



Who they are



www.cordarounds.com
San Francisco, California
2 employees
Online only
Men's and women's apparel

What they needed

- To establish their business on the Internet
- To grow their customer base
- To hone their marketing messages

What they did

- Began with **Google AdWords** in 2005
- Added **Google Analytics** tracking to their website
- Organized campaigns based on seasons and products
- Tested irreverent vs. classic copy for each campaign
- Determined branding value of ads based on repeat sales
- Targeted ads based on geography and content

What they accomplished

- **Holiday boost:** 200% return on their AdWords investment during the holidays
- **Increased brand awareness:** Customers who eventually purchase report first finding Cordarounds through AdWords
- **Improved marketing:** Use AdWords to test what messages resonate with customers
- **Better understanding of customer:** The integration of Google Analytics and AdWords offers greater insight into customer behavior

Mr. Fancy Pants

Using Google AdWords and Analytics, Cordarounds.com has seen a 200% return on their holiday spend, increased brand awareness, and strong growth of their return customer base.

New horizons

When he started Cordarounds, Chris Lindland didn't have a business plan, a marketing plan, or an advertising budget. But he did have a special pair of horizontal corduroy pants. So he cinched his belt and set out to discover just how far he could push the idea that horizontal was the new vertical.

"It started as a lark," says Chris. "I couldn't understand why there were no horizontal corduroy pants in the world. It seemed something you simply didn't question – like gravity. Vertical corduroy just was. So I had a pair made. Suddenly everyone was touching my pants. The attention got me thinking."



Two men, one world

Chris set up shop in the basement of his house, recruited his friend, Enrique Landa, and put the cost for producing 40 pairs of pants – dubbed Cordarounds – on a credit card. The first batch sold out fast. Word spread and the response was enough to convince Chris and Enrique to quit their jobs. They produced another batch of 150 and launched the irreverent Cordarounds.com. Sales were solid, but it wasn't exactly what they would have called a profitable business. "We were pants rich but cash poor," says Enrique.

Then the press came knocking – including the New York Times Styles section, the New Yorker, Newsweek, and NPR – and interest and sales began to take off. Suddenly the two men found themselves representing the "horizontal perspective" for the fashion world. "We thought we'd make some pants and maybe sell them in a few shops," Chris recalls. "We had no real business laying claim to the haberdasher mantle, no real strategy behind the venture, and didn't think we would be online-only. But as the articles broke, our customer base became both local and international. It was clear that given our size, the Internet was the best way to reach these customers. That's when we started to use Google AdWords™."

Hello and buy, buy

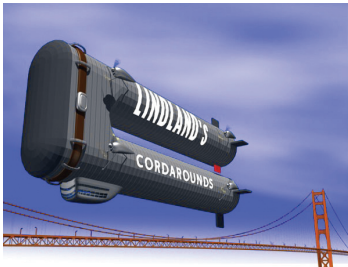
"Because of Google's reach, advertising with AdWords made a lot of sense, and I knew I couldn't rely on PR as my only means of marketing," Chris says. "We needed to grow our customer base or we'd be a flash in the fashion pan. I set up an AdWords account and started a few campaigns. They were effective, but I was spread so thin – traveling, admin stuff, walking every pair to the post office, newsletters, the website – that I never was able to find the time and really figure out how to get the most out of AdWords. But after we had more than a year under our belt, we had much better insight into our sales cycle and knew how critical the holidays were. They were approaching fast and we decided to get serious."

About Google AdWords

Google AdWords™ is a performance-based advertising program that enables businesses large and small to advertise on Google and its network of partner websites. Hundreds of thousands of businesses worldwide use AdWords for text, image, and video ads priced on a cost-per-click (CPC) and cost-per-impression (CPM) basis. Built on an auction-based system, AdWords is a highly quantifiable and cost-effective way to reach potential customers. For more information, visit <http://adwords.google.com>.

About Google Analytics

Google Analytics™ is a free, powerful web analytics tool. It precisely tracks visitors, referrals, search engine performance, email promotions, and even offline initiatives. Featuring visually enhanced reports, Analytics helps users focus their marketing resources, improve site navigation, and achieve a higher ROI. It measures the success of both AdWords and non-AdWords advertising campaigns, revealing which ads and keywords convert the best. For more information, visit <http://www.google.com/analytics>.



By then, Cordarounds had branched out beyond men's pants and had added horizontal corduroy shorts, skirts, and men's and women's reversible smoking jackets to its product line. Chris and Enrique first redesigned their Google AdWords campaigns based on each Cordarounds product. Next, they set up campaigns made up of keywords that targeted their ideal market demographic.

"Targeting is powerful," says Chris, "but also a bit daunting – there are a lot of options, but it's worth it. It really helped to sit down and map all of our campaigns out. And we tested each ad with at least one other variation. I call it finding the 'sweet spot.' Now we aren't just hoping eyeballs fall on our ads – we know they are."

"The integration of AdWords and Analytics is great – it reduces guesswork. I can use information from each to adjust and improve our campaigns, our site, and our marketing. We end up with a 360-degree view of the customer." Chris Lindland, Cordarounds founder

"And it's also about finding the sweet spot for our budget, which is tight," adds Enrique. "We want to reach as many customers as possible with the message right for them. Taking time to target precisely goes a long way to making every dollar count."

The effort has paid off. Since optimizing their targeting efforts, Cordarounds has seen a reduction in both cost-per-click and cost-per-conversion, and a marked improvement in holiday sales. AdWords has also boosted the recognition of the Cordarounds brand. "We know the raw conversion data doesn't reflect the number of people who ultimately shop at Cordarounds. Folks find our site through Google, consider, and come back. Because one in five people who buy, buy again, we are really excited to see the effect this kind of advertising has on our growth."

A perfect fit

But "getting serious" didn't stop with AdWords. Chris also decided to build Google Analytics into Cordarounds.com. "If we were going to put the time, energy, and money into acquiring new customers, we wanted to know as much about those customers as possible. Google Analytics was a perfect fit." A grin crawls across Chris's face. "Pun sadly intended."

Google Analytics, a free tool, allows Chris to see how visitors arrive at Cordarounds.com and how they interact with the site. "The integration of AdWords and Analytics is great – it reduces guesswork. I can use information from each to adjust and improve our campaigns, our site, and our marketing. We end up with a 360-degree view of the customer."

One leg at a time

Is horizontal now the new vertical? Cordarounds's success seems to indicate that, at least where corduroy is concerned, a change in perception is afoot. "Not only are you more aerodynamic when you wear it, you're more stylish. And horizontal corduroy does not make you look fat," insists Chris. "It's a myth that we have set out to dismantle."

And while fashion icon status remains elusive, with every sale, Chris and Enrique's business becomes less a question of survival and more a question of growth. "Fun ideas can be fun business. A lot of what gets us up in the morning is the magic of possibility – which direction can we take Cordarounds, just how far we can go. Google plays a big part in making that magic happen."

