ANSWER THE QUESTIONS
Talk about the things people care about

SEARCHER INTENT

People come to Google or other search engines with questions. Your goal is to anticipate questions prospective customers are likely to have. To win search you must build pages which answer the questions as specifically and completely as possible using language people are likely to use in their search.

An easy way to think about the questions is to start with the intention of the searcher. Intention falls into one of four categories: information, navigation, commercial investigation and transaction.

INFORMATION

The first step in the buying process is information gathering. Many of these searchers may never actually become customers but answering their questions will help you introduce your brand and company.

Informational questions are the first questions someone who doesn't know a lot about you, your product or service might ask.

For example, their questions might start with words like how, what, why, when or where. They might also use words related to learning skills such as resource, tutorial, or video. When they are looking for general information they might fall back on terms like ideas, tips, or suggestions.

EXERCISE: Write two questions someone in the information phase might ask about your product or service.

NAVIGATION

In this case the searcher is looking for a specific brand or company, but they may not know the exact URL. Winning this type of search Is only possible if you already have significant name recognition.

Examples of a navigation search might include your specific company name or a well-known product or service you sell. So, if you are a representative of a well-known brand or product, you may be able to capture some of that traffic in niche searches.

COMMERCIAL INVESTIGATION

When someone is in the market for a specific product or service, they begin by exploring and weighing their options. They may search for reviews, comparisons (Item A vs Item B) and evaluations. They may use words such as the top and best in their question.

In many product and service categories, proximity is a key deciding factor as searchers add the phrase “near me” to the query string.

This is your best chance to capture potential customers, so be sure you have a solid set of questions in this category and rich content on your website to answer each of the questions.

EXERCISE: Write one question someone in the information phase might ask about your product or service.

EXERCISE: Write two questions someone in the commercial investigation phase might ask about your product or service.

TRANSACTIONAL

Finally, someone is ready to buy. The tone of the conversation turns from an evaluation of features and products to price and location. At this last phase search terms may include buy, deal, discount, coupon, best price.

Once again geographic terms will be an important part of the search query.

While extremely helpful in consumer products these phrases are probably used less often for large consumer purchases or B2B services

EXERCISE: Write two questions someone in the Transaction phase might ask about your product or service.

Looking for help applying these questions to your marketing?

Schedule a working session