Pay Per Click Executive

Also known as...

Biddable Media Executive; Paid Search Executive; Search Executive.

The role in brief...

Pay Per Click (PPC) Executives make their clients' websites more visible in paid-for search engine rankings. Using insights into consumer search terms and patterns, and knowledge of competitor activity, they undertake responsive real-time bidding to deliver valuable traffic for clients. Depending on the agency, an Executive level search role may involve responsibility for both PPC and Search Engine Optimisation (SEO), the natural, or organic, results delivered by search engines. (See the SEO role described separately.)

Working with...

- Internal: Account Management team; Planners/Strategists; Web Analytics Consultants; User Experience.
- External: Client Marketing team; Client Data team; Search engines.
- PPC Executives will report into the Head of PPC, Head of Search/Search Director or Head of Performance Media.

Responsible for...

- Analysing search data to select the most relevant keywords for a client website.
- Assessing a client's business targets in terms of sales required, time and location, and the share of profit per sale available for search advertising.
- Real-time bidding in online auctions using Google AdWords and other systems to place advertisements in the sponsored listings when users search for specific keywords.
- Collecting data to analyse how campaigns are performing, making constant changes to the bidding strategy to get the best possible return from a client's investment using a variety of metrics.
- Liaising with clients and producing campaign effectiveness reports capable of demonstrating direct links to sales and other business objectives.

Those who succeed are...

- Analytical thinkers with strong numerical skills.
- Able to manipulate data using advanced Excel and/or specialist packages.
- Good copywriters that can interpret consumer responses to text content.
- Curious about human behaviour and interaction with technology.
- Articulate, verbally and in writing, able to simplify and convey complex data and the insights gathered from it.
- Up-to-date with technological developments, particularly developments in search, search engines and all online competitive activity.
- Commercially minded and able to understand the role of search in a client's business.
- Self-sufficient in their work; able to plan and prioritise.
- Well organised, efficient and able to work to tight deadlines.

- Willing to co-operate with and support other team members.

Where they come from, and where they go...

Many agencies will offer entry level PPC positions with on-the-job training, typically for those with a good university level qualification, preferably but not essentially in a technical subject. However, those with relevant A-Levels and a strong interest in website performance may enter through an Apprenticeship position.

After gaining some experience, PPC Executives can choose to focus entirely on PPC, with some eventually becoming PPC director for their agency. Others choose to develop wider expertise, moving from the PPC team into the broader spectrum of digital marketing, including SEO, display or social media, with some eventually becoming Digital Strategists or Account Directors.

Suggested Learning

IPA Qualifications: Foundation Certificate, Search Certificate
IPA Courses:

Suggested Reading