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## **Pay-per-click can work for you: The power of search engine marketing**

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SEO, or search engine optimization, has become a strategy familiar to nearly every real estate professional. This technical web site marketing method typically proves effective toward increasing organic search engine rank results. But real estate professionals who combine SEO efforts with search engine marketing - known as SEM - are the ones reaping the biggest online search benefits. In simple terms, SEM is the opposite of SEO. It is paid online advertising, often referred to as pay-per-click, and is displayed in highlighted text above or next to organic search results. These advertisements can be in the form of text, image, or video. They are eye-catching and guaranteed to be one of the first items on a search results page. This high ranking placement increases the probability of qualified leads clicking the ad and reaching the advertiser's web site, leading to expanded brand awareness and prospective clients.

SEM can prove an expensive advertising solution, but users can set a daily budget and maximum bid in order to control costs. Once the budget is reached for the day (based on the number of times it was clicked by individual users), the ad is removed from the specified search terms until the following day.

Google AdWords is typically the vendor of choice for advertisers seeking SEM services. According to SEMPO and eConsultancy's "The State of Search Marketing Report 2011," nearly 95% of businesses and advertising agencies surveyed use Google for their SEM solutions. The report also showed that 53% of respondents are now shifting their marketing budgets from print to search marketing/social media marketing.

SEM is most effective when executed as part of a seamless online marketing strategy that includes SEO and social media marketing efforts. By employing these methods in concert with one another, your real estate business will earn expanded name recognition, increased web site traffic, and more qualified leads. To save time and resources, contact an integrated marketing firm to help you design and manage an online marketing plan that will deliver tangible results.

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