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# PPC TRENDS

## 2023



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# PPC TRENDS 2023

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**Lee Bishop**  
Group Head of Digital  
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Click or tap this icon ☰ on the lower right of each page to navigate back to the Table of Contents.

# Contents

<b>Introduction: The Human Side Of PPC</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Editor's Note</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Automation, AI &amp; Machine Learning</b>	<b>10</b>
Embracing Automation: Get Assets And Data In Order	<b>11</b>
Performance Max Indicates The Path Forward For PPC	<b>22</b>
Auto-Generated Assets Are Pushing Boundaries And Automating Creative Work	<b>33</b>
Broad Match Keywords Outperform Other Keyword Types	<b>39</b>
<b>Personal Information &amp; Privacy</b>	<b>43</b>
You Need To Get User Buy-In And Build First-Party Data	<b>44</b>
<b>Change How You Think About Data</b>	<b>52</b>
Vanity Metrics Are Out – Qualified, High-Intent Leads Are The Best Signifier Of Campaign Success	<b>53</b>
GA4 Doesn't Just Change Metrics; It Changes Your Approach To Data	<b>55</b>
Conversion Tracking & Attribution Won't Tell The Whole Story	<b>62</b>
<b>Changing Consumer Trends</b>	<b>71</b>
Use PPC To Supplement All Stages Of The Buyer Journey For Higher ROI & Cheaper CPC	<b>72</b>
Cost Inflation And Competition Will Make ROI More Difficult	<b>74</b>
Economic Factors Will Impact PPC	<b>79</b>
Diversify The Platforms In Your Strategy	<b>82</b>

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# Introduction: The Human Side Of PPC

Every year, we turn to expert contributors and industry professionals to find out what they're concerned about and looking forward to.

This ebook is the result: a collection of responses from PPC experts working in different verticals.

This year, we noticed some clear themes among their insights; look to them when you're building your PPC strategy for 2023.



**Loren Baker**

Founder,  
Search Engine Journal

It will be no surprise that automation and artificial intelligence (AI) dominated conversations about PPC this year.

Many of the experts we reached out to spend at least some time talking about automation in their responses. But a more prominent common theme is running through this year's responses: focusing on the human element of digital marketing.

Every sale is a human experience – a connection between your business and someone with a want or need.

It's easy to get lost in budgets, performance metrics, and the endless amount of optimization you can do within advertising platforms.

There is, understandably, a lot of anxiety about losing data and control. Many of the levers, and some of the data you rely on to pull them, are changing or going away.

But within change, there are opportunities for new perspectives and better results. Many experts agree that 2023 will be a year to address your mindset and approach. Try not to get lost in the details and focus on what really drives results.

Work with other teams. Focus on humans, their journeys, and their experiences. Provide value at key points in human journeys and let some of the details go.

And now, without further ado, let's see what the experts say about the PPC road ahead.



# Editor's Note

Talking with so many industry experts is one of the highlights of my work.

Putting this project together was a fascinating experience. None of the experts and contributors we spoke with saw each other's responses, but I discovered many complementary insights among them.

Not everyone agrees on the severity of the changes coming in 2023. But many contributors agree that core knowledge of your audience and advertising will take you further than focusing on in-platform data.

For SEO and PPC professionals, the last year has proven that platform-specific data insights are not the same as sustainable insights about your audiences.

I think that's opened up some very interesting conversations. I'm excited to see where these conversations go in 2023.

This year's responses are incisive, insightful, and timely. I hope you'll find them helpful.

A big thank you to all the contributing experts from the SEJ team and me.

All my best,

Ben



**Ben Steele**

Senior Editor, Ebooks,  
Search Engine Journal



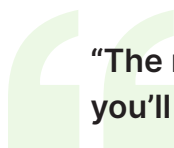
# Automation, AI & Machine Learning

# Embracing Automation: Get Assets And Data In Order

## Key Insights

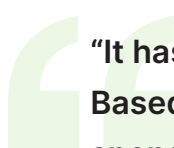
Almost all of the experts we spoke to had something to say about automation. Hyper-focusing on automation, however, can end up leading you in the wrong direction. Use automated tools as an opportunity to put more effort into your assets and your audience.

Aaron Levy, VP of paid search at Tinuiti, writes about gathering audience data and giving search engines more to work with.



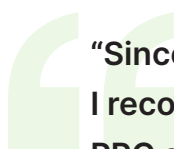
**“The more you can focus on the human side of PPC, the more successful you’ll be.”**

Ben Wood, strategy and advertising director at Hallam, focuses on embracing automation and letting it do its work while you look at the big picture.



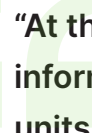
**“It has never been more important to understand advertising theory. Based on your client’s objectives, know how to advise on when and where to spend budgets.”**

Christos Stavropoulos, head of product strategy at BrightBid, writes about staying agile to address economic challenges and platform cost inflation.



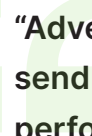
**“Since we see that the year ahead will be equally unpredictable globally, I recommend preparing for the unexpected and working on an adaptable PPC structure.”**

Jonathan Kagan, VP of search at 9RoofTops, writes about gathering data and finding new sources for insights as platforms change.



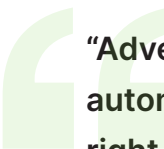
**“At this point, the best thing marketers can do is gather as much documented information as they can. Focus on what is and is not possible with these ad units to find a way to manage the systems and garner actual insights.”**

Melissa Mackey, associate director of paid search at MerkleB2B, writes about the struggles B2B advertisers have with automation performance.



**“Advertisers must consider their business objectives and the signals they send to search engines. The more we tell search engines, the better our performance will be.”**

Sean Johnston, VP of advertising at ClosedLoop, writes about adjusting to more hands-off campaigns.



**“Advertisers and agencies must adapt and determine the right balance of automation and intervention to ensure they reach the right audiences with the right content at the right time.”**



# Aaron Levy

VP Of Paid Search At Tinuiti



## The Decade Of Automation

It's been the year of automation for the last decade.

At this phase, nearly all PPC is automated in some way, shape, or form. Advertisers who lean into automation are seeing significant gains over those who don't. (No, Google didn't pay me to write that).

CPAs (cost per acquisition) are decreasing, ROAS (return on ad spend) is increasing, and ROE (return on effort – my favorite metric) is at an all-time high.

But modern automation (especially Google's Performance Max) is far from perfect. To their credit, Google and Microsoft are self-aware of the shortcomings of modern automation. They're working to make things more efficient, effective, and insightful for advertisers.

### **The importance of keywords continues to diminish.**

Keywords in their current state aren't obsolete, per se, but they are a bit, if you will, retro. They've been revitalized as something different. Broad match is much closer to "intent match." Phrase and exact match are closer to language match but far from what they used to be. I'm fine with it.

Going forward, expect an increased focus on other available inputs. First-party, zero-party, and, to a lesser extent, third-party audience data will be crucial.

The more you can focus on the human side of PPC, the more successful you'll be. You had better get started if your customer data isn't in order now!

### **We will have improved control over “assets” as we advance.**

Search engines are pushing for campaign consolidation to give automation more data to work with. Account consolidation performs well. But, control over messaging (or lack thereof) can leave your brand team wanting more.

I expect we'll have more ability to control the assets we deploy to our responsive search ads. I expect (and hope) we'll be able to manipulate elements of our ads with a specific message to a specific audience.

Personalization will be back in our control, functioning in tandem with machine learning. Work closely with your creative and brand teams to prepare some visual assets. The future of SEM will include much more than words.

### **Providing business data to search engines is already a key differentiator for successful SEM campaigns.**

I expect that search engines will make this much easier. Google and Microsoft aren't naive. They hear your feedback about questionable lead quality, weird matches, or back-end business data that doesn't match the UI. They also know that the best way to grow an advertiser's spend is to help grow their business.

Well, put two and two together; the best way for Google to grow is to make sure spending growth impacts your bottom line!

Getting back-end business data (like closed sales or lifetime value) into the UI has been clunky and unreliable.

This is going to change. There's already been a push from our friends at Google and Microsoft to get more business data in your accounts. That will get even easier as the future goes forward.

When we're all using the same tools (e.g., smart bidding and responsive search ads), differentiating your campaigns becomes even more important. What better way to do so than optimizing the inputs and outputs relative to your business? Control what you can control by getting your house in order will help you put your own spin on the search economy.

# Ben Wood

Strategy And Advertising  
Director At Hallam



## Embrace Automation, Become Essential Advisors

Most of the major changes to how we manage campaigns are related to technological advances that enable greater campaign management automation. Performance Max is the most notable recent example.

This shift toward automation will continue to accelerate in 2023, and with every major announcement related to automation, our industry tends to fall deeper into an existential crisis.

Instead, we should embrace automation and the management efficiencies it brings us as practitioners. Remember that we (humans) are still essential for strategy, planning, and advising our clients on where to invest their advertising budgets.

It has never been more important to understand advertising theory. Based on your client's objectives, know how to advise on when and where to spend budgets. Broaden your knowledge of platforms outside of Google Ads, ensure that you're using the right networks at the right time, and you'll be in a better place to navigate whatever features automation disrupts in the year ahead.



# Christos Stavropoulos

Head Of Product Strategy At BrightBid



## Become A Chameleon

The world of PPC in 2023 continues on the same path but with some unexpected twists.

### **Automation, automation, automation.**

This is definitely not a new trend, but it continues to become more and more important for improving performance, cost efficiency, and keeping up with the competition. Make sure you are automating routine processes but also assisting algorithms and machines with their learning by providing accurate and relevant data for your business objectives.

Google CPC inflation is pressuring marketing, driving up costs, and reducing growth and potential profits for businesses. I believe that automation will be the single biggest lever to pull in marketing in 2023 to negate some of these effects.

### **Artificial intelligence.**

The increasing complexity in the digital customer journey and the recent instability in the global markets are making decision-making and optimization even more complicated for humans.

AI solutions will be more important for advertisers in 2023 and the years to come, especially for identifying and targeting intent, the likelihood of converting, and conversion value prediction.

I believe this will be critical for B2B customers. It will soon be very difficult to compete without a good AI solution that is fed with accurate data across the customer journey.

### **Become a chameleon.**

The sudden changes in almost all aspects of life in recent years have shown that the companies structured in an agile way to quickly adapt – by pivoting offerings, advertising, and communication – are more resilient and successful.

Since we see that the coming period will be equally unpredictable globally, I recommend preparing for the unexpected and working on an adaptable PPC structure.

# Jonathan Kagan

VP Of Search At 9Rooftops



## Document And Adapt Quickly

### **Blind trust in search engines.**

Yes, it makes everyone cringe. But we see more and more migration (largely by force) into this.

Google's Local and Smart shopping is migrating to Performance Max and Bing is rolling out multi-platform Smart Campaigns. The lack of media ad spending and performance transparency is becoming increasingly prevalent.

At this point, the best thing marketers can do is gather as much documented information as they can. Focus on what is and is not possible with these ad units to find a way to manage the systems and garner actual insights. All while accepting that the ability to see the nitty-gritty details like search queries or ad unit placement is going away.

# Melissa Mackey

Associate Director Of Paid Search  
At MerkleB2B



## For B2B, Automation Has A Long Way To Go

As automated campaign types continue to come to the forefront, advertisers must think about their business objectives and the signals they're sending to search engines.

The more we tell search engines, the better our performance will be.

As usual, automation still has a long way to go to be highly effective for B2B advertisers. While broad match and Discovery campaigns perform well, campaign types like Performance Max and features such as Lead Form Assets continue to flounder.

B2B advertisers hold on to the hope that the search engines will continue to refine and understand our needs as we move into 2023 to make these elements work well for us.



# Sean Johnston

VP Of Advertising At ClosedLoop



## Find A Balance Between Automation And Intervention

Platform automation is one trend that I am particularly interested in going into 2023.

Over the past couple of years, Meta and Google have emphasized an increasing number of automated products and best practices. These aim to give their platforms more control over critical elements like creative, placements, and budgets.

Meta's Advantage Plus and Google's Performance Max are two examples of platforms pushing products that let the "algorithms" do most of the work.

The goal is to maximize machine learning and minimize the number of inputs needed to execute successful campaigns. As this becomes the new norm, advertisers and agencies must adapt and determine the right balance of automation and intervention to ensure they reach the right audiences with the right content at the right time.

# Performance Max Indicates The Path Forward For PPC

## Key Insights

Performance max was a hot topic within automation this year. It's one of the biggest developments for PPC on Google's platform and has caused anxiety for many marketers.

The experts recommend embracing new campaign types and spending time on generating meaningful insights instead of manual bidding.

Amy Hebdon, founder and managing director at Paid Search Magic, recommends getting to know customers on a deeper level.

**"How do you switch from "letting the data decide" to meaningful customer insights? Work closely with your team. Get clear on your unique differentiators and value propositions, and lean into them in your ads, extensions, and landing pages."**


Andrea Atzori, co-founder and director at Ambire, writes about embracing the potential of campaigns that can reach across multiple platforms.

**"The way forward is a multi-channel, integrated approach. It's something we have been longing for a while and is now conveniently available to all within Google Ads."**

Ashwin Balakrishnan, senior marketing manager at Optmyzr, advises marketers to roll with the changes and embrace automated campaigns.

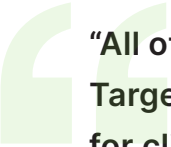
**"The gulf between those who use automation and those who continue to resist will become even more pronounced in 2023."**

Laurel Teuscher, VP services at Stryde.com, warns that you can't get all the information from individual platforms and focuses on new systems and data.



**"Marketers and businesses need to improve by diving into the data from multiple sources. Ad platforms don't tell the whole story about a customer's journey."**

Timothy Jensen, senior search engine marketing specialist at M&T Bank, writes about new bidding strategies and the importance of conversion tracking data.



**"All of us need to learn to work with bid strategies such as Max Conversions, Target CPA, and Target ROAS bidding as opposed to manually bidding for clicks."**

# Amy Hebdon

Founder And Managing Director  
At Paid Search Magic



## From Campaign Optimization To True Audience Insights

**Audience insights come from outside PPC interfaces.**

To drive better results in 2023, paid search marketers will need to know who their customers are on a deeper level.

In the early days of PPC, you could get away with not knowing much about your audience because the levers we had for optimization were just so good. You could be successful just by making adjustments within the interface.

As those controls and transparency go away, the best defense is a good offense. Messaging and offers crafted specifically for your audience will drastically outperform a “guess and check” approach.

**Be guided by meaningful customer insights.**

How do you switch from “letting the data decide” to meaningful customer insights?

- Work closely with your team.
- Get clear on your unique differentiators and value propositions, and lean into them in your ads, extensions, and landing pages.
- Get familiar with conversion copywriting and user experience so you can make strong recommendations for improving down-funnel interactions.

And always put your visitors' needs ahead of technical tweaks and optimization.

Remember, Google doesn't buy from you. Prospects do. But only if you give them what they need to say "yes" to your offer.

# Andrea Atzori

Co-Founder And Director At Ambire



## Embrace Performance Max Innovations

**Performance Max is a glimpse of PPC's future.**

This year has been a big one for innovation in the PPC industry. We have seen the emergence of Performance Max, the return of partnerships, and the rise of automation.

As significant industry changes continue, automation, AI, and machine learning spearhead the innovation.

For example, Performance Max campaigns are a true revolution, and a clear indication of the path PPC will take in the coming months.

Performance Max allows us to focus on the users across multiple platforms and keep a sustained engagement with them through multiple touch points. That is opposed to the traditional and siloed way it relies just on interacting when people are searching, or showing them a banner ad while they are browsing, etc.

**The way forward is a multi-channel, integrated approach.**

It's something we have been longing for, and now, it's conveniently available to all within Google Ads.

For sure, we are still in the infancy of this new way of running performance campaigns, and there are big opportunities and room for improvement. Still, a convenient and scalable solution like this has never been available before.



# Ashwin Balakrishnan

Senior Marketing Manager  
At Optmyzr



## Don't Wait To Get On Board

At this point, it's been proven beyond a doubt that PPC automation with oversight improves the performance of both campaigns and human marketers.

The gulf between those who use automation and those who continue to resist will become even more pronounced in 2023. I don't want to say there will be no way back for the latter, but it's going to be orders of magnitude more difficult the longer they wait.

### **Cooperate with other teams and integrate your strategies.**

We're also going to see better cohesion between PPC teams/agencies and the teams that run other parts of the marketing program, particularly SEO and demand generation.

Gone are the days when you could say, "it's not my problem," and just continue to pull PPC levers. The margin for error is already small and will continue to shrink. Smart PPC pros already know how vital on-page experience is to conversion rate optimization, and I think more people will start to come around.

**Performance Max will likely be much stronger by the end of 2023.**

Google's machine learning is growing at a phenomenal rate, and sadly the early adopters of Performance Max are the guinea pigs who will feed those algorithms with enough data to make better decisions in the future.

People complain about its shortcomings, and rightly so, but most of those issues should be minimized by the end of next year, possibly even with a bit more control (like campaign-level negative keywords).

# Laurel Teuscher

VP Services At Stryde.com



## Performance Max Outperforms Other Campaigns

### **Social media advertising is on the decline.**

Many of our clients and other businesses are looking to shift advertising budgets away from social media in 2023. The tracking capabilities, reporting, and overall performance has declined over the past year.

For businesses looking for an immediate return on their investment, social media doesn't perform like it used to.

More budget is being moved to spend on Google Performance Max campaigns because it's yielding better results. Transitioning from Smart Shopping to Performance Max has increased ROAS for many businesses.

For now, businesses are riding the campaign to generate more revenue. This campaign type is expanding the advertising ability on Google platforms to be more visual and try new creative.

### **Learn to work with new systems and data.**

Gone are the days of only being able to use the product feed in Google Merchant Center. Marketers can upload images and videos to be used across multiple Google-

owned channels and find audiences who are ready to make a purchase. The flexibility to test out different creative will require some learning and adjustments.

An area where marketers and businesses need to improve is by diving into the data from multiple sources. Ad platforms don't tell the whole story about a customer's journey.

The difference between the cost per click and cost per landing page view may mean that the landing page loads slowly and needs to be improved. Learn to use your website analytics platform and combine that with your analysis within the ad platform to understand better how ads perform.

# Timothy Jensen

Senior Search Engine Marketing  
Specialist At M&T Bank



## Learn New Types Of Bidding

Automation is here to stay, and search marketers need to be willing to adapt. Google's heavy push toward Performance Max over the past year, along with other campaign types like Discovery that only allow automated bidding, hint at trends in the bid strategies we'll be able to choose from. The shift to RSAs has moved us away from manual copy testing and trusting machines to test copy.

Most of us have likely delved into some level of automated bidding, but we all need to learn to work with bid strategies such as Max Conversions, Target CPA, and Target ROAS bidding instead of manually bidding for clicks.

Along the same line, a comprehensive, accurate flow of conversion data is essential to make automated bid strategies work. Tracking conversions throughout the sales process, with values correlated to each stage, is key. Even those outside of ecommerce should be experimenting with value-based bidding at whatever level they're able to nail down data.

In addition, keyword match types have become all the fuzzier, and carefully segmented strict exact/phrase match ad groups don't work the way they did in the past. Campaign and ad group structure should become more focused around broad, general themes, allowing for more data and for bid automation to work with RSAs – and determine what text combos perform best.

# Auto-Generated Assets Are Pushing Boundaries And Automating Creative Work

## Key Insights

Not all of the experts we talked to agree about the exact implications of automated assets and how much creative work will be automated in the future.

Amalia Fowler, Principal Strategist At Good AF Consulting, writes that automated assets give you more time to focus on strategy and creative tasks. She also expects SEO and PPC to grow closer together as site assets become more important.

**“Differentiation in success will start from how we develop our processes and people. You want to focus on automating repetitive tasks, leaving room for your team to focus on strategic thinking and learning, because the changes aren’t going to slow in 2023!”**

Jonathan Befort, digital advertising manager at ClosedLoop, writes that automation may come to the entire process in the future, making PPC campaigns completely hands-off.

**“ACA is about creating a campaign, including keyword selection, location targeting, graphics creation, and more, from beginning to end, without the necessary cog of a trained, experienced digital marketer.”**

Jon Lee Clark, managing partner at Moving Traffic Media, sees AI-generated creative assets becoming more common.

**“We already see AI-generated voiceovers in video advertising, and Google’s urging of Ad account managers to adopt more and more automated features will increase.”**

# Amalia Fowler

Principal Strategist At  
Good AF Consulting



## Dynamic Asset Automation Will Push PPC And SEO Closer Together

**Google's automation will continue to dictate the trends in 2023.**

We've seen inklings of a shift in how search terms are treated over the past few years, but those of us in PPC who haven't expanded our knowledge base beyond our specialty will want to start paying attention to SEO, CRO, Analytics, and more. We especially want to start paying attention to user experience on the site.

While SEO and PPC have always been adjacent and always overlapped in the realm of user experience, that overlap is going to become more prominent. Google is already dynamically writing ads with our site content, which means, in turn, we need to work with the people who manage our sites!

**So in 2023, work with your SEO teams and your web teams.**

Work together to share information and content. Build a site experience that Google can pull from to create automated assets. There's only so much we can do on the platform to influence results.



Additionally, as we all have access to the same platforms and automations, differentiation in success will start from how we develop our processes and our people. You want to focus on automating repetitive tasks, leaving room for your team to focus on strategic thinking and learning, because the changes aren't going to slow in 2023!

Building a marketing team that complements each other, works together, and is built around skill gaps instead of culture fit will set you apart from the competition.

# Jonathan Befort

Digital Advertising Manager  
At ClosedLoop



## End-To-End Automation Is Coming

### **More Google control, again.**

I know it has been said practically every year for nearly a decade, but Google campaign management is, again, becoming more automated.

From the forced utilization of Responsive Text Ads to the introduction of Automatically Created Assets (ACA), Google is not slowing down its march towards near total automation of all advertising on Google-controlled networks. In fact, ACA looks like a true pivot point.

Nearly all Google Automations up to this point were built on the backs of things we can't do. We can't pour through thousands of data points to determine an auction bid in real-time; we can't realistically test 15 headlines for every ad we create, so bid automation and RSAs make perfect sense.

### **A new step in automation.**

But ACA is about creating a campaign, including keyword selection, location targeting, graphics creation, and more, from beginning to end, without the necessary cog of a

trained, experienced digital marketer. Those are all things that a human can do. They are also things we thought a computer couldn't.

You might think I am being an alarmist because Google claims that ACA only helps with headlines and descriptions. I would say you're right, for now. However, its own previous actions would say it's just a matter of time before Google does it all, with nothing needed more than access to your client's website.

# Jon Lee Clark

Managing Partner At Moving  
Traffic Media



## We're Pushing The Boundaries Of What We Thought AI Could Do

**Artificial intelligence and machine learning will continue to change PPC.**

How PPC marketers understand and use AI will also continue to change.

It's no longer just about optimizing your budget, bids, and audiences. I expect to see this evolve even more into the creation of ad creative and creative optimization.

This will likely expand beyond text ads and ad extensions. We already see AI-generated voiceovers in video advertising, and Google's urging of Ad account managers to adopt more and more automated features will increase.

# Broad Match Keywords Outperform Other Keyword Types

## Key Insights

Keyword performance is changing. Many PPC professionals noticed that match types like exact match underperform compared to broad match. Broad match keywords seem to be the standard moving forward. This match type is getting a lot of support and driving better results.

Brooke Osmundson, leader of digital marketing at Smith Micro Software, writes that some marketers may look to find more control in the ever-expanding automation landscape. Broad match performs well, but transparency is an issue she notices.

**“Pure broad keywords are now being used more widely and have performed quite well compared to prior years. But to control more aspects of broad match and the limited transparency in Google’s automated bidding algorithms, expect to see manual CPC come into play for more advertisers.”**

Melissa Mackey, associate director of paid search at MerkleB2B, focuses on the significant updates to broad match keywords in the last few years and notes that keywords of all types have changed. Marketers may need to look beyond keywords.

**“Broad match, when used with audiences and smart bidding, often outperforms other match types, even exact match. That’s because the way broad match works today is totally different from how it worked even two-to-three years ago.”**

# Brooke Osmundson

Leader Of Digital Marketing  
At Smith Micro Software



## A Broad Match Focus And Limited Data Frustrate Some Marketers

**With increased automation and limited transparency, many marketers may go back to basics in PPC.**

Broad match keywords and manual CPC bidding used to be considered sins in PPC marketing as little as three-to-four years ago.

In some ways, Google's push for automation has become inevitable. For example, Performance Max has now taken over as Smart Shopping and has been met with very mixed results – primarily for B2B.

**When automated campaigns don't perform as well as expected, marketers may resist their adoption.**

Additionally, Google has been providing marketers with fewer data every year, specifically around search terms and how conversions are prioritized in accounts. This has made it hard for marketers to understand what is working for them and left them battling low-quality leads.

To top it off, Google has prioritized broad keywords instead of exact and phrase match by providing more machine learning signals to broad match types.

With these changes, marketers are looking to take back some control. Pure broad keywords are now being used more widely and have performed quite well compared to prior years.

But to control more aspects of broad match and the limited transparency in Google's automated bidding algorithms, expect to see manual CPC come into play for more advertisers.



# Melissa Mackey

Associate Director Of Paid Search  
At MerkleB2B



## Keywords No Longer Act The Way They Used To

**2023 will be the year that search engine marketers need to finally move their focus beyond the keyword and think about signals.**

Over the last several years, the increased proliferation of automation has brought us to a place where keywords no longer act as they used to. While 2023 will not be the end of the keyword as we know it, the old rules about match types no longer apply.

For example, when used with audiences and smart bidding, broad match often outperforms other match types, even exact match. That's because the way broad match works today is totally different from how it worked even two-to-three years ago.

**Broad match keywords have more support and use more data.**

Google broad match looks at signals, including keywords, audiences, bid strategies, landing pages, previous searches, and predicted performance.

Exact and phrase match keywords don't use all the same signals, which means that, sometimes, these previously stalwart match types may underperform compared to broad match.



# Personal Information & Privacy

# You Need To Get User Buy-In And Build First-Party Data

By **Gustav Westman, Founder and CEO**

Sponsored By  **BrightBid**

Privacy in Europe, Brazil, some U.S. states, and other parts of the world is becoming increasingly important in 2023, especially as it transitions into a global norm.

Before, first-party data and its permissions were just an important element in PPC strategies – now, it is becoming a requirement for all advertisers, especially B2B.

In 2023, we'll lose access to more and more third-party data; your marketing team will need a robust first-party data solution. It will be vital to capture, enrich, connect, and successfully use first-party data for targeting, optimization, and customer journey personalization.

Pairing relevance and content quality to conversion is key to building PPC audiences in 2023.

Start by providing valuable, truly interesting content. With this tactic, you can begin to build your marketable first-party database simply by motivating your website visitors to provide their information directly into your CRM.

Then, use your CRM to track and connect directly to PPC platforms to streamline a robust privacy-first data approach. For example, Salesforce and Hubspot integrates directly into Google Ads accounts.

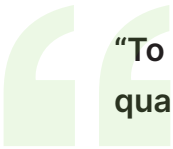
Finally, instead of using outdated leads and MQLs (Marketing Qualified Leads), you can consider leveraging AI to automatically predict a prospect's value based on intent prediction and buyer funnel location logic. This can help create a massive, automated boost to return on advertising spend (ROAS) on PPC campaigns.

By focusing on the shopper, their needs, and their positions in your sales funnel, you can streamline your first-party data-backed PPC campaigns with privacy in mind.

## Key Insights

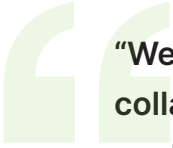
Changes due to privacy regulations will cause a lot of disruption for advertisers. The fundamental strategies for gathering data about your audiences are going to change. Learn different forms of attribution and get active buy-in from users.

Alex Macura, founder of Your Digital Assembly, writes that preparing to shift to first-party data models now is key to success and campaign longevity.



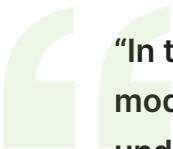
**“To collect first-party data successfully, you must inspire audiences to take quality engagement actions with your clients.”**

Andrea Atzori, co-founder and director at Ambire, advises that changes in how advertisers collect data will require creative solutions and collaboration.



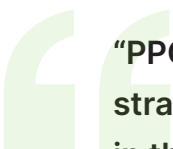
**“We are seeing a strong return of the importance of partnerships and collaborations between brands and advertisers. The big difference from the past is that now all of this is happening in a very transparent way, and these partnerships are ultimately meant to bring real value to the users.”**

Ben Wood, strategy and advertising director at Hallam, writes that marketers need to adjust their thinking about attribution and focus on business impact over specific metrics.



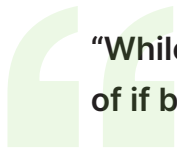
**“In the year ahead, we need to get more comfortable with the concept of modeling rather than absolute attribution, which is the methodology underpinning GA4.”**

Brooke Osmundson, leader of digital marketing at Smith Micro Software, warns that privacy regulation will continue to favor users, and strategies based on old data collection techniques will lose their impact.



**“PPC marketers need to keep first-party data at the forefront of their marketing strategy, or they may be left behind, dealing with more inefficient marketing in the future.”**

Ilya Cherepakhin, enterprise consulting lead at Media.Monks, writes that advertisers can look to updates in other Google services to see what might be coming next to paid search.



**“While Google’s cookie depreciation continues to be delayed, it is not a matter of if but only when it does happen.”**

# Alex Macura

Founder Of Your Digital Assembly



## Third-Party Cookies Will Bow Out While First-Party Data Takes Center Stage

Despite Google's delay in exiting third-party cookies, it is clearer than ever that these will disappear, and first-party data will become the marketer's bread and butter.

**So, start investing in first-party data now.**

While programmatic marketing uses third-party data to help segment your audience, when this comes to an end, you can harvest first-party data from many channels.

While programmatic marketing uses third-party data to help segment your audience, when this comes to an end, you can harvest first-party data from many channels.

Use a customer data platform (CDP) to collect all the data available about your customers and collate it into a single database for use by your marketing systems. To collect first-party data successfully, you need to inspire audiences to take quality engagement actions with your clients.

Consider growing email subscriptions from your website or old-school business cards exchanged at a business lunch. Also, try ebooks, free online events, and downloadables to grow your first-party database.

# Andrea Atzori

Co-Founder And Director  
At Ambire



## Privacy Regulation Will Require Creative Advertising Solutions

**Another emerging trend is the resurgence of partnerships.**

With the tightening of rules and regulations related to personal information and privacy, and the implications regarding technology and tracking, we are seeing a strong return of the importance of partnerships and collaborations between brands and advertisers.

The big difference from the past is that now all of this is happening in a very transparent way, and these partnerships are ultimately meant to bring real value to the users.

For example, think about the collaboration between two giants like IKEA and Lego. If you ask every parent of young children how much of a hassle Lego pieces scattered all over the place can be, most would strongly agree!

Well, IKEA and Lego have come up with a series of clever storage solutions that make both adults and kids happy.

While customers are happy, the advantages for both brands are obvious: great PR, expanded reach, and increased profits.



# Ben Wood

Strategy And Advertising  
Director At Hallam



## We're Amid A Digital Attribution Crisis

Many of us are struggling to prove the value of advertising spend due to the numerous challenges:

- Increased privacy constraints.
- Loss of data associated with Apple's IDFA update.
- The impending deprecation of third-party cookies.

This makes measuring the performance of each ad network much more difficult. It will make arguments for investing ad spend in campaigns that aren't typically the 'last-click' before purchase (e.g., paid social) even more difficult.

### **Don't lose sight of business goals in the quest for attribution.**

The danger is that this will likely lead to over-investment in the networks that are easiest to measure, such as search advertising, rather than those that have the biggest impact on long-term business performance.

### **In the year ahead, we need to get more comfortable with the concept of modeling rather than absolute attribution, which is the methodology underpinning GA4.**

For larger advertisers, measurement solutions that can assess the business impact of advertising spend, such as media mix modeling, will become more common as we explore alternative data sources to those that rely on third-party cookies.

# Brooke Osmundson

Leader Of Digital Marketing  
At Smith Micro Software



## First-Party Data Will Be A Necessity In PPC Strategy

**The rules and regulations of user privacy continue to evolve in favor of users.**

While first-party data has been talked about in previous years, it's time to create a strategy for how to capture the data and use it.

Google's approach to user privacy puts users in larger cohorts, which may make new acquisition targeting harder and less reliable than before.

PPC marketers need to keep first-party data at the forefront of their marketing strategy, or they may be left behind, dealing with more inefficient marketing in the future.

# Ilya Cherepakhin

Enterprise Consulting Lead  
At Media.Monks



## Watch Programmatic Advertising Innovations

**I would expect ongoing strides and innovation in the area of privacy.**

While Google's cookie depreciation continues to be delayed, it is not a matter of if but only when it does happen.

As much as most of the recent steps – like Google's new [Publisher Advertiser Identity Reconciliation, or PAIR](#) – have been mostly in the areas of programmatic advertising, paid search is a “close cousin” and will likely benefit from similar technology innovation.



**Change How You Think  
About Data**

# Vanity Metrics Are Out – Qualified, High-Intent Leads Are The Best Signifier Of Campaign Success

By Marisa Timko, Content Marketing Manager

Sponsored By **CallRail**

Most of your clients know that impressions and click-throughs from PPC ads aren't what pay the bills.

While marketing professionals can draw valuable insights from impressions and clicks, the only metrics that matter to clients are **qualified leads that convert into customers**.

If your business can't currently prove whether your campaigns are driving high-intent leads, your clients may see you as reporting on vanity metrics – and rightfully so.

Instead, when it comes to proving ROI on ads, be sure you're tracking and reporting actionable data such as:

- Number of conversions from calls.
- Number of conversions from form submissions.
- Exact keywords that drove conversions.
- Exact marketing tactics that drove a caller to reach out.
- CTA conversion rates.
- Lead quality.

Actionable insights like these tell agencies what they need to know to optimize and iterate on clients' individual PPC campaigns. In the end, your client gets a truly successful campaign, and you look like the trustworthy agency that got them there.

Having the right marketing analytics tools in place, such as Dynamic Number Insertion (DNI), ensures your agency gets the credit it deserves. When next month's reporting call rolls around, share lead quality and conversion data – which is far more important to your client's bottom line than impressions and clicks.

# GA4 Doesn't Just Change Metrics; It Changes Your Approach To Data

## Key Insights

Marketers need to be agile adjust to changes in the PPC landscape – not just in their approach but in their thinking. The experts we talked to agree that leaning into new data models and focusing on the real-world quality of user interactions will be critical paths forward.

Ilya Cherepakhin, enterprise consulting lead at Media.Monks, writes that the event-based systems in GA4 will force marketers to rethink how they track performance.

**“The new event-based model of GA4 is fundamentally different from the session and cookie-based methodology used until now. Paid search marketers will need to rethink what KPIs to use and how to configure them to optimize paid search efforts more meaningfully, moving forward.”**

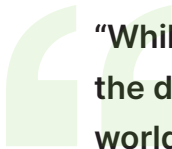
Jonathan Befort, digital advertising manager at ClosedLoop, advises that marketers will need to adopt a new language for expressing and tracking their goals.

**“GA4 is completely redesigned so that your data is centered around important events and will require us to start thinking more about quality than quantity and increasing positive metrics instead of decreasing negatives.”**

Lisa Raehsler, founder and SEM strategy consultant at Big Click Co., warns that platform upgrade will create interruptions that marketers should prepare for.

**“The upgrade to GA4 will cause confusion and dread among advertisers who may face interruptions in data and campaign performance from otherwise smooth-sailing ad campaigns. Smart advertisers will stay ahead of the situation to avoid a last-minute scramble to update.”**

Navah Hopkins, CEO at Navah Hopkins Consulting LLC, sees a silver lining in losing access to data that wasn't truly driving campaign performance.



**“While we might not get as much granular data and vanity metrics, we do get the data that matters, and the tools at our disposal empower a focus on real-world ROI. Achieving that ROI means spending more time on buyer personas and distilling down the audiences they relate to.”**



# Ilya Cherepakhin

Enterprise Consulting Lead At  
Media.Monks



## GA4 Introduces A Different Methodology

As search engine marketing is closely connected to Google Analytics, paid search professionals should expect a noticeable impact from the launch of GA4.

**This update represents a substantial shift, not a refinement or an enhancement like prior updates.**

The new event-based model of GA4 is fundamentally different from the session and cookie-based methodology used until now. Paid search marketers will need to rethink what KPIs to use and how to configure them to optimize paid search efforts more meaningfully, moving forward.

This is especially important for organizations where Google Analytics is used as an enterprise solution, with other disciplines also using Google Analytics to report on their efforts beyond paid and natural search.

# Jonathan Befort

Digital Advertising Manager  
At ClosedLoop



## Thinking In The Language Of GA4

From new definitions for familiar metrics and terms to new metrics and terms, GA4 isn't just a significant update to UA.

**It's a truly different approach to data and measurement.**

GA4 is completely redesigned so that your data are centered around important events. It will require us all to start thinking more about quality than quantity and more about increasing positive metrics instead of decreasing negatives.

Changing from "How do I decrease bounce rate?" to "How do I increase engagement?" might sound like a small change, but it's actually a fundamental shift in how we will need to frame the data we view in GA4, and this will take some getting used to.

# Lisa Raehsler

Founder And SEM Strategy  
Consultant At Big Click Co.



## Migration To New Platforms Can Cause Disruption

The biggest trend predictions for 2023 are coming from platform tech releases, post-pandemic economic shifts, and your magic eight ball.

### **Measurement: Reply hazy, try again.**

With Google Analytics 4 becoming the standard analytics platform, advertisers will be faced with migrating tracking and reporting from the current UA version.

The upgrade to GA4 will cause confusion and dread among advertisers, who may face interruptions in data and campaign performance from otherwise smooth-sailing ad campaigns.

### **Smart advertisers will stay ahead of the situation to avoid a last-minute scramble to update.**

Advertisers who are prepared will also be reevaluating how they value PPC ad programs cross-channel and throughout the awareness, consideration, and action funnel stages.

# Navah Hopkins

CEO At Navah Hopkins  
Consulting LLC



## Business Metrics Will Matter More Than Technical PPC

**This is going to be the year of business metrics and strategies mattering more than technical PPC skills.**

Just consider the innovations from this year:

- Performance Max consolidates marketing channels into a simple asset and audience conversation.
- Conversion values reign supreme over keywords and bids (especially in reporting and budget allocation).
- Conversion tracking evolves to account for primary and secondary conversions, so brands can see the full journey without compromising the integrity of the machine learning.

Marketers empowering the brands they serve to lean into these paths (along with a renewed focus on visual creatives) will see better results than those who cling to “just search.”

Additionally, they'll have an easier time navigating the tracking and data deltas coming from the depreciation of Universal Analytics. By focusing on understanding and tracking first-party sales and leads, marketers will be able to feed accurate information into Google while future-proofing themselves against ad platform data discrepancies.

**While we might not get as much granular data and vanity metrics, we do get the data that matters, and the tools at our disposal empower a focus on real-world ROI.**

Achieving that ROI means spending more time on buyer personas and distilling down the audiences they relate to. Crafting creative for visual-first channels will go much further, using real-world profits to dictate which parts of the business get that effort.

# Conversion Tracking & Attribution Won't Tell The Whole Story

## Key Insights

Many of the experts we talked to expect performance and ROI tracking to become much more complicated. They see it moving out of the realm of easy numbers and into other channels, more nebulous real-world interactions. Difficult-to-measure aspects of lifetime value and lead quality will make reporting messier, but they're opportunities for deep conversations and truer evaluations of marketing efforts.

Akvile DeFazio, president of AKvertise, Inc., sees the nature of retargeting changing as users opt out of tracking and legislation supports their privacy.

**"Retargeting isn't gone, and it's still important to have a strategy in place to recapture people when you can. But we've seen much more success in driving upper funnel sales in 2022 compared to prior years and foresee that continuing into 2023."**

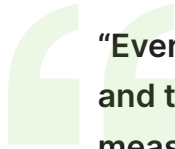
Jason Zotara, founder and managing partner at Ten26 Media, writes about lifecycle advertising and offline conversions as powerful tools for lead generation.

**"Lifecycle advertising is the ability to use digital advertising strategies at all stages of a customer journey. ... It's about moving the client conversation from being all lead-based to a deeper discussion around acquisition/sales."**

Jonathan Befort, digital advertising manager at ClosedLoop, warns that changes in how marketers must collect and use data will make existing issues with attribution clearer.


**"As dirty data begins to make its way up to the C-suite – after years of marketers just barely keeping it "drinkable" with a patchwork of bad fixes, bad integrations, and bad excuses – we are going to be forced to truly tackle this problem."**

Jon Lee Clark, managing partner at Moving Traffic Media, writes that it's going to get more difficult to know whether an ad is working using traditional tracking.



**“Ever since the release of iOS 14, attribution has been getting more difficult, and the gaps have widened. With changes in the way attribution works, measuring effectiveness will be as tricky as ever.”**

Timothy Jensen, senior search engine marketing specialist at M&T Bank, recommends letting go of ROI metrics to avoid hyper-focusing on less helpful data.



**“As conversion tracking becomes messier, we can encourage executives to look at the holistic results from overall marketing dollars vs. the minutia of needing to correlate the exact ROI with each individual channel/campaign.”**

# Akvile DeFazio

President Of AKvertise, Inc.



## Rethinking Retargeting

Retargeting through social media advertising has gotten increasingly more challenging since the 2021 release of iOS 14 and its resulting adverse impacts on Meta Ads.

### **Many users are opting out of tracking.**

It has been more difficult for advertisers to create warmer audiences for retargeting and to exclude other audiences from targeting lower in the funnel. We're accustomed to doing these things with more precision.

Retargeting isn't gone, and it's still important to have a strategy in place to recapture people when you can. But we've seen much more success in driving upper funnel sales in 2022 compared to prior years and foresee that continuing into 2023.

If you or your clients are in ecommerce and have a product catalog, even if it's on the smaller end, set up a catalog sales campaign using dynamic ads for broad audiences – also called DABA – in Meta Ads, targeting cold, broad audiences to optimize for purchases.



By implementing this across all ecommerce accounts, we have seen a significant lift in purchase volume and revenue and, in a number of instances, a higher return on ad spend (ROAS) than retargeting conversion and catalog sales campaigns.

Use your budget more effectively and efficiently by converting people sooner by leveraging the improved algorithm to find people to make purchases from your ads in the new year.

# Jason Zotara

Founder And Managing  
Partner At Ten26 Media



## Expand Your Thinking With Lifecycle Advertising And Offline Conversions

The two main areas of PPC that we are focused on with our lead generation clients are **lifecycle advertising and offline conversions**.

**To me, lifecycle advertising is the ability to use digital advertising strategies at all stages of a customer journey.**

In the past, PPC was primarily used for the journey's last-click (conversion) stage, without much support during the journey's brand awareness or post-lead stages. Rather than relying on email marketing, we've successfully expanded PPC efforts to include more remarketing tactics to improve lead-to-sales conversion rates.

**In short, it's about moving the client conversation from being all lead-based to a deeper discussion around acquisition/sales.**

One significant component of lifecycle advertising is offline conversions, which lets our clients optimize their paid media campaigns based on post-lead stages in their CRM.

For example, if your client uses Salesforce, you can link Salesforce to Google Ads to optimize the campaigns based on Opportunity stages. Having this valuable data available in Google Ads helps us bring in more sales-qualified leads (SQLs) and increases the likelihood of them moving to the acquisition/sales stage of the journey.

# Jonathan Befort

Digital Advertising Manager  
At ClosedLoop



## No One Does Conversion Tracking And Attribution Well

I don't know what else to say other than the state of conversion tracking and attribution – from the smallest companies to the largest agencies and corporations – is abysmal.

**No one does it well.**

As dirty data begins to make its way up to the C-suite – after years of marketers just barely keeping it “drinkable” with a patchwork of bad fixes, bad integrations, and bad excuses – we are going to be forced to truly tackle this problem.

The good news is that, as campaign management becomes increasingly hands-off, marketers will need to find new ways to keep providing value to clients.

**This is the single biggest value, by a mile, that you can offer.**

# Jon Lee Clark

Managing Partner At Moving  
Traffic Media



## Attribution Is Going To Get Even More Complicated

### How do you know if your ad is working?

The answer to this question has always been a little complicated, but it's about to become even more so.

Ever since the release of iOS 14, attribution has been getting more difficult, and the gaps have widened.

With changes in the way attribution works, measuring effectiveness will be as tricky as ever. Google has announced plans for its own “attribution model” that would be separate from third-party solutions like Facebook’s FBX and Twitter’s TAP – and what it means for marketers depends on how many companies follow suit.

But even that has been delayed.

**As a result, increased reliance on first-party data will likely be a point of emphasis for paid search marketers in 2023.**

# Timothy Jensen

Senior Search Engine Marketing  
Specialist At M&T Bank



## Focus On Holistic Results From Overall Marketing Dollars

**As PPC marketers move away from being constant lever-pullers, our focus should be all the more on other aspects of marketing:**

- Messaging.
- Creative.
- Brand strategy.
- The interaction of other channels with paid media.

Within the bounds of what we can control, we can test different creative and copy themes between ads, even in dynamic formats.

We can work with other teams to determine how paid media contributes to consideration during the sales process.

As conversion tracking becomes messier, we can encourage executives to look at the holistic results from overall marketing dollars vs. the minutiae of needing to correlate the exact ROI with each individual channel/campaign.



# Changing Consumer Trends

# Use PPC To Supplement All Stages Of The Buyer Journey For Higher ROI & Cheaper CPC

Sponsored By  rockcontent

Inform, help, and entertain your audience to get better and cheaper conversions at the bottom of the funnel.

2 years ago, Google presented the concept of the [Messy Middle](#) to explain the infinite time any given shopper may fluctuate between becoming aware, researching, and considering a product before making a purchase.



*Image credit, Google:* <https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/consumer-insights/consumer-journey/navigating-purchase-behavior-and-decision-making/>



Chances are, your content marketing team has created nurturing content that helps with the research phase and consideration phase of the shopper journey.

Why not use it to help build brand recognition, authority, and a top-of-mind experience that helps the shopper better tie their needs to your brand as the solution?

Combining Content Marketing with PPC tactics has the power to accelerate the results of your online strategy.

Use PPC to reach your audience not just in the purchase phase, but also while they're still in the exploration or evaluation phase.

People are not usually on the internet to buy something necessarily, but rather to be informed, solve problems or even to be entertained.

So, take advantage of that!

**Connect with your potential buyer at this moment, when your competitor is not even fighting with you on the SERPs. Create great informative articles, valuable free tools to solve their problems and outstanding interactive content experiences to entertain them.**

Using PPC to connect the whole content journey will bring incredible results in the short and long term for your company.

# Cost Inflation And Competition Will Make ROI More Difficult

## Key Insights

While some of the experts we talked to saw reductions in overall campaign costs, others have noticed areas of cost inflation. Which way your costs swing will likely depend on whether you're doing B2B or B2C marketing, the verticals you work in, and how those verticals respond to shifts in the COVID pandemic.

Corey Morris, president of Voltage, has seen advertisers experimenting with different platforms as Google has become more expensive.

**"If you're focused on ROI and ROAS metrics, you may find it harder to spend what you're willing to or scale upwards without eroding the ROAS itself."**

Ilya Cherepakhin, enterprise consulting lead at Media.Monks, writes about a decline in local search and increases in searches for travel and events.

**"No longer limited by location as they were during the last couple of years, consumers will be searching less for services like car rentals or using long-tail keywords with location modifiers."**

Jonathan Kagan, VP of search at 9Rooftops, warns that marketers should price in larger-than-usual growths in costs.

**"When you forecast 2023 budgets, instead of doing the standard 2-3% growth in CPCs, use a larger number (I recommend closer to 4%-7%)."**

# Corey Morris

President Of Voltage



## **Paid Search ROI Is Becoming More Difficult**

The biggest trend I have identified for 2023 for paid search is that it is getting harder to generate meaningful ROI from it.

PPC is still an important channel in my team's digital marketing mix for our clients and isn't going away. We have some great success stories and opportunities we're leveraging.

However, with changes in match types, ad types, and other aspects of how Google Ads operates continuing to change over time and what has seemingly been a saturation of advertisers, results have become more expensive or fewer, in some cases.

I know peers who have shifted their focus to LinkedIn and other platforms away from Google due to costs, competition, and complexity. I see that trend continuing. If you're focused on ROI and ROAS metrics, you may find it harder to spend what you're willing to or scale upwards without eroding the ROAS itself.

**Find niche areas; find what works and be as detailed as possible.**

Blanket, broad strategies will not be profitable. Google (and others) will take your money whether it is working for you or not. Don't give up on paid search, but scrutinize it and become ok with where you end up on the law of diminishing returns.

Find the opportunities to dig deeper, target differently, layer in other types of campaigns, and think full funnel (not just one platform, one advertiser, or one channel) in your digital marketing strategy overall.

# Ilya Cherepakhin

Enterprise Consulting Lead  
At Media.Monks



## COVID PPC Trends Beginning To Reverse

2023 will require paid search marketers to closely watch keyword trends and focus on measurement more than they recently have done.

With the pandemic starting to fade into the background, consumer trends will likely continue to shift away from patterns established during the height of public responses.

**Keywords categories relevant to industries that have been long suppressed should continue growing in popularity.**

For example, paid search competition for keywords around international travel, live sports, and entertainment events should continue intensifying. Consumers are expected to continue becoming more and more comfortable considering and transacting in these verticals.

The same dynamics will also be behind the ongoing decline of local search. No longer limited by location as they were during the last couple of years, consumers will be searching less for services like car rentals or using long-tail keywords with location modifiers. Paid search volume for these terms should continue to decline.

# Jonathan Kagan

VP Of Search At 9Rooftops



## Forecast Budgets For CPC Inflation

Inflation in CPC's: It is real.

How it is being determined by the search engines is fairly unclear, but since April 2022, CPCs have been rising dramatically.

When you forecast 2023 budgets, instead of doing the standard 2-3% growth in CPCs, use a larger number (I recommend closer to 4%-7%).

We're seeing it most aggressively hit brand keywords, so increases of as little as \$0.02 could be 20% increases in cost. Using these higher numbers will help to prevent under-budgeting.

# Economic Factors Will Impact PPC

## Key Insights

Businesses and consumers are looking ahead with uncertainty about their finances in 2023. Businesses will likely seek increased confidence that they're getting the most out of their campaigns, and consumers may reduce spending as recession concerns heat up.

Ben Wood, strategy and advertising director at Hallam, warns that 2023 will be difficult for many businesses, meaning that PPC service providers will need to prove the value of their work.

**"Our budgets will be put under massive scrutiny by business owners. Given the challenges we're facing with attribution, we will have a tough time proving return on advertising spend across many platforms."**

Lisa Raehsler, founder and SEM strategy consultant at Big Click Co., writes about the need to adjust to the needs of consumers during difficult economic times.

**"Advertisers will design successful PPC campaigns with a focus on price-conscious product lines, promos, and messaging with measurable benefits."**

# Ben Wood

Strategy And Advertising  
Director At Hallam



## Inflation And Consumer Confidence Threaten Profit Margins

**There's no escaping the fact that 2023 will be a tough year for many businesses.**

Global consumer confidence is at its lowest point in 44 years of tracking, while businesses are suffering erosion of their profit margins caused by rising inflation.

What this means for us is that our budgets will be put under massive scrutiny by business owners. Given the challenges we're facing with attribution, we will have a tough time proving return on advertising spend across many platforms.

**I think we have a duty of care to the brands we work with to avoid the easy route of diverting investments into the platforms that are easiest to track.**

Yes, paid search will perform in the short term to mop up immediate demand, but ignoring the long-term brand-building effect of advertising on display, video, and social platforms could be catastrophic for the long-term performance of any business.

In an industry obsessed with change, it's time to focus on what isn't changing – the theory of how advertising works. This will put you in a much better place to make decisions regardless of the technological, economic, and legislative advancements coming our way in 2023 and beyond.



# Lisa Raehsler

Founder And SEM Strategy  
Consultant At Big Click Co.



## Focus On Price-Conscious Consumers

**The magic eight ball says: Price consciousness: Outlook not so good.**

Recession and higher-than-predicted inflation are affecting consumers and businesses. Consumer confidence has plummeted. Advertisers will design successful PPC campaigns with a focus on price-conscious product lines, promos, and messaging with measurable benefits.

Think about scalable, flexible, value, sustainability, and long-term outcomes. Advertisers mindful of these selling points can earn more sales from on-edge buyers.

# Diversify The Platforms In Your Strategy

## Key Insights

Diversification has been on many marketers' minds this year. Some of the experts we talked to emphasized the importance of channel diversification going into 2023. New platforms with different use cases and algorithms will allow marketers to reach new audiences.

Akvile DeFazio, president of AKvertise, Inc., writes about TikTok and reaching a new generation of customers.

**"2023 is the year to explore the opportunities TikTok ads have to offer, if you haven't done so yet. Use the platform at lower cost to introduce your brands to new people."**

Alex Macura, founder of Your Digital Assembly, writes about formats outside of traditional PPC campaigns and expanding the ways in which you spend advertising budgets.

**"Think of podcasts, connected TV, video ads, livestream shopping, and other formats that only big-budget campaigns used to be able to afford."**

Jon Lee Clark, managing partner at Moving Traffic Media, suggests using shopping platforms to meet users where they're searching and in places they trust.

**"Consumers already trust the platform [Amazon]; they do a lot of their shopping there already, and its checkout process is streamlined. Walmart has a steadily growing marketplace offering a lot of the same opportunities, and even Macy's just announced its marketplace. This won't be the last of the marketplaces launched in 2023."**

Lisa Raehsler, founder and SEM strategy consultant at Big Click Co., predicts that image and video assets will become ever more prominent in PPC strategies across different platforms, and marketers will need to work with creative teams.

**“In 2023, advertisers can “DIY” effective video content and incorporate it into almost every ad type for massive reach and access to the 1.5 billion users per month watching YouTube Shorts.”**

# Akvile DeFazio

President Of AKvertise, Inc.



## Start Using TikTok Now

### **Diversification into TikTok ads.**

Short-form video continues to soar in popularity, and while it's brief in nature, it's mighty in performance, especially on TikTok.

Diversification of advertising efforts is crucial to reach new audiences across mediums and platforms, and in case one has a hiccup outside of your control, your business isn't on pause. This isn't a novel concept and practice, but if you aren't diversifying enough of your budget and efforts across platforms, it's critical you do so in the new year.

Historically, the majority of social media advertising budgets have been allocated to Meta.

### **TikTok emerged as a true competitor, and it's worthwhile for brands to test.**

TikTok is only going to continue growing in 2023. Start developing your strategy and short-form video content for ads before impression-share decreases and costs increase. More brands will enter the space to compete for consumers.

The platform skews heavier with younger demographics, but more people of all age ranges are flocking to the app. We've been testing ecommerce and lead generation brands all year and have seen surges of new website traffic, significant time spent on site, and in some instances, lower bounce rates and sales.

While younger demographics have higher click volume, video views, and engagement, we also see a healthy amount of older people clicking, viewing, and engaging. In many instances, depending on the brand and ad content, CTRs and sales have been higher with older demographics as they have more disposable income.

**Don't let that deter you from reaching younger people, as they are the next generation of your brand's customers.**

2023 is the year for you to explore the opportunities TikTok ads have to offer, if you haven't done so yet. Use the platform at lower cost to introduce your brands to new people.

# Alex Macura

Founder Of Your Digital Assembly



## Play Around With Diverse Ad Formats

You can promote your products, services, and brand across the web through digital advertising platforms like Microsoft Advertising and Google Ads. However, previously price-prohibiting digital channels are now becoming more available for SMEs.

**Think of podcasts, connected TV, video ads, livestream shopping, and other formats that only big-budget campaigns used to be able to afford.**

Also, consider offline ads to grow first-party data, such as snail mail and other local marketing tactics.

### **Get visible in the Metaverse.**

As the Metaverse continues to grow and gain traction, brands are starting to advertise more creatively in these multiverses.

If your target audience is at all active here, and you're not, then your brand needs to start building in the Metaverse sooner rather than later by buying up ad space.

# Jon Lee Clark

Managing Partner At Moving Traffic Media



## Transition To Marketplace Platforms

**Marketplace advertising spending will grow exponentially.**

Amazon is a huge opportunity for advertisers. It's the world's largest ecommerce platform, and it has a lot of data on its customers.

At Moving Traffic Media, we've seen ad spending shift almost entirely to Amazon for some clients for two primary reasons:

- Higher conversion rates.
- Lower click costs.

Consumers already trust the platform; they do a lot of their shopping there already, and its checkout process is streamlined.

You can also target specific audiences based on their shopping habits or interests by using keyword targeting when they are in the shopping mindset.

But this isn't just limited to Amazon. Walmart has a steadily growing marketplace offering many of the same opportunities, and even Macy's just announced its marketplace. This won't be the last of the marketplaces launched in 2023.

# Lisa Raehsler

Founder And SEM Strategy  
Consultant At Big Click Co.



## Image And Video Assets Will Be Vital For Reach

**The magic eight ball says ... Visualization: Signs point to yes.**

Fewer words, more visualization, with image and video assets more widely-accessible in the platforms than ever before in PPC history.

In Google events this year, it announced that visual updates are coming to search, ads serving the rapidly-growing viewers of YouTube Shorts, and new management features and tools.

Tools like improved Assets, Video Creator, and Voice-Over can help overcome the barrier to entry for some advertisers with fewer resources to create videos and images.

In 2023, advertisers can DIY effective video content and incorporate it into almost every ad type for massive reach and access to the 1.5 billion users per month watching YouTube Shorts.

Fast-paced, action-oriented videos will capture attention and increase brand awareness over the competition.



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