



3 Rising Tide Drive, Unit A ■ Beaufort, SC 29902 ■ www.contentclear.com

Pay-Per-Click Advertising Can Significantly Improve Your Search Engine Rankings and Online Sales

*By Pam Foster, Founder and Senior Copywriter, Web Content Optimization
ContentClear Marketing www.contentclear.com*

Pay-per-click (PPC) campaigns are online mini-ads that you pay for ONLY WHEN a prospect clicks on the ad to visit your Web site. In other words, you can arrange to have your PPC ad appear in Google when a Web user types in keywords related to the products and services your business offers.

For example, if you buy an ad to promote your dance studio in Maine, and a Web user types in “Dance studio in Maine,” your ad will likely be the first to appear in Google “sponsored listings” results.

You determine your ad price by bidding on a cost-per-click basis. If your business field is crowded and you want to show up above everyone else, you’ll need to bid a higher amount for each click than if you have a very unique market niche with good/specific keywords.

If you bid high enough, PPC is a great way to enhance the visibility of your Web site. That’s because once you set up a campaign, you’re guaranteed to appear at the top of the page you choose a certain part of the time (as opposed to leaving yourself at the mercy of organic rankings, in which good positioning can be much tougher to achieve). If your competition bids higher, they’ll come up above you. So you need to constantly monitor and tweak your bids.

To get started, make sure your PPC ad message has a clear offer (a reason to get excited, such as “Save \$50!”) and a clear call to action (“Do this to learn more” or “Do this to buy at this discounted price”).

Then, follow the simple rules of PPC ads (these rules apply to Google):

- Your ad title can be up to 25 characters, including spaces.
- Description line 1 can be up to 35 characters, including spaces.
- Description line 2 can be up to 35 characters, including spaces.
- Include the complete domain name of your Web site.
- Tracking URL: a special landing page promoting the featured PPC product with a clear offer and call to action (this must be used so the customer immediately sees the information related to the PPC ad only).

So, imagine that you’re a dealer of 1950s modern retro furniture, you’re having a sale on a few prized vintage Noguchi lamps, and you want to attract people who crave these lamps so they’ll come to your site, buy a lamp and maybe a whole lot more. Your PPC ad might look like this:

Vintage 50s Noguchi Lamps

Selected lamp models at 10-50% savings!

Excellent vintage condition, order now.

www.modretro.com/noguchi

When your target prospects type “vintage Noguchi lamps” in Google, your PPC ad appears, and boozing! They click through to your site’s specific landing page that promotes this particular Noguchi lamp sale (not your home page). Pretty easy!

WARNING: 80% of businesses fail with their PPC campaigns because they send prospects to their home page, and then the prospects can’t find the specific promotion featured in the PPC ad. So, the prospect gets annoyed and leaves the site.

Make sure your PPC ad links to a landing page that’s specifically created to promote your special sale, so there’s no confusion and a better chance of success.

These are just some of the ways you can boost your success on the Internet.

To learn more, you’ll want to check out the ContentClear™ Marketing Method for Web Site Optimization, a clear, methodical 7-step approach to increasing Web conversions and sales.

Pam Foster, senior copywriter and online content consultant, is the founder of the ContentClear™ Marketing Method for Web Site Optimization (www.contentclear.com). Her diverse 28-year marketing communications background includes writing and consulting for many types of industries promoting B2C and B2B products and services. She has 13 years of experience in Web content writing and strategy, SEO, and information architecture, as well as direct mail – all for clients such as L.L. Bean, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Maine, the American Cancer Society, Harper College, AWAI, Downeast Energy and many others.

Pam is co-author of 9 Easy Steps to Planning a Profitable Web Site and several other books under the Internet Jungle Guide brand (www.internetjungleguide.com). She has won 100+ marketing awards including New England DMA (Direct Marketing Association), Web Marketing Association, Telly, and Catalog Age. She is an AWAI Copywriters Wall-of-Fame honoree. Pam works mainly with larger corporate clients, helping them optimize their Web sites to boost conversions and sales. She also offers personal coaching services to copywriters looking to elevate their Web content and client service skills and learn her 7-step Web site optimization method. You can contact Pam at pam@contentclear.com.

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