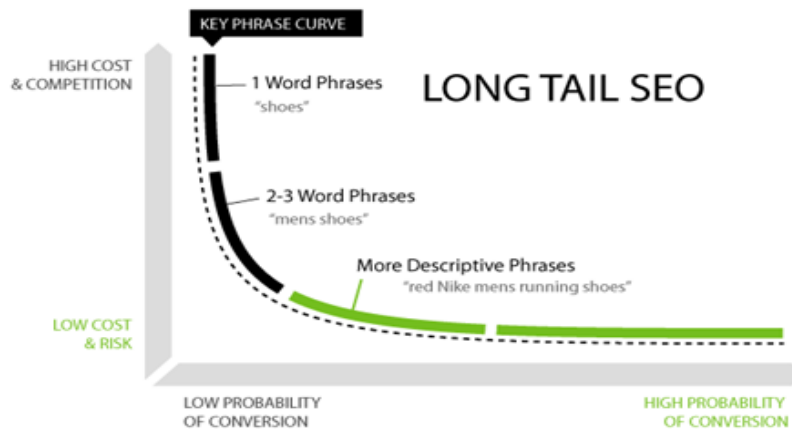


# The Pitfalls of Pay Per Click Marketing Using "Long-tail" Keywords

by [Ryan A Harris, Saleswriter](#)

Are you considering hiring someone to help you with pay per click (PPC) marketing, also known as search engine, or Google marketing? If so, you've probably heard about using "long-tail" keywords and how they can help lower your marketing costs. First, let me explain what long-tail keywords are, and their potential benefits to you as a marketer.

Long-tail keywords are usually keyword phrases that very few people search for. Because few people search with them, there is very little competition from other pay per click marketers, so the cost per click of these long-tails is relatively low compared to their short-tail, more popular brethren. The image below illustrates why they are called "long-tail". When you build a list of many long-tail keywords, in the aggregate, you can drive a lot of traffic to your website.



So why would someone want to target hundreds or even thousands of keyword or keyword-phrases which don't produce very much traffic? *Less competition!* With less competition, you can rank on the first page of Google far easier than the same ranking for short tail keywords.

This comes at a price of reduced searches and traffic, but by targeting many long tail keywords you can get traffic to your website affordably. It takes a lot of time and effort to get great Google ranking for highly competitive keywords but practically anyone can rank for long-tail keywords.

Another benefit is that the conversion rate for these keywords is usually higher, but only if the ad closely matches the keyword and the landing page closely matches the ad. Your website

visitors who found your site by searching long-tail keywords know precisely what they want. If you provide that product or service, your chances of making a sale are excellent.

But there are some challenges and other costs associated with long tail keywords that you should be aware of.

The first is the amount of time it takes to conduct keyword research. The amount of research time goes up considerably, because as you exhaust the "low hanging fruit" long-tail keywords, you have to get more and more creative, and run more and more searches to find good, relevant keywords. So it takes much more time to build a good list of long-tail keywords than short tail keywords, and time is money.

Another very important factor is that long-tail keyword searches are by definition very specific, as we've already discussed. To create an effective pay per click ad, it must match the keyword or keyword phrase that you would like to use, known as "congruency". That means for maximum effectiveness PPC marketers or their providers may have to write one PPC ad per long tail keyword. This is because most effective PPC marketers create an "Ad Group" for each focused grouping of keywords so they can fine tune their keyword bidding.

With long-tails, your ad groupings become smaller and smaller, requiring more and more ads and ad groups to make up a robust marketing campaign. The time and energy involved with creating really good long tail keywords is considerably more than with short tail keywords. The campaign requires more monitoring, more fine-tuning, and will get less traffic in general than a short tail keyword campaign.

So long tail keyword campaigns are not a "magic bullet" to solve your Internet marketing problems. You can definitely lower your cost per click (CPC) with long-tails, but this is offset by the additional time and energy it takes to create a campaign that delivers a large stream of traffic to your website.

If you outsource this work, expect to pay considerably more for your ad campaign and copywriting, because your provider has much more work to do. This is not said to discourage you, only to provide you with the information you need to make an informed decision about your marketing campaigns and how you implement specific plans to reach your business goals. PPC marketing can be extremely effective, but there are many providers out there who will tell you the upside to certain marketing strategies, but not the risks or downside. Now you have all of the information you need about the pros and cons of marketing with long-tail keywords.