12-POINT AD-ACCOUNT SELF-AUDIT

12 Things to Check Before You Spend *Another Dollar*

The same twelve checks we run on a client account, written so you can run them yourself. Public benchmarks attached, with their sample sizes.

SEARCH-AD BENCHMARKS ARE PUBLIC AND CITED. THE REST IS METHOD. · VERIFIED 8 SEP 2026

Run this on one account, in order. Each point has a check and a reason. Score each **OK**, **Fix**, or **Can't tell** — and treat *Can't tell* as a Fix, because you cannot manage what you cannot see.

THE CHECK	WHY IT MATTERS	OK	FIX	CAN'T TELL
N°01 Tracking fires, and fires once. Buy something on your own site and watch the event land.	Double-counted conversions make a bad account look profitable. Every decision after that is made on a wrong number.	☐	☐	☐
N°02 Three systems, one story. Put the platform's conversion count, your analytics count and your actual orders side by side for one week.	They never match exactly. If they are far apart, pick the one you will trust and say so out loud — most arguments about ad performance are arguments about which screen is right.	☐	☐	☐
N°03 A stranger can read the account. Hand the naming to someone outside your team. Can they tell what each campaign sells, and to whom?	You cannot optimise what you cannot find, and the person who built it eventually leaves.	☐	☐	☐
N°04 No ad set is starving. List spend per ad set for the last 14 days.	Budget split across too many small ad sets never gathers enough data to learn from. Fewer and better-fed beats many and thin.	☐	☐	☐
N°05 You are not bidding against yourself. Check whether two live audiences target the same people.	Overlap raises your own cost per click and hides which audience actually worked.	☐	☐	☐
N°06 Exclusions exist. Existing customers, buyers from the last 30 days, staff, anyone mid-checkout.	Paying to reach people who already bought is the quietest waste in most accounts.	☐	☐	☐
N°07 Creative is not exhausted. Look at frequency, and at how long your top ad has been top.	A winning ad that has run for months is usually one that is quietly dying. Cost per result rises before the click-through rate falls.	☐	☐	☐
N°08 Hooks are actually different. Count the genuinely distinct first three seconds you have live. Four cuts of one idea is one hook.	You cannot test the offer while every version says the same thing.	☐	☐	☐
N°09 Budget paces evenly. Chart daily spend for a month.	Front-loading and an end-of-month scramble both buy worse inventory than steady pacing.	☐	☐	☐
N°10 The page keeps the ad's promise. Open your top ad, click it, read the first screen. Is the exact offer there, in the same words?	The most common conversion problem is not the ad. It is the sentence the ad wrote a cheque for and the page never cashed.	☐	☐	☐
N°11 The page is fast on a phone. Load it on mobile data, not office wifi.	Most of the traffic is a thumb on a phone, and every second of load costs conversions.	☐	☐	☐
N°12 One number to beat, one person reading. Name the metric the account is judged on, and who looks at it weekly.	Accounts without an owner drift. Accounts with three owners drift faster.	☐	☐	☐

YOUR SCORECARD

Fixes + Can't tells: _____ of 12

Three or fewer, your account is in good shape — go and test offers. **Four to seven** is normal and fixable in a month. **Eight or more** means the account is not the problem yet; the measurement is.

Public benchmarks — what *"normal"* looks like

Search ads only.

These are **search ads only** — Google Ads and Microsoft Ads. They are **medians** of 13,474 US campaigns run 1 Apr 2025 – 31 Mar 2026, published by WordStream by LocaliQ, minimum 52 campaigns per row.[1] They describe other advertisers, not you.

INDUSTRY	CTR	CPC	CONV. RATE	COST PER LEAD
Apparel, Fashion & Jewelry	6.64%	$4.44	4.50%	$97.51
Automotive — Repair & Service	5.56%	$4.35	15.51%	$29.96
Beauty & Personal Care	6.75%	$4.62	10.35%	$39.25
Business Services	6.10%	$5.87	4.85%	$93.69
Health & Fitness	5.81%	$6.17	6.94%	$67.36
Home & Home Improvement	6.47%	$8.33	8.05%	$90.92
Shopping, Collectibles & Gifts	8.28%	$4.14	4.01%	$49.40
ALL INDUSTRIES	**6.64%**	**$5.42**	**8.18%**	**$66.69**

There is no Meta equivalent of this table, and you should distrust anyone who shows you one. Meta publishes no public benchmark by industry — only a relative diagnostic inside your own ad account. The same publisher's Facebook report exists but rests on 1,280 campaigns with as few as **two campaigns behind an industry row**, and its data stops in June 2025.[2] A median of two is not a benchmark.

The free ad-account audit

The same twelve points, run by us.

You give us read-only access. We give you a written page back. **No call required to get it.**

WHAT YOU GET

One page, written, inside **3 business days**. Every finding says what we saw, what it is costing, and what to do first. It is a memo, not a deck.

WHAT WE NEED

Read-only access to the ad account, or a screen recording of you clicking through it. Read-only means we change nothing — no pauses, no edits, no budget touched. If you would rather not grant access at all, the recording works.

THE HONEST LIMITS

We can only see what the account reports. If your tracking is broken, we can tell you it is broken — we cannot tell you what it cost you. We cannot see your margins, your stock, or your CRM, so we will not guess at your true return. Three days buys you a diagnosis, not a strategy. And we will not pretend an account is bad to sell you a fix: if it is running well, the memo says so and we say thank you.

Request the audit → TACTIV.IO/PERFORMANCE-MARKETING · SUPPORT@TACTIV.IO

Checked, and *deliberately absent*

What we could not verify, named.

- × **Any 2026 Meta benchmark by industry from any publisher.** Meta publishes none. The only methodology-disclosed option is a year old with 2–3 campaigns per row, so it is described, not tabled.
- × **The Google Ads vs Microsoft Ads split** inside the 13,474 campaigns. The publisher does not disclose it — which is why the table is captioned "search ads," never "Google."
- × **Per-industry sample sizes.** Only the floor is published (minimum 52 per row). The actual count behind each row is not disclosed.
- × **The gated PDF edition** of the benchmark report, which sits behind a form we did not fill in.
- × **Databox and Triple Whale Meta figures** — sign-up gated and unverified at source respectively. Not used.
- × ⚠ **Publisher error worth knowing:** WordStream's own body copy states a Travel CTR of 9.82% while its table says 9.32%. We do not use the Travel row. If you see 9.82% quoted anywhere, that is where it came from.

SOURCES

1. WordStream by LocaliQ, *Google Ads Benchmarks 2026* — 13,474 US search campaigns (Google Ads and Microsoft Ads), 1 Apr 2025 – 31 Mar 2026, medians, minimum 52 campaigns per row. wordstream.com/blog/2026-google-ads-benchmarks · verified 8 Sep 2026.
2. WordStream by LocaliQ, *Facebook Ads Benchmarks 2025* — 554 traffic-objective and 726 leads-objective US campaigns, 1 Apr 2024 – 30 Jun 2025, medians, minimum 2–3 campaigns per row. Published 8 Sep 2025; no 2026 edition exists.

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