

Choosing the Right Key Terms for Your Website and Advertising

Part of the Starting at Square One Series

Selecting the right key terms to use in the content of your website and to use when doing pay-per-click advertising is a crucial component of search engine optimization. You may think you know what the best key terms are for your business, but often times what we think are the right terms very often are not. Here are some common issues when choosing key terms:



Too Much Guessing

Two issues come to mind with regards to guessing about your key terms:

- **You Guess the Wrong Terms**

Just because you think people are searching on a particular key term doesn't mean they actually are. Many times what we think is a good search term turns out to get very little traffic. It's important to perform key term research to confirm whether your guesses are correct. There are many free and paid tools to perform key term research including [Wordtracker](#), [WordStream](#), [SEO Book](#), and [Google's Keyword Planner](#) (though you need to have a Google AdWords account to use this tool). You enter a term that you believe you should optimize for and these tools will give you information on how much search that particular term is getting in addition to other related terms that may be better options. Don't have the time for this, [we'd be happy to help!](#)

- **You Guess the Right Terms, But Wrong Audience**

There is nothing worse than getting a good amount of traffic on a particular key term, but then finding that the key term is getting almost 100% [bounce rate](#). There are times when you select a key term to focus on that is getting traffic, but is for a completely different type of product or service. When you're doing your key term research, be sure to actually do a search engine search of that term and see what other websites are coming up. Are these other sites related to your business and what you're selling? If not, you might be running into a case of a word(s) that have multiple meanings. If this happens, try to think of a more specific term that means the same thing.

Too Broad

Clients often want to be found on very broad terms related to their business, for example, a business selling gift baskets may want to focus on the term: "gift basket". It makes sense, right – we sell gift baskets, so we want our website to be found if someone searches on the term gift baskets. Well,

unfortunately, so do thousands – even millions – of other businesses. There are a couple of issues with this:

- **It Will be Very Difficult, If Not Impossible to Rank Organically On the Term**

Search engines are highly sophisticated and they want to show websites that are most relevant to the terms that people search on. If your website content and other internet marketing initiatives are not highly related to that particular key term, your website most likely won't rank very high for that term. Even if you wanted to try pay-per-click for the broad key term (paid advertising), it would most likely have a very high cost per click costing you more than it would be worth.

- **Even If You Did Get Ranking, It Most Likely Won't Bring the Right Visitors**

If you did get ranking on a broad term, you would most likely get a lot of visitors that are looking for products or services that you don't offer. So, why spend your efforts trying to get everyone to come to your site when you could be focusing on getting visitors that would be more likely to buy from you. Look for [long tail key terms](#) that are more highly related to what you are selling.

Too Many Terms

In order to cover their bases, clients often want to try to rank for every key term that is possibly related to their website and what they sell. However, trying to optimize for too many key terms will only water down your efforts. It's important to identify a few key terms related to each of your services, do the research to find highly related, long tail key terms, and use those as your focus. And, it's not about stuffing your website full of key words – the days of doing that are over – but instead [creating relevant, quality content that speaks to those key terms](#).

The bottom line when choosing the key terms that you'd like your website to be found on is to do the research to find viable (searched on), highly related and relevant terms. And, when creating content for your website, keep these key terms in mind as a kind of guide so that you can craft your copy so it speaks to the audience you want to reach.

Find the author on social media:

[+Elissa Mitchell](#)

[@ezmitchell](#)

Posted in [Pay Per Click Advertising](#), [Search Engine Optimization](#), [Square One](#)

by [Elissa Mitchell](#)

| Tagged [key terms](#), [keyword research](#)