



CASE STUDY

Walks of Italy boosts revenue and ROI with data-driven attribution and automated bidding

Tags [Search Ads 360](#)

The Goals

- Maximize tour bookings during the summer tourist season
- Increase the brand's visibility online to connect with travelers as they research
- Understand the customer journey and gain insight into search's effect on final sales

The Approach

- Set up a custom data-driven attribution model
- Implement target return on ad spend automated bidding strategy to optimize generic search campaigns

The Results

- 33% revenue increase
- 31% increase in transactions
- 25% increase in ROI

Maximizing crucial seasonal business

Walks of Italy's magic lies right in the name: the Rome-based company specializes in immersive walking tours around some of Italy's most famous destinations, including Rome, Florence, Venice, and Sicily.

Like most online tourism companies, Walks of Italy's busiest season is summer. With more than 70 available tours and services led by an international team of guides, Walks of Italy was focused on maximizing the number of tour bookings going into the crucial summer season.

Adapting to different search patterns

Knowing that many of its customers shop around online before booking their tour tickets, Walks of Italy primarily used search ads to engage with potential travelers who were beginning to research their options. However, 34% of the brand's conversion paths involved two or more touchpoints, and optimizing the entire search path historically posed a challenge.

Many travelers start their research with general search queries, such as "Rome tour" or "Florence tour guides." Then they narrow their options with branded searches like "Walks of Italy Rome tour" before booking. In the past, last-click brand searches like these accounted for 48% of the company's tour ticket sales. But that approach to attribution failed to account for all the searches, impressions, and ad clicks that led to a final conversion.

To make the most of its search ad spend, Walks of Italy needed to optimize its generic campaigns and make sure it accounted for impact throughout the click

path.

Setting up a custom data-driven attribution (DDA) model in Google Search Ads 360

Walks of Italy's performance marketing agency, Merkle | Periscopix, saw an opportunity to move the brand away from last-click attribution and take a fresh approach. The agency set up a data-driven attribution (DDA) model in [Google Search Ads 360](#) to give Walks of Italy a greater understanding of each type of search. That allowed the company to assign credit to each online checkpoint.

DDA uses machine learning to evaluate different patterns of searches. In this case, Walks of Italy was able to determine which searches led to a tour booking and which did not. That allowed the brand to measure the impact that each online touchpoint had on overall ticket sales.



The introduction of DDA to the account has added so much value in terms of seeing which campaigns and ad groups were previously being undervalued. We're now a lot more confident in allocating budget to areas where we previously didn't see too much value.

Roisin O'Sullivan, Marketing Director, Walks of Italy

After reviewing its DDA results, Walks of Italy saw generic search campaigns were generally being undervalued in favor of last-click brand searches.

With a fresh set of insights in hand, Merkle | Periscopix applied the model to a return on ad spend automated bidding strategy to optimize its bids for high-

volume, generic keywords. This let Walks of Italy increase its online visibility and engage potential travelers in their early online research moments.

DDA bidding campaigns spark a sizzling summer season

Compared to 2016's summer season, Walks of Italy's DDA bidding campaigns led to a 33% year-over-year revenue increase compared to just 6% for its non-brand campaigns. The DDA campaigns also boosted ROI by 25% year over year, and ultimately led to a 69% increase in ticket sales.

The success of DDA and automated bidding strategies inspired Walks of Italy and Merkle | Periscopix to continue exploring how a similar approach could drive even better results in the future.

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