

PPC vs. Organic SEO

What is the difference between PPC and organic searches?

Let's define our terms. PPC (Pay per Click) is named this because you have to pay for every time a visitor clicks on the ad you are sponsoring. Organic search results refer to the free results listed when a search term is entered into the search field in the main section of the search engine page (i.e. the area not labeled "sponsored ads" – usually the top, side bar, or bottom).

Both PPC and organic results (achieved using search engine optimization techniques –SEO) are going to cost to achieve top rankings. While PPC is easily measured by the budget, there is a definite cost to producing good relevant timely original content and implementing solid core SEO practices on your website. In both cases it depends on the popularity of the keyword.

Which is more effective for your business?

This is the meat of the issue. Almost everyone who has purchased a domain name has been approached by marketing (SEO) firms claiming that their firm can get your website to the top of the search engine results page within days or even minutes, and of course they can. PPC campaigns assure that you will be seen in the search engine results *if* – and it's a pretty big 'if' – you are willing to bid high enough to assure priority placement against anyone else bidding on the same search term. Typically organic (SEO generated) traffic is better than other forms of traffic (i.e. social media) but in terms of conversion highly optimized keywords will generate more conversions with PPC but will cost more.

Having the top listing among the sponsored ads will not assure you by *itself* that you are getting a good ROI (Return on Investment). Research has consistently shown that over 70% of search engine users ignore the paid advertisements in favor of the organic returns. Balance that with the statistics which show that 80% of the traffic that can be generated for any website will come from the search engines and the traffic source (PPC or Organic) becomes an even more important issue. This being true the question becomes not one or the other, but when to employ which method.

At VisionSite we recommend a good SEO foundation, and by maintaining good SEO practices as your business grows your rankings will follow. Websites that have a good foundation of SEO remain at the top of search engine results pages over the long haul providing sustained traffic. This is not a once and for all tactic, but must be maintained. Since all search engines change their algorithms frequently, so too must websites adjust as those changes go live. There are select times when a PPC campaign might be wise such as the following: when immediate results are desired, or when promoting a time-sensitive offer. Another effective use for PPC comes to those who already have good placement due to their SEO efforts. By adding a PPC campaign you can dominate all of the search results for the keywords that are most likely to be used for your business.

You want to remember that organic search (SEO) returns are not "Free" clicks; a tremendous amount of work is required in creating original and relevant content. Most experts agree that strong SEO tactics are a must to generate consistent traffic to your website through search engine results, and especially in targeted cases, complementary PPC campaigns can be highly useful.

Other Resources:

[SEO vs. PPC: When to Use Which Search Marketing Method for Maximum Profit](#)

[What is the difference between SEO and PPC? by Alex Chris](#)

[Which Search Method Yields the Most ROI for Your Business?](#)