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How One Company's Successful Integration of SEO and PPC Led to an Online Sensation

Complete Search Engine Marketing: Integrating Pay Per-click Advertising and Organic Search Engine Optimization

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Executive Summary Introduction

Search Engine Marketing is the process of leveraging the widespread use of search engines to create exposure for a company via its website. This exposure may involve brand awareness and message delivery, but normally it is used to garner conversions in the form of sales, leads, subscriptions, downloads and any other definition of a user turning into a paying customer. This is the core of Search Engine Marketing that lends itself well to what generally amounts to the best return on each marketing dollar spent: intent-based advertising.

Fundamentals of Search Engine Marketing

At its core, Search Engine Marketing leverages user intent by optimizing an organic or paid search listing around that specific user's intent. Instead of almost blindly placing a billboard, mass mailings, magazine advertisement or TV spot based on historical and demographical statistics, Search Engine Marketing serves up specific advertising via ad creative or search listing based on what the user is actually looking for.

Another advantage of Search Engine Marketing is that it brings the user that is already in search of you to your website—the best possible location for a potential customer to be other than in your store or office (if you have one). You can place every possible piece of information that that user needs to make the purchase right at their finger tips. You can make it as engaging and functional as you wish and allow that user to learn everything about you and what they are looking for. This helps the user experience because they see everything they need right in front of them. It also saves you time from needing to educate that consumer on what they could have been reading off your website.

The basic premise of Search Engine Marketing will provide the most relevant result, whether it is organic or paid, in front of the user on the search engine results page after a keyword query is entered. The user will then usually see a title, description, and URL. There is much more control over these factors, known as "creatives" in paid search, but organic search results allow some customizing here as well. Depending on the relevance of your listing and how well it matches to the intent they have in mind, they will chose to click-through to your site or not.

Why Search Engine Marketing?

Search Engine Marketing, as an advertising and marketing channel, continues to grow its national and international reach and offers businesses and consumers the first true worldwide platform upon which they can conduct business. Industry

statistics continue to show that more advertisers as well as consumers are turning to search to buy and sell what they need. In fact, the current numbers are rather surprising and the projections are quite impressive:

- In a study done by *Pew Internet & American Life Project* from 2000 – 2005, using search to find information was done by 90% of all internet users in the US. This number came in second to only Email users at 91%. According to March 2007 data from *Neilson/Netratings*, about 209 Million people in the US have internet access, which means that about 188 Million of them use search engines regularly.
- According to a statistical survey done by *Hitwise* in March, 2007, of the top 20 most popular websites on the internet, 18 of which are wholly owned by search engines. These websites make up for 26.85% of all website traffic on the internet. They include the search, Email, music and social media industries. The lone exceptions being eBay.com and Wikipedia.org. Of those top 20 websites, the Google, Yahoo, AOL and MSN contextual, image and video search interfaces make up for 14.23% of all website traffic.
- *ComScore Networks* reports, online consumer spending is estimated to have reached \$170 Billion in 2006.
- In a scientific study conducted by *Eyetoools* and *Enquiro*, the top three organic listings are viewed 100% of the time. The lower positioned listings get incrementally less attention as follows: rank 4 (85%), rank 5 (60%) rank 6 & 7 (50%), rank 8 and 9 (30%), rank 10 (10%). In that same study they found that the top paid search listing is viewed 50% of the time, with lower positioned listings getting incrementally less attention as follows: rank 2 (40%), rank 3 (30%), rank 4 (20%), rank 5-8 (10%).
- According to a 2006 *SEMPO* study, Search Engine Marketing programs were primarily funded by shifting budgets from offline media including print magazines (20%), Direct mail (16%), TV advertising (13%), and newspaper advertising (13%).
- Based on *comScore* data from February, 2007, Google is the leading search provider in volume with 3.3 Billion searches per month. Yahoo scores 2 Billion, MSN: 730 Million, Ask: 348 Million and AOL serves 338 Million. These statistics show that the 5 major search networks were responsible for over 6.7 Billion searches per month or about 35.6 searches per user.
- Data estimates from the *Interactive Advertising Bureau*, *PricewaterhouseCoopers* and *Lehman Brothers* show that 2001 Search Advertising spend was \$285,000,000. In 2005, that figure rose to \$5,142,000,000. The 2010 estimated projection is \$15,584,000,000.
- According to data from the *Interactive Advertising Bureau*, *PricewaterhouseCoopers* and *Lehman Brothers*, of the Top 10 US online advertising networks, 5 were search engine properties making up for a total of \$5,555,000,000 in advertising spend.
- The *US Department of Commerce* reports that in 2006, the total amount of E-Commerce was \$3,936,156,000,000.

Attributes of Pay Per-click Marketing

Pay Per-click advertising works on the premise of charging the advertiser a set auction price that they establish for each keyword. In its simplicity, every time that ad is clicked, the advertiser pays that set amount. PPC advertising has distinct advantages over search engine optimization as well as all other forms of interactive and traditional marketing. At the same time, these same advantages can be considered shortcomings as well

Advantages:

PPC Marketing is the latest and greatest in interactive and on-line marketing. First and foremost, it offers guaranteed placement. It also offers complete transparency and analysis down to a very granular level. Through the use of built-in search engine tools, commonly available analytics, and tracking techniques, the marketer can track when the ad was clicked, how much they paid for that click, what that user did after that click on the site, and whether or not that click was converted into a conversion. They can then take that data, analyze their entire campaign, determine how successful their spend vs. return was and make an educated decision on how to improve that effort.

It is this level of transparency, combined with a low barrier to entry and almost instantaneous ad response that gives PPC advertising a distinct advantage over any other type of interactive media. Campaign-wide decisions and changes can be made by quickly analyzing a set of data and making a few simple clicks.

Shortcomings:

Because it is now in the mainstream, everyone from major international corporations to mom-and-pop shops are possibly bidding on the same industry keywords. This can sometimes drive up click costs considerably. There are also cases where companies such as Wal-Mart and eBay intentionally bid on almost every possible keyword in the language, just to get the consumer to their site. They gladly take a loss on that click but take the chance of that consumer becoming a lifetime value customer. This strategy is sometimes employed by new companies looking to brand their name. This is known as volume bidding and smaller companies struggle to compete at times.

Click fraud is another major hurdle the search networks must overcome. Click fraud is the erroneous or intentional clicking on PPC ads without any intention to view the site or make a purchase. It is done with automated robot programs or outsourced to manual 'clickers.' Recent industry estimates range widely between 3-30% occurrence, however most industry experts agree the number is somewhere in the 5-10% range.

Another issue is trust: users that are aware that what they are clicking on is sponsored listings tend to assume (correctly) that site is trying to sell them something. Statistics show that a majority of searches are information-based so not all consumers will want to be overwhelmed with sales pitches on the site.

Attributes of Search Engine Optimization

Coined sometime in 1995 or 1996, "SEO" is the process of modifying the layout, navigation, content and popularity of a website to improve the chances of showing up higher in the "organic" or "algorithmic" search results. Over the years, it has become more and more difficult to persuade organic search results to your side. Ever since the rise of Google in 2001, external link popularity has become a major aspect of search engine optimization. SEO has some great merits to it which have helped it stay on top as one of the most effective interactive marketing methods around, but some of the basic aspects of SEO are also shortcomings that must be taken into consideration.

Advantages:

Search engine optimization tends to be less expensive than PPC advertising in the long-run. Attaining positive results through good navigation, content and link profile requires a lot of initial optimization work, but as time goes on and those results appear, the long-term costs tend to dwindle down. SEO has also been known to have a slightly higher conversion rate than PPC advertising, thus improving the return on the marketing dollar.

Organic listings tend to have higher click-through volume. This is an advantage over PPC advertising because you are not paying for each click. You can also use log file analysis and server-side analytics software to track the path of the user and various data points such as which keywords they used to get to the site, the conversion rate for organic results and project your final ROI.

Organic search engine optimization also has the potential to show results for long tail and obscure search queries that you never had much thought about. Google recently put out a statistic that said 50% of all Google queries are wholly unique. That means that half of all search traffic is hitting the long tail of keyword search. It is this long tail that is easy to optimize and rank well for—you just have to find it.

Shortcomings:

Search engine optimization is far from a science. Instead, it is more like an art form. It takes an entirely different individual to do SEO than it does PPC advertising. With that, search engine guidelines, best practices and algorithms are updated and change often. What may have worked a year ago may not necessarily work today. It is also not always easy to change landing pages, especially if the site has been active and already ranking for some keywords. So expanding your keyword list is difficult and altering the page that ranks for a specific keyword is even more so.

SEO is also difficult to change once everything is in place as compared to PPC advertising. It may take a year or more to optimize a site to rank well for a particular search term. If after all that time, that search term is discovered to not convert well and cannot be fixed, you cannot simply switch to another keyword. In addition, when it comes to SEO, it is fairly difficult to get things changed. Changes often require the collaboration between multiple departments such as IT, Marketing, Sales, Legal, Copywriting and SEO. The barrier to entry for Search Engine Optimization is thus greater than that of a PPC campaign.

PPC Advertising Techniques

Other than basic conversion and ROI analysis, PPC advertising uses entirely different tools, strategies and techniques to get results. There are various methods of defining and tracking success. The two most common ways of tracking success are to follow the Conversion Rate (CTC: Click to Conversion) and Cost per Acquisition (CPA). In addition, some PPC advertising campaigns focus on volume bidding for branding and testing purposes.

More of the Good, less of the Bad

The basic premise of PPC advertising is to get more traffic out of the 'good' keywords, and less out of the 'bad.'

1. **Bidding**

Bidding is the most basic strategy, whereby you bid down on 'bad' keywords to get less traffic, and bid up on 'good' keywords to get more traffic. Bad keywords can be defined as words that are less relevant and convert worse than good keywords.

2. **Building**

When a 'good' keyword is in the right position and is converting at a profitable metric, PPC marketers will build-out and expand that keyword to get more traffic from similar keywords. As an example, if "pens" was your best keyword, and you were already bidding to the top of the page, a sound principal in this case would be to try variations of the word, like "pen," "buy pen," "custom pen," "online pen," and the like. Each of these new terms will be judged and ranked on its own merits.

3. **Subtracting**

Negative keywords allow you to make a semantic distinction between two words with the same meaning. For example, if you are a company that has a keyword "windows for sale," you would not want to be coming up on searches for Microsoft Windows because that would yield a 0% conversion rate as your website would be totally irrelevant to those looking for information on the operating system.

4. **Testing Landing Pages**

Unique domain landing pages can be built specifically to target a small set of keywords or just a specific campaign to have a highly conversion-driven webpage be the destination for a specific set of keyword creatives. This method often leads to higher conversion rates because the user is taken to a page that is highly relevant to what they are searching for.

5. **A/B Split testing**

A/B split testing is performed by supplying search engines with 2 unique ad creatives and defining when and where each is shown. This allows the marketer to test which creative will yield the higher CTC Rate.

6. **Multi Variant Testing**

Landing page or multi variant testing involves analyzing multiple landing pages that deliver a different layout, call to action, conversion form or message. Often

times, simply moving one part of the page to another area and changing some of the wording can play a significant role in usability and conversion rate.

7. **Day-Parting**

Day-Parting analysis is useful when the business has specific limitations or previous testing has shown that certain ads perform better at certain times. If, for examples, your call center is operational only at a certain time, you can select your "Click here to speak to an operator" ads to only run during those times and not waste money on clicks that will yield to phone calls going to voicemail. Day-Parting allows for maximum return on the marketing dollar in these situations.

8. **Geo Targeting**

A company that sells products or services only in specific geographical area, can Geo-target ads to only run in the designated areas that you select. This technique allows users that are most likely to buy your products in that geographical location to see and click on your ads.

SEO Techniques

1. **Content**

In the SEO industry, it is often said that "content is king." Indeed, high quality, useful and relevant content is one of the main aspects of SEO. Simply duplicating other site's content will hurt more than it helps. Good, creative product descriptions and copywriting will also help generate high quality inbound links which are also an integral part of the organic ranking algorithm.

2. **Link Profile**

High quality link development that is highly targeted to the content on the page will be how to get ranked for ultra competitive keywords. The goal is to get backlinks with the keyword you are focusing that page on in the anchor text of the link to point directly to that page. It will further help if that linking site is somehow related to your site and has few other outgoing links to other sites and many back to it.

3. **Navigation and Indexation**

Navigation and indexation are the very basis of any site and are crucial to being listed in organic search results. Search engines will send crawlers or spiders to your site via external inbound links that can only follow text links for navigation. If the site is coded entirely in flash, JavaScript, or images, the crawler will have nothing to read: it can only read HTML text. Further, using strategically placed words in the anchor text of your navigational text links will help the search engines determine what the page you are linking to is about and therefore improve your ranking on that page for the keywords on which is it focusing.

4. **Web 2.0**

The emergence of "Web 2.0" has caused many internet marketers to re-think their entire approach. Web 2.0 is a broad definition encompassing image search (Flickr), video search (YouTube), social media optimization (blogs), social media marketing (Digg), and user generated content (Wikipedia). These emerging marketing avenues and venues have provided a new medium for the development of the core SEO premises: content and link development. In

addition, leveraging the power of Web 2.0 can bring significant amounts of traffic to your site.

Combining PPC and SEO Methodologies

The experienced internet marketer will understand the need to use both PPC advertising and search engine optimization in their internet marketing efforts. Here are some basic reasons why working on both paid search and organic search is important and why:

- Studies have shown that when a user sees the website and/or brand name on the search results in both the organic areas as well as the paid, they tend to have more trust in that brand. Those specific double listings tend to show higher conversion rates than those with either paid or organic listings alone.
- While the trust in the brand is established, the user is likely to click on organic listings which will not cost the advertiser any money.
- Increased impressions (occurrences) of a listing, though may not attract a click-through or conversion alone, will remain in the memory of the user, possibly bringing them back to that brand or that particular search query at a later time.
- The ability to target, test, optimize, and retest paid listings while applying that data to organic listings can yield high bottom line results. In addition, if you have multiple pages that may be relevant to a specific keyword or broad phrase match; you can optimize a content-rich page to rank in the organic listings while guaranteed results for a less optimized page can be had on the paid side.

Successful internet marketing should use both paid and organic search techniques. The difficulty is how to best integrate the goals to generate the best potential outcome. Here are some of the techniques to use:

Your main (top level) domain should always be optimized with SEO in mind. This means proper usage of keyword focus, content development, code optimization, server-side setup, keyword prominence and link acquisition. The main purpose of your main domain pages should be to inform and have the full conversion functionality. At the same time, you can build what are called "micro sites," which are sites on new domains that are built with a specific set of keywords and high conversion rate in mind. Micro sites may be prettier and more conversion-driven than your main domain sites and have a call to action or lead form above the fold right when the user lands on the page. This will encourage a greater conversion rate than your main domain that is more content-heavy and broad that will require the user move around the site. The general purpose a user's psychology has for organic results is to find information. Paid results psychology, on the other hand, expects to be sold something. These basic premises lend themselves well to the main domain and micro site strategy.

Once on the micro site, the user would be forwarded through a 'dummy' conversion process: a lead form for example. Once a few bits of information are attained, that lead form then links directly into your main domain for the continuation of the

conversion process. You can trace and analyze the user behavior during the entire cycle with session ID parameters, but analytics, forcing cookies, and tracking pixels are more ideal.

Some basic SEO elements should also be included into micro sites. Search engines base your paid search ranking mainly on the CTR x CPC (click-through rate multiplied by the cost per-click) model, but there is a "quality score" value attached to the paid rank result as well. Micro sites that are just one page will tend to rank lower than those with multiple pages that have the feel of real sites. Try and include a few pages connected via text links such as an "About Us" page, "Contact Us" page, "FAQ" page and search function page.

You can combine your SEO and PPC campaigns to target different aspects of your branding campaign. Let's say you have two different slogans that you want to push forward. You can target the main brand slogan for pages that are currently ranking well in organic results by placing them into the Title tag, Meta description, and content, while molding your PPC creatives to focus on and test another possible brand slogan.

The most valuable aspect of combining your PPC advertising and search engine optimization is the use of paid search data to quantify, measure and strategize your organic search campaign. Let's take for example a new website without any organic or paid search in place yet. The strategy will be to implement a paid search campaign and test the performance of the targeted keywords. Letting these ads run for a period of 1-6 months is usually good enough to get a quantifiable measure. For reasonable products and services, a full year may be required. Running the paid search campaign will allow you to test various keywords, implement different creatives, and determine how much you are willing to spend and what your potential return may be. You can use standard industry statistics to convert paid search data into organic search projections. This methodology, which can easily be changed and paused, will help you target the right keywords for your organic search campaign.

When your Search Engine Marketing campaign has a limited budget, the use of search engine optimization to improve organic search listings can help the PPC campaign decrease the amount of spend on keywords that are successfully ranking for organic search. This will free up budget that can be allocated to the PPC campaign in order to improve the rank of currently targeted keywords or target keyword bids to expand on the current keyword list. This will allow the paid search campaign to provide exposure on longer tail terms with less competition and less required spend. That spend can also be reallocated into organic search to target more keywords or improve the link profile helping current and future listings.

Case Study: Up-and-Coming Online Music Download Site Successfully Integrates Paid and Organic Search for a Holistic Search Engine Marketing Success Story

The legal music download industry is very competitive. There are a lot of companies vying for music clicks and traffic; however, it's worth noting that very few companies offer legitimately free and legal downloads. This company is one of the only doing it in earnest and has been officially approved by Google. Each possible relevant keyword has many sites battling for the top spot, best relevance, and highest conversion rates in both the organic and paid markets. You can be guaranteed that

the top ranking sites in both arenas have entire Search Engine Marketing teams working hard to maintain those positions in this industry.

Paid Search Challenges

The PPC advertising challenges facing this particular music download website and its company involve the complexities of scale. The music industry has many possible variants on keywords such as artist names, song titles, album titles, lyrics, record labels and many others. In order to capture the necessary market share required to succeed in this segment, scaling the keyword development and creative writing for the industry was a major hurdle requiring a significant initial investment. The company is actively managing 2 million keywords and building sophisticated proprietary bid management and analytics tools that allowed them to granularly manage keywords performance in real time in addition to monitoring the interaction of the media buy and the revenue take-in. In addition, this industry is one with constantly evolving keywords: there are always new artists, songs, and albums being released and the company needed to keep up with each new aspect. These challenges were then multiplied by the need to maintain campaigns across the major search engine ad networks in addition to some of the smaller networks. Besides the major networks, Google, Yahoo!, and MSN, there are smaller networks that required attention as well, such as Ask, Miva, and 7Search among others. Each network has a different set of guidelines and interfaces and the company had to mold its campaigns around each.

The music industry is highly competitive and keyword bid prices are constantly on the rise. Requiring the need of a campaign management team with a tight focus on conversion and maximizing the ad spend, the bidding and customer acquisition strategy was constantly audited, evaluated, and tuned. Decisions had to be made whether to acquire customers with volume bidding, base the spend on a CTC, or on a CPA basis.

The psychology of the user interested in legal music downloads had to also be taken into consideration and advanced PPC advertising techniques were employed. The company used negative keywords, landing pages, A/B split testing, multi-variant testing, day-parting, geo-targeting, web design and usability testing to optimize the campaign to its fullest potential and maximize the ROI. Landing page management was of particular importance as testing conversion rates for various pages and versions become an integral part of the strategy. The psychology of the free music download user is that of an 'I-want-it-now' consumer, and the usability aspect had to be optimized to where the consumer's experience was fine-tuned to match their requirements. The challenge was further increased when the company deployed an international campaign that required the use of local dialects of the language.

Organic Search Challenges

Scale is also an issue with organic search and search engine optimization. The particular website has over 100,000 unique pages active, 90,000 indexed by various search engines, and adds about 500 new pages per day. The use of this many pages required the need for a complex content management system. With that, the IT team, in collaboration with the SEO and copywriting teams had to figure out a way to automatically add various on-page and code elements such as the Title tags, Meta data, and content.

Content and copywriting needs were another major hurdle to overcome in the development of the SEO campaign. Since there are so many different ways to structure content around every aspect in the industry (artist, song title, album, and related information), the company enlisted the help of a copywriting team that was responsible for research and the development of unique, optimized content for each particular artist, song release and album.

Internal navigation and page indexation were yet other issues that needed to be addressed. Since these are at the core of being listed in organic search listings, it was vital to use automated data feeds for new page releases to attempt to get listed for the targeted terms on the new pages as quickly as possible. Using automated XML sitemap feeds and employing the use of Robot.txt file functionality, they were able to efficiently release new pages of content that were quickly picked up into the indexes. The navigational structure was equally as important. The challenge involved keeping older pages prominent in the page directory structure while featuring new pages to be linked off the homepage and other important pages allowing them to be indexed and valued quickly. With all this, usability had to be kept in mind to maximize the potential conversion rate.

The most challenging aspect of SEO for the site has been high quality link development. Citations or votes, in the form of inbound links from other websites, have been the staple in SEO since 2001. It is also the most challenging part to do correctly because it is the sole aspect that you cannot directly control. Ideally, they would look to acquire editorial links from related websites that use the destination pages main keyword(s) as the anchor text of that link. However, the amount of inbound link acquisition is always limited and the amount of control exacted on linking qualities is not always very strict. As a result, many links tend to be un-optimized. In this scenario, the company developed and fine-tuned an internal linking structure that best leveraged that attained link profile by imparting relevance factors in its navigational structure.

PPC Advertising and Search Engine Optimization Integration

The integration of the two disciplines started at the marketing management level. The right teams and personnel had to be in place and properly managed. This required the collaboration of IT/Web design, the paid search team, the search engine optimization team, and content writers. Open communication and sharing of ideas and intentions was a major part of mix. If, for example, the PPC team needed the installation of a tracking pixel on a new page, this would be requested of the IT team and cleared with the SEO department to make certain it does not clash with any other initiatives.

Keyword data was freely shared between the paid and organic search teams. Before SEO could be initiated, the page needs a specific keyword focus. Using impression, click-through, and conversion data from the paid search campaign, the SEO team was able to determine what the best keywords for that page to focus on would be. They were also able to ascertain what sort of search results page creative would encourage a click-through. As an added benefit, the marketing management team used spend data to determine if it is worthwhile to pursue those same keywords with PPC advertising, shift over to SEO, or do a combination of both.

The inclusion of a new page required the addition of a link on the page that is one-level above the new one and the optimization of the layout and keyword prominence.

The SEO team, with the help of the copywriters fashioned highly optimized Title tags and Meta descriptions to best help rank the page for the keyword(s). The copywriting team used their experience gained here to compose high quality creatives for the PPC team and their efforts. The IT team was also enlisted to update the HTML sitemap, the XML search engine feed and pull log file analytics data that is useful for all the teams.

Web design was an integral part in A/B split testing, multi-variant testing, and user behavior analysis for landing page development. By testing various design and layout options, calls to action, and content, the company was able to maximize their conversion rates and ROI whereby causing less spend on each particular keyword and allowing for the allocation of budget to capitalize on a wider reaching keyword campaign.

Other Search Engine Marketing Considerations

Web Design:

Web design can have a significant impact on both paid and organic search results as well as the user experience on the site. By not complying with noted search engine best practices in your HTML code, search engines can potentially decrease your organic search ranking. There are basic code elements that should be present with any site design and not implementing them can have harmful results.

Another issue that may surface is the use of complex graphics such as flash, on-page scripts such as AJAX or JavaScript or image-based navigation. None of those are search engine friendly and they will seriously harm the indexation of your pages and navigational ability of crawlers on the site.

Web design and W3C compliance may also play a roll with usability. A website with HTML markup errors and warnings can potentially lead to a poor user experience due to missing page elements, resolution non-compliance, cross-browser display issues and mobile devise layout problems.

A poor web design may also be unappealing to end-users. Simply put, if the site is unattractive and does not lend itself well to intuitive use, it will not convert well. Better calls to action, simpler navigation, clearer fonts, faster load times and a "Web 2.0" design layout will usually merit a better conversion rate.

Analytics:

Analysis of success and failure is an integral part of any marketing campaign. In the case of the internet, websites, and search marketing, that need is exponentially greater. A good marketer needs transparency in all they do. It is vital to test, change and re-test every possible data point and input. The more you can test, the more you can change; in turn, the more you can improve.

A good log file analytics program will help determine which pages are converting better than others and why. It will also allow you to analyze many small data points on a very granular level. Most modern analytics programs allow you to test most of the following:

- keyword usage
- referring site
- time and date of arrival
- user entry point
- user path
- user exit point
- bounce rate
- time on page
- site visited before yours
- site visited after yours
- click fraud detection
- crawler tracking
- funnel analysis
- conversion rate of each link on the page
- ROI tracking
- map costs, revenues, and profits

These abilities will be helpful for the methodologies in both organic and paid search. You can use this information to determine who is buying and when, and decrease the possibility of those that do not buy from clicking on your paid listings.

Contextual Ads:

Contextual advertising aims to target users by providing related ads near content that is on the webpage. For example, a newspaper site might run contextual ads provided by Google or Yahoo! along the top, side, and bottom of its pages. These ads will be triggered by certain keywords used on the page making them very relevant ad placements.

Contextual advertising is more targeted and relevant to what the user is interested in at the moment than search engine PPC advertising. Because of that, it tends to carry a higher CTR however a lower conversion rate. Depending on the publishing site, traffic volume can fluctuate greatly depending on product releases, industry news, and new stories. In addition, recent technology updates have allowed smart pricing functionality to automatically discount the amount the advertiser pays for the ad based on the likelihood of conversion as well as site exclusion abilities allowing the advertiser to not have their listing show up on pre-selected sites.

Conclusion

Search engines have been used as marketing tools since their earlier inception but as technology improves, new methods develop, and more ad spend is being pushed towards Search Engine Marketing, the complexities of making it work and the ROI succeed is becoming more challenging. Both PPC advertising and search engine optimization have unique advantages and some inherent shortcoming, but through their collaboration, each one's advantages fill the gaps present with the other.

It is through information acquired from data sharing that both PPC advertising and search engine optimization benefit and combine to become a highly optimized Search Engine Marketing campaign. With branding, implied trust, budget allocation, and various on-page testing, the complete Search Engine Marketing campaign is successful.

As previously stated, it also takes the collaboration of a wide range of teams to effectively integrate and operate a large scale and successful Search Engine Marketing campaign. Inter-departmental collaboration is essential to effectively and efficiently run a large scale program. It is this large-scale collaboration that most companies that do not focus on Search Engine Marketing alone tend to fall short and rely on experience and technology offered by a Search Engine Marketing agency.