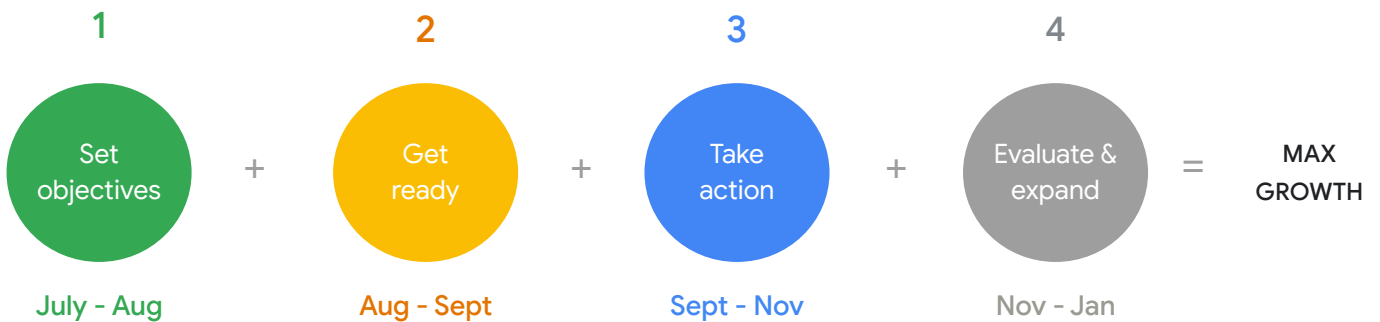




# Google Ads Growth Formula Holiday Planner



The Growth Formula is a step-by-step framework for leading brands and agencies to achieve digital success. This planner is intended for Google Ads advertisers and agencies to prepare for the holiday season and drive more growth with every dollar.

[g.co/growthformula](https://g.co/growthformula)

# Set objectives

You are three times more likely to hit your business goals if you tie them to your marketing goals -- making robust planning even more important leading up to the critical holiday sales period.



**Start by using real-time trends and insights to keep a pulse on how this year is shaping up** and understand how consumer behavior and demand are shifting across categories, channels, and geographies.

- [Google Trends](#) - See what people are, or aren't, searching for, almost in real time across Google Search, YouTube, Shopping, and Images.
- **Shopping Insights** - Dive deeper into what shoppers are looking for, compare competing products in your category, and discover local demand.



**Next, evaluate trends from previous holiday seasons to see where there is room to grow and evolve.** The 2021 holiday season is predicted, yet again, to be unlike any other, which means your brand should review holiday performance from the last few years when setting this year's objectives.

- [Google Merchant Center Best Sellers Report](#) - Shows you which products are best sellers and which you carry in your feed. This gives valuable direction for you to decide which products you should add to your current merchandising strategy.
- [Retail Categories Report](#) - See what your performance is for Search and Shopping across categories. This will allow you to assess where there is room to optimize further and gain more clickshare.
- [Google Merchant Center Price Competitiveness Report](#) - See how other retailers are pricing the same products that you sell. This will provide guidance when you're bidding on ads and pricing your products.



**Consider your holiday budget this year, and take into account impression share data from previous peak periods.**

- Evaluate previous holiday period performance by [adding impression share columns](#) to your Google Ads account. This year, consider using at least two years' worth of holiday data when evaluating past performance. Use impression share lost due to rank and budget to evaluate the percentage of time that your ads weren't shown.
- **Consider your competitive positioning** using the [auction insights report](#) in Google Ads.



**Now that you've evaluated trends, take a look at performance over the last two years. Use this [goal template](#) to put this information into action and ensure your business, marketing, and campaign objectives are aligned.**

# Get ready

Success is built on strong foundations. Make sure you have the big three in place: privacy-safe measurement, a value-based smart bidding strategy, and powerful creative.



## Invest in privacy-safe measurement

**Make sure you're equipped to measure and engage customers along their journey** by implementing the privacy-safe solutions below. Check out the [Privacy-safe growth playbook](#) for more information on these solutions.

- **Use Google's global site tag to easily collect first-party data on your website and build a strong measurement foundation.** Sitewide tagging is the most important step you can take because it ensures accurate measurement across browsers in a privacy-safe way, and it will be required for all future measurement solutions. Plus, first-party audiences enable you to connect with prospective customers during their buying journey.
- **With the global site tag in place, [implement enhanced conversions](#) to increase the accuracy of conversion measurement.**



## Find your high-value customers

**Implement a value-based bidding strategy to maximize your revenue and ROI.**

- **Use our best-in-class value-based bidding solution, Target Return on Ad Spend (Target ROAS),** to maximize your conversion revenue (i.e. conversion value), while meeting your business' ROAS targets. Campaigns that use tROAS should be uncapped by budget for best performance. Check the Recommendations page for Target ROAS suggestions with expected impact uplift in your account.
- **Maximize conversion value** automatically sets bids at auction time to get you as much conversion value as possible within your campaign's budget. This bid strategy is only recommended for low volume campaigns.

**Follow these holiday tips for monitoring your smart bidding this holiday season:**

- **Optimize bids and budgets** by using the planning tools in your account like [Performance Planner](#). We recommend that you start adjusting your budgets gradually four to six weeks ahead of peak season.
- **Consider using Seasonality Adjustments** if you expect your conversion rates to change by more than 30% within a short period of time.



## Stand out with powerful creative

**Prepare high quality, holiday-themed creative Search ads and assets.**

- **For Search,** ensure that there is a Responsive Search Ad with good or excellent ad strength in each ad group, at least four extensions per ad (promotion/price extensions), and that image extensions are utilized if you're eligible.
- **For Shopping,** don't forget [promotions on your Shopping ads](#) (available in the US and Canada). If you have a storefront, consider adding the [pickup today feature](#) to highlight products that can be picked up at your retail stores.
- **For Display,** follow these [best practices](#).
- **For YouTube,** follow these [best practices](#).

# Take action

Supercharge your holiday marketing by capturing existing demand and generating new demand.

## Capture demand



### Be present with Google Search ads.

- Use **broad match keywords (covers all exact and phrase queries) with Smart Bidding and responsive search ads to find your highest-value customers.** Keep in mind, value-based bidding (tROAS and Maximize Conversion Value) will allow you to achieve your goals most efficiently.
- Use **Dynamic Search Ads to serve relevant ads for relevant queries.** Dynamic Search Ads use Google's machine learning to customize and target your ads, and they have unique value in driving incremental traffic for retailers with large, complex websites. Run Dynamic Search Ads alongside keywords and responsive search ads for optimal Search performance.



### Promote your products to holiday shoppers in a dynamic environment with Smart Shopping campaigns.

- **Create a separate Smart Shopping campaign** if you want to prioritize certain types of products during the holiday season. Keep in mind this is only recommended if you have a different business goal (and ROAS target) as well as enough volume.
- **Due to increased competition, regularly reevaluate your KPIs and consider setting your Target ROAS to the lowest acceptable return on ad spend** to continue to help maximize visibility in the weeks leading up to peak periods.
- **Set budgets to capture additional headroom** during periods of increased holiday shopping. We recommend at least 30% over average daily spend in October. During peak days, review budgets on an hourly basis to take full advantage of the increased demand.



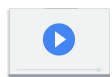
### If you're an omnichannel business with brick and mortar stores, drive shoppers to your physical locations by reaching them in their purchase journey across all Google properties with [Local campaigns](#).

## Generate demand



### Reach customers as they explore their interests and search for inspiration across their favorite Google feeds (YouTube, Gmail, and Discovery) with [Discovery ads](#).

- Grow **first-party audience** data in advance of the peak holiday season, and continue to reconnect with those audiences as the season progresses.
- Use **existing creative** from social feeds to build image ads in minutes as you prep for the holiday season.



### Your potential customers turn to YouTube to decide what to buy. Use Video to promote your brand or products on YouTube.

- If you're looking to drive action to your business, service, or product, use [Video action campaigns](#). Video action campaigns allow you to drive more conversions while optimizing for the lowest CPA as well as reach new customers. They also run in multiple places, allowing you to scale easily.
- If you're looking to drive customers in store, TrueView for Reach is a great way to reach an even larger audience across YouTube [using Location Extensions](#).

# Evaluate & expand

Meet shoppers where they are by regularly evaluating and expanding your campaigns to create and capture maximum demand.



Routinely check [optimization score](#) and review account recommendations. Consider enrolling in [auto-applied recommendations](#), to improve your account performance and save time.



Evaluate previous week or month's performance. During peak days, evaluate on a daily, and even hourly, basis.

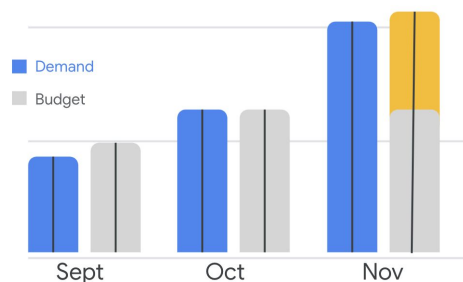
- Add [impression share columns](#) to see impressions lost due to rank and budget.
- Once you start hitting tROAS goals and are unconstrained by budget, **consider lowering ROAS targets to capture incremental revenue opportunity** and capitalize on high intent during seasonality.



Leave budget headroom to ensure you capture all sales at your ROAS target. Set at least 30% budget headroom, and if possible around 500% for big events like Black Friday and Cyber Monday. This will position you to capture more revenue while working within your campaign objectives.



Increase budgets in October to capture demand spikes in November and potential shoppers



Looking for more Google Ads holiday tips?

Check out:

[g.co/growthformula](https://g.co/growthformula)

Think Retail on Air