SEO You Might Not Know

Presented by Brian Gorman
I am a digital marketing professional and former school teacher with over 10 years’ experience in SEO strategy and training. I've worked with some of the world's biggest brands, such as GEICO, The New York Times, and Adobe.
WHO YOU ARE

This presentation is intended for digital marketing professionals who have a little knowledge of SEO all the way up to a few years of direct experience working with clients.
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KEYWORDS

Debilitating technical issues aside, keywords are the most critical component of an SEO strategy. They are the element that connects searchers to your website.
Every website has a certain amount of authority. For example, apple.com has high authority; davestackleshack.com out of West Montgomery, AL has less.

Keywords come in a variety of difficulties, and what you can rank for depends on your site's authority.
TIERS

Each site is in a keyword tier, based on its authority. A tier is like a weight class in boxing.

If you try to fight above your weight class, Google may not rank you well. Authority and trust have to be built slowly over time.
A smart keyword strategy is to:

- Choose KWs within your tier
- Rank on page 1 more quickly
- Earn clicks and links over time
- Build authority and aim for the next tier
We’ll start by pursuing keywords with the right difficulty. This can be identified by reviewing ranking terms in an SEO tool and identifying the difficulty ceiling. Be mindful of branded terms and outliers. You may be strong on some topics and weaker in others.
It’s also important to gauge the average volume your site is capable of pursuing. In this example, we’ve found terms with a difficulty 10 or lower and we’ve notched down even further by setting the search volume to 100 or lower.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Difficulty</th>
<th>Search Volume</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>how long does apple pie last in fridge</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crock pot apple pie moonshine</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most SEO tools can measure your site's authority. This is a useful metric to know when choosing keywords to pursue.

We've chosen low competition terms that also show lower authority sites ranking in the top 5 spots.
When we have a list of keywords that are in our tier, where low authority sites are ranking well, we’ll next look at intent.

Prioritize terms that show an intent that matches the conversions your website aims to attract.
Let’s look beyond the standard on-page optimization tactics involving primary keyword use in title tags, subheadings, etc.
Maximize your page’s relevance through **centerpiece annotation**. Use top-ranking pages, People Also Ask questions, related searches, and ChatGPT to ensure all sections on your page get credit and you rank for as many keywords as possible.
The People Also Ask section represents the next most likely questions people are asking about a topic or keyword.

AlsoAsked.com is a tool that helps visualize these more categorically and see deeper levels of PAAs.
The Related Searches section of Google’s SERP is another great place to review. Here, you can find ideas for additional content sections.

Click into one of the Related Searches and look at the RS for that phrase for deeper, but still highly relevant, content sections.
Entities are the people, places, and/or things mentioned in your document. Including related entities relevant to the main topic of your content can improve its performance in search.

Related entities can be found by auditing the SERP, brainstorming, or using ChatGPT.
In this section, I’ll show you one of my favorite ways to uncover great ideas that generate strong, meaningful backlinks that can support our content and help it rank better.
After reclaiming any broken links and redirecting old URLs, it's important to create new assets that can generate backlinks.

Use Ahrefs' “Best By Links” report to audit your site and competitor sites. Which content or assets get the most backlinks?
There are good uses and bad uses of AI when it comes to SEO. It’s great for efficiency, productivity, simplification, and ideation. For anything beyond that, exercise caution.
One of the best uses of AI for SEO is ideation. Here are some examples:

- Related subtopics
- Common questions
- Linkbait ideas

In this example, we've asked for semantically relevant subtopics for “drip irrigation.”

ChatGPT

Drip irrigation is a highly efficient method of watering plants, and there are many subtopics that fall under this main topic. Here are ten semantically relevant subtopics:

1. **Components of Drip Irrigation Systems**: This subtopic would cover the various components used in a drip irrigation system, such as emitters, tubing, valves, filters, and pressure regulators.
2. **Installation and Maintenance**: This includes the practical aspects of setting up a drip irrigation system and the necessary routine maintenance to keep it functioning properly.
3. **Water Conservation and Efficiency**: Drip irrigation is often used for its efficiency. This subtopic focuses on how drip irrigation conserves water compared to traditional methods.
Google recently (as of November 20, 2023) released a side panel for Google Chrome, which opens a window where users can interact with the page.

Extract key points, explore relevant questions, and more, depending on the content.
The side panel can extract key points from the page content. It usually includes three key points, and provides an option to click and jump to a specific section of the page.

It's not quite on par with ChatGPT at this time, but will likely improve.

Key points from the page

- Generative AI is experimental. Info quality may vary.
- This article explains how generative AI is changing search results.
- One example is Google’s Search Generative Experience (SGE), which uses generative AI to generate content from existing content.
- SGE uses three components: Input Encoder, Neural Retriever, and Output Generator.
The explore option provides relevant questions and the option to click to see that question answer by a content section from the page.

Let's talk about how it all works and where the SEO skillset evolves to account for it.

**What is retrieval-augmented generation?**

Retrieval-augmented generation (RAG) is a paradigm wherein relevant documents or data points are collected based on a query or prompt and appended as a few-shot prompt to fine-tune the response from the language model.
Harpa AI is a Chrome extension that can access the content of a web page or Youtube video transcript.

You can then query the content using ChatGPT-3.5. This is a great way to interact with pages and videos to get more out of them.
One of the best use cases for Harpa AI is to extract 3-5 key points from a page. Google's new side panel can do this, but Harpa tends to do it better.

This is a great thing to do on top-ranking pages to get insights on why the pages are performing so well.
Using AI to summarize content is great for a number of purposes. One of the most effective uses is for learning. Here, I've used Harpa AI to break down a 24-minute video on SEO strategy in seconds. I can use the output in lieu of the video or as a primer/review list.
Harpa AI can also be used to simplify. Some great use cases for this are:

- Simplify a complex article for learning
- Simplify a new client’s niche

And, if you’re struggling with strategy, try this AI-assisted method to get started.
Use Harpa AI to extract recurring themes within People Also Ask questions, a list of queries, subheadings from a page, etc. For PAAs, expand a few additional levels and then prompt the extension to find recurring themes.
In this YouTube video, I show one of my favorite ways to use AI to:

- Learn about a business
- Learn about their audience
- Outline a basic SEO strategy

This isn't a set-it-and-forget-it tactic, but it's a great way to quickly get a feel for things.
To outline today's talk, I used a tool called Mind Meister.

It's fun to use, has some really cool designs, and the presentation mode is awesome.
Let’s look at the main takeaways from today’s presentation. These three concepts represent the most important concepts to remember.

**KEYWORDS AND RELEVANCE**
Understand your site’s keyword tier and compete where you can win. Pursue the right terms, and optimize your pages by choosing the most relevant subtopics possible.

**BEST BY LINKS**
Audit content pieces from your site and competitor sites to understand what is generating the most links. Replicate and improve upon the ideas.

**AI FOR SEO**
Use AI to assist your brainstorming, ideation, and learning. It can also be used to overcome writer’s block and create multiple examples of an article heading, for example, or even a first draft.