

Peggy's Cheat Sheet #4: Keyword Research



Keyword research is a tool often associated with websites and SEO (Search Engine Optimization). However, it's also a great way to quickly find out the size and viability of any market, along with defining your niche.

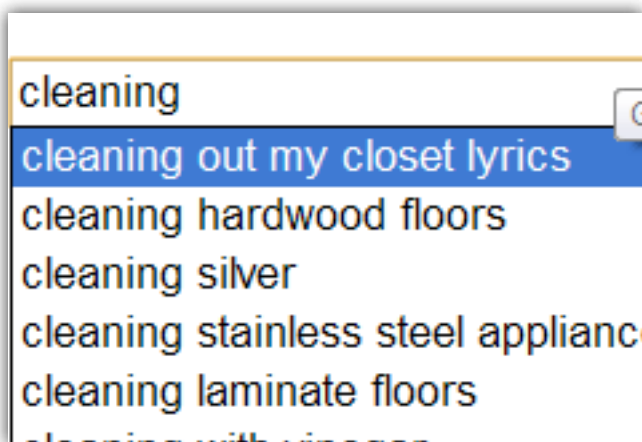
Here's what it is and how to start.
More at WizardofeBooks.com.

WizardofeBooks.com
How to start.

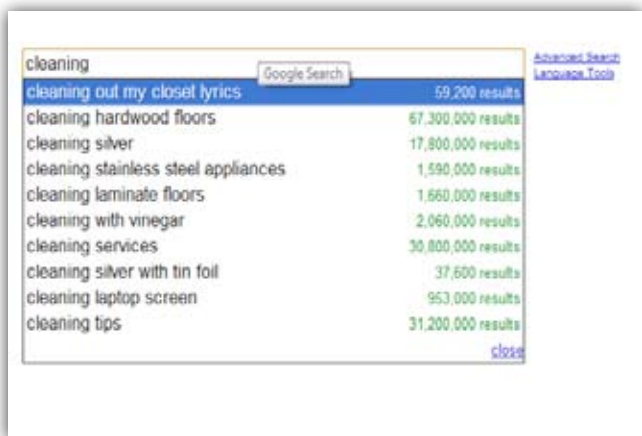
Keyword Research

What is a keyword?

Keywords are words that people are using to find you on the internet. These are the words they type into Google or other search engines when searching for products or services, and there can be many, many keywords for a single topic. The words *you* relate to your niche *may not be the words that others are using to find you*. It's important to find out what words are being used to discuss your niche before you write your book, create a blog, start using Twitter, or create anything relating to any product that you plan to market, whether you plan to market online or not.



TYPING YOUR WORDS INTO GOOGLE'S SEARCH BAR



YOUR FIRST CLUES - GOOGLE'S DROP-DOWN BOX

* A spreadsheet with a column for keywords/phrases, a second for the numbers, a third for the source (Google search, or other) and a fourth for the date last researched can be the easiest way to manage this list.

Let's discuss an example.

Tracy has a new cleaning product that removes the smell of smoke from fabrics. She's already done her product testing to prove it's better than anything else out there. The product is environmentally-friendly, and she has decided to sell it directly to consumers over the internet, shipping anywhere worldwide, rather than relying on traditional distributors and retailers.

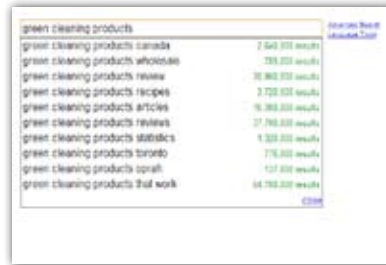
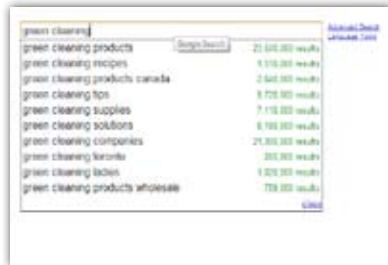
First, Tracy makes a list* of words or short phrases that she knows apply to her product; cleaning, green cleaning products, smoke smell, and removing smoke from fabrics.

It's a short list, but it's a start. She only uses clear language and no excess words.

Next, she goes to Google.com, and starts entering her keywords into the search field. Before hitting "enter", she makes a note of all the words that come up in the suggestion drop-down box that relate to her niche.

Importantly, she also makes a note of the numbers. These are the number of related results for each term. (She ignores any terms that clearly do not apply, such as the song lyrics in the first illustration.) **Ideally, we're looking for phrases that have slightly less than 100,000 results,** which indicates a healthy market, but one that is less competitive and easier to approach.

Even though these numbers indicate a very large market that is perhaps too broad, Tracy adds "cleaning tips", as well as "cleaning with vinegar" to her list because she knows that people using that search term might be trying to use vinegar to remove the smell of smoke.



Tracy does the same thing with each of her other terms, and *still without hitting "enter"*, she makes note of some other terms that might signal people looking for her product type.

She adds;

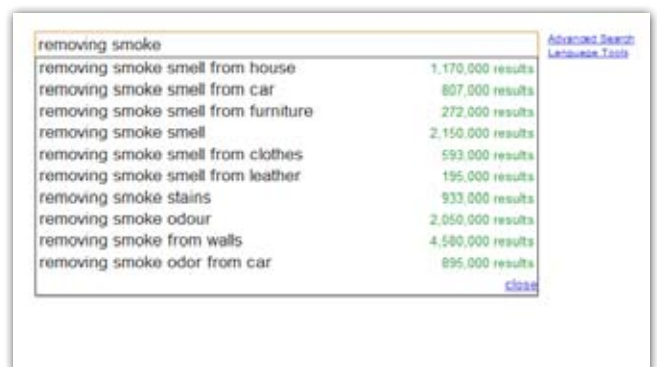
- green cleaning tips
- green cleaning supplies
- green cleaning solutions
- green cleaning companies
- green cleaning products wholesale
- green cleaning products review
- green cleaning products articles
- green cleaning products statistics
- green cleaning products that work
- green cleaning products for business
- green cleaning products for schools
- green cleaning products for hotels

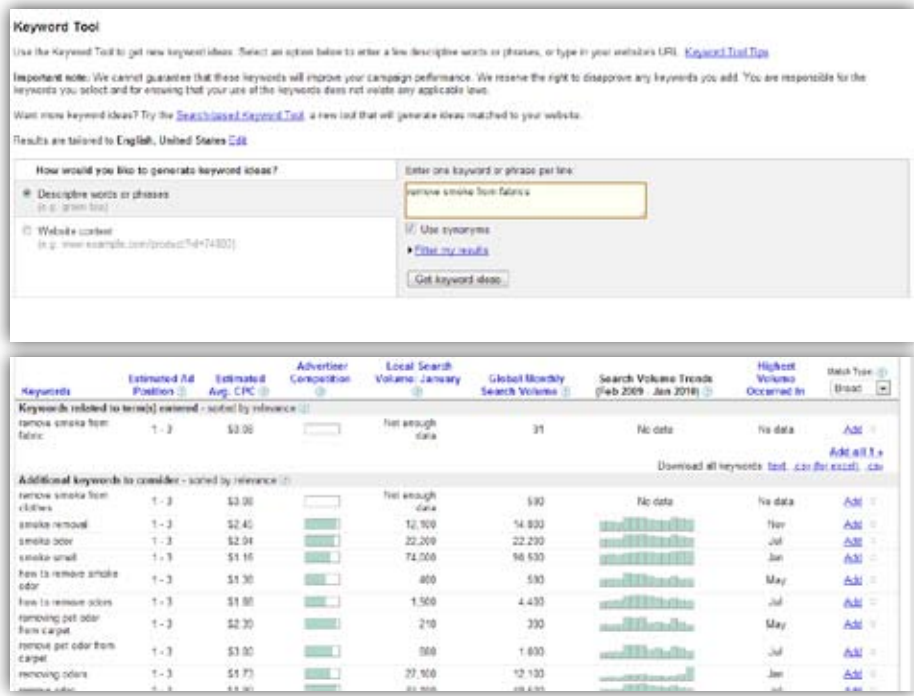
She quickly realizes that this list is not only showing her what words people are using to talk about her product niche, but also where she can sell it. **She decides to make a second list called "direct marketing targets", and adds businesses and hotels to that list.**

Notice that the more words she adds to this search term, the more large numbers appear. This is especially

dangerous in online marketing, where one can be lost in the shuffle of larger advertisers with deeper pockets.

Tracy continues to add more words to her list, **but she still needs to continue to narrow her search terms to get some smaller, more specific numbers.** Next, we'll use the same terms with new tools to do just that.





MANY TOOLS, MANY RESULTS

You will find that there’s no one definitive “number” for any single search term.

The numbers reported next to your search terms mean different things depending on the tool you’re using and how you use it. The numbers might represent the total number of results available (as in the Google search example on the previous pages) or the number of actual searches performed in the past 30 days, or other indexed results or algorithms.

The same phrase will report different numbers on different days, or even times of day, in the same tool.

What we’re looking for is a big-picture “feeling” of how popular a term is.

Even if the reported number represents results available (rather than the number of people who’ve searched that term), seeing that over a period of time is still a great indicator of market health.

Using Google Adwords’ Keyword Suggestion Tool

Besides using the basic search box at Google, there’s another Google tool that is provided to people that buy their ads.

The *Google Keyword Suggestion Tool* is part of *Google Adwords*, designed to help ad buyers find appropriate keywords in every niche. You can use this tool for free research without actually spending a cent on ads.

To use the tool...

1. Click to: <https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal>
2. Enter one of your phrases into the box labeled “Enter one keyword or phrase per line:” and click “Get keyword ideas”. (Let’s just start with one, but you can add many at a time.)

Take your time to carefully analyze this information, as it can tell you a great deal about how much competition you have in your market, terms to avoid or terms to use, and whether people search seasonally for your product. Try turning the variety of options on or off and make comparisons with the different results. **See if you can continue to focus your primary search terms more and more closely, and eliminate a few phrases from your list.**

About Google Accounts:

Logging in with your Google account to use the free Keyword Tool allows you to save your searches, lists, and results for later.

You can even save keyword lists and export them to text files or spreadsheets for analysis.

But Google accounts are useful for much more than using the Keyword tool.

Even if you never use it for email, a Google account offers plenty of free tools for everything from free web stats for your site (*Google Analytics*) to a suite of programs that are almost exactly like MS Office, *Google Apps*.

Wordtracker

HOME TAKE A TOUR FREE TRIAL PRICING ACADEMY

FREE keyword suggestion tool

Find keywords that include...

...the following keyword(s)

green cleaning products

Adult Filter:
Remove offensive

Why not try the Keywords tool free for 7 days?
[Take the Free Trial](#)

green cleaning products 287 searches (top 100 only)

Keyword	Searches (??)
1 green cleaning products (search)	167
2 green pet cleaning products (search)	41
3 green commercial cleaning products (search)	16
4 commercial green cleaning products (search)	12
5 green cleaning products good or bad (search)	8
6 chlorox green cleaning products (search)	3
7 green seal cleaning products (search)	4

BE OPEN TO PARALLEL NICHES

Remember to remark terms or phrases that are parallel to your niche, as well as those clearly planted in the middle of it.

For example, the same person buying an air purifier might also be interested in removing the smell of smoke from clothing, furniture, or car upholstery.

Perhaps Tracy would do well to add search terms related to "quitting smoking" to her list, even though it might be expensive to advertise in that niche. She can still use the keywords in ways we'll talk about on the following pages, and it tells her something about the needs of her clients.

Also, Tracy might have started out thinking that her primary market was the consumer trying to remove smoke from clothes or upholstery, but one of the largest search results on Google was "green cleaning products for businesses". That might include hotels trying to remove the smell of smoke from their rooms, or car rental companies.

WordTracker.com

Wordtracker is a paid keyword provider. But, you can use one of their tools for free by clicking to <http://freekeywords.wordtracker.com/>. (Their site also has many great free downloadable reports, videos, and other stuff worth exploring.)

Essentially, this free tool suggests synonyms and alternate terms that you may not have thought of, and gives you some basic numbers that can be a great guideline to tell you if your niche is profitable.

You're really looking for terms that score over 100 in this tool, but if you see something relevant that scores 80+, you might also decide to add it to your list.

There's No Such Thing as Competition Anymore

If you are getting worried because you see plenty of other consistent advertisers in your niche, don't freak out - that's a good thing! That means that there are enough customers in that niche to keep all the sellers busy.

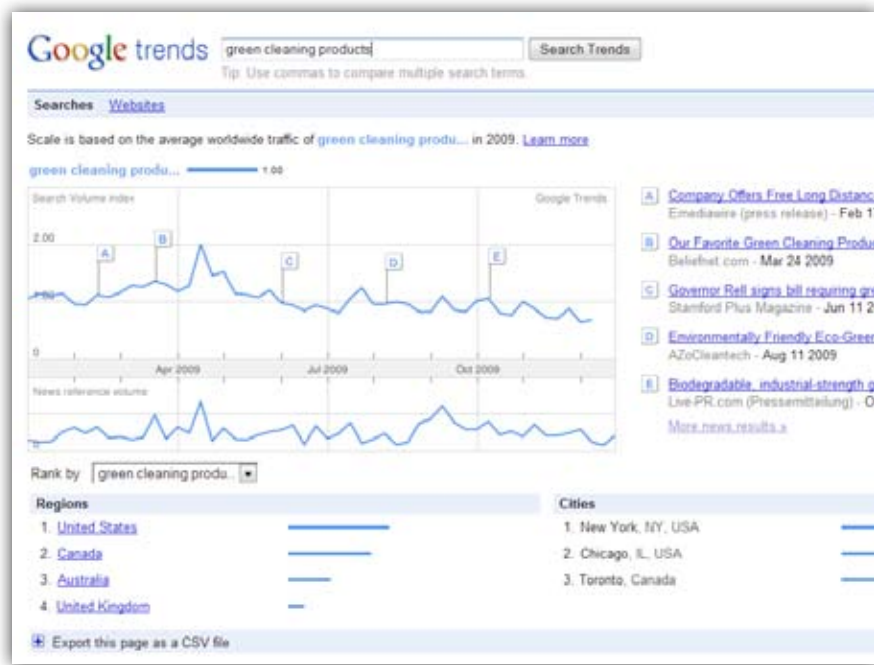
It's still important to differentiate yourself from the others where you can, but the easiest way to do that is to *sub-niche yourself even further*. Again, it's a bad thing if *everybody* is your customer.

Beware of Huge Numbers

Bigger is not always better. If your niche turns out to have massive numbers of either searchers or search results, you may need to consider one or both of two things;

- you are not specific enough in your niche or client profile, and need to sub-niche yourself even further
- you have too many or too broad of search terms associated with your niche, and need to cut back on how many you're adding to your list

Huge numbers = too much time or money spent trying to capture market share.



HOT TRENDS AND HOT SEARCHES

Google Trends' opening page shows you two primary lists: *Hot Topics* and *Hot Trends*. These two lists are based on current searches in Google.com's regular search bar, and their automatic indexing tools.

This can represent an opportunity to capitalize on something that people are already discussing, by using hot keyword terms in a blog post or tweet.

For example, Tracy might discover that a Hot Search today is "green interior design". She might immediately write a blog post that mentions this keyword phrase a couple of times, and in that blog post, talk about how her own products are great for interior designers who wish to re-use furniture that might have some smoke smell in it.

If she does this sort of quick action often enough, she will dramatically improve her overall traffic by making her blog appear higher and higher in Google's search results.

Google Trends

Besides just looking at the volume of search engine results and search terms, keyword research is an important step in judging the long-term health of any market.

Google Trends (<http://www.google.com/trends>) allows you to chart the health and trends of a market over time, thereby allowing you to use keyword research to predict the future of your business, and not just about how to market a single product or service right now.

In the Google Trends box, simply type any search term, or group of search terms separated by commas. If you put a term inside "quotation marks", the response will only include the exact phrase in that order, and not just any response with all the words you entered in any order.

The chart that pops up can be sorted by country, sub-region, year, or part of a year.

Tracy discovers here that her primary market is in the USA (versus Canada or Australia) and that cleaning products appear to be a seasonal business, peaking in Spring, to medium in the Fall, and dropping to almost nil in the Summer. As a result of learning this, she might choose to save her advertising dollars from June through August each year, and to focus on standardizing her shipping services in the USA rather than the UK/EU. She also decides that news items do have an effect on her market, and will therefore include regular press releases in her marketing and publicity plan.

It's A Numbers Game

In a couple of pages, we'll talk more about how to actually use your keywords to help your business, but in the Hot Trends example at far left, you can start to see how immediate the benefit of keywords can be.

Very often, selling can be a numbers game, in the sense that the more people who see your product, and the more often they see it, the higher your sales will be. This is especially true of online selling, where it's very easy to measure these numbers and determine an ROI on the type of marketing that you do.

Being able to put things to use at the right moment, such as the blogging and Tweeting example, is a big part of the daily work of any business. You may find that watching keywords on a daily basis becomes a fun and rewarding activity, and starts to actually shape the direction of your company.



keyword research	
keyword research tool	8,800,000 results
keyword research pro	3,070,000 results
keyword research software	8,830,000 results
keyword research free	41,100,000 results
keyword research service	54,900,000 results
keyword research guide	22,000,000 results
keyword research tutorial	1,260,000 results
keyword research tips	9,930,000 results
keyword research and analysis	2,900,000 results
keyword research seo	7,880,000 results
close	

KEEP ONE UP YOUR SLEEVE

Watching keywords on a daily basis will quickly show you the effect that a hot news item can have on the traffic that a website gets in a 24 hour period.

It might not be a bad idea to keep a blog post or article on hand, ready to post when something happens related to your product, so that you can align with an existing hot news topic.

Tracy knows, for example, that one of the hottest issues with cleaning products is the amount of aerosol cans in landfills. Her products are all distributed in packaging that is totally recyclable.

She watches trends and keywords related to fluorocarbons and aerosol propellants, and when a news story came out last week about new laws related to fluorocarbon-based packaging, she was able to snag some keywords out of the article, and immediately release a post to her blog including those keywords. Traffic and sales for that day were much higher than they normally are.

It's a Work In Progress

KeyWords and KeyPhrases are never static. They change over time, and will sometimes change on a day-to-day basis. It might be easiest to maintain a spreadsheet that you edit on a weekly or monthly basis, adding or removing words/phrases as needed. Think of it as a living document, rather than something carved in stone.

There are many, many ways to research and choose keywords - far too many to include in this paper. If you find that your business benefits from keyword research (and what business doesn't?) it might be a good idea to make a sort of personal project of keeping ahead of industry trends and new keyword technologies. Trust me: you won't be bored.

But, There Just Aren't Enough Hours In The Day!

Ongoing keyword research can be a great task to farm out to a contractor or assistant.

Initial keyword research is such a revealing exercise that I don't recommend contracting it to someone else - as you can see, you can learn a great deal about your business in only a few minutes.

But it might be a perfect weekly or monthly task to send out to an assistant, an intern, or even your teenagers!

Extension Tasks

The most closely-related things to keyword research include the following areas, any of which might be a good next step after you master the finding and use of keywords.

1. Landing page or "squeeze page" design and split-testing. (Search Google for all these terms.)
2. Blogging and other social media exercises.
3. Sales copywriting for ads, blogs, Twitter, and product use.
4. SEO for your blog or website. (SEO is a *huge* area: another one you might consider farming out.)

How To Use Your Keywords

There is almost no limit to the number of ways you can use keywords, but you will probably not use all of them at the same time.

If you took me up on my suggestion of using a spreadsheet to store and sort your list of keywords, you can sort them by the numbers - either the number of hits from Google, or the WordTracker search index. This will help you to segregate your list by demand, and you'll soon decide how it works for you to use different word groups as per;

In Your Blog

Since you all have a blog (right?), you're making that site very attractive to search engines by updating content regularly. Ways to use Keywords in your blog include integrating certain keywords and phrases into the actual writing of your blog's posts and pages. Don't be pedantic about this: it still has to sound great when it's read, of course. But those integrated phrases will help to rank the blog post higher in search results.

You can also place keywords in the code of the actual design of your blog - in the HTML. Unless you know what the terms "title tag" and "meta tag" mean, and are confident modifying the core code of your site's design, this part is best left to the professionals.

If you have a self-hosted WordPress blog, you can add any number of plugins related to keywords. The one I've used for years is called All-In-One SEO Pack by [Semperfi Web Design](#). This plugin allows you to enter a specific set of keywords for every post or page in your blog, and to craft a little 160-character summary that search engines will index neatly. It's free to download and use to the max.

On Twitter and Facebook

Every tweet or Facebook note you type gets indexed by Google at some point. Using your pre-researched keywords in your tweets, comments, groups and notes ensures that real humans are finding you using the language they're used to using. Remember the rules for using social media (no selling, etc.), but keep your keywords in there once in a while.

In Your Tangible-World Marketing

Use your keywords as part of your brochures, on your business card, in any handouts or training materials, and the verbal language you use with clients. I know a woman in Australia who used her primary keyword as her licence plate.

About Blogging

I sound like a broken record here, but **your blog is the cornerstone of your business**, whether it be online or real-world.

Don't make the blog part of the website, instead, remember that **the blog is the website**. Craft other content into the blog and you'll discover a new world of easily managing your website.

A blog is also the core of any social media marketing you choose to use, as it easily integrates with Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, podcasting, discussion groups, etc. Most of these tools will also integrate right back into your blog, so the benefits go both ways.

Remember too, that the best approach to setting up your own blog is using WordPress, but host it on your own server, not at WordPress.com! Download it for *free* from **WordPress.org** and install it on your very own webspace, usually for less than \$10 per month.

Then, to quote Darth Vader, "Now I have the power!" Wu-ha-ha-ha!!"

ARTICLE MARKETING IS A POWERFUL USE OF KEYWORDS AND PHRASES

Using articles to gain attention for you, your product or your company is not a new idea, but the way they are distributed certainly is.

In another one of these cheat sheets, we'll talk in depth about article marketing, but generally, you can imagine putting your keywords into an article that's syndicated all over the web.

Your Author byline will then contain a link back to you and your company, bringing pre-qualified customers to your door.

For a friendly article about how to write another friendly article, check out [this link at Biznik.com](#).

A SNEAKY LITTLE TRICK

Don't forget that people misspell words up to 40% of the time.

If you have a keyword that might be misspelled (try a Google search for your keyword and see if you find any common misspellings in the results) you might try adding that misspelt version of the word to your keyword list.

If you plan to buy ads based on your keywords, a misspelling can still bring you plenty of traffic, but be much cheaper than the correctly-spelled counterpart.

Also, don't forget about plural vs. singular (*cleaner vs. cleaners*), synonyms (*car upholstery vs. auto upholstery*), phonetic spelling (*otto vs. auto*), local slang (*pimp my ride*), other languages (*VW/Volkswagen*)...

More Keyword Tools

It would be impossible to include details in this paper about every keyword tool on the web. However, after reading these few pages, I hope you'll feel comfortable trying out each of the following tools. (I've tried to find ones that were free.)

Be bold! Like this text!

1. **Google Insights for Search** [<http://www.google.com/insights/search>]

This tool allows you to compare historical search data across multiple variables. (Trust me, it's not as boring as I just made it sound.)

2. **Trellian** [<http://www.keyworddiscovery.com/search.html>]

Type in a "seed" keyword, and this index will produce a huge list of related keywords and report the number of annual searches.

3. **Google Groups** [<http://groups.google.com>]

Here's your chance to talk to real live customers. Listen to their complaints and praise, and learn about their needs and the lingo they use. Don't try to sell here. Just listen.

4. **Blogs** [<http://technorati.com/> and <https://www.blogger.com> and <http://wordpress.com/> are all good.]

Again, here's a chance to witness your market as a living organism. Make note of keywords attached to specific blog posts, as well as the language in the articles themselves, frequency of topics, etc. Technorati has a cool ranking system.

5. **KeyCompete.com** [<http://www.keycompete.com>]

The Orwellian tool of the keyword universe: enter a keyword to find out who's bidding on it in Google adwords advertising. Then, click on their website link, and see their entire keyword list. Creepy, and mostly free.

6. **Google Quest** [<http://www.google.com/sktool>]

Perhaps you're still not using the right keywords? Enter your company URL into this tool and Google will tell you the number of searches in the last year that might relate to the content it scans from your current website. (I meant to say Blog.)

7. **CheckRankings.com** [<http://www.checkrankings.com/>]

This free tool tells you how well you're doing after you've optimized your site and put all your keywords in the right places.

Just in case you missed it, I'm nagging you again: you need a blog. [WordPress.org, remember?]

It all comes down to...

You may find that your business hinges on the use, advertising, and branding around a single keyword.

Most of us end up with a short list of about 3-4 that we use 90% of the time, and the rest of time, we augment that short list with about another 20-50. The shorter the list, the better. Quality, not quantity.

For example, your hottest keywords should be in your usernames of your social media accounts, titles of your book and blog posts, and so on. But the rest of the list can often end up baked right into the meta data of your site, used to buy advertising, or in the subtitle of your book.

If you had to boil it down to a single word, what would it be? (Mine's *chocolate*. No wait, *shoes*. No wait...)