GOOGLE ADSENSE QUICK GUIDE

Mastering the New Google AdSense Interface

MICHAEL MILLER

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Michael Miller has written more than 100 nonfiction how-to books over the past 20 years, including Que's *Using Google AdWords and AdSense*, *Googlepedia: The Ultimate Google Resource*, *YouTube for Business*, *The Ultimate Web Marketing Guide*, *B2B Digital Marketing*, and *The Absolute Beginner's Guide to Computer Basics*.

Mr. Miller has established a reputation for clearly explaining technical topics to nontechnical readers and for offering useful real-world advice about complicated topics. More information can be found at his website, located at www.molehillgroup.com.

DEDICATION

To Sherry, just because.

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WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

As the reader of this book, *you* are our most important critic and commentator. We value your opinion and want to know what we're doing right, what we could do better, what areas you'd like to see us publish in, and any other words of wisdom you're willing to pass our way.

As an editor-in-chief for Que Publishing, I welcome your comments. You can email or write me directly to let me know what you did or didn't like about this book—as well as what we can do to make our books better.

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Introduction

Do you want to make money from your website or blog?

Well, you can—by running ads on your web pages.

To do this, you need to partner with an ad network that works with advertisers to serve ads to your pages. The biggest such ad network is Google AdSense, and a lot of sites make a lot of money from running AdSense ads.

All you need to know is what types of ads you want on your site, where you want them, how big they should be, and other such details. AdSense will determine the most relevant ads to run on your site and automatically serve them to people when they visit your site. It's really quite simple.

In fact, using AdSense to generate revenue from regular old websites is so simple and so popular that hundreds of thousands of sites have been doing it for several years. Those sites got a bit of a surprise in November 2011, however, when they woke up to a brand-new interface for Google AdSense, as well as a load of new and changed features.

Of course, all these changes were designed to make AdSense easier to use, and thus easier to generate more revenues from those AdSense ads. But change of any kind, even good change, can be both surprising and difficult to adapt to. What's the new way to do all the stuff you used to do?

That's where this book comes in. Over the past several years I've written several books that covered Google AdSense, including Que's *Using Google AdWords and AdSense* and *Googlepedia: The Ultimate Google Resource*. I know how AdSense works and how different websites use it. Heck, I use AdSense myself on my own website and blog. So when Google made those big AdSense changes, I knew it was time to do a new book that covered all of AdSense's new features—and helped current users navigate all that was new or changed.

WHAT'S IN THIS BOOK

Google AdSense Quick Guide contains everything both new and existing AdSense users need to know to make money from online advertising. I'll walk you through the basics of pay-per-click advertising and show you what you need to do to place ads on your site—with a particular focus on AdSense's new and changed features.

This book contains eight chapters that walk you through the entire AdSense process:

1. Making Money from Google AdSense
2. What's New in the New AdSense
3. Navigating the New AdSense Interface
4. Monitoring and Managing Your Account
5. Creating and Managing Ads on Your Website
6. Reviewing and Blocking Ads
7. Viewing AdSense's New Performance Reports
8. Doing Your Old Tasks the New Way

And although I've dedicated several chapters to new and changed features, I'll make it a point throughout the book to point out what's different, for existing AdSense users.

WHO CAN USE THIS BOOK

Google AdSense Quick Guide is written for both existing and new AdSense users. I cover everything beginners need to know to start making money from AdSense, as well as focus on the new and changed features of the new AdSense interface. There's something here for everyone.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

I hope that this book is easy enough to read that you don't need instructions. That said, there are a few elements that bear explaining.

Most notable of these elements are what we in the publishing business call "notes." They look like this:

> **NOTE** This is a note that presents information of interest, as well as tips and cautions for using AdSense.

Obviously, there are lots of web page addresses in the book, like this one: www.google.com. When you see one of these addresses (also known as a URL), you can go to that web page by clicking the URL in the text or by entering the URL into the address box in your web browser. I've made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the web addresses presented here, but given the ever-changing nature of the web, don't be surprised if you run across an address or two that's changed. I apologize in advance.

THERE'S MORE ONLINE

When you want to learn a little bit more about me and my books, visit my website at www.molehillgroup.com. There's a lot of good information there. And don't forget to visit www.quepublishing.com for other fine books from the publisher, too!

GET READY TO CLICK!

With all these preliminaries out of the way, it's now time to get started. So get ready to turn the page and learn how to generate real income from your website—using Google AdSense.

This page intentionally left blank

IN THIS CHAPTER

- Viewing Key Metrics
- Reading Messages from AdSense
- Viewing Your Payment History
- Managing Your Account Settings
- Referencing Other Resources

4

MONITORING AND MANAGING YOUR ACCOUNT

The first thing you see when you log in to your AdSense account is the Overview page of the Home tab. This is a great place to start, full of the most essential data you need to evaluate your AdSense performance.

But that's not all you'll find on the Home tab. When you want to monitor and manage your AdSense account, Home is the place to be.

VIEWING KEY METRICS

If you view only one page on the AdSense site, it should be the Overview page on the Home tab. This page, which is what you see by default when you log in to AdSense, displays essential information about your account's performance, including earnings generated.

What information is displayed on the Overview page? Let's take a look.

EARNINGS OVERVIEW

Want to know how much money your AdSense ads are generating? Look at the earnings overview at the top of the data on the Overview page, shown in Figure 4.1. Here you can view

- Estimated earnings for today so far, yesterday, this month to date, and last month.
- Finalized earnings, including any unpaid earnings (money you're owed but haven't yet been paid) and the most recent payment you've received from AdSense.

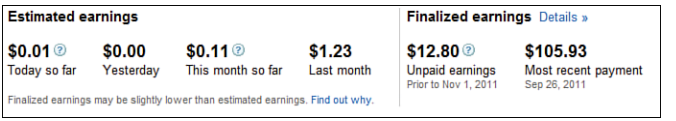


FIGURE 4.1

Viewing the earnings overview.

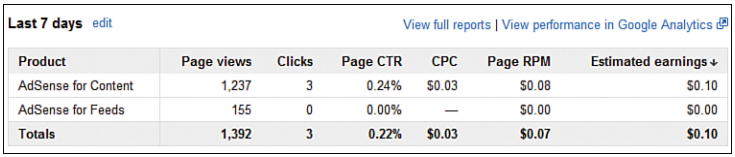
> **NOTE** To view more payment details, click the Details link in the Finalized Earnings section; this opens the Payments page, discussed later in this chapter.

Note that the estimated earnings displayed here are just that—estimated. AdSense's final earnings take into account any invalid clicks made to ads running on your site, and adjust the earnings amount accordingly.

> **NOTE** Invalid clicks are typically the result of click fraud, where unscrupulous individuals repeatedly click on their own ads with the intent to inflate PPC ad revenue. Google has mechanisms in place to detect click fraud, and will adjust key metrics as necessary.

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

The middle section of the data table on the Overview page, shown in Figure 4.2, is the performance summary. This data provides a quick overview of your AdSense performance, broken down by product (Content, Feeds, Video, and so on).



Last 7 days edit — View full reports | View performance in Google Analytics

Product	Page views	Clicks	Page CTR	CPC	Page RPM	Estimated earnings ↓
AdSense for Content	1,237	3	0.24%	$0.03	$0.08	$0.10
AdSense for Feeds	155	0	0.00%	—	$0.00	$0.00
Totals	**1,392**	**3**	**0.22%**	**$0.03**	**$0.07**	**$0.10**

FIGURE 4.2

Viewing the performance summary.

The performance summary data table contains the following information:

- **Product**, the specific AdSense product being tracked
- **Page views**, the number of times pages with ads have been viewed
- **Clicks**, the number of times ads on your site have been clicked
- **Page click-through-rate** (CTR), the percentage of times viewed ads have been clicked—calculated by dividing page views by clicks
- **Cost per click** (CPC), the average amount per click paid by advertisers
- **Page revenue per thousand impressions** (RPM), the average amount of revenue generated by each 1,000 page views—calculated by dividing estimated total earnings by page views
- **Estimated earnings**, the total amount of ad earnings generated in the specified time period

By default, this data table is sorted alphabetically by product. You can, however, sort by any metric just by clicking the column header; click the header twice to reverse the sort order.

Also by default, the performance section displays results for the past seven days. To examine another time period, click the Edit link above the table, and then select from Today, Yesterday, Last 7 Days, Last 30 Days, This Month, or Last month.

> **NOTE** To view the full set of AdSense performance reports, click the View Full Reports link. This opens the Performance Reports tab, discussed in Chapter 7, "Viewing AdSense's New Performance Reports."

By the way, if you've linked your AdSense and Google Analytics accounts, you can use Google Analytics to track your Google AdSense performance. Just click the View Performance in Google Analytics link.

> **NOTE** Google Analytics offers an even more robust set of tracking functions than what's available with AdSense, so if you have that option, it might be worth pursuing.

TOP CHANNELS

If you have AdSense ads on multiple websites or blogs (what Google calls *channels*), you can view performance by site in the Top Channels section of the Overview data table. As you can see in Figure 4.3, this section of the data table displays your top performing sites, along with seven-day earnings for each site. This section also displays the change in earnings from the previous seven-day period.

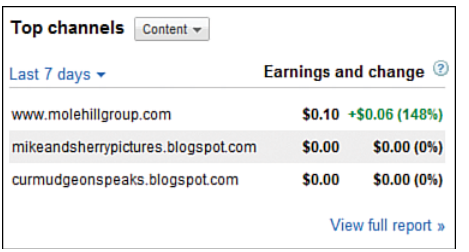


FIGURE 4.3
Viewing performance by channel.

To view channel earnings for a different period, click the Last 7 Days link and select from Today, Yesterday, Last 7 Days, Last 30 Days, This Month, or Last Month. To view the full Custom Channels report (not just the top channels), click the View Full Report link.

QUICK REPORTS AND SAVED REPORTS

In Google AdSense, the most commonly used reports are dubbed *quick reports*. These include the following reports:

- Overview (this month)
- Overview (last month)
- Custom channels (today)

- Custom channels (yesterday)
- Custom channels (this month)
- Custom channels (last month)

These quick reports, as well as any custom reports you've saved, are available from the Quick Reports section of the Overview page, shown in Figure 4.4. Just click a report to display it onscreen.

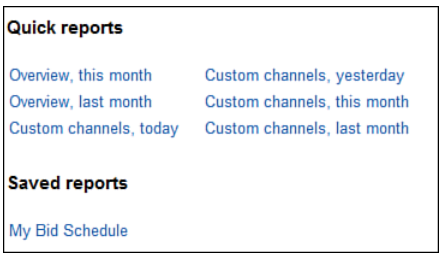


FIGURE 4.4

Accessing quick reports and saved reports.

READING MESSAGES FROM ADSENSE

From time to time, AdSense will send you messages—account notifications, tips and tricks, and the like. Any messages you've recently received can be viewed by clicking the Messages link in the Home tab's navigation pane. Click a message header to read the full message.

VIEWING YOUR PAYMENT HISTORY

How much have you been paid by Google AdSense in the past? That information is available on the Payments page. To display this payment history, click the Payments link in the Home tab's navigation pane.

The Payments page displays a wealth of earnings-related information. At the top left of the page you'll see any unpaid earnings due you, as shown in Figure 4.5. Next to this, at the top right of the page, is information about your last issued payment—the amount paid, earnings period, date issued, payment method (check or electronic funds transfer), and payee name.

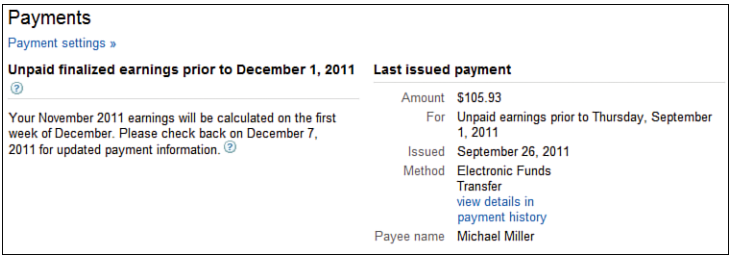


FIGURE 4.5

Viewing unpaid earnings and last issued payment information.

Beneath this top section is a large table with information about all your finalized earnings and payments, organized by month. As you can see in Figure 4.6, for each month you've been signed up to AdSense, this table displays

- **Date** of each transaction.
- **Description** of each transaction. To view more information about a given transaction—typically, the earnings breakout by AdSense product, as shown in Figure 4.7—click the Details link.

Finalized earnings and payments Export to CSV

Month	Date	Description	Earnings/credits ($)	Payments/debits ($)	Balance ($)
		Earnings carried over from previous months	$0.00		
October 2005	Oct 31	Earnings (Oct 1 - Oct 31) - details	$2.86		
	Balance at end of October				$2.86
November 2005	Nov 30	Earnings (Nov 1 - Nov 30) - details	$15.63		
	Balance at end of November				$18.49
December 2005	Dec 31	Earnings (Dec 1 - Dec 31) - details	$16.07		
	Balance at end of December				$34.56
January 2006	Jan 31	Earnings (Jan 1 - Jan 31) - details	$25.32		
	Balance at end of January				$59.88
February 2006	Feb 28	Earnings (Feb 1 - Feb 28) - details	$12.95		
	Balance at end of February				$72.83
March 2006	Mar 31	Earnings (Mar 1 - Mar 31) - details	$15.79		
	Balance at end of March				$88.62
April 2006	Apr 30	Earnings (Apr 1 - Apr 30) - details	$11.47		
	Balance at end of April				$100.09

FIGURE 4.6

Viewing a history of AdSense earnings and payments.

FIGURE 4.7
Viewing details about a specific transaction.

- **Earnings/credits**, any revenue associated with the transaction.
- **Payments/debits**, any fees or other debits associated with the transaction.
- **Balance**, the running amount available in your AdSense account on that date.

Your account balance at the end of each month appears at the end of each month's transactions in the data table.

> **NOTE** To view details of each payment listed in this table, click the View Details in Payment History link in the Last Issued Payment section at the top of the page.

If you want to keep a record of your payment history on your own computer, click the Export to CSV button. AdSense displays the Save As dialog box; enter a name and location for this file, and then click the Save button. This downloads a comma separated values (CSV) file filled with payment data, which you can open and edit in either Microsoft Excel or Microsoft Access.

MANAGING YOUR ACCOUNT SETTINGS

When you first sign up for AdSense you enter a lot of information about yourself and your website. If you want to review that information or change any of it, select the Account Settings page on the Home tab.

As you can see in Figure 4.8, your account settings are divided into several sections:

- **Personal settings**, including the email address you use to log in to AdSense, your preference for email notifications, and the language you want displayed.
- **Account information**, including your publisher and customer IDs, your payee name and address, phone number, account type, and active products.
- **Payment settings**, including your desired payment method, tax information, and your self-hold status (whether or not you've placed payments on hold, such as for vacations).
- **Default ad display preferences**, including the default ad type (for content ads only) and the default font family and size for ads on your site.
- **Access and authorization**, including sites authorized to show ads, crawler access, third-party access, and users who have sign-in access to your account.

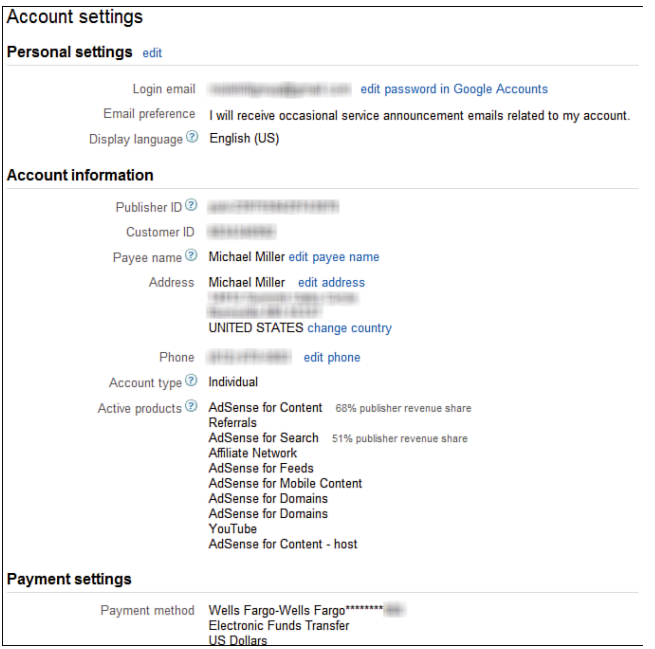


FIGURE 4.8

Viewing your account settings.

Most of these items can be changed if you wish. Just click the corresponding Edit link to expand that item for editing, make your changes, and click the Save button. (Figure 4.9 shows the Default Ad Display Preferences section expanded for editing.)

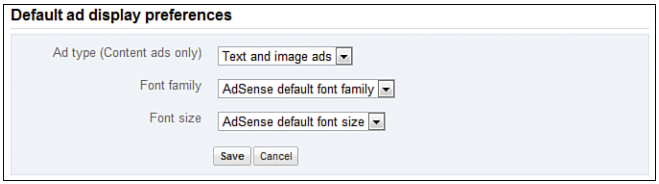


FIGURE 4.9

The Default Ad Display Preferences section expanded for editing.

REFERENCING OTHER RESOURCES

When you need more information about—or help with—using AdSense, click the Resources link on the Home tab. This displays the Resources page, shown in Figure 4.10.

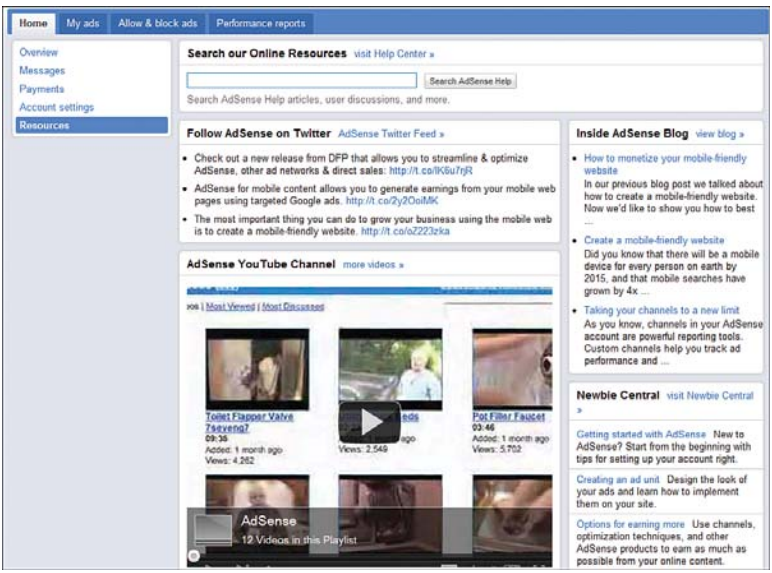


FIGURE 4.10

Viewing more online resources.

This page displays the latest posts from the following social media:

- AdSense's Twitter feed
- AdSense's YouTube channels
- Inside AdSense blog
- Newbie Central

NOTE Newbie Central is Google's gateway for new AdSense users.

In addition, the Resources page includes a search box to search the official AdSense help system; a Troubleshooting Wizard to help identify and fix operational issues; and a list of Reference Links that point to all manner of AdSense-related information—Publisher Tools, Webmaster Central, Webmaster Guidelines, Ad Formats, Glossary, Program Policies, Terms & Conditions, and Privacy Policy. Click a link to view the selected resource.