

The “Google Slap” Retort

Google Cash Third Edition Special Report

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The Google Cash “Google Slap” Retort

Purpose:

After reading this report, you should understand the following three things:

1. What is the “Google Slap?”
2. Three strategies to avoid the slap or reverse it
3. Four practices you must always avoid

Introduction

In July 2006, Google updated their Adwords landing page relevancy algorithm. This has become known as the “Google Slap.” In fact, Google has updated their landing page algorithm again in November of 2006, and this has become known as the “Google Slap 2.” After the Google algorithm update, many advertisers found that their 5 cent and 10 cent keywords were inactivated and that Google was asking for \$5 and \$10 minimum bids to reactivate them.

Personally, I had several keywords that were disabled with \$5 and even \$10 minimum bids required to reactivate them. At first, I was concerned, but experience has taught me to take Google algorithm updates with a grain of salt. I made a few changes that I will outline in this report, and the bids went back down to their previously low cost per click. My campaigns have continued unscathed ever since.

With this latest algorithm change from Google, a couple of things have happened. You have the “Little Slap” and the “Big Slap”.

The “Little Slap” is when the cost per click of your keywords is raised from say 5 cents per click to a minimum of 20 to 40 cents per click. Typically, you would discover this when all of your keywords that you had set with a maximum bid of 15 cents became inactive. Using the Google estimator tool, you would discover that Google required more than your previous maximum cpc bid.

The big slap is when your keywords are again disabled, but the minimum bid shown by the Google estimator tool has been raised to \$5 or even \$10 per click!

The “Little Slap” and the “Big Slap” happen for different reasons.

The “Little Slap”

The “Little Slap” happens when Google decides that your ads are loosely or poorly targeted.

If you have an Ad that has nothing to do with your keywords, you’ll receive the little slap and will have higher minimum bids. More specifically, if the keywords used in the Adgroup are not included in the ad copy itself, your minimum cpc will be higher than necessary. Google is giving you a low relevancy score which when factored into their algorithm, results in the higher cpc.

Another way to get the “Little Slap” is when the page where you are sending people to from your Adwords ad, is not very related to your ads or keywords. Again this will result in higher minimum bids being required to activate your ads.

Laser targeted ads where all of the keywords in the Adgroup are related to (or actually included) in both the ad copy and the landing page copy will require the lowest minimum bid price.

To receive the lowest bid price:

- Include keywords from your Adgroup in your ad copy and make sure that your ads are related to your keywords.
- Use a landing page that is very related to your keywords and ad copy. Don’t use a home page in the destination url, but instead use the specific page that has information on that keyword.
- Ideally, a landing page used in the destination url of your Adwords ad:
 - Has your keyword in the Title of the page.
 - Has a Headline (H1 Tag) that has the keyword in it.
 - Has the keyword in the first paragraph of text.
 - Has content built around that keyword’s theme.
 - If there is an image or graphic, it’s named with the keyword in it. For example: keyword.jpg. And the image’s Alt text also has the keyword in it.
 - Has the keyword in a navigation link.

The “Big Slap”

The “Big Slap” happens when Google decides that the website or the specific landing page that you are using in the destination url of your Adwords ad is of low quality, low relevancy, or is already black listed by Google. Google is protecting their users’ experience by raising minimum bid prices to prohibitively high amounts so that marketers will not use Adwords to direct traffic to unrelated or low quality sites.

On one of my campaigns, the minimum bid for several keywords was raised from 8 cents to \$10. I took one of those keywords and typed it in to Google. I noticed which Adwords ads were showing up for that keyword, and I assumed that those competitors had not been slapped.

First, I noted the URL that the ad was being directed to, and then I entered the same URL into the destination URL of my campaign. Voila, the minimum bid was back down to 8 cents. So then, I knew that Google did not like the website I was sending people to.

I quickly found a different merchant to promote, got my affiliate link, put it in my Adwords ad, and the bid prices returned to 8 cents.

When it comes to the “Big Slap,” the domain has the most influence, not the actual landing page. You can have the best landing page with the most relevant and perfect content, but if Google doesn’t like the rest of your site, then your going to get slapped with \$5 to \$10 minimum bids.

Here are some of the things Google looks at to determine the quality of a domain:

- **The Age of the Domain:** Older domains score better than brand new ones.
- **The Number of Pages Indexed by Google:** To have a high Quality Score, the domain needs to have several of its pages indexed by Google.
- **A Site Map:** The domain should have a site map somewhere on your site, and a link to it from one or more of your content pages. The site map enables Google to crawl and index your site.
- **A Privacy Policy:** Several Google Cash customers have mentioned that when they called and spoke with Google representatives regarding their domains, the representative told them that having a Privacy Policy was influential.
- **The Incoming Links:** The site should have at least a few, quality incoming links.
- **Adsense Ads:** Having Adsense Ads on a landing page of a site that doesn’t have a high quality score in the eyes of Google guarantees the slap. Only put Adsense ads on a landing page that’s on a domain you believe to have a high Quality Score.
- **The Landing Page:** If the landing page is on a domain with a good Quality Score then you can get away with it being a lower quality page. For example, it could be a name squeeze page with little content; however, if the same page is on a site with a low Quality Score, it will be slapped.

For the landing page to work on a site with a lower Quality Score, it will need to be a page with good, relevant content.

Three Strategies to Avoid the Slap or Reverse it

If you have been slapped or you want to make sure that you avoid it, there are three things you can do. All three will help you to get your minimum bids back to a reasonable amount so you can proceed with your campaigns. Even if you have never built a website, you will be able to implement any or all of these strategies. The three strategies are as follows:

1. Link Directly to the merchant
2. Use Blogger for a temporary landing page solution
3. Start from Scratch with a new domain

Strategy 1: Link Directly to the Merchant

Contrary to what many people are telling you, the process of linking directly to the merchant from your Adwords ad, using your affiliate link in the destination URL is alive and well.

During the last year, countless people have written that you can no longer link directly to the merchant's site using your affiliate link in the destination URL of your Adwords Ad. They said that if you do, you get slapped. That is not true. All of my campaigns that link directly to the merchants are working fine. Also, I keep in close contact with many of my Google Cash customers, and they have reported that linking directly to the merchant is working fine and their campaigns have not been affected.

Strategy 2: Use Blogger for a Temporary Landing Page Solution

This is a super fast and effective way to create landing pages! You don't need to have a website, and it is a quick way for you to test the waters with a new landing page. The only reason why I consider this a temporary solution is that you don't own the url, and all your pages live on Blogger. If something happens to your Blogger account, you would have to build a new landing page using another strategy.

For example, let's say that you are promoting a merchant with a direct link to their site, and you get slapped. First, you replace the destination URL of your ad with a URL from an ad that you found listed as a Google Adword search result for your keyword. If your minimum bid drops back down again, you know that Google gave the merchant's site a low quality score.

You can find a different merchant to promote and that would most likely fix the problem and remove the slap. In fact, you have already proven that to yourself by testing a URL that you found in an Adwords ad. But if you have already been successful promoting the merchant url that is causing the slap, you might not want to switch merchants. In that case you can build a landing page to promote this merchant and avoid the slap.

Similarly, you might want to use the Blogger strategy to create a landing page when a competitor is using a direct to merchant link for one or many of your successful keywords, and as a result, is reducing or even eliminating your daily impressions.

Using Blogger is the quickest option for building a landing page. This is an especially great option for a beginner, but it is also a great option for a seasoned website builder. Why? First of all, it is free. Second, it is super fast. Third, you don't need to FTP pages to your server, and finally, you don't even need to get a URL or hosting!

When most people think of blogs, they don't see what an elegant solution for landing pages they can be because blogs generally have tons of links in them to other blog posts, other blogs, etc and the format is different than a typical web page. What many people don't realize is that you can create actual landing pages on blogs. That is, you can create pages that don't have other links to distract people and lead them away from the merchant you are promoting.

And the best part about using Blogger is that Google loves Blogger. After all, they own Blogger.

It's easy to build these quick and effective landing pages on Blogger.

Here are the basic steps:

- a. Visit blogger.com and signup for free.
- b. Set up a new blog for each landing page.
- c. Edit the template and remove the sidebar. This removes all the links that normally show up on the side of blogs.
- d. Put your keyword in the title.
- e. For example, in order to create a Review Landing Page, write a genuine, original, personal review, add a picture with your keyword in the name, and include your affiliate link in the body of your post. Use your keyword a few times in the beginning of the review.
- f. Publish your blog.
- g. Now you will have a blog whose URL is for example: keyword.blogspot.com
- h. Use that URL in the destination URL of your Adwords Ads.

Strategy 3: Start from Scratch with a new Domain

If you own a site that got slapped by Google or if you are starting from scratch and building a site so that you can use landing pages, here are the steps I recommend:

Get a New Domain Name

If your site has been slapped and adding some content did not fix the problem, then get a new domain. Setup blog software on your site, add content, get indexed, and start advertising again.

Install a Blog

Google loves blogs. They also get indexed faster because of the Ping feature that comes with blogging software. Blogs are also an excellent way to run your website. Many people don't know this but you can build an entire website using blogging software. You can have a website that has sales pages, landing pages, a home page, and of course a blog, all by using blogging software to manage your website.

Using a blog is an excellent way to manage content on a website. Blogs are actually designed for this and therefore are a great content management solution. They allow you to create pages on your website through a built in word processor and designer. You don't need to know html or use software to upload files, etc. You just login to your site and write new pages or edit older ones. You can add pictures, video, or whatever you want on your pages. Click "Publish" when you're finished, and your webpage is updated! It's really that easy.

Also, using free blogging software like Word Press to run your website allows you to change the entire look and feel of your website at the click of a button. You can find thousands of different themes (templates) for your website, all for free. You upload the new theme. Click a button, and voila, your entire site's look and feel has changed, but all of your content, navigation, and everything else stays the same.

Also by using Word Press to run your website, you can take advantage of the many built in features and the constant, open-source innovation. For example, you can add a search engine to make it easy for people to search your site.

If you are starting from scratch, I suggest you use Word Press Blogging Software to build and manage your website. If you can use a word processor like Microsoft Word, you can use Word Press.

How to Set Up Your Site

1. Brainstorm some domain names. Pick something that has the general keyword theme in your domain name. For example, if you are going to build a website with different landing pages for Refinance Loans or Mortgage Lenders, you could choose a URL like: LendersReviewed.com
2. Go to [Host Monster](#) and sign up for hosting.
 - a. It is only \$4.95 per month and includes your domain name registration. It includes WordPress for free, and it is already installed and ready for you to use.
 - b. Once you've signed up, login to your control panel. Click on the icon that says "Fantastico." Then, on the left hand side of the screen, click "Word Press." Then, click on "New Installation," and follow the instructions from there.
3. Get a few incoming links to your site. For example, post on related discussion forums and include your domain in the signature or get listed in a few directories like dmoz.org
4. Add a Privacy Policy Page to your site. Find one that you like and mimmick it.
5. Add links to your landing pages. Each landing page must link to your privacy policy.

Four Practices you Must Avoid

1. Don't use directory building scripts. This worked for a little while, but I've heard from several people that Google is now black listing these sites as spam.
2. Don't put Adsense on your landing pages (unless you can get away with it because you have a well established domain with a high quality score).
3. Don't add a ton of keywords into one Adgroup at once. This will get your site slapped immediately.
4. Don't use a name squeeze page on a domain that has little content or a low quality score.

Conclusions

Realize that Google will continue to change its algorithms, and as a result, you may wake up one day with your best keywords deactivated because there has been an increase in the minimum bids. These changes are designed to make Google Adwords lead to the most relevant landing page possible, whether it has been created by you or belongs to the merchant. These adjustments are good for the long term viability of the Adwords system and are not designed to infringe on the profits of affiliate marketers.

Remember that you don't have to use a landing page, but it can improve your conversion rates. Linking directly to the merchant works because there are tons of merchants and tons of keywords. It's almost the same as before the one url per keyword rule was implemented in January of 2005.

Landing pages are good because you are starting to build real estate on the internet. As far as building a business, that is a great first step. Landing pages should be used when you can't link directly to the merchant or you think that you can improve your conversion rates. The only reasons why you can't link directly to the merchant are because someone else is already linking directly to the merchant using your most important and high trafficked keywords or because the merchant page has been given a low quality score. Otherwise, always start with a link direct to the merchant.

Finally, remember that the Internet is a very dynamic system, and the tools for creating your business online are getting better and easier to use. Blogging wasn't even a word a few years ago, and now the practice may replace the traditional web design process, especially for content related business applications.

Implement the steps in this report to improve your campaign performance and start building an online business. The time is approaching where you will spend most of your time building a business and not worrying about the technical aspects of working on the web. Don't be intimidated by changes. These changes will make your business more viable in the future.

Appendices of Recommended Links

[Host Monster](#) is a professional web hosting service that comes with the Word Press blogging software installed. Using Host Monster is easy and fast. The service comes with free domain name registration and is currently only \$4.95 per month!

[Adword Mentor](#) is a professional affiliate marketer membership site with numerous resources and helpful forums where professionals exchange the latest tips and tricks for internet marketing.

[Google Cash](#) is the step by step instruction guide and reference handbook for using Google Adwords and affiliate programs to create a profitable home business. Lifetime updates are free to all customers.

[Chris Carpenter Blog](#) is my business blog where I chronicle the latest developments in Internet marketing, new money making techniques, and any changes that are affecting affiliate marketers. I also include resources such as special reports and video tutorials. Look for my video tutorial that explains how to start your own resale rights business starting with this special report.

[Your Roadmap – Beyond Google Cash](#) is Chris Carpenter's sequel to "Google Cash". This complete home study course provides a road map to building an Auto Pilot Online Business. The video courses, workbook, and related learning tools provide exercises for you to develop your business ideas and a roadmap to create the systems that will run your business. "Your Roadmap - Beyond Google Cash" will have you working on your business and not in it.