

# Contextual Ads Secrets!

**Finally, A Step-By-Step Guide to  
Boosting Your Contextual Ad Income!**



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# Contextual Ads Cash!

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### **1. Introduction to Google Adsense**

Google Adsense is the easiest and simplest way to monetize your website or blog. Many webmasters use Adsense for content ad units and ad links to earn revenue.

You simply open a free Adsense Account, create ad units and/or ad links and, using either the ad code Adsense provides or one of the plugins available, install the ad units onto your site. Two good plugins are "All In One Adsense & YPN" and "Advertising Manager."

Google's robots (bots) will crawl your site to determine your site's content and, almost immediately, deliver ad units that are relevant to your sites content.

The ads Google places on your website are those that are created by the advertisers who belong to AdWords. They must "pay per click" - in other words, whenever someone clicks on one of their ads, Google charges them a set amount of money.

Google keeps some of the money and passes some on to the person whose website the ad was on. This is how you make your money from AdSense.

The ad units you place on your site can be highly customized and you can track the number of clicks and earnings easily through your AdSense account.

There is even a filter option that allows you to exclude advertisements from specific urls - such as a competitor or an advertiser whose product isn't relevant to your website.

It's not hard to optimize your site so that you get a lot of visitors who, in turn, will click through on your AdSense ads. Some ways to do this are is to vary your traffic-getting methods, but the most important thing is to populate your site with HIGH QUALITY CONTENT which, as a result, will give you higher quality advertisements which pay out more when someone clicks on them.

In the AdSense Reports area, you can see the percentage of people who have looked at the ad units on your site and clicked through on them. This is called the "click through rate" (CTR). You can also view your earnings for that day, month, the proceeding month, or for all time. Several custom reports are available for you to save or print out.

## **2. Creating Your First Money-Making Site: Step-by-Step**

Before we create our first website, there are some things I'm going to assume:

- \* You've done your market research and decided on a niche
- \* You've done your keyword research
- \* You've picked and registered your domain name
- \* You've signed up with a hosting service that uses cPanel, such as HostGator

Google loves the way WordPress is set up and there's not much you can't do with a WordPress blog, so that's what we're going to install on your site. Not the hosted platform, wordpress.com, but the self-hosted wordpress.org. This gives you complete control over the site.

Here are the steps you will take to install WordPress on your domain:

- \* Go to your cPanel
- \* Scroll down the page and click on the Fantastico Deluxe icon. You'll find it in the section entitled "Software/Services"
- \* On the next page, under "Blogs", click on WordPress
- \* At the next screen, choose "New Installation" Don't put anything in the directory box
- \* Add your username (don't use admin) and password. Remember these because you will need them to log into your blog
- \* Put your nickname into the Base Configuration. This is for the administrator (probably you) and you can always change it later

- \* Set up your email account. It can be admin@yoursite.com, or yourname@yoursite.com, or anything you wish
- \* In the description field, put in your main theme keyword
- \* Then, voila, click Install WordPress. You'll get a confirmation screen, and click "finish installation"
- \* The next screen will give you your username and password as well as the url for your admin area. Click on the url, enter your username and password, and click on "log in now"
- \* You'll be taken to the dashboard area of your brand new WordPress installation.

Wasn't that easy??

Now you're ready to customize your new website. You will do the following things under the SETTINGS tab in the left sidebar:

Under GENERAL the blanks are pretty self-explanatory. Just make sure your time and date settings are accurate for your location. Save changes.

Under WRITING, I usually make sure the postbox is set to 20 lines. You don't need to do anything with the rest of the screen at this point in time. Save changes.

Under READING you want your front page to display your latest posts, your blog pages shown to be 10, and syndication feeds to be 100. Save changes.

Under DISCUSSION, make sure "allow link notifications from other blogs" is unchecked. If you are not going to allow

comments to your posts, also uncheck "allow people to post comments on the article." This is your decision. Go through the rest of the screen and pick the options you prefer. Save changes.

Under PRIVACY, the second box, "I would like to block search engines, but allow normal visitors" should be checked for the moment. You're not ready for the Google bots to crawl your site yet. Just don't forget to change it later! Save changes.

Under PERMALINKS, my PERSONAL preference is to choose "Custom Structure" and put in the following: `/%category%/%postname%/`. This is just what I prefer. I like to make sure the keyword I'm targeting for each post is in the post's url. Sometimes that will be the category, not the post name, so I include both.

Before we talk about plugins, let's discuss your Theme. If you go to your site you will see that the new default theme for WordPress is already there. It's called [Twenty Ten](#) and it's really quite nice and very customizable. A couple of nice features are the six widgetized areas and the optional one-column page template which gives you a page with no sidebar. I prefer not to have a sidebar on my admin pages, and this makes it easy.

The themes I've had the most luck with are [Atahualpa](#) and [Suffusion](#). I've tried others, such as [Hybrid](#), but always go back to one of these because I've used them enough to be able to get them to do what I want.

Another very flexible and popular Theme is [Semiologic](#), and people who use it swear that it's the best Wordpress theme available. And they may be right, but I'm stuck in my ways and really haven't taken the time to check it out fully. I was impressed with what I saw, however.

Ok, on to plugins. As your blog develops, you will have many personal preferences as to the plugins you install. There are thousands.

If you go to this blog, <http://www.arindamchakraborty.com/> you will find several comprehensive articles on, and recommendations of, different plugins and what they do.

There are some plugins you need to install right away, and these are my core recommendations:

- \* [Akismet](#)
- \* [All in One Adsense and YPN](#) or [Advertising Manager](#)
- \* [cbnet Ping Optimizer](#)
- \* [Google Analyticator](#) (be sure to add your blog in your Google Analytics account first)
- \* [Google XML Sitemaps](#)
- \* [No 404 Errors](#)
- \* [Platinum SEO Pack](#) or [All In One SEO Pack](#)
- \* [WordPress Database Backup](#)
- \* [WP-SpamFree](#)
- \* [WP-UserOnline](#)
- \* [WP Security Scan](#)

These are just a few of the plugins I use, and I use this selection on all of my blogs, along with several other plugins.

Since we're setting up a site for Adsense, there are two plugins I would like to mention the two plugins that are very good for placing Adsense ads on your site. They are the above-mentioned [All In One Adsense and YPN](#) and [Advertising Manager](#). You can go to each of their descriptions and decide which one is best for you.

That's it! Your WordPress blog is now installed and you have started to customize it and get it ready for your Adsense ad units.



### 3. **Getting Approved by AdSense**

It's not unusual to be disapproved by AdSense the first time you apply. Many people have been turned down as many as five times, some even more, before Google approved their account.

This is the email you will get. Have you seen it before?

"Page type: We're unable to approve your AdSense application at this time because we feel that your site does not comply with the Google webmaster quality guidelines. More specifically, we believe that your site does not add value or provide unique content."

Why does Google disapprove some websites and not others? The answer has to do with the content of your site.

If you have a one-page site, say for "people search", which is offering more of a service and not unique, valuable content, you will most likely be turned down. Sites like this usually have hundreds of duplicates - people who all work through the same company and use the same basic template. This won't please Google.

What can you do?

One rather innovative solution that has worked for many people is to create another blog (that accepts AdSense - such as a free Blogger blog) and make five 400-word posts a day for one week. That would be thirty-five posts which should put a smile on Google's face.

One lady I heard of had written a book several years ago that had never been published. Each day she posted five chapters of her book. At the end of the week, she had half

of the book on the blog and when she reapplied for an AdSense account using that blog, after having been turned down with her mini-site, she was accepted.

What can you use if you don't have an old manuscript sitting on the closet shelf? Type anything! Copy pages from a book you have on hand. Write to your Aunt Hilda. Write a diary or copy all of those recipes you have been meaning to organize online for the last several months.

What you post isn't what Google is looking at. How much and how often you post is the secret.

Remember Google's mission - to offer their customers the most relevant, content-rich results they can find when they type in a search word. "Content rich" - that's the key.

Everyone I know who has tried this method has been successful. Give it a try and you'll soon be able to put Google AdSense ad units on all of your websites.

#### **4. Acquainting Yourself with the Rules of Google AdSense Program**

Here's what Google says about their rules: They're serious!

"Publishers participating in the AdSense program are required to adhere to the following policies, so please read them carefully. If you fail to comply with these policies, we reserve the right to disable ad serving to your site and/or disable your AdSense account at any time. If your account is disabled, you will not be eligible for further participation in the AdSense program."

Here is a brief summary; see the link at the bottom of the page for more information:

## 1. Invalid Clicks and Impressions

Don't click your own ads or use any method to increase the number of impressions and/or clicks artificially, including manual methods.

## 2. Encouraging Clicks

Don't ask anyone to click your ads (family, friends, someone you pay, etc.) or use sneaky means to obtain clicks.

## 3. Content Guidelines

Do not put AdSense code on pages with content that violates Google's content guidelines, such as content that is adult, violent or advocates racial intolerance.

## 4. Copyrighted Material

Don't put your ads on webpages that contain copyright protected content unless YOU have legal rights to display the content.

## 5. Webmaster Guidelines

You must stick to the webmaster quality guidelines.

## 6. Traffic Sources

You may not participate in paid-to-click programs, send unwanted emails, or use a software application to display ads, and your pages must meet Google's Landing Page Quality Guidelines.

## 7. Ad Behavior

Your AdSense code must not be altered, and you cannot manipulate the standard behavior, targeting or delivery of your ads in any way that is not specifically permitted by Google. As an example, you cannot cause the launch of a new browser window when someone clicks on your ad.

## 8. Ad Placement

Test different placements of your ads to find out what works best, but don't place any ads in pop-ups, emails or software. You must also follow the policies for each product used.

## 9. Site Behavior

Your site must be easy for your viewers to navigate and you must not have anything on your site that interferes with site navigation.

## 10. Competitive Ads and Services

If you sell ads and/or services on the same site on which you feature Google ads, you must make sure that the other ads and/or services don't confuse your reader by using the same layout and colors as the Google ads or search boxes.

## 11. Google Advertising Cookies

You must have and abide by a **PRIVACY POLICY!**

## 12. Product-Specific Policies

a. AdSense for content: Maximum of three ad units and three link units on each page.

b. AdSense for search: Maximum of two AdSense for search boxes may be placed per page. Also, a single link

unit or a search box, but no other Google ads, may be placed on pages with AdSense for search results.

For expanded information on each of the points listed above, go to:

<http://www.google.com/adsense/support/bin/answer.py?answer=48182>

## **5. Which Ad Type to Choose: Text, Image or Link Units**

In my personal experience, and researching the opinions of others online, the general consensus is that - for blogs - text ads are without a doubt the best choice.

Here are some reasons why:

You can configure them to blend into your site. A lot of people have become tired of "banner" ads so if you use ads with images, they could just be ignored.

Besides using three ad units per page, you can also use three ad links per page. these are nice to put in your sidebar.

There are a lot more text ads available than image ads. You stand a better chance of getting ad units that are really relevant to your blog if you stick to text ad units. If there isn't an image ad unit available for your keyword, there is a good chance that Google will just run one of their public service ads and, if someone clicks on it, you don't earn any revenue.

Because they're smaller, more advertisements can be included in each text ad unit, giving your readers a bigger selection to click through to.

Of course, you can chose the option of text ads/image ads and let Google pick which to display on your site, but I prefer to have more control over the size, colors, configuration, and location of my Adsense ads, not just leave it in Google's hands.

The best suggestion I can give is to try all three types, Text, Image, and Text/Image and see which ones perform best for your site and/or which ones you prefer when you look at your posts/pages.

## **6. Getting Traffic to Your Site=>Step-by-Step**

There are many ways to get traffic to your website. Some of them are:

- \* Article marketing
- \* Social Bookmarking
- \* RSS Feeds
- \* Building a list
- \* Twitter and Facebook
- \* Forum posting
- \* Comment posting on other blogs
- \* Search Engine Optimization
- \* Word of mouth
- \* Blog Carnivals

This is just a partial list. Basically, anything that puts your link in front of someone and makes them click on it is a traffic generator.

I did some searching on different forums to see what the general discussions were on the best ways of getting traffic. Hands down, the most popular method was Article Marketing.

But what is it that most of these methods have in common. What exactly is it that brings traffic to your site. . . backlinks!

So using article marketing as an example of how to get traffic to your site, here is one scenario:

1. Build a blog
2. Write 10 articles to populate your blog - unique, content rich articles
3. Make each article optimized for a different keyword
4. Interlink these articles to one another as appropriate to their content; for example, if I have an article on Burdock Root and another on Turmeric, I might mention Turmeric in the Burdock Root article using a hyperlink and anchor text. You can also set up a plugin called SEO Smart Links which makes interlinking simple.
5. Write 10 different, unique articles for ezinearticles - optimize each of these articles to one of the keywords used above.
6. In your Author's bio box, link back to the companion article on the blog which shares the same keyword, and to your blog's homepage url.
7. As you write each Ezine article, and when it's accepted, put it on your favorite social bookmarking site - or two.
8. Your Ezine articles will probably get ranked first and when people click on them, it will lead them to your blog.
9. Also remember, with ezinearticles, your articles can be picked up by other publishers for their ezines and

newsletters, and people who read your article can email it to their friends; so, these articles can go viral really easy

10. Open a Posterous account and add-on several different Web 2.0 properties, such as xanga, identi.ca, blogger, livejournal, plurk, and whichever ones you chose.

11. Make a post via email (post@posterous.com) of a synopsis of your EZINE ARTICLE. You can use the summary and then put . . .read more here. . . and put a link to your ezine article.

12. At the bottom of your Posterous post, you can sign off with your name and your website url.

13. Remember to put your tags in the subject line of your Posterous post like this: ((tag:turmeric,burdock root)) If you forget one of the parentheses they won't turn into tags, they will be part of your subject line (which is the title of the post) and you'll have to go to each post that Posterous auto-posts to and fix it. (I know, I did this and it's a nuisance!)

OK, if you do all of this, you will have numerous backlinks pointing towards your ezine article, your post articles, and your blog. That should start generating some exposure for your blog and some traffic.

Another good way, once you have traffic coming to your blog, is to set up a mini-course so you can start building a list. There have been studies that suggest that offering a free mini-course is the best way to get people to subscribe to your list.

That should get you started. Research some of the other methods listed above and you'll have all the traffic you can handle.



## 7. Tracking Ad Performance Using Channels

What are channels?

Channels are used to help you keep track of the specific metrics of different pages, domains, and sites. You specify the group of pages, ad units, etc., that you want to use for reporting purposes.

You can then easily view detailed reports about the performance of the channels you have set up. For example, you can track the performance of a banner ad versus a leaderboard just by creating a channel for a combination of pages and/or ad units.

Or, you can compare your gout pages to your yeast infection pages. An easy tactic is to assign a channel for each of your domains to get concrete evidence of which one generates the most clicks.

What are the two different types of channels?

URL channels are set up for domains, sub-domains, and specific pages. Custom Channels are used to view more definitive reports about how specific ad units or pages perform.

URL Channels explained:

URL channels give you the ability to create reports about your ads' performance on your domains. It's not necessary to modify your ad code to set them up. You simply enter your full or partial URL and the performance of the pages you specify will begin to be tracked. If you want to track every page on your domain, enter the top-level domain name. To track the pages below a directory, you would only need to enter a partial URL. To track the performance of

just a specific page, you would enter the full URL of that page.

You can only use URL channels on AdSense for Content pages. To track AdSense for search performance, you can create Custom channels.

Custom Channels explained:

As mentioned above, you can create custom channels to obtain detailed reports about the performance of pages and ad units that you specify based on the parameters you set up. You can gather data on several different metrics throughout a range of urls just by pasting channel-specific ad code in your pages. You could compare, for example, page topics, ad formats, ad placement, whether to include a border or no border, revenue returns for AdSense search boxes, which colors perform best, etc.

You can have up to 200 AdSense channels and they're easy to set up, delete, or rename. The customized reports you generate are also very simple. All of this information can be used to help you optimize your sites.

\*\*\*Tip: View Google's Guide, "[Optimizing with Channels](#)" for directions and ideas for using channels to track and improve your site's performance.

## **8. Choosing the Right Colors for Highest Conversion**

Ad blindness is a very real phenomenon and you can decrease it by optimizing the color palettes you choose for your AdSense ads on each individual page or site.

By doing this, your readers are more likely to read your ads because they won't be so separate from your main content. You aren't trying to confuse your readers, you just want

them to see your ads and click on the ones they have an interest in.

There are three techniques you should consider: blend, complement, and contrast.

In a blend, the background and border of your ad is the same as your page color.

To complement, match the colors on your site.

To contrast, which is best for sites with a dark background, you need colors that will stand out from the background. A good choice in this situation is to use a palette with a white background and borders, and blue titles.

Your color strategy should depend on where your ads are placed and the background color.

For the most part, it's a good idea to use the complement method. If your site text is black and you are using purple links, do the same with your AdSense ads.

Also keep in mind that blue links are what people are used to clicking on, so you might want to consider blue also.

Remember to use your common sense as readers won't click on your ads if they are visually offensive.

Here are some factors that cause ad blindness:

Repeat visitors - rotate the colors and change the ad locations on the page

A page with "busy" content and a lot of ads - In this case, you want to use the stronger colors of the more prominent palettes.

Go to one of your pages and pretend you are a reader. How do your ads appear to you? Do they catch your attention? Are the colors too "loud"? Would you click on them or move on? Strike a balance between ads that no one will pay attention to and ads that offend.

One technique you can use with color palettes is to choose the "Use Multiple Palettes" option when you generate your ad code while choosing your ad format and colors. You can use as many as four color palettes and they will rotate, keeping your ads visually fresh.

## **9. Split Testing Your ads**

Do you remember the A/B boxes we used back in the 80s to, for example, switch a printer between two computers? Split testing your AdSense Ads, also called A/B Testing, is similar.

You set up your ads so that they are similar in every way except one variable. The purpose is to determine which of the two ad units give you the best result.

There are several different variables you can test, and it's important to only test one set of variables at a time. Here are some of your choices: color palette; corner options; ad unit type, i.e. text vs. image ads; ad unit size; font size; and font family.

If you're comparing your font family, choose two different font families but leave everything else in the ad units exactly the same.

The default is to have one version of the ad show 50% of the time and the other version shown the other 50% of the time. How it works is that when a visitor comes to your site, he/she will see version A. The next visitor will see version B.

After enough visitors have visited your site, you will be in a position to analyze the data and determine which version performed the best.

Then you can make a new set of ad units, changing another parameter, but using the "winning" version from the previous test as your base.

By the time you've tested all the different variables, you should have an ad unit that performs the best for your website.

It's not hard to do split testing. All you need to do is set up a couple of Custom Channels (A and B works well), and then create two ad units, one for each channel. Using our example of font families, "A" would have one font family and "B" would have another font family. Everything else would be the same.

The next step is to copy the ad code for each ad unit into a notepad document and save it.

Here is how you'll put it all together:

Take this code:

```
<script type="text/javascript">  
  var random_number = Math.random();  
  if (random_number < .5){  
    //your first ad unit code goes here  
  } else {  
    //your second ad unit code goes here  
  }  
</script>  
<script type="text/javascript"  
src="http://pagead2.googlesyndication.com/pagead/  
show_ads.js"></script>
```

Insert your ad unit codes in the appropriate place in the above snippet. Now all you have to do is copy the resulting code snippet, with your two ad unit codes inserted, and paste it into wherever you want the ads to appear in your website.

You will now see the ad units rotating between the two variables you have chosen.

If you don't want the rotation to be 50/50, you can change the ".5" in the above snippet to represent your preferred schedule. For example, if you change it to ".7", it would cause the first ad unit to show up 70% of the time and the second one 30% of the time.

Wait about a week or so and then go to your AdSense Reports area and you will be able to see which ad unit, A or B, got the most action.

## **10. AdSense and List Building - Should You Build a List Off An AdSense Site?**

Good question! The first thing you have to ask yourself, is why would you want a list from an AdSense site? Here are some things to consider:

- \* Are you offering unique, informative content as well as AdSense ad units? In other words, is there any reason for someone who lands on your page to want to come back?
- \* Do you want to have a continuing relationship with the people who come to your site?
- \* Are you offering something of value to them that would encourage them to opt-in to your site?

\* Do you have an affiliate product you would like to sell, or maybe your own product?

\* Could you write a mini-eCourse to induce them to sign up and then sell them your product or an affiliate product through the mini-eCourse?

\* Is your site one that you just want to launch and have the barest maintenance necessary? If so, you probably don't want to deal with maintaining a list.

This is a tough question, because the answer depends on the structure of your site.

But, if you do want to build a list off of your AdSense site, here's one way to go about it. Mini-eCourses have been shown to be the biggest draw for getting people to sign up on your blog. They work much better than a plain "subscribe to my blog for notification when a new post is made", or a PDF, or Special Report.

A mini-eCourse can be structured as follows:

1. If you will be selling a book in your eCourse, say from amazon.com, go to Amazon and see if it's one of the books you can "look inside." If you can, look at the table of contents and structure your eCourse to have the same general flow as the book. Offer an eCourse that makes sense, something that flows from beginning to end like the topics in the book.

2. If you are selling your own eBook, use the same general outline as the eBook, but just touch on each topic. Perhaps your emails could each cover briefly a different chapter in your book, from beginning to end.

3. Once you have an outline for 10 emails, write a 300-400 word article for each topic. Don't put in everything from

your eBook or the book on Amazon, just write a synopsis of the subject matter.

4. Your first and seventh emails, after someone subscribes, should be a "hard sell" email. This gives you a total of 13 emails for your mini-eCourse.

5. Your fourth email should be a "soft sell" email.

6. At the bottom of several of the 10 content emails, put a dashed line, the words "Recommended Reading", the name of the book or eBook you are promoting, and your affiliate link or the link to your sales page.

7. The first seven emails, all the way through the second "hard sell" email, should be scheduled one day apart. After that time, vary the amount of time between each of the remaining six emails. Have some 2 days apart, some 3 days apart. Let your subscribers begin to anticipate the next email.

OK, that being said, also remember to schedule a blog broadcast (I hope you're using Aweber) so that whomever subscribes to your mini-eCourse will also get an email whenever you post a new post. And plan to schedule follow up emails to send out so your subscribers don't forget about you after they finish the eCourse.

Remember that quality content is the key to getting subscribers who opt-in and stay with you. Follow all the guidelines for the placement, color, size, etc., of your AdSense ad units so they fit in nicely with your site. And don't forget to do split-testing so you know which parameters work the best.

This didn't give you a definitive answer to the question, "Should You Build A List Off Of An AdSense Site", but it gave you something to think about.



## **CONCLUSION:**

Adsense ad units can be very financially rewarding if you take care to make your website one that people want to visit. Focus on informative, unique content, pay attention to off-page and on-page optimization, and you will reap the benefits of a job well-done.

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