

GETTING TO GRIPS WITH AD FORMATS

CHEAT SHEET

We all know the significance that paid search PPC has had on businesses looking to boost the performance of their search marketing and the rewards that can be gained by getting your strategy right. One thing we often hear about however is that many are confused by ad formats and the type of posts that they should be generating and pushing.

Google doesn't help matters to this end as ad formats are often changed, updated or rebranded and in the last few weeks this has been no different. In this post we are going to look at the ad formats that you should be using, the changes that Google has introduced and the new ad formats that could help elevate your engagement, performance and ROI.

Let's begin...



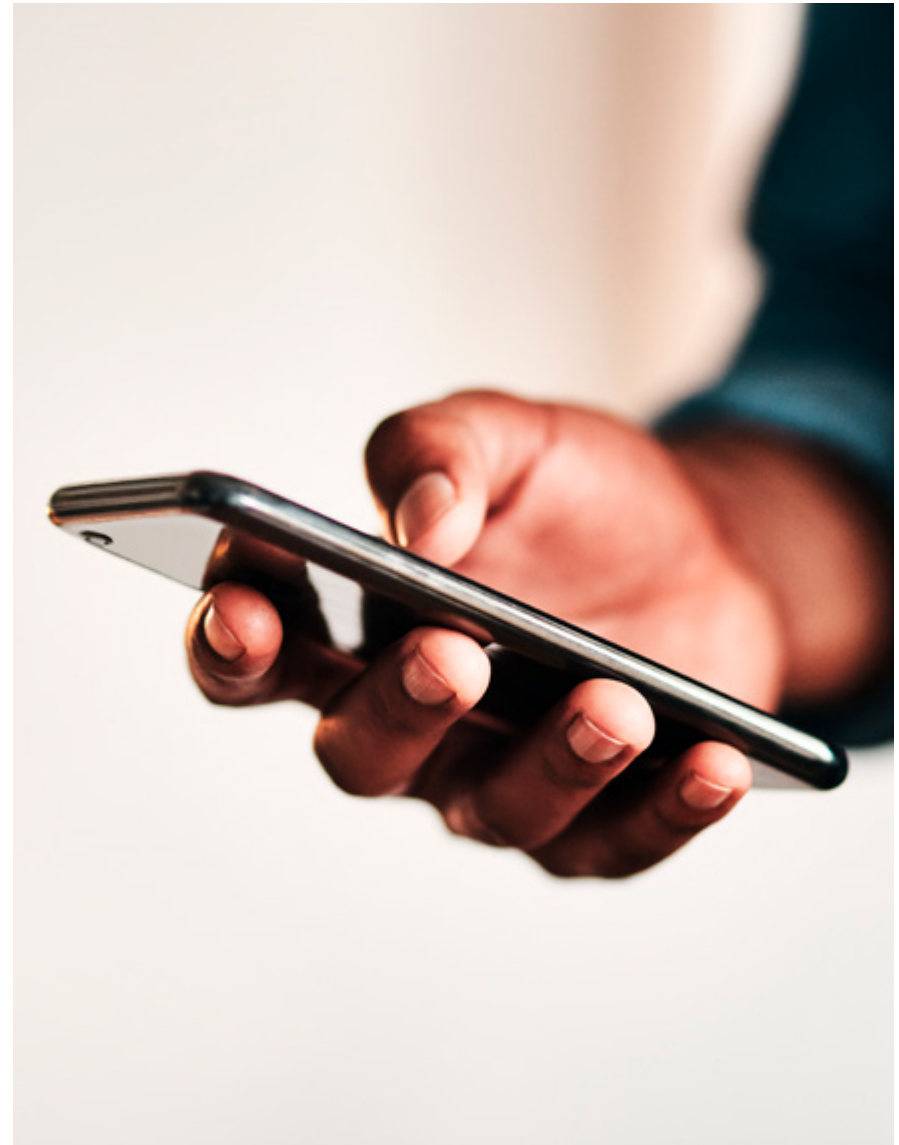
WHAT ARE AD FORMATS?

Ad formats are the varieties of paid adverts you can build, write and display to your audience or to a new audience based on a number of factors working behind the scenes. Businesses will utilise different strategies and ad formats depending on a number of factors including the platform they are sharing the ad on, the target audience and the type of product or service they are offering.

Google themselves say that: “Each ad format has its own benefits, whether it’s the ease and affordability of running a text ad or the colourful storytelling that comes with video. You can run multiple kinds of ads from the same Google Ads account and, in some cases, from the same campaign.”

Google now breaks down its ad formats into 8 clear categories all of which are vital to good paid search:

- **Search:** Text ads on search results
- **Display:** Image ads on websites
- **Video:** Video ads on YouTube
- **Shopping:** Product listings on Google
- **Discovery:** Advertise on online feeds.
- **App:** Promote your app on many channels
- **Local:** Promote your locations on many channels
- **Smart:** Automate your campaigns



BENEFITS OF PAID SEARCH

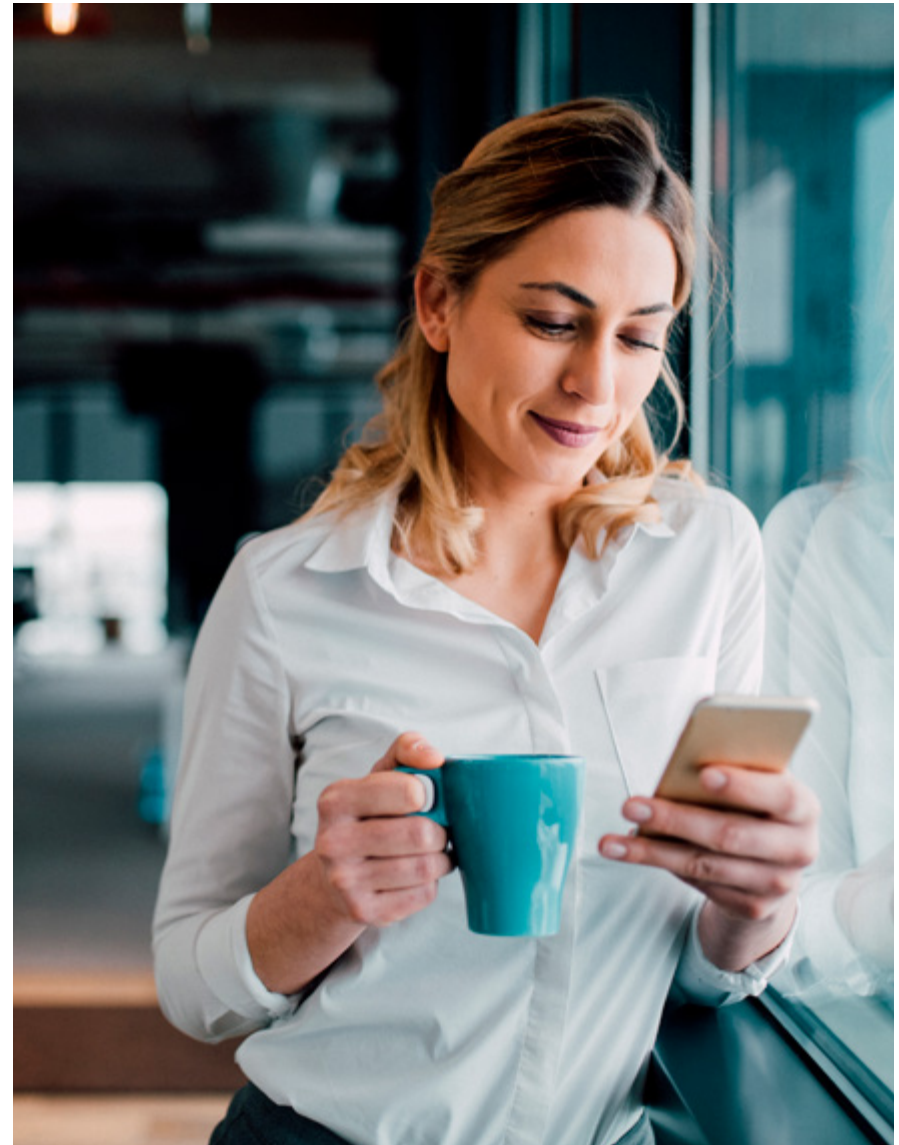
There are many benefits to adding paid search (PPC) into your marketing strategy. Below are the most common:

- Has an almost instant impact
- Can give you first page exposure on major search engines
- Can send immediate and consistent traffic to your website
- Allows campaigns to be tested and ads to be accurately targeted
- Can be optimised to drive leads or transactions to your site
- Gives your brand large reach and exposure
- Ensures your ads match relevant search queries
- Allows for accurate tracking

In addition, the PPC model allows full control of how much you spend on each campaign; you will never pay more than what you think each click, lead or sale is worth to your business.

However, the paid search landscape is competitive and in order to maximise your pay-per-click success, it is imperative to utilise data analysis tools, leading technologies, innovative thinking and paid search best practices.

Paid search drives relevant and targeted traffic to your website by showing ads for your business on search engine results pages (SERPs) when users search for related keywords. The pricing model means you only pay a fee each time someone clicks on your ad and visits your site (pay-per-click/PPC).



TYPES OF AD FORMAT

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.

Shopping ads

There are two categories here:

Product Shopping ads - Shopping ads show users a photo of your product, a title, price, shop name and more details about your product.

Showcase Shopping ads - An image and description that expands when clicked to show several related products and information about the store. It is worth noting that these ads are only available in a limited number of countries but more variations are rolling out.

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.

Call-only ads

You can now drive phone calls to your business with ads that include your phone number. People can click these ads and then call your business directly. These ads will only appear on devices that can make phone calls, and any field in these ads can be hidden to fit on smaller screens.

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 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 of 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.

Gmail sponsored promotions

Gmail Sponsored Promotion (GSP) is a standalone ad format that appears in user's personal Gmail account in promotions tab and looks like a regular email message. Once 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.

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.

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.



NEW AD FORMATS

At the start of June 2021, Google announced that they had once again rolled the dice and were going to push out another round of ad formats that they believed would offer the best possible experience, optimisation and return for those choosing PPC as part of their digital marketing strategy. Here are the new options that the search giant rolled out...

Hotel Ads

Hotel ads appear when a traveler searches for a hotel on Search or Maps. These ads appear in a hotel booking module that can show photos of the hotel, amenities, prices, and a link to book the hotel. Google is launching three new products to help our partners capture pent up travel demand.

Hotel booking extensions amplify advertiser's search campaigns and help expand the reach of these campaigns. This is now in an open beta for advertisers globally.

Local campaigns

Local campaigns are designed to help businesses provide their potential customers the information that they need to decide when and how to visit their stores and also make it easy for advertisers to promote their stores in the Google Search Network, Maps, YouTube, and the Google Display Network. Google is launching three new formats for local campaigns.



Local inventory ads

Pickup later is coming to local inventory ads. Local inventory ads feature allows advertisers to showcase their products and store information to nearby shoppers searching with Google. When shoppers click an ad or free listing that shows a local product, they arrive on a Google-hosted page for that retailer's store, called the local storefront. Google is expanding store pickup options by adding a "pickup later" option to local inventory ads. This is now in an open beta for advertisers in the US.

Customer match

Customer Match lets advertisers use their first-party online and offline data to reach and re-engage with customers across Search, the Shopping tab, Gmail and YouTube. Google said that using information that customers have willingly shared with the advertiser, Customer Match will show ads to those customers and other customers like them. This is now generally available to all advertisers globally.

Product feeds

Product feeds link to Google Merchant Center, enabling advertisers to leverage their product catalogues to create more dynamic ads. Product feeds pull product information and imagery from an advertising retailer's Google Merchant Center account and display this info as part of an ad campaign. This is now generally available for Video Action Campaigns advertisers globally. This is also now in an open beta for Discovery Ads advertisers globally.

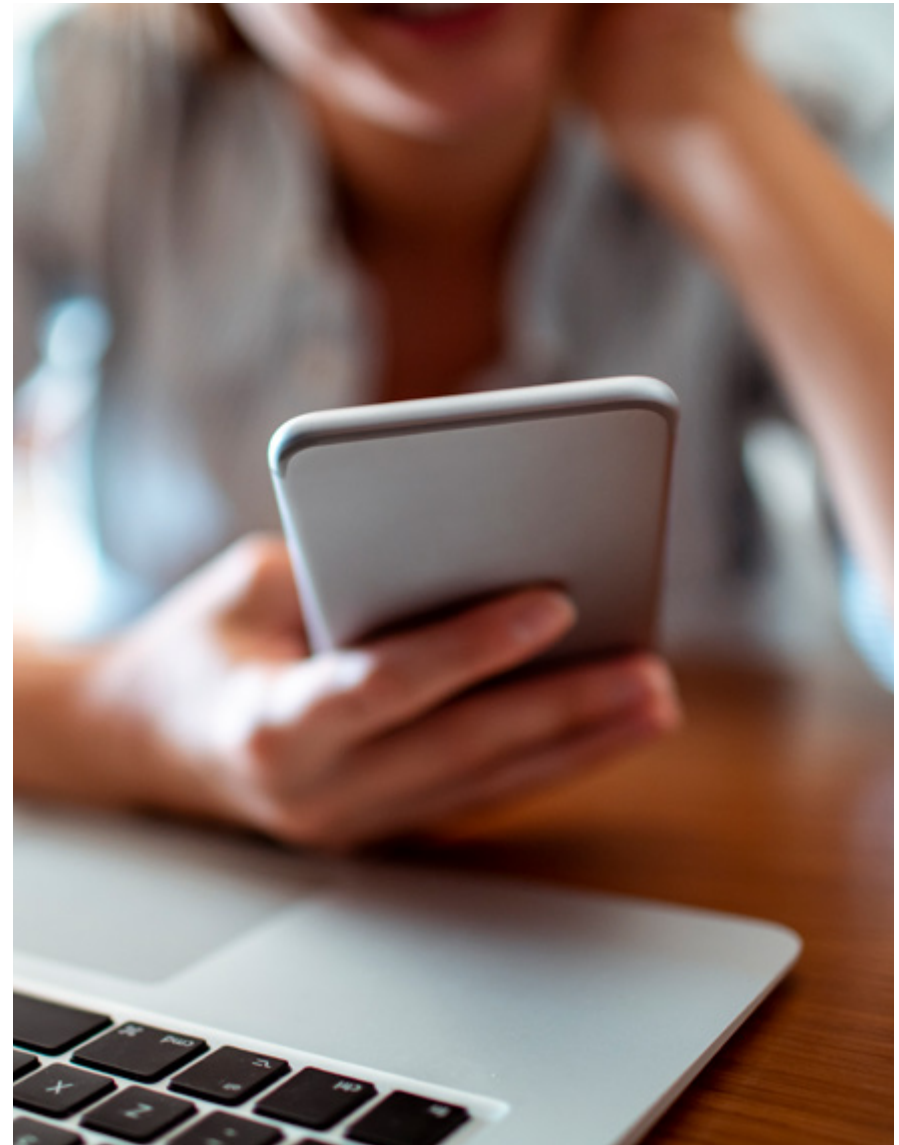
tROAS - Target Return on Ad Spend

tROAS is a value-based, automated bidding strategy that stands for Target Return on Ad Spend. This Google Ads Smart Bidding strategy helps advertisers get more conversion value or revenue at the target return on ad spend (ROAS) they set. Bids are automatically optimized at auction-time, allowing advertisers to tailor bids for each auction. This is now generally available for Video Action Campaigns advertisers globally. And is now in an open beta for Discovery Ads advertisers globally.

FINAL THOUGHTS

We all know about how fast the search marketing industry changes and the developments Google makes to their offering. We also know that users are becoming more fluid in their online habits and may use several different platforms, social media channels and search engines in order to find a product or service. With this in mind those running your businesses PPC need to do so with a fluid approach to paid search strategy.

Evolution is vital and your businesses must move with the times and adapt to changes in the PPC sphere or risk losing ground to your competitors.



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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.

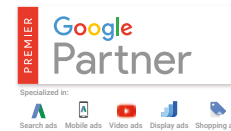
Click was named both SEO Agency of the Year and Organic Search (SEO) Team of the Year 2020; ranks within Econsultancy's 'Top 100 Digital Agencies', and Prolific North's 'Top 50 Digital Agencies'. We're also a Google Premier Partner, and a Microsoft Advertising Select Agency Partner.

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.

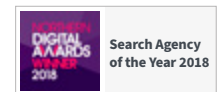
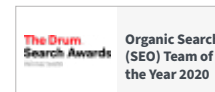
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