

Words to the Wise: Web Advertising

Online advertising involves much more than bidding on some keywords and placing a few banners with an ad network. To help you sort out your skyscrapers from your interstitials, here's a glossary of some often bandied-about terms.

Ad serving: Delivering online ads via an ad management system, which enables targeted ads to be served to each web visitor's computer.

Affiliate marketing: Contracting with another website to have it send traffic to your site in exchange for payment.

Banner: Horizontal, rectangular ad that usually runs across the top of a web page.

Behavioural targeting: Using technology to target web users based on their previous behaviour, such as sites visited.

Button: Square ad that is usually embedded within a web page.

Contextual advertising: Advertising programme in which web ads are placed only on relevant websites and web pages throughout an ad network, based on the text in the ad and on the sites; Google AdSense is the best known contextual advertising programme.

Expandable banner: Banner ad that expands when a user clicks on it or takes a similar action.

Frequency cap: The maximum number of times a web user can be served the same ad, as specified by the advertiser.

Geotargeting: Serving ads to web users based on the geographic location of their computer.

Hotspotting: Adding hyperlinks to an online video so that viewers can click on a web page directly from the video.

Incentivised click: Click-through generated by offering the web visitor some sort of reward, such as sweepstakes entry.

Interruptive format: Ad that "interrupts" the user's experience on a site, such as a pop-up or an overlay.

Interstitial ad: Ad that appears as a user moves from one page of a site to another.

Pop-under ad: Ad that appears in a separate window beneath the “host” web page; it’s not visible until the host window is minimised or closed.

Run-of-network: Option to have an ad placed to run on every website within a given network.

Run-of-site: Option to have an ad placed to run on every page on a given website.

Skyscraper: Vertical, rectangular ad that usually runs down the side of a web page.

Underdelivery: Delivery of fewer as impressions, visitors or conversions than contracted for.