

The Pursuit of Glory

The Little Known Secrets to Master SEO

(Tips, tricks & tools to quickly build a strategy you'll be proud of)



The Ultimate Guide to SEO



FLYERMANN DESIGN & BUSINESS CONSULTING

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A Little History

Back in the early www years, search engines fetched only three informations in a web page's html source:



Vintage Dutch SERP

A — *Keywords*

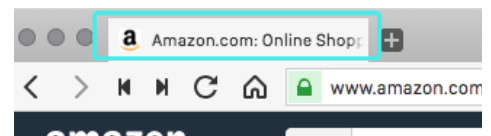
to compute its relevance against a search query.

B — *Meta Title* and

C — *Meta Description*

to properly display it in a search engine result page (SERP).

These informations are stored in *meta tags* within the page's HTML code. They are hidden to the end user; they are not displayed on the page itself.

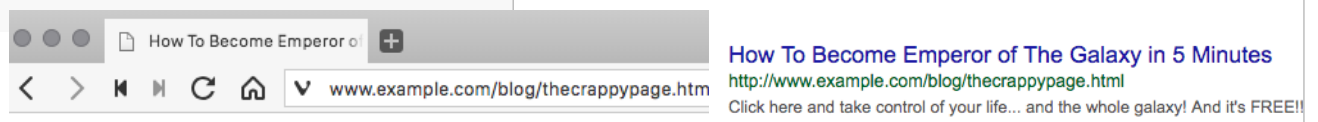


The *meta title* appears in your browser's tab.

It means that semantically there were two disconnected kinds of content: one for the human end user, another for the search bot.

Many black hat marketers soon realised how to benefit from this established fact: overload any crappy, low-quality webpage of poor content with a ton of trendy keywords to have it rank #1.

```
<title>How To Become Emperor of The Galaxy in 5 Minutes</title>
<meta name="description" content="Click here and take control of your life... and the whole galaxy! And it's FREE!!!">
<meta name="keywords" content="website design, consulting, flyer design, management consulting, SEO, marketing guru,
business consultant, web design company, businesswoman, logo, logo design, business consulting, user experience design,
UX, money, money maker... WHATEVER and so on...">
</head>
<body>
<h1>Hello</h1>
<p>This is my crappy page and I've got nothing to say.</p>
</body>
</html>
```



Hello

This is my crappy page and I've got nothing to say.

“Keyword Stuffing”



Search engines reacted and re-programmed their bots to save web search and prevent users from landing on absurd and low-grade SERPs... sometimes even aggressively by penalising websites that would misuse or abuse keywords.

As of today, the 'keywords' meta tag is considered dead. Major search engines do not use it as a ranking factor anymore — at best they ignore it, at worst they may treat it as a spam signal. The best practice is therefore to not use it.

Beyond The Valley of Keywords

So, keywords don't matter anymore?

No. Keywords are still the core of SEO. The way we implement them evolved. It gained complexity as content indexation techniques developed by search engines gained accuracy.

During the 'keywords meta tag era', keywords were *artificial* (the two disconnected contents mentioned above).

Today, keywords have gone *natural*. Practically it means that search bots identify and fetch keywords on a web page while crawling its meta tags (title and desc.) AND its actual content — that text content that is written for and showcased to your website's visitors.

Thus it is essential to strictly follow the three rules here below (fear not: we'll see how to later on).

- Ensure consistency between a page's meta tags and its content.
 - Ensure optimal semantics:
 - Within pages — textuality.
 - Throughout. your website — information architecture, navigation structure & internal links.Both allow Google to properly understand and index your content.
 - Publish fresh content that is both relevant and of quality.
- Freshness. Relevance. Quality. Here are the...



Three Crucial Ranking Factors

FRESHNESS

Publishing one outdated news once in a year is definitely not an option.

RELEVANCE

Is about finding the right topic using the right keywords to attract the right people. Getting search traffic to your website from people who aren't really interested in your business will do more harm than good. Therefore it is imperative to help Google really understand your site and your target market. When visitors come to the site but quickly close the browser tab or click back, it's a bounce. If your website generates a high bounce rate, its ranking may decline. If users spend a long time on your site and visit many pages, its ranking will improve.

To identify relevance, Google looks at how well the page answers the searcher's question or fulfils the purpose of the query. Most queries produce thousands of web pages that meet the relevance criteria.

Google then arranges the results in a certain order before they are displayed to searchers, ensuring that the best results appear at the top: this is where quality comes in.

QUALITY

What exactly does Google mean by 'quality' ?

The term seems incredibly vague. But the concept is actually well defined and has to do with many things beyond the website itself. Beyond backlinks. Beyond keywords.

The 'Truth' lies in 160 pages: *Google Search Quality Evaluator Guidelines*:

<https://static.googleusercontent.com/media/guidelines.raterhub.com/en//searchqualityevaluatorguidelines.pdf>

Let's make it shorter and have a look at the essential **Quality Rating Factors**:

1. Main Content

Write it well, place it right, size it smart.

The main content is the part of the page that "helps it achieve its purpose".

Three words: Content. Is. King.

The website design & usability must make it very clear. It must be prominently placed *front and center* and be immediately visible when a user opens the page.



Content length matters. Yet there's no universal, one-size-fits-all content length, Google tries to determine whether the content length on a given page is right for the query in question and the purpose of the page. A post about cupcakes should be shorter than an article about Einstein's general relativity theory.

A way to determine the ideal content length for a specific page, niche, and the keyword you're targeting is to look at your top ranking competitors. (keep calm: we'll address competitive analysis later on.)

If for some reason you can't do that, you'll have to rely on your own judgement about the most trusted SEO references online — knowing that it can go from 500 up to 5000, depending on the search query, the keywords, the niche.

2. E-A-T : Expertise, Authoritativeness, Trustworthiness

To win Google's trust and respect, you must answer the following questions:

- Was an assessed web page created by an expert in the field?
- Does it feel like the site can be trusted?
- What makes it authoritative for the topic?

Google aims at determining whether the page they are assessing was created by an expert in the field.

Does it feel like the site can be trusted? What makes it authoritative for the topic?

To gain E-A-T, it is important to demonstrate your venture's expertise by giving Google information about it on your website, like 'About Us' information, contact information, who is responsible for the content and maintenance of the site, who are the blog authors, who are the company founders / leaders / influencers.

A lack of E-A-T is reason enough to give a page a low quality rating — regardless of how well the page scored according to other quality parameters. Be sure to do your best to make it clear to Google that you can be trusted and called an expert by providing information that proves that on your site.

3. Backlinks

Back in the old days of SEO, the focus was on quantity: site owners were encouraged to get as many backlinks as they could, from any type of website.

As SEO has matured, the rules have changed. Google began to crack down on 'link farms' and the name of the game is quality now.

The quality of the pages that link to a site have a substantial impact on the site's overall quality in Google's eyes. Similarly, the quality rating of a website doesn't just affect the site itself, but also the sites it links to.



Google assigns a quality score to every link pointing to a site — based on the quality of the linking page and domain.

The link score for a backlink to your page from page A is in fact the difference between the quality of page A and your own page. Therefore, if the quality of your webpage is higher than that of page A, the link is given no weight at all (it doesn't represent negative link juice).

This tells us that as your site's quality improves, the value of your current backlinks will lessen; to improve your link score, you'll need to get backlinks coming from higher quality sites than before.

4. Reputation

Reviews can boost or ruin your rankings.

Many websites are eager to tell users how great they are. But Google looks for outside, independent reputation information about your website. When the website says one thing about itself, but reputable external sources disagree with what the website says, Google will most likely trust the external sources. Google will look for forum posts, reviews, discussions, references, recommendations by experts, news articles... any credible information about the website.

5. Supplementary Content

Help visitors stick around on your site.

Supplementary content of a webpage includes navigation and links that allow users to visit other parts of the site.

It should not distract from the main content — but still be readily available.

Though targeted to the purpose of the page, helpful supplementary content doesn't help the page achieve its purpose directly; rather, it contributes to a good user experience and further exploration of the site. (Typically, links to “related articles” that are similar or close topic-wise)



1. Define Your Mission

Before starting anything, think about your mission. Your mission as the starting point that will help you run proper keyword research and work towards a solid base: a keyword strategy.

Think about questions like: Who are you? What is your website about? What makes you special? Who are you trying to reach? You have to figure out what makes you stand out from the crowd. What's more, you have to know what kind of audience you want to target. So take the time to write this down.

Every website owner has certain expectations of his visitors. You want them to buy your products, to hire your services or to read your articles. Perhaps you want to inform or entertain your readers or to improve their lives with some awesome case studies.

To help you formulate the mission of your website, here's a list of questions you should be able to answer:

- What can people do with the services, products or information you're offering on your website?
- What makes your services / products unique?
- How will your services / products enhance your clients' lives?
- Why should people buy the services / products on your website and not on another (e.g. better known) website? Or why should people read your information and take your advice instead of information on another website?
- What's the reason you're offering these services / products or information, besides making money?

2. Start Keyword Research

Keyword research is the first step in the SEO copywriting process and an essential part of any SEO strategy. Before you write your website content, you need to think about which search terms you want to be found for and this means getting inside your audience's heads to find out which words they use when searching — it doesn't make any sense to optimise for words that they don't use. Then, you will use these exact terms in your content so that you start ranking for them. Be aware: keyword research is a tough task.



To this end it is essential to strictly complete the three tasks detailed here below:

1. Build your list of keywords
2. Do competitive analysis
3. Look at search intent

Task 1: BUILD YOUR LIST OF KEYWORDS

Once you have formulated a clear mission statement, you can start making a list of all the keywords you want your website to be found for. If your mission is clear, you should have little trouble coming up with search terms that apply to your niche market and your unique selling points: these will be the keywords you want to be found for.

In order to come up with good terms, you really have to get inside the heads of your audience. How are they most likely to find you? What would they search for on Google? What kind of search terms could they be using while looking for your amazing service?

Remember, what is called a keyword in SEO can actually be made of several words (e.g. “perfect movie soundtrack” is a keyword) — it can even be a sentence.

At the end of your keyword research, you should have a list of all the relevant search terms people might use. Also, think of combinations and variations of these terms.

Keep in mind that a shorter list will make it easier to successfully optimise your site.

Trying to target too many keywords may dilute the effects of your SEO labors.

Making a list of possible search terms is hard. Luckily, there are free tools which make your keyword research a bit easier:

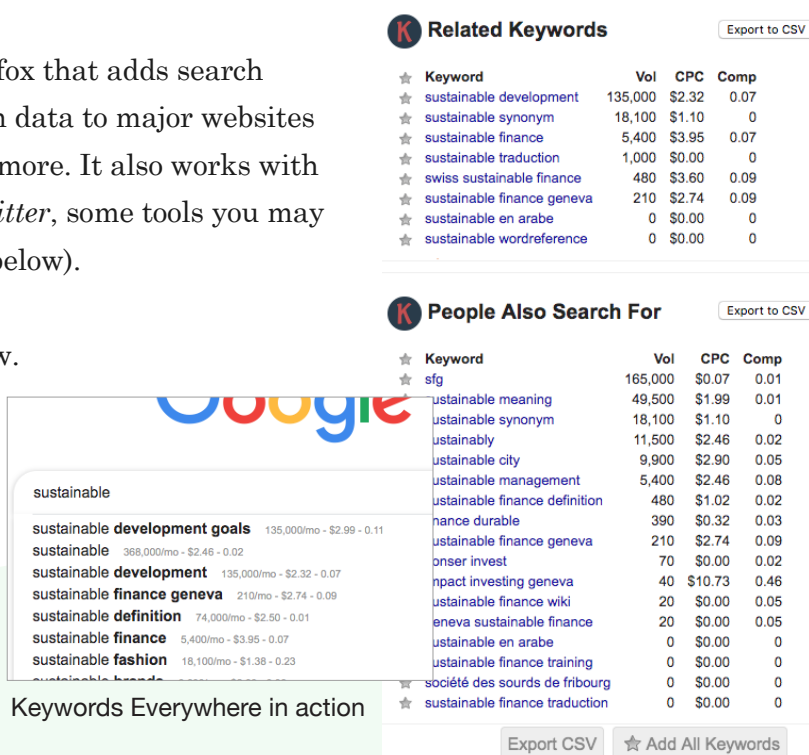
• Keywords Everywhere

Is a free addon for Chrome and Firefox that adds search volume, Cost per click & competition data to major websites such as Google, eBay, Amazon, and more. It also works with *Answer The Public* and *Keyword Shitter*, some tools you may use for your keyword research (see below).

Go install this one first off:

<https://keywordseverywhere.com> — now.

This is a seriously useful tool as it transforms casual browsing into keyword research. And it will be a must-have when it comes to competitive analysis.



Related Keywords Export to CSV

★ Keyword	Vol	CPC	Comp
★ sustainable development	135,000	\$2.32	0.07
★ sustainable synonym	18,100	\$1.10	0
★ sustainable finance	5,400	\$3.95	0.07
★ sustainable traduction	1,000	\$0.00	0
★ swiss sustainable finance	480	\$3.60	0.09
★ sustainable finance geneva	210	\$2.74	0.09
★ sustainable en arabe	0	\$0.00	0
★ sustainable wordreference	0	\$0.00	0

People Also Search For Export to CSV

★ Keyword	Vol	CPC	Comp
★ sfg	165,000	\$0.07	0.01
★ sustainable meaning	49,500	\$1.99	0.01
★ sustainable synonym	18,100	\$1.10	0
★ sustainably	11,500	\$2.46	0.02
★ sustainable city	9,900	\$2.90	0.05
★ sustainable management	5,400	\$2.46	0.08
★ sustainable finance definition	480	\$1.02	0.02
★ nance durable	390	\$0.32	0.03
★ sustainable finance geneva	210	\$2.74	0.09
★ onser invest	70	\$0.00	0.02
★ mpact investing geneva	40	\$10.73	0.46
★ sustainable finance wiki	20	\$0.00	0.05
★ eneva sustainable finance	20	\$0.00	0.05
★ sustainable en arabe	0	\$0.00	0
★ sustainable finance training	0	\$0.00	0
★ société des sourds de fribourg	0	\$0.00	0
★ sustainable finance traduction	0	\$0.00	0

Export CSV ★ Add All Keywords

Keywords Everywhere x Google SERP



• Google Trends

Visualizes how search trends change over time. Enter a keyword, and you will see the ‘relative popularity’ of that search query over the past — from 60 minutes up to 15 years.

Google Trends has another cool trick up its sleeve—*related queries*.

Drop down to the bottom of the page and you’ll see a ‘related queries’ box — with rising popularity. Particularly useful for quickly unveiling search queries you would otherwise never have thought of.

To sum it up, Google Trends will

- Show you trends for your keywords.
- Help you finding content ideas.
- Show you seasonal spikes and local differences for your keyword at a glance.

But this is only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to Google Trends.

<https://trends.google.com/trends/>

“Spend some time with Google Trends, I’m certain you’ll discover insights that will improve how content is created and promoted online” : 7 Ways to Use Google Trends for SEO & Content Marketing <https://www.searchenginejournal.com/google-trends/266721/>

• Keyword Shitter

Enter a keyword (or many) and hit

“Shit keywords!” This tool will generate a huge amount of keyword suggestions.

It’s quite basic. It doesn’t show search volumes or trends data, nor does it group keywords in any way (as *Google Keyword Planner* does).

But It works by mining Google Autocomplete, which means Keywords Everywhere will integrate in this tool and display its keyword-related data:

1. Keyword Shitter mines thousands of Google Autocomplete suggestions,
2. Keywords Everywhere pulls the search volumes for them.

Keywords Everywhere + Keyword Shitter

= a **less limited** Google Keyword Planner

https://ads.google.com/intl/en_us/home/tools/keyword-planner/

<http://keywordshitter.com>

1

2

Stop Job

Positive Filter

Negative Filter

sustainable [368,000/mo - \$2.46 - 0.02] ★
sustainable development goals [135,000/mo - \$2.99 - 0.11] ★
sustainable finance [5,400/mo - \$3.95 - 0.07] ★
sustainable development [135,000/mo - \$2.32 - 0.07] ★
sustainable finance geneva [210/mo - \$2.74 - 0.09] ★
sustainable definition [74,000/mo - \$2.50 - 0.01] ★
sustainable fashion [18,100/mo - \$1.38 - 0.23] ★
sustainable brands [6,600/mo - \$2.39 - 0.08] ★
sustainable investment [610/mo - \$15.73 - 0.46] ★
sustainable synonym [18,100/mo - \$1.10 - 0] ★

Keyword Shitter x Keywords Everywhere



It does have one notable feature: *positive* and *negative* filters:

- The positive filter ensures that it only mines queries containing the exact word(s) you entered in the text field.
- The negative filter does the opposite: it excludes queries containing the filtered words.

Tip: If you copy and paste all the Keywords Everywhere data from Keyword Shitter into a spreadsheet, the results are formatted in an odd way.

So make a copy of this Google Sheet https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/11tuONpgJBB7UxjFX3guAEweivGBwq5XBexMJ_AvVCY/edit?usp=sharing, then paste the Keywords Everywhere data into the first sheet—the one labelled “PASTEHERE.” Then go to “RESULTS” sheet and you’ll see a much neater list.

• AdWord & SEO Keyword Permutation Generator

This tool combines multiple lists of keywords into every possible permutation. It’s clearly quite simple in its functionality, which means that it doesn’t give you any additional data (e.g., search volumes, trends, CPC, etc.) but wants to save you time.

<http://seo.danzambonini.com>

• Answer The Public

Finds *questions*, *prepositions*, *comparisons*, *alphabeticals*, and *related searches*. Let’s tackle each of those individually:

- *Questions* are search queries containing who, what, why, where, how, which, when, are, and is.
- *Propositions* — i.e., for, can, is, near, without, with, and to.

These are search queries that fit the [seed] [preposition] [_____] format.

E.g., “protein powder without carbs,” or “protein powder for weight gain.”

- *Comparisons* — i.e., versus, vs, and, like, or.

The format is [seed] [comparison] [_____].

E.g., “protein powder versus meat,” or “protein powder or chicken breast.”

- *Alphabeticals* are Google Autocomplete suggestions.
- *Related*: no clue how the keywords are derived. But still, it does kick back a few gems from time to time.

Answer The Public full throttle with Keywords Everywhere

sustainable 165 questions

The screenshot shows the 'Data' tab of the Answer The Public tool. It displays three columns of search results for the keyword 'sustainable'. Each column has a header (are, can, how) and a list of related search queries. The 'are' column shows queries like 'are sustainable clothes really sustainable', 'are sustainable products more expensive', and 'are sustainable development goals'. The 'can' column shows 'can sustainable agriculture feed the world', 'can sustainable development be achieved', and 'can sustainable farming feed the'. The 'how' column shows 'how sustainable is wind energy', 'how sustainable are you', and 'how sustainab'. Each query is accompanied by search volume and cost-per-click data. At the bottom right, there are buttons for 'Export CSV' and 'Add All Keywords'.

are	can	how
are sustainable clothes really sustainable [0/mo - \$0.00 - 0] ★	can sustainable agriculture feed the world [30/mo - \$8.42 - 0.07] ★	how sustainable is wind energy [30/mo - \$0.00 - 0.08] ★
are sustainable products more expensive [0/mo - \$0.00 - 0] ★	can sustainable development be achieved [30/mo - \$0.00 - 0.03] ★	how sustainable are you [70/mo - \$0.00 - 0.03] ★
are sustainable development goals	can sustainable farming feed the	how sustainab



By default, you'll see a visualisation, but you can switch to a regular list if you prefer. As for Keyword Shitter, Keywords Everywhere integrates with Answer The Public, making it even more powerful!

<https://answerthepublic.com>

• Google Correlate

Finds search patterns which correspond with real world trends — I.e., trend correlations. Google kicks back search queries with trends that correlate with the “seed” word(s) you entered. Not all of these queries contain the “seed” phrase, because this is correlation data — they're keywords where the search trend correlates with that of your seed keyword. But every now and again, it will kick back a gem that you never thought of. Technically-speaking, google Correlate is part of Google Trends, but is worth a mention as a standalone tool.

<https://www.google.com/trends/correlate>

• Wordtracker Scout

A Chrome browser extension:

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/wordtracker-scout/lkalodfoplipapmeogaehmiabdhjapb>

Hit the extension while browsing any webpage and it will pluck out the most relevant keywords from that page.

It displays the data as a word cloud, which you can also manipulate to refine the suggestions by relevance and number of words.

If you navigate to the “Keywords” tab, you'll see some additional insights for the keywords—namely searches, competition, and opportunity.

All this data is easily copyable (hit the “Copy” button) and pastes nicely into a Google Sheet.

Just like Keywords Everywhere, this one is definitely a must-have when it comes to competitive analysis:

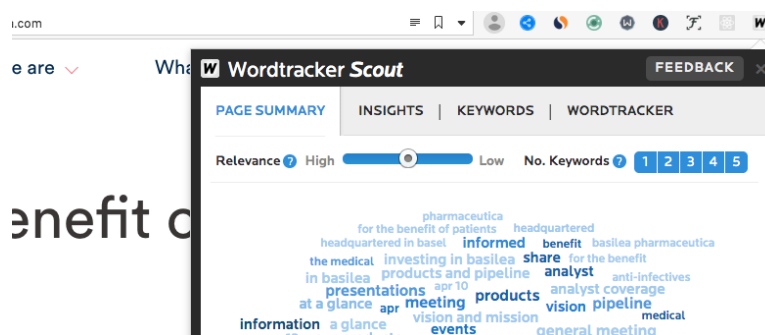
<https://www.wordtracker.com/academy/seo/site-optimization/competitor-analysis-guide>

• Google Search Console

What about the existing keywords you already rank for? Are there insights to be gleaned from these? Definitely.

Analyzing your own data plays a big role in the success of your keyword strategy. Google Search Console can give a lot of stuff to think about and opportunities to pursue. What content ranks well — or not? What search terms brought visitors here?

<https://search.google.com/search-console/about>



Google Search Console isn't a traditional keyword research tool, it's:

- *An official communication channel*
with individual site owners. Google can send webmasters information about site issues, errors, or even penalties.
- *A set of monitoring tools*
to help improving your content, refining your site settings, and minimizing your errors.
- *A performance dashboard.*
It has a feature that makes finding awesome keywords a cinch: The Performance Report: <https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/7576553>
This report list out the pages on your site that get the most clicks from Google. And the exact keywords that brought them there. Opportunity Keywords are where you rank between 8 and 20 in Google for a specific keyword.
- *A data source:*

• Google Data Studio: Analytics + Search Console

Combining both data from Google Search Console and Google Analytics is very helpful. When you do so, you'll get super in-depth keyword data than you would with either tool by itself. This is achieved with Google Data Studio <https://datastudio.google.com>.

1. Connect Search Console <https://support.google.com/datastudio/answer/7314895>
2. Connect Google Analytics <https://support.google.com/datastudio/answer/6370352>
3. Go build your dashboard

Task 2: DO COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

You've spent much time and energy looking at yourself, the time has come to look at the relevant others. The goal of competitive analysis is to identify how your competitors rank best / better than you.

First define the keywords you'd like to check against your competitors, then the next step is obvious:

- Do a search for these keywords.
- See who your competitors are by writing down what competitors ranks higher than you, and with what content.
- Check your competitors' keywords and make them long-tail (read below about long-tail keywords)

It's very important to use the right keywords in a competitive analysis. If you insist on using your, possibly branded, company outing as one of the main keywords, you might

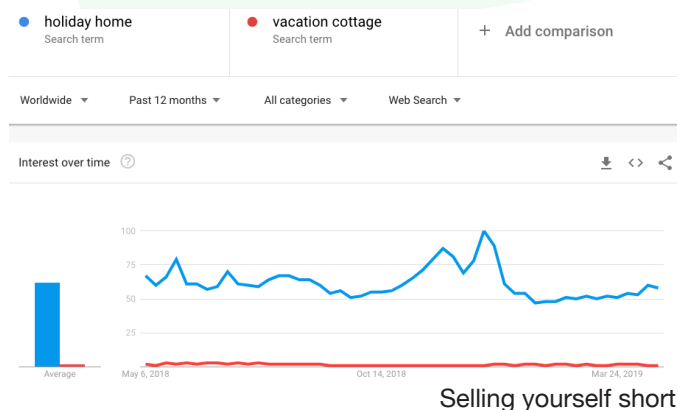


not even have any competition, let alone any decent organic traffic to your website. An example: if you are offering ‘holiday homes’, but insist on using the keyword ‘vacation cottage’, you are selling yourself short. Match the words your clients use.

Be aware! You can’t just blindly trust the search results because Google tailors them to your personal search history, which means your site will come up higher for you than for others doing the same search. Consider using *Disconnect Search*.

<https://disconnect.me/disconnect>. Special mention to SEO Minion, a tool by the team behind Keywords Everywhere <https://seominion.com>. It’s a Chrome & Firefox extension that has a nifty feature, the *Google Search Location Simulator*.

It’s very likely that you’re going to use Keywords Everywhere and/or Wordtracker Scout when doing competitive analysis.



keywordseverywhere.com/ke/4/analyze.php

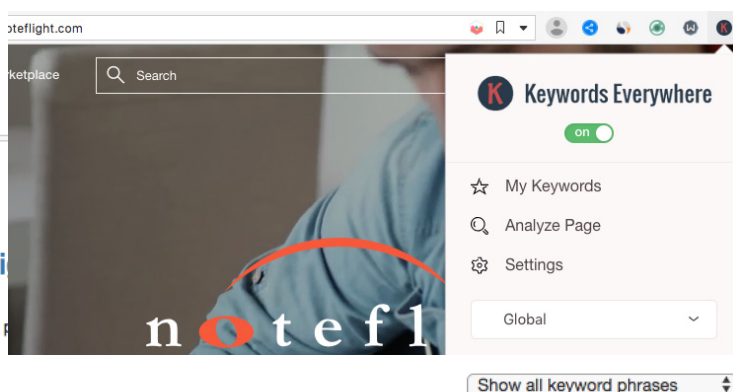
Keywords Everywhere

Keyword Density Analysis for <https://www.noteflight.com>

Title: noteflight - online music notation software

Description: noteflight is an online music writing application that lets you create, view, p

Word Count: 294 words



Show 50 entries

Copy Excel CSV PDF Print

Search:

Add	Keyword	Found In	Density %	Occurrences	Monthly Volume (Global)	CPC (Global)	Competition (Global)
★	noteflight	T D	5.10	15	90,500	\$1.07	0
★	music	T D	2.04	6	6,120,000	\$0.48	0.11
★	notation	T D	1.02	3	40,500	\$0.56	0
★	online	T D	0.68	2	2,240,000	\$0.25	0.07
★	music notation	T D	1.36	2	18,100	\$0.72	0.01
★	create	D	1.36	4	450,000	\$0.15	0.04
★	professional	D	0.68	2	673,000	\$0.12	0.01

You can find some good keywords with free keyword tools but at some point, you may feel the need for deeper keyword insights — free keyword tools are somewhat limited compared to paid tools. The amount of keyword ideas and data they give access to will always pale in comparison to paid tools which allow you to go way deeper and do more advanced marketing research.

Keyword research and competitive analysis can be very time-consuming, time is money, keyword research is money



If you go for a paid tool, I suggest you try Ahrefs which is widely considered #1 in the field.

- <https://ahrefs.com>
- <https://www.searchmetrics.com>
- <https://www.semrush.com>

Task 3: LOOK AT SEARCH INTENT

Search intent has to do with the reason why people conduct a specific search. Why are they searching? Are they searching because they have a question and want an answer to that question? Are they searching for a specific website? Or, are they searching because they want to buy something?

When planning your content, always ask yourself these questions. There are four types of intents:

- *Informational* intent: Just like it says on the tin, people are trying to find information on a specific topic.
- *Navigational* intent: People want to access a specific website by entering the term in a search engine.
- *Commercial* intent: People want to buy something sometime soon and are doing research before making a purchase.
- *Transactional* intent: People are looking to buy something after doing their commercial intent searches.

The words people use in their search queries will give information about their user intent. If people use words like buy, deal, discount, they are definitely prone to buy something. Also, if people are searching for specific products, they probably want to buy it. If people are searching and use words like information, how to, best way to, you'll know they'll have an informational search intent.

3. Compose Your Keyword Strategy

You should use your mission as a starting point, then take the steps in carrying out proper keyword research and work towards a solid base: a keyword strategy.

USE LONG-TAIL KEYWORDS FIRST

We distinguish between *head keywords* and *long-tail keywords*. A long-tail keyword is more specific than a head keyword, and most of the times it consists of more words. The head keyword is a general term lots of people write about. A long-tail keyword is a more



specific topic or a subtopic of the head term.

The idea is quite simple. There is less content on the web about long-tail keywords, because less people have written about them. Less content means less competition. Because the competition isn't that fierce, it's easier to beat other web pages with content about long-tail keywords in search engines.

So the general rule is: start with a big set of long-tail keywords which have little traffic, but you can rank for more easily. Then, work yourself up to the rankings step-by-step. Once you've gained some SEO authority, start optimising for more general keywords. And in the end, maybe you will even be able to rank for your head keywords.

If you have managed to know your niche's search intents and combine this knowledge with the use of long-tail keywords, you're good!

You might think: "But I want to rank for the head keyword. That one gets loads of traffic!" It does, but if you rank page 10 for that query, you won't get much out of it. It might drive a lot of traffic, but nothing that'll convert. When you've written several articles about related long-tail keywords and you rank for those, you can aim for a term that gets closer to the head term.

Example of A Long-Tail Keyword

An example of a head keyword is "educational books for children". If one just start out with a website, it'd be virtually impossible to rank for this term. One would have to compete with Amazon, Barnes and Nobles, and the likes.

What you should try is focusing on a niche for your blog. (*Yes, you need a blog and it will become the SEO frontline of your website.*) Finding a niche means targeting a very specific group of people. You can do so by creating very specific content: content about long-tail keywords. An example of a long-tail keyword could be: "educational books for autistic teenagers". If you write high quality content about such a specialised topic, you can beat the competition for those long-tail terms. Also, if you are targeting searchers who have an informational intent about writing books, you can include that term and focus your content on answering this search: "how to write educational books for autistic teenagers". I think you get the idea.

The definition of your mission, in which you made crystal clear what the awesomeness of your services, company or site is, should be central in choosing the long-tail keywords you want to rank for. Trying to make your website rank for a specific term can be quite profitable, as long as this specific term closely resembles you.



THINK CORNERSTONE CONTENT STRATEGY

Let's take the example of "educational books for autistic teenagers". You could write about "educational books for autistic preschoolers", "picture books for autistic children" and "reading stories to your autistic child" too. This way Google will find out you have quite a bit of specialised content on this topic.

If you bundle all this knowledge in one article, for instance, "educational books for autistic children" and you make sure you link from all your long-tail articles to this main article, you'll increase your chance of ranking for the main article.

If this works, you can start producing high quality content about other types of educational books for children. Slowly but surely, you'll be getting closer to the head terms.

By linking from the tail to the head — from the long-tail articles to a main 'cornerstone' article, you also tell Google what your site structure looks like and which of your pages is most important — the 'cornerstone' ones.

You cannot, anyway, optimise all blog posts for the same (head) term / head keywords, e.g. "homemade Italian food", even if all your blog posts will be about homemade Italian food. Instead, you should write a whole number of blog posts about "homemade Italian pasta", "homemade Italian pizza", "homemade Italian spaghetti bolognese", "homemade Italian penne carbonara" and so on.

4. Clear Up Site-Wide Content Structure

Proper semantics is the only way Google can understand your website and its content. Google wants your content showcased in an intelligible, actionable structure. You will achieve this with formatting & hierarchy.

If you revamp your site's structure, start with pen & paper or a chalkboard, whatever you like best to draw / write concepts. Stop thinking 'Pages' for a while.

- Think Information - what do you wanna tell?
- Think Information Architecture - give prominence to hi-business-value information only.
- Think User Journey - who are your visitors? Where do you want to take them, what do you want them to do, and how can you achieve this?



WEBSITE NAVIGATION

- Is all about information hierarchy. E.g., Google will assume a 2nd level navigation item is of a lesser importance than a 1st level one.
- Try to have your main menu work on one single level. Keep it simple. Shrink. Go straight to the point. (Mega-menus are a nightmare UX-wise) The clearer the information architecture, the easier the access to information.
- If you come to the point your top menu is overloaded, consider moving the links to pages of less importance to the footer navigation. (typically the Contact page)

Now start a blog if not done yet — this is crucial — and

5. Go Publish Awesome Content

So, let's assume now that you've done your keyword research, and set up your blog:

LEARN THE RULES

- Build *hierarchy* by using *sub-headings* wisely.
- *Format text* properly. Put your content in a bulleted or an ordered list when depicting a list of things. Put your content in a quote — the `<blockquote>` HTML tag — if it's a quote. And so on... <https://www.w3schools.com/TAGs/>
- *Format images* properly. Google's article about images <https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/114016> has a heading "Use descriptive alt text". This is no coincidence because Google places a relatively high value on alt text to determine not only what is on the image but also how it relates to the surrounding text.
- Every page and blogpost of your website must contain at least one *Call To Action* (CTA).

Be it "Work with us", "Newsletter signup" or just "Read a related article"... The goal is to have your visitor get in touch, leave some contact info or at least stay on your website (so that their feeling goes from "I've read an amazing article" to "I've found an amazing website filled with astounding resources").

- *Meaningful anchor texts* do matter SEO-wise, An anchor text is the text label of a link that is displayed to the user:

`My Anchor Text` outputs [My Anchor Text](http://example.org)

Google need them meaningful to understand the structure of your website.

WRITE A BLOG POST

First off, it's a mindset. Maybe you are pretty active on social media. From now on, each time you're about to post on LinkedIn, tweet or whatever, ask yourself: "Couldn't I write



a post about this?” Each time you talk or collaborate with somebody, each time you attend a professional event, each time you read something, each time something cool or interesting happens, ask yourself if it couldn’t make a post on your website. If so, take some pictures or even record a video, and take notes (that voice recorder app). All these just require a few swaps ’n’ taps on your smartphone.

1. Do Content Research

Content research tools take the guess work out of creating shareable, linkworthy content. Use them to find previously popular content based around your target keyword, that you can build upon, improve, or repurpose for your own.

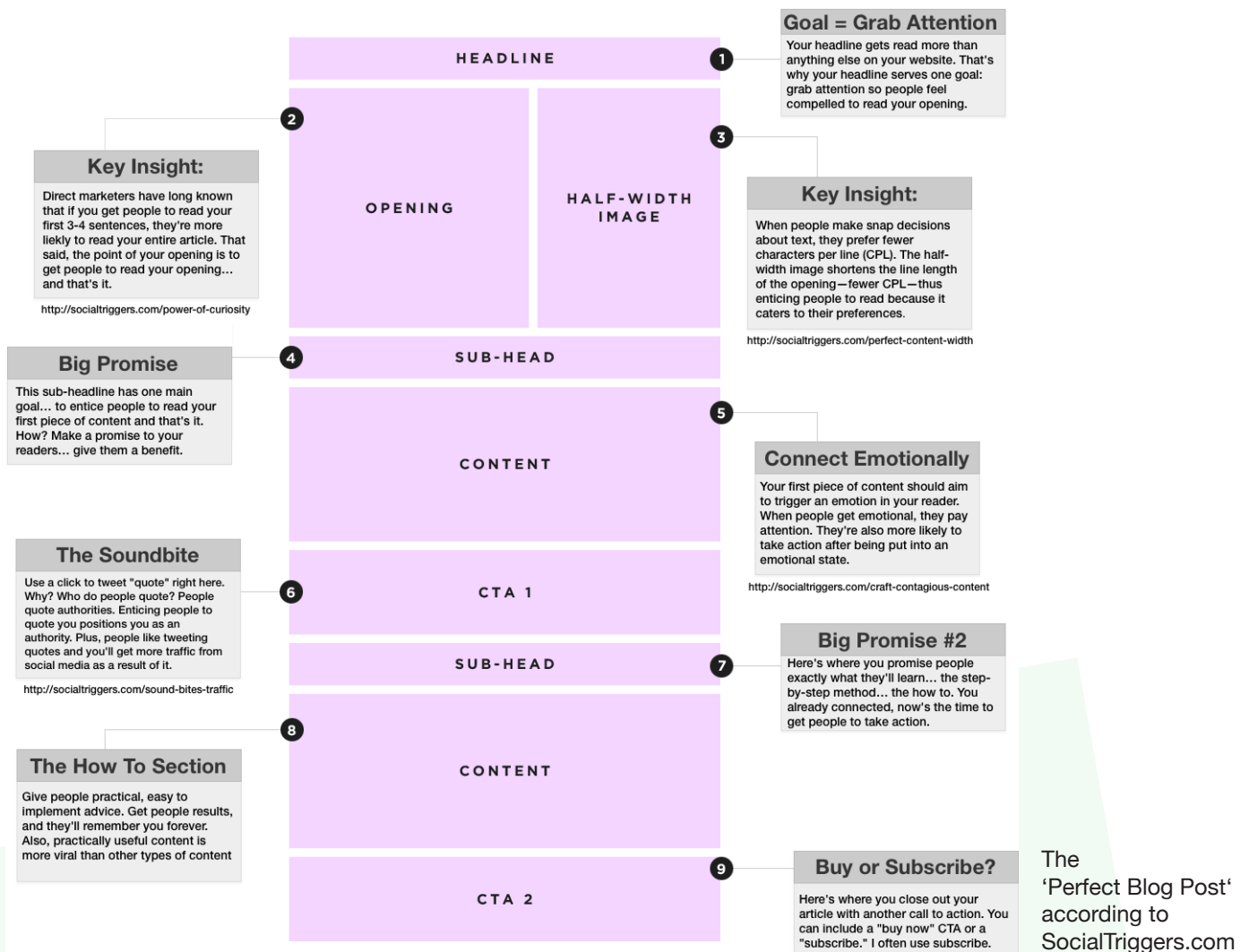
Tools for Content Research

Buzzsumo <http://buzzsumo.com> is the king when it comes to content research, that has some unique features.

Ahrefs Content Explorer <https://ahrefs.com/content-explorer> does pretty the same.

2. Follow A Pattern

Let’s have a look at a potential post structure. What will it look like?



3. Write Down The Post Keywords

Just write them down first off. They are the SEO core of your writing strategy. If a post / page has several keywords (e.g. “sustainable energy”, “cities and communities”, “environment technologies and assessments”), prioritise them: you’ll have one primary keyword and secondary ones.

The Keyword Cannibalization Effect

Beware of this while adding content:

- If you optimise your articles for keywords that are all too similar, you’ll be devouring your own chances of ranking in Google.
- If you optimise different articles for similar key terms, you’ll be competing with yourself, and it’ll make both pages rank lower.

If your site gets bigger, your chances increase to face keyword cannibalism. You’ll be writing about your favorite subjects and without even knowing it, you’ll write articles that end up rather similar. Once in a while, make sure to check whether you’re suffering from keyword cannibalism when it comes to the keywords you want to rank for the most. You can solve keyword cannibalization

- With internal linking: You should link from posts that are less important, to posts that are the most important. That way, Google can figure out (by following links) which ones you want to pop up highest. Remember the ‘Cornerstone Content’ strategy we spoke about?
- By combining articles: Find the articles that focus on similar search queries. If two articles are both attracting the same audience and are basically telling the same story and combine them. It will really help with your ranking (Google loves lengthy and well-written content) and solve the cannibalization problem. In the end, you’ll delete one of the two articles and adapt the other one.

Warning: don’t just press the delete button; make sure to redirect the post you delete to the one you adapt. Do this with Google Search Console:

Change page URLs with 301 redirects - Search Console Help:

<https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/93633>

- With ‘Content Pruning’ (see here below)

4. Write Your Article

Be creative while keeping SEO and keywords in mind. Google will identify words & phrases as keywords based on their weight. How do you actually give weight to your keywords?



- By using them in your <h1> heading / article headline.
 - By their prominence: make sure to have them in the first 100 words of your article.
 - By their density: using keywords repeatedly within your copy gives them weight.
- Although not as important as it once was, Google may use it to determine the topic of a webpage. But going overboard can hurt you.

Quick SEO Wins for Your Blog Posts

- Publish a *weekly* article — at least.
- Add a *comments* section and *social share* buttons to your blog.
- Write *keyword-rich alt text* for all your images. See “Use descriptive alt text” here: <https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/114016>
- Add a *CTA*.
- Write an *SEO-friendly URL*. It’s one of the first things that Google looks at so your URL should clearly describes your post and include at least one keyword
Good: example.com/20-marketers-tips-for-a-perfect-SEO-setup
Bad: example.com/post-SEO12
- *Write for humans* while building a structure that is compliant to search bots.
- Aim for at least 300-700 words per post. Once a month, write one that’s 1000+ words.
Beware of *Thin Content*: the risk is being penalised by Google for that. The basic definition from Google for thin content (in the context of violating Google quality guidelines and incurring a penalty) involves having little or no original (=copied) content.

5. Craft Well Your Headline and Tagline

Because you want people to understand what your website, blog post or page is about. Headlines and taglines are a good and fast way to tell people what your website / post / page is about. It matters, because people want to understand if you have what they want. And they want it fast. If not, they’ll just switch to a website with a clearer message.

- The *headline* is a page’s or post’s title. Its HTML <h1> heading.
Try to write your headlines in an action-oriented way by using verbs and sentences that imply an action for the visitor. E.g.: “Raise your benefits with Acme & Co.!”
If you don’t give your reader a strong reason to linger on your headline, then your tagline won’t get read. End of story.
- The *tagline* iserves to clarify or specify the headline. If your blog post is a movie, the tagline is the teaser. It’s made of a level 2 sub-heading <h2> and / or a short paragraph.
Combining your headline with a tagline will give people a concise and clear explanation of your headline. Usually, the effect of having a tagline is an additional chance to intrigue your visitors, and to clarify something for them. Here are three things that you can do with your tagline:



- Explain more.
- Talk about benefits. Benefit-focused headlines are great. By emphasizing how your product or service will improve the user's life, you can dramatically advance the page's power.
- Encourage action. A tagline is also a great way to get users to do something. If you successfully encourage action, it's only a short hop for them to click the call to action button below.

The Formula

- **Headline.** Grab their attention.
- **Tagline.** Draw them in deeper.
- **Call-To-Action.** Tell them what to do.

Don't assume people will understand you just because they're on your site. Put yourself in the shoes of a person visiting your website for the first time. Is it clear what you're offering by just reading the headline and tagline?

The Means

- Clarity
- Focus

We want clarity. It's the experience we get when visiting a website for the very first time: do we get the website? Is it clear what the benefits are for us visitors? And where or how can I get these benefits?

- Choose the right length. A good tagline should take just a few seconds to read.
 - up to 30 words for a 300-700 words article,
 - up to 50 words for a 1000+ words article.
- Aim for the right amount of information. Tell the user just enough. You don't want to explain everything. You want some of that curiosity to stay with them so they will click on the CTA.
- Include the right amount of persuasion. It's important to use your tagline for its intended purpose — to coax the user to convert.

<https://buffer.com/library/words-and-phrases-that-convert-ultimate-list>

Of course, for a single post, it's much easier to distill what it's about than for your entire website or business. So you should take some time to formulate your core business and goals. Having to think about a decent headline and/or tagline for your website and its pages, forces you to think about your core business. If a page's headline is getting too complicated, it might be a good idea to consider making multiple pages for what you're trying to do, for instance.



6. Craft Optimal Meta-Title and Meta-Description

You have a very limited space on a SERP to showcase your excellence and engage the user with your meta tags, so write them wisely! Use this space optimally to showcase your message! We're talking about a limited pixel width that we can convert into numbers of characters:

meta-title 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
<https://www.eda.admin.ch/agenda2030/en/home.html> ▾ Traduire cette page

meta-description Switzerland's contribution to the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – news, speeches, financing, implementation and reporting.

- Meta-Title: between 50-60 characters, including spaces.
- Meta-Description: under 160 characters.

Although in late 2017 Google expanded the number of characters to 300, aim for 160 characters max. It can be a challenge when writing the perfect description for pages, yet it forces you to be succinct — get your most crucial information out first — and ensures your description isn't truncated in the search results page.

Meta-Title

First impressions count: your meta-title is typically the first thing a potential visitor will take notice of when performing a search. So this is your chance to make a positive first impression.

Your meta-title must absolutely contain your primary keyword. If it is not a long-tail keyword ("music score"), find long-tail variations of it ("How I composed the perfect music score etc...")

Always be targeting one primary keyword.

It usually makes sense to target one or two long-tail keywords. Because it can take a long time to rank for your main keyword. It's quicker to start getting traffic from long-tail variations. Moreover, these long-tail variations can be incorporated into your title tag without unnatural shoehorning.

Draft Your Meta-Title — The Rules

- Focus on descriptiveness: It should accurately describe what the page/post is about and set reader expectations;
- Keep it short and sweet: Your finished title tag should not exceed 50–60 characters. You'll be adding to and iterating upon this draft as you work your way through this guide — so leave some room to spare.
- Include your keywords: make sure to include your primary keyword in the meta-title. Sprinkle your long-tail variation(s) in there, too.



- Add your brand name.
- Keep it natural.

Draft Your Meta-Title — The Formatting

- Long-Tail Keyword | Brand
or
- Long-Tail Keyword | Category | Brand
E.g.
 - “20 Composer’s Tips for Soap Operas | Acme, Inc.”
 - “20 Composer’s Tips for Soap Operas | Courses | Acme, Inc.”

Use the pipe sign ‘|’ to distinguish different parts of your title.

Once you don’t rely solely on long-tail keywords — once you start ranking in the first page for any worthwhile short-tailed / main keywords (i.e., those with actual search volume) — you can start playing more freely with your meta-title.

The 5 Qualities People Tend to Value in Search Results

And how to make them clear in your title tag.

People tend to look for certain *qualities* in the search results — exactly what these are will depend on the nature of the query:

- *Depth / thoroughness*: People love thorough, in-depth resources. That’s likely why there’s a clear correlation between the length of content and rankings. If your resource is more thorough than other search results, don’t hide it. Entice the click by adding words like to your meta-title: “ultimate,” “complete,” “definitive,” “study,” “step-by-step,” etc.
- *Lists / Quantity*: People love list posts. I suggest that you always include a number in your meta-title for list-style posts. (“500 free music sheets for you”)
- *Speed / Brevity*: Information overload is a real problem. If your content is concise and to-the-point, this is your USP. Sell your content with words/phrases like these in your title tag: “quick,” “simple,” “...in X minutes,” “today,” “now,” etc.
- *Freshness*: Some queries (e.g. “Online marketing tips 2019”) demand fresh results. To communicate freshness, add words/phrases like these to your title tag: “...in20XX”, “last updated Jan. 19”, etc.
- *Brand*: People are more likely to click on a search result from a brand they know and trust. So, if you’re remotely well-known in your industry, add your brand name to your title tag. If you collaborate with or worked for a well-known brand in your industry, name it in your meta-title.



Optimise for Click-Through Rate (CTR)

There's no point spending too much time and effort optimising for CTR until you reach the top 10, because most people don't go beyond the first page of results. Once you start ranking in the top 10 for any worthwhile keywords (i.e., those with actual search volume), this should be more of a focus:

1. Hook the reader in by adding *emotion* to your meta-title

Amazing, remarkable, magic, extraordinary, etc... These are power words that tap into people's emotions. Incorporating these into Meta-Titles can do wonders. <https://buffer.com/library/words-and-phrases-that-convert-ultimate-list>

But you shouldn't pick these randomly. You should answer the following questions:

- What does your content offer that's unique?
- What pain points do people searching for this query have? (and how does your content solve them?)

Use the "*curiosity gap*" to entice the click.

The curiosity gap is the space between what we know and what we want or even need to know. E.g., say you start with "*20 SEO tips for marketers*". You could go for

- "*20 SEO tips for marketers (Google doesn't want you to know)*" — but to be honest, you should then really list some tips Google actually doesn't want you to know. If not, try
- "*20 SEO tips for marketers (that work like a charm)*"

Meta-Description

- Provide your value proposition to the visitor

For every meta-description you write, consider what the user thinks: "What's in it for me?" This is where your value proposition can clearly articulate what you have to offer in relation to the particular service for which you're writing the page description. Ask these two questions: "What is this page offering?" and "Why should I visit this page?"

- Make It welcoming and flawless.

Write for the user first and search engines second: make your meta-description inviting rather than awkward. Stringing together numerous keyword phrases with little or no personality won't get you very far, even if you do rank in the top 3 results for the keyword(s) you're targeting.

- Incorporate a Call-To-Action

Your meta-description is essentially an ad in the search results; it's your sales text. Incorporating a CTA in it is a great way to boost your click-through rate and be your answer to standing out from your competition.

- Drop some names

Again, incorporating some names of clients, vendors, brands or certifications that your company is associated with makes a compelling case for your qualifications and credibility, and they encourage more click-throughs.



- Incorporate keywords and search phrases that are relevant to the page's content.
- If content freshness is key, you'll like to add date in your Meta-Description, e.g. *"12 Oct 2019 | your meta-desc here..."*
- Preview how your meta-title and meta-description will look in Google's SERP with <https://serpsim.com>

TAKE CARE OF THE POST LIFECYCLE

You'll have to share your post once published. Tip: set up a sharing schedule tailored to your different social media channels. Learn more: Develop and Perfect Your Social Media Sharing Schedule <https://buffer.com/resources/social-media-sharing>

You might want to use a tool such as Buffer www.buffer.com to properly schedule shares on your different social profiles.

HAVE YOUR BLOG GO SOCIAL

Both high social shares and a genuine comment activity will tell Google that your content is read and appreciated and it's going to rank higher.

- Display social button (and counts) in prominent positions:
Let people see your social sharing buttons and click them. Make sure they're instantly obvious to visitors.
Displaying current social share counts acts as social proof and can lead to further shares.
You'll have to set up a social sharing tool at a site-wide level — or at least a blog-wide level with a tool such as Monarch www.elegantthemes.com/plugins/monarch/ that features many ways to integrate in your website and comes loaded with a bunch of social medias.
- Allow comments: activate the 'Comments' section to let visitors add comments to all your blog posts.
Beware of spammy comments: a common practice is that the very first comment of a given visitor has to be 'manually' approved (by you). If not make sure your website runs a proper spam filter.
- Answer all visitors' comments.

PRODUCE RE-USABLE & EVERGREEN CONTENT

We previously mentioned content freshness and the importance of the publishing date for peculiar types of blog posts. To diminish your writing workload, aim at publishing re-usable content so that you can



Republish Content Periodically

- Update or expand old posts, e.g.:
 - Fix incorrect or outdated information
 - Add images/graphs/video/audio
 - Refresh examples
 - Include current stats and facts
 - Mention influencers
 - Add a content upgrade
 - Write a CTA
 - Link to one or two other posts in your blog
- Record a video version
- Turn posts into email newsletter
- Create podcast episodes
- Run a “best of” promotion

Compile several past posts into one “best of” article. Think cornerstone.

- Compile posts into an ebook

Look for a series of at least 10+ posts based around a central theme, organise them in a way that makes sense, and write any additional text needed to create a more cohesive read. Offering an ebook as an incentive to encourage new readers to join your email list can be extremely cost effective.

Release ‘Evergreen Content’

Evergreen content represents the posts and articles on your blog that will always be relevant to your audience, compared to topics that may change over time – it’s timeless. Google recognises evergreen content and gives it more value than to old content.

“What Is Movie Soundtrack?” could be an example of evergreen content, as the definition of “movie soundtrack” isn’t going to change in this context. That definition will always be helpful to industry newbies, and the topic itself will continue to provide enduring value to the blog’s audience over time.

On the other hand, the post topic, “10 Tools To Craft The Perfect Soundtrack” isn’t an evergreen topic (technology evolves, tools change over time).

Evergreen content benefits readers by providing basic information that’s crucial to understanding and enjoying other articles posted to the site. Following our example above, a reader coming to the site without any background might be lost without your introductory “What Is Movie Soundtrack?” article.



Types of Evergreen Content

- *“How to” guides and tutorials:* Process-based documentation often makes for great evergreen content, assuming the techniques you describe won’t be changing in the near future.
- *Resource lists:* Similarly, groupings of popular industry resources provides a great starting point for beginners in your niche.
- *Unchanging stances on industry issues:* This can be a tricky one to use in your evergreen content (as few things in this world are truly unchanging).
- *Frequently Asked Questions:* FAQ posts can provide helpful guidance to beginners in your field, making these articles important parts of your evergreen content campaigns.
- *Industry definitions:* Finally, you can’t go wrong with evergreen posts that define common things (acronyms, processes, improved theories...) in your industry.

Tips’n’Tricks

- Evergreen content must be kept up-to-date.

The overall goal of evergreen content is to create posts that will benefit your audience for a longer period than a single time-sensitive read. However, it’s worth acknowledging here that very few posts can be created that will remain perfectly up-to-date over time without a little help from the writer.

- Evergreen content shouldn’t be buried on your blog

You’ve gone to a ton of effort to produce valuable evergreen content for your readers, so don’t let these articles become buried by the influx of new posts on your blog. E.g.:

- Create a “Start here” page on your website that lists your evergreen posts as a reference point for new readers.
- Create training guide pages on your website that point industry beginners to the evergreen resources that will help them get up-to-speed.
- Call out these “Top posts” in a special section on your blog’s sidebar.
- Re-run them periodically on your blog to expose the highest possible number of readers to your evergreen content posts.

GUEST BLOGGING TO LIGHTEN THE WRITER’S WORKLOAD

One article a week may seem quite an abyssal schedule, especially for the lone writer or for small busy teams. Host guest bloggers on your website to delegate your writing tasks. This will allow you to:

- Keep fresh content on your website,
- Increase your blog’s publishing frequency — both are good for SEO,
- Add a new perspective for your audience, and hopefully
- Get new readers from your guest blogger’s community,
- And, yes, lighten your writing workload.



Guest bloggers write content for your blog. In exchange, they receive links to their online presence (website, social channels...), an opportunity to promote their own names. You'll have to find guests who are experts in your field or in a field closely related to yours.

Of course, you have to start small. Ask all your current and past close collaborators and fellows: your close — and relevant of course — network. Then, the more your website gains E-A-T, the more it gets visitors, the more your blog posts gain social shares, the easier it is for you to convince and find guest bloggers, especially the ones with a high E-A-T. Hosting renowned experts will help raise your own website's E-A-T.

Tips'n'Tricks

- Quality matters: be aware that search engines penalise poorly written guest posts that are clearly meant to solely build backlinks to websites and not to benefit the reader. Make sure your guests submit high-quality, targeted posts for your blog.
- On your quest for guest bloggers, you may come to them with topics or questions to guide them and relieve them from the writer's block — the blank page syndrome.
- You may have read online articles that were “originally published on whatever.com”. Not sure this is a good SEO strategy to host such articles since it's not original content, it's copied content, therefore it's “thin”.
- Create a win-win situation: you gain fresh, hi-quality content, they win visibility (might not be a solid argument when talking to a major player in your field, so, again: the more you raise your E-A-T, the easier for you.)

That's all for now when it comes to guest blogging. You're going to use this technique the other way round: guest blogging is a two way street that will also help you:

6. Build Your Backlinks

A good starting point for most link building campaigns is competitor research: analyse the backlink profiles of competing sites. Analysing the backlink profiles of several competitors will:

- Give an insight into their link building strategies
- Provide opportunities to replicate their links

The trick is to work out how (or why) your competitor received a particular link and determine whether that's something you can replicate. You'll probably want to start with some



QUICK WINS

- Easier links to replicate:
 - User generated links — social profiles, video sites, blog comments etc.
 - Guest post links — reach out to the linking site and ask if you can contribute your own guest post.
 - A link from a resource / hub page or website — reach out and ask if the site will add your resource.
- According to Google, each link can be given a different weight depending on several factors such as an offset of the hyperlink (e.g., position on the document: a hyperlink readily visible upon loading of a document may be given a higher weight than a hyperlink visible only after scrolling down) and a size of a paragraph where the hyperlink is located.

OUTREACH

With the exception of (very) rare cases — where content naturally picks up viral traction and spreads by itself — to acquire links you will have to get your content in front of the right eyeballs at the right time. Despite the rise of social media, the most effective medium for outreach continues to be email.

Outreach Tools

- <http://www.buzzstream.com> great web based app
- <https://www.gmass.co> Gmail / Chrome freemium extension
- <http://www.yesware.com> works with Gmail too

LINK BUILDING STRATEGIES

• Link Bait

Refers to creating content which attracts links naturally due to its high value or unique proposition. Links are considered ‘earned’ rather than ‘built’. Although that is not to say that link bait content does not require promotion.

That value could come from, e.g.:

- In depth research
- Unique data
- A survey, and so on...

Link bait is white hat link building in its purest form and is a return to the way Google originally envisaged links would ‘vote’ the best content to the top.

By definition, link bait requires a high quality resource as ‘bait’. A piece of content that



will engage users, is likely to be widely shared, and ultimately deserves to rank in search.

• Ego Bait

Is about attempting to engage influencers to further amplify your work and build links.

It's a very basic marketing / psychology principle — the element of reciprocity. If you positively feature another person, they're more likely to return the favor.

Some effective ego bait tactics include:

- Interviewing an influencer on your site
- Quoting an influencer in your content, or linking to their site
- Including an influencer in a top 10 list

Most influencers will be happy to at least share content that shows them in a positive light — amplifying its reach and potentially leading to links.

• Link Reclamation

- Fixing broken links pointing your site

If there are broken links pointing to 404 pages on your site, then you are losing valuable link juice.

- Finding unlinked brand mentions

When someone mentions your brand on the web when the writer didn't include a link back to your site. Reach out, thank them for the mention, and ask if they would consider adding a link.

- Identifying uncredited use of copyrighted material

You can of course ask the website to remove it. However, this is a prime link building opportunity and a polite email informing them of the infringement and asking for accreditation should be all that's required to pick up a link.

• Newsjacking

Refers to tapping into the slipstream of trending news and injecting your own brand, or ideas into the story. It can be a very effective way to pick up high quality links from major publications.

Timing is everything in newsjacking. As a major story breaks, journalists want to cover unique angles and gather quotes from experts who may be able to add insight.

• Interviews

Be interviewed. Interview opportunities provide your clients with increased brand authority, professional credibility, and even domain authority. Getting interviewed on podcasts, news sites, blogs, and in other publications is also a straightforward way to build natural backlinks.

Become an authority in your niche in an effortlessly cool sort of way. You can master this by being quoted on websites and in publications. Find other sites in your niche that are



holding regular interviews. Reach out to them. If you belong to any LinkedIn Groups or participate in Twitter chats, pop in to ask for a group interview opportunity. This also gives you an additional relationship building opportunity.

• Content Syndication

While syndicating content everywhere and anywhere is not advisable, syndicating your content to quality sites like LinkedIn Pulse or Medium (with link attribution) can lead to an increase in traffic and a boost in rankings.

• Content Repurposing

Squeeze more value out of your content while acquiring high quality links. A great blog post could be repurposed into e.g. a video, a podcast, an ebook etc... Each of these pieces of content can then be shared on relevant channels — with many of them offering the opportunity for a backlink.

• Blog Commenting

One of the easiest ways to get backlinks. An effective blog commenting strategy will make sure your backlink graph remains constant or goes up with time.

Google likes to see active participating in a niche and commenting on blogs is a good way to show you are an engaged member of a community.

Mass commenting will not work, but thoughtful commenting on a select number of blogs may help. Quality comments, which add insight and show expertise, can also drive traffic back to your own site and help to grow your audience.

Commenting is also a good way to build relationships with other bloggers. This will help with future outreach as it is always easier if you are 'known' by the site you are reaching out to.

• Guest Blogging

The first thing you will want to do is find guest post opportunities. When looking for places to guest post, your main goal is to find sites relevant to your niche or industry. You are looking for blogs that fit the following criteria:

- The content is focused on your niche / industry.
- The audience of the blog will be interested in your industry.
- The blog has engaged readership (posts have been shared socially and commented upon).
- The blog owner is active on social media (so you know that they will be promoting your work on their site).

Google is a great place to start in the search for guest posting opportunities.

As an example you could use the following keyword searches to find blogs that accept guest posts. Just replace */keyword/* with keywords from your industry:



/keyword/ "submit a guest post"
/keyword/ "guest post"
/keyword/ "guest post by"
/keyword/ "accepting guest posts"
/keyword/ "guest post guidelines"

If you have pulled up a backlink analysis of a competitor, chances are one or more of your competitors have backlinks from guest posts they have done.

- Find out what posts do the best.
To ensure that your guest post gets accepted, you will want to pitch the blog owner with topics that will do well with their audience.
- Format posts like the ones on the host website.
Take a look at posts on your target blog. Do they use lots of headers, bolded text, images, quotes, or other special formatting? Make sure that your post has similar elements to match other posts on the site.
- Include internal and source links.
Show the blog owner that you know their content by including a few internal links back to some of their posts. The easiest way to do this is to do a Google search for */site:domain.com intitle:keyword/*. This will get you their top posts on a particular keyword so you can link that post to the keyword in your post.
- Include a Call to Action for Comments.
At the end of your amazing guest post, be sure to include a call to action for comments. The more discussion your post generates, the better!
- Respond to comments and promote the guest blog post on your social channels.

TOOLS FOR LINK BUILDING

While it is technically possible to build links with just a bit of brain power, there are a number of tools that will help make the process of acquiring links much easier.

- Backlink Checkers: Allow you to spy on your competitor's backlinks:
 - Ahrefs' Site Explorer <https://ahrefs.com/site-explorer>
 - Majestic <https://majestic.com>
 - Moz 'Open Site Explorer' <https://moz.com/researchtools/ose/>
- Web Monitoring
Actively monitoring the web for new mentions of your keyword (or new links to your competitors) and acting quickly may double the results of your outreach.
 - Ahrefs Alerts <https://ahrefs.com/dashboard/metrics>
 - Mention <https://mention.com>
 - Google Alerts <https://www.google.com/alerts>



7. What's Next

- Reassess your keywords periodically. The market is subject to changes and so are your competitors. Keyword research never stops.
- Keep an open, creative mindset. Iterate, try, experiment and test variants
<https://vwo.com/ab-testing/> Check your analytics and find out what works and what doesn't.
- Your blog has grown big, time to start 'content pruning'. While it may feel contradictory, your rankings may very well improve after removing content. Outdated, irrelevant low-quality content will drop the ranking of your 'good' content and the quality ranking of your website. Learn more: <https://cognitiveseo.com/blog/5587/content-pruning-the-technique-that-will-protect-your-rankings-from-google-panda/>
- Check some official Google documentation:
 - Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Starter Guide - Search Console Help
<https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/7451184>
 - Webmaster Guidelines - Search Console Help
<https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/35769>

Quæ sunt Caesaris, Caesari: Sources

Many content has been aggregated from the (blogs of the) following high-quality websites:

- Yoast <https://yoast.com>
- Search Engine Watch <https://searchenginewatch.com>
- Search Engine Journal <https://www.searchenginejournal.com>
- Ahrefs <https://ahrefs.com/blog/>
- Neil Patel <https://neilpatel.com/blog/>
- Moz - Blog & Resources <https://moz.com>
- ContentKing Academy <https://www.contentkingapp.com/academy/>
- cognitiveSEO Blog <https://cognitiveseo.com/blog/>
- Buffer Blog <https://buffer.com/resources/>
- Wordtracker Blog & Academy <https://www.wordtracker.com>
- Link-Assistant Blog <https://www.link-assistant.com/news/>

And also:

- HubSpot Blog <https://blog.hubspot.com>
- Data Driven Labs <https://datadrivenlabs.io/blog/>
- Lifewire <https://www.lifewire.com>
- Social Triggers <https://www.socialtriggers.com>

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