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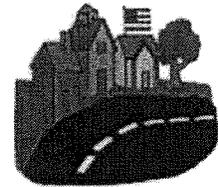
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## Google AdSense Case Study

**How Our-Hometown.com's local newspaper publishers profit from Google AdSense.**  
Case study : Our-Hometown.com : [www.our-hometown.com](http://www.our-hometown.com)

### Business



For centuries, community newspapers have chronicled events and personalities rarely featured in any other medium. Today, these papers are going online in greater numbers to serve their readers in two ways: by providing the convenience local readers demand, and by serving natives who have moved away and want to keep up online with hometown news.

Based in the Finger Lakes region of New York state, Our-Hometown.com serves as a complete turnkey business solution for more than 45 community newspapers that want to publish their content online. Through the services of this entrepreneurial service, community papers can easily place their entire newspaper including news stories and classified ads on a website individually branded for their paper.

Since 1996, founder Steve Larson has steadily built this online publishing business model based on weekly fees for such services as file conversion, domain hosting, disk space, email capabilities and advertising. Our-Hometown.com's database currently houses more than 200,000 articles, and the site posts 2,000 new stories each week for its growing stable of local papers.

### Approach

Citing recent findings that between 25 and 50 percent of people visiting community newspaper sites are outside the local market, Larson emphasizes how important it is for such papers to have an online presence. Publications like *The Baker County Standard* (Macclenny, FL), *The Wave of Long Island* (Far Rockaway, NY), and *Atlanticville* (Long Branch, NJ) extend their publishing reach well beyond the local area.

One of Larson's tenets is to provide additional money-making opportunities to his clients. Our-Hometown.com enables its community publisher clients to sell print subscriptions, take orders for classifieds, and sell (paper edition) display ads for the online version. Seeking to add more value to the business, Larson says, "I wanted another way to share revenue, and to do it in a way that would benefit my clients and their readers, as well as attract new community publishers."

The site overall sees half a million unique visitors each month, who generate millions of page views across Our-Hometown.com. Effectively monetizing all of those pages presents a substantial challenge. When Larson heard about Google AdSense, a program designed for web publishers to run AdWords ads related to the content on their pages, he was excited to try it.

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Steve Larson

Founder,  
Our-Hometown.com

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### Results

Larson spent less than an hour implementing AdSense for all 45 of his publishers. "It took no time at all to copy and paste the code on individual pages," he says, "and it fits well with our content management system, and with the look and feel of all of our pages." Even on sites with long scrollable pages, Larson quickly saw

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"Now we're putting Google ads on virtually

a good revenue stream. Good enough, he says, to replace an existing skyscraper ad format in favor of running four Google ads in the same area. "The placements are great," Larson says. "Relevant ads appear on relevant pages. And, he adds, "The advertising information is so unique. We're seeing ads that are geographically appropriate, or that relate to the news stories on the page."

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In the first month of running Google ads, Our-Hometown.com papers earned over \$6,000, which represents a significant new source of income for the company and its clients, with whom it shares revenue. "These are entirely new ads that supplement each paper's display ads," says Larson, "and as a result we have an entirely new source of revenue," says Larson. As a result, he has expanded the AdSense offering to more of his publishers. "Now we're putting Google ads on virtually all of our clients' pages. We're convinced that this program will produce significant income for both us and our publishers." As he notes, "Google has always been an important way for readers to find our site. Now it's important to us in yet another way: earning revenue."

### About Google AdSense

Google AdSense™ is a program for online businesses, enabling them 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.

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