

Google Adwords Guide by Aaron Rome, Rome Specialties, Inc 401-709-4420, aaron.rome@gmail.com

I have been managing my own Google Adwords campaign for almost four years and have spent over \$111,000 of my own money in the process. Google Adwords has been the prime engine that enabled my business to grow from gross sales of \$60,000/ year to over \$1/2 million per year. So, I kind of know what I am doing! But in this evolving online marketplace, with the global economy expanding in scope daily, there is no time for complacency. To be successful with an online business you need a 'constant improvement' approach to evolve with the times. And if you have an offline business and do not yet have a web-presence utilizing ecommerce, you are missing out on substantial market share.

SUMMARY

This document is a compliment to the one-on-one training that I provide to business owners who aim to take their web-presence to the next level. I pledge to work tirelessly with my clients to help them improve their skills in Google Adwords and gain a fundamental understanding of online marketing and optimization of their websites. Because my focus is on transferring my knowledge-base to you, the work outlined below will be a collaborative process. My goal is for you to be able to maintain your own Adwords account after working with me for a short period of time. My Adwords module covers these topics:

- 1) Clarification of business goals and objectives – more for my benefit than yours. If I don't understand your business model I will not be of much use
- 2) Homework – check list of what client should do prior to beginning adwords campaign. These items are a responsibility of the client to undertake as a pre-cursor to the Adwords campaign. For a reasonable fee I can consult with you in this area.
 - Website aesthetics and flow
 - Landing page review
 - Aesthetics of site
 - Keyword review of site
 - Contact information
 - Research competition
 - Goals Adwords campaign should achieve
- 3) Modify existing or setup new Adwords campaign (these steps are for new)
 - Setup conversion tracking
 - Setup Google Analytics
 - Research and select keywords
 - Settings – content network, scheduling, automatic matching, geo-targeting, daily limits
 - Write effective ads, use image ads if appropriate
 - Set bids
 - Setup appropriate adgroups
 - Download and begin using Adwords Editor

- 4) On-going data analysis
 - Review campaign summary stats on daily basis
 - Run weekly reports (ROI, placements, +)
 - Review Analytics bi-weekly and track organic vs. ppc visists, bounce rate, etc.
- 5) Modification of campaign every 3-4 weeks

MY SERVICES

- **Adwords Campaign Setup & Evaluation of Existing Campaign: \$150-\$250**
Review of and modifications to existing Adwords campaign, in consultation with client. Or, setup of new Adwords account.
- **Adwords Training: \$200**
Client is trained to manage his/ her own adwords account.
- **Website Peformance - Evaluation & Consulting: \$100**
This includes a review of your site, looking at its performance from the perspective of a potential customer/ visitor of the site. Written recommendations may include how to improve the aesthetics, checkout flow, content, use of keywords, integration of meta tags, SEO Tips. Implementation is responsibility of the client.
- **SEO Coding: \$150-\$300** depending on scope of work.
I would implement the following coding changes to the site: Meta Tags, Title tags, Copy Review and Editing, based on results of my evaluation as described in previous bullet or based on client's instructions.
- **On-Going Adwords Account Management: \$200-\$350/month**
I honestly believe that most small businesses are better off keeping this function in-house., which is why I focus on training and evaluation. However for those who have the resources to contract out and/or lack the time to do it themselves Iam more than happy to offer this service. Exact cost depends on size of campaign and level of modifications and on-going evaluation required.

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Adwords in its current form started around 2002. At the onset, as with most new paradigms, the early adopters benefited greatly. Early on you could get most keywords for pennies. Over the past 2-3 years as online merchants have become more savvy, competition has increased dramatically. Today, some keywords cost over \$60 a click! “ Mesothelioma treatment options” costs around \$69 for EVERY CLICK!! Why? Someone searching this keyword may be considering a lawsuit that could generate millions of dollars in business for a law firm. This is not the norm. Keywords for most industries are \$.20-\$1/ click. It’s all about Return on Investment (ROI). If you have a good business plan, a functional e-commerce website and a firm grasp on your cost-structure, you can use Google Adwords to your advantage. In most cases it will be a trial and error process to find the optimal configuration for your particular business. If your website is not smooth and the fundamentals of your business are not strong, you will be wasting your money by advertising on Google.

Adwords is referred to as a Pay Per Click (PPC) system. When someone types in certain keywords that you have selected to compete for, your ad is displayed in a browser. If someone clicks on your ad, then you will *pay for that click* – the amount is dependent on: how much you are willing to pay, the level of competition for that keyword, the relevancy of your ad to the search.

HOMEWORK

Pre-Adwords To Do List- Before embarking of expensive strategy of PPC (Pay Per Click) advertising, make sure you have your site in order. If your site is not already setup to effectively meet your business objectives – whether that be to generate leads or sales, PPC will be a big waste of your time and money.

- **Evaluate flow** of site against your objective(s). Your site should be easy to navigate and should clearly communicate the purpose of the site or sub-set of the site that the visitor is to take action on. If I have to spend more than 10 seconds searching your landing page trying to figure out what the product or service you are trying to promote is all about, I am outta there.
- **Landing Page** - Is the page where a visitor is sent to when clicking your Adwords ad. This is the page which will make the first impression. It should be free of clutter, include succinct content – bulleted points and using graphics to make your points work well. Clearly highlight the “value proposition” of your site – what makes your site unique and compelling to the visitor.
- **Aesthetics** – Your site should look good! If you are spending hundreds or thousands of dollars on your adwords campaign, you should invest in a professional graphic designer. For about \$300-\$500 you can get a nice “template” (also referred to as a “skin”) crafted that you can use on all your pages. This gives a consistent, clean, attractive look. If you have product photos – be

consistent! Take high quality photos and use the same background for all the products, or at least make sure the color schemes go well together.

- **Contact information** – In many cases, a potential customer or client will want to make a personal connection with a seller before making a purchase. So be sure to have your contact information on every page of your site. Visitors like to have a name as well – include a phone number and personal contact name. For me, I base my business around personal connections and that seems to work well. This may not work for everyone but I find it to be an effective model. My name is all over the site and I also include a family pic on the home page and in my blog. This makes potential customers feel like there are dealing with a real person and if they have a problem they know they can contact me.

- **Content & Keywords**– As mentioned, content on your landing page should be as minimal as possible. Content on your site should be rich but not overwhelming. Having a lot of relevant content on your site is a great idea, but don't put it all on the home page! Use a layered approach. Have some very basic information about your business/ product/ service on your home page and from there, as visitors probe looking for more detailed information you can direct them to the appropriate location on the site. This way you assure they are only presented with the most detailed/ possibly voluminous information when they are ready to absorb it. Your content should be relevant to your business – don't engage in "keyword spamming" – the practice of cramming unrelated keywords into your site to drive traffic there. It does not work and can hurt your rankings. Make sure the keywords you want to optimize are used throughout the site, in image alt tags, and in hyper links. Include them in the Title Tags and Meta Descriptions on your site as well. You want as consistency from the adwords keywords, ad content, landing page and throughout the site.

- **Mission and Objectives** – Be sure you have a clear sense of what you want to achieve through your Adwords campaign. Most often it's either sale of a product or service, or lead generation. If the latter, this usually results in an email with contact information from a potential customer or a phone call from them.

- **Research the Competition** – Adwords can be a goldmine, a money pit or something in between. For me it started off as a goldmine 3 years ago. As the industry matured and competition grew, things changed. Adwords is still profitable for me but I am very selective about what I choose to advertise and constantly monitor results. Adwords may not be right for your business. For example, if you sell mortgages and want to bid on mortgage related keywords, expect to pay \$1-\$5/ click. It may end up costing you \$100/ lead and \$300 per sale. Is this worth it? Every case is different, so it's important you know your cost structure and set your limits. In most cases it will not be 100% clear if Adwords will benefit your business until you do some experiments. Start by using Adwords' Keyword Traffic Estimator to get a sense of what certain keywords will cost you and what volume of clicks you will likely generate. Also, type your desired keywords into

google's search box and see who comes up on the left in the sponsored links section. Take note of th

- Seir ad copy, click on their links and checkout their landing pages, explore their websites and products. You will gain a lot of insight this way.

CAMPAIGN SETUP

- Sign up for an [Adwords account](#) and start a new "Campaign".
- [Conversion tracking And Analytics](#) – VERY important! Set this up correctly and test it out to be sure the sales, leads or whatever you want to track are being recorded on google correctly. Your data will be useless unless you have good data to indicate which keywords, ads, etc lead to conversions. If you are able to, assign a value to the sale as well – actual price of the sale if you can. Also, you should put the Google Analytics tracking code all public web-pages on your website.
- Start by choosing a list of [keywords](#) that are relevant to your product/ service. You have the option of "Broad Match" (keyword(s) may appear in any place in the search phrase), "Phrase Match" (Keywords MUST appear together in the search phrase). "Exact Match" (Keyword(s) must appear stand alone – NOT as part of a larger phrase).
- Settings:
 - [Search vs. Content Network](#): "Search" takes place when someone types a keyword into the Google search box. Your ad then appears on the left or on top under "Sponsored Links" heading. "Content" is when your ad gets shown on a related website. Google has a complex algorithm that determines which sites to show your ads on. Though it is not always accurate. Some advertisers achieve better results in one or the other. Content ads generally get more clicks because Google does not have to wait for the search words to show your ads. The downside of Content is that it will burn through your money so you want to be sure it gets you conversions. Before you have data to analyze, I recommend turning-on Content Network.
 - "Automatic Match" : This is similar to the content network, but google seems to have a much broader definition for what qualifies. I have found this service to be absurdly expensive – generating high volume of irrelevant clicks – Expensive! Do NOT turn this feature on.
 - Scheduling: Weekends are slow for my business, so I turn off my campaign on Sundays. But until you run some reports over a period of 3-6 months and have some good data to indicate which days are your best and worst, do not bother with the scheduling feature.
 - Geo-Targeting: If you only sell your product/ service in the USA, then be sure to choose the United States as the only location to show the ads and English as the language. If you currently or are interested in doing business overseas, setup separate geo-targeted campaigns for each country separately.

- Daily Limits – think of this as a safety net to assure you do not spend too much, actually it's more of a check on Google so they don't over-spend your money! In the testing phase, start off with a low budget – just a couple dollars a day. As you start to see results and know what aspects of your campaign are getting the results you want, increase the spending limit.
- Write your ads: start off with 3-4 ads. If you are not sure where to start look at some of your competitors's ads. Use strong language and complete phrases. The main point here is to filter out viewers of your ad so the clicks you get are relevant to your product or service. This will increase your conversion rate and lower your costs substantially. If your ads are vague you will get poor quality clicks and waste a lot of money. Consider what you want your landing page to be and your display page (this does NOT have to be same as landing page). Space is limited so be sure to be efficient and use it all!

Bad Example:

Green Widgets Available

We carry the best quality Green

Widgets you will find anywhere.

Good Ad Example:

Quality Green Widgets

Buy From #1 World-Wide Supplier

100% Satisfaction Guaranteed!

Here are some pointers based on my personal experience writing ads, I have no idea why some of these things are effective, but they are!:

- Use numbers
- Capitalize first letter of each word
- Avoid abbreviations
- Don't over sensationalize
- Make one important point per ad that sets you apart from the competition
- Don't mislead! It does you no good to get people to click your site if they don't buy, just increases your costs. So make your ad as representative as possible to your actual website.
- Image Ads Vs. Text Ads: An image ad is a graphical advertisement such as a banner. In my experience, Image Ads have not been effective. This is counterintuitive – I figured a more appealing image ad with the same basic content as a text ad would do at least as well. But performance has been poor.

- **Decide on bids:** You will have a “default” bid that will be applied to all your keywords unless you over-ride the setting by specifying separate bid for individual keywords. You generally do not pay ‘full price’ in other words, if your max bid is \$.79, you may find that you actually only pay \$.64 for your average click. This is because Google charges you the lowest amount possible. If your other competitors are not advertising at some point in the day and you are, that is one example of what circumstance could lower the actual payment per click. As you evaluate your data over time you may find some keywords have less competition and therefore you should lower your max bid to insure you don’t over pay. If you find some keywords have a high conversion rate, you should be willing to pay more per click.
- **Placements:** This is kind of advanced. Once you have been running the content network ads for a while you may want to target certain partner sites on which to display your ads. You can also run reports to analyze which of the partner sites generate conversions for you. Sites that are clearly irrelevant you can bar from showing your ads. In practice, I have not found much benefit in manually managing the placements.
- **Adgroups:** Within a campaign you can choose to have as many “adgroups” as you want. What is the distinction? Most of the important settings such as Geo, language, daily budget, scheduling, and some others are set on a campaign level. Best way to explain this is through example. I have 4 campaigns, organized by country. I have a UK Campaign, a USA Campaign, Canada Campaign and an Australian Campaign. This enables me to set a separate budget for each. I spend the most on the USA campaign (up to \$150/ day) and around \$20-\$40/ day on the rest. In the campaign settings is where I specify these ads show just in the appropriate country. And I have specific keywords and ads I use based on country. Within each campaign I have “Adgroups” for Green Widgets, Red Widgets, Blue Widgets and Purple Widgets. Separating the adgroups allows for more customization of ads and keywords that match up with a specific product. It also allows for much more insightful analysis of data.
- **Download Adwords Editor:** This is a tool provided by google which helps to create and modify campaign components very efficiently.

ANALYSIS

The summary pages within the campaign and Google Reports are the main tools I use to analyze data. The summary pages allow you to quickly see results based on a specified date range. When looking at data try not to be compulsive – give your ads time so the clear trends emerge. But it is a good idea to look at things on a daily basis, just don’t change things on a daily basis! When I scan the summary page I have an eye on:

- Click Through Rate (CTR) – this indicates the relevance of your ad to the viewers. Low CTR means those who are viewing the ad don't feel compelled to click.
- Average ppc – how much you are *actually* paying per click, on average.
- \$ spent on each adgroup and campaign.
- Conversion rates
- Cost Per Conversion – this is the biggie here and illustrates why it is so important to understand your cost structure. If your conversion cost is greater than your average sale, for an extended period of time and you have tried many different strategies – gues what? Adwords is probably not the best advertising vehicle for your business.

Analysis systems: It's best to use a systemic approach to evaluate your data each time you look at it. Even if just eye-balling it on a regular basis. For example, the relationship between \$ spent and average ppc is very important. The objective is to maximize clicks while getting as close as you can to your daily budget.

Example: Your daily budget is \$20 and your max bid is set to \$.55. When you check the summary you see that average ppc is only \$.48 and the amount spent is \$20. This shows that you COULD probably be getting more clicks for the same price. Lower the max bid to \$.39 and you find the actual average ppc paid is \$.33 and total spent is \$19.50. This is the optimal max bid for your desired spending limit.

Alternative Example: Your daily budget is \$20 and your max bid is set to \$.35. Yesterday you spent only \$10. This means that in order to get your spending up to \$20/ day you need to raise your max bid.

Key concept here is to never pay google anymore than you have to! Try different configurations of daily budgets and max bids til you find the combination that gets you the amount of traffic you want.

Keep in mind that the adwords data is "drill-down" – so you will get more and more detail each time you click. Click on the campaign and you will get the adgroups. Click on an adgroup and you will see all the ads and keywords in that group, etc. This information will show you how each ad and keyword performs

NEVER DELETE anything from your account! If you find certain keywords or ads do not perform well, pause them don't delete. Once you delete them they cannot be turned back on and it's harder to include data from deleted items in reports. It is nice to go back after a few months or a year and review inactive items to compare results.

GOOGLE ANALYTICS

This is a tab in your adwords account but really a stand-alone statistical package. It works great and has a ton of useful data. But you have to activate it and place the code (get it from the analytics page) on every page of the website you want to track. One thing I like to do is compare my organic vs. ppc traffic over time. Also helps you to see where visitors are entering and leaving your site.

CONCEPTS AND MISC

Quality Scores – give an indication of how good Google perceives your keywords to be. They base this on a number of factors such as the click through rate CTR of your ad as well as how well the keywords match up with the content on your landing page. If your quality score is low it will cost you much more to get your ads on the first search page.

REPORTS

Running reports regularly allows you to get a quick snapshot for your account's performance. You can setup reports as "templates" and run them at will. Or you can schedule to run at regular intervals. My favorite reports to run include:

- Conversion rates and Sales/ Value for past 7 days and past 30 days. This tells me which ad groups are most profitable.
- Landing page reports tell me which landing pages are working best. This implies that you have several different landing pages for each adgroup so you can see which works best.
- Text ad reports tell me which ads perform best – you can see many variables, but the ones I am most concerned with are conversions, Value/ Cost ration and cost/ conversion.
- Placement reports tell me which websites that display my ads yield the best results. Based on this information I can increase the bids for sites that perform well or put the losers on the "negative" list so my ads don't show up there.