



IAB Search Playbook

Google Contribution



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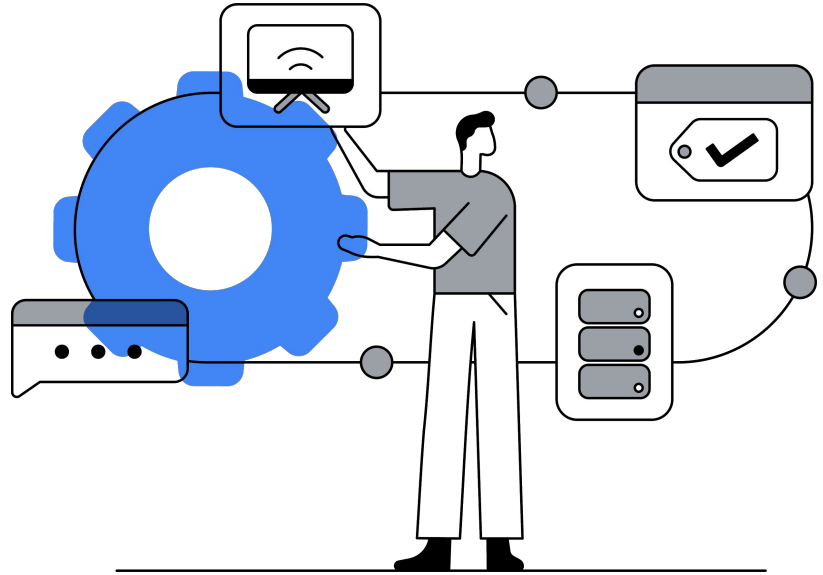
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1



The Next Age of Search: Introduction

Digital channels have become increasingly important over 2020, with the global coronavirus pandemic reshaping almost every consumer activity.

As the world seeks to better understand COVID-19's impact on our lives – from new ways of doing the things we love to staying connected in digital workforces – the role of Search as a consumer enabler has become more central than ever before.

At the same time, businesses have needed to pivot – and do it at pace. A renewed focus on digital offerings has seen years of progress happen in the space of months. Since the beginning of March, search interest in online shopping has grown by 2X worldwide and, in the U.K. alone, online shopping has soared to become 30% of retail sales. For marketing teams, this has meant a need to re-evaluate digital strategies tailored to changing consumer demand.

More than ever, it is critical for businesses to meet consumers where they are. Google Search has long since been the place people go to find what matters to them; and, in a changing landscape, this has never been more true. We are seeing double-digit growth in commercial queries in the UK, heralding a new age of digital growth as the online consumer shift continues. Our focus is to help businesses understand these evolving consumer needs, in order to prepare for the future and meet customers in the moment.

Beyond existing market and consumer behaviour shifts, Search as a platform is entering a new era; undergoing perhaps the single biggest shift since the mobile revolution of the 2010s. The increased power of machine learning is helping us dramatically rethink how we build our Search products from the ground up, providing better experiences for consumers and more effective marketing for advertisers.

Machine learning now provides the bedrock to the development of our Search product platforms. Here's how to effectively harness these capabilities across measurement, bidding and media buying to deliver growth from Search – and find what matters to your customers.

! References

1. Google, [COVID-19 has accelerated digital adoption – the time to transform is now](#), July 2020
2. Source: [Fast Forward Episode 4: Lara Naqushbandi, Director of Finance at Google](#)





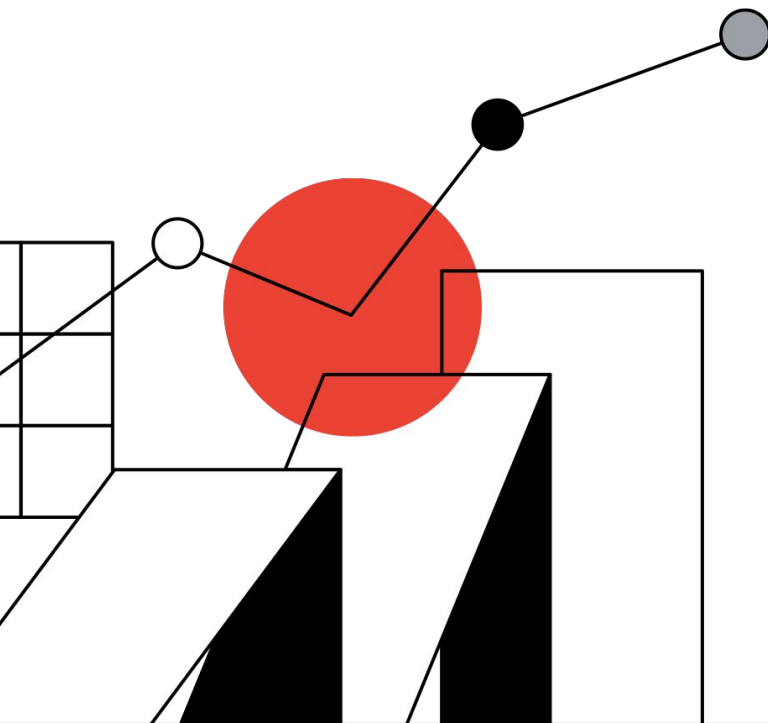
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Machine Learning: Measurement

Attribution remains a key focus for many businesses. We have naturally seen a significant shift in the number who are now leaning into machine learning to best understand consumer decision-making and flex their marketing efforts to match.

[Data-Driven Attribution](#) is the best way to apportion credit to digital touchpoints based on their statistical impact in a consumer's journey. As a result, it has unlocked greater performance from Search, allowing businesses to finally understand the impact of their campaigns and reach consumers earlier in their decision journey.

We have also seen a significant drive in businesses trying to better understand how their digital media investment affects online and offline journeys. [Omnichannel reporting](#) is now the industry standard. Businesses have a more holistic view of performance, ensuring it is fully embedded in their operations and used in combination with other tools such as bidding technologies. And, the businesses already doing it, are unlocking insights around what matters to their customers in a way that enables perpetual improvement in the future.



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Machine Learning: Bidding

Automation in bidding has seen a significant increase in usage throughout 2020 as businesses look to ensure they are able to navigate shifting markets with confidence.

While most businesses have already made the shift beyond manual to [automated bidding](#), the last year has seen a particular acceleration in adoption of [value-based bidding](#). Now, more than ever, the industry is focusing on driving revenue or even profit from campaigns, using fully automated bidding tools like Target ROAS to deliver performance at scale across their marketing activity.

The latest forms of bidding using machine learning optimise on an auction-by-auction basis: [Auction-Time Bidding](#). With this tool in wide circulation, advertisers can ensure they are able to lean on machine learning to vary their bids every time they enter an auction based on thousands of factors to ensure they are setting themselves up for success.

As businesses continue to develop their marketing technologies, many now use more sophisticated conversion signals (such as margin data) to focus on the traffic that will be most profitable. Some more advanced advertisers are beginning to calculate the lifetime value of customers, and use this information to feed their media buying with a long-term view of marketing impact. This focuses their business towards customers who will engage with them repeatedly and thus drives greater effectiveness.



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Machine Learning: Media Buying

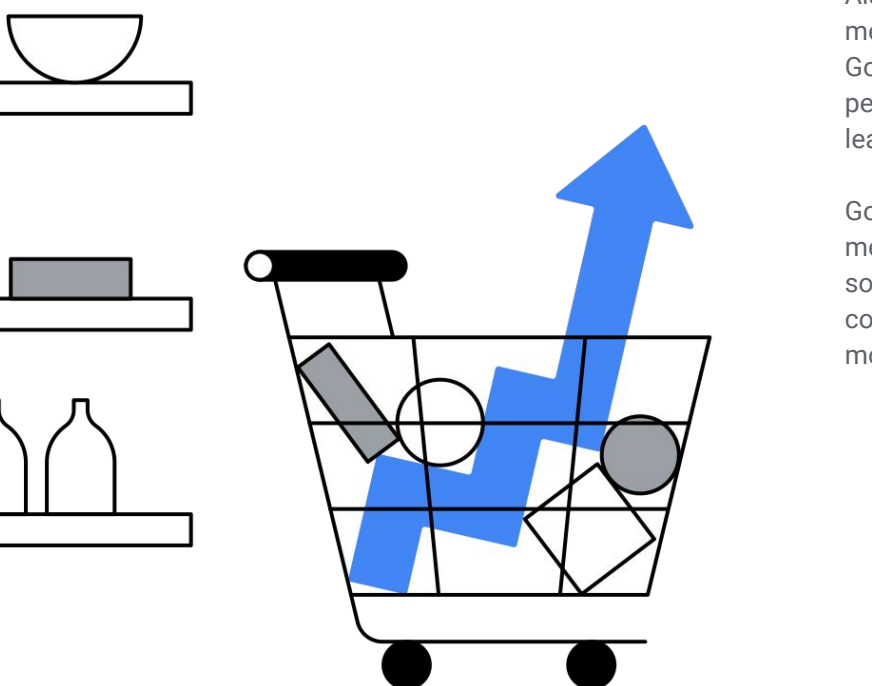
Machine learning has come to play an increasingly important role in Google's media buying products. This has been one of the areas with the most opportunity for businesses, with more advanced tactics routinely surpassing traditional options such as basic keywords or regular shopping campaigns.

Today, it is used to power keyword match types and build campaigns that directly work with website content to promote relevant inventory online with [Dynamic Search Ads](#) that work seamlessly with the latest Data-Driven Attribution models.

Our newly-released [Smart Shopping Campaigns](#) automatically advertise elements of your shopping feeds across multiple Google inventory sources like Search, Google Display Ads, Gmail and YouTube. This means each campaign can be optimised to one performance target across those sources to deliver the best performance across the board.

Also recently announced is [Performance Max](#); a new media buying product that brings the best of Google's automation together to allow performance-oriented advertisers to drive sales and leads across all Google properties.

Google's direction of travel is to continue improving media buying through machine learning, developing solutions to help businesses run profitably and communicate with customers wherever it will be most useful and impactful.



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2021 and Beyond

Search is the most useful tool for businesses looking to operate flexibly and confidently in uncertain times.

And, as machine learning becomes increasingly prevalent, businesses need to develop roadmaps to adopt and work with these new technologies. The question is no longer whether machine learning will work to improve marketing outcomes, it is now about how quickly businesses can make it work for them.

While every business is on a unique journey, the ones succeeding the fastest are those adopting and testing new technologies quickly. They have buy-in from the top to the bottom of their organisation, an agile long-term plan, practises to review their progress frequently, and a results-oriented view on how these technologies can help them achieve their business objectives. They're the ones already transforming their businesses to match the new digital expectations that have emerged.

We're committed to helping businesses navigate this shifting landscape. That's why we're continuing to develop and build products that help you reach customers safely and effectively – in every moment that matters.



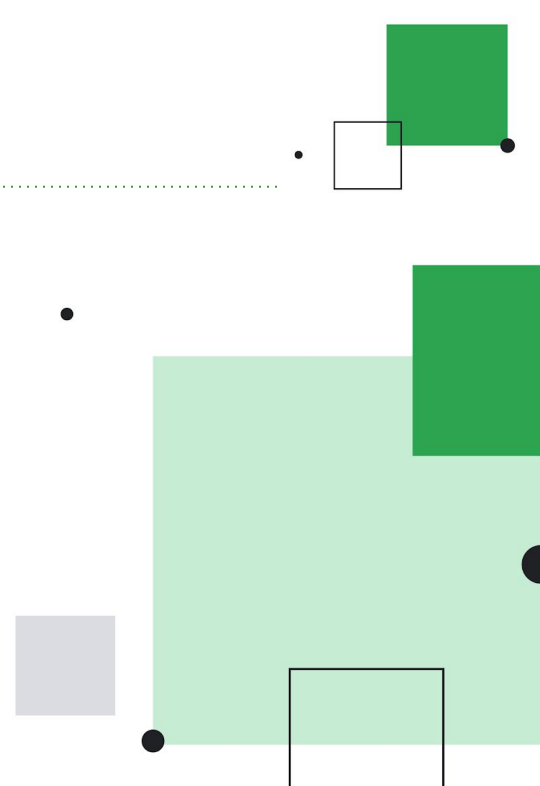
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