



SEO KEYWORD SELECTION

Building Your Online Marketing Campaign on Solid
Keyword Foundations



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INTRODUCTION

Why Keyword Selection is Important



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

Your digital marketing campaign's success 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 optimization 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 for because there is a lot of competition for them. “Shoes” or “women’s shoes” are good examples of short-tail keywords.
- **Long-tail keywords** are longer, more specific versions of short-tail keywords. Fewer people search for these terms and there is less competition for them. “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 search for “landscape photography tips” or simply “landscape photography”.
- **Transactional keywords** are used by searchers looking to buy something online. “Buy textbooks online” and “online clothes shop” are examples of these keywords. Being familiar with these keyword types can help you determine which ones are appropriate to use for your website and your target audience.

WHAT DEFINES A GOOD KEYWORD

Just because you're running an e-commerce site that sells shoes doesn't 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 can't find what they're looking for.



BUYER INTENT & CONVERSION

Many of the keywords you find through keyword research can generate a lot of traffic for your website, but that doesn't guarantee you'll see an increase in sales or conversions as well. 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 you know you can compete for in the market. It can be tempting to focus solely on keywords with the highest amount of searches, but you should also 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're easier to rank for. You can always add more competitive phrases as your site continues to grow.

KEYWORDS TO AVOID

When going through your keyword research, you need to 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

Failing to choose 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

Choosing keywords that nobody searches for often means you won't get any traffic, and not having any traffic means you won't get any sales.



IRRELEVANT KEYWORDS

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



BROAD KEYWORDS

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

GROUPING YOUR KEYWORDS

Keyword selection doesn't stop with choosing the best ones based on the four major factors listed in the previous section. Creating groups of related keywords to allows you to increase your website's relevance for those keywords, improve your click-through rates (CTR), and improve your Quality Score if you're 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 keyword in a group. It serves as the "root" for the other keywords its group includes.

FOR EXAMPLE

The website you're choosing keywords for features a New York-based dental clinic that specializes 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 keywords 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 in general to create ideas for topics.

2

IDENTIFY KEYWORDS FOR EACH TOPIC

Each topic will get its own list of keywords derived from the topic.

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 main keywords and supporting keywords.

5

CHECK COMPETITION AND CUT 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 all your online marketing campaigns and in some instances the success of your campaigns totally rely on your keyword strategy. It's an important element in your marketing strategy that should be given the correct amount of investment in time and effort.