

## An AcrobatAnt White Paper

### SEARCHING FOR A SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING STRATEGY?

For virtually every other marketing medium or campaign element, clients use sound rationale to determine their marketing goals and to set a budget for achieving those results. Yet, those same clients often apply backwards logic or no logic at all to their search engine marketing (SEM) campaigns. In fact, SEM campaigns should follow the same methodology as more traditional advertising and marketing.

#### BEING NO. 1 SHOULD BE A RESULT OF GOOD MARKETING, NOT THE NO. 1 GOAL.

When a client tells us that the goal of an SEM campaign is to be No. 1 in search results on all keywords, we suggest rethinking that objective for these reasons:

- Being No. 1 in search results means increasing the bid. The less relevant the keyword is to your business, ad and landing page, the more you will pay for that position. The higher the bid for each click, the quicker the budget is spent.
- Reaching the No. 1 position can mean being the victim of “click happy” people. These consumers click on the first search result, no matter what—a practice that makes companies pay a premium price for unqualified searchers.
- When the budget is spent too quickly, the campaign can miss qualified searchers later in the day. These people are often comparison shopping and believe that search results in the third, fourth or fifth positions are just as valuable as those in the first.

We’re not suggesting that you shouldn’t want to be in the No. 1 spot. Instead, occupying the top position should be a result of a viable strategy to highlight your brand name or service line, not the goal of that strategy.

**Spending money isn’t a goal.**

*“I have \$X to spend in the next 30 days on SEM; let’s spend it.”*

*“I budgeted \$X for the month and it isn’t being spent. I need more clicks.”*

*Spending money for the sake of spending money is not a sound SEM strategy. Getting people to click an ad is not difficult. Bids can be increased to raise the ad position. Additional keywords can be added to increase the likelihood of impressions. However, adding less relevant keywords also means that searchers and clicks are less relevant to the product or service.*

*Good positions can increase the potential for bad clicks and even click fraud. Dumping money on the content network is almost an assurance that the ad will be placed on sites that are less than ideal.*

*Buckets of money don’t guarantee an effective SEM campaign. They guarantee only that money is being spent.*

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### QUANTITY CLICKS VS. QUALITY CLICKS

One key objective of any SEM strategic plan is to get more quality clicks—not just more clicks. A quality click is one by a potential healthcare patient who is seeking a solution to a problem that can be satisfied by finding the right information.

An effective SEM budget should be spent on healthcare searchers who are seeking information on:

- A particular diagnosis
- Symptoms and/or treatments for an ailment
- A specific procedure
- Finding a physician
- Choosing where to receive care

Since search engines are the first place people go when they research health information, enhancing your visibility and optimizing your lead-generating opportunities online is a must.

### FORMULATING YOUR SUCCESSFUL SEM STRATEGY

As with any healthcare marketing effort, coming up with the ideal SEM strategy starts with understanding how your solutions can fulfill needs for your healthcare consumer.

Then, these four questions need to be answered:

- 1 What service are we marketing?
- 2 To whom are we marketing?
- 3 What action do we want healthcare consumers to take? (*Make an appointment, attend a free seminar or screening, etc.*)
- 4 How much are we willing to pay for that action?

### ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR SEM STRATEGIES:

- Ads should be specific and focused on your product, service or information.
- Ads should be a window to the landing page these searchers will see after clicking.
- Keywords should support the ads and not trick the searcher.
- Ads should be placed where the target searchers are located.
- Eliminate bad content network sites.
- Add negative keywords to the campaign.
- Make the call to action simple and obvious on the landing page.
- Set the bids and total budget for the campaign at a level where the return on investment is positive or at a target margin.

Remember, SEM is like any other media element of the campaign. It must be tracked and managed to ensure that it contributes to the overall marketing strategy.

## SEM BOOSTS HEALTHCARE ONLINE MARKETING EFFECTIVENESS.

What happens when a client is not willing to evaluate a campaign with a strict ROI measurement? It's still possible to improve the quality of clicks and increase the efficiency of a campaign.

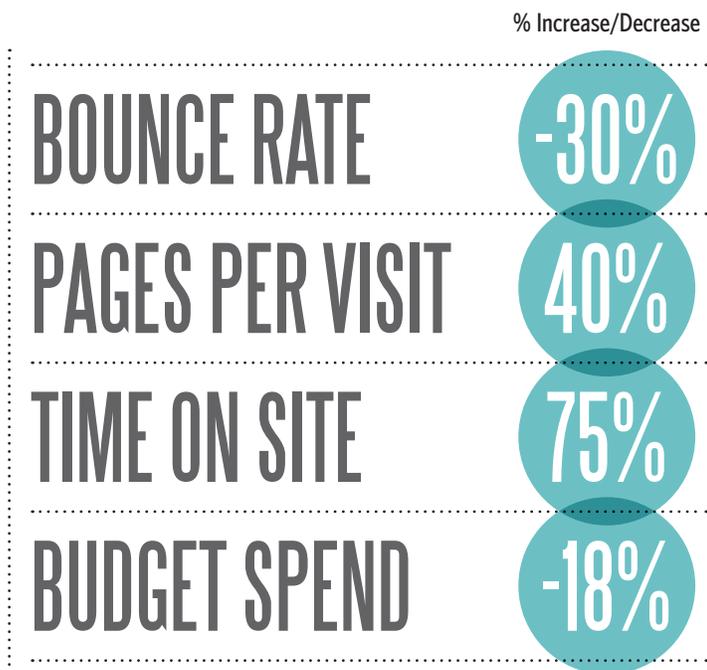
A certain healthcare client was marketing a specific service line in Google AdWords. The call to action, according to that client, was immeasurable. So, AcrobatAnt determined metrics other than the conversion rate to measure the improved quality and efficiency of the campaign.

AcrobatAnt reviewed the account and made strategic changes to improve quality. From the starting point (month zero) to month three, the bounce rate decreased 30 percent, pages per visit increased 40 percent and time on site increased 75 percent.

Fewer people were clicking, then immediately leaving. In fact, they were viewing more pages and staying longer. Although the total number of visitors did decrease by 34 percent—due in part to a 17 percent reduction in amount spent or budget—fewer random clicks and more qualified clicks were reported.

### How did the campaign become more efficient and receive better clicks? Key changes included:

- 1 Separating content network advertising into its own campaign and excluding sites that proved to provide poor clicks
- 2 Adding negative keywords to reduce the number of impressions given to "broad match" keywords that were not applicable
- 3 Adding additional exact match keywords to reduce the number of broad match keywords
- 4 Adding image ads to the content network
- 5 Managing the campaign to stay in the third or fourth position



**Helpful definition:**

Bounce rate: the percentage of entrances on the page that results in the person immediately leaving the site. Non-entrance pages always have a bounce rate of zero. A high bounce rate indicates that the page is not well matched to the ad or link that is driving traffic to the page.