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Selecting Magnetic Google™ Keywords

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Selecting Magnetic Google Keywords

The 16 Critical Rules for Selecting Google Keywords

Choosing the right keywords will spell the difference between success and failure in Google's AdWords program—and in optimizing your web page to rank high in Google search results. In most cases, Google advertisers stumble in their early attempts to find the right mix of keywords and keyword phrases. Like the process of learning how to ride a bike, it takes a few scratches, bumps and bruises before an advertiser gets the knack for uncovering keywords that deliver sales at a profitable cost per click (CPC). Some advertisers put limits on how much they're willing to spend on a keyword CPC, while others just watch the bottom-line cost of conversion. However you manage your campaign, you will need to develop a long list of keywords that will bring potential customers to your site. Here are the critical points to remember as you build your keyword list.

1. Get inside your customer's head

Even as you prepare to use one of the most technologically advanced forms of marketing, it's good to keep in mind an adage dating back to the mid-20th Century. Management guru Peter Drucker advised marketers to always remember what their customers are truly seeking. He noted that customers never buy a 1/4-inch drill bit because they need a 1/4-inch drill bit. A 1/4-inch drill bit is always purchased because the customer needs a 1/4-inch *hole*. If there were an easier and cheaper way to make a 1/4-inch hole than using a 1/4-inch drill bit, customers would surely quit buying 1/4-inch drill bits altogether.

Drucker slyly reminds marketers not to get involved in the importance of the solution. The customer is always focused on the problem. Say you're selling wonderfully effective skin cream that takes care of a host of maladies. You may be so focused on the beneficial qualities of your cream that you miss

your customer's real concerns. You start testing keywords like skin creams and medicinal lotions, and you brainstorm dozens of permutations on those general terms. Meanwhile, your customer searches on the word rash. Getting inside your customer's head is a matter of focusing on the problem your customer wants to solve, rather than focusing on your solution.

2. Use keyword generation tools

There are a number of tools you can use to drum up useful—and useless—keywords. These tools are designed to generate a long list of keywords. Google has its own tool, the Google Keyword Suggestion Tool, which is provided for free. You can also try commercial keyword tools such as WordTracker, Web CEO, and others. WordTracker (wordtracker.com) charges on a subscription basis that varies from a day rate under \$8 to an annual rate of just under \$250. Web CEO (webceo.com) charges by degree of keyword complexity, ranging from a free version (after an activation fee of \$19) to a \$495 full-blown version. If you're deeply involved in an AdWords campaign, it may be beneficial to use the paid keyword generators if they can deliver profitable terms you might not otherwise consider.

Here's an example of what Google's keyword generator provides for a company selling books about marketing:

- marketing books
- books on marketing
- marketing text books
- marketing e books
- network marketing books
- best marketing books
- internet marketing books
- marketing children's books
- direct marketing books
- marketing self published books

3. Use Google's expanded matching feature

Google's keyword suggestion tool has the additional feature of showing an expanded list of keywords that may not be as well targeted as the main list. Yet the expanded list may offer terms worth testing. Below is a list of expanded matches based on marketing books. Notice that the list includes a number of specific disciplines that fall under the general heading of marketing, including categories such as advertising, copywriting, promotion, lead generation, even MLM (multi-level marketing). The list also includes Jay Abraham, an author of books on marketing. This is just a small portion of Google's expanded match keywords. The full list is four times this length.

- book promotion
- book advertising
- marketing textbook
- advertising books
- advertising book
- mailing books
- mlm books
- copywriting books
- advertising textbooks
- direct marketing association
- mailing lists
- opt in
- business to business
- direct response
- lead generation
- sales promotion
- jay abraham
- branding books
- direct mail

In addition to finding unusual search terms, the Google expanded matching feature displays potential misspellings that could prove useful on a given topic. A quick Google search shows a company that actually bought the keyword, *marketin*. Here's the expanded list for marketing books that captures potential misspellings by searchers:

- maketing
- marketing
- emarketing
- boks
- marketin
- marketer
- markting
- marekting
- bookd
- mktg
- bokks
- boooks

4. Brainstorm for keywords

To find potential keyword jewels, you need to go beyond the lists generated by keyword selection tools. Hold a brainstorming session to find overlooked and potentially lucrative keywords. The best participants in a brainstorming session include those who are well versed on your industry, as well

as novices who may propose dumb words that an equally novice searcher would use. Try to include a customer or two in the brainstorming process. And even as you focus on the needs of your customer, it also helps to include expert jargon words as well, since customers often span knowledge levels from novice to expert on any subject. A wildflower company, for instance, found that the Latin names for flowers were both productive and inexpensive.

5. Use tons of keywords

Many AdWords campaigns fail in the early stages due to a lack of sufficient keywords. You could luck out and find one or two dozen perfect keywords, but your chances for success are greatly enhanced if you test 150 to 250 keywords and keyword phrases. The most common mistakes made by AdWords beginners are using too few or too general keywords. Avoid the delay and expense of these common early blunders by starting off your AdWords campaign with a healthy list of keywords. A good target is 200. You can always pare down a list that contains non-productive keywords.

6. The danger of general keywords

General keywords can sink an AdWords campaign, either by their expense or by their search weakness. The keyword *Golf* is a poor search term for *golf club retailers*. *Golf clubs* is very general and expensive, but it produces a better CPC than *golf*. A good AdWords marketer will try variations on golf club brands and may even tinker with *gulf clubs*, using the misspelling to get cheap hits. Even though general words may not convert as well as more specific versions of keywords, it's always worth the effort to test, just in case the general term is the profitable exception. In most cases, expensive keywords are priced high because they convert at a high rate. Otherwise marketers would drop them.

7. The danger of obscure keywords

Just as there are dangers in using general keywords, there are difficulties with obscure terms. The dangers of using terms that are too obscure, though, are not as costly. The successful use of Latin terms to attract

wildflower seed buyers is a good example, showing that even the most obscure keywords can produce sales. The only way to find out if your terms are too obscure is to test them. The good news is that they are usually very inexpensive, clicking through at the minimum, so it's not an expensive test.

8. Make keyword lists from broad to narrow

As you generate a long list of potential keywords, work from broad to narrow. You may not even use many of the broad terms, but they will still come in handy to organize your keyword list. In selling instructional books about marketing, you may begin with *marketing books*, then work into narrower terms such as *advertising*, *marketing campaigns*, *online marketing*, *Google AdWords*, and finally even as specific as, *selecting keywords for Google AdWords*. You can break off any of the second-tier terms such as *advertising* or *marketing campaigns* and create narrower terms.

9. Create keyword ad groups of related keywords

Once you've grouped your words from broad to narrow under general terms, you can create ad groups based on the terms that fall under your broad terms. Organizing your marketing effort by ad groups helps to tidy up a lengthy keyword universe into manageable sizes. Using the marketing books example above, you may create ad groups clustered around terms such as *advertising*, *online marketing*, *publicity*, and *direct marketing*.

As you create these clusters, you can evaluate the cluster as a whole even while you're tracking individual keywords. The results of creating and testing ad groups will offer the added benefit of determining which category in your product line produces the most efficient sales. This valuable information can help you tailor your product line to match customers' needs. Thus you may start out with a company that sells books about marketing and end up with a company that sells e-books and online courses about Internet marketing—simply by discovering and serving the needs of your potential customers.

10. Use keyword phrases

Don't just think in terms of single-word or even double-word keywords. You may want to use whole phrases as keywords. Though your broad-match keywords will catch most of your customers' phrase-

based searches, you may still need to use phrases to fill any holes. The broad-match keyword, *marketing books*, will nab how-to books on marketing, but it won't catch how-to marketing techniques. For that, you may need the full phrase.

11. Target words by location and language

Another direction to take your keyword selection is by location and language. If you're selling anything that has a regional element, get the location in your keyword list. Say you sell marketing books online, but you also offer marketing courses in your home base of Chicago. You may profit from adding Chicago or Illinois to keywords such as how-to marketing or advertising instruction. You will still get your book buyers, but you may be able to sell classroom instruction to those who come to learn about marketing. As you choose your keywords on Google, you can also specify language. If some of your marketing books are in Spanish, you may find customers by testing keywords in both English and Spanish.

12. Use Google's keyword matching options

Once you have a good list of potential keywords, you have to decide how to use those keywords. Google offers a number of options for entering keywords. In many cases, you will want to grab anything related to your keyword, but as you fine-tune your campaign, you'll find there are useful ways to exclude traffic that triggers click-through charges while producing no reasonable chance for a sale. Here are the tools Google provides to help you filter out unwanted click-throughs while capturing potentially profitable searches that are not exact.

Broad Match. A broad match delivers results for any string of search words that includes your keywords. The keyword *marketing books* would come up in a search on books about marketing.

Phrase Match. The phrase match requires that your keywords come up in order. So the keyword *marketing books* would come up in a search on how-to marketing books, but you would not come up in marketing your books online, since your keywords are not in order. Indicate a phrase match by entering your keywords in quotes, such as "*marketing books*"

Exact Match. This designation means your ad only comes up if the searcher puts in your keywords in order, and no other words are included. Indicate exact match with brackets, such as [*marketing books*].

Negative Words. Using negative keywords will keep your ads from appearing when you know the click-through will be wasted. If you're selling books about marketing, you will probably want to exclude searchers trying to find children's books or free information on marketing. Indicate negative words by simply putting a minus sign before the words, such as: *-children's* or *-free*

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13. Illegal keywords

There are certain keywords that will not fly with Google, and there are some that wouldn't seem to fly but actually do. Certainly you have to stay away from pornographic-type words, but you don't necessarily have to keep brand names out of your keyword list. If you're selling food items, you may want to try *Cooking Light*, which is a leading food magazine. When you search on that term, you get the magazine as the first listing in the reference list, as well as on the list of ads. But you'll also find an ad for *Cooking.com*, a site that is not affiliated with the magazine. Even though you don't own the brand name, you can use brand names as keywords.

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14. Set Maximum CPCs on Keywords

As you choose your keywords, don't fret over the potential cost of a keyword that might seem too general or obvious to come at a decent per-click rate. You can test general and obvious terms while protecting yourself against pricey keywords by simply putting a monetary limit on your CPC. This is a good device for avoiding the top CPC in your subject category. However, you may want to carefully test some of your category's pricier words, as they may deliver profitable customers. You can do this in small increments so that you don't get flooded with high CPC charges before you determine whether the term converts profitably. You can lift the top rate on a few key terms and further protect yourself with a

ceiling on daily charges to keep within reasonable bounds while testing pricey words.

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15. Avoid the bidding wars—most times

In most cases, it's best to avoid getting into a bidding war, especially if you're vying for a top spot. Second or third rankings often come close to the top spot on click-through rates, and the rates for lower rankings may be 30, even 50 percent below the top ranking. Many Google marketers insist that the 2nd and 3rd rankings convert at a better rate than the top spot. The time to enter a bidding war is when you have determined that the top ranking converts at the most profitable CPC even if the cost is \$2.00 or more. Your conversion tracker will guide you on this pricey experiment. It could be that a handful of \$2.00 clicks may produce greater profits than hundreds of 37 cent clicks that don't result in sales.

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16. Justify your keywords—conversion is king

Ultimately, it doesn't matter what your CPC is. You can certainly use it as a guide as you set up your AdWords campaign. But while the concept of limiting exposure by setting ceilings on CPCs makes sense, the true measurement will always be your conversion rate. I know one company that sells a very expensive marketing service through Google AdWords. A new client represents such a large dollar investment that conversion rates don't matter to the company's marketers. Yet they may be spending hundreds, perhaps thousands of dollars more than necessary to get the same result.

As you can see, selecting magnetic Google keywords combines the science of keyword research and testing with the art of buyer psychology and imagination. We hope you find this report helpful in identifying the keywords that work for you!

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