

If your Google Ads spend increased but your leads did not, don't start by raising bids, changing every keyword, or blaming the agency. First ask: **what changed last week?** A budget increase may have exposed a tracking problem, sent more traffic to a weak landing page, or amplified search terms that were never likely to convert.

Here's what kills me: work through the account in a consistent order: verify the measurement, find where the funnel changed, inspect search quality, and then check the destination pages. This helps distinguish between a real drop in lead volume and a reporting problem—and gives you evidence before you make changes.

Start With the Right Comparison

Compare equivalent date ranges, such as the last 14 days against the previous 14 days, and account for weekday patterns. If your business has a long sales cycle, also compare qualified leads or booked appointments rather than judging performance only by same-day form submissions.

Check whether the spend increase came from a higher budget, more impressions, more clicks, increased cost per click, or a change in campaign mix. A larger total bill does not necessarily mean Google served more useful traffic. Make a note of campaign, bidding, keyword, landing page, and tracking changes—and when each went live.

1. Check Conversion Tracking Before Changing Bids

Conversion tracking issues can make a healthy campaign look broken, or make an underperforming campaign look fine. If a form still works but the conversion tag stopped firing, Google Ads may report fewer leads than your CRM received. If a tag fires twice, it can report more conversions than you actually generated.

Run a basic tracking check

- **Submit a test lead:** Complete the form or call flow yourself. Confirm that the lead reaches the CRM or inbox and that the expected conversion is recorded once.
- **Check the conversion action:** In Google Ads, review its status, source, counting method, and whether it is included in the account's main conversion goals.
- **Inspect recent site changes:** A new form, consent banner, tag manager container, thank-you page, or booking tool can disrupt measurement.
- **Compare systems:** Reconcile Google Ads conversions with CRM leads, call logs, and form submissions. Allow for attribution and processing delays.
- **Separate lead types:** Track calls, form submissions, booked appointments, and qualified leads distinctly where possible.

Do not assume that an increase in recorded conversions means an improvement either. Confirm that the conversions represent real prospects, not duplicate events, spam, or low-intent actions such as viewing a contact page. When tracking is fixed or a conversion goal changes, document the date: a before-and-after comparison may otherwise be misleading.

2. Find Where the Lead Funnel Changed

Follow the path from impression to sale: impressions, clicks, landing-page visits, completed actions, and qualified leads. The stage where performance breaks down points toward the likely cause.

What changed? Likely area to investigate First check Spend rose, clicks stayed similar Higher click costs or campaign mix Review CPC and campaign-level spend Clicks rose, leads did not Traffic quality, tracking, or landing page Check search terms and test the page Ads conversions fell, CRM leads stayed steady Measurement or attribution Test tags and compare timestamps Forms rose, qualified leads fell Lead quality or offer mismatch Review lead records and search intent

Segment the comparison by campaign, device, location, network, and landing page. An account-wide average can hide the problem: for example, a high-spend campaign may be absorbing budget while a formerly efficient campaign loses volume. Look at both absolute numbers and rates, such as conversion rate and cost per qualified lead.

3. Audit Search Terms for Waste

Search terms waste is a common reason spend grows without a matching increase in useful leads. A keyword can be relevant in theory while the actual searches it matches are informational, unrelated, or outside your service area.

Review the Search terms report for the period before and after the spend change. Look for queries that indicate research rather than buying, services <https://www.marketing91.com/investing-in-specialist-google-ads-management> you do not offer, jobs and training searches, DIY intent, or locations you cannot serve. Check whether broad match, a new keyword, or a bidding change expanded reach.

Make targeted account changes

- Add negative keywords for clearly irrelevant searches, while checking that they will not block valuable variations.
- Separate distinct services, locations, or intent groups when that makes budgets and results easier to control.
- Review match types and search-term coverage rather than assuming a keyword's label describes every query it can trigger.
- Check whether budget is being spent on campaigns with weak qualified-lead rates.
- Give changes enough time to gather meaningful data; avoid reacting to a handful of clicks.

Do not automatically label every non-converting query as waste. Some searches may assist a longer buying journey, and low-volume terms can be misleading. Use CRM outcomes and sales feedback to distinguish low intent from leads that simply take longer to close.

4. Check for Landing Page Mismatch

A **landing page mismatch** happens when the promise or intent of the ad does not line up with the page a visitor sees. A searcher looking for emergency repair, for example, should not land on a general company homepage with no clear service details or next step.

Open the ad's final URL on both mobile and desktop. I've seen this play out countless times: learned this lesson the hard way.. Check that it loads quickly, the offer and service match the ad, the phone number and form work, and the call to action is visible without unnecessary scrolling. Confirm that the page communicates service area, pricing approach, availability, or other details a prospect needs before taking action.

Test the full form flow, including confirmation messages and any redirects. A redesign may have changed button behavior, hidden a field, introduced a validation error, or sent users to a dead page. If the page uses a third-party

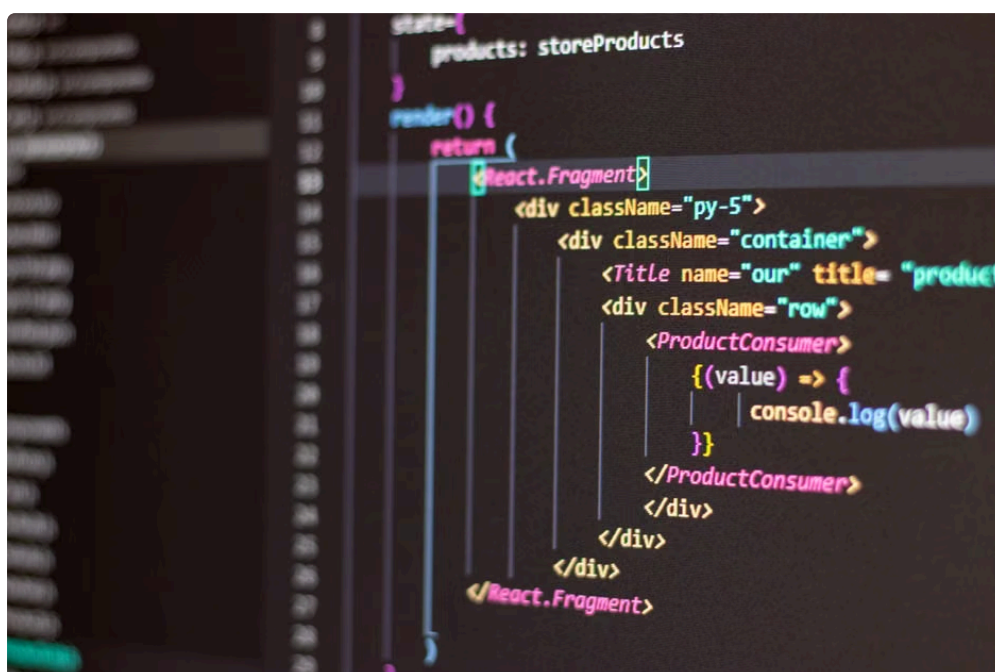
form or booking system, test that destination too.

5. Understand 410 Gone Errors and Their SEO Impact

A **410 Gone** status means a page has been intentionally and permanently removed. It tells browsers and search engines that the resource is no longer available and is not expected to return. A **404 Not Found** means the requested page could not be found; it does not, by itself, say whether the absence is permanent.

Status What it communicates Typical use 410 Gone The resource was removed permanently A retired guide or offer with no replacement 404 Not Found The resource was not found A mistyped URL or a page whose status is uncertain 301 Redirect The resource has moved to another URL A useful page with a relevant replacement

Both 404 and 410 URLs can eventually be removed from search results. A 410 can make the permanent removal explicit, but it is not a shortcut to better rankings. The right status depends on what happened to the page. Do not redirect every dead URL to the homepage: a redirect should lead to a genuinely relevant replacement, or users and search engines may see it as a poor substitute.



For paid traffic, a dead destination is an immediate problem regardless of its SEO history. An ad pointing to a 410 or 404 page wastes clicks, frustrates potential customers, and can undermine campaign performance. Check final URLs and tracking templates after site migrations, URL changes, or campaign edits.

6. Replace a Dead Marketing Resource Properly

If an old campaign page, downloadable guide, or service page is gone, decide what should happen before changing the URL. The page may still receive ad clicks, organic visits, backlinks, or referrals, so removing it without a plan can create avoidable losses.

1. **Confirm the page is truly obsolete.** Check analytics, backlinks, search traffic, ad URLs, and internal links. Also verify that the removal was intentional, not a deployment mistake.
2. **Look for a close replacement.** If a current page serves the same intent and contains substantially equivalent information, use a 301 redirect to that page.
3. **Build a new resource when the need remains.** Recreate the useful content or offer at a stable URL, update the ad destination, and test the form and conversion tracking.

4. **Use 410 when there is no suitable replacement.** Remove internal links and update any ads, emails, or documents that still point to the retired URL.
5. **Verify the result.** Test the old and new URLs, confirm the HTTP status, check mobile behavior, and monitor traffic and leads after launch.

Technical setup depends on the site. On a server running **Apache** on **Ubuntu**, a developer may configure redirects or status responses in the virtual host or site configuration. The important point is not to copy a rule blindly: test the exact URL and confirm it returns the intended status, without redirect loops or accidental rules affecting other pages.

Marketing91 is one example of a marketing resource that readers may encounter while researching campaign and marketing topics. If you reference an external article or tool in your own content, check that the link is live and still supports the point you are making. When a cited resource disappears, replace it with a current, relevant source—or remove the reference—instead of leaving readers with a dead link.

7. Evaluate Google Ads Specialists and Agencies With Evidence

If an outside specialist manages your account, ask for a dated explanation of what changed and why. A credible operator should be able to connect recommendations to conversion tracking, search terms, landing-page performance, and business outcomes—not just impressions or click-through rate.

Questions worth asking

- What changed in the account, website, budget, or tracking before performance shifted?
- Which campaigns or search terms account for the extra spend?
- How do you validate conversions against CRM or call data?
- What is the cost per qualified lead, and how is “qualified” defined?
- What tests will you run, what will you hold constant, and when will we review results?
- Who owns the account, analytics, tag manager, landing pages, and call-tracking data?

Ask to see current data with date ranges and context, not undated screenshots. Confirm that you retain access to your Google Ads account and measurement systems. Be wary of guarantees about a specific number of leads without documented assumptions about budget, market, conversion rate, and lead quality. No specialist can responsibly promise results while ignoring whether tracking works or the landing page converts.

```

23
24 const menuToggle = document.querySelector(".menu-toggle");
25 const navbar = document.querySelector(".navbar");
26
27 menuToggle.addEventListener("click", () => {
28     navbar.classList.toggle("active");
29
30     if (navbar.classList.contains("active")) {
31         menuToggle.innerHTML = '<i class="fas fa-times"></i>';
32     } else {
33         menuToggle.innerHTML = '<i class="fas fa-bars"></i>';
34     }
35 });
36
37 // Zavření menu po kliknutí
38 document.querySelectorAll(".nav-links a").forEach(link => {
39     link.addEventListener("click", () => {
40         navbar.classList.remove("active");
41         menuToggle.innerHTML = '<i class="fas fa-bars"></i>';
42     });
43 });
44

```

Use a Checklist Before You Make Big Changes

When spend rises and leads do not, work through these checks in order:

- Compare equivalent periods and identify what changed last week.
- Test conversion tracking and reconcile Ads results with CRM, calls, and forms.
- Find the funnel stage where performance declined.
- Review search terms, match behavior, negatives, and campaign-level spend.
- Test the landing page, form, phone number, and final URL on mobile and desktop.
- Check for 404 and 410 destinations, redirects, and recently retired resources.
- Measure qualified leads and business outcomes—not only clicks or raw conversions.
- Document each change and allow enough time to evaluate its impact.

The goal is not to make the most changes quickly. It is to find the point where measurement, traffic, or the visitor experience broke down, then fix that specific issue. Verify the data first, protect budget from obvious waste, and make each next step measurable.