

Key Word Selection

Before starting any search engine optimization campaign it is crucial to target the right set of keyword phrases for your market. Often times the most obvious keywords aren't always the best. This can be the case for a number of reasons. When choosing the right keyword phrases, it is important to remember three elements: popularity, competition, and relevance.

Keyword popularity refers to the sheer number of people searching for a particular keyword phrase. This is often the concept that most people have no trouble understanding – if your website is optimized well for a keyword phrase that a lot of people are searching for, this will bring you more traffic. After all, what good is it to be ranked #1 in Google for a keyword phrase that nobody searches for?

Keyword competition is an area that some newcomers to SEO fail to examine. When a particular keyword phrase is popular, this usually means that there are many other websites out there competing for top rankings of that phrase in the search engines. The number of competing websites is the number of results a search engine returns for a specific query. Optimizing for a competitive keyword phrase can make it much more difficult for you to achieve successful search engine rankings for these phrases.

So now you may be asking yourself, "Ok, great! Now how do I find popular keywords that aren't very competitive?". Many keyword research services, such as WordTracker.com, include an index that measures exactly this. The Keyword Effectiveness Index (KEI) is a qualitative measure of how easily it is to optimize for a particular keyword phrase. KEI is essentially a matter of "supply and demand". Ideally, we want to select keywords that are extremely popular but aren't very competitive. This would result in a very high KEI and take very little effort to achieve successful rankings.

But we can't forget one other very important element when choosing the right keywords…relevance.

Keyword Relevance has to do with how much a keyword phrase relates to your products or services. If you rank well for a popular search phrase and receive a lot of traffic from it, this still doesn't help you if the traffic doesn't translate to sales or leads. For instance, let's say you've found a good niche phrase that is fairly popular and has a high KEI index – "free keyword ranking report". So you optimize for this keyword phrase, rank well, and receive more traffic. However, if your website doesn't offer a free keyword ranking report or have any information on how to receive a free keyword ranking report, these extra visitors will not actually convert to customers. It is important to remember not to get too caught up in the popularity and KEI of a keyword phrase. You must also think about keyword relevance when conducting your keyword research.

Choosing the right keyword phrases to target can be the deciding factor between a successful and unsuccessful search engine optimization campaign. When doing your research, remember to keep in mind your business goals and the three factors discussed above. Is it always easier to work with the market trends instead of against them.

About the Author

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