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New models for Lead Generation

Auctions, community recommendations, product placements, and specialized search provide alternatives to Google AdWords

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Abstract: In this report, we look at four new models for generating leads and new business online.

- **Auctions:** The purest form of commerce comes in two types:
 - **Reverse auctions** where companies bid for the right to sell a consumer the desired financial service; for example, **Prosper** in consumer loans and **MoneyAisle** in consumer deposits.
 - **Traditional auctions** such as **Zions Direct** and U.S. Treasuries where buyers bid against each other to set the price of the financial product.
- **Community-based deal finders:** At these sites, financial offers are vetted by the community, with the winners bubbling to the top. Examples include **Credit Karma**, **FiLife**, **SmartHippo** and **FatWallet**.
- **Product placement in personal finance tools:** The idea here is to offer financial tools so valuable that users voluntarily turn over their financial transactions and personal data. Armed with that info, the website can make relevant recommendations culled from site sponsors. Examples include **Mint**, **Credit Karma**, **FindABetterBank**, and **Credit.com**.

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- **Specialty financial search:** As Google becomes more and more expensive for advertisers, other companies are trying to pick off some of the lucrative financial services search dollars. This is not a new phenomena — **BankRate.com** has done quite well meeting this need (*see traffic p. 10*) — but several new entrants are banking on new models that tightly integrate account opening with drop-dead simple search. Examples include **Mortgage Marvel** and **CheckingFinder**.

Companies Mentioned: Andera, BancVue/FirstROI (Checking Finder), Bank of America, Credit Karma, Credit.com, Dow Jones/IAC (FiLfe), eBay, Facilitas (FindABetterBank), FatWallet, Google, Mint, Mortgagebot (Mortgage Marvel), neoSaej (MoneyAisle), PNC Bank, Prosper, Quicken Loans (Quizzle), SmartHippo, WaMu, Zions Direct

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