

HOW TO DO A PPC HEALTH CHECK



CONTENTS

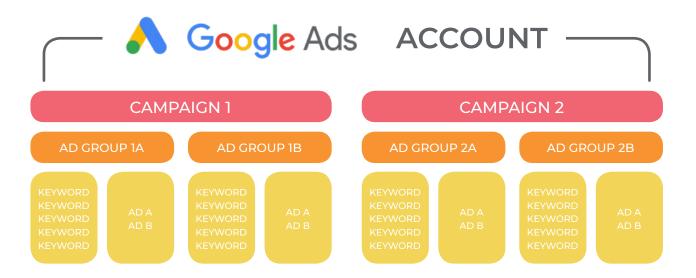
INTRODUCTION	3
SEARCH CAMPAIGN STRUCTURE	3
DISPLAY CAMPAIGN STRUCTURE	
SHOPPING CAMPAIGNS	88
ADS	10
AD EXTENSIONS	13
KEYWORDS	15
CLICK THROUGH RATE (CTR)	
COST PER CLICK (CPC)	
POSITIONING	17
BID MODIFIERS	18
LANDING PAGES	20
CONVERSION TRACKING	20
ATTRIBUTION	20
ANALYTICS LINKING	21
WEBSITE CALL CONVERSIONS	21
QUALITY SCORE	
BUDGET	22
FINAL THOUGHTS	23

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this Health Check eBook is to allow you to get more from your Google Ads budget, lower your cost per click (CPC), improve the quality of your traffic and increase your profits. Our Paid Search Team is passionate about PPC, testing and optimisation, with a track record of turning around underperforming accounts and seizing opportunities for growth.

They've split the audit into logical chunks, with each section comprising a series of questions to ask about your account, designing to surface areas for improvement, as well as techniques and features you're underusing.

SEARCH CAMPAIGN STRUCTURE



Campaigns should be structured around your business and campaign objectives. For example, own brand keywords should always be in their own campaign because they are expected to perform very well. Likewise, generic keywords would be in a separate campaign because they are expected to have a lower click through rate (CTR) and conversion rate.

It may be the case that your search campaigns and ad groups need to be restructured, particularly if they are not split out enough and ad text is too generic and not keyword dense.

Similarly, if the account is the structure is convoluted, this unnecessarily dilutes the data, making it more difficult to complete simple admin tasks and to spot trends which would allow you to focus on the most important and profitable terms.

Some specific questions to ask:

Are your ad groups tightly themed?

Ad groups contain keywords with varying intent, ie, it's likely that searchers are looking for different products or services and/or are at different sections of the purchase funnel.

For example, an ad group themed with keywords such as:

- ink epson printers
- cheapest epson inks
- quality epson ink
- epson picturemate ink

The completely different search intents, eg, 'cheap' and 'quality' make it impossible to get a keyword dense ad that perfectly encapsulates the theme of both of these search terms. This can impact your Quality Score.

Fix: Ad groups need to be well split out, so that ads can be highly targeted to their keywords, which will increase your Quality Score.

Similarly, an ad group with a large number of disjointed themes, including keywords such as:

- buy hp ink cartridges
- black hp ink cartridges
- amazon ink cartridges hp
- tesco hp ink cartridges
- refilling hp ink cartridges

Ad groups set up such as these mean that neither the ad copy nor the landing page can be relevant for such disparate keywords. There is also a large difference in a searcher's position in the purchase funnel between the first and last keywords in the above list. 'Buy hp ink cartridges' is quite specific and shows purchase intent, whereas 'refilling hp ink cartridges' is much more research focused.

Fix: Split out campaigns not just by intent but also position in the purchase funnel, as different call to actions work best for each. By segmenting these into their own campaign, we can accurately monitor search funnels, and whether these users go on to convert at a later time after revisiting the site. Importantly, the research campaign can be used to create an audience list, which can then be used to remarket to, and bring back the users to convert.

Do you have multiple locations in same ad group?

An example of this would be:

"no win no fee solicitors glasgow"

Fix: Keywords relating to different locations should be placed in their own ad group for each location, ideally in a purpose built location tailed campaign. People using locations in their search terms want to be reassured by the ad copy that the business has an office in their specified area. By not splitting these out, it is not possible to have location specific ad copy within the ad text, which would greatly increase click through rate for these terms.

Are brand keywords are included in non-brand campaigns?

This could be positively skewing the perceived performance of these non-brand campaigns, which makes it difficult to see where optimisation should be focused and where to apportion budget at a top level.

Fix: All brand keywords should be placed in their own dedicated brand campaign, so that their performance can be judged independently from non-brand search terms.

Is your campaign is set up as Standard Search?

Standard setting with search campaigns does not allow you to apply bid modifiers such as segmented location targeting or ad scheduling. There is also no option to apply all ad extensions such as callout. This is greatly limiting the potential for your campaign to maximise profitability and click through rate.

Fix: All campaigns should be set to 'All features' and not simply 'Standard'. This is an easily fixable error that should be rectified immediately to improve campaign efficiencies.

Is driving calls an important KPI for your business?

Consider building a call-only campaign to provide a focus for generating calls for your business. As you are charged per click to call, and each call is treated as a conversion, it can be a very cost effective way of driving more conversions.

[&]quot;no win no fee claims surrey"

[&]quot;no win no fee birmingham"

[&]quot;no win no fee manchester"

DISPLAY CAMPAIGN STRUCTURE

Have you got a remarketing campaign set up?

Remarketing campaigns are a great way of bringing visitors back to your site who haven't previously converted or even for repeat sales.

Fix: Set up audience lists for users that have visited particular sections of the site. This way you can retarget them with ad messaging specific to the products/services they have demonstrated interest in previously. You can vary the ad messaging based on how long it has been since they last visited the site and tailor remarketing bids on a number of factors, including overall engagement indicators from their previous visit, such as time on site and number of pages viewed.

You can also use a number of advanced types of audience lists, in order to generate the best return. For example:

- **Customer match:** This enables us to upload your mailing list to remarket to.
- **Similar to audiences:** This isn't strictly remarketing as these are new users, but allows you to target new users who display similar characteristics to people in your other remarketing lists and have previously converted on your site.
- **Smart lists:** A list of users that Google believes are 'ready to convert', determined by a number of factors such as engagement metrics from their previous visit.

With dynamic remarketing, you can make use of your product feed to deliver ads featuring products that visitors have previously expressed interest in. When set up correctly, these generally result in a much stronger ROI than standard remarketing campaigns.

When dynamic remarketing campaigns are set up, Google Ads automatically generates the following audience lists:

- General visitors
- Product viewers
- Shopping basket abandoners
- Past buyers

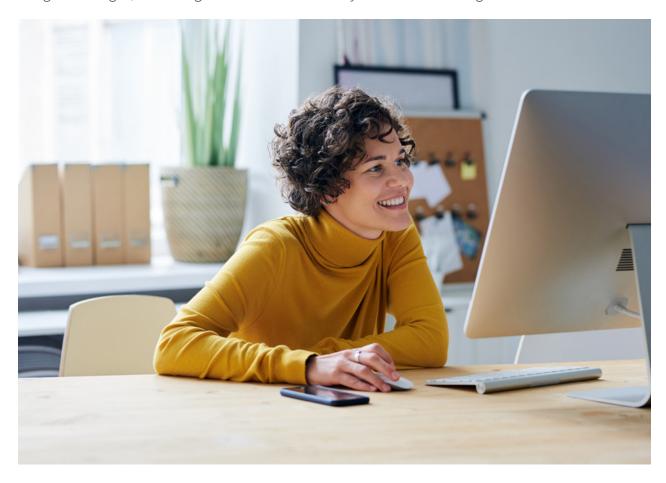
You can use these to target users differently dependent on their previous actions on the site. This allows you to set more effective bids for users at different points of the purchase cycle.

Are you targeting effectively?

While remarketing is a very effective way of reengaging potential customers who have already visited your website, there are a number of other display targeting methods we can use to attract new users to the website:

- **Keywords:** These will either solely target websites that contain or relate to keywords you add to your campaign, or also target users who have shown an interest in that subject while browsing the internet.
- **Affinity audiences:** Lists of users who have shown an interest in certain categories, such as 'Shopaholics' and 'Luxury Travellers', based on their browsing and search habits.
- **In-market audiences:** Lists of users who have recently shown interest in purchasing certain types of products.
- **Topics:** Lists of website categories, such as 'Price Comparison' and 'Health Insurance'. This enables you to show on the types of websites that are relevant to your business.
- **Placements:** Specific websites that you manually add into (or exclude from) your campaigns.

You can also use Smart Display campaigns, especially to see which audiences would be most effective to target on the Google Display Network. All you need to provide is a target cost per acquisition (CPA), a daily budget and some assets to create ads from (headlines, descriptions, images and logos) and Google Ads will automatically create ads and target users.



SHOPPING CAMPAIGNS

The Shopping Campaign set up represents one of the biggest opportunities for moving an eCommerce account forward. A well-optimised Shopping Campaign should account for around 60% of Google Ads budget.

Are you only using one campaign for all products/services?

Watch out for very basic Shopping Campaign structures, with just one campaign for all products. Make use of the priority system to create a robust structure. An ideal structure would be of the following form:

- **High priority campaign:** Used for top products or bestsellers that you want to prioritise over other stock to ensure you're always maximising visibility for these.
- **Medium priority campaign:** Follows the same structure of the Search campaigns, so that products are split out by type, to allow for more effective reporting and optimisation.
- **Low priority campaign:** Set up as a 'catch all' in case any products are not captured by the medium or high priority campaigns.

Are campaigns split out down to product category, but not down to ID level?

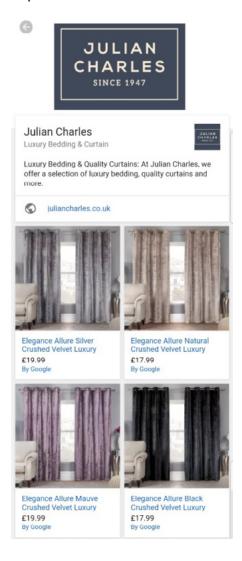
Bidding by product ID rather than at product group level allows greater control over spend and creates better optimisation opportunities.

Fix: Split out the Shopping Campaign structure and dedicate one item per ad group. This will allow you to control spend and monitor performance at a more granular level, and also refine search queries for each individual product.

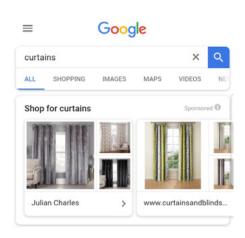
Are you making use of showcase ads?

A relatively new and lucrative feature that the account is missing out on is showcase ads. They appear as shown in the examples below for competitive generic searches, displaying the brand name and then a selection of products connected to the search. If not implemented, then this is a missed opportunity for relevant incremental volume and exposure on generics.

Expanded ad



Contracted ad



Test and improve search term performance product titles, descriptions, and categories as they are the main factors Google's algorithm takes into consideration when matching searches to products.

ADS

Do you have the optimal number of live ads per ad group?

Best practice is to create three keyword relevant ads per ad group to split-test with different calls to action, to determine work best.

Fewer than this does not allow sufficient testing, and is an indication of little emphasis being placed on ad optimisation, which is crucial for keeping campaigns fresh, and increasing CTR.

However, if the number of ads per ad group is too high, there will be too many variables to determine which is working best.

Are there mistakes in your ad copy?

Common mistakes include misspelling:

Or repetition of words within the description:

```
Baby Gifts
Get The Perfect Gift Anywhere
.co.uk
International Ordering And Fast Delivery Delivery
Options Available. Buy Online
```

These kinds of errors impact on your brand's credibility.

Are you relying too heavily on dynamic keyword insertion?

It's better to ensure that ads are naturally keyword dense after splitting out ad groups into tighter themes. This means you can write more compelling ads without the need to relying on the keyword being pulled in.

Are you taking advantage of expanded text ads?

Last <u>updated in August 2018</u>, expanded text ads give you more room to convey your message to customers, with ad length of up to 300 characters, three headlines and two descriptions. If you're not implementing this feature across your account, you could be losing ground to competitors who will be taking advantage of the increased CTR and improved Quality Scores seen from the new format.

Here's an example of an expanded text ad, taking advantage of the optional third headline and second description:

Comprehensive Insurance | Protect Yourself on a Budget | Get Your Free Quote Today

Ad www.example.com/insurance

Get affordable & trustworthy insurance. 10% discount on all online quotes. Easily compare insurance plans side-by-side in just a few seconds.

Have you added responsive search ads (RSAs) into the account?

These allow you to enter up to 15 headlines, and four descriptions for each ad; a maximum of three headlines and two descriptions will show. Google will test and run all combinations, then select the best combination using machine learnings. Not using <u>RSAs</u> means you could be missing out on more relevant searches, and additional ad testing.

Are you using appropriate ad qualifiers within ad copy?

Generic terms such as, for example, you may have 'personalised phone cases' in the account, however, if the only phone cases supported are Samsung, iPhone, HTC, and Blackberry this should be clearly mentioned in the ad text. Other phone manufacturer owners would still click on these ads – a complete waste of your budget as they would leave as soon as they realised they couldn't get a case for their device.

Have you got auto applied ad suggestions turned on?

Ad suggestions are variations of your existing test ads that Google will suggest. By default, Google sets this feature to 'Automatically apply ad suggestions after 14 days' which means that ads that have not been reviewed or could be against brand guidelines will be added into the account and set live.

Changing this to 'Don't automatically apply ad suggestions' will allow you to manually review the ads and amend or reject if needs be.

Are you using ad customisers?

Ad customisers are a powerful feature that enables greater personalisation and customisation of ads dynamically, based on real time signals. (See our <u>PPC gets personal vlogs</u> for more on personalisation).

They allow you to create personalised text which changes based on signals such as location, time of day, device and audience, without changing the base ad. This will allow the ads to be as relevant as possible, whilst improving Quality Score and CTR.

Added personalisation can see up to 150% increases in CTR, particularly when relating to delivery. This can be used to insert postcodes, towns, or counties.



Day scheduling allows you to dynamically change your ads depending on the time of the day or the day of the week. This can be used to create compelling ads, for example, ads that only show on hours when next day delivery is still available.

Audience customisers allow ad text to be personalised based on a visitor's previous interaction with the site, which optimises relevancy as it reflects their interest in your business, even if they return through a generic search query.

Mobile specific ad copy in its old format is no longer compatible with the new expanded text ads. However, it is still possible to create ads specific to mobile users by using **device ad customisers** which allows you to create a mobile-optimised ad with tailored CTAs and extensions.



AD EXTENSIONS

Are you utilising manual ad extensions?

Ad extensions are a powerful type of ad format that show extra information about your business. Some can be added manually and others are automated.

The benefits of using them are:

Improved visibility: They often appear above the search results, rather than along the sidebar. If two competing ads have the same bid and quality, the ad with greater expected impact from extensions will generally appear in a higher ad position.

Better return on investment (ROI): They can help improve CTR and can also affect the Ad Rank algorithm, which can lead to higher positions without needing to increase cost per click.

Types of manual ad extensions you can set up are:

- **Sitelinks extensions:** allow you to include additional links in your standard text ad, such as directly to popular or high-converting sections of your website.
- **Call extensions:** allow you to add phone numbers to your ad to increase engagement and let you report the call stats (see example below).



• **Location extensions:** allow you to extend your campaigns by dynamically attaching your business address to your ads, with location extensions. As well as the description lines and URL that appear in your ad text, your ad can also feature your business name, address and phone number (see example below).

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- App extensions: allows smartphone users are searching on Google to see your ad promoting your app and directly click to download it from the Google Play or iTunes App Store.
- **Callout extensions:** show valuable information to potential customers, drawing attention to important product details and benefits. Or highlight your USP.
- **Structured snippets:** a feature that allows you to list all the different products/services available (see example below).



• **Price extensions:** showcase the different products and price points, and provide an opportunity for highlighting price competitive product lines (see example below).



• **Promotion extensions:** allow you to add in any promotions or offers currently available (see example below).



Have you got automated extensions set up?

Automated extensions such as seller and consumer ratings add credibility to your ads. However, we recommend disabling other automated extensions such as dynamic sitelinks, callouts, and structured snippets to focus on manually versions – which generally outperform automated extensions.

KEYWORDS

Is your keyword list reaching its full potential?

You need to regularly update and expand upon your keyword list.

Here are some improvements to increase the reach of your campaign, and gain more traffic via exact match funnelling through specific ads and to the most relevant landing page:

- Build more keywords into new ad groups.
- Research keyword expansion using industry research tools such as Google's Keyword Planner (including competitor analysis).
- Use historical search query data from your campaign.

Are some of your keywords duplicated?

This is a very basic mistake, and it makes it very difficult to control your account with duplicates. This is because when bids are changed, the traffic is prone to just move from one keyword to another without the desired bid change effect.

Have you linked up Google Search Console to your Google Ads account?

This gives you access to the paid vs organic report available, which helps you to identify new keyword opportunities from ranking organic keywords that are not currently targeted within the current scope of paid keywords.

Have you got too many keywords set to broad match?

Less than 1% of your keywords should be broad match. This is because Google often uses broad match to appear for less relevant terms, giving you less control over your budget.

We recommend having as many exact match keywords as possible as your highest spending, this allows for tighter control of budget.

Are you utilising phrase match keywords?

Phrase match keywords can provide a vital addition to a keyword base by acting as a bridge between the broad match modified and exact keywords. As long as bids are staggered between the exact, phrase, and broad modified keywords there is no reason why phrase match can't form a vital part of your keyword strategy.

Are your keywords staggered correctly within the account?

In a correctly structured account, the highest number of keywords should be exact match keywords, then phrase, then broad match modified, with the lowest being broad, if any. Broad match modified keywords by default matches to phrase and exact match search queries. Similarly when bidding on phrase, it matches to exact. By ensuring each keywords has all the relevant match type variants built in, this will allow you to control your CPC spend and the relevancy of search queries matching.

Are you using negative keywords correctly?

If there are a low number of negative keywords in the account, consider developing the negative keyword list further using search query reports to gain greater control over relevancy and improve CTR.

Consider ad group level negatives to prevent cross-matching between ad groups, so that traffic always comes through the most relevant ad group.



CLICK THROUGH RATE (CTR)

How could you improve your CTR?

This can be improved in a number of ways, most notably the optimisation and testing of new ads. This should be based around a new concise ad group structure which would enable keyword and landing page relevant ad text, improving Quality Score and ad position.

COST PER CLICK (CPC)

How could you bring down your CPC?

A high CPC could be partly down to the level of competition in your industry but may also highlight a low level of Quality Score across the account. Optimisation of the ad text and the keyword strategy will help reduce the relative CPC significantly.

Another issue could be that bidding is being conducted at ad group rather than keyword level. This is an ineffective strategy, and represents a huge opportunity to take the account to the next level. Performance differs massively by keyword, even in the same ad group. Optimising by keyword will allow us to ensure that you are placing more emphasis on the exact keywords, which will increase your control over the accounts.

Have you set up enhanced CPC (ECPC)?

This can allow Google to use machine learning to bid higher or lower per auction based on how likely the user will convert. We would only recommend this on campaigns with a high volume of conversions so that there is sufficient data for Google to dynamically optimise.

POSITIONING

Are you adjusting your bids for your ads to appear in the optimum position?

The optimisation outlined to help improve Quality Score will also have positive effects on the average position, leading to a better CTR and ultimately improving Quality Score further.

Use conversion data to determine the best converting position for each keyword. The bids can then be optimised to appear in this optimum position.

BID MODIFIERS

Are you setting bid adjustments correctly?

Sometimes a click is worth more to you if it comes from a mobile device, at a certain time of the day, new vs returning visitors, or from specific locations. By setting bid adjustments, you can increase or decrease your bids to gain more control over when and where your ad is shown. Bid modifiers stack to create highly targeted bids in real time.

Perform analysis on each bid adjustment to make sure it is at the optimum level. Also add extra bid adjustments to areas where it will benefit the account.

Have you set up day parting bid adjustments?

Try setting up progressive bid adjustments on exceptionally good or poor performing days of the week and hours of each day to increase overall performance of the account. This analysis should be performed on each campaign.

The example treemap below shows the potential for optimisation of the bid adjustments in the account for UK only campaigns. For example, you should pull back the bid adjustment on Monday 12:00-16:00, and Wednesday 12:00-16:00. Conversely, you should apply positive bid adjustments on Monday 08:00-12.00, and Tuesday 08:00-12.00.



Have you set up device bid adjustments?

Set up progressive bid adjustments for devices depending on the deviation of performance from computer, mobile and tablet traffic. Also consider assist value, and lead quality per device in these calculations. These bid adjustments will need regular reviewing and updating.

Have you set up location modifiers?

If you know that locations perform differently in terms of CPCs, CTRs, conversion rates and ROI, you should review each campaign and set up the appropriate location bid modifiers.

Do you have search remarketing bid modifiers set up?

Search remarketing using Remarketing Lists for Search Ads (RLSAs) allows you to bid separately for people who have previously visited your site. Analysing new vs returning reports in Google Analytics will enable you to set bid adjustments for returning customers based on how their conversion rates differ from new visitors. Search remarketing also allows you to expand profitably. As conversion rates tend to be higher for returning visitors, you can build in more generic terms that will only show to returning customers. The lower conversion rates inherent in generic terms are offset by the higher conversion rates for returning customers.

Are you using 'demographics for search'?

This feature gives you the opportunity to bid separately for different ages and genders, and further increase efficiency for the account. Set this up and review regularly.

In the example table below, ages 18-24 should be pulled back, and 35-44 should be pushed.

Age Range	ROI
18 – 24	2.15
25 – 34	3.64
35 – 44	5.24
45 – 54	4.77
55 – 64	3.13
65 or more	3.56
Unknown	3.77

LANDING PAGES

Are your landing pages as relevant as they could be?

Make sure that the most appropriate ad group, and keyword relevant destination URL is being used. Having a highly relevant landing page will not only improve your conversion rate but will have a positive effect on Quality Score.

Use your landing page Quality Score factor to identify poor quality landing pages which need improvement, or to be changed to a pre-existing more relevant landing page.

CONVERSION TRACKING

Have you enabled conversion tracking correctly?

This is fundamental to measuring any campaign performance - without this you are effectively spending money in the dark.

With further understanding on the value each conversion has and CPA targets, you can optimise the account to improve conversion rate and overall ROI.

Do you have a number of CPA keywords that are much higher than average?

This indicates poor bid management. These tend to be keywords which don't spend much on a day to day basis, but over time are spending significant amounts without converting. Analyse multiple date ranges when conducting bid optimisation to ensure that all keywords are operating efficiently, and not just the top spenders.

ATTRIBUTION

Are you using last click attribution?

Google Ads as standard uses the last interaction attribution model which assigns 100% of the conversion value to the last clicked keyword. However, this can give a skewed picture of the value of different keywords in the path to conversion, stopping you from optimising accordingly. Identified following keywords that have high assisting conversion value and low last click conversion rate.

Analyse different attribution models to determine which one leads to the maximum bottom line conversions when used to optimise against. We often recommend the data driven attribution model.

ANALYTICS LINKING

Is your Google Ads account linked to the correct Google Analytics property?

Linking a Google Analytics property to your Google Ads account can help you analyse customer activity on your website. This information can shed light on how much of your website traffic or sales comes from Google Ads, and help you improve your ads and website.

After linking Google Analytics and Google Ads, you can do the following:

- Import Google Analytics goals and transactions into Google Ads as conversions.
- View Google Analytics site engagement data in Google Ads.
- Create remarketing lists in Analytics to use in Google Ads for targeting specific audiences
- Automatically view your Google Ads click and cost data alongside your Analytics site engagement data.

WEBSITE CALL CONVERSIONS

Are you using website call conversions?

This dynamically inserts a Google forwarding number resembling a regular local phone number on your website. This measures the calls made by these people viewing your site who have come through a PPC ad.

Any resulting calls will be tracked as call conversions in Google Ads. You can then attribute the call conversion and conversion value back to the keyword and ad that drove the customer. This provides you with further data to analyse and optimise your Google Ads campaigns.

QUALITY SCORE

How can you improve your Quality Score?

There are several areas you can optimise in your account to aid Quality Score and improve performance:

- Your keyword's past CTR: How often that keyword led to clicks on your ad.
- Your display URL's past CTR: How often you received clicks with your display URL.
- Your account history: The overall CTR of all the ads and keywords in your account.
- The quality of your landing page: How relevant, transparent, and easy-to-navigate your page is.
- Your keyword/ad relevance: How relevant your keyword is to your ads.
- Your keyword/search relevance: How relevant your keyword is to what a customer searches for.
- **Geographic performance:** How successful your account has been in the regions you're targeting.
- Your ad's performance on a site: How well your ad's been doing on this and similar sites (if you're targeting the Display Network).
- Your targeted devices: How well your ads have been performing on different types of devices, like desktops/laptops, mobile devices, and tablets you get different Quality Scores for different types of devices.

BUDGET

Are you making the most of your budget?

If your account is losing impression share (budget), it means that your campaigns are not reaching their full potential in terms of exposure. Bid management and keyword strategy optimisation would increase exposure as well as having numerous other benefits across the account.

By pulling back bids when a campaign is restricted by budget, you can actually bring in more clicks. This is because if the cost is static, then a reduction in the ratio of cost-per-click naturally means that clicks will be higher.

You should review the account budget as a part of our ongoing workflow and strategy.

FINAL THOUGHTS

The improvements you make to your Google Ad account as a result of a thorough audit will boost your Quality Score, UX and ultimate ROI. If you're willing to put in the work, you'll reap the rewards.



GET IN TOUCH WITH US TODAY

ABOUT US

Located in North West England, Click Consult is a multi award-winning search marketing agency with a focus on organic (SEO) and paid search (PPC), with over 70 professionals employed and with a portfolio of over 60 clients from across the UK, Europe, Americas and Australia.

Click was named Search Agency of the Year 2018, adding to its long list of other awards and accolades, and also ranks within both RAR's and Econsultancy's 'Top 100 Digital Agencies', and Prolific North's 'Top 50 Digital Agencies'.

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OUR ACCREDITATIONS









OUR AWARDS













OUR TECHNOLOGIES