

The Life Science Marketer's

Complete Guide to



Google Ads

10 Hacks For Targeting Scientists Through Google Search



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Meet The Authors:



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CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER

As the Chief Marketing Officer for Supreme Optimization, Eric manages a team of 27 to provide a measurable ROI on over 190 different accounts across Google Ads, LinkedIn, and Facebook.

Eric is a former NASA award-winning employee and a certified AdSkills.com course instructor. He has over 7 years experience in managing digital advertising campaigns, and he is considered to be one of the top B2B PPC specialists. Before joining Supreme, Eric was a self-proclaimed world traveler visiting over 35 different countries.



Mihaela Pupavac, Ph.D.

DIRECTOR - PAID SEARCH

Mihaela obtained her Ph.D. from McGill University, and has over 10 years of experience in academic research in the fields of biotechnology, molecular biology, and genetics.

She has since taken her knowledge of the life sciences and combined it with the skill set of paid advertising on Google Ads, Microsoft (Bing) Ads, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

For the past 5 years she has directly helped over 30 clients in the life science industry grow their business through paid advertising. She currently oversees a team managing \$17M in yearly ad spend



Michelle Goody, Ph.D.

MANAGER - PAID SEARCH

Michelle received her Ph.D. in Biomedical Sciences from the University of Maine in 2012. She completed two postdocs: one studying the innate immune response to Influenza A virus in zebrafish and the other studying muscular dystrophy in zebrafish genetic models of the disease.

She has co-authored 17 peer-reviewed, scientific publications. Michelle taught Histology and Developmental Biology to undergraduates at the University of Maine.

She lives in Old Town, Maine with her husband, two young kids, and step son. She manages 26 Google Ads accounts and over \$1M in annual ad spend.

Introduction:

Success in science absolutely depends on selecting the right tool for the job.

Microscopes and telescopes are both tools used in scientific discovery but trying to use a microscope to view Mars or a telescope to visualize the novel coronavirus would be fool's errands.

The cognitive bias that describes overreliance on a familiar tool, also known as Maslow's hammer, is well summarized by this quote from Abraham Maslow in 1966, "I suppose it is tempting, if the only tool you have is a hammer, to treat everything as if it were a nail."

To avoid this bias, you want to have multiple tools in your toolbox. You don't want to become over reliant on any one tool, and you want to know which tool is best to achieve your goal.

The same is true for digital advertising!

There are many digital advertising platforms, i.e. tools. They can be broadly classified as either search or social networks. Google and Bing are examples of search networks whereas LinkedIn, Twitter (now X), and Facebook are the main social networks. Each individual platform has its strengths and weaknesses and strategic best use cases.

If you want to do account based marketing to a B2B audience, then lean on LinkedIn.

If you want to advertise content to followers of key opinion leaders, then try out Twitter/X.

If you want to generate sales and leads on your website and there is search volume for your products and services, then go to Google.

In this guide, we detail 10 hacks for how we use the Google Ads platform to get the most qualified traffic and best return on ad spend for our life science clients. We'll cover everything from targeting the right keywords, to selecting the right settings, to the most important data to analyze.

After reading this guide, you'll have a firm grasp on when and how to use the hammer that is Google Ads for your digital advertising goals in the life science industry.

Hack #1: Pre-Qualify Your Paid Traffic With Life Science Intent-Based Keywords

So you've decided to advertise on Google's search network. You're clearly smart because that's a great use of your digital advertising dollars! When set-up and managed well, the typical return on ad spend on Google Ads is between 2- to 3-fold and we've seen similar returns on Google Ads for our clients in the life sciences industry. However, one of the costliest places where Google Ads accounts can go awry is spending money on clicks from people with absolutely no intent to purchase your products or services. This scenario can almost completely be avoided with strategic keyword selection - but how do you choose the right keywords to target?

Most people think too broadly when building their campaigns. They want their ads to show as often as possible and think of short-tailed, high funnel keywords for the product or service they offer. But that's not you - you're going to think much more strategically. Think about the last time that you were ready to purchase a solution to a problem and typed in a search query. How did that query differ from the earlier searches you conducted when you were looking to better understand the problem or seeing what kinds of solutions were out there? Now, put yourself in the shoes of your customer. What are their most likely searches going to be when they are ready to make a purchase? Choose those phrases as the keywords to start advertising with on Google - just the ones that show purchase intent.

For example, someone looking for a provider of mRNA synthesis is likely searching for "mRNA synthesis companies", "custom mRNA synthesis", or "mRNA synthesis service". This is your target audience. Undergraduate students learning about mRNA synthesis would search "mRNA synthesis mechanism", "mRNA synthesis diagram", "what is mRNA synthesis", or "how is mRNA synthesized". Graduate students may be searching for "mRNA synthesis protocol". If your main goal is sales and leads, you'll want to avoid having your ads show on 'educational' searches and instead target keywords that show intent to purchase.

Comparison of Cost and Conversions for Keywords with and without Intent

Keyword Without Intent	Ad Spend	Conversions
ELISA Reader	421.42 EUR	0
Keyword With Purchase Intent	Ad Spend	Conversions
ELISA Reader Price	260.40 EUR	3

Try typing your keyword ideas into the Google search bar and hitting enter. If other ads show up and the organic search results are for competing products, that is a good sign. People are finding it profitable to advertise on those keywords. If a Wikipedia article is the top organic search result, stop and think twice. That keyword is probably too 'educational' and lacking purchase intent.

Examples of Wasted Spend on Informational Searches

<input type="checkbox"/> Search term	Avg. CPC	↓ Cost	Conversions
Total: Search terms [?]	\$7.23	\$22,656.12	9.00
<input type="checkbox"/> ascites	\$10.54	\$2,961.18	1.00
<input type="checkbox"/> hek 293	\$7.68	\$1,527.85	0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> stem cell research	\$10.57	\$1,469.65	0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> sputum	\$11.34	\$1,133.97	1.00

Start your campaign with the most narrow but comprehensive list of intent-based keywords that you can think of. You can always expand to broader keywords later if the campaign is successful.



PRO TIP

Use a tool like Google's Keyword Planner or SEMrush's Keyword Magic Tool to check for search volumes in your targeted locations. It'll give you an idea of how much visibility you'll have for your budget.



PRO TIP

Type your keyword ideas into the Google search bar and then hit the spacebar. Let the suggested results that pop up give you ideas for longer-tailed, more qualified keywords that will still have some search volume.



PRO TIP

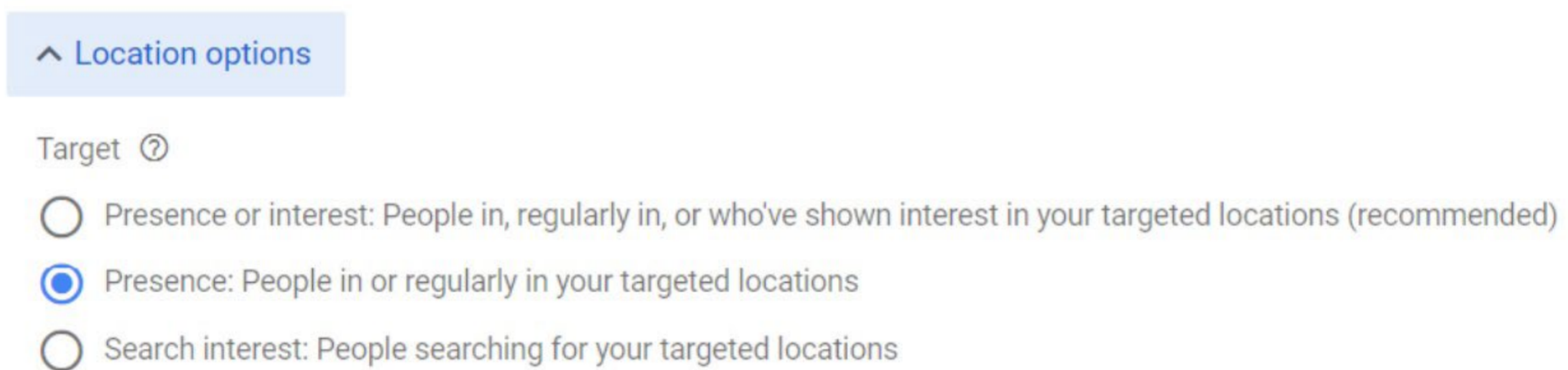
Be aware of whether the acronyms that you use in your field have other, potentially more commonly used, meanings in other fields. Use additional qualifying words in your keywords and negative keywords to ensure that your ads only show up for the life science searches.

Hack #2: Only Let Google Show Your Ads In Countries Where There Are Life Science Industries

You probably have an idea of where you'd like to advertise, based on where your product or service is available and factoring in where the global biotech and research hubs are located. So you enter your countries, states, zip codes, etc. into the list of locations to target and Google will only show your ads in those locations, right? Wrong!

Hidden in a collapsible menu called 'Location options' are choices to either target 'people in, regularly in, or interested in your locations'; 'people in or regularly in your locations'; or 'people searching about your locations'. The default and Google recommended setting is 'people in, regularly in, **or who show interest in**' your targeted locations.

Google Ads' Hidden Location Options Menu



This default/recommended setting allows Google to show your ads, meant for life scientists in the US, Canada, western and northern Europe, and some APAC countries, to people in countries that don't have strong (or any) life science industries and where your return on ad spend will not be as profitable.

Google Ads' Hidden Location Options Menu

<input type="checkbox"/>	Location	Location type	↓ Clicks	CTR	Avg. CPC	Cost	Conversions
<input type="checkbox"/>	United States	Physical location	1,464	3.77%	\$2.32	\$3,401.24	18.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Nigeria	Physical location	473	3.83%	\$0.73	\$345.93	0.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Indonesia	Physical location	413	2.71%	\$0.38	\$158.63	0.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	South Korea	Physical location	392	4.23%	\$1.88	\$737.38	0.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	United States	Location of interest	365	6.28%	\$1.96	\$716.29	6.40
<input type="checkbox"/>	United Kingdo...	Physical location	315	1.24%	\$1.85	\$583.86	1.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Philippines	Physical location	276	2.72%	\$0.50	\$139.05	0.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Germany	Physical location	258	3.67%	\$1.27	\$327.56	1.67
<input type="checkbox"/>	Canada	Physical location	220	3.51%	\$2.13	\$467.71	1.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Italy	Physical location	183	4.83%	\$1.10	\$201.57	1.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spain	Physical location	183	4.20%	\$1.32	\$241.77	1.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Brazil	Physical location	181	1.77%	\$0.78	\$140.86	0.00

We have found the following to be the most profitable countries for our life science clients on Google Ads:

• USA	• Canada	• Canada
• Germany	• Finland	• Denmark
• Norway	• Sweden	• France
• Belgium	• Australia	• South Korea

Google's recommended location options setting generally only applies to the travel industry and has no value for life science companies. It only leads to wasted spend.

Google makes it harder to see and analyze data from the countries where your ads appeared, but that you didn't purposefully target. If your targeting is set up correctly, the clicks and impressions for "Total: Locations" and "Total: Account" will be the same. However, if your ads are showing in locations other than the ones you listed for the campaign, you can see more clicks and impressions under "Total: Account."

Targeted location ↓	Impr.	Interactions	Interaction rate	Avg. cost	Cost	Conv. rate
Total: Locations ⓘ	2,782,283	10,261 clicks	0.37%	€0.41	€4,244.06	0.22%
▼ Total: Account ⓘ	6,792,877	229,194 engagements	3.37%	€0.04	€8,754.65	0.02%

You can still see physical location information in the Google Ads online platform by generating a custom report.

The best way to avoid this trap is to just change that hidden location targeting setting right from the very beginning so that your ads will only show to 'people in or regularly in your targeted locations'.



PRO TIP

If you are just starting out, we recommend testing out your campaigns in the USA first as this location tends to bring in the most conversions and the lowest cost/conversion. You can always add more countries to any campaign at any time.

Hack #3: Block The Bad Searches With Negative Keyword Lists

Negative keywords refine the searches containing your keywords that you allow Google to show your advertisements on. Adding words or phrases as negative keywords will block Google from displaying your ads on searches containing those negative keywords even though they also contain your targeted keywords.

For example, if you're targeting "mass spectrometry service", you wouldn't want your ad to show if someone is searching for "mass spectrometry service jobs". So, you should set up "job" and "jobs" as negative keywords.

Scientists are often searching for articles on specific topics that can contain keywords relevant to your business, but again, these types of searches are educational and not what you want to show your advertisements on. The searcher of this type of query is not looking to purchase because their search intent shows that they want to read up on a particular topic or method. To avoid paying for these clicks, add "publication", "journal", "slides", "article", "pdf", "ppt", and "et al" to your negative keyword list.

Informational searches by undergraduate students also often contain keywords related to products sold by life science companies. The intent of these student searches is to learn about the molecular pathway or technique they're studying in their courses. A good way to exclude searches with this intent is to add "class", "answer", "definition", "course", "picture", "textbook", "quiz", "quizlet", "study guide", "flash card", "diagram", and "tutorial" to your negative keyword list.

You can apply your negative keywords list to the whole Google Ads account, only to certain campaigns, or even just to the appropriate ad groups. You can also choose to add your negative keywords as broad, phrase, or exact match types. We recommend adding the broad or phrase match type of your negative keywords to prevent your ads from showing on similar, irrelevant searches. A good use case of when to use exact match negative keywords is in response to Google's recent close variants. Google will now show your ads on searches that are close variants of your phrase and exact match search keywords. This could mean that your ad showed on a search that was missing a whole word or words from your targeted keyword. For instance, if your targeted keyword is "LIMS Management Software", Google might show your ad to people searching for just "LIMS", which doesn't show intent. You can stop this from happening by adding [LIMS] as an exact match negative keyword to the appropriate ad group(s), campaign(s), or negative keyword list.

Blocking Close Variants as Exact Match Negative Keywords

<input type="checkbox"/>	Search term	Match type	Added/Excluded	Campaign	Ad group
<input type="checkbox"/>	lims	Exact match (close variant)	 Excluded	SO-LIMS	LIMS Management Software

Here are suggestions to get your account-level negative keyword list started:

• are there	• article(s)	• book(s)
• career(s)	• class(es)	• clinic
• club(s)	• college(s)	• conference(s)
• consultant(s)/consulting	• course(s)	• definition
• employer(s)/employment	• et al	• free
• full time/part time	• gift(s)	• hire/hiring
• how do I/how does/how to	• image(s)	• information/info
• intern(ship)	• job(s)	• learn
• nature	• near/near me	• occupation(s)
• online	• opinion(s)	• pay/paid
• photograph(s)/photo	• picture(s)/pic	• plos
• protocol(s)	• rating(s)	• recruiter(s)/recruitment
• resume(s)	• review(s)	• salary/salaries
• school(s)	• send(ing)	• textbook(s)
• training	• trend(s)	• tutorial(s)
• university/universities	• what are/is	• work



PRO TIP

At least once per week, review all the search terms on which your ads were displayed and block any undesirable search terms as negative keywords to prevent your ad from appearing on that same search term again in the future.



PRO TIP

Pro tip 2: Use the insights gained from frequently reviewing your search terms and adding negative keywords to keep an ongoing master list of negative keywords and then upload it and preemptively apply it to all your new campaigns, as appropriate.

Uploading a Master Negative Keyword List & Applying it to Campaigns

Navigation menu items:

- Search
- Reports
- Tools and settings** (1)
- Refresh
- Help

Sub-menu items under Tools and settings:

- Shared Library
 - Audience manager
 - Bid strategies
 - Negative keyword lists** (2)
- Bulk Actions
 - All bulk actions
 - Rules
 - Scripts
- Measurement
 - Conversions
 - Google Analytics
 - Attribution
- Setup
 - Business data
 - Policy manager
 - Access and security

Add negative keyword list

Master Negative KWs

Add negative keywords

are there
 article
 articles
 book
 books
 career
 careers
 class
 classes
 clinic

3

SAVE CANCEL

Dialog box: 1 selected | Edit | **Apply to campaigns** (4) | X

<input type="checkbox"/>	Negative keyword list ↑	Keywords	Campaigns
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Master Negative KWs	184	10

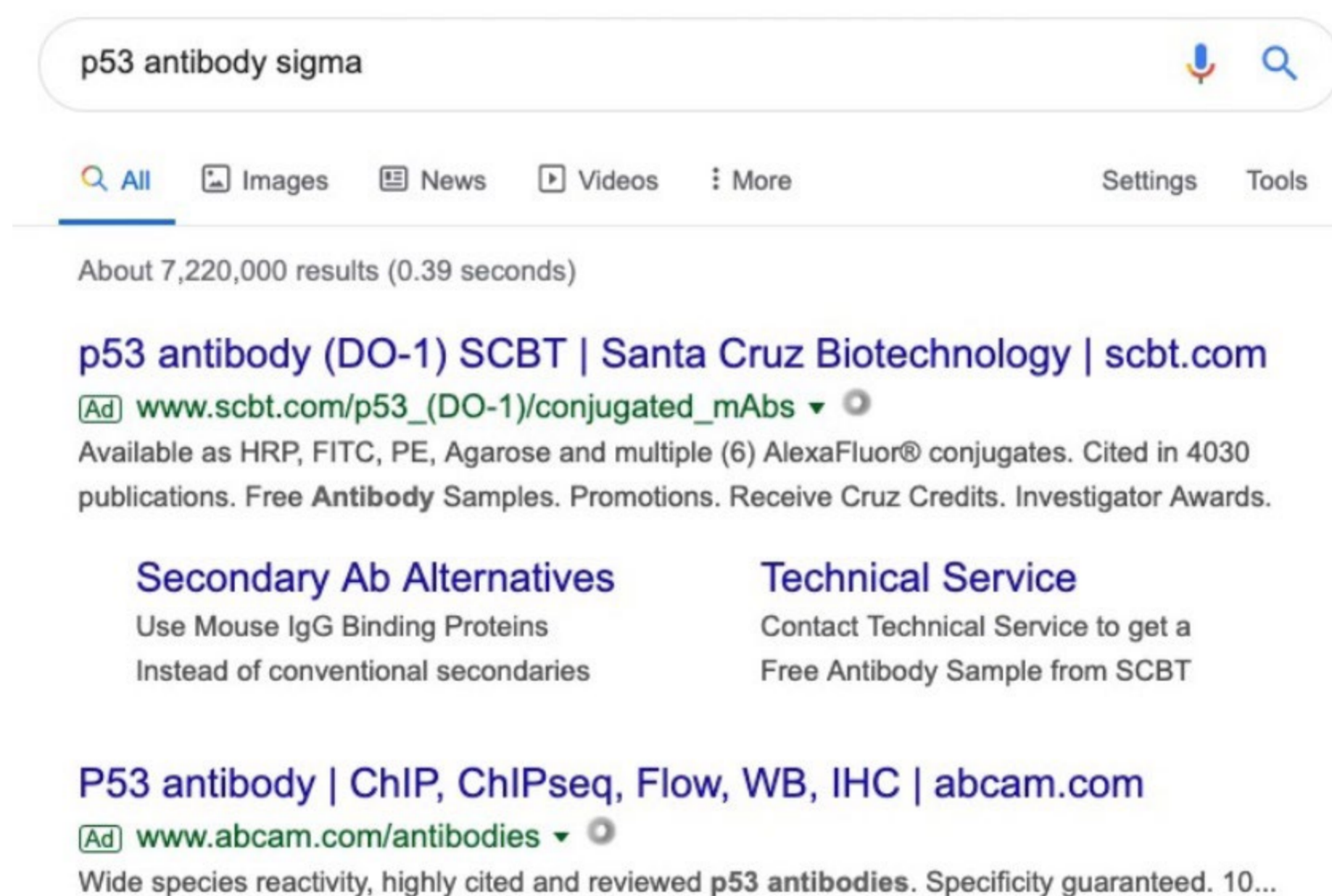
Hack #4: Target Your Life Science Competitors Using Competitor Keywords

When we set up campaigns, they loosely fall into 3 main categories:

Neutral - These campaigns contain terms that are related to the product or service you offer. The keywords you choose to bid on should target individuals who are at the bottom of the marketing funnel and who are close to making a purchase. "Order PCR Primers" or "Whole Exome Sequencing Service" are some examples.

Brand - These campaigns contain your company and product brand name terms. [Why bid on your own name? Because others are.](#) Bidding on your own brand name ensures that you always show up at the top of the Google results page, even when competitors bid on your brand.

Example of a Life Science Company Not Protecting Their Brand Name



The screenshot shows a Google search for "p53 antibody sigma". The search bar contains the text "p53 antibody sigma" and a search icon. Below the search bar, there are navigation options: "All", "Images", "News", "Videos", and "More". The search results show "About 7,220,000 results (0.39 seconds)". The first result is an advertisement for Santa Cruz Biotechnology (SCBT) with the title "p53 antibody (DO-1) SCBT | Santa Cruz Biotechnology | scbt.com". The ad text includes "Available as HRP, FITC, PE, Agarose and multiple (6) AlexaFluor® conjugates. Cited in 4030 publications. Free Antibody Samples. Promotions. Receive Cruz Credits. Investigator Awards." Below the ad, there are two columns of text: "Secondary Ab Alternatives" and "Technical Service". The second result is an advertisement for Abcam with the title "P53 antibody | ChIP, ChIPseq, Flow, WB, IHC | abcam.com". The ad text includes "Wide species reactivity, highly cited and reviewed p53 antibodies. Specificity guaranteed. 10..."

Competitor - These campaigns contain your competitors' brand names or competing technologies and techniques. You want to ensure that when someone is searching for one of your competitors, they also consider the product or service you offer.

Typically, about 80% of the Google Ads campaigns that we build for our life science clients contain neutral keywords. We recommend separating out any keywords containing branded terms and grouping them together in a brand campaign. This is because branded keywords will get better quality scores, higher ad rank, higher click-through-rates, higher conversion rates, lower costs-per-click, and lower costs-per-conversion than neutral or competitor keywords. Therefore, it's useful to be able to analyze performance metrics and control the budget and search impression shares for branded keywords separately.

The same logic applies to competitor keywords. These keywords typically get lower quality scores, lower ad rank, lower click-through-rates, lower conversion rates, higher costs-per-click, and higher costs-per-conversion than branded or neutral keywords. So, putting competitor keywords into their own campaign allows you to control the budget, search impression share, and analyze the data for this advertising strategy separately.

For some of our life science clients, competitor campaigns are their most efficient use of ad spend for generating leads on Google. For other clients, we trial a competitor campaign and then pause it after a few months of suboptimal performance.



PRO TIP

If your competitor is a very large company that gets thousands of searches per month, don't just bid on the competitor's brand name. Instead, bid on longer tailed keywords that contain the competitor's name along with products relevant to your business. For example, bid on "company name PCR reagents", or "company name oligos".

From the Desk of Sheldon Zhai

Hey there!

I hope you're getting a lot out of this resource guide so far.

Are there any questions I can answer for you?

Curious about our process or pricing?

Need help getting buy-in?

Contact us right away — we'd love to help.

Let's take a look at your website. Together, we'll figure out your best options for business growth.

To Your Success,

Sheldon Zhai, CEO
[Supreme Optimization](#)



Hack #5: Strategically Use Keywords In Ad Copy To Maximize Quality Score

Google search ads are made up of headlines and descriptions. Headlines give you three opportunities to say what you're offering in 30 characters or less. Descriptions allow you two opportunities (of up to 90 characters each) to provide a longer explanation of your product or service and its key benefits and features.

Google assigns each of your search keywords a quality score. The quality score is an integer from 1-10 with 10 being the best. Quality score is an important metric on Google Ads accounts because it factors into the auction, along with your keyword bid, to determine where your ad ranks on the results page and for what cost per click. Higher quality scores result in higher ad ranks for cheaper costs per click, which translate to cheaper costs per conversion.

The quality score depends on three factors: the keywords' expected click-through-rate, the landing page experience (e.g. loading speed, mobile friendliness, etc.), and the ad relevance. To ensure that you obtain the highest ad relevance value possible, make sure you use your keyword in your ad copy, specifically the headline 1 field of your ad copy, if character limits allow. If not, try putting your keyword in the description 1 field instead.

Examples of Quality Scores Where Ad Relevance is Maximized by using the Keyword in the Headline 1 Field

Quality Score	Ad relevance	Landing page exp.	Exp. CTR
10/10	Above average	Above average	Above average
3/10	Above average	Below average	Below average
7/10	Above average	Above average	Below average

For example, if your keyword was 'Protein A ELISA Kits', the headline 1 field of your ad would contain 'Protein A ELISA Kits' and the rest of your ad might look something like this:

**Protein A ELISA Kits | Tested By Orthogonal Methods |
Highly Sensitive ELISA Kits**
HCP ELISA For All Major Expression Systems. Supports Multiple
Commercialized Biologics. Industry Trusted For Purification, QC &
Lot Testing. Long-Term Supply Of Kits w/ Same Ab.

This hack also increases the click-through-rate of your ads because the first thing that the searcher reads in your ad's headline 1 field is exactly what they just searched for.



PRO TIP

Increase your Google Ads quality score by ensuring that the keywords you bid on are not only present in your ads but are also present on your landing page.



PRO TIP

Also make sure to use ad extensions (site links, call outs, and structured snippets, etc.), responsive search ads, and to split test multiple different ads for each keyword, as these criteria also factor into the quality score assigned by Google.

Hack #6: Maximize Your Visibility On The Highest Converting Device Type For The Life Science Industry

In our life science industry advertising experience, about 2/3 of clicks occur on desktop computers, about 1/3 on mobile devices with full browsers, and a very tiny fraction on tablets. Not only do most of the clicks happen on desktop computers but an even bigger proportion of sales-qualified conversions in the life science industry (e.g. purchases, form submissions) occur when ads are viewed on desktop computers.

Comparison of Conversion Number and Cost/Conversion for a Life Science Company on Different Device Types

	Device	Clicks	CPC	Conversions	Cost	Cost/Conv	All Conv.
1.	computers	2,560	\$4.98	46	\$12,739...	\$276.94	228.08
2.	mobile devices	869	\$4.04	7	\$3,509...	\$501.29	40.67
3.	tablets	38	\$4.75	1	\$180.57	\$180.57	2

This is because, again, we are targeting scientific researchers who are at the bottom of the funnel and are ready to purchase or partner with a life science company. When researchers are at this stage, they are most likely on their desktop computer at work. This is unlike targeting audiences to advertise for general consumer products, for which the majority of searches and conversions occur on mobile devices.

Although the life science audience is more likely to engage with your business via desktop computer, you still need to ensure that your website and landing pages are mobile friendly. Mobile speed scores are part of your quality score, even if you're not running ads on mobile devices.

There can definitely be value in showing your ads on mobile devices, especially if your goals are more awareness- and visibility-focused. We recommend considering your goals and analyzing a couple months of data to determine whether mobile and tablet traffic are the best uses of your digital advertising dollars. For instance, if your goal is lead generation and you are at your maximum monthly ad spend budget but don't have full impression share on desktop computers, we'd recommend turning off or dialing down mobile and tablet traffic to free up more budget to show ads on desktop computers.

If you have more advertising dollars to spend, another approach to get your ads in front of more people on desktop computers is to make an increased bid adjustment on computers (i.e. under Devices, tick the checkbox for the device(s) you want to adjust, select Increase, input the percentage by which you'd like to increase your bids, then click Save).



PRO TIP

If you're unsure or just want to decrease your presence on mobile, you can decrease your bids by a certain percentage on mobile devices. It still gives you some visibility but with a lower cost per click.

Bid Adjustment to Decrease Mobile Traffic by About Half

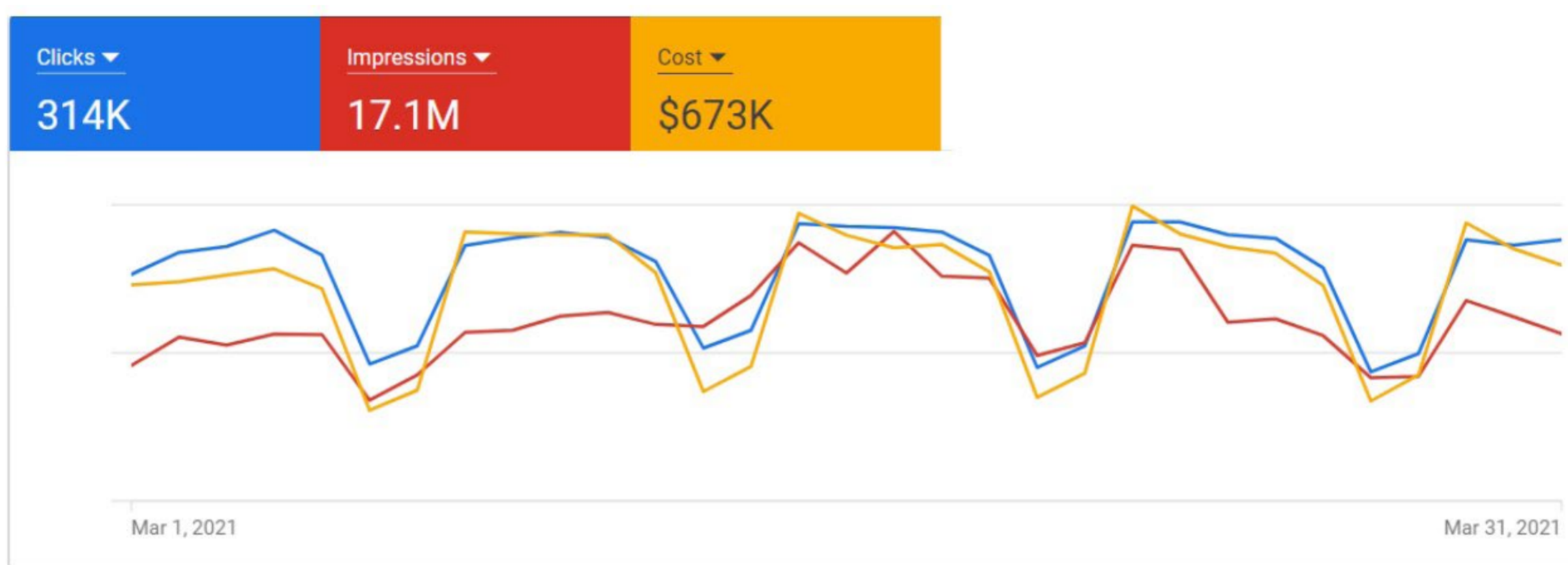
<input type="checkbox"/>	Device	Level	Added to ↓	Bid adj.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Computers	Campaign	SO-Brand KWs	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mobile phones	Campaign	SO-Brand KWs	-50%
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tablets	Campaign	SO-Brand KWs	-

Hack #7: Your Potential Life Science Customers Likely Take Weekends Off So Your Ads Should, Too

When advertising for products and services in the life science industry, we're generally targeting people working in industry and academic labs. This means that most of the searches for life science products and services will occur Monday through Friday between about 9 AM and 5 PM. People generally don't like to perform work-related searches during their free time and are even less likely to convert during the off-hours.

With Google Ads, your ads are only displayed when your keywords are searched and you only ever pay for clicks, so weekends generally see decreased clicks, impressions, and spend.

Reduced Google Ads Impressions, Clicks, and Cost for a Life Science Company on Weekends



However, you can opt to completely turn off your ads on weekends to conserve your budget for the days of the week that you're most likely to get conversions.

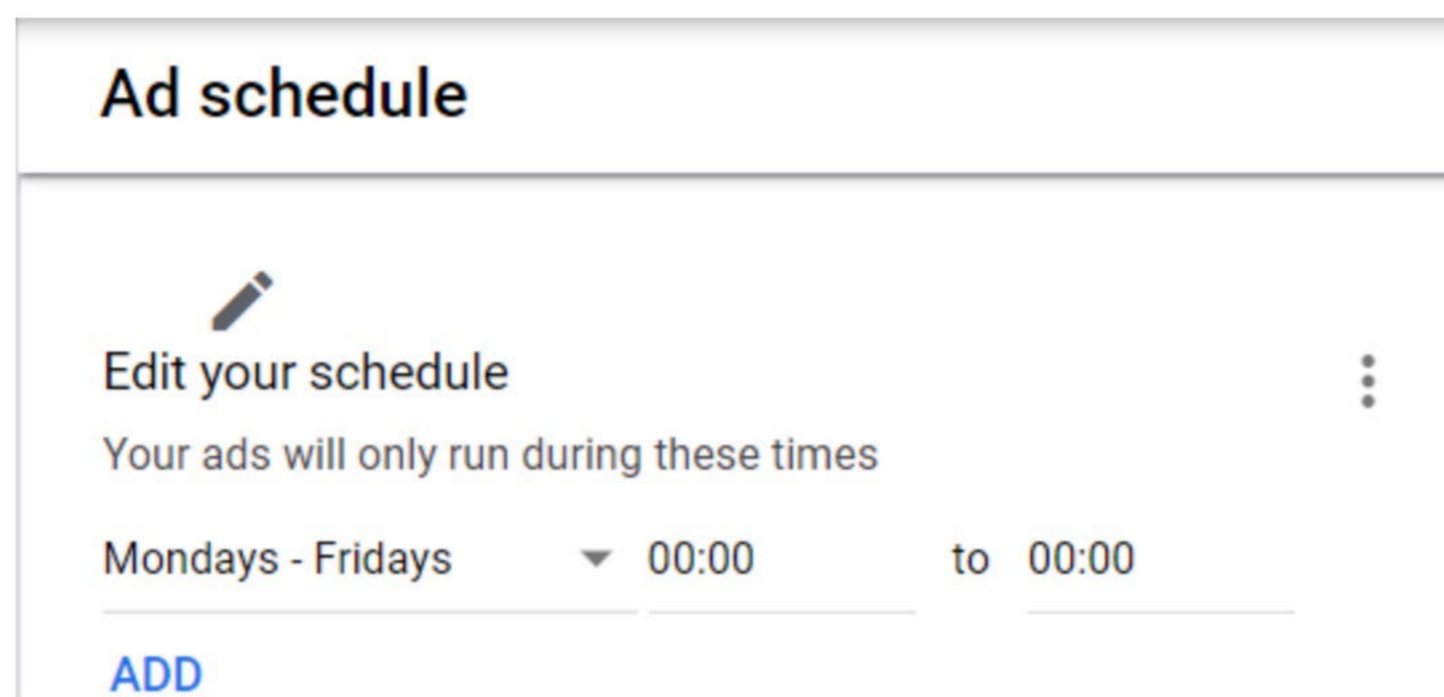
After your ads have run for a few months and you have collected plenty of data, you can use the Day of Week report found within the Predefined Reports listed under the Reports icon to help you analyze your account's performance on the different days of the week.

Example Day of the Week Report for a Life Science Company

Day of week ↑	Clicks	Impressions	CTR	Avg. CPC	Cost	Conversions	Cost / conv.	Conv. rate
Sunday	319	6,285	5.08%	\$6.27	\$2,000.58	3.00	\$666.86	0.94%
Monday	2,390	47,388	5.04%	\$5.45	\$13,026.85	36.17	\$360.19	1.51%
Tuesday	2,493	51,228	4.87%	\$5.35	\$13,335.88	31.50	\$423.36	1.26%
Wednesday	2,676	51,089	5.24%	\$5.30	\$14,174.48	54.92	\$258.11	2.05%
Thursday	2,610	50,428	5.18%	\$5.30	\$13,840.91	47.75	\$289.86	1.83%
Friday	2,132	41,656	5.12%	\$5.22	\$11,135.84	26.67	\$417.59	1.25%
Saturday	286	5,611	5.10%	\$5.70	\$1,631.05	1.00	\$1,631.05	0.35%

To edit the days of the week that your ads show, go to the ad schedule tab, select a campaign, and add in the days of the week you'd like to run your ads. You can also refine the hours of day during which Google can show your ads. The default is 24 hours a day and 7 days a week until you input in a different ad schedule.

Putting Your Google Ads on an Ad Schedule that only Shows on Weekdays



PRO TIP

Google can automatically make day-of-the-week and time-of-the-day bid adjustments for you if you choose to use automated bidding strategies. Try setting up an experimental campaign, selecting one of the automated bidding strategies (we recommend the ones where you can set a maximum limit per click), running the experimental campaign next to your manual bidding campaign, and comparing their performance over a few months. If the automated bidding algorithm outperforms your manual bidding campaign, you can switch all your campaign's traffic on to the automated bidding strategy.

Hack #8: Get Your Ads In Front Of Life Science Decision Makers

For life science Google Ads accounts that target bottom-of-the-funnel keywords, the age demographics that will generate the most clicks and conversions are the 25-34, 35-44, and 45-54 year olds. These mid-twenty to mid-fifty year olds are typically the decision makers and the purchasers in the life science industry. Thus, if your goal is leads, these are the most valuable age demographics to target with your life science advertising dollars.

Google Ads Data for a Life Science Company Showing the Best Metrics for 25-54 Year Olds

Age	Clicks	CPC	Conversions	Cost	Cost/Conv	All Conv.
35to44	679	\$4.92	15.5	\$3,344.07	\$215.75	63
25to34	671	\$4.6	14	\$3,083.51	\$220.25	50.83
45to54	656	\$4.31	12	\$2,825.34	\$235.45	61.5
55to64	355	\$4.88	4.5	\$1,733.43	\$385.21	28
18to24	250	\$4.63	3	\$1,157.87	\$385.96	12
gt64	234	\$5.04	1	\$1,178.84	\$1,178.84	10

The 18-24 year old age group tends to have a lower conversion rate and a higher cost/conversion in the life science industry. The reason this age group converts less is because they are mostly undergraduate students and are not looking to purchase or don't have the authority to make purchasing decisions. We try to avoid these educational searches as much as possible through keyword selection, but there is a lot of overlap and it's not entirely possible to avoid them. Another strategy to reduce the chance of showing your ads on educational searches is to exclude or do a negative bid adjustment on the 18-24 year old age group, which contains the students that are most likely to be performing educational searches.

Exclusion or Negative Bid Adjustments of Certain Age Demographics on Google Ads

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Age	Status	Bid adj.
Total: Ages				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	18 - 24	Excluded from ad group	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	25 - 34	Eligible	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	35 - 44	Eligible	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	45 - 54	Eligible	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	55 - 64	Eligible	-
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	65+	Eligible	-50%

The 18-24 year old age demographic does include 22-24 year olds who could be Masters students. This age segment could be worthwhile to target because Masters students do order certain reagents and consumables or learn about products and make suggestions to the decision makers. Some companies also deem that it's worthwhile to show their ads to this young age group to ensure that they stay top of mind as these young scientists progress through their career.

Other age demographics to keep your eye on are the two oldest segments, the 55-64 year olds and the greater than 64 year olds. These demographics contain people of retirement age that may no longer be working in the life science industry and/or may be searching your keywords to try to better understand and diagnose medical conditions. Like with any optimization decisions, we recommend collecting and analyzing a few months of data and then determining whether to exclude or bid up or bid down on any of the age groups based on your goals and the performance data.

There is one other age demographic that Google classifies as undetermined. While it may be tempting to exclude this group, it often results in the largest proportion of clicks and conversions on a life science company's Google Ads account, so we don't recommend excluding or bidding down on this demographic.



PRO TIP

Just like with devices, if you're unsure, you can lower bids on any age group by a certain percentage, like 50%, so you can decrease your spend without completely eliminating your visibility within the age group(s).

Hack #9: Maximize Your ROI Through Retargeting

You can spend a lot of effort and money bringing the best traffic to your website through paid advertising and SEO. Get the most from your digital advertising efforts by setting up a retargeting campaign on the Google Display Network.

A Google display campaign that retargets your website visitors has the potential to have the highest conversion rate and the lowest cost/conversion of any Google Ads campaign. This is because you're targeting people who have already shown interest in your products or services by visiting your website.

A display campaign uses image ads to remind customers about your brand as they browse other sites on the web. A responsive display campaign can be quick to set up and shouldn't cost more than about \$10/day for most life science companies. You'll need to curate and maintain an audience of at least 500 past website visitors to serve your ads to. We recommend blocking Google from showing your retargeting ads on any sensitive or inappropriate content as well as on advertisements within Apps. You can even add website placements, topic placements and/or website or topic exclusions to further guide Google as to where to show your retargeting ads. Also make sure you remember our tip from earlier in the book - under "location options" choose "**People in or regularly in your targeted region.**" It's a common mistake that leads to wasted spend even amongst agency pros.

Hack #10: Scale What Is Working On Google Ads Over To Bing Ads

If all the relevant traffic with intent is being captured on Google, a great strategy to increase leads without compromising traffic quality is to scale what is working on Google over to Bing.

Our clients typically find about a 10-20% boost in traffic and leads on Bing.

While the majority of searches do occur on Google, there is high quality traffic from hospitals, research institutions, and academic institutions that are required to use company-issued computers with Bing installed as the default browser, so many searches in the life science industry still occur on Bing.

Conclusion

Hopefully, after reading this guide, you have a much better understanding of the who, what, when, where, why, and how of advertising to the life science industry using one of the tools in your toolbelt, Google Ads, i.e. the hammer.

If common terminology is used in the life sciences to search for your products and/or services and you have an ecommerce or lead generation website, then Google Ads is absolutely the best place to start your digital advertising efforts. If you follow the hacks in this eBook, you can expect a positive return on your ad spend and you can use that return to scale up your digital advertising on Google Ads by maximizing your current impression share and/or by adding new keywords, locations, etc.

But for goodness sakes, if your goals or priorities shift and the next obstacle that you encounter in your digital advertising journey is not another nail but a screw, then put down the hammer and take out a screwdriver instead!



PRO TIP

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"Having Ph.D.-level scientists help us develop strategies, create content and monitor performance of our campaigns has been a wonderful experience"

KEVIN PELLERIN

Marketing Program Manager, Media & Advertising

