

Ten ways to tell if your ad spend is being wasted

Run these ten checks on your own Google and Meta accounts. Tick each only if you can honestly confirm it. The fewer you can tick, the more budget is likely leaking where a monthly report never shows it. The tag on each shows where to look.

- | | | | |
|--|---|--------|--------------------------|
| 01 | The change history shows regular, ongoing work | BOTH | ☐ |
| TELL: Open the change log. Long gaps mean the account is being left to run itself. | | | |
| 02 | Your customer data is connected to the ad account | BOTH | ☐ |
| TELL: Without it, you can't exclude existing buyers, retarget, or bid smarter on new ones. | | | |
| 03 | You're optimizing to real outcomes — not just the first conversion | BOTH | ☐ |
| TELL: Back-end data should feed the account: QLs and closed deals for lead gen, LTV and margin for ecommerce. | | | |
| 04 | Your account is split into too many campaigns | BOTH | ☐ |
| TELL: Spread too thin, each campaign starves for data and smart bidding never gets enough signal to work. | | | |
| 05 | Your brand terms aren't hiding inside non-brand campaigns | GOOGLE | ☐ |
| TELL: Brand searches are cheap wins. If they're counted as non-brand, growth looks better than it is. | | | |
| 06 | The same product isn't running in several campaigns at once | GOOGLE | ☐ |
| TELL: When it is, those campaigns bid against each other and split your budget. | | | |
| 07 | Performance Max isn't spending on no-intent searches | GOOGLE | ☐ |
| TELL: Check the search terms. How-to and research queries spend money on people who won't buy. | | | |
| 08 | Attribution isn't quietly over-reporting your results | META | ☐ |
| TELL: View-through settings let a platform claim sales it only showed an ad near. | | | |
| 09 | You're not running the same ads for months on end | META | ☐ |
| TELL: Creative fatigues fast. Winning accounts refresh ads weekly, not once a quarter. | | | |
| 10 | Your placements aren't quietly wasting spend | META | ☐ |
| TELL: Check placements. Audience Network apps and off-platform sites often burn budget with almost no sales. | | | |

Want the full read?

A fixed-scope audit goes deeper — your accounts, feed and attribution, with a prioritised list of what to fix first.

zellermedia.com/google-ads-meta-ads-audit