

PVRBlog.com found a way to cover costs and make a profit with Google AdSense.



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Matt Haughey
Founder,
PVRBlog.com

PVRblog

ABOUT GOOGLE ADSENSE

Google AdSense is a program enabling online businesses to earn revenue from serving ads precisely targeted to specific web content and search pages. A broad universe of sites profit from AdSense, with service levels ranging from online sign-up to dedicated support management. Google's thousands of advertisers also benefit from AdSense by gaining exposure on sites across the Google Network, including AOL, Ask Jeeves, Lycos, and EarthLink.

Visit www.google.com/adsense for more information.

It's fair to say that Matt Haughey doesn't always start with a business plan. Based in San Francisco, Haughey has been a website developer, designer, and publisher for years, and is an active blogger as well. One of his blog sites, PVRBlog.com, is all about personal video recorders (PVRs), especially the TiVo® brand. Nearly a year ago Haughey began posting messages about this growing consumer electronics category, including notes on TiVo features, shortcuts, new models, reviews, hacks, and PVR industry news.

Challenge

Haughey didn't intend for PVRBlog to become a business. But its popularity grew – up to 5,000 people read it every day – and he wondered if there was a way to cover costs for hosting and storage. "If running ads could pay for the site, that would be fantastic," he recalls thinking. But as rule, Haughey and his blogging circle did not like the often-irrelevant, obtrusive nature of most online advertising. "I didn't have a clue about how to find decent advertising for the site," he says.

Haughey read about the Google AdSense™ program and decided to try it. "It's completely automated, and so it took 5 minutes to set up," he says. "I've hardly touched it since then."

Results

"I can't believe how lucrative AdSense is," Haughey says. "On the very first day it was on, I made twice what it costs me for monthly hosting, storage, and bandwidth overage fees," adding that he's making money because the ads are relevant and readable. "The targeting is perfect for me," he says. Since PVRBlog is about a product, he gets a lot of traffic from searchers. "People are constantly looking for TiVo and PVR products and services. I'm lucky to have a blog that is product focused, because the ads all relate to PVR products and services."

Haughey says the custom color feature to differentiate the ads from the pages is "awesome. It's nice to add color so readers can see them in context on the page."

In his professional role as web creator, Haughey says he now sees the value of AdSense for similar endeavors. "I encourage people who can write and have active blogs dedicated to a single subject to support them through AdSense ads," he says. "It's definitely lucrative, and you can concentrate on your subject and your site." In particular, he feels the program is "really great for bloggers who worry about the wrong kind of commercialism creeping in, because AdSense ads really work in the context of blog pages."

Since launching AdSense on PVRBlog, Haughey has even opted to run AdSense ads on Metafilter, a much larger community blog site he began in 1999. Today, it features half a million posts on some 27,000 subjects. In short, Haughey has become an extreme fan of Google advertising, which he now says "changed everything by offering highly targeted ads that are actually useful."