

SCALECRO PLAYBOOK

Google Ads Audit Checklist

The 42-point checklist we run on every Google Ads account we take over. Structure, tracking, bidding, creative, negatives, hygiene.

ScaleCRO · Growth marketing for teams that want revenue, not reports.
scalecro.com

How to use this checklist

Work top-to-bottom. Every item is a real check we run on client accounts. If you can't tick a box, that's a finding worth investigating before you spend another dollar.

Account structure

- ☐ Campaigns are segmented by intent (brand, non-brand, competitor, generic).
- ☐ Ad groups contain tightly themed keyword sets (SKAGs or STAGs where appropriate).
- ☐ Search and Display / Performance Max campaigns are separated, not blended.
- ☐ Location and language targeting match the actual buyer footprint.
- ☐ Ad rotation is set to optimize; auto-applied recommendations are reviewed, not blind-accepted.

Conversion tracking

- ☐ GA4 is installed via GTM with a single source of truth for events.
- ☐ Primary conversion actions are marked correctly (only revenue-driving actions count).
- ☐ Enhanced Conversions are enabled for Search and Performance Max.
- ☐ Offline conversion imports are wired from the CRM for lead-gen accounts.
- ☐ Server-side tagging is in place for accounts where iOS / ad-blocker loss matters.
- ☐ Conversion values are dynamic (transaction value or lead score), not static \$1.

Keywords and search terms

- ☐ Negative keyword lists exist at account and campaign level and are reviewed weekly.
- ☐ Search terms report is reviewed for irrelevant, low-intent, or brand-conflict queries.
- ☐ Match types are used deliberately (exact, phrase, broad + smart bidding).
- ☐ Duplicate keywords across ad groups have been resolved.
- ☐ Brand terms are protected in their own campaign with strict match types.

Bidding and budgets

- ☐ Bid strategy matches the goal (Max Conversions vs tROAS vs tCPA).
- ☐ Target CPA / ROAS values are grounded in actual account data, not aspiration.
- ☐ Shared budgets are used only when campaigns truly compete for the same spend.
- ☐ Portfolio bid strategies are used to smooth learning across small campaigns.
- ☐ Budget pacing is monitored; no campaigns are limited by budget by day 3 of the month.

Ads and creative

- ☐ Every ad group has at least 2 Responsive Search Ads with pinned brand assets.
- ☐ Ad Strength is Good or Excellent for all active RSAs.
- ☐ Extensions (sitelinks, callouts, structured snippets, images) are fully populated.
- ☐ Landing pages match the ad promise and load in under 2.5s on mobile.
- ☐ Copy is tested against a control every 4-6 weeks.

Performance Max and Shopping

- ☐ Asset groups are themed by product / audience, not dumped in one bucket.
- ☐ Brand exclusions are configured so PMax isn't cannibalizing brand search.
- ☐ Merchant Center feed is clean: no disapprovals, GTINs present, titles optimized.
- ☐ Custom labels segment products by margin, seasonality, or performance.

Audiences and remarketing

- ☐ Remarketing lists exist for site visitors, cart abandoners, and past converters.
- ☐ Customer Match lists are uploaded and refreshed monthly.
- ☐ Similar / lookalike audiences are layered as observation, then targeting when proven.

Reporting and hygiene

- ☐ A single dashboard ties spend to leads / revenue by campaign and channel.
- ☐ Weekly performance review with documented changes and hypothesis behind each.
- ☐ Auto-applied recommendations are turned off unless explicitly reviewed.
- ☐ Account access is limited to owner + agency; no orphaned MCC links.

Want us to run this on your account?

Book a free audit at scalecro.com/free-audit and we'll walk you through what we'd fix, prioritize, and what it's likely worth in revenue.