

DigitalMarketing**NOW**

A Breakthrough Guide for Small Business

SEO Strategies
for **TODAY**
and Beyond

Facebook

Goes **LOCAL**
-Local Awareness Ads

Essential
LOCATION BASED
Apps For
SMALL BUSINESS

11 *Amazing*
(and FREE)
PPC Tools



Contents

03 **SEO Strategies For Today & Beyond**

So it's the start of a new year and small businesses everywhere are hoping this will be the best year yet to date. Every business needs an SEO strategy, but how should it look in order to be successful? What we reveal may surprise you.

07 **Essential Location Based Apps for Small Business**

Location-based and finder apps are all the rage right now and more and more of our smartphone use is centered around GPS. Last year 74% of adult smartphone users used their devices regularly to find their way around according to Pew Research. This is big news for the small business owner who wants to leverage that.

12 **Facebook Goes Local – Local Awareness Ads**

Facebook has recently begun to push its new 'Local Awareness' more heavily as a critical aspect of its advertising for small local businesses. So now that business owners can get ahead of the competition and leverage its geographical specificity, is this something you need to take notice of? We think so!

16 **11 Amazing (and Free) PPC Tools**

We look at 11 of the very best PPC tools that we think are pretty much essential for your success. No matter your niche or your strategy, these will help you to create ads that get clicked and to waste less time chasing down keywords that no-one is interested in.

Welcome To Digital Marketing NOW

Thanks for checking out this issue of Digital Marketing NOW, your online marketing resource guide for small business. Each month we will be covering topics that resonate with local businesses just like yours.

Our goal is simple. We want to enable you to do big things online, and it all starts by breaking down the complexities of marketing your business online.

It doesn't matter if you're just starting out, or an established business owner in your local community, you can always benefit from increasing your brand's visibility online.

To your Success,

Digital Marketing NOW
www.digitalsapien.com

Digital Sapien Interactive is a leading small business internet marketing service provider. We help small businesses connect with more customers online.

If you want to build your business, you need to market, it's that simple. But you can lose thousands of dollars if you don't know what you are doing. So we urge you to take action with some of the strategies we recommend.

For a more "hands off" approach, we offer affordable solutions and can deliver results. We hope you enjoy this issue of Digital Marketing NOW and feel free to reach out to us anytime.



SEO STRATEGIES FOR TODAY *AND* BEYOND!

Small businesses everywhere are hoping this will be the best year to date. So these days every business strategy needs to include a good helping of SEO to help gain exposure and bring in new traffic and customers.

But SEO in the next year is looking tricky. Over the past several years Google has been gradually plugging the holes in their algorithms to prevent site owners from manipulating them to get to the top. Things have become much more advanced and no longer is it sufficient to stuff your site with key words, or to

build countless in-bound links of dubious quality.

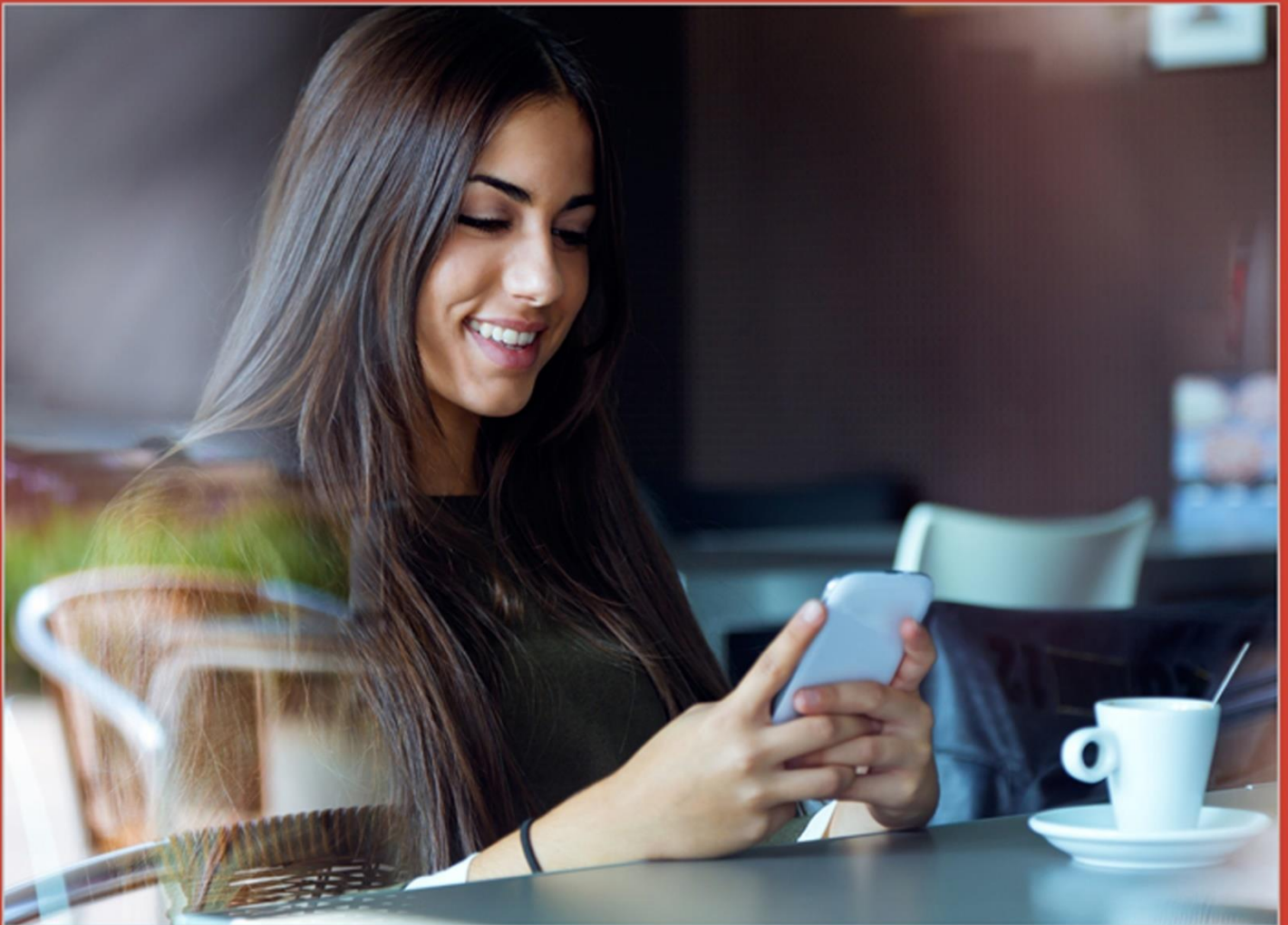
In fact though, Google did away with those strategies a long time ago: it's just even worse now going forward guest posting (where site owners write content for other sites in exchange for links) is no

longer safe, as Matt Cutts has been warning against over-using that strategy too.

So what's left? What *can* a business owner do to get to the top of search this year? Read on and we'll attempt to shed some light on this increasingly difficult question...

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Another way we know Google is putting a lot of emphasis on mobile is because they've added a mobile usability section in Google Webmaster Tools so users can test their site and see how it performs on a mobile device.



THE MOBILE EXPERIENCE IS CRITICAL

It was a monumental year in mobile marketing and that's because it was the year mobile searches surpassed desktop searches. It's pretty obvious that Mobile us "kind of a big deal now" and Google places

a lot of importance on the mobile experience for their users.

Another way we know Google is putting a lot of emphasis on mobile is because they've added a mobile usability section in Google Webmaster Tools so users can test their site and see how it performs on a mobile device. Additionally Google has been penalizing sites that generate errors for mobile users.

Businesses that don't offer a mobile friendly experience will see their conversions plummet and will see a significant drop in search engine rankings over the course of the next several months.

THE 'IN DEPTH' POST AND CONTENT MARKETING

Lately Google has started curating their search results to a degree by highlighting news articles as well as 'in-depth articles'. Of course you can try hard to get your content featured in this section but that's not what's important.

"What's important is that it tells us Google likes in-depth content" That means long-form writing that covers multiple angles of a given subject and links out to other resources.



Writing this type of content for a blog is the definition of 'content marketing' which is becoming more and more popular among webmasters. At the very least you should look at moving from 500 word articles to 700 or 1,000. But make sure to break it up into bite size paragraphs to avoid scaring off your readers.

SCHEMA.ORG MARKUPS

If you checked out that link explaining how to get your content to feature as an 'in-depth article', then you will have noticed that writing lots of detailed content isn't the whole story. Also outlined there is the importance of adding schema.org markups which will allow Google to identify the nature of your content. Think of this as an extended version of title and meta tags that lets you show Google key facts, company logos, publishing dates and other useful details.

These markups are also what allow Google to



include your content in its 'knowledge graphs' and to show more information alongside your listing in the SERPs (Search Engine Results Pages). With correct use of these markups you can theoretically increase your CTR (click through rate) without even getting higher in the rankings.

At the same time, these markups are only likely to become *more* important going forward as Google and other companies clamor to provide us with digital assistant services. It's this information that Google Now, Siri and Cortana will eventually be able to use to give you recipes or let you know times via voice command. If you want to future-proof your online presence this year, this would be a very good place to start.

SOCIAL MEDIA INTEGRATION

This has been 'the next big thing in SEO' for the last five years and it's only continuing to grow in importance. For starters, if the continuous algorithm updates have taught us anything, it's that relying 100% on SEO for business is folly – it's *crucial* that you also have traffic coming in from other sources and social media is a perfect example.





Likewise, social media can help to give your site more social indicators and organic looking recommendations that Google might be listening to more and more. In their most recent report of crucial factors for SEO, Moz found Google Plus to be an important indicator for Google. Likewise, Facebook and Twitter can also help to boost the street cred of your site.

Of course there are other advantages to social media too. For starters, Google Plus will impact on your personalized results which will bypass the regular listings. And looking to different, larger communities – Google is now also taking notice of Reddit it seems. Many bloggers have noticed that Reddit is playing an important role in their site promotion, while Google has even added Reddit posts to their 'news' section.

ALL THE REST

There are many other factors to keep in mind for this year, which by-and-large are developing in much the way they were expected too. SEO is no longer one dimensional and has become fully integrated with other aspects of marketing. Likewise, many techniques that worked previously still continue to work: like updating content, optimizing for speed and building quality backlinks.

BREAKING IT DOWN

That might seem like a lot to take on board, so let's break it down into some actionable points. Here's all you need to consider going forward.

- As usual, SEO will consist of adding great content to your site regularly, keeping your website fast and responsive and generating organic backlinks.
- In-depth content with lots of links to external authorities is the order of the day. 'Content marketing' is the best form of internet marketing this year.
- Google is clamping down even more on 'manipulative' techniques – even guest posts must be used sparingly
- Make sure you are using schema.org markups to tell Google more about your content and to be in with a chance of getting featured
- Generate natural links from social media, post to Reddit and other online communities

There's no doubt that the SEO game has evolved, with even more focus on the user experience. But while a lot of things change, some stay the same: A focus on relevant high-quality content, well-presented no matter where your user happens to be.

THE ESSENTIAL LOCATION-BASED APPS



Have you ever been out with someone only for them to stop to 'check in' to the place that you have just entered? This behavior might seem odd at first but what they're actually doing is using Foursquare to share publicly the fact that they're in that place with you at that time.

As a business owner, this should pique your interest. Do your visitors have the option of 'checking in' when they visit you? For restaurants, hotels, shops & theaters this can have a lot of benefit.

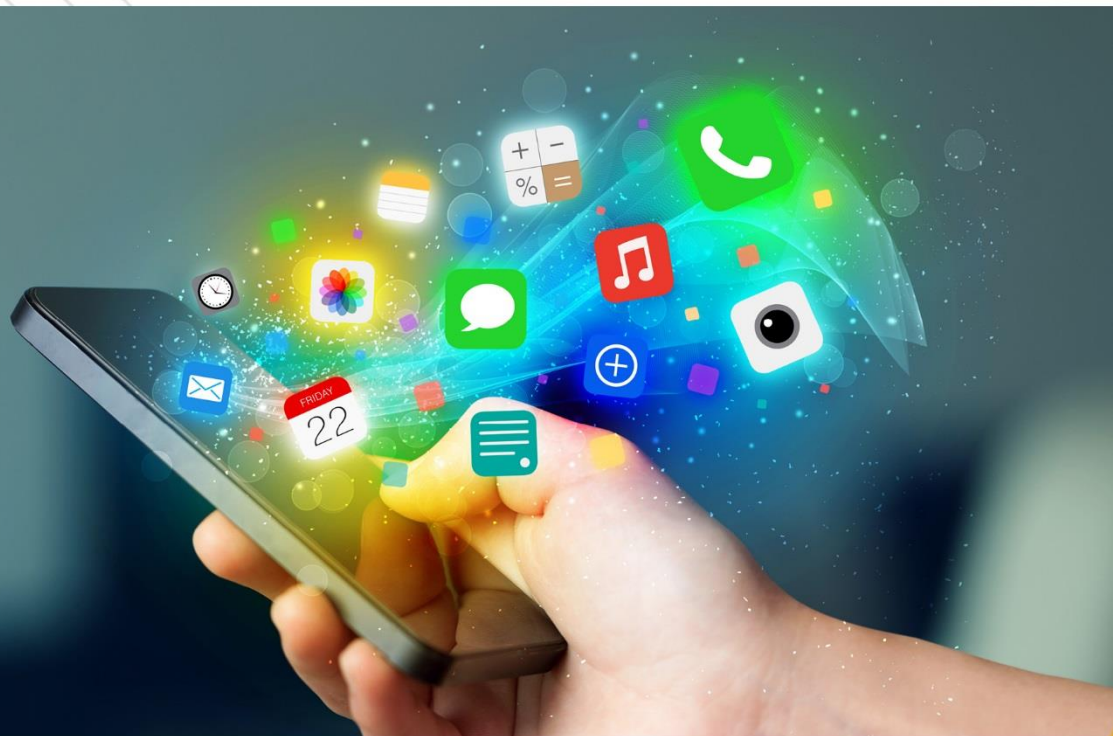
Meanwhile, location "finder" apps can also be used in order to help provide directions or suggestions for places to eat and all this can be very handy for getting around. In fact, some of

us are at the point now where we would be completely lost (quite literally) without our GPS-based apps to help us get around.

If someone is looking for your business, will it show up on these apps?

In short, location-based and finder apps are all the rage right now and more and more of our smartphone use is centered around GPS. Last year 74% of adult smartphone users used their devices regularly to find their way around according to Pew Research. This is big news for the small business owner who wants to leverage that.

Read on and we'll take a look at some of the big GPS apps that businesses should be taking notice of going forward.



Love it or hate it, Yelp remains one of the most downloaded location based apps and is trusted by it's users. During the first quarter of last year, 61 million unique visitors accessed the site via their mobile devices.

Getting good reviews on Yelp will not only help you to attract a ton of local business, it can do a great deal to help you build your reputation as well. Business owners can also add photos, track their views and reply to reviews. And make sure you are replying to reviews – it can go a long way to making you look like a real business that cares. You may already be on Yelp and getting reviews without realizing it.



FOURSQUARE

Foursquare doesn't have quite the popularity that it once did but it is still very widely used. It's an unusual creature this one, essentially just letting people brag about all the places they've been and all the exciting things they're doing. But then isn't that pretty much what social media is all about? It also just so happens that this is one of the very most effective ways to get your customers to spread the word of your business and to get their friends and other connections interested in doing business with you. If someone has a good time visiting your restaurant or hotel they might want to 'check-in' and this can then expose your business to their entire social network.

Currently the site has more than 50 million members and 1.7 million companies are listed. Don't miss out on this opportunity!



Groupon is already a very powerful tool for marketing your business that can be used to reach a large audience through deals and promotions. But when you combine this already impressive capability with location-based functionality you have a real match made in heaven. This won't be suitable for every small business but if you can think of a way to work with Groupon then it can lead to a lot of exposure and increased turnover.



VoucherCloud offers voucher codes and discounts specifically within a user's area. It's often the case that people between the ages of 18 and 30 won't eat out unless they can find some kind of coupon for a deal on their meal. And it's not just for retailers either – it can also be useful for a range of retailers and other local businesses.

Being on Google Maps should be the number one priority for any small business in the commercial sector when it comes to being found on users' smartphones. Being on Google Maps is crucial for your local SEO and will help people to find you when searching for businesses in their area. Likewise, by going to Google My Business you can get your property to show up on Google Places which is a tool many people use to quickly find places to eat and shop in their area when they're out and about. This greatly enhances the chances of people nearby discovering your business and can lead to a lot more business.

Google even have their own version of 'Foursquare' in the form of Google Latitude which is integrated with Google Maps and allows users to share where they are with their friends. Unlike Foursquare, Latitude lets you share your location even while your phone is off and is mostly used by families who want to keep track of each other.





Facebook is by far the biggest social network and if its user-base were a population, it would be one of the biggest countries in the world too. Never one to be left out, Facebook has its own version of Foursquare built-in in the form of 'Facebook Places'. This allows users to update their location status to tell their friends where they've been. Having a Facebook Places page will show your location on a map on Facebook, it will allow friends to share your business with others in the area. It doesn't take long to set up, so get on it!



LivingSocial is another app/website a little like Groupon that visitors can use to find ideas for things to do in their area. Log in and you'll be presented with spas, places to eat, places to stay, events and more. It's very popular, so if you own a small business then you need to be on here or you'll be missing out on a lot of potential business.



Other Useful Apps for Small Business Include...



Perka is a mobile app that makes managing a loyalty program easy. Whether its buy 10 get 1 free, earning points, loyalty tiers, whatever suits your fancy, Perka makes it easy to setup and even more importantly, easy for your customers to use. Customers check in at your business and the transaction can quickly be attributed to them. Super easy. It's 8x more cost effective to bring an existing customer in then get a new customer.



It's a fact – Wunderlist can boost your local business' employee productivity. Simply have each one of your employees download this free app. Then create personalized "to-do" lists to keep everyone in sync and on track. You'll never have to hear "what should I do" ever again!

There are tons of social sites that local businesses can use to reach customers in their area. We won't go over all of them as they're often rather similar but make sure to check out:

- Gilt City
- ScoutMob
- Pulsd
- Fab (for products)
- Savored (for restaurants)
- Thrillist
- Woot! (for technology ecommerce)
- Bloomspot

Many other sites and apps will also promote your business on your behalf once you start building your visibility on social sites So put in a little work up-front and you'll find it can pay off in spades month after month.

FACEBOOK GOES LOCAL:

LOCAL AWARENESS ADS QUICK START GUIDE



facebook

Facebook has recently begun to push its new 'Local Awareness' more heavily as a critical aspect of its advertising for small local businesses. As any smart local business should always be on the lookout for ways to get ahead of the competition and leverage its geographical specificity, is this something you need to take notice of?

WHAT IS LOCAL AWARENESS?

In some ways, you can think of Facebook's business pages as similar to Google's 'local business directories'. On Google, searching for a product or service in a certain area will often result in filtered results to show the most relevant businesses. This way, you can search for 'Wedding Dresses' in Denver and the results will be populated by places in that area that offer Wedding Dresses for sale.

Similarly then, Facebook is now offering advertisers the option to target people from specific regions. Since their introduction, Facebook ads (which work on a 'pay per click' basis) have let you select the gender, relationship status, interests and ages of the people you want to see your ad. This way, you can ensure that the right people are seeing your promotions and thus that you are more likely to get conversions. Someone selling wedding dresses for instance might choose to target someone in their **20s**, who is **engaged** and who is **female**.

All these features are still there, only now you can also add a local element – for instance choosing to only show your ads to people within a ten mile radius of

your store. This gives advertisers and small businesses in particular a lot more precision and should help to improve conversions even more.

HOW TO SET UP LOCAL AWARENESS ADS

Local Awareness is fortunately pretty easy to get to grips with if you're used to advertising on Facebook. You can find the full details on Facebook, but let's go over the process briefly.

1 First of all, go to create an ad campaign as you normally would but then head to the left hand menu option that says 'Local Awareness'.

2 Next you will see a map that also contains a search bar underneath. Here you can search for your local area by typing the name of your town, city or state and or you can put in your ZIP code.

Choosing Your Radius

The screenshot shows the Facebook 'Audience' selection interface. On the left, a map displays a blue circle representing a 3-mile radius centered on East Palo Alto. The map includes labels for various locations like Redwood City, Menlo Park, and Palo Alto. Below the map, a search bar contains the address '1601 Willow Rd, Menlo Park CA'. To the right of the search bar is a 'Radius' dropdown menu currently set to '3 miles'. Below the search bar, there are fields for 'Age' (set to 13) and a gender selection icon. On the right side of the interface, a box titled 'Potential Audience Size' displays '48,000 People' and states: 'This is the total number of people in your selected audience who are active on Facebook each day.'



3 After that, you'll then be given the option to select a radius which basically allows you to set how much of the local area you want to cover. This will be shown as a greyish circle around your location which you can then grow or shrink.

Deciding on the precise radius you want to cover might be a tricky decision at first but suffice to say the narrower the area, the fewer 'wasted' clicks you'll get and the broader the area, the more people you'll be able to reach. The correct choice here is likely to depend on the nature of the products or services you're offering – if you run a grocery store then people are unlikely to come from miles around. If you're selling products that are hard to find though, people might be more willing to travel especially so you can broaden your radius. As with everything in the world of PPC, it will probably come down to trial and error/split testing to see what works best for you.

4 Once you've done this, you'll then be able to scroll further to set your age, gender and other factors as you normally would. This new local element will be most effective only when it's combined well with other filters so do spend some time tweaking your settings. This is where surveying your audience and collecting data can really pay off.

NOTE: WHEN YOU CREATE YOUR FACEBOOK PAGE YOU WILL BE AUTOMATICALLY GIVEN A PRE-SELECTED COVERAGE AREA. YOU NEED TO CHECK THIS TO MAKE SURE IT'S IN-LINE WITH THE AREA THAT YOUR BUSINESS ACTUALLY SERVES.

5 Review your ad to make sure it looks the way you want it to.



Fuki Sushi

Sponsored · 🌐

👍 Like Page

Founded in 1978, Fuki Sushi was the first Japanese Restaurant in Palo Alto.



Fuki Sushi

Advertisers have the option of including additional space here to flesh out their ad creative. They can type up to 200 additional characters. That would then fill up this space underneath the picture.

Get Directions

Are Local Awareness Ads For Me?

Whether or not Local Awareness is worth your time is going to depend very much on the nature of your business. If you're a local business and you already advertise on Facebook, then this is good news that is simply going to make it easier for you to reach an even more specific audience.

Going back to the wedding dress example, a wedding dress shop that's in a specific part of town will now be able to target newly engaged women who live locally or happen to be in that part of town, and can come to try the dresses on in person. This local

targeting can prevent a lot of wasted clicks by people who aren't in the area able to visit in person.

For B2B companies that work online, the ability to target locally might not be of as much interest. Though it could be used to avoiding direct competition with some of the bigger names in your industry or niche, to find business partners, or to encourage local brand awareness. So this may be a good tactic to fly under the radar and gain some local visibility.

Facebook Vs AdWords

In terms of the bigger picture, what does this tell us about the state of advertising on the net?

There has been some speculation that these style of ads put Facebook in more direct competition with Google. Google AdWords has always had a big advantage over Facebook for local business in the past but this change from Facebook could be enough to challenge that.

If you're a small business trying to decide between Facebook and Google for your local ad then, which should you pick?

On the one hand, Google lets you target

people who are *actively searching* for the thing you sell. This is an important distinction, as there's still no way on Facebook to prevent ads showing to engaged women who *already* have their wedding dresses. That said, Google AdWords doesn't take into account quite the same nuanced information such as age or interests and it doesn't let you market 'passively' to people who might be tempted to make an impulse purchase nonetheless.

Again then, the best option is going to depend very much on the type of product or service you're offering. The only way to know for sure? Give both a go and compare the results!

11 AMAZING AND FREE PPC TOOLS

AS a local business owner, you should be focusing your marketing efforts on driving traffic to your website. Pay per click advertising is one of the fastest way to get quality traffic but if you want to build a successful PPC campaign for your small business then there's no need to go it alone.

There are plenty of websites, apps and tools out there that can make a real difference to helping you successfully generate clicks and more importantly sales and which can save you a lot of time and frustration. These can

help with everything from choosing your keywords, to testing your most successful combinations to creating display ads. And we're not just talking about Google here either – these tools can similarly help you whether you're looking to create Facebook ads or ads for Bing.

Here we will look at 11 of the very best PPC tools that we think are pretty much essential for your success. No matter your niche or your strategy, these will help you to create ads that get clicked and to waste less time chasing down keywords that no-one is interested in.





1 LOCAL KEYWORD GENERATOR (5MINUTESITE.COM/LOCAL_KEYWORDS.PHP)

Local Keyword Generator is a tool that comes from 5minutesite.com and which allows you to generate local keywords... as the name kind of suggests. Enter your desired keyphrase along with a city name, zip code or radius and let the generator do its work! Local businesses have a big advantage when it comes to AdWords and similar platforms as they will be fighting for a far less crowded niche and can be very exact in their choice of keywords. This tool will help ensure you don't squander that advantage!

2 SPLITTESTER (SPLITTESTER.COM)

Split Testing is the definition of 'essential' when it comes to success in the world of PPC – too bad then that it takes a lot of time. SplitTester allows you to extrapolate the likely long-term performance of two different

ads from short-term data in order to help you choose the best long-term choice.

3 BIDCOPS (BIDCOPS.COM)

BidCops is designed to help you track down money-wasting keywords and to then provide you with effective alternatives that should increase your traffic and conversions. Sometimes it's more important to get rid of the keywords that are slowing you down rather than to hunt for even more to add to your campaign.

4 SEMRUSH (SEMRUSH.COM)

SEMRush allows you to spy on your competitors which might sound sneaky but everyone's doing it! Just enter the address of your competitor's site and you'll get AdWords ad copy, key words, CPC and loads of other juicy details.

5 KEYWORDSPY (KEYWORDSPY.COM)

KeyWord Spy is a great tool again for checking out what the competition is up to. This way you can see who is spending what on PPC, what keywords they're targeting and more. Did you know for instance that Amazon spend over a million dollars a day sometimes on their AdWords? Whether you want to try and beat your competition at their own game, or you're looking to get inspiration for your own keywords, then Keyword Spy can be very helpful. They offer a premium account (which is well worth it) but you can get a lot out the free features as well so it's worth checking out.

6 WORDHIPPO (WORDHIPPO.COM)

WordHippo is a synonym or antonym generator which is very useful for mixing up your keywords as well as your negative keywords. Could a Thesaurus do the same job? Sure, but it's nice to have something convenient and build especially for PPC. And it's free!

7 FACEBOOK'S SUGGESTED LIKES AND INTERESTS (FACEBOOK.COM)

PPC isn't just about Google, Facebook is also a big player in this field. Suggested Likes and Interests is again a tool that does what it says on

the tin. Found on Facebook, you can use this to get suggestions for the most common likes and interests that can then allow you to show your ads to only the most targeted Facebook users.

8 ROICALCULATOR (TOOLS.SEOBOOK.COM)

Wouldn't it be nice if you knew whether or not your PPC campaign was going to pay off *before* you invested all of your hard-earned cash into it? With ROI calculator you can (in most cases) do exactly that. Enter the monthly clicks and estimated average cost per click along with some details and you'll get a convenient estimated ROI for any given ad. Sure, it's just a bit of basic math that you could probably do yourself, but it's definitely handy having it conveniently built-in like this.

9 JUMBOKEYWORD (JUMBOKEYWORD.COM)

JUMBO Keywords can help you to edit and clean up your keywords with a single click and also has an Ad-Maker for testing copy and placements to see what your ads are going to look like. You can also save your configurations in a useful .txt file which

10 GOOGLE WEB DESIGNER (GOOGLE.COM/WEBDESIGNER)

If you're looking to create flashy HTML5 display ads, then you need Google Web Designer. Google Web Designer makes it easy to add

PAY PER CLICK



PAY PER CLICK



animations and interactive elements to your banners which really grab attention and which can help to encourage interaction, engagement and clicks. This is also a great tool that can be used for a range of other applications and which is generally useful for learning the ropes of HTML5. As it's completely free, it's definitely worth downloading and trying out for yourself!

11 ADWORDS EDITOR (GOOGLE.COM/ADWORDSEEDITOR)

Perhaps the most essential tool of all though is still Google's own AdWord Editor which makes it as easy as possible to create your ads and gives you all the tools you could possibly need right from the guys who brought you AdWords themselves. This might not be an exciting choice to end off the list, but there's no denying that it's certainly essential for almost any PPC campaigns.

And there you have it! Eleven tools that can go a long way to helping you target more effective keyphrases and optimize your campaigns to be as effective as possible. These tools will make your display ads more beautiful, your Facebook ads more targeted and your PPC more effective.

But remember: good tools will not make up for a poor strategy to begin with! Make sure that you are approaching these tools with the best strategy in mind and that you use a little common sense in the mix as well.

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