PPC - CREATING A KEYWORD LIST

Keywords are the primitive entities of PPC ads. Choosing a correct and relevant set of keywords can help design a crisp and persuasive ad to fulfil the sole purpose of increasing the number of clicks on the ad.

Various keywords have different meanings and intents. Some keywords are typically used by general users who are into early research phase and some keywords are used by expert researchers.

Categorizing the Keywords

Keywords are categorized and arranged on the basis of their potential effectiveness in an ad. Refer the following target model for creating appropriate keywords.

This model shows generic keywords or phrases used by the users to describe their demand on the outermost section. The keywords or phrases become more specific as you go towards the center of the diagram.

The keywords can be categorized as follows:

User Phrases

Impression volume on these words is vast. It is based on the interest and pastime of users. These keywords generate lowest conversion and highest CPA for all the keywords. These terms depict that the user has no intention of searching for a particular product.

Product-Complementary Phrases

These are the terms the users use along with the main product. They can be someone else's product terms. For example, "Kindle Sleeves" in case of "Kindle Fire HD Tablet".

Competitor Phrases

Earlier, competitor phrases were next to the brand terms in order to get a high CPA, but recently, it is not possible, and it is not a good practice to use competitor phrases.

Product Phrases

This is a list of the products or services offered by a business. It can be as lengthy as all the range of products or services. The CPA on these terms is higher than that on the brand terms. The users searching for these terms are in a decisive frame of mind.

Brand Phrases

The users who use these as keywords are easy to convert. These keywords might not produce impressions or page views in terms of volume but these phrases produce the best conversion rate.

Building a Keyword List

You can use the given target model for keyword research and building a keyword list. The basic steps of building a keyword list are:

- Create a basic list *SeedList* of usual business terms
- Expand the list using keyword research tools
- Refine the list of keywords

Let us go through the steps in detail:

Creating a Seed List

A *seed list* is nothing but the initial set of keywords of the seller's business. Write down the six keyword categories in columns. Use a combination of brainstorming and investigation for categorizing the keywords into these six groups by keeping the brand and the product terms at the center of attention.

You need to build this list thoroughly, keeping in mind all the features of the product or service the seller is providing. You need to ponder and create a list of words about what all problems this particular product or service can solve.

- **Research the Audience** - Take the help of Internet to research and find out the following:

    - What are the terms your audience uses for describing the product or service?

    - What are the other day-to-day terms they use for the ones you created?

- **Research on Search Terms Used Currently** - Use your analytics tool, Google Webmaster tools, and your weblogs to find out what search terms people are using currently to reach to the seller.

- **Research on More Suggestions** - Make use of keyword suggesting tools such as Google's Keyword Planner or an autocomplete tool, **Soovie**. Keyword planner suggests more options of keywords. Soovie lets you enter a keyword and find out what the top autocompletes are for a number of different search engines and other sites. You can try a couple of keywords to see if you missed anything.

- **Research the Competitor Briefly** - You can see what the competitors are bidding on using tools such as **SpyFu** or **SEM Rush**. It can be helpful to put in a few competitor names or key terms to see if there is anything you missed out.

A thorough research builds a good list of keywords.

Expanding the List

Initially, you need to think of only a few dozens of keywords, then expand, and finally refine. While expanding, you can add new potential keywords in the existing list so that the list is always up-to-date. For this, you need to:

- Review the seller's website for new or upcoming products or services.
- Understand how people talk about the product and its features.
- Identify unique and well-performing keywords that need to be added in the list.
- Use keywords research tools for various suggestions.

Refining the List

While expanding, you may have added non-value adding or non-interesting keywords. Now it is time to refine the keywords list by eliminating the less interesting keywords and keeping only the best ones. There is no hard and fast rule to do this. Refining the keywords list is vital, as you need to take care not introduce any negative effect on the present list.

Here are some factors to consider while refining a list of keywords:

- **Use keyword categories to get an idea of intent of search**

  Maintain a good proportion of audience keywords and product keywords by dropping some of the less interesting audience phrases. Focus on the categories closest to the product and services.

  For example, if the seller is offering a B2B financial product, then "financial management" is a potential product phrase, but "financial management jobs" is a user phrase and therefore less interesting.

- **Participate in Google Keyword Competition**

  In the online tool, Google rates keyword competition from Low to High. These tools can help you find words that you might have an easier chance of winning.

- **Check for the results relevance**

  Enter some of the most important terms into the search engine and see what suggestions come up. You can drop the words and phrases of ambiguous meanings and make a list of potential negative keywords for any out of the topic results you may find.

- **Group the Keywords Semantically**

  As you go through the list of your keywords, create a column to group them semantically. For example, the phrases such as "tablets", "tablets for sale", and "tablets for kids" should be grouped under "tablets". The tightly-connected groups of words can be used as the PPC ad groups. If a group is too lengthy, you can drop some of those with a lower search count.

How Long Can the Keyword List Be?

The length of a list of keywords entirely depends upon:

- The complexity of seller's business
- The complexity of the product or service the seller is offering.
- The range of the products or service the seller is offering.

It need not be huge, unless you are developing a keywords list for a large enterprise that goes around thousands of keywords.

Keyword Research Tools

Keyword research tools help you to expand the list of keywords in most relevance of the seller's product or service. These tools suggest numerous variations of the words from which we can select the appropriate one.

These tools include:

- Google AdWords Keyword Planner
- Word Tracker

- SEO Book Keyword Suggestion Tools
- Keyword Discovery
- SpyFu

Keyword Match Types

Keyword match types determine how closely a user query matches with the keywords provided by the advertiser.

The keywords are matched irrespective of their case. That is, "perfumes", "Perfumes", and "PERFUMES", all are treated the same.

The following table shows the keywords match types from **broad match** to **narrow match**:

Match Type	Symbol	Example Keyword	Triggering Queries of the Ad	Example Queries
Broad Match	None	women's perfumes	They are any word in your keyword, in any order, including words closely related to the keyword, misspellings, synonyms, acronyms, split-words, and blended-words.	*buy ladies perfumes*
Broad Match Modifier	+Keyword	+women's +perfumes	They contain the modified phrase $ornearvariations, exceptsynonyms$ in any order.	*perfumes for women*
Phrase Match	"Keyword"	"Women's perfumes"	They are the keywords followed by the phrase or near variations of that phrase.	*perfumes for women*
Exact Match	[Keyword]	[women's perfumes]	They are the exact phrase and near variations of that exact phrase.	*women's perfumes*
Negative Match	-keyword	Women	Any searches without the keyword.	*Amouage Epic Man*

Using keyword match types, you can help control the searches that can trigger the ad. More precise is the keyword-query match, higher is the conversion rate.

Negative Keywords

Negative keywords are an important part of the keywords list.

They make sure that an ad appears only for a particular product the seller sells. They serve as ad filters. A negative keyword ensures that an ad does not appear for that particular term and reaches only the best potential audience.

For example, here is a list of typical negative keywords for books and manufacturing:

- **Books** - Download, Audiobooks, Kindle, eBooks, Films, Movies, DVDs, and CDs.
- **Manufacturing** - second-hand, used, rental, rent, hire, repair, and service.

Negative keywords can:

- Prevent the users from browsing for other products the seller is not offering.

- Help avoid paying for useless clicks.

- Reduce average Cost-Per-Click CPC and increase return on the investment ROI.

- Increase overall Click-Through-Rate CTR of the PPC account in the long run.

- Help create more relevant keyword groups with higher CTR.

- Raise the Quality Scores.

- Lower the investment cost.

Adding negative keywords is an important task in PPC strategy, which is scheduled once in a month. It is scheduled even more frequently, in case of large ads.

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