

Successful Advertising with Ad Words Select

By Chris Kalaboukis

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Google's Ad Words advertising medium is pretty cool: within minutes, and very cheaply, or so it seems, get your ad shown on one of the top engines in the world, including the one people go to after Yahoo.

Until I tried it, that is: after spending some cash and refining my keywords, I gave up, not able to effectively convert impressions to clicks.

Now comes Ad Words Select: a pay per click model: almost the same as Ad Words, but you don't pay unless they click on your ad. Cool I thought, let me try this out. This article spells out in detail how to use (and how not to use) this powerful ad medium.

First you should start by creating an account and going through the following process: you will not be charged a fee until you decide to activate your campaign:

1: Open an Ad Words Select account (\$5 set-up)

NOTE: This \$5 is a one time setup fee, not to be confused with a 're-activation fee' which I got hit with once as I didn't keep a close enough eye on my click through ratio. Be warned: I'll go into this in more detail later.

2: Write your ad: 25 character title and two lines of 35 characters each.

NOTE: While Google makes you write the ad first, it's not the best way to do this. It's much more effective to select your keywords and phrases first in order to get your best price on the most specific phrases. So here I suggest creating a bogus ad here which you will soon revise.

3: Select your keywords: be very specific

NOTE: Best thing to do here is to put your self in your customer's shoes. Think about what they would type in to look for you normally. But (and this is important) if you want your ad to be effective you must push a small niche in your ad. For example, if you have a shoe store, do not use the term 'shoe' 'shoes' or even 'shoe store'. Use a term like 'black shoes'. More on this later.

4: Their traffic estimator tool will determine the minimum cost-per-click for your keywords

NOTE: While you can pay more for some popular keywords, my ads have been effective even for key phrases which are at the lowest price of 5 cents per click. More on this later as well.

5: Specify your maximum cost-per-click for each ad. If your specified cost is higher than required for your ad to maintain its position, it will be lowered automatically.

NOTE: a good rule of thumb here is that if you have to pay more than 5 cents per click, your keywords are still probably too broad: refine-refine-refine. Don't worry about only talking about one of your many products or services, that's exactly what you need to do. For example, while our site provides advice in over a 1000 categories, our most effective ad key phrase is 'technical help'. But you say, what about all those other categories, don't you want to sell them too? Yes, but your primary focus is to get targeted ads delivered to those customers who are looking for one specific thing. Get those prospects to your site, and direct them directly to the thing that they are looking for and it's likely they'll buy.

6: Once you launch your campaign, clicks, impressions and click through rates are tracked.

NOTE: These stats DO NOT update in real time. For some really popular keywords the stats run up so fast that you will need to monitor them very closely in order not to violate the 0.5% rule and have your ad suspended. Plus, Google will continue to penalize you for the overall click through rate even if you delete the offending keywords, forcing you to create a new campaign in order to abandon your underperforming keywords. Be aware and monitor your campaign to get a feel for the trend: In Google's ad copy they say that you don't need to watch it like a hawk: wrong! You will need to watch very closely for the first short while in order to understand your true costs. After that, you will get a better idea and can relax a bit!

7: You pay per click based on who clicks on your ad.

NOTE: Yes, but you must keep your click through rate over 0.5%. What it does is count your last 1000 impressions per campaign (and this is important) and if you don't have 5 clicks, your ad is suspended. If your ad is suspended, you can modify the keywords and rerun the ad again twice before they charge you an extra 'activation' fee to run it again which is \$5.

WARNING: deleting underperforming keywords will not recalculate your overall campaign click through rates. Even if you are getting 10% click through on your current keywords, if you had a prior keyword which ran at 0.01 %, on balance you could be suspended again.

MORE WARNINGS: if you use a really popular keyword, you could run up many thousands of impressions before the system suspends your ad. If this happens, print out your campaign, delete it and create a new one. Google will penalize you for the last thousand impressions more than once. Cost me an extra \$5 to find that out.

Recommendations:

1: Put your keyword list together first, then craft your ad

2: Don't pay more than 5 cents per click, refine and narrow your phrases until you get that rate

3: Target key phrases, don't use generic terms

4: Use the EXACT keywords or phrases which you've purchased in the title of your ad: this gives you the biggest bang for your buck. For example:

Phrase: Technical Help

Ad Title: Need Technical Help?

Phrase: psychic readings

Ad Title: Online Psychic Readings

Phrase: wedding gift

Ad title: Unique Wedding Gifts

5: To start, enter a low per day rate, like \$2. Great way to test your ads without taking a bath

6: Watch your ads like a hawk!

Chris Kalaboukis is CEO of SwapSmarts: <http://swapsmarts.com> where you can get expert advice, help and support from over 1300 trusted advisors.

Chris has 17+ years of experience in internet, information technology and business development with web design, wireless, high-speed internet, cable television and entertainment firms.

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