Advertising

Getting people to identify themselves as interested in your product is the critical first step of your marketing efforts. Advertising is what brings them into your sales funnel, and everything after that is more generally classified as marketing.

Advertising can be simplified as a three-step process:

1. Identify the people for whom your product holds the most appeal.
2. Determine where on the Internet these people are likely to be found.
3. Put your lead-generation advertising in front of them in those places.

With the Internet, all three of these steps can be accomplished in an astonishingly short time frame—I'm talking *hours* instead of weeks or months!

What's more, the Internet gives you the power to accurately measure the effectiveness of your advertising. You can measure the number of visitors from each advertising source, cost per visitor, revenue per visitor, and most important, your ROI.

This level of advertising accountability allows you to quickly terminate the "losing" advertising and to scale up spending with your "winners."

Advertising on the Internet generally falls under one of the three main models:

1. *Cost per impression* (CPM). The *M* is for the Roman numeral denoting "1,000," and thus this is measured as a cost per 1,000 impressions. An impression is when a potential prospect views your advertising, such as a banner advertisement on a web site. Your advertising medium could be a static banner ad, a "media" banner, a pop-up ad (we all hate those, but they're still effective!), solo e-mails sent to a list, a classified ad in an online newsletter, and so on.

2. *Cost per action* (CPA). This is where you pay for some kind of action taken by the prospect, such the submission of a registration form. Your advertisement might, for instance, offer prospects a free "white paper" or "sample." You would not incur any costs unless/until the prospect filled out and submitted an online registration form supplying his or her contact information. In essence, you're purchasing a real-time lead, and you would generally have a system in place to respond immediately to a prospect's inquiry.

3. *Cost per click* (CPC). With this model, you are paying only when someone clicks on your ad. It might be a text ad, banner, or even video advertisement. This model of advertising is most often associated with the

pay-per-click search engines such as Yahoo! Search Marketing and Google AdWords.

CPM NETWORKS

Each of these companies has contracted with hundreds or thousands of web sites to provide them advertising revenue. For example, I recently went to CNN.com and clicked on an advertisement there—my browser was redirected through the doubleclick.net ad server to the advertiser's landing page.

For each of these companies, you can sign up for an advertising account and submit your advertising creative (text ads, banner ads, and so on), and they manage the placement and rotation of those advertisements on their network sites. You pay for the number of times your text/banner ad is displayed.

http://bannerCAST.com/
http://www.adbrite.com/
http://adsational.com/
http://www.bluelithium.com/
http://www.mammamediasolutions.com/publishers/
    graphic/index.html
http://www.tribalfusion.com/
http://flatfeespectrum.com/
http://www.burstmedia.com/release/advertisers/advertiser.asp
http://www.doubleclick.net/
http://www.theadstop.com/
http://www.hyperbidder.com/

http://www.pradnetwork.com/
http://www.onresponse.com/
http://www.valueclickmedia.com/
http://www.adjungle.com/

CPA NETWORKS

Rather than contracting with web sites, per se, these companies recruit affiliates (see "Affiliate Marketing") to promote performance-based offers. These promotions are frequently done via e-mail. The affiliates (and the company) get paid only when the prospect completes some specified action such as submitting a registration form or downloading some software. As the advertiser, you would set the specific action that must be taken by the prospect.

The less intrusive the action, the less you would pay. For instance, some advertisers will pay whenever someone submits a simple form that asks only for the prospect's zip code. Because there is little resistance to submitting this kind of information, the leads thus generated aren't as valuable as leads that include an e-mail address or phone number.

However, you may find that the submission of a zip code is enough to engage prospects in your sales process and entice them to make a bigger commitment through the submission of their contact information.

As the advertiser, you can specify whether or not your offer can be *incentivized*—which refers to the practice of the promoter giving some kind of bonus to anyone who completes

the prescribed action. It generally yields a higher number of lower-cost, less-valuable leads.

http://leadermarkets.com/
http://modernclick.com/
http://www.websponsors.com/
http://www.4fc.us/
http://www.cpaempire.com/
http://www.cpase.com/
http://www.hydramedia.com/
http://www.focalex.com/
http://www.neverblueads.com/
http://www.offerweb.com/
http://www.primaryads.com/
http://www.primeq.com/
https://www.affiliatefuel.com/advertisers/pricing.html

CPC ADVERTISING

With CPC (also known as *pay per click,* or PPC), you list the keywords related to your product or service and specify how much you're willing to pay for each visit to your site. In some cases, you can also specify the specific sites and pages you want the ads to run on (or *not* to run on).

Your advertisements are then displayed on sites that are determined to be related to your keywords (and/or the sites you specified), and you incur an advertising cost only when and if someone clicks on one of your advertisements. Costs

are determined largely by supply and demand—the more popular the keyword that generated the click, the more you will pay for the visit.

While there are literally hundreds of pay-per-click search engines, you should focus on the main three to begin with:

1. Yahoo! Search Marketing
   http://sem.smallbusiness.yahoo.com/searchengine
      marketing/
2. Google Adwords
   http://adwords.google.com/
3. Microsoft Ad Center
   http://advertising.msn.com/microsoft-adcenter

Successful PPC advertising is a topic unto itself—entire books have been written to explain its strategies and nuances. Be sure to read the section on "PPC Advertising" for more resources related to this method of advertising.

CONTEXTUAL ADVERTISING

Contextual advertising is a term that could apply to CPC/PPC advertising. But here I'm talking about advertising triggered by software on the user's computer. This method of advertising has a troubled past and is still somewhat controversial.

There's an ethical (and legal, in most cases) problem if the user doesn't know the software is going to trigger ads. In the past, this function was not disclosed or was hidden in the

legalese of the "End User's License Agreement." In addition, there were some shady operators who made the software well-nigh impossible to remove from the user's system. These applications were known as *adware*.

However, as long as the software in question is installed with the full understanding and permission of the user, I believe the ethical requirements have been satisfied.

The way it works is very similar to the PPC search engines from the advertiser's perspective. You simply list the keywords that should trigger the advertisement *or* you list the web site URLs you want to trigger your ads. Contextual advertising can be purchased on a CPM or CPC basis (and even CPA, in some cases).

Then, when users (those who have the contextual advertising software installed on their system) enter a search term in their favorite search engine, and that search term matches your keyword(s), they see your advertisement.

And here is where this form of advertising departs sharply from the PPC model. . . .

The web sites in question have *not* contracted with the contextual advertising company. They have no "space" on their site for the advertisement to appear. The advertisement appears in a new window on top of (or below, if you wish) the web site displayed in the user's browser.

This can be a half-page or even a full-page ad, not a dinky little advertisement in the margins of the web page.

You see why this can be a very controversial form of advertising. Imagine if Ford Motor Company set up a campaign to

display its advertisements whenever the user went to the Chevy web site or did a Google search for "Chevrolet truck buy."

As you can see, this form of advertising is both powerful and dangerous—care should be taken when using it.

Here are a few companies with an installed user base allowing them to offer contextual advertising:

http://mediatraffic.com/index.php
http://www.admedian.com/
http://www.zango.com/
http://www.whenu.com/
http://www.adonnetwork.com/
http://www.clicksor.com/
http://www.memedia.com/
https://www.mycustomersdirect.com/

E-MAIL ADVERTISING

Despite the ever-increasing volume of spam consumers must deal with, e-mail advertising can still be highly effective.

Remember, the proper function of advertising is to get people to "raise their hand" (i.e., demonstrate their interest in your product). Don't try to sell something in an e-mail to a list not already acquainted with you—your offer should be for a free report, a sample, or something similar.

These companies allow you to place advertisements in existing e-mail publications or send out solo e-mails to various e-mail lists. Note that all of these lists will have been built using accepted opt-in methods.

http://www.optininc.com/
http://www.edithroman.com/
http://www.postmasternetwork.net/
http://www.yesmail.com/
http://www.ientry.com/page/ad/
http://www.ezines-r-us.com/targeted-solo-ads/
http://www.demc.com/
http://www.directoryofezines.com/
http://www.ezinead.net/
http://ezineadvertising.com/
http://www.list-city.com/advertise.shtml
http://www.ideamarketers.com/publish/psearch.cfm
http://www.topezineads.com/
http://www.list-city.com/advertise.shtml
http://www.ezinead.net/

RSS ADVERTISING

These companies place your ads between news items in RSS readers (see "RSS").

http://www.feedburner.com/fb/a/advertising
http://www.bidvertiser.com/
http://www.pheedo.com/site/adv_overview.php

MISCELLANEOUS ADVERTISING RESOURCES

Yes, some of these are for advertisements that run external to the Internet—but if you use these to drive people to your web

site, I still call it "Internet marketing" . . . and these resources *are* online.

NEWPAPER ADVERTISING

For discount newspaper advertising (specializing in remnant space in newspapers), try this site:

http://www.mss-standby.com/

Newspaper classified advertising networks allow you to place your classified ad in several newspapers with a single ad-insertion order. For instance, one of the current offers is to place your 20-word classified ad in 20 newspapers with a total circulation of 1 million people for $180.

Another offer is for a total circulation of 14 million people for $1,400, which represents a cost per thousand (CPM) of just 10 cents! (For comparison, you'll usually pay a CPM of anywhere from $2.00 to $20.00 or more for banner or e-mail advertising.)

Now, these *are* classified ads we're talking about, so that CPM comparison isn't exactly apples to apples . . . but even if only 1 in 10,000 people looks at your classified ad, you're still talking about a low CPM cost of $1.00.

Another consideration is the kind of papers being advertised in. Many of these are small-town weekly newspapers and *PennySaver* or *Thrifty Nickel* types of papers, so they have a longer usable life than a daily newspaper.

The real value in these services is that you place only *one* order to get your advertisement in as many as 700 different publications—a huge time saver!

http://www.nationwideadvertising.com/
http://www.budget-ads.com/

This company offers to place your advertisement in *USA Today* at a discounted rate:

http://www.wolfenterprises.net/usatoday.html

Radio Advertising

http://www.bid4spots.com/
http://www.swmxradio.com/
http://satellite-radio-advertising.com/

TV Advertising

http://www.cheap-tv-spots.com/

Online Video Advertising

http://www.jivox.com/
https://adwords.google.com/select/videoads.html

Print Advertising Bids

http://www.mediabids.com/

Advertising Creativity Tools

http://www.adcracker.com/

Advertising Games

http://www.advergame.com/

Advertising Text Ads

http://www.adster.com/
http://www.Text-Link-Ads.com/

Online Classified Ad Sites

http://www.craigslist.com/
http://base.google.com/
http://www.usfreeads.com/
http://www.kijiji.com/

(In addition, eBay offers classified ads in a few specific categories—see more about that under "eBay.")

Per-Inquiry Advertising

http://www.hpowermarketing.com/