

Local Search from a Vertical View

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A recently-released white paper from The Kelsey Group points to vertical digital directories as an important online ad vehicle for local businesses.

Kelsey defines vertical digital directories as online properties "that provide deep amounts of structured content for a niche category, such as travel, real estate or home improvement." The company cites Lawyers.com and HomeGain.com as examples of vertical digital directories.

Kelsey believes vertical digital directories offer small- and medium-size businesses (SMBs) the opportunity to take part in paid search advertising. However, the research firm notes that by posing such opportunities, vertical digital directories could go head-to-head with search engines competing for the local market. Kelsey advises the best course of action for the two parties is to explore partnerships to help expand search engines' local coverage and help vertical directories increase traffic.

The topic of local search is hot, and has definitely heated up with buzz of Google's imminent IPO. Citysearch's targeted sites marked the first step in bringing local search to the forefront of discussion. Local media has gotten the ball rolling on their online outlets and the ball is now in the court of major search engines. Will they deliver?

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