

Seeing Is Believing

DigiTek Security used Google AdWords to help triple its revenue in 2007



About DigiTek Security

- www.digiteksecurity.com
- Chicago, Illinois
- Video surveillance services

Goals

- To market effectively with limited resources
- To grow their customer base

Approach

- Worked with a Google AdWords Premier SMB Partner to optimize AdWords Campaigns

Results

- Increased sales: 200% year-on-year growth
- Wider reach: Brought in out-of-state business for the first time
- More competitive: Ads are now seen alongside bigger companies'
- Return on investment: Estimated profits from the AdWords campaign are four times what they spent

Todd Hepler helps people see things. As CEO and president of DigiTek Security in Chicago, Illinois, he provides his customers with Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) video surveillance products for commercial, retail and residential use.

After a career as an electrical engineer, Todd first delved into entrepreneurship as the owner of a tanning salon chain in the Chicago area. When he sold that operation in 2006, he purchased DigiTek, an existing company since 1999. "I had to learn the surveillance business from the ground up," Todd says. "I love being part of something that's on the upswing. I believe video surveillance is going to be a big part of our life in the coming years."

Changing views

When it came to marketing his company's services, Todd relied mainly on word-of-mouth. "None of our business was coming from hits on our website," he recalls. "Seventy-five percent was from referrals."

Although DigiTek had been using the web as a key tool for its business, it had yet to try online advertising as a way to drive potential customers to its site, mainly because Todd was skeptical. "We spend a lot of time online with our customers, walking them through our demo on our site," he explains. "But I didn't think anybody really used search engines to find surveillance services like ours."

DigiTek's Google AdWords Premier SMB Partner thought Todd would be a good fit for its managed search engine advertising service, which uses Google AdWords™ to put advertisers in front of people searching for their products and services. "I thought DigiTek would benefit from wider reach," she says. "And I knew we could use AdWords to target customers looking for Todd's services."

Her instinct was right. After Todd gave the green light for a search engine marketing (SEM) campaign using AdWords, he saw immediate results.

"Now, instead of just using the web for demos, we were getting clicks to our website," says Todd. "And that translated into calls, not just from the Chicago area, but from all over the U.S. I never dreamed that a guy from California was going to call me up and say, 'I own a strip mall in Chicago and I want to put surveillance in there – can DigiTek go check it out?' Two days later he's sending me a deposit."

Surveying the competition

Since Todd opened a SEM account featuring Google AdWords, his perception of online advertising has changed significantly. The majority of his new business now comes from people finding DigiTek online.

"We haven't spent a single dollar on paper mailings, and our business has tripled," he says. "We've channeled all of our advertising funds online. One out of every five new leads reports that they found us using an Internet search engine. Before we started using AdWords, that number was zero."



Todd Hepler, CEO and president, DigiTek Security

One of the many advantages AdWords affords DigiTek is that Todd's business is now featured next to bigger competitors. "We now advertise alongside some of the same searches as the big guys," he says. "In the past we never even got to bid those big jobs, because there was no way for customers to find us."

Opportunity and Access

Todd's experience with AdWords has had a significant impact on his future plans for DigiTek. He's planning to move the company into a new area of the security business – "access control" – and using AdWords to both drive and track growth.

"Access control refers to those security systems that operate when you punch in a code and get buzzed through a door," Todd explains. "We do very little of it, and we should do more." As DigiTek expands into access control, he says, his Premier SMB Partner can include those new search terms in their AdWords campaigns. "When we're ready, I know we can quickly add it to our keyword list and check to see how effective the ads are at driving traffic to the site."

Todd explains that he's even had to rethink his long-term strategy. "We have already exceeded our five-year plan," he says. "We were looking for 10 to 20 percent growth over each the next five years, but we saw 200 percent growth right off the bat. We calculate that the program has generated four times what we spent on it, and we're going to continue to beef up our investment with our Premier SMB Partner and Google."

