

COLUMNS

4 reasons why your AdWords campaigns are not working

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Chris Lucas is vice president of marketing at Formstack

By [Chris Lucas](#)

If your AdWords campaign is not working, do not throw in the towel. Instead, find the source of the problem.

Try one of the following four fast fixes, and prime your pay-per-click (PPC) campaign to deliver results for your brand.

1. Reevaluate your copy, and make sure it is on-message

In any and all instances, your landing page headline and digital ad messaging should complement each other.

Your AdWords score allows a site to discover the cost per click. This score can be improved by having consistent content between the ad message and landing page text.

Your landing page headline is your first chance to communicate with your audience. It should not be confusing or vague, but should compel visitors to take a closer look.

Addressing a specific point that is related to the content of the Web site will catch a reader's attention more than a generic headline.

And remember: Your Web site is the voice of your brand. Spelling and grammar must be double and triple-checked to ensure that it is flawless before posted for public view.

Poor grammar does not communicate professionalism. It can damage consumer trust in your brand, and cast doubt on the quality of your product or service.

2. Build custom landing pages and optimize them to invite more clicks

Many brands make the mistake of sending all their paid search traffic to their homepage.

But if you create specific landing pages based on keyword campaigns, you can direct users to those custom landing pages according to their search criteria.

Once you have created landing pages around your AdWords campaign, make sure those landing pages are properly optimized.

For example, many landing pages corral links in footers for the sake of design. Yes, it looks clean, but this strategy equates to many missed opt-in opportunities.

Make it easy for people to make a connection: Put your signup form at the top of your landing page, alongside some other engaging content. This strategy will deliver maximum views to your form without requiring page visitors to scroll all the way down to the bottom.

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The same treatment should be given to conversion buttons.

For best performance, buttons should be visually dynamic and paired with a clear call to action either positioned directly below the button, or on the button itself.

Make your button big and bright, and do not make visitors scroll to see it.

3. Craft a strong call-to-action

As marketers, we want to make our communications with customers as turnkey as possible. This is not the time to be obscure.

When a visitor reads your landing page headline, it is important they know what to do next.

Do not be afraid to spell it out for your users they will appreciate your clarity, and will pay you back with dividends.

When Mozilla Firefox changed its call to action from "Try Firefox 3" to "Download Now - Free," it outperformed the original by 3.6 percent, and had a confidence level of more than 99 percent, resulting in 500 more downloads during Mozilla's testing period.

4. A/B test your way to an optimized form

One final, fast tip? Do not forget to optimize all the tools in your marketing arsenal to ensure that they are converting AdWords traffic. In any campaign, it is important to have a well-optimized form to convert paid traffic.

Even though there is no magic formula to improve Web site conversion rates, A/B testing helps you build a stronger online form.

A/B testing is a statistical method of testing certain variations in a group of subjects and measuring their effects on a given result.

There are many form elements that can be tested for optimization, but length is a good place to start.

Do you know how many users abandon your form because it is too much trouble? Find out by creating a shorter version for your A/B test.

Even though you might sacrifice some data collection, an increase in successful submissions might be worth it.

Also consider testing for field bottlenecks stages where users exit your form without submitting.

For example, if you require users to enter a phone number, that field may have a high bottleneck rate. In your A/B testing process, eliminate that field and see how it impacts your conversions.

Chris Lucas is vice president of marketing at [Formstack](#), Indianapolis, IN. Reach him at chris@formstack.com.