

Search Tunnel Vision: Agencies are Missing an Opportunity to Hyper Focus on the Shopper Journey

In many conversations we've had, we've heard agencies hyper focus on search and remain unaware or complacent on the other ingredients of the shopper journey. Everyone talks about and pushes search. According to Promethean Research's 2021 Digital Services Outlook, SEM/SEO/PPC is the second most popular digital service offering among all agencies. However, agency leaders are handicapped with a hyper focus on search only. The shopper journey now extends beyond search to include the product and marketplace

experience. Digital agencies need to provide services to help their brands improve these shopper experiences, and they require unified marketing intelligence to gain insight. Agencies are leaving money on the table by not using marketing intelligence to help brand clients get more clicks and sales.

Why should you care? Think as a digital shopper. As a shopper, you look at product prices, reviews, videos and lots more. You try to get deals by looking at promotions and expect free shipping and easy returns. You don't buy if a product doesn't give you this experience. This is a typical shopper's journey,

but why are agencies so focused on getting the shopper to your client's product only? Why are you pushing only SEO and ads to get the shopper's attention? You won't succeed if you bring a shopper to a product that offers an inferior experience. Brands will have inferior performance and fire agencies that give those results, won't they? Shouldn't you focus equally on helping your clients offer the experience shoppers expect? We caution that focusing only on search and ignoring the full shopper experience may provide an opportunity for other agencies to gain an edge over you. Brands will realize they aren't getting ROI and leave.

Despite the importance of an exceptional digital shopper journey, brands struggle here and hence have suboptimal ecommerce performance. Agencies have this opportunity to add services to enhance the digital shopper experience and grow their clients' ecommerce sales.

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THE LINES ARE BLURRING BETWEEN THE SEARCH, PRODUCT, AND MARKETPLACE EXPERIENCE

A smart agency starts with smart search by bringing their client brands to the channels the shopper is browsing. Amazon and Google are important. However, value shoppers browse Walmart. Target is a shopper choice with increasing online visibility and brick and mortar presence. A shopper in home goods checks out Home Depot and Wayfair. In electronics, shoppers check out Best Buy. As an agency, you must understand channels popular among shoppers and how to help your clients gain visibility here.

Assuming the shopper sees your brands, you want to catch their attention with the right offer. A smart agency goes into this area by utilizing product and marketplace intelligence to uncover what the shopper sees. On the digital shelf, you want your products to have tags like ‘Sale’, ‘Curbside Pickup’, ‘Price Drop’ and others. Unless your brand is a premium product, you don’t want Google ads to show that your products are exceptionally more expensive than other visible ads. You want to make the shopper comfortable with hundreds of 4+ star ratings and inclusion on review sites. You want to highlight free shipping and returns. When you get the shopper comfortable with your product, you get the click.

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Ads · Shop Bluetooth Speakers

Bushnell Wingman GP...
\$149.99
Bushnell Golf
Free shipping

Bose SoundLink...
\$129.00
Bose
★★★★★ (9k+)

JBL Charge 4 Portable...
\$129.99
Verizon
★★★★★ (7k+)

SALE

Free 2-day

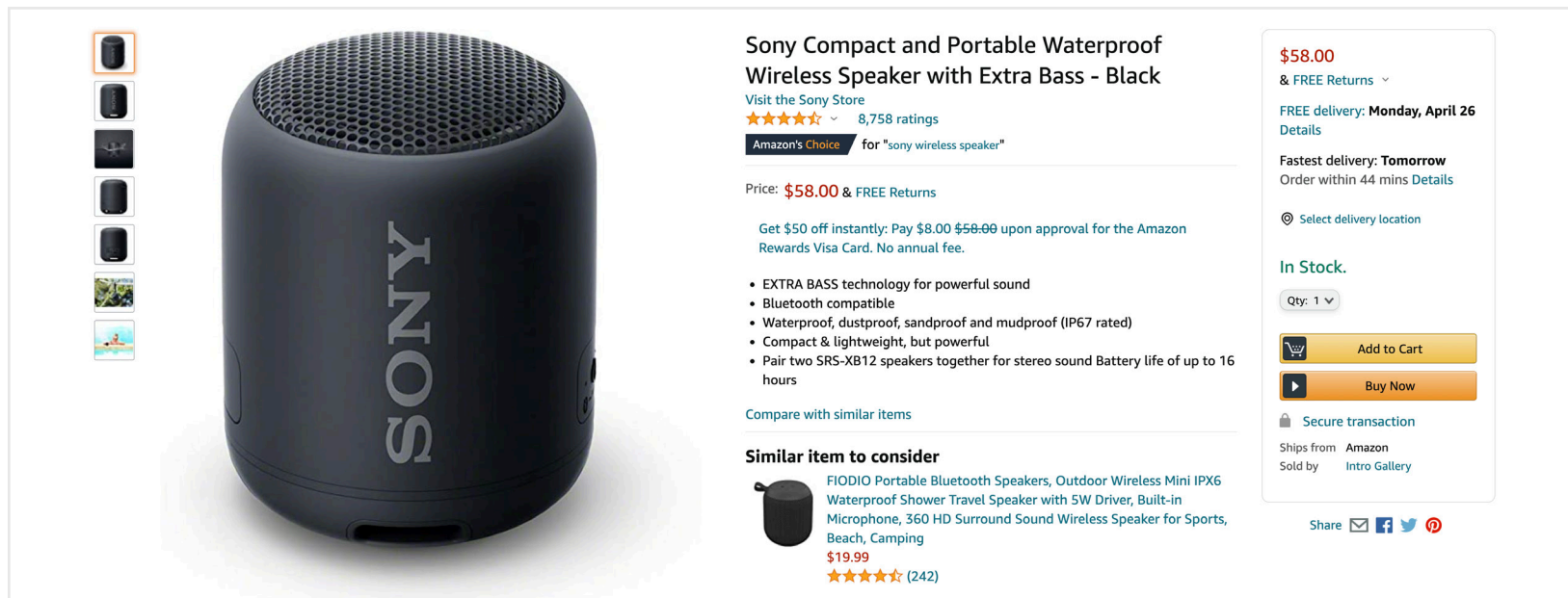
Klipsch The One II...
\$187.00 ~~\$249~~
Crutchfield

Bose SoundLink...
\$164.00
Bose
★★★★★ (7k+)

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Additionally, Google and marketplaces are always coming up with new shopping capabilities that catch the shopper's attention. You want to be one of the first to know about these capabilities and use them on your client's campaigns.

Yet that doesn't suffice! The shopper wants to experience the product by reading questions & answers, reviews (bad and good), watching video and browsing pictures, getting a sense they are getting a good price tempted with a promotion, and verifying free 2-day shipping and free returns. Stumble on any of these and the shopper browses away.



A NEW LENS INTO THE SHOPPER FOR AGENCIES

As a shopper, this kind of journey is obvious. However, as an agency leader, do your client brands delight the impatient and demanding shopper on the digital shelf? Are your client brands on top of these ingredients to get the shopper's purchase?

Agency leaders intuitively understand that as a digital shopper it's easy to shop with Amazon Prime membership. Yet many are not looking at the world from this complete shopping lens. Many are relying on incumbent search marketing tools and limited first party data provided by publishers. They have zero visibility on how competitors are changing and what publishers are changing.

Questions for you to ponder – for your clients – are you attracting a digital shopper with short attention wanting the very best product with the best price with the best experience? A tall order, but one that shoppers are expecting. Are you aware of competitor's new promotions and pricing discounts that can tank your client's sales? Do you know the changes Google is making that can hurt or help your clients? For example, are your clients' ads showing up but are very expensive vs others in the Google Shopping carousel? Are you aware of new products

competitors are launching or key geographies they are pushing? You need this to drive your clients' ecommerce growth. If you aren't, this is your opportunity to extend your services to help your clients' brands win in the eyes of the digital shopper.

IMAGINE A NEW, BETTER WAY TO MARKET TO SHOPPERS

You are serving Macy's. You understand Macy's competition by men's and women's clothing, home décor, cosmetics, toys and more across the top US metros. You understand competition with Nordstrom in San Francisco, New York, Chicago and Seattle in clothing, with Wayfair in home décor in Dallas, Miami and Atlanta, and with Target in toys in Denver, Phoenix and Washington DC.

You realize that Google ads are showing expensive Macy's men's shoes when you don't want to be perceived that way. You see that Macy's products don't have tags like sale and pickup today yet has pretty good reviews. And you are finding that Macy's is not offering easy free shipping. You extend your services to assist Macy's to address its weaknesses and customize its offering by geography.

NEW AGENCY SERVICES REQUIRE A NEW WAY TO LOOK AT DATA

Help your brand clients catch the attention of the impatient digital shopper. You've done the hard work to gain visibility of your client's products in their top markets. Why wouldn't you want to add value to get the shopper to click? And why wouldn't you identify and fix weaknesses in your client brands' product experience? You may already manage their product feed. Why not help them understand and improve their product reviews and rankings? Why not advise them to improve promotions when competitors are providing compelling offers and winning the sale? Why not enhance your creative to help clients' product images and videos becoming compelling? Why not enable clients to go into Walmart and Target? Why not add reputation management services by helping brands keep a pulse of reviews, rankings, product and seller feedback?

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These will help your brand clients delight the digital shopper and increase their revenue and

your fees. And you can win business from other agencies that aren't as forward thinking as you are.

As you read this, you may wonder how difficult it is to bring this to life. Given the latest advances in marketing intelligence, you can gain visibility directly from search engines and marketplaces. You can understand trends by geographies up to the zip code level at different times every day. You can track what is visible on desktop and mobile at the top of the screen, which the shopper rarely scrolls below. You can understand whether and how you are appearing on Shopping Ads, Text Ads, People Also Ask, Organic and other SERP components. You must keep pulse of reviews and price cuts. You can learn what Google is surfacing at the top of the page, whether it is knowledge panel, or people also ask, or shopping ads, or other SERP components. Additionally, you can read the product detail page to simulate what the buyer browses to experience the product. Shoppers read titles, images, videos, descriptions, questions/answers, prices, promotions, fulfillment, and sellers and seller reviews to get comfortable before buying.

Next, you may be wary of data accuracy as Google and Amazon are constantly making SERP changes. Your visibility data can't dip if Google PLA ads move from top of page to right and show two columns of ads vs three. SERP visibility from Text ads can't remain the same if Google pushes them to the bottom of the page. With proactive data quality assurance techniques, you can detect these changes and remain confident in data quality.

The icing on the cake - your teams can easily utilize this data. Gain data in a format custom to your needs. Connect the raw data from marketing intelligence into your business intelligence tools like Tableau or Google Data Studios and the insights will appear on your account team's dashboards. And you are not limited to macro trends data only. You gain visibility by shopper attributes like category, sub-category, gender, color, size, case pack and others by competition, geography and device, and be able to drive tactical improvements. To bring to life insights like better titles and advertising optimized by competitive pricing, push a product feed with recommended changes to the publishers.

PROACTIVE AGENCIES **KEEP CLIENTS**

We are passionate on this topic. We believe this is the proactive, forward-looking agency's opportunity to align with the digital shopper journey and win. Ignore this and your fees may go to another agency that helps the brand delight the digital shopper and win the sale.

Talk to an expert today by contacting info@growbydata.com or visit us at growbydata.com