
Challenge Realty Google AdWords Case Study

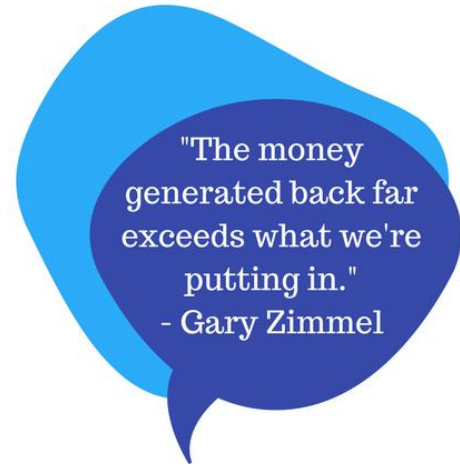
By Real Estate Webmasters

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The Challenge

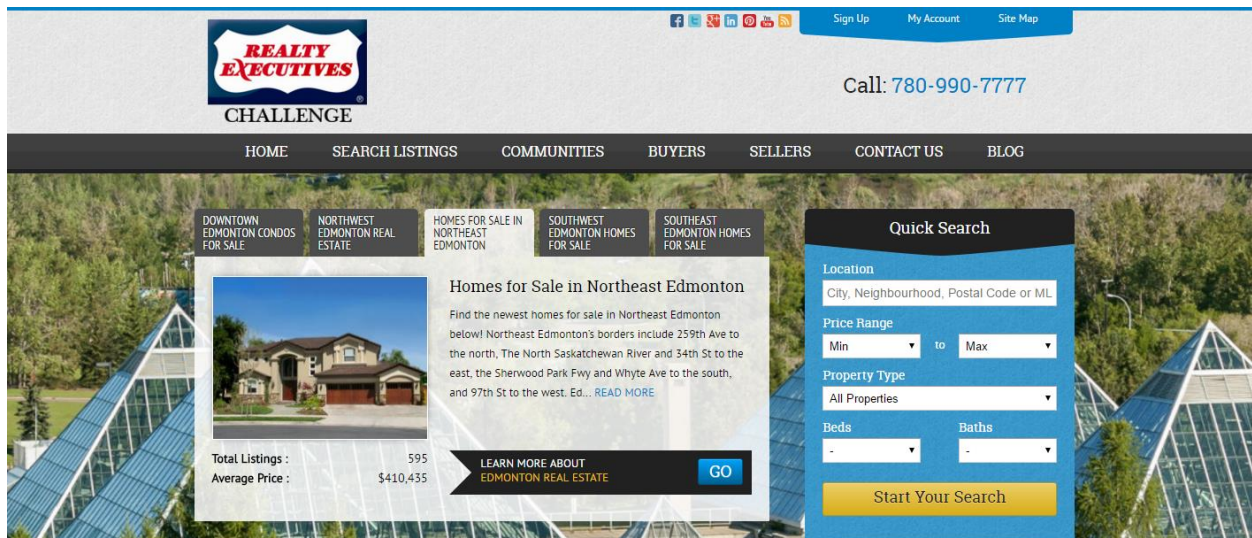
Gary Zimmel first came to Real Estate Webmasters because he wanted a new website for his brokerage, Challenge Realty, in Edmonton, AB. That website, MyEdmontonHomeFinder.com, went live on January 6, 2015, and a PPC campaign for the site was launched January 16, 2015.

Gary started a PPC campaign because he wanted a website that would pay for itself, while also helping his real estate team of close to 100 agents secure more clients. New agents would be able to get a foot in the door, while experienced agents would have a steady stream of client traffic.



"The reason why we started Pay Per Click was to not only help our new people out, but to help established realtors, if they were in dry spells, to give them leads," said Gary.

This case study will demonstrate the overall success of MyEdmontonHomeFinder.com's PPC campaign, with a clear increase in clicks, click through rate, and number of leads, as well as a simultaneous decrease in cost per click and cost per lead.



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Challenge Realty website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with social media icons, a 'Sign Up' button, and links for 'My Account' and 'Site Map'. The main header features the 'REALTY EXECUTIVES CHALLENGE' logo and a phone number: 'Call: 780-990-7777'. Below the header is a dark navigation menu with links for 'HOME', 'SEARCH LISTINGS', 'COMMUNITIES', 'BUYERS', 'SELLERS', 'CONTACT US', and 'BLOG'. The main content area is divided into several sections. On the left, there are five category buttons: 'DOWNTOWN EDMONTON CONDOS FOR SALE', 'NORTHWEST EDMONTON REAL ESTATE', 'HOMES FOR SALE IN NORTHEAST EDMONTON', 'SOUTHWEST EDMONTON HOMES FOR SALE', and 'SOUTHEAST EDMONTON HOMES FOR SALE'. The central focus is a 'Homes for Sale in Northeast Edmonton' section, which includes a photo of a house, a brief description of the area, and statistics: 'Total Listings: 595' and 'Average Price: \$410,435'. A 'GO' button is also present. On the right side, there is a 'Quick Search' form with fields for 'Location', 'Price Range' (Min to Max), 'Property Type', 'Beds', and 'Baths', and a 'Start Your Search' button.

The Strategy

There were three key components that led to the success of MyEdmontonHomeFinder.com's PPC campaign:

1. Solid SEO Foundation
2. Strategic PPC Campaign
3. Instant Follow-Up Routine

All three parts of this strategy played a critical role in the campaign's overall success, resulting in a symbiotic and highly productive relationship between Real Estate Webmasters and Challenge Realty.

Solid SEO Foundation

When Gary first launched the MyEdmontonHomeFinder.com website, he invested in 80 hours of SEO with Real Estate Webmasters. This allowed the REW team to set the website up for success with strong landing pages and a solid content foundation.

This SEO foundation was a contributing factor in the PPC ads' Quality Scores, which measures landing page relevance and quality. A strong Google Quality Score results in better ad placement at a lower cost.

Strategic PPC Campaign

Real Estate Webmasters' currently manages the PPC campaign for MyEdmontonHomeFinder.com, and is the sole marketing provider for the website. Over the course of the campaign (which is still ongoing), the REW PPC team continually created and refined ad groups around keywords that would drive relevant traffic to the site. When this traffic registered on the site or filled out a form, they become a "conversion" or "lead".

"The results were good right from the start. [The way] I look at it, if you're getting the result, then you don't have to look other places," said Gary.

On a weekly basis, all the active campaigns were inspected by a PPC expert, who individually evaluated each ad group and the ads within it. These ads were routinely evaluated using the following primary considerations:

- Cost Per Click
- Cost Per Lead



- Conversion Rate
- Lead Relevance

Ads that performed well were thoughtfully reviewed, allowing the PPC team to duplicate the positive results where-ever possible. Ads that were under-performing were also studied to determine their source of weakness, then tweaked to correct it or permanently paused.

By curating PPC ads and ensuring only the top performers were in circulation, the PPC team was able to effectively increase the number of clicks and decrease their cost.

Instant Follow-Up Routine

Gary initiated a follow-up routine for his leads that would prove itself to be highly effective. The steps of this routine are as follows:

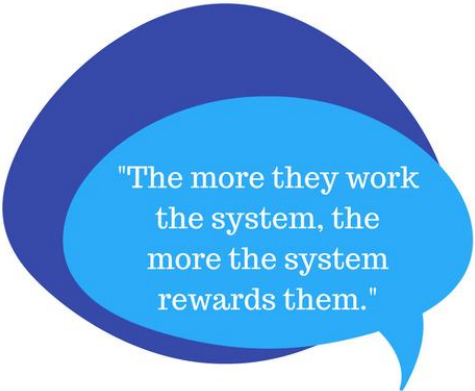
- 1** New lead is assigned to Realtor
- 2** Realtor phones within 15 minutes
- 3** Realtor sets up automated search email

"Those are the three things I try to instill. The people who are on it, they understand the system: the better they work the system, the more the system rewards them."

By phoning the client quickly, the real estate agent is able to make a personal connection with the user while the website is still top-of-mind. This instant connection sets the tone for a productive and highly effective relationship, and puts human touch into the process. It also allows the agent to qualify the lead, identifying their goals and determining their future potential.

"The most important element is follow up. Quick follow up. A lead comes in, you gotta get on the phone!"

Next, the saved search helps the agent stay top of mind, providing the client with a steady stream of valuable information. A saved search is essentially an automated



"The more they work the system, the more the system rewards them."

weekly email that sends out real estate listings of potential interest to a client. These searches are filtered by a number of parameters, including price, location, number of bedrooms and bathrooms, house size, specific features and more, ensuring the searches maintain the personal touch the agent previously established.

Through phone calls, automated emails, and meaningful personalized follow up, Gary and his team were able to make the most of every PPC lead that registered on the site, effectively transitioning client relationships from online to offline.

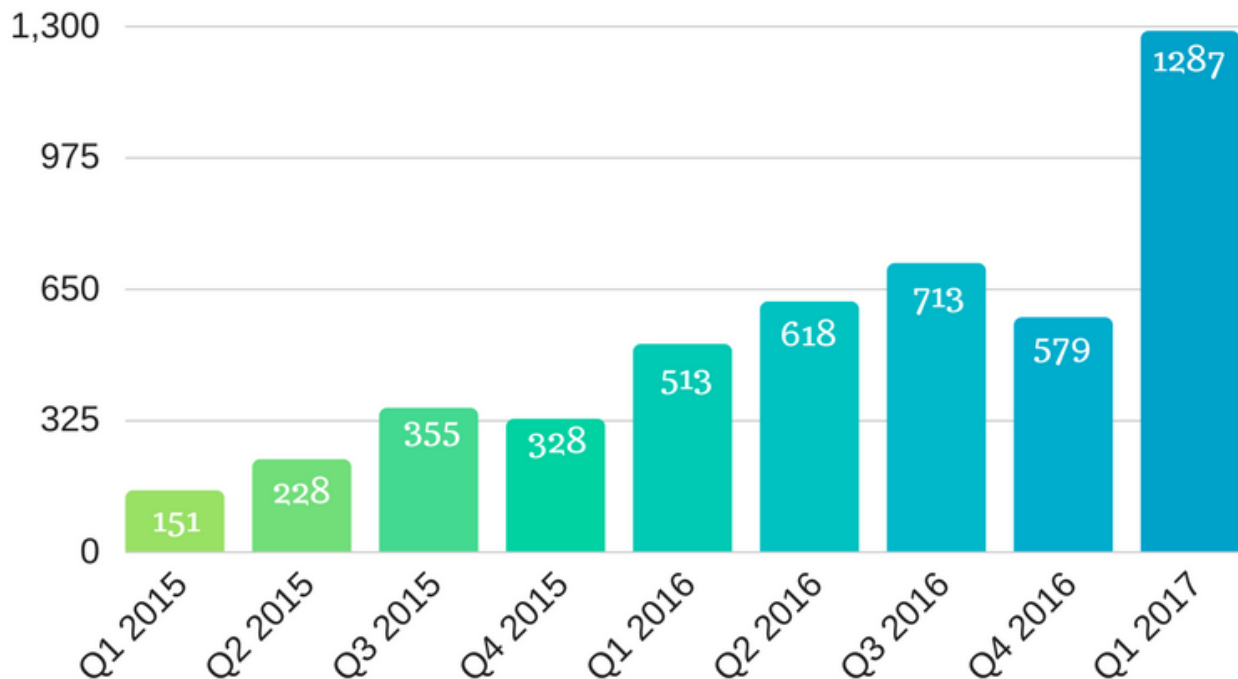
The Results

The results of the PPC campaign on MyEdmontonHomeFinder.com have been phenomenal. The campaign has experienced notable growth over the 2-year period that it's been active, and it's had a direct positive impact on Gary's business.

Gary estimates his current ROI is sitting around the 372% mark¹; in recent months, he invests approximately \$1800 into his web technology, and gets an average return of \$8500 on it—ultimately making a yearly ROI of over \$100,000.

The following graph shows how the overall conversions increase over time:

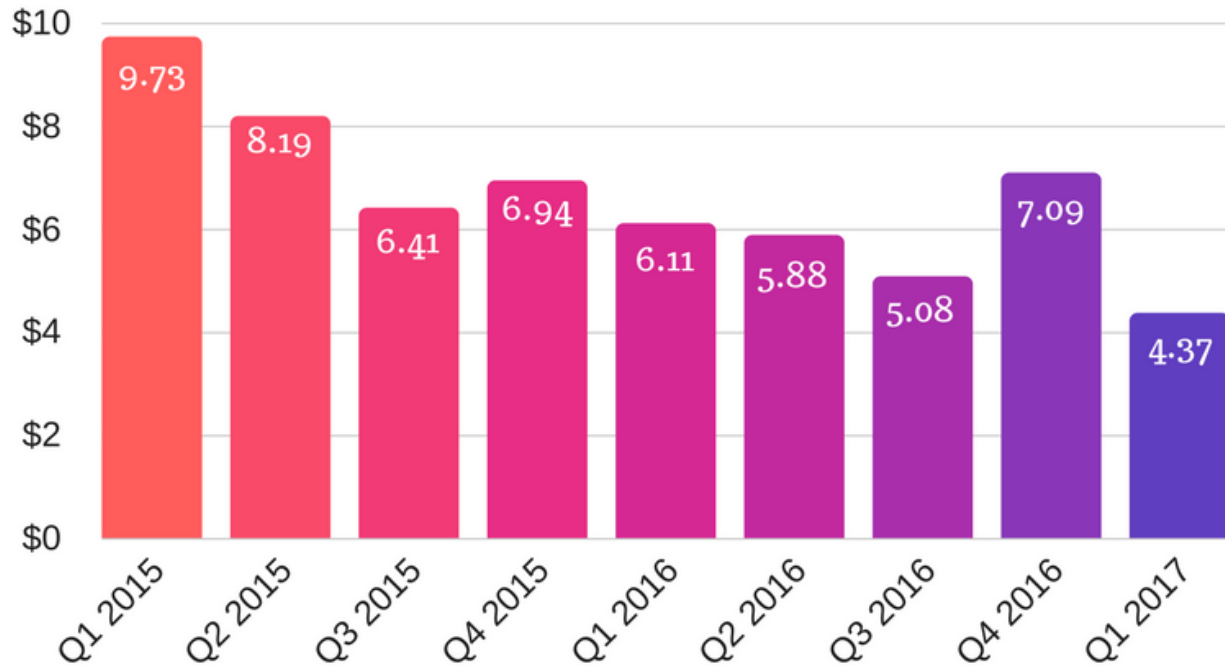
Conversions (Leads)



¹ ROI = (Investment Revenue – Investment Cost) / Investment Cost

By contrast, the conversion costs decrease over time:

Conversion Cost (Cost Per Lead)



Ultimately, we have seen the number of leads converting consistently increase, while our costs for those conversions decrease, over the two year duration. This indicates a strong, healthy campaign with ongoing long-term improvements.

"The money generated back far exceeds what we're putting in," said Gary. "We spend \$1800 a month and, on average we earn a profit of about \$8500 per month. It's a good rate of return."

A closer look at the Q1 stats for each year is further evidence of the campaign's growth:

Quarter	Clicks	CTR	Avg. CPC	Leads*	Cost Per Lead*
Q1 2015 ²	1,130	7.49%	\$1.30	151	\$9.73
Q1 2016	5,537	2.60%	\$0.60	513	\$6.11
Q1 2017	11,748	2.80%	\$0.48	1287	\$4.37
% Difference	(+)112.17%	(+)40.41%	(-)31.58%	(+)150.88%	(-)28.44%

*Leads = Conversions

² Q1 2015 runs Jan. 16, 2015 – Mar. 31, 2015; Q1 2016 & Q1 2017 run Jan. 1 – Mar 31.

Note that while the Click Through Rate (CTR) was higher in Q1 2015, this was due to higher bid level for premium positions. This increased click through, but led to higher costs per click and lead. As the campaign matured and our PPC experts refined the ads, they were able to focus the campaign on keywords that converted at a better rate, and ultimately narrow down the targeting. Doing this significantly reduced the cost per click and cost per lead, allowing the budget to generate a larger quantity of leads.

A Recruitment Advantage

Gary uses his PPC success to create new client relationships, but he also uses it to facilitate new business relationships by approaching real estate agents who are having a difficult time building those crucial client relationships in other brokerages.

"I use it as a little bit of a different tool," said Gary. "I use it to recruit agents—not only to retain agents. If someone's having problems at another company, and they're saying, 'I'm not getting any leads, I don't know how to generate them,' then I can bring them over here and put them on my PPC program."



Gary's ability to provide new clients in an industry where professionals are expected to generate their own business is a mighty piece of leverage. As a broker, this capacity to attract fresh talent from other teams is an extraordinary advantage, and has helped him grow his thriving business to include 95 total agents.

The Conclusion

The MyEdmontonHomeFinder.com has been the quintessential representation of an ideal, symbiotic partnership between a PPC team and a real estate sales team.

Real Estate Webmasters' role was to generate new leads on the site, while Challenge Realty' role was to actively follow up on those leads. Because both teams executed their role within this relationship, Challenge Realty was able to see a 372% ROI on their website and PPC initiatives within a two year period.

Further, the longer Gary Zimmel and his team committed to his PPC program, the better the results became. The campaign launched in the first quarter of 2015 with an average Cost Per Click of \$1.30, and a Cost Per Lead of \$9.73. By the first quarter of 2017, those results had decreased to a Cost Per Click of \$0.48 and a Cost Per Lead of \$4.37.

In an industry where real estate agents often pay \$20 - \$100+ per lead³, securing this traffic at a fraction of the price is business savvy, and a notable competitive advantage.

In fact, this method of lead generation has been so successful that Gary is able to use it as leverage to attract real estate agents' from competing brokerages to join his team instead. His ability to both retain and recruit new agents using his PPC campaign has been a contributing factor in the team's overall growth and success.

Gary Zimmel and the Challenge Realty team is a prime example of the extraordinary success a business can achieve with the right PPC campaign and follow-up program.



³ [Search Engine Land](#); [Trulia Voices](#); [Skyreal](#); [FitSmallBusiness](#);