



### Who They Are

- Vermilion Restaurant
- [www.thevermilionrestaurant.com](http://www.thevermilionrestaurant.com)
- Chicago, IL
- Upscale Indian & Latin American restaurant

VERMILION

### What They Needed

- To support a new online presence
- To bring in new customers and build awareness
- To target local Chicago audiences

### What They Did

- Began with **Google AdWords** in 2007
- Targeted their campaign to the Chicago area
- Showed ads on **Google Maps** using **local business ads**
- Tracked results using a custom phone number

### What They Accomplished

- **More reservations:** Average weekly reservations increased 15%
- **Cost-effective marketing:** Controlled advertising costs

## The Right Ingredients

Vermilion Restaurant used Google AdWords and local business ads to increase average weekly reservations by 15%.

Offering a blend of Indian and Latin American cuisine, Chicago restaurant Vermilion attracts food-lovers of all types, from downtown yuppies to suburbanites to professionals attending events. Founder and owner Rohini Dey, a former World Bank and McKinsey & Co. consultant, has grown the restaurant with virtually no advertising. “For a fine dining restaurant such as Vermilion, I find conventional advertising via print or direct mail is ineffective, at best, and can be counterproductive to the brand,” says Rohini.



Instead, Rohini has relied on positive press in national and local publications to bolster a word-of-mouth reputation and drive reservations and return visits.

### Adding Online to the Menu

In 2007, Rohini realized that launching an online marketing plan could have a significant impact on her business. “It dawned on me that over half of our reservations are made online, through OpenTable.com,” says Rohini. “So I knew our customers were looking online for options – but we had zero online presence, not even a website, since I’d been procrastinating setting one up.”

After seeing a presentation about Google’s advertising platforms at the National Restaurant Association conference, Rohini decided to take action. “After my epiphany, I resolved to go from being virtually absent online to having a strong web presence,” Rohini remembers. “Google has been an invaluable partner in getting there.”

---

“I resolved to go from being virtually absent to having a strong web presence. Google has been an invaluable partner in getting there.”

---

Working with Google’s Restaurant Solutions team, Rohini developed a marketing program to reach local Chicago food-lovers. The core of this program was a search advertising campaign using Google AdWords™, which was targeted regionally to only a Chicago-area audience.

Rohini’s ads appeared next to search results on Google.com. They also displayed on Google Maps as local business ads – AdWords ads associated with specific business locations. When potential customers search on Google Maps for restaurants in Chicago, they can see local business ads for Vermilion, which include the restaurant’s address, phone number, logo, and photo. With local business ads, users can also see where Vermilion is located right on the map. As with regular text ads, Vermilion still pays only when someone clicks through to its website.

---

## About Google Restaurant Solutions

---

Google's Restaurant Solutions team provides dedicated service and support to customers in the restaurant industry. Our clients use Google's online and offline media platforms to help build brand awareness, launch new menu items, promote store openings, drive online ordering, sell gift cards and more, on a local, national or international level.

Online, Google offers marketers the world's most used search engine and the largest global advertising network, including high impact sites like YouTube. Marketers can choose among many ad formats (such as video, display, text and other formats) and targeting options. Google also offers efficient, accountable buying platforms for offline media including television and more.

---

## About Google Adwords

---

**Google Adwords™** is a performance-based advertising program that enables businesses large and small to advertise on Google and its network of partner websites. Hundreds of thousands of businesses worldwide use AdWords for text, image, and video ads priced on a cost-per-click (CPC) and cost-per-impression (CPM) basis. Built on an auction-based system, AdWords is a highly quantifiable and cost-effective way to reach potential customers.

---

For more information, visit:  
<http://adwords.google.com>

---

## Mix and Match

AdWords provides Rohini with a comprehensive view of her campaign's performance. She can easily monitor which keywords drive the most conversions, then adjust keywords and spend accordingly. "AdWords allows for very easy experimentation and trial to figure out the optimal keywords, costs-per-click, and investment levels that work for us, in terms of driving clickthroughs and conversions," Rohini explains. "Right now I'm playing with broader keywords – *fusion, international, eclectic* – to help extend my reach."

Google's local business ads have also proven an inexpensive and effective way of driving website visits. Rohini's search ads have received an average clickthrough rate (CTR) of 0.42 percent and a cost-per-click (CPC) of \$0.47.

---

"It was very helpful to be able to track results  
to understand the efficacy of this campaign."

---

## Savoring Success

"It was very helpful to be able to track results to understand the efficacy of this campaign," says Rohini. "We measured our results using distinct phone numbers for Google leads, as well as tracking conversions from our ads on Google.com to online reservations completed on OpenTable.com."

She saw a lift of approximately 40 reservations per week through OpenTable.com, an increase of 30 percent over her average weekly online reservations. And by focusing her campaign solely on search ads that appear on Google.com, Rohini has brought her cost-per-conversion to approximately \$2.50, well below her goal of \$4.00.

Rohini also tracked phone reservations by using a custom phone number linked only to her AdWords campaign; she received an additional 15 reservations per week over the phone. Overall, advertising with Google helped Vermilion to increase average weekly reservations by 15 percent.

Rohini sees the impact of Vermilion's AdWords campaign extending beyond just immediate reservations. "We tend to convert 30 percent of our diners to repeat business," Rohini says. "Between that and word of mouth, adding a new reservation has many long-term benefits beyond just that one dinner – our average reservation size is three individuals, so each reservation has a huge impact. And we're thanking AdWords for a lot of that publicity and success."

In the future, Rohini plans to continue to experiment with AdWords. "I want to figure out how to keep robust clickthrough rates while tripling the volume of clicks and conversions we see," she says. "Overall, the returns of the campaign fundamentally outweigh the expense, which I think of as an investment in growth."

