

# Don't waste another dollar. Launch a Google Ads campaign that actually converts.

The pre-launch checklist, campaign structure, budget rule, and weekly optimization routine I use for every client account.

---

**Freeland Marketing & Entertainment**

For owners who want leads, not impressions.

## Pre-launch checklist

If you skip any of these, your campaign is leaking money on day one.

- > **Conversion tracking installed.** Google Tag for the site, plus a conversion action for "phone call clicks," "form fill," or "booking." Without this, you cannot tell which keywords make money.

---

- > **Negative keyword list ready.** Block out cheap, free, jobs, DIY, complaints, lawsuits, and any irrelevant adjacent industries. (See section 4 for the standard starter list.)

---

- > **Landing page matches the ad.** If the ad says "emergency plumber Palm Coast," the page headline should also say "emergency plumber Palm Coast." Mismatch kills Quality Score and raises CPC.

---

- > **Phone number is clickable on mobile.** Most service-business clicks come from phones. If your number isn't a tap-to-call link, you're losing leads.

---

- > **Trust signals visible above the fold.** Reviews, license number, years in business, photos of real work. Cold traffic needs proof before they call.

---

## Campaign structure

There is one correct way to start. Anything else burns money.

SETTING	USE THIS	SKIP THIS
<b>Campaign type</b>	Search	Performance Max, Display, Discovery
<b>Networks</b>	Google Search only	Search Partners, Display Network
<b>Match type</b>	Phrase + exact match	Broad match (until you have data)
<b>Bid strategy</b>	Manual CPC for first 30 days	Maximize Conversions until you have 30+ conversions
<b>Locations</b>	Specific cities or ZIPs you serve	Whole state or "United States" by default
<b>Ad extensions</b>	Sitelinks, callouts, call extension, location	Leaving them blank (free real estate)

### **AVOID PERFORMANCE MAX EARLY**

PMax is a black box. It will spend your money on YouTube and Display long before it cracks Search. Validate with manual Search first, then layer PMax once you know what converts.

## Budget rule

Start small. Scale on proof, not hope.

- > **Start at \$20 per day** per campaign for the first 14 days.

---

- > **Wait for 20+ conversions** before judging performance. Less than that is statistically meaningless.

---

- > **If your cost per conversion is profitable**, raise the budget by 20 percent per week. Bigger jumps reset learning.

---

- > **If cost per conversion is too high**, the answer is almost never "more budget." It's the offer, the landing page, or the keyword match type.

---

- > **Never run two budget changes and a creative change in the same week.** You won't know which one moved the number.

---

## Weekly optimization (15 minutes)

Do this every Monday. That's it.

- > **Search terms report:** scan last 7 days. Add anything irrelevant as a negative. Add high-converting phrases as new exact-match keywords.

---

- > **Bid adjustments:** if mobile is converting better than desktop (or vice versa), adjust device bids by 10 to 20 percent.

---

- > **Pause the bottom 20 percent** of keywords by conversion rate. Reallocate budget to top performers.

---

- > **Check Quality Score** on top spend keywords. Anything below 6 needs a landing page or ad copy fix.

---

- > **Refresh one ad headline** per week. Don't change winning ads, but always be testing a fresh variant.

---

### STANDARD NEGATIVE STARTER LIST

free, cheap, jobs, careers, hiring, salary, DIY, how to, tutorial, youtube, reddit, complaint, lawsuit, scam, near me free, training, course. Plus industry-specific: motorcycle, marine, RV, semi (for auto repair). Add new negatives every week.

## Real client snapshot

What this looks like in production.

### CASE STUDY

#### Home services contractor, North Florida

Started with an underperforming Google Ads account that was running on Performance Max with no negative list. We rebuilt with a Search-only structure, manual CPC, geo-narrowed to actual service area, and a focused negative keyword list of 200+ terms.

**62%**

DROP IN COST PER LEAD

**3.4x**

BOOKING RATE FROM  
CLICKS

**14 days**

TIME TO FIRST  
MEASURABLE  
IMPROVEMENT

## Want a free Google Ads audit?

Comment ADS on any of my Instagram posts, or DM directly. I'll review your account, find the leaks, and tell you exactly what I'd change. No pitch unless you ask for one.

**DM @freelandmarketing or comment ADS**