

# DIGITAL MARKETING BASICS: PPC

## WHAT IS SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING (SEM)?

Search Engine Marketing (SEM) is an umbrella term referring to all activities that generate visibility in search engine result pages (SERPs) through the use of paid placement, contextual advertising and paid inclusion. It is comprised of pay-per-click (PPC) and search engine optimization (SEO).

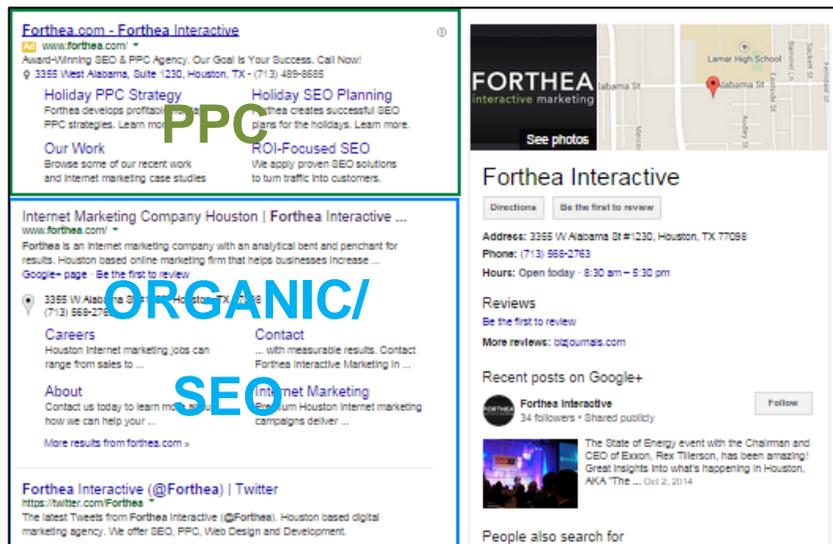
### What Is the Difference Between PPC and SEO?

#### PPC

PPC ads are paid ads displayed at the top and to the right in traditional search engines, such as Google, Yahoo & Bing. The advertiser only pays when a prospect actually clicks on the ad and ads are triggered only when a user voluntarily searches for a word or phrase that is part of a pre-selected buy by the advertiser. They are quick to implement and show immediate results.

#### SEO

Organic listings are unpaid listings that gain positions from Search Engine Optimization (SEO) techniques including optimized website code, content and link building. They appear under and to the right of PPC ads. They require more effort to implement and take longer to show results. However, once gains are made, they are more lasting than a PPC campaign.



## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PPC?

### Reach

Search is the most popular medium for locating information, with 100 billion+ searches per month on the Google search engine alone. PPC allows you to take part in this immense and most commonly used research channel.

### Targeting

PPC targets people who are actively searching for your product or service 100% of the time. PPC is not a billboard or an ad that may or may not be seen by people who require your goods. The efficacy of the channel is born from the fact that for your ad to appear, a potential customer must show interest in the form of a search query. In essence, they do you the favor of targeting themselves.

### Tracking & Transparency

PPC provides a level of accountability not found in any other forms of advertising. When properly set-up, PPC can be tracked down to the keyword that created the click, visit, order or other conversion. You can see where your money is going and optimize your campaign accordingly based on real metrics.

### Cost

PPC is structured around a performance model in that you only pay for the ads you run if somebody clicks on the ad featuring your product. This simplicity makes the channel an easy one to justify given the “fairness” of the price structure.

### Flexibility

The ability to modify your ad text, banner ad, target markets and budget within minutes makes PPC the most adaptable and efficient form of advertising. It is this efficiency that also makes PPC the ideal channel in which to test all facets of your advertising campaign.

## WHAT IS OUR PPC STRATEGY?

### Respect the Intent, Meet the Need

The best search campaigns respect the searcher’s intent and meet their need as specifically as they indicate it. For that reason, the more a campaign can be targeted to match the user’s exact search query, the more relevant the results will be. More relevancies equate to a more efficient campaign that converts at a higher level

Our campaigns are based on both a “national” and “local” search strategy.

### National vs. Local PPC

National and local paid search campaigns within a geo-targeted search engine such as Google, Yahoo or BING serve different roles, offer different benefits, have different structures and often perform very differently. When discussing local vs national PPC, it is also important to realize that the choice is not always an either/ or decision. Both types work well together to provide a comprehensive layering in which local targets at a more specific level while national works to make sure that no potential sales or conversion falls through the cracks.

#### National PPC

A national campaign offers wide distribution, awareness and volume in an easily implementable and manageable campaign. These campaigns often convert at a lower rate than a local campaign.

A national search campaign is targeted at a national or geo-fenced level and is composed of keywords, ads and landing page that are general or offer all possible options of a specific search.

#### Local PPC

A local campaign offers targeted distribution, relevance and ROI in a campaign that requires more effort and diligence to implement and manage.

Local campaigns are composed of geo-modified keywords, ads and landing pages specific to each local region. Ideally, a local campaign will be “hyper-localized” to not only include the local DMA, but also neighboring cities, neighborhoods and zip codes.

National PPC	Local PPC
Wide Distribution	Targeted Distribution
Awareness	Relevance
Volume	ROI
General Keywords, Ads, & Landing Pages	Geo-Modified Keywords, Ads, & Landing Pages
Easy Implementation & Manageability	More Effort & Diligence to Implement & Manage

## PPC FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Why isn't my ad showing?

Ads won't show for a number of reasons and it is important to know that an ad will NEVER show up 100% of the time.

- Budget - If the daily or monthly budget is exceeded, the ad will not show.
- Quality score - If your ad performs horribly, its quality score will drop below a threshold and it will stop showing.
- Heuristic nature of Google: Google learns by your behavior. If you search your ad 100 times and never click on it, it will show that ad much less.
- Google Being Google: Ads do not show 100% of the time.

### Why can't my ad always be on the top or the #1 listing every time?

To be eligible for a top spot your ad must have both a high Quality Score and a high Cost-per-Click bid relative to other advertisers. However, we do not recommend this approach in most cases.

Forthea PPC campaigns are optimized based on keyword conversions. So, if a keyword doesn't create a conversion (form, phone, etc) it is less likely to show because we'd rather bid on keywords that convert. We realize this can cause some issues when intuitively a client may expect a keyword should be great, while the numbers show the opposite is true, but optimizing on conversions rather than visibility is a strategy that works best for everybody.

### What can't I have the exact wording I want in my ads?

PPC ads have a number of limitations for both content and length. For example, Google ads do not allow the following:

- A display URL that does not accurately reflect the URL of the landing page, such as "google.com" taking users to "gmail.com."
- Overly generic ads that contain vague phrases such as "Buy products here"
- Gimmicky use of words, numbers, letters, punctuation, or symbols such as FREE

PPC ads are also limited by the number of characters on each line. The limitations as well as our methodology for ad writing:

<b>Headline</b>	<u>Matches Search Query</u>	25 Characters
<b>Description Line 1</b>	Features & Benefits.	35 Characters*
<b>Description Line 2</b>	Call To Desired Action	35 Characters
<b>Display URL</b>	Domain.com	35 Characters

*\* This line should also have punctuation at the end to ensure proper formatting in some horizontal formats*

## THINGS NOT TO DO AS A PPC CLIENT (PLEASE)

### Search Your Ads

Your first temptation will be to look for your ads online. This is completely normal but it's important that you understand that you can be working against your campaign when you do.

For example, if you search on an ad and don't click on it, you lower both your Click-Through-Rate and Quality Score, both of which can raise your Cost Per Click (CPC).

If you want to search for your own ads, it is imperative that you use the Google Preview Tool which allows you to do the search "offline" so it does not affect your campaign. The tool is also nice because you can segment by a number of factors such as location, device or language.

### Click on Your Ads

Clicking on your own ads guarantees you're spending money you don't need to spend on a person who will not convert. That is the exact opposite of what we at Forthea or you should want.

### Disappear

Forthea employs some of the best and most experienced search engine marketers in the U.S. We're experts in what we do and take pride in looking to win for every single client we have. What we are not are experts in what you do. We need your help.

We say we like to combine your industry expertise with our online expertise to create a winning recipe. To do that, we need you to participate. These include:

**Discovery Surveys** - We'll ask you within the first week to take part in a fairly extensive survey about your industry and past marketing efforts. Providing us with a full picture of what you do and your experience will go a long way to ensuring campaign success sooner.

**Monthly Meetings** - We host monthly meetings with every client to go over campaign metrics, successes, failures, strategy and what we'd like to do moving forward. Your participation is critical in making sure we are optimizing our campaigns as best we can and focusing on the metrics and goals that mean the most to you.

**Feedback Requests** - Lead generation campaigns need feedback on the quality of the leads. Ad text will always be better if you give it a good look. Keyword selection and optimization will go infinitely faster with your feedback. Make yourself available for ad hoc questions and we will all benefit from this collaboration.

## KEY PPC TERMS:

**Ad** - Text or banner advertisements containing your marketing message, call-to-action, & ad extensions that allow users to click and be directed to a landing page designed to convert them to buy your product and/ or service.

**Ad Extensions** – A feature that shows extra business information with your ad, like an address, phone number, store rating, or more webpage links.

**Ad Group** – A set of keywords, ads, and bids you manage together, in order to show ads to people likely to be interested in them.

**Ad Position** – The order in which your ad appears on a page in relation to other ads. An ad position of "1" means that your ad is the first ad on a page.

**Ad Rank** – A value that's used to determine your ad position (where ads are shown on a page) and whether your ads will show at all. Ad Rank is calculated using your bid amount, the components of Quality Score (expected click-through rate, ad relevance, and landing page experience), and the expected impact of extensions and other ad formats.

**Cache** – A temporary store of data collected by your Internet browser as you surf the web, including elements from webpages that you frequently visit.

**Campaign** – A set of ad groups (ads, keywords, and bids) that share a budget, location targeting, and other settings. Your AdWords account can have one or many ad campaigns running.

**Click** – A click is when a user interacts with your ad by clicking on it, typically showing an intention to visit your website and learn more about what you offer.

**Clickthrough Rate (CTR)** – A ratio showing how often people who see your ad end up clicking it. CTR can be used to gauge how well your keywords and ads are performing. CTR is the number of clicks that your ad receives divided by the number of times your ad is shown expressed as a percentage ( $\text{clicks} \div \text{impressions} = \text{CTR}$ ).

**Conversion** – A conversion happens when someone clicks your ad and then takes an action that you've defined as valuable to your business, such as an online purchase or a call to your business from a mobile phone. Common conversions include sales, calls and form submissions. Other conversions may include a download, viewing specific material or even time spent on site.

**Cost-Per-Click (CPC)** – Cost-per-click (CPC) bidding means that you pay for each click on your ads. For CPC bidding campaigns, you set a maximum cost-per-click bid - or simply "max. CPC" - that's the highest amount that you're willing to pay for a click on your ad.

**Destination URL** – The URL address for the page in your website where you'd like people to be sent after they click your ad. Your destination URL isn't visible in the ad, so you can use it to direct people to a specific page within your site without cluttering your ad.

**Display URL** – The webpage address that appears with your ad, typically shown in green text. Display URLs are meant to appear in your ad to give people a clear idea of what page they'll arrive at when they click an ad.

**Display Network** – A group of more than a million websites, videos, and apps where your ads can appear. Sites in this network show relevant AdWords ads.

**Impression** – How often your ad is shown. An impression is counted each time your ad is shown on a search result page or other site on the Google Network.

**Impression share** – Impression share (IS) is the number of impressions you've received divided by the estimated number of impressions you were eligible to receive. If your ad shows 8 times in 10 searches, you have an 80% impression share. This metric is a good barometer of how much volume exists for your set of keywords.

**Keywords** – Words or phrases describing your product or service that you choose to help determine when and where your ad can appear.

**Landing Page** – The web page at which a searcher arrives after clicking on an ad. Landing pages are important to the success of PPC campaigns since it is landing page actions that determine Ad Rank.

**PPC (Pay-Per-Click) Advertising** – A model of search advertising in which you only pay for the clicks on your ads, which themselves direct searchers to a specific page in your site. Well known PPC Advertising opportunities are with Google AdWords and Microsoft adCenter. Cost per ad click-through is based on your bid which is influenced by what the competition is willing to pay for the same keywords and the search engines' proprietary quality measures of your ad and the landing page content.

**Quality Score** – An estimate of the quality of your ads, keywords, and landing page. Higher quality ads can lead to lower prices and better ad positions.

**Remarketing** – A feature that lets you reach people who have previously visited your website. Your ads can show to these customers when they visit other websites in the Google Display Network or when they search on Google using your keywords.

**Search Query** – The word or phrase a searcher types into a search field, which initiates search engine results page listings and PPC ad serves. In PPC advertising, the goal is to bid on keywords that closely match the search queries of the advertiser's targets.

**SERP** – Acronym for Search Engine Results Page. The page delivered to a searcher that displays the results of a search query entered into the search field. The SERP displays both natural listings and paid ads in different places and by various rank.

**Sitelinks** – Ad extensions that allow you to include additional links in your standard text ad.

**Match Type** – Settings for each keyword that help control how closely the keyword needs to match a person's search term in order to trigger your ad.

**Broad Match** – Ads show for searches on similar phrases and relevant variations, including synonyms, singular and plural forms, possible misspellings, stemmings (such as floor and flooring), related searches, and other relevant variations..

- *Example: kittens = Searches that match: kittens, kitten photos, adopt a kitten*

**Phrase Match** – Ads show only for searches that include the exact phrase, or close variations of that exact phrase, with additional words before or after.

- *Example: "adopt a kitten" = searches that match: adopt a kitten, how to adopt a kitten*

**Exact Match** – Ads show only for searches that use that exact phrase, or close variations of that exact phrase, and no other words.

- *Example: [adopt a kitten] = Searches that match: adopt a kitten*

**Negative match** – Ads don't show for any search that includes that term.

- *Example: -free = Searches that won't match: free kitten adoption, free kitten calendars, who wants to free the kittens*