

Your monthly source of expert, high-quality data and opinion piece on the used car business

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What if the real key to success in SEO... was SEA?



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In the rapidly evolving automotive industry (with its focus on electric, digital, mobility), capturing customer attention at the right time is vital. Two factors dominate digital marketing: SEO and SEA. Read on to find out why they are essential and how they complement each other.

SEO: Free & sustainable traffic

Search Engine Optimization

- Organic visibility
- Qualified traffic
- Long-term impact
- Free

SEA: short-term impact & targeted traffic

Search Engine Advertising

- Search engine advertising
- Targeted traffic based on keywords
- Fast conversion
- Cost per click

Why combine them?

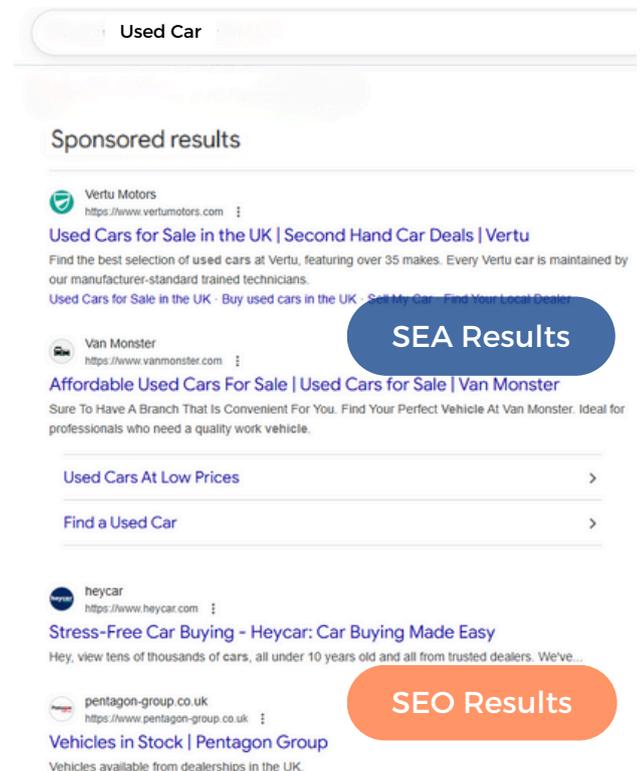
Increased visibility in search results

Appearing both organically and through paid advertising for the same search term maximises click-through rate and occupies more space than competitors. This strengthens credibility from a user's point of view. For example, if a user sees a paid search ad for an "Electric SUV" followed by an SEO link called "SUV Guide 2025", the likelihood of receiving clicks increases.

Impact on brand awareness

Every time a website appears in the search results (even without a click), brand awareness increases. This enables paid search advertising (SEA) to establish initial contact with users, who may then return to the website by searching for the brand name. This benefits Search Engine Optimisation (SEO). Furthermore, users who have been exposed to a brand multiple times are more likely to make a purchase on the website.

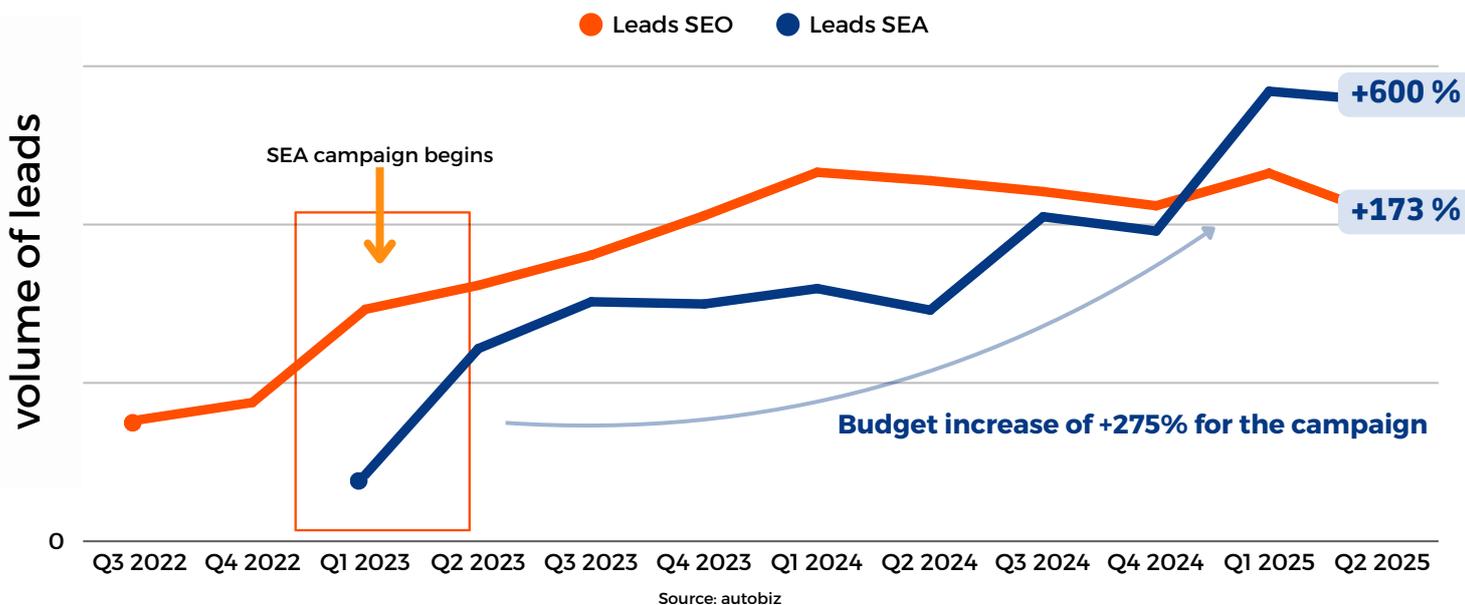
Search Engine Advertising (SEA) allows you to test short-term hypotheses and, if they are validated, apply them to your SEO strategy to achieve long-term results. For example, if an SEA campaign for a new range of vehicles generates a high click-through rate, it is advisable to create an SEO article on that topic with the same title as used in the ad.



Case study: How launching SEA campaigns boosted SEO

Since 2023, we have been managing the SEA campaigns for one of our clients. As the graph below shows, we can see an increase in SEO leads as soon as the SEA campaign began. Upon the success of the SEA campaign, we gradually increased the budget, thus boosting the number of SEA leads. We also observed a rise in SEO leads in correlation with the growth in SEA leads.

Evolution of leads after the launch of SEA campaigns



Budgetary investment here surged by **+275%**, reflecting the effectiveness of the campaigns conducted. This controlled increase is explained by solid performance with a conversion rate of **10%** and a **cost per lead maintained throughout the campaign below €2**.

These results confirm that a strategic investment in SEA can generate a significant returns whilst supporting the long-term performance of organic search engine optimisation.

Conclusion

SEO and SEA are not competing levers, but rather the two pillars of a successful digital strategy. SEO builds lasting and credible visibility, whilst SEA offers speed, agility, and valuable data with which to refine marketing actions. Together, they ensure an optimal presence on search engines, strengthen brand awareness, and contribute directly to growth.

This initial study, carried out in the French market, highlights the effectiveness of balancing SEO and SEA.

Stay tuned for our next insight into a new European market. What if SEA proved its worth everywhere?

Learn more



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