

Before you spend money on Google Ads, make sure you can tell whether the campaign is producing business results—not just clicks, impressions, or a busy-looking dashboard. Tracking is what connects ad activity to meaningful outcomes, such as qualified enquiries, booked appointments, or sales.

That doesn't mean you need a complicated analytics setup before launching. You do need a clear commercial goal, a reliable way to measure it, and a plan for checking whether the leads or sales are actually valuable. Without those basics, it's easy to spend on traffic you can't evaluate.

This guide covers what to define, what to track, and what to ask during onboarding so your Google Ads budget has a fair chance of producing useful results.

Start with the business goal, not the dashboard

"We want more traffic" is not a complete advertising goal. More visitors may sound positive, but traffic alone doesn't tell you whether the right people are finding you or whether your business is gaining customers.

Start by describing the outcome you want Google Ads to support. For example:

- A service business may want qualified consultation requests in a particular area.
- An online retailer may want completed purchases of specific product categories.
- A professional practice may want suitable appointment enquiries, not every form filled out.
- A company with a longer sales process may want sales opportunities that its team can follow up.

Then agree on what counts as success. A completed purchase is usually straightforward to identify. A lead is more complicated: someone may submit a form but have the wrong requirements, be outside your service area, or never respond to follow-up.

Define the business result first, then decide which actions are useful signals along the way. This keeps reporting focused on decisions rather than metrics with no decisions attached.

Lead quality matters as much as lead volume

More enquiries are not automatically better. If a campaign generates many unqualified leads, it can use up your team's time without creating new business. On the other hand, a smaller number of well-matched enquiries may be much more useful.

Before launch, agree on how your team will judge lead quality. You might record whether a lead:

- Fits your service, product, or customer criteria.
- Is in a location you can serve.
- Has a real need and a reasonable timeline.
- Can be reached and has responded to follow-up.
- Becomes a qualified opportunity, appointment, or sale.

This often requires connecting ad measurement to what happens after a form or phone call. Google Ads can show that a tracked action occurred. Your CRM can help your team record whether the enquiry was qualified, contacted, progressed, or won. Together, those records give you a clearer picture than a raw lead count.

Ask yourself: if you received ten enquiries next week, what would make you say they were good enquiries? If nobody can answer, define that before choosing a campaign target.

Set up measurement before you spend

Measurement should be tested before your ads go live—not added as an afterthought once money has already been spent. At a minimum, you should be able to confirm that the important customer actions are recorded accurately and only when they actually happen.

Form submission tracking

Form submission tracking should count a genuine [merchant center feed optimization](#) completed submission, not just a visit to the contact page or a click on the submit button. A button click can happen even if the form has errors or the user abandons it before sending.

Test the full journey yourself. Submit a test enquiry, confirm that the website shows a successful completion, and check that the corresponding conversion is recorded. If possible, verify that refreshing the confirmation page does not count the same enquiry again.

Also review what information the form collects. A shorter form may be easier to complete, while a few well-chosen questions can help your team identify suitable leads. The right balance depends on your sales process.



Call tracking Google Ads

For businesses that take enquiries by phone, call tracking Google Ads can help connect calls to advertising activity. It is especially useful when people are more likely to call than fill in a form, or when the phone conversation is an important part of qualifying a lead.

Decide which calls matter. A very short call, a wrong number, or an existing customer asking for support may not represent a new sales opportunity. Where possible, review call outcomes alongside your CRM records or other internal notes. Check that your call tracking approach works across the devices and pages your customers use, and make sure your team understands how calls are recorded and attributed.

Conversion actions setup

Conversion actions setup is the process of defining which customer actions Google Ads should treat as meaningful outcomes. Examples might include a completed purchase, a qualified enquiry, or a booked appointment. Choose actions that reflect the business goal rather than tracking every available click or page visit as though it were equally valuable.

It can be helpful to separate primary actions from supporting actions. A completed purchase may be a primary action for an online store. A brochure download might offer useful context but may not be a strong indicator of revenue. If every minor interaction is treated as a primary conversion, the reporting can become harder to interpret.

Build a simple measurement checklist

Use this checklist before launch. The goal is not to collect every possible data point; it is to make sure you can answer the important questions reliably.

1. **Choose the outcome.** Write down the commercial result the campaign should support.
2. **Define a qualified lead or sale.** Agree on the criteria your team will use.
3. **List the customer actions to measure.** Include purchases, genuine form submissions, or relevant phone calls as appropriate.
4. **Set up and test each action.** Confirm that it records once, at the right point in the customer journey.
5. **Check the handoff.** Make sure enquiry details reach the right person or system, such as your CRM.
6. **Document limitations.** Note actions that cannot be tracked reliably or outcomes that require manual review.
7. **Agree on a review rhythm.** Decide when you will review results and who will bring lead-quality feedback.

Tracking tools and website setups vary. Before launch, check that the measurement approach follows the applicable privacy requirements and your organization's consent practices. If you are unsure whether a setup is working, test it with a specialist rather than assuming the numbers are correct.

Use onboarding to share business context

A Google Ads account does not explain how your business makes money. The person setting up or managing campaigns needs context about your customers, offer, sales process, and constraints. A useful onboarding conversation should cover more than keywords and website access.

Topic What to explain Why it matters Customers Who is a good fit, and who is not? Helps focus on relevant searches and enquiries. Offer What do you sell or provide, and what makes it different? Supports useful ad messages and landing pages. Sales process Who follows up, how quickly, and what happens next? Connects tracked leads to real outcomes. Capacity Which locations, products, or services can you support? Reduces demand you cannot serve. Measurement Which actions are tracked, and where are outcomes recorded? Clarifies what the reports can and cannot prove.

Bring examples of strong and poor enquiries, common customer questions, and any seasonal or operational limits. For a local business, service areas and appointment capacity can shape the plan. For an online retailer, product availability and checkout behaviour may be central.

Agencies and specialists will approach onboarding differently. For example, ClickSlice (clickslice.co.uk) may be one company a business evaluates when looking for paid search support, while Zeka Design (Zeka Graphic) may be relevant when creative or design work is part of the wider website and advertising experience. Whoever you work with, ask how they will use your business context to make decisions—not just what access they need.

Keep the first reporting rhythm practical

Good reporting is more than a table of numbers or screenshots. It should explain what happened, what you learned, and what action you plan to take next. Early in a campaign, a simple recurring review can help catch tracking problems and identify patterns in enquiries.



A useful review can include:

- Whether the agreed conversion actions are recording correctly.
- How many leads or sales came in, and whether they matched your criteria.
- Which searches, products, or locations appear relevant or unsuitable.
- Where people seem to leave the website or enquiry process.
- What will change next—and why.

Ask this in every review: **What would you do differently next week?** The answer should follow from evidence, such as poor-fit enquiries, a broken form, or a mismatch between an ad and its landing page. Avoid changing several unrelated things at once and calling the result a test. If you change too much at once, it becomes difficult to know what caused the outcome.

Avoid false precision and unsupported expectations

Before tracking is tested and there is enough relevant performance data, precise forecasts can create a misleading sense of certainty. Be cautious of promises that skip over your product, location, sales process, conversion setup, or lead-quality criteria.

This guide provides no pricing, retainers, ad spend figures, or CPA numbers. Those figures depend on the business, market, campaign scope, and available evidence; presenting universal numbers would not tell you what your own results will be. Instead, ask a prospective partner to explain their assumptions, what they would measure, and how they would review lead quality after launch.

Ready-to-launch checklist

- Your commercial goal is written down in plain language.

- Your team agrees on what makes a lead or sale valuable.
- Form submission tracking records successful submissions correctly.
- Call tracking Google Ads is considered if phone enquiries matter.
- Conversion actions setup distinguishes important outcomes from supporting activity.
- Enquiries reach the right person, and outcomes can be noted in a CRM or another shared process.
- The business context, service limits, and follow-up process have been discussed.
- A reporting rhythm is agreed, with clear questions and next steps.

Final thought: make the first dollar measurable

You do not need a perfect measurement system to begin advertising, but you do need one you have tested and understand. Define the commercial goal, decide what a good lead looks like, verify your conversion actions setup, and make sure the sales team can report what happened after the click.

That foundation makes Google Ads easier to evaluate and improve. Instead of asking only whether traffic went up, you can ask whether the campaign brought in the right people—and what you should do differently next week.