

The content network (AdSense sites) presents its own twist on placement value. Many AdSense publishers choose horizontal banner-like displays of AdWords ads, in which four ads are positioned side-by-side. A good argument can be made that none of those positions is more valuable than another, and that argument speaks to the cost-saving value of dropping out of the top spot. (AdSense also provides publishers with a vertical display, in which the top spot is arguably more visible and productive than lower positions.)



When considering your performance in the content network, you drop off the radar when your ad is ranked below the fifth position, because none of the ad displays in the AdSense program contains more than five ads. Most of them contain four, and some of them contain two or one. (See Figure 9-10.)



These ramifications are interesting, but I must issue a closing reminder of this crucial fact: Google evaluates your ad performance strictly on Google's pages. Although you get clickthroughs on the extended networks, pay for them, and see them reported in the Control Center, they don't count toward the official CTR that Google uses to reward or punish your ads. Keywords are slowed and disabled according to how their associated ads perform on Google's pages, and nowhere else.

Figure 9-10: AdWords ads on an AdSense publisher's site. If your bids did not earn fourth place or higher, your ad would not appear here.