

January 27, 2008

Hi Edgers,

Since a few of you have asked, I've compiled some of my notes here for you and will email you as well if you wish to privately discuss any of your niches.

I'll be the first to admit that it takes a lot of work to find a good niche with the kind of numbers that I mentioned earlier. But I've managed to find more than a few!

You have to be persistent and have a deep desire to succeed. So be prepared to roll up your sleeves and get a little sweaty.

Finding Niches Within

First off, the best place to start looking is within yourself. Sit down with paper and pencil and write down your hobbies from the past, present and the future.

Write down the kind of work you've done, the education you've followed, the books you enjoy reading, the music that moves you and any other activities that you enjoy.

Ask people that mean the most to you, what they think you're really good at. And then listen and take notes. Sounds silly, but it works.

If you can find something that you're truly passionate about, all the more power to you, since it will show up in your writing.

Finding a Dream Niche

If you're still stuck, one of the questions you could ask yourself is: "If I had all the money and time to do what I wished, what one thing would I enjoy doing most"?

Then take that one idea and really research it. If it seems too competitive, then break it down to a lower level idea.

For example, if your idea would be to do photography and you found that it was too competitive then what lower level idea could you explore?

Perhaps it could be "digital photography", or "wedding photography" or any other lower level category.

And if you find that those lower level categories are still too competitive, then go down one more level ... i.e. digital wedding photography.

I've found that it's always best to start at the top of a niche and work your way down into its sub-categories. This approach will help you learn about your market while possibly discovering new and hidden gems.

You're not likely to find a great niche without a lot of effort. But when you do, it's very exciting.

Logistics and Persistence

Every week, I continuously search for new niche ideas. To manage the volume of niches, good or bad, I've created a folder called "Ideas for Niches". I name each of the GTrends files by the niche and the amount of Good keywords that I found.

So if I found a niche on "widgets" and it has 7 Good keyword phrases, I would save that as "Widgets - 7". This way, I can see at a glance, what niches that I've already researched and how many keywords I'd found. So if I decide to re-visit some of those niches, I'll be more likely to re-work one that has 7 Good keywords, opposed to one that has none.

Finding Popular Niches

As far as looking outside of yourself for niche ideas, there are countless sites you could visit for inspiration. Here are just a few:

<http://answers.yahoo.com/>

- read through the questions and answers, this alone will keep you busy for days

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/bestsellers/>

- look for the latest books and the best sellers, publishers should know what sells

<http://www.howtothings.com/>

- people want to know how to do things, these can spark new ideas

Keyword Gathering Tools

On your questions about "keyword gathering", I do use a few free tools to do quick initial keyword research:

<https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal>

- for Google's popular keywords

<http://adlab.msn.com/contextSim/Default.aspx>

- for LSI keywords and synonyms

<http://freekeywords.wordtracker.com/gtrends/>

- in conjunction with the GTrends tool

- but I also use the Thesaurus over on the left side for other LSI ideas

Once I've found a niche that shows some signs of life, with low competition, high searches and low Web 2.0 presence, then I'll use a paid keyword research tool called ThemeZoom (<http://www.themezoom.com/>).

With ThemeZoom, I can easily find 1,000's of keywords related to my niche while building out silos of sub-categories within a niche.

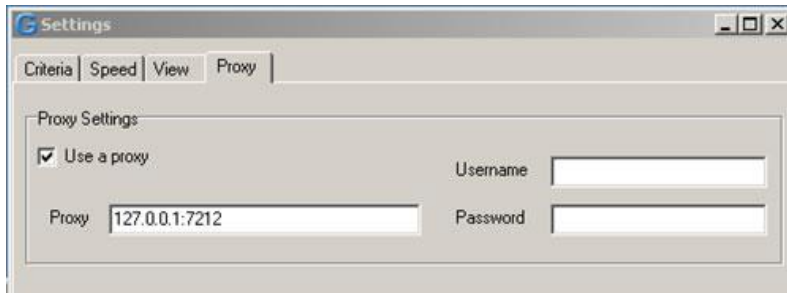
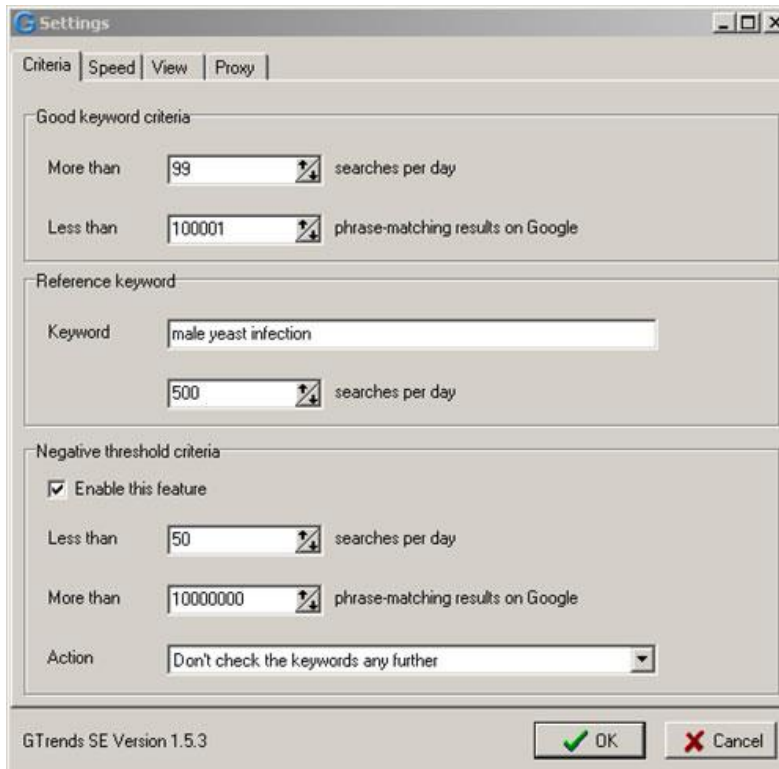
GTrends SE Tool and Settings

In the beginning, this tool worked perfectly, but one day Google began returning error messages, like “Forbidden” amongst others.

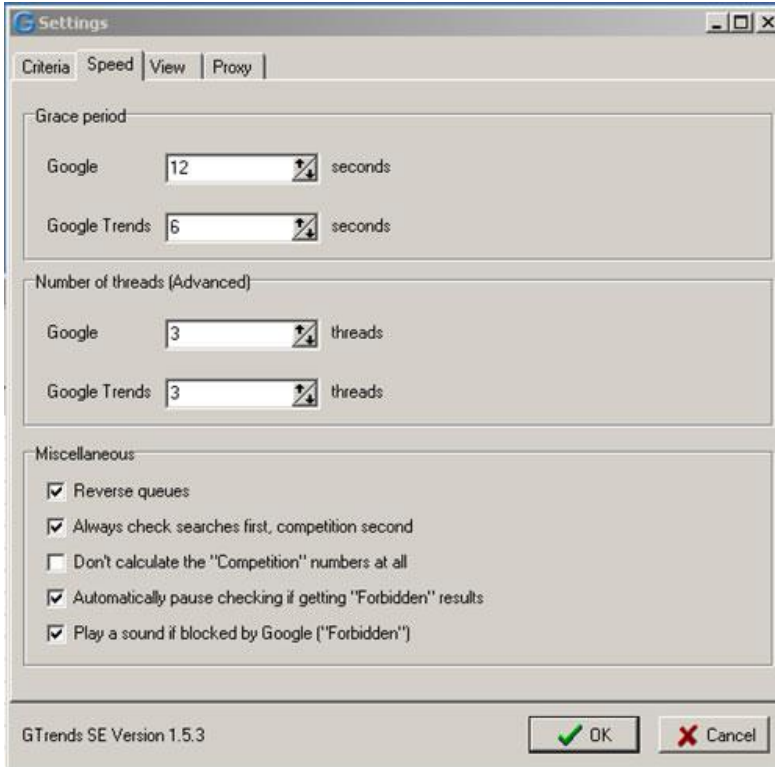
I immediately notified Janis, the creator and he responded quickly with suggestions and fixes to the tool. He’s since updated the tool a few times and I’m trying to convince him to add a few more features.

I’ve since purchased GhostSurf Platinum (<http://www.tenebril.com/consumer/ghostsurf/>) for the proxy and have tweaked my settings to the point where the tool runs perfectly once again.

Here are a few screen capture images of my settings:



Please note that you will need to purchase GhostSurf Platinum for this proxy to work.



Janis of GTrends SE has a page on Tutorials that may address any other questions you may have. <http://gtrends.w-shadow.com/tutorials/>

You're only Six Inches from Success

Often, it's just a case of thinking laterally, and not getting hung up on any one niche. And as far as always trying to find a niche that you're completely passionate about, good luck, it likely won't happen.

But don't let that get you down.

What will happen, is that you'll find a niche that hits a home run as far as technical qualifications (low comp/high searches/low Web 2.0 comp), but doesn't get your heart pounding with excitement.

The latter is one of the major reasons that I actively search for niches, and document my findings. Sometimes, I'll have a change of heart, and a niche that once seemed utterly boring turns out to be very interesting.

It all comes down to your point of view and how you perceive the world around you. Are you willing to be open-minded, if it could lead to financial freedom and security for you and your family?

Those six inches between your ears is the only thing that really controls your success or failure. Bottom line ... we can either make money or make excuses, but we can't make both at the same time.

Enough said.

When you have a growing folder full of niche ideas, good and bad, the problem will then become what niche should you work on next.

Well I hope these notes have given you some inspiration to find a handful of niches.

Good luck & all the best,

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P.S. I'll update these notes as needed.