

Will The Google AdSense Program Survive?

By Gauher Chaudhry

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Almost everyone is now aware of the Google AdSense program that has taken the Internet by storm. The Google AdSense program lets webmasters place Google's paid sponsor listings on their web sites and collect a percent of the bid amount when someone clicks on one of the listings.

I have been reading many ezines that I receive and every publisher seems to be making a huge hoopla about Google's new program.

In my own words, it is seriously overblown.

Now, this article might make a few people unhappy who are counting on the Google AdSense program to finally be their "oasis of Internet riches."

But somebody has to be the devil's advocate. :)

Discussion boards, chat rooms and advertisers are buzzing about the Google AdSense program like it is the California Gold Rush all over again!

Do you know how many people made money during the California goldrush?

Not many.

The reason was quite simple. Thousands of people flocked to California in 1849 to claim their gold riches, but ended up with nothing.

There were a few people who made some money finding gold, but the real people who made a fortune were the ones who provided

food, accommodation and laundry services to the thousands of people who flocked to California.

In fact, laundry services were so expensive that people had to ship their clothes to Hawaii to be washed for a cheaper price.

The ones who will probably make a lot of money with the Google AdSense program are the ones who sell complimentary products or services.

For example, don't be surprised if you soon see an ebook "How To Make \$100,000 A Year With Google AdSense" which will probably be a flimsy report that tells you to create targeted web sites that attract top dollar paid listings from Google AdSense.

But guess what, hundreds of naive people will probably buy this ebook and many other products and services that will pop up that are related to the Google AdSense program.

I am currently using the Google AdSense program on a few of my web sites and it does bring in revenue each month, but I don't expect it to stay at the same level.

I will tell you why I feel this way.

When the Internet first started, everyone was making a huge hoopla about how you could put banners on your web site and make money.

But what happened?

Internet surfers started becoming immune to banner advertisements and the average click-thru ratio on banners has now dropped below 0.5%. Many banner ad networks have slowly died and gone out of business.

As the Google AdSense listings will start to appear on thousands of web sites, Internet surfers will also start to become immune to these listings, which will result in lower click-thrus and revenues for the webmaster.

Overture.com is planning on launching their "Content-Match" program, which is similar to the Google AdSense program so regardless of what you believe, Internet surfers will become immune to text listings.

Many people hail the Google AdSense program as a long-term advertising solution because its technology analyzes the web page and delivers *relevant* and *targeted* listings that will interest the web site visitors.

But banner networks have been doing this for years without much luck, so what is the big commotion if Google can match text

listings that are relevant to the content on your web pages?

This is nothing new.

Just as banner networks had to deal with false click-thrus, Google will have to some how tackle the same problem. The Google AdSense program is a perfect environment for a fraud ring as is the case with many pay-per-click search engines that operate revenue sharing programs.

How do I know?

Because my company witnessed it on our very own pay-per-click search engine BulletBid.com. Basically what happens is organized groups of individuals sign up as affiliate partners and then they all take turns visiting each other's web sites and clicking on the paid listings.

This is something that is hard to track because the IP address of each click on the same listing is different. We managed to track the culprits because 1) We didn't have an overly huge amount of affiliates and 2) The software we use had built in fraud detectors to alert us the something could be wrong.

But with the Google AdSense program, they will have tens of thousands of webmasters who will be running their paid listings on their web sites. It will very hard to track who is organized with who.

I have a feeling that Google's staff knows this in the back of their mind and that is why they allow advertisers to opt-out of appearing on partner web sites.

But if Google cannot track down fraudulent clicks, this will result in their paid advertisers having a lower sales conversion ratio from the traffic that Google sends them,

This will result in advertisers lowering theirs bids and honest webmasters who host the Google AdSense listings receiving lower revenue payments.

Depending on the factors that I have mentioned above, webmasters might in the future find it more profitable to go back to their old affiliate links.

So what is the answer to the question, "Will the Google AdSense program survive?"

The answer is yes, but webmasters shouldn't expect to make as much money once the initial goldrush is over.

Gauher Chaudhry is editor of the weekly Cool Cash Ezine.

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