Make Money With Google AdSense

This is a guide to help you earn more money through Google AdSense and stop making all those mistakes that you were making before. The website that I refer to throughout this report is my photography tutorial site, ExpertPhotography.

There are five factors that will affect how much money that you can make from AdSense, and they are as follows:

• Ad size
• Ad placement
• Ad type
• Number of ads
• Referrer.

Knowing this, it’s up to you to come up with a compromise that works best for your own website, whether it’s flooding the page with ads because the content is good enough for people to put up with them, or using them subtly so that you don’t put anyone off. I find that somewhere in the middle works best for me, and although I don’t like a couple of the ads on my website, I put up with them anyway because it’s a compromise. For me, ads always are.

Ad Size

Clearly using larger ads are going to be noticed more often, which means that people are more likely to click on them, earning you more money. Advertisers prefer wider ad units for their premium inventory, resulting in higher bids for your ad placements. Though all sites are different, publishers typically see 0.35 eCPMs when using the wider ad size. You can start by simply changing single ads on popular pages to see how well they work, and if it’s not too intrusive, then you can start rolling it out across your whole website. I didn’t do this in my sidebar because I was aware that the whole width of the sidebar would have to change, and that would not only take a lot of time, but mess up the spacing that I had laid out for posts. Instead, I added a wider ad at the end of each post, that differs to all the other ads on my website, and this saw a good improvement in ad sales.

How to Use the Burn & Dodge Tools

If you’re like me and don’t particularly like the look of HDR photos, but still want to find a balance in exposure when shooting two contrasting brightnesses, then you will definitely find the burn and dodge tools very useful. They’re used in brushes in post production software, so you can add them where they’re needed.

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**Ad Placement**

Ad placement is just as important, if not even more important than ad size, because it’s all about putting them in places that people are going to see them, whether that’s inside of your content (like in the image above), at the bottom of a post, or even in your header. I’ve slowly added more ads to my site to test and see which ones work, and in that time I’ve added 3 sidebar ads, another at the bottom of each post, and one under the header. I’ve even tested an ad in the middle of the content, but we’ll get to that.

One of my smallest, simplest, yet most prominent ads is responsible for roughly half of all the ads clicked on my website, and that’s the one at the top of each page. It’s a simple text ad, which is a single line 728 pixels wide and 15 pixels high. I personally don’t like it all that much, but it would be foolish to remove it because everyone sees it, and it has a reasonably good click through rate, which I can’t share, because of Google’s terms of service.

I actually make slightly more money from the ads in the sidebar of the page, but there are three of them. As these are large ads that are both text and images, they’re worth more when they’re clicked on, so I actually make more money from them. The footer ad barely made me any money in the past few months, which is entirely down to it’s location, but as it’s only a small text ad, I won’t bother removing it. Every little helps.

I’m currently experimenting with some mid-text ads, and I immediately found that the CTR was higher than any other ad on the website, because people couldn’t avoid it as they read through my post. It’s a little bit intrusive, but as my posts are long and my content is good, it’s justified.

**Ad Type**

The type of ad you choose really depends on where you’re going to put it. I chose a small text based ad at the top of my page, which is less likely to get clicked on than an image, but also less likely to put people off the website altogether. It’s my most effective ad, but that’s entirely down to its location, and I’m sure that if I had used an image instead, it would have made me more money.

My sidebar and mid post ads are all set up to be either text or image ads, depending on bid price at the time. Enabling your ad units to display both text and image/rich media ad types, increases the number of ads competing to appear on your site. More advertisers in the ad auction drives higher bids and more revenue for you. On average,
publishers see a 59% increase in eCPM earnings when they make these changes. If you're not already using both, then it's as simple as going into the ‘My ads’ tab, and clicking on ‘Edit ad type’, next to the ad in the list. This will increase the cost per click, so even if you're not improving the number of clicks that your ad is getting, you'll still make more money.

Other than simple text ads, there are four different types of ads that will appear and in order of CTR they are: animated image, image, rich media and flash. By setting your ads up to be both text and image/rich media ad types, you're allowing Google to make the decision on which type of ad it displays, depending on how much the advertisers are willing to pay.

**Number of Ads**

This is one that you need to be careful about really because it can be a little bit misleading. It would be natural to think that the more ads you have, the more money you will be likely to make, but that's not necessarily so. If you have lots of ads, then that's going to result in lower bids for the ads, and with most visitors only clicking on one ad if they do choose to click on one, then they're going to be out of pocket. Because of this, I recommend only installing an ad one at a time, and seeing how it grows from there. To keep better track of how your ads are responding, I would recommend integrating your AdSense with you Analytics, which can be done with a click of a button on the AdSense home screen. Ultimately though, ad size and type is much more important than the number of ads.

If you still want to include more ads on your site, then I would recommend going through another ad company. The ads pictured below are provided by Buy/Sell Ads and they provide me with $225 a month (after their 25% commission). They're fixed ads, paid for monthly, and since each advertiser has started advertising on my site, they've not stopped.

**Referrer**

Believe it or not, all of the above is only important if you’re reaching the right people, who are the types of people that are willing to click on your ads. I know you’re probably wondering what the big difference is, and I’ll be honest, I was the same until I started delving a little bit deeper. I found that the majority of my earnings came from a single referrer, which was a photography forum which was linking to my website on their homepage, all thanks to Google Analytics. I had no idea why this was at the time, but I’ve got a better understanding of it now.

The first thing that I did was email the website, who I knew for ages was linking to me, and thank them, telling them that I would return the favor by linking on my own fan page - I didn’t want to ruin a good thing. I went further though and I actually joined the
forum, and as it’s a fairly small forum, it was quite a nice place to be, with very little negativity that you often find on much larger websites. By posting on the forum, I was able to link to more of my content and earn even more money from them.

Exactly why they were worth more money to me is a mystery, but I have a few theories. Firstly, there’s a chance that people from the forum were grateful for the content and clicked on an ad as a way of saying thanks. Much more likely though is that it comes down to how Google ads work. As I’m sure you’re aware, Google look at your cache information to tell what you’ve been clicking on, which determines what you’re interested in. It then uses this information to promote more relevant ads to you. Having come from a photography forum, onto another photography website, Google will have recognized this and provided them with adverts that are related to what they’re looking at, and because what they’re currently looking at is more relevant, they’re more likely to click on them. The third theory I have is that the type of user who frequents a photography forum is likely to be very interested in what I’m writing about, which will lead them to spending more time on my site, which will make them more likely to click on an ad.

To make more money, you need to appeal to your top referrers, and when you’ve found out what they are, appeal to sites that are similar to them. This single forum referrer is responsible for roughly 70% of my referred AdSense earnings in the past 30 days, so you can start to see the importance of targeting the right people.

So here’s how to start earning the maximum amount of money possible with Google AdSense:

• Use large ads, but not so much that they look out of place or intrude on your visitor’s experience.
• Place a small text ad close to your header and experiment with different locations and sizes until you’ve reached a compromise between size and effectiveness.
• Install an extra ad in the middle of the text with the use of the WordPress plugin called Ad Injection - [http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/ad-injection/](http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/ad-injection/)
• Set all your ads to be display both text and image/rich media ad types, unless you want them to be small and not too intrusive.
• Roll out your ads one by one to see which ones work, and which ones don’t. You don’t want to bombard people with ads if they’re not even working.
• Stick to a smaller number of ads, in different places, perhaps 5-8.
• Start appealing to your top referrer, maybe even take out advertising with them; it’ll soon come back to you, along with a larger following.

One final point worth making is that if you use Google Chrome, then there’s a new addon that you can use to keep track of your earnings, which can be downloaded [here](http://www.google.com/chrome). It makes it easier to track you earnings, and will even overlap how much each ad has made within a certain time period.