



GUIDE

5 BRILLIANT COMPETITIVE ADVERTISING STRATEGIES TO OUTSMART YOUR COMPETITION

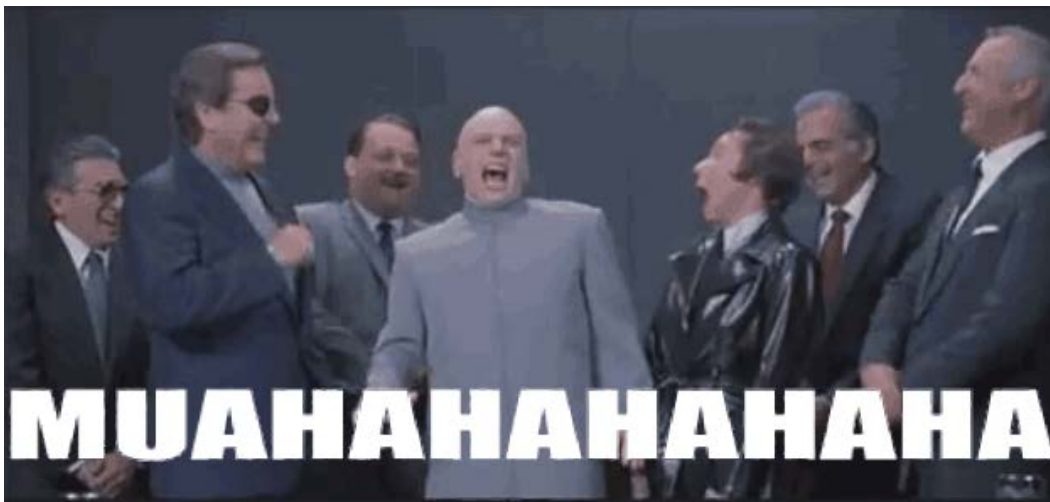
■ INTRODUCTION

It's often said that competition is good for your business. It pushes you to be your best. Think Coca-Cola vs. Pepsi, Visa vs. MasterCard, Xbox vs. PlayStation, or Apple vs. Microsoft.

Of course, part of the fun of rivalry is stealing customers from your rivals. You can do that with the help of advertising!

Today you'll learn five brilliant competitive advertising strategies you can use to get in front of your competitors' customers and (with a little work) turn them into YOUR customers instead.

Evil laughter



■ 1. TARGET FACEBOOK USERS WHOSE INTERESTS INCLUDE YOUR COMPETITORS

[Facebook Ads](#) doesn't offer keyword targeting for your ads and you can't specifically target people who have liked your competitors' pages. However, Facebook offers something called interest-based targeting.

On Facebook, interests range from extremely broad (e.g., business or entrepreneurship) to very specific. In this case, your competitor's name is the specific interest you want to target, because Facebook allows you to choose to target people based on, among other things, brands and products they like.

Interests ⓘ

Additional Entries

Bikram Yoga

Fitness and wellness

Yoga

Search interests

Suggestions | Browse

Type in your competitor’s website URL. Or, if that doesn’t work, you can type in your competitor’s brand name or try a few keyword combinations to figure out the best option for reaching their target audience — which is now your target audience!

Make sure [your Facebook ads are awesome](#) and your competitive campaign will be off and running.

■ 2: DISRUPT YOUR COMPETITORS’ VIDEOS WITH YOUTUBE ADS

Recently, I was on YouTube searching for an AT&T ad. Before I could watch the ad I was looking for, I had to sit through another ad — I know, that’s modern life. But the genius part was that **this ad wasn’t for AT&T, but for its competitor, Sprint.**

In this ad, Sprint explained why it is a better provider than AT&T and highlighted an offer to switch carriers, before I could even see the ad for the brand I had searched for.

To execute this competitive advertising strategy for your own campaigns, create the most watchable TrueView ad you can, adding in how much you’re willing to spend.

There are many targeting options to choose from (e.g., demographics, interests, keywords, remarketing). But today we’re feeling competitive!

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*You want to target your video ads so that whenever
someone searches for the YouTube videos of your competitor,
they’ll see your ad first.*

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You want to target your video ads so that whenever someone searches for the YouTube videos of your competitor, they'll see your ad first. If you play it right, they might not even watch your competitor's video!

For best results, [make sure your video ad is memorable](#).

■ 3. USE YOUR COMPETITORS' EMAILS AGAINST THEM WITH GMAIL ADS

Another brilliantly sneaky competitive advertising tactic you should start using now is targeting people who have recently shown interest in the things your competition sells.

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You should start targeting people who have recently shown interest in the things your competition sells. 

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With Gmail Ads (those ads that appear at the top of the Promotions tab of users' personal email accounts), **you can do keyword targeting on your competitors' brand terms**.

As you read this, people who are in the market for your competitor's products are getting emails from your competitors — and those emails mention your competitors' brand terms. For example, if you were competing with Sephora, you could target its brand name as part of a Gmail ad campaign so that every time a Sephora newsletter arrives in someone's Gmail inbox, your brand ends up in its inbox as well. Obviously, your email should tell Sephora subscribers all about your great competing site and product and why they should check you out.

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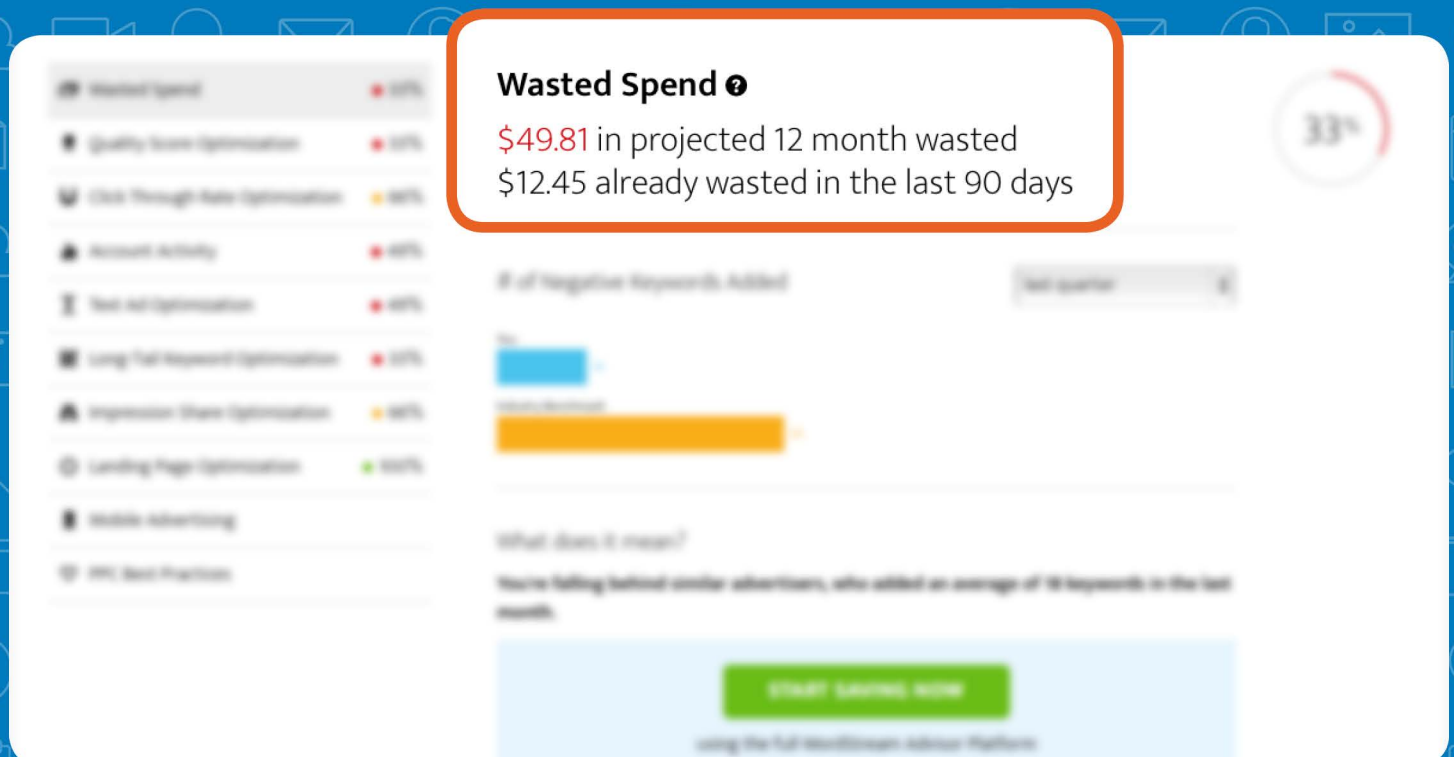
If you want to try to steal some sales, target the trademarks of your competitors. 

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So if you want to try to steal some sales, target the trademarks of your competitors (TWTR). Make sure you use an [email subject line](#) that will have users clicking your Gmail Ads in

STOP WASTING MONEY IN ADWORDS

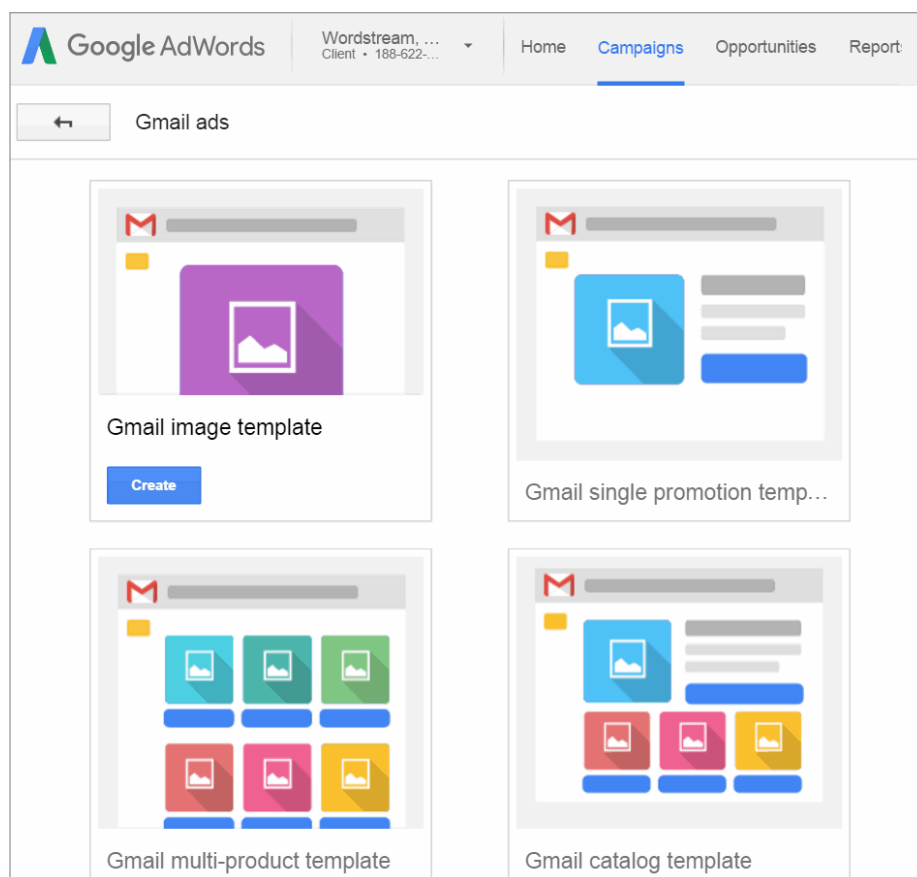
Get **actionable advice** on how to improve your account now
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GRADE YOUR ACCOUNT

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drives. Use only the best-performing subject lines, the ones with the highest open rates — your unicorns. As an added bonus, because these people are already in the market for a competing solution, it's likely that more people will click on your ads, which reduces your costs.



Check out more of [my best Gmail Ads hacks here](#).

■ 4. REACH YOUR COMPETITORS' AUDIENCES THROUGH THE GOOGLE DISPLAY NETWORK

Google has some great display ad technology. But if you want to beat up on your competition, you need to use Google's [custom affinity audience](#) feature.

Affinity audiences let you target a predefined audience, one that should be more receptive to seeing your ads.

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Custom affinity audience

Describe your affinity audience based on their interests and sites related to their interests. The more information you provide, the wider and more clearly defined your reach will be. [Learn more](#)

Name **Description** (optional)

Brunch Enthusiasts Custom affinity for weekend clothing

Sites and interests ⓘ

Custom affinity audiences are available in [these languages](#). If you enter interests in other languages, you'll serve substantially fewer ads.

brunch (interest) ✕ brunch menu (interest) ✕ best mimosa (interest) ✕ best bloody mary (interest) ✕ brunch reservations (interest) ✕
best eggs benedict (interest) ✕ best french toast (interest) ✕ best brunch in new york (interest) ✕ brunchoutfits.com (URL) ✕
reservationsforbrunch.com (URL) ✕ bestbrunchinnyc.com (URL) ✕ mimosaswithbrunch.com (URL) ✕

Brunch Enthusiasts 65M - 70M cookies

Top interests

Aspiring Chefs	
30 Minute Chefs	
Foodies	
Cooking Enthusiasts	
Bargain Hunters	

Demographics

Age

18-24	12%
25-34	22%
35-44	13%
45-54	9%
55-64	9%
65+	6%
Unknown	30%

To make this work brilliantly, and avoid wasting your ad budget, you'll want to **target the home page of your competitor**. AdWords will then figure out the brand trademarks and the behavior of the people who visit and are interested in that domain name (or search for content on related topics).

Let's use *MailChimp* as an example: *MailChimp* is a publication that's geared toward businesses doing email marketing. So if I'm running a similar business geared toward email marketers, *MailChimp* visitors would form the basis of our "ideal customer" we want to reach with our own [display ads](#).

This will start the process of getting the right people familiar with your brand and the products or service you provide. And hopefully, with the right message, you'll start stealing business away from your competitors and experiencing breakout growth.

■ 5. DOWNLOAD & TARGET YOUR COMPETITORS' TWITTER FOLLOWERS

There are tools that allow you to download a list of every Twitter follower for any account, such as [BirdSong Analytics](#). You can use these to download a list of all your competitor's Twitter followers. Costs generally start around \$35 and go up the more followers the account has.

Once you have your report, **you can use those Twitter handles to create a list that you'll then upload to Twitter Ads**. Make sure to select the option to "add tailored audiences." Uploading the list will take about 3 hours to process.

You can then create ads to get your business in front of the Twitter users who are already following your competitors and are likely in the market to buy or switch to a similar product or service. Genius, right?

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After setting your budget comes the real fun. It's time to get creative and compose your tweet copy. [Here](#) are some quick and (relatively) easy ways to produce creative for your Twitter ad and make it stand out from the crowd.

Important note: Twitter's "advice" for ad success is kind of a disgrace, so please read my article "[How to REALLY Run a Twitter Lead Generation Campaign](#)."

■ DON'T LET YOUR COMPETITORS HAVE ALL THE FUN!

Remember, all these competitive ad strategies are putting your business in front of users who are interested in your competitors, which means they're much more likely to be in the market for your product/service. You just have to show them that what you offer is better than what your competitors do!

ABOUT WORDSTREAM

[WordStream Inc.](#) provides software and services that help marketers get the maximum results from their online marketing efforts. WordStream's easy-to-use software allows for more effective paid search and social campaigns with the 20-Minute Work Week, a customized workflow that guides marketers through steps that can greatly improve their AdWords, Bing, Yahoo, and Facebook campaigns, plus tools for call tracking, keyword optimization, and more. WordStream also offers an award-winning free PPC tool, the AdWords Performance Grader, which evaluates users' Google AdWords accounts and provides valuable tips for improvement. WordStream is a Google Premier Partner.