

# PPC audit checklist

Twenty-eight checks in the order that finds waste fastest. Conversion tracking first, because everything else is judged against it.

*Conversion tracking is group one for a reason: every optimisation below is judged against the conversion data, so if that is wrong, an audit of the rest is an audit of noise.*

## Before anything else: conversion tracking

- ☐ Conversions are imported or tracked, and the count matches your CRM within a sensible margin
- ☐ Conversion actions are deduplicated -- one enquiry does not fire three conversions
- ☐ Only conversions you would call a result are set as primary; the rest are secondary
- ☐ Enhanced conversions or offline import is set up if the sale closes off-site
- ☐ Conversion value is populated, or you have decided deliberately not to bid on value

## Account structure

- ☐ Campaigns are split by something you would set a different budget for, not by something arbitrary
- ☐ Search and Display are in separate campaigns -- never the default "Search partners and Display" mix
- ☐ Brand terms are in their own campaign so their cheap conversions do not flatter everything else
- ☐ Ad groups are tight enough that one ad can be genuinely relevant to every keyword in them
- ☐ No duplicate keywords competing across campaigns for the same auction

## Waste

- ☐ Search terms report reviewed for the last 30 days, and irrelevant terms added as negatives
- ☐ A negative keyword list exists and is shared across campaigns, not rebuilt per campaign
- ☐ Broad match keywords are either on a tight negative list or paused
- ☐ Placements excluded on any Display or Performance Max campaign -- check where money actually went
- ☐ Location targeting is set to "presence" rather than "presence or interest" unless you sell remotely
- ☐ Ad schedule reflects when enquiries actually convert, not when the account was created

## Ads and landing pages

- ☐ At least two ads or asset variations per ad group, so there is something to learn from
- ☐ Ad copy matches the landing page promise -- the same offer, in the same words
- ☐ Landing page loads in under 2.5s on mobile, tested on a real connection
- ☐ The form on the landing page has been submitted end to end, by you, this month
- ☐ Sitelinks, callouts and structured snippets are populated rather than left empty

## Bidding and budget

- ☐ Bid strategy matches the data volume -- value-based bidding needs conversions to learn from
- ☐ Target CPA or ROAS is set from your own numbers, not a platform suggestion
- ☐ No campaign is limited by budget while another underspends
- ☐ Automated recommendations are reviewed rather than auto-applied

## Governance

- ☐ Change history reviewed -- you know who changed what, and when
- ☐ Account access does not depend on one person's personal login
- ☐ You own the account, or you have agreed in writing what happens to it if the relationship ends

# Where the money actually goes

Four patterns that account for most wasted spend in the accounts I have looked at.

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## The four to check first

- Search partners and Display left on in a Search campaign. The reporting blends them, so poor Display performance hides inside a decent-looking Search number.
- Broad match without a maintained negative list. It will find queries you would never have bid on, and it will keep finding them.
- "Presence or interest" location targeting. Unless you sell remotely, this pays for people who will never visit you.
- Brand terms mixed into the same campaign as everything else. Cheap brand conversions flatter the account average and hide which non-brand campaigns are failing.

## Your score

Count the unticked boxes per group. Fix the group with the most gaps before starting anything new.

**Before anything else: conversion tracking**

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**Account structure**

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**Waste**

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**Ads and landing pages**

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**Bidding and budget**

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**Governance**

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