

FOCUS ON IT / TECHNOLOGY

PAYPERCLICK – INSTANT RESULTS = BIG MONEY SEO – DELAYED RESULTS = LASTS FOREVER



By Randy Rowe; Hureka Technologies, Inc.

In an article written earlier for these pages, we covered how the criminal behavior at a respected news magazine read by at least three generations and, likely some millennials, when *International Business Times* (IBT), publishers of *Newsweek*, were exposed by *SocialPuncher* and *BuzzFeed* showing how IBT, in order to secure a government advertising contract for nearly \$3 million, purchased fraudulent traffic directed to their websites in order to embellish their presentation to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and secure the contract.

OTHER NEWS REPORTED IN MAJOR PUBLICATIONS:

An article written by Joe Mayes of *Bloomberg* on March 1, 2018 alerted the world to the precipitous decline in the share price of WPP Plc, the world's largest advertising agency. As of the final edit of this article, April 15, 2018, the CEO of WPP Plc has stepped down from his position, not for

the loss of clients, but for a more scurrilous accusation of 'personal misconduct' ... whatever that means. Considering the loss of revenue from advertising giants Unilever and Procter & Gamble, who have reportedly *reallocated their advertising dollars to the internet*, a new adage — when the going gets rough corporations fire their CEOs — seems succinct. (emphasis mine)

Following this, on March 28, 2018, *The Wall Street Journal* reported an investigation by Adobe that described how 28 percent of website traffic comes from bots and other 'non-human signals', and, in 2015 a Philadelphia branch of an advertising company lost more than 50 percent of their subscription revenue for largely the same reason: Lost clients and fake clicks.

WHICH IS BETTER: SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION OR PAY PER CLICK?

The main difference between Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Pay Per Click (PPC) is that traffic coming from SEO is organic and relatively inexpensive, while traffic generated from PPC is not. As the name indicates, you Pay Per Click... if someone clicks on your ad, you pay.

But if an ad is clicked by non-human entities or a click bot, you still pay, except

no one saw your ad, negating any opportunity to convert the click to a sale, and, you are out the cost of the click. According to Jupiter Research, a Forrester Research company, 81 percent of users find their desired destination through a search engine. This research makes it clear that a brand needs to have a strong presence on the search engines. How you choose to do it depends on whether you opt for SEO or PPC. When done correctly, both will get a website on the first page of the search engines for the targeted terms in front of the targeted audience but, one must keep in mind that each tactic has their respective costs and benefits.

SEMOz, one authority in SEO, recently published an article that quantified the effectiveness of SEO vs. PPC. Their article details how organic results are **8.5x more likely to be clicked on than paid search results!** (emphasis mine)

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This is attributed to the fact that the searchers instinctively know the difference between organic and sponsored results. Subconsciously, people searching have trained themselves to ignore paid results entirely while browsing online. Also, there's ample data that suggests users are more likely to trust organic results than sponsored ads. Ranking higher organically on Google for a keyword or search phrase is a clear sign that you're an authority, and an important player in your industry.

Interestingly when conversion rates are considered, PPC holds a slight edge over SEO. This is because paid search results are 1.5x more likely to convert clicks to sales, which is explained later.

Looking at both these numbers, we can conclude that opportunity from organic search is 5.66x of paid searches. When given a choice to rank high organically or have great PPC ads — the logical choice is organic. Unfortunately, SEO takes time and requires planning... which can be said for any successful endeavor.

PPC's true strengths are its expansiveness and speed. With an effective PPC campaign in place, you can be on the first page for any number of keyword phrases within a few days but, the phrases can cost

anywhere from pennies to many dollars per click, meaning the campaign can get very expensive, very fast, especially when it's done by a novice.

The Search Engine Marketing Professionals Organization (SEMPO) has estimated that 87 percent of the search engine dollars are spent on PPC vs. just 11 percent spent on SEO.

More than \$10 billion is spent on PPC vs. only \$1 billion spent on SEO.

Essentially SEO is almost 6x more effective, and only receives 1/8th of the digital media spend. One of the reasons is there are times when PPC will have a better impact. For instance, PPC is an amazing way to get exposure to upcoming events or limited time offers that require immediate promotion. PPC campaigns are more effective for products and doodads. E-Commerce sites that have hundreds of products will fare well and often get better ROI using PPC campaigns than a business that offers web design or web development services. Nonetheless, for long-term outcomes in Internet marketing, the studies couldn't have been clearer — SEO offers better value for search engine marketing.

SEO is a long-term project. Businesses that embark upon an SEO strategy intend to be around for many years, or have been around for many years. They are businesses that exist after economic shocks and the dust finally settles. They are businesses that make decisions based on the well-being of their families, employees and communities ... not the next quarter stock holder meeting. A business that starts today won't rank #1 overnight, regardless SEO is a better option and the benefits proven. PPC should be used to compliment the SEO.

For creating a good and trustworthy online brand image focus more time and resources on SEO vs. PPC.

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