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MICROSOFT ADVERTISING

The digital advertiser's guide to COVID-19

Considerations for advertising during (and after) the new coronavirus

Microsoft Advertising. Intelligent connections.

The world is facing an unprecedented time right now, which presents unique challenges for businesses.

We're here to help.

From audience strategy to competitive insights to account health checks, we've got you.

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The value of paid search:
a steady ship in stormy waters

Paid search generates the greatest return on advertising spend (ROAS) across media channels, per dollar invested in the U.S.[1]

Not surprisingly, for budgets impacted by COVID-19, when compared to other media channels, **paid search has been impacted the least and benefited the most** either retaining or receiving re-allocated budget.[2]

Some may venture that **paid Search is the most recession-proof tool**, considering its ability to connect marketers with consumer intent.

1. Various Sources (Benchmarking); OAAA, 2018. 2. Advertiser Perceptions, "Coronavirus Effect on Advertising Report," March 26, 2020.

Our multi-touch attribution study found that on average, search clicks are directly followed by a conversion **2.6x more** than clicks from other ad types, including social and video.

Advertisers are rapidly turning to more complex attribution models, away from depending on last click attribution and away from measuring media in silos.

Our multi-touch attribution study enabled Microsoft to statistically measure impact of digital media touchpoints on our proprietary properties to help drive omnichannel strategy.

3.4x
3.0x
2.4x
1.8x

Retail   Travel   Auto   FinServe

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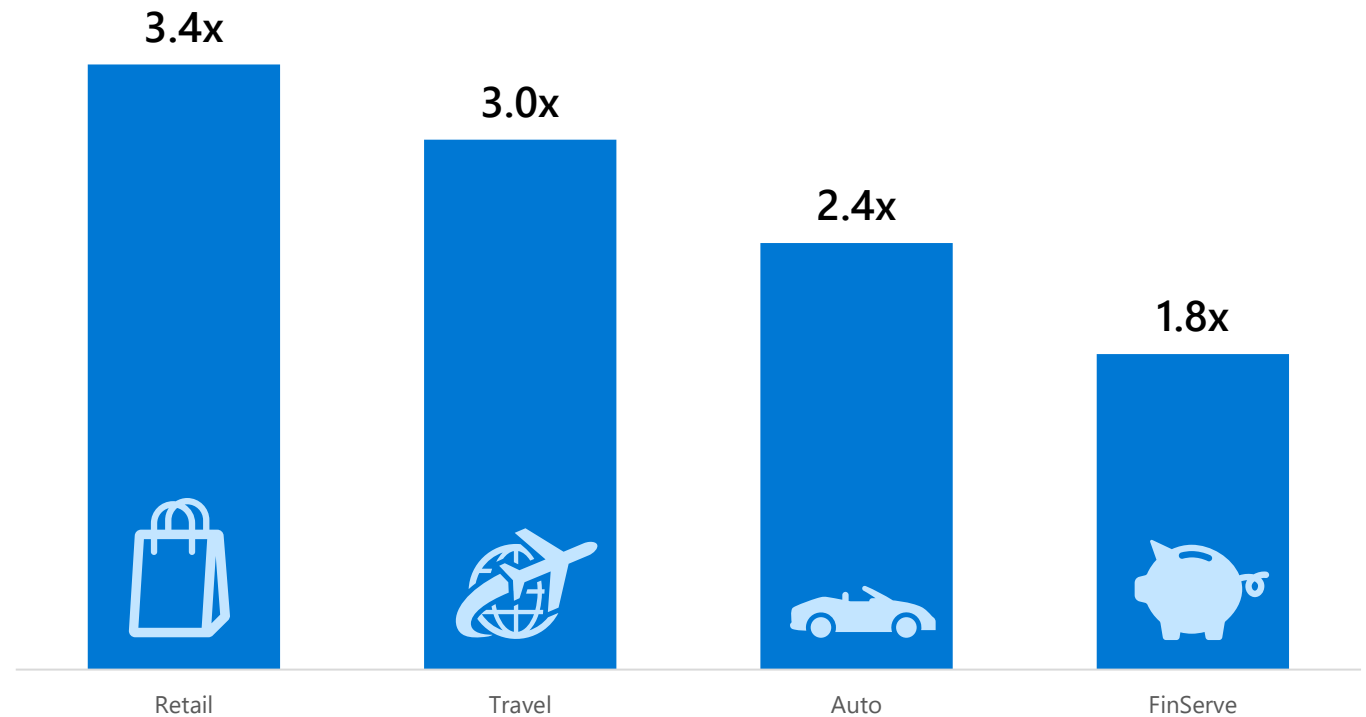
The Value of a Cross-Channel Strategy

Combining paid search with other media channels, including native advertising, will amplify your searches and can help you get the best return on investment during this unprecedented time.

ROI Comparison
Single Channel Strategy Vs. Combined

+25%

+45%

Offline

Online

Offline + Online
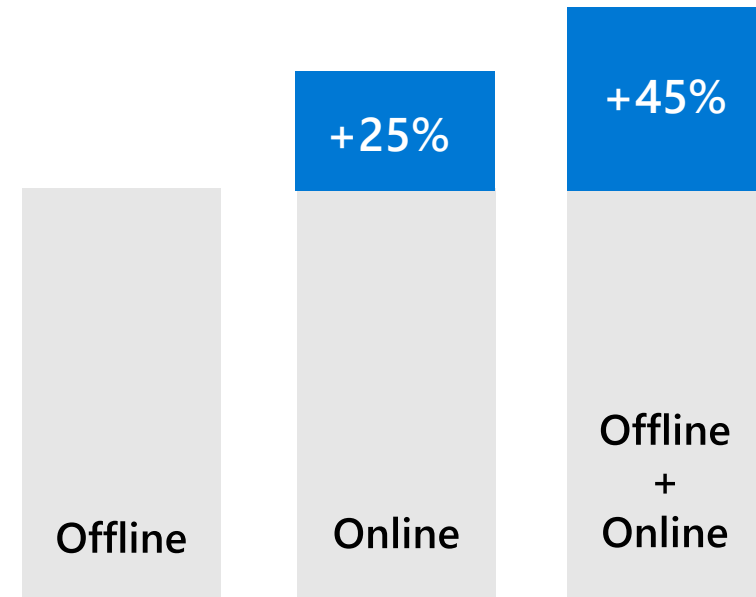
Source: Analytic Partners ROI Genome, Analysis based on over 3,200 Campaigns from 2012-2017

How has consumer search behavior changed?

Working from home and other lifestyle shifts has led to **blended schedules** with the following marketplace trends thus far COVID-19 vs. Pre-COVID-19[1]:

Desktop & Tablet Volume Share continues to grow respectively at 8% and 18% on average.

Weekend Volume grew significantly by 12%; 2x that of weekday volume growth

Non-business hours Volume[2] (5pm-5am) increased by 11%. This is approximately 2x the volume growth during regular business hours.

1. US and Microsoft Advertising core owned and operated (O&O) only, Time Periods: Pre-COVID-19 (January-February 2020); COVID-19 (March-April 2020)
2. Hours of Day converted from UTC to EST; adjusted for Daylight Savings

Considerations and opportunities during COVID-19

This guide will share tips and tactics to consider as you adjust your business strategies during this dynamic time. Your Microsoft account team can also help provide guidance, tips and real-time vertical insights to support you.

Immediate strategy
Quick actions you can take today.

Restoration strategy
Plan now for future opportunities and restoration scenarios.

New opportunities
Tips for you if you're seeing new or increased traffic.

Account health
We're here to help you prioritize smartly.

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Microsoft Advertising policy update for COVID-19

Protecting our users and our platform is our top priority at Microsoft Advertising, and we'll continue to evaluate the ads we show so we're sensitive to the events that are happening.

The coronavirus has been declared a global health emergency, and **we've taken precautionary measures to block ads for delivery related directly to the coronavirus** as well as **coronavirus-related medical supplies** under the **Microsoft Advertising sensitive advertising policy**.

Immediate strategy
Smart actions for today

1. Modify messaging

Check your ad copy and creative for your search and native campaigns

Be thoughtful with your message and images. It's a stressful time for everyone, so ensure your creative addresses the current situation and take care to avoid overwhelming your customers. Land your message in a positive way using creative that best represents your brand and values.

- **Make sure your message aligns with the current situation.**
  - Is your ad still relevant?
  - Do you have one product you should focus on over another?
  - Can you be more empathetic toward those affected by the coronavirus?

- **What can you change to make your ad work better with the current situation?**
  Highlight:
  - Empathy: Many are adjusting to new situations (working from home, no childcare).
  - Offerings: Fast and/or free shipping, waived fees, delivery service.
  - Opportunity: Donate to a coronavirus-related cause.

- **Swap out your images.**
  - Make sure your images match any new ad copy.
  - Use images to make your message relatable.
    - For example, if you sell laptops, consider swapping the image from a person working in an office to a person working from home.

If your company is doing something to help, highlight it!

Many companies are responding to the coronavirus with wonderful examples of putting customers and people first. Don't let your good initiatives go unnoticed. Highlight the positive actions your business is taking to help during this time. Example:

- Tech and telecom companies waiving data limits and fees.
- Businesses donating profits and offering unprecedented sales/discounts.
- Food service companies waiving fees.
- Travel companies removing barriers to change or cancel, etc.
- Special shopping hours for at-risk population
- Special delivery and pick-up options

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2. Strike balance between automation and manual checks

Things are moving quickly — from the marketplace to the economy to consumer behavior.
With a dynamically changing environment, it's critical to use automation tools while simultaneously applying a human eye to monitor performance and variance to modify as appropriate. As consumers spend more time at home, they're spending more time searching on PCs. With 37% of the U.S. PC market share,[1] Microsoft Advertising offers advertisers a valuable opportunity to reach audiences.

Don't set it and forget it. Your human eyes matter!
Your settings aren't fully optimized for a quickly shifting environment and behavior. Schedule regular manual checks.

Automation can help with:

- **Consistency during this time with staffing fluctuations.** For example, layoffs, sick leave, time off for family care. Ensure your business and marketing goals are on track within your campaign budgets with platform automation and tools.

- **Relevant ad copy to meet the shift in consumer behavior.** Suggestion: Instead of manually testing new headlines and descriptions with your changing messaging strategies (like delivery options), implementing Responsive Search Ads will enable Microsoft Advertising to analyze and automatically optimize.

- **Optimization management.** Suggestion: To keep up with emerging queries relevant to your business or best position bids, apply the artificial intelligence (AI)-driven recommendations in the user interface with a click of a button.

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3. Automated bidding strategies help adjust to the new normal

It is not recommended to switch to manual bidding. Utilizing automated bidding will help you stay on top of the dynamic marketplace during these times. If you are using manual bidding, it is best to switch to automated sooner rather than later. If your business is experiencing volatilities when using automated bidding strategies, we suggest adopting Enhanced CPC to continue to improve performance.

Automation is key towards navigating bid and budget landscape

- **Conversion based bid strategies:**
    - Continue to monitor that the campaigns are meeting the minimum conversion criteria (delivery status in UI). If they are not (due to volume drop for example) the bid optimization will stop, and the recommendation is to switch out to Enhanced CPC bidding.

    - For Target CPA, identify and make changes to account for any changes in conversion rate/ conversion volume changes.

- **Enhanced CPC (ECPC) for better ROI.** ECPC layered on top of automated bidding should help mitigate for volatilities.

- **Optimize for campaign goals.** Keep campaign goals up to date and enable auto-bidding features to do the intensive optimization work for you.

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4. Shift your approach: Products and your audience

Highlight products that align with the current situation

- Now is the time to reevaluate the products you're advertising.

- While you might think you don't need to advertise products with higher demand, customers may not be able to find you in a sea of "educational toys for children" ads with the demand surge as children participate in distance learning at home.

Continue to engage with your current audience, considering new ways to connect

- Think bigger than just selling your services to connect with your audience.

- Can you offer helpful tips during this time? Do you have a blog or newsletter you can promote to keep in touch while business is slower?

Capture a shifting audience

- With stores closing, manufacturers producing different products, and business looking for new ideas to keep running, it might feel like it's hard to know who your audience is today.

- Keep an eye on your industry — do you have a competitor switching up their services? Look for those gaps in the market where you can pull in new customers.

- Are you creating new products? Talk with us about your strategy and let us help you find a new audience.

- With a shifting audience, test and learn with the Microsoft Audience Network and our Audience Network Planner.

Check out our recent Microsoft Advertising blog post "Strategies for Unprecedented Times" for more tips.

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5. What to do today: Ad extensions

Review and update your ad extensions

Be agile by pivoting messaging quickly to connect with consumer needs right now. Use pull mechanisms to get consumers closer to their wants:

Action Extensions
- **Suggestions:** Buy Now, Order Now, Contact Us, Donate, Download, Email Now, Free Trial, Play Game, Play Now, Save Now, Shop Now, Start Now, Try Now, Watch, Watch Now.

Sitelink Extensions
- **Suggestions:** Use a clear call to action, like Action Extensions. Focus on actions to catch consumers' attention by providing an immediate benefit, for example curbside pickup, product safety.

Call Extensions
- **Suggestions:** Offer a direct line to your business/offering in the ad, so consumers can quickly reach your business for their needs.

Multi-Image Extensions
- **Suggestions: 1.** Showcase top products using images, as traffic is now online with stores closed. **2.** If you sell laptops, use images with a person working from home, instead of working in the office. **NOTE:** Images from your search campaign library can be used to serve ads on the Microsoft Audience Network and reach your audience in new places.

Price Extensions
- **Suggestions:** Use Price Extensions to show availability of products wanted by the consumers for an immediate purchase.

Video Extensions
- **Suggestions:** Align messaging between your offline and online marketing campaigns by using the same TV ads online.

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6. What to do today: Audience targeting

Ad customizers and IF functions can help land effective messages for your audience

Suggestions: If your customer has used a food delivery service in the past six months, then insert "free delivery" into the ad copy. Or insert products in the copy based on inventory availability in different geographies.

If you use Custom Audiences:

Consider building new lists or leveraging different lists than you've been using.

- Longest tenure of Customer Lifetime Value.
- Most recent purchasers.
- Cancelled subscriptions or those who didn't convert for later.

Take your Shopping Campaigns to the next level with Product Audiences

Over just a few short weeks, the world has shifted from brick and mortar to online for almost everything. Product Audiences may be able to help you make up for the shift. And if you already have a shopping feed, you can extend your search campaign into native for more volume with the Microsoft Audience Network — no additional assets needed.

100% CVR

Ads shown to Product Audiences saw up to a 100% greater conversion rate (CVR) than the same ads shown to non-audience targeted users for the same Shopping Campaigns.[1]
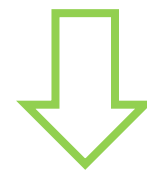
40% CPA

Ads shown to Product Audiences saw up to a 40% lower cost per acquisition (CPA) than the same ads shown to non-audience targeted users for the same Shopping Campaigns.[1]

Source: Microsoft internal data, early pilot data on Bing U.S. PC and tablet, April 2019.

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7. What to do today: Remarketing

User recency

User recency is one of the most useful remarketing signals there is, especially right now.

Ensure you have Remarketing audiences created for 1, 3, 7, 14 and 30 days to capture all those users who are still visiting your site and may still be looking to purchase.

Create brand-focused conversion goals

Sales are down for many at this time. Search is often considered an acquisition-based channel, but consider creating more brand-focused conversion goals to focus on right now, both in search and native.

- Can you drive more people to sign up for your newsletter, or focus on driving awareness of a specific product you sell that people may not be aware of (creating a conversion goal for visitors of a specific product page)? Think about the long term and how these goals outside of acquisition may impact sales once the environment stabilizes. For example, newsletter sign-ups can help you reach users sharing future deals even if they're not actively browsing your website.

Target your brand-focused campaign acquisition list later

Connect your brand-focused conversion goals with matching audiences.
And create a longer-term plan to retarget these people later for the bigger purchase or lead event.

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8. What to do today: In-market Audiences

Consider the following areas where you can target customers using In-market Audiences

Vertical: Education/online education

- /Education
- /Education/Primary & Secondary Schools (K-12)
- /Education/Test Preparation & Tutoring

Vertical: Retail – /Baby & Children's Products

- /Childcare & Education/Early Childhood Education
- /Childcare & Education/Childcare
- /Childcare & Education/Early Childhood Education
- /Diapers & Baby Hygiene Products
- /Infant & Toddler Feeding/Infant Feeding Supplies
- /Baby & Children's Products/Strollers & Baby Carriages
- /Baby & Children's Products/Toys & Games

Vertical: Retail – /Hobbies & Leisure

- /Pets & Animals/Pet Food & Supplies
- /Pets & Animals/Pet Food & Supplies/Pet Food & Treats
- /Toys & Games
- /Toys & Games/Games/Online Games & Puzzles

Vertical: Business – /Business services

- /Business Technology
- Business Technology/Business & Productivity Software/ E-Commerce & Retail Software
- /Business Technology/Enterprise Software/Collaboration & Conferencing Tools
- /Business Technology/Enterprise Software/Helpdesk & Customer Support Solutions
- /Business Services/Office Supplies
- /Business Services/Office Supplies/Office Furniture

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9. What to do today: Microsoft Audience Network

Everyone is glued to the news — get in front of customers where they are

With people around the world focused on the news, make sure you're getting in front of those customers. Native is a way to drive positive and informative messaging during this news cycle, with a mix of text and imagery. Use the Microsoft Audience Network to show your ads on news sites like MSN, Reuters and Fox Business. We've taken every precaution to ensure your ads don't appear next to undesirable content across our network.

Things to consider:

❑ Update your creative and copy to ensure they reflect the new messaging you want to land showing empathy and care for your customers.

❑ Assess opportunities and projections with our Audience Network Planner.

❑ Update your view-through conversion window to 30-60 days to fully measure the impact of your campaign and better understand customer interactions with your ad.

❑ With users working remotely, awareness is key. Readjust your audience targeting as there might be an opportunity to reach a broader audience.

❑ To maximize volume, adjust your bid and budget, via our bid landscape tool at the ad group level.

Global page views on Microsoft properties are increasing

+15%
Week-over-week article page views

+37%
Week-over-week MSN homepage views

Source: Internal Microsoft data. Increase represents an average of daily week-over-week and month-over-month increases between March 12 and March 18 (inclusive).

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Checklist
Immediate actions

Ads

❑ Check the extensions you're using. Use "delivery, curbside pickup, other services" that are unique and applicable to your business.

❑ Shopping: Adjust product group bidding strategy to align with your inventory dynamics.

❑ Shopping: Keep your product feed files up to date as product inventory and prices may change rapidly.

❑ Automatically test different messaging by adding Responsive Search Ads (RSA) to your ad groups. Add assets with "delivery options."

❑ Check your editorial rejections as COVID-19-related terms are disallowed.

❑ Check your text ads. Replace any standard text ads with Expanded Text Ads and RSA (standard text ad volume will begin to decline April 1).

❑ Search partners: Review publisher reports to optimize performance on the search partner network.

Keywords

❑ Use "Broadience" (broad match + audience targeting) to help you efficiently expand reach and identify new opportunities.

❑ Add keywords with terms around delivery, curbside pickup, fees waived, etc. as fit for your business (note "COVID-19" terms are restricted).

❑ Review your search term reports for emerging queries to add as keywords or add negatives to avoid poor performance.

❑ To capture emerging queries, create or reactivate Dynamic Search Ads (DSA) as a "catchall" with a lower bid and use discoverability tools like Microsoft Advertising Intelligence and Keyword Planner.

❑ Revamp your branded strategy and consider broad match on your core brand terms to cover highly relevant emerging queries.

Audience

❑ Create Remarketing lists with more recent frequencies (ex: 1, 3,7, 14, 30 days) to target customers still looking to purchase.

❑ Use In-market Audiences to target customers who are in-market for your product (especially for areas of opportunity for you).

❑ If you're using Shopping Campaigns, make sure you have Product Audiences (dynamic remarketing) set up to help increase performance.

❑ Optimize your Audience Ads campaign and reach people where they are today while navigating the web and news sites at home.

❑ Add images to your search campaign, so your ads can serve on the Microsoft Audience Network and get in front of more potential customers.

❑ Refine targeting settings to reflect consumer trends for your business around geographies, time of day, etc. Use the Bing COVID-19 Tracker to help.

Bidding

❑ Balance between using automation and manual reviews. Monitor auto-bidding, but keep a close eye to adapt to a fluctuating marketplace.

❑ Monitor SOV/click share and adjust bids, especially where you see opportunities with less competition in the marketplace during this time.

❑ Review your smart targets, adjusting as needed if your targets shift (ex: target conversion rates). Layer Enhanced CPC on top of manual bids.

❑ Check accuracy of online conversion tracking to properly account for increased online purchasing demand. Recommended to implement Universal Event Tracking (UET) on your site.

Budget

❑ Check budgets in the Microsoft Advertising Interface daily. Watch for budget pause notifications, which may not show up in bid management tools.

❑ Reallocate budget to your best-performing campaigns and products as performance fluctuates with emerging trends.

❑ Keep campaigns running at a lower CPCs and lower budget to capitalize on decreased marketplace competition, instead of pausing campaigns.

Restoration strategy
Plan now for future opportunities and economic recovery scenarios

Restoration strategies

REMARKETING

User frequency: Build lists of audiences with longer look-back windows

- **People who didn't convert.** Ensure you have 60-, 90-, 120- and 180-day audiences created. Once the market calms down, you'll be able to target all the users who visited your site throughout this time, though they may not have converted.

- **People who browsed, but didn't return.** With these segments set up, you could even focus on people who were browsing during this time but haven't yet come back by targeting the 60-day audience and excluding the 30-day audience to reach users in the window of last having visited between 30-60 days ago.

Build a "cancellation" audience list to later reach customers who cancelled a booking

Depending on the vertical, create Remarketing lists for users who may have cancelled their booking, so you might be able to remarket to them again later when the market calms or you have new offers.

NEW CONSUMER BEHAVIOR TRENDS

Ad copy and creative: As we transition back to "normal," start thinking through adjusting messaging around what will consumers need. Using RSA is a good strategy to quickly test new messaging that can also be used in native and other media channels.

Adjust keyword and budget strategies: Scenarios to start thinking through: Will food, grocery and shopping deliveries see a significant drop as people want to physically go to stores more? Use Custom Audiences to target those customers who've been purchasing online. Will there be an increase in the need for financial advisor and guidance now that people have seen the effects of perhaps not being prepared through a recession? What will the housing market look like during the typical peak season if rates go back up? Will there be hesitancy to fly still even if restrictions lessen, and will that lead to more road trips? If so, will that put more demand on auto parts/services? Tourism impacts? Will trips be more of a "holiday" gift than typical retail gifts? Etc.

BENCHMARKS

Adjust your KPIs: As we transition back to "normal," start getting ready to apply more flexibility to your benchmarks. Consider adjusting bids and budgets to align with marketplace dynamics. Your Microsoft account manager can help you identify vertical-specific marketplace trends.

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Restoration strategies

LONG- TERM MARKETPLACE CONSIDERATIONS

Sustain your campaigns running at lower budgets vs. turning off

- **I.e. Dynamic Search Ads (DSA).** Keeping DSA campaigns live will ensure your domains are in index and you will not need to initiate a new recrawl.

Keep your current account structure as is

- **Maintain existing ad copies, keywords, etc.** This allows the system to maintain the learnings associated with your accounts and minimizes ramp up time.
- **If you must re-structure...**do it sooner rather than later and launch (even with low budgets) to set up for success for platform to start learning and building account history.
- **Google Import can help**. Use the Google Import tool if you'd like to mirror campaign structures. No special structures are needed for Microsoft Advertising, so you can use the automated-import function to keep your accounts in sync across platforms.

Refine targeting to optimize for significant changes in consumer online behavior

- **Device targeting.** With significant increases in desktop and tablet volume, increase your bid modifiers for these devices. Especially if they are negative or at zero.
- **Dayparting expansion for day of week & time of day.** With unprecedented online volume increases around nights and weekends, ensure your ads are turned on and bid modifiers are optimized for all hours to maximize the revenue opportunity for your business.
- **Location targeting.** Identify and expand the geographies that are converting most during this time from zip codes and cites to states, countries and more. For example, if your campaigns have been turned off, you can ease into a relaunch by starting with targeting those locations further into recovery.

SHOPPING CONSIDERATIONS

Retail shopping behaviors may change

- **Optimize for new shopping behaviors.** Review search query reports at the offer level to check for new search queries driving traffic to your Product Ads
- **Shop online, pick up in store.** We've seen this trend in the market and expect this behavior to continue to grow as stores begin opening again.
- **Send your full product feed.** Upload your complete product offering feed with recommended fields (GTIN, MPN, Brand, Color, Size, Shipping costs, multiple images, etc.) to ensure your products are eligible to serve in new shopping experiences.
- **Product Audiences** (dynamic remarketing). Pair customers with specific products based on products they have looked at, considered, or already purchased on your website.

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Checklist — Restoration strategies

Ads

- ☐ Ad rotation should be set to optimize.
- ☐ Check your editorial rejections as COVID-19-related terms are disallowed.
- ☐ Begin the (required) move to Expanded Text Ads and add Responsive Search Ads (RSA) to your ad groups as an efficient way to swiftly change your text ad messaging.
- ☐ Use ad customizers and IF functions where applicable. Use audiences to land effective messaging.
- ☐ Shopping: Use Local Inventory Ads to indicate availability of items and adjust product group bids based on inventory changes.
- ☐ Shopping: As your inventory levels grow, re-evaluate your product group strategy and product prioritization to meet your campaign goals.
- ☐ Check the extensions you're using. Use "delivery, curbside pickup, other services" that are unique and applicable to your business.
- ☐ Consider Disclaimer in ads pilot (US only) to highlight specific information such as safety measures being taken for your business.

Keywords

- ☐ Monitor keyword recommendations specific to your account surfaced in Microsoft Advertising user interface.
- ☐ Continue to use "Broadience" (broad match + audience targeting) to help you expand reach and identify new opportunities after the initial period of greater volatility has passed.
- ☐ Reevaluate strategy on keywords around delivery, curbside pickup, fees waived (COVID-19-terms are restricted).
- ☐ To capture newly emerged queries, create or reactivate Dynamic Search Ads (DSA) as a "catchall" with a lower bid and use tools like Microsoft Advertising Intelligence and Keyword Planner.

Audience

- ☐ Reevaluate Remarketing list frequencies (ex: 1, 3,7, 14, 30 days) to target customers still looking to purchase.
- ☐ Use In-market Audiences to target customers who are in-market for your product (especially for areas of opportunity for you).
- ☐ Use Product Audiences (dynamic remarketing) to maximize the performance of your shopping ads.
- ☐ Create a separate Audience Ads campaign to reconnect with your ideal audience in high-quality and brand-safe native placements.
- ☐ Add images to your search campaigns to expand your audience reach and drive increased performance.
- ☐ Refine targeting settings to reflect consumer trends for your business around geographies, time of day, etc. Use the Bing COVID-19 Tracker to help.

Bidding

- ☐ Once the market has "leveled" out and fluctuations have lessened, begin moving back to automated bidding with adjusted targets.
- ☐ When using manual bids, monitor SOV to adjust bids and leverage ECPC.
- ☐ Ensure you are setup for real-time success if you are re-entering the auction by leveraging first page bid recommendations in the UI.
- ☐ Check accuracy of online conversion tracking to properly account for online purchasing demand shifts. Recommended to implement Universal Event Tracking (UET) on your site.

Budget

- ☐ Begin planning for increases (or decreases) in campaign budgets as the markets shifts from greater volatility to a new normal.
- ☐ Monitor SOV to adjust budgets based on new trends, inventory, etc.

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Checklist Restorations strategies

Retail & Shopping Campaigns best practices

Feeds

☐ Send a complete feed with all product offers and include recommended fields – GTIN, MPN, Brand, Color, Size, Shipping Cost, Multiple Images, and more

☐ Optimize product titles and descriptions for improved product matching and relevance. Use the Search Term Report at the offer level for relevant terms to include and test.

☐ Leverage Custom labels in your feed to customize your product groups to meet your business goals.

☐ Import your Google product offerings to Microsoft Merchant Center to mirror your campaigns from Google.

☐ Schedule automatic downloads of product feeds to keep your prices and inventory fresh.

☐ Once stores open again, use Local Inventory Ads to drive traffic to your physical stores. Also a great option for the Shop online, pick up in store trend.

Merchant Center

☐ Schedule your Merchant Promotions and include any relevant promotional codes.

☐ Opt into Automatic item updates for price and/or availability to ensure your Product Ad details match the customer experience on your landing pages.

☐ Use the new List view for ad groups to easily see your product group taxonomy and make bulk operations to your product groups like bid changes by percentage or filter products.

☐ Campaign priority settings (low, medium, high) give you more control over which campaigns and products take precedent

Audience

☐ Product Audiences (dynamic remarketing) can help you take your shopping ads to the next level with increased performance.

☐ Use Product Ads on the Microsoft Audience Network to expand your reach and get your products in front of customers where they are today.

Reporting

☐ Review share of voice metrics with Click share and Absolute top impression share reporting to see how traffic volume compares to your competitors.

☐ Use the Product match count reporting to identify product serving issues within your feed and campaigns.

☐ Easily add negative keywords from your search term reports to filter unqualified traffic to your Product Ads.

☐ Regularly review your Product negative keyword conflicts report to ensure negative keywords are not limiting how your Product Ads are serving.

☐ Check your feed error reports to trouble shoot rejections and resubmit corrections.

☐ Review the Untargeted offers report to confirm all product offers are targeted by a campaign. An All Products as a catch-all bucket for new products or low-bid products is recommended.

☐ Review your Product partition report to view product group performance and use the Product dimensions report to see product SKU level performance.

Bidding

☐ Balance between using automation and manual reviews. Monitor auto-bidding but keep a close eye to adapt to a fluctuating marketplace.

☐ Adding Enhanced CPC will leverage auction-time signals and increase the likelihood of clicks driving conversions.

☐ Test new auto bidding pilots for Shopping: Maximize Clicks and Target Return on Ad Spend (ROAS)

Budget

☐ Plan budgets to meet the increased traffic demands by monitoring SOV.

☐ Allocate additional budget to your current best-performing and products.

☐ Monitor your daily budgets and adjust as needed with the changing environment.

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New opportunities
Tips for you if you're seeing new or increased traffic

Make the most out of new opportunities

Broaden your audiences to make sure you're reaching all potential new customers

Native exposure can increase search demand. By adding images to your search campaign, you can serve your ads on the Microsoft Audience Network and expand your reach. In an initial study evaluating several campaigns over a three-month period, Microsoft Audience Network advertisers saw increased performance in their search campaign with a +37% lift in searches post exposure (post impression or post click) and a 47% lift in clicks post exposure.[1]

Use In-market Audiences to reach people looking to buy in your vertical area

Review the In-market Audience segments available to ensure you're capturing all appropriate segments for your business, and increase bids on those that are performing well.

1. Microsoft internal data, exposed vs. control lifts for both clicks and searches per user, Jan 2019 – Jan 2020. Searches based on ad flag for selected advertiser and other advertisers in that vertical. On average, those clients saw the reported lift in search impressions per user and reported lift search clicks per user for exposed users compared with those who were not exposed to an ad on the Microsoft Audience Network. This is based on a sample of our pilot advertisers and is not a marketplace lift. The experienced lift is on a per-user basis for the exposed users, not the advertisers' full search program.

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New opportunities: Focus on Shopping Campaigns

Re-rise of the desktop

As consumers spend more time at home, they're spending more time searching on PCs. With 37% of the U.S. PC market share,[1] Microsoft Advertising offers a valuable opportunity to reach retail audiences. New Shopping Campaigns experiences are launching on the SERP, Shopping tab and Images tab – expanding the reach of retailers on the Microsoft Advertising Network and giving consumers new ways to find the products they are looking for.

Respond to identified product demand highs

Shopping Campaigns can help you showcase these products and answer the increasing demand from your customers. Give your customers more information before they click with Product Ads where you can display up to 10 product images, include prices, offers, promotions, shipping costs, and more. These dynamic ads will automatically update as your product offerings change, making the day to day management easy.

Many products are experiencing a surge in demand, amidst a dynamic environment
For example, web and teleconferencing software demand has increased, with employees being required to work from home. Household items, home office equipment, and a variety of other products and services see an increase in demand during this time.

Expand your shopping reach and find your audience beyond search with high-quality native placements, by adding Microsoft Audience Ads to your Shopping Campaigns.

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Maintain brand awareness or land positive corporate messaging

While many products and services are widely impacted by the coronavirus, some commoditized or evergreen products may be less affected. Native advertising can be a good and cost-effective way to maintain brand awareness and set you up for success in the future. The Microsoft Audience Network can help you stay connected with your audience by serving your ads on high-quality and brand safe native placements. We're taking every precaution so that your ad doesn't appear next to undesirable content across our network.

Microsoft Audience Network

242 million
total unique visitors in the U.S.[1]

1. comScore Microsoft Audience Platform Report, December 2019. Numbers are rounded to the nearest percentage point.

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Checklist
New opportunities

Ads
- ☐ Ad rotation should be set to optimize.
- ☐ Check your editorial rejections as COVID-19-related terms are disallowed.
- ☐ Efficiently replicate your marketing messaging strategy changes in your text ads. Replace any standard text ads with Expanded Text Ads and RSA (standard text ad volume will begin to decline April 1).
- ☐ Use ad customizers and IF functions where applicable. Use audiences to land effective messaging.
- ☐ Search partners: Expand your reach to a wider audience across all devices on proven, reputable and tested sites.
- ☐ Check the extensions you're using. Use "delivery, curbside pickup, other services" that are unique and applicable to your business.

Keywords
- ☐ Monitor keyword recommendations relevant to your business surfaced in the Microsoft Advertising user interface.
- ☐ Use "Broadience" (broad match + audience targeting) to help you expand reach and identify new opportunities once the volatility has settled.
- ☐ Monitor keywords and consider relevant terms around delivery, curbside pickup, fees waived (COVID-19-terms are restricted)
- ☐ To capture emerging queries, use Dynamic Search Ads (DSA) as a "catchall" and use tools like Microsoft Advertising Intelligence and Keyword Planner.
- ☐ Use the Google Import tool to expand your reach by automatically mirroring your Google Ads campaigns and changes on Microsoft Advertising.

Audience
- ☐ Create Remarketing lists with more recent frequencies (ex: 1, 3,7, 14, 30 days) to target customers still looking to purchase.
- ☐ Use In-market Audiences to target customers who are in-market for your product (especially for areas of opportunity for you).
- ☐ Product Audiences (dynamic remarketing) can help you take your shopping ads to the next level with increased performance.
- ☐ Use Product Ads on the Microsoft Audience Network to expand your reach and get your products in front of customers where they are today.
- ☐ Add images to your search campaigns to expand your reach and connect with customers in new places on the Microsoft Audience Network.
- ☐ Refine targeting settings to reflect consumer trends for your business around geographies, time of day, etc. Use the Bing COVID-19 Tracker to help.

Bidding
- ☐ Balance between using automation and manual reviews. Monitor auto-bidding, but keep a close eye to adapt to a fluctuating marketplace.
- ☐ Adding Enhanced CPC will leverage auction-time signals.
- ☐ Review your smart targets, adjusting as needed if your targets shift, for example target cost per conversion.
- ☐ Check accuracy of online conversion tracking to properly account for increased online purchasing demand. Recommended to implement Universal Event Tracking (UET) on your site.

Budget
- ☐ Plan budgets to meet the increased traffic demands by monitoring SOV.
- ☐ Allocate additional budget to your current best-performing ads and products.
- ☐ Monitor your daily budgets and adjust as needed with the changing environment.

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Account health

Use your time strategically to plan and optimize your account

Strategy and planning: Audience targeting

If you use Remarketing:

Tag your website's subpages.

- **Ensure you have as many subpages of your site tagged and targeted as possible.** The ability to identify and optimize for specific audiences or products that are still converting well (beyond just the standard 'All Visitors' audiences), or at least have the highest conversion rates can help ensure you're focusing on the right audiences and maximizing performance.

Consider brand-focused conversion goals.

- Sales are likely to be down during this period. Search is often considered an acquisition-based channel, but consider **creating more brand-focused conversion goals** too.

  Can you drive more people to **sign up for your newsletter or focus on driving awareness of a specific product** you sell that people may not be aware of (creating a conversion goal for visitors of a specific product page)?
  Think about the long-term and how other goals may impact your sales as the environment begins to calm down. For example, newsletter sign-ups may be effective to reach your customers and share future deals even if they're not actively browsing.

Consider new audience targeting pilot opportunities:

Evaluate which audience targeting pilot offerings may be good to set up as you plan your strategy for the coming months and seasons.
Pilots include: Customer Match, Custom Combination Lists, LinkedIn Profile Targeting, Similar Audiences, Product Audiences (dynamic remarketing),

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Strategy and planning: Identify gaps and opportunities

Your Microsoft account team can help pull these reports to identify gaps and opportunities across your accounts.

Health check
High-level account audit in partnership with your Microsoft Advertising account team to identify gaps and low-hanging-fruit opportunities across search, shopping and audience campaigns (either for a single or multiple accounts, the whole customer ID, or agency).

❑ **Audience dashboard**
High-level and granular views of Remarketing and In-market Audiences performance for your account, and **bid adjustments** based on your key performance indicators.

❑ **Competitive gap analysis:**
New keyword opportunities and search term reports are becoming a larger ask. How do you stay ahead of your vertical in maximizing what competitors are running?

❑ **Negative keyword conflicts:** As we add new keywords and build on negatives lists, conflicts happen. This report allows you to identify opportunities to remove conflicts by match type.

❑ **Audience Network Planner (available in the user interface)**
Gain a better understanding of you audience while planning your Microsoft Audience campaigns.

❑ **Microsoft Audience Network customer and vertical report**
Overview of vertical or customer-level volume and efficiency trends.

❑ **Share of voice dashboard**
Identify how to optimize your budget, bid and ads for your audience campaigns.

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Strategy and planning: Marketplace considerations

Sustain your campaigns running at lower budgets vs. turning off

• **I.e. Dynamic Search Ads (DSA).** Keeping DSA campaigns live will ensure your domains are in index and you will not need to initiate a new recrawl.

Keep your current account structure as is

• **Maintain existing ad copies, keywords, etc.** This allows the system to maintain the learnings associated with your accounts and minimizes ramp up time.
• **If you must re-structure...**do it sooner rather than later and launch (even with low budgets) to set up for success for platform to start learning and building account history.
• **Google Import can help**. Use the Google Import tool if you'd like to mirror campaign structures. No special structures are needed for Microsoft Advertising, so you can use the automated-import function to keep your accounts in sync across platforms.

Refine targeting to optimize for significant changes in consumer online behavior

• **Location targeting.** Identify and expand the geographies that are converting most during this time from zip codes and cites to states, countries and more. For example, if your campaigns have been turned off, you can ease into a relaunch by starting with targeting those locations further into recovery.

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Microsoft Advertising is here to help

Audience insights for COVID-19

Microsoft Advertising shares [weekly audience behavioral insights](#) with regard to COVID-19 on our blog.

COVID-19 blog posts:

- [Strategies for Unprecedented Times](#)

- [Adapting to a New Way of Doing Business](#)

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The Give with Bing program

Support nonprofits, just by searching on Bing

Give with Bing empowers you to turn the Microsoft Rewards points you earn by searching the web into donations to a cause that's important to you.

We have over 1 million nonprofits for you to choose from, including the CDC Foundation to support COVID-19 needs.

Find more details.

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Bing COVID-19 Tracker and Microsoft News

Information at your fingertips amidst this global pandemic

The Bing COVID-19 Tracker dashboard provides an easy way to view the number of confirmed coronavirus cases around the world. Breakdown is by active, recovered or fatal cases by region over time.

Microsoft News also features dedicated global and local coverage of coronavirus news in 39 countries/regions and all 50 U.S. states.
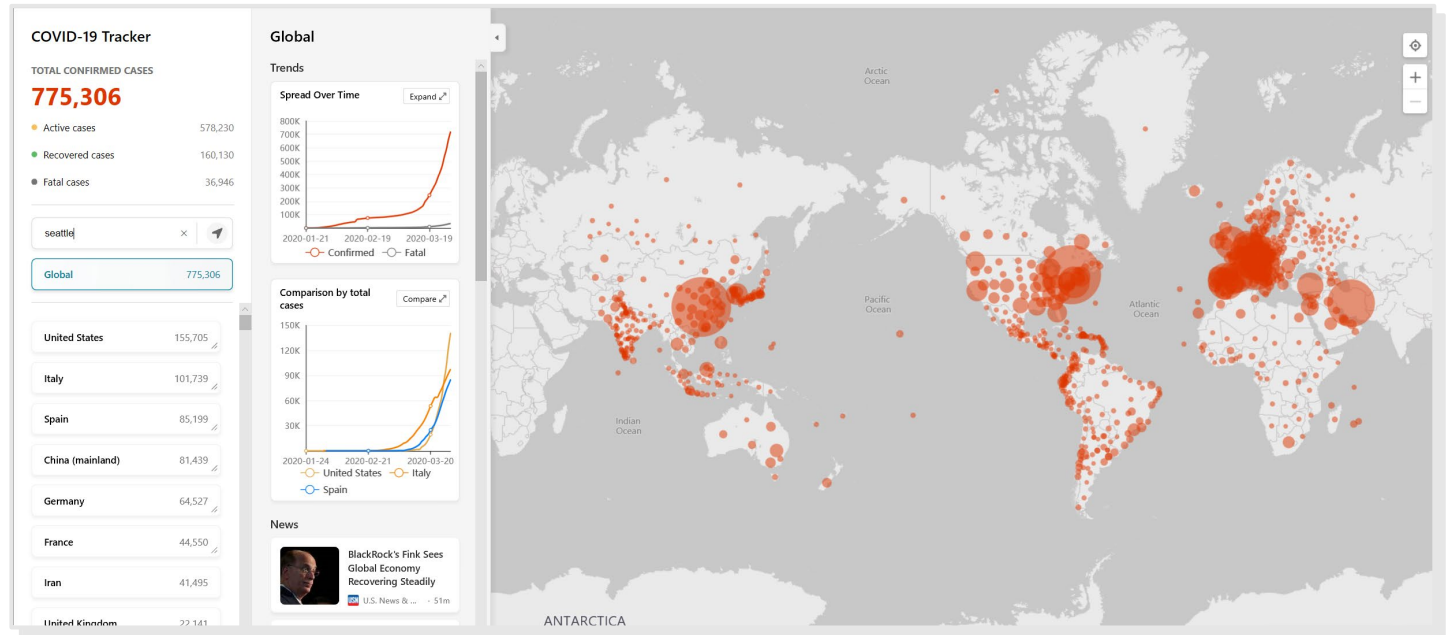
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Microsoft resources and response to COVID-19

Helping our communities and partners and connecting businesses

How Microsoft is helping our clients, communities and partners in response to COVID-19.
Microsoft's website: Responding to COVID-19.

How Microsoft is helping businesses connect and share advice and resources during this unprecedented time.
Microsoft launched a COVID-19 business resource center on LinkedIn.
Posts include:
- A conversation with Satya Nadella and Jared Spataro on what we're learning as Microsoft shifts to a complete remote working environment.
- A work-from-home guide created for Microsoft employees, which companies can adjust for their personalized needs.

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Microsoft Advertising. Intelligent connections.