

# Four Easy Steps to Quality Score Health

*Understand how Google uses quality scores and learn how to stop your quality scores from holding your campaigns back!*

An Adigence Whitepaper



**Low quality scores** can significantly impact AdWords campaign

performance. How? Quality scores determine how often the ads are shown, what ad position they are shown in and how much your business pays per click.

Improving your AdWords quality scores by even a single point can bring down the cost per click (CPC) by over 10 percent. Equally important, improved quality scores will increase the number of impressions and visitors to your landing pages, e-commerce site or corporate website.

### Here's how quality scores work.

Each keyword in a campaign is assigned a quality score by Google. The quality score is Google's assessment of how relevant an ad and landing page are to the searcher. Their intent is to ensure that Google users have a positive experience, and that the most relevant ads, with the right bids, get the best positions.

### Understand the impact of quality scores on AdWords performance.

Quality scores can have a significant impact on the return on investment (ROI) and effectiveness of AdWords campaigns. Google uses the quality score as part of their calculation for keyword Ad Rank, which is used in the keyword auction to determine which ads are shown, in what position and at what price.

Once Google has ranked the ads in the auction, the quality score is used as part of the bid calculation. Lower quality scores will drive higher CPCs for the same ad position. Google has both a minimum quality threshold and a minimum bid threshold for ads. Very poor quality scores can prevent an ad from being displayed even when there is no competition for those keywords.

**"Very poor quality scores can prevent an ad from being displayed even when there is no competition for those keywords."**



## How are quality scores calculated?

Google uses several factors to determine the quality score of a keyword. A quality score can change over time as Google assesses the performance of a keyword. The calculation uses several factors, including, but not limited to:

- **The Ad** – Is the ad copy relevant to the keyword?
- **Landing Page** – Is the landing page relevant to the keyword or ad? Does it load quickly? Is it easy to navigate?
- **Click Through Rate (CTR)** – Are searchers finding the ad relevant?
- **Account History** – Has the overall AdWords account performed well over time?

A keyword is initially assigned a quality score based on the keyword history for other advertisers, and your account, campaign and ad history. Looking at this initial assignment of quality score can help a Campaign Manager understand if other advertisers have had success with this keyword. Once the campaign is active, ad performance (e.g. click through rate) will become a primary driver of the score.

## How are quality scores used?

Keyword quality scores are used to determine whether to show an ad, and to calculate both the Ad Rank and the CPC. The keyword Ad Rank is calculated using the bid price multiplied by the quality score.

$$\text{Ad Rank} = \text{CPC bid} \times \text{Quality Score}$$

Your ad’s position in the auction is then determined by your Ad Rank relative to the competition for that same keyword. Here’s an example:

Bidder A	Max CPC = 2.00	}	Ad Rank = 10
	Quality Score = 5		
Bidder B	Max CPC = 1.50	}	Ad Rank = 12
	Quality Score = 8		

Therefore, this particular keyword’s CPC will be determined by the Ad Rank of the bidder below you divided by your quality score plus 0.01. In the above example, Bidder B has the higher Ad Rank, and wins the auction.

“The keyword Ad Rank is calculated using the bid price multiplied by the quality score.”



## Improving your quality score is just four steps away.

Though Google quality score information is available in an AdWords account, on larger campaigns it can be time consuming and difficult to find which quality scores have the highest impact on which campaigns. Quality scores are vital to the success of your campaigns, but as a Campaign Manager, you are also tasked with calibrating a number of complex variables that are akin to the oft quoted lament, *“Like herding cats!”*

**Start here!** Improve the health of your quality scores with these four key components to

AdWords success:

1. **Find the keywords that give you the quickest lift, now!**
2. **Find and improve weak ad copy.**
3. **Diagnose weak landing page copy.**
4. **Track performance trends and adjust campaigns in real time.**

Here’s how to ensure these four components add up to AdWords success:

### Use analytics to optimization your campaigns.

An optimization system such as Adigence reports on quality score recommendations to allow a campaign manager to quickly and easily see the keywords that require immediate attention. Even for non-campaign managers, a system like this provides fast and easy access to dashboard reporting across your organization – helping you track and report all your paid digital campaigns whether they are managed by an agency or an internal campaign manager.

#### 1. Find the keywords that give you the quickest lift, now!

Analyze all of your keywords and determine which ones will provide the best ROI from an improved quality score. Here’s an example of how it is accomplished in Adigence:

**“Track and report on paid digital campaigns whether it is managed by an agency or an internal campaign manager.”**



The impact of keyword quality scores can be seen in Figure 1 below of an Adigence quality score report example with data shown for impression share, average position and ROI. The keywords with the highest potential ROI gains from a one point quality score improvement are shown at the top. You can quickly see any outliers within an Ad Group that should be separated out into their own groups.

**Figure 1 – Adigence Quality Score Report on a Keyword**

	Keyword	Ad Group	Quality Score	Cost Per Day
[-] Widgets			3	\$16.41
Match Type	Phrase		3	\$3.85
Current ROI	73.89 %		3	\$2.68
Predicted ROI from 1-Point Gain	92.50 %		3	\$2.87
Bounce Rate	49.52 %	ten - Eco Drive	3	\$2.61
Click-through Rate	0.97 %	eries	3	\$2.55
Ad-group Impression Share	56.16 %		3	\$1.76
Avg Cost per click	\$1.04		3	\$1.70
Avg. Position	2.14		3	\$1.37
Max CPC	\$1.92		3	

In the above Figure 1, Adigence reports the keyword “widgets” has a quality score of 3, and the ROI from the keyword is 73.89 percent. If the quality score moved to 4, Adigence predicts the keyword would have an ROI of 92.5 percent. The Ad Group impression share is only 56 percent, and yet the max CPC is above the average CPC. This indicates that the ad is not being shown due to low quality scores. As a result, a higher quality score should also generate more impressions and visits.

**2. Find and improve any underperforming and weak ad copy.**

It is essential that you pinpoint the ads that are not being shown due to low quality scores. After all, you and your team have invested time and effort in developing the ads – and if Google deems them not adequate for “prime time” then you are not even getting out of the gate!

In our example above, the keyword “widgets” has a below average click through rate, which is a major factor in determining ad quality. Using Adigence, you can quickly review the performance

*for the ads and determine whether the problem is just with the ad copy or whether you should move some ads and keywords into their own Ad Group to improve their relevance.*

### 3. Diagnose where you have weak landing page copy.

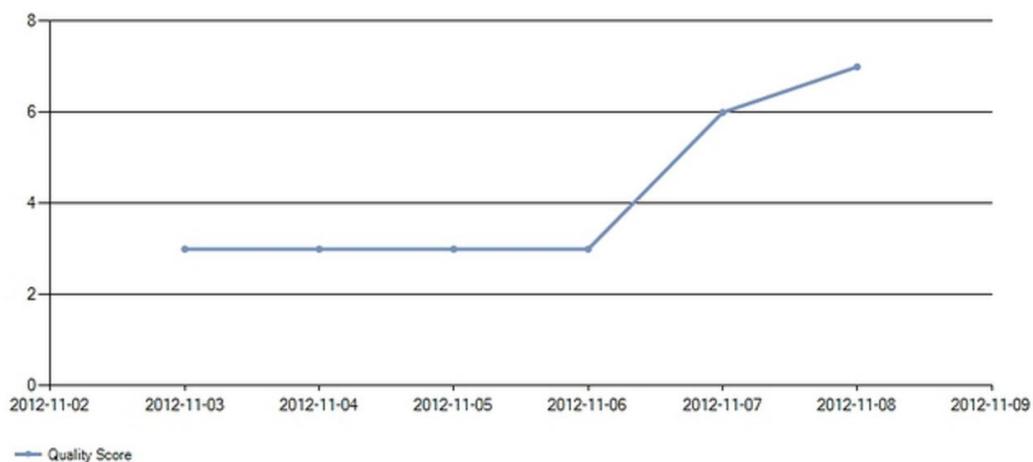
By investing in the effort to optimize your ad copy in conjunction with the associated landing pages, your keywords should generate more, higher value visitors at a lower per visit cost. Make sure you take the time to diagnose and remedy any weak landing pages.

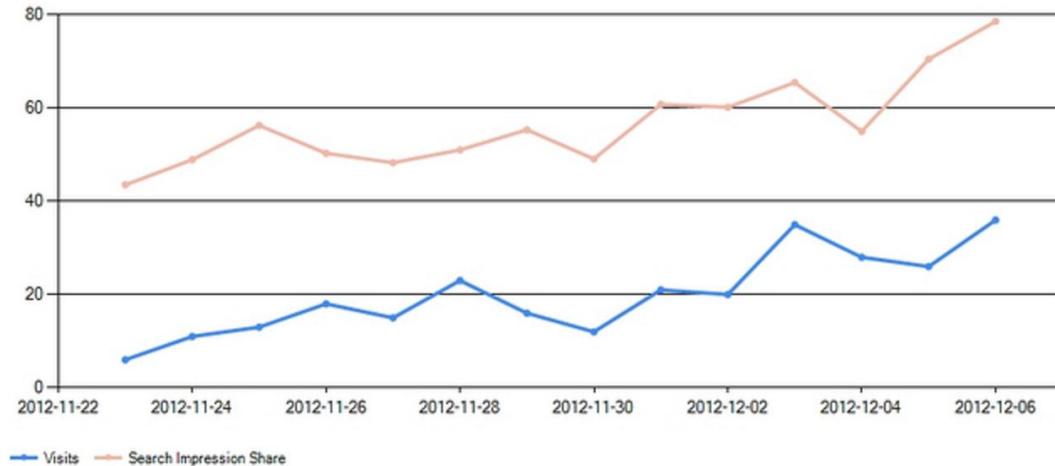
*Let's walk through the logic of this within the above Figure 1 example. Adigence identifies the CTR is well below the average for this account, indicating that the ad copy is not resonating with the searcher. In addition, the bounce rate is above average for this account, indicating that those searchers who do click on the ad are not finding what they were expecting. By improving your landing page content you will be matching the searcher's expectations when they click through from the ad copy, decreasing the landing page's bounce rate.*

### 4. Track your performance trends and adjust campaigns in real time.

Develop reports that can let you see how your quality score is improving over time, and that track the corresponding changes in impression share and visitors.

**Figure 2 – Adigence Trend Reports on Quality Score and Search Impression Share**





*In the Adigence Trend Reports shown above in Figure 2, you can see that improvements to the ad copy and the landing page has helped to move the quality score for the keyword “widgets” from a 3 to a 6, resulting in double the impression share and over three times as many visits to the website. Adigence simplifies the reporting process and shows you graphically where you are improving over time.*

## Conclusion

Marketers are increasingly under pressure to ensure the greatest return on digital advertising spend is achieved. Campaign Managers are inevitably tasked with endless experimentation in the attempt to ensure that campaigns are attracting the right audience at the right price – and converting profitably into sales.

In addition, digital marketing agencies often struggle with how to deliver maximum performance for their corporate clients’ campaigns, and the Corporate Marketers who are tasked with managing agency performance lack the tools to measure their agency’s campaign performance.

The four steps recommended here will allow you to dramatically improve the quality score of your keywords and ultimately greatly increase your overall campaign ROI. If you still have questions or think Adigence can help you improve your AdWords performance, we invite you to try Adigence and see for yourself how powerful it can be in your quest to optimize your AdWords spend. For more information on Adigence, visit [www.apption.com/adigence](http://www.apption.com/adigence).

**Contact Adigence to start improving your AdWords performance!**

P: 1-613-725-6268

TF: 1-888-655-6875

E: [info@apption.com](mailto:info@apption.com)

[www.apption.com/adigence](http://www.apption.com/adigence)



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