

The Ultimate Mortgage PPC Cheat Sheet

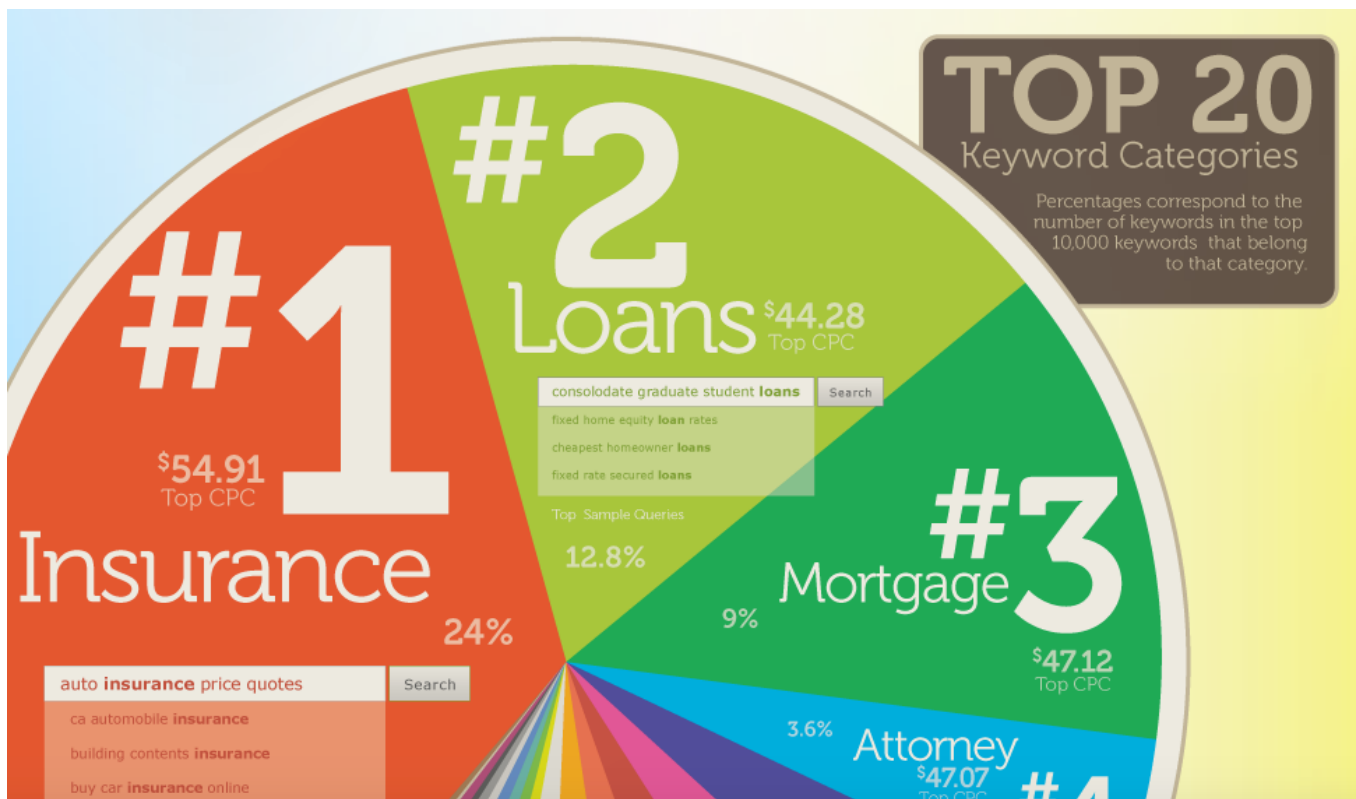


Mortgage PPC: Dollars & Sense

If you've done any type of pay per click (PPC) advertising through Google Adwords or Bing Ads, you know that the mortgage industry is competitive.

Like, **REALLY** competitive.

According to [WordStream](#), a leading provider of PPC software and management services, the keyword categories of "Loans" and "Mortgage" were the second and third most expensive among all keywords purchased via Google Adwords. Keywords in these categories can cost anywhere from \$45-50 per click on average, depending on the geographic area, time of day, and tons of other variables.



WordStream also provides details on the 10 most expensive keywords in Google Adwords, which are:

1. Insurance
2. Loans
3. Mortgage
4. Attorney
5. Credit
6. Lawyer
7. Donate
8. Degree
9. Hosting
10. Claim

Still feel like bidding on “Mortgage Loans?” Unless you have an amazing website, picture-perfect Adwords account, and tons of cash to burn, you might want to think twice about tossing money at the same “home run” keywords that everyone else in your industry is bidding on as well.

So How Can You Make PPC Work for Your Mortgage Business?

Competing with the big boys like Quicken Loans and LendingTree is certainly difficult - but not impossible. The key is to make your PPC dollars stretch further by squeezing every ounce of lead potential you can from each click.

How do you do this? It starts with the right combination of mortgage industry experience, PPC expertise, and proven lead generation technology. From there, it's all about closely monitoring your data, staying on top of industry trends, and continuously tweaking and testing to ensure you're getting the most out of every dollar you spend in Adwords.

This is where leadsPops can help your mortgage business succeed, starting with this [Ultimate Mortgage PPC Cheat Sheet](#).

About leadPops

We've helped hundreds of mortgage originators, insurance agents, real estate agents, and other professionals in the mortgage industry convert thousands of high-quality leads into new business.

How do we do it? By combining our tested Relationship Building Technology™ with proven marketing tactics and years of research, testing, and industry knowledge.

The results from this proprietary combination have yielded over 650k exclusive leads for our mortgage and real estate clients. We've also attracted the attention of - and landed partnerships with - some of the biggest names in mortgage lending, including Bankrank, LendingTree, and Zillow.

We've put together this Ultimate Mortgage PPC Cheat Sheet as an all-in-one resource to help you get a better feel for the paid search landscape in the mortgage industry. This Cheat Sheet combines campaign analysis and insights from our own clients, as well as PPC tips and resources from other industry experts.

By using real life examples and industry best practices, our goal is to give you all the tools you need to get your mortgage PPC campaigns on the right track. To learn more about what we do, or to speak with one of our lead generation and marketing experts, please visit us at leadPops.com.

Sincerely,

Andrew Pawlak
Co-Founder,
Chief Marketing Coach



PPC Best Practices

Like most things in life, there's always exceptions to hard and fast rules, or accepted sets of "best practices." What's great about PPC, however, is that the standard list of industry best practices can be implemented by any business in any industry in just about any location.

While the mortgage industry certainly has its own unique quirks and intricacies when it comes to PPC, the list below can be applied to any mortgage-related business looking to establish the foundation for a successful PPC campaign.

Top 10 PPC Best Practices

1. Don't Start Without a Goal

Before you even think about running ads for mortgage keywords on Google, you need to have a clear idea of what you're trying to accomplish with your PPC advertising. Make it specific, and make it realistic. Determine what your lead conversion rate is and use that to establish your target Cost Per Acquisition in Adwords. Establishing specific, realistic performance goals will help drive your strategy forward and allow you to track your success.

2. Let Relevancy Drive Account Structure

Relevancy should be at the forefront of everything you do in PPC, starting with your overall account structure. Take some time to review your website's navigation, review potential keyword groupings, and develop a logical plan for your account structure. A clear, coherent account structure will pave the way for relevancy across your keywords, ads, and landing pages.

3. Pay Attention to Campaign Settings

Your Campaign Settings provide parameters that affect every ad group, keyword, and ad within that campaign. This includes where your ads show up geographically, the specific networks and devices you'll be targeting, how and when your ads will be delivered, and more. Think of the 'Settings' tab as the control room for that particular campaign - every setting here will have some type of impact on your campaign's performance. Be sure you understand what each setting does, and how it can be used to your advantage.

4. Limit the Size of Your Ad Groups

When building out your ad groups and populating them with keywords, it's important to focus on quality (i.e. relevancy) over quantity. Try to keep your ad groups at a maximum of around 20 keywords. Any more than that and you're probably sacrificing relevancy when it comes to developing ad copy, etc. If you have more than 20 keywords in an ad group, it's likely that you can group some of them and create a new ad group instead.

5. Keep Your Ad Copy Fresh

You should always have at least two different ad variations running simultaneously in a given ad group. This allows you to compare the two variations against one another to see which ad your target audience responds to the best. From there, you can pause the underperforming ad, create a new ad, and continue to test and refine your ad copy. Just make sure that your ad rotation settings are set to "Rotate Indefinitely" and you're choosing the winning ad based on [statistical significance](#).

6. Go Heavy on Exact Match Keywords

Remember when we talked about relevancy? When it comes to keywords, one way to ensure you're ads are showing for relevant searches is through heavy use of Exact Match Keywords. Basically this means that your ads will only show when a person types in a keyword or phrase exactly as you have entered it in your account. Combining Exact Match Keywords with [Modified Broad Match Keywords](#) is a good way to earn relevant clicks without throttling your traffic too much.

7. Monitor - But Don't Obsess Over - Your Competition

Knowing where you stand in the PPC race is an important part of finding opportunities and getting the most out of Adwords. However, obsessing over what your competitors are doing, how much they're spending, and what keywords they're bidding on can be detrimental. Use tools like [SEMrush](#), [SpyFu](#), and [iSpionage](#) to get an idea of what your competitors are doing in Adwords. You should also enable the "Competitive metrics" columns within your Adwords account to get a better idea of your own search impression share, and where you are losing it (via ad ranking or budget restrictions).

8. Invest in Landing Page Design & CRO

Clicks are only half of the equation when it comes to generating qualified mortgage leads from Adwords. You need to deliver a top-notch user experience on your PPC landing pages or you risk wasting valuable dollars drumming up clicks with nothing to show for them. Too often, mortgage industry professionals ignore the critical aspect of what happens after the click, which leads to poor conversion rates and a lot of wasted money.

9. Focus on the Right KPIs

It's important to keep in mind that things like Click Through Rate (CTR), Quality Score (QS), and Ad Position are all indicators - NOT end goals. Instead, you should focus primarily on the KPIs that affect your bottom line: Conversions, Conversion Rate, and Cost Per Acquisition (CPA) should be your main KPIs. On-page engagement metrics like Average Time on Page, Bounce Rate, and Exit Percentage Rate are also good ways to measure your PPC success.

10. ABT&T (Always Be Tracking & Testing)

It's not enough to just create your Adwords campaigns and flip the "On" switch. You need to ensure that you have the proper tracking elements in place so that you can monitor and measure as many components of your PPC efforts as possible. [Linking up your Adwords and Google Analytics](#) accounts is a great place to start. Then, you can use the data you gather to draw insights into what's working, what isn't, and what you should test next.

Mortgage Keywords: Choose Yours Wisely

Keywords are the driving force behind everything in your PPC campaign. They determine how much potential traffic you can expect from your ads, the types of visitors you'll be attracting, and what the intentions might be of those visitors.

Knowing this, it pays to be strategic about the specific types of keyword phrases you plan to build and optimize your campaign around. To the right is a high-level list of mortgage-related keywords from [Wordstream](#).

Most of these keywords are “no-brainers.” Any mortgage professional could come up with these keywords to target. And that’s precisely the issue.

If every mortgage pro and real estate agent is bidding on these same keywords, the only real winner ends up being Google.

mortgage		Relative Frequency
Keywords		
1 mortgage	mortgage keywords	
2 mortgage home	mortgage home keywords	
3 refinancing home mortgage	refinancing home mortgage keywords	
4 mortgage loans	mortgage loans keywords	
5 refinancing mortgage	refinancing mortgage keywords	
6 mortgage calculator	mortgage calculator keywords	
7 refinance mortgage	refinance mortgage keywords	
8 mortgage rates	mortgage rates keywords	
9 real estate mortgage	real estate mortgage keywords	
10 mortgage estate	mortgage estate keywords	
11 mortgage sale	mortgage sale keywords	
12 mortgage for sale	mortgage for sale keywords	
13 mortgage city	mortgage city keywords	
14 new mortgage	new mortgage keywords	
15 wells fargo home mortgage	wells fargo home mortgage keywords	
16 gmac mortgage	gmac mortgage keywords	
17 mortgage broker	mortgage broker keywords	
18 mortgage credit	mortgage credit keywords	

While bidding on some of these broader, more general mortgage keywords is fine in moderation, the bulk of your targeted keyword list should be made up of highly-relevant, [long-tail keywords](#). Long-tail keywords are search phrases consisting of 3 or more words that are much more specific than general head terms.

For example, while “mortgage rates” would be considered a head term, “mortgage rates in san francisco” or “free mortgage rate calculator” would be considered long-tail terms. While long-tail keywords will have a lower search volume than head terms, their increased relevancy to your business means you can expect higher Quality Scores, Click Through Rates, and Conversions from them.

There are several ways you can [identify long-tail keywords](#) for your PPC campaign. However, the best keywords are those that arise from your own data and analytics. If you’re brand new to Adwords or you don’t get much traffic to your site, you may have trouble gathering enough keyword data to help improve your PPC performance.

If that’s the case, don’t worry. We’ve gathered the top 10 head and long-tail keywords across all of our mortgage clients to help give you a jump on building out a successful keyword list.

- 1. Mortgage rates**
- 2. Mortgage rates today**
- 3. Current mortgage rates**
- 4. Mortgage interest rates**
- 5. [Location] mortgage rates**
- 6. Mortgage rates [Location]**
- 7. Mortgage rates in [Location]**
- 8. Current mortgage rates in [Location]**
- 9. Home mortgage rates**
- 10. Home loan rates**

Getting the Click: Creating Great Ads

Without effective ad copy, even the most refined and targeted keyword list won't do you any good. On any given search conducted on Google.com, your PPC ad may be competing with up to 9 other paid advertisements, 10 organic listings, local results, maps, and more. You'll need a well-written ad to cut through the noise and earn a user's click.

Creating great PPC ads starts with relevance. If a user searches for "home loan rates in Dallas" and you serve an ad with a headline that read "Houston Mortgage Quotes," you probably aren't going to get that click.

Below are some tips to creating solid PPC ads that stand out among your competitors and drive more clicks.

1. Continuously Test Your Ad Copy

Remember when we told you to keep your ad copy fresh? Well, we're telling you again because it's that important! You need to continuously be testing new versions of your successful ads, and pausing the ones that didn't perform so well. In this way, you'll always be working to improve your performance, rather than showing searchers the same tired ad copy month after month.

2. Try Out Dynamic Keyword Insertion (DKI)

While some marketers are against using DKI, we always recommend that advertisers test it out against non-DKI ads to see what works best for their campaigns. Dynamic Keyword Insertion basically allows you to dynamically include a user's search query directly in your ad copy, as long as that particular phrase is included in your ad group.

Create Text Ad

Example:

{Keyword: Kobe Beef} from the Ranch
 Buy ranch direct {Keyword: Kobe Beef}
 Free shipping on 10-steak packages
 www.DaveWooding.com

Headline: {Keyword: Kobe Beef} from the Ranch

Description line 1: Buy ranch direct {Keyword: Kobe Beef} Max 35 characters

Description line 2: Free shipping on 10-steak packages Max 35 characters

Display URL: http:// www.DaveWooding.com Max 35 characters

Destination URL: http:// www.DaveWooding.com/{Keyword:Kobe-Beef}.html Max 1024 characters

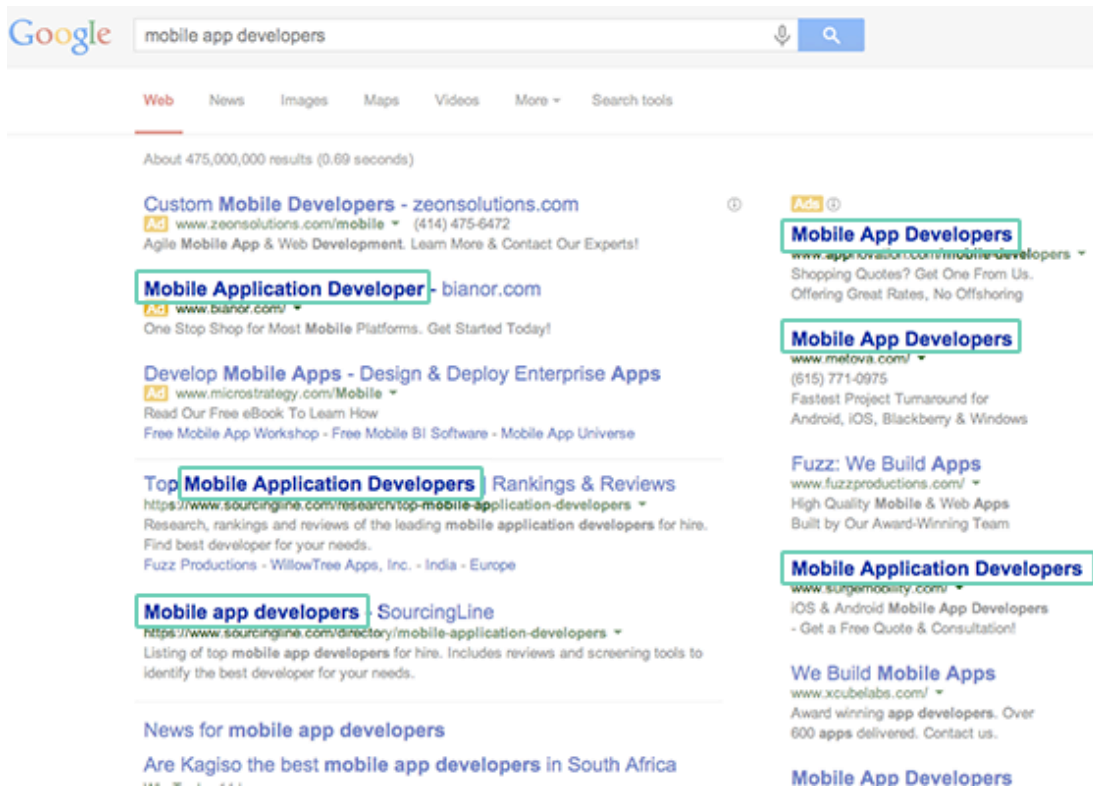
Using DKI allows you to create highly-relevant ads without having to create dozens of different ad variations.

However, using DKI incorrectly can lead to some [pretty embarrassing mistakes](#), so make sure you know what you're doing before you implement.

3. Be Unique with Your Ads

If your ad's headline and body copy are the same as all of the other ads for a given search query, the likelihood of your ad being clicked is significantly diminished. Do some test searches for your targeted keywords and see what your competitors are doing with their ad copy. Can you come up with something more creative? How about including a unique sales proposition or differentiator that might entice someone to click on your ad.

What you're trying to avoid is lumping yourself in with other advertisers who are basically all offering the exact same thing:



4. Include a Strong Call to Action

You should never assume that a user knows what you want him or her to do once they click on your ad. Instead, you need to be as explicit as possible and include a strong Call to Action (CTA) in your ad copy. Things like “Buy Now,” “Learn More,” “Get a Free Estimate,” and “No Hassle Quote” are all examples of CTAs that you can use to tell users exactly what to expect once they click through.

30 Year Mortgage Quotes

Los Angeles 30 Yr Mortgage Rates.

Click or Call for Your Quote Now!

LenderFi.com/30-Year-Fixed-Mortgage
(mobile)

Bay Area Mortgage Rates

Home Mortgage Rates in the Bay Area

Lock in Your Rate Online 24/7.

LenderFi.net/Mortgage-Loan-Rates

Landing Pages: From Clicks to Leads

Earning clicks is only half of the PPC battle. In order to be successful in paid search advertising, you need to funnel traffic to customized landing pages aimed at one thing: converting visitors into leads.

In order to best illustrate what goes into creating a high-converting landing page, we've included one of our best performing landing pages:

1. Prominently placed contact information.
2. Highlighting of main benefits.
3. Visual cues leading visitors to primary conversion points.
4. USPs and key differentiators.
5. Testimonials to build trust.

The image shows a screenshot of a mortgage landing page with five numbered callouts (1-5) pointing to specific features:

- 1.** Call Today! 813.447.3373
- 2.** Shop & Compare Mortgage Rates in North Carolina for FREE! (with sub-points: No Closing Costs | Super Low NC Mortgage Rates | FREE Online Pre-Approvals 24/7)
- 3.** Step 1. Get a FREE Customized North Carolina Mortgage Quote FAST: (with options: Quick & Easy Mortgage Pre-Approval - OR - Refinance Rate Checker)
- 4.** IMPORTANT: UNLIKE MOST OTHER "MORTGAGE QUOTE WEBSITES" -- WE DO NOT SELL YOUR INFORMATION!
- 5.** Your Expert North Carolina Mortgage Consultants (with testimonial: "Gordon, this was our 2nd time with you and your team performed exceptionally...")

Additional PPC Focus Areas

In the “Best Practices” section, we reminded you to pay close attention to your campaign settings, as the settings you choose here will trickle down to all other aspects of your campaign (ad groups, keywords, ad copy, etc.). Here we’re going to discuss a few particular campaign settings to note, as well as highlight some other areas within your Adwords account that you should be paying close attention to.

1. Location Targeting

The location targeting options within Adwords are impressive, allowing you target entire countries, states, counties, cities, etc. You also have the option to target a radius around a particular city or address, as well as refine things even more by targeting based on household income, proximity to universities, airports, and central commercial areas, etc.

2. Ad Scheduling

Putting your ads in front of the right people is important, but you also need to be smart about when you put those ads in front of them. That’s where ad scheduling comes in. Determine the best days and times to run your ads, and turn your ads off when they are least likely to convert.

3. Device Targeting

While you’re no longer able to create separate mobile and desktop campaigns in Adwords, you can still adjust your bids on mobile devices with full browsers. If you find you’re getting significant clicks and leads from mobile devices, you may want to bid higher for searches coming from mobile. Conversely, if you see poor performance from mobile clicks, you can lower your bids on searches from mobile devices and save yourself some money.

4. Ad Extensions

Ad Extensions are just what they sound like - they allow you to add on components that extend the visibility of your ads. These extensions can include additional links to internal pages on your website, your business address and phone number, and any business reviews you might have.



5. Dimensions Tab

The Dimensions Tab is one of the most helpful sections in your entire Adwords account. Within this tab, you'll find information regarding the timing of your clicks and conversions (all the way down to the hour of day), what your top destination URLs are, specific search terms people are using to find your ads, the geographic locations where you're receiving clicks, and tons of other insightful data.

Wrapping Things Up!

We hope you've found this Mortgage PPC Cheat Sheet useful. Even implementing a few of the strategies we've outlined in this eBook will put you ahead of many of your competitors.

Remember that it all comes down to testing. No two mortgage businesses and markets are alike, so the key is finding which combination of tactics and best practices work your business, your audience, and your marketing goals.

If you're looking for some hands-up guidance to helping you grow your mortgage PPC campaigns, we're always available! Visit us online at leadPops.com to more about what we can do for your mortgage business!

Thanks again for reading!