Insuring Sucess

IFA Insurance receives over 60% of its website traffic from Google AdWords.

Who they are

- IFA Insurance Company
- www.ifaauto.com
- Clark, New Jersey
- 150 employees
- Auto insurance quotes and policies in New Jersey

What they needed

- To increase traffic to a new direct-quote website
- To target ads to drivers in the New Jersey area
- To track and measure conversions

What they did

- Started with **Google AdWords** in 2006
- Regionally targeted their campaign to New Jersey
- Focused budget on the top-performing keywords
- Implemented conversion tracking and position preference to monitor return on investment

What they accomplished

- **Increased visibility**: Increased traffic to their website by 60%
- **Acquired more customers**: Increased new business by 40%
- **Increased conversions**: Adjusted ad text and keywords to improve conversion rates by 50%

Joe Del Sordo has always been a computer guy. After leaving his job as a computer trainer, he stepped in as the director of information technology at IFA Insurance, a New Jersey auto insurance company. But he still prefers the keyboard to the steering wheel.

"People assume that I'm a car enthusiast because I work at an auto-focused company. That's pretty far from the truth," says Joe. "I'm more a point A to point B kind of guy – I just like to get places the best way possible."

Joe applied this approach to help IFA Insurance shift its marketing model online. "Traditionally, IFA found new leads through newspaper advertising and a network of independent sales agents," he recalls. "But this wasn't the most efficient approach. I wanted to help IFA grow the business by finding new customers online."

"AdWords is a focal point of how we drive business to our direct-quote website. It's a sure thing for us, and we'll use it extensively in the future."
Joe Del Sordo, director of information technology at IFA Insurance

Rebuilding the engine

As drivers increasingly turned to the web to find auto insurance policies, Joe knew IFA needed an online presence. To reach more New Jersey drivers, he helped launch IFAAuto.com, a direct-quote website where customers can purchase a policy online.

"We wanted to attract consumers to our site directly, and we also liked the idea of our independent agents sending users to the site," explains Joe. "We had this great website, but we weren't generating much new traffic. I had heard about Google AdWords and decided to give it a try."

In January 2006, Joe created IFA's first online advertising campaign with Google AdWords™. "The results were extremely positive. We not only drove traffic to our website, but we also generated more business for our agents." By advertising its direct-quote website through AdWords, IFA has helped its independent sales agents increase business by 40 percent.

Tuning up

Because IFA serves New Jersey drivers exclusively, it needed to advertise only to a local audience. "At first I added location-specific terms to every keyword," Joe says. "Instead of auto insurance, I would put auto insurance New Jersey."

Then Joe learned about the regional targeting capabilities of AdWords. By changing the settings in his account, he selected particular geographic areas in

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://www.google.com/adwords

which to show his ads.

"As with anything, there was a learning curve with AdWords. When I found out about regional targeting, I created a separate campaign and targeted my ads to show only in New Jersey. This way, we could capture people searching in our area who might not include a specific geographic region in their search query."

Using these targeting techniques and tools, IFA now receives over 60 percent of its website traffic from AdWords.

More mileage

After regionally targeting his campaigns, Joe turned his attention to refining his keyword lists. "There are a lot of auto insurance companies out there and a limited number of important keywords in the industry," Joe notes. "To help us stand out, I wanted to develop the most relevant keyword list and the most compelling ad text."

Joe spent a lot of time looking at the keyword statistics on the Campaign Summary page of his account. "It became clear that about 20 keywords accounted for over 90 percent of clicks to our website. I wanted IFA's ads to show in the top spots on Google.com when people searched for these 20 keywords."

He focused his budget on these 20 keywords. When he noticed that his average position was dropping for a certain keyword, he would increase his cost-per-click bid amount for that keyword. "As long as I saw good return on investment for those main keywords, I would raise the bid to get a higher ranking."

"I'm always trying to learn how to improve my account," Joe continues. "To make my ad texts more effective, I followed suggestions on capitalizing the first letter of every word. I was also careful to include terms from my keyword list in the ad text. For example, if my keywords refer specifically to auto insurance quotes, I use 'Auto Insurance Quotes' in the title of the corresponding ad."

Shifting gears

To see what kind of business he was getting from his online traffic, Joe enabled conversion tracking, a free AdWords feature that provides up-to-date information on conversion rate and cost-per-conversion. IFA uses conversion tracking to learn how many visitors fill out the direct-quote form on the website.

"In particular, we used conversion tracking to help us understand which ad ranking position was bringing us the most profitable new traffic," says Joe. "We started to really examine our conversion rates based on ad position."

For two weeks, Joe used conversion tracking in conjunction with position preference, a feature that enables advertisers to show ads only in certain designated positions. First, he set higher bids and positioned his ads to only show in the top three spots. Next, he set his ads to only show in positions four through eight and closely monitored conversion rates of the ads in each position.

"With conversion tracking, we found that our ads were converting just as well in lower positions as they were in the higher positions," he explains. "We realized we could maintain a high conversion rate without having to bid high to keep our ads at the top of the page. As a result, we've been able to increase our conversion rate by 50 percent while keeping advertising costs low.

Driving the distance

Moving forward, Joe plans to continue using AdWords to make it easy for customers to find IFA online. "AdWords is a focal point of how we drive business to our direct-quote website," says Joe. "It's a sure thing for us, and we'll it use extensively in the future."