Measuring the Safety of Internet Search Engines

Benjamin Edelman
Results 1 - 10 of about 720,000,000 for laser printer [definition]. (0.11 seconds)

Laser Printer
www.hp.com Quality HP printers - From photo, laserjet, & multifunction. Shop now

Laser Printer
www.dell.com/softwareperipheral Find great laser and all-in-one printers at Dell online now!

Laser Printer
www.lexmarkstore.com Save now on Laser printers from Lexmark's official online store!

Product search results for laser printer
Samsung ML-2100 Monochrome Laser Printer - $129.99 - CompUSA
Samsung Black-and-White Laser Printer ML-2100 - $123.49 - Best Buy
HL-2700CN Color Laser Printer - $501.95 - Gateway

Howstuffworks "How Laser Printers Work"
Learn about laser printer technology, read laser printer reviews and compare prices and features on popular printer models.
computer.howstuffworks.com/laser-printer.htm - 46k - Jun 14, 2006 - Cached - Similar pages

Do-It-Yourself InkJet and Laser Printer Repair (HP, Apple, Epson ... Free expert tech support, do-it-yourself inkjet and laser printer repair kits, manuals, error codes, drivers, advice, and more. All you need to fix your own...
www.fixyourownprinter.com/ - 7k - Cached - Similar pages

PCWorld.com - Government Uses Color Laser Printer Technology to ... Practice embeds hidden, traceable data in every page printed.
www.pcworld.com/news/article0.aid.118664.00.asp - Similar pages

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www.prosoft3d.com/aquascreen/

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We test the Web to help keep you safe from spyware, spam, viruses and online scams.

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Stay safe while you search

“Surfing Made Safer: 5 stars”
June 8, 2006

Download SiteAdvisor

Learn more
Adverse Selection in Search Ads

• Are search engines’ ads “worse”?
  → “Worse” than what?

• Possible comparisons
  – All sites
  – All “similar” sites
  – Search engines’ organic results for the same terms
Methodology

1394 keywords in total
Organic vs. Sponsored Results

- Organic: 2.0% (yellow), 3.1% (red)
- Sponsored: 6.5% (red), 2.0% (yellow), 8.5% (total)
Dangerous Keywords

- bittorrent, free music downloads, ipod, itunes, limewire
- ipod nano, mp3 music download, nintendo revolution, psp, winmx
- 50 cent, avril lavigne, green day, mariah carey, slipknot
- 50 cent, brad pitt, david beckham, eminem, hayden christensen, jesse mccartney, michael jackson, ronaldinho
- aim, firefox, limewire, spybot

Google

Digital music
- 23.5%
- 22.4%
Tech toys
- 23.1%
- 20.5%
Musicians
- 16.6%
- 6.5%
Popular men
- 16.5%
- 8.9%
Popular software
- 16.0%
- 13.8%
Search Engine Comparison

Google:
- Organic: 2.6% (1.4% + 3.4%)
- Sponsored: 6.6% (1.9%)

Yahoo!
- Organic: 1.3% (1.1%)
- Sponsored: 4.5% (2.0%)

MSN:
- Organic: 2.0% (3.0%)
- Sponsored: 4.1% (3.4%)

Ask.com
- Organic: 2.2% (1.1%)
- Sponsored: 6.5% (2.6%)
First Page Is Safer?
Solutions

• Screening by search engines
Google's Editorial Policy

Aids to Pass Drug Tests

Advertising is not permitted for the promotion of products such as drug cleansing shakes and urine test additives.

Alcohol

Advertising is not permitted for the promotion of beer or hard alcohol.

Anti and Violence

Advertisements and associated websites may not promote violence or advocate against a protected group. A protected group is distinguished by their:

- Race or ethnic origin
- Color
- National origin
- Religion
- Disability
- Sex
- Age
- Veteran status
- Sexual orientation/Gender identity

Ad text advocating against any organization or person (public, private, or protected) is not permitted. Stating disagreement with or campaigning against a candidate for public office, a political party or public administration is generally permissible.

This standard applies to everyone who wants to advertise on Google, whether we agree with their viewpoint or not.

Bulk Marketing

Advertising of bulk marketing products is not permitted if the stated or implied use of the following products is unsolicited spam:

- Email lists that are not opt-in
- Bulk email software
- Bulk messaging

Cable Descramblers and Black Boxes

Advertising is not permitted for products that descramble cable and satellite signals in order to get free cable services.

Counterfeit Designer Goods

Advertising is not permitted for products that are replicas, or imitations, of designer goods.

Dialers

We do not permit advertising that is associated with dialers in any way.

Drugs and Drug Paraphernalia

Advertising is not permitted for the promotion of drugs and drug paraphernalia. This includes drug accessones, illegal drugs, and herbal drugs such as salvia and magic mushrooms.

Fake Documents

Advertising is not permitted for the promotion of fake IDs, passports, diplomas, and noble titles.

Fireworks/Pyrotechnic Devices

Advertising is not permitted for the promotion of fireworks and pyrotechnic devices.

Gambling

Advertising is not permitted for online casinos, sports books, bingo, and affiliates with the primary purpose of driving traffic to online gambling sites.
Google's Online Pharmacy Qualification Program

Important! We are transitioning from SquareTrade to PharmacyChecker as our third-party pharmacy verification provider. During this transition, advertisers may still use a valid SquareTrade ID to run pharmacy-related ads. However, please note that by the end of July, all pharmaceuticals advertisers will need a PharmacyChecker ID to continue to run such ads on AdWords.

The integrity of our advertisers and the safety of consumers within the Google Network are of utmost importance to us. As the online pharmaceuticals market becomes more complex, Google will take steps to give our users and advertisers the best advertising experience possible.

To ensure that our customers, advertisers, and partners have a relevant and trusted marketplace for online pharmaceuticals, we have introduced the AdWords Online Pharmacy Qualification Program.

Policy Overview: Google requires a SquareTrade ID for all online pharmacy advertisers and online pharmacy affiliates targeting the U.S. SquareTrade is approved by the National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA).

What is Google’s Online Pharmacy Qualification Process?

1. An Online Pharmacy is identified and required to participate in the SquareTrade ID program.
2. The Online Pharmacy is then directed to SquareTrade, a leading online trust infrastructure company, which verifies that an appropriate governmental entity has licensed both the pharmacy and its associated pharmacist (verifying a SquareTrade ID) in a program administered in partnership with the National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA).
3. The Online Pharmacy must then be certified as an Online Pharmacy that engages in a set of...
Solutions

• Screening by search engines
• Complaints by users, other advertisers
Policy

• Meaningful liability for advertiser whose ads are misleading? Whose products are harmful?

• Liability for search engine (and other advertising intermediaries) when ads are misleading? Harmful?
  – Duty to affirmatively investigate?
  – Duty to act on complaints received?
Search Engine Advertising Fraud

• Click fraud
• Syndication fraud
Failure to disclose that these are sponsored links.
SideFind Serving Yahoo PPC Ads

PPC Advertisers

money ⇣ money ⇣ money

Yahoo (Overture)

traffic ⇣ traffic ⇣ traffic

81.201.104.136

trafficicengine.net

SideFind

money ⇣ money ⇣ money

traffic ⇣ traffic ⇣ traffic
A Search Hijacker

video of the search hijacking

running a search at Google yields a results page full of ads from Yahoo

May 9, 2006
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Benjamin Edelman