

## Park Seed

## Multi-Channel Assists Increase Visibility, Grow Paid Search Revenue

### Company Overview

When Frontgate launched in 1991, the vision was not only to market a broad range of functional, high-quality products for the home and garden, but to create a level of service that exceeds industry standards. After the first Frontgate catalog was mailed to 300,000 upscale American households, their growth took off. In 1996, Frontgate was recognized by Inc. magazine as one of the nation's 500 fastest growing companies. Since then, it has been joined by subsidiary titles including Grandin Road, the Outdoor Sourcebook and Splash Pool & Spa, who have established themselves as some of the most respected and emerging names in direct marketing. Even though each catalog has a different focus, the mission remains the same: "To reward our customers with long-term value and product satisfaction for every purchase."



**Location:** Greenwood, SC  
**URL:** [www.parkseed.com](http://www.parkseed.com)  
**Industry:** seeds, plants and garden accessories

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#### ChannelAdvisor Solutions:

**Product:** Paid Search, Comparison Shopping

ChannelAdvisor combines on-demand software, integrated technology and best practices to help retailers manage the complexities of selling across multiple e-commerce channels – more efficiently and more profitably – all through a single interface.

Designed exclusively for online retailers, Paid Search enables retailers to manage, automate and maximize campaigns across top search engines – including Google, Yahoo! MSN and Ask.com – without adding costly resources or missing ROI targets.

Comparison Shopping puts control back in retailers’ hands, giving them the freedom to market every product – easily and effectively – across the comparison shopping landscape. By enabling them to achieve unsurpassed relevancy and generate maximum returns, Comparison Shopping helps retailers isolate the most compelling campaign strategies.

- Walt Yates  
 E-Commerce Director,  
 SEM and Web Marketing Strategies,  
 Park Seed

# Situation

Walt Yates, E-Commerce Director at Park Seed struggled with finding an automatic bidding tool to impact paid search and comparison shopping profits. Park Seed's current tools were not producing satisfactory results for his small marketing team. He wanted to gauge customer incentive through his choice of keywords or ads. And he wanted to bid with confidence on the valuable terms from click to purchase that would translate his efforts into true conversions.

"We were trying to discover the formula to make bid rules work in a more multi-faceted way rather than a simple ROI or position-based metrics. The creation of the Multi-Channel Assist feature gives us the ability to see many more layers of customer behavior data," he said. "We felt the answers lay in getting more quality data which would lead to a better understanding of customer search behavior while also keeping costs under control." He was impressed with what he saw from ChannelAdvisor and decided the Multi-Channel Assist feature in Paid Search could provide the combination he was looking for.

# Solution

ChannelAdvisor designed the Multi-Channel Assists feature to tell the full story of campaign performance from click to purchase. For instance, a consumer might initially search on broad terms such as "shrubs for sun," then come back the next day and search on "flowering shrubs full sun." Prior to purchase, the terms or ad clicked might be as specific as "baby lilac." Typically, these last few terms are the only keywords credited a value in the purchase.

Yates sought a more holistic approach that tracked all the terms leading up to a conversion to help Park Seed cast a wider customer net. Using the Multi-Channel Assists feature, Park Seed was able to map the full value of paid search keywords and comparison shopping ads that contribute to conversions. Multi-Channel Assists credited all terms used in the buying process with a value that Park Seed could filter automatically into future bidding decisions, even for words or ads that might initially appear too broad or invalid.

"Multi-Channel Assists helped us understand how customers are searching. It reinforced the fact that people don't always know what they're looking for initially, but that every search term or ad has validity as long as it eventually leads to a sale," said Yates. "We started looking at terms that we hadn't paid much attention to before or had been cautious about. Now, we can bid those terms up automatically, whether they come through paid search, natural search or a comparison shopping engine," he added.

In addition, the feature gave Yates new insight into customer behavior. Many times customers can be classified by the terms or ads they click on, he said. For instance, a novice gardener might search on a more broad term, whereas an experienced gardener might use something more specific. "Now, we can categorize customers by the search paths they take, predict their buying behavior and better steer them towards what they're looking for," he added.

# Results

Since launching Paid Search, Park Seed has increased year-over year paid search revenue by 43 percent and ROI by 15 percent. This comes at a time when other gardening supply companies are experiencing a drought in sales and accumulating losses. According to Yates, Park Seed's success is due to a good team and good tools, such as Multi-Channel Assists and Paid Search's ability to help them tap under-realized revenue, hit their revenue targets and maximize the true potential of their advertising efforts.

"With Search's Multi-Channel Assists, we've been able to justify bidding on terms that we wouldn't traditionally have assigned direct revenue," Yates said. "This has given us profitability control over other bidding tools and quantifiable metrics that help us effectively manage our ad spend."

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** 0203 014 2700 | [www.channeladvisor.co.uk](http://www.channeladvisor.co.uk) | [ukteam@channeladvisor.com](mailto:ukteam@channeladvisor.com)



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**ABOUT CHANNELADVISOR** ChannelAdvisor helps the world sell online with applications that enable retailers to efficiently distribute their products across multiple online channels, drive shoppers to those products and then convert those shoppers into customers. The ChannelAdvisor platform empowers retailers to distribute their products across multiple online marketplaces, comparison shopping sites and search engines. With application features such as keyword generation, to in-depth reporting, to our merchandising engine, retailers gain the tools they need to easily fine tune and analyse their marketing efforts to drive more shoppers to their products. Rich media offerings and storefront applications enable retailers to provide an engaging online shopping experience that represents their brand and is optimised to convert shoppers into customers. In 2008, ChannelAdvisor managed over \$2.6 billion in gross merchandise value (GMV) on behalf of leading retailers around the world including Vodafone, Brother, HP, B&Q, and Schuh. [www.channeladvisor.co.uk](http://www.channeladvisor.co.uk)