



PORTENT

Getting Started with PPC

Fast!

By the Portent PPC Team

Legal, Notes and Other Stuff

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Who is this book for?

This ebook was written by the PPC team at Portent, Inc. for all that want to get a quick start on Google AdWords PPC without wading through numerous help center articles, videos or piecing together blog posts. We've tried to make this more instructional with tips and tidbits along the way to help readers avoid the common pitfalls of starting out in PPC management. If you're really new to PPC, you may want to have a glossary open alongside as you read to define those fun words made up just for PPC.

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If you like this book, you might want to check out our other PPC posts at the Portent blog www.portent.com.



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Intro

Hey there, thanks for downloading Portent's free Get Started with PPC: Fast! e-book.

We're going to cover the basics of pay-per-click (PPC) using Google AdWords as an example so you can take the next step in applying it to your small business. You'll learn about:

- What PPC is
- How to create a Google AdWords account and set it up properly
- How to choose keywords and write ads
- The basics of quality scores, match types and bids
- How we at Portent can help you further

We promise PPC isn't as intimidating as it seems at first glance. In this e-book, we walk you through all the basics every beginner needs to understand to get started with PPC. The possibilities of what you can accomplish with PPC advertising are great as long as you start off on the right foot.

What is PPC?

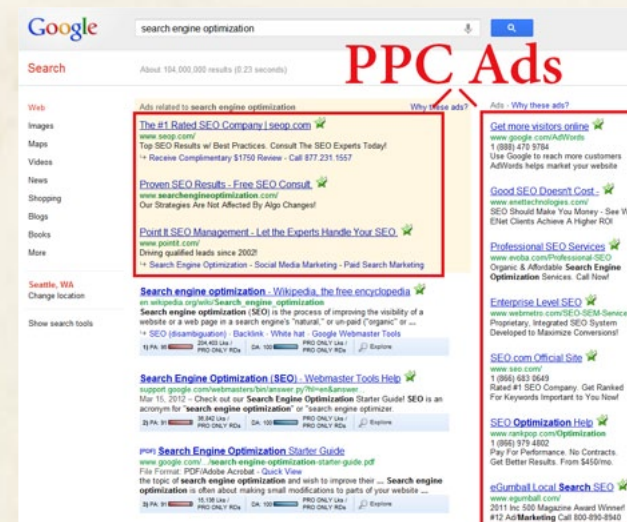
You may have heard that a healthy dose of PPC advertising might be just what your business needs—but what is PPC advertising?

PPC stands for pay-per-click. It is the standard term for advertising your products and services on search engines, social media platforms and across the web. You may also hear PPC called cost-per-click (CPC) or search engine marketing (SEM). Now you know the name for those ads that pop up when you search on Google.

* * *

PPC is also called SEM, search engine marketing, pay per click and paid search. It's all the same thing.

* * *



PPC ads appear above, below and to the right side of natural search results

Each time someone searches for a keyword on Google, there is an instant auction to determine which ads will show. These auctions are controlled in part by bids set by each business that advertises through AdWords. The business determines how much they are willing to pay for a click on their ad for that particular keyword.

That bid, as well as a keyword rating called a “Quality Score,” will determine which ads get shown and in what order. If a user clicks on an ad, that business is charged for the click (hence the name pay-per-click).

* * *

Need some help with the terms? [Check out this PPC Glossary.](#)

* * *

How it works

1. You set up an account with a PPC advertising platform like Google AdWords
2. You choose keywords and demographic information to select an audience to advertise to
3. You create ads to be shown to that audience
4. You pay each time someone clicks on your ads

This e-book will guide you through the process. Learn how to set up a PPC account, create audience-targeted campaigns using keywords and manage your budget and leads.

How it works

Google AdWords is the number one PPC advertising platform on the web. Google gets over one billion search queries every day. Advertising with AdWords mean you can pick which of those billion search queries you want to show your ads for.



PPC advertising with AdWords is a great way to find potential customers searching for products and services that you offer. Create engaging ads that entice potential customers, and drive those customers to a webpage on your site that creates leads or sales for your business.

Is PPC right for me?

Should PPC become a revenue source for your business? Analyze the pros and cons of PPC advertising to determine if your business can find a profitable place in Google AdWords.

Pro: See immediate results

You can set up an account with Google AdWords, add your payment information and begin showing ads today. You will want to spend some time building your campaigns and keyword lists (we'll discuss that later), but you can start advertising as soon as you are ready.

You will be able to see how many impressions and clicks your ads are receiving after only a 2-3 hour delay. This makes it easy to analyze ad performance while the ads are showing.

Ad	Clicks [?]	Impr. [?]	CTR [?]	Avg. CPC [?]	Cost [?]	Avg. Pos. [?]	Conv. (1-per-click) [?]	Cost / conv. (1-per-click) [?]	Conv. rate (1-per-click) [?]
Total - all account [?]	26,542	525,301	5.05%	\$0.40	\$10,670.14	1.7	2,168	\$4.92	8.17%
Rubber Baby Buggy Bumpers High Quality Bumpers in 8 Colors. Same-Day Shipping - Buy Today! www.rubberbbbs.com	5,059	55,114	9.18%	\$0.70	\$3,532.95	1.3	414	\$8.53	8.18%

Pro: You control the spend

Managing your budget with AdWords is simple: you set the daily spend amount for each campaign grouping, and that determines how many times your ads will be clicked. Readjust your budget as often as you like—reducing spend for under-performing campaigns and reallocating it to more-profitable campaigns. At a more granular level, you can adjust how much you want to pay per click on individual keywords. This allows you to develop highly-targeted budgets which spend money on the search queries that bring conversions to your business.

Pro: You can stop at any time

There aren't any contracts with AdWords. You pay for the clicks on your ads. If you want to stop showing ads, you can pause them at any time and stop spending money. And it's easy to come back to campaigns you have paused and rework them to be more profitable in the future.

Pro: Often cheaper than traditional marketing

Building an AdWords account of keywords that are highly related to your products and services can be a much cheaper option than traditional marketing.

A click on a PPC ad can cost the advertiser anywhere from \$0.50 to \$30, depending on the competition in your industry. The average cost is around \$3.50 per click. If you're advertising on the keyword "fitted trucker hats," which Google estimates will have a cost-per-click of \$0.71, a user that clicks your ad and buys a trucker hat for \$25 will net you a nice profit. Targeting the right audience with the right keywords can lead to an advertising campaign with a great return on investment.

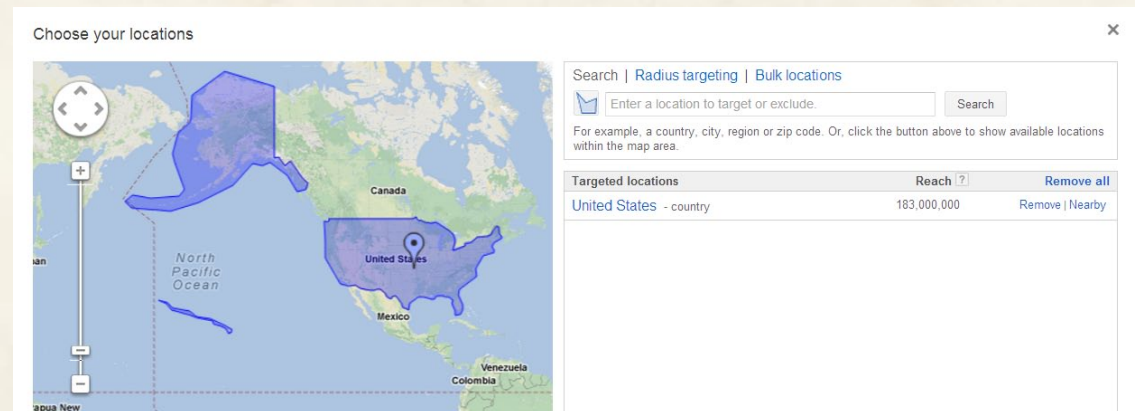
* * *

No contracts. Start and stop at any time.

* * *

Pro: You choose your potential customers

The custom advertising options of AdWords are what make the program excellent. Select which search queries you want your ads to appear for. Select which locations and demographics you want to see your ads.



And it is all measureable. You can easily determine which keywords are bringing leads and sales to your site. As your account gathers more clicks and data, you can continue to refine your keyword list and targeting options to reach only the potential customers that are valuable to your business.

Con: Not for every industry

Not every industry has a large volume of potential customers searching online, so that may limit your possibilities in PPC. Not every potential customer translates into a lead or a sale, so that may be limiting as well if your website doesn't have great landing pages to convert skeptical customers.

* * *

Sign up for an AdWords account [here](#).

* * *

PPC may be as expensive as traditional advertising if your industry is competitive. Competitive industries require competitive budgets. If you don't have the funds to dedicate to a substantial PPC campaign, you might not be able to find the keywords that convert.

Con: Account management can get complicated

It's easy to create an AdWords campaign—anyone can do it. Creating a profitable AdWords campaign can be more difficult.

Running a successful PPC campaign isn't just a one-time deal; you need to regularly analyze and optimize your account to react to conversion data and search trends. You will need to find the time to give your PPC account the attention it deserves.

AdWords also has many advanced features that can improve ad performance and return on investment. Finding profit potential can take time, and an untrained eye may not be able to identify revenue opportunities that the more sophisticated AdWords features can provide.

If you think PPC could be profitable for your business but you don't have the time to manage an AdWords account, look to an agency for strategy and management. Portent offers PPC management packages for all sizes of business that want to increase leads and sales with PPC. [Visit our PPC services page](#) for more information.



How to set up Google Adwords

Account Settings

* * *

Pay close attention here. There are several account settings that cannot be changed later.

* * *

When creating a new Google AdWords account, there are some initial steps you need to take before creating ads and keyword lists. This section will highlight the important settings you need to check first for both platforms before beginning a new campaign and assumes that you've already signed up and have an account started. If not, go [here](#): and walk through account set up. Hold off on entering any billing information until you've gone through this ebook and the initial set up.

There are three main settings for your entire account which you should address first.

Billing

The biggest and most obvious part is your billing settings—without a valid credit card entered into your account, you won't be able to generate any ad impressions. Once a credit card is entered, you can choose to pay

automatically—where your card is charged after \$50 is accrued or 30 days, whichever comes first—or manually—where you charge a specific amount to your card beforehand and use up that allotment like you would a debit card.

Location and time zone

Second, check the location and time zone settings. These will allow you to set which country your account is based in, what language you want AdWords to communicate with you in, what time zone you're in and what type of currency you'd like to use for billing.

Note that once you select a time zone and a currency, they cannot be altered.

Auto-tagging

Third, and very importantly, if you use Google Analytics to track site usage data, you should enable the auto-tagging feature. This will automatically tag the end of your URLs so AdWords data correctly corresponds with Google Analytics without any additional manual destination URL tagging on your part.

If you use another 3rd party analytics platform, you may be required to add manual tags different from Google tags, in which case you should leave the auto-tagging feature disabled.

The screenshot shows the Google Ads interface. The top navigation bar includes links for Home, Campaigns, Opportunities, Tools and Analysis, Billing, and My account. The 'My account' link is highlighted with a red box. Below the navigation bar, the left sidebar contains links for Account access, Linked accounts, Notification settings, and Preferences. The 'Preferences' link is highlighted with a red box. The main content area shows the 'Preferences' panel. Under 'Account preferences', the 'Time zone' is set to '(GMT-08:00) Pacific Time'. The 'Tracking' section is highlighted with a red box, showing 'Auto-tagging' set to 'Yes' with an 'Edit' link next to it. A red line connects the 'My account' link in the navigation bar to the 'Tracking' section in the preferences panel.

How to set up a campaign

An account's success or failure is dependent on the structure of your campaigns and ad groups. Finding your balance is really important. Too many ad groups or keywords under one or the other and the campaign performance suffers through lower quality scores, click through rates (CTR) and relevancy. If your ad groups are spread out too far, they can be difficult to manage and you may not have a large enough budget to go around.

Initial setup

Here is a quick walk-through on how to set up a campaign for optimal performance using dog toys as an example.

1. Decide what products or services you will be marketing through PPC. (In this case, squeaky toys and stuffed toys.)
2. Click the "+New Campaign" button and select "Search Network only"
3. Name your campaign something descriptive about the product or service like "Dog Toys"



4. Use section four of this e-book to better refine your setting selections. For now, go down the page and be sure to select the correct location where you would like your ads to be shown (USA and Canada is selected by default). Enter a default bid (\$1.00, section five of this e-book will dive deeper into this) and budget of \$5.

The screenshot displays the 'Create ad group' page in Google Ads. At the top, there are two tabs: 'Select campaign settings' (active) and 'Create ad group'. Below the tabs, the campaign type is set to 'Search Network only - Standard'. The 'General' section includes a 'Campaign name' field with 'eBook Test' and a 'Type' dropdown set to 'Search Network only'. To the right, there are radio button options for 'Standard' (selected), 'All features', 'Product listing ads', and 'Dynamic Search Ads'. Below these is a link to 'Learn more about campaign types'. The 'or load settings from' section has a dropdown set to 'Existing campaigns'. The 'Networks' section shows 'Google Search Network' selected with a checkbox for 'Include search partners'. The 'Desktops & laptops, mobile devices and tablets' section has a 'Devices' dropdown set to 'All available devices'. The 'Locations' section has a 'Locations' dropdown set to 'United States'. At the bottom, there is a text input field for 'Enter a location to target or exclude.' and a link for 'Advanced search'.

Select campaign settings Create ad group

Type: Search Network only - Standard

General

Campaign name eBook Test

Type Search Network only

Standard - Keyword-targeted text ads showing on Google search

All features - All the features and options available for the Search Network

Product listing ads - Ads promoting your product inventory from Google Merchant Center

Dynamic Search Ads - Ads targeted based on your website content

Learn more about campaign types

or load settings from Existing campaigns

Networks

Networks To choose different networks, edit campaign type above, or create a new campaign.

Google Search Network

Include search partners

Desktops & laptops, mobile devices and tablets

Devices All available devices (Recommended for new advertisers)

Let me choose...

Locations

Locations What locations would you like to target (or exclude) in your campaign?

All countries and territories

United States and Canada

United States

Let me choose...

Enter a location to target or exclude. Advanced search

For example, a country, city, region or zip code.

5. Hit “Save and continue”

The screenshot shows the 'Bidding and budget' section of a Google Ads campaign setup. Under 'Bidding option', the 'Basic options' tab is selected, and the radio button for 'I'll manually set my bids for clicks' is chosen. A yellow tooltip message states: 'You'll set your maximum CPC bids in the next step.' Below this, the 'Default bid' is set to '\$ 1.00' with a note: 'This bid applies to the first ad group in this campaign, which you'll create in the next step.' The 'Budget' is set to '\$ 5.00 per day' with a note: 'Actual daily spend may vary.' The 'Ad extensions' section is below, with a note: 'You can use this optional feature to include relevant business information with your ads. Take a tour.' Four checkboxes are listed: 'Location', 'Sitelinks', 'Call', and 'Social', each with a corresponding description. At the bottom, there are two buttons: 'Save and continue' (in blue) and 'Cancel new campaign' (in grey).

* * *

Keep your first campaign and ad group set up simple, don't try and add 100 keywords or ad groups at the start.

* * *

Create additional ad groups (as necessary)

1. Click the “+New ad group” button
2. Fill in the ad group name, ad and keyword list just as you did above
3. That's it

Now you have your first campaign and ad group set up, it's time to

go through and make some adjustments to make sure you're doing everything you can to be relevant and get the most out of each CPC paid. Be sure to review section five on bids and match types. Remember, you put in placeholders for now and you shouldn't leave those as-is.

Ad copy

Ads are your first impression to searchers so it's really important that your ad copy not only match up with what you sell but also what searchers were looking for. Plus you need to adhere to editorial guidelines from the search engines. You can view the complete [Google AdWords editorial policy for ads](#), but below this is a quick list of don'ts to keep in mind when writing ad copy. If you're really looking for unique ad copy and best practices, check out the ebook: "[Write Ad Copy that Inspire Greatness](#)" also by Portent.

- No excessive capitalization. Ex: FREE, ON SALE, HERE
- Only one exclamation point can be used per ad
- You can't say "click here"
- No profanity
- You can't replace words like "for" with "4" or "to" with "2" or "see" with "c"

However, you can (and should) do the following items in your ad copy:

- Use one of your keywords in the title and the body copy
- Have a call to action like “buy” “shop”
- Have a feature or benefit like “free shipping” or “25 colors”
- Have more than one ad in an ad group. At least 2
- Use proper grammar
- Use initial caps. Ex: Shop Our Huge Selection Today!

Here are some examples of good ad copy:

[Down Pillows | pacificcoast.com](http://www.pacificcoast.com)

www.pacificcoast.com/pillows

Down Pillow Sale Thru November: 20% Off Select **Pillows** This Month!

[Eileen Fisher Shoes](http://www.naturals-inc.com/)

www.naturals-inc.com/

Save 20% off **Eileen Fisher Shoes!**

Use Coupon Code: naturals

Create additional ad groups (as necessary)

Be sure to also read through match types in section five as well. For this section we’re going to review the five keywords we chose on our squeaky dog toys, why we chose those words and how you might chose keywords of your own.

1. Brainstorm five to ten words to describe your product or service that someone might use to find you.
2. Search on those terms and see what other ads and organic listings come up with them. If they’re not similar to yours, you’re going

to want to consider a different angle. For example: “cubicles” can pertain to several different kinds: toilet, dressing room and work stations. If most of the results revolve around work stations and you sell dressing room cubicles, you may not want to bid on the keyword “cubicles” but instead go after “dressing room cubicles.”

3. Look at your site and the words on the product or category pages that pertain to your brainstormed list. Make sure there is overlap between the two. If not, see what terms exist on your site already that you can bid on instead.
4. Use Google’s keyword tool under the “Tools & Analysis” tab to generate additional keyword ideas by typing in one of your brainstormed keywords. (Be sure to click the “Keyword Ideas” tab after entering your term.)



Home Campaigns Opportunities Tools and Analysis Billing My account

Tools
Keyword Tool
Traffic Estimator
Placement Tool
Contextual Targeting Tool

▼ Include terms (0) ?

▼ Exclude terms (0) ?

▼ Match Types ?
☒ Broad
☐ [Exact]
☐ "Phrase"

Help Help Center
Search help center Go

Save all
Search help center Go

▼ Saved ideas (0)
My keyword ideas
My ad group ideas

Find keywords
Based on one or more of the following:

Word or phrase: squeaky dog toys

Website: www.google.com/page.html

Category: Apparel

☐ Only show ideas closely related to my search terms ?

☒ Advanced Options and Filters Locations: United States X Languages: All Devices: Desktops and laptops

Search

Keyword ideas Ad group ideas (Beta)

Sorted by Relevance Columns

1 - 1 of 1

Keyword	Competition	Local Monthly Searches	Approximate CPC (Search)
squeaky dog toys	High	1,900	\$0.74

1 - 100 of 800

Keyword	Competition	Local Monthly Searches	Approximate CPC (Search)
squeaky dog toy	High	2,400	\$0.68
rubber squeaky dog toys	High	91	\$0.82
tough squeaky dog toys	High	28	\$0.58
indestructible dog toys	High	4,400	\$0.56
dog toys	High	135,000	\$0.81
squirrel dog toy	High	880	\$0.68
kong dog toy	High	9,900	\$0.99
kong dog toys	High	8,100	\$0.96
plush squeaky dog toys	High	58	\$0.92

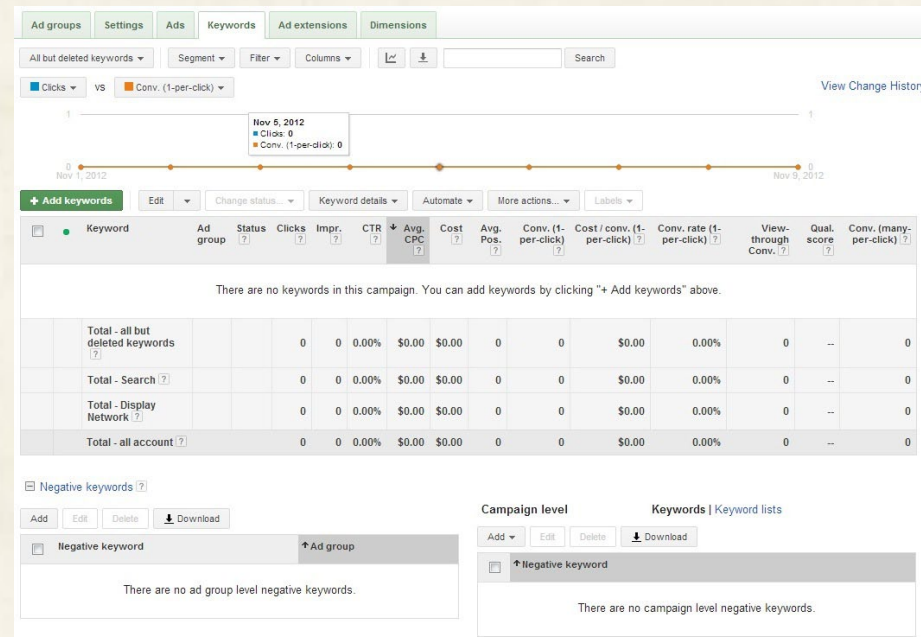
5. Consider using “longtail” keywords. Longtail keywords are keywords that consist of 3 or more words. They have lower traffic rates, are often cheaper and are more targeted. For example: “dog toys” vs. “squeaky dog toys.”
6. Add terms to your existing ad groups or copy them into a new ad group.

Negative keywords

These are words that you don’t want associated with your products or services. Examples might be competitor brand names, free, cheap, download, coupon or sample. Here’s how to add any words that you want to exclude to your negative keywords list:

1. Open the campaign you want to add the words to
2. Click on the “Keywords” tab
3. Scroll all the way to the bottom of the page and click the “+Negative Keywords” link
4. This opens up your negative keyword list. You can add words here at the campaign level (so that it applies to all your ad groups) or to a specific ad group
5. Click the “Add” button and select “Add Keywords”

6. Type in the terms of your choice and click “Save”



* * *

Don't forget to check in on your new keywords! Set a calendar reminder if needed.

* * *



Settings Overview

The campaign settings you choose to employ can help make and can definitely break the success of your campaign. The campaign settings play a crucial role in determining how much money you spend, where your ads are shown and on what devices they will be shown. In addition, the campaign settings allow you to adjust the way you bid in order to help guide the money you put into a given campaign. An important fact to note here is that these settings can only be adjusted at the campaign level—which means the settings you choose will set the standard across all ad groups, ads and keywords within the campaign.

Choosing your campaign type

The first major setting to address when looking at any given campaign is the campaign type. More specifically, what network or networks do you want to display your ads on? Let's start by understanding the difference between Google's two ad networks.

The Search Network is defined by Google as “a group of search-related websites where your ads can appear.” Basically, the Search Network is made up of a number of sites where visitors enter search terms for what

they are specifically looking for. Obviously, Google Search is the main site within this network but your ads can also be shown on syndicated search partners of Google such as AOL.

The second of Google's networks is the Display Network. The Display Network can be described as "a group of thousands of websites and apps where your ad can appear." Sites in this network have opted into Google's Display Network and are paid by Google to allow ads on their site.

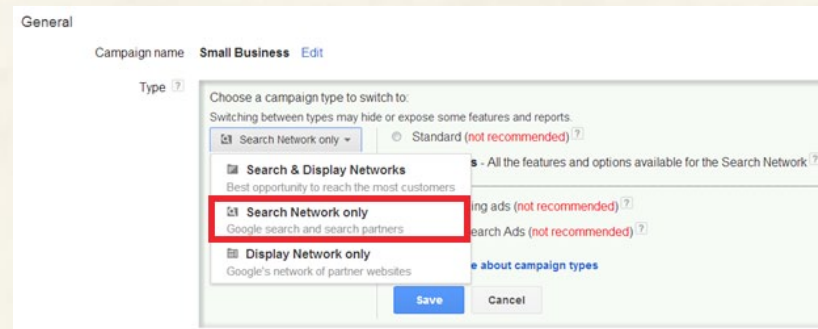
By default, your campaign will be set to show ads on both the Search and Display Networks. Despite this default setting, Google does not recommend running a single campaign on both networks.

For the purpose of this e-book, we are focusing on setting up a campaign on the Search Network.

If you did not change your Campaign Type to "Search Network only" when creating your original campaign, you are going to want to adjust it now. To adjust your campaign from running on the Display and Search Networks to the Search Network only:

1. Click the "Settings" tab to access your campaign settings
2. Click "Edit" to the right of the "Type" feature

- Click the drop down window to adjust your campaign type to “Search Network only”



- Click “Save” to save all changes



Locations

The locations feature is where advertisers decide geographically where their ads are shown. There are a number of questions to ask when deciding where to geographically target your ads.

First, a couple questions to ask yourself when determining where to show your ads:

- What geographical restrictions are integrated into my business model?

If you don't ship internationally, you should probably stick to showing ads in just the United States.

- Is the service you provide only relevant to people in an immediate geographical area?

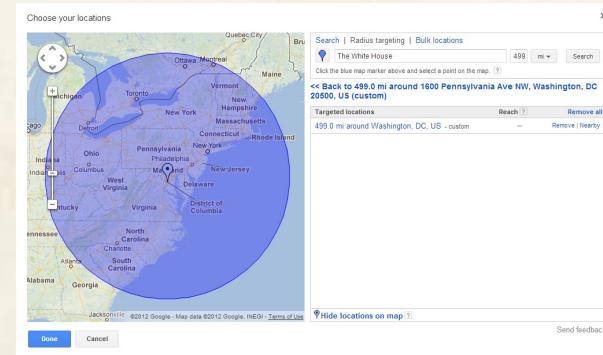
If you are a plumber servicing a 20-mile radius around your hometown, don't show ads across the nation. Instead, target your ads through location settings to only people in your service area.

By effectively eliminating unqualified potential customers based on their physical location, advertisers can stretch their paid search budgets to earn more clicks from geographically-qualified customers.

Google segments its geographical locations in six different ways. Advertisers can segment a visitor's physical location by country, state, region, city, zip code or congressional district.

Also, you can enable radius targeting which allows advertisers to set a targeted radius around any of Google's segments in addition to places,

addresses and coordinates. Radius targeting can be set to target areas from 1 to 500 miles around.



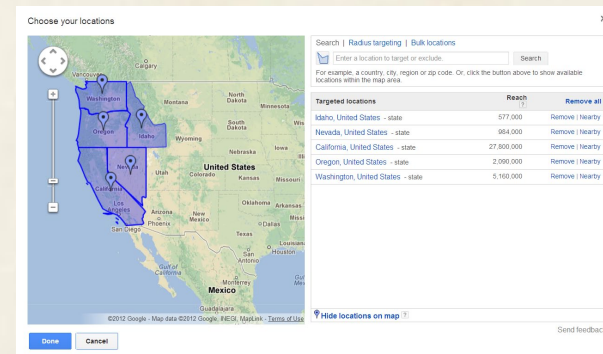
* * *

New account campaigns default to BOTH the USA and Canada. Make sure you've got the right places targeted.

* * *

Once you decide which geographical locations you want to target, it's time to segment those locations in AdWords.

By default, AdWords is set to show ads to all of the United States and Canada. If showing your ads across all of North America is a little too ambitious for your business, you're going to want to change the location settings.



To change your location settings:

1. Click the “Settings” tab to access your campaign settings
2. Click the “Edit” button under “Targeted Locations”
3. Start by removing the default settings by clicking “Remove” to the right of each country’s name
4. Enter your desired locations into the search box and click “Add” to the right of the location name
 - a. To enable radius targeting, click “Advanced Search” then “Radius Targeting” before entering locations in the search box
5. Click “Save” to save all changes

Bidding and budget

The bidding and budget options in the campaigns settings control the financial aspects of the campaign. More specifically, this is where you set your daily budget and how the bidding on your keywords works.

We will start with the bidding settings.

By default, AdWords is set to automatically set your bids for you while focusing on the number of clicks earned. With this option, AdWords will systematically bid on your keywords regardless of their quality in order

to achieve the most clicks possible per day while taking your daily budget into account.

The alternative is to manually set bids for clicks. This option allows you to set bid levels at the ad group and keyword level. Manually setting your bids allows you to increase bids on your highest quality keywords while decreasing bids of lesser quality keywords. By doing this, you can spend more of your daily budget on high quality keywords while limiting spend on clicks of lesser quality.

There are also two other bidding options available in AdWords.

Enhanced CPC enables AdWords to change CPC bids based on conversion rate predictions. AdWords takes into account historical performance, keyword match-type, user query and a host of additional qualifiers in attempt to increase your ROI. Enhanced CPC should be avoided in the early stages of any new campaign.

Conversion optimizer is quite similar to the enhanced CPC bidding method but takes into account cost per acquisition (CPA) goals and targets when making bidding decisions. To enable conversion optimizer, conversion tracking must be implemented and have recorded 30 conversions in the past month.

When setting up your first campaign, manually setting your bids is key.

Yes, it will take a little more time, but the added control in your account can make all the difference.

To set up manual bidding for your campaign:

1. Click the “Settings” tab to access your campaign settings
2. Click “Edit” to the right of “Bidding option”
3. Select “I’ll manually set my bids for clicks”
4. Click “Save” to save all changes

* * *

Manual bidding means that for each ad group and/or keyword you’ll type in the maximum CPC you’re willing to pay.

* * *

Bidding and budget

Bidding option ?

- ☒ Focus on **clicks** - use maximum CPC bids
- ☐ I'll manually set my bids for clicks
- ☐ AdWords will set my bids to help maximize clicks within my target budget

If you select automatic bidding, ad scheduling will be turned off and your ads will show all week.

Enhanced CPC ?

- ☐ Use my conversion tracking data and bids to optimize for conversions
Enhanced CPC will adjust your Max. CPC bid up or down for each auction in an effort to improve your return on investment.
- ☐ Focus on **conversions** (Conversion Optimizer) - use CPA bids
Unavailable because this campaign doesn't have enough conversion data.

Save Cancel

Budget ? \$20.00/day Edit

After your bidding method has been changed, it is time to determine your daily budget. Remember, this daily budget is set for the campaign—not for the entire account. Each campaign is individually budgeted so keep that in mind when updating your daily budget.

In addition, AdWords allows your clicks per day to exceed your daily budget by up to 20%. Called over-delivery, this fluctuating traffic may run your daily budget over its limit each day.

To set your daily budget:

1. Click the “Settings” tab to access your campaign settings
2. Click “Edit” to the right of “Budget”
3. Enter your daily budget into the box provided
4. Click “Save” to save all changes

* * *

Set your daily budget at amount that you're comfortable with. Don't pick an amount that will make you anxious.

* * *



Quick start to Keyword Management

While the squeaky dog toy keywords we chose earlier to build a campaign and ad group in section three are fantastic, there are three things that govern how those keywords perform in the marketplace in the competitive pet supply industry:

1. The max CPC bid—the maximum amount you’re willing to pay for single click on each keyword in your ad group
2. The match type we specify—there are four match types commonly used in AdWords that we’ll cover in greater detail later on:
 - Broad match
 - Broad match modifier
 - Phrase match
 - Exact match
3. And last, but most assuredly not least, quality score—Google’s 1 to 10 measurement judging how relevant you are for a given keyword. A few of the factors that Google uses to determine your quality score include, but are not limited to:
 - Historical CTR (click-through rate)
 - The relevance of your keyword to the other keywords in your ad group

- The relevance of your keyword to the ad text you've written
- The relevance of your keyword to the landing page you're sending the ads to

Let's explore these three items in the AdWords interface and the best practices around each so you can get the best performance possible out of your campaigns.

Setting your max CPC bid

When we click on the “Keywords” tab while in the “Squeaky Dog Toys” ad group you created earlier, you'll immediately notice a few important columns to the right of your keyword list—“Status” and “Max CPC”:

Settings

Ads

Keywords

Ad extensions

Dimensions

All but deleted keywords ▾

Segment ▾

Filter ▾

Columns ▾

Clicks ▾

VS

None ▾

1

0

Oct 14, 2012

+ Add keywords

Edit ▾

Change status... ▾

Keyword details ▾

☐	Keyword	Status [?]	Max. CPC [?]
☐	squeaky dog toys	Below first page bid First page bid estimate: \$2.25	\$1.00 ☐
☐	squeaker dog toys	Below first page bid First page bid estimate: \$1.50	\$1.00 ☐

Under “Status,” you’ll see that our ad group default bid of \$1.00 is below first page bid—that means Google doesn’t think your max CPC bid is high enough to get you on to the first page of ad results for this keyword.

That doesn’t mean that you’ll never show on the first page—but that your ads will show very rarely on that keyword unless you raise your bid to the first page bid estimate (FPBE) or higher. In this case, \$2.25 or more.

You can easily change your bid by clicking on the \$1.00 as shown below.

Keyword	Status ?	Max. CPC ?	↓ Clicks ?	Impr. ?	CTR ?	Av
● squeaky dog toys	Below first page bid First page bid estimate: \$2.25	\$ 2.26				

Set keyword specific bid.
Leave blank to use default bid.

We’re going to go one cent higher than the FPBE at \$2.26—just for good measure—and click “Save.”

Keyword	Status ?	Max. CPC ?	↓ Clicks ?
● squeaky dog toys	Eligible	\$2.26 ☒	0



After you've done that, notice your keyword is now eligible to show up in Google subject to AdWords approving the ads you wrote earlier.

We'll do that for the entire list to ensure our ads have the best possible chance of displaying for these keywords:

●	Keyword	Status ?	Max. CPC ?
●	squeaky dog toys	Eligible	\$2.26
●	squeaker dog toys	Eligible	\$1.51
●	dog squeaker toys	Eligible	\$1.51
●	noisy dog toys	Eligible	\$1.26
●	dog toys that squeak	Eligible	\$1.00

A few more tips on setting your max CPC bids:

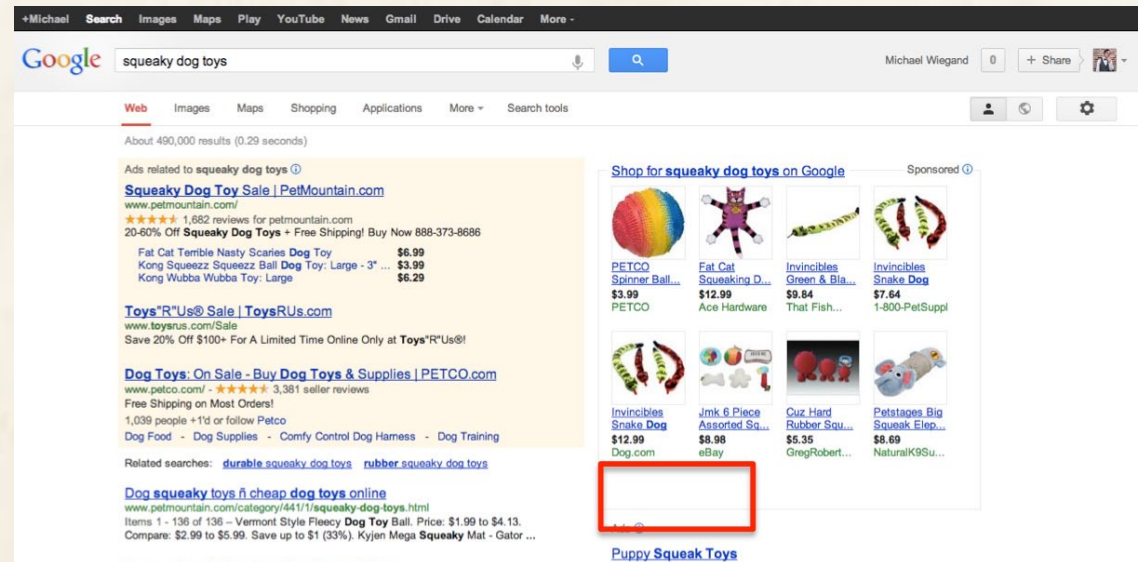
- Your Max CPC bid will hardly ever be what you actually pay for a click—in our experience, your average CPC for a keyword tends to be anywhere from 20% to 30% lower than your bid.
- Bid higher than you think you need to at first and scale down. This is because the quality score is heavily driven by historical CTR and your ads will generally get more clicks the higher they are positioned on the page.

- Watch your average ad position (Avg. Pos.) closely once you specify your bid—if your average ad position is any lower than #3 (the first three ads show up above the organic search results with the shaded background), you're probably not getting the kind of exposure in the search results you need to get high CTR (notice in the illustration below how the headline of the #4 ad is barely visible on a search for “squeaky dog toys”)

* * *

Ads don't show for every time someone searches one of your keywords. Use average ad position and impressions to see how much exposure you're getting.

* * *



You can find stats on “Avg. Pos.” for each keyword a few columns over from “Max CPC” bid:

Keyword	Ad group	Status	Max. CPC	Clicks	Impr.	CTR	Avg. CPC	Cost	Avg. Pos.
dog toys that squeak	Squeaky Dog Toys	Eligible	\$1.00	0	7	0.00%	\$0.00	\$0.00	7.4
squeaker dog toys	Squeaky Dog Toys	Eligible	\$1.51	0	1	0.00%	\$0.00	\$0.00	6
squeaky dog toys	Squeaky Dog Toys	Eligible	\$2.26	2	191	1.05%	\$0.14	\$0.29	4.6
dog squeaker toys	Squeaky Dog Toys	Eligible	\$1.51	0	32	0.00%	\$0.00	\$0.00	4.3
noisy dog toys	Squeaky Dog Toys	Eligible	\$1.26	0	7	0.00%	\$0.00	\$0.00	3.3

- Most importantly—before you set any max CPC bids—establish a target CPA based on the business outcome you’d like to achieve with AdWords.

For example, let’s say your average customer spends \$80 on your site (you can learn this with your shopping cart or web analytics platform) and that your site has a conversion rate of about 5%. That means you’d need about 20 clicks from AdWords to get one customer. If you set a max CPC of \$2.00 on your keywords, the most you’ll spend to acquire that customer is \$40. This will ensure your campaign yields at least a 2:1 ROI. Always make sure you have an objective of profitability.

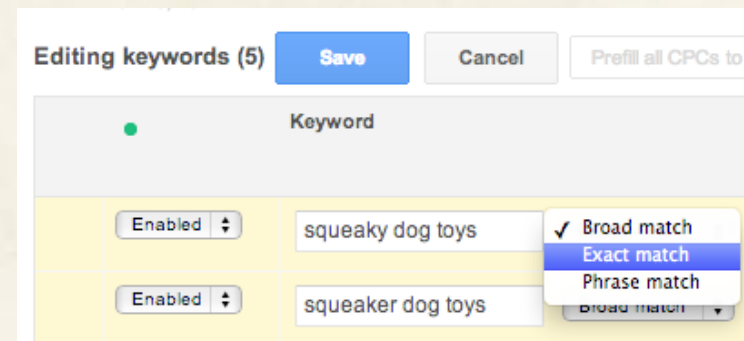
Defining your match type

Match types are vitally important in AdWords. They determine what other search queries your keyword can potentially trigger ads on. There are four different kinds to choose from and it can be difficult to decide which one to go with.

* * *

If you're unsure where to start on match types, try phrase match. You can always change it later.

* * *



But we'll clear that up for you by analyzing what each match type does with our example keyword phrase "dog squeaker toys."

Broad Match is the least specific match type. But—as the name suggests—it also has the broadest reach.

"Dog squeaker toys" on a broad match would trigger queries that could match any of the individual words in the keyword phrase, in any order, like this:

- dog food
- cat squeaker
- toys for kids

As you can see, some of these queries that broad match pulled in might not be at all relevant to the product you are selling or the ads you have written. And you would need to build out an extensive negative keyword list to prevent food or cat or kid queries from triggering on this keyword phrase.

That's where **Broad Match Modifier (BMM)** comes in. By using the plus sign (+) in front of specific words in your broad keyword phrase, you can make sure that the query always has to include that word, no matter what.

So if you put +dog +squeaker toys in your keyword list, anchoring down the words dog and squeaker in the keyword phrase, you could show for queries like:

- buy dog squeaker online
- squeaker toy for my dog
- dog needs a noisy squeaker

You see, matching to toys was the only optional part of that BMM keyword phrase. But both dog and squeaker had to appear in the query, regardless of order or accompanying words, in order for the ad to trigger.

Phrase Match is a little more definitive. All the words in the keyword phrase must appear, in order, but can include more words either tacked on to the beginning or the end of the phrase. If you put “dog squeaker toys” in your keyword list, you would trigger queries like this:

- dog squeaker toys for sale
- where can I buy dog squeaker toys
- find dog squeaker toys in Seattle

Exact Match, though, is pure and simple. By entering [dog squeaker toys] in my keyword list, I can only trigger ads on that keyword phrase if the searcher enters “dog squeaker toys” exactly.

Quality Score

Quality Score (QS) is the single most important number to watch in your account beyond cost and conversions. If your QS gets very high, you pay less to get in higher ad positions. If your QS gets very low it could lessen the amount of impressions you show up for, or even stop your ads from showing altogether.

When considering what goes into QS, you have to look at paid search from Google's point of view. Their goal is to get searchers to click on ads. Searchers only click on ads when they're very relevant to what they've searched for.

So where do you find QS in your account? A few columns over from your max CPC bid and Avg. Pos. in the keywords tab:

Keyword	Ad group	Status ?	Max. CPC ?	Clicks ?	Impr. ?	CTR ?	Avg. CPC ?	Cost ?	Avg. Pos. ?	Conv. (1-per-click) ?	Qual. score ?
squeaky dog toys	Squeaky Dog Toys	Eligible	\$2.26	2	191	1.05%	\$0.14	\$0.29	4.6	0	10/10
noisy dog toys	Squeaky Dog Toys	Eligible	\$1.26	0	7	0.00%	\$0.00	\$0.00	3.3	0	10/10
dog toys that squeak	Squeaky Dog Toys	Eligible	\$1.00	0	7	0.00%	\$0.00	\$0.00	7.4	0	10/10
squeaker dog toys	Squeaky Dog Toys	Eligible	\$1.51	0	1	0.00%	\$0.00	\$0.00	6	0	9/10
dog squeaker toys	Squeaky Dog Toys	Eligible	\$1.51	0	32	0.00%	\$0.00	\$0.00	4.3	0	9/10

To get more information on how you're getting a high QS, or what you can do to improve your QS, you need to hover over the little chat bubble next to "Eligible" in the "Status" column. You'll see this:

Automate ▾ More actions ▾ Labels ▾

Status ?	Ma
Eligible	
Eligible	
Eligible	
Eligible	

Keyword: dog toys that squeak

Showing ads right now?

Yes

Quality score [Learn more](#)

10/10

Expected clickthrough rate: **Average**

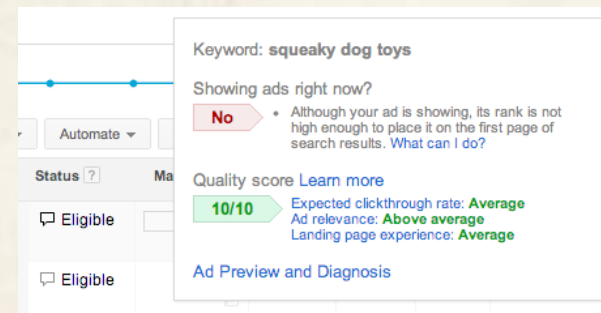
Ad relevance: **Above average**

Landing page experience: **Average**

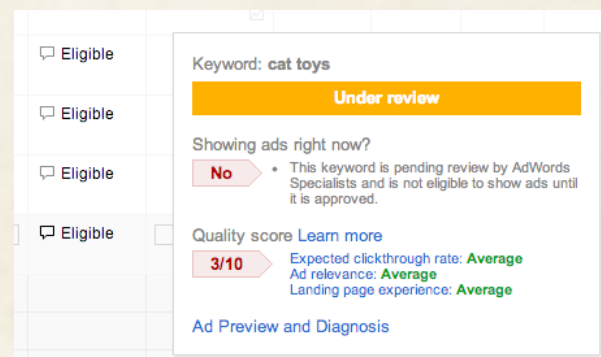
[Ad Preview and Diagnosis](#)

In this case, the ad text is very relevant for “dog toys that squeak” and the historical CTR and landing page relevance are not bad.

In other cases, your ad might not be showing, and the chat bubble will elaborate on that:



This tool comes in even handier when your QS is low and you need to make changes. If you had the keyword cat toys in your dog toys ad group, for instance, it wouldn't be very relevant to the ad text you've written and Google would project a far lower CTR on that:



In light of that, you would need to create a new ad group in your account that dealt more specifically with cat toy keywords and write very relevant ads based on those.

By watching your bids, match types and quality scores closely, you can make your paid search campaigns effective and profitable!



Conclusion

* * *

PPC Essentials: PPC Management for \$250

* * *

These are just the basics of PPC advertising. Now that you know how to get started the right way, you can create your own account for your small business. Once your ads begin generating impressions, keep an eye on your costs and clicks—a good PPC account needs to be optimized on a regular basis.

And on that note: we can help you.

Portent, Inc. has a team dedicated for paid search accounts. We also have a range of packages for PPC management. We can manage your PPC account and optimize it for you. The fastest-growing opportunity is our PPC Essentials package for small businesses. For just \$250 per month, you get:

- A custom strategy developed for your business
- A free 10-minute audit of your current account
- A brand new account created (if applicable) for just \$200
- A report each month with analysis on how your account is performing



We take care of all optimization work, there are no contracts and everything is 100% transferrable to you should you decide to cease our services at any time. If you're interested, [contact us](#) for more information.

You can also learn more about all of Portent's PPC services [on our website](#).

Thank you for downloading Portent's free PPC e-book!