



How to use content to engage

People are hungry for content. The number of consumers going to magazine, television and newspaper content sites increases each month, and many advertisers are looking for better ways to engage them. Advertising networks and exchanges offer marketers the ability to easily buy ad space across the web without the hassle of complicated search engine buys.

by Kristina Knight

"Overall, we see more and more brands willing to explore non-search related online advertising activities. Search has always been a great performer, but there are only so many queries per day per keyword," said Jon Carmen, Senior Vice President, AdBlade. "For brands that want to expand outside of that comfort zone, premium display related efforts are a good next step. For example, our Newsbullet Ad Units make an easy transition from search to display. It's a similar format, just reaching the user in a different part of their decision funnel."

AdBlade's unique ad units are one reason advertisers are trying them out. Since their 2008 launch, AdBlade has built an audience of more than 130 million monthly unique users (US base), partnering with only top-tier content providers so that advertisers get a bigger bang for their content buck. In addition to Newsbullets, their platform offers Article Marketing and AdCast units.

In addition to trying non-search advertising, Jon is seeing more marketers trying things like retargeted advertising and using branded content.

"When brands participate in creating their own branded content, it allows users to interact with the brand on a different level," said Carmen. "A level that consumers generally react favorably to. In some cases, branded content can act as it's own targeting mechanism. Users not interested in interacting with a brand's content will just click away, leaving only the interested users."

The key is to create content that serves a purpose - telling consumers about alternate uses for products, creating gift-buying guides or some other type of product education.

"Savvy online consumers...have been trained to research topics, process or price before making purchase decisions online. By educating the consumer with branded content...[brands can] interact on a more casual/informational level," said Carmen. "Overall personal internet usage is up across the board, more users have access to the internet and consumers assume they can do business with their favorite companies in whatever fashion is most convenient for them. For many, the most convenient place is online."