



## **Yahoo ends its paid inclusion search program**

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Yahoo has recently announced that it will cancel Yahoo Search Submit Pro (Y!SSP), its popular paid inclusion search program, effective December 31st. It is a sudden -but not totally unexpected move- which has left many internet marketers scrambling to readjust their search marketing strategies by year's end.

In what is viewed by some as an effort to solidify the impending takeover of Yahoo! Search by Microsoft's Bing, Yahoo's CEO, Carol Bartz, has taken yet another calculated (and controversial) move in her mission to improve Yahoo's overall viability.

### **Y!SSP vs Yahoo SLURP**

In contrast to Yahoo's proprietary web-indexing robot, SLURP, which crawls sites and pages using a search algorithm similar to Google's, it was their Y!SSP paid inclusion program that gave marketers more control in determining exactly what content was searched and displayed for their web listings. This key feature is what differentiated Yahoo's paid inclusion program from others and made it such an integral tool for so many marketers.

In addition to having more control, many also found Y!SSP beneficial due to the following reasons:

- Affordable costs when compared to similar paid inclusion CPC programs
- Higher traffic and click through rates (CTRs)
- Timely data updates via feed (this process had a 48-hour guarantee of particular pages that could be made searchable by marketers within Yahoo's natural search catalog)
- Its allowance for larger amounts of data via feed than is currently allowed by SLURP, which would commonly result in higher rankings for keywords than through the use of SLURP by itself
- Customizable title, description and "Quick Links" in the content of natural search listings, resulting in highly targeted results and better click-through rates

## **What does the end of Y!SSP mean for marketers?**

In a statement released to search engine marketing news hub, Search Engine Land, Yahoo stated, “We are committing our resources and efforts to our core areas of focus, including improving the search experience and relevancy of our ads to increase user engagement and ROI for advertisers, and as a result, have decided to exit Search Submit.” But what exactly does this change mean for marketers who have utilized Yahoo’s paid inclusion plan?

In spite of Yahoo’s own view that their recent announcement served as sufficient notice- many in the internet marketing industry would beg to differ. And with the end of the year fast approaching, marketers will need to carefully evaluate all of their available options, some of which may include:

- Focusing on maximizing the benefits of the Y!SSP paid inclusion program until its end
- Evaluating and improving their search strength in Yahoo’s SLURP
- Exploring new SEO initiatives
- Using these newly available funds in other areas of their budgets

With the elimination of Y!SSP, and what is possibly one of the last viable paid inclusion services available, marketers must now find new ways to adequately compensate for the absence of this beneficial and profitable marketing tool.