A winning creative stopped working

Don't duplicate it six times and hope. Go back to the concept and change the hook, first frame, creator, scenario, proof, pacing or output while keeping the reason it worked.

XIV The weekly Meta Ads meeting

You should be able to run the weekly acquisition meeting from one page.

Performance

This week

Previous week

Spend

Trials

Paid subscribers

CAC

D7 ROAS

D30 ROAS

Winning creatives

For each: creative, concept, spend, CPA, downstream performance, and one sentence on why you think it worked. If you can't state the hypothesis, you're collecting results instead of learning.

Losing creatives

Don't just record that they lost. What did you learn?

Next tests

For each new concept: the concept, the hypothesis, and what would prove you wrong.

Funnel changes

Onboarding, paywall, pricing, trial, tracking, signals.

Scaling decisions

Campaign, creative, budget change, reason.

XV The creative brief template

Copy this into your creative database.

Creative name *[Country] / [Angle] / [Concept] / [Creator]*

Audience problem or desire *What does the viewer want?*

Angle *Why should they care?*

Hook *What happens in the first 1–2 seconds?*

Story *What happens after the hook?*

Product moment *When do we show the product?*

Proof *Why should the viewer believe the claim?*

CTA *What do we want them to do?*

Hypothesis *We believe this creative will work because...*

Result

Spend **Trial CPA**

CTR **Purchase CPA**

CPI **D7 / D30 ROAS**

Learning

What worked?

What should we avoid?

What should we test next?

XVI Campaign launch checklist

Before you spend serious money, check the whole system. Don't scale before the basics work.

Tracking

- ☐ Meta integration connected
- ☐ Install event working
- ☐ Trial event working
- ☐ Purchase event working
- ☐ Revenue values correct
- ☐ Attribution links tested
- ☐ Signal flow verified
- ☐ Duplicate events checked
- ☐ Renewal behavior understood

Creative

- ☐ 3–5 distinct concepts ready
- ☐ Vertical versions prepared
- ☐ Key message appears early
- ☐ Product shown clearly
- ☐ CTA is obvious

Signals

- ☐ Optimization event chosen deliberately
- ☐ Enough signal volume (~50/week per ad set)
- ☐ Low-quality events understood
- ☐ Trial cancellations monitored
- ☐ Event delay understood
- ☐ Value data sent where possible

Product

- ☐ Onboarding works
- ☐ Paywall works
- ☐ Trial flow works
- ☐ Purchase flow works
- ☐ Subscription events appear correctly

Economics

- ☐ Target CAC defined
- ☐ Target trial CPA defined
- ☐ Target CPI estimated
- ☐ Payback target defined
- ☐ Trial → paid rate known
- ☐ Refund rate monitored

Reporting

- ☐ Creative-level reporting available
- ☐ Actual subscription revenue available
- ☐ Cohort reporting available

XVII A 30-day operating plan

Week 1

Fix the foundation

Set up tracking, subscription events and attribution. Define target CAC, baseline funnel metrics, your creative database and your signal map. The goal is simple: be able to tell whether future tests worked.

Week 2

Find the first concept

Launch 3–5 genuinely different concepts. Don't worry about scaling yet; find a message the market reacts to.

Week 3

Exploit the winner

Build new hooks, first frames, creators, outputs, scenarios and lengths around the winning concept. Don't drop it because you're excited about a new idea. Get everything you can out of it first.

Week 4

Improve the system

Once acquisition produces enough data, look past the ad: the optimization event, trial quality, signal latency, onboarding, paywall, message matching, pricing and predicted value. The best teams don't only optimize ads; they improve everything Meta learns from.

XVIII The subscription UA maturity model

Stage	Focus	The question
1 Find demand	Creative response, installs, activation	Can we acquire users at all?
2 Find monetization	Trials, purchases, onboarding, paywalls	Can paid acquisition create subscribers?
3 Find repeatability	Creative system, stable CAC, cohort ROAS	Can we do it again and again?
4 Improve signal quality	Qualified trials, revenue, predicted LTV	Can we teach Meta which subscribers are valuable?
5 Personalize the journey	Creative-aware onboarding and paywalls	Can we carry acquisition intent through to conversion?

At the last stage the system connects end to end: creative context → attribution → user segment → personalized product experience. The ad influences who arrives, attribution tells you why they arrived, and the product continues the same intent.

Final principle

Meta Ads isn't a slot machine, and it isn't an algorithm you need to trick. It's a feedback system.

What you put in

Creative, user journey, conversion signals, revenue data

What you get back

Distribution, more users, more feedback

What you put into that loop shapes what Meta can learn. Most teams keep asking how to make Meta optimize better. The more useful question is what you're teaching it to optimize for. Fix that first, then scale.

Put this playbook to work with Adapty Attribution

Ad-level attribution for subscription apps across Meta, TikTok, Google and Apple Search Ads, with Qualified Trials and Predicted LTV sent back to Meta, and attribution data you can use to personalize onboarding and paywalls.

adapty.io/attribution