

GETTING YOUR KEYWORDS RIGHT

WORKBOOK

THIS WORKBOOK
MADE AVAILABLE
WITH
MANY THANKS TO
OUR FRIENDS AT:



How to Get Your Keywords Right

The purpose of this workbook is to help marketers understand the first step in improving your organic search results. In order to drive more traffic to your website, you need to have a clearly defined set of keywords that you can test, measure and evolve. At the end of this workbook, you will have a list of keywords that you can start using and testing on your website to improve your organic search results.

Gaining Control of Your Organic Search Ranking is a lot of Manual Labour!

Sadly, there is no magic bullet to get control of your organic search ranking. Unlike Pay Per Click (PPC), you can't just throw money at it, sit back and watch the results. Organic search is a slow process that requires a strategy, a work plan and ongoing maintenance, measurement and adjustment.

Why Bother?

Because you want traffic on your website! 82% of people looking for stuff today start with a search on the web. There are 4 billion Google searches performed every day. Just because you have a website or issued a press release, doesn't mean that people are finding you or coming to your website. You need to optimize your online presence to improve your organic ranking and get found.

Why Organic Search?

If you are willing to pay top dollar then you'll likely be able to reach the top of the PPC results in the major search engines. However, recent research tells us that in the Search Engine Result pages (SERPs), approximately 70% of all search traffic ends up going to organic search results (left side of the SERPs). The obvious reason for this is that there is a higher level of trust implied with the natural "organic" side versus those who have paid for top spot in PPC. Organic search will give you a higher ROI in the long run and improve your trust ranking on the web.



Keywords Are Key

When we talk about keywords, we don't mean the list of meta keywords hidden in the heading section of your page that at one time was your primary source of ranking. Instead we are talking about the topical or primary phrases that explain the theme and subject of a piece of content. Keyword phrases are used throughout your content to relay the appropriate information to both your visitors and the search engines. Properly choose your keywords and you'll not only please your visitors, you'll also help the search engines position you as an authority for those phrases.

Determining the proper keywords for your business is the starting line for any search strategy, although it's also the toughest. Sometimes it feels like you may never get out of the gate. The key to a good keyword strategy is to start immediately, plan and test. gShift developed this workbook to help you pick the best keywords for your web presence.

Canopy Media Keyword Workbook

At the end of this exercise you will have your pool of keywords and keyword phrases.

To get started you will need to know:

1. Your domain name
2. A list of product(s) or services(s) your ideal target audience is searching for
3. A list of your top three competitors

In order to answer questions #2 and #3, you may want to start by making a list:

- What does your business sell?
- Who does your business sell to?
- How does your business sell its products or services?
(i.e., online, through referrals, sales reps, etc.)

Once you have answered these questions, you have just created your first list of keywords! Now what we want to do is refine this list to improve your optimization success.

How Many Keywords Do I Need?

There's no hard and fast rule, but 1-4 keyword phrases per web page on your website is a good rule of thumb.



Site Objective: _____

1. Branded versus non-branded terms.

In most cases, you are going to always rank highly for your proprietary “branded” terms (i.e. your company name, your exclusive product or service name, etc.) and spending a lot of time optimizing for these terms is not needed. It’s usually enough to just include your branded terms on your site, where appropriate for the audience, rather than optimizing extensively.

The obvious advantage in combining branded keywords with common (non-branded) keyword phrases is that there will likely be very little competition for the terms. But is there going to be anyone searching for those same terms? What pages will it make sense to put branded phrases on?

Make a list of your branded keyword phrases.

2. Create Long Tail keyword phrases.

A Long Tail keyword is a phrase that contains more than one word and is as specific as possible.

Although it is likely that far fewer people are going to search for long tail terms e.g (i.e., white tennis shoes in New York) than less specific terms e.g (tennis shoes), the more specific and unique a long tail phrase is, the less competition there is going to be when ranking for the term. The visitors that arrive on your site should be much more qualified.

Make a list of all of the long tail keyword phrases you think you will be found for.

What keywords need to be in content and on what pages:

List possible long tail phrases:



Site Objective: _____

3. Categorize by geography.

Geographic terms are of vital importance when creating a keyword list. Not only does it allow for better combinations of terms for creating long tail keywords, it also targets local search results and reduces competition for your keyword phrases.

What are some geography specific terms?

4. Categorize by industry.

Think about the industry(s) you are in and what terms are specific to that industry. Are those same terms the ones that the average visitor to your site might use?

Often an industry term that might be an “insider” term or commonly used within the industry is entirely different than what a visitor might use to search. It’s great to add industry-specific terms to your keyword pool simply because it instantly reduces keyword competition to just those in your same industry.

List some industry-specific terms.

Where will people search:

What industry are you in:



Site Objective: _____

5. Competitor's keywords.

Put together a list of who you perceive as your competition and have a look at their website(s).

- Look at their position for keyword phrases that you already have in your pool
- Look at your competitor's content and where are they using keyword phrases
- Look at titles and headings

Make a list of your competitors' keyword phrases that you could also use.

6. Choose keywords for specific content.

Each page should have a unique topic (or should belong to a very specific category or silo). You should focus your individual keyword phrase attention on optimizing these very focused pages on your site.

Pages that are extremely focused on matching keyword phrases will always rank higher than ones with many topics (barring external SEO factors such as backlinks, etc.) These pages make it much easier for the search engines to rank the page as a relevant one, while also making it much easier for your users who will be able to find what they are looking for immediately on your page.

What keywords do your competitors use:

What keywords need to be in content and on what pages:



Site Objective: _____

7. Testing Keywords

If you are using Pay Per Click (PPC), it is especially great for “testing” out keyword (long tail in particular) phrases before spending too much time optimizing your site for SEO. Very quickly, you’ll be able to see how often you show up in search results for a particular keyword phrase. You can also use a PPC tool to see what your competition might be doing. If you don’t have the budget to test out keywords via real-world PPC, there are a number of free tools out there:

- <https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal>
- <http://www.google.com/sktool/#>
- <http://freekeywords.wordtracker.com/>
- <http://www.keyworddiscovery.com/search.html>
- <http://www.wordstream.com/>

How will you test your keywords:



Site Objective: _____

8. Start by reviewing what is happening on your site today

If your site has been around for a while and you've been able to gather some analytics on your website, you can do some extremely valuable research when looking to build or refine your keyword pool.

Determining what keywords are currently driving traffic to your site (clickthroughs) from your analytics reports is vital. What you should look for is a list of what keyword phrases are sending traffic to your site, which search engines are sending that traffic and whether visitors that arrive at your site using those keyword phrases are spending time there.

Phrases that are driving traffic, but have high bounce rates usually means that when visitors clicked to get to your site they did not find what they were looking for when they arrived and instantly edited. Phrases with low time on site or low page-views indicate that people are just not finding what they are looking for. They are leaving quickly or possibly they are finding what they want quickly and leaving - either result is not ideal.

In all likelihood, there will be phrases which you had no idea would actually drive traffic to your site. If they have low bounce rates, add them to your keyword pool.

While your analytics will show you what keywords are sending traffic to your site, you'll also want to try and get a handle on what keywords aren't sending traffic. There are several tools that will give you an idea of keywords your site is appearing for in the search results (impressions) which are not actually resulting in someone clicking through to your site.

Make a list of where traffic is coming from today:

Analytics on Keywords Impressions and Backlinks

<https://www.google.com/webmasters/>
<https://siteexplorer.search.yahoo.com/>
<http://www.bing.com/webmaster>
<http://www.gshiftlabs.com>



Now You're Ready

Getting your keywords right is a lot of hard work, but it is the first step to improving your organic search rankings. Once you have determined your keywords and keyword phrases you are well on your way. gShift Labs is software you can use or have Canopy Media implement for you to manage your web presence and ultimately improve your organic results... once you have your keywords selected.

Now you're ready to start optimizing your web presence.

Visit www.canopymedia.ca or www.gshiftlabs.com to get started.

