CASE STUDY — META ADS / STRUCTURAL DIAGNOSIS

Beyond the Obvious Fix

Three Meta Ads diagnoses

Through Meta's Top Spenders partner program, I advised on paid-media strategy for accounts spending well above the program's threshold — across automotive, healthcare, and B2B technology.

Large accounts rarely fail for lack of effort. They have budgets, teams, agencies, and a standard playbook for when results drop: refresh the creative, adjust the bids, wait for the algorithm to settle. That playbook works often enough to become a reflex, which is exactly why it gets applied to problems it can't solve. In each of these three accounts, the real problem wasn't the one it looked like on the surface — and the fix only became visible once the reflex was set aside.

Advisory engagements: the strategic read was mine, execution and final decisions sat with each in-house team.

Andrea Ciccia

Performance Marketing & Growth Systems

DIAGNOSIS 01

The dealership with the wrong ad group

CONTEXT	A premium automotive dealership group, a Meta Top Spenders account.
THE OBVIOUS FIX	Campaigns were underperforming. The easy read is always creative fatigue or a bid adjustment — refresh the assets, nudge the budget, wait a week.
THE ACTUAL READ	The problem wasn't the creative. The price list was too wide for a single ad group — entry-level and flagship vehicles competing for the same audience signal, diluting what Meta's algorithm could learn about either one.
THE MOVE	Segmented ad groups into three price tiers, against the account's standard practice, letting each cluster build its own signal instead of sharing one blurred one.
THE RESULT	The campaign went from the account's weakest performer to the reference point the rest of their digital activity got measured against.

Behind the diagnosis

Meta's delivery system learns from who responds. When an entry-level car and a flagship sit in the same ad group, the algorithm receives two contradictory lessons at once: one buyer profile weighs monthly payments, the other weighs status and specification. It averages them, and the average describes nobody. Fresh creative wouldn't have changed that, because the creative was never the bottleneck — the structure was teaching the algorithm the wrong thing.

Splitting the range into three tiers meant each group could learn its own buyer. It also meant going against how the account had always been organised, which is usually the harder part of the recommendation. The case for it was simple: one structure had been tried for long enough to know it wasn't working.

DIAGNOSIS 02

The doctor who needed to be known, not just found

CONTEXT	A physician's practice, another Top Spenders account — healthcare was the dominant vertical in this part of the Italian market.
THE OBVIOUS FIX	More local lead-gen: tighter geo-targeting, better offers, standard acquisition tactics for a local practice.
THE ACTUAL READ	Local acquisition was already close to saturated. The real lever wasn't more ads aimed at the same radius — it was building the doctor's personal renown beyond it.
THE MOVE	Shifted the strategy from local lead generation toward personal-brand visibility, positioning the physician rather than just the practice.
THE RESULT	Recognition extended across Italy, Switzerland, and Monaco — a different scale of outcome than another few percentage points on local CPL.

Behind the diagnosis

When an account has already reached most of the people within reach, more spend in the same radius buys diminishing returns: the same audience, seeing the same offer, at a rising cost. The question changes from "how do we find more patients nearby?" to "why would someone travel to see this doctor?" — and the answer to that is reputation, not proximity.

So the work moved from offers to authority. Video became the core format, with content that let the physician explain procedures in his own words, and a much wider target than the practice's local area. The most persuasive pieces came from patients who agreed to take part in demonstration videos: real people, showing real results, doing what no ad copy can. The practice stopped competing on convenience and started being chosen by name.

DIAGNOSIS 03

The B2B account selling to two audiences at once

CONTEXT	An automotive technology company, advertising to a channel that isn't one audience but two.
THE ACTUAL READ	Channel partners — mechanics, dealers — and end consumers were being addressed by the same funnel, with the same messaging. They don't buy for the same reasons, and blending them dilutes both.
THE MOVE	Built parallel funnel architectures: separate messaging, separate targeting, for partners and consumers — run as one coherent system rather than two competing campaigns.
WHY IT MATTERS	Not every fix produces a headline number. This one produced an account structure that scales cleanly as the client adds partners or markets, instead of one that needs to be rebuilt every time.

Behind the diagnosis

A mechanic and a car owner can look at the same product and see two different things. The mechanic sees a business decision: margins, reliability, ease of installation, the support behind it, whether customers will come back satisfied. The car owner sees a personal one: safety, cost, convenience, whether to trust the workshop recommending it. A single funnel has to pick one of those conversations, or speak vaguely to both.

Separating them let each message be specific. Partners got the commercial case; consumers got the reasons to ask for the product by name — which, in turn, gave partners one more reason to stock it. Two funnels, one system, each strengthening the other instead of competing for the same budget.

THE PATTERN

Same instinct, three different rooms.

Three industries, three different surface symptoms, one repeated move: look past what the account looks like and ask what it is actually being asked to do. A dealership asking one ad group to learn three buyers. A practice asking a saturated radius for more growth. A B2B brand asking one funnel to persuade two audiences.

None of these fixes needed more budget or more creative. They needed someone to question the structure everyone else was working inside — and the willingness to recommend changing it, even when it went against standard practice.

Andrea Ciccia

andreaciccia91@gmail.com · andrea-ciccia.netlify.app · +39 329 534 2163 · linkedin.com/in/andrea-ciccia