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**FIRM MANAGEMENT**

# 4 Marketing Tips to Keep Your Accounting Firm Top of Mind with Contractors

Contractors are unique when it comes to location. Their office often changes based on the project location. Knowing that, what can you do to maximize your efforts to reach these nomadic business pros?

**Becky Livingston** • Aug. 11, 2017



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- 1. Mobile.** Not only should your website be mobile optimized, but any email campaign you're sending should be set to have mobile preferences. While your concentrating on this, also consider your image file sizes. They too should be optimized for web and use the .png extension, especially if the image contains text, for faster load times.
- 2. Online buying.** You might not think that contractors purchase large equipment online. However, there are cases when they do visit online sites to view equipment, such as auction sites. In that case, consider creating banner and graphical ads to run on those sites. One way to do that is with managed placements in Google AdWords. With this tool, you can search for websites that meet your criteria, image sizes you'd like to use, and bidding score for high ranking sites. Graphical ads do not cost more than text ads on this platform. So why not set aside part of your online ad budget to focus here? For more, read the example and side bar below.
- 3. Strategic text messages.** If you plan to implement this method, be sure to put a plan together for content and timing. People want useful information, rather than generic information, from your firm. Here are some items to consider:
  1. Employment taxes;
  2. Information returns;
  3. Tax requirements;
  4. Independent contractor responsibilities;
  5. Quarterly estimated tax payments;
  6. Tips about increasing business efficiencies;
  7. Links to videos or podcast tips that address common pain points; and
  8. New services your firm is offering.
- 4. Social Media.** Getting in front of contractors takes time, especially with social media. Finding the right hashtags for the industry is key when using any social media platform. Also, leveraging local terms and hashtags, such as the city or region is important. Keep in mind, you're not speaking with the whole Internet; just the target market you want to reach. Hashtagify.me is a great tool to find relevant hashtags and influencers in the target contracting market you want to reach. Finally, when sharing content, consider contractors' pain points and create content they can use.

# AdWords Placement Example

Search for new targeting ideas using the phrase “online auctions heavy equipment” and “heavy equipment online auctions” within the United States, that use English as their preferred language, and all ad formats.

*Tip:* Until you know for sure how your audience is using the graphical ads, start with all ad formats. When you review the ad analytics, you’ll know which formats worked the best.

In this example, one of the ad placement results showed the following information:

- PCIAuctions.com had multiple ad formats to choose from, and cost per click was between \$1.50 – \$2.00.
- Per week, that site gets 40,000 to 45,000 impressions (number of times the site is viewed) resulting in 3,500 to 4,000 cookies dropped per week.
- With a budget of \$44, you could expect an average of seven clicks on your ad per week.

## Google AdWords Managed Placements

Here’s how you would leverage managed placements for contractors. This feature on Google AdWords provides you access to mobile-ready graphical ad placement on prominent websites contractors frequent.

- Login to your Google AdWords account (a Gmail address is preferred and a credit card is required to set up the account).
- Go to Tools > Display Planner
- Choose how you want to search (1) Find new targeted ideas by phrase, website, or category; or (2) Find top placements by location. You can also view the insights and forecasts for your target once it’s defined.
- Click “Get placement ideas”
- Be sure the “Placements” tab is chosen on the individual targeting ideas results page.
- Click the “>>” arrows to add those websites to a plan. Once you have all the sites you want to leverage, download the plan for more details.

- Review the downloaded plan and choose which sites make the most sense to advertise on. You might choose to split test this and do the top-rated sites first, then do the secondary site another week. Compare results and choose the best sites to move forward with.

Having a good, mobile-ready plan in place can help you target contractors wherever they may be – on the job site, traveling from one location to another, or in their main office. Which tips will you add to your marketing plan?

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