



On-Page SEO Strategy Guide

How To Optimise And Improve
Your Content's Ranking



HubSpot



AccuRanker



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Introduction

The last few years have been especially exciting in the SEO industry with a series of algorithm updates and search engine optimisation developments escalating in increased pace.

Keeping up with all of these changes can be difficult, but proving return on investment can be even harder.

The world of SEO is changing. This ebook provides you with a brief history of the SEO landscape, introduces strategies for on- and off-page SEO, and shares reporting tactics that will allow you to track your efforts and identify their return.

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History of SEO

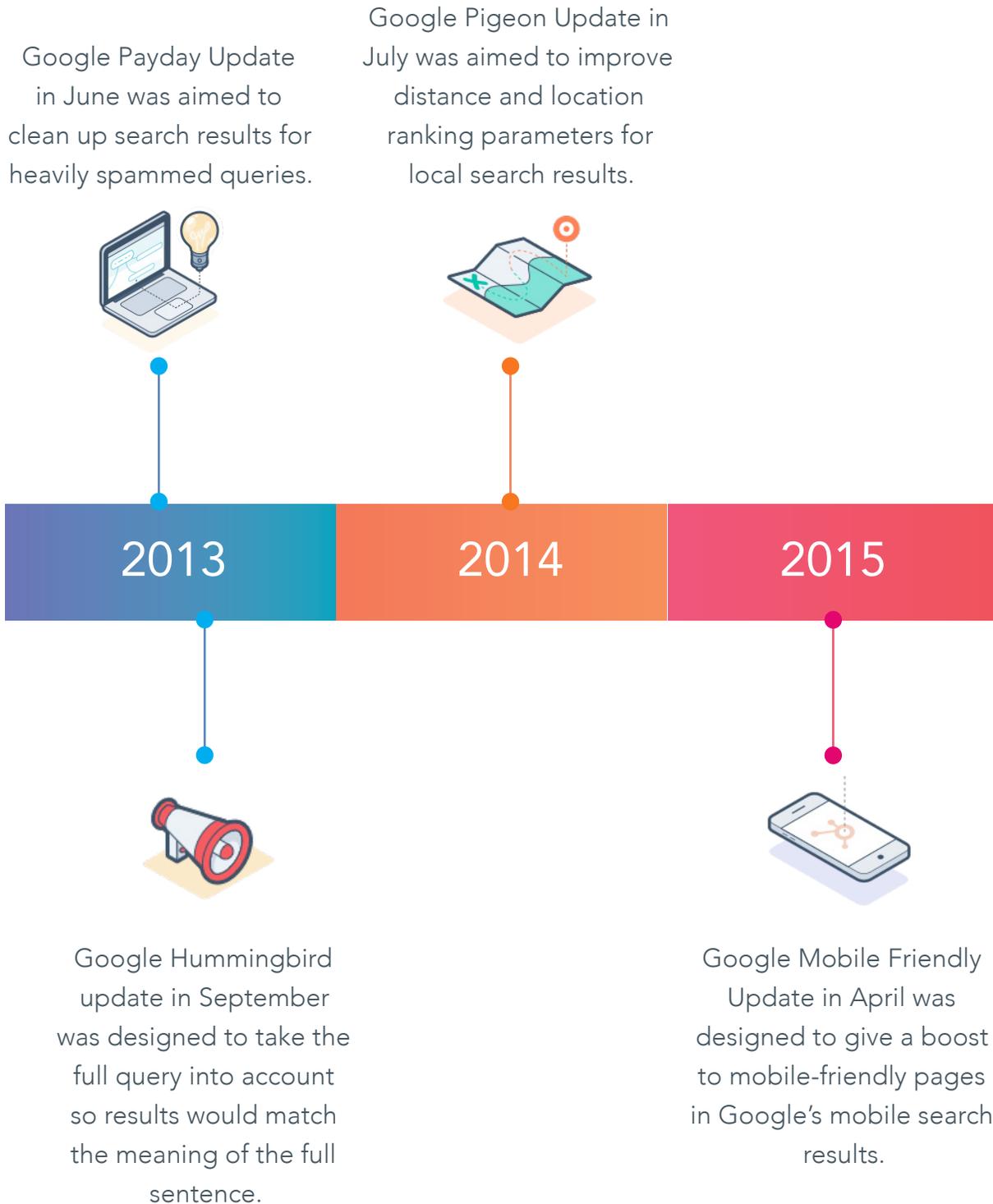
Search engines are constantly improving the search experience and therefore SEO is in a nonstop transformation. Google have had several broad core algorithm updates just in 2018 focusing on content relevance.

Changing search behaviour urges search engines to continuously improve algorithm to be able show more relevant search results. To process the search results better Google has made a machine-learning artificial intelligence system called RankBrain as part of their search algorithm.

There have been several major disrupting factors in organic search in recent years such as local search, mobile search and voice search. Local search results have been rapidly growing in significance ever since Pigeon update in 2014. In addition, Google's mobile update of April 2015 gave a boost to mobile friendly websites as all non-mobile-friendly websites started getting lower rankings.

In 2015 alone, voice search increased from [0% to 10%](#) of all search volume globally and is expected to grow to 50% by 2020. Voice search has further increased the importance of localisation in SEO. This is a great opportunity for local businesses to optimise SEO for local results and SERP features.

Google rolls out several broad core algorithm updates a year as well as smaller focused updates even several times a day.



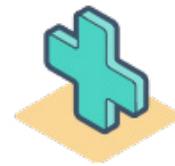
Google introduced RankBrain in October which is a machine learning algorithm that filters search results to give users the best answer to their query.



Google Penguin Update (2012) is part of the core algorithm in September which evaluates websites and links in real time and devalues link rather than page rank.



In August, Google released the Medic Update to resolve the large ranking fluctuation of websites in the medical and health industries.



2016

2017

2018



Google Mobilegeddon (Mobile-Friendly Update #2) launched in May increased the ranking signal to show more pages that are relevant and mobile friendly.

In January, Google rolled out a penalty to punish aggressive interstitials and pop-ups that might damage the mobile user experience.



In March 2018, Google rolled out mobile-first indexing and ranking to better help mobile users find what they're looking for.

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How To Get Started With On-Page SEO

1. Keyword Research

What might have worked for SEO just a few years ago, no longer applies today. You have to cater to the user and search engines, that are constantly updating algorithms to provide better search results. Long-tail keywords are increasingly valuable as search engines are being advanced more and more to match the user's specific queries as precisely as possible looking at phrases instead of single keywords.

Long-tail keywords are longer keyword phrases usually containing three or more words. In addition, long-tail keywords tend to be easier to rank for as the search volume is lower. Search volume of the selected keywords should be high enough to generate a good amount of traffic to your website but selecting keywords with very high search volume may present a challenge due to high competition for those keywords.

A good rule of thumb is to go for the low hanging fruits - the keywords that with little effort can make your site rank higher.

What's a long-tail keyword?

Here's an example that shows the difference between long-tail keywords and the corresponding head term.

Keyword definition	Examples
Head term A generic search term one or two words in length	"marketing automation"
Long-tail A long tail keyword is a very targeted search phrase that contains 3 or more words. It often contains a head term.	"information on marketing automation" "marketing automation information" "marketing automation system" "marketing software applications" "converting leads to customers"

As HubSpot article "[6 ways to do keyword research using HubSpot](#)" suggests, you need to put yourself in the shoes of your potential customers and create [buyer personas](#). These personas will help you to understand what your audience is searching for. Don't forget to speak to your customer support and sales teams as they have valuable insight of topics your customers care about.

Look at the top blogs in your industry and see what topics and keywords you can use in planning your content. There are many ways to do keyword research such as Google Ads Keyword Planner and Ubersuggest as mentioned in AccuRanker blog article "[How to get started with SEO](#)". If you run out of ideas when adding keywords in AccuRanker, you can also get keyword suggestions in AccuRanker itself.

2. Mobile and Desktop Keywords

Do you know from which devices your online traffic is coming from? You can use Google Analytics to see what percentage of your audience uses desktop versus mobile. With mobile search continuing to increase its market share over desktop, we always recommend tracking on both device types. It is vital to have a detailed overview of how your website ranks in mobile versus desktop search queries, such as shown in the image below.



3. Optimise Page Titles and Meta Descriptions

Optimise the website's content for search engines by using your primary keywords in the URL, title, header, meta description, and body.

Let's start by understanding what meta tags are and which are the most important for improving your site's SEO. Using meta tags is a good way for you to provide search engines with information about your site.

Meta tags basically are snippets of text that provide information about a page's content. Meta tags don't appear on the page itself, but only in the page's code. Meta tags are added to the <head> section of your HTML page. Google is able to read both HTML and XHTML-style meta tags, regardless of the code used on the page.

Make sure to create descriptive page titles and ensure that every page on your site has a title specified in the `<title>` tag. The goal of the snippet and title is to best represent and describe each result and explain how it relates to the user's query. You want to be sure to include the keywords you want to rank for. Include your primary keywords but avoid keyword stuffing (including a long list of keyword synonyms).

Make sure your titles are distinct and descriptive so both, search engines and visitors, can easily understand and navigate your site. You can test your page title by optimising page title and seeing if it gets more traffic within a month.

Every page on your site should have a meta description. Meta description tag provides a short description of the page. However, Google sometimes tends to pick a snippet of text from the page itself, meaning that description tag won't always show up in the results for a Google search, but it's useful in other ways.



Google has also stated that keywords in meta descriptions won't affect your rankings. However, a compelling meta description tag could encourage searchers to click through from the SERP to your site, especially if the description includes the keywords they were searching for.

Meta description length has been changing. After Google increased meta title description in 2017, it has been reduced again in 2018 and is now recommended to be between 120 and 158 characters for Google. This is due to different maximum lengths for mobile and desktop. Make sure to include to most important information first.

Are you wondering what a good meta description looks like? Check out the examples on the next page.



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Love travel? Plan and book your perfect trip with expert advice, travel tips, destination information and inspiration from **Lonely Planet**.

Rank Tracker : Grow your organic traffic with AccuRanker

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AccuRanker is the world's fastest rank tracker - a must-have tool if you want to organize and grow your organic traffic, and leave your competitors in the dust.

HubSpot | Inbound Marketing & Sales Software

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HubSpot is an **inbound marketing** and sales platform that helps companies attract visitors, convert leads, and close customers.

4. Optimise Page Content

It is also crucial to add your primary keyword in headings, content, image titles, alt text, and URLs. Image alt tags or alt attributes are used to describe an image so that search engines can understand the image's subject matter. The ultimate aim for adding more context around images is to provide a great user experience and use visuals to be found in Google Images as more and more people search for visual information. The alt and title attributes of an image are commonly referred to as alt tag or alt text and title tag – even though they're not technically tags. Note that the alt image tag should only provide information that is present in the photo.

In 2017 Google started showing badges (such as "recipe" or "ingredients") on certain results to aid users in the search process. In addition, Google also added the website's domain URL for each result to show users where the image is coming from. This presents you with an opportunity to increase high quality organic traffic to your site by adding context around images, like image captions, prominent badges, and AMP results.

[See Google's image publishing guidelines here.](#)

HTML has six different heading tags (H1, H2 etc.) and they are used to tell your web browser how to display the content. Heading tags help describe what the content is about. The H1 tag should be around 20 to 70 characters long, but much more important than length is the content. SEO is shifting its focus to providing a better user experience as organic search matches user queries more intelligently, taking on a conversational approach. It is a good idea to use keywords and especially long tail keywords in H1 tags to describe the topic so crawlers will better understand what content is on the page.

5. Optimise for Featured Snippets

Google first introduced featured snippets in January 2014 and new featured snippet types appear often to aid users to find the best answers to their questions. Snippets are designed to showcase the page content that best relates to a user's specific search and drives traffic as a result. This means that a page might show different snippets for different searches to better match user's query.

Google uses different sources for this information, including descriptive information in the title and meta tags for each page. Google sometimes uses <meta> tag content to generate snippets, if it give users a more accurate description that can be taken directly from the page content. Google may also use publicly available information, or create rich results based on markup on the page.

Snippets are automatically created from page content so all the above mentioned attributes are important for being shown as featured snippets. So in short, you have to follow the SEO guidelines to have valuable content with unique and descriptive text to have a chance of appearing in featured snippets. Featured snippets are gaining importance especially in mobile and voice-only searches.

By answering a specific question with your content and being seen as a thought leader in a particular field, Google will reward you with featured snippets. Check out the example below for HubSpot's featured snippet on keyword research.



How to do keyword research



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How to Research Keywords for Your SEO Strategy

1. Step 1: **Make** a list of important, relevant topics based on what you know about your business. ...
2. Step 2: Fill in those topic buckets with keywords. ...
3. Step 3: **Research** related search terms. ...
4. Step 4: Check for a mix of head terms and long-tail keywords in each bucket.

More items...

[How to Do Keyword Research for SEO: A Beginner's Guide](https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/how-to-do-keyword-research-ht)

<https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/how-to-do-keyword-research-ht>



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Topic Clusters Site Architecture

Website navigation should help guide the user through the website. Internal links provide more clear hierarchy and improve website navigation. One of the purposes for internal linking is to distribute page authority and ranking power among pages. Inner linking provides clear paths for search engines as well as prolonged sessions for users that increases dwell time and therefore also aids in ranking higher in search results.

Of course to start creating many internal links, you will need to create a lot of insightful and engaging content. A lot of linkable content will give the opportunity to structure the content in topic clusters. HubSpot has been known to successfully implement topic clusters content strategy to maximize the content ROI.

Tracking the performance and progress of each topic cluster helped make changes where it is most needed. HubSpot uses AccuRanker to track keyword rankings for each topic cluster. You can structure your AccuRanker account and replicate how HubSpot tracks the progress of their content strategy.

Here is a step-by-step guide on how to implement HubSpot's topic cluster strategy using AccuRanker.

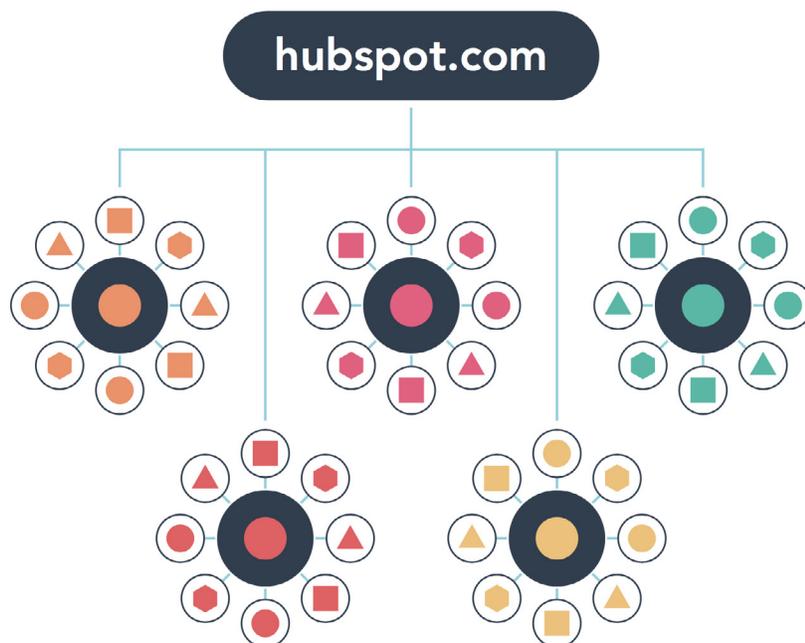
1. Content Audit

First you need to carry out a content audit of your website and take a look at your existing content. Your to do list:

- Begin considering which of the longer pieces can be used as 'pillar pieces'.
- Consider combining a few shorter pieces if you don't yet have any long form content.
- Repurpose and update any of your older content that could still add value.
- Look for themes amongst your content pieces.

2. Identify Topics

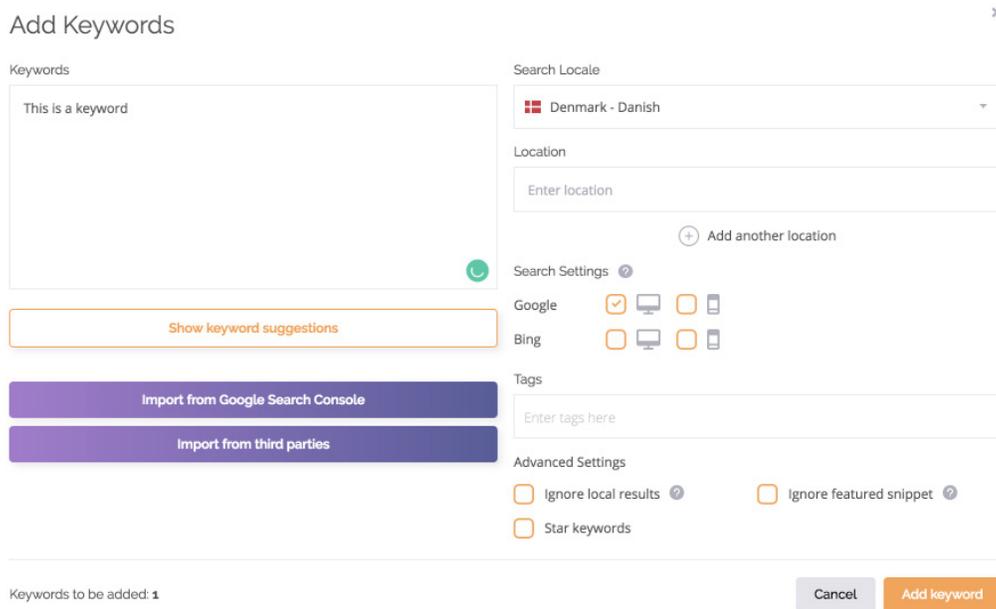
Start thinking in terms of which topics you want to own, not just keywords. If you already have lists of keywords associated with your content then begin organising those according to your new topic cluster structure (shown below). If you do not then consider the options highlighted below to begin your initial keyword research.



3. Track Keyword Rankings with AccuRanker

Log in to your AccuRanker account or set up your AccuRanker account [here](#). Start by adding your domains and keywords. There are several ways that you can upload your keywords into your AccuRanker account. You can enter keywords manually, use keyword suggestions, or import keywords from Google Search Console or from third parties.

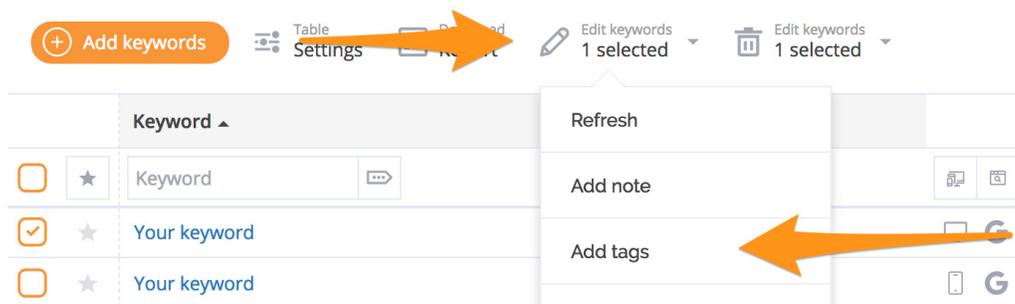
If your business has a physical location or if you are present in several markets and want to track keywords in a specific location - location feature will be very useful for you. It can be any specific region, city or even an address. This comes in handy if your focus is on local SEO, as you can add as many locations as you only wish. You can also track your keyword in both Google and Bing search engines, as well as track both mobile and desktop keywords. Mobile and desktop keywords are tracked separately to show you a more detailed overview of how your website ranks in mobile versus desktop search queries.



The screenshot shows the 'Add Keywords' modal window in AccuRanker. It features a text input field for keywords with the placeholder 'This is a keyword'. Below this is a 'Show keyword suggestions' button. There are two buttons for importing keywords: 'Import from Google Search Console' and 'Import from third parties'. On the right side, there are settings for 'Search Locale' (set to Denmark - Danish), a 'Location' input field with an 'Add another location' button, and 'Search Settings' for Google and Bing (with checkboxes for desktop and mobile). There is also a 'Tags' input field and 'Advanced Settings' with checkboxes for 'Ignore local results', 'Ignore featured snippet', and 'Star keywords'. At the bottom, it shows 'Keywords to be added: 1' and 'Cancel' and 'Add keyword' buttons.

4. Add Tags to your Keywords

To put it simply – tags enable you to put your keywords into different categories. Once you have added your keywords you can tag the keywords. Tags represent the topic cluster to which the keywords are allocated. Once you click 'Add keywords' then all of these keywords will have this tag. You can also add tags to keywords that you are already tracking. Adding tags will help you keep your keywords organised relating to your topic clusters. It will also help you monitor progress of each topic cluster.

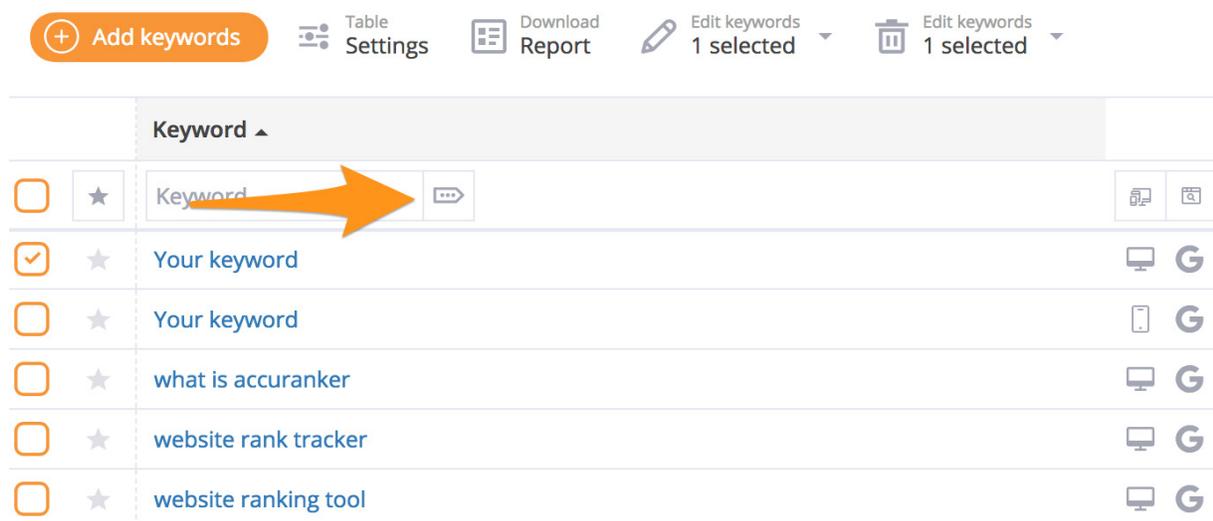


Bonus tip: add notes to your keywords to keep track of your content optimisation process.

5. Filter your Data

You can add as many tags as you wish as some of your keywords will have several tags as they might belong to several topic clusters. You can take your segmentation a step further by adding a second tag to denote which are the primary keywords for each topic cluster.

Tag filtering in AccuRanker allows you to show or ignore specific tags. In this way you can monitor the keyword list of a specific topic cluster. Simply select the 'Tag filtering' icon and select the tag. This technique enabled HubSpot to track the overall progress of each topic cluster. It does so by monitoring the progress of all keywords associated with a specific topic cluster tag, and those which were marked 'Primary' with priority.



By using the Tag Cloud feature you can track multiple metrics associated with the performance of your Topic Cluster. The number of tags that you can use to filter and segment your data is unlimited. Filter your view to see only the Topic Cluster Keywords, the Primary Keywords and the corresponding in-depth data such as Share of Voice and analytics data. You can also see:

- Combined CPC for all keywords at each tag
- Average time spent on the URLs the keywords in each tag point towards
- Average load time of the URLs that each keyword in the tag point at
- Bounce rate
- How much revenue each tag has generated
- How many times a URL has fulfilled a Goal in Google Analytics.

To have an easy access to the overview of keyword rankings for the specific topic clusters and work more efficiently with your team, you can save your segmented data with the 'Saved Segments' function in AccuRanker. Your segments can also be easily shared with team members to ensure you are all working from the same view of your topic cluster data.

6. Reporting

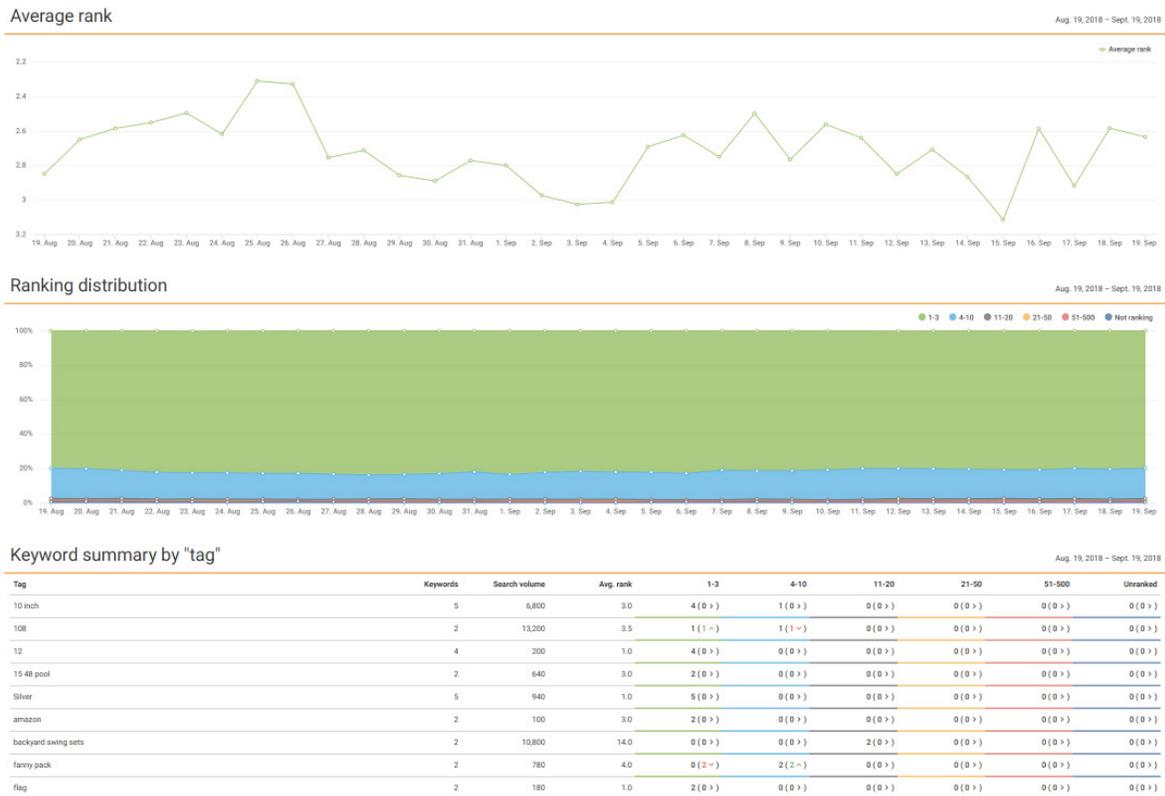
Once you have set your segments, it is simple to use the AccuRanker reporting system to ensure that you and your team are kept regularly up to date.

Use the extensive reporting functions to not only keep track of your topic cluster's progress but to share these with various teams and colleagues who will also use the information.

You can do this in two ways. Either download a report direct from your Keywords section once you have applied your filters, by clicking the reports icon next to the 'Add keywords' button. Select the dates you want to compare, and filters you want to add to your report, and download the report. This can be very useful if you need up to date data for a meeting – so you can download the report with live data in seconds.

Use the reporting template with the drag and drop report template builder to configure your report exactly how you want it. All reports are highly customizable and can be emailed to all team members directly. By scheduling daily reports the content team can monitor the performance of each topic cluster and identify which topic clusters need to be optimised.

Some keywords are more important to you than others (e.g. your primary keywords). To keep track of your primary keywords, all you have to do is go to your keywords overview in AccuRanker and star-mark your primary keywords.



Bonus tip: changes in your starred keywords ranking will be shown in your notifications.

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Analyse Results

Constantly analysing results and optimising content is the key to maximising content ROI. When looking at changes in organic traffic, pay extra attention to non-branded keywords and primary keywords in each cluster (this is made easier with filtering by keyword tags). One of the most important questions you have to ask yourself is - have I increased the number of pages that generate traffic?

Here's a list of additional metrics to use to measure the return on investment of your on-page SEO strategy:

- Search volume
- Share of Voice (this is AccuRankers way of showing visibility score as an indicator on how your organic market is progressing compared to your competitors)
- Cost value (combined CPC for all keywords at each tag)
- Average time spent on the URLs the keywords in each tag point towards
- Average load time
- Bounce rate
- How many times a URL has fulfilled a goal in Analytics

06 / Conclusion

The SEO industry is changing in a fast pace and in order to keep up with it you need to stay updated with the latest algorithm updates and cater content to your audience. Maximising content ROI is all about applying the right content strategy that takes SEO and site infrastructure into account, as well as monitoring your progress and constantly optimising your website. Advanced filtering and segmentation, historical insights, and exclusive Landing Page and Tag Cloud features allow you to analyse and monitor SERP activity on keywords for both you and your competitors. By tracking these SEO efforts over time you'll have a full understanding of your audience, how they interact with your site, and which areas are most impactful on your content ROI.

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