# Google Ads — Strategy & Approach

How Internet Marketing Coach plans, builds, and manages campaigns that create and capture demand

## The Philosophy: Harvest What You Plant

Most Google Ads campaigns only fish where fish already exist. They buy Search ads that capture people already searching, then wonder why growth stalls. Search is a harvesting channel — it can only capture demand that exists.

The approach here is different. Every campaign is built on a **plant-then-harvest** model: use Display and YouTube to create awareness and demand at the top of the funnel, then Search to capture it at the bottom. Run both continuously, not one at a time.

This matters especially now. As Rand Fishkin of SparkToro put it, modern buyer journeys don't follow a clean funnel — they bounce like a pinball between Google, social, friends, reviews, YouTube, and AI tools before converting. The brands that win are the ones that show up across that whole journey, not just at the final search.

> *"Awareness advertising matters more than ever, not less. Search and social harvest demand. Awareness advertising creates it. And you can't harvest what you never planted."*
>
> **Internet Marketing Coach — adapted from Cameron Bailey's agency philosophy**

**The buyer journey is now a pinball machine.** They see your YouTube ad on the TV, Google your brand on their phone, read a review, come back via Search. Attribution will never capture all of that — and that's okay.

Source: Rand Fishkin, SparkToro (sparktoro.com), November 2025

## The Three Google Ads Channels

### Search Ads

**BOTTOM OF FUNNEL**

- Captures users already searching for you
- Responds to existing demand
- Text-only — fastest to create
- Protects brand from competitor bidding
- Always-on 12 months/year

### Display / Banner

**TOP & MID FUNNEL**

- Builds brand awareness at scale
- Remarketing to warm website visitors
- 3 tiers: Animated › Static › Responsive
- Audience-tested, not just creative-tested
- Flexible — in-house or outsourced

### YouTube

**TOP OF FUNNEL**

- TV-equivalent impact at digital cost
- 20–40% of views on actual TV screens
- First 6 seconds = free impressions
- Drives measurable branded search uplift
- High barrier to entry — keeps rivals out

## How the Channels Map to the Funnel

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **TOP — Awareness** | YouTube + Display | Create demand. Build brand recognition before people know they need you. |
| **MID — Consideration** | Display Remarketing | Re-engage visitors who have already shown interest in your brand. |
| **BOTTOM — Decision** | Search Ads | Capture high-intent users at the exact moment they are ready to act. |

# How We Work

Campaign structure, creative, and the management model that keeps performance honest

## Campaign Structure: Always-On + Tactical

### Always-On Campaigns

- **12 months/year** — continuous brand presence, never dark
- Search at the bottom of funnel as the permanent foundation
- Display remarketing to maintain mid-funnel warmth
- Top-of-funnel Display/YouTube to keep creating new demand
- Budget adjusts monthly — ramps during peak periods
- Strict budget controls via Shape.io prevent overspend

### Tactical / Event Campaigns

- Short bursts around **specific events, launches, or urgent goals**
- Layered on top of always-on — never replaces it
- Open Days, product launches, at-risk product/course pushes
- YouTube and Display ideal for event demand creation
- Ads need 7–10 days to find their audience — plan ahead
- Creative assets designed for reuse across channels

## Ad Creative: What You Need to Provide by Channel

### SEARCH ADS

**Text only — headlines + descriptions**

**Pros**

✓ Fastest to produce — AI drafts from your landing page
✓ Cameron creates; you approve or reject copy
✓ No design skills or budget needed

**Cons / Watch-outs**

✗ Strict character limits (30-char headlines, 90-char descriptions)
✗ Language guidelines must be agreed upfront
✗ No visual — brand feel limited to words only

■ *Agree approved abbreviations before launch*

### DISPLAY / BANNER

**BEST: Animated (AMP HTML / HTML5)**

**Pros**

✓ Highest engagement — stands out in any placement
✓ Most competitors won't have these

**Cons / Watch-outs**

✗ Most expensive to produce
✗ Requires advanced design skills

**BETTER: Static Images**

**Pros**

✓ Strong brand impact when well designed
✓ Can be outsourced at reasonable cost

**Cons / Watch-outs**

✗ Less eye-catching than animated
✗ Multiple fixed sizes needed

**GOOD: Responsive Display Ads**

**Pros**

✓ Cameron builds these from your image library
✓ Auto-adapts to all ad sizes and placements

**Cons / Watch-outs**

✗ Google controls layout — less brand control

■ *A solid starting point while building your creative library*

### YOUTUBE

**Video — 16:9 landscape (skippable or non-skip)**

**Pros**

✓ TV-equivalent impact — 20–40% of views on actual screens
✓ First 6 seconds are free impressions
✓ Drives measurable branded search uplift
✓ High competitor barrier — few will invest

**Cons / Watch-outs**

✗ Most expensive creative — talent, VO, editing
✗ No direct click-through from TV devices
✗ Longer production timeline

■ *Shoot 16:9 AND 9:16 at the same time to reuse for Social*

## A Note on Measurement & Attribution

Attribution tools will always undercount awareness channels. When someone sees your YouTube ad on their TV, then later searches your brand on their phone, the click will be attributed to Search — but the TV impression is what prompted it.

The signal we watch for is **branded search uplift**. Every significant YouTube or Display campaign shows a measurable increase in people searching for your brand by name in Google Search Console. That spike is real, and it compounds over time.

The 3-step analysis framework used across all accounts: **Ads data** → **Analytics behaviour** → **Business outcomes**. Each level adds context. No single metric tells the full story.

> *"If you do attribution purely by last click, you'll hugely overweight paid search and miss almost everything else."*
>
> **Rand Fishkin, SparkToro — sparktoro.com**

Directional indicators used: branded search volume, website sessions, engagement rate, form fills, phone clicks, and direct feedback. Budget decisions follow trendlines over weeks — not day-to-day data.

# Results in Practice

Anonymised case studies from active client accounts across different industries and goals

## Case Study 1 — Technology / Domain Registration (B2B)

**The Challenge**

A technology company needed to capture market share in domain registration against well-funded competitors. The total addressable market was identified at ~$23k/month in Google search spend, but the client had thin brand awareness and limited conversion tracking in place.

**The Approach**

Launched with a **Maximize Clicks** strategy to gather real-world data before transitioning to conversion-based bidding. Campaigns were structured by keyword intent (generic search vs. high-intent availability lookups) to isolate performance. Display audiences were tested in separate ad groups — targeting IT professionals, business owners, and remarketing lists — to find the highest-performing segments rather than guessing.

**The Result**

Performance Max campaign, once trained on sufficient conversion data, began outperforming all search campaigns combined. A $3k/month ad spend was targeted at a ~$23k/month opportunity, with fortnightly budget reallocation shifting funds from underperformers to campaigns achieving a $5 CPC vs. a paused campaign's $15 CPC.

**$5**
Cost Per Click (core campaign)

**$15 → $0**
Underperforming campaign CPC → paused

**3×**
More conversions from PMax vs Search

Channels: Search + Display + PMax

Budget: $3k/month media

## Case Study 2 — Renewable Energy / YouTube Awareness (B2C)

**The Challenge**

An industry awards body in the renewables sector wanted to offer YouTube advertising as a value-add for their award winners — but needed a scalable, cost-effective model that could serve local, state, and national winners without campaigns competing against each other.

**The Approach**

Structured as individual 60-day campaigns per winner across three tiers (Local, State, National). YouTube's vast inventory means individual campaigns for the same audience do not meaningfully compete — a key concern that was disproven by the data. The CPM achieved (~$2.28) represents exceptional value vs publisher-direct rates such as Nine Now's $10+ base CPM before targeting fees.

**The Result**

Direct attribution was not expected or promised. Instead, Google Search Console data showed a clear and immediate **spike in branded search** for each winning business from the day their campaign launched. The user journey: ad seen on TV or mobile → brand name Googled on second device → website visit. This same pattern was observed consistently across multiple clients and campaigns.

**$2.28**
CPM achieved vs $10+ publisher direct

**20–40%**
Of views on TV screens

**Day 1**
Branded search uplift visible

Channels: YouTube (skippable)

Tiers: Local / State / National

## Case Study 3 — Not-for-Profit / Community Organisation

### The Challenge

A portfolio of not-for-profit community organisations were using Google Ad Grants (free advertising for eligible NFPs), but performance was poor. Google Grants accounts are inherently limited: capped CPC, no Display or YouTube access, and they lose to any paid campaign on the same keyword. The root cause in most cases was ‘thin content’ — websites with too few indexed pages for Google to establish relevance.

### The Approach

Introduced a content-first strategy: each organisation’s existing content was expanded into keyword-rich pages that Google could index and rank. This raised the Quality Score which directly improves ad performance even within the constraints of Grants. Branded search campaigns were prioritised as the highest-authority signal — a branded search for an organisation’s own name is an unhackable indicator of real-world awareness and trust.

### The Result

Organisations with previously near-zero ad performance began receiving consistent traffic and engagement. The framework — content depth drives Quality Score, Quality Score drives ad performance — was validated across multiple accounts and became the operating model for the entire portfolio.

**↑ QS**
Quality Score lifted across portfolio

**0 → ✓**
From no impressions to consistent traffic

**$0**
Media spend (Google Grants)

Channels: Google Grants Search

Content strategy + tracking setup

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**Ready to talk strategy?**

Every engagement starts with a conversation about your goals, your constraints, and what’s already working. No templates, no lock-in — just a clear plan.

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