

# The Google Guide to Search Advertising

How to make search advertising  
work for your business

Google Partner Staffordshire IT Services



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# Introduction

If you're the owner of a growing business, it's likely that you've heard of search advertising, also known as search engine marketing (SEM), or pay-per-click (PPC) advertising. But, you might be wondering, could it actually work for your company?

It can. In a world with so many advertising outlets and venues, it's vital to attract new customers to your business, and to connect with people who are actively looking for what your business can offer. That's what search advertising can do.

The Internet easily surpassed any single other means of finding information long ago. In fact, According to a consumer report, 89% of consumers research products and services online before investing in them.<sup>1</sup> Search

advertising is an effective way to reach the people performing those searches—including the specific people your business is looking for.

With search advertising, you're able to have very granular control over your ads: you decide on how much money you want to spend, which keywords (terms or phrases that prompt your ad to appear) to use, and the websites on which you'd like your ad to be placed.

You can also easily measure search advertising's impact on your business. The numbers are there: spend as much or as little as you like, see what's working for you and adjust as needed. With search advertising on your side, it's amazing how successful your business can grow to be.

## Google AdWords: What's In It For You?

If you're thinking about using search advertising, you might be wondering why you should choose Google AdWords.

- **It's effective:** Google is the most popular search engine in the world<sup>2</sup> with over a billion searches every day.<sup>3</sup> More people using Google means more of your target audience will see your ads.
- **Target locally:** AdWords lets you be incredibly specific when it comes to targeting your ads. You can select from countries, territories, regions and cities when placing your ad. You can choose a point on the map and specify a radius around it where your ads will appear, and even exclude certain areas within your selected locations. Growing, local businesses can make sure they're reaching their regional audience.
- **It's fast:** You can get your AdWords campaign up and running quickly and get help from the "Sign Up Tips" page: [www.google.com/adwords/signuptips](http://www.google.com/adwords/signuptips).
- **It's easy:** AdWords is designed for business owners; you don't have to be a webmaster or technical genius. You can do it yourself.
- **It's flexible:** You can change, pause, or end your campaign at any time.
- **There's no risk:** You only pay when someone clicks on your ad and is directed to your business—no strings attached!

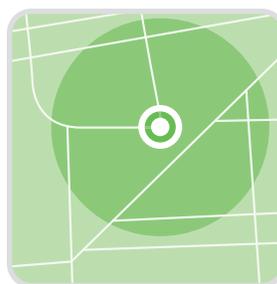
### Google AdWords Localization



Regional Targeting



City Targeting



Radius Targeting



Set Borders Targeting

<sup>1</sup> Clicks to Bricks: The Impact of Online Pre-Shopping on Consumer Shopping Behavior, Yahoo! and comScore, 2007

<sup>2</sup> comScore Media Metrix and qSearch, April 2008 <sup>3</sup> Website Magazine, "Improving AdWords ROI," June 2010

# 5 Steps to Success: Setting Up & Maintaining Your AdWords Campaign

1. Create your first campaign by going to [adwords.google.com](http://adwords.google.com) and clicking the “Start Now” but-ton. Setting up a campaign doesn’t take long and there are step-by-step instructions to guide you along the way.
  - Keep in mind you can always come back and make changes – add keywords, test new ads, revise your bids – so don’t worry about getting everything perfect. Remember, you only pay when someone clicks on your ad.
  - For additional information about the sign-up process—the steps involved, tips for success—check out our free “Sign Up Tips” page: [www.google.com/adwords/signuptips](http://www.google.com/adwords/signuptips)
2. Once the campaign is up and running, wait for a few days, or even a week. Then, see how it’s going—what’s working and what isn’t?
  - If you didn’t use your entire daily budget, take steps to increase your ad’s traffic: try adding more keywords, or try using different ad text that might get a higher click-through rate.
  - If it’s too expensive, you can adapt your campaign accordingly: put a bid limit on your cost-per-click, delete expensive keywords, or try different variations of your ad.
  - If you’re happy with the clicks you’re getting, consider increasing your budget.
3. Track the impact on your business. Keep it simple: ask customers how they heard about you, include a unique phone number on your website, or provide customers with an opportunity to share their contact information on your site.
4. Estimate the ROI (Return on Investment): how much money are you making compared to how much you’re spending? AdWords makes it easy to adjust your budget if your ROI is less than you want it to be.
5. Optimize your ad and your website. This is something you can work on over time. Edit your website’s content and coding, explore enhancing your landing page, etc.

There’s no minimum commitment or contract: you’re free to pause or discontinue your campaign at any time. By experimenting with the parameters of your campaign, you’ll be able to quickly discover what’s working best for your business.

If you would like assistance, Google provides a service to help get your campaign going: it’s a free program that helps growing businesses get set-up on AdWords. To get started contact 1-800-889-4296 (9am - 9pm ET. Service available for new advertisers and in English only. Service subject to website qualification.)

## Calculating Business Growth



**Advertise Using AdWords:** A local florist invests \$100 for her first month of AdWords.



**Customer Contacts Your Business:** She received 100 clicks from her ads generating 50 phone calls.



**Generate Sales:** Those 50 phone calls result in 25 flower sales that bring in an average profit margin of \$10 for a total of \$250.



**Earn Profits:** The florist’s profit from AdWords sales is \$150, giving her a ROI (percentage of the initial investment) of 150%. In other words, for every \$1 she spent, she earned \$1.50.

# Common Search Advertising Questions and Concerns

There are billions of people using the Internet on a daily basis. This means that search advertising can reach any audience actively looking for your product, service or information—whether around the block or across the world.

While the Internet can seem overwhelming, search advertising is actually quite simple. The following questions and answers will help explain why search advertising is worthwhile to use and how easy it can be.

## My business already appears in the regular search results; why should I advertise?

If you're already in the main list of search results (otherwise known as an "organic" or "natural" search), advertising on the right side of the page is still a good idea; having a top listing in both organic searches and advertising will generally increase the traffic to your website.



Relying on organic searches alone to bring traffic to your site could require more technical knowledge and time than it would to add search advertising to your outreach approach. A website's ranking in an organic search

can change at any time due to the creation of new websites online, and it's difficult to make sure that your website appears as one of the first few results. By adding advertising into the mix, you can have more control over where your business appears after someone searches for something related to what you can offer. Also, search advertising allows you to choose where customers are directed to once they click on your ad—to a page on your website, or, even better, on a landing page.

A landing page is a specially constructed page that is directly related and relevant to a user's search. Showing up in a search results gets someone interested in your business, but through ads, you can select to direct them to a more appropriate landing page, where they may be

more likely to become customers. What's more, having a good landing page is something that contributes to the positioning of your ad in a list of search results—the higher the quality of your landing page and ad text (combined with how much you decide to pay per click), the higher the position of your ad in the search results.

### 6 essentials for your landing page:

1. Provide interesting content
2. Have a compelling name for your page
3. Be clear about who you are and what you can offer
4. Make sure there's a clear call to action: what do you want the customer to do?
5. Make sure that the content on your landing page reflects your ad
6. Provide contact information

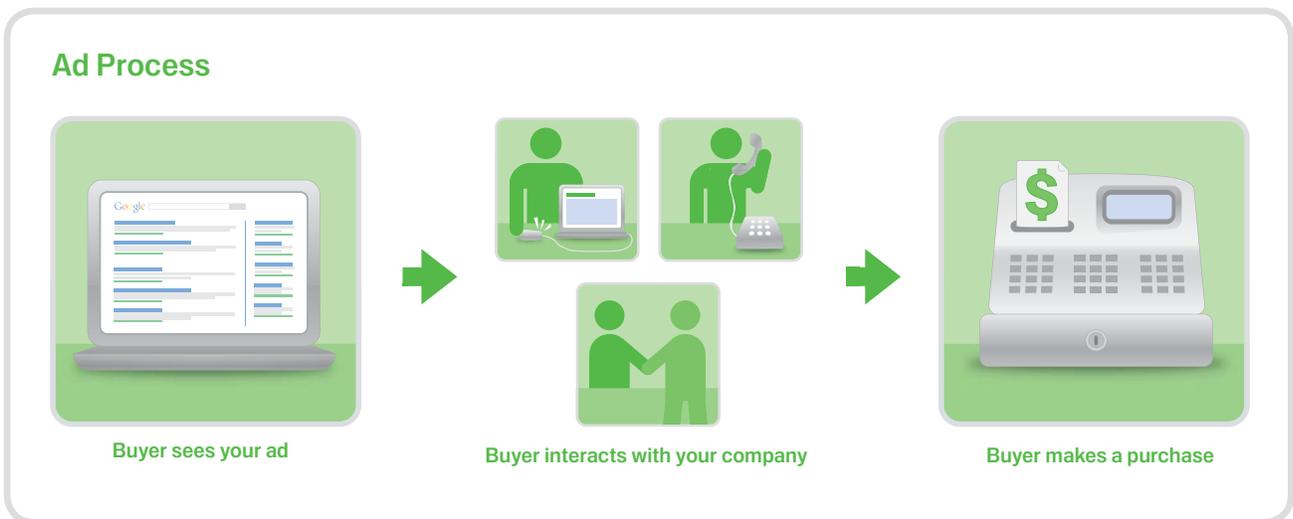
Optimizing your website to influence its appearance in organic searches is a good idea, but search advertising is often easier to do, can give you more control, and results are easier to measure; doing both will significantly help your business.

## Is search advertising relevant to my business?

Search advertising isn't just for big companies. In fact, Google's first AdWords customer was a mail order lobster company. Search advertising can enable growing businesses to compete with larger ones; the quality of your website (or landing page) and the relevance of the user's search triggering your ad carry much more weight than the size of your business. The majority of Google's revenue comes from its advertising programs, which means that searchers are clicking on these ads. Google AdWords (along with Google's other advertising programs, AdSense and Google Grants) generated \$54 billion of economic activity in the United States in 2009, helping hundreds of thousands of growing businesses to thrive<sup>4</sup>.

You can target anyone you want to with search advertising, whether you want to sell locally, regionally or globally; whether you're selling products or providing a service; whether you have a big budget or a small one.

With search advertising, you control the most you're willing to spend per day, and the most you'll pay to have someone click on your ad. Plus, you can pause or cancel your account at any time. You only pay when it's clicked on, which means someone was actively searching for your keywords and was directed to the landing page of your choice. Since you only pay for clicks, you have every reason to give search advertising a try.



## Can I do this without Internet expertise?

Absolutely. Growing businesses all over the world are using search advertising to attract new customers, without taking out loans or hiring technical geniuses. The key components of search marketing are easy - you decide where you want your ads to be placed, how much you want to spend, and what you want to say.

Even better, the control you get with search advertising also means there's freedom to experiment and make changes to find what works best for your advertising needs. Try setting your spending budget at different levels, or test different keywords to see which ones generate the most clicks. It's easy to see what's working, then adjust your campaign based on that information.

Google AdWords will provide you with assistance to help you get your campaign going. There are free tools that you can use to decide which keywords you want to use, get tips on writing your text copy, and feedback about how you want to set your bids.

<sup>4</sup> Annualized figures based on Google Q209 sales

## How do I determine how much I should spend?

One way to approach determining your budget is figuring out which keywords you want to use. Think of 10 different searches someone might do that would connect to your business and type in those keywords or phrases. For example, if you run a café in Norfolk, MA, you might add these keywords: “café in Norfolk,” “coffee,” “friendly coffee shop,” and “fresh pastries.” Think about your location, products and services specific to your business, and what someone would want that you can offer. Next, run a report using AdWords free tools to see what the average price per keyword is, and set your keyword bid to the average price, within your budget.

Here’s another approach: start out with anywhere from \$50 to \$1,000 per month, and use AdWords’ Budget

Optimizer with a cost-per-click bid limit. Then, monitor what happens during the next few days: is the budget used up? If so, see how it’s affected your business—perhaps you’ll be able to increase your budget. If your cost-per-click is higher than it needs to be, then lower it. Remember, you can always adjust your budget.

Google likes searchers to have a positive search experience, so more relevant and effective ads can often pay lower bids for keywords. This is determined in part by the ad’s Quality Score – the Quality Score is based on the ad’s historical volume of searchers’ clicks and the quality and relevance of the ad’s landing page, among other factors. Here’s how it works: the more relevant your ads are to a user’s search, the lower your cost-per-click will be.

## How can I make sure I’m tracking every cent I spend?

As a business, you want to know your advertising budget is well spent. With any form of advertising, you want to have an easy way to track the impact your campaign is having on your business. You can always include a question about how customers discovered your business on your website or landing page, along with a unique phone number to make sure you know when those customers contact you. But Google AdWords can also help you keep track of your conversions (searchers who involve themselves with your business after they click on your ad) with an optional, free tool called Conversion Tracking.

After you answer a few quick questions, Conversion Tracking provides you with a simple piece of code to add to your website that will track how many people completed an action that you define as valuable (subscribed to your service or bought your product, for example). This provides an easy way for you to measure your ROI, and helps you figure out how to optimize your website and your search ads.

Google Analytics is a free program that helps you track specific components of your campaign when linked to your AdWords account—individual keywords, for example—and get information about how people found out about your business online and how they navigated your website. This level of tracking makes it easier to fine tune your search advertising efforts—and generate more business.

So, experiment with keywords and budgeting. As you find out what works best for your campaign, your campaign will start working better and better for you.

### Tips for how to write effective ads:

- **State what makes you different from your competitors:** Use terms that tell the user what they can expect from your company and website, such as “excellent service,” “good value,” “professional,” and “quick.”
- **Incorporate a call to action in your ad:** For example, it’s better to say “buy flowers,” rather than “flowers for sale.”
- **Use the most important keywords in the ad text:** If search terms appear in the ad, they will appear in bold. This means that the ad has a better chance of being noticed and will be clicked on more often.
- **Don’t know which ad text is better? Use ad variations:** If you aren’t sure what text to use in your ad, just let your audience decide. You can create multiple versions of your ad and then compare them to find out which ones receive the most clicks or lead to the most conversions. Keep in mind, you only pay when someone clicks on your ad.

# Take *Body Renew Fitness*' Word For It

## A Google AdWords Success Story

*Body Renew Fitness* started as a new, local boot camp in Boise, Idaho. Now, it represents one of Idaho's leading fitness gyms with four boot camp locations, three gyms, and a tanning salon. How did this company attract so many new customers and grow so quickly? Google AdWords.

The company's CEO Dakota Routh wanted his business to be noticed online, by increasing traffic to his website: "I'd hired someone to create a great website for us, but no one was seeing it," says Routh.

Then one day, Routh saw a small town business owner being interviewed on television: the man explained how his only form of advertising was with Google AdWords, and that his business grew exponentially from using it. Routh says, "That definitely got me interested."

Like many growing business owners, Routh was concerned about not having a huge budget to work with. So, he decided to start with a prepaid monthly budget of \$75. It was immediately successful: "I got a sale from someone clicking on the ad the very next day." Routh was impressed; already he had made his money back and then some from just one sale. While it may not work this quickly for everyone, AdWords has tons of tools and help articles to help advertisers make adjustments or improvements quickly to aid in their ads' success.

"It's easy to figure out what works for you with AdWords," Routh says. "And the more you play around with your AdWords campaign, the more you learn. It's pretty cool." He discovered how to target to specific areas in Boise, which has been very effective for his ad strategy.

Routh also experimented with keywords to his advantage: "I quickly figured out which keywords worked best, and I've managed to run multiple campaigns at once." Now,

Routh has three different campaigns: one for the boot camps, one for the gyms, and one for the tanning salon.

Routh's biggest reservation about starting an AdWords campaign was that he didn't know enough about how to use it. But by just giving it a try, and taking advantage of some of Google's helpful tips and tools, he's been able to easily and effectively expand his business with AdWords—and with no outside help needed. "It's been very easy for me to track the influence AdWords has had on my business. Plus," Routh adds, "it's not a big time commitment. I spend a couple of hours a week checking my AdWords campaigns."

*Body Renew Fitness* has undoubtedly seen success by advertising with Google AdWords. Routh tells us that depending on the month and time of the year, the business gets between five to twenty new customers a

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month that he *knows* came from his AdWords campaigns. By using AdWords along with other forms of advertising, Routh is able to spend less money and get more people to invest in his business.

So take *Body Renew Fitness*' word for it: if it worked for Dakota Routh, it can definitely work for you.

## Get Started

There are tools, tips and guides to help with any part of your campaign process. You'll be surprised at how easy it is to get the ball rolling. Just start here: <http://www.google.com/intl/en/ads/faq/>, and start advertising!