



About Sweetwater Sound, Inc.

- Retail: Music Instruments and Pro Audio
- Fort Wayne, Indiana



About RKG (Rimm-Kaufman Group)

- Data-driven digital marketing agency
- Charlottesville, Virginia

Goals

- Capture growing segment of tablet-using customers
- Increase transaction rate
- Increase ROI to better reach tech-savvy audience
- Implement click-to-call feature to drive customers into telephone service channel

Approach

- Shifted mobile advertising initiatives toward tech-savvy tablet users, leading customers to call sales representatives where musicians thrive on personalized advice and support

Results

- **Captured greater share of tablet users:** Leveraged the knowledge that musicians are also likely tablet users, particularly iPads. Tailored copy to be device specific
- **Increased conversions:** iPad conversion rate was 30% higher than desktops and laptops rate, and orders originating from iPads had 10% higher value
- **Improved ROI:** Continuously tweaked ad copy, keywords, and bids based on performance by device
- **Maximized successful sales model:** Implemented the click-to-call feature to drive more leads by telephone, where expert sales engineers nurture customer relationships

Sweet Sound of Success

Sweetwater partners with digital marketing agency, RKG, to amp up mobile advertising to attract audiophiles on iPads, helping drive double-digit sales growth of high-technology musical instruments and pro audio equipment.

Harmony of expertise and service

When Chuck Surack, President and Founder of Sweetwater Sound Inc., started a recording studio out of the back of his VW mini-van 33 years ago, he set the stage for what was to become a pro-audio and multi-channel powerhouse that is now the sweetheart of the high-tech, retail audio industry.

From the beginning, Surack had the same two problems that musicians around the world have struggled with for decades: where to find great products at reasonable prices, and where to get dependable advice from people who really know what they are talking about and who are focused on providing the best customer service in the industry. These problems are non-issues at Sweetwater, where experienced and highly trained Sales Engineers help hundreds of thousands of musicians, broadcasters, and recording professionals select the best tools for their needs – from microphones, speakers, and digital recording systems to guitars, drums, and electronic instruments. A phone sales, Internet, and mail-order behemoth, Sweetwater's success is evident in its double-digit annual growth.

Tuning up mobile search

Ever advocates of effective electronic solutions, Sweetwater, partnering with top interactive agency RKG, became an early adopter of Google AdWords, and most recently incorporated mobile search into its marketing strategies. In 2008, Sweetwater launched the first version of its mobile site, thinking of it as an extension of their main website, and optimistic about how a mobile presence would bring powerful new dimensions to e-commerce. With the proliferation of mobile search, and given the tight integration among tech-savvy sound hounds and all things Mac, Sweetwater has found a hit by targeting ads and bids to specific devices, particularly for iPads.

"Before the advent of tablets, iPhones were our mobile sweet spot," says Mike Ross, Vice President of Marketing at Sweetwater. "Now iPads are taking over that title. We're leveraging the new insights we've gained about what products are most popular on mobile, and what content and features customers are attracted to."

Initially, in 2008, mobile traffic represented 2.6% of total sweetwater.com traffic. Now in 2012, mobile traffic has more than tripled to 8% of total traffic. By tweaking bids for the device-specific ads, mobile ads targeted at iPads are demonstrating a better return on investment than any other tactic. "Because iPad leads are targeted to that device and iPads are popular among musicians and sound engineers, order values generated from iPads run a full 10% higher in value than orders generated from any other source," says Matthew Mierzejewski, Vice President of PPC with RKG. "We were able to leverage iPad

About Google AdWords

Google AdWords™ is a performance-based advertising program that enables businesses large and small to advertise on Google and its network of partner websites. Hundreds of thousands of businesses worldwide use AdWords for text, image, and video ads priced on a cost-per-click (CPC) and cost-per-impression (CPM) basis. Built on an auction-based system, AdWords is a highly quantifiable and cost-effective way to reach potential customers.

For more information visit:
<http://adwords.google.com>

user data to increase our bids on that segment of the mobile audience. By leveraging this segmentation, we've been able to increase iPad CPCs by close to 90% compared to bundling smartphone and iPad devices together, efficiently driving more revenue for Sweetwater."

Ad content targeted at tablets garners a significantly better conversion rate than desktops and laptops. "Because tablet users tend to be active, tech-savvy customers, we see iPad leads convert 30% higher than desktop-based transactions," says Mike Clem, Director of E-Commerce for Sweetwater.

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Perfect feature

Beyond being great musicians, Sweetwater customers are very good at educating themselves. They spend considerable time browsing the company's 250,000-page web site, which is loaded with buyer's guides, product reviews, tech tips, gear videos, an online product support center, and unique, cutting edge browsing features, such as Guitar Gallery and Cable Finder.

When Google implemented its click-to-call extension, it was as if the feature was custom-built to play to Sweetwater's core strength – its highly-trained sales team. 4.5% of mobile phone leads choose click-to-call rather than clicking on URLs in ads. Already, Sweetwater and RKG know that, dollar-for-dollar, money is best spent driving self-directed shoppers to speak with a Sweetwater Sales Engineer, where service trumps all.

Pleased with click-through-rates as well as the results from using tried and true keywords on smartphones like iPhones, Sweetwater is now making the most out of tablet-targeted mobile ads. To ensure that users on iPads have an exceptional experience, Sweetwater has developed some unique customization. "For example, we allow iPad users to interact with product photos using multi-touch gestures," notes Clem. "We want tablet users to have as good an experience as they would on their desktop computer."

No matter how the mobile landscape evolves, it's certain that the Sweetwater business model will remain rooted in great service and will move forward in synch with mobile opportunities focused on tablets. Notes Clem, "Even though we are considered a very progressive company, we will always hold true to our relationship-focused approach."

