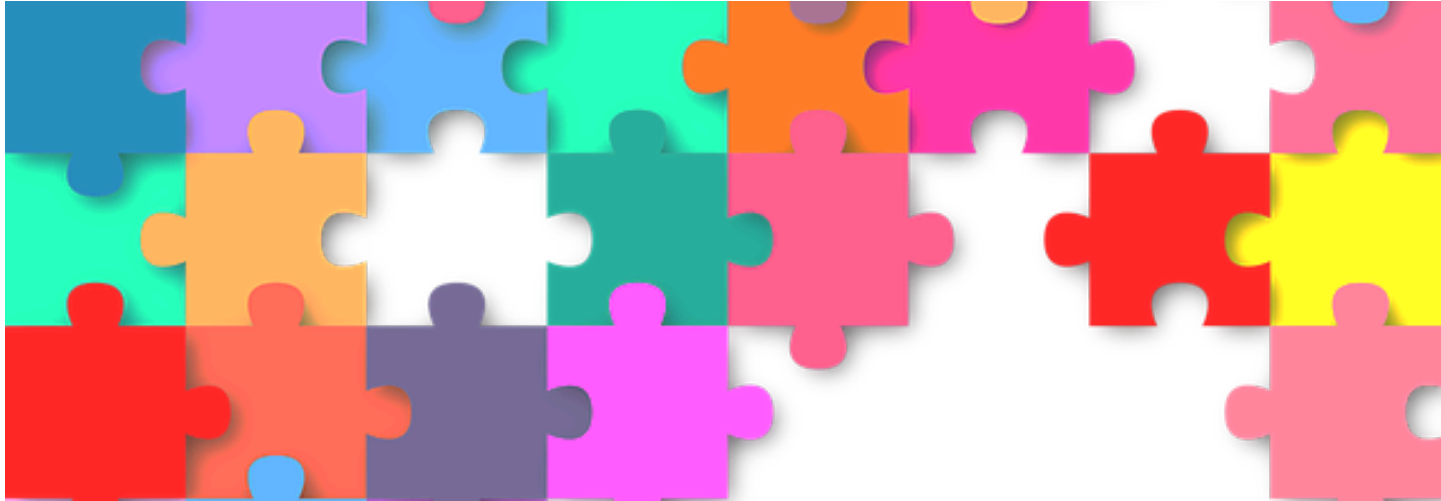


Effectively Managing Google Ads



Making sure your Google Ads and other paid advertising are using industry best practices can be a daunting endeavor.

This eBook provides an easy-to use guide for you to manage your Google Ads or PPC resource.

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Strategically Manage Paid Advertising



Ads to Support Overall Marketing Strategies

One way to jump start your digital lead generation efforts is to use online ads. Also known as SEM (Search Engine Marketing), PPC (PayPerClick), or search or display ads, you're essentially paying to be at the top of a Search Engine Results Page (SERP).

It's helpful to think of online advertising -- including Google Ads -- as an online auction. You're bidding against your competition to get clicks from searchers on terms (keywords) related to your product or service. Online ads are comprised of several types:

1. **Brand ads**-- based on keywords using your brand name(or variations), individual names of well-known founders or members of your executive team, and similar brand-related terms
2. **Search ads**-- based on keywords that are *not* brand related. Searchers are using search phrases based upon needs, problems they are trying to solve, product names, etc.
3. **Display ads**-- these ads appear on websites that sell advertising space (e.g., news outlets). Display ads use graphics/imagery along with limited text.
4. **Discovery campaigns**-- ads via Google properties (YouTube, Watch Next feeds, Discover, and to free Gmail accounts in tabs like "Promotions"). Similar to display ads, [Discovery campaigns](#) use building blocks like headlines, high-quality images, and logos; the system dynamically combines elements into ads.

Your online advertising strategy can support your overall marketing plan, including SEO. Organic results (the non paid listings on the SERP) are earned by SEO which is a long-term strategy. It takes time to build online credibility that translates into organic traffic to a domain and its individual web pages.

So how can your paid advertising support your SEO efforts?

1. Studies have shown that when a brand appears in both paid and organic results, the organic listing gets a lift. There's a psychological effort when searchers see your brand

more than once on a SERP. Plus, the results located near the top of the page garner a majority of clicks.

2. You can test ad text and landing page messaging through ad text and landing page copy quicker than with SEO. Those performance lessons can be then applied to your on-page optimization efforts.
3. Determine the value of specific keywords to your lead generation efforts. Not all keywords are created equal. Some search phrases are more effective in closing a deal. Some search phrases can be expensive but not necessarily translate into a lead. There's a balance between how much you're willing to spend and what the lead is worth (for the immediate sale or lifetime value of that new client).

Risks & Benefits of Paid Ads

Like any marketing strategy, there are associated benefits and risks.

- Ads typically appear above organic listings as soon as you begin your ad campaigns so you don't have to wait for visibility on desired keywords/search terms.
- Real-time auction data is available in the Google Ads software interface. This data can provide strategic intel like keyword search volume, how your ad campaigns rank against competitors, and available market share.
- Faster split testing (A/B testing) to find winning combinations that can be applied to other campaigns as well as your SEO strategies.
- Fine-tune your target audience as the Google Ads interface has settings to narrow your focus based on geography, demographics, interests, etc.

Now the potential downsides...

- Paid advertising requires an upfront investment in analytics (and potentially other paid tools) to ensure you have accurate tracking data. At the minimum, you must have a clear understanding of your conversions (and micro-conversions) in your web analytics. We also suggest investing in paid tools such as a/b optimization software and heat mapping for UX feedback.
- It can get expensive. In some markets, it can be cost prohibitive, especially if your competitors have deep pockets, greater brand recognition, and a willingness to outbid you in order to defend their market dominance. If this is the case, you may need to get creative and bid on lower volume, lesser expensive keywords. That's still a viable strategy but it may take longer than you'd like.
- You can waste dollars quickly if your account is not actively managed by a certified and experienced marketer. Google (and other PPC platforms) are happy to spend your money. Your accounts should be routinely monitored and sculpted to avoid spending dollars on clicks/traffic from irrelevant or tangential keywords. Even a mature account needs active monitoring to optimize its performance.
- For emerging markets, start-ups, and other "new" endeavors, it may take time and effort to find a viable market and performing keywords.

Effectively Managing Your PPC Resource



The following advice is applicable to internal (a team member who is responsible for running your SEM campaigns) or an external resource like a digital marketing agency.

1. Be clear on your business goals and conversion targets

- a. Communicate your business objectives with your Google Ads managers. If you have specific metrics or organizational milestones, share those details. The more you explain how your PPC efforts translate into qualified lead generation conversions, the better.
- b. Ensure accurate tracking in Analytics for conversions and micro-conversions are tied to actions that guide prospects into your sales funnel. Connect Google Analytics (or other analytics platform) to your Google Ads account. Basically you want to have all marketing channels – paid and unpaid – connected for analysis and optimization. Add other paid channels like LinkedIn, Bing, Facebook, etc.
- c. Agree on what you define as a conversion and their value. For B2C ecommerce sites, a conversion can literally translate into a purchase with an associated cart value. For non-ecommerce B2B sites, a “conversion” can be a filled contact form or phone call. If it's not an actual sale, a conversion is a lead that's not yet qualified. Also take into account the lifetime value of a customer. This distinction will be crucial, especially if you want to calculate ROI (return on investment) or [ROAS](#) (return on ad spend). Both metrics are directly tied to the lifetime value of your customer and the value of a qualified conversion.
- d. Reserve some of your ad budget and management time toward testing new keywords or market opportunities. The Google Ads and paid search ecosystem is dynamic and buyer behaviors can change quickly. By setting aside a piece of your PPC budget, you can explore new opportunities or test ideas that could pay off.
- e. Determine exactly what metrics you need in order to calculate ROI and ROAS for your company. To calculate ROI, a conversion value must be assigned. Again, consider the lifetime customer value (repeat sales/renewals, average tenure length, etc) as it addresses key business metrics such as acquisition costs.

2. Use a shared and dynamic dashboard

- a. Avoid unnecessary and frustrating missteps by agreeing upfront on the main metrics you need to effectively manage all your marketing efforts as well as each channel. The complexity of your reports depend on the number of paid channels and campaigns. While your Google Ads manager may focus on some granular metrics to make optimization decisions, agree on the most important metrics you need to justify the spend and show results.
- b. A dynamic dashboard ensures that data is automatically populated (via a report interface) rather than through manual uploads. We recommended [Google's Data Studio Report](#) as it is a free tool and can import data from a variety of sources within the Google ecosystem (GA, GSC, GAds) as well as many external or third-party systems (e.g., CallRail call tracking).

3. Set expectations of your Google Ads manager

- a. We highly recommend that your PPC manager should be in your Google Ads account daily and provide optimization updates at least monthly. This recommendation assumes you have a dynamic report set up and you can access the data at any time. Optimizing an account – even a seasoned one – requires active monitoring to maintain performance and respond to market conditions. For example, the keyword reports on your account should be reviewed and negative keywords added to avoid spending money on irrelevant terms.
- b. In your status meetings, we recommend reviewing the account's overall performance, each campaign metrics such as click-through rate (CTR) and landing page conversion rates, recommendations to further optimize your ad spend to conversion performance, as well as any other ideas to achieve your business objectives. The more informed questions you ask, the better. Collaborative discussions will provide your manager with the details they need to optimize the account and you'll have a better idea about what they need or what limitations may be impeding improvement. Utilize trend information to put your Google Ads performance into perspective.
- c. [Google Trends](#) can show seasonality and keyword interest (vs volume). The [pandemic has](#) impacted B2C and B2B buyer behaviors. Research groups and think tanks (like Think With Google, Gartner, Pew Research) release information that can be used to fine-tune your current marketing strategies or provide insight into new ones.
- d. Apply your Google Ads lessons to other paid channels like YouTube video ads, Bing Ads, etc. when possible. Your target audience is dynamic, they don't restrict their search for information or solutions to one channel.

Common Google Ads Questions & Answers

1. Do Google ads work for B2B?

Google Ads is used by many B2B companies to target a smaller or niche audience. The keywords, corresponding ad text and landing pages need to be tightly connected and use language that specifically appeals to your target audience. Knowing the customer journey path, typical objections and key information that influences buying decisions should be applied to your Google Ads campaign strategies. To gauge success, your B2B Google Ads campaigns must accurately track performance, including conversion rates.

2. What should be on my Google Analytics and Google Ads dashboard?

We recommend dashboards that are customized to your company's key performance indicators (KPIs). In general, we suggest that your dashboard connect data from as many marketing sources as possible, including Google Analytics, Google Search Console, Google Ads, any other paid channels included in your marketing mix.

Here's one example of how we split up general website data and report categories:

- Website Traffic Stats: sessions, engagement metrics (pageviews, pageviews by sessions, average time on page, bounce rate) as well as user type, channel, device and source/medium
- Demographics: age to goal completions, age ranges by goal completion type, gender, gender by goal completion type, geographic maps by traffic/sessions and goal completions
- Top Performing Content: by url with page views, average time on page, entrance %, bounce rate, exit % and page value,
- Conversion Events: goal completions plotted over time, goal completion by source/medium

For Google Ads, our dashboards are more complex as the data can be more granular. For example, we routinely report on:

- Performance metrics like impressions, clicks, CTR, avg CPC, conversions and conversion rates, cost/conversion, impression share, budget spent, total conversion value, etc
- Auction insights by domain, showing which competitors you're bidding against, top of page rate, impression share, etc
- Campaign Performance which splits out the various campaigns (typically segmented by product or keyword groups)
- Keywords and search terms with all the performance metrics mentioned above
- Geographic stats especially for national and international campaigns

As you can see, creating a dashboard that presents the most important metrics for your company is not a simple task. Developing a dynamic dashboard so you have the data you need for meetings and decision making is foundational to all your marketing efforts.

3. What is an average conversion rate?

From a 2021 report by [Statista](#), the most up-to-date e-commerce data suggests that an average desktop conversion rate is 3.9%. Tablet conversion rates are 2.2 percent and mobile phone conversion rates are 3.5%. There are many contributors – target audience, call to action based on buying journey stage, etc – that affect a website’s conversion rates.

4. How many keywords should I use for Google Ads?

Ideally, you should keep your ad group keyword count to a maximum of 10-20 search terms. These terms need to be closely related as they are directly tied to ad text and landing pages. Common root keywords are a good start as they act as an umbrella term for smaller keywords to fall under. We’ve found that large ad groups are more difficult to manage. We also do not recommend single keyword ad groups (called SKAGS) as it creates unnecessary complexity that requires more management effort.

5. How many Google Ads should I run?

We've found that it's preferable to have at least three ads per advertising group. This structure enables Google's AI software to optimize performance. With the three-ad structure, you can also monitor results to see if the ad is effective.

6. What is ad retargeting?

Retargeting, also known as remarketing, is a feature within Google Ads. Basically it lets you customize your display ads campaign for people who have previously visited your site. It essentially reminds visitors about your brand and product/service.

7. Is Google Ads better than Facebook ads?

It really depends on your target audience and your company’s products or services. For B2C products or services, Facebook ads may have an excellent ROI. On the B2B side, it’s not as clear cut. Some B2B companies find there are Facebook professional user groups that contain their target audience. Sponsored posts or ads may be an excellent way to drive leads and conversions.

In 2020, [Smart Insights](#) reported that Google search advertisements had a higher CTR at 1.55% conversion rate when compared to Facebook display ads. This is likely due to the fact that Google prioritizes advertising based on search relevance.

If you have the budget, we suggest testing both channels. Of course your advertising strategy really depends on your business goals, target audience, and marketing budget.

Start with a Free Google Ads Audit

We've often found that many companies waste their precious marketing dollars on Google Ads or other paid channels. It's not because online advertising doesn't work, it's because they accidentally make costly mistakes. Be the exception and drive qualified leads that grow your business.

Ready for a partner to help you add revenue to your bottomline? Contact us today to receive a FREE audit on your Google Ads account.

Get a PPC Audit

Who We Are

Don't have a certified and dedicated Google Ads manager or need help with your online advertising? The Spectrum Group Online has helped companies just like yours succeed.

Founded in 2011, the Spectrum Group Online is a digital marketing agency that embraces the values of transparency and integrity. We use an integrated approach to achieve results, building winning strategies and tactics that are based on data, collaboration, and years of real-world experience. In addition to being a [Certified Google Partner](#), we are also UC Berkeley Extension Instructors – teaching Google Ads, digital marketing, and SEO. When you work with us, you get a real partner.



What Our Clients Say

Spectrum Group Online delivered a high-quality website that captivates users. Their commitment to designing an intuitive UI/UX and polished web content helps generate sales. Executive-level engagement facilitates productive and positive collaboration. They're industry-leading professionals. If you're looking for a collaborative agency, you've found that and more with The Spectrum Group.

~ Marketing Professional, B2B Water Treatment Company

Spectrum Group Online delivers a personal touch and provides a service-oriented team that is easy to communicate with. Their work produces consistent traffic growth and high-quality leads, which lowers expenses. They even created a way to measure and track results when it couldn't be done before. They care about your website as much as you do.

~ CEO, Silicon Valley Broadband Microwave Company

[They] do an amazing job of educating people That really instilled confidence in us to move forward. The team works well together, but what sets them apart is their willingness and ability to teach an internal team how to best do their job. Their availability and responsiveness are top-notch. They are reliable in meeting deadlines and even improve accountability in their clients.

~ Marketing Director, Fruit Delivery Vendor

You can see additional [client reviews on Clutch](#) and the results we've achieved for our clients in [case studies](#) on our website.