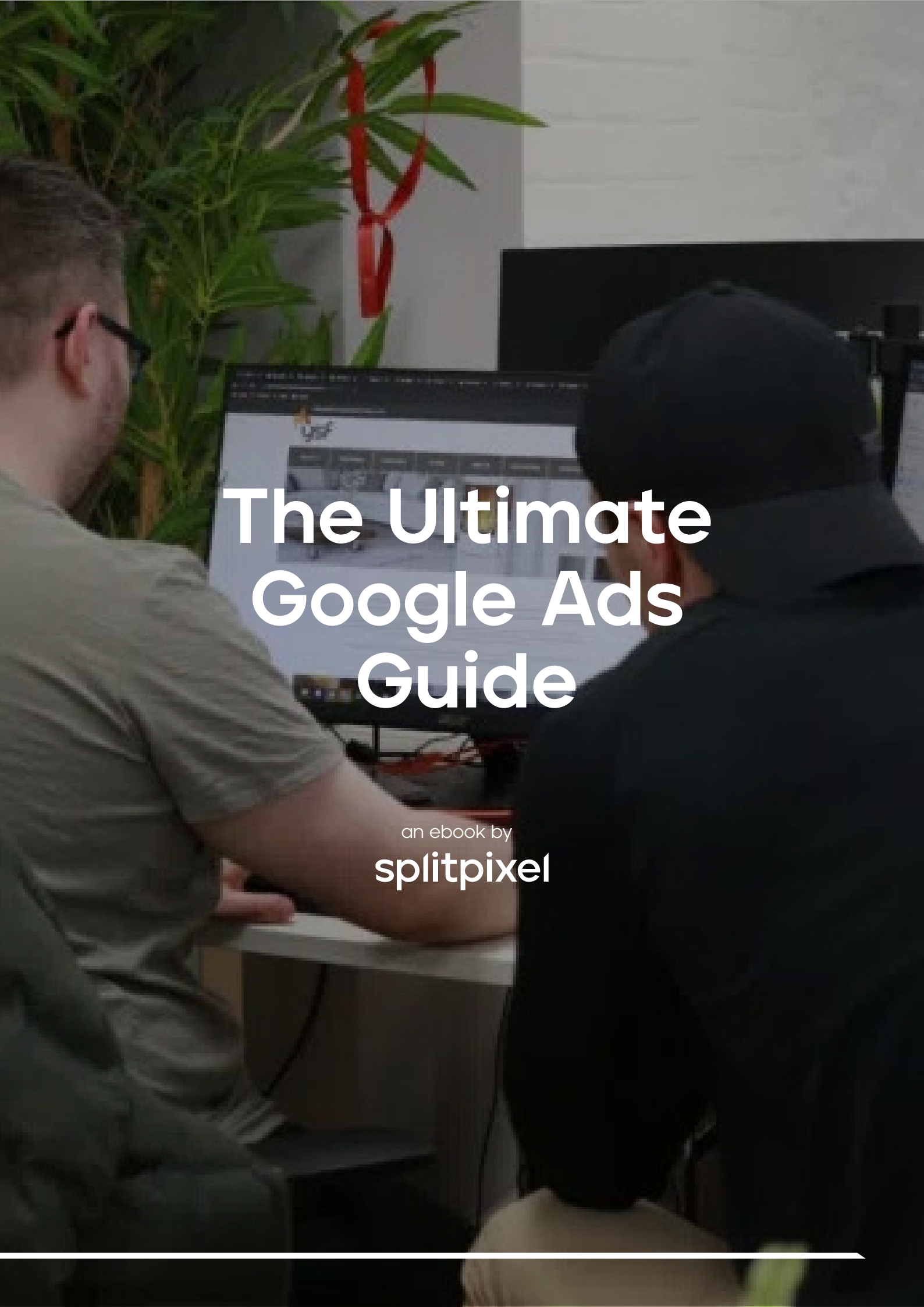


The background image shows two people from behind, looking at a computer monitor. The person on the left is wearing glasses and a grey t-shirt. The person on the right is wearing a dark cap and a dark shirt. The monitor displays a website with a grid of images. A large green plant with red ribbons is visible in the background. The text 'The Ultimate Google Ads Guide' is overlaid in large white letters.

The Ultimate Google Ads Guide

an ebook by
splitpixel

Google Ads can be a difficult platform to master, from effective conversion tracking, to campaign structures and bid strategies. We have clients of all different shapes and sizes, each year asking us on the best strategies to help drive the most relevant users to the right pages on their website.

We've put all our thoughts and experiences into this one guide, that will hopefully help drive your organisation to the best results.

Google Ads Optimisation Checklist and Morning Checks Sheet

The QR code opposite is the Splitpixel morning checks and optimisation checklist we use for each one of our clients. It allows us to pace our clients spend to a monthly budget using excel formulas. All it requires is for the advertiser to update the 'spent to date' metric in column G and column H, with the actual spend in Google Ads. This will inform you of how much your business is expected to spend, and how much of your budget you can spend per day before the end of the month.

The sheet also contains an optimisation checklist, so you can stay on top of monthly tasks, and prioritise weak areas of your account. A full breakdown of each optimisation task can be found in chapter 7.

We hope you enjoy the guide. If you have any questions, email us at hello@splitpixel.co.uk and we'll reply as quickly as possible.

[Download now](#)



FREE!

A tilted view of an Excel spreadsheet. The left column shows row numbers 4 through 30. The spreadsheet contains several sections: a header section with 'Days Gone (This Month)', 'Days Remaining (This Month)', and 'Days This Month'; a section for 'Campaign Name' with the value 'YOUR NAME' and 'Monthly Budget' with the value '£1,000.00'; a section for 'When did you start PPC ads?'; a section for 'Important Client Context'; and a section for 'Action' with sub-sections for 'This month = Yes/No?', 'Suggested Frequency', 'Last Completed', and 'Additional Notes?'. There is also a 'Search Query' field at the bottom right.

Contents

Introduction to Google Ads	5
1 Campaign Structures	6
Campaigns, Ad Groups, Keywords & Ads	7
Different Google Ads Campaign Types	8
Which campaign should you use?	11
Structuring a Google Ads search campaign	12
Chapter Takeaways	14
2 Keywords	15
How to conduct Google Ads Keyword Research	16
Which Google Ads Keyword Match Type should I use?	17
What are negative keywords in Google Ads	19
Chapter takeaways	20
3 Ads Copy	21
The Fundamentals of Google Ads Ad Copy	22
RSAs and their impact on keyword quality score	24
Advanced Ad Techniques	25
Chapter takeaways	28
4 Ad Extensions (Assets)	29
Types of Google Ad Extensions	30
Measuring Ad Extension Performance	37
Overtaking complete	38
Chapter takeaways	38
5 Conversion Tracking	39
An Introduction to Conversion Tracking	40
Google Tag Manager (GTM) vs GA4 Conversion Goals	41
Setting Up Google Ads GTM Conversions	42
Primary vs Secondary Conversions	45
Advanced Google Ads Tracking Strategies	46
Chapter takeaways	48
6 Bid Strategies	49
Non-smart bidding strategies	50
Smart Bidding Strategies	52
Extra Tips: Bid Strategy Learning Status and Bid Adjustments	53
Chapter takeaways	54

7 Regular Optimisation	55
PPC Optimisation Funnel	56
Smaller Optimisation Tasks	63
Being stuck with vanity metrics	63
Google Ads Optimisation Checklist	64
Become the Google Ads champion	65
Chapter takeaways	65
8 Shopping Ads - Multiple Routes for Success	66
Why Google Shopping listings are essential for ecommerce success	68
What you need to get started with Shopping Listings	69
Getting started with your Google Ads Shopping Campaigns	71
Optimising Google Ads Shopping Campaign performance by Campaign types	72
What bidding strategy should you apply for Shopping Campaigns?	74
Other key points to consider when setting up shopping Ad Campaigns	74
Chapter takeaways	75
9 Local Service Ads	76
What Are Local Service Ads?	77
Local Service Ads vs. Search Ads: What's the Difference?	77
Benefits of Local Service Ads	79
Drawback of Local Service Ads	80
Chapter takeaways	81
10 Google Ad Grants for Charities and Nonprofits	82
How do Google Ad Grants work and who are they for?	83
Who can apply for a Google Ad grant?	83
So, how do I apply for a Google Ad grant?	84
Running Ad Grants alongside an existing Google Ads account	85
Chapter takeaways	86
References	87
About Splitpixel	88



Introduction to Google Ads

Google Ads is the world's most dominant online advertising platform. According to SEMRush, there are over 8.5 billion searches a day¹, easily making it the number one place for users to find common answer to questions and queries.

Google Ads gives advertisers the opportunity to get in front of the right users at exactly the right time by paying their way to the top of a search result list. Ultimately, businesses see it as an investment to improve their visibility and website conversion performance.

This ebook will cover:

- ▼ How Google Ads work and why they're so effective
- ▼ How to set up campaigns that drive real results
- ▼ Proven strategies to optimise performance and maximise return on investment
- ▼ Common mistakes to avoid and expert insights to get ahead

Chapter 1

Campaign Structures

Campaign structures are the essential framework of your campaigns – and a poor structure can cause poor performance. For example, poor campaign structures could result in a lot of wasted spend or even users seeing poor ad messaging. This gives a significant advantage to competitors.

Understanding the structure of Google Ad campaigns can be tricky business, especially if you're new to the platform. But not to fear – we're here to break down the PPC jargon to get you well on your way to launching some Google Ads activity!

Campaigns, Ad Groups, Keywords & Ads

When launching a campaign (specifically search), it's best to think of it in four levels: campaign, ad group, keyword and ad.

Campaign

The campaign level is where you set the overall budget for your campaign. You can apply start and end dates, as well as ad schedules of when you want your ads to run, and what regions you want your ad appearing in.

You can also set different objectives for your campaigns. For example, you might have one campaign with objectives to drive purchases, but then another to drive PDF downloads. Having these different goals will allow the campaign to better optimise towards your key performance indicators.

Ad Group

Within campaigns, you might have multiple ad groups. Think of these as "buckets" of keywords, segmented by theme.

You'll want to keep your ad groups themed by the keywords in them, so you can tailor your ads to the keywords you have in your account.

For example, if you were selling jewellery under a campaign named "Earrings" you might have an ad group for "hoop earrings", and a separate ad group for "drop earrings".

Keywords

These are specific words or phrases that users type into their search bar which trigger your ads to show.

You'll want to make sure your keywords are matching their ad group name - so in this case, you'd not want to add 'drop earring' keywords in a 'hoop earrings' ad group, especially if a 'drop earrings' ad group already exists.

The keyword level allows you to set keyword match types, and set bids for keywords (if you're not using a smart bidding strategy).

Ads

Finally, we have ad level, which are the actual advertisements you want to show to users, consisting of headlines, descriptions, a landing page, and potential ad assets.

The best practices for writing Google Ads are widely debated, but specifically for responsive search ads (RSAs), you'll need:

- ▼ At least three headlines.
- ▼ At least two descriptions.
- ▼ A landing page.

Google Ads Account							
Campaign 1				Campaign 2			
Ad Group 1A		Ad Group 1B		Ad Group 2A		Ad Group 2B	
Keyword	Ad A	Keyword	Ad A	Keyword	Ad A	Keyword	Ad A
Keyword	Ad B	Keyword	Ad B	Keyword	Ad B	Keyword	Ad B
Keyword		Keyword		Keyword		Keyword	
Keyword		Keyword		Keyword		Keyword	

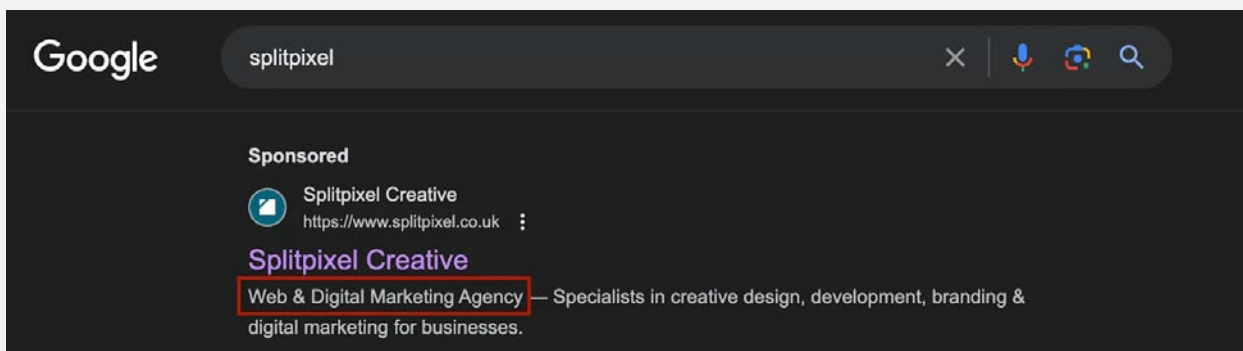
Different Google Ads Campaign Types

Search Ads

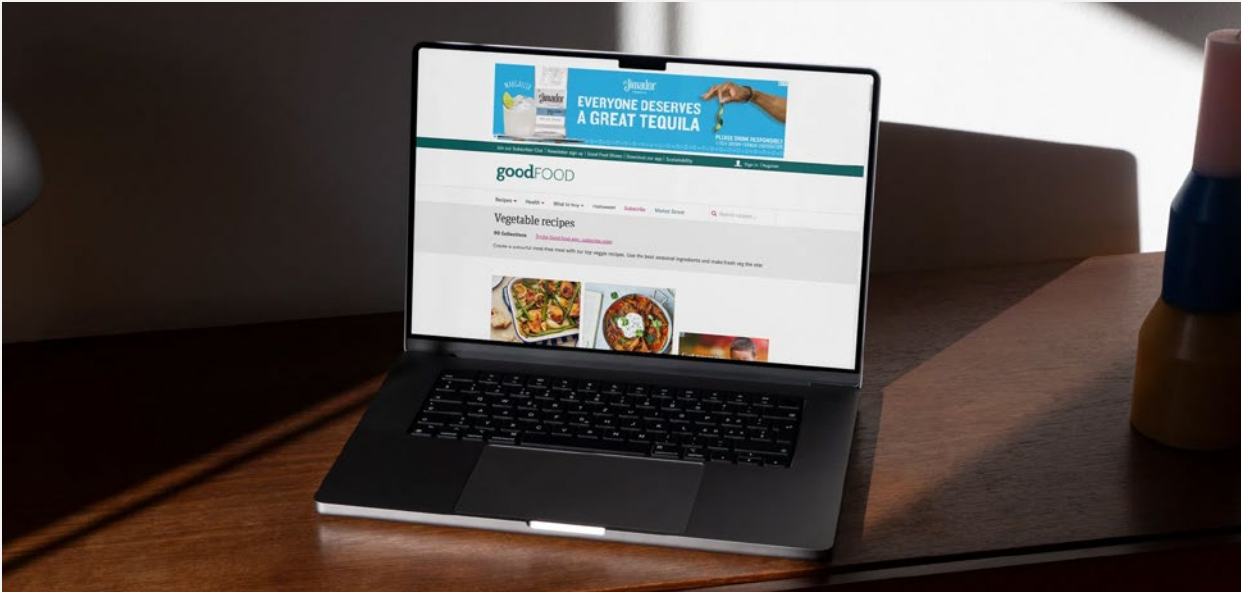
Google search ads appear on search engine result pages (SERPs) when a user searches for a keyword that your PPC account bids on.

This ad type is best for capturing users right as they're searching for your product or service and is typically used by advertisers when trying to capture users lower in a sales or marketing funnel (or users who are considering purchasing or enquiring about your product or service).

This is by far the most commonly used ad type in Google Ads due to the millions of users who search on Google for products and services daily.



Display Ads



Google display ads are ads that appear on the Google Display Network (GDN). You'll be familiar with these from the banner ads you see around the internet, most commonly on news sites. However, they aren't all image-based ads: text ads can appear also if you have this box ticked in your Google search ads.

This campaign type is predominantly aimed at driving brand awareness rather than website traffic or conversions, therefore target users higher in the marketing funnel.

This being said, display campaigns also give you the function to remarket to previous visitors of your site, which therefore allows you to put your ads in front of previous visitors who might be likely to buy.

Video Ads

Video ads appear on YouTube and other partner sites that allow for video placements, often local news sites or video sites such as Dailymotion. There are multiple ad types a paid account could use, such as bumper ads, skippable in-streams, or YouTube shorts ads.

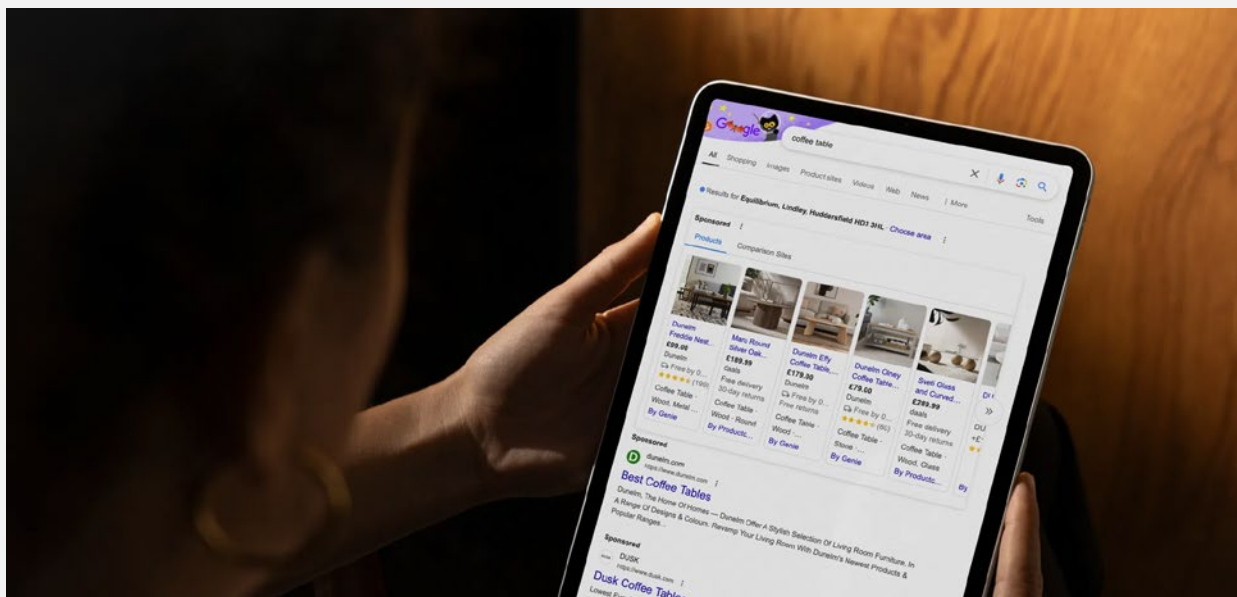
Like display, YouTube ads are often used to drive brand awareness and video engagements, rather than website traffic or website conversions.

Shopping Ads

Shopping ads can appear either at the top of a user's search result or in the Google shopping results. The products that are displayed in your shopping results come directly from your product feed and should be set up in your Google Merchant Centre account and linked with your Google Ads account.

Your shopping ad will use the image of your product, as well as providing some extra information, such as any sales, promos or delivery fees that might come with the

product. With more shopping ads appearing above search ads nowadays when users have an ecommerce-based search query, it's vital for ecommerce organisations to consider testing shopping ads.



Performance Max Ads

Performance max is best described as a combination of search, display, YouTube and shopping campaigns. As the advertiser, you can give Google all search, display, video and shopping assets and, based on its smart signals, the campaign will decide which channel is best to push its budget through. For example, if Google sees that 70% of a performance max campaign is coming via the product groups, Google will push more of the campaign spend through the shopping channel.

However, it's important to note that Google will almost never just push 100% of its budget through one channel. Since Google can utilise four different channels, it's almost guaranteed that some of your budget will be pushed through each channel for 'testing purposes' by Google.

The other thing to note is that P-MAX is considered a 'black box' by some advertisers. Google Ads gives you limited data on which channel your ad spend came through, making it difficult for advertisers to understand which channel actually works best. The only way to do this would be by adding an external script to the account, such as a handy one [provided by ads expert Mike Rhodes](#)².

Ultimately, P-MAX should be tested if you have a large budget, correct conversion tracking in place, lots of display/video assets and a shopping feed (optional if you're not ecommerce). P-MAX can be effective when you feed Google Ads lots of assets, and you're happy for Google to optimise the campaign based on the best-performing channel. If you want more control over the analytics inside Google Ads of which channels perform best, consider setting up individual campaign types.

Demand Gen Ads

Demand gen campaigns are a hybrid campaign, utilising display and video campaign ad types. While being strong at delivering a brand awareness campaign, they're also ideal for bringing in new leads, particularly to pages where you can supply the users with free materials in return for contact information. Consider this campaign type if your website has some lead magnet content.

App Ads

App campaigns are rarely utilised on Google Ads, as their main focus is to push app installations or in-app activity rather than website conversions. The ads often appear on search, display, YouTube and Google Play store placements. Consider using this only if you want to increase your app engagement.

Local Service Ads (LSA)

While not directly connected to Google Ads, LSA is a specific ad format that allows users to be connected to specific local services, i.e. local plumbers, electricians, tradesmen etc.

Instead of text ads, the ad might just give the phone number, message option, and customer rating of the business.

Smart Ads

Finally, we have smart campaigns, which used to be Google's default campaign setting when you first created a Google Ads account (now replaced with Performance Max).

The campaign uses an automated approach, creating ads based on the content on your website, which are then displayed across Google search and display networks. These are good for small businesses who may be unsure how to use Google Ads to start with – although since this campaign type does not use keywords, you will not be able to know what search queries your smart campaign has ranked for. We'd recommend opting for a search and display campaign bid strategy over a smart campaign.

Which campaign should you use?

It's all dependent on your campaigns' goals and objectives, but typically, if you want to drive relevant website traffic or website conversions (form fills or purchases for example), we'd suggest researching a search campaign strategy.

If your goal is to make users aware of your business through brand awareness, consider using a display/demand generation or video strategy, utilising visual assets to catch user attention on the Google Display Network or YouTube.

If you're an ecommerce business, we'd also encourage you to consider running some shopping campaigns, since they're often a cheaper alternative to search ads, and can give the user more visual info and ratings of products before they click the ad.

Structuring a Google Ads search campaign

So, you've decided that you want to run a search campaign. What should you do next?

Well, segmenting out your ad groups and keywords into relevant themes within your search campaign is critical to success, not just because it keeps your account tidy, but it can also better highlight what products and services do better than others, opening the opportunity to push more spend through different product or service areas.

Campaign Structure

While it's tempting to simply put all your ad groups under one campaign with a top-level budget, this wouldn't be best practice.

You'll want to break out your campaigns when:

- ▼ You want to target different product or service areas on your website. For example, if you sold jewellery, you might want to push a £50 daily budget through a necklaces campaign, but only £20 through an earrings campaign. Keeping these in different campaigns allows you to give both campaigns their own unique budget, whereas you wouldn't be able to do this inside one campaign.
- ▼ You're wanting to target different locations. For example, you might have a certain budget to target the United Kingdom, but another budget to target the United States. Separating these allows you to better control your budgets.

At the same time, you don't want to spread your campaign budgets too thin. For example, if you had a necklace campaign and only gave it a daily budget of £2, but its average CPC is £2.50, you'd rarely expect any clicks to come through your ads. If you've only got a small daily budget, consider focusing on one or two areas of your product categories or service areas your business promotes, and scale from there when budget permits.

Ad group structure

Ad group structures are often a grey area in PPC, with many different strategies being used. Some accounts prefer to split their ad groups by match type, by location-based keywords, and even by advanced ad copy tools such as Dynamic Keyword Insertions (DKIs) or location insertions.

Here at Splitpixel, we use a combination of all three set-ups. However, for a business just starting out its PPC efforts, we'd suggest segregating your ad groups in the following scenarios:

- ▼ When you know that you have different landing pages for different keywords. For example, you wouldn't want to mix necklaces and earring keywords in the same ad group, as you'll want to point necklace users to the necklace page, and vice versa.
- ▼ When you know you want to purposely change your ad copy to be more bespoke to your keyword. For example, a business might want to segregate "drop earrings" and "hoop earrings" as keywords, even though they may send users to the same landing page, as an advertiser might want the headlines to be more bespoke to either a "drop earrings" or "hoop earrings" search result to improve their click-through rate.
- ▼ We'd also suggest separating any keywords that contain "Near Me" into their own ad group. This is so you can use location insertions, where a headline would dynamically change to the users' location, making a users' search more personal.

While it's an older technique, some advertisers like to segregate their ad groups by keyword match type. For example, having one ad group for exact match only, and another ad group to contain the same keywords, but using a phrase match type instead. This is a technique designed to save advertisers money since exact-match keywords are typically cheaper than phrase-match keywords. A technique known as cross-negating is then used, where you negate the exact match keywords from the phrase match ad groups, to prevent any ad group cross-over (leading to inflated CPCs).

There are limited data and case studies to suggest which type works best and, after all, all accounts are different. However, the benefit of mixed-match type ad groups is that they cut down your ad group structure by half.

Picture this: you have one campaign running, with ad groups for necklaces, earrings and bracelets. Because you're segregating ad groups by match type, you have six running, one each for exact and one phrase. This means you require at least six responsive search ads. If you drive 100 clicks, this data will likely be scattered across six RSAs.

Whereas if you didn't segregate your ad groups by match types, you'd only need a minimum of three RSA. Not only does this keep your data and structure more

concise and easy to manage, but Google's machine learning algorithms don't have to learn double the amount of RSAs. In theory, pushing more data through fewer RSAs will quicker Google's machine learning, allowing you to speed up identifying the top-performing ad texts in your account.

A more advanced technique of campaign segregation would be if you wanted to test keyword match types against one another. Keywords have three match types: exact, phrase and broad. Exact and phrase are often the most opted-for match type when launching a new campaign.

However, once you're seeing highly relevant search queries coming through your campaign, you might want to create an experiment campaign to test exact and phrase vs broad match.

Experiment campaigns like this are fantastic at allowing you to change one variable at a time. If you're then seeing stronger performance with broad match across a short period of time, you could consider incorporating broad match keywords into your account.



Chapter Takeaways

- ▼ A Google Ads account is made up of campaigns, ad groups, keywords and ads.
- ▼ There are several campaign types available in Google Ads, but the most common is search ads due to it being the highest converter.
- ▼ Try to keep campaigns and ad groups consolidated, as more consolidated data helps Google's machine learning make better, data-led decisions

Chapter 2

Keywords

Your Google Ads' keywords are a critical part of your PPC search campaign set-up – they're the machine that allows your campaign to spend. If your search ads don't have any keywords in them, your campaign simply won't spend.

It's best to think of your keywords like your campaign's engine – without one, your account simply won't go anywhere.

In its current state, Google Ads search campaigns require you to provide it with keywords you'd like your website to rank for. You'll find that less relevant keywords will drive poorer quality traffic to your website, so you should be making sure that all keywords your account targets are extremely relevant to your business and its landing pages.

How to conduct Google Ads Keyword Research

There are several tools available to help you conduct Google Ad keyword research like SEMRush or Google Search Console, but Google Ads Keyword Planner is often the go-to tool. You can find it by going to *Tools and Settings > Planning > Keyword Planner* in your Google Ads account.

Once you're in the keyword planner, you're going to want to search for keywords that match your business' products or services. For example, if you sell "sustainable necklaces", you might want to target keywords such as "sustainable necklaces for women", "men's sustainable necklaces", "lightweight sustainable necklaces" or "silver sustainable necklaces".

When conducting this research, you should add these keyword ideas into an Excel or Google Sheet, so you can start theming your keywords into relevant "buckets", which can be used as an ad group structure when building your campaigns. Uploading bulk data from a sheet into Google Ads is also very simple with Google Ads Editor.

In this case, you might want to target both men's and women's sustainable necklaces keywords, but have them in different ad groups, because they have their own bespoke landing pages.

Not sure what keywords to target to begin with? Keyword planner can also scrape specific pages of your website, which can uncover potential keyword ideas based on your page's content.

Before you get any keywords live, you'll want to make sure that all your keywords are entirely relevant to your products or services before you run the ad, otherwise your performance may fall and ultimately require you to scrap your existing keywords and start again.

Target keywords with high average monthly search volume

Our key tip is to target keywords with at least >10 Avg. Monthly Search Volume.

If you're targeting keywords that don't have any search volume, Google will flag this keyword as having 'Low Search Volume', so it's best to avoid these. On new accounts where there's no campaign activity, you'll likely be given a range of average monthly search volumes a keyword has driven, rather than an exact number.

Avoid mixed search intent

Try to avoid keywords that may contain mixed search intent. For example, if you sell "sustainable necklaces", but they aren't made of gold, do not target the keyword "gold sustainable necklaces". This will only lead to you targeting users who are likely searching for "gold necklaces". Ultimately, driving the wrong intent will always lead to poor performance and wasted ad spend, as you will undoubtedly see irrelevant search queries. One word can significantly alter the intent behind a user's search.

Keywords vs Search Queries

There is a stark difference between keywords and search queries in your Google Ads accounts. Keywords are what you give Google and are what your ad ranks for, whereas your search queries are the exact searches a user makes to see your ad.

For example, an advertiser might target the keyword "sustainable necklaces" but notice that most users who see the ad through this keyword are actually searching for "sustainable necklaces discount".

Your search query reports identify potential opportunities in an account, such as adding in new keywords to a campaign that you might have missed, as well as offer data for you to make informed decisions about negating certain queries.

Which Google Ads Keyword Match Type should I use?

After you've completed extensive research on what keywords you want to target for your product or service, you're going to want to decide which match type is best for your key performance indicators. There are three options, all of which have their own useful benefits.

Exact match keywords

Exact match is the most restrictive match type. Users will only see your ad if they enter the exact keyword into the Google search bar. Using the sustainable necklace example, you wouldn't see the ad if you were to search "sustainable necklaces near me", if the keyword was just [sustainable necklaces].

This match type is particularly strong if you have a low daily budget (<£15 per day) and are concerned about wasted ad spend.

Phrase match keywords

Phrase match keywords will show your ad if a user's search query contains the phrase of the keyword you're targeting. In this case, you would see the advertiser's ad if you were to search for "sustainable necklaces near me", and the keyword was "sustainable necklaces", since the keyword is mentioned in the search query.

Phrase match keywords typically have a higher CPC than exact match terms since they are reaching a wider audience. They can also have higher CPAs since their intent is not exactly the keyword the user is looking for, so these naturally have a lower conversion rate most of the time.

This match-type strategy should be used if you have a higher budget and want to reach more users outside of exact match targeting. Phrase match keywords are great at identifying new keyword opportunities to target, and irrelevant search queries to negate from a campaign.

Broad match keywords

Broad match is the least restrictive match type of them all and allows advertisers to bid on other keywords Google thinks are relevant to the keyword you've given it. For example, "sustainable necklaces" as a keyword might drive the search query "golden pendants". This match type doesn't require the search query to contain the keyword, as long as Google believes the intent is similar.

Broad match requires lots of optimisations, such as frequent search query checks and significant negative keywords in place to combat irrelevant queries that could come through the account. This strategy also works best when running a smart bidding strategy, since broad match keywords use conversion data to aid its bids. If you don't have conversion tracking set up in your account, this match type is not for you.

If you're launching a new account, our recommendation would be to start off with exact and phrase match keywords, building healthy negative keyword lists for the first three to six months of your campaign. Once you start to see that almost all of your search queries are highly relevant to your campaign intent, with strong conversion data to back it up, we'd suggest creating an experiment campaign to test your exact and phrase match keywords against a broad match type strategy.

The exception to using a broad match strategy when you launch a campaign is if you are running a Google Grant account, which is where charities and non-profit organisations can qualify to get a free \$10,000 to spend per month. Since these accounts receive free money – and a lot of it! – there's no risk of wasting valuable budget, so using a broad match strategy can help Grant accounts reach more users. Therefore, it's best to use an exact, phrase, and broad match strategy on these accounts.

Close variants

While all of the above is true, in the past few years Google has been introducing 'close variants' to search query reports at phrase and exact match level. It means that even if you have the keyword [sustainable necklaces] set at exact match level, a search query such as "buy sustainable necklaces" could still rank for this keyword at exact match level. This is because Google sees the search query as very similar to the keyword that it classifies as a close variant. Annoyingly, this is not a feature you can turn off, so it's something to be aware of when launching your Google Ad campaigns!

Below is an image of what search queries could be driven by respective keywords and their match types, using the keyword "leather boots" as another example:

Broad Match: 'leather boots'	Phrase Match: 'leather boots'	Exact Match: [leather boots]
Matched: ✓ leather shoes near me ✓ leather shoes near me ✓ best leather boots store	Matched: ✓ men's leather boots ✓ women's leather boots ✓ buy leather boots online	Matched: ✓ leather boots
Not Matched: ✗ suede boots ✗ leather bags ✗ running shoes	Not Matched: ✗ black boots leather ✗ best boots leather ✗ boots leather men	Not Matched: ✗ men's leather boots ✗ buy leather boots ✗ leather hiking boots

What are negative keywords in Google Ads

Implementing negative keywords is one of, if not the most, important optimisations you can make to search campaigns. They allow you to stop your ads from appearing on irrelevant search queries that your keyword might be ranking for. Negative keywords can be applied at ad group, campaign and account level (via negative keyword lists).

When to use negative keywords lists

Negative keyword lists should be used when you want to exclude negatives across more than one campaign. For example, you might want to negate your brand name across your non-brand search campaigns, to prevent any brand-name overlap on campaigns.

They're also useful if you want to prevent a specific location from being used in user search queries. So, let's say you want to target "event halls London" as a keyword, but not rank for London borough terms, such as Chelsea, Kensington, Wembley etc.

Creating a 'London boroughs' negative keyword list allows you to negate all irrelevant boroughs, and set them across specific campaigns.

When to use negative keywords at ad group level

Setting negative keywords at the ad group level is equally as important as the campaign or negative keyword list level. Ad group negatives should be set when you want to cross-negative your ad group intent. For example, if you had a 'Men's Sustainable Necklaces' and 'Women's Sustainable Necklaces' ad group in the same campaign, the best practice would be to negate "women" from the men's ad group, and vice versa. Not only does this prevent users from seeing the wrong ad, but it often leads to cheaper CPCs.

Don't ignore the keyword data

Ultimately, there isn't a one-size-fits-all solution to testing keywords and their match types. However, you can utilise the data you receive as a key step in overtaking your competitors. Don't be scared to make slight tweaks to keywords, or pause poor-performing terms in the account, as long as your decisions are data-justified.

Chapter takeaways

- ▼ Your Google Ads' keywords are a critical part of your PPC search campaign set-up – they're the machine that allows your campaign to spend.
- ▼ There are three keyword match types; Exact, Phrase, and Broad.
- ▼ Our key tip is to target keywords with at least >10 Avg. Monthly Search Volume.
- ▼ Try to avoid keywords that may contain mixed search intent. For example, if you sell "sustainable necklaces", but they aren't made of gold, do not target the keyword "gold sustainable necklaces".



Chapter 3

Ads Copy

Google Ads isn't all about the data – there's a creative side to every campaign too! Creating your carefully handcrafted ad copy might be your favourite part, or the thought might fill you with dread.

Whether you're a confident copywriter or feel lost as soon as you sit at the keyboard, we can help you improve your ads. In this section, we'll be reviewing the secrets to creating search ad copy that doesn't just return a high click-through rate (CTR) but also converts.

First of all, we have to emphasise that writing ad copy should not be the first thing you do when looking to build a new search campaign. There are at least three other aspects to complete first.

These are:

- ▼ Creating a sturdy campaign structure.
- ▼ Conduct thorough Google ads keyword research that is bespoke to your products and services.
- ▼ Setting up conversion tracking on your Google Ads account.

Once you have all of these in place, we can start to consider what your ads might look like.

But it's important to remember from the start that your ads can't look the same forever. If you keep your copy the same for months, you'll notice that your ads will start to suffer from ad fatigue – users becoming over-familiar with repeated messages. You'll want to regularly update your ad copy to prevent ad fatigue and lower click-through-rates.

The Fundamentals of Google Ads Ad Copy

The most common ad format is responsive search ads. In fact, it's now the only option when creating a search ad. Prior to July 2022, Expanded Text Ads were available, but these have now been sunsetted by Google.

Responsive search ads (RSAs) can have up to 15 headlines and four descriptions. However, the minimum required for an ad to run is at least three headlines, at least two descriptions, and a final URL. Headlines can not exceed 30 characters each, whereas descriptions cannot exceed 90 characters.

Even though you could give Google Ads upward of 15 headlines, it doesn't mean all of them will be used. Google will use its smart signals to determine which ad text is best shown to users. Hence, some headlines or descriptions might be shown significantly more than others.

When writing a copy, you have the option to use Capitalised Case or Sentence case in both headlines and descriptions, but never UPPER CASE. If you use UPPER CASE in your ad copy, your ads will be disapproved due to excessive capitalisation.

We'd recommend using Capitalised Case for headlines and Sentence case for descriptions, staying consistent with it – but this largely comes down to personal

preference. There are plenty of other reasons for Google to disapprove your ads, so make sure your ad messaging and landing pages comply with ad policies³.

If you only want specific messaging to be displayed, such as sale messaging, that's not a problem at all. You can specifically pin your headlines or description to certain positions. If you have a 50% sale on your website, you might want to pin this message to the second headline position.

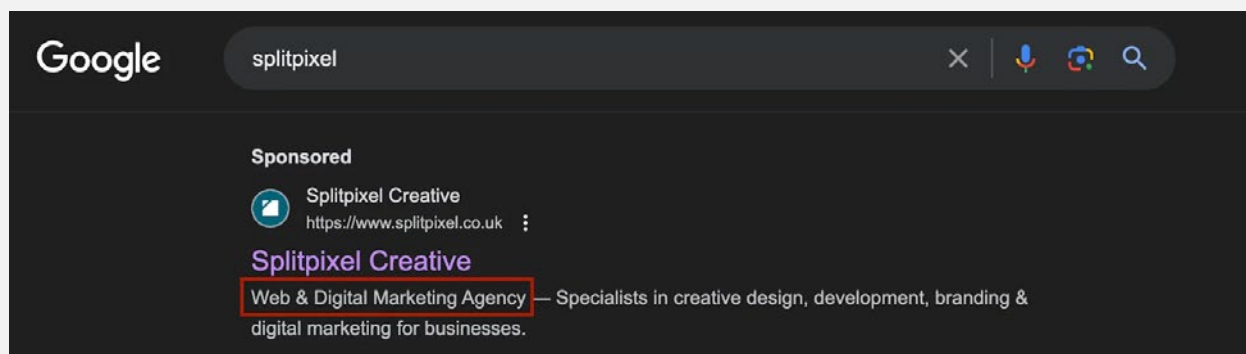
By doing this, only that headline text will show to users in the second headline position. Be aware, however, that your ad strength will decrease because of this change.

Ad strength decreases when:

1. You don't give Google Ads enough ad texts to test different headline or description options.
2. You pin certain ad copy. Pinning ad copy means Google has fewer ad variations it can test, weakening your ad strength.
3. Your ad copy doesn't contain the keywords you're targeting in it. If Google doesn't think your ad is targeting the keyword you're trying to rank for, you'll have a poor ad strength score, risking your ad to be rarely shown.

Ad strength hasn't been found to directly impact your search impression share (how often your ad appears on available impressions), but these are all factors to consider when building your ad.

A side note to consider when building your ad is that the second headline can now appear in the description of your ads, rather than in the typical headline position. This means headline one will be the only headline shown in the typical headline position. This was a feature introduced in February 2024.



RSAs and their impact on keyword quality score

Every keyword has a quality score, and your ad copy can play a large role in deciding what that score could be.

Quality score is decided by three core metrics:

- ▼ Ad relevancy
- ▼ Landing page experience
- ▼ Expected click-through-rate (CTR).

When writing your headlines and descriptions, you need to keep these three principles in mind to make sure that your keywords have the highest quality score possible, resulting in not just higher keyword visibility, but also cheaper CPCs.

Ad relevancy

When writing your ads, make sure to have at least one headline that mentions the keywords in your ad group. For example, if you're a jewellery retailer selling drop earrings, you'll want to make sure that your ad copy is bespoke to drop earrings, rather than hoop or stud earrings. Not only will this be more relevant to the user's search queries (improving ad relevancy), but it will also significantly increase the likelihood of the users clicking through to your ad (improving expected CTR).

Landing page experience

The next thing to consider is your landing page. In this example, if a user is searching for "drop earrings", make sure that your ads are pointing users to a page that has content around drop earrings, avoiding more generic pages or pages you that are less relevant. You want the user's journey to be as seamless as possible, making it easy for them to complete the conversion action in your account. If you don't have designated pages for the keywords you're targeting, consider building some new landing pages for these ads or not including these keywords altogether. A good user experience will improve the landing page experience metric.

Another factor for landing page experience is page load speeds. If your site is slow to load the page content, you risk users bouncing off straight away. We'd suggest running site speed tests and core web vitals reports regularly.

Expected CTR

Finally, regularly A/B test your ad messaging. Regular A/B tests allow you to better understand which messaging produces strong results, particularly CTR. A common test

is sale messaging vs generic messaging, since sale messaging creates urgency, often leading to higher CTRs. Regular A/B ad copy tests can increase CTR and find what messaging works best for your brand.

Advanced Ad Techniques

If you want to take your ads to the next level, or test other unique ad strategies, you may want to consider using some of the following techniques.

Dynamic Keyword Insertions

Dynamic keyword insertions (DKIs) are headlines that will dynamically change based on which keyword a user triggers with their search query. Below is an example of how they work.

You're using Google Ads to sell earrings for my jewellery business. Your ad group name is 'earrings', and you currently target two keywords in this ad group: "drop earrings" and "hoop earrings", both as phrase match terms. You currently have just three headlines in your ad, with one of these being a DKI. See it below:

{Keyword:Earrings For Sale} | 25% Off Sale | Handmade In The UK

If a user was to search for 'ethical drop earrings london', because our ad is using a DKI, it will replace the default copy inside the brackets with the keyword the search query triggered. In this example, the ad will actually look like the following to the user in the search result:

Drop Earrings | 25% Off Sale | Handmade In The UK

Likewise, if another user then searched for 'hoop earrings online', since "hoop earrings" is a keyword we're using as a phrase match, we'd expect our ad to show up like the following:

Hoop Earrings | 25% Off Sale | Handmade In The UK

The default text will be used in instances where Google is unsure which keyword triggered the search term or the keyword is too long to appear as a Google Ads headline. If this was to happen, we'd then expect the DKI headline to appear as 'Earrings For Sale'.

Dynamic Keyword Insertions are extremely efficient at getting a high ad relevancy score on all of your keywords. If you've segmented your ad groups correctly within your campaign structure, you'll notice that a DKI headline gives all your keywords in that ad group an above average ad relevancy score.

Another benefit of DKIs is that they grant you more options to mention more USPs or CTAs in your responsive search ads. This is because DKIs are almost always shown as a headline without you needing to pin them, due to the ad relevancy they give your ads. This means you could use the 14 other headlines in your RSAs to test USPs.

DKIs can also prevent your ads from using duplicate headlines. For example, instead of using three or four headlines that are centred around your ad group's keywords, a DKI can allow you to automatically rank for all your ad group's keywords (as long as they're thematically structured correctly). By doing this, you don't risk your ad from showing two 'keyword-based' headlines, and the search user not being shown a USP or CTA which are more likely to drive a higher CTR.

The negatives to DKIs are that you have to constantly be on top of the keywords in your ad group. Because DKIs use your keyword text, the keywords you have in your ad groups must be able to look good in the search results. If your keywords use broken English, your ad will look unprofessional, which would likely lead to low CTRs.

A good example of this is to never use DKIs in ad groups that have keywords containing 'near me'. These keywords as headlines will always look unprofessional since users wouldn't want to see 'near me' in a Google Ads headline, but rather their country, county/state or location. A location insertion would be a good choice of dynamic headline here.

Location Insertions

Location insertions allow the search user to see their location in the search result, making the ad more personable to the user search. These are great for keywords that are 'near me' based, as you meet a user search query with their IP address location. Stating a user's location in the ad, specifically if you are a service, can be extremely beneficial in getting a user to click your ad over a competitor. If you're a business providing car MOTs in Manchester, your ad could look like the following:

Car MOT {LOCATION(City):Near You} | 25% Off Today Only

As long as Google is aware of the location of the user, it will default to the user's town or city, i.e. Manchester. However, if this location is unknown, Google will default the text to Car MOT Near You.

Avoid location insertions if you have country-wide targeting set to your campaign, but you only provide products or services to specific areas in that country. These campaigns work particularly best when you have smaller location targeting since you could replace the default text with a central location.

Before you use location insertions, make sure your business mentions using your user's location in your privacy policy.

Countdown Ads

Countdown ads are fantastic at creating urgency in your Google Ads headline when a website sale is about to end. It dynamically changes how many days or even hours are left of a sale, particularly strong at producing high CTRs due to their urgency.

Sales such as Black Friday and Cyber Monday are particularly strong days to trial these headlines, especially if you have sales that run for short periods of time. For a Car MOT Business, this might look like the following:

25% MOT Offer, Ends in {COUNTDOWN(2024-11-29 23:59:59,1)} | Exclusive Black Friday Offer

Or

25% MOT Offer, Ends in 1 Hour | Exclusive Black Friday Offer

The countdown will then dynamically change with the end time that you've provided Google Ads.

Google Ad Extensions

Once you've finished writing up your ad copy for each ad within all ad groups, you're going to want to flesh these out with some ad extensions such as sitelinks, callouts, price, promotion and image extensions – which we'll cover in the next section.

Chapter takeaways

- ▼ Responsive search ads (RSAs) can have up to 15 headlines and four descriptions.
- ▼ Headlines cannot exceed 30 characters each, whereas descriptions cannot exceed 90 characters.
- ▼ Every keyword has a quality score, and your ad copy can play a large role in deciding what that score could be.
- ▼ If you only want specific messaging to be displayed, such as sale messaging, you can specifically pin your headlines or description to certain positions.
- ▼ Consider using more advanced ad copy techniques such as Dynamic Keyword Insertions, Location Insertions, and Countdown Insertions.



Chapter 4

Ad Extensions (Assets)

Ad extensions are the extra little boost your ads need to convince a user to click your ad over a competitor's, or even an organic listing.

Ad extensions often promote the unique selling points (USPs) your business provides; for example, a free quote or a sale that is currently on your website. While you might mention this in your ad copy, it's possible that other headlines might be chosen by Google's algorithm. Ad extensions give you another chance to get even more enticing messaging in front of the right user, to where they'll click through to your landing pages.



Types of Google Ad Extensions

There are 15 different Google Ads extensions advertisers can use within Google Ads. Below are some definitions and examples of how these specific extensions work, specifically centred on search ads only.

Sitelink Extensions

Google Ads sitelinks are the most common type of ad extension. They're hyperlinks that appear below the headline and description of your responsive search ad.

If your PPC goal is website conversions, sitelinks should point users to landing pages with call-to-actions (CTAs) that you should be tracking with Google Tag Manager or GA4. You'll want to avoid pushing users to blog or news pages for example. While these pages will be rich in content, they often lack strong call-to-actions like contact forms or purchases.

The placement of a sitelink can depend on if you include a description or not. If you choose to not include descriptions as part of your sitelinks, they will simply appear below your description in a small font, making them less likely to be clicked individually.

Sponsored

 **JD Sports**
<https://www.jdsports.co.uk>

Nike Trainers - Up To 50% Off

The Accessories Sale Is On - Save Up To 50% Off Big Brands With Deals On...



Shop Gifts Under £50 · 10% Student Discount · Gifts For Her · Shop Mens Gifts This XMAS

However, if you add a description to your sitelinks, they can also appear underneath the responsive search ad description, with more detail about these sitelinks. This is particularly strong when users are searching for a brand name, but are actually searching for a particular product or service.

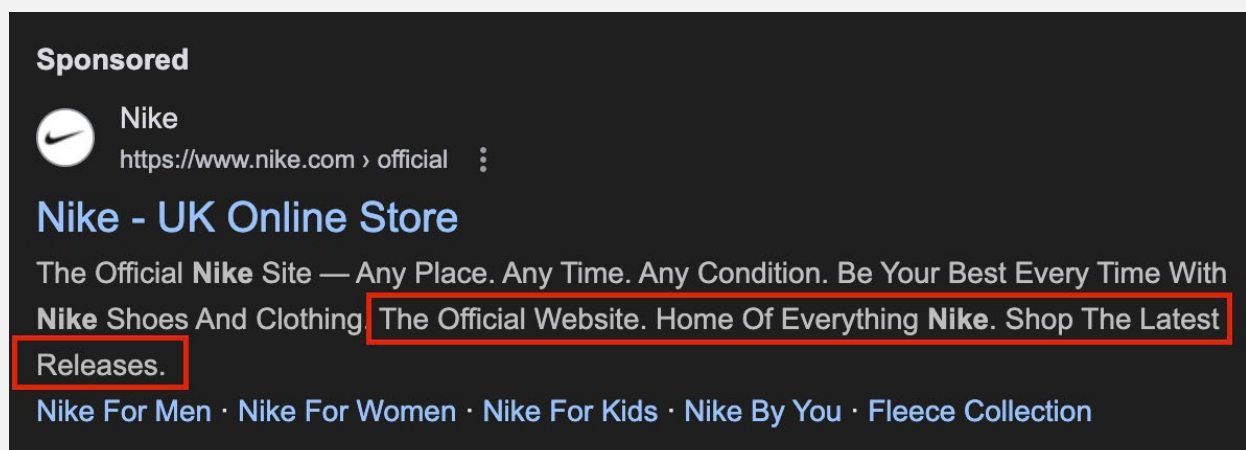
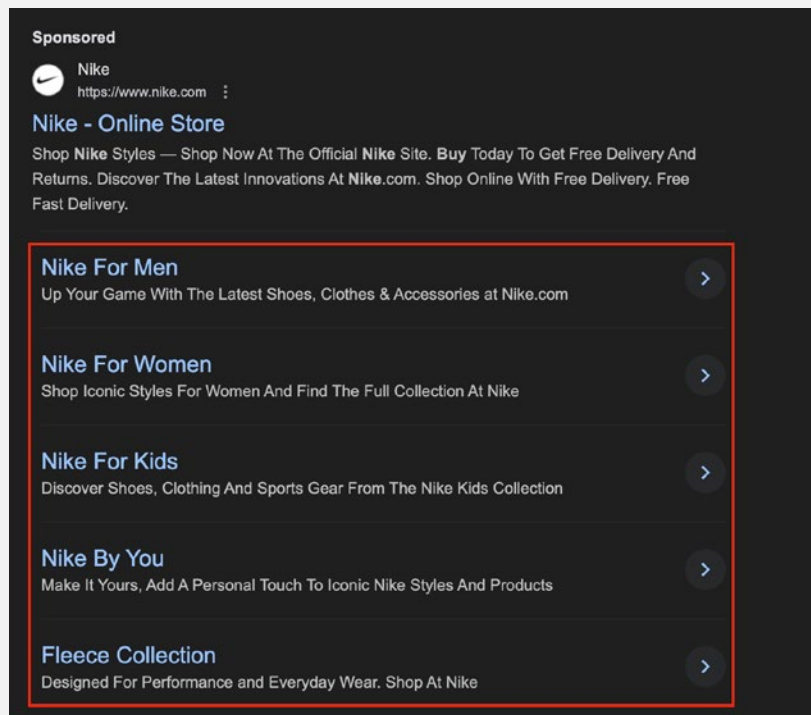
Another notable addition to sitelinks, especially those with descriptions, is the advertiser space they can take up. Like the example above, sitelinks can steal more advertiser space, and subliminally look more clickable.

When writing descriptions for sitelinks, Google will ask you for two descriptions at 35-character length. However, smart advertisers combine these two descriptions into a 70-character length sentence, since the second description immediately follows the first description.

We'd highly recommend writing 70-character length descriptions on all of your sitelinks to maximise the probability of your ad or sitelinks being clicked over a competitor.

Callout Extensions

Callout extensions in Google Ads appear at the end of descriptions. They can be up to 25 characters in length and are used to quickly shout the unique selling points (USPs) or CTAs to a user. They're designed to boost click-through-rate (CTR) by stating the benefits of the brand.



Structured Snippet Extensions

Like callouts, Structured Snippet extensions appear at the end of a responsive search ad description, typically stating the different types of products or services available from the advertiser. If you were a travel agent, you could also state the different destinations that you offer holidays, or if you were a sixth form college, you might want to suggest the different courses students could enrol on.

More recently, these have become rarer, and aren't shown as often as callouts or other extensions.

Sponsored

 **Russell & Bromley**
<https://www.russellandbromley.co.uk>

Russell & Bromley Sale Now On | Shop Up to 40% Off Sale Now
Luxury Leather And Bags For Women. Shop The Autumn Winter 24 **Sale** Now. Shop Our Range Of Leather **Footwear** & Handbags On **Sale** Online Today. **Leather Boots. Belts.**

Image Extensions

Google Ad image extensions are images that are displayed to the right of a responsive search ad, giving a snippet of what a user could expect visually when clicking on the website. These often have stronger CTR compared to other ad extensions, as users have become more aligned to image and video-based content. Look to add these to your account where possible.

Sponsored

 **Nike**
<https://www.nike.com> › [trainers](#)

Nike Trainers
Step Into Greatness — Designed For Sports, Crafted For Life. Discover The Latest **Nike Shoes** And Apparel Online.
[Men's Shoes](#) · [Women's Shoes](#) · [Nike For Kids](#) · [Men's Clothing](#) · [Nike Training](#)



Price Extensions

Price extensions appear below your responsive search ad descriptions, typically displaying two to four products with their price attached. These inform the user of the prices of the products before a click is required. However, often, other extensions like sitelinks, callouts and image extensions are preferred over price extensions.

Sponsored
 **Apollo Wholesale**
<https://www.eapollowholesale.co.uk> ⋮
UK's Best Wholesale Deals
Buy Bulk, Save More — Your Trusted UK Supplier. Shipping to Europe/Internationally. Fast Delivery, Good Quality
[Wholesale Armaf Perfume](#) · [Contour Kits](#) · [Toiletries Gift Sets](#) · [Gift Sets & Accessories](#)
[Hive Beauty Wax Pallets - £8.99 - Hot Film Sensitive Skin · More ▾](#)

People also see

[Palmers Olive Oil Shampoo - £2.85](#)
Smoothing Shampoo Frizz

[Simple Cleansing Wipes - £1.45](#)
Daily Detox Clear & Matte

Promotion Extensions

Promo extensions appear below your description of responsive search ads. These allow you to display a current offer (be it a percentage discount or fixed amount) off a user's purchase. Advertisers can choose the type of promotion it is, e.g. a Winter Sale, Summer Sale, etc. The advertiser must also pick a final URL to send these users to.

Advertisers can also choose start and end dates for these extensions, so you can schedule these to end in line with your sale end dates.

Sponsored
 **JD Sports**
<https://www.jdsports.co.uk> ⋮
Men - Nike Boxers & Underwear | JD Sports UK
Make Sure You Get Your Order In By 18th December For Standard Delivery Before Christmas
[Deal: Up to 50% off Gifting Offers](#)

Location Extensions

Google Ads location extensions appear below the responsive search ad description, like the promotion extension. However, these display the local store or office of the business. To run location extensions, you need to link your Google My Business account to your Google Ads account. Users who click this link will be taken to Google Maps, where they'll be able to find directions to the location given.

Sponsored

 **sportsdirect.com**
<https://www.sportsdirect.com>

Winter Sale - Up to 70% Off

Sale Up to 70% Off — Sports Direct - Shop the winter sale with up to 70% off clothing, **footwear** & accessories. Sports Direct - The UK's No.1 Sports Retailer.

 **Unit 8B Fox Valley Retail Park, Stocksbridge, Sheffield** - 0343 777 1503 - Open today · 10:0...

Lead Form Extensions

Google Ads lead form extensions appear below your RSA description and encourage users to fill out a contact form before clicking through to the website. Users who fill out these forms are required to submit their name, phone number, and email. All of this data can then be downloaded from the Google Ads interface.

Be aware, however, that these are rarely shown – and when enquiries are driven from these forms, their lead quality can be quite poor. This is because the user hasn't clicked through to your website.

If you do create a lead form, be aware that Google Ads will create a new conversion action in your account, called 'lead form - submit'. This will automatically track how many users have completed this lead form.

Sponsored

 **BIDBI**
<https://www.bidbi.co.uk> › tote-bag › printing

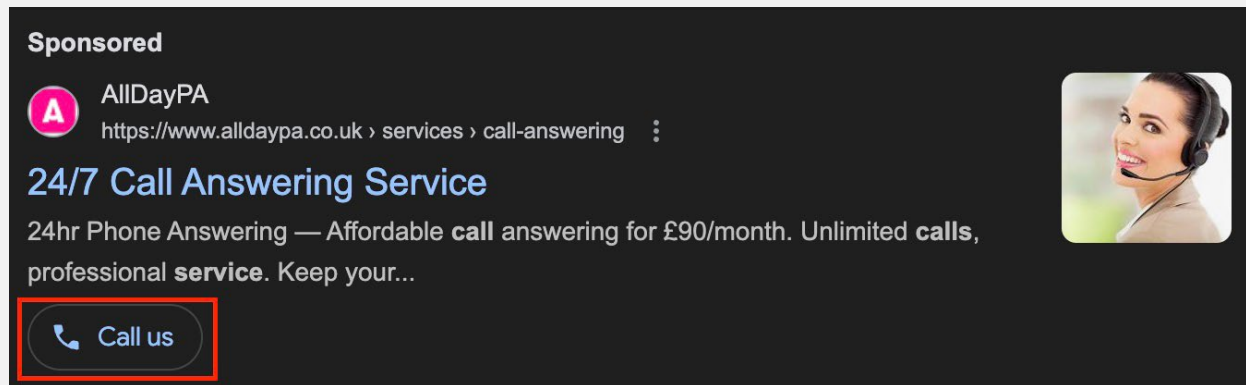
Tote Bags Wholesale Sheffield

Buy **Bulk Tote Bags Sheffield** — Bulk Tote Bag Printing - Print Your Logo On Our Sustainable Organic **Canvas** Products. Use Our 100% Natural Cotton Products as a Sustainable Marketing Tool or Ethical Accessory.

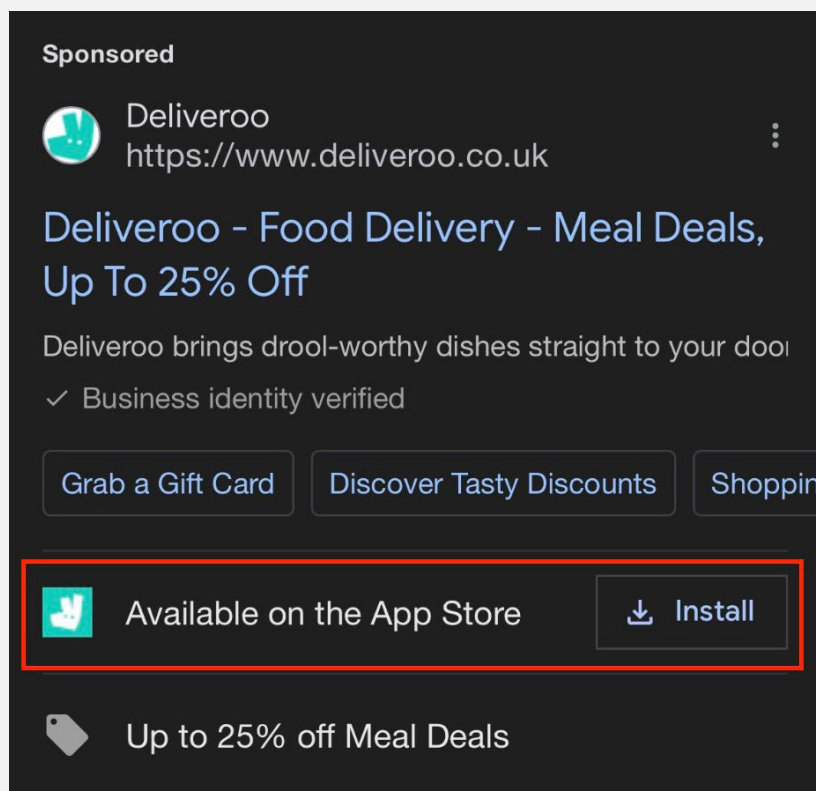
 **Learn more - Go Green, Choose BIDBI Today!**

Call Extensions

Google Ads call extensions appear as a small icon below your RSA description. They encourage users to make a call before a click to the website has been made. If you add in a call extension, an automatic conversion action will be created, called 'calls to clicks' in your Google Ads account. This will track how often a user has clicked this button.



This screenshot shows a Google Ads call extension for 'AllDayPA'. The ad is marked as 'Sponsored' and includes the company's logo, name, and website URL. The headline is '24/7 Call Answering Service'. The description states: '24hr Phone Answering — Affordable call answering for £90/month. Unlimited calls, professional service. Keep your...'. A red box highlights the 'Call us' button, which features a telephone handset icon.



This screenshot shows a Google Ads app extension for 'Deliveroo'. The ad is marked as 'Sponsored' and includes the company's logo, name, and website URL. The headline is 'Deliveroo - Food Delivery - Meal Deals, Up To 25% Off'. The description states: 'Deliveroo brings drool-worthy dishes straight to your door' and '✓ Business identity verified'. Below the description are three buttons: 'Grab a Gift Card', 'Discover Tasty Discounts', and 'Shopping'. A red box highlights the app extension area, which includes the Apple App Store logo, the text 'Available on the App Store', and an 'Install' button with a download icon. At the bottom, there is a tag icon and the text 'Up to 25% off Meal Deals'.

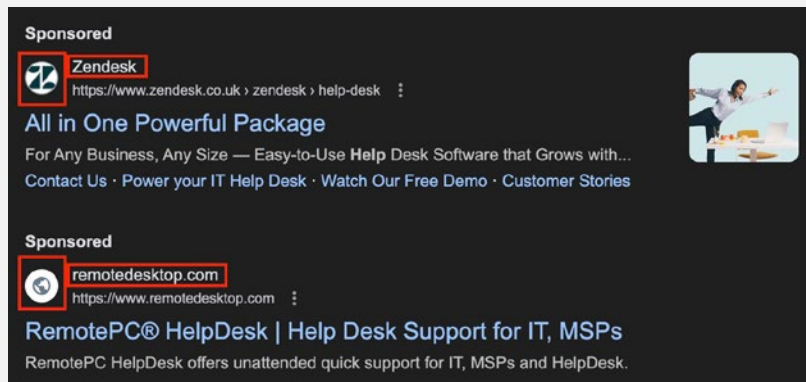
App Extensions

Google Ads app extensions are designed to drive a user to install and engage with a business app - likely where a bulk of the transactions or core KPIs are made. These are largely triggered on mobile or tablet devices since desktops aren't as reliant on applications; most users rely on web pages to meet their needs. However, this does not mean they can't appear on desktop devices.

Only use app extensions if you have KPIs focused on app visits, transactions or downloads. Otherwise, you could be wasting your money.

Business Name Extensions and Business Logo Extensions

Business name and logo extensions can only be unlocked once you've completed advertiser verification. Advertisers who complete advertiser verification can input the name and logo they want their ads to appear next to. If you don't complete advertiser verification, the domain name will be used, and a placeholder image will be used instead. More than anything, these extensions make your business look more credible in the search results.

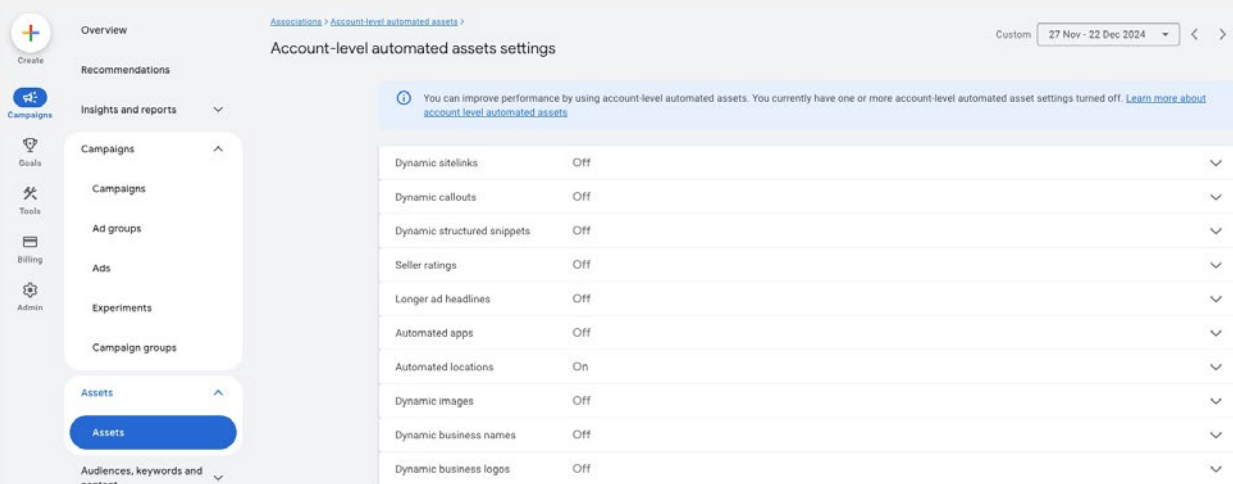


Account-level automated assets

Account-level automated assets are a hidden feature by Google, which defaults to 'on' when you create a new account. Numerous automated assets are enabled, like dynamic sitelinks, dynamic callouts, seller ratings, longer ad headlines and dynamic images. These can be really harmful to performance, especially if you're unaware of them.

By leaving these on, Google Ads will set up its own sitelinks, callouts or images based on your website content or even change your ad copy to use headlines you haven't approved. We'd highly recommend turning a majority of these off, so you have more control over the copy shown to your users.

To find these, go to: *Assets > More > Account-level automated assets > More > Advanced Settings*



Measuring Ad Extension Performance

Just like ad performance, you're able to see how individual ad extensions have performed across different metrics. However, the performance of these metrics can be masked. When looking at performance, you will want to go to *Segment > This Extension vs Other*

☐	Asset	Level	Status	↑ Impr.	Clicks	CTR	Avg. CPC	Cost	Conversions	Cost / conv.	Conv. rate
☐	Contact Us Enquire about any of our services here. We'd love to hear from you.	Campaign	Eligible	1,099	46	4.19%	£7.09	£326.24	2.00	£163.12	4.35%
	Other			1,099	46	4.19%	£7.09	£326.24	2.00	£163.12	4.35%
	This extension			1,099	0	0.00%	—	£0.00	0.00	—	—

When you do this, you'll see two boxes below your ad extension, 'other' and 'this extension'. The 'other' segment shows you the performance of all users who have seen this extension as part of an ad.

If the search user clicks the responsive search ad, this will be classed as a click for this extension, since it's contributed to the click.

The 'this extension' segment is a much better way of seeing how an ad extension has actually performed. From the example above, despite recording 1,099 impressions, no clicks actually came through the extension itself; instead, all 46 clicks came through the responsive search ad.

This would imply that this sitelink extension is being shown to the users, but the clicks are going to the ad URL rather than the sitelink URL, suggesting that the main purpose of this sitelink extension is to take up more ad space.

Overtaking complete

The vast number of ad extensions available can significantly increase your chances of a user clicking through to your website.

Our suggestions would be to test all relevant ad extensions for your organisation and measure which ones work best for your organisation.

While more ad extensions are better, remember to check that your ad messaging aligns with your website and that the pages you are pointing users to align with your digital marketing KPIs.

If your extensions are not pointing users to optimised pages, you could be doing more harm than good, and giving your competitors a big advantage.



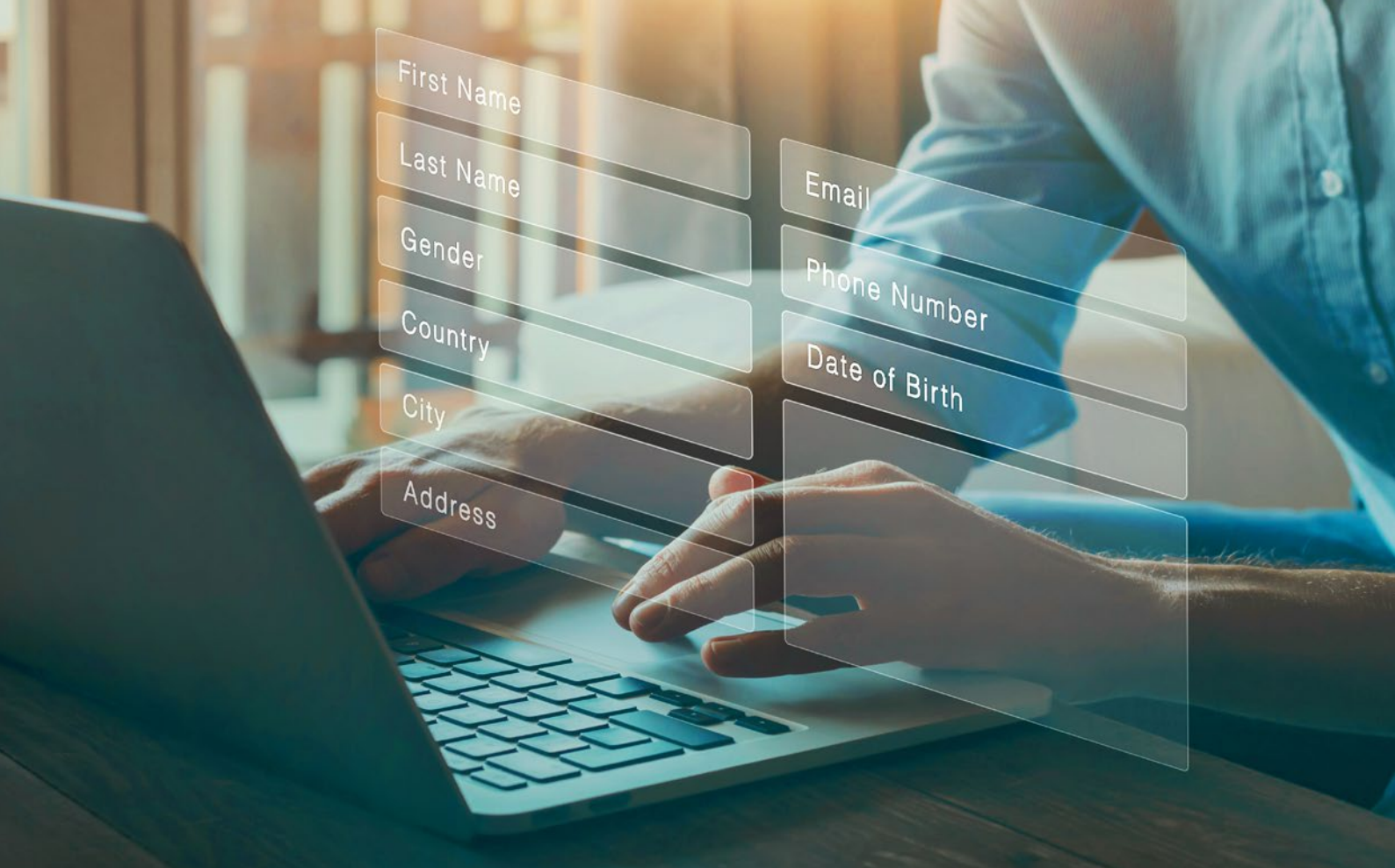
Chapter takeaways

- ▼ Ad extensions are the extra little boost your ads need to convince a user to click your ad over a competitor's ad or an organic listing.
- ▼ There are 15 different Google Ads extensions you can use within Google Ads.
- ▼ Add as many relevant ad extensions (assets) for your organisation. By providing more information for users and making your ads more prominent on the results page, this can help improve your click through rates!

Chapter 5

Conversion Tracking

Conversion tracking is potentially the most crucial component of your Google Ads account. But why is that? What actually is conversion tracking? And most importantly, how can you ensure you are tracking conversions correctly for your Google Ads campaigns?



An Introduction to Conversion Tracking

Depending on the market that you are in, your goals and objectives will differ, and the steps your website users take along the conversion path will also vary.

For example, an online store selling sustainable jewellery is likely to want to track purchases made on their website. In contrast, a B2B organisation might have a longer sales cycle, requiring quotes and direct communication with customers once they've filled out a form on their website. With this in mind, it is essential to consider and understand what conversions are important to you and the role each interaction your users take plays in driving prospects down your sales funnel.

Why is this so important for PPC campaigns? Well, Google Ads can quickly become a costly and unprofitable marketing channel based upon a few simple clicks within your conversion settings. Without accurate conversion tracking, it becomes much more challenging for both you and Google to determine which campaigns and strategies are effective and which are not.

Google Tag Manager (GTM) vs GA4 Conversion Goals

Here at Splitpixel, we frequently audit a variety of different Google Ad accounts across a range of sectors. One of the most common issues we run into when auditing accounts is that they utilise and rely upon GA4 imported conversions as their primary goals.

For a number of reasons, we advise using Google Tag Manager conversion tags rather than simply importing your GA4 goals in and leaving it at that.

Here's why we recommend GTM conversions over GA4 conversions:

- GA4 conversion imports may not capture all conversions. We've experienced instances where clients are using GA4 tags as secondary conversions, and their purchase tags fire almost half the number of conversions as compared to those fired through their GTM conversion tag. A real-life example can be observed below.
- GA4 doesn't support view through conversions – a potential issue particularly for mid to top of the funnel campaigns.
- GA4 imports can experience import delays compared to that of GTM conversions.

Purchase Account-default goal 15 of 15 campaigns					
☐ Conversion action	Action optimisation ↓	Conversion source	All conv.	All conv. value	Status
☐ Purchases	Primary	Website	73.00	6,247.36	Active
☐ Checkout Page	Secondary	Website	101.00	0.00	Active
☐ GA4 (web) purchase	Secondary	Website (Google Analytics (GA4))	36.72	2,890.26	Active

Setting Up Google Ads GTM Conversions

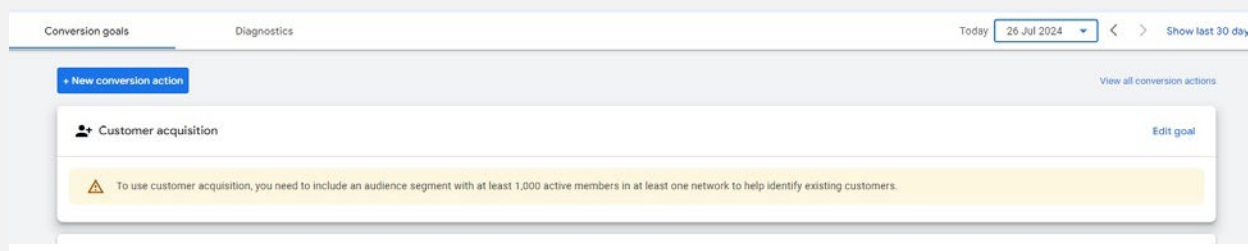
Setting conversions up inside Google Tag Manager enables you to create and assign a specific trigger for your different conversions. This is achieved by creating a new conversion in your Google Ads account, where you will then be provided with a Conversion ID and Label to assign to your new conversion tag inside GTM.

You can then set the tag to fire based on different triggers. If, for example, a user lands on a thank you page after submitting your form, you can add the URL of the thank you page as the page view trigger, meaning when a user fills out your form and lands on the thank you page, this will fire your Google Ads conversion tag.

Here's a quick step by step guide on how to get started.

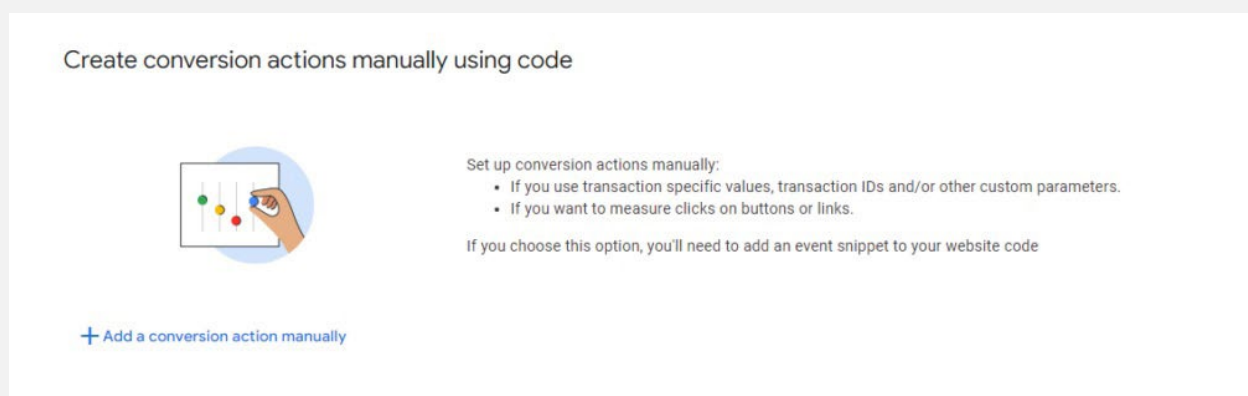
Step 1

Select Tools and Settings >> Measurements >> Conversions >> New conversion action



Step 2

Select Website >> Enter your website domain >> Create conversion actions manually using code >> Add a conversion action manually



Step 3

Fill out the conversion action details >> Save and continue

In most cases you will want to set any ecommerce purchases to count every conversion. However, for conversions such as a contact form submission, in most cases its best practice to set the conversion count to 'one' – i.e. you don't want Google to count multiple of the same conversions for the same user.

Conversion action details

 Conversion actions created manually need to be added to your website's code. When you're finished creating conversion actions, you'll get instructions for setting them up on your website

Goal and action optimisation	Purchases, Primary action	▼
Conversion name	Purchase GTM Conversion Tag	▼
Value	Use different values. If there's no value, use £20.	▼
Count	Every conversion	▼
Click-through conversion window	90 days	▼
Engaged-view conversion window	3 days	▼
View-through conversion window	1 day	▼
Attribution	Data-driven Recommended	▼
Enhanced conversions	Not configured	▼

Enable Enhanced CPC to help increase conversions in campaigns currently using manual CPC bidding ⓘ
You can adjust your bid strategy at any time in campaign settings.

☒

Step 4

In this example we will use Google Tag Manager >> Copy/note down the Conversion ID and Conversion Label/s

Set up with a Google tag

Email instructions to your webmaster

Use Google Tag Manager

Install the Google Ads conversion tracking tag

Use Google Tag Manager to [install the Google Ads conversion tracking tag](#).

Conversion ID

Conversion labels
Find below the conversion labels for the conversion actions that you have created

Purchase | GTM Conversion Tag

Next steps
Make sure that you add a [Conversion Linker tag](#) and configure it to fire on all of your web pages.
If you use AMP pages, you'll need a separate container. Add this information to that container on your AMP pages as well.

Step 5

Open/create your Google Tag Manager Account >> Create new Tag >> Tag Configuration >> Choose Google Ads Tag Type >> Google Ads Conversion Tracking >> Copy in your Conversion ID and Labels from the previous step.

The screenshot shows the 'Tag Configuration' page in Google Tag Manager. At the top, it says 'Tag Configuration'. Below that, 'Tag Type' is set to 'Google Ads Conversion Tracking'. A green checkmark indicates 'Conversion Linker tag found in container.' Below this, there are five input fields: 'Conversion ID', 'Conversion Label', 'Conversion Value', 'Transaction ID', and 'Currency Code'. Each field has a small icon of a building with a flag. At the bottom, there is a checkbox labeled 'Provide product-level sales data' which is currently unchecked.

Step 6

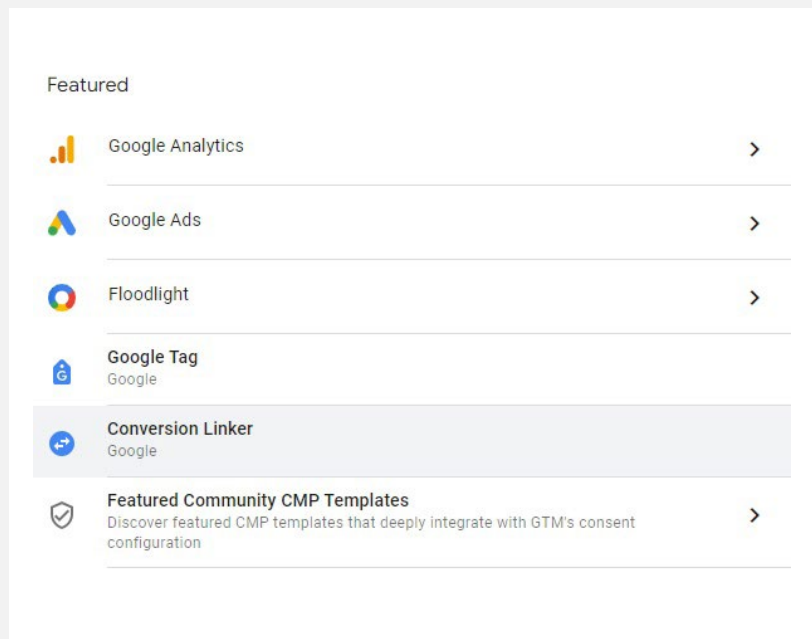
Choose a trigger >> This is where you then need to create the correct trigger for your conversion.

For example you may want the Tag to fire on a certain thank you page, or when a user clicks a call button on your website.

The screenshot shows the 'Trigger Configuration' page in Google Tag Manager. At the top, it says 'Trigger Configuration'. Below that, 'Trigger Type' is set to 'Page View'. Below this, it says 'This trigger fires on' followed by 'Page URL contains thank-you'.

Step 7

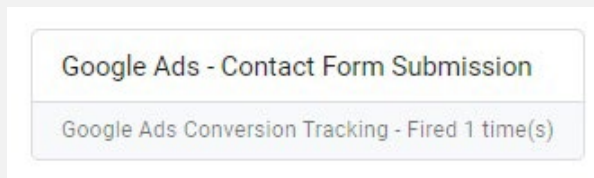
Make sure to add the conversion linker tag to your GTM Account >> Set a trigger for 'All page views'.



Step 8

Publish the Tag Manager container >> Open preview mode (next to submit) >> Test your Tag.

If the setup has worked, when firing the trigger your tag should show up under 'Tags fired' in preview mode.



Step 9

Make sure to test your Conversion tracking on a regular basis to ensure they are all working as intended.

Primary vs Secondary Conversions

When deciding on the conversions to add to your Google Ads account, it's important to define how each conversion will be used. Google allows you to create both primary and secondary conversions. So, what's the difference?

When using a smart bidding strategy, Google will optimise and target users better positioned to achieve your primary conversion/s. This could be a form fill, an online purchase, or simply clicking a call button on your website.

These types of conversions are what we often like to refer to as macro conversions – essentially the main goals you want users to engage with on your website.

Secondary conversions are actions you still want to track but are not necessarily the ultimate end goal. For example, this could be a user landing on the contact page or adding a product to their basket. These are what we would define as more micro conversions – actions you want users to take as part of the sales path and metrics you'd like to report on, but they are not valued as important as the macro conversions.

Google will simply observe secondary conversions and not optimise for them, so make sure you choose wisely on your primary and secondary conversions.

In a shopping campaign, purchases would most likely be marked as the primary conversion. However, an add to basket goal may be added as a secondary conversion. More add to baskets should lead to more purchases, but ultimately you want to optimise for purchases, not just add to baskets.

As a general rule of thumb, we recommend setting your main Google Tag Manager goals as primary conversions and any GA4 goals as secondary. That way, you also avoid duplicated primary conversion data.

You can also create custom goals inside your conversions tab that enable you to combine multiple conversions into one. Bear in mind that conversion actions included in a custom goal are used for both bidding and reporting, irrespective of whether they are set as primary or secondary conversions.

In addition to this you can set campaign specific goals as opposed to account default goals, enabling you to optimise for specific conversions depending on the campaign.

Advanced Google Ads Tracking Strategies

Now that we've covered the basics, it's time to move on to a couple of more advanced strategies if you're looking to take your ads game to the next level.

Remember, each Google Ads account is different, so just because a certain type of tracking works for one account, doesn't mean it will benefit your account. It's always important to test, review, and optimise.

Offline Conversions

Your Google Ads account is only as good as the data you feed it.

When a user fills out a form, Google will try to find you more of these users – but what if the form fills were irrelevant enquiries, whether bot spam or not? A user filling out a contact form doesn't always mean they converted into a paying customer.

This is where we can introduce offline conversions to tackle this potential issue.

Offline conversion tracking allows you to feed data back to Google on conversions that have gone through the entire sales funnel and eventually converted. Without this data, Google could well be optimising for conversions that are of low quality.

If you're tracking form submissions without offline conversion tracking, Google will not be able to differentiate between a spam form submission and a high-quality customer enquiry, therefore they may continue to send positive signals for the spam enquiries when going after new conversions.

Good quality data will most always outperform low quality data. The more accurate data you can feed Google, the better chance it has of pulling in more high-value conversions.

Example

1. User fills out an enquiry form.
2. Their information is passed into your CRM/CMS, including a GCLID based on their Google Ads click (usually found in the URL of a Google Ads click).
3. Your sales team contact the lead (offline – email, phone, etc.).
4. The lead converts.
5. You then pass the sales data back into your Google Ads Account, using the GCLID to match it against the click data.
6. You can then analyse what keywords, search terms, locations, times, etc are driving the most valuable conversions. Google will also then use this data as signals for future bids.

It may seem like extra work, but it's worth it – you're able to identify and optimise for the leads that you know will convert.

Enhanced Conversions

Enhanced conversions allow you to track conversions more accurately within your Google Ads account. By sending hashed first-party data to Google, it is matched to signed-in Google Accounts, enabling better attribution of campaign conversions.

For example if a user was signed in to their Google Account but viewed your ad on a different device, it enables you to recover conversions that otherwise would have been lost. When users fill out a form, their data such as email address or phone number, is hashed using a one-way algorithm. This ensures accurate conversion tracking while maintaining user privacy, and can result in ranging uplifts in conversion percentages.

Profit tracking

Profit tracking can be very beneficial, particularly for ecommerce and shopping campaigns. While it's important to drive campaigns to maximise return on ad spend (ROAS), focusing solely on revenue rather than profit can be misleading, especially for Google.

As an example, if you sell a product for £100 and another for £75 a bid strategy such as Target ROAS may prioritise bidding on the £100 product.

However, the profit margin on the £100 product may in fact be lower, so you could achieve a better overall return by selling more of the £75 product – and this is where profit tracking comes in handy.

There are different tools available online to help get started and simplify setting up your profit tracking. Websites such as ProfitMetrics⁴ can be a good starting point should you need help setting up profit tracking.

Chapter takeaways

- ▼ Conversion tracking is one of, if not the most important part of your Google Ads Account.
- ▼ Use GTM conversion tags over GA4 conversions.
- ▼ Make sure to accurately define your primary and secondary conversions.
- ▼ Test conversions frequently to avoid data issues.
- ▼ Use more advanced conversion tracking strategies, such as offline conversion tracking, to enhance the quality of your data.



Chapter 6

Bid

Strategies

Picking the right Google Ads bid strategy for search campaigns can be quite a daunting task, especially if you're new to Google Ads. Choosing the wrong strategy can limit your Google Ads performance, seeing you waste your budget – so we're here to break down what each strategy means, and which one you should be using for your search campaigns.

Bid strategies are catalysts to how much your account will spend per day. Being on the wrong strategy may grind your campaigns to a halt, and allow your competitors to overtake you.

There are two kinds of bid strategies – smart bidding, and the snappily named non-smart bidding.

What's the difference?

The simple difference is that smart bidding strategies use your previous conversion data to help set a bid. Google's algorithm uses machine learning to understand how likely someone is to convert after clicking your ad. If a user is likely to convert, Google might bid more for that user, but if a user isn't likely to convert, it might not show your ad to that user at all.

Non-smart bidding doesn't use any conversion signals to aid its bids – these bids can either be set by yourself or by the native set up of the non-smart bidding strategy.

Non-smart bidding strategies

There are four bid strategies that don't use smart bidding; Manual CPC, Enhanced CPC (eCPC), Maximise Clicks, and Target Impression Share.

These strategies should be used in the following instances:

- ▼ You're launching a new campaign with little optimisation data on the account (i.e. no negative keyword lists available).
- ▼ You've got a small monthly budget (which might not warrant a smart bidding strategy).
- ▼ You've got no conversion tracking set up in the account (meaning smart bidding is unusable here).

Manual CPC and Enhanced CPC

Manual CPC is where you decide the bid of the keyword you want to target. For example, if I wanted to bid £1, Google Ads will only ever bid £1 for my chosen keyword.

Enhanced CPC is a semi-automated strategy and slightly different to Manual CPC, so it means that if my bid is £1, Google could potentially double the bid to try to reach a user it feels would convert on my website (therefore this bid strategy should only be used if you do have conversions set-up in your account).

This is one of the most popular strategies for new campaign launches because it allows the marketer to control how much they spend on clicks, safely knowing Google will never overspend for a click.

Note, however, that as of October 2024, new campaigns will no longer be able to use an enhanced CPC bid strategy since this is being sunsetted by Google.

Maximise Clicks

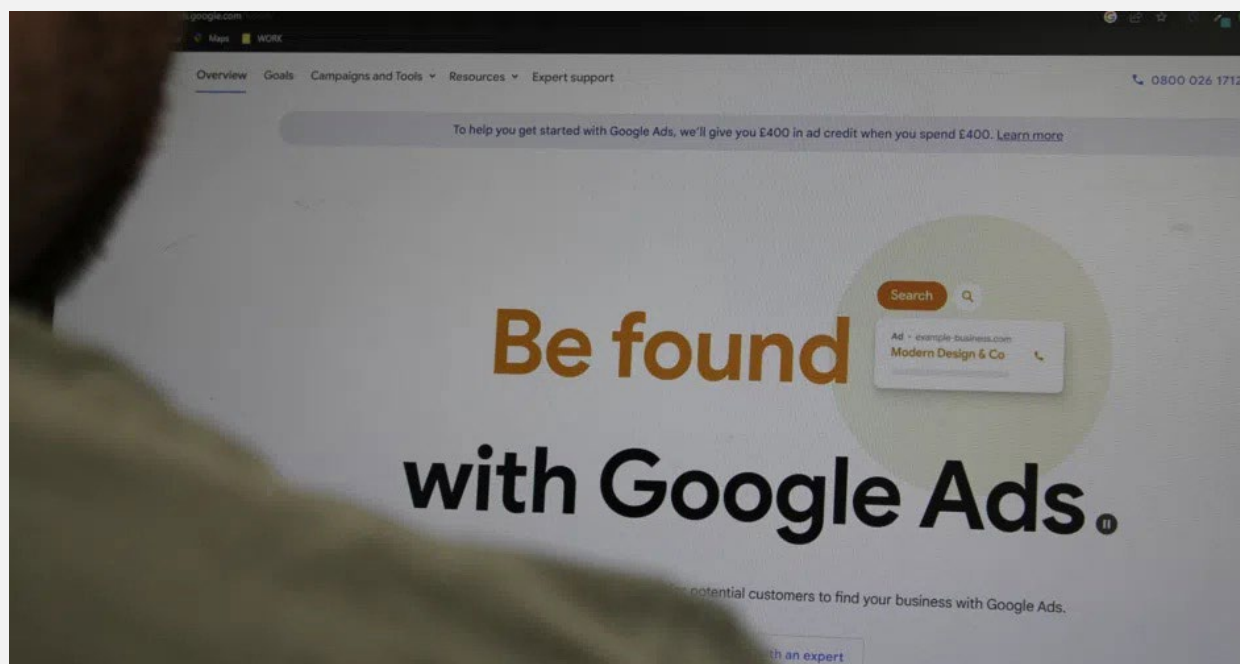
Maximise Clicks is similar to Manual CPC, except the goal here is for Google Ads to literally go after as many clicks as possible. You can set a Maximum CPC limit here – for example, a £1 limit, which Google Ads will never go over.

The difference to manual CPC here is that the keyword bid is set at the campaign level, rather than the keyword level. Beware, as setting a campaign-level CPC can limit the performance of specific keywords, especially if the CPC limit is set lower than the individual keyword's estimated cost.

Target Impression Share

Target impression share is one of the least used bid strategies in Google Ads. It allows you to tell Google to go after a specific search impression share. This is particularly good for branded campaigns, i.e. you want your brand campaign to rank on 80% of all searches for your brand. Google will then optimise its bids to rank towards that percentage.

While all of these strategies have great uses, your Google Ads environment can change, and sometimes switching to a more optimal bid strategy that better suits your circumstances can yield better results – just like an F1 team changing their tyres when it starts raining.



Smart Bidding Strategies

Conversion tracking is required to use Google Ads' smart bidding strategies. These goals should marry up with the key performance indicators you want to achieve through Google Ads, whether these are purchases through an ecommerce site, business-to-business lead generation form fills, or charities and non-profits looking to increase donation revenues or volunteers.

If your conversion tracking is set up correctly, once you've seen a sufficient number of conversions, you're going to want to move your campaigns across to one of the following bid strategies. Ideally, you will have at least 15-30 conversions per month before using smart bidding.

What if I'm struggling to achieve 15 conversions a month?

It may be that you only achieve a couple of high-quality leads a month, so your conversion numbers are low. While you might only be targeting macro conversions in the account, consider if there are any opportunities to include micro conversions too. For example, before a user fills out a contact form, are they downloading PDFs or resource files about your services? Could these events be something you could include on your landing pages that may help drive your conversions column above 15 per month?

Maximise Conversions

Maximise Conversions is the most popular bid strategy to use when switching from a non-smart bid strategy to a smart bidding strategy. This bid strategy will use your previous conversion data to aid the bids, using audience signals to determine how likely a user is to convert on your website.

If Google's algorithm believes the user is likely to convert, it may be that Google bids higher for that user, but lower for a user if it believes they will not convert. Because of this, you have no control over the bids Google sets, and this can often lead to higher CPCs compared to a non-smart bidding strategy. Hence, it's crucial that correct conversion tracking is in place, so Google is using the correct data to aid its future bids.

Maximise Conversion Value

Maximise Conversion Value bidding works basically the exact same as Maximise Conversions, but will prioritise the conversion actions that contain a value. This is mainly used by ecommerce businesses which have product values assigned to their products. Google will bid more for users who it believes will return a high conversion value (i.e. it will bid more for a user wanting to make a £100 purchase compared to a £20 purchase).

These two bid strategies are the most aggressive on Google Ads by far. It's because you give the full reigns to Google Ads, and allow the algorithm to deduce the bids on its own.

Target cost-per-acquisition (target CPA or tCPA)

tCPA is where the marketer sets the CPA for Google's algorithm to aim for. This should be set based on recent performance, likely over the past 30 or 90 days. By setting a tCPA, you're telling Google to use your conversion data to only go after users who are highly likely to return the tCPA you've set. This strategy is relatively safe, as you're telling Google to "maintain" performance, rather than go after as many conversions as possible.

Target return on ad spend (target ROAS or tROAS)

tROAS is the same as tCPA, but instead of providing a tCPA, you're telling Google to go after a ROAS percentage. ROAS is your conversion value (revenue) divided by your costs.

The danger with these target bid strategies is that if the CPA/ROAS is set quite high and is ambitious, Google Ads will be even "safer" with who it shows its ads to; these users will likely be highly likely to convert on your site. The algorithm will rarely show your ads to 'cold' traffic, and therefore not allow any top-of-funnel marketing activity via your PPC ads.

If you find that your campaigns are struggling to meet your tCPA or tROAS goals, you'll notice that your spend on these campaigns will be falling. To combat this, you might want to relax your targets.

If your campaigns' performance suddenly drops, it might be a sign to switch your bid strategy either back to max conversions or even a manual bid strategy.

Extra Tips: Bid Strategy Learning Status and Bid Adjustments

Bid Strategy Learning Status

If you've launched a Google Ads campaign before, you might have noticed your campaign receives the status "Bid Strategy Learning". This often occurs when you've changed your bid strategy, launched a new campaign or paused a top spending keyword.

This status typically lasts five days on your account, and is to inform you that the Google Ads algorithm is learning the new data due to the variable changes you've made to the account. It's best to leave your campaigns alone in this time and not make any account changes.

Performance at this time should also be taken with a pinch of salt, as the Google Ads algorithm will be re-learning keyword performance.

Bid Adjustments

Our final tip is that a smart bidding strategy will ignore bid adjustments made to campaigns. For example, increasing bids for London by +50% will be ignored by maximise conversions or target bid strategies, as well as target impression share, but will not be ignored by manual CPC, enhanced CPC, and max clicks bid strategies. This is because Google's algorithm prioritises its own smart bidding signals over manual strategies.

Chapter takeaways

- ▼ Smart bidding strategies use your previous conversion data to help set a bid. Google's algorithm uses machine learning to understand how likely someone is to convert after clicking your ad.
- ▼ We'd recommend using non-smart bidding if; you're launching a new campaign with little conversion data on the account, you've got a small monthly budget, or you've got no conversion tracking set-up in the account.
- ▼ If your conversion tracking is set up correctly, once you've seen a sufficient number of conversions, consider moving your campaigns across to smart-bidding.
- ▼ 'Bid strategy learning' refers to the Google Ads algorithm learning the new data due to the variable changes you've made to the account.

Chapter 7

Regular Optimisation

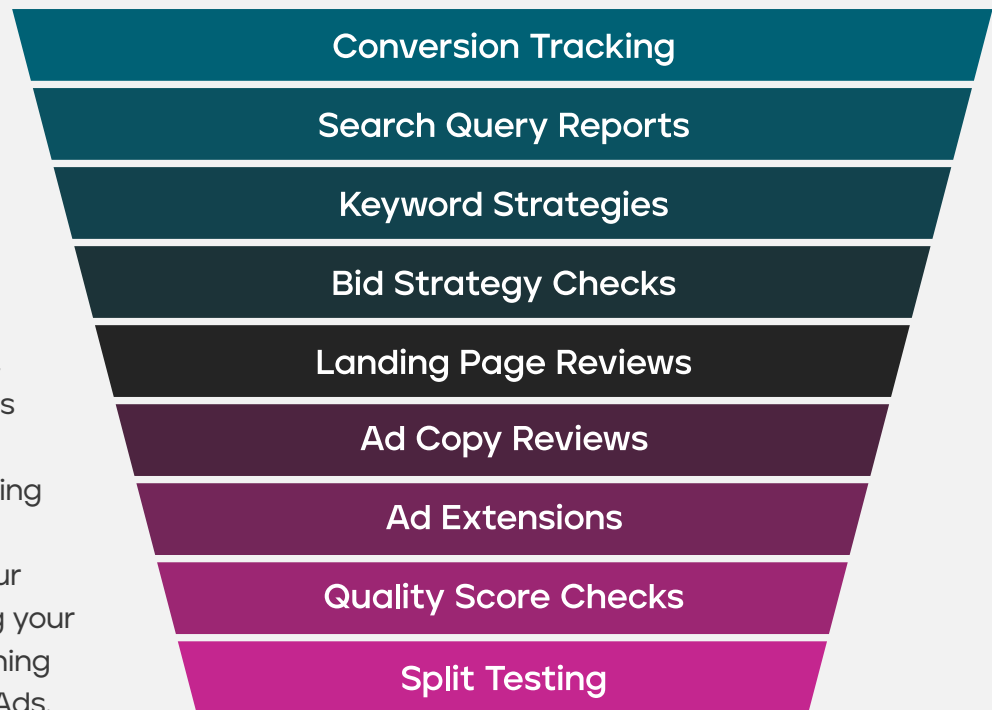
Optimising your account is essential to performance – regular check-ins and completing necessary tasks allows you to identify the weak points of performance, which campaigns to invest more money in, and when to make data-driven decisions.

Often, advertisers simply enable Google Ads and let it run in the background – your campaigns need a little love and attention every now and then.

PPC Optimisation Funnel

Here at Splitpixel, we use an optimisation funnel for each account we manage, so we know what improvements need to be made to an account before we can progress any further.

Because every account is different, some parts of the funnel may be in different orders. For example, if your landing pages are very poor, or if they have slow loading speeds, you should consider putting your focus into improving your website before pushing money into Google Ads.

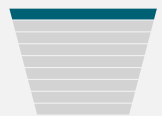


Conversion Tracking

Google Ads conversion tracking is arguably one of the most important aspects of the account. Having some form of tracking setup helps you identify if Google Ads is driving conversions, and if so, through which campaigns, keywords and ads. If you don't have any conversion tracking set up, you'll never know which keywords drove which conversions. A lack of data in your account will make decision-making really difficult. You'll notice that you'll be relying on gut feeling, rather than making data-driven choices.

You'll also be eliminating yourself from using any smart bidding strategy. Smart bidding strategies use the account's conversion data to aid its future bids and to go after users who are likely to convert. If your account doesn't have conversion tracking set up, you're limiting yourself to manual bidding.

Every Google Ads account should have some form of conversion tracking set up. If you do have conversion tracking set up, you should task yourself to regularly check



that your tags are firing correctly, be it through testing a form or purchase. Any slight changes to your website could impact your tag's triggers, and before you know it, your account has missed out on tracking a whole bunch of data. We'd suggest checking each one of your tags fires correctly every couple of weeks.

Search Query Reports



Google Ads search query reports help advertisers identify what users have been searching for to trigger your ad. You can find this report by going to *Campaigns > Insights and reports > Search terms*.

If you notice that your campaigns aren't performing as expected, the search term report is where you should go. You'll want to make sure that the keyword you're targeting matches the search queries they're triggering.

For example, if you're targeting the keyword "drop earrings", but all of the search term traffic is related to "hoop earrings", and you don't sell hoop earrings, the users who are clicking through to your landing page are probably not having a very good user experience. If this is happening, you're going to want to add negative keywords. In this example, negating "hoop earrings" from your drop earrings campaign will prevent your ad from appearing on these search queries.

On new accounts and campaigns, where comprehensive negative keywords and negative keyword lists aren't in place, you'll notice that irrelevant search queries will be picked up - a lot!

If you're using Phrase or Broad match, this will be because of close variants. Close variants are search terms which Google thinks are relevant to the keyword but don't quite use the phrase in the keyword.

"Hoop earrings" as a search query being triggered by the keyword "drop earrings" is a good example, since Google is able to recognise that "hoop" and "drop" earrings are a form of earrings, it may decide that this is a close variant. Sadly, there is no way to disable close variants inside Google Ads.

☐ Search term	Match type	Added/Excluded	Campaign	Ad group	Keyword	↓ Clicks
☐ split pixel	Exact match (close variant)	None	Branded (SP 24)	Branded	[splitpixel]	26
☐ splitpixel	Exact match	✓ Added	Branded (SP 24)	Branded	[splitpixel]	25
☐ split pixel	Phrase match	None	Branded (SP 24)	Branded	"splitpixel"	1
☐ splitpixel creative ltd	Exact match (close variant)	None	Branded (SP 24)	Branded	[splitpixel]	1
☐ splitpixel creative limited	Exact match (close variant)	None	Branded (SP 24)	Branded	[splitpixel]	0
☐ splitpixel huddersfield	Exact match (close variant)	✓ Added	Branded (SP 24)	Branded	[splitpixel]	0

New accounts should be having their search queries checked very frequently, every few days ideally, so that you save as much ad spend as possible. You'll notice that accounts or campaigns that have been live a long time won't need search query report reviews as frequently for two reasons:

1. Comprehensive search query reports have been done over a number of months and years, to where most irrelevant negatives have already been negated.
2. Google's machine learning will have become accustomed to understanding which search queries produce the best results (as long as the campaign is using smart bidding).

If your account and campaigns have been running for a long time, and you're noticing that you don't need to add in lots of negatives each time you check the search query report, consider scaling back the frequency of you needing to check these, and invest your time into areas lower down the funnel.

Keyword Reviews



If you're largely happy with the search queries coming through your account, you'll want to look into the keywords you're currently targeting. To perform a keyword review, you'll want to access your keyword report, by going to *Campaigns > Audiences, keywords and content > Search keywords*.

Filter your keywords by spend. This way, you'll see which keywords have spent the most money in your chosen time period.

Now you have your filters, you'll want to find keywords with a high spend, but low conversion numbers. These are known as 'fatty keywords'. As an advertiser, your job is to cut out the fat, or at least identify why that keyword is performing poorly. Before pausing a keyword based on poor performance, ask yourself:

1. Is this keyword driving the correct search queries?

To check, go back to your search term report, and filter to check search queries only triggered by this keyword. If there are large disparities between search queries and your keyword, consider negating these, before pausing your keyword, since these irrelevant search queries aren't a true reflection of the keyword.

2. Is your keyword sending users to a relevant landing page?

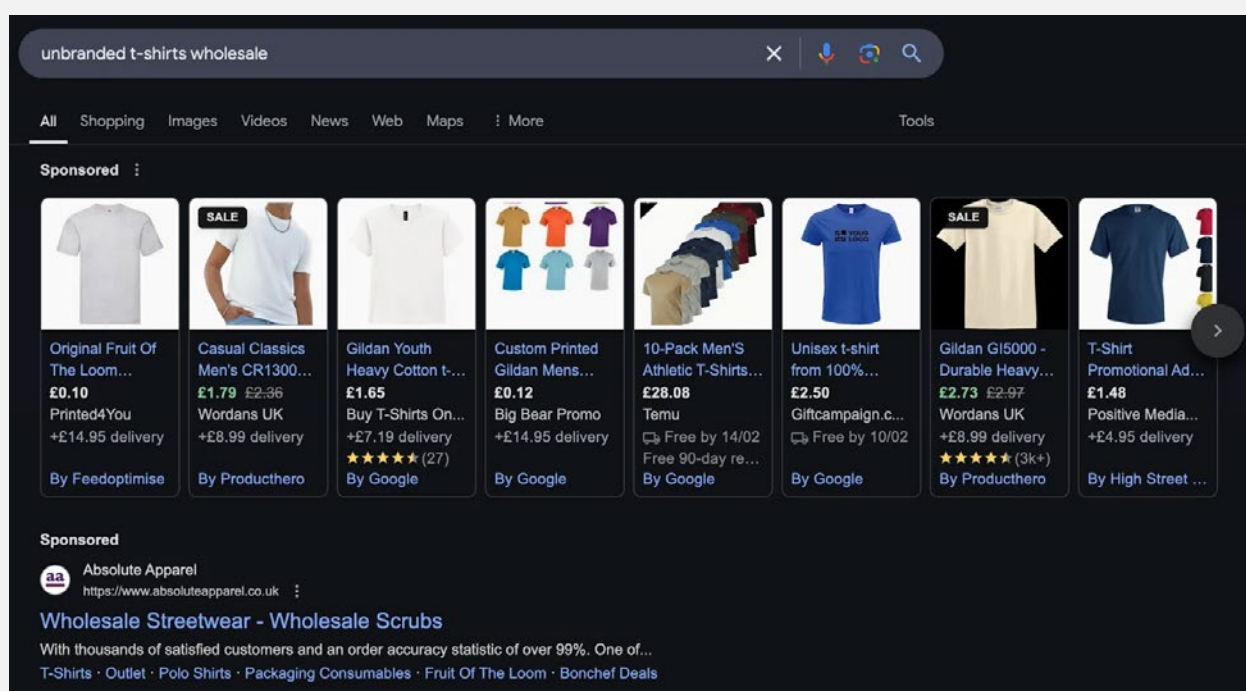
Remember, user experience is everything. If you're targeting the keyword "diamond drop earrings", but these frequently go out of stock, users who land on a page with no stock will almost always bounce off and not result in conversions. Likewise, if you target a keyword which your business rarely provides as a service, pause this keyword. Our advice would be to only ever target keywords that your landing pages mention and is a core KPI for your business. Regularly check that your keyword, landing page and KPIs are singing from the same song sheet.

3. Could your keyword be driving search queries with mixed search intent?

Even if your search queries correlate with your keywords and your landing page, could there be a hidden meaning behind the keyword you're targeting? Check this by

searching this keyword in the search results, and make sure organic listings correlate with your landing page. A common mistake is that Business-to-Business advertisers target keywords that can also have Business-to-Consumer intent. A good way to test this is if your high-spending B2B keyword is driving Google Shopping traffic on the results page – that means you’ve probably got a problem with mixed search intent.

For example, if you were a wholesaler selling t-shirts in bulk, where users had to request a quote for a minimum of 100+ quantities, you’d likely see ecommerce results next to your search ads. You’d risk your ad appearing to users who may only be looking to purchase a dozen shirts, or even just one. This is a prime example that, despite your keyword being highly relevant to your website, it contains two different types of search intent: users searching to request a quote, users searching to make a small ecommerce bulk order, and end consumers looking for new clothes.



After asking yourself these questions, and you’re still seeing poor performance, this would be the right time to pause the particular keyword. Ideally, check in on your high-spending keywords every 30 days, making sure they’re driving the right traffic to the right pages. Before pausing a keyword, make sure it’s driven enough click data. Anything with less than 100 clicks across its lifespan has not had enough click data to justify pausing.

Bid Strategy Checks

Bid strategy checks are vitally important, and their frequency can depend on which strategy you’re using. There are two types of bid strategy you can use, smart bidding strategies and non-smart bidding strategies.



If you get sufficient conversions, and you have healthy campaign budgets, you should be using smart bidding, since Google Ads can use previous conversion data to aid its future bids; optimising itself to bottom-of-funnel users.

You should be checking your bid strategies every 30 days, making sure your campaign is meeting the sufficient conversions it requires to run smart bidding efficiently (roughly 10-15 conversions a month).

If you're seeing your campaign conversions dip over time, you'll probably notice your campaign's CPC become more sporadic. If you are seeing this happen, ask yourself what could have changed to cause these conversion rate dips:

1. Is your conversion tracking working correctly?
2. Have you decreased your campaign budget?
3. Have your search queries become less relevant, or has search volume declined?
4. Have you changed your ad landing page?

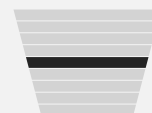
If it's a no to all of these, it may be that Google's machine learning has hit a point of inefficiency on the existing bid strategy.

In case you're running tCPA or tROAS bid strategy, it's possible that your targets are restricting performance. Make sure your targets are aligned with the actual performance of your campaign. Setting too low of a target could mean Google's machine learning isn't working as hard as possible.

As a result, the machine could be allowing your ads to appear to users high up the marketing funnel (and who are not likely to convert), wasting your marketing budget. Likewise, and arguably more harmful, a bid strategy target that is harder to achieve will only limit your ad's visibility.

If you're giving the machine unrealistic targets, the machine will simply choose to not display your ad, since it will know that it can't produce the results you're after with your budget. Making sure your bid strategy targets and your actual performance are aligned every 30 days therefore means you'll be targeting more relevant users, without negatively harming your ads' visibility.

Landing Page Reviews



If you're confident that the traffic you are sending to your website is highly relevant, and your conversion tracking is running correctly, it's time to review your landing pages.

Before you run any marketing activity in the first place, you should make sure that your landing pages are high quality, and page speeds don't negatively impact user experience. If your landing pages aren't good, we'd highly recommend investing your time into conversion rate optimisation (CRO) before pushing any paid traffic through these pages.

Sending users to an unoptimised page will only lead to a wasted ad budget. This can often lead to a sour taste in the mouth of businesses, who then blame Google Ads for driving low-quality traffic when in reality, it's unoptimised landing pages which is the main culprit for bad performance.

To analyse whether your landing pages need CRO, it's best to check whether other traffic channels suffer from low conversions first. If organic search, referral, direct and social traffic also have low conversion rates, it's further evidence that this isn't just a PPC issue, but a landing page issue. Consider checking your landing pages every 90 days.

Ad Copy Reviews

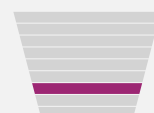


Unlike social media ads, which frequently suffer from ad fatigue (where the same users frequently see the same ad), Google search ad copy doesn't have to be as regularly checked and changed. This is because search ads can only be triggered when the advertiser's keyword is triggered, implying that the advertiser's offerings are highly relevant to the user's needs. Users don't idly search Google in the same way they idly scroll through social media, after all!

That being said, checking your ad copy should be something you're completing every 90 days. It's important to re-align any ads that might not be relevant to recent search queries.

In this scenario, it's possible the right users aren't clicking your ad because the ad messaging doesn't quite align to their search query, and as a result, this user clicks a competitor instead. Evidence that this may be occurring in your account is if your ads CTR is very low.

Ad Extensions Review



Ad extensions (also known as ad assets) are largely used by advertisers to help spruce up the ad copy, making the ad look more bulky in the search results, and taking up more ad space from competitors.

However, you are going to want to make sure that your ad extension messaging complements the keyword traffic you're going after. For example, make sure that each campaign's sitelinks are sending users to a page that contributes to achieving the advertiser's KPIs; blog or news pages typically should be avoided in this case since these are more informational and top-of-funnel (ToFu).

This isn't always necessarily the case, of course, as some blogs could link back to your core KPIs very easily (i.e. discussing why your product or service is much better than competitors). Within this review, replace or remove ad extensions which are performing poorly. Explanations on each ad asset and what to look for can be found in our ad extensions blog. We'd suggest reviewing your campaign's extensions every 90 days.

Quality Score Reviews



Google Ads quality scores are a scoring system for each of your keywords, measured on a scale from 1-10. They are made from three metrics: ad relevancy, expected CTR and landing page experience. Each keyword will be given a score based on how these three metrics are being met. Google suggests that a higher quality score will improve your ad rank and as a result, you can drive a cheaper CPC.

A high ad relevancy score is easy to achieve - you simply have to include the keyword you're targeting in your RSA's headline. While there are some unique scenarios, like bidding on a competitor's brand name or on very long-tail keywords, all your keywords should have an above-average ad relevancy score.

A high expected CTR can be tricky to achieve since expected CTR can be impacted in two separate ways:

1. If your search queries don't match your keyword intent, then the user is unlikely to click your ad.
2. If your ad doesn't have an incentive to be clicked, then your ad will naturally have a low CTR, negatively harming your expected CTR.

Your expected CTR will improve when your ad achieves a high CTR. You'll want to make sure your ad is only appearing to the correct users, and your ad contains messaging that provides an irresistible offer, to where a user feels compelled to click.

A high landing page score can only be achieved if your page is meeting your user's needs. This is indicated by variables such as how relevant your content is, the site speed, and how friendly your site is to mobile devices. Typically, if a keyword is driving a high conversion rate, it would suggest users are finding the page helpful in meeting their wants and needs.

In theory, if your search queries are aligned to your keywords, ad copy and landing page, there is no reason for your keyword to not be above a seven. However, if your keyword is below a seven, you'll want to conduct a quality score review. Starting with the poorest performing keyword, forensically analyse why that keyword might have a low score across a specific period, asking yourself:

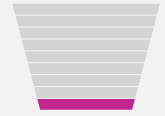
- ▼ Is this keyword driving the correct search query intent? (Expected CTR)
- ▼ Is this keyword mentioned in my ad? (Ad relevancy)
- ▼ Does the ad my keyword is triggering have a strong CTR compared to my other ads? (Expected CTR)
- ▼ After a user has clicked the ad, is the keyword or keyword theme mentioned on my landing page? If so, are users finding it easy to convert? (Landing page experience)

It's likely that Google is marking you down because your keyword is not fulfilling its potential in one of the above areas. Consider checking your keyword quality scores every 90 days.

A/B Testing

While some PPC experts say that you should always be testing different variables against one another, you should only be testing when you know that the variables in your control are working in harmony. There would be no point in split-testing two different landing pages if you know that your keywords are driving search traffic which isn't relevant to your website.

Every 90 days, we recommend identifying opportunities to split-test your campaign's bid strategy, keyword match types (exact and phrase match vs broad match), ad copy messaging or landing page changes. Our recommendation would be to identify where your ads are the weakest, and test changes to try to improve performance. Using the experiments feature, you could tell your campaigns to 50/50 split the budget between the changes across a specific date period, so you have a fair reflection of performance.



Smaller Optimisation Tasks

While we suggest following the funnel, there are some smaller checks we'd suggest completing every 90 days. These are:

- ▼ Device bids adjustments
- ▼ Location bids adjustments
- ▼ Observational audience adjustments

Being stuck with vanity metrics

You can sometimes over-optimize your account! In fact, the only way to increase performance is either to lower your tCPA or tROAS, or add some broader keywords to your account.

In this scenario, it's always best to double-check that your campaign's performance isn't creating a vanity metric. For example, if your non-brand search campaign is driving a conversion rate of 10%, ask yourself: are those conversions actually leading to high-value customers? If they aren't, then your account is driving a vanity metric; performance at face value is excellent, but the actual value it's driving is poor.

You can escape vanity metrics by using offline conversions. Regularly uploading customer data back into Google's algorithm allows you to not only see which form fill conversions became a sale, but also allows you to see which keyword triggered this high-value customer, as well as their search term.

It might be that your account has a keyword that has driven 50 form-fill conversions in three months, but these have all been low-lead quality and none of them have driven a sale. In this instance, the keyword is doing more harm than good to the account. Without offline conversion data, you'll never be able to justify pausing a keyword with a high conversion rate. However, with offline conversion data, you'll be able to identify which keywords are negatively harming your account.

Not only this, but feeding back conversion data to Google Ads can be invaluable for the algorithm since you can optimise the machine to go after more users like the data you've uploaded, something impossible to achieve without offline conversions set-up.

Setting up offline conversions often requires help from your website developer, so you'll need to reach out to your web agency to get this implemented.

Google Ads Optimisation Checklist

Download now!

Now we've gone through all of the key tasks you should be regularly completing on your Google Ads account, all you're missing now is an optimisation checklist template that you can use to stay on top of your tasks. Well, you're in luck! You can download our free optimisation checklist that we use at Splitpixel with the QR code below.



[Download now](#)

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1						
2						
3		Days Gone (This Month)	2	Weekdays Gone	2	
4		Days Remaining (This Month)	29	Weekdays	23	Weekdays Remaining
5		Days This Month	31	Weekend Days	8	
6						
7						
8		Campaign Name	Monthly Budget	Start Date	End Date	Target Spend
9		YOUR NAME	£1,000.00			£64.52
10						
11						
12						
13		When did you start PPC ads?				
14						
15						
16		Important Client Context				
17						
18						
19						
20						
21						
22						
23		Action	Search Queries	Conversion Tracking		
24		This month = Yes/No?	☐	☐		
25		Suggested Frequency	Every 10-14 Days	Every 10-14 Days		
26		Last Completed				
27		Additional Notes?				
28						

Become the Google Ads champion

Managing a Google Ads account is a lot of work, with lots of tasks and responsibilities that need to be completed across regular intervals.

All of these tasks shouldn't be left to one person – it's important to have a full team to manage an account, with key tasks delegated.



Chapter takeaways

- ▼ Regular check-ins and completing necessary tasks allows you to identify the weak points of performance.
- ▼ Every account is different, so some parts of the optimisation funnel may be more effective in different orders.
- ▼ Use our funnel or optimisation checklist sheet to help document your changes.
- ▼ You can over-optimize your account by making constant, unnecessary changes.- some changes need time to kick in and Google to learn from.
- ▼ Escape vanity metrics by using offline conversions to better track conversion quality.

Chapter 8

Shopping Ads – Multiple Routes for Success

You shouldn't always depend on a single Google Ads campaign type! Shopping campaigns offer a competitive edge by standing out on the results page with visually engaging ads that effectively showcase your product. Sometimes they may outperform the 'primary' campaign type.

With global ecommerce sales projected to reach \$8.09 trillion in 2028⁵, it's no surprise that Google's results page (SERP) is becoming increasingly crowded, especially when searching for products online.

So, where did it all begin for Google Shopping?

Originally introduced as Froogle in 2002, it started out as a free service where users could compare product prices. In 2012, it evolved into Google Shopping, where businesses began paying for product listings.

Today, Google Shopping offers two types of product listings:

1. **Free Listings:**
Where businesses can promote their products organically at no cost.
2. **Sponsored Listings:**
Businesses pay when users interact with their shopping listings.

A product listing traditionally showcases the following features, as a minimum:

Product image – typically an image of the product you are selling

Product title – the name of your product

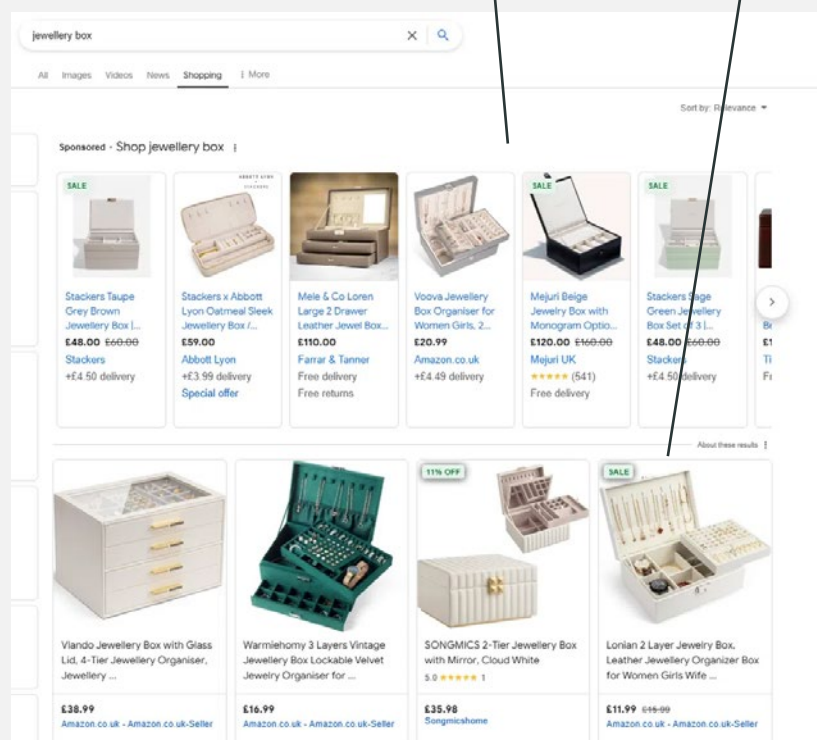
Website link – the page on your website that users will land on upon clicking your listing

Price – the cost of your product. This can also include any sale/offer pricing

Delivery information – usually outlining delivery costs and your policy on returns

Paid listings
(top row)

Free listings
(bottom row)



You will often also see product reviews assigned to products, giving a user-provided average star rating out of five.

Why Google Shopping listings are essential for ecommerce success

With over 80% of the UK population making ecommerce purchases, a figure expected to rise to 86% by 2027⁶, Google Shopping has become a valuable tool for ecommerce businesses aiming to reach their target audiences.

Let's explore some of the key benefits Google Shopping offers compared to traditional search listings:

Increased visibility and reach

The SERP is becoming increasingly populated with diverse result types, making it harder for products to stand out. Google Shopping listings provide a unique opportunity to ensure your products appear more prominently, grabbing attention amongst your competition.

Free listings

Not all listings require a marketing budget. Google Shopping supports free product listings, allowing businesses to gain organic clicks and impressions even without paid ad spend. This is particularly beneficial for smaller businesses looking to maximise visibility without significant marketing investment.

Drive transactional, bottom-of-the-funnel traffic

Shopping listings are especially effective at capturing high-intent users, those actively searching for specific products with the intent to purchase. By appearing and gaining clicks from such searches, your business can achieve higher conversion rates and attract better-quality leads.

Improved visual appeal

Google Shopping listings are visually engaging, enabling your products to stand out more effectively on the SERP. For instance, you can showcase your products in real-life scenarios. Such imagery can be particularly powerful in sectors where product presentation heavily influences buying decisions.

What you need to get started with Shopping Listings

As you might expect, Shopping listings aren't available for all businesses. Only certain websites can use structured product data to appear in the Shopping tab in Google Search results. To get started, there are three main components you need:

1. An estore
2. A Google Merchant Center Account
3. Product feed

Note: A Google Ads Account is only needed if you want to set up paid shopping listings – you can run free organic shopping listings without a Google Ads Account.

First of all, you need to set up a Google Merchant Centre Account.

Once you've set up your Merchant Center account, the next step is connecting a product data feed.

This can be done in several ways, including:

- ▼ **Manual Upload** – Manually upload a file with product information.
- ▼ **Scheduled Fetch** – Host a file on your website that contains the product data and set a regular schedule for Google to fetch updates automatically. If you use a platform such as WooCommerce, you can get the feed URL from inside your WooCommerce plugin.

We recommend using Scheduled Fetch, as it saves time and ensures any updates to your estore are reflected in your Shopping listings.

Required Product Attributes

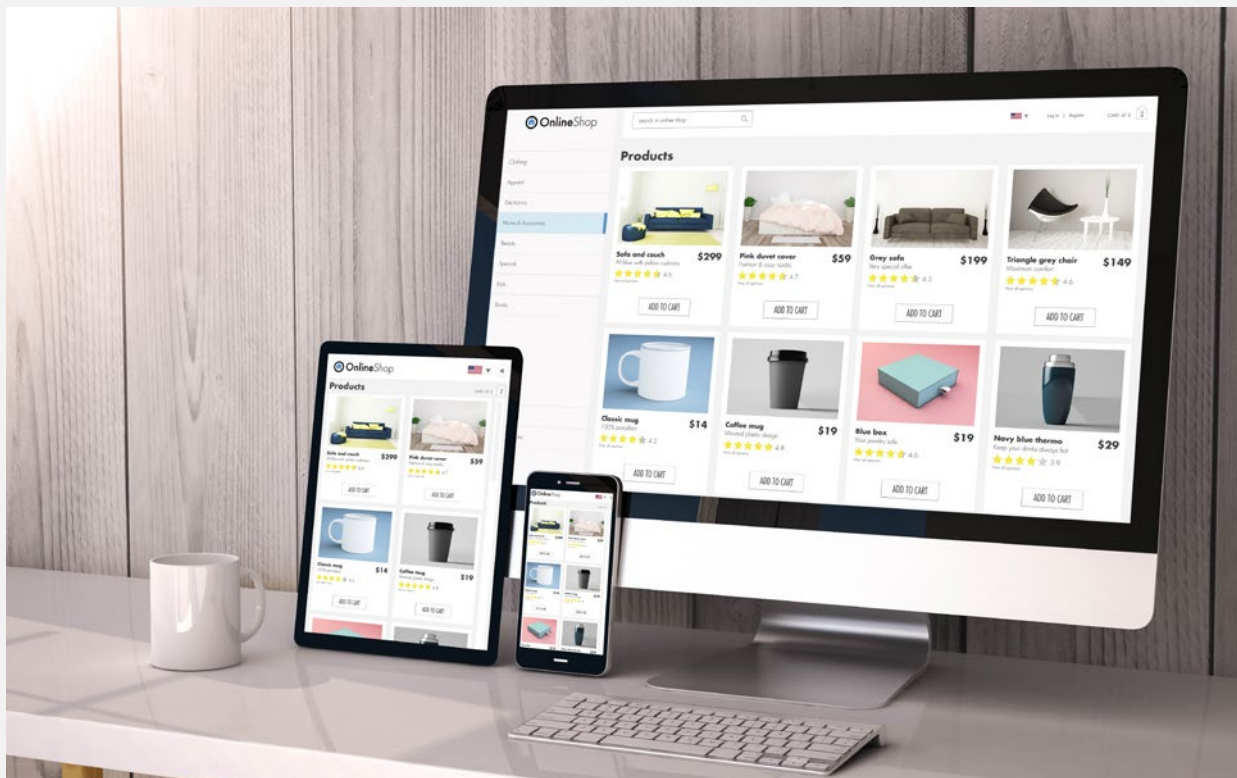
For your Shopping listings to be eligible, you must populate certain required product attributes:

- ▼ **ID [id]:** Your product's unique identifier.
- ▼ **Title [title]:** Your product's name.
- ▼ **Description [description]:** A description of your product.
- ▼ **Link [link]:** The URL of your product's landing page.
- ▼ **Image Link [image_link]:** The URL of your product's main image.
- ▼ **Availability [availability]:** Your product's stock status (e.g. in stock, out of stock).
- ▼ **Price [price]:** The price of your product.

Additional Product Attributes

There are other product attributes that can enhance your listings. The more detailed you can be with your product attributes, the better! For example, if you're selling apparel, you will also need to include additional information such as:

- ▼ **Material**
- ▼ **Colour**
- ▼ **Size**



Inside your Merchant Centre Account, you will also need to update your delivery information, such as times and costs, enabling Google to provide more accurate price comparisons for users.

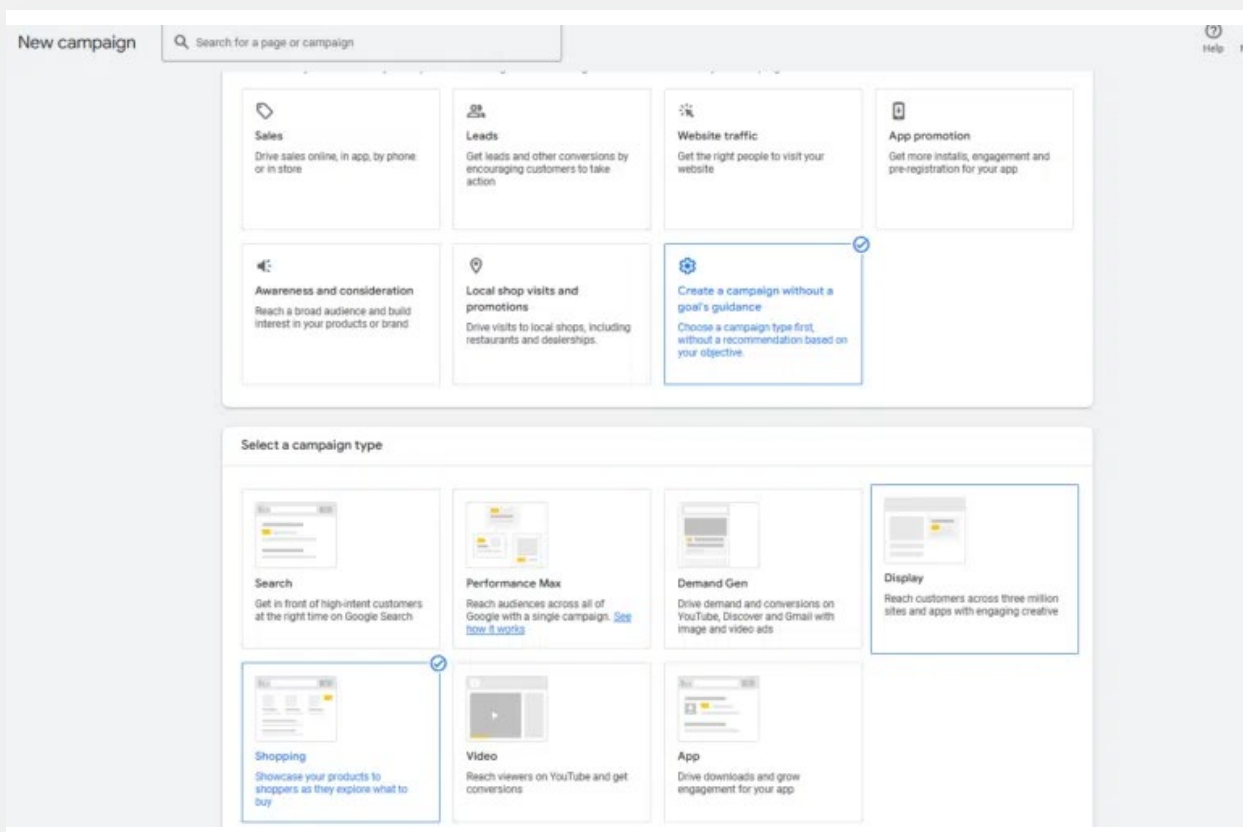
Google Merchant Center enforces strict policies and guidelines. Products that don't meet certain requirements may be disapproved, meaning they won't appear in Shopping ads or free listings until the issues are resolved. Ensuring that your data feed is accurate, comprehensive, and policy-compliant is essential to avoid disruptions in your Account.

Where possible, add as much product information as you can – this can have a positive impact on both User Experience and SEO.

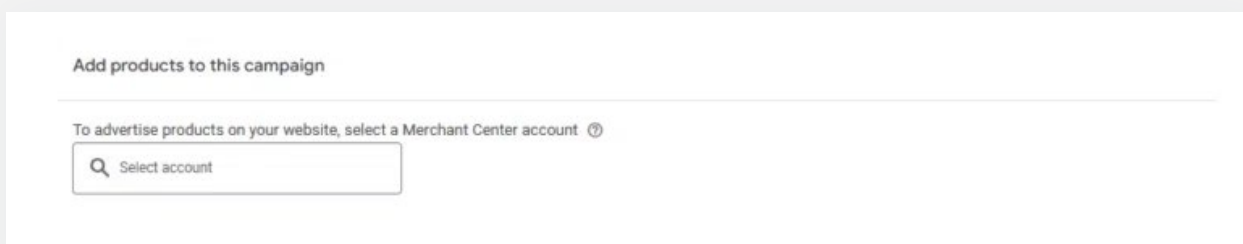
Getting started with your Google Ads Shopping Campaigns

Once you have set up your Merchant Centre account, the next step is to sync it with your Google Ads account. Try using the same email account you used to set up your Merchant Centre Account – this will simplify and speed up the linking of the two platforms.

Within Google Ads, create a new campaign and select 'Shopping' as the campaign type.



From there, you can link your Merchant Centre account to add products to the new Campaign.



Select a campaign subtype. Bear in mind that this selection can't be changed later.

☒ Performance Max campaign
Get the best of Google's automation to reach customers across all channels.

 Smart Shopping has upgraded to Performance Max. It has all the benefits of Smart Shopping, plus expanded reach. Show your ads across more inventory like YouTube in-stream, Discover feed and Search text ads – with a single campaign. [Learn more](#)

☐ Standard Shopping campaign
Pick your products, bid strategy, budget and targeting. You can show ads on the Google Search Network.

You'll then choose between a Performance Max campaign and a Standard Shopping campaign. The key difference here lies in the level of automation. A Performance Max campaign incorporates multiple ad formats (such as Display, YouTube, and Search) under a single campaign, offering a highly automated approach.

On the other hand, a Standard Shopping campaign provides greater control, allowing for more detailed optimisation. The choice of campaign will vary from business to business and can depend on various factors, such as your advertising goals and overall budgets.

Optimising Google Ads Shopping Campaign performance by Campaign types

Shopping campaigns alike can benefit greatly from segmentation. To maximise performance, consider organising your campaigns into specific Campaigns/Ad Groups.

Here are a few segmentation strategies to keep in mind when setting up your campaigns:

Product profit

Focus on profitability over revenue. A high-selling price doesn't always equal a high profit. For example, low-value items such as inexpensive accessories might generate minimal returns, so consider excluding these from your ads.

Categories

Group your products by type or brand. For instance, if you sell jewellery, you might categorise your campaigns by the product brands (e.g., Pandora or Cartier) or by product type (e.g. earrings, necklaces, rings).

Sales/clearance

If you're promoting sale or clearance items, creating separate campaigns and budgets specifically for these products can ensure they receive sufficient budget, not to be exhausted by other products.

Seasonality

Consider seasonal trends. For instance, an outdoor walking brand might have more of a selling focus on items such as coats, umbrellas and snow boots in the winter, and then focus on different products in the summer period, such as sunglasses or shorts. Grouping products by seasonality can help optimise performance during peak periods.

High-performing products

Consider segmenting products that are proven to sell well. This can help ensure your budget is allocated to items that consistently deliver strong conversion results.

If you're struggling with how to segment your products, consider using your website's main navigation menu product grouping as a framework – this is how your customers are used to dividing up your products, after all.

To refine your campaigns and ad groups, you can edit your products within each Ad Group. Locate the product group you want to adjust, click the pencil icon, and you will see the option to subdivide products using specific criteria. Simply select the products you want to include in that specific Ad Group.

Unlike Search campaigns, Shopping campaigns don't require you to add keywords. Instead, they rely on your product feed to crawl the data to match your products to relevant search queries. This makes it critical to optimise your product feed for terms

your audience is likely searching for. However, as with search campaigns, you can use negative keywords to prevent your ads from appearing for irrelevant search terms, ensuring your budget is spent effectively.

The screenshot shows a user interface for managing products. At the top, there is a dropdown menu labeled 'Subdivide All products by:' with 'Category' selected. Below this is a search bar with the text 'Search' and a magnifying glass icon. The main part of the interface is a table with the following columns: 'Product group', 'Prod...', 'Clicks', and 'Cost ...'. Each row in the table has a checkbox in the 'Product group' column. The rows are: Electronics (2 products, 0 clicks, £0.00 cost), Hardware (271 products, 60 clicks, £22.69 cost), Health & Beauty (1 product, 0 clicks, £0.00 cost), and Vehicles & Parts (1 product, 72 clicks, £0.00 cost).

☐ Product group	Prod...	Clicks	Cost ...
☐ Electronics	2	0	£0.00
☐ Hardware	271	60	£22.69
☐ Health & Beauty	1	0	£0.00
☐ Vehicles & Parts	1	72	£0.00

What bidding strategy should you apply for Shopping Campaigns?

Shopping campaigns often yield lower cost-per-clicks (CPCs) compared to that of standard search campaigns, making them a cost-effective choice for many businesses. However, selecting the right bidding strategy is crucial.

We suggest starting out with manual bidding. Initially, using a manual bidding strategy allows Google to gather data on your conversions. Once you've generated sufficient conversion data, consider moving the campaigns over to a smart bidding strategy, such as Maximise Conversion Value with a Target CPA. This automated bidding approach utilises signals from previous conversions to optimise your bids effectively.

For even more precise optimisation, you can use tools such as Profit Metrics, which focuses on Profit on Ad Spend (POAS), rather than just Return on Ad Spend (ROAS). This strategy ensures your campaigns prioritise profitability.

For example, if you have a product that sells for £50, with a profit margin of £25, the break-even point would be a £25 cost per acquisition – a 200% ROAS. So although you are in theory gaining £1 for every £2 spent, in this case, because you are considering actual profit margins on the product, a 200% ROAS is just breaking even, not making a profit.

Other key points to consider when setting up shopping Ad Campaigns

Optimise your product feed

Ensure your product attributes are fully optimised and accurately populated. The better the data, the better your products will perform in Shopping campaigns.

Use high-quality, engaging images

Shopping ads are highly visual. Stand out on the search engine results page (SERP) by using professional, clear, and engaging product images.

Set up accurate conversion tracking

Ensure you are tracking every sale from your ecommerce site. This not only ensures that Google is optimising and bidding for the correct conversion signals provided, but it can help you make more data-driven decisions from your campaign data.

Utilise negative keywords

Regularly review your search terms report to identify and exclude irrelevant keywords. This prevents wasted spend on non-converting or irrelevant traffic.

Keep your Merchant Centre account up to date

Stay on top of any errors or warnings in your Merchant Centre account. Accruing too many issues can result in account deactivation, which can affect both paid and organic Shopping listings.

Optimise your landing pages

Driving traffic is only half the battle. Ensure your landing pages are user-friendly, fast-loading, and designed for conversions. A poor user experience (UX) can deter potential customers, no matter how well-targeted your ads are.

Exclude low-performing and low-value products

Don't waste ad spend on products that don't deliver a strong return on investment (ROI). Focus your budget on high-performing, profitable products!

Chapter takeaways

- ▼ Over 80% of the UK population makes ecommerce purchases - a figure expected to rise to 86% by 2027⁷.
- ▼ Google Shopping listings provide a unique opportunity to ensure your products appear more prominently on the search results page, grabbing attention amongst your competition.
- ▼ Shopping listings are especially effective at capturing high-intent users, those actively searching for specific products with the intent to purchase.
- ▼ To get started, there are three core components you need: An eStore, A Google Merchant Center Account, and a Product feed.

Chapter 9

Local Service Ads

If a long-term PPC campaign is a marathon, Local Service Ads are a sprint, delivering potentially quick results with a less complex strategy required.

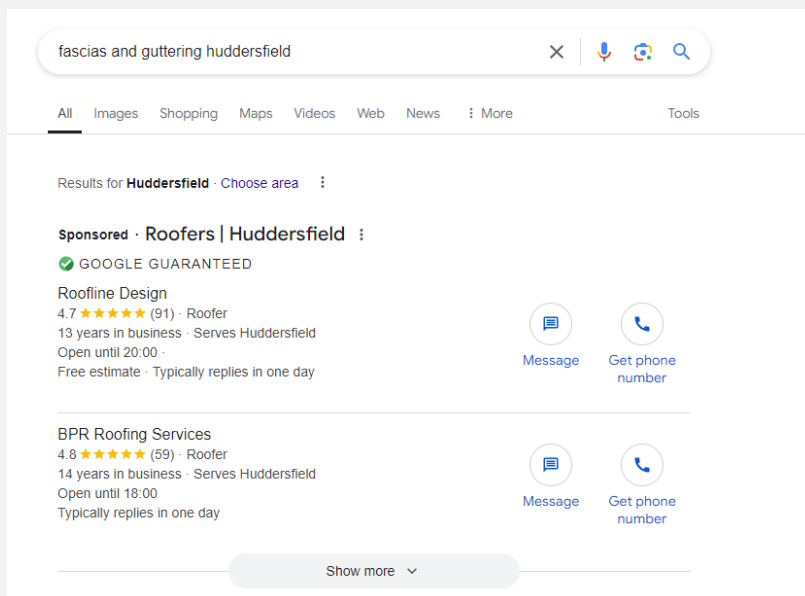
First launched in 2015 in the US and Canada, Local Service Ads (LSAs) became available in the UK for local businesses in September 2020. That's why they may still sound a little unfamiliar.

But what exactly are Local Service Ads? How can they benefit your business? Who qualifies for them?

Let's find out!

What Are Local Service Ads?

Local Service Ads (LSAs) are a special type of ad that appears at the top of Google's Search Engine Results Page (SERP), similar to Search Ads, centred more on local users searching for local services.



Example of a local service ad

From plumbers and electricians to roofers, LSAs showcase your services based on a user's search and location. They can be an effective way for local businesses to increase brand visibility locally and boost the number of enquiries, whether via phone calls or messages.

Local Service Ads vs. Search Ads: What's the Difference?

There are a few key differences between Local Service Ads and traditional Search Ads:

No Keywords Required

Instead of targeting keywords, Google uses categories for LSAs. It's important to select the correct categories that align with your business services to ensure your ads show up in relevant searches.

Location-Based Searches

LSAs typically appear for location-based service searches (e.g. "Roofer in Huddersfield"). They can also appear for more generic searches such as 'roofers', using a user's device location to impact what results to show. So, if a user is in Huddersfield and searches for 'roofers' it will show more local Huddersfield results. However, if you are in Huddersfield and search for 'roofers in Leeds' it will show LSA results for Leeds, not Huddersfield.

Google Guarantee Badge

Businesses that pass Google's screening and verification process receive a "Google Guarantee" badge, displayed with a green tick in the search results. This badge protects customers who book services through LSAs, providing peace of mind for customers.

Top Placement

Local Service Ads are always placed at the very top of the search results, above both the local map listings and organic (and paid) search results.

No Ad Copy Needed

The ad copy is automatically generated based on factors like name, customer reviews, and opening hours, which are pulled directly from your Google My Business (GMB) profile. Get collecting those five star reviews!



Pay Per Lead, Not Per Click

Unlike traditional Search Ads, you are only charged when a potential customer contacts you via phone or message. This means you don't need to worry about how well your website converts.

No Website Required

Don't have a website? No problem! LSAs can link directly to your GMB profile instead.

Bidding Strategies

Unlike traditional Google Search Ads, LSAs only have two main bidding options: Automated bidding (maximise leads) and Manual bidding (max per lead). However, similar to Search Ads, you can set a target cost per lead on the automated bidding strategy, to keep control on cost per leads.

Benefits of Local Service Ads

Local Service Ads are a fantastic way to generate enquiries from local users who are actively searching for services that you provide. Let's explore some key benefits:

It's Simple to Set Up and Manage Local Service Ads

LSAs are straightforward to set up. There are no keywords to manage or ad copy to write. Just provide your business details, select the categories and locations you want to target, set your budget, and you're almost ready to go. The longest part of the process is Google's screening and verification, which may include background checks, business registration, insurance, and licence verification. Failure to meet these requirements may disqualify your business from using LSAs.

Local Service Ads have Lower Costs

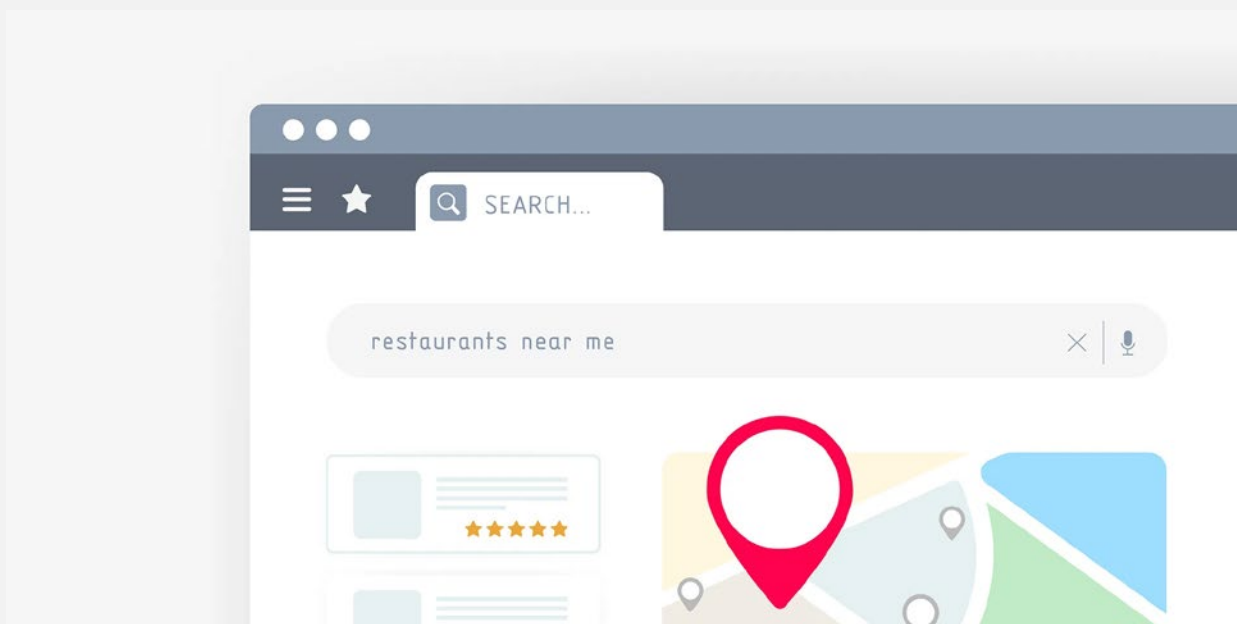
Based on our experience, LSAs tend to yield lower cost per leads compared to that of traditional Search Ads. You only pay when a user calls or sends a message, which can make your advertising budget go further.

Local Service Ads have Lead Monitoring and Filtering

LSAs allow you to monitor all your leads directly within the platform. You can filter out poor-quality leads and provide Google with feedback to improve the quality of future enquiries.

You Pay Per Lead with Local Service Ads

As already mentioned, with Local Service Ads you only pay when a user either sends you a message or calls your business. This means you're not relying on a website for conversions. Google may also not charge you for certain calls/messages if they believe the lead wasn't valid, for example if a customer didn't respond to your return call or message or a lead was received outside of your business hours.



Drawback of Local Service Ads

LSAs aren't all plain sailing. Here are some of the key negatives.

Verification Issues

Depending on the type of your business, you may be required to provide various documents, such as business verification and proof of insurance, to get your ads approved. Failure to have certain documents could result in your account not being approved.

Lead Quality

With limited control over factors such as keywords and ad copy – compared to a paid search account, this may lead to receiving less relevant enquiries and harder to negate for future searches.

Category Limitations

Local Service Ads (LSAs) are not available for all types of businesses, and you may not have the option to select a more niche service within your most relevant category.

No Difference in Search Results and Landing Pages

Aside from your business name and reviews, there's little you can do to differentiate your ad from others on the results page. Additionally, having no landing page makes it harder for you to make your business stand out from your competition.

Here is a list of Local Service Ads Categories currently available in the UK (as of 2025).

Appliance repair services	General contractor services	Plumbers
Carpet cleaning services	Handyman	Pool cleaning services
Carpenters	Home inspection services	Pool contracting services
Cleaning services	HVAC (heating or air conditioning)	Roofers
Worktop services	Junk removal services	Snow removal services
Electricians	Landscaping services	Tree services
Fencing services	Lawn care services	Water damage services
Flooring services	Moving services	Window cleaning services
Foundations services	Pest control services	Window repair services
Garage door services		

Currently available in Greater London only:

Contract lawyer services	Immigration lawyer services	Personal injury services
Corporate lawyer services	Insolvency lawyer services	Probate lawyer services
Criminal lawyer services	IP lawyer services	Property lawyer services
Employment lawyer services	Lawyer services	Road traffic lawyer services
Estate agent services	Litigation lawyer services	Tax lawyer services
Family lawyer services	Malpractice lawyer services	

Chapter takeaways

- Local Service Ads (LSAs) are a special type of ad that appears at the top of Google's Search Engine Results Page (SERP), similar to Search Ads, centred more on local users searching for local services.
- Instead of targeting keywords, Google uses predefined categories that are most relevant to your organisation.
- You are only charged when a potential customer contacts you via phone call or message.

Chapter 10

Google Ad Grants for Charities and Nonprofits

Google Ad Grants are available for charities and nonprofits – offering funding for digital advertising that they may be otherwise unable to afford. These grants are extremely useful, enabling you to raise the profile of your organisation, increase your donation revenue, attract volunteers, and much more!

How do Google Ad Grants work and who are they for?

Grant Ads accounts work very similarly to traditional ads accounts; eligible causes include arts and culture organisations such as museums, theatres, and botanical gardens. You must just be a registered charity in order to apply. If your organisation qualifies, you'll be given up to \$10,000 worth of free Google Ads per month!

Who can apply for a Google Ad grant?

To apply for a Grant Ads account, you'll need to be a registered charity, meet the eligibility guidelines for the country where your charity or non-profit operates, and agree to Google's terms of service. Here in the UK, that means that your organisation must be registered with the Charity Commission, NICC, OSCR, or be registered as tax exempt and Gift Aid eligible with HMRC.

- ▼ Your ads need to support your charity/nonprofit's campaign mission.
- ▼ Your website needs to be well maintained.
- ▼ Your ads account needs to be actively managed.

Note: government bodies, hospitals, medical groups, schools, nurseries, and other academic organisations *cannot apply* for Google Ad Grants.



So, how do I apply for a Google Ad grant?

Register with Google for Nonprofits

To access Google Ad Grants, your client must first sign up for Google for Nonprofits.

How to Apply:

1. Go to Google for Nonprofits → <https://www.google.com/nonprofits/>
2. Click "Get Started" and sign in with a Gmail or Google Workspace account.
3. Provide Nonprofit Details:
4. Approval: Once Google verifies the nonprofit status, the account will be activated.

Ensure Website Compliance

To qualify for Google Ad Grants, your organisation's website must meet Google's requirements:

Clear Nonprofit Mission Statement

Clearly state that the organisation is a nonprofit and explain its mission

High-Quality Website

Must be well-structured, secure (HTTPS), and have no broken links

Own the Domain Name

The organisation must own the domain (e.g. organisation.org instead of a free site like Wix or Blogger domain)

Clear Call-to-Action (CTA)

Example: "Support our Charity – Donate Today!" or "Join Our Community Events"

Apply for Google Ad Grants

Once Google for Nonprofits is approved, you can apply for Google Ad Grants.

How to Apply for Google Ad Grants:

1. Log in to Google for Nonprofits
2. Click on "Activate Google Ad Grants"
3. Complete the Google Ad Grants Eligibility Form
4. Confirm the website meets compliance rules
5. Acknowledge that ads will be used for mission-based activities, not commercial gain
6. Submit the Form & Wait for Approval (This usually takes a few days)

Running Ad Grants alongside an existing Google Ads account

You can run your Grant Ads account alongside your regular Google Ads account where you can continue to run paid ads separately. Your Grant Ads will appear slightly differently to your other paid ads. Grant Ads appear either on their own or below other paid advertising, and this means that competition may be slightly higher for competitive keywords. They're also exclusively for search campaigns meaning they can't be used for Search Partners or on the Google Display Network.

Grant accounts are closely regulated to ensure you continually meet the requirements for funded ads. These include the types of keywords you target, the number of ads per ad group, and a set of more specific requirements such as attaining a 5% CTR (click through rate) each month and only using keywords with a quality score of three or above. These limits stop accounts from targeting generic keywords such as 'today's news' or 'free ebooks', for example, and aim to reduce spam and ensure the quality of the ads are consistently high.

Whether you are too busy or simply can't get your head around Google Ads, it's worth taking advantage of the free advertising Google has to offer, even if you don't have the means to manage the account yourself.

Regular paid advertising can also be extremely beneficial for increasing donations revenue. If you have the budget to pay for an expert to manage yours, these ads can pay for themselves! You will likely raise more money in donations, ticket sales, etc. than you will spend on outsourcing your ads management. And, with the added bonus of Grant Ads, you'll have more resources to play with.

Chapter takeaways

- ▼ Google Ad Grants are available for charities and nonprofits - they work very similarly to traditional ads accounts (but with their differences).
- ▼ If your organisation is eligible, you'll be given up to \$10,000 worth of free Google Ads per month!
- ▼ You can run your Grant Ads account alongside your regular Google Ads account where you can continue to run paid ads separately.
- ▼ They're limited to Google Search campaigns only, meaning they can't be used for Search Partners or on the Google Display Network.



References

1. Jones, P. (2024). 34 Eye-Opening Google Search Statistics for 2024. [online] Semrush Blog. Available at: <https://www.semrush.com/blog/google-search-statistics/>.
2. Rhodes, M. (2025). Where to start?!? Start Here... | Mike Rhodes Ideas. [online] Mike Rhodes Ideas. Available at: <https://mikerhodes.circle.so/c/start/start-here>
3. Google.com. (2019). Troubleshoot disapproved ads – Authorized Buyers Help. [online] Available at:
4. profitmetrics.io. (n.d.). ProfitMetrics.io | Profit Bidding and POAS® Marketing software. [online] Available at: <https://profitmetrics.io/>. <https://support.google.com/authorizedbuyers/answer/10063840?hl=en>
5. Lin, Y. (2024). Global Ecommerce Sales Growth Report. [online] Shopify. Available at: <https://www.shopify.com/blog/global-ecommerce-sales>.
6. Pasquali, M. (2023). Online shopping behavior in the UK. [online] Statista. <https://www.statista.com/topics/7887/online-shopping-behavior-in-the-uk/>
7. van Gelder, K 2023. Online shopping behavior in the United Kingdom (UK) – statistics & facts – available at: <https://www.statista.com/topics/7887/online-shopping-behavior-in-the-uk/>
8. Charity Digital. (2015). Charity Digital | Charity software donations. [online] Available at: <https://charitydigital.org.uk/>. <https://www.charitydigitalexchange.org/user/login>
9. www.google.com. (n.d.). Nonprofit Management Resources – Google for Nonprofits. [online] Available at: <https://www.google.com/nonprofits/>. <https://www.google.com/nonprofits/>

About Splitpixel

Thank you for taking the time to read our Google Ads Guide - we hope you found it informative and now feel much more confident at either setting up a new campaign, or optimising your existing account.

As a specialist digital marketing agency, our goal is to make digital accessible to everyone and support our clients with everything from SEO strategy, organic social media campaigns to Google Ads and Google Ad Grants - tailoring our offering to a multitude of sectors and needs.

Our comprehensive digital marketing planning and strategy services encompass all types of digital marketing. We develop search strategies, manage social media channels and Google ads accounts, run email campaigns, create SEO content - the whole lot. Our dedicated team of marketing experts can transform clicks into conversions no matter your industry or customer base.



Let's talk!

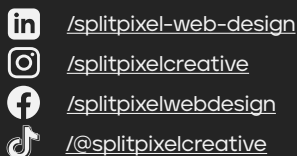
Don't hesitate to get in touch by emailing us at hello@splitpixel.co.uk - we're always happy to guide you through the Google Ads process and chat about our digital marketing services.



E: hello@splitpixel.co.uk
T: 01484 970 860

Heritage Exchange,
Wellington Mills,
Huddersfield,
Yorkshire, HD3 3HR

Follow us



www.splitpixel.co.uk

splitpixel

