

# YOUR GUIDE TO 2014 HOLIDAY SUCCESS

## CONNECTING CUSTOMERS TO YOUR PRODUCTS THROUGH SEARCH

### 1. OPTIMIZE META DESCRIPTIONS AND PAGE TITLES

- Identify changes you want to make well before any code freezes.
- Modify title tags to call out any products that are particularly good for holiday.
- Make sure any references to 2013 holiday have been updated to 2014.

### 2. DETERMINE AUDIENCE STRATEGY AND CREATE AUDIENCE SEGMENTS

- Use audiences to implement Remarketing Lists in Search Ads, which allow you to treat audiences completely separately in search – offer users different promotions and adjust bids depending on whether they've been to your site, have purchased before, are a new customer, and more.
- Consider broadening your target audience base. Your target audience may change as users shift to gift-giving mode.
- Create any new audience segments in advance of the holiday season so they have time to gather history.

### 3. OPTIMIZE PRODUCT ADS

- Evaluate performance of Shopping Campaigns post-migration and make sure you're taking advantage of new features, most notably, campaign priorities.
- Evaluate product group structure for both Google PLAs and Bing Product Ads. Consider using labels to segment products based on promotions, whether they have free shipping, or other features that will be useful in determining holiday bids.

### 4. PLAN FOR CHANGES IN CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

- Look at where key days fall this holiday season and determine how that may impact your business. 2014 will mirror 2013 in that the holiday shopping window is much shorter than average.
- RKG data suggests that consumers are being conditioned to search and buy earlier in the holiday season, in part due to promotions being offered prior to Cyber Weekend.

### 5. ANALYZE LAST YEAR'S HOLIDAY PERFORMANCE DATA

- Use last year's performance data to identify which days and times drove the most valuable visits to your site, or those visits most likely to lead to an order.
- Use click-date performance to inform bid strategy, not sales-date performance. It's important to tie orders back to the click events that drove those orders to accurately gauge the most valuable times to advertise.

### 6. TRACK AND VALUE PERFORMANCE BEYOND TRADITIONAL CONVERSIONS

- Evaluate your return on search investment beyond traditional revenue-generating transactions by making use of new features and tools that allow us to better track:
  - » offline conversions
  - » cross-device conversions
  - » store locator requests
  - » email sign ups
  - » catalog requests
  - » wish lists
  - » gift registry creations
  - » newsletter sign ups
  - » quote requests
  - » etc.

### 7. BUILD OUT KEYWORDS FOR NEW HOLIDAY PRODUCTS AND BEST SELLERS

- Identify which holiday products were popular last year and build out any keyword variations for products and product types that are likely to be popular again this year.
- Add any holiday-specific keywords in advance of high traffic days so they have time to gain traction and data.

### 8. EVALUATE USE OF AD EXTENSIONS AND FEATURES

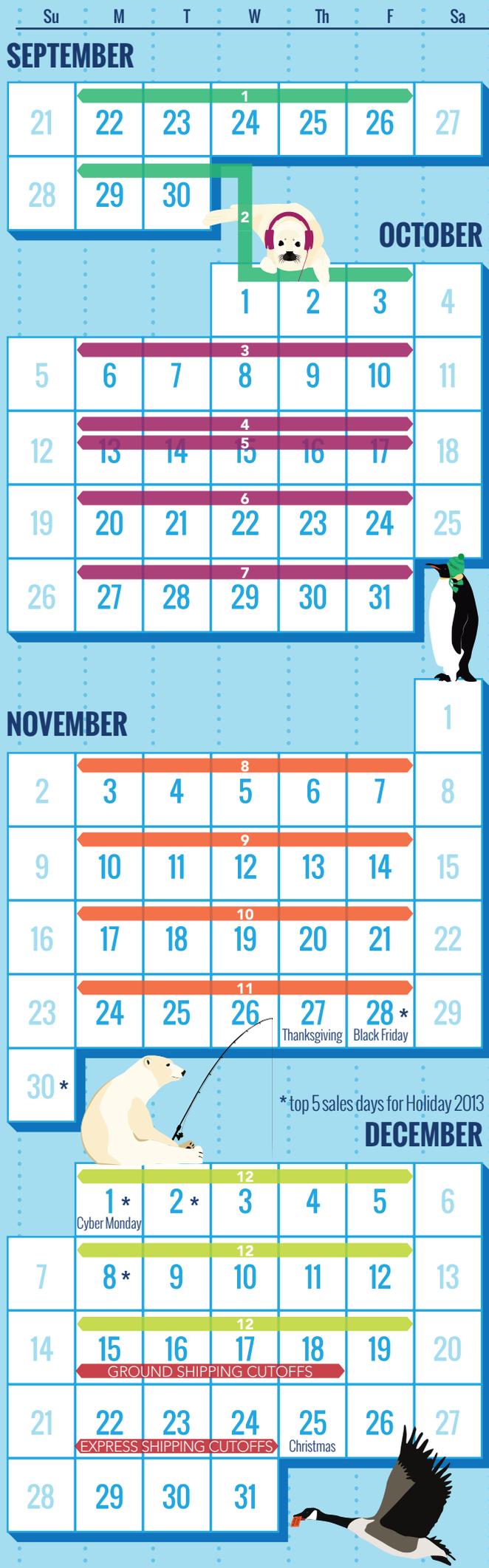
- Ad extensions increase your presence on the search results page, improve CTR, and make your brand more attractive to users. Identify any new ad extensions that can be adopted, including:
  - » app extensions
  - » location extensions
  - » sitelinks
  - » review extensions
  - » social annotations

### 9. PREPARE FOR HOLIDAY PROMOTIONS

- Submit or update a merchant promotions feed to advertise offers on Google PLAs.
- Determine a strategy for highlighting promotions in text ads, keeping in mind where in ad copy your offers historically perform best.

### 10. ADD ANY NEW HOLIDAY COPY VARIATIONS

- Analyze last year's holiday copy performance to identify where new copy needs to be created or tested.
- Load new copy versions as paused before you intend to activate them so they are approved by engines and ready for use.



### 11. IMPLEMENT HOLIDAY BIDDING STRATEGIES

- The change in consumer behavior during peak holiday season should be reflected in your bid strategy. In addition to performance-based bid adjustments, consider:
- » pausing any ad scheduling, day-parting, or week-parting
  - » increasing your max bid ceiling or safety check, if necessary
  - » adjusting efficiency targets per holiday goals
  - » recognizing that AOV generally decreases during the holiday season as users shift to gift-giving mode

### 12. EVALUATE PERFORMANCE & MAKE ADJUSTMENTS

Continually analyze performance and adjust strategies as needed.

#### 5 TIPS FOR KEY SHOPPING DAYS

**When analyzing last year's performance, be sure to align data based on key shopping days, not calendar dates.** For example, in 2014 each key day will be one calendar date behind last year. Keep in mind that drastic changes in promotional offers or ROI goals may significantly affect performance.

**Monitor intra-day performance.** Recording real-time cost and order data allows you to get a rough gauge of intra-day ROI and quickly identify any unexpected changes in performance.

**Inventory** is more likely to run out on high volume days – be ready to respond when products go out of stock or promotions change midday.

**Be prepared for spikes in mobile traffic** and make sure you're responding to the value of the traffic and not the volume.

**Identify shipping cutoffs**, which are typically midday, and be ready to pull-back as needed.

#### CONTACT US

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