

Proper Tracking and Conversion Buildouts

SlickText had already achieved unicorn status in the SaaS space and was spending nearly six figures per month on digital when it came to Web Sprout in search of a more scalable and data-driven strategy. With no direct way to attribute the best-quality leads and customers back to marketing touchpoints, it was difficult to optimize and scale paid search strategically.

Web Sprout knew that the only way to effectively scale ad spend was to more precisely show what efforts were influencing the ultimate customer decision. The team first built out closed-loop analytics that tied ad data, Google Analytics data, and CRM data together. Lead capture forms were rebuilt with hidden fields to capture click identifiers and other parameters so that post-lead milestones could be brought into Google Ads to use for campaign optimization. Reporting dashboards matched Google Ads data to CRM data to provide more granular looks at business impact.

Web Sprout wrote Google Tag Manager scripts to “listen” for successful submissions of different Hubspot forms across the website, such as demo requests or webinar signups. Based on the form ID submitted, custom events would be created in Google Analytics and turned into individual conversion actions within Google Ads. This provided visibility into which paid search efforts were generating leads of which type, so the value could be measured individually instead of an “all for one” bucket.

This segmentation allowed Web Sprout to apply separate conversion actions to search campaigns based on their strategic place in the customer funnel:

- Higher-funnel search like broad keywords around pain points, competitor brands, or general solutions would optimize toward content downloads, webinar signups, etc.
- Lower-funnel such as RLSA or branded search would push demo requests

Finally, Web Sprout brought offline milestones into the account and shifted optimization focus to them. By capturing the GCLID into Salesforce, Web Sprout was able to attribute post-lead milestones back to individual tactics. Ad efforts had complete visibility into the impact on customer and revenue volume for SlickText. And real-time dashboards could highlight things like milestones by campaign or spend as well as time lag from one prospect stage to the next. Web Sprout used this full-funnel data to build predictive models showing which tactics were reaching diminishing returns and which had significantly more investment opportunities.

Expanding Campaign and Audience Tactics

Web Sprout moved to build out new campaign and audience initiatives on search. Being able to quickly test for their impact on the customer journey allowed for agile adjustment, finding the best fit for each search initiative in the overall marketing plan.

Among the impactful search strategies implemented were:

- Competitor conquering - keywords weren't just competitor names or products, but common error codes that may indicate a frustrated user who could be in a "change now" mindset. Other keywords included competitor + renewal or support to find relevant prospects who may have frustration.
- Custom affinity audiences were layered onto search and built using the URLs of competitor "thank you" pages that were reached after requesting a demo. This created a custom audience of users likely researching similar competing products, which was then used in a pseudo-remarketing style.
- Search remarketing was built based on website behaviors (visited an integration page, investigated a particular use case scenario, etc.) as well as milestones (demo requested but no further action, etc). These allowed ads to reach prospects who were in varying stages of research as they continued to seek out solutions, tailoring copy directly to them (such as testimonials for post-demo users, or success stories based on a specific industry they had been looking at).
- A custom script ran daily scrapes of search term reports to highlight any marked by Google as "close variants," and mapped out which were underperforming compared to the exact-match versions. Custom alerts and automations helped move these into negative keyword lists, while higher-performing variants were built out into new ad groups to better control the bidding and ad messaging.

Key Results

Web Sprout helped SlickText profitably scale its monthly ad spend by nearly 20X from where it began, to more than \$2-million per month. Thanks to the robust tracking, attribution, and reporting put into place, the client achieved:

- A 340% return on total investment with Web Sprout, higher than the year prior despite spending exponentially more
- Three straight months of all-time highs in lead volume, SQL volume, and closed customer
- A 15.73% improvement in cost-per-closed customer, even while spending 20X