

ORR CONSULTING

The Google Ads Efficiency Scorecard

30 questions to see whether your ad spend is working as hard as it should.

For business owners and marketing leads running Google Ads, whether the account is managed in-house or by an agency.

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Fractional CMO and marketing measurement specialist

Why I wrote this

Google Ads will spend whatever budget you give it. Whether that spend turns into customers depends on a handful of settings and habits that are easy to miss: what counts as a conversion, how campaigns are split, which searches you're paying for, and whether anyone is watching. Most accounts I review have at least a few of these quietly costing money.

This scorecard covers the ground I look at when I audit a Google Ads account. It runs across six areas: conversion tracking, account structure, search terms, bidding and budget, ads and landing pages, and reporting. You can work through it in about 30 minutes with the account open in front of you. The conversation it starts is usually worth more than the score.

Answer honestly. A low score is useful. It tells you where to look first.

How to score it

- 0 No, or you don't know. If nobody in the room can answer confidently, score it 0.
- 1 Partly. It exists but is incomplete, out of date, or depends on one person.
- 2 Yes, and you could show the evidence today.

Each section has five questions worth up to 10 points. Add your section subtotals on the last page for a total out of 60.

The six areas

01

Conversion tracking

Smart bidding learns from whatever you tell it is a conversion. Start here.

02

Account structure

A clean structure keeps budget from drifting to the easiest clicks.

03

Keywords and search terms

The search terms report shows what you actually paid for.

04

Bidding and budget

Bids and budgets should follow your economics, beyond what the platform suggests.

05

Ads, assets and landing pages

The click is only half the job. The page has to finish it.

06

Reporting and ownership

You should be able to see exactly what you're paying for and what it returns.

01 Conversion tracking

Smart bidding learns from whatever you tell it is a conversion. Start here.

QUESTION		SCORE
1	Are your conversions set to the actions that make you money, like purchases, booked calls or qualified leads? <i>What good looks like:</i> Page views, scrolls and button clicks are set as secondary or removed, so bidding optimizes toward revenue.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
2	Does the conversion count in Google Ads match your CRM or store within a small, known gap? <i>What good looks like:</i> Monthly totals reconcile, and someone can explain any difference.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
3	Are enhanced conversions or offline conversion imports set up? <i>What good looks like:</i> Google learns which clicks became customers, beyond which ones filled out a form.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
4	Are phone calls tracked as conversions, with a minimum call length? <i>What good looks like:</i> Short or accidental calls don't count, and real calls are credited to the right campaign.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
5	Is a value assigned to each conversion type and passed to Google? <i>What good looks like:</i> A booked consultation counts for more than a newsletter signup, and bidding knows the difference.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
SECTION SUBTOTAL		<u> </u> / 10

02 Account structure

A clean structure keeps budget from drifting to the easiest clicks.

QUESTION		SCORE
6	Is brand search in its own campaign, separate from non-brand? <i>What good looks like:</i> You can see what new demand costs, apart from people who already searched for you by name.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
7	Do campaigns separate the products, services or locations that have different margins? <i>What good looks like:</i> Higher-margin offers get their own budget and targets.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
8	Do you know what Performance Max is spending on, and is your brand excluded from it? <i>What good looks like:</i> Placement and search term reports are reviewed, and brand traffic isn't counted as new wins.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
9	Are locations, ad schedules and devices set to where your customers actually are? <i>What good looks like:</i> Targeting uses presence in the area, and spend follows the hours and devices that convert.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
10	Is the account free of overlapping campaigns competing for the same searches? <i>What good looks like:</i> Each search has one clear home, so you aren't bidding against yourself.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
SECTION SUBTOTAL		<u> </u> / 10

03 Keywords and search terms

The search terms report shows what you actually paid for.

QUESTION		SCORE
11	Does someone review search terms at least every two weeks? <i>What good looks like:</i> Irrelevant searches are caught early and turned into negatives.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
12	Is there a maintained negative keyword list shared across campaigns? <i>What good looks like:</i> Job seekers, free-seekers and unrelated terms are blocked everywhere at once.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
13	Do you know what share of spend goes to search terms that never convert? <i>What good looks like:</i> Wasted spend is measured each month and trending down.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
14	Are match types chosen on purpose, with broad match only where bidding has enough conversion data? <i>What good looks like:</i> Broad match runs where smart bidding has data to steer it, and tighter match types run elsewhere.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
15	Are competitor and brand terms handled deliberately? <i>What good looks like:</i> There is a clear decision on bidding for competitor names, and brand terms are protected at a low cost.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
SECTION SUBTOTAL		<u> </u> / 10

04 Bidding and budget

Bids and budgets should follow your economics, beyond what the platform suggests.

QUESTION		SCORE
16	Does each campaign's bid strategy fit how much conversion data it has? <i>What good looks like:</i> Campaigns with few conversions use simpler bidding until they have enough data for target-based strategies.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
17	Are target CPA or ROAS goals based on your margins and customer value? <i>What good looks like:</i> Targets come from what a customer is worth to you, beyond Google's recommendations.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
18	Does budget move toward the campaigns with the best cost per qualified lead or sale? <i>What good looks like:</i> Budget is reviewed monthly and shifted toward what works.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
19	Do you know how much impression share you're losing to budget versus ad rank? <i>What good looks like:</i> You know whether the fix is more budget or better ads, landing pages and bids.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
20	Do you avoid frequent big changes that keep restarting the learning period? <i>What good looks like:</i> Changes are planned, spaced out and logged, so bidding has time to settle.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
SECTION SUBTOTAL		<u> </u> / 10

05 Ads, assets and landing pages

The click is only half the job. The page has to finish it.

QUESTION		SCORE
21	Does each ad group send people to a landing page that matches what they searched? <i>What good looks like:</i> The headline on the page answers the search that brought the visitor there.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
22	Do your responsive search ads have strong headlines and descriptions, with pinning only where needed? <i>What good looks like:</i> Ads have a full set of distinct headlines and use pinning sparingly.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
23	Are sitelinks, callouts, images and other assets set up and current? <i>What good looks like:</i> Assets are complete, accurate and updated when offers change.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
24	Have you tested a landing page or offer in the last 90 days? <i>What good looks like:</i> There is a running list of tests and what each one found.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
25	Does the landing page load fast on mobile and make the next step obvious? <i>What good looks like:</i> The page loads quickly on a phone, and the call or form is easy to find.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
SECTION SUBTOTAL		<u> </u> / 10

06 Reporting and ownership

You should be able to see exactly what you're paying for and what it returns.

QUESTION		SCORE
26	Do you own the Google Ads account, with admin access in your company's name? <i>What good looks like:</i> The account, billing and history stay with you if you change who manages it.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
27	Does monthly reporting show cost per qualified lead or sale, and revenue, beyond clicks and CTR? <i>What good looks like:</i> Reports start with business results, then explain the platform metrics behind them.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
28	Can you see what was changed in the account and why? <i>What good looks like:</i> Changes are logged with the reason and the result.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
29	Is your management fee flat, so it doesn't rise automatically when ad spend rises? <i>What good looks like:</i> You pay for the work, separate from the size of your budget.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
30	Do you know the return on each ad dollar after margin? <i>What good looks like:</i> Profit per ad dollar is known by campaign, beyond platform-reported ROAS.	☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2
SECTION SUBTOTAL		<u> </u> / 10

Your total

01	Conversion tracking	/ 10
02	Account structure	/ 10
03	Keywords and search terms	/ 10
04	Bidding and budget	/ 10
05	Ads, assets and landing pages	/ 10
06	Reporting and ownership	/ 10
Total score		/ 60

Solid foundation

48 to 60

Your account is in good shape. The next gains usually come from testing offers and landing pages, and from tighter targets by campaign.

Gaps worth closing

30 to 47

The basics are mostly there, but a few weak spots are likely distorting how budget gets set. Fix the lowest-scoring section first.

Not ready to lean on

Under 30

The numbers can't yet support big budget calls or outside scrutiny. Start with conversion tracking, because every bidding decision depends on it.

If you want help with the gaps

Google Ads Audit. A single-channel review of tracking, structure, search terms, bidding and landing pages, with a prioritized fix list.

From \$4,750

Multi-Channel Paid Media Audit. Google, Meta and other platforms reviewed together.

From \$8,000

Google Ads & Paid Media Management. One flat monthly fee, plus a modest one-time setup fee. We never charge a percentage of your ad spend. Accounts spending more than \$25,000 a month are quoted individually.

From \$2,750/month

Every engagement is custom quoted based on scope.

About me

I'm Linda Orr, PhD, a fractional CMO and marketing measurement specialist based in Cleveland. I've spent more than 25 years in marketing strategy and analytics.

I manage and audit Google Ads accounts for healthcare, legal, home services and premium consumer brands. Recent results include 80% lower cost per first-time call for a personal injury firm in seven weeks, 75% lower customer acquisition cost for a teletherapy provider, and 192% more daily registrations for a sports camp company.

At Upwork, I built the company's first marketing mix model across an \$88M annual media portfolio, plus its 1-, 3- and 5-year budget strategy. I bring the same discipline to every account: count the right conversions, cut the waste, and put budget where it earns the most.

Talk through your score

Bring your completed scorecard to a marketing strategy call. I'll tell you which gaps matter most for your business and what it would take to close them.

[Book a marketing strategy call](#)

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