Account health

Use your time strategically to plan and optimize your account

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Unprecedented times

As the world responds to the outbreak of COVID-19, our thoughts are with the people affected and the medical professionals working around the clock to help those most in need. At Microsoft, we're working to do our part by ensuring the safety of our employees, striving to protect the health and well-being of the communities in which we operate, and providing technology, tips and resources to our customers to help them do their best work while remote.

At Microsoft Advertising we are here to help you.

As consumers remain home, search has grown in increasing importance. This resource is part of The digital advertiser's guide to COVID-19, which covers immediate strategies, restoration strategies, future planning and account health, to help you continue to connect with your customers in meaningful and relevant ways.

Each of these resources are curated to help you and your business get the guidance you need no matter where what stage of the journey you are in.

We are also compiling key insights and industry trends on a weekly basis and publishing them on our COVID-19 insights and resources hub to allow you to make informed decisions for your business.

And finally, when people have a need and your brand is there to meet that need it creates a connection and builds trust. Never has that been more important than now. Consumers expect brands to step up and support them and the community in times like these. Marketing with Purpose is a framework to help you connect more authentically with your people, build trust and ultimately drive greater business value.
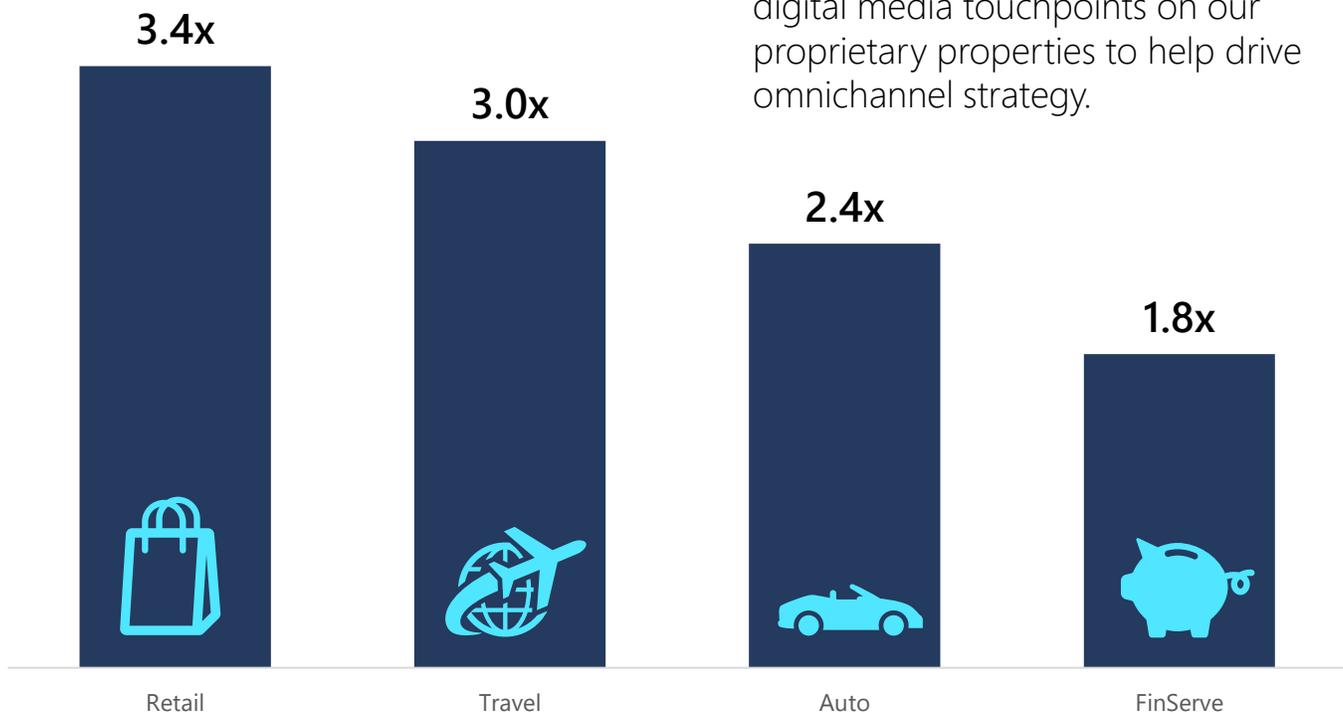
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The value of paid search

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.

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

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

Microsoft internal data. N = 1000 users per vertical, August 2019 – January 2020, US and PC only. Analysis of paid media only. Inclusive of display, native, partner, referral (including affiliates), social, video and paid search. Publisher and platform agnostic. Multiple paid digital media click touchpoints required for analysis inclusion.
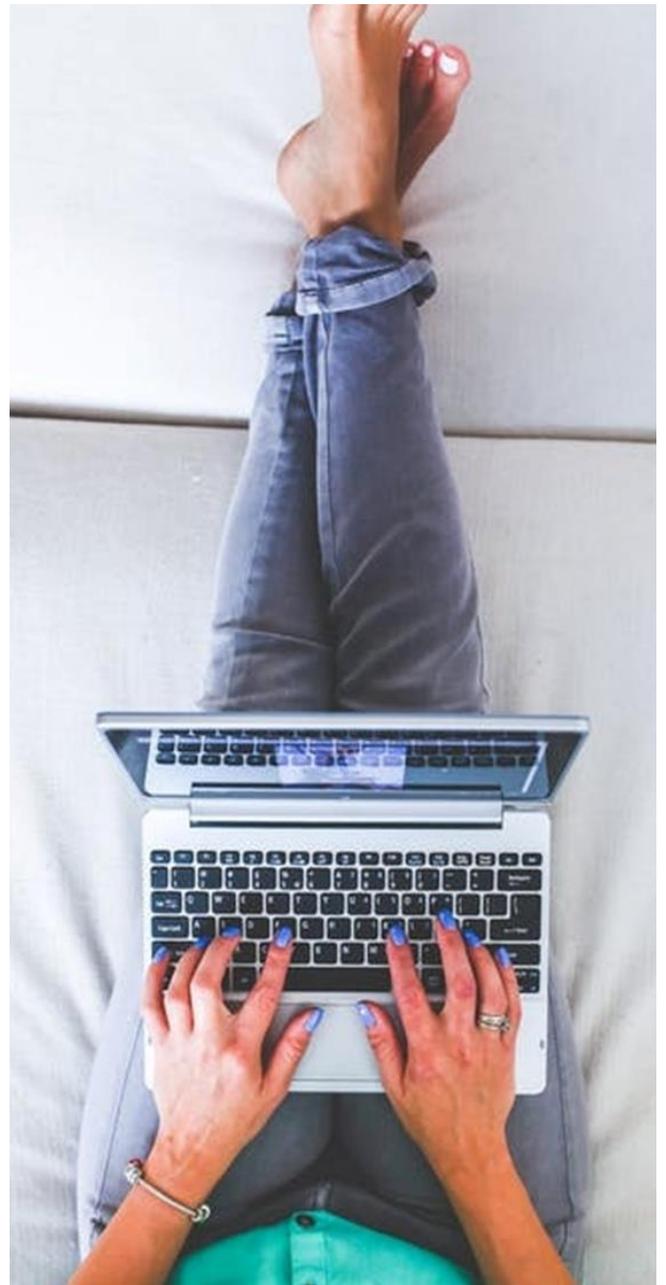
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How has consumer search behavior changed?

Working from home and other lifestyle shifts has led to **blended schedules** with the following marketplace trends 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 compared to Weekday Traffic by 12%.

Nighttime Volume2 (9pm-4am) increased by ~15% compared to volume for all other hours of the day.

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

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Table of contents

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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.

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Audience targeting

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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Identify gaps and opportunities

If you have a Microsoft account team, they 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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Marketplace considerations

Sustain your campaigns running at lower budgets vs. turning off

- **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.
- **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.

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.

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Resources

Microsoft Advertising

COVID-19 insights and resources for advertisers
As consumers remain home, search has grown in increasing importance. Our goal is to provide you with regularly updated insights and trends to allow you to make informed decisions for your business.

Microsoft Advertising blog
A comprehensive range of blogs that discuss issues relevant to advertising, search and our solutions.

Marketing with Purpose
Trust, loyalty and love create a sweet spot for purchase consideration. Learn how you can drive business results by making people feel seen and respected through inclusive marketing and purposeful personalization.

To learn more about Microsoft Advertising, please visit www.microsoft.com/advertising

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Microsoft's response to COVID-19
At Microsoft, we're working to do our part by ensuring the safety of our employees, striving to protect the health and well-being of the communities in which we operate, and providing technology, tips and resources to our customers to help them do their best work while remote.

Microsoft's Small and Medium Business COVID-19 Resource Center
Practical guidance for keeping your business up and running and getting the most out of your Microsoft technology investments.

LinkedIn COVID-19 business resource center
As businesses of all sizes grapple with the same key questions in the wake of COVID-19, the purpose of this community is to bring people together to share what they're learning and how they're managing through change during this time.

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