



# **The Executive's Guide to Google AdWords Success**



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Google AdWords has established itself as the most popular PPC ad platform available today, and it's easy to see why. It's highly targeted, and, if used properly, can provide a consistent return on your advertising investment. A truly exceptional campaign makes every dollar from your ad spend count toward more sales, leads and business growth. If you are managing your own AdWords accounts, it can be difficult to ensure your campaigns are set up to propel business growth and a positive return on ad spend straight out of the gate.

## **Luckily, I'm here to help.**

I have been developing and managing paid search campaigns for over 17 years, and I know what it takes to succeed using Google AdWords. In this guide, I'm going to explain my AdWords methodology, as well as provide several tips and checklists to instantly improve your Google AdWords campaigns. If you are working with a consultant or agency, this guide will help you properly evaluate their efforts and communicate your needs to get the most out of your ad spend.



# When it Comes to Google AdWords, What is Success?



Before I begin detailing how to set up a successful Google AdWords campaign, there is one question that needs to be defined up front—how will you measure success?

## **Seems simple, right?**

However, more often than not, advertisers create and launch paid search campaigns without clearly defining what success looks like. By identifying the goal of your campaign up front, everyone involved in your PPC marketing efforts can work together to achieve success. Whether you are looking to boost your online store sales, drive mobile downloads of your latest app, or increase online university applications, paid search can deliver when done right.



# Setting Your Goals Using KPIs and Metrics



Your campaign goal should be the one key performance indicator (KPI) that matters most to the business. In addition, you also need to establish a variety of conversion goals tied to your campaign that allow for ongoing optimizations toward achieving your overarching goal. For example, you may want a university applicant to download course information before submitting their formal application online. Tracking each action along the path to a final goal is vital to understanding user behaviour and identifying opportunities to optimize for success.

## Checklist & Recommended Metrics

- **Do you have a defined KPI that is specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound?**
- **Are conversion goals (downloads, sign ups, phone calls, sales transactions etc.) established and being tracked in Google Analytics?**
- **Is data from Google Analytics being properly imported into your Google AdWords account?**



## Recommended Metrics

- **Campaign Success**

- **Conversion rate** - The rate at which a website visitor takes the desired action.
- **Cost per conversion** - The average cost to achieve a desired action.

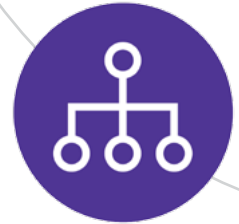
- **Campaign Health**

- **Quality Score** - High Quality Scores have a major impact on your ROI, improving your rankings and lowering your costs. Aim for a Quality Score of 7+.
- **Search Impression Share** - This metric indicates how often your ads appear as a result of relevant search queries. Increased impression share can improve exposure and multiply your lead generation results.
- **Click-through Rate** - CTR is a measure of how targeted your ads are.

By establishing your goals at the outset of your campaign using KPIs and metrics, you can properly evaluate the effectiveness of your paid search (and other marketing) efforts to learn which keywords, ads, and devices drive action. In doing so, you will be able to propel growth by staying focused on specific goals, and eliminate efforts not driving desired results—ultimately preventing wasted ad spend.



# Organizing Your Account Structure



The organization of your AdWords account is critical to your campaign's success. A thoughtful structure allows you to better target the right ads to the right audience. When building out your paid search campaign, the first step you need to take is to identify the structure that makes the most sense for your business. Here are some things to look for to determine if your campaign architecture is set up for success.

- **Is your campaign focused and aligned to one product or service?**
- **Are your ad groups small and focused? Each of your ad groups should be focused on a particular product, offer, or service. Smaller ad groups will result in a more relevant keyword list for each ad group. This, in turn, makes it easier to develop the right ads for each ad group.**
- **Do you have 2-3 ads per ad group running? This allows for testing and iterating over time based on what's working, what's not.**



By properly organizing your account structure, you can ensure that the right ads are triggered for the right search query and target the right customer. It also allows you to quickly optimize your campaign, as any updates to your account become much easier to apply. Finally, a well structured account is easier to grow over time, ensuring that as your business grows, you'll be prepared to grow with it.



# Keyword Strategy & Research



Once the proper account structure has been determined, it's time to take a look at your keyword approach. I always recommend you put serious consideration into keyword research, strategy, and the development of your keyword lists. Keywords and key phrases are the triggers for your ads, and you want to ensure that they are aligned with each step along the consumer's path to purchase. A focused keyword approach will ensure you reach everyone, from prospects in the discovery phase, all the way to high-intent audiences that are ready to purchase.

It will produce higher click-thru-rates (CTRs) and reduce cost-per-click (CPCs), resulting in a better campaign ROI. Here are a few things to reference when reviewing the keyword strategy for your AdWords campaigns:

- **Do you have a strategy in place to develop keyword lists for your Ad Groups?**
- **Are your keywords aligned to your consumer's path to purchase?**
- **What keyword research tools were used to determine keyword lists, industry terms, and competitive insights?**
- **Are long-tail keywords part of your keyword strategy?**
- **Are you making proper use of negative keywords?**





With effective keyword strategies and research in place, you'll be more likely to reach high-intent audiences, which increases click-thru rates (CTRs) and the likelihood of conversions. You'll also attract more low cost traffic through reduced cost-per-clicks (CPC). The more relevant the search query to what you offer, the more likely it is that your ad will appear and generate a response. When you implement an effective keyword strategy, you can expect to improve your overall quality score, which can reduce the cost of your ad spending.

# Crafting Text Ads



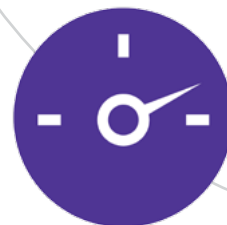
For optimal performance, you want to ensure that each Ad Group contains 2-3 text ads, with copy heavily aligned to the product or service keywords within that Ad Group. CTR is directly related to ad copy, which is why it is important to continue to improve CTR with ad testing. Using multiple text ads per ad group allows for the testing and optimization of copy, resulting in higher CTRs and lower CPCs.

- **Do you have multiple ads per ad group?**
- **Are your ads being iterated over time?**
- **Are Google Ad Extensions enabled?**
- **Is your ad copy aligned to potential search queries and landing page copy?**
- **Considering the marketing funnel and where your audience is in the buying cycle, does the ad copy align (targeted vs. generic keywords)?**

Carefully crafted text can increase the exposure of your ad, as well as increase your brand real estate on search engine results pages (SERPs). With high quality text ads, you'll also experience reduced bounce rates.



# Landing Page Optimization



Landing pages are the location your ads drive to, so they must be given consideration. Start by ensuring each landing page includes the option for a customer to take action (sign up for your newsletter, watch a video, purchase a product, etc.), and confirm your page copy is descriptive about what you are selling or offering. Then, work back when developing keyword lists and text ads driving to those landing pages. Your landing page is where your customer can learn more and take action, so the more relevant its content is to your Ad Group (keywords and ads), the more successful your campaign will be.

- **Are your landing page URLs optimized for conversions?**
- **Are all the proper KPIs or conversions being tracked on each landing page?**
- **More landing pages usually means more targeted messaging. Do you have more or fewer landing pages than similar advertisers?**

Over time, you can optimize your landing pages to increase conversions by actioning the data you collect to learn what's working, and what isn't. Optimizing your landing pages can also increase your quality scores, which, as mentioned earlier, can lower your costs. With high quality text ads, you'll also experience reduced bounce rates.



# Precise Targeting



Google AdWords provides a variety of targeting options that allow you to focus your advertising spend on audiences that are most likely to convert. You can target audiences by:

- **Geography**
- **Language**
- **Device**
- **Day of the week**
- **Time of day**
- **And more!**

The more precise the targeting, the greater the reduction of wasted ad spending. These targeting options should be enabled from the launch of your campaign, and are worth reviewing to ensure your team or agency has selected all relevant targets. Overlooking these basic settings can result in thousands of dollars of wasted advertising spending.



## Recommended Targets

Before launching your campaign, ensure the following targeting options are set:

- **Network targeting**
- **Geo-targeting**
- **Language targeting**
- **IP exclusions**
- **Device targeting**
- **Timing**

Taking the time to ensure these targeting options are set can help you avoid unnecessary spending, as well as decrease your cost per conversion rate and increase your CTRs. Most importantly, this will also increase your relevancy to target audiences.



# Start Your AdWords Journey on the Right Foot With My Checklists



Google AdWords can be complex, and it takes work to master. That's why it's important to learn from experienced users. Smart AdWords advertisers are concerned with:

- Increasing conversion rates
- Reducing the cost per conversion
- Creating a clear path to sale

By establishing clear goals and KPIs upfront, and following my checklists for success, I'm confident you will be able to better evaluate the success of your paid search campaigns, propel revenue and business growth, and delight in a positive return on ad spend.



**To learn more about  
how I can help you  
maximize your  
AdWords and PPC ad  
budget, get in touch  
with me today!**

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