Online Advertising

Hanlon Miller

It's reported that over 293 million searches are performed on Google each day. For companies looking to increase their customer base, advertising on Google and Yahoo is a great way to reach millions of targeted potential customers. Their simple advertising program makes it easy for even small companies to market their products and services.

It works by having businesses purchase certain keywords. When a user searches on Google or Yahoo, they enter in their search terms or keywords. The results are then displayed as well as short ads from companies. You may have noticed these ads when using Google or Yahoo to perform your searches. They are normally displayed on the right side of the screen as well as in shaded bars above the search results. People can click on these ads to make a purchase or learn more about products or services.

The ads will also appear on sites that participate in the Google AdSense program as well as partner websites (AOL.com, Ask.com, NYtimes.com, etc). The Google AdSense program allows sites to display Google ads on their sites. Again, placement is determined by the selected keywords. You can choose whether your ads appear only to online customers in your particular city, region, country, or to customers across the world.

Companies will purchase these keywords and decide how many clicks they want to pay for. Each keyword is assigned a value, based on popularity. Some key words will cost as much as $5 or more per click, while other keywords will only cost as little as 5 or 10 cents. Your ad will display until you have reached the amount of clicks that you have predefined. If your desired keyword is $2 per click and you have set a $50 limit, your ad will display until you have received 25 clicks. There is no minimum purchase, which means that a company can decide how much they want to spend on their advertising campaign.

The most important step is to study the keywords that are appropriate for the business. Once the keywords are selected a spending limit is then set. Finally, an ad copy must be provided which should be short and contain the keywords that were selected. For example, if the selected keyword was "camera," the ad would need to include this word. Once the ad is submitted, it will start appearing in searches in 2-3 days and start bringing new customers to businesses almost immediately.

Targeted advertising is a very useful way for small businesses to maximize their budget and receive the traffic they need for their sites. With Google's no-minimum-purchase policy, even tiny companies can benefit from advertising with the top search engines. If you are interested in learning more about online advertising contact M&H Consulting at 866-964-8324 x75 or support@mhconsults.com and we can help provide more details for your business.

How to conserve Battery Life on a Laptop

So you want to save some juice on your laptop? Follow these few steps to save on energy!

1. Be sure to set the brightness of your computer to the lowest setting that is comfortable. To do this, look for a purple "fn" button on the keyboard (usually next to the left ctrl key, sometimes the key has blue lettering instead of purple). After you've found the "fn" button, quickly search for another key with a purple or blue sun with an up or down arrow (usually on the arrow keys or on one of the F1-F12 keys). Now while holding "fn" press the button with the purple/blue sun and a down arrow.

2. Turn off all background programs that are not needed because they take up processor space which will use more battery.

3. Check that Bluetooth and/or wireless adapter is off (if it's built in).

4. Be sure to eject any discs out of your CD or DVD drive if you do not need them. The disc will still be spinning inside and consumes a ton of energy.

5. If you are running very low on power, or are watching a DVD, your laptop may have a way to turn off the LED lights (Power light, hard drive activity light, etc.). Check your owners manual to see how.

6. Unplug any USB devices you are not using (iPods, Flash Drives, External USB mice, etc.). Many of these devices draw power from your USB port, up to 500 mA (about a half an Amp) and 5 volts. It adds up quickly depending on how many you have plugged in.

7. When you are not going to use your laptop for a short time, put it into standby or sleep mode. This will only leave dire essential components in the computer running such as the memory. This allow you to resume working on your computer quickly.

8. When you are not going to be using your laptop for an even longer time, put it into hibernate (Shift + Standby Button) mode. It will have the same effect as turning the computer off, but it will allow you to go back to working on your laptop just like in standby and uses little to no power from the battery.

Tips*

- When purchasing a laptop, consider buying a spare battery or the extended life battery (keep in mind it will be bulkier and heavier).

- You should calibrate and test your laptop battery once every year to improve battery life.

Is Windows 7 worth the upgrade?
Steve Stryhalaleck

On October 22nd the latest version of Microsoft Windows was released to the world. Many remember the last release with Windows Vista since there were many issues that were introduced with this operating system, such as performance and program compatibility issues, to only name a few. Many hardware vendors had not released updated drivers that would work, and many software companies were tardy in releasing updates that allowed their programs to work with Vista. It also took Microsoft 12 months to fix the major glitches in Vista.

So how is Windows 7 going to be any different? Microsoft has made a concerted effort in making sure that the same mistakes are not made again. However, that does not mean there will not be some issues with program compatibility. Microsoft has also listened to its customer base and has delivered features and usability that people actually need.

The first and biggest worry that every small business has is, "My company has relied on this program for 8 years, and the software company is no longer around. It did not run in Vista. I cannot afford to find a replacement program." Microsoft has heard this concern from the business world, so they have created a new technology called "XP-mode" that allows you to run your applications that only run in XP in Windows 7. In most cases this works correctly, but you still want to test that your particular program is going to work as there may be other factors that will not allow it to do so. We at M&H can help with this testing to ensure a smooth transition.

Another concern for a typical company is data security; many users travel with laptops that hold confidential information. While laptops are definitely convenient and necessary for these users to work, they cause IT departments a headache trying to make sure that the data on those laptops is secure in case of loss or theft. Windows Ultimate and Enterprise carries over a utility from Vista called BitLocker. This utility is a drive encryption

program, which uses both a hardware and passphrase key that must be present to unlock the drive. For example, if your laptop has BitLocker enabled and it is stolen; the thief cannot easily take your hard drive out and attach it to another computer. It could however, be unlocked with the passphrase key. A new feature of Windows 7 allows you to encrypt removable drives as well. This technology is easy to implement and will help comply with any law requiring your data be encrypted.
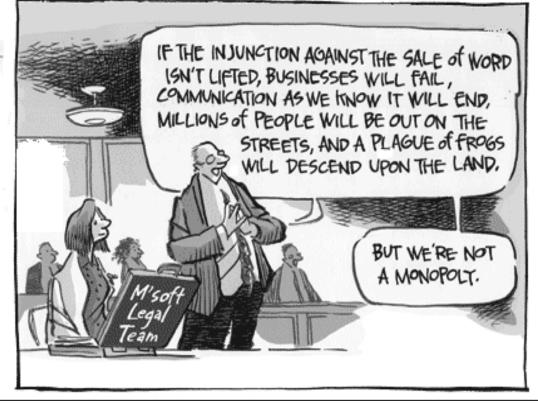
With all the work that has been done with this release, another reason to move to Windows 7 is that Windows XP has reached end of life. This means that Microsoft is no longer developing Windows XP and they will only be releasing critical fixes for security issues until April 14th, 2014. For the past few years Microsoft has also given users the option to downgrade Vista Business to XP Professional. You will still be allowed to do this under Windows 7 for a limited time. The current timeframe is April 22nd, 2011 or the release of Windows 7 Service Pack 1, whichever comes first.

We at M&H we currently recommend replacing one or two PCs as needed with Windows 7 in order to fully test all programs with the new OS instead of replacing all PCs at once.

M&H can help find out if Windows 7 is right for your business. If you want to contact us about upgrading your network to Windows 7, or any other technical issue, we can be reached at support@mhconsults.com or call Adam Gadoury at 866-9MH-TECH (964-8324) x 75.