

The 17 things we check in an ad account every morning.

Most money lost on ads goes quietly: a sold-out product still advertised, a price that changed, a link that broke. Each check below says where to look and what to do if it fails.

MONEY

01 Divide yesterday's shop sales by yesterday's total ad spend. That is your real return.

WHERE Sales in Shopify; spend in Meta Ads Manager and Google Ads, added together.

IF NOT One bad day is noise. Look at the seven-day figure before you act.

02 Check your return over the last seven days is above your break-even.

WHERE The same sum over seven days. Break-even return is 1 divided by your margin after refunds, discounts and fees.

IF NOT Below break-even for a week: cut the campaigns with the weakest real return first.

03 Check each advertised product against its own break-even, after its own refunds.

WHERE Sales and refunds by product in Shopify, against spend by product in the ad platforms.

IF NOT Keep, cut or reprice it. Do not let the ads decide by default.

04 Put each platform's claimed sales next to your real orders.

WHERE Purchases in Ads Manager and conversions in Google Ads, against Shopify orders for the same days.

IF NOT When they disagree, trust the orders. Use platform figures only to compare ads within that platform.

05 Check this month's spend so far against the ceiling you set for the month.

WHERE Billing in each ad account, added together.

IF NOT Ahead of pace: slow the lowest-return campaign, not all of them.

STOCK AND PRICES

06 Check no live ad is sending people to something that is sold out.

WHERE Stock levels in Shopify against the products in live ads and your product catalogue.

IF NOT Pause the ad or exclude the product until stock is back.

07 Check which advertised products will sell out within three weeks at today's pace.

WHERE Units sold in the last 30 days against units in stock.

IF NOT Reorder, or move spend to lines with deeper stock.

08 Check every price quoted in an ad, including inside the image or video, matches your shop today.

WHERE Each live ad's text, headline, image and video, against the product page.

IF NOT Pause and replace the ad the same day. A wrong price costs trust as well as money.

09 Check no ad, headline or sitelink still mentions a sale that has ended.

WHERE Ad text, Google sitelinks and promotion extensions, and any banner in the image.

IF NOT Remove it. Check again the morning after every sale ends.

DELIVERY

10 Open every ad link. Each should land on a working page, first time.

WHERE Click each link on a phone, in a private window.
IF NOT Fix or repoint the link, then open it again.

11 Look for ads marked disapproved or limited.

WHERE The status or delivery column in Ads Manager and Google Ads.
IF NOT Read the reason, edit the ad and resubmit. They spend nothing and tell you nothing.

12 Look for an old end date that is quietly stopping a campaign or ad set.

WHERE The schedule on each campaign and ad set, especially any you copied.
IF NOT Remove or update the end date.

13 Check what each campaign spent yesterday against its budget.

WHERE Spend against daily budget, campaign by campaign.
IF NOT Spending far less is a warning too: usually a disapproval, a narrow audience or a bid limit.

14 Note which campaigns are still learning, and move no budget by more than about 20% in one step.

WHERE The delivery column shows 'Learning'.
IF NOT Leave it alone for a few days. Raise or lower budgets in small steps.

AUDIENCE, CREATIVE AND TRACKING

15 Check how often the same people see each ad.

WHERE Frequency and click-through rate for each ad, over the last seven days.
IF NOT Above about three views each, with clicks falling, the ad is tired. Add a new one; do not just raise the budget.

16 Check each ad set has enough budget for the ads in it.

WHERE Daily budget divided by the number of active ads. Roughly £10 a day for each ad is a sensible floor.
IF NOT Pause the weakest ads, or merge ad sets.

17 Check your Meta pixel and server events still fire and roughly match your real orders.

WHERE Events Manager in Meta; conversion status in Google Ads.
IF NOT Purchases at zero overnight while orders are not means the tracking broke, not the ads.

Rather not do this every morning?

We run all 17, plus your orders, stock, margins and returns, before you wake up. Start with the free shop check.

practicalreason.co.uk

These checks come from the ones that run every morning on a live retail ad account, rewritten so you can do them by hand. The thresholds are rules of thumb, not laws. Practical Reason is the trading name of Parallel Agents Ltd, company 17123782.