

A woman wearing a yellow ribbed sweater and white headphones around her neck is holding a silver smartphone. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light blue. The text is overlaid on the image.

Google Shopping Ads: Is It the Right Fit for Your Brand?

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nuanced media

Contents

Intro	2
What Is Google Shopping?	4
How Do Google Shopping Ads Work?	6
Why Should You Use Google Shopping Ads?	7
Who Can Advertise on Google Shopping?	9
How Can I Advertise on Google Shopping?	10
Adding Products to Google Shopping	11
Google Shopping Ads vs. Amazon Product Ads.....	13
Cost of Google Shopping vs Amazon	14
Are You Ready to Learn More About How Google Shopping Fits into Your Marketing & Branding?	16
About Nuanced Media.....	17

Intro

Thank you for downloading your copy of Google Shopping Ads: Is It the Right Fit for Your Brand?.

We created this guide to educate and empower you on your journey to e-commerce success. There are so many nuances about the e-commerce industry and we don't want anything to hold you back from the success you deserve.

It's so important to put extra time into educating yourself on the do's and don't of any e-commerce space you choose - whether that be Amazon, Shopify, or social shopping. The wrong decisions could limit your growth. However, the right tools and advice can build your brand, ensure success right out of the door, and help you to create the vision you have.

We hope you find our e-commerce best practices helpful and wish you the best of luck with your business.

-Ryan Flannagan and the Nuanced Media Team

Have you thought about the benefits Google Shopping has to offer? Google shopping ads could be what you need for your online sales to go through the roof! The platform isn't new to the eCommerce world, but recent changes – that now allow access to the platform for free – has made it a significant contender. It's one you need to pay closer attention to as you determine where to position your brand online.

Amazon is undoubtedly the leader when it comes to where customers begin their search for a product with about 63 percent of people using the platform for this. Google Shopping is quite valuable because it positions your product in front of people who go right to Google to research a product they're interested in purchasing. Google accounts for 35 percent of those shoppers seeking a product.

It sounds like a good deal for your brand, but is it the right decision for the best path to success? To find out, let's dive into what it is and how it works.



What Is Google Shopping?

In April of 2020, Google Shopping became a free platform to use. Google now allows users to seek out the products they desire located within its database. This simple-to-use platform for consumers relies on the Google search engine's well-loved and understood platform. Results shown in Google Shopping are listed separately from the organic search engines. This separation from organic search results creates its own shopping database for consumers to browse and compare products.



When the consumer uses Google to search for a physical product, the Shopping results show up based on the closest match to what the person typed into the search engine. There are free organic results viewable as well as paid promoted products – these are kept separate.

Google Shopping ads use product images, which is an immediate draw to consumers. They also use a cost-per-click advertising model. You'll also have your results show up in front of potential customers – those who are searching for products similar to your own.

There's lots to know about Google Shopping. For example, Google Shopping ads drive as much as 76.4 percent of retail search spend. In addition, 85.3 percent of Google paid clicks are generated through either AdWords or Google Shopping.

How Do Google Shopping Ads Work?

Google Shopping places paid ads at the top and the bottom of the search engine results page when a consumer types a product into the search engine. Organic ads – the ones that are placed based on SEO strategies and natural ranking – are in the middle of the page. This gives you far more reach to connect with customers as the ads are spread out across the page.

Google Shopping allows for personalized recommendations for ads based on key characteristics and user data. When the company created the latest update, they also added in nice features such as inventory lists to make it super easy for customers to find what they needed – even the checkout process is very streamlined.



Why Should You Use Google Shopping Ads?

There are a number of fantastic benefits to using Google Shopping as a brand. What you'll quickly find is the process is easy and the results can be powerful. Here are some of the key benefits:



It's a Visual Representation of Your Product and Brand

A big key to Google Shopping is that it is comprehensively visual – meaning, images of your product are displayed which leads to buyers not only recognizing the product they need, but also building your brand in the process. Visual content often gets much higher results in clicks and sales.



A Campaign Platform That's Built for Retail Advertising

Google, from nearly the start of its time, has been about helping companies get their products and services in front of customers who want these products. As a result, the platform itself is simple to navigate and positions products in customers' hands efficiently. From the platform's design to the algorithms used, all is done to ensure the customer gets the products and services they desire which works in your favor!



Powerful Reporting Tool & Competitive Data Resource

As one of the largest companies in the world, Google has a lot of data. That data is helpful to you because it can tell you who is looking for the products you are offering, how well your products are ranking for any keyword used, and much more. You'll have access to competitive data, too, including insights about what is helping your competition do well.

In addition to this, Google Shopping increases:

- Sales
- Visibility
- Brand Recognition
- SEO
- Qualified Leads

The biggest reason to use Google Shopping is because it will increase your traffic. As the largest search engine in the world – with some 90 billion search inquiries each month – this is where your product needs to be if a customer is using Google to find it. Instead of clicking on a retailer’s website to go to the product listing page (think Amazon), the customer can complete a few clicks and buy your product right from the search engine page. That delivers improved results.

Another key reason is the improved traffic targeting you may see with Google Shopping. Higher traffic is not the only benefit; you also need traffic that’s most likely to purchase your products. Google Shopping works well here because it offers a clear path for people looking to purchase a product to find it, buy it, and finish the process. You can target your ads better to cater to the specific market you’re after – even customers looking for specific products in a specific price range.

All of this translates into more sales and visibility. It helps your product to get in the hand of customers, builds brand recognition, and leads more well-qualified (think likely buyers) to your website. Google Shopping ads targeting is highly effective and ensures every dollar you spend on your ads is money that’s likely to offer the type of return you desire.



Don't Overlook the Ranking Factor

All of this also builds SEO ranking for your website and brand, which goes a long way to improve the overall function of your business.

The only way to rank at the top of the Google Search results is to use Shopping. Do a product search now on Google and see what happens when you do. Shopping ads are positioned right at the top – right at eye level of the viewer while Google ads are placed below this. If you want to be at the very top, you need to use Shopping.

More so, there isn't a lot of additional space for organic results (which may frustrate customers, but definitely helps businesses). You will not only have that top position, but also a visual image of your product ready for a customer to click on to purchase.

Who Can Advertise on Google Shopping?

To create Google Shopping ads, you first have to set up a Google Merchant Center account. You then will add your products to the Google Shopping platform. To do this, you need:

- A legitimate Google account, such as Gmail
- Add all of your business information into the Merchant account
- Add all business information, countries you operate in, and your website information
- Prove that you own the site by filing your website server information.

Google will ensure you are a legitimate company. Once they do that, you can begin the process of adding your products to the platform.

How Can I Advertise on Google Shopping?

Once you load all of your products into the system, you can consider creating Shopping ad campaigns using Google Ads.

In April of 2020, Google changed its Shopping platform to give companies the ability to list their products on the site without charging them to do so. Paid ads were then placed at the top and the bottom of the search engine results pages. These ads contain rich product information, including:

- The price of the product
- A thumbnail image of the product
- Business name

To use this type of campaign, you need to create a Google Ads account (if you do not have one) and then link it to your Google Merchant Center account. The process is just a matter of steps completed on the platform. You can create Google Shopping ad campaigns at this point that fit your specific goals and strategies.



Adding Products to Google Shopping

Advertising on Google Shopping cannot happen until you have added your products to your Merchant account. There are four parts to this: your store and products, your product feed, your Merchant account, and then Google Ads.

You'll need to use each component to ensure your campaigns are set up and ready to go.



Product Feed

This is a big spreadsheet-like feed that provides all of your products' data. You'll need to follow a very specific format and include key information required by Google. It's not complicated, but you have to get it just right for Google to approve it.



Merchant Account

Once you set up your Merchant account, you can move on to link your product feed to your Google Merchant Center. Then, you'll need to configure both shipping and tax settings. Lots of tutorials are available from Google to help you do this.



Google Shopping Campaigns

When all of that information is loaded and approved by Google, the next step is to create your Google Shopping campaign. Standard Shopping campaigns and Smart Shopping campaigns give you some flexibility in what style of advertising you'd like to do; the difference comes down to automation.



Shopping Ad Groups

You'll then need to choose Product Shopping or Showcase Shopping ad group. Product Shopping ad groups are the most common and work best when you have a product with a specific search term – like a brand and product name that consumers are likely to Google. Showcase Shopping is more general and for products that may have a broad Google search from consumers such as “dog toy.”

There's quite a bit more to consider about Google Shopping ads and strategies for them, but this explanation is just meant to give you some insight.

Google Shopping Ads vs. Amazon Product Ads

If you are like many business owners, the decision comes down to this: Google Shopping vs. Amazon Product Ads. Which is best and which should you choose for your business?

There's little doubt you need to only use one of these platforms if you want to connect with buyers in eCommerce. Both platforms are worthy of attention if you are selling products and plan to build brand recognition.

However, there are differences between these platforms. For example, Google and Amazon's advertising approaches in terms of where customers come into the sales funnel is very different. On Google, customers are at the very start of their search for a product. They may know what they want or they may not. On Amazon, people are often further into the sales process and are not just seeking information.

Google Shopping now allows products to be purchased through the platform without clicking away into a website. Since Google Shopping's changes in April, it has become more of the place to find information and then stay to purchase as well.



Cost of Google Shopping vs Amazon

For many companies, it really comes down to cost.

Amazon has two selling plan options. **In Professional selling**, you'll pay \$39.99 per month and then a per-item referral fee which varies by category. You can also choose the Individual selling plan which costs \$0.99 per unit plus a per-item referral fee and that fee also varies.

Google Shopping is free to use. You will be able to list your products on the site and have them rank in Google Search in the U.S. without cost. You can also sell your products directly on Google without paying a commission to do so, making it an attractive option.

In both cases, you'll still need to pay for advertising – getting your product in front of customers.



Is Google Shopping Right for Your Brand?

Probably the biggest reason to use Google Shopping – at least right away – is that it's a low-risk move. Because the platform is free to use, there is little in the way of you getting up and running quickly. The advertising model of cost-per-click advertising makes this a much more affordable option than other platforms.

Overall, Google Shopping is easy to set up. The listing process is simple and it's managed nearly fully within one account: your Merchant Center account. You can quickly get up and running, which means sales can start faster. All of this leads to getting customers to your website and building your brand as well.



Average Purchase Rate

You also have to consider if your products will sell on the site. The average conversion rate on Amazon is **9.55 percent**. The average conversion rate on Google Shopping is **1.91 percent**.



The Cons of Google Shopping

Google Shopping campaigns do not use keywords to determine relevancy. That's why it is so important to have product titles and descriptions that are keyword-rich, but are also designed to sell to your buyer. Google does not use keywords specifically. Instead, it uses data to see how well your products fit the query types into the Google search engine box.

You also cannot display a lot of information on your ads. If you have a product that consumers would not recognize nor know what it is or a product that requires a lot of information to sell it, this platform may not work well for you. You do have several types of shopping ads to choose from, but overall you'll find that if you need to educate your buyer about your product to convince them to purchase (or even click into your site), that's going to be a challenge.

Which is **best**? That depends on your product, but also where you are in the process of getting your business up and running. There's little doubt that Google is a viable option for those who want to rank well and need a low-cost way of getting their business up and running quickly.

Are You Ready to Learn More About How Google Shopping Fits into Your Marketing & Branding?

Google Shopping ads are an easy solution for many companies and brands. They are also a solid way to increase product sales overall, especially if your product doesn't require a lot of explanation. If you're ready to explore how well Google Shopping can work for your business, reach out to Nuanced Media. We can help you set up and manage your Google Shopping from start to finish.

About Nuanced Media

Nuanced Media is a digital marketing and e-commerce agency specializing in strategic Amazon and multi-channel marketing campaigns to build success around your product and brand. We offer the tools and resources to help you every step of the way through your e-commerce journey. We're proven, dedicated, and excited to work with you on making it all come to life and deliver the results you desire.

Call us to get started.

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