

The Free Web Traffic Report

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Free Web Traffic?

Free traffic from the web is one of the Internet Marketing Holy Grails. The surprising thing about free traffic is there is no real “secret”: it is frequently a simple case of focusing on a few key activities and building a process or system to make the work as straight forward as possible.

The great news is that this means anyone who applies themselves can generate a tsunami of traffic to their chosen website or blog. The techniques I will outline in this report do not require a degree in Astrophysics, just a willingness to apply yourself to the task in hand and commitment to follow through.

Search Engine Optimization

Before we delve in to Search Engine Optimization as a topic you may have heard the term before but not fully understood what it means. Search Engine Optimization (frequently abbreviated to SEO) is the process by which a web page owner optimizes the structure and content of a given web page to make it appear highly relevant to a given search term. The goal is to be listed at the top (or at least on the first page) of a Search Engine Results Page (also known as SERPs).

The key point to highlight here is “web page” and not web site. While a few sites are considered “Authority Sites” by Google and have multiple pages listed at the top of a page of search results, the vast majority of search requests bring back lists of individual pages.

This is very important as it allows you to build a new page specifically for each search term you are targeting (see below). Typically your potential web customer will enter a search term in a search engine and then scan the results for what they are looking for.

If they fail to find what they are looking for they may browse to page 2 or 3 of the search engine results but it is highly unlikely they will go any further. It is far more likely that

they will attempt to refine their search by entering a modified or, in some cases, a completely different search term.

Think back to the last time you were looking for something but did not know the exact search term to enter...what process did you follow to find what you were looking for?

Market Research

The first step in an effective SEO campaign is the rather unglamorous, and some would say boring, task of Market Research. The idea here is simple. You need to know what words or phrases your target audience is typing into the search engine query box so that you can take steps to rank well for that particular phrase or keyword.

With literally billions of web pages online (a figure that grows each day) the average searcher has to rely heavily on the Search Engines to help them find what they are looking for.

While Google gets the largest volume of search requests it is a mistake to ignore the other search engines. And when I say search engine you may be surprised to find what sites this term includes. At the end of 20013 YouTube.com ranked as the second largest (and most popular) search engine on the Internet (#1 was of course YouTube's parent company Google.com).

Another interesting fact to note is that while Google is the most popular for general searches, numerous studies have shown that traffic from Bing.com (formerly MSN) converts to buyers very well. So while Google gets more searches it seems that Bing is used by more home shoppers to find things to buy.

As this report is all about "free web traffic" I will describe how you can do effective market research using only the free resources available from the search engines.

On a side note, an alternative (and frequently faster) option would be to invest in one of the many excellent keyword search tools such as Market Samurai (which does so much more than just keyword research) and more specialized tools like [Keyword Elite](#).

But, back to the free methods. As you are going to be relying on the search engines to bring the web visitors to your site it makes sense to start your keyword search using their own tools.

A quick Google search for “Google External Keyword Tool” will bring you, unsurprisingly, to Google’s own keyword tool. Here you enter your core keywords and the Google Keyword tool will return a list of related keywords and list the number of times each keyword or keyword phrase is used as a search term per month.

For example, let’s say you are looking to market bird cages. Using the Google Keyword Tool you find the following results (the numbers are searches per month):

Phrase	Local Search	Global Search
"bird cage"	450,000	673,000
"bird cages"	301,000	368,000
"birds cages"	12,100	33,100
"large bird cage"	18,100	27,100
"cage bird"	14,800	22,200
"bird cages for sale"	12,100	14,800
"large bird cages"	14,800	14,800
"bird cage stand"	8,100	12,100
"the bird cage"	9,900	12,100
"decorative bird cages"	9,900	9,900

"birds cage"	3,600	8,100
"vintage bird cage"	8,100	8,100

As you can see from the above results, there are a reasonable number of monthly searches being conducted for a range of Bird Cage related phrases.

One word of warning, when completing your keyword search using the Google tool: please ensure that you have selected either a "phrase match" or "exact match" as this will give you a much more reliable estimation of the number of searches completed.

The smart way of working is to pick the phrases that are more targeted. People using the phrase 'bird cage' could be looking for anything relating to the subject. People searching for "bird cages for sale" are far more likely to be the buyers you are looking to attract to your web page and so you should pick these types of phrases as your SEO keywords.

Having completed this step you should now have a list of core and related keywords along with the number of people searching per month using each keyword or phrase.

Competitor Analysis

Next step on your campaign to attract web visitors for free is to find out what your competition is for the various phrases on your short list. This is very easy to do, simply take each phrase and enter it into Google.com, Bing.com and Yahoo.com.

For each search I would look at the pages that the search engine in question is already ranking well. I would suggest your goals here are firstly to see how well your competitors rank in the search results and secondly to use your competitors to help you in your quest for great search engine results (and subsequently some more free traffic).

The job of a search engine is to match a web visitor with a query (the keyword phrase) with a relevant web page that has an answer to the query. So, how relevant are the pages at the top of the search engine results? Do they mention "large bird cages"

several times for example? These are your potential competitors and you are looking for pages that you can beat in the search engine results remember.

Getting a helping hand from the competition is a practice I think most people overlook. So, sticking with Bird Cages for a bit longer, enter the keyword phrase you are interested in optimizing your site for and then select the #1 result from the search engine.

Then, using the View Source command from your browser have a look at the underlying web code. (This option is available on all the popular browsers though you may need to check the menus or the browser's help section.) Now, we're not going to get all geeky here, just have a look for the following sections:

```
<title> The Web Page Title</title>
```

```
<meta name="description" content="The page description goes here" />
```

```
<meta name="keywords" content="The page's keywords should be here" />
```

These funny bits of code are called Tags and they tell your web browser (and things like search engines) all about the web page.

The "Title" tag is one of the most important bits of code on the web page. If your competitor's web page does not have the keyword phrase in question in this tag it's good news - you have a chance of leapfrogging them in the search results.

The "Meta" tags are less important to the search engines but can be very useful for you. Assuming that your competition has already completed their market research I would expect them to have other profitable keywords and phrases listed in their Meta tags.

So a quick read of these code sections can give you additional phrases to add to your keyword list. Additionally, if the original phrase you entered in to the search engine does not appear in either of these sections it further confirms that you have a chance to take the top spot in the search engine results page.

Link Building

You can think of links to your site as being votes by other websites for your site's relevancy and popularity. The more links you have the better your search engine results will be and subsequently the more free traffic your site should attract.

However, to paraphrase George Orwell, "not all links are created equal". What does this mean? Well some links are worth more than others. In simple terms, a link for another popular and/or relevant page to your page will count for more than a link from an unpopular or irrelevant page.

So your goal is to get as many backlinks (a link that points back to your own site) as possible and ideally have those links come from an authority site. Great candidates for these links are popular and respected blogs in your niche and the main stay of many SEO campaigns: article directories.

In simple terms there are two ways of getting great backlinks. The first is to simply write superb content. This will naturally attract backlinks from other sites as the third party website owners or bloggers will want to highlight your content if they believe it will be of interest to their readership.

Linkbait is a term often applied to specific styles of articles: those that are likely to get links from third parties. Great examples of linkbait styles include "10 Reasons Why...", "How To Halve Your...In 5 Easy Steps", "How To Double Your...In 28 Days", etc.

You can clearly see the themes running through these ideas. Bookmarking Linkbait articles like the ones mentioned on sites like Digg and Delicious or advocating them with links via Twitter or Facebook are a great way to kick start a viral marketing campaign.

Equally, these same outlets are a great way to conduct lightning market research into popular headlines and report types. Spending 20 minutes researching the most popular headlines on Digg in your particular niche is a great way to come up with ideas for your own linkbait short reports.

The second way to gather backlinks is to write relevant content and submit this content to popular web 2.0 sites. A neat modern twist on this process is to find relevant content rich sites in your niche (like a popular blog) and become a guest author on that site. This is a true win-win situation. You get your article and a very valuable backlink on the right type of site meanwhile the site owner gets free content written for them.

Whichever strategy you choose (and ideally you will do a mix of both) the more links you can get the better and the higher the quality of the link the bigger it's impact on your Free Traffic Campaign.

Free Web Traffic

As mentioned right at the beginning of this report. There is no hidden secret to getting free traffic or great search engine results. As with most things in business, it is a simple case of doing the right thing (market research, competitor analysis, linkbuilding: the smart work bit) in the right way and then repeating the process (the hard work bit) until you get the desired outcome.