



How RLSA Helps Canadian Brands Reach the Right Audiences

Published
November 2016

Optimize, optimize, optimize. That's the battle cry for agencies and businesses looking to get the most out of their digital marketing spend. To do that, many Canadian companies have turned to remarketing lists for search ads (RLSA).

think with **Google**

A familiar scenario: A shopper in Vancouver is on the hunt for the perfect ski jacket. She checks out her favourite apparel site and finds two good options. She's not quite ready to buy, so she closes the browser and decides to keep thinking and looking. A few days later, she wants to see what else is out there and conducts a generic search for "ski coat."

Connecting with this shopper [right in the moment she's thinking about buying](#) is paramount for an apparel company like this. That's where [RLSA](#) can help. Businesses can use RLSA to customize their search campaigns for people who've already been to their site.

Winning over repeat or familiar customers will likely always be easier than winning over brand-new customers. RLSA have proven effective for improving efficiency and overall results for many Canadian brands. And it makes sense. Here's how three Canadian companies found success with RLSA.

Arc'teryx expands reach with RLSA and improves return on ad spend

Outdoor clothing and sporting good company [Arc'teryx](#) was attempting to connect with people who had come to the site but hadn't purchased—and knew it could do a better job of re-engaging these potential customers.

Arc'teryx used RLSA to get in front of users who had previously viewed the home page, product pages, and even people who had completed a purchase. To reach these valuable users right in the moment they were looking to buy, the brand used RLSA, expanded its keyword list and increased bids for this audience.



Conversion rate
+86%



Cost per acquisition
-30%



ROAS
+59%

With RLSA, conversion rates improved a whopping 86%, cost per acquisition decreased 30%, and return on ad spend improved by 59% vs. non-remarketing search tactics.

"RLSA helps us get the most out of our search spend. When we know we're reaching people who are familiar with our company and are more likely to purchase, we can bid more aggressively. And it works," said Benjy Berger, manager of global e-commerce at Arc'teryx.

With this success on the books, Arc'teryx is now looking for ways to use RLSA to bring shoppers back for innovative new products.

Home Depot Canada conducts small tests with RLSA—and then goes big

[Home Depot Canada](#) relies heavily on [Dynamic Search Ads](#), which have proved effective in the past. The company wanted to build on that success by showing up more often for its best and most valuable customers. Home Depot took initial steps with RLSA by conducting small tests and measuring the results.

The brand saw success in initial testing and expanded its use of RLSA across its search strategy. By using bid modifiers to secure its most valuable searchers, the click-through rate for RLSA campaigns soared to 3X higher than non-RLSA campaigns.



The click-through rate for RLSA campaigns soared to **3X higher** than non-RLSA campaigns.

"After seeing the success of RLSA on a small scale, we plan to expand and use it on all our search campaigns. We're excited to see what more we can do," said Kerry Munro, vice president of e-commerce and marketing at The Home Depot.

RLSA is now incorporated into all its new builds; it's a pivotal component of its search and shopping strategy. The company plans to create more detailed audience lists (e.g., people who are likely to be interested in certain products based on their interest in other products), utilize first-party shopper data for improved targeting, and add custom tags throughout the site to target return audiences more granularly.

G Adventures uses RLSA and sees CTR and conversion rates skyrocket

[G Adventures](#), an adventure travel company, typically sees longer booking windows than other e-commerce sites. This is due to the nature of its travel offerings (river cruises and safaris don't come together in a day!). The brand wasn't treating returning visitors any differently than new visitors in its search campaigns, and saw a missed opportunity to reach people who'd already visited the site months ago.



Click-through rate
+134%



Cost per acquisition
-39%



Conversion rate
+199%

G Adventures used RLSA to reach people who had visited its site, explored trip packages, but had abandoned the checkout process. With RLSA, G Adventures saw a 134% higher CTR, a 39% lower CPA, and a 199% higher conversion rate.

"RLSA has helped us better tailor our campaigns. We're now able to tailor our targeting to visitors who are already aware of G Adventures tours, and are closer to converting," said Aizaz Sheikh, regional marketing manager, Canada. "This has resulted in more efficient use of ad spend, better conversion rates, and ultimately, better ROI."

Because of its success with RLSA, G Adventures has dedicated standalone budgets for RLSA across its major markets.

Best practices for working with RLSA

If you're looking to try out RLSA to reach valuable shoppers, here are some [best practices](#) we've seen work for brands and companies across Canada:

- 1. Start simple:** RLSA has all sorts of bells and whistles, but there's no need to get overwhelmed by what can be done. Start simple by targeting based on recency and build from there.
- 2. Launch RLSA to gather data:** Try out RLSA on all search campaigns when possible. This allows you to get data faster and understand how returning visitors perform at a higher level.
- 3. Use data to understand customers' behaviour.** Look at the kind of performance you get and see what works, then optimize that performance by improving bids and driving incremental results. You can then expand and add more complexity to your campaigns, breaking out segments and optimizing from there.

4. **Expand keyword lists to more general terms:** Once you have an idea of how returning visitors perform, you can expand your keyword lists, themes, and topics to include broader terms. These terms can often perform better for users who already know your business.

When used effectively, RLSA can be a real boost for your search ads. Follow the lead of these Canadian brands and see how RLSA can improve your efficiency and overall sales.