PAY PER CLICK:
you don't always get what you pay for.

For many business people who are using their websites as a marketing vehicle, the ability to drive targeted visitors to their sites is the largest obstacle to success.

It's THE question we get asked most often at xLAB is: "How do I get more traffic to my site?" Many entrepreneurs who have no access to professional advice on website promotion resort to **pay per click (PPC) advertising** to drive traffic to their sites.

Pay per click ads are the columns of text ads you see on some search engines and websites, usually from Google. As a business person, you can pay Google or other search engines to place ads for your products and services on the search engines' results pages (sponsored links) or on suitably themed websites owned by other compatible but non-competing businesses (Ads by Google). The idea is that the site visitor will be suitably intrigued by your ad to click on it and be **taken to your website to view your offer**. The benefit is you only pay when someone clicks the ad.

PPC can seem like the perfect solution for smaller companies because the upfront costs are nominal and the business person has complete control over the amount of money spent on the ads. The perception is that since the ads are placed on sites with complimentary content, click-throughs to your site will result in sales.

However, getting someone to come to your site alone will not necessarily earn you any revenue. You've got to turn that visitor into a **paying customer** (convert them). If your visitors are not motivated or not the right type of visitor you will not get them to take action on your site. So it is quite possible to spend hundreds or thousands of dollars each month on PPC and never make a sale! Not a very impressive return on your investment.

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"GET MONEY FOR NOTHING & CLICKS FOR FREE"

Fortunately there is a better way of driving qualified traffic to your site, and best of all it's **free**. No need to **pay** per click. Plus you will likely convert a **higher percentage** of visitors, and every conversion will be profitable.

In the web marketing industry this traffic generation method is known as "organic" or "natural search engine optimization", or SEO. It's all about free clicks – getting qualified traffic to your site without having to pay for any incremental costs.

Organic SEO techniques help ensure your website appears on the first few pages of search engine results; and that the information displayed about your business in these results is compelling and attractive to ensure a click onto your site. These natural searches to your site are more likely to result in sales than PPC clicks! How do we know this?

SURVEY SAYS…

There are now volumes of research to prove that free organic SEO is far **more effective** in sending higher numbers of *better qualified* traffic to your site. For example, 80% of search engine users report they **never** click on PPC results[1]. So while you may only be paying for clicks, you're not getting all the clicks you could be.

If you are like most sites, you convert about 1% of your visitors, so you can easily calculate how many visitors you need to meet your sales projections. With pay per click ads, you're effectively ignoring 80% of your potential customers.

But that's not the most critical statistic. You are also not getting the most qualified traffic. The overall conversion rate of sites using PPC is 3 times less than that of sites using organic SEO[2]. Or putting it another way, you'll **make 3 times as many sales using free organic SEO**, than you would if you used PPC. What would a 33% in sales mean to your business?

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[1] The iProspect Search Engine User Behavior Study, April 2006
[2] SEMPO 2006

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Compounding this, search engine users have become very sophisticated in the last few years. They have come to distrust the relevancy of paid ads on their search results pages. A full 72.3% of search engine users feel **Google's organic listings are more relevant** than their paid results[3]

The longer an individual has been using the Internet, the more relevance they place organic search results. Sixty three point two percent of respondents in a recent survey by iProspect, who have used the Internet for more than 6 years picked a natural search result as the one they found most relevant to a sample query. So if you don't know your target audience, PPC may be costing you a lot more than you think.

OTHER BENEFITS…

Organic SEO positions your website **for long-term passive revenue** – a minimal amount of regular site maintenance each month sustains your continuous stream of those highly qualified and eager to buy visitors. With PPC, once your budget is consumed, the traffic stops.

With the costs of PPC increasing by about 20% each year, and the cost of most competitive search terms is becoming increasingly prohibitive for smaller business to bid on. Relying on PPC as your main traffic generation method can end up being a very costly proposition, with lower and lower returns.

THE BOTTOM LINE…

Consistently, survey results from a variety of sources indicate that despite the amount of time, effort and money being invested by web businesses into PPC, organic search results are clicked on more often than paid search advertisements by the vast majority of users of the 4 major search engines. These users account for over 90% of Internet searches.

Clearly if you not yet investing in natural search engine optimization, you are potentially missing out on the preponderance of the traffic and search

[3] iProspect, Survey Sampling International, WebSurveyor, and Strategem Research, April 2004

audience you could be garnering on the keywords and phrases that are most relevant to the products or services you are marketing online.

Pay once to have your site optimized for organic search, and generate better quality traffic with higher conversions for life!

xLAB Interactive *helps entrepreneurs use technology and the power of the Internet to turn their passion, expertise and knowledge into streams of passive revenue.*

Contact xLAB at x@xlabinteractive.com for a free website assessment.

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