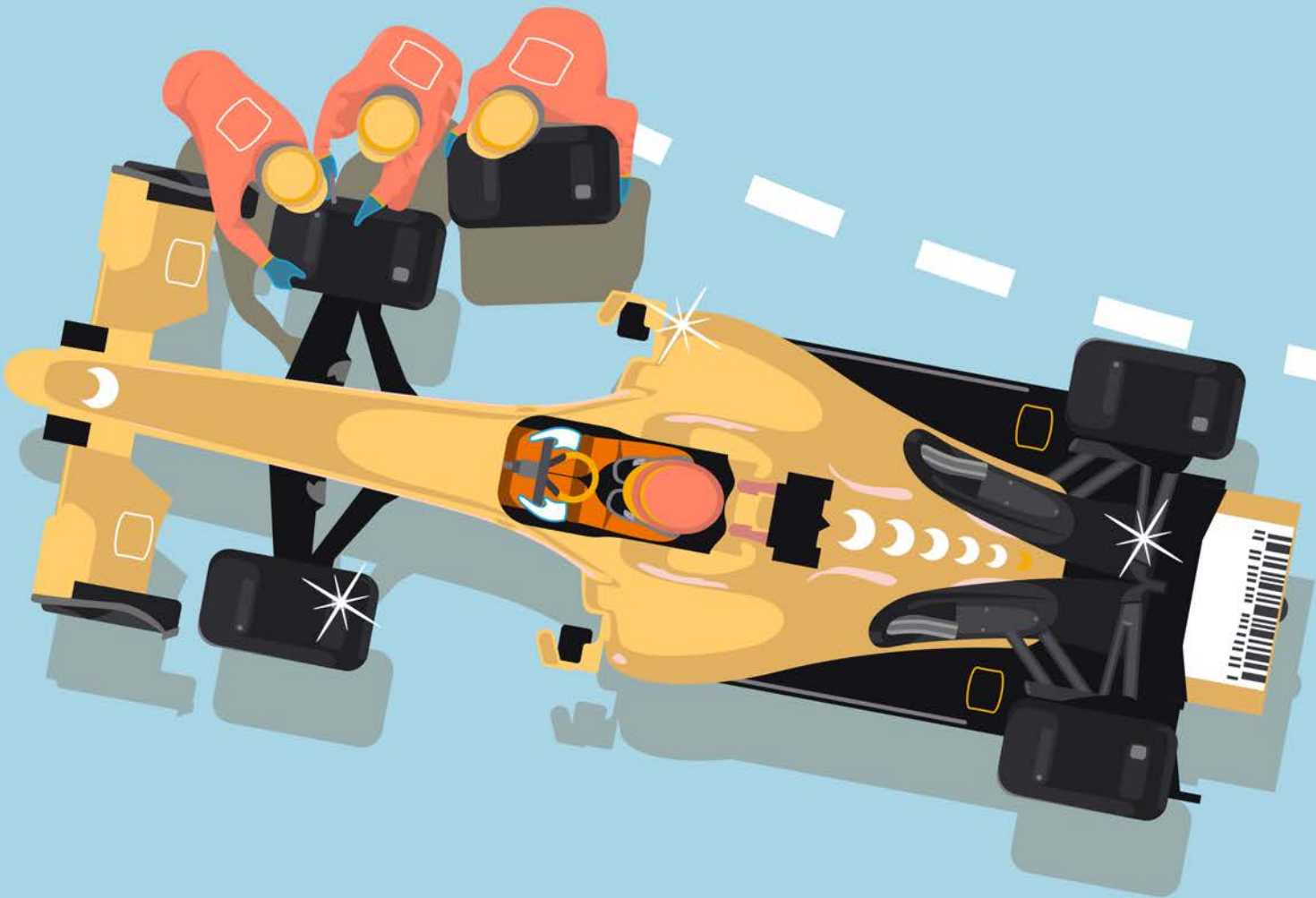




Radiant PPC

Quick Growth for **Unbounce** with PPC

Quality Product + Quality Traffic = Fast Growth




Radiant PPC +



unbounce

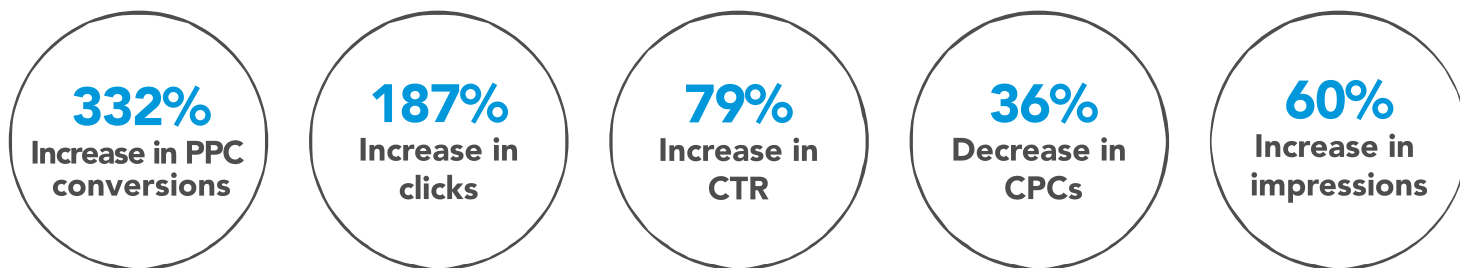
Quality Product + Quality Traffic = Fast Growth

I've had the pleasure of working with the amazing team at Unbounce recently, and they've graciously let me share with you some of what I accomplished for them in PPC. If you work in online marketing, you know Unbounce and you probably use it. *(If you're not using it, stop reading this and go sign up for it. Unbounce makes it trivially easy to create new landing page variants and A/B test them. Conversion rate optimization is worth literally thousands of dollars to you, and Unbounce lets you do it yourself for \$79 a month. [Do it now.](#))*

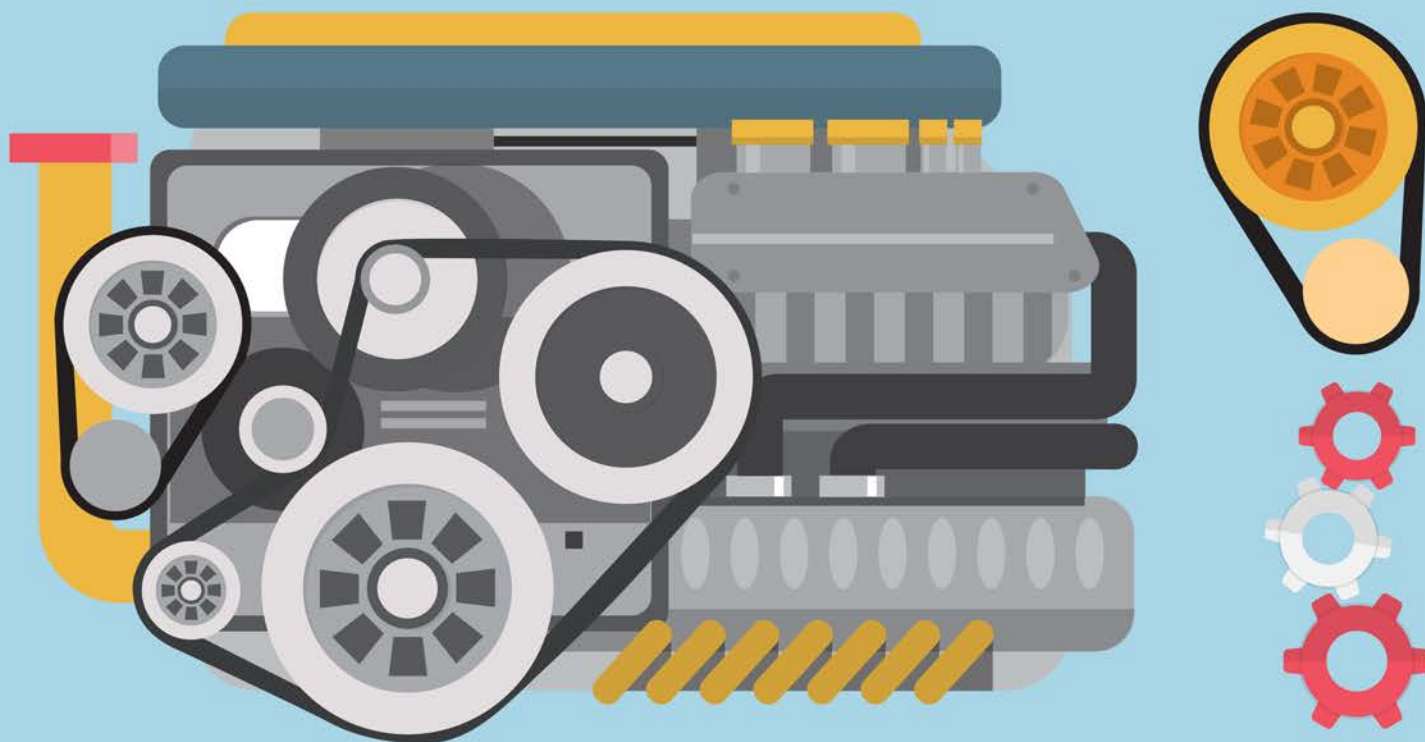


Unbounce came to me with a desire to get their foot in the PPC game and then gain quick growth. Through proven paid search methodologies and adapting PPC optimization strategies to fit the scenario, I was able deliver strong results and great improvement for Unbounce. The first month, was focused on set up and meeting the initial cost per conversion goal. The next 3 months were focused on growth.

Over those 4 months the following results were achieved:



In this case study, I will detail my technique on to achieve these types of results quickly. I will explain how to hit the ground running with any pay-per-click campaign through careful campaign creation, how to find faster success through quick optimizations, and how to grow a campaign quickly.



Discovering & Assessing The Situation

PPC had fallen through the cracks at Unbounce. Self-serve conversion rate optimization software is a hot market, and Unbounce is a dominant player in the niche. Word of mouth and organic search are working great for them and driving fast growth at the company, so it was easy to focus on that and not explore other channels.

Unbounce asked if I could do three things for them: validate the ROI of paid search, if profitability was there to grow the account as fast as possible, and finally support the transition to a full-time paid search manager that they would hire.

Before I began, there was an Adwords account with a few test campaigns, but the validation of paid search had not been approached in an organized manner; it was basically a new arena for them.



Campaign Creation

My approach was to create new campaigns based around the most highly relevant keywords, and hit the CPA goal. Once the campaigns were stable, I'd grow that list of keywords as well as expand to broader terms. We achieved success with highly-organized campaigns, a select group of highly targeted keywords, and very specific ad copy.

To meet this challenge in the shortest period of time possible, I took a very systematic approach to campaign creation. These aspects were critical to reach the goal: Initial keyword selection, campaign organization, and careful ad copy creation. Following that, fast and thoughtful optimizations were needed to quickly hit goals and improve campaign performance. If you set up a campaign well, you can see what is going on more clearly and make faster optimizations based on that.

I started with:

4
Campaigns

20 to 50
ad groups per
campaign

5 to 10
keywords per
ad group

3
ads per ad
group






When you're working with a test budget, putting it all behind a few arrows lets you get results fast.



Keyword Selection

The best keyword research strategy is pretty straightforward. I found the terms that were the most important and relevant to the product, and then came up with as many modifiers (e.g., create, build, make, etc) as I could think of. Keywords proliferate, and the account structure needs to make it easy to handle them. I used separate ad groups for each modifier; this allowed you to quickly see which set of keywords were working, and which were not. Keeping the ad groups tightly siloed also allowed for the creation of highly relevant ad copy!

Within these ad groups, I tested additional variations of exact, phrase, and broad match modified for these keywords. (I steered clear of regular broad match as the matching can be much too broad. I used it on the long tail keywords that were highly relevant to the campaigns.) I also began a campaign for branded terms to protect the brand. This is something that should be done for any recognizable brand right off the bat. Other advertisers will advertise on your brand and it is important to be covering that base.

-  Initial test: 720 keywords
-  Added during testing: 9,018 keywords
-  Growth: 1,252% increase over 4 months





Organizing Campaigns

For each campaign, I started with an overlying theme or head term and then created ad groups based on modifiers. Each ad group contained anywhere from 6 to 20 keywords and 3 ads. I also kept all match types of a keyword in the same ad group.



The most important thing to remember when creating a campaign for fast growth is that getting enough traffic to an ad group is important to determine what ad copy works and if that set of keywords work. Some PPC managers like to create ad groups for each match type and only have 2-3 keywords per ad group. But, when you are trying to figure out what types of terms work and what ad copy works, this is not an ideal strategy. You want to keep your match types together and not disperse the long tail terms into their own ad groups as it will take much too long to determine what works.



Ad Copy Creation

For optimal ad copy testing, I created 3 ads per ad group. In established campaigns, I typically run 2 ads – a winner and a challenger – but since these were brand new campaigns I created 3 fairly different variations. This allowed me to get an idea quickly of what type of copy would work best. I tailored all ads to the keywords in the ad group, using those terms in the ad copy as much as possible. This is part of the reason for those siloed ad groups. Highly relevant ad copy will lead to better click-through-rate and higher quality scores. It is very important to start off on the right foot with this.

Other Campaign Settings

It's important to set up several other options in Google Adwords. Google Analytics data allowed an understanding of how Unbounce performed on mobile devices. Since they have mobile responsive landing pages, I knew the landing pages would look great on mobile devices; I definitely took that into account when setting the mobile bid adjustments. Google's advice is to bid down by 20% on mobile devices; that can be a starting point, but you can use analytics to get a feel for how a site actually performs on mobile and adjust from there. When looking at analytics, my hunch that Unbounce performed well on mobile was validated.

I set up some basic ad scheduling to get started. There are some general assumptions you can make – you don't have to wait to gather the hourly data. Most lead generation and B2B don't perform well from 12am to 6am, so it makes sense to bid down during those hours.



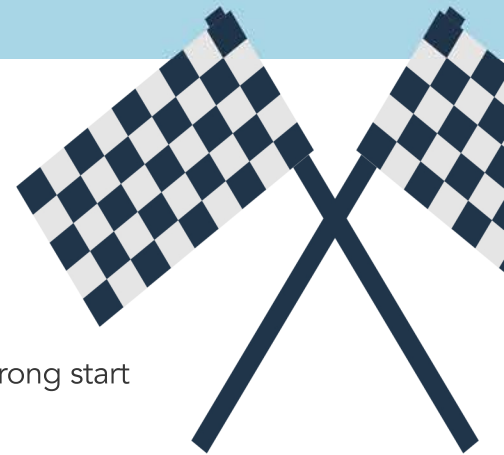
Other Campaign Settings *(continued)*

Ad scheduling is often overlooked, but taking a moment to get a basic setup in place will improve performance immediately.

Finally, I implemented all ad extensions. Callout extensions really help CTR as do the sitelinks, plus they provide extra relevant information to potential customers. I took what I knew to be awesome about Unbounce and what makes them different from their competitors, and used those value propositions for the callout extensions. For sitelinks, I linked to pages that would give users the most relevant and useful information on their product.

Campaign settings I used to drive performance from day one:

- + Initial negative mobile bid adjustment
- + Basic ad scheduling, later improved based on data
- + Callout extensions, highlighting unique features of Unbounce
- + Sitelink extensions to make the ad bigger on screen, and get CTR off to a strong start
- + Call extensions



These initial setups helped to hit the ground running and gather better data faster. Since I needed to get to their CPA goal as fast as possible, utilizing all features was essential.



Optimization

After the campaigns were launched, I began making optimizations within the first week. I did not want to waste any time. After 2-3 days, search query data is available and negative keywords can be added. Bid adjustments can be made. I started off with small tweaks and after a week to 10 days, I began to make larger changes.

Optimization *(continued)*

The key to quickly hitting a CPA goal is to make frequent and aggressive optimizations. You need to make fast and decisive changes. If you see a poor performing keyword, pull it quickly. If your ad copy has low CTR, pause it and get a new one in rotation. You're looking for obviously poor performers – even if impressions and clicks are low; you don't need to wait for 95% confidence.

Here are the optimizations I engaged in much more rapidly than normal:

- + Added negative keywords multiple times per week (excluded irrelevant searches, using negative exacts at the ad group level and broad match at the campaign level)
- + Paused keywords with higher cost and no conversions
- + Paused keywords with low CTRs and no conversions
- + Paused keywords with high bounce rates and no conversions
- + Paused ads with low CTRs and no conversions
- + Began new ads or expanded the best copy to more ad groups
- + Added converting keywords to account
- + Adjusted bids daily



Optimization (continued)

You need to kill things that might not be working in order to focus budget on the things that surely are. In a more mature campaign, you need to be more rigorous because you are chasing smaller marginal improvements. In new campaigns, you are looking for quick wins to drive initial growth. You can always revisit these decisions down the line. For Unbounce, I reviewed ad copy every few days, pausing poor performers and starting new ads. I would look for trends in the ad copy to see if I could decipher what was working and what wasn't; I look at the call to actions, headlines and so forth and then spread the best ads to all ad groups.

What I stayed focused on was my objective: Hit the CPA goal, and then grow the campaigns. In PPC, we need to be able to adapt strategies to a particular goal and not get bogged down in procedure. Being able to maintain my focus on my goal – not comply with every single Adwords best practice – allowed me to hit the CPA goal within 1 month.





Growth Strategy

After the 1st month, I had established that PPC really worked for Unbounce. With that bar cleared, I slowed my optimizations down to a more normal pace as I turned my focus to growth.

To grow the campaigns, I took the typical route of pushing for more traffic through top converting keywords, adding in more long tail keywords and the converting keywords not already in the account.

I also expanded to related, but broader keywords. Think terms that are not quite synonyms, but nearly: for Unbounce this was terms like squeeze and splash pages as near-synonyms for landing page. I kept these terms their own campaigns to limit spend as I knew these would take more time to hit the CPA goal.

I also looked more in-depthly at performance by location and hourly performance. I would increase bids in areas/hours that had strong conversion rates to push more traffic through top locations and the best hours of the day.

Finally, toward the end of my time working with Unbounce, I took the now optimized campaigns and ported them over to Bing. I like to expand to Bing once I've gotten my Adwords campaigns pretty dialed in. While Bing and Adwords do function differently, well optimized Adwords campaigns typically perform well right off the bat when added to Bing.



Results

Over 4 months I was able to hit all my goals I set out to achieve for Unbounce:

I was able to validate that PPC was a viable marketing channel for Unbounce. I drove rapid growth quickly to capitalize on the newly realized opportunity. I set a solid foundation so that their new hire could start from a position of strength and success.



Achieved CPA goal within 1 month of launching campaigns



Steady month over month increase in clicks due to improvement in CTR and additional keywords



Rapid growth in conversions through optimization of keywords, ad copy and landing pages



Strong improvements in click-through-rate through constant ad copy testing and elimination of unqualified traffic



Reduction of cost per click month over month to allow more traffic to be driven by the same budget

Above all, Unbounce now has a successful marketing channel in paid search where they didn't before: a clear win for the company delivered with focus and speed.

Making PPC work in a competitive market is tough, but an established product in the space has an advantage that can be worked. Keyword selection is critical for quality traffic, and rigorous maintenance will allow quick growth on good fundamentals. With thoughtful set up and constant optimization (and most importantly good landing pages!), most PPC campaigns can achieve desired results and quick growth.