Microsoft Advertising

2020 festive guide

Let Microsoft Advertising help you plan your best retail campaign with the 2020 festive guide.

Microsoft

New year, same key dates to build your marketing calendar around

Although, we don't expect 2020 to be similar to 2019, we want to share learnings from last year to influence your decisions this year.[1]

December shopping may be different. Consumers are being encouraged to start their December shopping early to risk being disappointed by delivery delays

Be sure to extend it through early January to capture the most shoppers.

■ **Black Friday**

■ **Expected peak search days**

■ **Cyber Monday**

■ **Expected secondary top search days**

This year is very unpredictable and consumer behaviors keep on changing.

To reach the right customers during the festive season, make sure to focus on **automation** and **audiences**.*

*we have **highlighted** the most relevant products for you on the next pages

November 2020

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December 2020

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

1. Microsoft internal data, November-December 2019.

Be Retail Ready – Get ahead

Start building an audience of your best customers

Conversion Tracking — Build remarketing pools and measure your impact online and offline.

Microsoft Audience Ads — **Build awareness beforehand by extending reach beyond search with Microsoft Audience Ads.**

Automated Rules and Bids — **Set up automated rules and bids early to allow the algorithm to build in advance of the festive peak.**

Microsoft Advertising search partners — Reach mobile audiences through our search partners and get performance insights with website reports.

Learn how headlines and descriptions perform for your business objectives

Responsive Search Ads — **Take advantage of additional headline and character limits and let us identify and report the best performing ad combinations.**

Influence decision-making among those who are choosing brands

Dynamic Search Ads — **Increase your search term coverage and uncover new business opportunities without draining your budget and team resources with broad match.**

In-market Audiences — **Use broad keyword targeting (e.g., category keywords, brand keywords) to reach relevant audiences who may be searching in a variety of ways.**

Remarketing

Recommendations tab — Help your ads be more visible with mainline bidding. Check out the Recommendations tab for bid adjustment recommendations.

Tease upcoming sales and events

Ad Customisers — Enhance your text ads with eye-catching ad customisers to give potential customers greater incentive to click your ads.

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Work smarter to be more efficient

Compete by leading with offer-focused messaging

Automated rules and bids	**Have more control and flexibility when enabling campaigns, adjust budgets, and send email alerts. Create an automatic rule to optimize your campaigns, ad groups, ads and keywords.**
Automated bidding strategies	**Focus on downstream conversions when CPCs are most competitive with Target CPA Enhanced CPC and Maximise Conversions. Let us adjust your keyword bids in real time to reach the cost per acquisition (CPA) you want.**
Dynamic Search Ads	**Hone efforts to expand coverage on highly profitable products or priority categories, and bid differently based on custom labels you create, with page feed Dynamic Search Ads.**
Shared Budgets	Reduce the risk of campaigns pausing during peak shopping by automatically redistributing unused budget to top performers with Shared Budgets.
In-market Audiences	**Save time and target customers ready to buy across the Microsoft Audience Network with In-market Audiences.**

Callout Extensions	Highlight competitive offers, top features of your business, and value propositions. Expanding your ads could increase your click-through rate.
Ad customizers and Target Audience ID	Improve ad effectiveness to provide better deals to audiences built pre-Cyber Week, and those already looking for your products or service.
Remarketing	**Reconnect with visitors that leave your website and remember to provide a compelling offer to drive conversions.**

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It's a marathon not a sprint

Convert last-minute shoppers by making in-store and digital shopping complementary

[Local Inventory Ads](#)

[Location Extensions](#)

Reach those who prefer to buy online and pick up in-store (BOPIS) by promoting products available in nearby stores; provide the exact store location; share in-store pickup availability with the BOPIS badge.

Be direct

[Action Extensions](#)

Drive customers to click through clear calls to action. Encourage engagement through direct messages, such as "Download" or "Reserve."

[Countdown Customisers](#)

Use countdown customisers to ensure your customers know when shipping promotions end.

[Callout Extensions](#)

Highlight top features of your business, such as free shipping dates.

Optimise based on learnings gleaned from earlier in the season

[Ad Customisers](#)

Reduce setup time and improve ad quality with ad customisers. Let us do the heavy lifting. Provide just one ad copy, and hundreds of customized ad variations will be created to test across audiences.

[Shared Budgets](#)

Redistribute unused budget to top campaigns, increase your chances of getting more clicks, and ensure high-performing campaigns don't pause.

[Microsoft Audience Ads Product Audiences](#)

Boost clicks and conversions outside search and remarket to those who viewed or added specific products to their carts.

[Device Targeting](#)
[Location Targeting](#)

Target your best customers on any device and advertise where your best customers are.

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Festive season retail best practices

Be there ahead of time

- Review previous campaigns for successes and lessons learned.

- Set budgets to accommodate increases in traffic.

- Upload campaigns early.

- Double-check to make sure all relevant accounts and campaigns are active.

- Follow up on any rejected ads.

- Add new, relevant and emerging keywords.

- Test new features and pilots to optimize before traffic volumes increase with peak season.

Find approaches for a better ROI

- Test In-market Audiences directly and indirectly related to your industry.

- Budget for PC/tablet and mobile traffic.

- Plan your budgets for periods of high CPC.

- Opt in to search partner sites to expand your mobile reach.

- Use long-tail brand terms.

Optimise keywords, ads and bids

- Set up the relevant ad extensions to drive more traffic.

- Test new ad copy variations.

- Set bids in anticipation of increased competition during the seasonal peaks.

- Apply auto-bidding strategies to take advantage of key audiences.

- Set up automated rules to schedule and automate your top campaign management tasks on a weekly, or even daily, basis for invaluable time savings and efficiency gains.

- Optimise your keywords and ads by testing Dynamic Search Ads and Responsive Search Ads.

Optimise Shopping Campaigns

- Refresh your product feed daily.

- Send your full product feed with all product offers. Search query trends can change quickly, so ensure your products are eligible to serve as traffic fluctuates.

- Go beyond the required attributes and populate your feed with as many recommended attributes as possible, including GTIN, MPN, brand, size, color, shipping cost, and multiple images (up to 10 additional).

- Use Local Inventory Ads to promote in-store products and include the Curbside Pickup badge, if applicable.

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Ready to learn more?

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Or sign up for our virtual bootcamps
Learn more >>

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