Fundaments Exam

Fundamental Exam

Introduction

Introduction to AdWords

AdWords is the name of Goggle's auction platform. It's Google's version of PPC marketing. The idea is to advertise through relevancy to the viewers. Outside of Google's SERPs there are many other places your ads can be displayed. There are two major parts of AdWords: Google Search Network and the Google Display Network.

For the Display Network there are four reasons you want to use it: sell more products/services, customer loyalty, engagement, and branding. Youtube is part of the Display Network. Many people will suggest turning off the Display Network when you first start. Getting good at using the Display Network will take a different set of skills than Search.

Before using any Google product you have to create a Google account. This account will be the universal login for all products Google. When you set up an Account with AdWords be careful when you choose your currency and time. This is because you cannot edit them when the account is set up. The email address you used, password for said address, and billing information are all found at the account level in Adwords. When you change your password for AdWords, every password changes including gmail, google drive, etc.

Using Google AdWords will help display to potential clients the products and services you offer. It increases the chance someone who wants to buy a particular product and service will select you. I compare it to internet sales and lead generation. Very similar to cold calling as it is a numbers game.

Account

Account Management

The MCC is the top level. Something affecting the MCC will affect all the accounts. The hierarchy is MCC>Account>Campaign>AdGroup>Ads. Google focuses on the Account, Campaign, and AdGroup levels the most. You pay google via the account level which is where the email address, password, payment information is located. The entire idea of account management is to be organized. Google likes organized AdWords accounts. Google rewards well organized accounts with Higher Quality Scores.

The campaign level is where you do budgeting and targeting. Setting up a campaign doesn't take very long. The main idea is that Campaigns specify settings that apply to all ad groups that are under it. You can have at most 10,000 campaigns. Google is pretty adamant each ad group should have a theme. The keywords should relate to each other. A theme is this relationship.

There are three types of campaigns: Search and Display Networks; Search Network Only; and Display Network Only. The ad level is where the actual ads and keyword triggers are located. The ad group contains the same ads and keywords. It's a good idea to brainstorm group themes and ideas in the beginning.

Campaign

Campaign Management

At the campaign level you are concerned about budgeting and targeting. Each campaign needs a unique name. This unique name will not affect the AdWords auction in any way. Campaigns determine where ads will be shown. One of the most important things for campaigns is optimizing them.

If you have a new product or service and wish to promote it you should create a new campaign. You should assign a separate daily budget to monitor it and make changes as necessary. The Campaigns tab is where you should go to make a new campaign. Under the default option your ads can be found everywhere. Depending on your business you may choose to do video/mobile/ect.

The Opportunities tab is pretty useful. You can use it to find new keywords and get a general idea of what the budget should be. It will suggest ways to improve the campaign performance. The tab provides three tools: Ideas, Campaign bid simulator and Analyze competition.

Monitoring the campaign is important for many reasons. The primary reason is to make money. You should set a goal in conversion, impressions, etc, and monitor whether you achieve goals. Campaigns on Google AdWords are measureable and can generate an immediate impact. As long as the calculated ROI is positive, you can attempt to capture all traffic. Profit can be due to volume of sales and not just margins. You can schedule campaigns to start in the future. When you do this it will say "pending." This is important for holidays. Using the average daily budget you can help control the Return on Investment. You can experiment with keywords and other factors and increase your budget when you find success. The average daily budget helps with keeping cost down. It does this by limiting exposure until you are ready to hit the market hard.

Search

Search Network

The minimal necessary to run an ad on the Search Network is text, keywords, and a bid. AdWords will recalculate the auction every time someone does a search. The easy way to manage keyword bids is to select the automatic Cost Per Click option. This takes the least amount of time.

Ad Rank on the Search Network is determined by the Maximum amount you will pay for Click multiplied by the Quality Score. For the Search Network you pay when someone clicks on your ad. Negative keywords prevent your ad from appearing when a user types in the keyword in the search query. When a campaign reaches it daily budget this probably means that there are missed opportunities. Certainly there are missed ad impressions that could have been obtained for that day.

PPC revolves around the idea you can pay to get the top ad in the Search Network. This is different from a natural search which is organic. If your website is not interesting to the viewer it will not show up high for natural searches. On the Search Network you can pay for potential qualified customers.

Ad Group

Ad Group Management

The Standard budget delivery method helps evenly distribute ads through the course of the day. You can change delivery to target certain time periods, nights/days, etc depending on your market. If you choose an accelerated delivery method your ads will be shown as frequently as possible until all your moneys is gone (daily budget). The optimize ad rotation setting gives AdWords the power to pick the best performing ads and show them over not so well performing ads. Under this setting the best performing ads will show more often.

For the Display Network only you can use the Display Campaign Optimizer which helps you find targets and bids to increase conversions. This is especially good if you already spent a large budget.

The other sort of new thing is the experiment option. This allows you to conduct split tests. You can test parts of the campaign against each other. New information can be used to change or remove keywords that are not working.

IP Exclusions allow you to prevent devices from seeing ads. This may be helpful if you have employees who are randomly clicking things. Pretty annoying…

Search II

Search Network II

There are certain things that you shouldn't do on the Search Network because it is not fetch. You cannot promote malware. You cannot deceive viewers. You should not invalidate personal information security. Spam is bad. Bridge pages are not allowed i.e. do not send viewers to different sites. Parked domains cannot be promoted.

Effective Search ads are simple and relevant. You only have 130 characters to make your point. And competition is fierce. This is where the idea of a theme really plays a role. Having a theme creates the ad since you already did the brain storming. The call to action "click" is not allowed. But you can use other words like "buy" or "download" to get your point across. Different capitalizations are also not allowed. Numbers and Prices work well as does coupons.

Dynamic Keyword Insertion is sort of fun to use. You will require a piece of code. I am experimenting with this now. Don't really know that much about it. It was not on my test.

Display

Display Targeting

The two bids methods for image ads on Display Network are CPM and CPC. CPM is good for branding and CPC is better for conversion. CPM is available for placement targeted campaigns on the Google Display only. A CPM bid is the amount you are willing to pay for 1,000 impressions. CPC is Cost Per Click and is the typical format to pay per click. Google believes success in the Display Network should be measured in overall cost per conversion. Conversions are the end goal for most marketing campaigns. You should try to get your cost per conversion down as low as possible. You can define conversions in many ways.

There are two types of placements for the Display Network: Automatic and Managed. Automatic is when Google helps determine which sites and what content shares the same theme as the keywords you selected. Managed Placement is when you pick for yourself which websites you would like to appear on. You can use frequency capping and CPM only on the Display Network.

On the Display Network you can run text ads, image ads, video ads, and rich media ads.

The quality of the landing page is very important in determining Display Network Quality Score. This is the single most important factor. The landing page is what a searcher sees after clicking. It is important to have a good landing page that relates to the actual ad via using the same keywords and being relevant.

Display II

Display Network

The Display Network is broad match only; therefore misspellings, variants, etc are not necessary. Display targeting is largely based on something called contextual targeting. Whenever you see contextual this clues you in that it is a Display question. Contextual targeting is matching based on Keywords, Topics, Interest Categories, and Remarketing. It's a hodgepodge. The contextual targeting tools automatically create ad groups and keyword lists for Google Display Network campaigns. This is pretty cool because it will suggest keywords for an ad group as well as a bid. It will also show you potential websites your ad could show up on.

Display keywords are used for non-search ads. Like the ones you see on Examiner.com… everywhere…. Limiting the amount of keywords can help target placements to a theme better. Both automatic and managed placements have a URL list which shows a link to every page that your ad was shown on.

Topics are a targeting method that allows ads to appear on pages with the specified topic. This expands advertising reach. Topics are a blend of keywords and themes and helps AdWords identify relevant placements for your ad. You ad will appear on any page that contains content related to the designated topic.

Remarketing is sort of like tracking someone… To enable it, you will need a piece of code embedded on the target page from your website. The code will create an audience list for you. It does this by tracking the cookie ID. Remarketing is particularly useful when someone has already purchased something from you. Repeat customers are after all easier targets. You can also track someone with different types of ads i.e. they don't need to see the same ad over and over again.

Display III

Display Network

On the Display network it is important to know that a low click through rate will not affect the search network quality score. Generally your CTR will be lower on the display network due to higher volume and lower relevancy.

Managed Placement is important for the Display Network because it allows you to select exactly what webpages, videos, games, etc that your advertisements will appear on. Depending on the website you may have to bid aggressively. Different websites and locations will have different competitors.

Smart Pricing is when Google automatically reduces the Cost Per Click bidding because it believes that it is unlikely to end in a conversion. Google figures this out by using the AdWords' history of conversion for the type of keywords in the ad group.

By including both keywords and placements in Ad Groups via Display Network the ads will only appear on specific sites you picked where content is also relevant to the theme. This is a very narrow way to attack the Display Network.

The last important thing is that Google recommends that you keep your search and display campaigns separate from one another.

Language and Location

Language and Location Targeting

Google determines the language of the ads to target through the language settings from the Google Interface the client is using. For instance someone in France sets their language preference to English then they will see ads that target people in Russia but the ads will be in English. If you want to target French speakers then you should set the language setting to French. You do this by adjusting the language target settings. For location targeting, you can change it at the campaign level. The primary reason you want to use location targeting is to pick countries and regions you want to sell in. Perhaps the brick and mortar store needs a little bit of help. Google uses the IP address of users for location targeting.

Ads

Ad Formats

Because the formula for ad rank on the Search Network is Maximum Cost Per Click multiplied by the Quality Score, it is important to improve the Quality Score. With a higher Quality Score you have a higher ranking but pay the same.

To see if your ads are running you can use the Ad Preview and Diagnosis tool. If you do not use the Ad Preview and Diagnosis tool when you search your ads you risk increasing the number of impressions without clicks therefore lowering your CTR. A lower CTR may prevent your ad from running as often as it could.

Before running your campaign you should identify special offers and create compelling text. However, Call to Action phrases like "Click here," or "See this" are not allowed because they violate Google Policy. Best practices when running an ad text is to include price of product/service, any promotions, and exclusive offers. Google has an extensive list of things to do and not do when formatting your ad. You should not simulate an email inbox notification. Fake friend and crush requests are also frown upon.

Ad extensions are a good way to promote a campaign. A typical ad extension is the google +1. The +1s your website already has is shown in the ads. Another extension type is a location extension. This is good for assisting local customers in finding where you are. To get greater exposure on mobile devices you can enable bid adjustments and bid higher for mobile devices. TrueView video format allows you to pay only when a user views your video ad through a cost per view advertising model.

Budgets + Bidding

How to Budget; How to Bid

Let's start with CPC which is Cost per Click. The maximum CPC is the highest amount you are willing to pay per ad. Normally you won't pay the maximum amount because you will only pay .01 over the next highest bid. Using Enhanced Cost per Click you can bid more aggressively if Google believes the auction will have more conversions (i.e. the viewer is more likely to buy or convert). The main goal of CPC is to generate as many clicks as you can within your budget. For manual CPC, it is the average profit derived from a paid click. Smart Pricing is when google reduces CPC bids that are less likely to result in a conversion or a buy. A low CTR on the Display Network will not affect your Search Network Quality Score. They are separate.

CPM is cost per thousand impressions. This is not available if you opted out of the Search Network and are only in Display. For the Display Network both CPM and CPC are allowed. When a CPM and CPC compete against each other Google estimates how many clicks the ad would receive in 1000 impressions, the one with the higher click rate will have a better ad position.

Conversions are another way to budget a campaign. CPA or Cost Per Acquisition is the amount of money it took to get one action, typically a purchase. Even if your CPA is low this doesn't necessarily mean you are making as much money as you can be. If the low CPA also has low sales volumes, then overall profit could be less than a higher CPA and more volume. Simple sales economics… If you raise your CPA bid it could mean more conversions. If you lower your CPA bid it could mean fewer conversions.

Measuring

Measuring and Optimization

There first step is to ask what are you goals. The goal is not as simple as to get clicks. Most businesses want what happens after the click. The click is good… it probably isn't the end goal.

Conversion tracking is a simple way to see if the desired behavior is being met. It places a cookie on a searcher's computer after the search clicks an ad. The cookie automatically expires for 30 days. If at any point during the 30 days a conversion occurs (the searcher lands on the conversion page) then a conversion is credited to the keyword on the date of the click. There are two types of conversion clicks: the one per click conversion and the may per click conversion.

Search funnels also use code but they provide more information and a clearer picture of what is happening. A Search funnel will show first click analysis, assisted conversion, top conversion, assist clicks and impression, top paths, time lag, path length, and last click analysis.

Performance and Profitability

Quality Score should be one of the main things you look at. It is in Google's best interest to show ads that receive more clicks. Each account earns a quality score based on the overall performance of the campaign. Quality Score is a big part of Ad Rank. It is important to note quality score is set at the keyword level and does not factor in match type.

CTR is one factor quality score relies on. A low CTR on the display network will not affect the Search Network Quality Score. Ad Rank on the Search Network is determined my Maximum CPC multiplied by the Quality Score. One way to increase Quality Score is to edit the landing page to make sure it is relevant to the keywords you are targeting. A higher Quality Score means that the ad could earn a higher average position which could mean more money. Quality Score and Ad Rank are re-calculated every time someone enters in a search that could trigger your ad.

Another factor to determine Quality Score is relevancy which is how relevant your ad is to the searcher. Did you ad prove useful to the searcher? Using negative keywords will usually help increase relevancy which increased Quality Score. Google will also look at landing page speed. There is also a non-google reason that landing page speed is important: marketing experts agree that a longer load time means a higher bounce rate. Not only are you hurting yourself for Google Adranks but you are annoying potential customers. Another factor that will affect Quality Score is account history. Building up a reputation of using Google's best practices is said to have benefits in boosting Quality Score.

Multiple Accounts

Managing Multiple Accounts

The MCC is like a hierarchy of accounts. It is referred to as an "umbrella" account which can operate AdWords accounts. MCC accounts provide a simple way to look at different goals for your clients. You can look at all your clients from one dashboard which is nice. With a MCC you will not need to login more than once. You can jump from account to account with a single login. It helps keep businesses separate. There are different levels of access from Read Only Access to Admin Access. Admin Access would have the most control. It cascades from there.

Manager Defined Spend allows a person to manage the budgets under the MCC dashboard. This makes it easy to manage multiple accounts. Setting this up requires you to work with an actual person!!! The Manager Defined Spend status requires there to be an agency. This is because the agency pays and not the client. You will need to set up a Manager Defined Order first. There is only one itemized monthly bill called the Manager Defined Order (yuk bills).

MCC accounts are organized in levels. It is possible to have a sub-level MCC hold another sub-level MCC. You get to choose how complicated or simple you want your accounts. If you want to limit someone's ability to see other accounts, i.e. other businesses… then you should create a new MCC account and link it to the main one. You can move accounts into the new MCC. This will allow the owner to make changes on the new MCC account. I believe this is the official Google way to do this.

Experimenting

Experimenting And the Rest.

Google wants you to constantly experiment with testing. This helps generate more conversions which should make both you and Google happy. One important term is conversion rate which is simply the number of conversions divided by the number of clicks. A high conversion rate indicates the clicks are relevant and may lead to a higher AdRank. The Cost per Conversion which is different from the Cost per Click (CPC) is calculated by the average Cost per Click divided by the conversion rate. The Cost per Conversion is what every client is really after. How much do you need to pay someone to do a certain action? The Cost per Conversion is your answer. It was previously discussed how to place the conversion code on a website. Google recommends you place the conversion code in the Thank You or Confirmation page.

Experimenting is important to Google. One tool that is helpful is the Google Bid simulator which will tell you how many more clicks you can expect if you increase your bids. This is useful in setting up a budget for the campaign. At some point the clicks should become too expensive per conversion to be worth bidding on. Or you purchased all possible clicks.

Google suggesting that at a minimal it takes about one week to gather data in an AdWords Experiment. Google also recommends one month if possible. You can use the Campaign Experiment tool to help. When testing your ads you should set the rotation to evenly to begin. You can always change the rotation later. Google recommends 300 clicks per ad as the lowest amount of clicks for an ad test. On a side note I use 1000 clicks per ad because its easier to do the math calculations. Since Google focuses on conversions you should be aware that Google recommends at least 7 conversions as a minimal for an ad test. I typically use 10 which again helps with the math.