

PRACTICAL BUSINESS GUIDE

Google Ads

Explain why cost per click measures the price of attention rather than customer value, and how targeting, landing-page fit and tracking shape the real cost.

Why Cheap Clicks Are Usually Expensive

Paid search buys an opportunity to place a relevant message in front of a searcher. The click is only one step; the page and measurement determine whether that attention becomes useful.

01

Match promise to page.

The landing page either continues the ad promise or makes the visitor start again.

02

Track customer outcomes.

Broad reach can produce activity without realistic demand.

03

Judge the whole journey.

Clicks become useful only when connected to valued customer actions.

Use this guide →

PURPOSE

The problem this guide helps you see

MISSION

Explain why cost per click measures the price of attention rather than customer value, and how targeting, landing-page fit and tracking shape the real cost.

WRITTEN FOR

Businesses paying for search traffic but unsure which campaigns produce meaningful enquiries, purchases or customers.

ACCURACY BOUNDARY

This guide avoids universal benchmark figures. Cost and return vary by industry, region, season, offer and the quality of the customer journey.

DEFINITION

Paid search buys an opportunity to place a relevant message in front of a searcher. The click is only one step; the page and measurement determine whether that attention becomes useful.

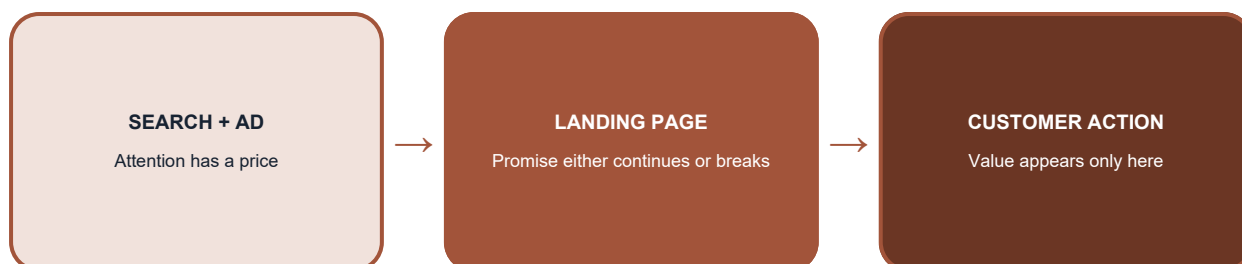
THINK OF IT LIKE THIS

The cheapest tradesperson quote is not the cheapest job if the work has to be redone. Cheap attention can be expensive when it produces no customer.

MECHANISM

Why Cheap Clicks Are Usually Expensive

Use the mechanism to understand the customer or evidence chain before changing a platform setting.



CHEAP CLICK

No matched outcome
EXPENSIVE CUSTOMER

HIGHER CLICK PRICE

Useful matched outcome
LOWER JOURNEY WASTE

Cost-per-click measures attention. Judge the campaign through to the customer outcome.

STABLE TEST

Platform interfaces change. Inspect the current customer-facing result, source evidence, interpretation and named owner.

COMMERCIAL EFFECT

Why this matters beyond the Google surface

The useful question is what customers can understand and what the business can reliably decide.

WHAT CHANGES

Promise fit

The landing page either continues the ad promise or makes the visitor start again.

WHAT CHANGES

Target quality

Broad reach can produce activity without realistic demand.

WHAT CHANGES

Measurement

Clicks become useful only when connected to valued customer actions.

WHAT CHANGES

Management

Campaigns need review as searches, offers and operating conditions change.

WHAT CHANGES

Budget quality

Cost per customer reveals more than the price of one click.

WHAT CHANGES

Learning

A clear measurement chain shows where the journey fails.

Accuracy boundary: no ranking, traffic, display or return guarantee is implied. Google interfaces and systems evolve.

FAULT REGISTER • 1 OF 2

What I would flag

Severity reflects customer and business impact, not a disclosed platform weighting.

CRITICAL

The landing page breaks the ad promise

Paid traffic reaches a generic or mismatched destination.

The business pays for attention and loses it at the first handoff.

CRITICAL

Customer outcomes are not tracked

Reports show clicks without knowing which activity produced a useful result.

Budget cannot be connected reliably to enquiries, sales or customers.

MAJOR

Targeting attracts weak-fit searches

Broad settings bring high volumes of attention from people unlikely to buy.

Cheap clicks accumulate without useful commercial intent.

FAULT REGISTER • 2 OF 2

What I would flag

Severity reflects customer and business impact, not a disclosed platform weighting.

MAJOR

Campaigns run without active review

The account is left unchanged after initial setup.

Search behaviour, offers and landing pages drift while spend continues.

MODERATE

Budget is judged on click price alone

Lower cost per click is treated as proof of performance.

The price of attention replaces the value of the outcome.

READ NEXT

Google Analytics

A campaign cannot be judged well when website outcomes are undefined or dashboard numbers are misread.

[Read next →](#)

CORRECTION

The assumption that keeps this fault alive

COMMON MYTH

A lower cost per click means the campaign is performing better.

Better framing: Cost per click prices attention. The useful commercial question is what the complete journey costs for each meaningful customer outcome.

WHY IT PERSISTS

Clicks arrive quickly

Attention data appears before enough customer outcomes exist.

WHY IT PERSISTS

The dashboard foregrounds cost

Easy-to-see metrics become the default verdict.

WHY IT PERSISTS

Journey ownership is split

Ads, landing pages and sales follow-up may have different owners.

WORKING CONTROL

Keep the promise

Send the searcher to the page that continues the ad.

WORKING CONTROL

Track meaningful action

Define the outcome before judging the campaign.

WORKING CONTROL

Review the chain

Inspect search, ad, page and handoff together.

Useful boundary: use current first-party evidence where it exists and describe changing platform behaviour conservatively.

STANDARD

What a working version looks like

Aim for a reliable business condition rather than one dashboard number or platform feature.

AREA	FAILING PATTERN	WORKING PATTERN
Ad promise	Broad claim	Specific matched offer
Landing page	Generic destination	Continues the same task
Targeting	Volume first	Useful intent first
Tracking	Clicks only	Meaningful outcomes defined
Management	Set and forget	Recurring active review
Budget	Cost per click	Cost and quality per outcome

QUICK SELF-CHECK

- The ad and landing page make the same promise
- Targeting reflects useful customer intent
- Meaningful outcomes are tracked
- The campaign has a review cadence
- Search terms and exclusions are examined
- Budget is judged beyond click price

RELEVANT FOLLOW-UP SERVICE

Meta / Google Campaign Setup

Use this when the live evidence needs to be inspected and prioritised.

from \$450

DUE DILIGENCE

Five questions worth asking your current provider

Strong answers should describe the current account, evidence and owner rather than rely on generic reassurance.

01

What customer action defines success?

02

Does the landing page continue the ad promise?

03

Which searches are producing weak-fit clicks?

04

Who reviews the campaign and how often?

05

What is the cost and quality of each useful outcome?**EVIDENCE CHAIN**

Ask for the current state, source, interpretation and named owner. Interfaces change; the business question underneath usually does not.

Why Cheap Clicks Are Usually Expensive.

Match promise to page. Track customer outcomes. Judge the whole journey. Keep the customer-facing result and the operating business connected.

PRIMARY NEXT STEP

Google Analytics

A campaign cannot be judged well when website outcomes are undefined or dashboard numbers are misread.

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Want help applying this to your business?

Bring me the campaign that looks cheap in the dashboard but does not feel commercially useful. I can inspect the message, targeting, landing page and measurement chain together.

[Discuss the task →](#)