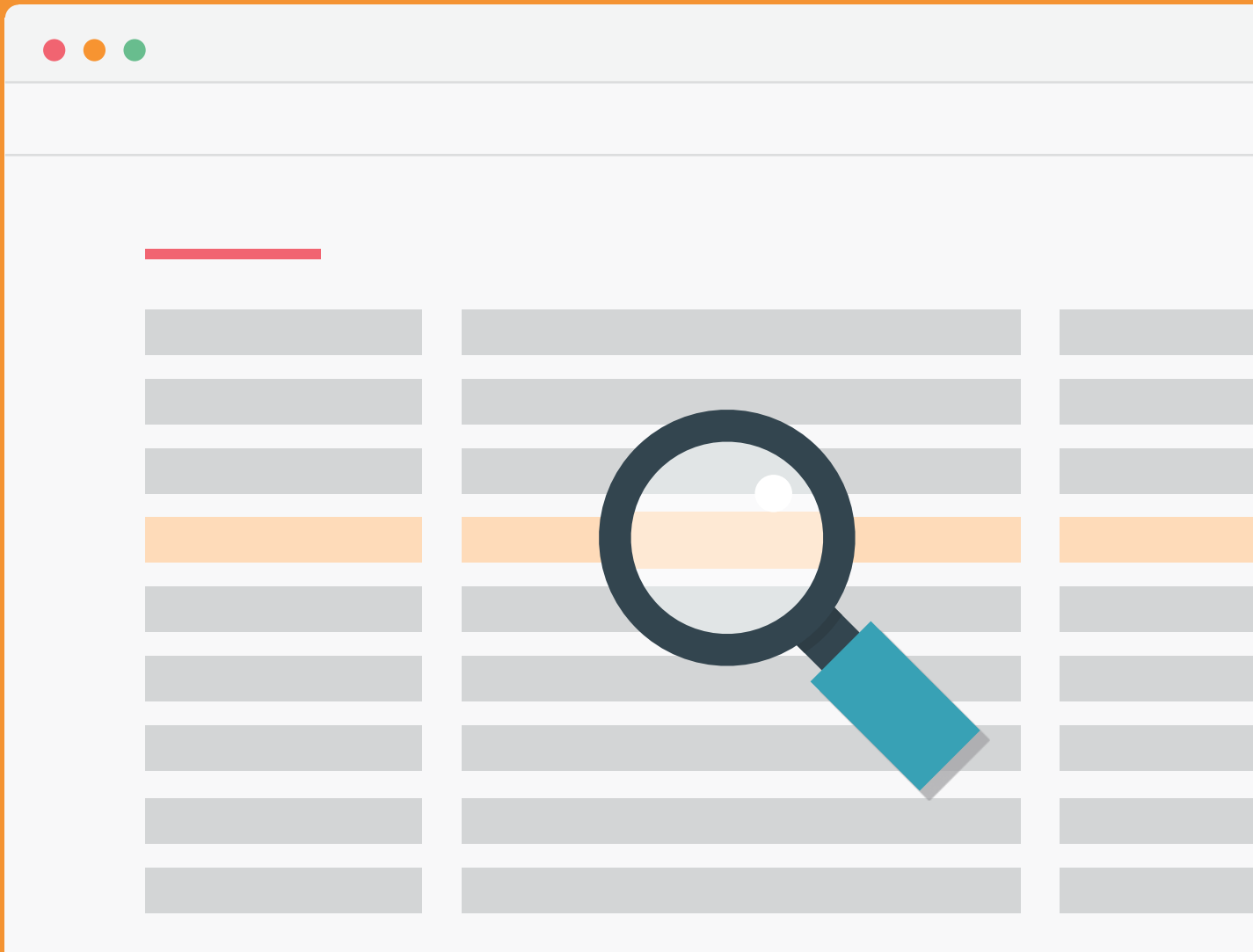




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# DEVELOPING A PAID SEARCH KEYWORD STRATEGY



Keyword strategies and their development are a hot topic within paid search at the moment; Click Consult is ready as ever to address your needs and set out keyword selection for paid search, how it differs from organic search strategy and how your brand should approach it.

Keyword strategy development for paid search shares a lot in common with [that of organic search](#): the process of creating buyer personas, looking for gaps in the market, ranking for priority and searching for the golden ratio of high traffic, low competition. Where strategy for paid search differs is in the increased need to read and cater for intent.

As is highlighted by our [conversion funnel infographic](#), there are levels of awareness which need to be catered to in order to ensure the most is made of a PPC campaign.

## DEVELOPING A LIST

As with an organic keyword strategy, we'd recommend creating buyer personas – archetypal consumers of your goods or services with which you can plot levels of intent and queries that may typify these stages. Though consumers are never the same individually, a large enough consumer base will allow for more generic assumptions so that personalisation to a number of personas can lead to a greater appearance of personalisation throughout the conversion funnel.

Once the buyer personas are in place, the next step is to brainstorm words or terms around your goods and services – as in the example below, each word or term can then become a hub for further expansion of the list. With shoes broken down into varieties of shoe, then broken down into colours, into gender specific varieties and on and on, each step increasing your list of words and terms for the next step.

This can then be combined with information from your analytics account to see what consumers are searching for on your site, or to check anchor text for inbound links, Google's auto-complete can be used to find the top performing auto-completes for your terms.

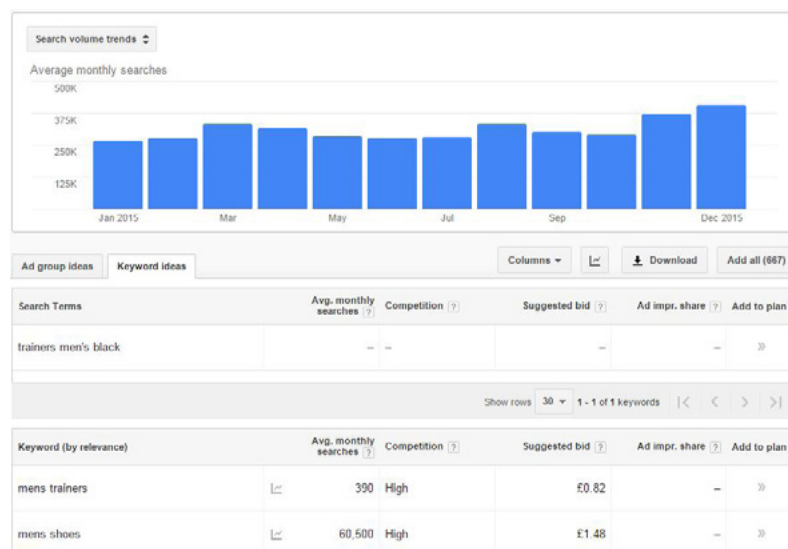


## REFINING A LIST

With what should be an impressive list of terms, you can go on to use any number of concatenation tools (such as [mergewords](#)) which can arrange your keywords into strings so that you have a list of terms you can then proceed to refine with other tools. The below example builds on the brainstorm diagram above to achieve 120 combinations from just 14 words:

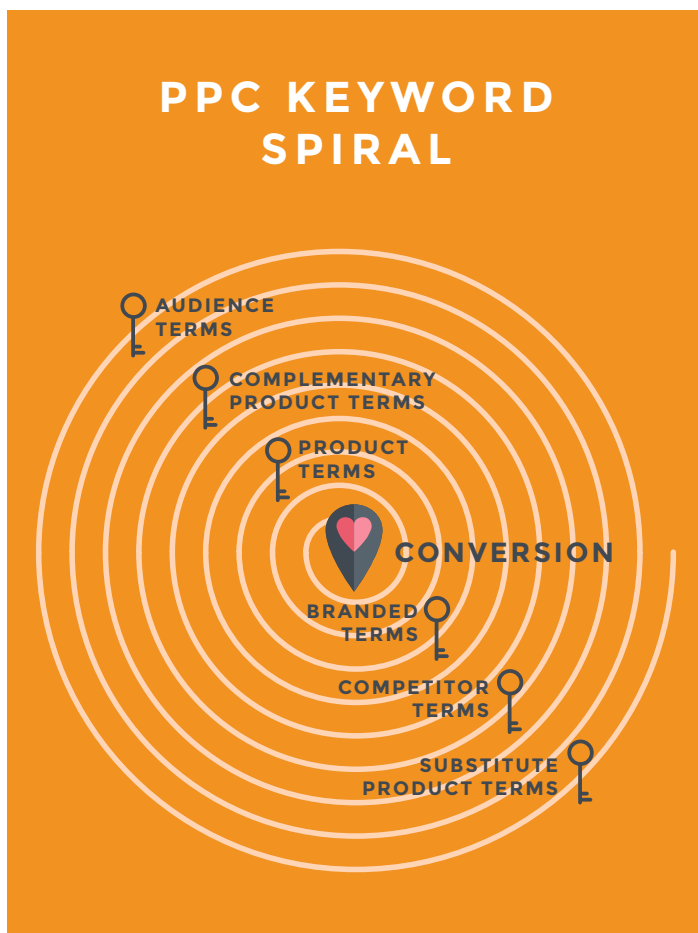


Following this step (and having removed non-applicable terms), you can then begin to use a keyword research tool to check for traffic (Google's Keyword Planner – pictured below – is as good a place as any to start as the majority of search traffic in the UK comes from their search engine). You can see in the following example, using the 'trainers men's black' term, that though it doesn't find anything for the term itself, it is able to make suggestions on the theme and offer suggested bids.



This process of refinement is about finding those areas which are best suited to your brand's financial and market position, in which to compete. By narrowing down your list by those terms with the highest traffic and a recommended bid which is within your comfort zone, you can reduce your list to terms you know you can successfully compete for, that have sufficient traffic to drive conversions and which are representative of your brand.

Once you have these lists, you can then segment them by the level of intention they demonstrate. As shown below (and mentioned in the [PPC Buyer's Journey](#) in our resource section), there are levels of intent inherent in specific searches. A 'buy white adidas trainers' search, for example, is much closer to conversion in our spiral diagram than simply 'white trainers'.



## WHAT MAKES THE RIGHT KEYWORD "RIGHT"?

Keywords for PPC are part of a journey toward conversion - that's why we've used the spiral over the conventional target metaphor. With a target, anything less than a bulls eye (conversion) is a miss, yet each keyword target fulfills a separate need, caters to a different level of intent. To ensure you are practicing the right keyword strategy, ideally you should be covering as many of these as possible to guide the consumer toward your goal. Some journeys start closer to the centre, some do not follow the expected route - but by being present at each step, you can avoid missing an opportunity.

**Brand Terms:** These are those closest to conversion - representing the highest level of intent. The consumer knows your brand, have done their research and are well on their way.

**Product Terms:** These are about what your product is or does - and represent probably the last stage of research before the consumer is ready for purchase level searches.

**Competitor Terms:** Consumers at this level are far enough along to be looking for types of specific goods or services. Competing at this point is less effective than it was, but could still sway potential consumers of rival brands.

**Substitute Product Terms:** At this level, consumers are looking for items or services in the same area as those you provide and with the right ad, may be convinced yours are right for them.

**Complimentary Product Terms:** Consumers here are looking for items that accompany the services or items you sell - accessories etc. With well crafted ads, they could see the need for your products too.

**Audience Terms:** These are terms remaining (that do not fit with other groupings), but that might represent activities or searches typical to your buyer persona, at this stage ads would be considered as predominately to raise awareness.

The next step is to group these keywords and terms thematically, by intention and semantically as the previous diagram shows – these groupings represent what will become your ‘ad groups’, follow the customer journey and, if your list of products or services is reasonably straightforward, the structure of your website. Shoes, for example, could be grouped as follows:

SPIRAL LEVEL	KEYWORD
Brand	Adidas Trainers
Product	Trainers
Competitor	Nike Trainers
Substitute Product	Tennis Shoes
Complimentary Product	Jogging equipment
Audience Terms	Gym Memberships

Each of these sections could feasibly contain search terms by intention (though, clearly with such a wide selection, greater focus would be recommended), by product etc. The tighter these groups are, the easier it will be to monitor results and the focus can be narrowed still further by using advanced options and filters to refine by location and by time of day/week and by using negative match keywords (words you **do not** want your ads to appear for) – the more (valid ones, don’t go too far or you risk missing opportunities) of these you can implement before the campaign goes live, the better.

### CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

As with all areas of search marketing, this is not a set up and go scenario, but a first step to running a great keyword focused campaign. It is virtually impossible to identify the perfect keywords immediately. However, through careful and consistent review, you will identify more keywords for which to compete and more you should exclude.

By ensuring that keyword research is a key and regular part of your PPC account management time, you will continuously improve and strengthen the account, your ads will become more relevant and your conversions and ROI will improve.

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## ABOUT US

We are a multi award-winning search marketing agency working with brands & SMEs that want a tangible, measurable return from their online budget.

Our website features an online resources section, full of useful [eBooks](#). We also write a blog, where you can find an abundance of search marketing tips. If you're feeling social, get in touch on [Google+](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#).

Want to know more about PPC? Why not have a look through our extensive list of infographics, resources and blogs.

**0845 205 0292**

Or visit our [website](#).



### WHAT THE CLIENT SAYS

*Click Consult's paid search work continues to contribute to our online commercial success. Using their highly analytical approach, they crafted campaigns to achieve our specific objectives and we're very pleased with the results.*

*Virgin Balloon Flights*

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Accredited Professional



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