

### **12.3 Compare and Contrast PPC and SEO**

To understand PPC and SEO, you must understand the definitions and the basic purpose for both. Let us start with SEO, which is simply search engine optimization. This term is referencing all the techniques you can use to make your website more visible to the people who are searching for something using a search engine. On the other hand, we have PPC which is simply pay-per-click advertising. It is an advertisement displayed to targeted audiences set up by the ad creator. You pay for one, you do not pay for the other. Users may use whatever search engine they like because they all fundamentally work the same. It is a common misconception that SEO is just picking keywords. This is not the case, it is a collaboration of techniques, including keywords, used to help search engines return the best fit solutions to the searcher based on what they are searching for.

The good news is that both target specific audiences, albeit differently. SEO is organic and is the preferred traffic driver. This means users are finding you naturally. They are searching for solutions to their problems based on whatever terms they use. It is like having a storefront with big windows where people can look inside and see what you sell if they choose to. You are not paying to make sure people know specifics about what is inside, they are casually looking. PPC is non-organic because it may or may not show up in a user's natural habits. Think of it like sticking a sign twirler on the curb in front of the storefront. It is the "look at me" marketing of the internet. You have paid to make sure every passerby sees your storefront. Neither is bad, but they serve different purposes to reach the end goal of more visibility. Put another way, SEO is a long-term technique that yields ongoing returns and PPC has immediate but short-term impact.

A good digital marketing plan includes both PPC and SEO, especially in the situation where you have a new website and are trying to drive traffic to it. With SEO, you are at the mercy of the search engine robots to crawl your content, index it, and then return it back to those searching for solutions. This can take time, there is no guarantee that it will happen the same day that you publish the content or even update it. That is where PPC comes in because it gives an immediate exposure to the content while you are waiting for your SEO efforts to propagate. This exposure is good because it increases the number of links back to your website thus increasing your value as a quality resource. The more quality the resource, the more likely it will show in search result pages but remember that it is only temporary while SEO increases your organic or natural traffic. PPC can boost traffic initially just not organically. Unfortunately, PPC by itself is not sustainable long-term because page authority rankings rely more on the length of stay, interaction, and return visits. Immediate visibility does not keep people on the website or get them to return, and it does not necessarily convert them into paying customers.