

7 questions **growth marketers** should ask about their search investments



Search engine marketing (SEM) greatly improves the impact of integrated marketing campaigns to help drive business growth, but at many organizations, questions remain about its value and effectiveness. To assess the performance of your search marketing investments — and to identify opportunities for improvement — ask yourself these seven questions.

QUESTION 1

Does your marketing strategy rely heavily on one channel?

A single-channel marketing strategy might seem like a good way to simplify and focus your budget. But a multi-channel approach creates synergies between your channels — delivering more than the sum of its parts:



In 2013, lead management campaigns integrating **four or more channels** outperformed single- or dual-channel campaigns by **300%**.¹



Advertisers who move from a single channel to two or more channels see **an average 3x improvement in ROI**.²

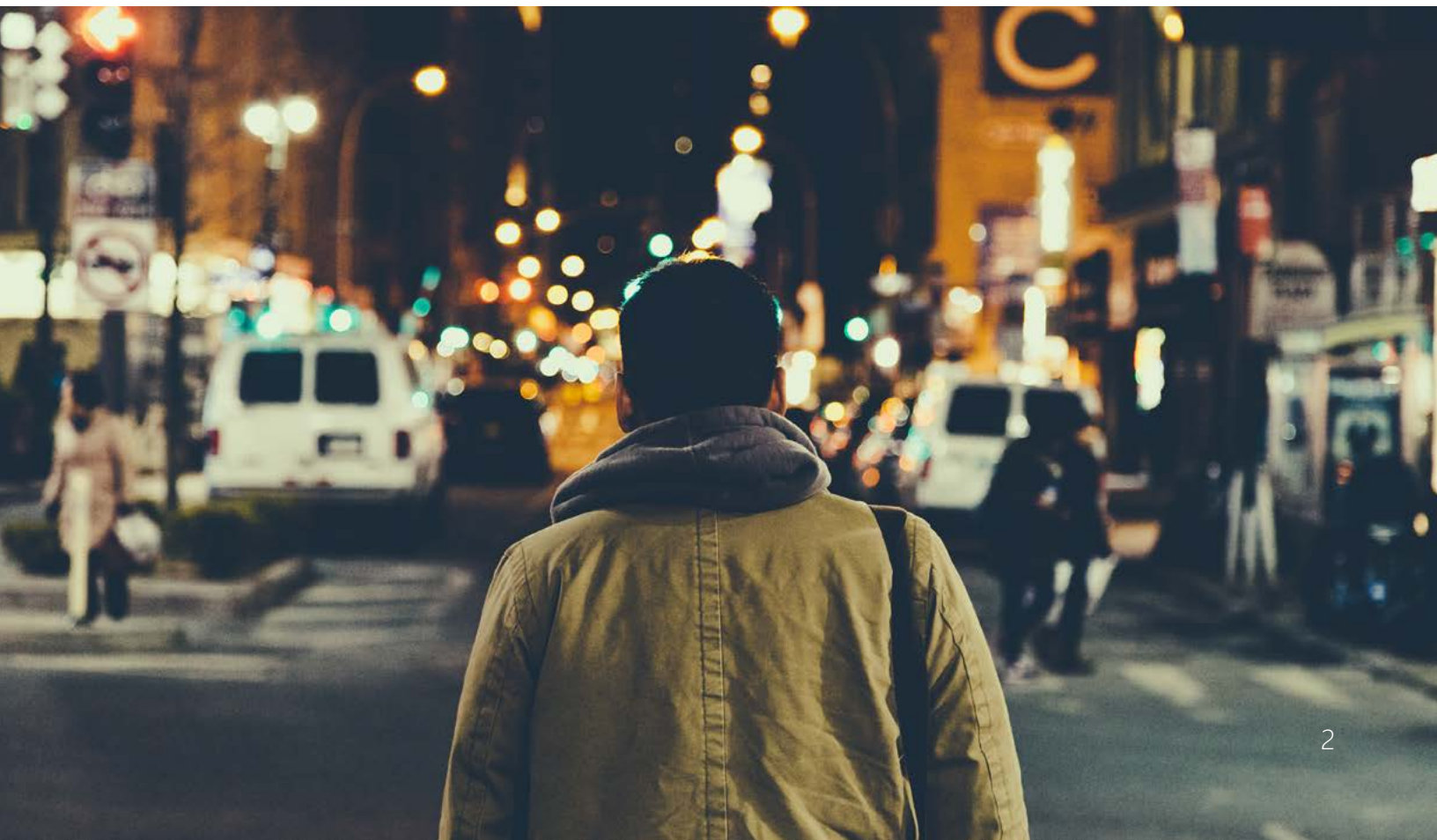


Consumers who see ads in multiple channels **convert 24% more often** than those who see them in one channel.³

Within paid search, it's important to diversify your efforts:



Capitalize on Bing Ads to reach the **58 million searchers who are exclusive to the Bing Network** in the U.S. alone.⁴



QUESTION 2

Are your search campaigns designed to work together with your other marketing efforts?

As the backbone of your marketing strategy, your SEM activities should integrate with your marketing efforts in other channels.



Use keywords from social, TV, email and other campaigns in your search campaigns to ensure alignment, amplify your messages and strengthen your funnel.

Search is particularly effective at creating this kind of marketing synergy:

Bing Ads and social	Bing Ads and TV	Bing Ads and email
3% higher conversion rate ⁵ 14% higher average order value ⁶	65% to 98% increase in search volume after release of TV commercial ⁷	19.99% fewer touch points on purchase paths with email and Bing Ads ⁸

➔ To learn more about how Bing Ads lifts your other media investments, download [**"The growth marketer's guide to search."**](#) **START READING**

QUESTION 3

Are you tracking your conversions?

To determine whether your paid search campaigns are yielding the desired outcomes and generating ROI, you must understand how customers behave on your site.



With **Universal Event Tracking (UET)**, you can easily track what searchers are doing after they click on your ad. Rather than tying a paid-search click to a specific action, you just create one UET tag and place it across your website. With a single UET tag, you can connect that click — and its associated keyword — with multiple conversion goals.

This, in turn, keeps valuable customers from slipping through the cracks simply because they didn't follow a single, narrow definition of a "conversion" on your site.

QUESTION 4

Are you bringing high-qualified leads back to your website?

UET also supports a second, and equally important, advanced targeting capability: remarketing. Think of remarketing as a second chance to reach users who show potential value but who leave or drop out before they actually convert on your site.



Remarketing in Paid Search uses UET tags to track user activity on your site and create remarketing lists. You can then retarget those users when they search on the Bing Network.



With Bing Ads Remarketing in Paid Search, Microsoft Store typically sees a **50% higher return** on ad spend compared to the leading paid search platform.⁹

To get the details on Microsoft Store's remarketing strategy, read "[**Microsoft Store: Finding the blend**](#)"

QUESTION 5

Are you bidding beyond your branded terms?

Search marketing excels at reaching audiences that know little or nothing about your brand. In a recent study, when consumers see branded ads for category search terms, the brand in the ad benefits in a number of ways — including a boost in purchase intent metrics.¹⁰

To capture these types of SEM benefits, Bing Ads offers several capabilities:



Bidding on category keywords: Putting your branded ad in front of searches for general, category search terms can deliver proven benefits.¹¹ As an advertiser on the Bing Network, you can take advantage of the [Bing Ads Intelligence tool](#) to research and expand your keywords, and refine your bidding strategy.



“Conquest” keyword bidding: This practice consists of winning bids on a competitor’s branded keywords. For businesses advertising on the Bing Network, consult the [Keyword Planner tool](#) when considering the benefits of pursuing a conquest strategy.

QUESTION 6

Are you allocating budget in real time based on campaign performance?

Campaign-level budget allocation has typically been a manual activity involving lots of data collection, number-crunching and spreadsheet work to assess and track campaign ROI, and to make budget allocation choices.



The **Shared Budgets** feature is a boon for every SEM team: It automatically distributes a single daily budget among any number of campaigns. For example, imagine your business makes news and unexpectedly receives a high volume of website traffic. You risk leaving money on the table if you’re unable to grab budget from lower-priority or lower-performing campaigns.

For teams that sometimes run hundreds of targeted, related campaigns in parallel, Shared Budgets offers a huge advantage.

QUESTION 7

Are you taking advantage of the latest search ad products and services to increase click-through rates?

Building an SEM campaign can be time- and labor-intensive. Supporting tools and resources are critical to maximizing the impact of your campaigns while managing your marketing team's workload. Bing Ads offers the following support tools, so team members can set up stellar campaigns with ease:

- ✓ **Expanded Text Ads:** create longer, more engaging, mobile-optimized ads with stronger calls to action
- ✓ **Enhanced CPC:** automatically analyze and optimize bids in real time on any number of keywords
- ✓ **Ad Preview Tool:** see search results pages for your keywords without affecting your campaign impressions or CTR
- ✓ **Bing Ads Editor and Bing Ads Editor for Mac:** streamline your campaign management for SEM
- ✓ **Google Import:** easily expand your online reach
- ✓ **Bing Ads App:** manage your campaigns when you're on the go
- ✓ **Free coaching:** let Bing Ads experts help you get started, with advice and best practices on setting up your Bing Ads account, creating ads, optimizing campaigns and more.

For growth marketers, understanding the value and effectiveness of SEM activities is vital for acquiring new customers, increasing ad engagement and maximizing the ROI of paid search activities.

➔ To learn more about how Bing Ads can help you make the most of your paid search investments, visit us at advertise.bingads.microsoft.com.



- 1 Apexx, "[Multi-channel marketing's positive impact on your ROI](#)," 2014.
- 2 Turn, Global Digital Audience Report, July 2013 – September 2013.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 comScore qSearch, Explicit Core Search (custom), U.S. December, 2016.
- 5 Microsoft, Consumer Journey Attribution Study, January 2015 – May 2016. Study of the customer journey across digital channels in the U.S., Pepperjam, commissioned by Microsoft, 2.6MM orders and 17.7MM path events from 10 attribution clients (including a majority of brands in the fashion & apparel industry), January 2015 to May 2016.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Microsoft, [Value of Search: Search + TV](#), 2017.
- 8 Microsoft, Consumer Journey Attribution Study, January 2015 – May 2016.
- 9 Microsoft, "[Microsoft Store: Finding the blend](#)," 2017.
- 10 Microsoft, Brand Impact of Paid Search Study, 2016. Study of U.S. consumers who will probably/definitely switch car insurance providers in the next 3 months; conducted online, Ipsos, commissioned by Microsoft, 634 participants, August to September 2016; at 90 percent confidence level.
- 11 Microsoft, [Brand Impact of Paid Search Study](#), August 2016 – September 2016.



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