

Post-Lockdown PPC Checklist

Phase I: Plan

- Analyze bid settings as business begins to ramp back up to make sure you're not spending too much or too little, depending on the new landscape.
- Question all benchmarks from Q1 and Q2. The second half of 2020 will be unpredictable at best.
- Analyze search term reports to see if your ads are showing for queries diluted due to COVID consumer behavior. Add negative keywords to avoid showing for these searches.

Phase II: Optimize

- Test automated bidding in a sandbox and analyze the results against manual adjustments. Use our Rule Engine for added customizability, like adjusting bids based on location.
- Experiment with increased spend on bottom-of-funnel campaigns, especially if you had to abandon them during the quarantine period.
- Explore ways to take advantage of RLSA and GDN retargeting, especially if little or no budget was applied over the past quarter.
- Check device bid modifications to make sure your priorities still apply. Some audiences still work from home; others are mobile. Watch to see if bids are inadvertently throttling performance.

Phase III: Track

- Review auction insights report to see whether competitors are bidding on similar terms, including brand terms. Make sure you're not getting outbid.
- Watch placement reports frequently. Overall, more people are still online. Monitor placements to identify where optimizations are needed.
- Track daily budgets like a hawk. Remember that Google paid search traffic dropped significantly in recent months. As traffic resumes, daily budgets can max out faster than you expect.
- Avoid the temptation to default to pre-COVID strategies. Consumer behaviors, confidence, and other factors will still trick the AI-powered machines.
- Scripts can help you automate many processes and keep you on target. The Flexible Budgets script from Optmyzr, for example, pauses activity when a time-based budget threshold is met.

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