Content Success Factors

Data-Driven Performance Insights For 2016

@KaneJamison

#SearchFest
Slides!

hmny.co/lotsofcontentdata
So... let’s get the definition of success out of the way.
Your Goal:

- Brand Awareness
- Engagement
- Conversion
- Retention

Your Success Metrics:

- Traffic, Links, Shares, Rankings
- Subscribers, Content Downloads
- Leads, Sales
- Repeat + Recurring Revenue, Referrals, Reviews
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1. What Ranks?

2. What Earns Links & Shares?
Remember all of those great studies you forgot to read?
I read all of them for you
SOURCES:

Moz Ranking Factors: hmny.co/mozfactors
Searchmetrics Ranking Factors: hmny.co/searchmetricsfactors
Backlinko 1 Million Study: hmny.co/backlinkofactors
Buzzsumo/Moz Shares & Links: hmny.co/buzzmoz
Stat Featured Snippets: hmny.co/statblog
What Ranks?
Word Count?
Backlinko: Average page one result is 1890 Words.
Searchmetrics: Average page one result is 1285 Words.

Heavy spike towards bottom of page 1.
STAT: Average page one result is 906 words.
STAT Data: Modest upward trend on featured snippet SERPs.
Moz Correlation: 5.6%

Searchmetrics Correlation: 7%
Verdict: Kind of important.
Verdict: Kind of important.

Make sure you’re above average for the primary SERP you’re targeting. 800-1200 words seems safe.
Schema.org?
Backlinko:
Upward trend for positions 3-10.

Sharp decline on 1-2.
STAT Data:
Lower Schema.org usage in #1-4 on featured snippet SERPs.
Moz Survey: 5% Correlation Expected
Moz Data: 1% Actual Correlation
Verdict: Don’t do it for the rankings.
Verdict: Don’t do it for the rankings.

Schema.org and other types of markup are important for rich snippets, however, so you shouldn’t totally ignore it.
Keyword Usage?
Backlinko: Solid higher average “topic authority” for positions 1-3.
Searchmetrics:
General upward trend except #1 & 2.
STAT DATA:
Pretty clear trend.
KEYWORD USAGE

**Moz:** Raw # of Keyword Matches In Body Text

- Query-Document relevance score using Language Model (Dirichlet smoothing)
- # of keyword matches in body text
- Text Query-Document relevance score using TF-IDF
- Query-Document relevance score using Language Model (Dirichlet smoothing)
  - Page-Level Keyword Usage Features: 0.13
Backlinko: Solid trend and quite a jump at #1.
STAT DATA:
Mild trend peaking at first organic slot (#2 since #1 is a snippet).
Verdict: Would you believe me if I said keywords are still important?
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Don’t get so caught up with link strategies and launch campaigns that you forget to block and tackle.
Readability?
Searchmetrics: Very slightly easier-to-read content leading the pack.
STAT DATA:
Trend looks mild but 2 points higher between #1-10.
Verdict: Mildly Important
Verdict: Mildly Important

Readability is probably more important for shareability than for rankings alone.
Images & Video?
Backlinko: Almost no trend here.
Backlinko: Almost no trend here.
STAT DATA:
Actually a downward trend, with featured snippets tending to have fewer images.
Searchmetrics: Pretty big page one jump here – 50% higher on average than page 2 results.
STAT Data:
Zero trend here within page 1 results.
Verdict: Not a make-or-break factor.
**Verdict:** Not a make-or-break factor.

*Use images & video to improve overall user experience and content quality, not for rankings.*
Lists? Tables? Links?
UNORDERED LISTS

Searchmetrics:
Upward trend towards #2.
UNORDERED LISTS

STAT Data:
Pretty flat.

Modest bump for first two organic results.
ORDERED LISTS

STAT Data:
Quite a bit more of a trend here, especially for the featured snippet position.
**STAT Data:**
Similar trend to ordered lists, with featured snippet URLs being much more likely to have a `<table>`. 

**TABLES**
OUTBOUND LINKS

STAT Data:
Another noticeable trend for #2-3 positions.
LISTS, TABLES, OUTBOUND LINKS

**Verdict:** `<ol>` & `<table>` usage trends almost as strongly as keyword usage on the page.
Verdict: `<ol>` & `<table>` usage trends almost as strongly as keyword usage on the page.

I’m not going to say these are ranking factors, but I think they’re all indicative of well-formatted content. Use them!
2 What Earns Links & Shares?
Buzzsumo & Moz: The vast majority of content gets <8 shares and 0 links.

100,000 random posts: 75% had zero external links and 39 or fewer shares
Buzzsumo & Moz: No correlation between links and social shares.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook total interactions</td>
<td>0.0221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>0.0281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linkedin</td>
<td>0.0216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinterest</td>
<td>0.0065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google plus</td>
<td>0.0058</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Buzzsumo & Moz:
...except for posts with over 10,000 total shares:

Reverse is not true. Highly-linked posts show no correlation with social shares.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Sample</th>
<th>Average Total Shares</th>
<th>Median Shares</th>
<th>Average Referring domain links</th>
<th>Median Referring domain links</th>
<th>Correlation Total Shares - Referring Domains</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Posts with over 10,000 total shares (69,114)</td>
<td>35,080</td>
<td>18,098</td>
<td>7.06</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Word Count?
**WORD COUNT**

**Buzzsumo & Moz:**
Pretty clear trend here for social shares and links alike:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length words</th>
<th>Total Shares</th>
<th>Referring Domain Links</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Median</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;1,000</td>
<td>2,823</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2,000</td>
<td>3,456</td>
<td>478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3,000</td>
<td>4,254</td>
<td>578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-10,000</td>
<td>5,883</td>
<td>566</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Verdict: Pretty important.
Verdict: Pretty important.
Formats?
FORMATS

Which Post Formats Earn Links Versus Shares?:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>Links</th>
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<tr>
<td>List post</td>
<td>(99,935)</td>
</tr>
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<td>Quiz</td>
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<td>(99,876)</td>
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## FORMATS

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<td>8,572</td>
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<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>257</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>202</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## FORMATS

Data-Based Research Content Earns Higher Average Links:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Number articles in sample</th>
<th>Average Total Shares</th>
<th>Average Referring domain links</th>
<th>Correlation of Total Shares to Referring domain links</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FiveThirtyEight.com</td>
<td>1.977</td>
<td>1,783</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priceonomics.com</td>
<td>541</td>
<td>1,797</td>
<td>11.49</td>
<td>0.629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PewResearch.com</td>
<td>892</td>
<td>751</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nytimes.com</td>
<td>4,143</td>
<td>3,990</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>0.498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theguardian.com</td>
<td>19,606</td>
<td>1,777</td>
<td>12.54</td>
<td>0.433</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Verdict: Know your goal.
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Making content linkable & shareable is possible but needs to be well planned.
TAKEAWAYS

1 - Design & formatting matters.
2 – Use long-form content to build links & domain authority.
TAKEAWAYS

3 – Use short-form content to keep audiences engaged cost effectively.
4 – Align each content type and purpose with your keyword planning.
THANK YOU!

Slides!

hmny.co/lotsofcontentdata

@KaneJamison
Founder, Content Harmony

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