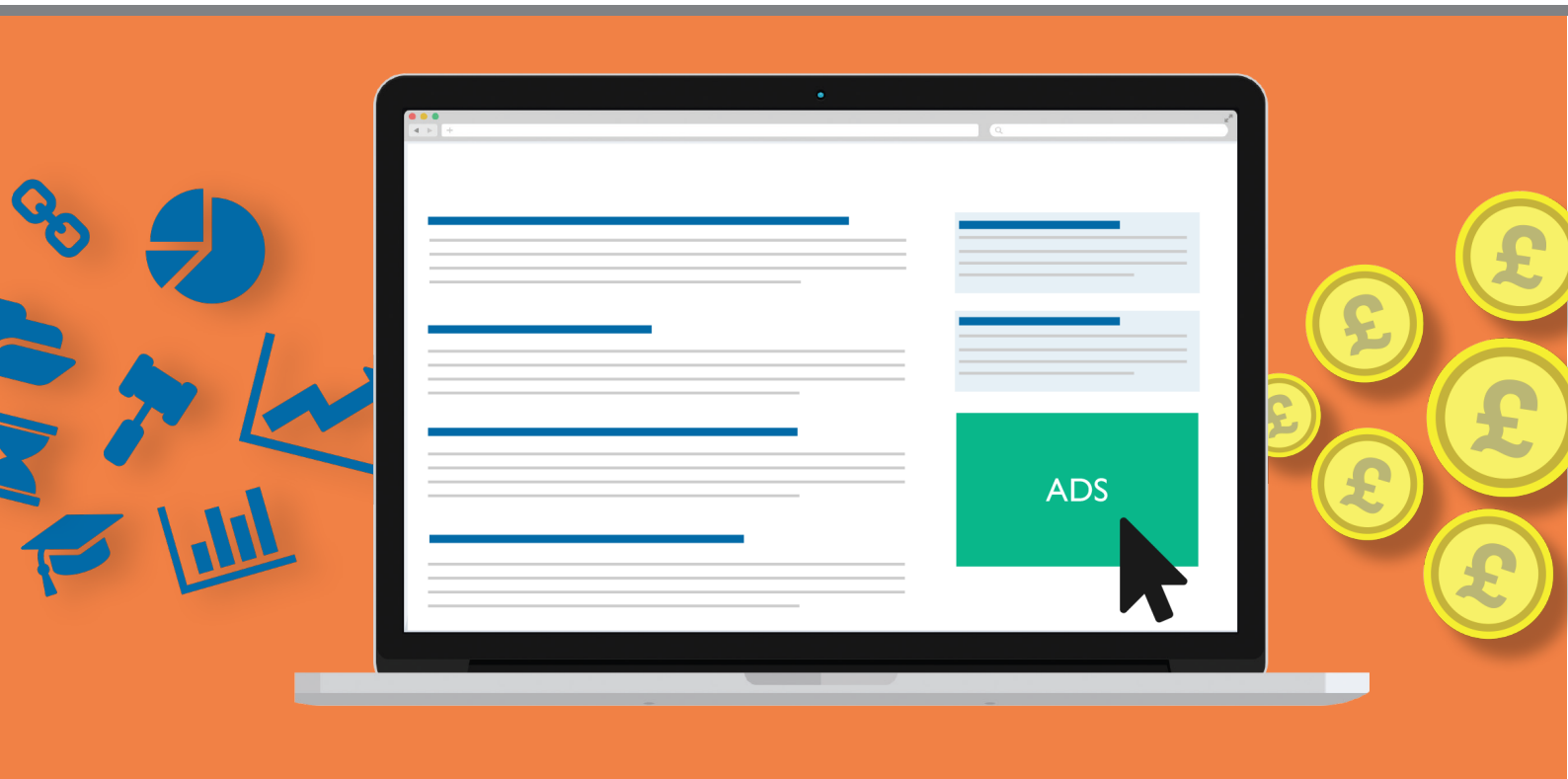
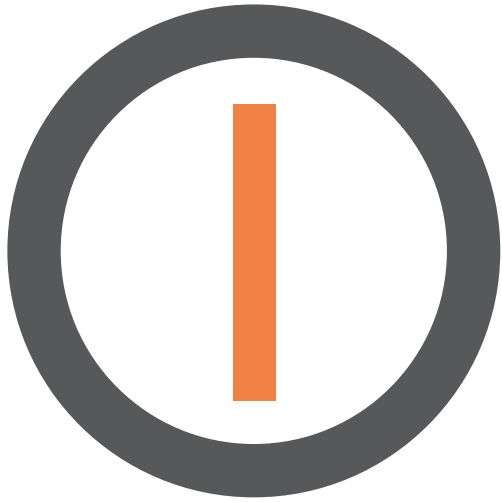


How To Use Google Adwords

An Introductory Guide





What is Paid Search?

Introduction

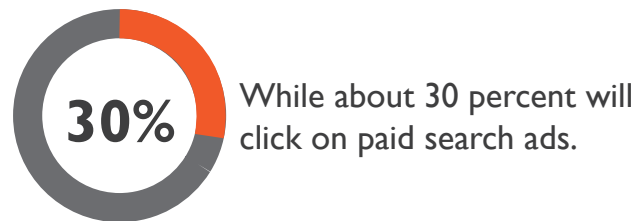
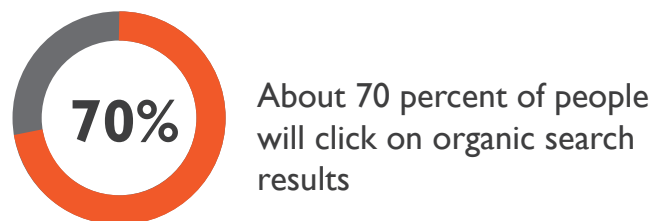
If you understand the fundamentals of how paid search marketing works and how it differs from organic search, you can use both of these aspects of search engine marketing (SEM) to drive traffic, leads, and therefore ultimately revenue, to your website and your business.

There are several predominant search engines but the way each one operates in terms of paid search (pay-per-click, or PPC) is based on the model used by Google, so this e-book will use Google AdWords as the example.

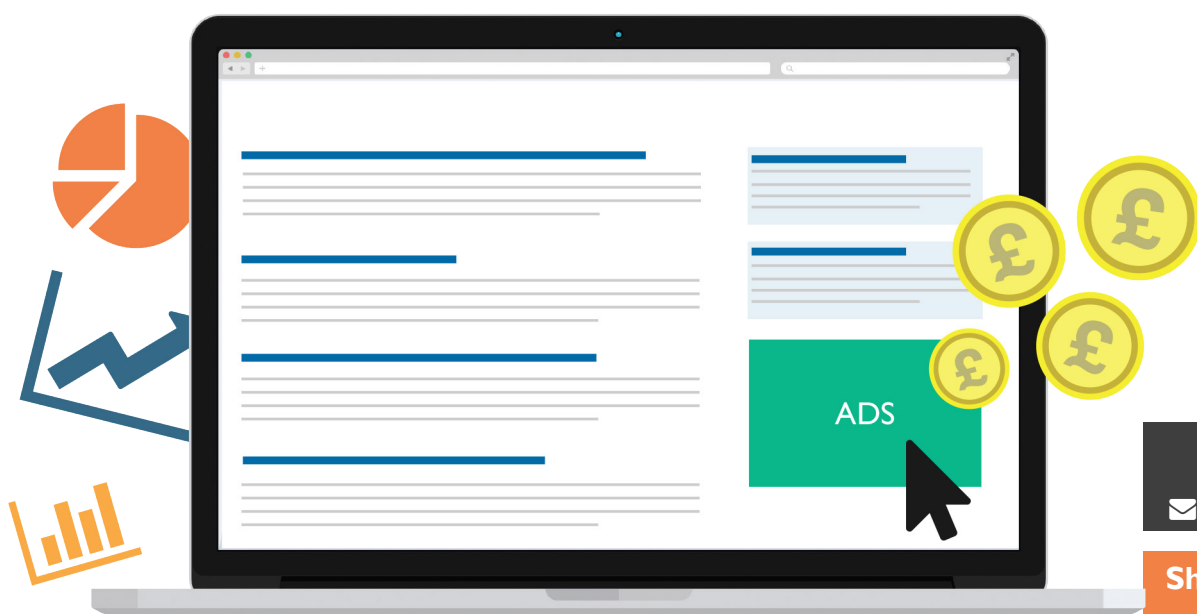
You can extrapolate the principles and use them on just about any search engine you choose.

Paid vs. Organic Search

Organic search results are the search results naturally produced by a search engine. They are based on complex algorithms each of the search engine companies has developed to provide answers to searchers' queries, which they believe most closely meet searchers' needs. You can use search engine optimization (SEO) techniques to influence these results to a degree. Paid search is where search engine providers allow you to pay to place an ad above or alongside the organic search results as they are displayed on the search engine results page (SERP). The ads you provide for placements will be displayed based on the keywords searchers use for their search queries. Whether, where, and when your paid ad is displayed, is based on how relevant your ad is to a search query and how much you are willing to pay (compared to your competitors) to display the ad.



Although it would be nice to succeed online solely based on organic search results, the reality for every business is that paid search helps to supplement your efforts to get found online and can symbiotically improve your organic search efforts over time, whilst driving traffic to your website now.



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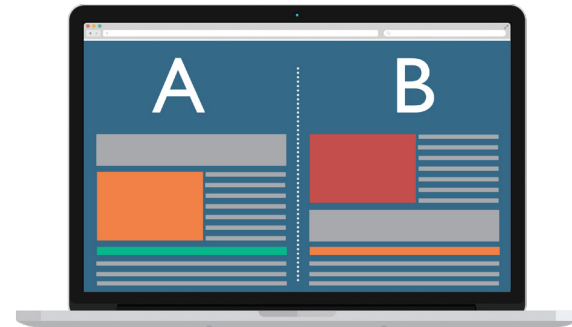
How to Use Paid Search

Paid search is not a set-it-and-forget-it proposition. To use paid search properly, you must understand how it is best implemented to drive real-time results while improving organic search results long-term.

Paid search is not a replacement for anything, it should be an integral part of a comprehensive inbound marketing strategy. You can use it to accomplish many of your inbound marketing goals.

Landing Page Testing

Paid search is an ideal way to test and optimise landing pages using A/B testing. A/B testing involves you testing two variations of a given campaign element. You can set a single ad to drive users to two distinct destination URLs, and so, to two different landing pages. You can test one offer's effectiveness against another. You can test different layouts. You can test different features on forms. Using A/B testing you can find the elements of your campaigns that drive the highest conversion rates from lead to customer.



Finding New Keywords

Paid search is also an excellent way to find new keywords to use in your overall inbound marketing campaigns. As you construct your paid search campaign, Google AdWords will generate a Search Terms report for you. Although you may have chosen to only use "lawn mowers" as your search term, Google's Search Terms report will also display effective ancillary terms, such as "electric lawn mowers," "gaspowered lawn mowers," or "push lawn mowers." You can then decide if adding any of these terms to your campaign is worthwhile. Knowing which keywords result in high search traffic can help you not only improve your paid campaigns but your organic efforts as well. You can use these words for SEO or to build landing pages using those keywords and phrases, thus optimising all your inbound marketing efforts.

Getting in the Game

You can also use paid search to improve your visibility in areas and for search terms where you have not yet been as successful as you'd like to be. You may rank high in organic results for "electric lawn mowers" but not rank well for "gas-powered lawn mowers." A well-placed search ad will get you seen and noticed, therefore boosting your efforts to get ranked favourably in organic search results for this secondary keyword. Better yet, if your competitors are not running search ads for this term, your ad will appear at or near the top of the list, giving you a competitive edge.

Paid Search Can't Stand Alone

Paid search, whilst effective, is not intended to be a standalone strategy. It will however, complement your inbound marketing efforts to drive organic traffic. When a user sees your website display in both organic search results and as a paid search ad, it signals to them that you are a player, a force to be reckoned with in your niche, in your neck of the woods or nationwide.

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How Paid Search Works

Keywords, Ads & Landing Pages

A paid search campaign consists of three elements: keywords, ads, and landing pages.

You begin by telling Google which keywords you want to buy to trigger your ads to display on their search engine results page(s) (SERPs). You design your ads around these keywords; working to make them relevant to the query and compelling enough to get users to click on them. Once users click through, you want to direct them to a landing page where you will try to persuade them to take the next step, buying your product, downloading an offer, or otherwise moving further down the sales funnel. By managing, matching, and optimising these three elements, you can improve the effectiveness of your paid search initiatives.

Pay-Per-Click (PPC) Bidding

Google offers two ways your ad can be displayed and billed: Pay-per-click (PPC) and pay per 1,000 impressions (CPM).

With rare exception, most businesses will want to use the PPC option. This means you don't pay to have your ad displayed, you pay only when someone clicks on it. Since only people who have an interest in your product or service will typically click on your ad, this is almost always the most cost effective advertising choice compared to the CPM option, where you pay every time the ad is displayed whether or not anyone sees it or clicks on it. The amount you pay per click is based on Google's auction-style of bidding for placement of your ads. Google will evaluate the amount advertisers offer to bid up to and then place ads based on those bids, starting with the lowest bidder at the bottom of the search ads (or not at all if more advertisers bid than there is room on a page). While you may bid £3 per click to display your ads, if the other bidders for your keywords respectively bid £1.20, £1.27, and £1.30, your ad will garner the top position, perhaps at a cost of £1.33 per click.



Quality Score

Although the amount you bid for ad placement plays a significant role in determining whether or where your ad gets placed, so too does the ad's relevancy to searchers' queries. Google also gives each ad a "quality score." The algorithm behind the quality score evaluates the relevance of your ad and the landing page it takes users to for any given search query. This is done to ensure buyers are not simply buying keywords to boost their exposure on Google. After all, if someone who sells bowling balls bid on haircuts, Chinese food, and Honolulu airfare, the resulting ads would ultimately be of little use to the vast majority of searchers, making Google's search results increasingly irrelevant and ineffective over time. Google's quality scoring ranks ads from 1 to 10, 10 being the best. If your ads are ranked 8 while your competitors' ads are ranked 4, your ads should be placed higher, even if you bid a bit less than the competition, because your ads are perceived to better meet searchers' needs. When you get this strategy of bidding and relevancy right (in Google's eyes), you should end up with the lowest possible cost for the best placement of your ads.



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Keyword Match Types

Google uses three variants of matching keywords to prompt ad placement.

They are exact match, phrase match, and broad match. You can set the ads to respond to keyword queries in those three ways.

Exact Match

An exact match will display your ad only when the keyword search matches your keywords exactly. For example, “pizza delivery Harvard Square.”

Phrase Match

If you choose phrase match, your ad can display if it contains the same order of words, but also if it contains additional words. In this case, “pepperoni pizza delivery in Harvard Square.”

Broad Match

If you choose broad match, your ad will display when those keywords are queried, not necessarily in that order or not just with those words. For example, your ad might display if people queried “pizza Harvard Square,” “pepperoni pizza Harvard Square,” or “free pizza delivery in Harvard Square.”

Negative Keywords

You can also set negative match keywords to prevent your ads from being shown if the negative keyword is present in the search query. Using our example, you may choose to have your ads not display if the search includes the words “cheap” or “all-night” if your pizzas are more expensive than most and you close at midnight.



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Paid Search Strategy

Keyword Strategy

Knowing your options; exact match, phrase match, and broad match, how do you choose which to apply? Choose too narrowly and you'll miss out on lots of search result opportunities. Choose too broadly and you may pay for far more click-throughs than are effective and thus squander ad budget. The answer is to experiment and monitor your results very closely. One popular strategy is to set all keywords to broad match and pair it with negative match. This will help you corral a lot of users quickly while still excluding the most irrelevant ones. You will need to pay close attention to the results and do so often, but by studying which keywords are working best, you will quickly hone in on the most relevant and most qualified leads the right keywords will produce. You can also use broad match- and phrase match-set keywords, then use the Search Terms report to see which keywords are most effective and cost-effective. Use that knowledge to set the best ones to exact match because they have proven themselves. Perhaps most important in your keyword strategy is your willingness to continue to test, analyse, and adjust. Not only will you refine your results but since keyword performance is a moving target and changing over time, your keyword strategy should likewise evolve over time to keep up with contemporary search habits and results.



Account Structure

As part of your inbound marketing strategy, you will want to keep your Google AdWords ads properly organised so you can efficiently monitor their success.

You can organise similar ads into ad groups and further organise your ad groups into campaigns. This will enable you to quickly and efficiently monitor those ads targeting like minded products and services. Using our example, you might group all your pizza delivery ads versus your pizza take-out ads. You might further bundle those under your pizza campaign as compared to a pasta campaign you might be running as well.

Setting Your Budget

Google AdWords ads operate by depositing a preset amount you determine in your AdWords account, let's say £370, which is intended to last you a month. You can then set your ad budget not to exceed a predetermined amount, perhaps £12 per day, and set your ad display budget to dispense that £12 evenly over the course of a day. Setting these parameters ensures that your entire budget isn't used up in far less than time than you intended either for the month or by day. By starting off slowly and monitoring your ad results closely, you can soon determine the best monthly and daily spending limits. Of course, just because you authorise Google via a deposit to spend £370 in a month or £12 per day doesn't mean your budgets will automatically be spent down that way. If not enough people click on your ads to draw down your daily or monthly limit that money will remain in your account. You will, however, want to rethink your keyword strategy if this is the case to ensure you have enough AdWords exposure to produce the results you were hoping to achieve.



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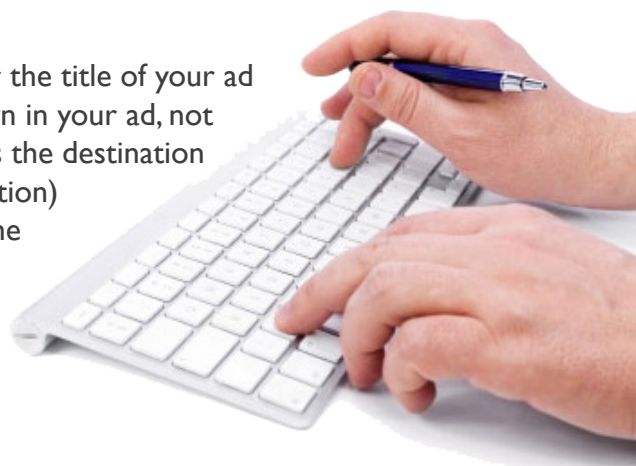
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Optimising Ad Copy

25, 37, 35, 35

Remember those numbers. Those are the character limitations for the title of your ad (the first line shown in blue text), your vanity URL (the URL shown in your ad, not necessarily the one to which users are directed which is known as the destination URL), and two lines, 35 characters each in the ad copy (or description) lines. You may use the first line of ad copy as a call-to-action and the second line for an offer, or vice versa. Do your best to maximise the characters you use to make the ads as effective as possible.



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Measuring With Metrics

Defining the 4 Basic Metrics

There are four basic metrics that count most when evaluating your paid search efforts: impressions, clicks, conversions, and spend.

- 1 Impressions** - This is the number of times your ad has been displayed. People may or may not have seen it or clicked on it, but they have been given the opportunity to be exposed to it via an impression.
- 2 Clicks** - This is when someone who has been exposed to your ad actually clicks on it, taking them to your landing page.
- 3 Conversions** - When you set up your AdWords account you will be prompted to add some tracking code to your website. That will let you and Google track user actions to know when someone has taken the desired action from your landing page, such as purchasing your product or downloading a coupon or special content, such as an e-book.
- 4 Spend** - Your spend is the amount of money you have spent on your AdWords campaign for any given time period (or to date).

Combining the 4 Basic Metrics

Combinations or derivatives of these four metrics, including click-through rate, conversion rate, cost-per-click, and cost per acquisition, will help you optimise your campaign via the inbound marketing analytics you use to evaluate them and improve your offerings.

- 1 Click-through Rate (CTR)** - The percentage of impressions that result in clicks. The higher the CTR, the more effective this aspect of your campaign is.
- 2 Conversion Rate** - The percentage of clicks that turn into conversions. It also improves as the ratio improves, fewer clicks to greater conversions.
- 3 Cost-per-Click (CPC)** - This cost metric is the amount of money spent to acquire each click. You can determine your CPC by dividing the number of clicks into your total spend. The more you can lower this ratio, the more efficient your campaigns will be.
- 4 Cost per Acquisition (CPA)** - This cost metric is the amount you're spending to convert prospects into customers. Divide the total spend by the number of conversions. The lower your CPA, the better.

The higher your percentage metrics and the lower your cost metrics, the more efficiently you're running your inbound marketing campaigns. Set (realistic) goals and then monitor and analyse your results to continually optimise your keywords, ads, and account structure towards achieving those goals.

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Conclusion & Additional Resources

Conclusion

Use what you've learned in this e-book about paid search as part of your overall inbound marketing strategy. Keep these things in mind:

- Paid search is based on a pay-per-click (PPC) model
- Keep your AdWords account structured properly to help organise your campaigns, ad groups, keywords and ad copy for maximum effect
- By improving your ad quality scores you will not only increase performance but also reduce your advertising costs
- Paid search is not a substitute for inbound marketing, it's an integral part of it. Master your inbound marketing fundamentals first – blogging, lead generation, SEO, and so on – then, use what you've learned from those efforts to optimise your paid search initiatives.

Continue to track, monitor, analyse, and optimise. The more you know about the effectiveness of every element of your paid search campaigns, the more effective, and cost-effective, they will be.

Additional Resources

You can find more information and articles about Google Adwords on the JDR 'Digital Prosperity' Blog <http://blog.jdrgroup.co.uk/digital-prosperity-blog>

If you are running Google Adwords and want some help, you can get a FREE Google Adwords account review. Click on the link below and fill out your details, and one of JDRs trained Adwords professionals will review your account with you and point out where you are losing money, wasting money, or missing opportunities to make money.



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