TOP 10 COST-SAVING
TIPS FOR GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR PAY PER CLICK BUDGET

ABSTRACT »

Chances are if you're running an AdWords program, you're already familiar with Google's extensive settings, optimizers and customizable features. But the real question is: Are you leveraging these elements in your day-to-day monitoring to make the most of your budget? This new white paper features 10 cost-saving tips for Google pay per click marketing.

Follow these best-practice tips and you'll be well on your way to running a budget-friendly campaign...

Today's marketers need to make smart and strategic decisions in these tough economic times, and that is especially true of their Google AdWords programs. Chances are if you are running an AdWords program you're already familiar with Google's extensive settings, optimizers and customizable features. But the real question is: Are you leveraging these elements in your day-to-day monitoring to make the most of your budget?

This white paper features 10 cost-saving tips for Google pay per click marketing, including the following:

01. Geo-Targeting – Only focus on regions where you are interested in selling or have dedicated sales support.

02. Ad Scheduling – Identify the time of day that drives highest quality leads and only run ads during this time.

03. Targeted Keywords – Narrow down your keyword list to those that are most relevant to your business.

04. Strategic Bidding – Avoid campaign-wide or AdGroup-wide bids and set individual keyword bids.

05. Negative Keywords – Identify keywords that trigger your ad but are not relevant to your business.

06. Match Type – Utilize phrase and exact match to ensure you're only showing up for relevant searches.

07. Strategically Aligned Keywords, Ad Copy, Landing Page and Offer – Maintain consistency by aligning messaging throughout the entire program.

08. Site Exclusion – Remove ads from sites with low business-relevancy.

09. Conversion Tracking – Implement conversion tracking on all thank you pages to track which keywords and ads are the best performers.

10. Outsourcing – Hire experts for daily monitoring and optimization.

This white paper will review, in detail, how you can leverage these settings and features and optimize your program.

01. GEO-TARGETING

It's as simple as this. Only focus on the regions where you are interested in selling or have dedicated sales support. Otherwise, you will waste impressions, clicks, and ultimately dollars on non-targeted areas.

For example, a real-estate vendor shifted from targeting the US to more specific geographic areas, and while click-through-rates and conversion rates remained stable, the total number of sales increased by over 250%.

Google offers customizable location-targeting that allows for country, state, and even city segmentation, filtered by IP addresses. By leveraging this feature, you'll ensure that your ad is ONLY shown to people who are located in your targeted areas.

02. AD SCHEDULING

Chances are, your target audience is more engaged and of higher quality during certain times of day. If you are focused on B2B buyers, they are probably more focused between 9AM-5PM, when they are in front of a computer, conducting research. Utilize your CRM system and compare time of day to quality leads. Limit your ads to run only during this time and you will maximize your budget at those times that lead to quality conversions. Remember to include coverage for other time zones as well.

After you make this change, compare the leads from before and after to see if it had a positive impact. Chances are the quality will be higher.

03. TARGETED KEYWORDS

Most programs make one of two mistakes. Either they include too few keywords or too many. If you don't have enough, you run the risk of missing relevant traffic or lower-cost clicks. But if you have too many, you may be getting clicks that don't produce quality results. Narrow down your keyword list to only include those that are highly relevant to your business. This includes industry keywords and acronyms.

Here are some examples of general keywords compared to targeted ones:

01. **Franchise vs. Coffee Franchise.** You may assume that someone interested in opening a franchise is interested in a coffee franchise, but that might not be the case. And you may also assume that if someone isn't interested in coffee franchisees, that they won't click on your ad – but 95 characters isn't always enough to cohesively convey your message, and you will still be wasting impressions.

02. **SLM vs. Non-Acronym Version.** In network management, SLM stands for service level management. But it also stands for Sallie Mae, Sound and Light Machine and many other HIGHLY irrelevant searches. Monitor your

acronyms and ensure they're providing relevant clicks. Again, don't solely rely on ad copy as a qualifier.

Take out those keywords that have very high impressions, low click-through rates, and high cost/conversions. Also, visit Google's Keyword tool to identify keywords that could be stronger performers for your program.

04. STRATEGIC BIDDING

When you first set up your account, Google will default to automatic campaign-wide or AdGroup-wide bids. At first, this may be a great way to begin collecting data and quickly make adjustments, without diving into keyword-level detail. However, over time you'll discover that this is not the most ideal decision.

For example, say you log in to your account and realize that your average positions are so low that some keywords aren't getting impressions because they're on the third or fourth page. Quickly, you increase your default bid to $10. Next time you log in to your account, surprise! You went from a $30 cost/conversion to $200 and you're over your budget.

Monitor individual keyword performance and set individual bids based on average position, business relevancy and performance.

05. NEGATIVE KEYWORDS

Negative keywords are a great way to exclude irrelevant clicks and wasted dollars.

Say you are in the business of Application Performance Management and you compete with CA Wily. You decide you want your ad to be triggered by keywords 'CA Wily' and 'wily.' Suddenly, impressions increase by over100,000 and your click-through rate is nearly nonexistent. What happened?

Wily will trigger your ad for searches such as:

- **Free Wily** – A great family adventure movie featuring a young boy who befriends a whale.
- **Wily Cycles** – A race team located in Boulder, Colorado.
- **Wily Coyote** – A disgruntled coyote whose life goal is to catch a devious Road Runner.

And, clearly, none of these keyword searches are relevant to CA or Application Performance Management.

Use the search query report to identify any keywords that trigger your ad but are not relevant to your business and include negative keywords to prevent your ad from showing, such as 'free,' 'coyote,' 'cycles,' etc. Exclude irrelevant clicks and wasted dollars by utilizing negative keywords.

"You already know it all comes down to your offer. If prospects aren't interested in your white paper, webcast, or sales-focused product datasheet, they won't click on your ads."

06. MATCH TYPE

Broad match keywords will sometimes trigger your ad for an unrelated search term. Consider the keyword, 'Application Architecture,' as an example, which simply defined is the design and development of software. Below are examples of how broad, phrase and exact matching will alter this keyword in searches:

1) BROAD MATCH: APPLICATION ARCHITECTURE
- Computer Application for Architecture Design
- Web Application to earn degree in Architecture

2) PHRASE MATCH: APPLICATION ARCHITECTURE
- Degree in Application Architecture
- Jobs in Application Architecture
- Exact Match: Application Architecture
- Application Architecture

Utilize phrase and exact match, with a combination of negative keywords (jobs), to ensure you're only showing up for relevant searches.

07. STRATEGICALLY ALIGNED KEYWORDS, AD COPY, LANDING PAGE, AND OFFER

You already know it all comes down to your offer. If prospects aren't interested in your white paper, webcast, or sales-focused product datasheet, they won't click on your ads. However, if your message is not aligned throughout your keywords, ad copy and landing page, prospects might skim your 95- character ad, think they're interested enough to click, but get to your landing page and realize they're not, wasting your budget.

Here is a brief example: You are in the business of data storage and your offer is a best-practice white paper on backing up virtualized servers. The below example is from the VMware Backup AdGroup, which didn't follow best-practice guidelines for strategic alignment. Compare the before and after for this AdGroup's ad copy:

Before

VMware Backup Struggles?
Analyst Report: Best Practices on
VMware Environment Backup. Read Now
www.Example.com

CTR: 1.52%
Conversion Rate: 3.3%

After

VMware Backup Struggles?
Analyst Report: Best Practices for
Backing up Virtualized Servers.
www.Example.com

CTR: 1.19%
Conversion Rate: 18.2%

A simple switch in ad copy not only increased the conversion rate by six times, but also decreased the cost per conversion from $133 to $22.

08. SITE EXCLUSIONS

If your campaign is opted into the content network, it's not uncommon for your ads to show up on irrelevant sites. Google chooses content sites based on the keywords and ad copy in each AdGroup. Sometimes Google assumes one site may be relevant, but it's not. For example, 'Application Architecture' might show up on sites related to building architecture.

Be sure to run Google's placement report every few weeks and eliminate irrelevant clicks and impressions by removing your ads from sites with low business-relevancy. Google also gives you the option to remove your ads from all error pages, parked domains, sites with user-generated content, video content, edgy content, etc.

09. CONVERSION TRACKING

The best way to track performance and success is through conversion tracking. Implement conversion tracking on ALL thank you pages so you can understand which keywords, ads, and landing pages are driving the highest number of leads. For example, a high-tech software vendor whose destination URL went to their homepage saw a 0.45% click-through-rate, 1.36% conversion rate and spent $179 per conversion. Upon creating a dedicated landing page and implementing conversion tracking on the associated thank you page, the same program saw a 1.64% click-through-rate, 7.81% conversion rate and a decrease to $52 per conversion.

Google Analytics can also be linked to your AdWords campaigns for additional tracking. Possible metrics include time on site, pages/visit, bounce rate and greater insight into which keywords are driving traffic to your site. And if possible, link your CRM system to AdWords so you can measure quality.

10. OUTSOURCE

Finally, pay per click management requires daily monitoring and optimization. If you don't have the resources to devote to your PPC monitoring every day, don't be afraid to hire experts who are trained in optimization and management.

ABOUT NOWSPEED

Nowspeed is a search engine marketing firm that drives leads—from click to customer—for companies like yours. Our packaged services include a blend of search engine marketing, website design, social media, lead nurture and

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marketing analytics, so that we can deliver complete end-to-end solutions to our customers. For more information, visit us at www.nowspeed.com.