



Acquire and Retain Customers

The Google Display Network Guide

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Optimization strategies and
best practices

Use cases and optimization best practices

Optimization—manually or through automated tools—is the key to success on the Google Display Network. To get the most out of your digital investment, actively manage your display campaigns just as you would your search campaigns.

Here's where it all comes together: Let's look at five examples of how you can optimize your campaign, according to different goals.

We'll outline some goals to help you get started, optimize and grow your campaigns. A great strategy is to build a strong foundation with a solid ROI, then expand out for more volume. For example, start out with campaigns types that yield the highest conversion rates (like remarketing) and expand out to campaigns that will help you to scale (like topic targeting).

Optimizing as you go is key, but also keep in mind that display is an effective tool for attracting new customers to your site—so be careful about limiting your campaign's traffic by stringent campaign settings. Your goals may also change as you introduce new products or services—necessitating strategies for acquiring new customers and seeking volume.

Use Cases

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“I want to get started with display.”

If you're just getting started, this is a great introduction to setting up your first display campaign, utilizing the targeting type most similar to search: keyword contextual targeting.

“How do I reach the right audience?”

- Just getting started? Try a keyword contextually targeted campaign, which shows ads on sites related to your keywords. Keyword contextually targeted campaigns on display are set up the same way as search—create ad groups related to specific themes and input corresponding ads.
- Create separate campaigns for display to ensure that you're getting the best performance. By separating search and display campaigns in your AdWords account, you gain more control and flexibility—and you're able to make changes that only influence the campaign that you are intending to change.

“How do I choose the right ads?”

- If you're copying over a search campaign, you should already have great text ads that you can use. As a second step, ensure that you're reaching as wide a variety of placements as possible by adding in all available image ad sizes.
- Don't know how to create a display ad? Try Display Ad Builder, which helps you quickly create customized ads in an array of sizes.

“Which bidding strategy should I consider?”

Conversion Optimizer can help you minimize manual work involved and may be the best option for you if you have more than 15 conversions in the past 30 days, since it manages the bidding for you to get you the optimal amount of conversions. If you're not eligible yet, use CPC bidding and remember that you can manage bids at the keyword level.

“How can I measure my campaign effectively?”

Add conversion tracking to your site to learn which keywords drive the most conversions, and to make decisions based on that information. In your AdWords account, you'll find an easy how-to under the Tools and Analysis section > Conversions.

**Advanced tip**

To get 'display-only' campaigns, you can copy your best performing search campaigns with AdWords Editor. AdWords Editor allows you to make bulk changes for your account easily—like copying campaign—and upload them right into the AdWords interface.

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“I want to increase the conversions of users who have already been to my site.”

If you're a performance-oriented marketer, the next logical step from paid search advertising is remarketing. Use these tips as a guide to setting up your campaigns.

“How do I reach the right audience?”

Remarketing is a no-brainer for performance advertisers, since you're re-engaging with prospects that have already shown interest by visiting your site. As a first step, set up a remarketing campaign with several lists. For example, you could target users who have visited just the homepage in one list, and users that have abandoned a shopping cart in another list, so you can tailor the message and promotions accordingly. For other ideas, see our [remarketing strategy list guide](#).

“How do I choose the right ads?”

Match your creative to the type of remarketing list. As in the example above, if you target users who have just been to your homepage, you could use a more general message. For users who abandoned a shopping cart, you might extend a special promotion or discount.

“Which bidding strategy should I consider?”

Conversion Optimizer can allow you to get the maximum number of conversions at a set budget with remarketing. However, if you're using manual CPC bidding, bid more aggressively on the user lists that are the most valuable to you, like those that were the closest to a sale and abandoned their shopping cart.

“How do I measure my campaigns effectively?”

At the bare minimum, install conversion tracking to understand which clicks and campaigns are converting.

Google Analytics allows a greater depth of data to analyze and make changes to your campaigns.



Advanced tip

Try out new and easier ways to create remarketing lists

- Google's new Remarketing Tag can allow you to use one easy tag across your entire site for flexible and customized list creation.
- If you're already using Google Analytics, try out Remarketing with Google Analytics for easy, integrated remarketing list creation.

Seven tips for improving ROI for remarketing

- 1** Use the new Remarketing Tag: One tag across your entire site passes values based on specific page views or user actions. It will save you time and allow more-sophisticated list strategies.
- 2** Tailor creative to specific remarketing lists. Personalize promotions, calls-to-action and landing pages for each list.
- 3** Create user lists based on different combinations of pages visited (for example, users who have visited a product page but did not purchase the product).
- 4** Automate bidding with conversion optimizer. Conversion optimizer is optimized for users, not just for sites. When paired with a remarketing, conversion optimizer on average yields an 8% decrease in CPA and a 14% increase in conversions.¹³
- 5** Exclude or bid down on poorly performing placements.
- 6** Select a relevant landing page for each user list (Product/Sign-up/Contact us).
- 7** Shorten membership duration or target a different user segment.

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“I want to optimize my campaigns for better ROI.”

The following points outline some great tactics for optimizing toward the best campaign performance.

“How do I reach the right audience?”

These tips work well for campaigns using Keyword Contextual Targeting, Topic Targeting or Interest Categories.

“How do I choose the right ads?”

Choosing the ad rotation setting ‘optimize for conversions’ gives preference to ads that are expected to perform best.

“Which bidding strategy should I consider?”

Lower bids or pause poorly performing keywords or placements.

- Optimize display keywords just as you would for search. Increase bids on high performing keywords, and decrease bids or pause keywords that are not performing.
- Try the same tactics for placements. Within AdWords, you can see any site you’ve received a click on (it appears as an ‘automatic placement’ in the placements section of the display tab).

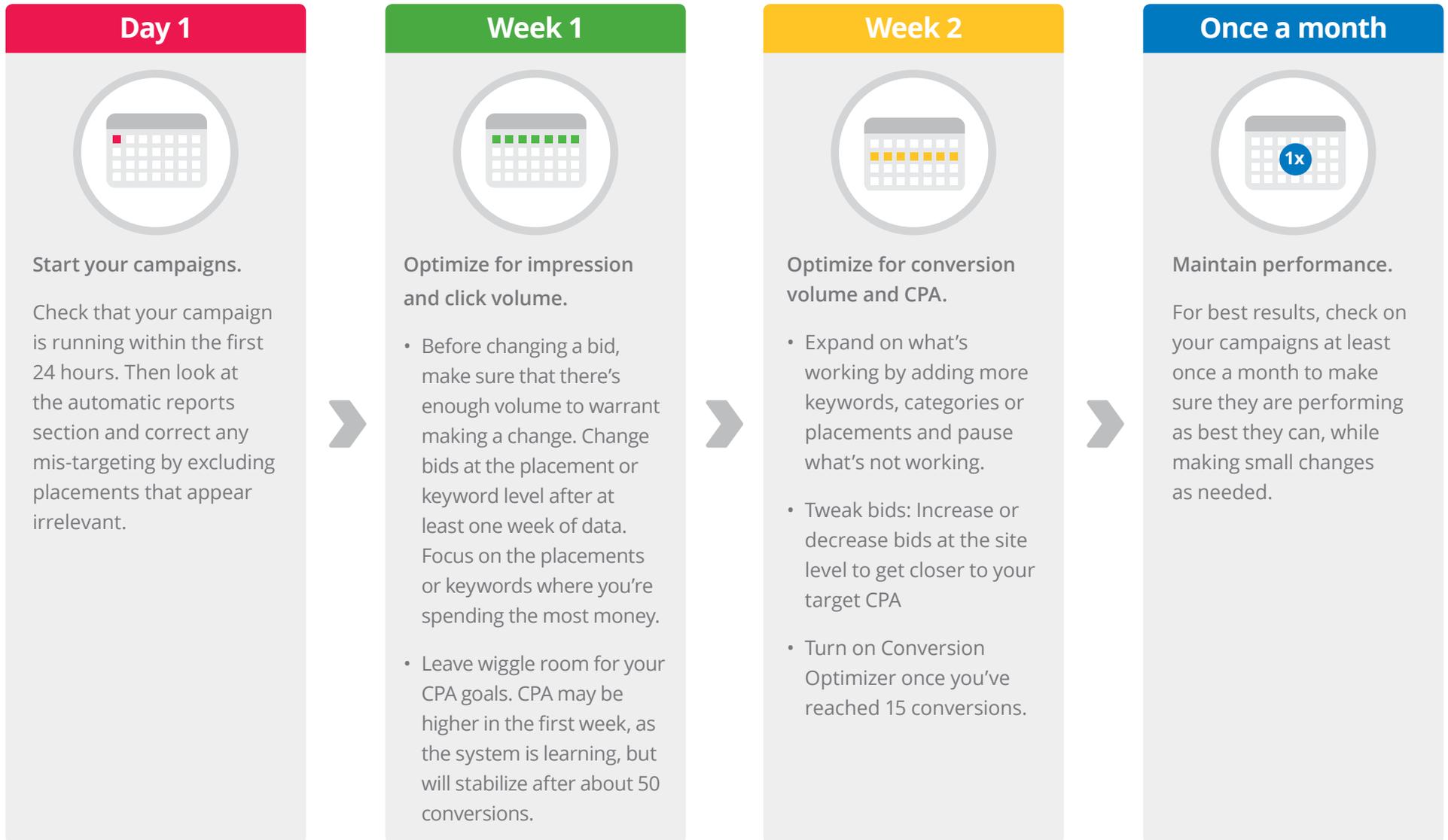
“How do I measure my campaigns effectively?”

At a minimum, implement conversion tracking to understand performance. Try multi-channel funnels in Analytics for more robust reporting.

**Advanced tip**

Another way to improve ROI is to send consumers to your most relevant landing pages. Add URLs at the ad creative or at the keyword level to send them to the page that will get that user the best information. This works especially well for retail, local and travel verticals.

Optimization calendar for performance campaigns



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“I want to increase the volume of my display campaigns.”

If you'd like to increase volume and acquire new customers, these are some great suggestions.

“How do I reach the right audience?”

There are lots of options for reaching new customers and increasing volume on the Google Display Network, while still maintaining ROI. Here are two good strategies:

- Topic targeting: Use broad topics to cast a wide net. Create a new campaign with relevant topics, or consider pairing it with Keyword Contextual Targeting for more precision. Also consider layering topic targeting with demographics for more targeted precision.
- To increase volume on an existing Keyword Contextually Targeted campaign, try adding new keywords to your campaign. These can be synonyms of keywords already in your account, or more generic keywords than you already have.

“How do I choose the right ads?”

Leverage all ad formats and sizes (including text). You'll increase the likelihood of reaching more prospects by capturing all available inventory.

“Which bidding strategy should I consider?”

When going for volume, a tactic you can use is to bid higher to get maximum exposure. Bid up on particularly well performing placements or keywords.

“How do I measure my campaigns effectively?”

View-through conversions (VTCs) are a great option for measurement here in order to understand the holistic value of these higher volume campaigns.

**Advanced tip****Expand only to new prospects**

For a specific promotion, guarantee that you're advertising only to new prospects by using a remarking list that captures customers that have already visited your site. Excluding this list of users ensures that you're reaching just new customers with these campaigns.

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“I want to save time and still achieve solid ROI with my campaigns.”

Let our automated tools do the heavy lifting—freeing up resources while still getting great ROI.

“How do I reach the right audience?”

Display Campaign Optimizer can be a great set-it-and-forget-it tool for optimizing bids as well as targeting. All you need to get started is ad creatives and a budget.

“How do I choose the right ads?”

Include all ad formats (including text) to let the Display Campaign Optimizer give you maximum reach.

“Which bidding strategy should I consider?”

When launching a Display Campaign Optimizer campaign, set an aggressive target CPA, at or above the past 30-day Google Display Network average CPA. You can lower this over time as the campaign starts to ramp up. We also recommend ensuring that your campaign budget is set at 20x max CPA goal.

Measurement/requirements

Conversation tracking and a minimum volume of conversions are required.



Advanced tip

Wait about two weeks before tweaking these campaigns to ensure that the Display Campaign Optimizer is able to learn the most about your campaigns. After two weeks, try optimizing with small changes to expand to more volume or refine your audience targeting.