



## GUIDE

# THE 20-MINUTE PPC WORKWEEK

*[MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR PPC ACCOUNT IN MINIMAL TIME]*

# INTRODUCTION

If you look at the pay-per-click (PPC) marketing campaigns managed by small and medium-sized businesses, most of them are in a state of disrepair, if not outright disaster. We've reviewed thousands of Google AdWords accounts with our free AdWords Performance Grader, and we've found some scary statistics in the process. For example:

- Did you know that over half of AdWords advertisers haven't checked their account in the past month?
- And another 25% haven't logged in once in over 90 days?

The primary reason that SMBs fail to achieve a return on investment from PPC is simple: *They don't spend enough time in their accounts.*

From the thousands of paid search accounts we've evaluated, we've discovered a strong correlation between account activity and performance – advertisers who make time on a regular basis to do active work in their accounts almost always see better results.

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But don't panic! We know that marketers and business owners at smaller companies are short on time and often juggling multiple roles – you usually don't have the luxury of hiring a full-time PPC manager. The reality is, you don't have to spend days or even hours per week working on PPC to make a difference. You can make a real impact on your PPC performance in just 20 minutes per week. Really.

The rest of this paper will outline a proven, consistent workflow that you can follow every week to keep your PPC account in fighting shape. The whole process can be completed in under half an hour per week. Let's get started!

# THE 20-MINUTE WORKWEEK: YOUR MOST IMPACTFUL WEEKLY WORKFLOW

If you can spare 20 minutes per week to optimize your paid search account, you can start to see results from PPC. We've outlined a workflow to guide you toward the tasks that will make the most impact on your bottom line. Here is your 20-minute work week:

## Minutes 0 – 1: Check Bids and Budget

The first two minutes of your weekly routine should be focused on bid management. The key here is to base bid changes on keyword performance. At a basic level, you'll want to:

- **Raise bids** on keywords that are performing well (converting at a profitable rate)
- **Lower bids** on keywords that are depleting your budget without delivering ROI

Remember, there's no real reason to limit budget on keywords that are driving profitable leads. In addition, remember that this isn't a one-time task – you'll need to optimize bids on a regular basis, because keyword performance can improve or degrade over time due to factors outside your control. However, bid optimization isn't a task you need to complete every day. You'll need longer timeframes to gather enough data so you can make informed bidding decisions.

### *Tips for Making the Most of Bid Management*

- **Don't bid more than you can afford!** More often than not, the top position isn't the most profitable.
- **Look for performance trends** based on Day of the Week, Time of Day, Location, and Average Position. Bid more during your best performing times and zones.
- **If you do use bid automation, know when to intervene and correct things manually.** For example, if you advertise for a product that is temporarily out of stock and the keyword then performs badly, an automated bid management tool could bid it down. If the bids get too low, there is little or no new performance data and the keyword can't redeem itself. An automated system is stuck here. If you want to give the keyword another chance, you have to raise the bid manually.

## Minutes 2 – 4: Pause Poorly Performing Keywords

Look for keyword outliers with below average ROI and/or Quality Scores – these are the terms that are costing you money and hurting your results. By pausing those keywords, you can stop the damage. Then, as time permits, you can work on optimizing those keywords or simply dumping them from your account, if they turn out to be irrelevant to your business.

### *Tips for Investigating Paused Keyword Performance*

If a keyword is driving clicks but no conversions, consider pausing and then making one or more of the following adjustments:

- **Different Date Ranges** – Even if the term hasn't performed well in the last 7- or 30-day window, it might have done well previously. If this is the case: what changed (bids, ad text, landing pages, something in your market/niche)?
- **Landing Page Effectiveness** – How effective is the associated landing page overall? What you want to confirm is that the landing page this keyword drives to performs well when paired with other keywords.
- **Ad Text Efficacy** – The same holds for ad copy – does the associated ad copy convert well from a CPA standpoint overall? This may well be a reason for a recent drop in effectiveness – maybe the ad copy you initially wrote has become stale and a new test would jolt your ad performance.
- **Assists** – Google's multi-channel funnel reports allow you to drill down to see not only last click attribution but also whether a term is driving a lot of conversions by acting as an earlier touch in the conversion process, so you can avoid cutting off a term that is helping to drive conversions that are being attributed to other keywords or channels.

## Minutes 5 – 9: Keyword Research

Keyword research is an important part of your PPC workflow – the quality of your keyword research can actually make or break your campaigns. After all, if you're not bidding on the right terms, your ads won't reach the right audience.

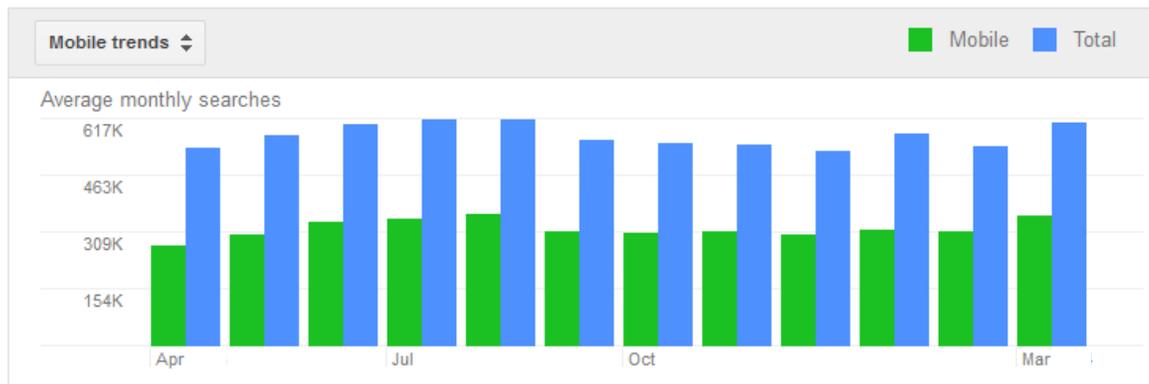
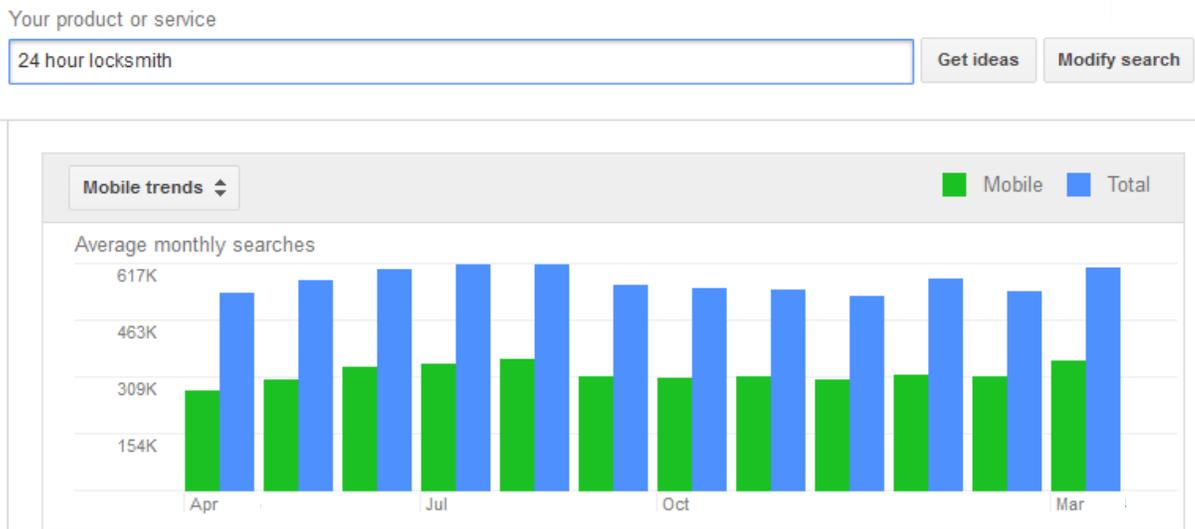
This portion of your week should be devoted to:

- **Adding promising new keyword opportunities** to your account – keyword expansion is key to increasing your reach.
- **Identifying negative keywords** – these are terms that aren't relevant to your business and will eat into your budget without delivering quality leads.
- **Experimenting with different keyword match types**, such as phrase and exact match, which are more restrictive than broad match.

Ideally, you'll develop a keyword universe that is both deep and broad, while still being highly targeted to the type of website visitor you want to attract.

### ***Tips for Better Keyword Research***

- **AdWords' Keyword Planner has added some cool features.** You can now break down traffic patterns by device, location, and time period. Explore these features to make sure you're choosing the right keyword for the right campaigns.



- **Don't limit yourself to the native AdWords tools though.** [Other keyword tools](#) and [creative keyword sources](#) can give you more long-tail keyword ideas.
- **High-volume, low-competition keywords are the sweet spot you should be looking for** – keywords that will drive substantial traffic without costing you a fortune.

- **Remember that you can apply multi-level negative keywords.** Chances are, you will identify some negative keywords that are a good fit across multiple ad groups or campaigns.
- **Don't go overboard with negative keywords, though!** Negatives are an important aspect of any PPC campaign, but an improperly used negative can hurt your account and kill your impression volume. As you set each negative keyword, be sure that it is highly unlikely that someone using that search query would convert on your site.

## Minutes 10 – 13: Ad Text Optimization

Well-written text ads get more clicks and help qualify your leads, so you only pay for valuable traffic. The best way to determine what messaging works with your audience is to test continuously. For starters, make sure that your ads include the keyword you're bidding on, as well as a benefit statement and strong call to action (tell the searcher why they should click your ad). Then test variations of your headline, word choice, and tone. Rotate your ads and the best of the best will rise to the top.

On a weekly basis, spend a few minutes to throw out your worst two ads and replace them with new text. Doing this regularly will net you higher click-through rates (CTR) and Quality Scores over time – that means you'll drive more leads at a lower cost per click. You can also use this time to try out new ad extensions, which can further boost your CTR. Extensions allow you to expand your ad with more information and links, giving searchers more opportunities to find what they're looking for on your site.

### *Tips for Optimizing Your Text Ads*

- **People respond to emotional ads.** Try to get inside your potential customer's head: Why would they be looking for what you offer? Stand out from the other ads by speaking to your prospect's fears and desires.
- **If you're an e-commerce company, try Shopping Campaigns.** These ads feature an image and price information so they're highly enticing to late-in-the-funnel shoppers.

# STOP WASTING MONEY IN ADWORDS

Get **actionable advice** on how to improve your account now with WordStream's **FREE AdWords Performance Grader**.

**Wasted Spend** ⓘ

\$49.81 in projected 12 month wasted  
\$12.45 already wasted in the last 90 days

33%

# of Negative Keywords Added

What does it mean?  
You're falling behind similar advertisers, who added an average of 18 keywords in the last month.

**START LEARNING NOW**

using the full WordStream advice Platform

**GRADE YOUR ACCOUNT**

[www.wordstream.com/google-adwords](http://www.wordstream.com/google-adwords)

## Minutes 15 – 18: Improve Campaign Relevancy

The more relevant your keywords, ad groups and campaigns, the more success you'll enjoy. Google rewards relevance with high Quality Scores, better rankings and lower costs, which all contribute to a high ROI from search marketing. To improve relevance, here are some of the things you can do:

- **Avoid ad group bloat.** Split your largest ad group into two smaller, more targeted groups. Tightly knit ad groups tend to earn higher Quality Scores.
- **Create a new, more targeted landing page.** Too few landing pages is a sure way to water down your relevance. It's best if each of your text ads aligns closely with a landing page – there should be a clear through-line from the keyword you're bidding on to the ad and the destination URL.

Set a goal to develop at least one more targeted ad group or landing page offer every month.

### *Tips for Improving Campaign Relevancy*

- **Run a check on your landing pages to ensure that you're following best practices.** WordStream's [Free Landing Page Grader](#) is a fast, easy way to see where your landing pages have room for improvement.

## Minutes 19 – 20: PPC Reporting

You're almost there! The last thing you need to accomplish before you can move on to the rest of your job is reporting. This is actually the fun part – if you've been following the 20-Minute PPC Work Week, your results are improving, and you can brag to your boss or your client. Show off your progress, and set goals for next month.



The above steps can be completed in about 20 minutes per week – but the reality is, it’s hard to get this all done in the AdWords interface alone. You’ll find this workflow much faster and easier to follow if you incorporate some outside tools. You might need to venture outside of AdWords and leverage third-party tools and software such as:

- Keyword research tools
- Bid management tools
- Conversion rate optimization tools
- Analytics software

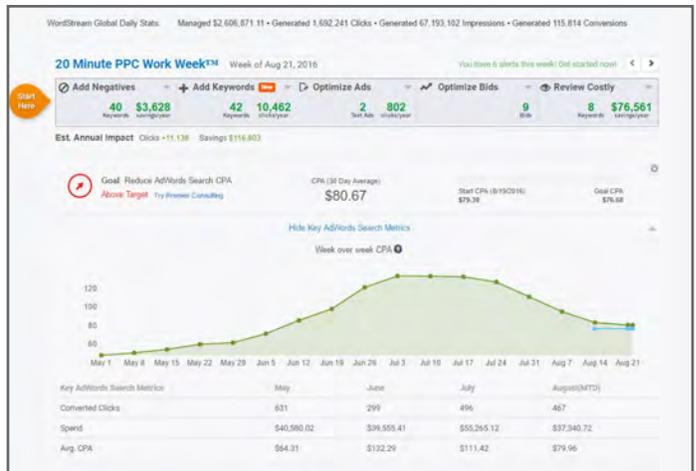
Dedicated software tools offer the benefit of automation (time savings) and, compared to AdWords, more control over how your money is spent.

## ■ GETTING IT ALL DONE IN 20 MINUTES A WEEK WITH WORDSTREAM

Rather than try to juggle multiple platforms and tools to manage your PPC campaigns, WordStream empowers you to get it all done in a single, integrated platform: WordStream PPC Advisor. **The 20-Minute PPC Work Week™** is your customized alert center inside PPC Advisor, a weekly to-do list with smart recommendations for PPC optimization. You get guided expertise to help you complete the tasks that will have maximum impact on your bottom line in the minimal amount of time.

These tools include:

- Add Negatives
- Add Keywords
- Optimize Ads
- Optimize Bids
- Best Practices
- Review Costly Keywords
- Remove Duplicates
- Try Bing
- Try Facebook



Campaign	Ad Group	Affected Keywords	Potential Savings	Take Action
Packages/Deals	Packages	3	\$43,795.58	See keywords
Lodging Related Terms	Resort	3	\$21,914.63	See keywords
Lodging Related Terms	Vacation	2	\$13,876.58	See keywords

Project	Changes	Keyword	WordStream Analysis	Status	Match Type	Max CPC	Avg. CPC	CPA	Conv. Clicks	Avg. Pos.	Est. Annual Cost
		vicocoin delis all	CPA Above Avg	Enabled	Broad	\$3.15	\$2.30	\$284.30	7	2.2	\$2,617.13
		vicocoin delis pac	CPA Above Avg	Enabled	Broad	\$3.00	\$2.24	\$535.34	2	2.1	\$12,609.76
		vicocoin delis pac	CPA Above Avg	Enabled	Phrase	\$1.00	\$2.46	\$351.17	1	2.0	\$4,242.89

This handy chart is a reminder of the six steps you need to follow each week to see your PPC performance improve and grow, with tips on how to complete each step in WordStream PPC Advisor.

WEEKLY PPC TASK	WHY IT'S IMPORTANT	HOW TO DO IT IN PPC ADVISOR
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Check Bids and Budget</b>	<p>Make sure you're not over- or under-bidding on key terms, leaving opportunities on the table or wasting your budget.</p>	<p>Use the Optimize Keyword Bids tool to get weekly or on-demand recommendations for when to raise or lower bids.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Review Costly Keywords</b>	<p>If your most expensive keywords aren't converting at a profitable cost, pause them so you can address the issue. You should also monitor keyword Quality Score.</p>	<p>You'll see a recommendation to pause a keyword if you're spending too much or have unusually low Quality Scores. Just click "Act"!</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Perform Keyword Research</b>	<p>It's important to grow your campaigns and filter out irrelevant terms that aren't working for you.</p>	<p>Follow our recommendations in the 20-Minute PPC Work Week to add new negative keywords. Use the Keyword Research Tools and QueryStream to find profitable new long-tail terms.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Optimize Ad Text</b>	<p>More compelling ad text leads to improved click-through rates and Quality Scores, saving you money over time.</p>	<p>Test new versions of at least two PPC ads each week. You can create ads and view ad performance in the Ads tab within Manage AdWords.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Improve Campaign Relevancy</b>	<p>Google rewards more relevant campaigns and ad groups with better rankings and lower costs.</p>	<p>Use the Split Ad Groups tool to easily break large ad groups down into tighter clusters that have more relevant text ads. Or create well-structured campaigns from scratch using the Campaign Builder.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Complete PPC Reporting</b>	<p>Set benchmarks, monitor your progress and set new goals.</p>	<p>Our PPC Dashboard Reports provide detailed information about costs, impressions, clicks, conversions and other key PPC metrics.</p>

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## ABOUT WORDSTREAM

[WordStream, Inc.](#) provides software and services that help marketers get the maximum results from their online marketing efforts. WordStream's easy-to-use software allows for more effective paid search and social campaigns with the 20-Minute Work Week, a customized workflow that guides marketers through steps that can greatly improve their AdWords, Bing, Yahoo, and Facebook campaigns, plus tools for call tracking, keyword optimization, and more. WordStream also offers an award-winning free PPC tool, the AdWords Performance Grader, which evaluates users' Google AdWords accounts and provides valuable tips for improvement. WordStream is a Google Premier Partner.