

Lesson no. 4 – Keyword Research for Content Ideas

1. KEYWORD RESEARCH FOR CONTENT IDEAS

How can you find out what keywords are ideal for your brand?

Step 1: Identify your target market.

In order to identify optimal keywords, you first need to determine who is searching around your industry. Who are your current customers? Are there new markets that you aren't reaching yet? What groups could benefit most from your products/services?

Your target audience should range from current customers all the way to niche markets that you're hoping to enter. These various groups likely have different needs, so it's important to remember these differences later on when creating your keyword list. This will help you focus your content to attract customers you aren't yet reaching, as well as to keep clients coming back!

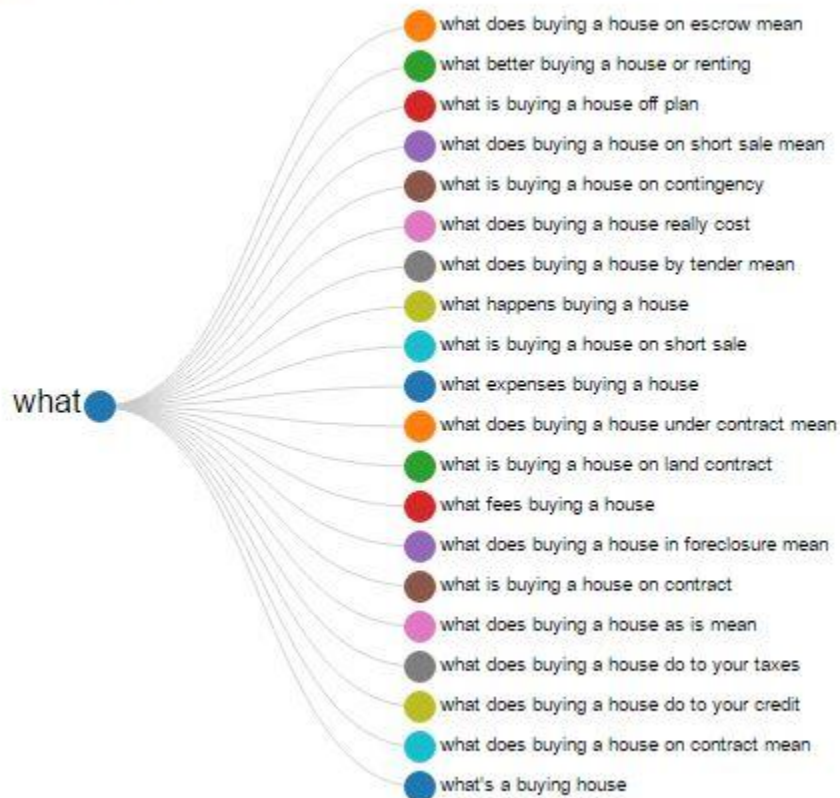
As we go through each step in the keyword research process, imagine you have your own local real estate company, and you're looking to increase traffic to your website. Your target market may consist of first-time home buyers, experienced landlords, and home sellers. You also want to target house flippers, an industry you have not yet entered.

Step 2: Know what questions customers are asking.

Now that you have identified your target markets, you need to know the questions customers are asking so that you can provide the answers through relevant content. As an expert in your industry, you should already be clued in to what your customers are asking. With new markets, though, you may need some help in determining these questions. A great tool that can help you in this search is Answer the Public.

In continuing with our real estate example, think about what questions first-time home buyers are asking. What fees are associated with buying a house? What is escrow? What are closing costs? Is it cheaper to rent or buy? You can also take a look at the results from Answer the Public to supplement this list of questions.

what buying a house



Step 3: Explore popular content in your industry.

Next, it's time to explore your competitors' and industry leaders' websites and content. Look for things you like. How can you emulate and improve on what they're doing? Also, look for things you don't like. What topics should you avoid? How can you make your content stand out?

Continuing with our real estate example, look to industry leaders in the real estate industry such as Zillow, TransUnion SmartMove, and RedFin. Each of them have blogs with tons of content to explore! Read through [Zillow's blog](#) to see what topics they're covering. Check out [TransUnion SmartMove's latest post](#) to get an example of their post layout. Look over the comments on [RedFin's posts](#) to see how customers are reacting to their content.

Remember, it's not just about what content you like or don't like, but rather what resonates with the customer. How can you find the content that's engaging your target market? Just look at social shares! Any time a user shares a piece of content on social media, it shows

the content was relevant and helpful. [Ahref's Content Explorer](#) is an easy way to see what content is resonating with customers for the topic you want to cover.



Most Popular Content for buying a house

Filters: Publish date, Languages, Shares, Domain Rating, Referring domains, Organic traffic, Word count, One article per domain

148,142 results | Select all | Who tweeted selected articles | Highlight unlinked domains | Sorted by Relevance | Export

Article Title	URL	Word Count	Date	Total Shares	Median Shares
How Buying a House Works	home.howstuffworks.com/real-estate/buying-home/house-buying.htm	356 words	16 May 03	4.7K	151

Step 4: Build a list of keywords.

Now the research phase is over. It's time to build a list of keywords that you can use to start planning your content. You'll have to be strategic with the keywords that you choose. For example, "buying a house" will be extremely difficult to rank for since it's a broad topic with a lot of existing content. Instead, focus on long tail keywords – longer, more specific phrases that will be easier to rank for. A long tail keyword you can add to your list could be "buying your first house in Houston" or "what you should know before buying a house".

As you're building your list, remember your different target markets. Make sure to list out specific keywords for each group. There may be some overlap between groups, but it's important that each market has their own exhaustive list. Don't worry if your lists are getting long. The more keywords you have, the more content you can cover!

Step 5: Use a keyword planner.

After you've created your list, you can get more information about the keywords you've chosen by uploading them into a keyword planner. If you have an AdWords account, Google's keyword planner is a great tool to help you organize your keywords and conduct further research. There are also some free versions, like Moz's keyword suggestions, that offer similar functionality with a limit on the number of keywords you can search for each day.

Overview:

how to flip a house

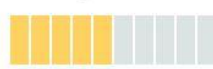
4.3k-6.5k

Volume ⁱ



50

Difficulty ⁱ



58

Opportunity ⁱ



67

Potential ⁱ



The purpose of a keyword planner is to help you organize, edit, and optimize your keyword list. You'll have access to estimated search volumes associated with a particular keyword, how competitive a keyword is to rank for, and alternatives to the keywords you've come up with. Your list is not static – use this information to make changes and list additional keywords as necessary.

You previously listed “how to flip a house” as a keyword for your new target market, but you've now found that this competitive keyword will be too difficult to rank for. Remove it! It's important to update your list, as search volumes and competitiveness will constantly change.

Step 6: Pick a keyword and write content surrounding this keyword.

It's finally time to start creating content! Focus on one or two keywords to start, and then begin creating content around those keywords. It's helpful to look at the SERPs (search engine results page) of those keywords, to get a better understanding of what is already ranking and what content might be missing that you could create.

When it comes to writing your post, check to make sure you aren't “keyword stuffing”. While it's important to use your keyword and close variants throughout your post, don't sacrifice readability for the sake of SEO. Write for your readers, not web crawlers.

Once your content is complete, publish it! Get that content out there, and start watching your own results to see what is working for you and what isn't. If your post on “5 Mistakes First Home Buyers Make” isn't ranking, focus on a different keyword for your next piece of content. The more content you create, the more you will learn which keywords will work best for you and your business.