



THE KEYWORD RESEARCH WORKBOOK



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INTRODUCTION

Keyword research and analysis are two of the most important, valuable and high return activities in search. Targeting the right keywords is vital to your organic search (SEO) visibility and strategy.

This workbook takes you through the most common techniques for building a keyword list and gives you practical exercises to carry out to get you started.

A 'keyword', as the term is used in search marketing, is a word or phrase that is used as a search query by searchers in order to find answers to questions, find goods or services or address any other search requirement.

It's not enough to take a website and add a sprinkling of keyword-packed content in the hope that it will appear higher in Google searches for those keywords. You need to carry out research and take the learnings to identify the phrases and topics to target to create high quality content that meets your target customers' needs.

As well as helping your site to rank, thorough keyword research will give you a much greater insight into what your customers want.

This will allow you to increase your visibility, improve the relevance of your traffic, reduce irrelevant traffic or leads, and enhance user experience.

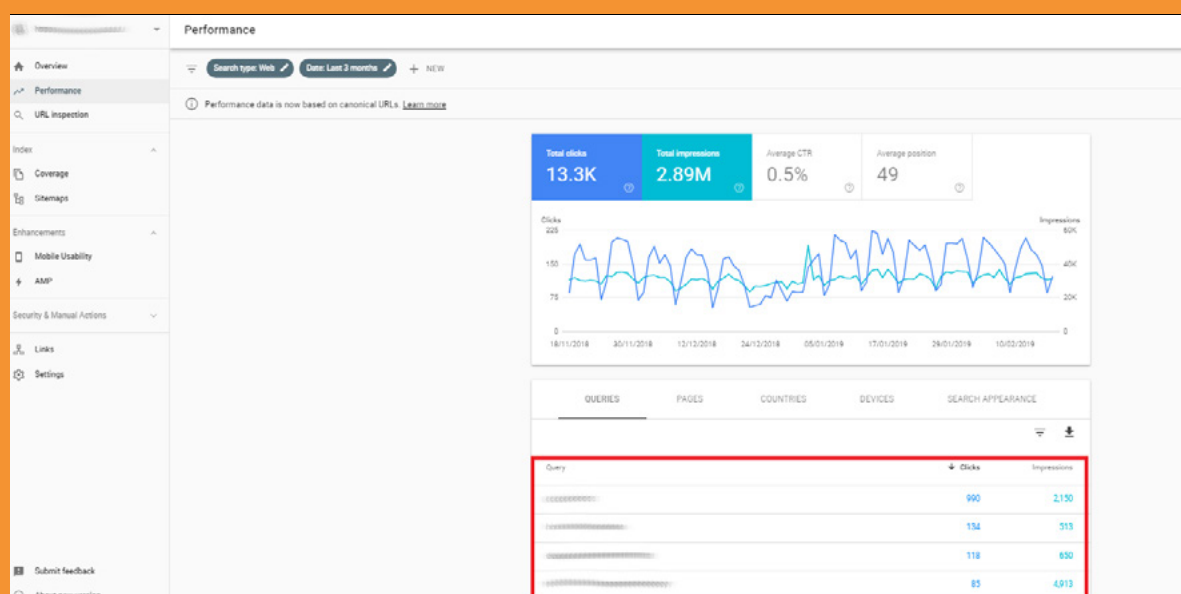
Bear in mind that targeting keywords just because they have high search volumes won't help you increase your ROI (return on investment) if the people using those search terms aren't looking for what you offer. Relevance is key.

How do you determine the type of keywords that are the most suitable for your business and for which you want to be found? This will depend on the overall objectives of your business and your website. What do you want people to do when they get to your website? Do you want visitors to sign up for a newsletter, or download an app? Are you selling a product or service?

GOOGLE'S FREE TOOLS

Google offers some great **free tools for keyword research** which generate variations of keyword phrases, as well as quantifying search volume. The most commonly used are [Google](#) [Google Search Console](#), and [Keyword Planner](#)

USING GOOGLE SEARCH CONSOLE



When you've selected this, export the list – either to Google Sheets, or as a CSV file. This will allow you to filter the terms by clicks, impressions, click through rate (CTR) or position (whereabouts you appear in Google's search results for that keyword).



You can use this data to:

- Discover whether keywords that you expect to see actually do appear; if not, your site might not have enough useful content relevant to those keywords.
- Find lower ranking results which you can look to either optimise for or create new content to target (filter by position to filter out the top 10 or top 20 results).
- Identify queries with high impressions and low CTR. These queries can help identify where you can improve your titles and snippets to match your users' interests.

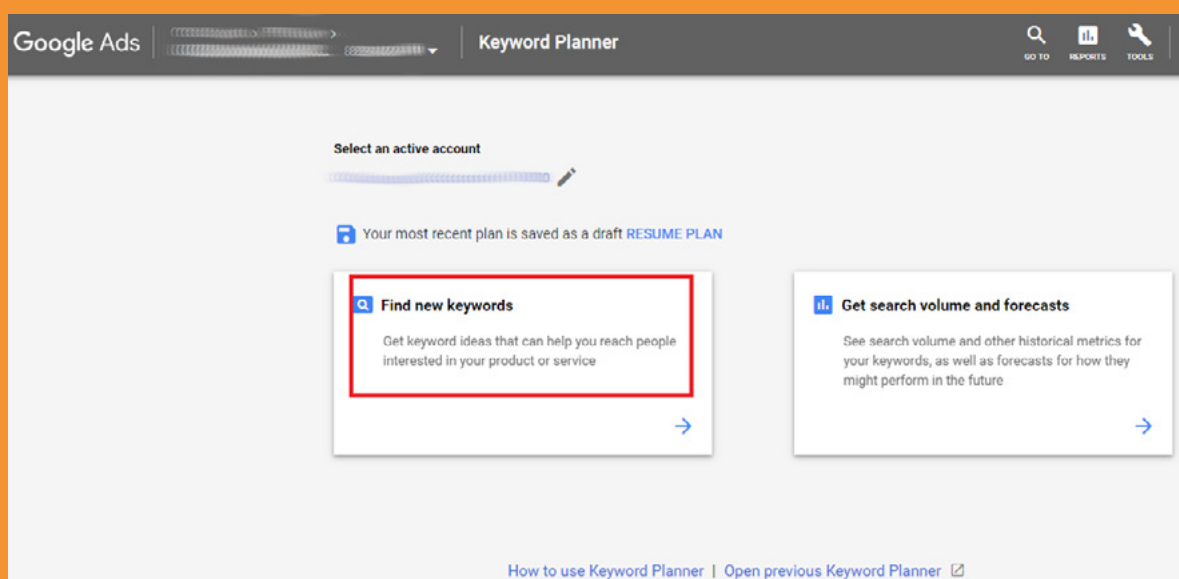
USING GOOGLE KEYWORD PLANNER



Part of Google's Ads (a paid search, or PPC, platform), this tool is designed to provide advertisers with the search volume and potential costs of specific keywords - and it's also a great tool for building out your keyword list for SEO purposes.

Getting started

Log in to Google Ads (or [set up an account](#)), select 'Find new keywords' and type in a keyword to begin generating new ones:



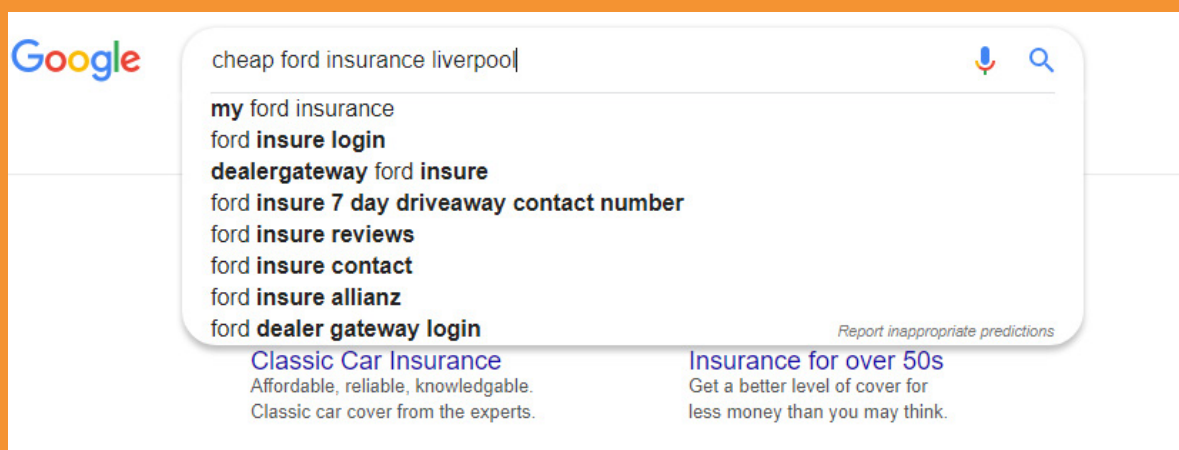


The suggestions provided will show you the average monthly searches carried out for each keyword and the competition level (High, Medium or Low). The latter is the measure of how difficult it will be to rank for a particular keyword; although this is based on PPC bids, it gives a general indication of how popular the keyword is and industry competition for SEO purposes.

Try to be as detailed as possible with your search; this way, you'll generate keywords that are more specific – and therefore relevant (known as 'long tail keywords' – more about this further on).

USING AUTOCOMPLETE

A simple way to discover common long tail searches is to use Google Autocomplete – the suggestions that appear in the drop-down menu when you start to type in your search. Google bases these predictions on how often others have searched for a term (although it can also be influenced by your own search history) and they can also provide you with a hint of the motivations behind them.



FIND OUT WHAT - AND WHO - IS ALREADY RANKING FOR THE KEYWORDS YOU'VE CHOSEN

The reason that competitors or other sites are ranking strongly suggests they are satisfying user intent as Google is viewing them as highly relevant and authoritative. What are the pages that rank offering customers? How are they satisfying the query? If your site aims to sell and the high ranking results for your term are offering information, this could be a sign you're targeting the wrong terms and may need to refine your keyword choices.

You can do this by simply carrying out a manual search and studying the organic results.

FIND OUT WHICH KEYWORDS YOUR COMPETITORS ARE RANKING FOR

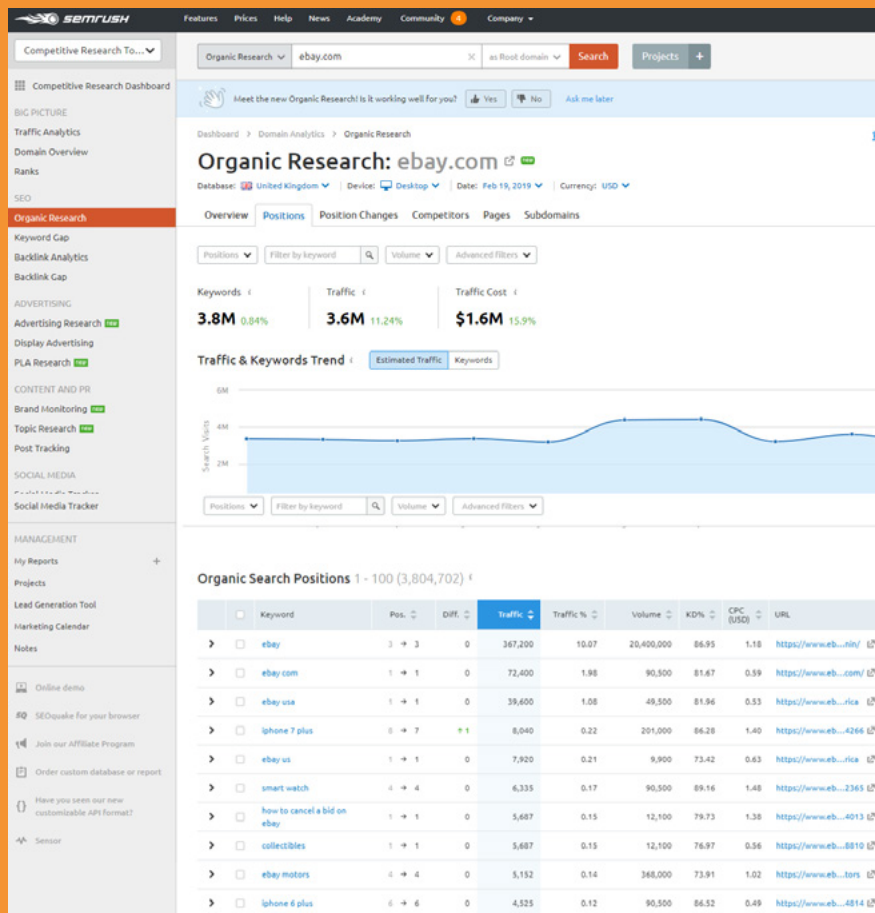
This will give you an indication of competitor keyword strategies and shows which particular competitors are ranking well for target keywords. It will also allow you to see where there may be gaps in your current keyword list, and to identify long tail opportunities to target.

USING SEMRUSH



While this is a paid-for tool, you can open a free account to carry out top-level research to identify the highest search volume keywords for each of your competitors.

Navigate to the 'Organic Search' under the 'SEO' category on the right-hand side of the screen:



By entering a competitor domain in the search bar at the top you get a list of keywords organised by the amount of estimated traffic driven to that website by the keyword (just the top ten in the free version of the tool). You can also view the search volume (the number of searches carried out for that term) and the landing page (URL) per keyword.

The paid version offers a lot more capability in terms of filtering, expanding date ranges, and downloadable data but the free option is still a great way to get started with identifying your competitors' best keywords.

It's also useful for pinpointing keywords that you don't rank for but for which they do, as this will provide you with potential keywords that could be valuable to your business and the types of content your competitors are using to rank for those keywords.

LOOK FOR TERMS WITH ENOUGH VOLUME TO JUSTIFY RANKING FOR

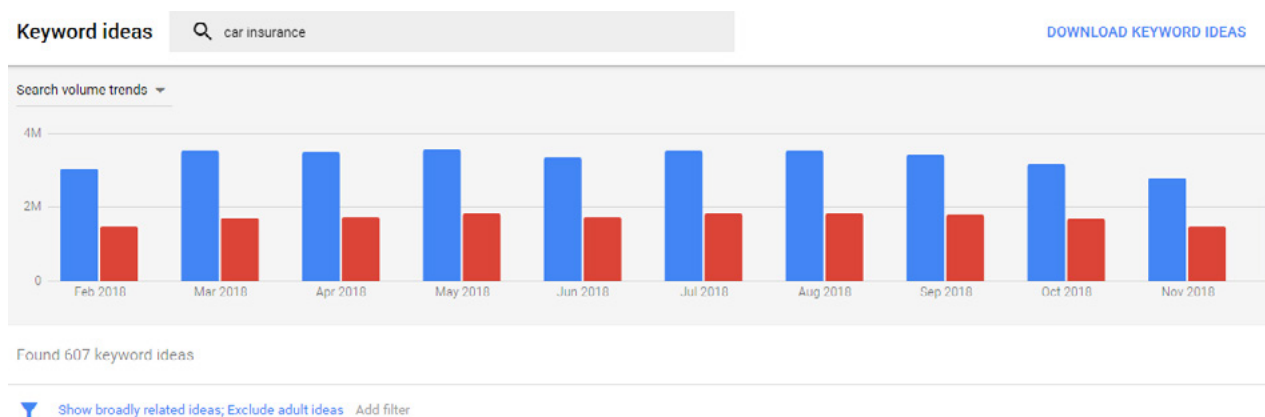
However, be wary of terms with very high volume unless you think your site has a realistic chance of ranking for them (taking into the competitiveness of your industry/sector and market position). It might be better to go after terms that have less volume, but may bring more targeted visitors to your site: the focus should be on quality as well as quantity: not ‘how many?’, but ‘how many of the right kind?’.

For example, a search for ‘cake’ returns 500,000,000 results on Google, whereas the long tail search ‘buy birthday cake online delivery’ only returns 4,060,000 results – and shows a much greater intent to buy!

FOCUS ON LONG TAIL KEYWORDS

Long tail keywords are phrases which are generally three or more words long, they tend to be more precise, reveal greater detail about searcher intent and, importantly, have less competition and, therefore, greater opportunity for more immediate gains in terms of rankings.

The more specific you can be with your long tail keywords, the less competition is likely. For example, while ‘car insurance’ may have an incredibly high search volume as the screenshot from Google Keyword Planner shows – a new entrant into the car insurance market would struggle against the industry’s biggest brands who will have been competing fiercely for the term for years.



In this regard, a long tail term such as ‘cheap ford insurance liverpool’ or ‘buy cheap ford insurance liverpool’ represent far fewer searches, but give a greater indication of searcher intent. It also represents less of a challenge to rank for the term – the following image, for example, shows that the top four results for ‘cheap ford insurance liverpool’ feature one result which is almost entirely irrelevant to the search, shows the authority of the site though, it’s because they have cheap insurance in the title of the Ford cars they sell and only one which features the keyword (approximately) in the meta title. This represents a real opportunity to rank on page one for a mid-intent, highly specific keyword.

Car insurance for your Ford | LV - Liverpool Victoria

<https://www.lv.com/car-insurance/insurance-for-your-ford> ▼

Uninsured driver promise - If the other driver's not insured and you have to claim, you keep your no claim discount and there's no excess to pay, as long as you have the other driver's details. Car keys icon. New locks and keys if yours are lost or stolen. Damaged car door icon. Accidental damage to your car, like scratches or ...

Cheap insurance in Liverpool, Merseyside | Cars for Sale - Gumtree

<https://www.gumtree.com/cars/liverpool/cheap+insurance> ▼

Find a cheap insurance in Liverpool, Merseyside on Gumtree, the #1 site for Cars for Sale classifieds ads in the UK.

Used Ford Cars for sale in Liverpool, Merseyside - Gumtree

<https://www.gumtree.com/cars/liverpool/ford> ▼

Find the latest used and new Ford cars for sale in Liverpool, Merseyside on Gumtree. See the latest used private and trade Ford FOCUS, FIESTA, MONDEO, KA, C-MAX, GALAXY, S-MAX cars for sale and more. ... Cheap cars Ford Focus zetec 1.6. Stoneycroft, Merseyside. 56 plate Ford Focus zetec 1.6 petrol long mot sh ...

Compare cheap Ford van insurance quotes - Confused.com

<https://www.confused.com/van-insurance/manufacturers/ford> ▼

Find help and information about your Ford van insurance quote, then use Confused.com's powerful comparison tool to compare our best prices in minutes.

THINK LIKE A CUSTOMER

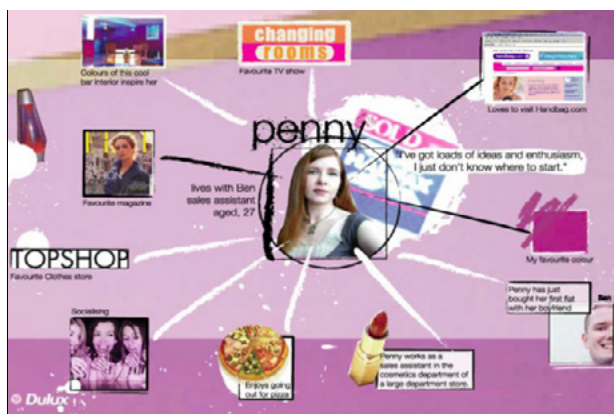
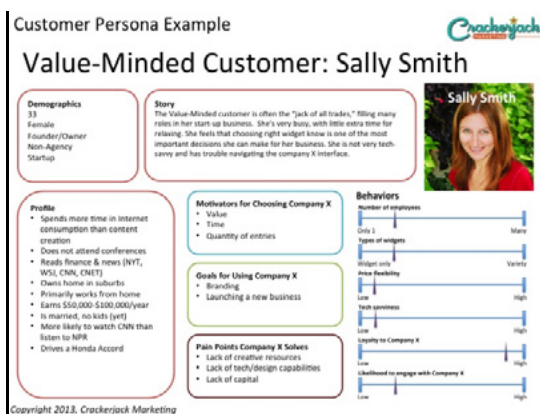
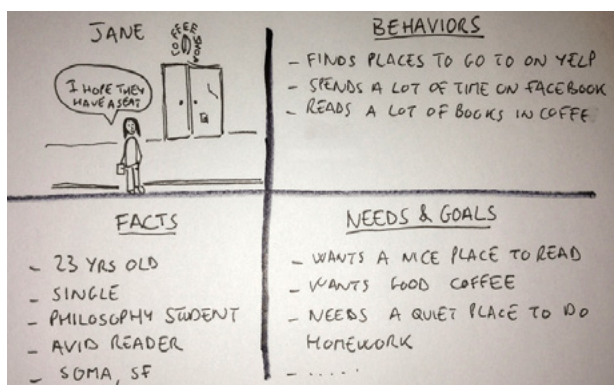
Don't assume your audience will search for the same terms or jargon you use to refer to your product or services internally. For example, you may refer to your business offering as 'bespoke HR solutions', whereas someone who needs your service might be more likely to type 'reducing employee absence rate' into a search engine.

Get into the mindset of a customer, who is more likely to use natural, casual language than industry jargon or the terms you use to refer to your business. Creating a 'customer persona' will help you to define a specific purpose for your content and a specific type of reader to write for.

To help you to do this, it can be helpful to create customer personas.



Agency Buyer Persona			
	Marketing Coordinator	Account Manager	President/Owner
Background	2 years of experience 24 years old First real job	3 - 7 years of experience 30 years old Second or third job	20+ years of experience Ad agency & consulting background
Activities	Day-to-day traffic manager Executing campaigns Social posts	Client-facing Managing communication & expectations between internal teams	Business development Industry events Scope/proposal strategy
Challenges	Not an expert Time Lack of resources Too much to do	Sales and strategy Deliver results Manage the process and the team	Small team Employee turnover Funding/tools Digital evolution
Concerns	Too small/growth Too hard No process or guidance	Marketing coordinator complains about being overloaded Losing accounts Losing team members	Competition Keeping clients Growth New customers
Needs	Tools to support her Easy automation/reporting	Data/tracks Flawless execution Resources	Affordable, robust, fast easy resources
Goals	More up Gain experience	Hit Goals Grow Keep clients happy	Grow; become a #1 agency Stay in business



Getting started



Consumer personas should be entirely dynamic, open to change based on the data you discover during the investigation process, however, it is important for you to have at least sketched an outline to build on. Begin by focusing on the following characteristics:

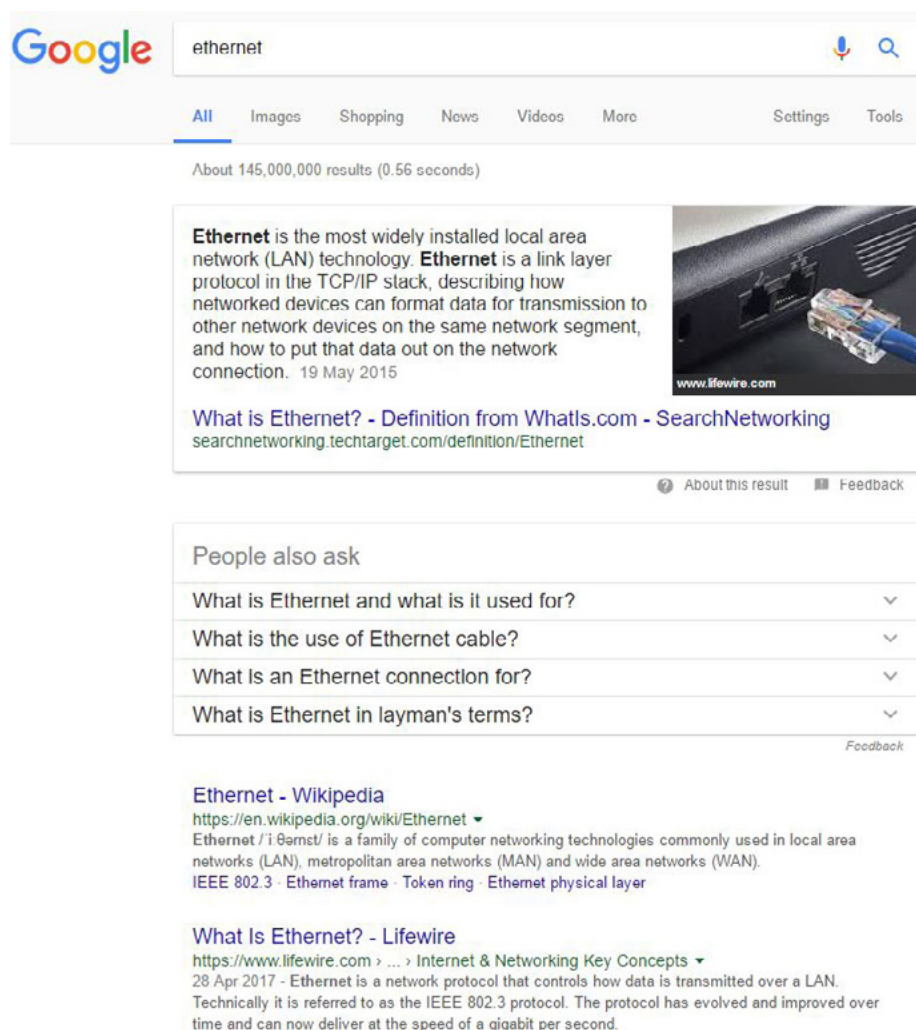
- **Target demographics.** This will feed back into many other areas of your strategic planning, so it's a good area to start with. Whatever service you provide will fall into a few generic types – whether it is 'female marketing managers 25 – 50', or 'house husbands 30 – 40 based in the South East', knowing the audience you're pitching at will begin to give you an indication as to how to satisfy their needs not only with the services or products you provide, but also the keywords and content you produce.
- **Goals and challenges.** What are your ideal customers' values and objectives, personal and/or professional (depending on whether your business operates a B2C or B2B model)? What motivates them and what frustrations do they face? This can help you to identify and improve the way you solve problems for your customers and prospects. You could also include traits such as attitude and behaviour, or even a phrase they might use and complaints they might have, for example, "I know quite a bit about recruitment, but further guidance would reassure me", or "I can never find the right swimwear for my body shape". It can also be useful to think about what they don't want.
- **Device use.** Understanding what devices your customers use, and how they use them, is important for a number of reasons. Device use also offers correlation with intent – with buyers more likely to use desktop to research and make purchases, while mobiles tend to be used more for solution based searches, local searches and voice searches. Determining device intent will feed directly into any good search marketing campaign, allowing you to offer cross platform personalisation to help nurture customers and increase conversions. As mobile search also tends to be influenced more by location, offering brands with a location specific, or multiple location specific, offers or products the ability to drive mobile users to convert in person.
- **Usage charts.** When are your customers most active and receptive? If usage peaks in working hours then this should be your focus or, if you run an eCommerce site, you need to work to your strengths during periods of high seasonal or holiday activity – think Christmas for toy manufacturers, or summer for BBQ equipment and garden furniture. It's not enough to be online for these periods, it is important to use gathered data and your customer personas to make your best pitches at times when your services are most required, in addition to creating meaningful content year-round. Though this is predominately of relevance to paid search campaigns, it is also useful when planning asset marketing for inbound sales and even for seasonal SEO updates to product feeds.

CONSIDER INTENT

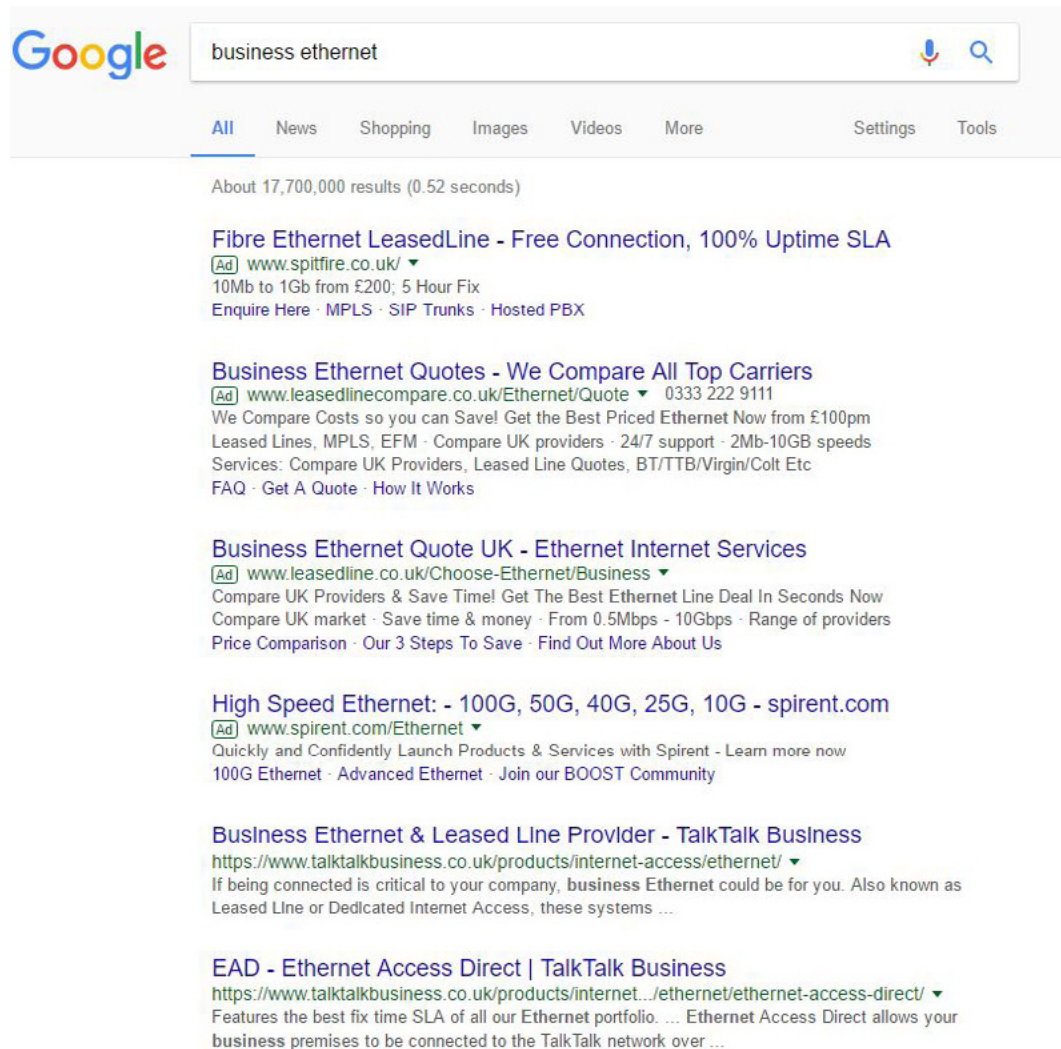
Think about what people search for at different stages of the buying cycle. At the start of their searches, potential customers are likely to search for problem-based keywords, eg: 'How to dry out a smartphone'.

Further into the buying cycle, they tend to type in solution-based keywords, eg, 'waterproof smartphone cases', while branded keywords tend to be used at the decision stage: 'Samsung Smartphone preserver case review'.

For example, a company selling business ethernet solutions may assume that focusing on the head word 'ethernet' will help their website to rank well. However, a quick search of this term shows that Google interprets it term as informational. In other words, it returns results relevant to those looking to find a definition for 'ethernet', rather than those looking to actually purchase:



A keyword better suited to this business' objective – to sell – would be to go for the more specific 'business ethernet', which returns transactional results:



Our eBook, [Search Experience Optimisation](#), goes into greater depth about how to optimise your web content for user intention.

ASK CLIENT-FACING EMPLOYEES

Colleagues such as Account Managers and Business Development Managers will know the queries that customers (or potential customers) ask most often and what language they use.






Google

buy birthday cake online delivery

Web Shopping Maps News Images More Search tools

About 4,060,000 results (0.22 seconds)

Shop for buy birthday cake online... on Google Sponsored

				
Personalised Ready Made ... £17.99 Party Pieces	Birthday Sprinkle ... £22.00 English Chee...	Princess Barbie Birthday £14.99 Baker Days	Kitty Cat Birthday Cake £14.99 Baker Days	Princess Birthday Cake £14.99 Baker Days

Buy Cakes Online fr £15 - BakerDays.com
Ad www.bakerdays.com/Buy_Cakes_Online
4.7 ★★★★★ rating for bakerdays.com
Buy Before 2pm, Delivered Next Day! Huge Range Inc Personalised Cakes.

Online Cakes at M&S
www.marksandspencer.com/Online-Cakes
Order Online & Collect In Store
Shop Cakes Online Today!
Liverpool
0151 709 1951

Buy Birthday Cakes Online
www.newcakes.co.uk/Cakes
Free Nationwide Delivery. Handmade.
With Prices From £59. Order Online!

Buy Birthday Cakes
www.cakesnextday.com/Cakes_Next_Day
020 8450 6788

NEXT STEPS

Keyword research is a vital exercise to inform your content strategy

Because content plays a key role in achieving organic search success, brands that publish fresh, engaging content on a regular basis are likely to rank highly on search engine results pages for terms included within the context of such content.

So the next step is to use the terms you've identified strategically to help you rank when potential customers are searching. Our eBook, [Creativity and SEO Content Creation](#), guides you through how to create on-page content that's relevant, useful and authoritative.

Use your keywords to optimise your pages

As well as using your keywords (or [variants of them](#)) in your copy, use them in:

- page titles;
- H1 headers;
- image alt tags;
- meta descriptions.

This last point - meta descriptions - is perhaps the most important. Although it has no direct SEO influence, this can be a make-or-break deciding factor in a user's decision about whether your content is relevant to their search query and worth checking out. Imagine you're creating an advertisement when creating your meta title and meta description, after all, you want to tempt searchers to click on your listing in the search results. They should include the keywords you're targeting for that page, but in an appropriate descriptive and interesting manner.

Don't get so distracted about aligning your content this with keywords that you end up creating content aimed at search engines rather than humans. Avoid overuse ('keyword cramming'/'keyword stuffing'); this can actually hurt your rankings. Content should read naturally: including your keyword in the title and headline of your page and a couple of times in the copy is enough. Repeating yourself can look spammy and even result in a Google penalty).

GET IN TOUCH WITH US TODAY

ABOUT US

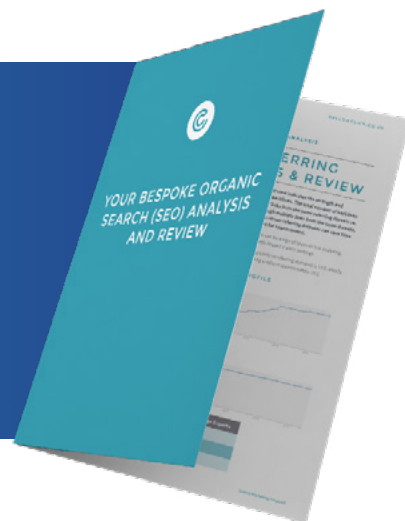
Click Consult is a multi award-winning digital and search marketing agency with a focus on organic (SEO) and paid search (PPC). Part of global consumer brand business Ceuta Group, we have a team of 70-plus specialists and a portfolio of more than 60 clients worldwide.

Our complementary services include content marketing, outreach, social media, conversion rate optimisation (CRO): and international/multilingual search marketing. We can also offer training and consultation to support your teams or existing strategy.

Click was named Search Agency of the Year 2018, adding to our long list of other awards and accolades, and also ranks within Econsultancy's 'Top 100 Digital Agencies', and Prolific North's 'Top 50 Digital Agencies'. We're also a Google Premier Partner, a Bing Select Partner and feature in The Drum Recommends.

YOUR BESPOKE ORGANIC SEARCH (SEO) ANALYSIS AND REVIEW

REQUEST NOW



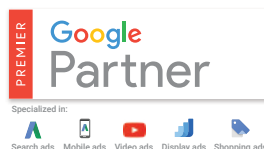
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