

12 Geo-Targeting Mistakes in Google Ads You Should Avoid

Over the past few years, online advertising has grown and evolved at an exponential rate. Today, markets have the choice to specify and target specific or niche audiences in various ways. One of these ways is using geo-targeted ads, which plays a vital role in PPC (pay-per-click) campaigns and delivers ads to people in specific areas. This is quite an effective strategy that can be used to build brand awareness in any locality.

Before diving into the details of the most common geo-targeting mistakes that can be done on Google Ads, let's understand how geo-targeting works. Google Ads has a feature that allows advertisers to set specific locations where they want their ads to be shown to users. This is an essential tactic for businesses, especially the ones that depend on home deliveries and/or foot traffic such as e-commerce sites, brick-and-mortar stores, and restaurants. In Google Ads, you have the option to configure the targeting settings according to different factors, such as;

- Nations
- Areas within the nation
- The radius of the location
- Specific location groups like business location, places of interest, etc.

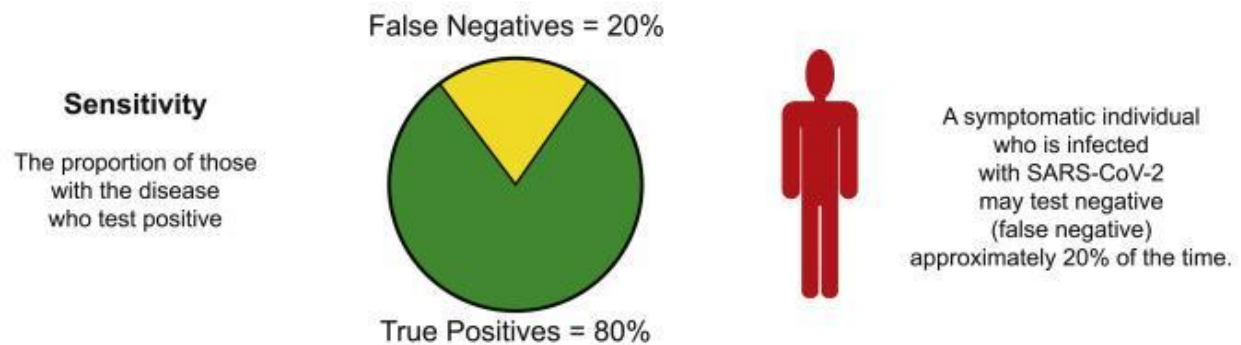
The main benefit of geo-targeting in Google Ads is that displaying ads to non-relevant audiences will waste clicks and impressions, effectively cutting down the marketing budget of a business and not providing any type of return. Hence, geo-targeting is an effective tool for many advertisers and marketers.

It is natural for companies to make geo-targeting mistakes, lessening the effectiveness of their campaigns. At its worst, it can result in the loss of potential customers. To prevent these from happening, it is important that you avoid some common Google Ads geo-targeting mistakes, some of these include;

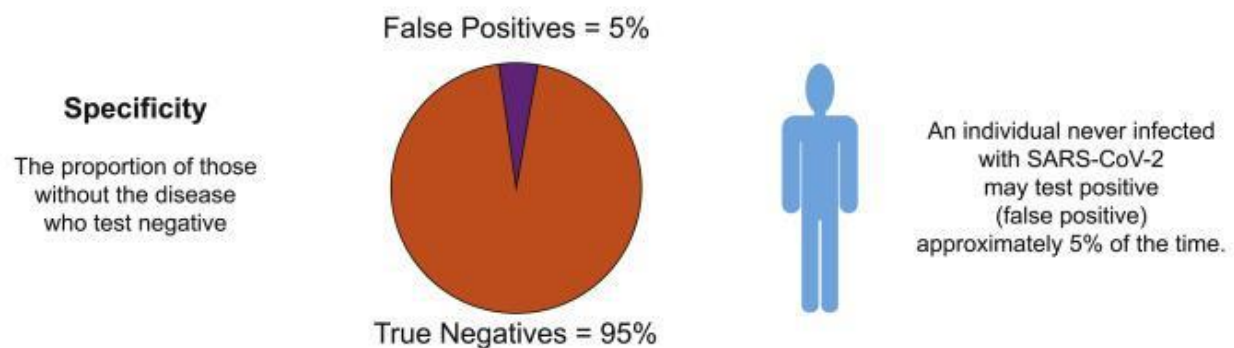
User Location and IP Address Mismatch

This is considered the most common mistakes when it comes to geo-targeting in Google Ads. The IP (Internet Protocol) address is designated by the ISP (Internet Service Provider) to provide the location of users. This is how Google helps you decide where to show your ads, based on the ISP and IP of the customers.

In clinical practice, rt-PCR has been reported to have a sensitivity that approaches 80%



In clinical practice, serology tests have been reported to have a sensitivity near 95%



However, Google has also admitted that the IP location may not be the same as the user location. While Google notes that you can put in the target area/country/city in the ad, most marketers would agree that this method is not the most effective.

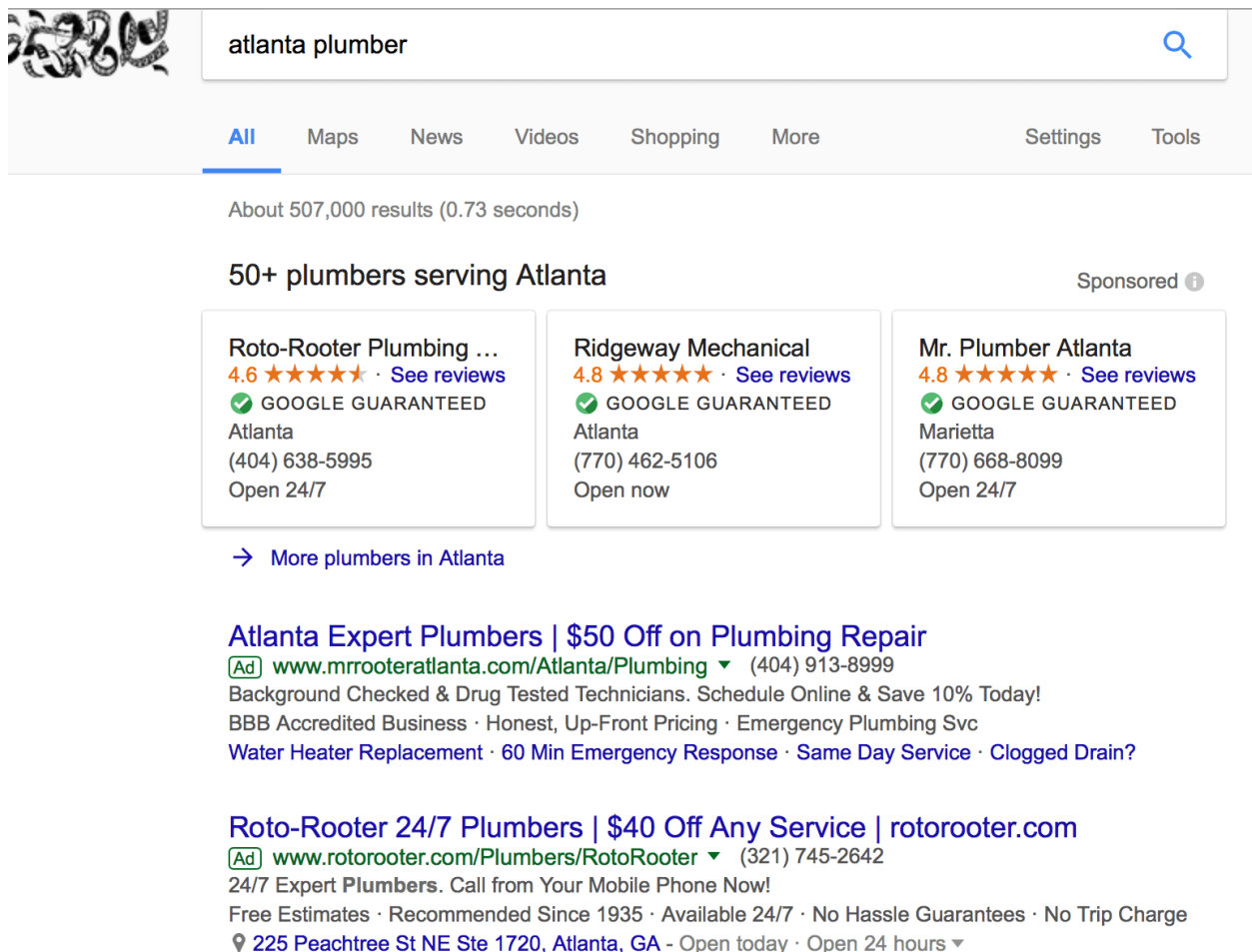
There are two main errors with this approach – namely, the false positive and the false negative. False-positive means that while you may appear in Los Angeles (for example), you are actually not. False-negative is the invert of the former and means that while you may actually be in Los Angeles, you don't appear to be according to Google. Hence, the credibility of this approach comes into play.

The practical solution here is to exclude specific locations. For instance, if you have a business selling clothes locally in Vegas but are receiving a high number of clicks from Sri Lanka, you may have to exclude that nation from your campaigns. However, be sure to do so carefully so that you don't end up alienating potential customers.

Not Being Specific in Terms of Location

When you operate a business online, you tend to think – who needs boundaries? This thought seems reasonable at first – why stick with one location when you can create an ad and target everyone in the world?

However, it's important that you be specific when it comes to geo-location. By creating location-specific ads, you will get better engaged and more meaningful traffic. However, you should also know that specifying the target location can also take a lot of time depending on the extent of your campaign. So why is it worth the hard work?



The screenshot shows a Google search for "atlanta plumber". The search bar is at the top with the text "atlanta plumber" and a magnifying glass icon. Below the search bar are tabs for "All", "Maps", "News", "Videos", "Shopping", "More", "Settings", and "Tools". The "All" tab is selected. Below the tabs, it says "About 507,000 results (0.73 seconds)".

The main results section is titled "50+ plumbers serving Atlanta" and is marked as "Sponsored". It features three sponsored listings:

- Roto-Rooter Plumbing ...**
4.6 ★★★★★ · See reviews
GOOGLE GUARANTEED
Atlanta
(404) 638-5995
Open 24/7
- Ridgeway Mechanical**
4.8 ★★★★★ · See reviews
GOOGLE GUARANTEED
Atlanta
(770) 462-5106
Open now
- Mr. Plumber Atlanta**
4.8 ★★★★★ · See reviews
GOOGLE GUARANTEED
Marietta
(770) 668-8099
Open 24/7

Below these listings is a link: → More plumbers in Atlanta

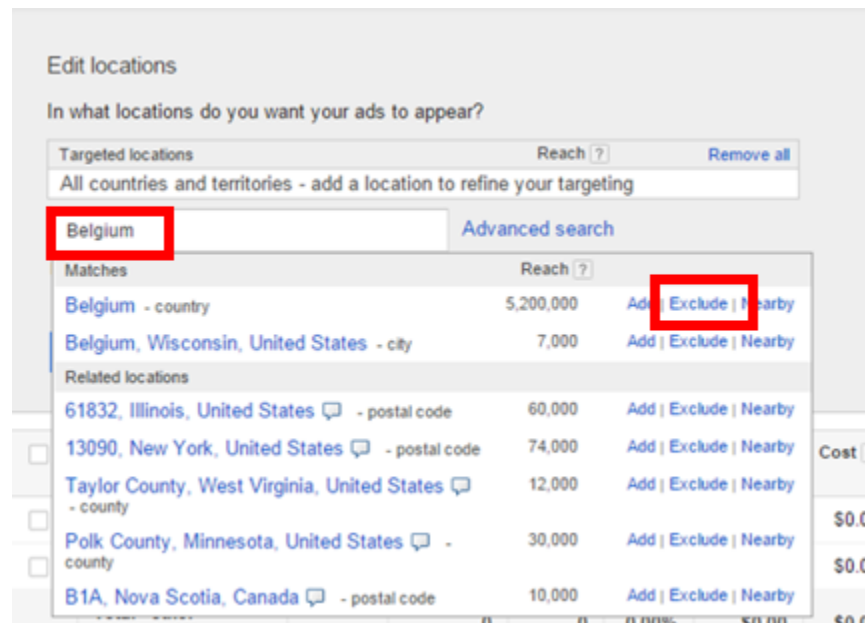
Below the sponsored results are two more sponsored ads:

- Atlanta Expert Plumbers | \$50 Off on Plumbing Repair**
[Ad] www.mrrooteratlanta.com/Atlanta/Plumbing (404) 913-8999
Background Checked & Drug Tested Technicians. Schedule Online & Save 10% Today!
BBB Accredited Business · Honest, Up-Front Pricing · Emergency Plumbing Svc
Water Heater Replacement · 60 Min Emergency Response · Same Day Service · Clogged Drain?
- Roto-Rooter 24/7 Plumbers | \$40 Off Any Service | rotorooter.com**
[Ad] www.rotorooter.com/Plumbers/RotoRooter (321) 745-2642
24/7 Expert Plumbers. Call from Your Mobile Phone Now!
Free Estimates · Recommended Since 1935 · Available 24/7 · No Hassle Guarantees · No Trip Charge
225 Peachtree St NE Ste 1720, Atlanta, GA - Open today · Open 24 hours

This is because people from different locations will behave differently to a particular business, service, or product. For instance, let's say you have an online store that sells shoes for the winter. While you may garner a lot of clicks from colder nations like Canada or Russia, you won't have much luck with countries like Jamaica, which is hot and sunny year round.

Not Setting Up Exclusions

As mentioned above, you need to set up the proper location to ensure that your Google Ads are targeting customers and clients within a specific location, and not to people that are merely showing interest. With this, you will ensure that the searches are more qualified and that your users are more engaged.



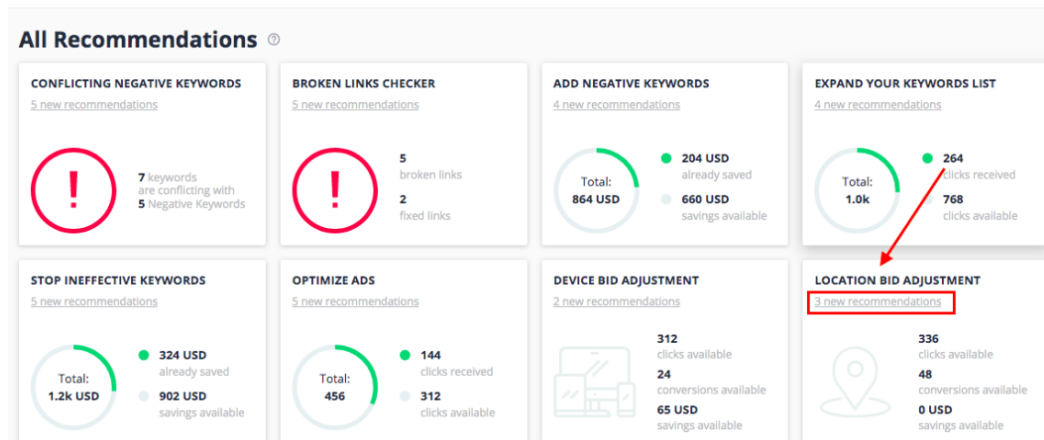
You need to look through the locations you are currently targeting. If you are not seeing the expected results, you should consider setting up exclusions. Of course, the results will vary from one location to another; hence, you should know the KPIs (key performance indicators) for each campaign you initiate.

It's important to set up exclusions within your Google Ads marketing campaigns. For example, let's say you have a car dealership in Alaska. While your dealership is located on an international border, you can exclude Canada if you don't do business internationally. In fact, you can exclude any location down to the zip code.

Experts recommend excluding major airports within locations you are targeting. Most people in these locations are simply traveling through and may be an ineffective use of impressions.

Not Using Location Bid Adjustment

Location bid adjustments allow you to show your ad dynamically to people in specific geographical areas. For instance, a click from a smartphone from a certain location at a particular time could be a better engagement, and worth more money. There are several types of bid adjustments that will depend on the type of campaign you are planning.



Choose a campaign for which you'd like to get bid adjustment recommendations and the report type.

For instance, the PromoNavi Location Bid Adjustment Tool can help you do exactly this. This platform will provide you with various recommendations through Google Ads Recommendations. With the help of this tool, you will be provided with a daily report of changes that you need to make on your campaign for the best performance possible.

The PromoNavi Location Bid Adjustment tool is one of seven available campaign recommendations that will help you optimize your Google Ads campaign. Additionally, you can also adjust the bid for different devices, such as smartphones and computers, to ensure your advertising campaign is effective.

Inconsistent Branding

Inconsistent branding is often considered a rookie mistake. Proper branding has been a topic for discussion for a long time, and both sides have significant support. However, we would like to say that you should bid on your own brand's keywords to increase conversions. However, this also means that you will have to keep a closer eye on your brand's overall value.

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Of course, you would want each of your locations to have its individual presence; however, it is also important that branding remains consistent. This matters for two main reasons – first, you need to make sure that the value of your brand is carried across different locations. If the client/customer will have a






good experience in one location, you would want them to see and recognize your brand's name and logo in another location and make the obvious connection.

For example, let's say you have two stores located in New York and Los Angeles. A customer in New York has received a bad experience and that resentment will likely carry on when that customer visits the Los Angeles branch as well, and vice versa.

Second, most online platforms like review sites and search engines tend to be very selective about linking locations with one another. This means that even if there is a minute setback – like calling one location 'ABC, Inc' and the other 'The ABC, Inc', there is still a possibility of you losing those valuable associations.

Improper Audience Segmentation

When your business starts to grow and you start adding multi-location firms, it becomes very important to segment your audiences into smaller and more manageable groups. This needs to be done so that your customers and clients respond better to relevancy.

Homepage Viewers	Category Page Viewers	Product or Offer Page Viewers	Cart Abandoners	Past Converters
				
Message: <i>"Discover great deals"</i>	Message: <i>"Check out new arrivals"</i>	Message: <i>"30% off today only"</i>	Message: <i>"Free shipping"</i>	Message: <i>"You may like other products like this"</i>

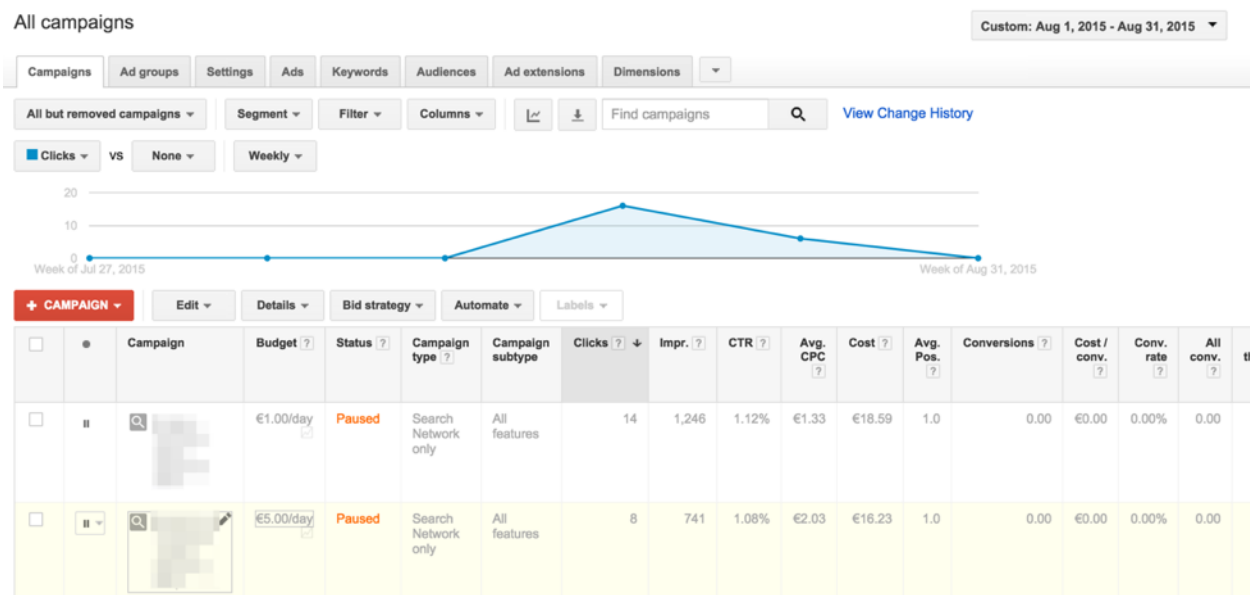
For instance, while it may seem fine to send the same email to all your subscribers, this particular approach will fall flat as you expand your business to more areas. If your business is spread across multiple locations, the first thing you need to consider for geo-targeting is the geography, as you would want to deliver the best services and products to local customers first.

However, this doesn't mean that you stop at this point. As your market share increases, you can segment your audiences according to different categories like demographics, behavior, etc. The more you segment, the better responses and engagement your marketing campaigns will have.

Let's say that you have different sections in your local store. On one hand, you see that the men's section is selling its good, while the children's and women's sections are performing poorly. In this case, you need to study why the men section and children's/women's sections are inversely proportional to each other. Maybe you are selling men clothes that fit the region and not doing the same for the others. Hence, understanding and analyzing the audience in a particular location is very important to your success and growth.

Not Assessing Analytics for Each Location

It's obvious that you cannot study the performance of your campaigns without diving deep into its analytics. Similar to other approaches, analyzing each location for a multi-location brand can be very difficult. Most would be content by only looking at the top-level results, since these campaigns are much more complex, with more audiences, stores, outlets, offices, etc.



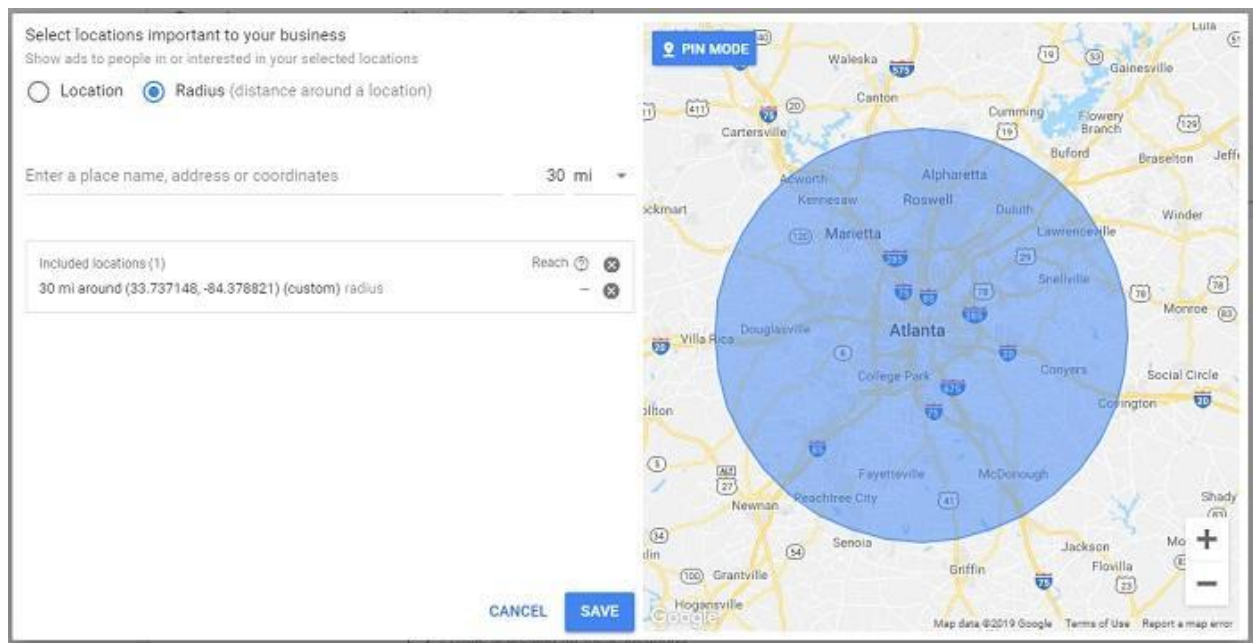
However, you must resist this temptation. With multi-location marketing campaigns, there is more data to parse, meaning you have more to understand and take away. If you properly analyze the data, you will be able to confirm whether a particular idea or tactic has worked in a certain location, or if a change in the wording of the ad has garnered higher conversion rates.

Analytics are valuable insights that you need to get into. If you are a savvy marketer, you will be rewarded for your analytic efforts in marketing your multi-location business with better engagement and conversion.

For example, let's say that one of your business locations has decided to sell winter clothes in the colder regions. That doesn't mean you will sell these winter clothes in business locations situated in warmer places; this is simply a waste of energy, time, and money.

Not Geofencing Your Ads

In geofencing, a virtual barrier is created around a physical location. The barrier can be either in the shape of a polygon around a specific store or building footprint, or a radius covering a large location.



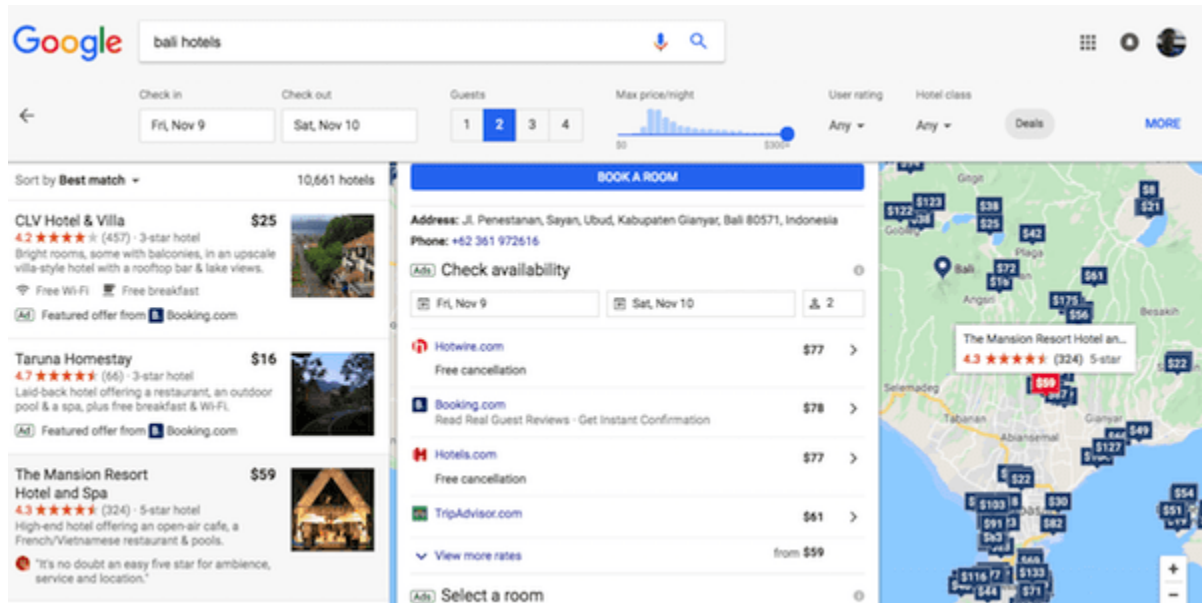
This will provide you with a high level of accuracy that will help you understand the effects of different kinds of geo-targeting campaigns, including those on Google Ads.

For multinational businesses, advertising is all about efficiency – you need to make sure that your campaigns reach the right local customers, not overlapping with each other. Geofencing is considered the best way to do this – for example, with Facebook or Google – to establish clear geographic areas ranging from hand-drawn boundaries to the zip-code. The campaign will target these areas only.

Geofencing also refers to advertising when someone enters this barrier – that person may receive a push notification, an ad, or an alert in your mobile app, based on the location and distance from the business. Today, geofencing is one of the most used strategies when it comes to specific location-based ads.

Not Monitoring All Of Your Pages

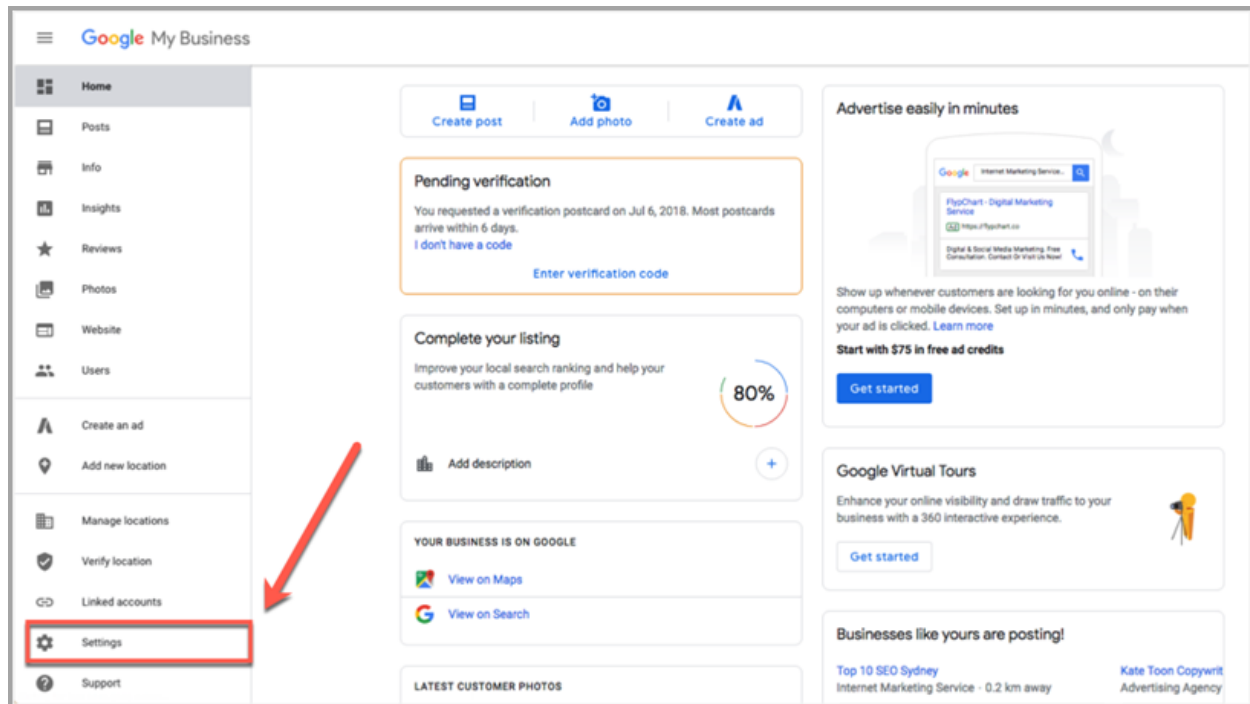
Of course, it's not easy to keep track of everything that happens on review sites like TripAdvisor or Yelp for even a single location business. When you bring in multiple locations for the same, the task quickly becomes daunting.



While it's not easy, it's very important that you keep monitoring and managing all your pages through various online platforms. In this aspect, timing matters a lot. For instance, if someone visits one of your business locations and leaves a bad review, it could easily affect your entire business. Hence, the only way to manage and deal with these issues is to ensure that you are actively engaging these pages so you become immediately aware of any issues and can send a reply just as quickly.

Not Setting Up “Google My Business” Correctly

It's essential that 'Google My Business' is set up properly. While it may seem very trivial, the impact can be very extensive. Today, customers and clients make use of searches and social media to look for and research local businesses; they have now become important key channels. If your location is not lined up properly in the backend system for your platform, it could mean bad news for you and your business.



It is important that Google (and Facebook, for that matter) know which master account is being used to control different locations, and who can make changes and manage the settings. If done properly, you will be able to unlock many significant options, like targeting online ads with greater efficacy or publishing content on different pages.

Setting Up Locations that Do Not Scale

If you have more than a single office or store that offers the same products and services, it only makes sense that you create a single platform to manage all of the locations. However, the problem with online platforms and search engines is that they do not 'understand' these systems, as they are generally made to provide customers with information related to specific locations.

Choose your locations

✕

Search | [Radius targeting](#) | [Location groups](#) | [Bulk locations](#)

Location groups are sets of related locations that you can target to reach specific types of customers. [Learn more](#)

My Locations ▾ within

Google My Business locations ▾

Radius around each location

Targeted locations	Reach ?	Remove all
5.0 mi around "Google My Business locations" within 53202, Wisconsin, United States - custom	--	Remove

[Hide locations on map](#) ?

Done Cancel

Hence, you shouldn't set up locations that won't eventually scale. This doesn't imply that you create a separate platform for each of your locations. However, you should ensure that your branches have their own pages within the platform, with additions like reviews, offers, images, addresses, and phone numbers.

Understanding the numbers

When it comes to geo-targeting your campaigns, you tend to pay per click. While the leads are fewer, they produce higher quality engagements. Hence, advertising is not made for everyone, since the math doesn't always make sense.

Keywords Tab

Search terms subtab

Sort by Clicks

Are any keyword phrases irrelevant?

Do any keyword phrases have lots of clicks, but no conversions?

Search terms

Learn how customers are finding your ad. With the Search terms report, you can see the actual searches people entered on Google Search and other Search Network sites that triggered your ad and led to a click. Depending on your keyword match types, this list might include terms other than exact matches to your keywords. [Learn more](#)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Search term	Match type ^[?]	Added / Excluded ^[?]	Campaign	Ad group	Clicks ^[?] ↓	Impr. ^[?]	CTR ^[?]	Avg. CPC ^[?]	Cost ^[?]	Avg. Pos. ^[?]	Converted clicks ^[?]
	Total					553	12,805	4.32%	\$5.76	\$3,187.12	1.8	12
<input type="checkbox"/>	dentist implant	Exact match	Added	Implant Search - US	Dentist Implant	21	99	21.21%	\$3.77	\$79.24	2.5	0
<input type="checkbox"/>	implant dentistry no	Exact match	Added	Implant Search	Dentist Implant	21	253	8.30%	\$5.78	\$121.48	2.2	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	implant cost	Exact match	Added	Implant Search - US	Implant/Dentistry Search	18	326	5.52%	\$6.76	\$121.77	2.6	2
<input type="checkbox"/>	implant dent implant	Phrase match	None	Implant Search - US	Dentist Implant	10	38	26.32%	\$3.39	\$33.91	2.4	0
<input type="checkbox"/>	same day dentist implants	Phrase match	None	Implant Search - US	Dentist Implant	10	25	40.00%	\$4.00	\$39.96	2.5	0
<input type="checkbox"/>	paying for dentist implants	Phrase match	None	Implant Search - US	Dentist Implant	9	34	26.47%	\$3.36	\$30.25	1.9	0
<input type="checkbox"/>	how much do implants cost	Exact match	Added	Implant Search - US	Implant	8	199	4.02%	\$7.66	\$61.28	1.4	0
<input type="checkbox"/>	dentist implants costs	Phrase match	None	Implant Search - US	Dentist Implant	8	48	16.67%	\$3.43	\$27.47	2.4	0
<input type="checkbox"/>	all on 4 dentist implants	Phrase match	None	Implant Search - US	Dentist Implant	7	14	50.00%	\$4.37	\$30.58	2.2	0
<input type="checkbox"/>	dentist cost	Exact match	Added	Implant Search - US	Implant	6	145	4.14%	\$7.39	\$44.33	1.2	0
<input type="checkbox"/>	new dentist implants	Phrase match	None	Implant Search - US	Dentist Implant	6	18	33.33%	\$4.07	\$24.40	2.3	0

For example, if you are working on a \$55 per unit margin, then the cost per click of \$10 will not add up. However, if you have margins of \$20 or more, you can buy those leads within a day!

Another choice you have is to reduce your cost per impression and swing it around accounts that are large enough for purchasing. You also have to understand that most people will not convert. Hence, you must look for better-quality leads that will be purchased and will help pay for your campaign as well.

Final Thoughts

Geo-targeting in Google Ads is a very impressive feature that allows you to target specific markets in districts, cities, states, and even countries. Perhaps the best aspect here is that you don't even need a physical business location.

Any type of marketing campaign can be a tricky situation to manage. While it is possible to generate fantastic results, it can also blow up on your face and result in money and time wasted. Hence, it is important to understand your customers based on their demographics.

When people look for services and products 'near me', it typically means that they're ready to buy. For most people, shopping is done online. If you are able to combine the 'to buy' and 'near me' intent, you will get usually positive results. However, if you want to succeed and have the best results possible, ensure that you avoid the mistakes mentioned above.