



IS YOUR PPC AGENCY MANAGING YOUR **PRODUCT FEED?**

The Critical Role Of The Product Feed In Search Campaigns



We Turn Browsers Into Buyers

Is Your PPC Agency Managing Your Product Feed?

It's a simple yes or no question – but the answer has serious ramifications on your short and long-term Retail Search marketing performance. As a retail marketer looking to maximize profitability on product-driven PPC programs like AdWords text ads and Google Shopping, **it's your responsibility to place your PPC campaigns in the hands of an agency who has full-control over every major aspect that influences the generation of qualified Search traffic.**

The goal of this white paper is to:

- ✓ Aid retailers in the tedious process of exploring agency partners – with preference to those agencies that place product-focused PPC campaigns in the best position to succeed
- ✓ Emphasize the critical role of the product feed in Search campaigns – especially the ultra-profitable Google Shopping program

Ultimately, even if you find that the answer is a resounding YES for your agency, there are still very important questions that need to be addressed to ensure that they're taking full advantage of that product feed control.



If Your Agency Does Not Control Your Product Feed

If we're looking to maximize Google Shopping performance, *not* having direct, immediate access to the product feed NOR the expertise to positively manipulate it is a **catastrophic disadvantage**.

Simply put, **the product feed is the foundation for which a Google Shopping campaign is built and it dictates the ceiling potential for success on the program.**

The combination of an ongoing product data optimization process and expert AdWords management experience is what every retailer should expect to receive when looking to offload Retail Search management. This same emphasis applies even for keyword-driven channels like traditional PPC text ads, where valuable search term data can and should be used to enhance the feed for your product data-driven channels.



If you have difficulty picturing all the moving parts in the Google Shopping auction, [this video](#) sums it up nicely.



If your agency is not managing your data feed, there are **2 core disadvantages that will negatively impact your Google Shopping performance** and hinder your potential for channel growth.

Feed Suspensions

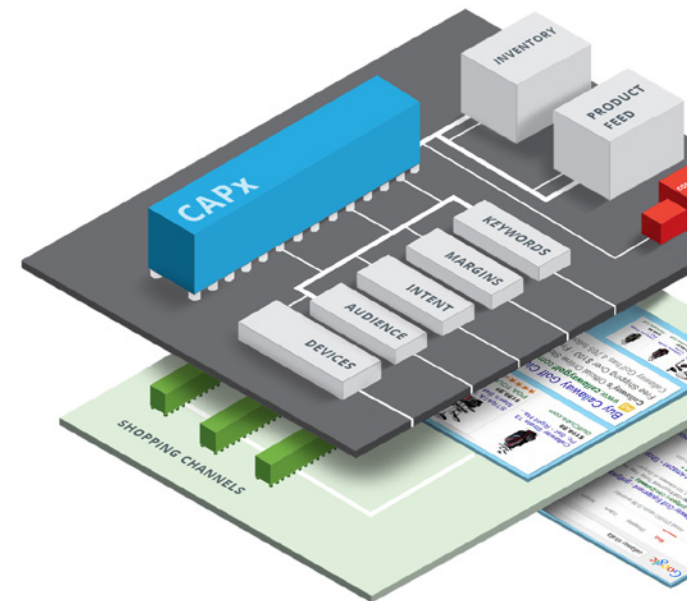
Feed issues happen. It's an unpredictable and frustrating aspect of Google Shopping management. For agencies without direct and immediate access to the feed, **the suspension period can be unnecessarily dragged out** due to back-and-forth communication with an IT department or third-party and by simply not having the experience with resolving feed issues.

For high-volume retail advertisers, **an entire feed suspension can result in tens to hundreds of thousands of dollars in missed out revenue.**

Feed Optimization

This is the most significant disadvantage for an agency – or any Retail Search channel manager, for that matter – to be faced with when not simultaneously managing the product feed.

To better understand why, one must learn the 2 significant transformations that a feed should undergo for optimal campaign performance:



Maximizing the Feed “Quality Score”

Just like a traditional AdWords text ad has a Quality Score associated with it, the Google Merchant Center feed has its own version of that metric. Upon launching a Google Shopping campaign, it's critical that the product feed is not only formatted correctly, but enhanced to the point where it's **as comprehensive as it can possibly be**.

This involves appending product titles and descriptions with relevant product attributes and addressing blank product attribute columns. **This feed exercise alone puts the Shopping campaign in the best position to succeed upon launch.**

Optimizing Feed Relevancy

But the quantity and allocation of data is only a slight and early-stage aspect of **true feed optimization**. High-quality feed optimization involves the ongoing process of improving product data relevancy by planting key search terms within the feed. These search terms should be discovered and analyzed by the actual campaign manager and then populated within the feed.

The long-term product is a feed that not only incorporates all of the readily available product content, but also the keywords that shoppers are using to find those products. **The results are product listing ads that are triggered and subsequently surfaced on the Google SERP** for the bottom-of-the-funnel, longtail queries that convert at a higher rate and at a lower CPC than less-specific shopper queries.

So without full control and direct access to the product feed, and, more importantly, without ample experience in dealing with feed issues and semantic feed optimization, **an agency that does not control your product feed inherently disadvantages both your short and long-term Retail Search marketing performance.**

If Your Agency Handles Your Product Feed

This is the ideal relationship to have with your PPC agency. Because alignment of the feed with the actual product ad campaigns are so inextricably tied to performance, having one centralized, true full-service solution where your master product feed and all of your Retail Search marketing campaigns are managed is an advantageous situation. But it's critical to ensure that both sides of the coin – ongoing product feed optimization & granular campaign management – are always top-of-mind and vigilantly handled with detail.

If your agency is managing your product feed, are they taking full advantage of that power? With the goal of ensuring that you're taking full advantage Google Shopping and other Retail Search channels, there are several questions you can ask your agency:



What Ongoing Customization or Testing Will be Applied to My Feed?

“Feed optimization” is not a secret – agencies know that product data is a critical component in Retail Search marketing. But the term has become an industry buzzword and, rightfully, a key selling point for many agencies. The challenge here is to get to the bottom of what “optimizing the feed” actually means in your engagement.

As mentioned earlier, maximizing feed comprehensiveness, a.k.a. feed Quality Score, and ongoing relevancy refinements should be the backbone of enhancement. Not having these core processes in place within the agency simply lowers the ceiling potential for the volume that can be generated on a channel like Google Shopping and puts the channel at a greater risk for wasted ad spend.

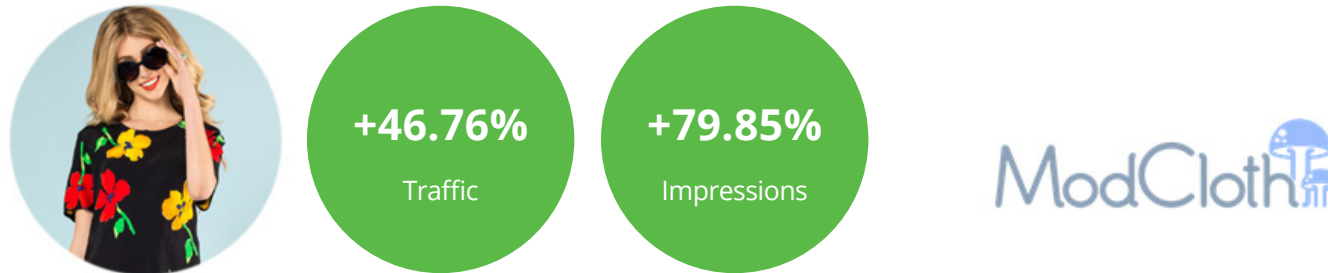
How Long Until You Expect to See Results?

Regardless of how long you’ve been partnering with your PPC agency, this question will address 2 core concepts: short-term performance boosts and long-term account growth.

Short Term Performance Boosts

Short-term performance boosts are a trademark indicator of great initial feed work. This initial feed work refers to improving the feed’s Quality Score, or maximizing the amount of relevant product content in all columns in the feed.

The results for [ModCloth's Google Shopping performance](#) are proof of this: a **47% increase in traffic** and an **80% increase in impressions** for a 3 week period compared to *the prior 16 weeks*. This is because when product titles, descriptions, and attributes are enhanced to be comprehensive and robust, the Shopping ads begin to surface for more relevant queries. This is especially true for Apparel.



Title Optimization Examples

| Before | After |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Essential Elegance Skirt in Black | ModCloth Rockabilly Long Full Essential Elegance Skirt in Black |
| Cosmic Chill Out Top | FluffyCo Vintage Inspired Mid-length Short Sleeves Cosmic Chill Out Top |

Long Term Account Growth

Long-term account growth occurs because of the combination of diligent account management and ongoing feed relevancy integrations. The reality is that effective

Retail Search management – specifically referring to the levers pulled within the AdWords interface – will only have a marginal immediate (ie. within the first several weeks) improvement on campaign performance, provided that the channel manager immediately addresses account settings and campaigns that are directly dragging down profitability.

Diligent account management has its biggest impact once 30 to 90-day sales performance data starts coming in, at which point this data can begin to inform performance factors such bid modifiers across multiple dimensions, campaign architecture, and budget allocation. It's at this time that valuable search term data – both top-converting search queries and irrelevant, non-converting queries – can be leveraged to optimize the feed.

What Now?

Schedule Your Retail Search Audit

CPC Strategy's Retail Search Audit is a complimentary 60-minute analysis and assessment of a retail advertiser's current Search initiatives. Performed over a screenshare and conference call with a Retail Search Strategist, **the Audit addresses the AdWords account, the Google Merchant Center, and the retailer's site.**

[Schedule My Audit](#)

