

# Home Improvement Website Increases Traffic With Content Marketing

## OVERVIEW

### Challenge

To analyze the impacts of a content marketing campaign on an ecommerce website and calculate the impact on pageviews and overall content return on investment (ROI).

### Solution

Deploy 180 long tail keyword-driven pieces of content to an ecommerce website and record the results over a 12 month period.

### Benefits

The ecommerce website increased overall pageviews by more than 20% and produced an average ROI of 300% per piece of content.

Home improvement is big business online. Not only do you have the major retail chain websites, but you also have a significant number of smaller niche online retailers all competing for the home remodeler's business. Each one of these businesses fights for organic supremacy and competition can be fierce for the high traffic keywords, which is why having a long tail content marketing strategy can pay off for both small and big players in the space.

The term "long tail" really is just another way of explaining how smaller, less searched for keywords when aggregated together can generate just as much traffic as the major sought-after search queries. Competition for long tail keywords usually requires less effort primarily because they are less sought after. For retailers willing to try, this presents a big opportunity to capture this traffic through cost effective content marketing.

This case study will focus on a longer tail content marketing strategy which was performed over 2009. It will identify what, if any, impact that adding content had on a home improvement retailer's website.

## Getting Started

Our analysis focused on an Internet retailer that started an online business in late 2008 selling bathtubs online. Initially, the client focused exclusively on Cost per Click (CPC) advertising to drive traffic to the site, while the retailer worked on optimizing the ecommerce storefront for major keywords. In 2009, they established a content marketing strategy where they used well written articles placed in an articles directory within their website to capture longer tail keyword searches.

A total of 15 articles per month were produced and deployed to the articles directory every single month, with each article focusing on a specific long-tail keyword combination. The long tail keywords were included in the title tag of each article's HTML page and a 2%-3% keyword distribution ratio (KDR) was used for each piece.

The content marketing team tracked the success of those articles over the entire 2009 calendar year and used Google Analytics to record the results. The content marketing team analyzed the data to see how many pageviews each article generated. The team also looked at developing a model to help calculate return on investment (ROI) for the content that was produced.

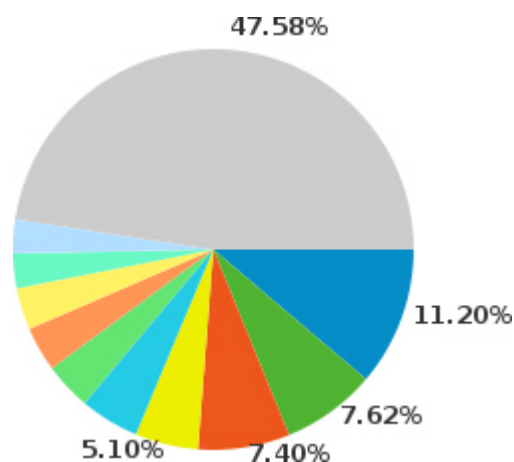
## Tracking Pageview Results

The analysis first looked at overall pageviews of all of the content that was developed. Pageviews are important as they help to count how many times a particular page was accessed by a website visitor. Pages that receive higher pageview counts (for the purposes of this case study) were looked at as being more successful than pages with lower pageview counts despite bounce rates.

Another important factor that was analyzed was overall bounce rates of the content marketing pages to see where visitors clicked to after they landed on the content page itself. The team wanted to know whether or not a visitor who lands on the page was proceeding to more important product sections of the site and eventually converting into a sale.

### PAGEVIEW TOTALS

Page	Pageviews
█	1,689
█	1,149
█	1,116
█	769
█	722
█	574
█	544
█	7,180



A total of 180 pages of content were produced over the course of 2009. Of those 180 pages written, 80% (144 pages) received traffic and pageviews generated specifically by long tail organic search engine queries. The 144 pages accounted for 15,086 pageviews or 20% of the ecommerce website's overall pageviews.

Another interesting fact was that 10 of the pages developed accounted for over half of the 15,086 pageviews captured by Google Analytics. Upon further analysis of those pages, longer tail keyword searches such as "how to" and adjective-based longer tail keyword phrases, such as "big", "small" and "extra-large", performed extremely well in capturing long tail keyword traffic.

The average bounce rate of the content marketing pages averaged 34.92%. Some pages were higher and some pages were lower. One adjective-based article, in particular, had a 14% bounce rate and produced a 72.28% Click-thru Rate (CTR). In fact, the average CTR for the top 10 pages within the articles directory was roughly 54.71%, which means that over half of all pageviews went deeper into the ecommerce website.

## Content Keyword ROI

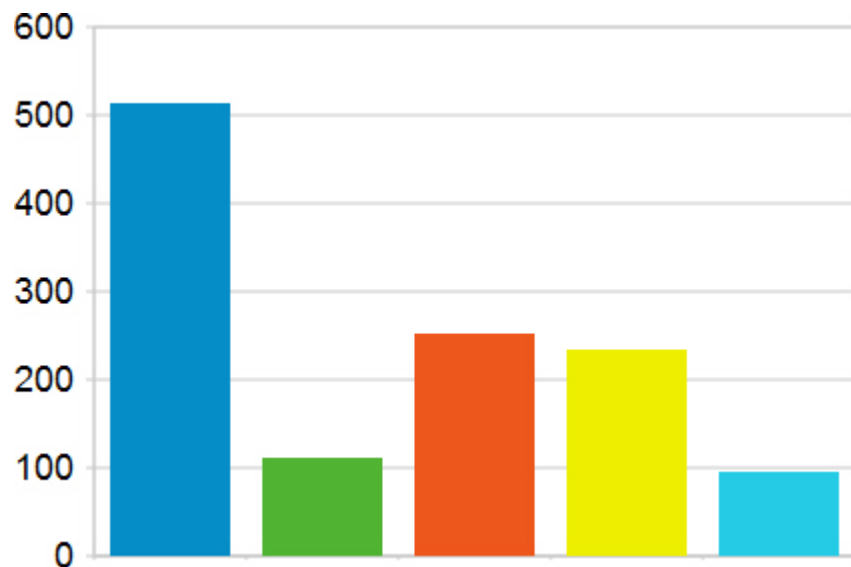
For the purposes of this case study we will calculate Return on Investment (ROI) for a particular piece of content by looking specifically at how many long tail keyword combinations were created over the course of the 12 month period. ROI for the single piece of content will not be based on how much revenues are attributed to the content, but rather the budget required to run a Google Adwords campaign for the keywords generated.

The team used a combination of Google Analytics and Google Adwords in order to capture and calculate the results. The model took a single page of content located in the articles directory of the website and extracted the total number of keyword combinations that the single page generated. Keywords were the main factor in the calculation as keywords from search engines are what drive the pageviews and overall traffic counts.

The model then uses the list of keywords and applies them to a basic CPC campaign within Google Adwords. Campaign settings were calculated to run 24 hours a day since the content was available over the same daily period. The model then uses the Google Adwords system to calculate the estimated costs of running all keywords on a daily basis.

### KEYWORD TOTALS

Page	Keywords Generated
■	513
■	111
■	252
■	233
■	95



The model was applied to the "how to" piece of content represented in dark blue above. As we can see from the bar graph above, the "how to" piece of content had a total of 513 different keyword combinations. The Google Adwords system estimated an average CPC rate of \$2.61 - \$5.30 and a cost per day of \$70.39 to \$116.52, or (if this campaign ran perpetually for 30 days) costing an advertiser anywhere from \$2,111.70 to \$3,495.60 per month. This data provides significant insight into calculating ROI for the "how to" piece of content that was developed.

Based on the numbers above, that single piece of content produced had an annual savings, or ROI, of \$25,340.40 to \$41,947.20.

## Conclusion & Analysis

Overall, the content marketing campaign discussed in this case study was a huge success. The campaign generated a substantial return of pageviews and a model was developed in order to help calculate ROI of the content deployed.

By adding a total of 180 pages of content to the ecommerce website, the business was able to capitalize on roughly 15,000 more pageviews which accounted for an additional 20% of yearly pageviews to the overall site. Using these numbers, if the website owners continued to build upon their content marketing strategy, a potential 20% increase in pageviews can be estimated for every 180 - 200 pieces of content.

The content marketing campaign not only helped to increase overall pageviews, but also generated thousands of keyword combinations across the 144 pieces of content. Looking at one of the top performing pages, we estimated an annual savings in CPC spend of roughly \$40,000. By producing this content, not only did the ecommerce business increase the overall long tail keyword traffic to their website, but more importantly, they lowered their potential advertising budgets for their future paid search campaign.

In conclusion, the above data supports the theory that adding long tail keyword-driven content to a website can help to increase traffic and overall pageviews. The side effect of this activity is a substantial increase in longer tail keyword search visitors, which in turn should increase overall revenues of an ecommerce website.

## For More Information

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