

Search Engine Success Tips : Research those Keywords before you target them

By Vic Pandya

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Search Engine Optimization (SEO), the art and the science of getting websites ranked higher on the search results has been gaining ever-increasing awareness with the progress of the Internet age. In the absence of any unified, authoritative standards, it has also come to be alternatively recognized as Search Engine Promotion / Placement /Positioning (SEP).

The differences in the moniker apart, some of the fundamental techniques essential for obtaining higher search engine rankings and traffic are pretty much universal and still it is a fact that many a webmasters are not aware of these and thus, fail to deploy them in their web promotion efforts.

One such fundamental SEO technique is keyword research, selection and targeting.

Let us consider this hypothetical scenario: You are building a website. Using a combination of your gut feeling and some brainstorming you come up with a list of keywords and key phrases for which you would like to get your site listed high-up on the search engines. You put in those keywords in the Title, meta tags and body text of various pages of your site. For a minute, let us assume you do manage to get top 10 - 20 - 30 rankings for many of those keywords that you targeted.

Now, if none of the Internet users are actually using those keywords in the queries they make on the search engines, how much traffic do you think your site will get via the search

engines? The obvious answer is very little, if that.

Therefore, in order to derive traffic to your website via the search engines, it is essential to find and target those keywords, which are

- a) Related to the theme of your website and
- b) Actually being used by a sizeable number of search engine users.

Armed with such keywords, you can be confident that if you optimize your site to rank high on them, you will have not only high rankings but also high traffic and that leads us to another problem.

How to find such high-traffic keywords?

In the following section of this article I will reveal several distinct online sources, all of them free and quick, where you can conduct your keyword research with a fair amount of effectiveness.

Keyword research source #1: Overture Search Term suggestion tool

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The pay-per-click search service Overture.com (nee GoTo.com) has a free service that takes a keyword from you and shows you

- 1) A number (usually dozens) of keywords related to yours on which their users have searched in the previous month and
- 2) The actual number of searches run on each of these keywords during the previous month

Experimenting there with a few basic keywords for your website should let you quickly build a list of high-traffic keywords you will do well to target for your website.

The Overture Search Term Suggestion Tool is available here:

<http://inventory.overture.com/d/searchinventory/suggestion/>

Keyword research source #2: WordTracker

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WordTracker is a commercial keyword finder service that finds hundreds of keywords related to your website. It also receives data from some meta search engines and attempts to project the aggregate number of searches run on these keywords across the Internet. You will also get a variety of other keyword research and targeting related data using this service.

They have a feature restricted free service that still packs good value for Do-It-Yourself type individual SEO projects. Because of the depth of features and information it provides, using this service usually involves a slight learning curve but once you get used to it, you will probably find it worth your effort.

You can find this service at <http://www.wordtracker.com/>

Keyword research source #3: Major Search Engines

As many Internet users might have noticed, when you run searches on some of the major search engines, they display a few related keywords along with the results. Some engines call it 'Others searched for', some call it 'Related Searches' while some others label this with different, but similar tags.

Regardless of what these are labeled as, you can be fairly sure that all of these keywords would be attracting a significant amount of traffic on the search engines. Here is a list of five search engines that display such related keywords, along with the identification of what they call it:

Engine	What they call it
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- AltaVista.com Others searched for:
- AllTheWeb.com Beta FAST Topics:
- DirectHit.com Related Searches
- HotBot.com PEOPLE WHO DID THIS SEARCH ALSO SEARCHED FOR
- Yahoo.com Related Searches:

Go to any of these search engines, type in your basic keyword and hit the Search button. On the results page, you will usually find a list of related keywords from which you can pick and choose the useful ones.

Summing up:

Use the above keyword research sources in any combination to suit your convenience and come up with a list of at least a few dozen or more keywords to target and then steer your search engine marketing campaign accordingly - the results, in all probability, will come as a pleasant surprise.

Happy keyword hunting and high traffic to you.

Author:

Vic Pandya has been a western India based computer software innovator - entrepreneur for over 15 years. Vic's software related research papers and articles have been published by such publishers as McGraw-Hill, Ziff-Davis and others. He can be reached at <mailto:Vic@WebAhoy.com>.

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