

Bigmouthmedia reports on Google shake up of UK digital marketing sector

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Google has unveiled radical changes to its Trademark policy that could cost Britain's major companies millions as they struggle to protect their brands online.

In a move that is sending shockwaves throughout the digital marketing (<http://www.bigmouthmedia.com/>) sector, Google's controversial decision to allow anyone to bid for trademarked keywords is set to have a major impact on the industry. Tipped to send prices skyrocketing, the decision could leave the search giant open to legal challenges from the major UK brands likely to lose millions as a result.

"This is an incredibly bold move that has taken most of the sector by surprise. It will certainly lead to a big change in the way that advertisers and agencies manage their search campaigns. It could also have an impact on the UK digital agency landscape with agencies running on pure performance deals taking a big hit" said Lyndsay Menzies, Managing Director of bigmouthmedia (<http://www.bigmouthmedia.com/>) UK.

Lyndsay further commented, "Our international offices have been working with such a system in the US for years and we know how to deal with it, but the news is likely to precipitate massive changes in the market as brands move budgets about within digital channels to maximise return."

Bringing the UK and Ireland into line with its North American business, which has operated such a policy since 2004, from May 5th Google will allow open keyword bidding on all terms. This means it will now be possible for more than one advertiser to appear in the list of sponsored links that appears after a user has typed in a search query using a trademarked term.

While bad news for major brands, the move is likely to be good news for smaller competitors looking to close the gap, although a question mark now hangs over what effect it will have on the millions invested every year in keyword bidding. Industry commentators believe that some major price comparison sites and aggregators could see advantages, while the change is likely to further fuel industry rumours that Google are planning to make a bid for Expedia.

This announcement is also likely to have a profound effect on all affiliate partners, with the ability to bid on competitor keywords greatly increasing the scope and range of their operations.

"Google's revised rules for UK and Ireland will add new layers of complexity to the search landscape. Look at affiliate marketing (http://www.bigmouthmedia.com/products_services/affiliate-marketing/) and PPC (http://www.bigmouthmedia.com/products_services/pay_per_click_management/): many brands restrict their affiliates from brand bidding but these policies now need to be reviewed," said Andrew Girdwood, bigmouthmedia's Head of Search.

He continued, "It may now make sense to let affiliates brand bid, compete using trade names against brand competitors and bring a stable cost-per-acquisition model to the auction market that Google has just made volatile."

Notes to Editor:

About bigmouthmedia

Founded in 1997, bigmouthmedia are leaders in digital marketing, with a team of over 200 staff across 13 offices in 10 countries on 3 continents the company maximizes return and exposure for major brands online through a variety of fully integrated digital marketing channels: Search - PPC and Search Engine Optimisation (http://www.bigmouthmedia.com/products_services/search_engine_optimisation/), Display Advertising, Affiliate Marketing, Social Networking, Brand Monitoring, Online PR and Web Analytics.

Bigmouthmedia services big-brand customers globally including: Adidas, Hilton, British Airways, Tesco, Aer Lingus, BP, Barclays, Castrol, Conrad International, Dorling Kindersley, Early Learning Centre, easyCar, Fasthosts, Jumeirah, Canon, Samsung, Starbucks, Top Man, Debenhams, Which?, Lacoste, Euler Hermes and Wall Street Institute.

Bigmouthmedia is a Deloitte Fast Growth winner and a 2007 FT Best Place to Work. 2007 saw the company celebrate its tenth anniversary and global CEO Steve Leach celebrated a unique hat-trick of major business awards; UK Entrepreneur of the Year title at the National Business Awards and National Business Awards for Scotland and UK as well being named European Entrepreneur at a recent ceremony in Paris.

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