

## Natural Search Engine Optimization or Pay-Per-Click

The internet is literally like having the world at ones fingertips. Not only does it provide families a cheap way to stay in touch (e-mail and instant messaging), it allows students to cram for finals and write last minute papers in the middle of the night, long after the library has closed, but the internet is suddenly a way for the smallest business to break into a global market.

Let's pretend that you are the owner of a small novelty store in a small rural town in the Midwest. Most of your merchandise is handmade trinkets and crafts created by the residents of the small town (on commission so the up front cost of most of your merchandise is minimal). Although business is slow during the winter months during the tourist season you turn a tidy profit. One day as a Chicago tourist purchases a photo of the late afternoon sun glinting off a herd of sleeping cattle she mentions that she wishes you had a website so she could purchase quaint Christmas gifts for her family. As she leaves the store, her wrapped photograph tucked under her arm, you stare at your computer.

The internet could be a cheap way to increase your profit margin. You already have your physical business, a website would simply be an addition. You look at all the pretty knickknacks arranged throughout the store. If you expanded your business to include a website you could sell mid-western trinkets all over the world. It wouldn't take that much time. You have a friend that would design and teach you how to manage a website for free. You could answer questions during the slow times when you're not doing anything anyway. It would be a win-win situation.

In theory you're correct. A website could be a lucrative addition to your business.

It is possible to design website, register a domain name, and submit it to a website. But what happens next. Just like the physical shop the website will not do any business if there isn't any traffic. No one will visit your online store if they don't know about it.

The chances are good that your regular customers will probably check out your website, the ones that made items you have featured will probably tell their friends and families about it, but the chances are good that they won't buy anything, why should they pay for shipping and handling when they can drive a couple of miles and purchase it directly from you. Your tourist customers might buy from your online store but only if they know about it and since you probably waited until the slow season to create your website it will be months before you can tell them.

You could look into search engine optimization.

You might even want to consider something called pay-per-click.

Pay-per-click is a search engine that bases its rankings on something that is called a bid position. A website owner bids for an elevated position in the ranking when a certain keyword is typed into the search bar. The higher the bid, the higher the ranking.

Businesses that use pay-per-click prefer it to natural search engine optimization because it's an easy efficient way to improve a sites ranking and increase its traffic. Pay-per-click also lets webmaster maintain control over the search engine campaign.

People who for go pay-per-click to natural search engine optimization say that the cost of pay-per-click is too high.