

How to Test Your Ads & Improve Your Profitability

By Angela Wu

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It's so easy to blow through money when marketing a website. If you're like many new entrepreneurs, you may have already wasted several hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars on marketing campaigns that didn't give you the results you were hoping for.

So how does one figure out which campaigns are worth the time, trouble, and money?

You track them. Ad trackers are commonly used to monitor the results of a marketing campaign. A specialized 'coded' URL records the number of times people click on the link. You'll be able to see how many 'hits' and unique visitors you get from each of your advertising campaigns, and by analyzing this information, you can instantly see which of your campaigns are successful -- and which are not.

A hit-and-miss 'strategy' is simply too frustrating, and often times too expensive! Here are just a couple of examples of what an ad tracker can tell you:

EXAMPLE 1: Let's say you run the same ad in two newsletters or ezines. EzineA has 10000 subscribers, EzineB has 50000. Most beginners naturally assume that a larger number of subscribers means a better response rate. This isn't necessarily true. What actually matters is how many people READ the ezine and how responsive they are! Your tracker will show you cold, hard numbers of how many subscribers from each ezine respond to your ad.

EXAMPLE 2: You create 2 different sales pages, each with a unique tracking link. You can send an equal number of visitors to each sales page, and let your tracker tell you which one is converting more visitors into paying customers.

A good tracker doesn't have to be expensive, either. Consider how much you pay for a single ad whose results you'll have to guess at... when instead, you could invest in a tracker that will SHOW you which of your campaigns are giving results. There are a wide variety of trackers available -- choose one that suits your needs. A couple include:

- * AdTrackz, <http://onlinebusinessbasics.com/adtrackz.html>
- a simple ad tracker that you can install on your own server. Available for a one-time fee.
- * HyperTracker, <http://onlinebusinessbasics.com/tracker.html>
- a much more in-depth tracker with loads of features. Free trial available.

Tracking your campaigns is also important when you're marketing offline. For example, let's say you create a couple of brochures. You can track orders by providing a 'code' on the enclosed order forms, or if you're directing people to your site, provide a different URL on each brochure to see which one is getting the most response. Knowledge is a powerful thing!

By testing everything you do, you'll have solid proof of what doesn't work, what works well, and what can be improved. You know which ad campaigns to continue ... and which ones to dump for something more profitable.

So invest in some a good tracker -- you'll gain valuable insight into where your sales are coming from, and be able to refine your marketing efforts and ultimately improve your bottom line.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Angela is the editor of Online Business Basics, a practical guide to building a business on a shoestring budget. It features loads of instantly usable tips and tools that were specifically chosen for beginners! For details, visit <http://onlinebusinessbasics.com/article.html> or download the free trial version of the Online Business Basics manual: <http://onlinebusinessbasics.com/freebook.html>

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