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# **Search Engine Marketing**

## **BASICS**

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**Digital marketing  
solutions designed  
to grow your sales  
pipeline**

- JEFF HARSH. *President*

# What is Search Engine Marketing?

**Whether you've heard a little about Search Engine Marketing and are curious to learn more, or you already know that you want to use SEM to market your business, but aren't sure where to start, you've come to the right place!**

Let's start by defining SEM and establish a basic understanding of how it works.

Search engine marketing is a form of digital marketing that involves advertising to increase visibility of products or services. SEM goes by a few names. It's called **search engine marketing, SEM, paid search, pay-per-click, or PPC.**

And there many places where someone can buy online advertising – through search engines like **Google and Bing, social platforms, or media companies.**

Paid search allows advertisers to bid for ad placement in a search engine's sponsored links when someone searches on a keyword that is related to their business offering. Search engines reward advertisers who create relevant paid search campaigns and charges less for ad clicks.



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# Components for Effective Search Engine Marketing (SEM)

There are several components that make up an effective search engine marketing campaign. In this guide, we will discuss the base components that go into high-performing campaigns.

# 01. Paid Search Strategy

Search engine marketing strategy should vary from client to client and from campaign to campaign.



# Strategy can include:

- Types of keywords to utilize
- Keyword match type (broad, broad modifier, phrase, or exact match)
- Bidding (Maximize for conversions, maximize for clicks, or target impression share)
- Geography

There are many moving pieces when managing a PPC. Whether you are managing your company's SEM campaign or work with a digital marketing agency, make sure you don't get in a rut and are constantly staying up to date with new elements. Take advantage of new platforms and features to improve performance.



## 02. Keyword Research

Google Ads or Microsoft Bing are the top utilized search engines because they both get most of the traffic which delivers the most impressions and clicks to your ads. Frequency of PPC ads appearances depend on keywords and keyword match types selected.

# Paid Search Keyword Research

Keyword research for PPC can be time-consuming, but it is an essential first step in creating a strong paid search campaign. Your entire paid search campaign is built around keywords, and the most successful Google Ads advertisers continuously grow and refine their keyword list.

An effective PPC keyword list should be:

**Relevant:** Focus on finding targeted keywords for your product or service that will lead to a higher click-through rate, effective cost per click, and increased profits. Keywords you bid on should relate to the products or offerings you sell.

**Complete:** Your keyword research should include not just the most popular searched terms in your niche, but also to the phrases of search. Long-tail keywords, or search terms, are more specific and less common, but they make up most of the search-driven traffic. Search terms are typically less competitive, and therefore less expensive.



# What You Should Focus on for Effective Paid Search Ads



**Keyword Relevance:** Crafting relevant paid search ads incorporate keyword lists, focused keyword groups, and compelling ad text.

**Landing Page Quality:** Building landing pages with persuasive, relevant content with a clear call-to-action.

**Quality Score:** Rating the value and significance of keywords, landing pages, and paid search campaigns. Advertisers with better quality scores get more ad clicks at lower costs.

# Key Factors to Focus on for Paid Search Optimization

**Add PPC Keywords:** Expand the reach of your PPC campaigns by adding keywords that are relevant to your product or service offering.

**Add Negative Keywords:** Add keywords as negative keywords for searches that you don't want your ad to appear.

**Split Ad Groups:** Split your ad groups into smaller, more relevant ad groups, which creates a more targeted ads and landing pages.

**Review Poorly Performing Keywords:** Turn off under-performing keywords.

**Refine Landing Pages:** Optimize the content and calls-to-action (CTAs) of your landing pages to better align with search queries for improved conversion rates. Don't send all your traffic to the same page.

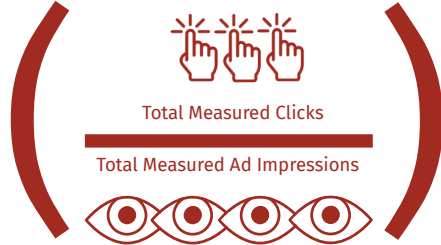
## 03. Click-Through Rate

# What Is Click-Through Rate?

Click-through rate is the rate at which your paid search ads are clicked compared to the number of impressions. The formula for CTR looks like this: (Total Clicks on Ad) / (Total Impressions)= Click Through Rate

## Why do click-through rates matter?

Click-through rates can affect your quality score. Google Ads and other search marketing platforms offer pricing discounts for ads that are highly relevant. If you are advertising on relevant queries and achieving a high CTR you are driving the highest possible number of people to your offering.

$$CTR = \left( \frac{\text{Total Measured Clicks}}{\text{Total Measured Ad Impressions}} \right) \times 100$$
The diagram illustrates the CTR formula with visual aids. The numerator, 'Total Measured Clicks', is represented by three hand icons with pointing fingers. The denominator, 'Total Measured Ad Impressions', is represented by four eye icons. The entire fraction is enclosed in large parentheses, and the result is multiplied by 100.

## 04. Quality Score

If you're trying to master paid search, you need a solid understanding of Quality Score. Let's start with the basics.

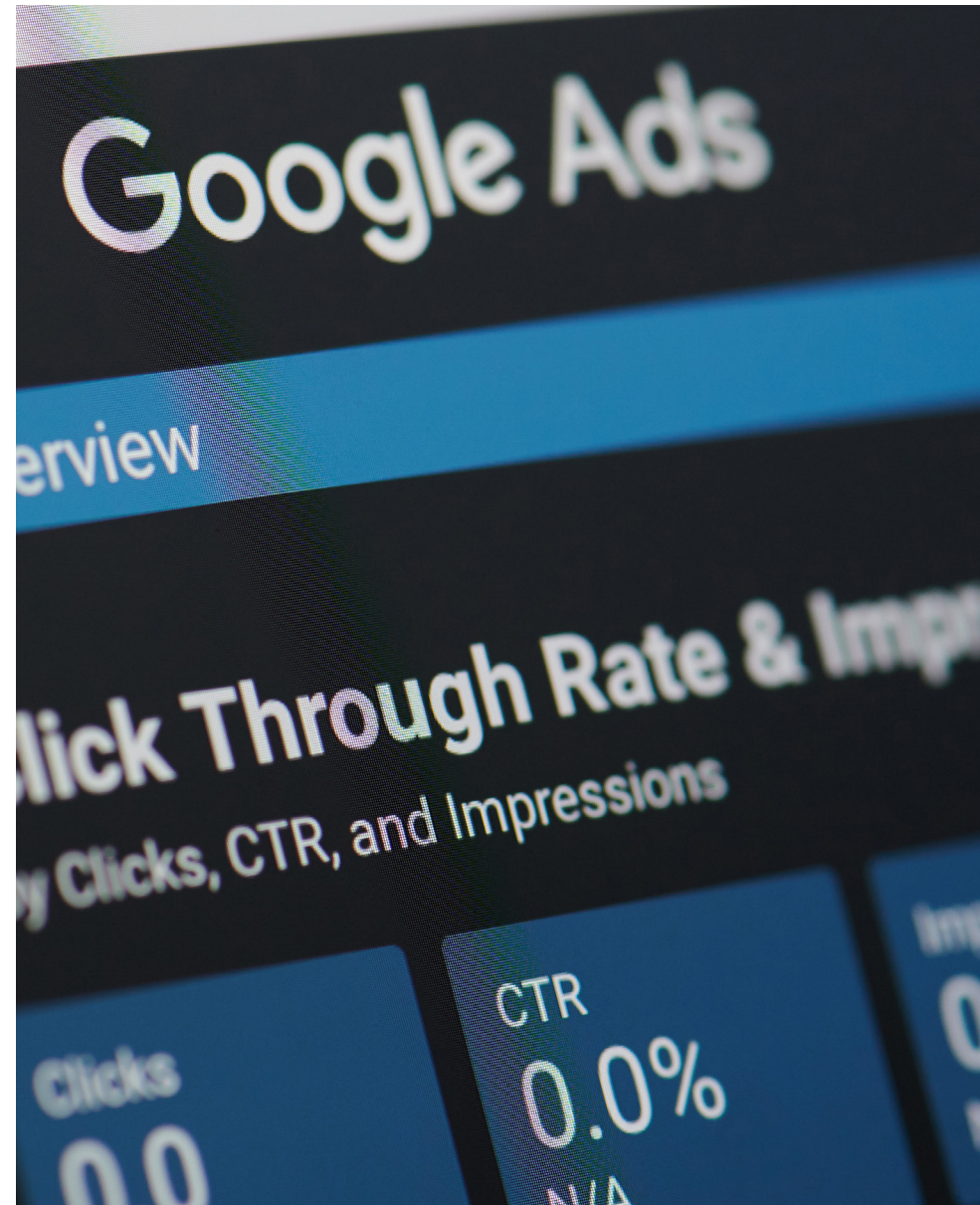


# Quality Score Defined.

Quality score is a search engine's rating of the quality and relevance of both your keywords and paid search ads.

Quality score determines your cost per click (CPC) and ad rank in the ad auction process. Factors include:

- CTR
- Keyword relevance as it relates to the ad group
- Landing page quality and relevance
- Text ad relevance
- Historical account performance



# Key Factors to Improving Quality Score

**Keyword Research:** Discover new, highly relevant keywords to add to your campaigns, including search terms that can add to your overall traffic.

**Keyword Organization:** Organize your keywords into tight, organized groups that can be more relevant to individual ad campaigns.

**Refining Ad Text:** Test out different ad copy in your individual ad groups.

**Optimizing Landing Pages:** Make sure that your landing page connects with your ad groups and provide a cohesive experience for visitors, from keyword to conversion.

**Adding Negative Keywords:** Identify and exclude search terms that aren't relevant and are wasting your budget.



A close-up photograph of a computer screen with a magnifying glass held over it. The magnifying glass's lens is centered on the Google logo, which is displayed in its characteristic multi-colored font. The background of the screen, including the search bar and navigation links, is blurred.

# Google

Search

I'm Feeling



# 05. Conversion Rate Optimization

Conversion rate optimization (CRO) is the process of optimizing paid search ads to improve conversion rate.

The overarching goal is to get the highest possible percentage of visitors to your site to convert – either by filling out a form, making a purchase, or calling.

### **Optimize Conversion Rates for Search Engine Marketing**

There are several ways you can optimize your conversion rate.

- Write compelling, clickable PPC ads that are highly relevant to the keyword/search query and your intended audience. All the better if you're targeting high-intent mid-tail and long-tail keywords that indicate a searcher who is late in the buying cycle, as those consumers are more likely to convert.
- Maintain a high degree of relevance between your ads and corresponding landing pages. Your landing page should connect the dots from your ad and make it easy for the visitor to complete an action.
- Test your landing page design. Conduct A/B testing to optimize layout and content that push the highest percentage of site visitors to complete an action.



# 06. Optimize Landing Pages

The quality of your landing pages can influence conversion rates. If the content and offering of a landing page aren't related to what they were searching for or expecting to find, they will return to their search and you will lose that lead.

Poorly performing landing pages can also cause your quality score to drop. This will then raise your cost per click, cost per action, and reduce your ad rank. Your ads will appear less frequently and lower on the page.

### Components of a Strong Landing Page

**Persuasive headline:** Create a strong headline that is relevant to your keyword and compels new visitors to remain on the page and complete an action.

**Concise, focused copy:** The content of your page should clearly communicate your offering and focus on the keywords associated with that ad group. Utilize bulleted lists to make reading the content easier and faster.

**Eye-catching, clickable call-to-action (CTA):** Make sure your CTA button stands out visually and uses short, compelling-action text.

**User-friendly lead capture form:** A good form includes all the fields needed to fulfill your offer, but not so many that new visitors are overwhelmed.

**Attractive overall design:** Landing pages should be clean and organized. This helps convey trustworthiness and professionalism to prospective clients.





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