

March ad updates: See what Google, Meta, TikTok, and more just changed

Article

Over the past month, we've seen ad updates from all the major players, from Meta's generative AI ads to Google's attempts to decrease clutter. Here's what they mean for

advertisers.

Player: Google

Google released Ads Editor version 2.3 and introduced new layouts and product-level reporting. The Ads Editor update boasts 12 new features, while the new layouts are meant to boost engagement. Reporting is a particular win for both Google and advertisers, because if you're spending money on ads, you need to know what's working.

Who cares? Anyone who is advertising with Google.

Google pushed new ways to drive travel conversions via Performance Max as well as new travel features on Search. These updates are useful for both advertisers and users because they streamline ads across platforms. Ads can push automatically across Google Maps, Search, YouTube, and Hotel Ads. Plus, Google introduced a flight price guarantee, meaning people who don't already browse flights on Google may start.

Helpful tips: [How to build better Performance Max campaigns.](#)

Who cares? Hotels, travel, and tourism businesses.

Google released a slew of tools to clean up its feed, including an **ads transparency center** and **"about the author" and perspectives** sections for search results. In addition, it's **testing verification badges for advertisers** to increase user trust. But verified sellers could make Google's feed look even more discombobulated. Keep a close eye on how these changes affect advertisers directly (by changing how ads appear) and indirectly (by transforming the search experience).

Who cares? Everyone who advertises or might advertise with Google—so, everyone.

YouTube removed overlay ads. These ads were only on desktop and were disruptive to viewers. YouTube hasn't replaced them with any similar ad type yet, but other ads still exist.

Who cares? Anyone who was already advertising with YouTube should know that this happened, but no action is needed. If you were using overlay ads, look into replacing those ads with another option.

Player: Meta

Instagram launched reminder ads. Will more ad types lead to a bigger ad business? That's what Instagram is trying to find out. Because customers will opt into seeing these ads, self-selection could be low. But those who do opt in are more likely to be motivated customers.

Who cares? Anyone inclined to host some sort of event on Instagram. Beauty and fashion businesses in particular have opportunities here.

Meta introduced call-to-action buttons within image and video ads, as well as interaction measurement tools. The buttons can push customers interested in featured products directly to the point of sale, driving conversions.

Who cares? This is another useful update for beauty and fashion retailers.

Meta is launching generative AI ad tools. AI ad tools would make ad production faster and cheaper. Consumers and advertisers already don't have a ton of trust in Meta, so its ad solutions may need to win clients over.

Who cares? Everyone who advertises with or might advertise with Meta—so once again, everyone.

Player: TikTok

TikTok introduced Effects House Branded Effects. The name is a mouthful, but the products are worth looking into. Brands can now sponsor their own AR effects and filters, which will foster user engagement in advertising. **Microsoft** used this resource to push its brand with a nostalgia factor, while **Daft Punk** tried it out as a fun way to push fan engagement. These ads are a little silly, but a viral filter could go a long way with user interest.

Who cares? Brands willing to take a creative risk.

Player: Microsoft

Bing's chatbot got more ads. Microsoft makes up just 5.3% of total US search ad revenues, according to our forecast. But these changes could **shake up search**.

Who cares? Brands and retailers that should be paying attention to how Bing is incorporating ads into chatbot-based search, because Google will likely make similar moves. But Bing's search footprint is still so low that advertising here may not be worth your time.

LinkedIn expanded generative AI assistance to recruitment ads. This could also be a safer place to check out GPT-4's ad prowess without risking loss of conversions.

Who cares? Hiring managers and human resources professionals, mostly. But others should also pay attention to GPT-4's ad possibilities.

Player: Pinterest

Pinterest made Shuffles shoppable. Users can see brands, prices, product info, and similar items as part of a greater push to make everything in Pinterest shoppable.

Who cares? Fashion and beauty retailers.

Player: Uber

Uber expands out-of-home (OOH) ads. The self-serve platform is aimed at small and medium-sized businesses interested in car-top ads in specific ZIP codes and times of day. The OOH ads can integrate with in-app discounts, making them more actionable than typical OOH ads.

Who cares? Anyone advertising a product or service, especially if that product is location-specific.

Player: Best Buy

Best Buy launched its own ad platform. Adding Best Buy into your retail media mix could help push online and in-store sales.

Who cares? Consumer electronics companies. Other retailers should keep a close eye on Best Buy as well, since its retail media network could eat into ad sales on rival networks.

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