

KROGER STUDY:

Predictive Creative Scoring Leads to Real Ecommerce Outcomes

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN KROGER,
VIDMOB, AND MMA GLOBAL

BELIEVABLE NARRATIVE ▲



GENUINE REACTIONS ▲



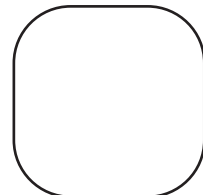


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Executive Summary

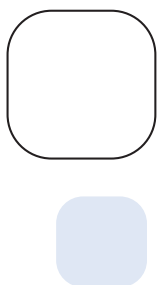
Marketers have spent years perfecting how media is bought and targeted, and in a world where that precision has become table stakes, it's no longer where the biggest gains are found. Far less attention and investment has gone into the creative that runs through that media, and that's where the unclaimed value now sits.

This is especially true in ecommerce, where audience targeting is typically locked in early, during the planning phase, well before creative enters the picture. Most marketers have already heavily optimized that upstream targeting strategy; what happens downstream, in creative development, has historically had far less rigor behind it. Creativity represents marketers' biggest remaining opportunity to move outcomes like ROAS and sales lift.

As AI allows brands to seize this opportunity by scaling their creative output, the question becomes: How can they scale their creative judgment?



Kroger, Vidmob, and MMA Global set out to study whether predictive creative scoring can improve ecommerce outcomes by statistically identifying which creative attributes will drive increased sales conversions. This whitepaper explores what Kroger's creative data reveals about driving ecommerce conversions, offering a model for how data-driven creative decisions can inform retail marketing more broadly.

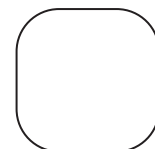


Executive Summary (continued)



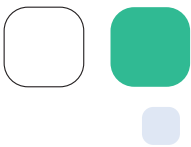
Using AI-enabled technology to analyze **1,934 creative assets** across Meta and Google's Display and Video 360 (DV360) over a full year of live campaign data, and applying statistical validation including regression analysis and testing against a full quarter of unseen data, this study proves that:

- 1. Creative scores are 81% predictive of ecommerce conversion** performance across Meta and DV360, validated on live campaign data the model had never seen.
- 2. Creative assets that follow data-backed guidelines achieve up to a 4X higher conversion rate** — at up to 70% lower cost per conversion — than assets that don't.



REACTING / ENJOYING ▲

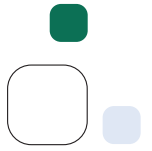
Executive Summary (continued)



Research Questions	Findings	Implications
Can predictive creative scoring be used as a lever to accurately forecast ecommerce conversion?	Predictive creative scoring accurately forecasts ecommerce conversion performance 81% of the time on Meta and DV360, per Vidmob/Kroger analysis.	By implementing predictive creative scoring, Kroger can develop custom creative best practices for driving improved ecommerce conversions across platforms, eliminating guesswork for marketers.
What creative factors lead to higher-performing ecommerce assets?	Creative that follows the data-backed guidelines — including centering genuine human moments over product or transactional shots — led to roughly a 4X improvement in conversions across DV360 and Meta.	These findings reinforce that creative rooted in the personal reasons people shop rather than just the product or transaction is what will drive ecommerce performance like ROAS, aligning with Kroger’s own brand instincts.



The Opportunity



Knowing that customers have more choices than ever about when and where they shop, Kroger set out to uncover what its creative data could reveal about the true drivers of e-commerce conversion. Working together with Vidmob and MMA Global, Kroger used predictive creative scoring to determine, with statistical rigor, which creative attributes actually drive ecommerce conversions, and to use those learnings to build a repeatable creative intelligence framework.

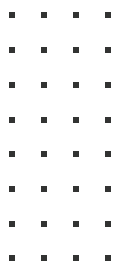
This study aims to:



Identify Kroger's custom creative best practices and insights that **drive ecommerce conversions on Meta and DV360.**



Give Kroger a **repeatable framework for connecting creative decisions to business outcomes.**



Methodology



This study was conducted across a 12-month test period (January 2025–January 2026) plus a one month validation period (Q1 2026). It analyzed live video and image campaign data from across Meta and DV360, including:



1,934

TOTAL PIECES OF CONTENT

1,062

ads on Meta

872

ads on DV360

KPI: Conversion by platform

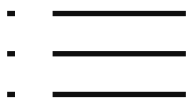


Powering the study is Vidmob's creative intelligence — based on 40 models, 20+ million assets analyzed, 3+ trillion creative elements tied to performance, and 13 platform integrations.

Using Predictive Creative Scoring



To prove out the impact of predictive creative scoring on ecommerce conversions, Kroger and Vidmob followed a three-step process:



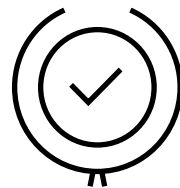
Collect

Gathered 1,934 of Kroger's ad creative that ran across Meta and DV360 from January 2025 to January 2026, building out a robust dataset of brand assets.



Analyze

Using statistical testing and predictive modeling, Vidmob determines which specific creative attributes drive improved performance across channels, providing both a granular view of individual creative elements and a holistic, full-funnel view of performance.



Validate

Models trained on 2025 data were tested against a separate period in Q1 2026, confirming the future viability of the findings and enabling Kroger to use the data to inform creative, planning, and media decisions.

➔ **This study gives Kroger the statistical validation that predictive creative scoring can accurately forecast ecommerce outcomes 81% of the time, transforming subjective creative decisions into a measurable, repeatable process rooted in data.**

Drilling Into Custom Creative Best Practices

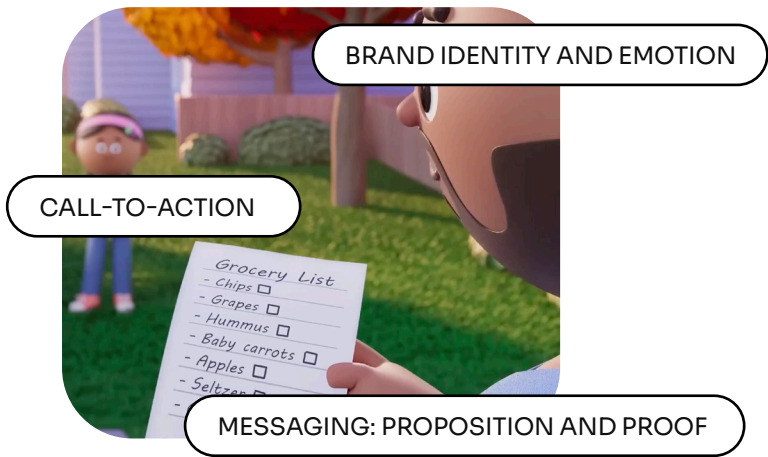


To fully optimize creative impact on ecommerce performance, it's essential to understand the nuances of what works best on individual platforms. The creative attributes examined in this study fell into two distinct categories: Message and Craft.

Message refers to what the creative communicates. This encompasses brand identity and emotional tone—how the brand presents itself and the feeling it evokes—as well as the value proposition, supporting proof points, call-to-action phrasing, and Kroger-specific elements such as loyalty offers.

Craft refers to how the creative is constructed. This includes visual execution (live-action versus animation), the use of talent and people, emotional intensity, and attention flow, such as the opening hook and where viewer focus is drawn within the first three seconds. Every asset in the study was scored against both dimensions.

Message



Craft

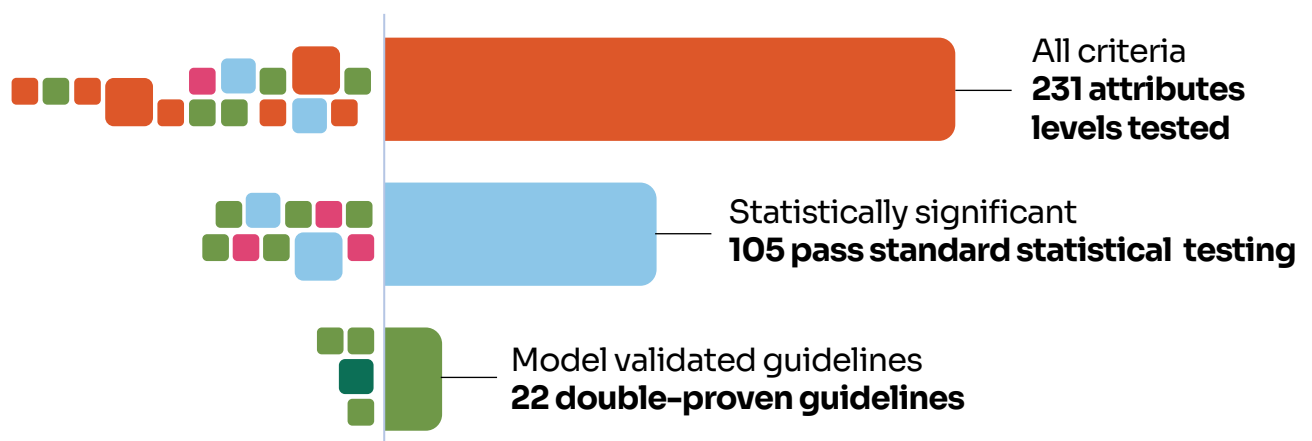


Drilling Into Custom Creative Best Practices (continued)



The study tested 231 attribute levels, of which 105 passed standard statistical testing — confirming they genuinely influenced conversions rather than reflecting noise. A guideline only makes the list if it passes three separate tests: it moved real conversions, it held up in live-action creative, and the predictive model agreed. Guidelines were only finalized when all three converged; any guideline lacking full agreement was excluded. This process yielded 22 validated guidelines across both platforms: 17 validated creative guidelines for driving conversions on DV360, and five directional guidelines for driving conversions on Meta.

We applied two levels of statistical validation and found **22 guidelines**



* applied regardless of creative concept



Drilling Into Custom Creative Best Practices (continued)

→ PHASE 02

Key takeaway

While **Meta** and **DV360** each require their own nuanced levers to optimize performance, one theme held true across both platforms. Ads built around relatable, human narratives consistently outperformed glossy product shots and transaction-focused creative.

On Meta, when creative includes a relatable human scenario, 87% of those assets are top-half performers, compared to just 38% without it. Similarly, ads that show people reacting or enjoying the moment are top-half performers 76% of the time, compared to only 45% without it. By quantifying the impact of specific creative attributes, Kroger is able to further validate its brand ethos and creative strategy to “Feed the Human Spirit.”

The Gold Standard: a human moment people recognize as their own



Attribute:

▲ RELATABLE HUMAN SCENARIO

With it: top performer 87% of the time

Without: 38% of the time

Attribute:

▲ REACTING / ENJOYING

With it: top performer 76% of the time

Without: 45% of the time

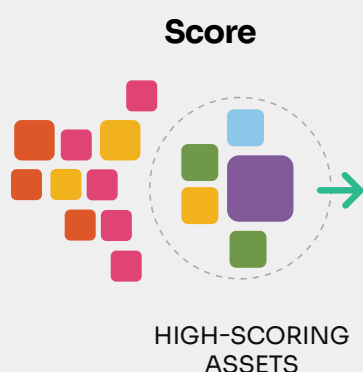
Proving the Impact of Predictive Creative Scoring on Ecommerce Outcomes



An analysis of Kroger's historical media spend revealed that approximately half of all media investment was allocated to low-converting creative. On average, conversions driven by high-scoring creative cost approximately 70% less than those driven by low-scoring creative. On DV360, the analysis uncovered an additional opportunity: lower-scoring creative had both lower conversion rates and higher CPMs, highlighting the potential to improve overall efficiency by pairing media investment with stronger-performing creative.

This raises an important distinction between the guideline-following lift (4X) and the reallocation-only lift (2.2X): the former reflects performance achievable when new creative is built to specification from the outset, while the latter reflects improvement available immediately through reallocating existing budget, without producing new assets.

We learned half of Kroger's media spend was going to low-converting creative. **The fix was a simple reallocation.**



About half of all media spend was applied to low-converting creative assets



No new dollars spent — reallocation guided by the predictive model

The Payoff

Up to

2.2x

Additional conversions without a single new creative asset

Proving the Impact of Predictive Creative Scoring on Ecommerce Outcomes (continued)



Kroger can use predictive creative scoring to drive real ecommerce impact:

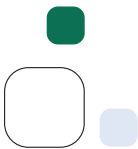
+ **81%**
accuracy in predicting the asset to be a low or high performer based on ecommerce conversion metric across Meta and DV360

+ **4x**
average improvement in conversion rate, across DV360 and Meta, when these guidelines are followed

+ Up to **2.2x**
potential conversions from the same media spend, by moving low-scoring creative to the high-performing tier



Operationalizing Creative Guidelines to Drive Advertising Impact

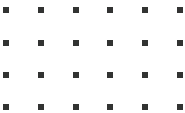


Proof of impact only matters if it changes how work gets done. For Kroger, that means building these validated guidelines directly into the creative briefing process, a standing part of how creative gets made, not a report referenced once and shelved.

These creative scores are designed to complement, not compete with, media mix models: where MMM identifies which channels are driving results, creative scoring adds the layer underneath, explaining why the creative running in those channels performed the way it did. As more creative runs, the guidelines are built to tighten rather than stay fixed, and as coverage extends beyond Meta and DV360 to the rest of Kroger’s media mix, that explanatory layer can travel with it.

Looking ahead, Kroger plans to build on this momentum with an in-market forward test, pitting high-scoring creative directly against low-scoring creative to turn this predictive model into measured, real-world proof. This process will give marketing, creative, and media teams a shared, data-backed language for collaborating and optimizing together, not just campaign by campaign, but as a standing capability across Kroger’s marketing organization.

PREDICTIVE CREATIVE SCORING LEADS TO REAL ECOMMERCE OUTCOMES



MEDIUM EMOTIONAL INTENSITY ▲

Operationalizing Creative Guidelines to Drive Advertising Impact (continued)

Key Takeaways

Five key takeaways for operationalizing predictive creative scoring throughout the creative development process:

1. Brief against creative guidelines

Incorporate platform-specific best practices into creative briefs to ensure alignment before campaign development.

2. Score creative before campaign launch

Run new creative through the model to move away from low-scoring assets before launch.

3. Run a predictive test

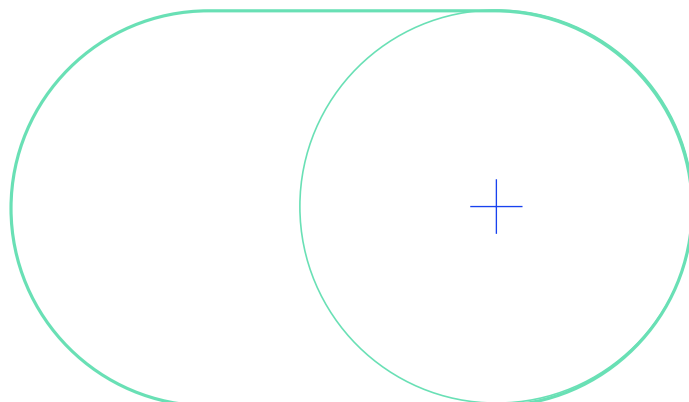
Put two campaigns in-market and measure performance against ecommerce ROI to establish a baseline.

4. Develop a repeatable framework

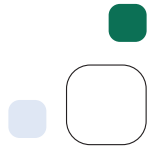
Embed predictive scoring as an always-on part of the campaign development process, ensuring best practices are in place from the briefing stage.

5. Tie brand results back to performance

Quantify the link between brand investment and performance on ecommerce channels by understanding which creative decisions lead to outcomes.



Future Research Questions



To expand and deepen the insights generated here, future research should consider:



Best practices by platform

Go deeper to learn best practices on YouTube, Snapchat, TikTok, Instagram, and other platforms to optimize performance at a granular level.



Building into briefing process

Determine the next steps for creating a repeatable framework to build creative best practices into the briefing process.



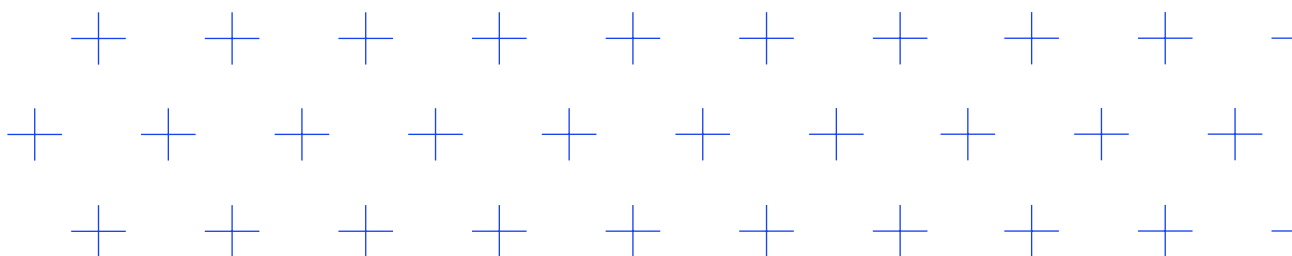
Impact by team and markets

Seek to understand how predictive scoring impacts Kroger's creative, media, and brand teams, and across lines of business and markets.

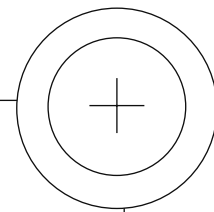


Creative influence

Further unpack how the findings around centering human, relatable moments should inform Kroger's creative style moving forward.

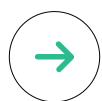


Summary and Conclusions

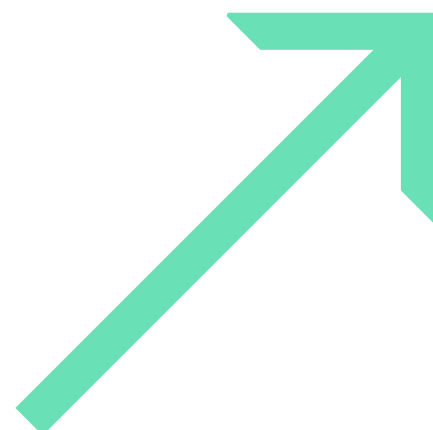


Kroger, in partnership with Vidmob and MMA, set out to understand how predictive creative scoring can impact ecommerce performance. By analyzing 1,934 pieces of image and video content, corresponding to 12 months of live campaign data across Meta and DV360, this study proves that predictive scoring can forecast ecommerce conversion performance with 81% accuracy.

In addition to proving creative's impact as a performance lever, the study uncovered platform-specific best practices for driving ecommerce outcomes on Meta and DV360. And it shed light on a key creative insight: ads that feature genuine, relatable human moments outperform those centered on the shopping errand itself, transactional moments, or glossy product shots, across the board.



Kroger's next step is scaling predictive creative scoring across its marketing organization and embedding creative best practices into its campaign development process, establishing a repeatable system that enables it to predict which creative will perform before it goes live, and tying its brand ethos back to true outcomes.



Acknowledgements

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