

Summary Report on MiPA General Meeting—March 9, 2021
34 Participating on Zoom

How to Decipher the Strange New World of Amazon Advertising

Speaker: [Bryan Cohen](#)



Bryan Cohen runs the [5-Day Amazon Ad Profit Challenge](#), an online event that has helped thousands of authors understand the complex machine that is Amazon Ads. He's also a *USA Today* bestselling author, the co-host of the *Sell More Books Show Podcast*, and the CEO of [Best Page Forward](#), an author copywriting agency. His books have sold 100,000+ copies.

Overview:

Bryan's talk focused on ads for **self-publishers**, primarily on those who use Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) to sell their paperbacks and e-books. Authors and publishers who use other means of distribution can place ads on Amazon through [Publish Drive](#) or an Amazon seller account, with similar techniques. His talk used examples mostly from the [KDP Amazon Ad](#) system.

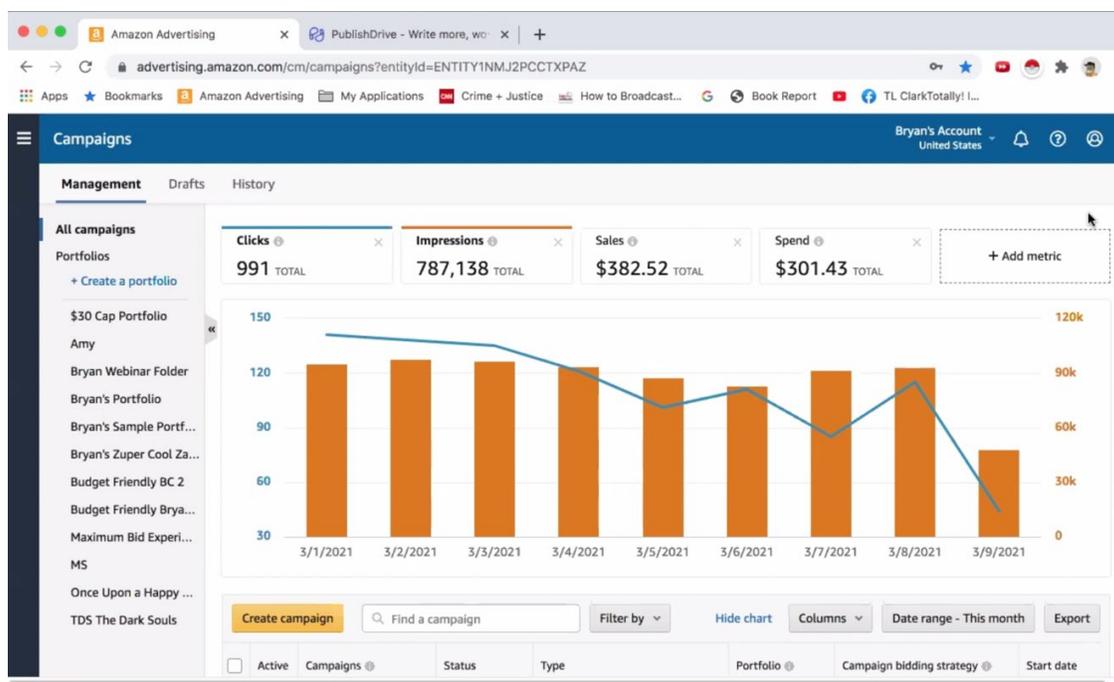
His general rules for online ads:

- Publish once, promote forever
- The most affordable way to advertise your books is Amazon Ads.
- You need to understand the numbers, especially margins.
- Nothing matters more than turning a profit, i.e., greater royalties or sales revenues than ad spending.
- Amazon sales tracking is very iffy and inaccurate.
- If you are making less than \$1 per book on Amazon, buying ads might not be profitable.

How to Create an Amazon Ad:

1. Sign In:

- You can sign in either through Amazon Advertising or directly through a KDP account.
- Sign in and choose United States on the dashboard to avoid glitches.
- At the top left 3 lines select Billing and Payments and be sure your account settings are up to date.
- If you can't create an ad, do a draft ad and call Author Central to help.
- All of your campaigns should now show up. Check dates if there any problems.
- When you get in, the Ad Dashboard should look like this.



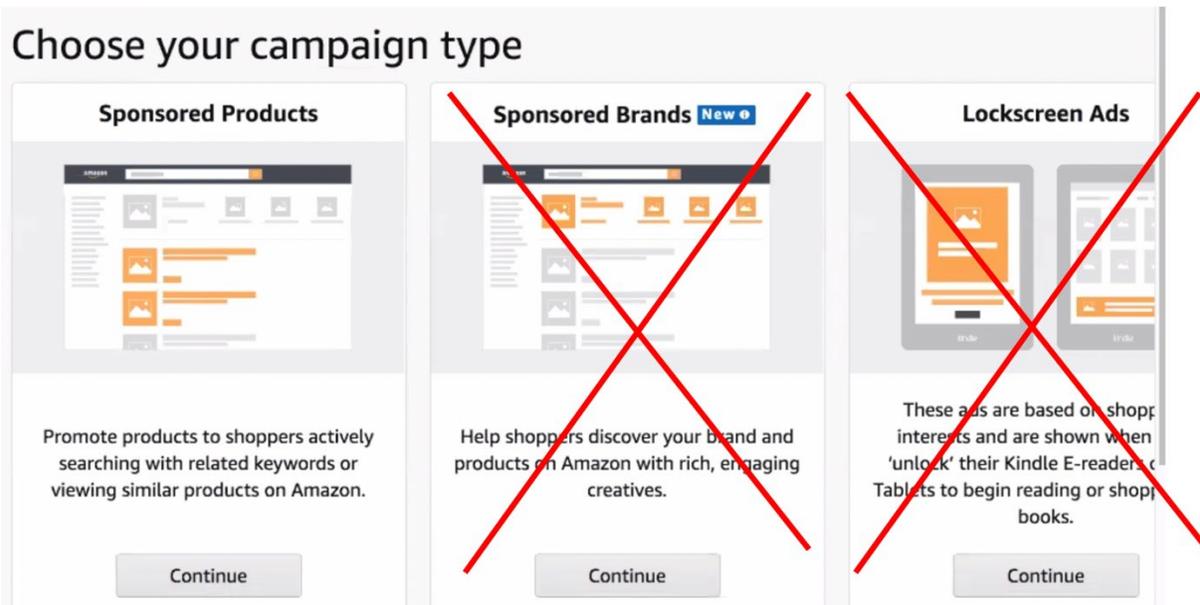
2. Understanding the Ad Dashboard:

- Note that you can see impressions, clicks, sales, and spending.
- The sales numbers you see are probably low and very inaccurate. To get a comprehensive sales number use "[Book Report](#)" for all Amazon sales.
- The term "impressions" means the number of views of your ad, and these are free to you. You may get hundreds of thousands of impressions.
- "Clicks" are when a reader interacts with your ad by clicking on it and visiting your book's product page (these cost you money).
- The amount you are charged is an amount you select, and Bryan recommends using about \$0.35 per click.

- Amazon runs on relevancy, so getting a lot of clicks per impression (click through rate, CTR) is good. For example, if you connect your book to a famous book (like Harry Potter) you may get millions of impressions but no clicks, and Amazon will stop showing your ad. So choose your approach wisely.
- “Ad spend” is how much you spend on your clicks and it is accurate.
- Name all your ad campaigns in a logical way—include a book title abbreviation.
- If an ad leads to Borrow on Kindle Unlimited, the money will not show up on the dashboard.

3. Creating a Successful Ad:

- In your KDP account, select the book you want to make an ad for and click “Run an ad campaign.”
- You can use “Auto Targeting” where Amazon picks the places for the ad based on title, key words, categories, etc. You can get help on picking the most effective keywords, categories, etc. by going on to [PublisherRocket](#).
- On the dashboard targeting page you can see what terms were searched and led to sales of your book. You can use this to better design new ads.
- When choosing your campaign type, Bryan strongly recommended we imagine a large red X over the two types on the right (which we added). They are too pricy.



- When you have clicked on **Continue** under sponsored products, you can scroll down to find the book you want to place an ad for, but only for KDP books. If you have used a small press, you need to use [Publish Drive](#) to find your book.

- For the actual design of the ad, just use Amazon's "Auto Ad" button, where it will be based on your title, key words, categories, etc. This should place your book in front of relevant titles.
- Pick a budget and duration (say \$5 per day, no end date).
- Set a bid for 30-35 cents per click.
- For bidding strategy select "Dynamic bids—down only."
- For ad format, choose "Standard Ad." If you want to do a custom text ad, you can, but are limited to 150 characters.
- You can choose "Negative Keyword Targeting" to avoid certain associations.
- Finally, click "Launch Campaign."

Bottom Line:

- You should get about one sale for every six clicks.
- Don't try to look too much at the details. If your revenues and royalties in the month exceed the ad costs, then that is what you want. Don't turn off the ad just because the Amazon dashboard looks bad. If you are profitable, consider running more ads.
- If you are getting 50 or more clicks, you can start to decrease your bid by 2 cents per day, with 20-25 cents for the bottom bid.
- To improve conversion, consider: changing price, add a subtitle, have a better book description, get more reviews, new title or cover (most inconvenient).

Homework or Help:

- How do you look at Amazon Ads differently now? How will this change the way you approach the platform? Send an email to bryandavidcohenD@gmail.com with subject line MiPA 2021 Homework.
- Check out his podcast at *Sell More Books Show Podcast* or the 5-Day Amazon Ad Profit Challenge Facebook Group.