Are you making these Adwords mistakes?

Arun Agrawal
Internet Marketing Consultants
www.ebizindia.com

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Dr. Mani Sivasubramanian

Google Adwords is a great place to advertise. You can get a large number of visitors coming over to your web site at a known cost per visitor. The first visitor generally lands up within a few minutes. However if you are not careful, you can burn up a large amount of money without having much Return on Investment (ROI).

Here are some mistakes that even regular Adwords advertisers have been found to be making. Make sure you are not making any of these mistakes and save a bundle of money.

Mistake #1: Having only 1 ad in the ad groups!

You should be constantly testing variations of your ads and for this; you should have minimum 2 and sometimes more ads in each ad group.

Setup your campaign to rotate ads evenly. The default setting is to show the better ad more often, which seems more logical but does not allow you to run effective testing. Wait for enough time to get around 30 clicks on the best ad and then delete the lowest performing one. Replace this with a variation of the best performing ad.

Mistake #2: Having widely varying keywords in the same ad group.

If you have widely varying keywords (like 'replacement windows' and 'upvc doors') in the same ad group, you will not be able to match the ads closely with all the keywords and this will result in poor quality scores, costing you more per click.

You should take out one set of keywords and create a separate ad group for those. Now write a new set of ads for these keywords.

Mistake #3: Not using the negative keywords.

You must use negative keywords (put –keyword in the keyword list) to avoid showing your ad to an uninterested audience. If you are selling a guide on some subject, you should use "-free" as a keyword to avoid people looking for free advice or free ebooks and like.

Mistake #4: Not using the exact match and phrase match keywords.

You must be using each of the broad match (keyword phrase), exact match ([keyword phrase]) and phrase match ("keyword phrase") variations of your keywords in your keyword list. This way, your CTR will be much higher for the exact match terms resulting in lower CPC.

Here is a FREE tool to generate all the variations of your keyword list.
If you are low on budget, you may even eliminate the broad match keywords from your list. That way you will get fewer clicks but high CTR and low CPC.

Mistake #5: Not checking your quality score.

Google assigns a quality score to each of your keywords. If your score is not **Great** or at least **OK**, you may be paying much more per click. To see your score, go to your ad groups and click on the keywords tab. Now choose "Show/hide columns" and opt to show the quality scores.

The quality score depends on the matching of the ad message, keywords, display URL and the landing page.

Mistake #6: Not having a targeted display URL.

Did you know that you can use any Display URL from your domain (it may not even exist)? So instead of using www.domain.com, consider using www.Domain.com/product where you put appropriate values for domain and product.

This gives an indication to the reader that you will take him to a specific page and not to the home page, increasing the likelihood of a click.

Mistake #7: Not having a focussed landing page.

Your landing page is a vital element of your Adwords campaign. Most of the times, you must avoid sending the visitor to the home page. Instead, they should be directed to a focussed landing page that continues the experience.

There are several elements of the landing page that must be checked to make sure that you get the best results:

- The visitor has come here after seeing your ad. He should get a similar message in the headline. If there is any discrepancy, he will simply go back. A classic mistake is to offer a free ebook or free trial in the ad and not talking about that in the landing page (or at least not putting it prominent enough).

- There must be the least number of distracting elements. The menu options can be put in the footer. Do not try to sell multiple products from a single landing page.

- Make it clear to the visitor what he has to do next (add to cart, buy, subscribe etc) with a prominent call to action.

- Have confidence building elements like testimonials, association logos etc

- A privacy policy just below the call-to-action button is compulsory.

Mistake #8: Not targeting a specific country or region for geo-specific products or service.

If you are selling a local service that applies to only a specific geographical area, why not select a country or even a region to tightly target visitors from only that region. This can save you a big chunk of money on wasted exposure and useless clicks and you may afford to invest more on clicks from your area.

Mistake #9: Not discovering new keywords consistently.

You must be on a lookout for new keywords that you can advertise on. The Google keywords tool can give you a good beginning. Wordtracker also offers a free trial.

Try this: Search for your important terms and visit the top ranking sites (say top 20). Now view the HTML source of each of these sites (right click on the page, select view source option). See what keywords they have used in the meta-keywords tag and note any that are relevant but you are not already using. Add new ad group(s) with these keywords.

Mistake #10: Not using the conversion tracker.

Getting high click-through rates is great. But you need sales or subscription sign-ups or some other actions. So your ultimate aim is to maximise the conversion.

Google offers a very useful and simple to implement conversion tracker that you can install in a few minutes, by copying a small piece of JavaScript code on the thank-you page. This will give you much better insights as you can get an idea on which keywords are actually converting better and also, the cost of each conversion. This is a much better metric than the click-through rate.

Since you need to have access to the thank-you page to use this feature, you can use this only if you are marketing your own site. You cannot use this if you are advertising sites on an affiliate basis unless you are close to the site owner who will agree to place your conversion code.

Double check your Adwords campaigns and if you are making any of these mistakes, you should rectify that to get a major improvement in your response rate and ROI.

You can call me on +91-98310-27107 or write to arun AT Ebizindia DOT com if you want help with managing your Adwords campaigns.