GOOGLE DISPLAY

We first introduced the Google Display Network (GDN) in Chapter 1 when we outlined the Google Network. AdWords provides the ability to advertise on the Display Network, but ads on this network reach a different audience and the network's inner workings are very different from those of the Search Network. Because of these considerations, we have focused on the Search Network up to this point. This chapter covers the Display Network.

Understanding the Display Network

The Google Display Network is comprised of over a million content sites[1] – blogs, news sites, video, etc. The essential difference between the Search Network and the Display Network is that users on the Display Network aren't actively searching for your products. The Display Network offers a larger spectrum of ad formats including text, image, rich media, and video ads. Because Google has recently been putting more resources into this ad channel, there are a number of new targeting options and features.

When managed correctly, Display Network campaigns allow you to reach a much larger audience. They give you the ability to reach people much earlier in the sales process, those who aren't yet in the sales funnel. Combining this with campaigns that target visitors later in the sales cycle makes for a more powerful marketing effort.

Unlike Search Network campaigns, which are based entirely on keywords and search engine results, the Display Network campaign has several options for targeting your audience. Table 8-1 outlines the targeting options covered in this chapter. These options can be used separately or combined for more precise targeting.

Table 8-1: Options Available in the Display Network

➡Open table as spreadsheet

Targeting Technique	Targeting Method	How it Works
Remarketing	Audiences	Visitors to your site are tagged with a cookie and shown your ads as they browse the Display Network. Site content is irrelevant.
Contextual targeting	Keywords	Ads are matched to the content of Display Network sites based on keyword themes.
Managed placements	Hand-picked sites	Ads are shown on sites that you manually select.
Topics	Select topics from a list	Ads are shown on sites that contain content that matches topics you select.
Interest categories	Past browsing behavior	Ads are shown to visitors based their past browsing interests. Site content is irrelevant.
Display Campaign Optimizer	Target CPA	Placements and bids are automatically optimized based on historical data to maximize for conversions.

When creating campaigns on the Display Network, it's essential to separate these campaigns from campaigns on the Search Network. This allows you to organize your accounts and manage settings separately—and to track results better. As shown in Figure 8-1, when creating a new display campaign you can start by selecting the default setting for the "Display Network only (text ads)", "Display Network only (display ad builder)", or "Display Network only (remarketing)".
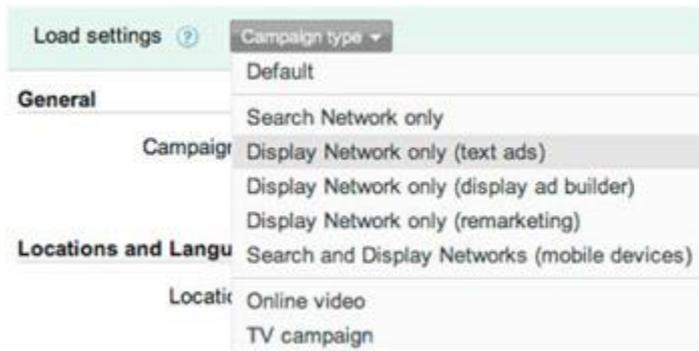
Larger View

Figure 8-1: Creating a display-only campaign

The other option is selecting Default and then changing the network settings, as shown in Figure 8-2.
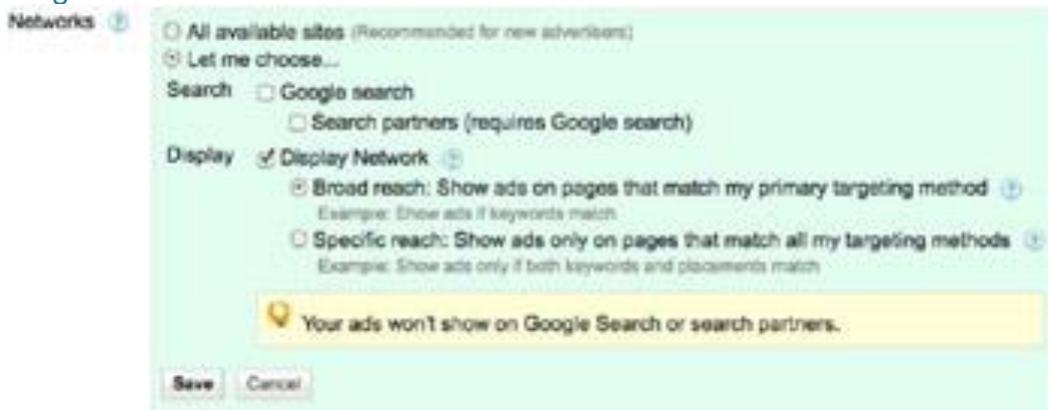
Larger View

Figure 8-2: Network campaign settings

As mentioned, Google is continuing to expand the range of targeting options on the Display Network. Take advantage of the various targeting methods available and stay on top of news from Google regarding the latest updates. In addition to creating separate campaigns for the Display Network, each targeting method should have a separate campaign.

- [1]Inside AdWords Blog, "Introducing the Display Network,"http://adwords.blogspot.com/2010/06/introducing-google-display-network.html
- Targeting Your Audience
- As the set of available targeting options increases, so does the potential audience. Let's start with what's generally the most successful: remarketing.
- Remarketing
- Remarketing allows you to target visitors that previously visited your website. As visitors browse your site's pages, Google tags them with a cookie. Later, as they browse other sites on the Display Network, Google presents your ads. Of the various targeting methods, remarketing tends to have the lowest cost-per-conversion and highest conversion rate. This is largely because you're targeting a well-qualified audience. However, the number of visitors to your site limits the reach of remarketing campaigns. In a sense, it's the low hanging fruit of the Display Network and results are closest to what you would see on the Search Network. If you're just dipping your toe in the Display Network pool, remarketing is a good place to start.

The How-To

Remarketing campaigns are organized using lists. In this context, a list is a subset of visitors to your site that you'd like to target. For example, a list could be visitors that abandoned their shopping cart or visitors that viewed a particular product page. Google generates a snippet of code for each list. These snippets are then placed on the corresponding page or pages of the site you're tracking for that list. This allows Google to assign a cookie value to each visitor to these pages. Google adds the cookie IDs to remarketing lists maintained within the AdWords system. Google claims that, on average, it can reach 84% of the visitors on a typical list[2].

The first step in setting up a remarketing effort is to create your list. To start a list, use the tree navigation frame on the left in the AdWords interface, as shown in Figure 8-3. Click Shared library ➤ Audiences.

Figure 8-3: Accessing Audiences via the tree navigation

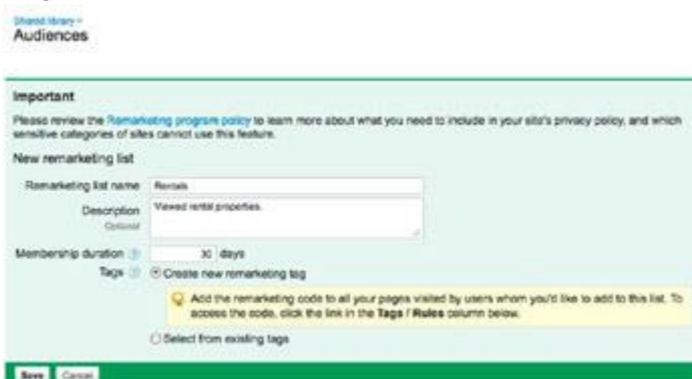Once on the Audiences page, go to New audience ➤ Remarketing list (Figure 8-4).

Figure 8-4: Starting a new audience

The next step is to define your audience (Figure 8-5).

Larger View

Figure 8-5: Creating a new remarketing list

Name your remarketing list and set the list membership duration. This is the amount of time a user's cookie stays on the list; the default setting is 30 days. If the user comes back to your site, AdWords resets the cookie for another membership duration period. Aligning your membership duration with the length of your sales cycle helps to reach potential customers in the consideration phase. The maximum membership duration is 540 days. Click the Save button and your new remarketing list will be displayed in the table (Figure 8-6). Notice that there are no users in the list. This number will grow once the tag is on your page or pages and effectively tagging users. Your remarketing ads will start displaying when this number reaches 100.

Larger View

Type	Name	Description	Open / Closed	Membership duration	Tags / Rules	Number of users
Remarketing	Series	Viewed tents properties	Open	30 days	Review (Tag)	-

Figure 8-6: Newly created audience

Repeat this process for all the audiences you'd like to tag. The custom combination feature allows you to track more complex behavior. For example, if you want to track visitors that started a shopping cart but didn't convert, you need to create two lists. The first tags visitors that created a shopping cart and the second tags visitors that converted. A custom list is created with Boolean strings. To complete this example, take the list of visitors that created a shopping cart and exclude visitors that converted. The segment left is visitors that didn't convert.

To obtain your tagging code snippet, click the name of your list and the generated code will be displayed in new window. Copy and paste this code into the HTML for the web page before the closing </body> tag near the top of the page you'd like to track. For further information on installing code and for help with complex web sites, follow the information provided via the Insertion Tips.

The next step is to create a campaign and associate the campaign with your newly created audience. Obviously, the campaign must be set to target the Display Network (Figure 8-2). The easiest way to do this is select the default option for Display Network only (remarketing) (see Figure 8-1). Choose the bidding method that matches your goals (Figure 8-7). Because you're reaching a well-qualified audience, you should bid higher than other forms of targeting on the Display Network.

Larger View

Figure 8-7: Bidding options

Next, create your first ad group. Because ads are associated with ad groups, name your ad groups to match the offer, theme, or the products represented by your ads, such as "Free Shipping" or "Ross Reels." You will be prompted to associate your previously created audiences with your ad group (Figure 8-8). You will also have the option of adding Topics, Keywords or Placements to further specify your audience. Click on Save and Continue.

Larger View

Figure 8-8: Associating an audience with an Ad Group

Lastly, you will be prompted to create you ads. You can create text ads, image ads, video ads or use the Display ad builder. Alternatively, you can skip ad creation and create your ads later.

Here are some ideas for creating remarketing lists:

Everyone who visits your site (highest volume but less information to base your ads on).

Visitors that don't convert.

Visitors that started a shopping cart and then abandoned it. Use remarketing to offer an incentive to return and complete the sale.

Customers (cross-sell, up-sell, or promote related products).

Sign-ups—these are well-qualified visitors, as they have already shown interest in your brand and offerings.

Those who have shown interest in certain products. You have the benefit of knowing what products they're interested in, allowing you to customize your creative for each product.

Use remarketing as an opportunity to advertise promotions. Turn on new campaigns to coincide with specials or new deals. Build lists of visitors and treat these lists like you would an e-mail marketing list. As with most components in paid advertising, test, test, test. Try various combinations to find your niche.

Before starting a complex retargeting campaign, it's good to consider the volume of visitors you will be tagging. Start with a simple campaign, like targeting all past visitors to your site. Users are added to a list as soon as they leave your site, which means they can be served an ad the next time they reach a site on the Display Network. In many cases, you will see the best results shortly after users have left your site. If you're seeing positive results, continue to tag visitors until you find it's no longer profitable.

Once your ads are running and you have data to review, use this opportunity to take greater control of where your ads will show. Check out the data in the Networks tab and exclude sites that are bad performers or eliminate categories that don't mesh well with your brand.

If you are worried about over-exposure, use the Frequency Capping option within the advanced setting in the campaign setting to limit the number of times a visitor sees your ad in a given period. We discuss this setting in more detail at the end of this chapter.

Contextual Targeting

With contextual targeting, also called automatic placements, Google uses a contextual algorithm to evaluate the keywords in an ad group and make placements based on the overall theme of the keyword group. Unlike the Search Network, it's okay to be general with your keywords. The algorithm works at the page level, not the site level, to place your ads as precisely as possible. The recommended number of keywords is around 20, and you should not go over 50 keywords. Keywords should be tightly themed and you can use multiple ad groups to reach multiple themes with varying ad content. As with search campaigns, you

should use negative keywords to further refine your theme. Other than negatives, however, match types don't matter.

⬚ The Contextual Targeting Tool

⬚ ⬚⬚Google provides a Contextual Targeting Tool accessible directly from the AdWords interface. To access the tool, go to Adwords ➤ Tools and Analysis ➤ Contextual Targeting Tool (Figure 8-9).
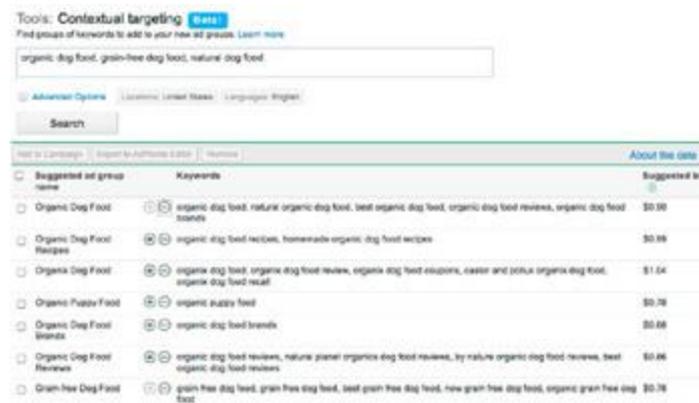

⬚⬚Figure 8-9: Accessing the Contextual Targeting Tool

⬚ ⬚⬚To use the tool, enter the keywords for your contextual campaign in the box at the top of the page (Figure 8-10). Google generates a list of suggested ad groups, including the suggested ad group name, keywords, and suggested bid. You can expand each ad group to see additional ad group ideas.

⬚ Larger View

⬚⬚Figure 8-10: The Contextual Targeting Tool

⬚ ⬚⬚To see a list of predicted sites (Figure 8-11), click the ⬚ symbol within the ad group line. The result is like a sneak peek into your future Automatic Placements report.

⬚ Larger View

Organic Dog Food

[Bid suggestion $0.90] ⑦

Predicted Placements ⑦	🗗 Expand all
⊞ catfoodreviews.com	
⊞ cats.about.com	
⊞ completedogfood.net	
⊞ dogfoodanalysis.com	
⊞ dogs.about.com	
⊞ mojosavings.com	
⊞ pedigreecoupon.com	
⊞ petcareeducation.com	
⊞ petfoodtalk.com	
⊞ recipes4gourmetdogs.com	

Figure 8-11: Predicted Placements report

Select the ad groups that you feel are a good match for your campaigns and edit the keywords as needed. From there you can add the ad groups directly to your AdWords account or export to the AdWords Editor. The AdWords Editor export feature provides an opportunity to view the data in a spreadsheet, make your edits, and then import back into the AdWords Editor. Note that the suggested bids are included as well, so be certain to change these as needed.

Managed Placements

With managed placements, you handpick the sites on which you'd like your ads to run. Look for sites with the sort of typical visitor profile that you would like to target.

Managed placement campaigns don't require keywords, since your ads will only run on sites you select. However, you can use keywords with managed placement to better match your ads to pages within a selected site. When you use both keywords and selected placements, you can tell Google how you'd prefer to match your ads (Figure 8-12).

Larger View

Networks ⑦
○ All available sites (Recommended for new advertisers)
◉ Let me choose...
Search ☐ Google search
☐ Search partners (requires Google search)
Display ☑ Display Network ⑦
◉ Broad reach: Show ads on pages that match my primary targeting method ⑦
Example: Show ads if keywords match
○ Specific reach: Show ads only on pages that match all my targeting methods ⑦
Example: Show ads only if both keywords and placements match

💡 Your ads won't show on Google Search or search partners.

Save   Cancel

Figure 8-12: Display Network options

If you choose Broad reach, your ads will show when either the keyword or the placement is a match. If both are a match, the bid from the placement is used because it's more specific.

If you choose Specific reach, your ads will only show if your keywords match the theme of the placement you selected. Again, the placement bid is used.

It's often good practice to run both a managed placements campaign and a contextual targeting campaign. The contextual targeting campaign allows you to cast a wider net and find those sites that are profitable for your business. You can then add these sites to the managed placements campaign and exclude them from the contextual campaign. This gives you more control over the bids on better performing sites. As an alternative to excluding a site, you can add it to managed placements and set the bids lower.

The Placement Tool

The Placement Tool can be used to find sites and pages across the Display Network that are matches for your site. There are two places within AdWords to access the Placement Tool. The first is via the Tools and Analysis menu in the main navigation tabs, as shown in Figure 8-13.
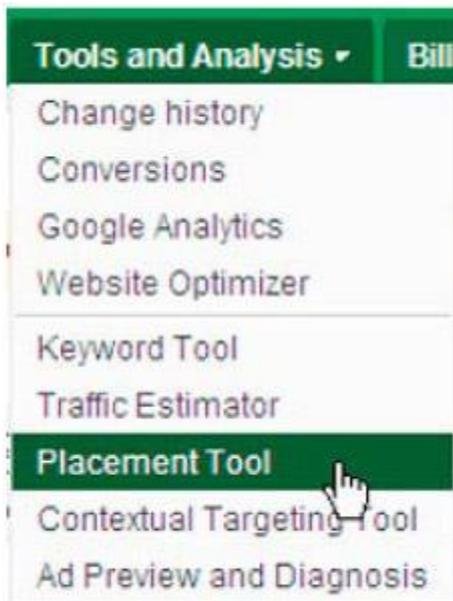
Figure 8-13: Accessing the Placement Tool from the Tool and Analysis menu

The second option is through the Networks tab: look under Display Network ➤ Managed placements ➤ show details (Figure 8-14).
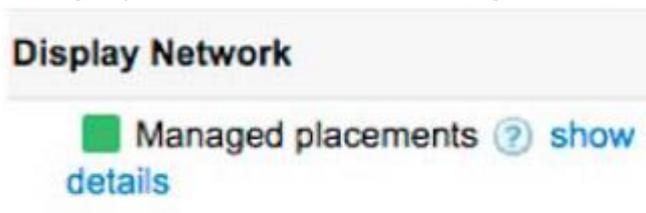

Figure 8-14: Accessing the Placement Tool from the Networks tab

From here click +Add placements ➤ Try the Placement Tool. Once the tool launches, search for placements by entering words or phrases to match your site. You can also start your search by entering the URL of your web site. To refine the results, use words or phrases from your web site. Clicking Search generates a results table. To filter your results, you can select from the options shown in Figure 8-15.
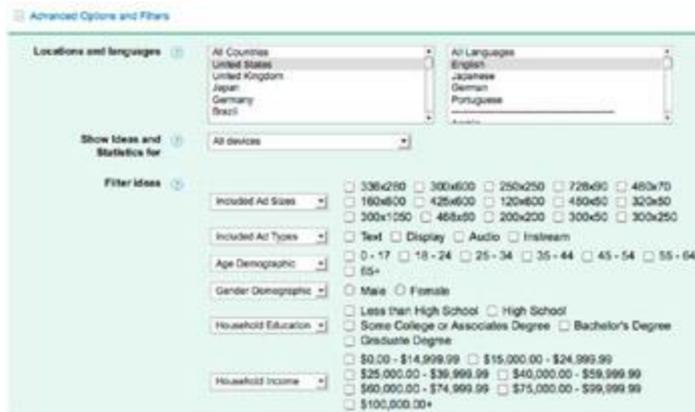
Larger View

Figure 8-15: Advanced filtering option in the Placement Tool

Note the options for finding sites based on demographic data (age, gender, education, and income). Use these selections (you can use up to three at once) as another means of more focused targeting of your audience.

In addition to filtering on the criteria shown in Figure 8-15, you can use Categories and Placement types to further refine your results. These options are found on the left of the screen. Figure 8-16 shows an example results table.

Larger View

Figure 8-16: Placement Tool results

To select placements, you can check the box next to placements you'd like to add to your ad group and then click +Add placement. The star functionality allows you to create an ongoing list of placements that is maintained through new searches (just like the Keyword Tool discussed in Chapter 6). AdWords maintains the list of starred placements between sessions and shows this list in the bottom right corner of the results table. You can download selected results or starred results, or perform a bulk download.

Doubleclick Ad Planner

Another tool for researching potential placements is the DoubleClick Ad Planner, which is a research and media planning tool that provides insights into demographic profiles of web sites. You can use this data to determine what web sites your potential audience is likely to visit. DoubleClick data is available directly in the Placement Tool. To see data on a site, simply click the magnifying glass next to the web site you'd like to research. You should see the following data:

Traffic statistics (Take a close look at Unique Visitors, Page Views, and Total Views.)

Daily unique visitors

Age

Education

Gender

Household income

Sites also visited (Hint: This is a great place to look for other sites to target.)

Audience interest

In addition to accessing the DoubleClick data in the Placement Tool, you can access the tool externally at www.google.com/adplanner. As you do your research in DoubleClick, your

results are saved as a media plan, which stores the lists of web sites where you'd like to advertise and aggregates results for all the web sites in the media plan. For more information on DoubleClick Ad Planner, access the help center from inside the tool.

Topic Targeting

With topic targeting, AdWords matches your ads to sites within the Display Network based on the topic categories you select. Usually this method of targeting reaches the largest audience, but it also tends to convert at a lower rate. There's no need to select placements or keywords, although you can use keywords and placements to refine where your ads will show. The list of possible topics consists of 1,750 topics and sub-topics. Target topics closely related to your business. It's best to start with low bids and monitor results to see that the placements you're seeing make sense. Although the list of topics is large, the categories are still broad.

The How-To

To start a campaign with topic targeting, create a new campaign set to target the Display Network. To configure your topics, you need to access the Topics tab. By default, this tab is not displayed, but you can add it by clicking on the pull-down at the end of the tabs and then clicking on the box next to Topics (Figure 8-17).

Larger View
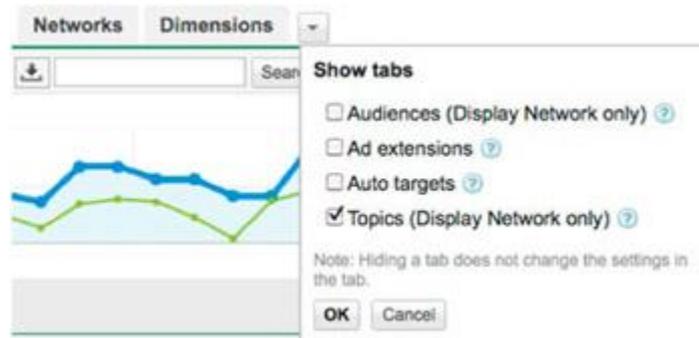
Figure 8-17: Adding a Topics tab

Click + Add topics and the list of available topics will appear (Figure 8-18). Expand the topics indicated with a + to see additional sub-topics.
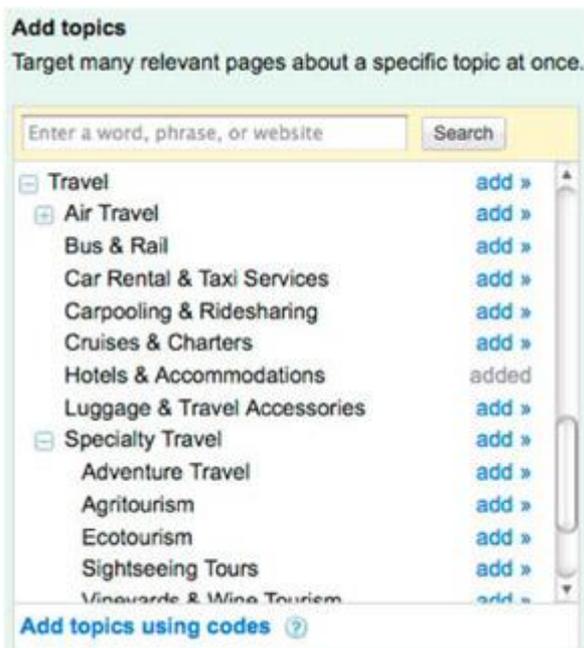
Larger View

Figure 8-18: Topic options

Selecting a top-level topic includes all the sub-topics by default or you can handpick the sub-topics. However, selecting all the sub-topics isn't the same as selecting the top-level topic, since there can be sites that fall under the higher-level topic that aren't included in any of the sub-topics.

In addition to adding topics, you can also exclude topics. For example, if you select Food & Drink as a topic, you can exclude Restaurants. This works in a fashion similar to negative keywords. The Exclusions option is located at the bottom of the page within the Topics tab (Figure 8-19). Exclusions can be set at the campaign or the ad group level.
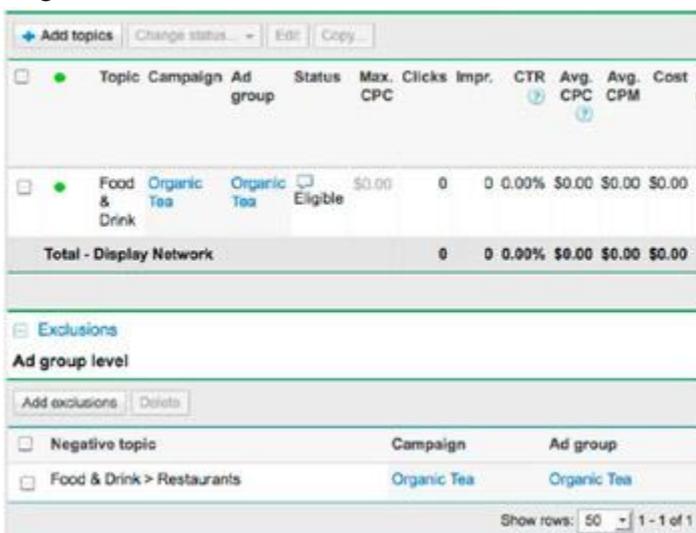
Larger View

Figure 8-19: Exclusion options

As mentioned at the start of this section, topic targeting alone reaches a broad audience. Consider using topic targeting in conjunction with other forms of targeting to better hone in on your audience.

- Placements + Topics: Find your niche within large sites. For example, you could target content related to travel within the New York Times web site. Additionally, you can exclude topics you know to be irrelevant to your business.
- Audiences (Remarketing or Placement selections based on demographics) + Topics: Limit the views of your ad (think reducing ad fatigue) by only showing your ads when previous visitors to your site are on sites with related topics.
- Keywords + Topics: Refine the reach of your keywords by adding topics to contextually targeted campaigns. Using keywords in conjunction with topics takes away the emphasis from particular keywords. Instead, Google treats the keywords as a theme. Do some of your keywords have multiple meanings? Highlight the correct meaning of your keywords by only displaying ads on sites with related topics.
- When using the previously mentioned combinations, make sure that your network settings are set to "Specific reach: Show ads only on pages that match all my targeting options" (see Figure 8-12.)
- Interest Categories (Behavioral)
- Another option for targeting involves the use of interest categories. This is also known as behavioral marketing. Google assigns interest categories to users based on the sites they visit as they browse the Display Network. You can then advertise to users with interests that match your business. Say, for example, that your business sells kitchenware. In a contextual campaign, your ads would shows on sites with content focusing on cooking. By setting up interest categories, your ad would show after the visitor has left the cooking-related sites and started browsing a new topic. Interest categories let you reach a cooking enthusiast on a wider range of sites. The sites your ads run on may or may not match your business, but your ads will follow users with the selected interests. This is in contrast to topic targeting, where the site displaying your ad matches your business.
- Users can see the data that Google has compiled about them at www.google.com/ads/preferences. It's interesting to check out what Google has for your interest profile. We found our profiles to be surprisingly accurate. While you're checking out what Google thinks about your interests, you can also opt out of interest-based targeting, manually remove categories not of interest, or add categories you feel should be included.
- The How-To
- To start a campaign based on user interests, create a new campaign strictly for this purpose. Create an ad group and associated ads. Next, select interests by navigating to the Audiences tab. (Again, the Audiences tab isn't shown by default.) Click +Add audiences. You will see the list of interest categories as well as the estimated number of global users in each category, as shown in Figure 8-20.
- Larger View

Figure 8-20: Targeting based on user interests

Click the + plus sign to expand a category to show its sub-categories. When getting started, it's best to target interest groups closely related to your products. Use the data generated by this first campaign to make decisions on additional sub-categories and/or additional interest categories. Consider using keywords in conjunction with interest categories to specialize your traffic further. You can easily combine interest categories with remarketing lists by using custom combinations. For example, you could combine a remarketing list that only includes visitors to your site that did not purchase with an interest category. This allows you to save your interest-based impressions for visitors that have not already made a purchase. Use the Custom combinations tab (upper right of Figure 8-20) to combine both interest categories and remarketing lists.

The Display Conversion Optimizer

The Display Conversion Optimizer (DCO) uses historical data to adjust bids to meet a target CPA. You provide the CPA goal and your daily budget, and the DCO starts by targeting sites that are contextually relevant based on signals from your web site. Use results from the first round of targeting to find additional sites to target, focusing on finding more conversions by automatically optimizing targeting and bidding options. As of this writing, the DCO is only available to a select group of advertisers. If you have a campaign that's eligible, you will see a link for "Automatic campaign optimization" within the Settings tab. Current requirements include 15 conversions per month with target CPA bidding enabled.

Targeting Options Summary

With all of the available options and combinations we've discussed up to now, we can certainly understand if your head is spinning. Years ago, setting up a Display Network campaign was an arcane art: click Save and cross your fingers. With the array of new options, many AdWords advertisers have a renewed interest in the Display Network. Taking the time to understand the various options on the Display Network will greatly increase your ability to reach customers while they browse the web. Refer back to Table 8-1 as you need to for a summary of the various marketing approaches available on the Display Network.

[2]Google Inside AdWords Blog, "Year in review: Remarketing delivers better ads, better performance," http://adwords.blogspot.com/2011/05/year-in-review-remarketing-delivers.html

Bidding Options

We covered bidding options in Chapter 2, but let's review them here. The bidding options on the Display Network include

- **Cost-per-click (CPC):** This is the best choice when controlling spending is a high priority, as you have more control over what you're spending per visit. CPC bidding is also helpful when you want to evaluate your cost per conversion at the ad group or placement level. Other circumstances for using CPC bidding are when running text ads or when your ads first start appearing on the Display Network. CPC bids can be set at the keyword, placement, or ad group level. You can also use automatic CPC bidding, which allows you to set a daily budget; Google sets the bid amount in an attempt to get to the most bids possible.

- **Cost-per-mille (CPM):** This is the better choice when looking for exposure and to increase brand awareness. You are charged each time your ad is displayed, regardless of whether the user clicks it. With CPM bidding, you set a maximum CPM bid. Note that CPC and CPM ads will compete with each other in the same auction. In this case, AdWords calculates an effective CPM (eCPM) for CPC ads. The bid, the click-through rate, and other ranking factors are considered across 1,000 impressions.[3]

- **Cost-per-acquisition (CPA):** CPA bidding is used in conjunction with the Conversion Optimizer. You set the amount you're willing to spend per conversion and Google manages the bid amount.

- **Enhanced CPC:** Enhanced CPC adjusts the max CPC based on the likelihood that your ad will convert in the current auction. In contrast to the Conversion Optimizer, Enhanced CPC bidding doesn't have conversion volume requirements and allows you to set maximum CPC versus maximum CPA. However, because Google isn't basing results on CPA, but only on historical conversion data, it's possible that you will see an increase in CPA. Google runs a split test with two groups: a control group (not managed by Enhanced CPC) and an experiment group. If positive results are seen, the size of the experiment group is increased.[4]. Overall, Enhanced CPC seems to work best on campaigns with a strong and consistent conversion history.

[3]Adwords Help, "How do CPC and CPM ads compete with each other?," http://support.google.com/adwords/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=113233

[4]"Google AdWords Enhanced CPC vs. Conversion Optimizer" – Search Engine Watch, August 20, 2010: http://searchenginewatch.com/article/2064650/Google-AdWords-Enhanced-CPC-vs.-Conversion-Optimizer

Display Ad Creative

Because most display campaigns target a different audience from search campaigns (i.e., users not actively searching for your products), you should design your ads with this in mind. Users on the Display Network aren't necessarily part of the buying funnel, with the exception of those included in some remarketing campaigns. When targeting a passive audience, you need a stronger call to action. Give users a reason to act quickly and take action sooner. Without a compelling reason to act quickly, they're likely to continue browsing without taking action. Image ads have the advantage of including buttons that clearly state a call to action. Research the sites where your ads are showing, see what the competition is doing, and make an effort to stand out.

Carefully consider the targeting method when determining the focus of your ads. Contextual targeting, managed placements, and topics campaigns are matching on keywords or placements that match your business and products. If you've selected the right placements, you will be able to make a connection between the content of the display site and your business and products. The more relevant your ad to the content of a site, the more likely you will see higher click-through rates. With interest-based targeting, you want to make the connection between your products/business and the interest category. Remarketing campaigns give you the advantage of understanding your audience. For example, if you're targeting an audience that viewed a

particular product, use that information to make your ad relevant. The lure of a special offer may persuade users who've abandoned a shopping cart to return to your site. When remarketing, use ads that match the look and feel of your web site to increase a viewer's recall of your site. To reduce ad fatigue, be certain to rotate your ads.

A good rule of thumb is to create separate ad groups for image ads and text ads. The performance of these ad groups will usually differ, enabling you to make better decisions on placements and bids.

Ad Types

Advertisers on the Display Network can choose from a variety of ad options, including text, image, rich media, and video. We recommend trying a variety of ad types to see what works best for your message. The following list provides a quick overview of the primary ad categories that appear on the Display Network:

- **Text ads:** Text ads on the Display Network follow a similar ad format to text ads on the Search Network, discussed in Chapter 7. Figure 8-21 shows an example of two text ads (designated by the arrows on the right). Text ads can also appear in videos and feeds within the Display Network (Figure 8-22). In general, using text ads on the Display Network isn't recommended, since they're not nearly as eye-catching as other ad formats in this context. However, around 25% of the sites within the GDN only accept text ads, so you can't always avoid this option.
- **Image ads:** These ads consist of an image and text, can be static or animated, and may include basic interactivity. Image ads must also meet Google's ad standards. You can create images to meet the ad specifications or you can create ads via the Display Ad Builder, as we will discuss shortly. In most cases, image ads see higher click-through rates than text ads, but overall click-through rate on the Display Network is lower than on the Search Network. Figure 8-23 shows an example image ad and Table 8-2 shows the sizes and specs for image ads. In general, 728 x 90 and 300 x 250 pixels are the most common image ad sizes. If you are looking to start small, creating ads for these sizes would reach the largest audience.
- **Expandable ads:** This category includes flash-animated ads that are interactive and expand when clicked.
- **Product Ads:** As with the Search Network, you can use a data feed from your Merchant Center to generate product-specific ads on the Display Network. The Contextual Dynamic Creative (CDC) Template (currently in beta), which is part of the Display Ad Builder, is a tool for creating ads for products from a Google Merchant Center feed. Prior to the creation of this tool, each product being advertised required a separate ad. If you want to advertise products from your Merchant Center on the Display Network, chances are good that this tool will become more widely available.

Larger View

Figure 8-21: Sample text ads on the Display Network

Larger View

Figure 8-22: Text ad embedded in video

Larger View

Figure 8-23: Sample image ad on the Display Network

Table 8-2: Techical Requirements for Image Ads (Sizes are in Pixels)
➡Open table as spreadsheet

Formats	.gif, animated .gif, .jpg, .swf, .png, and Flash
Image Ad sizes (IAB standards)	Banner: 468 x 60S quare: 250 x 250 Small square: 200 x 200 Leaderboard: 728 x 09 Medium rectangle: 300 x 250 Large rectangle: 336 x 280 Skyscaper: 120 x 600 Wide skyscraper: 160x 600
Expandable Ad sizes	120 x 600 468 x 60 728 x 90 300 x 250 160 x 600 336 x 280
File Size	No larger than 50k

Note	Promote your site with Google +1 by opting to include the +1 button on your Display ads. Access this feature from Campaign settings ➤ Advanced settings ➤ Social settings.

AdWords for Video

As of this writing, AdWords for video is still in beta after Google completely overhauled how video ad campaigns are created and managed within AdWords. Under this new approach, you upload your videos to your YouTube channel and then link your AdWords account to your YouTube account. Overall, the new process is simpler: once your videos are uploaded to YouTube, it only takes a few quick steps to integrate those videos into a display ad. Ads can contain both video and text. You can choose to target your ads strictly to YouTube or both YouTube and the Display

Network. If you choose the latter, you can select from the various targeting options for the Display Network just discussed.

Bids are set through a cost-per-view (CPV) model. The new ad formats are called "TrueView." This is meant to highlight that the advertisers only pay when the ad is viewed; charges are not accrued from impressions. The definition of a "view" varies depending on the type of ad. Ad types are listed below:

- **TrueView in-stream ads:** Ads play within YouTube videos or videos on the Display Network. Your ad can appear before, in the middle of, or after the video. Viewers have the option to skip the ad after 5 seconds of play. You are charged if the viewer watches the entire ad or for 30 seconds, whichever occurs first.

- **TrueView in-search ads (formerly YouTube Promoted Videos):** Ads are displayed above the search results on YouTube. This format allows you to promote YouTube videos. Google selects ads to display by matching the search query to the content of the video you are promoting in the ad. You are charged when your ad is watched.

- **TrueView in-slate ads:** These ads are run in conjunction with "longform" videos on YouTube or the Display Network, which are videos longer than 10 minutes. Viewers have the option of selecting one of three ads to watch before viewing the video or of watching commercial breaks during the play of the video. If your ad is selected, you are charged and your video is presented to the viewer.

- **TrueView in-display ads (formerly Click to Play):** Videos are promoted across the Display Network or on YouTube as display ad units. These ads are what you would typically think of if you wanted to use video as your format on the Display Network. You are charged when a users chooses to watch your video.

The How-To

To start a video campaign, go to Campaigns ➤ +New campaign ➤ Online video, as shown in Figure 8-24.
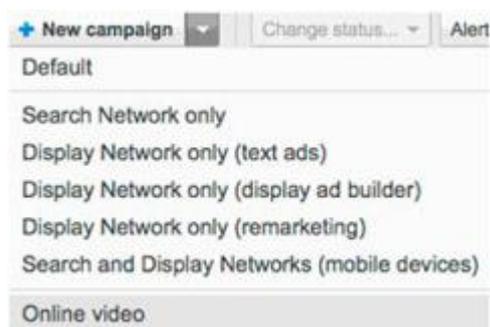Larger View

Figure 8-24: Starting a new video campaign

The next screen walks you through the selection of your campaign settings. The process and the options are similar to selecting settings for typical campaigns. First, name your campaign, set a budget, and select your locations and languages (Figure 8-25).
Larger View

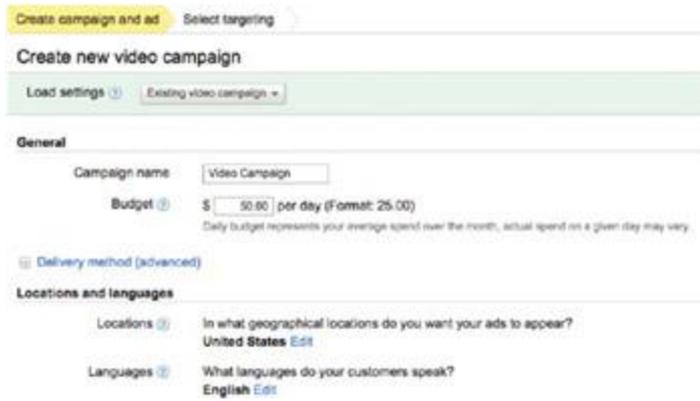**Figure 8-25:** Campaign settings in a new video campaign

Next, to create your ad, click the Select video button, as shown in Figure 8-26.
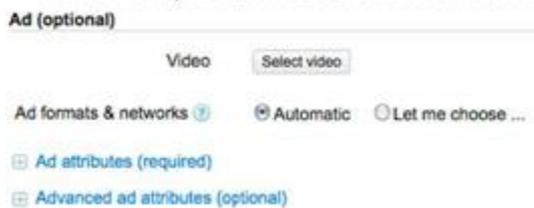Larger View

Figure 8-26: Selecting the video

The resulting pop-up prompts you to link your YouTube channel to your campaign and the videos in your channel will be displayed (Figure 8-27). You can also select videos by entering the YouTube URL of the video (top left in the figure).
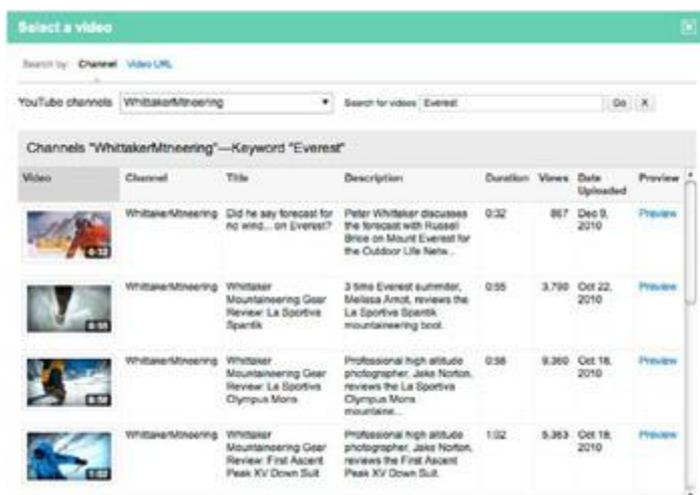Larger View

Figure 8-27: Selecting a video from your YouTube channel

After selecting your video, create the actual ad (Figure 8-28).
Larger View
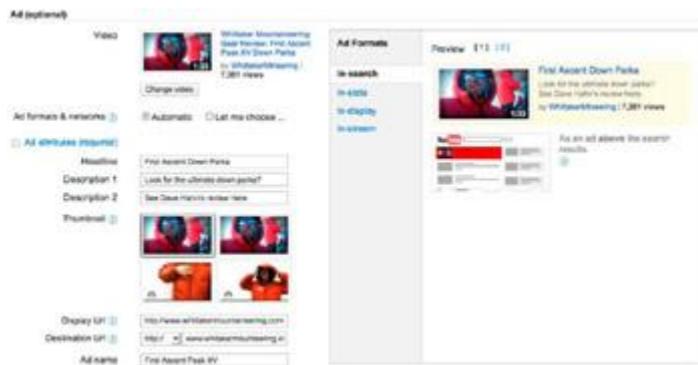
Figure 8-28: Creating a video ad

Choose the format and network. The Automatic option shows your ad on all available networks. Selecting "Let me choose" lets you mix and match the formats and networks of interest (the various formats were outlined at the start of this section). Figure 8-29 shows the options for networks and the corresponding formats.
Larger View
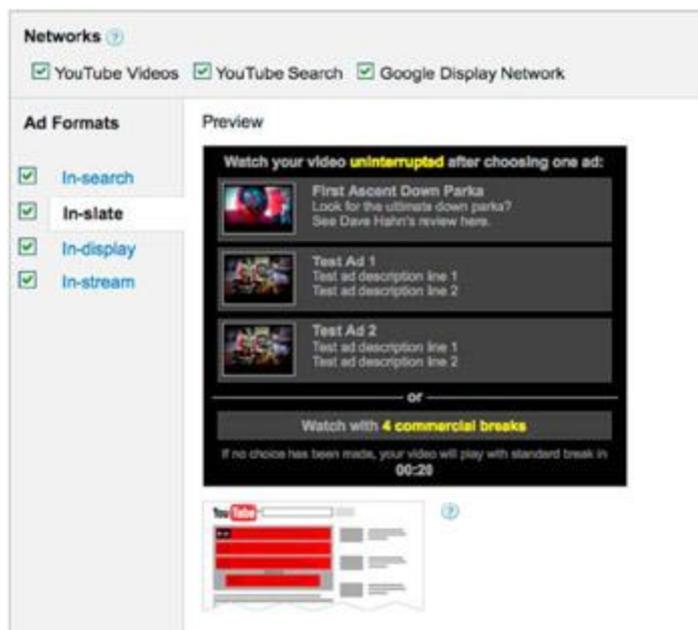
Figure 8-29: Selecting networks and ad formats

The following list gives a brief description for the network options:

- **YouTube Videos:** In-display, in-stream, and/or in-slate videos. Videos on YouTube Watch and channel pages. (A YouTube Watch page is simply the page where the video is viewed.)

- **Google Display Network:** In-display, in-stream, and/or in-slate videos. Ads appear on the GDN or YouTube.

- **YouTube Search:** In-search videos. YouTube search results and Google video search.

If you're setting up your first video campaign, we recommend selecting automatic (Figure 8-28, under "Ad formats & networks"). The AdWords for video interface provides a wealth of data to help you further refine your sections as your campaign matures.

The Advanced ad attributes contain some additional options, depending on your selected ad formats (Figure 8-30).
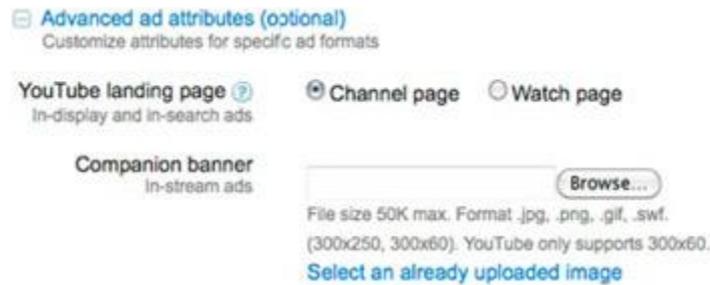Larger View

Figure 8-30: Setting advanced ad attributes

In-search and in-display ads can take viewers to your YouTube Watch page or your YouTube channel. Click "Save and continue."

The next screen walks you through your targeting options. Targeting is configured through the use of targeting groups. Set your bids by targeting group. The maximum CPV entered is similar to your ad group default bid. You can set one bid for all ad formats, or you can set a separate bid for each ad format (Figure 8-31).
Larger View
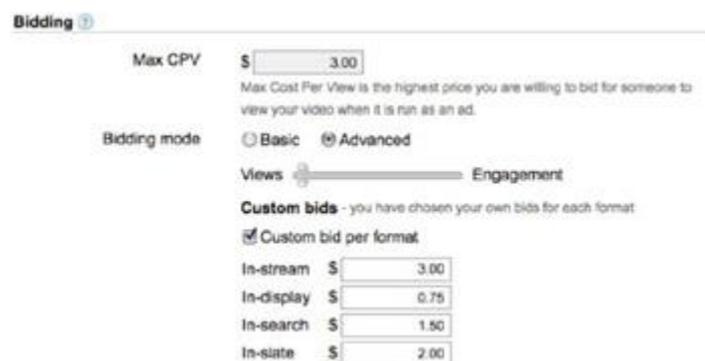
Figure 8-31: Setting bids for video campaigns

If you leave the "Custom bid per format" box unchecked, move the Views/Engagement slider-bar to set the bidding to emphasize views over engagement or vice versa. This will adjust the bid amounts among the four formats to emphasize or de-emphasize views vs. engagement according to your setting.

Next, select your targeting options for this target group. Here are the options for targeting:

▪ **YouTube search:** This option is analogous to running text ads on Google.com. You select keywords that match the theme of your video. Visitors searching in YouTube will see your ad above the YouTube results when their search matches your keywords.

▪ **YouTube Videos + Google Display Network:** Figure 8-32 shows the list of targeting options.
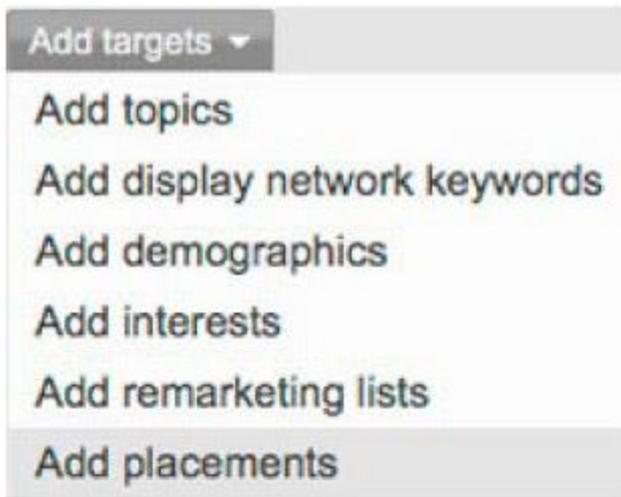
Figure 8-32: Targeting options for video campaigns

As you can see, these are the same targeting methods we just reviewed.

- **Topics:** As with regular display campaigns, topic targeting allows you to choose a group of placements based on the topic of these sites.
- **Display Network keywords:** Much like contextual targeting in display campaigns, your video is matched to sites based on keyword themes.
- **Demographics:** Do you want to target a specific gender and/or age group? Select from the options shown in Figure 8-33.
- **Topics:** As with regular display campaigns, topic targeting allows you to choose a group of placements based on the topic of these sites.
- **Display Network keywords:** Much like contextual targeting in display campaigns, your video is matched to sites based on keyword themes.
- **Demographics:** Do you want to target a specific gender and/or age group? Select from the options shown in Figure 8-33.
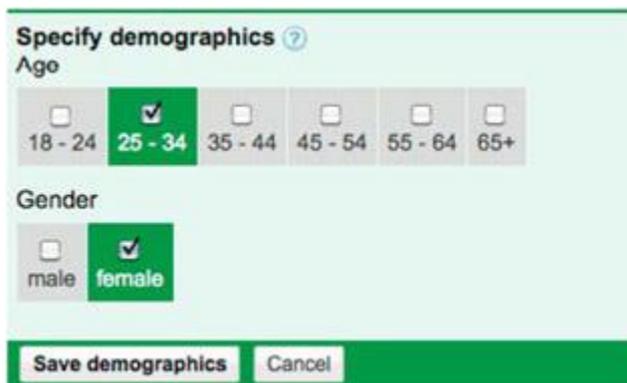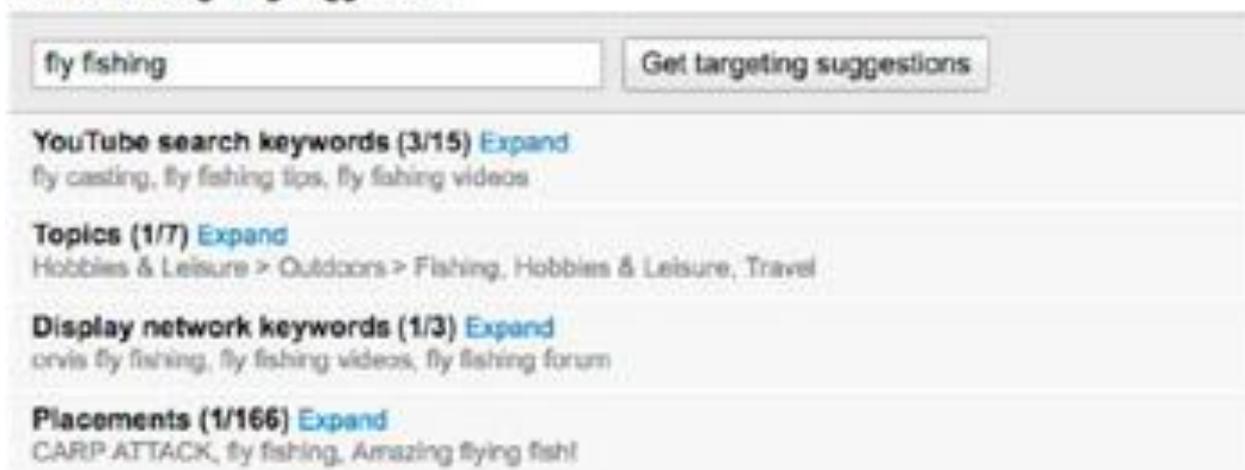 Larger View

Figure 8-33: Demographic options for targeting video campaigns

For targeting suggestions, Google provides a Targeting Suggestion Tool (Figure 8-34).
Larger View

Figure 8-34: Targeting suggestion tool

You can mix and match targeting options to create a variety of targeting groups.

One of the benefits of the AdWords for video interface is the amount of data available. You can see where your videos were watched and for how long. For example, you can see if your video was played to 25%, 50%, 75%, or 100%. In addition, you can easily segment data to see results by network, format, ad, and campaign. Data is available at the ad, video, and target level.

Although this ad format is still new, we see a lot of promise in AdWords for video. YouTube is currently the number two search engine (after Google.com) and AdWords for video opens up a ton of new ad inventory. Use well-crafted video ads to engage with your potential customers on a new level. Keep in mind that with in-stream ads, the first five seconds will determine whether a user continues to watch. This is also five seconds to get your brand in front of users who aren't going to take the time to watch the entire video. Make those seconds count!

Display Ad Builder

To help advertisers quickly create image, rich media, and interactive ads, the AdWords interface includes the Display Ad Builder. To launch the Display Ad Builder, click the Ads tab within the ad group that you'd like to create an ad for, then +New Ad, and select the "Display ad builder" option.

Once the tool launches, you will see a variety of ad templates. The default sample ads are the featured ads, which are ads recently added, high performing ads, frequently used ads, or ads relevant to upcoming holidays. As you browse through these, you can star ads to save them for consideration. There are multiple ways to search the templates. You can select the Show all option and then use the Sort by function to select either the newest, most popular, or highest click-through ads. You can also sort by theme, as shown in Figure 8-35.

Figure 8-35: Display Ad Builder themed templates

Each ad template has a version for each of the standard display ad sizes. To see what a particular ad looks like in each size, hover over the ad and click the link for Preview sizes. A pop-up will display the variously sized layouts (Figure 8-36).
Larger View

Figure 8-36: Preview of various ad sizes with the Display Ad Builder

Once you've selected a template you want to use, click that format and the tool will take you to a screen that walks you through building your ad. The tool uses the information you enter to build your ad. The prompts will vary according to the ad's layout. As you build the components of the ad, the tool displays a preview on the right of the screen. Once you've built your ad, click "See all sizes" to review the ad in the various sizes. Click the checkboxes next to the desired ad sizes (Figure 8-37).
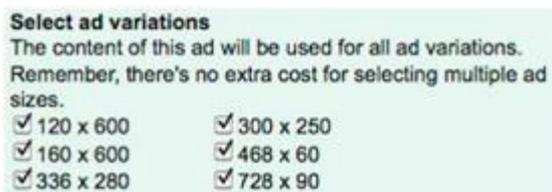Larger View

Figure 8-37: Selecting ad sizes in the Display Ad Builder

Click Next. You get one more chance to review the various ad sizes. All sizes are selected by default. If you aren't interested in using a particular ad size, uncheck the box next to that ad. Click the Save ad button and the tool will list your newly created ads in the table within the Ads tab.

The Display Ad Builder is a good way to quickly generate image ads for use on the Display Network. Use this tool to test various ads and messaging and enhance the more successful ads with professional help from a graphic designer or ad agency.

Creating Video Ads

You can also use the Display Ad Builder to create a video ad from an existing video. To get started, go to Display ad builder ➤ Media and channels ➤ Video, as shown in Figure 8-38.

Figure 8-38: Creating video ads

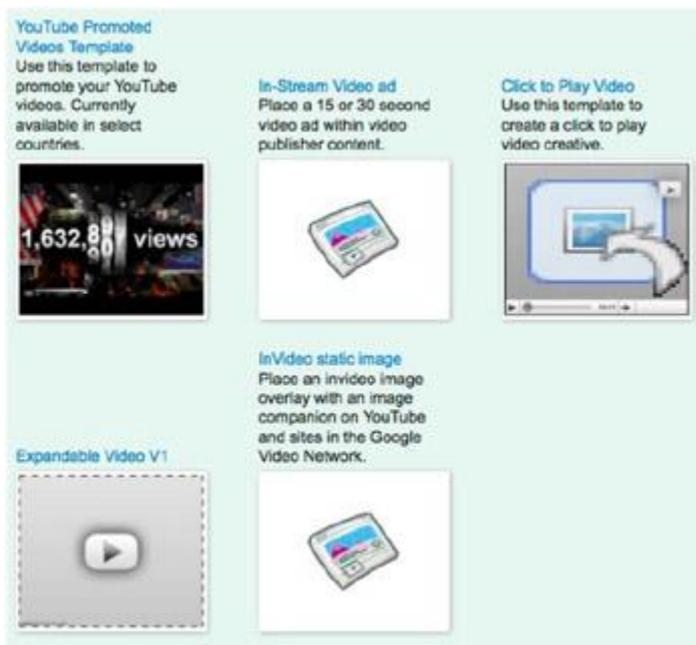Figure 8-39 shows the various options for video ads.
Larger View

Figure 8-39: Video ad creation options

Select the type of video ad you want to create and follow the prompts to complete the details of your ad. You can use a previously used video, a YouTube video, or create an ad with SpotMixer (`www.spotmixer.com`). The latter is an online service Google has partnered with to enable advertisers to create their own videos and TV commercials (Figure 8-40).
Larger View

Figure 8-40: Setting up a video ad on SpotMixer

Content Ads Diagnostic Tool

To see if your ads are appearing on the Display Network, you can use the Content Ads Diagnostic Tool.[5]. This tool provides information on your ads' visibility on a URL basis. Much like the Ads Diagnosis Tool for the search ads, you see the data for a URL by hovering over the speech bubble next to the URL. You can see if your ads are running on that site and if not, why not. There are two places to access this tool in AdWords.

The first way to access the tool is on the Adwords ➤ Campaigns ➤ Networks tab. Click on Show details for Managed placements under the Display Network heading. Click "Show details" and look at the status column. (Be sure you have clicked All online campaigns in the left navigation frame.) The left column shows the domain for each placement. Hovering your cursor over the speech bubble in the Status column for a placement will tell you the status of the placement, and whether your ads are running for that placement.

The second location is via the Topics tab, which shows the status for URLs that are part of a Topics campaign. (If the Topics tab is not showing under the Campaigns section, see "The How To" under the Topic Targeting section earlier in this chapter.)

[5]"Evaluating ad performance on the Display Network" – Adwords Help: http://support.google.com/adwords/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=2404178

Success on the Display Network

Before starting a campaign on the Display Network, as with all your marketing campaigns, you should think about what you want to accomplish with your Display Network campaign. The Display Network is a great place to go when looking to expand the number of people entering the sales funnel and to increase the reach of your brand. However, it does come at an additional cost, so make sure it makes sense in terms of the marketing ROI for your business.

When judging success, remember that the Display Network behaves much differently than the Search Network. Success on the Display Network requires careful testing and optimization. There are several places to define your goals on the Display Network. Here are a few pointers for measuring success on the Display Network.

- **Use multi-channel tracking:** This is a new feature in Google Analytics that gives you the ability to track visitors at various touch points along the conversion path. Display advertising often increases conversions. We take a closer look at multi-channel tracking when we discuss Google Analytics in Chapter 11.

- **Track conversions:** The GDN increases your number of ad impressions, so expect to see a decreased CTR and a lower conversion rate than on the Search Network. Note that this is by no means a rationale for letting your CPA goals slip.

- **Decide on a bidding model:** When bidding on a CPC model, use descriptive ads to help weed out unqualified traffic.

- **Increase brand awareness:** One way of understanding how to increase brand awareness is by tracking your branded searches in Google Analytics. This is covered in Chapter 11.

Tracking and Optimizing on the Display Network

As Google continues to expand the Display Network, it also continues to create tools to help you understand the performance of your campaigns. This section talks about some tools that can help you evaluate and improve your results on the Display Network.

The Placements Report

The Placements Report tells you how your ads are performing on sites across the network. With all the improvements in reporting that have become available over the years, it's interesting to think that there was a time when even this data was not available. To access the Placements Reports, go to the Networks tab. The data table displays information for both the Search and Display networks. To see data for either your managed or automatic placements, click Show details. Figure 8-41 shows a sample line item from the report.
Larger View

Figure 8-41: A view of the Placements Report

As you can see from Figure 8-41, the Placements Report provides data on clicks, impressions, click-through rate, cost per click, cost, and conversions at the site level. To see the exact URLs, click the See URL list drop-down. Much like the Search Query Report, the URL List Report provides greater granularity into the exact URL query. Look for well-performing sites that can be added to a managed placement campaign; then optimize your bids on these well-performing sites. (However, keep an eye on sites you've added to your managed placements. In some

cases, CPA can increase with managed placements.) In addition, be certain to exclude sites that aren't performing well. To exclude a site, select the placement and then click the Exclude placements button. Only exclude pages within a placement by viewing the URL list and performing the same exclusion process. Also, look for themes in placements to see where you might want to break out your keywords more.

Another place to see placements data is on the Dimensions tab by selecting "View: Automatic placements" (Figure 8-42).
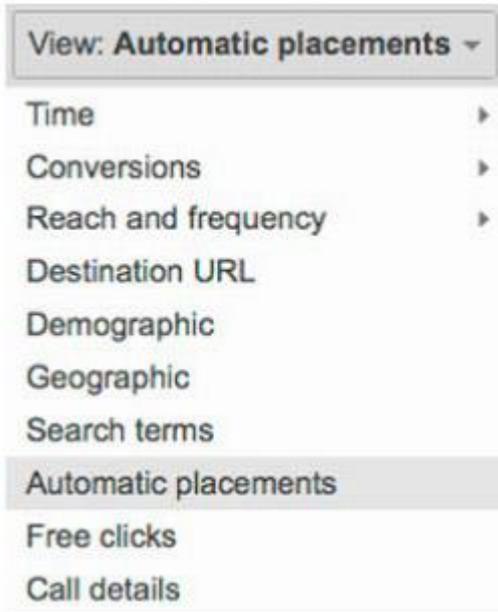
Figure 8-42: Viewing automatic placements from the Dimensions tab

From here, you can see the exact URLs at the ad group or the campaign level. The Dimensions Report allows you to customize the columns.

Placements Data in Google Analytics
Another opportunity for viewing placements data is in Google Analytics. To access the Placements Report in GA, in the left navigation frame go to Advertising ➤ AdWords ➤ Placements (Figure 8-43).
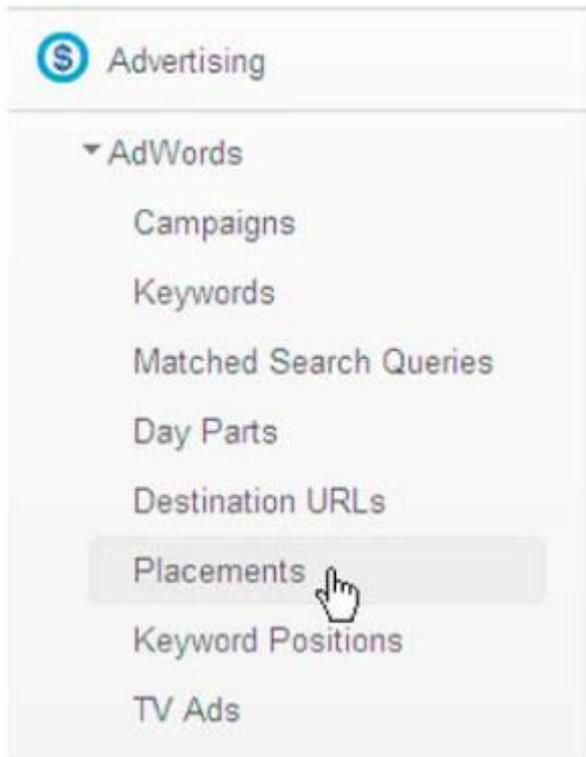
Figure 8-43: Selecting the Placements Report in Google Analytics

One advantage of viewing data in Google Analytics is the insight it provides into on-site data and user engagement with your site. What did visitors do once they arrived? Did they stay and check things out, or did they take one look at your site and run the other way? Google Analytics provides data to answer these kinds of questions at both the domain and URL level (Figure 8-44).

Larger View

Figure 8-44: Placement domain and URL data is available in Google Analytics.

Another option is to use placement URLs and placement domains as secondary dimensions in a variety of other reports, such as the Day Parts Report (Figure 8-45)

Larger View
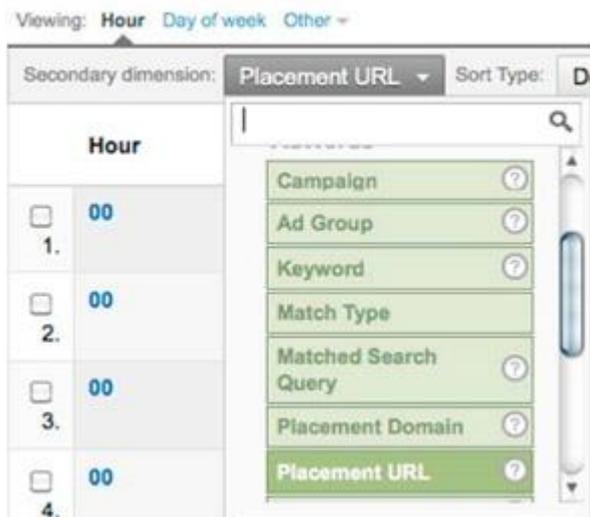
Figure 8-45: Day Parts Report in Google Analytics

You can set placement domain and placement URL as secondary dimensions in the following reports: Keyword, Matched Search Query, Day Parts, Destination URLs, and Keyword Positions. We will talk more about the reports available in Google Analytics in Chapter 11.

Excluding Placements by Site or Category

There are often reasons to exclude placements on certain sites or in certain categories of sites. You may find that some sites (domains) don't perform well in terms of the CTR for you display ads. Certain categories of sites may not work well for your brand. You can exclude specific sites or categories either at the ad group level or at the campaign level. You can also create exclusion lists that can be shared across multiple ad groups or campaigns.

To navigate to the area where you can define and manage exclusions and exclusion lists, go to Adwords ➤ Campaigns ➤ Networks. Click on All online campaigns in the left navigation frame if you want to define exclusions across all or a number of campaigns. Expand the Exclusions link in the lower left of the page by clicking on the + sign (Figure 8-46).
Larger View

Figure 8-46: Opening exclusion lists in the Networks tab

This will expand the exclusion lists for both ad groups and campaigns. Figure 8-47 shows the top few exclusions for ad groups and campaigns. Click on the Add exclusions drop-down for the Campaign level list, and select Exclude category.
Larger View

Figure 8-47: Selecting the Exclude Category in the Add exclusions drop-down

This will bring up the Category exclusion dialogue box (Figure 8-47). Click on the Choose button to select a campaign.
Larger View
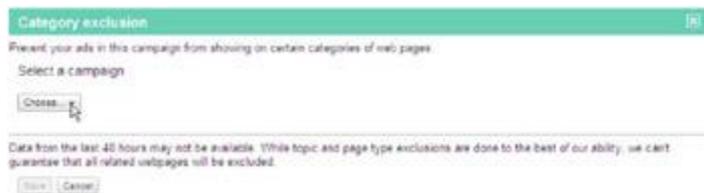
Figure 8-48: Selecting a campaign for setting up exclusions

Choose which campaign you want to manage, and a list of exclusion categories will be presented. Figure 8-49 shows the top few entries in this list. As of this writing, the full list included 23 categories. The list includes a range of data for the campaign in each category to help you
Larger View

Figure 8-49: Selecting exclusion categories for a campaign

Use this data—paying close attention to the two cost-per-conversion columns—to help you decide which categories are not cost-effective, or are otherwise not meeting your goals. To exclude a category, simply click the checkbox to the left of the Category name, as shown in the figure. Once you've selected the categories to exclude, click the Save button at the bottom of the list.

This is also your opportunity to see how your ads are performing on parked domains and error pages. If you are paying on a CPM model, use the category exclusions facility to exclude your ads from showing below the fold.

Unseen Impression Filter

This one is more of an FYI, rather than a report that you can set up and run. Basically, if your ad is displayed below the fold, the likelihood of someone seeing your ad is low. The Unseen Impression Filter ensures advertisers aren't charged when Google predicts that a user will not scroll to see your ad. In other words, you won't be charged for ads with a "low probability of being seen." This feature is set up automatically and requires no action on your part[6].

Frequency Capping

If you're concerned your customers may grow weary of seeing your ads as they browse the web, you can use frequency capping to limit the number of ads served to an individual user per day, per week, or per month. To turn on this functionality, navigate to Advanced settings under Campaign settings (Figure 8-50). Select the campaign you want to set a frequency cap for in the left navigation frame. You can apply the setting at the ad, ad group, or campaign level[7].
Larger View
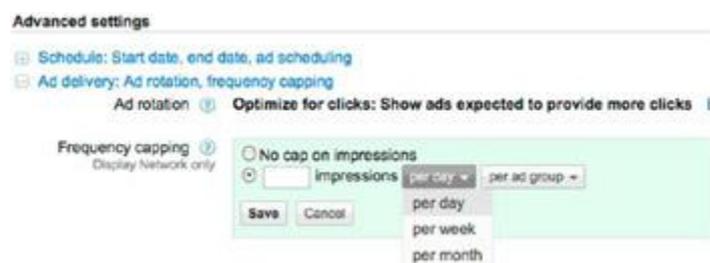
Figure 8-50: Frequency capping settings

Relative CTR

The relative CTR metric compares your CTR to those of other ads running on the same placements across the network. To see this metric you can customize the columns at the campaign or ad group level of the account. The following equation is used to determine relative CTR:

Larger View

```
Relative CTR = (Your CTR)/(CTR of all Advertisers on the same
placements)
```

Relative CTR is an indication of how well your ad content is resonating with your audience on the Display Network and it gives you an indication of your quality score. A relative CTR of 1 means your CTR is the same as the overall average for the same placements. A relative CTR lower than 1 tells you that your competitors are outperforming you. This is a good starting point for testing alternative ad creatives to see if you can improve your CTR.

In addition, make sure your placements are relevant. You can also take a closer look at your CPA. If you're meeting your CPA goals, look at how you can improve on placements. If you have a good CPA but low relative CTR, this is a sign you're on the right placements but may be missing some opportunities.

[6]"Google Display Network introduces new performance bundle" Google Inside Adwords Blog, June 14, 2011. http://adwords.blogspot.com/2011/06/today-innovations-in-targeting.html

[7]See the section titled "Setting a frequency cap on impressions for your Display Network ads" in"Choose an ad delivery method," Adwords Help Center - http://support.google.com/adwords/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=2404248&from=117579&rd=1

Summary

The Display Network is your opportunity to reach potential customers that are browsing sites within Google's Display Network, rather than searching on a search term. Take the time to understand the various targeting options and then be creative! Not only can you use each method described in this chapter to reach customers in a new fashion, but you can combine various methods to refine your targeting. Targeting options include the following:

- **Remarketing:** Visitors to pages within your site are cookied and shown your ads while browsing on the Display Network.

- **Contextual Targeting:** Display sites are matched on the theme of your keywords.

- **Managed Placements:** Display sites are selected individually.

- **Topics:** Your ads are shown on sites that are matched to a topic or excluded from showing on sites related to particular topics.

- **Interest Categories:** Ads are matched to visitors' browsing interests. The content of the site is irrelevant.

- **Display Campaign Optimizer:** Display sites and bidding are automatically optimized.

Because the Display Network doesn't reach an audience that is actively searching, it's important to position your bids and ad creative with this in mind. Image and video ads are useful for making your ads stand out. Use the data available in both the AdWords interface and Google Analytics to fine-tune your display campaigns.

Advertising on the Display Network requires separate strategies and goals. Another rapidly expanding ad channel within AdWords that has its unique characteristics is mobile advertising. In the next chapter, we will explore this area of paid search and its unique opportunities.

Creating Ads and Landing Pages

Overview

Selecting the best keywords for your campaign is only the first step. Getting users to click your ad and convert are the essential next steps. Finding the right message that attracts the attention of your audience is an important piece of a successful campaign, as is addressing your audience's questions and needs with well-crafted landing pages.

The search intent of a user is generally categorized as navigational, informational, or transactional. We are primarily interested in the transactional category here, since advertisers are promoting products or services. The average amount of time the user spends looking at a search results page is different for each category. One study showed that searchers looked at a

search results page an average of 10.3 seconds, and that they viewed a single result an average of 1.3 seconds. This is not much time to convince a user to click your ad.

In this chapter, we will discuss writing ads for the Search Network. Before we go into the strategy for writing compelling ad text, though, let's have a look at Google's editorial and legal frameworks.

Writing Compelling Ad Text

Now that you understand the landscape, it's time for the fun part: writing compelling ad text. Creating an effective message, given the constraints and guidelines covered in the previous section, is truly an art. Don't be concerned if it sounds like a daunting task. Although writing effective ad text isn't easy, practice and testing will constantly improve your ad writing skills. Depending on your goals and where searchers are in the buying cycle, there are several paths for developing your message. In this section, we will discuss how to develop some strategies and how to focus these strategies in a way that addresses your goals.

As a general rule of thumb, be concise but thorough. Always keep your potential customer in mind when creating your ads: what is important to them and what will strike a chord with your audience? Well-crafted ads that resonate with your users will lead to higher click-through rates, and higher click-through rates will lead to better quality scores. The goal is to get clicks, but clicks from the users that are potential clients. Your ad text needs to attract the right clicks—those that will convert for you.

Call to Action

If your primary goal is to drive conversions, it's important to include a "call to action" in your ad, telling the users exactly what you want them to do. Some examples of call to action phrases include:

Buy here

Call today

Get a quote

Subscribe

Download

Obviously, the action you want them to take should be clear on your landing page. Think about incentive-based words that help the user to think ACTION, such as "guaranteed" and "save." Another way to encourage an action is to include expiration dates in ads.

Features and Benefits

Features describe your product or service. The range of features, of course, can be as varied as the products on the market. For example, the description of dog food could be "grain-free and organic." Benefits highlight the advantages of your product or service and help to separate your products from the competition. Searchers who are early in the buying process are more likely to be attracted by features, while benefits are more likely to appeal to searchers later in the sales process. Searchers in the ZMOT phase (Chapter 3) will be comparison-shopping and gathering information. Highlighting benefits is one way to show users that you have the solution to their problem. Keep your target audience in mind when selecting between features and benefits. Often a combination of both features and benefits works best.

Discounts

Offers of discounts resonate well with searchers who are comparison-shopping in the ZMOT phase. Given the choice between two ads, one of which offers a discount, searchers are more likely to choose the ad with the discount. Think about what you can offer that the competition doesn't, such as free shipping or 24/7 support. Bargain-hunting words and phrases include:

Coupon

Price cut

Rebate

Markdown

To comply with Google's rules, you must display the offer stated in the ad within one or two clicks of the landing page, and the prices mentioned in the ad must be accurate.

Create a Sense of Urgency

Expiration dates and limited time offers induce a sense of urgency. With such little time to grab the attention of potential customers, evoking urgency is one way to encourage them to take action—now! Here are some example phrases you could use:

Limited time only!

Save today only!

Offer ends tonight!

Informative Ads

Users often search to find an answer to a question. Informative ads are a way to show searchers you have the answer to their question. Again, searchers comparison-shop while in the ZMOT phase of the sales cycle. This is a great opportunity to connect with potential customers while they're gathering information. What questions would a searcher have that your product or service answers? Figure 7-3 shows two examples.

Learn About Dog Nutrition
Know what to look for when
selecting food for your dog?
www.whoofwhoof.com/nutrition

Learn About Dog Nutrition
Everything you need to know
about organic and natural dog food.
www.whoofwhoof.com/nutrition

Figure 7-3: Two examples of informative ads

Pose a Question

Questions in ads are attention getters. Your ads will almost always appear while a user is conducting a search, so your ad should flow with the searcher's thought process. People search with a purpose in mind. Questions such as "Looking for K2 Skis?" fit in with a searcher's train of thought. You can also use questions to arouse interest, such as "Like Skiing Deep Powder?"

Testimonials

Fitting a testimonial into 70 characters or less is often impossible, but a strong testimonial (if one can somehow be shoehorned in) is very alluring. Searchers in the ZMOT phase are likely looking for product reviews. Include phrases such as "Read Customer Reviews" to searchers in the ZMOT phase to let them know you can help them with their research and learning process, then include testimonials on your landing page. Searchers further along (in the FMOT phase of the buying cycle) will more likely be interested in reviews of your business and the reasons why they should buy from your site. By the time they reach the FMOT buying phase, searchers usually know what they want: in a sense, they're at the store shelf. Give them a reason to buy from you.

Official-Looking Ads

Where appropriate, include the ™ trademark symbol (unregistered) or the ® registered trademark symbol to build brand trust and give your ad an official look. In a competitive space where other competitors might be bidding on your brand, this will help separate you from the crowd.

Reflect the Search Query

Including your keywords in the ad is an important process, no matter how you define your goals. Remember, words from the user's search query will be bolded in the ad text. This helps to serve as a link between the user's search query and your ad. Because you have created well-themed ad groups, creating ad text matching the keyword group is much easier. This can also help improve your quality score, campaign performance, and relevance.

Dynamic Keyword Insertion

For larger ad groups, dynamic keyword insertion (DKI) allows you to insert the user's search query directly into your ad. You can use this feature for the headline, ad description, or display URL. Because character length constraints can prevent some search query phrases from fitting into the ad text, you can provide alternative text that will display if the search query doesn't fit. Figure 7-4 shows how a DKI ad would be set up in AdWords.

{KeyWord:Smith Sunglasses on Sale}
Find the shades you want at the
price you want. Free shipping!
www.buynewshades.net

Figure 7-4: Ad created using dynamic keyword insertion

The phrase "keyword tag" is used to represent the capitalization of the search query. In other words, how it's capitalized will determine how a user's search query is capitalized in the ad. Consider the following examples:

{keyword: Smith Sunglasses on Sale}: The search query appears in lower case. Let's use the search query "showdown smith sunglasses" as an example. In this case, the search query would be dynamically inserted as "showdown smith sunglasses."

{Keyword: Smith Sunglasses on Sale}: If the first word of the search query is capitalized, you have the same search query as above, but this time it's inserted into the ad as "Showdown smith sunglasses."

{KeyWord: Smith Sunglasses on Sale}: This time each word within the user's search query is capitalized, but this time the phrase would appear in the ad as "Showdown Smith Sunglasses."

With phrase and broad-match keywords, the keyword inserted will match the keyword in your ad group that triggered your ad. Let's use the above example to help clarify this. You have the keyword "smith showdown sunglasses" in your account and a user searches for "find smith showdown." Google matches this query to the broad match keyword "smith showdown sunglasses" and that text is inserted into your ad.

Be aware of the keywords in your ad group, and ask yourself whether they would make sense when inserted in your ad. We believe DKI should be used only sparingly; in well-designed campaigns, you often don't need it. However, keep this tool in your arsenal and try rotating in DKI text when testing various ads.

The Display URL

Think of the display URL as a fourth line of ad text. It actually is, so it's nearly as important as the first three. The display URL gives users a hint of where they will go when they click your ad. Although the display URL doesn't have to be a page on your site, the displayed domain (i.e., the first part of the URL up to the first slash) must match that of the destination URL. This leaves several options for including keywords and messaging within the display URL. The display URL can serve as a place to sneak in words that might otherwise be prohibited for trademark reasons. Take, for example, the URL www.buytvs.com/sony. Anywhere else in the ad, you wouldn't be able to use the word "Sony." Nevertheless, as part of the display URL, it's representing a page on your site and thus would be approved.

Within a given Ad Group, the domain for all the display URLs must be the same, but destination URLs can vary. If you need to take the user to different sites, you should create separate ad groups or campaigns for each site.

Remember, the click-through rate of the display URL is a factor in the quality score. Google treats this line of the ad separately from the rest in determining the quality score.

The Destination URL

Although not visible, the destination URL is an important component of the ad. Every click an ad receives will take the user to that destination (also known as your landing page). Each ad, or even each keyword, can have a different destination URL, as long as the domain remains the same throughout a given ad group. To enter varying destination URLs at the ad level, create the ad with a different destination URL. To alter the destination URL at the keyword level, enter the unique destination URL within the Keyword tab of the AdWords interface or via the AdWords Editor tool. Keyword destination URLs trump ad level URLs.

The most common reason for adjusting the destination URL at the keyword level is to perform tracking. Advanced tracking techniques are outside the scope of this book, but linking your AdWords and Google Analytics account will provide the data needed to generate the data and reports discussed here. It's important to note that this tracking does take place within the destination URL and other analytics programs, and more advanced Google Analytics tracking would require adding additional variables to your destination URL.

Ad Extensions

Ad extensions allow you to add one or more lines to a standard text ad. We've found that ads with extensions see higher click-through rates. Use extensions as a tool to garner more attention and clicks to your ad. Possible extensions include location extensions, call extensions, product extensions, sitelink extensions, and social extensions. Figure 7-5 shows an ad with sitelink extensions.

Larger View

Figure 7-5: Sample ad with sitelinks

Ad extensions are added via the Ad extensions tab (see Figure 7-6). The added information may or may not appear as part of your ads. Currently, Google displays ad extensions only when the ad is in one of the top or bottom ad positions above or below the organic results. Multiple types of ad extensions can be set up for an ad.
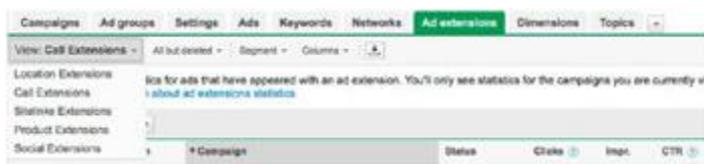
Larger View

Figure 7-6: Accessing the Ad extensions tab

To create an extension or see statistics for an extension, choose the extension type from the pull-down menu. Let's take a closer look at the various types of ad extensions.

Location Extensions

We discuss this feature in Chapter 5 when we focus on local advertising strategies, and we talk more about location extensions for mobile ads in Chapter 9. Any business can add a location extension, so this AdWords feature is a great way to increase your relevance to searchers. Location extensions can be added manually or by linking to your Google Places account.

Call Extensions

There are two types of call extensions. The first targets users on mobile devices with full Internet browsers. These users see your business number in the ad and can click to call your business. Users on desktops, laptops, and tablets will not see your number. We discuss this topic in Chapter 9 on mobile advertising. The second type of call extension uses a Google forwarding number. Google assigns a unique number to your ads via Google Voice technology. The ad displays this number on both mobile devices and desktops/tablets. If a user calls the number, the call is forwarded to your business number. Users on high-end mobile devices can still use the click to call feature. Google attributes the call data to the appropriate campaign, ad group, and keyword.

To enable a call extension, select the Call Extensions option from the Sitelinks Extensions pull-down. Click "+New Extension" and you will see the screen shown in Figure 7-7.
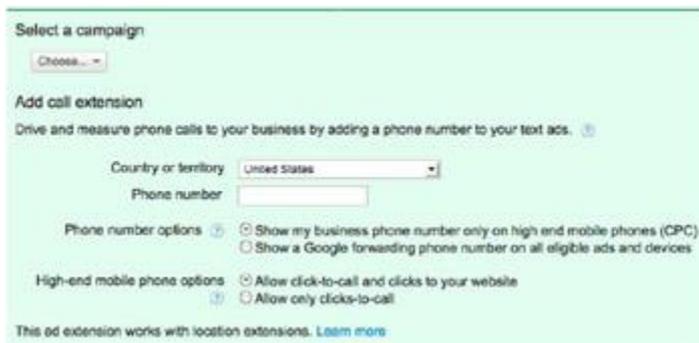
Larger View

Figure 7-7: Creating a Google forwarding number extension

Google charges calls to a Google forwarding number a minimum of $1.00. In addition, you can set a bid-per-call, which requires setting a maximum call-per-phone call (CPP).

Google shows call data on the Campaigns and Ad Group tabs by customizing the table to show call details. Alternatively, you can use the Segment menu to segment the data by click type. In addition, you can see detail data for your calls through the Dimensions tab. Go to View ➤ Select Call Details. When using a Google forwarding number, you can see the length of the call and the area code where the call originated. Use this data to determine the quality of leads coming from your calls.

> Note Both call and location extensions allow you to enter a phone number. The number listed in a call extension will display regardless of the searcher's location, while location extensions are based on the location of the searcher and their proximity to your business. Call and location extensions can be used together. For example, a call extension could be used to display your main number and location extensions could be used to display a local number.

Product Extensions

When a searcher enters a query related to one of your products, products extensions allow you to display pictures and prices of your products below your ads through the expansion of a "plus box" (see Figure 7-8). Products extensions are a great way to give a boost to your ads. This is your chance to occupy more real estate and convey more information to your potential customers. Serious buyers can instantly see what you have to offer and at what price you are offering the displayed products.

Larger View

Figure 7-8: Example ad with a product extension

Product extensions are enabled by linking your Google Merchant Center with your AdWords account. To trigger a product extension, the user's search query must match the data in your Merchant Center. Product extensions only display on Google.com search results pages or on m.google.com on high-end mobile devices.

To enable product extensions, you must first have a Google Merchant Center set up. In addition to providing the data for product extensions and product listing ads, Google Merchant Center provides a hub where your products can be uploaded for use in Google Product Search and Google Commerce Search. The setup process requires a Google account and a data feed for your products. To create a Merchant Center, go to www.google.com/merchants and start the process of configuring your account. For more information on creating a Merchant Center account, refer to the Merchant Center support at www.google.com/support/merchants/. The next step is to link your Merchant Center and your AdWords account. Sign into your Merchant Center and enter your AdWords customer ID by clicking AdWords in the Settings menu.

Next, log back in to your AdWords account. Navigate to the Ad extensions tab. Click "Product Extensions" from the View pull-down menu. When you choose to "+ New extension," you will see the options shown in Figure 7-9.
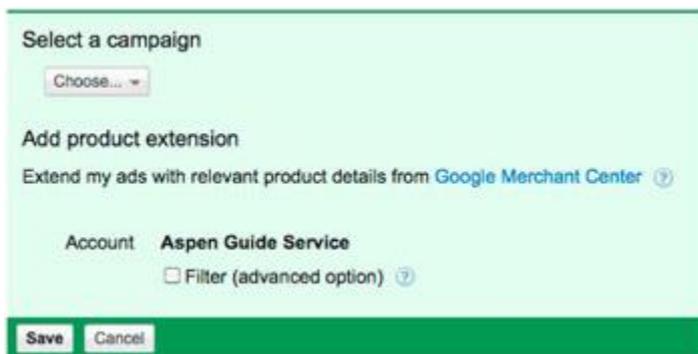
Larger View

Figure 7-9: Adding product extensions

The products that show up as extensions are determined by the information in your Merchant Center data feed. To further control which products are shown, you can use either product filters or auto targeting. Both allow you to better match products to your ads based on attributes within your Google Merchant Center data feed. You will need to make sure these attributes are populated within your feed and then uploaded into your Merchant Center. Once uploaded, product filters are configured through the product extensions tab. Click "Filter (advanced option)" (See Figure 7-9)

when creating your product extension. With previously created product extensions, product filters can be added by clicking on the Ad Extension within the table to enable editing. You can then define which products match a campaign based on product type, brand, condition, adwords labels, or adwords grouping. The "adwords_grouping" and the "adwords_label" attributes are specific to creating custom groups of products that you define.

"Adwords_grouping" only accepts one value, while the "adwords_label" can have multiple values and thus can be used to associate a product with multiple campaigns or ad groups. Adwords_grouping can be used with CPA or CPC bidding, while AdWords_labels can only be used with CPC bidding.

Once your Merchant Center is linked to your AdWords account, a new tab will appear for Auto targets. Click the Auto targets tab to match ad groups to an attribute. You have to set at least one target, which could be the "Add all products" option. Other target options are the same as with the product filters (Figure 7-10).
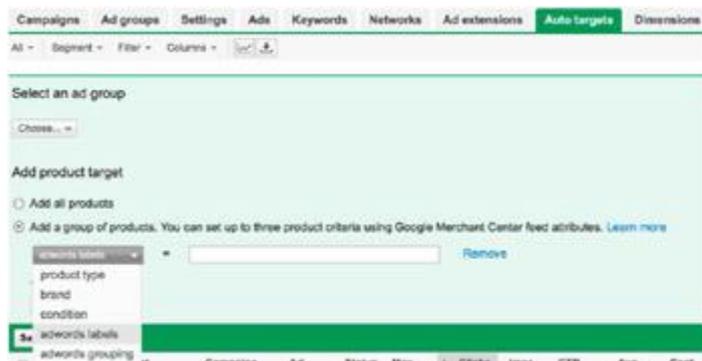
Larger View

Figure 7-10: Setting Auto Targets for Product Extensions

Once you have matched ad groups and attributes, the product targets will be displayed in the table as shown in Figure 7-11. To adjust bids for different product targets, click inline on the max CPC column.

Larger View

Figure 7-11: Auto target data table

Again, data on product extension clicks can be seen by segmenting by click type or by viewing the ad extensions tab. In addition, you can go to Dimensions ➤ Free clicks to see how many visitors clicked on the plus box.

Sitelink Extensions

This type of extension allows you to advertise more targeted or specialized pages within your site, as illustrated in Figure 7-12.

Larger View

Guided Fly **Fishing** | AspenGuideService.com
www.**aspen**guideservice.com/
Float or wade trips near **Aspen Colorado**. Experienced guides.
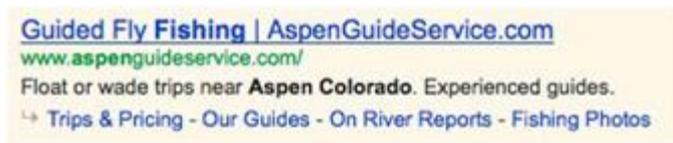↳ Trips & Pricing - Our Guides - On River Reports - Fishing Photos

Figure 7-12: An ad with sitelinks

Sitelinks give you full control over what links display, and they give you the opportunity to target multiple landing pages on your site. In addition, you can promote multiple areas where visitors can convert. By offering the searcher the ability to choose the landing page most relevant to them, they're more likely to convert. Sitelinks only appear in ads qualifying for the positions above or below the organic search results. High quality scores increase your chances of your ad displaying with sitelinks.

Again, to enable this extension, go to Ad Extensions ➤ View ➤ Sitelink Extensions. Click "+New Extensions" and select your campaign (see Figure 7-13).

Larger View
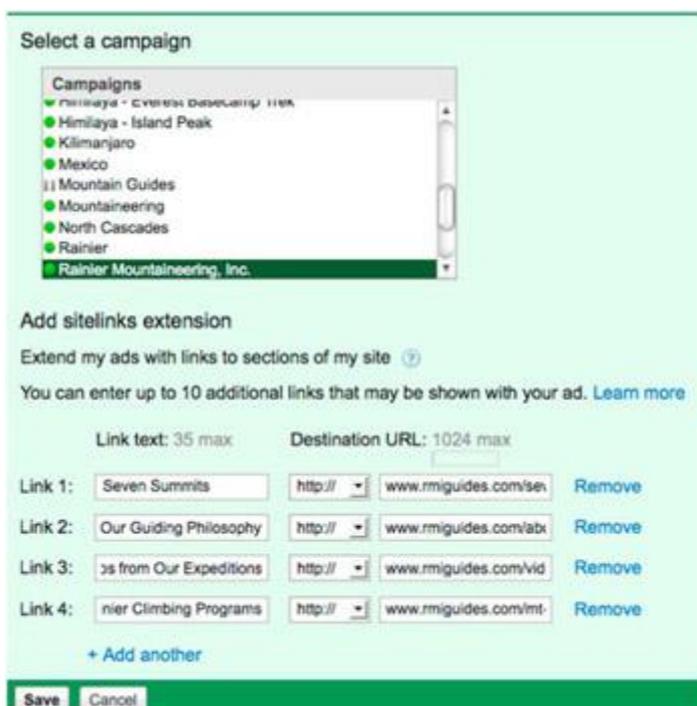
Figure 7-13: Enabling sitelinks

Add your sitelinks by entering your link text and the corresponding destination URL. You can add up to ten sitelinks, although the number displayed won't exceed six. Click Save and your new sitelink combination will display in the table. Once you've created a sitelinks extension, you can easily add the same group of sitelinks to another campaign by clicking on "+New Extension," selecting the next campaign, and then click "Select extension."

Which sitelinks AdWords will display depends on the search query triggering the ad. Google uses the click-through rate of the sitelinks to determine the order in which they are displayed.

Use sitelinks as an opportunity to combine the most successful elements of your campaign. Use ad text that has proven to have high click-through rates. Associate landing pages that are high converters, and promote sub-brands of your core brand.

Another option for sitelinks is enhanced sitelinks. This newer sitelink format displays a headline with two description lines (See Figure 7-14). You can't define sitelink extensions within your account. Instead, Google looks at the sitelinks you have added to your account and matches the sitelink to a related ad in your account.

Larger View

Figure 7-14: Example of Enhanced Sitelinks

It's also important to note the following: although sitelinks add additional landing pages, landing page quality is still determined by the main destination URL. Google won't charge you if someone clicks more than one sitelink. Duplicate clicks are treated as invalid clicks.

You may also add and edit sitelinks through the AdWords Editor. To access sitelinks, navigate to Extensions ➤ Sitelinks. Figure 7-15 shows the table where sitelinks are edited.

Larger View

Figure 7-15: Adding sitelinks in AdWords Editor

To see statistics for your sitelinks, return to the Ad extensions tab. Currently, performance statistics are only listed for the combined group of sitelinks, and individual link performance isn't available without more sophisticated tagging

Social Extensions

This extension allows you to show social recommendations as an annotation to your ads. To activate social extensions, you link your Google+ page with your AdWords account. +1s are shared between your AdWords ad and your Google+ page. Therefore, if your Google+ page has 25 +1s, these will show as an extension to your ad. If a user +1s your ad but doesn't click the ad, you are not

charged for a click. To evaluate performance of ads with the +1 annotations, you can segment your data by +1 annotations. We will talk more about segmentation in Chapter 10.

Seller Extensions

These automatically take effect when you reach certain levels relating to Google Product Search. There is nothing you can do to set up these extensions in AdWords. You must have 30 reviews in Google Product Search, and the reviews must be unique and rated at four stars or higher. A Google Merchant Account is not required.

> Note The data shown within the Ad Extensions tab shows how many times an ad extension was shown and the clicks represent clicks to either the headline of the ad OR the extension. To see clicks for only your extensions, use the "Segment" menu to choose "Click type."

Product Listing Ads

Not to be confused with product extensions, Product Listing Ads (or PLAs) show the pricing, images, titles, and other product-related information available from your Merchant Center (Figure 7-16). As with product extensions, you should first link your AdWords account to your Google Merchant account. It's possible to have both a PLA and a text ad displayed at the same time, which increases your visibility on the page. Much like text ads, PLA ads are ranked based on bid, historical performance, and relevancy. Because the data in your Merchant Center controls when and where your PLAs are displayed, it's important to keep the data in the Merchant Center current. As you can see from Figure 7-16, your ad may appear next to your competitor's ads.

Larger View

Figure 7-16: Example of Product Listing Ads

Once your Google Merchant Center and AdWords account are linked, you can create PLAs by creating a new campaign set to run on the Search Network. (PLAs are not shown on the Display Network.) Select the proper campaign settings for location, language, budget, etc. Under the Advanced Options ➤ Ad Extensions, click on the check box next to "Extend my ads with relevant product details from Google Merchant Center." Click "Save and Continue."

You will then be prompted to create your first ad group. Think about the best way to organize your ad groups. You can organize them based on the various attribute options including product type, brand, condition, adwords_labels, and adwords_grouping, or any combination of these. Name your ad group appropriately and under "Create an ad," click the radio button next to "Product Listing Ad." You then have the option of entering a promotion. This is not a required step, but it's a good opportunity to help increase your click-through rate (and potentially your quality score) by

advertising a special offer or special shipping rate. Under the Auto targets section you can choose to include all products, if relevant. Otherwise, uncheck this box and select your specific auto targets via the Auto targets tab at a later time. You do not need to enter keywords as Google will use the data in your Merchant Center to match your products to search queries. Enter your bid amount and click "Save ad group." If you did not select "All products" in the campaign settings, you will automatically be taken to the Auto targets tab. As with product extensions, this is your chance to tell Google what products to match with this ad group. Because Google pulls the data from your Merchant Center to create your ads, you do not need to do anything to your ads. However, you can create new promotions from the Ads tab by selecting "+New ad" and then clicking "Product listing ad."

Ad Preview Tool

The Ad Preview and Diagnosis tool is a way to see what your ad looks like live on Google without accruing actual impressions. You can use the setting options shown in Figure 7-17 to define the geographic region where your ads will show. This is especially helpful when you want to see ads set to display outside your current location. Settings for this tool are located within the Google AdWords interface under the Reporting and Tools tab. Enter a search query you would like to explore and select the domain, language, location, and device to match your campaign.

Larger View

Figure 7-17: The Ad Preview and Diagnosis tool

The tool will generate a preview search result showing the live SERP without increasing impression numbers. Figure 7-18 shows an example of the preview screen.

Larger View

Figure 7-18: The preview generated from the Ad Preview tool

If your ad doesn't appear, the tool will show the reason, as well as suggestions for what you can do to increase visibility (Figure 7-19).

Larger View

Figure 7-19: Ad preview results

Checking Your Ad Status

When you save a new ad, it's automatically submitted for review and will receive a status of either "under review" or "eligible." Ads under review won't display until Google reviews them and they're found to be in compliance with the ad policies. Ads listed as eligible are approved to run only on Amazon.com SERP pages for users who have SafeSearch filtering turned off, but won't run on the Search Network or Display Network. Google will normally review your ad within 1-3 days, at which time your ad will receive one of the following statuses:

Approved: You are ready to go on all networks.

Approved (non-family), Approved (adult): Google has deemed your ads not appropriate for all audiences. Not all sites on the Google Network will accept your ads and users that have turned on SafeSearch filtering will not see your ads. SafeSearch filtering is set up in the user's Google preferences and tells Google not to show ads in this category.

Approved (limited): In this case, your ad will not show in all areas or on all devices. This could be caused by a trademarked term approved to appear only in some regions, or by other content, such as gambling, not approved in some regions.

Disapproved: Google believes your ad violates one of their advertising policies; ads won't display until you resolve the issue.

Site-suspended: In this case, the web site has been suspended. For your ads to show, you'll need to edit your site to meet Google's policies.

To check the status of your ads, navigate to the level of the account you are interested in and click the Ads tab. This will show all ads for that level of the account in the main table. Each ad's status shows in the Status column. For disapproved ads, view the reason for disapproval by cursoring over the call-out icon.

Another way to find disapproved ads, especially in large accounts, is to use the filtering functionality within AdWords. To filter for disapproved ads, again navigate to the level of the account for which you would like to discover disapproved ads. This could be at the campaign level, the ad group level, or the account level. Click Ads ➤ Filter ➤ Create filter, as shown in Figure 7-20, to get started.
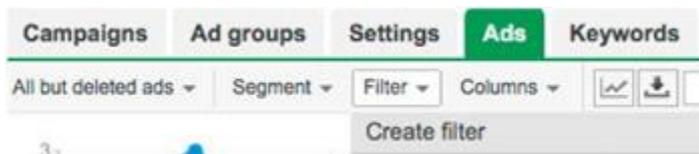
Larger View

Figure 7-20: Navigating to create filter

The filter tool will pop up in yellow. Use the pull-down to browse the filter options, selecting Approval Status. Click Disapproved (Figure 7-21) and click Apply.

Larger View

Figure 7-21: Selecting the Disapproved filter

The interface lists the disapproved ads in the table below the Filter panel. Again, to see the disapproval reason, click the call-out icon next to the ad. Edit the ad, addressing the reason for disapproval, and save the ad again. This will resubmit the ad to Google for review.

Test, Then Test Some More

No matter how great you think your ad is, the users will tell you what works and what doesn't by the way they interact (or don't) with your ad. Test results will often surprise you. The ad you were sure would be the winner many times isn't. The bottom line is that there's no magical formula for determining the best ad, other than user response. Always have at least two ads per ad group and keep the testing simple. Test a single variable for a few weeks, declare a winner, and move on to the next variable. For example, you might want to start with the headline. Run two ads with the same ad text and display URL but different headlines. Once you have your winning headline, create two new ads with the winning headline but alternative descriptions. Next, don't forget the display URL! Test ads using various extensions in the display URL, with and without the "www," or by adding a subdomain. Rinse and repeat. Keep the variables simple: it should always be clear which element generated the win.

Creating a Landing Page

So you've now painstakingly selected the perfect keywords and lured users in with your compelling ad text; this is your chance to convince your visitors to convert! You've done the hard part—you got them to your landing page. Now bring them home! One of the advantages of paid advertising is that you have control over where you take visitors and what you present to them.

Relevance

The most important quality of a good landing page is relevance. As discussed in the "Quality Score" section in Chapter 2, Google emphasizes the importance of relevance by making it a major factor in the quality score. It's also important to the searcher. You have only a few seconds to lure users in, so when they arrive at your site, make sure they feel welcome. Can they quickly tell whether your page is going to answer their question? Is the information on your landing page related to their search and the ad they clicked? If everything is well connected (i.e., relevant), they should feel they've found the right place and want to stay a little longer to look around. As we've emphasized before, a well-organized account should have tightly-themed ad groups: with focused groups of keywords, it's much easier to create focused, relevant landing pages. In addition, well-themed ad groups should direct to a single landing page.

Building Trust

It's also vitally important to establish trust quickly. Your visitors will want to know they can easily get to the solution they need. Landing pages should provide what the ad promises, what the user expects to see, and—more importantly—what the user wants. A high quality site also helps to build trust with your visitors. Speak to the keywords in the ad so it's abundantly clear they're on the right page. Use a clear heading that includes keywords to emphasize this point.

Other ways to build trust are through testimonials, especially from authority figures. As discussed with ad creation, during the ZMOT phase visitors are looking for reviews of products as they comparison shop. During FMOT, they're looking for reasons to buy from you.

What is Your Message?

The message you convey to your visitors is largely dependent on why they're searching and where they are in the buying process (Table 7-1).

Table 7-1: The Sales Process and Landing Page Creation

➡Open table as spreadsheet

Sales Process	Users Intent	Sample Keywords	Landing Page Pointers
ZMOT	Informational searches	"best organic dog food" "what is a short sale"	Answer their question. Provide the visitor with information. Gain trust.
FMOT	Transactional searches, navigational searches	"Good Doggie canned dog food"	Send the searcher directly to the appropriate product page. Don't risk losing the conversion by making the visitor sort through your site for the product they want.

Be sure to answer the searcher's question on your landing page. For informational searches in the ZMOT phase, it's important to recognize what the searcher is looking for and make sure your page provides that information. Take, for example, the search "what is a short sale." Obviously, the searcher is looking for information. Although this search might not be as direct as "realtor in Glenwood Springs, Colorado," this searcher is potentially looking for options for buying real estate or trying to learn more about their options for selling real estate. If your page addresses their query with in-depth information, they're more likely to convert in some way, perhaps by signing up to follow your blog about the details of the short sale and foreclosure procedure. If they become a follower of your blog, you have more opportunity to relay information to them, and you increase the prospect of building enough trust for the user to engage in a future transaction.

Now let's consider the searcher in the FMOT phase who is ready to purchase. For example, let's say you are a tea company selling tea online, and a searcher has just clicked on your site after searching for "buy premium green tea." In this case, you would want to take the visitor directly to your page for your green tea product. Offering a promotion can address their question, which is "why would I buy from you?" Make your policies, shipping rates, and return procedure very clear to the searcher.

Think "Convert"

Once you've addressed what the visitor is looking for, the next step is to get them to do what you want them to: convert! Don't leave visitors wondering what to do next. It's your job to make the call to action abundantly clear. It's often helpful to reduce the navigation—or at least de-emphasize it—so visitors aren't confused or overwhelmed. Be selective in choosing what else you link to from your landing page. In addition, be conscious of the complexity of the path to conversion. Don't make your user jump through hoops or scroll around the page to complete a

conversion. You are probably the person most familiar with your landing page, so do your best to look at it through the eyes of a first-time visitor.

Instant Preview

Google introduced its instant preview feature in 2011, allowing users to see a preview of the landing page before they click an ad. As of this writing, the feature is available for ads in top positions on the SERP, but not side positions. The latest version of the instant preview feature only requires a searcher to mouse-over any section of the ad. Figure 7-22 shows the double-arrow instant preview indicator to the right of the first top ad in the SERP for a search on "organic coffee," shown above the cursor arrow. A portion of the instant preview page is shown to the right of the cursor and indicator in the figure.
Larger View

Figure 7-22: Instant preview indicator (above cursor) for a search on organic coffee

Instant preview can increase click-through rates. This could be an advantage for PPC marketers, since PPC marketing allows you to handpick your landing pages and fill them with information targeted to the search. This is even more reason to include keywords and images in your landing pages. Be sure to use the instant preview feature on your own ads to see what you page looks like in the preview.

Testing Landing Pages

As with the other aspects of a campaign, it's important to use information generated through your visitors' actions to improve your results. Another very useful tool that Google provides for testing landing pages is the Google Website Optimizer (GWO). We discuss this tool more in Chapter 12. The GWO allows you to perform two kinds of tests: *multivariant* and what's called *A/B* or *split testing*. With A/B testing, only one element on the page is varied at a time. This element may be any part of the landing page critical to conversions. With multivariate testing, multiple elements within the conversion process are varied and are then combined to create multiple versions of the web site.

For a simple comparison of destination URL performance, there is a destination URL report within the AdWords interface (Figure 7-23). To access this report, go to the Dimensions tab in the main Adwords account table and click Destination URL. Use the destination URL report to compare conversion rates for various landing pages.
Larger View

Figure 7-23: Destination URL report

For more in-depth information, there is also a destination URL report in Google Analytics (GA). To access this report in GA, bring up the profile you're interested in, click Advertising ➤ Destination URLs, as shown in Figure 7-24.

Figure 7-24: Accessing the destination URL report in GA

By default, the report will show the statistics illustrated in Figure 7-25.
Larger View

Figure 7-25: Default statistics displayed in the GA destination URLs report

These are useful statistics when ascertaining the success of a landing page, as well as for the purpose of comparison. Performance can be viewed at the Campaign, Ad Group, or Keyword level. You can select to add a secondary dimension, such as keywords, to show URL/keyword pairs. Figure 7-26 shows the comparison of two pages within the same ad group. In this example, the first landing page has a much higher conversion rate.
Larger View

Figure 7-26: Destination URL report in Google Analytics

Chapter 6: Keyword Strategy

Overview

Keywords are the linchpin of all PPC marketing. They are the starting point of the process connecting the user's interest and intent to your ad campaign. Everything hinges on the set of keywords you choose. If a keyword that could materially improve your campaign is not in your account, then your campaign won't be hitting on all cylinders. The keywords you choose for your campaign will determine the quantity and quality of your visitors. In this chapter, we will discuss how to find the right keywords at the right time for the right audience.

Here are the topics we cover in this chapter:
- Keyword basics
- Using Google's Keyword Tool
- Selecting keywords
- Refining your keyword list

Keyword Basics

In Chapter 2, we discussed the ZMOT marketing model. Here we will take a closer look at how to find the right keywords for the various phases of the buying process. Understanding *why* your customers are searching is the first step. The second step is to understand *how* they are searching. The *how* starts with the keywords that you need to be marketing. By gaining visibility when consumers search for these keywords, you're able to gain interest and use this opportunity to convince them to use your products or services. It all comes down to mining for the right keywords.

Note	It isn't possible to start out with a perfect keyword list. An effective keyword list is the result of an ongoing process that will need to be constantly honed and refined.

Let's take a closer look at some important concepts relating to keywords.

The Long Tail vs. the Short Tail

Generally speaking, the earlier in the sales process a customer is, the shorter and broader their search. Let's return to an example from Chapter 2, where you aligned the sales process with sample keywords.

Looking at the keyword progression in Table 6-1, you'll notice that as the search/sales process unfolds, the keywords typically become longer, more complex, and more narrowly focused. In the search industry, these more complex phrases are called *long-tail keywords*. In contrast, the general phrases are often referred to as the *head*. Figure 6-1 shows the relationship between the relative search volume of keywords and specificity.
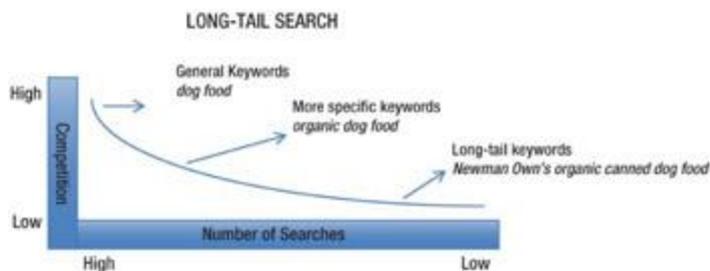Larger View

Figure 6-1: The relationship between the relative search volume of keywords and specificity

Table 6-1: Increasing Keyword Complexity in the Sales Cycle
➡Open table as spreadsheet

Sales Process	Sample Keywords
Stimulus	*Dog* *Dog food*
ZMOT	*Best organic dog food* *Dog food reviews* *Crain free dog food*
FMOT	*Newmans Own canned dog food*

As this graph shows, highly specific, long-tail keywords make up the bulk of searches. Targeting popular and more general keywords is not only expensive (because of greater competition) but results in missing a lot of quality traffic. This is consistent with what you learned about the sales process earlier (Chapter 3). According to a 2008 guest post by Dustin Woodard on Bill Tancer's Hitwise blog, "if you had a monopoly over the top 1,000 search terms across all search engines (which is impossible), you'd still be missing out on 89.4% of all search traffic."[1]

Users searching with long-tail keywords with the intent of purchasing a product or service are usually further along in their decision process. Less competition and higher conversion rates are a great mix for PPC marketing, and careful, precise research in setting up your keywords will help move your campaign in this direction.

Types of Keywords

In addition to the specificity that long-tail and short-tail conveys, there are several other ways to group keywords.

- **Branded vs. non-branded:** This keyword grouping is pretty self-explanatory, but when thinking about search-generated traffic it's important to differentiate the two. Users searching with branded terms are much further along in the sales cycle, so these keywords tend to have a high conversion rate. Branded keywords should be separated into their own campaign or ad group. When analyzing results, it's important to make this distinction, as campaigns and accounts that are heavily brand-focused will naturally see better performance. We will discuss tactics for using Google Analytics to segment data based on branded or non-branded traffic in Chapter 11.

There's an ongoing debate in the PPC world about whether you should spend money on branded keywords when you already have a high organic search ranking for these keywords. At first glance, you might think it's a waste of valuable PPC budget. If you're getting free clicks, why spend any amount on these keywords? We believe buying branded keywords is money well spent. In general, we have seen an overall decline in sales when branded keywords are turned off. We believe it's due to an increase in brand trust when searchers see multiple listings. Bidding

on broad matched brand names also helps to identify misspellings of the brand that you might not be ranking for organically. In addition, brand keywords tend to have great quality scores (and low cost-per-click), which is another plus for your account.

- **"Buying" keywords:** This is another way to describe keywords in the FMOT phase of the sales cycle and identify users who are ready to buy. These keywords consist of what you're selling with prefixes such as *buy, purchase, shop for*, etc. Include these keywords when promoting products on e-commerce sites.
- **Local keywords:** When a location is included in a search query, you can bucket these keywords as local keywords. For example, *Portland Oregon sushi restaurant* is a location keyword. We discussed location-based searches in Chapter 5.
- **Product keywords:** Again, these keywords tend to come late in the buying process and are very specific. *Canon PowerShot 100HS* and *Fisher-Price Kid-Tough Binoculars* are examples of product keywords. Don't miss the low-hanging fruit; these kinds of specific product keywords can improve you campaign's performance.
- **Broad vs. specific:** Broad keywords include variations of multiple root keywords, while specific keywords are multiple permutations of the same root word. For example, some people might search for *camcorder* and variations of that root word, while others might search for variations of *video recorder*. Leaving out either combination could exclude a large portion of your potential audience.

Identifying Your Themes

When composing your first list, it's okay to keep it small. Go for quality keywords and try not to get overwhelmed by the large number of possible keywords. The ideal keywords will reflect your business and the goals of your campaigns.

We like to create what might be termed "theme buckets" that aggregate keywords according to a set of themes. These themes will ultimately coalesce into your ad groups. The following are some suggestions to keep in mind when identifying your themes:

- What are the main products and/or services that you're offering?
- What themes are present on your web site?
- What are the natural divisions within your product lines?
- Where, in terms of geographic areas, do you want to offer your products or services?
- Who are your ideal customers and what are they looking for?

Next, start a spreadsheet, giving each theme its own column. Figure 6-2 shows an example spreadsheet for a travel company that focuses on high-end, luxury trips. Use multiple columns to make copying root keywords easy.
Larger View

Figure 6-2: Theming keywords via Excel

From here, spend some more time building out each theme. Browse your competitor's sites for additional ideas. Perform searches using your keywords and explore what you see. Use the Google Search AutoComplete feature as a guide. Look for synonyms and variations for your keywords. Think like your customers, and think about their intent. If you come across keywords you feel are a good fit for your business or web site but don't fit into an existing theme, create a new column. Be sure to include various themes that cover the ways people could think about your core products. For example, if you own a furniture store, you would want to include keywords that include *sofa* and *couch*.

In the next section, we will talk about Google's Keyword Tool, which taps into its considerable database of keyword and search information.

[1]Bill Tancer, "Guest Post – Sizing Up the Long Tail of Search," Nov. 6, 2008, http://weblogs.hitwise.com/bill-tancer/2008/11/sizing_up_the_long_tail_of_sea.html

Using Google's Keyword Tool

Google's Keyword Tool provides useful information on search volume trends, estimated CPC, and relative competition. You can easily import the data directly into your AdWords account or via a spreadsheet. The keyword tool can also recommend keywords based on an analysis of your site. The web-based Keyword Tool can be invoked directly in your browser using the following URL:

- https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal

However, when you access the tool externally, some of the features discussed here are not available. Alternatively (and recommended), you can navigate to the tool from your AdWords Account. One way to do this is to click the Tools and Analysis tab and select Keyword Tool (Figure 6-3).
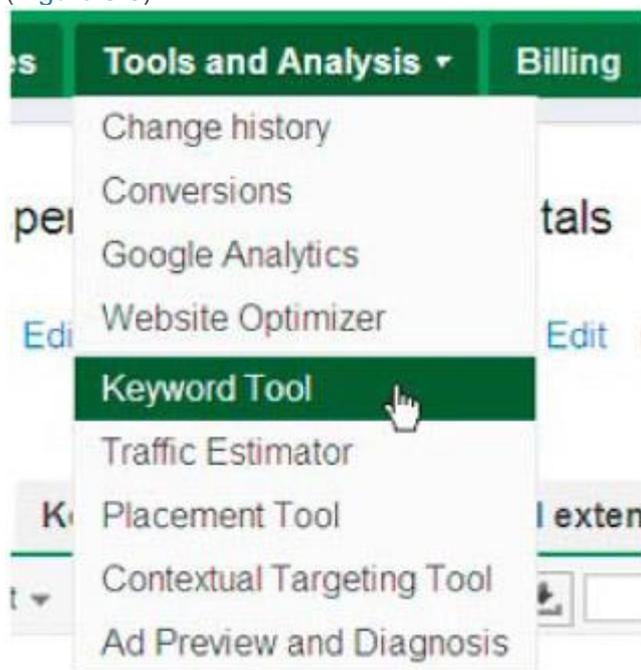
Figure 6-3: Selecting the Keyword Tool in AdWords

A second way of bringing up the tool in your AdWords account is to select "+ Add keywords" in the Keywords tab. This will show a prompt for adding the keyword. Click the Keyword Tool link on the right of the prompt, as shown in Figure 6-4.
Larger View

Figure 6-4: The Keyword Tool link

Once the tool launches, you'll see the screen shown in Figure 6-5.
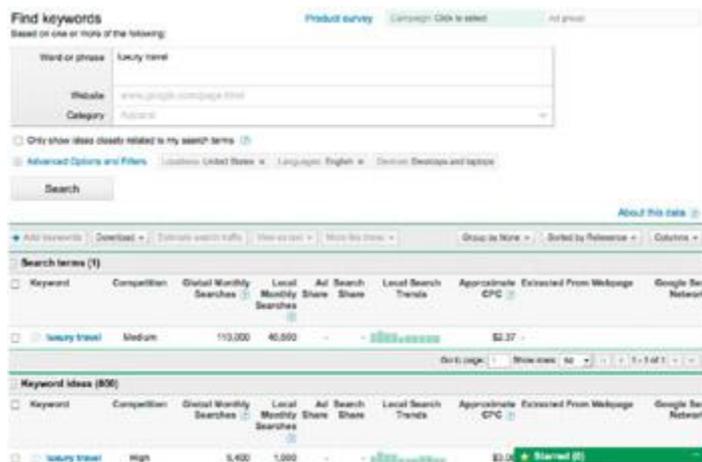Larger View

Figure 6-5: The Keywords Tool

Start your keyword research by entering words or phrases you've collected in your list. Start with broader keywords from one of your themes (ad groups) and click the Search button. The terms you enter will show at the top of the chart and the suggestions from Google based on the keywords you've entered will show below the chart. Before selecting keywords from this list of suggestions, let's look at a few options for narrowing down the amount of data.

Filtering Data

There are several approaches to narrowing (or filtering) the suggested keywords in a way that focuses the list on your specific needs. The following are several options for customizing the results:

- Combine words or phrases with categories. For example, researching a keyword such as *Aspen Homes* could trigger keyword phrases such as *Aspen funeral homes* or *Aspen nursing homes.* However, if you selected the category *Travel,* the results wouldn't include these types of keywords.
- Filter based on locations and languages. However, locations only go to the level of countries. Google's Keyword Tool does not provide geotargeted data. For example, you can't see search volume of a particular keyword for the Chicago metro area.
- Include or exclude adult ideas.
- Perform keyword research specifically with mobile devices in mind (see Chapter 9); this will help you understand the mobile searcher and the possible search volumes.
- Select "Only show ideas closely related to my terms." With this option selected, all results will include the words or phrases you entered.
- Filter results based on the filter options shown in Figure 6-6.

  For Competition statistics, you can choose low, medium, or high; for the other options, you can base your results on amounts greater or less than desired volumes.
- Select the match types. This is an important one. By default, the results shown are based on broad match versions of keywords. You'll find this option on the left hand side of the tool. All match types checked will be included in the results. The Keyword Tool is often used to discover keywords for organic search campaigns as well. When researching keywords for this purpose, it's important to select the exact match option. Note that the Keyword Tool ignores the "+" Broad Match Modifier on listed keywords, but this could change.
- Specify the words or phrase that must be included in each result. Again, this option is on the left of the screen. By entering terms in the "Include term" box, you can require results that contain these words or phrases. There are a few options for including terms in the results. Terms entered with no quotes will appear in each result but not necessarily in the same order. Terms entered with quotes will appear in the order entered. When terms are entered separately (one on each line), the results will include at least one of the terms, but not necessarily both in the same result.

- Specify words or phrase that must be included in each result. You can add keywords that you don't want included in the results by entering them in the "Exclude terms" box on the left of the screen. Another option for excluding terms in your results is to enter the word or phrase into the tool indicated with a "-"(minus sign) prefix.

Figure 6-6: Filter options

Sorting Results

Once you've selected your filtering options, click the Search button; the tool will generate a table of results based on your criteria. The maximum number of results generated is 800 (in other words, a lot!).

To help sort through this data, you can customize the results table by configuring what data is shown. Figure 6-7 shows the available options. To access these options, click the Columns pull-down on the right side of the table, as shown in Figure 6-7.
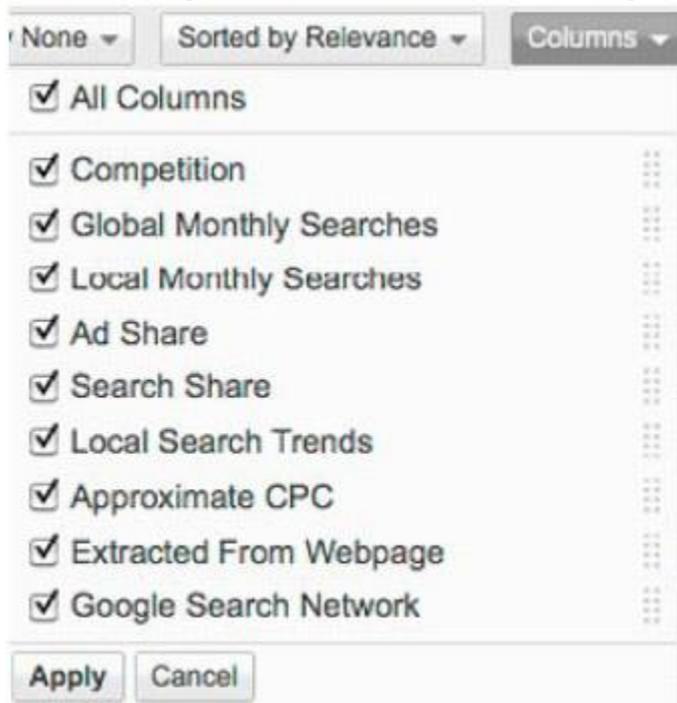
Figure 6-7: Selecting columns for the results table

Here is a description of what each column provides:
- **Competition:** Indicates the degree of competition for a keyword as high, medium, or low. If you cursor over an item in the Competition column, you should see a data annotation showing the actual two-digit competition metric (between 0 and 1.00) displayed.

- **Global monthly searches:** Shows the number of global (all countries) monthly queries for a search term averaged over the past 12 months.
- **Local monthly searches:** Shows the approximate number of search terms matching the keyword, averaged over the past 12 months. The number is based on the countries and languages you've selected, as well as your keyword match type. This is only relevant at the country level and not to locations set to regions (states), cities, or smaller areas. If there's insufficient data to determine the number, this will be noted in the column.
- **Ad share:** Theoretically, this shows the percentage of time your site is displayed for the exact match version of a keyword. In reality, this statistic can be confusing, and it doesn't always generate results.
- **Search share:** Similar to ad share, this statistic should indicate the percentage of time your site shows on the first page of the organic search results and is specific to your targeted country. Again, this is based on the exact match version only and rarely does the keyword tool generate results.
- **Local search trends:** Shows the relative monthly change in search volume. Each green bar represents a month, starting 12 months prior to the last full month of data (Figure 6-8). Each bar is relative to the keyword's overall performance for the prior twelve-month period. This chart won't show in the tool unless you're signed in to your AdWords account. It's specific to your selected country and language, as well as your selected match type. Again, if there's insufficient data, this will be noted in the column.

  For example, if it's Oct 2011 and you're looking at the chart in Figure 6-8, the first month on the right represents the relative search volume for September 2010. The local search trends feature is helpful for understanding seasonal variations.
- **Approximate CPC:** Shows the approximate cost-per-click you might pay if you were to bid on the keyword, averaged over all ad positions.
- **Extracted from web page:** If a keyword is relevant to your site, the page of the site deemed relevant will be listed.
- **Google Search Network:** This shows the number of searches for a keyword on the Google Search Network, averaged over a 12-month period. This metric is based on your selected country and language, and on the exact match version of the keyword.

Figure 6-8: Local search trend by month

You can also adjust the data in the results table by using the sorting functionality, as shown in Figure 6-9.
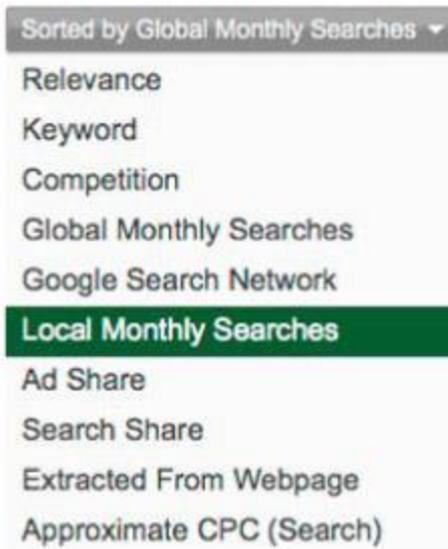
Figure 6-9: Sorting keyword results

By default, the results are sorted by relevance to the searched terms. However, you can also sort the results by any of the column headings by clicking on the heading.

One of the great features of the keyword tool is the ability to save keyword results while searching on additional keywords. The "star" feature (Figure 6-10) allows you to save keywords before starting another search. This allows you to build your list without doing multiple downloads.
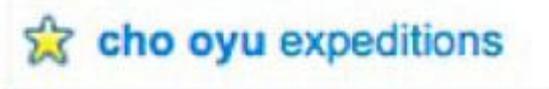

Figure 6-10: Marking keyword selections with the "star" feature

Starred keywords are added to a list stored for later use and are displayed at the bottom right of the tool in the minimized "Starred" window (Figure 6-11). Keywords remain in the starred list until you download them or close the tool. Opening the list and clicking Remove can individually remove starred keywords, or you can click Remove all.
Larger View

Figure 6-11: A starred keyword list in the Google Keyword Tool

To generate another round of results, you can start the process over or click the tab for "More like these" and generate results based on the keywords you've selected or starred.

Before you start downloading data, make sure you've thought about what is important to you and whether you've used the proper filters. If you have a tight budget, it may be a good idea to filter for keywords that match your bid prices (Figure 6-12).

Figure 6-12: Filtering by approximate CPC

Downloading and Importing Results

There are several options for downloading and importing results. The first is importing your keywords directly into an ad group. To do this, the ad group must have been previously created in your account. Select the keywords you want to import and click the "Add keywords" button. Then select the campaign and ad group to which you would like to add the keywords.

Another option is to export the data to a spreadsheet. Figure 6-13 shows the options for selecting the group of keywords you wish to download from the table.

Figure 6-13: Downloading starred keywords

As represented in Figure 6-13, you can set the download options to include downloading all the keywords, the keywords selected by checking the checkbox in front of the keyword, the starred keywords, or a bulk download. One of the advantages of downloading is that all the data from the chart will export, and you can use the spreadsheet to review and manipulate data or import to the AdWords Editor Tool. (We cover this tool in a later section of this chapter.) The exported statistics will match the visible columns in the results table.

Another useful feature is the "View as text" option (Figure 6-14). You can add keywords that have been selected or starred to a text list that can easily be cut and pasted into your original spreadsheet. The text list is a great option when you're ready to export keywords and don't have a need for downloading the statistics, such as when adding keywords to AdWords Editor or when compiling a list of negative keywords.

Figure 6-14: Downloading keywords by viewing as text

Estimating Search Traffic and Cost

To understand the cost of clicks for your selected keywords, you can use the Estimate Search Volume function. These are only estimates, as Google can't predict your click-through rates and

quality score. However, estimates are better than nothing, since it's important to get a feel for what your costs will be and to ascertain whether your keywords are a good fit for your budget.

You can view traffic estimates for any selected group of keywords. You'll be prompted to associate the keywords with an ad group. The pop-up window will display estimates for average CPC, estimated clicks, and total estimated cost, as shown in Figure 6-15.
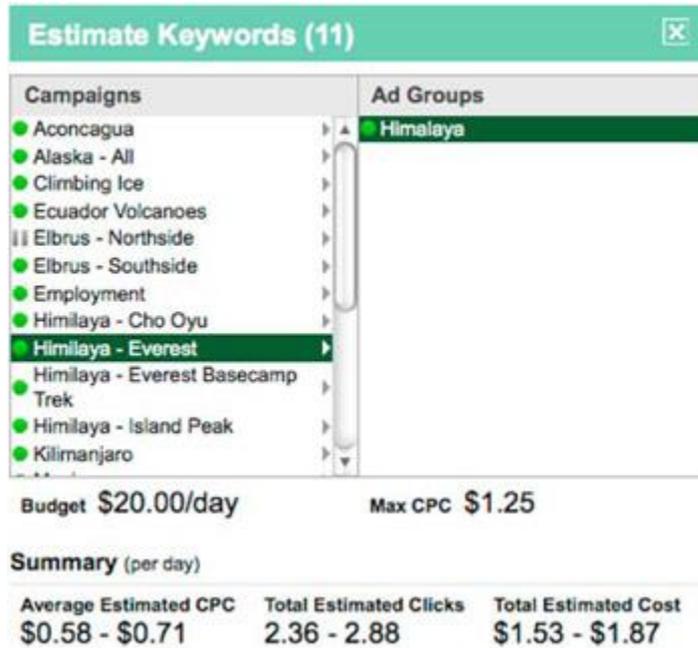Larger View

Figure 6-15: Estimated search traffic data

To see the estimated cost for an ad group, use the star function to note the keywords you want to add to your ad group. Use the "View as text" option to cut and paste the new list of keywords into the top of the tool. Click the Search button and your searched terms will display in the top portion of the results. Select all these keywords and click "Estimate search traffic." A pop-up will display your campaigns and ad groups, where you can select the matching ad group. The summary will display the estimated cost per day for your selected list of keywords for that ad group. If the estimate is beyond your budget, you may need to examine your list more closely.

Analyzing Web Sites with the Google Keyword Tool

The Google Keyword Tool will generate results based on the content of your web site(s), as shown in Figure 6-16. Enter the URL of a web site and Google will crawl that site to determine the associated keywords.
Larger View

Figure 6-16: Entering a web site

You can use this functionality to investigate a competitor's site, high-ranking sites, etc., and the Keyword Tool will display the keywords Google extracts from these sites. This can also be used as a starting point when first creating a keyword list; enter a page of your site and let Google tell you what it thinks the page is about.

Researching Negative Keywords

When using the Keyword Tool to research keywords, don't forget about identifying negative keywords. As you progress through the research process, make note of the keywords that have multiple meanings, some of which may be outside the scope of your business. We often open a text file and add these keywords as we use the tool.

Other Options for Keyword Research

In addition to using a keyword tool such as the one provided by Google, here are a few other options.

Competitive Research

It's always a good idea to do comparative searches for your product. Start at a general level then get more specific. Who are the online players that pop out? Who is your competition? If you're in an extremely competitive space, it might make sense to invest in a keyword spy tool. There are many third party tools on the market to help with this research. Most will list the keywords your competitors are bidding on and will show examples of their ad text.

Web Analytics

If you use a web analytics tool such as Google Analytics, look for the keywords visitors have used to reach your site. To find this data, in Google Analytics navigate to Traffic Sources ➤ Sources ➤ Search ➤ Organic.

To see the non-branded search queries visitors are using to get to your site organically, you can follow the previous steps and then use the advanced filter option to exclude keywords related to your brand. Alternatively, you can create branded and non-branded segments. We will discuss this in Chapter 11 when we explain how to use Google Analytics to improve your campaigns. If you're researching keywords for a branded campaign, reverse this approach by using the advanced filter to include branded keywords. Figure 6-17 shows a sample table of organic search queries.
Larger View
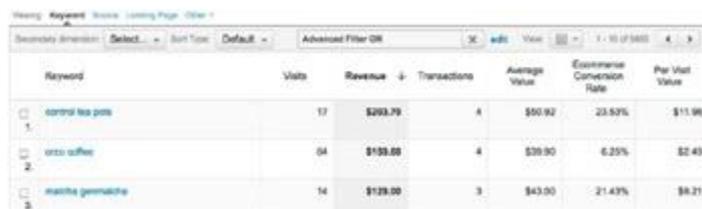
Figure 6-17: Organic non-branded search queries in Google Analytics

One of the advantages of using Google Analytics to discover keywords is that the keywords come with a wealth of data related to your site. If you're running e-commerce and/or attaching monetary values to your goals, you'll already have an understanding of what you should bid for a particular keyword.

Google Insights for Search

The Google Insights for Search tool (www.google.com/insights/search/) generates data based on worldwide Google web searches. You can see search volume as well as trends over time, and you can compare interest in a search term by area. Results can be filtered based on the type of search (web, image, news, or product), location, timeframe, and category. Google has minimum volume thresholds for keywords to be included in the tool, so keywords that don't see significant volume won't be included. The example in Figure 6-18 shows results for the keyword *Aspen real estate*. (Note: there are three "Learn more" links shown in this figure (upper right and lower center). If you're unsure of what you're looking at, it's often helpful to click on these links.)
Larger View

Figure 6-18: Google Insights for Search – interest over time for Aspen real estate keyword

What you can see from the "Interest over time" graph is that searches for *Aspen real estate* peak in the months of July and January. This is helpful information when budgeting for a PPC campaign.

The Insights for Search tool also provides geographic information on variations in regional interest, as shown in Figure 6-19.
Larger View

Figure 6-19: Regional data report from Insights for Search

This data is useful for determining which markets are showing the most interest in your products.

You can pull up Insights for Search results directly from the Keyword Tool. Click on the pull-down to the right of the keyword and the menu in Figure 6-20 will appear. Click on the option for Google Insights for Search.
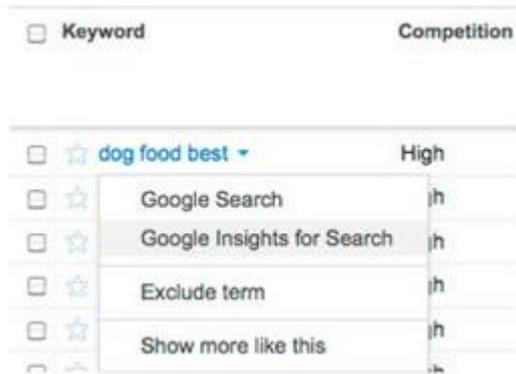Larger View

Figure 6-20: Invoking Insights for Search from the Keyword Tool

Generate Permutations

Another option for generating keywords is by creating a table based on your core keywords that allows you to create your own list of long-tail keywords. Add various prefixes and suffixes to your root keywords to generate a table similar to Table 6-2.

Table 6-2: Possible Keyword Prefixes and Suffixes

➡️Open table as spreadsheet

Prefix	Prefix	Root	Root	Suffix	Suffix
Discount Organic		Dog	food	online	store
Review Organic		Dog	food		
Review	Dog		food		
Buy	Healthy	Dog	food	online	

You can also find free tools online that will generate the permutations for you. SEOBook offers a free tool that outputs the data for easy upload to AdWords Editor. When first starting a new account, you don't need thousands of permutations. Instead, include variations based on different root words. Once you discover which keywords convert best, expand on those keywords.

Match Type Settings

In Chapter 2, we explained the various match types and their reach. As you enter keywords into your account, the match types you use are very important. Take the keywords in Figure 6-21 as an example.

Larger View

Figure 6-21: Search volume variations by match type

In this example, the amount of search volume for the broad match keyword is over six times that of the exact match keyword. When deciding to use broad match, be certain to include an extensive list of negative keywords. One option for adding negative keywords is using lists. By creating lists, you can add negatives in groups and then associate these lists with multiple campaigns. You can find these lists in the tree navigation under Adwords ➤ Campaigns Tab (left navigation frame) ➤ Shared library ➤ Campaign negative keywords. A list can be created directly from the Shared library menu or from the Keyword tab.

Broad match modifier (BMM) keywords are a great way to split the difference between broad match keywords and the more restrictive phrase and exact match. BMM opens up your keyword list without completely opening the floodgates. We have seen substantial increases in click-through rates with BMM. Figure 6-22 shows an example of how CTR can increase with the use of BMM. CTR is shown in the right column.
Larger View

Figure 6-22: CTR improvements with broad match modified keywords

Selecting Keywords

There are a couple of considerations to keep in mind when composing a keyword list. Remember that it's nearly impossible to find the perfect keywords at the onset of your campaign: a good keyword list is built over time. It's important to revisit the keyword research tool frequently for new searches. Make sure the keywords you choose accurately reflect your business. When using tools such as Google's Keyword Tool, you may be shown a wide range of suggestions, so be sure to handpick your keywords. Adding keywords suggested by Google without careful consideration will only result in mismatched keywords and a less cost-efficient campaign.

Don't repeat keywords in an account; if you do, you'll be in competition with yourself. You can include a keyword more than once if the campaign settings are designed so that keywords are not in competition with each other, such as in campaigns running in different geographical areas. To check your account for duplicate keywords, AdWords Editor has a solution. Within the AdWords Editor, go to Tools ➤ Find duplicate keywords. The window shown in Figure 6-23 will pop up.
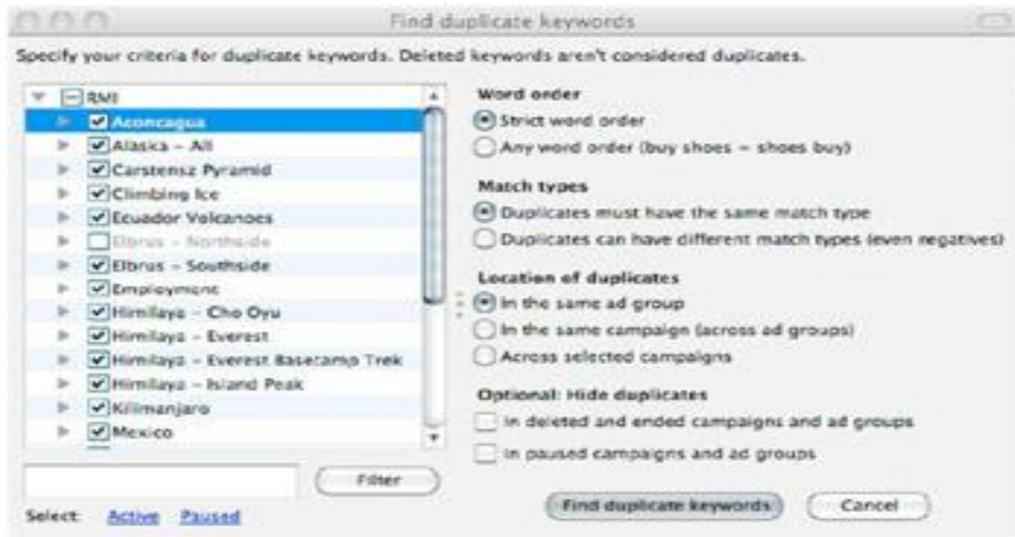Larger View

Figure 6-23: Finding duplicate keyword in AdWords Editor

Next, define your criteria. Strict word order is most relevant when trying to find duplicates in exact or phrase match. Any word order will find duplicates for broad match.

Once the tool has run and you're ready to delete duplicates, select the duplicates that you would like to delete. Use the "Select duplicates by" menu (Figure 6-24) to help select the duplicates in bulk.
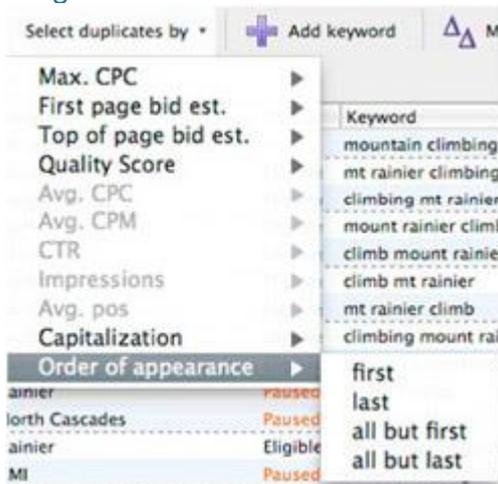
Larger View

Figure 6-24: Options for selecting duplicates in Adwords Editor

For example, you can select the keywords that have the lower quality score or the higher cost-per-click within the duplicate sets.

AdWords Editor has another feature that's helpful when selecting and organizing keywords and it's called Keyword Grouper. We often use this tool as an aid when we've inherited an unorganized account or when we have an unstructured list of keywords. Maybe your client handed off a list of keywords and you need to start somewhere. The tool works at the ad group level to sort keywords based on common terms. Therefore, imported keywords will be placed into a single ad group. Create an ad group to house these keywords. Ad groups are limited to 5,000 keywords so if your list is exceptionally big (i.e., over 5,000 keywords), you'll have to create more than one ad group. Treat this as a dummy group and name it something simple like GROUPER. Launch the tool by going to Tools ➤ Keyword Grouper in the AdWords Editor. A window will

open and you'll be prompted to select your ad group. Select your ad group, click "Generate common terms," and then click Next. Google's ad group suggestions will be listed, showing the included keywords and suggested ad group name. There's also an option for ad creation from a template, but we recommend skipping this option.

Here are a few guidelines for selecting keywords:
- When selecting keywords, be sure to keep in mind the searcher's projected intent.
- Keywords should match your goals and align with the settings in your campaign.
- Use the estimator to get a feel for what your spend will look like. Alternatively, you can export keyword data to a spreadsheet and generate your own estimates.
- Cover a wide range as opposed to a narrow focus. See what works best; you're looking for keywords that will help you grow your account.
- Use negative keywords to control the reach of your keywords. Negatives are especially important in constraining the wider reach of broad match keywords.

Refining Your Keyword List Over Time

Every day 16% of the search queries Google sees are queries that Google has never seen before. This means a keyword list is always a moving target.

Search Query Report

Search query data is helpful for refining your keyword list and discovering additional negative keywords to add to your account. Search query data shows you the actual queries that Google matched to your keywords that were then clicked on by visitors. This data allows you to see where unproductive traffic is occurring and what versions of your keywords are drawing the most clicks and conversions. Broad matched keywords will create the widest search query variations, while exact match keywords will have no variation.

For example, let's say you're a fly fishing guide offering trips in Alaska, and you see in the report that your ad showed when someone searched for *fly fishing jobs in Alaska*. You're a small operation not looking to hire, and you don't want to pay for a click for someone who is clearly not a potential client. You use this information to add the negative keywords *-job* and *-jobs* to your negative keyword list. On the flip side, the search query report can reveal high-volume, well-converting variations of your broad match keywords. You might also discover high volume keywords that warrant their own ad group.

Other things to look for are abbreviations you didn't think of when first doing your research, varied spacing between words, or domain names or URLs you've overlooked. In all of these scenarios, making changes will help to improve your click-through rate, which in turn improves your quality score. As you make decisions based on data from the search query report, pay attention to the number of impressions to ensure you're basing your choices on a large enough sample size.

There are two places to find this data: the first is from the keyword section of the AdWords interface, and the second is in Google Analytics. To see the report in the AdWords account interface, navigate to the Keywords tab and select All from the "See search terms" tab, as shown in Figure 6-25. If you would like to see only matched queries for a subset of the keywords, select the keywords you're interested in and then click on "Selected."
Larger View

Figure 6-25: Locating the Search Query Report in the AdWords interface

Once you launch the report you will see a list of queries with performance statistics for each search term (Figure 6-26).
Larger View

Figure 6-26: Query statistics

In the first column, *search term* refers to the search query that triggered your ads. The *match type* (second column) tells you how search terms triggering your ads are related to the keywords in your account.

- **Broad match:** The searched term is a variation of a keyword in your account. Let's use the data in Figure 6-26 as an example and look at the search term *aspen luxury rentals*. Google matched this search term to a keyword in your account; perhaps the keyword *aspen rental* is in your account. According to the match type rules, it's logical that Google would make this match. Looking at that search term, you have a few choices. You can add *aspen luxury rentals* to your current ad group. (We recommend broad matched modified or exact match or both.) You can deem *luxury* not relevant to your business and add it as a negative. Alternatively, you could create another ad group focusing on luxury-related keywords with luxury-focused ad text that takes the visitor to a landing page focusing on your luxury offerings.
- **Broad match (session-based):** This is an interesting one—and a bit confusing. The search term is considered a variation of a keyword from your account but is based on previous searches the user has performed during the same search session. This is part of Google's effort to personalize search results. Because Google is matching your ad based on earlier searches, your ads could be showing even though the searcher has changed the intent of their search. Session-based broad match is often frustrating to advertisers because there's little they can do to limit these types of matches. The best you can do in this situation is to add these search terms as negatives; however, it's certainly not possible to add every possible negative keyword.
- **Phrase match:** The search term contains a keyword in your account. As a reminder, keywords set to phrase match will match to queries that include your keyword in the exact spelling and order but may contain words before or after the keyword. Look for keywords that match as phrase match but would work better as exact match. Also look for possible negatives. For example, you may have the keyword *Alaska fishing guide* in your account, and the search term *Alaska fishing guide school* is receiving clicks. In this case, *school* is another logical negative.
- **Exact match:** The search term exactly matches a keyword from your account keyword list. The keyword in your account can be a broad match or phrase match keyword that matches exactly as entered.

To review, search queries matched to your ads should be added to your account and irrelevant searches should be added as negatives. In the example in Figure 6-26, *aspen luxury rentals,*

"aspen luxury rentals", and [*aspen luxury rentals*] should be added to your account. Conversely, because your business is *not* located in Piscataway, NJ, add the following negative keywords: -*[Piscataway, NJ]* and -*Jersey*. This will keep your ad from appearing for similar searches in the future. When adding negatives from within the report, you can select the keyword that you would like to add as a negative then click on the box for "Add as negative keyword." The settings in Figure 6-27 will appear at the top of the search query report.
Larger View

Figure 6-27: Adding negative keywords from the search query report

By default, Google suggests adding the keyword as exact match. However, exact match is not always the best choice. Take, as an example, a campaign where you are advertising for jobs within the mountaineering field. *Fishing* will never be relevant to your business. We would recommend adding just the word *fishing* as a broad match. Adding the negative as Google suggests will only exclude a very limited number of searches. Also, note that you have the option to add the negative keyword at the ad group level, the campaign level, or to a previously created negative keyword list.

As with other tables in the AdWords interface, it's possible to customize the columns to show the data most relevant to you. To do this, click the Columns pull-down and select "Customize Columns."

Google Analytics Data

To see search query data in Google Analytics, navigate to a keywords report. Keyword data is available under Traffic Sources reports as well as at Google Analytics ➤Advertising ➤ AdWords ➤ Matched Search Query. You can add a second dimension to show the keyword as it's listed in your report. Figure 6-28 shows an example table of the data you'll see.
Larger View

Figure 6-28: Visit data for keyword matches

By viewing the data in Google Analytics, you can see more in-depth information, such as Bounce Rate, which is available only in Google Analytics.

Keep in mind that the search query data only includes queries for ads that were both displayed and clicked on. Therefore, if you're receiving impressions for search terms matching your keywords but not being clicked on, these search terms won't appear in these reports. Search query reports are not available for keywords in the Display Network (although there's a similar report for placements, which we will discuss in Chapter 8.)

The Opportunities Tab in AdWords

Another source of information when refining your list is through the Opportunities tab in AdWords. The Opportunities tab is located in the main navigation section. Within the Opportunities page navigation frame is an Ideas link, which lists Google's suggestions for your campaign, broken out by budget and keyword suggestions. Figure 6-29 shows an example of suggested keywords.
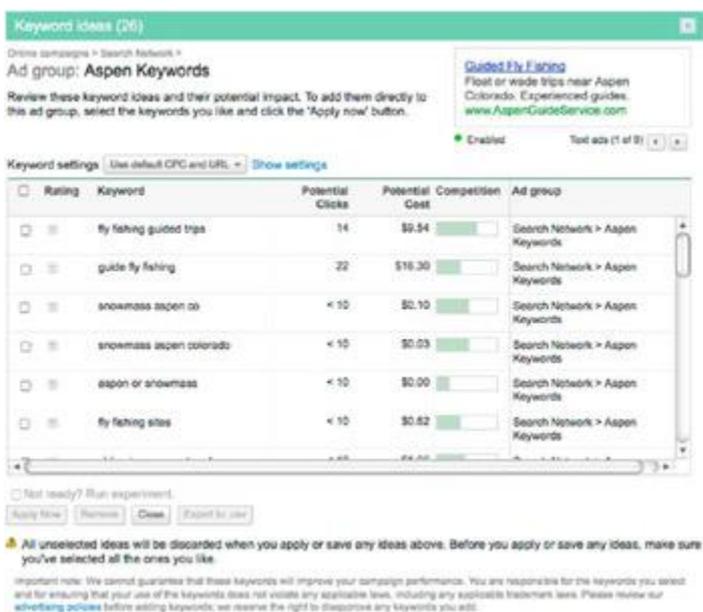Larger View

Figure 6-29: Keyword ideas via the Opportunities tab

You can sort the list by campaign by using the tree navigation on the left. You can also adjust results by choosing one of the goals suggested by Google, as shown in Figure 6-29. Click the ideas within a campaign and a window will appear, as shown in Figure 6-30.
Larger View

Figure 6-30: Reviewing keyword suggestions

We recommend reviewing the keywords closely versus adding keywords through "select all." Some keywords will be good recommendations while others will be out of the scope of your business and/or campaign. The benefit to looking through this data is that Google has insight into new searches in the Search Network, which change daily.

Keyword Opportunities in AdWords Editor

In addition to viewing keyword opportunities within AdWords, AdWords Editor provides ideas for expanding your keyword list. Once in the AdWords Editor tool, go to Tools ➤ Keyword Opportunities. There are three choices.

- **Keyword expansion:** Much like the Keyword Tool within AdWords, you can enter a keyword to see possible keyword suggestions. Figure 6-31 shows an example.

  Included in the results are search volume and competition information. You can add keywords directly into your account from this screen (Figure 6-32).
- **Keyword multiplier:** The keyword multiplier lists keywords to generate new keyword possibilities, which can then be added directly to your account. Figure 6-33 shows an example of the tool in use. Keyword possibilities with low search volume are not included in the results. The threshold of this setting can be changed in your AdWords Editor settings (Windows) or Preferences (Mac).
- **Search–based keywords:** This tool generates possible new keywords based on your web site. The suggested keywords are based on queries seen by Google over the past year. Because these suggestions are based on your web site, the volume estimates will differ from those provided by the Keyword Tool. Figure 6-34 shows the steps for generating results.
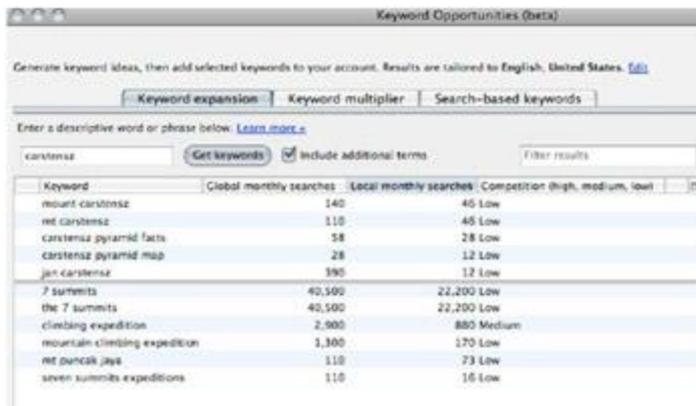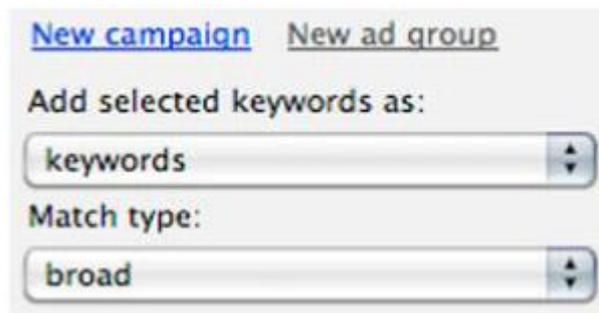
Figure 6-31: Keyword expansion in AdWords Editor

Figure 6-32: Adding keywords from AdWords Editor suggestions

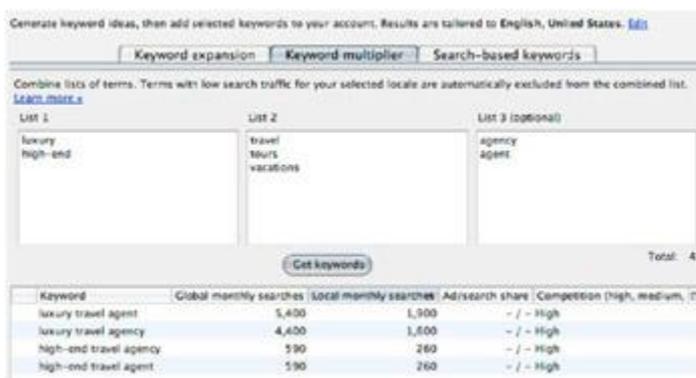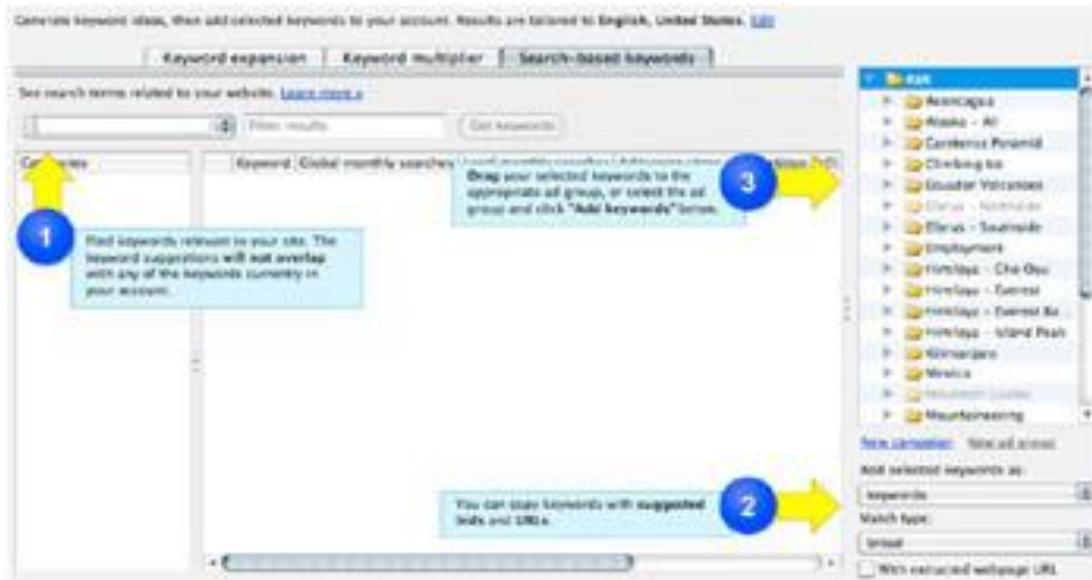**Figure 6-33:** Using the keyword multiplier in AdWords Editor

Larger View

Figure 6-34: Generating keyword ideas in AdWords Editor