



## THE BENCHMARK

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# Getting to page one

**C**ompanies are being “pitched” daily to spend money on web marketing, and there are many confusing options. Ask yourself this question: “Is my company even on the grid?” If I’m a prospect and I don’t know your name or company, can I find you if I’m searching for a resource? If you’re not on page one as one of the top five listings of the major search engines’ results pages, then you’re simply losing.

Getting noticed takes a great deal of effort and you must make an investment as part of your monthly budget. The good news is if you choose your marketing sources wisely, you’ll earn a positive return.

### » WEB EXTRA

Visit the Web Extras section of [Landscape Management.net](http://LandscapeManagement.net) for Jeff Harkness’s take on Facebook and LinkedIn advertising.

## A word about keywords

It’s important to have the right keywords on your site. Otherwise, people won’t find your site via search. Make sure to include your city and state as keywords. You also need to include location keywords to ensure the right people—people who actually are able to patronize your business—find your site.

## Google AdWords

Google has nearly an 80 percent share of the search engine market, so it makes sense you’d want to use it to advertise. Fortunately, Google advertising is made easy through a popular service called Google AdWords. With Google AdWords, you can use video, image and text ads to advertise your services on a platform that boasts millions of searches per day. Once your campaign is all set up, your ads will display to people who search using the keywords you added to your account. When using contextual ads, you can further qualify the people who click your ads by including action keywords, like “buy,” “service,” “emergency,” etc. This means the clicks you receive will have a very good chance to turn into an actual sale. With no long-term commitments, very little money down (\$20) and access to one of the largest segments of the Internet population, AdWords is an extremely powerful tool.

*The Good:* AdWords represents the largest segment of your customers in one place, and your ads

show based on their search intent. This creates a powerful combination that can lead to a staggering amount of clicks and potential business.

*The Bad:* Everyone else knows this, so you have a lot of competition. Prices per click are higher than Bing due to more competition.

*Expert Tips:* Turn off Google partners to only show ads to Google.com users to get the highest quality clicks. Also keep a close eye on your budget—you can spend literally thousands of dollars a day if you don’t have your budget settings correct.

## Bing Ads

Microsoft’s search engine Bing offers another option: Bing Ads. Bing Ads combines Bing with Yahoo to create the second largest search engine segment, at about 15 percent of web searches. Options are similar to Google’s and you can import your Google campaign directly into Bing, so the cost of moving your campaign to Bing is very low.

*The Good:* Bing is typically cheaper and converts better than Google, probably due to less competition. For instance, I see Bing traffic is about 20 percent cheaper than Google and that visitor has a 10 percent to 20 percent higher chance of calling or emailing us.

*The Bad:* You’ll get great traffic that converts to customers, but the numbers are too low to focus entirely on Bing.

*Expert Tips:* It’s very important to exclude website partners, so make sure you’re only advertising on Bing.com and Yahoo.com. Keep a close eye on your traffic. If you’re not converting at or better than Google, you need to evaluate your account. There are many fraudulent clicks on this network, so be on top of it by reviewing your numbers frequently. Bing’s customer service is good; call if anything looks strange.

Remember, these are “measurable” items. Tracking leads is a must. If you’re not generating more money than you’re spending, it’s time to reevaluate your marketing efforts and relationships. Prospects are looking for services daily by using their handheld devices. I ask you again. Are you on the grid? That means page one.