

Google AdWords

What it's all about

Why Google Search is so Successful

To get the most from Google AdWords, it is first important to understand Google search. Google has applied the same criteria again and again at the forefront of its business strategy.

Google is all about relevance. Relevance to the searcher.

When someone searches for something on Google, Google only wants to present the most relevant results. Why? Because that's what the user wants, they want to search once, find a source for the information they are looking for and land on the page containing the information. The easier it is to use, and the more effective, the more people will use it.

And we are, in our millions.

Why does AdWords work?

AdWords, or any of the paid search advertising media works because people only search when they are 'in a buying mood'. You don't search for a locksmith unless you lost your keys, right? You wouldn't search for wedding dress hire if you weren't getting married. OK, bad example, some women do that stuff even when they're not getting married!

So How Does That Affect My Campaign?

With Google AdWords, Google applies the same criteria. When you bid on keywords, Google analyses both the content of your ad for relevance and the content of the page that the user will land on (the landing page) when clicked. The more relevant the ad and the more relevant the page, the higher your ad will feature in the listings.

So it's not all about how much you bid, although that is a factor if you are bidding on high value keywords (more about that later).

It gets better: the more your ad is clicked, the more Google appreciates its relevance and rewards you. Usually, the highest ranked ad is the most relevant, not which ad carries the highest bid. And better still, those ads that aren't relevant (i.e. don't get clicked) get barred. For life.

Understand Your Market

To best identify new customers, you need to understand why your existing customers use your product or service, how they found you, why they found you. Once you've done that, identify keywords that applied to them when they were seeking a solution to their problem.

Which Keywords?

If your business makes widgets, don't just bid on the word 'widget'. Firstly, it'll cost a fortune, and secondly, the traffic you'll get to your site won't necessarily be relevant. That's worst case scenario: you'll be paying top dollar for irrelevant traffic that has no intention of spending money with you.

Define the problem that your widget solves, the other products that it works with and bid on the niche keywords in that space. Is your widget used with another product? Use the keywords. Does it solve a problem left by an obsolete product? Use the part codes. If you cover a specific geography, include that in your keywords. Combine all of them to create a specific message to a very specific market, people who have this problem in this specific area: make it *relevant*.

Then duplicate it for lots of other geographical areas. You're not trying to create a single message to the mass market; you're creating many messages for hundreds of very small markets.

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Stock available for every model
With you in three days
www.peugoethubcaps.co.uk

[New Ford Hubcaps](#)

Stock available for every model
With you in three days
www.fordhubcaps.co.uk

For example, if you sell hubcaps for cars, you'd want to bid on Ford Hubcaps, Vauxhall Hubcaps, Mercedes Hubcaps, Peugeot Hubcaps and so forth. You might want to consider bidding on Replacement Vauxhall Hubcaps and narrow your message even more.

Get Negative

Google AdWords includes a wonderful, often unused feature for negative keywords. This allows you to filter out the unwanted irrelevant traffic that would still cost you money in clicks, but not gain you anything in sales.

Going back to our hubcaps example, if you don't sell Renault hubcaps, make sure you use "-Renault" in your campaign.

Using Google, search for your keywords and see what results come up, then try to filter all of those results by using negative keywords until you are only left with relevant results.

There is no limit on the number of keywords, or negative keywords that you can use in your campaign.

A Word about Ads

Being a bit of a people-watcher, the fascinating thing I love about AdWords is that you can monitor and react to consumer behaviour, you can tweak and change keywords and ads and see the results in a few days, or weeks depending on your market. A simple full-stop in your ad, or trying ‘fast’ instead of ‘quick’ might make the difference between a 2% click-through-rate (CTR) and a 3% CTR. That’s a 50% increase in visitors to your site, just by changing one word!

Continuing with the focus on relevance, make sure that your ads match your keywords. If you are bidding on ‘Property Guildford’, make damned sure that your ad says ‘Property in Guildford’ and not ‘we’re the best at selling your home’, or even, ‘Successfully selling property in Surrey’ – they just aren’t relevant enough to your market.

I realise that this means lots and lots of different ads all saying something very, very similar, but I didn’t say this was quick, did I? There’s no such thing as a quick win. To get the best results, your keywords must be relevant and your ads must be relevant to your keywords.

[Vauxhall Crash Repairs](#)
Stock available for every model
Fast turnaround, expert service
www.crashrepairs.co.uk

[Vauxhall Crash Repairs](#)
Free estimates, friendly crew
Loan car provided free
www.crashrepairs.co.uk

[Vauxhall Crash Repairs](#)
Free loan car provided
Free estimates, friendly crew
www.crashrepairs.co.uk

Google also has a really funky ad cycling tool that lets you experiment with different ads on the same keywords. You can have a number of ads for the same keywords and see which of those ads score the highest CTR, deleting or tweaking the ones that don’t work so well, and keeping those that do. I strongly recommend starting with at least two ads for an ad group and usually recommend three, even if they only have subtle differences.

Content is King

Google AdWords is just one tool, one stepping stone on the path to a ‘conversion’, that is, whatever you are trying to achieve by your campaign. Your web site has to be relevant too.

In the same way that your ad must be relevant to the keywords, your ‘landing page’ must be relevant to the ad too, if you want to achieve the best results. Research shows that a web page gets about 2 seconds attention to establish whether the searcher has found what they are looking for, if not, you just paid someone to look at a page and then leave without hearing your story. Why?

Imagine you’re searching for property in Guildford. You type ‘property in Guildford’ in to Google. You are presented with organic results and 10-12 paid-for ads for property. Some of which say the company name and what their unique selling point is, the most sites, selling more property than anyone else, the nicest staff, the best web site. A few say ‘property in Surrey’. A couple say ‘Property in Guildford’.

Which one are you most likely to click? The one that says ‘Property in Guildford’?

So you click the ad and land on the *home page* for the estate agent. It’s pretty, well designed and has a few featured properties that look fantastic. And a nice search box that says, “Where would you like to buy a property?”

At this point, you sigh with disappointment, scream in frustration or simply click the back button. Most, if not all of the visitors you paid to get to your site will be irritated too. Annoying someone is not the best way to start a relationship, now is it?

The user already told you where they wanted a property: in Guildford. Why do they have to tell you again? They said Guildford, you said Guildford, they clicked and you said, 'where was it again?' Surely your site search will generate a URL with the query in it?

Imagine that as a verbal dialogue. It would be considered just plain rude. You're not giving the customer the courtesy of just listening to what they are saying.

This is just plain lazy, and will not produce great results.

So There It Is

Bid on keywords that are relevant to your audience and use negative keywords that filter out the bad traffic.

Cycle a few ads that are relevant to those keywords to see which one performs best, removing or modifying those that don't perform well.

Land your searcher on a page with relevant content. This will increase your conversion rate.

Call them to action: contact me to discuss, buy now, sign up to our newsletter, sign up for property alerts, win a free holiday. They searched, they found someone who was talking their language and they are looking to buy, otherwise they wouldn't be searching, right?