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GOOGLE JUICE

A Simple Guide to Getting Your Blog or Website to the
Top of the Google Search Results

Scott McIntosh

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About the Author - Scott McIntosh

Scott McIntosh - has more than 10 years of success in progressive U.S. Navy leadership roles, entrepreneurial technology ventures, and creative marketing and online campaigns. His specialties include search engine optimization (SEO), public relations, creative advertising, social media, brand management and new media marketing.

It's hard to find an aspect of running a business online that Scott hasn't been personally involved in. He runs multiple websites to include his current Angel funded company for songwriters called MusikPitch.com. Scott has handled everything to include optimized website design, public relations/ publicity, social media, and better customer conversion through optimized user experience. In terms of SEO, Scott has achieved and consistently maintains high rankings in Google for multiple difficult keyword phrases. He has a knack for staying on top of the newest SEO and social media trends and easily translating "what's going on" to "non-tech" speak.

Scott's background includes having a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Scott spent 8 years as a Naval Officer followed by 2 years of public relations and SEO marketing for new media companies. Scott's campaigns have been covered online in *The New York Times*, *Forbes* and some of the top blogs in the world. In his spare time, Scott speaks and blogs about search engine optimization, online trends and the future of entertainment media.

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PART I - There's Juice in the Fridge: Onsite Optimization

Chapter 1 – What Is Google Juice?

So what is Google Juice? Google Juice is everything that you do, online (and maybe off), to get your web presence to the top of Google's search results when people are looking for whatever it is that you are selling. This includes whether you are selling toasters or just selling your ideas, whether you have a blog or maybe a website describing your local business, either way, you want to be at the top of Google's search results.

(By the way - since Google is still the dominant online search engine as of the writing of this book, we will concentrate there. Although the techniques you will learn here will help with search results on all the search engines.)

What's happening to traditional advertising?

Why is being on top of the Google search results important?

Because the traditional advertising techniques, mostly "interruptive" techniques, such as commercials or telemarketing, are dying. Is this a bad thing? Maybe for the advertising agencies who haven't made the move to the web. But for us this is good because nobody likes interruptive advertising – it interrupts us!!

Let's take a look at some of the traditional platforms for advertising and why it's becoming more difficult for them to "interrupt" us.

Television shows have commercials but they can be skipped using DVR systems like Tivo.

Radio is now being overtaken by internet radio services such as Pandora or by an MP3 player substitute holding thousands of the listener's favorite songs.

Junk mail often goes straight to the shredder unopened, and junk email is getting filtered by spam filters.

Telemarketers are losing ground due to caller-ID and the fact that many people are cancelling land lines altogether in favor of cell phones, Skype, or Google Voice type services.

Newspapers are failing due to everyone getting their news online. Magazines aren't doing as well as they used to, but are holding out a little better than the papers. Maybe they can make an easy transition to platforms such as the iPad where they can remain as visually pleasing, but only time will tell if subscriptions and advertising revenues will stay consistent.

What about billboards? Most people aren't even looking at the road these days due to their heads buried in their mobile devices while driving (which is extremely dangerous by the way and not recommended).

So if you haven't realized it already, traditional forms of interruptive advertising just aren't working as well as they used to, and that is a good thing because people are tired of them anyway. That's what makes Google so great since people go to the site already looking for something! These people WANT to find your product, and you don't have to interrupt them to show it. You just need to be sure they find what you are selling...and at the top of the list if possible!

Search Engine Results

So how can you do this? How can you make sure you show up first on the search engine results page (or SERP as it's sometimes called)? Well, there are two ways. One way is to pay for it by using Google's Adwords or what's called a Pay-Per-Click (PPC) service, and the other is to convince Google that you are the most relevant result for that search term and appear for free. This second way is called Organic Search Results.

The image shows a Google search for "buy shoes". At the top, there is a search bar with "buy shoes" entered and a "Search" button. Below the search bar, it says "About 266,000,000 results (0.28 seconds)" and "Advanced search".

The search results are divided into two main sections:

- Sponsored Links:** This section is highlighted in pink. It includes:
 - Buy Shoes Online - Zappos** (www.Zappos.com) - Free Shipping Both Ways at Zappos. Plus Fun, Fast & Fantastic Service!
 - Shoes from Shoebuy.com - Free Shipping & Return Shipping** (www.shoebuy.com) - Shop for the latest styles of womens shoes, mens shoes, kids shoes, sandals, boots, clogs and slippers. Free shipping & returns, no tax.
 - Buy Jordan Shoes, Cheap Jordan Shoes, Nike Air Jordan Shoes ...** (www.vkicks.com) - Buy Jordan shoes site is selling Cheap Jordan Shoes and Nike Air Jordan Shoes, offering Cheap Jordan, Jordan Shoes, Air Jordan Shoes and Nike ...
 - Shoes at DSW: Shop Thousands of Women's Shoes, Men's Shoes, Boots ...** (www.dsw.com) - Find New Styles at Great Prices. Shop DSW Shoes Online with Free Shipping for DSW Rewards members. 1000s of Women's Shoes, Men's Shoes, Boots, Sandals, ...
 - Shoes, Clothing | Zappos.com Free Shipping** (www.zappos.com) - Zappos.com was founded in 1999 with the goal of becoming the premiere destination for online shoes. Since then, we've become much more than just an online ...
 - Shop Women's Shoes, Men's Shoes and Kids' Shoes | Shoes.com** (www.shoes.com) - Shop shoes.com for a great selection of shoes, boots and sandals for the entire family with free shipping on all orders and a 110% price guarantee!
 - Athletic Shoes - Running Shoes - Casual Shoes | Eastbay** (www.eastbay.com) - Your source for shoes, clothes, sports equipment and fan gear. ... Got too many miles on your running shoes? Eastbay has a shoe for you regardless of your ...
- Organic Results:** This section is highlighted in blue. It includes:
 - Buy Shoes at endless.com** (endless.com) - free overnight shipping on shoes! free returns + 100% price guarantee. Endless.com is rated ★★★★★.
 - Onlineshoes.com®** (www.Onlineshoes.com) - Huge Selection of New Fall Styles! Free Shipping & Exchanges Everyday. Onlineshoes.com is rated ★★★★★.
 - Shoes.com® Official Site** (www.Shoes.com/Official) - Over 700 Brands & 700,000 Pairs. Free Shipping, Low Prices Everyday.
 - Discount Shoes Online** (www.6PM.com/Shoes) - Save Up To 75% Off On Top Brands. Seize these Great Deals. Shop Now.
 - Great Shoes - All Styles** (www.Shoebuy.com) - Free Shipping. No Tax. All Sizes. Plus Free Returns & Great Savings!
 - Cheap Shoes 40-70% Off** (www.6PM.com) - Save 40 - 70% Designer Shoes. Your Favorite Brands! Your Sizes.

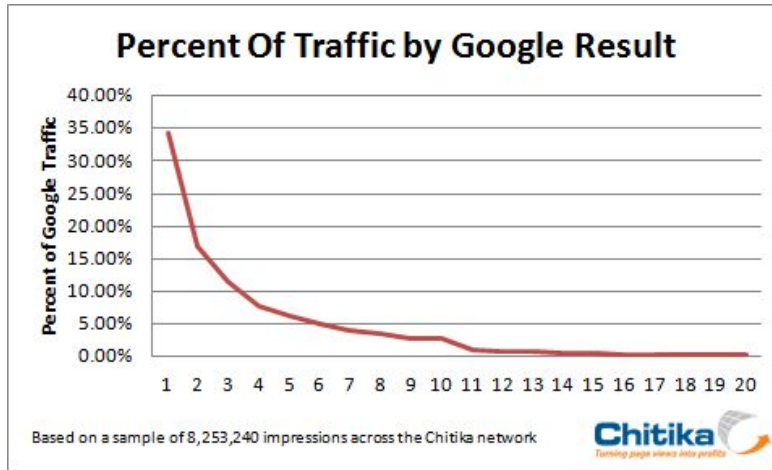
Red arrows point from the "Sponsored Links" label to the pink highlighted results. A blue arrow points from the "Organic Results" label to the blue highlighted results.

It may be obvious that you would rather show up for free rather than having to pay but there are even more benefits to showing up organically. Google has found in recent studies that over 70% of searchers are more likely to click on the organic results versus the paid results! We will cover paid search results in more detail later, but most of this book will be concentrating on convincing Google that you are the best in order to show up at the top of the organic results list.

But what do I mean by the top?

Well, essentially, most studies have shown that the highest percentage of click-throughs (people clicking the link provided in the search result) remained within the top three organic results. The percentage of click-throughs then drops off heavily as you make your way down the results page. Even lower was the amount of people who went to page two in the Google search results and beyond that, practically nothing. Point being, if you aren't on the homepage, and even then, ranking in the top three, your click-through-rates (CTRs) can be virtually nil.

Let's look at some data. Chitika, a firm based in Massachusetts that offers search-targeted advertising solution to web publishers, published the following study in May of 2010 based on a sample of 8,253,240 impressions across the Chitika advertising network.



Just glancing at this graph you can see the dramatic drop off from being in the first position to being ranked after 10. Let's take a look at the actual numbers:

1	2,834,806	34.35%
2	1,399,502	16.96%
3	942,706	11.42%
4	638,106	7.73%
5	510,721	6.19%
6	416,887	5.05%
7	331,500	4.02%
8	286,118	3.47%
9	235,197	2.85%
10	223,320	2.71%
11	91,978	1.11%
12	69,778	0.85%
13	57,952	0.70%
14	46,822	0.57%
15	39,635	0.48%
16	32,168	0.39%
17	26,933	0.33%
18	23,131	0.28%
19	22,027	0.27%
20	23,953	0.29%

Source <http://chitika.com/research/2010/the-value-of-google-result-positioning/>

So taking a look at this data, we can see that being ranked first for a search query is going to land you around a 35% CTR, or 35% of people will click on the number 1 result from a search. Being second is going to cut that in half to around 16% CTR. This drops quickly to 1% and lower for being ranked after the 10th position! That's a huge drop and can mean the difference between having huge amounts of traffic to your website versus having none!

Getting to the top

Ok, so I've convinced you of how important it is to get to Google's homepage, and even more importantly, to be in the top three search results! But how do you get there? You get there by convincing Google that YOU are the most relevant result for a specific search. In order to do this you need to juice up everything that you do online to include what you do on your site and off. You do this with Google juice!

This book will layout the best techniques to ensure you are doing everything you can to get the most Google juice you can squeeze out of the web. It is written for the non-expert, and highlights any areas that require outside help. And if you do need outside help, I'll recommend some of the best places to find it.

One thing to note is that Google is always changing its techniques to ensure its search engine results get better and better. Google wants people find the best returns for their search, or in other words, not land on spam sites. Do you need to worry about the fact that Google is always changing? Not really. Because if you ARE the expert you SHOULD be in the top results, by following the steps in this book you will ensure Google recognizes this fact. By juicing up everything you do online you'll begin to get closer to being that number one result. I've come up with a simple equation that I want you to remember in all you do online that's going to give you the most juice (don't worry, it's a simple one).

$$\mathbf{PL = GL \quad \text{or} \quad \text{People Like} = \text{Google Like}}$$

Basically, if people like your site and what you do off-site, Google will like it too. If your site provides the best services or products or information, and you follow the techniques in this book, Google will learn this and move you closer to the top of their homepage.

Chapter 3 – Google’s Keyword Tool

There are many ways to get some great Google juice right on your own website. I’ll just use the term website to simplify everything, but this can mean a blog, forum, website or web application as well. A web application is a website that has a function as opposed to a website that is usually more like an online brochure for a particular company, organization, etc. Facebook would be a web application because the whole purpose of the business is what happens on the website.

The first thing you need to consider to get the most Google juice at home is who is your target market? Who needs your service? Who are the people you want visiting your website? This is very important as you need to figure out what your potential customers are typing into Google’s search engine so you can understand what keywords you should target. What do your customers want? What problem do they have that you are solving? All of these questions should be asked as you use our first recommended service:

Google Keyword Tool



The image shows a screenshot of the Google Keyword Tool interface. At the top, it says "Find keywords" and "Based on one or both of the following:". Below this, there are two input fields: "Word or phrase (one per line)" and "Website". Underneath the input fields, there are three options: "Advanced options" (with a plus sign icon), "Locations: United States", and "Languages: English". At the bottom left of the form, there is a "Search" button.

Located at <http://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal>, Google Keyword Tool is an amazing and free service that is going to begin to show you how people are searching the web for your product. You don’t need to be logged into your Gmail account to begin but you can if you want. To start using Keyword Tool, come up with a phrase that you think one of your customers would type into Google in hopes of finding a service like yours. You don’t need to worry about typing in a single word, go ahead and put in the multiple keywords that you think someone would use to search for your business.

Leave the Website area blank for now. When you place your website address in this space and hit search, Google will look over your website and display what it thinks your website is all about in terms of keywords.

Just to clarify, the term ‘keywords’ can refer to a single word or phrase. Experiment with both single words and phrases in your keyword research to see which ‘keywords’ are best for you to target later. If a certain phrase generates more traffic and has less competition than a single word, then it would be better to target that phrase. Many times a single word will show more traffic, but it isn’t specific enough. For instance, if I sell cookbooks I could do some research on the word *books* as a keyword and see that it gets around 101 million monthly global searches. But is everyone using that search term looking to buy my book? Probably not. It would be better to target *cookbooks*, or even more specific terms like *vegan cookbooks*.

Let’s look at a real world example. I run a website named MusikPitch.com that allows anyone to get custom music created for anything. Basically, we sell a service for custom music. If people need custom music created, I need to consider all the phrases they might type into Google so I can get as much juice as possible for each phrase on my website. I also want identify searched phrases with the least amount of competition so

I can narrow my targets to a manageable few. Here are the results from Google's Keyword Tool for the search term *custom music*:

The screenshot shows the Google Keyword Tool interface. At the top, it says 'Keyword ideas' and 'Sign in with your AdWords login information to see the full set of ideas for this search.' Below this is a table with columns: Keyword, Competition, Global Monthly Searches, Local Monthly Searches, and Local Search Trends. The row for 'custom music' is highlighted with a red box. The data for 'custom music' is: Global Monthly Searches: 60,500; Local Monthly Searches: 40,500. Other keywords include 'custom sheet music', 'custom music cd', 'custom songs', 'custom song', 'custom hold music', 'custom music cds', and 'personalized music'.

Keyword	Competition	Global Monthly Searches	Local Monthly Searches	Local Search Trends
custom sheet music		260	-	
custom music cd		1,600	1,000	
custom songs		74,000	49,500	
custom music		60,500	40,500	
custom song		33,100	14,800	
custom hold music		320	-	
custom music cds		720	720	
personalized music		22,200	14,800	

Here is some great information about my potential market. First you'll notice that Google has given several keyword suggestions in the left column based on my initial search. Notice that people search the term *custom songs* more than they search the term *custom music*. Also note that the competition is lower for the term *custom songs*. So it is probably better for me to concentrate on *custom songs* more so than *custom music*. In reality, I'll target them both because that is my main business. Just like if you sell coffee beans, you'll probably target the words *coffee beans* and *espresso beans*. Besides, those results are pretty close and these Keyword search results can change quickly. To make the numbers easy, let's just say 30% of people click on the first link for the term *custom songs* (even though studies show this to be higher). 30% of 74,000 people equals 22,200 people that will potentially click on the link to MusikPitch after searching for *custom songs*! One thing to keep in mind is your Title and Description of your site as it appears in the Google search results will help determine whether or not people think that your link is the most appropriate for what they are looking for. We will cover this more in a later chapter.

You can click the header of each column to rearrange the column by that category of data. So if I clicked Global Monthly Searches, all the keywords would rearrange themselves in order from most Global Monthly Searches to least. Make sure you always do your initial search with the default settings: Sorted by **Relevance**.

Avoid using the following words in your searches as Google doesn't address these words so neither should you: a, and, be, I, in, me, of, on, the.

One item to note about the numbers is this data is general and doesn't reflect the exact amount of searches. It does give you a general idea of the potential search traffic and competition for your chosen keywords.

So take some serious time and use Google Keyword Tool to get familiar with the best keywords to target for your business. This is very important as you are going to spend the next couple of weeks/months working with those keywords and you want to be sure they are optimal ones. Ask your friends and family what they would type in a search field when looking for your product. You'll be surprised at the words they would use that you didn't even consider. You may want to keep some paper and a pen handy or use a service like Evernote* because you need to continuously write down your keyword ideas when you have them. Each keyword will probably lead you to more keyword ideas because Google will have its own suggestions on recommended keywords.

(*Evernote is a service that helps you quickly make note of and remember anything and is located at Evernote.com.)

When you see some really juicy keywords (lots of traffic and low competition) in the Keyword Tool results, write them down or paste them into Excel or other similar spreadsheet programs. You can also download your keywords directly to an Excel sheet from the Google keyword tool. Simply check the box next to the keywords you like and click the download button. Downloading them as CSV to Excel will put them in a familiar format to use with Excel type programs on your computer allowing you easy access and the ability to send the data to others. Be sure to rearrange your columns the way you want before downloading the data.

Another way to find some keywords that work is by testing your phrases with paid advertising using Google's Pay-Per-Click (PPC) campaigns. We'll discuss this more on in chapter 15, but the basic idea is that by running paid ads, you can experiment with different phrases to see which get the most clicks and conversions (buys of your product). Then you know which phrases work best so you can begin to target them organically.

The old method of keyword targeting was to select hundreds and see which ones repeatedly came out on top overtime. This is complete garbage. Pick 3-5 of your most important keywords and target those. If you have more product categories than that, you can select more keywords but you'll probably have to use landing pages which we'll discuss later. If this is the case, you can pick as many words as you think you need for your different products. Remember though, the more words you pick the more time you'll need to invest in targeting those words and the harder you'll have to work. Lower competition is always better but don't worry too much. If you have the drive, you can beat the competition by working harder and smarter online.

Some other Keyword services you can use:

1. Wordtracker: <http://www.wordtracker.com>
2. Keyword Discovery: <http://www.keyworddiscovery.com>
3. Goodkeywords: <http://www.goodkeywords.com>