



# **7 AWESOMELY ADVANCED WAYS TO GET MORE FROM YOUR PPC CAMPAIGNS**

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## Introduction

PPC, or pay-per-click advertising, can be a tough nut to fully crack. For some companies, PPC is similar to a stubborn pistachio that doesn't quite want to come out of its shell. Businesses might experiment with a few campaigns and even have some success, but ultimately, PPC is very often used to far less than its full potential and eventually abandoned in favour of easier, more accessible strategies.

Part of the reason for the rampant suboptimal PPC implementation is the complexity that comes with running campaigns, bidding on keywords, collecting and interpreting large amounts of data, managing a set budget and measuring results. It's a lot to take on, especially if you're a small business owner figuring it out yourself or just a digital marketer who lacks extensive PPC experience. The other cause for confusion with PPC is the false notion that it's a one-dimensional digital marketing cog that serves only to deliver you an expected amount of traffic for a fixed-cost. While that is certainly one of the upsides of PPC, it's not the only reason to add pay-per-click to your digital arsenal and there are definitely other ways it can make a big difference to your bottom line.

As steep as the PPC learning curve can sometimes seem, it's a strategy that your business should at least experiment with (rather than ignore). So at some point, you need to learn by doing (or at least understand by doing) because the only way to get real experience is to get your hands dirty. But it's much easier if you have an in-depth - albeit still general - understanding of the finer points of PPC and, perhaps more importantly, how exactly it integrates with the other components of your digital marketing strategy. Whether you're planning to manage your PPC campaigns or just want to develop a stronger understanding of what the experts are doing with your budget, we're here to help.

WSI can be that expert on both ends - the one teaching you how to run better campaigns on your own or the one developing your understanding what we're doing with the money you've set aside for PPC. Whichever kind of PPC support you're seeking at the moment, here are seven awesomely advanced ways to get more from your PPC campaigns:

## 1. Master the Basics

This might seem like an inauspicious start to a whitepaper with *awesomely advanced* in the title, but given that it's so difficult to actually master all the basics of PPC, we think it's an advanced accomplishment all on its own. It's easy enough to get a PPC campaign up and running, but it's much harder to maintain them at a consistently high level. And managing amazing campaigns that generate great return on investment and are fully integrated with every component of an overall digital strategy? Let's just say that doesn't happen very often. When it does, however, it begins with the basics.

Here are some basic areas of pay-per-click that, if you learn to master, will set you along the path to PPC greatness:

**Sparkling ad copy:** just like a great headline, title or SEO meta description, PPC ad copy is often overlooked and underrated. The copy is the ad and the thing you want people to engage with, so why wouldn't you spend a considerable amount of time and energy crafting a pristine, creative ad that is just begging to be clicked? This is as basic as it gets but it's not easy to do - mastering it will help deliver results.

**A/B test ads:** one of the things you can do to enhance your ad copy is experiment and split test the ads you create. There's more than one way to say the same thing, especially in such a limited amount of space. Create two ads for the same page or offer, set up a brief split test, and then run with the ad that gets the best results. It's better than hoping your first idea is your best idea.

**Use better landing pages:** hopefully, you're using landing pages to receive all the visitors your PPC campaigns are funneling to your website, because it's the most basic rule of thumb. But your landing pages could probably be better, so you can use A/B testing to improve them (and thus improve your Quality Score, which is the relevance between your chosen keyword and its landing page).

**Target your ads:** the more targeted your ads are, the better results you'll get. This means that your keywords, ad copy and landing page content must work in complete unison. If you can't find enough harmony between these elements then you're most likely wasting much of your PPC budget. Remember, you're paying for clicks but a click and a website visit does not necessarily mean a conversion.

**KEY POINT: the basics of PPC are no cakewalk, so if you can hone your skills and become a master of ad copywriting, creating relevant landing pages and laser targeting, you'll be more advanced than most of your competitors.**

## 2. Use PPC to Inform and Improve SEO

You've probably read the articles that vehemently support either PPC or SEO while recommending that you eschew the other tactic. SEO detractors might claim that it doesn't work or takes a longer time to garner results, and PPC naysayers often insist that the money isn't worth the return on investment. The truth is that both PPC and SEO are very good digital marketing tactics and, like most aspects of marketing your services online, the one that's right for your business depends on many factors. The ability to adapt to the rapidly shifting landscape of the Internet and recognize the combinations of strategies and tactics that deliver the best results is the most important component of great digital marketing campaigns. There's too much change in the digital marketing game to get stuck on one tactic or strategy - if you develop a narrow focus, your company will fall behind your adaptive competitors.

For most businesses, the best course of action is often to use PPC and SEO in tandem, which makes sense since they both focus on getting your business found via search engines. PPC is all about finding high-value, low cost keywords that generate converting traffic, so if set up and tracked correctly, the results of a PPC campaign should highlight great long-term SEO targets. For example, let's say you try a PPC campaign that includes four different keywords (we'll call them A, B, C and D, with A being the most expensive term). After a month, the results show that even though A is the most expensive term, C is the keyword that generated the most conversions (whether it's buying a product or signing up for a newsletter). At this point you should probably do some keyword research to confirm your findings, but because it's doing so well in the PPC campaign, it's likely that C is a term for you to focus on with your SEO efforts.

Another thing that suggests PPC and SEO make a great strategic match is their combined effect on search engine results pages (SERPs). Small studies have shown that when a PPC ad and an organic ranking appear on the same SERP, [good things happen](#). This particular data set found that when PPC ads and organic listings for the same business appear, the click-through-rate (CTR) increases by 7%. Even more interesting is the when paid and organic listings appear on the same SERP, the CTR for the PPC ad alone actually increases. This means that not only can you use PPC data to inform your SEO results, but you can also use the two tactics in tandem to generate more clicks and a higher conversion rate - which ultimately means more sales and money!

**KEY POINT: Broaden your focus instead of narrowing it.  
Use PPC and SEO together - they are stronger in tandem  
and will generate better results than if used alone.**

### 3. Use PPC to Accomplish More Than One Goal

PPC is mainly associated with conversion and when most people hear the word 'conversion' they think in terms of money: selling a product or service. But as marketers know, conversion is a process and our job is to lead potential customers from the beginning of that process to the end. PPC shouldn't just be used to seal the deal; it [should be used throughout the conversion process to achieve various goals](#). Conversion isn't just about making a sale, it's about accomplishing a series of small goals that each play a part in completing the larger end goal.

These days, people search for information before they make a purchase (it is the Information Age, after all). Consumers also use different devices throughout the conversion process, so it can be very confusing to figure out what, when and how you should target and send your messages. To help with the confusion, here are a few things you can focus on throughout the conversion process:

**Brand awareness:** it probably goes against your pre-conceived notions of PPC, but brand awareness PPC campaigns are not geared toward selling a product or service. As the name suggests, the goal is to make as many people as possible aware of your brand. The consumers who are most swayed by branding are usually the ones at the beginning of the conversion process where they only have a general idea that they want to make a purchase or the ones really close to converting (they might

be trying to remember your brand's name). Techniques for branding campaigns can be as straightforward as bidding on your name to ensure the SERP real estate or as creative as the [Snickers campaign that bid on common search misspellings as keywords](#) (and offered their chocolate bar as a solution).

**Content and information:** if you're creating any sort of branded content, the goal of that content should be to provide value and information to your potential customers. One of the SEO goals for content is to rank highly for certain keywords so that searchers find your insightful posts organically while they're looking for information. Why can't PPC help out with this goal? The answer: it can! All you have to do is craft an ad that is highly relevant to your blog post topic, target it towards consumers who are searching for information on your blog topic and keyword, and launch the campaign. In this case, PPC is just a quicker way to get eyes on your content, which could potentially increase social shares and in the end, help your post climb the SEO ladder. It's a win-win!

**Special offers:** Every potential customer is different, so while a 10% discount might seal the deal for one, a free guide or whitepaper might be the deciding factor for another. To cover all your bases, make sure you provide various offers through your PPC ads, especially when the focus is on the consumers who are nearing their purchase decision.

**KEY POINT: use PPC campaigns to target potential customers who are at every level of the conversion process (not just the ones in purchase mode).**

## 4. Reach New Audiences and Markets

One of the great things about PPC is its versatility. More specifically, it's the immediacy of that versatility that allows you to be really creative and reach new audiences and markets almost as soon as you think of a great campaign idea. Since campaigns are effective the moment you launch them, you can theoretically monitor your campaign for just a few days and figure out whether it's working and delivering results.

For example, let's say you want to target an audience that isn't quite your normal audience but does have some crossover areas of interest with your products and services. You could run a campaign using the crossover keywords just to see if members of these secondary audiences have any interesting in clicking through to information about your brand. You can also get super focused with your campaigns and do things like running a one-hour coffee break campaign for five days in a row, just to test the waters.

Here are a few other campaign ideas that you can run ads in response to:

- Online trends
- TV and other media
- Seasonal events
- Peak online shopping periods

**KEY POINT: get creative with your PPC campaigns and attempt to reach new audiences and markets - you never know what crazy ideas are going to work.**

## 5. Target Customers Anywhere and Everywhere

PPC gives you the opportunity to target your customers anywhere and everywhere they are online (and with or without their permission). In addition to reaching new audiences with experimentally targeted campaigns, PPC allows you to target potential customers using display ads and remarketing. This enables you to create special offers or seasonal campaigns to serve to previous conversions or visitors who have at least shown interest in your brand.

To give you some insight as to how this works, let's follow the digital path of a theoretical website visitor. First, you set up a PPC campaign that a searcher finds and clicks on, which takes them to your website. Whether or not this visitor actually converts (depends on other factors, including the type of ad they clicked on) you can now track this website visitor as they traipse around the Internet after leaving your website. At the very least, you know this visitor is mildly interested in your products or services and it certainly wouldn't be a stretch to assume they are considering a purchase. This is where display advertising and remarketing come in; without permission, these potential customers who have previously visited your website will be served display ads that nudge them back in the direction of your website and keep your brand in their minds.

**KEY POINT: stay top-of-mind to your previous website visitors and converted customers by targeting them with display ads and remarketing, which gives them another opportunity to purchase or repurchase from your brand.**

## 6. Learn More About Your Competitors Than You Think You Can

There are countless ways to discover the digital tactics and strategies being employed by your closest competitors. As an example, many businesses are still incorrectly using meta keywords in their SEO strategy, which only serves one purpose: to tell their competitors the keywords they are trying to rank for. There's plenty of opportunity to spy on the PPC activity of your competitors as well.

Using tools like [Keyword Competitor](#) and [SpyFu](#), here are a few ways that you can begin to scrape information from the campaigns of your closest competitors:

- Analyze keyword selection
- Analyze bid levels
- Monitor ad updates
- Monitor special offers

The information you discover can help you determine which of your competitors are hurting your market share and allow you to modify your campaigns to once again get ahead of them. You can do things like outbid your competitors (for keywords you deem worthwhile), make better and more frequent ad updates and offer more enticing deals that will hopefully steal clicks from other brands.

**KEY POINT: remain curious about what your competitors are doing with their marketing efforts and find out as much as you possibly can. Then, use any information at your disposal to tweak your PPC campaigns and once again launch yourself ahead of the competition.**

## 7. Measure and Improve Your Conversion Rate

With the sheer amount of data that comes with running a PPC campaign, there's no excuse for not measuring - and continuously trying to improve upon - your conversion rate. On a very basic level, it's easy to decipher the keyword phrases that are leading to the most conversions, which is essentially the same exercise we went through to show you how to use PPC to inform your SEO strategy. In the same way that highly converting terms make good SEO targets, they also should continue as terms you bid on for your PPC campaigns (even if you have to bid a higher amount). By the same token, you might want to swap the lower converting keyword phrases out for new ones in hopes that they'll do a better job.

One thing to be mindful of when tracking your conversion rate is the [new naming conventions Google intends to roll out in February 2014](#). What we currently call 'conversions (1-per-click)' will change to 'converted clicks,' which is the number of clicks that lead to at least one conversion. The real change comes in the form of 'conversions (many-per-click),' which will be called 'conversions.' For this category, you can dictate how 'conversions' are tracked. For example, we spoke about the conversion process above having multiple mini-conversions - the new tracking conventions will allow you to measure more than one 'conversion' per user if you specify the conversion cases. This tracking format benefits you because it paints a clearer picture of the true results at all points of the conversion process.

Another way to measure and improve your conversion rate is by tracking your phone calls and responding to leads as quickly as possible. Studies have shown that [the odds of qualifying a lead drop 21 times with a response in 30-minutes versus a quick, 5-minute response](#). Once you are absolutely certain that your speed-to-lead response times are fast, then start tracking your calls so you can analyze your conversations and make improvements based on the results.

**KEY POINT: make sure you respond to your leads as quickly as you can and always measure and seek to improve your PPC conversion rate.**

## Go Forth and Get More From Your PPC Campaigns!

Armed with these seven awesomely advanced ways to get more from your PPC campaigns, we send you off to track, measure, research, improve and be creative with your paid search efforts. And of course, if you need our help or expertise, you know where to find us!

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### About WSI (We Simplify the Internet)

WSI is a digital marketing company with a strong international presence. Our Digital Marketing Consultants use their knowledge and expertise to make a difference for businesses all around the world. Headquartered in Toronto, Canada, we also have offices in over 80 countries. We're a powerful network of marketers who strive to discover, analyze, build and implement digital solutions that help businesses succeed online.

Over the last 20 years, WSI has won multiple digital marketing awards for our solutions by adapting to the constantly shifting landscape of the Internet. We take pride in helping businesses make the most of the dollars they spend on digital marketing.

Ready to move ahead and discuss a project with a local Digital Marketing Consultant? Get in touch with one of our experts now by visiting <http://www.wsiworld.com/get-in-touch-with-an-expert>.