

How a Leading Health & Beauty Brand Generated 20% More Incremental Sales

BACKGROUND

A major health & beauty brand sold across Amazon, Target, Walmart, and Ulta runs a significant Amazon media program spanning both Sponsored Search and Display (DSP). The brand operates at scale across multiple product lines, with retail media as a central pillar of their growth strategy.

Like most brands in the category, their program had grown organically over time. Search spend was driven by its direct attribution and clear click-to-purchase visibility. DSP played a supporting role, and the mix felt intuitive. But the team had a nagging question: whether their budget allocation was actually optimal, or whether the apparent efficiency of Search was masking a bigger opportunity in DSP.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Global health & beauty brand with dozens of product lines across personal hygiene, face & skin care, hair styling, oral care, and cosmetics
- Four-week test with ~flat budget
- 20% more incremental sales generated on Amazon
- Proven double-digit sales lift at Target, Walmart, & Ulta

CHALLENGE

Standard retail media metrics told an incomplete story. Reported ROAS for Search looked solid. But ROAS measures total attributed purchases, not incremental ones. Without a way to separate sales driven by media from sales that would have happened anyway, the brand couldn't know which channel was actually pulling its weight.

Without causal measurement, optimizing the media mix was guesswork, and the cross-retailer question wasn't answerable with the tools they had.

SOLUTION

The brand partnered with Incremental to run a controlled incrementality test on their Amazon media program. Incremental's platform established a baseline measurement period and quantified the true incremental impact of Search and DSP, channel by channel, retailer by retailer.

The core metric: iROI (Incremental Return on Investment). Unlike ROAS, iROI isolates only the sales that wouldn't have occurred without the media, removing baseline demand, organic lift, and attribution bias. It's the only number that tells you whether a channel is actually working.

The test held total spend roughly constant while shifting allocation toward DSP based on iROI signals. It also tracked cross-retailer impact: whether Amazon campaigns were generating incremental purchases at Target, Walmart, and Ulta.

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

- Was Search or DSP generating more incremental revenue per dollar?
- What is the right investment mix for Search & DSP?
- Were Amazon campaigns influencing purchases at Target, Walmart, and Ulta, or do sales operate in retailer silos?

RESULTS

The findings reframed how the brand thought about their media mix and surfaced a cross-retailer story they hadn't been able to see before.

Budget mix matters more than total spend.

With 2% less total Amazon spend, the brand generated 20% more incremental sales. Overall iROI improved 23% - from 1.15 to 1.42.

The driver: reallocating dollars from Search to DSP. DSP's iROI (2.54 baseline) consistently outperformed Search (0.85 baseline). Reducing Search spend 5% dropped its incremental sales 15% - the expected, acceptable result of pulling back from a sub-1.0 iROI channel. Meanwhile, increasing DSP spend 56% drove incremental sales up 60%.

20%
**more incremental
sales on Amazon**

Amazon media drives sales beyond Amazon.

The test also quantified something most brands can't see at all: the cross-retailer halo effect. During the test period, Amazon campaigns drove measurable incremental sales lifts at competing retailers.

These are causally measured numbers that have been isolated from organic trends and baseline demand. Incremental's platform helps show how the brand's Amazon media was building demand that converted across the full retail ecosystem.

Amazon campaigns drove incremental sales at other retailers:

- Target: +45%
- Walmart: +38%
- Ulta: +53%