

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

e-mail: freedom-of-information-rexxxxx@xxx.xxx.xx

Our Ref: 2283

Date: 11 December 2009

Dear Mr Nolan

Thank you for your enquiry emailed to Directgov through the DWP Freedom of Information mailbox on 8 November and subsequent email on 24 November where you clarified your request.

You asked;

Please can you supply a list of campaigns for which paid search engine placement was purchased detailing:

- *The advertising platform (e.g. Google [Adwords], Microsoft Live, Yahoo!)*
- *The pages users are directed to*
- *The total cost of paid listings by campaign*
- *The number of visitors directed to each campaign for each platform*

For the periods 1st January 2008 to 31st December 2008 and 1st January 2009 - 31st October 2009.

You then clarified your request on the 24 November as follows;

I would like details of any campaigns under your control. For campaigns funded by someone else, please:

- *supply details of who funds them*
- *supply any information you do have, for example lists of referring search engine advertising platforms and visitor numbers.*

Directgov uses paid search engine placement to promote content and services contained within its website. I have attached a comprehensive list (see attached spreadsheet) of content which we pay for search terms (see column A - "Section on the Website") alongside a list of the groups of search terms we buy for that specific section (see column B - "Grouping of search terms related to the section."). Also, as you requested, I have included the website addresses that we direct our users to who "click" the paid for result (i.e. column C)

Below is a list of the search engine platforms that Directgov has worked with, as well as a summary of the total number of “clicks” that have been directed to our content. To ensure a measure of commercial confidential, I have rounded these figures.

2008

Search engine	Clicks through to Directgov
Google	19m
MSN	0.7m
Yahoo	1.4m
Miva	0.5m
Mirago	0.5m
Yell.com	0.1m
Thomson Local	0.2m
Webfinder	0.4m
Totals	23m

2009 (As of 30 November)

Search engine	Clicks through to Directgov
Google	16m
Yahoo	0.8m
MSN	0.4m
Miva	0.04m
Webfinder	0.07m
Totals	17m

Regarding your query for the cost of this exercise; in 2008, Directgov spent £1,303,237.96 on paid search engine placement, which yielded approximately 23 million visits to Directgov from the platforms listed above, which equates to a commercially competitive cost of nearly 5p per click. So far in 2009, we have spent £925,786.67 with some 17 million visits to the site, which like 2008, is the equivalent to just over 5p per user.

Unfortunately we cannot release precise information about the number of visits from an individual campaign, the amount of money spent with an individual search engine or the exact search term purchased. This information is being withheld as it falls under the exemption in section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act. This exemption covers disclosure which would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of Directgov by weakening our bargaining position with media suppliers of goods and services and also weakening our position in a competitive environment by revealing market-sensitive information or information of potential usefulness to competitors.

Section 43 is a qualified exemption and in accordance with section 2(2) of the Act the department has balanced the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosing the information.

In applying this exemption the department has balanced the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosing the information would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of the department by affecting adversely its bargaining position during contractual negotiations. This would ultimately result in less effective use of public money.

Finally, you have asked about the details of who funds campaigns not owned by Directgov. Unfortunately we do not hold this information, as these costs will only be known by the individual departments themselves.

I hope you have found this information helpful, if you have any queries about this letter please contact me quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central Fol Team

Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act

If you are not happy with this response you may request an internal review by e-mailing freedom-of-information-request@dpw.gsi.gov.uk or by writing to DWP, Central Fol Team, 5th Floor The Adelphi, 1-11, John Adam Street, London WC2N 6HT. Any review request should be submitted within two months of the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office for a decision. Generally the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF www.ico.gov.uk