

6 strategies to master your online presence and drive sales to your stores

Increasing in-store sales isn't easy, but with the right approach you can see significant results very quickly and for much less money than you might think.

The following guide is about how to use online ads to boost in-store sales. It includes proven strategies for maximizing your physical sales and increasing the efficacy of your online ad buys.

1. Now is the best time to go digital

COVID-19 has seen a rapid growth in online sales and shopping. Many millions more people around the world are spending more time online, buying more online and searching online for products and services they need in their area.

Businesses are paying attention to the new reality and putting in money accordingly.

As Megan Graham [notes](#) for *CNBC*:

“Americans spent \$791.7 billion during 2020 on e-commerce, up 32.4% from 2019, according to data published by the U.S. Census Bureau in February.”

Now is the best time to go digital, as competition has also brought ad rates down.

2. Master your market

More and more people are shopping online during the pandemic, however one factor which many businesses are missing out on is understanding that a massively increasing number of people are also searching online for physical products and services near them.

Google searches for “in stock” are currently up 800% year-over-year and searches for “takeout restaurants” are up 20,000%.

Those are just two examples.

If you can understand who your online ads are targeting and offer potential customers the information they want quickly and clearly, you can help draw many more customers to your business in-person via online ads.

Online ads don't just have to be for virtual transactions: they can be a magnet for customers to come to you in person.

3. Get a digital makeover

What's the first thing people see when they Google or Google map search your business or your business category and your company shows up?

They see your Google "My Business" window with photos, store hours, information and directions.

It's like what people see when they walk down a physical street but the online version.

And it matters a lot for getting people out of their chair and into your store.

You should edit this to ensure all the information is up-to-date, the photos are professional and engaging and the ratings are positive.

You should also make sure to link your My Business section to your Google Ads account to ensure you get accurate customer insights and valuable market information.

In particular, linking with Google Ads will tell you how many people who Googled you visited your store in person (offline conversions).

4. Own your online presence

Omnichannel advertising options such as Google's local inventory ads. Having these set up increases your market penetration, communication with customers and provides you online and offline conversion data.

This can be highly valuable to you in order to improve your business strategy, marketing and product or service lineup to increase sales.

Local inventory ad data does much more than just give you raw numbers.

It tells you specifics such as how many people clicked to call you, visited your site from the My Business window, clicked for directions and so on as well as time so you can get insights into people's schedules and online visits and how that drives or reduces in-store sales.

You will be given clear data estimates on how many customers interact with your ad and later come to your store in person as well, which is key to see the efficacy of your online campaign.

Customer privacy is still protected, as the data is anonymous and aggregated. It is not based on individual clicks and visits but is extrapolated overall from the amount of traffic you're getting compared to in-store visits and other factors.

5. Put Google to work for you

Google has the top machine learning technology in the world, and you can put it to work for your business using the Smart Bidding feature.

Smart Bidding can make sure you never pay more for ads than you should and bid on ad prices in real-time based on the market penetration and reach you are trying to achieve.

By balancing your performance goals with your budget and ad pricing, this feature will ensure your online ad spending isn't wasted.

By ensuring that you're also measuring offline conversions you can also make sure that Smart Bidding tells you about ad opportunities that are likely to drive physical customers to your location, including YouTube Smart Bidding coming soon.

6. Get specific and translate digital to physical

In many cases you may wish to specifically promote a new product, sale, menu, event or product, store announcement or new service but be unsure how to translate it from Google Ads to people walking in your store.

As Google local ads product team leader Reena Nadkarni [says](#) of Google's Local Campaigns option:

“Local Campaigns allow you to reach customers across Search, Maps, Display, Gmail, YouTube, and, of course, your business profile page in one campaign. It’s designed specifically to grow foot traffic and sales at your locations.”

Let’s get physical!

As you can see, there are numerous effective ways to turn online ads into physical customers in your store and this trend is only going to increase as people turn online before they head out to shop in person.