

# Dodge The Competitive Keyword Bullet

By Rob MacCurry

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Today you will learn how to avoid the pitfalls of expensive and ineffective search engine optimization. You'll also learn how to dodge what I like to call the the "pay per click competitive keyword" bullet. Just exactly what is this bullet?

It's a highly searched on keyword. Its the ammo that depletes your pay per click budget, and keeps you from getting the results you need. You can lose a lot of money if you choose the wrong keywords. Likewise, ineffective search engine optimization can mortally wound your online marketing efforts.

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It's true. Online businesses have gone broke trying to optimize for the search engines, directories and pay per click services.

Selecting the right keywords is the first step in any professional search engine optimization job. And in the past, this has been a very expensive, complicated, frustrating and nerve wracking experience.

And if you are just starting out, you'll be amazed to find that many professional search engine optimization companies charge thousands of dollars for this one function alone.

In my opinion, that's a rip off.

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What's the problem? You know what your visitors are searching for. But the problem is, so do all your

competitors.

If you focus on a keyword or keyword phrase that is too competitive, your chance of ranking in the top ten, well, they stink.

That's right.

And at Overture, the cost becomes very prohibitive very quickly if you try to target these highly competitive keywords. Or you can go the other route. Select some obscure keyword or keyword phrase.

Sure, you might rank highly for that specific term or phrase.

But guess what?

It won't result in any significant increase in your web site traffic.

What you need are highly targeted niche keywords and key phrases.

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Your benefit:

Laser targeted non-competitive traffic.

How do you find these targeted niche keywords and key phrases? And more important, how can you predict the # of click throughs, the costs per click, much less the number of sites competing for these niche keywords and key phrases?

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You could go to Overture, and use their "Search Term Suggestion Tool". You enter a general term related to your business. The tool will list related keywords and key phrases, and the # of times each term has been searched on in the last 30 days.

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Unfortunately, you can only analyze the relative competitiveness of these keywords and phrases by submitting them for editorial review.

So you might find yourself with a long list of terms with a lot of competition. Of course you can use Overture's bid manager to remove them, but that's not a very productive method generating lists of targeted low competitive keywords.

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So I did a search on Google for "targeted keywords" and I found an interesting service. They claimed to be able to locate these targeted niche key phrases. And since they offered a free trial, I felt that I would at least get some interesting key phrases for my web pages. As a bonus I might learn something about positioning a pay per click keyword campaign properly.

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So I logged on to my free trial and started to use the tools they provide.

<http://supersystem.i8.com/wtrial.html>

I started with the Keyword Universe tool. Here's how it works:

Step #1. You enter a phrase (two or three words) that describes your business or service. Eg. 'golfing equipment', 'real estate' or 'search engine positioning'.

Step #2 Then I hit the "proceed" button. The service will search its database and return a general list of phrases related to your search term.

Then I selected one of the general terms and clicked on it. This adds up to 300 related keywords to your "basket". These are your targeted keywords.

Step #3 "Click Here For Step 3" arrow brings you to the page where you can email or export your keywords.

But I didn't mail them or export them yet.

Why? Because here was a very important link for successful search engine optimization and pay per click campaign:

The competition search link.

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Here's how this works:

It reveals just how much traffic and how much competition there is for a particular keyword in the directories and search engines. And for Overture, it reveals the number of searches and the bids for any keyword on your list.

It certainly seemed like a good way to find keywords that are relevant and have little or no competition.

Step # 4 I then selected the keywords which I thought would be productive for my site. Then I clicked the competition

search icon.

Step# 5 I then chose two search engines. You can only do two at a time, otherwise your results get corrupted. I chose Overture and AltaVista.

This is where I hoped to discover that some of these keywords had very few competing web pages in many of the major search engines.

These of course, would be targeted niche keywords. When I pressed the proceed arrow, the system generated a report. This includes the keywords, the count, the 24 hour projection, and the KEI analysis number.

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The first figure to be aware of is the KEI Analysis - The KEI compares the Count result (number of times a keyword has appeared in WordTracker's data) with the number of competing web pages to pinpoint exactly which keywords are least competitive. (Remember in search engine optimization, as well as ppc campaigns, less competition means more targeted traffic for you.)

In a nutshell: The higher the KEI, the more popular your keywords are with the people who search, and the less competition they have. Which means you have a better chance of getting to the top.

(Of course this figure is not relevant to Overture, there you will be interested in the count and the actual bids).

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Count - This shows the number of times a particular keyword has appeared in their database. This service states that their database currently holds 361 million words.

A count

of 147 tells us that this particular word has appeared 147 times out of 361 million (this is over a one month period).

24hrs - This is the number of predicted traffic you would expect to receive in 24 hrs if you were on page one of the AltaVista search engine alone.

Competing- Each keyword has been submitted to the AltaVista search engine and the number of competing web pages given in response.

The lower the competition (particularly under 300) the easier you will find it to reach the top of AltaVista using this keyword.

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Here's an example of how this works:

I recently did a competition search and wound up with the term "Best Affiliate Programs".

It had a KEI# of 23, a one month count of 102 searches, and 436 other sites that were competing for that keyword listing at AltaVista!

That's a total losing proposition!

On the other hand, keyword # 1 "internet affiliate advertizing, has a KEI# 345,a one month count of 72 and only 15 other sites were competing for that keyword listing at AltaVista.

Even better: Keyword #22 "money making on the net affiliates programs for webmasters" has a KEI# 300, a one month count of 72. And only 2 other sites were competing for that keyword listing at AltaVista.

That's an improvement.

Of course, you will want to be using keywords with much higher counts than these, and small competition numbers.

I found quite a few and am using them on Overture today.

Rob MacCurry publishes SuperSystems!Says! an ezine with exact step by step methods to leverage your internet website promotion. Subscribe <mailto:roberex@softsend.com>  
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