

HOW TO UTILISE PAY-PER-CLICK ADVERTISING TO BOOST BLACK FRIDAY AND CYBER MONDAY SALES

CIRCUS
PPC AGENCY

BLACK FRIDAY AND CYBER MONDAY ARE THE TWO DAYS AHEAD OF CHRISTMAS THAT CAN MAKE OR BREAK A BUSINESS'S YEAR. IT'S CRUCIAL THAT YOU HAVE A PAY-PER-CLICK STRATEGY IN PLACE, AND ARE READY FOR THE SPIKE IN TRAFFIC!



INTRODUCTION

Remember the pre-smartphone days when Black Friday (and to a degree, Cyber Monday) were all about who has a better elbowing technique in stores? That sense of accomplishment when you managed to snatch up that last discounted TV from under your neighbour's nose in the local appliances shop? That's what Black Friday is still all about: the experience, the rush, and the sense of urgency.

In today's online world, not much has changed. No, you can't push Uncle Bob out the way to grab that toaster your Auntie has been dreaming of – but you can use a special discount code first. To entice such behaviour, a carefully created digital marketing strategy is crucial.

While all channels of digital marketing contribute to success, paid search is the most reactive of all of them and therefore particular attention should be paid to what can be achieved with a carefully and well-crafted PPC strategy.

Therefore, we've prepared a short guide on how to make the most out of the pre-Christmas sales. Remember, your competitors are doing it – and so should you!

1 REVIEW LAST YEAR'S PERFORMANCE

There's a significant chance you have used paid search advertising in previous Black Friday campaigns. That data will give you invaluable insight into how to ensure the success of this year's campaigns. Asking yourself the following questions, review your AdWords data from previous years:

- What did you learn?
- Which ads performed best?
- Which ads didn't work very well?
- Can you re-use any of the content this year?
- What improvements can you introduce?
- Are your hero products from last year still relevant?

Analysing historical performance will give you a chance to know what to expect and how to prepare your accounts to get the best results on the day. Pay particular attention to the activities which achieved the best ROAS (Return on Ad Spend), analyse peak user search times and ensure you have ads ready to run at those times.

Reviewing how your accounts performed last year will lessen the impact of last-minute adjustments to accounts and allow you to prepare for every eventuality.





2 DO YOUR RESEARCH

By now, you have probably extensively researched which of your products customers are going to be looking for, based on last year's sales. To build upon that knowledge, you can utilise tools available from search engines themselves.

A good place to start is Google Trends, which will help you answer the question of what users are searching for this year. This will aid you in creating a clear plan of what offers you will be running on products for both Black Friday and Cyber Monday (and throughout the weekend).

Another tool to consider is Google Analytics – diving deeper into the data will allow you to analyse insights such as bounce rates, which will tell you what parts of your site are underperforming. Those are the areas which will need optimising ahead of the Black Friday weekend for better performance.

The promotions you have will be individual to you, so this is something you'll need to decide internally. However, it's important to keep an eye on what your competitors are doing. You don't want to have a 10% sale on an item that your competitors are holding a 50% sale on!

3 SET AUTOMATED RULES

Google has a number of automation tools to help you manage your PPC accounts during this busy time. The relevant one, in this case, is Rules. They essentially allow you to dictate when to activate and pause elements of your PPC account. In the case of Black Friday and Cyber Monday sales, this can be applied to manage ads.

Setting rules will allow your ad copy to go live at midnight without you sitting there having to manually update it. Here are a few examples of what you can do with Rules:

- Schedule ads for special promotions or events
- Change keyword bids to control your average position
- Raise keyword bids to ensure that ads show on the first page
- Send yourself an email if a campaign's budget is nearly exhausted early in the day

By being prepared, you can create promotional ad copy well ahead of the time of the flash sale. You can use rules to activate and pause these ads as they begin and end.

Read more on setting flash sale rules here:
<https://circusppc.com/q4-retail-promotions-play-rules/>



A close-up photograph of a person's hands writing in a spiral notebook on a desk. The person is wearing a dark blue shirt. In the foreground, there is a white coffee cup on a saucer and a laptop keyboard. The background is slightly blurred, showing a window and some office equipment.

4 CRAFT AD COPY

Bin the boring, generic ad copy and opt for something more festive. Including simple phrases like ‘Christmas Offers’ or ‘Gift wrapped for Xmas’ can make all the difference. The best way to achieve great results is by testing various options and then choosing the one which converts best while continuing to test more.

Utilise Google’s Structured Snippets. Structured snippets are non-clickable ad extensions that give you more room within your ad copy to highlight special offers and discounts. They help to increase CTR and can be set at the account, campaign, or ad group level.

You need to make your ads stand out: this weekend, everyone will be trying to grab users' attention so try these few tricks:






- Add a countdown to your ads. Introducing a sense of urgency is the oldest trick in the book, but one that still works wonders!**
- In the same spirit, if possible, integrate your ads with your stock levels – this will allow the ads to display messages such as “only 37 left in stock!”**
- Change sitelinks to include specific sale terms, such as “30% off all stock” or “Today only, 2 for 1!”**

5 ADAPT WEBSITE COPY

Not only do your ads need to be snappy and clearly reference Black Friday and Cyber Monday sales – but they also need to fall in line with the rest of your website and promotional communications. It's crucial to match the messages between your website and ads to ensure the user has a smooth journey through the whole buying process.

Introduce dedicated landing pages, and make sure potential buyers can easily find what they're looking for. If you have the resources, redesign or rearrange your website, so it displays the promotional items first. This way even if someone came to the website looking for another item, they might be tempted to buy more as it is at a discounted price.

Here's Amazon's Black Friday dedicated page, which already offers discounts on certain items (and cleverly weaves in the urgency by adding countdown products to each product)

 <p>DEAL OF THE DAY \$139.99 Price: \$353.22 (60% off) Ends in 15:05:44 Samsung POWERbot R7010 Robot Vacuum Ships from and sold by Amazon.com. ★★★★☆ 125</p> <p>Add to Cart</p>	 <p>DEAL OF THE DAY \$8.83 - \$21.08 Ends in 15:05:44 Save up to 40% on select Crayola ★★★★☆ 18</p> <p>See details</p>	 <p>DEAL OF THE DAY \$37.79 - \$99.99 Ends in 15:05:44 Under \$100 Work & Safety Boots ★★★★☆ 1881</p> <p>See details</p>	 <p>DEAL OF THE DAY \$33.99 - \$218.99 Ends in 15:05:44 Save up to 25% on Braun and Venus ★★★★☆ 1548</p> <p>See details</p>	 <p>DEAL OF THE DAY \$4.49 - \$162.00 Ends in 15:05:44 Save on Thanksgiving Kitchen Essentials ★★★★☆ 1012</p> <p>See details</p>
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6 UTILISE REMARKETING

Remarketing one of the best tools digital marketers can utilise for Black Friday and Cyber Monday sales. Surely, over time, you have compiled a significant database of users who have previously visited your website, as well as those who have made a purchase.

Use this information to craft a specifically designed remarketing strategy. Knowing what users are looking for and what they have previously purchased is key to figuring out what they might be looking for during Black Friday weekend sales.

Say someone has previously purchased a candleholder and a set of candles from your website in April. Remarketing will allow you to target them with a winter-themed candle set perfect for this time of year. Same goes for other industries and the people who are looking for gifts and presents for loved ones.

Moreover, the data behind browsing habits will enable you to track the purchase journey and focus your efforts on those customers who dropped out in the later stages to entice them to come back and complete the purchase.



7 THE BIG DAY

The Black Friday weekend will undoubtedly be one of the busiest times of year for PPC managers. Even if you've meticulously planned all the campaigns, you will still need to ensure you monitor the accounts on the day. This is to ensure that any unforeseen circumstances are swiftly responded to.

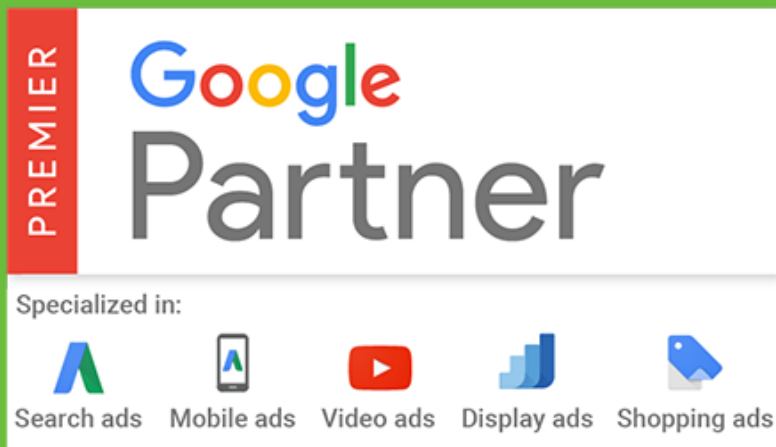
For example, if your site goes down, the ads will need to be paused immediately; same goes for performance – if the site capacity falls, or the stocks deplete at an unexpected rate, you will need to reduce bids and scale back activity on certain promotions.

Also, don't forget to keep an eye on your budget caps and make sure you do not hit them. This applies especially to those campaigns which are performing really well.

And to find out more about how to get your accounts ready for Christmas, have a read of our blog:
<https://circusppc.com/ppc-account-ready-christmas-2017/> .

For more information, don't hesitate to contact us on 0113 88 77 285!





ABOUT CIRCUS PPC

When Circus was founded in 2009, we had a strong single objective; to see companies grow through successful and intelligent PPC marketing. All these years on, the goal remains the same.

We believe that companies deserve expert advice from experienced PPC specialists they can trust. That's why all of our team has at least five years' experience as a PPC specialist. We implement tried and tested strategies, constantly reviewing and refining them, testing new technology and methodologies. No two clients are the same and therefore, no two clients receive the same PPC package. We implement an individual strategy that not only meets our clients' goals but exceeds them.

As the leading PPC agency in the UK, we consistently deliver measurable results, showing high-level growth for our clients alongside a reduction in the cost per acquisition (CPA). Your success is our success, and for that reason we have a proactive and forward-thinking approach, allowing us to implement a strategy that develops as your company develops, and adapts to changes in the market.

CONTACT US

LEEDS OFFICE

Address

Pure Offices
4100 Park Approach
Thorpe Park
LS15 8GB

Telephone

0113 88 77 285

Email

info@circusppc.com

LONDON OFFICE

Address

Hamilton House
Mabledon Place
Bloomsbury
WC1H 9BB

Telephone

0207 85 94 259

Email

info@circusppc.com