

*Guide to*

# **PAY-PER-CLICK (PPC) ADVERTISING FOR SMALL COMPANIES**

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**PRACTICAL SERVICES**  
*for*  
**BUSINESS DIRECTORS**

So you have a website, but you are not getting many hits or relevant leads from it. Without spending a fortune, how can you compete with the billions of other pages on the web and how can you make the search engines take notice of your site?

As far as direct marketers are concerned lead generation is the Internet's killer application, with search engines the main medium. Search engines can be equally beneficial for companies selling products direct to consumers or even for smaller businesses selling to other businesses.

Search engine marketing (SEM) helps websites get seen, delivers leads and can achieve a high return on investment (ROI).

There are three main techniques that should be considered:

## **1. Organic Search Engine Optimisation**

Search engine optimisation (SEO) aims to improve the ranking of a website in search engine listings. When it works, and a customer enters a relevant keyword terms, your site comes up on the first few pages.

To help get towards the top of the listing, you need to fill your site with well-written content and offer value to visitors. The search engines measure your content and score it according to its value to users.

Select keywords and keyword terms that are most likely to be used to search for your product or service. Know your limitations and select keywords that won't draw a big number of competitive web-sites in a keyword search.

Have a lot of quality sites linking to your site. Links are viewed as 'votes' for your site, and the 'better' the voting site, in the search engine's eyes, the higher the value assigned to your site.

Ensure your website designer knows how to design your site in a search-engine friendly way.

## **2. The Directory Listings**

Online directories can drive good traffic and be useful in building SEO value links to your site.

Generally you pay a flat listing fee, so you can get masses of great clicks or you can get nothing for your money. Use the common sense that you would for a press ad and buy into the online directories that are significant for your industry or area and beware of any you haven't heard of.

## **3. Search Pay-Per-Click (PPC) Advertising**

Google is currently valued at over \$100bn and 99% of its revenue is generated by advertising. The ads are placed next to, or above, the free

search results. Only when a visitor clicks on the PPC ad, is the advertiser charged a small amount.

The most popular Pay-Per-Click search engines are Google AdWords, Yahoo! Search Marketing and MSN AdCenter. You choose keywords that best describe your product or service and bid for each keyword phrase. Many professionally run campaigns have hundreds of keyword terms. Minimum bid prices are a few pence, but it is a dynamic marketplace and the higher you bid, the higher and more often your advertisement will be displayed in the list.

You pay only when a searcher clicks on your listing and connects to your site. You don't pay to display your advertisement.

You have control over when your ad is shown. You can define which searchers see your ad by geography and you regulate what you pay for each click. Campaigns can run globally, nationally or locally and in practically any language you choose. With the right tracking in place you can accurately and instantly evaluate your sales and return on investment.

There are many advantages over SEO. Pay-Per-Click campaigns require no changes to a current site's content, just a willingness to pay. Also, the

implementation of a pay-per-click campaign is relatively quick — it can take just a few hours to start getting targeted traffic rather than months or years for SEO campaigns.

But there are also limitations to consider. New bids can lower the positions of other firms, and many will react by raising their bid to regain a previous ranking, so monitoring your position is crucial. This can also cause campaigns to become prohibitively expensive as the prices of sought-after keyword phrases soar in aggressive markets.

Search Engine Optimisation, where practical, is fundamental to long-term success, but if you want short and medium term traffic and sales then Pay-Per-Click may be your solution.

But be sure to remember that it is an auction. Don't lose your head — it is crucial that you pay a reasonable price for each visitor, that each visitor is highly targeted, that you maintain your exposure over time and that you monitor your results to maximise ROI.

If in doubt enlist the help and advice of an experienced professional.

*If you are interested in our Pay-Per-Click Advertising Services, please telephone us on 01225 480325 or complete the contact form on [www.practicalservices.co.uk](http://www.practicalservices.co.uk) to arrange a free discussion.*

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