Yelp offers new ad customization to advertisers



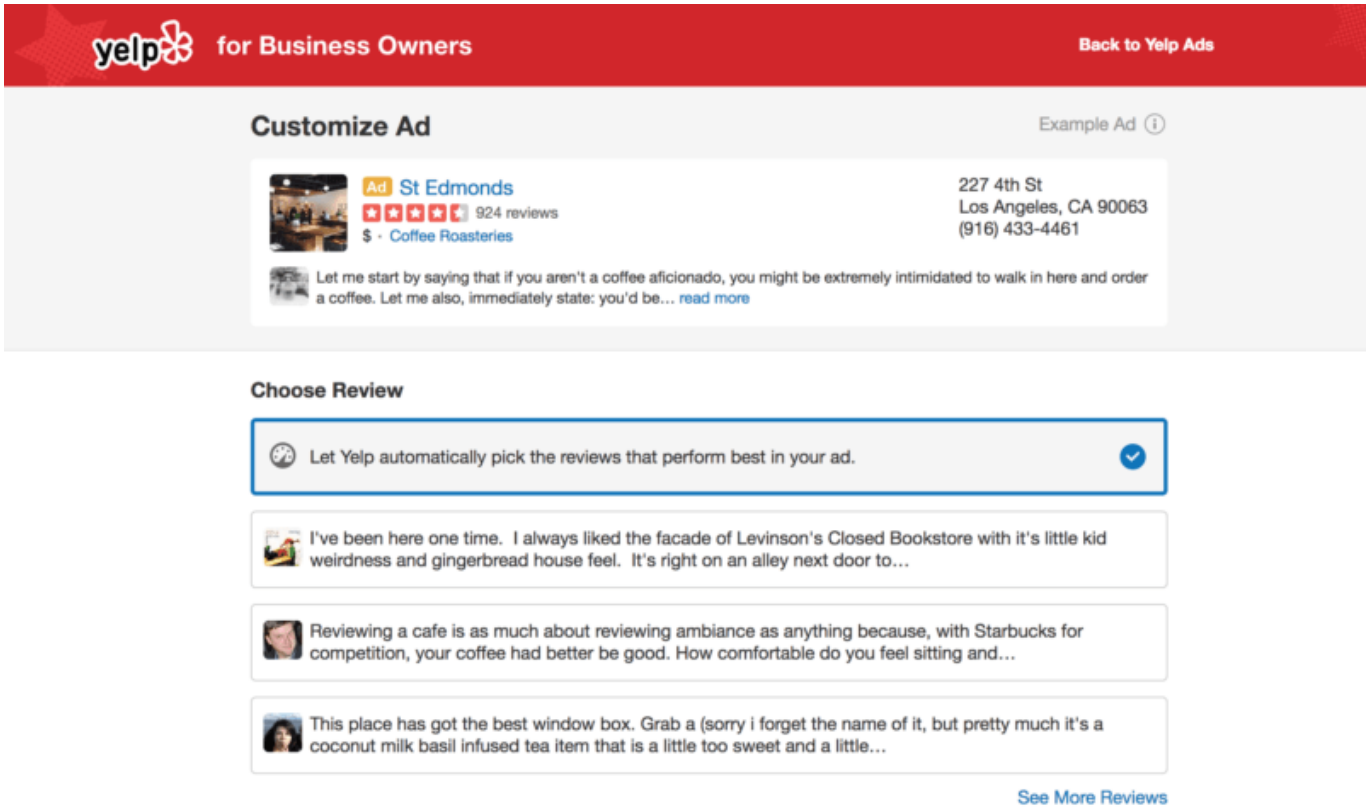
Yesterday Yelp announced “custom ads” for small businesses. They offer advertisers on the platform the ability to select a desired review and image to appear in their ads. This is similar to TripAdvisor’s ad program allowing advertisers to feature a favorite review.

Yelp says these ad units are being quickly adopted:

> *By giving advertisers the ability to select which photos and reviews they would like to feature in their ad, we’re providing a unique tool that leverages the voice of a customer to promote their business. Based on our initial tests, businesses owners and marketers are loving the increased controls of Custom Ads. We’ve already seen 30% of new advertisers using this feature.*

If advertisers are uncertain about which photos or reviews to

use, Yelp explains that a machine learning algorithm can do it for them, increasing the likelihood of user response and clicks. The company also says that it will deploy “up to thirty sample ads with varying combinations of photos and reviews” to determine which ones perform best on behalf of the advertiser.



In order to utilize the new ad unit, marketers must claim their Yelp profile, select “customize ad” in the business dashboard and then either manually select an image and review or let the system make those choices, as indicated above.

Last month Yelp completed what the company said was a very successful test in Canada using email address matching and guest WiFi to measure foot traffic and offline conversions driven by its online ads.

About The Author



Greg Sterling is a Contributing Editor at Search Engine Land. He writes a personal blog, Screenwerk, about connecting the dots between digital media and real-world consumer behavior. He is also VP of Strategy and Insights for the Local Search Association. Follow him on Twitter or find him at Google+.

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