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# POINT & CLICK



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A beginner's guide to  
Green Industry pay-per-click  
marketing. BY **SHAUN KANARY**



**In the past,** advertising to consumers in the Green Industry was difficult. Limited budgets and a limited potential customer base often caused traditional advertising campaigns, such as television, magazine, billboard and direct mail, to fail. Through these traditional advertising channels, your message gets broadcast to many consumers who may not want, need or even qualify to purchase your services.

Wouldn't it be nice if we could advertise our Green Industry services to only those consumers who have indicated an interest? Better yet, pay a reasonable rate for those who not only have an interest in our advertisement, but who actually want to learn more about our companies? Wait no longer, because this form of advertising does exist. It's called pay-per-click (PPC) advertising. »»

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## PAY-PER-CLICK



YOU CAN TARGET YOUR AUDIENCE BY TIME, LOCATION AND SPECIFIC DEMOGRAPHICS, WHICH IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH TRADITIONAL MARKETING METHODS.

### **PPC advantages**

The concept of PPC advertising is simple. Search engines such as Google allow users to search for various products and services by matching the user's question or query to a page of results. On the results page are advertisements tied to the search queries by keywords on which advertisers bid.

Which ads appear and in what order are closely tied to the keyword the advertiser used, how relevant it is to the user's search query (referred to as quality score), and how much you as the advertiser are willing to spend for someone to click on it (referred to as maximum cost per click). These two factors multiplied by each other gives Google your Ad Rank Score. The highest "ad rank" has its ad in the first spot, followed by the next highest in order.

You as an advertiser are not charged until a user clicks on one of your ads. At that time, you are charged a specific amount of money for that click. However, you control the amount you are willing to spend on each click, as well as the amount you spend on your campaigns daily, weekly or even monthly.

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In addition to controlling how much you pay for advertising and who sees your message, PPC advertising allows you to change your messaging at any time, testing different offers and ads based on successes and failures. Furthermore, you can target your audience by time, location and specific demographics, which is impossible with traditional marketing methods.

The days of advertising your snowplowing services when it's not snowing are over. With PPC advertising, you're in control of when your ads show, and more importantly, when they don't.

Each major search engine has its own version of pay-per-click marketing and, subsequently, its own separate platform. However, Google's AdWords platform represents 70 percent of the market share, with Bing/Yahoo! (a very similar platform) making up roughly 20 percent of the market share. So for the sake of this article, we'll discuss Google AdWord's platform in depth.

## **Campaigns**

Campaigns are the main groups of keywords that share similar main settings, such as the

location where your ads appear, times when your ads show, which types of devices your ads display on (tablets, phones, PCs, etc.) and daily budgets. These settings are unique and shared by each keyword in your campaign. Let's examine some important settings you should be aware of when setting up your campaigns:

**Location.** When setting the location of where your campaign's ads will appear, it's most effective to target a metro area, a service radius in miles from your location, and a custom shape on a map. Warning: A person's location is not determined by geography, but rather by where the Internet Service Provider (ISP) is located. For example, in rural areas, a consumer's ISP may be located in a major city many miles away, causing problems with your ad showing in areas you do not serve. Additionally, people often live in the suburbs but work in cities up to 30 miles away. So don't be too limited in your geographic settings; it could backfire.

**Time settings.** When setting times for your ads to appear for each campaign, keep in mind any times during the day that tend to produce

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## PAY-PER-CLICK

weak leads. Also, thanks to the time settings, you can have campaigns that feature an “after hours” phone number and information to supplement your campaigns during regular business hours.

**Daily budget.** Controlling your campaigns by daily budget is another great feature of AdWords. It allows you to set an advertising budget for a specific campaign and turns off your ads when it reaches that spend. This feature is great for smaller businesses that may not have huge budgets for advertising.

Most Green Industry companies are at the mercy of the seasons. In fact, a majority of our services revolves around them. Separating your services into different campaigns allows you, as an advertiser, to have precise control over each service’s advertising reach, budget and timing. Landscape companies often use different campaigns for their snowplowing keywords (to only show during the winter), their individual locations (if they’re located in multiple cities) or if they have an after-hours call center (showing different phone numbers in ads).

### Keywords

Keywords are words or phrases you choose to bid on that could be contained within or match a search query that a potential consumer uses in the search engine’s search box. When a

*continued on page 58*

## Match type tips

When first developing keywords, using broad match terms will help you establish and learn which terms are successful and can be broken out even further. You may pay for some irrelevant clicks, however, you can collect some valuable data on which keywords are effective. As you develop your keywords, you can start to build more groups containing phrases and exact match keywords and begin to eliminate unprofitable broad match keywords.

Not only will using broad match cost you clicks that won’t deliver bids, it also will cost you more for each of those clicks. As we discussed earlier, your ad’s rank is determined by multiplying the amount you’re willing to pay by the quality score for the keyword. If your keyword is in broad match and gets a lot of impressions without clicks, it’ll drive your quality score down, making you bid more to keep your ad ranking high.



ILLUSTRATION: ISTOCK INTERNATIONAL, INC.

# PVB LOCK BOX

## PVB LOCK BOX

The **P.V.B LOCK BOX** will come in one size 24x24x12 this will fit all wall mounted Pressure Vacuum Breaker units ranging from ¾" to 2 ½" as you may have seen at the 2012 irrigation show this product is professionally built in the U.S.A. The product is powder coated hunter green, it comes with the four security bolts and lead anchors it also comes with one security key unlocking bit. This unit wholesales for \$319.99 and the manufactures suggested retail price is \$499.00. Our contractors are installing these units at \$600.00 each and the unit installs in less than 20 minutes.



## CLOCK BOX

The **CLOCKBOX** will come in one size 14x17x10 this will fit most outdoor irrigation controllers, this unit will also be powder coated hunter green and come with a removable front cover for access to the unit the locking mechanism will be (2) security hex pin locking bolts and will come with two unlocking bits one for the owner and one for the irrigation or maintenance tech. This unit wholesales at \$259.99 and the MSRP is \$439.00. Our contractors installed pricing is \$539.00 and this also installs in less than 20 minutes. By installing this product this assures that no unauthorized person or persons are tampering with the irrigation controller and will also protect it from being stolen.



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GROUP KEYWORDS TOGETHER IN SMALL, TIGHTLY KNIT THEMES OR GROUPS OF WORDS THAT TRIGGER THE SAME AD TO SHOW.

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consumer searches using terms that match your keywords, it triggers the appearance of the ad associated with those keywords.

The most common types of keywords explicitly describe what you do, the services you offer (landscaping, lawn care), the product lines you offer (Unilock, Belgard, Hunter), and problems that could arise (weeds in lawn, broken sprinkler). Or, they're informational in nature, seeking answers to things such as "how to trim a tree." When developing these keywords, keep in mind terms that your customers would use to search for your products or services.

To help control when your keywords are triggered by search queries, there are rules that you as the advertiser can set up, based on how closely the keyword matches the search query:

**Broad match.** This setting triggers your keyword and its associated ad whenever the consumer uses a search query that's similar to your keyword. For example, if you had the broad match keyword "lawn service prices," your ad would be triggered by the search query "lawn

prices," "lawn service costs" or "lawn costs." The only problem is that Google determines which search queries are similar. This can lead to a lot of search queries triggering your ad that are not relevant to your business. For instance, using the keyword "lawn service prices" in broad match may lead to your ad being triggered for the search query "house with a lawn," "locksmith service" or "prices for shoes online." Therefore, broad match should be used sparingly. (For more on broad match, see "Match type tips" on page 56.)

**Modified broad match.** With modified broad match, you can tell Google which words in your keyword phrase are important and should be in the search query that triggers your ad. To use modified broad match, simply put the plus (+) sign in front of the important words. So in the example above, making the keyword a modified broad search, "+lawn +service prices" will tell Google to only show your ad to similar search queries that include the words "lawn" and "service."

**Phrase match.** This match type tells Google that the search query must include your keyword

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DATE	SPECIAL GUEST	PROGRAM TOPIC	SPONSOR
6/5	<b>Judith M. Guido</b> , Consultant, <i>Guido &amp; Associates</i>	Public Relations & Branding	Sponsorship Available
6/12	<b>Adam Sokoloff</b> , Vendor, <i>Sunrise Signs</i>	Visual Marketing for Landscape Contractors	Sponsorship Available
6/19	<b>Rich Goldstein</b> , Contractor, <i>Green Meadows Landscape Contractors</i>	Growing a Balanced Landscaping Business	Sponsorship Available
6/26	<b>Frank Ross</b> , Consultant, <i>Ross-Payne &amp; Associates, Inc.</i>	Business Financial Management	Sponsorship Available
7/3	<b>Stephanie Cohen</b> , Garden Expert, <i>The Perennial Diva</i>	Tried and True Perennials	
7/10	<b>Jerry Gaeta</b> , Consultant, <i>J. Gaeta Business Planning, LLC</i>	\$0 to 1 Million in 60 Minutes	

## ABOUT THE HOST

Jody Shilan is an award-winning landscape designer with more than 35 years of experience in the green industry. In addition to hosting FD2B Talk Radio and managing FromDesign2Build.com, Shilan is a regular presenter at industry events and writes the "Profiting from Design" column for *Landscape Management* magazine.



Shilan earned his Bachelor of Science in Landscape Architecture (BSLA) from Rutgers Cook College and his Master's Degree in Landscape Architecture (MLA) from the University of Massachusetts.

Remember: all shows are archived for later listening at [FD2B.COM](http://FD2B.COM)!

## LISTENERS LOVE IT!

"I love listening to FD2B Talk Radio. I appreciate the candid yet light-hearted conversations he has with his guests. And the topics are relevant and on-point." —Chris Heiler, president & founder, *Landscape Leadership*

"Jody has brought a great variety of industry resources to a single media channel. I feel that the topics are relevant and the concise manner in which they are delivered saves me time. The format allows for feedback and questions, which I find helpful." —Michael McShane, president, *Plantique*

"FD2B Talk Radio is not only informative and insightful, but it's also entertaining. Each week I look forward to learning the next guest speaker and topic of discussion." —Amanda Bell, landscape designer, *Landscape Design by Amanda*

"I listen to FD2B Talk Radio to educate myself on the landscape design/build topics to better my business. Jody responds to all my questions promptly and with helpful hints you can't get anywhere else." —Kim Stratton, landscape designer, *Stratton Landscape Design*

Interested in FD2B Talk Radio sponsorships? Contact Craig MacGregor 216-706-3787.

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in the same order that you have it in your group. For example, the keyword “patio install” in phrase match would trigger your ad to appear for search queries such as “patio install companies,” “quick patio install,” or “patio install tips.” Your ads would not appear for the search queries, “install patio,” “installing patios” or “how to install a patio,” because it does not match the order of your keyword phrase.

**Exact match.** When using this match type, the search query must match your keyword phrase exactly. Using the above example again, your ads would only appear when consumers use the search query “patio install.”

**AdGroups**

When developing your keywords, you’ll want to group your keywords together in small, tightly knitted themes or groups of words that trigger the same ad to show. This group is known as your AdGroup. Some common AdGroup themes include product names (Belgard, Unilock, Rainbird), services (lawn care, mowing, patio installation), geography-driven keywords (lawn care Cleveland, Columbus landscaper) or even names of your competitors.

For example, let’s say you have a campaign featuring your paver installation services. If your company handles multiple lines of pavers, you’ll feature different product names in your

campaigns, such as Belgard, Unilock and Pavestone, just to name a few. To make your campaign more powerful, you’ll want to group those keywords into similar groups so you can create very specific ads that mention the product’s name. This way, when someone is searching for Belgard pavers, not only will your ad appear, but by grouping your Belgard keywords together you can create an ad that has the word “Belgard” in it.

**Ads**

As we learned above, when a searcher poses a question or enters specific words in the search engine box, a series of ads are shown on a search results page. These ads are tied to the searcher’s query through the keyword associated with the ad.

Text ads are the most common AdWords advertisement, consisting of a subject line of 25 characters or less, two body lines each 35 characters or less and a display URL (website address) line of 35 characters or less. The typical ad looks like this:

Stop Crabgrass Early  
 Keep Your Lawn Crabgrass Free!  
 Free Lawn Analysis & 25% Off  
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*continued on page 62*

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