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MSN Introduces First Paid-search Tool

MSN Keywords is the first tool to be launched on the MSN adCenter



Microsoft launched its first paid-search advertising application that offers advertisers information on searchers and their search activity, and the frequency at which keywords have been accessed. The advertisers pay a one-time subscription fee of S\$5 (US\$3) for MSN Keywords. For each keyword, they bid a minimum of S\$0.10 and pay for the number of times search users click on their advertisements, which appear as sponsored links alongside search results. The placement of the links will depend on the bid price, click-through rate as well as the types of user profiles captured by the system. Advertisers can key in a pre-determined budget in MSN Keywords and initiate marketing campaigns that work around the budgets. They can also view the profile of users who search for particular keywords, and find out how frequently certain keywords have been searched. According to Raxit Kagalwala, MSN's director of program management, although advertisers currently can only view the age and gender of search users, more profile differentiators will be added in future. One example is the type of industry the user comes from, which Kagalwala noted, would be of interest to B2B (business-to-business) companies. MSN Keywords is the first tool to be launched on the MSN adCenter announced earlier this year, which was designed to be a one-stop site for customers looking to launch advertising campaigns. Microsoft's officials said Singapore is the first country in which MSN Keywords was launched. According to Eva Balan, MSN's international marketing manager for MSN adCenter, France will roll out the paid-search application next month. French businesses will be required to pay €5 (US\$6.16) to sign up, with each bid starting from €0.05. A pilot is scheduled to launch in the United States in October.