Galactic Fed

Keyword Research
Toolkit

Hi there,

Thank you for downloading Galactic Fed's Guide to Keyword Research.

We've prepared it with 4 key goals in mind:

Help you better **understand how to conduct thoughtful keyword research** and its remarkable impact on your growth

Help you prioritize keywords and **balance out your content strategy**

Help you **rank higher** and improve your website's discoverability

Help you find a trusted SEO partner to **achieve new business heights**

Here's what you'll find here:

⭐ **Keyword Research Template and Checklist** to help you organize your keywords and assess them properly

⭐ **Keyword Guide** to walk you through the process step-by-step and explain how to analyze keywords

⭐ **SEO Glossary** to make sure you speak the same language as your SEO partner and/or resources you find online

⭐ **List with SEO resources** to take your efforts one step further

Alright, let's take your website to SERPs Top-10.

BUCKLE UP!

⭐ Keyword Research Template and Checklist

Duplicate the template **here**

Instructions:

⭐ **Read the Keyword Research Guide**
You'll find it below. It will explain every step you need to take to run a solid research and avoid common mistakes.

⭐ **Get access to a keyword research tool**
First, you'll need access to either **Ahrefs** or **Semrush** - they are the best tools to conduct keyword research. They are both amazing, and it's often a matter of preference which one you settle with. They have their own sources of data that might change slightly - if you want to compare results over time, make sure to use the same platform you used before.

⭐ **Check what keywords you and your competitors rank for**
type in the domain name {website URL} into the search bar. You will see the current stats, including keywords you already rank for.

⭐ **Transfer the data into the Keyword Research Template file**
You can export it from either tool for the ease of copying and pasting.

A quick note if you're using Semrush: this tool doesn't provide data on # of referring domains indeed to rank Top 10, so the column E (Efficiency) will return an error. What you can do instead is to change the Efficiency formula to be calculated as Search volume/Keyword difficulty (=H2/G2 for the keyword in row 2). This is a bit less accurate but can also give you an idea whether or not it makes sense to pursue a given keyword.

To help you get started, we provided an example for our galacticfed.com domain.

⭐ **Expand your keywords list**
If you want to rank for more keywords, here's what you can do:
1. In your keywords research tool, click on any keyword you already rank for to see keyword variations, related keywords, and question queries.
2. Add these keywords to the Template.
3. Next time you create a piece of content, target new keywords you want to rank for and make sure to use variations to increase your chances.

★ **Fill in categories and subcategories**

These are not predefined and depend solely on the types of keywords you rank for.

★ **Analyze your keywords**

Highlight the most efficient keywords that you want to rank (better) for.

★ **Create a content strategy**

Time to turn your keywords into a valuable SEO content strategy. Refer to the **SEO Resources** section for more information.

Galactic Fed SEO Keyword Research Template

The keywords are currently sorted by "Efficiency", which represents the balance between search volume and keyword difficulty. Generally, a higher Efficiency means more traffic for the effort you put in to rank. Though, this is a simple heuristic and is only meant to help prioritize which keywords to look at first.

For ease of searching, the data sheet also contains columns for "Category" and "Secondary Category". Keywords can be sorted and grouped by any or all of these markers, so that similar keywords can be evaluated together more easily.

Category	Findings
Brand	Search queries containing the brand's name help to target bottom-of-the-funnel traffic.
Resources	Requests for additional information on the subject that could be targeted with blog posts. Have potential for conversion and raising the brand's awareness.
Research	Mostly commercial and informational search intents - looking to compare services and their impact on the marketing.
Services	Purchase intent across various digital marketing services. Important to target related service pages and/or pages with CTA buttons.

Other notes:

Sub-categories:
Branded queries
SEO
Paid media
Growth marketing
CRO
Email marketing
Social media marketing
Web design
Web development
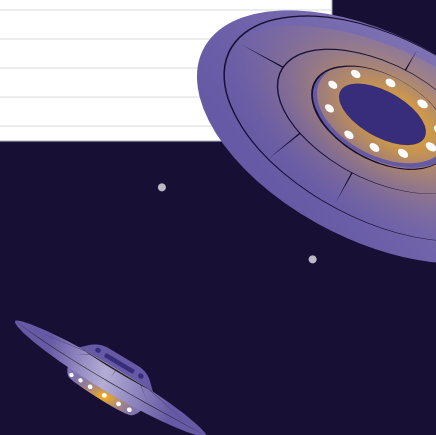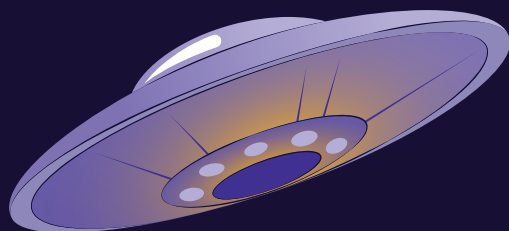
★ Keyword Research Guide

What is Keyword Research?

Keyword research is the process of finding and **analyzing actual search terms that people enter into search engines.** The insight you can get into these actual search terms can help inform content strategy, as well as your larger marketing strategy.

The goal of keyword research is to identify search terms that your site can and should rank for in Google Search, in order to inform your content strategy. The best keywords to target have both high search volume and low competition. (Note that a "keyword" is not necessarily just one word, despite the name; an entire sentence can be a keyword)

Capturing a keyword involves building a page with that keyword in its body content, and building up that page's authority through backlinks and traffic until it becomes (ideally) the first result in Google search for that keyword.

Why is Keyword Research important?

Finding high-volume search terms itself is not enough. You need to ensure that the SEO keywords used in your content matches with your brand, product, or service to the keywords that your customer uses. And this is where keyword research happens.

Once you have performed adequate and thorough research, only then will you be able to craft a viable SEO strategy. With a good strategy, you can then create a detailed plan of action to achieve your goals.

5 Key Metrics and Qualities to Evaluate Keywords

1 SEARCH VOLUME

Keyword search volume refers to the volume (or number) of searches for a particular keyword in a given timeframe. Keyword search volume is typically averaged over a set timeframe to provide marketers with a general idea of a search term's competitiveness and overall volume.

It's important to mix keywords that have both high and lower search volume. Naturally, the more "popular" the keyword is, the more difficult it is to rank for it.

2 KEYWORD DIFFICULTY

Keyword Difficulty evaluates on a scale from 0 to 100 (the most difficult) the chances of getting into the top 10 of search results. Apart from backlink profiles and content relevancy, many additional ranking factors come into play among the results of the first page of any search.

3 SHORT/LONG-TAIL KEYWORDS

These terms are often used just to refer to the number of words in a search query. Specifically, "Long-tail" is the standard name for long, very specific/targeted, low-search-volume keywords. While "Short-head" is often used interchangeably with "short-tail". Long-tail keywords can drive a ton of high-converting traffic to your website and increase revenue for your business as compared to short-tail keywords. **Based on previous research**, four and five-word phrases have significantly more search volume than two-word phrases.

4 INTENT

People search for different reasons expecting different outcomes. By leveraging various types of intent, businesses can serve the right type of content, attract more qualified prospects, and ultimately drive more sales and generate more leads.

The main types of intent are:

Informational: searches are performed to answer questions or learn something

Commercial: searches are performed to compare products/services before committing to a purchase

Transactional: searches are performed to buy something

Navigational: searches performed to locate a specific website

Read more about different types of search intent **here**

5 RELEVANCE

Keyword relevance is about using all the relevant related terms and topics in your content. You want to signal to Google that you're not just publishing surface-level content. You also want to make sure you seem "predictable" in terms of the keywords you rank for. If, say, you're a marketing agency, you don't want to rank for "best winter tires".

8 Basic Steps for Keyword Research

Understand your space

What users might search for to reach your website?

Look at your competitors

What keywords are bringing them the most traffic? What are the common topics? Where are you lacking the most?

Brainstorm a list of seed keywords

Create a list of keywords that make most sense to your brand, including the ones you and your competitors rank for.

Feed your keywords into research tool

You'll be able to see the important metrics like Keyword Difficulty and Search Volume.

Use the tool to get more keyword idea

Click on a keyword to see related terms, what users also search for, and keyword variations - this is an excellent source of inspiration. When it comes to relevant keywords, none is too many.

Fill in the template with keywords

See instructions above.

Critically review your top keywords and develop a content strategy

Is there a family of keywords that you could take advantage of, but aren't? Is there a keyword that stands out as a blog post topic? How relevant are your keywords, and how likely do you think that someone searching for them would be interested in your site?

(Optional) Analyze your keywords in Google Trends

This will help you see if they have a noticeable upward or downward trajectory:

Some things to keep in mind while completing the above steps:

1 The # backlinks needed metric tells you roughly how many *different* sites it would need backlinks from to rank in the top 10. This is an estimate, and not a guarantee. Furthermore, the number of backlinks needed to rank in the top 3 positions (where you would be getting significant traffic) could be magnitudes more

2 Keywords that are high-efficiency, but still difficult to rank for, may not be worth pursuing. Any keyword where you're not ranking in the top 10, you might as well not rank for at all. You need to be able to pour in serious resources to directly target keywords above a difficulty of 20 (and anything above 70 is close to impossible to rank for).

3 Likewise, don't toss out low-efficiency keywords if they are long tail, have decent search volume, and are natural to include in your content. These keywords often have many variations that can add up to have some extra keywords in your content. They may not bring a lot of traffic, but it'll often be more targeted and valable, closer to the bottom of the funnel.

4 Don't engage in "keyword stuffing". SEO tactics should always take a backseat to quality content. Include your target keywords in your content in a way that is natural and doesn't sacrifice the readability of the piece.

5 Assess whether your top keywords are really relevant. For example, say you have a high-efficiency short tail keyword that could mean several different things, like "STT". Maybe this is short for "Speech-To-Text", or "St. Thomas", or "Surface Tension Transfer", or the stock market symbol for "State Street Corporation". Even though this keyword might have a lot of search volume, how many of those searches would actually be interested in your site? And how likely would you really be to rank for such a broad keyword?

6 Long-tail keywords are great for informing what needs to address and what questions to answer on web pages. While targeting a short, high volume keyword like "fixed rate mortgage", you can drill down into the most common related topics and questions like "fixed rate vs adjustable rate mortgage" and "can my fixed rate mortgage change". An article on fixed rate mortgages can answer these and other questions, targeting all of these keywords (and all their synonyms) in the same piece.

7 Beware of long-tail keywords that are suspiciously long, low difficulty, and high search volume. Many times, these are copy-pasted quiz questions. Continuing with the fixed rate mortgage example, you might run into a keyword like "what impact might an economic downturn have on a borrower's fixed-rate mortgage?" While it's tempting with its 250 search volume and 0 difficulty, if you actually targeted this keyword you would be wasting your time:
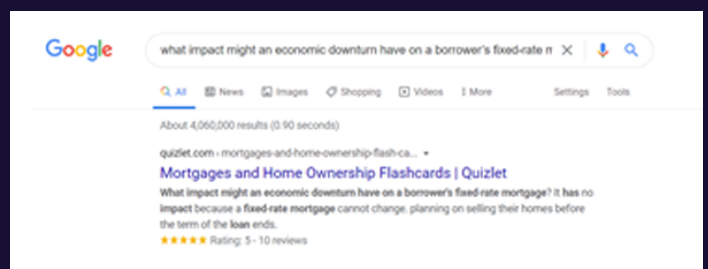
⭐ SEO Glossary

Duplicate it **here**

Instructions:

In this glossary, we've compiled all the key terms you're likely to come across while working with SEO. Words like "crawl budget" or "status code" may puzzle you now, but it's crucial to understand them as they provide clues to what and how you should be doing to get your website to rank well.

Feel free to add your own terms as you expand your SEO expertise - this is your personal glossary copy.

Term	Definition
Keyword	A keyword is a string of text that makes up all or part of a search query (and it is not necessarily just a single word, despite the name). The goal of SEO is to get pages to rank well in search engines for relevant keywords. For example, a website promoting a sci-fi movie may want to rank for keywords such as "sci-fi", "movie", "science fiction", "film", "sci-fi movies", "movies like 2001 space odyssey", etc.
Short/long-tail	Keywords are sometimes described as being "short-tail" or "long-tail". This is a fancy way of saying that the keyword has few words or many words. Short-tail keywords like "movie" are simple and get a lot of searches, but they are hard to rank for, and are not very direct (it's usually vague as to what the user's intention is). Long-tail keywords like "best sci-fi movies from 2015" individually get very few searches, but are more in-line with what people actually search for, and are easier to target.
SERP	This stands for "Search Engine Results Page". Type a query into Google and hit enter. What you see is a SERP, and each individual listing is a "result".
Organic	This is a qualifier for a certain kind of website traffic. Any traffic that comes in from clicking on a search result is considered "organic traffic". This is distinct from those who come in through clicking on advertisements in search results. SEO is concerned only with organic traffic. SEM (Search Engine Marketing) is a separate field that deals with ads on search engines and ad traffic.
Index	The "index" is a search engine's internal catalog of websites. If a page is "indexed" on Google, that means Google is aware of its existence and it can be found in search results.
Spider/bot	A "bot" or "spider" refers to a bot run by a search engine, which automatically visits websites, reads their content, and follows their links to discover more websites to add to the search engine's index.
Crawl	Crawling refers to the act of a bot or spider reading and storing the content of a webpage. A lot of SEO involves making pages friendly to search engine spiders so that they can crawl it efficiently and recognize its content. If a page has been "crawled", that means its content has been recorded in the search engine; this is different from being indexed. A page can be crawled, but not indexed (if the page has a "no-index" tag, telling robots not to index the page), or it can be indexed, but not crawled (if the site's robots.txt has a directive not to crawl the page - the page may still show up in search results, but there will be no preview of its content, and the spider will not follow any links on that page).
Crawl budget	With billions of web pages on the internet to crawl, and limited resources to do so, web crawlers allocate a "crawl budget" to each website, limiting the number of links they will follow on your pages. Having too many pages, especially if your website is relatively new and has low authority, will eat up your crawl budget before web crawlers are able to visit every page on your site, leading to pages not being indexed.
Robots.txt	The robots.txt file is a text file hosted on the site at www.domain.com/robots.txt - it contains directives for search engine spiders, telling it which pages to crawl or not to crawl. Note that the robots.txt is often unjustly relied upon for ensuring that certain pages are not indexed. It does not actually prevent pages from being indexed.

★ SEO Resources

- **Why Your Digital Marketing Strategy Needs Keyword Research**
- **The Definitive Guide to SEO Keyword Research**
- **4 Different Types of Search Intent**
- **Long vs. Short Tail Keywords**
- **SEO Best Practices: General Content Creation**
- **SEO Best Practices: Article Content Creation**
- **SEO and Content Strategy: How They Work Together**
- **What Is E-A-T In SEO & How To Improve It**
- **SEO Tools Guide**

We hope this guide helps you to significantly improve your website's ranking and get more quality traffic - just like it has for us. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out.

You can also start by getting a **free SEO marketing plan** from us - no strings attached!

Good luck!

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