

Creating effective Ads

Online advertising on the Internet leaves a lot to be desired. We have ads that emulate Windows-warning boxes. We have pop-ups and pop-unders. All of these are developed with the intent to make people notice them. However, most of them only end up irritating them. Advertisers, especially those with small budgets, can't afford to waste money on ineffective buys. In order to optimize your advertising buys, you need to concentrate on improving your creative.

Here are some tips that might help:

Step 1: Define clear goals of your advertising campaign

The most important aspect of any advertising campaign is to have a clear objective in mind. You may be targeting a specific group of people, your initial aim may be to target at least 1000 internet surfers and so on and so forth. Have a well defined, clear purpose.

Step 2: Identify the most effective sites for achieving your goals

Sites that are most relevant to your product or service will, more than likely, be your best bet; but also consider larger sites or networks that can target the audience you're trying to reach. They can be very cost-effective. If you have multiple products or services that appeal to various target markets, you'll have to consider sites that reach all those various segments.

Step 3: Craft your message to fit the needs of the audience you're targeting

This comes down to understanding the audience of the sites you're advertising on. The message you use on a technology site to appeal to technologically savvy customers won't have the same appeal for visitors on a small-business site. Focus your campaign.

Step 4: Content of your Ad

Pay particular attention to the content of the Ad. The content should be such that it clearly distinguishes your product or service from your competitors'. Have a catchy headline. The headline is probably the most important part of the Ad – It is the customer puller.

Step 5: Formulate the specific promotional messages that correspond to your goals

The promotional messages should concentrate on the major selling points of your product or service and have a strong call-to-action.

Step 6: Make the desired action clearly visible

This certainly doesn't mean the desired action should necessarily blink, bounce or do flips, but it should be visible within an accepted format for the media you're using. In the case of the Internet, underlined text links, "click here" text entry boxes, and pull-down menus are all ways you can make the desired action clearly visible.

Step 7: Design the ad so it looks like it belongs on the sites where you're advertising

For instance, you may want to use the site's font faces in your text, color schemes in your background, font color choices overall, and emulate images where appropriate. Try to conform to the environment so potential customers visiting the site don't gasp in shock when they see your ad.

Step 8: Produce multiple versions of each ad

Create three or four versions of each ad, changing the promotional message, call-to-action, font faces and color schemes. This is especially important if you're doing price testing or gauging reaction to specific promotions. By splitting your advertising buy among the various versions of your creative, you can then start to optimize your buy based on the message that works best.

With these tips, you will not only be able to create an ad, but you will be able to create an effective ad that does what it is supposed to do – sell your products and services.

Talk to you soon!

Regards,
Steve Brining