

Google Adsense: make the best from your advertisements
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Introduction: What is AdSense

Advertisement on the net is a good way to make good money from your content website, and to provide a good service for your readers also.

Google Adsense is a somewhat smart banner system, letting you expose advertisement related to the content you are offering on your website.

This means that if you publish a website about “Scuba Diving” and this phrase and related ones will appear often in your site, Google Adsense will display you advertisements about scuba diving, diving centers, etc.

The Google ad program is maybe the best known on the net, even if it’s not the only one since there are many competitors out there (Overture, Zanox, Chitika Minimall... we will discuss those later).

Keyword Role in Adsense

Every AdSense advertiser *bids* a certain amount if his ad is clicked. Part of the revenue will go to you. Some people say Google shares 50% of the revenue with you, but I am not sure of it (noone is since numbers are “secret” for the big G).

The more expensive the keyword is, the more you will gain. Anyway, in my humble opinion building a website just to have high-paying ads is useless, for two main reasons.

The first, is that probably you would build a site that would go in a very competitive market. It means you will have to work very hard to rank in the search engines (or it would be impossible if you will have to compete with giant competitors), so you would obtain very poor traffic.

The second, is that with a good chance you would do a website only to have ads displayed, not caring about content.

I think the gold rule for a website success is:

Don’t make your site for AdSense. Let AdSense be made for your site!

I mean: you should write content on arguments you know, for which you’ve got a passion, or you’re informed about. Or at least, you should inform yourself in a proper way in order to write quality content in your site. When you’re building a website, remember to make it good and useful for your users. Success will follow consequently.

AdSense Optimization

Always keep in mind the general rule I’ve told you before. You need to think your website for the users, not for the search internet nor for AdSense. In that way you will positively contribute to the Net, and will have a good success in monetary terms also.

Anyway, you can plan your strategy for an optimal positioning of your advertisements, their modality, and color layout.

In this document I will discuss AdSense optimization, that is part of a general **SEO (Search Engine Optimization)** strategy. Apply a wise SEO, and you will have excellent result on the long term.

AdSense Advertisements

Adsense supply two kind of advertisements:

- text and images ads *[insert sample image]*
- text link ads *[insert sample image]*

Moreover, there are different sizes and fashions for everyone of these ads. You will choose the format that best fits and blends in your website.

[comment about different formats]

Colour layout optimization

There are two philosophies about the colours the advertisement layout should have.

One is making them really different from your website, with bright colours if on a dark background, and viceversa. This is done in order to attract the visitors' attention.

[example]

Otherwise, you would like to make your ads blend in your template. This is done setting the colour of the border and the background of the advertisement the same of your website's background, and the text and url colour of the same colour palette of your site.

[example]

In my website I always followed this advice, because I think that is the most user-friendly optimization. Anyway anyone's got his way to do things.

AdSense number and positioning

Google lets you put up to 3 banner blocks for a single page, independently from the number of ads in a block and the size of the block (which you decided before).

Always remember that in a certain sense AdSense is an auction. So the more advertiments you put, the less they will pay, generally.

In my websites I put 1 block per page as usual, rarely I put 2 block (if so, I prefer putting a text and image ad and a text link ad).

Place your ads in key points of your website.

I avoid putting them in usual banner spots, since majority of people simply does not look banners, and knows where a banner is usually put and doesn't care. I place the ads in parts the user will naturally look at.

For example, if you have a sidebar menu I put them in a specific section in that sidebar, calling it "Sponsored links". Otherwise, if in a blog I would put them just below the first article's title and description, blending them with the background.

Just think about it. If you're interested in the site's topic, and you get curious from the first title, probably the proper AdSense speaking about what you're interested in will attract your attention, and you would click on it.

When studying your advertisement position personify yourself in the average user: what he's looking for, why he went into your site, where would he look, and so on.. this will be a good strategy to place the ads.

Section Targeting

Google gives you a smart option to suggest AdSense the topics in which you're interested to show the articles.

You just need to put additional code to your source page, and AdSense will do the rest.

[Brief explanation about section targeting]

For further information, refer to the official Google page [insert URL].

Increase your ads' CTR

CTR (Click Through Rate) means how many clicks you get relatively to the impressions (visualizations of the advertisements) you serve on your page.

Increasing it is fundamental: a high CTR means a rich cash flow into your bank account.. simply!

Anyway don't even think to cheat to increase the CTR: Google will know and will permanently ban you from the AdSense program.

If you've tried the positioning suggestions and the color layout optimization, you're already on the right way to increase your CTR.

Increase CTR with images near the ads

A good strategy to increase CTR is positioning small thumbnails next to your ads. Warning: Google TOS (Terms Of Service) explicitly says that these kind of images must have a clear border separating them from the ads. They must not blend in anyway to the ads: this is a violation to the AdSense TOS and would cost you a permanent ban.

A sample image will explain the concept better than thousands of words.

[sample image]

Some people deprecate this technique, saying that this can confuse a user that can think the ads part of the site. I don't think this is an evil thing like many say: obviously things can be managed in different ways: find the right compromise and this can bring you to result, it's up to you; there is no guide on the world telling you the exact way to success. Simply because there's not a way like this, and that if someone had this, maybe he would not will to tell you, instead he would apply it for himself. The real key to success is believing in your personal work, apply hard on it, "play fair" and have a bit of luck. And be patient, too.

AdSense monitoring

From the AdSense Panel you can have a complete view of your earnings' situation and with a bit of optimization you can have a detailed screening. This is done by setting *Channels*. You can also exclude your competitors' ads from viewing in your website. You can do it setting the *Competitive Ad Filter*. You can have all the information about those features browsing in the AdSense help. Spend sometime setting those, and you will be able to monitor your sites' revenue, find out the best ones and the ones that need to be improved.

SEO: Search Engine Optimization Techniques to improve the Rank of your Website

Search engines are the first source of the traffic you want targeted to your site. In fact, even if word of mouth will do his job (and your **back links** also), the primary target for you is to get well ranked in the search engines (at first place Google, Yahoo, MSN, Altavista, and the minor ones).

This is a delicate matter and a complicate one: also, for the newbie webmaster it's difficult to have good information since at first glance he will impact with payment sites, SEO schools and "scam" sites of people just trying to get the most money from their users.

The best place where to learn SEO are bulletin boards, or at least this is the place where I'm learning this skill.

I must advice you that this will require lots of time and dedication, because the information you need is spreaden through the boards and it's not collected in an unique site: this is the primary intention of the website you're reading right now, but it's a hard task to accomplish.

You will find my links suggestions in the **useful links** section.

Paying for learning SEO has got a sense, but you must care you're paying a serious company, and not just a scammer who's going to teach you useless thing or nothing at else. The reason you're going to paying for such a service is that *your personal time has got a cost* (in economy it's called *opportunity cost* meaning the money per hour you are able to earn spending your time in another job). The higher your opportunity cost is, the less you want to waste your time.

From that point of view, if you are a student spending his free time in that job, maybe your cost opportunity is lower than the one of a company CEO.

If you're the first subject, you will want to learn by yourself browsing the internet and experimenting. I must say that I think this is the right way to do the best thing, since trial&error had always been the most effective method to deeply understand what you're really doing.

If you cannot waste your time in public forums, you need to search a good SEO school and learn the fundamentals. Also, considering looking some good books at Amazon would be a good idea.

This document wants to be a good resource for a newbie webmaster, and I hope the others' contribution will lead to a complete guide useful to expert users also.

The original version of this document (the one I'm writing right now) is the result of my small experience on SEO, so you must acknowledge it and take my informations with care. Anyway, I had good results with those techniques, and I've learned browsing forums and having good mentors willing to help me for free (that was my bit of luck).

Basic Optimization of a HTML Page

In order to rank in the search engines, you must compete for your site to be listed in the engine for a certain keyword you want your site to rank to.

From a theoretical point of view you are able to compete for an infinite number of keywords and phrases. More realistically, if you want good result you must choose one or two significant keyword per page, or per site depending on the structure and the kind of size your content will be. This choice is up to your personal experience, so I don't think is got a sense to give you clues about this since I'm sure you will think the good criteria to manage this aspect of the optimization.

Title Optimization

First of all, let's start from the title tag of your website. If you open an HTML source page, you will find it between two "Head" tags: the content between the Title tags is the one that will be displayed on the top bar of your browser. The keyword you put in it will be crawled and indexed by the search engine, so be careful to insert only your relevant terms, and to be concise also.

META Tags

The META Tags are located in the head section of a HTML Page. They are invisible tags to a browser, but they have an importance for the web spiders (meaning the bots the engines use to crawl the net and make their indexes).

TO BE CONTINUED