

HI!

SOMETHING ALMOST EVERY ONLINE ENTREPRENEUR STRUGGLES TO GET THEIR HEAD AROUND (AT LEAST AT FIRST!) IS KEYWORDS. HOW CAN THEY BE WORDS WHEN THEY'RE WHOLE PHRASES OR SENTENCES?! WELL, THESE ARE CALLED LONG-TAIL KEYWORDS, AND YOU'RE NOT THE FIRST PERSON TO FIND THEM CONFUSING! WE'VE BROUGHT TOGETHER THIS ARTICLE TO MAKE IT CLEAR FOR YOU ONCE AND FOR ALL! SO READ ON...

DEREK

How to grab purchase-primed customers with long-tail keywords

Long-tail keywords are keyword phrases made up of anywhere from four to 15 keywords. Here's an example:

Short keywords: *ski vacation*

Long-tail keywords: *honeymoon ski vacation aspen colorado march 2009*

You can see that the long-tail keywords are WAY more specific and focused than the shorter keywords. This makes them perfect for connecting with your niche market!

(A niche market is a group of people searching the Internet for a solution to their problem, and not finding many relevant results.)

With long-tail keywords, it's much easier to get your target market's attention because there's less competition for it.

Why long-tail keywords sell

Long-tail keywords are the key to success for a couple of reasons.

First, they're **easier to rank for**. Try this:

Search **ski vacation**, and then search **honeymoon ski vacation aspen colorado march 2009**.

For the short keyword search, there are well over a *million* sites listed on Google — Yahoo has over 200 *million*! For the second, long-tail keyword search, there are about two and a half *thousand*. **That's a lot fewer websites you'll have to climb past** to get to the top spot in the search results!

Second, people tend to use long-tail keywords for searches when they are **getting close to making a purchase**.

A person's buying cycle can be broken down into three phases:

- Interest
- Research
- Purchase

As people get closer to the purchase phase they tend to use longer, more specific keywords in their searches. This means that the traffic you get from your long-tail keywords is far more likely to make a purchase from you than the traffic you get from your short keywords.

How to use long-tail keywords

Here are some things you can do to get the most out of your long-tail keywords:

1. **Create a landing page for each long-tail keyword cluster.** Someone who uses a long-tail keyword is looking for *very specific information*. If they follow a relevant-seeming link only to discover that it leads to a vaguely sort-of related page, they'll leave.

Keep your landing pages focused on ONE problem statement. Use one to three *very similar* long-tail keywords that address that problem, and include synonyms as well. For instance, along with “*honeymoon ski vacation aspen colorado march 2009*” you'd include a couple of other honeymoon-related keywords, but not keywords about ski vacations in general, or family ski vacations.

Search engine spiders — particularly the Googlebot — love websites with lots of pages, so with your new set of landing pages you'll be able to please both human and robot readers!

2. **Optimize your landing pages for each long-tail keyword cluster.** Be sure to use the keywords you are optimizing for in the important places in your code: page title, meta description, headers, and image alt text.

Your title tags are particularly important here. In your keyword tool, look for the top three 24-hour results for each cluster. Use those in your title tags (up to 100 characters).

Make sure the phrases also appear naturally in the content of the page at least three or four times, along with synonyms. Watch for duplicate content too. Most of the content on each page should be unique. The goal here is to get to the #1 spot in natural search results.

3. **Mix your long-tail keywords with short keywords.** Short keywords play an important role, too! Short keywords drive a high volume of less-focused traffic to your website, providing an opportunity for you to ask for your visitors' email addresses.

Short keywords are also really good for establishing your business as a brand — people who recognize your business name or URL from the early phase of the buying cycle are more likely to click on it later on, when they're getting ready to buy. Getting to the #1 spot for your short keywords isn't the priority (although it's great if you can do it!), but the closer you can get to the top, the better.

Long-tail keywords are ideal for connecting with your niche market, they're easier to rank for than short keywords, and they launch you into a person's buying cycle at *exactly* the right time.