Local Search Guide

Advertisement and promotion guide for websites for small companies and beginning businessmen

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Introduction

What is the course about?

This course shows briefly and quickly:

- how a small company website, useful for potential customers, should look like (a hair-dressing salon, or a moving house company);

- how for free and with minimal effort it is possible to advertise your company and its services on the Internet

Who is this course for?

This course is addressed for people who run small companies (e.g. car garages, hair salons, or accounting offices) and have not benefited from promotion of their business on the Internet on a large scale (due to lack of financial means or lack of knowledge on this subject)

What can this course give you?
- It will give you basic knowledge about promoting your services on the Internet;
- It will help you show yourself on the Internet with your products or services without the necessity of paying money to advertising agencies or IT experts;
- It will help you create such a website which can be friendly for search engines and your customers (or will show you how to use websites prepared by me);
- It will enable your customers to find your company in Google, Yahoo, MSN, and other search engines;

What cannot this course give you?

This course will not replace professional services provided by the advertising companies on the Internet. However, it can guide you through some professional services, which are normally not really cheap and you can usually afford them only after your company starts to yield large profits.

Local Strategy

A small company has always a limited budget to its disposal, which is to be used for advertisement on the Internet and in other places. In such a situation, you should be focused on using this budget effectively in order to receive the largest number of users possible, who are very likely to be your customers in the near or further future.

Strategy and its assumptions

It is the first and basic step of each advertisement planning, no matter what its scale and size is. Thorough rethinking of the whole undertaking is a key to its success, since it enables us to spend the resources to your disposal better and more effectively, and it helps to focus only on these areas, which could yield the largest benefits in comparison to your expenditure.

Before you start promoting your products or services for good in a local search, it is worth looking into your own business to determine at which point you are currently at.

Things worth rethinking and determining in the first place

Your expectations towards the Internet effectiveness

On the Internet the competition is getting stronger and stronger. It is important to be aware of the fact that promotion on the Internet and in search engines as any other way of promoting is connected with risk, which can be minimized if:
- our knowledge about the company's promotion on the Internet is substantially high;
- our promotional and advertising actions are well-prepared.

Of course the more local your market is (which also means that the competition is relatively smaller), the bigger the probability is that you will be one of few players on it, which promises better chances to reach your potential customers easily and quickly.

Who are your current and target customers?

- Are they students, the retired, or small building companies? Generally, the younger and more Internet proficient they are, the easier your way through the Internet to them will be.
- Are they the same kind of customers that you have at the moment (and you just want to expand their number) or do you want to reach through the Internet such a group that has not yet been reached by a traditional advertisement (e.g. your current customers are the retired, who get to know about your restaurant from their friends. Via the Internet you would like to reach people who are looking for a small restaurant for a wedding reception).

Specificity of searching for your product or service on the Internet

- What makes your customers look for information about products and services on the Internet – a will to save time, a possibility to see the pictures of a club or a company, maybe instructions who to get to a place? There are many reasons and possibilities, but if you realize as many of them as you can, you will be able to create such a website for your company which will be very useful to your customers.
- Is it easy to advertise your product or service on the Internet? To what degree do people use the Internet to search for this kind of product or service? And if they do not use it very often, what is the reason for that? Maybe the fact that it is difficult to find this kind of service on the Internet and you can be the first person in your area to promote your service through a website and search engines like Google, Yahoo, MSN?
- What would be the most efficient way to convince your service visitors to buy your products or services: good descriptions, good-quality pictures, or maybe other clients' opinions?

Who is your competition?

- How many companies, which run a similar business to ours in the local range (most often in the same town/city), promote their services and products on the Internet? Do they have the same sort of services as ours or is just a marginal activity?
- How strong is the presence of competitive companies on the Internet? Do they have only websites, or do they promote themselves in search engines and Yellow Pages?

Your competitive advantages

What is so special about your company, which others lack? What would be valuable for a potential customer? Maybe it has good localization, it is close to a bus stop, or has a large parking lot? Maybe your prices are low, the service is quick, or maybe you could convince your customers with a long tradition of your family business?

It is important to focus only on a few chosen competitive advantages and not to try to distinguish ourselves at everything. Competitive advantages fulfill their task only if they are really important for the customers (the possibility of a large parking lot will therefore not be a trump card for your diner if your target customers are mainly schoolchildren and students, who use public transport. They would probably be more interested to see the menu and to book a table on-line).

Your competitive actions

Do you face direct competition on the Internet with companies similar to ours or do you look for your own Internet niche? (e.g. in your city there are a lot of companies offering places for wedding receptions on-line, however, you focus only on those customers who are looking for smaller restaurants up to 50-60 people)

Answers to these questions will influence:
- the content that will appear in your website;
- the choice of keywords, which you will promote your Internet service with;

- our business promotion strategies through paid advertisement in search engines and Yellow Pages.

One of the crucial rules that need to be remembered is: „Be reasonable." It means that you should not start with competing with your strongest opponents on the market. Instead of competing with companies who have their position settled in your business and on the Internet, it is far better to find a market niche for your company, where you can offer more than your competitors. you can also look for such a niche that your rivals found unprofitable.

For example:

Our main competitor is a large accounting office, which does not find profitable to account small, one-person companies. In this case, instead of competing with this office for all their customers, you are just trying to gain small companies, which the large office is not interested in (we are a small office so it is profitable for us to keep small companies' accounts).

On the other hand, remember that any Internet activity is better than none

If your estimations showed us that you cannot afford to create a professional website, buy an Internet advertisement, or commission a website promotion in search engines and Yellow Pages to those people who are experienced in that – do not give up. Even a simple and small Internet site is better than nothing.

You can always use one of the free website creators, which enable us to create an Internet page without the knowledge of the HTML language. One of the better tools of this kind is **Google Page Creator** available at this address: www.pages.google.com/ .

The choice of relevant keywords

One of the most important aspects of creating and promotion of the website is the choice of keywords - relevant for this page and for your business. Later you will base on those words the whole creation, search engines promotion, and paid advertisement of the website (if you decide to do it as well).

Keywords are words or phrases that describe and relate to your business and the area of activity of your company. Internet users search for local products or services in search engines or Yellow Pages by means of keywords.

Example:

For a hairdressing salon in Chicago keywords (or key phrases) might be: "hair salons," "hairdressers," "cutting hair Chicago," "hairdressers Chicago," "hair salons Chicago," "hairdressing Chicago," "wedding hair style Chicago," "hair-modeling Chicago," etc.

Criteria of keywords choice

Contrary to what you may think, the choice of relevant and most effective keywords is not a piece of cake and it is worth spending more time at their identification.

It is important that you should identify the keywords before creating and promoting your website. The keywords should fulfill these conditions:

- keywords, which are important for you and in the best way describe what your company deals with;
- keywords by which users will look for a company like yours in search engines and Yellow Pages;
- keywords, which are the most profitable for you;
- keywords, whose competitiveness does not exceed your abilities.

Keywords, which are important for you and in the best way describe what your company deals with

It is you, who knows your business the best, so you know what kind of keywords describe your business, products, and services the best. In a small company promotion, local keywords play the most important role (connected with a particular area, e.g. "hairdressers Chicago," "transport services Louisiana"), so you should focus on those kinds of phrases in your promoting activities.

Example:
There is no point in trying to gain good positions in search engines with such a general phrase as "transport services" if your service concerns only the state of Louisiana. If by accident you managed to get very high in search results with this phrase, paradoxically only a small number of people visiting your website would become your customers (because probably

a large number of users was looking for a transport service in e.g. Illinois or California, or maybe even for an international transport company). In this case therefore it is more sensible to opt for a good position in the phrase "transport services Louisiana."

Keywords by which users will look for a company like yours in search engines and Yellow Pages

Keywords which describe your business in the most thorough way are not always the same ones, which a potential customer uses while searching for this type of products or services in search engines and Yellow Pages. Thus it is important that you should try to walk in your customer's shoes. Use their vocabulary and their expressions. If the receivers of your services are people who are not accustomed with professional vocabulary, do not use it.

Example:
       If your company provides services connected with metalwork, one of the keywords that describe your business well could be "cornice brake metalwork." However, the question arises – do you have, among your customers, a lot of specialists at your trade, who would look for a company like yours using such a keyword as "cornice brake metalwork?" Perhaps your customers are the people who do not have to have any knowledge about the details of your trade and they will use such keywords as "metalwork," or "metal workshop."

Example 2:
       The local scope of keywords, by which people search for products or services, depends also on a specific field of business. In some cases, like e.g. "transport" this scope will be wider (we do not necessarily look for a transporting company in your town, but maybe in a state, or even the whole country), so you might be interested in such phrases like "transport Louisiana," or even "international transport." In other cases you will undoubtedly care for more local keywords. If you run a hair salon, you will not be really interested in a phrase "hairdressers," or "hairdressers Illinois." you would need more local, specific phrases like "hairdressers, Denver." In larger cities you can even limit yourselves to districts, e.g. "hairdressers Brooklyn."

Keywords, which are the most profitable for you

Choose those key phrases that can become the most profitable for you. If you have many phrases to choose from, pick those which are connected to the products or services on which you earn the most money – which means that the ratio of their competitiveness to the cost of the fight for them is the lowest.

Example:
       The phrase "prom hairstyles Tallahassee" may be much less competitive than "wedding hairstyles Tallahassee," but only on the assumption that the first gives us 20$ of pure profit, and the latter 50$, it can appear that it is more worthwhile to invest more in promoting the second phrase. The phrase "wedding hairstyles Tallahassee" despite higher cost, will be more profitable for us than "prom hairstyles Tallahassee."

Keywords, whose competitiveness does not exceed your abilities

Estimate correctly your abilities to choose keywords. Choose those phrases, which on one hand are somehow connected with your business, and on the other hand are unique enough so that there are not many companies which compete for it. The more general a given keyword is or the broader a geographical or semantical range is, the more difficult to promote is – and of course it is more expensive (in organic promoting in search engines, as well as in paid advertising)

Example:

Each transport company would like to be the on top of the search results under "transport" in Google, however it is impossible. It is better to the second under "transport service Denver," the forth under "transport Denver," or the third "transport companies Denver" than to be 25th under a keyword "transport." The phrase "hairdressers" will be more expensive to promote than "hairdressers New York," and this one will be more expensive than the phrase "hairdressers New York Brooklyn."

Phrase competition assessment

To make your promotional actions effective, you have to assess correctly competitiveness of your chosen keywords. Only such estimation will help you pick keywords which:
will be the easiest to promote;
will be the most profitable

Simple competition assessment

The easiest way to estimate the competition of a phrase is to write the phrase into the search engine and check the number of search results and sponsored links.

Be careful:
It is a very simplified form of competition assessment of keywords, so it sometimes may lead to draw wrong conclusions.

Figure 1. Simple competition assessment of a keyword
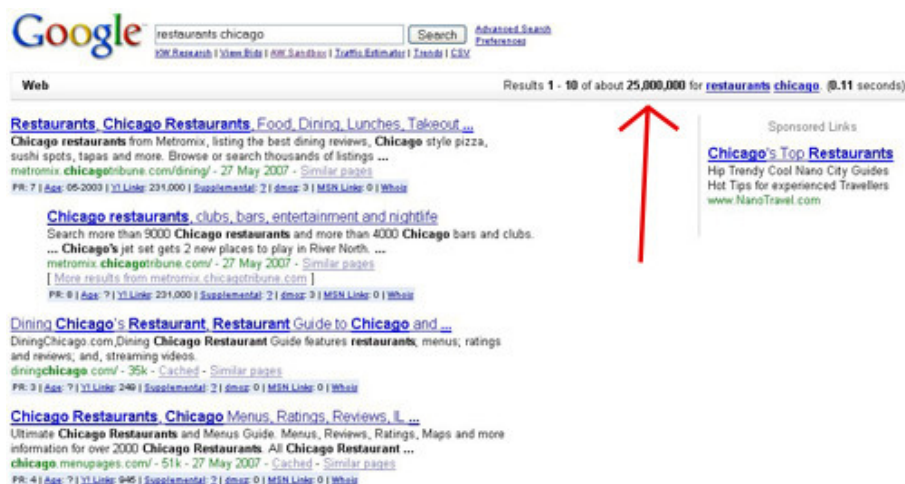
As far as phrases connected with local search are concerned, it is agreed that 50-100.000 results make them competitive phrases.

Keywords competition assessment by means of SEO

A bit more complicated way, though giving more information at the same time, for keywords competition assessment is using an extension for Firefox browser.

Steps to install the extension:

1. Go to: http://tools.seobook.com/firefox/seo-for-firefox.html#
2. If the *Software Installation* window is visible click *Install Now*
3. Restart Firefox
4. Change your settings in **Tools -> SEO for Firefox ->Options** by choosing the information about domains. It is worth pointing only a few options since choosing too many delays the browser and makes the search results unclear.

Figure 2. SEO tools for keywords competition assessment
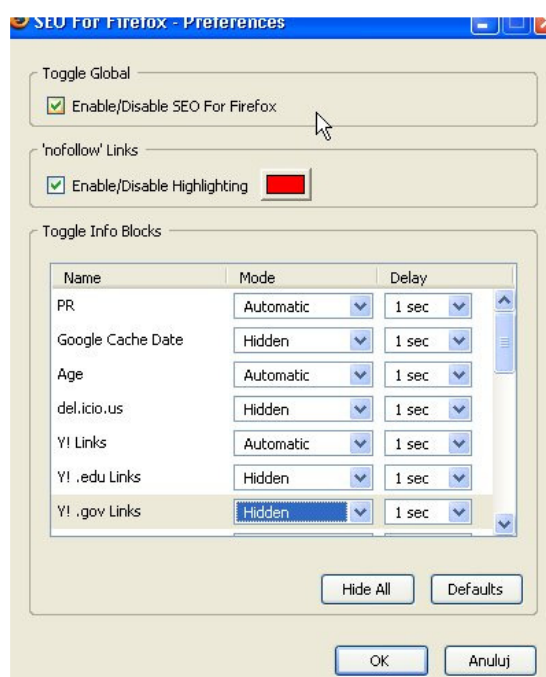
This list presents options recommended by me for Automatic settings:

PR – shows PageRank Google, which is a kind of Google scale estimating the website value (however, there is no point in bothering too much about this value). Generally, the larger the valued of PR is, the stronger the webpage is. More details about PR will be found in the next chapter of this course.

Whois – shows the date of website register and the period for which it has been registered. The website age is important for some search engines (e.g. for Google). The older the address is, the more the search engines trust the website, which is at this domain.

Age- shows approximate age of a website on the basis of its historical copies at Archive.org. The older the site is, the more valuable and stronger it is.

Dmoz – shows if a website belong to one of the most important catalogues in the world:

Dmoz.org. If it is, it might me helpful in Google page rankings.

Y Links- shows the number of links found by a Yahoo! search engine from other websites leading to a tested domain

MSN Links- shows the number of links found by a MSN search engine from other websites leading to a tested domain

After installing this extension to Firefox, information gathered by this tool will appear at the bottom of every search result of Google.com search engine. (see Figure 3)

Figure 3. Search results when using SEO for Firefox
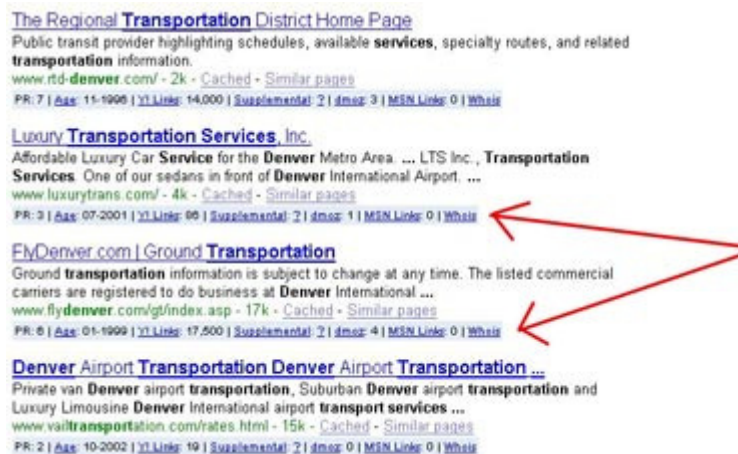
Important

Links are one of the most important elements in positioning websites by Google and other search engines in search results for a keyword. The more links lead to a site, the more important this site for search engines is. Especially crucial for search engines, while positioning site A in search results for a given keyword, are external links from other pages that link back to site A, having a keyword included.

Example:

The more links of your website there are on other pages (with a keyword e.g. "hairdressers", "good hairdressers", or "hairdresser Chicago"), the more important your website is perceived to be and the higher the placement of your site will be in search engine results for the keyword "hairdressers" and "hairdressers Chicago." A broader explanation of this subject can be found in the next chapters of the course.

So, in other words, a person who puts a link on their webpage takes part in search engines "elections". Remember to put on your website only links to valuable sites, because by putting a link, in some way you answer for the content of the linked page in front of search engines.

Google does not give precise data concerning the links that lead to a given website, so the best way is to check that via Yahoo.com and MSN search engines.

Ylinks, presented earlier in the section about Firefox extension, is the number of links to your website that Yahoo! knows about.

Similarly,

MSN links is the number of links to your website that MSN knows about.

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"Nofollow" links

In the presented tool, showing "nofollow" links is switched on by default. Such links are shown in red edgings. Such a link does not give the target site any profit when Google is concerned. In other words, for Google such a "vote" is not valid. "Nofollow" links **will not help to promote your website in search engines**.

Figure 4. „Nofollow" links on Wikipedia
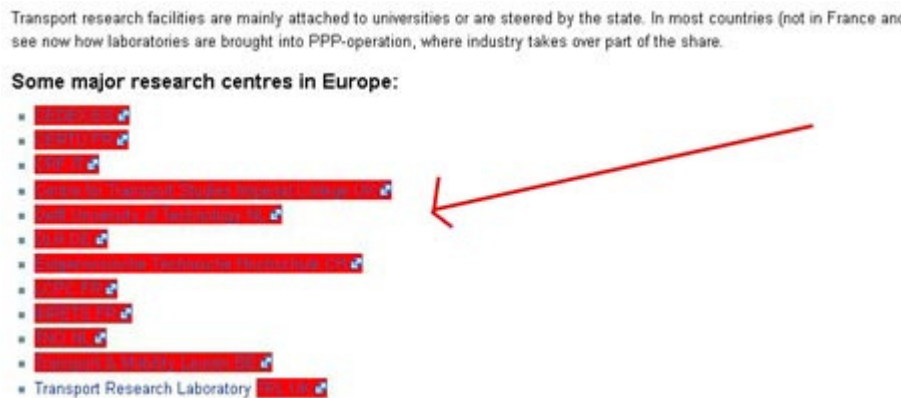
I recommend disabling other options in the extension of SEO for Firefox. They are only useful for people who deal with website positioning professionally.

Searching for keywords

You are not entirely sure if you found good key phrases, use tools which can help you to analyze keywords, their popularity and competitiveness in a given trade area.

Keywords in the website content

Key phrases are used on the Internet sites of the companies similar to yours (it is enough to write in a search engine some keywords connected with your company activity and browse through web pages that will appear in search results for the keywords).

Key phrases in tags: meta name="description" and meta name="keywords" on the websites of the companies similar to yours

These tags are a part of an Internet page code. Indirectly they inform search engines what your company's website is about.

To see the meta tags of a competitive website, open it in your browser and then:

a) **if you use Internet Explorer**

- In the browser's top menu choose: ***View->Source***
- Then you will see source code of a given site. There should be two tags at the beginning of this code:

<meta name="description" content="

<meta name="keywords" content="

b) if you use Firefox

- In the browser's top menu choose: ***View -> Page source***

- There should also be two tags at the beginning of this code:

<meta name="description" content="

<meta name="keywords" content="

Figure 5. Meta tags in Internet source code

In these tags you should find descriptions and example keywords, which can help you to find keywords suitable for you (the very meaning of the tags will be explained later)

Google Keyword Tool

Google Keyword Tool is a very useful tool in search for keywords. It is available at this address: https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal .

This tool shows keyword competitiveness and how frequent it is entered in Google. However, you should always treat theses results with some dose of sensibility. On the other hand, this is probably the best keyword tools available. It helps to find specialized keywords, which are relatively often entered by users, and at the same time not frequently used to promote other companies on the Internet.

Figure 6. This is what Google keywords manager looks like
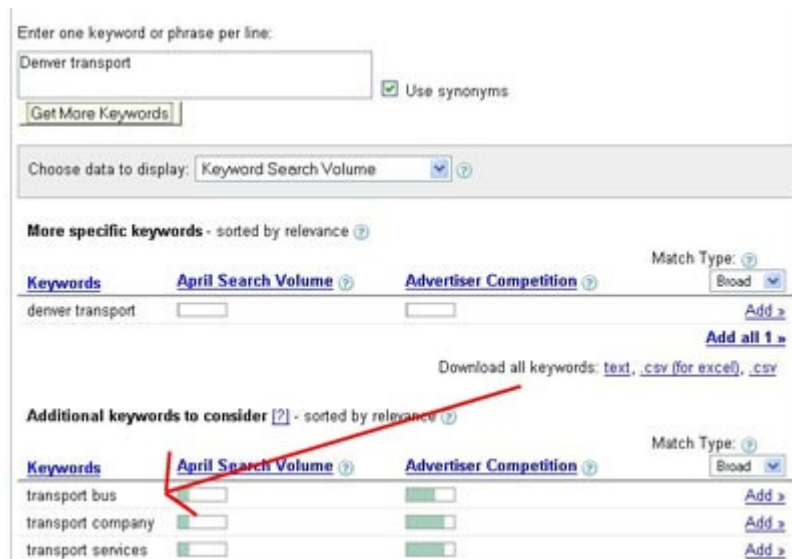
The Overture tool

A very good tool to search for keywords is the Overture too available at this address:
http://inventory.overture.com/d/searchinventory/suggestion/. It not only searches for the Word
connected to the ones you are looking for, but it also shows the number of this keyword search
results in the Yahoo search engine. This tool precisely shows not only keyword popularity, but
it also allows to find synonyms for the keywords you are interested in.

Figure 7. This is what Overture keyword tool looks like

Trade press and documents

A very good way to find specific keywords is reading magazines, brochures, and leaflets
connected with your trade. However, it is important to remember about the abovementioned
rule of searching for keywords that are used by your target customers (it cannot be technical

jargon unless you are sure your customers are accustomed with it).

Asking, asking, asking….

Sometimes it can be a good idea to ask your friends and colleagues what kind of keywords they use to search for products or services you offer. Their answers can give us some ideas about the way your products or services are searched for on the Internet.

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Local website

The choice of suitable keywords is one of the preparatory stages prior to the actual creation of your website content. However, before you start preparing the content of your WWW, make sure you are accustomed with all the main preparatory aspects of this activity.

Crucial aspects of preparing your website content

- Using the Internet usually results from the will to save time; and that is why the users maniacally try to search for given information as quickly as it is only possible.
- You should use the rule of an inverted information pyramid on the Internet – It means that at first the user should be shown only a small summary of the whole content, which will encourage him/her to become acquainted with the rest of the content later.
- While transferring book content to the Internet (e.g. leaflets, notices) not only the content should be changed, but also the amount of the information (the optimal size of a sub site on the Internet is approximately 600 words).
- Reading text on a computer is less comfortable than on paper, so to ease your users maximally, you should use clear and not very long paragraphs.
- When it comes to the sub sites content, it is important to focus on your customers' needs, not on elaborate descriptions of your products or services. When describing, you focus on what a given thing can give to your customer, not on the very description of it.

Example:
It is far better to write that your bakery has been 70 years on the market, which guarantees the high qualities of your products, which are based on traditional recipes, rather than describing these 70 years of the bakery's history without mentioning what it can give to your customer.

- The content of your website cannot be an exact copy of another text that has already appeared on the Internet. Copying somebody else's website makes Google and other search engines not want to show your web page in their search results.
- In the content, you should put these keywords with which the Internet users will search for you in search engines. At the same time though, the content cannot be a mere cluster of keywords.

Example:
You will not get any profit that your target customer has found your website on the Internet if he quickly leaves it because of the techno babble that is inside.

- In the content use the language and vocabulary that will be understood by your target customer. **Do not make him look up the meaning of the words you are using in dictionaries**.
- When describing your service, include in the description the most important keywords for you (e.g. "hairdresser Hoboken"). Remember, however, to use such keywords which your customers use to search for service similar to yours (sometimes they can even be some, taken from everyday language). At the same time, bear in mind that your website is your business showcase – too many keywords or too many colloquial expressions will not give your company credibility.

Preparing your WWW

When preparing the content for your website, it should be preceded by a suitable customer requirement analysis. Before you create you own WWW, make sure you know what kind of information helps your target customers to make a decision to buy products or services offered by your company.

The easiest way to get such information is to prepare a small survey among your friends whose profile is similar to your prospective customers' (it means that they look for information about products or services in a similar way, or they have similar knowledge about this kind of product or service.

Gather as much information as possible about:

- What kind of specific information your customers search for on a website when they are looking for a product or service offered by your company (e.g. driving directions, opening hours, description and pictures of the restaurant).
- What their criterion of a valuable and useful website is (e.g. content, pictures, and customers' opinions).
- What they like and what they do not like on competitive websites (reliable content, advice, dish description in restaurants etc.).
- What they can quickly find on competitive websites and they would like to find (e.g. they can't find quickly the restaurant's address and phone number).
- What kind of problems they face when they want to buy products or services offered by your company.

Example:

You have a moving company. After asking a few friends, who has been moving out lately, it turns out that on the websites of the companies they hired, they missed the information about the way they should have packed the object before moving them.

Be careful:
When making these interviews, approach the results cautiously. The fact that somebody says they didn't like this or that does not necessarily mean that this is practical – it may just be somebody's personal and subjective opinion.

Be especially careful with the opinions of those people who have never faced the issues your company deals with. If your friend has never needed a moving company service, he will not be able to give you a valuable piece of advice concerning this type of trade business on the Internet.

Try to design your website so that it would match your customers' needs in a best possible way. Try to predict what your customers would look forward to finding on this web page and what would disturb them.

Remember that whatever disturbs your customers, will also disturb your profits.

Things that should not appear on your website:

While designing your own WWW or commissioning it to somebody else, you should bear in mind a few basic things that should **not** appear on your company Internet page. The presence of these elements can prevent your customers from using your website.

Ads

It is a source of profits, but in the case of a small website you will not earn a lot of money on it anyway and the site itself may lose a lot in the public eye. Do not discourage your customer from your service!

Pop-ups

There are always better ways to keep your customers informed about sales, novelties etc. Text in a well-visible place plus esthetic frame will be much more effective than such pop-ups.

Large and heavy pictures (e.g. taken directly from a digital camera)

Try so that the weight of all the pictures on one sub page did not exceed 100-150 kb. No one wants to wait endlessly for all the large pictures to open.

Glitters, animations, banners

Do not put on your website anything you don't like. Don't exaggerate with using bright colors, flashing banners and graphics. Simplicity is strongly advised.

Descriptions which do not add anything new

Remember that your customer is not interested in your company, but in a solution to a particular problem. Your company's site is not a diary or a blog. Include only this information which can be used for your customers only, not something you like writing about.

Website preparation stages:

This section shows following stages of website creation.

Your customers' needs analysis

- This stage has been presented thoroughly at the beginning of the guide. The merit of this action boils down to creating a concept of a website that can be accessible financially and technically, as well as she will be useful for your present and prospective customers.
- Try to create a website in your customers' shoes.
- Try to investigate your customers' way of thinking and vernacular.
- Detect these elements that can be unclear and difficult for them (e g jargon or technical vocabulary, which is obvious for you, but can get your customers confused)

Preparation of the website's address

This is what you need to take into consideration when you pick your website's address:

- It is not advisable to use free hosting addresses like http://www.Yourbusiness.blogspot.com/ (what is the point of promoting somebody else's address?) – buying your own address is an expense of just several dozen dollars per year.
- Your website address (in other words: your domain address) should be as short and as easy to remember as possible.
- It is worth registering your domain address for at least a few years. On one hand, it gives you more credibility for search engines, and on the other hand, it protects you from the situation that in the rush of everyday life you may forget about renewing the subscription.
- Your WWW address should be easy to spell (try spelling www.wzw-sfc-gs.us on the phone).
- Your main address should not contain a dash (-); however, it is also worth buying the variety of main address with a dash.
- The name of your website should be tightly connected with your trade.

Example:

If you run a restaurant called "Blue Tiger," the website's address could be: www.BlueTiger.com In the case of local websites it is not a good idea to buy long addresses with general names like: www.restaurant-in-tallahassee.com (unless it is a really attractive name).

- Make your business e-mail address out of your website

Example:

jsmith@yourbusiness.com sounds far more professional and believable than: jsmith2005@hotmail.com.

The choice of a hosting account – a server on which your website will be

The basic thing I would to discourage you from is using free hosting service like MySpace or BlogSpot.

It is not worth doing so for several reasons:

- the overload of free servers is often very large, so their websites frequently load very long;
- you can almost never have your own www address, since free hosts usually make you use their address (e.g. www.yourbusiness.readywebsites.com), which is often long, difficult to remember, and does not belong to you.
- on a paid service you can count on technical support with your account, placing your website on the server, etc.
- some addresses of free hosting accounts are not accepted in some catalogs
- using free servers WWW is very often connected with the necessity of accepting

advertisements on your website, most often very invasive, thus your website may quickly look not like a professional page, but like garbage.

- You can buy a small account for 50-100$ a year which is not a considerable expense even for a small workshop. These services are sold by such companies like http://www.midphase.com/ , http://www.yahoo.com/, http://www.godaddy.com/.

Creating your website

If it comes to creating your website, you can choose between:
- doing it on your own – if you know HTML and CSS;
- hiring somebody who knows how to do it (for a fee or not)
- using a website creator given by the account provider on the server. Such a creator is e.g. provided by http://www.MidPhase.com/.

Important:
If you don't know HTML well enough and you are not sure if you can adjust it to your needs do not quit your avtivity in online

Testing your website

Before you put your website on the server ask your friends and colleagues, what they think about it – what they like, what they don't. But tell them that you are interested in honest opinions and you will not get offended if they point out mistakes and negligence.
It is also a good idea to ask a person who knows nothing about your trade (or knows very little) to check if the content of your website is understood and if he can find information that your present and potential customers might be looking for.

As I mentioned earlier, you should remember:

- to treat the information coming from others cautiously since there can always be the matter of a different, subjective point of view and esthetics;
- the more you are attached to another person, the more restrained from telling the truth they may be – it is possible they are not telling you about the problems with your website because they don't want to hurt your feelings;
- if you test more people, the survey will be more believable – the bigger group of respondents, the better (try to ask at least 10 people)

This kind of research will not substitute for a professional usefulness survey, or even a "home" survey with the help of website usefulness tools, but it will help you detect the most serious problems that your customers might have when using your web page.

Putting your website on a server

After creating your website, put in on a server. The best way to do it is by a FTP program (it is a kind of program which can transfer the files from your computer to your account on a server)

or use the file manager if the control panel of the account on your server provides such a function.

For the people who are not experienced enough in this area, I would recommend FileZilla – a small program helping to transfer the pages to the server. It is available e.g. at http://filezilla-project.org/

Ddownload it click:
https://sourceforge.net/project/showfiles.php?group_id=21558&package_id=15149

FileZilla manual:

- Download and install the program (only default settings– just click "Next" all the time)
- Open this program in Windows. It looks like that:

Figure 7. A screenshot of FileZilla
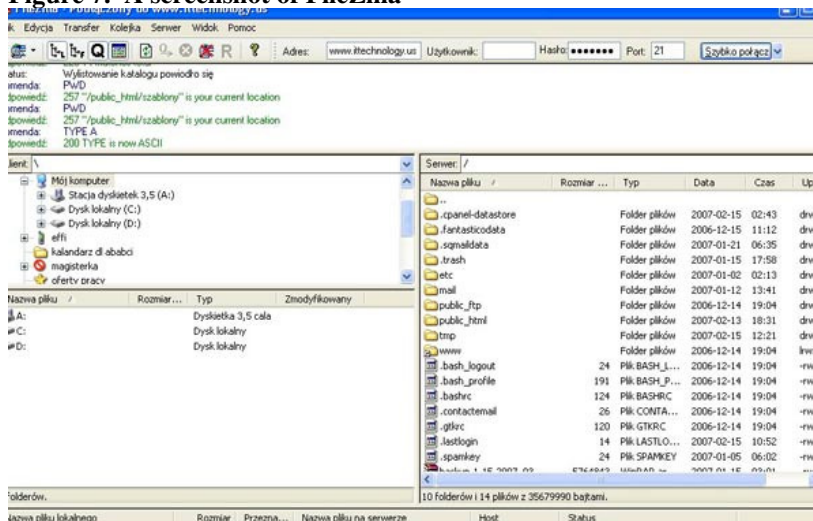
- In the top bar, enter your website address, username, and a password (all the data should be given by your account provider).
- When you see the folders on the right, click a "public_html" folder.
- On the left, find your website files and drag and drop them to the right (together with all the subfolders of the page).
- If everything is done correctly, you should see your website with a proper name.

Basic elements of all the local websites:

The basic thing you need to remember is to put your physical address (with a zip-code and a telephone number) on each of the sub-pages of your website in a very well-visible place. It can be e.g. at the top of every page. The example of such an address you can see here:

2

http://www.dinkels.com

By putting this address on your website, you can gain higher places in search engines results for a local keyword.

Example:

2264 N. Monitor Ave, Milwaukee, WI 60639 – 1 414 2342424

Using the address on every page of your website can help your company to be higher in the search engines results which contain the keywords "Milwaukee", and "Wisconsin".

This chapter will be one of the most important parts of this manual. It describes these elements which should appear on a small company's website. Your target customers will be looking for these issues on your web page, so make sure that you included as much of the forthcoming information as possible.

Home page

Home page is the most important part of your website. **It is usually the first one to be looked at by your customers!**

On your home page, your target customers should find:
- the name of your company,
- what your company deals with and you your customers are,
- places you cover,
- opening hours,
- what your company is good at and why your services are worth your customer's attention,
- competitive predominance – described clearly and briefly (remember that too much of content hampers reading).

"Contact" sub-page

The Contact sub-page should include:
- the precise, detailed address of your company, telephone number, and a contact person,
- mail form, helping to contact with customers,
- e-mail address written in an anti spam manner e.g. jsmith<yourbusiness.com (please exchange the sign < for @).

Remember to check your email often and frequently. It is a way to contact with your customers and a way to prove that you can be trusted as a contractor and service provider, and not just a way to show that you are able to create a mail form on your website.

"Directions/How to find us" sub-page

On this sub-page you should precisely describe directions to your company. Apart from standard driving directions, it is worth adding the closest subway or bus stops, how to get to

your company from the airport, or from characteristic points in your city. When describing the directions, you should bear in mind that it may happen that your potential customer may not know your city, so dry descriptions of street will not be much of a help. It is so a good idea to mention some landmarks.

Example:
The company X is situated 500 yards from the Rockefeller Center; the company X is situated 200 yards from the Central Park North Station etc.

In the location description, it is worth including:
- driving and public transport directions from the most important landmarks in the city, e.g. in NYC there will be: JFK airport, Manhattan, Central Park etc.
- a link to an Internet map, where the exact location of your bar, or hair salon will be shown,
- a picture with a map of the surrounding area (nowadays on the Internet you can find a lot of maps that offer it if you include the information about the source of the map).

Service (or Products) sub-page

Our Service (or Products) sub-page should describe the most important elements of your business activity. It is important however, to present it from the view of the benefits for your customers. Write then why your customer should buy your service, not your competition's. in this place it is worth using the effects of the competition analysis, which was mentioned earlier in the text. If you have a possibility to insert some pictures or your previous tasks descriptions it should be definitely done. **One good picture can do more than dozen descriptions.**

Optional (but recommended) elements of your website

"About us" sub-page

This page should not be maybe the most crucial on the whole website, but it should also be taken care of properly.

You can include here:
- a short company history (preferably short and brief – focusing on its traditions and importance in the neighborhood),
- achievements and prizes
- other things that can enhance your customer's trust.

Example:
If you hale a transport company, it may be a good idea to describe your cars and your drivers' experience

"Customers' opinions/ we are recommended" sub-page

Here you can praise with your customers' opinions and recommendations. What is important, these opinions should not be empty marketing phrases. If you happen to have a very satisfied

customer, ask them for permission to put their opinion on your website. This opinion should not be superficial and unnatural and should express a true point of view about your company or its service. Therefore to make it work, it should be precise, not general.

So not:
"*I love the "Blue Tiger" restaurant",*

but:

"I love the customer service at the "Blue Tiger" restaurant"

or :

"I love how fast and friendly the customer service at the "Blue Tiger" restaurant is"

And of course, the effect of such opinions will be greater if the esteem of your customer in a given area is larger.

"Customer service/ How can you help you?" sub-page

If you want to create a really good website, you can add some elements of customer service, which can not only be helpful for them, but they may help us approach them.

Remember that your customer knows less about your trade than you. What is a piece of cake to you, can be a serious problem to your target customers. Help them through your website to solve their problems, and sooner or later they will become your customers.

Example:
Imagine a situation of a family who wants to build a house. They don't know what kind of materials they should use, why some materials are more expensive than the other, which of them are recommended for energy saving reasons, and which are for economic ones.
So if you have a building material company, creating a small section devoted to describing the basic issues connected with the choice of building materials on your website could be a real competitive advantage and a distinguishing point from the other companies on the market.

"Partners" sub-page

This sub-page could improve the cooperation with other companies which do service or products harmonizing with ours. It often happens that e.g. a building company recommends a furniture company.
Why not decide to apply it on your webpage?

Example:
If you own a hair salon, talk to beauty salons about cooperation. A person, who comes to your salon with the reference from the cooperating beauty salon, can get a 10% discount. In return, the customers who saw the beauty salon ad on your web page can get the same discount there. In this way you advertise your website and your service virtually for free.

2

What else should you remember?

Make sure you put your address and phone number on every sub page and in a visible place where your target customers may expect it (e.g. at the bottom of the page).

Important technical elements of site-building

The forthcoming elements will improve the website clarity as well as the search results in search engines. It is worth spending a little time studying them to help your small website. Appropriate usage of these elements can have a considerable importance with little competitive local phrases.

This section describes the usage of tags, which you can find when opening the source of the page. It was described on the **page 14** (when I presented checking the meta tags on competitive websites).

To make you understand the structure and creating the tags, I will use an example of a fictitious company: Betty Smith's Hair Salon. On the basis of this company I will show you how the tags should look like.

The title of the page, or the <title></title> tag

Make sure that the titles of every sub-page were unique and different from one another. The sub-page title should reflect the sub-page contents.

The title should **be short, its length shouldn't exceed 75 characters**, but the best it is better to stay with maximum 60 characters (spaces included, so the optimum length would be 5-7 words). It is preferable so that the title included the keywords, which your target customers would use to find your website in the search engines (the keywords should be at the beginning of the title). In this case the title: "Welcome to my cool website – CoolWebsite.com" s useless for users and for search engines.

Examples:

> *Sub-page title **Home Page:***
Hair Salon in Dallas – *Betty Smith's Hair Salon*

> *Sub-page title **Our service***
Hair Salon in Dallas – *hairdressing for men and women*

Meta Tag Description
<meta name="description" content=" Sub-page description, which should be as interesting and as suitable to the sub-page content as possible. ">

Every sub-page should have its own unique tag <meta name="description" content=">

Things worth knowing about the **tag**:

- It should contain keywords important for you, however, should not be a cluster of keywords only.
- It is important because it often appears as a website description in search results (so shouldn't look like that: *hairdresser Dallas, hairdresser Dallas, Dallas hairdresser*, because the probability that user will choose your website is very small).
- As in the title, keywords should appear at the beginning of the tag.
- Don't repeat the same keywords in the Description part – it is absolutely enough to repeat them 2-3 times.

Examples:

*The tag and the title for the **Home Page***:
<title> Hair Salon in Dallas – *Betty Smith's Hair Salon </title>*
<meta name="description" content="Betty Smith's Hair Salon offers you professional hair services in Dallas. The range of our service includes hairdressing for men and women."/>

*The tag and the title for the **Our service***
<title>Hairdressing service in Dallas, Texas – wedding and prom hairstyles, perm, color</title>
<meta name="description" content=" Betty Smith's Hair Salon offers you professional hair services in Dallas: extensions, perm, formal and party updo's, classic to edgy cuts, house call for wedding services."/>

Meta tag including the keywords:

<meta name="keywords"content="key_word_1, key_word _2, key_word _3">

Things worth knowing:

- Meta name="keywords" is not used by the majority of search engines, so it is less important than **Mata Tag Description.**
- Don't exaggerate with repeating the keywords (2 is enough).
- This tag should not be too long.

Examples:
*The tag and the title for the **Home Page***:
<title>Hair Salon in Dallas – Betty Smith's Hair Salon</title>
<meta name="Keywords" content="hairdressers Dallas, hairdressing service Dallas, hair salons Dallas, beauty service , Dallas, Texas, TX" />

*The tag and the title for the **Our service***
<title>hairdressing service in Dallas, Texas </title>
<meta name="Keywords" content=" extensions Dallas, coloring Dallas, perm Dallas, beard trim Dallas, clipper shave Dallas, wedding hairstyles Dallas , prom hairstyles Dallas" />.

Headings

Headings, or "heading tags," concern the size of the text and its importance on the page.

On the page they appear as:

<h1>a heading***</h1>***

<h2>a heading***</h2>***

<h3>a heading***</h3>***

The <h1></h1> tag is the most important tag and should be found only once on a given sub-page. Other tags are of a less importance and can be used many times.

The text in tags should not be too long, have sense, and contain the keywords (especially the one inside the h1 tag).

Emphasis
 - bold
<u></u> - underlining
<i></i> - italics

These tags are used to emphasize given words. The words in bold or in italics are treated by the search engines as more important in the text. So these tags should be used to specify the most important thing for us in the text (e.g. to single out the crucial keywords)

Alt tags
Pictures included on your websites should include the alt tags: alt="A description with keywords".

It is an alternative test that helps the search engines and people, who for some reason cannot see the content of the picture (e.g. this text is used by the scanners for the blind).

Inside the alt tags you ought to include important keywords.

Text on the page
It is a good idea to use keywords inside it, but in such a way so as not to discourage the visitors. The crucial keywords should be at the very top of the text, because according to the search engines the higher on the page something is, the more important it must be. Valuable text at the top is important not only for search engines, but first of all for your target customers. Try to describe your products and services briefly and clearly.

Link titles, or anchored links
As it was mentioned before, the text in the link titles is one of the most important factors, which increase the chances of your website to appear in search results for given keywords. The text included in the link should contain keywords.

It also refers the links to the website placed in catalogs and on other websites, as well as among the group of links on your page.

You shouldn't use links in such a form:

> *To see the directions to "Blue Tiger Restaurant" click here*

It is better to do it this way:

> *Here you can find the directions to "Blue Tiger Restaurant"*

You need to remember that all the links in your website **must be understandable for your target customers**. It is definitely a bad idea to change the most important links like: Home Page into the Restaurant only because you want to include the keywords.

The website should be first of all optimized for the target customers, and later for the search engines.

After the first website optimization, you could proceed to creating your website's link base. Search engines treat the links as your votes – the more links, which lead from other websites to yours, there are, the more valuable and important your "vote" is for the search engines. What kind of local phrases will lead to your website depends on you're the amount of work you invest to develop your site's popularity.

Website positioning and SEO

After creating the website, optimizing it with reference to important keywords, it is worth spending some time on the short and basic positioning. **The techniques presented in this chapter will help you promote your company's website in the organic search results of the major search engines (especially *Google.com, Yahoo.com and MSN.com*).**

Positioning is a promotion of a website in the search results of the search engines for important keywords. The range of positioning, i.e. the competitiveness of the phrases, for which you will be positioning your website depends on the amount of time spent on working on it, your knowledge about positioning, and patience.

The main part of positioning is really gaining as many links as possible on external websites, which was mentioned earlier in the text. Before you start to gain the links to your website, be acquainted with basic information about this.

Basic information about links

The quality of links

As in many thing in life, in the case of gaining links the quality is important, not the amount. 10 strong links can be more successful than 400 weak links from poor websites. If you position your website according to local phrases, try to gain the links from the local websites and catalogs, which are connected with the field of your interest.

Example:
   If you have a hair salon, get the links from the websites of:

- the local chambers of commerce,
- trade unions,
- hairdressing companies and hair and beauty websites,
- companies similar to yours,
- sub-pages and categories connected with hairdressing in the case of general Internet services.

To find valuable websites in which it is worth placing your links find these Internet sites that respond to similar keywords to yours. Just enter into the search engines important key phrases and observing these websites which are at the top of the search results.

Check if it is possible to add your contents or links to your website on those pages that appear very high in search results for the keywords that are important for you.

Figure 8. Looking for thematic background in a search engine
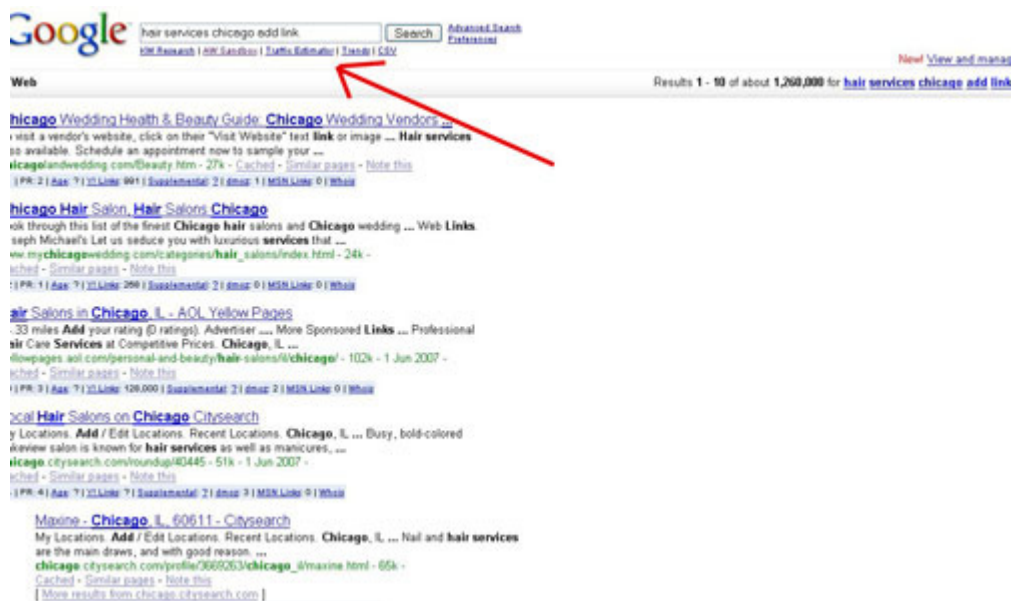
You can also try command "related" at Google to find websites that Google sees as releted to your website.

Figure 9. Checking the related stes in Google
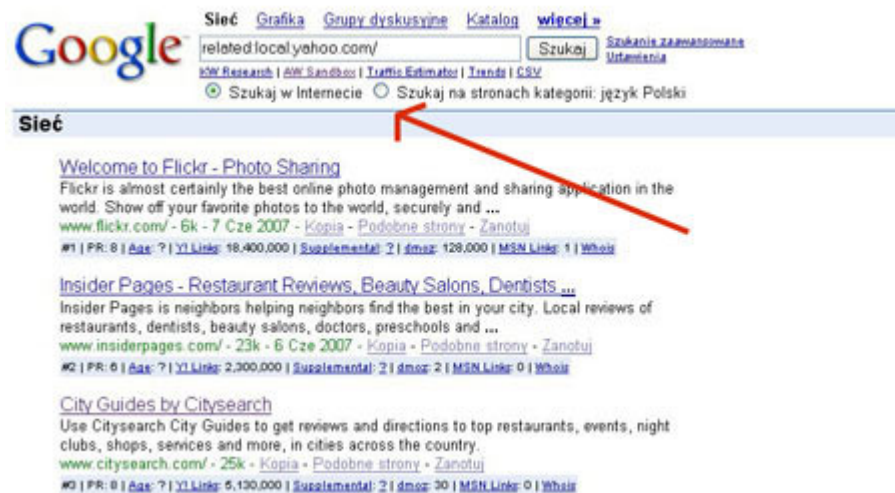
Indexing the linked sub-page

Before you add your website to a paid catalog or buy a link on some other website, make sure if the sub-page of the catalog you chose is already found by the search engines. If such a sub-page is not found yet, the link on it is worthless.

In such case, try to add to other categories which are connected wit your trade or add it to the other catalog.

To check if a given sub-page of the catalog or a website was found by the search engines, copy the Internet address of this sub-page and paste it into the search engine window. If the search engine shows it in its results, it means that this page was found. If it doesn't, it means that the sub-page has not been found by the search engine yet.

Time distribution of linking

Adding new links to websites should be distributed in time. During the first 1 or 2 months of the existence of your website, you can just limit yourself to gaining a few valuable links. Later you can gradually increase the number of links, but no more than 5 links a day. It is important that link adding should be constant, i.e. maybe fewer (let's say 2 links a week) but regularly for a possibly long time (at least for a few months).

Link titles

It is a common mistake to give links with the same title all the tome. Adding the same links (especially quickly) may provoke the search engines to give your website a punishment. This punishment is a filter put on a given keyword. As a result, the website plummets down in the search results for a given keyword or even disappears from the search results for a given keyword. So even if you really want to position your website for the phrase: "hair salons Dallas," you need to introduce a rotation of the links titles and descriptions.

Example:
The phrase: "**hair salons Dallas**" can be substituted for: **"hairdressers Dallas,"** or **"hairdressing salon Dallas."**

Link value

The value of the links for the purposes of positioning is different and depends on many factors. For your website a link from a famous page will have different value than a link from a mediocre forum.

Deciding whether or not it is worth having a link to your website on a given Internet page, take into the consideration:

- if the page of your interest plays an important role in your business trade and in your region/state. The bigger this role is, the more valuable for your promotion this link will be.
- If there are many links to this website from other Internet page, which are also valuable for your business trade. The more links lead to this site, the more valuable for your promotion this link will be. You can always check the number of the leading links from other web pages by using this tool:

  o http://www.linkvendor.com/seo-tools/domain-popularity.html

- how many external links are on the sub page where you are planning to insert your link. The more links there are, the lower value of your link would be.
- the PR of this page – the best way to check that is by installing Google Toolbar, which shows PR in a bar in a 0 to 10 scale. You can download it from the Google website:

  o Internet Explorer version - http://toolbar.google.com/T4/?rd=f
  o Firefox version - http://www.google.com/tools/firefox/toolbar/FT3/intl/en/

Figure 10. Checking the Google PR by Google Toolbar
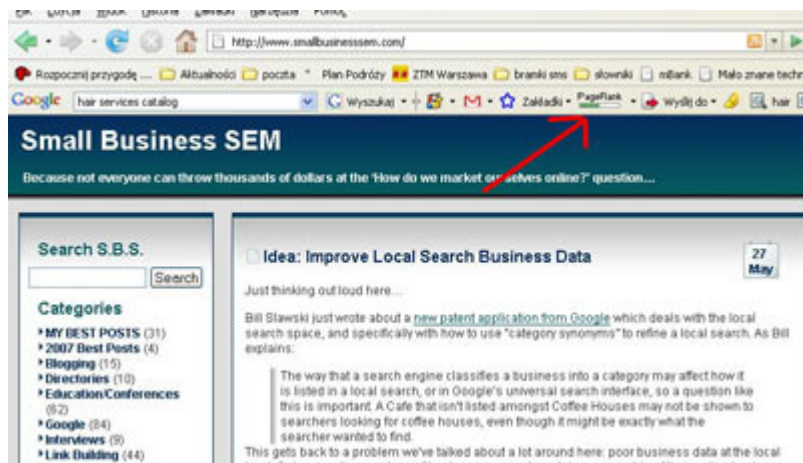
- the PR of the given sub-page where your link is going to be. Different sub-pages of the same website have different PR. So it may happen that the website *http://www.website.com* has 6 in the PR scale, whereas the sub-page *http://www.website.com/subpage.html* only 4.
- if there are no securities that would prevent Google and other search engines from seeing the link to your website. One of the reasons for such a situation is when a link from another page gives no profit according to Google is the abovementioned "nofollow" link and meta tags "noindex, nofollow."

They look like that

Figure 11. Meta tags in the website code

As I mentioned in a previous part of this guide, you can check meta tags in the source code.

Time of waiting for your website to appear in search results

Before your website appears in search engines, it may pass even up to three months from adding the first links so you need to be patient. However, such a long period before the search engines "accept" your website is rather rare.

To check if your website appears in the search engines, enter its name in inverted commas into the search window, e.g.:

„*www.cnn.com*"

Figure 12. Checking the indexing of the section
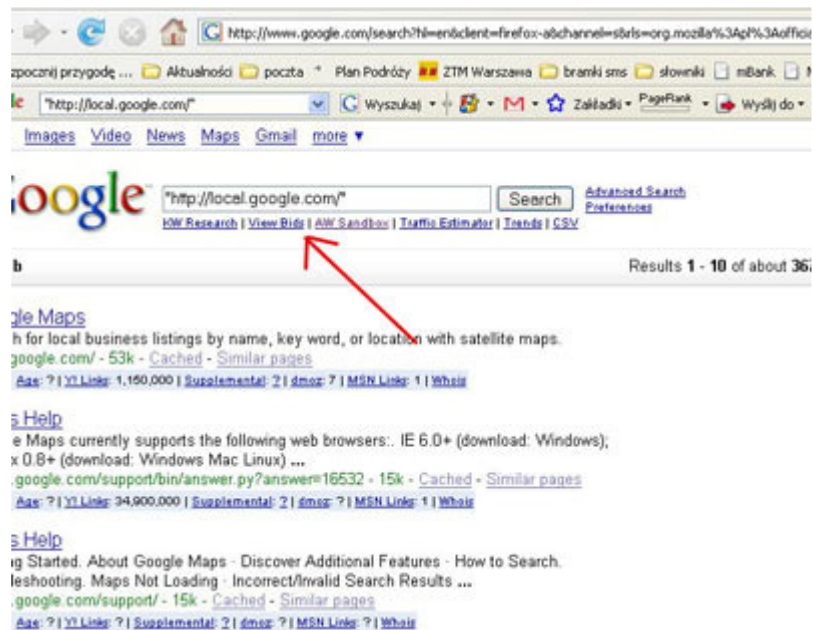
Adding links

If you have no time and will to indulge into the search engines mechanisms, you should focus your actions on getting the best possible positions in the search results for the name of your company and its address. The worst thing that can happen to a company which wants to target their customers through its website is to be lower than its competitor in the search results for the actual name of the company.

Example:
        Your company's name is "Johnny's Transport Service." Your main competitor's name is "Peter's Transport Service." However, in the Google search results for the phrase "Johnny's Transport Service" the first result is your competitor's website, not yours.

Basic link adding

If your company is e.g. *Betty Smith's Hair Salon*, which is located in Dallas, TX, so what you have to focus on in the first place is to guarantee the top place in the search results for such phrases like:

- *"Betty Smith's Hair Salon"*
- *"hairdressers Betty Smith"*
- *"Dallas Betty Smith's Hair Salon"*
- *"Dallas Betty Smith"*

Achieving this should be relatively easy. To do so, it is enough to get a few strong links to your site. The easiest way for adding links is adding your website to a few good catalogs or websites which allow inserting the content.

Such an exemplary link could look like that:

Website title: Betty Smith's Hair Salon
Website description: Betty Smith's Hair Salon offers professional hair service in Dallas. Our service includes: haircutting, modeling, washing, and trimming. you are happy to provide service for men and women.
Keywords: hair salon Dallas, hairdressing service Dallas, Betty Smith's Hair Salon, hairdressers Dallas Betty Smith, Dallas Betty Smith, hairdressing service Dallas Betty Smith.

Expanded link adding

If you can spare more time than just a few hours or you live in a small town, where the competition of the companies similar to yours on the Internet virtually doesn't exist, you can promote your website by more general keywords, like e.g. hairdressers "your town," or hair salon "your town."

Website title: hairdressers Dallas
Website description: Betty Smith's Hair Salon offers professional hair service in Dallas. Our service includes: haircutting, modeling, washing, and trimming. you are happy to provide service for men and women.
Keywords: hair salon Dallas, hairdressing service Dallas, hair modeling Dallas, hairdresser Dallas.

Websites worth leaving your link on

As I mentioned, when promoting your small local website in search engines, it is important to take care of gaining the links of local sites, connected to the place, where you run your company.

A very good place to gain links may be:
  • websites of the local chambers of commerce;
  • www of societies and associations;
  • local town and institutions websites.

Apart from the abovementioned thematic and local websites, it is worth adding links to multi-thematic catalogs, which have a long Internet history.

Adding your website to such catalogs as DMOZ.org, or Yahoo Directory does not cost too much time and is a good way to gaining valuable links (unfortunately, some of these catalogs are paid, but the money is small – a few dollars).
A detailed list of the directories can be found at http://www.directorylist.org/. I recommend adding your website at least to these catalogs which have their PR higher than 5 and do not charge too much for adding your link to their database.

Links from other websites

Apart from getting links from catalogs, you can try to gain them from other websites, similar thematically to yours. You can exchange links with your friends, who have their own websites with a similar topic or with companies, which are not a direct competition for your business.

Example:

You run a hair salon in New York, so if you put a link to a hair salon in Chicago on your website, there will not be any threat that your customers will choose your competition.

In link swapping, you had better avoid direct exchange of link, presented in this example:

Example:

On the main page of your website you are putting a link to a sub-page of another website, on which there is a direct link to you. It looks like that:

A-→B
B-→A

The search engines will quickly notice such a practice, so it is worthless to do so.

It is a better idea to have a model of a multilateral link Exchange, in which a few websites are taking part. Such an exchange is obviously more difficult to organize, but is more profitable when it comes to the value of links.

Example:

On your page (A), you are putting a link to B's website. B's is linking C, C is linking D, which finally is linking your website.

It looks like that:

A → B
B → C
C → D
D → A

Additional ways to gain users and valuable links

Additional ways to gain links to your website, which are presented in this section, are recommended to those companies which are ready to sacrifice enough time to introduce these ideas.

Adding articles

In each trade there are websites, which allow you to add article connected to a specific topic. There can be e.g. Internet trade websites.

Apart from strictly thematical websites, there are also multi-thematical Internet sites, which allow their users to add their own articles.

In America such websites are e.g.:

- http://www.selfgrowth.com - PR 7
- http://www.squidoo.com/ - PR 7
- http://www.businessknowhow.com/ - PR 6
- http://www.buzzle.com/ - PR 6
- http://ezinearticles.com/ - PR 6

3

- http://www.articledashboard.com/ - PR 6
- http://www.goarticles.com/ - PR 6
- http://www.articlecity.com/ - PR 6
- http://www.zinos.com/ - PR 6
- http://www.easyarticles.com/ - PR 5
- http://www.isnare.com/ - PR 6
- http://www.bigarticles.com/ - PR 5
- http://www.authorconnection.com/ - PR 5
- http://www.articledepot.co.uk/ - PR 5
- http://www.articleson.com/ - PR 4
- http://www.articlepros.com/ - PR 4
- http://www.articlesarea.com/ - PR 4
- http://www.articlestop.com/ - PR 4
- http://www.articlemotron.com/ - PR 4
- http://www.earticlesonline.com/ - PR 4
- http://www.articlecat.com/ -PR 4

Although, adding the links directly to the website is usually not allowed, but by publishing the article, you have the possibility of creating your own footer placed at the very end of the article (it may also contain a link to your website).

Presell pages

You can also decide to make so called presell pages, i.e. pages created and made accessible by other websites, on which you can put the links to your sub-pages. Links from a good presell page should be surrounded by the content, in which there are a lot of important keywords. This presell page should also be well-linked within the whole website.

Mostly, presell pages are sold by strong websites. There are however many websites, which allow to add the articles with the links to other websites for free.

Taking part in local Internet communities, such as discussion groups or forums

On such forums, people often ask for advice about buying furniture, a good hairdresser or an accounting office. Giving advice even in petty things to the members of such communities can also be your chance to gain prestige and trust among the local people.

The moment when somebody from this community needs services or products which are provided by your company, there is a great likelihood that he/she will accept your offer. Such an activity will enable you to gain links to your website, as well as to gain your customers directly.

Local sponsoring

Sponsoring some cultural and business events in a local community is not only a good advisement, but also a chance that the links to your website may appear on the Internet websites of the local news (they are strong free links).

Standing out

It can be understood as everything that gives a real profit to the local community, everything that attracts attention and public. The more you distinguish yourself from others, the more unique things you are doing, the more chance for publicity you have.

Website analytics

When you created website it is very important to measure its effectiveness. You can measure effectiveness with web analytics. Web analytics

Web analytics basics

It is said that web analytics is very complicated, but if you have small website even basic web analytics will be enough.
Remember:
- Even very basic web analytics is better than none. Even if you spend like 1 hour per week looking at your website data you can increase your profits seriously
- You do not have to spend money for analytics software. You can use Google Analytics, which is free.
- Even if you consider buying professional analytics software in the future, starting with the basic one will give you to knowledge about analytics rules, which allows you to choose software wisely.

Google Analytics Installation Guide

It is basic information which will show you how to set up account with Google Analytics. You will find more detailed information on this topic at Help Center at www.google.com/support/analytics.

How to create Google Analytics Account

- Visit http://www.google.com/analytics.
- At the site click "Sign up" now to create new Google Analytics Account
- Enter your website's address
- Choose the nickname for your new account in the Account Name field, then click Continue.
- After that enter your contact information and click Continue.
- Read the Google Analytics Terms of Service and then select the "Yes" checkbox to agree to these terms,
- click "Create New Account" to continue.
- After that you will see the tracking instructions page. This page contains the tracking code that you'll need to paste into each page of your site.
- Add the tracking code to your pages.
- After sou havee completed this step, Google Analytics will begin collecting traffic data. You' will see data in your reports within 24 hours.

Which data I should monitor?

The more data you monitor the better results you will get. If you do not know anything about web analytics read article:
http://www.ecommerce-guide.com/solutions/customer_relations/article.php/3616281

Below I have listed the most important data you should watch regularly. To make easier starting with web analytics and working with Google Analytics for people, who do not know anything about this subject, I have prepared screens that show appropriate places in Google Analytics.

1. Top Key Phrases from Search Engines - more and more entries at websites are from search engines. Look at the keywords, which direct visitors to your site to check if those keywords have real value for your site. Visitor, who entered your site from keyword search engine, which is not relevant to your site, is not going to convert into the money. Look at top key phrases from search engines to find out, which of them give you the highest profits.

Figure 13. Checking Top Key Phrases from Search Engines in Google Analytics
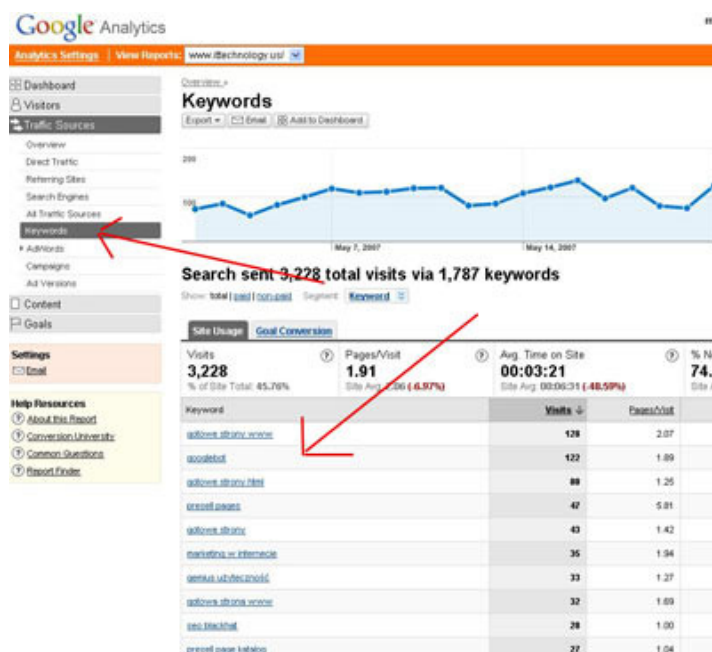
2. Top Referring URL's. Monitor your traffic, which goes from other sites. If you see many of your most profitable visitors went from particular site, it could be the sign that this site is good candidate for partnership. This situation can give information, which kinds of promotion and partnership are profitable for your site. On the other if you do see traffic from the sites, which should give it to you consider contacting those website's owners to start cooperation wit those ones.

Figure 14. Checking the Top Referring Sites in Google Analytics
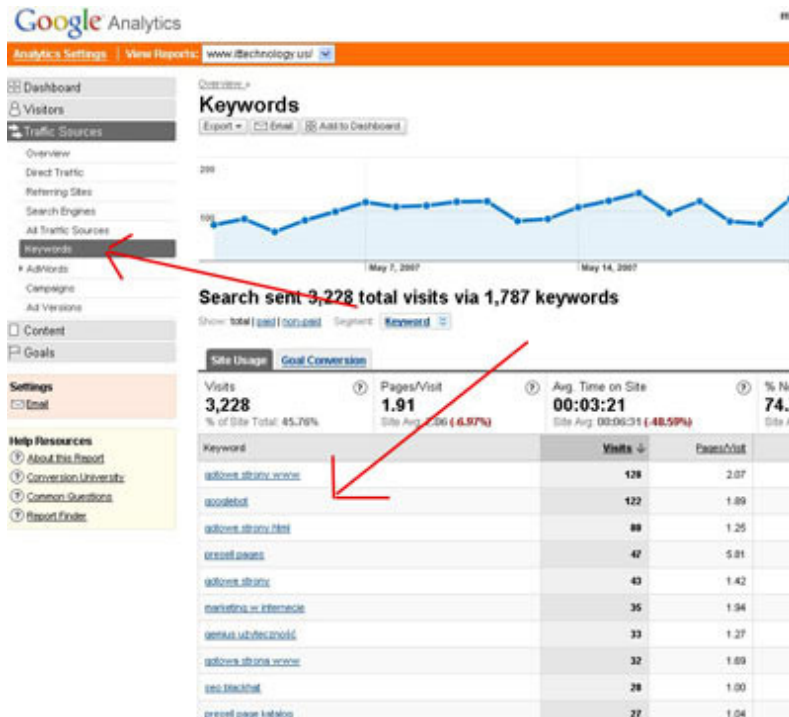
3. <u>Site Content Popularity</u>: it is very important to know, which pages are most popular on your site. Sometimes your visitors will love content, which you do not care about. If you see that people do not visit pages, which should be most important and most valuable for them it can mean they do not know about those pages and you have focus on promoting those pages. Understand, what people like on your site and what they need from your site.

Figure 15. Checking the most popular pages in Google Analytics

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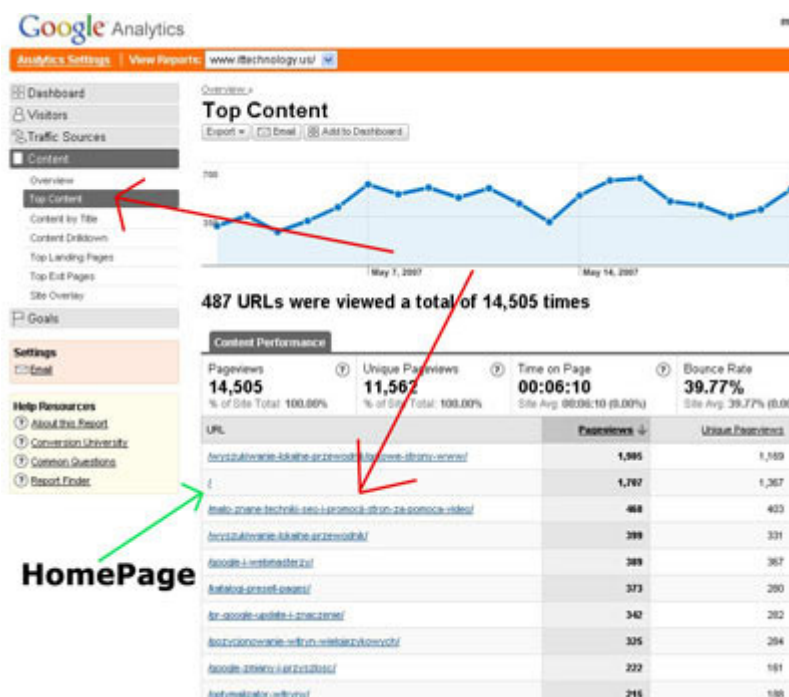
4. <u>% of Visitors Who Visit the Home Page</u>: very often people visit site from search engines, so they do not see home page or they see it has no meaning for them . You should know how many of your visitors see your homepage to find out if you should focus on creating nice and user-friendly homepage or deeper pages. The less people see your homepage the less important it is.

Figure 16. Checking in Google Analytics how often the landing page for visitors the homepage was
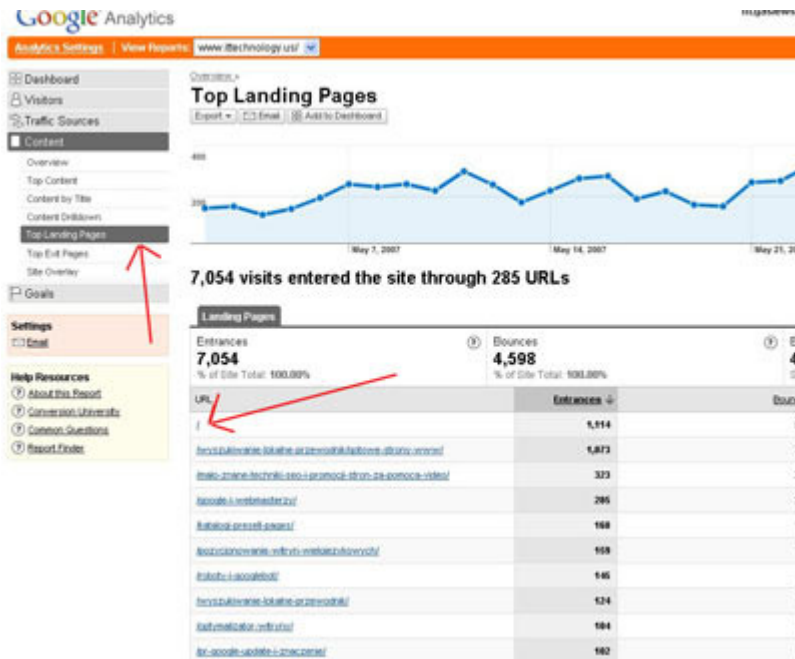
5. <u>Site Overlay</u>: This report will show you, which links are clicked on your site. If you see that your visitors do not click links, which are important and can increase your sales try to optimize your site. Use site overlay as easy and basic usability test, which will show you , if the visitors are able to complete their task on your site.

Figure 17. Site Overlay in Google Analytics
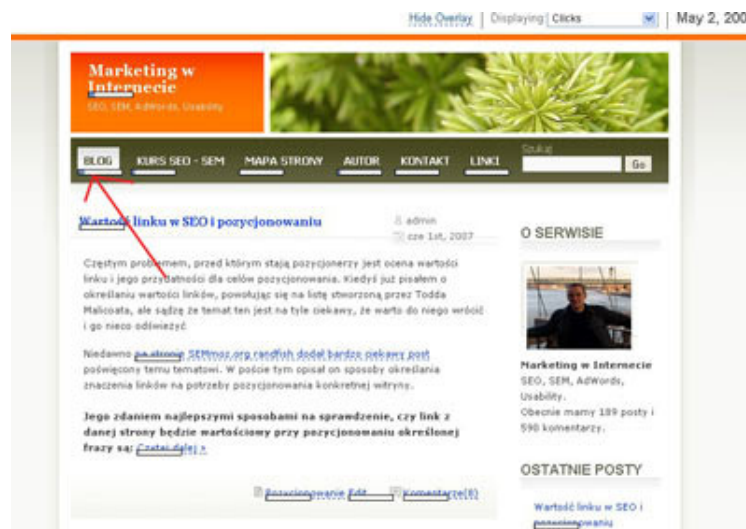
6. <u>Site Bounce Rate</u>: This rate defines visitors who visited only one page on the site and then left it. It is valuable to know this number for your site. The higher that number the worse is the quality of your site traffic. High number of bounce rate means that the people, who visited your site were not interested in your content. Compare that rate at different traffic sources to know, whose of them give you most valuable visitors. If you see that one site give you better visitors than another one fasten your cooperation with the more efficient one.
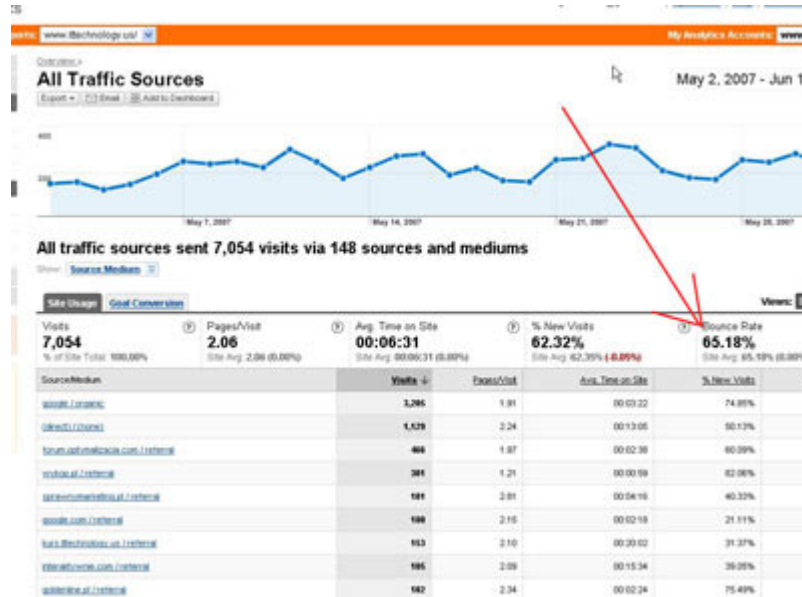
Figure 18. Bounce Rate in Google Analytics

7. <u>Conversion rate</u> – conversion rate is the relation of people, who did business with you after getting information about your business from your website to all visitors of your site. It is important to know how many visitors you need on your site to do one deal. It is very difficult to measure but you can try to do it measuring number of people who did business with you after getting information about your business from your website.

You can:

• ask people who do business with you how they go information about your business

• have two different phones for your company: one for newspaper advertisements and the other one placed on your website (then you know how many got information about your business from newspapers and how many from website)

• place coupon on website with 5% and then get to know how many people used it.

Local search solutions

- Google local
- Yahoo Local
- MSN Local Search
- CitySearch
- InfoUSA
- Local.com
- Merchant Circle
- TrueLocal

Google local

Optimizing your service for Google Local is important not only due to utilization and popularity of this service among the Internet users, but most of all because of the fact that the results of Google Local will appear in Google.com search results for local keywords. The results are shown in a form, called One Box. You can find the example of the Google Local results in Google.com search results in the figure below.

Figure 19. Google search results for "transport services Chicago"
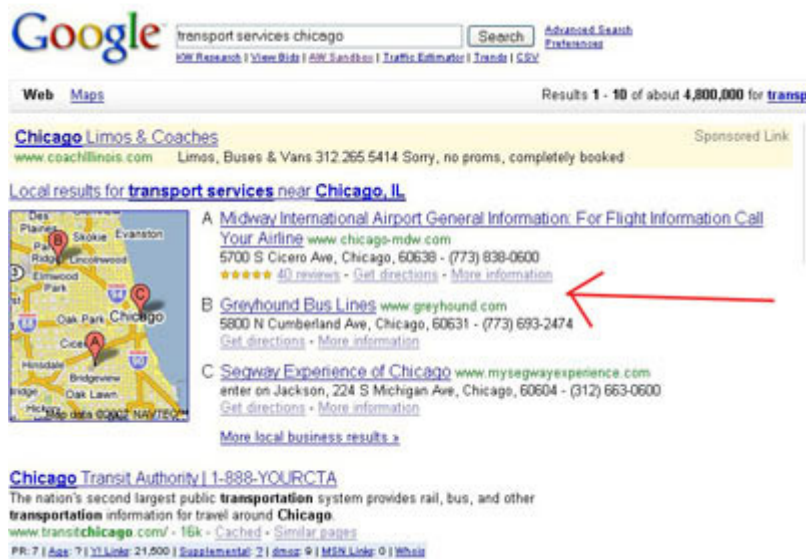
What does Google Local offer?

As the more and more people use Google Local search and more and more often its results appear in normal Google search results, Google Local offers great possibility to get local customers for your business. To see how the search results in Google Local look like, see the image and descrition below.

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Figure 20. This figure presents the Google Local search results for "plumber Hoboken, NJ"

The search result is divided into 3 parts: on the right there is a large map, which shows companies. On the bottom left hand corner there is a short description of the presented companies. On the top part of the left side there are Google sponsored links coming from Google AdWords advertisemen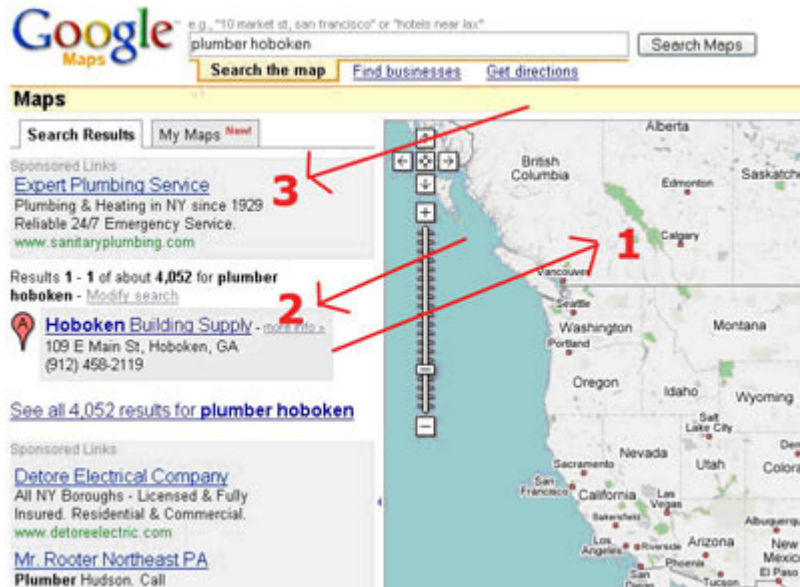t, which is targeted on specific keywords in a PPC (we pay for every click on a sponsored link). A more detailed description of AdWords is in the next part of the guide – "Sponsored Search."

How do I add my company to Google Local?

To add your company to Google Local, you need to register at Local Business Center Google. In order to verify the information entered to Local Business Center Google (so that your competitor didn't register their company under your address), Google sends a special verifying code under your company's physical address given during the registration (the code is sent by the traditional mail). After entering the verifying code, your company appears on a Google map within a few weeks.

Figure 21. Google Local Business Cener
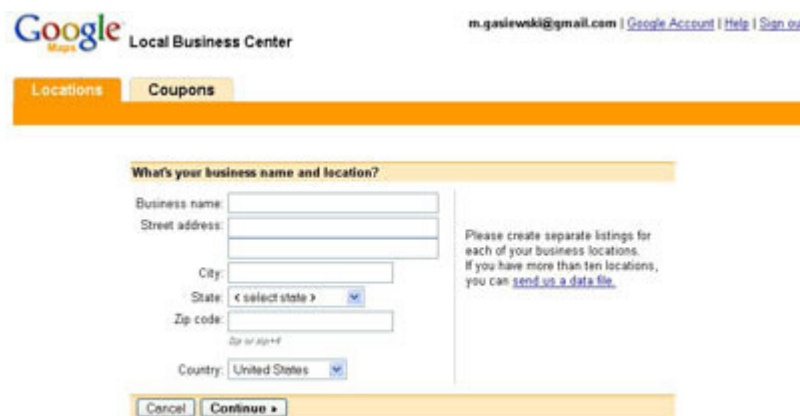
After registering your company at Local Business Center, it is worth spending some time on using all the functions provided by the Google Local account:

- inserting pictures that can familiarize your customers with your company ("Edit images of the listing" function),
- adding additional and non-standard company descriptions ("Edit custom attributes of the listing" function),
- checking your company's position on a Google map and correct it in case of wrong results ("Fix incorrect marker location"),
- observing the statistics of the Google Local account ("Listing statistics" function).

What do I need to do to appear at the top of Google Local search results?

Adding only your company to Business Local Center is not enough to appear at the top of Google Local search results. What is more, it is not enough to appear in Onebox Google.com in the search results for keywords.
Here are the things that influence how high your company will appear in Google Local search results (apart from the account at Business Local Center):

- **Website**
  Having a website is not indispensable to appear in Google Local and Yahoo Local search result but when you have it, the search results might be more favorable to you. Appropriately optimized (according to the scheme presented in the earlier chapters), your local website gives you more prestige in the eyes of search engines.

- **Optimizing the contents on your website for suitable keywords**
  The website, which is prepared from the point of view of the contents and the technical elements, such as the page title and appropriate H1 tags, creates a more favorable impression on Google.

- **Links from other websites**
  As I have already mentioned, the search engines treat links to a website as votes. That is why, the more links lead to your website, the more probable is that you will be acknowledged a valuable website in a given trade. The most important links are of course these coming from websites important in a given business: local chambers of trade, industrial chambers, etc.

- **The presence of your company in important business catalogs and websites**
  It is especially important to be present on such websites like: Yellow Pages, local WWW, business websites like e.g. Yelp, CitySearch.

- **Reviews**
  Reviews (their quantity and quality) can (but don't have to) help your company gain better search results at Google Local.
  .

Yahoo Local

Yahoo offers free and paid form of promoting a small company in Yahoo Local results. The results coming from Yahoo Local are also shown within the results of Yahoo for local keywords.

Figure 22. Yahoo Local results in the search results of Yahoo.com
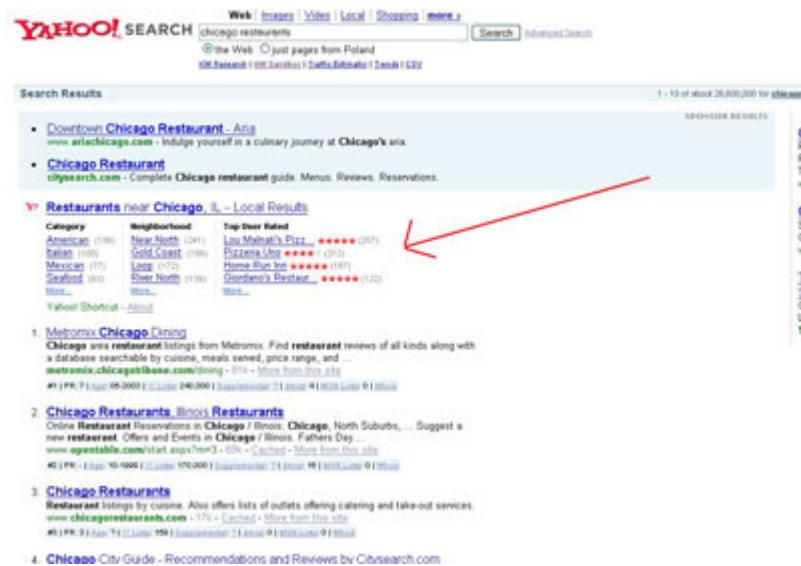
Local Basic Listing

It is a basic and free Yahoo Local offer targeted for small, local companies. Within this offer, the owner of the company can add basic information about their company to the Yahoo database.

This offer provides inserting: the address, telephone and fax number, www and e-mail address, putting the company in up to 5 business categories, opening hours, acceptable ways of payments, basic information about services and products.

Figure 23. Yahoo Local Basic Listing

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Local Enhanced Listing

Within this offer the owner of the company can add: the company logo, tagline, pictures (maximum 10) and their own company description. This way of promoting a local company appears in the middle part of Yahoo Local search results and is subscribed monthly - 9.95$/month.

Figure 24. Yahoo Local Enhanced Listing
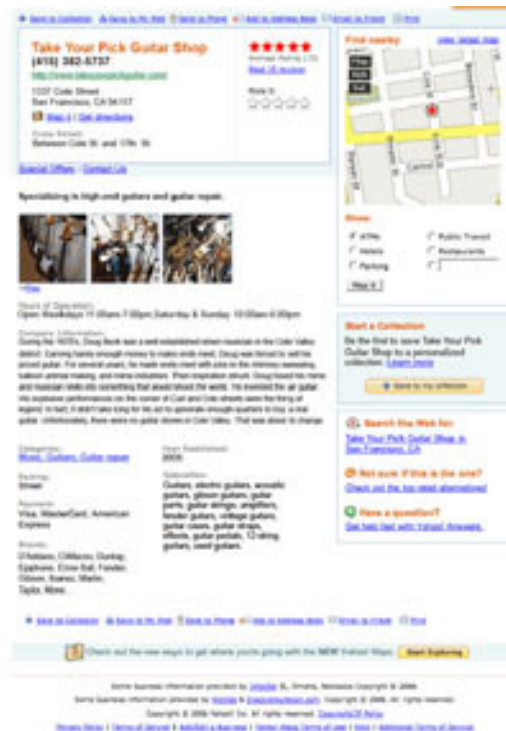
Local Featured Listing

These are the search results shown at the top and bottom part of the Yahoo Local search results (3 at the top and 3 at the bottom). They are shown on the blue background with the title Sponsored Results.

Within the Local Featured Listing Yahoo offers you also free website with 5 sub-pages. The additional advantage of Local Featured Listing is that within geotargeting in Yahoo Local, the extent of Local Featured Listing is larger than any other search results in Yahoo Local.

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Figure 25. Yahoo Local Featured Listing
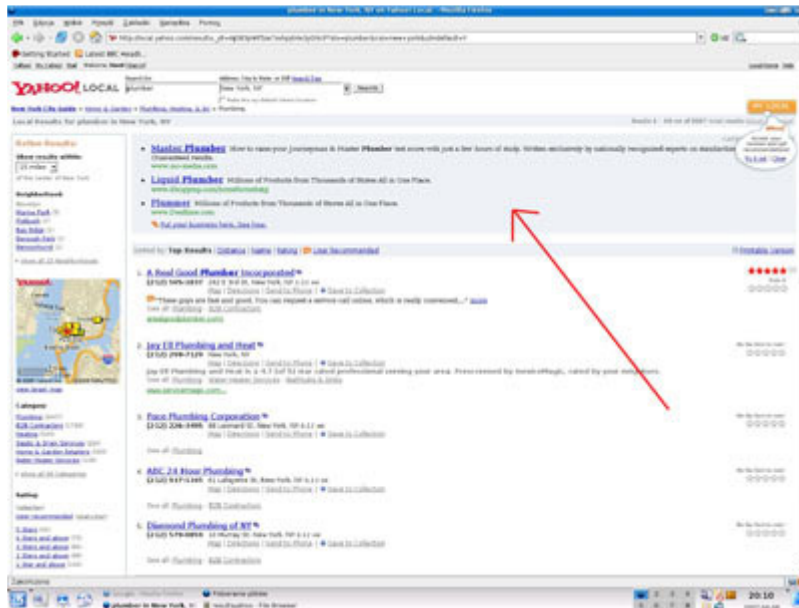
The fees are determined in a quasi-auctioned rate – the fee may differ from 15 to 300 $, depending on the business region and category.

Figure 26. Price ranges in for Yahoo Featured Local Listing
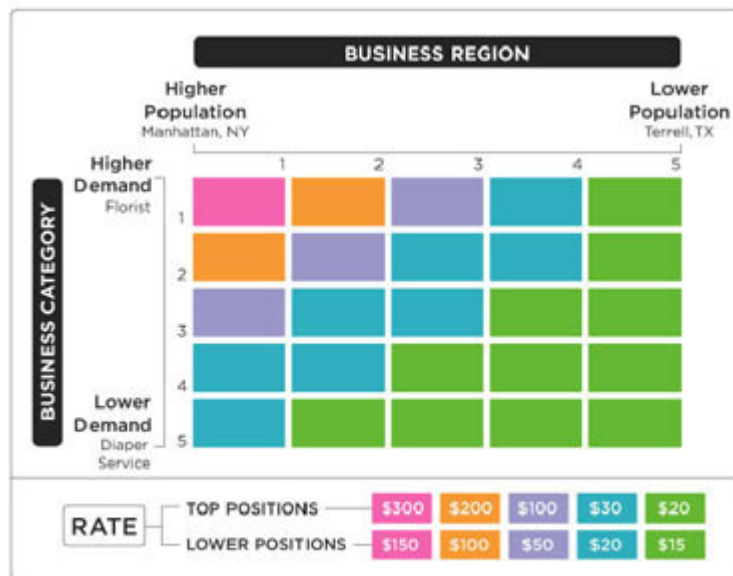
How can I add my company to Yahoo Local?

The basic data shown at Yahoo Local are taken from InfoUsa, Wcities, Discoverourtown.com databases, and the company owners whose data did not appear in these databases can add their company here: http://listings.local.yahoo.com/

5

What do I need to do to appear high in Yahoo Local search results?

1. Buy at least Local Enhanced Listing and fill in the company description carefully, inserting some important keywords within the description.
2. Take care of all the elements mentioned at Google Local.
3. Buy Local Featured Listing, which guarantees that your company will appear after entering important keywords at the top and bottom of the Yahoo Local search results.

MSN Local Search

The MSN Local Search combines local white and yellow pages listings with mapping technology from Microsoft MapPoint. MSN and Verizon SuperPages.com have created an alliance to integrate SuperPages yellow pages business listings within MSN Local Search.

Free option

If a business owner wants to be included in Live Search Maps results, he should add his business listing to the MSN's partner, Localeze at: http://webapp.localeze.com/bizreg/add.aspx.

Figure 27. Localeze that is MSN's partner for Live Search Maps

In this listing the business owner can add:
- company name,
- business category
- company address and phone number,
- company website and email

He can also use Localeze to update his company listing at:
http://webapp.localeze.com/bizreg/update.aspx or remove business listing at:
http://webapp.localeze.com/bizreg/remove.aspx.

Advertisement on Live Search

MSN uses a Verizon's Superpages.com to provide paid advertising listings as well. Paid ads appear at the top of the search results in a colored rectangle.

Figure 28. Advertisement in Live Search
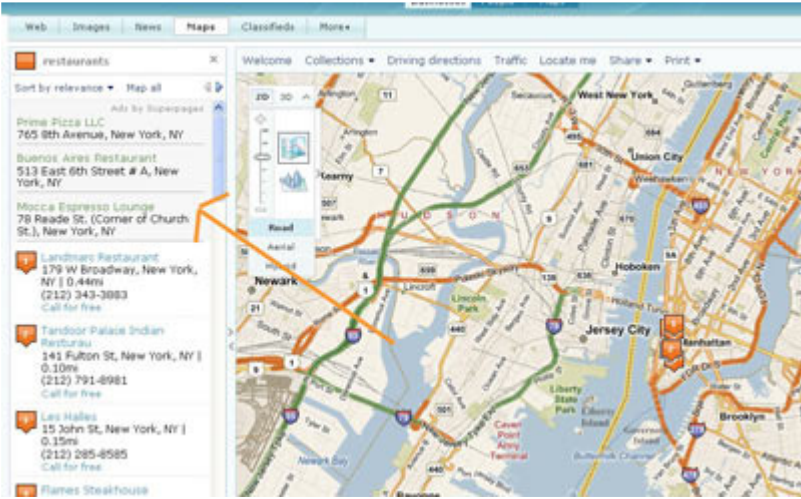
If a advertiser wants to be advertised on http://local.live.com/ he has to do it with SuperPages, which provides pay-per-click advertising. For information about this kind of advertisement, please read the chapter SuperPages.

CitySearch

If you want to be included in all major local search sites you should check if information about your site is available in CitySearch. Citysearch is a serious provider of local search information for many sites including MSN, Ask.com, Hotels.com

Figure 29. Homepage of CitySearch.com
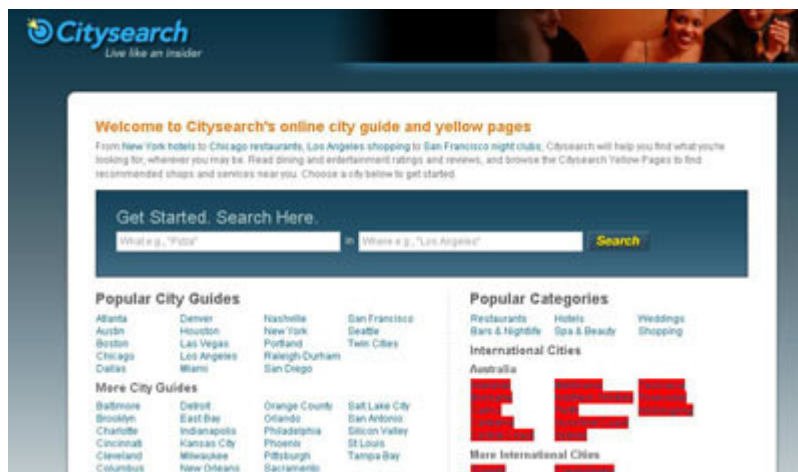
City Search offer

CitySearch offers following advertising options:

- Business Profiles – one page profiles which you can use to describe briefly your products and services, offer and payment types, hours of operation.

- Featured Listings- special messages, which customers see at business listings when they look for some services

- Special Offers: printable coupons with special prices and discounts, which can be used at business offline locations

- Edge Ads: listing on the profile pages of related businesses and at the top of the results within searches for related services and products

- Geo Views: advertisement on Citysearch maps

Payement for advertisement in CitySearch includes:
- Monthly Listing Fee (It can be found on the MyAccount tool web page)
- The cost-per-click payment set by customer for each click-through to the business' profile page located on Citysearch or the business' web site.

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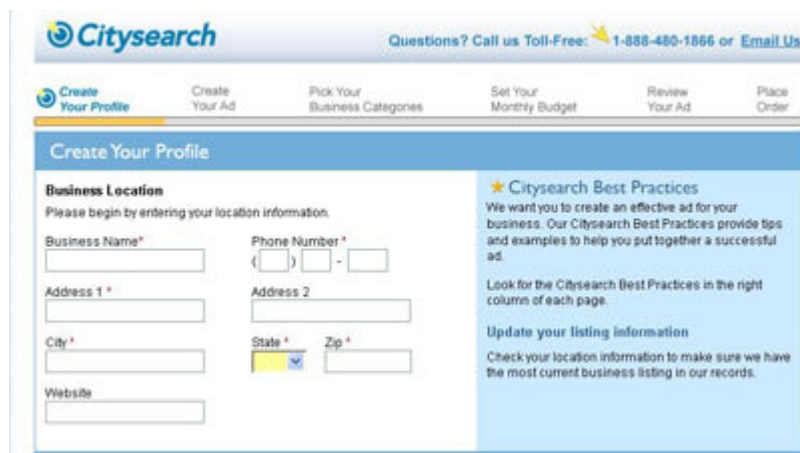
Phone based advertisement

With CitySearch you can order phone based advertisement: CitySearch displays link with local or toll-free number chosen by advertiser and charge him for leads generated with this advertisement.

You can sign up for CitySearch account at:
https://selfenroll.citysearch.com/?Agent=citysearch&Feed=default

Figure 30. Sign up page in CitySearch.com

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InfoUSA

InfoUSA aggregate information about businesses from various white and yellow pages, local newspapers and other business sources.

Figure 31. Homepage of InfoUSA.com

Before doing anything with InfoUSA database check if your company exists in this database. As InfoUSA compiles data from so many sources it is almost sure that it does. If your company is not listed in InfoUSA database you can add it for free at: http://list.infousa.com/dbupdate.htm

Figure 32. Sign up page in InfoUSA.com
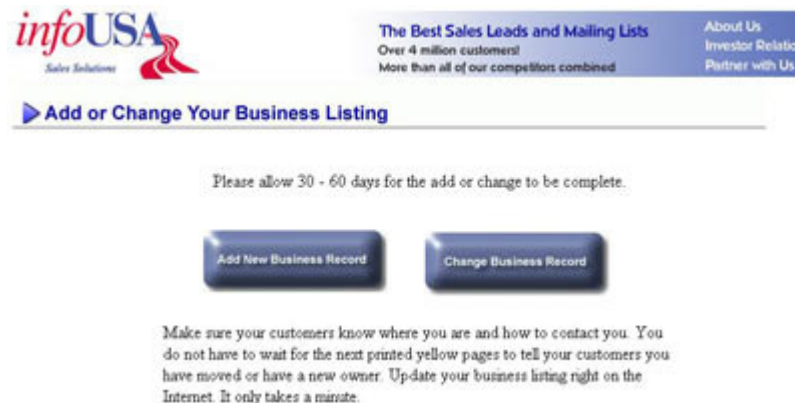
Actually InfoUSA does not offer advertisement options, but it is recommended to get listed in its database as major search engines like: Google, Yahoo, MSN uses InfoUSA's data for local-based searches. InfoUSA provides listing information for many of the smaller search directories as well.

Local.com

Local.com is a local search engine that offer a variety of advertising options on the site for businesses targeting local customers. According to the ComScore to the Local.com is the fastest growing local search engine on the internet. As the Local.com claims it has more than 10 million monthly unique visitors. Local.com presents user reviews with some listings; which are taken from sites such as Insider Pages and Judy's Book.

Figure 33. Homepage of Local.com

Free listing

If you do not want to spend money for advertisement in Local.com add your listing to its database to be shown in its organic searches.

You can include in free listing:

- company name,

- company address,

- business website URL,

- business category.

You can add free listing at: http://advertise.local.com/search_buslisting.aspx

Figure 34. Free listing at: Local.com

Paid advertisement options

Banner ads

At Local.com you can buy banners, which are shown on Local.com results pages. They following sizes:

- 728 x 90

- 300 x 250

- 120 x 600

- 160 x 600

The banners can be directed to the customers with various combination of refine options: geography (country, city, zip/ postal, DMA, area code), weekday, daypart, language, frequency and so on.

Sponsored results

Sponsored results are Pay-Per-Click ads, which are served on the Local.com results pages contextually to the keywords and categories chosen by user. The ads are ranked by the bid value specified by advertiser

Figure 35. Banners and sponsored results at: Local.com
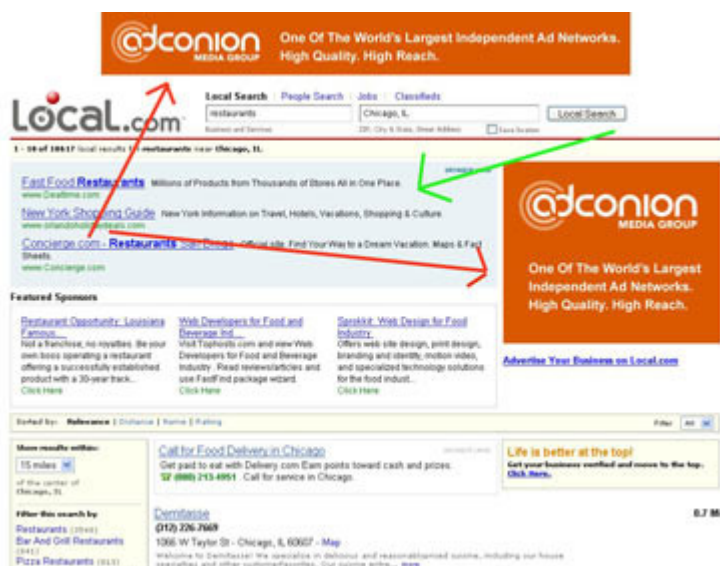
Local Promote Premium.

A Local Promote Premium profile is a profile , which enables advertiser to provide detailed information about his business to Local.com users. This information can include:

- company mame

- company address, phone number and map

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- website URL and email address

- store hours

- services and products offered

- brands carried

- promotional offers & discounts

- payment options and so on.

Figure 36. Local Promote Premium
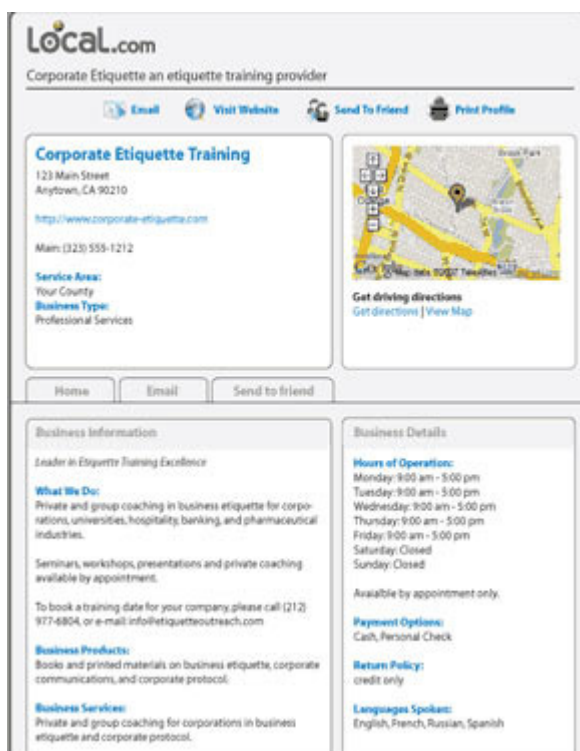
Local Promote Premium costs 39.95$/month.

6

Merchant Circle

Merchant Circle offers business listings and many online marketing tools, which the company can use to reach and attract customers.

Figure 37. Homepage of Merchant Circle
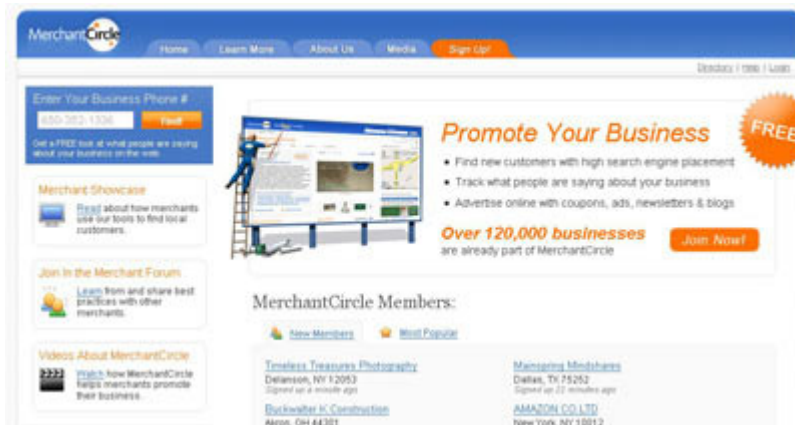
Free option

The basic service, which is offered for free gives quite many options. With this plan you can add your listing, start your business blog, send newletter to the customers, create coupons, upload pictures and video. You can sign up for this free account at: http://www.merchantcircle.com/signup?utm_medium=homepagepricing&utm_source=pricingfree&plan=free

Figure 38. Free listing at Merchant Circle
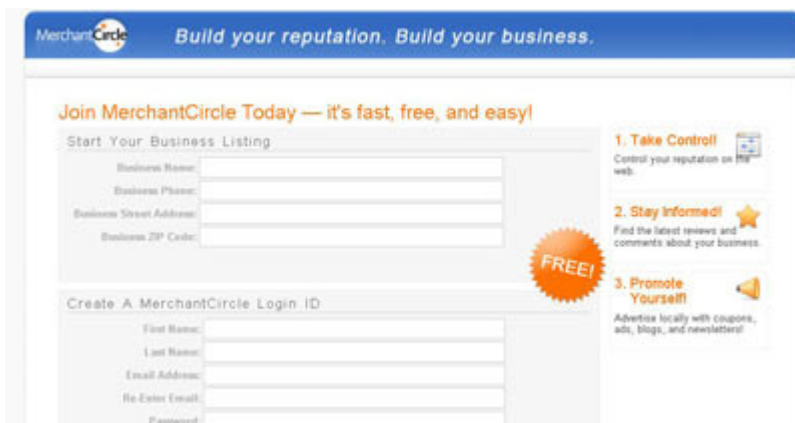
Paid options

Merchant Circle offers 2 paid options: 29.95$ per month and 99.95$ per month. You can compare the features of both plans at: http://www.merchantcircle.com/corporate/pricing.html With paid options you can track what is said and written about your business online, add ads to main search engines like Google and Yahoo, get premium listing in Merchant Circle directory,

get support from Merchant Circle advertisement specialists.

Figure 39. Premium listing at Merchant Circle
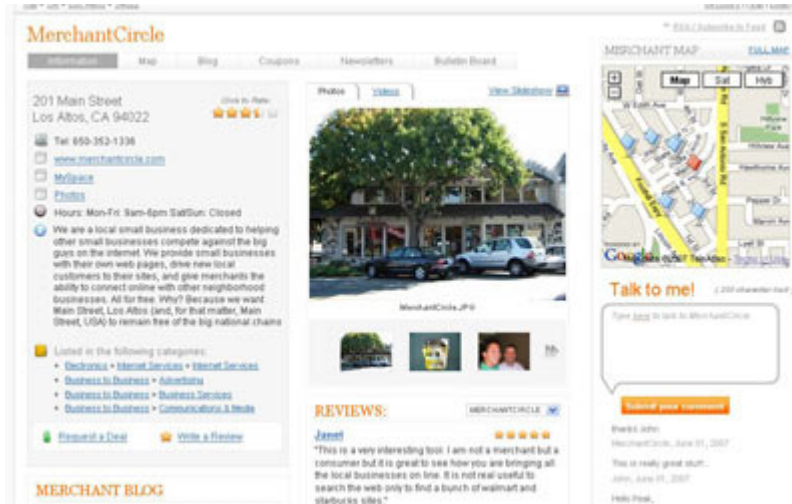
Business network

With MerchantCircle you can invite other businesses in your business area to join your business network. After your partners join your network you will be added to each network they joined before. In this situation listing of your company will show on the page of your partners. Similarly , listing of your partners will show on your listing.

Figure 40. Business network at Merchant Circle

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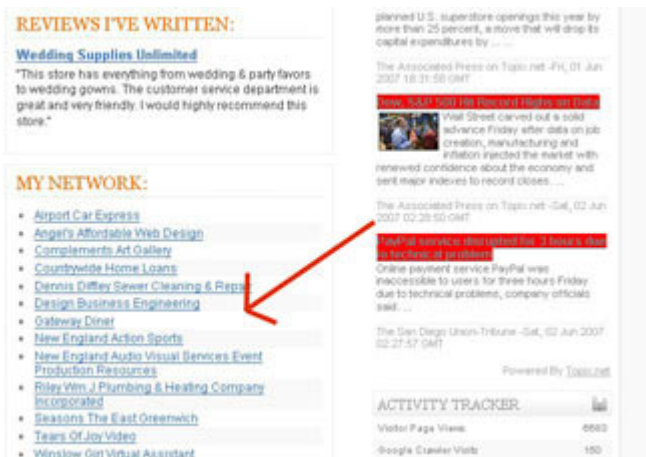
TrueLocal

TrueLocal.com is an Internet business directory, which the users can use to do full text search on it. Users can search for any type of business, product, or service like in yellow pages directories and they can do full text searches like cabernet sauvignon, defense lawyer and teeth whitening.

Figure 41. Homepage of TrueLocal.com

Free option

The free listing can include:
Company name
Company address
Company phone number

You can sign up for free listing at TrueLocal at:
https://www.truelocal.com/newlisting.aspx?type=0

Figure 42. Free listing at TrueLocal.com

Enhanced listing

The way TrueLocal.com works is quite simple. The business owner chooses a business category and zip code (like "Transportation services" and "60639) and then declares monthly fee affords to pay to be at the top of the listings. All combinations, which include category and zip code start at $1 per month. If your company is the only one which competes for category-zip code combination then 1$ is enough to be at the top of listings. If there are other businesses bidding on the same combination, advertiser has to increase his $1/month bid to be placed at higher position.

Figure 43. Lisings at TrueLocal.com

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Yellow Pages

Yellow Pages websites such as www.yellowpages.com or www.superpages.com are still very popular among many users looking for products and local services. They often offer a few different options of paid ads.

On Yellow Pages websites you can buy business cards, which enable to present your company in details, as well as keywords banners, paid links, sponsored links etc.

Figure 44. YellowPages business profile
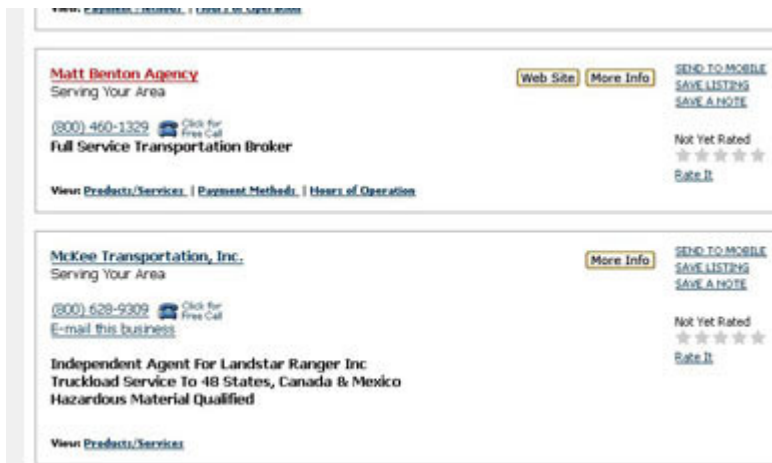
The advantages Yellow Pages websites:

- Yellow Pages are still a basic medium for many people to gather information about products and local services,
- searching products and local services there is often more comfortable and easy for users than looking for information in the search engines,
- through such an advertisement you can target valuable users who are interested only in finding products and local services (within a smaller or bigger local radius),
- Yellow Pages often have very active promotional policy on the Internet, gaining more and more users for their customers,
- some Yellow Pages offer adding company reviews, which can be a chance for small companies to gain customers' trust and prestige in a given environment pr trade. Reviews and opinions about products and services are the future of local search. Nothing can be more convincing to use a company's offer than good, concrete customers' reviews.

Disadvantages of *Yellow Pages websites:*

- The cost of the final deal can be a lot higher than in the case of Internet search engines
- The range of yellow pages search engines is lower than in the case of Internet search engines

What do I need to remember when advertising on Yellow Pages?

- Present your contacts clearly.
- Present the information about your business activity briefly and clearly. Use he same rules about the contents which were mentioned before.
- Your Yellow Pages business card should not be a copy of your website. It is smaller (one page only) than a website and it is more organized. These facts make that your target customers may be familiar with your offer more quickly (if you present it concretely), however, they may also have more problems with finding detailed information about your business if you don't manage the contents and space of your business card reasonably.
- Make a reference to your website, on which you will have a possibility present your offer in details, with a little bit of marketing "babble", which is frequently useful in business.
- Update the contents on your business card. In your control panel you have a possibility to edit your business card without any help from an IT specialist. Use this function (you are paying for it anyway) so that the contents of your business card were always up to date.

How can I put my ad on YellowPages?

To do that, contact the customer service from a chosen Yellow Pages website. After buying the business card option, you will get access to the control panel of the business card, which enables you to edit it without any knowledge of HTML.

YellowPages.com

YellowPages.com is main yellow pages directory in US. It it recommened to get at least free listing at this directory as many Internet search engines (like Google) give high trust to listings going from this directory.

Free option

You can get free listing with YellowPages.com, which will be shown in search results having:
The general listing information including: business name, address, phone number
A link to a More Info Page, which allows the advertiser to provide additional information about his business.

Figure 45. Free listing at YellowPages.com

At the More Info Page you can include following information:
- General information abort business
- Forms of payment
- Hours of operation
- Links to map and driving directions
- Links to e-mail

You can sigh up for free listing with YellowPages.com after choosing your zip-code at:
http://ypc3.yellowpages.com/router/?_load=1&za=m

Paid advertisement

The advertising options vary between cities, so before the advertiser gets to know the final options and prices for his region, he has to check it YellowPages.com website using the zip-code of the city, which he is interested in. After decision to advertise with YelloPages.com his listings will appear in a Local Service Area which includes this zip code plus surrounding cities.

This information below was shown only to give local advertisers general idea about YellowPages.com, so those advertising options can be different in your area. Those, which iave written about are advertising options for zip code 10010 in New York.

Check those advertising options with your zip code at:
http://ypc3.yellowpages.com/router/?_load=1&za=m

Figure 46. Choosin og zip code at YellowPages.com

The main advertising options at YellowPages.com include:
- Listings
- Premium Inventory Listings
- YPclicks
- YP Website Solutions

Listings

Each of listings is shown in YellowPages.com results with the priority, representing the importance and price of specific listing type in the geographic area connected to the user's search. It means the better listing you buy the more chance the your listing will be placed highly in YellowPages.com search results for specific user's search (so in the area, which he is looking for product or service).

Each of listings includes a link to a More Info Page, which allows the advertiser to provide additional information about his business.

As I said before the More Info Page can include following information:

- General information abort business

- Forms of payment

- Hours of operation

- Links to map and driving directions

- Links to e-mail

Exemplary listing options are valid for zip-code 10010.

Platinum listings

- Premier placement.
- Listing information - business name, address, phone number
- 50 character slogan line outside the banner
- Includes a Banner Graphic and 2 lines of text to promote advertiser's business
- A link to advertiser's Web site
- A link to a More Info Page

Figure 47. Platinum Listing at YellowPages.com

Gold Listings

- Priority placement over Silver Listings
- Listing information - business name, address, phone number
- Includes a banner graphic and 2 lines of text to promote advertiser's business
- A link to advertiser's Web site
- A link to a More Info Page

Figure 48. Gold Listing at YellowPages.com

Silver Listings

- Priority placement over Bronze Listings
- Listing information - business name, address, phone number
- Can have a logo in the listing
- A link to advertiser's Web site
- A line of text to promote advertiser's business
- A link to a More Info Page

Figure 49. Silver Listing at YellowPages.com
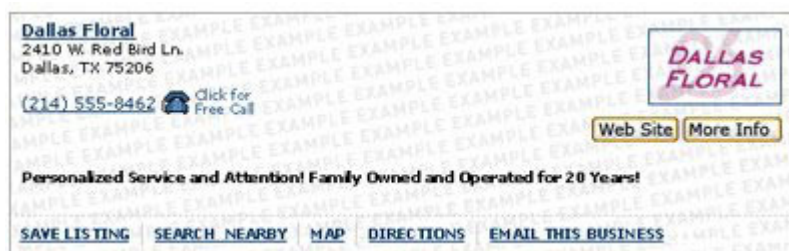
Bronze Listings

- Priority placement over free listings.

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- Listing information - business name, address, phone number
- Includes a line of text
- A link to advertiser's Web site
- A link to a More Info Page

Figure 50. Bronze Listing at YellowPages.com

Premium Inventory Listings

Premium Inventory Listings is the offer for local advertisers, who want to give the visibility to their business all the time. As the amount of those advertisements is limited, you need to contact YellowPages.com all the time you are interested in it.

Figure 51. Premium Inventory Listing at YellowPages.com

YPclicks

YPclicks are the packages offering promotion of local businesses in Internet search engines. In this offer the advertiser is able to select from a variety of packages that guarantee a minimum number of click-thrus per month.

Details of the offer:
- The ads are targeted locally
- Fixed monthly biling – the advertiser is charge monthly for the advertisement
- Monthly e-mail reporting – the advertiser get the email with the report abort clicks each month

YP Website Solutions

YellowPages.com offers creating and preparing local business websites for companies.

3 levels of Web site Products
- Basic Package, which can have up to 3 pages
- Plus Package, which can have up to 5 pages
- Premium Packag, which can have up to 10 pages

Features, which YellowPages offer with YP Website Solutions:
- A custom domain name (URL)
- Web site design & copywriter services
- Up to 10 e-mail accounts
- Self-editing tool to update your site
- Online traffic statistics
- Web site hosting

Superpages.com

Superpages.com is one of the most important yellow pages site in the United States. It provides traffic to other search engines as well.

Figure 52. Hompage of SuperPages.com

Free option

You can set up free listing with Superpages.com, which is recommended as the presence in Superpages.com directory can help you local business get listed in Google Local or Yahoo Local.

Within the free business listing at Superpages.com you are able to post the following information:
- company name
- phone number
- address
- map for your business's location

Figure 53. Free listing at SuperPages.com

You can sign up for free listing at: http://advertising.superpages.com/spweb/products/business-listing

The local businesses can also have free business profile with SuperPages.com . In this business profile you can provide with:

- contact information for the company: business name, address, and phone numbers
- hours of operation,
- number of years in business,

- payment options,
- links to the company's web site, email address,
- maps and driving directions,
- display of products, services,brands, specialties.

Enhanced listing

If you want your listing to be more visible at SuperPages.com you can buy additional features for the listing:
- color for the listing's font for $20/month
- more visible and cursive font for $20/month
- bigger font for the listing $20/month
- highlighting of the listing for $25/month

Figure 53. Enhanced listing at SuperPages.com
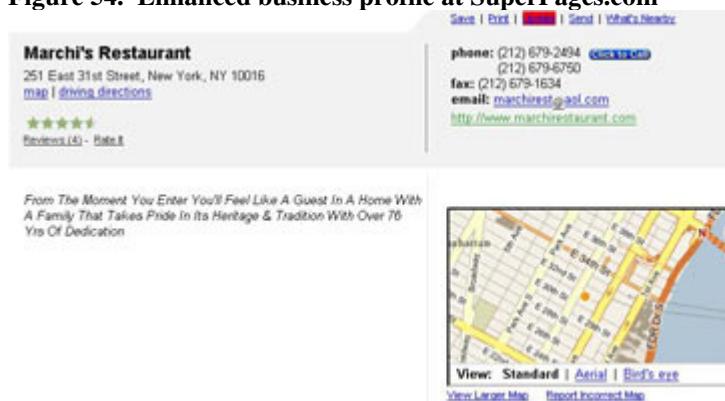
Enhanced Business Profile

Enhanced Business Profile costs $23/months and and enables to display:
- all features that has the free business listing
- promotional text in your listing (up to 150 characters)
- a company logo or graphic.

Figure 54. Enhanced business profile at SuperPages.com

Pay Per Click

The Pay Per Click of SuperPages.com is the advertisement program targeted to the local and national businesses based on the small text ads charged on the pay-per-click basis. It is good to know that all text ads on Live Maps are placed by SuperPages system and the only way to be able to advertise on those maps is to joi SuperPages program.

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Figure 55. Pay per click ad at SuperPages.com

All sites that are the part of SuperPages.com network are listed at:
http://advertising.superpages.com/spweb/pageflows/entrypoint/landingpage/splash.jsp?splash=splash79

The main features of the SuperPages.com pay per click program:
- the ads appear across network of sites like MSN or About.com
  the ads can be targeted geographically
  the adsvertiser get performance reports emailed to him every month
- the basic option of the program is $15 per month and 20 cents per click
- for the management of ads SuperPages.com offers management panel
- advertisement can be targeted geographically
- the ads can be targeted through keywords and by category
- targeting by location affects the position of the ad in sponsored search results: the first three ads on each search results page are reserved for ads targeted nationally, by state, and by metro area while the next three ones are for local ads are reserved for ads targeted to a specific city
- tageting options include national, by state, by metro area, and local (by city)
- the ad position is based on the relevance of the ad to the search . The factors, which are considered, include: location, keyword information, bid rank (the declared maximum pay per click)
- the advertiser can have more than one ad

The local businesses, which do not have time or experience for the ad preparation can use the full-service option at SuperPages.com that costs $20 monthly service.

All details about the SuperPages.com pay per click program are listed at:
http://advertising.superpages.com/spweb/portals/customer.portal?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=why_faq

Pay for call ads

For local customers, which do not have website or use phones to generate sales, SuperPages.com prepared ads that promote phone numbers. The pay per call ads are displayed on Superpages.com and its network of partner sites.

Figure 56. Pay for calls ad at SuperPages.com
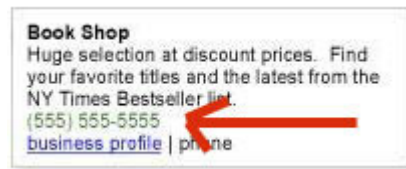
The way the pay for call ads work:

- The advertiser creates ad that includes a headline, promotional text, the link to the business profile of the advertiser and the tracking phone number created by SuperPages.com
- That phone numer, which is assigned by SuperPages.com to local advertiser, is unique and only appears in the advertiser's pay for calls ad (it can be local or toll-free phone number)
- when a customer calls the tracking number in the advertoser's ad, he is forwarded to the advertiser's business phone.

As the SuperPages states the advertiser is charged only for completed calls, so in this situation the advertiser is not charged for repeat calls within 24 hours, calls shorter than 15 seconds, hang-ups and unanswered calls.

The main features of the SuperPages.com pay for calls program:
- the minimum spend for calls is $15 per month
- the ads can be targeted through keywords and by category
- the ad position is based on ad's relevance to search criteria a user enters (like location and keywords, categories) and bid rank (so the declared maximum pay per call)
- the advertiser can have more that one ad, but each additional ad is charged a $20 monthly fee
- the minimum bid for the call ranges from $2 to $6 per call based on the categories the advertiser decided to select

All information about the SuperPages.com pay for calls program you can find at:
http://advertising.superpages.com/spweb/portals/customer.portal?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=why_faq

Web hosting solutions

For businesses, which want to have their business websites SuperPages.com offers 3 different hosting packages
- Premium Web Site – $14.95/month
- Professional Web Site – $24.95/month
- Basic eCommerce – $34.95/month

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Sponsored Search Marketing

If you want to develop your company's presence on the Internet, it may be a good idea to think of advertising with sponsored search of the most important Internet search engines. There are a few options of such advertisement, which can be easily used in the local search.

- AdWords
- Yahoo Panama
- Microsoft adCenter

Google AdWords advertisement

AdWords is an advertisement sold in **a model of CPC (cost-per-click) with a bid for every click.**

You can see AdWords on the left side of the search results in the most popular search engine: www.google.com. In the case when you offer rather high bids for keywords and the ad itself is well done, and by that frequently clicked, Google places it at the top of the search results marked in blue.

Figure 57. AdWords sponsored links in Google
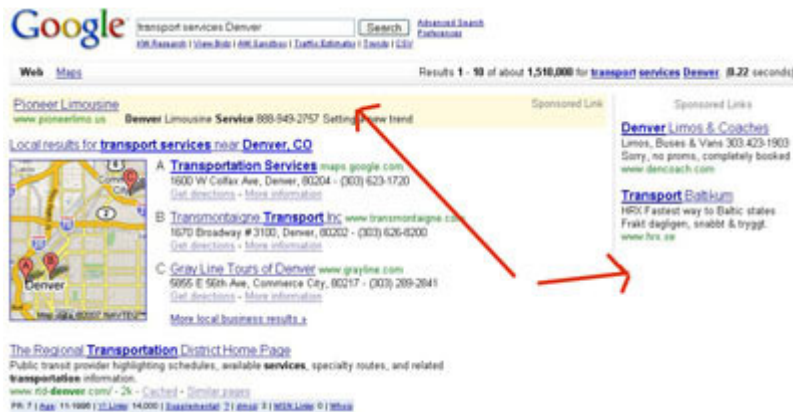
AdWords for the local search results at Google.com

You can use AdWords for your small local company in **three** ways:
1. set up quite a general (or localized) keyword by choosing a region of the ad, i.e.:

Example:
Choose the phrase "***hair service***" and decide that the ad can only appear for users from Texas.

2. set up quite a general (or localized) keyword and choose a radius within which you ad will be displayed (e.g. 30 miles)

Example:
Choose the phrase "***hair service***" and decide that the ad can only appear within the radius of 50 miles of Dallas.

3. set up a detailed keyword, without any geographical limitations. In this option the ad will appear for every query in search results, matching a given keyword, no master where the user currently is.

Example:
Choose a detailed phrase *,,wedding hairstyles Dallas"* and the ad will appear in the whole country.

AdWords' look

The AdWords advertisement, like Yahoo ads, consists of 4 elements, but is considerably

smaller than the mentioned one.

It comprises of:
- **Ad Title**

The heading, which can have up to 25 characters;

- **Body Text**

The main text of the ad, consisting of two lines of a text – each line can have up to 35 characters;

- **Display URL**

Your website address shown within the ad, which can have up to 35 characters

- **Destination URL**

This is the destination address of the ad, where all the users who click the ad will be transferred;

How much does the AdWords ad cost?

As I mentioned, **in AdWords you pay for one click at your ad, not for its display**. The bids paid for each click are auctional, i.e. that the more companies want to advertise themselves using a given keyword, the higher the bid is for this keyword. The very algorithm for estimating the bid for clicking a given keyword is quite complicated in AdWords.

To make it simple, the bid for every click depends on:
- competitiveness of a given keyword – how many companies want to display themselves for this particular keyword in Google sponsored links;
- how often your ad is clicked by the users of Google;
- if in the ad text there will appear some keywords for which the ad is displayed;
- if within your website, to which the users are transferred after clicking the ad, there are the same keywords for the ad is displayed.

 Simply the more relevant ad and keyword you have the less you pay for that.

Ad rank for the ads

The ads are ranked on search result pages in relation to their cost-per-click (CPC) bid and the keyword's Quality Score on Google.com.

Ad Rank = CPC X Quality Score

By the the Quality Score we mean:
- keyword's CTR (how often is clicked in relation to the competitive ads)
- ad text relevance, (how the ad text is relevant to the keyword)
- and the keyword's relevance in relation to the user's search query.

If you want to have high positions for your ad you need to have: relevant keywords and ad text, a strong CTR on Google, and a high CPC bid.

How should I create the AdWords ad?

You should create the ad in the AdWords panel, which enables you to have access to the tools which can create keywords, the ad and its statistics. You shouldn't count on technical help from AdWords consultants – you must create the ad on your own.

Figure 58. AdWords control panel
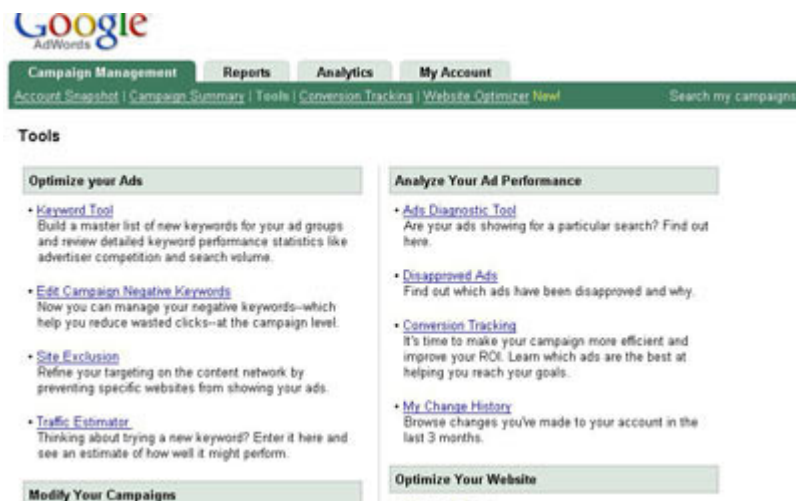
In the case of AdWords ads 4 stages of creating an ad are important:
- the choice of keywords;
- deciding on a bid per each click,
- preparing the ad text;
- preparing the destination website – this website on which the user will be transferred after clicking on an ad.

Keywords choice

There are 4 options of adjusting keywords, i.e. 4 different methods of directing the AdWords ads. In this case using one of the options can bring about more ad impressions, whereas in another option fewer impressions, which however can increase the number of clicks at the ad.

Options of AdWords matches are available:

Broad matches – this option is a default one at AdWords. If on a keyword list, there are some general phrases like "sport shoes" in a broad match, so the ads can be displayed both with the search results of "sport" and "shoes" in any order, also together with synonyms, plurals etc.

Example:
        In broad matches, with the key phrase: "hair salon Dallas," the ad will appear also for "salon hair Dallas," "hair stylist Dallas," and "hairdressing salon Dallas."

Phrase matches – after entering your keyword **in phrase matches** (such a keyword in AdWords control panel is always in inverted commas), e.g. "**sport shoes**," the ad will be displayed if the users are looking or a phrase that includes the words: "sport" and "shoes" in precisely this order.

Example:

If you choose a key phrase: "**sport shoes**," in phrase matching, the ad will be displayed if the users enter: "tennis sport shoes," "cheap sport shoes," "Nike sport shoes," "sport shoes Chicago," but it will not be shown, when the query is: "fancy shoes."

As you can see phrase matching is more precisely targeted than broad matching, and still more flexible than exact matching. In order to provide a greater deal of precision of ad targeting, it is a good idea to include at least 2 descriptive words in keywords.

Exact matches – in this case, ad impressions appear only when the user enters precisely chosen keywords.

Example:

If you choose a key phrase: "**sport shoes**" in exact matching, (such a keyword in AdWords control panel is always in square brackets – [**sport shoes**]) the ad will be displayed if the users enter "sport shoes" only. It won't be shown for such queries as e.g.: "sport shoes Chicago," or "tennis sport shoes."

The option of exact matching provides the maximum precision of targeting. That is why although exact matching gives fewer impression, the effectiveness of clicking is actually often higher because the ads appear only for the exact keywords that match the profile of your company.

Negative matches – prevent t the impression of an ad for defined keywords for which the ad would appear without defining them.

Example:

You advertise "**language schools Chicago**" when you use broad or phrase matching your ad will appear for " free language schools Chicago," "language schools Chicago forum," "language schools Chicago opinions." Only after you add the negative matching: "**free**," "**forum**," and "**opinions**," you can be sure that your ad will not appear when the users enter also such words.

When choosing keywords for local AdWords advertisement, you should always pick precisely these matching your product or service ideally.

Remember about all the general rules that were mentioned in the case of positioning and Yahoo sponsored links ad campaign.

In the case of AdWords matching the ad is also very important. For small local businesses, it is not a good idea to buy ads for such general keywords, like e.g. "café" and first of all for broad matching. If you decide to buy an ad for a general keyword, your ad will appear for such queries like: "café Florida," "café Denver." This is because a person who enters "café" may look for a café in New York, Boston, LA, or Tallahassee, so they won't be interested in clicking your ad. A low ratio of clicking results in higher bids for this word. And the more general your keyword is, the more competitive and expensive it becomes.
The auctional model of AdWords encourages you to choose less general keywords, i.e. these which are not widely used by the majority of companies. In the case of "Betty Smith's Hair Salon," such words can be "wedding hairstyle Dallas," "perm Dallas," etc.

The fewer companies choose a given keyword:
- the smaller the competition will be;
- the fewer sponsored links next to your ad will appear, so the probability that the user

will click your ad will be greater (and this also influences the price of the ad).

Choosing the bid

When you add your keywords to the AdWords campaign, you declare your maximum bid you are ready to pay for one click. Usually, the bid is smaller than the maximum you stated and depends on how much your competitors are willing to pay for the same keyword. Each of the keywords has its minimum bid that depends on your landing page's Quality Score. If you have high minimum bid for the keyword it means that your destination webpage for the ad is not relevant to the ad and you need to improve its quality.

Your maximum bid influences greatly your position in sponsored links (another important factor influencing its position is a Quality Score which estimates a text and keyword relevance and the keyword clickthrough rate (CTR).)

Writing an AdWords text

What does it mean to write a well-targeted AdWords Text?

AdWords texts should be
- maximally relevant to your keywords you use in the ad (the best idea is that they include the impression keywords)
- interesting enough to have high CTR;
- clear and straightforward enough so that the users who are not interested in your products did not click it (e.g. people who are looking for free products);
- concrete and concise at presenting the elements of your offer (with prices, or transaction conditions).

Example:

A hair salon which chooses the phrase "wedding hairstyles Dallas" can have e.g. such an ad test:

> **Wedding hairstyles Dallas**
> Trendy hairstyles from 10 dollars
> Trial for free. Check this out!
> My-website.com/WeddingHairStyle.html

Google AdWords text ad policy

Google is known for restrictive policy of an ad text approval. It wants to focus on user experience, so in order to have the ad approved you need to meet their Editorial Guidelines.

If you want your text to be approved, it:
- can't contain an exclamation mark in the heading (only one exclamation mark is allowed in the whole text);
- must be correct grammatically (no abbreviations are allowed unless they are standard);
- cannot contain redundant and superficial repetitions of keywords;
- cannot contain symbols instead of words (such symbols like „#", „$", „@");
- must contain standard punctuation sign and corrects form of small and capital letters.
- cannot contain excessive capitalization such as "BUY" or "LOCAL SERVICE"
- may contain capitalized first lettesr of each word within your displayed URL
- must be in logical sentence or phrase form and must contain grammatically correct spacing

If you want to know more details about the guidelines for AdWords text, click here:
Google Adwords guidelines. -https://adwords.google.com/select/guidelines.html

Display URL policy

The Display URL of advertised sites has to be accurate with the following Google guidelines:

- The Display URL must accurately reflect the URL of the adverted website.
- The Display URL field cannot include information like this one in ad copy
- The Display URL must include the domain extension, for example: .com, .net, or .org.

Destination URL policy

- The Destination URL of the ad must work properly.
- The site, which the Destination URL is directing to, must be functional website. The landing page for the ad cannot be under construction.
- The site, which the Destination URL is directing to , cannot have any pop-ups
- We do not allow links to landing pages that generate pop-ups when users enter or leave your landing page. We consider a pop-up to be any window, regardless of content, that opens in addition to the original window.
- The destination page cannot block Back button from working

Creating your landing page for an AdWords ad

Your target web page which users will see after clicking your ad should contain the keywords from the ad (it should also be working properly, but I guess that seems obvious).

The major mistake you can make is to set your Home page as a target website of the AdWords ad. If you advertise with "**wedding hairstyle**," your target customer should see the page which describes wedding hairstyles your company offers. If you mention some prices, sales, or other condition in the ad, you must provide suitable information on your target website. Don't make users wander around the whole website to find this information that inclined them to click it.

Example:

Let's assume this is your ad:

Your target web page can include such elements:

We offer:
1. make-ups:
wedding make-up – 50$
trial wedding make-up – 30$

2. wedding hair styles:
a basic wedding hairstyle – 30$
a wedding bun – 50$
an extravagant hair style – 60$
Trial wedding hair style for free!

Local ads on Google Maps

Local ads onnGoogle Maps are AdWords ads, which are shown above the search results on Google Maps.

I order to be able advertise with Google Local ads on Google Maps you need:
- Include your business listing in Google Maps (if you do not know how to do this go to the section Google Local)
- Your need to specify in AdWords campaign settings that you want to target your campaign to Google Maps results
- Create your Adwords ad, which will be shown on Google Maps

How the ads are displayed

On Google Maps, users will see local business ads whenever they put location-specific queries for geographical areas, at whose's advertised created any local business ads. For local ads on Google maps the location of user searching for services and product does not have any meaning. The only factor that plays a part in ad display is the user's search submitted to Google Maps

Figure 59. Local business ads on Google Maps
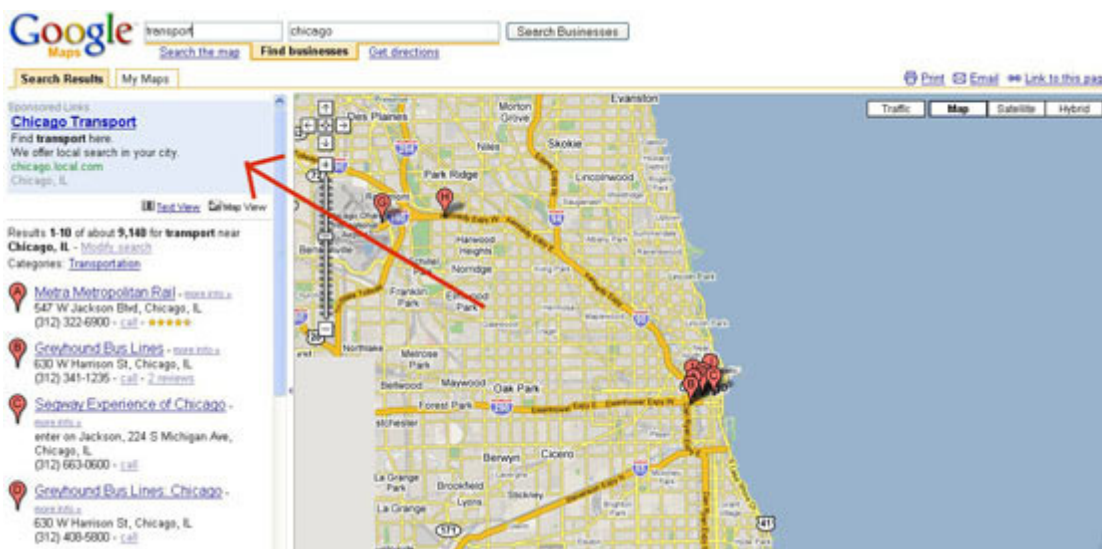
Example:

If user in Warsaw search for 'New York hostels' on Google Maps, he will see all local business ads for New York hostels that are eligible to appear.

On Google Maps may appear up to four local business. If there are more than four local business ads available for showing at Google Maps search results, the remaining ads may show on subsequent search results pages.

Local business ads, which were created for advertisement on Google Maps are eligible to appear on Google, and other sites and products in the Google Network as well.

Choosing keywords

Local business ads are automatically targeted to the area surrounding your business, whose location is taken from Google Business Center. That is why choosing keywords for business ads showing at Google Maps it is recommended to choose quite general keywords (in opposite to advertisements on normal search results on Google.com, where the specific keywords limit impressions fo the ad for unrelated searches).

Example:
On Google Maps if the advertiser use general keywords, such as "hairdresser", the local business ad will be shown only for users who are located in advertiser's business area or who search for your specific location, such as "hairdresser Chicago".

If you create very specific keywords that include location names it will be more difficult for your local business ads to be shown on Google Maps

Example:
If you have chosen the keyword "hairdresser Chicago" as the keyword for local business ads on Google Maps , user would need to enter the search query "hair dresser Chicago, Chicago" to see your ad. However, if you used the keyword "hairdresser" your ad woild show on a Google Maps search for query "hairdresser, Chicago".

How do I create a new local business ad?

You can create a new local business in your normal AdWords account. As I said before you need to have a Google Maps business listing to be able to advertise on Google Maps.

To create local business ad follow those steps:
- Log in to your AdWords account at https://adwords.google.com.
- Click the keyword-targeted campaign that contains the ad group, which will include your new local business ad and then cick the appropriate ad group.
- Click the link "Create New Local Business Ad"
- Identify the business listing, which you want to use for advertising on Google Maps
- Enter your description lines and URL. Note that the business name, address, and phone number of your business will be taken automatically from your Google Maps business listing, so make sure that that information about your business at Google Business Center is accurate
- Choose or upload an icon for your map marker.
- If you want, you can upload a business image to appear in the info window that expands from your map marker as well
- Click Save Ad.

Headline of local business ad

One of the Google AdWords requirements is that headline of advertiser's local business ad

must accurately reflect his business name. As the headline for AdWords ad cannot be longer that 25 characters , so if your business name is longer than 25 characters, then it will automatically be shortened. You are able to edit the shortened version of the headline as long as it doesn't exceed 25 characters and accurately reflects your business name.

Remember that all edits will be reviewed by AdWords Specialists for compliance with Google Editorial Guidelines.

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Yahoo Panama Sponsored Search

Yahoo sponsored links, similarly to AdWords are a kind of advertisement sold in a **CPC model – cost-per-click.**

Yahoo Panama ad can be seen on the left and at the top of theYahoo.com search results (these sponsored links for which the owners are ready to pay the highest bids are placed at the very visible, blue background).

Figure 60. Yahoo sponsored search results
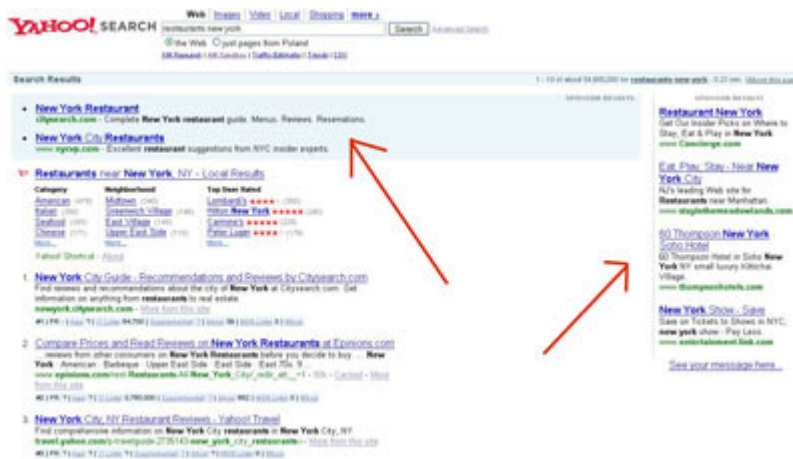
How is the Panama advertisement displayed?

With Panama Sponsored Search, you create ads that appear in search results in particular areas, so in this way you can reach customers, who live in your nearest neighbourhood.

Figure 61. Local targeting in new Yahoo Panama system
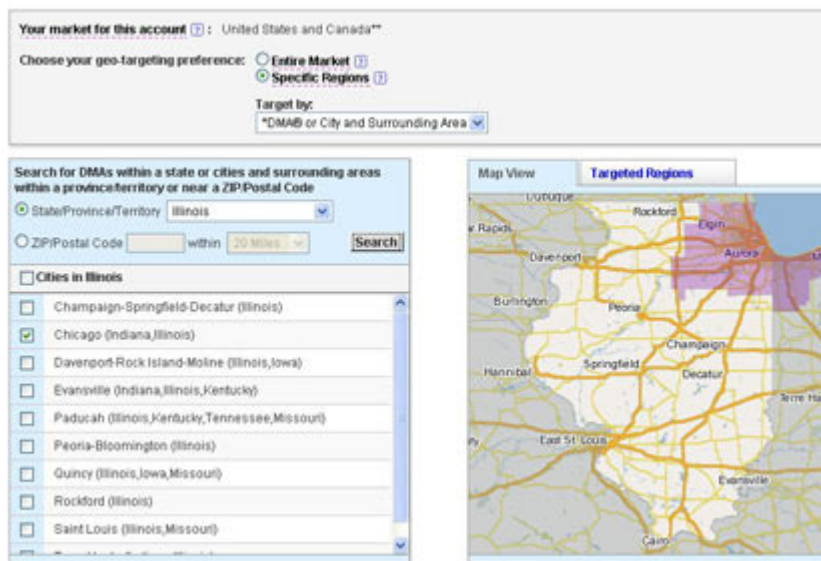
Yahoo Sponsored Search for local companies

You can target Sponsored Search with Yahoo using three different ways:

- you can select your geographic area during the sign-up process and target general or targeted advertisements to this area

Example:
Choose a keyword „transport services" and establish that this advertisement will be displayed in the state of Illinois;

- you can target general or targeted advertisements inside a specific area

Example:
Choose a keyword „transport services" and establish that this advertisement will be displayed in the radius of 2 miles from New York

- you can target advertisement with very specific, targeted keywords without any geographical limitation

Example:
Choose a targeted keyword „transport services New York" and establish that this advertisement will be displayed at any place in the United States

Yahoo advertisement – editor guidelines

The Yahoo Panama ad like Adwords advertisements has 4 main parts:

- Title, which has a 40 characters maximum.
- Main part of the ad, which should have 70 characters (or less) – it is the main text of the ad.
- Display URLs, with maximum of 35 characters, which is shown in the advertisement.
- Destination URL, which is the address, where the customers are directed to after the clicking the ad.

How much does the Yahoo Sponsored Search cost?

Using Yahoo Sponsored Search, you are supposed to choose the bid, which you are ready to pay for the advertisement in Yahoo. The more you pay, the bigger chance is that your advertisement will be displayed. The money, which you are ready to give for Yahoo advertisement has direct influence on the position, at which your advertisement will be displayed.

Ads in Yahoo system are ranked by:
- bid amount (the more you pay, the higher your ad is going to be in the rank)
- ad quality (description below)

The minimum bid for Panama Yahoo Sponsored Search is 0.10$

General information about quality index in Yahoo

An ad's quality is determined by:

- The historical performance the of the ad (by this I mean the click-through rate relative to the position of the ad in the sponsored search results)
- The expected performance of the ad determined by various factors, which are considered by Yahoo's ranking algorithms. Those factors are relative to other ads displayed at the same time, so the better are your ads in relation to the competitive ads the higher the position of your ad is.

Ads with higher quality can:
- deliver a lower cost per click and/or
- may receive better placement on the results page in relation to those ads, which quality is lower.

Other information you should know about quality index:

- Quality index of each ads is displayed as one to five bars (the more bars, the higher quality) in Yahoo panel
- As Yahoo describes it, the quality index is updated daily.
- When you create a new ad, your quality index is initially based on various relevance factors for the keyword and ad. Unfortunately you may not see a quality index displayed in your account until the day after your first impression is recorded.
- The more impressions and clicks at your ad, the higher importance of the factor in calculating quality index of the ad your click-through rate of the ad has.

To help improve your quality index, focus on making your ads as compelling as possible. You have to keep the ad very relevant to the keyword and landing page at the same time of course, because in the other situation received clicks will not convert to earned money.

How to start using Yahoo Sponsored Results

When you start using Panama system you can:
- let Yahoo create your campaign using your business objectives (they will provide keyword, ad, bid, and budget recommendations) for 199$
- do it by yourself for free in Yahoo Panama Panel

The first solution is recommended for users, who do not have enough experience or time to get to know how to choose keywords and bids for the advertisements.

When you choose the second solution, which I recommend, you will have to spend a few hours learning Yahoo system. Yahoo system has quite good tutorials at its Help Center page at: http://help.yahoo.com/l/us/yahoo/ysm/sps/index.html, so I would recommend spending a few hours to get to know the most important of them.

Figure 62. Yahoo Panama administration panel
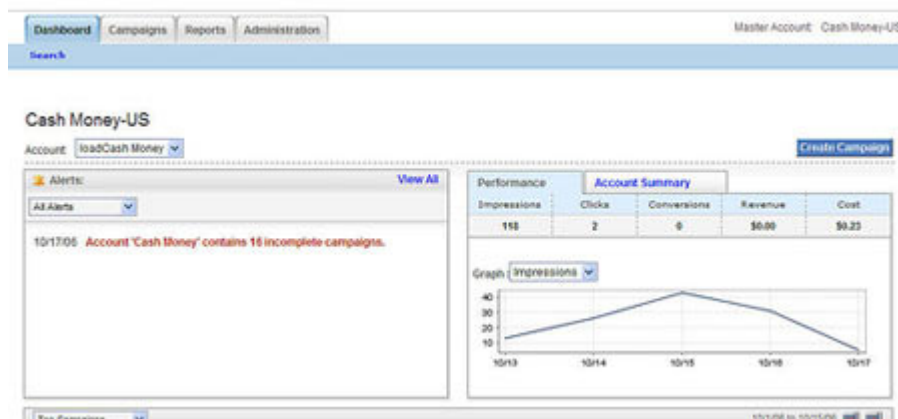
Preparing Keywords

In Yahoo Panama system you have 3 different types of keyword matches, which can be used to target advertisements.

Keyword Matches

Standard Match Type

The Standard match type displays ads for exact matches to keywords, as well as for singular/plural variations and common misspellings.

Example:

 If you advertise on the keyword "transport services Illinois" your ad may be shown for the following search queries: "transport service Illinois", "transport services Illinois"

Advanced Match Type

The Advanced match type displays ads for exact matches to keywords, singular/plural variations and common misspellings and relevant searches that use advertised keyword in a phrase, separated by other words or in a different order.

Example:

 If you advertise on the keyword "transport services Illinois" your ad may be shown for the following search queries: "cheap transport services Illinois", "transport Illinois"

Excluded Words

Excluded Words is a feature, which can be used to help block displaying of ad for unwanted searches, which are nor relevant to the ad. It is important to use Excluded Word feature, when you use Advanced Match Type. You cannot use this feature with Standard March type.

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This feature helps you to refine matches as it looks like below:

Using Advanced match type for following keywords:	You may want to use following Excluded Words:	Reason to block:
transport services	cheap	You do not want customers, who look for very cheap services
ski lessons	children	You only offer lessons to adults
haircut	for men	You offer haircut only for women

Things, which you should know about Excluded Words:

- Excluded Words can be set at the account level (in the Administration tab) and ad group level (in the Ad Group Setting page).
  - At the account level, it will help stop unrelated search terms that you select for the whole account (all groups inside this account).
  - At the ad group level, it will only help stop unrelated search terms for that specific ad group.
- The maximum number of Excluded Words allowed at the account and ad group levels is approximately 50 words/phrases.

Rules, you should consider choosing keywords for Panama system

- Customers may use a variety of search terms, consider using keywords, which are used in normal and usual language as well.
- choose keywords, which are relevant to particular page of your website (this one, which will be the destination url for particular advertisement.

- choose local keywords (it is a good idea to do it even if you want to target your advertisement geographically)

- Imagine yourself as a potential customer who is interested in what you sell and try to figure out, what words would you use to find your products and services?

- If it is possible look at search data in your web logs, the terms that visitors search on within your site

- You can create a list of words relevant to your products or services and then try to mix this list to prepare new keywords.

Example:

Below there is an example of mixing and matching keywords for an online retailer selling outdoor clothing.

Description	Main Keyword	Location	New Keywords
	plumber	Boston	plumber Boston
	plumbers	Boston	plumbers Boston
cheap		Boston	cheap plumber Boston
		Boston	cheap plumbers Boston
experienced			experienced plumber Boston
			experienced plumbers Boston

- To find relevant keywords for your business you can use the ways, which I described at page nr. 10 when for choosing relevant keywords for SEO.

- Try to avoid Advanced match type for generic terms such as "transport services" because you may receive unqualified traffic.

Choice of the maximum bid for an advertisement

Before you choose the maximum bid for your advertisement you should find the ROI (Return on Investment) of particular word.

By this I mean to find out:
- how much you will earn if the customer buys your product or service after clicking in Yahoo advertisement
- how many clicks of your advertisement you need to get one customer.

Of course it is quite difficult to predict this data (especially the second one before the advertisement is launched), but it is a good idea anyway to have rough estimations.

Choosing the maximum bid do not fight for top spot in sponsored results. Very rarely top placed sponsored results give the best profit.

Preparing good text ad for Yahoo Panama

Good ad text clearly, simply and precisely describes what is offered on your site. Try to use the same language, which is used by your local customer.

Remember that your ad is like your business profile, it gives assumption about your local company.

Writing text ad recommendations

- Include the keyword in the title and description, because in search results on Yahoo! and other sites, keyword will be bolded when it appears in your title and description and customers are more likely to click on ads that include the keyword, which they are searching for.

- If possible, start the title with the keyword, so it will be more visible to the customer.
- Use correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar to be ok with Yahoo Editorial guidelines.

- Use special prices, discounts or free offers to differentiate your offer from your competitors (be aware that those promotions must be easily found at your destination url; if you cannot show them on your website, do not use them).

What cannot you use in ad texts?

- vulgar or obscene language.
- contact information (telephone/fax numbers, address, full URL).
- symbols, gimmicky language and superlatives ("America's greatest," "best," "cheapest")
- repetition of words and phrases ("Promotion, promotion, promotion…").
- phrases, which directly please to make an action such as "click now" or "link here".

Example:

Correct Ad Example:
Plumber Hoboken, NJ
Plumber services in Hoboken. 24 h/7. 25% discount for loyal customers

Incorrect Ad Example:
Plumber Hoboken, NJ
Plumber services in Hoboken. 24 h/7. 25% DISCOUNT FOR LOYAL CUSTOMERS.

Landing Page

Destination page is one of the most important advertisement's elements. It is the factor, which decides if visitor, who clicked your advertisement, buys your service or products.

Yahoo requirements for landing page

Preparing the landing page for the Yahoo advertisement make sure you considered Yahoo requirements for preparing of landing page.

- You cannot create a landing page, which is not a functional web page.
- You cannot place on a destination page ads or links, which are very similar to the content
- You cannot create destination pages, which have only navigational links and ads
- You cannot disable back button work on the landing page.
- You cannot have pop-ups, pop-unders or exit consoles on the landing pages.

Landing Page recommendations

 Remember to create a destination page, which is easy and clear for visitors. The more relevant your destination page is to your keywords and ad text, the higher probability that your visitor will convert to a paying customer is.

If you included any information about discounts, sale, special offers in the ad text, show it to the visitor at your destination page as soon as possible. The more difficulties your potential

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buyers have with finding them, the less chance that they buy anything at your site.

Example:

If your advertisement looks like.

Correct Ad Example:
Plumber Hoboken, NJ
Plumber services in Hoboken. 24 h/7. 25% discount for loyal customers

Then destination page can look like:

Figure 63. An example target page for an Yahoo Panama ad

v are a leading plumber service in Hoboken offering a range of plumbing services throughout Jersey City as well.

Some of the plumber services we offer

- Bathtubs / Showers
- Toilets
- Septic Tanks / Sewer Lines
- Service Pipes
- Water Heaters
- Water Softeners
- Garbage Disposal
- Soft Water Systems
- Tree Root Removal
- Preventative Maintenance Inspection

Loyalty program

Our goal at X Plumbing Services is to reward your loyalty. Each and every time you choose Capital Plumbing to be your Service Plumber you can earn "Loyalty Credits" toward the purchase of future services!

You earn $50 for each 200$ you spend at **X Plumbing Services.**

For more information please call the **X Plumbing Services** at **201.364.5273**!!!

Hours of Operations

- Normal business hours: 7am-7pm Monday-Friday
- Service/Trip Charge (after hours): **$129.95**
- 24/7 Emergency Service - flooding water, stopped drains

5 Church Towers 7G * Hoboken, NJ 07030 * 201.364.5273

Display URL

- Display URL has to reflect the site found at your landing page

  Example:

  You cannot show www.plumbershoboken.com as your Display URL and then send visitor to www.plumbers.com/hoboken

- The display URL must include the domain extension

  Example:

  www.plumbershoboken.com, www.plumbers.com/hoboken

- The display URL cannot be used as another line of text or as an email address field.
- The display URL cannot include text that violates Yahoo editorial guidelines (for example it cannot be something like www.stolencracks.com).

Microsoft's adCenter

The Search Marketing on Microsoft's search engines provides can be managed through Microsoft's adCenter. This is a platform that lets a advertiser create, manage, and optimize search advertising campaigns on Microsoft's sites.
Microsoft sponsored links, similarly to AdWords and Yahoo advertisements are a kind of advertisement sold in a **CPC model – cost-per-click.**

Microsoft Search ads can be seen on the left and at the top of Microsoft Live Search results (these sponsored links for which the owners are ready to pay the highest bids are placed at the the top of results).

Figure64. Search results on Live Search
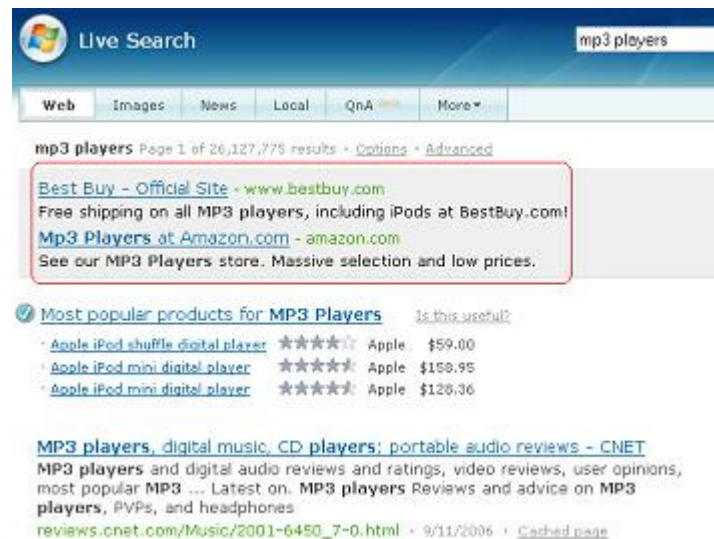
How to start with Microsoft's adCenter

You can sigh up for Microsoft adCenter account at: https://adcenter.microsoft.com/.
The non-refundable sign-up is 5$. If the business owner wants to spend more than 30$ per day with adCenter he can use QuickLaunch possibility at:
http://advertising.microsoft.com/microsoft-adcenter/quicklaunch/signup?s_int=250.
With QuickLaunch option he will get support from Microsoft Media Specialist for thirty days, during which time Microsoft Media Specialist is supposed to will help in planning, creating, analyzing, and optimizing search advertising campaign.

How are Microsoft ads displayed ?

Microsoft ad consists of 4 parts:

- **Ad title**, which can have up to 25 characters (the title links to the landing page of advertiser's website)
- **Body copy**, which can have up to 70 characters. The body copy is the main part of ad – it should describe advertiser's message and offer's description to the customer.
- **Display URL**, which can have up to 35 characters – it gives the customer information about the site, which he will visit after clicking the ad
- **Destination URL**, which can have up to 1,015 characters. This url is the page, where the customer will land after clicking the ad.

Targeting

If you want to use Microsoft's adCenter for local advertisements you have to target your advertisements.

With Microsoft's adCenter you can target advertisements:
* to the specific city
* to the specific region
* to the specific state
*

For now the adCenter does not provide with zip-code targeting.

Additionally to the geographic targeting advertiser, so this is you, has following targeting options:
* Age and gender
* Day of week
* Time of day

Use this options to target those customers, which give you the highest profit.

Targeting in adCenter requires additional bid to his one, which was added to normal keyword. Each target added to the keywords requires a separate bid. The advertiser decides how much he wants to bid on targeting. As targeting means higher bids, it improves ad's rank very often (additional bids for targeting mean higher final bid of specific keyword).

Main rules of bidding for keywords

Microsoft adCenter allows you to submit various bids for keywords or phrases you want to be advertised for.

The there are 3 general rules for that bidding:
* The more advertiser bid, the higher the position in search results his ad will have.
* The minimum bid required for keyword is 0,05$
* Targeting ads geographically, by the time or demographically requires higher bids.

In Microsoft adCenter system you have 3 different types of keyword matches, which can be used to target advertisements and 1, which can be used to limit search range.

How does keyword matching work in Microsoft AdCenter ?

Broad match
The broad match is the **default bid.** Broad match causes that the ad is shown to each of searches containing specific word in the keyword or phrase. The order of words does not have any meaning in this situation.

Example:
If your chosen keyword phrase is "Detroit cars," your ad will show to a user who searches on " Detroit cars sale " or "used cars Detroit" but not "Chicago cars"

Phrase match

In this match type the ad is supposed to be shown to everyone who searches on a phrase that contains specific keyword or phrase in the same order as the keyword we have chosen.

Example:
If our keyword phrase is "plumbers Chicago" your ad will show to a user who searches on " plumbers Chicago " and "24 plumbers Chicago " but not "Chicago plumbers."

Exact match

In this match type the ad will be shown only to users who search on the exact keyword or phrase.

Example:
If our keyword phrase is "moving services Boston" the ad will be shown only to the user who searches on "moving services Boston"". The user, who searches on: " cheap moving services Boston" and any other spellings or combinations of words will not see the ad.

Excluded words

If advertiser wants to reduce displays of ad, which are shown in response to search queries unrelated to his products, he can use "Excluded words".An excluded keyword is a keyword the advertiser can choose to exclude it as a keyword match for his product.

Example:
Our ad sells cars in Detroit, and we have specified "Detroit car" as a keyword in Broad Match, but we don not want this ad to be displayed for searches " Detroit car insurance". In this situation we are supposed to choose word "insurance" as an excluded keyword.

Rules, you should consider choosing keywords for adCenter system

Choosing keywords for your advertisement you should consider the same rules, which are true for advertisement in Google AdWords and Yahoo Panama. Choosing the keywords consider using keywords, which are used in dictionary language and in normal and usual language as well.

Remember that :
- Potential customers may use a variety of search terms - not only the main and best known in your business.
- Potential customer may not know your business, so he will not use professional language.
- Before choosing keywords you have to try to understand potential customer. Imagine yourself as a potential customer who is interested in what you sell and try to figure out, what words would you use to find your products and services.

Additional guidelines for keywords:
- choose keywords, which are relevant to particular page of your website (this one, which will be the destination url for particular advertisement.

- choose local keywords (it is a good idea to do it even if you want to target your

advertisement geographically)

Keyword creation

As I showed this example you can create a list of words relevant to your products or services and then try to mix this list to prepare new keywords.

Example:

Below there is an example of mixing and matching keywords for an online retailer selling outdoor clothing.

Description	Main Keyword	Location	New Keywords
	used cars	Chicago	used car Chicago
	used car	Chicago	used cars Chicago
Japan		Chicago	Japan used cars Chicago
		Chicago	Japan used car Chicago
American		Chicago	American used car Chicago
		Chicago	American used cars Chicago

- To find relevant keywords for your business you can use the ways, which I described at page nr 10 when I described choosing relevant keywords for SEO.

- Try to avoid Broad match type for generic terms such as "transport services" because you may receive many visitors, who will not be interested in your offer.

A advertiser when sign up for account, is limited to have 20 ads per order and 10,000 keywords per order. To create keywords advertiser can use any of the keyword creation option, which I described in chapter *Searching for keywords*. He can use Microsoft Keyword Generation Tool as well. This tool can be found in adCenter.

Choice of the maximum bid for an advertisement

Before you choose the maximum bid for your advertisement you should find the ROI (Return on Investment) of particular keyword. As I said the minimum bid is 0,05$ for the keyword, bu before you place your bid you should try to find out how much is a particular keyword worth for you.

By this I mean to find out:
- how much you will earn if the customer buys your product or service after clicking in my advertisement
- how many clicks of your advertisement you need to get one customer.

Of course it is quite difficult to predict this data (especially the second one before the advertisement is launched), but it is a good idea anyway to have rough estimations.

Choosing the maximum bid do not fight for top spot in sponsored results. Very rarely top placed sponsored results give the best profit.

Writing text ad recommendations

- Writing ad you should use as specific and accurate language as it is possible
- The text of the ad should be a clear and accurate description of your site.
- The local ads (especially those ones, which are geographically targeted) should include the targeted location within the ad.
- Ads cannot not be misleading or give the user wrong impression bout the ad and the final page

- If possible, start the title with the keyword, so it will be more visible to the customer.
- Use correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar to be ok with Microsoft Editorial guidelines.
- Use special prices, discounts or free offers to differentiate your offer from your competitors

What cannot you use in ad texts?

- vulgar or obscene language.
- contact information (telephone/fax numbers, address, full URL).
- symbols, gimmicky language and superlatives ("America's greatest," "best," "cheapest")
- repetition of words and phrases ("Promotion, promotion, promotion…").
- phrases, which directly please to make an action such as "click now" or "link here".

- exclamation points in ad titles.

- capitalized words

- numbers, letters and symbols, which are not used in normal speech.

Example:

Correct Ad Example:

Carpenter Chicago
Carpenter services in Chicago. Tables, chairs, beds. For home, office.

Incorrect Ad Example:

Carpenter Chicago
Carpenter services in Chicago. Tables, chairs, beds. FOR HOME, OFFICE.

Landing Page recommendations

Remember to create a destination page, which is easy and clear for visitors. The website should provide fast access to content advertised in Live Search ad. Remember that you pay for each of clicks so it does not make any sense for you to pay for the users, who are not interested in your offer.
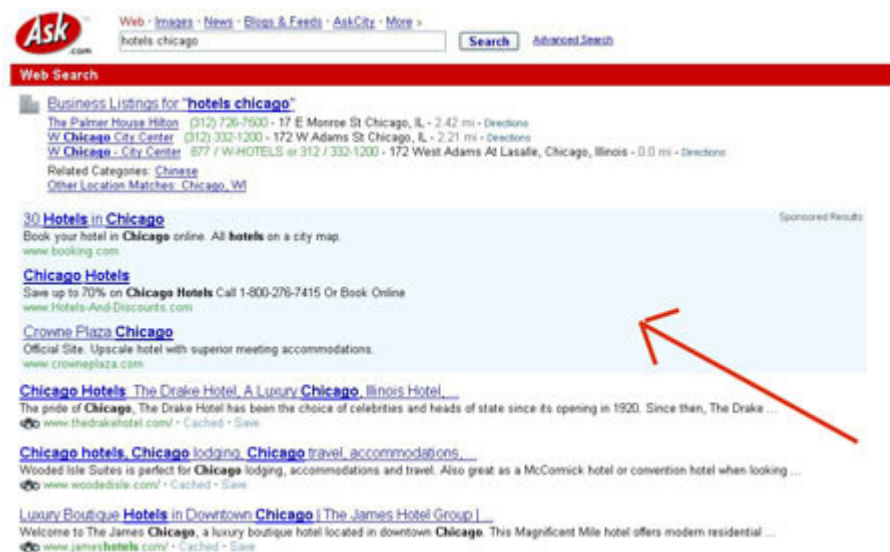
Ask.com

Ask.com is not so popular Internet search engine as Google.com or Yahoo.com, but it can be very good alternative for both of those searcg engines if the advertising with Google.com or Yahoo.com is high.

Where the adverisement wil be displayed?

The ads in the campaign with Ask.com will appear in sponsored search results and ad placements across its network of partner sites. The partner sites list includes such sites as: TicketMaster.com, DogPile.com, Excite.com, InfoSpace.com.

Figure 65. Ask.com search results

How much does the advertisement with Ask.com cost?

The advertiser, who advertises his products or services with the Ask.com, ischarged on a cost-per-click (CPC) basis,. Similarly as in the situation of Google.com or Yahoo.com , the advertiser has to pay when a prospective customer clicks on advertiser's ad and visits his website.

It is good to know that Ask.com does not have flat cost of click. The cost of click varies based on the targeting options the advertiser chooses, his Max CPC and market demand. The minimum cost of click, which has to be bid by the advertiser, is $0,05, but many commercial keywords have reserve prices, which means the advertiser has to pay more than $0,05 to be sure that his ad will show up in the search results.

The higher rank you want to have in the sponsored search results the higher cost per click you have to bid and the more effective ad you have to prepare.

Ranking = (CPCxCTR)

where,

CPC – the advertiser's declared cost per click

CTR – the efficiency of the ad measured as how often advertiser's ad is clicked in comparison to other ads based on the same keyword

 Note that the declared Cost per Click is not always your final price for the advertisement.

Ask.com offers:

a) relevancy discounts - the higher percentage of people, who see your ad click on it, the lower Cost per Click you will pay for a particular position.

b) distribution discounts. - discounts automatically applied to CPC rates throughout the Ask.com network, which depend upon Ask.com regulations and matching options the advertiser chooses (keyword matching or contextual matching).

How to prepare the ad for Ask.com ?

The ad preparation steps are almost the same as in the case of Google.com or Yahoo.com. Those steps include:

• Keyword selection
• Ad copy preparation
• Landing Page optimization
• Setting the bid for the keywords

Keyword selection

If you want to choose good keywords for your advertisement take those keywords, which are associated to your local products and services. Avoid too general keywords, because only specific keywords bring highly qualified customers that have a specific product, service or offering in mind.

To find good keywords for your campaign please read the chapter at page 10 "Keyword Selection". You can also read the chapters, which describe the keyword preparation for Google.com and Yahoo.com advertisements. The rules for keywords preparation for local advertisements are the same.

If you do not know how to find good keywords read chapter sdgfdg . As you want to advertise local services or local products your chosen keyword phrase should include an appropriate geographic word.

Example:
    "Plumbers Chicago"   instead of "Plumbers"

Ad Copy

The good copy preparation rules are the same as in the case of Google.com and Yaho.com advertisements. The ad copy should tell the customer about your product. It should list the best product's features, but it should not confuse him.

It is recommended to include in the ad copy (as long as they are true):
- keywords (in the title and description). The user prefers the ads in which the keyword is included.
- call to action like: "Buy", "Order", "Save", "Purchase"
- special offers or promotions like : "One Day Shipping", "15% Off",
- relation to the seasonal events like Holidays, Valentine's Day, Back-To-School

Landing page optimization

Landing page has critical meaning for the ad's return on investement. If you say something in your ad, make sure you confirm it on the landing page. If you want to make profits on your ads, your landing page has to be relevant to the keyword. As the advertiser you need to avoid sending users to general pages or to your site's homepage, because it will be very difficult for them to find, what they are looking for.

Setting the bid for the keywords

Setting the bid for the keyword do not pay more than it is profitable for you. Always remember about ROI (return on investement) for your site. It is recommened to read chapter Web Analytics to get to know, how to measure your site effectiveness. Remember that you can set the bis separately for each keyword or use the default campaign maximum Cost per Click. If you don't set a maximum Cost per Click for each of your keywords or ads, then the Ask.com system will use the default campaign maximum Cost per Click for all keywords across the campaign.

Keyword matching

Ask.com offers 2 main keyword matching options, which direct the traffic to the customers and 1 option, which excludes traffic unrelated to the advertiser's ad.

Broad match
Broad matching causes display of the ad for any query that contains advertiser's broad keyword or variations of that keyword. It means ad display for: plurals, common misspellings, shared "root" words, and different word orders. The broad keyword matching does not display ads for synonyms.

Example:
        If you select the keyword "hairdressers Chicago" and you choose broad matching, your ad will be displayed in response to the queries: "I need a hairdresser in Chicago", "Chicago hairdresser", "cheap hairdresser in Chicago". Your ad will not be displayed in response to the queries "barber Chicago".

Exact match
With the exact matching the advertiser's ad will be displayed in response to queries that match that keyword and queries that are a variation on your keyword. Those variations on chosen keyword include: plurals, common misspellings, shared "root" words, and different word orders, but do not include synonyms.

Example:
        If the advertiser chooses the keyword :"hairdresser Chicago" and select exact matching, the ad will be shown in response to queries: "hairdresser Chicago", " hairdressers Chicago", "hairdresser in Chicago", but not in response to the queries: "need hairdresser in Chicago";

"cheap hairdresser inChicago".

Negative Match
The negative match keywords stops display of the ad in response to queries that conatain that keyword. The negative natch keywords should be used to prevent specific queries or contextual page determinations from unwanted displayd of the ads.

Example:
      If you select broad matching on the keyword "plumbers Chicago" and you want to stop displaying the ad for the keywords including word "cheap", then you should use negative match. You shoulduse negative match on the word "cheap" and then your ad will not be displayed in response to queries such as: "cheap plumbers Chicago", "cheap plumber in Chicago"

Ad copy Editorial Guidelines

If you want to display your ad at Ask.com site make sure you meet their Editorial Guidelines.

In the ad copy you are not allowed to use:
- Unnecessary capitalization
- Incorrect spacing between words, letters and punctuation
- Obvious misspellings
- Symbols, numbers and letters in place of words
- More than one exclamation point
- Punctuation used for extra and unnecessary emphasis
- Offensive language
- Repetitive punctuation and repetitive words
- Direct call to action phrases like: Click here, Visit us, Apply now

If you want to use in your ad copy competitive advantage claims such as, "better than", "cheaper than" or superlative language such as,:"lowest price", "highest quality" then that opinion must be supported on the landing page by third party verification or certification.

Display URL

- Your display URL must be an accurate representation of your website

- Your display URL must include an the domain extension (.com, .edu, .com, etc.)

Destination URL for the ad

Destination URL must:

- be fully accessible all the times
- Your site must offer quality content that fulfills a specific user need
- Contain only fully functional weblinks
- Finished and not "under construction"
- Not be rediration to to another Web site
- generate excessive more than one pop up
- not block back button
- be rrelevant to the ad and the keyword

How do I get started?

If you plan on spending $5,000 a month, or more, on your advertisement with Ask.com you can Ask.com sales representative at:
http://leads.sponsoredlistings.ask.com/contact/asl_contactrep.aspx , which will assist you in the campaign preparation.

If you do not want to spend more than $5,000 a month, sign up for the service at:
http://sponsoredlistings.ask.com/ , choosing the "Easy Access Plan".

All additional information about Ask.com advertisement rules you will find at: Help Center page at: https://secure.sponsoredlistings.ask.com/help/faq

References

- http://www.adwords.google.com/support/
- http://help.yahoo.com/l/us/yahoo/ysm/sps/index.html
- http://help.live.com/
- http://help.yahoo.com/l/us/yahoo/local/help
- http://blogs.msdn.com/livesearch//basics/local-13.html
- http://local.google.com/support/
- http://www.useit.com/
- http://infousa.com/
- http://corporate.local.com/
- http://www.aboutcitysearch.com/
- http://www.truelocal.com/about.aspx
- http://www.yellowpages.com/sp/ypbrowse/
- https://secure.sponsoredlistings.ask.com/help/faq
- http://www.clickz.com/showPage.html?page=3623252
- Don't Make Me Think: A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability by Steve Krug
- http://www.smallbusinesssem.com/local-search-marketing-guide/yahoo-local-search/
- http://www.smallbusinesssem.com/local-search-marketing-guide/msn-local-search/
- http://www.smallbusinesssem.com/local-search-marketing-guide/other-options/
- http://www.smallbusinesssem.com/2007/02/16/10-likely-elements-of-googles-local-search-algorithm/
- http://www.smallbusinesssem.com/local-search-marketing-guide/google-local-search/
- http://www.kaushik.net/avinash/2006/06/tips-for-web-analytics-success-for-small-businesses.html
- http://www.ittechnology.us/audio/avinash-kaushik.mp3

The most important Local Search blogs

- http://www.smallbusinesssem.com/
- http://adcenterblog.spaces.live.com/
- http://googlemapsmania.blogspot.com/
- http://ylocalblog.com/
- http://www.ysearchblog.com/
- http://adwords.blogspot.com/
- http://searchengineland.com/lands/locals-only.php
- http://local.aol.com/aol/localhome
- http://www.locallytype.com/
- http://www.kelseygroup.com/blog/
- http://www.blumenthals.com/blog/

Summary

I'm looking forward to any suggestions and ideas that could help to improve this guide. You are welcomed to type them at my blog's comments, as well as to send an email through a contact form to m.gasiewski@ittechnology.us or m.gasiewski@gmail.com

Marketing on the Internet – http://www.ittechnology.us/