

While SEO and PPC on first sight appear to be similar, however, they are quite different in many respects.

SEO - natural search

PPC - paid search

Definitions

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search engine optimization (SEO) is the process of improving the volume or quality of traffic to a web site from search engines via 'natural' ('organic' or 'algorithmic') search results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay per click (PPC) is an Internet advertising model used on search engines, advertising networks, and content sites, in which advertisers pay their host only when their advert is clicked
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Main aims

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve relevant pages at the top of the search engine results for defined keywords/phrases • Encourage quality links to our website • Produce optimised web content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce relevant, targeted and cost-effective adverts • Fill gaps where SEO cannot get on page 1 of the search engine results, as our website will never be as relevant as other websites despite a page being relevant
	<i>Across both SEO & PPC</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a high level of quality traffic • Maximise the number of click throughs

Planning

	<i>Across both SEO & PPC</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be done either through an agency or in-house
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Implementation

Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slow to implement due to large variety of small changes needed (the aggregation of marginal gains) • Tends to be a long term slow burn (up to 3 months) coupled with hard graft • Link building has to be slow otherwise Google may see it as manipulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick to turn on and off within 24 hours
Resource required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More in-house as mainly content driven, however, requires scarce development resource in the initial stages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Either agency or in-house
Type of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No set rules - bit of a black art, a mixture of art & science and less tangible • Difficult to understand/describe, and complex • Mistakes can be costly, eg delisting from Google • Quite a variety of tasks: technical; content; link building; navigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Straightforward through to complex • Misconception exists that it is both quick and easy to do well • Mistakes can be quick to resolve
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to quantify as there are so many changes made. It is often difficult to identify which had the biggest impact or not 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear, especially the media spend and creative cost • Easy to set a pay limit from just a few £/\$s

Keywords/phrases used by visitors in the search engines

Top/popular keywords/phrases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive with larger companies tending to dominate due to their website's high reputation (in Google's opinion) • Relatively easy to come top for own brand name 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generic terms tend to be more expensive. Some prohibitively • Brand terms tend to be much cheaper though their price has increased as Google's rules have been relaxed allowing companies to bid on competitors' names
Other relevant keywords/phrases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited exposure eg likely to cover <100 keywords/phrases on top pages • Due to the multitude of keywords/phrases it is not possible to include all variations within the website content • We use newsfeeds for wider keywords/phrases but they are not ranked highly as they are on lower level pages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potentially huge exposure, eg can cover 10,000+ keywords/phrases, especially the long tail ones, and at an decreasing price • Useful for filling gaps left by SEO, especially words not used, eg 'cheap' and 'discount' • Ability to hone keywords/phrases through various techniques including synonyms and negative match

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Other relevant keywords/phrases (contd)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is it useful to have a wide number of generic keywords/ phrases?: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Some of our product offerings are not generally understood as a concept 2. We do not have as strong a brand compared with some of our competitors 3. In our business we get little online repeat business so we need to encourage new visitors who stumble across our site to buy
	<p><i>If we are already top in natural search for our brand, then why pay for a brand advert? Why do we need both?</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It's a type of insurance and protection by maintaining a high presence to help keep competitors out from advertising 2. It allows for alternative messaging (see next section: 'Wording seen in the search engine results') 3. Links from the paid advert can go deeper within the website. Links to the home page normally have a higher bounce/exit rate 4. A brand advert reinforces and supports a TV brand campaign. The alternative of no advert is that we generate online interest but then a competitor benefits by giving them a presence and a foothold 5. Research consistently shows that having both provides an extra uplift in conversion

Wording seen in the search engine results

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search engines use short titles which we control, plus snippets of website page content where we have less control over what is displayed • Changes made to content may take some days even weeks to be indexed • A search engine will index the website right down to the lower levels if it sees it as relevant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is total control over content/message • A strong offer can: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nullify a competitor's weaker SEO result 2. React quickly to a competitor's offer 3. Help the PPC advert to work with a SEO result as a reinforcement • Ideal for brand messaging and boost the brand to improve trust and reputation. NB: we only pay for the click throughs so many more people will see the advert • Due to the short set up times and the ability to switch on/off, it is ideal for campaigns/opportunities, eg: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Long period of hot weather: push relevant content and offer, eg sunglasses 2. Use as a corporate hook to exploit excellent research studies we have carried out 3. Product offers 4. Use keywords/phrases to latch on to breaking news stories where traffic will be high for a short time
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Traffic generation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generates 75% of search traffic • No guarantee of achieving a page 1 listing can result in low/no traffic for quite a number of keywords/phrases • Traffic is more permanent across the long term but is still subject to fluctuation • Slow to rank highly and difficult to increase traffic significantly • Higher risk and unpredictable due to changes in the Google algorithm • Rankings can change without warning and are likely to be different across the search engines for the same term • Ranking relies heavily on a website's reputation. This often takes time to build 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generates only 25% of search traffic, however, the adverts are high profile, especially those at the top which help with brand awareness • Traffic is transient/temporary. No long term benefits • Instant results and easily scalable - ideal for high exposure campaigns • Low risk and guaranteed traffic and at a price which is decreasing due to the credit crunch • Ability to segment traffic, eg run at certain times of day, or in certain locations/regions • Google rewards well-targeted, relevant adverts by improving their ranking
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Trust

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More trusted	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less trusted as seen as an advert, however, if an advert is not used there may be a visitor perception of 'Why is there no advert for our brand? Are they in financial trouble and going under?'
	<i>Across both SEO & PPC</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If used together it provides visitors with increased confidence, reassurance and credibility in our organisation

Website page relevance

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Links to a website page which is generally a 'one size fits all' and informational style of copy to encourage a high SEO ranking• Good in engaging with the visitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To maximise effectiveness, the advert must:<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Link to a highly relevant and targeted landing page which is very conversion focussed, has few distractions and a clear route for the visitor to follow2. Marry up with the landing page by using relevant content and offer
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Testing

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Difficult to test due to timescales and the number of variables involved, certain elements can be tested using A/B or multivariate testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ideal for testing:<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Quantity and quality of keywords2. PPC advertising copy3. Landing pages, and4. Email subject lines. Email open rates can increase significantly when effective PPC copy is used
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Value for money

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Once indexed highly in the search results the effectiveness can be excellent but this will be limited to a smaller number of keywords/phrases	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Excellent value up to a certain level. Above that money can easily be wasted• Can suffer from click fraud
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