

Getting to the top of Google with AdWords

It's not only how much you bid per click that will determine where your ad appears on Google's search results, but also the quality of your offering. Find out how to improve your campaign by increasing your Quality Score.

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Video: What is quality score and why does it matter?

As we saw at the start of this series, Google AdWords can be a great way of getting your business displayed on the first page of Google search results. You cannot influence the normal 'organic' search results you see on Google, but you can influence where your ad appears.

Two factors influence your Ad Rank, that is where your ad appears: your bid (or CPC) and your Quality Score. [Last week](#) we looked at how to determine your CPC, this week we'll take a closer look at Quality Score.

What is Quality Score?

In AdWords, Quality Score is a measure of how relevant your advertising is to people who search for your business, products or services.

Each of the keywords or terms are assigned a Quality Score based on how relevant users who searched for these keywords found your ad. Google uses a variety of means to calculate Quality Score including:

- How closely related the text in your ad is to the keywords that you chose to trigger it.
- The clickthrough rate (CTR) of your keywords - i.e. how many users that saw your ad clicked on it.
- Whether your landing page offers content that is likely to be helpful to people searching for those keywords.

Based on these factors, your Quality Score may adjust up or down over time. The best way to maintain a good quality score is to make sure your ad is always relevant to the product you are advertising, the URL y

are sending users to and the content on that page.

Why is Quality Score Important?

Google makes sure that the user always has a relevant and useful experience when searching the web. Only ads that are legitimate and truly relevant to a search query are shown next to search results. Ads that are particularly relevant are given a higher Quality Score and are more likely to appear higher up in the results. Ads that are irrelevant are penalised and drop down in ranking, no matter how high their CPC.

This is good news for both users and advertisers: users do not see irrelevant search results; and thus learn to trust the advertising that they see.

AdWords uses both your Quality Score and the amount you're willing to pay per click (your CPC bid) to determine where your ads are displayed on search result pages. Generally, the higher your Quality Score, the better your ad position and the lower your cost-per-click.

Where Can I Find My Quality Scores?

To find your keywords' Quality Scores select any campaign or ad group and select the **Keywords** tab. Hover over the speech bubble icon next to the status of any keyword to view detailed information, including the Quality Score, for the keyword.

To view the Quality Score for all keywords, you can also enable a column in your account statistics. Here's how:

Step 1 - Sign in to your AdWords account at adwords.google.co.za

Step 2 - Select the campaign or ad group you want to view

Step 3 - Click the **Keywords** tab

Step 4 - Go to the toolbar and click **Columns**, then click "Customize columns"

Step 5 - Select the **Qual. Score** checkbox and hit **Save**

[<< last week's article: Bidding and budgeting basics with Google AdWords](#)

[<< Back to Google AdWords article index](#)

[>> next article: Spend 10 minutes tuning your AdWords account](#)