

# Keyword Konfusion

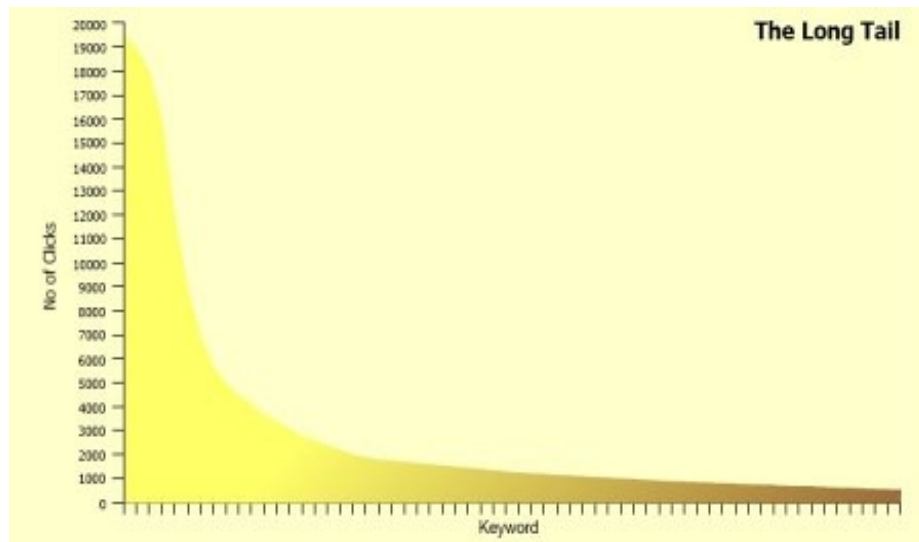
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## Search Engine Optimization and on-line success begins with proper keyword research.

The success of your website may well depend on the key words and key phrases that you decide to target. Get it right and the money can be rolling in. Get it wrong and you will probably give up and quit without ever knowing the true income potential of your website. This goes for so called "niche" research also. Some folks are using research products to identify niches that should be profitable. Sometimes that "niche" is nothing more than one or two keywords. Nothing wrong with that, if you take your research all the way to its logical end.

I would like to address a few quick points. First, I use these interchangeably: key word, keyword, key phrase, keyphrase, keyword phrase. When I say "keyword" I mean any of those. Second, I don't know everything, but I listen to mentors and gurus who have proven themselves to be thorough researchers with consistent proven results. There are a lot of so called experts out there. Be careful.

Third, you probably have heard the phrase "long tail keyword" if you have read anything about search engine optimization or on-line marketing. I recently read a sales pitch from one well known marketer, who is suddenly calling himself an SEO Expert, that stated long tail keywords are just long phrases. That's wrong. So the first thing I want to clear up is the meaning of "long tail keywords". Consider this graph:



This is an imaginary graph of a typical set of keywords. They would be listed along the bottom with those keywords having the most searches on the left and in descending order to the right. On the left hand side we have the number of

searches in a given period of time starting at zero and progressively larger as it rises. When all the keywords in a set are graphed like this, then connected with a curve, they form a long dragon tail kind of image. Thus the phrase “long tail keywords”. You can see that the first few keywords on the right get a lot of searches, but when you combine the searches in the long tail you may actually get more than the first few high volume searches!

There are some good reasons to target the long tail keywords. They may be easier to obtain high search engine rankings for. They may be more focused and more likely to be looking for what your website is about. Maybe....

A good keyword should be:

- **Relevant to your site**
- **Obtainable in the rankings**
- **Have enough search volume to justify the work**
- **Convert well to sales**

Let's expand on these 4 items.

**Relevant to your site** – I would think that this shouldn't even have to be said. But there is always somebody that thinks any traffic is good traffic. If your website sells hockey skates, then visitors searching for Jon & Kate + 8 will do you no good. The more targeted your keywords are the better.

**Obtainable in the rankings** – Some keywords are going to be just too hard to rank for. At least starting out. If you have a site about dieting, the keyword “weight loss” might look pretty tempting to pursue. Google claims there are about 15,000,000 searches a month for that phrase. A quick Google search shows the top ten results have sites like Webmd, Weight Watchers, Mayo Clinic, LA weight loss, About.com, etc, etc.... sites with a lot of authority and a lot of trust. To overcome them in the serps(Search Engine Results Page) would be a lot of money, time, and effort. This would not be the place for most of us to start at.

**Have enough search volume to justify the work** – You can never trust the accuracy of any tool for search volume. Even Google's tools. But you can use it to compare one keyword to another. We mentioned the “long tail keywords” earlier and how they are often easier to rank for, but sometimes there is competition even for those. It is just common sense that you don't want to invest 200 hours into ranking for a phrase that gets 10 searches a month. There are exceptions of course. If you are selling \$5000 products and can convert 1 in 10 visitors to sales, then it is a different story. You need to balance effort and reward by having an idea of what a visitor to your site is worth. Then target keywords that are going to deliver enough volume to make it worthwhile.

**Convert well to sales** – This can be a little harder to pin down when starting out. You have to do some research and make some educated assumptions to determine which keywords actually convert to sales. A web consultant can help you when starting out. Here is a tip: real gurus track and test everything. That's how they get to be gurus. You should track everything possible. I want to point out that I just handed you the key to success here – Testing and Tracking. Test everything until you have refined it into a winner.

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**Ryan C. Web Consulting specializes in helping small business and ecommerce start ups become successful. We have SEO services starting at \$150, so contact us today.**