Pay Per Click or PPC Advertising

Pay per click advertising (PPC) is essentially bidding in an auction for position on the search engine results pages. You set a monthly budget, say $50, set the maximum you are prepared to pay for a click say $1 and the search engine will serve your ads (top and right) amongst the natural results UNTIL your budget is exhausted. At that time your ad falls out of rotation.

> ***Tip:*** *Only do this as a last resort. Exhaust all avenues to come up in the "natural results" first.*

PPC commentators suggest you bid sufficiently high to get the 2nd or 3rd position amongst your competitors, but not the 1st position. You want your advert to appear "above the fold" (i.e. as the screen loaded, but with no need to scroll vertically) but you do not want to out bid everyone and pay a premium.

Additionally, the copy you use in your ad has been shown to make a huge difference to the click through rate. You should expect to have 2 or 3 ads and test them over a couple of months. You only have room for a tiny amount of text for each ad, so having variations shouldn't take too long to set up.

Similarly, the keywords you choose in the Google AdWords or campaign managers will impact strongly on the effectiveness of your ad. You will need to research your keywords at a site like www.keyworddiscovery.com before making any decisions about what keywords are worth optimising your site around.

Obviously, PPC (pay per click advertising) is a big revenue earner for the search engines – according to *Forbes* magazine it will earn the search companies $8 billion per annum by

2008. It means however that the best web site does not necessarily get optimal screen real estate, that this now goes to the web site owner with the highest ability to pay.

> ***Warning 1:*** *even if you get number 1 position it may not equate to sales. Traffic is no indicator of willingness to purchase.*
>
> ***Warning 2:*** *your competitors can click you adverts and exhaust your budget. Amazing but true. Google claims to have "click fraud" mitigation practises in place, but they will not confirm what they are and therefore can not be tested and confirmed as effective.*

Conclusion: PPC advertising is growing massively, and is here to stay. PPC can deliver traffic to your site – if you have the ability to pay.

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