

Dynamic Search Ads

Playbook

Google™



WHAT

Introduction to Dynamic Search Ads

What are Dynamic Search Ads?

Dynamic Search Ads offer a way to advertise on Google.com without keywords, allowing advertisers to harness their website's content to deliver more relevant ads and landing pages to users based on their search queries. They are an efficient way to drive incremental traffic with positive ROI.

The DSA value proposition

DSA are all about adding relevance to your ads to drive better performance with minimal effort. By matching the advertiser's content to each user query and serving a custom ad creative and landing page, DSA shortens the user path to conversion. Additionally, DSA captures incremental traffic that might otherwise be missed by targeted keyword lists alone.

Better Performance

DSA shortens the path to conversion for complex queries

DSA aims to take users straight to the content they are looking for by automatically matching their specific queries with the most appropriate landing page. For example here we can see that someone has searched for "hyde park hotel london". DSA responds to this specific query by showing a tailor-made ad matching that search. Once the ad is clicked, it will take the user straight to the page they are looking for, shortening the path to conversion.

Automation is where the industry is heading






A recent poll shows that marketers who are already using automation value its performance and return on investment, with the majority rating it as fairly priced or worthwhile.



¹ Source: [Venturebeat](#)

It will give you back time to strategise

The scale of traditional paid search management has led to a lot of marketers using their time for manual, less strategic tasks. Harnessing automation will free up time that can then be spent on more valuable, strategic tasks, like audience list segmentation and proper attribution.

Monday		80% of time is spent dealing with manual, less strategic tasks
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		20% strategic

Incremental Traffic

15% of search queries that Google sees daily are brand new

Every day, Google sees over 500 million searches that it has never seen before, meaning no matter how much time you spend managing your accounts, you won't be able to capture all of that new traffic.

As over 500 million search terms per day have never been seen by Google before, there is an extremely good chance the traditional keyword-led approach will be missing out on a good number of queries. By combining DSA with a layer of audience targeting, you can have a highly targeted way of filling in the gaps of your search account.

- IAB

² Source: [BCG Study 'Cutting Complexity, Adding Value'](#)

Finding incremental traffic with minimal effort

Most of Dynamic Search Ads' traffic is incremental, picking up on the queries that you would have otherwise missed due to the large number of variables that have been added into search.

Unique ad headlines tailored for every query and optimised by site content

A custom headline to match every user query

Dynamic Search Ads dynamically generate a custom headline drawn from the content of the user query and the content of your site. This is important because our research shows that this level of relevance makes a real difference; 75% of online consumers in the UK have taken action after seeing a message from a brand that is relevant to them.³

Website content is large and dynamic

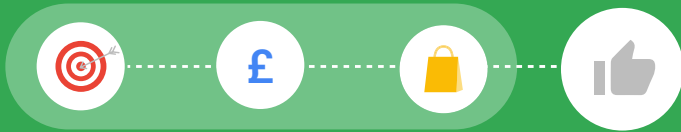
Dynamic Search Ads make it easy to advertise against shifting product inventory and content hidden deep within your website. As your available inventory changes with seasonality and demand, DSA automatically provides coverage and a tailored ad experience.

Who should be using Dynamic Search Ads?

Dynamic search ads are a great solution if you:

- Are looking to find new incremental value efficiently, with automated targeting of specific queries to specific pages.
- Have large diverse inventory and fundamentally think in an inventory-centric way
- Travel, Retail and Local / Classifieds business in particular have seen large expansions in traffic from DSA

³ Source: Ipsos Moments that Matter Research, June 2015, UK



WHY

Success Stories and Proof Points

Brands that have already benefited from DSA

Over the last few years, many businesses have benefitted by adopting Dynamic Search Ads. In the travel sector, the combination of destinations and accommodation types can quickly balloon into a huge set of variables, making the task of ensuring search coverage both time-consuming and expensive. This was of particular concern to Hostelworld Group, who provide beds to adventurous travellers in more than thirty thousand properties around the world, and who wanted to maintain breadth of search coverage while achieving a viable cost per acquisition (CPA). Hostelworld opted to upload a feed of their ever-expanding list of properties for DSA to crawl, and by boosting conversion rates and reducing cost per click, the resulting campaigns achieved a CPA 35% lower than observed in equivalent generic search campaigns ([read the full story](#)).

Faced with a similar challenge of expanding coverage while controlling costs, hotel chain Travelodge also turned to Dynamic Search Ads. After exploring DSA's potential to drive incremental traffic for small, medium and large cities where Travelodge have properties, the brand included DSA campaigns targeting larger cities, optimised against time-of-day and using audience lists to further boost performance. Compared to the performance of equivalent generic campaigns, Travelodge's DSA activity achieved click-through rate improvements of over 100%, conversion rates up to 150% higher, while cost per click dropped by around 50%, leading to a much-improved cost of sales ([read the full story](#)).

For Virgin Experience Days, Dynamic Search Ads offered an opportunity to improve return on investment after a period of substantial growth. With a well-optimised account already successfully targeting high-volume generic keywords, the brand wanted to cover gaps created by lower-volume products that either changed frequently, or had recently been added to the range. Using DSA in conjunction with Remarketing Lists for Search Ads (RLSA) enabled Virgin Experience Days to maximise coverage with their most valuable audience, boosting click-through rate by 281%, conversion rate by 230%, and improving ROI by 89% compared to DSA campaigns not using RLSA ([read the full story](#)).

Dynamic Search Ads can help any business maximise coverage of a diverse range of products, as Tradepoint, the trade-only arm of B&Q, discovered when they began using Google's suite of Search Audience tools. Tradepoint took an audience-first approach to their campaigns, using AdWords Customer Match and Remarketing Lists for Search Ads, and then used DSA to ensure that each customer was presented with a tailored ad experience. In conjunction with their audience strategy, DSA helped Tradepoint improve ROI by an impressive 191% ([read the full story](#)).

Benchmarks

DSA delivers as a performance tool as well as a time saving tool. When comparing like-for-like broad match and phrase match vs DSA across multiple verticals globally, DSA campaigns delivered: 15% more clicks, 30% higher CTRs, 30% lower CPCs and 35% lower CPAs.⁴

15%+
Clicks

30%
CTR^s

30%
CPC^s

35%
CPA^s

When compared
with like-for-like
query performance

⁴ Source: Google Internal Data, 2016



HOW

Implementation and Bidding

How DSA works

Targeting

You specify the content of your website you want to target, add a daily budget, and select an ad template. You have **four targeting options**:

Categories: pages with a similar targeting concept are automatically grouped into the same category.

URL: for instance, target all pages with a URL matching 'example.com/shoes' (be sure to exclude non-relevant site areas such as blog or contact pages to avoid generating inaccurate matches)

Page content: for instance, target all pages that contain the term "shoes" (be sure to exclude non-relevant site areas such as blog or contact pages to avoid generating inaccurate matchings)

Page Feeds: upload a list of URLs and a custom label, then target ads to those label groupings. This gives you complete control over which URLs to target for serving Dynamic Search Ads.

Matching

When the user enters a query, if no exact match keyword is eligible to show, we look for the page that is the most relevant to the user query among the pages that have been specified. In order to do that, we consider both our organic and ads historical data, and look at the queries that have driven traffic to each page on the advertiser website.

Relevance

DSA will look to see if the search query relates to your page content. If it does, we then dynamically generate a headline based on the user query and the title of the page selected, insert it into the ad copy and use the page selected as the landing page for the ad.

Creating your first DSA campaign

- 1 Set up a new Search campaign in Adwords and select 'Dynamic Search Ads'
- 2 Enter your site URL and domain language
- 3 Create a single ad group to 'target all webpages'
- 4 Leave to run for four weeks
- 5 Look at category report and search query report to then create more granular campaigns based around categories

DSA Best Practices

- Use the core Extensions to improve quality score
- Add negative keywords to ensure that you only bid on content you feel is valuable
- Start by targeting 'all webpages' to see where the majority of your traffic will be coming from

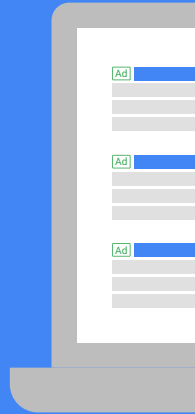
DSA Page Feeds

Beyond the initial targeting methods (Categories, URL, Page Content), using DSA Page Feeds can give you additional control over campaigns to ensure relevant pages are shown by providing a feed of URLs you want to promote and combine them with custom labels for targeting and organisation. For example, use a "Holiday Promotion" label applied to a group of products to easily activate and pause all ads within that promotion at the same time or mark out of stock products with an "Unavailable" label to prevent driving traffic to them. We think Page Feeds is great for advertisers who need more control and/or have more complicated site structure.

Booking.com, the world leader in booking accommodations online, has also experienced positive results with Page Feeds:

DSA Page Feeds has provided us with better ad performance through more relevant ads and allows us to reach more potential customers.

- *Richard Gradwell,*
Director Marketing PPC Innovation at Booking.com



HOW

Expansion and Optimisation

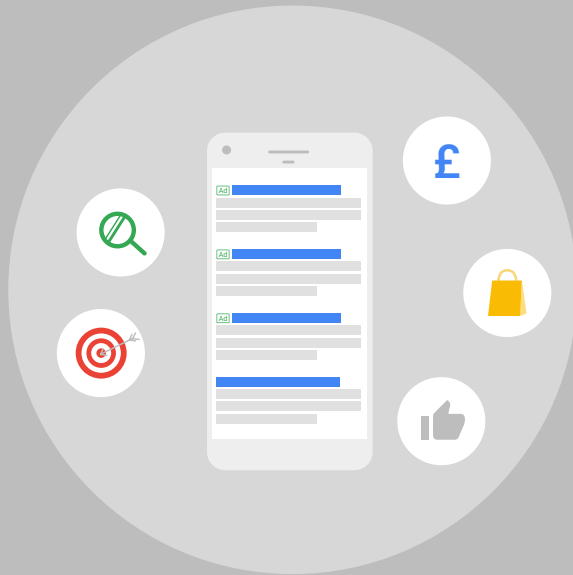
Automate your bidding to get the most of DSA

DSA will generate a dynamic headline and landing page for each individual user query, shortening the path to conversion. Combining this with Adwords Smart Bidding, which takes into account a multitude of real-time signals to optimise bidding towards conversions, allows you to show the right ad at the right time, every time. Even if your account hasn't received any conversions, DSA will benefit from having eCPC turned on.



Combine DSA with Audience Products

Bring your Search Audience strategy to DSA by layering your existing lists onto the campaigns. DSA rarely needs a “separate” strategy to the one employed on other areas of your accounts, but is disproportionately affected by the quality of your strategy, so if your regular strategy is already performing well, expect even better things from these lists on DSA.



Frequently Asked Questions

How do DSA and exact match behave?

DSA will never trump exact match keywords if the keyword is located in the same account or in an equivalent account, but may trump broad match keywords if we expect DSA to perform better than broad match keywords.

Can I use DSA if I'm using 3rd party tools?

The major 3P tools (DS, Marin, Kenshoo and Adobe) are compatible and serve Dynamic Search Ads supporting most DSA features (apart from automated bidding). We are continuing to improve integration all the time and recommend that when using a 3rd party tool you combine DSA with Adwords Automated Bidding. Our advice is always to work closely with the account management team from your 3rd party tool provider.

Will I lose control over my search campaign by using DSA?

No. Reports show search terms, headlines and landing pages for all the ads you serve, allowing you to optimise your campaign at any time.

Is it recommended to use DSA even if my website has a messy structure?

Yes. DSA categories scan your site and provide automatic targeting recommendations, no matter its structure.

Should I use DSA for keyword farming?

Whilst DSA can serve as a great tool to identify new keywords for your campaigns, we do not recommend using it for keyword farming, as data shows that DSA largely outperforms long-tail keywords.

What is the best type of targeting for DSA: categories or URL?

We recommend categories as they are automatically created based on your website content, and offer better coverage. They also allow you to serve more specific description lines within your ad groups.

- ▶ *For more information on Dynamic Search Ads and additional best practices, go to the [Adwords Help Centre](#).*

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