Get ready for the holiday season with the Skai Paid Search playbook
Paid Search Market Insights

What to expect this holiday season

The “Holiday Hammock”

Amazon’s October Prime event has pushed up ecommerce holiday events to October, shaping Q4 charts to resemble a hammock of two main spending events, bridging a period of slower spend in between; Advertisers must allocate their marketing budget over this elongated period.

Source: eMarketer
Improving economic conditions are beginning to spur ad spending growth.

**Paid Search by the numbers**

- **41.8%**
  - Total US Paid Search Ad Spending

- **10.8%**
  - Expected Paid Search growth from 2023-2024

- **$110.20B**
  - Total Forecasted Paid Search spend in 2023

- **3X**
  - Microsoft's US search ad revenue growth compared to Google's in 2023.

Source: eMarketer
Introduction

Prepare your 2023 holiday and Q4 marketing campaigns with Skai’s **Paid Search Playbook**, crafted by our internal experts to help you make the most of the year’s biggest shopping season.

The Skai Team is dedicated to enhancing your omnichannel marketing performance at scale. For this holiday season we’ve crafted playbooks for Retail Media, Paid Search, Paid Social, and App Marketing. Be sure to check out our additional solution playbooks relevant to your ecommerce strategy.

*Keep reading for Paid Search recommendations, tactics, and strategies from our marketing experts!*
Paid Search Holiday Toolkit

**Phase 1**
**Lead up**
*Prepare and set up for success*


**Phase 2**
**Go Time**
*Launch, monitor, expand, and optimize*

Stay on the pulse. Identify opportunities to optimize. Take action immediately.

**Phase 3**
**Lead out**
*Turn holiday learnings into 2024 strategy*

Sustain momentum and use remarketing to convert customers who didn’t purchase.
Phase 1: Lead up
Prepare and set up for success
Phase 1: Lead up

Set up and streamline campaigns

- Using Skai’s **Bulk Edit**, pause and archive campaign elements that are no longer relevant to create a streamlined program, and to reduce reporting and processing times during peak season.

- Double and triple check campaign setup with **Audits** to ensure ads point to the proper landing pages and offers, and that no issues will negatively impact advertising performance.

**SKAI PRO TIP**

Identify issues in campaign setup and structure, and get alerts before they impact performance results with **Audits**.
Phase 1: Lead up

Prepare to monitor campaign health in real time

- Prepare to quickly analyze campaign performance and surface any issues that need to be addressed in Skai’s Activation HQ, where you get a bird’s eye view of performance.
- Perform Audits of your campaign setup to ensure smooth ad delivery throughout the season.
- Keep campaigns on track all day long with Pacing Monitor.

SCENARIO

When preparing for the holiday rush, you’d like to find a way to streamline the campaign monitoring process. First, using Dimensions and Categories you label your holiday activity. Then, you create a view in Activation HQ that is filtered for your holiday campaigns. Using the Top Action Items section you quickly audit your holiday activity at a high level daily and make informed changes.
Phase 1: Lead up

Prioritize products with growing interest

✓ Uncover product trends and ensure you have campaigns supporting them with Smart Tags in the Products Grid.

✓ Identify and prioritize SKUs/ASINs that are gaining momentum at scale with Trending Products.

✓ Set appropriate budgets for products with growing or declining interest by drilling into the Smart Tag Panel data.

SCENARIO
Using Trending Products, you identify that a specific style of men's shoes are gaining significant momentum. Armed with this data, you can go into campaigns containing these products, prioritize SKUs, and capitalize on the increased interest.
Phase 1: Lead up

Keyword strategy musts for search term optimization

- Use historic holiday data to build a robust base of keywords for your Q4 campaigns.
- Identify and negate underperforming keywords with **Search Term Analysis** to focus spend where it’s most impactful.
- Avoid wasted spend by honing in on your most valuable search terms and with **Search Term Analysis**.

**SCENARIO**

During the holidays your ads may show up for searches that include holiday search terms, but are not relevant to your business. Using the **Search Term Analysis** tool, you can easily find these underperformers and negate them so no money is wasted during peak season.
Phase 1: Lead up

Organize campaigns and campaign elements

✔ Organize campaigns to support rapid analysis and optimization.

✔ Use **Custom Dimensions** and **Categories** to group campaigns, ads, and ad groups together and take advantage of advanced analysis, bulk actions, and performance optimization with just a few clicks.

Group elements (e.g. Black Friday promos), product category (e.g. sports socks, baby products), brand name, and more to identify and take action faster.
Phase 1: Lead up

Make data driven decisions for better performance

- Improve performance with A/B tests and pre-post Experiments.
- Launch tests on bidding strategies, ad copy, targeting, landing page and more within just a few clicks.

SKAI PRO TIP

Utilize Skai’s interactive Experiments dashboards and visualizations to distill information quickly by creating a Cyber 5-specific Dashboard.
Phase 1: Lead up

Audience strategy musts

- ✓ Expand audience reach with **Campaign Mirroring** to Microsoft.
- ✓ Leverage your own first-party data and customer match lists to reach customers with proven interest and intent for your brand and products.
- ✓ Reach out to audience segments similar to your most valuable customers.

**SKAI PRO TIP**
Create, target, and manage Google campaigns at scale in Skai. Then use **Campaign Mirroring** and keep Microsoft campaigns in Sync, all from one central location.
Phase 1: Lead up

Automate now. Thank yourself later.

✔ Automate all possible campaign actions ahead of time, based on scheduling, budget, and KPI performance with **Advanced Automated Actions**.

✔ Build out, template, and automate core reporting and dashboards to ensure you stay on track to hit campaign targets.

**Advanced Automated Action** templates for the holidays guide campaign performance, while **Scheduled Reports** and **Pacing Monitor** keep you in the know.

**SCENARIO**

During peak season, promotions often run only at specific times. This promotional ad copy may need to be turned on and off multiple times, and the general ads may need to be paused while the promotional copy runs. Using **Advanced Automated Actions**, you can create a decision tree to pause general campaigns and activate promotional campaigns simultaneously, saving you lots of time.
Phase 1: Lead up

Build a plan of action for every scenario

✔ Utilize Skai’s **Budget Navigator** to forecast possible outcomes and support the management of daily budgets and KPI targets across paid search campaigns.

**SKAI PRO TIP**

Whether KPIs are missed or your daily budgets need to be adjusted to reach your goals, Skai’s **Budget Navigator** will help you prepare and have a plan for every scenario.
Phase 2: Go Time
Launch, monitor, expand, and optimize
Phase 2: Go Time

Keyword strategy musts for intent and relevancy

✓ Expand automatic and broad match activity to capture new trends and consumer interests unique to the holiday season with Intent Driven Messaging.

✓ Incorporate high-intent keywords into your ad copy that drive engagement and efficiency with Intent Driven Messaging this holiday season.

SCENARIO
During peak seasons, it’s common to adjust ad copy to reflect holiday promos. Using the Intent Driven Messaging tool, you can identify which holiday search terms consumers are already using and then add them to your ad copy to increase your quality score and position in Google.
Phase 2: Go Time
Funnel traffic to the right landing pages

✓ Prioritize best performing landing pages by intent with Destination Optimization.
✓ Identify misalignment between customer intent and the landing page served.
✓ Uncover outdated or obsolete landing pages and take them offline to reclaim traffic.

SCENARIO
When creating holiday promo ads, there may be multiple landing pages driving traffic, with varying results. Skai’s Destination Optimization tool will pinpoint the best performing landing pages so you can get the most out of the traffic you are driving to your site.
Phase 2: Go Time

Analyze in flight and take action quickly at scale

✓ Analyze ongoing performance across campaigns, ad groups, ads, and keywords in Skai’s Performance Grids.

✓ Use Bulk Actions to optimize campaigns including:
  - Copy
  - Status
  - Budget
  - Bids
  - Match types
  - Keyword text

In just a few clicks, perform rapid analysis and updates across thousands of ad entities with Skai Performance Grids and Bulk Actions.
Phase 3: Lead out

Turn holiday learnings into 2024 strategy
Phase 3: Lead Out

Analyze results and apply key takeaways

- Utilize Skai Dashboards to view all of your aggregated cross-publisher data and gain additional context on your Holiday advertising performance in one comprehensive, interactive view.

- Identify core trends, audience preferences, and untapped opportunities throughout the holiday season, and leverage them to start 2024 on the right foot.

**SCENARIO**

After the Cyber Five, your manager asks for a comprehensive look-back at performance on your paid search results. You dive into the Skai Dashboards and generate a Paid Search Dashboard from the templates that reports on Google and Microsoft. You customize your Dashboard to include all of your KPIs. Once done with customizing it, you click the share button to send it to your manager, and export a copy for the client as well.
Skai’s advanced capabilities have you covered for all your paid search marketing needs.

**So you can enjoy the holiday season**

- Skai HQ
- Budget Navigator
- Pacing Monitor
- Dimensions and categories
- Intent driven messaging
- Trending Products
- Search Term Analysis
- Destination Optimization
- Bulk actions

- Auditing
- Automated Actions
- Portfolio optimization
- First-party data ingestions
- Scheduled reporting
- Experiments
- Incrementality testing
- Dashboards
- And more!
Thank you

Reach out to the Skai Team with questions.

skai.io