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PAY PER CLICK



DOES PAY-PER-CLICK ADVERTISING MAKE SENSE FOR POOL BUILDERS IN 2021?

WHEN LEADS WERE short, such as in pre-COVID times, pay-per-click (PPC) advertising made a lot of sense for pool builders. You could start almost instantly and stop at any time. The business could choose exactly which keyword searches should pull up their ads, which geographic areas should see your ad, and exactly what is said in the ad copy. You can even control what landing page the prospect will go to.

Admittedly, there's nothing like it.

But then this thing called COVID hit, and now, most pool companies have more leads than they can handle. So when you're faced with overwhelming demand, why would anyone spend money on PPC advertising? It may sound counter-intuitive, but I can think of three pretty smart reasons to start (or restart) your online advertising efforts — even if your business is running at or near full capacity.

1. GET PICKY WITH YOUR LEADS

Thanks to fairly serious material shortages, most builders are limited

to building a fixed number of pools this year. So ideally, you'll want every project to be as large and profitable as possible. After all, why give up a construction slot for \$50,000 when it could be \$150,000?

The problem is that most of your prospects are finding you online by searching "pool builder near me" or some similar phrase. This includes all the tire-kickers and budget-buyers who are looking for the cheapest pool they can possibly find.

By contrast, some select homeowners have been waiting for years for this moment to finally make a major investment in their backyard. They're not looking for the cheapest pool they can find. They're ready to pull the trigger on a once-in-a-lifetime backyard makeover.

So how do we get the wealthy homeowners to contact us and get the tire-kickers to ignore us? The answer is in PPC advertising.

You see, with organic searches, you don't have a whole lot of control over when your listing shows up for searches in your area. Sure, you can try to target

"If expanding your revenue during these unusual times is one of your goals, there is probably no faster and more reliable way to do so than with pay-per-click advertising."

certain keywords through a variety of organic "search engine optimization" efforts. But organic search is a mystery that Google holds very close to its chest. It can take months or years to move the needle and get your company to show up when and where you want.

By contrast, with pay-per-click advertising, you can instantly and comprehensively target any and all



Ideally, you want every project to be as large and profitable as possible. PPC advertising, when carefully done, can improve the profit potential of a builder's sales leads.

keywords that luxury home owners are more likely to use, such as "luxury pool builder" or "award-winning pools." Now, your ads will show up "above the fold" whenever your ideal clients conduct a search.

And if your ad talks to these homeowners about what's important to them (e.g., high-quality, luxury pools, award-winning design, etc.), they will be eager and anxious to click the link and find out more about you.

But when the bargain-basement, budget-buyer sees your talk about "premium" and "high quality," they will be much more likely to ignore you, knowing they're not going to get the budget deal they seek from a high-end builder like you.

2. PROMOTE OTHER PARTS OF YOUR BUSINESS

Your capacity to build new pools may be tapped out this year. But what about maintenance or repairs? Or your retail operation? If you are still trying to grow your revenues, it might make sense to turn your advertising budget towards other business lines that have room to grow.

For example, if you've wanted to add pool maintenance to your list of offerings (or add more routes), pay-per-

click advertising is a great way to begin promoting it quickly and easily.

Some pool companies are adding additional services, such as a chemical delivery service, to their offerings, since their vehicles and employees are already on the road anyway. I can't say whether that's a good business model for you, but if it's something you want to try, pay-per-click advertising is a great way to test it out quickly and easily.

3. GIVE YOUR DESIGNERS / SALESPEOPLE A BREAK

The word to remember here is "pre-qualify." By targeting only high-end homeowners who are looking for premium services from a top-notch pool builder, you'll spare your salespeople those wasted meetings with unqualified pool buyers who really aren't a good match for your company in the first place.

Closing ratios go up and with a little luck, so does the average sales price. And your salespeople get the reprieve they've been desperately seeking since this crazy demand hit over a year ago.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Not everyone needs to be spending money on pay-per-click advertising. But if expanding your revenue during these

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unusual times is one of your goals, there is probably no faster and more reliable way to do so, no matter what business you're in. PPC advertising is probably worth another look. ~

Brett Lloyd Abbott is the founder and CEO of Pool Builder Marketing LLC (www.PoolBuilderMarketing.com), a marketing consulting agency that works exclusively with swimming pool builders, pool service companies, and high-end landscape professionals throughout the world. He is a frequent keynote speaker and leader of workshops and seminars.