

Using Google AdWords in the MBA MIS Course

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ABSTRACT

From February to June 2008, Google ran its first ever student competition in sponsored Web search, the 2008 Google Online Marketing Challenge (GOMC). The 2008 GOMC was based on registrations from 61 countries: 629 course sections from 468 universities participated, fielding over 4000 student teams of approximately 21,000 students. Working with a real-life client, student teams planned, executed, and assessed a three-week online marketing campaign using Google AdWords, all funded by Google. In this article, we share how the GOMC augmented a Master of Business Administration, Management Information System (MIS) course, providing each class team with a unique, experiential, electronic-commerce project. Student feedback shows that the projects stimulated student interest in technology and marketing as well as provided experience with creating effective ad campaigns and direct marketing via the Web, specifically with the Google AdWords platform. In this article, we provide a brief explanation of sponsored search, an overview of literature on pedagogical use of experiential team projects, a discussion of how the project provided tangible illustration of traditional MIS topics, and address why this type of exercise is well-suited for a class project format. Based on our experience, we will offer advice on what worked, what did not, and recommendations for the future. The article should be of interest to educators who might consider participating in future GOMCs, as well as others who might consider the inclusion of Google AdWords (or similar program) as a pedagogical tool in their curricula.

Keywords: Sponsored Search, Search Advertising, Paid Search, AdWords, Experiential Learning, MBA Curriculum, Management Information Systems