

The 20-Minute PPC Work Week

Making the Most of Your PPC Account in Minimal Time



A WordStream Guide

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If you look at the pay-per-click (PPC) marketing campaigns managed by small and medium-sized businesses, most of them are in a state of disrepair, if not outright disaster. We've reviewed thousands of Google AdWords accounts with our free AdWords Performance Grader, and we've found some scary statistics in the process. For example:

- Did you know that over half of AdWords advertisers haven't checked their account in the past month?
- And another 25% haven't logged in once in over 90 days?

The primary reason that SMBs fail to achieve a return on investment from PPC is simple: ***They don't spend enough time in their accounts.***

From the thousands of paid search accounts we've evaluated, we've discovered a strong correlation between account activity and performance — advertisers who make time on a regular basis to do active work in their accounts almost always see better results.

But don't panic! We know that marketers and business owners at smaller companies are short on time and often juggling multiple roles — you usually don't have the luxury of hiring a full-time PPC manager. The reality is, you don't have to spend days or even hours per week working on PPC to make a difference. You can make a real impact on your PPC performance in just 20 minutes per week. ***Really.***

The rest of this paper will outline a proven, consistent workflow that you can follow every week to keep your PPC account in fighting shape. The whole process can be completed in under half an hour per week. Let's get started!

The 20-Minute Work Week: Your Most Impactful Weekly Workflow

If you can spare 20 minutes per week to optimize your paid search account, you can start to see results from PPC. We've outlined a workflow to guide you toward the tasks that will make the most impact on your bottom line. Here is your 20-minute work week:

Minutes 0 – 1: Check Bids and Budget

The first two minutes of your weekly routine should be focused on bid management. The key here is to base bid changes on keyword performance. At a basic level, you'll want to:

- **Raise bids** on keywords that are performing well (converting at a profitable rate)
- **Lower bids** on keywords that are depleting your budget without delivering ROI

Did you know that over half of AdWords advertisers haven't checked their account in the past month? And another 25% haven't logged in once in over 90 days?



Remember, there's no real reason to limit budget on keywords that are driving profitable leads. In addition, remember that this isn't a one-time task — you'll need to optimize bids on a regular basis, because keyword performance can improve or degrade over time due to factors outside your control. However, bid optimization isn't a task you need to complete every day. You'll need longer timeframes to gather enough data so you can make informed bidding decisions. So if your PPC budget is large enough, the investment in software could definitely be worth your while.

Minutes 2 – 4: Pause Poorly Performing Keywords

Look for keyword outliers with below average ROI and/or Quality Scores — these are the terms that are costing you money and hurting your results. By pausing those keywords, you can stop the damage. Then, as time permits, you can work on optimizing those keywords or simply dumping them from your account, if they turn out to be irrelevant to your business.

Minutes 5 – 9: Keyword Research

Keyword research is an important part of your PPC workflow — the quality of your keyword research can actually make or break your campaigns. After all, if you're not bidding on the right terms, your ads won't reach the right audience.

This portion of your week should be devoted to:

- **Adding promising new keyword opportunities** to your account — keyword expansion is key to increasing your reach.
- **Identifying negative keywords** — these are terms that aren't relevant to your business and will eat into your budget without delivering quality leads.
- **Experimenting with different keyword match types**, such as phrase and exact match, which are more restrictive than broad match.

Ideally, you'll develop a keyword universe that is both deep and broad, while still being highly targeted to the type of website visitor you want to attract.

Minutes 10 – 13: Ad Text Optimization

Well-written text ads get more clicks and help qualify your leads, so you only pay for valuable traffic. The best way to determine what messaging works with your audience is to test continuously. For starters, make sure that your ads include the keyword you're bidding on, as well as a benefit statement and strong call to action (tell the searcher why they should click your ad). Then test variations of your headline, word choice, and tone. Rotate your ads and the best of the best will rise to the top.

If you're not bidding on the right terms, your ads won't reach the right audience.

On a weekly basis, spend a few minutes to throw out your worst two ads and replace them with new text. Doing this regularly will net you higher click-through rates (CTR) and Quality Scores over time — that means you'll drive more leads at a *lower* cost per click. You can also use this time to try out new ad extensions, which can further boost your CTR. Extensions allow you to expand your ad with more information and links, giving searchers more opportunities to find what they're looking for on your site.

Minutes 15 – 18: Improve Campaign Relevancy

The more relevant your keywords, ad groups and campaigns, the more success you'll enjoy. Google rewards relevance with high Quality Scores, better rankings and lower costs, which all contribute to a high ROI from search marketing. To improve relevance, here are some of the things you can do:

- **Avoid ad group bloat.** Split your largest ad group into two smaller, more targeted groups. Tightly knit ad groups tend to earn higher Quality Scores.
- **Create a new, more targeted landing page.** Too few landing pages is a sure way to water down your relevance. It's best if each of your text ads aligns closely with a landing page — there should be a clear through-line from the keyword you're bidding on to the ad and the destination URL.

Set a goal to develop at least one more targeted ad group or landing page offer every month.

Minutes 19 – 20: PPC Reporting

You're almost there! The last thing you need to accomplish before you can move on to the rest of your job is reporting. This is actually the fun part — if you've been following the 20-Minute PPC Work Week, **your results are improving**, and you can brag to your boss or your client. Show off your progress, and set goals for next month.

The above steps can be completed in about 20 minutes per week — but the reality is, it's hard to get this all done in the AdWords interface alone. You'll find this workflow much faster and easier to follow if you incorporate some outside tools. You might need to venture outside of AdWords and leverage third-party tools and software such as:

- Keyword research tools
- Bid management tools
- Conversion rate optimization tools
- Analytics software

Dedicated software tools offer the benefit of automation (time savings) and, compared to AdWords, more control over how your money is spent.

Getting It All Done in 20 Minutes a Week with WordStream

Rather than try to juggle multiple platforms and tools to manage your PPC campaigns, WordStream empowers you to get it all done in a **single, integrated platform**: WordStream PPC Advisor. **The 20-Minute PPC Work Week™** is your customized alert center inside PPC Advisor, a weekly to-do list with smart recommendations for PPC optimization. You get **guided expertise** to help you complete the tasks that will have maximum impact on your bottom line in the minimal amount of time.

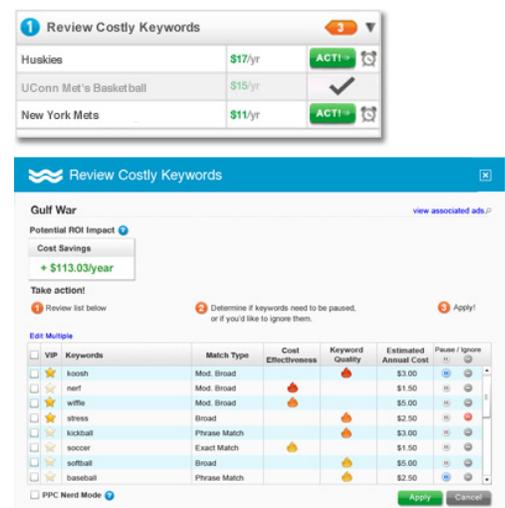
These tools include:

- **Alert Center** — Weekly automatic alerts tell you exactly how you can save money now.



The screenshot shows the '20 Minute PPC Work Week' alert center. It features a progress bar at the top indicating '25% done'. The main content is divided into two sections: '1 Pause Poorly Performing Keywords' and '2 Add Negative Keywords'. The first section lists keywords like 'Huskies', 'UConn Met's Basketball', and 'New York Mets' with their annual costs and 'ACTI' buttons. The second section lists negative keywords like 'Massachusetts', 'Unemployed PDF', and 'New England Patriots' with their potential savings and 'ACTI' buttons. A callout bubble highlights the 'ACTI' buttons. At the bottom, it shows 'Total Potential Savings' of \$3,049 per year and 'You've already saved' \$78.00 annually.

- **Optimize Keyword Bids** — Set keyword bids to the right level to optimal performance.
- **Review Costly Keywords** — Seek out and destroy underperforming keywords in your account.



The screenshots show the 'Review Costly Keywords' interface. The top screenshot is a summary view showing keywords like 'Huskies', 'UConn Met's Basketball', and 'New York Mets' with their annual costs and 'ACTI' buttons. The bottom screenshot is a detailed view for the keyword 'Gulf War'. It shows a 'Potential ROI Impact' of '+ \$113.03/year' and a 'Take action!' section with three steps: '1 Review list below', '2 Determine if keywords need to be paused, or if you'd like to ignore them.', and '3 Apply!'. Below this is a table of keywords with columns for 'VIP', 'Keywords', 'Match Type', 'Cost Effectiveness', 'Keyword Quality', 'Estimated Annual Cost', and 'Pause / Ignore'.

VIP	Keywords	Match Type	Cost Effectiveness	Keyword Quality	Estimated Annual Cost	Pause / Ignore
<input type="checkbox"/>	koosh	Mod. Broad	🔴	🔴	\$3.00	🔴
<input type="checkbox"/>	nerf	Mod. Broad	🔴	🔴	\$1.50	🔴
<input type="checkbox"/>	wiffle	Mod. Broad	🔴	🔴	\$5.00	🔴
<input type="checkbox"/>	stress	Broad	🔴	🔴	\$2.50	🔴
<input type="checkbox"/>	kickball	Phrase Match	🟡	🟡	\$3.00	🔴
<input type="checkbox"/>	soccer	Exact Match	🟡	🟡	\$1.50	🔴
<input type="checkbox"/>	softball	Broad	🟡	🟡	\$5.00	🔴
<input type="checkbox"/>	baseball	Phrase Match	🟡	🟡	\$2.50	🔴

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- **Dashboard Reports** — Get a quick picture of your account's performance.
 - **Smart Keyword Tools** — Find new profitable keywords, do negative keyword research, spy on your competitors and more.
 - **QueryStream** — Take immediate action on your search query report.

Benchmark Your Campaigns with the AdWords Performance Grader

WordStream offers a free tool to help you benchmark your campaign performance and compare your results to those of similar advertisers.

[Get your free performance report now.](#)

See It for Yourself: Try PPC Advisor Free

Sign up for a free trial of WordStream PPC Advisor and you can see the power of the 20-Minute PPC Work Week for yourself — you'll get actionable, customized recommendations based on real data. Try it now to save time, save money, and drive more leads through PPC .

About WordStream

[WordStream Inc.](#) provides search marketing software and PPC services that help marketers get better results from their PPC and SEO efforts. The company's services deliver quality traffic, clicks and conversions across all major search engines including Google, Bing and Yahoo Search. WordStream's easy-to-use software facilitates more effective paid and organic search campaigns by providing a customized workflow, the 20-Minute PPC Work Week, to help advertisers increase relevance and Quality Scores in Google AdWords, follow proven best practices, and get expert-level results in a fraction of the time. Whether you're new to search marketing or are experienced at PPC management, WordStream's keyword tools, AdWords management tools, and Quality Score optimization tools can help grow your business and drive better results.

