



### Who they are

- First Crush Restaurant Wine Bar & Lounge
- www.firstcrush.com
- San Francisco, California
- Restaurant specializing in wine and California-French cuisine



### What they needed

- To bring in new customers and build awareness
- To target their core market of tourists and groups
- To distinguish themselves from other San Francisco restaurants

### What they did

- Began with **Google AdWords** in 2002
- Targeted their campaign to the entire U.S.
- Used keywords to reach out-of-towners and event planners
- Highlighted awards they won in their ads

### What they accomplished

- **Increased site traffic:** Now receive between 700 and 800 unique visitors per day compared to 200 before using AdWords
- **Target future customers:** Catch the attention of tourists researching San Francisco restaurants
- **Cost-effective and timesaving marketing strategy:** Control advertising costs without constant monitoring

## Wine and Dine

First Crush Restaurant Wine Bar & Lounge used Google AdWords to increase its site traffic by 400%.

### Dream come true

Shahram Bijan hasn't sat still for the past 10 years. After going to school for advertising and marketing, he started a software company and a consulting firm. And then one day, he heard about a San Francisco restaurant up for sale. "I love the art of food and always dreamed of having my own restaurant," Shahram explains. "The opportunity to buy First Crush just kind of fell into my lap, and it was love at first sight."

Almost overnight, Shahram became a restaurateur – which meant he had to learn a thing or two about the business.

"First Crush serves California-French cuisine made from sustainable, local ingredients," says Shahram. "With 600 California wines and an excellent wine and food pairing program, I had to know wines inside and out – but back then I was pretty much starting from scratch. So I did a lot of tastings at different California wineries, and people would bring me samples all the time." He sighs nostalgically. "It was a lot of work, but I can't say I didn't enjoy it."



### Feet in the door

"When I took over First Crush in 2001, I made some changes to create a really welcoming environment where people would want to both dine and hang out," Shahram recalls. "My next step was getting our name out there to bring more people through the door."

In 2002, Shahram learned about Google AdWords™ and signed up for an account. "With my marketing background, I could see how advertising on Google could work extremely well for First Crush. Restaurants work with such a small profit margin that it's really crucial for them to use their marketing dollars efficiently and get the most bang for their buck. Taking out ads in regular newspapers and magazines is expensive, and you're bombarded with so many other ads that it's hard to tell one from the other. It's also hard to track whether those types of ads are bringing in customers."

"The amazing thing with AdWords is that people are using Google to find specific information," Shahram continues. "When they're looking for San Francisco restaurants or places for corporate events, our ad comes up. So we're paying for clicks from people who have already expressed interest in a business like ours. Plus, we can keep track of how much website traffic AdWords is driving. We're able to use our advertising dollars wisely but effectively."

### On the town

Once Shahram had become a wine connoisseur, he set out to learn just as much about his customers. "I paid careful attention to our clientele – where they came from, what type of experience they were looking for. We're located right in Union Square, a popular tourist destination, and can accommodate large groups, so we get tons of convention and tourist business. About 80 percent of our customers are out-of-towners, and 30

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## About Google AdWords

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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>.

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to 40 percent of our business comes from private parties. So I designed my Google AdWords campaign to zero in on the types of customers we serve.”

To reach his target market, Shahram shows his ads throughout the U.S. and uses keywords related to group dinners, private parties, and San Francisco restaurants. “Whenever I go to a new city or am planning an event, I research restaurants on Google,” Shahram explains. “So I thought of the types of terms I might search on. Now, when people all across the country research restaurants in San Francisco, our AdWords ad comes up. The next step, of course, is getting people to click on it. It’s no easy task to run a restaurant in San Francisco and stand out from all the competition, so we use our AdWords ads to distinguish ourselves from the herd. For example, some of our ads mention that we won Best of Citysearch 2006 in several different categories.”




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### A full plate

These days, Shahram logs in to his AdWords account every few weeks to evaluate its performance, adjust his budget, and add or remove keywords. “That’s one of the great things about AdWords. You don’t have to keep monitoring it all the time. You set it in place and it does the work for you, which is fantastic – especially in our industry, where you have so many things going on every day and it’s hard to stay on top of everything.”

“Which is not to say I haven’t noticed the impact of advertising on Google,” he continues. “Before AdWords, we got about 200 unique visitors to our website each day. Now we get between 700 and 800. Incredible food, great wines, a wonderful ambiance, and an effective marketing strategy have made First Crush what it is today. Google AdWords is a key ingredient in that recipe. You can have the best restaurant in the world, but if people don’t know about it then they’re never going to go.”

### On the menu

Six years and several bottles of wine since he ventured into the restaurant business, Shahram is still on the move. In 2005, he crossed the Golden Gate Bridge into Marin County and opened Ora, a Pan-Asian restaurant and lounge, and Toast, an upscale diner. “I also have plans to open a second Ora in San Francisco,” he adds.

As he ponders the future of his flagship restaurant and the role Google AdWords has played in its success, Shahram waxes philosophical. “I see a parallel between First Crush and AdWords. One of our goals at First Crush is to help people discover small boutique wineries they wouldn’t encounter otherwise. We also want to make wine less intimidating for the uninitiated. AdWords is also about helping small local businesses get their names out and showing customers what they may be missing out on – and it works for every budget.”

“I’ve had a busy decade,” Shahram admits. “And Google AdWords will play a big part in keeping us busy for the next one.”

