

Google announces "Conversions" API for adding offline information to targeted online advertising

December 24 2012, by Bob Yirka



(Phys.org)—Google has announced (on its DoubleClick search site) the development of a new API that allows advertisers to combine online and offline information on users/customers resulting in more sophisticated online targeted advertising. The new API, called Conversions allows retailers to add information obtained via in-store transactions as well as that gained from call-tracking or from other activities (such as when customers take advantage of discounts, return items, experience credit problems or engage in fraud), to online data collected by Google. The result is a system that is expected to result in users finding ads being shown to them as they cruise the web that are tailor-made for them based on both their online and offline shopping and/or browsing habits.

Google explains that up till now, a gap has existed in user histories – between what users do while online, and what they do offline when visiting retail establishments. [Conversions](#), they say, will help bridge that gap.

As part of the announcement, Google notes that as a matter of course, user data will be kept private and confidential, though the company declined to specify what sort of measures they will take to ensure that third party intruders don't gain access to the data that is collected. Also not mentioned is that the system only works when users and customers cooperate – to collect and merge data online users have to log in to a Google service (YouTube, Gmail, etc.) and remain logged in as they visit other sites. They have to use a credit card too, both in-store and online, as it's the only way that retailers can link online purchasing with offline transactions.

In another earlier post to its official blog, Google noted that governments around the world have been increasingly asking for user search and browsing data and because in many cases the company has been complying with such requests, it appears that even more information will be made available to such entities in the future based on new data supplied to Conversions. Whether users of [Google](#) services or customers of retailers will continue to go along with such programs and policies, however, remains to be seen.

More information: [doubleclicksearch.blogspot.com ...erful-reporting.html](http://doubleclicksearch.blogspot.com...erful-reporting.html)

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