

# Advertising is about getting the traffic-demographic equation right...are you?



By [Veruschka Khan](#)

12 Sep 2014

What makes a site a great place to advertise? It's a simple question, with a simple answer. Firstly, there needs to be traffic - and the more the better. Secondly, you need to be assured that the right demographic is seeing your ad...traffic that is ready and able to buy what you are selling. It's like the wings of an airplane. If you have one, but not the other, your campaign won't get off the ground.

Classifieds, by their very nature, have both of these qualities. The largest classifieds portal in South Africa enjoys 8 million unique visitors a month - all of whom visit the site with the intent to buy. You might argue that that answers the traffic question, but not the demographic. A niche site focused on your product category will have fewer hits, but the right demographic, and the campaign will be optimised fully. Actually, while that might be true for news or celebrity sites, it's not true for classifieds.

## What users do online

Gumtree's automotive category is only one of many, but traffic-wise, it's the largest automotive site in South Africa (and as a standalone, it draws an equal amount of traffic to Yahoo ZA). Not only is that a huge amount of traffic, but every single visitor that browses through the category is doing so because they would like to buy a new car.

In some ways, classifieds are the unseen giant of the online world. There are many misconceptions that have kept advertisers away - including that goods advertised are purely second hand (false!), that visitors are mainly among the lower LSM's and purely looking for a bargain (false!), and that users aren't particularly engaged (false again!).

We have to re-examine how users spend their time online. Every visit is either informational, social, or transactional. Informational searches are research-orientated...discovering when your flight leaves, how much a new stroller costs, or what the capital of Bulgaria is. Socialising online is simple - sharing pictures and interests with peers or strangers - while transactional visits are done for purpose of buying or selling.

## Advertising in the right section

A classifieds portal combines all three through self-generating, audience-driven content, which would account for the volumes of traffic they receive. If used correctly, this can be a powerful platform for any discerning advertiser. Segment the audience and focus on your key vertical (e.g. if you are targeting parents-to-be, the Baby and Children's category would be the ideal placement). Every single person visiting that category is a parent or parent to be - and they are looking to buy something for their nursery.

It's this buyer intent that gives a classified portal the upper hand over other high-traffic sites. When your brand appears on a classified site, you are appearing before an audience that this is there to buy what you are selling. Moreover, you can own a vertical through innovative premium displays (like page takeovers) or targeted banners. Unlike ecommerce sites that are traditionally hesitant about providing space to competitors, classifieds are the business of providing a space for customers to interact - they aren't selling anything except opportunities.

If advertising success is about achieving the perfect traffic-demographic equation, can anyone really afford to ignore classifieds?

## ABOUT VERUSCHKA KHAN

Veruschka Khan is the Head of Sales for Gumtree South Africa. She currently oversees several teams in charge of mobile and desktop ad sales and has many years of rich media experience.

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