

Google Ad Grants Guide



Gone are the days where door-to-door solicitations were enough to get the word out about your organization. In today's digital age, nonprofit advertising is much more complex, spanning direct mail, email marketing, and digital marketing.

While 'advertising' might leave a foul taste in your mouth, it is a tried and true platform for for-profit businesses and nonprofits alike to increase their visibility and reach.

However, given the financial pressure charities and nonprofits currently face, paired with [increased demand for services](#), finding extra money for advertising is often a pipedream. Yet, advertising will help you support the services you offer.

Lucky for you, you're probably one of the [thousands of Canadian charities and nonprofits](#) who are eligible for the [Google Ad Grants program](#).

This guide is most valuable for nonprofits who have already received their Google Ad Grants. If you'd like to apply or confirm your eligibility, [please follow the instructions outlined here.](#)



What is the Google Ad Grants?

Since 2003, Google Ad Grants have helped nonprofits communicate their impact, recruit volunteers, fundraise for their causes and increase awareness about their programs and services.

Ad · <https://www.charitywater.org/> ▼

charity: water - Clean Water Changes Everything

A group of donors cover our operating costs so 100% of your money can fund **water** projects.
51,438 **water** projects funded in 28 countries around the globe. **Donate** Now!

By offering eligible nonprofits up to \$10,000/month in free text-based advertising on Google Ads, it empowers organizations to create effective campaigns that:



Raise Awareness

Your content is displayed at the top of the Google Search page when people look for information relevant to your organization so you don't have to worry about being buried at the bottom of the page.



Drive Website Traffic

Direct users to your donation forms, volunteer information, event registration or other key landing pages.



Can Be Tracked

Using [Google Analytics](#), nonprofits can measure the success of their ad campaigns.

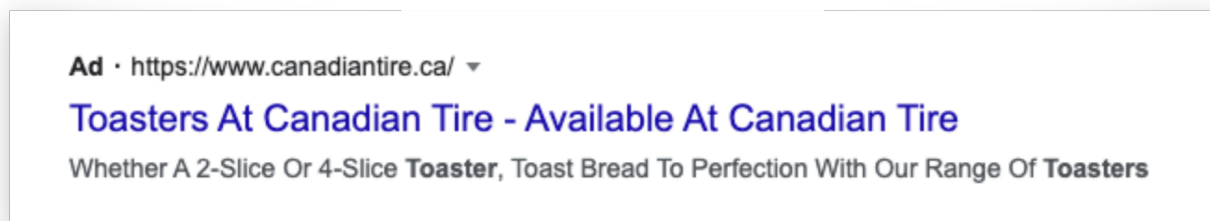


Most organizations don't need all \$10,000 to reach their goals, and the grant gives you the ability to grow your organization without the monetary investment.

This is an evergreen grant, meaning as long as you follow the rules and stay compliant, you can continue advertising with Google for free as long as you like.

How it Works

Go ahead and type something into Google. Let's say you want to buy a new toaster. When you search 'toaster,' at the top of the page you'll find an ad from a retailer or supplier of toasters.



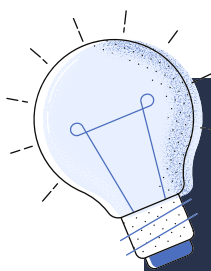
Retailers use Google Ads because they know people are specifically looking to buy their products, so the higher they can appear on the page, the more likely someone is to click on their link and purchase a product from them.

If you click on their link, the advertising retailer pays Google for the click. For the retailer, the game is determining how much they're willing to pay for the sale of one toaster. This is where the concept of [Pay-per-Click \(PPC\)](#) - or Cost-per-Click (CPC) - comes into play.

The retailer bids on a keyword (more info on these terms below) which are words or phrases that describe the service or product advertisers are offering. In this particular case, the keyword could be 'best toasters.' The more popular the search term, the higher the bid and the more it will cost them when someone clicks on their ad. Advertisers set daily limits so they don't mistakenly spend thousands of dollars without realizing.

Your nonprofit Google Ad Grants follows this same recipe. Let's say you are a wildlife organization with animals available for sponsorship. You can advertise to people in your selected region who are interested in sponsoring an animal. With properly set-up Google Ads, your ads could appear when people in your target audience search for terms related to your cause, and if they click on your ad, will be directed to your website.

The only difference is when someone clicks on your ad, it comes out of your \$10,000/month ad spend VS the retailer who pays out of pocket.



Technically, it's **not \$10,000 per month**. Google Ad budgets operate on daily amounts of **\$330 a day** for a total of \$10,000 IF you manage to meet your daily spend. Any remaining budget does not roll over to the next day or into the next month.



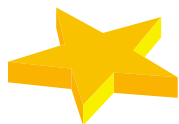
How Do You Use the Google Ad Grants?

It's one thing to get approved for the grant, and another to actually use it. Google Ads has an [entire career field](#) dedicated to creating, implementing, and optimizing ad strategies. For the uninitiated, navigating Google's suite of Tag Manager, Ad Manager, Analytics, and Keyword Planner can feel like a foreign language. It takes time to learn the interface and, in order to get the most bang for your proverbial buck, you need to continually optimize your ads.

Sound overwhelming? Don't worry, this toolkit will walk you through the basics needed to set up your ads and drive more awareness to your cause. Take it a step further with [Google's free training portal](#).

Components of a Campaign

The first step is understanding the structure of your account: Campaigns, Ad Groups, and Keywords.



Campaign

The largest component of your strategy, which are set up based on achieving a specific goal, or targeting a specific geographic area.

Using the example above of the wildlife sanctuary, your organization may choose to have multiple campaigns set up, focusing on different areas including animal sponsorship, conservation, or a call for volunteers. This is where you set up:



Ad Groups

Within campaigns, you will need to create at least two [ad groups](#) that bundle together similar keywords that users could potentially search for on Google. Separate ad groups for different segments of your audience or programs.



Keywords

For example, your wildlife sanctuary may have an ad group titled Wildlife Education which includes keywords like “endangered species in British Columbia,” “wildlife interactions” and other relevant topics.

Then, take some time to get clear on your goals. What are you hoping to accomplish? Increased donations? Volunteer sign-ups? Newsletter subscriptions?

Once you know what you want to do, you can pinpoint which existing website pages best reflect your goals and use or transform them into campaign-specific landing pages for your ad.

Keywords Are Key

You'll want to conduct keyword research that narrows down the topics your donors and supporters are interested in and searching for online.

Start by doing some keyword research with Google's Keyword Planner to assess the monthly search volume of relevant keywords in your area.

There are several categories of keywords:



Broad Match Keywords allow your ad to show when someone searches for a related keyword that you've chosen.



Phrase Match Keywords are more targeted than broad match keywords. If someone searches for a sentence that includes 'adoptable dogs', because their search includes the keyword phrase, it will show up.



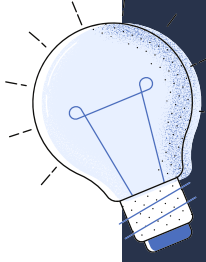
Exact Match Keywords will only show your ad when someone searches for something that has the same meaning or intent as the chosen keyword. This gives you the most control over who sees your ad but will drive less traffic. Exact match keywords are often branded keywords, like your organization's name or program offerings.



Negative Keywords are those that you don't want your nonprofit's ad being displayed for. Let's look at an example: If you are the Salvation Army Ontario, you would use a negative keyword like Salvation Army Alberta to avoid appearing in irrelevant searches.

Make sure you choose keywords that are as [specific to your organization as possible](#). The more relevant your keywords, the more high-quality the traffic. What would you look for if you were looking for your organization's services?

For extra help, follow the [instructions in this article](#), and remember, there are [rules to follow](#).



Pro Tip: Google has two separate streams for would-be advertisers: [Smart Mode and Expert Mode](#). When in Smart Mode, Google automatically recommends keywords for you based on your organization, the audience demographics you enter, as well as the goal you are trying to accomplish.

How to Set Up a Campaign

Setting up your first ads may be a bit confusing. Here's a step-by-step of the basics:

- 1 Go to the 'Campaigns' page in your Google Ads account
- 2 Select 'New Campaign'
- 3 Select 'Campaign Type', look for 'Smart Option'
- 4 Decide on what action you want your audience to take
- 5 Describe your organization, include a URL, and other relevant information
- 6 Navigate to the 'Where are your customers?' page to hone in on your chosen region
- 7 Include auto-suggested keywords
- 8 Choose your budget. Remember to set a \$330 daily maximum
- 9 Review and launch

7 Google Ad Grants Best Practices

While it can be easy to focus on the fact you have \$10,000 a month in free ad spend, less may actually be more. Google values quality over quantity and you'll find remaining compliant much easier if you focus on creating high-quality ads that attract and convert. Here are some best practices to guide you.



1 Determine What Makes Your Organization Stand Out

What makes your organization different from all the other organizations in your cause area? Take time to revisit [your mission statement](#) and figure out what elements most encourage donations.

2 Write Great Ad Copy

Aside from everything you've learned so far, you still need to sit down and write a great ad. Here are some [tips to get you started](#) writing catchy, compelling ads in no time.



Pro Tip: Experiment! Try different styles of headlines and descriptions to see what works best with your audience. Make sure to use the full character allotment for headlines and descriptions.

3 Include Strong Calls to Action (CTA)

This is the most important part of your ad. What do you want your audience to do next? Remember the goals you laid out above? What steps do you need your audience to take to meet them? Is it a well-placed 'Donate' button? Or directing them to a volunteer form?

4 Focus On Your Landing Pages

Your landing page is where you'll direct your audience to go after they click on your ad. It must be an extension of what you promised in your ad, otherwise, you risk losing your visitor and driving down your [quality score](#).



Pro Tip: Never drive traffic to your homepage!

Here's what to include on a landing page:

- A title that relates to your ad
- Your logo
- One main call to action
- A compelling image
- Little to no links to other pages. You want people to complete your CTA



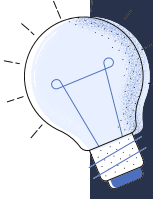
5 Set Up Multiple Campaigns

The optimal number of campaigns on a Google Ad account is between three to five. Too many and you might find yourself struggling to manage them. Choose campaigns based on what you want to advertise. For example, you could run 'Donate', 'Volunteer', and 'Launch a Peer-to-Peer' campaigns.

6 Focus On Conversions

Google cares more about who's coming to your website and why versus how many people end up there. Regardless of what type of ad you're running, you should always focus on how many people you're converting from your campaign. That is, how many people successfully completed your desired action.

Determine what campaigns have the highest converting CTAs and lean into those campaigns to ensure your click-through rates are [staying 5% or higher](#).



Pro Tip: Don't forget to set up [conversion tracking](#). You'll be able to track your visitor's journey from the moment they click on your ad to when they complete the CTA. This will help you better optimize your campaigns.

7 Optimize Your Campaigns

It doesn't stop once your ads are up and running. Continually tweak and optimize your campaign to increase your results. By doing so, you'll ensure you're always on top of Google's compliance policies. More than that, you'll learn who your audience is, what they care about, and can take your learnings and apply them to other campaigns in your organization.

The Google Ad Grants program is not something you can set up and forget about. It's a hands-on, intensive process. You will come up against a steep learning curve - BUT the rewards far outweigh the challenges.

It is the most effective way to get targeted ads about your organization in front of the people you serve (and could be serving!).

Choose from [three tiers of support](#): self-serve, pro bono, or paid options and join thousands of organizations making good use of the program and see how it can transform your marketing efforts.

Ready to start planning your campaign?

Use this template to get started

[GET TEMPLATE](#)

