Top trends to increase value for paid search spend

If you're like many small to medium sized businesses, budget is everything and every dollar counts.

And while spending advertising dollars may be a big part of your PPC campaign, it's really the *how* behind the spend that matters.

More money doesn't necessary equate to a successful campaign, and before you up your budget for the next quarter, take into account these top trends that can increase the value of your current paid search advertising spend.

Getting your ads and landing pages right on mobile is more important than ever

Expand your reach to millions of potential customers by optimizing your ads and landings pages for mobile device users. Every year, new data is released showing the growing prominence of mobile paid search vs. desktop paid search clicks. According to the Kenshoo Quarterly Trends Report, mobile shopping campaign impressions have more than doubled year-over-year, while click-through rates have stayed consistent. What does this mean to you as a small business?

To maintain a solid quality score and create ads the actually convert, make sure your ads are designed for mobile and your landing pages are user-friendly, no matter the device people are using.

As a PPC advertiser, you probably understand that bidding for a keyword doesn't guarantee your placement in search results

for that keyword. Ad platforms like Bing, Facebook and Google want to know that your ad will provide value to users who click on it.

So, if your ads look terrible from a mobile standpoint, or, if when a user clicks on the ad, they are taken to a landing page that isn't optimized for a mobile experience, you're going to get smacked with a low-quality score.

From a customer stand point, that makes sense. Have you ever felt frustrated trying to navigate a website from your phone that has hasn't been built for that screen experience? Probably.

Bing, Google and Facebook know that too, so they try to prevent a bad user-experience by bumping your site down the list.

If you still insist on getting that un-optimized ad displayed, you're going to have to pay for it, because the lower the quality score, the more you have to pay for your ads.

On the flipside, by designing a site that is mobile-friendly with a fast and efficient check-out process, and creating ads that are meant for mobile screens, your quality score (and ROI) is given a good boost.

More importantly, prospective customers are more likely to click-through and convert.

Create a remarketing funnel to capture those who were close to converting

Remarketing is a cost-effective way to get in front people who may have visited your website, maybe even added things to their shopping cart, but then abandoned ship before closing

the sale.

With remarketing, businesses are able to appeal to a subset of audiences who didn’t initially convert, staying at the forefront of their search. It can help you exclude, cross-sell or upsell to existing site visitors, and ultimately drive a higher ROI.

Remarketing in paid search can help you improve on your current campaign investment, by using data to target specific subsets of people who have visited your site before.

For example: Let’s say you’re an online retailer, and there’s a potential customer searching for a brown leather jacket on your website. She goes through multiple webpages on your site and adds a leather coat to her cart, but then she exits out of the website without actually completing the sale. With a strong remarketing strategy in place, that initial exit is just one step in her purchase journey.

Based on the time that this prospective customer spent on your site, you can pull data and use that to continue to reach her. Since you know that she has some level of interest surrounding a brown leather jacket, the next time she’s searching online for it, you could initialize ads that remarket that exact coat she added to her cart. You can essentially automate a very targeted ad, specific to that user. Pretty cool, huh?

The space between someone’s initial search and actual purchase shouldn’t be a dead zone for your business. Use customer data in a strategic way to guide targeted customer segments in the right direction, helping them remember what they added to your cart in the first place and why they did it. Learn more about remarketing funnels on Bing and how to incorporate them into your current PPC campaigns.

Technology is changing the level of personalization customers expect

As technology continues to evolve and new audiences begin to emerge (taking a larger stake of overall buying power) the purchase journey for your typical consumer is transforming. That is to say, consumers are becoming anything *but typical.* These new consumers have a set of user experience expectations that are nuanced, and to put it simply, needs to be all about them.

New consumers have had a smart phone since they were 13.

They have no problem sharing private information for a more individualized, personal purchase experience. They want information to be provided to them without having ask for it, and they want to be recognized for their uniqueness in every interaction.

This means that winning the new consumer requires understanding who each person is, and creating contextually relevant experiences to meet these rising expectations. Relying on old methods to attract and retain new consumers isn’t going to add value to your campaign. Instead, learn more about how consumers of today are changing and evaluate how you need to change your marketing perceptions to reach them.

Better user experience is key to increase the value of your spend

The common thread between all three trends is this – better user experience and engagement. A streamlined mobile experience, personalized ads attuned to a customer’s purchase journey, and campaigns designed with the individual in mind will help your business reach the people you want without increasing your current spend – just making it more valuable.

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