

The Keyword Competitiveness Strategy

**How To Find Keyword Sweet Spots, Avoid
The Keyword Bullies and Be The Big Fish
In A Small Pond While Cashing In On Low-
Competition Keywords**

A Special Report

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When he released his information product, "**The Special Report Bible**" he created waves in the internet marketing world by describing how anyone can create and sell small Special Reports on virtually any topic to a hungry market of customers.

Since the late 1990's, Damon has spent considerable time learning, mastering and making money with info-product creation, newsletter writing, AdSense, affiliate marketing, PPC (pay-per-click) advertising, e-mail sequences, article marketing, portal site creation, link-building, and more.

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<http://www.WebBusinessToday.com> - Visit this site to subscribe to one of the most widely-applauded and longest-running internet marketing newsletters. Damon teaches marketing strategies with a writing style that is often quirky, often unorthodox and always enjoyable.

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Stuff my lawyer made me say:

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Introduction To Keyword Competitive Analysis

A wise man once told me...

“Business is a jungle. And your capacity for success is dependent upon your ability to walk into that jungle, identify threats and opportunities and be able to avoid the former while exploiting the latter.”

I’ve never forgotten that.

In this Special Report, I’m going to explain how you should analyze keywords. And a major component of keyword competitiveness analysis is the ability to identify areas where you are able to compete. In essence, to identify the threats and exploit the weaknesses in various keyword territories.

First, we’re going to talk about the various lists of “high-paying” keywords that are being sold today. There’s a reason you should be wary of these lists and I’ll explain why in that section.

Second, I’m going to explain the opportunities you can uncover by targeting “low-hanging fruit” keywords. Other folks ignore this territory. I’ll show you why that creates an opportunity for you (and I’ll show you how to exploit it!).

Third, I’m going to show you how to dig up “sweet spot” keywords. These are the keywords that your best prospects are using to find you.

Fourth, I’ll show you how to identify your REAL competition in any keyword territory. Many are frightened away from markets because they misinterpret how competitive those markets are. Read this section and you won’t make that mistake.

Fifth, I'll explain some fundamentals of search engine optimization that will help you to outrank your competition. This is not the normal on-page (yawn!) stuff that you normally read about. In fact, I haven't seen many folks talk about this material at all.

Last, I'll give you a short list of tools (there are only a few) that I use for my keyword analysis. These tools will help you automate much of the analysis work. You can do everything in this Special Report manually if you choose to do so. Or, you can invest in the same tools that I use to leverage your time and effort.

Keyword competitive analysis is not brain surgery. But, it does require that you learn how to do it the **right** way. I'll teach you how to do it the right way in this Special Report.

I've spent a lot of time putting this Report together for you. There is a lot of great information in it. But, you have to **take action** to make it work for you!

That said, let's get started.

And, by the way, if you haven't already subscribed to "Web Business Today!", you're missing a LOT of incredible information that can help you grow your business and increase your revenue. Subscribe today at...

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Damon G. Zahariades

Keyword Analysis Part I: The Fallacy Of High-Paying Keywords

Let's say you have just bought a brand new list of keywords. The sales letter that you bought the list from said that these are HIGH-PAYING keywords.

In other words, these are keywords that advertisers are shelling out big money in order to bid on clicks through Google's Adwords program. When someone clicks their ads, the advertiser is charged a huge amount of money and Google splits it with you through their Adsense program... Sounds great, right? I mean, some of these keywords are getting bids of \$20, \$30, \$40 and more PER CLICK.

Even if Google is only giving you 50% of the cut, it doesn't take much to hit \$10,000 per month in Adsense revenue. Here's the math...

$(20 \text{ clicks} \times \$30) \times 50\% = \$300 \text{ per day in revenue.}$

Kinda gives you a tingle, doesn't it?

Hold your horses, partner! There's more to this than meets the eye.

There are 3 reasons why the promise of high-paying keywords is a fallacy...

REASON 1: Advertisers Are Saying No To The Content Network

Trust me. Any advertiser who is paying \$20 a click in Google Adwords is tracking their performance. He's tracking his ROI.

I know, I know... you've been taught that the Adwords game is filled with corporate knuckleheads who are just begging to throw their ad budget at Adwords. You've been led to believe they're bidding up prices and they couldn't care less about their ads' performance.

That's BS.

Advertisers are getting more savvy. They want results. And they have the tools to easily recognize when those results aren't happening.

It's no secret that the Content Network (that includes your sites on which you display Adwords ads for Adsense revenue) delivers prospects of LOWER quality than the Search Network.

Advertisers know this. So, many of them simply choose to NOT display their ads on the Content Network.

What does this mean for that list of high-paying keywords that you just bought?

The bid prices that are displayed for each keywords on those high-paying keyword lists come from bids on Adwords ads that are shown on Google's search results pages. NOT the Content Network.

If there are fewer advertisers willing to shell out the cash to show their ads on your sites, what happens to the bid prices of those keywords?

Simple supply and demand... the bid prices go down. Often, dramatically.

So, when you see that "mesothelioma" is getting bids of \$60 a click, that bid price is for ads that are being shown on Google's pages. Not yours.

The ads that are showing on your pages are earning MUCH less than that. Ask anyone with a "mesothelioma" site.

The folks selling the high-paying keywords don't mention that little nugget.

REASON 2: Advertisers Are Lowering Their Bids On The Content Network

In the past, advertisers could only display their ads on the Content Network if they agreed to bid the same amount that they bid to display their ads on Google's pages.

That is no longer the case. Google now allows advertisers to bid different amounts on the Content Network.

Now, a quick review... you know that the Content Network delivers lower-quality prospects via Adwords ads than Google's pages (see Reason 1 above).

So, if advertisers can adjust their bids for displaying their ads on the Content Network, which way are they going to adjust them?

Exactly. DOWN.

Which means you get paid less. Often, MUCH less.

That's another little tidbit that you aren't told when you buy high-paying keyword lists.

REASON 3: Smart-Pricing Creates A Huge Mystery

Now, I'll be the first to admit... I have no idea how Google determines what they pay you each time someone clicks on the Adwords ads showing on your site.

Let's say an Adwords advertiser has bid \$1.50 each time somebody clicks on his ad that shows on the Content Network. So, if Google is giving you 50% of each click price, that means 500 clicks would put \$375 in your pocket, right?

If only the math were that easy!

Unfortunately, Google uses what they refer to as Smart Pricing to determine what you get paid. There are tons of variables that Google uses. And they protect it like Coke protects its secret recipe.

So, what does that mean for the huge bid prices that you're seeing on the high-paying keywords list that you bought?

Well, you already know that the bid prices are for the ads that show on Google's pages, not yours.

But, to ADD to the mystery, now you have no idea if Google is going to pay you %50, 22%, or 78% of the click price. It depends on their Smart Pricing and nobody knows what makes up the recipe.

That kinda throws those bid prices on your high-paying keywords list into a

tailspin, doesn't it?

Last Thoughts

Okay, we've covered a lot of ground. And by now, you may be snorting with anger. You're either angry at your high-paying keyword lists or you're angry at me for suggesting they ain't what they're cracked up to be.

So, let me clear the air a bit.

First, high-paying keyword lists are still worth acquiring. There's a bit of art and science that goes into finding lists and massaging them so that they're actually WORTH something, but I'll go over that in a future article.

Suffice to say, if you know that "mesothelioma" is getting \$60 bids, that's worth knowing.

But, you have to put that data into the proper context. By now, after reading this article, you know you're not going to get \$30 a click for ads on "mesothelioma". So, don't count on it.

Same goes for every other word on your high-paying keywords list. Put the data into context.

Whether you're building auto-generated sites or valuable virtual real estate with quality content, a list of high-paying keywords can be valuable. But, like any data, you have to analyze it correctly to get the value from it.

Keyword Analysis Part II: Looking For Low-Hanging Fruit

An important note before we get into the article...

SEO is big business.

Not just because big businesses are getting into the game. But, because there's so much darn money in it that everyone is scrambling to get in the top ten slots for their keywords.

Top slots mean huge traffic.

Some go about it the right way (and we're gonna talk about that today). Some just don't get it.

Whatever the case, you can research and analyze keywords manually or find a tool that allows you to automate the process and save you time, effort and ultimately money. You can find my favorite tools for both keyword competitive analysis and SEO analysis in the "**Resources**" Section on Page 33 of this Special Report.

Getting traffic from the search engines for competitive keywords is a tough battle. And it's getting tougher.

This article will help you continue to drive traffic from Google, Yahoo and MSN while avoiding the sandbox where the bullies hang out.

There's always someone with a bigger budget and larger staff trying to bump your site from the top ten slots on the search engine results pages (SERPs). In fact, some keywords are so competitive that search engine optimizers (SEOs) resort to tactics that range from mildly scandalous to downright brutal.

Some SEOs cloak their pages. Some of them hijack other sites' pages. Still others file false DCMA complaints against their competitors, hoping the search engines will ban the offending sites without bothering to validate the claim.

Like I said... brutal.

Find The Keywords Others Are Ignoring

In every niche market, there are several keywords that everybody focuses on.

These are the keywords that command high bid prices in Adwords. These same keywords are also savagely fought over in the organic SERPs. Either way, you're gonna be a goldfish in a sharkpool if you try to rank for them.

So, if the competition for those keywords is so fierce, why are so many people content to be ripped apart by the sharks?

Why do they spend so much time, effort and money competing for keywords they have little chance of ranking for?!

Three reasons...

First, most people aren't creative. They can't figure out what unexplored keyword sweet spots are available to them (I'll show you an example in a moment).

Second, they're lazy. And when it comes to growing your business, laziness trumps creativity every time.

Third, they don't know about the tools that can help them. There are tools you can use to help you find the sweet spots of keyword territory. I'm using one of these tools right now that does this. You can find out more about it in the "**Resources**" Section on page 33.

Whatever the reason, people are ignoring valuable keyword territory. They are leaving money on the table... money that you can scoop up by optimizing pages for these ignored keywords!

An Example Of Ignored Keywords

Let's say you want to rank in the top three slots in Google for the keyword "chiropractor." (We're not even going to touch how unlikely it is for a general

keyword like that to convert!)

Do a Google search for "chiropractor."

At the time of this writing, there are 8,910,000 results. That number is NOT a real indicator of TRUE keyword competitiveness, but it's a start in the right direction. (We're gonna talk about how to do TRUE keyword competitiveness analysis in the next few lessons in this series.)

The first ten slots in the SERPs are very well-entrenched. How do I know that? From using my favorite tool for analyzing keyword competition (you can find out more information about this tool on page 33 of this Report).

Beating those folks in the top ten slots will be tough. A little too tough in my book. That is, it will require too much time, effort and money to knock them off their perch for the ROI I can expect from ranking for "chiropractor."

It's one of those high-voltage keywords that everyone in that market focuses on.

So, let's dig deeper for some less-competitive, undiscovered treasure.

Let's search Google for "california chiropractor" (use the quotes). Whoa, that a big difference. Now, we get 9,880 results. MUCH better! But, if I wanted to get into the top three, this keyword is still a little too competitive for my tastes.

With a bit of work, I can likely knock the 2nd and 3rd guys off their purchases. It'll take some effort, but I can do it. As for the guy ranked first... not a chance. He's entrenched.

So, let's dig deeper. Maybe there's some unexplored territory out there.

Search Google for "north orange county chiropractor" (again, use the quotes). Look at that! At the time of this writing, there are 0 (zip, nadda, zilcho) results.

Now, how easy would it be for you to rank well for THAT keyword? It's like shooting fish in a barrel. This is true low-hanging fruit.

Are people using this keyword in Google? Well, it may not jump out at you in Wordtracker, but think about this...

There are a LOT of people in Orange County, California. A lot of them look for chiropractors (heck, I have a friend that drives from Los Angeles to Fullerton twice a week for his chiropractor).

People are refining their search these days to get more relevant results from Google. Often, they're refining their searches by geography.

And not only will you easily scoop up folks looking for "north orange county chiropractor" but you should also rank well for "orange county chiropractor" (only 326 results at the time of this writing).

That's a pool I'm willing to swim in!

Cumulative Effect Of Ignored Keywords

Let's face it. Ranking well for "north orange county chiropractor" is not going to bring a flood of traffic like ranking well for simply "chiropractor."

But, it doesn't need to.

First, "north orange county chiropractor" is much more targeted. If someone is searching for "north orange county chiropractor" it's a good bet that he's having problems with his back and wants to fix it fast.

If you're collecting and selling leads (we'll talk about how to do this in an upcoming series, so stay tuned) to a chiropractor in Orange County, you can unload 'em for a lot more cash than leads collected from people searching Google for "chiropractor."

Second, you're gonna have a bunch of these tiny keyword sweet spots sending search engine traffic to you.

For example, you're not going to simply create one page for "north orange county chiropractor," call it a day and head for the beach. You want to create pages for...

- "south orange county chiropractor"
- "laguna beach chiropractor"
- "anaheim hills chiropractor"

- "yorba linda chiropractor"

... and so on. You want to have lots of these pages scooping up people who are searching for these largely-ignored keywords. If you want to dig even deeper for keyword treasure, tack on the word "certified" or "board certified" to each keyword above.

The possibilities are endless. And cumulatively, these little sweet spots can add up to a flood of highly-targeted traffic to your site.

Are you getting excited yet?

Last Thoughts

Avoid the high-voltage, ultra-competitive keywords in your space. The time, money and effort you need to spend to rank well for them will probably give you a rotten ROI (most folks don't have a business model that can yield a great ROI from these shark-infested waters).

Instead, go for the keyword sweet spots... the unexplored territory of largely-ignored keywords.

They're much easier to rank for. And the traffic they drive is more targeted and easier to convert.

The traffic that only one of these sweet spots drives may not seem like a big deal. But, rank well for a LOT of them and the targeted traffic can pile up quickly.

There is a great piece of software that I use for SEO analysis (which pays off big). You can get more information about this tool in the "Resources" section of this Report (page 33).

You can manually do everything this tool does for you. But, this powerhouse piece of software can do it in a fraction of the time and effort.

So, if you have no budget, do it manually.

But, if you have a few bucks to spend and want to save massive amounts of your time, grab a copy of this gizmo.

Keyword Analysis Part III: Finding "Sweet Spot" Keywords

Last time, we talked about how you should go for low-hanging keywords. These little dumplings are the golden nuggets that you want to rank well for in the search engines.

First, they're often ignored by the folks who are chasing your tail in the search engine results pages (SERPs).

Second, the ladies and gents who are searching for these nuggets are usually more targeted and easier to convert than the masses.

Today, let's talk about how to find "sweet spot" keywords.

Your Prospects Are Looking For You

Believe it. I know it sometimes SEEMS like you're running a business in a virtual ghost town. But, your prospects are out there.

Even better, they're actively trying to find you. And here's the icing on the cake... they want to give you their money. They want to buy what you're selling. If you rank well in the engines and your site is converting well, you can't HELP but gain more business.

Here's an example...

Years ago, when I slaved away in Corporate America, I worked closely with a man named Mark. One day, I noticed Mark trolling Google, looking for a paintball gun to buy.

I watched over his shoulder.

First, he typed in "paintball."

That didn't do much good. Way too much general crap in the SERPs.

Next, he tried "paintball gun." Better. He found lots of promising sites trying to sell him the latest stuff. After clicking like a madman (and growing weary at the number of sites), he began to refine his search in Google.

He started using model numbers that he knew. Along with other qualifiers. And as Mark refined, his desire to buy grew.

Here's where it got interesting.

Why?

Because a friend of mine owned four of the top ten slots in the Google SERPs for one of Mark's refined search phrases!

It was a "sweet spot" keyword. Only the folks who were serious about buying used this keyword in their search. And it was largely ignored by most businesses.

My friend knew that and focused his SEO magic on it.

Different domains. Different pages. Different content. All focused on ranking for (well, dominating actually) that "sweet spot" keyword.

Mark clicked on through to one of my friend's sites, clicked on an affiliate link and was cooked by the merchant site.

I never asked my friend how long that merchant's cookie lasted, but I DO know Mark went on to order a brand-spanking new paintball gun from that merchant a few weeks later.

Brainstorm Keywords Your Prospects Are Using

You already know they're looking for you. Now, you've gotta figure out HOW they're looking for you.

What keywords are they using?

If your prospect is looking for information (i.e. he wants to read stuff), he's using words like "tips," "tutorial," "instruction" and so on in his search.

If he's hot to pony up and buy something, he's gonna use words like "review," "buy," "bargain," "deal," etc. in his search.

So, what does that mean to you?

If you have a paintball site filled with content and you're trying to bring home the bacon with AdSense, you need to point your SEO efforts toward keywords with the first set of qualifiers ("tips," "tutorial," etc.).

If you have a site that promotes products without a lot of fluff (for example, a datafeed site), point your SEO mojo towards keywords with the second set ("review," "buy," etc.).

Figure out who your prospects are, what they want and adjust your SEO efforts to give it to them.

Outsmarting Your Competition With Better Keywords

Sweet spot keywords can be great (I'm defining "great" as "very profitable"). After all, they bring targeted people who either click on ads or buy stuff. And there are tons of these sweet spots in every market.

But, competitive markets hate a vacuum. Your competitors WILL find you. Eventually. (They're like a virus, those rascals!)

When they do, you have two choices...

1. Compete against them.
2. Find better keywords that your competitors haven't discovered.

I do both. And if you have the time (and discipline), you should, too. The point of this article is to get you to dig deeper than your competitors. Figure out the psychology of your prospects. Then, figure out how they're looking for you.

This isn't as hard as it sounds. In fact, it can be as easy as walking into a store and striking up a conversation with someone. Ask them what they search for.

I'll show you how to do competitive SEO in an upcoming "Web Business Today!" mini-series, so keep your eyes peeled for that.

Last Thoughts

There are people out there searching for you and your products (or reviews and articles). They want what you have and they're searching Google, Yahoo and MSN for you right now.

Will they find you?

That depends. Are you ranking well for the sweet spot keywords that your prospects are actually USING?

If not, you have some work to do.

You now know how to use low-hanging and sweet spot keywords to...

1. outsmart your competitors
2. easily find targeted prospects

It's easier than you think. The key is to get started. I've just given you some great strategies that you can use to find sweet spot keywords that you can rank well for.

Now, you simply need to get to work!

That's it for now.

This short mini-series isn't over yet. Next time: How To Uncover Your REAL Keyword Competition In The Search Engines.

Keyword Analysis Part IV: How To Uncover Your REAL Keyword Competition In The Search Engines

You have your set of keywords that you're trying to rank for. The trick is to figure out how many competitors you're gonna be in the boxing ring with.

Go up against a bunch of Mike Tysons and you'll have lots of bruises (and maybe some broken bones) to show for it.

But, compete with some slow, powerless half-wits and you can smile all the way to the bank.

The trick is knowing which is which. And that's exactly what I'm going to show you how to do today.

Finding Your REAL Competition

If you have your finger on the pulse of your niche market, you can easily identify your REAL competition.

Let's say your market is 'basket weaving.' (Don't laugh. Take a look at the Google Adwords.)

If you're in the boxing ring, about to go twelve rounds in that market, you'll need to size of your competition. Are they wannabees? Or are they gonna crush you?

You need to do 2 things quickly...

1. Identify who your TRUE competitors are in the SERPs (search engine results pages)
2. Figure how well they've executed their SEO efforts

Do these two things and you can decide whether you want to play in that sandbox or not. Get these two things wrong and you're in for a world of hurt.

The One Mistake Most Newbie SEO's Make

Lots of folks look at how much competition there is for their keywords in the search engines. That's good. They SHOULD be looking at that.

But, sadly, here's where most people get it all wrong.

They go to Google, type in their keywords, see the number of results returned, and usually gasp at how many competitors there are.

For example, Google 'basket weaving.' At the time that I'm writing this, there are over 3,600,000 results.

Newbie SEO's immediately think, 'Crap, there's a lot of people in that market. I can't compete.'

But, the number of results returned by Google is completely misleading. It has NOTHING to do with the level of competition in the 'basket weaving' market.

The fact is, most of the pages that Google returns are owned by people who aren't competing for the phrase 'basket weaving.' They merely have the phrase on their site.

And that's not even close to competing.

Now, let me show you exactly how to identify your REAL competition.

Three Steps You Need To Follow To Identify Your REAL Competition

There are a lot of wannabees in the SERPs. They aren't your competition. You don't care about the posers you can knock out in the first round. You're looking for the guys who can go the distance.

In the world of search engine rankings, your TRUE competitors are other SEOs in the market. They're the ones to watch for.

Doing a Google search for your main keywords ain't gonna cut it. That won't identify them. You'll need to dig deeper.

So, here's what you need to do...

Step 1: Look For Title Tags

You need to find how many pages there are in Google that contain your keyword in the title tag.

If a page doesn't have your keyword in the title tag, they're not trying to rank for your keyword. Simple as that.

So, go to Google and type in the following exactly as I've done it below (in fact, just copy and paste it)...

```
allintitle:'basket weaving'
```

At the time of this writing, Google is showing 20,500 pages in their index that have 'basket weaving' in the title.

That's a hell of a lot less than the 3,600,000 pages returned by Google when we simply typed in 'basket weaving'.

You're already getting a better idea about your REAL competition for this keyword.

Step 2: Look For Keyword-Specific URLs

Here's another good indicator of SEO work... URLs with the keyword contained within.

If a site is trying to rank for 'basket weaving', the owner will usually try to put 'basket weaving' somewhere in the URL.

It's not clear whether doing this will actually give you a boost in the SERPs for your keyword. But, there are a lot of SEOs who believe it will. Since, you're tailing SEO's, you need to do this step.

So, let's take another trip over to Google. Type in the following line exactly as I've done it below (again, make life easy on both of us and copy and paste it)...

```
allinurl:'basket weaving'
```

At the time of this writing, Google returns only 1,360 pages where 'basket weaving' is somewhere in the URL.

Whoa. That ain't much.

After doing step 1, you had a better idea of your REAL competition for 'basket weaving'. After doing step 2, you have an even better idea.

But, now for the coup de grace... Step 3.

Step 3: Look For Keyword-Specific Incoming Links

Any SEO worth the clothes on his back is going to try to get links coming to his site.

And not just ANY links. I'm talking about incoming external links with the keyword in the anchor text of those links.

If a site doesn't have keyword-specific incoming links coming from outside the site (i.e. from another domain), that site is NOT your competition.

So, it's Google time again. You know the drill. Copy and paste the following...

```
allinanchor:'basket weaving'
```

At the time of this, Google only returns 9,980 pages that have links with 'basket weaving' in the anchor text.

This is VERY important information!

You now have a clear idea of your TRUE competition.

Now, I know you're getting tired, but I always like to give a little something extra.

So, here's Step 4...

Step 4: Look For Everything At Once

You already know that your TRUE competitors are doing one (if not more) of the following three things...

- putting their target keyword in the title tags of their pages
- putting their target keyword somewhere in the URL
- getting incoming links with their target keyword in the anchor text

But, let's kick it up a notch. Let's look for the folks who are doing ALL THREE of the above. After all, you're planning to do all three, so you want to know which of your competitors are just as diligent.

So, go to Google and copy and paste the following...

```
intitle:'basket weaving' inurl:'basket weaving'  
inanchor:'basket weaving'
```

At the time of this writing, Google returns only 994 pages that have all three going for it. That's your REAL competition.

That's a lot less 'competition' than the original 3,600,000 pages Google returned when we first started poking around!

Last Thoughts

If you want to know how much REAL competition you're gonna have to duke it out with in your niche, you need to follow the steps that we just completed.

The good news is that most SEOs (believe it or not) don't do this. Some are lazy. Some just don't know any better.

If YOU do this and identify your REAL competition, you can easily make the decision to either attack the market or move on to a market that you can penetrate more easily.

That saves you time, money and effort.

By the way, you are absolutely NUTS if you don't save this article or print it out to refer to later. There's a lot of step-by-step meat in this article. Don't let it go to waste!

Epilogue

Just because we found 994 pages that were doing some fundamental SEO work doesn't mean those 994 pages are hard to beat in the SERPs.

Without knowing for certain, I'd be willing to bet that most of those 994 pages only had a few links coming in.

Keyword-specific links are arguably the most important piece of SEO. If you were to get a few MORE links than those other 994 pages, who do you think would be smiling THEN?

Take action and put these steps to use in your business.

Keyword Analysis Part V: Dominating Your Keyword Territory By Giving The Search Engines What They're Looking For

In the last few sections of this Special Report, we've focused how you can find "sweet spot" keywords. These are the keyword territories that are easier to dominate with less time, money and effort spent.

That is, competing and dominating the SERPs for the keyword "*south orange county chiropractor*" is a heck of a lot easier than competing with the big boys for "*debt consolidation*."

Bottom line... if you can't compete, you can't monetize. And aside from being able to tell all your friends that you're crushing the SERPs for your keywords, monetization of your time, money and effort spent (i.e. your ROI) is the only thing that matters.

In this section, we're gonna take a brief look at search engine optimization (SEO). Not on-page stuff. We're going to talk briefly about *off-page* criteria. This is actually a prologue to an upcoming series on SEO that I'll be doing for my newsletter subscribers.

So, if you're reading this Report because someone you know gave it to you and you're NOT subscribed to my newsletter, you should do that now at...

<http://www.WebBusinessToday.com>

Let's get started...

What Do Search Engines Look For

We know they like links. But, this isn't 2003 anymore. Back then, you could simply acquire thousands of links and the search engines would love you for

it. It didn't matter if you paid for the links, bribed your friends for them, or stole them with black hat methods.

For awhile, it didn't even matter if your keywords were contained in the anchor text of the links.

If you had lots of links, Google, Yahoo and Microsoft (The Big Three) would love you. And they'd show their respective adoration by showering your sites with top ranks for your keywords.

That was 2003.

The next year, 2004, brought a change in the landscape. The Big Three began to reward anchor text. That is, if you wanted your site to rank for the keyword "*dog training tips*," you had better get some links with "*dog training tips*" in the anchor text of the links.

As SEO's began to adjust and eventually become comfortable with this new landscape, the search engines were brewing another change in their respective pots.

The landscape was about to shift yet again.

2005. This was the year that swept the proverbial rug out from under the feet of many SEOs.

During the middle of 2005, the Big Three began to reward something else in their algorithms. They began to reward links that had two characteristics...

- Quality
- Diversity

This change in the landscape was enough to put a lot of search engine spammers (those who create millions of pages with content of questionable value and slam them into the search engines) out of business.

In the past, search engine spammers could acquire tens of thousands of links with their chosen keywords in the anchor text. They would accomplish this by using their own growing networks of spam sites. These tens of thousands of links would result in top ranks for their chosen keywords.

This mid-2005 change in the Big Three's algorithms began to inhibit the effectiveness of this strategy. A portfolio of links with high quality and wide diversity began to trump a portfolio of tens of thousands of low-quality links.

That's where we are in 2006.

Let's look briefly at how quality and diversity in links impacts your sites' rankings in the SERPs.

Quality In Your Links

Quality links are links of high authority. An **authority** link doesn't necessarily mean a thematic link.

That may sound confusing, so let me explain...

CNN.com is an authority site. It is an authority site largely because of the huge diversity and quality of links pointing at it across the web. (Some theorists claim that sites like CNN.com are white-listed by the search engines. That theory may be true, but it's impossible for me to validate.)

If you get a link pointing to your site from the homepage of CNN.com with "*payday loans*" in the anchor text, that link will have a dramatic effect on your site's ranking in The Big Three for the term "*payday loans*."

The link from CNN.com is obviously not a thematic link as CNN.com is not a site about payday loans. But, because the link is coming from an authority site, the link will have a positive effect on your site's rankings.

The same is true about other authority sites. If you get a link pointing to your site from the homepage of Apple.com or GM.com that has "*bad credit mortgage loan*" in the anchor text, you will enjoy a significant boost in the SERPs for the keyword "*bad credit mortgage loan*."

A lot of people think quality links mean links from .edu, .gov and .mil sites.

It's not that simple. Quality links come from sites who have a gigantic portfolio of high-quality and diverse links pointing to them.

Now, obviously, getting a link from the homepage of CNN.com, Apple.com, or GM.com will be tough. But, there are millions of sites online that enjoy

varying levels of authority based on their respective portfolios of high-quality and diverse links.

Getting links from these sites is doable. Directories still work. Article banks still work. Especially those who employ some level of editorial discretion.

But, that's a topic for the upcoming series on search engine optimization.

Diversity In Your Links

I have already implied the importance of a portfolio of diverse links above. So, I won't beat this concept into the ground here.

But, I **WILL** tell you how you should be thinking about building your portfolio of diverse links.

Ultimately, you want your site to enjoy a portfolio of links from different domains, IP's and site types. These three components offer varying levels of diversity and value in The Big Three's algorithms.

Let's talk briefly about them...

Diversity Of Domains

In the old days (2003), getting 10,000 links was as easy as placing an order for a site-wide link on a site with 10,000 pages. Your link would be placed on each page of that site.

It took awhile for The Big Three to figure out that 10,000 links from the same domain didn't ensure that *the site that was linked to* was truly a valuable site worth ranking highly in the SERPs. But, they eventually **did** figure it out.

Today, having links from a variety of domains (with appropriate anchor text, of course) can have a significant impact on your rankings in the SERPs.

But, The Big Three aren't stupid. They realize that it's easy for one webmaster to reserve 1,000 domains relatively cheaply. With some effort, that webmaster could potentially use his newly-acquired 1,000 domains to point to another site that he owns (with proper anchor text).

It's not likely that a webmaster will do this. But, it **does** happen. In fact, I personally know several people that do this.

So, growing your portfolio of diverse links by getting other domains to link to you is important. This diversity will help your site's rankings in the SERPs. But, again, The Big Three aren't stupid. And that's why you need a higher level of diversity through IP's.

Diversity Of IP's

Getting other sites to link to you is important. But, getting other sites that are located on IP's that are significantly different than the IP that your site is located on can have a dramatic impact on your site's rankings.

A detailed discussion of IP's for the purposes of search engine optimization is best left for the series that I have planned for "Web Business Today!" subscribers in the near future. It's simply beyond the scope of this Special Report on keyword competitiveness.

But, the use of IP's as a method of diversifying your portfolio of links is important. So, I wanted to mention it here briefly.

IP's come in octets. The different octets of an IP can signify varying levels of diversity in the eyes of The Big Three. Therefore, getting links from a wide variety of IP's that are comprised of different octets can also give your site a dramatic boost in the SERPs.

That's enough about IP's for now.

Diversity Of Site Types

Think for a moment about how The Big Three determines the value of a site. Not only is a diversity of domains and IP's important. Site types are important, as well. A portfolio of links from various site types will imply that your site is worthy of attention from the entire market.

Let me give you an example.

Let's say you have a site about dog training. You've taken great care to build a portfolio of links from various domains and IP's (from high-quality site, of course!). Obviously, the links have your targeted keywords in the anchor text.

But, you're not satisfied. You continue to build your portfolio of links. By talking to other webmasters, establishing a credible presence in your market and offering great content about dog training, you're able to get links from the following site types...

- Blogs (Wordpress, blogspot, Moveable Type, etc.) focused on dogs
- Press release sites
- News sites
- Article sites focused on dog training
- Directories (in the section devoted to dog training)
- Other dog-related sites with editorial control

This portfolio of links sends a signal to The Big Three. It tells them that the entire dog training market is taking note of your site. Not just article banks. Not just blogs. But, the entire market!

This portfolio of links from a diverse set of site types will give your dog training a significant boost in The Big Three.

Last Thoughts

These days, getting your site to rank highly (for the long-term) for your targeted keywords in The Big Three's SERPs is about developing a portfolio of links from a diverse set of high-quality sites.

Links from authority sites help dramatically.

Links from a diverse set of domains, IP's and site types help dramatically, too.

But, you need to focus on developing both. You need to find and acquire links from authoritative sites that are on different domains, IP's and comprised of different types of information.

By doing this, you are ensuring the longevity of your site's ranking in the SERPs.

Always think about how Google, Yahoo and Microsoft determine the value of a site. Ultimately, they want sites in their respective indexes that offer the searcher (their true customer) what he is looking for. The best way to convince The Big Three that your site will give him what he's looking for is to have everyone else in your market declare how wonderful you are by linking to your site!

Resources That I Use For Keyword And SEO Analysis

SEO Elite – This is the 800-lb. gorilla of search engine optimization analysis. Brad Callen released this gem a couple of years ago and has consistently updated it to make it more powerful than anything else on the market. It's not cheap, but if you're serious about SEO and want to compete against folks who know what they're doing, you need to consider this tool for your arsenal.

With a couple of clicks, it can show you the portfolio of links that any of your competitors has built. It can display the quality and diversity of those links.

SEO Elite does a lot of things that I don't have room to explain here. You can check out everything it does and read the hundreds of testimonials that Callen has received for this tool here...

<http://www.webbusinesstoday.com/seo-analysis-tool>

Keyword Elite – This is another great tool that was released recently by Brad Callen. If you would like to build powerful lists of keywords for your targeted keyword territories, this tool can save you a ton of time and effort (and money, in the long-run).

You can use **Keyword Elite** to dig up keywords that most of your competitors are ignoring or don't know about. You can also create huge lists of keywords for your AdSense sites. You can even spy on your competitors' Adwords campaigns.

Callen has established a reputation for providing great customer support and a track record of constantly updating his tools to keep them two steps ahead of anything else available on the market. In fact, he has already released the latest version of **Keyword Elite**.

I don't promote a lot of products in the marketing space. But, I'm always willing to promote Callen's offers because of his excellent reputation and the high quality level of his products.

In any case, there are a lot of videos on his site that will show you exactly how powerful Keyword Elite is and how it works. If you're serious about your keyword research, you owe it to yourself to watch those videos. You can access them for free here...

<http://www.webbusinesstoday.com/keyword-research-tool>

Epilogue

As with anything related to success, you have to **take action** to move toward your goals.

That's especially true with keyword competitive analysis.

The information and data that you need to compete effectively in your targeted keyword territories is available to you. The only thing that's required of you is to do the necessary work to extract that data.

I've shown you exactly how to do that work in this Special Report...

- You know how and why you should be wary of the various lists of "high-paying" keywords that are being sold.
- You know how to find the "low-hanging fruit" keywords that most of your competition is ignoring.
- You know how to uncover the "sweet spot" keywords that your prospects are using to search for you... the keywords that they're using that practically identify them as paying customers and not just tire-kickers.
- You know how to identify how much REAL competition exists in the organic SERPs of any niche market. Most of your competitors don't know how to do this elementary research. You do and you can profit from their ignorance.
- You know how to compete in Google, Yahoo and Microsoft for your targeted keyword territory with some fundamental search engine optimization strategies that others don't know or aren't talking about.

I've given you this Special Report free of charge. And I realize that some folks are going to assume that there's no value in this Report because it didn't cost anything.

Don't make that mistake. There is a wealth of knowledge in this Report. If you put it to use by taking action, you can begin ranking in the SERPs for

keyword territories that others either ignore, are unaware of, or are frightened away from.

Ranking for keyword territories in ANY niche market can be profitable. There are dozens of ways to monetize traffic. But, the first step is GETTING the traffic to your site.

And that's exactly what this Special Report has taught you to do.

So, go out there and crush the competition!

To your growing success!

Damon G. Zahariades

P.S. If you received this Special Report from a friend and would like to hear from me in the future about building your business online, I invite you to come along for the ride at...

<http://www.WebBusinessToday.com>