Amazon advertising attribution: Here’s how it works

Amazon is complex. Amazon Advertising is really complex. And Amazon Advertising Attribution – well, that’s another level entirely!

Amazon Sales Attribution is when Amazon assigns credit for a sale to a specific campaign. For example, when a user clicks on one of your ads and buys a product within a certain time period such as 7 or 14 days, the “sale” is attributed to your campaign.

There are three different dashboards you can use to advertise on Amazon.

- **Seller Central**, also known as 3P or the dashboard third party sellers use.
- **Advertising Console,** formerly Amazon Marketing Services (AMS), or the dashboard vendors use (1P/first party sellers).
- **Amazon DSP,** formerly the Amazon Advertising Platform (AAP), run by the Amazon Media Group (AMG). Note: Amazon DSP is offered through AMG’s managed service. It is also available through select agency partners as a self-service tool or directly to top-tier, large budget advertisers.

Amazon tracks attribution differently depending on the platform you’re using. Oh, you thought this was going to be easy? Think again! Here’s what you need to know:

Seller Central attribution

Sponsored Product (SP) Campaigns

- Sales attribution is measured on a 7-day click-through attribution window. Meaning, if a user clicks on an ad, comes back up to 7 days later, and buys one of your products from your brand Amazon will attribute the sale to that campaign.
- Sales are attributed only to the last ad the user clicked.

Note: Product ASIN targeting attribution falls under the same rules as SP.

Sponsored Brand Ad (SBA) campaigns:

- Sales are measured on 14-day click-through attribution window.
- Sales are attributed only to the last campaign the user clicked (last touch model).
- SBAs follow what Amazon calls “Brand Halo” sales attribution. This means that if the user clicks on your ad and buys ANY product with your brand name on it, not just a product featured in your SBA ad, Amazon will attribute the sale to that campaign.

“Brand Halo” gets very tricky. If you are a brand that has listings with different variations of your brand names, Amazon will attribute ANY sale from ANY of those brands, including sales made by anyone on Amazon who sells products under your brand.

For example, here are two toys owned by Mattel. One has the brand name “Mattel” and the other “Mattel Games.” If both of these products are in a single campaign, Amazon will attribute any sale to any product with EITHER brand name. So if Mattel just wanted to see performance on its “Mattel Games,” Mattel would not be able to do that in this case because it would

pull in data on any Mattel-branded product on Amazon… not necessarily only Mattel Games.

Brand Halo gets even more complex for licensed brands such as Disney Princess. They license the rights out to many different companies to make products around its brand, Disney Princess.

In the three examples below, you can see that each of these products are technically Disney Princess products, but their respective brand names are different: “Disney,” “Hasbro” and “Lego.” If Disney were to serve an ad targeting these three products, Amazon would attribute a sale after a click was made for ANY product in EITHER of the three brands. This means that if someone clicked on a Disney Princess ad, with these

products in it, and later bought a Minecraft Lego set, Amazon would attribute the sale to Disney’s ad, even though Minecraft has nothing to do with Disney. It is simply because the Minecraft product has the “Lego” brand name in it.

Advertising Console attribution, Formerly AMS

The first thing you should know is that the attribution for the Advertising Console differs from Seller Central, even though many of the ad types are the same.

Across the board, all the units in the Advertising Console work on Amazon’s Brand Halo attribution, whereas in Seller Central, only Sponsored Brand Ads work on Brand Halo.

Sponsored Product campaigns

- Instead of a 7-day click-through attribution like in

Seller Central, the Advertising Console works on a 14-day click-through attribution.
- Brand Halo attribution applies here.

Sponsored Brand ad campaigns

- Same 14-day click-through attribution as Seller Central.
- Brand Halo applies here just as it does in Seller Central, BUT it also includes:
    - Sales from products within your brand when EITHER Amazon ships and sells the product OR other sellers sell your product.

Product Display ads

- Measured on a 14-day click-through attribution.
- Amazon's Brand Halo attribution applies here.

What happens if there is a promotion?

In either Seller Central or the Advertising Console, attribution is treated the same. Any discounts that are applied before the customer enters the checkout phase are applied and taken out of the attributed ad revenue. But if the discount was applied during the checkout process, Amazon still reports the full retail price as the sale. Here is an example:

- Let's pretend the item you're advertising costs $100. If it sells, Amazon reports a $100 sale.
- Let's say you had a $15 off COUPON (pre-checkout discount) running and the customer clicked it. Amazon reports an $85 sale. **In this case, the discount was accounted for.**
- Let's say you had a $15 PROMO CODE (checkout discount) running and the customer applied it. Amazon still reports a $100 sale. **In this case, the discount was not accounted for.**

Amazon DSP, formerly AAP

There are a few different ways that Amazon attributes sales in the DSP platform, Amazon's display advertising platform.

First, if you are advertising a product sold on Amazon, there are two types of reporting metrics or values to measure your return on ad spend: **Product Sales** and **Total Sales**.

Product Sales only tracks the ASINs you provide to Amazon for conversion tracking purposes. There is NO Brand Halo attribution applied here. Amazon currently has to manually approve each list of ASINs you provide to them to verify they are indeed yours.

Other info to note:

- The Product Sales metric is calculated on a 14-day **view-through** attribution window. This means the ad only has to appear on the screen, it doesn't actually need to be clicked. Whether or not the user actually saw that ad, the impression is considered a "view."
- Viewable impressions are based on the Media Rating Council's (MRC) viewability standards. Effective Jan. 1, 2019, only 50 percent of the display ad needs to be in view for one second or more for a sale to be attributed. Also, only 50 percent of a video ad needs to be in view for two seconds or more for a sale to be attributed.
- Deduplication applies: meaning if they saw a DSP ad but then clicked on an SP ad, SP would take the credit for the sale, not DSP.

Total Sales tracks sales on the ASINs provided to Amazon for conversion tracking AND all Brand Halo sales from the brand names included in the tracked ASIN list. If Dyson were to give Amazon a list of all their ASINs and they all had the name "Dyson" in the brand field, then their Total Sales value should be clean. If a brand gave a list of ASINs with 10

different brand names, like the licensed brand example we mentioned above, then Total Sales would be skewed because Amazon would attribute ANY sale from ANY of those brands in the list, even if you weren't tracking those ASINs.

Other info to note:

- Total Sales is calculated on a 14-day view-through attribution window.
- Deduplication applies.

With Amazon DSP, you can also serve ads sending traffic OFF-Amazon. You can track the number of conversions attributed to the ad campaign but not the dollar amount or type. The same 14-day-attribution applies.

Let's close this down

Now that your eyes have rolled back into your head, let's close this article down! All in all, Amazon's attribution is complex and not necessarily front and center. It's important to understand not just the numbers, but also the attribution behind the numbers so you can get a complete sense of how your advertising is really performing to your specific goals.

As a closing gift, here is a quick summary table to keep in your back pocket:

Opinions expressed in this article are those of the guest author and not necessarily Search Engine Land. Staff authors are listed here.

About The Author

Trevor George is founder and CEO of Blue Wheel Media, a

digital marketing agency. He is also the President of Trevco, a leading licensing company. Trevor is one of the largest 3rd Party sellers on Amazon in the U.S., catapulting Trevco into an 8 figure business on Amazon in less than 2 years. Trevor puts a heavy focus on the Amazon Advertising division at Blue Wheel Media, which has helped major global brands achieve massive scale through an advanced strategy called “search term isolation” coupled with technology. Over the past decade, Trevor has helped drive numerous digital marketing initiatives which resulted in American Business Awards wins for Blue Wheel: 3X Marketing Campaign of the Year in 2018, Company of the Year in 2017, and Most Honored Interactive Agency, their Grand Stevie, in 2017.

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