
SEO Guidelines for Keyword Research & Page Tagging

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Keyword Research Strategies

Initial Keyword Research

- Here are guidelines for beginning to identify terms (keywords):
 - Start with 10 to 15 base-line terms and simple two or three-word phrases
 - Run searches for these keywords in Google and regional search engines to see who appears and what they are saying in their titles and headings
 - Look at the key competitive Websites in your country
 - Research any online forums or communities to get an understanding of what terms and keywords are being used for different categories of equipment
 - Make sure to look at the existing PPC campaigns to identify the number of impressions on keyword advertisements, as well as the percentage of click-thru's

Keyword Research Tools

- Once you have a set of keyword targets, there are various tools to use to project keyword search volume.
 - Free Tools:
 - DigitalPoint: <http://www.digitalpoint.com/tools/suggestion/>
 - Google Adwords: <https://adwords.google.com/select/Login>
 - You do need to have a Google AdWords account to access this. But, there is no minimum spend required to gain access.
 - Commercial Tools:
 - WordTracker: <http://www.wordtracker.com/>
 - Keyword Discovery: <http://www.keyworddiscovery.com/>

What Keyword Results Mean

- The higher the number of clicks or searches for a given keyword, the more competitive that keyword phrase is in search
 - Results that yield search volumes of greater than 100 searches/day are generally considered high volume keywords
 - Results greater than 1,000 searches/day are considered highly competitive keywords
 - Just because there is little volume for a given keyword, does not mean that there will be little search volume
 - Often times, regional keyword phrases or “specific niche” keywords can have very low volume but are highly competitive as a result of a large number of competitors in a small space
 - Example: “las vegas real estate”

Identifying Keyword Strategy

- Each page on your Website is an opportunity to be found in search
 - Higher volume/more competitive keywords should be used on main landing pages/more accessible sections of the website
 - This often refers to the more generic keyword phrases
 - The home page should always contain the most-valuable keywords because this is likely to be the page with the highest traffic
 - The page-tagging section (starting on slide 8) guides you through the specific locations where keywords should be seen and placed in HTML code

Additional Keyword Thoughts & Guidelines

- High search volume does not necessarily equal a good keyword
 - Make sure your keyword strategy always fits the message of the page and Website
- Avoid overly broad terms and one-word strategies
- Compare singular vs. plural terms for search volume
 - Example: Website versus Websites
 - Compare hyphenated and non-hyphenated words
 - One or two-letter words do not have a negative impact
 - Use of “the”, “a”, “in”, etc.
- Misspelled words should not be a part of your keyword strategy

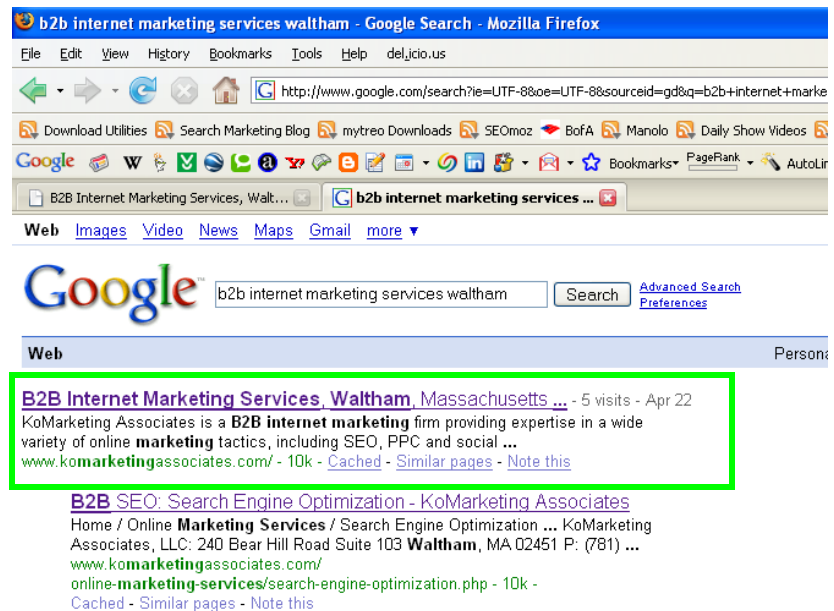
Page Tagging and Content Development

Page Tagging Components

- The following are the main components of page tagging:
 - The HTML TITLE Tag
 - <TITLE>A Web Page Title</TITLE>
 - META Tags – Meta Descriptions and Meta Keywords
 - <META name="description" content="">
 - <META name="keywords" content="">
 - Page Heading Tags
 - <H1>A Heading</H1>
 - <H2>Another Heading</H2>

The HTML Title Tag

- The HTML Title Tag is the single most important component of a Web page.
 - It is the text that is visible on the top blue bar of the web browser
 - It (is meant to) represents the “Main Idea” of that page
 - If located on the home page, it represents the “Main Idea” for the entire Website
 - It is the default text for bookmarks and “favorites”
 - Most importantly, it is traditionally the text that is visible as the link in Search Results

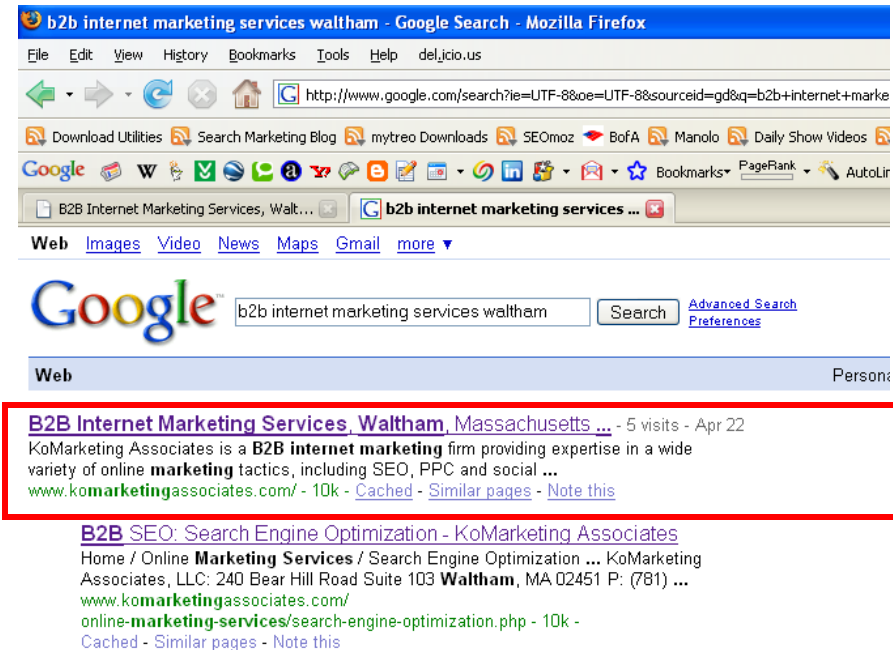


The HTML Title Tag Guidelines

- You should target no more than two **keywords** for placement in each page's title tag
 - The home page may have three keywords depending on usability and selection
 - **Keywords** here means phrases, not the total number of actual words (i.e. do not go for more than two concepts per page).
- The most important keyword should appear FIRST in the title, followed by the second
- The title should be written concisely and without errors in spelling or unnecessary capitalization
 - Do not “Stuff” the title with lists of keywords
- HTML titles should be no longer than 65 characters whenever possible
 - This is the character cap for search result visibility in Google, as of September 7, 2007
- We recommend adding the company/Website name to the end of all title tags
 - This helps enforce the “brand” universally throughout the Website

META Tags – Description & Keywords

- META tags are not visible to the user of a website
- They were initially designed to define parameters for search engines and other web technologies accessing a web page
- Due to Webmaster abuse, META tags are no longer considered high priority as it *directly* relates to search rankings
 - However – The content found in the META description tag will often be found in the supporting text of search results
 - Effective content can therefore improve visitor clicks when web pages are found in search
- The META keyword tag is not considered a strong factor in general search rankings BUT can be an important factor in INTERNAL search engines that you have on your site



META Tag Guidelines

- The META description should be no longer than two or three sentences or 25 to 30 words
 - The META description should contain all applicable keywords defined for the specific page
 - The META description should read as a general marketing statement about what is on that specific Web page
 - Do not use exclamations, unnecessary capitalization or misspellings in meta descriptions
- The META keyword tag should ONLY contain the keywords you are designating for that specific Web page
 - Do not “keyword stuff” the tag with long lists of keywords
 - At most, it should contain two or three keywords

Page Headings

- The topic of Page Headings has 2 related components:
 - The main heading and sub headings of a Web page that are visible to users
 - The HTML Code that can be used to define a “Page Heading”
 - Meaning the tags: <H1>, <H2>, <H3> for relative page headings and sub-headings

Page Heading Guidelines

- Page headings should contain at least the main keyword of the Web page
 - Sub headings can contain secondary keywords as well as derivations of the main keyword, depending on relevance
 - If there is a plural or singular option with the main keyword (example: tractor or tractors), the most popular version should appear in the Main Heading and the alternative version should appear in the sub-headings

Page Copywriting Guidelines

- It is important to have your strategic keywords within the body text (page copy) of the Web page.
 - Page copy should contain derivations of the strategic keyword, including:
 - Singular/plural versions
 - Keyword separation and differentiation
 - Cross-link related Web pages on your site. This helps users find similar pages and gives search engines a better understanding of your site
 - Important guidelines:
 - **Always write page copy with the human user in mind. Keyword strategy for page tagging should never take away from the overall user experience.**
 - Do not create repetitive lists of keywords in the page copy
 - Avoid misspellings or grammatical errors to page copy
 - Do not purposely try to capture misspelled keywords

Additional Recommendations

- Additional thoughts on what works with page tagging and copy
 - HTML Titles and the main heading of a page are usually the same, or very closely tied together (minus the “ - Your Brand” exclusive to the HTML title)
 - Always use unique HTML titles on every page
 - Meta descriptions should not be overtly promotional unless the actual page is a sales promotion
 - Keyword density (the percentage of text that actually contains a keyword) is often discussed and argued in page-copy generation. There is not statistical evidence that proves a Website must have a certain percentage of keywords in the page copy
 - Make changes or adjustments to the text on a regular basis for your most important pages
 - At least twice a month
 - Try using related keyword terminology when possible
 - Always create page copy with the human user in mind first