

Sure Bet

VEGAS.com uses Google mobile ads to extend ad coverage to vacationers on the go, reaching new customers and driving measurable ROI



Who they are

- www.VEGAS.com
- Travel services
- Las Vegas, Nevada

What they needed to do

- Extend advertising reach to mobile users
- Easily manage both mobile and traditional campaigns
- Achieve return on investment from mobile ads

What they did

- Implemented Google mobile ads, a form of AdWords ads, to reach mobile users

What they accomplished

- Achieved close to 20% clickthrough rate (CTR) on some iPhone-targeted campaigns
- Compounded audience reach: Used click-to-call and click-to-website ads to tap into the large and growing audience accessing the Internet from their mobile devices
- Streamlined campaign management: Easily maintained desktop and mobile AdWords campaigns in a single AdWords account
- Met ROI goals: With little effort, improved overall returns from AdWords

Never a gamble

No one knows Vegas like VEGAS.com, a company with a mission to provide the most customer-friendly, innovative and comprehensive Vegas travel services on the planet. When travelers don't want to gamble on their Vegas experience, they turn to VEGAS.com for the inside track on air and hotel ticketing, tours, shows, front-of-the-line nightclub passes and more.

Over than 2.5 million unique visitors come to the VEGAS.com site every month.

One of VEGAS.com's top objectives is driving healthy traffic volumes to its website. Since 2003, VEGAS.com has been using Google AdWords search-based advertising to promote its site and become the premier destination for booking Las Vegas travel and activities. The company leverages its site as well as a fleet of contact center representatives to help travelers research their options and make reservations quickly and easily.

Because the deals VEGAS.com promotes rotate on a fairly regular basis, Scarlet Lento, Internet Marketing Manager for VEGAS.com, requires a flexible advertising tool that allows her to make changes to her account quickly. Lento appreciates how easily she can make edits and additions to keywords and create negative keywords to reach the most appropriate prospects, reduce cost-per-click (CPC) and increase return on investment (ROI). "Google provides advertisers with great tools like the free AdWords Editor application to help manage accounts more efficiently," says Lento.

Improving the odds

Having achieved a high degree of success with AdWords, Lento decided to expand her advertising reach. People researching Vegas travel opportunities on the go using their mobile devices rather than from home on their computers constituted a large pool of potential customers. Seeing an untapped opportunity, VEGAS.com decided to go beyond the traditional Internet and branch out to the mobile Internet.

"Many of our customers are already in Vegas, and they want to make arrangements for a show or other activity while they are there," says Lento. "It makes total sense for us to extend our reach to users on mobile devices."

Mobilizing AdWords

In 2008, VEGAS.com launched a mobile website at mobile.vegas.com and started using Google mobile ads to raise awareness of the company's services. Mobile ads are a form of AdWords ads that appear on mobile websites, and are available as either text or image ads. Google mobile ads enable the company to reach Google's mobile search and content networks; track impressions, clicks, and conversions; and target by country, language, and mobile carrier. With either text or image ads, VEGAS.com has the option to direct prospects to the company's mobile web page, or to connect them via phone to one of VEGAS.com's contact center representatives.

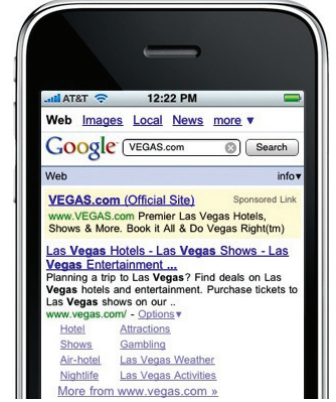


ABOUT GOOGLE ADWORDS

Google AdWords™ is a performance-based advertising program that enables businesses large and small to advertise on Google and its network of partner websites. Hundreds of thousands of businesses worldwide use AdWords for text, image, and video ads priced on a cost-per-click (CPC) and cost-per-impression (CPM) basis. Built on an auction-based system, AdWords is a highly quantifiable and cost-effective way to reach potential customers.

For more information, visit <http://adwords.google.com>.

According to Lento, it was easy to get started with Google mobile ads – the process mirrors the one used for regular AdWords campaigns. The company started with standard mobile ads that appear on Wireless Application Protocol (WAP) browsers. Lento leveraged much of the same ad copy and many of the same keywords used for non-mobile AdWords campaigns, with one important difference. Reasoning that mobile searchers would have an easier booking experience over the phone than on a mobile website, the company started out by adding a click-to-call number to the mobile ads that would connect users to the VEGAS.com customer contact center. To track which calls were derived from Google mobile ads, VEGAS.com created a custom vanity phone number for the click-to-call ads. The company also complements its mobile ads by mentioning the mobile site on VEGAS.com and through email marketing.



Since its initial successful foray using standard Google mobile ads that appear on WAP browsers, VEGAS.com has started displaying ads on iPhone, Android, and other high-end mobile devices that use regular Internet browsers. One advantage is that the company can deliver the VEGAS.com site in its entirety – without modifications – to these mobile devices. Lento has been impressed with the performance of both the standard ads, as well as those delivered to iPhone and other similar high-end devices. “Google mobile ads are working in our favor,” Lento says. “Sometimes clickthrough rates are a lot higher for mobile ads than for ads delivered on the desktop – and we’ve seen impressive returns on the iPhone with CTR nearing 20% on some campaigns.”

Lento notes that VEGAS.com is ahead of the mobile advertising game with mobile ads and says you never know how something will work until you test it. “So far, we are 100% satisfied with what we’re seeing in terms of Google mobile ads meeting our ROI goals,” she says.

While mobile traffic is still lower than activity on the company's traditional site, Lento is convinced that mobile traffic will grow over time. “We’re glad to have a jump on mobile advertising,” says Lento. “With Google tools, we have a solid platform and strategy that will help us take advantage of the growing mobile audience – mobile advertising is going to be huge before we know it.”

