



Cognito

**Evolving to  
thrive in the  
new digital  
marketing age**

**Paid search has advanced with the times and is now even more accessible to advertisers. Everyone jumps on the bandwagon, but achieving acceptable ROI doesn't prove to be as easy. The market is forever evolving, and your strategy needs to too.**

**We'll look into the evolution of paid search and digital marketing and how you can best utilise it for success.**

# Survival of the fittest

## Creating and managing effective paid search campaigns

**Much like Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, digital marketing is an ever expanding phenomenon that stands still for no one. User behaviour is evolving with the landscape, meaning paid search is more important than ever in reaching the right audiences online.**

Poorly executed campaigns will yield only one winner: the platform owners. Campaigns with high costs and low conversion rates won't survive in the face of interrogation from business owners demanding ROI. Ongoing campaign management and optimisation is crucial in managing profitability, increasing qualified leads and ultimately ensuring success.

Understanding your marketing goals and desired outcomes from the outset is fundamental. These can then be translated into campaign metrics to inform

the set up and structure of the campaign, as well as how that is measured and tracked – both within the advertising platform and through web analytics.

Metrics can be as basic as logging a sale, as well as help explain more complex user behaviours such as content consumption, calls to action or media views. Align your KPIs with your business objectives and insight into your audience and industry, to establish your foundation for success.



# The bigger and stronger won't always survive

## Paid search can't be ignored – it's levelling the playing field

The ability to compete against long standing competitors within organic search is becoming harder each year. As the volume of content rockets and the number of external links to their websites grow, so do their organic ranking metrics.

For organic listings, the first result attracts 30% of all clicks. This can mean even the strongest organic SEO campaigns can fall short of driving quality traffic. If you want to compete in search you need months, or even years, and a hefty budget. Or do you?

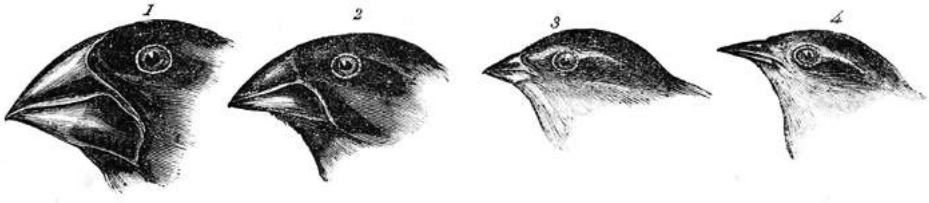
Want to see instant results, measure all activity and manage ROI? Paid search provides the platform to compete on a level playing field. Get detailed insight into what your customers search for and how they find you, understand what search metrics drive conversions and constantly optimise your campaigns to drive more qualified traffic.

Many brands often struggle to understand users' intent to their searches; are they likely to be problem or solution led, do they know what they're looking for, and will they make a broad or specific search? The introduction of demographic targeting options now allows advertisers to adjust bids dependent on gender, age, parental status and household income. Startling, but incredibly useful in making sure your ads reach the right audiences, and critical in allowing you to run a niche campaign standing out from the big spenders.



# The theory of natural selection...

## Keeping up with change



Your audience's behaviours are changing, from searching for you online to looking you up on LinkedIn, to reading your latest FT coverage. People live online, and your brand needs to be there. Whether you are proactively looking to reach new audiences and drive leads, or simply want to be there when existing clients or word of mouth referrals look for you, search engine marketing (SEM) is a big part of the user journey. It's often one of the first touchpoints someone will have with your brand.

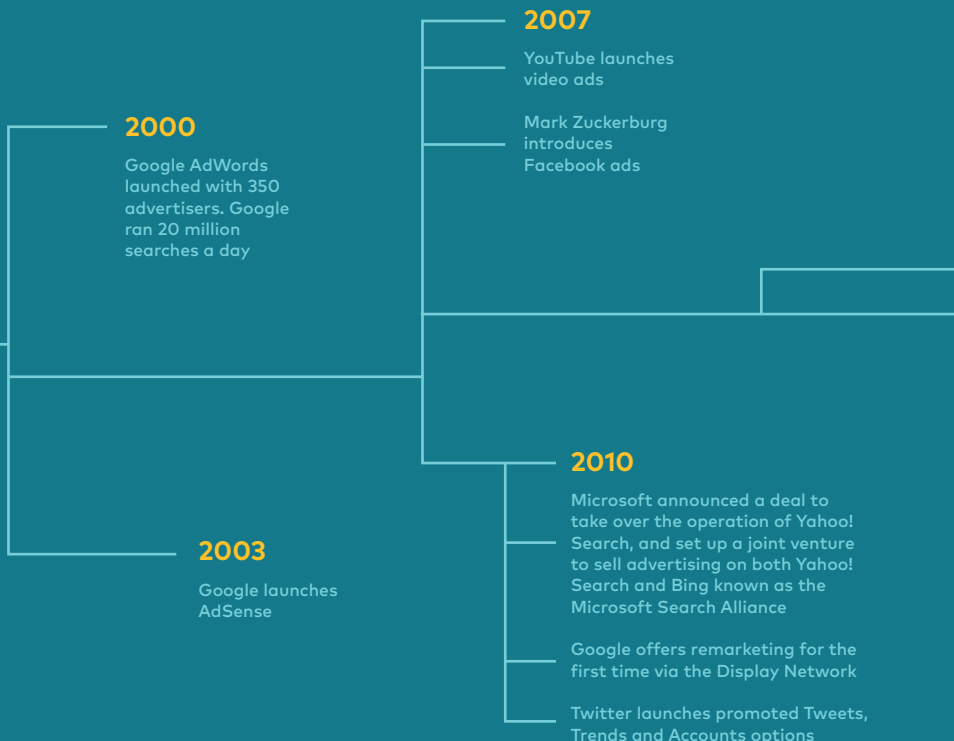
Paid search has become increasingly important (alongside SEO) in taking control of those coveted Page 1 results. SEM should be central to your digital marketing strategy, alongside PR and online coverage, company and employee social media activity, and wider digital channel activity such as Glassdoor and Wikipedia. Make sure you own what people see when they search for your brand.

At Cognito, we have evolved our strategies and approach in line with the latest digital developments and channel updates to provide integrated marketing solutions, tailored to the often niche audiences of our clients.

# The origin of (paid search) species

## The evolving landscape of digital marketing

Paid search has evolved constantly since its introduction by Google in 2000. Google alone boasts over 3 billion searches a day with 1 million advertisers trying to take advantage. Click through rates, conversion rates and impressions data are at the mercy of platform upgrades or changes. All well and good, so long as you keep up with the pace and retain a targeted approach...





**“Intelligence  
is the ability  
to adapt to  
change”**

Stephen Hawking



# Strategies and channels you must consider for your campaigns

## **It's not all about Google...**

It's easy to align your paid search strategy with the single biggest platform, Google. What many people don't realise, however, is that the search engine giant only accounts for around 60% of search volume in the UK, leaving the likes of Bing and Yahoo! to sweep up the rest. In the US things are even more equally split with Bing alone growing their market share to over 30%.

With most advertisers channelling all their efforts into Google, there is an opportunity for more cost effective, less competitive campaigns on Bing and Yahoo!

## **Taking an integrated channel approach**

Paid search should be one part of a holistic digital channel strategy, to ensure you are reaching the right audiences online. Paid social campaigns on LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook and YouTube are also highly targeted and consistently deliver high engagement and conversion rates for clients. Remarketing is another effective and underutilised option to increase touch points with previous visitors.

The channel mix and remarketing approach will depend on your campaign objectives, the audiences you are trying to reach and the content you want to promote. The beauty of digital marketing is you can easily test and measure performance - which channels, content types and targeting options are working best? This allows you to focus budget where the results are and adapt your campaigns accordingly.

# Know your Finches from your Dodos

## **AdWords**

Google's platform to allow advertisers to target ads on the Search, Display and Video network.

## **AdSense**

Google's platform to allow publishers to serve ads to their audiences.

## **Backlinks**

A backlink is simply a link placed on someone else's website that points back to your site. Backlinks are one of the most important factors for off-page SEO. Getting a lot of backlinks with relevant anchor texts is the shortest way of improving your search engine rankings.

## **SEO**

They are two main elements of SEO: "on-page" and "off-page". On-page practices are everything you do on your page to improve its rankings.

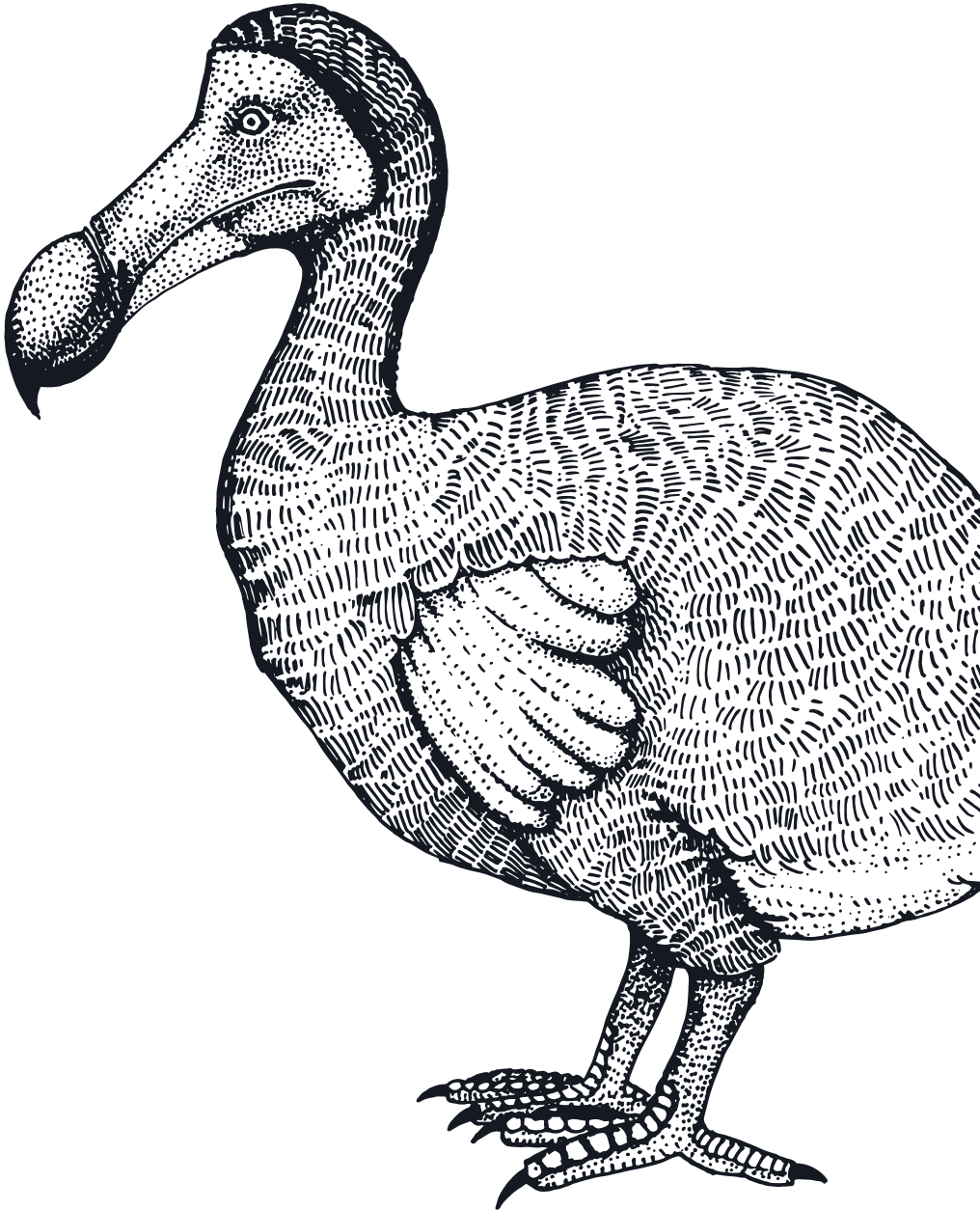
This includes things like: tuning the HTML structure, improving title tags and descriptions, making your site load faster, checking the keyword usage and density, improving the internal linking structure (the way your pages are linked to each other), etc.

## **PPC**

An internet advertising model used by the likes of Google & Bing to direct traffic to websites, in which an advertiser pays only when an ad is clicked.

## **Remarketing**

A form of online advertising that enables sites to show targeted ads to users who have already visited their site.




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