WeAdU · Field Guide

Google Ads Best Practices for **Multi-Brand** Resellers

2024 Edition

The year AI Overviews arrived with ads inside them, the Digital Markets Act rewrote Europe's results page, and profit became a bidding goal – what a multi-brand reseller should have done.

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1. AI Overviews, and the first ads inside **them**

AI Overviews rolled out to everyone in the United States from May 14, 2024, to the United Kingdom, India, Japan, Indonesia, Mexico and Brazil from August 15, and to more than 100 countries from October 28. At Google Marketing Live on May 21, Google said: "Soon, we'll start testing Search and Shopping ads in AI Overviews for users in the U.S."; on October 3 it announced that "ads in AI Overviews are now available for mobile users in the US", served from existing Search, Shopping and Performance Max campaigns with no opt-in. For a reseller, the tile had a new place to appear, and the same feed decided whether it did.

- Nothing to enable: the Shopping and Performance Max campaigns already running were eligible. What to do was read the search terms per brand for the longer, question-shaped queries that an AI answer attracts, and make sure each brand's feed titles and attributes answer them.
- Point brand campaigns at brand pages that answer the shopper's question – compatibility, size, what is in the box – because an AI answer sends a shopper who has already read a summary.
- Do not budget for it separately: it was a placement inside campaigns that already had a return target per brand tier.

2. Europe: the Digital Markets Act rewrites the results **page**

Google published its Digital Markets Act changes on March 5, 2024, two days before the March 7 deadline: in the European Economic Area it added "dedicated units and chips to help users find comparison sites in areas like flights, hotels and shopping", removed some of its own units, and required consent to link Google Shopping data with other Google services. On February 15, Google's Search Central blog had described new carousel

rich results and "product sites" units for shopping queries, tested first in Germany, France, Czechia and the United Kingdom. Agencies reported a Products filter and a Product Sites filter replacing the Shopping tab in results, and comparison-shopping services able to send free listings and Shopping ads to their own product pages. On March 25, the Commission opened a non-compliance investigation into self-preferencing; on September 10, the Court of Justice dismissed Google's appeal and upheld the 2017 fine. For a British or European reseller, the results page under a brand search was different in March from what it had been in February.

- Run a public Shopping reading the week after March 7 – a signed-out browser on the country's Google, one search per model, presence, product shown, price, "By …" label – and compare it with a reading from February; the auction had not changed, but the page around it had.
- Ask your comparison-shopping partner what it does with the new product-sites units and its own product pages, and whether your listings appear there; a partner with a real comparison site now had one more place to show them.
- Watch cost per click per brand through the spring: agencies reported rising Shopping-ad click prices as organic shopping surfaces shrank in the EEA.

3. Consent mode v2: the March **deadline**

On January 18, 2024, Google said that advertisers "may require immediate action to preserve ads personalization features before March 2024": consent mode v2 adds two signals, one for user data and one for personalisation, and without them audience, remarketing and Customer Match features for EEA users would degrade from March. For a reseller, the Customer Match list built across every brand since 2015 depended, in Europe, on a consent banner passing two new flags.

- Deploy the two new signals through the tag manager on every brand template before March, and check on one brand's page that the consent platform actually passes them.
- Read audience list sizes for EEA users per brand after March; a brand whose shoppers refuse consent more often loses more of its measured audience, with no change in real demand.

4. Performance Max gets brand guidelines, asset metrics and a beta for **negatives**

Through 2024 Google gave Performance Max more of what a multi-brand account needs. Final URL expansion gained beta controls on April 29 and experiments on October 23. Brand guidelines – a business name, logo and colours the automation must respect – were announced at Google Marketing Live on May 21 and began reaching accounts later in the year. On September 18, asset-level conversion metrics and impression-share reporting for Performance Max text and Shopping ads arrived, and at DMEXCO in September campaign-level negative keywords entered beta. In October, Performance Max stopped automatically taking priority over standard Shopping campaigns for the same products. For a reseller, that last change was the quiet one that mattered: a standard Shopping campaign could now hold a brand's flagship models on its own terms.

- Set brand guidelines per campaign where the campaign is a single brand's, with that brand's logo and colours under its distribution agreement; where a campaign holds a tier of brands, use the store's identity, not one brand's.

- Read impression share for Shopping inventory per brand campaign against the standard Shopping campaign of the same brand: the two now competed on equal terms, and the reading said which won the auction for the flagship.
- Ask for the campaign-level negative keywords beta and use it for the other brands' terms, as a second layer under brand exclusions.
- Turn final URL expansion off, or restrict it with URL exclusions, on any brand campaign whose tracking template or page set cannot take an arbitrary landing page.

5. Profit becomes a bidding **goal**

Gross-profit reporting was not new: conversions with cart data, combined with the *cost_of_goods_sold* attribute in Merchant Center, had reported profit per product for several years. What Google Marketing Live on May 21, 2024 announced was a profit-optimisation goal for Performance Max and standard Shopping campaigns, "in the coming months", so that Smart Bidding could steer toward gross profit rather than revenue. For a reseller, this was the year's largest single idea: the thing that differs most between the brands it sells is margin, and the bidding could now see it.

- Supply *cost_of_goods_sold* for every product of every brand in Merchant Center, from the supplier's price list; a brand without it is a brand the profit goal treats at face value.
- Implement cart data in the purchase conversion so that Google Ads knows which products were bought, not only the order total.
- If you would rather not hand Google the margins, send the order's margin, multiplied by a fixed factor, as the conversion value instead; bidding only needs the proportions between brands, not the true figures.
- Set the return reference per brand tier from margin, and check quarterly, because supplier pricing moves margins even when nothing in the account changes.

6. Merchant Center Next for everyone, and the feed rules of **2024**

"By September, all retailers will be upgraded to Merchant Center Next," Google said in August 2024, and the help centre switched over on October 1. The April 9 product data specification update added *structured_title* and *structured_description* to declare AI-generated text, IPTC tags to declare AI-generated images, *loyalty_program* in the US and Japan, *auto_pricing_min_price* and *free_shipping_threshold*, and made shipping cost required in India and New Zealand from July 31. In May, incremental feeds were deprecated: primary and supplemental feeds only, with offers expiring 30 days after their last submission. For a reseller, the rules now covered not only what a product is but how its text and images were made.

- Declare generated text and images with the new attributes rather than leaving them undeclared; a brand's product described by a model is still a product listing that must be true.
- Rebuild any incremental-feed process into a supplemental feed keyed on the product ID before May, and keep the primary feed refreshed within the 30-day expiry for every brand, including the slow-moving ones.
- Use the products view in Merchant Center Next per brand for limited-performance and disapproval counts; the interface changed, the brand-by-brand reading did not.

7. Demand Gen in 2024: Discovery upgraded, images generated, Shorts **added**

Remaining Discovery campaigns were upgraded to Demand Gen between January and March 2024. Generative image tools rolled out in Demand Gen in English from April 16; animated image ads built from product feeds for YouTube Shorts were announced on May 21; creative preferences and Google Video Partners inventory arrived in September; the minimum lookalike list size dropped from 1,000 to 100; and on September 4 Google announced that Video action campaigns would be upgraded to Demand Gen from the second quarter of 2025. For a reseller, the product feed now animated itself into Shorts, brand by brand, with a lookalike built from a list as small as a hundred buyers.

- Attach the feed filtered by brand to each brand's Demand Gen campaign, so the animated Shorts ads show one brand's models, and check the brand's agreement on generated imagery before enabling the image tools.
- Seed lookalikes from the all-buyers list; with a 100-buyer minimum, a brand-level list is possible but a store-level one is stronger.
- Prepare the Video action campaigns for the 2025 upgrade by giving each brand's campaign its own feed and audience now.

8. Brand inclusions and exclusions across all of **Search**

In 2024 Google renamed brand restrictions "brand inclusions" – "brand inclusions in broad match help your brand campaigns get the benefits of broad match, while limiting traffic to the brands you select" – and on June 26 began "rolling out brand exclusions across all match types and Dynamic Search Ads over the coming months"; its November 18 recap listed both as delivered. For a reseller, the brand lists built for Performance Max in 2023 now governed Search campaigns of every match type.

- Apply each brand's list as an inclusion on that brand's broad-match Search campaign and as an exclusion on every other brand's Search campaign, whatever the match type – the same one-list-per-brand structure as in Performance Max.
- Add the exclusions to Dynamic Search Ads campaigns, which had had no brand control until now, so a dynamic campaign fills gaps without taking a brand's own searches.

9. The new Google Shopping, and the cookies that **stayed**

On October 15, 2024, "the new Google Shopping" began rolling out in the US: an AI-generated brief for each product search, a personalised feed, a deals page and price tracking, built on 45 billion listings. On July 22, Google had announced that Chrome would not deprecate third-party cookies after all, but would offer users a choice instead. For a reseller, the first meant that a brand's model was now introduced by a summary Google wrote; the second meant the remarketing lists had a longer life than expected.

- Keep every brand's feed data – titles, attributes, reviews, price – complete enough to survive being summarised; the brief is written from the listings, and a thin listing produces a thin brief.
- Do not unwind the first-party work done for the cookie deadline: enhanced conversions, consent mode and Customer Match are the assets Google now ranks highest, cookies or not.

10. What was **new** in 2024 – and what each thing turned into

Ten dated changes from the year, in order, each with what it became:

- **January 18 and 23 – consent mode v2 notice; the conversational Search experience for all English advertisers.**
- **March 5 – Digital Markets Act changes in the EEA.**
- **April 9 and 29 – the 2024 feed specification; final URL expansion controls.** Both in force.
- **May 14 and 21 – AI Overviews in the US; Google Marketing Live: ads in AI Overviews, profit optimisation, brand guidelines, Product Studio video.**
- **June 26 – brand exclusions across all match types and Dynamic Search Ads.** The controls AI Max inherited.
- **July 22 – third-party cookies stay.** First-party data still ranks highest.
- **September – Merchant Center Next for all; Performance Max negatives beta; asset-level and impression-share reporting; Court of Justice upholds the fine.**
- **October 3 – ads in AI Overviews on mobile in the US.**
- **October – Performance Max no longer takes priority over standard Shopping.** Flagships back in standard Shopping.
- **October 15 – the new Google Shopping (US).**

11. What the numbers showed: Performance Max carries two thirds of Shopping **revenue**

Tinuiti's benchmark for the fourth quarter of 2024 put Google search spend up 10% year on year on 3% more clicks, with cost per click up 7%; spend growth across Performance Max and standard Shopping slowed to 10%; more than 95% of retailers used Performance Max by year end, and it produced 67% of retailers' Google Shopping ad revenue. Adobe measured US online holiday spending at $241.4 billion, up 8.7%, with 54.5% of transactions on smartphones and traffic to retail sites from generative-AI chatbots up 1,300%.

- A third of Shopping revenue still came through standard Shopping, at 95% adoption of Performance Max: the campaigns resellers kept for control were paying. Keep the flagship models of each brand there, now that priority no longer favours Performance Max.
- Clicks up 3% with cost per click up 7% is a market buying the same clicks dearer: the return per brand, on margin, decides which brands still justify the price.

12. A five-minute **check**

CHECK	WHY IT MATTERS
Search terms per brand read for question-shaped queries; brand pages answer them	AI Overviews send a shopper who has read a summary
Public Shopping reading in each EEA country after March 7, compared with February (UK and EEA)	The page changed; the auction did not
Consent mode v2 signals passed on every brand template before March	EEA audience features degrade without them
Brand guidelines set per single-brand campaign; impression share read per brand against standard Shopping	Priority no longer favours Performance Max
cost_of_goods_sold supplied for every brand; cart data in the purchase conversion	Profit optimisation only sees the margins you give it
Generated text and images declared; incremental feeds rebuilt as supplemental	The 2024 specification and the May deprecation
Feed filtered by brand on each Demand Gen campaign; lookalikes seeded from all buyers	Shorts ads animate the feed brand by brand
Brand lists applied as inclusions and exclusions on every Search campaign, Dynamic Search Ads included	One list per brand, everywhere

About **WeAdU**

WeAdU is a Google Premier Partner and the current home of a Google Ads practice founded in 2002, focused on AI-boosted Google Ads for brand product resellers.

Across the client book: **$241M+** in sales generated, **$132M+** tracked in Google Ads, **$32M+** in ad spend managed and **5.3M+** conversions. **14 of 20** clients (**70%**) saw a higher ROAS, measured over 12 months.

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ABOUT THIS EDITION

This edition is a retrospective written in September 2026, not a document from 2024: it describes Google Ads, Shopping ads, Google Shopping and Merchant Center as they worked that year, checked against sources published at the time or reliable later accounts, listed below.

Sources & further reading

Google, The Keyword / Google Ads Help / Merchant Center Help / Google Search Central: consent mode v2 (January 18, 2024, answer 14505993; Google Ads Developers blog, October 19, 2023); "Put Google AI to work with Search ads" (January 23, 2024); "New search experiences in the EEA" (Search Central blog, February 15, 2024); "Complying with the Digital Markets Act" (March 5, 2024); 2024 product data specification update (April 9, 2024, answer 14784710); "Enhance visual storytelling in Demand Gen with generative AI" (April 16, 2024); final URL expansion controls (April 29, 2024, answer 14817268); "Generative AI in Search" – AI Overviews (May 14, 2024); Google Marketing Live announcements (May 21, 2024, answer 14835145; "AI creativity at Google Marketing Live"; "Generative AI marketing features"); incremental feeds deprecated (May 2024, answer 14274016); brand inclusions and brand exclusions across match types (June 26, 2024, answer 15070437; answer 13721847); Privacy Sandbox update (July 22, 2024); "New ways to connect to the web with AI Overviews" (August 15, 2024); Merchant Center Next upgrade for all retailers (August 2024, answer 15285007; October 1, 2024, answer 15195499); "Video action campaigns upgrade to Demand Gen" (September 4, 2024); Google Ads AI features update (September 18, 2024); Merchant Center Next new features (October 2024, answer 15517376); "Ads in AI Overviews and Google Lens" (October 3, 2024); "The new Google Shopping" (October 15, 2024); final URL expansion experiments (October 23, 2024, answer 15535462); AI Overviews in 100 countries (October 28, 2024); 2024 recap (November 18, 2024, answer 15639790); conversions with cart data (answer 9028254) and cost of goods sold (answer 14943482); supported-language policy (December 2024, answer 14965622). European Commission – press release IP/24/1689 (March 25, 2024). Court of Justice of the European Union – press release 135/24 (September 10, 2024). Independent: Search Engine Land – Digital Markets Act compliance changes (March 5, 2024), AI Overviews roll-out (May 14, 2024), Performance Max insights and reporting (September 18, 2024), brand guidelines (December 19, 2024), third-party cookies reversal (July 22, 2024), Tinuiti Q4 2024 figures (January 22, 2025); Jellyfish – Shopping ad performance in the EEA (April 2, 2024); Search Engine Journal – Merchant Center Next upgrade (July 24, 2024), consent mode v2 details (February 19, 2024); PPC Land – Merchant Center Next rollout complete (August 23, 2024), Google Marketing Live 2024, Demand Gen timeline; Search Engine Roundtable – Performance Max priority over standard Shopping (October 22, 2024); TechCrunch – ads in AI Overviews (October 3, 2024); Reuters – third-party cookies (July 22, 2024), Court of Justice ruling (September 10, 2024); smarter-ecommerce – profit optimisation for Smart Bidding (July 3, 2024); DataFeedWatch – cart data (March 21, 2020); Tinuiti – Digital Ads Benchmark Report Q4 2024 and 2025 reports; Adobe – holiday 2024 recap (January 7, 2025); PPC Land – free listings removed across the EEA (September 19, 2026). Policies and product names have changed since 2024; the 2026 edition describes the current rules.