

*In video 16 we have learnt about Search Engine Marketing (SEM) with a focus on Google Ads.*

A paid form of marketing implemented by brands to rank highest in the search results, **Search Engine Marketing** is highly targeted and effective as it allows brands to show up when the target audience has a high purchase intent and is looking for their products/services the most.

Search engine marketing is implemented by Google and Bing through Google Ads and Bing Ads. Similar to SEO, SEM ads are triggered when a query is entered into the search bar.

In the case of Google, **text ads** have three major components:

- A headline (30 characters) which can include the brand name/product name/pricing or any relevant information
- Two descriptions (90 characters each) that provide detailed information about the offering, or promotion
- A display URL which shows the link that the user will be sent to

To create an ad, marketers first need to [set up a Google Ads Account](#).

They can then set up search engine marketing using their Google Ads dashboard and enter the keywords for which they need their brand to show up.

Even if the brand's keywords match the query searched by a user, there are 3 primary factors at play that help determine which ad shows up at the top of the search results:

- **Bids** - SEM works on a pay-per-click (PPC) model which means brands pay every time a user clicks on their ad. A bid determines how much a brand is willing to pay for each click. While you'd expect a higher bid to win the race, the auction is not dependent solely on this factor.
- **Quality Score** - this refers to the quality of the text ad seen by the user, as well as the landing page that it links to, and the expected click-through rate based on previous data.. Text ads need to be relevant to what the user needs and has searched for, and the landing page should not load slow or have unrelated information. The higher the **quality score**, the lower the bid that an advertiser needs to pay for their ad.
- **Use of Ad Extensions** - an optional but highly recommended addition to text ads is extra information about the product or service, such as location links, phone numbers, and landing page links. These can help improve the overall score assigned to the ad as they provide the user with much more value - prime real estate that brands should not miss!

An optimized combination of the factors above is the best way for brands to win the auction and be placed higher in search engine results.