

Solmate Socks

How Strategic Google Advertising Drove 47% Revenue Growth

47%

Year-over-Year Revenue Increase (November 2023)

\$104,570

Additional Revenue Added in November 2023

\$4.62

Return on Ad Spend (ROAS)

\$500,000+

Total Revenue Generated (6 Months)

Executive Summary

In July 2023, Solmate Socks hired me to transform their underperforming digital advertising strategy during their critical Q4 holiday season. Previously working with a \$6,500/month agency that relied on text-based ads and broad targeting, they were frustrated with poor results and high costs.

Within six months, I delivered exceptional results by transitioning to visual, product-focused Google Performance Max campaigns, eliminating wasteful spending, and aggressively scaling budgets during peak shopping periods. The November 2023 results speak for themselves: **revenue increased 47% year-over-year from \$222,934 to \$327,504**, adding \$104,570 in additional revenue while maintaining a strong \$4.62 return on every advertising dollar spent.

This case study details how I achieved these results through strategic keyword management, product feed optimization, AI-powered campaign targeting, and dynamic budget scaling—turning Solmate's beautiful, premium socks into their most powerful marketing asset.

The Challenge

What Wasn't Working

When I took over Solmate's Google AdWords account on July 24, 2023, the problems were immediately apparent. Their previous agency had built campaigns around a fundamentally flawed strategy:

- **Broad Match Keywords:** The agency had been bidding on extremely broad match keywords that attracted low-intent traffic and wasted budget on clicks that would seldomly convert.
- **Text-Based Ads:** They relied almost exclusively on text ads, completely failing to showcase Solmate's vibrant, unique sock designs—their primary competitive advantage.
- **Unprofitable Keywords:** Many keywords had a Cost Per Acquisition exceeding \$20, which made no economic sense when Solmate socks retail for \$23. The margins simply weren't there.
- **Incomplete Product Feed:** The Google Merchant Center was poorly maintained with missing product attributes (colors, sizes, gender targeting), resulting in products being blocked from Shopping feeds.
- **Meta Advertising Black Hole:** Their Meta (Facebook/Instagram) advertising was hemorrhaging money with ad spend exceeding revenue—a completely unsustainable situation.

The Core Problem

The agency's approach ignored a fundamental truth about Solmate's business: their socks are **visual products**. The vibrant colors, mismatched patterns, and unique designs are what command premium prices. Text ads couldn't communicate this value proposition. Additionally, their premium pricing (\$23 per pair) meant we needed highly qualified buyers, not broad traffic—yet the agency was casting the widest possible net and paying for clicks from people with no intention of purchasing premium socks.



Strategic Approach

Day One: Immediate Cost Reduction

On my first day, I conducted a comprehensive audit of every keyword in the account. I uploaded all active keywords and analyzed their Cost Per Acquisition (CPA) performance. Any keyword with a CPA exceeding \$20 was immediately paused—this was non-negotiable given Solmate's \$23 price point. I also examined whether certain keywords might perform better during peak shopping periods, but the data showed they were simply unprofitable. This single action eliminated over **\$20,000 in annualized wasteful spending within the first 24 hours of working for them.**

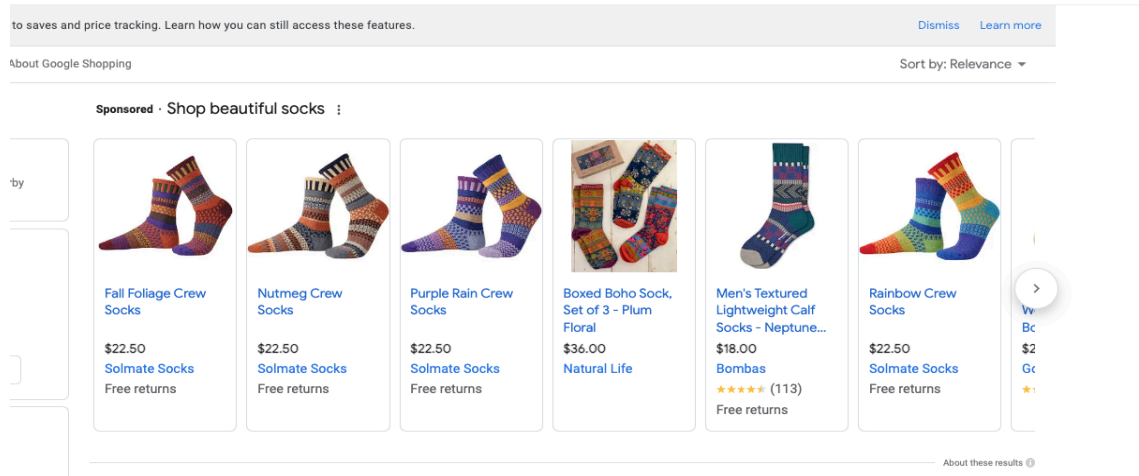
Visual-First Campaign Architecture

I completely restructured the advertising approach around showcasing Solmate's beautiful products:

- **Google Performance Max Campaigns:** I made these the primary driver of revenue. Performance Max campaigns leverage Google's AI to identify buying signals that I, as a human marketer, couldn't possibly detect. These algorithms analyze thousands of behavioral signals to serve ads to users with genuine purchase intent.
- **Strategic Google Shopping Campaigns:** While Performance Max did the heavy lifting, I created supplementary Shopping campaigns for strategic purposes: securing additional premium placements within Google Shopping, creating account-level negative keyword lists to refine targeting, and running specialized campaigns for bestsellers and sale items.
- **Product Feed Optimization:** I spent hours meticulously filling out every field in Google Merchant Center—colors, sizes, gender targeting, and all available attributes. This tedious but critical work unblocked previously ineligible products and dramatically expanded our inventory available for Shopping feeds.

Dominating Search Results

I adopted an aggressive "dominate the space" philosophy for high-value search terms. During the holiday season, consumers prioritize finding the perfect gift over finding the lowest price. By securing multiple ad placements for terms like "beautiful socks," I ensured that Solmate products were omnipresent when gift-buyers were actively shopping. In one example, four of the six sock images displayed at the top of Google's results page for "beautiful socks" were Solmate products—completely surrounding potential customers with our brand.



Execution & Tactics

Dynamic Budget Scaling

The previous agency maintained a fixed \$800 daily ad spend regardless of performance or seasonality during peak season. I took a radically different approach: I closely monitored campaign performance and **aggressively scaled spending during peak shopping periods to as much as \$2,500 per day**. This flexibility allowed us to capture maximum revenue when consumer intent was highest, particularly during the critical November holiday shopping window.

Leveraging AI for Precision Targeting

Rather than manually selecting keywords based on my assumptions about buyer behavior, I trusted Google's Performance Max AI to identify genuine purchase intent signals. The algorithm's ability to process vast amounts of data—search patterns, browsing behavior, time of day, device type, and hundreds of other variables—far exceeded what I could analyze manually. This data-driven approach meant we weren't guessing at keywords; we were responding to actual buying signals.

Addressing the Meta Challenge

While Google advertising flourished, Meta (Facebook/Instagram) remained problematic. The account was losing money with ad spend exceeding revenue. I implemented aggressive retargeting focused primarily on abandoned cart recovery, which improved the situation to achieve a positive revenue-to-ad-spend ratio. However, Meta never became a significant revenue driver and remained a challenging channel compared to Google's strong performance.

Results

November 2023: The Breakthrough Month

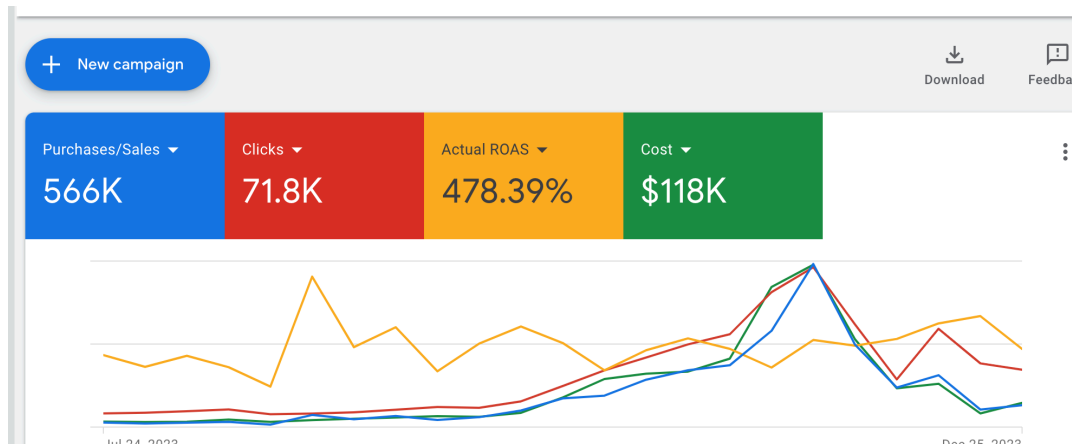
November 2023 represented the peak of our success and validated the entire strategic approach:

Metric	November 2022	November 2023
Total Revenue	\$222,934	\$327,504
Year-over-Year Growth	—	+47% (\$104,570)
Return on Ad Spend	\$3.20	\$4.62



Six-Month Performance (July-December 2023)

From July 24, 2023 through December 31, 2023, Google AdWords generated over **\$500,000 in revenue** while consistently maintaining a ROAS exceeding \$4.60 for every dollar spent. This performance represented a complete transformation from the previous agency's results and demonstrated the power of combining visual product showcasing, AI-powered targeting, and dynamic budget management.



The Competitive Advantage in Action

Our "dominate the space" strategy proved remarkably effective. For high-value search terms during the holiday season, we achieved overwhelming visibility. When consumers searched for gift-appropriate terms like "beautiful socks," they encountered Solmate products in multiple positions on the first page of results, creating a perception of market leadership and making competitor products nearly invisible.

Key Lessons & Takeaways

- **Match Ad Format to Product Strengths:** Visual products demand visual advertising. Text ads for Solmate's vibrant socks were fundamentally misaligned with their value proposition.
- **Trust AI, But Verify:** Google's Performance Max AI identified buying signals I never could have found manually. However, human oversight remained critical for strategy, budget allocation, and quality control.
- **Ruthlessly Eliminate Waste:** The immediate \$20,000 annual savings from pausing unprofitable keywords provided budget to invest in high-performing campaigns. Not all clicks are created equal.
- **Product Feed Hygiene Matters:** The tedious work of completing every product attribute in Google Merchant Center unlocked significant inventory and improved targeting. This foundational work is often overlooked but critical.
- **Seasonal Flexibility Creates Opportunity:** Fixed daily budgets ignore market realities. Scaling from \$800 to \$2,500 per day during peak periods captured maximum revenue when consumer intent was highest.
- **Premium Pricing Requires Precision:** Broad targeting doesn't work for premium products. Solmate's \$23 price point demanded highly qualified traffic, not volume.

- **Not All Channels Are Equal:** While Google delivered exceptional ROAS, Meta advertising remained challenging despite aggressive optimization. Understanding channel strengths and limitations is critical.

Conclusion

The transformation of Solmate Socks' digital advertising demonstrates how strategic thinking, data-driven execution, and relentless optimization can drive substantial business results. By recognizing that Solmate's beautiful products were their greatest asset—not a feature to hide behind text ads—and by leveraging AI-powered campaigns to reach genuinely interested buyers, we achieved a 47% year-over-year revenue increase during their most critical month.

This case study represents more than improved advertising metrics. It demonstrates how understanding a brand's core strengths, eliminating wasteful spending, and dynamically responding to market conditions can transform business performance. The \$500,000+ in revenue generated over six months, combined with a consistent \$4.62 ROAS, proves that when strategy and execution align, exceptional results follow.

About Doug Duguay

I specialize in helping small and medium-sized businesses dramatically improve their digital advertising performance through strategic Google Ads management, product feed optimization, and data-driven campaign execution. My focus is on delivering measurable revenue growth while maintaining strong returns on advertising spend.