Top Required PPC Skills and Platforms

Study by SEMrush
Academy

PPC jobs
worldwide research

SEMrush Academy analyzed **4500+** PPC vacancies on **Monster** and **Indeed**, two large job search sites.

MONSTER   **indeed**

We analyzed PPC job offers in the **UK**, **Canada**, **USA**, **Australia** and **India** to find out which skills employers want to see in their ideal candidates.
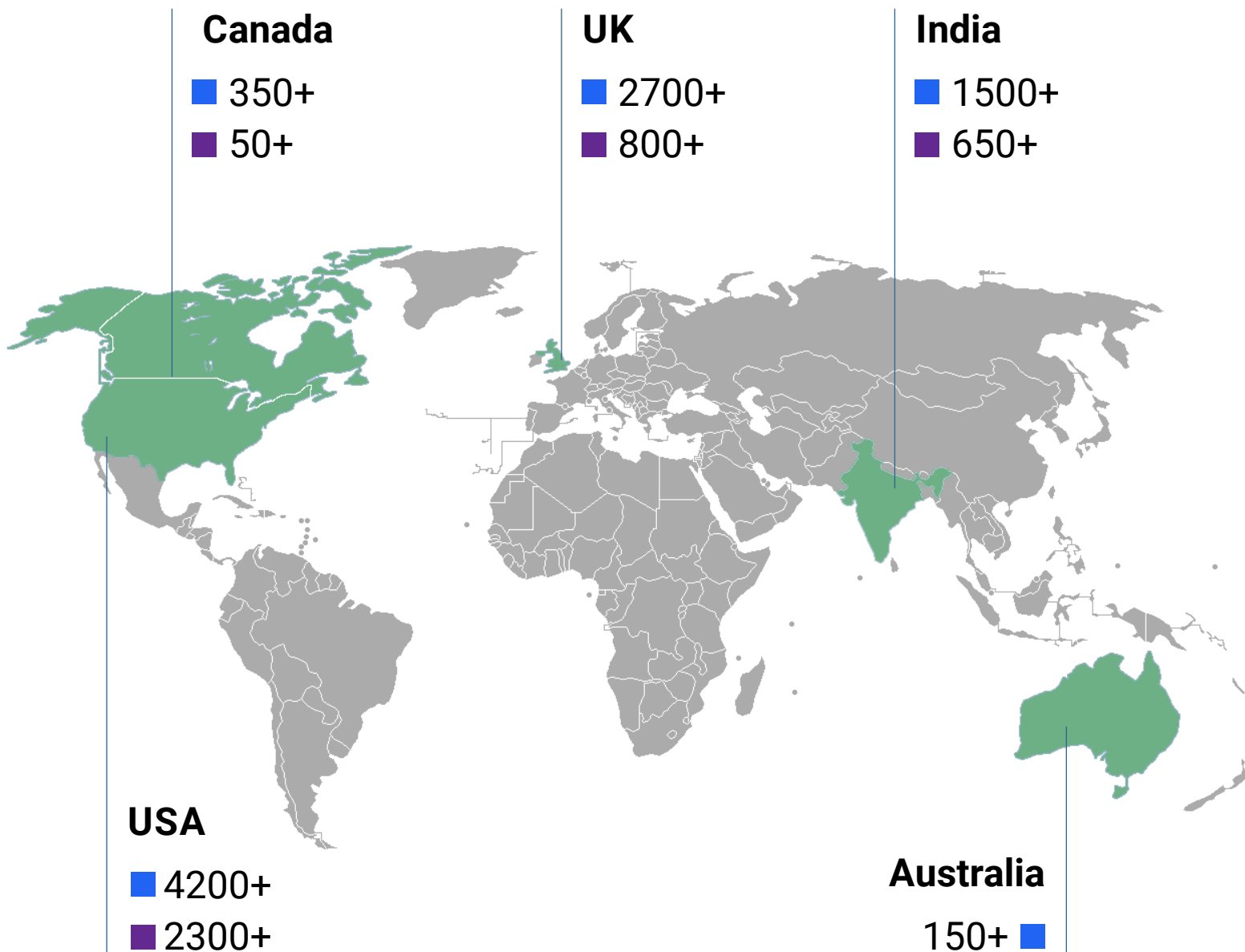
We reviewed job vacancies for **PPC**, **Paid Search**, and **SEM Specialists**.

Finally, **5 experts** from each of these countries shared their opinion about the results, as well as their shortlist of skills and platforms they think will be most in-demand for PPC specialists in 2019 and beyond.

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The research geography

Number of job offers reviewed worldwide

Canada
- 350+
- 50+

UK
- 2700+
- 800+

India
- 1500+
- 650+

USA
- 4200+
- 2300+

Australia
150+

indeed

MONSTER

Most required skills

This is an aggregated list of top skills for all the countries analyzed.
Almost every third job offer worldwide requires knowledge of **Google Analytics**, **SEM**, **AdWords** (now **Google Ads**), and **Excel**. Many employers also want PPC specialists to master platforms like Facebook and Bing, and also know a thing or two about web development and content marketing.

31%
Google Analytics

18%
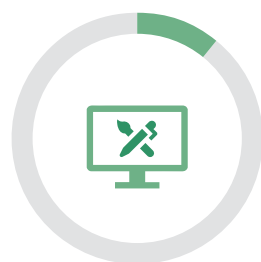Pay Per Click

31%
SEM

18%
Web Development

31%
AdWords

17%
Facebook

30%
Excel

13%
Bing

28%
Content Marketing

11%
Web Design

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Joel Bondorowsky

PPC Optimizer / Online Marketing
Expert, Founder @ PPC Designs

"Much of this report reinforced what I've already known from my experience doing SEM. It is no surprise that American and Canadian employers put an emphasis on Analytics and Excel. These markets are very competitive. The way to win there is by beating the competition with analysis and conversion optimization.

Vlookups are a function of Excel that is on top as it is the most important. Without knowing how to perform a lookup, an employee will not be able to combine performance data from two different reports, such as an Adwords spend report with a product sales report. Employers in all of these countries are mostly looking for workers to help sell products in that specific market.

Australians have always been the population that converted best with a search. They appear to be the most into online shopping. Thus it is no surprise that their employers put more of an emphasis on it. This makes India an exception. Indian employers are mostly servicing foreign markets. They are often agencies that are being outsourced. Content marketing is most significant in India due to it being labor intensive which makes Indian employees appealing to foreign companies looking to get the most bang for their buck.

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Most required skills: USA

The United States is the only country to value **Excel** as the most important skill. This means that if you're aiming to get a job as a PPC/SEM specialist or strategist, you really need to be savvy about **VLOOKUPs**, **advanced charting**, and **pivot tables**.

Alongside conventional PPC-related skills and platforms, content marketing, web development and web design also fall into the Top 10.

1		Excel	36%
2		SEM	35%
3		AdWords	32%
4		Google Analytics	30%
5		Content Marketing	23%
6		Web Development	20%
7		PPC	19%
8		Facebook	17%
9		Bing	13%
10		Web Design	12%

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Navah Hopkins

Services Innovation Strategist
at Wordstream

"I'm really surprised business development and market strategy isn't part
of the list — the skills listed make for a great "cog" PPC practitioner, but the
best account managers on our team are able to talk real world metrics and see
trends emerge in c.world that would impact the account. Folks should be
looking for long-term strategic talent, and that requires a creative, strategic,
and analytical mind.

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Most required skills: UK

Surprisingly, content marketing is the most in-demand skill for PPC specialists and strategists in the UK, followed by **Google Analytics** and **AdWords**. Also, the UK employers mention **CRMs** as an important aspect of working in PPC.

1		Content Marketing	35%
2		Google Analytics	31%
3		AdWords	27%
4		Excel	23%
5		SEM	20%
6		PPC	19%
7		Web Development	16%
8		Facebook	16%
9		Bing	13%
10		CRMs	10%

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Samantha Noble

MD & Founder,
Biddablemoments

"
I find it very surprising to see Content Marketing as the most required skill for a Paid Media role. Whilst a PPC specialist needs to have a creative mind when it comes to writing ad copy, I wouldn't say that Content Marketing experience would be the skill I would look for when recruiting.

The other skills in the list are much more relevant but again I am surprised to see certain skills in the order that they are. When I am actively looking for candidates for a PPC role, the skillset I look for in order is: Google Ads/Bing Ads, Google Analytics, Excel, Mathematical and Statistical, Attention to Detail, Creative, Strategic.

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Most required skills: India

Indian employers and CMOs expect candidates to have an extensive knowledge of **content marketing**, **SEM** and **Google Analytics** in the first place. They also want them to master lead generation and platforms like AdWords, Facebook, Bing, and Yahoo (the last is not mentioned as a top skill in any other country).

#		Skill	%
1		Content Marketing	42%
2		SEM	37%
3		Google Analytics	37%
4		AdWords	31%
5		Facebook	24%
6		Web Development	18%
7		PPC	16%
8		Bing	14%
9		Lead Generation	11%
10		Yahoo	11%

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Nitin Manchanda

SEM Expert & Global Head
of SEO at Go Euro

> *It's really interesting to see the results varying a lot for Indian market than other markets which looks in sync more or less. A bit surprised to not see Excel in the list for the Indian market, which is definitely one of the most important skills I would see in a PPC specialist, or maybe that's considered as an implicit skill.*
>
> *I would also not consider "Content Marketing" as the most trendy skill for this profile, which is the case for Indian and the UK market. Maybe these are job posting from startups which are looking for an all-rounder who could contribute to Content Marketing as well.*
>
> *Not surprised to see Bing also being a part of this list, given the growth in the last few years in the US market especially.*

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Most required skills: Canada

Here are the top 10 skills that are required in Canadian PPC specialist job offers.

Google Analytics is at the top of the list, with almost half of the employers indicating this skill for their vacancies. Then Lead Generation is a separate skill that was mentioned in 16% of the job offers.

1		Google Analytics	44%
2		AdWords	40%
3		Excel	36%
4		Content Marketing	34%
5		SEM	33%
6		Facebook	28%
7		Web Development	19%
8		Bing	17%
9		Web Design	16%
10		Lead Generation	16%

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Patrick W. Schrodt

PPC Expert & Founder
at Titan innovations

"
Based off the data for Canada only, I don't fully agree with the rankings of skills required. I was surprised to see that Google Analytics outranked Google Adwords. At the end of the day while Analytics is important, most pure PPC agencies live in Google Adwords.

Another strange ranking to see was Lead Generation being so low. Proper PPC landing pages are a fundamental part of any PPC campaign, so I would always hire someone with more Lead Generation/Landing Page skills. Perhaps "Web Development" falls under this category, but it seems that Landing Pages should be on the list. Speaking of Web Development, that wouldn't even be on the list for me.

I am always hiring based off Adwords Skill, Online Marketing Skills, Typing Speed and General Knowledge of Internet Marketing. Something like "Excel" defaults into this category and would be seen as a skill on almost every resume these days. Excel is used by all members of our team on a daily basis, so I am glad to see it's ranked in the top 5 skills.

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Most required skills: Australia

Here are the top 10 skills for the Australian PPC specialist market. The most in-demand skills, which were defined by analyzing the job offers in Monster and Indeed, are **Search engine marketing** and **Google Analytics**.

1		SEM	41%
2		Google Analytics	41%
3		AdWords	27%
4		Facebook	21%
5		Content Marketing	19%
6		Excel	19%
7		Web Development	15%
8		Web Design	14%
9		CRMs	11%
10		Bing	10%

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Irene Lee

Head of Paid Media
at Canva

> *I'm surprised Facebook doesn't have a higher percentage against it.
> More people spend their time on social media than they do on Google Search.
> Mid and bottom of the funnel (BOFU) is relatively "easy" since the people you're
> reaching know what they want (they have high intent). Therefore when I look
> for paid specialists, if they can also do Top of funnel (TOFU) in spaces (social
> media) where people are investing most of their time and attention, that's a big
> advantage compared to those solely in SEM.*

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Essential Skills Every PPC Professional Needs to Have in 2019

Joel Bondorowsky

PPC Optimizer / Online Marketing Expert,
Founder @ PPC Designs

Campaign targeting and bidding are becoming automated with greater sophistication and accuracy each year by Google and other PPC platforms. The year 2019 is fast approaching, it is bringing us to a point where many are starting to wonder what relevance internet marketers have in this new world of AI, tech, and automation.

These people forget one point. Ad creatives are a critical component that make or break campaigns. It doesn't matter how good campaign targeting, or sophisticated bidding is, and no matter how amazing a product and the sales funnel that guides users to buy it is.

At the end of the day, it is the ad, and it's creative that needs to appeal to the small segment of the more than 1 billion internet users that will take internet users off their current path and onto your sales funnel. Automation will never write ads to sell to people that are ready to take action and buy.

Automation will also never interest people into having a desire to purchase a product, and then take action to do it. Only internet marketers who understand the tools to target people with different intent that can write ads to appeal to them can do this. Looking at 2019 and beyond, I can only stress this point. People buy from people, not machines. Automation and AI do not replace the online marketer, and it supplements them. The best PPC campaign managers in 2019 will understand how to use the advanced technology we are given to communicate our sales message like never before.

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Essential Skills Every PPC Professional Needs to Have in 2019

Samantha Noble
MD & Founder, Biddablemoments

in

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In 2019 and beyond I think that PPC Specialists need to really start to display their passion for the role; to be good at the job they need to get great results for the business they are marketing but to be great at the job they need to fully immerse themselves in the PPC space and keep up to date with the very frequent changes and launches to the ad platforms. This is what sets apart a good PPC specialist with a great one.

Additionally, it is becoming more vital that they have a strategic and tactical mindset; understanding how PPC fits in with the whole digital mix is going to become more important so keeping up with important updates across digital is also key.

Dido Grigorov
SEM Expert, SEO Specialist at Serpact Ltd. & NetPresenta Ltd.

in

"
A good PPC specialist should be more focused on audiences in the future, not on keywords like before. Audience engagement metrics will continue to be more and more important, which is expected and absolutely normal. We make campaigns for people, it's understandable to evaluate them according to the engagement metrics in priority.

Automation — that's not coming, it's here, but not many specialists use it yet. I think it will become an important trend in the near future, because the automation saves a lot of time, giving the specialist the chance to take into account some tasks in his work with much higher priority like tweaking the strategy making it better and better according to the analytics data. It's also about getting better with Attribution & Cross-Channel Advertising Experiences. Many people already use it, but we need to see some more involvement here and continuous work on attribution and cross-channel model work for finding the best model for every business.

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Essential Skills Every PPC Professional Needs to Have in 2019

Nitin Manchanda
SEM Expert & Global Head of SEO at GoEuro

"*I personally think that a PPC specialist should be master of numbers crunching and analytics, so along with understanding some the tools like Adwords, Google Analytics, Excel etc., this person should be really good at analytical skills. As I love automation, I would also target to master some automation tools related to PPC to save my time on stuff which is monotonous in nature, reporting for example.*

My advice would be to start with Excel and number crunching to get familiar with numbers, charts etc., which would play a vital role as PPC experts." It's also about getting better with Attribution & Cross-Channel Advertising Experiences. Many people already use it, but we need to see some more involvement here and continuous work on attribution and cross-channel model work for finding the best model for every business.

Irene Lee
Head of Paid Media at Canva

"*If I have someone that is an expert in SEM and someone that is an expert in Facebook/IG, give me the latter because they are more likely able to move a person down the funnel as they actively work in the space of the end to end user experience (from awareness, to evaluation to conversion).*

What you need to learn to be sought after is to have strong foundational skills; understand the dynamics of delivering an ad to the right person, at the right place, at the right time, with the right product, with the right message — all in different contexts, whether a user is engaging with an ad on SEM, Facebook, Bing etc.

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Essential Skills Every PPC Professional Needs to Have in 2019

Patrick W. Schrodt
PPC Expert & Founder at TitanPPC

The world of Machine Learning and automation in Google Ads is evolving at a rapid pace. Google is making it easier for advertisers with zero experience to show up online. This makes the job of a digital marketing manager easier and harder at the same time. Automation makes the job easier, but then harder to sell to an end client if the perception is a client can "self manage" on their own. So ultimately this means there is another skill required that's not really on the list mentioned, and that is: "people and relationship" skills.

I believe that the future (the next 5-10 years) of PPC management will be weighted more to this skill rather than hands on tactical management of the account. There will always be a human factor to management of PPC accounts, but ultimately the management of the client relationship is what's going to keep clients paying for expert advice.

Sergey Matrosov
PPC Engineer at SEMrush

I guess that we'll see a growing trend of using machine learning algorithms to accurately buy proper target audiences for businesses. That's why the importance of programming in digital marketing will increase significantly.

With the increasing role of automation and AI in Google advertising products, it's easy to fall into a trap thinking that machine learning will do all the donkey work and a PPC manager will just present good-looking reports to clients. But to me, it's a naive hope. I think the coding skills is something a PPC specialist will definitely need in the future, as well as a solid background in data analysis and data science.

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Key Takeaways

1. Our observation is that employers consider **Web Analytics**, **SEM** (Search engine marketing), **AdWords** as a key requirements for PPC specialist

2. **30%** of employers consider good **Excel skills** essential for the candidates. They may only list Excel 30% of the time, but it is required for PPC. You can't run campaigns without Excel

3. Being **internet savvy**, analytical, know Excel and have good communications skills is a takeaway

4. The most in-demand skills vary slightly in different countries. However, the top PPC skills are **universal for all countries** in the research, and the most valued skills can be found in the top 10 of each country

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How you can use it in your work

1. You can **analyze your professional profile** and compare it to the profile that employers want to see in their ideal candidates. So the gaps in your profile are the **points that can be improved** in order to become more in demand and thus get **better offers and a better salary**

2. Looking at the worldwide results you can **identify the differences** between five English-speaking countries and take into consideration the opinions of our local experts, who are industry leaders in the PPC area. This way, you can **develop the right skills** for the location in which you want to **progress as a PPC specialist**

3. If you are an employer, then you can **compare your expectations** with the other employers and **adjust your requirements**, limiting or expanding the list of desired skills

4. And finally, it is a great way to **get top experts' opinions** on the subject, finding out their ideas about the ideal future PPC specialists. So start today to **become a highly in-demand specialist** for the near future!

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Boost your PPC skills with SEMrush Academy

PPC Fundamentals Course

Learn how to create effective and profitable PPC campaigns that pay off with Joel Bondorowsky, a renowned professional with many years of experience in Pay-Per-Click advertising. Explore how PPC campaigns work and how you can avoid hidden pitfalls that lead to money-losing use of Google Ads. After the course, you can take the exam and earn a certificate that will be a valuable asset to your CV, LinkedIn or other professional networking accounts

Enroll now

PPC Fundamentals Exam

Become a certified PPC specialist with the knowledge and skills to beat your competitors for the desired job

Start exam now

SEMrush Advertising Toolkit Course

Discover how to make the best use of SEMrush tools for advertisers and study real-life PPC cases. Get practical tips you can utilize for the best experience with the SEMrush Advertising Toolkit. Gain experience in performing keyword research, managing your keywords, creating ads and more

Enroll now

SEMrush Advertising Toolkit Exam

Test your knowledge of SEMrush PPC tools and get a course certificate upon successful completion of the exam

Start exam now