

**CIRCUS**

PPC GUIDE

# The ABCs of PPC Tracking



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**A-Z GUIDE TO EFFECTIVE PPC TRACKING (YES, EVEN X AND Z)**

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**REAL-WORLD EXAMPLES OF PPC TRACKING SUCCESS**

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**BEST PRACTICE WHEN IT COMES TO TRACKING**

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**PRACTICAL GUIDANCE THAT CAN BE USED TODAY**

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**INSIGHTS FROM CIRCUS PPC EXPERTS**

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**HOW TO IMPLEMENT EFFECTIVE TRACKING**

# The A-Z of PPC Tracking

We hope you know your ABC's, because we're about to guide you through our PPC tracking alphabet.

From budgets and trends, to forecasting and KPIs - we've left no stone unturned when it comes to implementing effective tracking.

And yes, we've EVEN included X and Z!

**A**

*Google and Bing's **ALGORITHMS** rely on conversion data to improve and optimise ads.*

Accurate and working PPC tracking plays an important role in how the Google and Bing algorithms deliver search results. By tracking user interactions with ads - including clicks, impressions and conversions, these platforms can gain valuable insights into the relevance and effectiveness of specific keywords and ad campaigns.

When the algorithms can accurately measure user engagement and behaviour, they can better rank ads based on their performance - adjusting bids and ad placements to ensure that the most relevant and high-quality ads are delivered to users.

This also allows both Google and Bing to continuously refine their algorithms for better ad targeting.



*Correct, working tracking can help drive **BUDGET** efficiency.*

**B**

**Budget efficiency** is key when it comes to getting the most from your PPC, and correct, working tracking can help drive this by providing clear insights into the ads, keywords, and campaigns delivering the best ROI. Using these insights, businesses can then identify where valuable traffic and conversions are coming from, and in turn, allocate budget more effectively.

By optimising bids for high-performing campaigns, and cutting spend on underperforming ones, businesses can reduce budget waste and focus on pushing the campaigns that generate the best results.

***CHANGE** up your tracking for different campaigns.*

**C**

Using one-size-fits-all tracking for different campaigns, products, and audience segments could lead to poor data insights, as different campaigns naturally have different end goals - especially when campaigns are unrelated.

By customising tracking for each of your campaign or ad groups, you can focus on setting up unique goals and UTM parameters to track specific performance at a more granular level.

**D**

*Accurate tracking supports a **DATA-DRIVEN** approach to PPC.*

Well, realistically, there isn't any other approach you should be using!

Tracking will highlight the data you need to see to make important decisions around your PPC - and even your wider marketing strategy - moving forward. Without this data, there's no way to tell which activity is benefitting your business.

**E**

***ENHANCED CONVERSIONS** should be implemented to improve the accuracy of conversion measurement.*

Enhanced Conversions can benefit businesses by providing more reliable and comprehensive conversion data, which leads to better insights and decision-making.

Once implemented, Enhanced Conversions can improve the accuracy of PPC tracking by bridging the data gap caused by issues such as privacy restrictions, cookie limitations, and user tracking changes.

By securely sending hashed first-party data directly to platforms like Google Ads, Enhanced Conversions allow businesses to accurately track conversions that might otherwise go unrecorded.

*Effective PPC tracking can help with **FORECASTING** campaign performance going forward.*

**F**

**Forecasting** future performance is a great way to set expectations, especially when working with clients. But none of us are psychic or using a crystal ball!

Instead, accurate data collected with effective tracking can provide insights into time-based trends, campaign performance, and seasonal data - all that can be analysed and interpreted alongside market insights to drive results.

**G**

*"Account **GROWTH** is only achievable if you have the right data to back up your decisions and help you to optimise your campaigns. Growth can look different for every account - some might be focused on ROI, some focused on CPA, or those looking to raise brand awareness might choose to have impressions and impression share as their key metric. No matter what it looks like for you, tracking the right metric can give you the insights you need to make changes and optimisations to grow your account effectively."*



**Inny Vaiciute**  
PPC Manager, Circus PPC

**H**

***HISTORICAL DATA** can help you to recognise how to best optimise your campaigns in the future.*

Access to historical data through effective tracking is crucial for optimising future PPC campaigns, as it provides valuable insights into past performance. This can help with identifying trends, patterns, and areas for improvement.

With historical data, businesses can see which keywords, ad copy, audience settings, and bidding strategies have been most effective in driving conversions and delivering the best ROI.

**I**

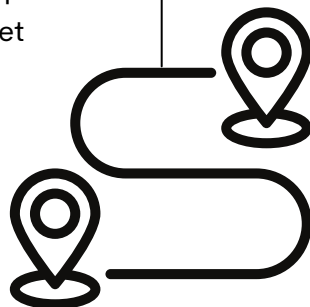
***INCORRECT** tracking could be even more damaging to your PPC account than no tracking at all.*

Incorrect tracking might be worse than no tracking at all.

Why?

Because if your tracking isn't correctly installed, or focusing on the wrong metrics, the algorithm is using the wrong data to improve and optimise your ads and potentially funnelling budget towards the wrong areas.

Take the time to make sure not only that you have tracking, but that it's set up correctly.



*The right tracking and data collection can help enhance the customer **JOURNEY.***

**J**

Landing page experience and relevance is one of the big factors that contributes to quality score and ad rank - which plays a huge role in how your PPC ads appear on the results page.

The right tracking, and in turn, data collection, can greatly enhance the customer journey by providing insights into how users are interacting with both your ads and your website.

This data can highlight user behaviour, preferences, and touchpoints - which help businesses to continuously refine the customer journey.

*Accurate tracking doesn't just measure **KPIs**, but helps to define the right KPIs.*

**K**

Sometimes, the right KPIs might not be the ones you've always been looking at. The likelihood is that as your business grows and adapts to the demands of customers and external market factors, your KPIs are also going to change depending on the business needs at a certain moment in time.

PPC tracking helps you identify the right KPIs by providing detailed performance data that aligns with your business goals and objectives.

**L**

**LEVERAGE** key insights from PPC tracking to make data-led optimisations and drive results.

Your tracking should work for you - and therefore any insights can be leveraged to best drive the results you want to see. After all, there's no point in having tracking in place if you're not going to use the data to your advantage.

Make the most of your insights from tracking by taking action when something stands out. For example - if something is under-performing, stop it. If something works, give it more budget.

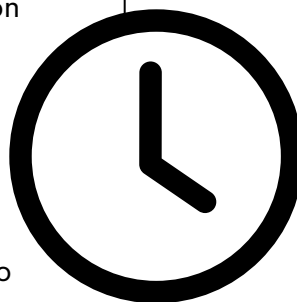
**M**

Make sure you **MONITOR** the effectiveness of your tracking.

It might feel strange to 'track your tracking,' however keeping an eye on and monitoring your PPC tracking closely is important for making sure that it continues to capture the metrics you want to see.

If you don't monitor the effectiveness of your tracking, you risk making decisions based on inaccurate data, leading to inefficient ad spend and missed opportunities.

Regularly reviewing and optimising tracking settings allows you to identify issues early, and make the right decisions to drive results.



**NEGATIVE** keywords assist with improving inaccurate tracking data.

**N**

By monitoring how irrelevant searches or 'bad clicks' are affecting your campaigns, you can further avoid spending in poor performing areas, alongside improving inaccurate tracking data.

By regularly reviewing your search query reports and adding in negative keywords to filter out irrelevant traffic, this will ensure that your ads will only target relevant audiences, leading to more accurate and reliable tracking data.

**For more information on how you can find the right keywords for your PPC campaigns, register to receive our upcoming whitepaper here.**

Stop **OVERLOOKING** UTM parameters.

**O**

Failing to use UTM parameters or mismanaging them is a common PPC tracking error. Without UTM tags, it's hard to distinguish paid traffic from other sources in analytics tools like Google Analytics.

Use consistent and well-structured UTM parameters for source, medium, campaign, term, and content to track traffic accurately. Make use of tools like Google's URL builder to ensure proper tagging.

**P**

**PROBLEMS** can be identified, explored and solved with the right tracking in place.

Tracking is just as useful for recognising problems in your account, as it is for highlighting what is driving performance.

It can help flag unusual user behaviour on a website, which could signal website or marketing platform issues, such as problems with campaigns or website loading.

These insights into unusual behaviour and differences in results can help you to better explore and understand what could be causing it - whether this is overall search volume due to market changes, stock level, or website-specific issues.

Once a problem is identified, you are in a better position to find a solution. For example, stock issues can't be fixed with PPC alone, but what can help is actions like changing aggression and pushing products with lots of stock.

**QUIT** relying on a single platform for all of your data.

**Q**

Finding the right platform that works for your tracking needs is important, but in order to work out the one that's right for you, comparing platform data can help with this.

By cross-checking data across different platforms, you can verify results and use tools that provide a holistic view across multiple platforms, avoiding biased reporting.

**REMEMBER** to refresh tracking scripts.

**R**

As tracking technologies evolve, so do the tools and techniques available. Regularly update scripts to use the latest features from platforms like Google Ads and GA4. Periodically review and upgrade to new tracking tools or features.

**S**

*"There are so many PPC tracking **SCRIPTS** that can be applied to implement measurements across various metrics. Whether you want to look at conversions, click-tracking, remarketing, or dynamic keyword insertion (to mention a few), there's likely a script to be able to help you to see the data you need."*



**Inny Vaiciute**

PPC Manager, Circus PPC



**T**

**TRENDS** can be identified through PPC tracking, and used to drive strategy moving forward.

Much like the weather, different brands and industries experience trends and 'seasons' throughout the year.

Just like we expect summer to be hotter than winter, we can also set expectations for future PPC performance by looking at past trends identified within historical data insights.

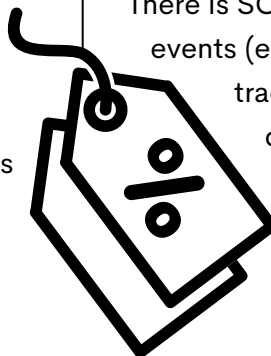
Tracking allows advertisers to identify, explore, and use trends to their advantage - with this data signalling when changes to strategy might be necessary to drive the best possible results.

**U**

Track **USER** engagement to improve the conversion journey.

Looking at metrics such as CTR (click-through-rate) and CVR (conversion rate), as well as drop-off points in the customer journey and which ads are performing best to drive the results you want to see, can help you to look at different ways of improving the journey to better drive conversions.

By testing different iterations and combinations of ad copy and descriptions, campaign types, and landing pages - you can figure out best performing ad campaigns, and what will drive success for your business.



PPC tracking offers the **VISIBILITY** you need to make data-driven optimisations to your ads.

**V**

Tracking is, simply put, visibility across the performance of your campaigns. Without it, you don't have the ability to see what's happening in your account, which leads to blind optimisations that may or may not be doing what you want them to do.

Would you use a map to get to a destination you hadn't been to before? Or would you guess which way to go without looking at any sort of route? We know what we'd rather do.

Account growth and reaching all-important business goals, objectives, and milestones with PPC can be made quicker, easier, and much more effective by looking at what's right in front of you... that's if you have accurate PPC tracking implemented, of course.

**WARNING:** try not to make tracking implementation changes close to big seasonal events such as Black Friday.

**W**

There is SO much to do in the run-up to seasonal events (especially Black Friday), so having your tracking working and effectively delivering the data you want to see in plenty of time is hugely recommended.

**X**

*Want your ads to have the **X-FACTOR?** Check your tracking!*

We told you we had a tip for the letter 'X'!

Without the right, working and accurate PPC tracking - your ads aren't able to be optimised to drive the best possible results.

Incorrect, or no, conversion tracking means that you're not receiving the data that highlights where your ads are performing well and where to allocate budget, and equally, where things don't look as good, and budget is being wasted.

**Y**

***YOY** data comparisons can paint a picture of your business's PPC growth over time.*

Almost as exciting as business growth is the visual representation of what this YOY/QOQ/MOM growth looks like - and accurate tracking provides you with the data you need to show off your progress.

Reporting is a huge part of the PPC optimisation process - but it isn't only helpful for pointing out where improvements need to be made.

It can also highlight data and insights in a compelling way, making it easier to justify PPC performance



and (hopefully) get more budget to push the areas that are working well and driving growth for your PPC campaigns.

**Learn more about the importance of PPC reporting from our PPC Reports Analyst, Dev, here.**

*Ultimately, no tracking = **ZERO** valuable insights.*

**Z**

Even if your business is doing well and you're happy with the results that are being driven - without tracking, you have no data, and without any data, there's nothing indicating what's driving those results.

By implementing working, accurate tracking that measures what you need to see how effectively PPC is helping you towards your business goals, you're setting yourself up for success with the right information you need to optimise your account successfully.

Whether you're running your PPC in-house, or working with an agency - tracking is up there as one of, the not THE, most important parts of your strategy - allowing you to discover exactly what PPC is doing for your business.

**Additional resources:**

- [Creating An Award-Winning PPC Strategy | Whitepaper](#)
- [The PPC Black Friday Blueprint | Whitepaper](#)
- [PPC Case Studies | Circus PPC](#)



# CIRCUS



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**New clients see an average 150% increase in sales within the first 3 months when working with Circus.**



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