

VOLUME 1  
ISSUE 2  
2018

# PAGES

CLEAN  
PROVEN  
SEO

AN SEO MAGAZINE



my next vacatio|

my next vacation  
my next vacation **will be**  
my next vacation **destination**

## THE KEYWORD RESEARCH ISSUE

### LINK WITH INTENT

Vincent Nero  
Content Marketing Manager, Siege Media

### KEYWORD DIFFICULTY

Russ Jones  
Principal Search Scientist, Moz

### GET OUTSIDE THE BOX

Tim Soulo  
Head of Marketing & Content Strategy, Ahrefs

### CRAFTING CONTENT MAGIC

Olga Andrienko  
Head of Global Marketing, SEMrush

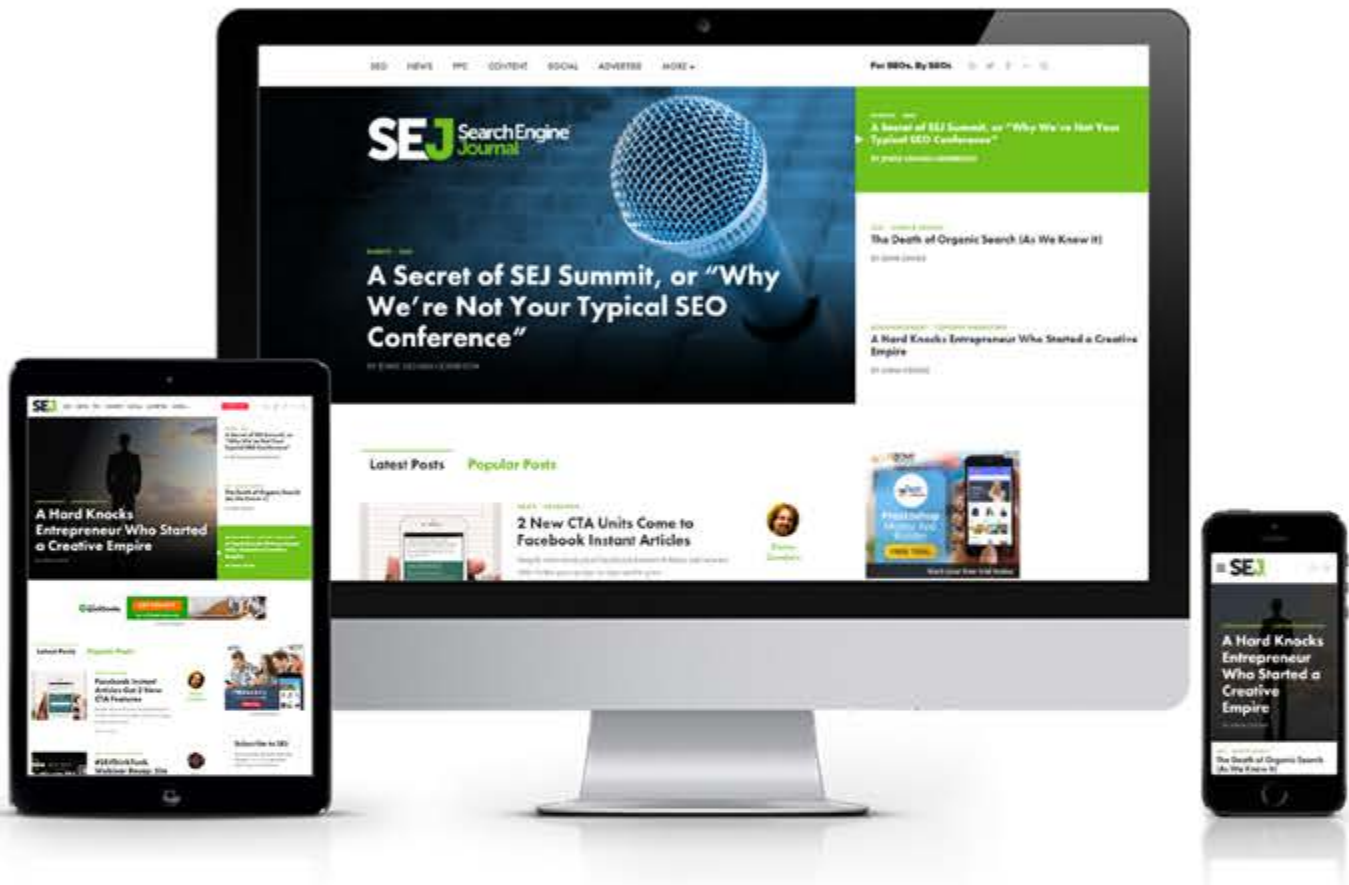
### GREAT MINDS

Matt Vazquez  
Online Marketing Manager, Drift

### THE REAL GOLD

Peter Buffington  
Product Manager, Australian Broadcasting Corp.

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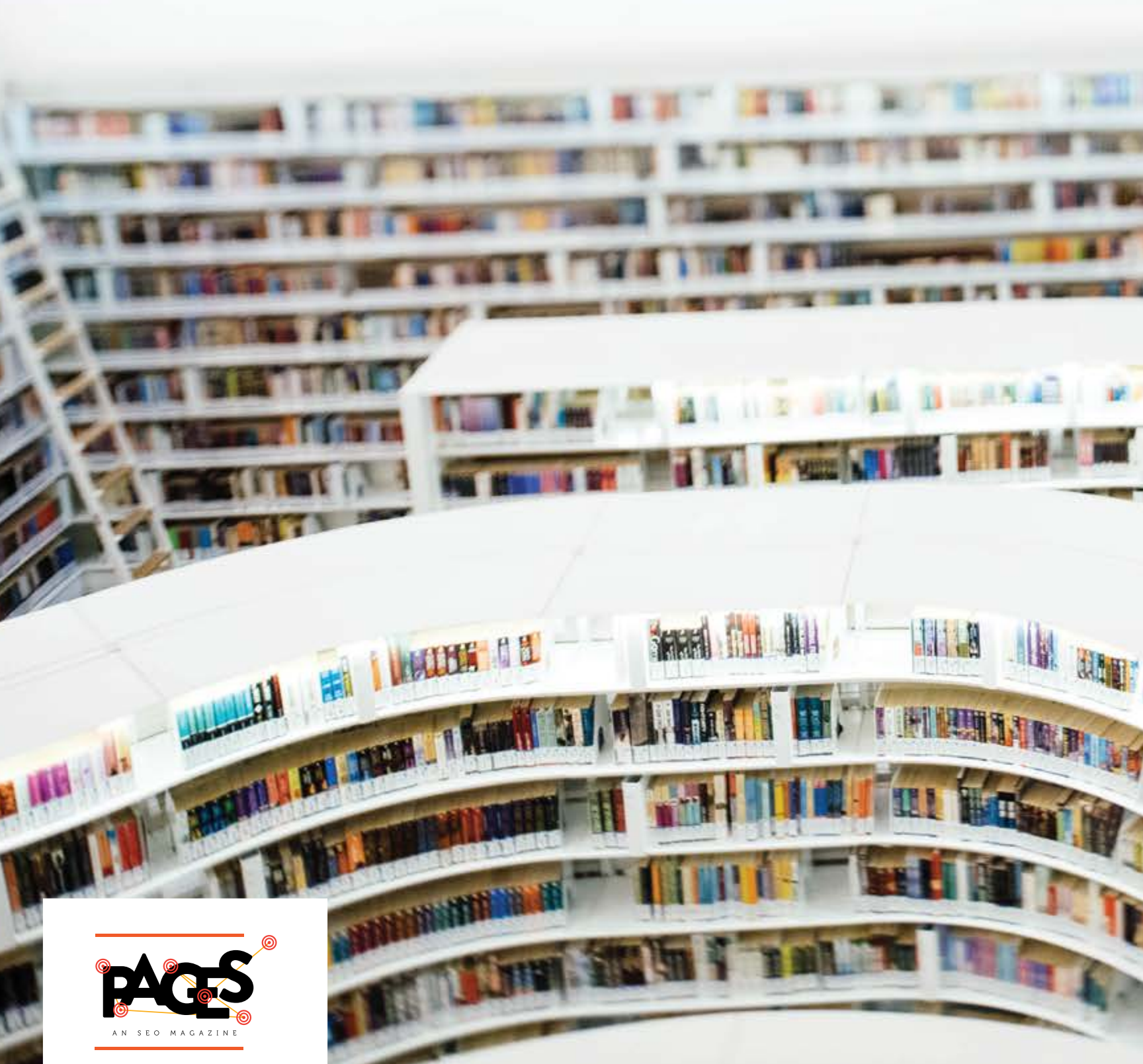


**WELCOME BACK.**



# PAGES

A N S E O M A G A Z I N E



**EDITOR IN CHIEF:** JOE OLIVER  
**ART AND DESIGN:** A.J. OGDEN  
**MANAGING EDITOR:** SLOAN ROSEBERRY  
**MARKETING AND ADVERTISING:** JAN SCHMIDT  
**PHOTOGRAPHY:** UNSPLASH.COM  
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# FEATURED

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Head of Global Marketing, SEMrush

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Head of Marketing & Content Strategy, Ahrefs

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Principal Search Scientist, Moz

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Infrastructure = 2.5K servers, 38K CPU cores0101

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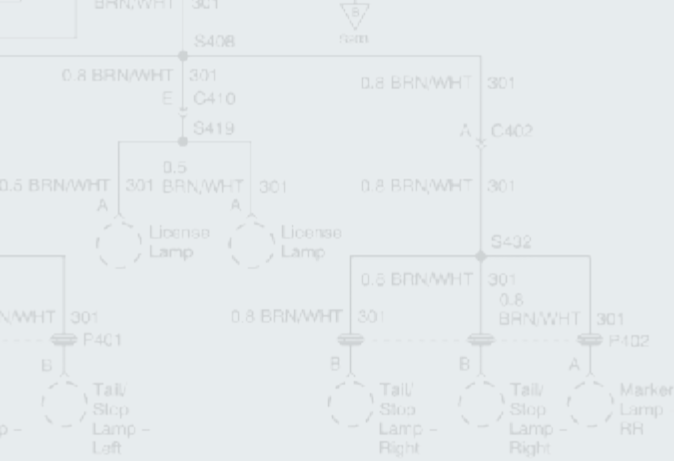
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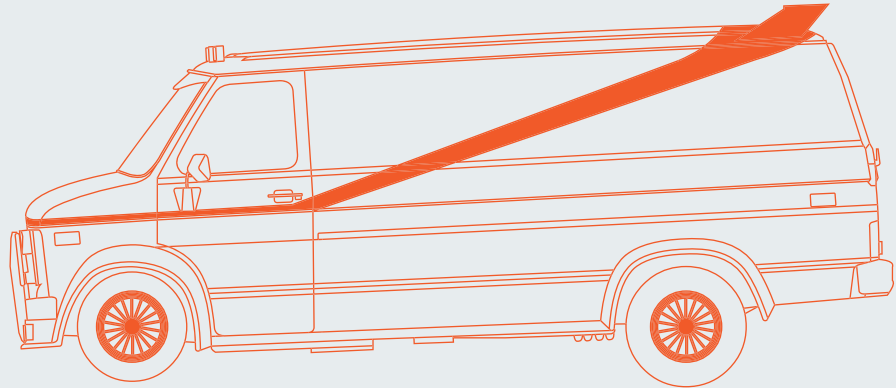


<b>NAME: OLIVER, Joe</b>	
ALIAS: INTRO	
TACTICAL SPECIALIST IN LINK STRATEGY & SEO SOLUTIONS	DOB: 12 / 26 / 78
	LOC: BOISE, ID USA
	RANK: CHIEF



vol. 1

ISSUE 2



**Growing up in the 80's, I was naturally a huge fan of the A-Team. Murdock, BA, Face, Hannibal — and who could forget that iconic 1983 GMC Vandura van. Jet black with the red streak down the side. I had every toy and watched every episode.**

You can imagine my excitement when I heard there was a movie being released in the summer of 2010. With a cast starring Liam Neeson, Bradley Cooper, Rampage Jackson, and Sharlto Copley, it looked like it was going to be a fantastic movie.

It was okay.

However, there was one scene that stood out to me, that even today I love to watch.

Hannibal, played by Liam Neeson, is in prison with his team and needs to escape. Hannibal is the team leader and is the man who always has the plan. He's never outwitted, never caught off guard.

In this particular scene, he's sitting with those he intends to escape with and is questioned about his ability to work out a way to break out. He responds, in his most Liam Neeson way,

"Give me a minute, I'm good. Give me an hour, I'm great. Give me six months, I'm unbeatable."

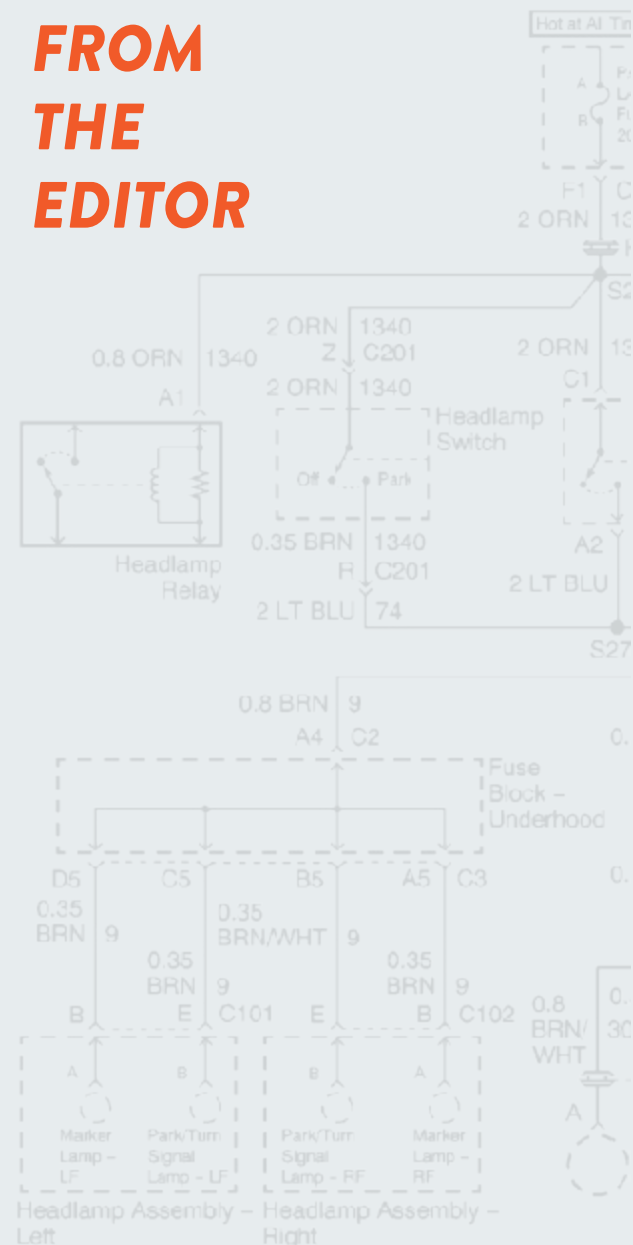
In this issue of *PAGES*, we wanted to share stories and guides about the practice of keyword research. Keyword research is about having a plan. A plan that, when executed well, gives any website it's best chance to compete.

I hope that as you flip through the pages and read the stories, you'll find inspiration and information to help you build a plan, so you, too, are unbeatable.

Thank you for reading *PAGES*.

Joe Oliver  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, *PAGES* MAGAZINE

## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



VOLUME 1  
ISSUE 2  
2018

# THE KEYWORD RESEARCH ISSUE



# READER VOICES

ON PAGES MAGAZINE



Got something to say about PAGES? Let your voice be heard.

Here at PAGES we love hearing from you, our readers. Each issue we highlight some feedback, questions, and comments in response to the previous issue. Please share your thoughts via twitter using the hashtag below or email us at [pages.editor@pageonepower.com](mailto:pages.editor@pageonepower.com).

## #PAGESSEOMAGAZINE



Sunday reading. Getting ready for the new week.  
@pageonepower  
@joeOliver #SEO  
#sundaymotivation  
#pagesmagazine  
[@STATICSETH](#)



Just got the new PAGES Magazine. Great SEO read. Check out the packaging! Thanks so much for sending, can't wait to read.  
[@VINCETHENERO](#)



Nicely done. Well written. Quality paper. Oversized. Loved it. Most go in the recycle bin when I'm done, but not this one.  
[@JOEWATERS](#)



I just got a copy of @pageonepower's new magazine, PAGES. It's really sleek! Thanks guys.  
[@fighto](#)  
[PAUL SHAPIRO](#)

I love the return to print and would love to hear/see how it fits into a larger marketing plan! As for the content it's not aimed at me particularly. No worries there but to be blunt I haven't read it and probably won't. NO OFFENSE INTENDED!! The cover itself sort of positions the reader as someone who is not ready to be a link builder (yet). That as a starting point for a reader narrative is a bit off putting to me. I flipped through and did not see any content that got me excited to spend time except from a "forensic/competitive" standpoint. That said, I will reiterate, it's gorgeous.  
[GARRETT FRENCH, CitationLabs](#)

Garrett,

Thanks for your feedback! No offense taken — many of us are former link builders, our skin is pretty thick when it comes to editorial critique! One of the best things our readers can give us is candid feedback. We appreciate that the link building advice and insights included in Issue #1 of PAGES are already familiar to some readers. We hope future issues of PAGES speak more to your interests, whether because they explore SEO topics you're less familiar with, or because they provide new insight on familiar topics. We also encourage you, and others who can relate to your response, to consider contributing to PAGES in the future. Contributions from experts like you help make PAGES a trusted resource for our readers. We're excited for you to see more of PAGES, and hope you'll continue to read and share your honest thoughts!

-The PAGES Crew

## GREAT IDEA: NEW SEO MAG FROM P1P

[@CYRUSSHEPARD](#)

Thanks

## TWEETS A MILLION!





Thomas Swisher is Page One Power's resident Web Analyst and Data Scientist. He handles our SEO strategy. That's right — even an SEO company needs a dedicated professional to make sure SEO strategy is successfully executed, and of course, we only trust the best.

**HERE'S THOMAS'S TAKE ON A FAVORITE SEO EXTENSION FROM HIS OWN TOOLBAR.**



**LINK MINER**

Link Miner, on the surface, is just a broken link checker. Designed by PointBlankSEO, the extension scans the page you choose for links highlighting working links in green and broken links in red, and displays the status code of the URL.

This is where Link Miner leaves other broken link checker extensions behind. It integrates with Ahrefs, Majestic, and Moz. I integrate mine, with Ahrefs, which allows me to automatically pull data about the links. For example, I can get the number of backlinks and/or referring domains, social media metrics, and get the top five linking pages for that link. One of the most important features for me is the ability to export all the links and their metrics to a spreadsheet for further analysis.

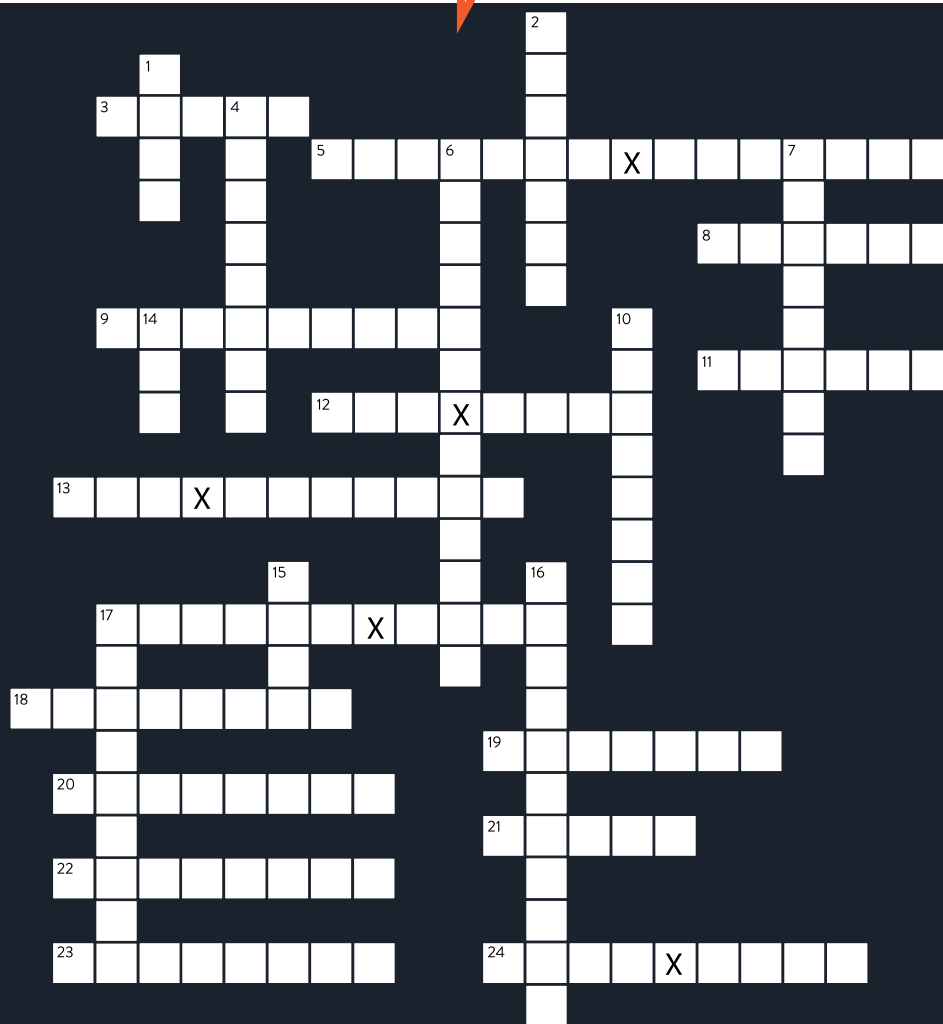
Overall, these extra features make Link Miner the best broken link analysis extension around.

You can read the official documentation at: <http://pointblankseo.com/linkminer>

# TIME KILLER



AKA: BRAINBUSTER



**THEME: SEO KNOWLEDGE!**

**ACROSS.**

- 3. This fuzzy friend hates bad content.
- 5. Works best between the numbers 1 and 3.
- 8. Without a reason to stay, this is what they'll do.
- 9. Google's most hated twins.
- 11. Charlotte, Shelob, and Aragog.
- 12. Image cannot be displayed, but this will.
- 13. For search engines. Describes the universal resource locators on a given domain.
- 17. Describes a destination.
- 18. Less juice, still full of use.
- 19. I don't want it! Sacrifice quantity for quality.
- 20. Fraudulent shroud.
- 21. What do you need to find?
- 22. Retrograde Litigation.
- 23. Housekeeping. Gets you where you need to go.
- 24. Uncommon, but ranks with ease.

**DOWN.**

- 1. Popular on the Hawaiian Islands. Your folder is probably full.
- 2. Popup nouveau.
- 4. Standard state for links.
- 6. Rare flowers grow here. Exclusive linking.
- 7. Just for turkeys (or Tofurkeys!)
- 10. Info about info.
- 14. Content for the people by the people.
- 15. You can do it with a stick. There and back again.
- 16. Who here is responsible?
- 17. Associated individual.


X - Denotes space between words in answer. Answer key in back of magazine.

**BREAK OUT  
OF THE  
SAME OLD SAME OLD.** ©





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**IT'S NOT ALWAYS  
ABOUT GETTING  
VISITORS TO YOUR  
SITE, BUT ABOUT  
GETTING THE RIGHT  
KIND OF VISITORS.**

---

- RANDFISHKIN  
*SparkToro*





C R A F T I N G

C O N T E N T

**Magic**

KEYWORD RESEARCH FOR  
CONTENT MARKETING

- O L G A A N D R I E N K O -

Head of Global Marketing, SEMrush

**According to a recent study by eMarketer, 9 out of 10 B2B businesses in the United States use digital content marketing. It's not only an industry best practice, but quite often a competitive requirement to run content marketing campaigns in-house or with the help of an agency.**

If you're not applying keyword research to your content marketing, it's time to start. Keyword research can help you create assets your customers are searching for, driving traffic to your website and building brand authority on the topics your target market cares about.



**IF YOU'RE NOT  
APPLYING KEYWORD  
RESEARCH TO YOUR  
CONTENT MARKETING,  
IT'S TIME TO START**

# The **BASICS**

Content marketing is a branch of online marketing that helps attract users to a company's website.

Some common examples of content include articles on a company's blog, videos, or infographics. By sharing content, a company doesn't aim to advertise to a broad audience, but targets precisely the users who are already searching for something related to the business.

Let's say your company sells power tools online. Your content marketing process might look something like this:



There are a lot of “**IFs**” when it comes to content marketing.

- You can only post **IF** you run a content platform: a corporate blog, forum, or social media.
- The user will see your page in search results only **IF** you rank high enough for their search query — the keyword that they type in the search field. Ideally you should be on the first page of the search results.
- The user will make a purchase only **IF** you convince them that your product is what they are looking for. Needless to say, nowadays, it's unacceptable to be pushy in your writing.

Regardless of the challenges — and perhaps, in part, because of them — content marketing is a very effective means of attracting users to a website. This is the main reason why companies run blogs and invest in social media marketing: to attract potential customers. The noble intention of sharing valuable knowledge with the world usually comes second.

# The **CONTEXT**

**Keyword Research in Content Marketing**

Any piece of content you create should be designed for your target audience, so it has to be relevant to their interests - or better, satisfy their *intent*. This concept, broadly popularized by Google, is described as the intention of the user when they open their browser on the search page.

You can't know for sure what your readers *will* be interested in, but you can know what they *are* looking for now. This is the main implication of content creation: you assume that users will be interested in a certain topic based on the information that a sufficient number of users are already interested in it. Though this involves some educated guesswork, big data provides the necessary insights.

Keyword research is how you discover what your potential readers are searching for.

Keyword search volumes — the average amount of search queries for a certain keyword in a particular geographical location — can give you an indication of how much demand there may be for a given topic or query and help you decide where to focus content creation efforts.

There are plenty of online tools that help you find the most popular and relevant keywords, from Google's own Keyword Planner to multiple other providers with independent calculation mechanisms, including SEMrush.

**YOU CAN'T KNOW  
FOR SURE WHAT YOUR  
READERS WILL BE  
INTERESTED IN, BUT  
YOU CAN KNOW WHAT  
THEY ARE LOOKING  
FOR NOW.**





# The APPLI- CATION

## Applying Keyword Research

Keyword research traditionally involves three major steps:

### 1. DEFINE

DEFINING THE CORE TOPICS THAT YOU WILL BE WRITING ABOUT.

In the power tools example it could be “power tools” and “DIY.” This list can consist of more search terms, which we call *seed keywords* or *seeds*.

### 2. EXPAND

EXPANDING THE LIST OF SEED KEYWORDS WITH THE HELP OF A KEYWORD RESEARCH TOOL.

### 3. INVESTIGATE

RUNNING COMPETITIVE RESEARCH TO SELECT THE KEYWORDS THAT HAVE THE BEST POTENTIAL.

Usually, these keywords have a combination of high volume and low competition level.



Step one is typically pretty straightforward – a quick brainstorm is usually enough. You already know what your business provides.

For the last couple of steps, you’ll need to use specific tools that can show related keywords and keyword volumes, and are capable of filtering the results to help you decide precisely which keywords to target.

At SEMrush, we have developed the Keyword Magic Tool for keyword research. It’s easy to use, even for beginners, and provides multiple valuable insights useful to even experienced content strategists.



# The EXAMPLE

## Keyword Magic Tool Walkthrough

If you enter the seed keyword “circular saw,” the tool generates 12,615 relevant keywords.

By number of keywords	By volume
All keywords	12,615
> blade	2,714
> cut	1,391
> 1	993
> 4	780
> dewalt	779
> cordless	749

### All keywords

Total volume **318,370** | Average Difficulty **7.43%**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Keyword	Volume	KD%	CPC
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">circular saw</a>	49,500	87.17	0.76
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">dewalt circular saw</a>	6,600	85.64	0.73
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">circular saw guide</a>	6,600	78.21	0.51
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">makita circular saw</a>	4,400	88.59	0.64

The Keyword Magic tool groups results by the number of words in a keyword phrase, displays search volumes for the past month, provides keyword difficulty (which indicates how strong the competition is for this keyword), and indicates whether this keyword triggers any SERP features – for instance, Featured Snippets, Top Stories or Local Packs.



One of the biggest advantages of the tool is its ability to show you the most commonly-searched questions related to your seed keywords. By addressing these specific questions in your content, you provide valuable information to the user and satisfy their search intent with an answer – what they intended to find when they began their search.

### All keywords

Total volume **10,510** | Average Difficulty **5.04%**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Keyword	Volume
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">how to use a circular saw</a>	1,900
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">how to change a circular saw blade</a>	590
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">how to sharpen a circular saw blade</a>	320
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">how to cut straight with a circular saw</a>	260
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">how to cut a straight line with a circular saw</a>	210
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">how to make straight cuts with a circular saw</a>	210
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">what is a circular saw</a>	170
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">how to cut plexiglass with a circular saw</a>	170

# The WRAPUP

In Conclusion



**Keyword research boosts the effectiveness of your content marketing, and it's simple to implement as long as you have the right tools. Once you understand which metrics to look for and how to use the tools, it's not difficult to incorporate keyword research into your content marketing and reap the SEO and brand-building benefits. Try adding a few extra steps to include keyword research in your content creation workflow — they'll add significant value to your assets. ©**

# OLGA

## Andrienko

Olga is Head of Global Marketing at SEMrush.

She and the SEMrush team have built one of the strongest and most active international communities in the online marketing industry.

In 2016, Olga worked on tapping into new markets, and YoY average revenue growth from the top 10 new markets was over 90%. During the last year, she's been focused on investing in SEMrush's PR and social media, and revenue coming from referrals has doubled as of the end of 2017.

Olga is a sought-after speaker at leading marketing conferences such as SMX, Pubcon, and BrightonSEO.



@olgandrienko



An aerial photograph of a crowded beach. The sand is light-colored and dotted with numerous colorful beach umbrellas in shades of blue, orange, red, and white. People are scattered across the beach, some sitting on towels or blankets, others standing. The scene is bright and sunny, with shadows cast by the umbrellas and people.

**YOU'LL HAVE TO GET  
INSIDE PEOPLE'S HEADS  
AND FIND OUT WHAT  
WORDS THEY USE WHILE  
SEARCHING.**

---

- MARIEKEVAN DE RAKT  
YOAST







G R E A T

M I N D S

T H I N K

~~A L I K E~~ DIFFERENTLY

THINKING LIKE YOUR CUSTOMERS FOR KEYWORD RESEARCH

**-MATT VAZQUEZ-**

Conversational Marketing Manager, Drift

# Keyword research is a bit like learning to cook, in the sense that it doesn't take a lot of knowledge or skill to do the basics.

**Once you know how to boil water, you can make pasta. Once you know what your business provides, you can use those words on your website.**

Every business owner understands this concept. Vinny, the Boston Italian restaurant owner, knows intuitively that his website should prominently include language like “Boston restaurant” and “dinner in Boston.” All he has to do is use some type of free keyword tool, such as Google Keyword Planner, to plug some of those keywords in, verify that they indeed have search volume — usually quantified as “average monthly searches” — and look for some additional related keywords that the tool suggests. Bravo! All done.

Similarly, Nathan, the owner of a software company, knows that his software helps businesses, schools, and churches plan ahead and prepare for emergencies. Therefore, his most basic keyword research will revolve around similar keywords, such as “emergency preparedness software” and “emergency planning.”

In short, basic keyword research starts by identifying what value your business provides.

This is a great first step to attract people that already know the solution they want from their search. For example, “dinner in Boston” or “software that helps prepare for emergencies”.

But what about those people that understand the problem that they are looking to solve, but haven't figured out the solution they want yet? How do you attract them?





### **What Problems Are Your Customers Looking To Solve?**

Putting yourself in your customer's shoes is the only way to uncover the insights needed for this next stage of keyword research. This is when keyword research starts to become an exciting practice of discovery. Opportunities to provide value become clear, and you are able to meet customers exactly where they are in their search for a solution.

Let's look at some examples of how this can play out.

Vinny, the restaurant owner, started talking to his customer base as well as customers from other nearby restaurants. He soon realized that a large number of his customers are couples that are going on a date. Some were married couples looking for a fun evening away from the kids, and others were young professionals on their first date.

It occurred to Vinny that these people were just as interested in "date night options" as they were in a place to eat, whether that be bowling, a movie, or a delicious meal together. This insight inspired Vinny to do keyword research around phrases like "date night boston" and "romantic night out in Boston".

He selected the keywords with search volume that made intuitive sense, and used them to build an additional page on his website, titled, "The Best Date Night in Boston." On this page, he highlighted the restaurant's romantic ambiance and his "dinner for two" specials.

Soon enough, he was attracting new customers that weren't originally searching for a restaurant in particular, but thought that Vinny's restaurant would be a great place to spend their date night.



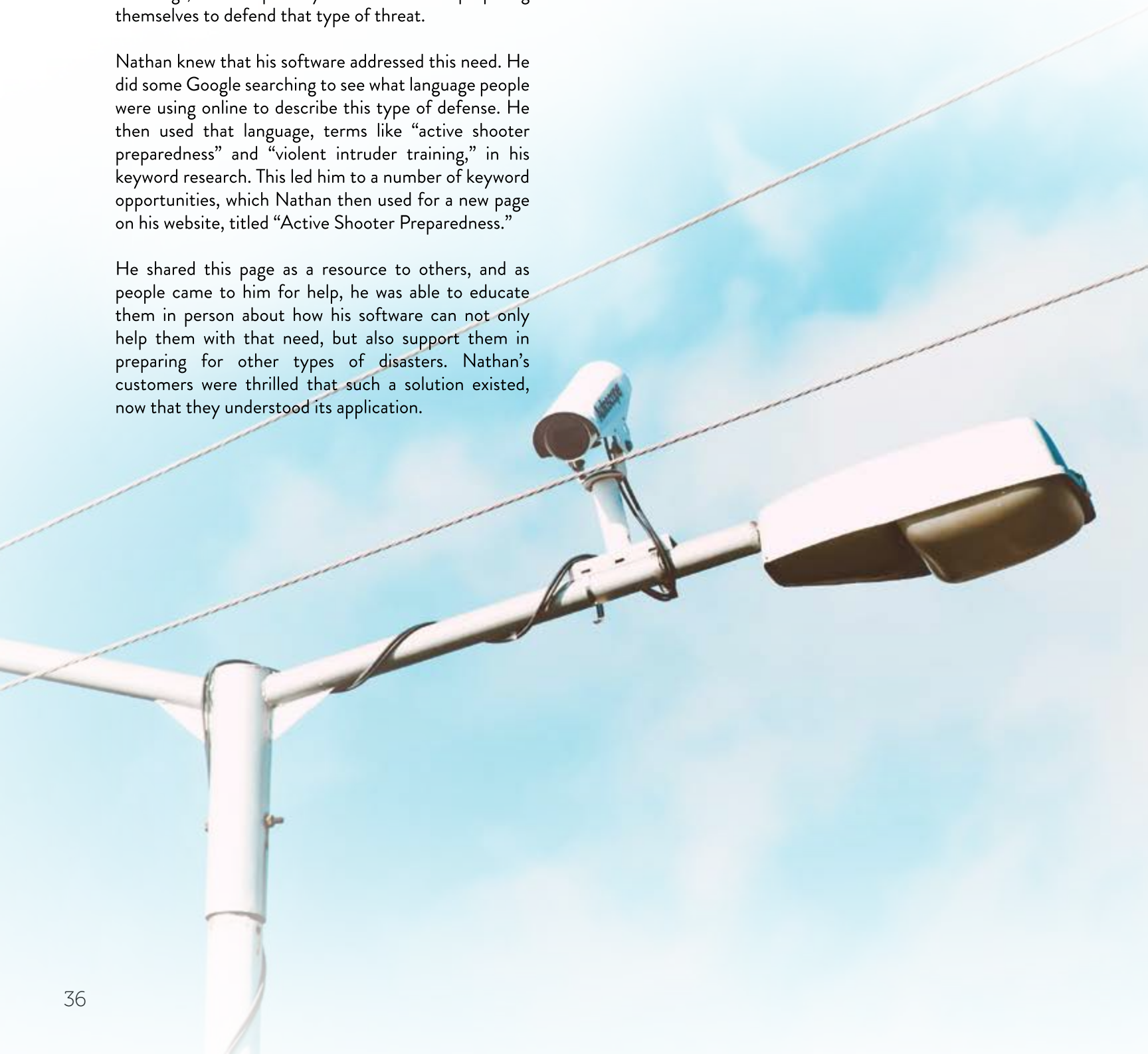
## **Unlearning What You Already Know To Understand Your Customer's Search**

Nathan, the software company owner, was having a harder time with this level of keyword research than Vinny. He couldn't figure out why people weren't finding him for their "emergency preparedness" needs.

After talking to more and more prospective customers, he uncovered the hard truth that people did not resonate with his "all-in-one" emergency preparedness product offering. Their concerns were more acute. Given all of the terrible news of violent intruders and shootings, their primary interest was preparing themselves to defend that type of threat.

Nathan knew that his software addressed this need. He did some Google searching to see what language people were using online to describe this type of defense. He then used that language, terms like "active shooter preparedness" and "violent intruder training," in his keyword research. This led him to a number of keyword opportunities, which Nathan then used for a new page on his website, titled "Active Shooter Preparedness."

He shared this page as a resource to others, and as people came to him for help, he was able to educate them in person about how his software can not only help them with that need, but also support them in preparing for other types of disasters. Nathan's customers were thrilled that such a solution existed, now that they understood its application.



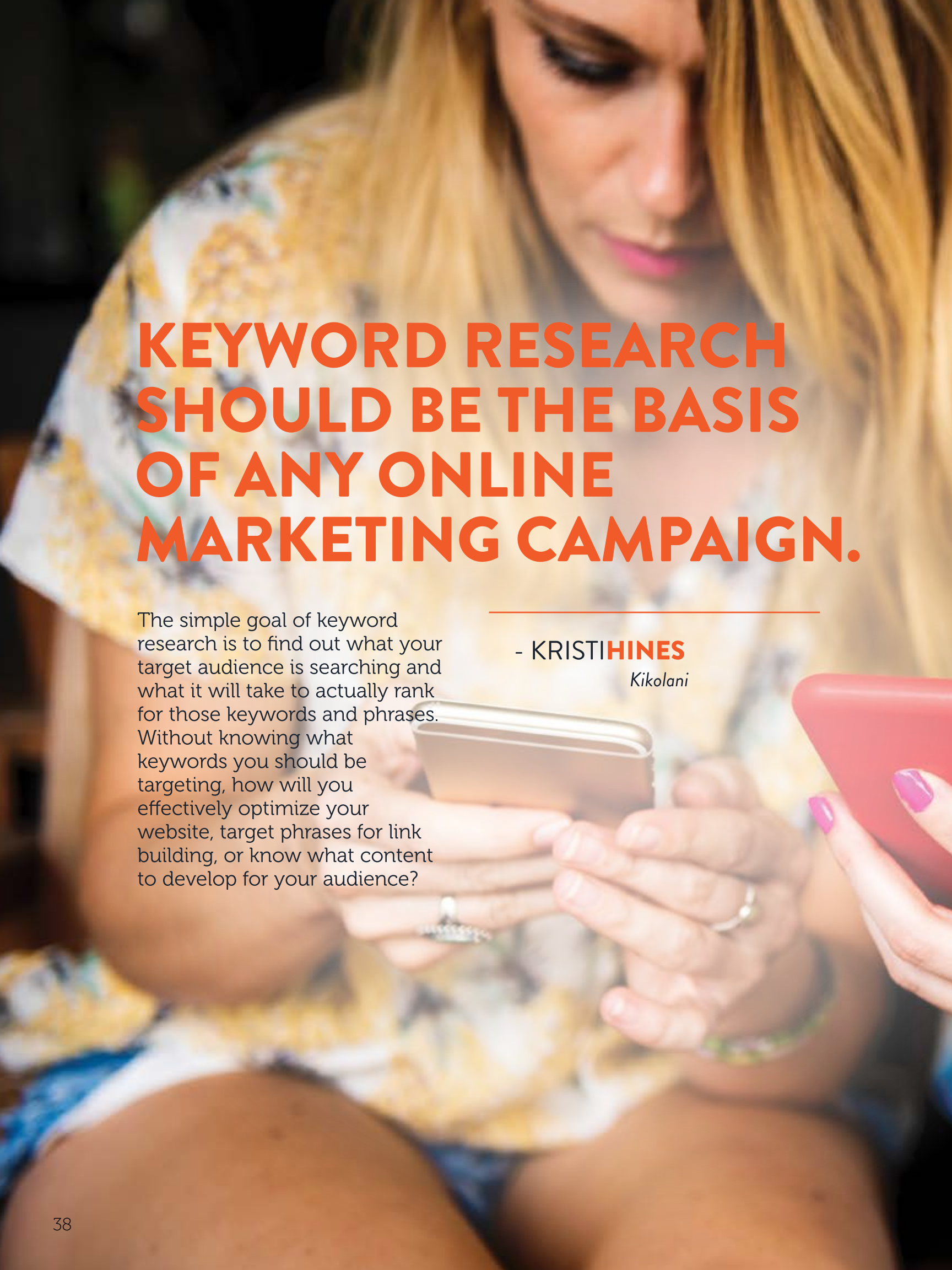
# Great keyword research is about listening to customers.



Vinny and Nathan both had to humble themselves and listen to their customers in order to understand the language that would attract more potential customers to their website. This crucial step is what separates good keyword research from great.

Although it's certainly true that SEO is often not this simple and involves many other factors, the most seasoned SEO practitioners will be the first to tell you that understanding your audience is at the core of the work. It is this process of discovery and exploration that makes keyword research and SEO such a fun and fulfilling form of marketing. ☺



A close-up photograph of a woman with long, wavy blonde hair looking down at a smartphone. She is wearing a patterned top. The background is blurred. The text is overlaid on the image.

# KEYWORD RESEARCH SHOULD BE THE BASIS OF ANY ONLINE MARKETING CAMPAIGN.

The simple goal of keyword research is to find out what your target audience is searching and what it will take to actually rank for those keywords and phrases. Without knowing what keywords you should be targeting, how will you effectively optimize your website, target phrases for link building, or know what content to develop for your audience?

---

- KRISTIHINES  
*Kikolani*





# THE REAL GOLD: LEARNING FROM ON-SITE SEARCH DATA

PETER BUFFINGTON

SEO Manager, Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC)



# SEO IS ABOUT UNDERSTANDING USER INTENT AND CRAFTING STRATEGY AROUND WHAT PEOPLE ACTUALLY WANT.

**Optimizing the content on your website and wider organizational digital products for search engine visibility requires a methodical approach and consistent effort, but the principles are beautifully simple: users tell us what they want, and we give it to them. It's like a restaurant.**

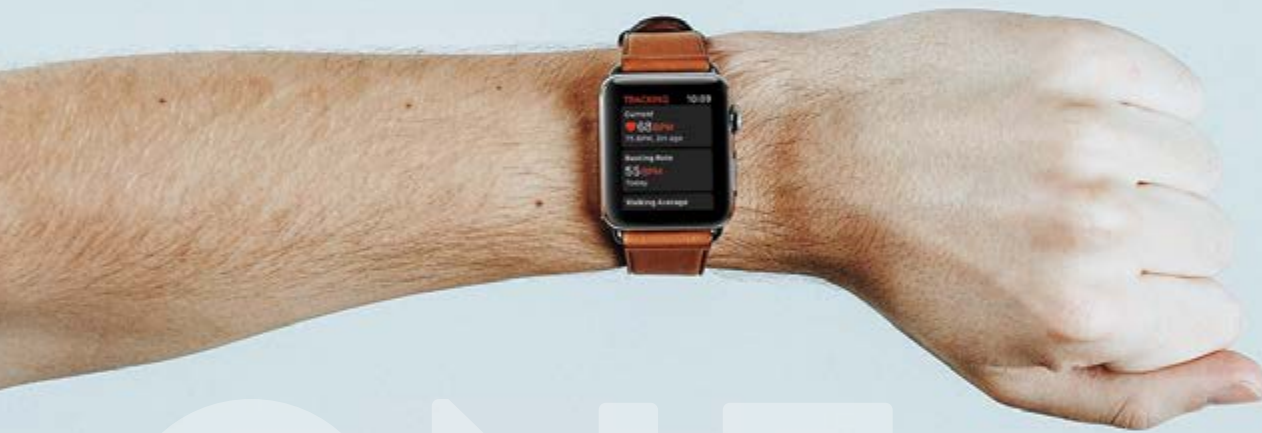
**This line of thinking is even more true for on-site search. It's an absolute gold mine for SEO strategy, and keyword research specifically.**

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) is Australia's taxpayer-funded national broadcaster, and is also a prime example of a large organization that takes search behavior seriously. The ABC produces and distributes diverse content, ranging from news videos to talk shows to text article to podcasts to games. With that comes the responsibility to ensure all that content is discoverable, on and off platform, to users across the country and the world.

While traditional SEO — involving consideration for external search engines like Google and Baidu — is surely part of the ABC's editorial and technical strategy, site search data from within our actual websites and apps has become an integral part of our digital product and content vision.

With tens of thousands of on-site searches each day, our keyword data is full of rich learnings and has many associated insights such as peak search times, full user path, and even the ID associated with particular users and particular searches. This data is essentially unfiltered and unsampled — a little more detail than AdWords provides — and can be used to improve the performance of our internal site search as well as third party search engine performance.

Here are three actionable steps that the ABC has taken to leverage site search that can apply to any organization of any size or any industry.



# ONE

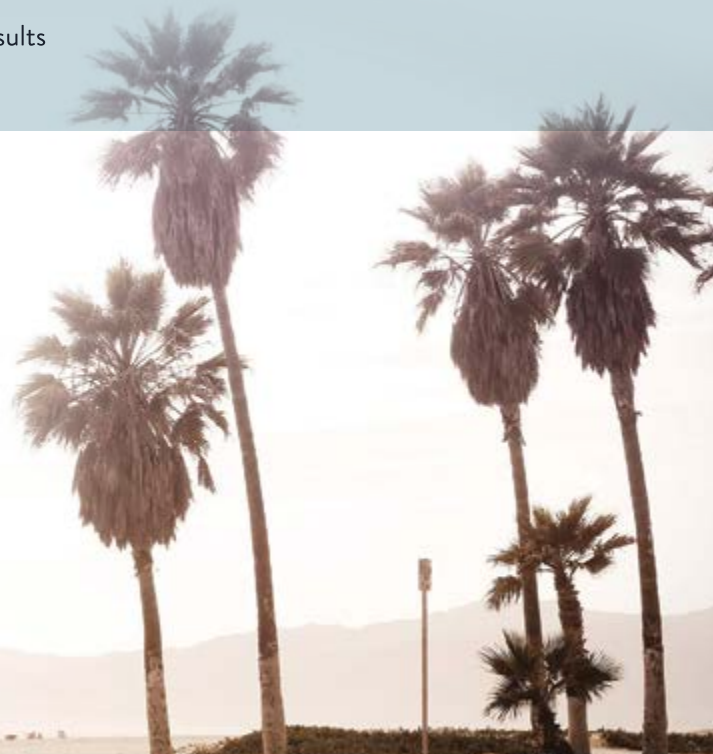
**WE IMPLEMENTED SITE SEARCH AND  
MADE SURE IT WAS TRACKED WITH A  
FULL ANALYTICS PACKAGE.**

If your organization's website doesn't have a site search function, seriously consider adding one. Part of adding this function is ensuring you can track its use, and track it well. Knowing how people on your website are behaving and what they want from your website is invaluable for content development, site structure, and optimization.



## KEY THINGS TO TRACK WITH ANALYTICS

- Keywords
- Location of search (which URL)
- Time of search
- Destination (which URL)
- Demographic data
- Keywords that don't trigger relevant results
- Adjusted searches



# TWO

## WE COMMITTED TO SITE SEARCH.

● According to a recent study from eConsultancy, 84% of companies don't actively optimize or measure their on-site search. Imagine how tiny the percentage is for businesses that consistently leverage that data to influence wider strategy. At the ABC, we didn't want to be one of the businesses that ignored some of their most important and detailed user data.

### WHAT COMMITMENT MEANS:

- Get a team around your site search and include the necessary resources on this team: a product owner who is responsible for on-site search, a tester, and even a developer to customize the experience and user interface (UI).
- Make it a long-lived focus by considering it as a brother or sister of traditional SEO that requires consistent and sustained effort.
- Continue iterating the way you utilize the data as you become more familiar with its potential.



# THREE

## WE LEVERAGED SITE SEARCH DATA TO INFORM WEBSITE OPTIMIZATION, CONTENT DEVELOPMENT, AND INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE.



SITE SEARCH

GO

When we dug into our site search data, we found that over 50% of users were searching for information about shows on our network and over 10% were searching for games. This was a big surprise because these weren't the assumed priority areas for our audience.

Using this information, we learned that not only should information about our shows and games be front and center with regards to user interface and navigation (and site search/SEO strategy), but also that our show page titles were too focused on the episode and season numbers rather than specific show details, such as title, actors or genre. We also discovered we didn't have some information users were searching for available on the site, such as detailed actor profiles.

Users on your website, regardless of industry, are very likely searching for similar content and topics that others may be looking for in third-party search. The ABC has found direct parallels between site and third party search behavior and the learnings have helped us move forward strategically.



# THE (Australian Broadcasting Corporation) ABC HAS FOUND DIRECT PARALLELS BETWEEN SITE AND THIRD PARTY SEARCH BEHAVIOR.



## WAYS TO USE SITE SEARCH DATA:

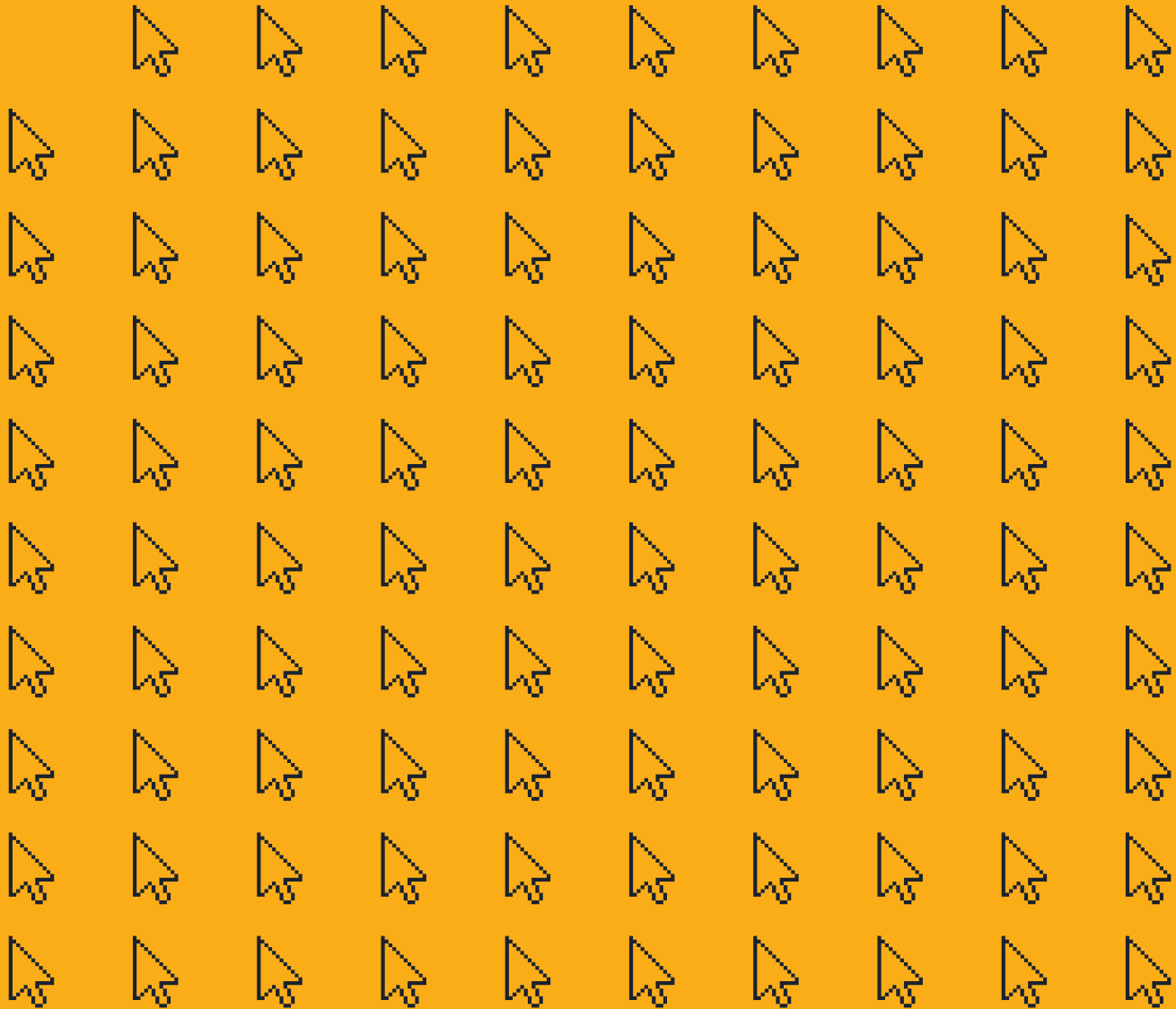
- **Information Architecture and Navigation**  
If users are searching for something frequently, you may as well present a path to that information right away.
- **Page and Website Optimization**  
Use the detailed keyword data to understand specifics around what people are looking for, and which areas of your website they are searching for them on.
- **Content Development**  
If you don't have the information people are looking for, create an optimized page or section about it.
- **Social and Wider Media and Content Strategies**  
Use audience insights from site search data to guide content strategy and creation off-platform.

Site search is a data-driven representation of the public and your specific users.

Implementing site search, if it's not already available to your site's visitors, can not only improve the UX of your site, but open the door to a wealth of data about how those users behave and what they want from your website. It's a benefit to everyone: improved functionality means visitors have a better experience on your site, and the insights you'll gain from the data you gather allow you to further improve that experience.

Take advantage of your most loyal followers by leveraging the questions they're asking right on your doorstep. 📍

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**I'M NOT EXAGGERATING  
WHEN I SAY THAT  
WITHOUT KEYWORDS,  
THERE IS NO SUCH  
THING AS SEO.**

---

- BRIAN DEAN

*Backlinko*

OSSED  
WNV



# DIGITAL CARTOGRAPHY

MAPPING THE WORLD WIDE WEB







# THE WEB WAS CREATED BECAUSE WE NEEDED A WAY TO SHARE INFORMATION WITH EACH OTHER.

Some of the information was related. By creating connections between related pieces of information, we could share information and make new discoveries more easily.

Each spot on the web is called a site. Websites hold our ideas. There are over 1 billion websites on the world wide web today.

Each individual website can contain different web pages, which help us organize the information on the site for users. We can only estimate how many individual pages exist, but we know the number is somewhere in the tens of billions.

Each connection between related websites is a link. Links are like paths, helping us move from one related idea to another.

**WEBSITE**

**LINKS**

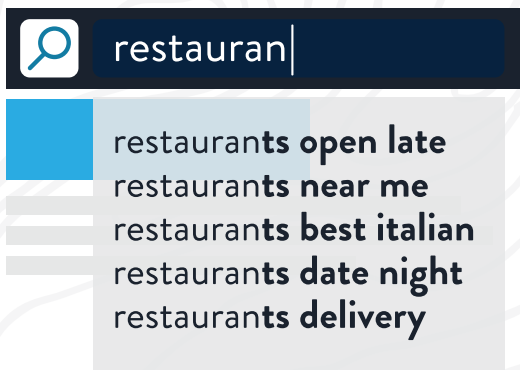
# WITHOUT LINKS, TO FIND AN IDEA ON THE WEB, YOU HAVE TO ALREADY KNOW WHERE IT IS. THIS MAKES IT HARD TO LEARN ABOUT ANYTHING NEW.

But even with links, the web can get tangled.

Search engines were created to untangle the web. They help us find new ideas and answer our questions.

We use keywords to search the web. Keywords are the important words on a site that help us — and search engines — understand what it's about.

## KEYWORDS ARE THE IMPORTANT WORDS ON A SITE THAT HELP US, AND SEARCH ENGINES, UNDERSTAND WHAT IT'S ABOUT.



We use different words to indicate exactly what we're looking for. Sometimes we search for similar, but different, ideas. Search engines are in tune to this and help users by auto-suggesting keywords.

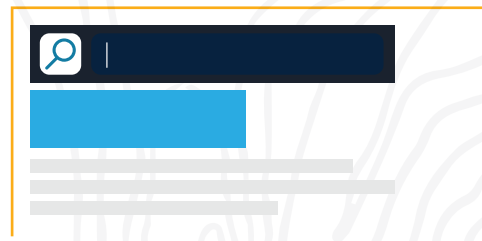
### ANATOMY OF A SEARCH ENGINE



**INDEX**  
The catalog of websites.



**SPIDERS**  
Crawl and follow links on the web to add pages to the index.



**INTERFACE AND RELEVANCY SOFTWARE**  
Accepts user queries and gathers a ranked list of relevant pages.

# DID YOU KNOW?

THE WEB WAS CREATED BY TIM BERNERS-LEE IN 1991. AND THE WORLD CHANGED FOREVER.

THE FIRST SEARCH ENGINE WAS CREATED BY ALAN EMTAGE, A STUDENT AT MCGILL UNIVERSITY IN MONTREAL. IT WAS CALLED ARCHIE, SHORT FOR "ARCHIVES."

6 OUT OF 7 PEOPLE ACROSS THE GLOBE HAVE ACCESS TO THE WORLD WIDE WEB.

42% OF SEARCH ENGINE USERS CLICK ON THE TOP SEARCH HIT. 8% CLICK THE SECOND RANKED RESULT.

GOOGLE ADJUSTS ITS SEARCH ALGORITHM 500-600 TIMES EVERY YEAR!

84% OF U.S. HOUSEHOLDS OWN A COMPUTER. 73% HAVE A BROADBAND CONNECTION TO THE INTERNET.

## THE WAY WE SEARCH FOR SOMETHING ALSO DEPENDS ON OUR OWN EXPERIENCES, THOUGHTS, AND NEEDS.

Different people might search and think of the same thing in very different ways.



**LET THERE BE CONNECTIONS!**



# SEARCH ENGINES GATHER INFORMATION ABOUT WEBSITES TO DECIDE HOW TO BEST HELP USERS FIND WHAT THEY'RE SEARCHING FOR ON THE WEB.

They analyze many elements of the content on a website to decide how well it matches the keywords you used to search.

Search engines also measure the quality of websites to choose the best sites on the web.

- USER FRIENDLY?
- RELEVANT TO QUERY?
- TRUSTWORTHY?
- PROVIDES VALUE?
- LINKS FROM OTHER WEBSITES?



**H1:** PAPA JOE'S EATS  
**URL:** [WWW.PAPAJOESEATS.COM](http://WWW.PAPAJOESEATS.COM)  
**LOCATION:** BOISE, ID  
**AGE OF SITE:** 3 MONTHS  
**KEYWORDS FOUND:** ITALIAN, CASUAL, DINNER, LUNCH SPECIALS, OPEN LATE, PASTA, PIZZA, BOISE  
**REVIEWS:** 4.6 STARS  
"MY FAVORITE! THE BEST IN TOWN." -JOE O.  
**IMAGES ON SITE:**



PAPA JOES EATS



Understanding how users search the web and how search engines analyze websites can help you create websites that contribute to building a better web.

The process of optimizing for how users search the web, and how search engines function to meet user's needs, is search engine optimization. 🎯

**START BY THINKING OF  
JUST ONE GENERAL  
PHRASE THAT  
DESCRIBES THE TOPIC  
YOU'RE DOING  
KEYWORD RESEARCH  
FOR. MAKE IT A PHRASE,  
NOT A WORD.**

It can be 2, 3, or 4 words...as long as it's not just one word. The term "keyword" is actually a bit misleading...because phrases are keywords...at least the most qualified and most valuable ones.

- **NICKEUBANKS**

*IFTF*



# GET OUTSIDE THE

RETHINKING CONVENTIONAL KEYWORD RESEARCH

- TIM SOULO -

Head of Marketing & Product Strategy, Ahrefs



Staying competitive in SEO often requires us to revisit trusted workflows and methods when important changes occur in the industry. It's one of the elements that makes SEO challenging, but it also means there are plenty of opportunities for those that are willing to invest their time in learning how to improve.

It's not a secret: Google makes changes to their ranking algorithm and their search results every year. In their turn, the SEO tools industry does their best to adapt to all these changes and empower SEO professionals with new features and data.

If you're not staying up to date with those changes, you're putting yourself at risk of losing the competitive edge to anyone who invests more of their time in learning.

In 2018, there are two important considerations that should shape your keyword research workflows: understanding where the keyword data is coming from, and having insight into the total search traffic potential of your target keywords.

# AT ITS CORE, THE PRACTICE OF KEYWORD RESEARCH IS ALL ABOUT DISCOVERING WHAT PEOPLE ARE SEARCHING FOR IN GOOGLE, SO THAT YOU CAN CREATE PAGES ON YOUR WEBSITE TARGETING THESE SEARCH QUERIES.

## BUT HOW DO WE LEARN ABOUT ABOUT WHAT PEOPLE SEARCH FOR?

It seems that the only ones who truly have this data are Google themselves, and their motivation to share it with the public is unclear.

Up until recently, SEO professionals had only three sources of keyword data, those being:

1. Google Keyword Planner in Adwords
2. Google's "autocomplete" feature
3. "Related searches" at the bottom of search engine results pages (SERPs)

None of these three gave us the full picture of what people search for.

Google Keywords Planner provides users with a list of relevant keyword ideas to discover new keyword opportunities. However, this list is limited to 700 items — more than enough for search advertisers, but not enough for SEO.

Google's "autocomplete" feature (automatic keyword suggestions that populate as you type a search query) and "related searches" (displayed at the bottom of SERPs) show you a dozen keyword ideas per "seed" keyword — again, not sufficient data for keyword research purposes.

Given these limitations, SEOs have had to rely on scraping — harvesting information from SERPs — to really dig deep into Google's database of search queries. And, until recently, almost every single keyword tool was using a database of keywords that was collected this way.





But in the last few years, a brand new source of SEO data has emerged: clickstream.

A clickstream is the recording of user “clicks” — the actions they take while web browsing. Third-party apps are capable of collecting this anonymized data about web user behavior, including the searches that they perform in Google.

Because of the high cost of obtaining this data, only a few SEO tool providers currently use clickstream data to vastly broaden their database of search queries. The two most popular tools that use clickstream data as one of their sources are Ahrefs and Moz.

## WHAT IS THE “TOTAL SEARCH TRAFFIC POTENTIAL”

OF A KEYWORD?

# WHEN DEVELOPING KEYWORD STRATEGY, CONSIDER HOW MUCH TRAFFIC YOUR SITE MIGHT GAIN IF IT BEGINS RANKING — OR IMPROVES ITS RANKING — FOR A PARTICULAR KEYWORD.

Most SEO professionals reference only one metric to determine this: **search volume** — the measure of how many queries are being made for a given keyword by search engine users.

However, relying on the search volume metric alone isn’t enough. Getting the clearest picture of total search traffic potential requires a less conventional approach, for a number of reasons.

These reasons include:

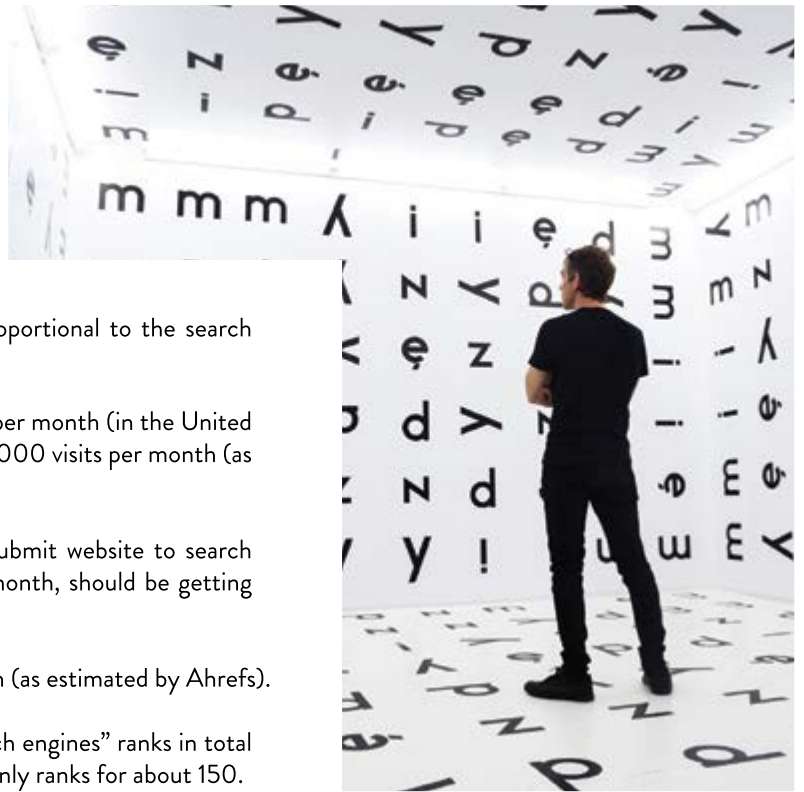
- *The search volume numbers provided in Adwords don’t seem accurate if you compare them to data from Google Search Console, or even Google Trends.*
- *Different keyword research tools will show you different search volumes for the same keyword, depending on how often they update their database.*
- *The presence of ads and other various SERP features in Google’s search results — such as featured snippets, which give users a preview of the websites in a SERP — can “steal” clicks from organic results.*

Most importantly of all, the search volume metric doesn’t accurately reflect the total search traffic that you can expect to get from building a page that targets a certain topic.

The thing is, web pages never rank for just a single keyword.

Here’s why: if you have a page on your website that ranks at position #3 for “how to tie a tie,” chances are it also ranks in the top ten results for other related search queries like “how to tie a tie quick,” “tie a tie tutorial,” and “knotting a tie.”

The total search traffic on a page is the aggregate of all traffic coming from all of the search queries that the page ranks for.



It may seem that the total search traffic should be directly proportional to the search volume of a given keyword, but that's not always the case.

The keyword "SEO tips" has a search volume of 2,700 searches per month (in the United States), and the top-ranking page for that keyword gets nearly 2,000 visits per month (as estimated by Ahrefs).

Does that mean that the top-ranking page for the keyword "submit website to search engines," which has the search volume of 1,300 searches per month, should be getting about half the traffic?

In fact, it gets eight times more traffic — 16,000 visits per month (as estimated by Ahrefs).

This is because the top-ranking page for "submit website to search engines" ranks in total for nearly 4,000 relevant keywords, while the "SEO tips" page only ranks for about 150.

And that's not because it has more content or better links than the other page. It's because of the actual search traffic potential of each topic.

**Think about it — there aren't too many ways you can search in Google for SEO tips. That main keyword pretty much reflects all the search demand:**

- SEO tips (2,700)**
- SEO optimization tips (500)**
- google SEO tip (100)**
- easy SEO tips (30)**

However, in the case of the topic "submit website to search engines", there's no single best way to phrase that query. The total search demand gets diluted between a ton of similar keywords:

- submit website to search engines (1,300)**
- submit site to search engines (500)**
- submit url to search engines (500)**
- submit to search engines (300)**
- submitting site to search engines (300)**
- add website to search engines (250)**
- submitting to search engines (200)**
- ...and many, many more.**

If you want a better picture of how much traffic you might expect to gain from targeting a particular keyword, take a look at the pages that are currently ranking for that keyword. How much traffic are they getting from search? This number is a more accurate reflection of the traffic you could expect to drive to your own page.



## RECAP.

To get an accurate estimate of the total potential traffic you could expect to gain by targeting a given keyword, you can't rely on that keyword's search volume alone. The potential for a page to rank for multiple queries is high, and for this reason, demand for a topic can't be fully reflected in a metric like search volume.

Paying attention to the amount of search traffic going to the top results for the keyword you want to target — and where your keyword data comes from — will help you stay competitive. 🎯





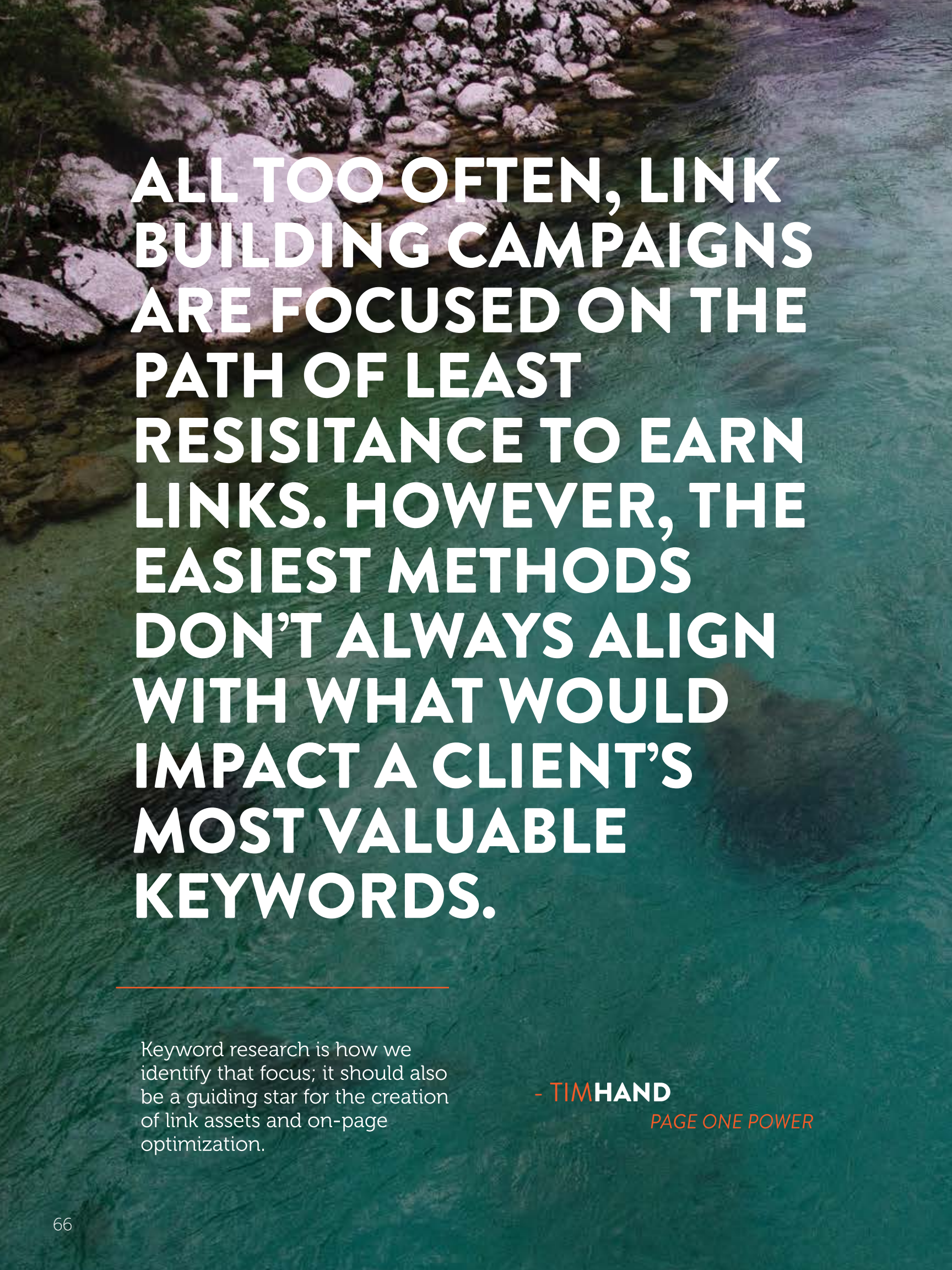
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**ALL TOO OFTEN, LINK BUILDING CAMPAIGNS ARE FOCUSED ON THE PATH OF LEAST RESISTANCE TO EARN LINKS. HOWEVER, THE EASIEST METHODS DON'T ALWAYS ALIGN WITH WHAT WOULD IMPACT A CLIENT'S MOST VALUABLE KEYWORDS.**

---

Keyword research is how we identify that focus; it should also be a guiding star for the creation of link assets and on-page optimization.

- **TIMHAND**

*PAGE ONE POWER*



LINK WITH

INTENT

THE POWER OF LINK INTENT

- VINCE NERO -  
Content Marketing Manager, Siege Media

**BUILDING YOUR BUSINESS  
OR BLOG ONLINE IS ALL  
ABOUT GETTING INTO YOUR  
CUSTOMER OR READER'S  
HEAD. KNOWING WHAT  
THEY THINK AND HOW THEY  
THINK WILL MAKE YOUR JOB  
AS A MARKETER THAT MUCH  
EASIER.**

**CONTENT MARKETING IS ABOUT WRITING THE INFORMATION ON YOUR WEBSITE TO FIT THE NEEDS AND WANTS OF YOUR CUSTOMERS. IF YOU HAVEN'T DONE ANY KEYWORD RESEARCH, IT'S KIND OF LIKE TRYING TO DRIVE WITHOUT A MAP. YOU MIGHT GET LUCKY AND GET TO THE PLACE YOU NEED TO EVENTUALLY, BUT CHANCES ARE YOU'LL RUN OUT OF GAS ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD A FEW TIMES FIRST. WE WANT TO AVOID THIS, BECAUSE IN THIS BUSINESS, GAS EQUALS MONEY.**



#### WHAT IS SEARCH INTENT?

When I first started to understand the power of search intent, I felt like I had solved a Sherlock Holmes mystery. For those unfamiliar with the topic, search intent refers to the type of result the user hopes to get when they're searching. Generally, we can classify search intent into a few common types of searches.

When searching for the name of a brand, a user might just want to visit that brand's website but aren't sure of the actual web address. That search intent is "navigational" — the user is just trying to get to a place on the web and needs an easy path. Other types of searches include: "informational," "transactional," and "commercial" search intents.

By combining your keyword research with search intent, you'll quickly uncover more relevant keywords (and perhaps, some not worth the trouble) and drive relevant organic traffic.

There is a special type of search intent within the "informational" category that can help supercharge your organic traffic: that's *linking* intent.

#### WHAT IS LINKING INTENT?

A small group of "informational" searchers are looking for content that they can link to in their own article. These include journalists, students scrambling to find a reference for a paper, or people like me, a content marketer looking to support my point with a source.

These searchers, who are looking for statistics, case studies, or reports, can be invaluable assets to your marketing strategy if you keep them in mind during your keyword research.

A large number of links to your website is one of the top, if not the most important, signals to Google that your website is relevant and should appear higher in the rankings. So naturally, link building is a key strategy for SEO.

If you can find a keyword with search volume that also has link intent, you've struck gold. Even if some of these special keywords don't have high search volume, they can end up earning you links passively.



THERE'S A SPECIAL TYPE OF INTENT THAT CAN HELP SUPERCHARGE YOUR ORGANIC TRAFFIC:

# THAT'S LINKING INTENT



# CONSIDER SERPs YOUR GUIDING LIGHT FOR CONTENT CREATION.



SEARCH  
ENGINE  
RESULTS  
PAGES

## FINDING YOUR LINKABLE KEYWORDS

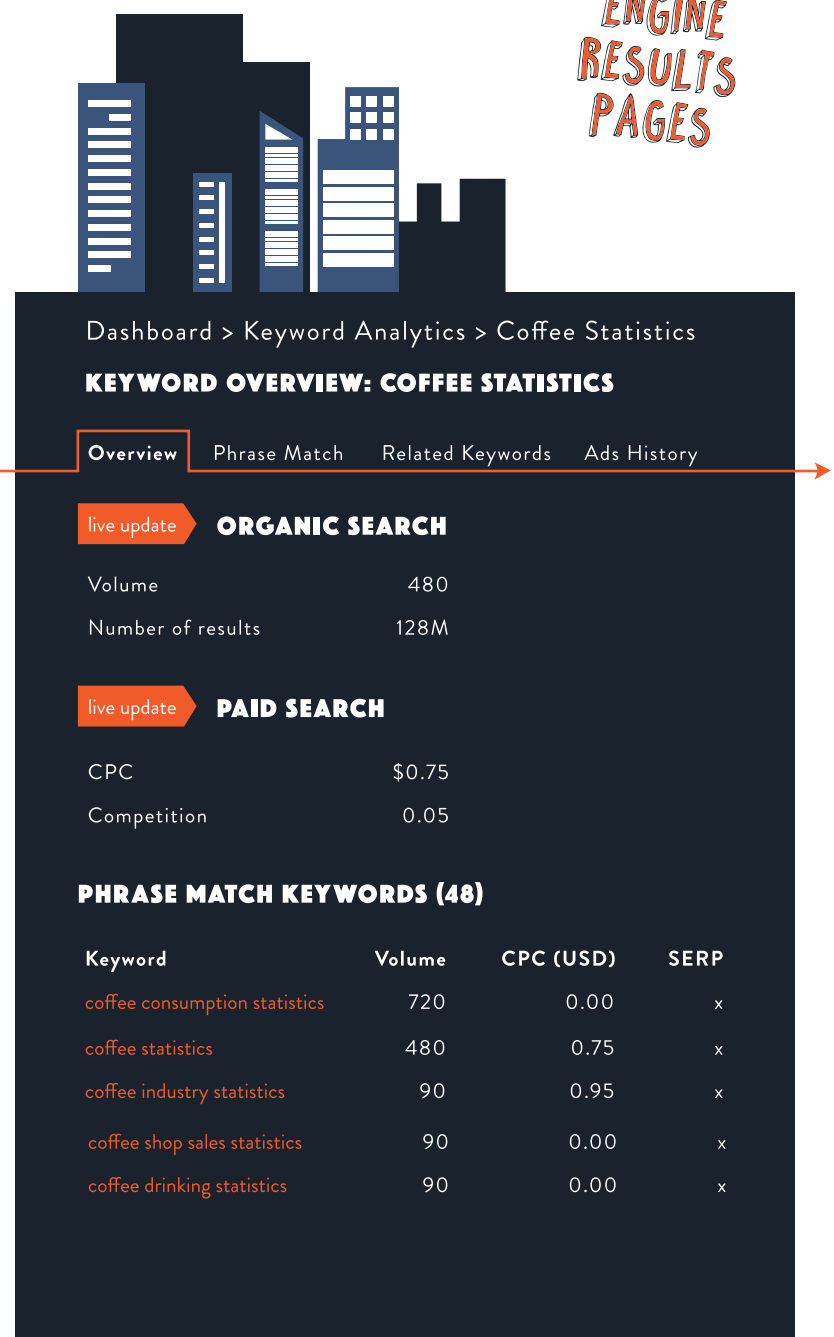
Let's take an example company and find a linkable keyword that fits their industry. Say you own a mail-order coffee business. Using a tool like SEMrush, let's see if there is any search volume for posts about coffee statistics. You'll find that there's search volume for a few different types of coffee-related topics.

First type in the main keyword: coffee statistics. >>>

The results show that there are 480 searches per month for the phrase "coffee statistics," and at .05, the competition is low. SEMrush also provides a "phrase match keywords" section, which reveals more specific keywords that we can use to create our piece. Since "coffee consumption statistics" has the largest search volume, 720 searches per month, we can start there.

Other suggested keywords, like "coffee industry statistics" or "coffee shop sales statistics" are still valuable, but should be less of a priority since their search volume is lower.

Next, you'll want to check the search results on Google to see what is already ranking for this keyword. This will give you a sense of the competition and ideas for how to structure your piece.







coffee statistics

All News Images Maps Shopping

About 7,490,000 results (.60 seconds)

Coffee Cup Consumption Per Day: Men drink as much as women; each consuming an average of 1.6 cups per day. Women seem to be more concerned about the price than men.

**Coffee Statistics - Coffee Shop Drive Thru Business**  
[www.e-importz.com/coffee-statistics.php](http://www.e-importz.com/coffee-statistics.php)

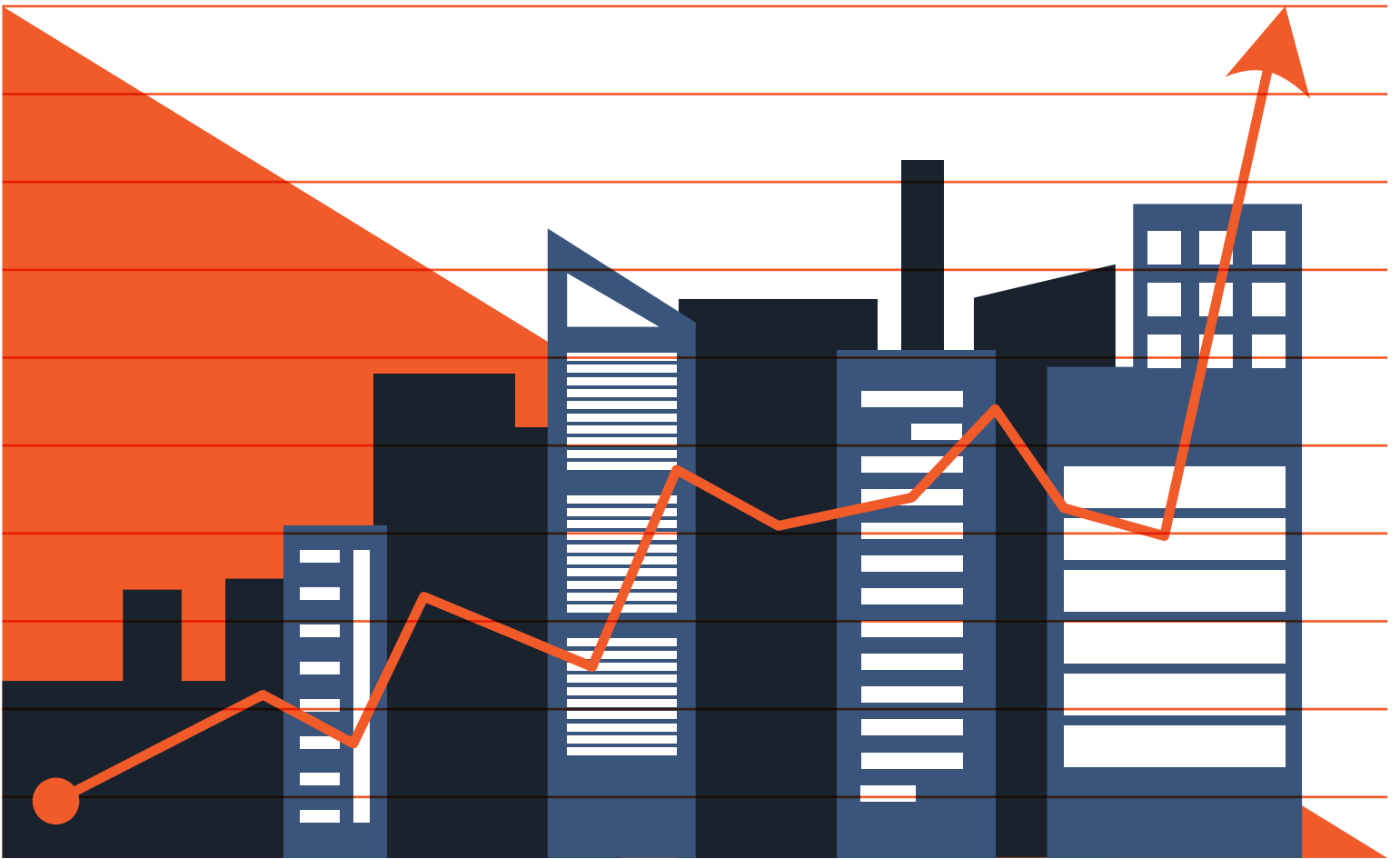
## CHECKING THE SERP

Consider Google search engine results pages (SERPs) your guiding light for content creation. Google's algorithms are created to provide the most relevant results for the user. Google is also constantly testing and tracking click data to ensure their results are providing users with the most relevant answers to their queries.

Checking SERPs in Incognito Mode helps filter out results that you might be seeing based on your own browsing history.

For this keyword, you'll notice one thing we don't see in the search results is advertising. This reinforces that this is an "informational" search query.

Further down in the SERP, there is also an image carousel. This signifies that users like (and click on) images frequently for this query.



## HOW TO IMPROVE

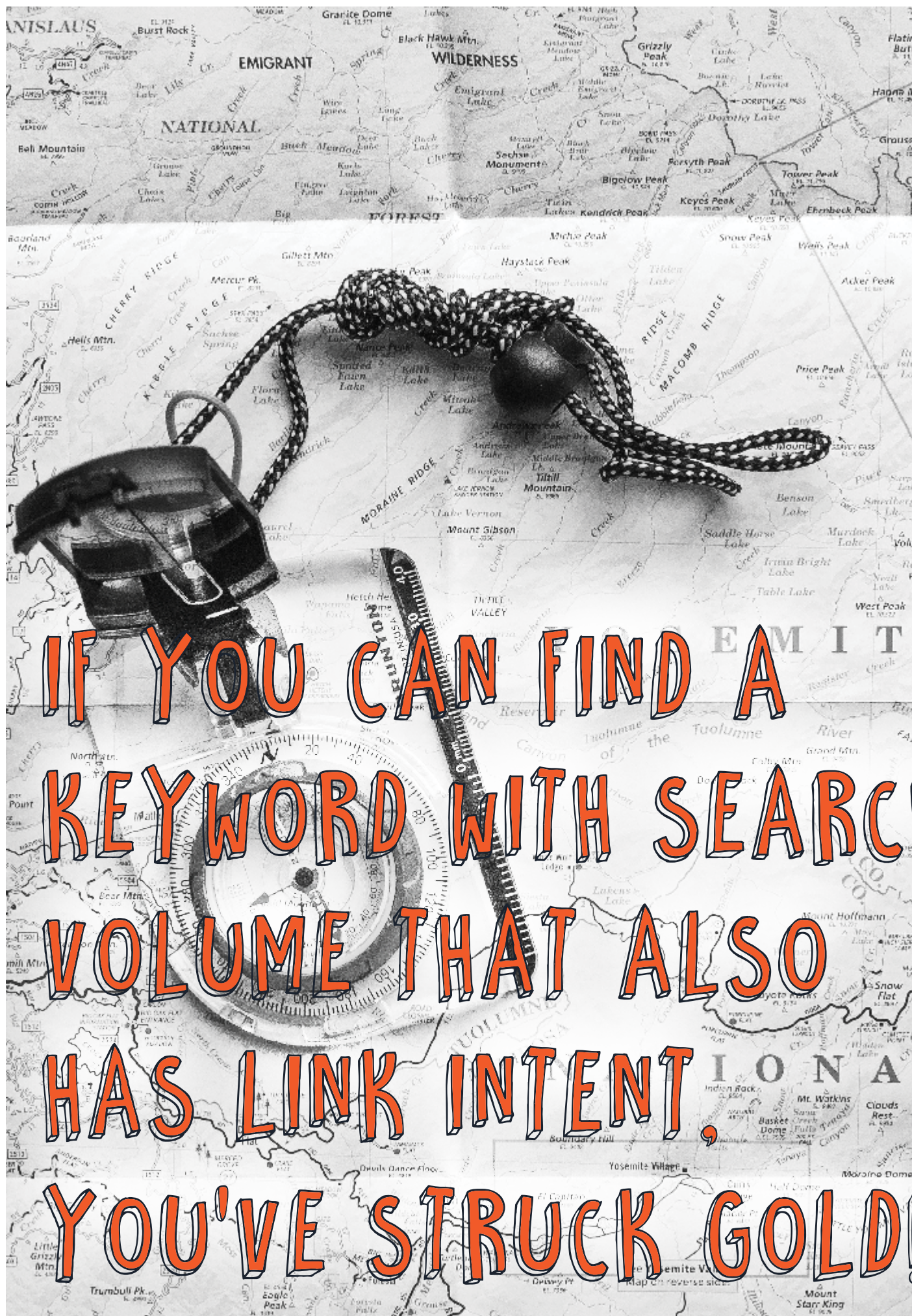
After you analyze the SERP, evaluate the top-ranking pieces and see what you can do to improve upon them. Just because you have a page with link intent doesn't mean you will automatically start getting links — your content needs to be a valuable asset to others.

Here are some areas where existing content is commonly in need of improvement that you can look for in ranking pieces:

- Is there outdated information?
- Could you include fresh photos that look better than those featured in ranking pieces?
- Can you build a (more) visually stunning infographic?
- Could you add more or better statistics than the current pieces feature?

Once you've created a piece that's better than your competitors, remember to update it regularly. Keeping your information up-to-date and your page looking great will ensure this asset is something others will want to read, click on, and link to — all positive signals that Google looks for when ranking pages.

If done correctly, people will continue to click, which will drive your piece higher, which can bring more links...which will keep driving your page up the rankings! 🎯



IF YOU CAN FIND A  
KEYWORD WITH SEARCH  
VOLUME THAT ALSO  
HAS LINK INTENT,  
YOU'VE STRUCK GOLD!

EFFICIENT OUTREACH  
DOESN'T HAVE TO BE  
IMPERSONAL.





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KEYWORD

KEYWORD

KEYWORD

KEYWORD

KEYWORD

KEYWORD

KEYWORD

# DIFFICULTY

In A  
Post-  
RankBrain  
World

**RUSS JONES**

Principal Search Scientist, Moz





## - EXACTLY HOW HARD IS IT TO RANK - FOR A PARTICULAR KEYWORD?

Answering this question is a key component of good keyword research, and software companies like Moz have developed “keyword difficulty” metrics to answer it.

A good keyword difficulty metric will help you pick out terms you can win handily, maximizing your return on investment, while also avoiding terms which would cause you and your business to waste resources on unattainable rankings.

Unfortunately, the addition of the machine-learning technology RankBrain to Google's ranking algorithm means you can't always rely on these metrics alone when determining how difficult it is to rank for a given keyword.

### **RANKBRAIN: NOUN**

DATE CONFIRMED: 10/26/2015

IMPORTANCE: 3RD MOST IMPORTANT RANKING SIGNAL

POWERED BY: MACHINE LEARNING

FUNCTION: AIMS TO DETERMINE A SEARCHER'S TRUE INTENT TO DELIVER MORE RELEVANT SEARCH RESULTS, BY ACCOUNTING FOR FACTORS LIKE LOCATION, SEARCH HISTORY, AND THE SURROUNDING WORDS USED.

#### **SHORT TAIL KEYWORDS: NOUN**

3 WORDS OR LESS, TYPICALLY BROAD. TYPICALLY HIGHLY-COMPETITIVE AND RESULT IN LESS-QUALIFIED TRAFFIC

#### **LONG TAIL KEYWORDS: NOUN**

3 WORDS OR MORE, TYPICALLY SPECIFIC AND TARGETED. TYPICALLY LESS COMPETITIVE, BUT RESULT IN MORE QUALIFIED TRAFFIC

## - GETTING TO THE TOP -

We know generally what factors are responsible for ranking in Google, like how many links you have, so most keyword difficulty metrics attempt to measure how highly the current top 10 URLs for a particular keyword score on those known ranking factors. The higher the score on these ranking factors, the higher the keyword difficulty.

This standard methodology for determining keyword difficulty, also called keyword competitiveness, has been around for the better part of a decade, but it now faces a far more difficult foe in RankBrain.

RankBrain was integrated into Google's ranking algorithm to better determine search engine users' intent. Experts believe it's used as a way to retrieve search results that might not match the exact keywords used in the query.

Much has been attributed to RankBrain without warrant, but at least one thing we know is that RankBrain endeavors to answer queries by interpreting their meaning beyond the keywords used.

A simple example of this in practice (which was likely true before RankBrain, and certainly true afterwards) would be Google's understanding of the phrase "cab NYC". Google now has the capacity to understand this phrase in the context of all the synonyms and related terms like taxi, sedan, NY, New York and New York City. Google can "expand" a query to include these synonyms and thereby have a much larger set of pages to consider as relevant - more relevant terms means more relevant pages.

## - THE IMPACT OF RANKBRAIN -

**Let's take a look at how RankBrain throws a wrench into keyword difficulty scoring. We'll start by using an obviously long-tail phrase which hasn't been targeted yet: "this keyword should have low difficulty despite Rankbrain." According to our understanding of ranking factors and competition, this keyword should be easy to rank for.**

This eight-word phrase had never been targeted, and now, the only page which targets it is on my personal blog. My site, at the time of writing, ranks #1 for this term — and rightfully so, as it is the only existing page on the web truly relevant to the query. It ranked for the term within hours of publication without any external links.

However, at the same time, popular tools like Ahrefs and Moz give this keyword a mid-range difficulty rating of 30 and 39 respectively. How can this be?

If you continue down the search results for this long phrase, you will see that Google has decided that the most relevant articles on the web to this query are on sites like Ahrefs.com, Moz.com and SearchEngineLand.com.

RankBrain rightfully identified the articles on these sites as relevant to the topics of keyword difficulty, RankBrain, and keyword research.

In doing so, it lifted up more generic content into the top 10 from powerful sites, which makes the phrase appear more competitive than it really is. Authoritative sites ranking for a term due to RankBrain's interpretation of a query, and the high content quality on those sites, can artificially inflate the keyword difficulty scores shown by tools like Moz or Ahrefs.

I assure you that had I instead written an article titled "cab NYC," it would have not jumped to #1, despite the fact that it has a lower keyword difficulty according to both Ahrefs and Moz.

## - CHOOSING GOOD KEYWORDS -

**While the industry at large works to solve these confusions, there is one step you can take to increase the likelihood you will select good keywords.**

Instead of relying on a single term, group them together with related terms and find an average. If, for example, you were to put "cab NYC," "taxi NYC," "new york taxi," and "new york cab" into a list in Moz's Keyword Explorer, you would find the average score is much higher than the long tail phrase I presented before.

Moreover, be wary of keyword difficulty scores for terms that have no exact matches in the search results (ie: the phrase does not appear in exact order in the titles or descriptions of the search results). This can often

indicate that the term is related to popular phrases, but is otherwise unoptimized - giving you an opportunity which your competitors might miss.

In the meantime, your best bet is to dig into the search results yourself. Use tools to cut out terms and phrases which you know are too competitive, but take the time to hand check the remaining opportunities — you might just find that RankBrain has created some hidden gems. 🍀

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# МІСЯЦЬ



# UP

# TECHNICAL SEO

Where does your business live online?

Is it a grand castle, full of luxury and wonder? Or instead, a clean-yet-humble abode where your visitors are never left wanting?

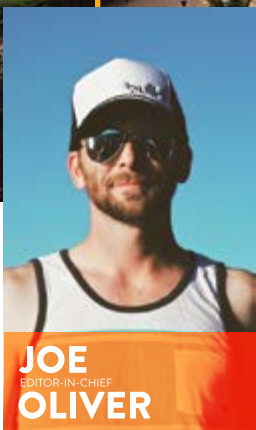
Big or small, technical optimization is about building the foundation for a successful site. In the next issue of *PAGES*, we'll be talking about how to do just that.

There's no single blueprint for a great website, but just like the construction of a home, certain best practices can achieve reliable, successful results. Technical SEO makes it simple for search engines to understand your website and connect it to relevant search queries. It begins with behind-the-scenes work that lays the foundation of your site's success, and it's a constant consideration for the teams behind most successful sites on the web. If you're looking to join their ranks at the tops of the SERPs, it will become one for you too.

Get ready for a little home improvement — and to watch your property value soar. We'll see you next time!

HI.  
HELLO.  
HEY, HOW ARE YA?

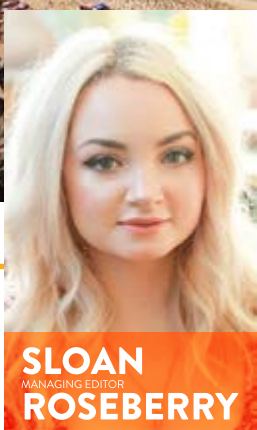
# MEET THE PAGES CREW



**JOE**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF  
**OLIVER**

An Apple fanboy, camping enthusiast, and developer of leaders. Joe believes great marketing lives at the crossroads of compelling design and interesting stories. When Joe's not helping the PAGES crew live at that crossroad, you'll find him in the mountains with his family or giving his money to whatever Marvel Studios movie is currently playing.

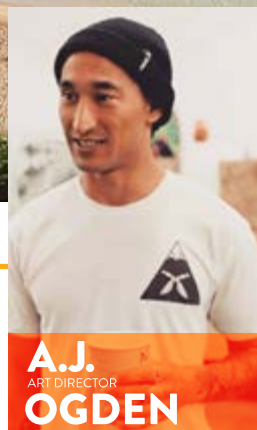
Twitter: @JoeOliver



**SLOAN**  
MANAGING EDITOR  
**ROSEBERRY**

Web nerd and writer who decided to make that skill marketable with a marketing degree. She's been attached to a computer since 1996, when her dad would let her watch him play Diablo on Windows 95, and loves to explore the ways we change and are changed by the web.

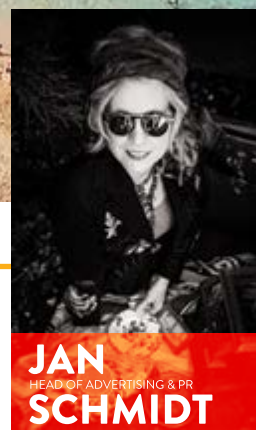
[linkedin.com/in/vsloanroseberry](https://www.linkedin.com/in/vsloanroseberry)



**A.J.**  
ART DIRECTOR  
**OGDEN**

All-weather winter enthusiast, fair-weather golfer, summer-weather kook. Prefers standing sideways on boards and playing with dogs. Enjoys trying to find neverland and tracking coordinates with a pencil and notebook in hand. Pleasantly surprised to be pushing analog treasures in a digital industry.

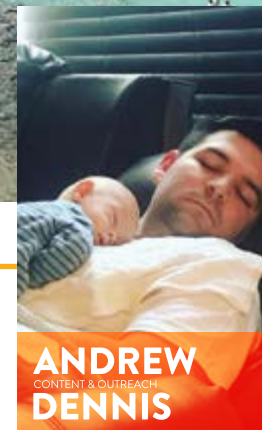
IG: @juicemachinedesign



**JAN**  
HEAD OF ADVERTISING & PR  
**SCHMIDT**

Wrangler of tasks, keeper of peace, and organizer extraordinaire. Social media master and knick-knack emporium curator. Knows good marketing comes from collaboration, a warm office, and a few cups of strong coffee.

IG: @tomatobabylifestyle



**ANDREW**  
CONTENT & OUTREACH  
**DENNIS**

Andrew Dennis is a proud graduate of the University of Idaho and a (less) proud Detroit Lions fan. Fresh member to the Rad Dad Club.

Twitter: @AndrewDennis33



# THANK YOU

To This Issue's Contributors

Crafting Content Magic

Olga Andrienko - SEMrush

Great Minds Think ALIKE Differently

Matt Vazquez - Drift

The Real Gold

Peter Buffington - ABC (Australian Broadcasting Corporation)

Get Outside The Box

Tim Soulo - Ahrefs

Link With Intent

Vince Nero - Siege Media

Keyword Difficulty

Russ Jones - Moz





# THE CREDIT

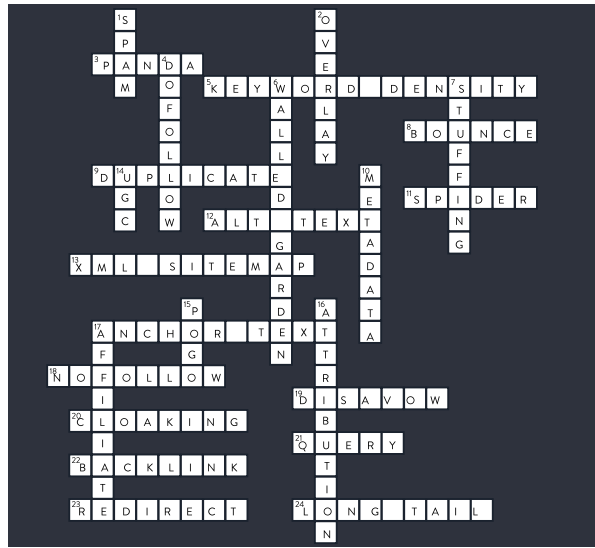
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**EDITOR IN CHIEF: JOE OLIVER**

**MANAGING EDITOR: SLOAN ROSEBERRY**

**ART DIRECTOR: A.J. OGDEN**

**ADVERTISING: JAN SCHMIDT**



## THANKS FOR READING! HERE'S TO YOU!

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For reprints and advertising inquiries, please contact Jan Schmidt at [jan@pagesSEOMagazine.com](mailto:jan@pagesSEOMagazine.com)

If you are interested in becoming a contributor to PAGES, you can reach our editor at [sloan@pagesSEOMagazine.com](mailto:sloan@pagesSEOMagazine.com)

Write to us at:  
Page One Power  
ATTN: Pages Magazine  
3100 N Lakeharbor Ln, Suite. 254  
Boise, ID 83703

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