

Day 1

- How do you figure out what keywords the prospects are using? Ideally, you talk to customers, or the sales people. Anyone who has direct access to talking to prospects or customers or your market to ask what they think a prospect might search on, or the terms they use to describe what you offer. Look at competitors' websites. Ultimately, your SEO will only be as good as the level of understanding you have of your target market and prospects
- At which stage do you take into account 1) how difficult it will be to rank for a keyword and 2) the projected traffic if you target a certain keyword. This is where manual searches of your keyword, and eyeballing results, will come in. Tools giving the "SEO competition level" score can help, but I think nothing beats the manual review.
- So is part of your work actually creating the content on the sites of your client? You are advising about SEO and what content they should have AND you also write the content for them? Just curious! Most of the time, there is someone else creating content. If I do create content, I will only do so if I have a subject matter expert (SME) I can work with and interview to get quality content. To rank these days, content can't be generic or blah. It has to stand out, and how that happens is by uncovering details and nuances only SMEs know. Often the marketer is NOT a subject matter expert.
- Can you clarify industry keywords? they seem pretty general ... more like perfect-lead keywords. For example, with cancer, we want to be recognized as the leader for breast and lung cancer. So would the industry keyword be "best lung cancer treatment," "top lung cancer doctor," etc.? Is my understanding correct? Thx! By the time someone is looking for a doctors or medical professionals, I would think those would be "lead gen" keywords as that is a very qualified search. Those keywords generate leads. An industry keyword would be I think more along the lines of "lung cancer treatment" as I can see multiple pages and URLs you can expand upon to be seen as the expert in the lung cancer treatment industry.
- In the early days, SEO experts used to say you need a certain number of keywords per words on a page. Is there still a formula? Did you say just one keyword per page? This is called keyword density. This lead to a lot of keyword stuffing, and unnatural keyword usage just for the sake of crossing it off a checklist. These days, you do not have to aim for a certain percentage. You do want to use your keyword strategically in the "right" places – see the Moz resource of the Perfectly Optimized page – but you don't need to be so stilted about using it a certain number of times. If the keyword is mapped properly and is a fit for the topic, you'll be using the keyword and its variations naturally enough
- My company is a news source (online/print medical journal) with a audience of pediatricians. We cover hundreds of topics that are very specialized. Do you have a recommended cadence for working with editorial to update key words based on new article topics? This will take collaboration and a good working relationship for sure to work out a new process of adding the "SEO" layer in before content gets published. There is no one-size-fits-all way of working with editorial, but making sure the directive comes from the top down is a good place to start. Or – giving the editorial team an SEO training so they get onboard and excited is helpful too!

- any thoughts on punctuation on a website when it comes to quality? if lowercase titles are part of the brand, should it be avoided? This is where creative and SEO goes toe to toe and you need to determine which will trump the other. Is your brand creative extremely protected? Or is SEO more important in this instance? One will need to be emphasized. I do get the need for consistency with lowercase, but I would also think it would look a little odd/spammy to someone who is a new prospect and hasn't been introduced to your brand creative before.

Day 2

- With Google giving more weight to local results, how important is it to include geographic identifiers in your keywords? It's important to use some geo-targeted keywords in your phrases, but you don't have to as much as you did in the past. There are many elements to a website and webpage that should be localized. Having some geo-targeted keywords in the copy is just one of the many factors that helps you rank for Local SEO. Other factors include an updated Google My Business profile, NAP presence, map embed, localized, unique image file name and alt text, etc.
- Out of all the tools do you feel the keywords everywhere extension is the best investment if you're going to pay for one tool? If you have a smaller budget, then yes. If you can afford \$99, I'd say SEMRush as that is a traditional tool. Keywords Everywhere is good for what I call "quick and dirty" keyword research. I love it for on-the-go keyword research, or single blog post optimization. However, when I'm doing foundational keyword research, or have big portions of a site to optimize, a traditional tool is needed.
- With keywords that don't rank now, is it possible they will rank later and therefore, we should keep them in our arsenal? Absolutely! It may take ranking for several variations and longer-tail keywords before you can work up to ranking for more competitive, higher volume phrases.
- I don't have access to our Google Search console (50K person company and I'm not on our web team), and I've used all the free tools, but have been faced with a pay wall at this point...any other way I can see volume? SEMRush, or another paid tool, can get you a ton of statistics about your website if you're limited with GSC (Google Search Console) access. I don't know of any other free tool (besides doing the free trial) that will get you that insight.