

Playing hide and seek

Be found more often using Google AdWords

By Kim McCotter



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Put yourself in the shoes of a prospective patient. You’ve moved to a new area where you don’t know anybody and need to find a dentist for your family. Before selecting a dentist, what do you do? Chances are you would Google dentists in the local area and start gathering information.

75-80% of online users have searched the internet for health information. In this day of savvy e-patients, your website is likely to be the first touch point a prospective patient will use when choosing a practitioner.

In the last article, we explained the basics of Search Engine Marketing. This article outlines the steps required to start using Google AdWords in your practice. Google AdWords is a paid advertising tool you can use to increase your website’s exposure, increasing your chances of being found by potential patients. Whilst it is a paid option, you can allocate as much or as little as you feel comfortable with to try it out. Whatever budget you set is depleted each time someone clicks on your link to the point where your advert stops appearing when your budget is exhausted.

Google AdWords is designed to boost traffic to your website, if you don’t have a website, why not? If you already have a website, ensure it is current, relevant, interesting and optimised. Paying to direct traffic to an ineffective website will be an expensive way to attract new patients.



1. Decide on your Marketing Objectives and Metrics

Your overall marketing objectives may be to establish your brand name, attract new patients or expand your service offering. If specific success measures are not specified ahead of time, then you will be unsure whether the money you invested in Google AdWords was worthwhile.

Example metrics could be based on new unique visitors, volume of new patient enquires or new service enquires through your website.

2. Setup your Website Analytics

If you currently have a website and don’t have a formal reporting system, you probably have a gut feeling on how your website is going.

Luckily, with a little foresight the guesswork can be removed. If you specify your objectives and metrics in advance, results can be captured using Google Analytics. This is a free website analysis tool supplied by Google, and is available at <http://www.google.com/analytics/>.

The results from your Google Analytics will provide a source of keywords that can be used for your Google AdWords Advertising. Your website maintenance company will be able to help you setup your website analytics and conversion goals (metrics).

You can combine your online metrics with off line techniques.

You should be already asking, “where did you hear about us?” whether on the phone, or on your medical history form as this allows you to build a more complete picture.

3. Create a Google AdWords Account

Go to www.google.com.au/adwords, and click on the “Try AdWords now” button, enter your details and follow the prompts, this will create your account.

4. Create your Campaign

The process requires you to choose a daily budget, create an advertisement, select your keywords and enter your billing preferences.

When choosing the campaign settings, ensure you nominate your geographic area and daily budget, everything else can be left on the “recommended” settings. This is crucial, mainly because you don’t want your services advertised in countries or cities outside your potential market.

5. Write your Advertisement

Google displays a title (25 characters long) and two lines of ad text (35 characters each). While this task may seem a bit daunting at first, you can change it at any time.

Writing AdWords advertisements is mostly common sense, we recommend:

- Try to think like your patient and include keywords and phrases potential patients use;
- Accurately represent what you are offering;
- Write advertisements that are grammatically correct and make sense;
- Be specific;
- Use simple words;
- Avoid gimmickry, excessive use of superlatives and the word “Free”; and
- Direct traffic to a relevant page on your website rather than the home page.



6. Choose your Keywords

Next you need to specify the keywords or phrases that will be used to show your advertisement. Thinking like your patients will be an effective way to generate appropriate keywords.

Your Google Analytics reports will show you what keywords and phrases visitors are currently using to find your website. In addition, if you get stuck, there are keyword generation tools like Google’s Keyword Tool, available at <https://adwords.google.com/select/Tools>.

Google will also suggest keywords and phrases you can use once you get started.

7. Choose your Negative Keywords

To improve your chances of attracting the right patients you may not want to be associated with certain terms for example: Medicare, pain, cheap dentist or emergency. Other exclusions to consider are irrelevant geographic indicators, services you don’t offer and similar sounding but unrelated businesses. For example Brisbane, sedation, and the phrase “Advanced Animal Dentistry” would be appropriate if this is not your market!

8. AdWord Payment and Budgeting

Budgets are set on a daily basis, when your budget is reached your advertisement is removed for the remainder of the day. You can start advertising with Google AdWords with a very low daily budget.

Google will recommend a daily budget and a maximum cost per click to assist with your budgeting. You don’t need to follow this recommendation, choose a maximum cost per click that is cost effective and meets your objectives.

Payments can be automatically charged from your credit card, but if you are not comfortable with that idea, other options are available. You can also run your account in a similar way to a pre-paid mobile phone.

You can recharge your account using BPAY, account transfers or credit cards. When you run out of credits, you either recharge your account or your service is suspended. From a practical point of view, this will assist with your monthly cash flow.

If you get stuck, there are plenty of tutorials available on Google and YouTube to help you through this process. After your campaign has run for a couple of weeks, you will be able to analyse the results.

The next article in the series will take you through analysing and making sense of Google AdWord results.

About the author

Mr Kim McCotter is Business Development & Marketing Manager at Levitch Design Associates. With a background and passion for business and marketing, Kim comes to LDA with experience in both service and product based industries. Having over four years of professional services experience and four years of marketing experience, he brings a fresh and professional approach to LDA. Kim holds a Bachelor of Business (UTS), Masters of Business in Marketing (UTS), and a Certificate in Digital Marketing (ADMA). He is continually investigating marketing and business techniques to find the next competitive edge. His methodical business development and marketing approach is outcome driven, his initiatives will be beneficial to the future success of our clients. He can be contacted on (02) 9880-9300.