

When is 'Spying on Your Competition' a Complete Waste of Time?

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By Ron Hutton

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Your brain screams "Gimme Fast", "Gimme Easy", "Do it for me automatically"! So when you see the headline that reads...

"Imagine Spying On Your Competition To Build A Massive Targeted Keyword List Of 3000 Or More Keywords On Auto-Pilot... In 10 Minutes Or Less And Skyrocket Your Adsense Profits Quickly And Easily"

You think "Hmmm. Sounds good. Looks intriguing..."

"Never Build Another Keyword List The Slow And Hard Way!"

Gosh. Is it possible?

"You must understand that this is a numbers game."

O.K. Now tell me something not quite so obvious.

The above headlines and subheadlines are quoted directly from a sales letter for a relatively new piece of software (no names will be mentioned here) that's intended to eliminate all the "hard work" of doing keyword research. It sounds exciting. No more tedious keyword research. Yes! I find life is so much more enjoyable when I don't have to engage my brain.

Don't pull out your credit card just yet.

With this particular product there's no need to review the entire sales letter to find out what else the software will do for you. It's all nicely summarized in the very first headline.

The sales letter includes a link to view a nice video presentation demonstrating how the software works, and it certainly appears to do exactly what the author says it will. I have no doubt that the

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program delivers on all of the promises of the sales letter, but what exactly are you getting?

Let's go back to the headline again...

"Imagine Spying On Your Competition To Build A Massive Targeted Keyword List Of 3000 Or More Keywords On Auto-Pilot... In 10 Minutes Or Less And Skyrocket Your AdSense Profits Quickly And Easily"

Again, I may be tempted to plop down one cool C Note, but what's wrong with this picture?

What doesn't this software tell you?

- 1) Keyword search frequency.
- 2) The amount of competition for any keyword.
- 3) Keyword bid cost in Google Adwords and/or the approximate AdSense value.

When you take the approach of "spying on your competition", be very careful not to give your competition too much credit for having done their homework. Maybe they did. Maybe they didn't.

If you generate a "highly targeted" keyword list of 3,000 keywords and you don't know the search frequency, the amount of competition for any of the keywords, the Adword bid cost or the approximate AdSense value, what do you do from there?

ANSWER: Start over.

Some marketers like to say that Wordtracker is just "So Expensive"! Have you seen the price of a "Value Meal" at McDonald's lately? "SuperSize It" and you've spent about the same amount of money that it would cost to gain access to Wordtracker for a day. As of the writing of this article, a one-day subscription to Wordtracker costs \$7.65.

If you've never used Wordtracker before, you can easily learn all of the "how to's" in a few hours by using their tutorials, which are very well done. Now you still have 20 hours to do intelligent keyword research. You'll have the answers to the important questions that you really should be asking, and you'll have spent a whopping \$7.65. Now that's an outstanding value.

Just because someone creates a software application that "automates" the work for you doesn't necessarily mean that the information you'll generate is worth anything.

Would you rather have...

– A big fat hairy list of 3,000 keywords with no real useful information about any of them.

OR

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– A truly valuable list of keywords with the search frequency and amount of competition for each and every keyword.

Choose the latter.

Begin with the end in mind. Formulate a plan. Think through your entire project and strategize.

When you learn how to use Wordtracker efficiently, you'll be able to research 10 niche markets in a day without breaking a sweat.

When it comes to keyword research, there are some shortcuts that you can take by using services like Wordtracker and even some very good software programs, but don't give in to the temptation to shift the gray matter into idle.

There are effective ways to build content sites and there are other "click a button and build a bazillion page site" methods. The shelf life of the latter is getting shorter every week.

In the words of the great Aretha Franklin, "Think. Thinka–think."

Ron Hutton is a 20 year sales and marketing veteran with a passion for coaching and training. Subscribe to "GoThrive Online", for big juicy marketing tips in small, easy–to–chew, bite size servings. 17 Free Cool Tools...

<http://www.gothrive.com>

How To Take Advantage Of Your Competition

By Rich Hamilton, Jr

When people market their business, they pay little attention to their competition. However, they can learn a lot from them. Your competition plays a large role in your business and in your marketing efforts, so don't ignore them.

There is an old saying, "Keep your friends close, keep your enemies closer". In this case, your enemy is your competition. You shouldn't look at your competition as an enemy, but, as a guide or a valuable tool.

Your competition can be an asset to your business. I want you to think about this for a minute, your competition is like having a one stop shopping center, they have it all. Let me give you an example, take a look at your fearsome indirect competition, they have it all. They may have targeted an area of the market that you've missed, on the web that's not hard to do.

Who Are Their Link Partners

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One day when I was analyzing my competition I immediately noticed something about their link partners, a lot of them were different, but some were the same. Let me give you an example, if you were to take three of your competitors, you may only find a few of them with the same link partners, other than that, a large portion of your competition's link partners will be different.

Once you've found out who your competitor's link partners are, persuade them to link to you. By getting your competition's link partners to link to you, it will take some of your competition's traffic away and give it to you, bringing targeted traffic to your web site.

How do you find your competition's link partners? A couple of ways, one is you can use software like Arelis. Arelis will retrieve all the web sites that are linked to your competitor in minutes, saving you a boatload of time. Another way to find your competitor's link partners is by using Marketleap's Link Popularity Tool, which is free to use.

Who Are Their Affiliates

Another way to take advantage of your competition is to find out who their affiliates are. If you offer an affiliate program, this may be an ideal strategy for you. Track down your competition's affiliates and persuade them to promote your product or services, instead of your competitor's.

If your competitors offer their affiliates a lower commission percentage than you, then you already have the upper hand. How? Affiliates are always looking for a way to make more money and by offering them a higher commission percentage, they'll be able to increase their affiliate profits.

How do you find your competition's affiliates? You can use the same methods to find their affiliates, as you would try to locate their link partners, by using Arelis and/or Marketleap's Link Popularity Tool.

Spying On Your Competition

Thanks to the power of the internet, spying on your competition couldn't be any easier. You can easily find out what their marketing angle is, what they have for products, how much they are charging for their products, and any new products that they may be working on.

If you were to go to your competition offline and evaluate their establishment, while taking notes on their products, you would immediately draw attention to yourself and get thrown out of the store. There is nothing worse than letting your competition know you are keeping tabs on them, but on the internet, it's completely anonymous. Your competition will never know you are there or what you are doing there.

When you pay a visit to your competition's web site, the first thing you want to know is, what their weaknesses and their strengths are. That way, you can capitalize on the opportunity of making their weaknesses, your strengths.

Rich Hamilton, Jr is the CEO/President of

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When is 'Spying on Your Competition' a Complete Waste of Time?

and the Author of Inside

Internet Marketing. His book will show you how to laser in on your targeted market with unconventional marketing strategies to promote your web site without ever having to pay a cent in advertising.

<http://www.InsideNetMarketing.com>

How To Take Advantage Of Your Competition
What Your Competition Knows About Traffic
Big Brother has a name: Yahoo is Spying on you
Free Competition Analysis for E-Commerce Startup
Is Your Business Producing Hazardous Waste?

Competition Commando
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14 Profitable eBooks
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