Money-Making...

Pay Per Click Marketing

Introduction

One of the most effective marketing techniques is pay per click advertising. And the most beneficial aspect of this type of marketing is the fact that you don't need to pay a set fee. Instead you pay for each occasion someone clicks on your ad.

To narrow it down even farther, you choose specific keywords and then bid for placement of your ads for those particular keywords. That way, your advertising is highly targeted, limited to only those individuals who are actively and deliberately using those precise search terms.

In other words, you have the ability to reach people who are already interested in your specific offer or product.

By doing it this way, you have a great deal of control over your buying public and the amount of money you pay for advertising. The only downside, of course, is the fact that over-spending can take place much too easily.

In order to combat that possibility, you need to make certain you place ads that possess two key elements…

1. They attract qualified prospects and not random viewers.

2. They're based on keywords that are directly related to what you're offering.

Naturally, there's more to it than that. But those two elements alone will help prevent you from over-spending.

As long as you establish a budget - and stick rigidly to that budget - you can relax and concentrate on things like improving your pay per click ads and expanding your advertising reach.

A good solid pay per click campaign is worth its weight in gold, not just in revenue but with regard to the overall benefits.

First and foremost, initiating pay per click campaigns will enable you to drive an unlimited volume of targeted traffic. And, you can do it from the moment your ad gets published.

Compare that to other advertising or traffic generating methods. With basic "organic" SEO, for example, you would have to wait until the search engine spiders crawled your website and then hope your income-producing pages ultimately get listed.

Although organic SEO is highly profitable, it can take a considerable amount of time before you experience enough targeted traffic to make it financially worthwhile. With pay per click, you have the potential to bring in revenue within hours of launching your campaign.

Another advantage is the ability to benefit from highly competitive search phrases. If you were simply waiting for traffic to arrive through the usual search engine tactics, you would most likely

avoid those types of keywords.

With pay per click, you merely have to bid higher than most of your competitors. Having done that, you'll automatically begin to benefit from any and all traffic associated with any given search phrase.

Additional benefits are tracking and testing. In order to accurately determine the return on your investment (ROI), you need the power to track all your ad campaigns.

You also need the ability to test any and all pay per click ads. Instead of diving head first, you can run minimal campaigns just to see whether or not they have the potential to be financially successful.

Of course, with all pay per click ad campaigns, it always comes down to how much money is being spent versus how much income is being generated. And that's the major pitfall.

Implementing solid organic SEO tactics, you can be rewarded with months or even years of targeted traffic. And all without spending a dime. Pay per click traffic, however, will only work as long as you continue funding your campaigns.

Truth be told, this type of advertising can be a blessing or a curse. If you do it right, you can generate a substantial amount of income from each and every ad you place.

On the other hand, if you fail to put together a good solid campaign, you could be literally throwing a great deal of money away.

Like any other form of paid marketing system, you have to ease into it. There are just too many variables not to. Try it. Kick the tires. Take it for a test run. Then, if all goes well, you can expand your advertising efforts.

Making The Most Of PPC
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The very first thing you should do - even before you plan your pay per click campaigns - is establish exactly who your target audience is.

For example…

- Is there a specific age group you need to reach?
- Is gender a major factor?
- Is their family status relevant?
- Is their income level important?
- Is their education level important?

Overall, you need to choose the type of people who can most benefit from whatever product or service you're offering.

You also need to zero in on those individuals who will be most receptive, people who have a specific problem or need that you or your product can satisfy.

Without this type of information, you'll get off to a very rocky start, one that could cost you a great deal of money.

Adversely, if you know exactly who you want your advertising to be geared toward, choosing the right keywords will be a much easier task. Plus, your campaigns will be much more effective.

Your goal is to select keywords (search phrases) that form a direct connection between your product or offer and the people who are interested in that particular product or offer.

Basically, you need to determine your own expectations and then choose keywords that will attract the individuals who can fulfill those expectations.

Keyword Strategy

Following are the key aspects of developing a cost-effective pay per click keyword strategy.

1. Above all else, you need to determine exactly how much you can afford to bid on any given keyword. In order to do that, you need to first calculate how much an individual visitor to your website is worth.

2. It's not necessary to be in the number one position in order to experience a financially successful campaign. Anywhere in the top three would be exceptional, but even having your ad appear in the top ten would deliver good income results in most instances.

3. In many instances, you can get substantial benefit from bidding on commonly misspelled keywords or lower priced variations. Rather than pay several dollars per click - as you would for the most popular and competitive keywords - you could be spending as little as a nickel per click for similar and misspelled keywords.

4. Rather than choose a small number of the more popular keywords (which most often carry the highest bid prices), bid on a larger volume of less competitive search phrases.

5. Shy away from the most commonly used general keywords and locate ones that are much more specific. You might not receive an exceptionally large volume of traffic, but your overall sales conversions will be much greater due to the highly targeted prospects you'll be receiving.

6. Conduct test marketing in some of the less popular pay per click search engines. Although Google AdWords (http://adwords.google.com/select/) and Yahoo Search Marketing (http://searchmarketing.yahoo.com/) are the top two players, you can still get good solid results from some of the other services…

MIVA (formerly FindWhat)
http://www.miva.com

Ask Jeeves Sponsored Listings
http://sponsoredlistings.ask.com/

MSN Paid Search Advertising
http://advertising.msn.com/searchadv/

Kanoodle
http://www.kanoodle.com

Enhance Interactive
http://www.enhance.com

LookSmart LookListings
http://aboutus.looksmart.com/p/aboutus/advertise/

Espotting (UK Search Engine)
http://www.espotting.com

Pay per click search engines such as these might not provide the same kind of traffic you'll gain from Google and Yahoo, but they're capable of producing a respectable amount of income at a much cheaper cost.

To keep informed of all the current pay per click search engines, use Pandia's Guide which is located at http://www.pandia.com/optimization/ppc.html.

6. Always write separate and independent ads for each offer that you're promoting (these ads would be specific to each of the keywords you're bidding on). This allows you to send prospects to a highly targeted landing page, giving searchers exactly what they're looking for.

7. Take advantage of some of the specialty pay per click search engines. You'll find ones that are targeted toward niche areas such as gaming, Nascar, pets, science, and travel. You can find many of them listed, along with a brief description, on the Pay Per Click Search Engines website at http://www.payperclicksearchengines.com.

Writing Killer PPC Ads

Just like choosing your keywords, each of your pay per click ads needs to be written with a specific target audience in mind.

For example, if the individuals you're trying to reach are women in the 30 to 45 age category who live in a somewhat rural environment, are married and have children, that's who your ad should be specifically addressed to.

If your ad is written in a more general demographic nature, you could be attracting scores of people who would not benefit from what you're offering (men, teenagers, elderly).

Don't forget… you'll be paying for each and every click your ad link receives.

So the third most important aspect of any pay per click campaign (the first two being target audience and keywords), is writing ads that work from two different directions at the same time.

The first direction is attracting the precise prospects you need in order to fulfill whatever results you're expecting to achieve - selling a product, generating more newsletter subscribers, and so forth.

The second direction is a bit more tricky. You have to actually deter any and all individuals who would not be seriously interested in your offer.

Basically, you need to create an ad that will weed out tire-kickers while at the same time cause ready-to-act prospects to click over to your landing page.

Attracting the right type of individual can generally be whittled down to merely using the search phrase in the title and/or body of the ad.

If the individual is searching for "dog training collars", they're most likely to click on ads that

display those exact words. And they'll click on those ads first. Then, if they still don't find what they're looking for, they'll try some of the other ads, ones that either don't display their search term or have some variation of it.

But let's say your landing page is all about electronic dog training collars. In that case, you want to make certain that the only people who click on your ad are in fact interested in what you're offering and not some other type of collar.

In that particular instance, you definitely want to include the word "electronic" in your ad, either in the title or the body. By doing that, you'll automatically whittle your click-through results down to prospects who are highly interested rather than merely lukewarm.

Another method of eliminating almost every lukewarm prospect is to include the actual price of the item. This won't work with every product or service, but when it can be used, it will help isolate those individuals who already have a particular price in mind.

If your price is higher than what they're willing to pay, they won't even bother to click on your ad. If the price seems reasonable, they'll go to your landing page fully prepared to spend "x" amount of dollars for the product associated with their search.

The same concept of divide and conquer can be applied to any information you include in your ad. It's simply a matter of being brutally honest about whatever it is you're promoting.

That means making certain whatever you state in your ad doesn't conflict with what the prospect finds when they reach your landing page.

Using gimmicks or "false" advertising to drive traffic to your website will have only one result… it will cost you, both in terms of money and credibility.

If a person is searching for a particular item, don't lead them to believe you can deliver that item and then attempt to talk them into something else when they arrive on your website.

The most effective pay per click ads are those that state exactly and precisely what is being offered on the other side. Anything less than that and you're pretty much wasting one of the best means of gaining hot targeted prospects.

A good method of developing effective and eye-catching pay per click ads is simply looking at what your competitors are publishing. Just search using one of your keywords and then take note of how the top position ads are written.

Although you can't "steal" their ads, it will give you a solid indicator of what type of headline and text content work best for any given keyword or search phrase. Just use that knowledge to format your own ads.

Naturally, no matter how effective you think your ads might be at the start of any campaign, you'll still need to track and monitor them on a regular basis. That's the only way to find out for certain what kind of results an ad will generate.

Once you've established the average performance of an ad, you can decide whether it's worth fine tuning (in an attempt to get higher results) or whether it should be taken completely out of the running.

Solid PPC Landing Pages

No matter how hard you work on your pay per click ads, they'll be totally ineffective if you don't aim them in the right direction.

Referred to as a landing page, this is where visitors are taken once they've clicked on an ad. The more relevant and productive the landing page, the higher the conversion rate.

Of course, whatever landing page you associate with any given ad campaign depends entirely on what course of action you want the visitor to take.

Do you want people to sign up for your mailing list or subscribe to your newsletter? Then you'll need to direct them to a page that effectively promotes the capture of names and email addresses.

Do you want people to purchase something from you? Then you'll need to direct them a sales page that effectively turns a lukewarm prospect into a hot buyer.

Naturally, it's entirely up to you just how effective your landing page is. You've already pre-qualified these visitors by choosing the right keywords and publishing a killer ad. The only thing left to do is make the final conversion.

If your pay per click campaign isn't giving you the results you want, look toward your landing page.

•Is it the right landing page for that particular campaign?

One of the primary reasons pay per click ads fail to produce is because of the landing page. Either it's the wrong one (for example, sending visitors to the home page rather than a specific product page) or it isn't powerful enough to get the desired result.

Above all else, the landing page must conform to and deliver whatever the visitor is expecting to find…

If a visitor conducts a search using the term "electronic dog collars", they expect to arrive at a landing page that focuses specifically on that particular product. Make certain that's what they get and not a generic listing of every other type of dog collar.

•Does the landing page have the ability to close the deal?

If you've gotten a visitor all fired up with your pay per click ad, don't drop the ball when they arrive on your landing page.

You know they're pre-qualified because your ad did the job it was intended to do. You've got their attention and their willingness to take you up on your offer. Don't blow it by subjecting them to some half-hearted attempt to get the action you need.

If you're trying to sell a product, then you'd better be prepared to hit your prospects with some very compelling sales copy. If you don't know how to write the kind of sales copy that will result in high conversion rates, hire someone who can.

If you want people to subscribe to your newsletter, you need to actively sell it. Tell them why your publication is exactly what they're looking for. And you do that by making certain your "sales" pitch is based on the search phrase they used to get there.

Here's an example…

Let's say the search phrase for one of your ads is "dog training tips". Although you sell a variety of

dog training products on your website and promote the products through your newsletter, you also have a feature segment that gives out free training tips and advice.

Since the visitor got to your landing page by using the keyword "dog training tips", you know they're not interested in purchasing dog training products. At least, not yet. So the content of your landing page for that particular keyword should be centered around the valuable tips and information your newsletter provides.

Of course, once you've converted that person from a random visitor to a subscriber of your newsletter, you can begin to promote all those wonderful dog products you sell. You just don't want to do it on the landing page that's tied to the phrase "dog training tips".

That page should be focused entirely on what the visitor is looking for. And nothing more. If you dilute the page by adding information other than what they're looking for, there's a good chance they won't even bother signing up for newsletter.

It's also a good idea to conduct tests. Try different landing pages and see which one produces more results. Or simply beef up the content of the landing page (change the headline, add a bonus, tweak the sales copy).

Google AdWords

Of all the pay per click options, the Google AdWords program is by far the best choice for effective advertising. And, you can implement two different types of ads…

> Search Match - These paid "sponsor" ads are listed on the top and right-hand side of Google's search results pages.

> Content Match - These are Adsense ads which are placed on websites other than Google. They are displayed either vertically or horizontally on the page, based on the display options an individual webmaster chooses.

With search match ads, the top positions aren't determined by the price that's paid per click. In order to achieve that coveted placement (and move from the right-hand side of the Google results page), an ad must receive two things:

> 1. an extremely high click through rate

> 2. manual approval by a Google AdWords worker

Just keep in mind that top placement does not necessarily equate to higher conversion rates. That's why it's important to test different strategies with regard to positions as well as constantly track and record your conversions and ROI.

AdWords also gives you the ability to choose between four different methods of search phrase targeting…

> • broad match

> • phrase match

> • exact match

> • negative keyword

Broad match - Your ad can display for either the keyword phrase or some variation of it, even if the words are out of order or separated by other words. Although this works well with highly specific searches, it can result in a large number of non-targeted clicks for general terms, especially those that carry more than one meaning. For example, "dog songs" can match "songs by three dog night".

Phrase match - Your ad will display for a search phrase just as it's written, whether included with other words or not. For example, "dog training" can match the phrase "electronic dog training collars" but not "training dogs".

Exact match - Your ad will display for the precise search phrase, exactly as it's typed, and nothing else. For example, "dog training" can only match "dog training" and not "dog training methods".

Negative keyword - This allows for the exclusion of certain words by placing a hyphen in front of them. For example, if your keyword is "dog training collars" and you want to exclude results that are associated with electronic collars, you can specify "-electronic" as your negative keyword. Any match with electronic dog training collars will then be automatically eliminated.

By choosing the correct keyword matching option, you'll be able to reach more targeted viewers, improve your conversion ratio, lower your per-click cost, and increase your ROI.

In addition to keyword matching and practicing the top two pay per click success methods - targeting the right audience and bidding on cost-effective keywords - the following will help generate greater AdWords results.

Assuming it applies to your particular promotion, you can dramatically improve your conversion ratio and increase sales by restricting your ad views to certain languages and/or locations. Simply select the languages and countries you wish to target when you're creating your individual campaign.

Another method that is extremely effective with AdWords is to use your keywords in the title or the body of your ad, or both. This not only makes your ad stand out, it will attract more targeted prospects, mainly because they see the phrase they're searching for and naturally assume you'll be able to satisfy their search criteria.

Since Google allows you to create different ad groups for different search phrases, it's a good idea to take full advantage of this feature. That way, you'll be able to easily test your ads for relevance as well as polish and improve them for maximum click through results.

Of course, the best thing you can do in order to achieve the highest financial results with Google AdWords is conduct proper research. In the world of pay per click, that equates to locating targeted keywords that are associated with a substantial number of monthly searches but have little or no competition.

You can conduct that kind of research manually, gathering all the information by hand, or you can save a considerable amount of time and effort by simply using a software program like Ad Word Analyzer (http://www.adwordanalyzer.com).

Either way, the more energy you invest in your preliminary research, the more successful your Google AdWords campaigns will be. And that means only one thing… more money in your pocket.

Tracking Your PPC Campaigns

With any pay per click campaign, there are two performance aspects that are critical in establishing what type of results you ultimately achieve.

The first one is the click through rate. This lets you know what percentage of the people who are exposed to your ad actually click through to your landing page.

The only problem with this particular statistic is the fact that anyone who accesses the page where your ad is located would be included in the results. But just because someone visited that page doesn't mean they actually viewed your ad.

The second performance aspect, conversion rate, is the most important. This tells you how many of the visitors who went to your landing page acted upon your offer. For example, purchased the product or subscribed to the mailing list.

Both Google AdWords and Yahoo Search Marketing have advanced tracking systems that deliver this type of conversion data. Even so, it's always a good idea to implement an independent tracking system, one that will accurately measure not only keyword phrases but referral traffic as well.

Without tracking and monitoring your pay per click campaigns, you have no way of determining just how effective any given ad happens to be. And that means you have no method of improving whatever financial results you achieve.

Advertising through pay per click search engines can be extremely effective and profitable. But it's not a "set and forget" type of method. Once you begin, you have to stay on top of things, always calculating results and implementing improvements.

Keeping A Lid On Your Campaigns

The most important aspect of keeping a lid on any pay per click ad campaign is simple… just don't spend more money than you can afford.

That might seem obvious, but most people don't think past the money in their pocket. But that's not good enough when you're talking about pay per click.

It's one thing to say you've got "x" amount of money to spend on an ad campaign. Trying not to exceed that amount is a whole different story.

Yes, you need to establish a budget. Yes, you need to stick to that budget.

Unfortunately, that's not easy when you're faced with someone who's bound and determined to out-bid you for a keyword that you've already determined is the best choice for drawing targeted prospects to your website.

One way or another, you need to establish monetary lines that you absolutely won't cross, no matter what the circumstance.

Whatever monthly budget you've allotted, stick to it. If someone outbids you or the price of a keyword is beyond your financial reach, let it go. It's not worth the risk.

As long as you're relatively cautious and make an extra effort to bid within your means, you'll be

able to profit more easily. And in most instances, enjoy much higher profit margins.

And speaking of profit margins, you should run a pay per click campaign only as long as it continues to make money or produces the desired results. If it fails in that respect, you need to either be prepared to do a total overhaul (tweaking and refining) or end the campaign altogether.

You also have to consider your product. Is it the ad campaign that failed or is it the fact that your product isn't capable of generating substantial sales, no matter what you do?

For the most part, you should be able to determine accurate results after approximately three hundred clicks. When any ad reaches that plateau, compare the amount of money you've spent to what you've gained. Then, and only then, decide if the result warrants additional investment.

Pay per click is only as good as the bottom line. And in this case, that bottom line is your ROI… return on investment. If it's good, make it better. If it's bad, be prepared to bail out before it drains your entire advertising budget.

The rule of thumb is this…

Run a pay per click campaign for as long as it's generating what you consider reasonable results. When it stops doing that, it's time to pull the plug and invest time and energy in another campaign.

No doubt, there's considerable benefit in using pay per click. Handle it wisely and you'll be able to rely on it for the majority of your advertising and promotion needs. More importantly, you'll have the ability to generate substantial results in the least amount of time.

Checklist

- Pay per click gives you the ability to reach people who are already interested in your specific offer or product.

- Place ads that attract qualified prospects and are based on keywords directly related to what you're offering.

- Initiating pay per click campaigns will enable you to drive unlimited targeted traffic from the moment your ad gets published.

- You have the potential to bring in revenue within hours of launching your campaign.

- The first thing you should do is establish exactly who your target audience is.

- Zero in on those individuals who will be most receptive and have a specific problem or need that you or your product can satisfy.

- Select keywords that form a direct connection between your product or offer and the people who are interested in that product or offer.

- Determine exactly how much you can afford to bid on any given keyword by calculating how much an individual to your website is worth.

- You can get substantial benefit from bidding on commonly misspelled keywords or lower priced variations.

- Rather than choose a small number of popular keywords, bid on a larger volume of less competitive search phrases.

- Shy away from general keywords and locate ones that are much more specific.

- Conduct test marketing in some of the less popular pay per click search engines.

- Each of your pay per click ads needs to be written with a specific target audience in mind.

- You need to create ads that weed out tire-kickers while at the same time cause ready-to-act prospects to click over to your website.

- Make certain that whatever you state in your ad doesn't conflict with what the prospect finds when they reach your landing page.

- The most effective ads are those that state exactly and precisely what is being offered.

- The more relevant and productive the landing page, the higher the conversion rate.

- One of the primary reasons pay per click ads fail to produce is because the wrong landing page is being used or it isn't powerful enough to get the desired result.

- The landing page should be focused entirely on what the visitor is looking for.

- Try different landing pages and see which one produces more results. Or simply beef up the landing page (change the headline, add a bonus, tweak the sales copy).

- With Google AdWords you can implement two types of ads… search match and content match.

- AdWords gives you the ability to choose between four different methods of search phrase targeting… broad match, phrase match, exact match, and negative keyword.

- You can dramatically improve your conversion ratio and increase sales by restricting your ad views to certain languages and locations.

- You should include your keywords in the title or body of your ads.

- The best thing you can do to achieve higher financial results is to conduct proper research.

- Locate targeted keywords that are associated with a substantial number of monthly searches but have little or no competition.

- Tracking and monitoring your pay per click campaigns is critical to achieving maximum results.

- Don't spend more money than you can afford. Establish monetary lines that you absolutely won't cross, no matter what the circumstance.

- Run a pay per click campaign only as long as it continues to produce the desired results.

Resources

Google AdWords
http://adwords.google.com/select/

Yahoo Search Marketing
http://searchmarketing.yahoo.com

MIVA (formerly FindWhat)
http://www.miva.com

Ask Jeeves Sponsored Listings
http://sponsoredlistings.ask.com

MSN Paid Search Advertising
http://advertising.msn.com/searchadv/

Kanoodle
http://www.kanoodle.com

Enhance Interactive
http://www.enhance.com

LookSmart LookListings
http://aboutus.looksmart.com/p/aboutus/advertise/

Espotting (UK Search Engine)
http://www.espotting.com

Pandia's Guide
http://www.pandia.com/optimization/ppc.html

Pay Per Click Search Engines
http://www.payperclicksearchengines.com

Ad Word Analyzer
http://www.adwordanalyzer.com