



Zervant's user base grows 200% in 12 months with help from Google

About Zervant

- Founded in 2010
- Headquarters in Helsinki
- www.zervant.com

Goals

- Grow internationally
- Expand user base at rapid rate

Approach

- Adopted Google AdWords for search, display, remarketing, dynamic search ads and Gmail sponsored promotions
- Gathered insights using Universal Tag Manager, Consumer Barometer, Google Analytics and Google Trends
- Launched Universal App Campaigns to promote mobile app downloads

Results

- Rapidly expanded from one to seven markets
- Tripled user base within one year
- Grew traffic from search to now represent 70% of all site traffic

Zervant aims to make running a small business as simple as possible with a solution that enables companies to easily create and send online invoices in any format. Based in Finland, the company is keenly focused on international export. "The main strategy from the beginning was to build an international and global service," explains CEO Mattias Hansson. "Finland is small; one of the benefits coming from a tiny market is that you need to be global. We selected specific markets, initially starting with Sweden and then spreading to Central Europe, where it's possible to serve several markets with the same product."

Exporting business abroad by being visible online

To facilitate its global export strategy, Zervant adopted Google AdWords, using the platform for search, display, remarketing, dynamic search ads and Gmail sponsored promotions. Over time, it has emerged as the company's most profitable channel. "Based on the results, we realised that this is the way to achieve the growth we need," says CMO Matias Vahtola. "It's easy and handy when you can see the results immediately and measure everything. It has helped us grow in new markets."

AdWords has also proved to be the channel that scales Zervant's marketing most effectively. "Given the market situation, it's important to expand really quickly, doubling or tripling the markets we're in," Hansson says. "We've tried a lot of different channels, but online is the only one that works for our segment." Today, approximately 70% of Zervant's marketing budget goes into AdWords, and out of that approximately 80% goes towards export.

In this context, Zervant is committed to using data intelligently to drive advertising decisions on a market-by-market basis. The team uses Google Analytics to efficiently gather insights based on onsite user actions, analyses consumer behavior using the Consumer Barometer and Google Trends, and conducts surveys among the existing user base. Meanwhile, A/B testing helps identify successful optimization approaches. "We know what sources drive good quality traffic, and which sources don't," Vahtola says. "Based on data, we can then focus on the good ones."

An emphasis on making the most of every screen

As devices proliferate, tailoring the approach to different screens is helping to sustain Zervant's cross-border success. "Basically we've focused some of our marketing messages differently when advertising on mobile," Vahtola explains. "On mobile we keep the message short and straight to the point. On desktop we aim to explain ourselves a bit more."

In addition to its standard online services, Zervant also offers a mobile app that contains extra features for users, such as on-the-go time tracking and receipt uploads. "When people search for some keywords such as time tracking – which our mobile app is strong on – we send them directly to the app," Vahtola says. To efficiently promote the app across Google Search, Google Play, the Google Display Network, YouTube and mobile display, the team uses Universal App Campaigns.

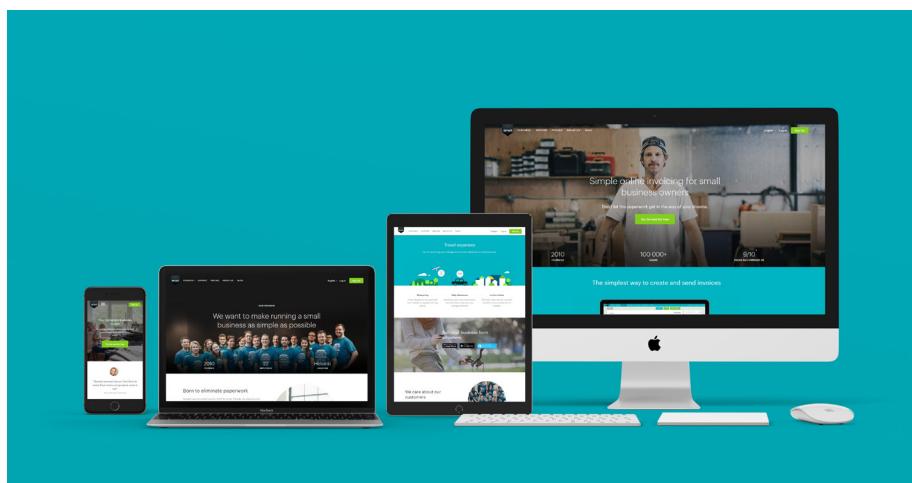
"As the most important growth driver for Zervant, search has definitely been extremely crucial in our expansion. It's been an essential part of the entire marketing strategy, because it works."

– Matias Vahtola, CMO, Zervant

Measures of success

For Zervant, achieving ambitious growth targets depends on paying close attention to results. "Basically we measure everything from ad click to conversion and customer lifetime value," Vahtola reveals. "We have really good visibility on Google. Overall we're seeing around 70% of traffic coming from search, both organic and paid, and it's easy to see how much revenue it brings in. We've been able to triple our users in one year from 30,000 users to more than 100,000, and we can attribute a lot of that to Google Search."

Vahtola's advice for other businesses looking to replicate Zervant's export success? "The AdWords platform makes sense to use if you're selling anything from services to goods. As long as you're measuring the right things and seeing positive ROI you're all good. If you can provide a solution to what people are searching for, any business should definitely start out testing to see what results they can get."



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