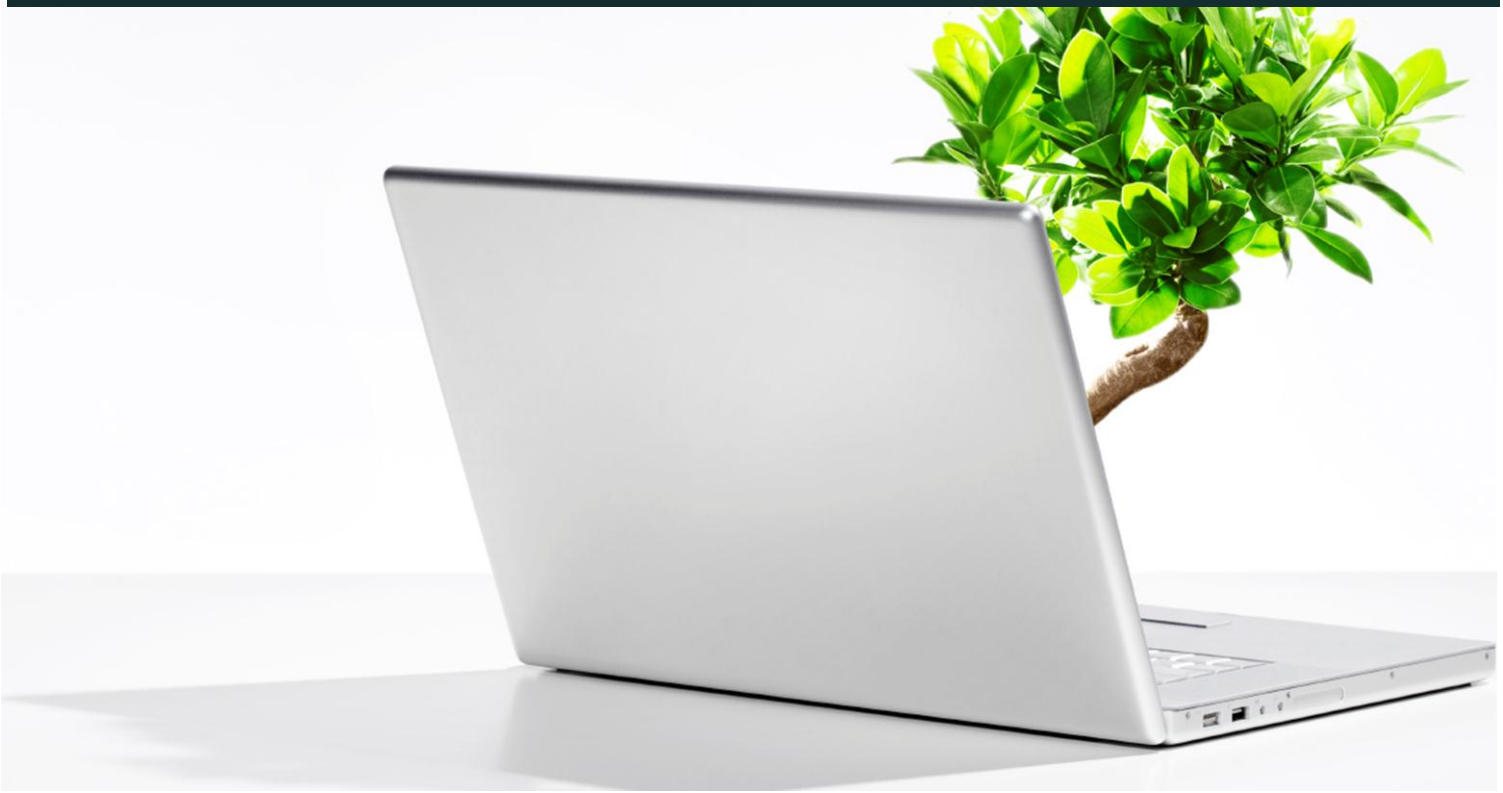
V1.0

PRACTICAL SEO COPYWRITING

The DIY guide to writing copy for visitors
AND google



GLENN MURRAY

divine write

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Introduction

SEO copy. What is it? How do you do it? How important is it? How hard is it? How much do you have to focus on it? How much of it is SEO, and how much of it is copy? How do you know if you're doing it right?

You're reading this book because you've been asking yourself these very questions. And you don't yet have any good answers.

Well, you're not alone. There are hundreds of thousands — probably millions — of people out there, wrestling with the concept, just like you. Many of them SEO copywriters! So don't feel bad.

Hopefully, this book will answer your questions. It won't make you an expert SEO copywriter, but that's not my intention. What I want is for you to finish reading it and approach your next piece of copy with a sense of excitement and anticipation, not dread and uncertainty. No prizes for guessing that's what you want too...

As per my previous e-book, SEO Secrets, this one is written for other copywriters, business owners, CEOs, marketing practitioners, and webmasters. I'm not just an SEO copywriter, I'm also a business owner. And I'm no techo, so I know the importance of explaining things in layperson's terms. If everyone did it, I'd know a lot more!

This e-book is structured in three main parts:

1) First, I provide a detailed discussion of WHAT you need to know. What is SEO copy? And what is it not? (p.9)
2) Then I go on to discuss and resolve some examples of common problems people encounter when trying to write copy for both search engine and reader. (p.14)
3) Finally I show you that you'll probably spend less time optimizing your copy than you'd feared. (p.51)

Suggestions & feedback

If you have any suggestions or feedback, or would like to be notified of future updates to this book, please email me at glenn@divinewrite.com. You can also connect with me on Twitter.

About the author

I'm a specialist SEO copywriter. I specialize in writing web copy that will help increase a website's search engine ranking (while also remaining engaging and compelling to readers).

I rank no.1 in the world for most of my important keywords (on google.com.au).

Keyword	Google.com.au worldwide rank
copywriter	**No. 1**
SEO copywriter	**No. 1**
website copywriter	**No. 1**
advertising copywriting	**No. 1 & 2**
website copywriting	**No. 1**
copywriting	**No. 2**
internet copywriter	**No. 5**
copywriting forum	**No. 5**

Based just north of Sydney, Australia, I've been a **copywriter for 7 years** and was a **technical writer for 9 years** before that. Numbered among my clients are some of the world's leading companies including Toyota, IBM, Virgin, Telstra, Honeywell, Kimberley-Clark, Safe-n-Sound, Doubleday, the Australian Government, the University of Sydney, Raine & Horne, PMP Limited, Volante, Reckon and MYOB.

I have a **Bachelor of Arts** in Linguistics and English Literature, and a **Master of Arts** in International Communication.

I'm also a lucky husband and a very proud father of three.

Thanks

Thanks to Marie-Claire Jenkins, David Harry, Ben McKay, Angie Haggstrom and Bill Slawski, for your invaluable advice and feedback during writing. Thanks again to Ian Butler for your awesome book design, to my affiliates for helping me sell the book, and to all my Twitter friends who are always so giving.

Earn money promoting this book

Join my Affiliate Program and earn 50% of every sale you generate.

Chapter 1

What is SEO copy?

The term "SEO copy" — like the term "search engine optimization" — is thrown around a lot these days. Usually inappropriately. You'll often hear it in the same sentence as other equally obscure terms like "keyword density", "latent semantic indexing", "probabilistic latent semantic indexing", "the Semantic Web" and "Web 3.0".

Sounds terrifying, doesn't it? Well it's not. If you ask me, a lot of people throw around a lot of terms, in the hopes of bamboozling prospective clients. (I reckon the majority of people who so freely use these terms don't even know what they mean!)

Don't get me wrong; some of those complicated sounding terms are very relevant to *some* SEO copywriters. It's just that they're not relevant to *all* SEO copywriters. In fact, they're relevant to only a small percentage of SEO copy projects: the really big corporate sites that are trying to rank in ultra-competitive searches, like "computer", "car" and "hotel". For everyone else, SEO copywriting is a lot simpler to grasp (although not necessarily simpler to do well).

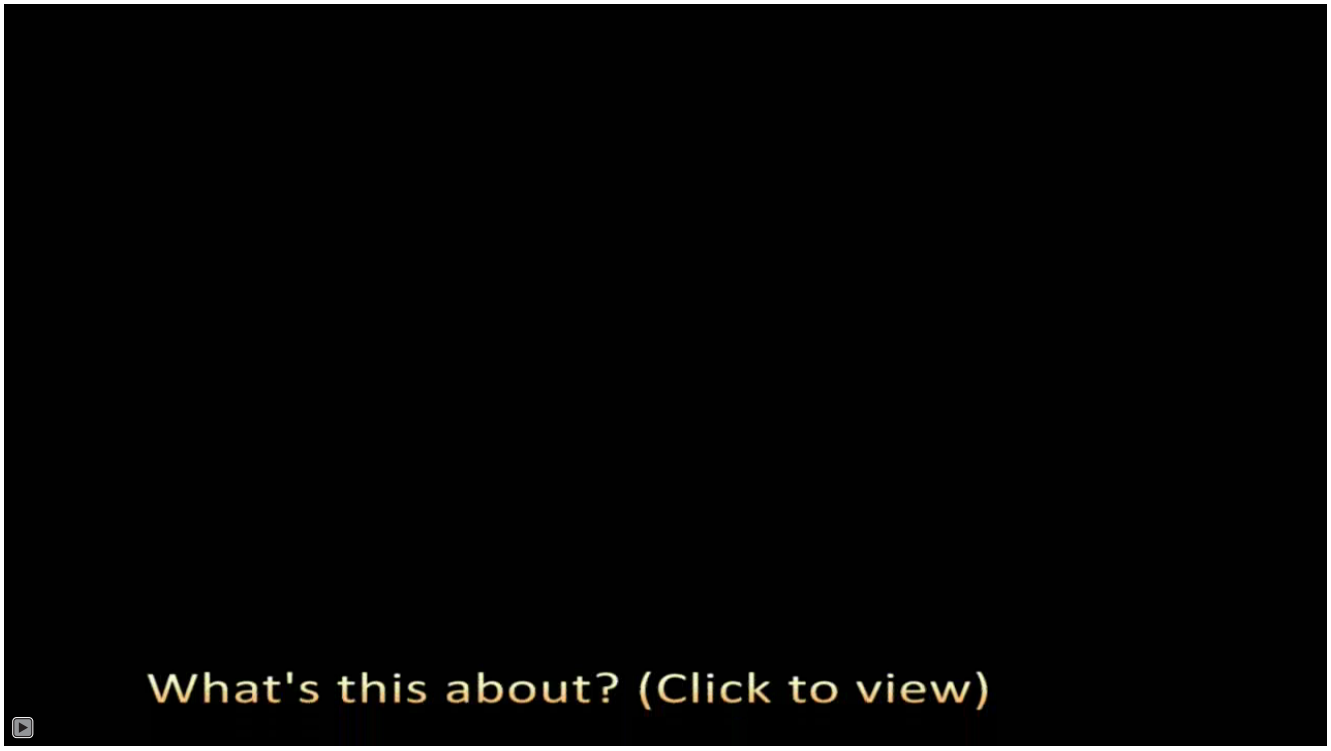
And on that note, let's jump in and get started!

A simple test

In the interests of simplicity, I'm going to start my explanation of SEO copy with a very simplistic illustration.

Do you know what this is about?

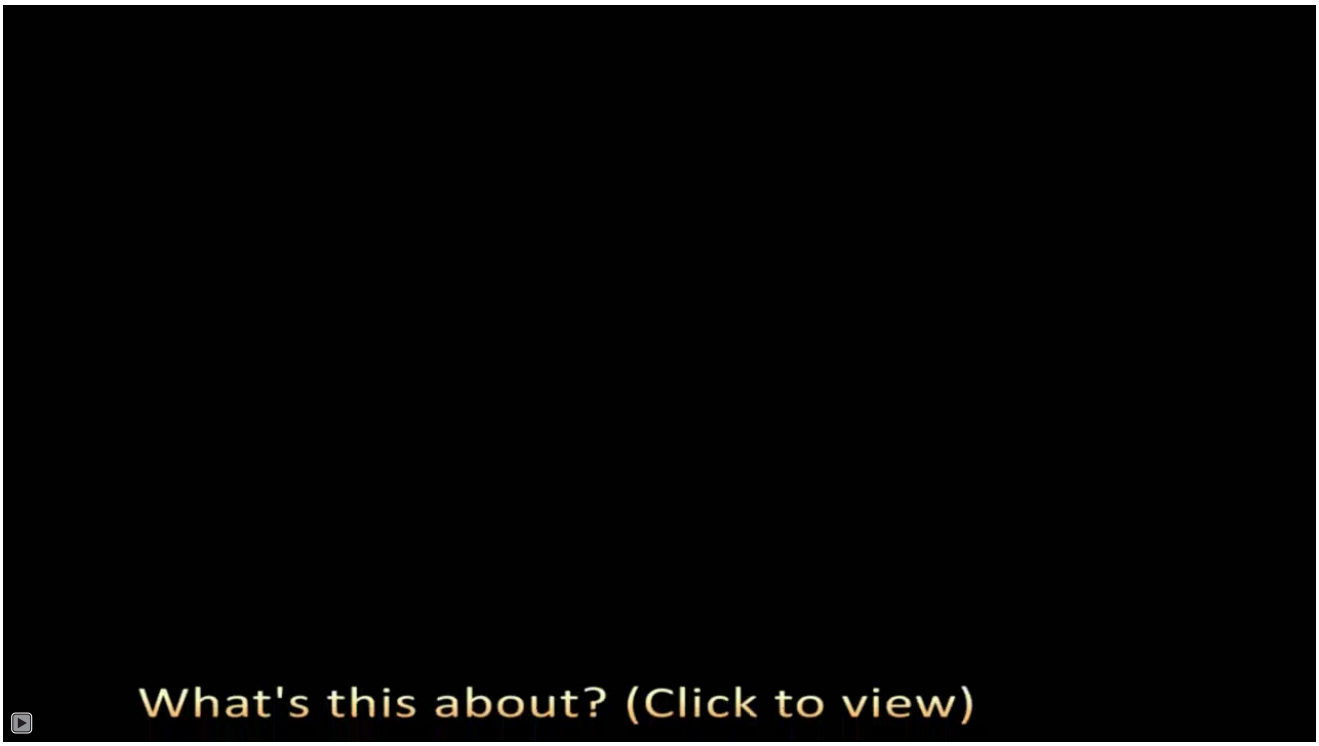
Click the following image. You'll see a block of text scroll up the page, too quickly to read. **What's it about?**



No idea? Good! I'm making a point here, by making it go fast, and I promise you'll appreciate it far more if you bear with me. So try to resist the urge to watch it again. All will be revealed as you read on...

What about now?

Ok, now I've added some clues. **Click the following image.** Can you tell what it's about now?



Those keywords helped, didn't they?

You learned a lot from one simple signal

Even though you didn't have time to read the page completely, you learned that it's about kangaroos. And you learned that from one very simple signal.

Google learns from simple signals too

Google learns in much the same way. It wants to return relevant search results. (After all, great search results = more users = more people clicking on paid listings = more $ for Google.) But it isn't very smart. Sure, it's smarter than all the other search engines, but it's nowhere near as smart as a human visitor. It can't understand your page. It can't infer. And it can't make sense of pictures, color or music.

Just as you were handicapped in the test above, by the speed at which the page scrolled, Google is handicapped by its own lack of intelligence. So, just as you did above, Google relies on some pretty simple signals to learn what your page is about, and to deduce whether it's relevant to a search query.

If those signals aren't present, Google won't know how to index your pages, and your site won't rank in the searches you want it to — no matter how relevant your content actually is.

You need to provide the signals

You need to make sure all the right signals are there, so Google can fully appreciate the relevance of your content.

Interestingly, those signals aren't too dissimilar from the clues I gave you in the test above — the clues that helped you make sense of the kangaroo content, without actually reading it. Sounds unlikely, I know, but it's true. Here's why...

When Google comes to your page, it analyzes the words mathematically, and makes some educated guesses about the subject matter, based on that math. Basically, it looks for:

- the most frequently used words;
- the words in headings, bulleted lists, numbered lists and links;
- bolded, italicized and underlined words; and
- relationships between all of the above words, and between those words and the rest of your copy. i.e. Related words, similar words, parts, stems, and so on. (This is where all the 'semantic' terms come from. (e.g. Latent Semantic Indexing, the Semantic Web.)

Google's logic, here, is that if your page is about kangaroos, the word "kangaroos" will appear frequently, and will most likely feature in a lot of your headings, bulleted lists, numbered lists, and so on. What's more, a page about kangaroos will naturally feature related words (marsupial), similar words (wallaby), parts (roo) and stems (kangaroo). Most likely, it will also live in a neighborhood of pages — a 'cluster' — that are somehow related to kangaroos.

So to make sure Google does the right thing by your site, you need to hold its hand a bit. Just as I added some bold "Kangaroos" in my test above, you need to make sure Google encounters enough of the right words in your copy. And that they're in the right places. You also need to make sure Google uncovers the right relationships between those words, and between the pages containing the words.

But readers are smarter than Google, so you can't dumb it down too much

Google may need handholding, but human visitors certainly don't. (Not as much as Google, anyway.) They'll be able to tell, within a second or two, what your page is about. From the pictures, the layout, the navigation, the design, the music and the general 'feel'. If you dumb things down too much, by peppering your pages with keywords in inappropriate places, you'll instantly put your visitors off.

What's more, there are times when even subtle optimization can cause problems for human visitors.

You need to write for both Google AND human visitors

The next chapter of this e-book is dedicated to resolving the Google VS Visitor conflict. Using practical examples I show you how to optimize adequately for the search engines, without making readability a nightmare.

Chapter 2

Finding the Google-Visitor balance

When you're writing SEO copy, it's the 'copy' part — the part for visitors — that's most important. After all, visitors buy; search engines don't.

But there's another reason too. It's not discussed as often, but it's just as important if you're after a high ranking. A reason that makes quality even more important in SEO copy than in other forms of copy.

That reason? In SEO copy, you're not just trying to persuade readers to buy your product or service, you're trying to persuade them to link to you too. Inbound links tell Google your site is good, so they're critical to a high ranking. But no-one will link to you without a good reason. Paying for links is expensive (and against Google's rules), so if you want people to link to you, you have to write great content. They have to know that if they link to you, they'll be helping their readers.

Write for visitors first

So the golden rule of all SEO copywriting is to always write for visitors first. Forget the search engines altogether, until you're satisfied your content is engaging and compelling to its target audience(s).

(That said, you should think about search engines *before* you write too — when deciding what pages to write. But once you actually start writing, you should forget the search engines until you're happy with your content. But more on this a little further on...)

Then optimize your copy

Once you're satisfied your copy conveys the right messages and that it's appropriately persuasive, you can optimize it for search.

As discussed above, this means:

1. Using your key-phrases relatively frequently;
2. Using them in the right places (particularly headings, lists, links and bold text); and
3. Using words that are semantically related to your key-phrase (e.g. related words, similar words, parts, stems, grammatical variants).

Sounds simple enough, doesn't it? Only three steps, after all! Alas, it isn't simple.

When you actually get down to it, the same sticky situations tend to arise, again and again. And they're all caused by one thing: the conflict between what (you think) Google wants, and what your reader wants.

Pages 26-51 of this chapter are dedicated to discussing and resolving those sticky conflict situations. All practical guidance with realistic sorts of examples. But before we launch into that discussion, you should familiarize yourself with a few of the clever little techniques SEO copywriters use many, many times every day. Think of them as the SEO copywriter's virtual Swiss Army Knife.

Once you're familiar with these tricks, you'll find the discussion about the sticky conflict situations much easier to deal with.

Some general purpose SEO copywriting tips

Forget keyword density!

Keyword density is responsible for more heartache to SEO copywriters than any other single problem. (I'm sure it's responsible for a few of my own gray hairs.) But it shouldn't be. Google isn't at all interested in keyword density. In fact, it doesn't even measure it. Apparently keyword density was used in information retrieval (IR) back in the 1950s & 60s, but it's not used now at all.

For what it's worth, keyword density is a measure of the number of times you've used your key-phrase, relative to the total number of words on your page, expressed as a percentage. E.g. If your page has 200 words, and you've used your keyword phrase 6 times, its keyword density is 3% (6/200 x 100).

The reason keyword density is still such a popular concept is that it's quantifiable, relative and understandable. SEO practitioners grasped it, and many refused to let go.

But it's dangerous. Most people who use keyword density place way too much emphasis on achieving a particular density (e.g. 3%-10%) — usually high — without any real regard to how that density impedes readability.

Having a high keyword density won't necessarily help you. In fact, if it's too high, Google may think you're a spammer, and penalize you. Worse, visitors will be put off if you use your keywords too liberally. They'll find your copy hard to read, and if they know anything about SEO, they'll assume you're a spammer.

Forget keyword density. Instead, measure your keyword *frequency* (discussed below).

Measure keyword frequency with a word cloud

To measure the relative frequency of your keywords, run your copy through a word cloud generator. I use Wordle. Here's a word cloud generated from the home page of my own website, www.divinewrite.com.

Figure 1 – Word cloud generated from the copy of my home page

As you can see, the words "copywriter" and "copywriting" are very prominent in the cloud. This means I've used them more than any other single word or phrase (ignoring words like "if" and "the" etc.).

And don't worry if your keywords aren't *the* most frequent words on *every* page. Just try to ensure they are on *most* pages.

TIP: If you've structured your site correctly, you'll have a cluster of pages optimized for each keyword phrase, and you can always make up the difference on the other pages in the cluster. (See p.18 for more information on clustering.)

Target one keyword per page

If you're targeting quite specific key-phrases in your copy, you'll find it difficult to aggressively target more than one per page. You can target a few extras (maybe related words), but usually only incidentally.

For example, let's say you want your tennis clothing page to rank well when for the following searches:

- "blue tennis shoes California"
- "green tennis skirts West Coast"
- "purple tennis hats"
- "fastest tennis shoes world"

Let's also assume 400 words per page.

Now, if you try to optimize your web copy for *all* of these phrases, you'll find that it becomes very difficult to read. You'd need to include all of the words from each of the above phrases around 5-10 times. That would mean up to half the copy on your page would be keywords!

The best way around this is to create additional pages — to build a 'cluster' of pages around each key-phrase.

Dedicate a cluster of pages to each keyword

Continuing with the tennis example above, you'd have a cluster of pages for "blue tennis shoes California", another cluster of pages for "green tennis skirts West Coast", another for "purple tennis hats", and so on. This way, only around 10% of your copy would be dedicated to keywords. This results in much more readable, natural-looking pages.

And in this particular example, it would also result in a much more logically structured site; a well structured site typically wouldn't discuss all of the above items on the same page.

IMPORTANT: You must also consider your message, not just your keywords, when you structure your website. If you structure your website without thought to the content, you'll end up trying to squeeze the copy into an inappropriate structure.

For more information...

- on **clustering**, watch me strut my stuff in this high-definition video blog post: Choosing keywords & theming your site – An example.

Be specific

When you actually sit down and try to write some SEO copy, you'll see that it's not always easy to include your keywords more often than any other single word or phrase. At least to begin with.

The easiest way to do it is to be specific. As you write every sentence, ask yourself, "Could I be more specific?" For example, if you sell cheap second hand computers, don't just say "our computers" or "our products"; ask yourself if you can get away with saying "our cheap second hand computers".

Similarly, don't say things like "with our help"; instead, say "with the help of our cheap second hand computers". Once you get the hang of it, you'll find there are many opportunities to replace generic wording with your keyword phrase.

Example: Following is some un-optimized copy for the Products page of a hypothetical ecommerce website.

Jono's Products

If you're a gym junkie, you need the right gear. You want to look good and feel comfortable. So when you're working out, you feel completely confident, and can focus on what's important: your workout.

Jono's has just what you need. Our stylish, comfortable products will ensure you always look and feel the part.

Importantly, they'll actually improve your performance too. They reduce the risk of injury, and increase the rate of muscle recovery, so you can exercise safer and more often.

Browse our products below, or search for something specific.

You know what this site sells, right? Gym gear. But does Google know that? By generating a word cloud from this copy, we'll get a simplistic idea of what Google understands of this page:

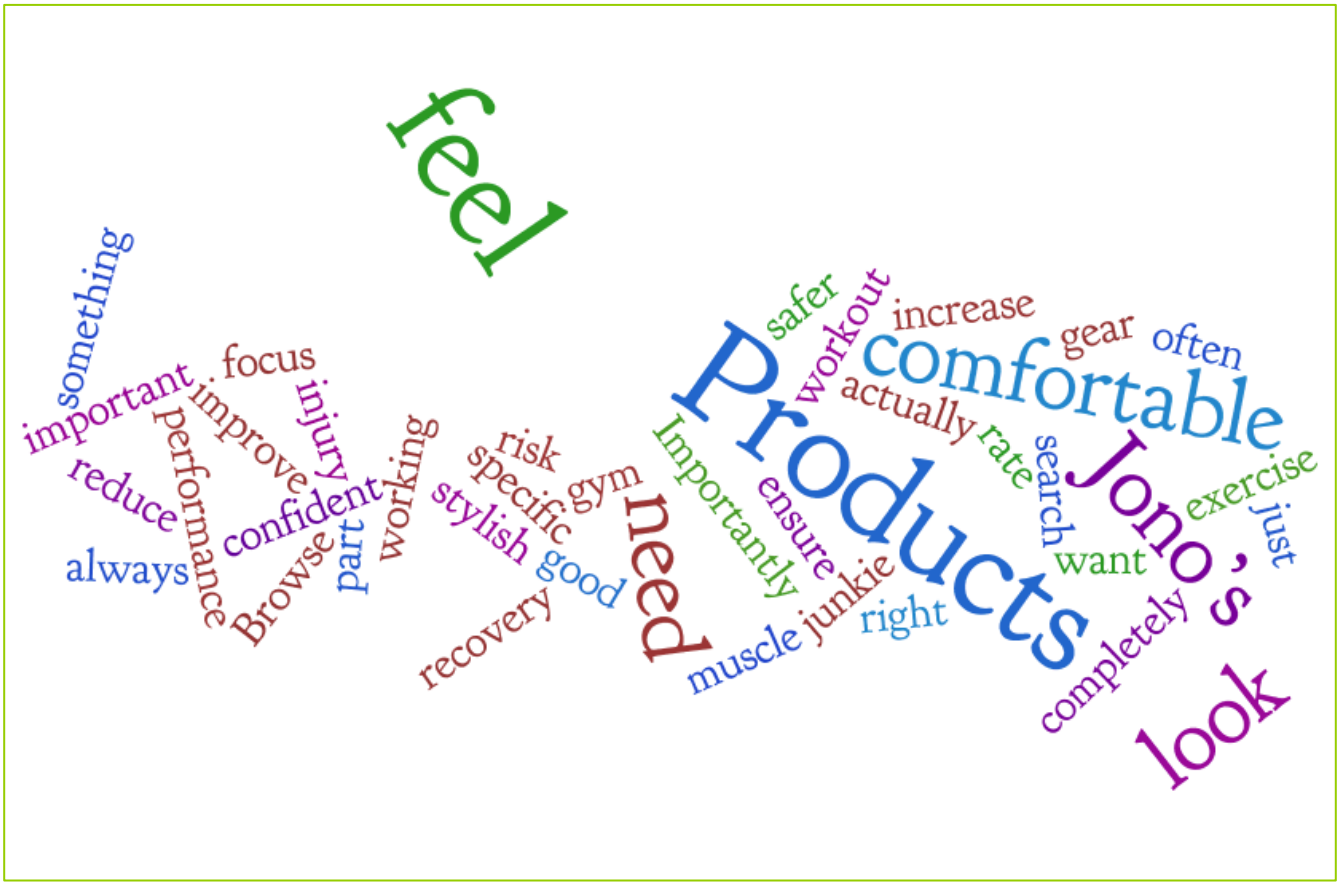


Figure 2 – Word cloud generated from un-optimized gym gear page

As you can see, the un-optimized copy doesn't tell Google much. From the copy alone, Google might think the page is about products, feelings, need, comfort and Jono (you'll note these are the most prominent words in the cloud).

But by being specific, we can easily turn this around (I've highlighted my changes):

Jono's Gym Gear

If you're a gym junkie, you need the right gym gear. You want to look good and feel comfortable. So when you're working out, you feel completely confident, and can focus on what's important: your workout — not your gym gear.

Jono's has just the gym gear you need. Our stylish, comfortable gym gear will ensure you always look and feel the part.

Importantly, our gym gear will actually improve your performance too. Quality gym gear can reduce the risk of injury, and increase the rate of muscle recovery, so you can exercise safer and more often.

Browse our gym gear below, or search for something specific.

Now let's take a look at the word cloud generated from the optimized copy:

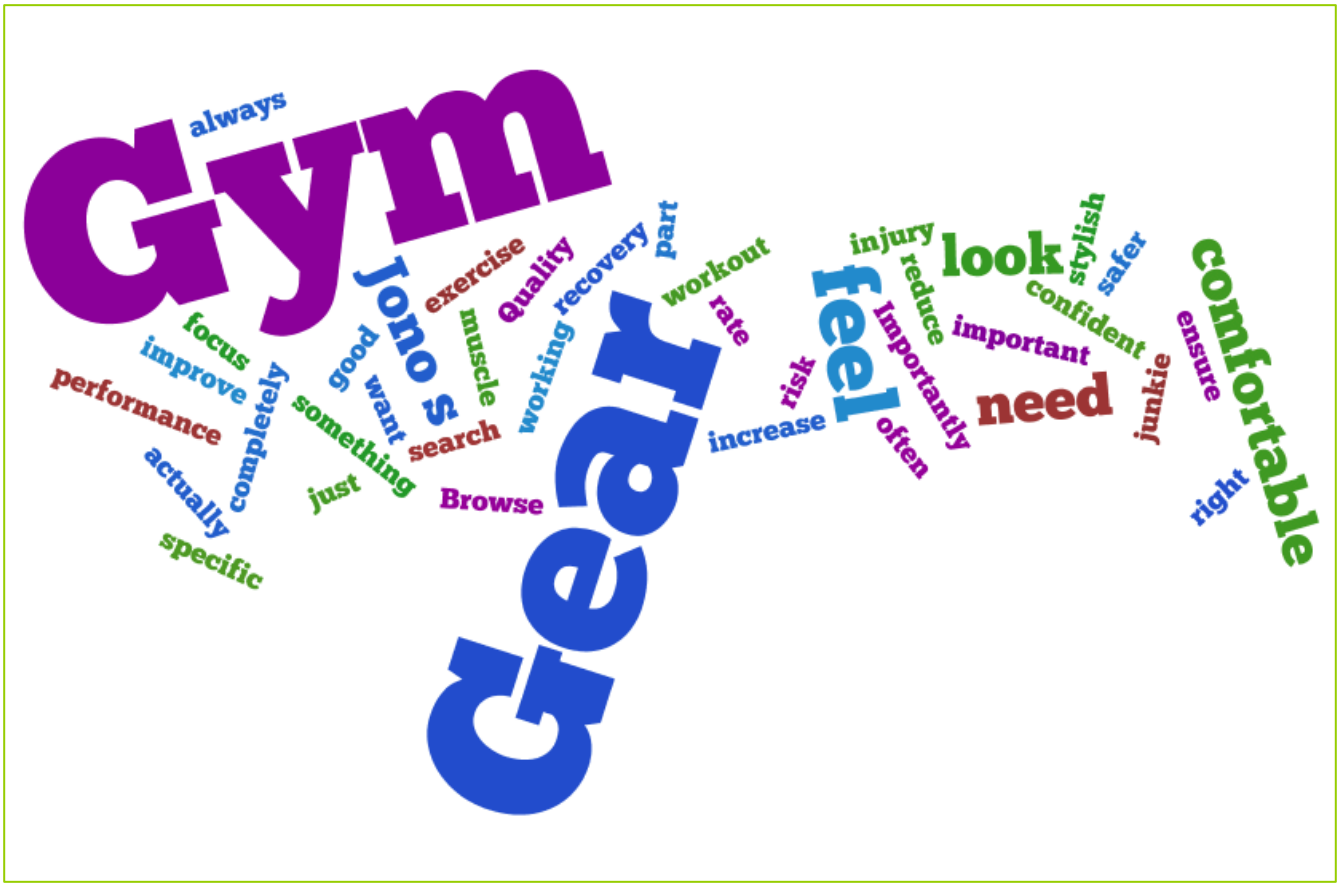


Figure 3 – Word cloud generated from optimized gym gear page

That's better! Now, when Google reads the copy, it will have no doubts about the subject matter of the page. This means it'll be much more likely to index the page appropriately and accurately determine its relevance to search queries.

Obviously, there's a bit of an art to it; sometimes it ends up sounding like you're repeating your keyword phrase over and over again. If this happens, you may just need to restructure the sentence or paragraph. Always remember: your site reflects the quality of your product or service. If your site is hard to read, people will infer a lot about your offering...

Invent headings, captions and lists

Google loves headings, captions and lists. When indexing your page and determining your relevance, it pays particular attention to the words you use in these elements. So they're good places to use your target key-phrases.

Fortunately, readers love headings, captions and lists, too. So if you're struggling to increase your keyword frequency, why not just invent a couple of extra headings, just to accommodate your keywords? Or throw in a new image and associated caption? Or a new bulleted list? So long as you're adding value to your reader (or at the very least, you're not reducing value), you can use headings, captions and lists quite liberally.

Although these elements are technically within the body copy, they're somewhat removed from the *flow* of the body copy. (i.e. Many readers will scan them — or completely skip them — when reading your page, from start to finish.) This makes them particularly easy to optimize without impeding readability.

TIP: You can even make extra use of your invented captions and lists, by adding keyword-rich links to them.

Use grammar & punctuation... 'creatively'

Grammar and punctuation are your friends. Honest. They are, after all, the literal difference between a long and boring block of text, and a great read.

Let's start with punctuation, as it's the easiest to be creative with. Assume you're targeting a key-phrase like "office stationery west gosford". The problem with this phrase is that the words don't sit together nicely as part of any meaningful sentence. (Not without punctuation, anyway.) The temptation is to add words around and between the individual keywords, but this simply makes your key-phrase dominate your page even more (it eats into the wordcount you might otherwise assign to meaning and persuasion).

By using punctuation creatively, you eliminate the need for padding words. In this example, you can actually make the phrase read properly as part of a meaningful sentence, without changing the word order or adding any extra words.

Example: A heading might read: "ACME office stationery, West Gosford" or "Want office stationery? West Gosford is the place." Note that the phrase "office stationery west gosford" appears in both of these examples, with its original word-order, and without any additional words — only the insertion of a punctuation mark.

You can also use grammar creatively, in a similar way.

Example: Using the same target key-phrase, you might write a sentence in your body copy like: "All Central Coast businesses need office stationery; West Gosford is no exception." (This is grammatically incorrect because it implies that West Gosford is a Central Coast business.) Alternatively, you might insert a map of your business location, and accompany it with a caption (and image Alt attribute) like, "Office stationery — West Gosford ACME store". (This isn't a grammatically complete sentence.)

Fortunately, people don't expect headings and captions to always be grammatically correct. They expect them to be scannable and succinct.

Link out for SEO and credibility

Helpful websites build brand credibility, authority and trust. But readers don't expect you to know everything. Nor do they expect your website to provide all the answers, or cover all possible related subject matter. If you think your readers will want to know something, but it's outside your scope or your realm of expertise, link to another site that covers it properly.

A link to a helpful site is a positive reflection on you and your site. Your readers will remember your site was helpful, even if you didn't provide the ultimate answer; you still pointed them in the right direction. As a result, they'll quite likely return and maybe even bookmark your site, using a social bookmarking service like Delicious (see my SEO Secrets ebook for more on social bookmarking and SEO). They'll also respect you for sharing the link, and not trying to horde visitors — at the expense of helpfulness.

From an SEO perspective, linking out can actually be helpful too. If the anchor text of your link is keyword rich, you'll be helping Google understand your subject matter and relevance. Outbound links are particularly beneficial when they point to 'hub sites' — the really, REALLY big and trusted ones in your field. If you link to a hub site, the search engines figure you're adding value to your visitors, and this may count in your favor.

Google's head of spam, Matt Cutts, hints at this:

> "...if the user is happy, they are more likely to come back or bookmark your site or tell their friends about it. And so, if you try to hoard those users, they often somehow subconsciously sense it, and they are less likely to come back or tell their friends about it."

Translation? Outbound links can impact your ranking favorably. (When discussing ranking factors, Matt usually talks in terms of visitor experience.)

Common Google-Visitor conflicts & how to resolve them

Now that you're familiar with the clever little tricks professional SEO copywriters use on a daily basis, let's look at the problems you're most likely to face when writing SEO copy.

The biggest problems are usually caused by the conflict between what Google wants and what your readers want. Following are the 15 problems you're most likely to encounter when writing SEO copy, along with some tips on how to resolve them.

1. Keyword frequency VS readability

Google wants...	Visitor wants...
Relatively high keyword frequency	**Natural keyword frequency**
Although Google doesn't measure keyword density, it does assume that the most frequently used words are an indication of your subject matter. Most of the time, this is a fair assumption. After all, if your page is about kangaroos, "kangaroos" is likely to appear quite often.	Visitors don't want to notice your target keywords at all. If they do, they'll be put off. If they know anything about SEO, they'll assume you're a spammer. And if they don't know anything about SEO, they'll assume you're just a terrible writer.
Solution	
Most importantly, write for visitors first. You should be aiming to make your SEO copy sound as natural as possible. Ideally, once you've written your copy, you'll have only to make a couple of tweaks to make your keywords more prominent. Forget keyword density. You just have to use your target keywords more frequently than any other word or phrase.	

2. Keyword-rich VS persuasive headings

Headings are vital to your SEO copy, so it's important you leverage them effectively. But remember, they're also vital for conveying your message and keeping the reader on the persuasion slippery slide.

Google wants...	Visitor wants...
Keyword-rich headings	**Meaningful, persuasive headings**
Just as human visitors do, search engines rely on your headings when determining what your content is about. So from an SEO point of view, you should try to include your keywords in headings, wherever possible. This can, however, become difficult when your key-phrase is relatively long (as most are), because you're left with very few words with which to add meaning and persuasion. **NOTE:** We're talking, here, about headings tagged in the HTML code as <H1>, <H2> and <H3>.	Human visitors glean much more from headings than simply an understanding of the overall page subject matter. Your headings break down the page into meaningful chunks, so humans can tell which sections they want to read. This means your headings need to be meaningful, otherwise your readers won't know which sections they can read, and which they can skip. What's more, it means your headings are the perfect vehicle for persuasive writing. In fact, the objective of every heading is to draw the reader in — to get them reading the next line. This is difficult at the best of times, let alone when you're trying to squeeze in a long key-phrase, to boot.
Solution	
Firstly, don't be afraid of long headings. You don't have to keep them to three to five words. Anything up to about 15 words is usually OK. **Example:** You'll notice some of my headings above are quite long. For instance, the following (from p.13) is 14 words long, and I bet you weren't put off by it: "But readers are smarter than Google, so you can't dumb it down too much." By using longer headings, you'll resolve a lot of the problems introduced by longer key-phrases. Similarly, don't be afraid to use more than one sentence or clause in your heading. Two is definitely OK. (Even three can be OK, if you have to do it.) By doing this, you can break each of your headings into two parts: one part meaning & persuasion, one part keyword richness. **Example:** If you're writing copy promoting the online store of a coffee roaster, and your target key-phrase is "fresh coffee beans", you might consider a heading like this: "Fresh coffee beans. One click, and we deliver", or "Buy fresh coffee beans online — All roasted to order". In both of these examples, the first part of the heading is keyword oriented, and the second part is persuasion/meaning oriented. The second example is better from a persuasion point of view, because it uses the active voice ("Buy..."), but it's slightly worse from an SEO point of view, because the key-phrase isn't the very first thing in the heading (which is, as discussed below, ideal).	

3. Headings that start with keywords VS headings that start with persuasion

Google wants...	Visitor wants...
Headings that start with keywords	**Headings that start with persuasion**
When deciding what your page is about, Google pays particular attention to the first few words in tagged headings (e.g. <H1> headings). It assumes that if these words are important enough to launch your heading, they're likely to be indicative of your subject matter. Obviously this is a pretty big assumption to make. If you've ever tried to write a heading or headline, you'll know that the first words quite often don't reflect your subject matter. So the need to start your headings with keywords can make it difficult to write headings that are persuasive and also meaningful to scan-readers.	Persuasive headings quite often use the active voice. (Active voice: "Bob kicked the ball." Passive voice: "The ball was kicked by Bob.") Generally, readers respond better to active voice because it's a direct representation of what's happening — or what you want to happen. The reader's brain doesn't have to work as hard to figure it out. Unfortunately, when you use the active voice, the first few words are typically actions, not things. Keywords, on the other hand, are usually things. E.g. Someone searching for gardening gloves will most likely search for "tough gardening gloves", or something similar. An active heading, however, would be something like, "Protect your hands all day long with our tough gardening gloves". As you can see, the keywords in the active heading would feature at the end of the sentence, not the start. What's more, visitors who scan rely heavily on the first couple of words of each heading. (Read the eye-tracking research). If you simply position your keywords at the start of each heading, you'll undermine the scannability of your page (as those visitors will glean much the same meaning from each heading on your page). There are also visitors who read each heading, in its entirety, as a way of summarizing the page. For these visitors, you need to use your headings to summarize each section. Ideally, you'll also tell a story with the headings (as stories are a great way to keep people reading).
Solution	
Start the first heading (the <H1> heading) with your key-phrase. This is the most important heading for SEO. If you have more than one heading on your page, mix things up a little: start some with related or similar words, some with scanner-friendly words, and some with persuasive (active) words. You'll find your choices here will be guided by the subject matter and intent of your heading.	

Example: You're writing copy to promote PC backup/restore software. Your target key-phrase is "backup software". Your differentiator is the software's simple set-and-forget functionality, with intelligent feedback. You might write headings as follows:

- <H1> heading: "Backup software you can trust to set and forget". This is the most important heading for SEO, so start it with your key-phrase.
- First <H2> heading: "Set a backup schedule with just 3 clicks". This is an active heading that is still quite scannable, as the first two words are short, so the third and fourth words (the key meaning words for the following section) are still quite prominent. So this heading will be both scannable and persuasive.
- Next <H2> heading: "Back up to your hard drive, a USB drive or network drive". The first three words are the key for scan readers: "Back up to..."; they clearly signal the meaning of the following section. They're also active, therefore more engaging and persuasive.
- Next <H2> heading: "Proactive space management: Acme Backups tells you BEFORE you run out of space". This heading starts with meaning and emotion, not keywords or active voice. It's great for scanning and for getting readers to associate an emotion (peace of mind) with the product. The second clause is in the active voice, but the reader, in this sentence, is the object, not the subject. They're being acted upon. This is generally not ideal, but here, the key point is the software's proactive, intelligent notifications, so the reader might feel comforted to be positioned as the object here, as they want the software to be thinking for them once it's installed (i.e they want the software to be the actor). Finally, the second clause is slightly optimized for search; the name "Acme Backups" includes part of the target key-phrase.
- Next <H2> heading: "Acme Backup software — Backup & restore made easy". This is a passive heading, which is not as good for engaging the reader, but the trade-off is that it starts with the target key-phrase. Also, it has a summarizing / closure feel to it, which is suitable and, indeed, beneficial, toward the end of the page. (Read more about using passive voice in headings.)
- Final <H2> heading: "Watch a demo now — See for yourself how easy backups can be". Being a call to action, this heading is in the active voice. It positions the reader as the do-er, and encourages them to act *now*. It also promises a quick easy way, which is one of the four core ingredients usually found in effective headlines. What's more, it includes part of the target key-phrase.

As you can see, these headings are *not* all things to all people (or all search engines). They're a combination of SEO, persuasiveness and scannability, which is exactly what you need for a page that needs to be optimized, persuasive and scannable.

4. Keyword-rich VS feature/benefit-rich lists

Readers and search engines, alike, love a good bulleted list. Sadly, they disagree on what constitutes 'good'.

Google wants...	Visitor wants...
Keyword-rich lists	**Feature/benefit-rich lists**
In its never-ending attempt to be human, Google pays particular attention to the words in bulleted and numbered lists when trying to learn what your page is about. So from an SEO point of view, it's a good idea to make sure your lists are keyword-rich. Unfortunately, however, unless every list item is about the same thing, featuring the same words in each item can dilute the meaning and scannability of your list, and make it very repetitive.	Humans like lists because they reduce reading effort. All the rubbish has been filtered out, leaving only the good stuff. This means readers are not only *attracted* to lists, but they also read them in a very specific way. They assume the list is intended to be scanned, so they scan it, typically with an F-shaped pattern to their eye movement. Let's say Bill Googled "ride-on mower". If he's in the early research phase of his buying cycle when he arrives at your page, he'll most likely be scanning for benefits, like "durable engine". If he's nearing the end of his research phase, or he's already in the buying phase, he'll most likely be scanning for features. Things like "10hp engine". So to attract Bill to your online mower shop, you'd need to target the key-phrase "ride-on mower", but you couldn't just blindly pepper every list item with that phrase, because you'd reduce the likelihood that Bill will read the list, and — if he did — the likelihood that he'd notice the benefits and features he's looking for.

Solution

List items are most effective when short. So increasing the length, alone, isn't a viable option. You can, however, increase the length of each list item if you also bold the features/benefits, and ensure the first two words of each bullet are meaningful.

Example:

Our Honda ride-on mowers feature:

- **Durable engines:** Honda ride-on mowers are renowned for their durability. The XT68 is no exception, with a seriously tough **10hp engine**, that'll get you to the end of the paddock and back an average of 200,000 times (20,000km).
- **Fuel efficiency:** The sniff of an oily rag is the Honda ride-on mower's equivalent of over-eating! Under standard conditions, it'll do **3 miles to the gallon**.

By adding bolding within the bulleted list, I was able to draw the reader's attention to both the benefits and the features, and was still able to target my key-phrase in each bullet. All without making the bullets appear overwhelming. (Readers will still feel confident they can scan to the part they're most interested in.)

You can also try including words in your list that are semantically related to your target key-phrases (e.g. similar and related words). As mentioned at the start of this ebook, this is one of the things Google expects to see in naturally relevant copy.

Example: In the example above, you'll notice the following words / phrases, which are all semantically related to "ride-on mower":

- Honda
- Durable engines
- Durability
- XT68
- Tough
- 10hp engine
- Paddock
- Fuel efficiency
- oily rag
- gallon

Interestingly, included in this collection of semantically related words are the feature and benefit my hypothetical reader was looking for. So in this instance, including those words — and bolding them — would actually have helped my SEO too. I'd expect this would often be the case.

5. Bolded keywords VS bolded meaning words

This is a similar situation to the lists conflict above.

Google wants...	Visitor wants...
Bolded keywords	**Bolded meaning words**
Search engines assume your bolded words are a good reflection of your page's subject matter. So it's a good idea to bold your target key-phrases, as this will help ensure Google indexes your page correctly, and will give it that extra little shove when it's deciding what results in its index are most relevant to a search.	Visitors, on the other hand, use bolded words as a way to scan the page, as they figure out what they have to read, and what they can skip. So from your point of view, as the copywriter, they're like hooks. You can use them to draw the reader into your copy. Obviously, though, the reader won't be drawn in if you simply bold your key-phrase, again and again. Instead, you should be bolding the key meaning phrases, like benefits, promises, statistics and — if the reader is close to buying — features. The things that will impress the reader.

Solution

The first thing to realize is that your features, possibly even your benefits, may double as key-phrases (or related or similar words). So there may not always be a conflict between Google and visitor.

However, it's unlikely that *all* the bits you want to bold will be target key-phrases, so at some point, there'll be a conflict. When this occurs, first try bolding one or two of your target key-phrases, as well as your meaning words.

Example: Let's say you're writing copy for a dust buster. Your target key-phrase is "dust buster", but your benefits are suction power, technology and battery life. You might bold as follows:

> If you've never had a dust buster before, you should know they're not all created equal. The most important things you need to consider when buying a dust buster are **suction power** and **technology**, **battery life**, and whether it's **rechargeable**.
>
> **The ideal dust buster** will suck at a minimum of **30 kPa**, will use a **bagless, cyclonic** technology, and will have a **rechargeable battery** that you can use for an hour, before simply plugging into the charger.

As you can see, both your key-phrase and your benefits are bolded, and there's no loss of readability or scannability. So both Google and the reader are happy.

Longer bolding is OK too.

Example: If you're promoting a USB microphone, your target key-phrase is "usb microphones" and your differentiator is voice clarity, you might write:

> "**Acme USB microphones keep your voice clear**. Our patented noise-cancelling technology delivers a voice signal that is **20% clearer** than any other USB microphone under $500."

You can see I've bolded an entire sentence to capture both the target key-phrase and the benefit, and I've also bolded the measurable benefit. Note that I haven't bolded the feature, "patented noise-cancelling technology", because I judged that the claim of 20% clearer is more compelling. Note also, that the sentence I bolded is a short sentence. You wouldn't want to bold a long sentence (like the second sentence above); that would undermine the scannability of your page.

6. Keyword-rich VS scannable VS engaging links

Google wants...	Visitor wants...
Keyword-rich links	**Scannable OR engaging links**
Google assumes the words you use in your links are likely to be a good indication of your page's subject matter. Especially the first two words of those links. It's a rule of thumb that Google pays slightly more attention to words at the start of things (page, paragraph, sentence, etc.). The same applies to links. So for SEO, start links with keywords where you can. E.g. Assuming your key-phrase is "self-sharpening pencils", a well optimized link might say: "Self-sharpening pencils from Acme to be used by American astronauts in space-walk."	Like Google, visitors who scan pay more attention to the first two words of a link. However, *unlike* Google, they're not interested only in your keywords. They're interested in meaning words and promises. Sometimes your keywords will double as meaning words and promises, but, more often than not, they won't. When they don't, you need to find a way to resolve the conflict. To complicate matters, if you start your links with key-phrases and/or meaning words, you'll quite often end up with passive links (i.e. use of passive voice). While more scannable, passive links are generally considered less engaging. E.g. You can see the example to the left is passive (the pencils are "...to be used by American astronauts...", rather than the active "...astronauts to use..."). Likewise, if you start with the most important meaning words, you may produce a passive link: "Our pencils in space: to be used by American astronauts in space-walk". Another alternative might be, "American astronauts to use our pencils in space walk". Although this is in the active voice, it doesn't address the reader directly; it doesn't position the reader as the do-er. The most engaging links tend to be active, and they tend to address the reader directly. E.g. "Read how American astronauts will use our pencils..." But clearly, the first two words here aren't keywords, nor are they meaning words. So no good for SEO or scannability.

Solution

You're juggling three agendas here: 1) SEO; 2) scannability; and 3) engagingness. In this situation, you'll usually have to prioritize, and cater to your highest priority. Unfortunately, this is one of the rare situations where there's no effective compromise.

Example:

1. If SEO is your highest priority, go with, "Self-sharpening pencils from Acme to be used by American astronauts in space-walk."
2. If scannability is your highest priority, go with, "Our pencils in space: to be used by American astronauts in space-walk."
3. If engagingness is your highest priority, go with, "Read how American astronauts will use our pencils in space-walk."

In my humble opinion, SEO should never be your highest priority, so you should be considering only options 2 or 3 above. And realistically, the overall impact of one link on scannability will be minimal. So rather than go with a muddy link that few people will click on, go with the clear link that may be slightly less scannable: option 3.

7. Summaries that start with keywords VS summaries that start with meaning or persuasion

This conflict is similar to the link conflict above. So is its solution. But because the reasons for that solution are different, it's worth discussing separately.

(Note: Summaries aren't tagged items on a page; there's no <summary> tag in the HTML of the page. So Google doesn't analyze summaries the way it might analyze, say, a Title tag. Summaries do, however, tend to appear toward the start of the page, which is argued to draw Google's attention a little more than the content toward the end of the page.)

Google wants...	Visitor wants...
Summaries that start with keywords	**Summaries that start with meaning or persuasion**
As always, Google assumes the words at the start are more representative of subject matter than those at the end. So it's good SEO practice to start summaries with your key-phrases. E.g. You've written a blog post about rapid weight loss. Your target key-phrase is "rapid weight loss". You might introduce it with a summary like this: **Summary:** Rapid weight loss is best achieved by aerobic exercise (performed at around 75% of your maximum heart rate (HRmax)). Read on to find out why...	As per the above discussion, readers who scan pay most attention to the first two words of your summary (their eyes scan in a F-shaped pattern). So, to please scan-readers, you need to ensure the first two words of your summary are meaningful enough to allow them to judge whether the entire summary is worth reading. This means you need to start your summaries with meaningful phrases, not key-phrases. (Occasionally, your target key-phrases will double as meaningful phrases, but this won't usually be the case.) E.g. For the aerobic zone example to the left, the entire page is about rapid weight loss, but the meaning of the post is that aerobic exercise is the key. So the meaning-laden phrase in the summary is "aerobic exercise". So you might summarize as follows, for scan-readers: **Summary:** Aerobic exercise delivers rapid weight loss. Read on to find out why 75% of your maximum heart rate (HRmax) is the ideal zone... Note that, although this approach is good for scannability, it may not be the most *effective* approach, because it uses the passive voice

(something is being done for / to you). The more engaging and effective approach would be to address the reader directly with an active voice summary:

> **Summary:**
>
> Find out why exercising aerobically (at 75% of your HRmax) makes you lose weight rapidly.

This approach is active (find out) and immediate (they can find out now), but it subordinates the meaning (aerobic exercise) to the action (find out).

Solution

The conflict here is between: 1) SEO; 2) scannability; and 3) engagingness. Because you'll have plenty of opportunities to include your key-phrase elsewhere on the page, there's no need to sacrifice scannability or engagingness in the name of SEO. So we're left with a choice between scannability and engagingness.

My solution would be to use an active approach, but to ensure it favors meaningful action over immediate action.

Example: The actual outcome would vary with each situation, but for the above example, I'd write the summary as follows:

> **Summary:**
>
> Exercise aerobically (at 75% of your HRmax) to lose weight rapidly. Read on to find out why...

Here the summary is active, but I've turned the meaning (aerobic exercise) into an action (exercise aerobically) so there's no longer any competition between meaning and action for prime spot in the sentence. The cost is immediacy (we're now instructing the reader to do something in the future ("exercise aerobically...") rather than now ("find out why..."), but I think the trade-off is worth it.

8. Captions that start with keywords VS captions that start with meaningful description

Google wants...	Visitor wants...
Captions that start with keywords	**Captions that start with meaningful description**
Google pays particular attention to the first few words of your captions. So, for SEO, you should make your captions keyword-rich, and you should start them with keywords.	Visitors want descriptive captions, preferably with the most meaningful words toward the start. Sometimes your target key-phrases will be meaningful in the context of a description of your pictures, tables, charts, etc. But most of the time, they won't be. When they're not, you have a conflict between what Google wants and what your readers want.
Solution	
If there's a conflict, don't spend much time trying to resolve it. Simply write your captions for Google. Remember, your readers can make sense of your pictures, tables, charts, etc., without having to read the caption. Google can't.	

9. Target keyword VS grammatical variants

The best way to discuss this conflict is through example: Assume your target keyword is "kangaroo". Its grammatical variants would be "roo" (part) and "kangaroos" (plural). Is it OK use a grammatical variant in your copy? Or do you need to find a way to use the exact target keyword?

Google wants...	Visitor wants...
Target keyword AND variant	**Target keyword OR variant**
Google is smart enough to recognize, and make sense of, both the stem keyword "kangaroo" and its grammatical parts. In fact, Google *expects* to see grammatical variants like "roo" on a page about kangaroos. Its logic is that any helpful page about kangaroos would naturally have instances of "roo" too (broadly speaking). If you don't have them, your page may actually rank lower, even if you have a high frequency for "kangaroo".	Visitors don't care whether you use the exact keyword or a grammatical variant. What they care about is meaning, readability and style. E.g. 1. Readers of a scientific piece about kangaroos would probably prefer to see "kangaroo" than the part, "roo". Readers of an 'Aussie outback' blog post, on the other hand, would be happy to see either. E.g. 2. In the context of a stylized heading like, "Rabid Red Roo Routinely Runs Riot", readers would expect "roo", not "kangaroo" (substitute "kangaroo" for "roo", above, and you'll see why). E.g. 3. All readers would expect the plural in, "Why kangaroos cost farmers money". I.e. You can't say, "Why kangaroo cost farmers money", regardless of the importance of search traffic to your site.
Solution	
It's actually good practice to use grammatical variants instead of the exact target keyword, if you need to. (E.g. You can use "roo" or "kangaroos".) It's good for your readers, and — assuming the frequency for your target keyword is higher, across most of your pages, than the frequency of any other single word or phrase — it's good for Google too. If your keyword frequency for the exact target keyword is very low, you have a bit of a conflict to contend with. I'd recommend doing whatever works best for the reader. Remember, Google recognizes and makes sense of grammatical variants, so if there's any adverse SEO impact, it'll be minimal. Don't increase keyword frequency at the expense of readability, meaning or style.	

10. Exact string VS individual words scattered across the page

Google wants...	Visitor wants...
Preferably the exact string, but either is fine	**Individual words scattered across the page**
When someone searches for "blue tennis shoes California", all things being equal, a website that targets the exact string "blue tennis shoes California", in that exact order, will rank higher than a website that targets just the individual words, scattered across the page. But for most key-phrases, targeting the exact string is very difficult to do, if not impossible. And it's only getting harder, as searchers are entering increasingly long and specific search queries. And anyway, when are all things ever equal? In reality, it doesn't make that much difference. Google is smart enough to pick the words out — no matter where or how they appear on the page — and there are so many other factors influencing your ranking, that your use of the exact string (or not) is relatively unimportant.	Although your visitors found you by Googling a very specific phrase, it's highly unlikely they want to read that exact string in your copy. They'd expect something far more natural — preferably something that's grammatically correct (which most search queries are *not*)! What's more, if their search query is nonsensical as an exact string (as is "blue tennis shoes California"), they may, in fact, be suspicious if they see it in that form. Many people will recognize this as an SEO tactic, and may construe it as spam.

Solution

Only target the exact string if doing so makes sense from a readability, meaning, persuasion and style point of view.

Example: It's easy to target the exact string if your key-phrase is something like, "My headphones fall out when I run".

If your phrase isn't this natural, your first port of call should be those parts of your copy that can afford to be a little ~~incorrect~~ ... creative (*ahem*), grammatically and semantically. Things like headings (yes, headings! — think newspaper headlines), labels, captions, table headers and lists. And make good use of punctuation; use it creatively!

Examples:

- Use punctuation creatively to write a page heading like, "Blue Tennis Shoes — California Comfort & Style".
- Use grammar creatively to write a chart caption like, "Blue tennis shoes — California wears more than any other US state". (California doesn't wear shoes, but your meaning is clear, and you'll get away with it.)

Otherwise, do what you can to keep as much of the key-phrase together as possible, and keep the separated words close by.

Example: "The latest California craze? Blue Tennis Shoes" or "Dress like a Californian... In blue tennis shoes"

And remember, Google is smart enough to find the words, even if they're spread out. So don't try too hard. It'll show.

11. Long VS short copy

Google wants...	Visitor wants...
A lot of copy	**Only as much copy as they need**
Google likes to see a lot of copy on your pages. But it doesn't count your words and strike you off the list if you don't have enough. It's only interested in your word count insofar as that's an indication of the helpfulness of your page. (As a rule of thumb, a helpful page will have a lot of words.) So for SEO, the more words the better. (Unless that actually makes your page slower to load. Google may now be favoring fast-loading pages in its results.)	A lot of copywriters rave about long copy. How much better it sells than short copy. Don't listen. Long copy is *not* better than short! Nor is short copy better than long. Copywriting's about the reader, not the length. There's no inherent value in length. The only important metric is appropriateness. If long copy works for your audience, use it. If short works, use *it*. Yes, if you can get a reader to read 500 words, you can get them to read 5000. And yes, some of the 'legends' of copywriting report that their longer sales letters pull better than their shorter letters. And yes, there's evidence suggesting that high price point offerings need more copy. But none of that means long copy is better. It simply means that *some* audiences respond better to long copy. And they only respond better when all of that copy is succinct. For effective copy, write just enough to convey your message, to engage your audience, and to compel them to act. Write as much as you *need*, not as much as you *can*!
Solution	
As always, write for your reader first. Then, and only then, optimize. By doing this, you won't fall into the trap of writing ridiculous amounts of copy, when your reader doesn't *want* ridiculous amounts of copy. Use the following as a guide: • 100-150 words for your home page (usability studies show you shouldn't make your reader scroll down on the home page) • 250-500 words for pages lower in your hierarchy (product pages, service pages, About Us pages, etc.) • 300-1000 words for blog posts Having said all of that, you'll *occasionally* need to write copy just for Google. Some pages may require little or no copy for visitors, but without copy, they may not rank. You may have to make these pages a little wordier than you'd otherwise have liked.	

Examples:

- Your site might be very visual — very image-based, and intuitive to use.
- Or your products may be so self-explanatory that they need very little, or no, description.
- You might want to include a few extra words on your Contact page, just for the search engines, otherwise it may not rank for "contact <your business name>".

In these situations, try to write copy that the reader may still benefit from. But if that's not possible, and you're simply restating the obvious (painfully), try to find a way of presenting the copy such that the reader knows s/he doesn't have to read it. So s/he doesn't even try. Provide some sort of visual cue. Perhaps position your text below 'the fold' (i.e. the reader can't see it without scrolling). Or perhaps present it in a design element that is clearly 'incidental' (e.g. make it look like an ad — then *no-one* will read it!).

12. Keyword prominence VS succinctness

Google wants...	Visitor wants...
Keyword prominence	**Succinctness**
Google *may* pay more attention to the words at the start of your page than the words at the end. But *if* this is still true (and I'm not entirely convinced), it makes only a miniscule difference. Why? Two reasons: 1. Technically, we're talking about the page of code, here, not the page of copy. If you right-click on your page and View Source, you'll see that your copy is a relatively small component in the code. There's usually far more code (before *and* after) than there is copy. So even if your keywords are prominent in your copy, they won't be that prominent within the overall page of code. 2. The whole keyword prominence recommendation originally came about because, years ago, Google could read only a small portion of your page of code (a certain number of kilobytes of data). These days, it can read the entire page of code, so there's no constraint to worry about.	Visitors want you to get to the point. Well, actually, they want you to get to something that interests them, whether or not that happens to be your point. Now, the thing that interests your reader may not always be your target key-phrase (even if that's actually what they Googled). E.g. You sell mobile phones. Your target market is 15-18 year old females. Your key differentiator is the fact that you have the biggest range of pink phones with plans offering free SMS. Your key-phrase is "pink mobile phone free sms". So what do you write in your copy, remembering that it needs to get visitors reading and keep them reading? Well, let's think it through... When 15 year old Breanna arrives at your sales page, she can see instantly — from your product shot — that you sell pink phones. She can see you offer plans with free SMS — from the banner overlaying the product shot. She's not interested in the fact that you have the widest range; you either have the phone she wants, with the right plan, or you don't. So the copy doesn't have to tell her any of this. And it certainly shouldn't *lead* with any of this. Then what should it lead with? What's going to get Breanna reading and keep her reading? What about the benefits? The improved social connectivity? The fashion? The freedom? The excitement? I don't know if these are actually the things that 15-18 year old girls value. My point is that these girls will engage with the copy better if it leads with the things they *do* value — whatever your research reveals those things to be.
Solution	
This particular 'conflict' is hardly a conflict at all. There's very little — if any — benefit in focusing on keywords toward the start of your copy. On the other hand, there's a lot to be gained from focusing on benefits at the start of your copy. So do that, without compromise. Lead with the things that will sell your offering — don't lead with keywords. Write for the reader first, and lead with the promise, the benefits.	

13. Title tags that start with keywords VS Title tags that start with brand

The Title tag is a line of code in the HTML behind your page. It looks something like this:

```
<title>Australian Institute of Architects</title>
```

When the page is displayed in a web browser, the Title displays at the top left:

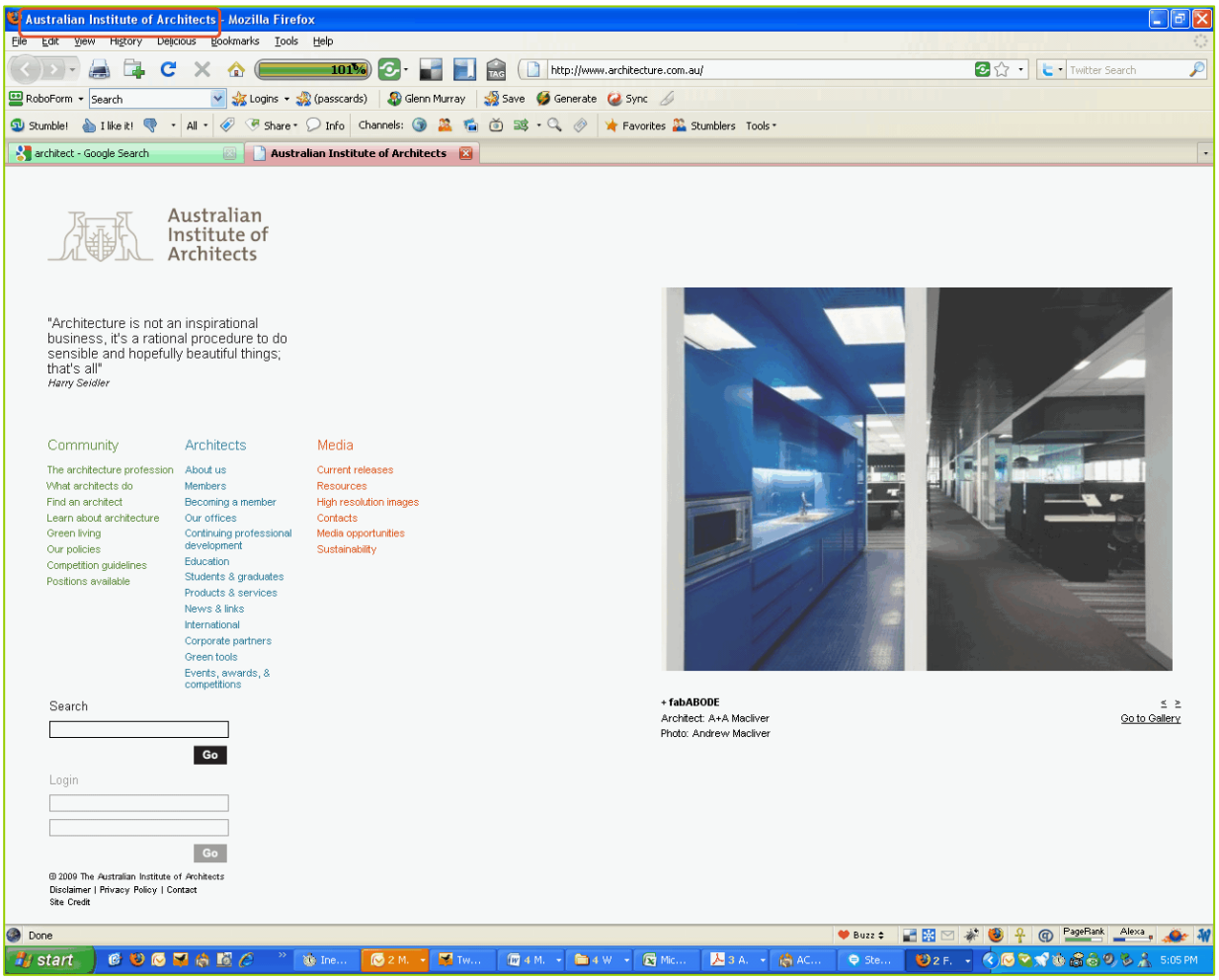


Figure 4 - How the Title tag displays in a web browser

Google uses your Title tag to generate the title of your listing in the natural search results.

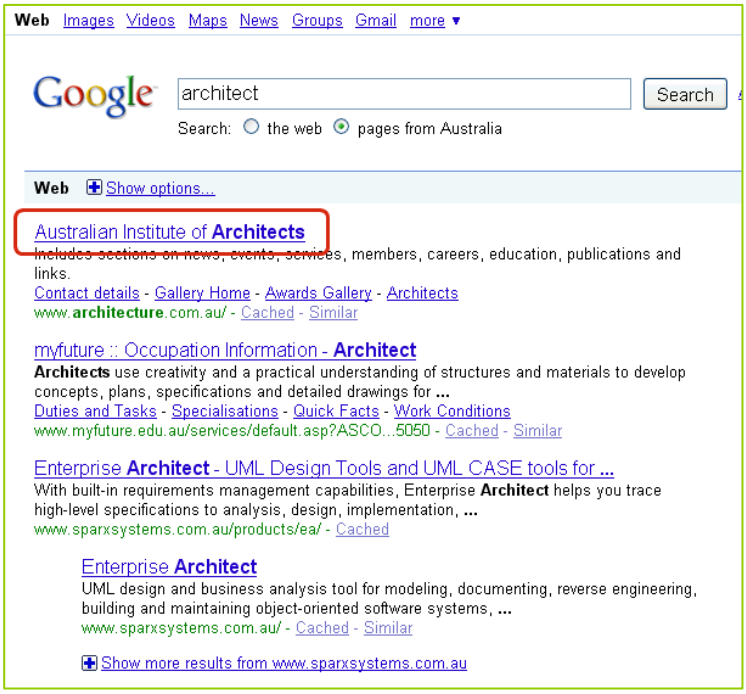


Figure 5 - How the Title tag displays in Google

Google wants...	Visitor wants...
Title tags that start with keywords	**Title tags that start with keywords... sometimes**
Title tags are very important to Google. They're judged to be very representative of your page's subject matter. And within the Title tag, the first two to three words are given the most weight. So for SEO, you should definitely include your keywords in your Title tags. And if possible, put those keywords up front.	Unless you're a big brand, visitors will respond best (click through more often) to Title tags that start with keywords. Remember, if Google finds any of the words from the searcher's query in your Title tag, it bolds them in the search results. Due to readers' tendency to scan in an F-shaped pattern, this is far more likely to draw the reader's eye if the keywords are in the first couple of words of the Title. If you're a big brand, on the other hand, visitors will respond best to Title tags that start with your brand name. When they see a familiar name, they tend to click on it because it makes them feel comfortable and secure.

Solution

Start your Title tag with keywords, unless you're a big, recognizable brand.

Example: "Office furniture London — Modular desks that grow with your business"

But don't forget, the rest of your Title tag has to be compelling and engaging, and it has to describe the page. Think of it as the headline for an ad — you're trying to get people to read on and click through. The better your title, the more people will click on it. Be descriptive and accurate. In fact, why not consider the four criteria for an effective headline?

- Self Interest – Does it promise a benefit to the searcher?
- Quick, Easy Way – Does it offer one?
- News – Does it contain any?
- Curiosity – Does it sound interesting?

14. Keyword-rich VS persuasive, meaningful Description tags

The Description tag is a line of code in the HTML behind your page. It looks something like this:

```
<META NAME="DESCRIPTION" CONTENT="Pocono Whitewater Adventures,
whitewater rafting, paintball, mountain biking, river canoeing,
canoeing, and kayaking on the Lehigh River and in Lehigh Gorge
State Park. Located in Jim Thorpe, Pennsylvania the heart of the
Pocono Mountains.">
```

Google *sometimes* uses the Description tag as the description (or 'snippet') of your page in its search results. (Sometimes it simply compiles a snippet from the copy it finds on your page, and sometimes it grabs a description from your DMOZ description (if you have a DMOZ directory listing).)

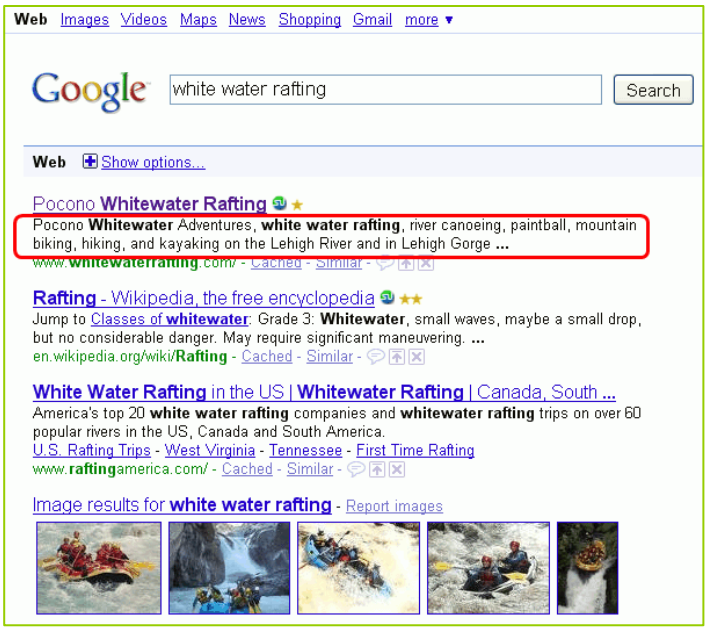


Figure 6 - How the Description tag is *sometimes* used by Google

Google wants...	Visitor wants...
Google wants to yawn — It's not interested in the Description tag	**Persuasive, meaningful description + keywords**
In the words of Google's head of spam, Matt Cutts: "Even though we sometimes use the description meta tag for the snippets we show, we still don't use the description meta tag in our ranking." 'nuf said.	As with the Title tag, if Google actually uses your Description tag for its snippet, and it finds any of the words from the searcher's query in your snippet, it bolds them in its search results. And again, due to readers' tendency to scan in an F-shaped pattern, this is far more likely to draw the reader's eye if the keywords are in the first couple of words of the Description. Beyond that, readers respond best if your Description tag is (gasp!) descriptive, as well as engaging and compelling. It doesn't hurt to be creative either.

Solution

There's no conflict here. The Description tag is *not* an SEO device. It's *sometimes* a persuasion device, and that's all. So treat it as you would the content for any ad, only in this ad, you're selling the page to which you want the reader to click through. Start with your keywords, so the first few words stand a good chance of being bolded. Then, with the rest of the Description, do your best to convince the reader to click through to your site.

Example: Here's an example Description tag. I included it because it shows you can be creative to engage and persuade your reader. You don't have to do the same old boring stuff everyone else does.

```
<meta name="DESCRIPTION" CONTENT="Logitech USB microphones. We sell 'em. And they
is great. They make your voice louder. Far out, hey?! If you like, we can hook you
up with one. We'll charge a lot more than Amazon, but you'll love the product
description. And when did you last like one of theirs?" />
```

15. Keyword-rich VS helpful, descriptive image Alt attributes

When a vision-impaired person accesses your page, their screen reader describes pictures by reading aloud the associated Alt attributes. These attributes are defined in the HTML behind your page, and they look something like this (the bolded bit is the Alt attribute):

```
<img src="filename.gif" alt="Cheap second hand computer in use" title="Cheap
second hand computer in use">
```

Google wants...	Visitor wants...
Keyword-rich Alt attributes that start with keywords	**Helpful, descriptive image Alt attributes**
Because the search engines assume your pictures have something to do with your subject matter, they pay some attention to the Alt tag when indexing your page. And as with all the elements it pays attention to, Google pays *particular* attention to the first few words. So try to include your keyword at least once in your Alt text — preferably in the first few words.	Unlike Google, the real users of image Alt attributes (vision impair people) want accurate, descriptive text. Words that actually convey the content and meaning of the associated image. Sometimes, your keywords will help convey the true content and meaning of the image. E.g. Your page discusses the storage of pistachios. Your target key-phrase is "keeping pistachios fresh". Your page features a photo of a recommended storage container. To describe the photo, you might use the Alt attribute: "Keeping pistachios fresh with an air-tight glass cookie jar." Often, however, your keywords will simply get in the way of your image description. E.g. Your page sells universal remote controls. Your target key-phrase is "too many remote controls". Your page features a photo of a woman programming her Logitech Harmony Universal Remote. The most useful Alt attribute for this image would be something like, "Smiling woman programs Logitech Harmony Universal Remote using online configuration tool." As you can see, only one of the words from your key-phrase fits here.

Solution
If a conflict between Google and reader occurs, it's a tricky one to resolve, because: 1. The SEO benefit of image Alt attributes is moderate; and 2. To people who use screen readers, image Alt attributes are quite important. Without a useful Alt attribute, they simply can't make sense of your images; however 3. The percentage of site visitors who use image Alt attributes is typically quite low — most of your visitors simply ignore image Alt attributes. So you need to make a decision. Is SEO more important to you than the small percentage of visitors who need image Alt attributes? I'm glad to say, I can't resolve this one for you. I'll leave that unpleasant task in your capable hands.

Chapter 3

Write quality, and you won't have to optimize it much

The three key take-aways from Chapter 2 are:

1. Write for your reader first, focusing on being engaging, helpful, meaningful & persuasive.
2. Once you're happy with the reader-focused copy, optimize for Google.
3. If the needs of your reader conflict with the needs of Google, most of the time, find a compromise that favors the needs of your reader, or don't compromise at all.

Admittedly, there's a lot to digest in Chapter 2, and some of it is quite difficult to implement. But take heart. If you *do* write for your reader first, and you *do* focus on quality, you'll find you won't have to do much optimization of your copy at all. This chapter explains why.

Quality content is naturally optimized

Google is getting smarter. It now takes context and 'hidden' meaning into account when learning what a page is all about. (Thus all the talk about latent semantic indexing, probabilistic latent semantic indexing, the semantic web, Web 3.0, etc.)

Unfortunately, many SEOs have taken this as a cue to consciously optimize context and hidden meaning. But they're missing the point, if you ask me. While Google's investing millions of dollars in algorithms that identify naturally written

content, these SEOs are spending *more* time optimizing their copy, making it even *less* natural, in the process! Ironically, by trying so hard to give Google what it wants, they're giving it precisely what it *doesn't* want.

I'm not saying you shouldn't optimize your copy. Far from it. (I've just written a whole book on how to do it right, after all!) What I'm saying is that you no longer have to try as hard as you used to. Simply by writing quality, natural content, you're already half way there, because it naturally contains many of the elements the search engines look for when assessing relevance, and the search engines are now smart enough to find those elements.

To refresh your memory, I'm talking about:

1. Frequent use of key-phrases;
2. Appropriate placement of key-phrases (e.g. headings, lists, links and bold text); and
3. Use of words that are semantically related to your key-phrases (e.g. related words, similar words, parts, stems, grammatical variants).

When you write helpful content that specifically targets your reading audience, you naturally do a pretty good job of these things.

Don't believe me? I suspected you wouldn't. So I've dug up some non-SEO copy I've written over the past year or two, and analyzed it to see if it naturally contains the things that SEO copywriters would normally focus on.

Four examples of copy that contain these elements WITHOUT optimization

Below are four pieces of non-SEO copy. When I wrote them, I wasn't targeting any particular keyword, I was just writing on a supplied topic. (And I swear, I didn't optimize them at all during this exercise.)

Piece 1 — Brochure copy for rainwater tank manufacturer

Here's a screen grab of all seven pages of the copy. I've highlighted all the bits that Google would be likely to expect in a piece of copy about rainwater tanks. ([Download the actual Word document.](#))

Who is Formit?

We manufacture and supply rainwater tanks. Thousands of them. More, in fact, than just about anyone else in Australia. We certainly have the largest range on the East Coast!

We've been in the water tank business since 1983, we're wholly Australian-owned, and we have manufacturing and distribution plants in six locations across NSW, QLD and VIC.

Why Formit?

Why Formit? Because we make rainwater tanks easy. All you need to do is choose a tank that looks good. And we have so many great looking tanks that you're bound to find one that's just right. Or, more to the point, one that fits in perfectly - maybe even disappears!

We offer free advice, we deliver on time, we even give you a 10 year guarantee! And all for a very reasonable fixed price.

Our Difference

Tanks have been our business since 1983. And if we've learned one thing since then, it's that making things easy for you, ultimately makes things easy for us.

When we plan and quality control things properly, we get the job done quicker, with fewer hassles and a much shorter lead-time. When we treat you professionally, deliver the results you're after, and actually follow up, you keep coming back. And when we customise to your requirements, we don't waste time trying to force a square peg into a round hole.

We also think that being wholly Australian-owned is very important. It means we know what Australians need - and we care about delivering it. That we know how tough Australian conditions are, and that our entire range of rainwater tanks can withstand those conditions.

Last, but certainly not least, we believe there's no substitute for having a real person answer the phone.

Formit's History

We didn't become Eastern Australia's leading manufacturer of rainwater tanks overnight. In fact, we've been working at it since 1969. And it's taken a vast amount of manufacturing experience to get there. Experience manufacturing boats and yachts. Experience manufacturing Telstra's concrete and cast iron telecommunication lids and concrete pits. Experience manufacturing plastic and metal portable toilets. And, of course, experience manufacturing hundreds of thousands of rainwater tanks.

We have a long, rich and varied history. And it's what makes our products as good as they are.

Our Manufacturing Process

At Formit, we use quality hexane copolymer resin (a linear, low density polyethylene) designed specifically for water tank rotational moulding, and state-of-the-art, computer-controlled biaxil and rock & roll rotational moulding machines.

Our tank designs undergo Finite Element Analysis (FEA) to ensure optimum long term performance, and the finished product is tested using inhouse facilities that include ultrasonic thickness measurements and impact testing. And, of course, all our tanks meet Australian standards governing manufacturing materials, durability and storage capability.

Translation? Our tanks are guaranteed tough, durable and built to meet or exceed Australian standards. And you can use them to store virtually anything - from household water to food or chemicals.

It's also worth mentioning that our manufacturing facilities are the safest in the industry. We care about our workers too!

Australian Standards Compliant

Only a handful of manufacturers in Australia have achieved the coveted AS 4766 compliance. We're one of them.

AS 4766 governs the design and manufacture of "Polyethylene storage tanks for water and some chemicals." It sets out specific requirements for Melt Flow Index, Thermal Stability, UV resistance, dispersion of pigments and additives, light penetration, stress cracking resistance and chemical resistance for non-buried, vertically installed tanks containing water, liquids used in food and beverage manufacture and chemical solutions at atmospheric pressure.

Importantly, a number of rainwater tank rebate programs will soon demand AS 4766 product compliance in order for rebates to be paid (e.g. VIC Government rebate as of January 1st, 2009).

In addition to our own AS 4766 compliance, the polymers used in our tanks are compliant with AS 2070 (Food Grade) and AS 4020 (Drinking Water).

Our Distribution

With manufacturing and distribution operations in Queensland (Innisfail, Rocklea, Heathwood), New South Wales (Fountaindale) and Victoria (Ballarat, Montrose), we've got you covered, wherever you are on the East Coast.

Add that to the east's largest product range, and you have a pretty impressive distribution footprint.

Formit - Innovative & Responsive

If you need it, most likely we already make it. But if we don't, ask us, and we'll see what we can do. We've found that one of the best ways to remain successful, year after year, is to invest in innovation and to be responsive to the 'on-the-ground' needs of our customers.

When our customers told us slimlines were one of the more difficult tanks to install because they're always put in poky spots, we came up with an Australian-first. We put detachable wheels on them. Once you have the tank installed, just remove the wheels, and send them back to us in the supplied prepaid mailbag. (We recycle them to ease the strain on the environment.).

Our focus is on making tanks that are easier for resellers to sell, easier for installers to install, and easier for homeowners to love.

It's the Right Thing for the Environment

1 million litres! That's how much water the average Australian uses in a year. Only Americans use more. Even though only 0.007% of the world's water is usable! And even though Australia's the driest inhabited continent on earth.

So residential rainwater tanks aren't just a regulation, they're the right thing for the environment.

Slimline Tanks

Each of Formit's extensive range of slimline tanks was designed with three things in mind: 1) make it fit; 2) make it look inconspicuous; and 3) make it easy to install. So they're ideal for even the tightest of spaces, and the most style-conscious of customers. They'll have all the water they need to keep their gardens looking great, and they won't even notice where it's coming from.

- 2,100 - 5,000 litre capacity
- Best selling slimline tank on the market
- Unique steel frame gives extra strength & stability
- Full range of colours available
- 10 Year Guarantee (must be installed on a concrete slab)
- Unique temporary wheel system for easy manoeuvrability during installation. Send them back to us in the supplied prepaid mailbag. (We recycle them to ease the strain on the environment.)

Round Urban

For homes with a big yard, expansive gardens or a pool, a Round Urban tank may be the most appropriate solution. They look great, they're surprisingly compact, and they're available in a wide range of colours. So you're sure to find one that blends in perfectly.

- 675 - 10,000 litre capacity
- UV stabilised
- Compliant with Australian Standards
- Food-grade interior materials
- Full range of colours available
- 10 Year Guarantee
- Can be connected to toilet and washing machine

Under House

Particularly useful for bearers-and-joist homes or those with a deck, Formit's Under House (Under Deck) rainwater tanks are an innovative way to save space without compromising on storage capacity. Perfect if there's no room to spare around the outside of the house, or you need to hide the tank altogether.

- 2,000 litre capacity per tank
- Link multiple tanks for additional capacity
- 10 Year Guarantee
- Can be connected to toilet and washing machine

Accessories

Formit tanks aren't just tough and great looking. They also come with a host of clever accessories. Accessories to increase catchment without increasing catchment area. Accessories to keep contaminants out by diverting the initial flow of water when it first rains. Accessories to keep leaves, debris and mosquitoes out. Even accessories to remotely monitor a tank's water level.

Pump Cover

Formit's wide range of attractive, easy-to-install pump covers are manufactured to be suitable for most types of pumps. They're sturdy, unobtrusive and available in 10 different colours (Mist Green, Merino, Heritage Green, Heritage Red, Birch Grey, Rivergum, Beige, Slate Grey, Smooth Cream & Mountain Blue).

First Flush

When it starts raining, the first rush of water coming off the roof contains contaminants that you don't want in the tank. Our innovative First Flush device diverts that initial flow, so the only thing that goes in the tank is fresh, clean water.

Wireless Level Indicator

With Formit's Wireless Level Indicator, your customers will be able to monitor their water levels without even leaving home. It continuously displays the tanks' level on a small LCD panel, up to 200m from the tank itself.

Leaf Collector

Stop leaves and other debris from clogging your customers' downpipes, with a dedicated Leaf Collector. Comprised of two stainless steel mesh screens filtering inflow, the Leaf Collector is one of the most effective means available for keeping out leaves, mosquitoes and vermin.

Davey RainBank

When there's water in the tank, it makes sense to use it for the household (toilets, washing machines, etc.). But Australia's rainfall is so up and down that it's good to have a backup. The Davey RainBank gives you that backup. When there's water in the tank, that's what it uses. If there's not, it switches back to mains water.

Simple.

It even switches to mains when there's a power failure and the tank's pump is out of action.

Rain Reviver Pump

With the Rain Reviver Pump, running water is as easy as turning on the tap. The Reviver automatically turns itself on when the tap is turned on, and off when the tap is turned off. It also turns itself off when it runs out of water. It pumps 40lpm at 160kPa, so it's ideal for the average home's laundry, toilet and garden hose. It's made from non-corrosive materials, so no rust-tasting water. And, of course, you can plug it into any standard power point.

Benefits of Rainwater Harvesting

When we harvest rainwater, everyone wins. Homeowners can use water liberally - even during droughts - and still save on water rates. Many even get a rebate. Farmers are more productive. Consumers enjoy lower prices. Dam-water goes further. Our creeks, water habitats and organisms suffer less stormwater damage.

And, of course, rainwater is chemical-free, which is gentle on clothing and the vegetable garden.

In other words, every tank takes us one step closer to long-term sustainability.

Ideal Use of Rainwater

Ideally, we'd use rainwater for everything. There's no reason why most households shouldn't be using it for toilets, laundries and gardens. That alone would reduce mains water consumption of a typical household by 70%. Throw in hot water systems, and consumption is reduced by up to 85%!

Many government authorities certainly feel rainwater should be more widely used. Some already require all new homes to have rainwater supplied toilets, laundries and gardens, and many offer rebates to homeowners who install rainwater systems into new or existing dwellings.

Rainwater Quality

Rainwater is the cleanest, softest water available. Unlike dam-water, it's fit for human use the moment it falls from the sky - no need for extensive treatment processes.

And when it's stored in a properly designed, well maintained rainwater tank, nature takes care of contaminants, itself. (Naturally occurring biofilms line the inner surfaces of the tank, creating a continuous decontamination process.)

Sustainability and Environmental Impact

Most of the world's water is un-usable. Only 3% is fresh, and 99% of that's frozen. That equates to just 1 teaspoon of usable water in every 100 litres!

Yet still Australians use 1 million litres each, per year, a quarter of which goes down the toilet!

And our population is growing fast; it's predicted to increase by 45% in the next 30 years. If we don't start using it wisely, we may actually run out of water before we run out of fuel. In fact, UNESCO says water shortage will be a world-wide problem in just over 10 years! And water shortage means food shortage and - eventually - health crisis.

Fortunately, we can make a difference. If every household installed a properly designed, well maintained rainwater tank, we could reduce our reliance on reservoir water by up to 85%, freeing up rainwater supplies, so water is available where it's most needed.

Call Us for a Quote

Call us on (02) 4389 1555 to discuss your rainwater tank needs. You'll speak with a person, not a machine! Someone who specialises in tanks, and is happy to take the time to offer advice and guidance.

Figure 7 – Un-optimized copy with key-phrases & semantic elements highlighted

As you can see, the copy is chock-full of key-phrases, related words, etc., without any optimization, whatsoever.

Now let's take a look at the word cloud:

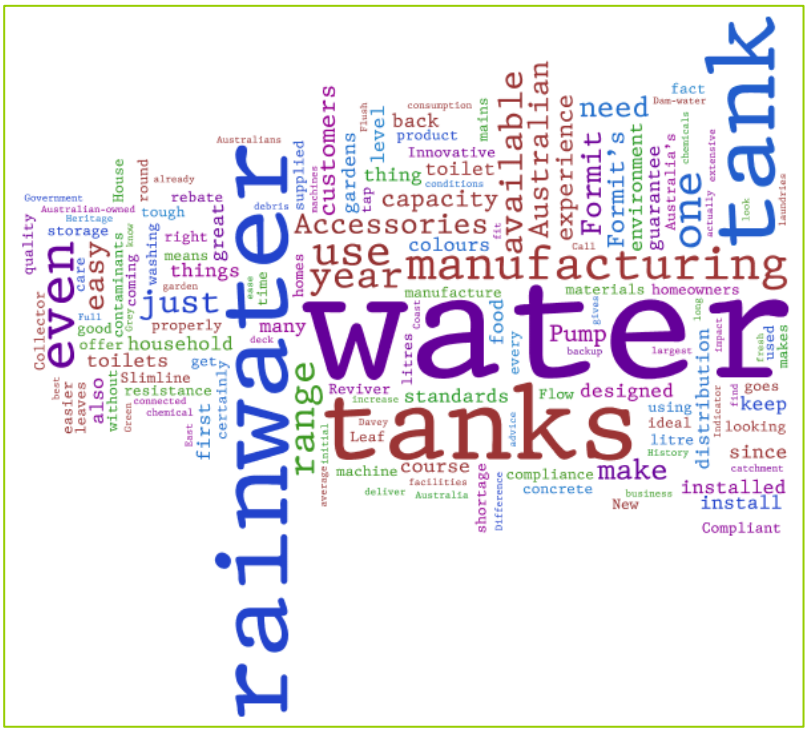
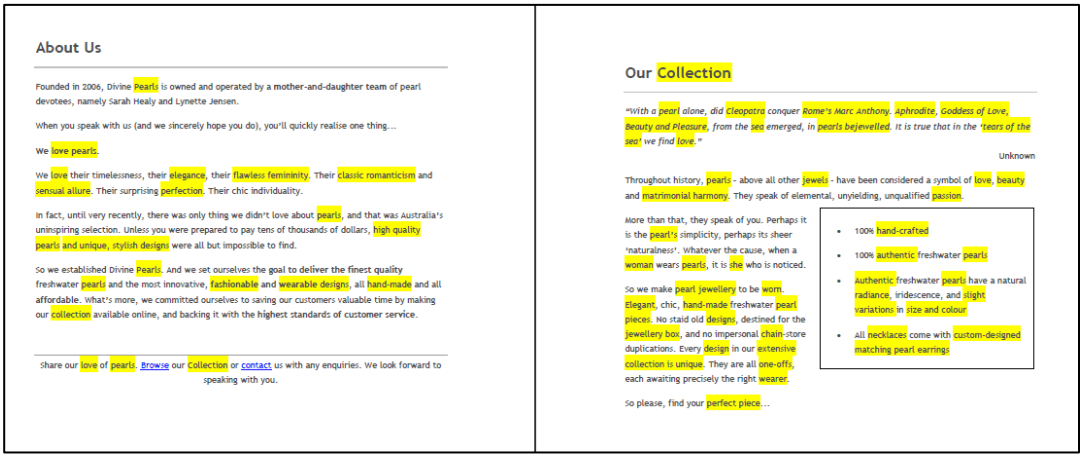


Figure 8 – Word cloud of un-optimized copy

Clearly, the important keywords appear very frequently in the copy.

Piece 2 — Non-SEO web copy for pearl retailer

Here's a screen grab of both pages of the copy. I've highlighted all the bits that Google would be likely to expect in a piece of copy about pearls. ([Download the actual Word document.](#))



About Us

Founded in 2006, Divine Pearls is owned and operated by a mother-and-daughter team of pearl devotees, namely Sarah Healy and Lynette Jensen.

When you speak with us (and we sincerely hope you do), you'll quickly realise one thing…

We love pearls.

We love their timelessness, their elegance, their flawless femininity. Their classic romanticism and sensual allure. Their surprising perfection. Their chic individuality.

In fact, until very recently, there was only thing we didn't love about pearls, and that was Australia's uninspiring selection. Unless you were prepared to pay tens of thousands of dollars, high quality pearls and unique, stylish designs were all but impossible to find.

So we established Divine Pearls. And we set ourselves the goal to deliver the finest quality freshwater pearls and the most innovative, fashionable and wearable designs, all hand-made and all affordable. What's more, we committed ourselves to saving our customers valuable time by making our collection available online, and backing it with the highest standards of customer service.

Share our love of pearls. Browse our Collection or contact us with any enquiries. We look forward to speaking with you.

Our Collection

"With a pearl alone, did Cleopatra conquer Rome's Marc Anthony. Aphrodite, Goddess of Love, Beauty and Pleasure, from the sea emerged, in pearls bejewelled. It is true that in the 'tears of the sea' we find love."

Unknown

Throughout history, pearls - above all other jewels - have been considered a symbol of love, beauty and matrimonial harmony. They speak of elemental, unyielding, unqualified passion.

More than that, they speak of you. Perhaps it is the pearl's simplicity, perhaps its sheer 'naturalness'. Whatever the cause, when a woman wears pearls, it is she who is noticed.

So we make pearl jewellery to be worn. Elegant, chic, hand-made freshwater pearl pieces. No staid old designs, destined for the jewellery box, and no impersonal chain-store duplications. Every design in our extensive collection is unique. They are all one-offs, each awaiting precisely the right wearer.

So please, find your perfect piece…

- 100% hand-crafted
- 100% authentic freshwater pearls
- Authentic freshwater pearls have a natural radiance, iridescence, and slight variations in size and colour
- All necklaces come with custom-designed matching pearl earrings

Figure 9 – Un-optimized copy with key-phrases & semantic elements highlighted

And the word cloud…

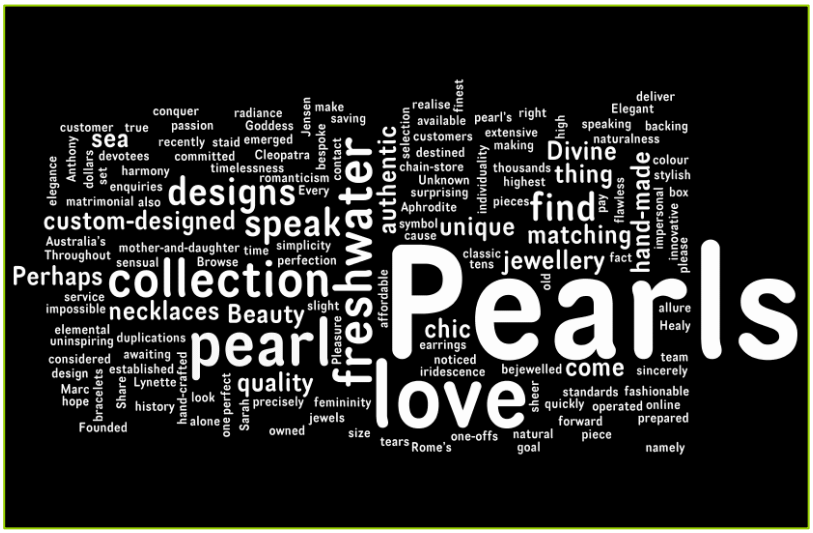


Figure 10 – Word cloud of un-optimized copy

Again, the copy is full of key-phrases, related words, etc., without any optimization, whatsoever.

Piece 3 — Non-SEO web copy for concept artist

Here's a screen grab of all six pages of the copy. I've highlighted all the bits that Google would be likely to expect in a piece of copy about concept art. ([Download the actual Word document.](#))

From vision to visuals

Whether your feature film is ready for pre-production or still just a great idea, we can help you take it to the next stage, quickly, creatively and cost-effectively.

Evolve Pictures specialises in high impact concept artwork and design for feature film, TV and emerging media. Early concept art, story-boards, characters, sets, teaser brochures, posters, websites... We collaborate with producers, directors and writers to convey the true potential of the film-to-be, and to decrease production costs and time to market.

So your vision goes further, faster.

For more information or a free quote on your project, please contact our Conceptual Supervisor on [INSERT PHONE] or [INSERT EMAIL].

Specialist concept artists

Evolve Pictures is a boutique digital art studio, specialising in high impact concept art and design for feature film, TV and emerging media. Founded by one of the industry's leading creatives, Damien Thaller, Evolve is committed to delivering professional, innovative concept art to the development stage of any production.

Five things set Evolve apart:

1. **"Wow!" power** - Our work makes your work stand out from the crowd. We create visuals that leave lasting impressions. Visuals that do justice to the world of your production. Your audience will feel they've actually visited it (or would like to). Time and again we've helped writers, directors and producers breathe life into their project in order to raise funding.
2. **Cost-effective** - This is our core business. It's not a division and not an afterthought. It's all we do. In other words, we don't have big overheads, so we're affordable.
3. **Creative story-telling** - We're a creative collective, not an assembly line. Sure, we use state-of-the-art tools, but technologies and trends come and go; only true creativity is timeless. To us, art is a passion, a culture, a lifestyle; it's not a career. And it's our original thinking that allows us to take an undeveloped - even verbal - idea and quickly transform it into inspiring, relevant artwork.
4. **Responsive** - We can adapt to your specific needs, and we can get stuck in immediately, for faster, more effective results.
5. **Unique** - We're the only top-tier studio dedicated to delivering professional, cost-effective concept art to the development stage of production - a specialised service that was previously available only to big-budget productions.

At Evolve, we fervently believe that all productions should benefit from the introduction of concept art and design prior to pre-production. And we're committed to making that happen...

For more information or a free quote on your project, please contact our Conceptual Supervisor on [INSERT PHONE] or [INSERT EMAIL].

Damien Thaller - Renowned digital artist

Damien Thaller is one of Australia's leading names in concept art for film, TV and emerging media. And with good reason. One very good reason, in fact: creativity. He's not just passionate about it; he's defined by it. Original thinking, fresh ideas, cutting-edge approaches... It's not what he does; it's who he is.

In a career spanning more than 14 years, Damien has:

- worked for the biggest visual effects companies around the world, including ILM, Method, EA and Ambience
- worked in senior positions, directing high-end visual effects and animation
- worked on numerous feature films, including X, Y and Z
- regularly featured in Ballistic Publishing publications
- become a renowned concept artist and animation director, with a passion for telling stories through 3D animation
- worked in virtually every medium, including advertising film, TV and console games

For more information or a free quote on your project, please contact our Conceptual Supervisor on [INSERT PHONE] or [INSERT EMAIL].

Concept artwork and design

Evolve Pictures specialises in high impact concept artwork and design for feature film, TV and emerging media.

Specifically, we make it possible for all writers, producers and directors to invest in professional concept artwork before pre-production. Creative, high quality artwork and design, that you can afford it at the very start of your project, when it's most useful, rather than waiting 'till pre-production, when it may be too late...

Whether you're after funding for a seed project or subsequent production time and cost-savings, we can help make it happen.

Concept Art	Pitch Materials
Present your concept just as you see it in your mind's eye...	Make your pitch with the help of a professionally designed collation of your art...
• Art Direction • Concept Supervision • Budget Consulting and Script Breakdown • Character & Creature Design • Landscape & Set Design • Key Images & Style Frames • Colour Scripts • 3D Pre-Visualization • Visual Effects Design • Storyboards & Animatics • Digital Matte Painting	• Presentation Packs • Printed Concept Books • Printed Teaser Posters • Printed Teaser Brochures • Teaser Website
More info...	More info...

For more information or a free quote on your project, please contact our Conceptual Supervisor on [INSERT PHONE] or [INSERT EMAIL].

The finest quality creative

With three feature film credits to our name, and several more in progress, our work speaks for itself. Its unparalleled quality, detail and creativity make it evocative, inspirational and - above all - effective.

See for yourself…

[INSERT gallery]

For more information or a free quote on your project, please contact our Conceptual Supervisor on **[INSERT PHONE]** or **[INSERT EMAIL]**.

Pitch your film with professional concept art

You have the concept in your head; it may even be ready for pre-production. If only you could present it just as you see it in your mind's eye…

With Evolve Pictures, you can.

Evolve Pictures specialises in high impact concept artwork and design for feature film, TV and emerging media. We make it possible for all writers, producers and directors to invest in professional concept artwork before pre-production. Creative, high quality artwork and design, with true "Wow!" power.

Our professional, affordable concept art and pitch materials will help you:

1. raise funding
2. consolidate your creative direction
3. reduce project timeframes and meet tight deadlines

- reduce production costs

Evolve's Services

[INSERT table as per Services page - including 'More info' links]

Contact Us

Whether you're after funding for a seed project or subsequent production time and cost-savings, please contact our Conceptual Supervisor on [INSERT PHONE] or [INSERT EMAIL].

Figure 11 – Un-optimized copy with key-phrases & semantic elements highlighted

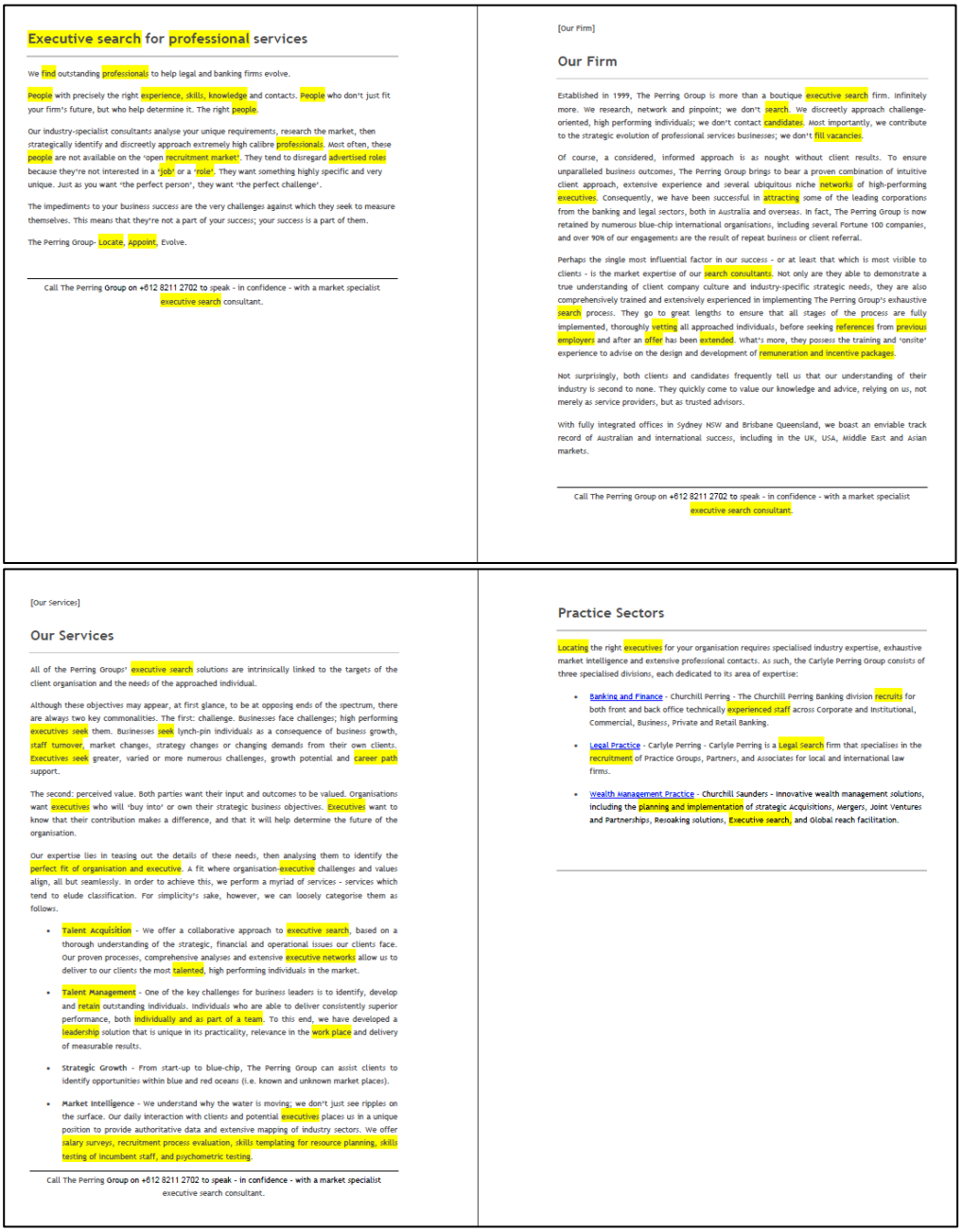
And the word cloud…

Figure 12 – Word cloud of un-optimized copy

Again, the copy is full of key-phrases, related words, etc., without any optimization, whatsoever.

Piece 4 — Non-SEO web copy for executive search firm

Here's a screen grab of all four pages of the copy. I've highlighted all the bits that Google would be likely to expect in a piece of copy about executive search. ([Download the actual Word document.](#))



Executive search for professional services

We find outstanding professionals to help legal and banking firms evolve.

People with precisely the right experience, skills, knowledge and contacts. People who don't just fit your firm's future, but who help determine it. The right people.

Our industry-specialist consultants analyse your unique requirements, research the market, then strategically identify and discreetly approach extremely high calibre professionals. Most often, these people are not available on the 'open recruitment market'. They tend to disregard advertised roles because they're not interested in a 'job' or a 'role'. They want something highly specific and very unique. Just as you want 'the perfect person', they want 'the perfect challenge'.

The impediments to your business success are the very challenges against which they seek to measure themselves. This means that they're not a part of your success; your success is a part of them.

The Perring Group- Locate, Appoint, Evolve.

Call The Perring Group on +612 8211 2702 to speak - in confidence - with a market specialist executive search consultant.

[Our Firm]

Our Firm

Established in 1999, The Perring Group is more than a boutique executive search firm. Infinitely more. We research, network and pinpoint; we don't search. We discreetly approach challenge-oriented, high performing individuals; we don't contact candidates. Most importantly, we contribute to the strategic evolution of professional services businesses; we don't fill vacancies.

Of course, a considered, informed approach is as nought without client results. To ensure unparalleled business outcomes, The Perring Group brings to bear a proven combination of intuitive client approach, extensive experience and several ubiquitous niche networks of high-performing executives. Consequently, we have been successful in attracting some of the leading corporations from the banking and legal sectors, both in Australia and overseas. In fact, The Perring Group is now retained by numerous blue-chip international organisations, including several Fortune 100 companies, and over 90% of our engagements are the result of repeat business or client referral.

Perhaps the single most influential factor in our success - or at least that which is most visible to clients - is the market expertise of our search consultants. Not only are they able to demonstrate a true understanding of client company culture and industry-specific strategic needs, they are also comprehensively trained and extensively experienced in implementing The Perring Group's exhaustive search process. They go to great lengths to ensure that all stages of the process are fully implemented, thoroughly vetting all approached individuals, before seeking references from previous employers and after an offer has been extended. What's more, they possess the training and 'onsite' experience to advise on the design and development of remuneration and incentive packages.

Not surprisingly, both clients and candidates frequently tell us that our understanding of their industry is second to none. They quickly come to value our knowledge and advice, relying on us, not merely as service providers, but as trusted advisors.

With fully integrated offices in Sydney NSW and Brisbane Queensland, we boast an enviable track record of Australian and international success, including in the UK, USA, Middle East and Asian markets.

Call The Perring Group on +612 8211 2702 to speak - in confidence - with a market specialist executive search consultant.

[Our Services]

Our Services

All of the Perring Groups' executive search solutions are intrinsically linked to the targets of the client organisation and the needs of the approached individual.

Although these objectives may appear, at first glance, to be at opposing ends of the spectrum, there are always two key commonalities. The first: challenge. Businesses face challenges; high performing executives seek them. Businesses seek lynch-pin individuals as a consequence of business growth, staff turnover, market changes, strategy changes or changing demands from their own clients. Executives seek greater, varied or more numerous challenges, growth potential and career path support.

The second: perceived value. Both parties want their input and outcomes to be valued. Organisations want executives who will 'buy into' or own their strategic business objectives. Executives want to know that their contribution makes a difference, and that it will help determine the future of the organisation.

Our expertise lies in teasing out the details of these needs, then analysing them to identify the perfect fit of organisation and executive. A fit where organisation-executive challenges and values align, all but seamlessly. In order to achieve this, we perform a myriad of services - services which tend to elude classification. For simplicity's sake, however, we can loosely categorise them as follows.

- **Talent Acquisition** - We offer a collaborative approach to executive search, based on a thorough understanding of the strategic, financial and operational issues our clients face. Our proven processes, comprehensive analyses and extensive executive networks allow us to deliver to our clients the most talented, high performing individuals in the market.
- **Talent Management** - One of the key challenges for business leaders is to identify, develop and retain outstanding individuals. Individuals who are able to deliver consistently superior performance, both individually and as part of a team. To this end, we have developed a leadership solution that is unique in its practicality, relevance in the work place and delivery of measurable results.
- **Strategic Growth** - From start-up to blue-chip, The Perring Group can assist clients to identify opportunities within blue and red oceans (i.e. known and unknown market places).
- **Market Intelligence** - We understand why the water is moving; we don't just see ripples on the surface. Our daily interaction with clients and potential executives places us in a unique position to provide authoritative data and extensive mapping of industry sectors. We offer salary surveys, recruitment process evaluation, skills templating for resource planning, skills testing of incumbent staff, and psychometric testing.

Call The Perring Group on +612 8211 2702 to speak - in confidence - with a market specialist executive search consultant.

Practice Sectors

Locating the right executives for your organisation requires specialised industry expertise, exhaustive market intelligence and extensive professional contacts. As such, the Carlyle Perring Group consists of three specialised divisions, each dedicated to its area of expertise:

- Banking and Finance - Churchill Perring - The Churchill Perring Banking division recruits for both front and back office technically experienced staff across Corporate and Institutional, Commercial, Business, Private and Retail Banking.
- Legal Practice - Carlyle Perring - Carlyle Perring is a Legal Search firm that specialises in the recruitment of Practice Groups, Partners, and Associates for local and international law firms.
- Wealth Management Practice - Churchill Saunders - Innovative wealth management solutions, including the planning and implementation of strategic Acquisitions, Mergers, Joint Ventures and Partnerships, Reloaking solutions, Executive search, and Global reach facilitation.

Figure 13 – Un-optimized copy with key-phrases & semantic elements highlighted

And the word cloud...

Figure 14 – Word cloud of un-optimized copy

As per all of the above examples, the copy is full of key-phrases, related words, etc., without any optimization, whatsoever.

You still need to optimize... But not as much

While all the above examples are pretty well optimized, naturally, if any of these clients had told me they wanted to use their copy as *SEO* copy, I'd definitely have performed a dedicated optimization review. But it wouldn't have needed much. Really just a word here and there.

Example: I might have added another two or three instances of "art" to the concept art piece.

Note also that I've been writing SEO copy for many years, so I'm sure SEO is at the back of my mind every time I write, even when I'm not focusing on it. If you haven't been writing SEO copy for long, your copy might not be so SEO-friendly to begin with. You might need to spend a little more time optimizing than I do.

Still, if you follow my advice, and write for readers first, focusing on quality, I think you'll be surprised. You'll spend a lot less time optimizing your copy than you expected.

Conclusion

When you're writing SEO copy, it's the 'copy' part — the part for visitors — that's most important. After all, visitors may buy from you; search engines definitely won't.

In fact, the 'copy' part is even more important in SEO copy than in other forms of copy. Remember, you're not just trying to persuade readers to buy your product or service, you're trying to persuade them to link to you too. (Hopefully, one day, all those spammers cluttering the Web with meaningless, keyword-stuffed content, will realize this.)

So always write for visitors first. Always. Assuming you've done some keyword research to decide *what* to write about, forget the search engines altogether, until you're satisfied your content is engaging and compelling to its target audience.

And if you do that, the good news is, you'll spend a lot less time optimizing the finished product than you feared.

Now begone! Do some work already! ☺

Earn money promoting this book

Join my Affiliate Program and earn 50% of every sale you generate.

Buy my other ebooks

If you liked this ebook, I think you'll like my others too...

SEO Secrets

SEO Secrets: The DIY guide to topping google is a comprehensive 213 page DIY search engine optimization (SEO) guide for small business owners, bloggers and SMB marketers. It details a practical 10-step process that will get you to the top of Google. It's more than tips & tricks, and more than advice. It's a comprehensive process you can start implementing NOW.

Buy now and download instantly...

The Copywriting Scorecard for Bloggers

The Copywriting Scorecard for Bloggers: Score your posts out of 100 is a 98 page ebook I co-wrote with Australia's leading blogger, Darren Rowse (aka Problogger). It allows you to objectively measure the quality of your blog posts, from a copywriting point of view, using tried and tested best practices. You simply check how many recommendations you've incorporated into your post, then complete the electronic scorecard, and it automatically calculates your score out of 100. The higher your score, the more effective your post is likely to be.

Buy now and download instantly...

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