



BY JEREMY SANCHEZ

Speaking the Customers' Language

Google is the new homepage, so potentially any page on your site could be the page someone finds. Learn why speaking your customers' language provides a better brand experience.

The Web is a functional and task-oriented environment. It turns much of traditional marketing on its head because customers find content themselves, rather than the traditional model of content being carefully placed in front of them (such as with print or TV). In order to be found (and not summarily rejected when the user is dissatisfied with the resulting Web site), you must know what words customers use when they search. If you do not use your customers' language you provide little value, as your content does not match their mission. By speaking your customers' language, you uncover opportunities to find new customers or better serve existing ones.

So, how do you know what language your customers are speaking? Keyword research is the practice of mining search engine databases for popular consumer search keywords and trends. The keyword search data stored in Google and Yahoo!'s databases is a gold mine of consumer insights and intentions. Google, Yahoo! and other search engines make a portion of this data publicly available and, with roughly 500 million searches per day in the U.S. market alone, marketers have access to data that did not exist 10 years ago. Think of this

data as a huge focus group study that is conducted in an unbiased setting. The resulting data is powerful, and companies are leveraging search term data to not only create marketing content that can be found by search engines, but also to:

- Name products
- Estimate market sizes or emerging markets
- Develop future product offerings
- Understand seasonality trends
- Define Web site architecture or content hierarchies

For DTC marketers, search term data can be used to better understand and define the condition lifecycle. Lifecycle is defined as the different search terms a consumer may type into a search engine from first discovering a condition, to diagnosis, through to treatment and then to maintenance post-prescription. To illustrate this point, Global Strategies conducted keyword research on the category of insomnia. We evaluated the top 500 search terms by search demand (number of searches performed each month). The research included both brand and condition-based searches. The table below highlights samples of the keywords we investigated.

Researched Keywords	Related Keywords	Monthly Searches	Topic	SubTopic	Searcher Intent
Ambien	buy ambien	5,798	Medication	Purchase	Buy
Ambien	order ambien	3,169	Medication	Purchase	Buy
Ambien	buy ambien online	3,158	Medication	Online	Buy
Ambien	cheap ambien	2,436	Medication	Price	Buy
Ambien	ambien	43,572	Medication	General	Consider
Melatonin	melatonin	20,641	Medication	General	Consider
Lunesta	lunesta	10,377	Medication	General	Consider
Rozerem	rozerem	5,814	Medication	General	Consider
Ambien	ambien cr	3,942	Medication	General	Consider
Doxylamine (Unisom)	doxylamine succinate	1,562	Medication	General	Consider
Ambien	generic ambien	1,548	Medication	Generic	Consider
Ambien	ambien side effects	1,456	Medication - Side Effects	General	Consider
Unisom	unisom	1,011	Medication	General	Consider
Sleep	sleep	68,681	Information	Sleep	Learn
Sleeping	sleeping	55,127	Information	General	Learn
Insomnia	insomnia	29,341	Information	General	Learn
Tired	tired	14,891	Symptoms	Tired	Learn
Rest	rest	12,395	Treatments/Remedies	Rest	Learn
Fatigue	fatigue	10,602	Symptoms	Fatigue	Learn
Sleep	sleep disorders	10,021	Information	Disorder	Learn
Asleep	asleep	8,989	Information	Falling Asleep	Learn
Sleep	sleep deprivation	5,021	Information	General	Learn

The column labeled “Researched Keywords” are the keywords that were put into tools that mine the search engine databases for popularity and search demand. The terms in the “Related Keywords” column are the most popular variations of the “Researched Keywords.” The “Monthly Searches” column is the estimated number of searches conducted in North America over a period of a month.

The final three columns (Topic, Subtopic and Searcher Intent) are our classification of both the topical subject matter of the keyword and of the searcher’s intent when conducting the search. This is a manual process with the goal of broadly understanding what consumers are looking for online as relates to insomnia.

Taking a closer look at the findings

So what do consumers want to know? Which brands are top of mind? To no surprise, “Learn” phase words usually have higher demand, as searchers tend to start with these higher-level words before they qualify with more granular search terms. We expect this behavior, because most users start with broad search terms and then modify or refine their search based on the relevance of the results.

Examples of “Learn” phase keywords:

Sleep disorders – Insomnia – Better sleep – Go to sleep – Can’t sleep – Causes of insomnia – Insomnia and menopause – Insomnia hypnosis – Sleep aids – Sleep remedies

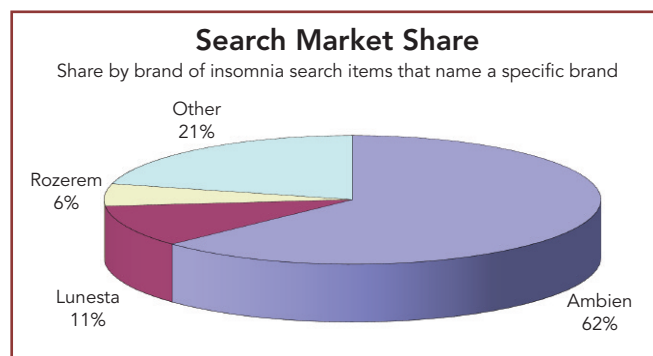
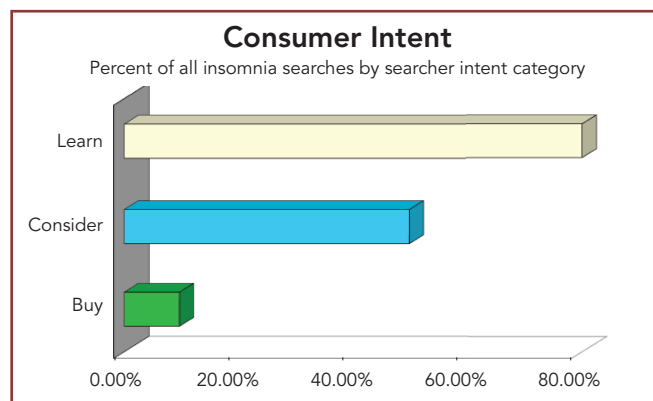
“Consideration” and “Buy” phase words in the insomnia category are characterized by the use of specific brand names and qualifiers that indicate a deeper level of engagement in the decision process. Ambien dominates brand searches 6-to-1 to its competitor, Lunesta.

Examples of “Consideration” and “Buy” phase keywords:

Lunesta side effects – Lunesta reviews – Lunesta forums – Buy Rozerem – Rozerem price – Discount Ambien – Ambien amnesia – Ambien sleepwalking

Our research also included investigating the visibility of each of the top three brands (Ambien, Lunesta, and Rozerem) in the search results for the top 25 unbranded search terms related to insomnia. Other than a No. 7 ranking by Lunesta for the term “sleep aid,” none of these three insomnia brands rank on the first page of search results. This represents a tremendous opportunity to the brand that first seizes it, and it could significantly close the gap that Ambien has with search market share – or further widen it. If other brands are

Assumptions	
Share of Search Potential (% of Total Demand expected based on rankings)	10.00%
Prospects (% of visitors that become prospects)	20.00%
Conversion Rate - (% of prospects that become prescriptions)	10.00%
Avg. Lifetime Value (Assuming 6 Month Compliance)	\$500
Missed Opportunity	
Total Monthly Value of Missed Opportunity	\$965,300



Based on search data from Keyword Discovery as of 04/06/2008

returned in the results for unbranded queries, brand awareness grows and demand for that brand grows with it.

The graph below estimates search engine traffic and potential ROI if any of the brands were to rank in the top 10 search results. The graph represents a large missed opportunity for Ambien, Lunesta and Rozerem.

Leveraging the data

The best strategy for taking action based on the data is to first split it into two buckets: unbranded and branded search terms. Branded search terms represent the lowest-hanging opportunity as these keywords are core to your brand equity and offer the easiest opportunity to improve your search engine visibility. The first step is to understand your brand keyword landscape and then better match your current and future site content to how searchers are looking for your brand. Content focusing on price, comparison and side effects are areas not very well-covered, yet offer the biggest opportunity to capture new customers. We understand from our work with pharmaceutical companies that this topic area can be a legal minefield. However, this opportunity is not to be dismissed without careful consideration. Remember, transparency is key and helping consumers find the information they are looking for is the best and quickest way to build your brand.

Unbranded keywords represent the biggest opportunity for incremental traffic and new customers but are also more competitive. Across most major categories, authority sites including the Mayo Clinic, WebMD, Wikipedia and other content-rich Web sites dominate unbranded search results. Brands

Keyword	Current Estimated Referrals	Potential Referrals	Missed Opportunity	Missed Prospects	Missed Sales (units)	Missed Sales \$	Google Demand	Best Ambien Rank
sleep	0	24,600	24,600	4,920	492	\$246,000	246,000	
melatonin	0	16,500	16,500	3,300	330	\$165,000	165,000	
insomnia	0	11,000	11,000	2,200	220	\$110,000	110,000	
ambien	38,282	9,050	0	0	0	\$0	90,500	1
tired	0	7,400	7,400	1,480	148	\$74,000	74,000	
sleeping	0	7,400	7,400	1,480	148	\$74,000	74,000	
fatigue	0	4,950	4,950	990	99	\$49,500	49,500	
lunesta	0	3,310	3,310	662	66	\$33,100	33,100	
exhausted	0	2,710	2,710	542	54	\$27,100	27,100	
sleep disorders	0	2,710	2,710	542	54	\$27,100	27,100	
rest	0	2,710	2,710	542	54	\$27,100	27,100	
sleep deprivation	0	2,220	2,220	444	44	\$22,200	22,200	
sleep mask	0	2,220	2,220	444	44	\$22,200	22,200	
restless	0	2,220	2,220	444	44	\$22,200	22,200	
ambien cr	2,158	1,810	0	0	0	\$0	18,100	2
ambien cr	7,656	1,810	0	0	0	\$0	18,100	1

need to be prepared to invest heavily in high-quality content that searchers want if the brands hope to rank in the search results.

Brand credibility is another unique challenge DTC marketers face when targeting unbranded keywords. Leaders are leveraging a multiple domain strategy with the goal of repositioning the brand in a more credible way to customers. In some cases, the brand is absent to circumvent legal hurdles.

Brett Crosby, a Google senior manager for analytics said it best, "If people aren't listening to the way customers are voting through search for what they want on their Web site and the products they want them to build, they're not listening to their customers."

Marketing on the Web is less about telling your customers what you want them to hear and more about giving them information they need. Brands who cannot embrace this concept will lose trust (and clicks) in the world of digital marketing. The keys to success here are in doing this now, doing it well, and doing it honestly.

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