



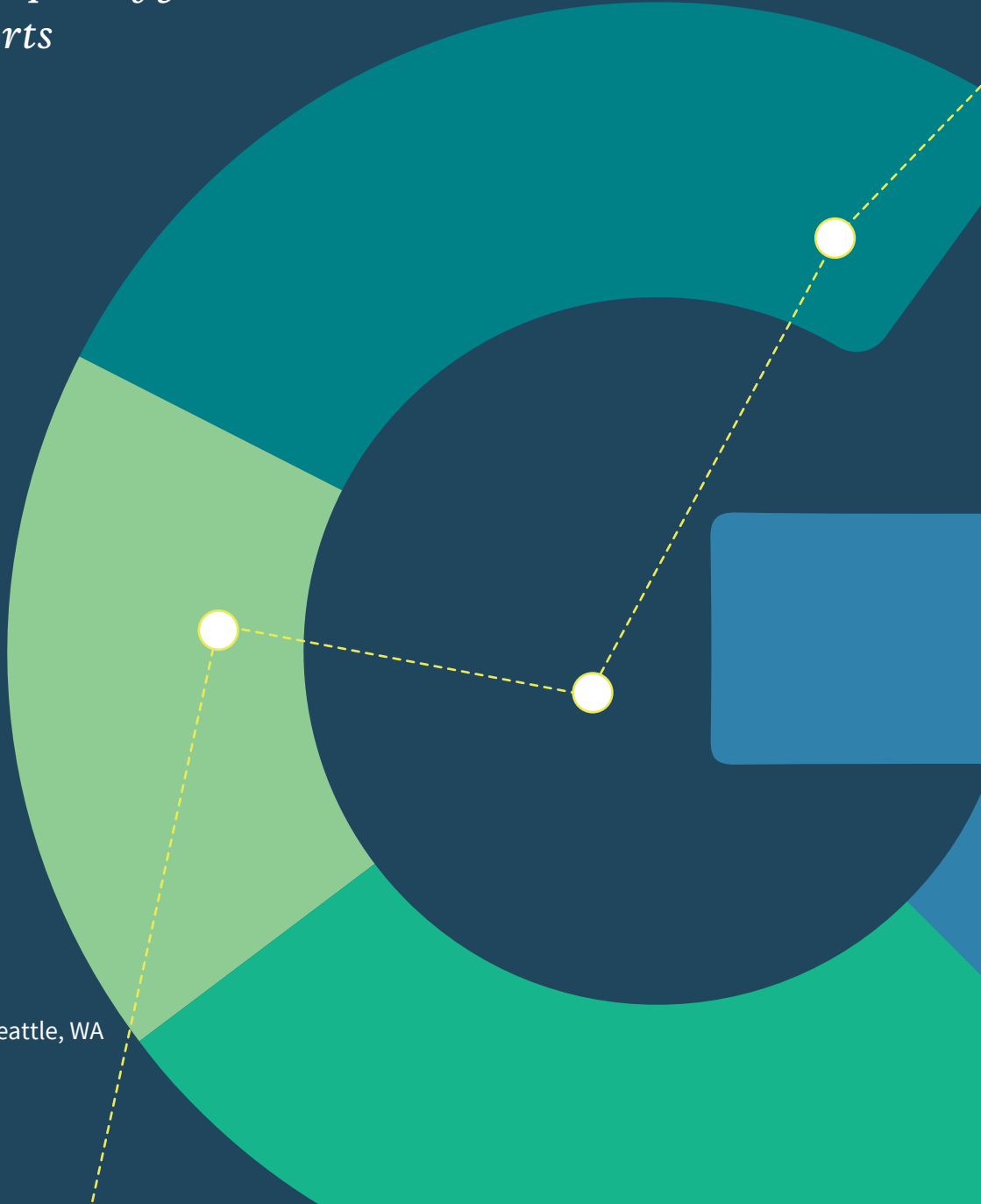
HOW-TO GUIDE

Google Ad Grants for Nonprofits

*Maximize the impact of your online
advertising efforts*

FORUM ONE™

Alexandria, VA | Washington, DC | Seattle, WA
forumone.com





Forum One is a full-service digital agency that works with mission-driven organizations to create the stunning designs, smart messaging, and custom-built technology tools they need to realize their goals and extend their influence in the areas they care about most.



About this guide

This how-to guide is designed to help nonprofits best use the resources available to them through Google's Ad Grants program, and become more familiar with Google's powerful advertising tool, Google AdWords. The guide focuses on the basics of Ad Grants, and provides best practices for managing AdWords accounts to maximize impact.

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WHAT ARE GOOGLE AD GRANTS?

Google's Ad Grants program provides a monthly Google AdWords budget of \$10,000 (\$329 per day) to eligible nonprofit organizations. The program is designed specifically for nonprofits to help them promote their missions, attract volunteers, drive donations, and share the impact of their work.

Why is It Important for Nonprofits?

The Ad Grants program offers nonprofits an additional tool to effectively reach their target audiences at no charge. Organizations can raise awareness, activate volunteers, attract newsletter subscribers, and increase donations by creating ads and selecting the most effective keywords to bring potential supporters to their websites.

Who is Eligible?

Organizations must meet the following criteria to participate in Google's Ad Grants program:

- ✓ Possess a live website with a robust and clear description of the nonprofit and its mission. The site must not contain broken links.
- ✓ Be a nonprofit charitable organization in good standing in the country where it is registered.
- ✓ Be registered with the local TechSoup partner in the country where it is a registered nonprofit.

Who is Not Eligible?

- ✗ Government entities.
- ✗ Hospital or health care organizations.
- ✗ Schools, academic institutions, or universities (however, the philanthropic arms of educational organizations are eligible).

GETTING STARTED

In order to participate in the Google Ad Grants program, registered nonprofits must first have a Google AdWords account. When creating an AdWords account, follow these eight steps.

- 1 Go to adwords.google.com and click “Start Now”.
- 2 Enter your email address, country, time zone, and select US dollars as your currency. Please note: even if you are based and registered in another country, you must still choose US dollars as part of the Ad Grants program.
- 3 When prompted to add your credit card information, leave this section blank to avoid being inadvertently charged for your ads.
- 4 Set up at least one campaign with two ad groups — including at least two ads, keywords, and sitelink extensions.

- 5 Once your AdWords account is set up, make note of your account ID (the format is xxx-xxx-xxx and can be found by clicking on your account avatar).
- 6 Go to google.com/nonprofits and sign up for “Google for Nonprofits”.
- 7 Follow the instructions and enter your TechSoup validation token. If you do not have one, go to techsoup.org/support/validation-tokens.
- 8 Enter your Adwords account ID and submit.

Once you’ve submitted your registration, your account will then be sent for review by Google. You will be notified once your ads have started running. If your account contains errors, you will get an email with instructions on how to fix them.

YOUR ADWORDS ACCOUNT

The following are the key elements and rules that exist within your Google AdWords account when using Google Ad Grants.

Campaigns

Campaigns are used to organize ad groups with a common theme or goal. For example, you might name your campaign “Raise Brand Awareness” or “Increase Conversions”. Each AdWords account must contain at least one active search campaign, and each campaign must have at least two active ad groups.

Ad Groups

Ad groups further categorize topics with similar themes or calls-to-action. Each ad group must contain at least two active text ads.

Ads

The creative text, or ad text, for a nonprofit’s AdWords account must clearly reflect its mission, programs, and services. Text must be specific and relevant in order to create effective ads. Each ad group must contain a set of highly-relevant keywords.

Landing Pages

A landing page is where people are taken when they click on an ad. You can think of a landing page as your audience’s entry point into your site. It should provide them with what your ad promises. The content of the landing page must be relevant to the ads and keywords in order to receive a good quality score. This serves as an indicator of how well your ads, keywords, and landing pages are surfacing based on the content your audiences are looking for. A higher quality score can lead to lower prices and better ad positions (i.e., your ad will appear higher up on the search results page).

Keywords

Each ad group must contain a set of highly-relevant keywords, and the account must maintain a 5% Click-Through-Rate (CTR) each month at the account level. A CTR is the portion of people who click on your ad after seeing it.

The following keyword practices are permitted within paid AdWords accounts, but **are not permitted for Ad Grants accounts**:

- ✘ **Branded words:** brand names that the nonprofit doesn't own.
- ✘ **Single-word keywords:** single-word keywords are not permitted, while single-branded words that the nonprofit does own, recognized medical conditions, and a few other exception keywords (<http://go.forumone.com/exceptionkeywords>) are acceptable. Terms with dashes, periods, or special characters are not treated as single-word keywords.
- ✘ **Overly-generic keywords:** examples include: names of places, historical events, people, “free videos”, “ebooks”, “today’s news”, “download games”.
- ✘ **Low keyword quality score:** keywords with a quality score of two or less are not allowed.

Sitelink Extensions

In addition to landing pages, a sitelink extension offers searchers an additional page link to click on within the ad. Each Ad Grants account must have at least one active sitelink extension.

Geo-Targeting

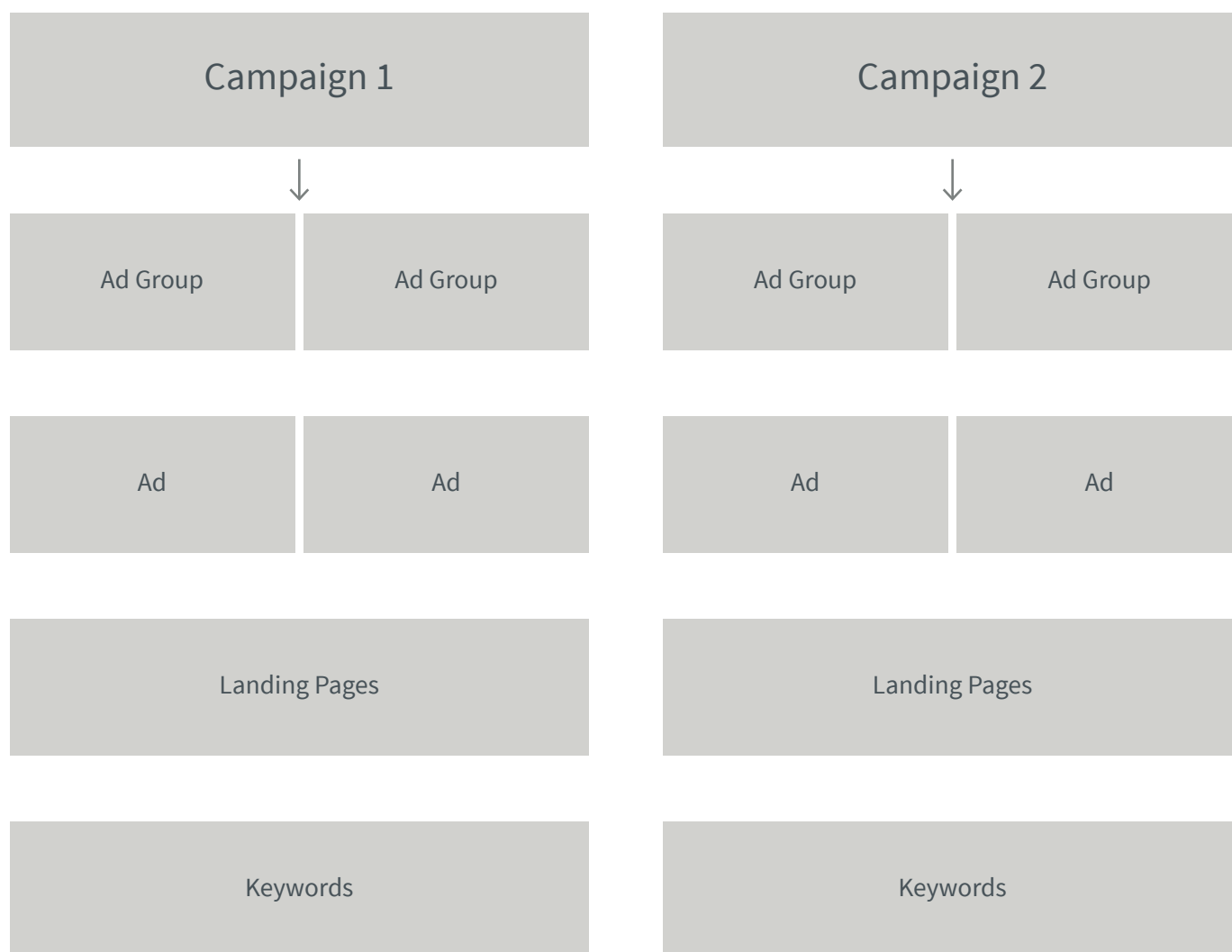
Geographic targeting allows you to select the cities, states or countries where your ad can appear. Relevant geo-targeting must be enabled for Ad Grants accounts.

Conversion Tracking

Conversion tracking allows you to measure the effectiveness of your ads. Google has added a conversion tracking implementation as a requirement for new grantees joining the program for the first time. Grantees can either set up a conversion directly in AdWords or create and import a goal from their Google Analytics account.

A Breakdown of the AdWords Account Structure

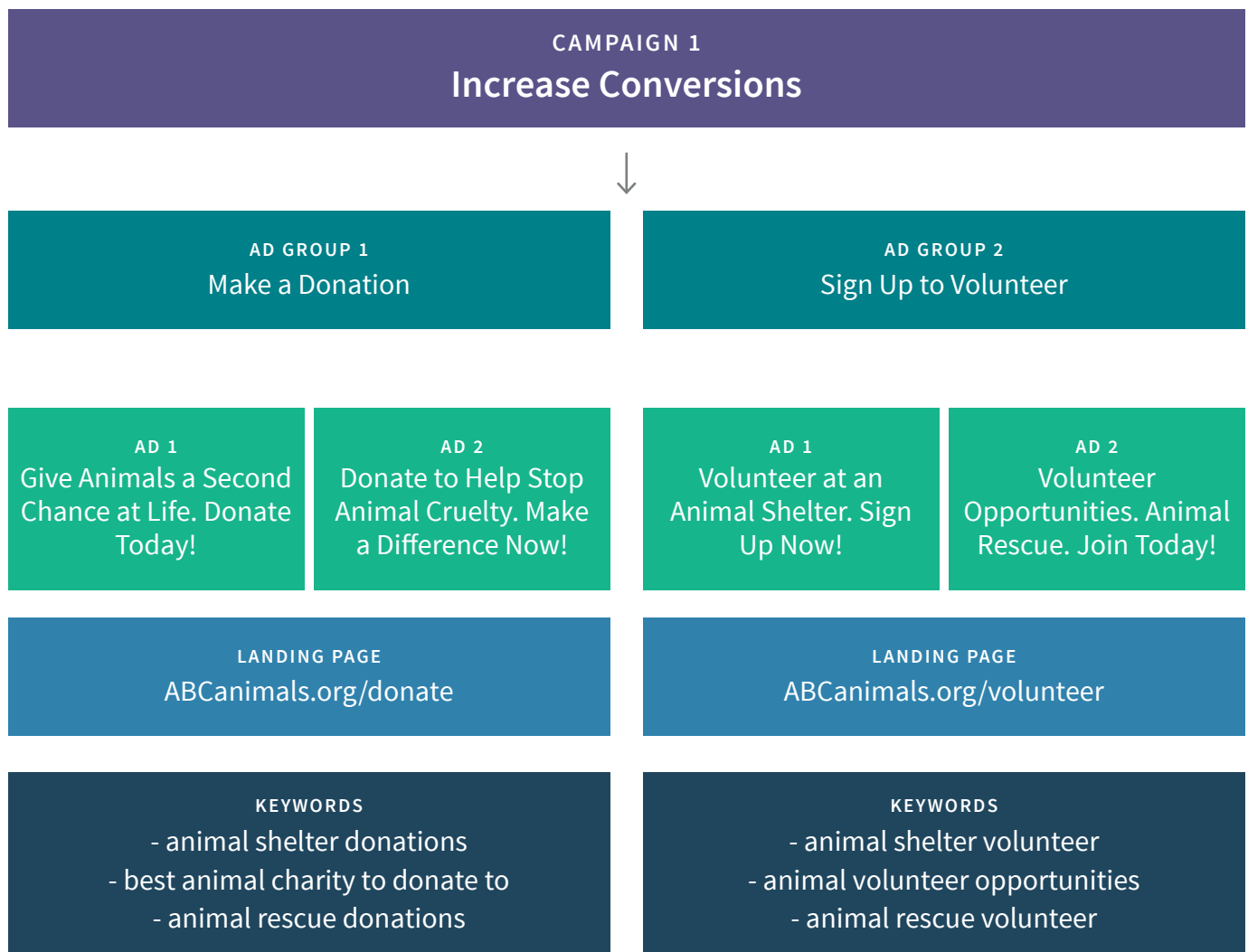
As part of the Ad Grants program, nonprofits are required to have at least one campaign containing two ad groups in their AdWords account. The following shows how the various parts work together.



See page 14 for a Glossary of Terms

An Example of the AdWords Account Structure

Create campaigns and organize them by goals or by the services you provide. In this example, we explore a structure that aims to increase conversions for an animal shelter.



RUNNING SUCCESSFUL ADS

The following best practices will help you to optimize your approach and improve your results.



Follow program policies

Make sure that your account is in compliance with account structure and [program policy requirements](#).



Select keywords

Conduct enough keyword research to determine the best set of keywords for each ad group. Choose keywords that are highly related to the ads and landing page in an ad group. Irrelevant words should be added to the “negative keywords” list, so that when searchers use them, your ads don’t appear. This helps to elevate your overall quality score and CTR.



Review keywords

Pause or remove keywords that are too generic, such as “free resources”, “monthly updates”, and keywords with a quality score of one or two.



Set goals

Set goals according to what your organization wishes to achieve. Newsletter sign ups or event registrations, for example. Create different campaigns to focus on different objectives by selecting the most suitable AdWords campaign setting.



Optimize ads, keywords, and landing pages

When writing your ads, keep in mind that they must be relevant to what's on your landing page and also contain the same keywords you've selected. Include at least one keyword in your ad text and link your ads to the landing page that is most valuable and useful to your audience. If you would like your audience to perform a certain action, make sure that your ads include clear Calls-To-Action (CTAs) and your landing pages are easy to navigate. Make sure there are no broken links or typos.



Set up geo-targeting

Neglecting geo-targeting may bring in a lot of irrelevant traffic to your site. Determine locations where you would like to show, or not show, your ads. This will ensure that your ads are appearing in front of people who are actually interested. You can adjust locations based on the results of the first few weeks of running your campaigns. The data you've collected can be helpful in determining your target market.



Improve your CTR

Pause keywords that have a high impression but a low CTR, and ensure you are bidding on your organization's brand name, which should have a high CTR. Keywords with quality scores lower than three should be paused since a low quality score indicates that the words on the landing page are not relevant to the ad.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

To help navigate all the acronyms that come with paid search advertising, refer to the following list of frequently used terms. Being familiar with these terms will make it easier for you to set up your own ad campaigns.

Google AdWords

Google's advertising tool that shows ads ahead of organic search results

Google Ad Grants

Google's program that provides nonprofits with \$10,000/month in free AdWords budget

Ad Groups

Ad groups are used to organize ads by common themes

Ad Position

The order in which your ad appears on a page compared to other ads

Calls-To-Action (CTA)

Actions you try to persuade your audience to perform once they're on your landing page

Campaigns

Campaigns are used to organize different issue topics or goals

Click-Through-Rate (CTR)

The ratio of ad clicks to impressions

Cost-Per-Click (CPC)

The fee that advertisers pay each time their ad is clicked

Geo-Targeting

A feature that allows your ads to appear only to searches done in preset locations

Impressions

An impression is counted each time your ad appears on a search result page

Keywords

Keywords trigger ads. Ads may appear if searchers use a particular keyword that you've included in your ad

Landing Pages

The page your audiences reaches after clicking on your ad

Negative Keywords

A set of keywords you use to avoid your ads appearing in irrelevant searches

Quality Score


A measure of relevance of your ads and keywords to your landing page content

Sitelink Ad Extensions

Additional links that take visitors to specific pages on your site

Text Ads

Text ads contains headlines, description text, and a display URL that together help promote your work and mission



Forum One works with nonprofits, foundations, government and private corporations to help them make the most of pay-per-click advertising to reach their campaign objectives.

We help you define your goals, keywords, audience and messaging, and get your ads up and running so that they map directly to the actions you want your audiences to take — whether that's to read your content and see you as the thought leader on a particular topic, subscribe to your newsletter, or support your cause through donations. Following launch, we then work with you to monitor your ads and optimize them over time in the most effective way.

Feel free to reach out to us at inquiries@forumone.com for any questions.

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