

Google Is Replacing Dynamic Search Ads With AI Max via @sejournal, @brookeosmundson

Google just announced the deprecation of Dynamic Search Ads (DSA) and is officially moving its legacy capabilities into AI Max.

Starting in September, eligible campaigns using Dynamic Search Ads (DSA), automatically created assets (ACA), and campaign-level broad match settings will automatically upgrade to AI Max.

While advertisers have speculated about this change for months, the update is now official.

If you're running Dynamic Search Ads, automatically created assets (ACA), and/or campaign-level broad match settings, keep reading to understand how your campaigns will be affected.

DSA Features Migrating Into AI Max

Beginning in September, advertisers will no longer be able to create new DSA campaigns through Google Ads, Google Ads Editor, or the Google Ads API. Existing eligible campaigns will be migrated automatically.

Google positions AI Max as the next generation of DSA.

Historically, DSA helped advertisers capture additional search demand beyond their keyword lists by using website content to generate headlines and choose landing pages. That made it useful for large sites, inventory-heavy businesses, and advertisers looking for broader query coverage.

AI Max keeps that concept but adds more signals and controls.

According to Google, AI Max combines advertiser assets, landing page content, and broader intent signals to help match ads to more relevant queries. It also adds controls such as:

- Brand controls
- Location controls
- Text guidelines
- Search term matching
- Text customization
- Final URL expansion

Image credit: Google, April 2026

Google says campaigns using the full AI Max feature suite see an average of 7% more conversions or conversion value at a similar CPA or ROAS compared with using search term matching alone.

Google is also splitting the transition into two phases.

Phase 1: Voluntary Upgrades

Google announced that upgrade tools for existing DSA users are rolling out this week.

DSA advertisers will receive tools to move historical settings and data into new standard ad groups. ACA and campaign-level broad match users may see in-platform prompts to upgrade to AI Max.

Phase 2: Automatic Upgrades

Starting in September, remaining eligible campaigns with legacy settings will be upgraded automatically.

Google says all eligible upgrades are expected to finish by the end of September.

It's important to note how legacy settings will be automatically migrated over to AI Max settings:

- DSA users will have **all three** AI Max features enabled by default (search term matching, text customization, final URL expansion)
- ACA users will have **two** AI Max features enabled by default (search term matching and text customization)
- Campaign-level broad match users will have just search term matching enabled by default

What Advertisers Can Do To Prepare For The AI Max Transition

If you still rely on Dynamic Search Ads, now is the time to review where those campaigns sit in your account and how much value they drive.

Some advertisers use DSA as a core growth lever. Others use it as a low-maintenance catch-all for incremental growth. Your next steps may differ depending on that role.

#1. Review Your DSA Performance Now

Before the automatic upgrades begin, pull recent performance data for your DSA campaigns.

Look at conversions, assisted conversions, search terms, landing pages, and efficiency metrics. That baseline will help you judge whether performance changes after migration are positive, neutral, or negative.

#2. Upgrade On Your Timeline Before Automatic Upgrades

Google is encouraging advertisers to move early, and there is a practical reason for that.

A voluntary upgrade gives you more control over settings, structure, and testing than waiting for an automatic migration.

If DSA is important to your business, it makes sense to evaluate the upgrade before September.

#3. Test AI Max Impact

Google recommends using one-click experiments because they give advertisers a cleaner way to compare performance before making a full rollout decision. While I haven't tried this yet, I will be testing it myself in the coming months.

Even if AI Max improves results on average, averages do not guarantee results in every account. Lead generation, e-commerce, local services, and B2B advertisers may all see different outcomes.

Run controlled tests where possible and compare against your existing baseline.

#4. Lean Into Additional Controls

Many advertisers asked for more steering options in search automation, and Google has listened to our feedback. AI Max includes more controls than legacy DSA.

Spend time understanding brand settings, location controls, and text guidance. Those inputs may matter as much as the automation itself.

#5. Watch Search Match and Landing Page Quality

Once you've migrated your DSAs to AI Max, watch closely for the search terms your campaigns are now matching with. How does it compare to past DSA performance?

You'll also want to pay attention to the landing pages used (if final URL expansion is turned on), lead quality, and conversion paths.

Looking Ahead

Dynamic Search Ads have helped advertisers scale beyond their current keyword lists for years. Now, Google is folding that capability into its broader AI Max framework.

The clearest next step is to review where DSA is still active in your account and decide whether to migrate on your own timeline or wait for the automatic upgrade.

The real focus should be protecting performance during the transition and understanding where AI Max improves results, or where it needs tighter management control.

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