

What's the best way to write SEO copy? Starting with a plan is always a good idea. Keep in mind, these are guidelines of techniques that can be used *IF* they make sense for your site visitors. I never recommend writing solely for the search engines. In the case of search engine copywriting, the customer is truly #1.

- 1) **Use Three Keyphrases Per Page** - Not a carved-in-stone rule, the guideline of three keyphrases per page gives good variety and helps keep the copy from sounding too repetitive. I always choose keyphrases first - before I write - because they can have a direct impact on the focus of the page.
- 2) **Have 250 or More Words of Copy** - The length of your copy depends on several things: Your target customer's preferred communication style, whether the product is new to the marketplace, if a detailed explanation needs to be given, site design and many other factors. However, the 250-word minimum gives enough room to get your message across and offer an effective level of keyword support. Remember though, it's all about the customer. If your target customers prefer longer copy, write longer copy. If they like shorter copy, write shorter copy.
- 3) **Write In Natural Language** - "Natural language" is a term popular in SEO copywriting. It means that the reader should not be able to (or should barely be able to) detect what keyphrases the page is being optimized for. The copy should flow as if it were not written with the search engines in mind. You don't want the copy to sound forced or stiff. When you generate ideas for the page copy, keep your keywords in mind. Ask yourself whether you can use them in the copy in such a way that they won't be obtrusive.
- 4) **Use Keyword Phrases In Headlines and Sub-headlines** - IF it makes sense to do so. You will not blow your rankings if you have no keyword-filled or other tags. If your headline sounds stupid with keywords in it, don't use them. There are countless sites online that rank highly which have no keywords in the headline.
- 5) **Use Keyword Phrases Once or Twice Per Paragraph** - Again IF it makes sense. Remember what I keep repeating? None of these guidelines are carved in stone. Read your copy out loud. If it sounds stupid or forced, take out some keywords or find ways to rework them so they flow more naturally.
- 6) **Use Keyword Phrases In Bold, Italic or Bulleted Lists** - IF it makes sense to do so. Don't automatically bold or italicize every instance of your keywords. It will make your page look stupid, and your visitors will wonder what kind of drugs you've been doing!
- 7) **Do NOT Use Keyword Phrases As Substitutes For Generic Terms** - For example, do not replace every instance of the generic word "cruise" with the keyphrase "Mexico cruise vacation." Your copy will sound ridiculous.
- 8) **Use Keyword Phrases As Anchor Text In Links** - This is certainly not always possible. If your primary keyphrase is "Mexico Cruise Vacation," you absolutely should not write every link to include that phrase. However, if you can include keywords in anchor text within body copy or in text navigation links, you might score a little extra credit.
- 9) **Test and Track** - Lastly, and above all, please remember, it may take some tweaking to get your page to convert the way you want it to. All customers are not the same, and all sites are not the same. All keyphrases are not the same. There is no magic bullet. You'll have to test and track and see what works best for you.