

PAID SEARCH AD COPY IN 2021

CHEAT SHEET

Businesses are looking to expand online at a greater rate than ever before. 2020 brought with it huge challenges especially for retail but one area that did very well was eCommerce. We have spent the last few months fine tuning a number of projects and strategies to make sure our clients are geared up towards a further shift towards this area of marketing.

We know that it is important that your brand is found online organically and that's why we spend a lot of time working with SEO projects. One area we can't ignore however is paid search. If you want to run adverts and bid for customers that are relevant to your goals and which is highly likely to convert then you have to write good ad copy and optimise your ads to reach their potential.

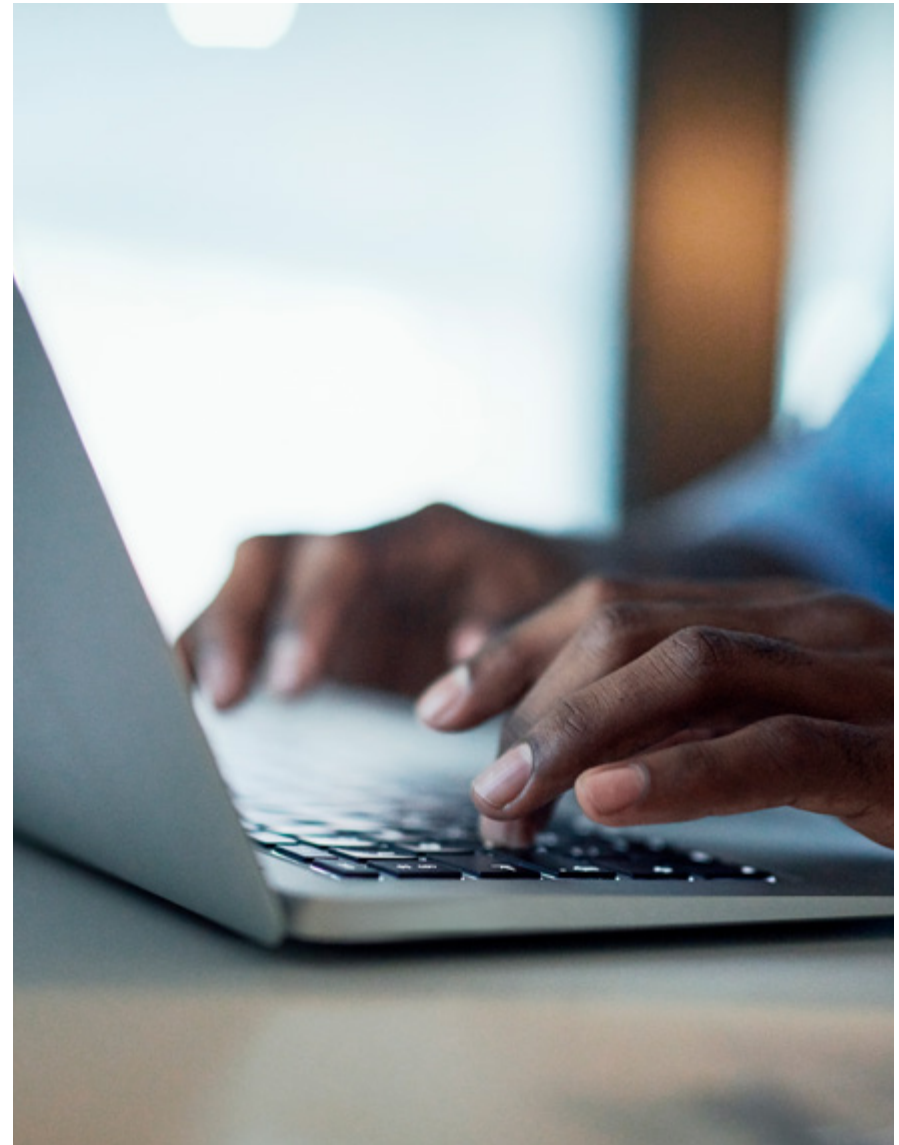
We've put together this cheat sheet to give you the best start to this project.

Let's begin...



WRITING THE COPY

The copy proportion of a paid search text ad is, at its most basic, limited to two sections (though we've added a couple of extra to consider near the end) – the headline and the description, both of which have a more restrictive character limit than their organic search equivalent. One thing that I'd recommend before you start is that you need to make sure that the content and the ad fits a need. When a user sees your ad they don't think 'wow, that's great, let's buy from them', they decide to buy because you actually offer something they are looking for.



HEADINGS

Your ad heading copy, as with that highlighted above, can be written in a number of ways, but should always consider what you want to achieve and whether that is compatible with the keywords for which you are competing.

For example, if you are looking at placing an ad for your business which is pitching fairly low in the conversion funnel – ie at a point where the consumer is settled on the item or service they wish to buy, but not yet from where to buy it – your heading needs to cater to that level.

Had I searched for ‘cheap iPhones’ or ‘iPhone deals’, the above heading has the benefit that it would retain relevancy for the purchase level search terms.

In the same regard, for a generic ad for a holiday firm, the heading should highlight a unique selling point (USP). As many holiday firms will compete for most of the same keywords, it is important that this copy, the most eye catching section, offers something unique.

Here we can see a number of companies positioning themselves with a USP – with the use of ‘deals’, ‘bargain’, ‘exclusive’ and ‘sale’ featuring in ads for the rather generic search term ‘holidays’.

Even Icelolly Holidays relies on the hot weather implications of their company name to make an impact, while ‘find your next holiday’ caters to a more aspirational, or

desire variety of search (someone looking wistfully at holiday packages). Remember:

1. Your heading is the most visible part of the ad, and must catch the eye
2. Your heading must set you apart from other brands.

In this regard (especially for searches lower in the conversion funnel), the inclusion of sale terms is a fantastic device.

It is often recommended that any registered or trademarked items or services are marked as such – as the use of special symbols (where appropriate, most of us remember Google’s early days, and wouldn’t wish to return) can be eye-catching.

DESCRIPTIONS

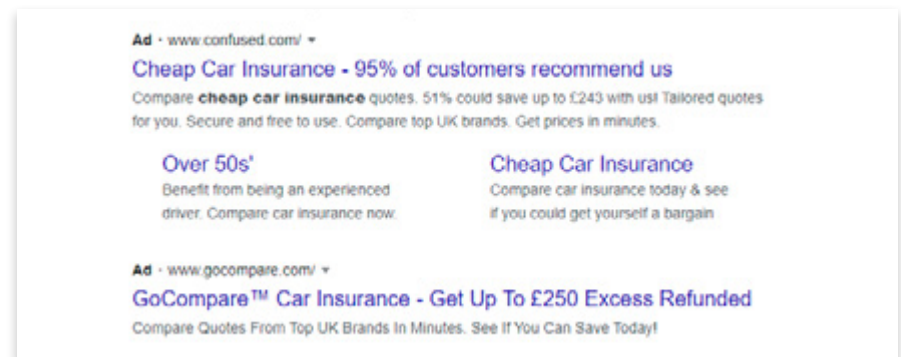
Having snared the consumer with a catchy heading, the description section of your ad offers slightly more freedom in terms of characters, but the brief remains mostly the same as with the heading, except that rather than attract the description seeks to engage. In AdWords, the character limit is spread over two lines – description line 1 and 2.

Anyone that has taken a creative writing class will be familiar with the importance placed on title and opening line – but as a metaphor for ad copy, those who have not need only place themselves in the shoes of someone looking to purchase a new book. While the heading, like the title of a novel, seeks to draw the reader in, the description, like the opening line, needs to create the desire to see more.

BACK UP YOUR CONTENT WITH STATS

If you want to write eye catching ads then there is nothing better than adding in a stat to back up your content. An excellent way to do this is by including numbers or statistics in your ads, preferably in the headlines.

If you search for car insurance, a very competitive term there is always going to be a fight for ad space. When I conducted the search myself I was surprised to find that the top two results both used numbers in their headlines.



As you can see from the above the top ad uses the stat relating to customer satisfaction and therefore highlighting their reputation. The second one uses the hook of a refund to draw you in. Both are enticing offers and the choice comes down to the user if they want to be drawn in by a saving or reputation. This is why big brands run so many ads and change their copy.

5 TIPS TO IMPLEMENT TODAY

1. **Think like your consumer** – what are they looking for? What is most important to them in their search at each stage of the conversion funnel and how can you cater to it?
2. **Be concise** – enough said.
3. **Employ capitalisation(sparingly) and punctuation to good effect** – caps and exclamation marks are generally associated, at a base psychological level, with warning and importance, they naturally draw the eye.
4. **Make the most of your USP and offers** – as the old saying goes: ‘don’t hide your light under a bushel’, by which the historic, virtually nonsensical metaphor essentially means ‘if you’ve got it, flaunt it’. If you’re cheaper than everyone else then say so, if you’ve a sale on then make it known.
5. **Use imperatives and CTA’s** – as with the first lines quoted above, you want to inspire action in the consumer, compel them to do what you want them to do, let them know what a devastatingly short time they have to act, and that they have to act now!



TWO OTHER AREAS WHERE COPY CAN MATTER

URL – this does not necessarily have to be the URL of the page they will eventually land on (though it does have to have the same domain name), but look back through the examples and you will see a lot of compact URL's featuring either the searched keyword, 'offers', 'sale' or 'clearance'. A short, descriptive URL can be reassuring to the consumer that they are choosing the right link.

Landing page copy – though not a part of the ad itself, the landing page copy is a part of the ad experience and could make the difference between a positive or negative consumer interaction with your brand. Don't let your ad down with irrelevant or sloppy copy at their destination.

Many advertisers overlook the potential impact that a display URL can have on the success of their ads. Newcomers to PPC may not even realise that the display URL (the URL that appears in their ads) and the destination URL (the actual URL of the page to which visitors are directed upon clicking an ad) can be different.

The team over at WordStream say: "The display URL can serve two purposes – it can be something more interesting and relevant to the copy of your ads, and it can (and should) contain your top keywords. Even if your destination URL doesn't contain the keywords you're bidding on, your ads can still appear in search results if you include them in your display URL."

KEYWORD STRATEGY

Choosing your keywords might just be the most important consideration to make when it comes to creating a successful ad campaign. If you are looking to make impressions that convert into sales you have to make sure that you're bringing the correct audience to your page. If a user makes a general internet search for a product that you specialise in yet you don't feature as an ad or in SERPs you are missing out. Cover your bases and perform thorough research.

Good keyword research will reveal gaps in the market and highlight areas your competitors are not competing in, or competing only marginally. If your brand is new to a marketplace, the chances are that competitors will be well established for some of the prize keywords, whereas industry specific long tail gaps might not be covered. A good strategy means you can exploit these gaps to get ahead with your ads. As you can see from the above chart, getting the balance right is key if you are to identify a good keyword strategy. The words that form the strategy will be based on internet searches, your content and the competition for keywords in your industry.

HIGHLIGHT THE BENEFITS

When it comes to writing the body of your ad, don't waste time by stating how amazing your brand is. Instead, get visitors to take action by telling them how your brand or your product will improve their lives.

Your ad needs to be personal (use "you") and must be able to demonstrate how your service can benefit the visitor. Good ads can use many trigger points and if we again take the example of car insurance you could include the following things:

- Say how much the visitor will save (pricing)
- Say how a visitor can cut costs without cutting coverage (useful)
- Informing that the plan works anytime, anywhere (convenience)



REMEMBER THE AD FORMATS

The best display advertising strategies utilise a combination of different ad types. Using several formats and sizes increases the reach and potential frequency of your ads being seen by your target audience.

Most campaigns will have a combination of standard text ads, image and rich media banner ads and video ads. Each type is available in various shapes and sizes and a combination of each is required to gain optimum performance.

There are several new or non-standard display advertising formats that you can also incorporate into your campaigns:



Text ads

Display text ads are built using lines of advertising text; often the same format as paid search ads shown on search engine results pages. You can tailor your messages with dynamic remarketing and increase click-through-rates using dynamic keyword insertion.

Image ads

Image ads can be used to capture people's attention as they browse websites, enticing them to your site using a combination of graphics and text. The different networks contain thousands of sites and apps on which image ads can be displayed. Image ads can be static or contain moving elements to highlight your message.

Rich media

A rich media ad contains images or video and involves some kind of user interaction. The initial load of a rich media ad is 40K or more. While text ads sell with words and display ads sell with pictures, rich media ads offer more ways to involve an audience with an ad. The ad can expand, float, peel down, etc. And you can access aggregated metrics on your audience's behaviour, including number of expansions, multiple exits and video completions.

Video ads

Video ads can be placed across the web, but YouTube is the most popular platform. Unlike with TV, your video ads don't have to be short; you can take as long as you need to tell a story – just keep it engaging.



Dynamic remarketing ads

Are the most personalised ads showing users the exact products users have been viewing during their visit to your site. Despite the requirement to run a merchant centre, this type of ad can also be utilised by certain lead generation business sectors.

Google lightbox ads

Lightbox Ad is a rich media display ad format that brings a fullscreen creative to engage users with your brand's story. The ad can contain high definition content including YouTube videos, games or a catalogue shopping experience. When a user engages with the banner the ad expands taking a dominant position in the forefront creating a dimming effect on the page underneath which gives great opportunity for brand exposure. This format is often best for strengthening brand-to-consumer relationships and tell your brand's story by letting the consumers engage with your ad content.

TrueView ads

With TrueView you can advertise your products and services with video content on YouTube. Get your ads in front of hundreds of millions of viewers paying only when users find your content interesting and view your video.

Gmail sponsored promotions

Gmail Sponsored Promotion (GSP) is a standalone ad format that appears in a user's personal Gmail account in the promotions tab and looks like a regular email message. Once a user clicks on the teaser message, the ad expands showing full creative. The ad can feature products, an image creative or a html ad that can contain multiple links or contact forms for direct engagement.

By using keywords to contextually target the ads to the content of users' inbox facilitates high ad relevance. GSPs are best for top of the funnel brand awareness as well as direct lead generation with in-ad contact forms.

Native ads

Native display advertising uses ads that automatically adjust themselves to the webpage they appear on, matching the format and function of the site. Native ads look and behave as if they were a part of the site they appear on. Yahoo's research into display ad performance has proven that native ads generate 3.6 times higher uplift in brand searches than regular display ads and 3.9 times greater uplift in the website view-through rate.

CHOOSE YOUR TARGETING METHOD

There are a number of display targeting methods to make sure your display campaigns produce maximum returns for the underlying budget. Here are the most common:

Remarketing

Remarketing (also known as re-targeting) allows you to get your ad in front of people who've already shown an interest in your business and should be a staple for many display advertising strategies.

When someone visits your site, a cookie is downloaded onto their browser which allows us to build an audience list based on their interaction with your site or YouTube channel. We can then show them remarketing ads across the web.

This extra layer of relevancy allows you to recapture your previously engaged audience to pitch your product, service or brand. Find out how popular remarketing segmentation options and other remarketing platforms can be used to re-engage your target audience.

Placement targeting

Once the data starts rolling in from contextual targeting, you can identify the highest-performing website placements and set specific bids for these, to maximise your return on investment.

Keyword contextual

Often used as the main targeting method for an advertiser's first step into display advertising. By targeting groups of keywords, it is possible to match your ads up to relevant websites that contain your keywords within their content.

In-market audiences

Reach users who want your product or service in more places across the web. Google can determine that someone is 'in-market' for your product or service by the related ads they have clicked, related clicks that led to conversions and related sites and pages recently viewed.

Affinity audiences

Reach users who have shown an interest in an area that relates to your product or service. Based on previous internet activity, Google will build a profile of your users' interests; Google Analytics then allows us to target your ads to these users across the Google Display Network.

Topics

The 'topics' targeting method allows ads to be shown on a group of sites that Google has categorised as related to a set topic. Topics are based on the content of the site or webpage your ad appears on.

Layered targeting

Each of the above targeting methods can be used independently or in conjunction with another. This allows campaigns to be created with a huge reach or micro-targeted to a niche audience, and everything in between.

Demographics

Display advertising allows you to bid higher or lower for users depending on their age or gender. The strong advantage of the above targeting methods is the ability to combine them whichever way you please to create micro-targeted campaigns. For example, if market research indicated that males aged 35 – 44 are your most valuable audience, you could bid higher for this specific demographic.

Or, if you found that no conversions were being driven from the 18 – 24 age range then you may choose to exclude this audience from your campaign entirely.

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PART OF CEUTA GROUP

ABOUT US

Click Consult is a multi award-winning search and digital marketing agency with two decades of experience. Part of global consumer brand business Ceuta Group, we have a team of 70-plus specialists and a portfolio of more than 60 clients worldwide.

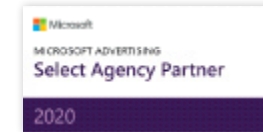
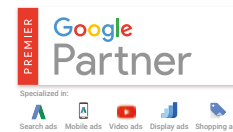
Click was named both SEO Agency of the Year and Organic Search (SEO) Team of the Year 2020; ranks within Econsultancy's 'Top 100 Digital Agencies', and Prolific North's 'Top 50 Digital Agencies'. We're also a Google Premier Partner, and a Microsoft Advertising Select Agency Partner.

We're here to help - whether you're looking to hire an agency to undertake technical and creative work behind the scenes until the present situation is clear, or you just need some free advice. You can get in touch using hello@click.co.uk.

Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#), or to find out what Click Consult can do for you, call:

0845 205 0292

OUR ACCREDITATIONS



OUR AWARDS



SEO Agency of the Year 2020



Organic Search (SEO) Team of the Year 2020



SEO Agency of the Year 2019



Search Agency of the Year 2018

OUR TECHNOLOGIES

monitor **TRAX** rank **TRAX** feed **TRAX** link **TRAX** pro **TRAX** page **TRAX**

