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By Danny Shepard, CEO at Titan Growth



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How to Activate The Power of Interactive Content + Paid Promotion

By Fábio Miranda, Marketing Manager at Rock Content

You'll get uncensored and unfiltered insights and tips straight from these experts on how to succeed at PPC in 2022:



Andrea Atzori

Co-Founder & Director,
Ambire



**Julie Friedman
Bacchini**

President, Neptune
Moon



Amalia Fowler

Instructor, BCIT &
Google Ads consultant,
Good AF Consulting



Amy Bishop

Owner & Digital
Marketing Consultant,
Cultivative



Duane Brown

CEO & Head of
Strategy, Take Some
Risk



Ilya Cherepakhin

Consulting Manager,
MightyHive

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President, AKvertise



Jeff Ferguson

Partner, Amplitude
Digital



Brad Geddes

Co-Founder, AdAlysis



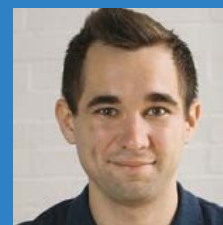
Amy Hebdon

Founder, Paid Search
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Marketing, Adzooma



Mark Irvine

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SearchLab Digital



Pauline Jakober

Founder & CEO, Group
Twenty Seven



Tim Jensen

Campaign Manager, Clix
Marketing



Robyn Johnson

CEO and Founder,
Marketplace
Blueprint



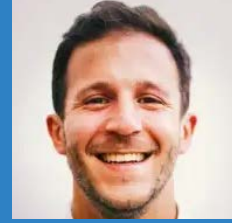
Sean Johnston

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Aaron Levy

Head of Paid Search,
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Melissa Mackey

Paid Search Manager,
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Senior Director Client
Strategy, NordicClick
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AJ Wilcox

Founder, B2Linked

10 MOST IMPORTANT PPC TRENDS TO KNOW IN 2022

By Danny Goodwin

What are the most important PPC trends that you should focus on in 2022 for greater success?

For our fifth annual look at PPC Trends here at Search Engine Journal, we once again reached out to some of the top PPC experts for their insights.

Here are the top 10 PPC trends you need to know for 2021 – from paid search, to paid social, to remarketing, and beyond – according to 23 experts.



1. Automation

Automation continues to be a hot topic in PPC trends, with almost half of our experts weighing in with their thoughts.

“Automation has been picking up speed and momentum for a couple of years now,” said Julie Friedman Bacchini, President, Neptune Moon. “But it feels like it is about to enter hyperdrive.”

Andrea Atzori, Co-Founder & Director, Ambire, agreed, noting that automation will play a key role in helping marketers make informed decisions based on data.

“The challenge of having to extrapolate, consolidate, and collate information from multiple sources means that this is not a job that can be completed without resorting to automation,” Atzori said.

“Similarly, the planning, execution, and analysis of scalable, data-driven campaigns across multiple channels and platforms will require adequate processes and tools in order to succeed.

“Investing in smart(er) technology will help marketers to gain an advantage over their competitors and businesses and brands to be nimble and agile with their marketing,” Atzori added.

Brad Geddes, Co-Founder, Adalysis, believes that humans are still better than machines at strategy, empathy, insights, and prior knowledge. With Google's massive automation push, it looks like both camps are starting to merge.

"Advertisers need to use some automation but realize Google is terrible at certain aspects of automation, and there are areas the human is clearly superior that should be leveraged," Geddes said. "This year should be a 'catch-up' year where the various groups learn to blend human ingenuity, insights, and strategy."

Melissa Mackey, Paid Search Manager, MerkleB2B, noted that the most successful B2B advertisers are already laser-focused on delivering the right content to the right audience at the right time – and using automation to do so.

"If you haven't already, it's time to get started on identifying audiences, creating a variety of content, developing differentiated ads, and embracing automation, for both paid search and paid social," Mackey said.

Should you compete with automation or work with it?

"Successful PPC advertisers will learn how to deploy automation layering in 2022 to stay in control of modern PPC," said Frederick Vallaeys, Co-Founder & CEO, Optmyzr.

2. First-Party Data

Another trend that experts like Amalia Fowler, Instructor, BCIT & Google Ads consultant, Good AF Consulting anticipates is that, “Continued advocacy for privacy will make acquiring first-party data something brands should be working on.”

Sean Johnston, VP of Digital Advertising, Closed Loop, believes that the integration of first-party data with advertising platforms is going to become even more critical for digital marketers in 2022.

“We’ve been dependent upon pixels, tags, and cookies for marketing attribution since the beginning of digital marketing,” Johnston said. “But now that companies like Apple and Google are beginning to restrict the usage of these means of tracking in the name of consumer privacy, we have to plan for a future without them. As a result, the value of first-party data – and specifically, the means to integrate it with advertising networks – is going to be the key to maintaining and improving digital marketing efforts.”

Kimberly Shah, Senior Account Executive, Microsoft Advertising agreed that privacy will continue to be an important focus for our industry.

“With the updates in cookie tracking in iOS14, and the deprecation of third-party cookies in Chrome looming on the horizon, inevitably, other publishers will quickly start to follow suit,” Shah said. “The reality of a 3P cookieless world is fast approaching, and in order to ensure a successful entry into this world, it will be key in 2022 to heavily strategize, invest, and test into first-party data sources and start to apply these across your marketing channels holistically.”

Jeff Ferguson, Partner, Amplitude Digital, said smart marketers should learn how to go “old school” with their targeting using modern technology.

“Look for a massive shift to more contextual targeting options, but a more updated version than what we had at the turn of the century,” Ferguson said. “Machine learning and other tech will be on every marketer’s lips while they try and rebuild their first-party data so they can claw back some of the targeting they were used to before.”

3. Audience Targeting & Segmentation

You need to ensure that your brands are showing up when their target users will be online, not just when they're searching, said Brooke Osmundson, Senior Director Client Strategy, NordicClick Interactive.

"With the other announcement in how Broad and Phrase match keywords are being categorized, audience characteristics will be even more important to capture and target our audience, with less reliance on keywords," Osmundson said. "In sum: less keywords, more audience, better intention."

Jonathan A. Kagan, VP Search, 9Rooftops, agreed.

"With more 'smart' programs rolling out, the typical levers we advertisers control for digital are shrinking. This means they need to refocus on the most important things they can still control, which is audience targeting and segmentation."

4. Testing

With the end of expanded text ads in sight, Amy Bishop, Owner & Digital Marketing Consultant, Cultivative, is encouraging clients to test, test, test.

“Test ETAs for as long as you can – and consider even adding in additional variations for later testing, once they can no longer be created,” Bishop said. “And test Responsive Search Ads (RSAs), as well. Test different messages and test pinning different parts of the ad.”

Ilya Cherepakhin, Consulting Manager, MightyHive, wants marketers to rethink copy testing.

“I would say that the shift to ad creative automation is perhaps the most impactful trend we see in paid search,” Cherepakhin said. “This impacts not only the tactical and technical aspects of campaign management but paid search and digital marketing strategy of any omnichannel marketer.”

“Rather than testing performance variances from a couple of words... advertisers will need to think bigger and focus on ads that test concepts and phrases aligned to intent rather than specific words,” Cherepakhin added.

Testing is also important for Amazon advertisers, according to Robyn Johnson, CEO and Founder, Marketplace Blueprint.

“Advertisers on Amazon should be focusing on making sure they are testing the new ad types and placements. Testing multiple match types/placements and different ad products like Sponsored Display, Sponsored Brands Video, and in some cases Amazon DSP.”

5. Diversification

“If PPC marketers want to be more successful, they need to help the brand(s) they work on look beyond paid ads...” said Duane Brown, CEO & Head of Strategy, Take Some Risk. “Making sure the brand you work on has built up other marketing channels like PR, SEO, affiliate and even email marketing is more important than it ever has been.

“Paid ads don’t operate in a silo, nor do these other marketing channels. And the more ways you can grow your brand via channel diversifications, the more stable your business and brand will be,” he added.

That also includes looking beyond platforms you’re comfortable with, noted Akville DeFazio, President, AKvertise.

“Many of us grew comfortable and reliant on what certain channels like Facebook offered and how it impacted the bottom line,” DeFazio said. “If you haven’t yet, see what other ad platforms like TikTok, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Quora, Pinterest, and others can offer as they, too, have grown and can be lucrative.”

Tim Jensen, Campaign Manager, Clix Marketing, agreed.

“While skilled marketers will continue to find routes to track as much data as possible, the most success is likely to come to those who shift to looking more holistically at ROI data across the board,” Jensen said. “Diversification across multiple channels will become more crucial, as marketers have seen one-channel success stories tank overnight after these changes.”

6. Responsive Search Ads

In 2022, Google’s Expanded Text Ads (ETAs) will become a thing of the past as Google pushes all advertisers to Responsive Search Ads (RSAs).

“Advertisers that have already had RSAs live will be ahead of the game”, said Pauline Jakober, Founder & CEO, Group Twenty Seven. “They’ll have the processes in place for creating and managing these ads as well as performance history and metrics they can build on.

“Advertisers that haven’t yet included RSAs in their ad groups need to start today,” she added. “RSAs require a different approach than ETAs, backed by solid procedures and strategies to build comprehensive, targeted messaging.”

Aaron Levy, Head of Paid Search, Tinuiti agreed.

“ETAs are dying, though they’ve effectively been dead for some time as nearly everything in the search engine realm is responsive to one degree or another.”

Ultimately, it’s about creating the best ads for your audience, not for Google, said Amy Hebdon, Founder, Paid Search Magic.

“Google’s given us ample notice that RSAs are the ad type of the future. Don’t be afraid to pin and control your ads, even if Google gives you a ‘poor ad strength’ warning,” Hebdon said.

7. Conversion Tracking

Johnston is seeing an increased emphasis on the Facebook Conversions API, as well as Google’s Offline Conversion Tracking from the platforms, as marketers look for ways to maintain tracking quality in a pixel-less environment.

“Smart marketers will get on board with offline conversion tracking and integration quickly to help future-proof their efforts in 2022 and beyond,” Johnston said. “Embracing offline conversion tracking isn’t just a necessity for survival though. It’s also the key to improving the performance of campaigns through better optimization.”

8. Small Business Education

If you work with small advertisers, keep in mind that in 2022, the small advertiser will continue to suffer, said Fowler.

“They typically have less budget and less resources to expend when the industry changes and these large shifts are going to make it even harder,” Fowler added. “Continued education of, and advocacy for, smaller businesses will be key in 2022.”

9. Return To Fundamentals

Even if you’re an advanced user, Mark Irvine, Director of Paid Media, SearchLab Digital, suggests a fresh return to fundamentals – keywords, match types, ads, bidding.

“All of them have changed several times in the last 20 months and in significant ways,” Irvine said. “Relearn and reapproach them as they are in 2022 without the past blinders of the best practices of yesteryear.”

10. Be Ready For Anything

Vallaey's recommends that marketers be ready for anything. Why? Because we aren't going back to a predictable time yet.

2022 will likely be another year where advertisers will need to be nimble and take full advantage of all the flexibility search marketing has to offer, he said.

"Monitor your data closely for anomalies," Vallaey's said. "Have a campaign structure that is flexible enough to support changing the course when business data warrants it and use your own tools and automations to keep things running smoothly when a colleague is unexpectedly unavailable."

DISCOVER MORE PPC TRENDS & INSIGHTS FOR 2022

We've only just gotten started.

Ready for more?

Read on for more insights and tips from 23 PPC experts on how to succeed at PPC and paid social in 2022.





ANDREA ATZORI

Co-Founder & Director, Ambire

We will continue to see an increase in emphasis on automation whilst the focus shifts more toward audiences and users.

Increased awareness about privacy and changes to align the technology with it, plus the ripple effects of the global pandemic, have already made marketers have to change their strategies and approach.

The other significant trend we will also see next year is the introduction of more paid channels into the “performance” media plans.

Whereas until a couple of years ago most marketers would have achieved strong results just utilizing one or two key channels, like Google and Facebook Ads, focusing on bottom of the funnel activity, the aforementioned changes have meant that it is now necessary to increase the target on the users across the whole conversion path.

Value will continue to be the currency at each touchpoint, whereas in exchange for data businesses and brands must offer meaningful and valuable experiences.

In an ever more complex world, our options keep growing.

Paid campaigns and ads allow us to reach and engage with users across every platform of choice – not only Google, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, of course – but more and more responses to brief will also contemplate audio for example, with ads on Spotify, Sonos, etc.

No brief is the same, and so no response can be a cookie-cutter approach.

As mentioned, automation will play a key role in helping to make informed decisions based on data.

The challenge of having to extrapolate, consolidate, and collate information from multiple sources means that this is not a job that can be completed without resorting to automation.

Similarly, the planning, execution, and analysis of scalable, data-driven campaigns across multiple channels and platforms will require adequate processes and tools to succeed.

Investing in smart(er) technology will help marketers to gain an advantage over their competitors and businesses and brands to be nimble and agile with their marketing.



JULIE FRIEDMAN BACCHINI

President, Neptune Moon

2022 is probably going to be a bit of a wild year in PPC – pandemic, privacy, and automation to name but a few factors.

If the pace of change that we have seen in the last quarter is any indication, we will need to be flexible and forward-thinking like never before.

If I had to narrow it to a few things or trends that I think will be most important in PPC in 2022, I would say that owned/first-party customer data is going to be really important.

I'm sure I am not the only one who will highlight this!

But, as targeting within platforms based on data they are able to capture has been greatly diminished, we will have to come up with ways to get our messages to our audiences and people who are similar to our established customer lists.

Get on this now if you are not already.

The other trend I am preparing for in 2022 is what I'll call "the automation onslaught."

Automation has been picking up speed and momentum for a couple of years now, but it feels like it is about to enter hyperdrive.

It will not be practical to just keep doing what you've always done – in some ways, that is already true!

The levers that we will be able to directly control in PPC advertising are going to continue to diminish.

How will you handle that?

It would be wise to be thinking about how you will continue to add value to the PPC strategy and management processes.

I don't think the machines will make PPC professionals obsolete, but our day-to-day jobs will definitely be changing.

The platforms are moving toward less and less input and direct management from advertisers/their PPC teams.

Figure out how you can stay an important part of the process – human brains will always be needed for any kind of successful advertising. And certainly for those who wish to do more than the minimum the “machines” can offer.

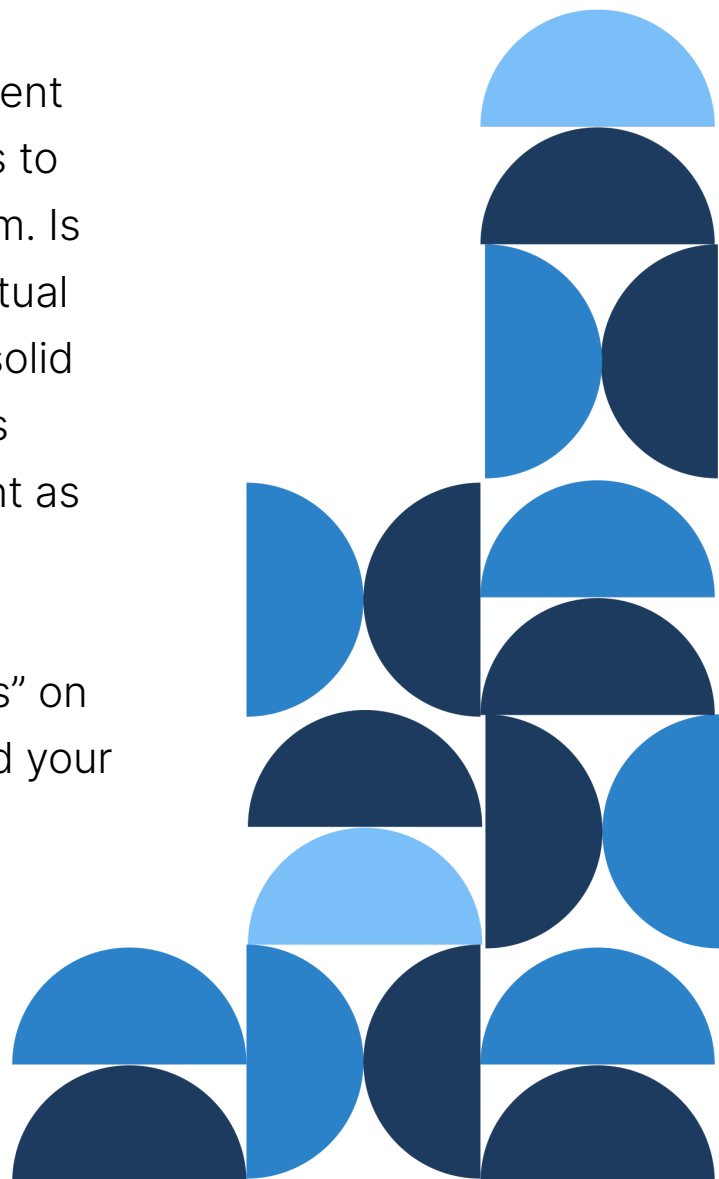
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10 ACTIONABLE WAYS TO IMPROVE THE AGENCY-CLIENT RELATIONSHIP

By Wijnand Meijer, Co-founder & CEO at TrueClicks

As we head toward 2022, it's an excellent occasion for both agencies and clients to examine the relationship between them. Is it (still) a partnership built on trust, mutual respect, and understanding? Is there solid communication from both sides, and is everyone as aligned and as transparent as they possibly can be?

Ideally, you'll answer a resounding "yes" on all questions. But even if you do, would your partner agree?



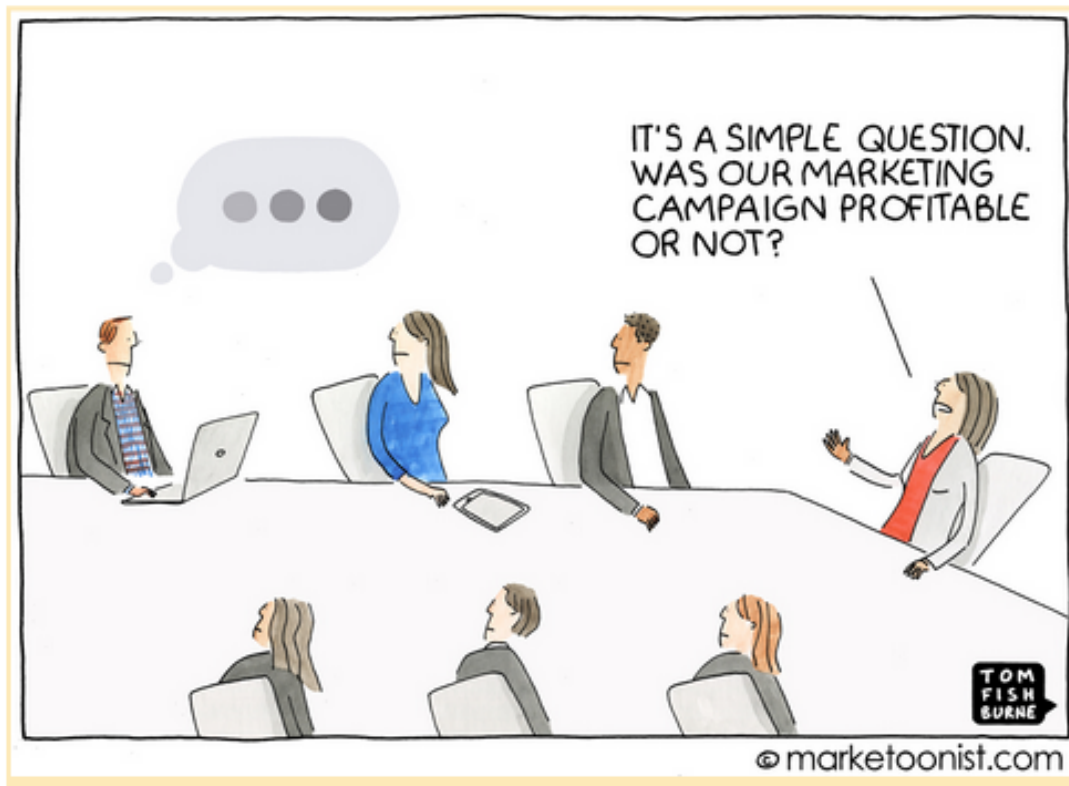
Research from betterbriefs.com found that 78% of marketers think their briefs provide a clear strategic direction, but only 5% of creative agencies agree. On the other hand, Forrester Consulting found that 86% of agency leaders believe they deliver great value, but only 52% of brands are satisfied with the value their agencies provide, especially due to current compensation models.

So in some areas, there's a clear disconnect between brands and agencies on their perception of the value exchange.

With the actionable insights below, hopefully both parties will have enough starting points to bridge this gap, and to challenge themselves while doing so.

Let's start with what clients wish agencies would do (better):

- Understand the client's business, industry, and unique needs.
- Set realistic expectations.
- Be fully transparent on agency fees, media budgets, processes, and deliverables.
- Challenge the client to do better (in the right way).
- Proactively share trends (like from this ebook), insights, and best practices.
- Prove that marketing is a revenue driver, not a cost center.
- Offer better-aligned compensation models.



What agencies wish clients would do (better):

- Be crystal-clear on what success looks like and the available budget.
- Provide all the required data and approvals on time.
- Understand the agency's role (fill the funnel with qualified traffic) and the part the client has to play (convert that traffic with a great website, value proposition, brand, and price)
- Be more willing to take risks and try new things.

What agencies wish clients would stop doing:

- Panic whenever there's a dip in a KPI. The classic example is a client that panics when CPA goes up (or ROAS goes down) and tells the agency to cut costs to bring it back. When the agency succeeds, conversions (or revenue) usually drop as a result. So now the client is panicked again and tells the agency to boost volumes because they need more leads/revenue. Guess what happens next?
- Let procurement treat the agency as a commodity. I've seen clients care more about the hourly rate than the total fee or the expected results. It's madness. I'll share more reasons to move away from hourly rates below.



What follows are actionable recommendations that agencies and clients can implement to get the most out of this relationship.

If you're a client, please don't skip the agency part, as you can use it to direct and select agencies.

Let's start with how agencies can improve this relationship:

- **Learn all you can about your client's business.** You should have a template with questions to ask each (type of) client to make sure you know all about their business model, goals, customers, competition, challenges, etc.
But do your homework first to make sure you ask the right questions. Also, have tools in place to monitor your client (and their competitors) in case they're mentioned in the news, on social media, and the SERPs.
- **Move away from hourly rates and charging per channel/service.** These ways of billing don't align with your client's best interests. How much time you spend and how you distribute the available media budget shouldn't be your clients' concern. And the last thing they want is to pay more because you're inefficient.

Also, you don't want to discuss how long something should take or how much should be spent on Google Ads vs. Facebook Ads. Free yourself and your clients from these discussions and consider an "all-inclusive" flat fee that covers everything it takes to deliver the results they want (given their media budget).

Even better: **have some skin in the game.** At the very least, clients should be able to quickly leave you when they're not happy. You can call this your "satisfaction guarantee." On top of that, you could offer performance-based pricing. Just make sure you've got attribution covered, as well as factors outside of your control that influence performance. But if you can make it work, it's a win-win model. Examples can be as simple as 5% of revenue generated (for ecommerce) or a hybrid model where certain performance milestones unlock a higher fee.

- **Use technology to facilitate collaboration and information-sharing.** Emails, calls, and meetings have their place, but they can also be highly inefficient time sucks. You don't want these channels to be the only option whenever someone (from either side) needs information.
 - Offer **real-time reporting and recommendations** that are available with a click on a bookmark. With Google Data Studio and plenty of user-friendly reporting solutions out there, there's no excuse to waste everyone's time (including your own) with Excel.
 - Have a shared space your client can log in to access relevant files, updates, milestones, tasks, etc. Most **project management** solutions let you invite external users.

- Maybe you even want to offer a channel to **chat** with your client (using Google Chat Spaces, Microsoft Teams Private channels, or Slack Connect). As long as they understand, you can't respond to each chat message immediately.
- Finally, depending on your client's PPC knowledge, let them access tools or Google sheets (populated by scripts) containing relevant information about their campaigns.
- **Use automation to monitor and audit the campaigns.** When was the last time a client was unpleasantly surprised by something that happened (or didn't happen)? Or even worse: another agency did an audit on your work and generated a long and painful list of improvement opportunities? Could you have prevented this by using scripts, automated rules, or a third-party solution? Or by investigating built-in warnings and recommendations? There is no way a human can be on top of everything that could possibly go wrong.
- **Offer tailored services and technology to clients with in-house capabilities.** It's no secret that advertisers are increasingly managing PPC in-house. But this certainly doesn't make agencies obsolete. As long as agencies keep offering what clients can't do better themselves, their value can only increase. Some examples:

- **Auditing.** By definition, auditing means an external perspective. As an agency, you can provide a fresh pair of eyes on the in-house accounts, including a roadmap for improved performance.
- **Learning & development.** Leverage your cross-industry knowledge and experience to educate in-house teams.
- **Technology.** Based on your experience, help in-house teams pick and implement the right technology for their needs. If you (re)sell licenses, this can become a significant source of recurring revenue.
- **Creative and content production.** As targeting and bidding becomes increasingly automated, agencies need to distinguish themselves with creativity. Make sure your agency has the creative talent to produce stunning and effective ads (both text and image), videos, landing pages, and other content advertisers will continue to need.

As I'm feeling generous, and in case you know someone who's still doing any of the below, let me add five **don'ts** for agencies.

Clients get frustrated when agencies do any of the below.

- **Promising the world just to land the client.** This will guarantee disappointment. And for clients reading this: don't pick an agency based on (unrealistic) promises or forecasts. As former Chief Marketing Scientist at Merkle George Michie wrote, "We thoroughly understand why prospective clients want to know: we all want to know in advance what the impact of a change will be on ROI. What I don't understand is why they'd believe what we tell them."
- **Doing the "bait-and-switch."** Don't let senior-level leaders pitch the business and then hand it over to junior folks.
- **Changing the main point of contact too frequently.** Clients don't appreciate turnover at agency teams.
- **Holding client data "hostage" for any reason.** It's the client's money, so all accounts, data, creatives, etc., belong to them. Provide it whenever they ask for it, also when they leave you.
- **Enforcing long-term contracts.** Sure, you'll need 3 to 6 months to get things going with a new client. So you should charge a setup fee for the onboarding period. But after that, clients should only stay with you because they want to. Not because you made them sign a contract.

Finally, let's talk about what clients can do to improve this relationship.

First, they should pick an agency that does all the good stuff mentioned above.

After that, it's about providing the agency with the best possible input, understanding what the agency can do, and keep working on what the client will need to do themselves.

What can clients do to improve this relationship?

- **Clear briefings and goals.** Start with painting a clear picture of what success looks like to you and the available budgets. Your brief will help the agency create a fitting plan and proposal. And to health check your goals vs. your budget.
- **Understand the agency's bandwidth.** If you want the same person to be working on your business five days a week, you should hire an employee. What's great about your agency contact is that she is continuously learning from cross-industry and cross-client experience. As a client, you profit from this knowledge and experience. But it also means she can't fulfill your every desire within minutes or even hours.

- **Share all data that can help the agency.** The more information you share, the better. Yes, this probably also means sharing sensitive information like historical performance and margins.
- **Have reasonable expectations.** Realize that growth comes at the expense of profitability. Everyone wants more customers and a lower cost of acquisition. But you'll have to prioritize one over the other, so your agency can focus on your main objective. And don't constantly change goals, as it's hard to hit a moving target.
Also, realize that search doesn't create demand; it just captures it. So if you don't get enough volume from your search efforts, maybe there aren't enough people searching. If that's the case, you'll need other channels to generate demand.
- **Play your part.** If your agency manages your PPC campaigns only, their primary responsibility is to get the right traffic for the right price, which is not as simple as it sounds.
But everything that happens after that (the "post-click experience") is on you. So be sure to keep improving your value proposition, design, copy, load times, pricing, etc. As CRO expert and author Bryan Eisenberg said, "Most websites don't have a massive traffic problem. However, every website in the world has a conversion problem."

Hopefully, these recommendations will help agencies and clients bring their relationship to the next level.

When parties know how to combine each other's unique qualities, the future of this relationship looks as bright as it ever will be.



AMALIA FOWLER

**Instructor, BCIT & Google Ads
consultant, Good AF Consulting**

None of my predictions are groundbreaking, but they are all things smart marketers need to pay attention to.

I've been preaching the slow death of the keyword at Google's hand for a long time, and 2022 may just be the year they decide they know what's best for our brands in that realm.

We will see.

I also anticipate on this front that we will continue to see less than 50% of our relevant search terms, making keyword research and, more importantly, negative keyword research a priority.

Continued advocacy for privacy will make acquiring first-party data something brands should be working on.

Leverage remarketing and third-party cookies while they are here, but be prepared for a cookie-less world.

Finally, I'd be remiss if I didn't add that in 2022, the small advertiser continues to suffer.

They typically have less budget and less resources to expend when the industry changes and these large shifts are going to make it even harder.

Continued education of, and advocacy for, smaller businesses will be key in 2022.



AMY BISHOP

**Owner & Digital Marketing
Consultant, Cultivative**

The biggest areas of focus should be on testing, building first-party data, leaning into automation, and focusing on multi-channel strategy.

With the end-date in sight for the creation of expanded text ads (ETAs), I'm encouraging clients to test, test, test.

Test ETAs for as long as you can – and consider even adding in additional variations for later testing once they can no longer be created.

And of course, test Responsive Search Ads (RSAs), as well. Test different messages and test pinning different parts of the ad.

And with the end of third-party cookies in sight (albeit delayed until 2023), marketers should use this additional time to focus on their data strategy.

Last but not least, each and every year, Google continues the march toward more automation and less control for advertisers.

As advertisers, it's a good idea to focus on applying that automation in a strategic way.


Get comfortable with the idea of automation and making it work for you.

And, on that note, I've probably said this before and I'll probably say this again: marketers should focus their efforts on being a strategic guide.

Even the very best of automation will still need a guide – marketers should focus on owning that role, among others.

I almost always recommend testing a multi-channel strategy, as it allows you to pivot and shift as needs arise.

Being that strategist allows you to orchestrate all of the channels, in a unified way, putting automation to work for you in each respective area, while playing a role that is more important than ever.

A decorative graphic in the top right corner features a portrait of Duane Brown, a man with glasses and a beard wearing a checkered shirt, set against a brick wall background. Overlaid on and around the portrait are several semi-circular shapes in two shades of blue (light blue and dark blue).

DUANE BROWN

CEO & Head of Strategy, Take Some Risk

If PPC marketers want to be more successful, they need to help the brand(s) look beyond paid ads, be more strategic on what work they do, and embrace automation.

Let me tell you why these three areas are the trifecta of 2022.

Apple's iOS 14.5 update isn't the end, but the beginning as Google is looking to remove cookies by 2023, and Apple is coming after emails next.

Making sure the brand you work on has built up other marketing channels like PR, SEO, affiliate and even email marketing is more important than it ever has been.

Paid ads don't operate in a silo, nor do these other marketing channels and the more ways you can grow your brand via channel diversifications, the more stable your business and brand will be.

There are more options and opportunities with paid ads across search and social today.

Brands need to intentionally pick the right work that is going to move the business and hit your KPIs & revenue goals for the year.

No longer can brands just be happy they checked off eight of 12 items on their to-do list this week.

They need to make sure they picked the right eight items to keep moving forward.

Picking the wrong work is a huge waste of time, money, and productivity.

While they decide what they work on, they need to take automation into account because it's not going anywhere.

Helping guide the machines and taking work off your plate through automation means you can pick more of the right work to work on and help make sure your brand is growing outside of paid ads.

Stop being an advertiser and embrace the marketer who is strategic and looks at the whole business.



ILYA CHEREPAKHIN

Consulting Manager, MightyHive

The shift to ad creative automation is perhaps the most impactful trend we see in paid search

In the last few years, paid search has seen an increasing reliance on automation. Still, they have coexisted alongside the many manual processes that date back to the very beginning of search engine advertising.

This balance tipped in favor of automation with Google's announcement of phasing out Expanded ads.

By moving to responsive ads, Google is irreversibly changing the ad creation process and tilting the industry in an ever more decisive way towards automation.

Google's feature retirements have a tendency to be gradual, with delays commonly allowed to ensure advertisers can comfortably migrate to the new way.

However, this change and, with it, further reduction in advertiser control over search engine campaign management is a matter of time.

I would say that the shift to ad creative automation is perhaps the most impactful trend we see in paid search.

This impacts the tactical and technical aspects of campaign management and paid search and digital marketing strategy of any omnichannel marketer.

Tactically, search marketers need to rethink copy testing. Many still find that Expanded Text Ads (ETAs) outperform Responsive Search Ads (Ads).

As much as that can be due to RSA's problematic ad structure, in many cases, RSAs perform poorly due to there not being enough dissimilar variations.

Rather than testing performance variances from a couple of words, advertisers will need to think bigger in the new worlds dominated by automation and focus on ads that test concepts and phrases aligned to intent rather than specific words.

To manage paid search at scale, reliance on robust solutions such as third-party bid management tools will become an absolute must.

Anyone who has gotten by without them so far and aspires to grow their search efforts could face considerable challenges when RSAs become the only ad format for new ads.

Alongside, there will be an acute need to create scalable approval processes for advertising in regulated fields.

Historically, legal teams may request for review paid search ads and could be easily provided with the exact ads one intends to run.

While relatively easy with ETAs, doing this at scale with RSAs requires new processes and workflows.

There are also important strategic implications from the shift to full automation of ad copy creation.

Typically, omnichannel marketers find it easier to align non-paid search channels to target personas or audience profiles.

Paid Search has been harder since keyword-level targeting does not allow to infer intent with high precision.

The move to automation can help here: rather than designing ads exclusively around keywords, the new success for paid search ad development will be from designing ad components geared to distinct audiences to be assembled into an ad based on the algorithm's inferred user intent.



AKVILE DEFAZIO

President, AKvertise

In brief, diversification, data detective work and driving connections through assets.

Diversification is not a new concept, especially in our line of work. Still, many of us grew comfortable and reliant on what specific

channels like Facebook offered and how it impacted the bottom line.

If you haven't yet, see what other ad platforms like TikTok, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Quora, Pinterest, and others can offer, as they too have grown and can be lucrative.

Additionally, since the iOS 14 update in 2021, attribution has become even more challenging.

Just because tracking has dissipated doesn't mean that our audiences have.

With more paid social channels than ever before, increase your appetite to diversify your efforts, testing further and becoming more comfortable in the data detective role.

And just because we may be advertising with a larger blind spot, this is your time to shine by being creative, future-forward, staying in the know, testing, and leveraging psychology to captivate users through copy, creativity, and landing page development.

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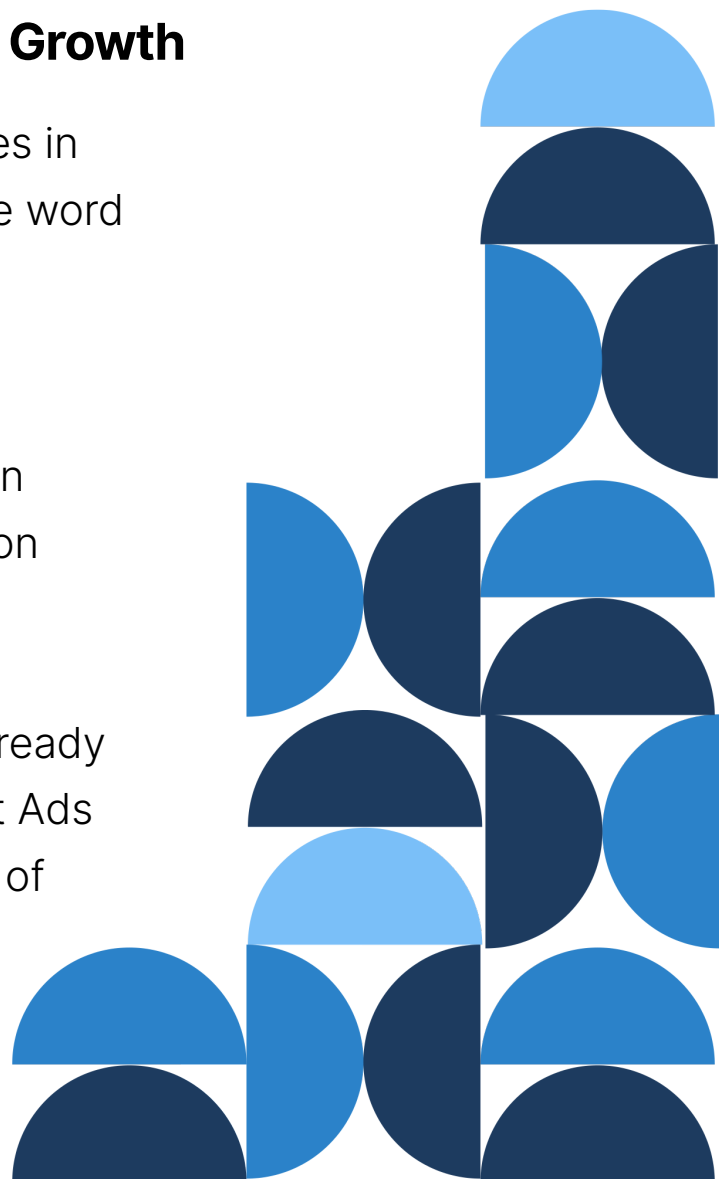
THE END OF GOOGLE EXPANDED TEXT ADS (ETAS): A FIRM PUSH TOWARD AUTOMATION

By Danny Shepard, CEO at Titan Growth

We expect 2022 to bring many changes in the paid search realm, and there is one word on the tip of everyone's tongues: Automation.

We've already begun to see automation in action and know it is a high priority on Google's agenda.

One major impact of automation we already know for certain is that Expanded Text Ads (ETAs) will be discontinued in summer of 2022.



As Google moves to more responsive, automated campaigns and ads, many marketers are wondering what these changes mean for them and how to adapt their game plan.

Fear not – that’s what we’ll cover in this chapter.

The Sunsetting of ETAs & How to Navigate the Change

Google has announced that in July 2022, it will take a major step in automation by sunsetting expanded text ads (ETAs).

Advertisers were given quite a bit of time to adapt. Google recommends that you “have at least one responsive search ad in every ad group in your Search campaigns by June 30, 2022.”

The Dawn of the RSA

Although Responsive Search Ads (RSA) are no longer new as they rolled out in 2018, they are surging in importance now that ETAs are officially on the way out.

An RSA is an ad type (and now the default ad type) that allows an advertiser to use variations of copy and headlines that Google serves to users.

The variations are automatically tested to determine which combinations have the highest performance.

In the wake of 2020 and 2021 economic changes, Google thinks the adoption of RSAs will “improve flexibility and performance for advertisers, improving clicks and conversions up to 10%.”

Google also notes that this “gives advertisers more flexibility to address changing market environments due to the pandemic and save time.”

Responsive Search Ads Best Practices

With the option to add up to 15 different headlines and 4 different descriptions, the flexibility of the RSA ad type is endless.

At a glance, RSA ads allow more real estate on the search results than their predecessor ETAs did, providing more opportunities for headlines, longer descriptions and ads.

| Ad Feature | Responsive Search Ad | Expanded Text Ad |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| # Headlines Shown | Up to 3 | 2 |
| Headline Length | 30 Characters | 30 Characters |
| Domain | Taken from your ad's Final URL | Taken from your ad's Final URL |
| # Display URL Path Fields Shown | 2 (Optional) | 2 (Optional) |
| Display URL Path Field Length | 15 Characters | 15 Characters |
| # Descriptions Shown | Up to 2 | 1 |
| Description Length | 90 Characters | 80 Characters |
| Total Max Length | 300 | 150 |

According to Google, advertisers can expect to see a 5-15% higher click-through rate than with standard search ads. For the greatest benefits, consider these best practices:

1. Max out your headlines and descriptions.

Those 15 headlines and 4 descriptions give you over 42,000 possible ad combinations and the more combinations you have, the stronger the ad. Aim for at least 10 headlines and 3 descriptions, but use all available variants if you can.

2. Make them all unique and different.

When creating headlines and descriptions, call out different aspects of your products and services. Attempt to make them as unique as possible so you can get a good idea of what combinations work best.

Remember, RSAs can show up to 3 different headlines so if your headlines are repetitive and boring (or don't flow well together), your click-through rates may suffer.

3. Pin headlines or descriptions that are important.

If there is a crucial headline or description that you prefer is always shown or displayed in a specific position, you can choose to pin it. Use this feature sparingly to allow for maximum ad testing and performance.

4. Start thinking about one-to-one ad to ad group structuring.

It has always been an RSA best practice to include just one RSA in an ad group, to avoid the cannibalization of responsive ads. While ETAs are still in the picture, this is still a recommendation.

However, when they are retired in summer 2022, advertisers must put serious thought to the structure and organization of their search ad campaigns.

In some cases, this might look like a one-to-one ad to ad group ratio. If your ad groups are broad enough to accommodate multiple RSAs with unique headlines and descriptions, we recommend no more than three at most.

5. Repurpose all the gold from your ETAs.

Now that ETAs are on the way out, this recommendation is even more important. If a headline or description is performing well in your static ads, use that as fuel in your responsive ads, as well. But now that ETAs are leaving for certain don't let all that asset gold go to waste! Repurpose your ad content into new RSA ads while you're able.

Improving Your RSAs with Ad Strength Score

Even with best practices in place, there's still room for improvement. Google makes that easy for us with their Ad strength metrics. Ad strength has two components:

- Ad rating.
- Ad recommendations.

The Ad Strength Column

When reviewing your ads, you'll see your Ad strength column with ratings ranging from "excellent" to "poor." This is shown as an overall rating such as "average" or "excellent." Click on the rating to get more information about how to improve your ad.

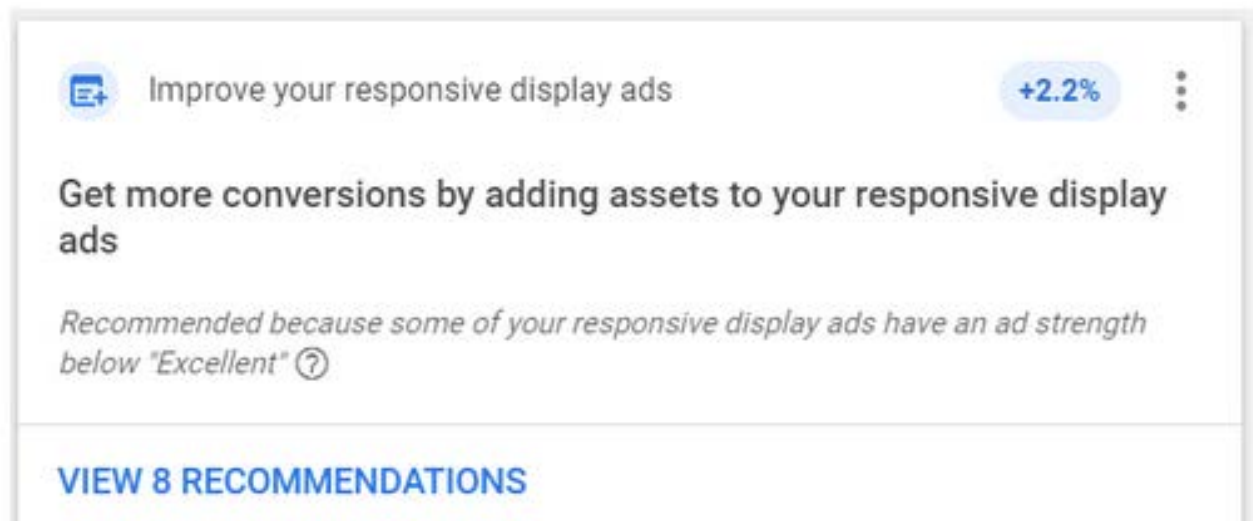
| Ad strength ↓ | Ad type |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| | |
| Pending | Responsive search ad |
| Good | Responsive search ad |
| Good | Responsive display ad |

Real-time Ad Strength Scoring

Google makes it easy to see how strong your ad is as you're creating it. As you fill in assets and make changes to your new ad, you'll see your score update in real-time.

Recommendations

In your overview tab, you'll see the optimization score for your account and any recommendations. You'll often see recommendations for specific ad formats or ad groups, so make sure you're familiar with this tab.



Use Google's tools to your advantage and monitor your Ad strength score frequently, especially on your RSAs.

Where to Now?

While ETAs have been a constant fixture since 2016, a six-year run is essentially eons in Google-time. It was only a matter of time before Google decided to shake things up, and we now find ourselves on the precipice of a big change.

So, what's a marketer to do?

Lean in.

Lean in to automated processes. Lean in to RSA and creating the most effective ads for your target audience. While none of us can fully realize the impact of the change that is yet to happen, getting cozy with RSA and adopting automated processes will give you the best shot at positive outcomes in 2022.



JEFF FERGUSON

Partner, Amplitude Digital

Thanks to Google for pushing back the demise of third-party cookies, the most significant trend of 2022 will be learning to live without them.

Sure, there were some solid articles in 2021 leading up to when we thought it would happen the first time, but I still don't feel like everyone genuinely understands what a systematic shift this change will be (which is probably why Google pushed it back).

Just about everything we've learned to love about audience targeting is about to change radically.

So, what will the smart marketers focus on for greater success with this in mind: Learning how to go "old school" with their targeting but using modern technology.

Look for a massive shift to more contextual targeting options, but a more updated version than what we had at the turn of the century.

Machine learning and other tech will be on every marketers' lips while they try and rebuild their first-party data so they can claw back some of the targeting they were used to before.



BRAD GEDDES

Co-Founder, Adalysis

The most significant trend this year is going to be merging human creativity and insight with machine learning.

Over the past few years, we've seen advertisers go in two extreme directions: fighting the machine for control or giving into the machine and losing human insights and creativity.

Humans are still better than machines at strategy, empathy, insights, and prior knowledge. With Google's massive automation push, it looks like both camps are starting to merge.

Advertisers need to use some automation but realize Google is terrible at certain aspects of it, and there are areas the human is superior that should be leveraged.

This year should be a "catch-up" year where the various groups learn to blend human ingenuity, insights, and strategy.

This combination should allow advertisers to put guardrails to leverage machine learning while ensuring the car doesn't crash and stays on the proper road.

This will be a difficult drive as Google will continue to expand your impressions (most new ones are pretty poor) with match type, ad, and audience changes.

With the proper strategy and oversight, advertisers will adapt and combine human intelligence and machine learning.



AMY HEBDON

Founder, Paid Search Magic

The two core Google Ads trends every marketer needs to understand are:

- Its mission is to go keywordless.
- Its need to increase profits.

All of Google Ads' updates support at least one of these objectives.

If you understand this, then most year-to-year changes won't be shocking or even surprising. (Frustrating, sure... but they aren't exactly plot twists.)

If you understand Google's mission to not rely on search queries, you'll understand its push toward smart bidding using natural language processing and implicit signals, as well as its gradual sunset of tight match types and keyword control.

This means campaign structure and intent-based ad groups become even more essential to successful campaigns, while you can loosen your grip on inputs like spelling, prepositions, and certain modifiers.

Successful marketers also realize that Google Ads' revenue goals can conflict with their own efficiency goals.

It's okay to dismiss Google's recommendations and ignore optimization scores. Focus on decisions that benefit the account.

Specific updates for 2022 and how to approach them:

A Shift Towards Enhanced Conversions

This justifies bigger budgets by attributing more conversions to Google Ads within the engine, creating even more reconciliation

issues with other analytics sources.

Before implementing, consider the potential impact of reduced confidence in your reported data.

The Reign of Responsive Search Ads (RSAs)

Google's given us ample notice that RSAs are the ad type of the future. Don't be afraid to pin and control your ads, even if Google gives you a "poor ad strength" warning.

Create the best ads for your audience, not for Google.

The Broad Match Trojan Horse

Broad match is a wildcard that can be used to drive both targeted and extremely irrelevant traffic in high volume.

Basically, it works... until it doesn't.

Be very prudent in how and where you use broad match keywords in your campaigns.

Where tight control is needed, keep broad keywords out of the mix.



NAVAH HOPKINS

VP of Strategic Marketing, Adzooma

The biggest trend to account for is the rapid change in rules of engagement and being comfortable being uncomfortable.

Between the shifts in privacy-first web and the growing importance of owning your brand's sources of truth, shifts in attribution, automation in creative, and feed-based ads – the one known is there will be a lot of unknowns.

Ad channels are automating a lot and we no longer have the choice to be uncomfortable with it – and that's not necessarily a bad thing.

Close variants now allow for different language matching based on the algorithm detecting that a person is bi/trilingual. A human building a campaign will see that and think it's a wasted click.

However, those different language queries can be cheaper and drive value the human wouldn't have thought to go after.

Granted, performance will be random in the early days as the ad is still in the targeted language – however, this pluralistic approach to search and targeting seems to transcend human bias – which is pretty exciting.

Expect to see more of these kinds of automation innovations in 2022.

Brands will win in 2022 by building business ops into the paid media management conversation.

When the Sales/CS team can verify the quality of leads/customers, you'll have an easier time owning your data.

SEO and data analysis teams should be involved in landing page conversations to ensure CRO efforts capture additional value and paid campaigns aren't wasting good leads on bad conversion experiences (landing pages).

I'll add that brands should expect to pay more than before for traditional media buys as more and more is automated. However, smaller budgets will find homes in often overlooked channels.

Visual ad channels will likely dominate for SMBs, with search being a branded/competitor play.



MARK IRVINE

**Director of Paid Media,
SearchLab Digital**

If you look at the trend from Google (and Microsoft's habit of following Google), you'll notice that their focus in PPC is not on the advanced user.

As experts, we lament that. But it would be foolish for us to bet 2021 chasing microtrends or holding out for the advanced segmentation or controls we've been dreaming of.

Instead, the best you can do in 2021 is take a fresh return to fundamentals – keywords, match types, ads, bidding. All of them have changed several times in the last 20 months and in significant ways.

Relearn and reapproach them as they are in 2022 without the past blinders of the best practices of yesteryear.

Broad match may have been a mark of an inexperienced marketer in 2015, but with all of your keyword match types changing twice in 2020, can you unbiasedly assume it's the same?

I can't.

It still has flaws, but we need to understand its current weaknesses of 2022 rather than retain our choices from 2015 data.

The same can be said about automated bidding, ads, and campaign types.

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HOW TO ACTIVATE THE POWER OF INTERACTIVE CONTENT + PAID PROMOTION

By Fábio Miranda, Marketing Manager at Rock Content

Experts predict there are somewhere between 7 and 10 million new blog posts published each day – and that says nothing of the massive number of social media posts, videos, and other pieces of content emerging to compete against yours.

How can you make your content stand out in order to intrigue, engage, and convert the most targeted audience?



We're huge champions of interactive content at Rock Content – think quizzes, infographics, videos, and other content assets your audience can really dig into.

But once you've created this exceptional interactive content, too many companies fail to promote it to those most likely to take action.

As with everything in digital marketing, the loss of your competitors is your advantage.

We're going to teach you how to activate the full power of interactive content with smart, targeted paid promotions that will help each piece reach its full ROI-producing potential.

You'll learn how to optimize Facebook Ads, LinkedIn Ads, Google Ads, and native ads to help achieve your content goals and generate valuable first-party consumer data, too. But first...

What Is Interactive Content?

In short, interactive content gives the reader or viewer something to do. Rather than passively consuming information, they can answer questions in a survey or quiz, play out different scenarios on a calculator, or choose where to go on a map, for example.

Interactive content is a super valuable format because it:

- Encourages user participation by offering different paths the user can follow according to their preferences or desires.
- Enables you to keep consumers engaged and provide more information, better meeting both their needs and yours.
- Can be a great source of consumer data you can use to inform sales, marketing campaigns, and even product development and operations.

Check out our Rocking Lead Generation calculator as just one example of how interactive content can work. In order to truly serve its purpose and provide a great experience, your interactive content must provide real value whether informational, educational, or entertaining in nature.

Now, let's see how you can get your interactive content out into the right parts of the online universe.

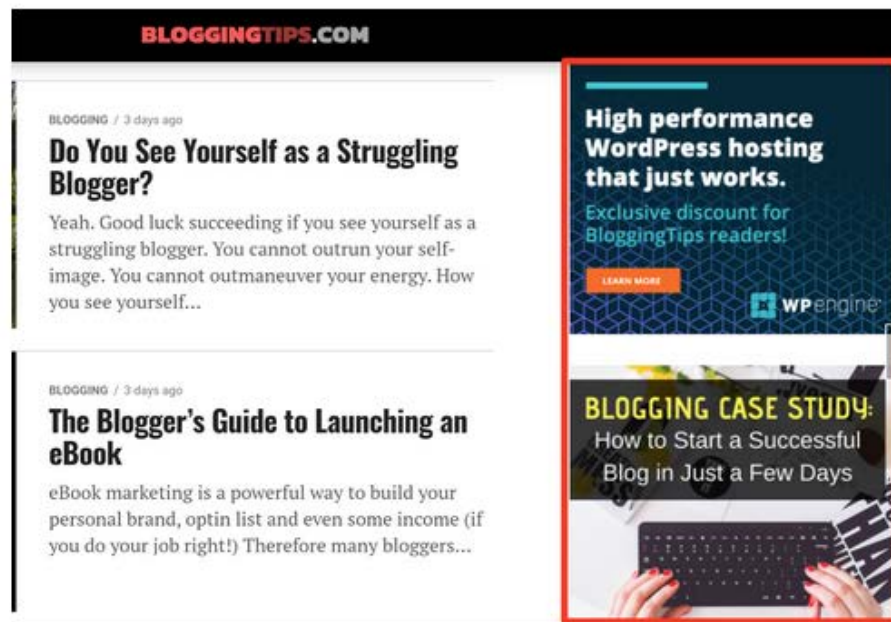
Four Types of Paid Promotion That Rock For Interactive Content

The best types of paid promotion tactics for content contribute to the immersive, engaging nature of the experience rather than being disruptive or jarring.

Native Advertising

Native advertising is a great example of an experience that doesn't interrupt or irritate your audience. Facebook's sponsored content inside the Newsfeed is a great example of native advertising in action.

There are networks designed specifically for this type of promotion, such as Taboola and Outbrain, that help your paid content seem like a more natural part of the organic experience on different sites around the web.



Source: [Taboola](#)

Native ads aren't a hard sell of your products or services; they tend to match the tone and appearance of their surrounding content.

For more successful native ads to promote your content, you must:

- Consider the context and ensure your messaging makes sense for the intended audience and platform on which it will appear.
- Use high-quality imagery and clean, compelling ad copy.
- Provide a teaser or create a knowledge gap to win the click.

Facebook Carousel and Poll Ads

Making sure that your landing page is aligned with your creatives is vital when setting up your ads. This is how you can create conversion campaigns on Facebook and Instagram that engage your audience right away and seamlessly lead them to your content experience.

Carousel Ads

Carousel ads can be used to introduce the interactive experience, and your CTA in the last card can direct the user to continue the experience. Set “Conversions” as your campaign objective so you can track the results and optimize your ads in the future.

Introducing your experience through a carousel can give your prospects a better idea of what they can expect on your page and improve your click-through rate.

Poll Ads

Poll ads can kickstart a user interaction that continues on your content experience. Use “Conversions” as your campaign objective.

Direct your prospects to the experience after answering the poll. This is the Endowed Progress theory in action – namely that people tend to continue working towards a goal once they've begun.

To make the best possible use of Facebook Ads for promoting content:

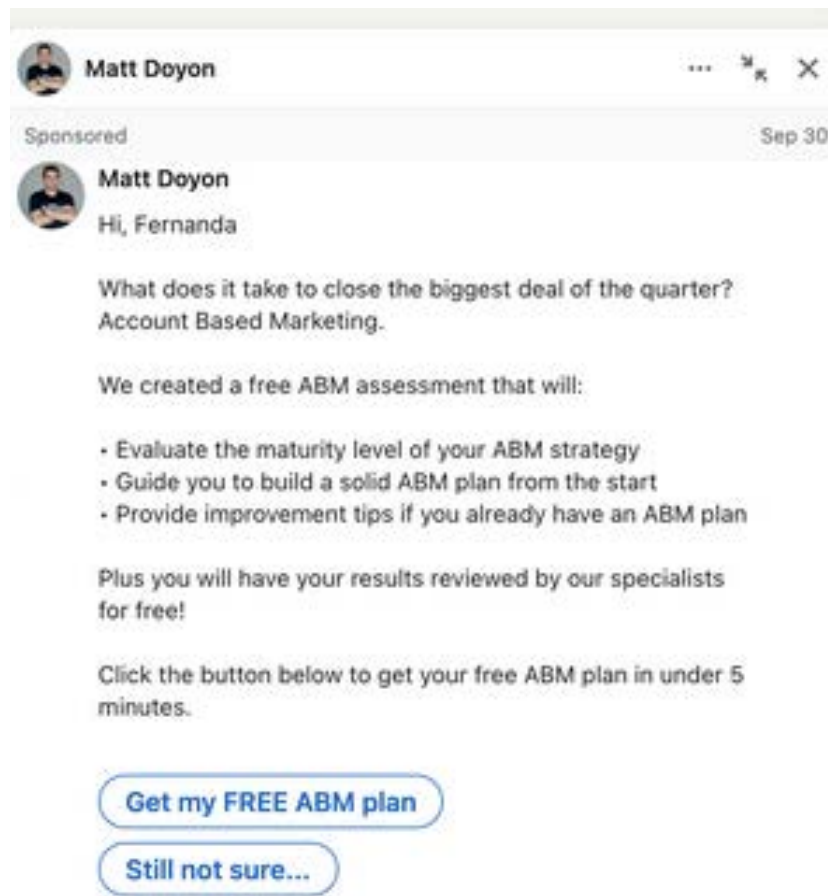
- Segment your ads by persona or lookalike audiences.
- Create a Customer List custom audience and retarget existing customers to encourage loyalty and increase CLTV.

LinkedIn Ads

LinkedIn's in-feed ads are similar to Facebook feed ads, so the interactive content promotion strategy here will have a similar approach.

The most significant difference on LinkedIn is your ability to use conversational ads. You can send an offer directly into your prospects' inboxes, which is particularly useful for B2B companies who need precision targeting and quality interactions over impression volume.

Take this Rock Content campaign as an example. We created an interactive experience to help marketers with their ABM strategies. The number of MQLs generated surpassed our expectations.



To reach our target audience, we created a personalized audience on LinkedIn looking for marketing managers, a targeting function that is a LinkedIn differentiator. Then, we promoted an advertisement linking to our interactive experience.

It's hard for our persona not to interact with this ad. We deliver exactly what they seek, directly to their inboxes. The user informs his challenges in the ABM strategy, we send him a custom plan based on the responses – and boom, we get the lead.

Apply these best practices to your LinkedIn content ads:

- Use rich media such as videos or audio to capture audience interest and give a preview of the interactive experience.
- Make sure your images are high resolution, crisp, and colorful.
- Use the LinkedIn Audience Network to expand your reach beyond the platform itself.

Google Ads

Google Ads can be competitive and expensive, depending on your niche. It's important that you're laser-focused here. If you get it right, you gain access to a vast audience of motivated searchers already actively seeking out interactive content like yours.

You can create a PPC campaign for users in a specific country and show a tailor-made landing experience depending on the state they are accessing from, for example.

Or, use dynamic keyword insertion carefully to have relevant search terms injected into your ads.

For best results with your Google Ads:

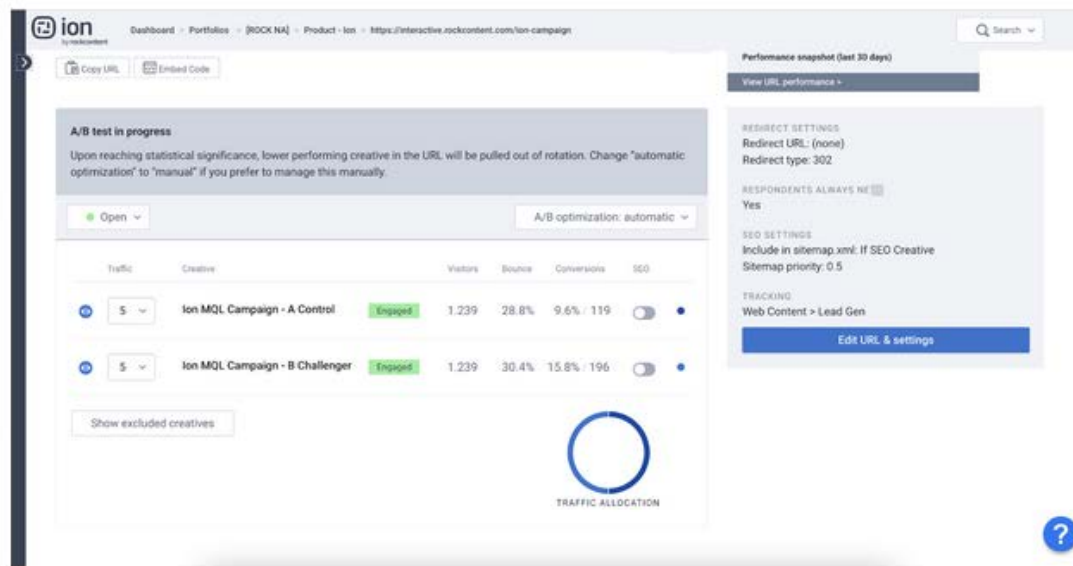
- Ensure that your organic and paid efforts are aligned so your ads aren't cannibalizing organic search results.
- Use negative keywords and bid modifiers to gain more control over your ads.
- Target only those keywords with relevant transactional intent, avoiding more broad and unfocused "What is," and "How to" informational queries.

Interactive Content Campaign Management At Scale

Managing content creation and promotion at scale is tough – we know, as Rock Content helps over 2,000 customers including enterprise-level brands such LinkedIn, Dell, Spotify, Oracle, DHL, and Salesforce expand their reach via interactive content.

That's why we put the power of our Ion platform to work for them to:

- Quickly build engaging, personalized content experiences.
- Capture valuable first-party data and generate business insights from every interaction.
- Activate that data for lead generation and sales enablement.



Example of A/B testing running on [Ion](#)

One company, for example, wanted to reduce its cost-per-lead on PPC campaigns and improve its conversion rates. We helped them save over \$100,000 U.S.D. per year and increase their ROI by 291% by creating 330 highly-targeted landing pages for their ads, then A/B testing and optimizing accordingly.

Another customer was able to grow their Google Ads Quality Score by 22% with efforts focused on mobile-specific AdWord campaigns and landing pages. Their conversion rate increased 40% and the cost-per-conversion decreased 51%.

Ion enables your team to focus on the creative aspects of your campaign and offer. Important but repetitive optimizations, A/B testing, data analysis, and other conversion optimization (CRO) tasks are automated to save valuable time and enable you to scale.

Delivering Value With Your Interactive Content Ads

Interactive content ads aren't just a tool for getting people from A to B – they can be an extension of the experience itself. By combining interactive content and ad campaigns, you get the best of both worlds, with the power of paid search and social to dramatically expand your audience and the rich, engaging content it takes to delight and convert them.

Want to learn more? [Request your demo now](#) and let's see how we can put the power of interactive content to work for you.



PAULINE JAKOBER

Founder & CEO, Group Twenty Seven

Google Ads agencies and in-house teams need to get ready for more Google Ads automation in 2022.

The automation trend has been building for years, but it will come to a head next year as Google takes steps to remove some manual options entirely.

This move is most evident in Google's announcement that it will start replacing expanded text ads (ETAs) with responsive search ads (RSAs) in June 2022.

Advertisers that have already had RSAs live will be ahead of the game.

They'll have the processes in place for creating and managing these ads and performance history and metrics they can build on.

Advertisers that haven't yet included RSAs in their ad groups need to start today.

RSAs require a different approach than ETAs, backed by solid procedures and strategies to build comprehensive, targeted messaging.

Google's decision to compel advertisers to move from ETAs to RSAs is a harbinger of more mandatory automation to come.

Automated (Smart) options exist in many Google Ads features, including smart shopping, automated bidding, and display network targeting methods. We can expect these "smart" options to eventually replace manual methods.

Manual bidding, for example, looks like a prime candidate for sunseting as more and more advertisers choose automated bidding as the AI improves.

This may not happen in 2022, but it will surely happen!

Unfortunately, this is bad news for advertisers that have fewer conversion metrics for AI to learn from, such as some B2B accounts.

To get themselves prepared, these advertisers may need to lean on other success metrics and micro conversions and start testing against manual bidding.



TIM JENSEN



**Campaign Manager,
Clix Marketing**

In 2022, marketers will continue to deal with decreasing accuracy in attribution, as actions such as iOS App Tracking Transparency and Facebook's aggregated event measurement limit the ability to properly correlate conversions with ads.

While skilled marketers will continue to find routes to track as much data as possible, the most success is likely to come to those who shift to looking more holistically at ROI data across the board.

Diversification across multiple channels will become more crucial, as marketers have seen one-channel success stories tank overnight after these changes.

As Google and Microsoft shift toward more automation and RSAs across the board, reliance on ad platforms to handle the heavy lifting of back-end optimization will continue to become a necessary handover. This will leave marketers to focus more on aspects such as maintaining the right spend mix, planning messaging and offers, and optimizing the experience post-ad on a landing page or form.



ROBYN JOHNSON

CEO and Founder, Marketplace Blueprint

Ad costs on Amazon have been increasing due to rising competition, aggregators, and changes on other platforms like Facebook.

This has driven up CPCs on Amazon, which has in turn driven a faster adoption of Amazon DSP and video ads.

Advertisers on Amazon should be focusing on making sure they are testing the new ad types and placements including testing.

Testing multiple match types/placements and different ad products like Sponsored Display, Sponsored Brands Video, and in some cases Amazon DSP.

Amazon is just debuting the use of audience targeting; the ability to retarget based on purchase history and viewed listings could be a huge advantage to some early adopters.

Finally, for many ad types on Amazon, you have to have in-stock inventory to run ads. Inventory management will play increasing importance to the success of ad campaigns in 2022.



SEAN JOHNSTON

**VP of Digital Advertising,
Closed Loop**

The integration of first-party data with advertising platforms will become even more critical for digital marketers in 2022.

We've been dependent upon pixels, tags, and cookies for marketing attribution since the beginning of digital marketing. But now that companies like Apple and Google are beginning to restrict the usage of these means of tracking in the name of consumer privacy, we have to plan for a future without them.

We're seeing an increased emphasis on the Facebook Conversions API, as well as Google's Offline Conversion Tracking from the platforms, as they look for ways to maintain tracking quality in a pixel-less environment.

Smart marketers will quickly get on board with offline conversion tracking and integration to help future-proof their efforts in 2022 and beyond.

Embracing offline conversion tracking isn't just a necessity for survival though, it's also the key to improving the performance of campaigns through better optimization.

This trend is likely to continue, if not accelerate.

As a result, the value of first-party data – and specifically, the means to integrate it with advertising networks – will be the key to maintaining and improving digital marketing efforts.



JONATHAN A. KAGAN

CEO and Founder, Marketplace Blueprint

The pandemic has shown us that DTC needs are stronger since the pandemic, and if you are a CPG operation, you need to rethink and adopt (if you haven't already) a strong DTC model.

Additionally, with more “smart” programs rolling out, the typical levers we advertisers control for digital are shrinking. This means they need to refocus on the most important things they can still control, which is audience targeting and segmentation.



AARON LEVY

Head of Paid Search, Tinuiti

Forgive the topical “pun,” but I believe 2022 will be the start of a new normal.

It will be the official launch of the programmatic era of SEM.

Match types are effectively thematic at this point – even the most precise match type is now scattershot, and what used to be broadest (again, pun intended) is now closer to the top performer due to factoring of other non-language signals.

ETAs are dying, though they've effectively been dead for some time as nearly everything in the search engine realm is responsive to one degree or another.

Last click attribution isn't dead, but it certainly isn't healthy and will be forgotten before long.

As search evolves into this sort of "autopilot" design, advertisers would do their best to let go of old adages and old best practices.

They weren't wrong when they were built, and arguably they're not wrong now either.

They are, however, dated, tired, and probably a bit rusty at this point.

I believe the best road forward is a reset of sorts – the best performing campaigns will be those that move away from keyword-only manually targeting.

Instead, look at all elements of exactly what (and how) the machines learn.

Learn where to build guard rails to prevent terms that you know are poor performing or eliminate audiences you know would never buy your product.

Campaigns of the future will be more about runways – broad brushstrokes allowing for incremental growth as automation learns new things while ensuring the machine doesn't go off the rails and impact performance as it learns.



MELISSA MACKEY

Paid Search Manager, MerkleB2B

2022 will be the year B2B advertisers must adapt or perish.

If you're a B2B advertiser who hasn't yet adopted an audience strategy, a content strategy, automated bidding, and a clear lead funnel and retargeting strategy, your grace period has come to an end.

It's time to get with the times.

The B2B space has become crowded and competitive, with ever-rising CPCs.

The only way to win in 2022 will be to incorporate a robust strategy utilizing first-party audiences, segmentation, top-notch ad copy and content, and a strong cross-channel retargeting strategy that helps pull users down the funnel.

Just targeting CEOs in paid social with the same creatives for months isn't going to be successful.

Neither is a generic paid search strategy that doesn't differentiate between various stages of the buyer journey.

Robust creative, content, and targeting are going to be the key.

And automation is a crucial part of it all.

As much as paid search marketers eschew heavy automation, we've got to make peace with it and take advantage of its strengths.

The most successful B2B advertisers are already laser-focused on delivering the right content to the right audience at the right time – and using automation to do so.

If you haven't already, it's time to start identifying audiences, creating a variety of content, developing differentiated ads, and embracing automation for paid search and paid social.

B2B advertisers have gotten away with basic tactics for a while, and in 2022, that won't be enough.



BROOKE OSMUNDSON

**Senior Director Client Strategy,
NordicClick Interactive**

Marketers Will Continue To Deal With A Loss Of Individual Data Points And Move More Towards Aggregated Data

While we have started to see this shift in the past year, this modeling will become more aggressive in 2022. The recent announcement from Google Ads about moving the default attribution to Data-Driven Attribution modeling helps support that theory.

Additionally, as Facebook has changed its modeling for iOS users, we already see this play out.

As marketers, we need to lean into this truth and understand the implications and opportunities this presents to our clients.

By looking at more holistic, bigger picture data, we may be able to make business decisions and pivot faster than before.

We need to be okay with not knowing everything but feeling confident enough to push and pull levers as we see fit to grow the business to more profitability.

Consumer Behavior Is Shifting In How We Consume Content And How We Purchase

Because of this, we need to ensure that our brands are showing up when our target users are online, not just when they're searching.

With the other announcement in how Broad and Phrase match keywords are being categorized, audience characteristics will be more important to capture and target our audience, with less reliance on keywords.

This has been the trend the past few years, but I think that it will

be even more aggressive this year.

In sum: less keywords, more audience, better intention.

User Experience Will Become Even More Important

Because marketing budgets are stretched so thin and PPC is being pushed to the max to bring as much profitability as possible, marketers need to learn to do more with less.

This will require us to take a look at the experience for the traffic we are already driving.

As marketers, we can drive all the traffic in the world to a website; but if that experience doesn't match a user's expectation, nothing will make them convert.

We need to shift resources to amplifying online user experiences to match customer demand for increased conversion rates and greater profitability.



KIMBERLY SHAH

Senior Account Executive, Microsoft Advertising

With the updates in cookie tracking in iOS14 and the deprecation of third-party cookies in Chrome looming on the horizon, inevitably, other publishers will quickly start to follow suit.

The reality of a 3P cookieless world is fast approaching, and to ensure a successful entry into this world, it will be key in 2022 to heavily strategize, invest, and test into first-party data sources and start to apply these across your marketing channels holistically.

Once this becomes a (more or less) mandatory move for the paid search industry, it's better for you to be ahead of the game than the other thousands of advertisers who will be entering into the same space at the same time.

You can do this by having already gotten past a testing stage and entered into an evergreen strategy as an early adopter.

It's important not to underestimate the magnitude of this change and the work it will require – this could be a huge shake-up in your overall strategy and the mix of how you invest your marketing dollars.



FREDERICK VALLAEYS

Co-Founder & CEO, Optmyzr

What you need to do to be successful in PPC in 2022:

1. Don't compete against automation, but use automation layering to make it perform better.
2. Use new audience capabilities to distinguish between B2C and B2B opportunities.

3. Be ready for anything - we're not going back to a predictable time yet.

Don't Compete Against Automation, But Use Automation Layering To Make It Perform Better

That PPC is becoming more automated is a trend, though not a new one.

After years of automation seemingly eroding advertiser control (think RSAs instead of ETAs, close variants instead of exact matches, and smart bids instead of CPCs with bid adjustments), smart advertisers have come to realize that control in the game of PPC has simply shifted to new levers. Think pinning headlines, using scripts to control match types, and controlling bids with value rules.

Successful PPC advertisers will learn how to deploy automation layering in 2022 to stay in control of modern PPC.

Use New Audience Capabilities to Distinguish Between B2C and B2B Opportunities

More audience targeting was a trend last year. Still, questions around FLoC and other privacy-driven initiatives have cast doubt

on how much advertisers will be able to rely on audience signals going forward.

The good news is that the major ad engines create new ways to target audiences without compromising user privacy.

One hugely appealing possibility is that FLoC will help advertisers distinguish between a business buyer (B2B) and a personal buyer (B2C).

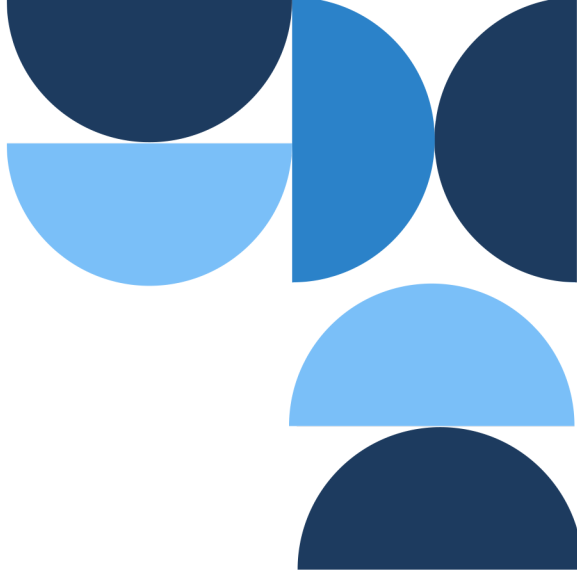
This is due to the fact that audience signals may be restricted to each device, so someone who does a lot of personal searches on their phone and many business searches on their desktop could be recognized as two distinct audiences to target.

Be Ready For Anything – We’re Not Going Back To A Predictable Time Yet

2022 will likely be another year where advertisers will need to be nimble and take full advantage of all the flexibility search marketing offers.

Monitor your data closely for anomalies.

Have a campaign structure that is flexible enough to support changing the course when business data warrants it and use your own tools and automations to keep things running smoothly when a colleague is unexpectedly unavailable.



AJ WILCOX

Founder, B2Linked

The next big trend for smart marketers is becoming more data- and tech-savvy.

I have been closely watching the LinkedIn Ads landscape over the last ten years, and the general consensus has always been “LinkedIn Ads are too expensive.”

Since I’ve been watching, the average CPCs on the platform have gone from \$2 to now \$12 and are continuing to increase.

Yet, the platform is getting wider and wider adoption, and more advertisers are finding success.

Why, despite the platform becoming more and more expensive, are marketers flocking to the platform and having more success?

It's because marketers are getting more adept at data analysis and tools that facilitate tracking/attribution are becoming better and less expensive.

We're increasingly skilled at translating our spend on advertising into the quality of the lead (Cost per Sales Qualified Lead), and not just relying on the cost per lead metric (which never tells the full story), which allows us to accurately assess the lead quality from each channel.

Marketers who become more technical will stay ahead of the curve.

Consider improving your familiarity with Excel as the top priority. Then get to know databases for storing your data as well as SQL for accessing it.

Gain familiarity with data visualization platforms like Google Data Studio for understanding your data. Some basic scripting like Python and AutoHotKey will also do wonders for your effectiveness and your career.



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