ONLINE CONTEXTUAL ADVERTISING MAKES NO SENSE

Submitted by: Pirate Communications

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Fed up of searching for 'Windows' software and being presented with adverts for double-glazing? Want a relaxing break in Fallujah? Or bid on eBay to be attacked with a hammer? And exactly when is a football manager a roll of tape?

Crystal Semantics, the context targeting company, believes that current online contextual advertising is not reaching its true potential by producing too many untargeted and often bizarre and insensitive advertising results. The existing basic keyword-based methods are delivering results that can easily be taken out of context and be very damaging to brands.

Last month the online auction site eBay was embroiled in controversy when a Google Group member discovered that entering 'African slaves' into Google returned an advertisement from eBay apparently offering cheap African slaves. It was later revealed that the advertisement was linked to a company making money from eBay's affiliate scheme. However it was still potentially damaging to the eBay brand.

Some other examples of irrelevant and inappropriate advertising that users may encounter are as follows:

· a search for the word 'Windows' will present search results relating to the Microsoft software, yet 'contextual' advertising is for double-glazing
· an online article about the fierce fighting in Fallujah, Iraq, has ads appearing alongside touting 'cheap flights to Fallujah' and different holiday-themed travel sites
· advertising for a DIY bridge appearing alongside an article on the card game
· advertising for Trojan condoms appearing alongside a review of the movie Troy
· results from a search for a 'knife attack' can lead to adverts for the best type of knives to use (Global, Victorinox, Henckels and Wusthof apparently, if you are keen on this type of thing). A search for 'hammer attack' can lead to an invitation to bid for your very own attack by this blunt weapon via eBay…
· an article relating to a footballer referring to his manager as 'the gaffer' has ads alongside all relating to various offers for 'gaffer tape'!

Crystal Semantics, has developed Textonomy Advance to eradicate this problem. Powered by the world's first 'Sense Engine', Textonomy Advance provides rapid contextual analysis of users' search terms to identify the proper theme of each site and deliver the most relevant advertisements. Textonomy Advance analyses the content of a web page to identify not just the keywords, but the context in which they are presented, drawing upon human understanding of language to go beyond the basic methods or the inadequate mathematical algorithms currently used by search and contextual advertising technology.

David Crystal, chairman of Crystal Semantics, said: "Some out-of-context advertising results can be amusing, many simply waste your time and advertisers' money and others are extremely insensitive and can lead to brand damage. I cannot imagine that major kitchen implement manufacturers really want to develop an audience amongst violent criminals or that budget airlines are so desperate for revenue that

they will risk their people's and passengers' lives by flying into Fallujah at this time. In actual fact, current problems aside, it doesn't even have an airport!

"It is apparent that many organisations are not getting full value for money from their online advertisements, as existing techniques have resulted in many of them being poorly targeted. Understanding the true context of words is the key to online contextual advertising producing branding and direct response results. If all advertisements are more applicable to each internet user's needs, companies can realise an increase in clickthroughs from all forms of web advertising."

-ENDS-

About Crystal Semantics (www.crystalsemantics.com)

Crystal Semantics has developed Textonomy, the first Sense Engine to deliver significantly more accurate and powerful Internet search results. By applying human "senses" and concepts that current algorithms, semantic systems and other statistical techniques cannot match, Textonomy uniquely uses human linguistic intuition, tapping into the semantic relationships between words and the contexts in which they occur. The Textonomy suite of products includes solutions for search and navigation, e-commerce and contextual advertising.

Based in Holyhead, UK, Crystal Semantics is a division of Crystal Reference Systems Limited – a context targeting company. The company was founded in 2001 by Professor David Crystal, a world authority in linguistics, and managing director, Ian Saunders. It has provided online content for many major publishers including Penguin Books, A&E Television Networks and Webster Publishing and is one of the fastest growing online content publishers in Europe.

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