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The Power of Paid Search...

How to Succeed with Google Adwords

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Google AdWords provides the Best Opportunity to dominate any online market in a targeted, controlled & cost effective manner in almost real time...and open to all organizations, small, medium or large from R50 per day upwards!

By Tony Roocroft, June 2009 ... www.seoza.com, 011-454-0105



Introduction

Can You Imagine a World Without Google?

Google started life in the information laboratory of Stanford University in 1996 and became a registered private company on September 4th 1998 before becoming a public company in 2004.

The mission of Google is stated as follows... “Google's mission is to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful.”... and (my words) to make a fortune in the process!).

In Q1 2009 Google's reported revenue was \$5.51 Billion with 67% coming from its own website properties and 30% coming from Google's partner websites (referred to as AdSense sites).

The vast majority of people see Google as a search engine when in fact it makes something like 97% of its revenues from selling advertising.

Google is one of the world's largest media companies. Their advertising model, referred to as Google Adwords, is based upon both keyword based and contextual based search using Google's powerful algorithms. Google search engine is the vehicle used to distribute advertisements referred to as “Sponsored Links” by Google.

In summary Google sells advertising space to any type of organisation or individual. When a search query is performed Google automatically populates the search results page with targeted adverts based upon the keyword used to initiate the search query. Advertisers only pay Google when an advert is actually clicked. Contrary to conventional advertising Google does not charge for the display of an advert.

What is Google Adwords?

When a searcher enters a search query into Google's search box a page containing links to relevant web pages is displayed. Some of the links are in fact advertisements placed by Google in response to the keyword being searched. These advertisements will only show if one or more organizations are bidding for that particular search term (or a variation of it).

It should also be noted that even when an organisation bids on a specific keyword there is no guarantee that the organisation's ad will show. The failure of an ad to show is a function of the quality score of an ad as perceived by Google's algorithm.

Advertisements are identified as “Sponsored Listings”.

Very few searchers actually realize that they are viewing a mixture of free search results and paid listings or ads.



shark diving gansbaai

Search

Advanced Search
Preferences

Web Show options...

Results 1 - 10 of about 21,200 for **shark diving gansb**

Shark Diving Cape Town

www.CapeXtreme.com No **diving** experience required. Unforgettable. From R1200 Book now.

Sponsored Links

Sponsored Links

White Shark Cage Diving

www.extremescene.co.za/ Enjoy **shark** cage **diving** tours in **Gansbaai**, Cape Town. Book Now!

Cape Town Shark Diving

www.cape-town-helicopter-tours.com With Great White **Shark** Ecoventures No Exp needed. Cape Town from R1200

Great White Shark Diving South Africa | Shark Cage Diving Tours

Great white **shark** cage **diving** and scuba **diving** vacations at **Gansbaai**, South Africa. ...

The **shark** makes its swift, surprise attack from below and behind, ...

[Shark Pictures](#) - [Contact Us](#) - [Location](#) - [Accommodation](#)

www.sharkcagediving.co.za/ - [Cached](#) - [Similar](#)

Gansbaai Accommodation Guest House Bed and Breakfast

Self catering accommodation or bed and breakfast guest house accommodation in **Gansbaai**, South Africa.

www.sharkcagediving.co.za/accommodation.htm - [Cached](#) - [Similar](#)

White Shark Diving Tours

Great white **shark** **diving** at **Gansbaai** in South Africa is possibly the greatest thrill that you will ever experience. Just imagine pulling up on the boat in ...

[Gansbaai](#) - [Cape Town](#) - [The Sharks](#) - [Featured Tours](#)

www.sharkbookings.com/ - [Cached](#) - [Similar](#)

Shark and Rays Expedition

Help conserve **sharks** and rays in California for 10 days
www.earthwatch.org

Accommodation in Gansbaai

Quiet And Charming With Stunning Sea Views. Visit Our Website Now!
www.Oom-Piet.yodelweb.co.za/

Gansbaai Accommodation

Plan your trip in **Gansbaai**. Book Now, Deal Direct! CapeTown-Direct.com/**Gansbaai**

The Bay Lodge - Gansbaai

A warm welcome awaits you at this friendly B&B
www.thebaylodge-gansbaai.co.za

Gansbaai Self Catering

The best views in **Gansbaai**. Watch the Whales from your balcony!
www.gansbaai-whalescape.co.za

The search results on the right hand side are Sponsored links or paid advertisements. Results on the left hand side with a yellow background are also paid advertisements. There are up to 11 slots for advertisements on a page.

The advertiser only pays Google if an ad is actually clicked... hence the name Pay Per Click or PPC.

This is a unique type of advertising since ad exposure costs nothing unlike traditional media where costs are based upon frequency and reach of display and not a specific action. Since the ads placed are keyword based it is possible to target any type of searcher behaviour at a micro level.

The reporting presented by Google allows the return on adspend to be measured in almost real time. This is another important differentiation point between Adwords and any other type of advertising.

There are no minimum spend requirements and the amount paid for a click can vary from \$0.01 to many Dollars per click. My use of US Dollars is intentional and is the currency choice that I had to make when I first set up my Adwords account. New account holders can choose other currencies eg Rands.

Google Adwords... Simple in Concept, Extremely Complex in Practice

Google allows advertisers to bid against each other in order to attempt to gain maximum exposure in the paid rankings... ie in simple terms if A bids more than B then all else being equal A's ad will appear higher than B's ad. In actual practice the way the actual position (Adrank) of an ad shown is a function of many variables including the bid price, the click through rate (CTR) for the ad and a loosely defined Quality Score (QS) parameter. It is fundamentally true that sponsored listings (ads) occupying a higher Adrank (ie position in table of sponsored listings) will enjoy a higher click through rate so long as each ad is directly comparable. It is often not a good idea to be in the first position. It is not the intention of this presentation to go into any depth with respect to the effective set up and efficient running of an Adwords campaign except to say unless the system is well understood then the chance of a campaign being profitable is pretty low.

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When Adwords campaigns are properly structured and there is a complete continuity between search query, ad display and landing page content then Adwords campaigns can easily provide a return on adspend far in excess of 100%.

The objectives if any Adwords campaign should include the achievement of the following...

- Maximum volumes of **targeted traffic** (known as % of impression share)

Lowest cost per click consistent with high click through rates... The worldwide average click through rate is probably somewhere between 0.5% and 1%

- Lowest cost per conversion to a final action eg a sale or lead by effective copywriting and landing page design.

The reporting system provided by Google allows each of these vital variables to be readily monitored and controlled to extreme levels of detail.

Sponsored listing can be targeted at individual or groups of countries and in a wide range of different languages. It has recently become possible in South Africa to even target geographical regions eg searchers within a 150 kms radius of Johannesburg.

Keywords are the Basis for Understanding Most Internet Marketing Strategies... and Especially Google Adwords

Shark Diving in Gansbaai...

When a person enters a search term into Google that person is expressing a need at that point in time. The need could be to buy an item or review a product or just search for information by browsing. A keyword, as entered into the search box, can therefore act as a proxy for indicating a market need. Think of each keyword as a tiny tiny market niche waiting to be fulfilled.

As a simple example when a person types "Shark Diving Gansbaai" into Google it's highly likely that the searcher is interested in exploring that topic (probably BROWSING). If the searcher was to enter "Shark Diving Boats Gansbaai" then it's probable that the searcher has done basic research and is now perhaps thinking of booking a shark diving trip (ie SHOPPING). If the person enters "Book Shark Diving Trip Gansbaai" there is an excellent chance that the person wants to BUY a diving trip.

Typically users of search can be split into these 3 broad categories:

1. Browsers
2. Shoppers
3. Buyers

As a general observation (not a rule) searchers closer to the buying point will favour clicking the sponsored links especially if the ads are well written to match targeted searcher needs.

By discovering hundreds and possibly thousands of keyword variations it then becomes possible to create an ad for each of these alternative search terms (lets call them market niches) and therefore meet the initial needs of a searcher... ie match an ad to a search query.

No other advertising medium allows this possibility of matching an individual search query in real time to an organization's offering.

Consider the following:

A person who has been researching shark diving and has concluded that Gansbaai is the place to go is far more likely to click an ad that contains the words “Shark Diving Gansbaai” than an ad just showing “Shark Diving”.

Let’s take a closer look at the Google search results displayed for the search query “Shark Diving Gansbaai”. Notice that not a single ad meets the searcher query exactly. The ads talk about shark diving in Cape Town, Western Cape, Gansbaai accommodation etc. The only ad having a reference to shark diving AND Gansbaai is ad number 2 (left side yellow shaded background). It is highly likely that our searcher would click this ad and not the others. This advertiser could have almost guaranteed the click if the words “Shark Diving Gansbaai” had been inserted into the headline.

Notice that only one sponsored link refers to shark diving AND Gansbaai. It is thus highly likely that the searcher will click this ad in preference to others on the same page... notice how Google makes bold the words contained in the search query. Google will give preferential treatment to this ad because as far as Google is concerned it will make more money than any other ad on the same page even if the cost paid for a click is lower than other advertisers’ on this same page. It’s also almost certain that, in addition, the ad will be displayed more often than the other competing ads (larger share of available impressions) thus providing the advertiser with the opportunity to make even more sales.

It’s also probably true that this advertiser is paying less to be in position 2 than ads placed lower than position 2. It’s probably also true to postulate that this same advertiser could knock the number 1 advertiser off top spot without paying more for a click simply by using the headline “Shark Diving Gansbaai”

Here’s the ad enlarged for clarity.

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[White Shark Cage Diving](#)

www.extremescene.co.za/ Enjoy **shark cage diving** tours in **Gansbaai**, Cape Town. Book Now!

Based upon my 6 years experience of running Google Adwords campaigns (and despite a complete ignorance of anything to do with shark diving) I would have a high degree of confidence that I could outperform the competing advertisers on this page. By this I mean... get more clicks, and pay less for those clicks.

Conclusion: Through a detailed and comprehensive understanding of keywords, Google bidding strategies and ad copywriting it becomes possible to guide targeted searchers to click relevant ads in preference to competitors' ads while paying less for the click and getting greater ad exposure.

Getting the Click is Not Enough Even if it is a Low Cost Click

At the point of getting a click only one thing is certain namely your advertising is a cost. The charge made for a click is a function of many variables and will never exceed the maximum bid you chose to make when you set up the campaign. This click cost will vary even for the same keyword throughout the day.

In setting up your campaign it's important to also set a maximum daily spend... in other words Google will not allow your ad to run after the daily budget has been met (allowing for minor over and under-runs).

Using the above example I clicked the ad displayed and was presented with the page shown below.

EXTREME SCENE

LIVE LIFE TO THE EXTREME

Home
 Contact Us
 Go To Checkout
 General Enquiries
 Currency Converter
 Accommodation
 About Us
 Terms and Conditions
Packages

ACTIVITIES
 Abseiling
 Ballooning
 Bungy Jumping
 Canyoning/Klloofing
 Cape Tours
 Copper Hat Dive
 Crocodile Cage Diving
 Dune Boarding
 Game Fishing
 Helicopter/Fixed Wing Flips
 High Speed Boat
 Jet Fighter
 Mountain Biking
 Predator Dive
 River Rattling
 Safari
 Scuba Diving
 Sea Kayak to Penguins
 Shark Breaching
 Surfing/Kite Surfing
 Tandem Paragliding
 Tandem Sky Diving
 Tiger Moth Flight
 Tree Tops Canopy Tours
 Triple X Adventure
 Quad Biking
 Whale Watching
 White Shark Diving

Great White Shark Cage Diving - Cape Town

In the shark cage

This is no aquarium!
 Your day of shark diving begins with a breakfast or light lunch in Gansbaai. Here you will be given a briefing of the day by your fully qualified skipper.
 Prepare yourself for one of the most exhilarating days of your life!

Dive certification is not necessary and all equipment is provided.
 If you are not up to jumping in the cage you can get a brilliant view of these spectacular predators from the upper deck of the boat.
 Chumming(way of attracting the sharks attention) will then begin and then wait in participation as these huge predators appear from no where.
 There is no limit on time in which you can spend in the cage.

My Briefcase
 Add to My Briefcase
 View My Briefcase
 Go to Checkout
 About the Briefcase

Whales
 Time permitting, the boat will visit Geysers Island en route, to view the Seal Colony.
 During the right season you will also definitely have a very good chance of viewing the whales along the way.
 A light lunch and snacks and drinks will be served on the boat.
 Video of your day is an optional extra.

People who enjoy white shark diving might also like to try these activities:

- Shark Breaching
- Scuba Diving
- Predator Dive
- Copper Hat Dive
- Bungy Jumping

Make an Enquiry

5 Most Popular

Find Cape Town Accommodation

Captain Morgan
 Black Label
JAMAICA RUM
 Join the Captain's Mate.
 www.captainmorgans.com
 Not For Sale To Persons Under The Age Of 18.

The above page was reached by clicking the number 2 ad as described above. This page is known as the “Landing Page”... ie the page on which the searcher arrived after completing the search and clicking a sponsored link.

This page has the vitally important job of trying to convert the searcher into buying a shark trip.

It’s not the intention to critique this page in any depth but much could be done to improve the chances of a sales conversion. What’s important to realise is that the landing page this is where a cost can be transformed into a profit. It’s the place where all your advertising will succeed or fail.

The over-riding objective of any Google Adwords campaign is to **maximise conversions** at the **lowest possible cost** to ensure **maximum total profits**.

It’s true to say that the vast majority of Adwords sponsored links do not lead to a page that will convert well. Google certainly has an interest in seeing pages convert to a sale and is a reason for incorporating landing page structure into its Quality Score algorithm.

Summary... to succeed with any Adwords campaign it is critical to ensure a continuity between searcher query through the ad display right through to a highly targeted landing page. Failure to ensure this continuity will not only reduce the number of conversions it will **dramatically** increase the cost per conversion and will probably make the difference between a losing Adwords campaign and a highly profitable one.

The Right Way to Run a Successful Google Adwords Campaign

One of the most competitive online markets and one which gets more competitive by the day is the travel and accommodation market. This presents us with an opportunity to see how well the topmost organisations easily out-compete the vast majority of sites competing in the same market.

Before discussing the right way in some detail it's important to show a wrong way and a bad mistake that is made by many advertisers on Google. Take a look at the following screenshot... the search term was "accommodation".

The screenshot shows a Google search for the term "accommodation". The search bar contains the word "accommodation" and the search button is visible. Below the search bar, there are several sponsored links (Adwords) and organic search results. The sponsored links are highlighted in yellow and include:

- AccommodationSouth Africa (www.yourtravelcompanion.co.za) - Accommodation Options in SA Contact details & Travel Tips
- S African Accommodation (Ellerman.co.za/SouthAfrica) - Cape Town's Most Popular Hotel. 5 Star Accommodation & Facilities!
- Cape Town Accommodation (www.capetown-southafrica.co.za) - Self Catering and B&B selection book your holiday chalet here

The organic search results include:

- South Africa Accommodation / SA Accommodation Guide/ South African ...
- Accommodation SA | Accommodation in South Africa | SA Accommodation directory where you decide where to stay at great SA Venues, Southern African Venues. KwaZulu-Natal - Western Cape - Gauteng - Limpopo
- www.accommodation.co.za/ - Cached - Similar
- Accommodation in South Africa - Where To Stay
- Accommodation in South Africa | Where To Stay - an Accommodation directory for South Africa Namibia Mozambique Zimbabwe Guide to holiday and business ...
- KwaZulu-Natal - Western Cape - Gauteng - Eastern Cape
- www.wheretostay.co.za/ - Cached - Similar
- South Africa accommodation - Accommodation South Africa - AA ...
- South Africa accommodation - Accommodation South Africa. AA Travel Guides is the largest online travel database in South Africa for accommodation in hotels, ...
- www.aatravel.co.za/ - Cached - Similar

On the right side of the search results, there are sponsored links for:

- Travel insurance sense
- Melody Guesthouse Tshwane
- Superb Accom in Gauteng
- Accommodation
- Blue Crane Lodge
- Drakensberg Accommodation

The search for the broad term "accommodation" shows many advertisers which means the cost of a click is very high for the top positions and in fact for any first page position. The search term is so vague any chances of a conversion are almost zero. This means it is more often than not fruitless and costly to advertise using such keywords.

1. There are many advertisers which means the click cost is going to be very high to get into the uppermost positions.
2. It's almost certain that any of these sponsored links which gets a click will not make a conversion for the reason the search term is far too broad and is in no way identifying the intentions of a searcher. A person typing such a keyword into Google is definitely a browser. The person is almost certainly not at the shopping stage and definitely not at the buying stage.

In general unless an organisation runs an Adwords campaign to promote branding or a concept it is most unlikely that bidding on single word keywords will generate any ongoing meaningful profit.

Let's zoom in and get closer to a searcher's needs. The highly competitive search for "Cape Town Accommodation" yields the following search results page. ...

The screenshot shows a Google search for "cape town accommodation". The search bar contains the query, and the results indicate 1-10 of about 1,600,000 results. The page is filled with various sponsored and organic search results for accommodation in Cape Town, including links to websites like CapeTownApartments.com, CapeTownWaterfront.com, and CapeTownAccommodation.com. The results are highly generic and cover a wide range of accommodation types.

Notice in this search for "Cape Town Accommodation" that advertisers cover: Hotels, Guesthouses, Apartments and Villas. Clearly a number of these ads are "fishing" in the Cape Town Accommodation market. While more targeted than the search for accommodation the searcher's intent is unknown and searchers are probably browsing and at best the majority will be shopping. From my experience unless the advertiser has a very large profit margin on a sale it's very difficult to make a profit out of a shopper in this market.

The problem with advertising to a large and generic market is that click costs are high and the majority of searchers who click are, at best shopping, and probably browsing. This means the chances of a sale from such a visitor are small.

The volume of searches (impressions) for "Cape Town Accommodation" is high. The search is too broad as evidenced by the offers of apartment, hotels, guesthouse and villas.

How to Succeed in the Online Accommodation Market

1. If the advertiser is offering hotel accommodation any ad should be focused on this market sector... ditto for B&B's, guesthouses, villas etc.
2. Serious consideration should be given to ignoring the broad generic searches such as "Cape Town Hotels" unless there is a large profit margin to be had or there is an irresistible offer that can be made obvious in the little space available in the ad itself.
3. In the event of a click the unique selling proposition of the advertiser must be extremely compelling and obvious or else the searcher will leave the page and look at other ads. Remember this type of searcher is at best shopping (ie comparing offers, looking for customer reviews etc) and not yet in buying mode.
4. Target the market as specifically as possible. If your Cape Town Accommodation is a Hotel in Gansbaai then only advertise to that niche market. The volume of impression will be very significantly lower but the click through rates will be higher and the chances

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of a conversion will also be much higher so long as the landing page matches the search query and offers value to the searcher and meets that searcher's particular needs.

The screenshot shows a Google search for "gansbaai hotel". The search bar contains the text "gansbaai hotel" and a "Search" button. Below the search bar, there are several sponsored links. The first sponsored link is from booking.com, titled "Hotels in Gansbaai" and "Book your hotel in Gansbaai online No reservation costs. Great rates!". Other sponsored links include "Gansbaai Accommodation" from safarimow.com and "Gansbaai Self Catering" from gansbaai-whalescape.co.za. On the right side of the page, there are more sponsored links for "Accommodation in Gansbaai", "Bed & Breakfast Gansbaai", and "Gansbaai Accommodation". At the bottom of the search results, there is a link for "Gansbaai Bed and Breakfast / Gansbaai B&B".

For the search query “Gansbaai Hotel” there are only 6 advertisers. Immediately this means the click cost will be much lower because there is less competition. In fact there is only one advertiser SPECIFICALLY and OBVIOUSLY offering HOTELS in Gansbaai. This advertiser also happens to be number 1. This advertiser is going to get these much more targeted searchers’ clicks. The advertiser is a Dutch based organisation called booking.com.

For the search “Gansbaai Hotel” it is probable that the searcher is at least shopping and possibly wanting to book a Gansbaai Hotel. Since there is only one advertiser apparently offering Hotel Accommodation in Gansbaai the search will with a high probability click this sponsored link first and may never return to view other advertisers.

The advertiser in this case is booking.com . This organisation, based upon my involvement with this online market sector, completely dominates the PPC accommodation scene in South Africa. The same organisation has very little SEO presence. Booking.com almost certainly pay dramatically less for a click than other advertisers on the same page for the simple reason Google makes more money from the high click through rate (CTR) enjoyed by boking.com. Because the CTR is so much higher (probably by a factor of 10) Google will make more money from displaying booking.com’s ads in the top position for literally 1/10th what other advertisers might be paying.

IMPORTANT CONCEPT TO UNDERSTAND: Google aims to maximise its income per 1,000 page impressions. It is not only about the value of a click from Google’s perspective. This is a critically important concept to understand. As a simple example an ad getting a CTR of 3% can pay as little as 1/3rd the cost of a click by a competitor having a CTR of only 1%. In short Google handsomely rewards advertisers with high CTR.

Take a look at the landing page when the above booking.com sponsored link is clicked...

The screenshot shows the Booking.com interface for a search in Gansbaai. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the Booking.com logo and language/currency options. Below that, a search bar is filled with 'Gansbaai'. The main content area is divided into three sections: a search filter bar with date pickers and a 'SEARCH' button; a map section titled 'In and around Gansbaai' showing distances to nearby locations like Cape Town and Die Kelders; and a 'Featured Hotels in Gansbaai' section listing three hotels: Whalesong Lodge (4.5 stars, ZAR 840), Whale Sanctuary Lodge (4.5 stars, ZAR 650), and Misty Waves Boutique Hotel (4.5 stars, ZAR 640). A customer review for the Misty Waves Boutique Hotel is also visible.

An excellent example of a landing page **created on the fly** to match the searcher's query and intent. It will be very difficult for competitor to beat this organisation. Booking.com is quite possibly also paying less for a click than any other advertiser on the page.

This is an example of an excellent landing page. The only content is relevant to Gansbaai... not Cape Town, not Hout Bay just Gansbaai and surrounds. Booking.com have met the immediate need of the searcher who queried "Gansbaai Hotel", saw an ad targeted to "Gansbaai Hotel" and when the ad was clicked was taken immediately to a page showing "Gansbaai Hotels" ... and related Gansbaai accommodation and other Gansbaai relevant information that would appeal to the same searcher. Why, under these circumstances, would a searcher/buyer want to consider other sponsored link offers on the search results page?

Conclusion

Competition between organisations on the Internet is significant and growing. If any commercial organisation with a serious intent to use the internet to attract shoppers and buyers must be prepared to discover, at a micro level, search terms (keywords) being used by the target market. Once identified these keywords should form the basis for a highly targeted advertising campaign which meets the intentions of the searcher right through to the landing pages... the concept of keyword continuity. Failure to do this will probably result in the advertising campaign being sub-optimal at best, and a complete loss making adventure at worst. The biggest single mistake made by Adwords advertisers is to make a searcher who has already completed a search to search again. For this reason alone it is a bad idea in general to send paid visitors to a home page.

