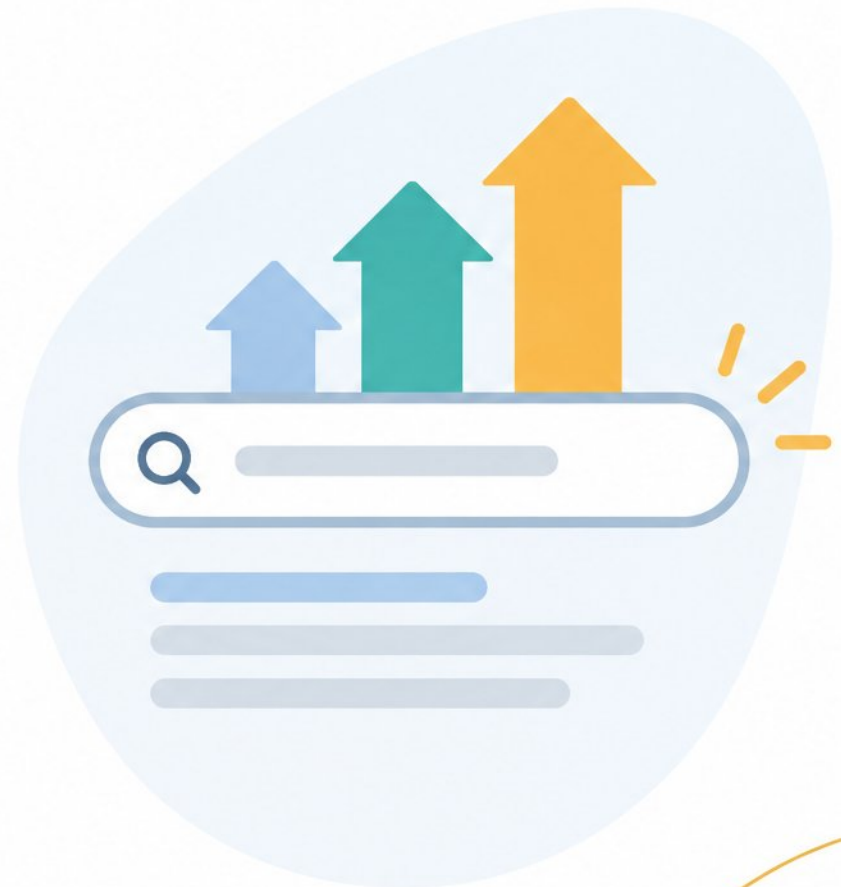


Introduction to SEM

Meaning in Digital Marketing

-  SEM = Search Engine Marketing: gaining visibility in search results
-  Today SEM mainly means paid search ads (PPC); SEO covers organic
-  Full modern view: paid search, SEO, and AI search visibility
-  Captures high-intent demand: searchers already want something
-  Beginners gain speed, measurable data, and fast offer testing
-  Outcomes: clicks, calls, form fills, bookings, store visits, sales



SEM vs SEO: How Paid and Organic Search Work Together

Paid Search

Fast, paid,
rents attention

SEO

Slow, earned,
compounds



SEO earns visibility over time; SEM rents it instantly and stops when budget stops



Paid search drives traffic in hours or days; SEO typically needs 3–12 months



SEO costs time and content; paid search costs money per click or impression



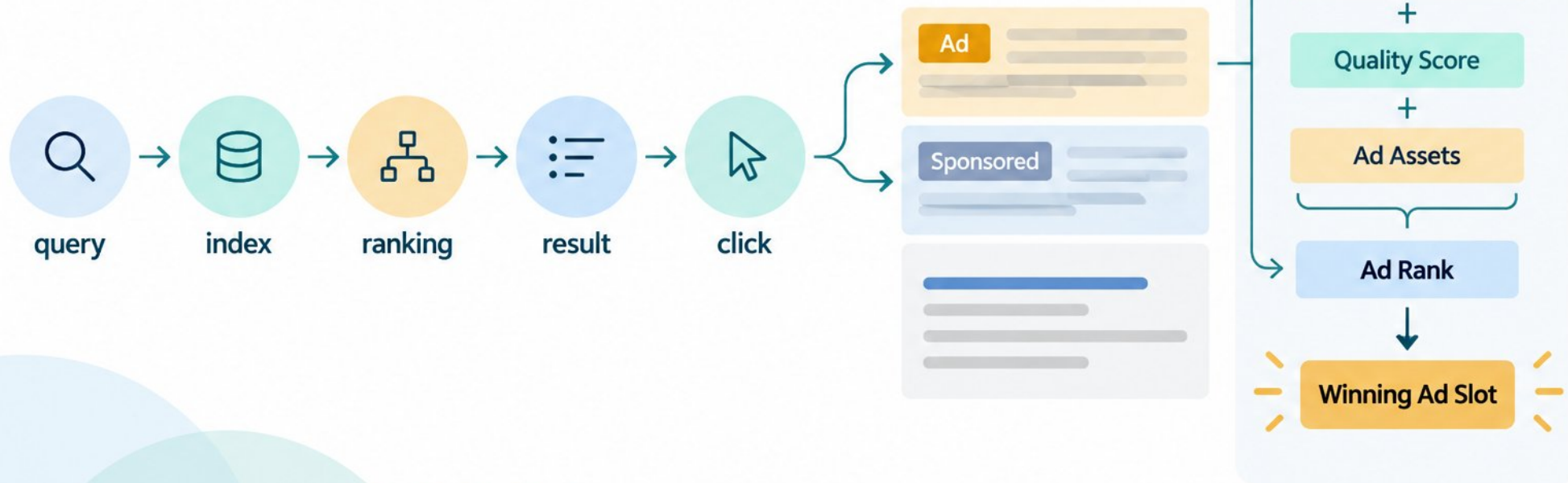
Use SEO for informational queries; paid search for commercial and urgent intent



Beginner rule: use SEO to answer the market, paid search to intercept it

How Search Engines and Search Ads Work

- Search journey: query, index, ranking, result, click
- Ads sit beside organic results, labeled Ad or Sponsored
- Every search can trigger a real-time auction in milliseconds
- Six factors decide who appears, and in what order
- $\text{Ad Rank} = \text{bid} \times \text{quality}$; the highest bidder does not always win
- You usually pay less than your maximum bid



Key SEM Terms and Metrics You Need to Know

The funnel chain:



- **Core vocabulary:** keyword, ad group, campaign, landing page, impression, click, conversion
- **The funnel chain:** impressions → CTR → CPC → conversion rate → CPA → ROAS
- **CTR** measures ad relevance and feeds Quality Score; **CPC** is only meaningful with downstream value
- **CVR** shows whether clicks act; **CPA** is the standard lead-gen outcome metric
- **ROAS** measures revenue per dollar spent — for e-commerce, not the same as profit
- **Beginner mistake:** judging on one metric — high CTR with zero conversions still wastes money



What Counts as a Good Number: Reading Metrics Together

- **Read metrics in pairs:** high impressions + low CTR = copy or targeting mismatch
- **High CTR + low CVR:** ad promise does not match the landing page
- **Rising CPC + flat CTR:** check Quality Score and new competitors
- **CTR benchmarks are directional:** search often 3–6%, varies by industry
- **Break-even ROAS** = $1 \div \text{gross margin}$; 3.0x can lose money at 20% margin
- **Track 5–7 metrics** per campaign to avoid analysis paralysis

Impressions + CTR



High impressions + low CTR = copy or targeting mismatch

CTR + CVR



High CTR + low CVR: ad promise does not match the landing page

CPC + Quality Score

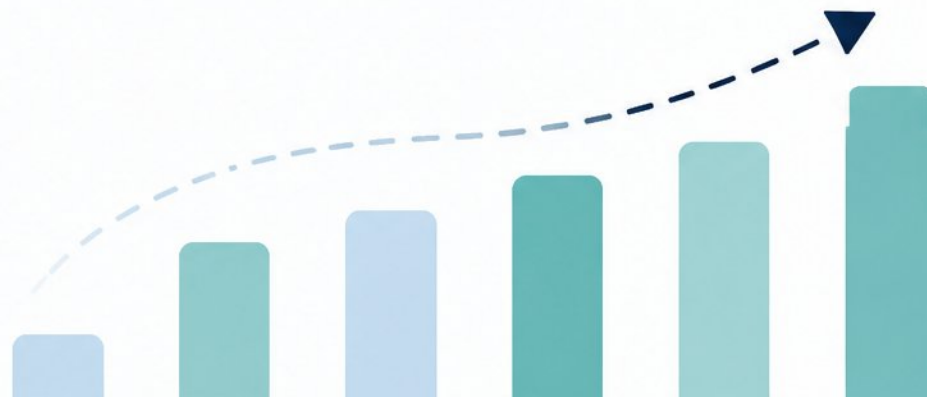


Rising CPC + flat CTR: check Quality Score and new competitors

Break-even ROAS



Break-even ROAS = $1 \div \text{gross margin}$; 3.0x can lose money at 20% margin



Keyword Research and Search Intent



Search for ideas...



Informational

I want to know



Navigational

I want to find



Commercial

I want to compare



Transactional

I want to buy



Keyword research: find real search phrases, judge which are worth targeting



Four intent types: informational, navigational, commercial, transactional



Intent beats volume: low-volume transactional terms can drive more revenue



Free methods: autocomplete, People Also Ask, related searches, forums, Search Console



Read the SERP before committing: product pages mean product intent



Group related keywords by intent so one page or ad group serves one topic

Building a Starter Keyword List for a Small Business



- 1 Start from the business: list offers, then buyer phrases
- 2 Add commercial modifiers: pricing, near me, quote, buy
- 3 Long-tail phrases (3+ words): less competition, higher conversion
- 4 Score each term on volume, difficulty, and intent match
- 5 New sites target low-difficulty terms first
- 6 Build negative keywords early: free, jobs, salary, DIY

Keyword Ideas

pricing

near me

quote

buy

Phrase

Volume

Difficulty



Writing Search Ads That Get Clicks



Responsive search ads: up to 15 headlines (30 characters) and 4 descriptions



Write the first three headlines as if they will appear together



Include a target keyword in at least one headline



Diversify assets: keyword match, benefits, CTAs, proof, differentiators



Avoid generic CTAs; use "Call now for a free quote"



Every headline and description must work in any combination



Use Ad Strength as a checklist, not a guarantee; pin sparingly



Search for what matters

Headlines (up to 15)

Quality Plumbing Services

Fast, Reliable Repairs

Call now for a free quote

Headline 4



Headline 15

Descriptions (up to 4)

Licensed. Experienced. Local.

Description 2



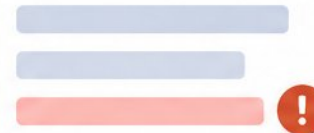
Description 4

Ad Assets and Testing Ad Variations

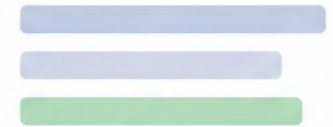
- ✓ Assets extend your ad: sitelinks, callouts, snippets, images, call, and location assets
- ✓ Business name and logo shown with ads average 8% more conversions at similar cost
- ✓ Aim for two responsive search ads per ad group with Good or Excellent Ad Strength
- ✓ Improving Ad Strength from Poor to Excellent averages 15% more clicks and conversions
- ✓ Asset ratings (Best, Good, Low, Unrated) flag weak headlines; asset metrics overlap across impressions
- ✓ Test one business question at a time and judge results on conversions, not clicks

RSA Asset Library

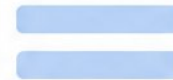
Headlines



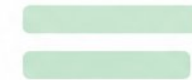
Descriptions



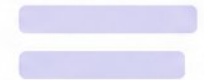
Sitelinks



Callouts



Structured Snippet



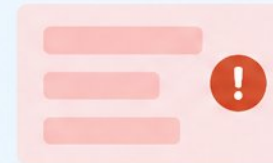
Images



Call



Location Assets



Landing Pages and Conversion Basics



Message match: repeat the ad promise word-for-word in the headline



Dedicated pages convert ~4% vs ~2.3% for general pages



Above the fold: headline, subhead, visible CTA, one trust signal



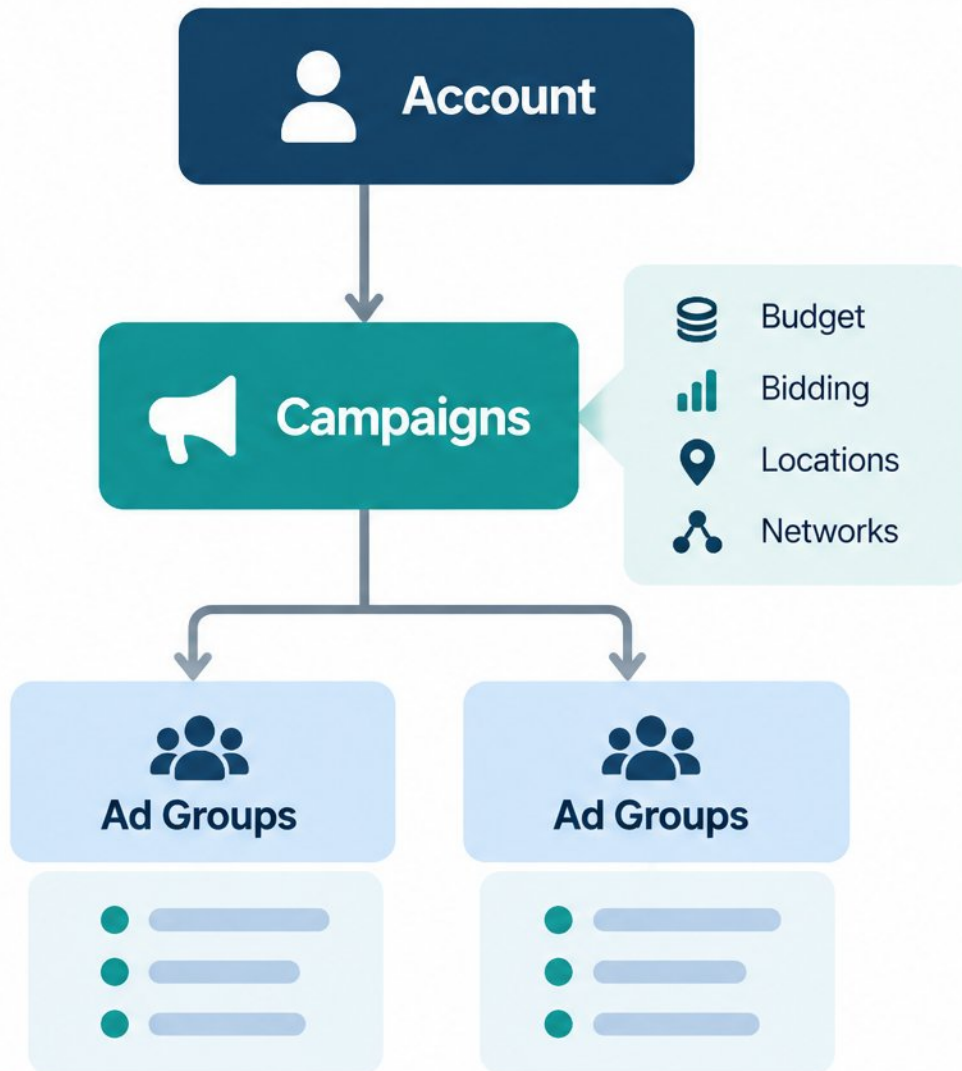
One primary call to action; competing CTAs split attention



Under 1.5s load converts far better than 3-4s; track conversions first



Campaign Structure, Budgets, and Bidding



1

Account > Campaigns > Ad Groups: campaigns control budget, bidding, locations, and networks

2

Keep ad groups tightly themed: 5–20 keywords sharing one intent, one ad answers all

3

Daily budget is a soft cap; Google may spend up to 2x on busy days

4

Match bid strategy to data: Manual CPC or Maximize Clicks early, then Maximize Conversions after ~15 conversions/30 days

5

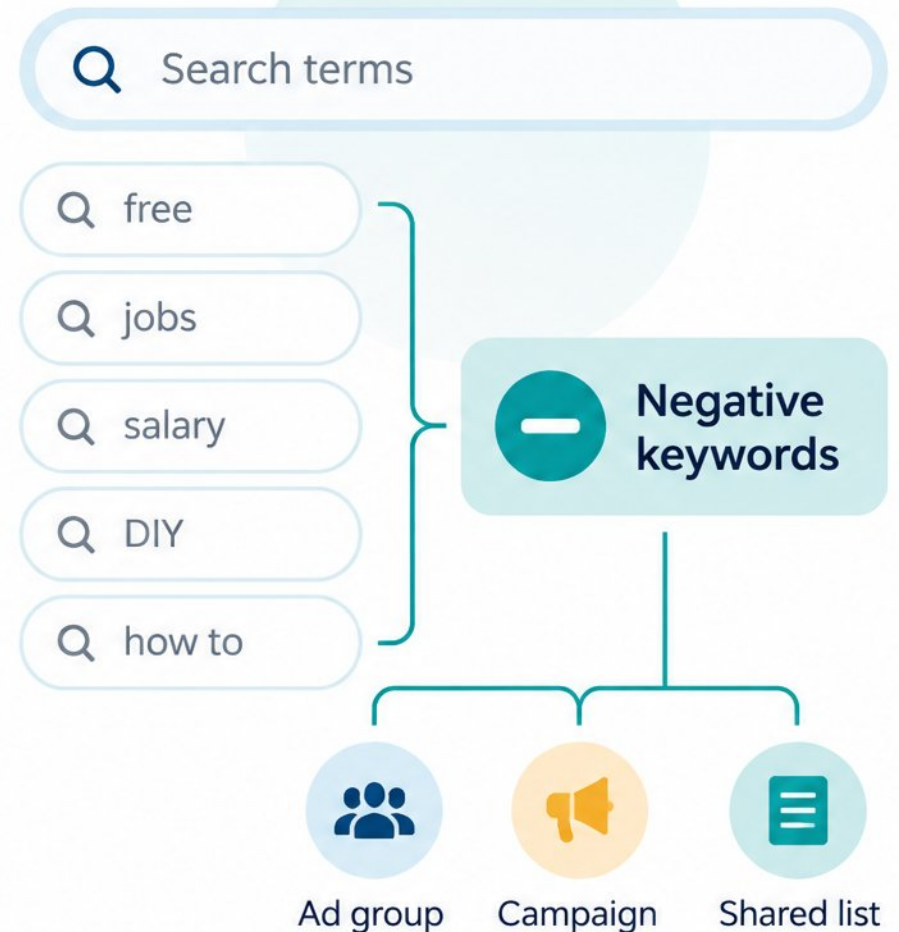
Change budgets gradually; jumps above ~30% restart learning

6

Set location targeting to Presence; turn off Display expansion and Search Partners

Measuring Results and Cutting Wasted Spend

- 1 Review the search terms report: it shows the real queries that triggered your ads
- 2 Sort by cost or impressions to expose the biggest budget wasters first
- 3 Filter known junk patterns: free, jobs, salary, DIY, how to
- 4 Phrase match is the practical default; exact is surgical, broad is risky
- 5 Apply negatives at ad group, campaign, or shared list level
- 6 Negatives ignore close variants; add plurals manually and watch the first 16 words
- 7 Confirm gains by watching CTR, CPC, and conversions in change history



SEM in Action: Local, E-commerce, and Creator Examples



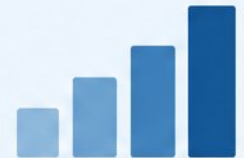
Tampa HVAC

25 to 80 leads/month, CPA \$60 to \$25, 8x ROAS



Portland locksmith

673 verified leads in four months on a rebuilt account



Painting company

\$15.6K spend turned into \$180K collected, about 11.5x



- Small budgets work: \$1,000–\$2,000/month improved by restructuring
- Pitfalls: counting clicks, sending traffic home, quitting too early

Your First SEM Action Plan and Launch Checklist



Step 1: Define one clear goal and conversion action; set up tracking first



Step 2: Build 10–20 high-intent keywords, mostly phrase and exact match



Step 3: Create one Search campaign with tightly themed ad groups and RSAs



Step 4: Set a modest daily budget; use Manual CPC or Maximize Clicks



Step 5: Review search terms weekly, add negatives, shift budget to winners



Before launch: verify billing, Presence targeting, tracking, and matching landing pages



PersonWise.

PersonWise • AI digital-human course platform



Scan the code or click anywhere to watch this course live, with voice Q&A

personwise.ai/t/38a0672b/public