

DIGITAL AD DESIGN, CREATION, AND MARKETING RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

The digital age has brought tools that few of us understand or use to either market products and services, or research markets and customers. In 2001, Ray Kurzweil outlined The Law of Accelerated Returns where he described the exponential growth of development and applications of technology [12]. In this view, Gordon Moore's Law that technology will yield twice as much capacity in circuits every 24 months may be applied to Google [11]. This firm is leading the way in new modes of advertising research and development using the web. The tools available range from search engines as research tools, test marketing landing pages for head-to-head testing of effectiveness, measuring competition intensity, identifying and measuring trends, estimating traffic flow, all offered by Google. These tools allow marketers and marketing researchers to directly measure relevance of ad design elements, to improve ad campaign performance, and to help boost ROI for online ads. This paper describes the digital tools available at Google and their use in marketing researching and advertising online.

GOOGLE HISTORY AND CORPORATE OVERVIEW

A look back at how Google was started shows in 1996 Larry Page and Sergey Brin collaborated on a Stanford search engine called BackRub. By 1998, these two Stanford University graduate students had adopted a mission, "to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible." They created what today is known as Google, a play on the word "googol", which is a mathematical term for 1 followed by 100 zeros. Today, there are over 20,000 employees worldwide with over 50 office locations around the globe. The corporate headquarters nicknamed Googleplex is located in Mountain View, CA [3].

PAGE RANK

So why are some pages listed higher than others by Google? Before you even enter your query in the search box, Google is scanning the web information with software programs called crawlers, or "Googlebots." A crawler visits a page, copies the content and follows the links from that page to the pages linked to it, repeating this process over and over until it has crawled billions of pages across the world-wide-web [3].

“PageRank” is an algorithm tool used by Google to determine the importance of a webpage. This is how the search engine organizes and ranks results of the search query. Companies with a higher ranking are usually the first to be clicked because most users do not click websites unless they are on the first page of results. To make pages easier to find by Google, webmasters and businesses have started to utilize principles called search engine optimization (SEO). SEO is both important and relevant because it means more traffic and potential customers when optimization occurs. A very important component of SEO is creating pages with unique and accurate page titles. These page titles need to be brief yet descriptive. Web site developers should be using meta-tags to provide both search engines and users with a summary of what a page is about. The website Universal Resource Locator (URL), or web address such as www.google.com, should be comprised of important descriptions not plain text. Using heading and image alt-tags appropriately will help crawlers find and index website content.

A webmaster is able to submit an xml site map, which causes Google to automatically crawl pages in a website. Google Webmaster Tools will help programmers better understand website html and enhance coding. There are also many other resources within this service to make a site run faster and easier, enabling customers to become more engaged [4].

ADWORDS

Effective ads lead to more sales. In the last decade, technology caused online advertising to evolve dynamically. Now with AdWords, advertisers can create basic text ads that then appear beside related search results. AdWords are the advertisements shown as ‘Sponsored Links’ in blue at the top right of a Google search result page. Anyone can create and run ads for a business, with a flexible budget. Businesses only need to pay for ads when clicked, not by the times the ad is displayed. This approach is called ‘pay-per-click.’

Marketers are able to reach an audience with targeted geographic specifications. For instance, marketers can just run the ad to locations within a 50 miles radius of a business. Remember, it is critical to write ads which make people look twice. Promotions using push tactics or a call to action with buzz words such as “free” or “discount” tend to be more effective. Customers need to understand what keywords to use to reach specific products or service or to find a specific website. Keyword selection needs to be specific because using vague or broad keywords lowers performance. Essentially, vague keywords generate more impressions but less relevant clicks.

Why should marketers pay for ads which are not describing what the customer really needs? Using direct descriptive keywords targets a product. Campaigns can be organized by themes and separating products or brands to highlight a specific product for advertisement. For instance, a print company, instead of running a campaign for the entire product line, can separate an AdWord campaign into segments such as business cards, brochures and publications. Advertisers can then choose more relevant keywords to fit into each product category, allowing potential customers to efficiently find exactly the pages related to the search topic.

Expected success rates can be calculated by using the Traffic Estimator. This tool shows the estimated click volume by region for any given search keyword. This can be helpful when determining what budget to use for a campaign. If uncertainty or disagreement exists for an AdWord campaign, the Keyword Tool can be employed to generate relevant words by analyzing a website's content.

A great ad is only as good as the page used to send prospective customers to a great website. Every campaign should be anchored by a landing page which emphasizes the theme and product described in the ad campaign. Helping users find what they seek in a fast and easy way helps convert more sales.

Campaign performance can be tracked with analytic conversion tracking tools. These tools measure success by analyzing which keywords and ads get the best results. Marketers and researchers can visit the AdWords online classroom to learn how to use this important tool [5].

GOOGLE INSIGHTS

Informative marketing research leads to more knowledgeable business decisions. Google Insights for Search is a product allowing marketers to compare search volume patterns across specific regions, product categories, and time frames. This allows insight into search patterns across Google. By using the Geography Tool marketers determine what countries and cities customers are concentrated in for a given industry. Geographic segments can be defined where designated search terms are used to define a "hot spot." Tracking can use a time frame to better anticipate expected demand for upcoming seasons. Additionally, search volume market share can be measured by comparing search results for the business to competitors. To determine if an advertising campaign changed awareness, spikes can be monitored in a product or ad web site visits over time and see if an advertisement inflated searches [6].

GOOGLE ANALYTICS

Google Analytics is used to determine how potential customers find, interact, and become customers on your site? As an advertiser using Google Analytics, helpful measurements are available to assist understanding site statistics and overall website performance. Data is available for analysis to measure where visitors originate and how long they spend on individual pages in the website. This means countries, states, cities, or towns originating customers and searches can be identified. Data can also be accessed which is important to web design teams such as the operating system viewers are running, the browser type and the page resolution size. This data shows if customers are originating searches from a computer or mobile phone [7]. These analytic data can help answer such questions as:

1. What channels do customers go through before purchasing a product?
2. How do customers find out about a website and discover product information?
3. How can marketers optimize the path from search to sale allowing customers to find what is sought faster?

WEBSITE OPTIMIZER

Website Optimizer is a free testing platform that increases conversion rates. Typically, the page content that needs testing is used to create a version A and B with different headlines, colors, images or verbiage. Google then reports data and advice helping to identify which combination of design elements works best. Conversion rates on the two alternative designs can be monitored. This measurement helps decrease cost per new customer acquisition because the best version is capturing the attention of potential customers more effectively. Without Website Optimizer, many designers and businesses work by hunch. Now webmasters can experiment on a sample population and leverage empirical data. As always, letting potential and actual customers decide which site layout and design is best is optimum [8].

Here are some useful optimization tips yielding needed data:

1. Test a page with a lot of traffic
2. Keep your independent variables consistent and test a bold headline or dominate image
3. Using a page where customers are asked to complete a specific task or sale

ANDROID OPERATING SYSTEM

The Droid Phone is creating more customers on new devices constituting another marketing and research innovation from Google. Recently Google developed the Android operating system for cell phones. There are an estimated 32,000,000 Android phones sold to date [2]. The system is a free, open source mobile platform so any phone company can install and use it on existing hardware. Some research suggests more people are using their mobile devices to view content online rather than their laptops or computers. Mobile advertising has been on a steady incline since its introduction. Advertising Age explains there has been a 79% increase in mobile ad spending since last year. This is a new way to engage target audiences. As with computers, advertisers can segment potential customers by region, phone platform, and app usage. Advertising publishers can then receive instant quantitative results which analyze the campaign. This allows ad publishers to measure how efficient the message was. Mobile advertising proves to be a low cost alternative allowing businesses to find a plan to fit any budget [1].

GOOGLE TV

This past year, Google has developed a new media platform known as Google TV. This innovation is changing entertainment and opening up new business opportunities. Sony and Logitech are integrating the technology into televisions, allowing users to watch videos, view photos and play games. It is also possible to search on these televisions and find web content straight from any room in the house or apartment. The world's websites are becoming tweaked and optimized for this new platform in order to reach new users in this evolving market. Businesses can develop applications which run on the Google TV system, extending reach and integrating more seamlessly into customer's lifestyles. These apps can be found by customers on the Android Network, which is basically Google's version of Apple's iTunes store. Prime data on customers can be collected to understand viewing and searching habits [9].

WHY IS DIGITAL AD RESEARCH AND DESIGN RELEVANT?

Latest data from Internet World Statistics [10] show there are approximately 1,966,514,816 internet users and about 68.4 million mobile web users with these numbers growing exponentially. Businesses are developing site content which is optimized for phones. Many companies are even creating mobile Apps which can be downloaded and used to generate consumer awareness. Mobile marketing helps create a buzz about your products or services because your offers will reach consumers while they are shopping, socializing, and making buying decisions. More than ever consumers are on the go, so creative strategies need to be adapted to fit the lifestyle of versatile consumers.

CONCLUSION

Digital media technology and online advertising is a new and rapidly evolving field of marketing. These new tools offered by Google are allowing businesses to more effectively connect to consumers in a completely new way. Now customers can find information faster with a better overall experience. Additionally, advertisers can make decisions on real time analytical data. It is possible to monitor ad campaigns and segment target customers in real time. Businesses can do more with a limited budget because it is now possible to control pay per click advertising. Optimization tools offered by Google can make company sites intuitive and increase customer acquisition and retention while limiting click-through visits. Using these new digital tools makes marketers able to more effectively promote a business and drive revenues.

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