

Lesson no. 16: Google Adwords- PPC Advertising

OPTIMIZE SEARCH CAMPAIGNS

I. HOW TO OPTIMIZE CAMPAIGNS AT THE TIME OF CREATION?

i. Focus on profit

There are a lot of metrics you can use to measure the success of your campaigns such as: cost per click (CPC), cost per thousand impressions (CPM), cost per acquisition (CPA), return on ad spend (ROAS), click through rate (CTR), conversion rate and average value order. Often these metrics are reported in conjunction so that you get a clear picture of each campaign in comparison, allowing you to optimise accordingly. However, while these metrics give you the surface return on investment (ROI) which is important for adaptive campaign management, what is the net profit of each transaction that's generated? Understanding this will allow for more informed decisions.

For example:

Campaign A – generates a large volume of transactions at a high CTR and low CPC

Campaign B – generates a smaller volume of transactions at a lower CTR and higher CPC

Campaign A delivers a high volume but low value transactions, while Campaign B delivers a lower volume but higher value transaction. Therefore, the surface ROI of Campaign A is the clear winner but Campaign B actually returns the highest net profit. It should be noted here that there could also be additional customer service benefits or cost savings when dealing with a lower volume of deals.

ii. From click to customer

Do you know what the complete user journey is like for people clicking on your ads? The last thing you want to do is spend money on targeting and having the right people click or view your business, only to have them abandon the process. Here are some basic steps you can take to start checking your user journey:

- a) What happens when the user clicks through from mobile, tablet or desktop? Are all the pages optimised for the relevant screen size?
- b) What does your landing page communicate above the fold? Do you have a clear call to action?
- c) How fast does your page load?
- d) If the customer abandons the process, what steps do you have in place, eg. re-marketing campaigns or abandon cart/form triggered emails?
- e) If they do become a customer, do you place them into an onboarding process to mitigate churn and stimulate activity?

iii. Analytics

Creating a trading room floor mentality to campaign management is crucial to great optimisation, but to do this you need to have your analytic platform set up correctly. Ensure that you have the right analytics platform such as Google Analytics set up correctly and syncing with your own admin system. This will create accurate attribution and reporting of revenue figures against a respective campaign, channel (paid search, organic, email, social, etc), and source or medium.

iv. Timing is everything

There is such a thing as 'right place, right time' in the world of digital advertising. Sure, you could go out and buy as many eyeballs as possible, but how is that going to allow you to drive budgetary efficiency? One of the key aspects of getting the timing right on a large scale is understanding what events like school holidays, public holidays, sports, conferences, concerts and festivals might impact your business. Using the **PredictHQ web app** you can not only get event visibility across the world, you can also understand what events impact your business and when on average customers are most likely to buy relative to that event.

With this timing in mind, you can start to leverage overt and covert marketing tactics as explained here to ensure you're increasing your ad spend at the right time.

v. Understand who your target audience is

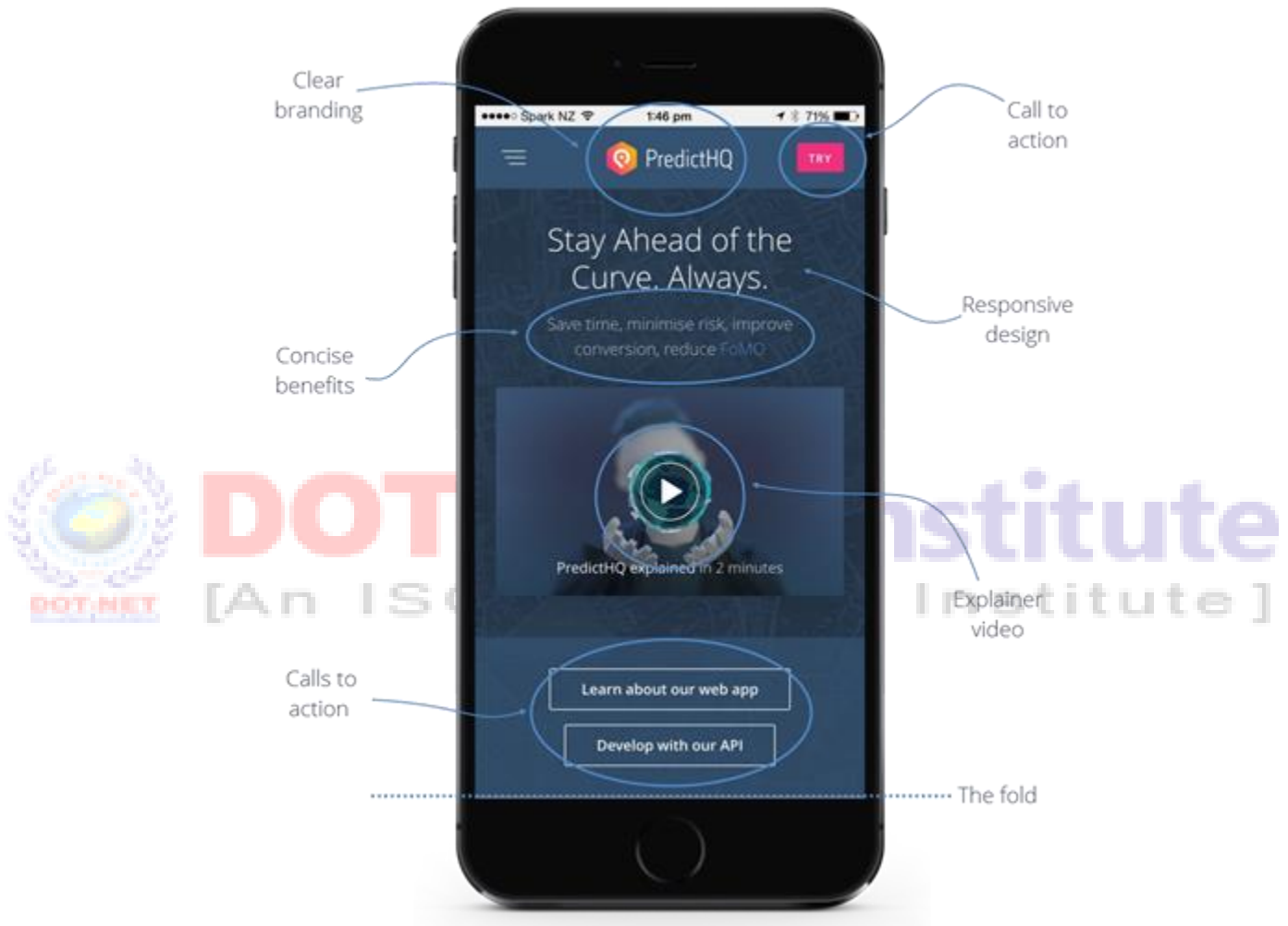
Who are the customers that are buying your product or service? There's no point trying to sell Sea World family holidays to a male student with no dependents and a penchant for beer. Use the intuitive platforms of today that come complete with a wealth of targeting options to help you zero in on the people you want to target and better-understand your audience, not just in the traditional sense of demographics but also their interests.

vi. Landing pages

Having optimised landing pages is a crucial step in generating the best-performing campaigns. So much can be won or lost on your customer's first click experience. Below are some quick tips about establishing a great landing page:

- a) Put content on the page which relates to your campaign to improve the quality score of your search campaign ads.
- b) Make the landing page relevant. For example, if a user is clicking or tapping on an ad which is for 'car hire from San Francisco airport,' send them to a localised landing page that contains elements including but not limited to:
 - o An image of San Francisco airport;
 - o A title which includes the term 'San Francisco;'
 - o Deals available from San Francisco airport;
 - o Localised content about hiring a car from San Francisco airport (which will also help with your quality score for Google Adwords campaigns).
- c) Clear branding
- d) What content and calls to action are above the fold?
- e) What trust elements do you have on the landing page which validate your brand and reassure the users? Initial elements could include:

- User reviews;
- Awards or accreditations;
- Social media following count;
- Number of bookings, transactions or members;
- Concise benefits of using your business.



vii. Consistency

This is probably the easiest tip but something that is not often followed. What do we mean by consistency? It's about ensuring that your potential customer has a familiar brand experience all the way through from seeing the hero image on the display ad, to it appearing on the landing page. The tone of voice, colours, logo, and other creative and visual cues you use should remain consistent all the way through the journey. Creating familiarity is a sure-fire way to keeping them on the path to conversion.

viii. Abandonment

No matter what you do, there will be times when certain users abandon the process. Even worse is when these users become qualified leads and abandon at the point of signing up or transacting. To mitigate losing the cost spent in getting them to your landing page, try implementing abandonment tactics. This means if the user is either logged in or has completed an email field as part of the process but then abandons, you can trigger an email response.

ix. A/B testing

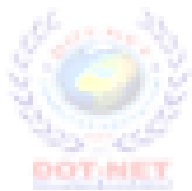
You're probably sick of hearing about A/B testing but there is a reason it comes up so much – it works. If used and quantified correctly in isolation, it can be an exceedingly useful tool for eliminating the subjective and asserting the objective. My only side note is that you should work towards a 95% (or higher) confidence level when assessing the results to ensure they are statistically significant. For extra certainty, build in a margin of error that you must be over to justify implementing the change.

So what should you be A/B testing on your landing page? It could be anything from including a video on your homepage or not, through to simply changing the text on the main call to action button from 'view now' to 'start free trial'. Whatever the tests are, we recommend testing each element in isolation, which means only having one A/B test running on the landing page at any given time.

x. Fail fast

There are myriad advertising platforms out there that promise the world but deliver very little. However, diversifying your advertising platforms is a great way of finding new channels that can deliver higher value ROI than the usual self-service advertising platforms of Google (et al), Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, plus third-party players like Marin, Kenshoo, AdRoll, etc. Fortunately, if you implement most or all of the above, then you should be able quickly identify which platforms deliver the most accurate targeting options and in turn generate optimal levels of conversion.

If a certain platform is not delivering the results you want, then you will have the ability to quickly assess and switch off. Likewise, if you find a platform that works for you then you can ramp up ad spend accordingly.



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