



Online budget optimization produces 10k conversions per month for Asbury Automotive Group



About Asbury Automotive Group

- Sixth largest auto retailer in U.S.
- www.asburyauto.com

Goals

- Unify online marketing efforts for dozens of dealerships nationwide
- Create a dominant online marketing presence
- Increase search traffic and conversions

Approach

- Partnered with Google AdWords Premier SMB Partner
- Increased online advertising from 20% to 50% of total budget
- Used Google Analytics to quickly refine campaigns

Results

- Increased conversions to 10,000 per month
- 70% of search traffic now goes to deep-linked pages (bypassing home pages)

As the sixth largest auto dealer in the U.S. and with more than 75 dealerships, Asbury Automotive Group has begun to uncover the secret to becoming the most admired company in the auto industry. In the last year alone, in an effort to develop a strong web presence as well as increase traffic and conversions, Asbury allocated an additional 30% of its marketing budget to improving its online strategy.

In 2010 the company spent only a fifth of its advertising budget on online advertising. Since re-evaluating its advertising strategy, Asbury has shifted resources from traditional to digital advertising and nearly tripled its online advertising budget. Not surprisingly, concentrating efforts on driving traffic to its websites ultimately produced a very desirable return on investment – in the form of 10,000 conversions a month.

New outlook on online advertising helps perfect company's image

"With Google AdWords, we know exactly what's working. Curveballs get thrown in all the time, and we always have to refine how we do business and how we present ourselves to our customers," says Asbury's Director of Operational Marketing, Bob Murray.* "With AdWords, we can do that, and do it quickly."

Bob notes that before teaming with a Google AdWords Premier SMB Partner who specializes in automobile advertising, Asbury's dealerships had not utilized budgets appropriately and had created competing campaigns in the same markets. With a new outlook on online advertising, their Premier SMB Partner helped Asbury leverage itself holistically, organizing dealerships as ad groups.

Increasing ad relevancy drives 70% of traffic to deep-linked pages

Since diving into digital marketing, Asbury has made good use of its Premier SMB Partner's resources, specifically a dynamic inventory-based ad creation tool. The tool automatically pulls the entire vehicle inventory directly into the advertiser's creatives in the form of ad text and deep-linked URLs.

With this optimization, 70% of traffic bypasses the homepage and is sent directly to deep-linked, highly relevant landing pages where potential customers can easily find the vehicle or service they are searching for. "Traffic is definitely up, and we're seeing a lot more long-tail searches," Bob says. "We want to make sure we're all the way down to specific search terms that convert at a much higher ratio."

Based on the positive results, Bob is confident that the company's advertising efforts are moving in the right direction, largely because he now has detailed data – both on individual dealerships and the company's overall efforts. "We learned a little bit this year, and successfully moved to a 50% online presence versus traditional advertising. In 2012, I don't know what the right number is, but we'll definitely be increasing the focus on our online efforts," he says.

*Ryun Pavlicek has succeeded Bob Murray as Asbury Automotive's Director of Retail Strategy.

