

# Keyword Effectiveness

By Scott F. Geld

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Scott F. Geld  
sfg3@marketingblaster.com

Marketing Blaster, Inc. <http://www.MarketingBlaster.com>

As marketers we all understand the importance of search engine rankings. Around 85% of all web users search for web sites using a search engine, with many users not venturing past four or five pages of subsequent search results on their keywords to find what they are looking for. Achieving a high ranking on popular search engines is therefore vital to the success of any web site in the quest to attract visitors & sales. Keyword selection and optimizing the site using those keywords contribute immensely to this goal.

How it works

When you submit a web site to a search engine you will be instructed to list keywords for the site. These keywords are used by the search engine in their ranking algorithm, and will take into account keywords specified in meta tags and the density of keywords found within normal sentence constructs of your content. Indexers will look for a high degree of relevance between keywords you specify and the appearance of keywords in your content to insure that they work in harmony. If the keywords do not reveal themselves in high enough density then your ranking will be penalized. Using techniques to hide keywords or spam the engine will also result in ranking penalties.

Be the 'Buyer'

Keywords should therefore be thoroughly researched and carefully selected. Think how your target buyer would think when using a search engine to find products & services you are selling. For example, if you are selling lawnmowers, keywords a buyer may use could include the brand of mower, the region of the country/state they are located in and words like 'buy' and 'shop'. It is quite likely that you will come up with a long list of potential keywords to use, and this will need to be reduced to around a maximum of 10-20. To help you select keywords, use programs such as those found on <http://www.overture.com> to check on a keyword's popularity. The more popular a chosen keyword is then the more likely it is that it will bring you the results you want.

Scott F. Geld is the Marketing Director of MarketingBlaster.com, a company providing targeted traffic and leads: <http://www.MarketingBlaster.com>

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