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Tips for Successful Pay-Per-Click Campaigns

By Eddie Machaalani

Tips for Successful Pay-Per-Click Campaigns Copyright © 2005, Interspire, Eddie Machaalani ROI and Conversion Tracking Application, TrackPoint

<http://www.interspire.com/trackpoint>

Introduction

Pay per click (PPC) is by far one of the easiest and quickest methods of driving targeted, consistent traffic to your website. While this may seem like a daunting method of advertising for some, it's actually quite easy and can end up becoming that one marketing method that you can't live without.

What I'd like to do today is provide some tips and techniques that I personally use when creating and monitoring PPC ad's. Hopefully these tips will help you in your future marketing endeavors.

Experimenting With Different Search Engines

There are many PPC search engines, with some being better than others. The top two are Google and Yahoo, which was previously known as Overture. It's a good idea to start your PPC campaigns with a small budget, spreading it out over a few different search engines to experiment and see where your target market may be lurking.

Generally speaking, I've found Google Adwords is better for more technically orientated products or services, including software, hardware, web design etc. Yahoo, on the other hand, is better for general consumer products, including insurance, toys, music etc.

What I wrote in the previous paragraph is very general, and you should analyze your campaigns carefully to see where they are performing their best. We'll discuss this in detail a little later in the article.

Selecting the Right Keywords

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The keyword selection process is probably the most important of all when it comes to creating your PPC ad's. You'll need to select keywords that are specific to your product or service offering, but you need to be careful not to select keywords that are extremely popular, as this may deplete your PPC funds sooner than expected.

The keyword selection process begins by asking yourself just one question:

"If I was searching for a product just like mine, which words or phrases would I search for?"

Using your answer(s) to this question as your base, you can then use a thesaurus and common sense to start building your keyword list with plurals, synonyms, similar words, etc.

To see which keywords your competitors are using, simply try searching for them. If you see a PPC ad

along the side for your competitor, then note that keyword down and add it to your list.

Another way of coming up with great keywords is to use the Overture search suggestion tool:

<http://inventory.overture.com/d/searchinventory/suggestion/>

Type in a set of keywords and it will list similar keywords, including the number of times that keyword has been searched for on Overture (Yahoo) in the last month!

There's often a fine line between selecting keywords that are either too specific or keywords that are too general. Try to keep away from these, as they can often result in wasted PPC funds.

A typical example of this would be an ad that I created recently for our latest product, TrackPoint, which — not coincidentally — is an internet marketing return on investment (ROI) tracking tool. Although the product is heavily geared towards internet marketing, using such a broad term would have made it virtually impossible to compete with the other advertisers.

The term "internet marketing" is searched for 825,674 times per month on Overture alone. Combined with the huge number of different advertisers that target this keyword, the top bid for "internet marketing" on Google AdWords is \$13.84 per click! With an average of 240 clicks per day, a single day of advertising alone would cost \$505!

Now, unless you have an extremely high conversion rate of visitors to sales, or you're selling a high priced item that usually has a high customer acquisition cost, I suggest targeting more specific keywords. Not only will this decrease your overall competition with other advertisers, but it will also increase the chances of turning your newly found web site visitors into customers.

Back to my earlier example, I chose to be specific with my keywords. One keyword was "ROI tracking", which is searched for 1,828 times per month on Overture and has a much cheaper top bid. This keyword is also more targeted to the product I was marketing, meaning that a large percentage of people clicking on my ad should turn into customers.

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It's also helpful to note that taking the top bid is not always necessary, and anywhere in the top 5-10 can generate great leads. This really does come down to budget and analysis.

Attracting People to Your Ad

Now that we've selected our keywords, we need to get those searching to click on our ad, which in turn will result in them clicking through to our web site and potentially purchasing our product.

One of the simplest ways to get peoples attention is to use their search keywords in the title of your PPC ad. This has been proven to increase click-thru rates on ad's by over 50%.

Why? Simple. If the potential customer is searching for "ROI Tracking" and the title of a PCP ad begins with "ROI Tracking", then their attention will be grabbed instantly. He or she doesn't need to know much else, other than that the PPC ad is catered specifically for him or her.

One thing to keep in mind is that you can sometimes create a more relevant title by combining your different keywords into one PPC ad. For example, I could have easily used something like "ROI Tracking PHP Script" as the title of my ad, which effectively would have decreased my click-thru rate,

but definitely caters my ad more to a specific audience. Once again, this comes down to analysis and adjustment.

Another important technique to attract attention to your ad is to differentiate yourself from your competitors. In our particular case, the majority of our competition offer hosted solutions, whereby they manage the software on their servers in return for monthly or per traffic fees.

Our product caters to a different audience, those that want more control over their software, as well as those not wanting to pay monthly fees. So, in this example, I would make the title of my ad "Pay no monthly or per traffic fees".

Next -- and this is where experimentation is extremely important -- we need to create a description for our PPC ad that will attract the potential customer and let them know that our product is exactly what they are searching for. To do this, I start my ad's description with "Track PPC, campaigns & search".

Finally, it's good practice to add a "Call to action" at the bottom of your ad. If you're not familiar with this term, its usually an instruction to tell the person to do something, such as "Click here to view a demo", "Download Now", etc.

Marketing experts seem to agree that the average human needs to be prompted to click on an ad or take action, so we'll add this line to the end of our PPC ad's description:

"Track PPC, campaigns & search. Try demo!"

Reducing Click-Thru's

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Sometimes it's important to reduce the number of clicks your PPC ad is receiving. This could be because you are attracting people who are only after free products/services, or even the wrong target market.

The two quickest ways to reduce click-thru's are to make the description of your ad more targeted and to add the price of the product to the ad.

Making the description more targeted (as I've discussed above) can reduce your overall click-thru rate, but potentially increase the likelihood of a click resulting in a purchase.

In my earlier example, by adding the words "PHP script" to the description, we are effectively filtering out those looking for a hosted solution, downloadable software or even those with a server that isn't capable of running PHP scripts.

We also increase the targeting of our ad because we now know that the majority of those clicking on the ad are looking for a PHP script, which is exactly what our product is.

Secondly, by adding the price of the product you are selling to the end of the ad, you instantly eliminate those looking for free products, and target those willing to purchase your product or service.

Tracking Your Clicks and Conversions

The fundamental core of a successful advertising campaign -- whether it be a PPC ad, banner ad or even newspaper ad -- is knowing whether or not your ad's are actually converting into sales or not.

If your ads aren't making you money then you're more that likely better off saving your advertising dollars and adjusting your ad's or using your marketing budget elsewhere in your company.

Both Google and Overture have built in tracking and conversion tools that you can use to get a holistic view of your current PPC ad campaigns. You can even use external tools which let you add conversion code to your website to tell you exactly which of your ad's are converting into sales and which aren't. This is often referred to as knowing your ROI or Return on Investment.

We need to know exactly how much money we are making per dollar spent on every PPC ad. If the ROI is positive and we are making more money than we are spending, then the ad is working and we can use this knowledge to further improve our other ad's or increase ad spending for that particular ad/set of keywords.

If, however, our ad's are costing us more than they are returning, then we can reduce our spend, change our approach, or remove these ad's altogether. It's a rather simple formula, but frustratingly ignored by many advertisers.

You must track your ads if you want to succeed with any form of Internet advertising. You should also constantly monitor and adjust your ads according to how they are performing, your return on

investment, etc.

Conclusion

Hopefully I've provided you with a clear insight into PPC advertising and techniques that you can use to improve your advertising campaigns. It pays — pun intended — to do your research and understand your target market, because the rewards can sometimes be much more than you expected.

Eddie Machaalani is the Interspire marketing and project manager. He's most recently been kept busy helping out with the interface design for Interspire's

ROI and Conversion Tracking Application,

TrackPoint

. To see how TrackPoint can help boost your revenue, go here:

<http://www.interspire.com/trackpoint>

How to increase the ROI on your PPC campaigns

By Rick Rouse

Pay-Per-Click (PPC) advertising is one of the most cost effective (and just plain effective) ways to get laser-targeted traffic to your website. For just pennies per click you can have your offer placed in front of only those people who are truly interested in what you have to offer.

There is a problem with PPC however. Return On Investment (ROI) can be quite low if your ad campaigns aren't designed properly. In a nutshell, you need to make sure that enough people who click on your ad make a purchase to allow you to end up with a healthy overall profit!

Here are a few tips for maximizing the effectiveness of your PPC ad campaigns:

1 - Write clear and concise ad copy that tells the potential customers **EXACTLY** what they will find after the link is clicked. Since you have to pay cash for each and every click, you want to limit the clicks to those people who are truly interested in what you're offering!

2 - Be creative with the keywords but be precise in the ad copy. While you want the ad copy to be very precise in describing your offer, you want as many people as possible to see the ad in the first place.

Using several variations of the wording in your key phrases and synonyms for your keywords you can ensure that your ad will be displayed for a wide variety of search terms. Then your laser-targeted ad copy will "weed out" those who just aren't interested in your particular offer.

3 - Link the ad to the **EXACT** landing page of the offer described in the ad, **NEVER** to your home

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page. If your prospects have to search for a link to the offer, they simply won't do it in most cases. The web is all about instant gratification, and the "back button" is used extensively when people click on a link only to find something that wasn't described in the ad.

4 - Test, test, and then test some more! The key to maximizing the ROI of any ad campaign is testing, and PPC is no different. Set up test campaigns using various keywords/phrases and different ad copy. Analyze the results after a few days, and then drop the ads that perform poorly and expand the ones that do well.

5 - Experiment with the bid prices for your keywords. For example, you might well find that a bid of \$0.35 results in almost as many clicks (and customers) as a bid of \$0.55! This means you save 20 cents on each and every click! Remember, your ad doesn't have to be displayed in the top position for it to be effective.

Rick Rouse is the owner of RLROUSE Directory & Informational Resources, one of the fastest growing

Directories on the web. Visit

<http://www.rlrouse.com>

and submit your URL!

How to increase the ROI on your PPC campaigns

The Pay Per Click World

Pay Per Click Search Engines – A Fundamental Overview

Pay-per-click - the Ultimate Tool to Boost Affiliate Sales

Just One Click Away!

Adwordiser

Domain Alarm – Is your site working?

The Great Big Book of Internet Marketing

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