



# PROVE IT! PODCAST

HOSTED BY DEBBIE ALBERT

## Episode 105: Opening the Faucet with Google AdWords

**Guest: Niki Fielding**

*This is Prove It. A podcast for impatient business owners, overwhelmed marketers, and PR practitioners with no time for podcasts. In just 10 minutes they answer 3 questions and offer proof of what's working in marketing communications today. Here's Debbie Albert, President of Albert Communications.*

**Debbie Albert:** Welcome, on this episode of *Prove It* we're talking about Google AdWords with Niki Fielding, the founder and president of [Digital Brand Expressions](#). Niki is an accomplished senior digital marketing executive. She has 25 years of success across the technology, marketing, and media industries. She launched DBE in 2002 and has helped more than 200 clients grow through search engine and social media marketing initiatives and she has led the agency to become a Google premier partner. In a word, she knows her stuff. So, Niki welcome to *Prove It*.

**Niki Fielding:** Thanks Debbie it's great to be here.

**Debbie Albert:** I'm so glad you're joining us today because I have learned so much from you about Google AdWords and it makes my head spin and adds to my gray hair, but you've been very good about talking me off the ledge when I get crazy with it. So, as you know we plan for 10 minutes for 3 questions, give or take, because I interrupt constantly. And then we're going to ask you to prove it. So, are you ready to get started?

**Niki Fielding:** Sure, absolutely.



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**Debbie Albert:** Okay so my first question is I would like you to just talk about Google AdWords, and how they can help businesses of different sizes, in different industries. If you could just give us a broad overview as the first question.

**Niki Fielding:** Sure, so when you buy ads on Google AdWords, your ads appear at the top of the page on the desktop version and they also appear at the bottom of those search engine results page. And on a mobile device, which is what most people are using these days, the ads will appear at the very top and they're marked as ads. What's great about them is that they show up when people are actively looking for the services or products that you provide. And that happens because you picked keywords, phrases that you think people would be looking for you would use as search queries. The ads are great because you only pay for them if somebody clicks on them. So, if someone sees the ad and they recognize your company and they get a quick sense of it from the ad but they don't click through, you don't pay Google for anything, so it's free exposure. But really the best part is you're being served up to people who are actively looking for what you provide.

**Debbie Albert:** And one of the things you taught me along the way is that you can tweak these along the way because you and your team are constantly monitoring what is getting clicked on and if the phrase has the slightest nuance in it you're able to change it to get more clicks, more valuable clicks, I would say.

**Niki Fielding:** Right. And ads these days have gotten very complex so it's not just buying a keyword, or it's not buying 100 keywords, it's really figuring out first what are the ways that people will search for you and your competitors and making sure that you put those keywords and phrases into your buy.

But your ad is not just the headline and some lines of text. These days you can have structured snippets, you can have call out extensions, there are all different ways that you can accentuate your text-based ad. And again, Google AdWords are just, at this time anyway, they're just text. There are no images. The images that you see in the search



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results are other kinds of listings. But Google AdWords ads are just text. They're headline and two lines of copy, but then you'll see ads having different kinds of additional copy that are called extensions. So, when you think about what is the structure of an ad on Google AdWords, it's the headline, it's the body copy, it's the link to your website, but then it's all these other extensions. So, one keyword could basically have numerous permutations of combinations of ads that are associated with it.

**Debbie Albert:** What do you mean?

**Niki Fielding:** So, if you have the keyword, say that you're selling scented soap and its lavender scented soap. You would have a headline to attract the person's attention if they're looking for soap and they might consider lavender or they're specifically looking for lavender soap and then you would have two lines of text that would describe the soap and try to get them to want to click through from the ad to the website and the reason you want them to click through is because obviously once they get to the website you can tell them more and incentivize them to make the purchase. The structured snippets, the call out extensions might have other information. Maybe a special promotion going on. Maybe you want to have competitively comparative information in there. You can drop the person to different pages on your website based on what you're trying to test. You might want to drop them right on a page which they can place the order for the lavender soap, but part of your strategy might be to drop them on a page where they can see herbal soaps, in addition to lavender.

**Debbie Albert:** Oh, I see what you're saying.

**Niki Fielding:** So, you have lots of different options based on your strategies it's not just buy a keyword and take them to your home page. That would be disastrous from a financial standpoint. You want to get them as close to the desired action and it's part of an integrated campaign, so there are probably multiple things you're testing at any one time. Ultimately,



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the goal is to get, in business to business it's usually to get a lead, a qualified lead. And in ecommerce, it's usually to get them to make that purchase.

**Debbie Albert:** So, my second question really should have been the first, which is obviously buying ads on the internet has changed over the years. You are so entrenched in this. How do you foresee it continuing to evolve?

**Niki Fielding:** It's evolving at this moment. It's constantly changing. One of the things that Google has announced, for example, and they've been testing this with various agencies, is this idea that the ads are more dynamic. So, you preapprove the ads but then Google can create the structured snippets, change out headlines, pull from a pool of content that you've approved and basically on the fly, restructure the ads based on what Google's algorithm thinks people are most likely to take action on.

And again, Google gets paid when someone clicks from the ad to your website so everything that Google is doing is to try to create the optimal experience for that potential buyer so that they do click through.

**Debbie Albert:** Right. So, this is I think the big question, and you and I have dealt with this with some clients together. Before a company decides to go with Google AdWords, because there are two choices really, you can go with Facebook ads which are a different kind of ad or you can go with Google AdWords. **Before a company makes the decision to go with this, what kind of, what do they need to consider, in terms of patience? In terms of investment? And commitment.** So, I just need to ask you because you know we've run into situations where people say after a month, "*Oh it's not working, I'm not doing it.*" And we know that that is really not a fair way to test something like this so, I need your expertise on if any of us are talking to a client about making this investment, what should we tell them they really need to focus on, before they take that step?



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**Niki Fielding:** That's an excellent question! The first thing I would say though is it's most likely for most advertisers unless they have very, very small budgets. And by very, very small, I mean something under \$1000 a month to spend on advertising. They're not really making a choice between Google and Facebook, they would actually be doing both. And the reason is with Google you're attracting people who have gone to that search engine to look specifically for something that they need, again, whether it's a service or product, they have a need and they go to Google to start to look for information on the Web.

So, you're buying the potential for them because they have the need, you're buying the potential to reach them when they have the need. With Facebook there's no algorithm for need. With Facebook you're targeting people much more like traditional advertising. In traditional advertising you would buy a publication or you would buy a TV spot based on the audience that you perceived would be there, based on the research that that media would provide, medium would provide. Or that station or network, etc.

With Facebook, we're able to target people based on the information that they've put in their personal profiles and so Facebook's algorithms are changing too and as we all know they've gotten into trouble for oversharing. So, they're making changes, very specifically, with their advertisers for the kinds of information they can and cannot provide about us as consumers. But just from a bigger picture perspective, we can target people for an advertiser, let's use our lavender soap example. We can make some assumptions based on the information that that brand has, and I'm making this up because I don't really know about lavender soap. [laughs]

**Debbie Albert:** I was like that's an interesting choice, okay.

**Niki Fielding:** So, for lavender soap we might know from the brand that they do very well with women 35 and older who live in a certain geographic region, let's assume that lavender soap is very soothing and if you live in colder parts of the United States you're more likely to buy lavender soap for more months of the year. So whatever information



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somebody has shared in their profile with Facebook, Facebook will allow us to group those people and to make assumptions and to target our advertising to them and I'm being vague because they're really in the midst of what they will and won't allow so for example, one of the things that we were able to target until very recently, was education.

So, we could have a brand where we knew that they tended to do better with people who had high school diplomas who didn't go on to college, we could have targeted for that. Now we may not be able to do that anymore. But there's still great opportunities for targeting. We used to be able to target by job title. We may not be able to do that anymore. Okay so what you can do on Facebook is to target people based on the criteria that they share in their profile with Facebook, but you're not targeting them as individuals. I can't send you an ad to Debbie Albert. I can target you for the groups of people that you fall into that I know you may or may not like my soap. So, the differences between Facebook and Google, Google is targeting people who are actively looking, and Facebook is targeting people based on what we think they might be interested in.

**Debbie Albert:** Got it.

**Niki Fielding:** So, then when you talk about budget, and commitment and patience, for any of us it's all about testing. Unless you've been doing it before you don't have a history, so most brands have been doing some form of Google advertising for some time. But let's assume that you're new to it. What would you need to know? First of all, you need to budget appropriately. How do you do that? We do the research.

Whoever is going to be managing the advertising for you can research through the search engines own platforms to find out how many people are looking for what you provide? How many other brands are advertising? The tool won't tell exactly how many people are advertising or how many other advertisers there are, but from the cost of each keyword, the cost per click, we can ascertain that it's a very competitive category or it's something that might be a good option for you. Even if it's very competitive that doesn't mean that you





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have to avoid it, it just means that hey you're in a good business and people want what you have. Now the job is to be really smart about how you spend those ad dollars. And that's where budgeting appropriately comes in. If you don't spend enough, your ads aren't going to be seen, even if they're shown to the right people they won't be shown often enough for you to get the data you need to really improve the program and to reach the right people.

**Debbie Albert:** How long do you think people really need to give it to see that it's working?

**Niki Fielding:** Assuming that there's no seasonality to their business, because that's another factor, if your business is pretty much the same throughout the entire year, I really don't think you have enough data to say if this is working or not until after about 4 or 5 months. And that's 4 or 5 months from the time you launch it. But what's great about paid search, in particular, is you do start to get results right away so if the ads are live you should be getting traffic. Now whether that traffic converts to sales is another whole question.

DA: And that's a question for another day. But let me get to the finale when I ask you to prove it. So, **can you tell us about a company who made an investment in Google AdWords and how it paid off for that company?**

**Niki Fielding:** Sure. There's a restaurant that we work with and they're out in California. And they happen to be sandwiched between the, they're in Orange County, but they're in between the big metro areas. And so, on the weekends, their business is fantastic because they have this jazz brunch every Sunday and they turn people away, they're so busy and they're so well-known for this. But they weren't able to fill seats during the workweek lunches because they're so far from everything. And they're a very upscale establishment.



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So, they had heard about us through another client and asked us if we could help them. And we set up a Google AdWords program based on the strengths of their restaurant and the fact that they were upscale and the fact that they were a little bit more exclusive so if you had a business luncheon and you were looking to take somebody to something that was a little bit more impressive, this would really be the restaurant that you would want to take them to. And it took us 3-1/2 months to really tweak the program, but now they're full at lunchtime every single day!

**Debbie Albert:** That's amazing! Alright you proved it! I knew that you would. We're out of time and I wanted to thank you for sharing your knowledge.

My guess is that we're going to sign you up for another podcast to dig deeper into this because I know you and I have sat over several lunches together talking about this and it can go on and on. And I just think it's fascinating. And from someone who is a little more seasoned professional the way that these algorithms change, honestly, like my eyes start to spin like in the cartoons, when I learn about it. So, I want to thank Niki for joining us and encourage our listeners to keep listening for more ideas and trends and more clarity in marketing communications. Thanks for joining us. Take care!

**End of podcast**