

## **The Basics of PPC Marketing**

All copy Pay-per-click advertising, also known as PPC, is a form of online advertising whereby internet users are directed to an advertiser's website after clicking on an advertisement. The advertiser pays for each visitor to their website on a per-click basis. These advertisements most commonly appear on search engine results pages such as Google, but also appear on hundreds of thousands of websites, news pages and blogs.

### **How it works**

A search engine user types what they are looking for in the search box and a results page appears with a list of websites and advertisements that the search engine deems relevant. The PPC advertisements are usually located both on the right hand side of this results page and above the main "natural" results on the left.

By using a PPC program such as Google Adwords you can choose which search terms should trigger your ad and how much you are willing to pay/bid for someone to click through to your site. The more you bid, the higher you will appear in the results. You only pay when someone actually clicks on your ad.

### **What are the benefits of using a PPC program?**

PPC advertising offers a fast and quantifiable method of generating excellent levels of traffic to your website and can easily be used in conjunction with any form of online and offline advertising to create a potent marketing mix.

If managed correctly PPC marketing generates targeted visitors to your website. The use of specific keywords that have been properly researched, coupled with the close monitoring of your traffic and statistics, will allow you to optimise your campaign and ensure good results.

### **Who offers PPC services?**

Many search engine providers have PPC offerings, the most notable and profitable are Google, Yahoo and MSN. Google holds over 85% of the UK search engine market share and is by far the largest and most profitable search engine in the UK. Each of these providers have their own programs that make the whole process as easy as possible for someone to get started with PPC advertising.

### **What is Google Quality Score?**

Your bid alone does not determine where you appear on the search results list, Google also takes into your Quality Score for a given keyword. Quality Score is an algorithm used by Google which takes into account factors such as the relevancy of your adtext, keywords and landing page and how good your click through rate is. If you achieve a good Quality Score for a keyword, your ad may appear above someone who is bidding (and paying) more than you.

### **What is Adtext?**

Adtext is the adverts a searcher sees when they have searched on a search engine. There are restrictions as to what you can and can't include in these to ensure they are accurate and relevant for the searcher. Ensuring your adtext is effective is key to a good PPC campaign.

## What are Keyword Match Types?

Google offers 4 different matching options for keywords which determine which Google searches trigger your ads to appear. Selecting the correct match types for a keyword can turn it from being unprofitable to profitable very quickly. You can set each keyword to have one of the below statuses by adding the appropriate punctuation.

### Match type 1 - Broad Match

A broad match keyword is eligible to appear when a user searches for one or more of your keywords in any order, and possibly along with other terms. Your ads could also show for singular/plural forms and synonyms. For example, if your adgroup contained the keyword 'running shoes' your ad may appear when someone searches on 'running' or 'shoe' or 'running sneaker'.

This is the default option. Google will automatically set the match type as Broad Match unless you specify otherwise.

### Match type 2 - Phrase Match (" ")

A phrase match keyword is eligible to appear when a user searches on your keyword(s) in your specified order with no words in-between. For example, if your adgroup contained the keyword "running shoes" your ad would be eligible to appear for the search terms 'running shoes', 'red running shoes' and 'running shoes in England' but not for 'shoes for running'.

In order to set a keyword as phrase you surround them with speech marks.

### Match type 3 - Exact Match ([ ])

An exact match keyword is only eligible if the search term matches your keyword(s) exactly. For example, if your adgroup contained the keyword [running shoes] your ad would be eligible to appear for the search term 'running shoes' only.

In order to set a keyword as phrase you surround them with square brackets.

### Match type 4 - Negative Match (-)

A negative match keyword means your ad will not be shown if this negative keyword is found anywhere in the search term. For example, if you only sell new shoes you might add '-used' as a negative match so that your ad will not appear for any searches that contain the word 'used.'

In order to set a keyword as phrase you add a minus symbol in front of your keyword.

## How does bidding work?

When you set up keywords you specify the amount you are willing to pay for each click through to your website. Based on your bid and your quality score, Google will place your ad in the search results at the position they see fit. You will never pay more than your maximum bid but you may pay less. For example, if you are top of the results for a keyword and the person in second position has paid 20p, Google will only charge you 21p even if your maximum bid is 50p.

## How do I get started?

Due to its market dominance, start a campaign running with Google and look to roll out to other search engines based on your results.

As with all things Google, setting up a Google Adwords account is a simple process. For more information on how to start your PPC activity take a look at our article 'Getting Started with Google PPC'.