

# Why Pay Per Click

By Richard Igoe

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Why do 9 of the major search engines feature Pay-per-click listings on the first page of search results?

The answer is simple. Search engines are becoming commercialized.

Pay-per-click listings are becoming more and more popular with the search engines because they return relevant results. And the reason for this is that website owners are not going to pay for keywords that are not relevant.

The largest of the Pay-Per-Click search engines at the moment is GoTo.com and it is no coincidence that its paid listings can be found on the first page of search results on 9 of the major search engines. If you do a search at Altavista, AOL, Netscape, Lycos, Hotbot, or CompuServe, you will find that the top 2 or 3 listings, sometimes called sponsored links or featured listings, are the same as the search results on GoTo.com.

Mamma.com also includes GoTo.com listings in its top 10 results and at Ask Jeeves there is a section at the bottom of the page that links to results from Mamma.com, NBCi, Streamsearch.com and GoTo.com, so 3 of these options will return one or more of GoTo.com listings.

Dogpile, a popular metasearch engine, provides results from 2 pay-per-click search engines, GoTo.com and FindWhat.com.

Pay-per-clicks are being increasingly used because of

their high relevancy to the search results, and because the search engines have to make their money from somewhere.

What about the website owners? There are 2 points of view. One is that search engines should be free and robot-spidered and that paying for traffic produces biased results because only those that can afford to advertize will be noticed.

However on the other hand, the web has become so large and there is so much competition to be in the top 10 results, that results had become biased by another factor - technical know-how. Those sites that had search engine experts promoting them got to the top, not necessarily the best sites. If you can't be found on the first 2 or 3 pages of results you may as well not even be listed. So in a way, the Pay-per-clicks are restoring equilibrium.

There is one catch however, most of the popular keywords have become expensive to bid for, so the trick is to know how much each keyword or phrase is worth to you. You will also have to bid for words in the niche areas that other sites are not bidding for. There is a very good free course that teaches you how to do this, and you can get it by sending a blank email to <mailto:tams5pp@sitesell.net>.

You can get a list of the major Pay-per-Click search engines at <http://www.TheWebsEYE.com/pay-per-click.htm> including a list of UK sites.

So the pay-per-click listings are featuring more and more in searches, but what about the rest of the search results. The leading search engines are constantly trying to improve the relevancy of their results and to achieve this, there is an increasing weight being given to the theme of a website and to the number and quality of links from other sites.

The robot-spiders will increasingly look to see how relevant a keyword is over a number of pages on a website, not just one page. This means that theme based content rich websites are going to achieve better results. The other advantage of producing a content-rich site is that other websites will want to link to it, and this again will add some weight to the relevancy on the search engines.

The keywords and phrases on each individual page however are still very important because these are the building blocks that the search engines must use to

index your pages.

One of the most revolutionary tools to come out of the internet marketing gurus this year is going to be Site Build It! - <http://buildit.sitesell.com/5pp.html> - This tool automatically optimizes your meta tags, keyword densities, etc... and leaves you to concentrate on writing valuable content for your web pages.

While most of the other search engine optimizing tools concentrate on giving each web page a high keyword relevancy, this one focuses on developing a site theme, but at the same time optimizing each web page for a certain keyword or phrase. It is a tool that can work with the search engines and not against them.

To stay ahead in business you have to be one step ahead of your competition, and this is nowhere more true than on the world wide web. Sites focused on a particular theme are likely to make their way to the top of the search engines in the near future and to be amongst the leaders you have to act now.

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