

Get Started Off Right

By Elizabeth Marsten

Legal, Notes and Other Stuff

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Who is this book for?

Small businesses, sole proprietorships, crafters, technicians, consultants, contractors, anyone with a small PPC budget (\$1000 per month or less) who would like to give this PPC thing a try.

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That's a fancy way of saying: please don't steal from me. It's not cool.

If you like this book, you might want to check out Elizabeth's posts at the Portent blog <u>www.portentinteractive.com</u>.

If you want to talk to Elizabeth, you can reach her at elizabeth@portent. com

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To really get the most out of this ebook, read the whole thing through once and then come back and do the set up.



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What is PPC and how does it work?

PPC stands for "pay per click" and also goes by the name CPC (cost per click), SEM (search engine marketing) and paid search. The basic concept is that you will be paying every time someone clicks your ad. EVERY time. The exact cost you pay will fluctuate for every click. You can't control the exact amount; it's a bid system. So just like an auction, you could walk away with something really great for cheap or completely overpay for something not that great. For example- keywords for "mesothelioma" can cost up to \$50 per click, while "wedding etiquette" can be bought for as little as \$0.15 CPC. It simply depends on the competition and your relevancy for that keyword. Don't let mesothelioma scare you away though- PPC is a great way to learn about your customers' behavior on the web, get some sales and bring people to your site.

What should my budget be?

Don't expect to triple your money and leads right out of the box! Treat trying PPC like going to Vegas. Set aside a specific amount of money that you have to "lose" and don't touch the rest. Once that's gone, the table's cold and it's time to walk away and re-examine. Assume that, at the minimum, what you'll get is traffic to your site. Expect that, if you implement the steps outlined here and check in on your account regularly, you will have spent your money in the most efficient and effective way possible. From

that, only you will be able to determine if you want to continue on with PPC or not.

Your budget depends entirely upon how much you can afford to spend to get one sale, taking into account things like average order value and cost per click. If your average sale value is \$30, it costs you \$20 for the product and you make a \$10 profit per sale, how much of that \$10 are you willing to spend to get the \$30? This is only something you can determine and had better determine **BEFORE** you turn on your first ad.

For example:

My average order value is \$20. My cost of goods is \$10, which means that I have a \$10 profit margin. But to get the \$20, I need to spend some money on advertising. Assuming that the CPC is 0.50 and it takes 10 clicks to get a sale, I will spend all \$5 to make \$5.

There is no guarantee that it will take you 10 clicks or 100 clicks to get that sale, nor is there a guarantee on that it will cost \$0.15 or \$1.00 CPC-that's why you have to set an overall budget to start out with and refine from there.

Let's assume that your budget is \$500 over the next two weeks. \$250 per week, \$35 per day, every day. That is what you should set your daily campaign budgets (total) to start off with. You can always change this later, depending on how much money you've spent and when your audience is

online. Use this as a baseline.

Don't be delusional. If your average sale is \$40,000 because you sell a very fancy, high end, file transfer software solution, don't expect to see \$0.25 CPCs and hundreds of leads with a \$500 budget. Your budget should match your industry.

This is also why you need to start with *one* product or service— preferably your most popular/profitable one. This may or may not be the same thing. Pick something that will help you determine if you can sell through PPC or not, not something that you want to sell to get rid of it. The product or service needs to be something that people actually buy. You need to find out what you can get out of PPC or if it's right for you before you expand.

Which product or service to try first

Take a hard look at your inventory. What is that people buy? Is the same product online? Why do they buy it from you?

You want to select something that fulfills a certain niche. If you sell "shoes," don't be that broad. Pick a specific kind of shoes based on the competitiveness of the product. For example, women's running shoes would be a good start. Can you dig deeper than that? How about brands or type?

Now It's Your Turn.

My average order is

My average cost of goods is___

My average profit margin is_

How much of that profit am I willing to spend on advertising?_____

* * *

What is my total PPC budget to test with?_

* * *

Now it's Your Turn.

My profit margin on that item is_

What words would I search for to find that

How much traffic does Google say there is for those

* * *

The item I sell most is

item

words?_

* * *

PPC for Your Small Business

Let's say women's running shoes is the top level category of what you sell, but you specialize in women's running shoes for marathons and trail running. You want to target keywords around women, running shoes, trails and marathons. If you're already in a nice niche, like featherbeds for dogs, you don't have to get more granular than that (in fact, you might have to expand).

Get traffic estimates

Word or phrase (one per line)	Max CPC \$	Daily budget	(?
Advanced options Locations: United States Estimate	Languages: English		

Check out the competition and find out how many searches you might see in a month with <u>Google's Traffic Estimator Tool</u>:

Keyword		Local Monthly Searches	Estimated Avg. CPC	Estimated Ad Position	Estimated Daily Clicks	Estimated Daily Cost
\precsim running shoes		450,000	\$1.60	1.28	849	\$1,381.64
$\underset{\sim}{\curvearrowleft}$ womens running shoes		27,100	\$1.58	1.59	0	\$0.67
\precsim marathon shoes	Q	4,400	\$1.08	1.51	3	\$4.51
$\stackrel{\wedge}{\succ}$ shoes for marathons		140	\$0.05	1	0	\$0.00
🖄 marathon running shoes		1,900	\$0.00	0	0	\$0.00

Enter in the keyword(s) for your product or service. The Max CPC and Daily Budget fields are optional- leave those blank if you want to see what it will cost approximately to be #1. Clearly to be #1 in the USA for "running shoes" is a bit pricey at \$1,381 per day.

So this is where it might get a little confusing- according to this, Google is saying that the keyword "womens running shoes" gets 27,000 searches a month, but no clicks. Unfortunately that's not correct, nor accurate. It's a free tool from Google, so we can't complain too much, but we can use the data that is there as a baseline.

Keep in mind that 450,000 searches every month doesn't mean 450,000 impressions. Impression rate is based on the daily budget and CPC set by each individual advertiser on a per query basis. This means Google can't tell us what that is, nor predict it as accurately.

Which keywords to use

Now that you know which product/service you're going to feature in your first campaign, let's figure out what your "seed keyword" list is going to be. That's the top 5-10 keywords that you'll start your account with and build off of as data and sales roll in. Do not fill your account with tons of keywords to start with- use the ones that best describe your product that users would type in to search with.

For example: dog collars.

There are several types of dog collars and they can be classified by materials, size and style. Organize these different search behaviors by placing the keywords in separate ad groups or campaigns.

Keywords you might be considering: dog collars, leather dog collars, choke chain, spiked dog collars, dog harness collars, jeweled dog collars, rhinestone dog collars, big dog collars, large dog collars, small dog collars, medium dog collars, dog collars for large dogs, dog collars for small dogs, dog collars for medium dogs.

* * *

Do not fill your account with tons of keywords to start with- use the ones that best describe your product that users would type in to search.

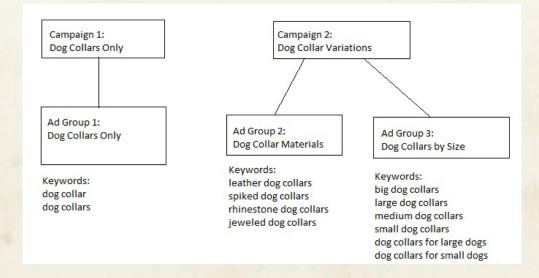
* * *

The suggested structure for this keyword list would be 2 campaigns, 3 ad groups total. One for "dog collars" by itself due to the 201,000 estimated impressions and the other for the variations for dog collars. This allows us to control the budget for the broader, less likely to convert keywords and provide enough funds to the longer tail/more niche keywords that are more likely to convert.



Also, look at the results page. Are the organic search engine results showing items for sale that are similar? Is it the same with the ads?

* * *



Campaign #1 is the campaign that will capture the most traffic but also be less likely to convert overall, as well as a campaign that targets a specific style, color, model or size. A broader search is indicative of the research phase of the buying cycle and means that the user may not be ready to buy quite yet. Depending on your inventory and message, your site may be the one to occupy this space and be profitable from broader

terms. If you sell 4 kinds of dog collars, chances are you won't have what the person who searched on "dog collars" is looking for over the advertiser that has 40 kinds of dog collars. But if you sell 1-inch thick green leather dog collars and brought the visitor to the site through the keyword "leather dog collars," your chances of conversion improve.

How to determine what terms people are searching

Besides using the keyword estimation tool and suggestion features from Google, one of the best free tools is the search engine itself. Simply search for the keyword in question and see what similar terms are suggested by Google as you type. Also, look at the results page. Are the organic search engine results showing items for sale that are similar? Is it the same with the ads?

For example, you want to search keywords around Cisco network systems because you sell Cisco online support. The keywords you think you want to target are Cisco telephone support, CCEI support, and Cisco networks. However, when searching upon these terms, the results center around jobs, careers, training and certificate programs. So, that is not going to work.

Think in a different direction then and go a little broader for example: Cisco tech support, Cisco service provider, CCIE service provider, Cisco

maintenance, CCIE security.

Another tool that offers some free information is <u>SEMrush</u>. Simply type in the term(s) that you need suggestions for and see what comes up in their "similar terms" area.

Related keywords report - 1,523

Keyword	∆ Volume	CPC	Competition	Results	Trend
technical support page	104	0.05	2.88	138,000,000	
cisco netpro	288	0.05	1.55	160,000	
cusci	155	0.05	2.04	48,800,000	
cisco technical support	192	2.11	2.80	2,530,000	1
cisco technical	21	0.05	3.07	19,600,000	, s. ben
tac support	54	0.05	3.55	7,130,000	
cisco customer service	104	0.05	3.25	9,620,000	and the second
tech support website	43	0.05	3.38	173,000,000	

Match types

Google offers four different match types: broad, modified broad, phrase and exact. The match type will depend on the amount of traffic you are expecting from your keywords and the negative keywords you have in place. You should have a negative keyword list in place at the campaign or ad group levels (go to the Negative Keyword section on how to build out your list). See the definitions of the different match types and examples here: <u>Google Match Type Definitions</u>.

* * *

My keywords are:

* * *

Search Traffic	Match Type
40,001+	Exact (1,400 per day average)
20,001-40,000	Phrase (1,333 per day average)
15,001-20,000	Modified Broad (666 per day
	average), complete anchor
10,001-15,000	Modified Broad (500 per day
10.00	average), dual anchor
5,001-10,000	Modified Broad (333 per day
	average), one anchor
0-5,000	Broad (166 per day average)

What match types to apply

This chart is a very basic generalization to help you determine a starting point based on monthly estimated search impressions from the Google Search Tool. Keep in mind— this is a baseline **only**. You should do what makes sense for you and your business; this is simply to help get you started. How a match type will react to your keyword list and business goals varies from industry to industry and from campaign to campaign. Impressions and clicks are influenced by a lot of other factors like your budget, keyword bids, competition and historical data in your account—which means that keeping an eye on your account after you launch a new campaign or ad group is a must. Additionally, if you are in a competitive niche, you definitely want to utilize the modified broad match option from Google. Be sure to check out their chart on how to implement that <u>here</u>.

Figure out how much to bid

We're going to use the Traffic Estimator tool in AdWords again to figure out where to start when bidding. You'll find the Estimator Tool under Tools > Traffic Estimator Tool. The tool will allow you to enter or paste in the keywords you are using (or thinking of using) and set down a bid and see what kind of placement that bid will get you.

You don't have to be super accurate, just put something in the Max CPC and budget fields and run it. Play with it, change your bids/budget amounts to see how what the fluctuations are and use this to determine where to start. Paste in the keyword list you researched from earlier and see what suggestions come up.

Get traffic estimates

Word or phrase (one per line)	Max CPC	D	aily budget
dog collars studded dog collars leather dog collars	\$ 80	\$	25
🗄 Advanced options Locations: United States	Languages: English		
Estimate			

As we saw earlier in this ebook in the What Product or Service to Try First section, these are estimates and aren't always that accurate. This is why I recommend using the chart below to set your actual CPC.

This chart is a very basic generalization to help you figure out where to start bidding at the ad group level. Paste in your keyword list by ad group into the traffic estimation tool, take the average of that and add a few cents based on the following.

While Google provides you with a keyword estimate, new accounts/campaigns/ad groups often need a push to get going monetarily. It is better to start higher and hotter and come down than to try and ramp up slowly.

* * *

Play with it, change your bids/budget amounts to see how what the fluctuations are and use this to determine where to start.

* * *

Suggested CPC Average	Add
0.01-1.00	0.50
1.00-2.00	.075
2.00-3.00	1.00
3.00-4.00	1.50
4.00-5.00	2.00
5.00-6.00	2.50
6.00-7.00	3.00

And so on. The larger the suggested CPC, the higher you should over-bid. The system is an auction system and more competitive industries will have high thresholds. Since it's decided on a per advertiser basis and often has a minimum set by Google that we can't see, you'll need to overshoot at first. This is how keywords like "mesothelioma attorney" cost \$45 per click.

Keep in mind what you bid is the absolute maximum of what you COULD pay and not necessarily what you WILL pay. If you undershoot the CPC, Google will let you know by placing a warning next to the keyword that says "Bid below first page minimum." This simply means that your ad for that keyword is not showing up in the first page of results on Google when someone searches due to the low bid amount.

Don't panic if you see this- this is called a "you're paying, but you could

be paying more" suggestion. Check your average position, if it's lower than 5, you will need to raise your bid to be competitive. If it's not, that means you are showing on the first page when there is less competition throughout the day.

Competition often drops throughout the course of the day as advertisers budgets are maxed out, turned off or turned down. If the keyword is not of great importance/conversion to you, you can raise the bid slightly for more first page placement, pause it, delete it or leave it.

If you leave it, it could have a negative effect on Quality Score and your account history. But unless there are many keywords with this message, the damage will be negligible.

Negative keywords

You want these. Negative keywords filter out search queries that are close to your keyword list but not close to what you sell or do. Common examples for almost every account are free, print, printable, download and cheap. They can also help with branding and avoiding messages or ads that you don't want to associate with your business. They are applied at the campaign and ad group level. If your campaigns are organized in a solid structure (as outlined above), you will really only have to apply them at the campaign level.

* * *

Keep in mind what you bid is the absolute maximum of what you *could* pay and not necessarily what you *will* pay.

* * *

For example— I sell new office cubicle systems. My negative keywords are: used, toilet, dressing room, refurbished, cheap, jokes, practical jokes, gags, pranks. (Or maybe I sell an online calendaring system- I'll want to exclude words like: download, print, printable, pdf, free or software.)

These example negative keywords will filter out searches for used/refurbished cubicle systems, different types of cubicle systems and culture references to jokes and pranks that officemates play on each other.

Start typing a search into Google and see what the search box suggests. Mark down what shows up in the search suggestions that you do not want associated with your campaigns and add them to your negative keywords list. Write down words you already know you don't want associated with your business. You know what they are!

Then, once every couple of weeks, click the "see search terms" button in the keyword list tab at the ad group level and select "all." This will tell you what people typed in that made your ad show. This report is often very telltale and can have all kinds of negative keyword opportunities that can be added along with any terms that you might have missed that you should be adding to your regular keyword lists.

My negative keywords are:

What to write in ads

If you followed the account campaign structure suggestions, this part will be easier than you think.

- Get a keyword in the headline and again in the body copy, 1st or 2nd line.
- Always be sure to offer a benefit or feature- Sale, Free Shipping, % Off, Promo Code, 25 styles, 10 colors, affordable, professional, expert, etc.
- Make sure the destination URL works.
- Use capitalization in the body copy to help words stand out and with readability.
- Use proper spelling and grammar, and follow the editorial guidelines for the search engine.
- If you're not sure that your messaging is on track, ask someone else- if they were searching, would they click that ad? The less tech savvy the person is, the better.

* * *

For more advanced options and ideas with ad copy, see Book 2: Taking Ads Up A Notch.

* * *

Have at least 2–3 ads in every ad group, always. You never know if one will get rejected or not. Plus, you should be testing different offers, messaging or keyword usage in the ads.

But— do not test 16 ads against each other. That will create far too many variations at once and make it impossible to determine what is successful and what isn't. A solid set of well performing ads is what you should have running (always) and then **add** new experimental ones one at a time.

* * *

Have at least 2–3 ads in every ad group, always. You never know if one will get rejected or not.

* * *

Ready to Start Bidding and Buying

Where to Start

- Start a Google Account (if you don't already have one) and sign-up for Google AdWords. That is the engine with the most volume, most robust capabilities and will be able to tell you faster whether or not this PPC thing is for you. Know that you will be charged \$5 to set up the account. Also, have your first campaign, ad group, ad and keyword list ready to go when walking through the sign up process.
- 2. Review this <u>AdWords Beginner Guide</u> from Google. This guide will show you what is required to start, what info is needed and some tips. This will make the set up process go a lot faster and easier.
- 3. You will be walked through the Google AdWords start up wizard. You will need to know what your first campaign, ad group, ad and keyword list are going to be. Keep in mind that you can always go back and refine. Do not start with a 50 word keyword list.
- 4. Pick ONE product or service (see the Which Product Or Service To Try First And Which Keywords To Use list sections of this book for help)

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Whenever you're starting a new Google AdWords account, set the currency, time zone and payment method (pre or post pay) correctly— they **cannot** be changed later.

* * *

that you want to try with PPC- name the campaign and ad group to go with that product or service. Do not name it "campaign #1." You'll look at that later and have no idea what it is.

- 5. Start with a very simple ad, a headline that states what the product is and use the body copy to state a benefit or feature about it. This could be "Free Shipping" or "All Sizes" or "Download Now."
- 6. Start with no more than 5 keywords in your keyword list. Don't worry about the match type right now. Just get those in there- go back later and play with those.
- 7. If you're really concerned that you're going to forget to check on the account, set an end date on your campaign(s) in the near future so they will turn off automatically.
- 8. Complete the AdWords set up wizard, save and login. Enter your billing information when you're ready and the ads will launch.

Important account settings

Whenever you're starting a new Google AdWords account, set the currency, time zone and payment method (pre or post pay) correctly— they *cannot* be changed later.

Follow this checklist for new campaigns; these settings can be changed at any time:

- Under Settings, open the Network setting and disable the Display network. Leave Search and Partner enabled.
- Under Ads, set the serving option to "rotate" and not "optimize."
- Set a daily budget you are comfortable with.
- Set Spend to throughout the day- standard.
- Set the bidding option to manual.

The standard settings provided by Google are set to make you spend more and faster than you will be comfortable with as a new advertiser. Until you're comfortable with search, do not run ads on the display network. And if you do, start a new campaign.

The rotate option on the ads will show them evenly. The "optimize" feature is based on CTR only, not conversions. So if your goal isn't purely to drive traffic, don't use it right away, particularly if you want to test ads against each other. Setting the bidding option to manual means that you get to set the bids at the ad group and key levels. If you choose "auto," Google will spend as best it can to get every last click. Therefore, those on a tight budget should probably avoid this feature.

How to determine if PPC is working

Well the obvious question would be- do you have more sales or leads?

If so, hooray! But, that doesn't mean you shouldn't login to your account ever again until you get a large AdWords charge on your credit card. Paid search has to be looked at **often**.

If you'd like to do some math now that you have some sales and a conversion rate- check out these formulas from <u>Knol</u>:

For Products: **cost per click = conversion ratio X cost per sale** Cost per click = the most that you can actually afford to spend per click The conversion ratio = percentage of visitors that were sales Example: 13% x \$60 = \$7.80 CPC

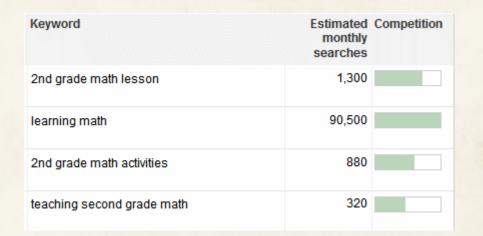
For Leads: **cost per click = closing ratio X cost per sale X conversion ratio** Closing ratio = percentage of leads that turn into sales Example: 10% x \$60 x 13% = \$0.78 CPC

If things are going well, check out the "Opportunities" tab and see what Google suggests that you should be adding for keywords to your ad groups. Pay attention to the traffic estimates alongside those keywords. Higher traffic keywords may need a match type adjustment, like phrase instead of broad or a modified broad match.

* * *

The standard settings provided by Google are set to make you spend more and faster than you will be comfortable with as a new advertiser.

* * *



The trick at this point is to know which keywords are bringing you the traffic and sales/leads that you want. Make sure those have good bids for good ad position (3 or higher) and enough budget to spend every day. This may mean moving them into their own ad groups or campaigns, but be sure to keep like terms and like ad groups together. The rule of thumb is that 20% of your keywords will bring you 80% of your conversions- so keep your 20% well maintained.

If you don't have e-commerce tracking, that's OK. You really should— but if you don't, I hope you have an analytics program of some kind. Whether it's built into the program that's holding your website together or Google Analytics (a free tool you should have anyway), it's a good idea to have one. This way, you can determine what is working from something other than Click Through Rate.

maintained.

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The rule of thumb is that 20% of your

keywords will bring you 80% of your

conversions- so keep your 20% well

PPC for Your Small Business

Using Google Analytics as an example- you can rate the effectiveness of a keyword or ad using the following metrics:

- Time on Site If the average visitor only stayed for 10 seconds for that keyword or ad, they didn't find what they wanted. Drill down to see what the culprit is.
- Bounce Rate A bounce rate of higher than 80% is pretty indicative that your landing page isn't living up to the user's expectation you set in the ad text.
- Pageviews per Visit If you're averaging a 1.x page views per visit stat with a high bounce rate, something needs to change.

Reference AdWords Beta	
Overview	
Campaigns	
Keywords	
Day Parts	
Destination URLs	
Placements	
Keyword Positions	

Additionally, Google Analytics has an Ad-Words section under Traffic Sources that is able to pull in your clicks, cost and give you deeper information about what is doing what for almost every facet of your account.

If your CTR is good (over 1.5%) on the ad level, you're headed in the right direction. Keep going. If your CTR is low (under 1.5%) on the ad level, it's time to either change up the ad or see if there is a specific keyword that has a lot of impressions and a low CTR that is dragging the ad down. If so, try pausing the keyword or changing the match type.

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Now, these numbers (1.5% CTR or 80% bounce rate) aren't written in stone or by any means a rule to live by. They are simply baselines to give you a broad idea about what is "good" and what is "bad." You know your business best. You know your customers. You are the one who can truly determine what is "good" from what is "bad" for your business.

Google AdWords also offers Conversion Tracking within the AdWords interface. You should have that in conjunction with an analytics program. But, at the very least, you'll be able to tell when a sale or lead comes in right within your AdWords dashboard along with which ad and keyword brought it in.

Under the Reporting tab— choose Conversions, create a new conversion, name it and select the purpose.

Conversions	Webpages	Code	Settings		
Create a conv	ersion				
Tracking Purpos	Se Select a track	ing purpose	• 💌		
Save and continu	e Cancel				

Be sure to select http or https for the *conversion* page that the code will go on. This code will go on one page only on your site— the checkout

* * *

You know your business best. You know your customers. You are the one who can truly determine what is "good" from what is "bad" for your business.

* * *

complete, thank you or receipt page (whichever you have on your site). It should be the page that is reached when a sale or lead is completed. Then, each time someone via PPC hits that page, AdWords will record a conversion. For more on this, consult the <u>AdWords Help Center</u> for implementation instructions and troubleshooting.

Where to send visitors

Never send visitors to the home page unless you can help it. A PPC ad should bring the visitor directly to the item or service they were searching for. If you sell pet accessories and they came to your site via the keyword "leather dog collars," don't send them to the home page or the dog category of your site.

Send them deep into the site to the dog collars or, even better, the leather dog collars page of the site. The home page works for branded or really general ad groups, but as a rule of thumb, bring those visitors into your site to what they came for.

Do you need a PPC specific landing page?

Some industries and businesses have found greater conversion success by creating dedicated landing pages to send their paid search traffic to. If your site is organized in a way that makes navigation or search difficult, this is definitely a route to be tested. * * *

Resources to Check Out

Portent Interactive PPC Blog

Search Engine Land PPC Column

Click Equations

* * *

A PPC landing page can speak directly to the visitor, incorporate your keywords for a better Quality Score and make special offers or list out attributes that you weren't able to capture in the ad. No matter what, your ad message should reflect your landing page. Do not offer a download and then have no download button on the landing page for the visitor to click. This creates a poor user experience and a poor conversion rate for you.

Check out this list of <u>14 Landing Page Upgrades</u> to consider when creating a landing page.

Now What?

PPC is a constant process— lather, rinse and repeat. Don't ever leave an account unattended for more than a week (you won't like what you find when you get your credit card bill). It's also a huge industry with lots of little niches, tips, tools and tricks from experts across the globe. Check out the resources section in the margin for sites that you can use to help you build your AdWords skills even more. If you're seeing success with AdWords and are comfortable with it, consider branching out to other search engines like Bing/Yahoo to capture a different set of users. PPC is very simple at heart but can become very complicated and overwhelming quickly. Just keep in mind that you have a lot of control over it and keep it that way.



Conquer Paid Search Without Spending A Fortune

By Elizabeth Marsten

Legal, Notes and Other Stuff

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Who this ebook is for:

Small businesses, sole proprietorships, crafters, technicians, consultants, contractors, anyone with a small PPC budget (\$1000 per month or less) who know what PPC is, has a basic understanding of how it works, is currently running a PPC account (or was) and knows the features available in Google AdWords, wants to get more out of their account, and has read Part 1 of this e-book.

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If you like this book, you might want to check out Elizabeth's posts at the Portent blog <u>www.portentinteractive.com</u>.

If you want to talk to Elizabeth, you can reach her at elizabeth@portent. com

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"What if I already tried PPC?" or "PPC is currently eating my money."

Good thing you got this book then! Take a look through and make sure you've tried what's in here. If you haven't, do it now. If you have and it's still not panning out for you, PPC may not be for your business. Sometimes that is just how it is. Paid Search is not meant for every industry. Maybe your goals are too ambitious for your industry. Maybe the industry can't support your goals. Maybe you didn't outline concrete goals before you started. Before you write PPC off completely, make sure you check out Book 1: *How to Determine if it's Working*, then decide.

Important Account Settings

Before you start diving into the more advanced features and flipping switches and match types, take a look at the list below and match it against the settings in your account and campaigns. You might find that you had a different problem all together. Here are some of the top issues seen with accounts that have been having problems.

• **Problem**—thousands and thousands of impressions but few clicks and conversions.

Check at the campaign level that you are not opted into both the Content

or Search Partner networks. If you are, **DISABLE** the Content (Display) network. Start with a Search only (people who typed in your keywords into the search engine) campaign before branching out to Content. (See the Content Network section for more.)

Networks (?)	 All available sites (Recommended for new advertisers) Let me choose
	Search Google search
	Search partners (requires Google search)
	Display Display Network (2)
	O Relevant pages across the entire network (2)
	\odot Relevant pages only on the placements and audiences I manage \odot
	Your ads won't show on Google's Display Network. Learn more

If your site isn't mobile phone conversions friendly (i.e. many steps in the checkout process, high cost items or long buying cycle items), consider opting out of serving ads on mobile devices and select computers only in the Devices settings. Or you can keep mobile ads on and select specific devices like the iPad. This is also under the Networks and Devices settings at the campaign level with the Search and Content (Display) Networks.

• **Problem**—one ad gets all the impressions or only one ad seems to be doing anything.

Go into your campaign settings and under Delivery, click the button from "optimize" to "rotate." By default, any new campaign automatically has

the ad serving set to optimize, which means that Google is choosing based on CTR which ad is the better ad to show and more often. If you're trying to conduct a test where you're trying to beat the other ad- you have to change to "rotate" or it won't work.

• **Problem**—getting lots of clicks, but no conversions and a pretty high (90+%) bounce rate.

Check out your keyword list, at the bottom, there's a plus box for "negative keywords." If you don't have any in there, you'll probably need to add some. Click the "see search terms" button in the keyword list tab at the ad group level and select "all." Then you can see what people have been typing in that's brought them to your site. Adding negative keywords lets you filter out unwanted traffic right off the bat.

Problem—not getting enough impressions. Check what your match types are.

If you're using exact or phrase match types, try scaling back one to see if that expands your impression base. If your entire ad group is using exact keywords, you'll have less impressions that if you try using phrase or broad.

• **Problem**—I'm not really sure when to use broad match. I picked exact and phrase because I didn't want to waste any money and was being

very cautious.

Use broad match for the longer tail (3+ word key phrases) lower traffic keywords and exact match for really popular terms (often 2 words or less). Be sure to check out <u>modified broad match</u> if you haven't yet. If you're geo-targeting to a metro area or smaller, set the keyword match types to broad match to start with.

• **Problem**—I set my geographic settings to specific cities or a small radius and I can't seem to get many impressions.

Often when we set geographic areas, we tend to set them pretty tightly, trusting that Google will show to the right people and cut out those people on the fringe we don't want to see our ads. The issue here is that the geotargeting functionality often isn't as robust or selective as we'd like. Try expanding your settings by a larger area, either by metro or a larger radius/polygon and don't worry so much that someone in a neighboring suburb just out of your delivery area might see an ad.

• **Problem**–I keep seeing "rarely shown due to low Quality Score" in my ad groups.

This means that Google isn't finding your keyword list relevant to what your ads and/or landing page are offering. Check that your keywords match up with the same offers that your landing page and ad are adver-

* * *

Use broad match for the longer tail (3+ word key phrases) lower traffic keywords and exact match for really popular terms (often 2 words or less).

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In fact, sometimes having the lower bid pays off— as other advertisers deplete their budget throughout the day, you haven't.

* * *

tising. Then check to see that the keywords in the list are closely relatedchances are this is the issue and you'll need to move out some of the low quality keywords into a new ad group with a new ad and more relevant landing page or pause then. If you have a handful of keywords that don't have that quality score warning next to them, leave them there and continuing to run.

 Problem—I keep seeing "bid below first page bid"—does that mean I need to bid more?

Not necessarily. This means that you are meeting the minimum required bid to show your ad, if you weren't you'd be seeing a different message, like low quality score. If you would like a higher average ad position or more exposure, you increase your bid to the suggested amount to show on the first page of results. If you aren't concerned with being on page 1 every time, you don't have to do anything. In fact, sometimes having the lower bid pays off— as other advertisers deplete their budget throughout the day, you haven't. Which means when they run out of money, you move up.

Getting More out of Your Budget

Now, there are a couple of ways to stretch a campaign's daily budget that might be too small for the industry it's in. Using tools like the Keyword Tool in Google can help, but they should be taken as a ballpark for

estimated searches. The same goes for the Traffic Estimation tool, which is the fastest and easiest way to find out if a keyword is going to eat all your budget in an hour or not. Let's assume you've already got your keyword list and niche and are trying to figure out how to stretch with what you've got. Get started by building a smart account structure with smart settings. Do not use all these techniques at once! Otherwise, how will you know what worked?

Using the example of a \$500 monthly budget for an ecommerce site with an average CPC of \$1.00, here is a sample account:

- No more than 2 campaigns.
- No more than 3 ad groups per campaign.
- No more than 10 keywords per ad group.
- Place your best keywords (the ones you are most relevant for, most likely to convert for and most likely to get a high QS) in one ad group.
- Set the max CPC for that ad group higher than the \$1.00 to \$3.00.
- Write very specifically targeted ads.

Stretch Your Dollar Even More

- Turn on position preference and set the positions for 1-3 for lower QS keywords (don't do this for your top keyword ad group/campaign).
 Then set the max CPC at the \$1.00 or lower.
- Set the ad delivery rate to "accelerated." This means there's a higher

chance of you burning through your entire budget in an hour (or it means that you're going to show up a lot throughout the day). If you're in a really niche industry that doesn't have a lot of traffic- this could be your best setting and it works for campaigns that do NOT hit their daily budget every day.

- Set the ad delivery rate to "accelerated" and lower your ad group maximum CPC bids. This means that Google will show your ads as often as they can for that lower rate. This is a good way to work within highly competitive spaces with a limited budget- but will only work well with very small groups of highly targeted keywords.
- Set ad scheduling to show during the best hours of the day. This could mean pausing ads on certain days all together (like weekends or Fridays- if you know that's your worst day for sales). Use the new Ad-Words beta segment in Google Analytics to see what days and hours people are coming to your site and what they're doing during these hours.

* * *

Set ad scheduling to show during the best hours of the day. This could mean pausing ads on certain days all together.

* * *

 Segment even further with ad scheduling and set your bids to increase during peak hours of the day. Be there when your target audience is looking. Look to increase your bids 10-15% during those hours to start with. Reduce the bid during hours of the day where you want to show up (for less) but aren't as crucial.

Day	Time period	% of bid	Midnight	4:00 AM	8:00 AM	Noon	4:00 PM	8:00 PM
Monday	06:00 AM - 11:00 AM 11:00 AM - 05:00 PM 05:00 PM - 08:00 PM	110% 100% 90%	XXXX	$\times \times \checkmark \checkmark$	4444	4 4 4 4	1	
Tuesday	06:00 AM - 11:00 AM 11:00 AM - 05:00 PM 05:00 PM - 08:00 PM	110% 100% 90%	XXXX	$\times \times \checkmark \checkmark$	4444	1 1 1 1	1	
Wednesday	06:00 AM - 11:00 AM 11:00 AM - 05:00 PM 05:00 PM - 08:00 PM	110% 100% 90%			4444	4 4 4 4	1 2 2 2	

 Geo Target if you can— it's typically cheaper. But if you're in a really narrow niche, it's better to show ads nationally (unless, of course, you don't deliver to Minnesota).



* * *

Reduce the bid during hours of the day where you want to show up (for less) but aren't as crucial.

* * *

Expanding Your Account

Get More Keywords

Now that we know how much you can spend per day, what should you bid at the ad group and keyword levels? First things first, go to the keyword list and copy it. Then, open the **Traffic Estimator** tool under the **Opportunities** tab.

Home	Campaigns	Opportunities	Reporting -	Billing -	My account 👻	
Tools > T	raffic Estimator					
Get traffic estimates Word or phrase (one per line)			Max CPC		Daily budget	
Estima		Locations: United S	itates Languages:	English		

Paste in your keyword list and put in a default Max CPC of \$1.00 and the daily budget you already configured. Then, click "estimate." Using the women's running shoes example, we can get an idea of how much the max CPC should be. According to the information below, we want to go higher than \$1.00 to obtain an ad position better than 3.

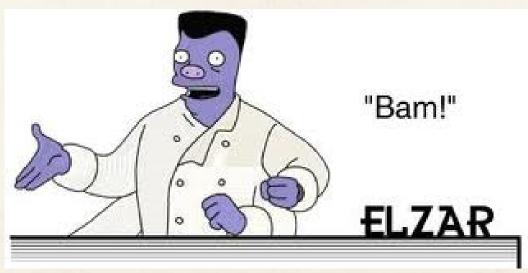
Get traffic estimates								
Word or phrase (one per line) womens running shoes running shoes for women	Max CPC \$ 1.00	Daily \$ 35.	budget .00 ⑦					
Estimate	ions: United States Languages: E	-						
ummary (per day)	Traffic estimates About this data (?)							
0.70 - \$1.00	+ Add keywords Dov	wnload 🔻				Sorted by	Relevance *	Views 💌
otal Estimated Clicks 10 - 32 otal Estimated Cost 14.74 - \$33.07	Keyword		Local Monthly Searches	Estimated Avg. CPC	Estimated Ad Position	Estimated Daily Clicks	Estimated	Daily Cost
	running shoes for w	vomen 🕰	40,500	\$0.87	2.86	13		\$12.05
	womens running sh	hoes 🔍	135,000	\$0.83	3.03	13		\$11.85

Tools	Find keywords						
Keyword Tool	Based on one or both of the following:						
Traffic Estimator	Word or phrase (one per line)	Word or phrase (one per line) Website					
Placement Tool	running shoes						
All Categories	Advanced options Locations: United S Search	tates Languages: English					
Apparer Beauty & Personal Care							
Computers	💠 Add keywords 🛛 Download 👻 Estimate s	earch traffic					
Consumer Electronics	Keyword		Competition				
🗄 Family & Community	running shoes	Q					
🖽 Finance							
E Food	best running shoes	Q					
Gifts & Occasions	discount running shoes	Q					
Health	mens running shoes	Q					
Hobbies & Leisure							
Home & Garden	running shoes sale						
	cheap running shoes	2	10				
Law & Government Products	Criedp running silves						

These estimates are based upon the numbers you input. The higher the daily budget and max CPC you enter, the more clicks the system will estimate that you will get. Edit those numbers and click the "estimate" button for an updated estimate. It is not required to bid for the #1 ad position for everything. In fact, you can try for a specific or higher ad position by bidding less for those more expensive keywords. Check out the next section, Bid to Position for Less, on how to do that.

There is a Keyword Tool in the AdWords toolbox that can suggest additional keywords, but it will not show you estimated costs or ad position with those suggested keywords. Instead, it will let you search by website URL, keyword or category and is a good tool when considering expansion and additional niches for which you might be relevant.

Taking Your Ads Up a Notch



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Writing doesn't have to just be about the benefits/features model or boring at all. In fact, punchy, exciting or funny ad copy can really bring the visitors coming. The trick is to make the ad fit to the audience you are trying to reach. A quirky ad may not appeal to someone shopping for life insurance or 401k options, but it might to someone looking for Hello Kitty purses or LED light up dog collars. Keep that in mind as you're taking a look at...

Stuff to try!

• Dynamic keyword insertion in the headline.

<u>{KeyWord: Free Home Buyer Seminars}</u> Ready to Buy a House? Or Need More Info? Free House Buying Seminars!

Dynamic keyword insertion on one of the body copy lines.

Short Queen RV Mattress

{KeyWord:Short Queen Mattresses} Plush RV innerspring mattress

Dynamic insertion in the display URL.

Batman's Cape

Every Superhero Needs a Cape! Waterproof, Belt Not Included www.example.com/{KeyWord:Bat+Man}

• Using the URL as the headline.

www.YourSiteURL.com

You'd Be Surprised How Much This Can Improve Click Through Rate!

• Using special characters in ads, - ~ * : or |.

Wedding Rules & Etiquette Wedding Traditions, Roles & Rules! ~Free Etiquette Articles & Tips.~

Ask a question in the headline.

Buying a Home in 2010? Free Home Buying Seminars in the Seattle Area. Sign Up Today!

• Use a "v" formation in the body copy with keywords.

Used Textbooks

Save Cash! Buy Used Textbooks. Used Textbooks at Low Prices.

• Free Shipping/Shipping offer in the headline.

RV Mattresses Ship Free Any Size, Any Style. Made in USA. Affordable RV Mattresses in All Shop Affordable RV Mattresses.

Free Shipping RV Mattress Sizes, Plus Free Shipping!

Be aggressive.

Kick Ass Backpacks

Your Backpack is Old and Ugly. Buy a new Backpack Now!

• Use guilt.

Flower Bouquets

You Can Always Do a Little More to Show Her that You Care.

Use humor.

Free eCards for Him He's an Idiot, Tell Him How Much of an Idiot with a Free eCard!

• A question in the body copy

Mattress Pads & Toppers Ready? Set, Go! On Sale for A Ltd Time. What Are You Waiting for? www.mattresspads.com

• All CAPS at the start of words

The Bike Shop

Bicycles & Cycling Equipment. Low Prices - Free Shipping!

• Repeat the headline in the 1st line of body copy

Great Deals on DVDs Great Deals on DVDs New and Used. We've Got What You Want.

Repeat words

Chug Chug Chug Get Some Beer in Your Mug! Shop Personalized Mugs Now. • Cross the line...a little

<u>Get Completely Screwed</u> Screw Often, Hard & Accurately! Shop Phillips Screwdriver Kits.

Use sounds

Drinking Glass Sets Crack! Smash. Tinkle. Replace Your Broken Glasses.

Keywords after the display URL

Wedding Rules & Etiquette Wedding Traditions, Roles & Rules! Free Etiquette Articles & Tips. www.yoursite.com/wedding+etiquette

• Drop the WWW in the display URL

Apartment Reviews Looking for a New Apartment? Search and Review Online. Padmapper.com

• Use a countdown or math problem

4+4=8 Adding Games

Free Basic Math Addition Games! Download Today to Learn More.

Advertising on the Content (Display) Network

The content, display or partner network is a network of sites that have enrolled into the search engine's advertising program where the site owners reserve blocks of space on their site to show text, image or video ads dependent on the kind of content their site is composed of. Search engines show advertiser ads next to this content and for every ad that's clicked, gives a portion of that CPC to the site owner. The content network differs from search in that the user did not actively search or seek out content with a keyword query— they are already engaged on a website and you are trying to lure them away with your ad to your own content. So as you can see, how you market to someone through a content network needs to vary from how you would advertise for them if they were searching.

In the AdWords their content network has been renamed the Display Network- but it's still the same thing. On MSN adCenter it's know as the Content Network but also has a "syndicated search partners" network which works very similarly and is enabled by default at the ad group level. For more on MSN adCenter networks, consult their blog and forums. Here's how to advertise on Google content networks without losing your shirt.

- 1. Start a new campaign and enable the content network, disable the search network.
- 2. Never duplicate campaigns or ad groups exactly that you've created for search. They're going to be similar, but need some tweaks. Take your most successful campaign/product and start there- you're going to have to build new ads and different keyword lists.
- 3. Keyword lists should revolve around the content you want your ads associated with. For example:
 - a I sell a powdered energy drink that comes in little foil tubes, simply open and mix with water.
 - b Instead of bidding on keywords like: energy mix, energy drink, powdered energy drink mix, I'll be bidding to the audience that would use the product. Keywords like: hiking tips, best hiking trails, mountain hiking supplies, packing for hiking- that could be one ad group.
 I could do another for running or fitness like: running nutrition, running advice, marathon tips, running trails.
 - c Keep these keywords to 3 words or less, too much longer and you'll have a hard time with the search engine finding relevant sites and content.

- d If you do a campaign (managed placements) where you choose which sites you want your ads to appear on— you won't necessarily need a keyword list.
- 4. The ads for content/display networks need to be very compelling— remember, you're trying to pull someone away from what they are already doing to come to your site and see what you're selling.
 - a. This is a great place to experiment with messaging you've always wanted to— be it humorous, aggressive, punchy or whatever.
 - b. Be sure to use keywords in the title and again in the body you've got to show the user that you have what they are looking for. It also helps with making sure that the search engine is placing your ads on the right pages.
- 5. Set your daily budget lower than you have for the search campaign you modeled it after to start out with- you can always add more later.
- 6. Know that you're going to see a lower CTR, the content network always has a lower click through rate than search, don't be surprised if you see thousands of impressions with 50 or less clicks.
- 7. Bid high at the ad group level to start with and come back around and lower if needed. If you turn the campaign on and see little to no impressions in the first couple of days- turn up the bid.

- 8. Just like search campaigns you can add negative keywords- be sure to duplicate the list you have for search over to your new content net-work campaign.
- 9. You also have the ability to add negative sites— sites that you do not want your ads to show up on. This could be competitor sites, parked pages, low quality sites or sites that are just irrelevant by your definition. Add these like you would a negative keyword.
 - a If you're using AdWords sites that constantly drive a lot of impressions:
 - i. MySpace, Gmail, Orkut, YouTube.
 - b If you're using MSN adCenter sites that constantly drive a lot of impressions:
 - i. Ezine Articles, Articlesbase.
 - ii. MSN owned properties (Astrology, Careers, Travel, Auto, Finance).
- 10. Be sure to check where you ads are showing after they've been running for a couple of days by running a placement performance report or logging into your account and viewing under the Networks tab where your ads would have shown and how often. Exclude ineffective sites immediately, a content network campaign can cost a lot of money quickly for no return on your investment. Repeat this every other week, if not every week.

AdWords Tools and Features

Sitelinks is the easiest free tool available in the campaign settings tab and is a great way to take up more real estate on a search engine result page. Sitelinks are links you can add under an ad, up to 10 at 35 characters each that can link to different pages or landing pages on the same ad. You will need to be in one of the top 3 ad positions to appear. When enabled with a bid for positions 1-3, they show on about 20-30% of impressions.

SONY ® - Official Site

www.SonyStyle.com Research, Shop, Experience Sony Bravia, Cyber-shot, VAIO, Handycam VAIO Laptops & Computers Cyber-shot Digital Cameras BRAVIA HDTVs NEW: Internet Google TV!

Overstock.com Shopping Overstock.com At Home with the "O" Entire order ships for just \$2.95. Overstock Sales Home & Garden Furniture Bedding & Bath

Branded campaigns can benefit from site links like: Locations, Clearance, popular model numbers, sales, About Us or Demo type categories.

Non-branded campaigns like Down Pillows can benefit from site links regarding: firmness, sleep position, sets, sales or fillpower.

Everyone should try Sitelinks at least once. Use the Ad Extensions tab to see statistics for performance.

Product Extension Ads (also called Plus Box ads) require a Google Merchant account and a live product feed (which is a free service). Link a Google Base merchant account with your AdWords account and when a user searches for something, thumbnail images and links appear to the product's page from the feed. Clicks on results in the Shopping area of a Google search result page are free, but a click on the thumbnail will cost a click in AdWords. It does not cost anything if the user clicks the plus box to expand or contract the ads.

The best use of this feature is with AdWords accounts that are e-commerce product based and have an optimized product feed. You will not be able to dictate exactly what product shows up with which AdWords queries, but you can add an attribute column to suggest to Google what you would like. If you would like more information on how to better control this feature, check out: <u>Pimping Out Product Extension Ads</u>.

Conversion Optimizer requires that Conversion Tracking be enabled and installed in your AdWords account. Having Conversion Tracking installed and enough conversions allows you to take advantage of CPA bidding and Enhanced CPC functions. Conversion Optimizer uses conversion data to determine when and who to show your ads to based on their intent. (See Google's <u>How it Works</u> section for more information.)

* * *

Clicks on results in the Shopping area of a Google search result page are free, but a click on the thumbnail will cost a click in Adwords.

* * *

Baby Strollers at Target

www.Target.com Find Baby Strollers & More. Shop for Baby Products at Target. <u>Hide products from Target for baby strollers</u>









Graco Baby Spree Baby Stroller Brooke \$89.99 Miamoda Facile Baby Stroller Flame \$69.99

Babys CozyGraco BabyWorld cozyLiterider BabyCuddler BabyStroller\$29.99\$74.99

Peg Perego Gt3 For Two Performance \$649.99

* * *

Be sure to note that your CPC can exceed up to 30% of your set max CPC with this feature if the system deems the visitor qualified.

* * *

Conversion Optimizer works best on a campaign that regularly has conversions and contains high performing keywords and ads. Campaigns that have it enabled with ad groups are profitable with it and ad groups that are not, struggle. The system then has to balance out the converting and less converting activity and can make your higher converting ad groups suffer. Be sure to structure your account accordingly— even though you really want to set that \$4 CPA on an ad group that's been giving you trouble since you'd rather it not convert at all if not for \$4 or less. Max CPC bidding is the route to take when you have an issue like that.

Enhanced CPC works with the Max CPC setting and will dynamically lower and raise your bids based on conversion history on a per query basis. Check out the definition and how to enable it <u>here</u>. Enhanced CPC is a good option for those that are interested in 3rd party bid management software and want to try it first, for free, with minimal set up. It is also

most beneficial for high traffic, highly competitive ad groups- but requires patience. Since it works off historical data, the more data you have, the better- campaigns that have been running conversion tracking longer will have a faster uptick than those that install conversion tracking and then enable the feature immediately following. *Be sure to note that your CPC can exceed up to 30% of your set max CPC with this feature if the system deems the visitor qualified.

Now What?

There's a lot you can do with PPC and advanced tactics, here is a list of free tutorials that you can use to further your campaigns performance and build your PPC knowledge base:

Using Negative Keywords to Direct Traffic— This post explains how to utilize negative keywords on the ad group level when using broad match (or variations of broad match) to "push" Google into showing the ads that you want with the specific keyword list that you want and avoid overlap.

<u>Google AdWords Remarketing</u>— Everything You Need to Know— how to set up a remarketing list, custom combination or audience based list for the content network in Google AdWords.

<u>22 Free Keyword Tools</u>— Free tools and ideas to help you expand your keyword list, niche or angle.

How to Set Up and Track Product Extension Ads- a feature mentioned earlier in this ebook as Product Ads or Plus Box Ads, this tutorial walks you through how to set up the product feed and link your accounts.

How to Set Up a Google Product Search Feed – This one's vintage, but still accurate for getting a product feed up, quickly and easily. You can always go back and get fancier later.

Other stuff by Elizabeth Marsten

The Web Marketing All-In-One Desk Reference for Dummies

Portent Interactive Blog-PPC

PPC Presentations