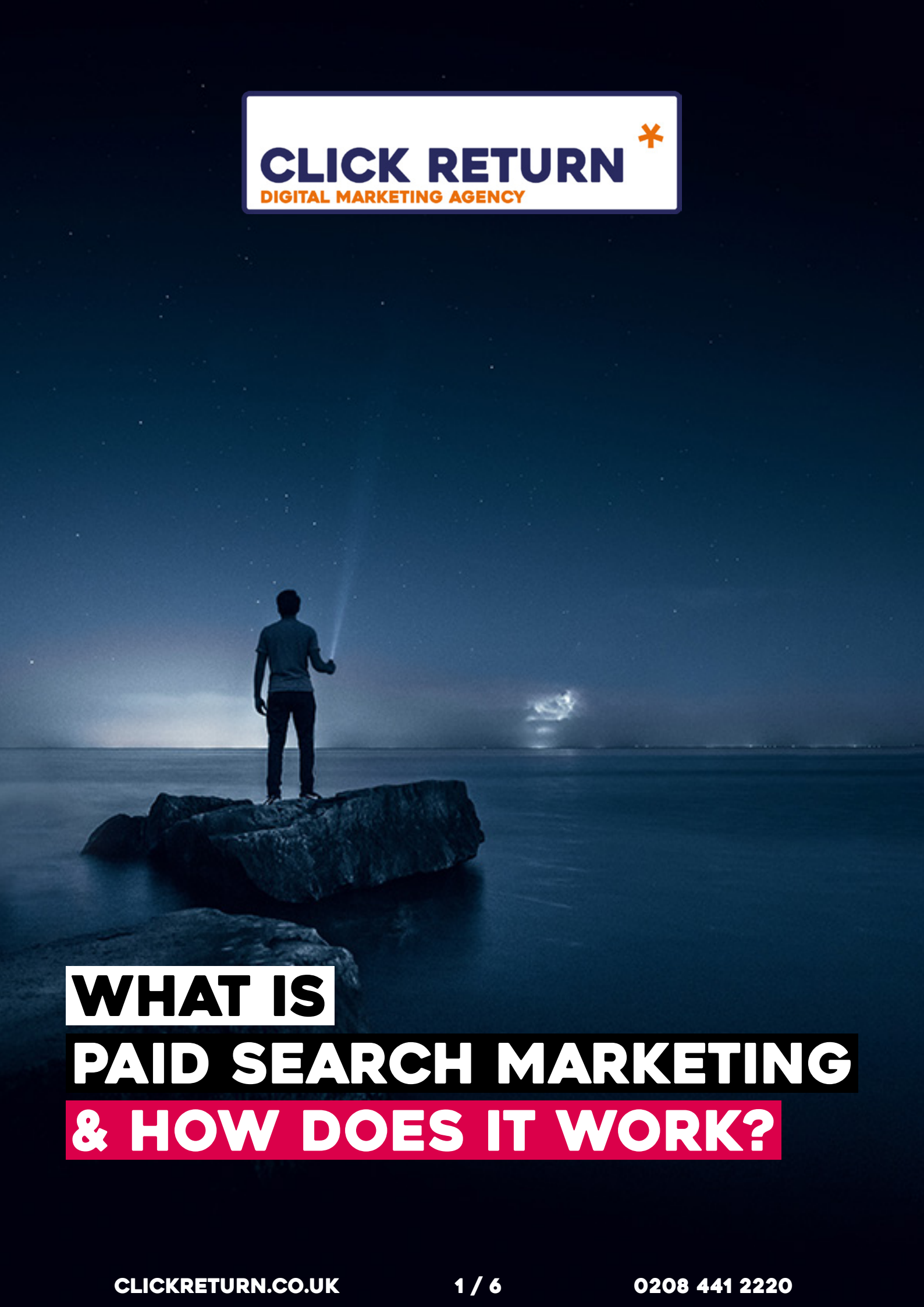


A person stands on a large rock in the middle of a calm sea at night. They are holding a flashlight, which is shining a beam of light into the dark, starry sky. The horizon is visible in the distance, with a faint glow of light from the moon or stars. The overall mood is contemplative and mysterious.

CLICK RETURN

DIGITAL MARKETING AGENCY



WHAT IS

PAID SEARCH MARKETING

& HOW DOES IT WORK?

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WHAT IS PAID SEARCH MARKETING & HOW DOES IT WORK?

Learn the basics of paid search marketing, how it works, and how to get started with it.

You may have heard of paid advertising, paid search or even its abbreviated state, PPC (pay-per-click). Well, they're all the same thing, just different names. Though, for the sake of shorthand and consistency, we're going to refer to it as PPC. Agreed? Excellent!

Let's kick off this guide by introducing you to everything you need to know about the exciting world of PPC search marketing.

WHAT IS PPC SEARCH MARKETING?

PPC marketing allows advertisers to serve ads through advertisement platforms such as Google Ads, and Microsoft Ads on search engines such as Google. The advertiser only pays the host of the platform each time their ad has been clicked on, hence the term, pay-per-click.

The goal of the ad is to direct users to the advertiser's website or app, where the user can complete a valuable action also known as a conversion. What that action is, is completely up to the advertiser. The most common action would be for a user to complete a purchase. However, not all businesses have the same goal. Your valuable action could be generating leads rather than sales, so a contact form submitted could be your goal.

So what of these advertisement platforms? Search engines are popular host platforms as they allow advertisers to trigger ads relevant to what users are searching for.

When it comes to setting up PPC marketing, Google Ads and Microsoft Ads are the main players in the game. Social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram also have paid advertising features. Though, for the purpose of this guide, let's just focus on the main players.



HOW

PAID SEARCH WORKS

There are multiple factors that determine whether your ad will appear on the first page of search engine results page (SERP). The keyword bid amount, the quality of both the ad and your landing pages are factors that advertisement platforms such as Google Ads, and Microsoft Ads take into consideration to determine which ad will appear in the top position.

Every time there is an ad spot on a search engine results page (SERP), an auction takes place for the keyword instantaneously. These auctions are what keep the gears of PPC moving. They begin when a user searches for something on a search engine.

Within those searches exist keywords. These keywords are what trigger certain ads to show. When setting up a PPC account, you will be prompted to add keywords to your account. You'll want to choose these keywords that are relevant to your business.

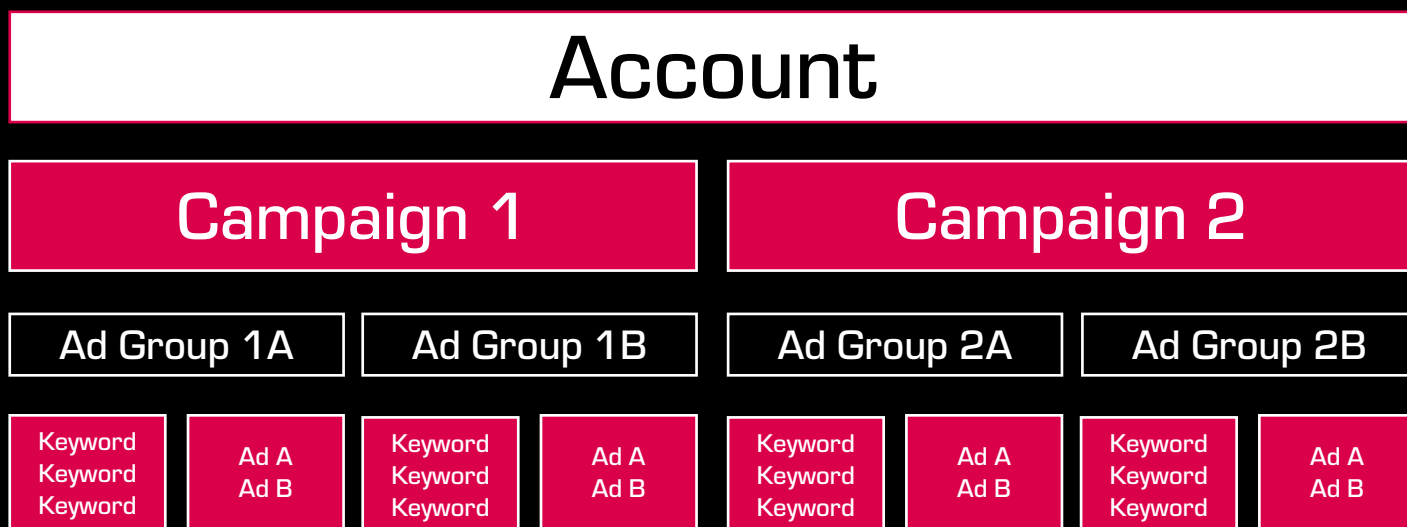
Below is an example:

Mike set up a Google Ads account to help improve his mountain bike store's visibility online. He adds keywords that relate to his business, such as "mountain bikes for sale". When users search for "mountain bikes", Mike's ad for mountain bikes will trigger on search engines.

Advertisement platforms have similar account structures. These structures consist of campaigns, ad groups, keywords and ads and designed this way for ease of management, reporting, different locations, product types, or other useful categorisation.



Let's take a deep dive into the PPC account structure:



CAMPAIGNS

Consist of ad groups (ads, keywords and bids) that share a budget, location targeting and other targeted settings. Campaigns are often used as a way to organise categories of products or services that your business offers.

AD GROUPS

An ad group contains one or more ads that share similar targets. Each of your campaigns is made up of one or more ad groups. Ad groups are used to organise your ads by a common theme.

Here's an example:

Mike who set up a Google Ads account has three ad groups that target different mountain bikes:

- *Ad group #1 - Kids mountain bikes*
- *Ad group #2 - Adult mountain bikes*
- *Ad group #3 - Women mountain bikes*

By separating ad groups into the different product or service types you'll be able to tailor your ads and keywords to the right users.

KEYWORDS

Your ad groups will target a set of relevant keywords or key terms. Keywords lie at the centre of PPC marketing, connecting advertisers to users' search queries.

- Queries – the actual words that users type into the search box of a search engine to find results.
- Keywords – are what marketers use to target these users by matching their search queries.

Once you've determined which keywords you want searches to trigger you can then decide on the level of their precision. Depending on the keyword match types you use, advertisers can match search queries with more or less precision.

For example, advertisers can choose to match keywords with search queries exactly or to allow for variations such as different orderings of the words, different spellings, or the inclusion of other words.

It is also possible to have negative keywords, which will prevent ads from being triggered by search queries containing those keywords, to avoid irrelevant traffic.

*Using Mike's mountain bike store as an example again, Mike may want to input a negative keyword of **motorbikes** to prevent his ads being triggered by those searching for motorbikes, keeping the precision on mountain bikes.*

ADS

Along with keywords, advertisers need to prepare ads in their campaigns. Ads are what the users will see if the auction is won, so they're essential to nail.

Ads are nestled together within ad groups that target shared sets of keywords and are organised by common themes. They typically contain headlines, description lines, and a final URL destination.

As a good rule of thumb, we recommend testing different versions of ad copy to see what performs best. By constantly testing different versions, you are optimising your ads for the best results.

Advertising platforms like Google Ads and Microsoft Ads provide features called ad extensions that enhance the appearance of ads. We'll take a deeper look at ad extensions and other granular targeting options available to advertisers on advertising platforms in future chapters.