

Insights

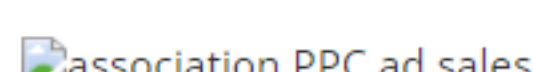
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Why Associations Avoid PPC in Ad Sales, and 3 Surprising Uses for It

IN STRATEGY FOR AD SALES /



One of the most important decisions in establishing a digital **ad sales** program for your association is how to price your inventory. The model that you use will impact how attractive your publication is to advertisers as well as how much non-dues revenue you will be able to generate.

Associations tend to steer away from selling ads on a pay-per-click (PPC) basis, and as an **advertising sales agency**, AdBoom typically recommends that clients avoid this model as well. Here's why.

The Problem with Pay-Per-Click

In PPC, you only receive revenue when a reader of your digital publication clicks the advertisement. **The assumption** is that the value of an advertisement is that it drives the reader to immediate action.

However, this overlooks a lot of other benefits advertising with your publication offers.

When a reader sees an advertisement in your publication, that "impression" has the opportunity to influence him or her in ways that go beyond the immediate click. It can:

- Grow your reader's awareness of the advertiser's company, brands, and products.
- Change the way he or she views the advertiser's products (from low-quality to high-quality, from niche-focused to serving a broader audience, and so on.)
- Increase the likelihood of a purchase, whether it's now or later / online or offline.

Selling advertisements on a PPC basis gives all of the credit to the ads that readers click and none to the impressions that aren't clicked, even when they provide value. Alternatively, a cost-per-impression (CPM) model compensates you for all of the benefits you provide an advertiser.

3 Ways PPC Ad Sales Can Work for Associations

While there's a compelling case for selling ads based on impressions, there are some situations in which PPC makes more sense for associations. This isn't an exhaustive list, but it offers some creative ways to use a pay-per-click model.

1. Associations can integrate PPC advertisements within website search results.

Situation: Your association website offers articles and information that you monetize with ads. You provide a search form so that readers can find the content they want more easily.

Approach: On the "results" page for a search, the reader will see a list of content that is relevant. Your association can also serve a "sponsored" result that links to an advertiser and that the advertiser buys on a PPC basis.

Reason:

- "Sponsored" results only appear when they are highly related to the reader's search. As a result, you aren't giving away many impressions.
- Since a reader is searching for something specific, it's likely that he or she is ready to take action. Impressions have less value than a click in this situation.

2. Associations can offer PPC advertisements within gated content.

Situation: An association member signs into his or her account on your website and navigates your digital publications. This content is only visible to those who sign in.

Approach: The member is presented a PPC advertisement that offers a benefit. This might be a link to an advertiser's white paper; a special discount on products or services; or some other added value. The ad's offer is relevant to the member's needs and to the other content on the page.

Reason:

- Your association's ad sales team can stipulate that advertisements must offer a benefit to the member.
- You are trading the value the association loses (by using PPC instead of an impression-based model) for the benefit that the advertiser is offering to your members.

3. Associations can sell ads on a PPC basis to demonstrate the opportunities for advertisers.

Situation: Advertisers have a lot of options. One might be making a CPM ad buy in your publication. Another might be a PPC campaign through a service like Google AdWords. When they compare these options, advertisers may be uncertain that CPM will provide the same return on investment as the pay-per-click model.

Approach: Associations can offer a test campaign to an advertiser using the PPC model. After the test is over, the association can show the advertiser the impressions that it received as well as the clicks it got. Then, it can move the advertiser to a CPM model.

Reason:

- Offering the PPC model on a temporary basis can give advertisers confidence in your association's ability to deliver impressions from an engaged membership.
- After conducting the test, the right **advertising sales manager** can help your advertisers understand the value the CPM model offers.

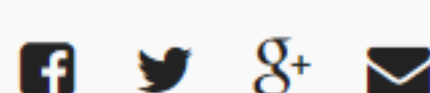
PPC, CPM, and ROI

Regardless of the ad model, however, your association has an incentive to show return on investment to advertisers. After all, you want to keep them around. When AdBoom handles **ad sales management**, we make recommendations to CPM advertisers that improve their campaigns and show them real value from their buy.

Ultimately, the best approach is the one that provides effective results to advertisers and higher revenues for your association. CPM and a tactical use of pay-per-click can help you achieve these goals.

If your association is exploring advertising models for its digital or print publications, get in touch with AdBoom Advertising.

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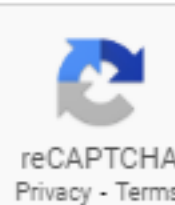
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