

Sales & Orders

Management Software for Google Shopping



BigCommerce: Geared Up for a Better Google Shopping Experience

How our partnership with the leading ecommerce platform has made selling on Google Shopping a whole lot easier for their merchants

FOREWORD

It was in 2003 when, by happenstance alone, fellow Aussies Mitchell Harper and Eddie Machaalani met in an online chatroom. What they may have not known then was that in just a few more years, they will have launched one of the most widely recognized names in ecommerce technology.

From those humble beginnings, \$140 million in funding, and over \$16 billion in merchant sales later, sprang forth the now global phenomenon that is BigCommerce.

“Success is their mission,” as they say now. For them it is far more than simply building software. They are first and foremost ‘Customers first’ and want nothing less than the best possible for their merchants.

You may have read it here first: according to a report by The US Census Bureau, e-commerce sales made up 8.5% of the total \$1.25 billion in retail sales generated in Q1 2017.

That number is expected to be at 11% by the end of 2018.

When you balance out the equation and remove your extreme outliers (like Amazon for example), much of the tremendous growth in e-retail is owed, in large part, to the platforms and solutions which power online stores. Platforms like BigCommerce.

Yet, that very same growth equates to not only more competition vying for valuable digital shelf space, but also the need for increasingly aggressive and highly focused marketing strategies. Gone are the days of simple ROI, far too generic of a metric now and just as much then as well.

Today, it’s about what keeps online stores alive; Profit. How do stores achieve that?

BigCommerce saw Google Shopping as a most definite opportunity.

Just ahead of the 2016 holiday Shopping season, Google turned on its E-Commerce Platform Imports for Merchant Center. Using that integration, merchants on 3 major e-commerce platforms, including the industry-leading SaaS solution **BigCommerce**, could connect their store catalogs directly to Merchant Center. For a little over a year, thousands of merchants relied on this integration to ensure they could send their product feeds to Merchant Center and thus continue selling on Google Shopping.

Then, in January of this year, the first emails went out announcing it. The program was being retired and as of March 20th, 2018, any merchants utilizing the platform imports would have their integrations and feeds removed.

For the thousands of merchants on **BigCommerce** already advertising on Google Shopping, this would leave them without a feed or a way to continue sending one to Merchant Center.

However, for those merchants, there was **Google Shopping by Sales & Orders**.

TODAY

Over 4900
App Installs

Over 15 Million
Approved Products in Merchant Center (combined)

Over 3500
Retailer feeds successfully onboarded

5/5 Stars, 70 reviews
Ranked in the Top 5% of all BigCommerce apps





“Through our partnership with Sales & Orders, BigCommerce merchants have access to a world-class solution for Google Shopping. The Sales & Orders platform and team have provided significant value to our customers, and in a few short months hundreds of merchants have successfully launched campaigns with great results.”

Brent Bellm, CEO, BigCommerce



THE CHALLENGE

BigCommerce had a tremendous challenge ahead of them, and one that was *two-fold*:

-  Not only was the Google platform import integration being retired, but they were also retiring their native-built app for sending products to Merchant Center
-  BigCommerce would have had to invest the time and resources required to rebuild their native app

This meant that every merchant using either solution would soon have neither to rely on anymore. Their choices otherwise?

- 1 Move to a manual approach to both feed creation and management via complex spreadsheets and arduous editing
- 2 Seek the assistance of a third party, and very often expensive, product feed solution provider

Both choices, however, came with their own inherent challenges as well.

- & Option 1, while more affordable, also left merchants to face the extremely daunting task of manually exporting product details and configuring them to be Google-approved. Any and all changes or optimizations thereafter would also have to be done manually. For merchants with thousands, tens of thousands, or more products, this task would be utterly insurmountable.
- & Option 2 meant piling on additional costs (sometimes quite significant at that) and a lack of personalized control over feed management. In most cases, 3rd party options also put more extreme limits on the number of products allowed to import from one's store and/or send to Merchant Center.

To migrate all those merchants en masse and create a more seamless transition, BigCommerce needed an affordable, fully-integrated solution. Moreover, BigCommerce needed a partner well versed in not only product feeds, but all things Google Shopping.

THE SOLUTION

After only a few months of development, we officially launched **Google Shopping by Sales & Orders** in late November of 2017. Through our partnership with BigCommerce, we were able to offer the out-of-the-box feed tool free of charge and full onboarding support just the same.

The primary focus for the initial "soft" launch was to benefit early adopters: merchants new to BigCommerce, Google Shopping, and anyone looking to get a head start on the upcoming, inevitable transition.

The app itself completely streamlined the entire product feed process by simplifying much of the complicated aspects of setup and management:

- & **Automated Feed Generation:** App installation immediately triggered the automated creation and sending of the feed to Merchant Center via the Content API
- & **Diagnostics & Error Reporting:** Once processed, the app would receive diagnostics reports from Merchant Center and display findings to merchants
- & **Product Management:** By utilizing the inherent, first gen tools in the app, merchants were able to manually adjust feed inventory and perform bulk Google Product Category mapping
- & **Product Variant Support:** Something previously unavailable to many BigCommerce merchants, the app also allowed for the sending of variant product options by default
- & **Automated Attribute Mapping:** Taking the configurations direct from their store's options (variants), the app was able to automatically map and send required attributes such as Color and Size.

Additionally, for any merchant who did not already have an existing Merchant Center account, our app was built with the capability to create a new account for them without ever leaving the setup wizard. Merchants could also Claim and Verify their website URLs right from within the app as well.

All of this was merely the beginning, and by January the app supported **over 700** early adopters migrating their stores.

It was at the end of January that the announcement came. The e-commerce platform imports in Merchant Center were also coming to an end.

THE NEXT PHASE

Relying on the feedback of our existing app userbase was key in helping us create an even better experience. While even early on, the app was constantly being updated and improved, the revelation of Google's retirement of platform imports only spurred a greater fervor to do more.

Working closely with the BigCommerce team, our developers began outfitting the app with even more robust capabilities. One of which being the ability to accept and send the **Legacy Google Shopping settings** within BigCommerce.

Many merchants who had been relying on the platform imports integration also relied on these settings to ensure an acceptable feed would be sent with select required attributes.

These settings included a predefined "enable for Google Shopping" configuration and a variety of both required (Size, Color, etc.) and optional (Pattern, Material) attributes.

Additionally, to be able to ensure merchants retained their historical cache in Merchant Center, we noted that both original feed solutions (BigCommerce and Google) had been sending two completely different variations of Product ID: one that was singular and another where two different IDs in BigCommerce were concatenated using an underscore ('_') as a separator.

Our team, once the Legacy Google Shopping settings were implemented, then built in the functions to import any Product ID variation possible from BigCommerce. With this, merchants could maintain the exact Product IDs they had been previously sending. This, in turn, ensured that any existing Google Shopping campaigns that were still running would see little to absolutely no downtime during the transition to our app.

By adding these as features within the app we were able to accommodate what would be the largest influx of new installs since launch.

OUTCOME

In the month and a half leading up to March 20th over **2900** store owners installed **Google Shopping by Sales & Orders** for their BigCommerce store and, in that same time frame, our team fielded over **11,000** requests for assistance onboarding their feeds.

To date, over **2000** more store owners have installed the app, and today we support over **3500 active feeds** with over **15 million approved products** in Merchant Center.

Store owners like **Doug Root, Co-Founder and President of AtlantaLightBulbs.com**, who has seen tremendous year-over-year growth since onboarding to not only our **feed app but also our campaign management platform**:



72.08%

YoY Revenue Increased

1858%

YoY ROAS Increased

90.59%

YoY Revenue Increased

“We did not have an automated feed management system, we were elated to find that Sales & Orders was already there with a free tool to keep us live and selling on Google Shopping. Prior to working with Sales & Orders we had a firm managing our shopping ads, but we knew that there was definitely room to do better. We really wanted our ads spend and strategy to be based on margin rates per SKU. Giving up that control, though, can be quite difficult so we needed a trustworthy partner who would learn and adapt from our experience and knowledge of our business. Well, they have definitely delivered. Their team has leveraged their very own software to take us far beyond what we ever expected, and one of the best parts of it all is being able to log into their platform and see everything at a glance. We can monitor our feed and our campaign performance all from one place, freeing us up to focus more on growing our business as a whole.”

Doug Root, Co-Founder and President of AtlantaLightBulbs.com



We have also retrofitted our app with even more substantial capabilities such as the **Modify Products** tool.

This incredibly affordable add-on feature (that which some merchants pay thousands for in 3rd party fees) provides a combined rule-based/template-based system for modifying and optimizing existing product feed attributes such as Titles, Descriptions, Custom Labels, and more.

Merchants can also take advantage of other specialty add-ons such as **Multi-Country Feeds** and the **Easy Campaign Creator**.

Easy Campaign Creator is an extremely cost-effective solution to campaign creation for merchants who are either new to Google Shopping or who may have very modest budgets to work with. Once enabled, our app will automatically:

- 1 Create two specially designed Shopping campaigns in AdWords
- 2 Apply ID (Product) level Max CPC bids for all products
- 3 Display overall campaign performance stats right within the app itself

Now ranked in the Top 5% of all apps in the BigCommerce App Marketplace with 70 reviews and a 5/5 Star rating, Google Shopping by Sales & Orders has become the **first step in a BigCommerce merchant's journey to start selling on Google Shopping**.

