KONTERA ADLINKS SECRETS

by Joel Comm

Turning Clicks to Cash

KONTERA ADLINK SECRETS

TURNING CLICK TO CASH

Or

HOW TO <u>REALLY</u> MAKE THE WORDS ON YOUR WEBSITE PAY!

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INTRODUCTION — WHAT IS KONTERA?

After publishing the first edition of my book *Google AdSense Secrets*, many people asked me if I could recommend any other advertising programs that they could use to earn revenue from their websites.

There are a lot of companies that provide contextual advertising. Yahoo! has its own service and Kanoodle has another, to name just two of the leading alternatives. All of these companies do pretty much the same thing: put relevant ads on your Web pages that complement your content.

But there is one service that is both significantly different to all of these *and* has the power to deliver high revenues: **Kontera's AdLinks**.

Like other ad companies, AdLinks relies on your content to deliver *relevant, contextualized* ads that readers will click. Where it differs from just about every other form of contextual advertising though is that AdLinks doesn't place advertisements all over your Web pages.

There are no banners, no ad units and no text links placed at the side of your page, in the middle of an article or anywhere else on your site for that matter.

Instead, Kontera uses a mixture of technology and algorithms to decide what your page is about, *then highlights some of the words you've already put on your page*.

Only when the user places the mouse over those words does an ad appear related to that word's meaning. The ad disappears when the user moves his mouse off the word — or clicks the ad.

So if you had a Web page about furniture for example, Kontera might highlight the words "sofa," "home furnishings" and "dining table" at certain points on your Web page. If the user wanted to know more about any of those topics, he'd simply place his mouse over the link and see an ad.

If the ad interested that user enough, he could then click on the link or the advert and be taken to the advertiser's site. And that's when you get your commission.

The ads delivered by AdLinks then are:

- Unobtrusive — users don't see them unless they want to.
- Targeted — Kontera chooses words relevant to the subject of your site.
- Profitable — Kontera automatically chooses the highest paying ads for the most relevant keywords to display.

That last point is important.

In theory, Kontera is completely automated. You can simply sign up, put the code on your pages and let them do the rest.

They'll pick the words to highlight, decide how to space them out on the page and choose the ads to display. *They'll also keep track of your figures for you, calculate which keywords have the best combination of relevance and price, and ensure that you're getting the highest possible revenue for your page.*

According to the people at Kontera, you can do nothing to your website and within a month, it should be earning the maximum possible revenues.

I'm sure lots of people trust Kontera to maximize revenues on their site for them and earn a pretty good income. Personally, I don't want to earn just "a pretty good income" though, and I doubt you do either.

I want to earn an *outstanding* income through Kontera.

I've had a good look at the AdLinks system and I've discovered some truly amazing things, not least the fact that Kontera grants its publishers *almost complete freedom over the way ads are served on their site.*

If you thought that playing with the look and positioning of your ad units on AdSense or Yahoo! could rocket your revenues, wait till you see what you can do with Kontera!

You're not going to find any of these strategies and techniques on the Kontera pages or in the members' area of the site. But they're all possible, effective and approved for use by the people at Kontera.

In this book, I'm going to talk about the three most important aspects of earning high revenues with AdLinks: formatting, keywords and stats.

I'll explain the best way to present your ads, how to lay out your page to persuade people to click and how to use Kontera's controls (yes, there are controls) to make sure the ad links appear exactly where you want them to appear.

I'll also talk about using keywords and controlling which terms get highlighted and turned into ads so that you can always be certain they're getting the most interest, the largest number of clicks and the highest revenue.

And I'll discuss how to read and analyze your stats so that the changes you make are smart and effective.

What you won't find in this book though is a step-by-step guide to putting AdLinks on your website. That's pretty simple and you don't need me to tell you how to do that. You can find out everything you need to know at www.kontera.com.

In this short guide, I'm going to give you solid, effective and never-before-seen tips for squeezing the maximum revenue out of your Adlink ads.

That said, let's start with formatting....

1. Formatting — Building A Page That Brings Revenues

One of the most important principles of successful Internet publishing is that the ads should blend into the page. The less the ads on your page look like ads, the greater the chance that someone will click them.

When you're earning revenue with Kontera, that principle doesn't apply. Your ads are *already* blended into the site. That's the beauty of AdLinks: you can't ask for the ads to be better blended than to have them embedded in your text!

But that doesn't mean you shouldn't do *anything* about the look of your ads. On the contrary, there's plenty you can — and should — be doing.

1.1 Where To Put The Code

The first thing you should be doing is putting your code in the right place.

I said I'm not going to give a step-by-step guide to putting AdLinks on your site and I'm not. But when I contacted the people at Kontera, they stressed the importance of making sure that the code goes in the right location at the bottom of the page before the </body> tag.

I'm guessing they stressed that because lots of people are putting in the wrong place.

They also said that it's important that your HTML is up to scratch, with no illegal coding. I'm sure there are lots of sites with that problem!

Now, I don't know if putting your code in the wrong place is going to give you the wrong ads or no ads at all (although I suspect that any illegal HTML would throw the contextualizing system out of kilter). But if the people at Kontera think it's important to mention, it's probably important for publishers to pay attention to.

When you're adjusting your site to optimize it for Kontera, take a minute to review your HTML and make sure your code is legal and their code is in the right place. It will just take a minute and could make all the difference in your revenues.

1.2 The Color Of Your Link — When Blue Isn't Always Best

I used to say that the color of advertising links should match the colors used on the Web page. I figured that if the colors matched the page, the links would blend better and the ads would get more clicks.

Then I read an article that pointed out that blue has become the universal color for Internet links. People see the blue text on a Web page, assume it's a link, and click. I tried it on my advertising links, watched my CTR rise... and changed my mind. I started saying that blue links *always* pay.

Now I'm changing my mind again.

Blue links don't always work best. They still work best on most forms of contextualized advertising. But they don't work best on AdLinks.

AdLinks differ from regular links in two ways. The first is that AdLinks have a second, dotted underline beneath them. That already makes them stand out on the page. You want to make them stand out a little more by using an eye-catching color.

When you're using AdLinks, you want people to know they're there.

The actual color you choose for the link will depend on the design of your Web page. It shouldn't be so outrageous that it puts people off, draws attention away from the surrounding text or screams "I'm an ad!" But it should be just different enough to make people notice and tempt them to mouse-over and bring up the tool tips. A tone or two up from one of the surrounding colors on your site would be perfect.

So if your site uses borders or edges in this color:

then you might want to put your AdLinks in a color like this.

To do that, you just need to change the line in the code that says

    var dc_AdLinkColor = 'blue';

to whichever HTML-friendly color you need.

Now, you might be thinking, "That's all very well but if the links aren't blue, how will people know what they are?"

Here's the kicker: **with Kontera, there's nothing wrong with putting a message at the top of your Web page explaining exactly what those AdLinks are.**

In fact, the people at Kontera positively *recommend* that you do this!

You can't tell your readers to click on all your AdLinks to ensure that you get revenue. Nor can you persuade them to click because you'll pay them or for any other reason. Kontera's advertisers won't like users who aren't genuinely interested in their offers any more than Google's advertisers or Yahoo!'s or anyone else's. When those

advertisers complain to Kontera about their low conversion rates, you can be sure that Kontera will pass their complaints on to you.

But you can put a small line at the top of your website that says something like:

For more information and special deals related to any of the issues on this page, place your cursor over the double-underlined links. All information supplied by Kontera.com.

A line like that does two things: it tells people what the links are; and it encourages people to place their cursor over the links.

And that's probably the biggest reason that links in colors other than regular link-blue work on Kontera when they don't work on other contextualized ads: the links themselves have a second difference beyond their appearance.

Put the cursor over an AdLink, and you're going to get a result. You're going get a box of tool tips that floats over the text and gives extra information related to the word.

It's fun to do! That's a big difference compared to passing your cursor over regular links or looking at regular ads.

Of course, you don't get paid when the user brings up the ad; you only get paid if they click on it. But now you've got people deliberately bringing up ads and looking at them, instead of doing everything they can to avoid them.

That's going to do wonders for your CTR.

And of course, after a user has spotted an AdLink and brought up the tool tips once, there's a great chance he'll look around for other links to do it again. For users who have even the smallest amount of curiosity, it's going to be hard to resist the temptation to bring up more tool tips.

1.3 The Color Of Your Tool tips — It's Not A Grey World…

So making your links the right color for your site can actually draw users into bringing up the tool tips box and reading the ads. They'll do it once, look to see where they can do it again and recognize the special color and underline that marks out an AdLink. That's already a great start.

But playing with palettes doesn't stop there. Kontera also lets you change the color of the tool tips box itself. You can do this by simply changing the Javascript parameters located in the tag.

The line you need to change is:

```
var dcAL_bgColor = 'white'; // AdLink background color
```

(If Javascript is a foreign language to you, try writing to Kontera and asking them to do it for you. They're a friendly bunch and happy to help.)

The same principle applies here that applies to the links: you want to make them attractive enough for people to want to bring them up... without making them so garish that your users avoid them like the plague.

One way to do that is to match the first tool tip color with the colors used on your site and make the mouse-over color just a tone or two different.

So if your site used this color:

and had AdLinks like this, then you might want tool tips in these colors:

Flavored Coffee	Flavored Coffee
Looking for flavored coffee? Choose from hundreds of different kinds of coffee, tea and chai.	Looking for flavored coffee? Choose from hundreds of different kinds of coffee, tea and chai.
www.coffeedrinkers.com	www.coffeedrinkers.com
Advertisement What's this?	Advertisement What's this?

The point is that whatever colors you choose, the tool tips should be attractive. They should match the colors of your site so that your users *want* to bring them up, *want* to read the text written on them and don't feel that they're being force-fed ads that just get in their way.

The big advantage of AdLinks is that the ads are completely blended into the site. Choose colors that are too loud and you could remove that advantage.

If you don't have an eye for colors or you don't feel like playing with code, the easiest option is simply to stick with the default settings that Kontera gives you. These are the colors that I have on my blog. The blog itself has a white background so I just stuck with a white background for the first appearance of the tool tips box and a light cream for when the mouse rolls over the box:
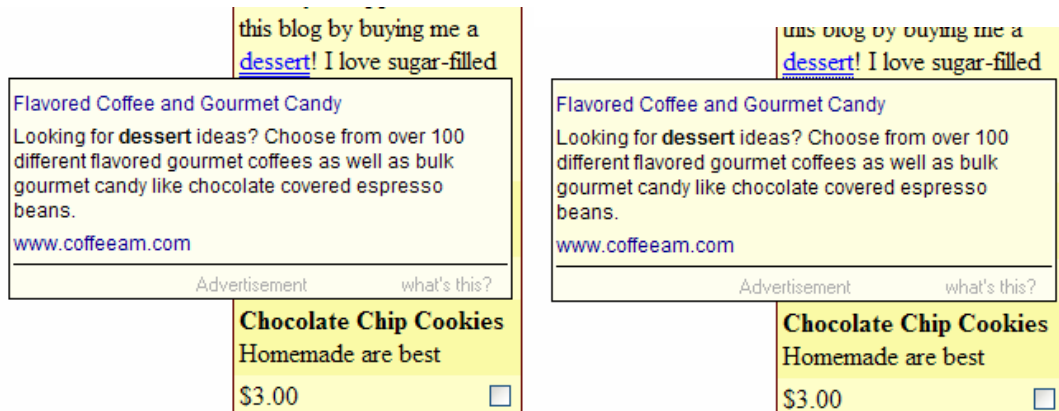

Fig. 1.1: Light colors and a simple design that matches the site at www.joelcomm.com.

Very easy... even for someone with no design skills at all!

1.4 Designing The Page

One of the most important elements of any website — and especially for a site that aims to earn revenue through advertising — is how the page is laid out.

In traditional forms of contextualized advertising, publishers decide where they should place their ad units. Although the actual location can vary from site to site, there are some general rules: ads above the fold (on the screen and visible before users start to scroll) tend to do best; ad units on the right hand side of the page tend to do well too, and it also helps if the ads are integrated into the site so that they look like part of the text.

Putting ad units at the bottom of the page is a pretty good way to make sure that they're ignored.

With AdLinks, you don't get to make those choices.

Kontera's DynamiContext system is built to identify the content of your site automatically and in real time, pick out the highest-paying keywords and serve up ads that are relevant to the context. (So a site about new mothers and a site about nutrition might both have

the word "milk" highlighted, but one would receive ads about breast-feeding while the other would be served ads about dairy products.)

But that means that where the ads appear on the page will depend on where the keywords happen to be located. In theory, it's possible for all of the highlighted terms to be the last words of the text, tucked away in the bottom right hand corner of the page.

In practice though, Kontera also employs a system that spaces out the ads to prevent that from happening. If you do find that the spacing of the AdLinks is still not the way you'd like it, you can write to them and ask them to change it for you.

Kontera's automatic spacing though will only make sure that you don't get clumps of AdLinks gathered together. It won't make sure that the links appear in the places where users are most likely to click.

The first task then is to figure out which areas of the page are the "hottest" in terms of clicks. The second task will be to make sure that the best keywords are located in those areas.

Put the highest-paying keywords on the best parts of the site in attractive and eye-catching colors, and you'll maximize your revenues.

1.5 Where Are Your Site's Hotspots?

For publishers used to using channels to track which parts of the page give the highest number of clicks, AdLinks can look a little restrictive. There doesn't seem to be any way to control where the ads appear or how to know which parts of the page are bringing the best results.

In fact, you *can* pick up this information but you have to ask Kontera to do it for you. Maybe that will change in the future and Kontera will add a system that allows publishers to follow what's happening on different parts of their pages themselves (and if lots of publishers start pestering them for information, they'll soon have an incentive). But in the meantime, you can just drop them a line and ask them to create Location Channels for you that focus on particular areas of your Web pages.

The real question you need to ask of your site though is how important location is in comparison to context.

Few users are going to look at traditional ad units deliberately so one of the keys to success is to place them where the largest number of users are going to be looking anyway and tempt as many of them as possible to glance over. Those areas are largely geographical: the top of the page, the right-hand column etc.

I agree, they are idiots. I'm from southwest Louisiana and I knew once the hurricane hit it was just a matter of time before this looting would begin. They are hoodlems with no regard for the law or other people.

Some people I know are upset that the media keeps showing and reporting on this but I think its' a good thing. I want the rest of the nation to see what we have to deal with on a regular basis. This is an extreme situation but I am not at all surprised by it.

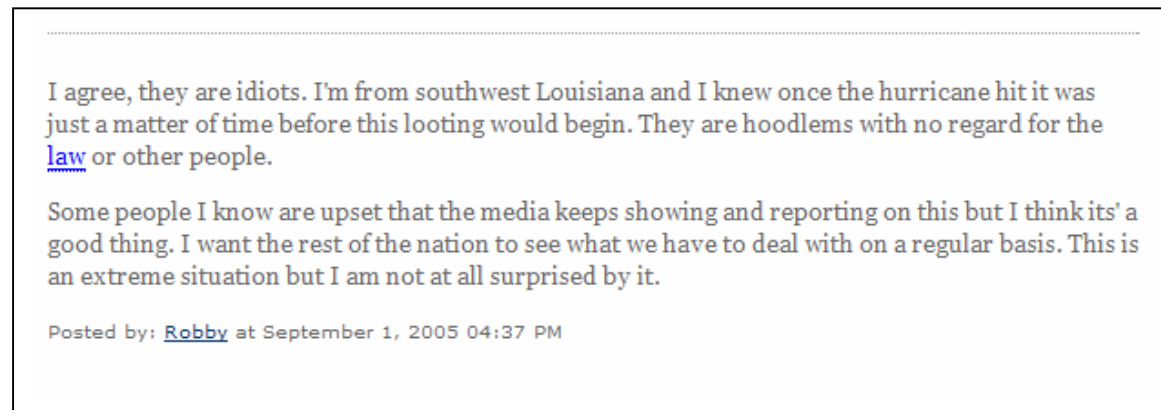Posted by: Robby at September 1, 2005 04:37 PM

Fig. 1.2: Which AdLinked blog comment is most likely to receive a mouse-over and a click? This...

For AdLinks, that same principle applies: you still want your links to appear in the most popular areas of the page but there's another factor that could be even more important to the chances of a user actually mousing over and clicking: context.

The quality and type of content in which the AdLink appears is crucial to your revenues.

Tool tips are a little like footnotes in a book. Footnotes can contain interesting information but they're also a bit of a distraction. If you're captivated by what you're reading or want to get to the end of the chapter, then it's more likely that you're going to skip right past them, telling yourself that you'll come back and read them later. Of course, you never do.

That means that if you've got a big block of text on a page — something like a long article or a giant blog rant — your readers are going to be less likely to call up any tool tips they'll come across. If they start doing that, they'll never finish what they're reading.

On the other hand, if you have a small piece of text — something like a sidebar or a quick blog entry — then readers are going to be more likely to mouse-over to pick up some more information.

Hey, Joel - long time no talk. Just a quick comment here. My heart goes out to those affected by this terrible tragedy and my admiration for those who are helping in any way they can is great. However, I must say that there is one thing that is bothering me greatly. The fact that people in many different ways are taking advantage of the situation to benefit themselves is disgusting. The people looting for profit and not need are truly making the situation worse. But the media and some in the government, both liberals and conservatives, are making it worse by disgustingly trying to politicize the situation for their own benefit. Also, I am tremendously bothered by the many cries I hear (a lot from conservatives) about laying down martial law and "shooting looters on sight." How humane! (insert great sarcasm here) Yes, the looting is a problem, but these people are DESPERATE, scared, and feel that their lives are ruined. Does that give them a right to steal for profit? ABSOLUTELY NOT! But they have just experienced the worst trauma of their lives probably. Yet Conservatives like Bill O'Reilly and some bloggers demand that looters be "shot on sight." What about the people who ARE stealing for need? Should we just circumvent the entire American legal system and the entire principles this country was founded on to impose a Communist or military state in the area and murder anyone who causes problems? In the blink of an eye make the punishment for stealing death? Ridiculous and absolutely revolting! We need to find the best way to restore order without adding to the already devastating death toll. Why is that such an impossiblity with such an outpouring of aid to save people's lives? We are trying to SAVE LIVES there, not DESTROY more, even if people are being truly wrong and unmanageable. Just remember, these people are DESPERATE. They know that everything that they had is gone and many of them are so poor that it might be years and years and years to ever reclaim anything like the life they once had. People like Bill O'Reilly, sitting in his nice house in Washington or wherever, need to think of that before they start sentencing people to death.

Posted by: Robert at September 2, 2005 01:38 AM

Fig. 1.3: Or this?

Your site's AdLinks hotspots then might be those areas with the least text rather than the spots on the page that attract the most eyeballs.

You can use a SPAN tag to direct the AdLinks towards particular areas and away from others. You can also design your site that it has lots of small nuggets of information distributed across the site rather than one long piece running down a page. (And dividing up long articles across several pages will give you the chance to show more ads about different topics, increasing further the chances of getting clicks.)

But you should also make sure that those areas of your site that do have small sections of text also have the highest-paying keywords and the ones most likely to become AdLinks.

That's the subject of the next chapter.
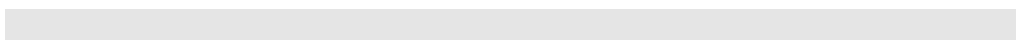
2. Keywords — Watch Your Language

One of the most enjoyable aspects of using AdLinks (although not as enjoyable as the revenues of course) is logging in to see which words the DynamiContext system has decided to highlight next.

Because Kontera is always trying to serve up ads for the highest paying keywords and because bidding prices can change all the time, so the AdLinks on your site can change all the time too.

And Kontera is fast. If you're used to making a change to your website and waiting weeks for a robot to come on by before you can see the results, then you're going to be amazed at the speed with which Kontera works. As soon as a visitor downloads your site, the tag tells the DynamiContext system what's on the page and picks the best words to turn into AdLinks. Just like that.

That isn't always an advantage of course. If you've rigged up your site to make sure that the links always appear on popular areas of the page where there are only short pieces of text, then you won't be happy to surf over and find that the AdLinks are now appearing in dark, unseen corners of the site or in the middle of long essays.

But the good news is that at least you'll know then which words are in vogue, and you can adjust your site accordingly.

So if you find that a high-paying keyword is being highlighted in some out-of-the-way place, there are two things that you can do:

1. Move that *entire text block* into a more prominent place on the page or;
2. Move the *keyword* into a more prominent place on the page.

Which of those you choose to do will depend on how want your website to look.

In the example below, the word "spam" was AdLinked on my blog beneath the comment form. It's possible that enough people would see it there to give me a good revenue (it's in just one sentence and it *is* the main word in that sentence) but it's at the bottom of the page, and in tiny little print. It's more likely that many of my readers are going to miss it.

But now I know that "spam" is a relatively high-paying keyword and I'm sure I could increase my CTR if I could make it more prominent.

I could move the comment form up the page. I could increase the size of the font so that the AdLink stands out more clearly or I could even create a new blog entry about spam so that the AdLink would appear in the middle of the page.

Now that Kontera has told me which words they think will give me the most money, it's up to me to put that word in the best place on the page.

Fig. 2.1: A hard-to-spot AdLink in a small section of text. A tempting link but will anyone see it?

Don't worry about the effect of these changes on your SEO rankings. I don't see any reason why your AdLinked keywords should have any effect at all on your search engine placement.

2.1 Controlling Your Language

There is a third way to influence the words AdLinks picks of course, and that's to control the keywords. You can do that on AdLinks by defining a list of restricted topics or by creating a list of restricted words.

Restricting Topics

Imagine this scenario: you've created a site that points out the dangers of gambling. You talk about the problems of online casinos, the risks of roulette and the hazards that gaming can pose for people with a tendency to become addicted. You also point out where addicted gamblers can get help.

You fund the site, in part, from the revenues the website brings in from advertising.

But every time you mention "gambling," "casinos" or "roulette," you get an AdLink telling your users how great this online casino is why they should lose their shirts at that one.

Not exactly what you'd want on your site, right?

That's really the advantage that restricting topics brings to publishers.

Kontera divides its ads according to particular types of content. ==At last count there were about 30 top level topics, but this number changes over time as Kontera adapts to new products and services available on the Web==

I know there are some topics on their list that I wouldn't want on any of my websites. There are also topics that aren't suitable for some of my sites. I doubt if my users would find them in any way interesting if they were to turn up as ads on those particular pages.

Restricting topics then can be useful but I'm not sure how useful it is as a tool for increasing revenue. It's best used, I think, to make sure that your website doesn't serve ads about a topic that your users — or you — would find offensive rather an as a way to make more money.

Restricting Keywords
Removing entire topics as possible sources of ads is a little clumsy though. You might not want AdLinks on your site promoting casinos, but how about ads from sellers of board games like Monopoly or chess?

If you know that some of the ads in a content category *are* suitable for your site, then you can simply ask that words like "casino" and "roulette" aren't turned into ads. You could also try writing to Kontera and asking them to make sure you don't receive ads from particular companies.

While restricting topics and keywords does have certain advantages (not least that it can keep competitors off your website), it is worth remembering that when DyamiContext picks a keyword it's because it thinks that's the keyword that's going to give you the highest revenues.

Cutting keywords from your page then could simply mean that you're going to be missing out on the highest paying options, even if they're not in the highest-paying positions.

2.2 Contextualizing Your Keywords — Specific Terms Brings Top-Paying Ads

In an ideal world, you wouldn't have to do anything to achieve maximum advertising revenues for your website. You'd simply create exactly the sort of site that you think is best for your users and money would pour into your account.

Actually Kontera comes pretty close to that. Its system is continuously checking your revenues to make sure that you get the best ads linked to the best keywords in the best places on your page.

But you want to maximize those revenues even further. And that can mean making real changes to your site.

One of the easiest changes is to keep the content on your site as specific as possible. If you've got a site that's about computers for example, then mentioning the names of particular computer companies should give you better results than talking in general about computers: so discussing "Sony Vaio laptops" instead of just "laptops" will give you ads with much better targeting — and no less importantly, higher CPM's.

Again, pay attention to which keywords are being highlighted and ask yourself how you can make them more specific.

2.3 Six Of The Best

You also need to pay attention to how many keywords you want to put on your page.

For publishers using any type of online advertising program picking the right number of ads is always a tricky balance. While you want as many opportunities as possible to earn revenue, you don't want

to turn your website into a giant billboard with little more than ads from start to finish.

The most important factor for any website using any revenue program is not the number of ads though; it's always going to be the quality of the content.

Good content gets clicks; pages packed with ads put people off. They also make it hard for contextualized programs like AdLinks, which rely on your text to figure out the subject of your site, to serve the right ads. While Kontera can identify and react to multiple topics that appear on a page, the more ads — and graphics —you have on a page, the greater the chance that the system will make a mistake and serve you up ads that just aren't relevant.

But remember: with AdLinks, users won't see the ads unless they choose to mouse-over. All they'll see is a few words highlighted on the page by an unusual linking color or a double underline.

What's more, because bringing up the tool tips box can actually be fun, your users could even come to think of AdLinks as an additional service: a little more information about the main terms related to the subject of your website.

In fact, when you only have one or two AdLinks on a page, not only are you giving yourself fewer opportunities to earn revenue, you're also making your AdLinks look more like ads than they need to: plenty of AdLinks looks like lots of extra information about your content; one or two AdLinks looks like carefully chosen links to advertisements.

The bottom line is that you can place up to six AdLinks on your page and the people at Kontera recommend that you take all six.

On the whole, I think they're right: the more AdLinks you have on your page the better.

That doesn't mean that you should worry if your page only serves up one or two ads (I have plenty of pages that do that). As long as the pages are short and contain only a few text areas then that's fine. The problem comes when you have a big page with lots of text and very few AdLinks.

If that happens — even though you've asked for as many AdLinks as possible — try dropping Kontera a line asking for more ads, or putting in more text using keywords that you know are popular at

the moment. That should increase the number of Ad Links that appear on your pages.

There is one caveat about putting as many AdLinks as possible on your site though. Some people have claimed that putting lots AdLinks on their Web pages slows down loading time. Kontera say that any slowdown is nothing to do with them. They argue that they've put a lot of effort into ensuring fast performance and say that because the AdLinks appear on the page only at the end — after all the text, images and objects have downloaded — the AdLinks do not delay anything. At most, they claim, if a page is new to the Kontera system and has a large amount of text, the AdLinks might appear in a delay of a few milliseconds, but it wouldn't delay page loading.

Maybe they're right and maybe those delays were caused by something other than AdLinks. If you're not sure though, you could try restricting the ads to particular parts of the page. Again, that might reduce the number of ads you receive or cut out the highest-paying keywords so it's only worth doing if you find you're losing impatient users.

On the whole, I haven't found any delay long enough to justify that. If I'm going to move ads to particular parts of the page, it's because I think those are the areas that will get me the greatest number of clicks.

2.4 No Ads, No Money

A more common problem that can turn up with AdLinks isn't having too many ads; it's not having any ads at all. You go to all the work of putting the code on your page, making sure that you have short chunks of text, figuring out the best places on your site and moving your keywords into your hot spots.

And when you surf to a page and find that there are no AdLinks there at all.

Or alternatively, instead of giving you ads directly related to the topic of your site, you get all sorts of strange words highlighted in all sorts of strange places.

This is the Kontera equivalent of AdSense's public service ads. AdLinks decides that Kontera doesn't have any ads that would suit your users... so it either gives you nothing or it gives you random selection of ads from the ones it has available.

Neither do much for your revenues.

According to Kontera, there are two reasons that your Web page might not get the targeted ads you're hoping for. The first is that your website is about a "sensitive" topic for which they don't supply ads.

I think most publishers can rule that one out pretty quickly.

The second reason is a bit more problematic: if your site contains only a small amount of text then DynamiContext won't have enough material to decide what your pages are about.

On the other hand, if you have a large amount of text on a page then you could find yourself back in the position of showing targeted ads to readers who are too busy reading to click.

The best strategy then is to design your pages so that there are plenty of small blocks of text. Forums and blogs are good for this and so are pages with readers' comments. If you find that you're still getting random ads or no ads at all, try expanding each section in turn, using plenty of the best keywords for that topic, until you start to see the ads become more targeted.

Because Kontera works so quickly, it's pretty easy to refine each text block to bring in targeted ads.

2.5 Changing Content To Suit Keywords

One of the biggest frustrations of using other forms of contextualized advertising is that you can only guess which keywords are triggering ads. There have certainly been times when I've looked at the ads Google has sent me and wondered what on earth made them think they my users would be interested in those.

There have also been plenty of times when I've tried to get particular keywords onto my site in the hope of landing ads with the highest possible CPM's.

On Kontera, you don't have to worry about any of that stuff. You can see for yourself exactly which words are triggering ads and paying you money.

So if I can see that the word "spam" is almost always AdLinked on my page, even if when it's little more than mentioned in passing,

then I can be pretty confident that that's a word that's paying money.

So what's to stop me from building an entire Web page dedicated to spam and cashing in on ads for that topic?

As far as I can tell... nothing.

Or rather, nothing except the amount of time that I have available to write about a topic I'm just not very familiar with.

AdLinks has been designed to help you earn revenues using the content that's already on your site. As long as your content is interesting to your readers, those users will assume that the links that lead away from your site are going to be interesting too.

You have to build up trust if you want people to click, and you can only build up trust by giving your users the sort of content they're looking for. AdLinks, like every sort of contextualized advertising, works best with high quality content.

But that doesn't mean you can't use the keywords that you see highlighted on your pages to experiment and create new opportunities for yourself.

Let's say that Fred has a site about digital cameras. He signs up to AdLinks and notices that on a page about digital photography techniques, he gets one set of ads when he mentions "Nikon digital cameras" and another set when he writes about "Canon digital cameras." He also sees that he gets AdLinks when he mentions "online photo albums" and "printing."

All of those keywords are relevant to his topic and they receive clicks. But none of them is directly related to the light tricks that Fred was trying to teach on that Web page.

So Fred decides to create four more pages on his website, one about Nikon digital cameras, one about Canon digital cameras, one about online photo albums and one about printing.

Fred knows that there are targeted ads available from Kontera for each of these topics. In effect then, *instead of letting Kontera give him contextualized ads, he's created contextualized content for ads that are already available.*

A strategy like this though can only work when you're producing specialized pages targeted towards keywords you know. Trying to

produce a website about home loans just to pick up the AdLinks for that topic might give you ads with high CPM's but if your CTR is in the basement because your content isn't interesting, you're just wasting your time.

It's also worth remembering that keyword rates change all the time. There's not much point in building an entire site to cash in on a keyword that isn't going to be worth a dime in a week's time.

Following your CTR though is crucial to your AdLinks success and that's why it's vital to follow your stats. I discuss how you can do that in the next chapter.

3. Stats — Counting Your Money

Earning revenues with Internet advertising is a business. And no business can succeed unless the manager keeps a close eye on the figures. If you don't keep a close eye on your stats, you'll have no idea whether your advertising strategies are working... let alone how much money you're earning.

Kontera's stats don't provide a huge amount of information. They tell you page impressions, total ad clicks, click-through rate, revenues and ECPM. All of that information is useful but it's not very detailed. Looking at your stats page won't tell which ads your users clicked on, nor will they tell you which ads are bringing you the most money.

That's a shame. When you have as many as six ads on a page, it might well be the case that only one or two of them are actually bringing in revenue. The rest could be little more than decoration. That's especially true if each of those ads is about a different subject.

If Fred looked at the stats for his page on digital photography techniques for example, he'd have no idea how many of his clicks had come from the ads for "Nikon cameras," how many came from "Canon cameras," how many from "online photo albums" and how many from "printing." He'd only know how many clicks that page received in total.

But actually, those detailed stats *are* available. Fred would just have to ask Kontera for them.

(I know, it would be nice if you could just create Channel-type systems to track keywords and ads yourself but until Kontera create that system, you'll just have to get in touch and ask them to tell you how many clicks a particular keyword or ad received.)

Of course, one problem is that the ads you receive on a page can change, and so can the choice of keywords that AdLinks highlights. Fred the photographer would have to wait at least a week to see whether those four keywords are always going to be turned into ads before he asked how many clicks those words received.

Only then would he know which keywords were really earning money and were worth turning into focused pages.

3.1 How To Use Your Stats

Even though the basic stats that AdLinks gives you are restricted, it doesn't mean that they're completely useless. There are two pieces of information that are always going to be useful.

The first of course, is revenue. You're in this to make money and ultimately it's the revenues that will define how successful your AdLink campaign has been. You might be getting very few clicks but if all of your AdLinks are based on high-paying keywords and your revenues are sound then there might not be any reason to take further action.

The other important figure is your click-through rate — and what's important about that figure is the rate at which it changes.

In this book, I've discussed a number of different general strategies for increasing your revenues. Those strategies include putting keywords in the most prominent places on the page and building Web pages based around particular keywords.

All of those changes should increase your CTR. (Other strategies should also increase your CPM).

Once you've got your AdLinks up and running, I recommend making one change at a time. That will let you see exactly what effect each change is having.

So if, like me, you find that the word "spam" is highlighted at the bottom of your page beneath the comment form, you could move the form into a more prominent position, *wait a week*, and see exactly how much that change was worth.

Sure, those sorts of changes can take time but the alternative is to make lots of changes and not have a clue which ones are responsible for the changes in your CTR and your revenues. Even though it can be slow-going, I still think the piece-by-piece approach is the best way to understand how your site works with AdLinks and how much revenue your strategies are bringing in.

3.2 Stat Reporting Speed

Some people have complained that Kontera can be a bit slow when it comes to updating stats. Actually, I don't think they're any slower than any of the other companies that serve ads bought through Yahoo! Search.

In any case, I don't care. It *is* fun to watch your revenues rise all the time but I think there's a danger there too.

Revenues and CTR's can change every day and they can change for reasons that you just can't fathom. One day your CTR can be through the roof and the next through the floor. That's why I always say you should wait a week between logging into your stats.

That will give you an overall picture of what's happening on your site and it also means that if Kontera (and Yahoo!) stay slow than you might like, you won't be acting on old information.

3.3 The Stats You Can't See

I've already pointed out that there are two important figures that Kontera's stats pages won't tell you: the CTR per keyword and the CPM for each ad. Your stats also won't tell you the CTR for each ad.

The first of these figures you just can ask for. The others you'll have to be a bit clever to discover.

The strength of Kontera is that it's dynamic. But it doesn't have to be. As long as advertisers are earning money, Kontera is earning money and you're earning money, everyone's going to be happy. That's true whether you're showing a dozen ads a week or just the same ad day after day.

Kontera have told me that if you want a particular ad to run on your pages, they'll do it for you.

There's no reason then that Fred, for example, couldn't ask that a particular company's ads always appear on his page about Nikon digital cameras, restrict that page to just one keyword and see the CPM that that ad brings.

(And if Kontera changed its mind about letting Fred ask for the same ad to be shown all the time, he could try blocking out enough other ads to keep the ad he wanted to see coming back.)

With that information, Fred would be able to figure out which ads are giving him the most money for each click on a keyword and really optimize his site for maximum revenues.
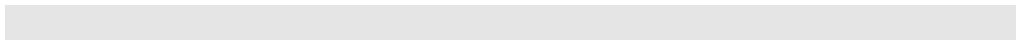
Conclusion

Kontera has the potential to bring publishers revenues at least as high as those currently being earned on just about any other form of contextualized advertising. The ads don't harm the user's experience (in fact, they even enhance it), they're well targeted and they're easy to implement.

They're also flexible, allowing you to adjust and re-format your AdLinks to maximize the number of people who click on your ads and the commissions you receive when they do.

Those optimization strategies include picking the most attractive colors for links and tool tips; moving your ads into the best places on the page; finding the best keywords to put on your pages; making the most of the keywords that you know work; and putting the highest-paying ads on your page.

The truth is that AdLinks is almost completely flexible. But much of what you have to do to optimize your site will have to be done through Kontera.

That's a bit of a pain and life would certainly be easier if you could control all these things without changing Kontera's code (which could clash with their TOS) or sending out an email every time you wanted to try something new.

It's also worth pointing out that other contextualized advertising companies might not be willing share your site with Kontera's ads. That could be a problem if you're very happy with your current program and don't want to make a complete change

On the other hand though, if Kontera publishers are finding that unobtrusive ads get more clicks and higher revenues than traditional ad units, those traditional companies might well find themselves left in the cold.
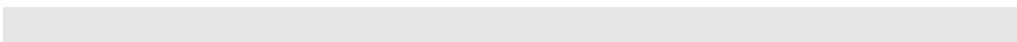
THIS JUST IN!

I regularly receive email from readers asking me if they can use Kontera AdLinks units on their web pages without violating Google's Terms of Service. I have been following a conversation that has been taking place at AdSenseChat.com, where Michel Fortin has been in dialogue with an AdSense representative regarding this very issue.

http://www.adsensechat.com/showthread.php?t=1198

The final reply from Google was summed up in this email from AdSense rep, Katie.

Hello Michel,

Please note that our ad policy applies on a per-page basis, meaning that your individual web pages may not run Google ads and other ads that bear a striking resemblance to Google ads on the same web pages. However, separate web pages within a domain may run either Google ads or other types of ads.

Sincerely,

Katie
The Google AdSense Team

If I read this right, I believe that since Kontera AdLink units do not bear a "striking resemblance" to Google ads, they would indeed be compatible to run on your web pages without violating Google's TOS.

This is indeed great news!

For more up-to-the-minute news and tips for Kontera, AdSense, Chitika and YPN, visit www.AdSenseChat.com

About the Author

Joel Comm is an Internet entrepreneur who has been building successful web sites since 1995. Dedicated to providing a family-friendly Internet experience, Joel's flagship site, WorldVillage.com, continues to be a popular family-safe portal. Joel is the co-creator of Yahoo! Games and co-author of Internet Family Fun: The Parent's Guide to Safe Surfing (1997, No Starch Press). He is the self-appointed Mayor of WorldVillage.com and author of the best-selling ebook, "What Google Never Told You About Making Money with AdSense"

Joel's sites include:

DealofDay.com - a popular bargain-hunting community
FamilyFirst.com – Family-friendly sites reviews
SafetySurf.com – Parental control products and services
JoelComm.com – Internet consulting services
PrizePot.com – Contests and Sweepstakes

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Internet Resources by Joel Comm
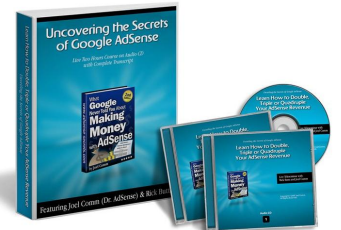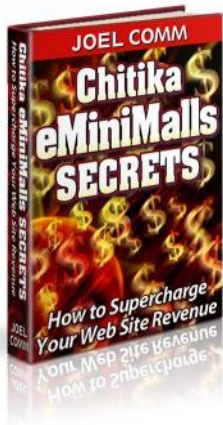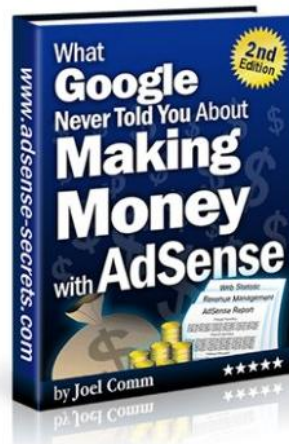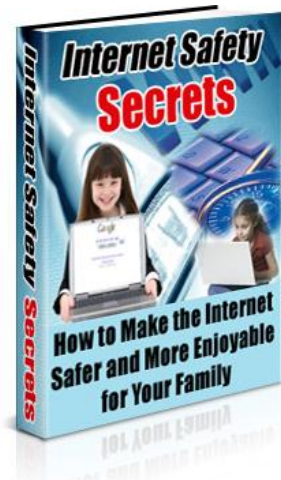
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Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the tips and strategies included in this guide, but there is no guarantee that you will earn any money using the techniques and ideas in these materials. Examples in these materials are not to be interpreted as a promise or guarantee of earnings. Earning potential is entirely dependent on the person using our product, ideas and techniques.

Your level of success in attaining the results described in our materials depends on the time you devote to the program, ideas and techniques mentioned, your finances, knowledge and various skills. Since these factors differ according to individuals, we cannot guarantee your success or income level. Nor are we responsible for any of your actions.

Results may vary, as with any business opportunity, you could make more or less. Success in ANY business opportunity is a result of hard work, time and a variety of other factors. No express or implied guarantees of income are made when purchasing this eBook.

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