

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE · WW-013

Set up Google Ads lead conversion tracking with Google Tag Manager

Create a Google Ads conversion action for leads, deploy the Conversion Linker and conversion tags through Google Tag Manager, and confirm conversions are recorded.

GOOGLE ADS

VERSION 1.0	EFFECTIVE 5 October 2026
NEXT REVIEW 5 April 2027	TIME 60 minutes
DIFFICULTY Intermediate	RELATED WW-001 · WW-003
AUDIENCE Paid media specialists with Google Ads admin and GTM publish access	
TOOLS Google Ads · Google Tag Manager · Tag Assistant	

Purpose

Google Ads can only optimise towards leads it can see. This procedure creates a dedicated lead conversion action, fires it through Google Tag Manager on the same reliable success signal used for GA4, and makes sure it counts once per enquiry. It is finished when Tag Assistant shows the conversion firing once on a test submission and Google Ads reports the action as recording conversions.

Scope

In scope

- Creating a website lead conversion action with the right settings
- Deploying the Conversion Linker and Google Ads conversion tag in GTM
- Testing and confirming the conversion status

Out of scope

- Choosing the success signal (follow the first phase of WW-003)
- Enhanced conversions, offline conversion imports and call tracking
- Bid strategy changes after conversions start recording

Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Paid media specialist	Creates the conversion action, builds the tags and tests them.
Website owner	Approves test submissions and confirms leads arrive.
Reviewer	Checks the conversion settings and quality checks.

Prerequisites

- GTM installed on every page (WW-001) with publish access.
- A reliable lead success trigger already in GTM (built in WW-003).
- Admin or Standard access to the Google Ads account (see WW-015 for access).
- Agreement on a lead value, or a decision to use no value.

Procedure

Create the conversion action

Configure the action to count leads, not clicks.

1. In Google Ads, open **Goals**, then **Conversions**, then **Summary**, and click **New conversion action**. Choose **Website**.

2. Enter the website domain, then choose to set up the conversion manually using code.
3. Set the goal category to **Submit lead form**, name the action `Lead · Website form`, and choose a value: use the agreed lead value or **Don't use a value**.
4. Set **Count** to **One**, so a person submitting several forms in one session counts as one lead. Keep the default click-through conversion window unless the sales cycle is long.
5. Save, then choose **Use Google Tag Manager** and copy the **Conversion ID** and **Conversion label** into the work ticket.

Add the Conversion Linker

The Conversion Linker stores click information so conversions can be attributed.

1. In GTM, check **Tags** for an existing **Conversion Linker** tag. If none exists, create one with the trigger **All Pages** and name it `Google Ads · Conversion Linker`.

[!NOTE] If the container has a Google tag for the same Google Ads account, it can handle linking automatically, but a dedicated Conversion Linker tag is harmless and makes the setup explicit.

Add the conversion tag

Fire the conversion on the same success signal used for GA4.

1. Create a new tag of type **Google Ads Conversion Tracking** and paste the **Conversion ID** and **Conversion label**.
2. Attach the lead success trigger from WW-003 (for example `Lead · contact · success`). Name the tag `Google Ads · Lead · Website form`.
3. Save the tag.

[!WARNING] Use the same success trigger as GA4. Firing Google Ads on a different, looser trigger causes the two platforms to disagree and can inflate reported leads.

Test and publish

Prove one submission counts as one conversion.

1. Click **Preview**, submit the form with the agreed test details, and confirm both the Conversion Linker and the conversion tag fired, with the conversion tag firing once.
2. Submit an invalid form and confirm the conversion tag does not fire.
3. Click **Submit**, name the version `Google Ads lead conversion`, and publish.

Confirm in Google Ads

Make sure Google Ads is receiving the data.

1. In **Goals, Conversions**, check the action's status. Within a few hours of real traffic it should change from **Inactive** or **Unverified** to **Recording conversions**.
2. Confirm the action is set as a **Primary** action in the right goal so bid strategies optimise towards it, and that no older duplicate lead action is also primary.

Quality checks

- ☐ The conversion action counts **One** per interaction and uses the agreed value.
- ☐ A Conversion Linker fires on all pages.
- ☐ The conversion tag uses the same success trigger as GA4 and fires once per valid submission.
- ☐ The action shows **Recording conversions** within 48 hours of traffic.
- ☐ Only one primary lead action exists for the website form.

Troubleshooting

Symptom	Likely cause	Fix
Status stays Unverified	Tag not published, or no ad traffic yet	Check the live GTM version and wait for real ad clicks.
Conversions double GA4 leads	Count set to Every , or duplicate primary actions	Set count to One and demote old duplicate actions.
Tag fires on page load	Wrong trigger attached	Attach the success trigger from WW-003.
Conversions missing for some browsers	No Conversion Linker, or consent blocking	Add the Conversion Linker and review the consent setup.

Records

- Record the conversion action name, ID, label, count setting, value and GTM version in the client's tracking plan.

References

- [Set up conversion tracking for your website \(Google Ads Help\)](#)
- [Google Ads conversions with Tag Manager \(Google Tag Manager Help\)](#)
- [About the Conversion Linker tag \(Google Tag Manager Help\)](#)
- [About conversion counting options \(Google Ads Help\)](#)

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