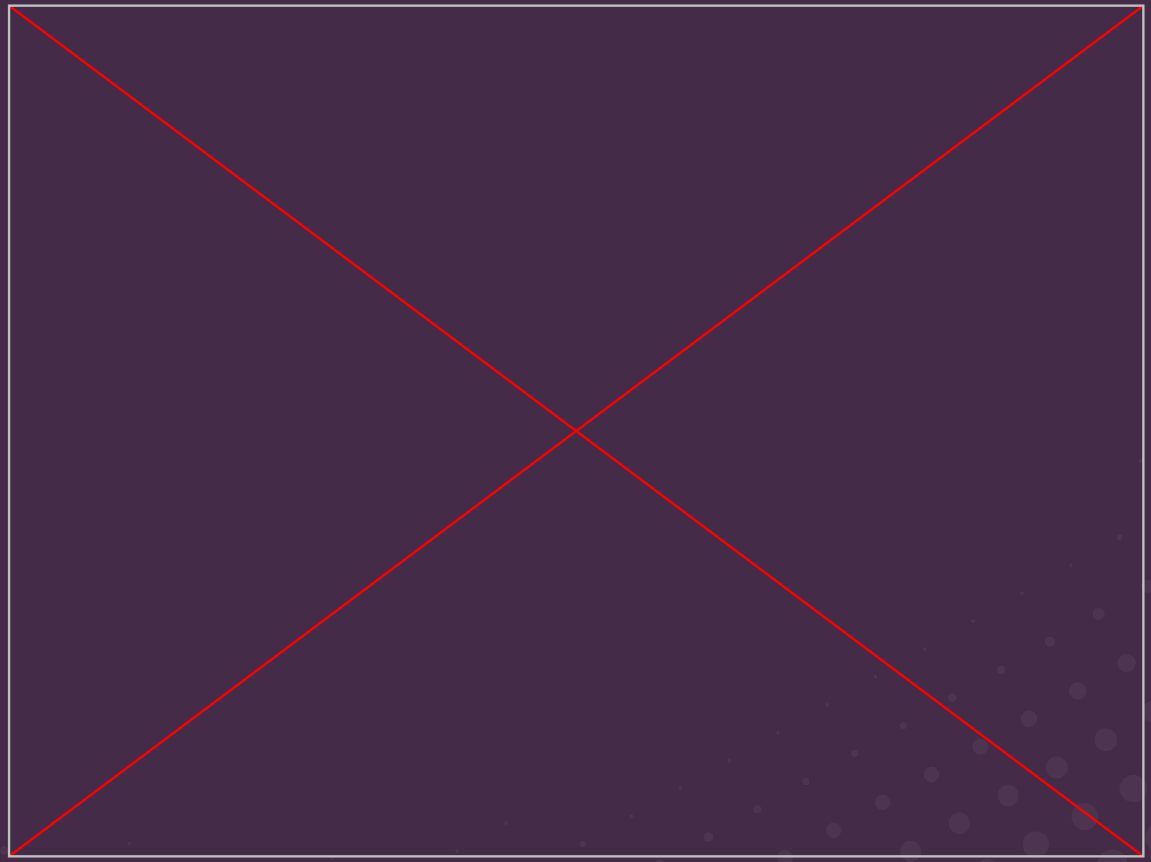
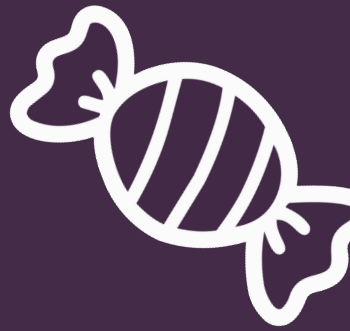


How?



AUTOMATION DRIFT

And How to Correct Course

Ameet Khabra

#29 Top 50 Most Influential PPCers Globally

@adwordsgirl everywhere on the internet

Owner of Hop Skip Media

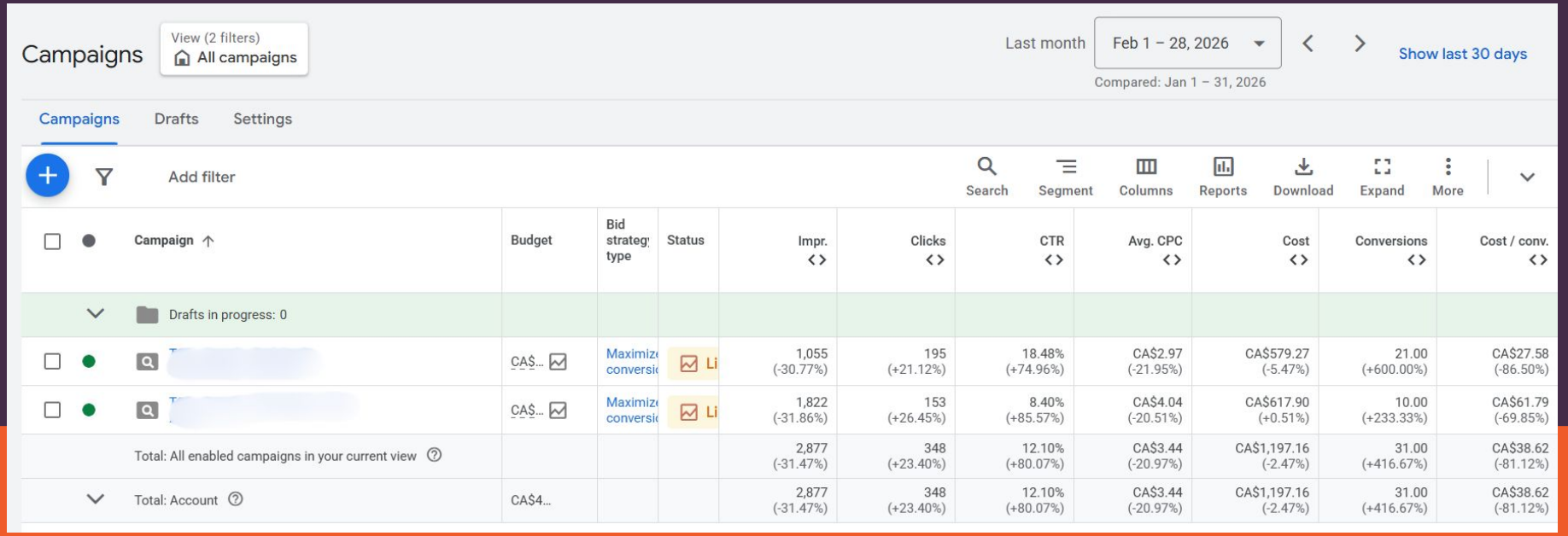
Hates public speaking

Contributor:

MnSearch 2023 SUMMIT · brightonSEO. · SMXNEXT · PPC Live · HERO CONF · SEJ Search Engine Journal · PPC HERO · Search Engine Land

CASE STUDY

A closer look.

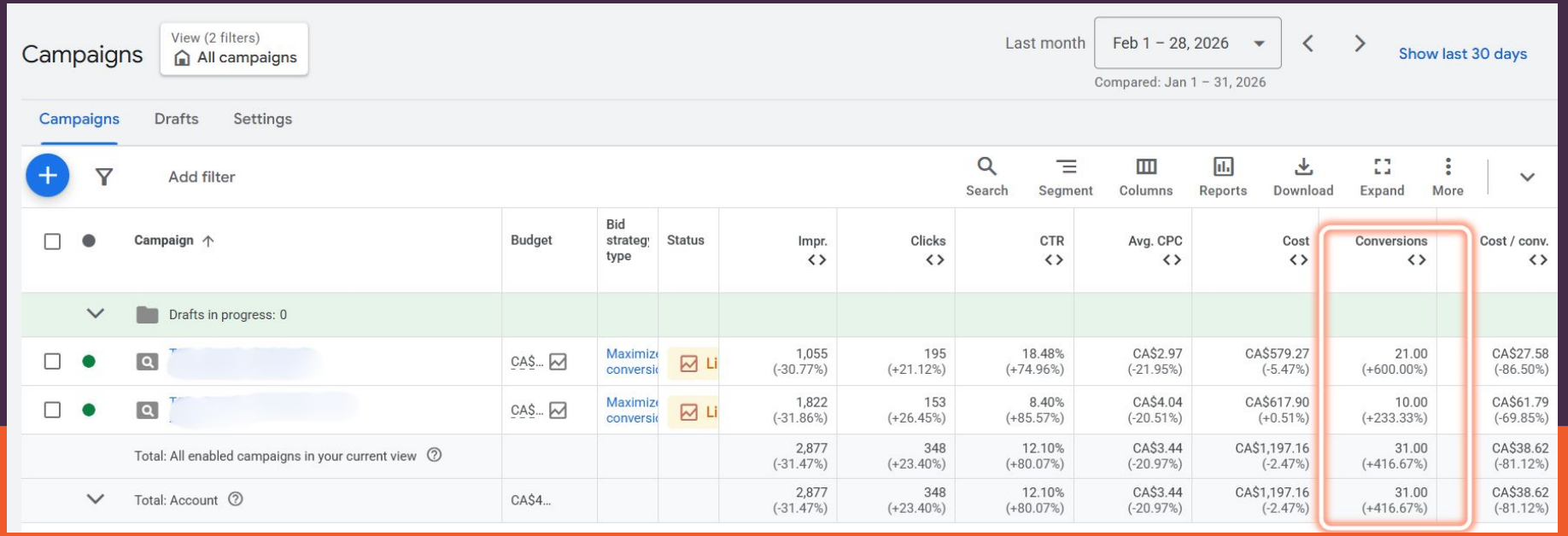


Campaign	Budget	Bid strategy type	Status	Impr.	Clicks	CTR	Avg. CPC	Cost	Conversions	Cost / conv.
Drafts in progress: 0										
[redacted]	CA$...	Maximize conversi	Li	1,055 (-30.77%)	195 (+21.12%)	18.48% (+74.96%)	CA$2.97 (-21.95%)	CA$579.27 (-5.47%)	21.00 (+600.00%)	CA$27.58 (-86.50%)
[redacted]	CA$...	Maximize conversi	Li	1,822 (-31.86%)	153 (+26.45%)	8.40% (+85.57%)	CA$4.04 (-20.51%)	CA$617.90 (+0.51%)	10.00 (+233.33%)	CA$61.79 (-69.85%)
Total: All enabled campaigns in your current view				2,877 (-31.47%)	348 (+23.40%)	12.10% (+80.07%)	CA$3.44 (-20.97%)	CA$1,197.16 (-2.47%)	31.00 (+416.67%)	CA$38.62 (-81.12%)
Total: Account	CA$4...			2,877 (-31.47%)	348 (+23.40%)	12.10% (+80.07%)	CA$3.44 (-20.97%)	CA$1,197.16 (-2.47%)	31.00 (+416.67%)	CA$38.62 (-81.12%)

@adwordsgirl

CASE STUDY

A closer look.



Campaigns | View (2 filters) All campaigns | Last month | Feb 1 – 28, 2026 | Show last 30 days | Compared: Jan 1 – 31, 2026

Campaigns | Drafts | Settings

Add filter | Search | Segment | Columns | Reports | Download | Expand | More

Campaign	Budget	Bid strategy type	Status	Impr.	Clicks	CTR	Avg. CPC	Cost	Conversions	Cost / conv.
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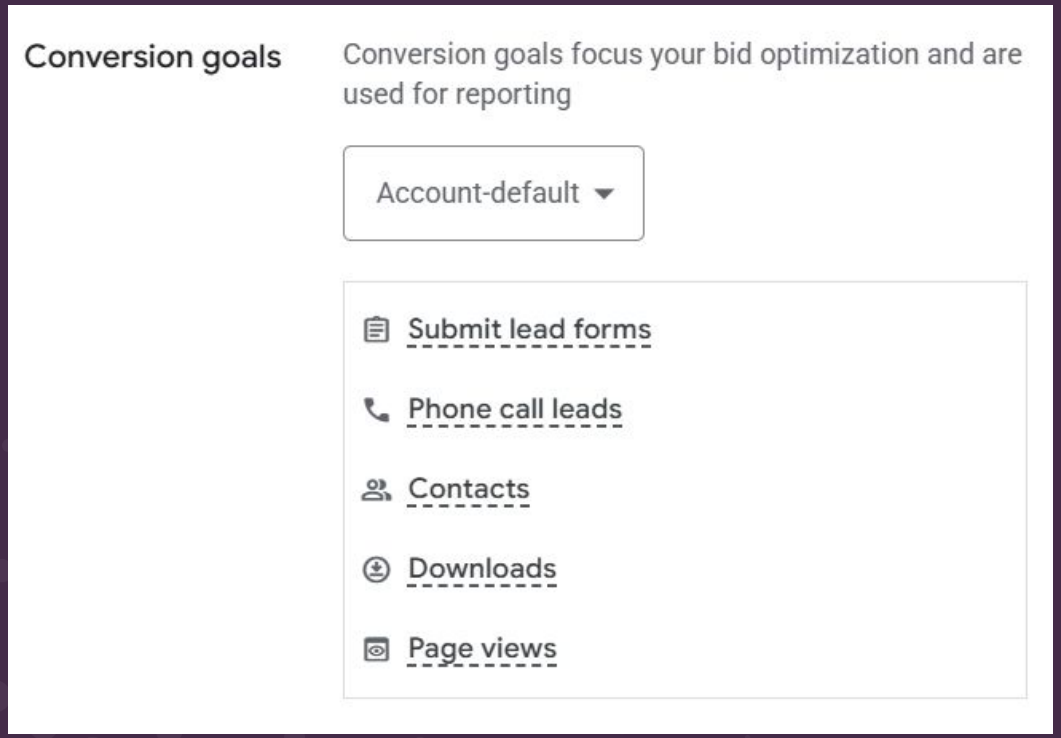
A closer look.



SIGNAL DRIFT — THE FIX

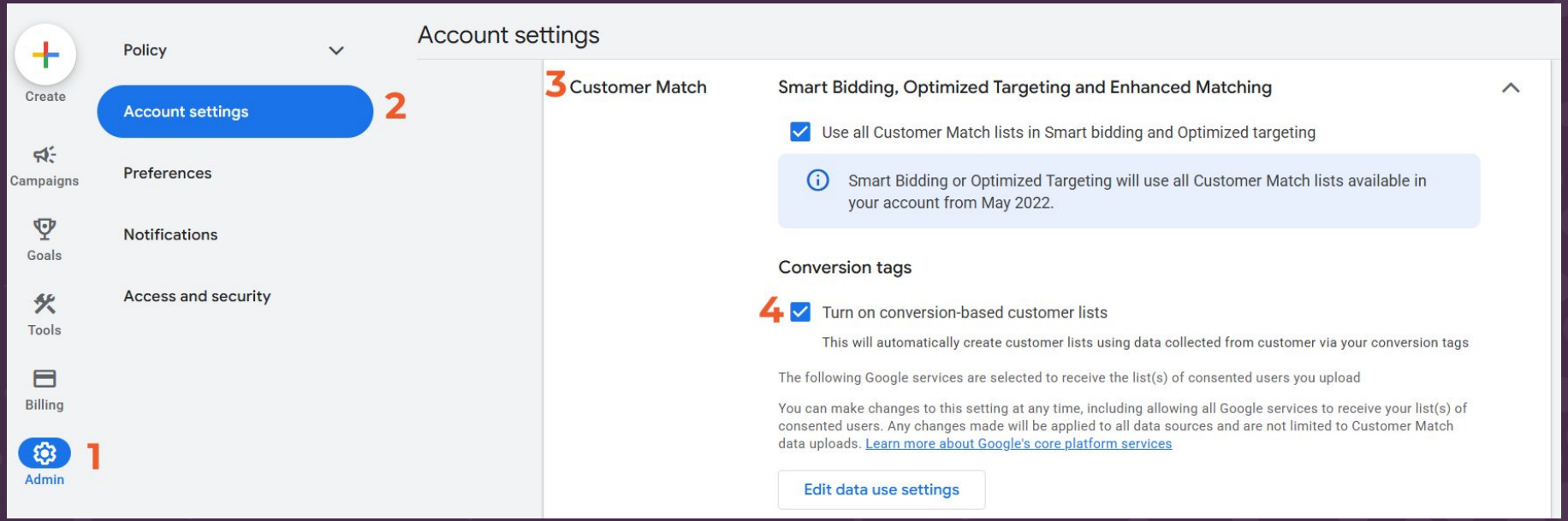
Tell the system which conversions actually mattered.

01 Audit what you're counting as a conversion

02 **Plant the seed:** Upload your customer list as a signal

https://support.google.com/google-ads/answer/14530785

Tell the system which conversions actually mattered.



https://support.google.com/google-ads/answer/13471685

QUERY DRIFT — THE PROBLEM

Your ads are showing up for searches you didn't intend to target.

Exact match "interprets" intent

PMax and AI Max aren't keyword dependent

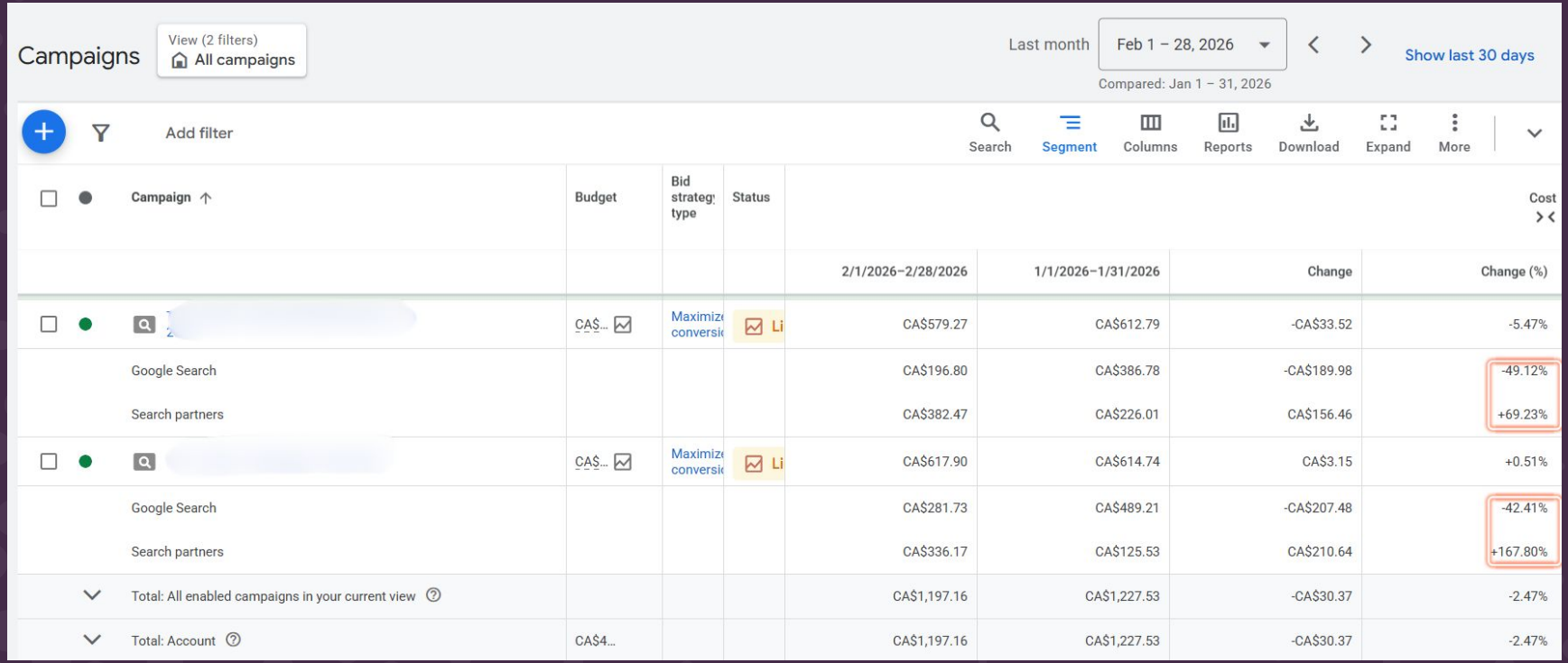
QUERY DRIFT — THE FIX

Steer the system.
Don’t just let it explore.

01 Block categorically, not reactively.

02 Text guidelines lock your intent spectrum

A closer look.

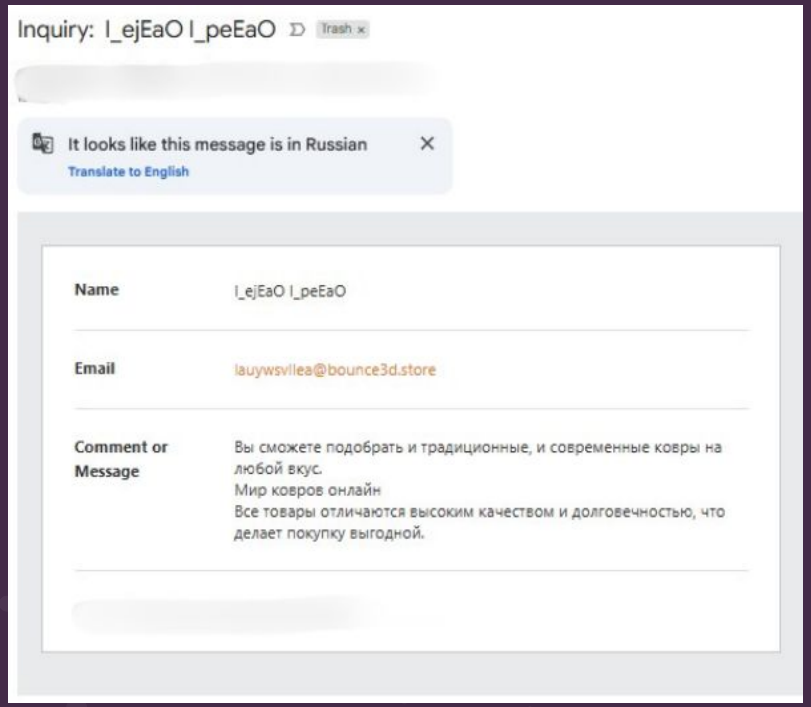


Campaigns | View (2 filters) | All campaigns | Last month | Feb 1 – 28, 2026 | Compared: Jan 1 – 31, 2026 | Show last 30 days

Add filter | Search | Segment | Columns | Reports | Download | Expand | More

Campaign	Budget	Bid strategy type	Status	Cost 2/1/2026–2/28/2026	Cost 1/1/2026–1/31/2026	Change	Change (%)
[redacted]	CA$...	Maximize conversi	Li	CA$579.27	CA$612.79	-CA$33.52	-5.47%
Google Search				CA$196.80	CA$386.78	-CA$189.98	-49.12%
Search partners				CA$382.47	CA$226.01	CA$156.46	+69.23%
[redacted]	CA$...	Maximize conversi	Li	CA$617.90	CA$614.74	CA$3.15	+0.51%
Google Search				CA$281.73	CA$489.21	-CA$207.48	-42.41%
Search partners				CA$336.17	CA$125.53	CA$210.64	+167.80%
Total: All enabled campaigns in your current view				CA$1,197.16	CA$1,227.53	-CA$30.37	-2.47%
Total: Account	CA$4...			CA$1,197.16	CA$1,227.53	-CA$30.37	-2.47%

A closer look.



INVENTORY DRIFT — THE FIX

Multiple switches.
Know why you're flipping them.

01 The landing pages (& expanded) report

02 Segment Search Partners Performance

Your ads are getting better at attracting the wrong people.

Keep the guardrails tight.

01 Cross-reference CTR against Conv. rate

02 Reduce the number of assets

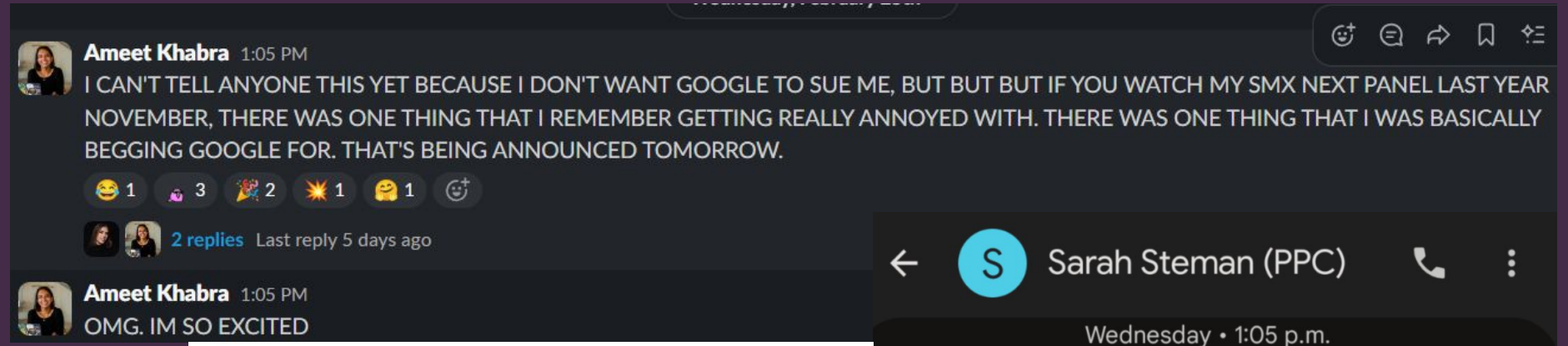
Two risks and one new weapon

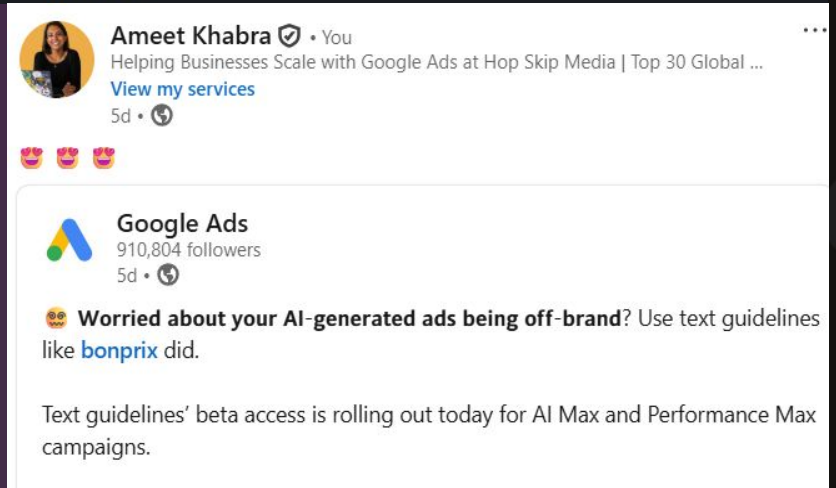
Ad Scheduling Pacing

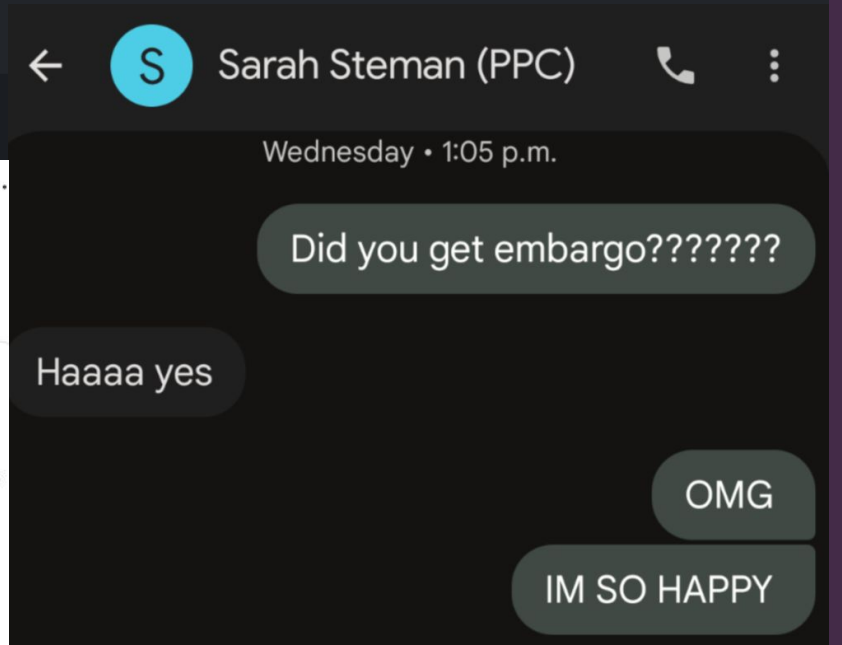
Campaign Total Budgets

Text Guidelines

HAPPENING RIGHT NOW







When signal quality is high,

automation compounds value.

When signal quality degrades,

automation compounds error.

The difference is not sophistication.
It's the source of truth.

@adwordsgirl

Drift is quiet.

Oversight must be deliberate.

Questions?

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