



Your Website Coach



Pay to Be Seen – 4/27/06

So you have a little chunk of change left in your website budget and you are wondering where to spend it. Perhaps you would like to increase your website's visibility? Here are several methods of paying to be listed with search engines and improve your site's visibility:

Paid Inclusion – You pay a small fee to be included in a search engine's database. Typically, when you manually submit your site for free to a search engine, it can take 6 – 8 weeks or longer to finally appear in the engine's database and there's no guarantee you'll be included. Paid inclusion gets your site listed (provided you follow the requirements of that engine) and does it in a couple of days. Note that this method does not have anything to do with your site's rankings in the engine's results and not all search engines allow paid inclusion. Google is one that does not offer that option.

Pay-Per-Click – This method involves giving the top spot to the highest bidder, the second spot goes to the next highest bidder and so on. You are bidding on a key word that your customers would use to find you. Let's say you sell pet supplies and you specialize in custom dog bowls. Naturally, you along with your competitors will want to nab the key word "dog bowl". You offer to pay the search engine \$0.45 **every** time a visitor clicks on your link from the list of *paid results*. Your competitor may offer to pay \$0.50 every time a visitor clicks on their link and thus the bidding war begins. Whoever offers to pay the most gets the top spot in the list of paid results for that search engine.

Context Ads – This type of online advertising takes advantage of the content of an actual web page on which the ad is displayed. Using the bidding process, you buy placement as high up on the page as your budget allows. To illustrate this concept, imagine that the magazine "Dog Fancy" has an article on its website that describes how adjustable-height dog feeders improve your dog's digestion. You know that "dog bowl" will be mentioned multiple times in that article, so you pay to have one of those instances of "dog bowl" link to your site.

Search Engine Optimization Company – These people specialize in raising the visibility of your web presence. They will optimize your site using natural search engine techniques as well as study what keywords your competitors are using. They do a lot of work for you and it isn't cheap. On average, this service will cost you approximately \$750 per month, at least in the beginning.

Written by Christine Chubenko, christine@yourwebsitecoach.net