



**ClickThrough**  
SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING

# Beginners Guide to Search Engine Marketing

## **WHITE PAPER**

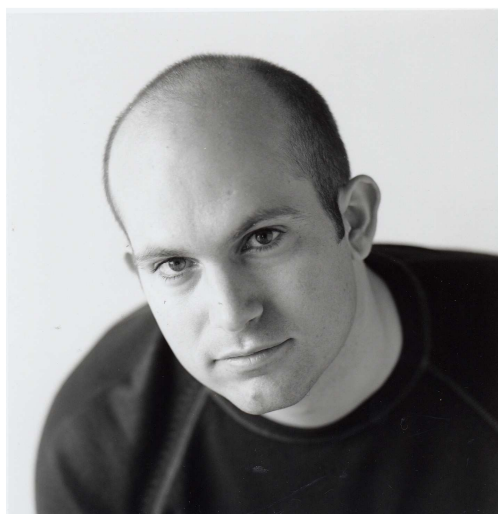
Version 1.0

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### **About the Author**

Phil Robinson has worked as an online marketing consultant since 1994. Phil writes articles, gives presentations and workshops about online marketing, including special focus on search engine marketing, web site promotion and ROI-based web analytics. Prior to founding ClickThrough, Phil has worked in several management positions for IT and internet companies, responsible for driving online marketing strategies.

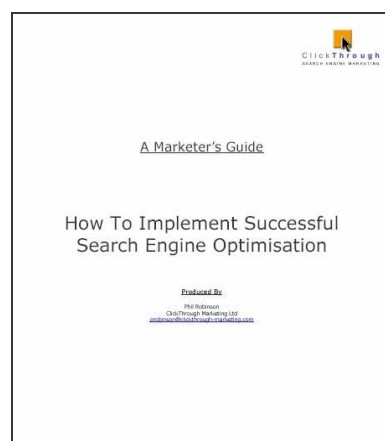
### **Web Address**

[www.clickthrough-marketing.com](http://www.clickthrough-marketing.com)

### **Other Resources**

**White Paper:** How to Implement Successful Search Engine Optimisation

**Newsletter:** Receive Search Marketing Tips, Articles, White Papers and Industry News via Email



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## Introduction

Over the last few years, search engine marketing has become big business and an increasingly important part of the marketing mix. In particular, the Google IPO in 2004 has generated huge awareness in search engine marketing.

**Have you considered a focused Search Engine Marketing  
campaign to drive qualified leads and sales from your web site?**

If not, and when you consider that 85% of all searches online are done via search engines – then the question to ask yourself is, Why Not?

A properly implemented search engine marketing program can provide huge volumes of traffic and resulting sales leads. Your competitors that are running active search engine marketing programs are winning business by being listed in the search engines for relevant search phrases.

Many businesses have already switched huge proportions of their marketing budgets to search engine marketing because the returns out-way traditional offline methods so much that it's almost a no-brainer.



## Search Engine Marketing Options

So, what are the options in Search Engine Marketing?

**Pay Per Click (SEO) Advertising** - a search engine marketing technique that requires you to pay a fee every time someone clicks to your website from an advert you've placed in a search engine's results. Therefore, you only pay each time someone visits your site.

**Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)** - This is the art of fixing, improving and optimising your web site so that there is a good chance your web pages will appear at the top of natural or free search engine listings for your selected search phrases. Effective search engine optimisation (SEO) goes much further than meta tags and titles, and should involve search engine approved methods.

The screenshot shows a Google search for "cleaning service". The search results are categorized into sponsored links and organic results. Annotations include:

- Pay Per Click Advertising (PPC):** Points to sponsored results such as "Office and home cleaning" (www.londoncleaners.co.uk/), "London Domestic Cleaning" (http://www.homeclean.co.uk/), "Cleaning Service" (BizRate.com), and "Start a Cleaning Business" (homebusinessforms.istores.co).
- Free or Natural Listings (SEO):** Points to organic search results such as "Cleaning Services" (www.shef.ac.uk/cleaning/) and "Cleaning Services - Home page" (www.shef.ac.uk/finance/cleaning/).



## Pay Per Click (PPC) Advertising

Over recent years pay per click (PPC) advertising has grown strongly, however, in 2004 expenditure on PPC engines grew exponentially as an increasing number of web-based businesses began to realise the returns available. By 2008, online marketers will spend an estimated £15.6 billion on PPC advertising (Forbes).

PPC marketing offers an excellent alternative to achieving natural free listings on search engines through search engine optimisation (SEO). Implementing effective SEO can be time-consuming and can take several months before you start seeing results.

The PPC engines serve varying geographical markets and have different percentage shares of the global search market. The main two UK pay per click search engines Google ([www.google.co.uk](http://www.google.co.uk)) and Overture ([www.overture.com](http://www.overture.com)) which own a huge 90% of the UK search market.

## Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)

Effective search engine optimisation (SEO) is a complex and time-consuming process. Some people do not bother with SEO because they argue it is too difficult to achieve natural listings on search engines. It is difficult, but if done correctly the benefits can be huge and long lasting.

Because of the complexity and time-consuming nature of doing SEO properly, most companies that take SEO seriously employ a specialist agency. Many web design agencies and webmasters will experiment or say they offer SEO, but the majority are not SEO specialists and only scratch the surface of what is possible.

If done poorly, SEO can have serious side implications for your business – a worst case scenario being that your corporate web site is dropped by the search engines, meaning that your internet presence becomes virtual invisible to your online target market. This has happened to numerous company web sites and will continue to happen while there are webmasters and agencies willing to drive traffic using unethical methods.

If you are looking for an SEO agency, get them to be very clear on the methods they adapt and look for statements, white papers and articles on their web site that discuss their best practice ethical approaches.

To read an overview of the things to look out for read, Stop Search Engine Spam, available at <http://www.clickthrough-marketing.com/articles/stop-search-engine-spam.php>



## Comparison – Pros & Cons

Pay Per Click (PPC) Marketing		Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)	
Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons
You can setup a pay per click campaign yourself with a credit card	Once you stop paying the traffic stops immediately	It does not cost you each time a user clicks on your link	Implementing SEO is a hugely complex and time-consuming process
You decide and control your daily, monthly or weekly budget	Doing yourself requires you to manage bid and adverts on a daily basis	If your site maintains good SEO practices the resulting traffic builds over time and lasts in the long term	Results usually take a minimum of 4 weeks to start taking effect and can take up to several months before traffic really starts to build
Your ads can start showing and traffic generated within hours	As more companies start pay per click, the price of bids are rising	Users are more likely to click on natural listings because people know they are not paid for, plus they are more prominent in the search results	An agency or webmaster that uses poor SEO practices can cause serious damage to your online presence
Your ads appear for the search phrases you have chosen	Click fraud is an issue for businesses that have unethical competitors that wish to you up your budget		
Can be used as a temporary measure before SEO begins to show results	Can under perform and become expensive if not monitored and managed by a professional		