

# Online Advertising Terminology — A Practical Overview ?

Below is a structured glossary of the most common terms you'll encounter in online ads (Google, Instagram/Meta, YouTube, TikTok, etc.). I'll group them by how ads are planned, bought, measured, and optimized.

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## 1) Core building blocks (how campaigns are organized)

1. **Account / Business Manager**
    - The “container” that holds billing, users/permissions, pixels, and all campaigns (e.g., Google Ads account, Meta Business Manager).
  2. **Campaign**
    - The highest-level objective and settings (e.g., *Sales, Leads, Traffic, Awareness*).
  3. **Ad Set / Ad Group**
    - Where targeting and delivery settings typically live.
    - **Meta** uses *Ad Set*; **Google** uses *Ad Group* (especially in Search/Display).
  4. **Ad / Creative**
    - The actual ad users see: image/video, headline, copy, CTA button, etc.
  5. **Objective / Goal**
    - What the platform optimizes toward (e.g., purchases, leads, landing page views).
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## 2) Targeting & audiences (who sees the ads)

1. **Audience**
  - The group of people you want to reach.
2. **Targeting**
  - Filters like location, age, language, interests, behaviors, device, etc.
3. **Custom Audience (Meta) / Customer Match (Google)**
  - Audience built from your data (email list, site visitors, app users).
4. **Lookalike Audience (Meta) / Similar Segments (historically Google)**

- People who “resemble” your best customers based on a seed audience.

#### 5. Remarketing / Retargeting

- Showing ads to people who already interacted with you (visited site, added to cart, watched video).

#### 6. Placements

- Where ads appear.
- Examples: Instagram Feed, Stories, Reels; Google Search results; YouTube in-stream; Display network sites.

#### 7. Frequency

- Average number of times a person saw your ad in a period.
  - Often watched for *ad fatigue* (too many repeat views).
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## 3) Bidding & budgets (how you pay and how delivery works)

### 1. Budget

- **Daily budget:** per day average spending.
- **Lifetime budget:** total spend over a campaign’s run.

### 2. Bid / Bidding Strategy

- How you compete in the auction.
- Common approaches:
  - **Lowest cost / Maximize** (spend efficiently to get most results)
  - **Cost cap / Target CPA**
  - **ROAS target** (optimize for revenue return)

### 3. Auction

- Real-time decision process determining which ad shows, to whom, and at what “price” (influenced by bid, predicted performance, relevance/quality).

### 4. Pacing

- How spend is distributed over time (smooth vs accelerated, depending on platform and settings).
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## 4) Pricing models & key metrics (the language of performance)

### 1. Impression

- One instance of an ad being shown.

### 2. Reach

- Unique people who saw the ad.

3. **Clicks**
    - Users clicking the ad (to site, app store, call, etc.).
  4. **CTR (Click-Through Rate)**
    - Clicks ÷ impressions.
    - Indicates how compelling the ad is *for that audience/placement*.
  5. **CPC (Cost Per Click)**
    - Spend ÷ clicks.
  6. **CPM (Cost Per Mille)**
    - Cost per 1,000 impressions.
  7. **Conversions**
    - Desired actions (purchase, lead form, signup, call, add-to-cart).
  8. **CVR (Conversion Rate)**
    - Conversions ÷ clicks (or ÷ sessions, depending on reporting).
  9. **CPA / CPL (Cost Per Acquisition / Cost Per Lead)**
    - Spend ÷ conversions (or leads).
  10. **ROAS (Return on Ad Spend)**
    - Revenue attributed to ads ÷ ad spend.
    - Example: ROAS 3.0 = \$3 revenue for each \$1 spent.
  11. **AOV (Average Order Value)**
    - Revenue ÷ number of orders.
  12. **LTV / CLV (Lifetime Value)**
    - Expected total value of a customer over time (useful for scaling).
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## 5) Tracking & attribution (how results are counted)

1. **Pixel (Meta) / Tag (Google)**
  - Code installed on your site to track events and build audiences.
2. **Event**
  - A tracked action like `PageView`, `ViewContent`, `AddToCart`, `Purchase`, `Lead`.
3. **UTM Parameters**
  - URL tags (e.g., `utm_source`, `utm_medium`, `utm_campaign`) for analytics tools like GA4.
4. **Attribution**
  - Rules for assigning credit to ads for a conversion.
  - Common concepts:
    - **Click-through attribution** vs **view-through attribution**
    - **Attribution window** (e.g., 7-day click, 1-day view)
    - **Last-click** vs **data-driven** models (platform dependent)
5. **Conversion API (Meta CAPI) / Enhanced Conversions (Google)**
  - Server-side tracking to improve measurement when browser tracking is limited.

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## 6) Creative & messaging terms (what you're actually showing)

1. **Creative**
    - The visual/video asset plus messaging.
  2. **Copy**
    - The text: primary text, headline, description.
  3. **CTA (Call to Action)**
    - The button or prompt (e.g., *Shop Now*, *Learn More*).
  4. **Landing Page**
    - The page users arrive at after clicking.
  5. **Offer**
    - The value proposition (discount, free trial, bundle, free shipping).
  6. **Ad Fatigue**
    - Performance decline as the same audience sees the same creative too often.
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## 7) Campaign strategy concepts (how people move toward purchase)

1. **Funnel**
    - **TOF (Top of Funnel)**: awareness/discovery
    - **MOF (Middle of Funnel)**: consideration (engagement, site visits)
    - **BOF (Bottom of Funnel)**: conversion (purchase/lead)
  2. **Cold / Warm / Hot Audiences**
    - **Cold**: never interacted
    - **Warm**: engaged/visited
    - **Hot**: high intent (cart/checkout visitors, prior leads)
  3. **Prospecting**
    - Reaching new people (cold audiences).
  4. **Retargeting**
    - Re-engaging people who showed intent.
  5. **Incrementality**
    - Measuring what conversions happened *because* of ads (vs would have happened anyway).
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# 8) Testing & optimization terms (improving performance)

1. **A/B Test (Split Test)**
    - Compare two variants (creative, audience, landing page) under controlled conditions.
  2. **Creative Testing**
    - Systematically testing multiple hooks, formats, and angles.
  3. **Learning Phase (Meta)**
    - Period where delivery is still stabilizing as the system gathers data.
  4. **Scaling**
    - Increasing budget/spend while maintaining efficiency (CPA/ROAS).
    - **Vertical scaling**: raise budgets on winners
    - **Horizontal scaling**: expand audiences/creatives/placements
  5. **Optimization**
    - Adjusting bids, budgets, creatives, targeting, and landing pages to hit goals.
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# 9) Platform-specific quick translations (Google vs Meta)

1. **Meta (Instagram/Facebook)**
    - Campaign → Ad Set → Ad
    - Pixel / CAPI
    - Placements: Feed, Stories, Reels, Audience Network, etc.
  2. **Google Ads**
    - Campaign → Ad Group → Ad
    - Search terms, keywords, match types (Search campaigns)
    - Tags, Enhanced Conversions
    - Networks: Search, Display, YouTube, Shopping, Performance Max
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If you tell me your goal, I can tailor this glossary

Reply with:

1. Your platform(s): Google, Instagram/Meta, TikTok, etc.
2. Your objective: sales, leads, app installs, awareness
3. Your business type: e-commerce, local service, SaaS, creator, etc.

...and I'll highlight only the terms you'll actually use day-to-day (plus what to watch out for) ☐

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