XPLN

The Importance
of Insight

The ultimate
Google Shopping booster

How to get more out of your shopping ads

Almost two thirds of all Internet users planning to buy something start by looking online for information about the products or services they are interested in. Amazon, eBay, Idealo – the big players among the online marketplaces – are all frequently-used sites for research. For more than one in five Internet users however, Google is still the first port of call for research. This is reason enough to make the most of the opportunities that Google now offers in e-commerce, and to take a closer look at how to optimise your own performance in Google.

With Google Shopping, the online giant has created a product search engine that represents the sales channel with the highest turnover for some retailers. Users who are at an advanced stage in the purchasing funnel particularly like to use Google Shopping for product and/or price comparisons. Google Shopping thus functions as a central sales driver, and provides online shops with high-conversion traffic. The platform is one of the most important building blocks in the online strategy of many players in e-commerce, and is becoming an increasingly powerful performance channel.

In order to make the most of the full potential of Google Shopping, there are some important things to consider. On the following pages you will learn how you can get even more out of your e-commerce activities with Google Shopping campaigns.

Your data feed is worth gold

In order to be successful with Google Shopping, a high-ranking placement is essential. However, anyone who wants to advertise their products via this channel will soon find that there is comparatively little space here, with many competitors. The best positions are limited and therefore highly competitive.

In contrast to portals which compare price alone, Google's algorithm sorts the shopping ads according to the relevance of the search queries. The basis for calculating the relevance of your ads is your product data feed. In order to be found with the right product in the so-called PLAs (Product Listing Ads), it is therefore essential that this is maintained comprehensively and with high-quality information.

The data feed is the foundation for your Google Shopping campaigns. With the right maintenance of your data feed and the associated criteria, you will benefit from Google's reach – you will reach purchase-oriented users, increase the traffic on your site and boost your conversion rate. This white paper provides you with the most important tips in a clear format, so that you can get started immediately with the improvements.

Care more about your data!

The Google Shopping algorithm serves up ads according to the relevance of the search queries. This relevance is made up of many different factors, which – provided they are carefully maintained – are going to be decisive in the success of your products on Google Shopping.

One thing is certain however: there isn't a single 'correct' path to success. What is usually true online is also recommended for Google Shopping campaigns: test different approaches and check which product ads are popular with which target group.

Nevertheless, there are a few points that can lead to more traffic and better conversion with Google Shopping ads, taking into account the most important criteria that are decisive for the prospective buyer.

The top criteria for successful Google Shopping Ads

———— Title

———— Description and link

———— Price

———— Picture

———— Landing page
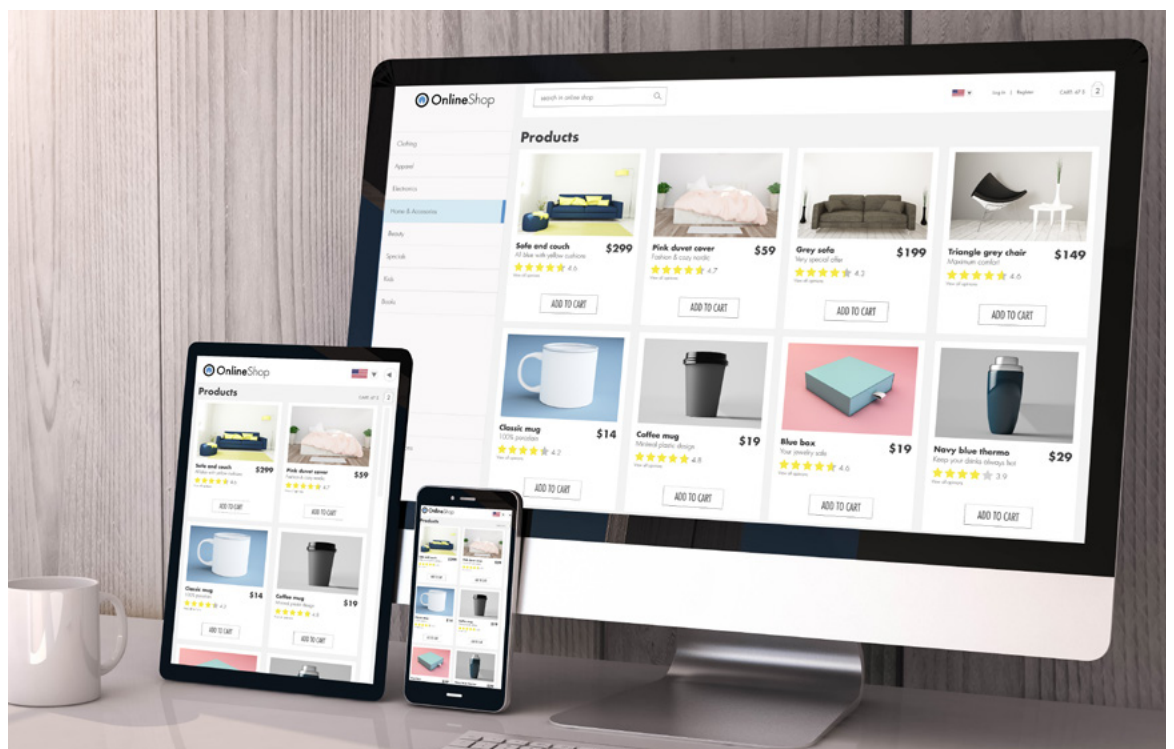
First things first – optimise your title

One of most important attributes in the data feed is the title. It goes without saying that the most important product information should be mentioned here. Nevertheless, there are a few tips and tricks you can use to set yourself apart from the competition and boost the performance of your ads.

An optimised product title is beneficial for the placement of your products on Google Shopping in two ways. Firstly, this information flows into the algorithm that determines whether the product is relevant to the user: if the title matches the search query and the algorithm classifies your ad as relevant, this increases the visibility and thus the impressions of your products. On the other hand, the user also sees at first glance whether an ad or product is interesting for him or her.

The most important information includes:

——— Brand

——— Product and synonyms

——— Attributes such as colour, size, number…

As a rule of thumb, the most important information should be at the beginning.

Google Shopping currently provides a maximum of 150 characters for the title description, with the first 70 characters visible in the ad. Within this range of characters, you should describe your product in the best way possible so that the information that is decisive for making a purchase can also reach the user. Depending on the product category, information can be assigned different levels of relevance, and a different sequence of attributes in the title may be appropriate.

Title optimisation alone often works wonders when it comes to improving impressions and click rates. Just try it out with some of your products and see how your visits increase in a short time!

Next step– product description and link

For an optimal Google Shopping ad, a meaningful title is not the only important factor. To improve the performance of your products, an optimised product description is an absolute must. This is because Google also uses the text of the product description to improve the findability of your product.

At first glance, the description contributes less to the ranking result than the title, and is therefore less relevant for the algorithm. Retailers often use the manufacturer's product texts or treat the description as a minor matter. Errors in spelling or grammar, however, very quickly affect the user's buying interest negatively: you lose authority and risk your image. For many customers, a product description that is missing or contains errors is a deal-breaker.

In order not to lose customers to the competition unnecessarily, you should therefore take a closer look at your products. Consider the Google Shopping ad as the entry page to your online shop, and design your product description carefully. What information is the user looking for, and what arguments do you use to convince your customers to buy the product from you? In addi-

tion to key information that's relevant for the purchase decision, it can also help to respond to the season or to current trends, for example, or to address the user on an emotional level through storytelling. Nevertheless, you should be careful (unless the product requires it) not to scare off your customers with too much information. Users do not like to read while shopping, especially when they are researching with mobile devices.

Pay particular attention to the following points:

—— Check your data feed regularly and remember to apply changes in Google Shopping if you make adjustments in your shop

—— Make sure that the colour, size or finish of the product is output consistently to all channels

—— Think in terms of your customer, and make sure your data feed is properly maintained so that a search matches the results.

Keep going – set the right price

You have now laid the foundations for successful Google Shopping ads by optimising your texts and titles. Here's where another crucial factor comes into play – your price, which is the main deciding factor in getting a click.

In order to succeed on Google Shopping, a competitive price is increasingly becoming the number-one criterion. The more comparable the product on offer, the more transparent it becomes (for both the algorithm and the customer) how to select the most attractive offer.

The price has the strongest effect on the purchase decision if the products are identical. On the one hand, the comparability is therefore highest for the customer. On the other hand, in the case of identical products in Google search, the product is only displayed once in the right-hand column and the prices of the various providers are listed one below the other. **The price including shipping costs thus becomes the sole deciding factor.**

Keeping an eye on the offers of the competition and adjusting your own prices accordingly should therefore be one of your core tasks if you want to operate successfully with Google Shopping. In contrast to writing product texts, however, this task presents you with a time-sapping challenge: competitive prices are not a one-off effort, but a continuous responsibility.

Numerous competitors and strong competitive pressure are certainly not new in e-commerce. The Google Shopping algorithm, however, aggravates the situation for market participants and forces them to take action. For a long time now, players with manual „search and compare" strategies have not been able to keep pace. Numerous competitors, a fierce price war and (above all) a dynamic market make competitive pricing a challenge that cannot be mastered on its own.

Support is at hand however in the form of smart tools that monitor prices and the competition. They provide the transparency you need to know the prices in e-commerce, observe your competitors, understand the market and react flexibly and quickly to dynamics.

Price crawlers collect market prices for your products from a wide variety of online sources such as major search engines, price comparison portals, platforms and marketplaces, as well as directly from market companions. Dynamic pricing algorithms automatically suggest new prices to traders based on the prices determined and other sets of rules. What is particularly relevant here is that you can develop your own pricing strategy with any number of individual rules. Thus, the tool not only monitors prices, but also takes delivery times, availability and shipping costs into account. The algorithms are based entirely on your requirements and determine individual sales prices tailored to your products. This way you avoid the danger of a downward price spiral.

In return, you will receive the calculated prices every hour (or if necessary, more or less often – depending on price volatility) and can thus adapt to current market conditions in a highly flexible manner.

Final sprint - use strong images

In addition to the factors mentioned so far, the product image in particular is decisive for a successful Google Shopping ad. Its effect is often underestimated however. People generally perceive images better than text – so you have the opportunity to convince potential buyers at first sight. In PLAs, product images take up the largest part of the ad and thus have a major impact on the click-through rate (CTR). To stand out among many similar ads, a striking product image is therefore often very effective.

In most cases, retailers use the manufacturer's images for their data feed. They give away valuable clicks, because other providers usually use the same images. In order to push your click-through rate, you therefore need to take action in terms of image material.

As a rule, different images are available to you from the manufacturer. As a first step, test which images will best reach your target audience. Sometimes early successes can already be found simply by mirroring an image. Of course it is even better if you create your own product images. This gives you the opportunity to show different perspectives of the product or to present the product in a different way.

You should pay attention to these points with your product pictures:

——— Only use high-resolution images

——— Use the available space

——— Place the product in front of a white background: so-called 'cut-outs'

——— Show product from different perspectives

Concentrate on your top sellers at the beginning. You will see how your click numbers change after a short time. The more comparable the offered product is, the greater the effect will be.

Peak performance – the landing page

You have optimised the most important criteria on Google Shopping, you're continuously maintaining your product data feed, and yet you haven't seen much of a sales increase? One reason could be your landing page. The previous factors all relate directly to your data feed. But this is only the first step. Optimised ads increase your reach and generate more traffic on your landing page. In the second step, however, your own webshop or landing page is also largely responsible for an increase in sales. Even during the ordering process, you can still lose customers to the competition if, for example, your payment terms are not practical or your delivery times are too long.

So think about your customer: if the potential customer comes to your landing page through a Google Shopping ad for a black iPhone 11, for example, he or she will most likely not want to end up with the white variant. The user's product search and the results must therefore match, so as not to cause confusion on the home stretch.

The highest bounce rates are due to inconsistent data. A lack of quality content on your site quickly erodes the trust and credibility you have built with a quality Google Shopping ad and in many cases inevitably leads to bounced visits. Therefore, pay special attention to the consistency and quality of your data.

The landing page is your opportunity to generate sustainable success. Therefore, you shouldn't see the maintenance of the page and its product data as a means to an end, but as a real opportunity. Because once a customer has been convinced to make a purchase, the probability that they will return increases significantly, and thus not only ensures a one-time increase in sales but also lasting business success.

Ready for take-off with the revenue driver Google Shopping

Success on Google Shopping with just a few clicks: unfortunately, it's not always as easy as it sounds. For the complex search algorithm, many different factors have to be considered and continuously optimised. In addition, one of your tasks is to keep your data consistent on other channels (especially your web shop).

On Google Shopping, the price is the main deciding factor when it comes to click numbers, and therefore has an influence on the placement of your ads. Nevertheless, it is a misconception that only the lowest prices are displayed at the top. The Google Shopping algorithm does not sort (as already mentioned) by price, but by the relevance of an ad, which is made up of various factors. We have explained in this white paper what are currently the most important factors.

The decisive factor for success in e-commerce is therefore not to be the cheapest provider, but to pursue the perfect price strategy. Bundles and offers in particular increase the click and purchase probability on Google Shopping many times over. The recipe for success is therefore a sophisticated, automatically adjusted pricing system with frequent updates. In combination with an optimised data feed and a customer-oriented landing page, nothing stands in the way of a sales and profit boost.

Google Shopping is one of the most important revenue drivers in e-commerce – but only if you maintain your data feed properly and keep up with the times. We would be happy to help you develop your individual pricing strategy, and integrate a price/competition-monitoring tool, laying the foundation for lasting success in e-commerce.
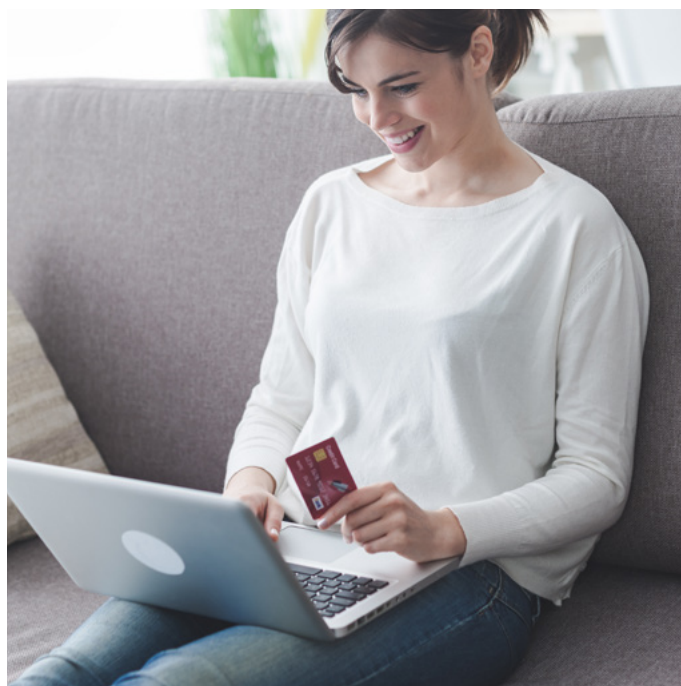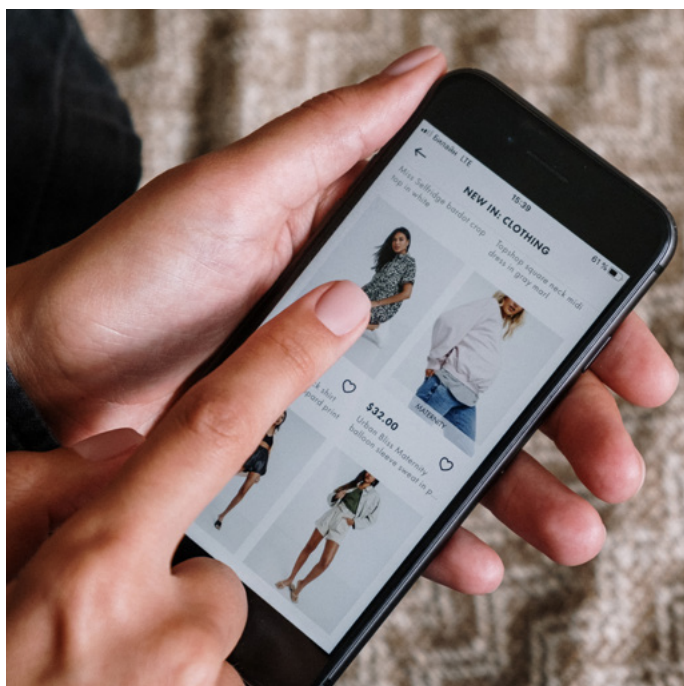
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You've read enough. Let's talk!

We are very familiar with your day-to-day work in the e-commerce sector. And we know why reliable data is the key to confident decision-making.

Let's sit down and talk about how we can address the challenges you face every day and improve your sales and margins together.

TELL ME MORE

ABOUT XPLN

XPLN unearths buried e-commerce data troves and reveals their riches, empowering our clients to make confident decisions and take decisive action. Our unique SaaS+ approach combines AI-based software with human expertise and data consulting to correctly interpret data and use them profitably. It informs crucial branding decisions by major brands and retailers and offers structure for maximized performance. This is the heart of XPLN – The Importance of Insight.

XPLN supports key players in diverse industries such as Calvin Klein, Tommy Hilfiger, Gardena, Euronics and Swarovski.

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