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New matching behavior for phrase and exact match keywords

Tuesday, April 17, 2012

Consider these three exact and phrase match keywords in AdWords.

[waterproof sunblock] "bollard cover" [single serving coffee maker]

Now have a look at these two rows of search queries.

1. waterproof sunblock buy bollard cover single serving coffee maker
2. waterproof sunblock buy bollard covers single serve coffee maker

Today, only the search queries in the upper row (1) are considered a match and allowed to trigger an ad that can appear in the results. The close variants in the bottom row (2)

are not considered a match by AdWords, despite the similarity in user intent.

This will change soon. Starting in mid-May, phrase and exact match keywords will match close variants, including misspellings, singular/plural forms, stemmings, accents and abbreviations. Based on our research and testing, we believe these changes will be broadly beneficial for users and advertisers.

Focusing on user intent

People aren't perfect spellers or typists. At least 7% of search queries contain a misspelling, and the longer the query, the higher the rate.

Even with perfect spelling, two people searching for the same thing often use slightly different variations, such as "kid scooters" and "kid's scooter" or "bamboo floor" and "bamboo flooring."

Google's organic search systems detect and compensate for misspellings and close variants.



We know users are happier when they get search results that reflect their intent and help them achieve their desired action, even if it's not a precise match for what they've typed. So we're extending this behavior to ads.

Benefits for many advertisers, control for all

Our early experiments looked at the impact on advertisers getting a third or more of their clicks from phrase or exact match. On average, the new matching behavior increased AdWords search clicks by 3%, with comparable CPCs. Keep in mind that results may vary by advertiser.

We've been testing this new improvement with advertisers, and participants have seen positive results. "Previously we spent a lot of time making sure to include hundreds of versions of brand misspellings and to include plural forms of all our keywords," said Dana Freund, Senior SEM Manager at GameDuell. "With the improvements to exact and phrase match we don't have to worry about these keywords anymore. We get more relevant impressions for a smaller number of keywords, and it's been a significant time saver for us."

If you don't want the potential for more clicks and prefer to maintain the current matching behavior in your campaign, you'll still have that option. In the coming weeks, we'll begin rolling out controls which will allow you to adjust your keyword matching options. Once they're live, log in to AdWords and select the **campaign settings** tab. Under "Advanced settings" select **Keyword matching options**:



Again, these controls will begin rolling out in the coming weeks to all AdWords accounts. But, to be clear, the new matching behavior won't actually start until mid-May.

For more details on keyword matching behavior, reporting changes, and other frequently asked questions, please visit the [AdWords Help Center](#).

Posted by Jen Huang, AdWords Product Manager



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