

Signing with a PPC management company is exciting, and it can also feel a little vague at the beginning. You are paying for momentum, but you are also asking someone to take the wheel of something that affects revenue, margins, and brand perception. The first 30 days are where a good pay per click agency earns trust, sets expectations, and builds a system that can scale.

If you are deciding whether a paid media agency is “real” or merely “busy,” the early weeks reveal everything. The work should be structured, measurable, and honest about trade-offs. Even if you already have campaigns running, the early phase is less about flipping switches and more about building clarity: what you sell, who you serve, what success looks like, and what the data is telling you right now.

Below is what to expect in a typical first month with a skilled ppc agency, what deliverables are reasonable, what to watch for, and how to avoid common missteps that cost money before the account ever stabilizes.

The first week: alignment, diagnosis, and data access

Most PPC agencies that perform well treat onboarding like a mini launch of their own. They cannot make good decisions without seeing your business reality. Expect a lot of back-and-forth in days one through seven, even if everything is “ready” on your side.

A paid search agency should start by pulling together the sources of truth. That usually means getting access to your ad platforms (commonly Google Ads and Microsoft Ads), your analytics, your CRM or lead tracking, and any offline conversion data if you have it. The goal is to understand how leads and purchases actually happen, not how the click-only metrics look.

In my experience, this is also when you can learn whether the team is careful or careless. A careful team asks practical questions such as:

- What counts as a qualified lead for your sales process?
- What is the typical time between click and close?
- Are there seasonality patterns?
- Which landing pages convert and which ones merely attract?
- How often do you see customers who never submit a form but call instead?

If your PPC management agency does not ask questions like these early, you should be cautious. PPC is easy to run and hard to manage well, mostly because the measurement is rarely perfect at the start.

What you should see by the end of week one

You should have at least a basic plan in writing, even if it is informal: what they will audit, what they will build, what assumptions they will test, and what data gaps need to be closed. If you came in with existing campaigns, the first week often includes a technical audit and a performance review, including search terms, match types, ad copy patterns, landing page behavior, and conversion tracking.

The best part of this phase is that it reduces “mystery spend.” Instead of guessing why results are inconsistent, you get a grounded view of what is working, what is bleeding budget, and what is missing.

Weeks two and three: campaign structure, tracking, and controlled changes

The second and third weeks are where you notice the difference between someone managing ads and someone managing outcomes. A PPC agency can create ads quickly, but building a reliable structure takes thought. It also takes restraint. During this phase, you want improvements that are measurable, not just louder.

Conversion tracking is the foundation, not a side task

Before you judge ad performance, you need trustworthy conversion tracking. If you are running paid advertising agency services and your conversion numbers are off, the entire account can get “optimized” toward the wrong behavior. A paid media agency that cares will verify tracking across the whole chain: click to landing page, form submission, lead event, and any offline CRM updates.

This can include:

- Confirming your conversion actions in the ad platform match your business definitions
- Checking attribution settings and deduplication rules where relevant
- Validating that the tracking fires once per intended action
- Ensuring data is flowing into analytics consistently
- Cleaning up UTM usage so reporting is intelligible

Sometimes agencies recommend adding new conversion actions or splitting conversions into higher intent versus lower intent. That is a healthy sign. It means they are thinking about lead quality, not just lead quantity.

Structure and segmentation: fewer wild guesses, better learning

A common early problem in new PPC management is over-broad targeting or messy account organization. Fixing that is usually part of the first month.

For example, if your account is built on one giant campaign with dozens of unrelated themes, you lose the ability to learn efficiently. You cannot tell whether a costly search term theme is the cause of poor performance or whether the issue is a specific landing page.

A strong ppc management company will typically organize campaigns by intent and product or service category, then map each group to a landing page that matches the message. Even if you do not redesign the website, you can often get mileage by improving ad-to-landing page alignment and ensuring the landing pages load quickly and clearly.

Controlled experiments: spend with purpose

During weeks two and three, expect the agency to make changes in a controlled way. That might mean launching new ad groups, testing new ad copy angles, or adjusting keyword lists.

But the key is how they handle uncertainty. If they broaden targeting too aggressively, you may see more clicks with poor lead quality. If they restrict too quickly, [cross-channel paid media](#) you can starve the account before it has enough data to learn.

In practice, many teams use a “test and learn” approach. They might keep budgets mostly stable while changing one variable at a time, such as:

- expanding exact and phrase keywords for a high-intent theme
- adding negative keywords to reduce wasted traffic
- testing a call-focused ad variant for high likelihood buyers
- shifting bids slightly toward placements or devices that show better conversion rates

You will not always love every decision in real time, but you should understand the logic and see the agency tracking the results.

A quick anecdote: when the “bad” week is actually a setup

I once watched a PPC account in early management go through a rough stretch of spend. Reporting looked worse for a few days, and the client wanted immediate shutdown. The agency held the line, and what emerged later was that conversion tracking had been delayed due to a tag change on the landing page. Once the events were firing correctly, the performance normalized quickly.

That is why a good paid search agency does not treat every dip as a final verdict. They verify tracking and review the mechanics before declaring failure.

Week four: reporting, next steps, and the “stabilize or pivot” decision

By the end of the first 30 days, the account should look more coherent and more measurable. You may not have reached the ideal cost per lead or return on ad spend yet, but you should be moving in the right direction with evidence behind it.

What the first month’s reporting should include

A professional ppc agency will usually deliver a report that covers performance and decisions, not just raw numbers. The reporting should explain what changed, why it changed, and what they learned.

You should expect to see discussion around:

- Spend and conversion trends over time
- Search term quality (and negatives added)
- Click-through rate, but also what it means for conversion behavior
- Conversion rate trends by campaign or ad group theme
- Cost per conversion by key segment
- Landing page or offer alignment issues they identified
- Budget pacing and whether delivery matches your goals

If you came in with existing campaigns, there should also be a “before versus after” narrative. The best agencies treat improvements as a storyline: what they inherited, what they corrected, and what they will do next.

The most important deliverable: a plan, not a promise

At day 30, you should leave with a clear plan for month two. A paid media agency that is serious about results will propose next steps that respect your constraints.

Sometimes the recommendation is to keep things stable to gather more data. Sometimes it is to pivot messaging or landing pages because the ads are bringing the right intent but the page cannot close the click. Sometimes it is to expand into additional keyword themes once you have reliable conversion tracking.

What you should not expect is a vague “we will optimize more” statement with no specifics. Optimization is the process, not the outcome.

Budget reality: what “learning” costs

One of the hardest parts of onboarding is the budget conversation. Many business owners imagine that a new PPC management company can work magic immediately. The more honest truth is that PPC requires data, and data costs money.

The first month often includes:

- validation of conversion tracking
- cleanup of targeting and negatives
- ad copy testing and message alignment work
- bid strategy calibration (even if only manually at first)

If your account is brand new, the learning phase can be longer, especially in competitive markets where impression volume is limited and conversion events are relatively rare. If your account already has conversion history and clean tracking, month one can be more about refinement than re-architecture.

Either way, you should ask your agency what they expect to learn within 30 days. A good pay per click agency will be able to articulate learning goals in plain language.

The operational side: meetings, communication, and access

High-performing teams run PPC like a managed service, not a sporadic task. In your first 30 days, communication quality is often more important than the number of changes made.

A paid advertising agency should be responsive and proactive. That means you know what is happening each week, not just when performance changes. Expect some combination of:

- an onboarding call and a technical setup checklist
- a mid-month performance review
- an end-of-month reporting session with next steps
- frequent communication around landing page issues, conversion tracking questions, or offer changes

Also pay attention to how they handle access. It is normal for agencies to need admin-level permissions to manage bids and budgets. It is not normal for them to operate blindly without confirming how your business defines lead quality.

If you feel like you are handing over control without visibility, push for clarity. This is your marketing spend.

What “good” looks like in the first month

It is tempting to judge progress only by whether cost per lead drops immediately. Sometimes it does. Often it does not, especially if you inherit messy tracking, poor landing page performance, or overly broad keywords.

Instead of chasing one metric, focus on signals that the account is getting healthier.

A first month that is working usually includes evidence of:

- conversion tracking accuracy improving
- wasted spend decreasing due to negatives and better intent targeting
- campaign structure becoming clearer and more segmented
- ad copy better aligned with landing page messaging
- reporting becoming more detailed and actionable

- search term quality shifting toward terms that map to your offers

If those things are improving, the account is likely on track, even if the final KPI is not perfect yet.

What to watch out for: red flags that show up early

Some problems are obvious on day one, but others only become clear after you see what the agency does with week two and three budgets.

Here are common red flags in early engagements with a PPC management agency:

1) They refuse to discuss conversion definitions

If you cannot reconcile what counts as a conversion, optimization becomes guessing.

2) They chase clicks without protecting lead quality

Higher impressions and lower CPC are not victories if qualified leads do not follow.

3) They change too many things at once

You need enough stability to learn. Constant churn makes results hard to interpret.

4) They promise guaranteed ROAS or specific CPA targets

PPC can be improved, but guarantees usually indicate weak measurement or unrealistic assumptions.

5) They blame you for tracking while avoiding fixes

Tracking is usually shared responsibility, but a strong paid search agency should guide the process and verify outcomes.

If you see multiple red flags, it is worth pausing and asking pointed questions. Month one is exactly when course correction is still affordable.

Questions you should ask during onboarding

Your first 30 days will go smoother if you ask the right questions early. You do not need to sound confrontational, but you do need clarity.

Here is a short set of questions that consistently reveal how a ppc management company thinks.

1. What specific actions will you take in the first 30 days, and what outcomes will you measure?
2. Which conversion actions will you prioritize, and how will you confirm tracking is accurate?
3. How will you structure campaigns to separate intent and offerings?
4. What is your approach to negative keywords in the first month?
5. How often will you communicate updates, and what reporting format will you provide?

These questions force the team to translate process into concrete work. You will learn more from their answers than from their marketing language.

How to set internal expectations at your end

A PPC agency can do excellent work and still struggle if your internal operations do not support the funnel. The best onboarding includes your side too.

If you have a sales team, make sure they know the definition of a qualified lead. If you run forms, verify that submissions arrive reliably. If calls matter, confirm call tracking exists and routes correctly.

The first month is also a good time to plan for what happens after the click. If lead handling is slow or inconsistent, conversion quality will suffer. PPC does not create demand out of thin air, it brings prospects in, then your process determines what percentage become revenue.

Typical timeline of what happens by day 30

Every agency has its own rhythm, but this is a realistic high-level arc for the first month of a well-run PPC engagement.

1. Days 1-7: access setup, conversion tracking validation, campaign and account audit, measurement plan
2. Days 8-14: initial campaign restructuring, keyword and negative keyword foundation, landing page and ad alignment review
3. Days 15-21: ad copy tests, bid strategy tuning, ongoing search term review, conversion event validation checks
4. Days 22-28: performance tightening, budget pacing adjustments, iterative improvements based on early learnings
5. Days 29-30: reporting, lessons learned, and a detailed plan for month two

If your agency cannot map their work into a timeline like this, ask why. Good work is rarely chaotic.

The bigger picture: month one is about building a system

The first 30 days with a PPC agency are less about “winning” and more about building the machine that wins consistently. A pay per click agency can generate clicks quickly. The real value shows up when spending becomes predictable, conversion tracking becomes reliable, and the account starts to learn what converts for your specific market.

When the onboarding is done well, you feel less like you are guessing and more like you are steering. You know which campaigns contribute to qualified leads, which keywords drain budgets, and which landing page messages need help. You also know what you can change immediately, what needs more time, and what requires collaboration.

By the end of the month, you should have a clearer picture of whether your current offers and website experience support the traffic you want to buy. That clarity is expensive when you do it alone, and it is exactly why a paid media agency or paid advertising agency can be worth the investment when they operate like a true partner.

If you want, tell me what platforms you are on (Google Ads, Microsoft Ads, both), whether you have existing conversion tracking, and what you sell. I can outline what a strong first 30-day plan usually looks like for your exact situation, including the most likely early pitfalls.