Hubspot Google Ads

Future-proof your marketing strategy



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Navigating Uncertain Times Ahead

After the enormous disruption of the past few years, we now find ourselves in a period of uncertainty. And amid that uncertainty, we are seeking answers.

The importance of pivoting in uncertain times

Chances are, your business will need to make changes to adapt to this new reality. In uncertain times, it can feel especially consequential to do this, so many marketers have an impulse to hunker down.

But the riskiest move is making no move at all.

One thing is certain: Together, Google and HubSpot can help you navigate this everevolving macroenvironment.

You can prepare for this moment by implementing strategies that deliver reliable results and help drive long-term growth. The reliability of tried-and-true marketing solutions powered by new insights and Google's AI will help you adjust to what's next.

Marketers use video to reach some of their key goals, reflecting a big investment in video as a tried-and-true method for achieving more.

Doing the "tried and new"

We call this combination of tried-and-true approaches and new, automated solutions the "tried and new." Here are three of these types of solutions:



Measure what matters

Tap into your first-party data, the information you collect directly from your customers, site visitors, and app users during their interactions with your products and services.



Market at the speed of consumers

Get to know your customers and then create demand and convert users.



Multiply your expertise

Use Google's AI to amplify your expertise and get better results, faster.

Ongoing uncertainty is driving unexpected shifts and fluctuations in how people shop online. Before we dive into our tactical framework, let's review a few global trends we're seeing that reflect these new shifts in consumer behavior.





Emerging Google Search Trends

Top 5 post-pandemic trends on Google Search



Trend #1: Consumer buying journeys are longer, and omnichannel.

Despite rising prices, rather than completely cutting back, many consumers have opted to be more thoughtful about spending, saving and investing in things they plan to still do. They're also more patient, as searches for "good time to buy" have grown globally year-over-year, and searches for "prices go down" have increased by 100%¹. And while they're still heading to stores, consumers are consolidating visits and informing those trips with digital channels.

In the business-to-business (B2B) space, more decision-makers tend to be involved in the purchasing process, leading to lengthier buying cycles.

stakeholders, on average, now make up a B2B buying committee, according to Bain & Company²



Trend #2: Consumers are creating personal budgets.

Consumers are researching products beforehand to feel more confident in their purchases and are relying on price and quality to make a decision.

of consumers in surveyed countries say they need to conduct research to feel confident about a large purchase decision³

¹ Google Data, Global English, March 22, 2022–May 20, 2022 vs. March 22, 2021–May 20, 2021.

² Google/Bain, US, B2B Discovery to Devotion Study, n=1,208, conducted across B2B buyers, 2022.

³ Google-commissioned Ipsos Consumer Continuous study, AU, BR, CA, CN, DE, ES, FR, IN, IT, JP, KR, MX, UK, US, ZA, ~n=500–1,000 online consumers 18+ per market, July 7, 2022–July 10, 2022.



Trend #3: Consumers are prioritising value.

Consumers are searching for more affordable ways to indulge. It's not just what consumers are buying and searching, it's how they're prioritising value in these uncertain times.

46%

of consumers in surveyed countries say that the quality of an item is the most helpful thing a brand can communicate as they make buying decisions⁴

45%

say that deals and promotions are the most helpful things a brand can communicate as they make buying decisions⁴



Trend #4: Consumers are searching with specificity and intention.

As consumers seek balance between managing pent-up needs and associated costs, we see indications of consciousness in how they search. Consumers are being intentional about what they search for to ensure that the information will be specific to their needs and circumstances.

"Best time to"

Searches have increased globally year over year⁵

⁴ Google-commissioned Ipsos Consumer Continuous study, AU, BR, CA, CN, FR, DE, ES, IN, IT, JP, KR, MX, UK, US, ZA, ~n=500-1,000 online consumers 18+ per market, July 7, 2022–July 10, 2022.

⁵ Google Trends, Global, Oct. 5, 2021–Oct. 5, 2022.



Trend #5: Consumers are open to switching stores and brands.

People want to make the right choices when it comes to buying, and many have become more open to trying new products, brands, businesses, and sources when making purchase decisions. This trend is unlocking opportunities for brands to capture new demand.

36%

of consumers in surveyed markets said they purchased a brand that was different from their preferred brand to get a better price or deal due to rising prices⁶

42%

have purchased from at least one new store they've never bought from before⁷



⁶ Google commissioned Ipsos COVID-19 tracker, AU, BR, CA, CN, DE, ES, FR, IN, IT, JP, KR, MX, UK, US, ZA, ~n=500-1000 online consumers 18+ per market, July 7-10, 2022.

⁷ Google / Storyline Strategies, Ad Controls, AU, BR, CA, MX, DE, FR, IN, JP, UK, US, n=1,000 per market, A18-55 with Internet access, March 2022.



The Google Ads Growth Formula

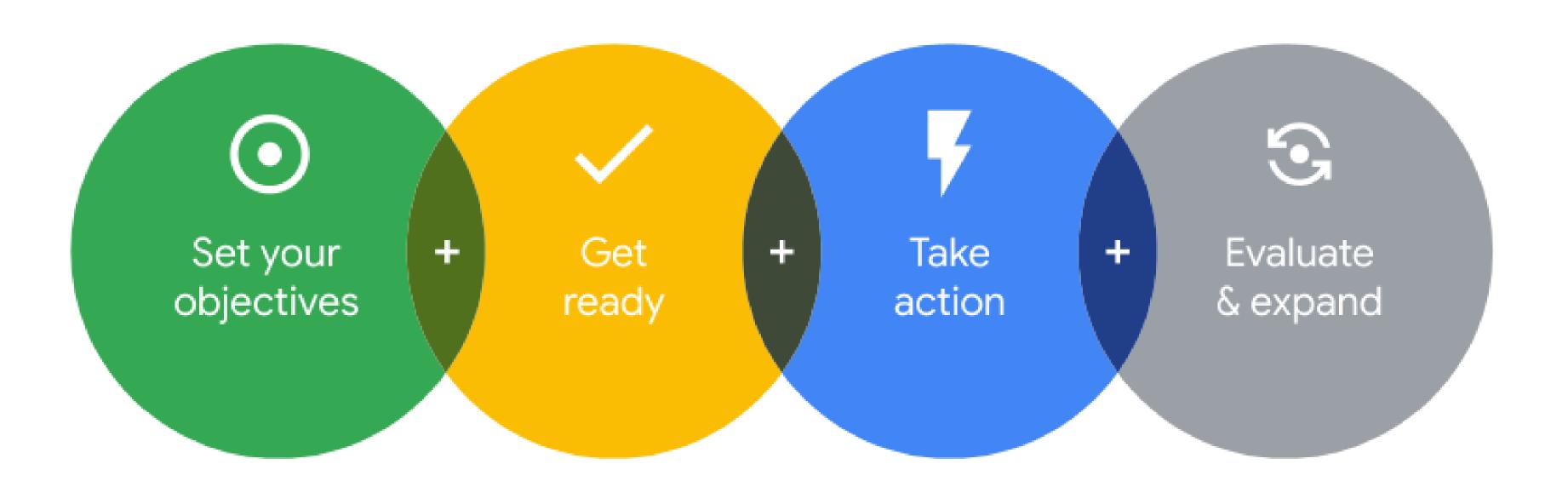




The Google Ads Growth Formula

Adapting to behavioral changes like these can be challenging for marketers. To deliver reliable results now and build greater resilience for the future, we've bundled our tried-and-new methods into an actionable framework that we call the Google Ads Growth Formula.

Our go-to tactical plan for uncertain times



You can use this formula to evaluate your broader marketing strategy or apply it to a specific marketing channel, like Google Ads. In this guide, we'll take you through a high-level overview of the Growth Formula, then dive into an example of how you might apply it to future-proof your digital advertising strategy.

Already running Google Ads? If you're on Google Ads and ready to put these concepts into action, head directly to **Chapter 6**.

New to Google Ads? New advertisers may be eligible for a £400 ad credit when they spend £400 in their first 60 days on Google Ads.* **Get started here**.

^{*}Terms and conditions apply. See more here.

Chapter 4

Step 1 Set Your Objectives





Step 1 - Set Your Objectives

First up, it's all about setting your objectives. This is the critical step where you pause to pinpoint and align your business objectives with your team. Then you can make sure your marketing, media, campaign objectives, and key performance indicators, or KPIs, are working together to achieve that goal.

We recommend taking a two-pronged approach here:



Map your lead-to-sale journey

This journey represents all of the events that gradually process and qualify inbound leads into a paying customer. Here are a few pointers to help you do this effectively:



Put on your customer hat and go through the process yourself, like you're a "secret shopper."

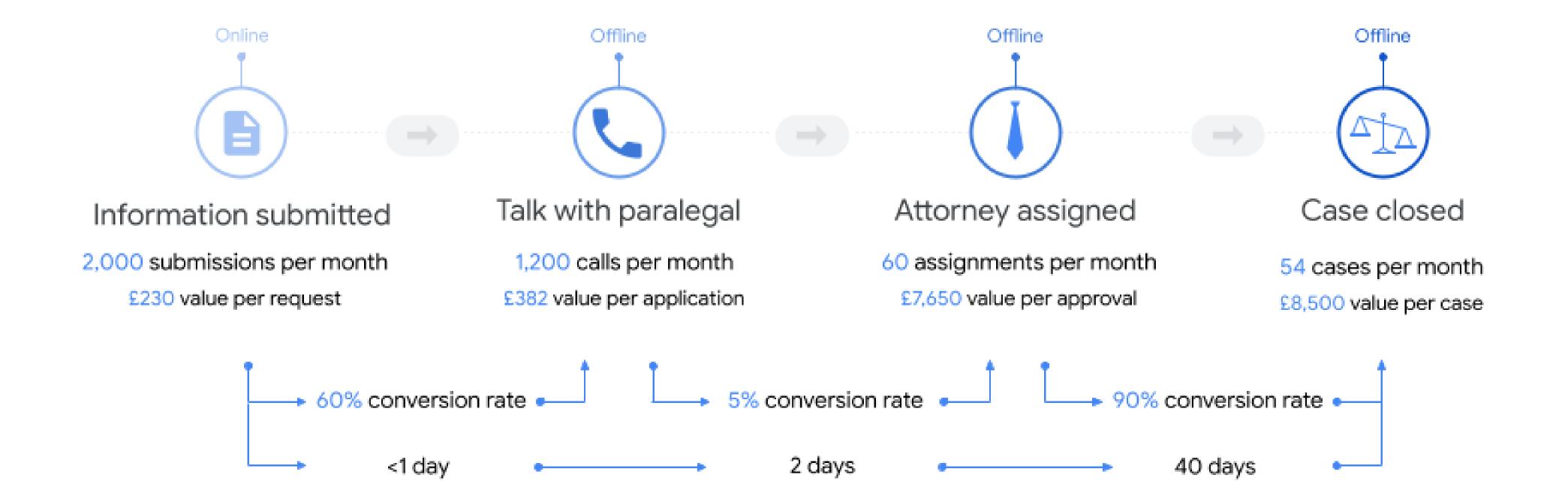


Be on the lookout for challenges a user may confront along the way or gaps in your communication touchpoints. For example, if a customer likes how a product is described online, but it's different from how your in-store sales people describe it, that's an opportunity to better align your messaging.

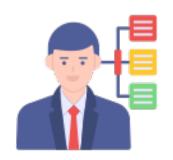


Pinpoint the key stages in the funnel and determine which actions bring you the most ideal customers. These insights can help you prioritise investment in marketing efforts that drive the best outcomes for your business.

Of course, the number of events, sales conversion rates, and timelines for the lead-to-sale journey vary per business type. You can find examples by vertical for inspiration in this **guide**.



Sample lead-to-sale journey mapping



Align with your leadership team

This step is crucial to ensuring you fully understand your main business objectives. These usually fall into one of three categories: market share, revenue, or profit. To create long-term sustainable growth, shift your focus from driving lead volume or revenue to profit. And keep in mind that great business objectives are measurable, time-bound, and raise the bar above what you're already achieving.

Not only can this pre-work help you define campaign-level metrics later down the line, it can also help you to position marketing as a profit center, rather than a cost center.



Chapter 5

Step 2 Get Ready





Step 1 - Set Your Objectives

Now that you have a solid grasp of your objectives, it's time to get a handle on outside factors that may influence your future performance. Start by identifying how your customers' needs or preferences may have shifted.



Understand your customers' needs

One outside factor that has surfaced in the wake of the pandemic is the rise in sustainable shopping. Savvy businesses that recognised this trend have adapted accordingly.

New look, new approach: British clothier Marks and Spencer invested in an eco-friendly program to hire out **capsule wardrobes to shoppers**. Other brands have also shifted their value propositions to showcase sustainable aspects of their business practices, a narrative that resonates with eco-conscious consumers.



Investigate market trends

- 1. Launch a scaled survey program: Create a survey to query customers on important topics, like what's trending in the eyes of your buyers, what their key challenges are, and what influences their purchase decisions. Distribute the survey through scaled channels, like email or social media. You can even sweeten the deal by offering them an incentive to participate.
- 2. Conduct a value prop analysis: Formulate a series of alternate value propositions for your core offering. For example, you may have one headline highlighting stellar support and customer service, another highlighting cost savings, and another highlighting product quality. Sit down with a handful of

customers and ask them to rank these headlines by appeal. You can also ask them for feedback as to why certain messages resonate (or don't).

3. Head to Google Trends: This tool, available at no cost, analyses the popularity of top search queries in Google Search across various regions and languages.

A different escape: When the pandemic prompted people to stop traveling, online travel agency Luxury Escapes had to rethink its business strategy in Australia. Looking for insights to help guide its decisions, it analysed Search trends and discovered that interest for domestic travel was steadily rising.

The result: it worked with local travel and hotel partners to promote new offerings to meet people's search demand as more regions in the country opened up for travel. Try searching for terms related to your business – you may be surprised by what you find.



Want to learn more? Find out more about these approaches and many others in HubSpot's Market Research Kit – available at no cost.

If you're servicing various markets, it's also critical to take local nuances into account. Customer behavior is often influenced by factors like national sentiment, cultural norms, and local economic factors. Be sure to test creative separately in key markets to glean insights on how to tweak it to meet local preferences.



Prepare for upcoming changes

The privacy landscape is rapidly evolving. Now, more than ever, people believe their privacy and personal identity are at risk. Knowing where your users stand in terms of these issues is a critical factor when revising your go-to-market approach.

700

of consumers in the UK are concerned about the current state of their online privacy⁷

People want more transparency into how their data is being used online and more control over their experiences. And putting in the work here truly pays off.

Research conducted by Google and Ipsos shows that when European customers feel in control of their data, they experience significant increases in trust and brand preference.⁸

Brands need to go beyond the basics to provide truly positive privacy experiences. This involves letting people know why their data is being collected, what it will be used for, and how the customer experience will be improved. All these factors combine to create transparency and build trust with your customers.

⁷ Google / Storyline Strategies, Ad Controls, AU, BR, CA, MX, DE, FR, IN, JP, UK, US, n=1,000 per market, A18-55 with Internet access, March 2022. Google Trends, Global, Oct. 5, 2021–Oct. 5, 2022.

⁸ Google/Ipsos, France, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, UK, Privacy by design: the benefits of putting people in control, n=10,001 online participants aged 18–70, July 2022.







Step 3 - Take Action

So far, we've focused on laying the groundwork to adapt your marketing strategy. Now it's time to modify your assets accordingly, increase your efforts on what works, and build new campaigns that help deliver accelerated returns on your investment. Here's how:



Optimise your assets

Gathered in the research period, these updates will run the gamut and you may find yourself with a long to-do list, including changing landing page messaging, reworking media to localisation, and emphasising high-performing campaigns.

To prioritise efforts accordingly, revisit the lead-to-sale journey that you've created. Focus on updating your high-value touchpoints first, or on plugging any gaps that you've identified in your funnel.



Rethink your marketing mix

Lean into measurable activities throughout the funnel that are driving a clear impact to your bottom line.



Adapt your product offering

This may mean shifts in your business model to reflect your customers' changing needs, like introducing a line of refurbished products or expanding to new product lines altogether. While you'll likely need to involve members of your broader team to bring these ideas to life, this is a great example of how marketers can surface insights from the front lines to propel a business forward.

Chapter 7

Step 4 Evaluate and Expand





Step 4 - Evaluate and Expand

We've now revised our goals, assessed new consumer behavior, and pivoted our programming – but the work doesn't end here. As the Greek philosopher Heraclitus once said, "Change is the only constant in life." And now, more than ever, this rings true.

So how can marketers adapt to this rapidly evolving environment? The short answer is with rigorous measurement and a little elbow grease.



Measure what really matters

Anytime you build a new campaign, be maniacal about measurement, so you have the infrastructure in place to evaluate its efficacy later down the line. This is especially important during periods of uncertainty, where external factors can cause rapid performance fluctuations.

Particularly when it comes to online marketing, **building a measurement foundation based on first-party and modeled data is a great way to be ready for a future with stricter privacy requirements**, moving the industry away from third-party data and cookies.

The benefits of improving your measurement methods extend beyond compliance, allowing you to:

- Deepen customer relationships
- Embrace Google's AI grounded in accurate models
- Use new approaches that don't track users across the internet
- Keep your analytics focused on the real outcomes that matter



Adopt a privacy-safe approach

As mentioned earlier, building meaningful customer relationships requires you to first earn people's trust by **helping them understand and choose** how their data is used. Even with a solid foundation of consented first-party data, less observable data may lead to gaps in the customer journey.

Innovations in conversion modeling can help us solve for unknowns in the customer journey in a privacy-safe way. More than ever before, our industry needs innovation and collaboration to protect the tools and insights that businesses need to grow.



Build a cyclical approach to reviewing and optimising

Once you have your measurement infrastructure in place, set up a regular meeting to review campaign performance with your broader team. Setting aside designated time to dig into your reporting and discuss it with others is a smart way to ensure you're catching new trends or detecting problems early on.

Finally, be prepared to act on learnings gleaned from this new data.

You can think of this whole process as cyclical – during annual or quarterly planning, make sure to bake in resources for regular landing pages and campaign optimisations.

For some campaign types, you can also **utilise Google's AI as a business multiplier**. For example, in Google Ads, automated tools learn from you. Your inputs about goals, relative conversion values, and ad creative ensure you're steering it in the right direction. Then, these automated tools can adapt and optimise your campaign performance 24/7.

Chapter 8

Put It Into Practice





Put It Into Practice

Now that you're well-versed in this "tried and new" approach, let's go over a practical application of the **Google Ads Growth Formula**. All of the recommendations we'll discuss here can be conducted directly through Google or through **HubSpot's Google Ads integration**. You can apply these insights to both existing and brand-new Google Ads campaigns.

New to Google Ads? We're offering an ad credit for HubSpot users. Simply spend your first £400 on Google Ads in 60 days, and you'll get a £400 credit to spend on future campaigns.* **Get started here**.

*Terms and conditions apply. See more here.

Now, let's get started with the first step.



Step 1: Set Your Objectives

Define your business's overall goal to ensure your digital marketing, media, campaign objectives, and your KPIs are working together to achieve that goal. Of course, your ultimate goal will vary by business type.

Here are some helpful questions you may want to ask yourself as you define your Google Ads objectives:

- Is your topline objective sales revenue, profit, customer acquisition, or lifetime value (LTV)?
- Does growth mean more sales or higher average order value (AOV)?
- Which channels and platforms are driving cash flow now versus in the future?
- How are you factoring your customers' LTV into channel performance or efficiency goals?

Once your team is aligned on your business's goals, proceed to the next step.



Step 2: Get Ready

By redirecting your attention to privacy, first-party customer data and assigning conversion values, you can lay the foundation for getting strong performance out of Google Ads.

Remember, Google's machine learning system needs to know how your business defines a high-value sale before optimising more. First, measure online conversion values and capture your first-party data by setting up sitewide tagging with the Google tag. Sitewide tagging enables you to accurately measure how visitors interact with your website and ads. It'll help you enrich your first-party data and create more value, ultimately leading to more conversions.

Do it in HubSpot: Easily set up Google Tag Manager for HubSpothosted content.

Once you have reliable measurement in place, capture all conversions by enabling enhanced conversions for web. This is a robust answer to the challenge of restricted cookies, as it uses first-party data to help recover unobserved conversions and deliver a full, accurate picture of your performance. Enhanced conversions for web takes hashed user-provided data (like email addresses) and matches it against hashed Google signed-in data.

Here's how it works: Let's say a signed-in user views your ad on YouTube and then converts on your website. The conversion tag captures a field you specify, hashes the data, and sends it to Google. Then Google matches it against the hashed data and a conversion is reported in your account. None of this hashed data is ever visible to Google.

With more accurate data, bidding strategies can more effectively position your ads in auctions for higher-quality users – and bid appropriately when those users search for your keywords. This means improved performance through better conversion rates, higher ROAS, and lower CPA.

Do it in HubSpot: Create new enhanced events or augment your existing Google events with form submissions from HubSpot.

Capturing online data is only half the battle. It's also **critical that you feed offline first-party data**, **like qualified leads**, **lead scores**, **and buyer information back to your Google Ads account**. By importing data across the entire funnel, you can not only see exactly who your highest-value prospects are, but also optimise your campaigns toward these segments.

Good measurement can be the difference between hours, or even days spent qualifying resources. And it's a good way to improve lead quality. This means a couple of things:

- Your ad campaigns can be optimised for upper-funnel proxy events like newsletter subscriptions. For example, you can directly optimise toward a marketing-qualified lead.
- The lead cycle will continue to feed itself: You can create more opportunities
 for people to interact with your business to further enrich your first-party
 data. How? By collecting email addresses on your website with promotions,
 subscriptions, lead form submissions, sales, and user profiles.

Do it in HubSpot: Easily set up offline conversion imports directly in HubSpot. The process is simple and straightforward, with no developer resources required.

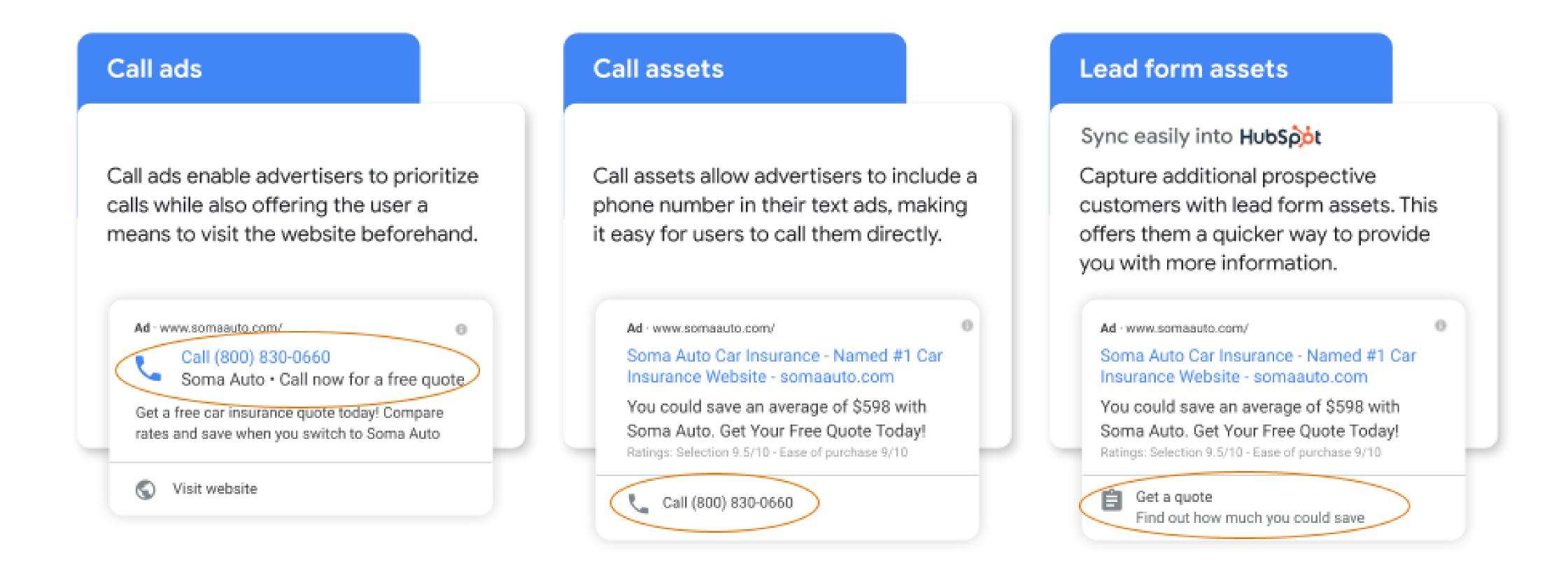
Now that you're collecting the data needed to truly understand your customers' needs and their performance, let's keep moving ahead!



Step 3: Take Action

Through this step, you can enable tools to boost your lead volume and quality, using the data you've collected in Step 2.

Let's start by reviewing the solutions you can adopt to drive a higher volume of leads. Remember, users interact with businesses in different ways, and we see this in the way they search. By catering your ad type to your users, you can better engage with them during their moments of intent. Here are a few tactics to try:



- **Call ads:** Feature your phone number in the title of your ad this is ideal for driving phone calls to your business, while still offering users a quick way to visit your website.
- Call assets: Include your phone number alongside your ad to give mobile users the option to call you directly if that's their preference.
- Lead form assets: Capture important details from connections with highintent prospects, so you can follow up with them through other venues.

Do it in HubSpot: Many of these solutions can be set up directly through HubSpot's **Google Ads integration**.

You can also layer in other solutions to enhance your lead quality. Key examples include:

- **Smart Bidding:** These strategies use machine learning to optimise for conversions or conversion value in every auction also known as "auction-time bidding." This comes in handy during uncertain times, where your competitors' bids may be fluctuating regularly. To strengthen Smart Bidding performance, be sure to assign values to your conversion actions. Then, move to more sophisticated bidding strategies, like Maximise conversion value with an optional target ROAS.
- **Customer Match:** This tactic uses your online and offline data to help you reach and re-engage customers across Search, Shopping, Gmail, YouTube, and Display. By delivering more tailored, relevant messages for your audiences, you can drive more effective campaigns and a better experience for your customers.

Do it in HubSpot: Apply both of these tactics directly through HubSpot using the **Google Ads integration**.

Once you've taken action on the data at hand, it's time to move on to the final step of the Google Ads Growth Formula.



Step 4: Evaluate and Expand

During times of economic uncertainty, various campaigns, product groups, and customer segments might perform differently.

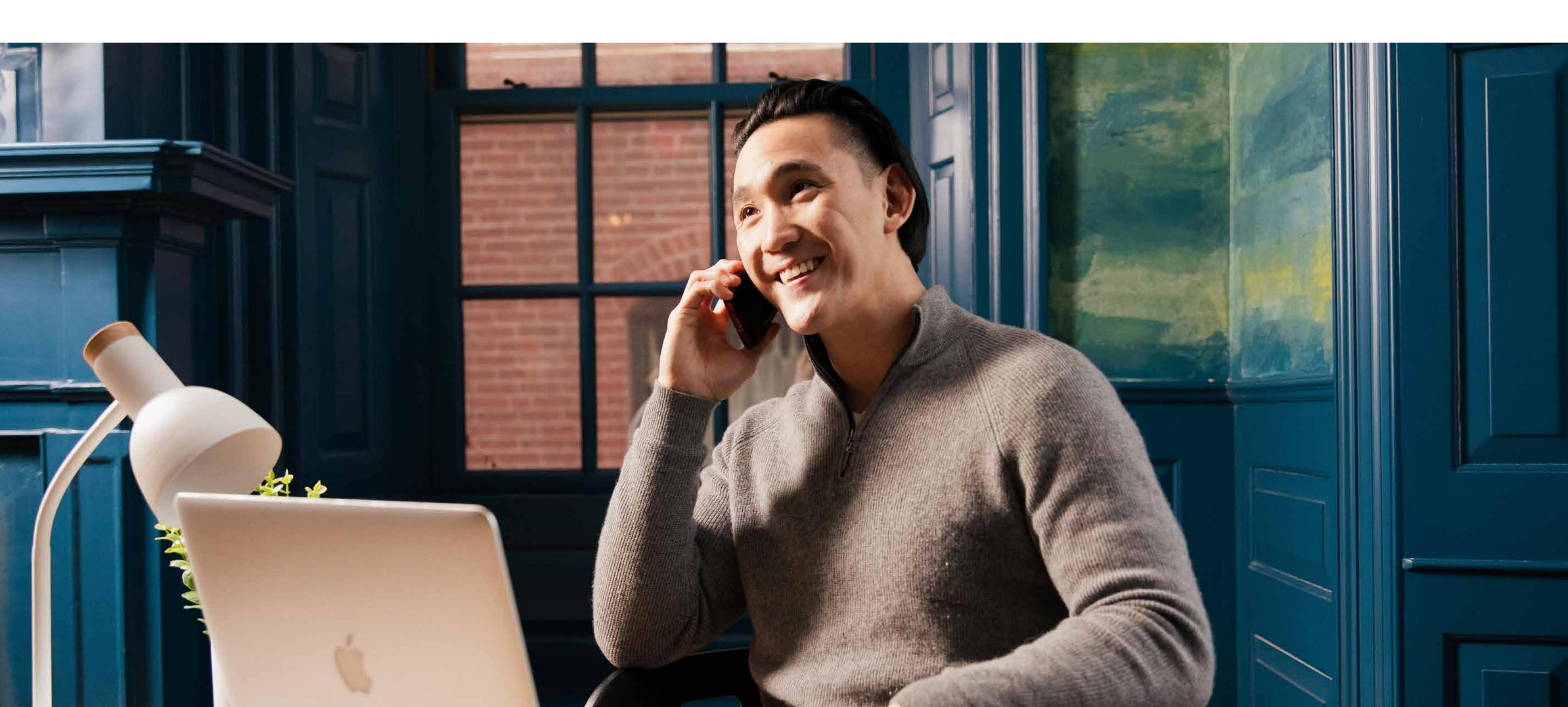
The performance of your campaigns will become clearer as you gain this valuable data. And it's critical to stay flexible to navigate these shifts effectively. Use your data to derive insights, test new strategies, and scale high-performing campaigns.

Start by **evaluating your campaign budgets**. The key is to find the sweet spot between volume and efficiency that enables you to maximise your return on investment.

- If you're consistently maxing out your daily budget, you could be missing out on incremental conversions and may want to consider raising your budgets.
- If you're seeing low conversion volume, your bidding targets might be too high or your targeting might be too narrow, limiting performance.

You'll want to ensure you're tweaking your campaigns to boost performance and keeping your ads and keywords fresh. Deciding which adjustments to prioritise can be time-consuming, and that's where the Recommendations page comes in handy. The Recommendations page suggests improvements to help you get more out of your campaigns, so you can spend your time maximising performance rather than conducting research.

Do it in HubSpot: When you link your Google Ads account to HubSpot, relevant recommendations will be surfaced directly within your HubSpot portal, making it easy to incorporate optimisation into your existing workflow.



Glossary

Lead-to-sale journey: This journey represents all of the events that gradually process and qualify inbound leads into a paying customer.

First-party data: First-party data is information you collect from your customers, site visitors, and app users during their interactions with your products and services.

Lifetime value (LTV): Customer lifetime value is the total amount of money a customer is expected to spend with your business, or on your products, during the lifetime of an average business relationship.

Average order value (AOV): Average order value tracks the average amount spent each time a customer places an order on a website or mobile app. To calculate your company's average order value, simply divide total revenue by the number of orders.

Cost-per-acquisition (CPA): The average amount that you've been charged for a conversion from your ad. This is calculated by dividing the total cost of conversions by the total number of conversions.

Return on investment (ROI): How much profit you've made from your ads and free product listings compared to how much you've spent on them. To calculate ROI, take the revenue that resulted from your ads and listings, subtract your overall costs, then divide by your overall costs: ROI = (Revenue - Cost of goods sold) / Cost of goods sold.

Google tag: The Google tag (gtag.js) is a single tag you can add to your website to use a variety of Google products and services. Instead of managing multiple tags for different Google product accounts, you can use the Google tag across your entire website and connect the tag to multiple destinations. The Google tag lets you send data from your website to linked Google product destinations to help you measure the effectiveness of your website and ads. The Google tag is currently only accessible and configurable from Google Ads and Google Analytics 4.

Enhanced conversions for web: Enhanced conversions is a feature that can improve the accuracy of your conversion measurement. It supplements your existing conversion tags by sending hashed first-party conversion data from your website in a secure way.

Offline conversion import: Sometimes, an ad doesn't lead directly to an online sale, but instead starts a customer down a path that ultimately leads to a sale in the offline world, such as at your office or over the phone. By importing offline conversions to Google Ads, you can measure what happens in the offline world after your ad results in a click or call to your business.

Call ads: Call ads are designed to encourage people to call your business, and can appear only on devices that make phone calls. When a potential customer clicks your ad, the ad places a call to you from their device.

Call assets: Call assets allow you to add phone numbers to your ads, which significantly increases clickthrough rates. When your call assets show, customers can tap or click a button to call your business directly or go to your website. That means more customer engagement with your ads and more chances to get and track valuable conversions.

Lead form assets: Lead form assets help you generate leads by letting people submit their information in a form directly in your ad.

Smart Bidding: Smart Bidding refers to Google Ads bid strategies that use machine learning to optimise for conversions or conversion value in each and every auction – a feature known as "auction-time bidding." Smart Bidding strategies include: Maximise conversions with an optional target CPA and Maximise conversion value with an optional target ROAS.

Customer Match: Customer Match lets you use your online and offline data to reach and reengage with your customers across Search, the Shopping tab, Gmail, YouTube, and Display. Using information that your customers have shared with you, Customer Match will target ads to those customers and other customers like them.



Hubsobt

Drive high-quality leads and conversions with Google Ads in HubSpot.

It's never been easier to grow your pipeline of qualified leads at scale and increase conversions with Google Ads and HubSpot. Simply connect your accounts, and tap into Google's AI and measurement tools to save valuable time and create betterperforming campaigns.

Connect your Google Ads account to start optimising your campaigns.

Getting started is simple. New advertisers may be eligible for a £400 ad credit when they spend £400 in their first 60 days on Google Ads.*

*Terms and conditions apply. See more **here**.

Learn how in this video.

Get Started