

TOP 10

THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT RULE-BASED CAMPAIGN AUTOMATION



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Stay at the top of your game - PPC management tips

Think you know it all when it comes to PPC management tools? Whether you have experience with them or not, it's in your best interest to get the low down on the latest and greatest in PPC management tools. Remember: Innovations in the industry are happening at lightning speed and your competitors are taking advantage of it. As you weigh your PPC management options, we've developed a list of things to consider to help you stay on top of the game.

1. Do you really need an automated management tool?

Maybe you've got a light client load and few campaigns to manage. If that's the way you roll, you probably don't need to spend time or money setting up a PPC management platform. But if you're like many others in the industry with more clients, campaigns and keywords than you can handle, a PPC management tool's just what you need to stay cool and keep your clients happy.

The leading PPC management tools provide features like:

- Automated bid management
- Automated reporting
- Email alerts
- Day parting
- Bulk editing



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2. Do you understand what a PPC management tool really is?

A PPC management tool is NOT a program that you turn your PPC stuff over to and walk away. When implemented and maintained properly, a PPC management tool works as your virtual assistant: You set rules like term x is to remain in first or second position at all times until the bid caps out x value. If you reach that cap and begin to drop below second position the tool can then be set to email you an alert. At this point it's your decision to continue your bidding war or wave the white flag and allow the competition to dominate the top positions for that term.

As the search marketer, you've got to get your hands dirty because all decisions are left up to you. As long as you understand that a PPC management tool is designed to help you run a more efficient campaign, then you can make an educated decision on whether you really need one or not.

3. Automatic tools - Stop being a robot

You're proud of your campaigns. You've nurtured them, built them and optimized them to achieve your clients' goals - They're like your kids at this point... Okay, maybe not, but close enough that when it comes to handing the reins over to an assistant or allowing a tool to make automatic tweaks, you break out in a cold sweat.

You need to ease up and allow yourself to get used to the idea of having a tool that'll do some of the leg work for you, under your strict instructions of course. Hand over some responsibility and you'll be able to sit back and relax while you take advantage of the conveniences of a PPC management platform.

Just imagine: Each week, you'll have time to review all your campaigns, identify areas of opportunity and make strategic decisions. Some of the campaigns you've already grown and optimized might even reach a whole new level of conversion and efficiency. Sounds good, huh?

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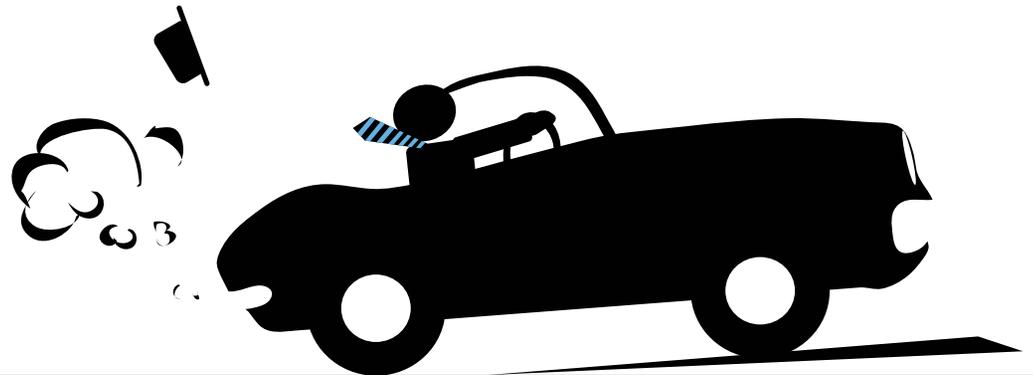
4. You're in control !

Each PPC management tool is unique. A tool that's effective at maximizing conversions does not imply that those functionalities should be used on every campaign. This is when your experience and knowledge as a campaign manager come into play. You might have a client that's focused on growing their brand and increasing site traffic. Or perhaps lead capture is a plus but not your client's main focus. The rules you put in place should focus on gaining the most traffic available at the lowest CPC rather than conversions.

The best way to determine which rules to apply to each campaign is to review each adgroup individually and ask yourself: What have my goals been in the past? From here, you can build effective rules for each facet of every individual campaign.

Bids rules can be based on:

- Sales
- Leads
- Signups
- Quality score
- Traffic levels
- CPC
- ROAS
- Cost/conversion
- First Page Bid
- Or any available metric



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5. Choose and prioritize your goals

Most of us have at least a few clients that want it all - low CPC, lots of highly targeted traffic and of course, high conversion rates.

As a search professional, you know that while you can work toward all of these goals, they've got to be prioritized in order to succeed.

This is important in your daily management style and it's also important when setting rules: Make sure they focus on your highest priority goals.

Before implementing rules:

- Define all campaign goals
- Map goals in order of importance
- Assign rules to reflect this hierarchy

6. Create basic rules using Quality Score and First Page Bid

Slow and steady wins the race, right? Take your time when learning your way around your campaign automation tool. Set a few simple rules you're comfortable with. Select a few adgroups and set rules based on positioning or quality score. These are easy to monitor and the tweaks made to your campaign will be very apparent. As you begin to trust the tool and understand how to use it, you can move on to more complex rules.



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7. Create sophisticated rules for specific groups and portfolios

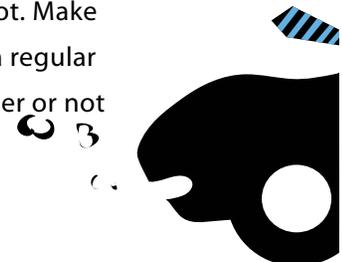
Once you're comfortable with the tool, it's time to really take it for a test drive. Choose an adgroup or two and setup more complex rules. Perhaps you want to make a rule based on conversion rate and CPC in order to keep your cost-per-conversion at or below a specific price point. This is a great way to test how well you know the tool and gain some confidence. Once you start seeing how the tool can help you reach some of your or your clients' loftier goals, you're ready to really take advantage of the tool.

8. Test, test and retest your rules

Now you're confident and ready to implement the tool across all your campaigns, but wait! It's time for more tests! Map out all the rules you're planning to use and when you've got a comprehensive list of those rules, it's time to test each one individually. Choose an existing adgroup or perhaps launch a new one with just a few terms. Apply each rule and watch them closely, after all, your rules are only as smart and effective as you make them. You might find a more effective way to write or implement a rule during this process, saving tons of time, money and a headache or two. The last thing you want to do is launch a rule that negatively affects multiple campaigns rather than a single adgroup.

9. Keep an eye on your landing pages and ad texts

One of the biggest mistakes a campaign manager can make is to become overly dependent on an automation tool and neglect their accounts. As you begin to experience success with your bid rules, it's time to dive in even further rather than move to autopilot. Make sure that you're still checking on your landing pages and ad copy; regardless of metrics, your ad copy should be updated on a regular basis. Landing pages can always be tweaked to increase conversion rates and time on site. Be sure to keep this in mind whether or not your campaign is a success.



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10. Don't expect miracles

Remember that PPC management software is not a miracle worker, it's a tool designed to simplify your job and make you a more effective search marketer. The only way to run a truly optimal campaign is to stay current with your rules and email alerts and continue to make strategic campaign and rule changes. If you're looking for a miracle, keep looking, but if you're looking for assistance with your campaign, a PPC management tool is exactly what you need.



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