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[Search engines](#) rely on algorithms to find web pages and decide which ones to rank for any given keyword.

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There are 3 steps to how search engines work:

#1 Crawling

- *Discovery stage*
- *Automated crawlers are sent to find new and previously known pages by following links from one page to another*

Search engines send out web crawlers to find new pages and record information about them. They discover new pages by following the links on pages they already know about.

For the pages they have previously visited, crawlers are periodically sent back to check whether the content has changed.



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Sometimes websites instruct search engines not to crawl certain web pages and these are left out of the index.

2. Indexing

- *Filing stage*
- *Some results are filtered*

Most web pages that offer unique and valuable content are placed into the index. Common reasons for pages not placed in the index are that the content was considered:

- Duplicate
- Low value/spammy
- Couldn't be crawled
- The page or domain lacked inbound links

3. Rankings

- *Retrieval stage*
- *Search engines scan their indexes*
- *They select web pages that provide the best answers*
- *There are over 200 ranking factors*

In 2013, Google upgraded its main algorithm and named it Hummingbird. This upgrade included Google being more intelligent in understanding the meaning of keywords and being better able to return more relevant results.

In 2015, Google announced RankBrain, which is a sub-algorithm of Hummingbird and an artificial intelligence system. This further illustrates the importance of understanding the true meaning of keywords, rather than just matching up keywords to pages that mention them.

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In English, a keyword normally implies just one word, but for SEO, it can mean one or more.

When thinking of keywords, try and understand what the users want and what task they are trying to complete - and then try to offer the best possible content to satisfy the intent behind the keyword.

Broadly speaking, there are three types of keywords:

- Navigational
- Informational
- Transactional

Depending on the topic or page you are researching, the types of keywords you will wish to target are likely to require different types of content and a [slightly different approach for SEO](#). We'll now review each one.

Navigational keywords

We can think of these types of keywords as signposts that direct searchers to a place they already have in mind. If you search Google for a brand name, a person's name or a URL, you are using navigational queries. Queries and keywords are used interchangeably in SEO.

Informational keywords

Collectively, informational queries make up the largest proportion of keywords, and because they happen at the earlier awareness stage of the buying cycle, so are harder to convert into customers.

Blog posts are examples of content where informational keywords are often targeted. That's because a blog post is more about informing, rather than selling. For this reason, informational content tends to be more successful in social media.

Transactional keywords

Transactional queries happen at the last decision stage of the buying cycle, so are easier to convert into customers, but tend to be more competitive to rank for.

As the name suggests, transactional keywords are targeted at sales pages, so they are often the first types of keywords we research and optimise for. They are also the most likely to improve the bottom line of your business and help meet business goals.

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As you might expect, transactional keywords are the most likely to help with sales and help a business grow. But they are also the most competitive type of keywords, so the hardest to rank for. Some businesses [that are new to SEO](#),

ONLY target transactional keywords, which means they struggle to rank for any keywords. Targeting informational keywords often means progress can be made quicker, particularly at the start for SEO.

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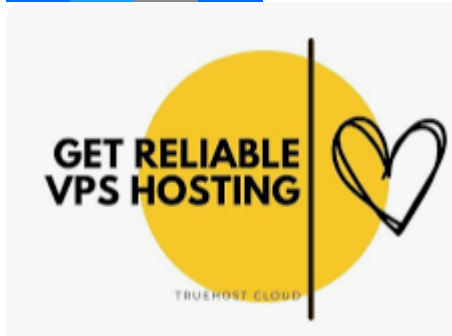
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Action Point

PS: I know you might agree with some of the points raised in this article or disagree with some of the issues raised.

Please share your thoughts on the topic discussed. We would appreciate it if you could drop your comment. Thanks in anticipation.

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