

The AdSense account never requires your credit card information but you must at some point supply tax information so that Google can pay you. That information consists essentially of your tax ID number or Social Security number. (The latter is the appropriate identifier for sole proprietors and small-business operators with no employees.) You use the W-9 form to convey this information to Google. You may fill out and submit that form online or mail a paper version of the form through an anachronistic institution known as the “post office.”

AdSense offers three significant features:

- ✓ **Performance reports.** Use your account to check the number of AdSense ad displays at your pages, the number of clickthroughs, the clickthrough rate (CTR), and your earnings. This information can be delineated by date range.
- ✓ **Payment reports.** Use this section to check your history of payments received. Google pays monthly, whenever \$100 or more is due.
- ✓ **HTML code for ad layouts.** This section provides HTML code for all available ad layouts and color palettes.

If Google doesn’t know you through the AdWords program, you must apply for an AdSense account. The application process takes only a few minutes, but the acceptance process and opening the account can take up to three days. If you’re an AdWords advertiser and use the same password for the AdWords and AdSense accounts, your AdSense account starts immediately.

To get going, follow these steps:

1. Go to the AdSense home page here:

www.google.com/adsense

2. Click the Click Here to Apply button.

3. Fill in the Email address and Password fields, and then click the Continue button.

If you have an AdWords account, you may use its e-mail address and password for your AdSense account. If you don’t have an AdWords account, you must enter your e-mail address and create a password, though it can be the same password you use for any other Google account, such as a Google Answers account. For this series of steps, I assume that you don’t have an AdWords account.

4. Fill in all the information required on this page and click the Submit button.

Included here is an opt-out check box for periodic newsletters from Google. Don’t worry about spam; Google is the least spammy company I know. Frankly, I wish it would send *more* e-mail.