

# The RV Dealer's Paid Media Playbook: How Awareness, Demand, and Conversion Work Together

A plain-English guide to building a paid media strategy that doesn't fall apart when CPCs rise and demand cools off.



# Introduction

Paid media used to feel simple: put money into Google, get leads back out.

Lately, it hasn't felt that way at all.

Cost per click is up. Leads are down. New AI features keep changing the search page. And any time you ask two people about Performance Max, you get three different opinions.

This playbook is here to cut through the noise.

- You'll see how **awareness, demand, and conversion** fit together
- What each channel is good at
- How to adjust your mix When the market gets tough.

No buzzwords, no "growth hacks" — just a clear plan RV dealers can use.

# Why Paid Media Feels Harder Now

## Why Your Same Budget Doesn't Go as Far Anymore

If it feels like you're spending the same money but getting fewer leads, you're not imagining it.

Over the last year, Google's cost per click has climbed while RV demand has softened in several months. That means you're paying more just to hold your place in line, and there are fewer serious shoppers in that line to begin with.

At the same time, Google changed how the search results page looks. AI Overviews now take up more space at the top, leaving fewer traditional ad slots and forcing more advertisers to compete for less real estate.

So instead of:

**"I increased my budget and got more leads,"**

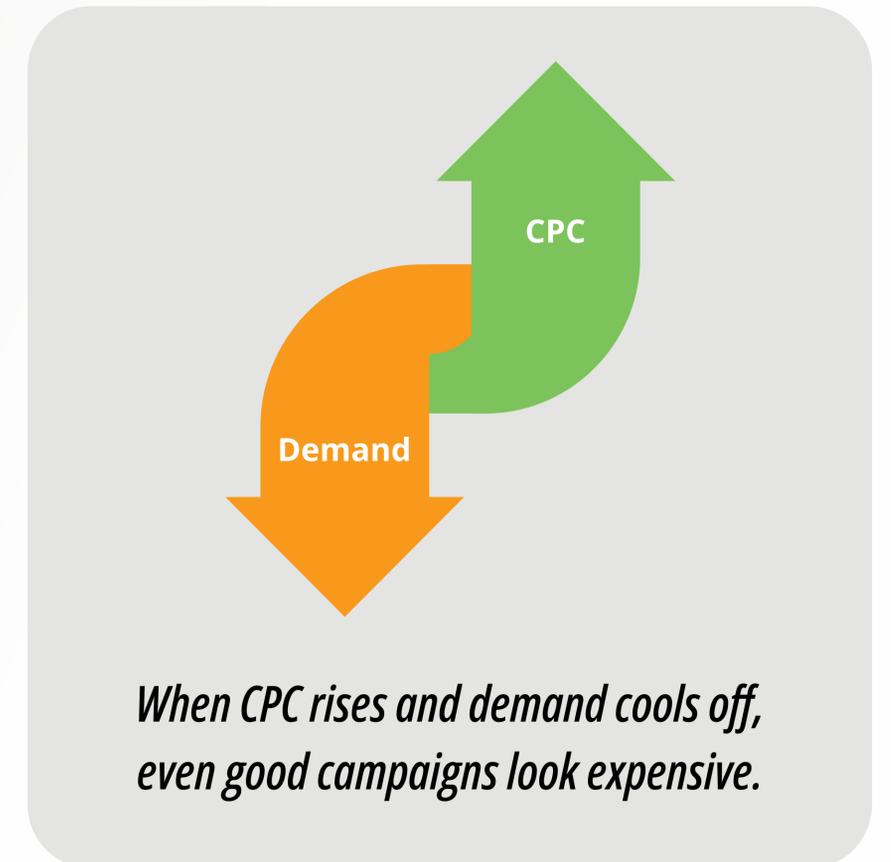
many RV dealers are seeing:

**"I increased my budget and barely kept my leads from dropping."**

Key narrative points:

- CPC inflation means each click costs more than it did a year ago.
- Seasonality still exists; slow months are still slow, which makes higher CPC feel even worse.
- New formats and AI features have changed where and how your ads appear.

None of that is your fault. But it does mean that "Search-only" strategies are starting to show their cracks.



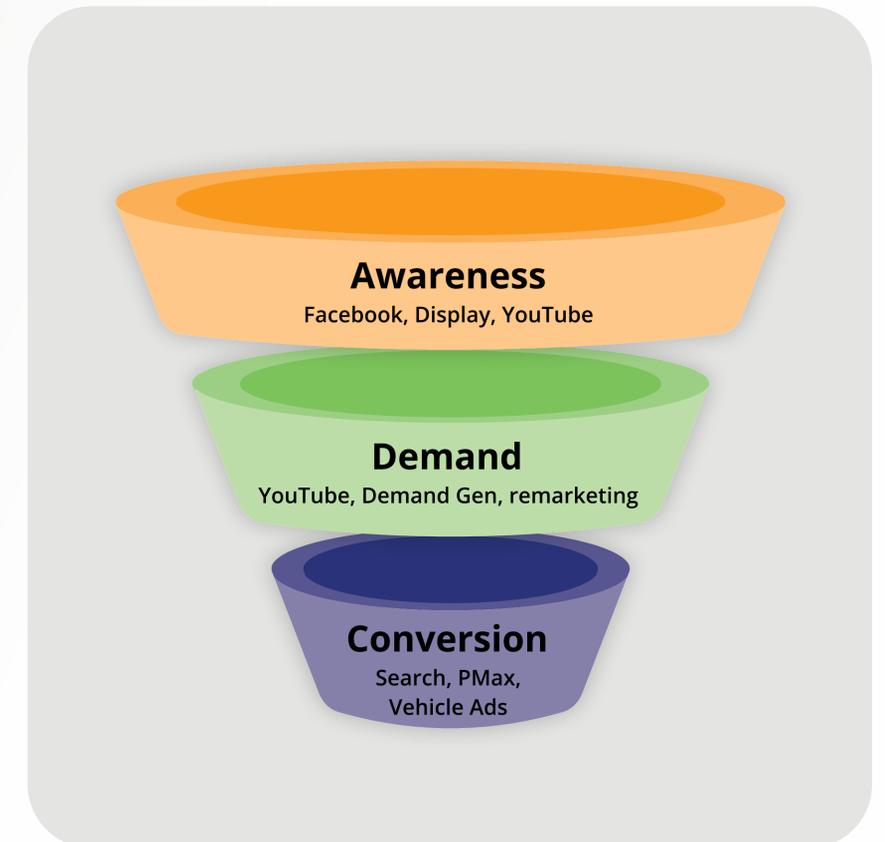
# The Full-Funnel View: Awareness, Demand, Conversion

## The Funnel: What's Actually Going On in Shoppers' Heads

You don't wake up one morning, grab your keys, and buy a motorhome on a whim. Your shoppers don't either.

They move through three rough stages:

- 1. Awareness** - "That looks interesting."  
They notice a unit, a lifestyle image, a trip idea, a social post. They're not ready to submit a lead, but the idea of owning an RV is on their radar.
- 2. Demand** - "I kind of want this."  
They start watching more videos, clicking more ads, looking at different floorplans, and asking questions like, "Could we actually make this work?"
- 3. Conversion** - "I'm ready to talk to someone."  
They search "RV dealer near me," compare prices and payments, check inventory, and submit a form or pick up the phone.



Most paid media problems arise when a dealership spends almost everything on the conversion stage and nothing on earlier stages. That works fine in peak season when shoppers are already in-market. But when demand dips, a conversion-only strategy runs out of people to talk to.

This playbook is about matching your channels to each stage so you're not completely exposed when the market turns.

# Seasonal Strategy: Adjusting Your Mix Through the Year

## What Each Channel Is Actually Good At

Not all clicks do the same job. A click from a Facebook video is not the same as a click from “used Jayco travel trailer near me” on Google Search.

Here’s how the primary channels work together for RV dealers.

### Awareness

Facebook & Google Display



These are your “put our name in their head” channels. They work best when:

- You want to show inventory, lifestyle shots, or offers to people who look like RV shoppers.
- You want to stay visible even when people aren’t actively searching.

Across InteractRV accounts through November 2025, Facebook clicks average around \$0.23, with a conversion rate of 0.19%. That’s lower than Search on purpose. These campaigns are built to start the relationship, not finish it.

### Demand

YouTube & Demand Gen



These channels help your future buyer move from “That looks nice” to “We should seriously think about this.”

Think:

- Walkthrough videos of popular floorplans
- “Top 5 things to know before buying a travel trailer.”
- Real customers talking about their first season with their new rig

The goal here isn’t to push everyone into a lead form tomorrow. It’s to keep your dealership front and center as shoppers do their research.

### Conversion

Search, PMax & Google Vehicle Ads



This is where shoppers raise their hand.

- Google Search catches intent-heavy queries like “RV dealer near me” or “used fifth wheel under \$60k.”
- Performance Max spreads your ads across Search, YouTube, Display, Maps, Discover, and more — useful when you have good creative and clean data.
- Google Vehicle Ads show real units with pricing and help buyers jump from search to specific inventory quickly.

These channels are your closer. They deliver most of your forms, calls, and walk-ins. But they perform best when shoppers have seen you earlier in their journey.

# Reading the Data: What Your Reports Are Actually Telling You

## Making Sense of CPC, CTR, and Conversion Rate

A lot of reports throw three big numbers at you:

- **CPC (Cost Per Click)**
- **CTR (Click-Through Rate)**
- **Conversion Rate**

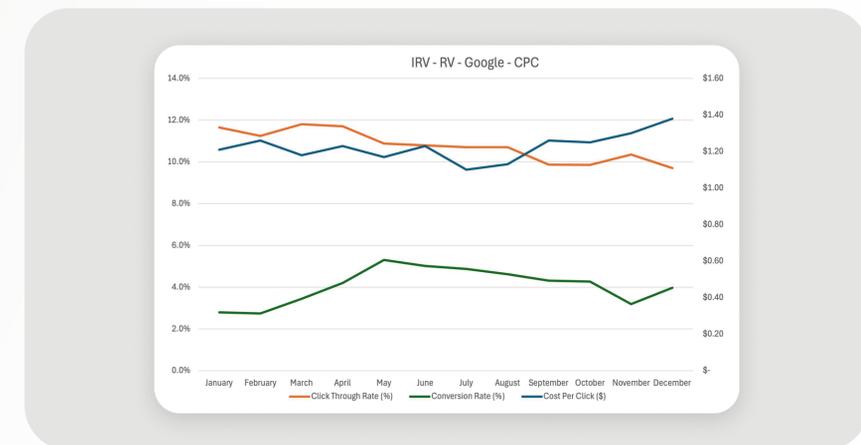
On their own, they can be confusing. Together, they explain what's really happening.

You'll likely notice patterns such as:

- **CPC creeping up in certain months.**
- **Conversion rate softening in slower seasons.**
- **CTR shifting as new formats and features roll out.**

The takeaway isn't "turn everything off." It's:

- **Understand which months are naturally slower.**
- **Notice when CPC creeps up faster than demand.**
- **Use that information to shift more budget into awareness and demand-building channels during tougher stretches, instead of just throwing more money at Search.**



Across InteractRV's RV Google campaigns through November 2025, we've seen:

**\$1.22** Average Search CPC

**4.1%** Average Conversion Rate

In a healthy market, those numbers support solid lead flow. But when fewer people are searching and A.I. Overviews cut into ad space, even those averages can start to feel painful.

# Seasonal Strategy: Adjusting Your Mix Through the Year

## Planning Your Mix for Slow Months vs. Peak Season

Just like you don't stock the same inventory for January and May, you shouldn't run the same paid media mix all year either.

### In slower months (higher CPC, lower demand):

#### Your goals:

- Stay visible.
- Build up future demand.
- Keep your brand familiar so shoppers remember you later.

#### What this often looks like:

- Increase spend on Facebook, Display, and YouTube.
- Maintain, don't over-extend Search and Vehicle Ads.
- Use remarketing to stay in front of website visitors without overspending on fresh Search clicks.

You're laying runway for the busier season — making sure that when someone finally sits down and searches for an RV, they already recognize your name.

### In peak months (strong demand):

#### Your goals:

- Catch as many serious shoppers as you can.
- Connect interested buyers with specific units.
- Support the sales team with consistent lead flow.

#### What this often looks like:

- Increase spend on Search, Vehicle Ads, and PMax.
- Keep Facebook and YouTube active but in a supporting role.
- Use remarketing to bring back viewers who interacted with your mid-funnel content earlier in the year.

Instead of treating every month the same, think of your plan as a seasonal dial you can turn toward awareness or conversion depending on where you are in the calendar.

# A Sample Full-Funnel Play for RV Dealers

## Putting It Together: An Example RV Paid Media Play

To make this concrete, here's a simple example of how a dealer might structure things over a quarter:

### Month 1 – “Plant and Warm”

- Launch Facebook campaigns featuring lifestyle images and a few hero units.
- Run YouTube videos explaining key buying decisions (tow capacity, floorplans, financing basics).
- Keep a lean Search campaign running on core branded and “RV dealer near me” terms.

**Goal:** People in your market start seeing your name and units regularly, even if they're not in shopping mode yet.

### Month 2 – “Move Them Closer”

- Continue Facebook and YouTube, but add remarketing to people who watched your videos or visited your site.
- Turn on Demand Gen campaigns to reintroduce inventory and offers to interested shoppers.
- Begin expanding Search coverage to more unit-type and brand keywords.

**Goal:** Nudge warm shoppers to come back, compare units, and think more seriously about visiting.

### Month 3 – “Catch the Ready Buyers”

- Increase bids and budgets in Search and Vehicle Ads.
- Use PMax to reach buyers across Google surfaces using the creative and data you've been refining.
- Keep remarketing active to catch anyone who still needs a final push.

**Goal:** Capture as many ready-to-talk shoppers as possible while demand is strong.

This isn't the only way to do it, but it illustrates one key point: your best conversion months are usually built on the awareness and demand work you did in the months before.

# Metrics That Matter & A Quick Dealer Checklist

## What to Watch — and What to Do Next

### Metrics that help you make decisions

#### Yes, still watch:

- Cost per lead
- Total leads
- Conversion rate

#### But also keep an eye on:

- CPC trends: Is your cost per click steadily climbing, staying flat, or dropping?
- Volume of quality traffic: Are good-fit visitors (not just any visitors) still coming through?
- Assisted conversions: How often did Facebook, YouTube, or Display show up in a buyer's path before they converted in Search?
- These help you see whether awareness and demand work are doing their job, even if the last click comes from Search.

### Final Thought

Paid media didn't suddenly "stop working." The rules changed. CPCs rose. A.I. reworked the search page. Shoppers took a breath. Search stopped being able to carry the whole load on its own.

When you treat awareness, demand, and conversion as parts of one system instead of separate campaigns competing for budget, you give your dealership a steadier, more predictable way to show up — no matter what Google or the market throws at you next.



Since 2002, InteractRV has been the RV industry's trusted partner for digital marketing and web solutions. Focused exclusively on RV dealerships, we empower businesses to thrive with our cutting-edge technology, flexible tools, and deep industry expertise.

More than just a technology provider, we are your committed partner in success. Every dealership is paired with a dedicated Client Success Manager who understands your business and provides reliable, personalized support to meet your unique needs all with your budget.

Our full-featured platform, reliable tools and people-first approach have set the standard for delivering unmatched results for over two decades. InteractRV is here to help you achieve your goals. Partner with us as we pave the open road to your dealership's growth and long-term success.

