

A tall, cylindrical lighthouse with alternating black and white horizontal stripes. The top section is white with a black railing and a glass-enclosed lantern room. The lighthouse is situated on a rocky, grassy cliffside. In the background, the ocean is visible with white waves crashing against the shore under a clear blue sky.

THE SEM PLAYBOOK FOR RETAILERS

presented by

 THE
SEARCHMONITOR

www.thesearchmonitor.com



The Search Monitor, LLC
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Orlando, FL 32801

The Search Monitor, LLC

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The Tools Missing From Your SEM Toolbox

► "The SEM terrain is like a rocky landscape with a nice hiking trail right down the center. You are probably doing a great job of navigating on that center hiking trail carved out perfectly in front of you – exactly where Google and Bing want you to be." Lori Weiman, CEO, [The Search Monitor](#)

You already are a World Class Marketer. You likely have a well-rounded budget doing the things that you are great at, like measuring ROAS, balancing traffic volumes, and tweaking your ad copy to match your unique voice. But what are you missing... What can't you see? What's in the SEM black box?

The SEM terrain is like a rocky landscape with a nice hiking trail right down the center. You are probably doing a great job of navigating on that center hiking trail carved out perfectly in front of you – exactly where Google and Bing want you to be.

How will you handle the inevitable challenges, when ROAS is compromised, costs go up, traffic is flat, or growth has slowed or reversed? Maybe your stake in the landscape is good (is it...?) but competitors are eroding it and you don't even know it.

I will tell you a story that happened to us. The CPC's on our brand terms increased 3x somewhat suddenly. We deduced that the search engine's "relevancy" algorithm could not keep up with the bid and budget swings introduced by one of our competitors. The competitor had raised some fresh funds and plunged those into its marketing budget creating a landslide effect on our brand and brand plus CPC's. Since we track this stuff (drinking our own 'Kool Aid'), we checked our market share – it was stable, which told us NOTHING! Our agency turned to auction insights but this was not insightful either because the competitor had always been there lurking. We analyzed more of our own TSM data which

illuminated a few things: 1. Our competitor had drastically increased their number of ad copy variations; 2. The competitor was outranking us; 3. Their ads were gigantic – filled with site links – while ours were tiny by comparison; and 4. They were using a word trick to incorporate a variation of our name into their ads. We were able to rectify all of this and stabilize the market back to pre-blowout budget levels. It took 3rd party granular data (The Search Monitor’s data), notifying the search engine of relevancy issues, and a few other insider tricks to get us back on track.

Does your current SEM tool box enable you to do these things? Can you do it quickly and nimbly? What are you doing to protect yourself (defense) plus come back fighting (offense) with your current processes? Ultimately, do you feel in control?

World Class Marketers who want to take their results to the next level, do not just measure ROAS. They defend themselves and get aggressive. To achieve this at scale, you need 3rd party data and the knowledge on how to use it. In this guide, we cover some of the key data and processes that top brands are using as part of the retail tool box ‘must haves’ in order to take your SEM to the next level.

In this guide we cover:

- ✓ **Be An SEM LandLord:** Use the Whole SERP
- ✓ **Block and Tackle Defense:** Brand Protection & Enforcement
- ✓ **Build Your Offensive Line:** Use Affiliates for More Reach & Control
- ✓ **Bonus Data:** The Results of our PLA KPI Survey
- ✓ **Customer Viewpoint:** SERP Control by Vorys eControl

I hope that you put this PlayBook to great use! We would love to hear from you. Please tell us about your successes. Feel free to email them to me at lori@thesearchmonitor.com.

Lori Weiman, CEO

About Us

The Search Monitor is an independent 3rd party monitoring tool that watches the search

landscape for you. We report on the entire SERP including organic, paid, and shopping listings, by keyword, competitor, platform, and engine globally. It is the only customizable results tool that gives you granular insights as often as hourly, from any zip code, city, state, region, or country globally.



If you aren't using The Search Monitor, just imagine that your competitors are using it to protect brand and brand plus keywords from competitors, search arbitrageurs, and affiliates,

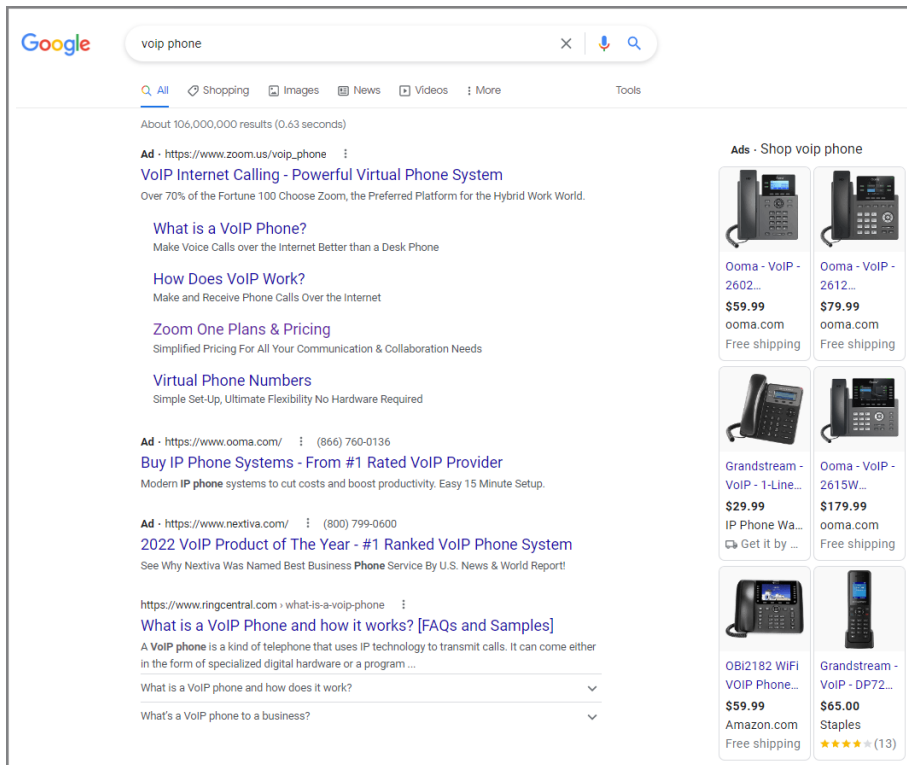
to compare market share and ad spend, to control affiliates and partners, and to make big budgeting decisions like when to turn ads on and off and when to lower or raise bids. ■

Be An SEM Landlord: Use the Whole SERP

The SERP consists of three components: organic listings, paid shopping listings, and paid text ads. The layout of the SERP is dynamic and ever changing throughout the day. The only constant is organic. The other two sections ebb and flow, varying by keyword and search moment. This fluctuation is a good thing as it presents opportunities to capitalize by moving your budget between paid text ads and paid shopping ads, depending on the SERP layout, competition, and where you rank organically.

To start, you need to think like a consumer and not like a marketer. Marketers get caught up in their own silos: SEM marketers focusing on paid text ads, SEO marketers focusing on organic, and PLA marketers optimizing shopping. Consumers do not see your silos. They see a SERP page and want to click on the most expeditious result to accomplish the task i.e. learning, researching, or buying.

Here is a typical view that a consumer might see. What do you think you are seeing when you look at this page? We will dissect it with our lens below:

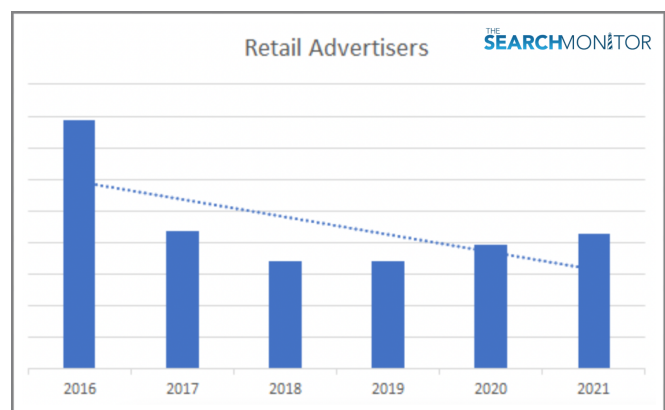


Here is our view:

- 1 Zoom.us - First paid ad: Zoom is advertising on the wrong keyword and paying for it with first position. The consumer is looking for a phone, not a phone service.
- 2 Ooma.com - Second Paid ad + 50% of PLA Placements: Ooma is in the right place doing a great job. Knowing that they own a good chunk of PLA, they can use their Paid placement to control messaging, to 'talk' about themselves, which they are doing.
- 3 Ringcentral.com - First Organic: Kudos to their SEO team for snagging this coveted spot BUT did a consumer see them with 3 ads above, and 6 PLA's to the right? This is where the World Class Marketer might say...let's spend a little money and knock Zoom.us off the top spot.

In the retail universe, consider that Google shows paid ads on 97% of keywords, with ads showing on 70% of searches. Google shows shopping ads on 95% of keywords, with ads showing on 89% of searches.

Since 2016, retail budgets have moved from paid search to PLA's. The diagram below shows that the number of retail advertisers using PPC text ads has been trending down. We look at this as a missed opportunity. PPC text ads are controllable, targeted, and with ad copy that you write. You have much less control over PLA's and even less control over organic.



Our customers armed with our data know how to manipulate this paradigm. They know how and when to bid more, bid less, raise budgets, and pause or enable campaigns. They know what to say in their ad copy because they can see everything. With these tactics, our customers save significant money, 50 - 60% of their paid ad budgets, without sacrificing traffic and sales. They take action when the SEM landscape favors them such as high organic rank, with low competition, or when there is a dearth of ppc ads, or when competitors are beating them with better SOV on specific keywords, or when they can take advantage of

PLA and PPC together to control their messaging.

The questions you need to ask are how many ads are showing? Are the ads yours or your competitor's ads? How do you rank organically? How often do PLA ads and paid search ads show at the same time? Can you maximize page exposure by bidding higher / lower or pausing ads throughout the day or week?

The Search Monitor answers these questions for you with reports and recommendations that show the entire SERP, score every advertiser with a Visibility Score, present a detailed breakdown of how often each page section appears by keyword so that you can maximize page real-estate and own the SEM Landscape while reducing your costs, and maintaining or growing your traffic. Come and chat with us. We would be delighted to show you how. ■

SEM INSIGHTS

Conquer your industry with
unlimited SERP knowledge



Benefits

The Search Monitor gives you insights into trend data for your industry to gain more visibility, clicks, and impressions in your vertical:

- ✓ Visibility into clicks, spend, and impressions - 7 years of history
- ✓ Compare SOV Across all 3 Media Channels—SEM, SEO & PLA
- ✓ Measure Performance Against Industry Leaders
- ✓ Hone Strategies to Free up Budget to Re-Invest In Other Ad Media

Integrates with
Salesforce & Tableau



Use Cases

- ✓ Cross-Channel Media Planning
- ✓ Benchmark Budget, Metrics, & Goals
- ✓ Presentation Ready Reports
- ✓ Tactical analysis of keywords, copy, and products
- ✓ Prospect New Clients

Common Users of TSM

- ✓ Internal Marketing Teams
- ✓ Search Managers at Advertising Agencies
- ✓ Business Development Teams at Advertising Agencies

GET THE DATA & INSIGHTS YOU NEED

The Search Monitor makes it easy to access paid search, organic search and PLA statistics organized into vertical categories. The Search Monitor provides unlimited competitive data across all advertisers in your verticals.



Paid Search

SOV, Spend, Clicks, Impressions, CPC, Ad Copy, Keywords, & Offers



Organic Listings

SOV, Page Share, Impressions, Listing Copy, & Keywords



Shopping Listings

SOV, Page Share, Impressions, Products, Sellers, Brand Reach, Prices, Keywords, & Offers



Visibility Scoring

Conquesting reports that Score Visibility of Competitors & Keywords Across All 3 Media Channels



What's Included?

- ✓ **1,200+ Verticals:** Clients receive insights into unlimited competitors across 1,239 verticals for millions of keywords for Google and Bing.
- ✓ **Custom Indexes:** Develop indexes across verticals to benchmark performance against similar advertisers.
- ✓ **Historical Data:** Starting from July 2013 (with Lighthouse™ add-on).
- ✓ **Data Source:** Global, geo-targeted data. Includes customizable keyword lists.

The Search Monitor captures advertising activity on paid search, product listing ads, organic search, and shopping engines worldwide. Search marketers, agencies, and affiliate marketers use The Search Monitor to analyze ads for brand compliance, affiliate/reseller compliance, and competitive insights. The Search Monitor monitors search engines globally, including Google, Yahoo, Bing, Baidu, Yandex, Naver, AOL, Sogou, Haosou, Amazon, and Google Shopping.



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Block and Tackle Defense: Brand Protection & Enforcement

Unless you are completely new to PPC, it is tough to get the big gains that we once saw in the 2010's. As a marketing tactic, PPC has been mature for years, and few "easy wins" still remain. Many categories are dominated by large players (e.g., Amazon), long-tail keywords have become expensive, and the most advanced marketers have complex technology and expensive agencies on their side.

Surprisingly, many advertisers still struggle with how (and whether) to bid on their own branded keywords. The answer is simple: Yes, you need to bid on your own brand and brand plus keyword variations. If you do not, someone else will steal that customer from under your nose!

What Are Brand & Brand-Plus Keywords?

Let's start with some definitions. A brand keyword (aka branded keyword or brand term) is the keyword used to search for a company name. A recognizable example is "Macy's." Note that brand keywords can include obvious typos, such as "Macys." A brand-plus keyword, meanwhile, refers to a keyword phrase that includes the brand term plus a qualifying phrase. An example would be "Adidas running

shoe." To quantify the competition on brand and brand-plus keywords, consider this: We observe that bigger brand names often enjoy autonomy, with limited competition on their actual correctly spelled trademarked name. As soon as we iterate the brand name with typos, dot-com extensions or brand-plus variations, the entire first page of paid results is littered with competitors, search arbitrageurs, affiliates, partners and URL hijackers, fake review sites, and bad actors.

Why You Should Care

Bing released data at the end of 2015 showing that when advertisers bid on their branded terms, they received 31 percent more clicks (for retail ads) and 27 percent more clicks (for travel ads). The Bing data recommended a strong brand defense to save lost clicks. Their data showed that when a retail brand did not bid on its branded searches, 34 percent of the missed clicks went to other ads, and six percent went to other organic listings. Seven years on from this study and the same outcomes are true. With first-page CPCs on the rise, however, advertisers are tempted to look for any opportunity possible to reduce costs, and sometimes brand campaigns end up getting axed.

If you do not think you have a problem, then your brand is either too small or too niche. For everyone else, you have a brand bidding problem even if you cannot see it. You probably don't know who is bidding against your brand or how to quantify it. We do...the typical mix includes competitors, search arbitrageurs like third tier search engines, your own partners and affiliates (we cover in a separate article), competitors' partners and affiliates, and bad actors.

More Clicks Overall – SEM + SEO

There is the concept of amplification, which, according to a Search Engine Land article, occurs when “[t]he traffic through the sponsored link is 100% incremental AND the ad is responsible for increasing the traffic on the organic link as well.”

A long ago study by then 3Q Digital quantified this amplitudinal (new word!) gain when it showed there was a significant difference between whether you receive 56% of all clicks (with no brand ad appearing) or 88% of all clicks (with a brand ad at top) from a search on your brand. That's a gain of 157% more clicks!

Enforcement

We have established that brand bidding grows revenue. That means that it is valuable real estate and necessary to protect. You can not run an effective search campaign without protecting your investment in your brand and brand plus keywords. Here are some strategies to enforce compliance on your brand:

- **Blocking Strategy:** use your affiliates and partners to blockade your keywords. More details on how to best work with affiliates can be found in the affiliate focused article.
- **File Complaints with the Search Engine:** The Search Monitor will file automated complaints for you with the search engines for take downs of non-compliant ads in violation of your registered trademarks.
- **Facts and Agreements:** Form brand bidding pacts with your competition. Be sure to run this by your legal team first for any potential antitrust violations as the case law around these tactics is new.
- **Budget Control.** Spend money on your brand terms so that you own that real-estate on all 3 SERP areas: paid search, organic, and PLA. Do not let your competitors piggy-back on your brand by controlling these page sections instead of you! ■

Build Your Offensive Line: Use Affiliates for More Reach & Control

Let's dig a bit deeper into a tactic that will help you better control the search engine results and your CPC prices by coordinating your SEM marketing with affiliates.

Benefits of affiliates bidding with you:

- Controlling page 1
- Pushing out competitors
- Lowering CPC costs
- Driving more visits
- Improving return-on-ad-spend (ROAS)
- Growing revenue

For affiliate bidding to work as an offensive tactic, you need to run a tight ship. Your tactics must include six key elements: Media strategy, legal agreement, ad monitoring, Super-affiliate boost, avoid internal revenue wars, and compliance enforcement.

Let's dive into each one.

Tactic #1: Media strategy

Before you can implement a partner strategy, you need to define your media strategy. This, in turn, will help you formulate your program rules. Questions to address include: Do you want to brand bid alongside partners? If you have an active and aggressive SEM strategy, you will be bidding heavily on all

brand variations. You will want your partners at your side, with you in first position and your partners blocking the ranks directly below you from competitors. Some companies have hundreds of affiliates but may only allow PPC brand bidding for their best three or four partners (super-affiliates).

Do you want to use partners to offset PPC ad spend? If you are looking to scale back your ad spend on PPC (maybe you had a budget cut), you can use your partners to fill in the gaps. In this case, you might want to anoint a few special super-affiliates and encourage them through incentives to maintain the top ranks.

Or you may want to adopt a very loose brand plus bidding policy and allow all of your affiliates to have access. If you find yourself in this boat, remember, you still need to bid on your own name. Do not give that up!

Tactic #2: Legal agreement

Once you have defined your media strategy, it's time to meet with your legal team and put the plan into writing. You will need a well-defined legal agreement that specifically explains the rules of the engagement, notice procedures, and enforcement (i.e., you lose your payout, or

hasta la vista, baby, you're kicked out of the program!).

The areas where restrictions can apply include:

▶ **Allowed and prohibited keywords.** Be specific about which keywords are allowed and which are prohibited and/or define classes of keywords. The prohibited keyword list is designed to prevent your affiliates from directly competing with you on specific keywords. The list of restricted terms could include your brand names, typos of brand names and variations that include '.com' or typos of that. You may also want to include your top performing keywords and/or brand phrases—phrases that contain your brand along with a generic word to avoid channel conflicts that can raise cpc's artificially. The allowed keyword list is designed to get your affiliates to bid on keywords where there is a lot of competition or where you need better coverage.

▶ **Allowed and prohibited ad copy.** Non-compliant offers are misleading to consumers and can land you in legal trouble. Some aspects to be mindful of include:

- Use of your brand in ad copy text or in the display URL if you are prohibiting brand use
- False advertising
- Promoting old invalid offers or coupons that have expired
- Unauthorized coupon use
- Using certain words such as "official" or "free" when untrue
- Copying your landing pages if you want your affiliates to have their own unique landing pages—in some cases, you may want to supply the ad copy/ landing page language.

▶ **Allowed and prohibited linking practices.** The most effective affiliates maintain their own websites and direct traffic from search engine ads to their owned and operated landing pages. A destructive linking practice known as direct linking or URL Hijacking should be prohibited. URL Hijacking is when the affiliate directs traffic from the search ad directly to you, through their affiliate links. Affiliates that engage in this practice try to hide and cloak their identity so that you can not find them easily. Direct linking is harmful as it will compete with your own search ads for placement, ad serving frequency, and run up your cpc costs.

- ▶ **Page rank.** If you are bidding alongside partners, you will need to define page rank rules. Examples include: never above you, or your brand is always first on keywords x, y and z.

Tactic #3: Ad monitoring

With the strategy and legal out of the way, it's important to remember that your plan to corner the market is only as good as your enforcement. Best practices include:

- **3rd Party Monitoring:** Use a 3rd party to monitor paid search ads. Search ads on each page refresh and vary based on the location of the searcher. It is nearly impossible (and boring) to monitor ads manually. We recommend monitoring ads several times a day, at randomized times, and across multiple locations. If you are hyper geo-sensitive, then city and maybe even ZIP-code-level monitoring might be important settings for your account with The Search Monitor.
- **Alerts and Summaries.** It is important to stay on top of your ad monitoring. The Search Monitor provides alerts, with customizable frequencies of intra-day, daily, or weekly, and summarized filterable findings to make sifting through large quantities of data much easier.

Tactic #4: Get the Super-Affiliate 'Boost'

Owning more paid search spots on search results can increase your clicks by 30–50% for each additional spot that you occupy. To get this type of monster click growth from paid search, tap on your affiliates, partners and resellers to make a paid search land grab.

To achieve this you will grant a trusted list of 'Super-affiliates' with brand bidding rights, whilst simultaneously restricting ranking so that your ads always appear on top. By utilizing affiliates to fill in competitive ad spots on your brand+ keywords, you effectively reduce the reach of your competition. The big benefit? More page real estate and clicks for you.

This tactic works best if you are in a highly competitive space with three or more advertisers bidding on your brands. If you are already dominant — i.e., the only advertiser on your brand and brand+ keywords — then this tactic does not make sense and you should probably charter a more conventional course.

Tactic #5 Protect Against Internal Revenue Wars

Lack of coordination between your search and affiliate marketing efforts can create internal revenue wars. Conflict arises when both search teams and affiliate teams vie for the same or similar keywords. To maintain a healthy working relationship between these two teams, you could consider the following practices:

- Unify management. If you can do it, you ought to consider common management for both channels, so that one agency or one group is responsible for both the paid and affiliate channels. It is also wise to consider bringing the SEO team into the process as well.
- Be transparent in tracking or external monitoring. If you are going to manage search and affiliate teams separately, you ought to consider some transparency in tracking and/or external monitoring so that your SEM agency has a way to see which keywords have a strong affiliate presence. This will give the SEM agency a clearer picture when evaluating performance and in decision making.

Tactic #6: Compliance enforcement

Whichever path you choose in working with your partners, you will need an effective tool with which to police and enforce your agreements. Doing this yourself can be an arduous manual task that can feel almost impossible to achieve without cutting-edge technology to help. The Search Monitor can automate enforcement for you so that you can spend time working on more productive things. The manner in which you will enforce your policies should be neatly detailed in your legal agreement. Remember to provide fair notices and consequences, and act swiftly. You can advise affiliates to use negative matching in their search campaigns if their ads are accidentally being served against prohibited keywords. ■

BRAND BIDDING COMPLIANCE

Easily Monitor Competitor & Affiliate Trademark Bidding Activity on Paid Search



As a result [of using The Search Monitor], our Brand CPC decreased by 64% clicks increased by 34% and cost decreased by 51%. The reduction in brand CPCs saved us thousands of dollars a year, which we reinvested to drive more awareness, more qualified site traffic, and ultimately more sales for Avery. ”



Avery, A manufacturer of office supplies.

THE
SEARCHMONITOR



Global Monitoring Technology

Worldwide, city targeted, keywords scans

Keyword scans launch every few milliseconds



Detects Brand Violations

Identifies competitors & affiliates bidding on branded keywords

De-cloaks affiliate direct linkers



Automated Enforcement

Email violation alerts to offenders

Automatically submits TM complaints to search engines for take downs.

IT PAYS TO PROTECT YOUR BRAND

12%

of your clicks are lost to competitors who advertise on your branded search keywords

10x

higher CPCs on branded terms now than they were 4 years ago due to competition

28%

of affiliates do not comply, many knowingly practice affiliate fraud

\$100,000s

of thousands of dollars are lost by retailers when publishers promote expired promo codes

GLOBAL MONITORING TECHNOLOGY

The Search Monitor's SmartCrawler™ Technology adapts to the market as it evolves.

- ✔ **RANDOM CRAWLING**
Day part, keywords, and geos are randomized.
- ✔ **GEO-TARGETING**
Configurable by zip code, city, state, region, & country.
- ✔ **KEYWORD DISCOVERY**
Identifies commonly abused trademarks, typos, and brand-plus keywords.
- ✔ **AFFILIATE IDs**
De-cloaks affiliate IDs, domains, and referring links.
- ✔ **AFFILIATE PROFILES**
Searchable report of 60,000+ affiliates exposes threat rating and merchant relationships.



The Search Monitor captures advertising activity on paid search, product listing ads, organic search, and shopping engines worldwide. Search marketers, agencies, and affiliate marketers use The Search Monitor to analyze ads for brand compliance, affiliate / reseller compliance, and competitive insights.

DETECT BRAND VIOLATIONS

Scans ad copy for competitors & affiliates bidding on your brand

- ✔ Ad Copy Abuse
- ✔ Brand Bidding
- ✔ Out-Ranking
- ✔ Direct Linking

AUTOMATED ENFORCEMENT

- ✔ Auto-submit search engine complaints
- ✔ Set-up email alerts and save templates
- ✔ Screenshots with date, time and location

 THE
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PROTECT YOUR BRAND WITH CONTENT MONITORING

Easily monitor web page & influencer content for costly regulatory & policy compliance issues



Discover

Identify content containing the brand, product, and/or affiliate links

- Sweep the web daily for relevant content
- Follow social posts and blog feeds



Examine

Analyze discovered content for compliance

- Compare content or source code against policy rules
- Mark content as passed or failed



Resolve

Take steps to address failed content

- Email findings to content owners
- Re-examine content for compliance

Track Issues with Our Case Management System:

- ✓ View detailed case reports with pass/fail status
- ✓ Get highlighted screenshots
- ✓ Logs case history with date/time stamps
- ✓ **Take actions:** email enforcements, whitelist publishers, add comments, and open/close cases.

GET THE DATA & RESULTS YOU NEED

Content Monitoring makes it easy for affiliate networks, affiliate managers, SEM marketers & brand managers to detect & verify:

- ✓ Non-compliant offer content
- ✓ Expired promo codes
- ✓ Unauthorized brand use
- ✓ FTC disclosure statements
- ✓ Proper Product disclaimers



Easily set-up and customize policies

- ✓ Define policies with easy 'if-then' logic
- ✓ Set start and stop times for examination
- ✓ Examine source code and text
- ✓ Examine only the page section you want: top, body, footer, or near brand
- ✓ Provide your own list of specific URLs or allow crawlers to discover relevant content
- ✓ Whitelist pages or publishers

The Search Monitor captures advertising activity on paid search, product listing ads, organic search, and shopping engines worldwide. Search marketers, agencies, and affiliate marketers use The Search Monitor to analyze ads for brand compliance, affiliate/reseller compliance, and competitive insights. The Search Monitor monitors search engines globally, including Google, Yahoo, Bing, Baidu, Yandex, Naver, AOL, Sogou, Haosou, Shopzilla, Picegrabber, Amazon, and Google Shopping.



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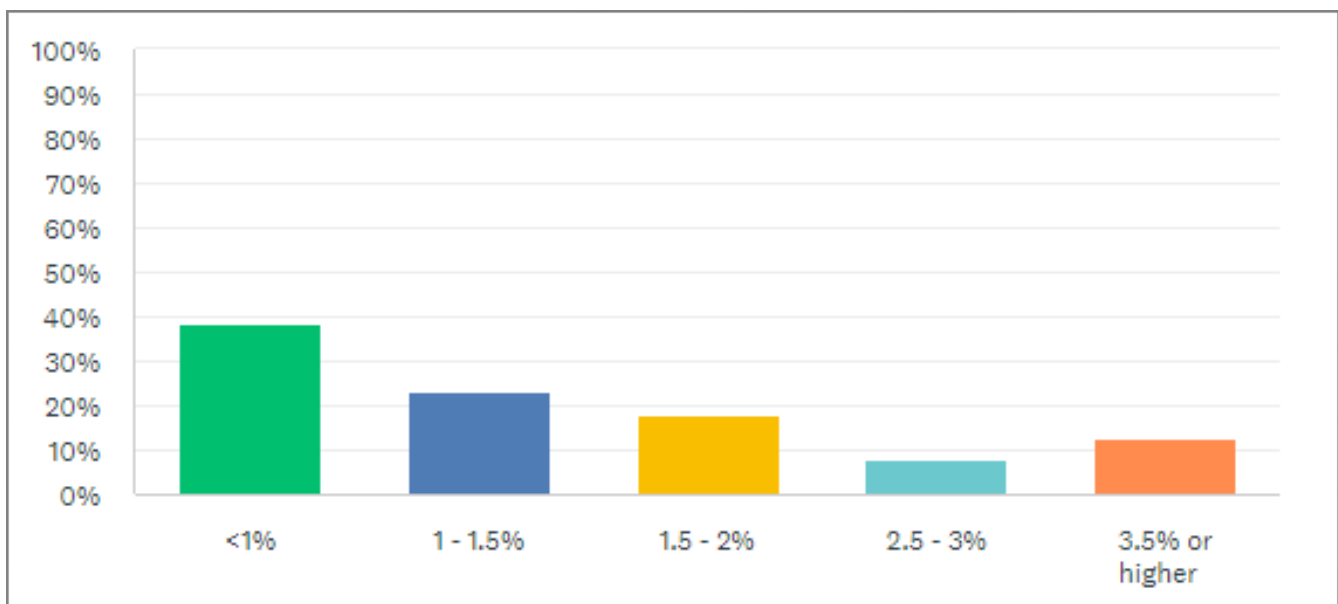
Bonus Data: The Results of Our PLA KPI Survey

The Search Monitor (www.thesearchmonitor.com) recently conducted a retail survey to aggregate performance metrics for shopping campaigns on Google, Bing and Amazon. As shopping engines don't publish any directional stats, and few research papers have been published on this topic, benchmarking and goal setting for shopping campaigns can be challenging. Here are the top most requested KPI's for advertisers running shopping campaigns:

- ▶ CTR: What is your average click through rate?
- ▶ ROAS: What is your return on ad spend?
- ▶ Conversions: What is your average conversion rate?
- ▶ Ad Spend Investment: What % of revenue do you spend on shopping ads?
- ▶ Upsells: What % of sales results in an upsell?

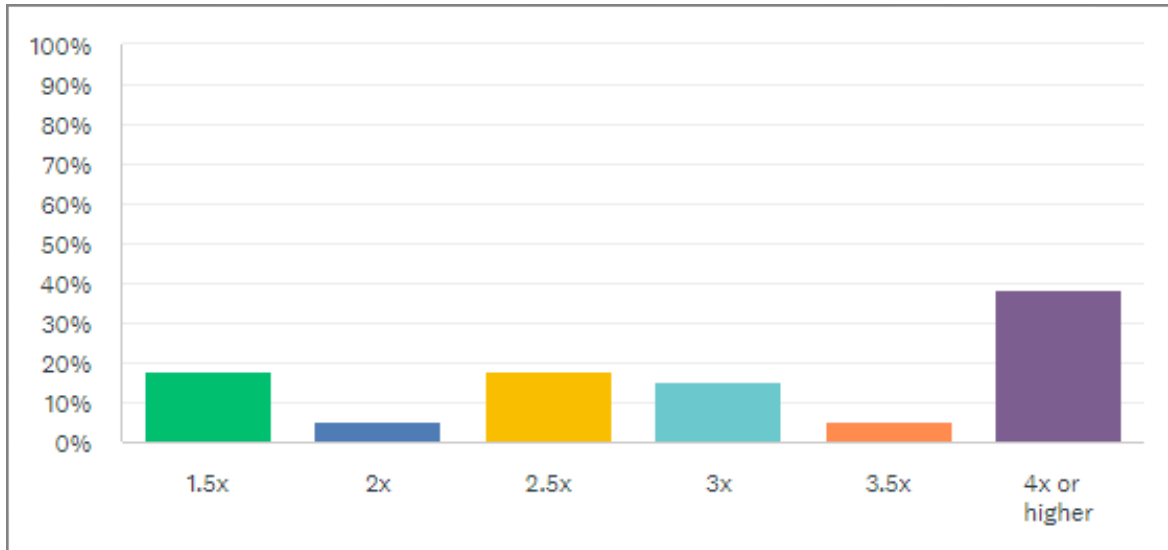
Click Through Rate

Most advertisers are seeing an average CTR of 1.5% or lower, while just over 20% see an average CTR over 2.5%. CTR is largely dependent on competition, product relevance, and product price point. You can track each of these items by monitoring PLA listings.



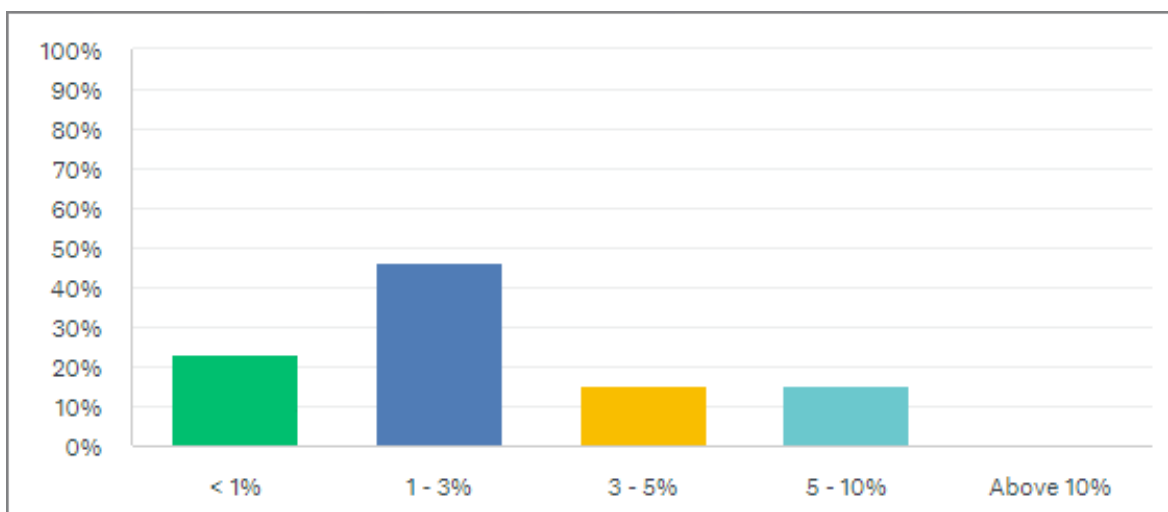
Return on Ad Spend

While there's no "right" answer, a common ROAS benchmark is a 4:1 ratio — \$4 revenue to \$1 in ad spend. 37% of our survey respondents indicated they are seeing ROAS of at least 4x.



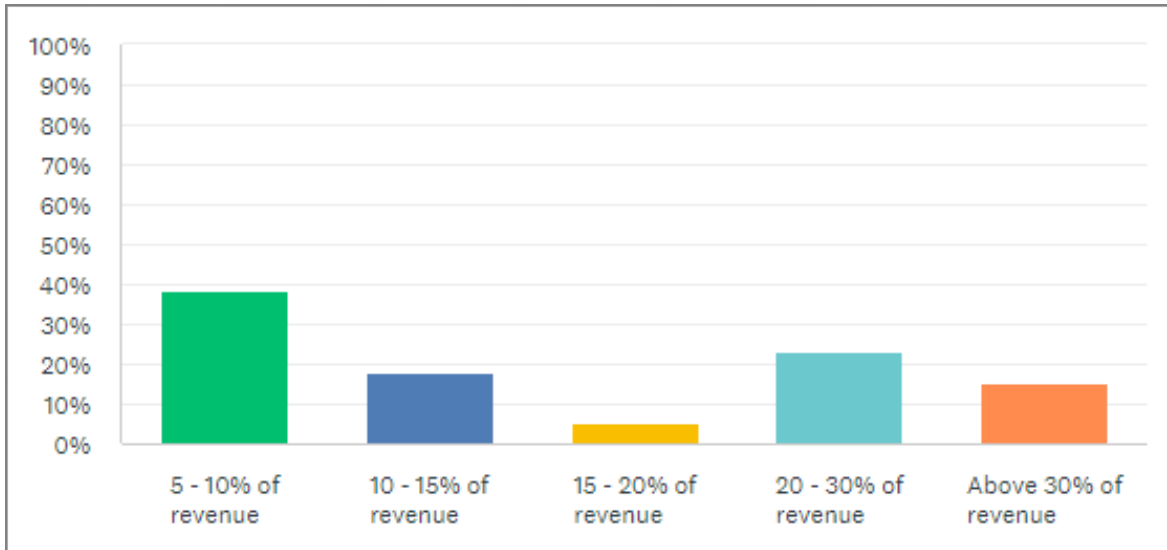
Conversion Rate

Over 75% of survey respondents are seeing conversion rates above 1% for their industry, with almost 1/3 seeing rates of 3% or more. Conversion rates vary by price point and industry. Keep in mind, shopping ads often have different conversion rates than traditional PPC ads because they are typically lower in the buying funnel (last touch attribution) since people coming from shopping ads are more ready to purchase. That means the conversion from a last touch view might look stronger than search ads.



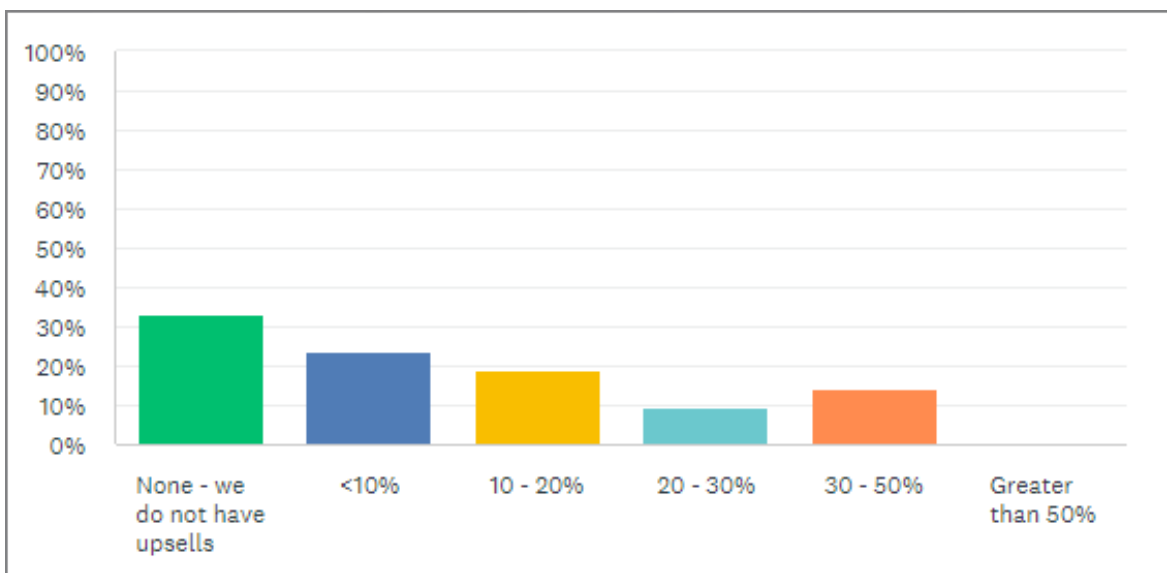
Ad Spend Investment

Over half (55%) of survey respondents spend 15% or less on shopping ads (as a percentage of revenue).



Upsells

30% of survey respondents indicated they do not have upsells. This is a missed opportunity to increase order size and revenue. 25% of survey respondents see less than 10% of shoppers adding additional items to their shopping cart after selecting a product from an ad. That means that >50% of retailers are missing out on upsells.



How The Search Monitor Can Help Retail Marketers

Since 2007, The Search Monitor has provided competitive market research data to advertisers running online search campaigns, affiliate marketing programs, and online shopping campaigns worldwide. The Search Monitor offers insights into shopping listings to enable retailers to take control of the market.

Helpful Search Monitor reports for retailers:

- **Sellers Snapshot** allows advertisers to see all competitors' product listings.
- **Keyword Coverage** determines which words are triggering shopping and text ads, and where you and your competitors have coverage gaps.
- **Share of Voice (SOV) Alerts** enable users to receive real-time alerts when any advertiser's PLA SOV increases or drops.

Get total shopping control with The Search Monitor. Contact sales@thesearchmonitor.com for a free demo and brand consultation today. ■

Customer Viewpoint: SERP Control By Vorys eControl

Vorys eControl (<https://www.vorysecontrol.com/>) provides legal solutions to brand manufacturers to control online ecommerce. In the brand protection space, we focus on online marketplace channels, like Amazon, and search engines, like Google and Bing.

A manufacturer's Search Engine Results Pages ("SERP") must remain a key part of brand protection strategy. Search engines provide competitors, traffic diverters, and bad actors with opportunities to divert consumers looking for information about your brand. Left unchecked, brands can lose significant website traffic and potential sales to this type of traffic diversion.

Focusing on the PLAs and text ads, there are a number of common advertiser types. These include the brand itself, authorized and unauthorized sellers of the brand's products, sellers of competitive products, product review sites (both real and fake), online marketplaces, trademark infringers, and aggregators.

Vorys eControl recommends a four-part strategy for controlling SERP. First, a brand should develop its SERP channel control strategy.

Starting with an initial assessment of the brand's SERP, it is important to set goals for how the brand wants its search page to look. For example, a brand may decide that it wants to encourage its authorized sellers to place PLAs so that consumers searching for a brand's keywords will see primarily ads of the brand's products, instead of competitors'. Similarly, a brand may want to prevent its authorized sellers from running text ads, so that consumers searching for the brand will be more likely to end up at the brand's website. But these strategies will vary significantly depending on the brand, its goals, and the mix of unwanted items on the brand's SERP. Regardless, having a clear strategy in mind is critical.

Once a brand has set its strategy, it will need to implement policies to achieve it. There are various legal considerations here, so it is important to involve experienced legal counsel to make sure that your activities and policies are legally compliant.

This is especially important because the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has shown interest concerning the restriction of online advertising. The FTC brought an enforcement action against 1-800 Contacts Inc. in 2016 asserting that agreements 1-800 Contacts entered into with

competitors were anti-competitive. In these agreements, the parties agreed not to bid on each other's trademarked keywords. After the FTC initially succeeded at the administrative level, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit ultimately overturned the ruling. The Court did not conclude that these sorts of restrictions on advertising are always lawful, but rather they are subject to a rule-of-reason antitrust analysis, similar to what applies to minimum advertised pricing policies. To minimize legal risk, it is important to have legal counsel involved in the drafting of a brand's online advertising policies and in setting up a plan to enforce the policies.

In addition to establishing its online advertising strategy and implementing it with the appropriate policies, regular monitoring of SERP is essential. SERP is a dynamic environment, and it's not practical to monitor it manually. For example, PLAs and text ads will vary throughout the day depending on keyword-bidders' advertising budgets and other factors they select when placing ads. Only by regularly monitoring SERP will a brand have an accurate view of the major players on a brand's search results.

As with any enforcement program, prioritizing the targets is essential so that a brand can direct its enforcement budget efficiently. 3rd party monitoring data, like that supplied by The Search Monitor, show which advertisers appear

most often in the search results and thus have the greatest impact on the brand's overall search results. In addition, monitoring will give a brand the best view of the different advertisers and results that appear when consumers search for the brand.

With the brand's goals in mind and with the aid of The Search Monitor's data, we work with brands to develop a custom enforcement plan aimed at achieving the brand's goals. Typically, we will prioritize IP infringements, potential scam websites, and violators of the brand's online advertising policies. As with MAP programs, the brand must be responsible for enforcing its advertising policy against breaching authorized resellers. Developing and implementing an enforcement program is critical. For other advertisers, the enforcement program should consist of utilizing the reporting function of the particular search engine, where applicable, and also identifying the advertisers and addressing them directly when there is a legal basis to do so.

A brand's SERP remains one of the top ways online consumers get information about a brand and its products. With careful planning and the right monitoring and enforcement plan, a brand can improve its SERP results and help consumers find accurate information about the brand and products. For more information contact Vorys at vorysectrol.com. ■

About The Authors

About The Search Monitor®

Hundreds of agencies, search marketers, and affiliate managers use The Search Monitor® to drive greater revenue from online advertising campaigns. The Search Monitor platform provides real-time advertising intelligence to monitor brand and trademark use, affiliate compliance, and competitive advertisers on SEM, SEO, local search, display, mobile, PLAs, and shopping engines worldwide.

The Search Monitor data is the most precise available through high-frequency crawling and advanced geo-targeting from thousands of global IP addresses. All data is available through easy-to-use web-based reports, APIs, and automatic alerts that are customizable for 1,200+ verticals.

Learn more at TheSearchMonitor.com.

About Vorys eControl

Vorys eControl was founded on this vision: to provide effective, efficient and legally compliant solutions that allow companies to protect and grow their brand value by controlling sales in the age of eCommerce. Today, we've represented more than 600 brands, including several of the world's largest companies. We regularly speak across the country educating companies and service providers regarding innovative solutions to the challenges involved in controlling sales across online and brick-and-mortar channels.

www.vorysecontrol.com

The Jellyfish logo is displayed in white lowercase letters on a blue background.

"We have been using The Search Monitor for over 10 years in the USA, Europe, and other parts of the globe to support our clients' search campaigns. The Search Monitor is a great all-around platform that includes SEM, SEO, and PLA insights all in one place."

Kevin B., Chief Growth Officer, Jellyfish



"We switched to The Search Monitor from another provider, and couldn't be happier. The platform is easy to navigate and has all of the great data that we need. The support team has been responsive and helpful. We are really happy so far that we made the switch."

Eric Seidelman, VP Performance Digital, Universal McCann

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