

How To Target Your Niche Online Markets

By Kalena Jordan

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Does your web site target a particular market? Is it geographic or demographic? Male or female, young or old? Business or consumer?

Targeting your niche market via search engines can be a very efficient and effective way of pinpointing your visitors with the most potential to buy your products and services. With a little planning, you can determine exactly who visits your site and who doesn't. How? Well, by using search terms throughout your site that are geared specifically towards your own niche markets. We're going to show you how to do it right now.

Take a minute to write down the specific markets your products and services are aimed at. Now drill down even further. Do you service only one country, State or city? Are you mainly targeting men in their twenties? Parents? Low-income earners?

To give you an example, let's take a fictional florist located in Miami, Florida who specializes in wedding bouquets. Their target markets would be something like this:

- women in their early to late twenties
- people living in Miami and surrounding suburbs
- brides-to-be living in Miami and surrounding suburbs
- dating males
- couples (especially around Valentine's Day)

There are probably more potential markets than this, but let's stop there. Ok, now that you have narrowed down your target market/s, try to get inside their heads. If you were a single parent/ frequent traveler/ retiree, what would YOU type in to the search engines to find the goods and services offered on your own site?

Start writing down these search terms as they come to mind. Using our florist example again, relevant search terms could include:

- flowers
- roses
- bouquets
- Valentine's Day

- wedding flowers
- florists
- gifts

Now start adding qualifying terms that will help define your market even more closely, ensuring the chosen terms are extremely relevant to your geographic region, or specific product / service offering. Unless our fictional Miami florist sends flowers outside the State, they wouldn't want to attract any web site visitors from outside Florida right? Perhaps not even outside Miami. Also, if somebody searches the web looking for advice on growing roses, our florist wouldn't want them visiting either, agreed? Adding qualifying terms reduces the likelihood of these visitors. For example, let's add the following terms to our original list:

- [send] flowers [Florida]
- [send] roses [Miami]
- [wedding] bouquets [Miami]
- Valentine's Day [gifts Florida]
- [Florida] wedding flowers
- florists [Miami]
- [send] gifts [Miami]

See how a few selective terms narrows down the searches considerably? Visitors that arrive at the site after typing in such specific search terms are already highly qualified to buy from the site. This increases the visitor/sale conversion rate while reducing the "click away" rate considerably.

Ok, now you know your niche markets and you've narrowed down your target search terms to reach these markets. What next? Well, now you scatter these search terms throughout your web pages, in a logical way so as not to interrupt the flow of writing. Then you replace keywords in your existing META keyword tag with your new target terms and use the most important ones within your META description and title tag too. If you're not confident enough to do this yourself, give the terms to your web designer or a SEO and ask them to do it.

Now when the search engines index your site, they'll find it more relevant for these target searches and (hopefully!) rank you highly for these new terms. The result: effective targeting of your online niche market, less "click aways" and more real customers.

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Kalena was one of the first search engine optimization experts in Australasia and is well known and respected in her field.
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