

Search Engine Optimisation versus Pay-Per-Click

“Effective-marketing delivers ROI ordinary marketing just creates work.”

Firstly what are they?

Search engine optimisation (SEO) is the free organic listing in the search engines, such as Google, with the aim of every website is to be in the top pages for relevant “keyword” phrases. These keyword phrases are one or more words that describes the type of services or products that the website is trying to provide. For example a solicitor based in Oxford, who wants their website to generate sales leads, would want to be on the top page for the phrase “solicitors Oxford”. On Google this search currently generates over 1.6 million results. The importance of having a high position in the results is shown by the fact that 62% of searches click on a result on the first page and 90% of searches click on a link within the first three pages.

Pay-Per-Click (PPC) is “paid searches” or “sponsored links” which appear along side the free organic searches generated by the search engines. However if anybody clicks on the link then a fee is paid to the search engine. Their position in the sponsored links is determined by a number of factors with the larger the amount the website is prepared to pay for each click-through the closer to the top of the list it will appear.

So the main different is that SEO clicks are free – but it is much harder to get to the top whilst PPC cost you money each time someone clicks on your entry, but it is much easier to get to the top.

For SEO it is rarely the fastest way to the top of the search engines so you need to be patient. Moreover it is not particularly easy to achieve a top position, and that is why many businesses outsource their SEO requirements to a specialist agency. However once you get to the top of the lists, if managed properly, you can stay in the top results for a prolonged period.

With PPC you can get to the top within a few hours, after setting up the account and “paying” for the relevant keywords. Once your PPC account is set up your sponsored links will be shown alongside the organic search engine listings and the placement is determined by a

combination of the cost you pay for the keywords, the relevancy of your ad and your click-through rate.

With PPC it doesn't necessarily mean that your marketing budget is being spent effectively or that it is optimised to give the maximum return for the market expense you have incurred. Once again if this is your main objective you may want to use an expert to set up and manage your PPC marketing campaign.

Many companies use both SEO and PPC to achieve the highest possible return on investment from their overall search engine marketing budget. If used correctly it can generate a significant amount of sales enquiries or online sales. The crucial issue to remember is that once you have a website, don't just sit back and expect visitors to find you. The market for your products and services is out there - you just have to make it easy for them to find you.