



Google Opinion Rewards

CASE STUDY

Hitched Magazine and Google Opinion Rewards: One happy marriage

Hitched Magazine is an online publication for married couples, exclusively dedicated to helping couples stay happily married. Steve Cooper and Gabriel Lefrancois founded Hitched in 2004 to “entertain, educate and inspire” marriages.

“Success for Hitched is that our readers are getting the information they want,” says co-founder Steve Cooper. “I would love to be able to look back and see that we were able to move the needle in happy, successful marriages.”

Success from a business perspective means more unique visitors. “We look at everything, but unique visitors is the biggest thing for us. We just want to make sure we’re reaching more people quarter over quarter.” Today, Hitched averages about 200,000 unique visitors/month.

Diversifying digital revenue streams

Steve refers to Hitched as “the WebMD of marriage.” Since many visitors come to Hitched directly from search, the company has decided against implementing a subscription model. Instead, Hitched has monetized content through a therapist directory, a wine club for couples, ads and Google Opinion Rewards since 2013.

Hitched was one of the first 100 publishers to launch Google Opinion Rewards. Steve decided to try Google Opinion Rewards as a way to generate more revenue for the site. “I understood the economics of online journalism,” he said. Hitched was up and running with Google Opinion Rewards in under two weeks and is still running the surveys across all the major site content areas they can.

“Running surveys on our site has had a negligible impact on our visitors and our traffic. It hasn’t impacted our bounce rates. It hasn’t impacted our page views.”

—Steve Cooper, Co-founder, Hitched Magazine

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About Hitched Magazine

- Online publication for married couples (www.hitchedmag.com)
- Established 2004
- Averages 200K unique visitors per month

Goals

- Promote year over year revenue growth
- Increase revenue without disrupting site traffic or user experience

Approach

- One of first 100 publishers to launch Google Opinion Rewards
- Currently running Google Opinion Rewards across most of site

Results

- Google Opinion Rewards accounts for 50% of all revenue
- Double-digit RPMs
- No negative impact on bounce rates or pageviews



Google Opinion Rewards

Results

Hitched is extremely satisfied with their results. Revenue from Google Opinion Rewards now makes up about 50% of all site revenue for Hitched. While standard ads deliver \$2 - \$4 revenue per 1,000 impressions (RPMs), Google Opinion Rewards delivers double-digit RPMs for Hitched. "In comparison with everything else we've done in terms of monetizing our content," Steve says, "[Google Opinion Rewards] has been the most efficient and the most effective."

It's okay to ask for something in return

"It's okay to ask your readers to attach some sort of value to the quality of the content you're producing," says Steve. "It's okay to ask readers for something in return. There's nothing wrong with giving readers the information they want and making a couple cents off that."

Analytics show that user experience has not been affected by asking for something in return. "Running surveys on our site has had a negligible impact on our visitors and our traffic. It hasn't impacted our bounce rates. It hasn't impacted our page views." With this peace of mind, Hitched can continue focusing on entertaining, educating and inspiring happy marriages.