



Figure 11-1:
Google AdSense in action. This holiday gift site publishes AdWords for other, not directly competitive, gift sites.

So, what does this seemingly slapdash distribution of Google ads do to the vaunted relevancy of AdWords and search advertising? On Google, AdWords ads are associated with keywords and are displayed when somebody searches on those keywords. When the advertiser does a good job choosing keywords related to the advertised site or product, relevancy is automatic and chances are good that the ad is of interest to the Google user. What kind of relevancy ensues when AdWords ads are displayed on a non-Google site — a site that is, in most cases, not even a search engine?

Google builds relevancy between ads and their host sites by analyzing the sites and determining keywords appropriate to them. This task might seem presumptuous, but remember how much experience and success Google has in crawling, absorbing, understanding, and indexing Web pages. After all, Google is in the keyword-matching business and is arguably better at making those matches than any other company in the world. So if you trust Google to find Web pages matched to keywords, there's no problem trusting Google to display relevant ads on AdSense sites. It's all about keywords.