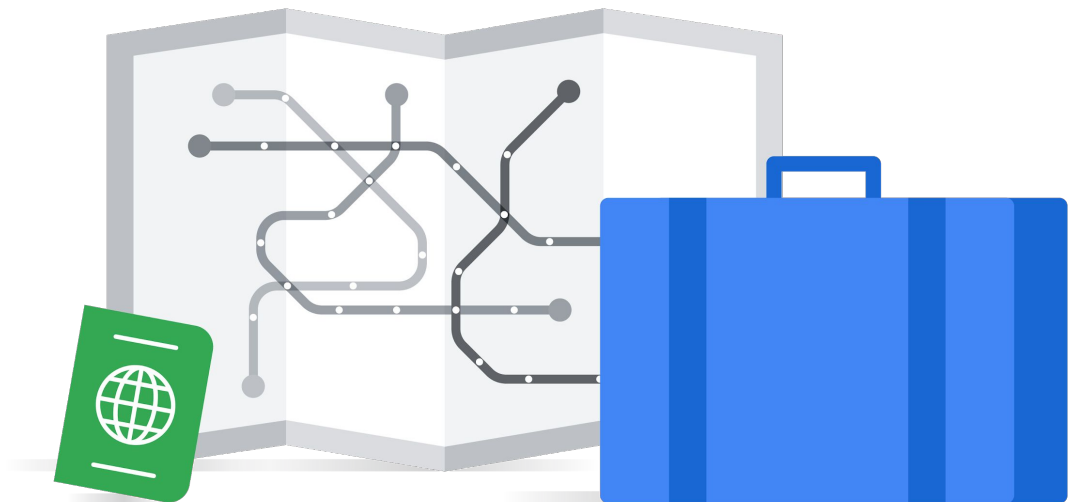August 2020

# Google for Hotels 201: Promoting Your Hotel with Google Ads

Google For Hotels 201:
Drive Bookings with Google Ads

Introduction to online advertising

Today's digital consumer is constantly connected. One study (Source: We Are Social and Hootsuite, "Digital 2019," Jan 2019) published in 2019 found that the average person spends 6 hours and 42 minutes online every single day. Suffice to say, to get results, you need to be found online, where potential customers can see you, particularly when they are looking for info about the products and services you offer.
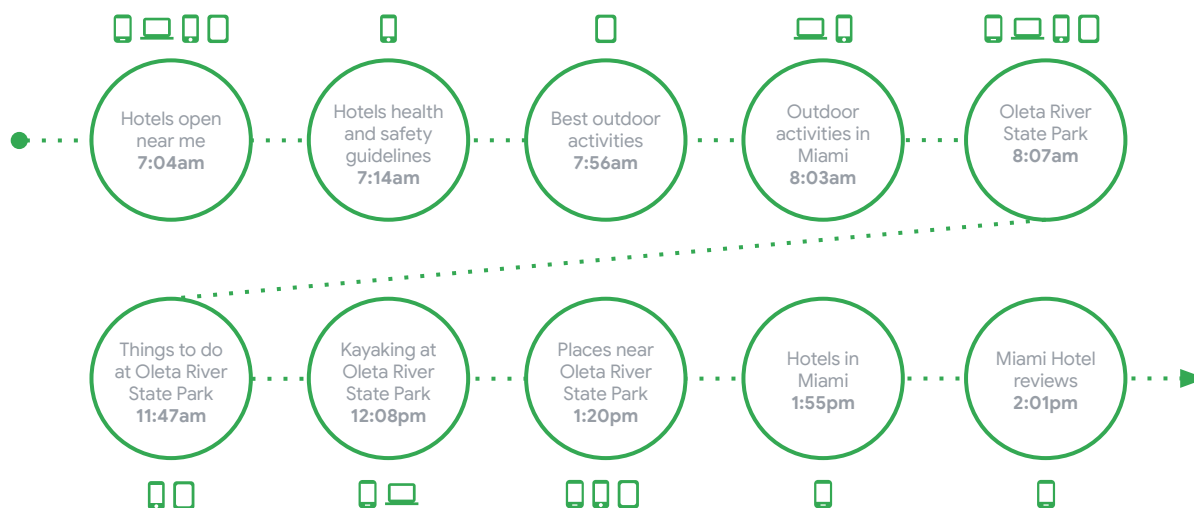
Consumers are deeply connected to the web, but it's not a simple, linear connection. There are many reasons people go online, many ways to find and access information, and many devices used, like smart phones, tablets, and desktops. Needless to say, consumer journeys are complex.
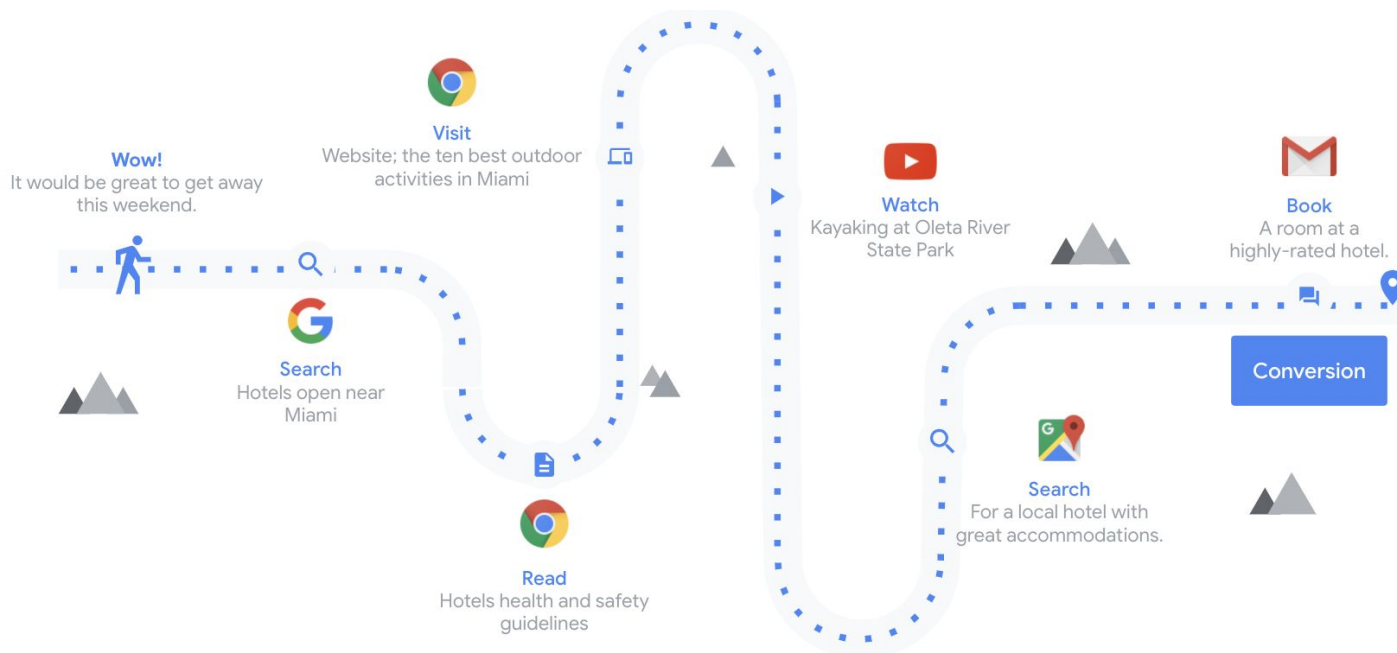
One common thread you may notice in the consumer journey example above is the prevalence of search. As a business owner, you need to make sure your site is a useful destination for every relevant search. For example, if my first search query was "Hotels open near Miami", your website could appear in the search results - if you have that answer on a web page!

Google Ads

Think about potential customers and what their journeys might look like overtime. Does your website help them? If not, consider a content strategy that fills content gaps or makes your site more compelling and more useful. The more relevant your website is to their search queries, the more opportunities you have to appear in the search results. Don't miss valuable moments when consumers are searching for answers related to your products and services.

Search is critical… are you there?

Hotels open near me
7:04am

Hotels health and safety guidelines
7:14am

Best outdoor activities
7:56am

Outdoor activities in Miami
8:03am

Oleta River State Park
8:07am

Things to do at Oleta River State Park
11:47am

Kayaking at Oleta River State Park
12:08pm

Places near Oleta River State Park
1:20pm

Hotels in Miami
1:55pm

Miami Hotel reviews
2:01pm

Online advertising is ideal for businesses large and small, in no small part because it can be held accountable. Its value to your business can be tracked and measured. Online advertising doesn't need much of a sales pitch… because the proof is in the results. If the campaign is not effective, there's no sugar coating it. And when an advertising campaign IS really effective (as we hope it will be for your business!) you can see in the reports what actions happened as a result of your efforts. Another big advantage: you control the budget. You decide how much you're willing to spend on your ad campaigns - and you can edit, pause or cancel at any time.

You can track and measure performance

You control the budget

You can track and measure performance

Google Ads

Reach customers with Google Ads

Google Search: The Auction

It all starts with a question, a desire, or a need. Most people start looking for answers online by typing a search query into Google.

Google's organic algorithm gets to work and creates a search engine results page, presenting websites and other resources that can help the searcher find answers.

At the same time, but separately, the Google Ads algorithm runs an auction. Advertisers are bidding for opportunities to show their ads. Eligible ads compete for a spot on the search results page, above and below the organic results. The "winners" appear on the page, clearly labeled with an "Ads" sticker. Searchers see the ads and hopefully take an action (for example, clicking to visit the website, or initiating a phone call on a mobile device, or calling a trackable number).

These actions connect searchers with the advertisers, and drive business results.

Google Search: Ad Rank

Search results may include Shopping ads.

Search results may include Text ads.
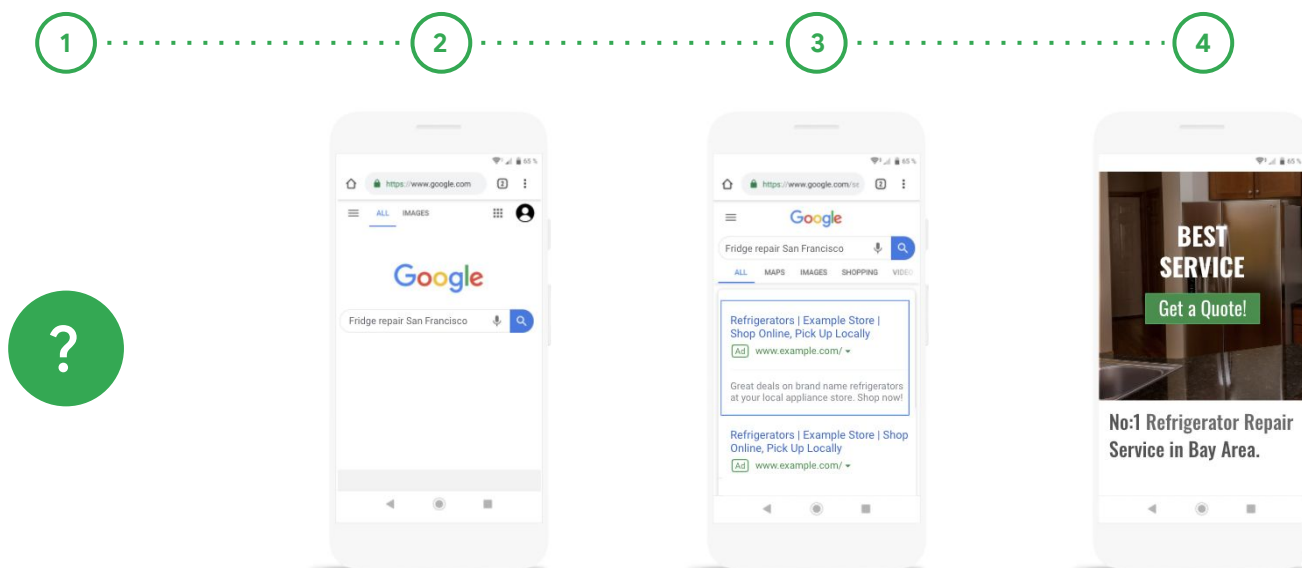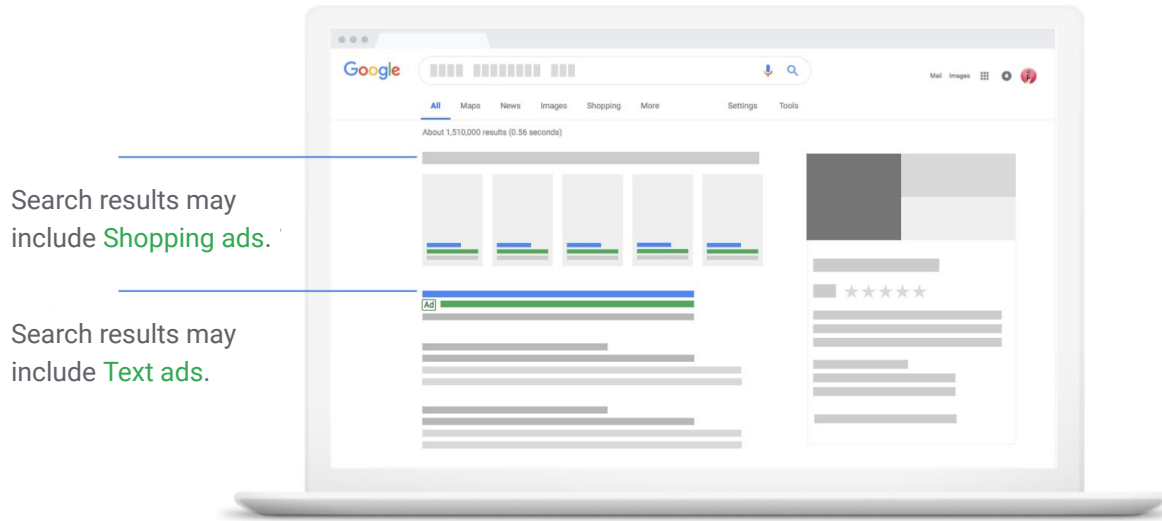
The illustration above shows how ads may appear on Google's search results page:

- At the top, you may see images with associated product information - these are called Shopping ads.
- Next you see a text ad. They can appear above the organic results, and below as well.

Note: Advertisers do not pay to show ads on the results page; they only pay if a searcher takes an action on the ad.

An ad's position on the page, relative to other ads, is determined by something called Ad Rank:

- Ad Rank is calculated using the bid amount, the ad's quality at auction time (this includes stuff like expected clickthrough rate, relevance, and landing page experience), the Ad Rank thresholds, the context of the search (for example, the person's location, device, time of search, search terms, and other signals), as well as the expected impact of extensions and other ad formats.
- Ad Rank is recalculated every time an eligible ad competes in this auction. So, an ad position can fluctuate depending on competition, the person's search, and its quality at that moment.

Google Display Network

Ads can also appear on other Google sites, including Gmail, and more than 2M non-Google websites that are part of the Google Display Network.

The Google Display Network reaches 90% of Internet users worldwide, across millions of websites, news pages, blogs, and Google sites like Gmail and YouTube.
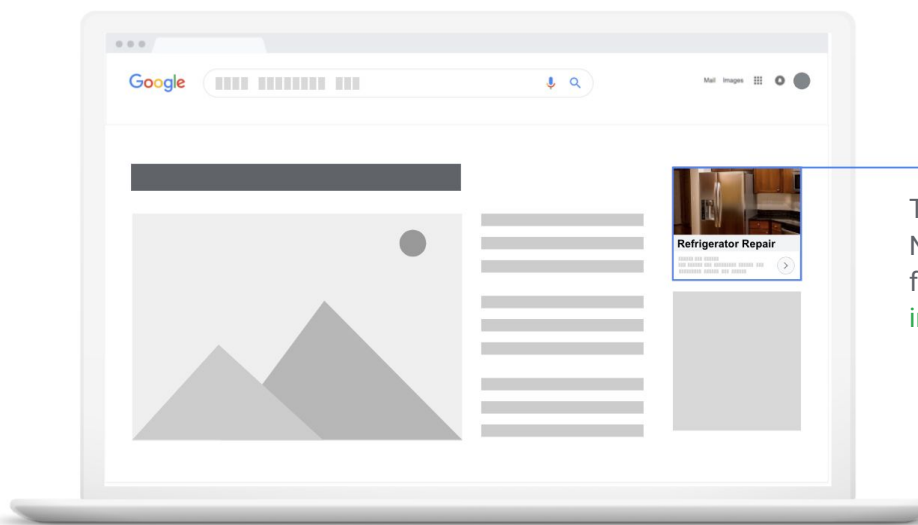
The Google Display Network can show many ad formats, including text, image, and video ads.

Getting started with Google Ads

A few things to know about Google Ads:

- Pay for results, clicks on your website or phone calls
- No startup fee
- No cancellation fee
- No contract

When it comes to bidding, there are a few bidding options depending on the platform. Search operates on a CPC (or cost-per-click) model, meaning just that - you only pay for a click (or a desired action), not just to appear on the search results page. The Display Network offers other bidding options, like CPM (cost per thousand impressions) and CPV (Cost per view) for video ads.

To get started, visit Ads.Google.com (you will need a Google Account).

Creating your first campaign

When it comes to driving online bookings for your hotel, there are two crucial aspects to consider when driving online sales:

1. **Be discoverable:** Ensure your hotel is showing up for users who are searching for you.
2. **Acquire new customers:** In addition to users who are searching for your hotel specifically, we also want to ensure you're showing up for potential travelers who are still browsing (e.g. a user searching for "best hotels near me").

**Capture demand and acquire new consumers
across the consumer journey to drive bookings**

Be discoverable

New customer acquisition

Search

Dynamic Search Ads

Smart Display

Driving online bookings
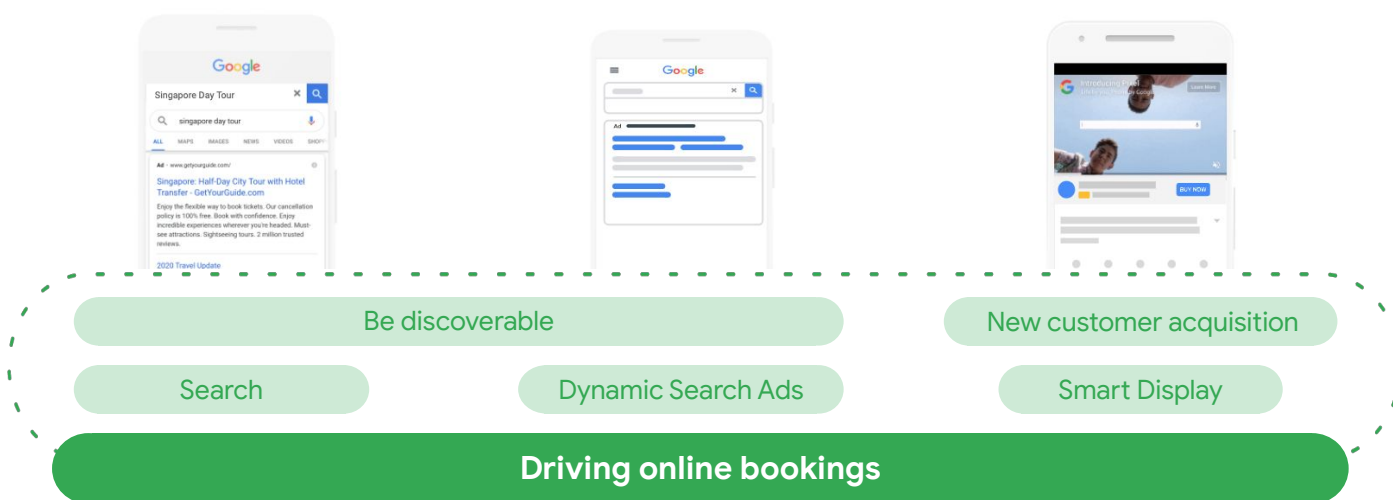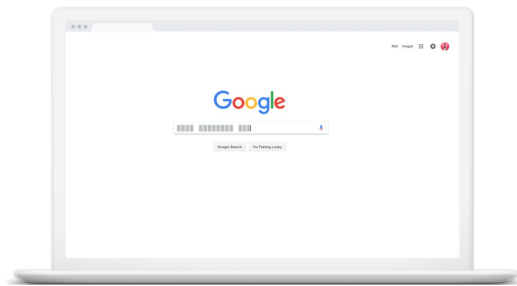
Be Discoverable: Google Search Ads

Google Search Ads are a great way to ensure your hotel is showing up for potential travelers who may be searching for you. To start showing ads, you need to create a campaign in Google Ads. This is when you'll make decisions about things like how much you want to spend and where your ads show.

Step 1: Pick your goal

You select one goal per campaign. This choice is important because Google Ads uses it to guide your campaign settings options to help you succeed. Here are example best practices:
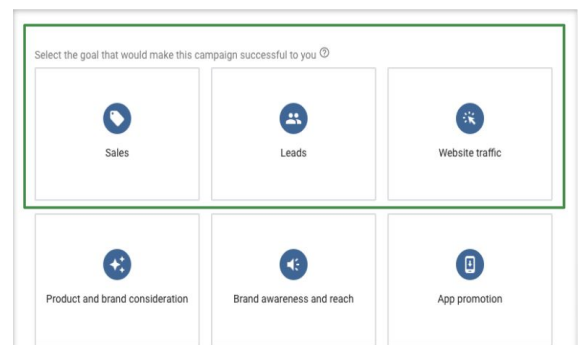
Step 2: Set your bid strategy and budget

Most new advertisers use automated bidding because they find it's most effective. For example:

- If you're looking to drive conversion actions like sales or leads, you can use the "Maximize conversions" strategy.
- If you're looking to receive as many clicks on your ads as possible, you can use the "Maximize clicks" strategy

You don't have to set a maximum limit on your bid with automated bidding because you control how much you spend using your budget. Your campaign's average daily budget, which you set next, limits how much you spend overall.

Step 3: Make sure your ads show

Ad groups are where you specify which ads should be shown to people searching for specific search terms. A Search campaign should have very specific ad groups with at least 3 ads in each. Organize your ad groups around what you think people will be searching for when your ad is triggered.

For successful account organization, be sure to create very specific ad groups: an ad group should have keywords that are closely related to one another, and that are each relevant to an idea that's different from the ideas you're targeting in other ad groups. A person looking for a helmet is more likely to click an ad about helmets than a generic ad about cycling supplies. Specificity and detail helps your ads be more relevant. Relevance tends to lead to higher quality ads that perform better in the ad auction (and generate more clicks and conversions, like newsletter sign ups, calls, or sales.

Again, every ad group should have at least 3 quality ads. That way, the system can optimize your performance, and you can check your performance data to learn what message resonates best with your audience.

ProTip: Use Google Keyword Planner to help discover new keywords related to your products, services, or website. With Keyword Planner you can:

- **See monthly searches:** See estimates on the number of searches a keyword gets each month.
- **Determine cost:** See the average cost for your ad to show on searches for a keyword.
- **Organize keywords:** See how your keywords fit into different categories related to your brand.
- **Create new campaigns:** Use your keyword plan to create new campaigns centered on in-depth keyword research.

Once you open Keyword Planner, there are two ways to create your keyword plan:

1. Search for new keywords by clicking Discover new keywords.
2. Upload existing keywords by clicking Get search volume and forecast.

Get more information on Keyword Planner on the Help Center.
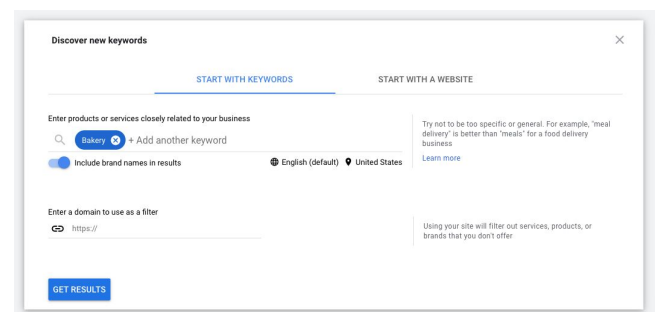
Step 4: Add extensions

Most advertisers use extensions, and they're essential to creating Search ads. So what are they exactly? Well, if you've ever been searching on Google and seen an ad with a call button, extra links, an address, or other extra information, you've seen extensions.

Extensions make your ad larger and more robust, giving people more reasons to take action directly from your ads.

Example text ad:

> **Refrigerators | Example Store | Shop Online, Pick Up Locally**
> [Ad] www.example.com/ ▼
> Great deals on brand name refrigerators at your local appliance store. Shop now!

The same text ad, with extensions:

> **Refrigerators | Example Store | Shop Online, Pick Up Locally**
> [Ad] www.example.com/ ▼ (555) 555-5555
> ★★★★★ Rating for example.com: 4.2 · 3,463 reviews
> Great deals on brand name refrigerators at your local appliance store. Shop now!
> Contact Us · Track Your Order · Financing Information · Store Locations · Shop By Brand
> ⦿ 55555 Example Pike, Nashville, TN · Open today · 8:00 AM - 10:30 PM ▼

Here are the 3 extensions that are recommended for just about everyone:

- **Sitelink extensions.** Direct people to specific pages on your website—your store hours, a specific product, or more. When someone clicks or taps on your links, they can skip right to what they want to know or buy. For example, if you run a bicycle shop, you'd display the link "City bicycles" and set that sitelink URL as your page that shows your city bicycles. To make it more likely that your sitelinks show with your ads, add at least 4 sitelinks (for example: Hours, City bicycles, Electric bicycles, Contact us). Learn more about sitelink extensions.
- **Callouts.** Callouts give you more space to add text. When customers see your ads with callouts, they see a larger ad with more detailed information about your business, products, and services. To make it more likely that your callouts show with your ads, add at least 4 callouts (for example: Free Shipping, New Arrivals Are Here, Extended Sizes, New Customer Discount. Learn more about callout extensions.
- **Structured snippets.** Entice users by highlighting specific aspects of your products and services in your ads. Structured snippets show underneath your ad text in the form of a header and list (for example: "Destinations: Hawaii, Costa Rica, South Africa"). Learn more about structured snippet extensions.

Beyond these 3 extensions, Google Ads offers many more, like location extensions (to promote local business), promotion extensions (for holiday sales), and call extensions (to get calls from prospective customers). Learn more and select extensions to use.
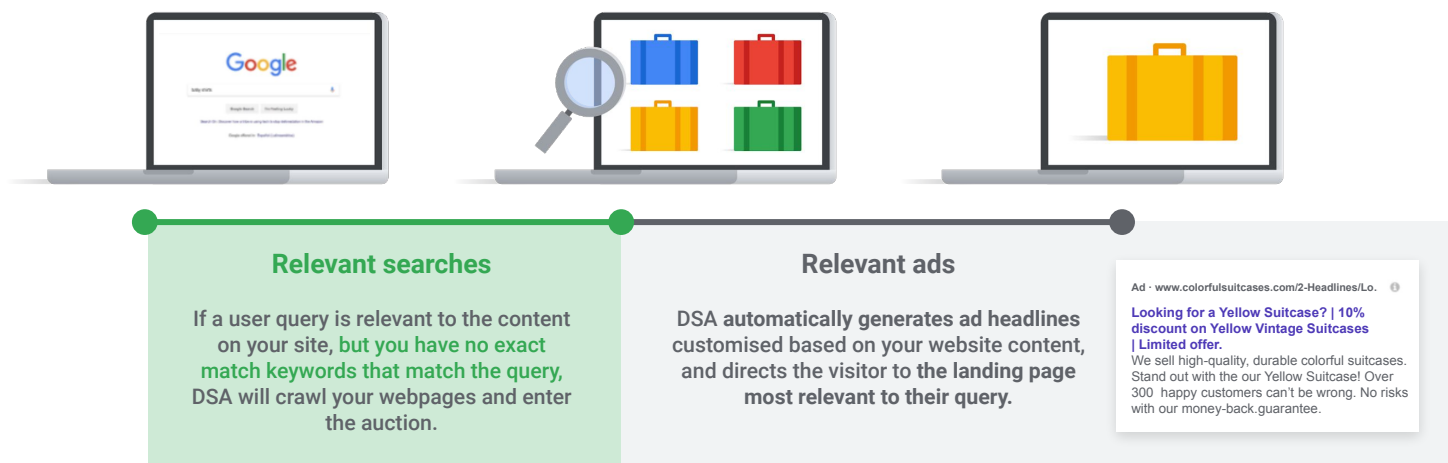
Step 5: Stay Engaged

Remember that a successful campaign doesn't end with set-up. You need to monitor how it's doing and make adjustments. For best results:

- Set up conversion tracking in order to see what happens after a customer interacts with your ads—whether they purchased a product, signed up for your newsletter, called your business, or downloaded your app. Learn how to set up conversion tracking.
- Check your campaign performance at least weekly. Make sure you don't miss any important notifications, and be sure to find ways to get more value and impact through your Recommendations page—an entire section of your account dedicated to helping you improve your campaign. Learn more about Recommendations.

Google Ads

Be Discoverable: Dynamic Search Ads

Dynamic Search Ads are the easiest way to find customers searching on Google for precisely what you offer. Ideal for advertisers with a well-developed website or a large inventory, Dynamic Search Ads use your website content to target your ads and can help fill in the gaps of your keyword based campaigns. Dynamic Search Ad headlines and landing pages are also generated using content from your website, which keeps your ads relevant and saves you time. All you need to do is add a creative description. Without Dynamic Search Ads, even well-managed Google Ads accounts with many keywords can miss relevant searches, experience delays getting ads written for new products, or get out of sync with what's actually available on advertisers' websites.

Relevant searches

If a user query is relevant to the content on your site, but you have no exact match keywords that match the query, DSA will crawl your webpages and enter the auction.

Relevant ads

DSA automatically generates ad headlines customised based on your website content, and directs the visitor to the landing page most relevant to their query.

Ad · www.colorfulsuitcases.com/2-Headlines/Lo.

Looking for a Yellow Suitcase? | 10% discount on Yellow Vintage Suitcases | Limited offer.
We sell high-quality, durable colorful suitcases. Stand out with the our Yellow Suitcase! Over 300 happy customers can't be wrong. No risks with our money-back.guarantee.

How to create a new Search campaign with a Dynamic Ad Group in your Search campaign:

1. Sign in to your Google Ads account.
2. From the page menu on the left, click Campaigns.
3. Click the plus button ⊕, then select New campaign.
4. Select one or more goals for your campaign. Or, click Create a campaign without a goal to continue without goals.

   Optional: Under "Select the results you want to get from this campaign," select the check box next to the actions you want customers to take after seeing your ad (for example, website visits, phone calls, or app downloads). Enter relevant details.
5. Select Search as your campaign type.
6. Select any results you want to get from the campaign.
7. Click Continue.
8. Name your campaign and enter the locations you want to target, languages you want to use, and your budget.

9. Under "Bidding," choose an automated bid strategy if you want Google to optimize your bids. We recommend the target CPA or enhanced CPC options.
10. Enter your bid limit (optional) and budget.
11. At the top of the screen under "General Settings," expand Show more settings, and then click Dynamic Search Ad.
12. Enter your website domain and select your website language.
13. Click Save and Continue to continue onto the next stage—creating a dynamic ad group and targets.

How to create a dynamic ad group:

1. For the Ad group type, select the Dynamic option (default).
2. Name your dynamic ad group.
3. Decide how you'd like to target your ads. If you're unfamiliar with dynamic ad targets, we strongly recommend reading About targets for Dynamic Search Ads. We recommend starting with:

    Landing pages from your standard ad groups category: All webpages that you're currently running search ads against, across all of your accounts. This targeting option makes it easy to increase traffic on the webpages you're already using as landing pages in existing ad groups and campaigns. We recommend this target for users that are new to Dynamic Search Ads.

    Other categories: Sets of landing pages organized by theme. You decide which sets of pages to target, how to group similar pages, and the level of granularity. If your site is completely new to Dynamic Search Ads it may take up to 24 hours for categories to show.

    `URL_Equals`: You can target specific URLs. This is a simple way to target individual pages. However, it can limit your reach if you want to get incremental traffic.
4. If you're not using automated bidding, adjust your bid based on the value of each specific target to your business. Bid adjustments can give you more control over when and where your ad is shown. You can set these adjustments to increase or decrease your dynamic ad target bids by a percentage. Learn About bid adjustments.
5. Click Save and continue.

How to create your ads:

You can have more than one Dynamic Search Ad, which means you can collect data on which ad is most effective. Here's how to add Dynamic Search Ads to a Dynamic ad group:

1. Click New ad.
2. Select Dynamic Search Ad.
3. Your Dynamic Search Ad headline, final URL, and display URL will be dynamically generated, so just enter your description text.
4. Click Save and Continue.

Google Ads

New Customer Acquisition: Smart Display

Display ads promote your business when people are browsing online, watching YouTube, checking Gmail, or using mobile devices and apps.

How is Display different from Search?

With search campaigns you can show ads when people search for specific goods or services. But what about people who aren't searching? What if people don't know about your product or service yet? The Display Network helps you capture attention earlier in the buying cycle. You can put your ads in front of people before they start searching.

For example, if I was researching open hotels in Miami, I might see an image or video ad showcasing a new hotel in Miami. You can also remind people about hotels they've seen before - remarketing to people who've previously visited your site or app.

When to use Google Display in addition to Search campaigns to acquire new customers

Search campaigns are the recommended campaign type to drive new customers.

However, if you have **separate goals and budgets** for new customer acquisition, Smart Display campaigns are a great way o **allocate a specific portion of your budget** to Google Display.

Display Ad formats

The Display Network offers many different ad formats, including simple text-based banner ads, custom ads in Gmail that expand on the top tabs of people's inboxes, and image and rich media ads with interactive elements and animation.

Display Ad targeting:

Display Ads can be targeted in several ways, including:

- **Contextual targeting**, matching ads to relevant site content using keywords and topics.
- **Audience targeting**, reaching specific groups of people based on interest categories, demographics, and remarketing.
- **Placement targeting**, selecting or excluding specific websites and apps, including categories like live streaming video or sites that include sensitive topics like crime and emergency.

Google Ads

Introducing Smart Display campaigns

| Smart Bidding | Automatic Targeting | Automatic Creatives |
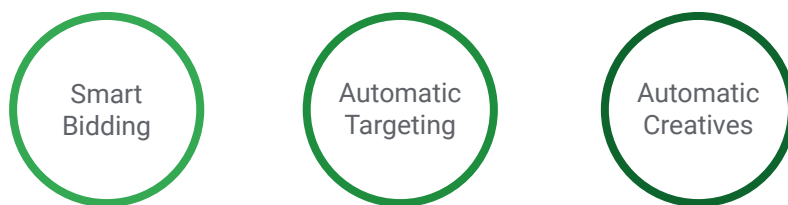
Built for simplicity and transparency

Smart Display:

Smart Display campaigns offer a simple, intelligent solution to managing the complex variables of display advertising, and may be the most effortless way to broaden your customer base and win new conversions. Use a Smart Display campaign to show ads in almost all formats across the Google Display Network, reaching people at all stages in the buying cycle—from people with demonstrated interests to customers just about to buy (or book).

Across the Display Network, Smart Display campaigns combine 3 optimization technologies to take the labor and guesswork out of targeting, bidding, and ad creation:

- **Automated bidding.** Using Target CPA as a basis, Smart Display campaigns optimize to set your bids according to the likelihood of conversion in each and every ad auction, seeking to give you the best possible value.
- **Automated targeting.** Targeting optimizes as your campaign runs, which means your ads increasingly show where they'll get you the most business. Where applicable, Smart Display campaigns use dynamic prospecting to match your feed to the likeliest converters.
- **Automated ad creation.** Ads are automatically generated from the building blocks you provide, like headlines, descriptions, logos, and images. They responsively fit into almost all ad spaces across the Display Network.
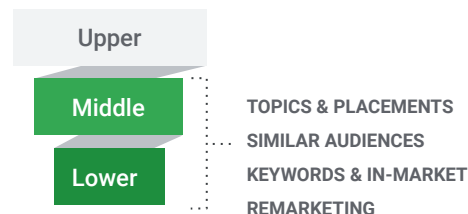
Your Google Ads data and site content   **Prediction**   **Combination of Targeting**

- Existing Targeting and Creatives
- Landing Page and Site Content
- Audience Lists
- Audience Interests

Upper

Middle   TOPICS & PLACEMENTS

    SIMILAR AUDIENCES

Lower   KEYWORDS & IN-MARKET
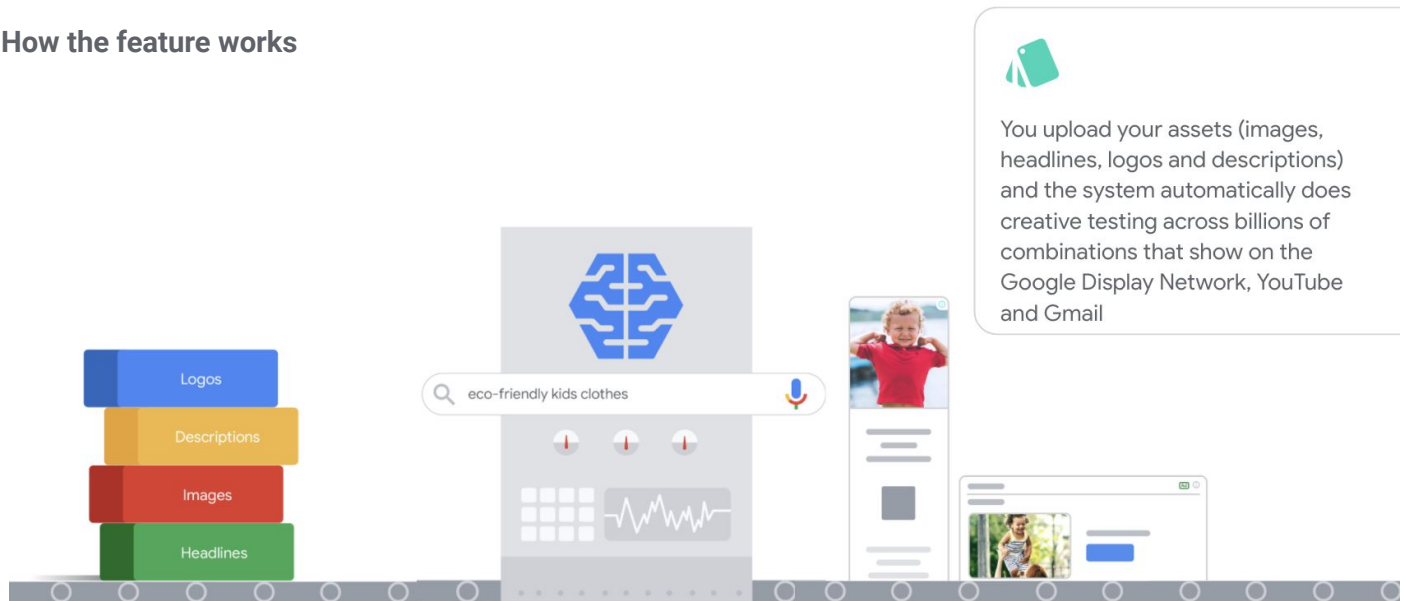
    REMARKETING

Optimize across re-engagement and new customer acquisition

Uses Google Brain to provide audience and contextually relevant expansion across remarketing, Similar Audiences, Audience Keywords, In-Market segments, Topics and Placements.

Google Ads

Responsive Display Ads (RDA)

How the feature works

You upload your assets (images, headlines, logos and descriptions) and the system automatically does creative testing across billions of combinations that show on the Google Display Network, YouTube and Gmail

We recommend starting with a Responsive Display Ad, a partially automated format that uses text, images, and your logo to create an ad layout that's optimized to the website it appears on. These responsive ads can blend into the look and feel of the website and potentially improve performance.

You can find more information on how to create a Responsive Display Ad on the Help Center.

Search & Display Ads aficionado? Take your digital marketing one step further with Hotel Ads, an ad format specifically created for hoteliers. Check out our **301 Guidebook: Getting Direct Bookings**.