

Clarks makes big strides with Remarketing Lists for Search Ads



At a glance

Goals

- Increase the impact of web campaigns
- Get more in-depth analysis of customer activity online
- Improve the conversion rate

Strategy

- Place RLSA tags on every page of the Clarks website
- Analyse the behaviour of website visitors
- Tailor keywords, creative and bids for individual users

Results

- Sevenfold improvement in click-through rate
- Sevenfold increase in conversion rate
- Return of £6 for every £1 invested

Background

Leading footwear manufacturer Clarks, the world’s largest casual and smart shoe company, was keen to make the most of its online presence. The rapid growth of its website over the last six years means that the internet is playing an increasingly important role in its business. The firm wanted to capitalise on this. “It seemed logical that taking our most successful search campaigns, and combining those with retargeting, would deliver big results,” says John Ashton, Head of Multi-Channel Retail for Clarks.

Tags open up possibilities

AdWords’ Remarketing Lists for Search Ads (RLSA) offered the perfect opportunity to optimise search campaigns based on the behaviour of website users. Placed first on the biggest campaigns on the site, RLSA tags enabled the team to fine-tune Clarks’ advertising on AdWords by:

- Constructing rules based on visitors’ previous activity on the Clarks’ website
- Tailoring ad creative to fit these patterns
- Adjusting bidding accordingly for individual users so as to limit the chance of getting priced out of auctions for high-cost generic keywords



People visit your website

Visitors are added to your remarketing lists

Show them your tailored ads while they browse the web

The benefits were quickly obvious. “By placing the Google remarketing tag on every page of the Clarks site, while creating customised lists of users depending on their interaction with the site, remarketing search ads allowed Clarks to provide the right people with the right message when they search on Google,” says Anton McMenemy, Account Manager at Google.

“Search retargeting gives the consumer a much more personalised experience”

— *John Ashton, Head of Multi-Channel Retail, Clarks*

“Remarketing search ads allowed Clarks to provide the right people with the right message when they search on Google”

— *Anton McMenamin, Account Manager, Google*

“Previously you had one bid per keyword in the Google auction; now you have another way to layer in additional information about the customer”

— *Richard Brooks, Director, Kinase*

The numbers add up to success

Analysis of the results, which were available almost as soon as the remarketing tags were implemented, proved they were having a powerful impact. The team found that 15% of generic conversions were going through RLSAs, with an impressive conversion rate of 4.5% as compared to 0.68% for new visitors.

With tags making it possible to personalise the wording of messages so that, for example, customers known to be looking for school shoes see corresponding ads, the technology has produced a far more effective advertising programme. “Return on investment’s been great,” says John Ashton. “For every quid we spend, we’ve got six back. We’ve had outstanding results.”

Looking ahead

Clarks has been so impressed by what RLSA has brought to its work that it plans to make it part of its other campaigns. By enabling it to bid more strategically in keyword auctions, the technology has boosted the firm’s competitiveness and helped it to connect more customers with products likely to be relevant to them.

There have been other advantages too: as well as strengthening Clarks’ position as an innovator, RLSA has helped it to cherish and deepen the values that have underpinned the company throughout its 188-year history. “Personalised retargeting is allowing us to go back to that old-fashioned, one-to-one relationship between a shopkeeper and a customer,” says John Ashton. “Retargeting is one of the things that takes us on that journey, and gives the consumer a much more personalised experience with us.”