

CHECKLIST · FOR OWNERS, NOT MARKETERS

# How to audit the agency running your *Google Ads*

Twelve checks you can run yourself in an afternoon to find out whether your agency is producing patients — or reports.

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BEFORE ANYTHING

# Own your accounts.

The Google Ads account, the Analytics property, the Tag Manager container and the Business Profile should be owned by *your business*, with the agency granted access.

If any of them sits inside the agency's own account and you have no admin rights, that is the first finding and it outranks everything else in this checklist. Your history, your conversion data and your remarketing audiences leave with them.

DO THIS TODAY

Ask for admin access **in writing**.

The response time and the tone of the reply are diagnostic. Reluctance to hand over rights to accounts you paid for is itself the finding.

# You do not need to understand Google Ads to run it.

You need access and a willingness to ask questions until the answers stop being vague. Each of the twelve checks is a specific question with a specific place to look.

Run it before you decide anything. An agency that fails these checks may still be worth keeping if they fix them; one that resists giving you the access is answering the question already.

- 01 What counts as a conversion?
- 02 How many conversions are modeled?
- 03 Do those conversions exist in your CRM?
- 04 What is the call conversion threshold?
- 05 What share of spend is brand?
- 06 How much goes to Performance Max?
- 07 When was the last search terms review?
- 08 What changed last month?
- 09 Who is doing the work?
- 10 What is the cost per closed customer?
- 11 Where does the reporting come from?
- 12 What would they cut first?

# 01<sub>/12</sub>

## What counts as a conversion?

### WHERE TO LOOK

Goals → Conversions

### WHAT TO CHECK

Read every conversion action and what triggers it. A “conversion” that fires on a page view or a 15-second call is not a lead – and the bidding algorithm is optimizing toward it anyway.

### WHY IT MATTERS

The whole account is steered by this list. If it is wrong, every other number is wrong too.

# 02<sub>/12</sub>

## How many conversions are modeled?

### WHERE TO LOOK

Compare “All conversions” to observed

### WHAT TO CHECK

A large modeled share means the CRM will never reconcile with the platform – and nobody should pretend otherwise.

### WHY IT MATTERS

Modeled conversions are estimates the platform credits to itself. Your intake team cannot call an estimate.

# 03<sub>/12</sub>

## Do those conversions exist in your CRM?

### WHERE TO LOOK

Last month's number vs. your intake records

### WHAT TO CHECK

Take last month's reported conversions and ask your intake team to find them by name, phone or date.

### WHY IT MATTERS

This single check finds more problems than the other eleven combined.

# 04<sub>/12</sub>

## What is the call conversion threshold?

### WHERE TO LOOK

Conversion action settings → call length

### WHAT TO CHECK

Usually 60 seconds. Wrong numbers, vendors and job-seekers clear that bar every day.

### WHY IT MATTERS

A 60-second call is a phone ringing, not a patient. Ask what share of counted calls became appointments.

# 05<sub>/12</sub>

## What share of spend is brand?

### WHERE TO LOOK

Filter campaigns containing your own name

### WHAT TO CHECK

Someone searching your clinic by name had already decided to contact you. The click that intercepts them gets recorded as an acquisition.

### WHY IT MATTERS

Ask what performance looks like with brand excluded – that is the real number for whether advertising creates demand or harvests it.

# 06<sub>/12</sub>

## How much goes to Performance Max?

### WHERE TO LOOK

Campaign list → PMax share of budget

### WHAT TO CHECK

Then open the asset group report and ask what it actually tells you about where the money went.

### WHY IT MATTERS

PMax absorbs brand queries and reports them as generic acquisition. Ask specifically whether brand exclusions are applied.

07 /12

## When was the last search terms review?

### WHERE TO LOOK

Ask for the negative keyword list, with dates

### WHAT TO CHECK

An empty or stale list means nobody is watching the money.

### WHY IT MATTERS

Search terms are where budget leaks in daily, small amounts. Nobody notices until it is a quarter.

# 08<sub>/12</sub>

## What changed last month?

### WHERE TO LOOK

Tools → Change history

### WHAT TO CHECK

If it is quiet, you are paying a retainer for a screensaver.

### WHY IT MATTERS

Six weeks of silence in change history is maintenance that is not happening.

# 09 /12

## Who is doing the work?

### WHERE TO LOOK

Ask for the name of the person in the account

### WHAT TO CHECK

Not the account manager – the person who logs in and makes changes. Ask how many other accounts they run.

### WHY IT MATTERS

A strategist you never meet and a junior on 40 accounts produce very different results at the same retainer.

# 10<sub>/12</sub>

## What is the cost per closed customer?

### WHERE TO LOOK

Not per lead – per admitted patient, signed client, closed sale

### WHAT TO CHECK

If they cannot answer, they are not measuring the thing you are buying.

### WHY IT MATTERS

A \$400 lead that closes at 30% beats a \$40 lead that closes at 1%. Cost per lead cannot tell you which one you have.

11 /12

# Where does the reporting come from?

## WHERE TO LOOK

Dashboard data sources

## WHAT TO CHECK

A dashboard that pulls only from Google Ads can never contradict Google Ads.

## WHY IT MATTERS

Reporting that includes CRM outcomes is the only kind that can tell you something the platform will not.

# 12<sub>/12</sub>

## What would they cut first?

### WHERE TO LOOK

Ask: if the budget dropped 30%, what dies?

### WHAT TO CHECK

Good answers are specific and slightly uncomfortable.

### WHY IT MATTERS

An agency that knows the account knows its weakest 30%. One that hesitates has never looked.

# Brand campaigns are not waste. Their attribution is.

Bidding on your own name defends against competitors and is cheap. The problem is what it gets credit for: a patient who searched your clinic by name had already decided to contact you.

Performance Max makes this harder by absorbing brand queries into a campaign that reports them as generic acquisition.

## TWO FOLLOW-UPS

1. What does performance look like with brand excluded?
2. What happened the last time brand was paused for a week? If nobody has ever tested it, nobody knows what it is worth.

# Not proof of bad faith – proof of decisions made without evidence.

WHAT YOU HEAR

WHAT IT USUALLY MEANS

|                                              |                                                                                                   |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| “You don’t need admin access, we handle it.” | Your account history is not yours. Fix this first.                                                |
| “CTR and impressions are way up.”            | The metrics that improved are the ones that do not pay staff.                                     |
| “The algorithm handles that now.”            | Sometimes true. Ask what signal it optimizes toward – if it is form fills, it is the wrong thing. |
| “We’d need a bigger budget to see results.”  | Reasonable only if they can show what the current budget produces per closed customer.            |
| “Your CRM data isn’t accurate.”              | Occasionally true, and also the standard deflection. Ask them to prove it with specific records.  |
| Change history shows nothing for six weeks   | You are paying for maintenance that is not happening.                                             |

# Fire nobody on the strength of a checklist.

Take the findings to a meeting and watch how they are handled.

An agency worth **keeping** will recognize most of these, explain the ones that are deliberate trade-offs, and commit to fixing the rest with dates.

An agency worth **replacing** will explain why cost per closed customer is the wrong thing to measure. That is the tell – resistance to being measured on the outcome you actually buy.

## EITHER WAY

Fix the measurement layer before you change anything else.

Switching agencies without closing the attribution loop just changes who is guessing.

RAN THE CHECKLIST AND WANT A SECOND OPINION?

# Thirty minutes. Bring what you found.

I'll tell you which findings are serious, which are normal, and what I would fix first. Direct with the owner — no account managers.

FULL ARTICLE [levbrovtsev.com/articles/how-to-audit-your-google-ads-agency/](https://levbrovtsev.com/articles/how-to-audit-your-google-ads-agency/)

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