

The Google Ads Audit Checklist for 2026

1. Account structure

- ☐ Confirm campaigns and ad groups are organised by theme and intent
- ☐ Check settings: network, location, language, and ad rotation
- ☐ Separate brand, generic, and competitor campaigns
- ☐ Use a consistent, readable naming convention

2. Conversion tracking

- ☐ Verify conversions fire accurately and are not double-counting
- ☐ Import offline conversions from the CRM for lead-gen accounts
- ☐ Assign realistic conversion values so bidding optimises for revenue
- ☐ Confirm you are counting the right primary conversion action

3. Keywords & search terms

- ☐ Review match types and intent alignment
- ☐ Mine the search-terms report for wasted spend and add negatives
- ☐ Build and maintain shared negative keyword lists
- ☐ Cut or pause keywords with spend but no conversions
- ☐ Check broad match is paired with smart bidding and reliable conversion data before you trust it

4. Bidding & budget

- ☐ Confirm the bid strategy fits the goal (target CPA, ROAS, max conversions)
- ☐ Check budgets are allocated to the best-performing campaigns
- ☐ Make sure smart bidding has enough conversion data to work
- ☐ Check for recent bid-strategy or budget changes that reset the learning period

5. Ads & landing pages

- ☐ Check ad strength and that RSAs have enough quality assets
- ☐ Confirm sitelinks, callouts, and other assets are live and relevant
- ☐ Verify landing pages match ad intent and convert
- ☐ Confirm every campaign has enough RSA and asset variety for the system to test

6. Audiences & targeting

- ☐ Review audience segments, observation vs targeting
- ☐ Check geo, device, and dayparting adjustments against performance
- ☐ Add exclusions for irrelevant placements and audiences

7. Performance Max & AI Max

- ☐ Check whether AI Max has been switched on for your Search campaigns, since Google began migrating legacy campaigns to it automatically
- ☐ Review the AI Max search terms report for queries the broader matching pulled in
- ☐ Add brand exclusions to Performance Max so it stops buying traffic you already own
- ☐ Check PMax asset group signals and exclude the placements and audiences you do not want
- ☐ Compare PMax and Search on incremental conversions rather than on last click

8. Waste & quality

- ☐ Investigate low quality scores and their landing-page/relevance causes
- ☐ Quantify wasted spend and reallocate it to what converts
- ☐ Confirm brand is defended and not cannibalising generic performance

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