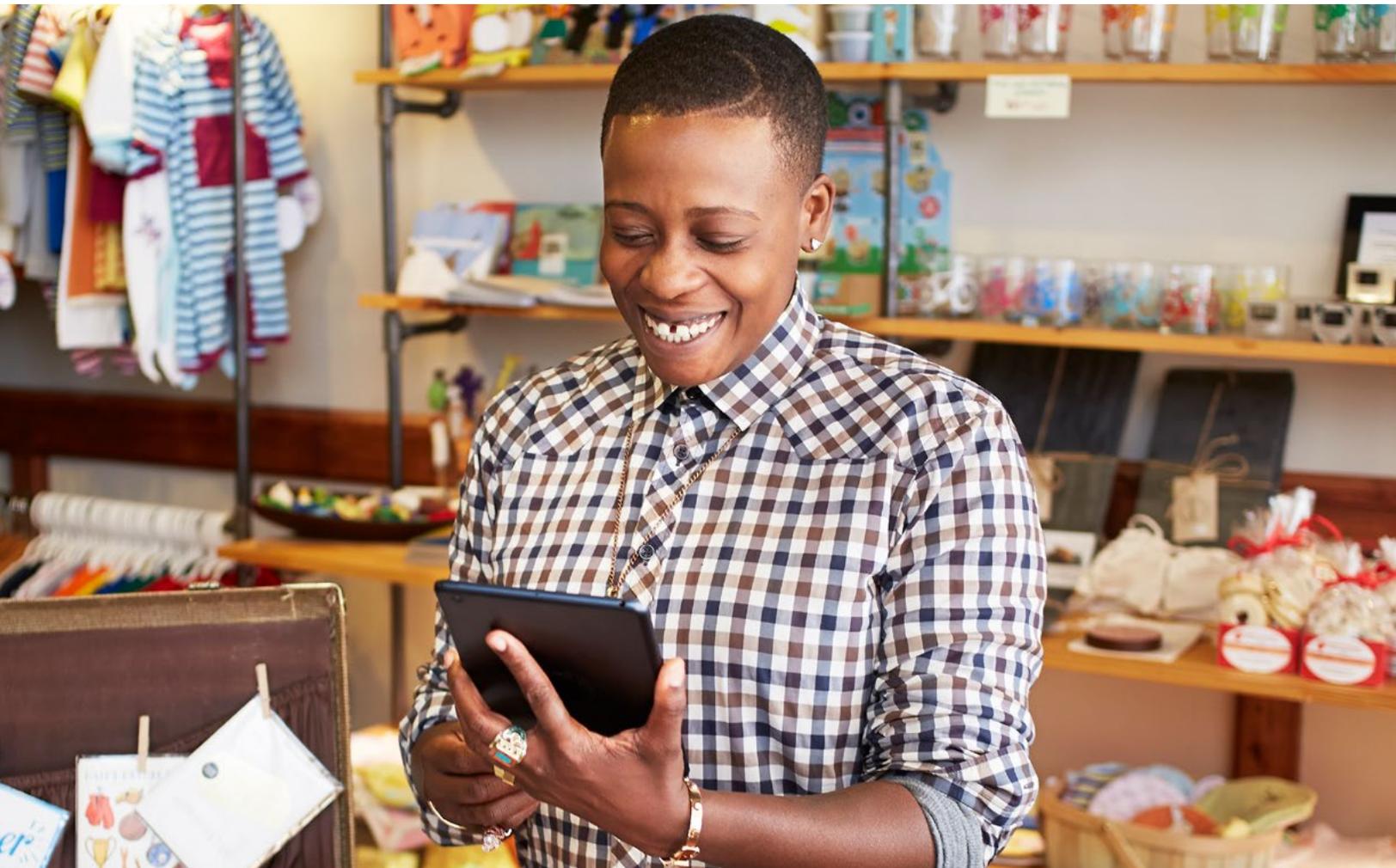# Using Ad Tech to Drive Holiday 2019 Marketing Success

Smart advertisers are holding planning conversations earlier, long before summer ends, with the goal of capturing consumers who are already researching their holiday purchases. By anticipating your customers' needs and creating brand and product awareness before demand increases, you'll ensure that they know your brand when peak sales season hits.

Capitalizing on the shorter holiday shopping window will require a sound strategy and ample planning. Determining media mix, budgeting for each channel, strategizing promotion, and preparing for an influx of orders and site traffic will be essential, as will using the right technology to execute. As the holiday season rapidly approaches, we've assembled a few recommendations for making the most of the technology and automation available to you.

There are six fewer shopping days this season.[1]
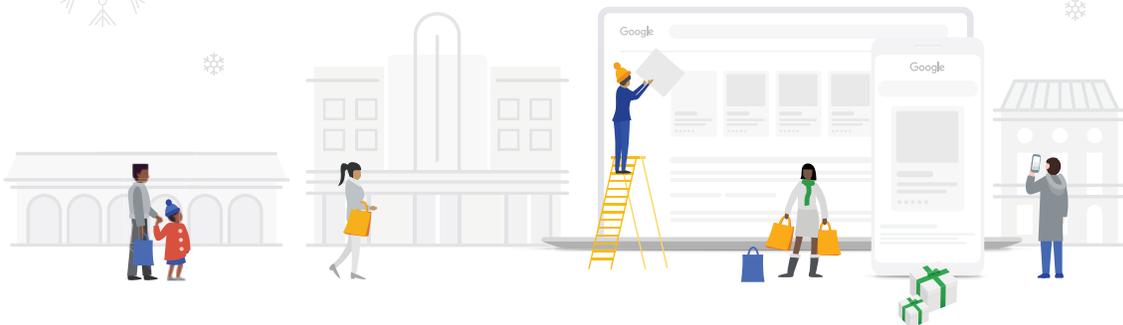
Ad tech has improved, which means data analysis and insights have improved.

With Google Ads, automation and audience offerings have evolved tremendously, now allowing for the use of seasonal bid adjustments and third-party audiences. Make the most of the technology available to you by following three best practices:

- **Connect:** Employ automation to make your day-to-day account management easier so you can focus more on positioning strategy rather than bid and budget changes at scale on a daily basis.

- **Control:** Refresh critical marketing metrics and dashboards frequently, and prioritize integrated technology platforms to help make timely customer connections.

- **Communicate:** After integrating your content management and analytics systems, you'll be able to facilitate reporting and action from all corners of your organization by encouraging a data-driven mindset.

Maintaining good technology and data hygiene will help you more efficiently identify opportunities to optimize investments throughout the season, rather than focusing only on Black Friday or Cyber Monday. The data you collect can also inform your personalization efforts, connecting potential customers with your business and products in a tailored, relevant way.

76% of customers are shopping via three or more channels.[2]

Connect with customers by bridging data and personalization.

The more you understand consumer data, the better you will be able to position your messaging so it's applicable to where your customers are and how they've experienced the brand. Determine and examine their lifetime value, repeat purchase patterns, and average order value (AOV) tiers.

Use ad customizers to tailor your message so consumers will discover your brand wherever and however they're searching. Then make it easy for them to choose you by implementing a variety of custom promotions, or relevant landing page experiences such as gift guides, for each audience segment. It's all about creating a seamless, relevant experience.

- Which would work better, percent discounts or dollar-off pricing? Gauge your audience's readiness to spend and promotion affinity.
- Is free shipping more enticing than two-day shipping? Cater to your audience's urgency to receive their purchase.

Your customers' stage in the shopping journey, along with their activities on your site, indicates how valuable they are and how much you can afford to budget to acquire their order. Google Analytics and your business's customer relationship management (CRM) data can help you create advanced audience segments for remarketing to users to best serve each persona you uncover:

- **Affinity:** their interests and habits
- **Intent:** their research activities
- **Remarketing:** their previous interactions with your business

In other words, you can take what you know about your existing audience and compare that to the broader audience in order to scale your strategy.

Other great personalization tools are Hotjar, which combines analysis and feedback (via self-selection quizzes and heat mapping) to recommend ways to customize your landing page and pair audiences with products; Liveramp, which segments data sets and offers workflow solutions to help you improve match rates and activate your data; and Adalysis, which monitors and clarifies the statistical significance of your ad copy and overall account health.

To sum up, the greatest benefit of digital is that it empowers you to capture and leverage user data to personalize your message and engage with your customers to build brand loyalty. In order to activate that benefit, you need an omnichannel approach.

59% of consumers expect shipping and billing information to be remembered.[3]

58% of consumers want promotions based on purchase history.[4]

Make video part of your omnichannel approach.

Even if they end up at a physical cash register, consumers are using every channel at their disposal, from web research to video to apps, to first find out what they want. Video is particularly effective in driving brand awareness and consideration: 44% of customers watched an online video ahead of their in-store visits.[5]

Video is a phenomenal way to build brand awareness and tell your brand's story. Some products are best explained via video. If you have a unique offering with no direct alternatives and it's not readily apparent how to use your product, that's a key indicator that a video strategy is called for. Additionally, if your brand has a **bigger story** than its product, a strong mission that it's built around, then video can keep that message from getting lost.

- **Make sure your brand is audible and visible** within the first three to five seconds of the video.

- If people are in the video, ensure they **appear within milliseconds** of start to capture viewers' attention.

- **Ensure video colors** are unique to your brand.

- **Use specific calls to action** that reinforce the purpose of video. For example, a "learn more" call to action is well-suited for a brand-heavy video, while a "start your trial" CTA can help you gain sign-ups.

- Use Google Display & Video 360 to **run video, measure across channels**, and directly compare results with other campaign types to shift budgets and remove or add video.

Next, we'll drill down to another influence that is rapidly transforming the way people shop, especially going into the holidays: mobile.

81%

of consumers searched, 76% visited a website or app, and 44% watched an online video ahead of in-store visits.[5]

Leverage the increase in mobile shopping.

Customers are increasingly doing product research on their phones, even inside brick-and-mortar stores. Not only are they learning about product features and doing comparison shopping, but they are also purchasing on their phones and picking up in store. To be successful, retailers need to compete for presence, which is made more difficult by the increase in ads within mobile search results.

Brands also need to understand their customers in a comprehensive way: Are they researching features, doing in-store price comparison, or just looking for directions to a store? Retailers' mobile sites become central to the shopper experience, so load times should be fast, and it should only take a few taps to make a purchase. Below are three ways to create an engaging mobile shopping experience.

- Provide **localized information** like directions and phone numbers for local stores. Interactions with that information are great secondary KPIs and provide insights about what your customers want.

- Create a different phone number for each of your targeted campaigns, and use a **call tracking solution** to see what's happening beyond the digital experience. Track call locations, inquiries, and sales down to a campaign or keyword level to optimize your program.

- Build complementary channel strategies in order to **track cross-device activity**. If you've successfully bridged in-app checkout with your on-site checkout numbers, the next step is to ensure that the data is being passed between the platforms to give you full visibility.

Use Google Ads to learn how your advertising performs in terms of click-assisted and impression-assisted conversions. How do your core campaigns drive awareness leading into the holiday season?

61% of online purchases were made via mobile, +27% YoY.[6]

60% of consumers shopped via a mobile app.[7]

Technology and data will power your 2019 holiday season. Take the opportunity to embrace advanced ad tech tools to accelerate your business. The power to make data the foundation of everything you do is at your fingertips. We encourage you to enhance your predictive decision making, from marketing to pricing to merchandising to personalizing and more, by tapping into your own and Google's data. Ultimately, it's about transforming and optimizing your operations and workforce with the tools and technology that can help you scale and function more effectively.

For more holiday audience insights and strategy, download our 2019 Holiday Shopping Predictions and Behaviors report.

Sources:

1. Emarketer, US 2018 Holiday Season Review and 2019 Preview, February 2019

2. Google/Ipsos, U.S., Omnichannel Holiday Study, Nov. 2017–Jan. 2018, Holiday shoppers 18+ who shopped in previous 48 hrs, n=5944

3. Google/Ipsos, Shopping Tracker Study, Jan-Dec 2018, U.S., n=11,191 Americans 18+ who conducted shopping activities in past 48 hours

4. Google/Ipsos, Shopping Tracker Study, Jan-Dec 2018, U.S., n=11,191 Americans 18+ who conducted shopping activities in past 48 hours

5. Google/Ipsos, U.S., Omnichannel Holiday Study

6. Google/Ipsos, Omnichannel Holiday Study, November 2018 – January 2019, US, n=5,543 online Americans 18+ who shopped in the past two days. [Occasional: Holiday Shopping Occasions for Shoppers Who Have Conducted Activity in P48H and Made an Online Purchase (n= 3918)]

7. Google/Ipsos, Omnichannel Holiday Study, November 2018 – January 2019, US, n=5,543 online Americans 18+ who shopped in the past two days

About Tinuiti

Company info:

142 West 36th Street, Floor 11
New York, NY 10018
www.tinuiti.com

email:
hello@tinuiti.com

Tinuiti is the new name for Elite SEM and its recently acquired agencies CPC Strategy, Email Aptitude, and OrionCKB. Tinuiti is a performance- and data-driven digital marketing leader that helps clients identify, acquire, and engage customers across the digital media ecosystem, while its post-click solutions retain and reactivate consumers as they continue their digital journey. With expertise in Search, Social, Amazon and Marketplaces, Mobile Apps, Email Marketing, and more, every solution is built on best-in-class data and analytics, brought to life by brilliant creative execution and powered by exceptional strategists. Clients include Bombas, BB&T, Eddie Bauer, Ethan Allen, Etsy, Jet.com, Rite Aid, Seventh Generation, The Honest Company, Tommy Bahama, Terminix, and Vitamin Shoppe.

Tinuiti has won several prestigious industry awards and accolades for both culture and performance, including recognition as number one on *Ad Age*'s Best Places to Work and taking home both Top Boss and Employer of the Year at the Digiday Worklife Awards. Tinuiti's commitment to people and performance has cemented its position as one of the top digital marketing agencies in North America.

Stats:

30% growth in Tinuiti's search business YoY

33% growth in Media Under Management YoY

50+ client NPS

25% of Tinuiti's revenue from Google is international