SEO KEYWORD SELECTION

Build Your Online Marketing Campaign on Solid Keyword Foundations

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Why Keyword Selection is Important

Your target market uses certain keywords and phrases to look for the products or services you offer online. When you target these keywords in your content, your website can rank higher on search engine results pages (SERPs), and make them more visible to your audience.

The success of your digital marketing campaign relies heavily on the keywords you use. Creating a list of keywords is just the first step in building a successful marketing campaign; the real challenge lies in selecting the right keywords for your optimisation goals, and ultimately your business goals.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF KEYWORDS

Keywords can be divided into two groups based on length and search volume:

- **Short-tail keywords** are usually one or two words long, and have the highest search volume. This often makes them difficult to rank because of their high competition. "Shoes" or "women's shoes" are good examples of short-tail keywords.
- **Long-tail keywords** are longer, more specific versions of short-tail keywords. As fewer people search for these terms, the competition for these are not as high as short-tail variations. "Affordable women's shoes online" is a long-tail version of "women's shoes".

These types can be further divided based on their purpose:

- **Navigational keywords** help searchers find a specific web page. For example, someone might search for "nikon" to find the website for the Nikon brand.
- **Informational keywords** help searchers find information on a topic. Someone looking for information on landscape photography might type "landscape photography tips" or simply "landscape photography".
- **Transactional keywords** are used by searchers with an intent to buy something online. "Buy textbooks online" and "online clothes shop" are examples of these keywords. Once you familiarise yourself with these keyword types, you can determine which ones are appropriate to use for your website and your target audience.

WHAT DEFINES A GOOD KEYWORD

Just because you are running an e-commerce site that sells shoes does not make "shoes" a good keyword for your online marketing campaign. You need to keep four major factors in mind when deciding which keywords to use in your website content and online ads:

RELEVANCE
Choose keywords that are relevant to your products, services and content. Your keywords need to describe your content accurately, or your visitors will simply skim your website and leave because they cannot find what they are looking for.

BUYER INTENT & CONVERSION
Many of the search terms you find through keyword research can generate a significant amount of traffic for your website, but that does not guarantee an increase in sales or conversions. Choose keywords that appeal to visitors who are most likely going to buy your products or services.

SEARCH VOLUME AND COMPETITION
Choose relevant keywords that can compete in the market. It can be tempting to focus solely on keywords with the highest amount of searches; remember that these are the keywords everyone else is trying to rank for.

By definition, a good keyword is one that is relevant, targeted and has a combination of good conversion and search volume. Newer sites will benefit from choosing what digital marketers often refer to as "low-hanging fruit" (or targeted, long-tail keywords with lower competition and search volume) because they are easier to rank. You can always add more competitive phrases as your site continues to grow.

KEYWORDS TO AVOID

When going through your keyword research, know which keywords you should avoid using in your campaigns. This quick list can tell you which keywords to eliminate from your campaigns:

POORLY TARGETED KEYWORDS

Not choosing general keywords based on your target audience can increase your website's non-targeted traffic. This means more people will visit your site, but your chances of making a sale are low.

KEYWORDS WITH LITTLE TO NO SEARCH VOLUME

You will not get any traffic if you choose keywords that nobody searches for, and not having any traffic means you will not get any sales.

IRRELEVANT KEYWORDS

You will naturally avoid keywords that have absolutely nothing to do with your business, but those are not the only ones you can consider "irrelevant". Do not misrepresent yourself by using related keywords that don't accurately describe what you offer. For example, do not use the word "discount" in your keywords if you are not offering products at discounted prices.

BROAD KEYWORDS

Keywords that are too broad will require an incredible amount of time and resources to rank, and even then, achieving top rankings is near impossible.

GROUPING YOUR KEYWORDS

Keyword selection does not stop with choosing the best ones based on the four major factors listed in the previous section. By creating groups of related keywords, you can increase your website's relevance for those search terms, improve your click-through rates (CTR) and enhance your Quality Score if you are running pay-per-click (PPC) ads on Google.

Start creating groups by choosing your main keywords. The main keyword is the highest priority and most competitive term in a group. It serves as the "root" for the other keywords.

> **FOR EXAMPLE**
>
> The website you are working on features a New York-based dental practice that specialises in affordable dental implant procedures. Your main keywords might be "dental implants in ny".

Once you have chosen your main keywords, choose your supporting keywords. These are long-tail variations that include the main keyword.

> **FOR EXAMPLE**
>
> The group with "dental implants in ny" as a main keyword can include "affordable dental implants in ny", "cheap dental implants in ny", and "low cost dental implants in ny".

KEYWORD RESEARCH PROCESS

1

CREATE A LIST OF RELEVANT TOPICS
We use your products and services to start the process and then branch out further into your industry to create ideas for topics.

2

IDENTIFY KEYWORDS FOR EACH TOPIC
Each topic will get its own list of relevant keywords.

3

FIND RELATED KEYWORDS OR PHRASES
We use tools to generate keyword and phrase variables to add to our list.

4

GROUP KEYWORDS
This process helps us focus our campaigns by identifying the main and supporting keywords.

5

CHECK COMPETITION AND NARROW DOWN YOUR LIST
We establish the relationship of demand to competition, which is the estimated global search impressions divided by the number of exact match search results.

CONCLUSION

An effective keyword strategy can elevate the success of your online marketing campaigns. In some instances, the success of your campaigns will rely on how you execute your keyword strategy. It is an important element in your marketing strategy that requires careful planning, time and effort.