

PAY-PER-CLICK MARKETING

THE GOLD STANDARD: PAY PER CLICK

Pay-per-click (PPC) advertising has been the standard bearer in online advertising models. It all started with the Google search engine that began using keywords that people searched in their engine to determine where to place ads through a content-generated ad placement system. By combining the power of the Google search engine and tracking keywords, advertisers could set up ad campaigns based on very highly targeted niche topics. This insured that when an ad showed up on a site, it was relevant to the audience, who would be more inclined to click on the ad since it would interest that demographic.

ADSENSE VS. ADWORDS

In Google's program, there are two programs that a person can sign up with to use pay-per-click advertising: AdSense and AdWords. AdSense is the program that publishers of pay-per-click advertising use to generate income by adding Google ads to their online content. AdWords is the program where online merchants can create pay-per-click campaigns using keywords so that publishers can expose them to their markets.

There are ways to make money with either of these models, whether as a publisher or as a merchant. Pay-per-click marketing isn't just limited to people who publish pay-per-click links and get paid per every click generated. There is far more to making money with pay-per-click marketing than that. However, the most popular and well-known way to make money with pay-per-click advertising is as a publisher, for several reasons.

PPC PUBLISHERS

The main reason that people like to implement PPC publishing as a strategy to make money online is because it costs them nothing, except time, to do. If you have a large enough audience or know how to attract traffic to links, you can make a good amount of money by simply posting links that other people will click on, and thus, create income for you. It does take some understanding of keywords, and we will go over that a little later on. Suffice it to say, for now, if you want to start using PPC marketing in your lineup of potential money makers, then PPC is the easiest way to go. Ads are generated automatically on your sites based on the content that you post. You don't have to know much programming, other than cutting and pasting code into Web pages. You don't have to shell out any money to get involved, and entry into the Google AdWords program is very easy.

MAKING MONEY WITH PPC AS A MERCHANT

There are ways to use PPC marketing in your online advertising to create powerful campaigns that attract an army of affiliate partners to do your promotion for you. You will have to pay for the privilege, but it can be a great way to generate almost instant exposure. PPC campaigns in Google start with an AdWords account. From there, you can choose keywords that are good traffic draws or can create your own based on what you think will bring in traffic to your site. You will be responsible for paying your publishers per every click they generate that brings someone back to your site.

THE COSTS OF PPC MARKETING

Unlike PPC publishing, PPC advertising campaigns cost money. You will have to pay whatever you've set as cost-per-click on your campaign, whether it's only \$0.01 or more. If you set too high an amount and many publishers market your campaign, you can end up paying a lot of money for your clicks. On the other hand, if you set it too low, no one is going to be interested in targeting your keywords, and you'll end up with few of your ads appearing anywhere. Pick something that will bring value to the publisher, but will also keep you within your budget.

You can set a daily and a monthly budget so that once you've reached your limit, the ads are no longer served up, and thus, you'll stay within your budget. Some people start at \$400 per month for an advertising campaign, others go higher like \$800 per month. Obviously, the more money you have to spend upfront, the more you will gain traffic and exposure to your sites.

WHAT'S THE REWARD?

For business people, the reward of using PPC marketing with Google AdWords is that you will hopefully get many more new customers. You will be able to advertise more of your affiliate links, and your content may end up placing higher on their Search Engine Result Pages (SERPs). If you do get top placing in the Google search engine for a keyword phrase that is highly searched, you will end up driving massive amounts of traffic to your site. You should be ready for that possibility by having email capture pages and offers ready to entice your visitors to sign up to your email list.

Once they are on your email list, you will be able to market to them much more effectively. Getting that email address is the start of your sales funnel and is highly important to generate future sales.

IT'S NOT ALL ABOUT GOOGLE

Even though Google is the gold standard by which it all started, it is by far not the only player in this field at this time. You can use pay-per-click strategies and campaigns with various search engines from Yahoo! to MSN. Many Internet marketers feel that the Google AdWords program is far too competitive for smaller advertisers, so they try to find programs that can still use PPC, but have less competition. Some social networking sites, like Facebook, are now offering PPC advertising in their Social Ads format that will give you more leeway in determining the traffic demographic your ads will be shown to too.

YAHOO PUBLISHER NETWORK

Yahoo! is one of the other big search engines that offers PPC advertising. It is very similar to Google, but less competitive. You will get paid through PayPal as a publisher. The ads look similar to Google ads, with various types of banner and rectangular ads; however, it will say "Ads by Yahoo" and not by Google on the top. It's a very simple matter of cutting and pasting, just like with Google, to get their ads on your pages.

MSN AND BING

Bing is the Microsoft search engine that is relatively new on the scene. They may be less competitive at this point, and may convert higher just due to the fewer number of people in their program. They will give you analysis on your campaign based on demographics of age and gender. You can go to the Microsoft adCenter to get involved with this PPC campaign, as well as with the MSN campaigns.

FACEBOOK

This is a far different way to perform PPC advertising, but it is highly targeted. You may not have to build a profile or a sales page to use Social Ads on Facebook, but you will have to be familiar with the interface and how people interact on social networks for the best results. You can use Facebook to get a really good idea of how to best target your ads for demographics and use the same information in other PPC campaigns.

Some people combine different PPC campaigns to bring in traffic from different areas. For instance, a PPC campaign that brings people to a Web page where Google ads are placed would not be unheard of, except that it would require some understanding of social networking sites. You would have to put good content on that page in addition to the ads, as people will report you to their friends as a spammer if you don't contribute to the value of the social network too.

HOW TO TARGET KEYWORDS

Keywords are the most important element in your PPC marketing campaign. They will determine how people find you on search engines and how many people will find you. It also will be important to understand what the possible payouts are of using one keyword in your copy if you are a publisher versus using another keyword. If you only end up with ads on your site that pay out \$0.01, then you won't be able to make a large profit. The money just isn't there. However, if you know which keywords are going to attract better ads, then you can generate content with those keywords, and the likelihood that Google will serve up those ads to your site increases.

THE GOOGLE KEYWORD TOOL

While you can make up your own keywords, it's good to do a little research and see where other people are making money on their keywords. Google offers a free Google Keyword Tool that lets you put in a keyword or keyword phrase and see how that keyword and associated keywords are performing on Google. The data is very recent, and it can be as detailed as to give you the CPC that advertisers are using on average and the volume and trend for searching for that keyword on Google.

This is great news for publishers who may want to seek out keywords that have a high CPC so that they can get ads served up to their site that make them more money. However, it's not just a case of getting the highest-paying keyword and putting it in your copy to get that ad served; you also have to figure out how competitive the keyword is, and fortunately, the Google Keyword Tool will tell you that too. If the market is already saturated with too many publishers competing for that keyword, it won't matter that your content has that keyword in it; you most likely won't make much on it. Take a look at the Google AdWords Keyword Tool and play around with it to see all that you can do with it. It is located at <https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal>.

POSSIBLE RETURN ON YOUR INVESTMENT

The possible return on your investment for your campaign is going to be limited by the amount of traffic generated by your PPC campaign. This is also a good thing to research before you set up a PPC campaign so that you don't add dud keywords that can't possibly provide you with a reasonable ROI. The tool is called the Google AdWords Traffic Estimator. It is located at <https://adwords.google.com/select/TrafficEstimatorSandbox>. Put in your CPC and the keyword and countries you are targeting and see how much traffic Google estimates that that campaign will draw per day versus the cost of advertising.

GET ONLY TRAFFIC YOU WANT

One of the biggest problems with PPC advertising, both as an advertiser and as a publisher, is not attracting the traffic that is most likely to buy your products. If you get millions of people to visit your sites and even to click your links, but they are not in a demographic that is buying, you are wasting your money. This is one of the reasons that advertisers and publishers have a tough time making money with PPC. Their campaigns are just not targeted well enough to make the right people show up at their door. Yes, they get many new people showing up, just not the right people.

Think of it this way. Say you are trying to sell your house. Would you want the realtor to bring in tons of people who haven't a clue why they're there or even interested in a 2-bedroom house in the suburbs? Absolutely not! You waste time, and if each visit were to cost you money like a PPC campaign, it could get very expensive after a while. Instead, focus on bringing in only the traffic that you want and no other.

LIMIT COUNTRIES, IF NECESSARY

While the whole point of the World Wide Web is to expose your business offerings all over the world, there's really no reason to do that for every product and service that you offer. If you are selling an English-speaking book about how to buy real estate in California for no money down, why would anyone in Japan care? You might get one or two investors who might be interested, but the majority of your demographic is going to be in the United States. You do have the option to limit your searches to specific countries, so do that, and you will get better-targeted traffic.

If you've decided to do PPC advertising on a forum like Facebook, you will have even more choices to limit the demographic to exactly what you want. They will let you include gender and age, as well as location, to help you refine who actually sees your ads and who doesn't. This makes it a very easy way to keep your CPC ROI very high.

AVOIDING SPAMMERS AND CLICK FRAUD

Targeting your traffic doesn't just help you generate more valid clicks from potential buyers, but it can also help you weed out spammers and click fraud artists. In some cases, you can set up your campaign to block specific domains from the account. It may be limited to 500 domains that can be blocked, but at least you can remove those people who are not generating any income, any targeted traffic, and who are potentially abusing the system. Once you block these people from your ad campaign, they will not be served any of your ads, and you will have tightened the traffic to make it more authentic.

WAYS PPC PUBLISHERS MAKE MONEY

PPC publishers can find many innovative ways to make money, either by PPC alone or by combining it with other types of moneymaking strategies. The conventional view is just to get a Google AdSense account and then start creating content with high-powered keywords to generate income. That's really too limiting to make most people money. There are many reasons for that, including the biggie that you need a website with huge amounts of traffic to generate enough clicks to make all that content creation worthwhile. Another reason that this is limiting is that not everyone is a natural writer, and having to create content to attract just the right ads is very tricky, even for those with Search Engine Optimization (SEO) experience. The last possibility is for someone to outsource that aspect of the money strategy, but that adds additional costs to the bottom line. You don't really need to do strict PPC advertising on your website to get the two elements you need most to have a successful PPC campaign: targeted traffic and some way to convert that traffic into income.

SEARCH ENGINE PROMOTION

When you join the AdSense program, you also get the ability to add a Google search box to any of your sites to promote your pay-per-click program. It may seem as if Google gets all of the promotion, but this is not true. Every time someone uses your Google search box, it serves up ads that have your AdSense ID in them too. If the person searching clicks on those ads, you get some AdSense income from the PPC program based on the keywords that they used in the search engine. In this model, you're still using the Google AdWords campaign, but you didn't have to place the ads or even write the content. You just promote the search engine on your sites.

BLOG WITH PLR OR FEEDS

Setting up a WordPress blog is exceptionally easy today. If you own your own domain, you can add Google AdSense to it in every post so that people will be exposed to your ads on a daily basis. However, who wants to write all of those posts? Many Internet marketers don't have the time or the money to outsource this, so they use feeds or Private Label Rights (PLR) to help them have fresh content every day. You do have to be careful to make sure that your content isn't too widely exposed on the Internet already, as that can lead to Google downgrading your site. Obtain good quality PLR from membership sites that limit the number of PLR licenses it sells for its content. Change it slightly too before you post it so it's not an exact duplicate of what you bought. Using this and feeds can help generate ads without writing content.

WAYS PPC ADVERTISERS MAKE MONEY

Advertisers are assumed to make money by advertising their products and services, but just like publishers, that's a very limited view of a way an advertiser can make money with Google PPC. There are even more opportunities to make money as an advertiser than as a publisher, even when you are having to put forth money to play the game.

PPC TO CPA

PPC has a place to put the URL where you are sending people when they click the link. Though there are now rules in place to where you can send people (must be a landing page), you can still use this to create some leverage with other types of affiliate campaigns, most notably Cost-Per-Action (CPA) campaigns.

CPA campaigns differ from PPC in that they come with different networks and they do not pay out per click. Instead, they pay out for some action performed, like filling out a survey or signing up for a newsletter. It can also be the action of selling an item. The payouts are actually higher than PPC, and it's easier to convert visitors in a CPA format because many times they aren't actually buying anything; they're just providing information. That's why some PPC advertisers leverage the PPC ads with CPA links by setting them to be the destination URL. What happens then is that they buy a CPA campaign to deliberately generate targeted traffic and the offer they send them to is the publishing of a CPA link, which costs them nothing. However, if the person does the action required, they get a payout. Depending on the

conversion rate of traffic, it can be a decent way to earn some money online by leveraging PPC with CPA ads.

OTHER PPC CAMPAIGNS

Since other PPC networks like Social Ads on Facebook offer very highly-targeted traffic by age and gender, many advertisers will buy campaigns to send them to specific affiliate offers or even to sign-up referral bonus pages. They can make money not by advertising their own products, but by advertising someone else's products and services. In lieu of that, they can join programs that pay a sign-up bonus for people and advertise that program via a PPC campaign that is highly targeted on Yahoo, Bing, and Facebook's Social Ads. This works great for dating sites and other types of niches that require more understanding of demographics. In short, there are many different ways to make money with PPC as an advertiser, even if it's not advertising your own goods and services.

PROMOTE YOUR PPC ACTIVITIES

Don't assume you'll get tons of traffic from the search engine where you have your PPC campaign. Instead, opt to bring traffic in from various sources back to areas where you can generate PPC income. That means that you are going to strategically promote search engines, content, websites, and blogs as much from your own online activities as from search engine placement. Here are a few ways to do that.

ARTICLE MARKETING

You can create articles to submit to article directories with keywords that you are exploiting on your own site or with similar keywords. This will grab significant interest from readers on these sites, and then you can send them to your website using the resource box at the bottom of each article. This is a technique to grab targeted traffic from various article directories around the Web. You can upload the same article to multiple directories using services that allow you to do that, and you will have instant mega traffic that is highly interested in your ads.

COMMENT ON BLOGS

If you have a bunch of links to blogs dealing with the niche to which you are marketing, you can join in the conversation and add a link back to your

content or sites. This way, you can get a direct stream of highly-targeted traffic back to your offers.

ADD A SIGNATURE LINE TO EMAILS

You should have an automatic signature that promotes your various online content to drive people back to your sites. If you are doing email campaigns for your products and services, why not expose your email list to the content that's free, but that also has ads that they can click on and generate income for you that way? It's a very inoffensive way to market your ad links.

PROMOTE ON SOCIAL NETWORKS

When you have a new page up and you want to promote it heavily, use a site like Ping.fm to submit it to many social networking sites at once. You can thus update your Facebook and Twitter status, include it on bookmarking sites like Delicious.com, and submit it to social networking search engines like StumbleUpon. Rather than doing this one at a time, you can automate it so that when new content comes online, it will be easily distributed across your social networks with one click.

TRACK EVERYTHING

At first, you may not generate as much income as you'd like. There is no guarantee when you buy an ad campaign or publish PPC ads that you'll make any money at all. There is a learning curve associated to what works well and what doesn't. The best way to figure out what is working is to track everything you do via the online tools provided by Google Analytics or other third-party tools. Once you understand which keywords are generating income and which are not, you will start to refine your methods and create more opportunities for income. However, the first thing you'll want to keep a close eye on is your daily budget.

DAILY TARGET

You can set a daily target on a Yahoo ad campaign and assume that it will stop serving ads when your budget is reached, but sometimes, that's just not the case. It's very hard for some companies to turn off very popular ads, and those with high CPC keywords can generate hundreds of clicks before the campaign is finally shut off. So, it's not really a spending limit. You should be very careful when first starting out to test your campaigns with low CPC keywords and see how the daily budget is tracked once it goes live so that you don't end up being liable for a large bill at the end of your first day.

TRACK TRAFFIC STATISTICS

Use a free tool like Google Analytics or your website's control panel to determine the demographics and behavior of visitors on your site. By using a product like Google Analytics, which is free, you can determine the cross-section of people coming from different search engines. This will help you to decide which PPC campaign is working better for you. It will track all of your PPC networks too. It is integrated with the Google AdWords campaigns so that advertisers can get a real close-up view of their conversion goals for each landing page. You also want to know which country most of your traffic comes from, as that can help you to better define your PPC campaign distribution.

TRACK SALES

Of course, you want to track sales too if you are using PPC campaigns to advertise your own offerings or other affiliate offerings. You may find that the PPC campaigns work best for your entry-level products, and you can save yourself lots of time and effort by trying to advertise high-income products at a point in your funnel when your customers trust you better. Keep track of your PPC campaign's effectiveness to create traffic and keep track of the bottom line too.

LEARN FROM OTHERS

The rules for PPC marketing can change overnight, depending on the whim of the major search engine giants. One day, what seemed like a brilliant strategy to create income can get you blacklisted and sandboxed the following week. That's because there are always changes and improvements to the policies that are meant to keep click fraud to a minimum. The key is to stay in touch with other Internet marketers to continue to learn how to best fine-tune your campaigns while maintaining the terms of service that Google has set up for its members.

THE WARRIOR FORUM

A great place to get started learning what others are doing to utilize PPC marketing is through the Warrior Forum. This online bulletin board hosts many expert Internet marketers and SEO geniuses. You don't have to pay anything to join and you can learn a lot from reading the threads. There is a specific forum for AdSense/PPC/SEO Discussion under the Internet Marketing Forum's main category. It is located at:

<http://www.warriorforum.com/adsense-ppc-seo-discussion-forum/> .

SEOBOOK.COM

If you are a publisher and you 're not sure how to optimize your pages for SEO, then this website can really you get started. It is a community of people involved in SEO, and you can search through their postings to find the answers to questions you might have on SEO using the custom search bar offered there. There are two levels of membership: a free basic account and a premium account. You will not be able to join the premium account, but you can add yourself to a list for the basic membership. You get a bunch of SEO tools, and you'll be able to view the content by applying for a basic membership.

LOOK THROUGH OPTIMIZATION REPORTS

If you are a publisher, it's in Google's best interest to see that you have your websites optimized to get more exposure for their advertisers. That way, everyone is happy and Google is making money. For that reason, they send out a monthly optimization report that indicates where they think you can best put your efforts to creating more effective pages on your site. Be sure to read every report, as it can provide valuable insights into how to learn the Google PPC game better.

Facebook will have its own set of tools and reports that tell you how you might be performing. In fact, any PPC company is going to have optimization tools, and you should take full advantage of them. Check them out. Drill down into whatever categories they have and really understand what is making or breaking your campaigns. This way, you stay fully informed with techniques on each site and can optimize them for the maximum return on your investment without spending too much time in research elsewhere. Once you master the PPC game, you will find that this experience carries over to all areas of Internet marketing and will strengthen your presence and moneymaking abilities to be able to achieve a monthly income that literally drives itself and needs very little maintenance overall.