AMBZON AMBZON Rankings

HOW TO RANK YOUR KINDLE BOOK #1 IN AMAZON



DAVE CHESSON CREATOR OF Kindlepreneur



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Amazon Kindle Rankings

The key to selling your Kindle eBook is getting it in front of the most potential customers. Some authors do this with elaborate launches, extensive pre-developed email lists, and other cutting-edge tactics. However, many Kindle authors neglect the simple optimization of their eBook sales page on Amazon.

By making some simple word changes and tweaking your Amazon product page, you can *dramatically increase* your Amazon rankings. You can also show up for more Amazon searches, therefore getting your eBook in front of your potential customers more often.

If you're not sure how to do that, don't worry. This guide will show you exactly how you can take actionable steps to improve your Amazon rankings and get your eBook in front of more customers, which means *more sales* and *more money* for you.

The best part about this is that each step is **completely free** and can be completed within **a couple hours**.

Be Responsible and Moral

But before we move forward in this guide, let me take a second and beg that you only use this information in a responsible and moral way. What I am about to show you is an extremely powerful method that will improve your Amazon rankings and I do not want you to use this information immorally.

For example, do not use this method to rank a book about "red" for the word "blue."

And please don't promote poor quality books.



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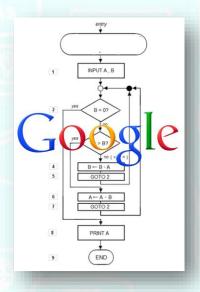
My greatest fear is that the information presented on Kindlepreneur.com will fall into the hands of spammers and poison the legitimacy of self-publishers and the Kindle store. I dread the day when I wake up and search Amazon for a Sci-Fi military book, and I find a list of romance books. Argh... NOOO!!!!

If you are ready to get your books ranked in the top results, then roll up your sleeves, grab a notebook, and discover exactly what you can do to reach #1 in the Amazon Results Page.



Algorithms and Search Engines

Before discussing the nuts and bolts of this process, you have to first understand why a group of simple words, ratios, and selections can have a dramatic effect on where your book shows up in the Amazon Search Results.



It all begins with a simple algorithm.

If you're already a SEO-savvy person and understand optimization tactics, then **click here**, and jump ahead to the meat and potatoes of this process.

However, if you are somewhat new and need an introduction to algorithms, optimization techniques, and the basics of search engine operations, then continue on.

I promise I won't make this nerdy, but I will warn you that I am somewhat of a technical geek.

You've all heard of the search engine called Google, right?







Did you know that 67% of the world's Internet searches are done through Google?

It's true, and their popularity is mainly because they produce the best results. Web searchers believe they have a better chance of finding what they want on Google instead of on Bing or Yahoo.

How is Google delivering better results?

Through their top-secret algorithm.

An algorithm is a process or a set of rules used in calculations that performs a particular function. I know that sounds geeky, so let me redeem myself by breaking it down a little more.

Google uses a mathematical calculation that searches the Internet and finds sites that are worthy of its rankings. Sending out its Google bots—yes, bots are a real thing—like the wicked witch sent her flying monkeys out in search of Dorothy, websites, and their content and links are detected and read. Then using the algorithm, Google assigns rankings for relevant search terms.

What makes Google so excellent in this mission is the fact that they always find ways to change their algorithm to improve the results and thus provide the best user experience possible.

What Does This Have To Do With Amazon?

One of the biggest keys to Amazon's success is their ability to get **the right products in front of the right customers**.

Type into Amazon's search box "Cat Unicorn" and Amazon will present to you some products they believe you are looking for.

More importantly, the results are based off of what Amazon believes will increase their sales.





Have you ever wondered how Amazon chooses what to put in front of you? If you guessed an algorithm, you're right.

Like Google, Amazon uses their own algorithm to figure out what should rank where. Crawling its own pages, Amazon weighs certain values and chooses the product pages it thinks will generate the most money for a particular search term.

How does this help you?

If your book's page is set up using the methods in this guide, it will naturally show up above other books or products and will show up more often for other search terms.

Pretty nice, huh?

Vocabulary

To enhance your understanding, we need to go over some important words that you might not be familiar with.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO): The process by which you change certain aspects on your product page in order to improve your search engine rankings and results.

Search Engine Results Page (SERPs): After you type a phrase into a search box, the SERP is the webpage that shows up with the top 10 or so websites or product pages. Usually this term is used in a phrase like "good SEO will increase your SERPs."

Keyword: In the SEO world, a keyword is the important word that you want your website or article or video to rank for. These are the words or phrases your target customers are searching for, looking for an answer or solution. In most cases, you will want to aim for "long tail keywords" (explained below).

Long Tail Keyword: This is a really specific keyword phrase. For example, "blue" would be a keyword, but a long tail keyword would be "blue-striped bunnies of New Hampshire."





The idea behind this is that you can't rank for a word like "blue" because there are too many websites that use the word "blue." However, if you aim for a long tail keyword, you will have **less competition** and can **easily rank #1.**

The strategy is to <u>find a long tail keyword</u> that gets lots of traffic but has little competition—something <u>Kindlepreneur.com</u> mentions *a lot*.

Amazon Keyword: When you submit your book for publishing, you will notice that Amazon has a field called "Keywords." The function of the Amazon Keyword is a little different than the definition above—and it's actually more powerful.

earch keywords (up to 7,	optional) (What's this?)	
		7 keywords left
		r nayholas lali

When you choose your **7 Amazon keywords**, you are telling Amazon that your book *should rank* for that particular term AND that it should be a part of certain **secret categories**.

To find out more about how your keyword can unlock new categories, check out the Kindlepreneur article here.

NOTE that if I discuss *Amazon keywords*, I will specifically say "Amazon Keywords," so don't get this confused with the single term "keywords."

Text Ratio or Keyword Density: Both terms are regularly used, but can sometimes have a slightly different meaning. The text ratio, or density, refers to what percentage a particular word or phrase is used in a document.

For example, say your keyword was "Cheetah." If your product page summary has 400 words, and you use the word "Cheetah" 8 times, then your Keyword Density would be 2% (that's 8 divided by 400). If you used it 16 times, then it would be 4%. This may seem weird, but I will



show you later how this exact phrase will have a huge effect on your rankings.

Click-Through-Rate (CTR): CTR is the rate at which customers click on your product page link when it is shown in the SERPs. Basically, it is a measure of user-perceived relevance – which as you can imagine is important to any search engine. Say your product page shows up 1000 times in search results, but out of those 1000 times, it is only clicked on 10 times, resulting in a 1% CTR, which isn't very good.

Okay, woo....that was a lot to take in I am sure. But, let's make this practical and dive into how we can use these terms and get our books ranking better.



Let's Optimize Those Product Pages

Our number-one objective is to optimize our product pages to let Amazon know that *our product* would be a prime candidate for a particular term or phrase. Remember the **Kindlepreneur oath** and ensure you are only using these powerful tactics for good!

To accomplish this task, there are **5 variables** that need to be considered, as each plays an important part in your ranking results. I'll begin each variable with an explanation, and end with how you can use it to your advantage.

That way, you will gain a better understanding about Amazon optimization and how you can start right now to improve your rankings.



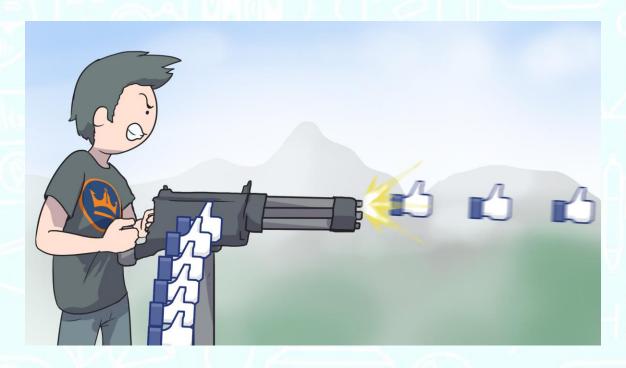
1. Number of Verified Reviews

The number of verified positive reviews is **BY FAR** one of the more important metrics in Amazon SEO.

I'm not saying that the number of sales aren't important – we'll get to that next – but you need to realize that just because a book has lots of sales, doesn't mean it was a good experience for the customers...and Amazon takes notice of this.

A verified review was created by someone who not only bought the book and read it, but also felt compelled to go back to Amazon and write their thoughts....good or bad.

It is the only metric on Amazon that tells Amazon directly whether or not people are happy with a product. Why place a product at the top of their list when no one reviews it or their customers hate it.



Makes sense right?

A book that has 10 verified reviews has a better chance of showing up in the SERPs than a book that has 2. The same goes with the review score as well.



You may wonder why certain books with fewer reviews beat out a book with a ginormous load of them.

Well, one major reason is that the weight of the review metric is dependent on the time of their publishing.

What I mean by this is a book with *more recent reviews* will beat out a book that doesn't have any recent reviews, regardless of how many total reviews it has.

If the book with 1000 reviews received all of those last year and hasn't had many reviews this year, then it will drop in the rankings. If a new book gains 100 verified reviews in a couple of weeks, then that book will skyrocket up to the #1 spot for its particular keyword, all else being equal.

What About Unverified Reviews?

It is important to note that out of all of the case studies I did, I found that unverified reviews (reviews from customers who did not purchase or download the book on Amazon but left a review) DO have a positive effect on rankings—but it is a *much* smaller impact than verified reviews have.

However, later on, I'll show you how an unverified review can still have some clout...so stay with me here.

Ways to Increase Verified Reviews:

A complete book could be written on this subject and I am fast at work trying to cover each and every one of them on <u>Kindlepreneur.com</u>. For the time being, here are a couple of steps you can take right now to increase the number of reviews:

(I). Go to sites like Goodreads.com and find people who have read your type of book, then message them and see if they would like to read a copy of *your* book.

In most cases, you will have to gift them a copy in order to get them to read it and promise a review. Websites like Goodreads are excellent

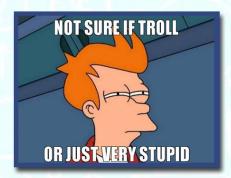


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sources of potential readers because these readers have already proven they enjoy your type of book and have already shown that they will take the time and write a review.

However, be careful about the way you gift someone a copy. By giving them a PDF version, they will not have a verified review.

One warning: Before gifting them a copy, check their Amazon or Goodreads review history; you don't want to contact any trolls. You can do this by clicking their username and see what they have reviewed in the past and whether or not they were super critical or happy and nice.



- (II). If you have an email list, engage with your readers and ask for reviews. Most people are willing to help if they're asked!
- (III). If you are posting your story on forums or site's for writers, or have fellow writers that you have helped in the past, you can always call them in to do you a favor and review your book. This is an important use of your tribe!
- (IV). Believe it or not, but adding a page IN your book and asking for a review near the end is a SUPER way to increase the number of reviews. I did this in one of my preexisting eBooks and my review increased by 4x.

The best tactic is to place that page right before the automatic rating function inside your book (there is an article on its way on how you can change the location of the automatic Amazon review request, stay tuned to Kindlepreneur.com!). This also allows you to connect with your readers and humanize yourself before they receive the option to leave a review by Amazon.

IMPORTANT: Many people complain that they left a review but it doesn't show up or was deleted. This is because **Amazon is cracking down on any reviews** from people who have what amazon believes is a personal connection to the writer.



If you want to know more about criteria that makes Amazon delete reviews, then **check this out**.





2. Number of Sales

The main objective of Amazon is to generate sales. They are a for-profit business with shareholders to answer to!

Amazon accomplishes this by giving customers what they are looking for. A good indicator (to Amazon) as to what customers want to buy is the books' total number of sales.

If your book sells more under a certain search keyword, then your book will rise in that keyword's rankings because it has proven to have a high potential of selling in that keyword. But just like the review metric, this is dependent on how recent their spike in sales is.

Ways to Improve the Sales Metric:

Most of what **Kindlepreneur.com** is all about is helping you to increase this metric, but there are actions you can take to improve this *right now*:

(I). Use Kindle Select promotions. They are an excellent way to generate lots of sales numbers and subsequently build your ranking.

"But Dave, the Kindle Select promo is free, so I am not making any money!"

You would be right in saying this; however, once your free period is over, Amazon still uses your past sales numbers (even though they were free) in deciphering your paid book sales rank.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Understand that free book Rankings and Paid Book Rankings on Amazon are two different sets of numbers. However, the <u>calculation that Amazon uses</u> to decipher your ranking has an inverse time variable...okay, just geeked out on that statement.

The main goal is to using Kindle Select is to build your sales numbers while free, get reviews and drive up your metrics, so that when your book is no longer free, it will reach the top and stick

In most cases, when your book reaches #1 in the SERPs, you will continue to generate sales organically from people looking for that



particular type of book even after it isn't free anymore – so long as your book is a good one.

(II) Time your promotion wisely. You have a better chance of success if you choose a date for your Kindle Select free promo to end near a peak sales date.

What this means is that, thanks to Kindle's sales records, you can check out your sales graph and see what days you tend to have the most sales. Is it on the weekend or during the week?

The idea is that if your book sells best on a Wednesday, then you can setup your Kindle Select free period to end on Monday or Tuesday. That way, once your book is back to its normal price, it reaps the benefit of being at a higher rank during its peak sales time.

(III). Consider and build your promotions around holidays.

If you time your promo to coincide with a major holiday like Black Friday or Christmas, you can enjoy the benefit of ranking #1 on Amazon SERPs when millions of shoppers are doing their Christmas shopping.

Holiday Ideas:

- If your book is geared towards students, time your promo to coincide with the beginning of each semester.
- If you book is about Fantasy Football, then time it right before the peak draft days.
- If you book is about weight loss, then time it before the New Years and catch those New Years resolutionists at their best.
- If your fiction is on Sci Fi, and a new Sci Fi movie is coming out that is close to your story, then ride that wave of euphoria.

As you can see, many books have a peak season or time period. The key is to find the one that works best for your book and optimize your Kindle Select sales to coincide with it.



3. Click-Through-Rate

As previously discussed, Amazon's true objective is to increase their profits. As a Kindlepreneur, I can completely understand that. Therefore, it makes sense that books with higher CTRs are more likely to sell better than books with lower CTRs for a particular keyword.

$$CTR = \frac{Clicks}{Impressions}$$

Another way of looking at CTR is whether or not a book deserves a particular keyword ranking.

Say someone doesn't follow the Kindlepreneur's ethics code and tries to rank their book for something that it shouldn't rank for.

Most likely, their CTR will end up being be zero.

Having a zero CTR for a search term is like telling Amazon "Hey, this book is NOT what customers are looking for when they type in this keyword."

And just like that, their book will fall in the rankings or even disappear on that keyword's SERPs.

There are several different ways to improve your CTR.

Surprisingly, I found that typing in your keyword, finding your own book and clicking on the link did actually increase the rankings over time.

I proved that it worked by finding a couple of books in the darkest depths of Amazon. Having not seen the light of day in a long while, these books had a stable ranking at the bottom of the list for a particular keyword.



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I then clicked on their links once a day using a certain keyword search phrase, and within a week, I saw them all rise in the rankings. However, after a while, they all hit a plateau and stalled, thus no longer being effective.

The reason the books reached a plateau is that these books finally found a place above the rest of the books that hadn't made a sale. However, it wasn't going to beat out any books that actually sold and had a natural CTR. So, using this tactic doesn't really help you in the long run, it only proves that CTR is an important factor in Amazon's algorithm.

Why even mention this if you can't manipulate it?

Because it's all about the visuals. It's all about the way you get people to naturally click on your Amazon page link by making it more appealing than the competing results.

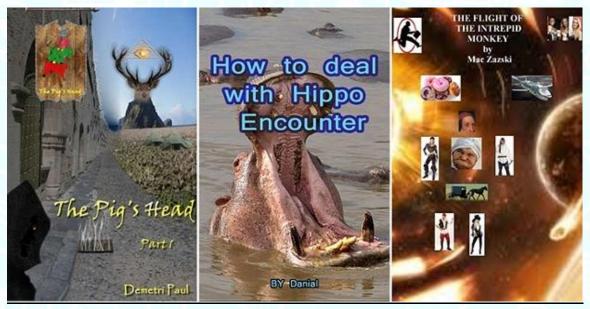
Take a look at the Amazon SERP for any keyword. What do you see?

- 1. Cover
- 2. Title
- 3. Bestseller or Not
- 4. Number of Reviews

So, what actions can you take to improve the 4 above? Again, I could write a complete book on each of these and over time, Kindlepreneur.com will have just that, free online. But let's give you some quick chewable bites that should help going forward.

Cover:

- Make sure that the cover sticks out and doesn't just blend in with the rest of the books.
- If you use a white background, then give the edges a drop shadow and or use an off-white color. We don't want to camouflage the book.
- Ensure that viewers can quickly see what your book is about by just looking at the cover and not having to read the title.
- Make it professional. It's obvious when someone ordered a Fiverr gig and people do judge a book by its cover.



Title:

- Choose the <u>right keywords</u> to go after so as to expose your book to a larger audience.
- Your title needs to have a hook. It needs to be catchy, so really think about it.
- Ensure that the title actually tells the viewer what the book is about...you'd be surprised how many people will select something very witty, but utterly confusing and don't use a cover image to back them up.

Best Seller Status:

 Choose the <u>right eBook category</u>...one that you can get bestseller status for.

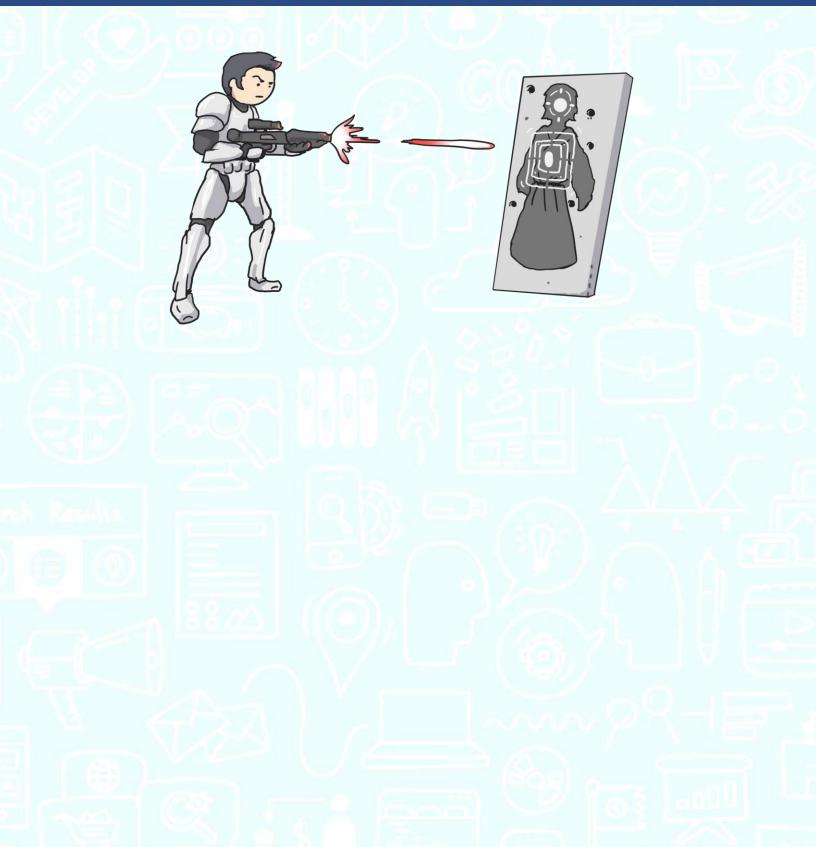
Amazon Reviews:

This one has already been discussed above.

Changing these metrics and improving them will increase your CTR and lead to an increase in book sales.



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4. Keyword Placements and their Weight

Ten years ago, SEO specialists were stuffing keywords on webpages in order to rank high in Google. Google caught on to this and created an algorithm change that made every one of these unnatural pages disappear.

If people ruin the experience of shoppers by overtly overstuffing their pages with keywords, Amazon will respond and do the same as Google.

Be warned: optimizing your keyword placement is great, but you must approach this ethically and naturally. Be wise and don't be greedy.

One of the biggest differences between Amazon and Google right now is that Amazon has other metrics they can use for SEO purposes like product reviews and sales. But metrics like these only tell Amazon your level of success; they don't tell Amazon what phrase or word you should rank for.

Therefore, the words on your page help Amazon's search engine figure that out. Based on what you write and where you put it, your sales page will reach more SERPs and, thus, more customers. The other metrics listed will help them figure out *where* in that particular SERP you should be placed: #1, #4, infinite and beyond!

The following areas are where you should place your keyword. I cannot stress enough that it is important that you do this naturally.

A. TITLE:

The title of the book is the most important area to place your keyword. A lot of people will choose a catchy title for their book that doesn't have their keyword in it. That's okay, because the title that you place on your cover *can be different* than the title you input into your Amazon product page, so long as they are close and not misleading.

For example, you might have a title on your eBook cover that only says



"ACT Test Help" but your Amazon sales page lists it as "ACT Test Help Study Guide."

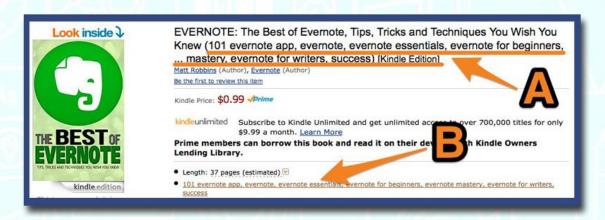
B. SUBTITLE:

Separate from your Title on the KDP Dashboard is the subtitle. Don't forget the subtitle; the subtitle is really important. It allows you to tack on other keywords without distracting from the main aspect of your book title.

You should be trying to find other keywords that your book should show up for on Amazon SERPs and place them here.

Here is my **complete guide for finding keywords** and how you can access tertiary words to help in this department.

Here is an example of an Evernote book that has stuffed its keywords in the subtitle:



Now, this is an example of someone just stuffing their keywords into the subtitle and being very spammy. But there are two really cool lessons one can learn when they stumble upon spam like this:

A. They did the keyword research for you! They literally – and yes I can say literally in this case – listed all their target keywords for you to read. Hopefully, they did their research well;)

B. On the page itself, Amazon created a link that AGAIN uses your subtitle words. Another reinforcement to the power of the subtitle.



As you can see, the subtitle is super important and needs to contain your search words inside of it...so don't neglect it!

IMPORTANT: Notice that the cover of the book does not reflect this so-called subtitle. There is no requirement that you must have your title or your subtitle on your book cover for it to be accepted by Amazon...so long as they are close.

And let's face it, if you tried to always fit your subtitle on your book cover, it could look hideous and end up resembling a Jackson Pollock piece.

C. DESCRIPTION

You should also place your keywords throughout the description. However, for a truly optimized summary, you need to sprinkle them into your header tags.

A header tag is your <H1>, <H2>, <H3>, etc., and these tags, which are in HTML code, tells both Google and Amazon to make your words look a certain way on the Amazon Product page.



IMPORTANT: Your description is the only part of your product page where you can control the font or look of your words. All other inputs strip your html.

If you want your words to be really big and bold then you would type in something like:

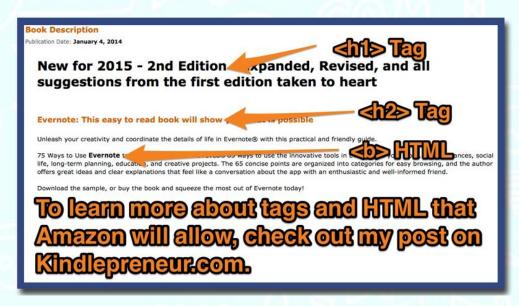
<H1>This is REALLY big</H1>

And you would get something like this:

This is REALLY big



Here is an example:



The <H1> header tags generate the biggest boldest text at the top. If your book description contains subheadings, you should use <H2> tags, and if you need sub-subheadings, then use <H3> tags.

The reason why using header tags is important is because it is a way for you to tell Amazon that certain phrases or words are more important than others.

Basically, header tags are like chapter and subchapter titles for your viewer and the search engine. The point of a chapter title is to give the reader and idea of what the rest of the content is about and the same is true for search engines.

D. REVIEWS:

Believe it or not, but the words inside the reviews hold some of the most powerful weight in the Amazon algorithm.

Reviews are created by the customer and depict what they thought about the product, and if that customer uses your keywords in their review, then it is a sure sign to Amazon that even the customer believes your product is about that keyword and should be shown more in that particular SERP.



Although we don't really have control over reviews or what they say, understanding that the words a review consists of is important.

This is also another reason why having a keyword in your title is important. Most reviews will *write the title* of the book in it and thus place the keyword inside the review!

E. AUTHOR NAMES:

One thing I'd like to mention is to NEVER use your author name as a keyword. This is terrible tactic, and means that you make the name of your editor, illustrator, etc., part of your keywords. Don't do it!

I once saw a book on nursing and it had a normal author's name but the editor's name was "nurse," the illustrator's name was "study guide," and the publishing company's name was "how to."

Here is an example of another Evernote book using this tactic. I may be wrong, but I have never heard of an author named "Evernote Essentials" or "Evernote" before.



Ugh! Double ugh! Very well Mary Masterson...your SPAM skills astound me.

This tactic reduces the level of legitimacy of your book. Furthermore, this is likely one of the first things that Amazon will check for when it does its next algorithm update.



If you're sitting there thinking to yourself, "I need as much help as I can get," let me remind you that this tactic has little effect on your rankings and isn't worth the danger in which you'd be placing your book in.

Although it *will* help in the near-term (which is why you see lots of people doing it), the risks outweigh the gains and such a tactic is unbecoming of a Kindlepreneur.



5. Keyword Ratio

Your Keyword Ratio also plays an important role in optimization.

To understand what a Keyword Ratios is, let's look at an example.

Say you and your competitor are trying to rank for the word "Gorgonzola."

Your competitor's title is "The Best Gorgonzola You Can Find in All of America."

Your title is "Gorgonzola Cheese Guide."

Assuming that all of your other metrics are the same, which title will most likely be ranked higher?

Your book, of course!

Why? Because you have a higher Keyword Ratio density then your competitor. Your book has the word "Gorgonzola" in 33.3% of your title. However, your competitor only has it in 10% of the title. Thus, your title concentrates on the word "Gorgonzola" more than your competitor's.

You win!

The good news about Keyword Ratio is that it helps to make Amazon optimizers more conscientious over what keywords they plan on pushing for. Putting too many words into your title or subtitle will dilute the power of your target keywords.

Keyword Ratio also plays into your subtitle, and summary, so keep that in mind as you move forward.

A rule of Thumb that I like to use for my Descriptions is to keep my individual keyword density between 2-4%. This is conservative, but I don't exactly like to live my life on the wild side when it comes to my books. Nope, nope, nope,...



What's Next?

Now that you have a better understanding of the vocabulary used by both Google and Amazon—and how they use it—by making some simple word changes and optimizing your Amazon product page, you can *dramatically increase* your Amazon rankings. You can also rank higher in the search engines and get your book in front of potential customers more often. Ultimately, this will lead to more sales!

If you would like to know more about this aspect in Kindle marketing, then please check out **Kindlepreneur.com** and be sure to join our **Facebook Page** so as to get the most up-to-date and *free* information available to you.

Meet the Author

My name is Dave Chesson, and I am first and foremost a father and husband. But when I am not taking my wife on a date, playing princess dress-up or vanquishing the boogieman, I am a jack of many online

trades.



My favorite is Kindle Publishing though. I started my humble entrepreneurial escapade in Google Search Engine Optimization, which led me to a technical fascination with Amazon as another form of search engine.

Hopefully you have enjoyed my analysis of Amazon and Keyword Optimization. If you would like more of this type of technical marketing and recommendations like I have presented here, please check out my website: Kindlepreneur.com – believe it or not, you don't have to pay a premium or subscription for my information!

