



Facebook Advertising for New Marketers - Should You?

You've built a website or created a WordPress blog, and packed it with your best content. You've done solid market research, carefully optimizing your site for SEO with long-tailed keywords. And now you're busy networking that site by:

- Submitting articles to directories
- Including a clear "call-to-action" at the end of every post
- Networking on related forums and social media

But there's one other strategy you might want to consider - one that at

first may seem premature for a new blog or website. And that is advertising on Facebook. It's not for everyone, of course - but if you fit a certain profile, it can be the fastest way to turn your site or blog into an authority site and increase its page rank.

You could invest in a pay-per-click (PPC) campaign - if you're going to pay for advertising at all. But anyone who has tried to find a good keyword with competition that isn't overwhelming, then register a dot com domain for it, knows all too well that finding that keyword

unregistered is akin to winning millions on the lottery.

The Hazards of Keyword Selection

And if you pick a keyword with heavy competition, no one's going to notice you. Especially if you're just using that long-tail for SEO purposes, rather than purchasing PPC. (And this is especially true for internet marketers - one group fully aware of and savvy to keyword SEO - unlike, for example, the majority of people in, say, knitting forums, where the main interest is knitting; not marketing.)

If you do have a clear niche, however, and a strong demographic that is narrow and precise, your fastest road to creating a profitable presence could be to invest in a

Facebook ad. You can purchase one inexpensively, run it for a set amount of time - and have your site spread via the best route of all: The buzz created among your social network friends (all of whom are sitting there, right in your specific niche demographic).



Remember, this is an experiment. Set your daily allotment low, and track it. (Facebook does allow you to do that.)



Maximizing Your Ad

Make the most of Facebook ads' graphics ability, and add an appealing photo or image (just look at those Facebook ads down the right-hand side of your profile page, to see examples of visually strong ads).

And Facebook's ability to target by city, state and country is one of its best ad features. If your website or blog is dependent on location (i.e. "Niagara Falls Orchard Photography") and you've also created a Fan Page on Facebook, you may find you've got it made.

One caution, however: Do make sure that you actually do use strong, specific keywords for your niche in your ad headline and body text. Keep the focus narrow to that one single, specific group.

Remember that Facebook's participants are predominantly (but not exclusively limited to) the female 18-34 range. If you were running a site that wanted to sell to a strong male demographic in a different age range, you'd need to make sure there was a good sprinkling of active Facebook groups and fan pages in that field visibly populated with males, before you went ahead with your ad.

Remember - keep your daily costs low, your target specific - and good luck with your Facebook advertising!

Facebook Ads

Built on Boredom

When it comes to Facebook ads, you'll get wildly varying comments and results reported in your favorite business, SEO or marketing forums. Some people are up-front about stating that Facebook ads are the greatest thing since the iPhone; others give it a total thumbs down. That being the case, how do you get at the truth? What makes it work for some, and not for others?



First, make sure you have a niche that suits Facebook. While it's true that an experienced marketer can fine-tune an ad until it does bring decent results, these won't be great, if you've picked a niche with a low Facebook demographic. And if you are closer to starting out in your marketing career than you are to buying a California mansion, it's easier to make sure yours is a subject

Facebook users are likely to love.

Here are some broader categories that have - and haven't - had a lot of success on Facebook. (Note that these results are not compiled within some formal market research study with quantified results, but were simply gathered by monitoring the answers on a variety of authority business blogs.)

YES

- Mobile phones
- Local services, events or projects
- Games
- Apps
- Vacations
- "Fun" products
- Recreation

NO

- Graphic design
- Web design
- Insurance
- Household products
- Anything with too broad a keyword; or too much competition.

You'll know you have a winning Facebook niche if it rates well for

what one SEOmoz commenter called "inherent coolness".

Upping your Chances of Facebook Ad Success

A couple of things to always keep in mind, when using Facebook as an advertising campaign platform...

People use Facebook basically to pass the time. It's where they hang out between appointments; when there's nothing to do; when they're bored, depressed or just not in the mood for work; or when they need a little online "reward", after completing a

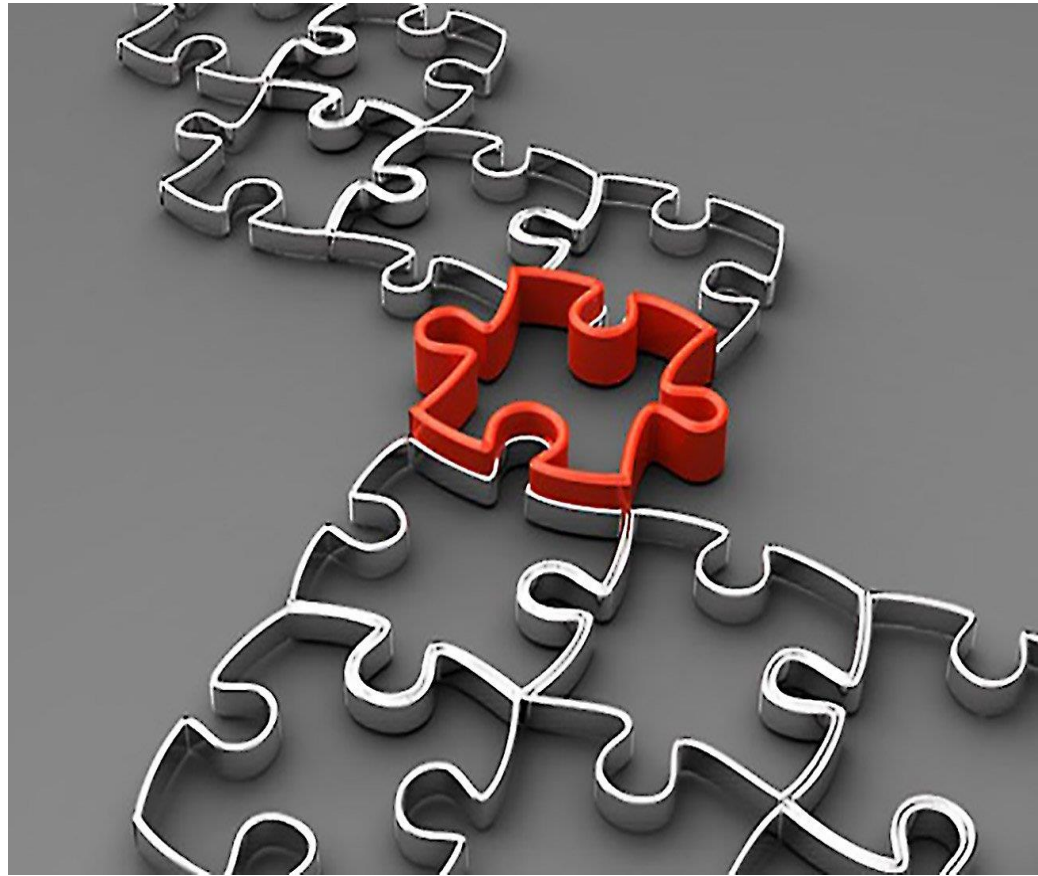
ton of homework or a boring project.

As a result, if you do create an ad for popular escapist or entertainment categories, you're right on the money with Facebook user interest level, and you may get a lot of clicks. But, as always, there's no guarantee that your ROI (return on investment) is going to be worth the money you invested in the ad. Only a trial run and testing will tell.



The Most Important Element

When people are wandering around Facebook, they don't really want to leave it to visit yours - and not all of them know about right-clicking to open your ad in a new tab. Consider sending them to your specially-created, interactive Facebook page instead - that way, they're not so likely to regard your ad as an intrusion.



But the real solution to making sure you have a winning ad campaign? Thorough market research, of course! Find out if anyone is actually spending money in that niche. (There are a lot of specialty niches - especially within the hobby category - with high interest but almost zero spending!) And then find out who is doing the spending.

What about you? Have you tried Facebook ads yet?