

# Search Engine Marketing

## Exclusive Study Proves The Necessity Of Good Search Engine Rankings – Even For Established Brands

Within the framework of the well-known Internet study „WWW User Analysis W3B“, Fittkau & Maaß investigated specific issues on „Searching in the Internet“ exclusively for eprofessional, a full-service agency for search engine marketing.

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Searching and Finding in the Internet

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Ranking of Search Engines

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Preferred Search Results

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Search Engines in Decision-Making Process when Purchasing

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you market. That is to say Internet users will reward you if you, as the retailer, have detailed background information on your products. If you can then offer a low price on top of that, you will have an excellent chance of acquiring a customer.

On that note we wish you exciting reading.

Christian Petersen  
Managing Director eprofessional GmbH

## Dear Readers,

We are pleased to present the results of a new study conducted by Hamburg market research and consulting firm Fittkau & Maaß on behalf of eprofessional. Within the framework of the well-known Internet study “WWW User Analysis W3B”, Fittkau & Maaß investigated specific issues on the subject of “Searching in the Internet” exclusively for eprofessional.

The results prove among other things that search engines are an important starting point for German Internet users at every stage of the decision-making process when purchasing via the Internet. In addition, the figures show clearly how important it is for online retailers to be found in search engines – i.e. both in the index, as well as in the text ads – because depending on the content of the search enquiry, the search engine user will select results from the index or the sponsored links. Hence, whoever does not appear in the results listing will not exist for potential online shoppers. This also applies to brands, for if the user can’t find the retailer with their first product, they assume that the retailer does not carry this product, even if this is, in fact, not the case.

We would, therefore, like to give website operators the following advice: search engine marketing gives you a unique opportunity to find customers at every stage of the purchasing cycle: the research phase, the price comparison phase and ultimately the purchasing phase. So please ensure that your website contains relevant and detailed information on the products and services

## Aim of the Study

Within the framework of the well-known Internet study “WWW User Analysis W3B”, Fittkau & Maaß investigated specific issues on “Searching in the Internet” exclusively for eprofessional, a full-service agency for search engine marketing.

With these specific issues, eprofessional wanted to find out amongst other things how the German Internet user perceives search engine marketing, how they handle the search results and what conclusions they draw. The survey aimed to find out why users click on either index results (“algorithmic search”) or on sponsored links and how search results affect their buying behaviour.

### About the W3B Study:

The Internet study “WWW User Analysis W3B” is celebrating its anniversary. From 5 April to 9 May 2005 Fittkau & Maaß conducted the W3B survey for the 20th time. The W3B’s population is the total number of German-speaking Internet users: over 100,000 German-speaking Internet users were surveyed. The results were summarised in four volumes (User Behaviour, Communication and Advertising, Electronic Commerce and Navigation). Further information can be found at [www.fittkau-maass.de/reports](http://www.fittkau-maass.de/reports).

## The Questions

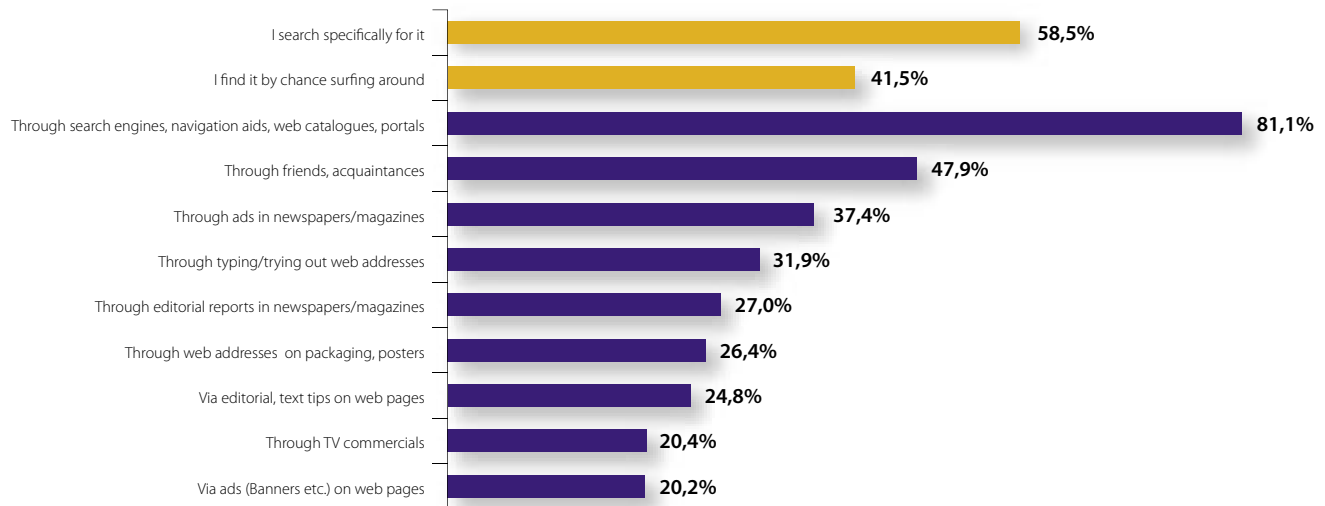
The following questions were posed to 101,385 Internet users within the scope of the 20th W3B study:

1. Search engine machines and web catalogues mostly produce both a normal search results listing, as well as so-called sponsored links (paid search results). Which search results do you personally prefer?
2. If you use search engine machines or web catalogues to search for products or services, when do you normally do this?
3. How do you react if, at the end of a search for a product, you come across a retailer who has already impressed you with their high quality product information on their website at the start of your search?
4. Assuming that you make several search inquiries for a product in a search engine/web catalogue and the same retailer continually surfaces high up in your search results, what do you normally do?
5. In your opinion why do particular retailers continually appear high up in the search results?
6. What do you think when you are searching for a product in a search engine/web catalogue and the retailer you were actually expecting does not even appear in the search results?

## Searching and finding in the Internet

The results of the 20th W3B study indicate clearly what the primary motives for using the Internet are: after searching for up-to-date information and communicating, shopping comes in third. 67.2% stated that they use the Internet for shopping and 65.9% for searching for product information.

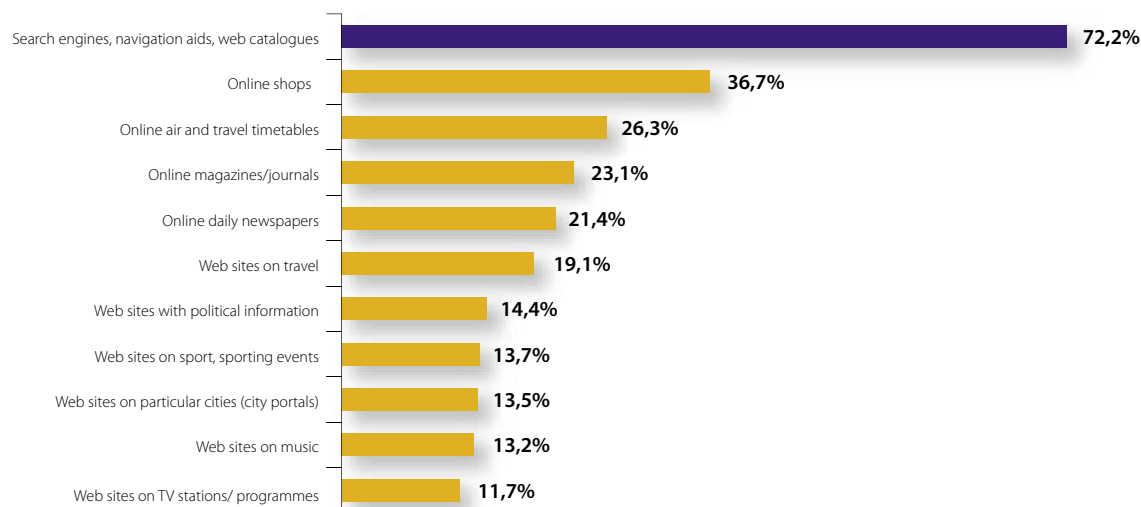
When searching for information and website addresses in the Internet, a majority of 81.1% of users use search engines for assistance.



Base: Total Internet users, multiple selections possible, Selection  
Source: 20th WWW User Analysis W3b, Survey completed April/May 2005

## Regular use of website types in comparison

If the types of websites that are regularly visited by German Internet users are considered, search engines are once again found in first place by a large margin with 72.1%. About half as many users (36.7%) use online shops regularly, followed by online air and travel timetables (26.3%).

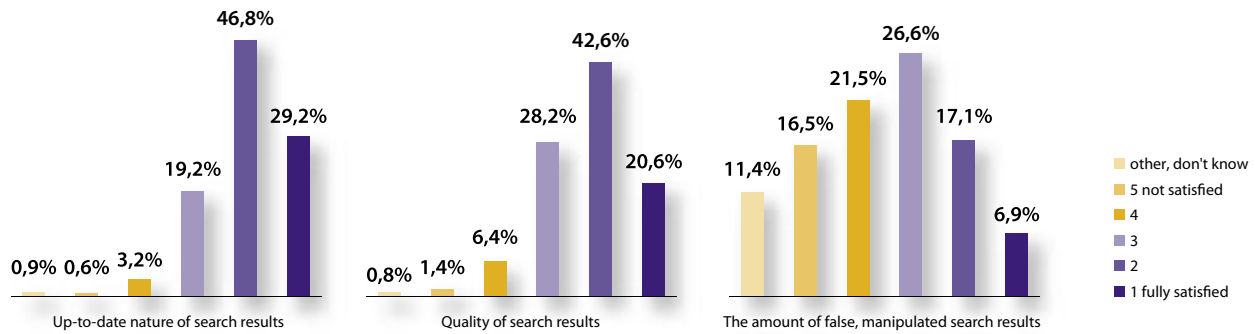


Base: Total Internet users, multiple selections possible, Selection  
Source: 20th WWW User Analysis W3b, Survey completed April/May 2005

## Ranking of search engines

The most favoured German search engine by far is Google. Over 70% of all users stated that they mostly use Google to research in the Internet. In comparison competitors such as Yahoo! (5.8%) or MSN.de (2.2%) still play a very minor role in Germany. The major

ity of search engine users are satisfied with the up-to-date nature (76%) and quality (63.2%) of the search results. Only the amount of false, manipulated search results (“spam”) disturb search engine users (24%).

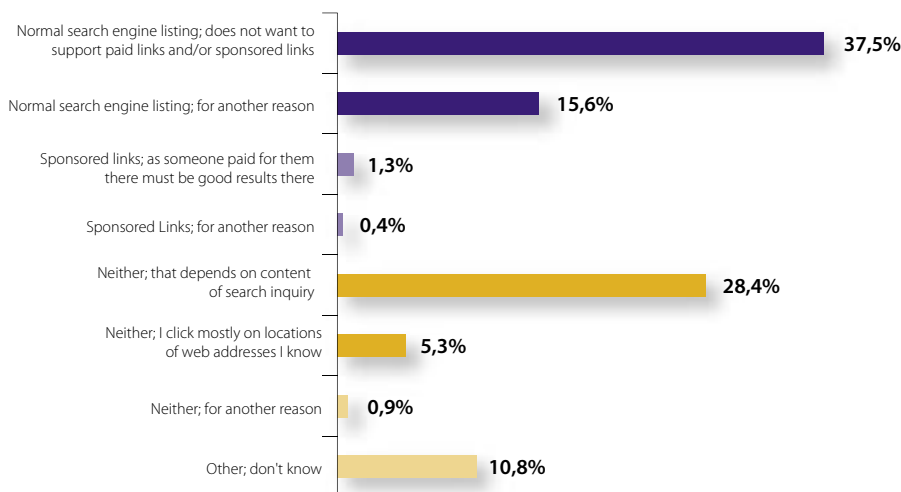


Base: users of search engines (n=94,135)  
Source: 20th WWW User Analysis W3b, Survey completed April/May 2005

## Preferred search results

One of the most important results of this study on “Searching in the Internet”, which Fittkau & Maaß found exclusively for eprofessional, is the fact that more than half of the users surveyed (53.1% in total) usually prefer normal search results (algorithmic index) and do not

click on paid text ads such as Google Adwords (so-called sponsored links). 28.4% of users, however, would make this dependent on the content of the search inquiry as to whether they would click on index results or ads.

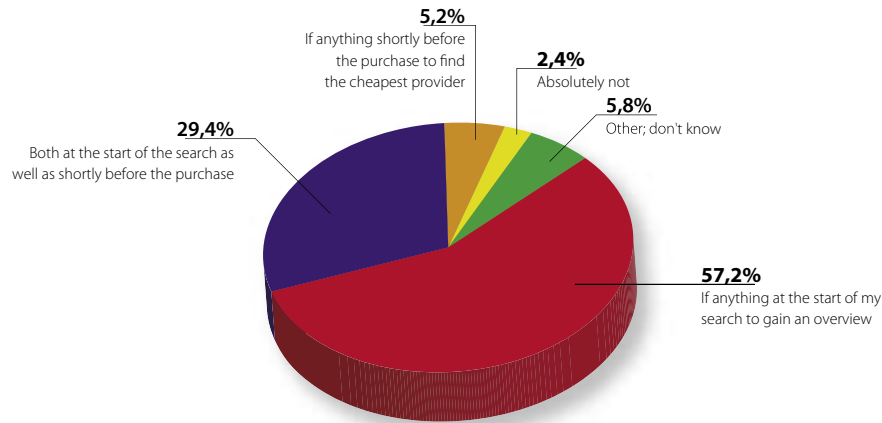


Base: users of search engines (n=94,135)  
Source: 20th WWW User Analysis W3b, Survey completed April/May 2005

## Search engines in decision-making process when purchasing

Search engines are employed by users in every stage of the decision-making process when purchasing. 57.2% of search engine users declared that search engines are more likely to be used at the start of

their search in order to gain an overview of what is on offer on the Internet. 29.4% rely on search engines at the start of their search, as well as shortly before the actual purchase.



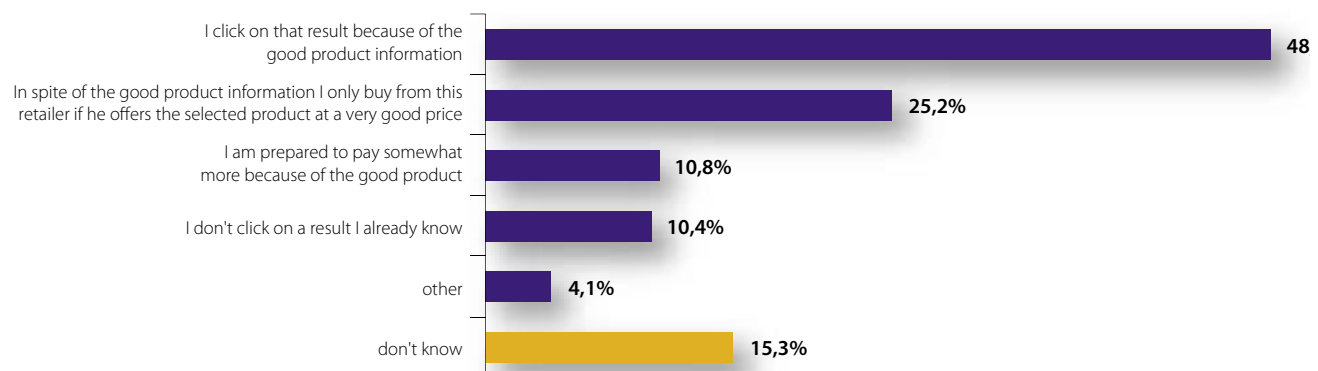
Base: users of search engines (n=94,135)

Source: 20th WWW User Analysis W3b, Survey completed April/May 2005

## Recognition of a retailer with good product information

On the question of how search engine users would react if at the end of their product search (i.e. shortly before the purchasing decision) they came across a retailer who has already impressed them with the wealth of product information, 48.6% replied, "I click on that result because of the good product information". A quarter

of the users would only buy from this retailer, however, if it also offered the selected product at a very good price. All the same, 10% of users would be prepared to pay somewhat more to the retailer who has good product information.

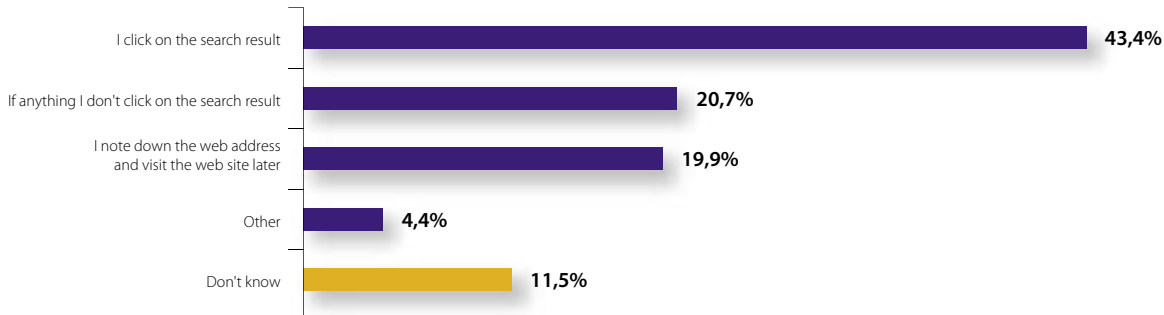


Base: users of search engines (n=94,135)

Source: 20th WWW User Analysis W3b, Survey completed April/May 2005

## Retailer appears again high up in the search results

If a retailer appears again in the search results in a leading position, 43.4% of German Internet users would click on that link. A fifth of the respondents declared they would even note down the Internet address in order to visit the website later.

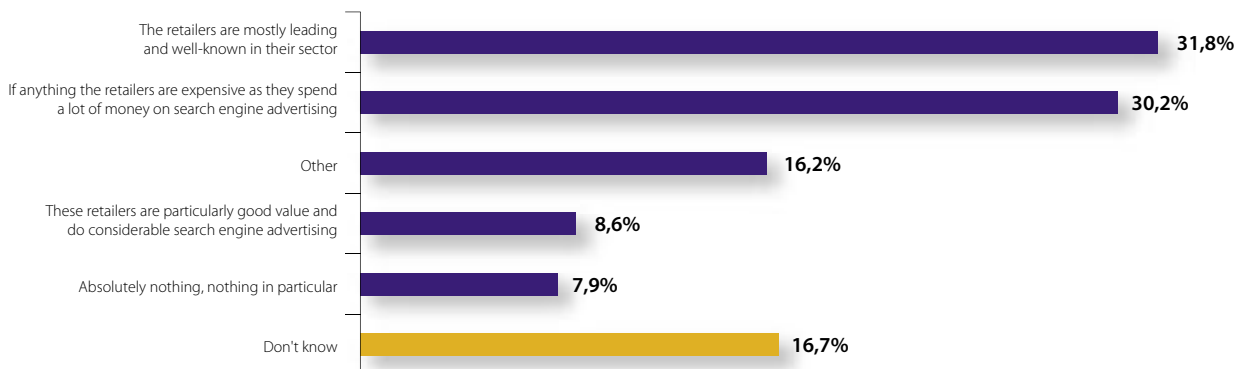


Base: users of search engines (n=94,135)  
 Source: 20th WWW User Analysis W3b, Survey completed April/May 2005

## Reasons for the good search engine placement

It is also interesting to note the finding that 30.8% of search engine marketing users are convinced that retailers who appear right at the top with several search inquiries are leading, well-known retailers

in this sector. Unfortunately, around 30% of users also assume that these retailers are expensive because they spend a lot of money on search engine advertising.

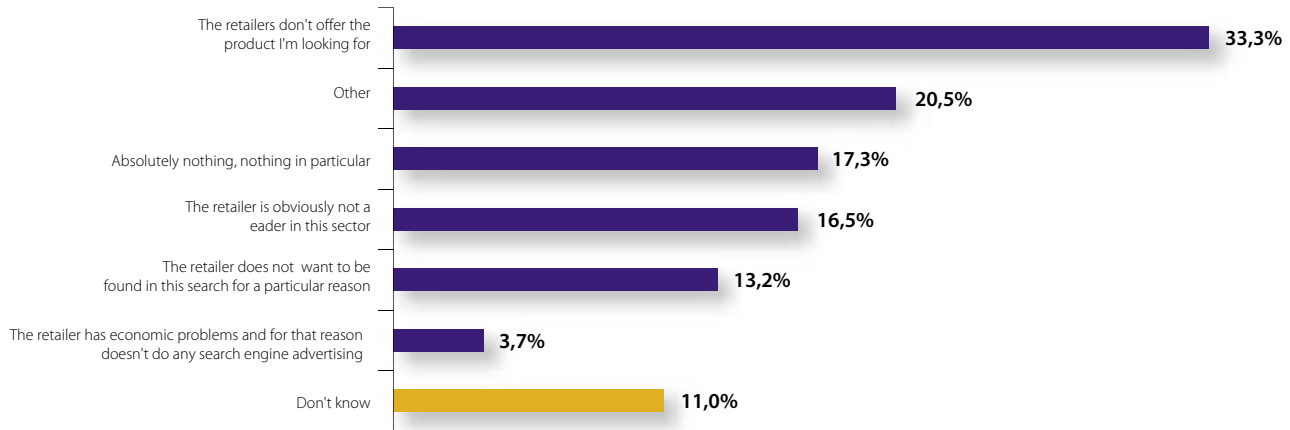


Base: users of search engines (n=94,135)  
 Source: 20th WWW User Analysis W3b, Survey completed April/May 2005

## Expected retailers do not even appear in the search results

If the search engine user did not find a retailer they had expected to see in the result listing after a search inquiry, a third of the users would assume in this case that the retailer did not carry the product. 16.5% of users would believe that the retailer was obviously

not a leader in this market. Only 3.7% of users would conclude that this situation was because the retailer had financial problems and therefore could not run any search engine advertising.



Base: users of search engines (n=94,135)

Source: 20th WWW User Analysis W3b, Survey completed April/May 2005

## Conclusion

The findings prove how important it is for online retailers to be found in search engines – i.e. both in the index, as well as in the text ads – because depending on the content of the search inquiry, the search engine user will select results from the index or from the sponsored links. Hence, whoever does not appear in the results listing will not exist for potential online customers. This also applies to established brands, for if the user does not find the retailer in their initial product search, they will assume that the retailer does not carry this product even when this is, in fact, not the case.

This means for online retailers that their products and services must be found, using both generic search inquiries (e.g. mobile) made at the beginning of a search process, as well as using specific search inquiries (e.g. “Samsung SGH-D500”) mostly made shortly before a purchase. Hence, even well-known brands have to ensure, through search engine marketing, that they can not only be found under the brand keywords, but also under general search terms, so as not to lose potential online customers to their competitors.

## About eprofessional

Eprofessional GmbH is a full-service agency for search engine marketing, which was founded by Christian Petersen and Michael Scheland in Hamburg in 1999. Today eprofessional employs more than 40 staff and handles a total of over 100 advertising clients. It is considered one of the leading German full-service agencies for search engine marketing.

As a full-service agency we cover the whole spectrum of services:

- ▶ Text ads in search engines (sponsored links)
- ▶ Index traffic (trusted feeds, shopping portals)
- ▶ Website optimisation (search engine optimisation, search technology "SiteSearch" for clients' websites)
- ▶ Affiliate marketing management
- ▶ Web controlling (eprofessional analyzer)
- ▶ Consulting

eprofessional can advise you on all issues related to the optimal visibility of your websites on the Internet. In this respect our consulting teams can draw on long-term know-how and can develop individual solutions for you. Our reference clients include BHW Holding, CreditPlus Bank, Globetrotter Equipment, Heinrich Heine, Maggi, Medion AG, OBI@OTTO, OTTO, RTL-Shop and Staples.

eprofessional is active in the following working groups: Search Engine Marketing, Success Monitoring and Affiliate Marketing, and the expert group Performance Marketing, in the Bundesverband Digitale Wirtschaft (BVDW, National Association of the Digital Economy), as well as the project group Search Engine Marketing in the Deutschen Direktmarketing Verband (DDV, German Direct Marketing Association). eprofessional is one of the first search engine marketing (SEM) providers to have been awarded the BVDW certificate for Search Engine Marketing (SEM) providers.

Moreover, Managing Director Christian Petersen is the official German representative of the international association SEMPO (Search Engine Marketing Professional Organization).

Since March 2005 eprofessional has been a certified „Qualified Google Advertising Professional“. Since then more than 15 eprofessional staff have successfully passed the examination to be a Google Advertising Professional, which proves their comprehensive expertise, as well as their extensive experience in the area of Google AdWords marketing.

## Contact

**eprofessional GmbH**  
 Margit Berner  
 Sommerhuderstrasse 12  
 D-22769 Hamburg  
 Germany  
 Phone +49 (0)40 / 39 92 78 38  
 Fax +49 (0)40 / 39 92 78 78

mberner@eprofessional.de  
 www.eprofessional.de  
 www.eprofessional.co.uk

