PPC Pulse: Google Data Manager API, YouTube Shorts, LinkedIn Reserved Ads via @sejournal, @brookeosmundson

The PPC platforms rolled out a few meaningful updates this week that shape how we measure, plan, and buy media.

Google introduced a new API that makes it easier to bring first party data into Ads. YouTube shared improvements to the Shorts advertising experience. LinkedIn launched Reserved Ads to give advertisers more control over pricing and delivery.

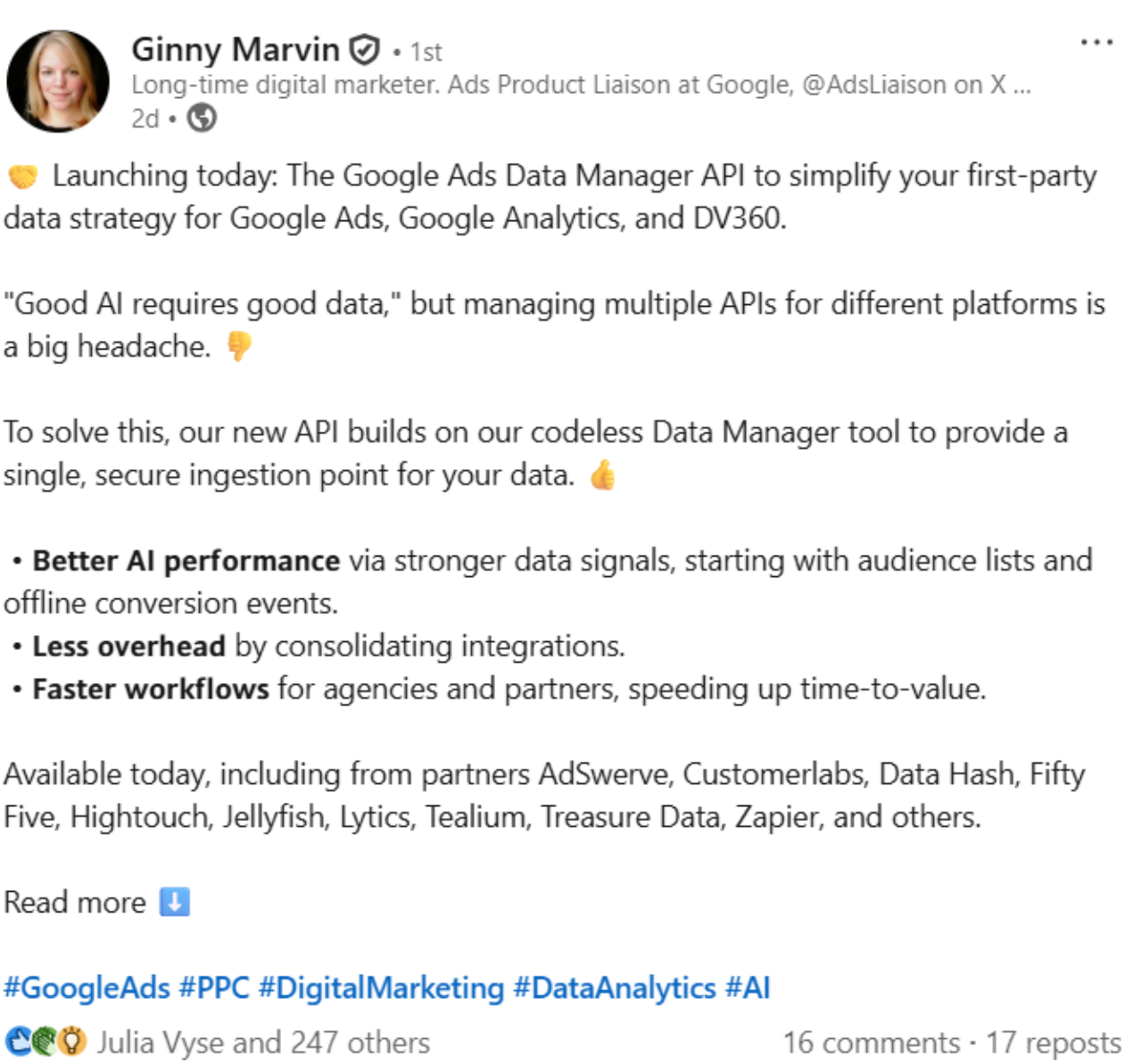
Here is what stood out and why these updates matter for day-to-day execution.

Google Launches Data Manager API

Google announced the Data Manager API, a new way for advertisers to push their offline conversions and business data directly into Google Ads. The goal is to make measurement setups simpler and more reliable, especially as more teams rely on modeled conversions.

According to Google, the API helps advertisers turn first party data into performance signals that Smart Bidding can use. It also removes some of the friction that previously made offline tracking complicated.

Ginny Marvin, Google Ads Liaison, added helpful context on LinkedIn where she noted that this update is designed to support more flexible measurement setups across platforms and internal systems.



Screenshot taken by author, December 2025

If you manage accounts with sales teams, long consideration cycles, or mixed online and offline activity, this is a welcome step. Better data pipelines usually translate to better bidding performance.

It also signals that Google is prioritizing easier paths for advertisers who have struggled to adopt accurate conversion tracking.

Why this matters for advertisers

Platforms continue to raise the bar on first party data. Advertisers who rely on spreadsheets, uploads, or manual CRM processes will fall behind.

The API helps teams move closer to real time signals, which Smart Bidding depends on. It also reduces the gap between what actually happens in the business and what Google sees inside Ads.

This update gives advanced teams more flexibility, and it gives mid sized teams a way to clean up measurement issues that have slowed performance.

YouTube Shorts Rolls Out New Ad Experience

YouTube shared several updates to help advertisers get more out of Shorts during the holiday season.

Google highlighted Kantar research showing that YouTube Creator Ads on Shorts increase purchase intent by 8.8% on average and drive higher consumer intent to spend compared to competitors.

The new updates focus on making Shorts ads feel closer to the organic experience while giving brands more ways to guide user action. The main updates include:

- Google is introducing comments on eligible Shorts ads so brands can respond to viewers in a more natural environment.
- Shorts creators can now link directly to a brand’s website in branded content, which gives viewers a clearer path to learn more.
- Google is also expanding Shorts ads to mobile web, which adds another surface for short form video placements across TV, web, desktop, and mobile app.

Why this matters for advertisers

Short form video still moves quickly, and advertisers need placements that offer both reach and some level of

interaction.

These updates make Shorts more workable for teams that want clearer signals and more opportunities to understand how users respond. The added surfaces and creator linking options give brands more flexibility as they plan holiday and year-end campaigns.

LinkedIn Introduces Reserved Ads and New Creative Tools

LinkedIn announced a set of updates aimed at helping B2B marketers build awareness with more consistency and scale.

The platform is positioning these changes around brand building, noting that only a small percentage of buyers are in-market at any given time. The updates focus on giving advertisers more predictable visibility and more efficient ways to produce and personalize creative.

The biggest addition is Reserved Ads. This placement guarantees the first ad slot in the LinkedIn feed, which gives brands steady reach in a high-attention position.
LinkedIn describes it as a way to secure predictable impressions and a larger share of top-of-feed delivery. It supports multiple formats including Video Ads, Thought Leader Ads, Single Image Ads, and Document Ads.

LinkedIn also introduced ad personalization tools that allow marketers to tailor copy to individual members using profile-based fields like first name, job title, industry, or company name.

The goal is to make impressions feel more relevant without requiring one-off creative. These features are only available to managed accounts for now.
An important note is that Reserved Ads and Ad Personalization are only available to advertisers who have a LinkedIn Account

Representative.

LinkedIn is also expanding its creative support with AI Ad Variants, which generate multiple copy versions from a single input, and a flexible ad creation workflow rolling out in early 2026.

Advertisers will be able to upload multiple images, videos, and copy variations, and LinkedIn will mix and match them across campaigns while shifting spend toward what performs best.

Why this matters for advertisers

LinkedIn continues to push deeper into brand advertising, and these updates reflect that direction.

Reserved Ads give marketers more certainty when planning top-of-funnel campaigns, something B2B teams often struggle to secure. Personalization and creative automation address a different challenge: producing enough message variation to keep performance stable across longer sales cycles.

For teams who rely on LinkedIn for both awareness and consideration, these tools may help streamline production and improve consistency without adding complexity.

The real value will come from how well these features integrate into existing campaign structures and how accurately they surface top-performing creative.

Theme of the Week: Platforms Are Reducing Friction

Across Google, YouTube, and LinkedIn, the updates had a similar goal. Each platform is trying to remove barriers that slow down planning, measurement, or creative production.

Google is making it easier to bring in first party data so advertisers can give better signals to their bidding strategies. YouTube is tightening tools around Shorts to help brands participate in short form video with fewer gaps in user flow. LinkedIn is focusing on predictability and creative efficiency so B2B marketers can maintain visibility without adding more operational work.

Each change supports a familiar goal: making it easier for advertisers to plan, measure, and adjust without unnecessary complexity. Folding these updates into your workflows can help create steadier execution and more reliable signals as planning continues into 2026.

More Resources:

Featured Image: Pixel-Shot/Shutterstock

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