

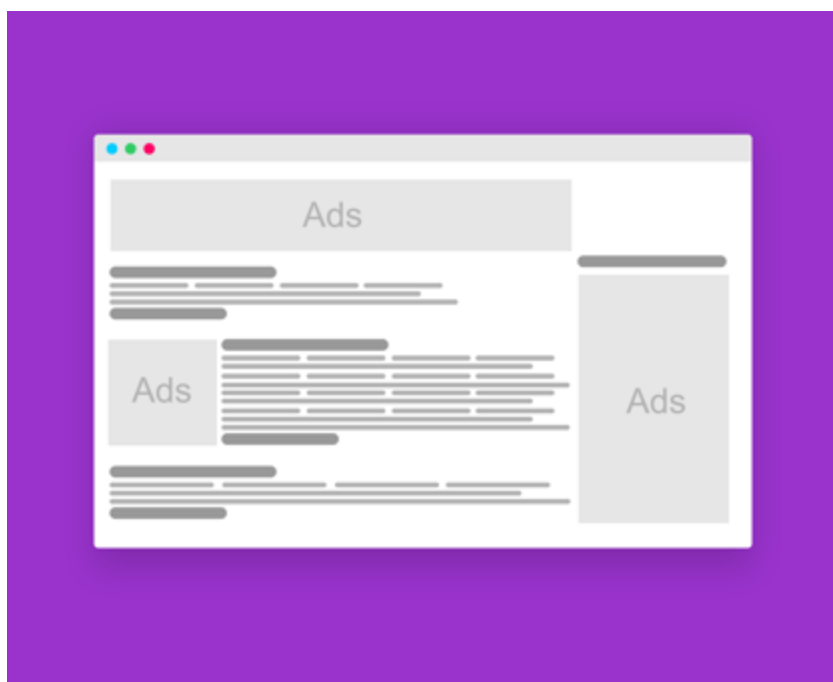
Why Google Ad Recommendations Don't Always Work for B2B Businesses

By Ava Champion, Content Specialist, Daniel Traicoff, Growth Specialist, and Lindsey Glorioso, Digital Marketer.

Google Ads can be a powerful lead generation tool for B2B businesses. In fact, as of February 2023, Google holds 93.37% of the search engine market share globally.¹ And since 49% of B2B buyers use Google's search engine during their buying journey, B2B businesses should take advantage of the tool's benefits.²

Google offers businesses running ads tips and recommendations for optimizing their advertising campaigns on the platform. However, there are a few crucial things B2B businesses need to consider before accepting those recommendations.

As a search engine, Google is not structured for B2B businesses. Most recommendations favor B2C, as the



consumer buyer journey is very different from a business's journey – mainly that B2B speaks to a buying committee rather than a singular person.

Google Ad recommendations are also not tailored to specific audiences or industries. B2B businesses using Google's recommendations might see an increase in conversions, but it is more difficult to distinguish if those form submissions result in qualified leads.

This is where integrating a CRM with Google Ads is beneficial. Several CRMs (like HubSpot) offer integration with Google Ads to bridge the gap between conversions and the quality of those conversions.

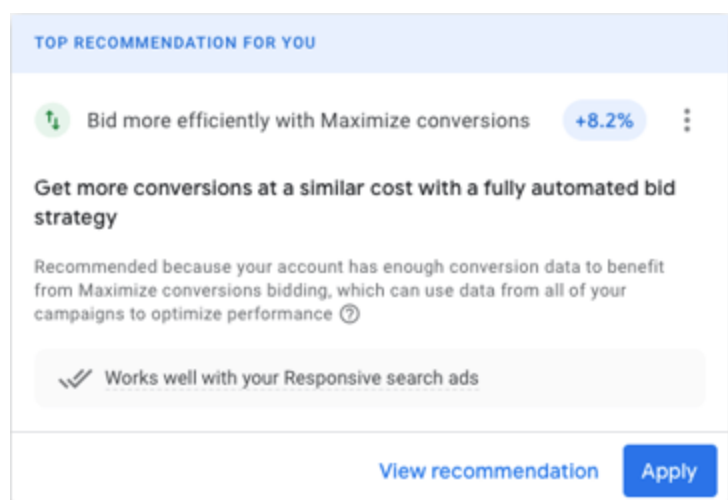
As a growth agency, we always examine how our marketing efforts affect lead generation and revenue. Our focus is on the quality of leads – not quantity. Google's recommendations are often designed to maximize the number of leads without concern for the quality of those leads.

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There are a few Google Ad recommendations we recommend not implementing immediately – and here's why.

[Learn how to create a B2B marketing strategy that drives results.](#)

Maximize Conversion Bidding



Google defines maximize conversion bidding strategy as:

“Bid more efficiently with Maximize conversions: Get more conversions at a similar cost with a fully automated bid strategy. Recommended because our simulations show your campaigns may benefit from Maximize conversions

bidding.”³

Max conversion bidding can be challenging to set up, and we do not recommend doing it as an introduction to PPC (pay-per-click). Additionally, conversion-based bidding requires accurate conversion tracking on Google Ads. If tracking is not set up and monitored, businesses can't use advertising budgets to their full potential.

This type of bidding strategy can be very successful if implemented correctly. If not - businesses will see increased costs without increased qualified lead generation. For B2B, max conversion works well when bidding on keywords that also have consumer-facing terms. However, if you are bidding on a term only used in your industry, a max clicks campaign may be more beneficial.

Since some B2B businesses operate in highly niche markets, keywords tend to be very focused and specific, and max conversion bidding will become expensive quickly. In this instance, we suggest our clients use max clicks.

Sending Lead Value Data Back to Google

Since our goal is to utilize Google ads to generate qualified leads, we want to teach the Google algorithm what qualified leads look like for B2B businesses to improve overall outcomes for all our clients.

HubSpot can send lead values to Google Ads based on their lifecycle stage (ex: MQL, SQL, and opportunity). By assigning higher values to leads who move down the funnel, Google Ads gains valuable information on the quality of leads.

By sending data back to Google, we can teach the platform who out of all the people who submitted a form is *actually* qualified.

The data takes a few months to process, but it improves the client campaigns. This data type works exceptionally well when implemented alongside a Conversion Bidding model.

Keywords: Broad, Exact, and Phrase Match

Google usually suggests using broad match keywords to reach audiences better. Broad match is the only keyword type that considers all of a searcher's search history rather than the single search, which makes phrase and exact match potentially more limiting.

Google defines broad match as:

“Add broad match keywords: Get more conversions at a similar or better ROI by adding broad match versions of your existing keywords. Recommended because

using broad match type keywords in these Smart bidding campaigns can help you effectively grow conversions within your performance targets.”⁴

Despite Google’s recommendation, we opt not to use broad match keywords. We have found that phrase match performs better since broad is often *too* broad for B2B campaigns and brings up too many unrelated results for highly targeted audiences.

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Broad matches bring in high school biology teachers when a business is trying to reach conference attendees from a B2B event. The goal for our clients is always specific, qualified leads – not as many leads as possible.

Increasing Optimization Score with Bidding

Google defines its optimization score as:

“Optimization score is an estimate of how well your Google Ads account is set to perform. Scores run from 0-100%, with 100% meaning that your account can perform at its full potential.”⁵

These scores are important to track, as they predict how well the campaign will perform based on Google’s massive dataset of previous campaigns and knowledge of common searches. For our clients, we shoot for at least an 85% score.

Google will offer recommendations to improve the score. When implementing these recommendations, the original bidding strategy setup will often be switched, such as max clicks to max conversions, which we do not recommend for most clients.

For some campaigns, these recommendations make sense. Google has even claimed to see advertisers who increase their account-level score by 10 points

gaining a median 14% increase in conversions.⁶ But it's important to note that the quality of these conversions isn't verified. Nor does this lift distinguish whether the advertisers were B2B or B2C.

Implementing optimization score recommendations requires specialization to understand the changes made and how they will affect the bidding strategy selected. We run plenty of client campaigns that maintain high optimization scores without applying the recommendations and keep the quality of conversions high.

Align With Specific Goals

At the end of the day, Google's recommendations are just that – recommendations.

Even Google acknowledges that its recommendations might not be suited to specific advertising goals. "You can review recommendation details and dismiss recommendations that do not align with your advertising goals."⁷

As a B2B growth marketing agency, we regularly wade through the recommendations given to our clients, considering that Google won't have the in-depth knowledge of our clients and goals as we will. Our digital marketers specialize in running optimal campaigns that draw in qualified leads that meet specific customer profiles.

Sources:

¹StatCounter, *Search Engine Market Share Worldwide*, February 2022

²Çakirca, Suay, *35 B2B Statistics and Trends in 2023*, UserGuiding Blog, March 23, 2022

³Google Ads Help, *Types of Recommendations*

⁴Google Ads Help, *Types of Recommendations*

⁵Google Ads Help, *About Optimization Score*

⁶Google Ads Help, *Find More Opportunities with Recommendations*, January 31, 2022

⁷Google Ads Help, *About Applying Recommendations Automatically*