Rug Doctor was building up learning and reserving media budgets for an aggressive Q4 holiday season. The intelligence that Black Friday was no longer a trend, and that competitors and retailers began sales as early as October drove numerous business decisions around the timing of keyword effectiveness and promotional efforts. Accumulating almost a year's worth of keyword and promotional intelligence, we tripled our budgets for the holidays, resulting in almost a 17 to 1 ROAS (our goal was 10 to 1) at an annual peak of over $400,000 in SEM media spend for November.

There were three primary success levers that defined our approach:

- Multiple accounts restructures to identify lower funnel converting keywords and product categories that changed daily and to create upper funnel awareness with unique goals of ROAS and new customer acquisition

- Ad copy customization that tested and ran for weeks up to Black Friday and the holiday, which allowed frequent changes of offers from 24 hours sales to site-wide events, leveraging different points of holiday shopping mindsets 3. Maximizing core branded keywords using existing organic results and competitive bidding observations to maximize effectiveness, with a maximum of 30X ROAS (branded only).

Implementing an Ad customizer enabled us in promoting new offers during the holiday season without extended delays of ad review during the pandemic situation. This also enabled switching ads across multiple themes within minutes, increasing the relevancy of ads to active promotions on the website and landing pages.

Consumer behavior was unknown at this time. Due to the pandemic, Black Friday was no longer reserved for single-day, in-store events. All retailers were using unique strategies and holding Black Friday sales as much as a month in advance. Any retail thinking and traditions were broken.

Web Sprout moved to an aggressive testing model against promotions, timing, and ad messaging. Sales results were recorded on a daily basis, with an analysis on triggers, time, and creativity. Accumulating all learnings for a pre-Black Friday execution allowed us to break client records in terms of revenue generated against media dollars spent on Paid Search.

Leveraging our pre-holiday learnings resulted in the following:

- Nearly **$7M** in revenue from Paid Search alone – the highest revenue for SEM ever

- **16.7%** ROAS – 67% above goal

- **13%** CTR – the 2nd highest for the year despite increased impressions and budgets.

Consumer habits for the last few years have pivoted from the traditional to the unpredictable. Retail sales and revenue were spaced out over several weeks leading up to Black Friday vs. the concentrated multi-day period between Black Friday and Cyber Monday. Web Sprout and Rug Doctor knew we had to think differently to find success in a new dynamic. Weeks of preparation across keyword strategies tied to sales, ad copy, and promotional testing, and numerous restructures around performance led our team to squeeze the highest levels of results out of our SEM campaigns. Several weeks of critical and creative thinking and analysis resulted in the record-breaking numbers we saw during Rug Doctor's 2021 holiday season.