

ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS



Look Before You Leap: Strategies for Developing an Effective Online Campaign

[By Lance Podell, Chief Executive Officer of Seevast]

Amid all the increased competition to build market share, businesses of all sizes are feeling the pressure to dedicate significant portions of their advertising budgets to online campaigns.

Also driving this pressure is the incredible revenue opportunity for businesses to target consumers online, even if the web isn't their primary sales channel. In fact, eMarketer estimates that online-ad spending will reach \$36.5 billion in 2011.

Allocating dollars for an online campaign can pose certain challenges. Most businesses don't have the resources in-house to effectively run a year-long marketing campaign, let alone the staff to manage an online campaign and determine its return on investment (ROI). This is a job in itself. Additionally, the task of designing, implementing, and managing an online campaign can be complex.

However, that doesn't mean the challenges outweigh the opportunities. There are many innovative targeting tools available for businesses seeking to increase their visibility online that won't break the bank. Consider these simple rules and tips when embarking on your campaign, and you'll be armed for success.

Start with the Basics.

A successful online ad campaign will fail without clearly defined, quantifiable objectives that you can measure against. Think about and determine your campaign goals. Of course you want to convert clicks into sales, but what other business objectives are you trying to achieve?

Define Your Audience.

There are many innovative tools available today to marketers that can help target their campaigns. So it goes without saying that one of the first steps to success is defining your audience. Once you know this, it's much easier to determine where your ads need to be.

Speak the Language.

Every industry has its own native language. The world of online advertising is no different. There are several different targeting strategies, such as "behavioral," "content," "keyword," "local," and "geo-targeting." You'll also hear acronyms like "CPM" and "CPC" thrown around. Take the time to educate yourself so you can speak the same tongue.

Integration is Key.

There are usually several ways to answer a question. The same idea holds true in advertising, where your customers complete the buying cycle in various ways. Often, an integrated marketing strategy will yield better results than limiting yourself to a single targeting tool.

Diversify, Diversify.

Everyone spends time online searching for information, but don't forget that your

everyday search engines only represent a small portion of the web. The rest of the web is made up of content pages, which refer to anything that is published on the web, whether it's by Joe Smith or Dow Jones. Search engines command a lot of eyeballs, but it's important to diversify beyond search to target the content pages your audience reads.

Remember, You're in Control.

When selecting a company to work with to design your online campaign, be sure to ask about the advertiser tools it offers. These are the tools that allow you to schedule exactly when and where your advertisements appear on the web. For example, if you are running a holiday campaign, you should have the tools at your fingertips to "turn on" and "turn off" your campaign during the holiday months. You always want to be in the driver's seat.

Combine Ad Formats.

If you've been on the web, you've seen many of the different types of ad formats designed to break through the clutter and grab your attention. For example, Pulse 360 distributes content-targeted sponsored links, which are the most effective form of online advertising. A good combination would be to buy a mix of CPM-display and CPC-sponsored links. CPM refers to the amount an advertiser pays each time a user views



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the ad, while CPC stands for cost-per-click, or the payment made each time a user clicks on the ad.

Explore Uncharted Territory.

It's hard to ignore the explosion of user-generated content on the web in the form of blogs and on social networks like MySpace.com and Friendster.com. For example, according to Alexa, Friendster has seen a 15% increase in membership in the past three months. And according to eMarketer, nearly a third of social network users aged 14 to 40 have increased their Internet usage. While many traditional brands are uncertain about advertising on blogs and social networks, if approached

correctly, there is a certain opportunity to tap the excitement in these communities. Definitely explore this channel to determine if it's right for your business.

Measure for Success.

Track your ad spend and the ROI of every ad purchase religiously. This will help you identify which ad format is giving you the best conversion rate for your dollars. It is important to set up unique tracking for each type of online advertising you are buying.

About Pulse 360:

Pulse 360 is the content-targeted sponsored-links innovator that gives

advertisers the control, tools, flexibility, and support they need to get results with certainty and offers publishers a partner that can help them monetize their websites. The company started as the new business name for the content-targeted sponsored-links business that was previously part of Kanoodle, which has been around since 1999. Pulse 360 is now a unit of Seevast, an operating company created by industry-recognized professionals to provide innovative web-based marketing services.