

FREE eBook!



Search Engine Marketing

# MISTAKES



THAT ARE KEEPING YOU FROM  
**THE RESULTS YOU WANT**



It's no secret that Search Engine Marketing (SEM) is an effective digital marketing tool that should be included in every business's marketing strategy, but are you seeing the kind of results you want? SEM is only effective if it is done right. This requires a full understanding of the tool, in addition to daily upkeep—both of which require time that you as a business owner are already short on.

In this guide, we highlight four common SEM mistakes that are hurting your campaigns and keeping you from seeing better results. Whether you're just starting to explore search engine marketing, or are an experienced SEM veteran, we'll help you avoid making these mistakes on your next campaign!



## Mistake #1

### Not Staying Up to Date On SEM Changes

One of the biggest pitfalls that can potentially rob you of better SEM results is falling behind on the changes made to the various SEM platforms you use. Services like Google AdWords, Bing!, and Facebook Advertising change regularly, so you need to stay in the know.

Search engine marketing is always evolving. New features get added to better reach potential customers. New restrictions are made for copy limits that will require you to prioritize. Sometimes a process changes altogether, such as campaign creation or budget setup. It is important to be aware of these changes so that you can take advantage of their benefits and maintain compliance with rules.

So how can you easily keep up with these changes? With a staggering 30% of small business owners spending 50-60 hours a week running their business (AlternativeBoard), spare time to scour the internet for the latest SEM changes isn't realistic. But don't give up just yet! There are tools you can use to gather the most recent news automatically such as Google Alerts, IFTTT (If This, Then That), and Mention. Each of these tools has you select specific keywords and topics and will send you notifications when new content containing those keywords gets published online.

The key to keeping on top of constantly changing SEM platforms and trends is in staying ahead of them, learning to adapt to them, and tracking your data. Even the smallest changes in your metrics can help you gauge how well your campaigns are aligning with current standards and trends.



**30%**

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ALTERNATIVEBOARD



## Mistake #2

### “Setting and Forgetting” Your Search Engine Marketing



In order for you to get the best return on your SEM campaigns, you should be checking and optimizing your campaigns at least once a week. One of the most common blunders people make when running their own SEM campaign is falling into the classic “set it and forget it” mindset. While the ability to automate your advertising efforts can be a great benefit, you still need to keep an eye out

for opportunities to improve. To maximize your campaign’s performance, check your bids (raise on strong performers, lower on poor performers), add negative keywords, add new keywords, experiment with match types, and optimize and test ad copy.

Attention to detail is key when running an SEM campaign. If you don’t feel you can invest the time into fully focusing on your SEM campaigns, you may be better off investing in a professional service to handle it for you. Yes this costs money, but with your campaigns being properly run, you will likely get a greater return than the investment. If someone is bidding on your brand name, bid on it as well to assure that your ad appears on top. Because it is your brand name, it will cost you less to appear ahead of your competitor.

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## Mistake #3

### Bidding On Someone Else's Branded Keywords / Overspending



SEM campaigns use keywords that are directly related to your business and chosen by you. However, there will be some overlap with your competitors on certain common keywords.

It's important to keep tabs on your competition if you want to stay ahead. However, keeping tabs does not mean campaigning against, such as by bidding on another

company's branded keywords. The right way to keep tabs is to frequently check in on what your competitors, partners, suppliers and customers are doing, and adjust your bids accordingly.

Conversely, you should also keep an eye out for competitors making this mistake. Keep track of competitors bidding on your brand name in order to avoid losing potential customers. If someone is in fact bidding on your specific keywords to the point that it's not profitable, don't get into bidding war.

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*It's important to keep tabs on your competition if you want to stay ahead.*



## Mistake #4

### Not Using the Data



As mentioned above, you should always be on the lookout for opportunities to improve your SEM campaigns. However, if you're not keeping track of their results, how will you know how to improve them? It's important to have transparent reporting results in order for you to see how (or if) your marketing dollars are working. Comprehensive data will allow you to make faster and smarter decisions for continually improving your SEM campaigns and maximizing your spend. Using data in your decision making is like using a compass that points you to more customers and business growth.

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## Conclusion

While running a business is no easy feat, avoiding common SEM mistakes will help drive traffic to your business and help you gain new customers. By staying up to date on SEM changes, checking and optimizing your campaigns, keeping tabs on your competitors, and reviewing transparent reporting results, you'll be able to reap the benefits of search engine marketing!

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YOU!**

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