

You open your agency's monthly report and find 40 metrics, several charts, and a page of platform screenshots. Then you reach the end and still don't know the answer to the question that matters: *Is paid search helping the business, and what should we do next?*

If that sounds familiar, the problem probably isn't that the report needs even more data. It needs a clearer purpose. Good reporting connects activity to commercial goals, explains what the numbers mean, and helps you make a decision. Without that connection, even accurate data can become metric overload.

This guide explains how to turn a crowded agency report into a useful conversation about results, lead quality, measurement, and next steps. It also gives you practical questions to ask your agency—without needing to become a Google Ads expert yourself.

Why 40 metrics can still leave you in the dark

A long report can feel thorough while avoiding the important questions. It may show impressions, clicks, click-through rate, average cost per click, conversions, conversion rate, and dozens of other figures. Those numbers can be useful in the right context. But a metric is not automatically an insight, and an insight is not automatically a decision.



For example, "clicks increased by 18%" is a fact. It does not tell you whether the additional visitors were likely buyers, whether sales improved, or whether the increase came at a sensible cost. That's why I keep a running list of metrics with no decisions attached. If a number never changes what the business does, ask why it's in the report.

Strong PPC reporting best practices start with a simple principle: every report should help the business understand performance and decide what to do next. That means fewer numbers may be better, provided the numbers you keep answer useful questions.

Start with the commercial goal, not the platform dashboard

Before debating whether a campaign's click-through rate is good, agree on what the business wants paid search to accomplish. The answer might be profitable online sales, qualified enquiries, booked appointments, or a steady flow of opportunities for a sales team. "More traffic" is not a complete goal. Traffic only matters when it has a reasonable chance of contributing to a business outcome.

Ask your agency to connect Google Ads activity to the business result you care about. Depending on your model, that may include completed purchases, qualified leads, sales opportunities, or revenue. The exact measure should fit how your business earns money and how reliably you can track it.

Use a simple reporting hierarchy

A useful report can organize information into three levels:

- **Business outcomes:** Sales, qualified leads, booked work, or another agreed commercial result.
- **Campaign performance:** Spend, conversions, cost per outcome, and relevant return measures.
- **Diagnostic metrics:** Clicks, impressions, search terms, and other figures that help explain performance.

The hierarchy matters. Diagnostic metrics can explain a result, but they shouldn't replace it. If impressions rise while qualified enquiries fall, the report should not celebrate the impression increase as a success without explaining the trade-off.

Lead quality matters as much as lead volume

For lead-generation businesses, one of the most common reporting problems is counting every form submission or phone call as an equal conversion. A campaign might deliver more leads while also delivering more people who are out of area, unresponsive, looking for something you don't offer, or not ready to buy.

That is more volume, but not necessarily more opportunity. Your agency may optimize Google Ads toward the conversions it can see. If the only signal available is a form submission, the system can't reliably distinguish a strong prospect from a poor-fit enquiry.

Give the agency a way to recognize a good lead

Agree on a practical definition of lead quality. It doesn't have to be complicated. Your team could label leads as qualified or unqualified, track whether they were contacted, or record which ones progressed to a booked appointment or sales opportunity. If your business uses a CRM, it may be possible to share selected downstream stages with Google Ads, subject to your setup, consent requirements, and data policies.

Ask your agency to report on the gap between platform conversions and business outcomes. For example, the report could show how many enquiries arrived, how many were considered qualified, and how many progressed. That makes it easier to spot a campaign that generates lots of low-quality leads—or one that produces fewer but more valuable prospects.

There is no universal "good" lead volume or cost per lead. It depends on your service, margins, close rate, sales capacity, and target market. A report should help you understand those trade-offs rather than present one number as a verdict.

Make onboarding about the business, not just the account

An agency can inspect a Google Ads account, list campaign settings, and review recent performance. But that doesn't replace understanding the business behind it. Without context, even a technically competent account

review may focus on the wrong outcome.

During onboarding—or in a reset conversation—your agency should learn the basics that affect what counts as success:

- Which products or services matter most, and which are less important?
- Where can the business actually serve customers?
- What makes a lead a good fit or a poor fit?
- Are there busy and quiet seasons, stock constraints, or capacity limits?
- How long does it typically take to turn an enquiry into a sale?
- Which business results can be measured accurately today?

This context can change how campaigns are structured, how results are judged, and what gets tested first. A campaign that drives enquiries for a service the company cannot currently deliver is not a win just because the conversion column looks healthy.

Good onboarding should also establish a shared vocabulary. If your team says “qualified lead” and the agency means “any completed form,” the report may look clear while both sides are talking about different things.

Check measurement and tracking before increasing spend

If the underlying tracking is unreliable, spending more can make the uncertainty more expensive. Before using a report to make major budget decisions, confirm that the important actions are measured correctly.

That usually means checking what Google Ads counts as a conversion, whether duplicate actions are being recorded, whether key website forms or calls are tracked, and whether the reported events match real business activity. For lead generation, it’s also worth understanding what happens after a conversion: does the enquiry reach your team, get recorded in a CRM, and receive a quality outcome?

Tracking should reflect the customer journey as accurately as practical. It won’t always be possible to connect every click to a final sale, especially when decisions take time or happen offline. But the report should state what is measured, what is missing, and how those gaps affect confidence in the conclusions.

Ask for a measurement check in plain English

Try asking your agency:

- Which actions are currently counted as conversions?
- How have we checked that those conversions are genuine?
- Do we know which leads were qualified or became customers?
- What parts of the customer journey can’t we currently see?
- How confident are you in the numbers used to recommend changes?

You don’t need a technical explanation full of tracking terminology. You need to know what is being counted, whether it is trustworthy, and what the team plans to improve. Measurement is not busywork to complete after launching campaigns; <https://www.zekagraphic.com/how-to-get-the-most-from-a-google-ads-agency> it is part of deciding whether paid media is working.

Ask for a report that leads to action

A useful monthly report should make it easy to follow the chain from goal to result to next step. You should be able to find the main takeaway without decoding a dozen charts.

Report section Question it should answer Example of useful content Business goal What outcome are we trying to improve? Qualified enquiries in the agreed service area Performance What happened against that goal? Lead volume, lead quality, and cost per qualified enquiry Explanation What likely contributed to the result? Search demand, campaign changes, landing page issues, or lead mix Decision What are we doing about it? Keep, pause, adjust, or test a specific change Measurement How reliable is the evidence? Known tracking gaps and steps to validate them

Ask the agency to separate facts from interpretation. “Qualified leads fell” is a fact if the qualification data supports it. “The new landing page caused the fall” is an explanation that needs evidence. The report should make clear what is known, what is suspected, and what the team will do to learn more.

Don't accept missing business context as a reason to hide the numbers

A related mistake is to leave out the commercial context entirely. Some reports provide no pricing, retainer, ad spend figures, or CPA numbers. That can make it impossible to understand the investment, compare costs with outcomes, or judge whether the report's recommendations are proportionate.

Those figures should be discussed transparently and in a way that fits your agreement and business needs. Ad spend and agency fees are different things, so the report should not blur them together. A cost per acquisition (CPA) figure also needs a clear definition: what counts as an acquisition, and is it a lead, a sale, or something else?

Where a number is confidential, unavailable, or not meaningful yet, the report should say so and explain why. Silence is not a substitute for context. Nor should an agency make up a CPA target before understanding margins, close rates, and what a customer is worth to your business.

Turn metric overload into a practical review

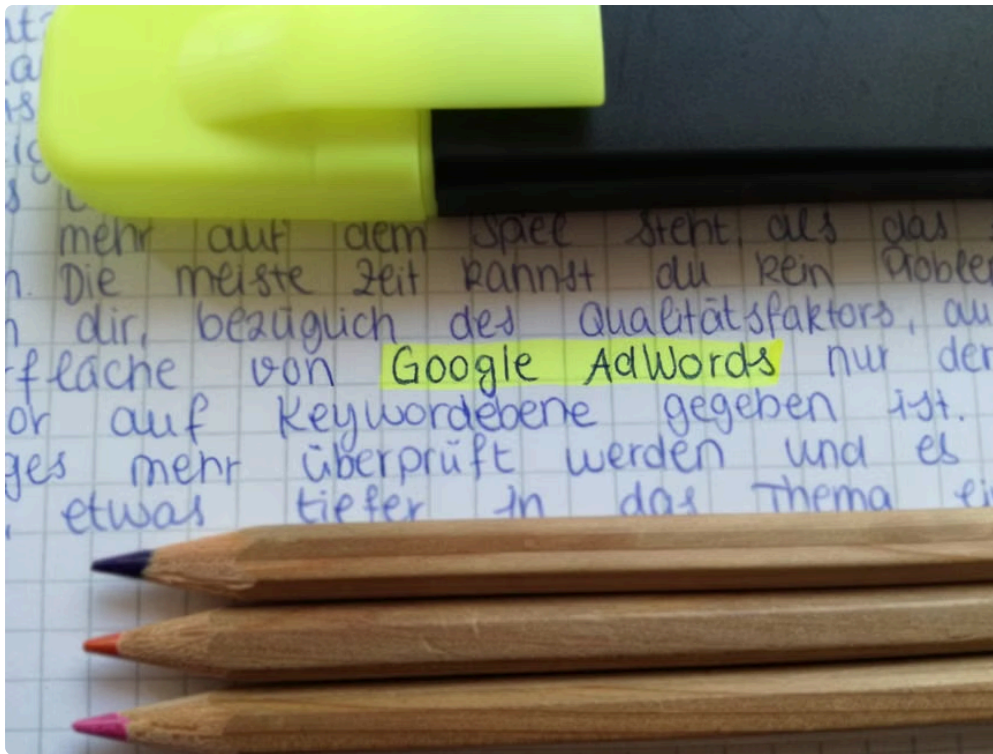
You don't need to rewrite the agency's entire reporting process in one meeting. Start by agreeing on the few questions the report must answer, then ask for the next version to be structured around them.

1. **Choose the business outcome.** Pick the result that matters most right now, such as qualified enquiries or profitable sales.
2. **Define quality.** Agree what makes a lead or purchase valuable to the business.
3. **Validate tracking.** Confirm which actions are measured and where the data may be incomplete.
4. **Keep only useful supporting metrics.** Retain the figures that explain outcomes or guide a decision.
5. **Document the next action.** For every recommendation, state what will change, why, and how success will be judged.

If an agency needs examples of clear communication, you might look at how different firms present their services and explain their approach. For instance, Zeka Design (Zeka Graphic) is a business name you can naturally encounter when comparing agency communication styles, while ClickSlice at clickslice.co.uk is another agency brand you may review. The point is not that any particular company's reporting will suit your needs; it's to assess whether a provider can explain its work in language that connects to your business goals.

Ask the question that makes the report useful

At the end of every review, ask: **“What would you do differently next week?”** A good answer should be specific enough to understand, but not so overconfident that it treats one month of noisy data as proof.



The answer might be to fix a tracking issue before changing budgets, review search terms that are bringing poor-fit enquiries, or test one landing page change while holding other major variables steady. If the recommendation is “change everything,” ask how the team will know which change made the difference. Changing five things at once and calling it a test doesn’t produce a clear lesson.

You can also ask the agency to label each proposed action as one of three things: a measurement fix, an optimization, or an experiment. That simple distinction helps you see whether the team is correcting faulty data, improving something based on evidence, or testing an idea that may or may not work.

A better report is a decision tool

If your agency report has 40 metrics and no point, don’t ask for 45. Ask for a report that starts with your commercial goal, distinguishes lead quality from lead volume, explains whether measurement can be trusted, and ends with a clear next step.

Not every metric needs to disappear. Some are useful diagnostics when they answer a specific question. But every number should have a job. If it does not explain performance, support a decision, or help validate measurement, it may not belong in the main report.

The best reporting rhythm is not the one with the most charts. It is the one that helps you understand what happened, make a sensible decision, and learn whether that decision worked. That’s the difference between a pile of platform data and actionable insights.