



Designing your Ads

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit the learner will be able to:

- ✓ Explore the essential for designing your ads.

Designing your Ads

Choosing Your Language

You don't have to be a copywriter to create your AdWords copy, but you are about to find out just why a copywriter can make such a good living.

Definition:

Copywriter, noun. A person who writes the text for advertisements, publicity materials, and websites.

Your Google AdWords ad is small. It has to be in order to catch the eye of your potential customer and to fit into the space available. Not only do you have to know all of the following:

- Who you are selling to
- What you are selling
- How it can help them
- Why they need to buy from you (as opposed to the competition)

You also have to know:

- Your budget

And, very importantly:

- How to get them to take action and buy (or download) something from you

Don't make the mistake of thinking that your ads should inform, influence, and provide information. Your ads are there to sell your product or service. Period.

While people are sometimes attracted to "low prices," "the best deal ever," "outstanding deals," "family pricing," or "amazing results," those terms may not earn the trust you are looking for. In fact, over-the-top language may just send people looking for the next ad in the list.

Selling is really about **influence**, and if you can **persuade** a prospective customer to visit your landing page because you can solve a problem, you are more likely to sell than the company that is using impressive or pushy language. The ads that get lots of clickthroughs are not the ones with impressive language. They are the ones that are engaging, straightforward, seem honest, and are **relevant** to the individual person reading the ad.

Persuasive Techniques

Getting a short ad to sound persuasive takes some work. You'll quickly see that ads that shout out "buy now" or "today only" are not using persuasion and influence as a sales approach, even though we know that's how to get the best results.

There are plenty of techniques that people use to be persuasive, and the factors can be summarized as presented below. (We've adapted these ideas from Robert Cialdini's excellent work in the field, and his book *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*.)

Predictability

People respond to what they expect. If they get a coupon, they expect that they are getting a reduced price, even when the terms of the coupon don't necessarily mean that is the case. If they know that one store is usually cheaper than the other, they tend to buy without checking prices closely. This principle also describes the idea of high prices being associated with quality products, even though the product may not change between one store and another.

Reciprocation

This principle describes how we respond by giving back one thing when we are given something else, especially a gift. This is something we see when people send thank you notes after receiving a gift, as well as the idea of taking a new car for a test drive before you buy. (In terms of Internet marketing, the PPC ad may say that you can come in today for a test drive, with the intent being that driving the car will make the customer more receptive to purchasing it.) Similarly, if your neighbors invite you over for a meal, you return the gesture at a later date.

Consistency and Commitment

After we do make a decision, our actions will support the choice we made even when we are faced with the knowledge that a better choice might have been a good idea, or that we have to wait a long time for delivery. In the world of Google AdWords, we know that we can set a budget, create an ad, and get things selling quickly.

Social Evidence

Marketers work with what works. Although many people dislike the idea of a laugh track (a pre-recorded loop of people laughing that gets played in many televisions comedies), marketers know that the laugh track engages people in the program. Laugh tracks even help engage listeners when the jokes are bad! We respond to statements that something is a "best-selling" item, even though the tag line does not tell us anything about the quality of the item. If you have ever watched a telethon for public television or a charity, you've seen the screen roll with names of everyone who donated, which is a way of saying to people, "Hey, look at what your neighbors are doing. Your name needs to be here too!"

Authority

We tend to believe people who are in positions of authority and trust, whether they actually earned that trust or not. We trust doctors, police, firefighters, and actors who are dressed as people with authority. Actors do shampoo, makeup, and beauty promotions, and people buy the products even when the

claims are unproven or the products are toxic, because we want to believe that they know what they are talking about.

Liking

You already know that you will buy from or be convinced of something by people that you like. This is the likeability factor. Customers will return to shop at stores with friendly or attentive staff because they are likeable, even if the prices are a little higher than the competition. Home shopping parties such as Tupperware, Pampered Chef, Epicure, and others have capitalized enormously on the likeability factor. Instead of buying from an unknown sales person, people come to the party to enjoy a demonstration, flip through catalogues, look at samples, win prizes, and to buy products. While the salesperson is really the one selling, party goers spend money in order to support the hostess, who also happens to be their friend. The friends know that the more money they spend, the more “free” benefits that the hostess receives in exchange for hosting the party. People at the party are well aware of this, and will also leverage reciprocity by asking this particular hostess to attend the party that they book.

Scarcity

Scarcity is a great technique to drive people’s need to have things. Commercials promote upcoming products, and manufacturers will deliberately release small amounts of the product in order to drive up interest in the product. They will even use excuses like having design or materials challenges, or something equally ambiguous. Meanwhile, customers are trying to find one of the scarce copies in order to be part of the special group that has the product.

Self-Interest

Everything that we undertake includes some element of self-interest, and persuaders are very conscious of this. As a standard, people want to get (or believe they have) a good value, and even a great deal, every time they invest energy or spend money on something. Even people who volunteer for altruistic reasons often understand the virtue of reciprocity for their good deeds.

Keeping Your Eyes Open

Not everyone has a happy story to tell about their use of Google AdWords. Google runs a tight ship, and they exercise a lot of control over what they do. As an AdWord account holder, they also exercise a lot of control over what you do.

If you search for “Google Slap” in a search engine, you will see stories there about AdWords customers who had their accounts restricted (and even suspended completely) because Google did not approve of the advertisers’ behavior. This can happen for a huge variety of reasons, including misusing advertising, bringing people to a landing page that has nothing to do with the keywords listed, illegal activity, and never having a site (or a purpose) that supports the keyword campaign. If your account gets suspended, it is extremely difficult to get back in Google’s good graces, something which some small companies cannot afford.

Imagine if most of your advertising was being done through Google AdWords and suddenly that stream was no longer available to you. Or, imagine if the rates being charged for your PPC advertising go from a reasonable \$1.00 per click to \$10.00.

If you are going to work with Google AdWords:

- Set up a plan. Do not approach AdWords as a test, an experimental space, or take it for granted.
- Make sure your landing page(s) and website are well constructed and founded on great content.
- Write excellent ads.
- Follow up on your results regularly.

Structuring your Ad

Most clickthroughs come from having a keyword in the headline of your ad. People are looking for something specific, they enter it as a search term, and when they see it in your ad, they click on it. Simple! Some ad writers also recommend that your toll free phone number should be in the headline, making things quick and simple for people who are searching from small screens (like the ones on a smartphone).

The headline for your ad contains just 25 characters, so you need to be concise and descriptive. Think about headlines on a magazine or tabloid in the checkout line of your local supermarket: they are short and eye catching, and sometimes the headlines alone are enough to prompt you to pick up that paper. You want the same technique to catch the eyes of a searcher on the Internet.

The second and third lines of your ad are limited to 35 characters each. You'll often see that many ads place product benefits on the second line, and the third line is reserved for features or offers. You'll have to experiment and see what brings you the best clickthrough rate.

The fourth line is your landing page, or the destination URL for the clickthrough. Make sure that the landing page loads quickly, has your keywords written into it, and that you follow Google's rules for content!

Remember as you write your ad that you need to use your associated keywords. Also remember to use negative keywords in your list so that you reduce unwanted clicks and save yourself some money.

Test Your Knowledge

Jot down ideas about a compelling ad that is already forming in your mind.

Further Reading:

