

CHITIKA EMINIMALLS SECRETS

2nd Edition

STRATEGIES FOR TOP CHITIKA REVENUES

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INTRODUCTION

Since writing the first edition of this guide, [Chitika](#) has gone through a number of important changes.

The old ad products are just as innovative and just as effective as ever. But there are a whole bunch of new products available too. In addition to being able to place highly targeted, eye-catching CPC ad units on Web pages that contain AdSense, publishers using Chitika can now offer Multiple Products in one ad. They can place text links to related products at the bottom of an article. And, most importantly, they can create an entire CPC store stuffed with all the products they could want.

In this guide, I'm going to explain everything you need to know to get started and earning with Chitika. The first thing you'll want to do is get signed up with Chitika. [Click here!](#)

I'll start by discussing **eMiniMalls**. These are the ad units that started the whole thing off. Interactive and unmissable, they brought fantastic results — even for publishers who thought that graphic ads had gone the way of the dodo and the banner.

First, I'll talk about the **appearance** of these ads. I'll discuss the colors you can use, how many ads you should take and where you should place them. I'll also explain which formats work best on which sites and which tabs you should choose as your default.

I'll discuss Chitika's new Multiple Product Units. When Chitika launched eMiniMalls, the company made it clear that it knows how to create ads that attract eyeballs and draw clicks. These new units take that approach even further. I'll explain how to get the most out of ad units that offer more than one product.

I'll then move on to **keywords**. Because eMiniMalls allows you to choose your own ads, keywords are particularly important. I'll explain how to make sure that your contextualized ads stay relevant and how to bring up high-paying ads when you're picking the products yourself. You can do that by choosing from Chitika's list of keywords or by picking from its selection of categories. I'll point out the differences and suggest which option you should use and when.

I'll review **stats**. It's always important to follow the results of your efforts so that you can see what's working — and what isn't. I'll

explain how to keep an eye on your figures, and more importantly, what to do with them once you get them.

eMiniMalls remains the focus of this guide and it's important to have a good overall strategy when you use them. In Chapter 4, I'll describe some general approaches you can take for blogs, product sites, and sites that combine Chitika's units with other contextualized ad programs.

I'll then move on to the new methods of making money that Chitika has unveiled since I first brought out this guide.

For many publishers, especially bloggers, there's no question that Chitika's **ShopLinc** represents a giant opportunity. It's never been easier to create your own online store, stuff it with products you never see, handle or ship, and promote it through your content. I'll discuss what Chitika's new idea means for publishers smart enough to use it and offer some tips for getting valuable clicks.

I'm also very excited about Chitika's new **ShopCloud\$** and **Related Product Unit (RPU)** features. Providing choices for publishers to earn a number of different ways, you should be excited as well!

And I've also included a number of new case studies that illustrate the techniques I've described.

Many of the strategies I mention in this guide are a bit technical. You have to change the code if you want to change the colors and that's pretty much true of all the changes you'll make to your Chitika units. That's why at the back of this book I've also included a summary of the various codes that you'll have to use. It should help you to find what you need easily.

That said, let's start with eMiniMalls.

1. WHAT ARE EMINIMALLS?

Chitika's eMiniMalls are a radically different way to place promotional ad links on your website. Instead of a static link that a user can click or ignore, eMiniMalls are unique, interactive and packed with useful information. They also offer a great deal of flexibility, which makes them easy for publishers to optimize — provided they know what they need to do and how they need to do it.

They get results.

In effect, eMiniMalls are really a bunch of different ads packed into one unit. Each unit may consist of four tabs: a list of best deals, a product description, product reviews and a search tab that readers can complete to bring up other ads. And of course, there are the pictures and brief details that appear above those tabs:



The image shows a screenshot of an eMiniMalls ad unit. At the top left is a small image of a blue iRiver H10 MP3 player. To its right, the product name "iRiver H10 (20 GB) MP3 Player" is displayed in blue text. Below the product name, it says "Buy at: QVC - \$299.96" and "In Stock at QVC". Below this information are four tabs: "Best Deals", "Description", "Reviews", and "Search". The "Best Deals" tab is selected and expanded, showing a table of offers from various merchants. The table has three columns: Merchant Name, Price, and another Price column. The first row shows "QVC.com" as the merchant, with a price of "\$299.96" and another "\$299.96". The second row shows "TigerDirect.com" with a price of "\$289.99" and another "\$289.99". The third row shows "Circuit City" with a price of "\$284.99" and another "\$284.99". The "QVC.com" entry is marked as the "Featured Store".

| Merchant Name | Price | Price |
|-----------------|----------|----------|
| QVC.com | \$299.96 | \$299.96 |
| TigerDirect.com | \$289.99 | \$289.99 |
| Circuit City | \$284.99 | \$284.99 |

Fig. 1.1: Your basic eMiniMalls ad unit.

To move from one tab to another, users simply need to move their mouse over the tabs, an act that's always simple and fun.

So the units look good, and they contain enough detail to get users looking and clicking.

But Chitika also lets publishers play with the way the ads look, define the default tabs and **even lets them choose the products they want to advertise.**

That's a huge difference to the way other contextualized advertising systems work. If you're fed up with trying to figure out how to put keywords onto your Web pages to bring up the ads you want, then you're going to love eMiniMalls. Turn off the contextualization system and you can choose which products you want to promote.

And doing that gives you an added bonus: **it makes eMiniMalls compatible with AdSense and YPN.**

That's right. If you want to plug in the keywords yourself so that the ads aren't contextualized, you can keep your AdSense or YPN ads, and give yourself a brand new, additional revenue stream.

Now, if you're wondering what sort of effect all this has had on the incomes of people who have used eMiniMalls, the answer seems to be quite a lot. Revenues for optimized eMiniMalls have been comparable to those of AdSense. In fact, not only have some users reported higher earnings than those with AdSense, they've also found that the overall number of clicks can be higher too.

Giving users a choice of ads, it seems, encourages them to click more ads more often.

That means that when you sign up with Chitika you shouldn't toss out the AdSense or YPN ads with the bathwater. Instead, you should find the best way to make eMiniMalls work — and work together with whichever compatible system you're using.

Getting the most out of your eMiniMalls units starts with making them look the part...

2. FORMATTING EMINIMALLS — CREATING PAGES THAT SELL

When it comes to making money with online advertising, there's one law that seems to rule them all: blend your ads into the page and users will click on them.

That makes sense. When you deliver good content, people will trust you. They'll come to your site knowing that you're going to give them information that they'll find useful and interesting.

If you don't deliver that, they won't return.

But when you do deliver good content, not only will your users come back to your site, they'll also visit the sites you recommend, check out your affiliate links and click on your ads. Even when you have no control over the ads that appear on your page (and uniquely with eMiniMalls, you have a *lot* of control over the ads that appear on your page), they'll still trust the ads that appear on your page to be worth visiting.

But they'll only trust those ads if they look like part of your site.

All of the tips I give in this section of the book are intended to blend your ad into your site. They'll certainly do other things too, but that's the most important effect these tweaks should have.

2.1 Choosing The Right Format

Once you've been accepted by Chitika (a process that's very very quick), the first choice you'll have to make is which format — or formats — of ad you want to put on your site.

Chitika currently offers about fifteen different ad formats and says there's more on the way. That's nice. It's always good to have a choice. But there's a downside to having a big choice: it's easy to make the *wrong* choice.

Clearly, the format you choose will depend on the type of page you're going to put it on but in general, some formats are better than others.

According to the people at Chitika, **180 x 150** and **468 x 60 units** have shown the best results on blogs.

The image shows two examples of Chitika ad formats. The top one is a 'Small Rectangle (180 x 150)' featuring a small image of an iPod Nano, a title 'Apple iPod Nano (1GB, Black)', a link to 'uBid Online Auction', and a table with 'Specs', 'Deals', and 'Search' buttons. Below the table is a short paragraph of text. The bottom one is a 'Banner (468 x 60)' featuring a larger image of an iPod Nano, a table with 'Product', 'Description', 'Best Deals', and 'Search' buttons, and a link to 'Chitika | eMiniMalls'. Below the table is a title 'Apple iPod Nano (4GB, black)' and a link to 'PC Connection'.

Fig. 2.1 Chitika's best-performing blog units...

And **300 x 250** has shown the best results on regular sites.

That doesn't mean you should completely ignore the other formats available. If you have the sort of page layout that allows them to blend into the page, then you can certainly give them a try but if you're not sure, start with at least one 300 x 250 on a regular site and either a 180 x 150 or 468 x 60 on a blog. They're the sizes most likely to give the most clicks.

Whichever format you choose though, the unit should slip easily into your site. You want to make sure that your ads look like

personal recommendations from you and not sales messages from some outside source. The best way to do that is to pick the formats that I've suggested here as your starting point and blend them into the page.

Medium Rectangle (300 x 250)

[Apple iPod Nano \(1GB, Black\)](#)

[PC Connection](#)
Save \$10 After Rebate!, In Stock at PC Connection

Description | Best Deals | Search | [eMiniMalls](#)

Thanks to its limited capacity, the gorgeous iPod Nano isn't for everybody, but it sets the standard for MP3 players to come.

[Read More at PC Connection >](#)

Powered by **CNET.com**

Fig. 2.2 And its best-performing conventional site unit.

And of course, you should certainly get rid of the borders.

Borders just mark off the ads from the rest of the page. Take them off your units and your ads will already be well on their way to merging with your articles.

2.2 Multiple Product Units

Multi-Product Leaderboard (728 x 90) - New!

Product | Description | Best Deals | Search | [Chitika | eMiniMalls](#)

Witness the evolution of the revolution. First it played songs. Then photos. Then podcasts. Now iPod plays video, changing the way you experience your music and more. Again. In lighter, thinner 30GB and 60GB models starting at \$299, the new iPod is music to your eyes.

Fig. 2.3 More ads per unit with Chitika's Multiple Product Units.

Until recently, one of the big differences between an AdSense unit and an eMiniMalls unit was that AdSense units contained ads for lots of different products. If the user wasn't interested in one link, he might be interested in another, and the result would be a higher CTR.

It didn't take too long for Chitika to catch on. The company brought out Multiple Product Units... with the usual Chitika twist.

Instead of simply offering a list of static links to a number of different products, these ads contain images and details of up to four different products. Mouse over one of the product images, and the details will change and that product will move into the central spot in the ad unit.

It's very neat, very smooth and very eye-catching.

But that doesn't mean that it's always very profitable.

eMiniMalls tend to work best when the content of the ads closely matches the content of the articles the ad is associated with. If you've written an article that discusses the latest Nikon camera, and you have an ad unit that shows a picture of a Nikon camera and offers more information about it, there's a good chance you'll get clicks.

But if that ad unit also offers information about Playstations or iPods, why would a user interested in cameras click on any of those links?

As soon as you start showing multiple ads for very different products, you begin to weaken the strength of your ad targeting. Ideally you want to have articles that talk about products, and ads for the products you've discussed. That's the approach that will always bring the best results.

So does that mean you should steer clear of Multiple Product Units?

Not necessarily.

Not every article you write will be about a specific product. If you have a site that talks about computer gaming for example, a multiple ad unit that shows images of a Playstation, a computer game and a PSP device could well get clicks on whichever item the user was most interested in.

There's no reason why that wouldn't work in the same way that a large AdSense unit works.

In general then, if an article has discussed a specific product, try to find a specific ad to complement it. If it's talked about more than one product — or no product at all — then you can try a Multiple Product ad. You might find that it does the trick.

2.3 Matching Fonts

Once you've chosen the right format for your page, the next step will be to start blending it into your page.

Blending your ads will require making changes to the way those ads look. The first change will be to the fonts. If the fonts in the ads match the fonts on your Web page, the ads will start to look like part of the site and not something brought in from outside.

eMiniMalls gives you complete control over the fonts you want to use. But like all of their changes, you have to break into the code and make the changes yourself.

The lines you need are:

```
ch_font_text = `font name`;  
ch_font_title = `font name`;
```

While you can choose just about any common font (the less common ones will bring you back to the default font), I do recommend that you use the same fonts in the ad that you used on the site. That's the system that gives the best results.

2.4 Changing Colors

Exactly the same is true of the colors you choose for the text and the background.

Sure, you can help your ads to stand out by choosing some weird color and some wacky font. But all that's going to do is say to the user, "I've got nothing to do with the rest of this page. I'm from some other company that's got no relation to this site that you trust and enjoy."

You don't want your site to say that. You want your site to say, "Hey, check this out. I think you'll like it..."

Make the color of the ad text match the color of the Web text both for titles and content — and match the background colors too — and you'll make the ads look like part of your site.

The code for changing the background color is:

```
ch_color_bg = "#CCCCCC";'
```

You should also make sure your links are blue.

Blue has become the default color for links on the Internet. While there can sometimes be some good reasons for making your links a different color and marking them out, I can't think of one on eMiniMalls. As far as I'm concerned (and I'm guessing as far as most users are concerned) if they work like links, they should look like links.

2.5 How Many Ads Is Too Many Ads?

Sometimes, you can have too much of a good thing. eMiniMalls are a good thing and Chitika lets you take as many of them as you want.

That's right, there's no limit at all on the number of eMiniMall ads you can place on each Web page.

Except one. Put too many ads on your pages and your website will look more like an ad page than a content page. That's the sort of thing that damages your relationship with your users.

Of course, with lots of ads, you'll still have a site that looks like a hard-sell advertising page rather than an interesting page of content.

That doesn't mean you have to stick with just the one eMiniMall unit though. You can certainly put up two ads, and you can even go as far as three if you have a long page and no other ads. But I can't think of a reason why you'd want to put more than three good ads on a Web page.

Frankly, if your users aren't clicking with three ads on the site, putting more ads isn't going to solve the problem. You need to be looking at some very different solutions.

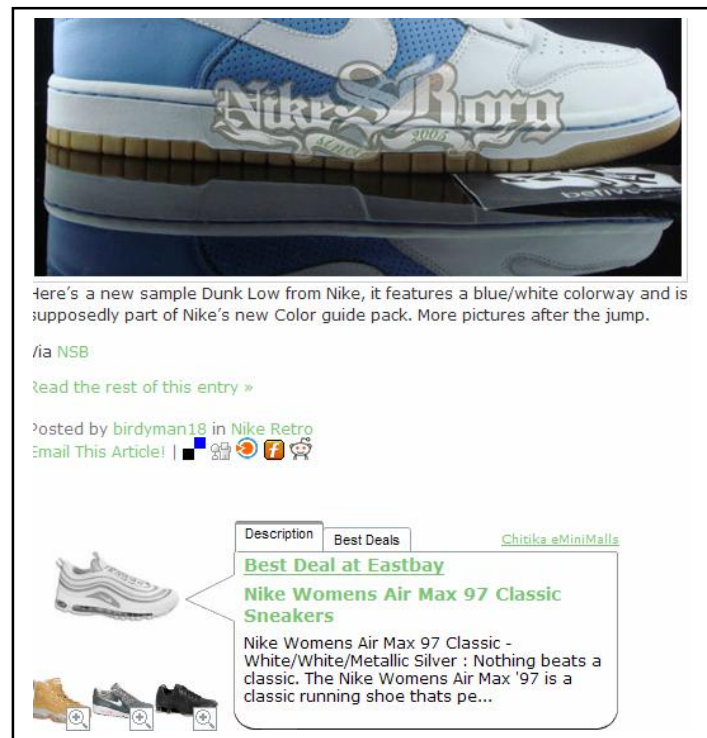
If you're using AdSense or YPN then, I recommend one AdSense unit and two eMiniMalls or two AdSense units and one eMiniMall.

2.6 Location, Location, Location

So far, I've talked about the look of your ads. That's important. But so is where you put your ads. No one ever comes to a website and starts looking around for the ads. If the ads aren't pushed under their nose, users are just going to ignore them.

But if the users *know* the ads are being pushed under their nose, they're going to ignore them too.

Google has published a heat map which shows that for regular sites, the best places for ads are at the top and bottom of the page and in the upper left hand corner. I've found that to be generally true for AdSense. But I don't think that these are the best places for eMiniMalls.



The screenshot shows a blog post with a large image of a Nike Dunk Low sneaker. Below the image is a text block: "Here's a new sample Dunk Low from Nike, it features a blue/white colorway and is supposedly part of Nike's new Color guide pack. More pictures after the jump." Below this is a link to NSB and a "Read the rest of this entry" link. Further down, it says "Posted by birdyman18 in Nike Retro" with social media icons. At the bottom, there is an eMiniMalls ad unit for "Nike Womens Air Max 97 Classic Sneakers" with a "Best Deal at Eastbay" badge. The ad unit includes a description, a "Best Deals" tab, and a "Chitika eMiniMalls" link. The ad content reads: "Nike Womens Air Max 97 Classic - White/White/Metallic Silver : Nothing beats a classic. The Nike Womens Air Max '97 is a classic running shoe thats pe..."

Fig. 2.4 Kicksaholic puts units between posts but uses big pictures to help the ads blend in.

The best locations for any ads are always going to be those places where users are going to be looking anyway. Yes, that usually means **above the fold** (the part of the page that's visible before the user has to scroll). Put your ads at the top of the page and you can guarantee that every user who reaches your site will see them.

But they might also look right past them. After all, they're going to be looking for the content not the ads. That's why although it's still a good idea to make sure that you have ad units above the fold, I also think it's a good idea to embed your eMiniMalls units into the text itself.

In fact, Chitika's own studies have shown that units positioned within a blog post content consistently outperform units placed outside the blog posts.

Now, you have to be careful here. An ad stuck inside a piece of text can be annoying to the reader. Annoyed users don't click ads and they don't come back. Matching the colors and fonts will help to smooth the joins but another way to get around this problem might be **to blend your Web page into your ad.**

What do I mean by that? Well, think of it this way. There's only so much that you can change on an eMiniMalls unit. Once you've

picked the format and matched the colors and the font, you're still going to have a small picture of the product, a quick description and some tabs.

If nothing on your Web page looks like that, then your ad is going to stand out.

But if somewhere before the first eMiniMall, you've already embedded a similar picture into the text, then the ad will look familiar, seem recommended and be more attractive to click.

It doesn't matter which picture you use or where exactly you put it, but it should come before the first eMiniMall and ideally (although not necessarily) be a similar size to the picture in the ad. That should help the ad blend in even better.

You could try to copy the layout of eMiniMalls in other ways too: you could put a brief list of specs next to another product picture on your page or use tabs in your navigation bar.

Remember the idea isn't to create your own eMiniMalls (you certainly don't need to do that). The idea is to make the eMiniMalls you show look like a part of your Web page so that users feel that your site is recommending them. Create that impression and you'll do wonders for your CTR.

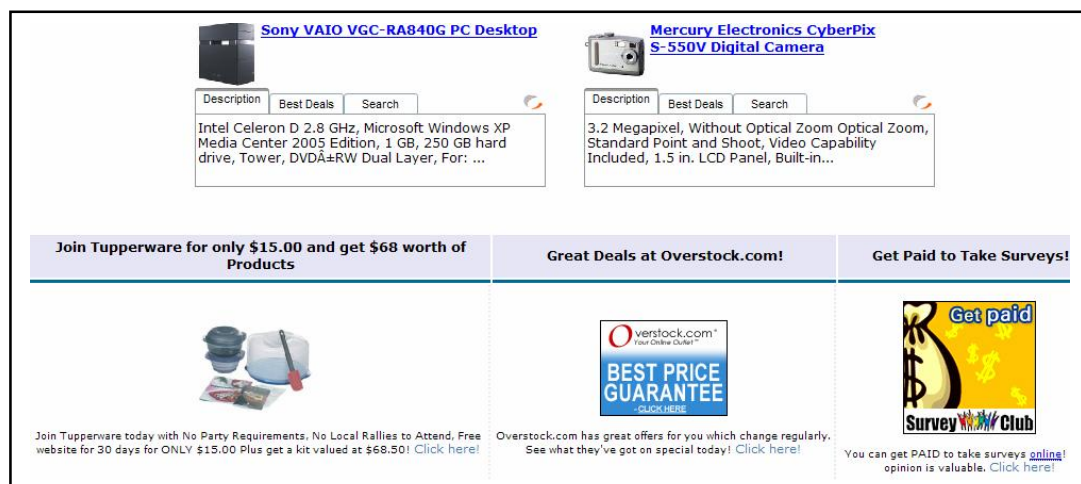


Fig. 2.5 Small images help eMiniMalls blend in on DealofDay.com

2.7 Special Rules For Product Sites

Although eMiniMalls can work on any site, they're particularly powerful on Web pages that talk about products. That could be a review site or it could just be a blog which frequently mentions the products you use.

You can think of eMiniMalls as being like tiny little product sites themselves. They contain the specifications of the products, short reviews and even a price list that helps people pick up a bargain. That's exactly the sort of information that a user is going to expect to find on a site that talks about goods. And that means that users on product sites are going to find them particularly interesting.

It also means though that where you put these units on the page and how you present them can have a huge effect on your CTR.

Chitika itself recommends putting the units **between blog posts, at the end of reviews and after content**. Their argument is that users are more likely to click — and to buy — after they've finished reading what you've written.

There's something to that argument, and it's a pretty good default strategy.

But unfortunately not everyone reads to the end of a post, especially if the article is long. If you've got an ad below the fold, at the end of a long review, you're going to lose all the users who read half the article, get bored and look for a place to click away. They won't reach the ad and they won't see it.

If your reviews are long, or if there's a big space in the middle of the page where there are no ads, then the idea of subtly blending a unit into the text area should still bring results.

You've really got a choice then between placing your eMiniMalls units between your articles or inside your articles. Which will work best for your site? Test and see. Try each strategy on two different Web pages and compare your CTR rates. Every site is different so testing and checking is the only way to know for sure which methods are going to bring *you* the highest revenues.

2.8 Picking Your Tabs

So far, I've talked about formats, fonts, colors and location. There's one more feature that you can change that's unique to eMiniMalls: the tabs.

Each eMiniMalls ad contains up to four tabs, with the default set to "Best Deals." You have complete freedom to remove any of the tabs you wish and to change the default tab to any tab you wish.

So which tabs should you use and which should you start with?

According to the people at Chitika, the description tab is usually the best place to start for most types of website. For sites that contain reviews or which recommend bargain places for people to buy though, they recommend making "Best Deals" the default.

Their recommendation makes sense to me but again, this sounds like exactly the sort of thing you need to test and experiment with. I think it's safe to assume that whether people will be attracted by a description, best deals, a review or a search box will depend entirely on the text that surrounds the ad. Even the slightest change in that text could have an effect on the attractiveness of that tab.

As for the search tab, it used to be the case that Google insisted that this feature on eMiniMalls was removed to comply with their terms and conditions. That's no longer the case.

Because the search only consults Chitika's advertising database and doesn't scan the Web as a whole, the search tab doesn't conflict with its TOS. Even if you have a Google search box on your site, you can still have an eMiniMalls search box and let users pull up the ads of their choice.

As for removing other tabs, usually you shouldn't need to unless you think it makes your page look too crowded. You should certainly leave the Description and Best Deal tabs. Those two are likely to be the most attractive for users.

The code to change the default tab is:

```
Ch_default_tab - 'tab name';
```

(Some formats use different names for the tabs. It's important to use the same name used by the tabs in the format you've chosen.)

To remove the search tab, if that's what you wish to do, you need to use the line:

```
ch_nosearch = 1;
```

2.9 Using Your Tabs To Sell

Some publishers have come up with a very clever approach to using their tabs. I think it's genius.

They think of their page as a sales letter and the eMiniMalls units as a part of the sell.

One of the golden rules of any sales approach is not to mention the price until the end. First, you create interest then you build desire. Only when you've got leads eating out of your hand do you introduce the price.

So when you put an ad unit at the top of the page, you could take off the price tab and let that ad unit help to create the interest. The content creates the desire, and only at the end, do you place an eMiniMalls unit with "Best Deals" as the default tab.

It's an approach that some publishers have found very effective and it could well be worth a try for you too.

All of the strategies I've discussed here will make your ads more attractive for users to click. But you also want to make sure that when they do click, the ads bring you lots of money. Once you've targeted the user, you need to use keywords to target the ads.

I'll talk about that in the next chapter.

3. KEYWORDS — MAKING YOUR WORDS COUNT

eMiniMalls doesn't only look very different to other kinds of contextualized ads, it acts very different too. For one, publishers can turn off the contextualization and plug in their own keywords. In fact, by default, your Chitika ads will be non-contextualized. Only those with millions of page views per month can select the contextualized option.

That's pretty useful. I don't know of any other ad system that lets you choose the ads you serve to your users in this way, changing them as you wish and very easily too.

But that just adds another layer to the keyword problem. Publishers using contextualization need to make sure that they're getting the most relevant ads possible by putting the right keywords in the right places on the page; publishers who aren't using contextualization need to make sure that they're getting the

highest-paying ads by putting the right keywords in the ad unit's keyword array.

In this chapter, I'm going to explain how to do both of these.

3.1 Titles Call The Ad

When it comes to contextualized ads, the titles you use on your Web page are at least as important as the keywords in the metatag.

For keywords, the titles will always be your hottest spots.

They won't be the *only* hot spots, but they'll certainly be the hottest — and the ones that give you the most control over the content of the eMiniMalls.

You can experiment with this. Because the ads are updated as soon as you upload a page, you can just keep playing with those titles until you start to see the sort of ads you want.

So if you find that your Web page about Toshiba laptops for example, is running ads about desktop computers or Toshiba servers, then you can try putting the phrase "Toshiba Laptops" in a title and uploading the page again.

And if that doesn't work, **try breaking up the text by adding more titles with the same keyword phrase.** That should help the contextualization engine come up with more accurate ads.

In fact, using lots of keyword-rich titles is particularly important on a Web page that covers several different topics. I've already said that eMiniMalls works best on pages that cover just one topic. An article that begins by talking about DVD players and ends up discussing which type of plasma screen make for best viewing, for example, could well confuse the contextualization engine.

Tossing in those extra keyword-carrying titles will keep the ads on DVDs.

Let's say for example that you're running a blog and you write an article about an inflatable children's paddling pool entitled "Inflatable Paddling Pools Make The Summer Cheap And Easy." The eMiniMall you have embedded in the entry might show an ad for a children's paddling pool which gets plenty of clicks.

Your readers then start to contribute comments which discuss other toys that can keep kids entertained in the summer months. Soon your ads could start to show the items that are mentioned in the comments rather than in the topic of your blog.

If that's still getting you plenty of clicks, that's fine. And Chitika checks the ads for popularity, dropping ads that don't get high responses. But while you might be getting the best-performing ads for water pistols, if you know that ads about paddling pools will give you even more clicks then obviously you'll want to optimize your site to bring those ads back.

One way to do that is to break up that page with titles that carry that key phrase.

And another method is simply to turn off the contextualization system and throw the keywords directly into the ads.

3.2 Choosing Your Ads

If you are a premium Chitika publisher, contextualizing your ads saves you the headache of having to decide for yourself which products you want to promote. Chitika will do all that for you and you should be able to rely on it to serve you the highest-paying relevant ads each time.

That's very useful if you've got the sort of site that covers a bunch of different topics and changes all the time. Like a blog, for example.

Chitika's engine will read the page, scan the title, check the metatags and give you the best-performing ads that match your content. Great.

But if you want to earn the most revenues possible, you still have to optimize your site. And it's likely that you'll also want to keep your eye on the ads to make sure that readers' comments or some other site change hasn't started to bring in less attractive or lower-paying ads.

That requires a fair amount of work and in my opinion if you're going to do that work anyway, you may as well go the whole hog and choose your own ads. That's especially true if you're putting the ads on a "static" site whose content doesn't change.

Chitika seems to agree. They've made non-contextual the default setting for eMiniMalls.

That makes choosing the ads you want very, very easy. (It also makes the ads compatible with AdSense and YPN right from the start). When you put eMiniMalls on your site, the code will contain the four keywords already in place. To get the ads you want, all you have to do is swap the keywords in the quotation marks for keywords related to your own topic.

Again, you'll need to go to Amazon or Shopping.com to identify the most accurate keywords. This time though **you have to be absolutely certain that Chitika has an ad to serve for each keyword you use.**


If Chitika can't find an ad, it will serve up any ad at random — or if you've also chosen a category, an ad from that category. That's better than getting a public service ad but I still can't think of a reason why you'd want a random ad when you can get a targeted one.

To confirm that an ad for your keyword exists — and to see which ad you could get — you can simply enter the keyword into any eMiniMalls search box. If you don't have one on your site, there's one on Chitika's home page. The ad you see is likely to be the one you'll receive.

But Chitika also practices geo-targeting, so a user in Canada will receive a different ad to someone in the UK. Which is why the company has its own preview tool at <http://www.chitika.com/preview.php> that shows you all the ads a particular keyword will display around the world.

Set Keywords: Category:

United States (US)




Best Deal at Everything Office Furniture
Adjustable Monitor Computer Desk - Leda Furniture - DL-037G
In Stock, This item is IN STOCK and usua... at Everything Office Furniture

Description Best Deals Search

DL-037G Features: 3 Level adjustable series Steel frames Metal Inserts Smooth round edges Left and right CD racks Tinted Tempered glass Slide out key...

Canada (CA)




Best Deal at Everything Office Furniture
Office Furniture - L-Shaped Computer Desk - Executive Office
In Stock, This item is IN STOCK and usua... at Everything Office Furniture

Description Best Deals Search

Download Catalog (PDF) Includes: desk and return 7684-48 Features: Constructed of maple solids, select hardwoods and cherry veneers on selected wood ...

United Kingdom (UK)



Apple iPod Video White (60 GB, MA003LL/A) Digital Media Player
[Amazon Marketplace](#)

Description Best Deals Search [Chitika | eMiniMalls](#)

Witness the evolution of the revolution. First it played songs. Then photos. Then podcasts. Now iPod plays video, changing the way you experience your music and more. Again. In

[Read More at Amazon Marketplace >>](#)

Fig. 3.2 Computer desks from around the world... except in Britain.

3.3 Contextualized Ads: Landing The Best Ads Automatically

The advantage of leaving your ads contextualized is ease. Once you've optimized your page, you can just leave it to Chitika's engine to find the best ads and plug them in.

But even with contextualized ads, you still have to optimize your page. That's as true with Chitika as it is with any other contextualization system.

Chitika seems mostly to look for keywords in two places: in the metatags and in the titles on your Web page. When you're trying to get the best ads automatically, those are the places you need to look.

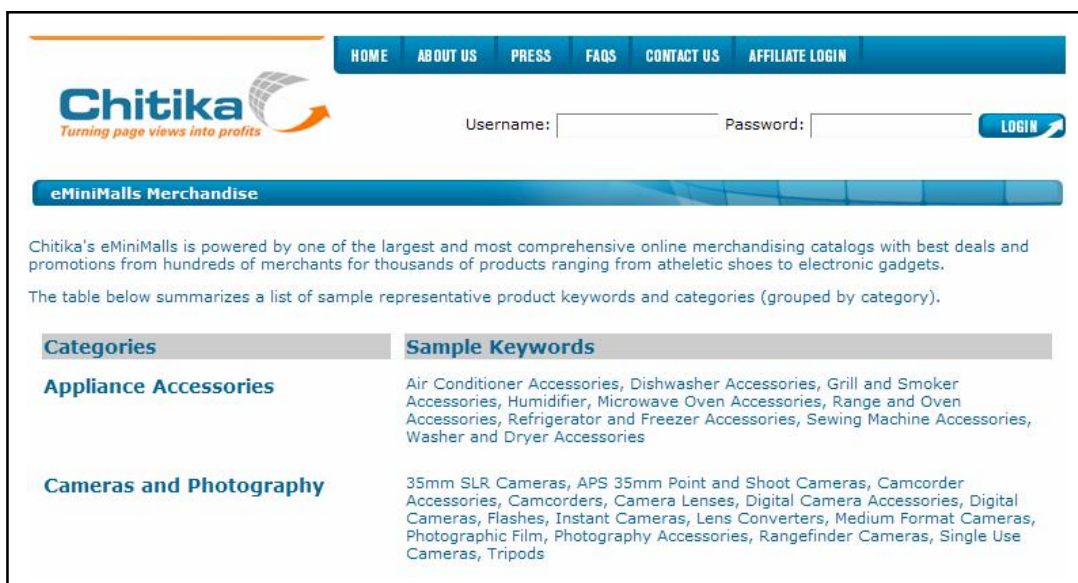
3.4 Making Metatags Work For You

Plugging keywords into your metatags is pretty straightforward and the fact that Chitika provides a giant list of keywords at www.chitika.com/catalog.php for just about every topic you can imagine makes it easy to know which phrases you need. You just

need to browse through the list and toss them into the appropriate place. Simple.

Or almost simple. In practice, there is a problem with just tossing these words into your metatags.

Chitika seems to take its ads directly from retail sites like Amazon and Shopping.com. So if you had a site that talked about coffee, for example, you could surf to the coffee section on Amazon and use category terms such as "Coffee Pods," "Espresso" and "Ground Coffee" or even the names of specific products. While Chitika's terms will keep your ads relevant, adding phrases from Amazon and Shopping should give you results that are even more focused.



The screenshot shows the Chitika website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for HOME, ABOUT US, PRESS, FAQs, CONTACT US, and AFFILIATE LOGIN. Below this is the Chitika logo with the tagline "Turning page views into profits" and a globe icon. To the right of the logo is a login form with fields for "Username:" and "Password:" and a "LOGIN" button. Below the login form is a blue banner for "eMiniMalls Merchandise". Underneath the banner, there is a paragraph of text explaining that Chitika's eMiniMalls is powered by a large online merchandising catalog. Below this text is a table with two columns: "Categories" and "Sample Keywords".

| Categories | Sample Keywords |
|-------------------------|---|
| Appliance Accessories | Air Conditioner Accessories, Dishwasher Accessories, Grill and Smoker Accessories, Humidifier, Microwave Oven Accessories, Range and Oven Accessories, Refrigerator and Freezer Accessories, Sewing Machine Accessories, Washer and Dryer Accessories |
| Cameras and Photography | 35mm SLR Cameras, APS 35mm Point and Shoot Cameras, Camcorder Accessories, Camcorders, Camera Lenses, Digital Camera Accessories, Digital Cameras, Flashes, Instant Cameras, Lens Converters, Medium Format Cameras, Photographic Film, Photography Accessories, Rangefinder Cameras, Single Use Cameras, Tripods |

Fig. 3.1 Helpful hints from Chitika.

But you should also keep to one topic throughout the page. The more specific you can be about that topic, the better.

If you have a website about computers for example, having separate pages for different models would give you the most accurate contextualized ads. That would allow you to use the exact titles of various laptop models in the metatags as well as plugging in general terms such as "personal computers," "laptops" or "electronic goods."

While AdSense or YPN are likely to give you general ads about computers, eMiniMalls would serve ads promoting the exact models you've been discussing.

Of course, it's important to remember that any changes you make to your metatags are likely to affect your search engine rankings. I can't see why adding more specific terms to your metatags should

do anything but turn up your site when a user enters those terms but your ranking is something you should keep your eye on when you're playing with the metatags.

You should also pay attention to any special deals you find in your topic on Amazon and Shopping.com. Some publishers have reported that ads for these products give the highest paying ads in eMiniMalls. I can't confirm that but it sounds sensible and it's definitely worth a try.

3.5 Categories Or Keywords?

Chitika's keywords now come with an insurance policy. Put a category number in your code and if for some reason your keywords no longer work, you won't get some random ad that has nothing to do with your site.

You'll get an ad for the most popular product in the category you've chosen.

Of course, you can just skip the keyword, plug in the category code and get that ad automatically. If your site is pretty general, that might work for you. But on the whole, you're going to get better results — as always — putting targeted ads on pages that match the content.

There are really only two reasons to use the category option in your eMiniMalls units.

The first is to make sure that your ads are always targeted to some extent even if, for some reason, your keywords fail.

And the other is that one of the categories is a "Seasonal Specials" that could be useful at certain times of year.

I certainly don't think that it's a bad idea to have at least one unit on your Web pages advertising Christmas trees and decorations in December or costumes during Halloween, even if your site has nothing to do with those topics.

As long as you've *also* got targeted ads on those pages, you might find that they're a good way to cash in on the season's spending without sacrificing your CTR.

3.6 Alternate URLs

Including category codes in your ads should make sure that your units always display ads, even if the keywords don't work. But Chitika is picky about its traffic sources. Users from outside the USA, Canada, UK, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Spain and Sweden will still see an ad... but you won't get paid if they click.

In the past, that's proven to be a very sensitive topic. Publishers had checked their stats, found that they were earning large sums of money and prepared to receive a fat check from Chitika. When Chitika audited the clicks and deducted the clicks from users outside their chosen countries, many publishers found that their commissions were cut dramatically.

You don't want that to happen to you.

If you have plenty of users from countries that Chitika doesn't accept, then you should be using an alternate URL. When a user from one of those countries stops by, instead of seeing a Chitika ad that won't pay you a penny, they'll see a different ad that will give you cash.

Darren Rowse at Pro Blogger.net, for example, writes about how one publisher he knows uses it to show his Japanese users affiliate ads from Amazon Japan. Very neat.

Remember though that whatever you put in that ad space has to have the same size as the original unit. So if you're using a 468 x 180 eMiniMalls unit and you want to show an affiliate ad to users from countries that Chitika doesn't accept, that alternate affiliate ad unit has to be 468 x 180 too.

3.7 Rotating Your Ads

We've seen that the ad code that you'll receive when you sign up contains four keywords. Those four keywords relate to four different ads. The ads for each product are served one after the other at random, a good way to stop users ignoring ads that they've seen too many times.

But when you're trying to get maximum value from your website, you have to be very careful with this rotation. Obviously, the easiest thing to do would be to simply plug in a handful of the best

keywords that bring up the most relevant and highest-paying ads and leave them to rotate.

Sure, that would be easy. But it would also means that your highest-paying or most attractive ad will only be served *a quarter of the time*.

You want the best ad to be served, not the ad whose turn it is next.

That's why I'm not crazy about letting Chitika rotate my ads automatically.

I think it makes more sense to use just one keyword, follow the stats for a few days, then switch to a different ad. Serve up each ad in turn and you should soon be able to figure out which ads that relate to your topic are bringing in the greatest number of clicks and the highest revenues.

You could then start with the best ad and keep serving it until the CTR starts to fall before swapping it for the next ad.

Clearly, that does require some work. You're going to have to keep a close eye on your CTR and revenues. You're going to have to know which ads are the best four or five to serve on your site. And you're going to have to be ready to make the switch when you see revenues starting to drop.

Letting Chitika do that for you is likely to cost you some money, but if you've got a lot of Web pages to monitor I can see that it could make your life a great deal easier.

If you do want to use just one keyword though, whether that's because you want to manually rotate different ads in turn or just because you want to put up one specific ad and forget about it, you need to delete these lines of code:

```
var ch_queries = new Array('phrase1', 'phrase2', 'phrase3');  
var ch_selected = Math.floor((Math.random() * ch_queries.length));  
ch_query = ch_queries[ch_selected];
```

and replace it with this line, inserting the keyword between the quotation marks:

```
ch_query = 'keyword';
```

Easy.

Of course, monitoring the CTR and revenues from particular ads means knowing how to read your stats — and knowing what to do with the information you get from those stats.

That's the subject of the next chapter.

4. STATS — COUNTING YOUR MONEY

One of the key characteristics of eMiniMalls is convenience. The fact that you can actually choose the ads you want to put on your Web page is great. It's much easier than playing with keywords on various parts of the page in the way that you need to do for AdSense or any other contextualized ad system.

That's even true if you want to go through the whole process of following the results of your ads closely so that you can rotate them at the best times.

eMiniMalls' convenience though also extends to its stats. When I wrote the first edition of this guide, the stats on Chitika were pretty basic. You could see your impressions, calculate your CTR and count your revenues (the most fun of all). But it was all pretty limited.

I contacted the people at Chitika and they told me that they were planning to introduce channels that would let publishers track the response of particular ads.

In fact, they said, we'd be able to follow any ad we wanted in any way we wanted by using any string.

Well, the people at Chitika are as good as their word. Publishers now have unlimited channels (actually up to 1,000 per account but you don't want to be following 1,000 channels) and you can create any type of channel you want.

4.1 How To Create Channels



Fig. 4.1 Checking your Chitika channels.

There are two ways to create a channel.

If you haven't yet placed the code on your site, you can log in to your account, click "eMiniMalls Code" and in the "Set Options" section, add your channel name. When the code is created, it will contain your channel details.

Alternatively, if you've already placed a Chitika ad on your site you'll need to add this line to the code:

```
ch_sid = "channel name";
```

Place the line anywhere after "ch_client" but before "/script". And of course, replace "channel name" with the name of your channel. (If you find that your eMiniMalls units disappear after you do this, try changing the double quotes for single quotes. Chitika has had some trouble with this.)

If you're not comfortable playing around with code though, you can always log into your account, generate new ad code and use it to replace the unit on your site.

The fact that you can create unlimited channels of an unlimited type raises all sorts of possibilities.

But again, lots of possibilities means lots of possible ways to go wrong. The channels you create are supposed to give you information that will help you make smart decisions. But you have to be able to pull out the right information. You have to know which questions to ask... and you have to ask them one at a time.

4.2 Tracking Your Ads One String At A Time

One of the most common mistakes that people make when they first start using channels is to create tons of them. You might well end up with lots of channels — twenty or thirty isn't uncommon, more if you have several sites — but you want to add them in very small doses, otherwise the information becomes too confusing. You won't be able to tell exactly what is influencing your CTR and by how much.

That's the information you need to know.

You want to find out how much each presentation decision and each tweak is affecting your revenues. That's why you'll need to check each element of the ads separately.

The best place to start is by checking the **formats of your ad units**.

You now know that some formats are always going to work better than others and you've probably got a good idea of the formats that are likely to work least well on your site. But when you've got a choice of two similar formats, you don't want to have to guess which one is likely to pay you the most money. You want to know for certain.

To find out which format gives you the best results, you'll need to create a channel for each format in turn, *changing nothing else on the site*, and compare the results.

So for example, if you wanted to know whether a 468 x 180 or a 468 x 60 ad unit would work best on your blog pages, you'd first put up the longer ad, create a channel called "468 x 180" and follow the stats for a week (any less just doesn't give accurate enough figures). Then you'd switch and do the same for the 468 x 60 ads.

As long as everything else stays the same, when you compare the results, you'd soon know which type of ads work best on those pages in that position.

The next thing you'd look at is **location**. In theory, that could be a lot harder — after all, you can place the ads pretty much anywhere you want.

In practice though, you're more likely to be weighing up whether you should put an ad inside this section of text or that section of text, whether you should put it on the left or whether you should put it on the right.

How would you figure that out?

Right, exactly the same way: you'd try the ad in one position first, create a channel for that position, keep everything else on the page the same, follow the stats for a week and then swap.

And finally, you'd do the exact same thing with the **keywords**.

This is where things are going to get really interesting. **If you can choose your own ads by selecting keywords and create channels for each product, then you should be able to figure out which ads are paying the most.** (Of course, the highest paying ads might not be the ones that your users want to click but

watching the revenues should guide you to the best ads for your site.)

There's one factor you have to watch out for though when you're tracking the revenues from an ad: the Best Deals tab lists three places the user can buy the product.

Did you notice that those places are not listed in order of price?

They're listed in order of price per click. The ads at the top of the tab are the ones that pay the most.

That's nice to know but there's not much you can do about it. The people at Chitika will let you do lots of things but they won't let you remove the lowest-paying ads from the Best Deals list — even if they are offering the best deal to the user.

The only way I can see to use this information is to mention the top-ranking link in the Best Deals list somewhere on your Web page. Obviously, you don't want to say "Click that link." But mentioning the store might just make users curious enough to look past a higher price quote when they see the name again in an ad.

This method is clearly going to take a while. But when you're optimizing your pages, there are no shortcuts. Traffic can vary so much from day to day that you need at least a week to make meaningful comparisons. And while you can track format, location and keyword simultaneously, bear in mind that if you change one of them in response to your results, you could affect the behavior of another aspect of your ads.

If you were to discover, for example, that ads in your sidebar perform better than the ads in your text, then you'd need to use a different format when you move them. That doesn't mean that you shouldn't collect all that information at once. It just means you'll have to do it again once you've made the change.

4.3 Checking Your Channels

Creating your channels is easy. But you have to be able to read them easily too. After lots of requests from publishers, Chitika did that too.

You can choose to review your channels' performance over any time period of your choice. You can



Fig. 4.2 Check those stats!

see audited or unaudited stats (the amount of unaudited stats will show you how important it is to set up those alternate URLs) and you can compare two different channels.

That last option can be very helpful. It will let you compare the performance of different Web pages and different sites. It's something that you should enjoy playing with.

5. PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

I've laid out some general principles in this ebook that you can follow when you're putting eMiniMalls on your website. But I've got lots of different sites, and it's pretty clear that's it not just the page design that affects the CTR.

Different types of site affect users' willingness to click in different ways.

5.1 eMiniMalls For Blogs

Putting eMiniMalls in a blog is very easy. The type of formats you should use is clear and you can easily embed the ads into text by putting them after posts.

But there are a couple of things you have to watch out for when using eMiniMalls on blogs.

The first is that the subjects of blogs can vary. That makes it difficult for Chitika to find the best ads. If you're using contextualized ads, putting lots of titles throughout the page should keep them relevant. Otherwise, select the keywords which best fit your blog's audience.

The second problem is that blogs can be very general while the ads on eMiniMalls can be very specific. If you have a blog entry that's about current affairs for example, then the ad that Chitika serves you could have pretty weak relevance. (Entering the keyword "politics" into an eMiniMalls search box for example, brings up an ad for a t-shirt — maybe not the most attractive ad for a user interested in government.)

But because you can choose your own ads, there's no reason why you can't steer your blog entries towards the ads you serve. For example, one of the ads I've noticed you can get through Chitika is for Republican t-shirts. (I assume you can also get Democratic t-shirts too — I just didn't look for them.) If you had a Republican-oriented politics blog then, you could embed that ad into your text and in your entry, argue that supporters of your point of view should be willing to show their support.

You wouldn't have to change the entire approach of your entry or let the ads have any really significant effect on what you write. But if you're running the ball park anyway, I don't see any harm in making your hot dog stand look like part of the fixtures.

Because you know what ads your page is going to serve, it's not difficult to guide your users to them.

5.2 eMiniMalls For Product Sites

Work with eMiniMalls for any period of time and you get the impression that they were designed for product sites. You can drone on about the latest mobile phone on your tech site or discuss which types of coffee table are now in fashion on your interior design site — and you can serve up ads for exactly those products in your text.

It doesn't get better than that.

And again, if it's relevant to the overall theme of your website, I can't see anything wrong creating relevant content to match high-paying ads.

As long as the content is high-quality and interests readers, those pages should give you a good income.

So if you had a website about gardening, you could check Shopping.com, identify a product that was on special offer — a lawn mower, for example — search for it on an eMiniMall, put it on your website and monitor your stats to find out how much that ad pays. Once you've confirmed the price, you could then create a brand new page about lawn mowers and mention why that particular model is such a good buy.

But it's the one topic per page that's really key.

You could certainly talk about lots of different models of one type of product — and serve multiple ads for different models if they're

available — but when you want to talk about a different product, you'll get the best results if you start on a different page.

The alternative is to have very clear section breaks between different topics and include one ad in each section.

I think that's likely to lose the user's focus and cost you clicks but it's a good alternative to having lots of different Web pages.

5.3 Running eMiniMalls With AdSense or YPN

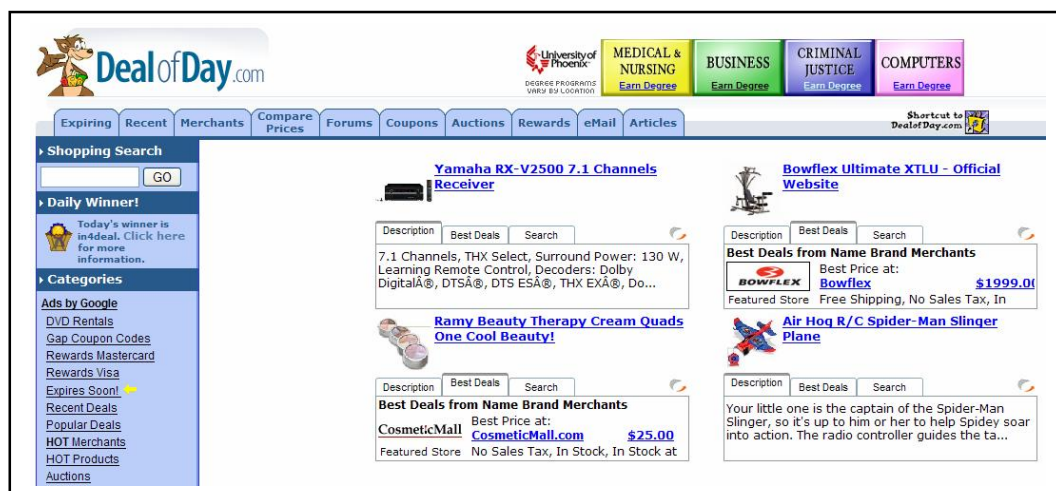


Fig. 5.1 Google on the left, eMiniMalls above the fold and in the middle at DealofDay.com. Note the different products on each ad.

Right at the beginning of this ebook, I pointed out that if you are a typical Chitika publisher, you are not using contextualization, so you can run eMiniMalls with AdSense and YPN.

The fact that you can now keep the search box makes that even better.

In my opinion, if you've got a product site, eMiniMalls makes a perfect complement to AdSense and YPN. Your AdSense ads will serve up general ads that point users to sites where they can get more information about the topic; and your eMiniMalls will promote specific products related to the topic.

If your users don't want the products in one type of ad, there's a good chance they'll want the products in the other.

There is one place though where the two different types of ads are likely to compete.

That's in the space inside the text.

eMiniMalls work best when they're embedded in the text. But plenty of people do the exact same thing with their AdSense units and get great results. I know I do. So which should you put inside your text: your eMiniMalls ads or your AdSense/ YPN ad units?

eMiniMalls.

The closer your product ads are to the discussion of the product itself, the better. If users aren't interested enough in the product to want to click on the ad then they're not likely to be all that interested in the article either. Their eyes will wander... and land on your more general ads at the side of the page.

That doesn't mean you should never put AdSense or YPN ads in the middle of the page. But as a general rule, if you're using both Chitika and one of these other systems, I think that you're best strategy is to blend the contextual ads around the content and use selected eMiniMall ads in the text itself.

5.4 Referring eMiniMalls

There is one other method of generating revenue with eMiniMalls. Chitika has launched a [referral program](#) which gives referrers 10 percent of the revenue earned by the publishers they refer for 15 months following each referral's approval date.



That could turn into a pretty tidy sum and a nice addition to your own eMiniMalls income. If you know that other publishers come to your site, this really has to be a no-brainer — especially now that Chitika has produced a good range of referral banners and buttons. You can find more information at chitika.com/rcp_overview.php.

6. SHOPLINC — BECOME AN ONLINE STORE OWNER

eMiniMalls have been around for a while and they've already proved their worth. Recently though, Chitika launched a new product: ShopLinc.

In effect, Chitika is now letting publishers create an online store, stuff it with products and link to it from their blogs.

That can be pretty useful, especially for blogs with plenty of traffic that talk about products. Unfortunately, it's also only for blogs with plenty of traffic that talk about products. ShopLinc is new, it's in Beta, and Chitika is being very picky about the people who can use it.

If you've only just started blogging and only have a handful of users, you can still apply. But don't be surprised — or offended — if you're turned down.

It's possible that Chitika will keep access to ShopLinc restricted; too much competition from similar sites could see everyone's revenues fall. But that doesn't mean you should ignore it. Chitika could well relax its conditions enough to let your site in — and you could well grow big enough to meet them. ShopLinc is worth knowing about...

6.1 What Is ShopLinc ?

GPS Shopping
Go Shopping with the GPSReview Experts. powered by Chitika|ShopLinc

Search for in

Featured Products

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Creative Technology Muvo V100(2GB) WhiteReceiver MP3 Player 2 GB (Built-in Memory),, 500 Songs, 1.64 oz., Audio... | Tomtom GO 700 GPS Automobile GPS, Fixed LCD TFT Display, DGPS Rece... | Tomtom GO 300 GPS Receiver Automobile GPS, Handheld , LCD TFT Display... |
|--|---|--|

Best in GPS Devices

Description Best Deals Search [Chitika eMiniMalls](#)

Search for other products without leaving this page

Related Expert Research

Expert Profile

Go Shopping with The GPSReview Experts

- Research from the Expert

Magellan Offers Free TrafficKit
Magellan is currently offering a free TrafficKit for people who purchase a Magellan RoadMate 3000T before January 31, 2007. The trafficKit normally co...

Celestron SkyScout wins Popular Science Award
The Celestron SkyScout is probably on holiday wish-lists of a number of people this year. (Certainly one mine!) If you haven't heard, this devic...

Magellan RoadMate AAA RS2.0
Magellan has announced a new partnership with AAA to provide a

6.1 Build a store like GPSReview.net's with ShopLinc.

For most publishers, placing ads on a website is pretty straightforward: post good-quality content, attract users, and make

money when some of those users click on the ads that surround the words.

ShopLinc reverses that approach. Instead of offering users content surrounded by ads, ShopLinc gives them ads surrounded by content.

Users reach a **front page** that shows a search box, three products, a Multiple Product eMiniMalls unit and a small piece of content. The products and the content shown relate directly to the content of the publisher's RSS feeds.

You can also add a header and footer that contains any content of your choice — AdSense ad units or a banner for your blog are obvious choices.

Or, users can reach a **product page**, which shows details of just one product.

The screenshot shows a product page for a TomTom GO 700 GPS Receiver. The page has a green header with the title "GPS Shopping" and the tagline "Go Shopping with the GPSReview Experts." powered by Chitika|ShopLinc. A search bar contains "Tomtom-GO-700" and "GPS Devices". The main content area features a product image of the GPS receiver, a description, and a "Best Deals" section. The description states: "You won't find a smarter portable GPS navigation system anywhere, as the TomTom Go 700 not only speaks more than 30 languages in over 50 voices, but its user interface now also includes 18 languages. With the improved functionality, you can quickly access millions of points of interest and plot your quickest, shortest choice of road in no time at all. For maximum driver and passenger convenience, the TomTom Go 700 works with an optional remote control accessory (not included with product). The remote uses radio frequency so...". The "Best Deals" section shows a price of \$299.99 from CAR-TOYS, with a "Shop Here" button and "Free Shipping, In Stock, Pre-order." text. On the right, there is a "Related Expert Research" section with an "Expert Profile" and a "Go Shopping with The GPSReview Experts" button. Below that, there is a "TomTom GO 700 Deal" section with a "TomTom GO 700 and Treo 650" sub-section and a "TomTom GO 700 Deal" sub-section. The "TomTom GO 700 and Treo 650" section says: "Trying to pair a TomTom GO 700 with a Treo 650? Frank dropped us a line and showed us how he was able to connect his TomTom 700 and his Treo. While he...". The "TomTom GO 700 Deal" section says: "Looking for a TomTom GO 700? Are you an American Express Cardmember? The TomTom GO 700 will appear on Amex's 'My WishList' on June 12 as the ?...".

Fig. 6.2 A product page at GPSReview.net.

Or, they can conduct a search (or click a ShopCloud\$ link) and reach a **search results page** stuffed with different products.

That's three different types of pages... and three different rates of revenue: product pages have been shown to bring in the best results of the three, provided you can get your users there. While setting up a ShopLinc site is very easy, marketing it and getting our

users to the pages that bring in the best revenues can take a bit of effort.

Chitika has created a very useful tool to help you customize your ShopCloud\$ and ShopLinc products.

ShopCloud\$ - <https://chitika.com/affiliate/sccode.php?md=4>

ShopLinc - <https://chitika.com/affiliate/slconfig.php?md=5>

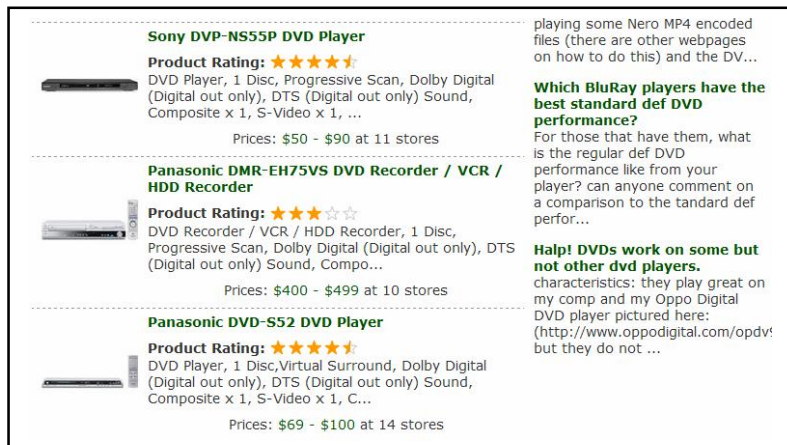
6.2 The Experts Are At Work On Expert Reviews

And once you've put in that effort, there's always the chance that a user will click on content and surf away from your store. If they're looking at products related to your own content, that would just bring them back to your site. But if they've already moved away from a topic that you blog about, instead of your content appearing in the right-hand column, they'll see content from other sites. When they click on that content, they're going to disappear.

That's a whole area of the page that isn't going to earn anyone a dime.

There have been complaints to Chitika about that, and they made a change. They're now adding a "paid matching reviews content" option to ShopLinc's admin panel. Every time a user clicks on content from a third-party site, the publisher will get paid.

A few publishers asked to be signed up right away and the good news is that the system is working. Users who click on content from other sites are leaving money in the tip jar on the way out.



The screenshot shows three product listings for DVD players on ShopLinc. Each listing includes a product name, a star rating, a brief description of features, and price information. To the right of the listings is a sidebar with two articles: 'Which BluRay players have the best standard def DVD performance?' and 'Help! DVDs work on some but not other dvd players.' The first article asks for user comments on DVD performance, and the second article discusses DVD characteristics and includes a link to an Oppo Digital DVD player review.

| Product Name | Product Rating | Price Range | Number of Stores |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|
| Sony DVP-NS55P DVD Player | ★★★★★ | \$50 - \$90 | 11 stores |
| Panasonic DMR-EH75VS DVD Recorder / VCR / HDD Recorder | ★★★★☆ | \$400 - \$499 | 10 stores |
| Panasonic DVD-S52 DVD Player | ★★★★★ | \$69 - \$100 | 14 stores |

Fig. 6.3 ShopLinc' search results.

The bad news is that they're only leaving five cents per click.

That's clearly only a partial solution, and there is pressure on Chitika to allow publishers to turn off that content altogether. It's unlikely that they'll allow publishers to place competing ads there

but I don't see why they won't allow publisher to either leave a space in that area or place their own content.

We'll just have to watch that space.

6.3 The Advantages Of ShopLinc

So ShopLinc lets you create a site that contains lots of ads and a little bit of content.

But we know that it's content that determines whether or not a site succeeds, so why would anyone want to go to a ShopLinc site?

There are a couple of reasons. The first is that a ShopLinc site can actually be a pretty good place to do comparison shopping. Because information and prices about the products are drawn from a range of different sites, users looking for particular products can pick up a good variety of information very easily and make a smart purchase decision.

That's one good sales point.

The other advantage is that *you're* the one referring users to the site. When a user clicks a link on your site to your ShopLinc store, they'll assume that the products they'll see there are as reliable as your content.

You can also reinforce your influence over your ShopLinc store by formatting the template to match your site's color scheme and general appearance.

So even though the site you're promoting is essentially an ad site, you can still bring users to it and generate revenues from it. But it's not easy and you're going to have to put in a bit of work. Fortunately, there are some good strategies that you can use.

6.4 Marketing Your ShopLinc With RSS

One of the reasons that Chitika restricts its ShopLinc to blogs is that the company powers the products on the front page of the ShopLinc site according to the content in the blog's RSS feed.

There's no picking your keywords and throwing them in the code here. But there's also no reason to take whatever you're given and make do.

Some publishers have reported a lot of success by creating unique RSS feeds for their ShopLinc site. They then use that feed instead of their primary feed to power the front page of their ShopLinc store.

A strategy like that makes sense. It gives you direct influence over the products that appear on the front page. If you know that your users are likely to be most interested in a particular make of digital camera or DVD player or whatever your site talks about, you can make sure that that product is always highlighted on the site first.

But the fact is, even if you do manage to keep your top product in the top spot, it's still unlikely that you'll see massive returns from that page. It's the product pages that tend to bring the biggest revenues, so your best strategy is to link to them directly.

6.5 Linking To Product Pages

Chitika actually offers a bunch of tools to help publishers send their users to pages that pay more. While the text links and banners will drive traffic to the front page, direct links and the search box can help users reach information — and an ad — for specific products.

Your linking options will be very straightforward. They'll be no different to a text link for any affiliate product.

And that should give you food for thought. You'll want to know whether an affiliate link, (leading to, say, Amazon.com) would pay you more than a link to a page at your ShopLinc store. Remember that as an affiliate, you'll only get paid for a sale, while your ShopLinc pages will pay on a CPC basis, but you might want to try both and compare the results before you settle on a final option.

You'll have to make the same sort of decision when you consider where to place your ShopLinc search box. It's possible that it could detract from an AdSense search box and lower your revenues. That's unlikely though. Few publishers have had a huge amount of success with AdSense's search box and the ability to send users to a

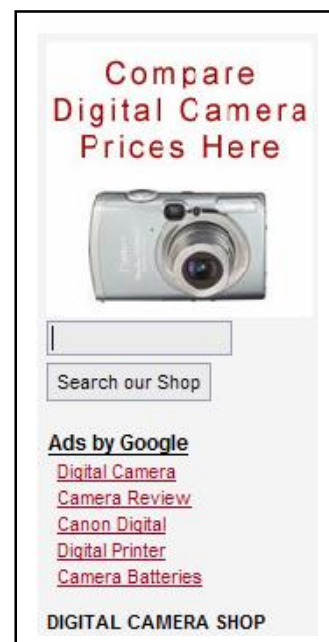


Fig. 6.4 [Darren Rowse](#) uses a banner, a search box and a text link to promote his ShopLinc store.

page that contains lots of targeted ads, complete with price information could yield a lot more.

Getting users into your ShopLinc store isn't rocket science. All of the strategies that you will have had to use to build the sort of popular, product-related blog that qualifies for a ShopLinc Beta will work. You'll want to:

- Set up your domain for your ShopLinc store (Chitika lets you use [product].[yourdomain].com;
- Use targeted RSS feeds to keep your front page exciting and inviting;
- Put banners at the top or bottom of the page to bring people into the store;
- Place deep links on product-specific pages to help users find bargains;
- And place a search box at the top of the page to bring users to product pages.

The real key to getting maximum revenues out of your ShopLinc store isn't the strategies you use to get clicks, it's the pages you choose to use those strategies.

Publishers have reported some pretty good results with ShopLinc. What they haven't done is reported whether they would have earned more money with affiliate links or AdSense units.

Overall, I think that it's a good thing that Chitika has restricted ShopLinc to blogs that talk about products. Those aren't just the pages that are going to make the most money out of ShopLinc, they're also the only pages that will make more out of ShopLinc than anything else.

Remember, with a ShopLinc store, you only get paid when a user clicks on a link within the site. In effect then, the user has to click at least twice before you get paid: once on the blog and then again in the ShopLinc store. And that's if he hasn't been so distracted by the content that he's just clicked on through. That's only likely to happen if he's genuinely interested in the model... which is only likely to happen to users on product-specific sites.

If you have a blog that qualifies for a ShopLinc store then, it's certainly worth applying to join the program, and it's worth optimizing your blog to send users to those product pages. (And if you have more than one blog on different topic, don't worry, Chitika is working on letting publishers run multiple ShopLinc with different areas of focus.)

But if you don't qualify, don't sweat it. Your site will probably be making more with AdSense and eMiniMalls.

7. SHOPCLOUD\$ — TURNING WORDS INTO MONEY

There is one more way to send users to a ShopLinc store... and you can do it even if you don't qualify for the Beta.

You can place a ShopCloud\$ unit on your site.

ShopCloud\$ unit are a mass of links in different — and eye-catching — fonts and sizes, attached to a search box which returns product results as users type. All the links lead to your Shoplinc store — or to Chitika's own store if you don't have one of your own.

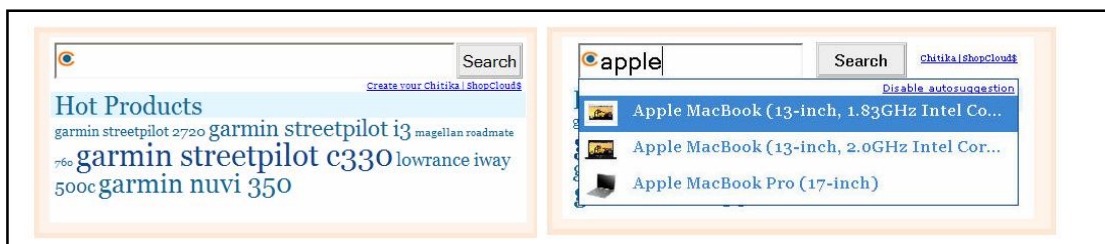


Fig. 7.1 ShopCloud\$ matches product links to ShopLinc stores.

ShopCloud\$ can be a lot of fun. I doubt that they'll give you the sort of revenues that will have you filling Swiss bank accounts and buying up Caribbean islands but on sites that talk about products, they have been shown to generate clicks and income. As always though, it comes down to format, location and keywords.

7.1 Formatting Your ShopCloud\$

One of the biggest advantages of a ShopCloud\$ unit is that it looks nothing like an ad. You want to keep that impression. Obviously, you'll want to use the same color scheme as the colors on your site to help the unit blend in. (Again, you'll have to hack into the code and simply replace the color numbers you've been given with the color numbers you use on your site.)

But this time, you don't want to use the standard link blue for the tags. You want to use the same font color that you use for your content.

When you're only giving your users one word to click, they have to believe that *you're* going to be the one giving them content. Or at the very least, that you're going to be giving them content that you approve of.

Make your tags link-blue and your users will feel that they could be going anywhere on the Web. They won't click. Make the tags the same color as your content font and they'll feel that even if they're not getting your content, they're getting content associated with you. It's an important difference.

Make sure too that you vary the size of the tags by creating a large difference between the maximum and minimum tag sizes. That will make sure that some words stand out much more than others. Even if you end up with fewer tags in the unit altogether, the larger tags will appear to be recommended.

7.2 Placing Your ShopCloud\$

Formatting your ShopCloud\$ unit is pretty simple. So is choosing where to put it.

According to the wise people at Chitika, the units work best directly beneath the content either in the same column as the text or in a sidebar. You can test each to see which gives you the best results.

They've even provided this neat little map to show you exactly what they mean:

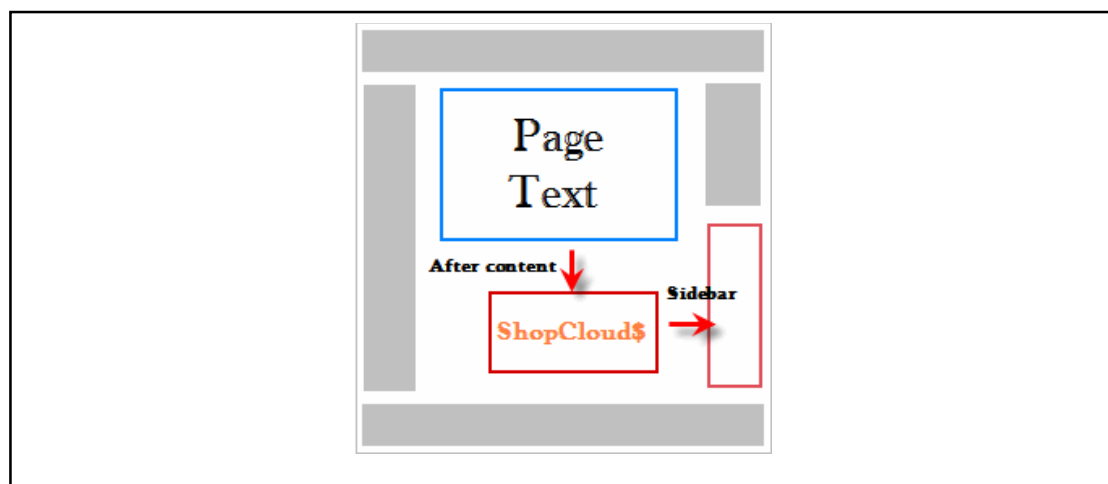


Fig. 7.2 Chitika helps you find the spot after your content.

The reason this location works best, Chitika says, is that once users have read your article, they should be curious enough to want to

learn more. Your tags will look as though they're going to provide that extra content.

That all makes sense to me, but I can also see that placed at the end of very long articles, ShopCloud\$ tags are going to do poorly. If you've already satisfied your users with tons of good information, it's unlikely that they'll click on to keep learning, even if they reach the end.

While putting ShopCloud\$ at the end of articles rather than inside them is a good idea then, you should keep them for the end of short posts about products rather than long ones.

7.3 Choosing Your Words

It's when it comes to choosing words that optimizing your ShopCloud\$ units starts to get challenging. When you create your ShopCloud\$ code, you'll be asked to choose a category. That should be an easy choice. Chitika will then toss in the names of products from that category.

But you can also throw in your own words, and there are a couple of places to do that.

The first is in the **title**. Initially, your ShopCloud\$ unit will have the title "Hot Products." You should change that. What you change it to will depend on the topic of your site, but the title should certainly contain your site's most important keyword. So if your blog talks about patio equipment then you should probably call your ShopCloud\$ unit "More Garden Furniture."

If you find that you're getting very few ShopCloud\$ clicks, this is the first thing you should look to change.

The second place you can add your own words is also important. But it's a lot easier. Chitika lets you add **products** of your choice to your word cloud. Obviously, the products have to be part of their catalog, but their catalogs are big enough that you should be able to find something you like.

Or rather, something you've mentioned in the article above the unit.

That's what's really going to generate clicks on these units. If you can build interest in a product with a short post, users will click the tag in the word cloud to keep reading. It's an easy way to keep earning.



8. A QUICK WORD ABOUT RELATED PRODUCT UNITS (RPU)

ShopCloud\$ units are pretty neat. If you have a ShopLinc store, they're going to be a good way to bring in traffic. And if you don't, they're going to be a good way for product sites to send traffic to Chitika's ShopLinc store.

There is one more unit that you can put at the end of a piece of content though and it's the best yet.

Chitika's new Related Product Unit (RPU) blends in perfectly.

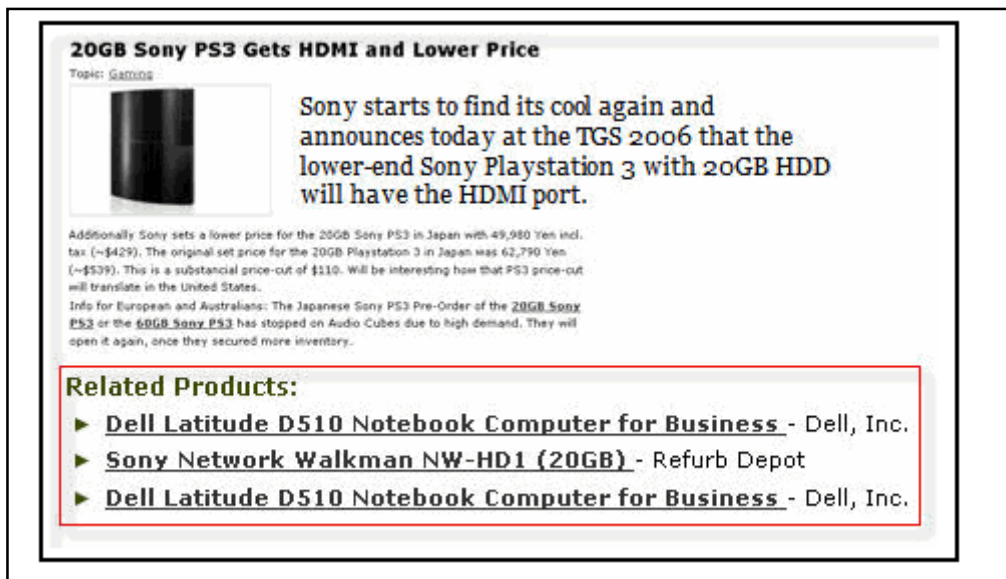
It's just a small box with three lines. Each line contains the name of a product and the vendor. And the vendors come from a special network of qualified sites. That's it. Nowhere does it say it's an ad or that it's "Provided by Chitika". There's just the tiniest little link that says "What's this?" It looks like a series of links provided by the site, and it's very, very powerful.

It's also exclusive and simple.


RPU is only available to Chitika publishers who have more than 50,000 page views a month... or have earned more than \$100. Okay, it's not that exclusive.

It is simple though. You can only place an RPU at the end of an article and you'll be assigned a representative to help with optimization.

Want one? Thought so. You'll need to contact Ryan Travis at Ryan@chitika.com. Have fun!



20GB Sony PS3 Gets HDMI and Lower Price
Topic: Gaming



Sony starts to find its cool again and announces today at the TGS 2006 that the lower-end Sony Playstation 3 with 20GB HDD will have the HDMI port.

Additionally Sony sets a lower price for the 20GB Sony PS3 in Japan with 49,980 Yen incl. tax (~\$429). The original set price for the 20GB Playstation 3 in Japan was 62,790 Yen (~\$539). This is a substantial price-out of \$110. Will be interesting how that PS3 price-out will translate in the United States.

Info for European and Australians: The Japanese Sony PS3 Pre-Order of the 20GB Sony PS3 or the 60GB Sony PS3 has stopped on Audio Cubes due to high demand. They will open it again, once they secured more inventory.

Related Products:

- ▶ [Dell Latitude D510 Notebook Computer for Business](#) - Dell, Inc.
- ▶ [Sony Network Walkman NW-HD1 \(20GB\)](#) - Refurb Depot
- ▶ [Dell Latitude D510 Notebook Computer for Business](#) - Dell, Inc.

Fig. 8.1

RPUs blend right in.

8. CONCLUSION

In the short time that Chitika has been helping publishers make money, they've come a long way.

For publishers used to working with AdSense or YPN, Chitika's eMiniMalls mark a pretty radical departure. Not only do they look very different to standard ad units but the fact that publishers can actually choose their own ads means that they're very different to work with too.

No longer do publishers have to take whatever ad they're given by the big boys and be grateful.

If they don't like the ad they get, they can certainly play around with the metatags and adjust the titles until they get better ones in the traditional way.

But I can't imagine that many people are going to bother.

Not when they can just toss keywords into their code and swap an ad they don't like for one they do.

In that sense then, it's not entirely accurate to talk of eMiniMalls as a contextualized system. I doubt if many serious publishers are going to let Chitika decide their ads for them.

Most will be contextualizing their ads themselves.

But eMiniMalls do have plenty in common with other advertising systems as well. Most importantly, they still have to be blended into the site so that they don't look like ads.

Fonts and colors have to match, borders have to be removed and ads have to be put in places where people are going to spot them — without feeling that they're getting in the way.

In the case of eMiniMalls, that means placing them inside the text as much as possible so that they appear to be providing an additional service to the information you're giving your users.

The other chief characteristic of eMiniMalls is that they promote products rather than sites. In fact, the Best Deals tab will give users a choice of different sites where they can buy the same product (with each link paying the user a different amount of money.) That's certainly not something you're going to find on any other advertising program.

eMiniMalls then will certainly work best on product-oriented sites. For these sorts of sites, they're a perfect fit.

But smart publishers should have no problem making them work with other sorts of sites too. And they should be looking to make the most of Chitika's other products too.

Even if you don't qualify for a ShopLinc store, a ShopCloud\$ unit can let you benefit from one, and a Related Product Unit is one of the best-looking ad units around.

Chitika is changing all the time. Barely a week seems to go by without the company doing something to make life even easier for its publishers. The company's blog at <http://chitika.com/blog/> is pretty much essential reading.

In short, whether you're using eMiniMalls alone or with other advertising programs, on a product site, a blog or any other sort of website, I can't see any reason why they — and Chitika's other products — shouldn't have a very positive effect on your revenues.

APPENDIX I. CASE STUDIES

Case Study 1: Using eMiniMalls As Graphics

In the first edition of this guide, I pointed out how Rick Blythe had done an outstanding job on his photography website, camera-news.com. By inserting the right keywords into his title ("Fujifilm FinePix E900"), and embedding the ad into his text, the graphic in his eMiniMall seemed to illustrate his review of the product while the text looks as though it was simply adding more information.

That's a fantastic way to make use of the graphics in the eMiniMall ads, and it's clear that product reviews make excellent homes for these types of ads.

It's a system that's obviously been working for Rick, because he's still doing it. In fact, he's now added a Related Product Unit to his posts, and look how well it's optimized!

By matching his "Related Products" to his "Related Articles," he's made those ads look like a part of his site. It's great work and a model for anyone to copy.



Canon PowerShot SD800 IS 7.1MP Digital Elph Camera


Related Articles:

- [A Canon PowerShot SD800 Review](#)
- [Canon PowerShot SD800 IS Rated Very Good](#)
- [Canon SD800 IS Review | DCResource](#)
- [The Canon PowerShot SD800 IS Digital ELPH](#)
- [Canon PowerShot SD300 Digital ELPH full review](#)

Description Best Deals

[Best Deal at RitzCamera.com](#)
Canon PowerShot SD700 IS Digital ELPH / IXUS 800 Digital Camera
 Free Shipping at RitzCamera.com

The PowerShot SD700 IS Digital ELPH / IXUS 800 sets a new standard. The first Digital ELPH equipped with Canon's Image Stabilizer technology, its sleek, tri-color body is loaded with



Related Products: [What's this?](#)

- ◆ [Canon EOS Rebel XTi \(body only, black\) - RitzCamera.com](#)
- ◆ [Canon PowerShot SD600 - RitzCamera.com](#)
- ◆ [Canon PowerShot SD630 - RitzCamera.com](#)

Fig. i. eMiniMalls as an illustration on <http://www.camera-news.com>

Case Study 2: Mixing Chitika With Google

One of the big advantages of Chitika is the fact that you can use a variety of different ads on the same page. GPSNews.org takes that to an extreme by filling the space above the fold with a ton of well-blended ads.

The site has an AdSense unit blended to look like a navigation bar; a giant ShopCloud\$ unit right at the beginning; an eMiniMall unit at the start of the text with a picture that complements the picture in the content; a second unit at the top of the side bar; and a second AdSense skyscraper.

It's amazing anyone sticks around to read the content.

And if they do, they aren't off the hook because every short post starts with a small eMiniMall unit too.

The screenshot shows a website page with a red header containing navigation links: 'Ads by Google', 'GPS Cards', 'GPS Info', 'GPS Fishfinder', and 'GPS Sales'. Below the header is a search bar with a 'Search' button and a link to 'Create your Chitika | ShopClouds'. A 'Hot Products' section lists several Garmin models: 'garmin streetpilot 2720', 'garmin nuvi 350', 'garmin streetpilot c330', 'garmin streetpilot i3', and 'lowrance iway 500c'. To the right, there is an advertisement for the 'Garmin Nuvi 660' from 'Buydig.com', featuring a small image of the device and a 'Specs Deals Search' button. Below this is another ad for '\$199 WorldNavigator' with details about its features and a website link. At the bottom left, there is a section for 'Mio DigiWalker C520 and Mio DigiWalker C250' with a 'Product Description Best Deals Search Chitika | eMiniMalls' menu and a small image of a device. To the right of this section is an ad for 'Online GPS Specialists' listing various brands and a website link.

Fig. ii. Phew, look at all those ads at <http://www.gpsnews.org>.

I'd love to know what sort of clickthrough rate this sort of heavy advertising is getting but when it's this well optimized, I'm sure it's very impressive.

Case Study 3: Multiple Pictures, Multiple Products

You have to be careful about the way you use Multiple Product Units. Too much choice isn't always a good thing, especially if it can dilute your ad targeting. Digicamhelp.com however, shows exactly the conditions when these sorts of ad units can work best.

The front page doesn't contain one article about one topic. Instead, it has a bunch of links leading to different parts of the site.

With a choice like that, expecting readers to select one of a range of different ads isn't asking too much of the users. And that's especially true when a series of small pictures help the unit to blend into the page.

That's great work!

Ads by Google
[Digital Portraits](#)
[Digital Cameras](#)
[Digital Images](#)
[Photo Software](#)
[Digital Photo Imaging](#)

Top Selling Digital Cameras & Accessories.
[Shop Amazon](#)
[Shop Amazon.uk](#)

Best Deal at PCNation
Pentax K110D Digital Camera

Best Deals
PCNation \$496.00
Free Fed. 2-3 Day

What People Say...
"You can't fake good writing. Can't wait for the next issue."
Newsletter subscriber

Sponsored ad
Compare Prices for [Sony](#)

Processing Photos
Just about everything you need to know about working with images.

Buying Guide
Simple but comprehensive advice about buying a digital camera.

Digital Camera Features
Discover the purpose of those settings and modes.

Accessories
Extend the use and functionality of your digital camera.

Taking Photos
Techniques for taking much, much better digital photos.

FEATURED ARTICLES

Hybrid rechargeable batteries
Pre-charged hybrid rechargeable batteries hold their power for months.

Snow photography
How to photograph snow without messing up the colors.

Photo recovery and rescue
Recovering deleted image and video files from a memory card is possible!

Digital cameras & cold weather
How to care for a digital camera and batteries when taking shots in cold weather.

Steel
Photo by Arnd W © 2006

Best Deal at RitzCamera.com
Panasonic Lumix® DMC-FZ7 Digital Camera

The DMC-FZ7 features a lens with a remarkable 12x optical zoom, equivalent to a 36 to 432mm lens on a 35mm film camera. A film camera with an optical

[Chitika](#) | [eMiniMalls](#)

Fig. iii. Choice is a good thing at <http://www.digicamhelp.com>.

Case Study 4: Growing Income With Related Products

Techfresh.net is a perfect example of what I mean when I say that ad links at the bottom of the post work best when the posts are kept short.

Just look at how simple a post like this was to create! It must have taken all of five minutes. Just add the picture, write a line of code and paste in the RPU.

And it still looks professional and interesting.

In this example, the link color of the RPU isn't blue but it does match the link color on the rest of the site. The principle remains: keep your ad links the same color as your conventional links. Anything else will announce that you're presenting an ad instead of more content.

Altogether, this is a great model of a simple, high-earning blog that anyone can copy.

European Sony PlayStation 3 Commercial Video

Posted on January 18th, 2007 by [Bluvenom](#) in [Game Systems](#)



This is the European version of [the Sony PlayStation 3 commercial video](#) titled "This is Living". Video after the jump!

[YouTube](#) via [Video Games](#)

[Read the rest of this entry »](#)

Tags: [commercials](#) [ps3](#) [sony](#) [video](#) [games](#) [youtube](#)

Related Products:

[What's this?](#)

- [Tokyo Xtreme Racer DRIFT \(PlayStation 2\)](#) - [GameQuestDirect](#)
- [Pro Race Driver \(PlayStation 2\)](#) - [Wal-Mart](#)
- [Ford Bold Moves Street Racing \(PlayStation 2\)](#) - [GameQuestDirect](#)

Fig. iv. Related products that promise so much more at [TechFresh.net](#).

APPENDIX II. USEFUL CODES

eMiniMalls

Define Text Fonts

```
ch_font_text = `font name`;
```

Define Title Fonts

```
ch_font_title = `font title`;
```

Define background color:

```
ch_color_bg = "#CCCCCC";'
```

Disable Search

```
ch_nosearch = 1;
```

Set Tab Default

```
ch_default_tab = `tab name`;
```

Remove Contextualization

```
ch_non_contextual = 1;
```

Choose Keywords

```
var ch_queries = new Array('keyword 1 ', 'keyword 2',  
'keyword 3');  
var ch_selected = Math.floor((Math.random() *  
ch_queries.length));  
ch_query = ch_queries[ch_selected];
```

Choose Single Keyword

Replace:

```
var ch_queries = new Array('keyword 1 ', 'keyword 2',  
'keyword 3');  
var ch_selected = Math.floor((Math.random() *  
ch_queries.length));  
ch_query = ch_queries[ch_selected];
```

with:

```
ch_query = `keyword`;
```

Channels

```
ch_sid = 'my_ad_1';
```

ShopCloud\$

Unit Size

```
ch_width = 468;  
ch_height = 180;
```

Category

```
ch_default_category = 95;
```

Font Size

```
ch_font_max = 35;  
ch_font_min = 24;
```

Unit Color

```
ch_top_color = 314651;
```

Border Color

```
ch_color_border = "efefef";
```

Background Color

```
ch_color_bg = "efefef";
```

Title Color

```
ch_color_title = 000000;
```

Title Background Color

```
ch_color_title_bg = "a3afb5";
```

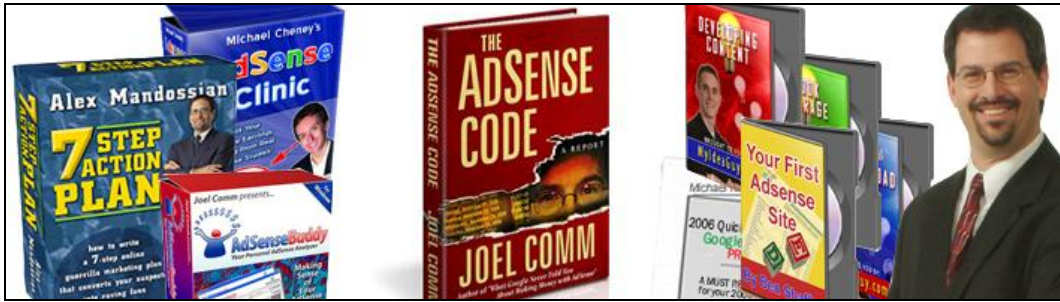


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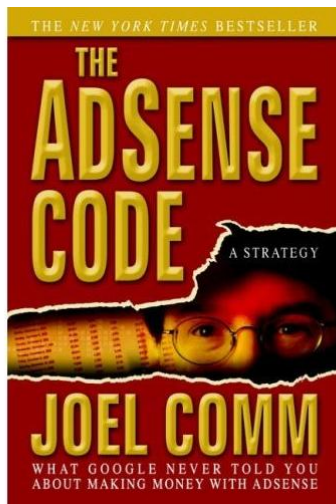
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About the Author

Joel Comm is an Internet entrepreneur who has been building successful web sites since 1995. Dedicated to providing a family-friendly Internet experience, Joel's flagship site, WorldVillage.com, continues to be a popular family-safe portal. Joel is the co-creator of Yahoo! Games and author of the New York Times Bestseller, The AdSense Code. Joel makes frequent appearances at Internet marketing conferences and seminar, conducting workshops and training others in the latest ways to make money on the Internet.



Joel's sites include:

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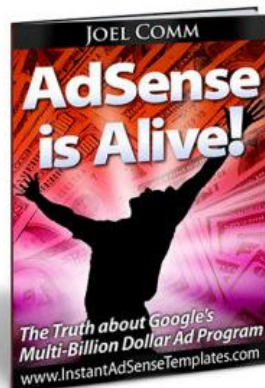
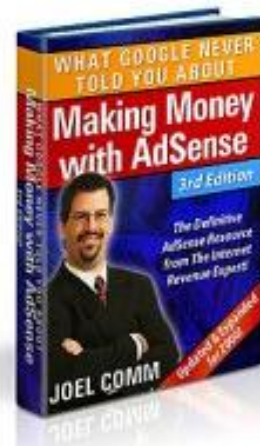
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