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10 Effective Ways to Boost Banner Click-through

By Chee Wee

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Banner advertising is one of the most widely used marketing medium on the Internet. Though banner click-throughs have decreased to less than 1.0% in the past year, it is still possible to achieve reasonably good click-through of 3.0% and above.

Below are 10 effective steps that I have successfully used to help my clients boost click-throughs on their banner campaigns.

1. Employ Action Words

Use action words like "FREE" and "Click Here" in your banners.

Offering something "FREE" in your message attracts the reader to click on your banner. Banners with "Click Here" teasers and similar action phrases also increase click-through.

2. Use Short and Punchy Headlines

A short and punchy banner headline makes a difference. Always load your headline with benefit statements – offer solutions to the challenges that your customers face. If you sell diet products, try "Lose 10 pounds in four weeks!". Work on a winning combination of text and graphics in your banner ad.

3. Animated Banners vs. Static Banners

Animated banners usually outperform their static counterparts by more than 100%. Surfers are more likely to notice banners that

are animated. Example: If you have the words "Click Here" flashing in your banner, it will perform better than a static version.

4. Adopt Better Designs

Many of us are not graphic artists. We can create simple banners but it is hard to match the work of a professional graphic artist. You should engage a professional banner ad designer to create your banners. Expect to invest \$80 per banner.

The standard sizes for banner ads are 400x40 pixels or 468x60

pixels. I recommend that you design a 468x60 banner. With the clutter of graphics on most webpages, a larger banner has a higher chance of getting noticed.

5. Try Trick Banners

These banners resemble Windows dialog boxes, scroll bars, submit buttons or blue-colored underlined hyperlinks. They attract you to click on the dialog boxes and scroll bars – which you are already accustomed to doing with the Windows operating system. If you use trick banners with short and punchy headlines, you can get click-throughs above 10.0%!

6. Reduce Your Banner File Sizes

Reduce your banner file size to less than 15k. The last thing a surfer wants is a slow-loading webpage. Most websites and banner exchanges do not allow excessively large banners.

Create a fast-loading banner right from the start. Optimize your banner file size through your graphic software or an online graphic optimizer.

7. Rotate Your Banners Regularly

Always have 2 or more banners to promote each product. A banner usually burns out after a surfer has seen it 3 times. They will ignore (if not hate) banners which they see repeatedly. If your click-through is steadily declining, then it is time to rotate your banners.

8. Target Your Banners

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Place your banners on websites visited by your potential customers. If you promote gourmet coffees, place your banners on sites targeted at gourmet coffee drinkers. The quality of leads generated are higher, and more likely to result in sales.

Running your banners on targeted sites generally yield higher click-throughs and return-on-investment (ROI). You are reaching people who are most interested in what you have to offer. Of course, you can try websites with general audience if they generate substantial ROI.

9. Monitor Your Banners' Performance

Make it a point to check on your banners' performance every few days. Monitor the click-through rate. The click-through tells you how well your banner performs. Most banners fetch a click-through

of between 0.8% to 2.0%. If your banner gets more than 2.0%, it is doing a pretty good job.

By monitoring your banners' performance, you can kill under-performing banners before they waste away your advertising dollars.

10. Do Your Mathematics

Do your mathematics for each banner advertising campaign. Calculate the cost-per-visitor, cost-per-sale and return-on-investment ratios.

For example: If a website charges you \$20 per thousand impressions (\$20/CPM), and you get a 2.0% click-through (20 visitors), your cost-per-visitor is \$1.00 ($\$20 / 20$ visitors).

And if 1 in every 10 visitors buys your product, your cost-per-sale is \$10.00 ($\$20 / 2$ sales).

So if each sale of your product produces a gross profit of \$15, then your net profit per-sale will be \$5.00 ($\15 gross profit – $\$10$ cost-per-sale).

Your return-on-investment (ROI), before non-marketing expenses, is 50.0% ($\$10.00$ total net profits / $\$20$ investment). This campaign is profitable!

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Try advertising on different sites or using different banners.
Find the winning combination(s) that can yield the highest ROI.
Comparing Deal A which yields an ROI of 20% to Deal B that yields
60%, your advertising dollars work three times harder (and
profitable) with Deal B!

Chee Wee is a professional Internet Marketing Consultant. Visit his website for lots of powerful online marketing tips and articles. Go to <http://www.InternetMarketingFocus.com>

Ask Mr. D on Banner Exchange

By Bill Daugherty

Ask Mr. D on Banner Exchange by Bill Daugherty

Dear Mr. D,

I recently joined a banner exchange. This is my first venture into banner advertising and I was shocked to see my banner getting a measly .3% click-through rate.

Is this a normal ratio or do I just have a lousy banner?

Signed,

Clickless In Seattle

Dear Clickless,

Back in the good old days (three or four years ago) it was easy to get surfers to click on banners. Today that has changed dramatically, banner advertising has hit hard times.

But even in today's climate, a .3% click-through rate is extremely low. I haven't seen your banner, so I don't know if it is lousy or not. But here are some tips to follow when creating your banner.

* The text should consist of only a few words that offer a clear message.

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* Choose your color scheme with great care. Make sure your text color contrast well with your background color.

* Animation is great, but don't make it too busy.

* The two most important words you can put on any banner are "Click Here."

Now for a look at banner placement strategy:

Some banner exchanges allow you to target the type of sites where your banner will appear and some do not. If your exchange doesn't offer this feature, switch to one that does.

Banner advertising may never again enjoy the strength it had in the good old days, but you can get the most out of your banner advertising by following the guidelines above.

Bill Daugherty. Do you have an advertising or marketing question you'd like to see published in this column? Send it to <mailto:MrD@epm.zzn.com> You can visit Mr. D's website at: <http://www.freeadsgalore.com>



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