PayPal™

Search engine marketing gets customers clicking

There are lots of online marketing strategies to help boost your site visitors and sales. One that can give you a great return on investment is search engine marketing (or SEM for short).

What is search engine marketing?

SEM is paying to be listed in search engine results - like on Google - when people type in specific keywords or phrases. And from there, it's what people do once they click on your ad and arrive at your website, such as:

- shop online
- call or email you
- join up or subscribe
- enter your competition
- visit your store.

6 reasons to use search engine marketing

SEM offers many benefits that advertising through TV, radio, newspapers, magazines and billboards can't match:

1. It's highly targeted

You can get in front of potential customers at the very moment they're searching for your product or service.

2. Response rates are better

People aren't busy doing other things while your ad interrupts or passes them. They're actively trying to find someone like you, so the clicks and conversions to sales or inquiries can be very high.

3. It's very cost-effective

One reason SEM is so popular with small businesses is that you pay a small amount when someone clicks your ad – not a huge amount just to show it.

4. Your ads can be seen straight away

SEO is great, but it can take weeks or months to get a high listing in the organic search results. Similarly, traditional advertising takes a lot of planning and production time. You can have a pay-per-click SEM campaign up within hours. The most popular and well known SEM is Google Adwords pay-per-click advertising. These paid for ads run down the right hand side of the search results, or in a shaded box at the top.
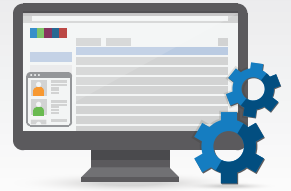
5. It's flexible

You can't change a print ad once it's out there. With SEM you can change your ads instantly, as often as you want, and whenever you want.

6. You can measure it

With SEM, you don't just hope it works – you'll know. You get reports showing how many people clicked your ads, used which keywords, and more. And with tools like Google Analytics on your website, you can see where they go once they click through.