PPC Pulse: Reddit Max Campaigns, Google Creator & Microsoft Targeting Updates via @sejournal, @brookeosmundson

Welcome to the first PPC Pulse of 2026! In this week’s update, Reddit introduces a new automated campaign type, Google expands its Creator Partnerships beta, and Microsoft announces new data-driven targeting capabilities.

Reddit launched Max Campaigns, an automated campaign format designed to simplify setup and expand reach across its ad inventory.

Google rolled out updates to its Creator Partnerships beta, adding creator search and centralized inquiry management inside Google Ads.

Microsoft announced a new partnership with Publicis Media Exchange and Epsilon, bringing Epsilon audience data directly into the Microsoft Advertising platform.

Read on for more details and why they matter for advertisers.

Reddit Ads Introduces Max Campaigns

Reddit has officially introduced Max Campaigns, its new automated campaign type designed to simplify setup and expand reach across the platform’s inventory.

Max Campaigns automate targeting, bidding, and ad delivery with the goal of driving conversions at scale. Advertisers provide a few core inputs, including budget, creative, and

optimization goals, and Reddit’s system handles the rest.

If this sounds familiar, it should. Max Campaigns mirror the broader industry shift toward automation-first buying, similar to Google’s Performance Max or Meta’s Advantage+ formats.

What’s notable is the timing. Reddit has spent the last year improving its ad infrastructure, creative formats, and targeting capabilities. Max Campaigns feel like the next logical step in pushing advertisers toward a more consolidated buying experience.

Why This Matters For Advertisers

For advertisers already testing Reddit, Max Campaigns lower the barrier to scaling spend without building complex campaign structures.

This matters most for teams that have struggled with Reddit’s historically manual setup. Instead of managing multiple ad groups or niche targeting layers, Max Campaigns encourage a broader approach that lets Reddit’s system identify where conversions actually come from.

That said, this is not a “set it and forget it” situation.

Advertisers should expect trade-offs, as with any other automated campaign type.

Automation reduces setup friction, but it also limits visibility and control. Early testers will need to pay close attention to conversion quality, placement mix, and creative fatigue, especially since Reddit’s communities behave very differently from traditional social feeds.

The opportunity here is testing, not wholesale replacement. Max Campaigns make Reddit easier to experiment with, but they still need guardrails, realistic expectations, and clear success metrics.

Google Ads Expands Creator Partnership Beta

Google Ads quietly rolled out meaningful improvements to its Creator Partnerships beta, adding tools that make creator discovery and management far more usable for advertisers.

The update was first spotted by Thomas Eccel on LinkedIn.

Screenshot by author on LinkedIn, January 2026

The first is Creator Search, which allows advertisers to search for creators directly using keywords. This replaces the clunky browsing experience that made creator discovery feel disconnected from actual campaign goals.

Advertisers can now filter creators by:

- Subscriber Count.
- Average Views.
- Location.
- Preferred contact methods.

The second update is a Management Menu that centralizes creator inquiries. Advertisers can view creator names, statuses, subjects, response deadlines, and contact details in one place.

Why This Matters For Advertisers

Google is clearly positioning creators as a more integrated part of paid media strategy, not just a brand add-on.

For advertisers already running Demand Gen or YouTube campaigns, this update closes a workflow gap. Instead of managing creator outreach in spreadsheets or external tools, Google is pulling creator collaboration closer to the ad platform itself.

This also matters for efficiency. Teams can align creator selection more closely with campaign objectives, audience geography, and performance expectations.

It also signals where Google is headed. Creators remain one of the few formats that consistently earn attention instead of getting lost in a sea of generic ads. Google investing in better creator discovery suggests this channel will play a larger role in future campaign types.

The caveat is program maturity. This is still a beta. Measurement, attribution, and scalability remain open questions. Advertisers should approach this as a testing ground, not a replacement for established creator programs.

Microsoft Announces New Data-Driven Targeting Capabilities

Microsoft Advertising used CES to announce a new collaboration with Publicis Media Exchange and Epsilon that brings Epsilon data directly into the Microsoft Advertising platform.

The initiative, called Third-Party Search (3PS), allows Publicis Media clients to activate Epsilon's identity and audience data across Microsoft's search, native, and display inventory.

According to Microsoft, early pilots in the travel vertical showed strong results, including higher return on ad spend (ROAS) and access to net-new audiences that were not previously identifiable through standard in-market targeting.

The announcement reinforces Microsoft's push toward identity-driven personalization while staying compliant with evolving privacy expectations.

There wasn't detail provided about what specific audience types or how advertisers can use these audiences in the platform, but I'm sure more detail will follow in the coming weeks or months.

Why This Matters For Advertisers

This update highlights Microsoft's long-term strategy: differentiated data partnerships instead of pure scale competition with Google.

For large advertisers and agencies with access to Epsilon data, this unlocks more precise audience activation without relying solely on keyword intent. That's especially valuable in verticals like travel, finance, and retail, where user intent is fragmented across devices and touchpoints.

It also reflects a broader shift away from traditional in-market audiences. As privacy constraints tighten, platforms are leaning on richer identity frameworks and curated data partnerships to maintain performance.

For advertisers not working with Publicis or Epsilon, this announcement still matters. It signals where Microsoft is investing and how future audience solutions may evolve.

Expect more emphasis on data interoperability, identity resolution, and partnerships that sit outside standard platform-owned audiences.

Theme Of The Week: Platforms Are Simplifying Entry, Not Strategy

This week’s updates all lower the barrier to getting started, but none of them remove the need for thoughtful decision-making.

Reddit’s Max Campaigns make it easier to launch and scale without building complex structures, but advertisers still have to define success, monitor conversion quality, and decide when broader delivery is actually working.

Google’s Creator Partnerships updates streamline discovery and outreach, but they do not solve measurement, creative fit, or long-term performance questions.

Microsoft’s data collaboration expands access to richer audiences, yet advertisers still need a clear plan for how those audiences fit into their overall targeting approach.

The common thread is access, not automation as a substitute for judgment.

As setup gets easier, the real differentiator becomes how clearly advertisers define what they want these systems to

achieve, and how disciplined they are about evaluating results.

More Resources:

Featured Image: beast01/Shutterstock

https://www.searchenginejournal.com/ppc-pulse-reddit-max-campaigns-google-creator-microsoft-targeting-updates/564712/