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Intelligence over vigilance:

The human interaction of search marketing. By Chris Copeland

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Paid search marketing has become a game of technology one-upping. Reminiscent of school yard arguments, companies are reaching into their toolboxes to pull out what they believe is going to be the biggest and best bid management solution.

These companies and many of their clients are betting increasingly large search marketing budgets on the idea that automated bid management programs provide the best exposure to clients and the biggest impact on lead generation.

Unfortunately, focusing solely on “best-bid, highest-placement” ignores the fact that Internet users are sensitive to variables beyond a top listing on a particular search engine. Research has proved that more interactive elements such as keyword segmentation, creative messaging and landing page/term matching often have a more memorable impact on the consumer than a high ranking.

Efficient bid management certainly has its place and is valuable at increasing exposure. But companies intent on improving overall search results need to be sure that their programs are driven by many variable elements that lead to a greater probability of a click and a subsequent conversion.

As MSN, Yahoo! and Google all explore the future of demographic targeting along with the expansion of contextual opportunities, the marketers who remain tied solely to bid management tools will find their upside for better ROI capped. The marketers who better understand the search engagement and can control the human interaction points best will be the conquering heroes.

These savvy marketers will look to the latest technology for vigilance, but recognize that humans provide the true intelligence.

Thorough analytics is key to making sure your search campaign stays relevant. Companies intent on improving overall search results need to be sure that their programs are driven by many variable elements that lead to a greater probability of a click and a subsequent conversion.

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