



TO PAY-PER-CLICK OR NOT TO PAY-PER-CLICK?



Consider these factors before starting a Google Ads campaign for your cosmetic practice.

BY NAREN ARULRAJAH

New patient numbers are down. Attrition is up. Profits are down. And expenses are up. You need to do something fast, but what? With the promise of broad exposure and abundant leads, Google Ads might seem like the ideal solution. However, there are a few things you need to know before jumping on the pay-per-click (PPC) bandwagon.

WHAT ARE GOOGLE ADS?

Google Ads, formerly known as AdWords, is one of the most popular PPC platforms. Successfully implementing a Google Ads campaign can be quite complex, but the concept is

simple. You create an advertisement and then bid on a select keyword. Google will assess the quality of your ad and assign it a Quality Score. When someone performs a search, Google determines which ads to display based on your maximum bid and Quality Score. You are only charged if someone clicks on your ad.

THE BENEFITS OF USING GOOGLE ADS

Google Ads are especially inviting due to their prime placement. Because ads appear above organic search results, they are often the first thing a consumer will see. You can gain traffic for popular search terms, even if your website does not rank

highly for those keywords. If you don't get a click, you don't pay.

When properly implemented, this type of advertising and the impulsive clicks it generates can be fantastic, but it works much better for some industries than others. If your business revolved around selling ad space or posting affiliate links on your website, then the easy traffic generated by PPC could be quite profitable. Even retail businesses often find Google Ads worthwhile as they can benefit from spontaneous, one-time purchases.

Reaping the benefits of this type of advertising is a bit more difficult for an aesthetic practice. No one spontaneously schedules skin tightening or

pricey cosmetic work. Impulsive clicks are not all that valuable for a cosmetic dermatology practice.

THE PROBLEM WITH GOOGLE ADS

Quality leads are people who are serious about getting cosmetic work done and likely to schedule an appointment. Furthermore, you need people who are a good fit for your practice so they will come back and refer their friends.

There are several reasons Google Ads is less than ideal for cosmetic practice marketing:

- Low-quality traffic. You will get a lot of clicks from people who are simply curious and not actually looking for a dermatologist or plastic surgeon. Be forewarned: these clicks can be quite expensive, especially if you are vying for popular keywords.
- Ad limitations. Google and most other PPC platforms limit the space in your advertisement. You might be able to include a tagline or mention a couple of available services.
- Low-quality leads. A person who takes time to seriously research cosmetic doctors in the area will find you if your practice has a strong digital presence. In this case, appearing at the top of the search page among other paid ads is not likely to be a deciding factor.
- Here and gone. If your campaign is successful, your advertisement will regularly appear in a prime location...as long as you continue paying. The exposure will not increase unless you up your investment. If and when you quit running ads, the benefits disappear.

WHAT IT TAKES TO MAKE IT WORK

Reputation building, website optimization, and gaining a social following are generally better investments than PPC programs. These activities create a solid foundation for future growth, and they tend to generate higher-quality leads. However, that does not mean Google Ads and other PPC programs are destined to fail. Many cosmetic doctors can, and do, acquire new patients this way.

Here are a few tips for a successful PPC advertising campaign:

- Work with a Google Partner. Many professionals and marketing companies will manage Google Ads. Google provides certification to those who have completed appropriate training and demonstrated necessary skills; only hire a person certified as a Google Partner.
- Provide a generous budget. A skilled professional can create a campaign that earns a high Quality Score—one factor in gaining prime placement. The

other is your maximum bid, and the competition for good keywords can be intense.

- Target the right procedures. Google Ads are going to attract the patient who is in a hurry to find a cosmetic doctor. As such, walk-in dermatology, same-day appointments, and weekend availability may be good choices for your keywords.

FINAL THOUGHTS

With the right approach, Google Ads can be a great addition to your marketing strategy. Use these ads to quickly attract patients while you work on creating a strong online presence, improving your website, climbing the ranks of organic search results, and building up your professional reputation. These are the marketing techniques that can have long-term, ever-increasing benefits and help you acquire a large and loyal patient base. ■

NAREN ARULRAJAH

- President and CEO of Ekwa Marketing
- A leader in medical marketing for over a decade. Ekwa provides comprehensive marketing solutions for busy doctors, with a team of more than 180 full time professionals, providing web design, hosting, content creation, social media, reputation management, SEO, and more.
- Call (855) 598-3320 or text (313) 777-8494 to schedule a session at your convenience.