

168 - Boosted Posts: The Good, The Bad and The Ugly!

Laura Davis: [00:00:00] On this week's episode, we're discussing boosting posts, the good, the bad, and the ugly.

Laura Moore: Welcome back to another episode of JFDI with The Two Lauras. This is the weekly show, where we talk to you, the freelance social media marketer about all kinds of things when it comes to running your business, whether it's content ideas. Getting rid of clients, winning clients, pricing, all sorts of things we talk about, and as Laura's just alluded to today, we are talking about boosted posts.

This is something that comes up a lot in our communities. Should you boost posts? Should you not? What's the pros? What's the cons? We're gonna go right into it. Talk about all the things you need to know in relation to boosting your content. Before we get into it, we would love to hear from you. So I'm here with a massive beg.

Please leave us a review wherever it is you are. You are listening to the show. It really helps us. To know that A, someone's actually listening and B, that they're enjoying it. So yeah, if you'd love to leave us, leave us a review, we would be so, so grateful. Obviously hit the five stars if you think we're worth it.

Uh, but let's dive in then. Boosted [00:01:00] post. Should we start with the good?

Laura Davis: Let's start. Well, let's start with the perception. I think maybe.

Laura Moore: Okay.

Laura Davis: Of boosted posts because –

Laura Moore: I'll tell what though. Let's just wind back and say, what are we actually talking about when we're talking about boosting a post? Just in case. Yeah. You know, you're like, what are you talking about on Instagram, on Facebook, et cetera.

Wherever there's a post, there's usually a button that says Boost it or like promote this post. However they, the wording changes all the time, isn't it? But it's basically turning your existing content into an ad. So that's what we're talking about today. And rather than going and creating an ad in Ads Manager.

Laura Davis: Yeah, and in the back in the day. So I've run ads for like over 10 years and boosted posts have changed considerably. So 10 years ago, probably even maybe five, six

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years ago, I'd have been saying boosted posts was, uh, shit, don't do it. It's not worth it. It's a waste of money. It was so limited. I'm still not someone who is a huge advocate for [00:02:00] boosting posts, but.

Uh, times have moved on and they are, they, I don't think they deserve the bad name that they had years ago. So if you listening to this thinking, well, hang on. Everyone always says boosted posts aren't worth doing, then keep listening. Um, because actually I think things are a little better than they used to be, and there are some opportunities to benefit from boosting posts, but obviously also listen to the downsides of it as well.

Laura Moore: Yeah, like we boost posts all the time, don't we?

Laura Davis: Exactly. Yeah.

Laura Moore: But we do it in a very strategic way. We do it with a specific reason behind it and we'll probably get into that, but we don't just willy-nilly chuck some money on a post and hope for the best.

Laura Davis: Yeah. Yeah. Exactly.

Laura Moore: Which is what I think a lot of people probably do.

Laura Davis: Yeah. And that, which leads us onto probably some of the good things about boosted posts is that it, they are easy. It is just press a button and then follow the, the steps through. And they're slightly [00:03:00] different depending on whether you're on Facebook or Instagram for example. But by and large, you are taken through that process with very few options that might confuse you or um, overcomplicate things.

So it very much simplifies things. You could argue, well, well hang on. If you go into Ads Manager and you wanna run ads. That's also kind of takes you through the process, but there are so many variables when you're an ads manager, it can be overwhelming, confusing. Whereas when you are doing a boosted post, it's much more who do you want it to go to? What do you want them to do?

Laura Moore: Yeah, how much do you wanna spend? That's pretty much the decision.

Laura Davis: How much do you wanna spend? Yeah, it's very kind of simple, simplified, um, which makes it easy, which there are probably downsides to that. Just looking purely at the positives. If you don't know Ads Manager, you dunno how to run ads, but you do have a

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bit of budget to put behind some content, then it can be quite simple, which is a positive.

[00:04:00]

Laura Moore: And like we have to remember that Meta is a business and they want people to spend money on ads. So they're going to make it easy. They have to have these more strategic options for people who've got big budgets and want to really go to town. But they have to make things easy for the people who are not tech savvy.

Who still wanna spend some money so they can get that money out of them. So it is all of like a business move and you have to remember that when you are weighing up, should this be a boost or should this be a post? You have to think like from your own business perspective, but also from Meta's, like why are they making boosts easier?

It isn't so that you can get better results. It's so that they can make more money in their bank.

Laura Davis: Yeah. Yeah. Nice. Good point.

Laura Moore: So yeah, so they are easier not just in terms of setup. Like from a technical perspective, but in terms of the actual creative for the ad, because if you are going into Ads Manager, you have to go and think about, oh, what, what ad am I gonna create?

Like, what's the creative gonna be? What's the copy gonna be, yada, yada, yada. Whereas with a boost, [00:05:00] you've already created the content. Ideally, you're not boosting it until, unless it's actually working. So the content's already there. You don't have to think about that again.

Laura Davis: And I think that's just a good point that you've just made that is worth kind of highlighting.

You should not be boosting posts that do not work organically. That's kind of putting money behind it like a, a dead post. So lots of people sometimes have the mentality, oh, that didn't work as well as I wanted it to. Let's put some money behind it because that will make it better. And that's the wrong way to approach it.

It has to be that post is done really well. Getting you the results that you were hoping for in that post. So let's put some money on it and like make, make hay while the sun shines.

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Laura Moore: Yeah. If you're doing it the other way around, if you've got a shit post that no one's seeing, no one's commenting on it by spending money on it, it's still a shit post that no one's commenting on.

It's just that more people might be seeing it. Yeah. So it doesn't make it a good post by putting money on it. Yeah, yeah, exactly. For sure.

Laura Davis: And it's worth saying that boosted [00:06:00] posts can work, but it depends on what your goal is. Now, if you are sat here thinking, okay, I've done this post, it's got some good engagement, I'm gonna boost it and I'm gonna try and get more sales.

It's going to be very difficult when you are an ads manager and when you are running ads, there are a huge amount of optimisations you can create your ads in. So you are basically saying to Meta, go and find me people who are gonna buy stuff. In boosted posts, you don't have that range of optimisation.

So you could say to Meta, I wanna boost this post and I want to get people to my website. Now that's fine. Or I want people to come and engage on this post, or I want more views of this video, which are all great things to have, but especially if you're after the vanity metric. But it's not necessarily going to help you get sales.

Now, it may do, if your offer is [00:07:00] incredible and an absolute no brainer, then just sending people to that sales page or a boosted post may well be enough. But if people aren't really, if it's. And you'll know that because that's happening organically. If that's not happening organically, just by boosting a post where you can only optimise it for link clicks, uh, i.e. get someone to your website, that is not gonna suddenly generate sales.

That's where you are better to put it into an ads setup in Ads Manager and actually optimise it for sales or leads or whatever it is that your goal is.

Laura Moore: And if you, if that, if that doesn't make sense to you. Just in like really basic terms, what Laura is saying is by optimising it for sales, you're basically saying to the Meta algorithm, go and find people who historically have bought things like this, or they've spent money by clicking on ads, et cetera.

Because Meta knows so many things about us, it has so many different data points. It knows like what links I click. It knows what happens when I'm on websites, whether I've

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gone via an ad or not, whether [00:08:00] I've spent money, you know, or know if I bought nail varnish yesterday or if I bought shampoo yesterday.

If those websites had. You know, uh, the pixel on it will also know the conversations that I'm having in groups, et cetera. So it has all these different pieces of information and you can only pull on that information if you're an ads manager. You can't pull on that information. In such depth. If it's a boosted post, yes, you might be able to find people who click links and yes, you might be able to find people who comment because those things are really easy for meta to find because they're like internal kind of metrics aren't there?

Yeah. But when it's pulling on information that's coming from the pixel, et cetera, that's much harder for it to do. So you have to do that in Ads Manager.

Laura Davis: Yeah. So Boost can work, but we have to be realistic about what the, the opportunities are. So for example, what, where Laura said before we do boosted posts, we do with a lot on Instagram.

Mainly we do boosted posts to get more profile views, which ultimately. [00:09:00] Get us more followers, they tend to work well. We only ever do it when we've got posts that are already doing that organically, as we've mentioned. And some people can boost posts because it's going to form part of their funnel. So they may have a real, which they want to boost to get more views from the right people.

So later date, they're gonna retarget those video views as part of a, a more strategic ad campaign. So there are definitely benefits, um, to the boosted post and they definitely work. You just have to make sure you have the correct expectations as to what you are wanting to achieve. Because like suddenly getting shed loads of sales, for example, might be a bit of a stretch.

Laura Moore: Yeah. And just go into it strategically like you would with anything. Yeah. You know? And if it is that you want comments like. Fine. But if it is that you are thinking, oh, by boosting this post and getting more people to comment on it, it means that they're gonna buy stuff. Like Laura said, that's not, that's not how things [00:10:00] work.

But yeah, so that, so there are definitely positives, but there are also negatives, I think, and one of the negatives that we haven't got on our notes, but that have just come into my mind as we were talking. You just said like we mostly boost on Instagram. When you boost

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a post on Instagram, it shows on Instagram when you create an ad in Ads Manager, you can show it on Threads, Facebook, Instagram.

It can be in the reels feed, it can be stories feed, like it can be everywhere, and that's not the same as it when you boost.

Laura Davis: And when you do it in Ads Manager, you can optimise for all those different platforms. So if you were to boost a post on Instagram, it may show in stories, but it wouldn't be optimised by, so as in it wouldn't be the correct size.

It would have obviously the call to action, et cetera, in the copy which people would have to click to see, as opposed to having it in the creative that. So when you are an ads manager. You can change all the creative to work for every single placement, whereas you can't do that for boost. And I think that's quite an important [00:11:00] point.

Laura Moore: Yeah. Yeah. And you can't, you just can't be seen everywhere. Which is, which might be fine, you know, you might only wanna be seen on Instagram because you're trying to grow your Instagram followers fine. But if it is a part of a wider thing that you're trying to do across multiple platforms, then you can't do that with boost.

Laura Davis: Yeah.

Laura Moore: So just do bear that in mind.

Laura Davis: And along with those limitations as, and we've kind of touched on this, there is that limitation on optimisation. So we, you know, we can't optimize for sales or leads that there's much, yes. It's the, the benefit is it's simple, but the downside is there's, there's a lot less, um, scope for you to be able to get kind of tangible results, I think.

Laura Moore: Yeah. Like you can't link your catalogue, et cetera, can you?

Laura Davis: Yeah. Yeah, it's very kind of top of funnel basic stuff, which can be good.

Laura Moore: Yeah, definitely. That you also can't carry out testing and we would always recommend that you're carrying, well, you should be carrying out testing all the time anyway, regardless of whether it's paid or [00:12:00] organic.

But if you are spending money on ads, especially if you're spending like a decent chunk of money, then you will wanna be testing and you wanna be testing different creatives. So as

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in like literally what people see in the image or the video. Different copy, perhaps different calls to action. You can test lots of different things, different audiences, et cetera.

When you're creating an ad in Ads Manager, but in a boosted post, you're literally just boosting what's already there. Yeah, so there's no testing option. You can't say, okay, this carousel did really well, but I want to test a different coloured version of it. Not, you can't do that as a boost. You would have to create that carousel and post it again as an organic post and then boost it.

And those two things then wouldn't be tested against each other as such. So yeah, just bear that in mind as well.

Laura Davis: Yeah, you'd have to, and even if you did want to test that you, you're paying twice. Whereas in Ads Manager, you only pay for the ad set. And so you can have multiple [00:13:00] creative and it doesn't cost you anymore.

So you can be testing easily two or three different creatives and the budget doesn't change. Whereas to do what you just said, to boost a couple of posts, even if you boost them exactly the same time and they went out exactly the same time, you're paying double.

Laura Moore: Yeah. And so that like boosts are quite expensive, not just because of that, but just in general.

They're quite expensive. Like if you are boosting in app, on Apple, I dunno if it's the same on Android, but on iPhone you have to pay extra for the privilege of doing it on an iPhone because of the app store charges. Whereas if you're on desktop, you don't have to do that. So that's obviously something to keep in mind as well.

Um, but just in general, they're more expensive, aren't they, than a, than a normal po, a normal ad. So just keep that in mind.

Laura Davis: And so if a client says to you, so, because there's sometimes opportu, like I've been in this situation where clients will say, look, I've got a couple of hundred quid. Shall I run an ad or shall I boost a post?

Like, or they probably don't actually ask me that. They just say, I've got a couple of hundred quid. Can we do an ad? And I would always say, [00:14:00] actually, it's not worth doing an

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ad because 200 quid's not gonna get you very far. But yeah, we can, we can do a boosted post. But it's making sure that you are kind of advising them correctly.

So I would say to them, for 200 quid, it's gonna be hard to do an ad. It's up to you, you're not, your results might be cheaper, but it's gonna cost. For my time is gonna be a lot more, but also, but all way up with, you could just do boosted posts, but your results might be more expensive. You just need to be kind of open with your clients about that.

But it's definitely more expensive in terms of, especially that iOS fee that's been added. I think it's iOS, uh, Apple.

Laura Moore: I think it is only Apple.

Laura Davis: I don't think it's Android.

Laura Moore: Yeah, I'm not sure. Uh, we're Apple girls. We wouldn't know that.

Laura Davis: No.

Laura Moore: Feel free to let us know so we can put a note in the podcast. Um, but yeah, it can be quite expensive.

And like you've just said, if you are running ads, then you're gonna obviously, if you charging the client for that, and that's gonna [00:15:00] cost them more than a boosted post. But I would argue that if you're boosting posts for clients, you should still be charging extra for that because you're still gonna have to.

Make sure that the ad account is set up correctly. Make sure you're doing the ads properly, like in terms of the setup, make sure you're keeping an eye on it. If it's something that's running and you wanna like, you know, check on the data to see if it's still worth running, you're gonna probably wanna report back on that.

Like there's a lot more additional work that you're probably gonna have to put in in if you are boosting posts that a client really shouldn't be getting for free.

Laura Davis: No.

Laura Moore: Yeah, it depends what you, if it's like one post randomly here and there for 50 quid, fine. Yeah. But just have a think about that as well. It'll be different for everybody.

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Laura Davis: And when you know that there's budget gonna be spent, even if it is just on boosted, when you're starting to put your proposals in, then price accordingly. 'cause as you say, it can be a bit of a ballache. Like, and I think it can also be, so when you boost a post, you can see your results kind of in, in the app, like on.

Uh, any of the platforms and that's, that's [00:16:00] fine, but it's basic information. But you can also go into Ads Manager and see the results in Ads Manager, so you can see lots more data, which is great for someone like me 'cause I love the data and it's fine for me because I am an ads manager, so I know what all the data means and I can then take.

The results and kind of analyze those and then take necessary next steps. If you don't know Ads Manager and you go into Ads Manager, it can be incredibly overwhelming. So it may be the data that you do just get in, the apps are fine and that's all you need and it's enough information for you to decide whether that was as success or on on your next steps.

If you do want more granular information, you can go into Ads Manager. It just can be. Quite complicated. Um, it's fine once you know what you're doing, because there's great ways to remove a lot of the data and the overwhelm, and we cover all of this, like in the Ads Manager Academy, [00:17:00] like how you can actually just filter out the information that you do need.

But sometimes for some people, when they go in there, if they've not had any training, it can be overwhelming and a little bit kind of like, like a rabbit in headlights.

Laura Moore: But like you said, I think once you get to know it and you, you know what button does what, it takes all of that away and you're like, hang on a minute.

How did I find this so confusing to start with? Because actually it's not, it's just for some reason Meta just make it look really difficult. Which, you know, once you know what you're doing, it actually isn't all that hard. Yeah.

Laura Davis: Yeah. And I think just, I think when you enter the realms of boosting posts and ads and all of that area in meta, you do start to also see how sneaky meta can be.

And I actually think it's marginally better than it used to be. 'cause it used to be every five minutes this post is doing well, why don't you boost it? But you're constantly getting

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notifications to say this post is, [00:18:00] you know, the, your best performing post. And it's like not.

Laura Moore: Yeah. Three views.

Laura Davis: Yeah. It's done really badly. And, but you're like, you're being told to boost, because of course that's meta trying to get you to spend money. And for the uneducated in terms of ads, you'd sit there going, oh. Alright then. Yeah. I'll boost, it's only a fiver. Yeah, yeah. Why not? But you know, over the course of a year, if you are spending a fiver on every single post, and of course I'm sure meta thinks, hang on, I've got one here.

This, this person's listening to what I'm saying and doing what they're doing. So then they tell them to boost more and like, you know, call me a cynic, but like, I just. I can, I think the bad side of boosting posts is some of the bullshit that comes out of, I was gonna say Meta's mouth then, but it's, you just have to have your due diligence and just think critically.

Like when they're saying to you, oh, this post is your best, um, boost it here, or do this or promote it, or [00:19:00] just think. Is it really? Like don't believe everything Meta tells you, and that's something –

Laura Moore: And let's not even, let's not even get onto the Meta ad reps who might phone you up because like –

Laura Davis: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Laura Moore: That's a whole different podcast in itself. Spoiler alert, just don't listen to them because they give listen rubbish advice. Yeah. Um, but yeah. Yeah, it's well sneaky. I haven't had one of those for a while. Pop up. Maybe our posts are all rubbish.

Laura Davis: Yeah. Well no I have. I got one the other day for on our account saying This post is on fire or something crap. And it wasn't on fire.

Laura Moore: Love it. So there we go.

Laura Davis: Yeah, so do just, don't, yeah, don't believe all the bullshit. Um, in life.

Laura Moore: Yeah, but also don't, don't, like, don't believe if people are still saying that boosted posts are not the way to go, just take it with a pinch of salt. Because in some circumstances they can be the way to go. In some circumstances they can really be helpful.

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Like Laura said. Um, we use them, you know, for various different things, whether it's to get more followers, whether it's to get some [00:20:00] video views so that we can then retarget people as part of a funnel. Whatever it is, they have a place. Um, you just have to think about. Is, is this the right option for what I want to achieve?

Or would Ads Manager be a better option? Yeah. Um, and just always keep that in mind. So like where we probably started the podcast saying, you know, we're gonna tell you whether you should use boosted posts. We can't tell you that because in some circumstances you shouldn't and in some circumstances you shouldn't.

So I know that's quite annoying. Um, but you just need to make a, an informed decision.

Laura Davis: And hopefully this podcast will help you with that informed decision. But I think if you've got, the way I would look at it, especially when handling clients, is that if they're saying, can I boost this post because I want to get more sales or because I want to get more leads, then you probably need to go, you know what?

I think you'd be better to run an ad campaign. Quickly come and do Ads Manager Academy and learn how to be an ads manager, and then obviously get them to pay for the ads and your time. If they're coming to you saying, oh, it'd be [00:21:00] nice to just get some more views on this because we can target them later, or.

Whatever their goal is, then that you can say, okay, yeah, maybe this would work, but be wary, especially when it's clients with their expectations. If they say, yeah, I'm happy to spend 50 quid, make sure they're clear what, what they're gonna achieve with that 50 pounds. Yeah. Um, so it's not too, they're not disappointed in a week or two weeks time when that money's run out and they've not got any sales.

'cause you haven't kind of advised them on that. So yeah, and if you are listening to this thinking, God, I wish I knew a little bit more about ads, I wish this was something that I could offer, then come and check out the Ads Manager Academy. It's our ads training all aimed at social freelance social media managers to get you, um, completely up to speed on running ads for yourself and for clients.

We've had hundreds of social media managers go through the program and some incredible ads managers out there now as a result, which is always [00:22:00] amazing to see. So if you are up for learning more about becoming an ads manager or adding ads

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management to your repertoire, then you can visit our website on thetwolauras.com/ads. Is that right?

Laura Moore: Well done. Yeah.

Laura Davis: And if you've got any questions –

Laura Moore: She doesn't remember a lot of things, so I'm impressed that she remembered that.

Laura Davis: It's just 'cause ads is so easy.

Laura Moore: It's fairly easy to remember.

Laura Davis: Yeah. So, but if you have got questions and you don't know whether ads is for you and you've maybe thought about it and you are not sure, just come and ask us because we are both very different ads managers, so we both have come across or approached ads management in very different ways.

Like Laura absolutely loves the kind of creative side of it, the, the creating the ad. Um, I love the data, not so much the creating of the ads. So we've come and like Laura hates the data. So if you all sat there going, oh, [00:23:00] I can never be an ads manager because I don't like the data. Then like Laura is perfectly good ads manager and doesn't like data.

So there are ways to kind of lean into what your preferences are. Um, so yeah, so just come and have a chat with us. We're always in our DMs on Instagram and we're @thetwolauras. If you don't already follow us, you can come and chat with us there or drop us an email, anything. Either or.

Laura Moore: Love it. There we go then. That's another one in the bag. We'll be back, same time, same place next week. Hope you're enjoying your summer and yeah, maybe we'll see you on Instagram.

Laura Davis: Yeah. Alright, chat to you soon. Bye.

Laura Moore: Toodles.

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