

What \$200 actually buys you on Google Ads

Not an attack on Google. It is the best-measured advertising ever built. But the arithmetic at the bottom of the market is rarely written down, so here it is.

The clicks

WordStream's 2026 benchmarks put the all-industry average cost per click at **\$5.42**. At that price, \$200 is **36 clicks**. Not 36 customers. Not 36 signups. Thirty-six people who clicked something.

\$5.42

AVERAGE COST PER CLICK,
2026

36

CLICKS \$200 BUYS

2.9

CONVERSIONS AT 8.18%

The conversions

The same benchmarks put the average landing page conversion rate at **8.18%**. Thirty-six clicks at 8.18% is **2.9 conversions** — and a "conversion" there is usually a form fill, not a paying customer. Your \$200 bought you three people who typed an email address.

The part nobody bills you for

Juniper Research put advertising spend lost to fraud at **\$68 billion** a year. Fraud Blocker puts the invalid share of paid traffic in the double digits for many advertisers. Take even 10% off the top and your 36 clicks are 32, and some of those were never a person.

What the same money does here

An empty hour is free, so the honest comparison is what \$200 buys once the board is contested. At the \$1 floor it is two hundred hours of the front of a board. At \$10 an hour it is twenty. Either way you are buying **time in front of a page**, not clicks metered by the platform selling them.

The fair objection: a Google click is intent — somebody searched for what you sell. An hour on our board is not. If your product has clear, high-intent search demand and the unit economics to pay \$5.42 for a click, buy the click. We are for the case where you do not, or where \$200 is the whole budget and you would like to see something happen this afternoon.

Sources. WordStream, Google Ads Benchmarks 2026 (wordstream.com/blog/2026-google-ads-benchmarks) · Juniper Research, digital advertising spend lost to fraud (juniperresearch.com) · Fraud Blocker, ad fraud data (fraudblocker.com/data/ad-fraud-data-facts). Figures current as of publication; check them yourself before you spend anything on our word.