



# Search Engine Marketing (SEM) Audit Checklist

Your one-stop-shop for improving paid search performance and completing an audit of your pay-per-click channels. If you need a fresh set of eyes, Imarc's digital marketing experts are ready to help.

## GOALS

- ☐ Reiterate your campaign goals, especially if you're presenting to internal/external stakeholders.
- ☐ Benchmark your paid search performance to other marketing channels, like social, email, etc.
- ☐ Use industry benchmarks to compare your performance of paid search KPIs.
- ☐ Identify which campaigns contributed to your goals and at what cost. Then, identify what may have hurt your goals.



**Inheriting a paid search account can be like digging through someone's kitchen cabinets. There's a method to the madness, but it requires opening 5 drawers to find the spoon you're looking for. The best way to overcome this hurdle is to perform a detailed SEM audit.**

DEREK CUMMINGS  
Digital Marketing Consultant

## OVERALL PERFORMANCE

*(repeat for each campaign type)*

- ☐ Identify the top performing campaign that impacted your business goals.
- ☐ Analyze and sort the campaigns based on the following criteria:
  - Clicks
  - Impressions
  - Conversions
  - Highest Click-through-rate (CTR)
  - Lowest Cost Per Conversion
  - Lowest Cost-per-click (CPC)
- ☐ Evaluate the average cost per click and cost per conversion, determine if this cost is justified based on the conversion value.
- ☐ Leverage industry benchmarks for each campaign type to evaluate where your business stacks up.
- ☐ Identify the top performing landing pages from the campaign. If multiple, were there similarities in layout, content or landing page events?
- ☐ Identify the top performing ads from the campaign. If multiple, were there any similarities in tone/messaging?
- ☐ Pinpoint where you spent the majority of your budget. Evaluate the ROI.
- ☐ Look for opportunities to re-allocate underperforming campaigns to successful ones.
- ☐ Identify underperforming campaigns and set an action plan to improve or remove them.



## DISPLAY CAMPAIGNS

- ☐ Examine your audiences & placements for performance in the following areas:
  - CTR
  - Conversions
  - CPC
- ☐ Identify successful and engaged audiences. Find opportunities to reallocate more of your budget to these.
- ☐ Investigate successful placements for your business goals. Consider whitelisting successful websites for future campaigns.
- ☐ Exclude placements that aren't working. Do this on an ongoing basis, around once per month.
- ☐ Identify top performing ads and banner creative. Make sure to compare the performance of mobile vs. desktop sizes.

## SEARCH CAMPAIGNS

- ☐ Analyze historical keyword performance. We recommend exporting a CSV to slice and dice your data.
  - Quality Score
  - CTR
  - Conversions
  - CPC
- ☐ Remove keywords that aren't converting or producing results.
- ☐ Add negative keywords on an ongoing basis, weekly while your campaign scales & bi-weekly/monthly once it's been running.
- ☐ Identify top performing ad copy and headlines by quality score. Ensure they are getting their fair share (or more) of the budget.
- ☐ Mix in a variety of ad types, like text, dynamic or responsive ads
- ☐ Are there any clear trends as to what is working best?
- ☐ Adapt or combine successful traditional or expanded text ads into responsive ads.

