Demystifying SEO

Danielle Ramsey

Digital Marketing Manager

- Building Websites Since I was 12
- HMB for Eight Years
- Enjoy Traveling, Photography & Videography in my Free Time

What will you learn?

- What goes into ranking high on Google and other search engines
- Common SEO myths that no longer work
- Strategies for getting your organization started with SEO

What is SEO?

The practice of optimizing your website so it shows at the top of organic search engine result pages (SERPs).

The end goal is an increase in the amount and quality of traffic to your website.

How Fast Does SEO Work?

SEO is a long-term growth strategy that will require patience.

If you need to drive traffic to a page quickly, utilize PPC or other marketing techniques.

Why SEO for Your Business?

- Organic results typically more trusted than ads
- Long-term growth strategy, builds on itself over time
- “Free” traffic to your website, can result in leads

What Makes Good SEO?

SEO Myth #1

Great SEO is all about knowing where to place keywords.

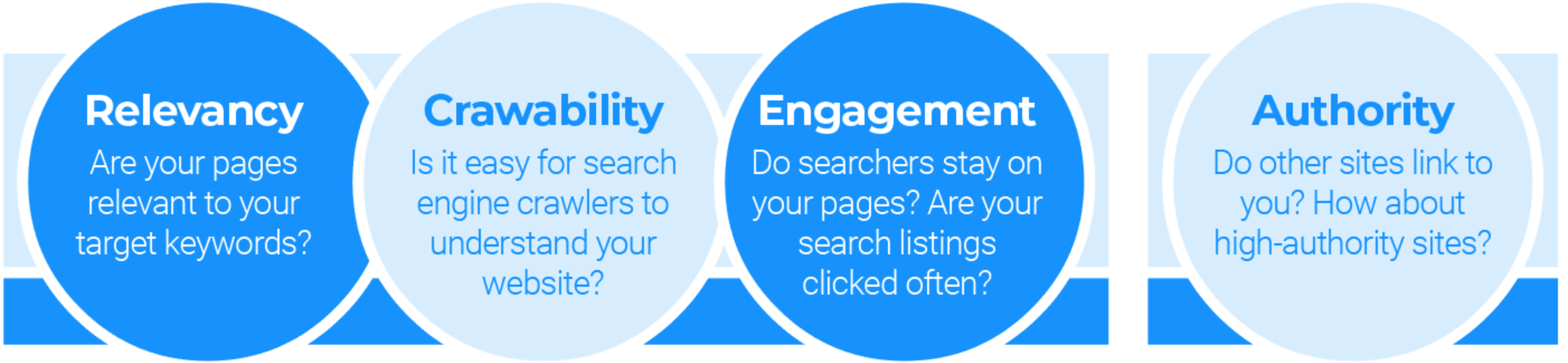
The Truth

Great SEO is mostly about creating great content.

First, remember when it comes to SEO Google is just trying to serve up the best content to its searchers.

How this is done can be summed up in four basic element.

The Four Elements of SEO



Internal Optimization **External Optimization**

Your SEO goal, at the simplest level, is to make great content for your audience **and** make it easy for Google to find it…

Relevancy

SEO Myth #2

You can make a website rank high on Google with great SEO.

The Truth

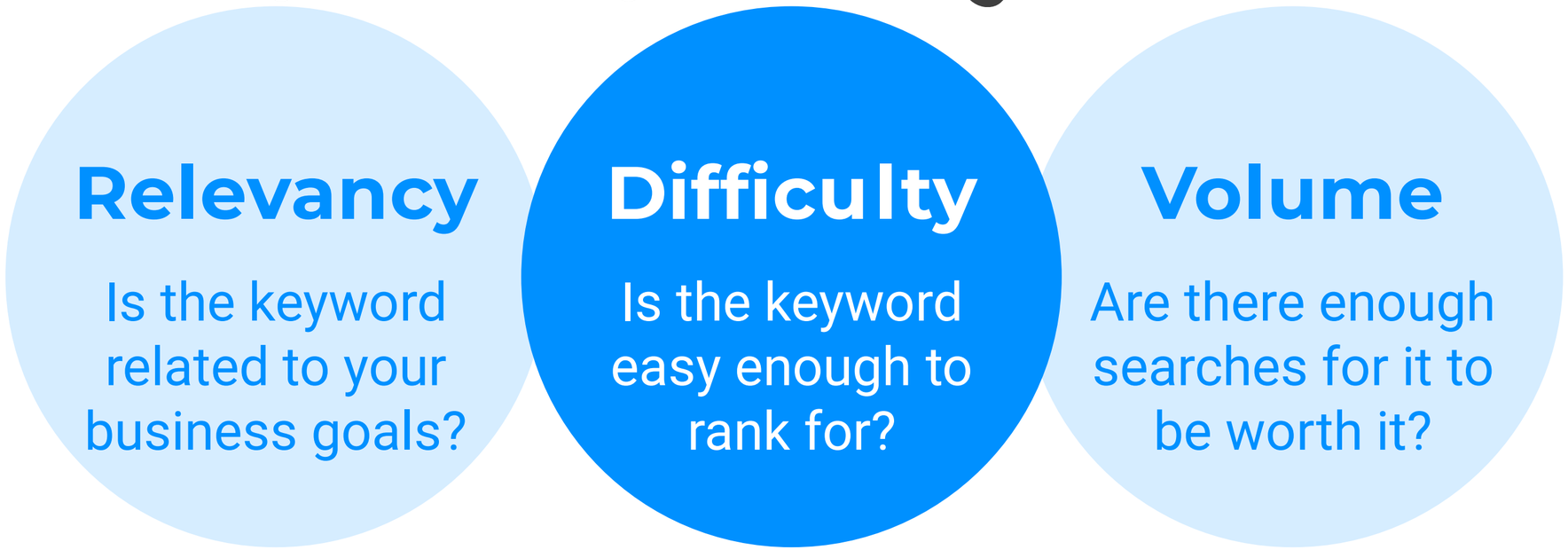
Websites don’t rank high on Google… pages do.

What does this mean?

The best way to grow targeted traffic to a website is by focusing on individual pages that are targeted toward a specific keyword/search term.

This means you need to conduct **keyword research** to really succeed at SEO.

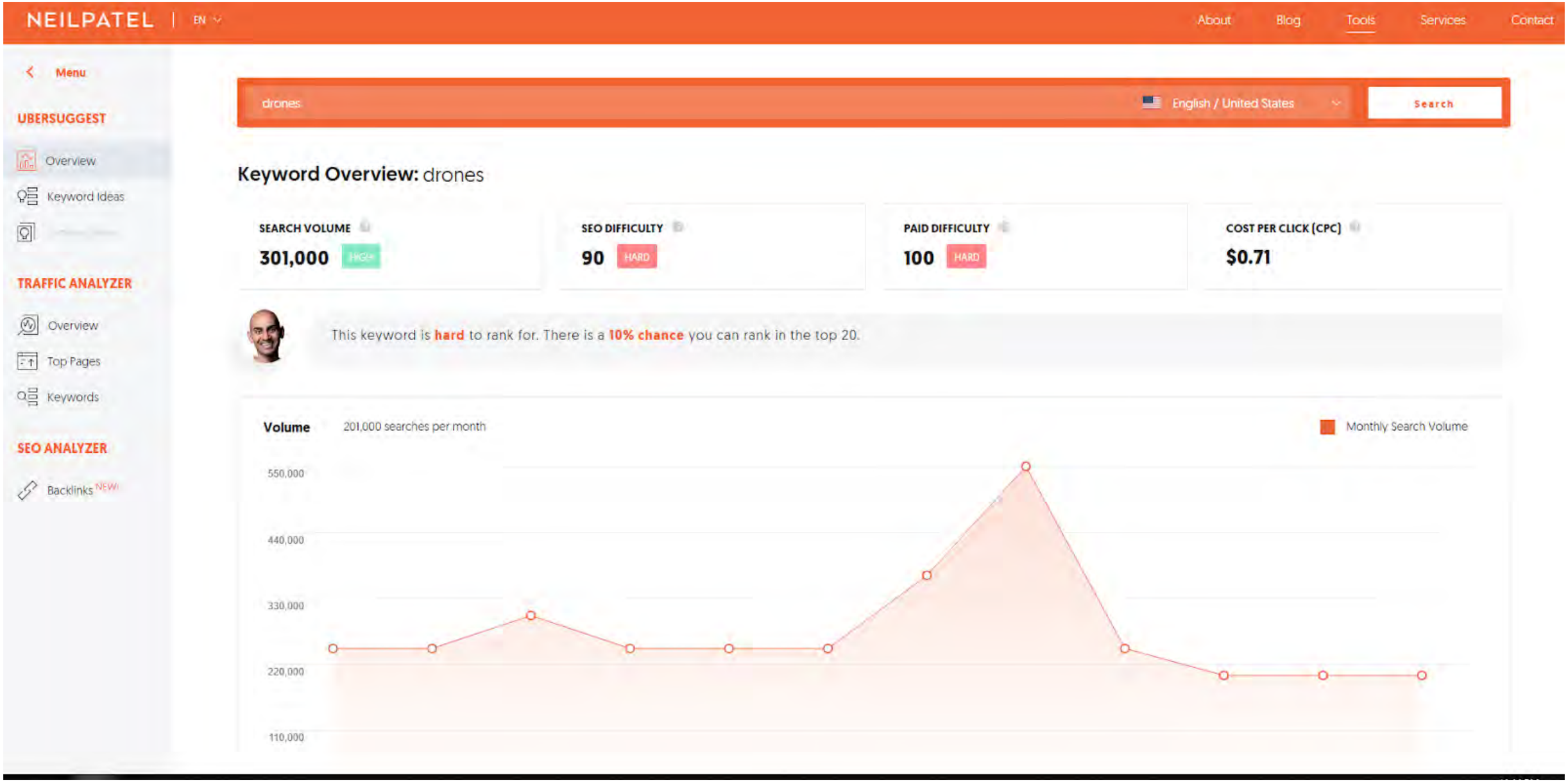
Targeting Keywords



To choose the perfect keyword for SEO all three answers should be yes.

Keyword Research Tools

- UberSuggest *(Freemium)*
- SEMRush *(Premium)*
- Google Keyword Planner *(Required Google Ads Account)*


NEILPATEL
EN
About
Blog
Tools
Services
Contact
Menu
UBERSUGGEST
Overview
Keyword Ideas
TRAFFIC ANALYZER
Overview
Top Pages
Keywords
SEO ANALYZER
Backlinks NEW!
drones
English / United States
Search
Keyword Overview: drones
SEARCH VOLUME
301,000
HIGH
SEO DIFFICULTY
90
HARD
PAID DIFFICULTY
100
HARD
COST PER CLICK (CPC)
$0.71
This keyword is hard to rank for. There is a 10% chance you can rank in the top 20.
Volume
201,000 searches per month
Monthly Search Volume
550,000
440,000
330,000
220,000
110,000

Now What?

Now that you have a few keywords ready to target, what do you do with them?

In an ideal world, you'll already have a post or page that has content on the keyword you're targeting, and you can optimize an existing page.

But often, you'll need to create brand new content.

Dos & Don’ts of Relevancy

DO

- Ensure your target keyword is included in the title of your page
- Link to the page you created using your target keyword as anchor text throughout your website
- Write unique content
- Create a page that is the best resource on the target keyword you’re targeting

DON’T

- Bait and switch content – make sure your page is about the target keyword
- Create several different pages for the same target keyword
- Steal content from other sources – keep it original
- Create pages with thin content that add little to no value to potential readers

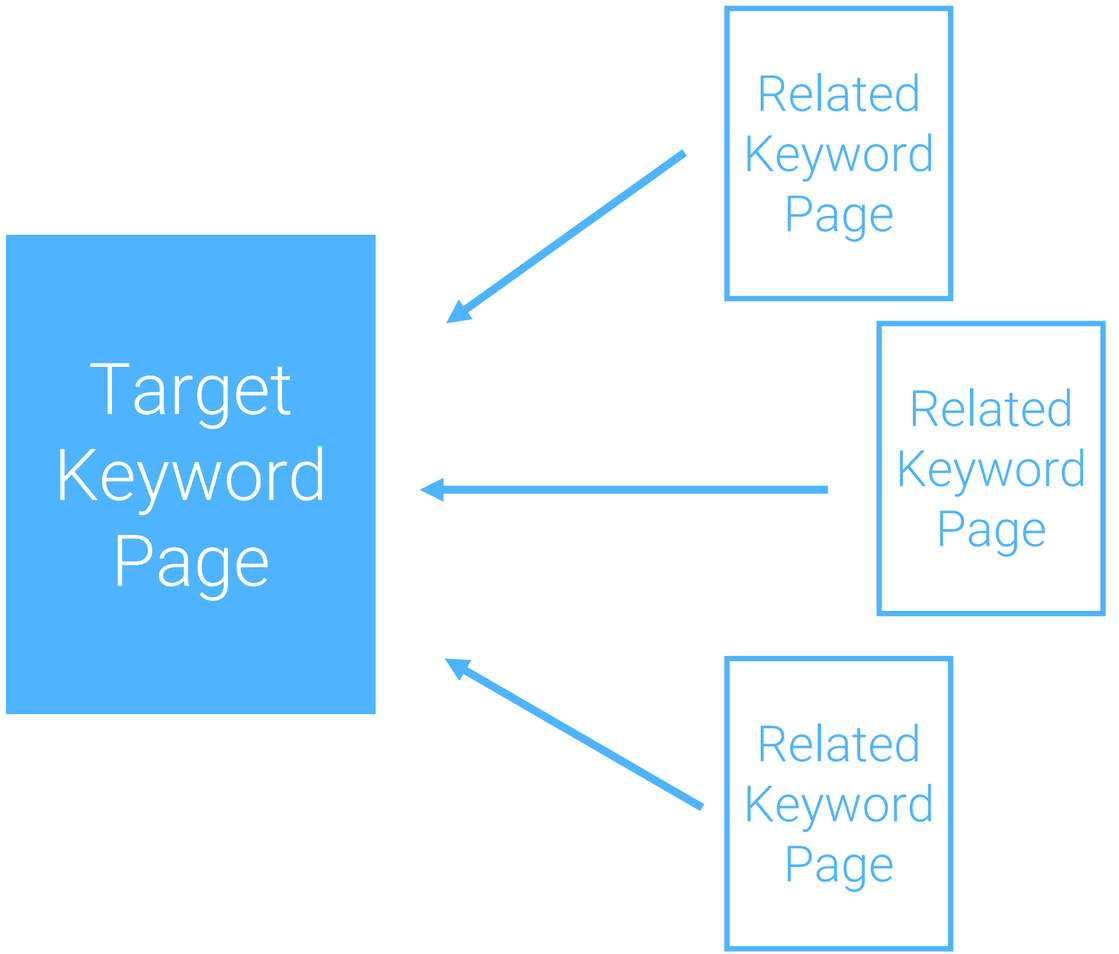
Making More Relevant Content

- Tools like UberSuggest, LSIGraph, BuzzSumo will give you ideas on what people are searching for and what types of content is already popular
- Make your content include answers to common questions and queries related to your target keyword
- Create pages related to your keyword (but be careful not to cannibalize your target keyword)

Create one-way links back to the page you're trying to rank for on Google.

Use your target keyword in the anchor text of these pages.

This reinforces to Google that this is the page on your website to go to for this search term.



Crawlability

What is Crawlability?

This is the aspect of search engine optimization that most people think of when they think of "SEO."

- Putting your keywords in the right spot
- Making sure it's easy for Google to 'read' or 'crawl' your website

This can get technical – but we're going to stick to the basics…

Where to Use Target Keyword

- Mention Keyword One time each in:
  - **Title**
  - **Headline (Bounce Rate)**
  - **Meta Description (more on this later)**
  - Image alt tag
  - URL
  - Subheaders
  - Image Names

All pages on your site should do at least this

Most pages on your site should do this

- Two-Three times in content

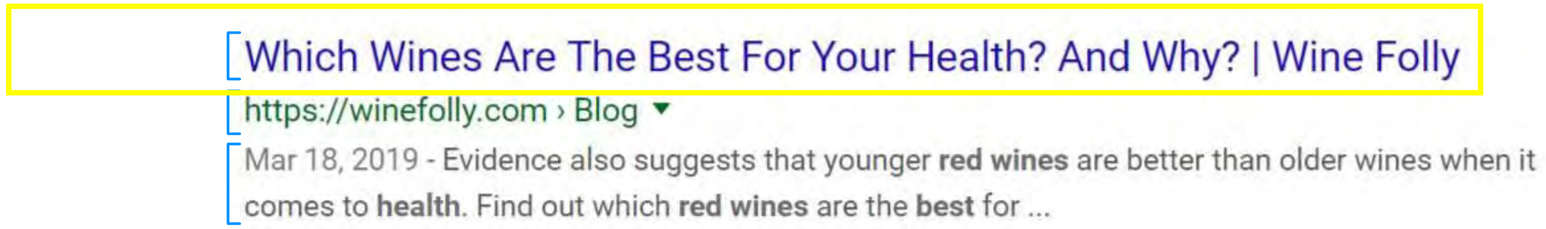
https://moz.com/blog/how-much-keyword-repetition-is-optimal-whiteboard-friday

Which Wines Are The Best For Your Health? And Why? | Wine Folly

https://winefolly.com › Blog

Mar 18, 2019 - Evidence also suggests that younger **red wines** are better than older wines when it comes to **health**. Find out which **red wines** are the **best** for ...

Writing a Great Title/Header



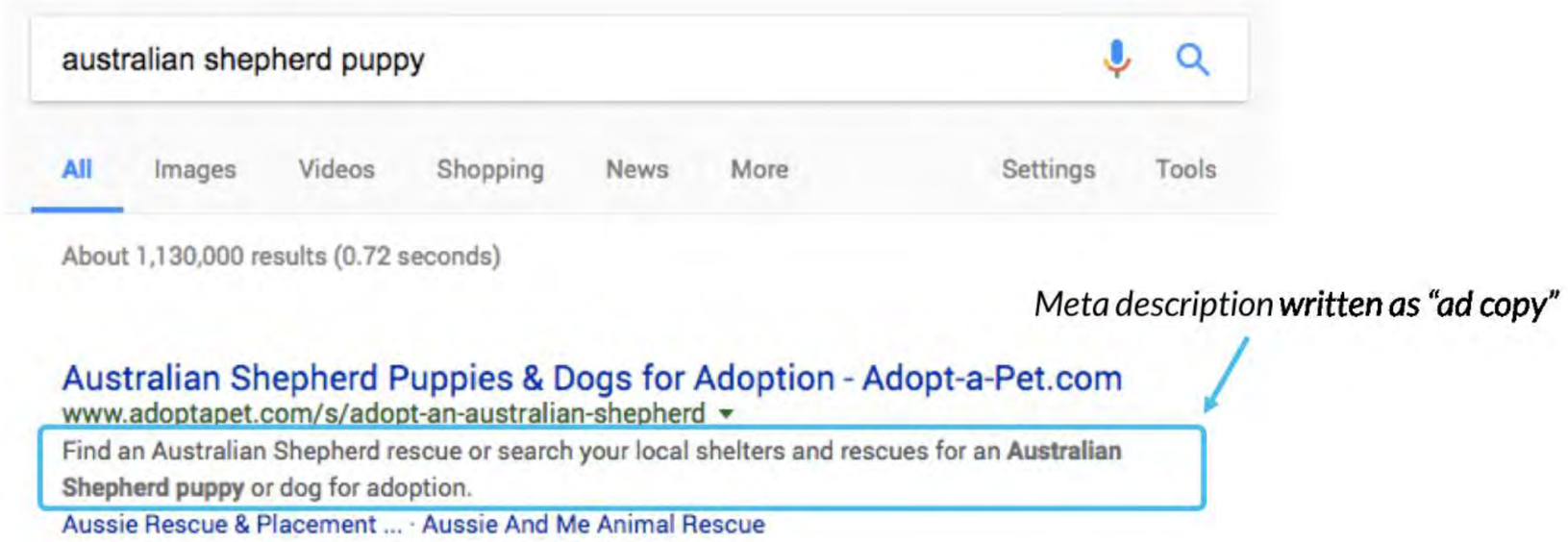
- Aim for 50-60 Characters. 65-character max.
- Include Your Target Keyword
- Generate Curiosity
- Use Emotional Words (Amazing, Sensational, Daring, Simple, Alarming)
- Use Action Words (Learn, How to, Boost, Impact, Reduce)
- Use Numbers (1-10) – i.e. 5 Steps to Getting the Perfect Drone Shot

After you do these things, try running your headline through an analyzer for additional ways to improve.

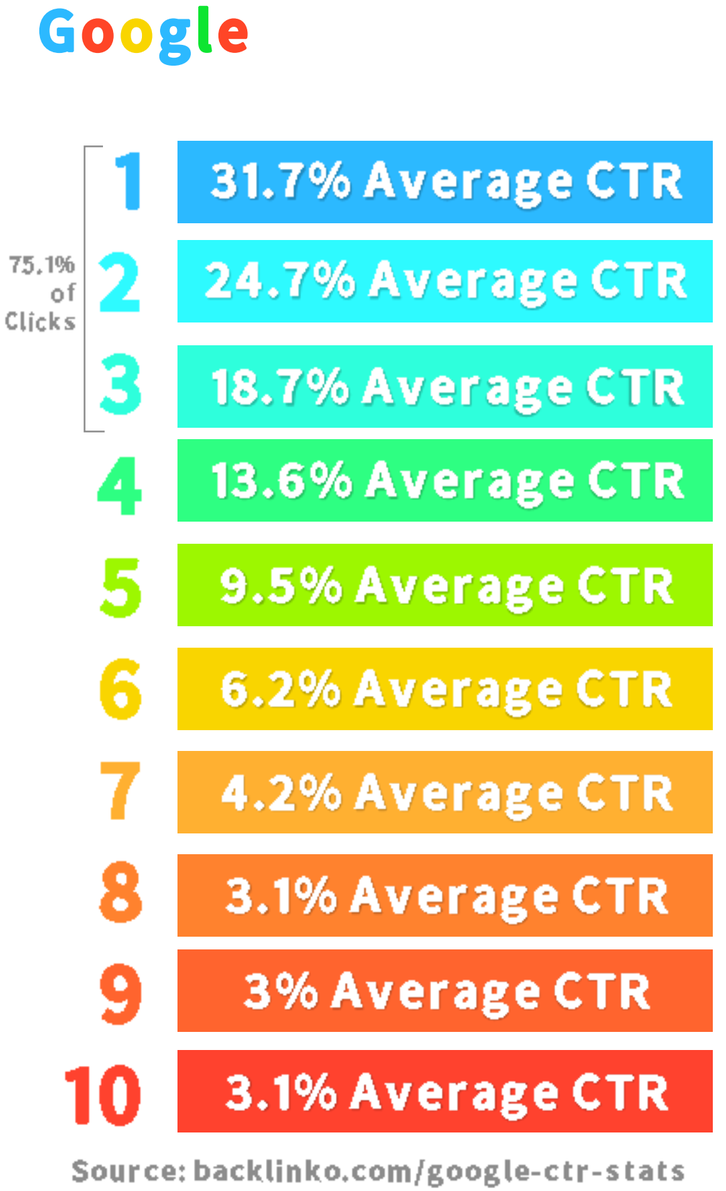
Always make sure the target keyword is in the headline though.

https://coschedule.com/headline-analyzer

Meta Descriptions



- Meta descriptions don't directly affect SEO
- Mini-ads to searchers enticing them to go to your website
- Aim for 150-160 characters
- Include your target keyword – it will be bolded if searched for
- If your CTR is higher than average for that search term it is a positive signal to Google



Okay:`<img src="pancakes.png" alt="pancakes">`

This alt text is only "okay" because it's not very descriptive. Yes, this is an image of a stack of pancakes. But, there's more to be said about this image.

Good:

```
<img src="pancakes.png" alt="Stack of blueberry pancakes with powdered sugar">
```

This alt text is a better alternative because it is far more descriptive of what's in the image.

Not recommended:

```
<img src="pancakes.png" alt="">
```

or

```
<img src="pancakes.png" alt="pancake pancakes pan cake hotcakes hotcake breakfast food best breakfast top breakfasts breakfast recipes pancake recipe">
```

- Source: Moz.com

Alt Text Guidelines

Do	DON'T
• Do describe the image as specifically as possible • Use your target keyword *(if it makes sense to do so)* • Name image file names descriptively • Compress images to small as possible file size	• Don't leave alt text empty or with vague descriptions. • • Keyword stuff in an attempt to rank for an image • Don't include 'image of' or 'picture of' – this is unnecessary • Avoid Using CSS background images for Informational Images

Size Down Your Images

- Size down images appropriately
- Generally, images shouldn't be larger than 500 KB for fast loading.
- Compress your images with Photoshop or a free tool like tinyjpg/tinypng
- PageSpeed Insights to Check Website Speed

The Technical Stuff...

- **Ensure your page is mobile friendly**
  - https://search.google.com/test/mobile-friendly
- **Make sure your website is fast-loading**
  - https://developers.google.com/speed/pagespeed/insights/
- **Use short URLs and keep folders to a minimum.**
  - URLs show up in search results. Make sure your URLs are concise, but also include target keywords for pages you're trying to rank for.
- Make sure you're linking to all of the important pages in your website and using appropriate link text

Engagement

Make Content Engaging

Scannable

- Don’t write long blocks of text without pause (generally, I try not to have more than 3 lines of text per paragraph)
- Include short bullet-pointed lists
- Include icons, illustrations, photos, and diagrams, as often as possible
- Create lists

Interactive

- Explanation videos or GIFs
- Podcasts
- Quizzes, surveys, and polls
- Relevant infographics or even comics

Anatomy of a Great Blog Post

H1: Page Title
Include your target keyword. Make it make sense to a search engine what the article is about.

When writing blog post content, write for scanability and engagement. Long paragraphs are not ideal. I try to keep text to only 3-4 lines per paragraph. **Use bold text to emphasize your main points.**

- Use numbered lists and bullet points
- To increase readability
- And break-up or summarize long bits of content

Creating Custom Graphs/Images that contain your target keyword is a great way to rank higher.

BUT **do not keyword stuff**.

The first image on your post should ideally contain the target keyword in the file name AND the alternative text field. For finance, the easiest way to do this is probably with graphs or mini infographics.

Callouts are a great way to make a post more interesting!

If you can, include videos on the topic as well. Often you'd probably want to include video closer to the top for people who would rather watch/listen to the post in video form.

Video can keep people on your blog longer which is great for engagement!

As you write, **make sure to include natural related keywords in your post.** You can use tools like LSIgraph or UberSuggest to give you ideas.

By writing naturally about a topic, you often do this automatically.

For example, if you're writing advice targeting the keyword **institutional investment**, think and write about topics related to this search. Use keyword tools for ideas.

Examples include:

- Institutional Investment Strategies
- Institutional Investment Definition
- Institutional Investment Management Fees

When it comes to blog post length, there is no hard and fast rule.

What I recommend doing is looking at the top 3 search results ranking for your target keyword on Google and taking their average length and aiming for content that long.

VS

You've probably heard the adage, "No Risk, No Reward." While I suppose there is always some level of risk in anything you do, taking on too much financial risk can lead to unwanted consequences. Foundations and endowments, or really anyone focused on the institutional space, must be particularly careful about the amount of risk needed to help their mission become a reality.

I recently reviewed a survey by CAPTRUST of 1504 foundation and endowments with less than $50 million of investible assets. The survey questioned how much risk the foundation/endowment was willing to take to get their target return. The answer: too much!

The survey showed that most foundations/endowments are taking on more risk than they would like. There was also a personnel-related risk as the majority surveyed had only one staff member (full-time or part-time) focusing on investments with most relying on financial institutions for advice. While it's always recommended to leverage an expert when needed, it's important to note that unless they have agreed to assume fiduciary liability in writing, you are still held liable for the decisions being made. Why is that a concern? Let's take a deeper dive.

You may already be familiar with fi360, an organization dedicated to the development of fiduciary best practices. FI360 uses a four-step process in the Prudent Practices for Investment Stewards (this would be board members, trustees, investment committee members, attorneys, accountants, institutional investors and anyone else who is involved in overseeing investment decision-making). The four-step prudent process is laid out as:

Organize

Formalize

Implement

Monitor

Sounds easy, right? Allow me to further complicate things. Within each step, there are multiple practices. Within those practices, there are multiple responsibilities. Institutional boards have the fiduciary responsibility to fulfill all responsibilities under each practice of each step. Want to guess how many total responsibilities there are? 107 207 507 The answer: 1401 I can't make this stuff up! If you want the full list, reach out and I'd be happy to review it with you.

Getting back to the topic at hand, how is one board, let alone one person, supposed to manage all those responsibilities on an ongoing basis?

If this is you or someone you know, you may be asking yourself several questions. What are all these responsibilities that I am supposed to be fulfilling? How am I supposed to manage all of these on an ongoing basis? What happens if I'm not doing all these things? How can I offload some of these responsibilities so I'm not having to do this alone?

You have a choice: you can try to manage all those responsibilities on your own, hope you are doing it correctly and risk personal liability for breaches; you could work with a financial advisory firm (you are still held liable for any breaches that may occur); or you can hire a discretionary trustee to manage the responsibilities for you. When you work with a discretionary trustee, your fiduciary responsibility for your investments is limited to being prudent in hiring and monitoring that trustee.

At Unified Trust, we even make that easy. We take full fiduciary responsibility (in writing) for the first three steps (organize, formalize, and implement) regarding your investments. All that is left for you is to be prudent in hiring and monitoring us and we provide you with a quarterly monitoring report to make that easy.

Feeling that sigh of relief yet?

Board members have an immense amount of responsibility in overseeing the mission and success of the foundation/endowment. Among those responsibilities is knowing and understanding how much risk the foundation is willing to take to achieve the targeted reward. At Unified Trust, our mission is to help build financial futures in the interest of others. We go through a risk tolerance process with each of our clients to make sure they are taking the right amount of risk to achieve their financial goals. We would be honored to serve as your trusted fiduciary so you can focus on your mission at hand and achieve the foundation's financial goals.

H1: Page Title
Include your target keyword. Make it make sense to a search engine what the article is about.

When writing blog post content, write for “scanability” and engagement. Long paragraphs are not ideal. We try to keep text to only 3-4 lines per paragraph. **Use bold text to emphasize your main points.**

- Use numbered lists and bullet points
- To increase readability
- And break-up or summarize long bits of content

> *Callouts are a great way to make a blog post or webpage more interesting!*

They can also be used to highlight main points in the articles.

Video can keep people on your webpages longer which is great for increasing engagement

Authority

What is Authority?

- How trusted is your website's domain?
  - How many websites link to you?
  - Are these websites high authority?
  - How old is your domain?

- Moz.com developed a free tool that will allow you to evaluate your domain authority (https://moz.com/link-explorer)
  - Higher = Better
  - Real goal is to be higher than competition. A domain score of 20 can be good or bad depending on who your main competitors are

root domain | starbucks.com | Analyze

8 of 10 queries available until 12/17

Domain Authority	Linking Domains	Inbound Links	Ranking Keywords
89	104.9k	10.2m	137.1k
	Discovered in the last 60 days 965		
	Lost in last 60 days 2.3k		

root domain | https://www.caribou coffee.com/ | Analyze

7 of 10 queries available until 12/17

Domain Authority	Linking Domains	Inbound Links	Ranking Keywords
60	7.2k	123.4k	5.7k
	Discovered in the last 60 days 95		
	Lost in last 60 days 162		

How to Build Authority

Grow links to your website. This can be done naturally or manually. Be consistent.

- As websites age, they naturally acquire links
- Creating content so great that other sites will link to it on their own over time
- Reaching out directly to other bloggers and third-party websites.
- Target websites who link to your competition. Use a tool like UberSuggest to find them.
- Guest Blogging or Podcasting
- Ads on Trade Magazine Sites/Directories

https://backlinko.com/link-building-strategies

Starting Your SEO Strategy

Getting Started with SEO

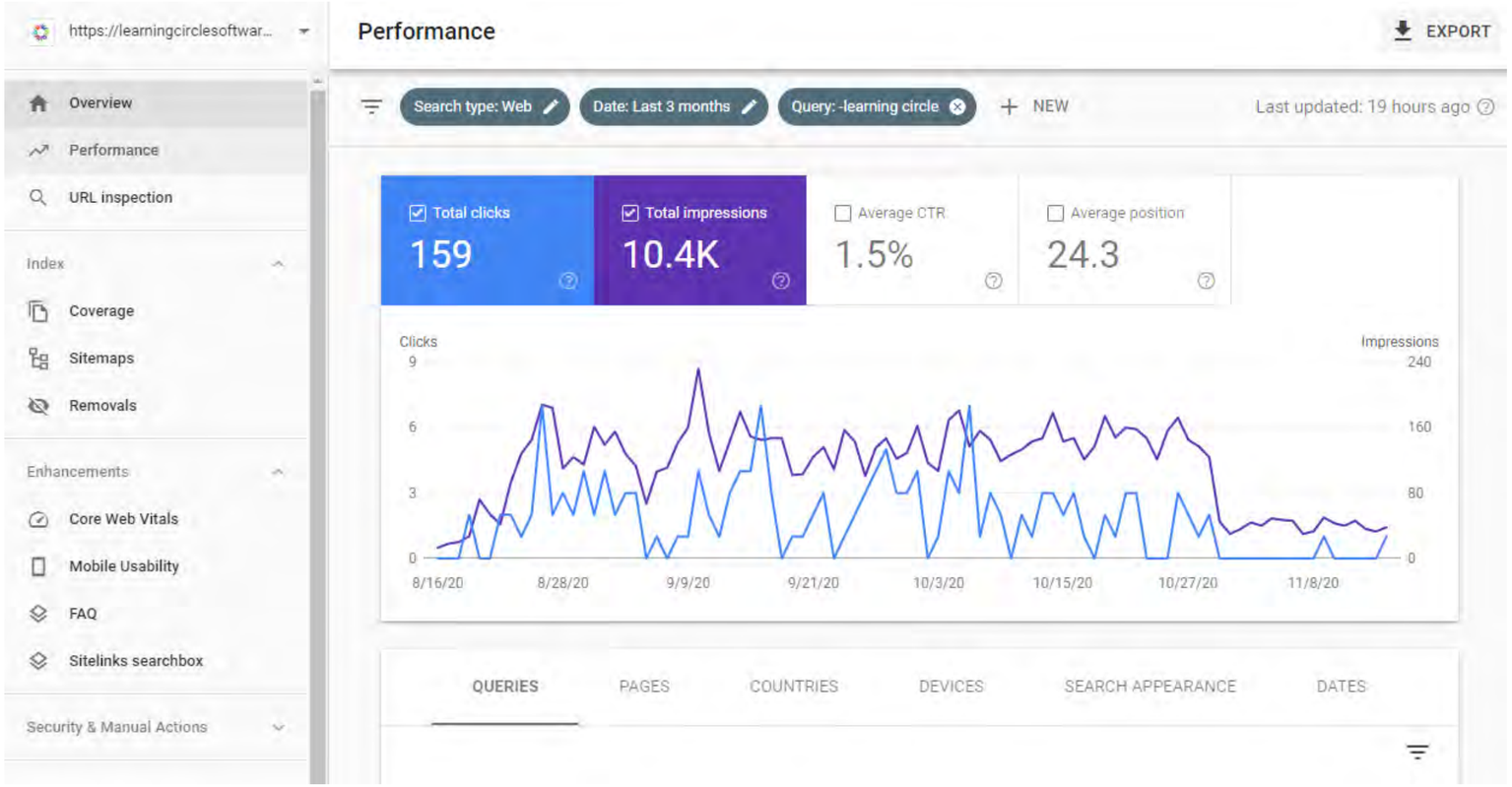
- **What pages are ranking well right now?**
  - Can you make these pages rank higher by implementing SEO strategies?
- **Do you have thin content or duplicate content?**
  - Can you combine or expand on this content to make it more useful?
- **Conduct keyword research and determine a shortlist of target keywords**
  - Start with a keyword that seems easiest to rank for so you can see results

Tracking Metrics

Google Analytics

- **Google Analytics is a great all-around web traffic tool**
- **Most useful for understanding how *everyone* is using your website, for example…**
  - What pages are most popular?
  - What devices and browsers are used to access site?
  - What are most common paths from homepage?
  - Most common exit pages?
  - Best converting pages?
- **But, for analyzing SEO and keywords generating traffic to your site, Google Analytics is <u>not</u> the right tool for the job…**

#1 SEO Metric Tool



Google Search Console

Questions?