The Week in PPC
September 28, 2015

Keeping you up-to-date on the latest PPC news and changes so you can manage your accounts effectively.

1. A new study analyzes the accuracy of Google's location targeting.

2. Adwords announces a new "Customer Match" feature similar to Facebook's Lookalike Audiences.

1. Study on Google's location targeting

Advent Communcation did a survey to determine how accurate Google's location features were. Those of us in the business have long suspected that Google's ability to accurately track both mobile and desktop devices is far weaker than they have implied.

How did they test it

Advent asked participants to log in to Google Analytics and then use the Real Time reporting tool to monitor their own visit — from both a desktop and a mobile device. With the mobile device, we asked them to ensure that they were not connected via WiFi , but rather using their mobile device's internal geolocation function.

What did they find

The study showed that only 55% of users were correctly located with zero error. If you allowed for location error of 25 mi – that number rises to 67%. In the US, the average error in miles for desktop users was 145 mi. For mobile users it was 334 mi. Worldwide, Google was far more accurate with desktop devices than with mobile devices.

What Should You Do?

Realize that you will find two kinds of false "hits" for people in your area. False positives where Google serves your ad to someone who is actually outside your search area and false negatives where someone is not being served your ad because Google mistakenly believes they are out of your target area. While there is not much you can do about the latter, you can work to mitigate the lost click cost effects of the former by making sure that location specific language appears in your ad.

100% accuracy in geo targeting is impossible and tightening your geos won't solve the problem of out-of-area leads.

Google
Similar Audiences

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Lookalike Audience

2. Adwords Announces "Customer Match"

Google announced the roll-out of "Customer Match" to US accounts. Advertisers can target lists of emails and use those lists to provide the framework for targeting "Similar Audiences" (Facebook calls them Lookalike Audiences).

Why it matters

First, it allows parallel work flows for campaigns. Pulling, a prospect list and running college application or campus tour campaigns for Facebook has long been a very worthwhile use of the Look-alike audience and individual targeting features. And now you can do the same on Adwords. Second, having this feature available as a means of identifying "Similar Audiences" will provide savvy marketers with some nice behavioral clues regarding the different profiles and habits of intentional searchers vs Facebook users.

What Should You Do?

With application and search seasons coming up, we think this will be a great tool for colleges to offer up more targeted and effective messages on platforms outside of email and text.

Consider creating campaigns on both Facebook and Adwords to push different periods of the application cycle such as tours, early decision and more. Targeting both specific users and similar audiences will help you learn more about your prospects and reach more potential students.

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