

A close-up, shallow depth-of-field photograph of a person's hands typing on a silver laptop keyboard. The person is wearing a blue and white checkered shirt. The laptop screen is open and shows a web browser with a colorful sidebar. The background is a blurred office environment with a desk, a plant, and a window.

PUTTING YOUR WORDS TO WORK

IN DIGITAL MARKETING

WHO AM I?

- 16 YEARS AS A PROFESSIONAL WRITER
- TRANSITIONED TO SEO FOCUS IN 2010
- WORKING WITH E-COMM BRANDS SINCE 2011
- LAUNCHED CONSULTING BUSINESS IN 2019
- BASED IN LANCASTER, PA

- CLIENT PROFILE:
 - E-COMMERCE SMB
 - E-COMMERCE SAAS
 - DIGITAL MARKETING AGENCIES

- SERVICES INCLUDE:
 - SEO AUDITING
 - E-COMMERCE CONSULTING
 - SHOPIFY SETUP
 - CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY
 - OPTIMIZED CONTENT WRITING
 - USER EXPERIENCE (UX) MICROCOPY



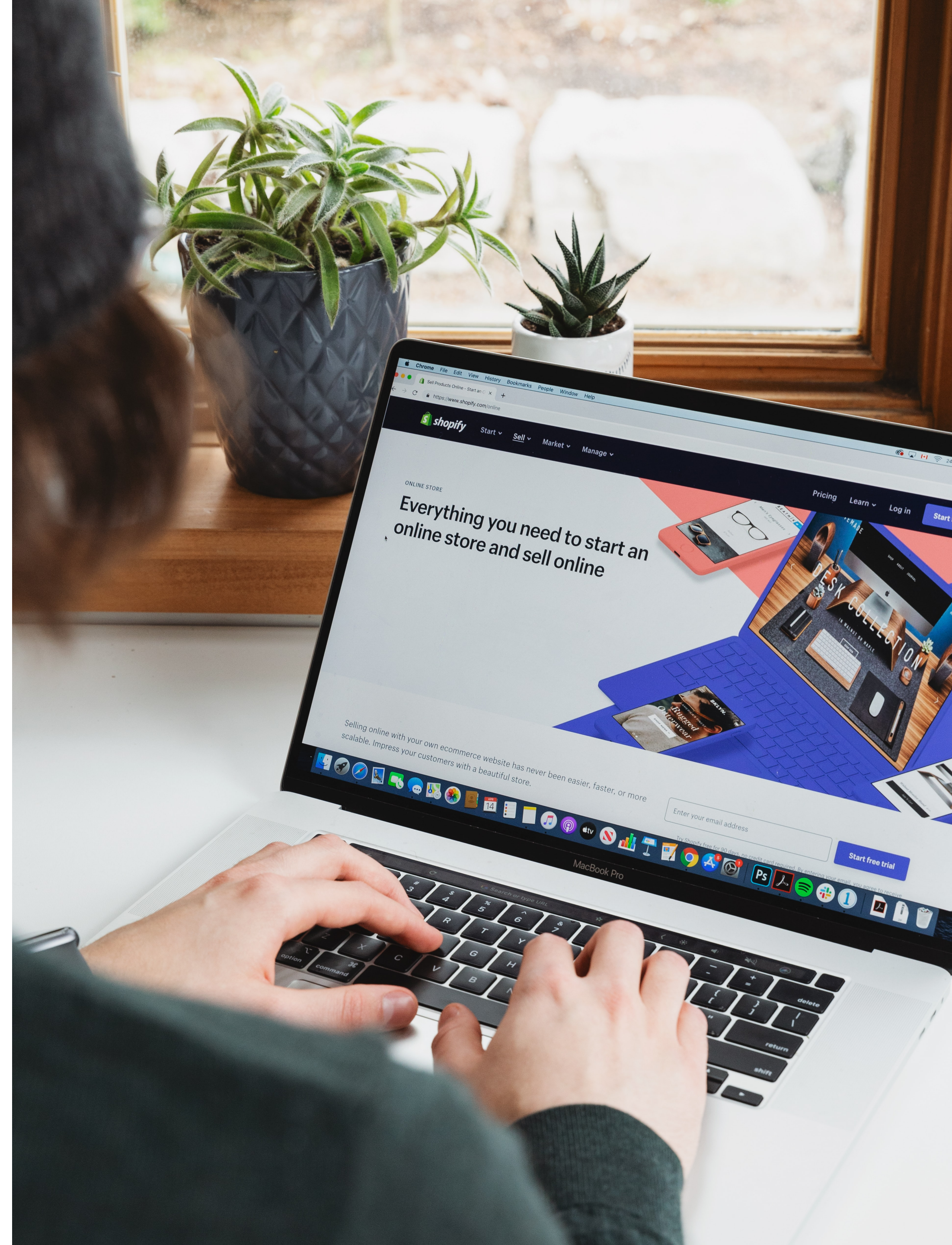
\$2.75

THE AVERAGE RETURN AN E-COMMERCE BUSINESS SEES FOR EVERY \$1 SPENT ON SEO EFFORTS

SOURCE: WEBFX

GET TO KNOW THE BASICS

MARKETING YOUR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES



TRADITIONAL MARKETING

DOESN'T WORK FOR INTERNET BUSINESSES

While some customers are willing to search until they find just what they want, most shoppers need a quick and accessible option at the right price.

- Customers aren't physically in your store
- You need to reduce the number of actions required to connect the shopper with a purchase.
- Billboards, TV ads, radio ads, and print media all require the potential customer to
 - Remember your information
 - Visit the website
 - Locate what the ad was about
 - Purchase

...if you can condense steps 1-3 into just one action, you increase the chance of conversion (purchase)

WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS?

PPC ADVERTISING

VIA GOOGLE, BING, AMAZON

PPC = “Pay-Per-Click”

- **Digital ads that you only pay for when someone clicks on it**
- **Available through major search engines and within the Amazon ecosystem**
- **PROS: cost effective, low entry barrier, highly targeted, links to whatever you want, delivers fast results**
- **CONS: limited control, platform-exclusive, cost varies (holiday spikes), high competition in some industries — competitors can buy out your keywords**

SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING

IN SEARCH, MAPS & MORE

- **Includes, but is not exclusive to, PPC**
- **Paid digital ads appearing in search and localized apps (Google Maps, Yelp, etc.)**
- **Offers a varying level of control over your advertising**
- **PROS: appear in a wide variety of search results, target customers in geographic area, delivers fast results**
- **CONS: high competition, continual expense, platform-exclusive**

SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING

LEAD CURATION & CLICKS

- **Similar to PPC/Search Engine Marketing but within a social media platform**
- **PROS: can provide great insights about your audience's shopping behaviors, works well with influencer marketing friendly companies**
- **CONS: not as great for B2B, may need to create different kinds of ads for every platform, labor/time intensive, may take a while to find where ideal audience hangs out on social media, potential initial customer suspicion**

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

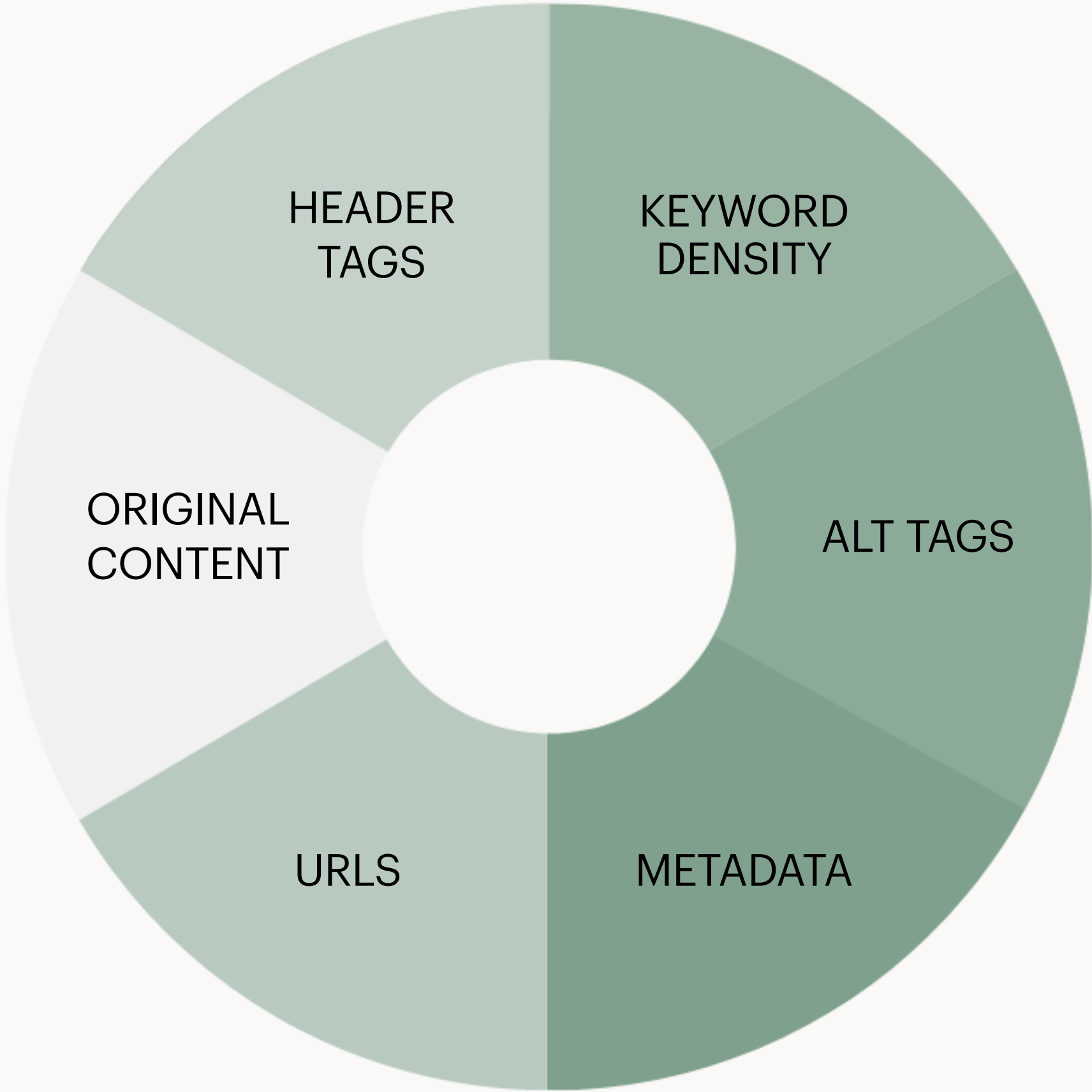
FREE*, SUSTAINABLE, AND SCALABLE

Use content and page structure to “teach” search engines that your content should be shown to people browsing the web.

Builds customer trust and loyalty

- **PROS: not paying the search engine for ads, typically stable and sustainable, accessible to anyone with a website, considered trustworthy by end user**
- **CONS: has to be done correctly to be effective, technical entry barriers, slow process**

ON-PAGE SEO FACTORS



PUT ON YOUR SEO HAT

STAYING ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF SEARCH ENGINES

- SEO has evolved and changed over the years.
- You used to be able to put a bunch of keywords on a page and watch it rank fairly easily.
- This is no longer the case due to higher competition, more businesses online, and tighter rules implemented by search engines to control spam.
- SEO that follows industry best practices is known as *white hat*.
- SEO that knowingly attempts to circumvent, break, ignore or overpower industry best practices and safeguards is known as *black hat*.

PUT ON YOUR SEO HAT

STAYING ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF SEARCH ENGINES

Examples of white hat SEO:

- **Using selected keywords in real content that is designed for humans to read**
- **Following appropriate text hierarchies**
- **Implementing appropriate privacy features as required by law**
- **Getting other websites to link to the content through natural marketing outreach: sending products for review by magazines/bloggers, press releases, asking for a feature, establishing business relationships**

PUT ON YOUR SEO HAT

STAYING ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF SEARCH ENGINES

WHITE HAT PROS	WHITE HAT CONS
Leads to sustainable long term growth	Slow to achieve
Will not incur penalty from search engines	
Rank will not be stripped abruptly	
Provides a great user experience	

PUT ON YOUR SEO HAT

STAYING ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF SEARCH ENGINES

Examples of black hat SEO:

- **Stuffing content full of keywords and prioritizing this frequency over readability**
- **Creating false links to obscure actual content paths**
- **Ignoring or circumventing privacy features required by law**
- **Paying for links or followers**
- **Placement in link 'farms' used to generate traffic spikes**

PUT ON YOUR SEO HAT

STAYING ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF SEARCH ENGINES

BLACK HAT PROS	BLACK HAT CONS
Cheap, quick initial gains	Rank gains can be stripped abruptly
	Website may be shut down or flagged as spam
	May incur penalties or fines
	Typically low-quality; does not build trust

**GET IN FRONT
OF YOUR
AUDIENCE**



KEYWORDS

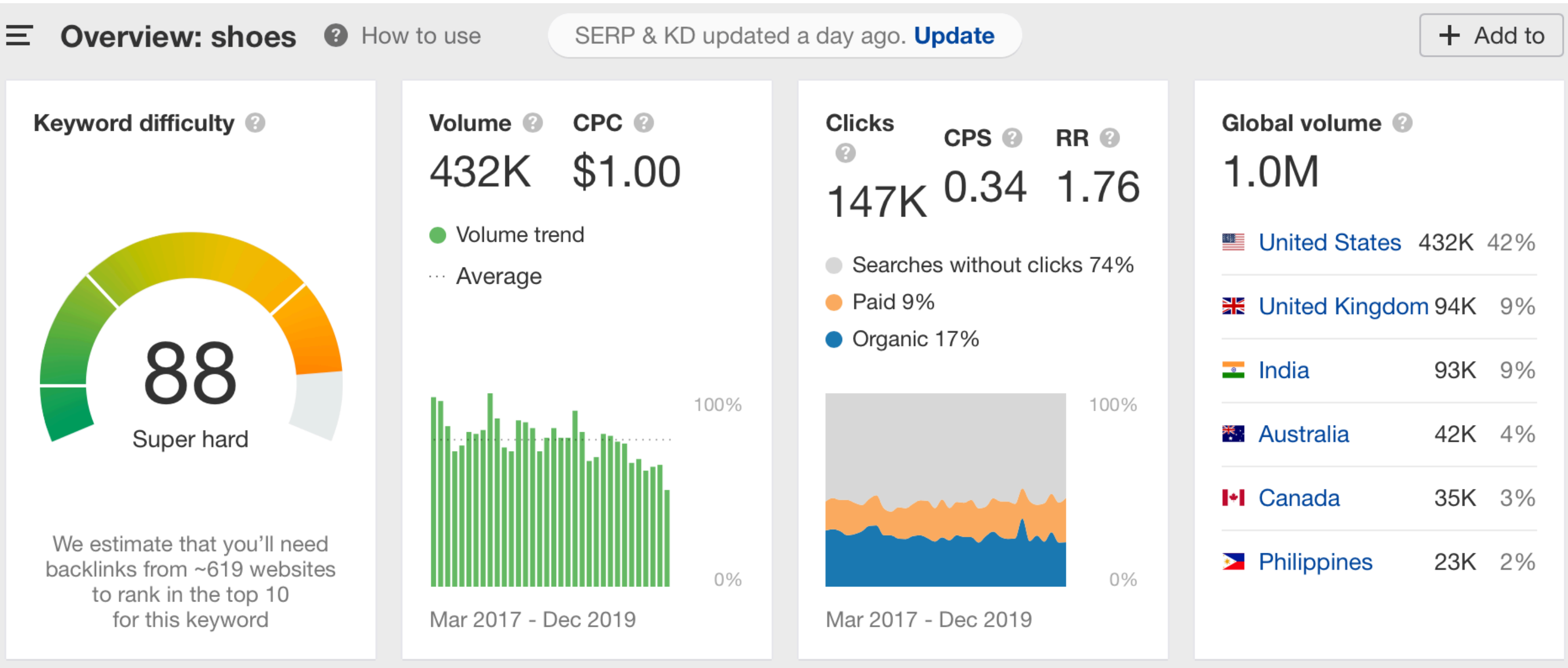
THE BACKBONE OF SEO

- Can be more than one word
- Topical phrases that relate to content
- Should be things people are actually searching for online
- Apply across all search engines
- May apply throughout different languages and countries
- Anyone can implement

TYPES OF KEYWORDS

FIND YOUR COMPETITIVE NICHE

SHORT TAIL	LONG TAIL
One or two words (“shoes”)	Full phrase or question (“best women’s walking shoes”)
Broad, vague top-level concepts and terms	Highly specific search intent
High search volume, high competition	Lower search volume, less competition
May apply to too many people	Use multiple variations for effective reach



<input type="checkbox"/>	+	how to clean white shoes	8	15K	26K	7,634	<div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/>	+	how to tie shoes	13	6.5K	8.3K	3,658	<div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/>	+	how to lace shoes	15	5.1K	8.1K	2,579	<div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/>	+	how to polish shoes	15	4.5K	8.6K	3,522	<div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/>	+	why glue pennies to shoes	2	3.9K	4.1K	1,602	<div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/>	+	how to make shoes	11	3.2K	5.0K	1,945	<div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/>	+	how to lace dress shoes	12	2.8K	3.4K	2,215	<div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/>	+	how to clean canvas shoes	9	2.8K	4.3K	1,787	<div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/>	+	how to stop shoes from squeaking	11	1.8K	2.1K	1,016	<div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/>	+	how to clean white leather shoes	8	1.6K	2.9K	1,064	<div></div>
<input type="checkbox"/>	+	how to break in shoes	13	1.6K	2.2K	928	<div></div>

GET A FEEL FOR YOUR KEYWORDS

RIGHT THIS MINUTE

The most basic way to begin keyword research:

- Go to google.com
- Type in a question or descriptive phrase
- Scroll to end of page
- Examine “searches related to” section

Searches related to best women's walking shoes

best women's walking shoes **for supination 2020**

best walking shoes **for travel**

women's walking shoes **with arch support**

best shoes **for walking all day**

best **cushioned** walking shoes

best women's walking shoes **for heel spurs**

best shoes **for walking and standing all day**

vionic satima active walking shoes



USING YOUR KEYWORDS

BE SMART, NOT SPAMMY

- Choose 1-3 per webpage (shorter content = fewer keywords)
- Only use keywords that fit naturally into content — is it something a real person would say?
- Place your most important keyword in the page title and URL
- Place secondary keywords in any subheads
- Sprinkle a few instances through text if it fits well
- You do not need to use every variation on a word — Google can figure it out
- Do not misspell a word because some people have typed it into Google incorrectly

HOW THIS WORKS FOR SEARCH

WHAT DOES GOOGLE DO?

- **Search engine algorithms are very advanced**
- **They understand natural human speech patterns. Strings of keywords that aren't arranged in a way people speak will be discounted/devalued by Google & co.**
- **Search engine "spiders" (bots) crawl the Internet and evaluate content**
- **Links to relevant content create positive associations, especially to/from well-known websites or sites with legitimate high traffic (.gov and .edu sites are extra valuable)**
- **The content of page titles and URLs tell the search engine what to expect on the page**

START BLOGGING

LIKE IT'S 2008

- **Home, about and product pages tend to remain fairly consistent over time with minimal changes**
- **Regular creation of new content helps increase the chances of a site ranking well**
- **Blogging is not dead — all businesses need to have a blog or resource articles section**
- **Use questions people asked Google as long tail keywords and blog topic ideas**
- **Write about answers and link to your relevant products, services, etc that relate to the solution and explanation**
- **Blog posts should be at minimum 500 words**
- **Over time, develop content into larger 1000+ word posts**

CONTENT THAT SELLS YOUR STUFF



PRODUCT DESCRIPTIONS

THE 4-2-1 FORMULA

- Works for physical/digital products and professional services
- 4 key features in bullet points
 - Serves as the 'hook' — you only have a few seconds to lock in attention
 - Focus on the absolute essentials
 - Should not include price, that is visible elsewhere
- 2 descriptive paragraphs (approximately 2-3 sentences each)
- 1 focus keyword: place in title and URL

PRODUCT DESCRIPTIONS

THE 4-2-1 FORMULA

Top everything off with a title:

BRAND NAME + KEYWORD + OPTIONAL FEATURE — DIFFERENTIATING FACTOR

Examples:

Levi's Womens' Skinny Jeans with 5-Way Stretch — Size 10 Dark Wash

Levi's Women's Jeans with Button Fly — Size 6 Petite

Fossil Leather Briefcase with Laptop Pocket and Crossbody Strap — Saddle Brown

CONVINCE YOUR CUSTOMER

BY ALTERING YOUR CONTENT STYLE

FEATURE/BENEFIT LANGUAGE	ASPIRATIONAL LANGUAGE
Great for products and services that fill a utilitarian need or do a specific function	Often used by boutiques, luxury/lifestyle brands, and coaches or consultants with premium services
Explains the feature, the benefit, and the <i>benefit of that benefit</i>	Paints a mental picture for the reader, illustrating how this product or service will help them achieve the life or look they always wanted to have
Example: the Instant Pot’s warming feature allows you to start dinner in the morning, <i>giving you more time with your family when you get home from work</i>	May focus on enhancing beauty, creating the look of someone who spends summer evenings on yachts, or subliminally promises executive success

WHAT TO EXPECT

ONCE YOU GET STARTED



- **Organic search engine optimization can be a long process**
- **Expect 6-12 months to begin seeing results**
- **After a year you should be seeing consistent traffic with a slight upward trend on average, not wild spikes and dips every month/quarter.**
- **May need to refine as you go**
- **Update content regularly to keep it fresh**
- **As traffic increases:**
 - **Bounce rate should decrease (% of people leaving the site without visiting any other pages)**
 - **Conversion (purchase) rate should increase**

WHAT CAN GO WRONG

AND HOW TO FIX IT



- **Traffic isn't increasing**
 - *Do you have the right customer/audience profile?*
 - *Consider surveying your customer to make sure your perceptions are correct.*
- **Traffic increased but dropped off again**
 - *Is your content still relevant? Did a bigger competitor create similar content? Is your content more seasonally specific than year-round?*
 - *Create a new variation on your content and test the performance.*
- **You are getting hits but low conversions and/or a high bounce rate**
 - *How easy is it for people to use your website? Are there banners in their way? Heat map software will allow a look at where people stop scrolling/clicking.*

DUPLICATE CONTENT HURTS YOUR
RANKINGS NOT THROUGH A
PENALTY, BUT BECAUSE GOOGLE
CHOOSES ONE RESULT TO SHOW.

FINDING RELIABLE PARTNERS

WHAT TO LOOK FOR & BIG RED FLAGS



LOOK FOR:

- **Consultants who can explain the process in relation to prior projects and your current business**
- **Demonstrated experience and understanding of how SEO works, or a partnership with a technical SEO expert**

AVOID:

- **Promises of “overnight results” or a “magic fix”**
- **Consultants who rely on AI programs to generate content**
- **Content farms**
- **Guarantees of specific metrics, traffic numbers, ranks, etc.**

TYPES OF CONTENT CONSULTANTS

AND WHEN YOU'LL NEED THEM

- **SEO Content Writer** — creates sales-focused and informative website content specifically geared to work well in search.
- **UX Writer** — creates eye-catching headlines, short text snippets, buttons and calls to action that enhance the user experience. May overlap with SEO writing; sometimes called “microcopy.”
- **Copywriter** — while sometimes used interchangeably with content writer, a *copywriter* is traditionally focused on print or broadcast ad copy. May do emails or social media ads.
- **Direct Response Writer** — strictly focused on creating mail, cold email, and advertorial communications to sell products to consumers.
- **Content strategist** — develops the overall strategy to take for your longer form content, such as a blog. Often overlaps with content writing.

CONTACT



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