

**Straight-Up Ideas™**  
*Presents*

# KEYWORD RICH

ARTICLE MARKETING SEO GUIDEBOOK



## SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION CHECKLIST FOR TOP RESULTS

SKSI, KSI  
KEI, KCI  
Formulas  
Explained!

**How to Research and Apply Keywords for High Rankings and Sales Conversions that Attract the Right Visitors • Structure Your Articles to Engage and Deliver**

Written by Award-Winning Educational Author and Software Designer, Nile Duppstadt II,  
for Savvy Business Owners, Marketers, and Bloggers

“Practical, actionable, easy-to-read—it’s million-dollar advice.”

– **Joe Mellett**, Co-Founder of Education.org

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## ***Introduction***

*“Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts.”*

– William Bruce Cameron (1963)

Search engine ranking factors are closely guarded secrets. Google™, YouTube (*yes, YouTube is the second largest search engine*) and other search engines will never reveal their complete algorithms, but there are tried and true methods of achieving the top spot. With live examples for you to review and a step-by-step instruction guide—from researching natural keyword phrases to measuring your article’s return on investment—we know you will find this resource helpful.

As a marketer, taking the time to ensure that your customers can find you (e.g., location of your store, the right mailing list to rent, magazine to place your ad, etc.) or, in this case, keyword to use, is essential, and online we can have the luxury of guesstimating less. In fact, the insight is remarkable. Reviewing what people are actually typing in search engines prior to creating your article is akin to knowing which location is the best to place to build your new restaurant, or the best shelf space in a retail store.

In order to get your article ranked highly in search engines, your page content must closely match the searched terms (known as keywords, keyword phrases, or keyphrases) entered into the search engines. How well it matches the search terms determines your page’s ranking. This is the gray-area known in the search engine world as *relevance*.

It’s the search engine’s job to serve up the most *relevant* pages for the searched keywords. Relevance is difficult to achieve, which is why the top search engine mathematicians make the big bucks, but consider the basics. For example, when a friend asks for a recommendation, say for a good restaurant, the processes carried out in your brain mimic the fundamentals of the search engine algorithms (vaguely, but sort of... bear with me). You probably think of your favorites first, the ones you visit the most, then, you may recommend a few restaurants you occasionally visit, and so on, until more specific attributes are revealed in the conversation such

as “spicy” or “tomato soup.” This recommendation process or “human brain algorithm” is exactly what the search engines algorithms are trying to achieve (on a global scale).

Now, imagine you were recording that conversation and then watched your friend walk into one of the restaurants you recommended, look at the menu, and order the exact “tomato soup” you recommended. This is exactly what Google™ allows us to do (granted, online only), with their free Keyword and Analytics tools. *(Note: For the purpose of this guide we are focusing on Google™, since it is the dominant search engine with the most market share, and it offers the most free tools.)*

Now, what is not shared by Google™, or any member of the search engine community, is the popularity of that exact “conversation” (were it to happen online on a search engine), which is a great indicator of relevance, as our “human brain algorithm” example showed by recommending our favorites first. We can tell if a website is receiving traffic, and how much traffic, using many free and/or paid resources, but not the individual page-specific traffic itself. This is important, and the search engine community obviously recognizes the importance (and

### Checklist of Notable Search Engine Page-Specific Ranking Factors

Tip: Use this as a checklist while creating your article. Improve your page rank by adding any of these factors to your article.

- Substantive, Unique Content on the Page
- External Link Popularity (quantity/quality of inbound links from other websites)
- Page-Specific Trust Ranking (whether the page has earned links from trusted sources)
- Keyword Use in Title Tag
- Keyword Use in the Root Domain Name (e.g. keyword.com)
- Keyword Use Anywhere in the H1 Headline Tag
- Keyword Use in Internal Links on the Page
- Keyword Use in External Links on the Page
- Keyword-Focused Anchor Text from External Links
- Keyword-Focused Anchor Text from Internal Links
- Use/Quality of External-Pointing Links on the Page
- Keyword Use in Body Text on the Page
- Keyword Use in the Subdomain Name (e.g. keyword.straightupideas.com)
- Keyword Use in the Page Name URL (e.g. straightupideas.com/page-keyword.html)
- Keyword Use in the Page Folder URL (e.g. straightupideas.com/keyword/page.html)
- Keyword Use in other Headline Tags (<h2> -<h6>)
- Keyword Use in Image Alt Text
- Keyword Use in Image Names Included on the Page (e.g. keyword.jpg)
- Keyword Use in <b> or <strong> Tags
- Keyword Use in List Items <li> on the Page
- Keyword Use in <i> or <em> Tags
- Link Popularity within the Site's Internal Link Structure
- Use of Links on Page that Point to Other URLs on Same Domain

The importance of these factors are bound to change, and probably have as you are reading this, but clearly, a unique, well-written, organized, linked, titled, and named article will receive a fair, often high-ranking in Google and other search engines. For a more complete list of search engine ranking factors, visit: [www.seomoz.org/article/search-ranking-factors](http://www.seomoz.org/article/search-ranking-factors)

legalities) surrounding the real-time “page popularity” attribute, as there is currently no way to measure page-specific traffic volume of competitors (without having access to their analytics or logs).

Google™ uses links of all types along with over 200 ranking attributes to determine relevance, hence page ranking. Google’s™ job is formidable and requires constant tweaking. Imagine using just inbound links to determine relevance. For example, the number of inbound links to a page (link popularity) won’t tell you how helpful or relevant the page really is, it only shows you who took the time to link to the page. It doesn’t show you how popular the restaurant’s “tomato soup” is at any one moment, or over time.

Therefore, since a page with a lot of inbound links and little content value may not be very relevant or helpful for a visitor, inbound links and links in general are used in conjunction with hundreds of other variables to determine relevance, such as how often the page is actually visited. This requires using page-specific popularity as an indicator, which Google™ most definitely uses. However, Google™ doesn’t have access to all of the “page popularity” data since people visit URLs directly by typing in the domain name in the address bar of their browser, instead of visiting the search engine first. *(Note: With the use of Google™ Chrome, Google™ Analytics, Droid Mobile devices, and other partnerships, Google™ gains more access to “page popularity” data.)*

It’s important to realize that there are probably more like 5,000+ ranking factors, and millions of permutations thereof, but only the advantageous factors are exposed to the public. The rest are almost certainly used as a competitive advantage, and to offset unethical marketers, spammers, etc., trying to game the system. *(This has not been confirmed, we are merely speculating.)*

Therefore, when applying the 200+ known ranking factors advertised by Google™ to your articles, bear in mind that less is often more. Trying to utilize hundreds of ranking factors and apply them to your page is unnecessary, even for highly-competitive keywords, which is why the checklist of notable page-specific ranking factors is provided. We recommend focusing on

these factors in the checklist primarily, while occasionally monitoring new ranking factors to see which ones are gaining more weight.

On average we apply 10-20 of these page-specific ranking factors to each page, depending on the keyword's competitiveness, and rarely more. You can always add more factors to your page later if you need a boost in ranking. *(Only the essential factors which have been researched and tested by the Straight-Up Ideas™ team are documented and recommended in this guidebook.)*

Many of the factors are nebulous, such as Page-Specific Trust Ranking (whether the page has earned links from trusted sources), as we can measure link popularity to specific article pages, but not Google's™ mathematical definition of "trust." Therefore, what trustworthy sites we should pursue for backlinks (a.k.a., inlinks, incoming links, inbound links, and inward links) are unknown until they are "ranked," and even after they are ranked, because the level of "trust" could fall at any moment.

This reveals many truths about Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and keyword article marketing. The top search results themselves provide the best way to identify "trustworthy" sources, and the entire ranking system is incredibly volatile so linking to (endorsing) and receiving links from sites with high customer service and/or business ratings, longevity, quality content, and navigation, is a sound strategy. The nebulous aspect means in order to find or become a trustworthy site, requires your old "noggin," your instinct, and a bit of research. The same applies for researching keywords and writing relevant content for an article. The process is just as much an art as it is a science, whether you like it or not.

The best strategy when writing keyword-rich articles is to provide useful content of which you can be proud. People are attracted to well-written, content-rich information; they bookmark it

**Recommended Reading:**

[Google SEO Starter Guide](#) (shows you what to avoid so as not to be penalized!)

[Google Webmaster Quality Guidelines](#)

[SEOMoz.org Beginner Guide](#)

[SEOMoz.com Search Engine Ranking Factors](#)

[SEOMoz.com Google Algorithm Change History](#)

[Inc. Magazine - How to Optimize Your Site for Search](#)

[About.com's Top 10 Search Engine Ranking Factors](#)

and link to it, and who knows what the algorithms of the future will be (perhaps based on our own brain wavelengths), so write your article the way the human brain likes to read, not what you think search engines want. With that said, why not take advantage of the existing research strategies, proven tricks of the trade, notable ranking factors, follow search engine best practices, and review live, successful case studies? We thought you would appreciate the approach.

PageRank™, invented by Larry Page (co-founder of Google™), is one of many search engine algorithms used today and is constantly evolving. PageRank™ is exactly what it says, a value of rank or importance given to a particular page. The Google™ ranking algorithm is based primarily on links (e.g., backlinks, links with anchor text, internal links, link quantity, link quality, etc.) and the popularity of those links. According to Google™, a link to a page is considered an endorsement or vote for a page's usefulness. At first, the ranking system worked pretty well, but over the years, as people learned how the ranking system really worked, mainly through trial and error, many tactics considered abusive emerged (e.g., buying links, spamming links in forms and forums, invisible keywords hidden by color, etc.). As a result, in order to negate these content-poor pages from appearing high in results, Google™ now uses over 200 other factors in addition to PageRank™ and most likely other methods to optimize the search results. Most of the notable "page-specific" ranking factors are listed in the checklist.

In fact, right before this book was published, Google™ implemented a major update to their algorithm dubbed the Penguin Update (on April 24<sup>th</sup> 2012), which actually penalizes sites/pages for the overuse of ranking factors and "over-optimization." The update adjusted spam factors and sought to penalize those pages conducting keyword-stuffing and other spam techniques. Since we expected Google™ to do this, none of our clients' pages were impacted by the update.

**Other notable factors to consider (not listed in checklist):** the kilobyte size of a page, load time, number of changes or page freshness, date posted, visitor time spent on page, ratio of page advertisements to content, ratio of links to content, and the age of the page. *(Note: We do*



*not encourage wordiness for the sake of increasing page size/length. Nobody likes an unnecessarily long-winded article.)*

Currently the Title Tag (title of the article) and the Root Domain Name (www.domain.com) seem to have tremendous importance; however, they may not tomorrow, therefore, focus more on writing a great article first and foremost, ranking factors second, and diversify your approach. Always use caution when using “possible” ranking factors to write articles or optimize your website as even search engine optimization experts do not know how the ranking factors really work; after all, the algorithms are trade secrets and change all the time. As any good marketer will tell you, you must test, test, and test some more.

Welcome to the chaos. Revel in it. You are now joining millions of marketers trying to outsmart thousands of search engine scientists. It can be done and is being done, but we like to think of it more as contributing to the overall goal of providing relevant, useful content. It’s a cooperative process. After all, search engines would not exist without us, the page-makers! Plus, our job is the same as the search engines: to provide *relevant* content.

Search engine scientists are constantly evolving their algorithm to prevent rewarding marketers from filling the web with useless content, merely for a top ranking. Hence, our recommended approach: work-smart and contribute value. In the search engine world, working smart often means focusing on keywords with low-to-moderate competition where you have a good chance of appearing on the first page of results. These “low-hanging fruit” keywords allow you to contribute value easily with your given knowledge and a little research.

When targeting highly-competitive keywords, great content alone may do it, but often times factors outside our control keep the page from rising to the top position. When terms are exceptionally competitive, top rankings are often only achievable with a highly established site (meaning it’s been around for a while and has a lot of pages) with enormous link strength (meaning lots of other sites are linking to the site and the site has lots of outbound links and internal links). Therefore, since our goal is to generate sales or leads with a minimal amount of effort, this guidebook focuses mainly on low-to-moderately competitive keywords that yield

high rankings and conversions quickly. *(Note: This handbook focuses on natural, or organic, search engine marketing, using keyword-rich articles. Paid keywords are not covered.)*

Writing keyword articles is an essential aspect of web marketing. Often overlooked as a powerful lead generation and direct marketing tool, articles rich in quality and genuine content rival all other forms of marketing in terms of return on investment. This book outlines the fundamental strategies, tips, and best practices to help you write effective keyword articles quickly. Feel free to use the cited examples as references and templates as you write your articles.

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Search Engine Optimization Checklist for Top Results



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StraightUpIdeas.com offers research-based marketing techniques with creative twists for your unique business and target audiences. The Straight-Up Ideas™ Think Tank offers a wealth of knowledge; our creative team is diverse and actively engaged in their respective fields. We are composed of veterans from the early days of e-Commerce, brick and mortar business owners, executives, marketers, whiz-kid interns, web 2.0 gurus, SEO ninjas, lawyers, webpreneurs, psychologists, researchers, and sales professionals. We are your creative marketing and publishing partners.