

Case Study: Pay-Per-Click Campaign Online Education Provider



Note: Because of today's highly competitive marketplace, Prominent Placement's fiduciary role as our client's business partner precludes us from publishing their name for this Case Study. Our partner, however, has allowed the use of their success metrics for the purposes of this Case Study.

SITUATION: Client sells online courses to consumers who want to train at home to become a real estate agent or real estate appraiser. The Client asked Prominent Placement to review and recommend enhancements to their pay-per-click (PPC) campaign. The Client had placed this campaign themselves two years prior and had been managing it since then. At first glance, the campaign appeared to be very successful, with an extremely high click-through rate and volume of clicks. However, the Client was not tracking visitors through the sales step. Prominent Placement recommended tracking software, which revealed that the original PPC campaign was actually losing money. Prominent Placement made changes to the campaign (detailed below). The click-through rate is currently lower, which is desirable because more targeted/qualified visitors are being generated. The campaign is now showing a positive ROI at a significantly lower cost.

STRATEGY:

1. **Marketplace challenge:** It's difficult to reach the target audience, because they could be anyone (either gender, any age, any level of education/income). Because it would be prohibitively expensive to use mass media to reach this audience, it was decided instead to make Client's web site easily findable when a prospective customer is searching online for a solution like theirs.
2. **Target audience:** Adults who desire to change careers and become either a real estate agent or a real estate appraiser. Courses for real estate agents are sold in seven U.S. states. Courses for real estate appraisers are sold in 20 U.S. states.
3. **Strategic objective:** : Drive traffic from search engines using a pay-per-click campaign, and generate sales at a positive ROI. Ideally, if possible, reduce the monthly click expense at the same time.

CREATIVE STRATEGY: Before, the Client was bidding on broad, national search terms such as "real estate course," "real estate education," and "real estate class." This included a great deal of wasted reach, since their courses aren't sold in all states. Agency switched to state-specific search terms such as "Georgia real estate school," only in the states in which courses are sold.

Before, the landing page for every search term was the web site's home page, which requires visitors to enter the type of course they're looking for and their state before proceeding any further. To get around this barrier and deliver visitors directly to the content they're seeking, Agency changed the landing page to tailor it to each search term. For example, searchers for "Georgia real estate school" land on the page selling real estate agent courses in Georgia.

Before, the campaign experienced a high volume of clicks, but few sales, demonstrating that visitors were not as targeted or qualified as they could be. Prominent Placement added the courses' pricing to the creative messaging in order to discourage searchers looking for free or cheap courses from clicking. This, predictably, reduced the click-through rate. In order to partially offset this, Prominent Placement added benefits to the creative messaging, including that buyers can conveniently take the course at home, it's easy to take, and there are high pass rates and scores. In addition, Prominent Placement added the number of hours/credits in order to demonstrate the high quantity of material buyers get for their money.

RESULTS:

<u>Measure</u>	<u>Pre Prominent Placement</u>	<u>Post Prominent Placement</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Click-through rate	13.6%	7.5%	-44%
Monthly click expense	\$19,000	\$9,000	-53%
For every dollar spent...	made \$0.65	made \$1.69	+160%