



Google Ads *Playbook*

2026 Search + YouTube + PMax

The strategies that work on Google Ads in 2026, **and how to run each one with Claude**, with every prompt written out and every number sourced.

6 strategies

11 Claude prompts

1 setup guide

1 live dashboard

19 pages

YOUR ADS RUN ACROSS

 Search

 YouTube

 Maps

 Analytics

*“Search answers intent.
Your job is to be the best answer.”*

THE IDEA BEHIND EVERY PAGE OF THIS PLAYBOOK

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

PAGE NUMBERS ON THE RIGHT

01	How Google Ads works in 2026	03	02	Split brand from everything else	04
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WRITTEN BY

Anisha Dogra



RUNS WITH
Claude

NEW TO GOOGLE ADS? [Start on page 3 →](#)



BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Start *here*

Three ways to read this guide, what to have ready, and how every strategy page is laid out.

YOU WILL BE
ABLE TO

pick your starting page and have everything ready before you touch your ad account.

THREE WAYS IN

PICK THE ONE THAT FITS YOU

ROUTE A

New to Google Ads

Read pages 3 to 8 in order, then connect Claude on page 9.

ROUTE B

Already spending every month

Connect Claude, run prompt P01, then read the page it names.

ROUTE C

Here for the Claude setup

Connect on page 9, test on page 10, prompts on pages 13 to 15.

HAVE THESE READY

SETUP TAKES ABOUT AN HOUR

- ☐ **Admin access** to your Google Ads account
- ☐ **Conversion tracking** on your site, ideally with enhanced conversions (page 8)
- ☐ **Your own numbers for 90 days:** orders or qualified leads, revenue

- ☐ **A Claude account;** connector dashboards need a paid plan (page 18)
- ☐ **One hour** for the connection and the three safety tests
- ☐ **Your brand terms** and your top competitors' names

HOW EVERY STRATEGY PAGE WORKS

SAME ORDER, EVERY TIME

STEP 1

In plain words

What happens inside Google.

STEP 2

Do this

The actions, in order.

STEP 3

Watch out

The common mistake.

STEP 4

Claude prompt

The prompt that runs it.

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SECTION · WHAT YOU GET · PAGE

#	SECTION	WHAT YOU GET	PAGE
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08	Ten prompts to paste	Ten long prompts: audits, search terms, briefs, bidding	13
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Every number in this guide names its source. Where a popular claim has no source behind it, the guide says so instead of repeating it.

PART ONE · HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS

01

How Google Ads *works* in 2026

Every search runs a fresh auction. In 2026 Google also began retiring older campaign types.

YOU WILL BE
ABLE TO

read what the auction rewards, and know which parts of Google Ads changed underneath you this year.

IN PLAIN WORDS

EVERY SEARCH, A NEW AUCTION

STEP 1 · ELIGIBILITY

Can your ad show?

Keywords, AI matching, targeting

Your keywords, or Google's AI matching, decide which searches your ad is even considered for.



STEP 2 · AD RANK

Where does it rank?

Computed fresh every time

Bid, expected click rate, ad and landing-page quality, the context of the search, and your assets.



STEP 3 · PRICE

What do you pay?

Less than your maximum

You pay what it takes to beat the ad below you, not your full bid.



Quality Score is a readout, not a lever

The 1 to 10 score in the interface is a diagnostic. Google computes quality fresh in every auction. Improve the ad and the page; do not chase the number.



AI answers did not shrink paid search

Alphabet's Q1 2026 results: paid clicks up 13%, cost per click up 5%. A 2026 randomised study found AI Overviews cut organic clicks by 39.8% while ad clicks did not move.

WHAT CHANGED IN 2026

FIVE MOVES TOWARD AUTOMATED CAMPAIGNS

FROM	TO	WHEN
Dynamic Search Ads	AI Max for Search	Automatic move from February 2027
Call-only ads	Responsive search ads with call assets	Stop serving February 2027
Standalone Display campaigns	Demand Gen, with Display as a channel	Automatic move from 2027
Smart campaigns (via the API)	Performance Max	API creation ended, reported June 2026
Search with campaign-level broad match or auto-created assets	AI Max for Search	Automatic upgrades since 1 Sep 2026



What is left for you to steer

Almost every control that remains is a way to say where your ad should **not** show: negative keywords, brand exclusions, placement and URL exclusions, and text guidelines. Pages 5 and 6 cover each one.



Google now decides more of where you show. You decide where you never show.

Spend your effort on exclusions, clean conversion data and ads that match the landing page.

RUN IT WITH CLAUDE
PROMPT P01 · PAGE 13

Sources · Alphabet Q1 2026 earnings call · Agarwal and Sen, randomised AI Overviews study (SSRN, 2026) · Google Ads Help: Ad Rank, Quality Score · Google Ads product blog and Ads Liaison (DSA, Display, call-only timelines).

02

STRATEGY 1 OF 6

Split *brand* from everything else

Brand searches and new-customer searches behave like two different businesses. Keep them apart.

YOU WILL BE
ABLE TO

set up campaigns that learn from enough data, keep brand clean, and use the right campaign type for each goal.

IN PLAIN WORDS

THE ONE SPLIT THAT IS NEVER OPTIONAL

People who search your brand name already want you: they convert often and cheaply. People searching for the problem you solve are new and convert less. **Put them in one campaign and the bidding learns an average that fits neither.** Google's AI campaign types also all reach for brand searches, because those convert best.

CAMPAIGN 1

Search · brand

Exact and phrase match only, so it cannot drift into generic searches. Keep it small and cheap.

CAMPAIGN 2

Search · non-brand

Your real growth engine. Add your brand as a negative keyword list so brand searches stay out.

CAMPAIGN 3

Performance Max · Shopping

For stores with a product feed. Add brand exclusions so it earns new customers, not brand clicks.

DO THIS

PICK THE CAMPAIGN TYPE BY GOAL

YOU WANT	USE	WHY
People searching for what you sell	Search	The clearest intent Google has
Online sales from a product feed	Performance Max, feed first	Shopping inventory plus Google's other channels
Demand before people search	Demand Gen	YouTube, Discover, Gmail and Display in one
Calls to a local business	Search with call and location assets	Call-only ads end in 2027

1 Consolidate for data

Fewer campaigns, each with enough conversions to learn. Split only for a different goal, budget or bid strategy.

2 Name every campaign the same way

Fixed fields, one separator:

2026-10_SEARCH_IN_NONBRAND . The name is your only filter.

3 Contain brand three ways

Brand negatives on non-brand campaigns, brand exclusions on Performance Max, and exact or phrase match on the brand campaign.

4 Check the brand list

Brand exclusions only work if Google recognises your brand. If it does not, fall back to negative keywords, with spellings and plurals.

?

When a split is worth it

Only when a group needs its own budget, goal or bid strategy, and still gets enough conversions to learn once it stands alone. If either half fails, keep it together.

!

Switch off auto-applied recommendations

Especially keyword removal and broad-match upgrades. Accepted silently, they move searches out of your control. Review each one by hand.

Sources · Google Ads Help: brand exclusions, Performance Max, Demand Gen, auto-applied recommendations · practitioner brand-containment method (April 2026) · Prompt P02, page 13.

STRATEGY 2 OF 6

03

Search that *converts*

Keywords are now suggestions to Google's matching. Negatives, search terms and the ad itself do the steering.

YOU WILL BE
ABLE TO

choose match types on purpose, cut wasted searches every week, and write ads that match the page.

IN PLAIN WORDS

WHAT EACH MATCH TYPE DOES IN 2026

MATCH TYPE	WHAT IT MATCHES	USE IT FOR
Exact [running shoes]	The same meaning, including close variants	Brand and your best money terms
Phrase "running shoes"	Searches that include the meaning, in order	Most non-brand terms
Broad running shoes	Anything Google judges related, using many signals	Only with Smart Bidding and strong negatives

DO THIS

THE WEEKLY SEARCH TERMS ROUTINE

1

Open the search terms report

Sort by cost. Every term with spend and no conversion in 30 days is a candidate negative.

2

Add negatives as lists

One shared list for junk (free, jobs, DIY), one for competitors, one for brand on non-brand campaigns.

3

Protect what converts

Never add a negative that would block a term that has converted. Check before you save.

4

Write the ad for the page

Use the words from the search in the headline, and make the landing page say the same thing in its first line.

BUILD

Responsive search ads

Up to 15 headlines (30 characters) and 4 descriptions (90 characters). Give Google distinct ideas: price, proof, speed, guarantee, the product name.

READ

Ad Strength is not performance

It rates variety, not results. Judge ads on conversions and cost per conversion over at least two weeks.



Google hides some search terms

The report does not list every search that triggered your ad. Judge match types on conversions and cost, and treat the visible terms as a sample, not the full picture.

THE LANDING PAGE

WHAT PAID VISITORS READ FIRST

80%

read only the headline and the first line

Wynter 2026 survey research

64%

of mobile visitors never scroll past the first screen

Wynter 2026

2.5s

the loading time to beat for the main content

Core Web Vitals (LCP)

Make the page's first headline repeat the ad's first headline. Never send search traffic to your home page: send each ad group to the page that answers its search.

Sources · Google Ads Help: match types, negative keywords, search terms report, responsive search ads · Wynter landing page research (2026) · web.dev Core Web Vitals · Prompts P03 and P04.

STRATEGY 3 OF 6

04

AI Max and Performance Max, *controlled*

Both reach past keywords. AI Max is now pre-selected in new Search campaigns: set the limits first.

YOU WILL BE
ABLE TO

switch on Google's AI campaign features with every guard rail in place, and test them properly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

AI MAX IS THREE SWITCHES, NOT ONE

SWITCH 1

Search term matching

Finds searches beyond your keywords. Turn it off on brand and tight exact-match ad groups.

SWITCH 2

Text customization

Writes headlines from your site. Limit it with text guidelines: up to 25 excluded terms and 40 written rules.

SWITCH 3

Final URL expansion

Sends people to the page Google picks. URL exclusions only work with this and text customization on: add them the moment you switch it on.

DO THIS

BEFORE YOU SWITCH AI MAX ON

1

Test it, do not flip it

It needs conversion-based Smart Bidding. Run a 50/50 experiment against your current setup for at least four weeks.

2

Turn off Search Partners

One 250-campaign study found partner sites converting at 0.07% against 3.04% on Google Search.

3

Add competitor names as negatives

Before launch, not after. Expansion can start spending on other brands' names.

4

Check again after upgrades

Since 1 Sep 2026, Search campaigns using campaign-level broad match or auto-created assets move to AI Max. Re-check every setting.

PERFORMANCE MAX

LAUNCH NARROW, THEN WIDEN

CONTROL	WHERE	WHY
About 30 conversions a month first	Practitioner rule	Below that, use Shopping and Search
Launch with the feed only	No text, image or video assets	Keeps spend on Shopping to start
Brand exclusions	Account or campaign	Stops it taking cheap brand clicks
Negative keywords	Campaign-level list	Blocks known waste on Search and Shopping
Channel performance report	Insights	Shows Search, YouTube, Display and more

GOOGLE'S FIGURE

+14% conversions or conversion value at a similar CPA or ROAS, from Google's internal data. No randomised holdout has been published.

AN INDEPENDENT STUDY

250+ campaigns: median revenue +13%, but median CPA +16%, and ROAS results from +42% to -35%. Test in your own account before you trust either.

Sources • Google Ads Help: AI Max for Search, text guidelines, Performance Max reporting • Google Marketing Live 2026 • Smarter Ecommerce AI Max study (250+ campaigns, vendor data) • Prompt P05.

05

STRATEGY 4 OF 6

Smart Bidding by the *numbers*

Smart Bidding needs no history to start, but it learns from conversions. Match it to your data.

YOU WILL BE
ABLE TO

pick the bid strategy your conversion volume can support, and move up only when the data does.

A PRACTITIONER LADDER

CONVERSIONS IN THE LAST 30 DAYS, PER CAMPAIGN

CONVERSIONS A MONTH	USE	NOTE
Under 15	Manual CPC, or Maximize clicks with a cap	Too little data to learn from
15 to 30	Maximize conversions, no target	Let it find your real cost per conversion
30 or more	Add a target CPA	Where target CPA results tend to steady
50 or more, with values	Target ROAS	Needs real, varied conversion values

Google says Smart Bidding can be switched on with no history, and suggests judging results over a period with at least 30 conversions, or 50 for target ROAS. **The same numbers make a sensible ladder.**

HARD RESET

Resets learning

Changing the bid strategy, or changing which conversion actions are primary. The model starts over.

SMALLER SHOCK

Recalibrates

Changing the target or the budget. Keep target changes under 20% at a time, and wait a week between them.



The 17 August 2026 change

Budget-limited campaigns on a target CPA or target ROAS now bid toward the target instead of beating it. A campaign that used to deliver ₹150 against a ₹240 target will drift toward ₹240. Reset targets to the number you want, not a safety margin.

LEARNING TAKES TIME

TYPICAL DURATION BY WEEKLY CONVERSIONS

5-7

days at 50+ conversions a week

practitioner consensus

7-14

days at 15 to 50 a week

practitioner consensus

3+

weeks under 15 a week; some never finish

practitioner consensus

SETTING YOUR FIRST TARGET

A PRACTITIONER METHOD

STEP	DO THIS
1 • Discover	Run Maximize conversions with no target for 2 to 4 weeks. The CPA you get is the real price.
2 • Set	Target CPA = that CPA plus 10 to 20%, so the system has room to learn.
3 • Fund	Daily budget of 10 to 15 times the target CPA, for several conversions a day.
4 • Tighten	Lower the target 5 to 10% at a time, 7 to 14 days apart. Stop if volume drops 15%.

S

Seasonality adjustments: short events only

Google suggests them for events of 1 to 7 days. In one three-year Black Friday study, 2024 accounts using them saw ROAS fall 15.7% while those without rose 5.7%. Test before a big sale.

Sources • Google Ads Help: About Smart Bidding, target CPA, target ROAS, seasonality adjustments • Google announcement, 15 Jun 2026 (effective 17 Aug 2026) • Optmyzr seasonality study (Nov 2025) • P08.

STRATEGY 5 AND 6 OF 6

06

Measurement Google can *trust*

Smart Bidding optimises to whatever you mark as a conversion. Mark the wrong thing and it learns to chase the wrong thing.

YOU WILL BE
ABLE TO

set one primary conversion per goal, recover lost conversions with enhanced conversions, and feed lead quality back from your CRM.

DO THIS

THE CONVERSION SETUP, IN ORDER

1

One primary action per goal

Purchase, or qualified lead. Mark add-to-cart, sign-ups and page views as secondary, so bidding ignores them.

2

Check the custom goals

A secondary action added to a campaign's custom goal becomes a bidding input again. Open each campaign to check.

3

Turn on enhanced conversions

Capture email and phone at the moment of form submit, hashed, not from the thank-you page, where the fields are gone.

4

Read the diagnostics card

Goals > Conversions > Settings shows coverage and match rate per action, refreshed within a day.

LEAD GENERATION

FEED QUALITY BACK, OR BIDDING CHASES FORM FILLS

EVENT	STATUS	VALUE
Form submitted	Secondary	None; for reading only
Qualified lead	Primary	A set value per qualified lead
Closed deal	Primary	The real deal value

Upload qualified leads from your CRM at least weekly, through enhanced conversions for leads (matched on hashed email or phone). **Faster than your sales cycle:** a monthly upload arrives after the auctions it should have steered.

WATCH OUT

A conversion rate that looks too good, such as 60%, usually means a micro-event is primary.

Google Ads and GA4 will never match: different attribution and counting. Pick one source of truth for decisions.

ADVANCED MOVE

Prove lift with a geo test. Pause non-brand ads in matched regions for three to four weeks and compare sales.

Know your consent mode. It passes each visitor's cookie choice to Google; in advanced mode Google models the conversions it cannot see.

55–70%

typical enhanced conversions match rate in US-heavy accounts

practitioner figures

~50%

below this match rate Smart Bidding gains little

practitioner figures

1

primary conversion per business goal

Google Ads Help

Sources • Google Ads Help: primary and secondary conversion actions, custom goals, enhanced conversions, enhanced conversions for leads, consent mode • Run it with Claude: prompts P07 and P09.

PART TWO · RUN IT WITH CLAUDE

07

Connect Claude to Google Ads

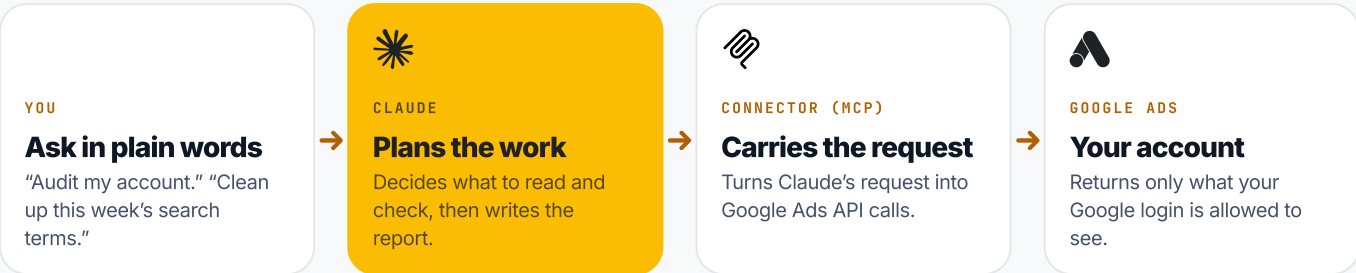
Claude reads your account through a connector. You stay the person who approves every change.

YOU WILL BE
ABLE TO

choose the right connector for your team, and know exactly what it can and cannot touch.

IN PLAIN WORDS

HOW A REQUEST TRAVELS



MCP (Model Context Protocol) is an open standard that lets Claude use outside tools. A Google Ads connector is an MCP server: you sign in through it, and it turns Claude's requests into calls to your account. Claude never sees your password.

CHOOSE A CONNECTOR

ALL THREE CHECKED ON 30 SEP 2026



Windsor.ai

Made by Windsor.ai and listed in Claude's connector directory, so it connects in a few clicks. Five read tools and no write tools. A 30-day trial, then paid plans from \$23 a month, or a limited Forever Free plan.

EASIEST · READ ONLY



Supermetrics

Made by Supermetrics, also in Claude's directory. Reads, and writes: it can create Search and Performance Max campaigns, change bids, pause ads and edit ad copy. New campaigns start paused. A 14-day free trial.

READ AND WRITE



Google Ads MCP server

Google's own, from the googleads team on GitHub. Free and open source (Apache 2.0). It runs on your computer through Claude Code, with three tools, all marked read only. Needs a Google Cloud project (page 11).

OFFICIAL · GOOGLE

WHAT CLAUDE CAN TOUCH

DECIDE THIS BEFORE YOU CONNECT

LEVEL	WHAT CLAUDE CAN DO
Read only	See campaigns, results, search terms and conversions. Enough for P01 to P07, P09, P10 and the dashboard.
Read and write	Also change bids and budgets, pause ads and draft paused campaigns. Only for P08, after you approve.
Never	Billing, payment methods, user access and account settings.



Google has no read-only sign-in

Google does not publish a read-only permission for its Ads API. A connector stays read-only because of the tools it offers, or because the Google login it uses has Read only access (page 12).

WHICH ONE TO PICK

BY WHAT YOU WANT CLAUDE TO DO

IF YOU WANT

Reports and audits

Windsor.ai. Read only by design, and connected in about five minutes (page 10).

IF YOU WANT

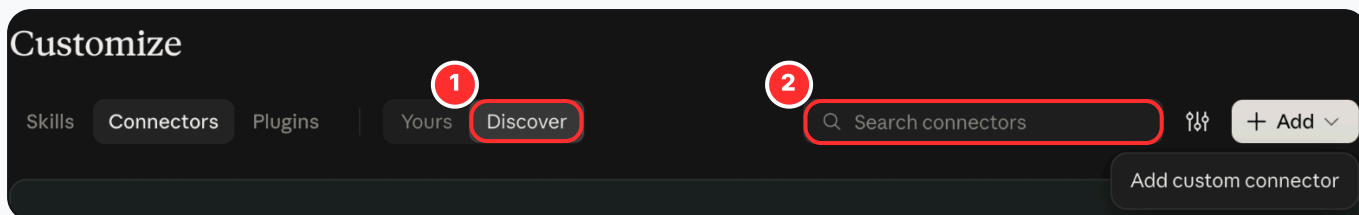
Claude to draft changes

Supermetrics, with a Read only login for daily work and P08's approval step for every change.

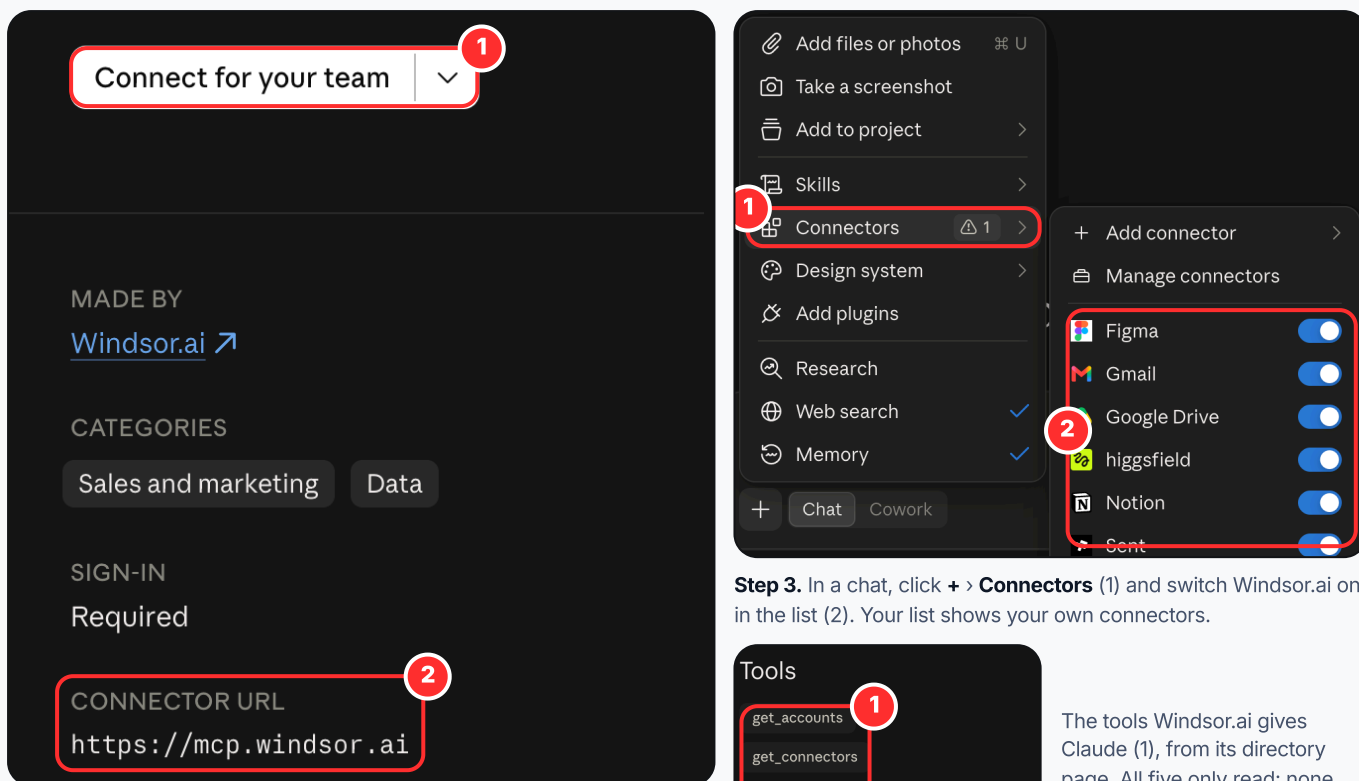
IF YOU WANT

No company in between

Google's own server through Claude Code. Free, but plan an hour for the setup (page 11).

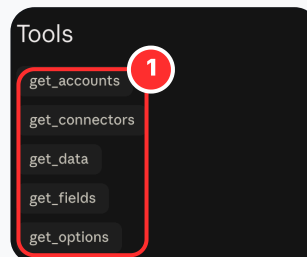


Step 1. In the Claude app open **Customize > Connectors**, choose **Discover** (1) and search for Windsor.ai (2). Supermetrics is found the same way. Real screen, claude.ai, 30 Sep 2026.



Step 2. On the connector's page, check the maker and the connector URL (2). Click the connect button (1), sign in to Windsor.ai and add your Google Ads account there.

Step 3. In a chat, click + > **Connectors** (1) and switch Windsor.ai on in the list (2). Your list shows your own connectors.



The tools Windsor.ai gives Claude (1), from its directory page. All five only read: none can create, change or pause anything.

1 Read test

Ask: "List my Google Ads accounts and each one's spend for the last 7 days." The numbers must match Google Ads for the same dates.

2 Accuracy test

Compare one campaign's clicks, cost and conversions with the Campaigns table. Recent conversions can still rise: Google credits them to the click date.

3 Safety test

Ask Claude to pause one campaign. A read-only connector must say it cannot. With a write connector and a Read only login, Google must refuse.

FIRST · PAGE 13

Audit

Run P01. It lists the fixes that matter most and names the page to read for each.

SECOND · PAGE 14

Clean up

Run P03 on the last 30 days of search terms, then paste the negatives it lists.

THIRD · PAGE 18

Watch

Build the dashboard with P11, then open it every Monday before P06.

Option 2 costs nothing and puts no company between you and Google. You need **Claude Code**, the **gcloud** command-line tool and **pipx** on your computer, and admin access to a Google Cloud project.

- 1

Pick a Google Cloud project
Enable the Google Ads API in it and sign up for API access in the Cloud Console. Since 10 Sep 2026 no manager account is needed.
- 2

Apply for Explorer access
On the project's Google Ads API Overview page, expand **Upgrade access level** and click **Apply for access**. Test access reaches test accounts only.
- 3

Create an OAuth client
In the Cloud Console, create an OAuth client of the **Desktop app** type and download its JSON file.
- 4

Run the two commands below
The first signs you in once and saves your credentials. The second adds Google's server to Claude Code.

```
IN YOUR TERMINAL • GOOGLE'S OWN SERVER, ADDED TO CLAUDE CODE

# 1 • sign in once, with the OAuth client file you downloaded in step 3
gcloud auth application-default login \
  --scopes https://www.googleapis.com/auth/adwords,https://www.googleapis.com/auth/cloud-platform \
  --client-id-file=<YOUR_CLIENT_JSON_FILE>

# 2 • add the server (no developer token: Google retired them on 9 Sep 2026)
claude mcp add --transport stdio \
  --env GOOGLE_APPLICATION_CREDENTIALS=$HOME/.config/gcloud/application_default_credentials.json \
  --env GOOGLE_PROJECT_ID=<YOUR_PROJECT_ID> \
  google-ads -- pipx run --spec "git+https://github.com/googleads/google-ads-mcp.git" google-ads-mcp

# through a manager account? also add: --env GOOGLE_ADS_LOGIN_CUSTOMER_ID=<MANAGER_ID>
# 3 • check it: open Claude Code, type /mcp, then ask it to list your accessible customers
```

LEVEL	REACHES	DAILY LIMIT	HOW YOU GET IT
Test	Test accounts only	15,000 operations	Given when you enable the API
Explorer	Your real accounts too	2,880 operations on real accounts	Apply for access, as in step 2
Basic	Real and test accounts	15,000 operations	Needs brand verification
Standard	Real and test accounts	Unlimited	Start application; about 10 business days

- T

No developer token any more
Google sunset developer tokens on 9 Sep 2026. Access now comes from the Cloud project behind your sign-in. Google says older code keeps working; a token sent in a request is ignored.
- i

The dashboard needs option 1
Option 2 lives in Claude Code on your computer. The live dashboard on page 17 reads through a connector in the Claude app, such as Windsor.ai.

WHAT YOU SEE	LIKELY CAUSE	FIX
/mcp shows the server as failed	pipx, gcloud or the credentials file is missing	Run the pipx part of the command on its own to read the error, then re-run the sign-in command
Calls to your real account fail	The Cloud project still has Test access	Apply for Explorer (step 2) and wait for approval
Client accounts under a manager fail	Requests need the manager account's ID	Add <code>GOOGLE_ADS_LOGIN_CUSTOMER_ID</code> , or name the manager ID in your prompt

Sources • github.com/googleads/google-ads-mcp (README and source, read 30 Sep 2026) • Google Ads API docs: access levels (updated 23 Sep 2026), developer token (updated 29 Sep 2026) • Google Ads Developer Blog, 10 Sep 2026 • Claude Code docs: `claude mcp add`.

KEEP IT SAFE

SET THESE BEFORE THE FIRST REAL PROMPT

R**Connect with a Read only login**

The strongest guard sits in Google Ads itself. Sign the connector in with a Google login that has **Read only** access to the account (Admin > Access and security). Give Standard access only when you run P08.

!**Write access changes live settings**

With Supermetrics, only new campaigns start paused. A bid change, a pause or a copy edit is live as soon as it is made. Allow writes only for P08, after you approve the list.

G**Google's rule for connectors**

Google's developer policy update of 31 Aug 2026: third-party tools, AI connectors included, must connect through their own Google Cloud project. For option 2, use a project you own.

V**Running your own scripts?**

Google Ads API v22 stops working on 7 Oct 2026. The current version is v25, last updated to v25.2 on 23 Sep 2026.

SAVE YOUR RULES AS A SKILL

CLAUDE LOADS IT BY ITSELF WHEN THE TOPIC COMES UP

SKILL

google-ads-operator / SKILL.md

SAVE AS A SKILL · PAGE 12

```
---
name: google-ads-operator
description: Rules for working on our Google Ads account. Use for any
  Google Ads audit, report, search terms review, ad or bidding change.
---
# How to work on our Google Ads
- Default to READ ONLY. Only prompt P08 may change the account, after I
  approve a numbered change list in chat. Never touch billing or users.
- The connector signs in with a Read only Google login, except for P08.
- One change per campaign per week. Target changes under 20%.
- Bid strategy must fit 30-day conversions: <15 manual, 15-30 Max conv,
  30+ tCPA, 50+ with values tROAS.
- Brand stays separate: exact and phrase only, brand negatives on
  non-brand, brand exclusions on Performance Max.
- Negatives never block a term that converted in the last 90 days.
- Label every figure READ or ESTIMATE. Our sales truth: <store / CRM>.
- Our business: <what we sell, prices, margins, main customer groups>.
```

Customize

Skills

Connectors

Plugins

Yours

Discover

Q Search skills and plugins

🔍

↑↓

+

Add

📁

Upload skill

✏️

Create a skill

🗨️

Create with Claude

From Anthropic

Data

In the Claude app: Customize > Skills > + Add (1) > Upload skill (2), then pick the zip. Real screen, 30 Sep 2026.

CLAUDE APP**Before you upload**

Put the file in a folder named `google-ads-operator` and zip the folder, not the file. Skills need code execution: on personal plans it is under Settings > Capabilities; on Team and Enterprise plans an admin switches it on.

TERMINAL**In Claude Code**

Save the file as

`~/ .claude/skills/google-ads-operator/SKILL.md`. Claude Code finds it on its own, in every project.

Sources · Google Ads Help: access levels in your account · Google Ads developer policies (31 Aug 2026) and Developer Blog (v22 sunset, v25.2) · Supermetrics: Google Ads to Claude · Claude Help Centre: skills · screens captured in claude.ai on 30 Sep 2026.

PART TWO · RUN IT WITH CLAUDE

08

Ten prompts to *paste*

Each prompt is written to be copied as it is. Fill in the parts in angle brackets first.

YOU WILL BE
ABLE TO

run a full audit, a search terms clean-up and a weekly report on your account in under an hour a week.

FILL IN

<angle brackets>

Replace these with your own details before you paste.

SAFETY

READ ONLY

Nine of the ten prompts only read. Say it in every prompt anyway.

TRUST

READ vs ESTIMATE

Every figure is labelled, so you know which numbers came from Google.

P01 Account audit

MONTHLY · READ ONLY

Run first, then monthly. The report names the strategy page to read.

You are my Google Ads analyst. Use the connected Google Ads tools. READ ONLY: do not create, edit, pause or remove anything.

Account: <customer ID or name>. Business: <what we sell, average order or deal value, main goal>. Period: last 30 days against the 30 before.

Before you start, repeat back the account, currency and date range.

If a figure is not available through the tools, write NOT AVAILABLE.

1. Structure: list campaigns with type, bid strategy, budget and 30-day conversions. Flag any campaign whose bid strategy is above what its conversions support (15 / 30 / 50 rule), and any brand + non-brand mix.
2. Conversions: list conversion actions marked Primary. Flag micro-events (add to cart, page views, sign-ups) that are Primary, and any campaign custom goal that includes a Secondary action.
3. AI features: for each campaign, AI Max switches, Search Partners, brand exclusions, final URL expansion and URL exclusions.
4. Budget-limited campaigns on tCPA or tROAS: actual CPA or ROAS vs target.
5. Waste: search terms with spend and zero conversions, top 20 by cost.
6. Auto-applied recommendations: which types are switched on.

Output: a five-line summary, one table per section, then the three changes that would help most, in order. Label figures READ or ESTIMATE.

P02 Structure check

BEFORE ANY LAUNCH

Read my account structure. READ ONLY. Report PASS or FIX for each:

1. Brand and non-brand search are in separate campaigns.
 2. A shared brand negative list is on every non-brand campaign.
 3. Performance Max has brand exclusions (or a negative list if my brand is not in Google's brand list).
 4. The brand campaign uses exact and phrase match only.
 5. Every campaign's bid strategy fits its 30-day conversions.
 6. Campaign names follow <YYYY-MM>_<TYPE>_<COUNTRY>_<AUDIENCE>.
 7. Search Partners are off unless a test shows they convert.
- For each FIX, say what to change and whether it resets learning.

P03 Search terms to negatives

EVERY WEEK

Pull the search terms report for the last 30 days. READ ONLY.

1. List every term with spend and zero conversions, sorted by cost.
2. Group them into themes: jobs, free or DIY, competitors, wrong product, wrong location, informational.
3. For each theme, propose negatives with the right match type (exact or phrase) and the list it belongs in.
4. Check every proposed negative against terms that HAVE converted in the last 90 days. Remove any negative that would block one, and say why.
5. Output: a table, then a clean list ready for me to paste into a shared negative list. Do not add anything to the account yourself.

P04 Responsive search ad writer

FOR EACH AD GROUP

Write a responsive search ad for the ad group <name>, landing page <URL>. Read the page first. Our proof points: <3 facts we can prove>.

- 15 headlines, each 30 characters or fewer, each a different idea: the product name, the main benefit, price or offer, proof, speed, guarantee, the search words themselves.
 - 4 descriptions, each 90 characters or fewer.
 - Mark any headline that must be pinned (legal or brand), and why.
 - Use words from the page's first screen so the ad and page match.
- Show the character count next to every line. No claims we cannot prove.

P05 AI Max and PMax control check

BEFORE AND AFTER ANY UPGRADE

For every Search campaign with AI Max and every Performance Max campaign, READ ONLY, report:

- AI Max: search term matching, text customization, final URL expansion (on or off), URL exclusions, text guidelines in use, Search Partners.
- Performance Max: brand exclusions, campaign negative keywords, placement exclusions, whether it runs on the feed only or with assets.
- Channel performance for the last 30 days: spend and conversions by Search, Shopping, YouTube, Display, Discover and Gmail.

Flag: expansion switched on with no URL exclusions; Search Partners on; brand terms reaching PMax; any channel with spend and no conversions. Finish with a numbered fix list. Change nothing.

P06 Weekly brief

EVERY MONDAY

Compare the last 7 days with the 7 days before, per campaign: spend, conversions, cost per conversion, conversion value, ROAS, impression share and clicks. READ ONLY.

Explain every change over 25% either way, choosing one cause:

- DEMAND (impressions moved with search volume or season)
- COMPETITION (impression share or CPC moved)
- CONVERSION (clicks steady, conversions moved: check tracking and page)
- CHANGE (an edit this week; list edits with dates)

Recommend at most one change per campaign. Numbers first, short sentences, then a three-line summary for our team chat.

P07 Conversion tracking check

AFTER ANY SITE CHANGE

Audit my conversion setup. READ ONLY. Ask me for anything the tools cannot reach.

1. Every conversion action: Primary or Secondary, counting (one or every), value, and source (Google tag, GA4 import, upload).
2. Custom goals per campaign that pull a Secondary action back in.
3. Enhanced conversions: on or off, and the match rate per action.
4. For lead generation: is qualified-lead data uploaded from our CRM, how often, and is form-submit Secondary?
5. Compare Google Ads conversions with our own orders or qualified leads for <date range>: <number>. Report the ratio.

Output a fix list in order of impact.

P08 Bidding plan, with approval

WHEN RESULTS DRIFT

The only prompt that writes to the account. It needs write access and your explicit approval.

Goal: <campaign> at <target CPA or ROAS>. Read the account first. Make NO change until I approve.

1. Check its 30-day conversions against the ladder: under 15 manual or Maximize clicks; 15-30 Maximize conversions; 30+ tCPA; 50+ with values tROAS. Say if the current strategy fits.
2. If it is budget-limited on a target, compare actual vs target since 17 Aug 2026 and propose a target that matches what I want to pay.
3. Keep any target change under 20%. One change per campaign per week.
4. Present a numbered change list: campaign, field, old, new, date.
5. Ask "Approve changes 1 to N?" and wait.
6. After approval apply one at a time, read it back, and log it:
date | campaign | field | old | new | approved by.

P09 Reality check

MONTHLY, WITH YOUR OWN EXPORT

I am attaching my orders (or qualified leads) for <month>: date, ID, customer or email, value, new or returning.

Compare with Google Ads for the same month. READ ONLY.

1. Google-reported conversions and value, by campaign.
2. My real orders or qualified leads, and revenue.
3. The ratio of Google conversions to real ones; explain it plainly.
4. Cost per new customer = total spend / new customers.
5. Brand vs non-brand: spend, conversions and cost per conversion.
6. Three sentences on what changed and why, marking guesses as guesses.

P10 Competitor scan

QUARTERLY

Competitors: <brand 1>, <brand 2>, <brand 3>. Pull Auction Insights for my top 3 non-brand campaigns (last 90 days) if the tools reach it; if not, say so and I will paste the export. I will also paste what the Google Ads Transparency Center (adstransparency.google.com) shows for each one.

1. Auction Insights: impression share, overlap and outranking rate per competitor, and how they moved over the 90 days.
2. For each competitor, the ads they run most: offers, claims, formats.
3. Three angles all of them use, three none of them use, and five ad ideas for us. Describe their ads in your own words; do not copy them.

PART THREE • MAKE IT YOURS

09

Make it fit your *business*

The strategies stay the same. The primary conversion, the campaign mix and the first things to watch change.

YOU WILL BE
ABLE TO

adapt the playbook to your kind of business in one sitting, and set a weekly routine that takes under an hour.

D2C AND E-COMMERCE

Online store

Primary conversion: Purchase, with value.

Set up: Brand Search, non-brand Search, and Performance Max launched on the feed only. Merchant Center feed kept clean.

Watch: Brand leaking into PMAx; feed errors; ROAS after brand exclusions.

Prompts: P01, P03, P05, P09

CLINIC, SALON, RESTAURANT, REPAIRS

Local business

Primary conversion: Calls and bookings.

Set up: Search with call and location assets, a tight radius, and ad schedule matched to opening hours.

Watch: Calls under a minute; searches from outside your area.

Prompts: P02, P03, P04, P06

EDUCATION, REAL ESTATE, B2B

Lead generation

Primary conversion: Qualified lead from your CRM.

Set up: Form submit as Secondary; weekly CRM upload through enhanced conversions for leads.

Watch: Cheap leads that never qualify; upload gaps longer than a week.

Prompts: P07, P08, P09

LONG SALES CYCLES

High-ticket services

Primary conversion: Qualified lead, then closed deal with value.

Set up: Exact and phrase non-brand, Maximize conversions until 30 qualified leads a month.

Watch: Bidding on form fills instead of quality; brand terms inflating results.

Prompts: P01, P07, P08

THE WEEKLY ROUTINE

UNDER AN HOUR A WEEK

WHEN	RUN	TIME
Monday	P06 Weekly brief, then at most one change per campaign	15 min
Wednesday	P03 Search terms to negatives; P04 for any weak ad group	20 min
Friday	Check the command centre alerts (page 17) and budget pacing	10 min
First Monday of the month	P01 Account audit, P05 AI controls, P09 Reality check	30 min

Sources • Google Ads Help: call assets, location assets, enhanced conversions for leads, Merchant Center feed requirements.

10

PART THREE • EVERYTHING IN ONE PLACE

Your command *centre* in Claude

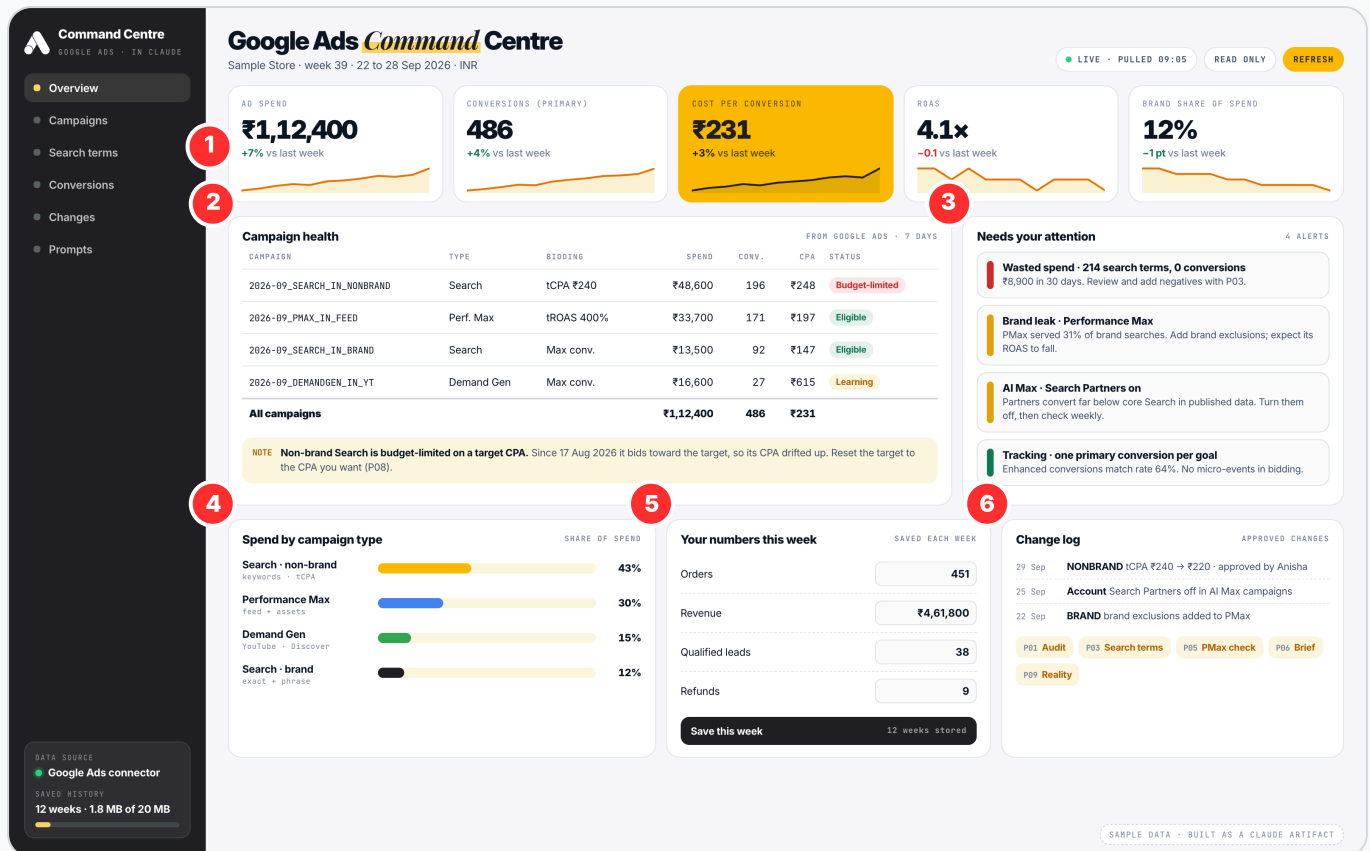
One dashboard that pulls live results through your Google Ads connector, keeps your own sales numbers, and shows what to fix next.

YOU WILL BE
ABLE TO

have Claude build a working dashboard for your account with one prompt, and know what every panel is for.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

A REAL CLAUDE ARTIFACT • SAMPLE DATA



A real artifact built from prompt P11, shown with sample data. In the live page the numbers roll up, cards arrive in sequence and the lines draw on, built with anime.js.

1

Scorecard

Spend, primary conversions, cost per conversion, ROAS and brand share, each with a 12-week line.

2

Campaign health

Type, bid strategy and target, and a flag when a budget-limited target has drifted.

3

Needs your attention

Wasted search terms, brand leaking into Performance Max, Search Partners, bidding above your data.

4

Spend by type

How much goes to brand, non-brand, Performance Max and Demand Gen.

5

Your numbers

Orders or qualified leads and revenue from your own systems, saved weekly.

6

Change log and prompts

Every approved change, plus one-click copies of the prompts you use most.

HOW IT WORKS

THREE THINGS HAPPEN EACH TIME YOU OPEN IT

OPENS

Pulls live data**Through your Google Ads connector**

Read only. Each person who opens it approves access once, and it runs on their own connection.

REMEMBERS

Keeps your numbers**Inside the artifact**

Weekly snapshots and your sales inputs stay in the artifact's own storage, up to 20 MB.

FLAGS

Turns rules into alerts**From pages 3 to 8**

Wasted terms, brand leaks, Search Partners, bidding above your data, tracking gaps.

P11

Build my command centre

ONCE · THEN OPEN IT EVERY MONDAY

Paste into a new chat with your Google Ads connector switched on. Add your prompt texts at the end.

Build me a dashboard artifact called "Google Ads Command Centre" for my account <customer ID or name>. Currency <INR>. Week starts on Monday.

DATA (read only)

- Each time the page opens, pull through my Google Ads connector: every campaign with type, bid strategy, target, budget, status (including budget-limited and learning), spend, conversions, cost per conversion, conversion value and impression share, last 7 days and the 7 before.
- Pull the search terms report for the last 30 days.
- Never call a tool that creates, edits, pauses or removes anything.
- Save one snapshot per week in the artifact's storage. Keep 26 weeks.
- Add a weekly form for my own numbers: orders or qualified leads, revenue, refunds. Save it with that week's snapshot.

PANELS

1. Scorecard: spend, primary conversions, cost per conversion, ROAS, brand share of spend. Change against last week and a 12-week line each.
2. Campaign health: type, bid strategy and target, spend, conversions, CPA, status. Totals row. A note when a budget-limited campaign on a target has actual CPA or ROAS far from its target.
3. Needs your attention, one line each:
 - search terms with spend and no conversions in 30 days (total cost)
 - brand searches served by Performance Max
 - Search Partners on in any campaign
 - a bid strategy above what 30-day conversions support (15/30/50)
 - Google conversions / my orders outside 0.8 to 1.2
4. Spend by campaign type: bars for brand Search, non-brand Search, Performance Max, Demand Gen.
5. Change log: every change I record, with date, campaign, old and new value, and who approved it.
6. Prompt buttons for the prompts I paste below. A click copies the text.

DESIGN

Numbers first, plain labels. Google yellow leads; blue and green only as small chart accents. Readable on a laptop.

Show "Last pulled" and a Refresh button. Mark inferred numbers ESTIMATE.

Visuals

Artifacts

Create and publish artifacts from Claude Code and Cowork to a shareable Anthropic-hosted page, and share chat and Cowork artifacts with your organization.

AI-powered artifacts

Build apps and interactive documents that use Claude inside the artifact.

Inline visualizations

Allow Claude to generate interactive visualizations, charts, and diagrams directly in the conversation.

Settings > Capabilities: the artifact switches that let Claude build working apps (1). On Team and Enterprise plans an admin may control them.

**Know the limits**

Dashboards that use connectors need a paid plan (Pro, Max, Team or Enterprise). They stay private, or inside your organisation, and cannot go on a public link.

**Find it again**

Everything Claude builds is saved in the **Artifacts** tab in the sidebar. Open it each Monday, enter your numbers, and read the alerts before P06.

11

KEEP THIS PAGE

The one-page *checklist*

Everything in the playbook, reduced to what you check before launch, every week and every month.

USE IT TO

run your Google Ads account from this page alone once the setup is done.

BEFORE LAUNCH

- ☐ Brand and non-brand in separate campaigns
- ☐ Brand negatives on every non-brand campaign
- ☐ One primary conversion per goal
- ☐ No Secondary action inside a custom goal
- ☐ Enhanced conversions on, match rate read
- ☐ Bid strategy fits 30-day conversions
- ☐ Search Partners off unless tested
- ☐ AI Max: URL exclusions set with expansion

EVERY WEEK

- ☐ P06 brief read; one change per campaign at most
- ☐ Search terms reviewed; negatives added
- ☐ No negative blocks a converting term
- ☐ Budget-limited targets checked against actual
- ☐ Target changes kept under 20%
- ☐ Dashboard alerts cleared
- ☐ Change log updated

EVERY MONTH

- ☐ P01 Account audit run
- ☐ P05 AI Max and PMax controls re-checked
- ☐ P09 Reality check against your own sales
- ☐ Brand vs non-brand cost per conversion
- ☐ CRM upload running at least weekly
- ☐ Competitor scan (P10) every quarter
- ☐ Skill file updated with anything learned

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

EDITION 01 • SEPTEMBER 2026

AUTHOR

Written by Anisha Dogra

Anisha works on performance marketing and AI systems for brands. This playbook is built from a source-checked research base on Google Ads in 2026, re-checked on 30 September 2026.

METHOD

How the facts were handled

Platform facts come from Google's own help pages, blog and earnings calls. Google's uplift figures are labelled as Google's. Numbers without a traceable source were left out.

Use it freely. Copy the prompts, adapt the skill and share the checklist with your team. Google changes its platform often: check dates on any setting before you rely on it. Nothing here is financial advice, and results depend on your product, offer and market.

**Start with one prompt this week: P01.**

Read the report it writes, then turn to the strategy page it points you to.

GOOGLE ADS PLAYBOOK 2026
ANISHA DOGRA

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