

Competitor Analysis in Uncertain Times

Industry Shifts, Online Stats
& Surefire Insights for
Digital Marketing Growth



Table of contents



Industry Shifts in March 2020: the New Essentials



How to Find Surefire Insights for Your Digital Marketing

Get Insights from Competitors' Website Traffic

Analyze Your Rivals' SEO Efforts

Get Marketing Ideas from Their Recent Online Ads

See How Your Rivals Are Adapting Their Content Marketing and PR

Check Up on Your Competitors' Moves on Social Media

Review the Findings with Your Own Goals and Strategy in Mind



How Often Should You Do Online Competitor Analysis?



Industry Shifts in March 2020: the New Essentials

Industry Shifts in March 2020: the New Essentials

In these first few months of 2020, the market has changed dramatically.

Offline industries experienced severe turbulence and, in the best of cases, had to make an emergency landing online.

Digitally native businesses, meanwhile, had to adapt to the changing consumer demand, purchasing power, and the new messaging that many of their competitors had adopted.

While you may wonder how exactly your competitive landscape has changed, let's have a look at the bigger picture first. We need to **clarify the context in which businesses operate** when it comes to online presence.

Below, you can find data on several **industries that showed atypical online growth in March 2020**. These are not their seasonal fluctuations — when we checked data for March 2019, traffic to the analyzed companies' websites didn't increase that much, nor did they grow in online popularity in February 2020. All the stats are estimated with [SEMrush Traffic Analytics](#).

The first categories to increase in terms of traffic **are those that accommodate the work-from-home situation**.

Teamwork Software

Average Traffic Growth: +30.4% in March 2020

Location: US

Domain	Visits	Unique Visitors
smartsheet.com	14M +25.52%	2.8M +18.04%
workfront.com	4.3M +28.77%	319.3K +27.24%
monday.com	2.8M +42.03%	685.4K +20.36%
wrike.com	2.1M +12.05%	515.7K +10.98%
teamwork.com	2.1M +41.32%	264.9K +15.70%
toggl.com	1.7M +19.98%	530.6K +18.35%
mavenlink.com	739.1K +35.56%	91.7K +6.44%
clickup.com	426.3K +18.66%	182.9K +17.97%
miro.com	585.5K +36.89%	273.8K +73.45%
pipefy.com	376.1K +43.14%	60.5K +19.11%

Webinar Platforms

Average Traffic Growth: **+54.6%** in March 2020
Location: All Regions

Domain	Visits	Unique Visitors
demio.com	410.3K +18.24%	244.8K +54.97%
webinarninja.com	93.3K +51.18%	61.3K +42.89%
gotomeeting.com	16.8M +69.75%	5.2M +50.08%
webex.com	39.9M +72.44%	10.1M +56.93%
clickmeeting.com	1.7M +21.90%	673.6K +33.85%
getresponse.com	7.4M +10.09%	3.7M +2.80%
bigmarker.com	267.7K +97.38%	147.4K +79.03%
easywebinar.com	75.7K +110.52%	25.7K +9.96%
dacast.com	532.5K +74.54%	339.3K +55.77%
intermedia.net	1.3M +20.16%	540.9K +27.99%

Money Transfer Services

Average Traffic Growth: **+11.1%** in March 2020
Location: All Regions

Domain	Visits	Unique Visitors
transferwise.com	20.5M +14.41%	11.2M +8.99%
paypal.com	616.7M +2.55%	240.2M +2.48%
worldremit.com	2.5M +7.14%	1.2M +8.46%
currenciesdirect.com	181.7K +7.42%	117.5K +1.37%
riamoneytransfer.com	1.4M +23.05%	561.3K +7.00%
xe.com	77.7M +16.66%	29.2M +7.11%
travelex.com	479.1K +5.97%	413.9K +3.11%
xoom.com	4.2M +14.44%	1.8M +7.13%
westernunion.com	17.3M +8.38%	8.4M +4.20%

Then followed the companies that make a place feel like a home.

Cleaning Services

Average Traffic Growth: **+6%** in March 2020
Location: All Regions

Domain	Visits	Unique Visitors
mollymaid.com	339.8K +8.00%	286.9K +8.90%
thecleaningauthority.com	361.8K +5.11%	103.3K +1.48%
handy.com	986.2K +7.06%	597.8K +2.18%
merrymaids.com	434.3K +3.86%	377.3K +4.78%

Home Decor E-Commerce

Avg Traffic Growth: **+22.8%** in March 2020
Location: US

Domain	Visits	Unique Visitors
abchome.com	171K +15%	136K +5%
article.com	1.3M +8%	782K +11%
crateandbarrel.com	7.4M +9%	4.4M +3%
decoratorsbest.com	80K +11%	67K +30%
dwr.com	514K +12%	305K +8%
luluandgeorgia.com	225K +5.11%	110K +11%
leifshop.com	10K +25%	10K +25%
highfashionhome.com	126K +25%	98K +4%
schoolhouse.com	160K +22%	113K +0.1%
restorationhardware.com	2M +8%	1.2M +4%

However, when it comes to online shopping for generally essential goods, it looks like the initially increased demand has been satisfied, and thus has decreased.

General E-Commerce

Average Traffic Growth: **+19.8%** in February 2020

Location: All Regions

Domain	Visits	Unique Visitors
amazon.com	3.3B +8.54%	559.4M +5.83%
ebay.com	881.7M +6.42%	188M +5.96%
walmart.com	600.1M +31.12%	203.5M +13.10%
costco.co	20.2K +15.52%	19.7K +12.95%
target.com	259.1M +37.59%	110.9M +20.64%

General E-Commerce

Average Traffic Growth: **+5%*** in March 2020

Location: All Regions

Domain	Visits	Unique Visitors
amazon.com	3.3B -0.27%	534.4M -4.47%
ebay.com	863.3M -2.09%	183.2M -2.55%
walmart.com	582.5M -2.93%	200.9M -1.29%
costco.co	26.2K +30.15%	25.3K +28.35%
target.com	259.5M +0.16%	110.8M -0.03%

*Three out of five e-tailers experienced negative growth

Some less expected markets became active. While offline entertainment was put on hold, online alternatives stepped in. Here, for example, we see the result of opera theatres adapting to the current situation and attracting their visitors to live streams.

Theatres

Average Traffic Growth: +125% in March 2020
Location: US

Domain	Visits	Unique Visitors
metopera.org	1.1M +39.82%	566.8K +37.78%
berliner-philharmoniker.de	24.8K +95.29%	21.1K +71.33%
roh.org.uk	105.5K +26.59%	77.3K -5.16%
broadwayhd.com	108.8K +63.22%	74.7K +62.05%
staatsoper.de	2.1K +400.00%	834 +100.00%

We see that the precarious situation is not solely a cause for concern — it can in fact provide opportunities for many businesses.

We can also see that we can't always predict online consumer behavior. Will there be renewed interest in general e-commerce? And if you start sales? And if your competitors do the same?

Now more than ever we need to make **data-driven, not chaos-driven, decisions.** And this is where online competitor analysis can help you.



How to Find Surefire Insights for Your Digital Marketing

How to Find Surefire Insights for Your Digital Marketing

In this guide, we will take you through the **main points of online competitor analysis** which you may need to do to adapt your campaigns to the new reality.

We will name the **key metrics** that we recommend **tracking on each digital marketing channel** and show you how to get them with SEMrush tools.

Normally, we recommend that our users follow the **complete workflow** described here. This way, they get a clear understanding of their competitors' online presence and don't miss any insights.

However, this is not a strict step-by-step guide. If you are especially interested in one particular area of your rivals' marketing, just click on the corresponding chapter in the table of contents above.

To let you get the most out of this analysis, we're offering you a **7-day free trial of the entire SEMrush Competitive Research Bundle**. With it, you'll access all the SEMrush tools, including the premium Competitive Intelligence Add-On, and find actionable insights in minutes.

[Get a Free Trial](#)





1. Get Insights from Competitors' Website Traffic

Get Insights from Competitors' Website Traffic

In the online world, just like in nature, it is not always the strongest that survive, but those that are the most adaptable to change.

At all times, you want to be certain that your **digital strategy will help you beat your competitors**. In these times, you particularly need to ascertain that your chosen **marketing mix is cost effective**, the focus of your campaigns **corresponds to the changing demand**, and your messaging is **clearly received by the audience**.

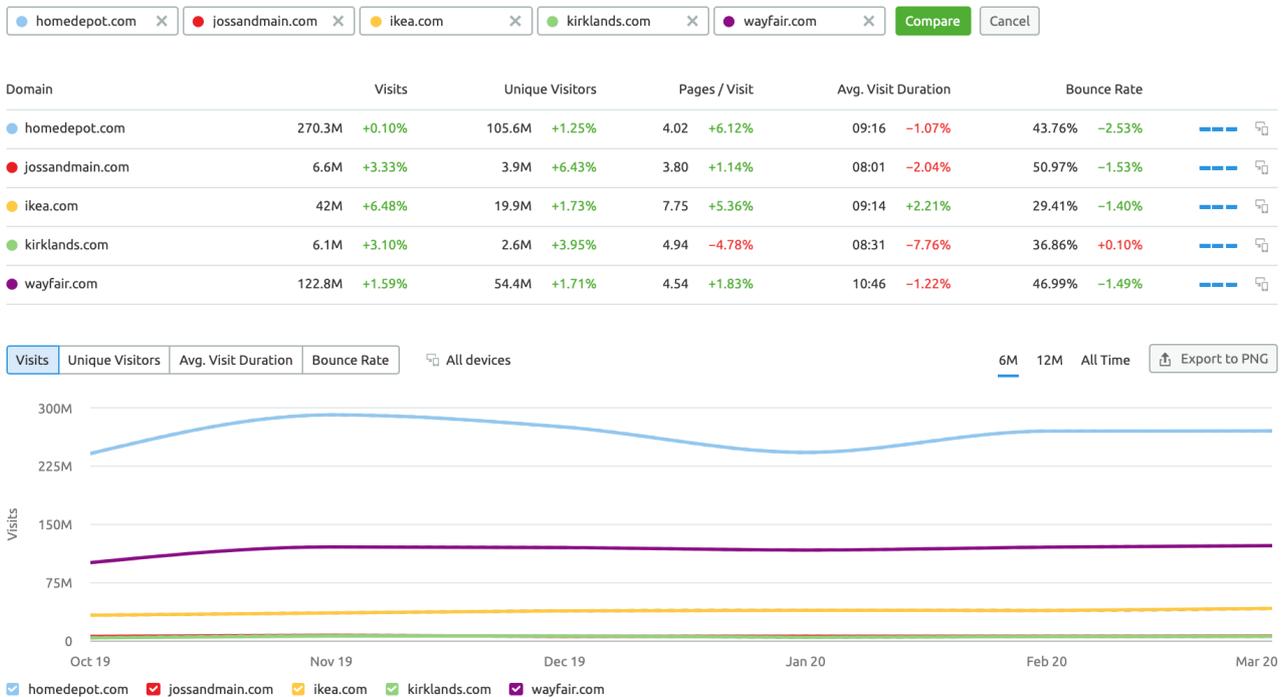
Your previously adopted strategy may become obsolete, and you may need to **act decisively**. It will be helpful if you **ascertain what you shouldn't do** first.

Each of these points can be supported with the analysis of your competitors' website traffic.

Let's imagine a home decor e-tailer that wants to catch up with its rivals' online performance. With five competitor websites entered in [SEMrush Traffic Analytics](#), we get to see:

- **if the leader of the competition has changed**
(in our case, homedepot.com has remained #1 in the list);
- **what fluctuations have affected the competition** in recent months;
- **how each rival grew (or lost) its popularity** over the observed time.

In our example, homedepot.com and wayfair.com remained the undisputed leaders in the US. However, ikea.com enjoyed increased website traffic and positive user engagement metrics (more Pages/Visit and longer Avg. Visit Duration), showing that newly arrived visitors were interested in the content of the pages.



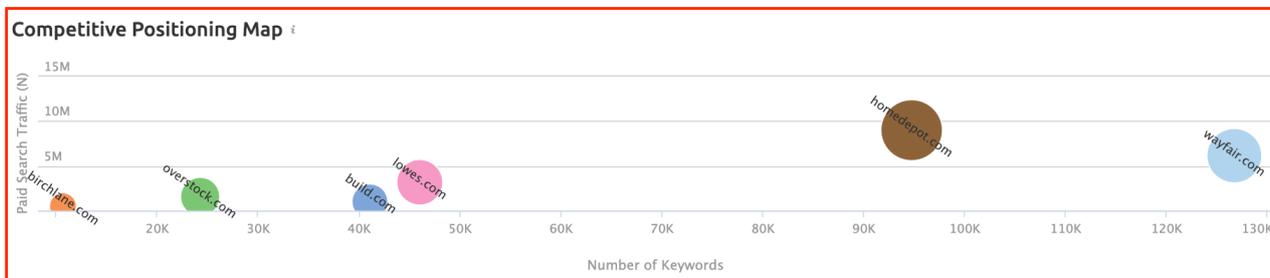
Find out how your competitors attracted their audience:

- Which digital marketing channels performed the best for them.
- Which countries proved to be lucrative in terms of traffic generation.

In our example, the US is not the only market for ikea.com. Nevertheless, their growth in March 2020 makes us think of their capacity to strengthen their position in the region.

Positions Position Changes **Competitors** Ad Copies Ad History Pages Subdomains

Keywords **94.7K** 2.05% Traffic **9M** 7.38% Traffic Cost **\$7.4M** 11.46%



Paid Competitors 1 - 100 (6,577)

Export

Domain	Com. Level	Common Keywords	Paid Keywords	Paid Traffic	Paid Traffic Price (USD)	SE Keywords
wayfair.com	12%	13.2K	126.7K	6,075,133	7.2M	4.2M
overstock.com	5%	3.1K	24.2K	1,503,279	1.7M	6M
lowes.com	4%	3.1K	46K	3,172,210	1.9M	5.2M

Before drawing conclusions, **click back to the past periods** to see month-over-month and year-over-year changes — you want to make sure these are not typical seasonal fluctuations.

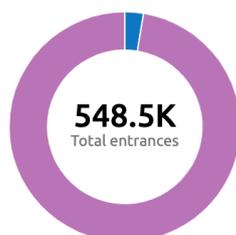
To get a deeper understanding of competitors' digital strategies and performance, take a closer look at their **Top Pages**. These days, your rivals may be focusing on **promoting their delivery services or at-home options and essential goods** instead of premium items. They may also try to **drive traffic to relevant blog posts, provide free software and subscriptions, and start sales**.

If they created and promoted a web page for any of these, you can find data on it in the Top Pages report and see how the action performed. You can then safely decide on whether you need to focus on a similar offering or not.

In our example, homedepot.com showed unprecedented ability to adapt: their top product in March 2020 was not home furniture or garden equipment, but a respirator mask. By their entrance sources breakdown, we see that most of these visits came from search.

Top Pages 1–12 (12) ⓘ

safety				Entrance Sources			
No.	URL	Total	Search	Direct	Social		
16	homedepot.com/b/safety-equipment-r...	713.5K	590.1K	548.5K	534.3K	14.2K	0

Entrance Sources All devices

Source	Percentage	Count
Direct	2.60%	14.2K
Referral	0%	0
Search	97.40%	534.3K
Social	0%	0
Paid	0%	0

Devices



Analyze competitors' traffic



For a better understanding of the market, you may want to check up on more than five competitors. In [SEMrush Market Explorer](#), you just need to enter one website in the search field, and the tool will outline the rest of the field.

At this stage, you will get to:

- **map out the competitive landscape** in a comprehensible form of the Growth Quadrant;
- **qualify your competitors by their current audience size and market potential**;
- switch from “All Market” to “Narrow Focus” and **reveal your closest rivals’ online market shares and research their digital marketing strategies** further.

In our example, homedepot.com appears to have a lot in common with general e-commerce websites like costco.com, walmart.com, and amazon.com, and they all tend to grow at a faster pace.

Could you, as another home decor e-tailer, seek a lesson from larger websites’ digital marketing? You may want to research it.

Market Explorer: similar to homedepot.com NEW

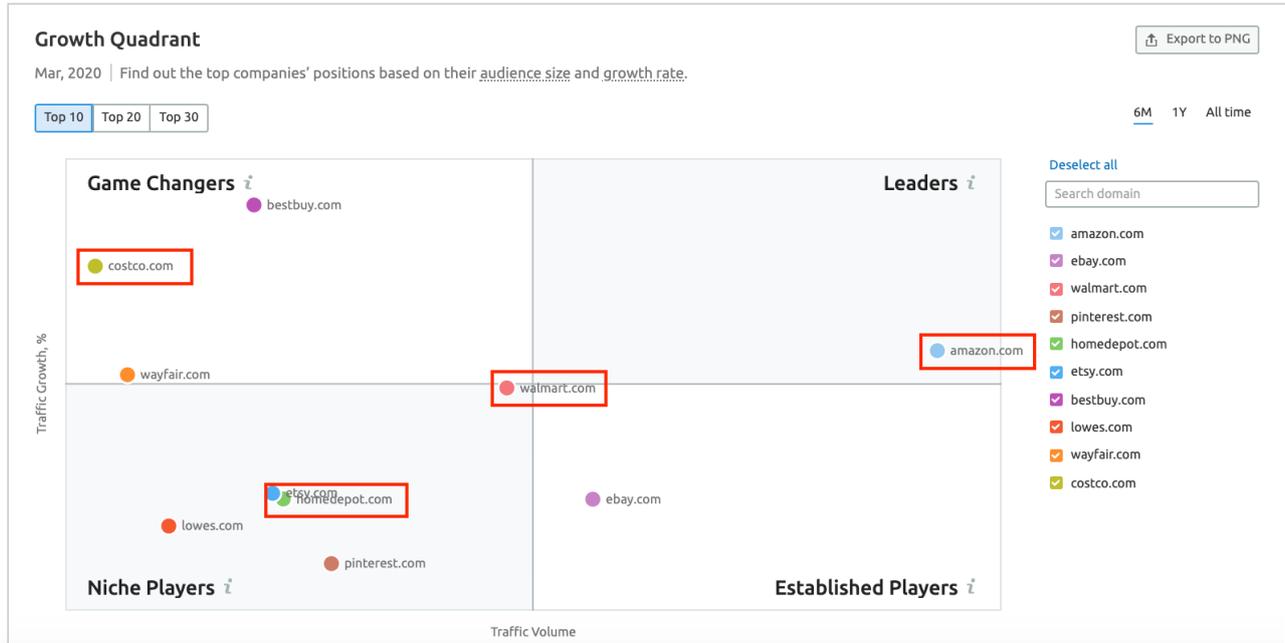
Date: March 2020 Location: United States

Overview Relevant Sites Custom Market

Market Overview

All Market 6,708 Narrow Focus 32

Customize market



Try out SEMrush Traffic Analytics and Market Explorer on your actual competitors and get even more details on their traffic and market potential.

Discover market players' traffic growth

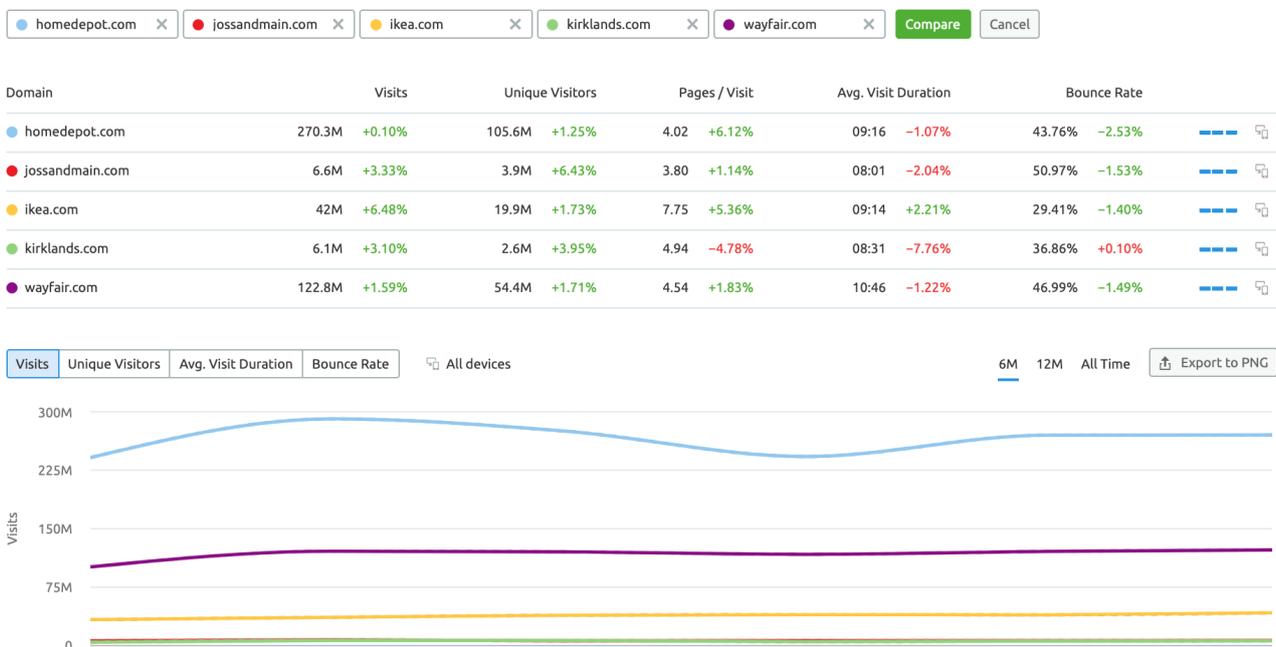


2. Analyze Your Rivals' SEO Efforts

Analyze Your Rivals' SEO Efforts

If competitors are outranking you in organics, they must also be getting more clicks, generating more leads, and gaining more revenue. There can be 200+ reasons why it happens, but usually it's not all that complicated.

With the Organic Research tool, you can monitor a target website's organic search visibility. We will continue our model analysis and see how homedepot.com has been doing in organics:



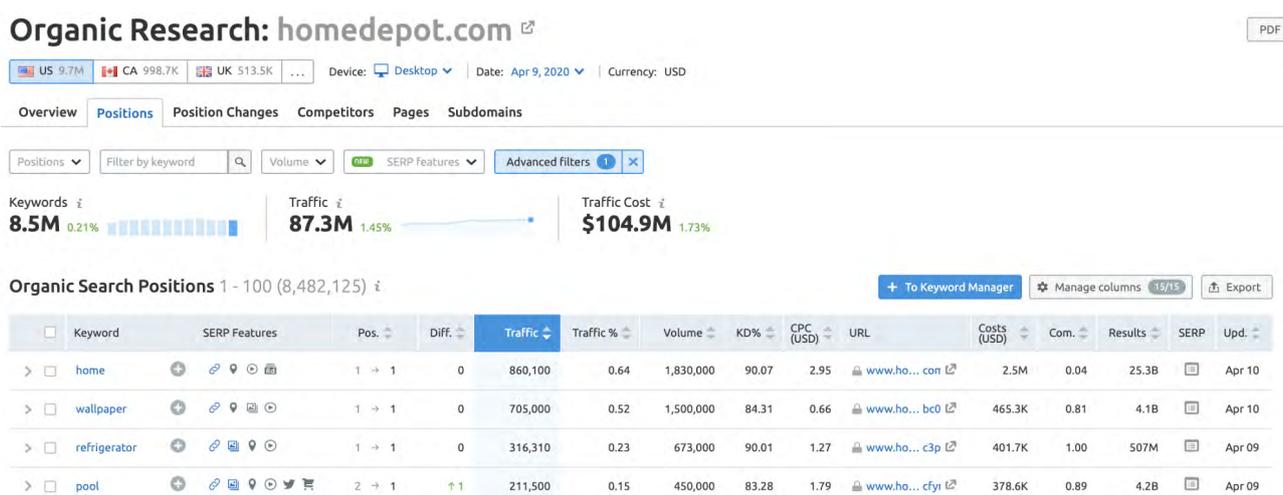
At a glance, you can discover:

- the target website's **total number of keywords** with organic positions (in Google Top 100), presented visually;
- expected monthly organic traffic** from those keywords;
- estimated monthly price** of the given organic keywords in text Google Ads;
- estimated branded and non-branded traffic.**

You can get into more detail on the competitors' keywords that let them take top positions in organic search:

- **discover their most successful keywords;**
- **get an idea of consumer behavior**, based on search frequency;
- **see the most popular pages** that users found with organic search;
- outline initial ideas on how you can **optimize your campaign to increase your rankings and conversions.**

In our example, we applied "Advanced Filtered" and excluded branded keywords to see if users found homedepot.com when searching for generic goods. This way, we get an idea of the best-optimized and most searched items on the website.



There are two more steps to a deeper understanding of competitors' SEO:

- **Find gaps in your rivals' coverage** with the **Backlink Gap** tool. Competitors added can be root domains, subdomains, or URLs. A good way to use this intelligence would be to reach out to the resources that are linking to your competitors but not you.
- **Enhance your content marketing strategy** with **Keyword Gap**. The tool allows you perform a side-by-side comparison of all of the similarities and differences between keyword portfolios (be it organic, paid, or PLA) of up to five competing domains.

Enriching your keyword strategy is a **long-term project** that may have nothing to do with the immediate increase in demand for essential items. Even so, if your company scaled up its paid promo, it may be wise to spend this dry spell on the optimization that can bring you long-term results when the crisis subsides.

Organic Research: homedepot.com

PDF

US 9.7M CA 998.7K UK 513.5K ... Device: Desktop Date: Apr 9, 2020 Currency: USD

Overview **Positions** Position Changes Competitors Pages Subdomains

Positions Filter by keyword Volume SERP Features Advanced filters

Keywords **8.5M** 0.21% Traffic **87.3M** 1.45% Traffic Cost **\$104.9M** 1.73%

Organic Search Positions 1 - 100 (8,482,125)

To Keyword Manager Manage columns 15/15 Export

Keyword	SERP Features	Pos.	Diff.	Traffic	Traffic %	Volume	KD%	CPC (USD)	URL	Costs (USD)	Com.	Results	SERP	Upd.
home		1 → 1	0	860,100	0.64	1,830,000	90.07	2.95	www.ho...com	2.5M	0.04	25.3B		Apr 10
wallpaper		1 → 1	0	705,000	0.52	1,500,000	84.31	0.66	www.ho...bc0	465.3K	0.81	4.1B		Apr 10
refrigerator		1 → 1	0	316,310	0.23	673,000	90.01	1.27	www.ho...c3p	401.7K	1.00	507M		Apr 09
pool		2 → 1	↑1	211,500	0.15	450,000	83.28	1.79	www.ho...cfyi	378.6K	0.89	4.2B		Apr 09

Break down competitors' SEO



3. Get Marketing Ideas from Their Recent Online Ads

Get Marketing Ideas from Their Recent Online Ads

In advertising, the scale of changes you may need to adopt depends a lot on the industry in which you operate.

For the category of work-from-home essentials, this may be the busiest time in the last 12 months. Video conferencing software brands are said to have **doubled their ad spend** in Q1 2020, compared to Q4 2019 or Q1 2019.

From a B2B customer perspective, it is not just the ad spend to increase – software buyers expect that the existing situation will make their **tech spending soar**.

Meanwhile, 42% of fashion retailers are claimed to have **pulled back their marketing**, and 90% of marketers from various industries affirmed that they had **adjusted their creative messaging** in mid March 2020.

To make sense of the unstable advertising landscape, you should keep an eye on the closest competition in your niche. You may see **how your current rivals experiment with placements and messaging** or even **how established players handled somewhat similar crises in the past**.

To analyze any advertiser of your interest, use the **Advertising Research** tool. Switch tabs to reveal:

- the **number of keywords the domain is bidding on**;
- the **estimated traffic** coming **from these keywords**;
- paid **traffic cost** estimation;

Advertising Research: homedepot.com

Alerts PDF

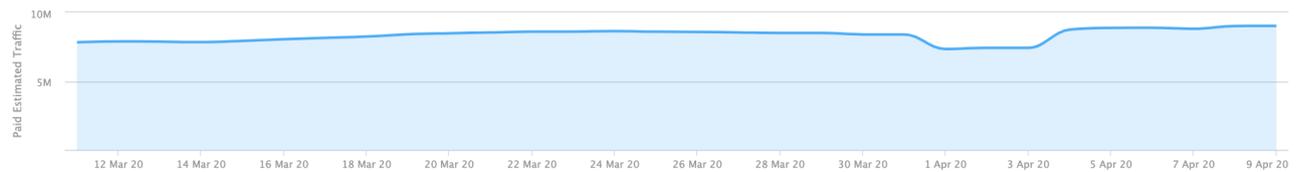
Database: United States | Device: Desktop | Date: Apr 9, 2020 | Currency: USD

Positions Position Changes Competitors Ad Copies Ad History Pages Subdomains

Filter by keyword Advanced filters

Keywords <i>i</i>	Traffic <i>i</i>	Traffic Cost <i>i</i>
94.7K 2.05%	9M 7.38%	\$7.4M 11.46%

Paid Search Trends *i* Estimated Traffic Keywords Traffic Cost 1M 6M 1Y 2Y All time



Paid Search Positions 1 - 100 (94,726) *i*

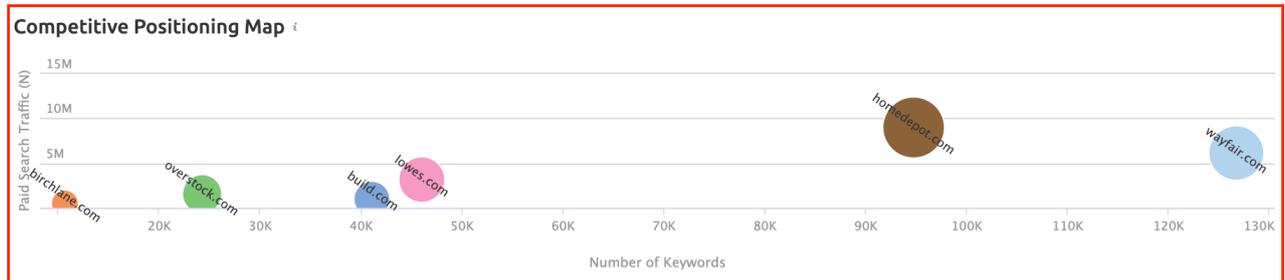
Manage columns (15/17) Export

<input type="checkbox"/>	Ad	Keyword	Pos. <i>f</i>	Diff. <i>f</i>	Block	Volume <i>f</i>	CPC (USD) <i>f</i>	URL	Traffic <i>f</i>	Traffic % <i>f</i>	Costs (USD) <i>f</i>	Costs % <i>f</i>	Com. <i>f</i>	Results <i>f</i>	Trend
>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	home depot	1	→ 1	new	24,900,000	0.02	http://www.hom... al/Site	1,170,300	12.98	23.4K	0.3	0.08	86	
>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	home depot	1	→ 1	0	24,900,000	0.02	http://www.hom... al/site	1,170,300	12.98	23.4K	0.3	0.08	72	
>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	home depot	1	→ 1	0	24,900,000	0.02	http://www.hom... ot.com/	1,170,300	12.98	23.4K	0.3	0.08	90	

other websites your target rival competes with in advertising;

Positions Position Changes **Competitors** Ad Copies Ad History Pages Subdomains

Keywords <i>i</i>	Traffic <i>i</i>	Traffic Cost <i>i</i>
94.7K 2.05%	9M 7.38%	\$7.4M 11.46%



Paid Competitors 1 - 100 (6,577) *i*

Export

Domain	Com. Level <i>f</i>	Common Keywords <i>f</i>	Paid Keywords	Paid Traffic	Paid Traffic Price (USD)	SE Keywords
wayfair.com <i>i</i>	12%	13.2K	126.7K	6,075,133	7.2M	4.2M
overstock.com <i>i</i>	5%	3.1K	24.2K	1,503,279	1.7M	6M
lowes.com <i>i</i>	4%	3.1K	46K	3,172,210	1.9M	5.2M
birchlane.com <i>i</i>	4%	2.1K	10.7K	492,937	525.3K	229.4K

■ **historical data** to uncover your competitors' **seasonal preferences** in advertising—this may be especially interesting if it's been quite a while since you checked up on competitors' ads.

As you may remember from the website traffic analysis chapter, one of the Top Pages of homedepot.com in March 2020 was dedicated to a respirator mask. We decided to check if there was any promo of this item, so we clicked back to March data in Advertising Research and discovered two pieces of ad copy about this product.

Positions Position Changes Competitors **Ad Copies** Ad History Pages Subdomains

mask Advanced filters ▾

Ad Copies 1 - 6 (6) ⁱ Sort by: Number of keywords - descending ▾

<p>Shop Damask Wallpaper Available at The Home Depot® ↗</p> <p>www.homedepot.com/</p> <p>Save on a Wide Selection of Beautiful Wallpaper. Shop Today! Store Finder. Register Online.</p> <p>Keywords: 1 ▾</p>	<p>Shop Damask Wallpaper - Available at The Home Depot® ↗</p> <p>www.homedepot.com/</p> <p>Save on a Wide Selection of Beautiful Wallpaper. Shop Today! Store Finder. Register Online. Track An Order. Gift Cards Available. Sign Up For Emails. Highlights: Local, Licensed & Insured Professionals Available, Customer Service Available.</p> <p>Keywords: 1 ▾</p>	<p>Meadow Damask Gray 8 ft. x 10 ft. Area Rug-C80241240305HD ↗</p> <p>www.homedepot.com/HDC</p> <p>Shop Now Stunning Furniture & Decor Items. Free Shipping, Easy Returns! Free Shipping Over \$45. Leading Brand. Home Depot Guaranteed. Free In Store Pickup. Highlights: Online Shopping Available, Gift Cards Available, Store Finder Available.</p> <p>Keywords: 1 ▾</p>	<p>Shop Damask Wallpaper Available at The Home Depot® ↗</p> <p>www.homedepot.com/Wallpaper/Damask</p> <p>Save on a Wide Selection of Beautiful Wallpaper. Shop Today! Store Finder. Sign Up For Emails. Track An Order. Gift Cards Available. Register Online. Highlights: Local, Licensed & Insured Professionals Available, Customer Service Available.</p> <p>Keywords: 1 ▾</p>
<p>HomeDepot.com - Paint Respirators & Masks Home Depot ↗</p> <p>www.homedepot.com/</p> <p>Need New Tiles? Shop Styles, Materials Or Shapes. Get Tips Or Ideas @ Home Depot. Find A Store. View Catalog. Track Your Order. Gift Cards Available. Types: Carpet, Rugs, Laminate, Tile, Vinyl, Vinyl Plank, Hardwood, Stone Flooring, Artificial Grass, Sheet Vinyl.</p> <p>Keywords: 1 ▾</p>	<p>3M 1860 Safety Masks Free Shipping Available ↗</p> <p>www.homedepot.com/</p> <p>Safety Supplies From 3M Keep You Protected. Shop Respirators & Masks. Save on Top Brands. Find A Store Near You. Free In Store Pick-Up.</p> <p>Keywords: 1 ▾</p>		

The context leads us to believe that the respirator mask ad was no accident in March 2020. However, as a Home Depot competitor, you may hesitate to promote such a sensitive item as a mask. So you may need to research some other goods with time-tested demand. For that, dig deeper into the ad history and, see how they promote outdoor items. Apparently, some of them stay or even become more relevant.

We decided to dig deeper in our model research and clicked on a blue cell in the Ad History report. We got to see an actual ad of homedepot.com which was run at a particular point in time.

Positions Position Changes Competitors Ad Copies **Ad History** Pages Subdomains

outdoor Advanced filters

Domain Ad History 1 - 100 (6,716) Export

Keyword	Coverage, %	Last month			2019							2020				
		Volume	CPC (USD)	Traffic	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
outdoor ceiling fan with light	100	12,100	1.48	568	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	4	2	1
home depot outdoor lighting	100	12,100	0.50	568	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
home depot outdoor rugs	100	8,100	1.81	380	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

October 2019	November 2019	December 2019	January 2020	February 2020	March 2020
homedepot.com/ Area Rugs, Floor Mats, Rug Runners, Bathroom Mats. Shop Today! 300+ Rugs. Free	http://www.homedepot.com/Rugs.../Sale High-Quality Area Rugs, Floor Mats, Rug Runners, Bathroom Mats. Shop Today! Helpful Rug Buying Guide. Select from	http://www.homedepot.com/ High-Quality Area Rugs, Floor Mats, Rug Runners, Bathroom Mats. Shop Today! Select from 50,000+ Rugs. Free	http://www.homedepot.com/Area-Rugs/Special-Buys Visit Our Constantly Updating Page of New Special Buys on Thousands of Quality Area Rugs. Use Our Convenient	http://www.homedepot.com/Rugs/Sale High-Quality Area Rugs, Floor Mats, Rug Runners, Bathroom Mats. Shop Today! Select from 50,000+ Rugs. Free	http://www.homedepot.com/Area-Rugs/Special-Buys Visit Our Constantly Updating Page New Special Buys on Thousands of Quality Area Rugs. Use Our Conven
Volume: 6600; CPC: 0.93	Volume: 6600; CPC: 0.93	Volume: 8100; CPC: 2.45	Volume: 8100; CPC: 2.45	Volume: 8100; CPC: 1.91	Volume: 8100; CPC: 1.81

The next step for us would be **to adapt this ad** to our business, **let it run**, and **see how it performs**.

You can **focus on Google Shopping or display ads** in your competitor analysis and use **PLA Research** and **Display Advertising** accordingly. In PLA Research, you can see the product listing ads your competitors promote in different countries. In Display Advertising, you can analyze the distribution of a competitor's GDN ads around the globe and measure your rivals' advertising activity **to understand which markets you should be targeting and how**.

Among other things, look at the actual Landing Pages from your competitors' campaigns and analyze important specifics like which ads pointed to each landing page on their site at a particular time.

As a result of this step of competitor analysis, you will be able to **analyze the pricing in the target segment by PLA ads and optimize your ad creatives** (in terms of keywords, titles, and pictures) **and ad spend for maximum ROI**.





4. See How Your Rivals Are Adapting Their Content Marketing and PR

See How Your Rivals Are Adapting Their Content Marketing and PR

In uncertain times, you may want to be especially careful with your brand statements, whether on your owned, earned, or paid media.

Those [surveyed marketers](#) that claimed to have implemented substantial changes in their messaging specified that they had to create **more helpful and emotional content**. Their new creative assets are meant to be more empathetic in tone. In visual terms, all **lifestyle imagery has to be adapted** since typical seasonal pictures are no longer relevant.

With so many restrictions and precautions to keep in mind, competitor analysis can help you navigate safely. Here is what you can do, step by step.

- **Track online mentions** of any word or phrase related to your rival's brand name, product name, product category, motto or anything else. You can research all of these with the [Brand Monitoring tool](#). The report can help you:
- find mentions **on the web, forums, Twitter, or Instagram**;
- estimate reach for each mention and **bring out a platform with the largest coverage**;
- **highlight the strength and popularity of the mentioner's domain** (Authority Score) **and website traffic** (Traffic: Low/Medium/High in the tool).

As in previous steps, we researched each of these aspects for The Home Depot, and we filtered recent mentions so that they included the keyword "mask".

Brand Monitoring: The Home Depot

[+ Add campaign](#)
[Email reports](#)
[PDF](#)
[Settings](#)

Campaign: [The Home Depot US](#) | Country: [US](#) | Keywords: [The Home Depot](#) | Last Update: 2 hours ago [Update](#)

Overview **Mentions** Statistics Resources About tool

Web [Mar 23, 2020 - Mar 29, 2020](#)

English [mask](#) in mentions [Link to website](#) [Sentiment](#) [Advanced filters](#)

[Save filter view](#)

[Actions](#) Mentions found: 32

[Send to Link Building Tool](#)

[Export all](#)

<p><input type="checkbox"/> Murphy Says Some Bosses Forcing Employees Work From The Office Mar 28, 2020 10:17</p> <p>Estimated Reach: 6.7K no backlink Language: English</p> <p>675 – the second most among the 50 states. The death toll is now up to 44. Murphy said that many companies, including Walgreens, Verizon, Comcast, Home Depot and Apple, are contributing to the war against COVID-19. On Tuesday, he said PSE&G has donated some 50,000 masks and the 153,000 face masks and respirators ...</p> <p>Neutral + Add tag</p>	<p>Domain www.tapinto.net US</p> <p>Authority Score: 65/100</p> <p>Traffic: High</p> <p>Track domain</p> <p>Block domain</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Physicians fear for their families as they battle coronavirus with too little armor Bemidji Pioneer Mar 28, 2020 08:56</p> <p>Estimated Reach: 937 no backlink Language: English</p> <p>... health centers stopped testing for COVID-19 because there is not enough protective gear to keep workers safe. One described buying N95 masks from the Home Depot to distribute to colleagues; another spoke of buying safety glasses from a local construction site. "Health care workers around the country continue ...</p> <p>Neutral + Add tag</p>	<p>Domain www.bemidjipioneer.com US</p> <p>Authority Score: 58/100</p> <p>Traffic: Medium</p> <p>Track domain</p> <p>Block domain</p>

If you are especially interested in the traffic driven by referrals, go to [Traffic Analytics](#) for insightful research.

[Check your rival's reputation](#) and [discover their referrals' traffic deeper](#).

- **Study a competitor's backlink profile in detail and monitor your rival's new and lost backlinks.** Use [Backlink Analytics reports](#) to see the pages that link to your competitors' (source URLs) and the actual pages that received traffic from these backlinks (target URLs). Also, consider Authority Score in your analysis.

Backlinks 1 - 100 (~783,300)

Disavow list Table settings Export

Links per ref. domain All 1 3 10 All links Follow Nofollow Sponsored UGC By type Text New Lost Advanced Filters

Page AS	Source Page Title and URL	Ext Links	Int Links	Anchor and Target URL	First Seen	Last Seen	Disavow
82 Page Authority Score	The Daily Beast www.thedailybeast.com/	14	168	is offering corporate.homedepot.com/newsroom/COVID-19-update-how-home-depot-preparing-and-responding	19 d ago	19 d ago	+
79	The Home Depot Pro - Maintenance, Repair and Operation Supplies and Indust... homedepotpro.com/	15	0	Learn More corporate.homedepot.com/newsroom/COVID-19-update-how-home-depot-preparing-and-responding	20 Mar'20	28 Mar'20	+

Number of links from the source page

(text) new Type of link

Explore rivals' backlink profiles

There is one point that you shouldn't ignore either for your or your competitors' articles: **assessing the content performance**. Connect your Google Analytics to **Post Tracking** to answer these questions and stay up-to-date with how the metrics change:

- How much traffic did a particular post get?
- How many shares and mentions did it receive?

Content Analyzer: The Home Depot ▾

Content Audit **Post Tracking**
[Edit group](#)

The Home Depot blog... [+ New group](#)

Resource ▾
Author ▾
Tag ▾
Referral Traffic ▾
Estimated Reach ▾

URL	Referral Traffic	Keywords	Shares	Backlinks	Estimated Reach
13	Connect	0 no changes	3.1K +450	893 +290	0

Add article
Articles added: **13 / 50**

URL ↕	Referral Traffic ⓘ	Keywords ⓘ	Shares ↕	Backlinks ↕	Estimated Reach ⓘ ↕
Get the Look of New Kitchen Cabinets the Easy Way https://blog.homedepot.com/look-of-new-kitchen-cabinets-easy-way/ <div style="margin-top: 5px;"> resource: blog.homedepot.com ✕ author: Article Posted By: Rust-Oleum ✕ + tag </div>	n/a	+ keywords no added no lost	270 +270 new no removed	57 +57 new no removed	n/a
Top contributors					
How to Paint an Ombre Wall - The Home Depot Blog https://blog.homedepot.com/how-to-paint-ombre-wall/ <div style="margin-top: 5px;"> resource: blog.homedepot.com ✕ author: https://www.facebook.com/homedepot ✕ + tag </div>	n/a	+ keywords no added no lost 10 suggested	66 +66 new no removed	161 +161 new no removed	n/a
Top contributors					

As you may notice in the screenshot, two metrics are missing for The Home Depot research example: Referral Traffic and Estimated Reach. Referral Traffic becomes available only when you connect your Google Analytics to the tool; Estimated Reach is taken from SEMrush Traffic Analytics, and "n/a" means there is not enough data to calculate the metric.

Add your content to the analysis



5. Check Up on Your Competitors' Moves on Social Media

Check Up on Your Competitors' Moves on Social Media

Social media may be the most relevant when it comes to showing your brand's reaction to current events.

For brick-and-mortar businesses that can't be visited in person, social networks provide great opportunities to stay on their customer's radar by being helpful. Fitness brands, for example, have switched to **offering at-home workouts** for free.

For online businesses, where the competition is now even stiffer, social media should be a place to stand out and prove their relevance, no matter the crisis.

How can you act in your specific case? Your industry competitors can tell you this. So, here is your to-do (and to-answer) list:

- **Find who's been active on social media and on which platforms they've been using;**
- **See if their audience has increased or decreased;**
- **Learn what type of content they've been posting**
(are there any non-promotional posts?) **and how often;**
- **See if there's anything new in audience engagement and brand communication.**
- **Highlight your own opportunities in social media ads.**

Social Media Tracker will help you in this part of competitor analysis.

Social Media Tracker: The Home Depot

Go to Poster tool PDF Settings

Overview Facebook Twitter Instagram YouTube LinkedIn Pinterest

Company: homedepot.com Dates: Mar 23-29, 2020

Social channels

Social channels	Followers/Subscribers	Posts/Videos	Engagement
Facebook	5,035,705 ↑	0 ↓	0 ↓
Pinterest	1,879,815 ↑	8 ↓	8 ↓
Twitter	393,905 ↑	0 ↓	0 ↓

Top content

wayfair.com Mar 23, 2020 · 18:30

To the left, to the right, bring it back now! With the Mustafa Multifunctional Writing Desk, get a spot for work, decor, and so much more – all with the swing of a shelf. ☺ <https://www.wayfair.com/sv83...>

Total Engagement: **1,728** Engagement Rate: **2.29**

[View all Facebook posts](#)

worldmarket.com Mar 24, 2020 · 2:48

Looks like this day's going to the dogs. Happy #NationalPuppyDay! bit.ly/3bjAajC Expand

Total Engagement: **14** Engagement Rate: **1.23**

[View all Twitter tweets](#)

worldmarket.com Mar 26, 2020 · 1:00

Take advantage of every space in your home to maximize relaxation. A small collection of soft pillows and snuggly blankets kept within reach makes it easy to take a cozy break. #worldmarket #bedroom Expand

Total Engagement: **64** Engagement Rate: **1.75**

[View all Pinterest pins](#)

Comparison with competitors

Audience	Activity	Engagement	Sort by:	Total audience	Change	Growth (%)
wayfair.com				8,781,234	+18,047	+0.21%
homedepot.com				7,309,425	+29,759	+0.41%
homedepot.com				7,309,425	+29,759	+0.41%
worldmarket.com				2,064,812	+1,026	+0.05%
jossandmain.com				1,815,122	+4,039	+0.22%

Legend: Facebook (dark blue), Twitter (light blue), LinkedIn (medium blue), Pinterest (red)

Monitor competitors' social media



6. Review the Findings with Your Own Goals and Strategy in Mind

Review the Findings with Your Own Goals and Strategy in Mind

You've walked through the key points of the online competitor analysis that will be particularly pertinent in these uncertain times. Now you need to make sense of your findings



Review your benchmarks and reevaluate your performance.

From monitoring your internal stats, you may have concluded that your company underperformed in the last period. However, the picture may look less dramatic if you compare your results to your competitors'. It might be the case that the whole industry went down. Be aware of the metrics you should be aiming at.



Assess how competitors' actions and your marketing ideas correlate with your initial strategy.

You may find out that a long-term campaign that you started a month ago doesn't correspond to the current market trends and needs. Well, it's definitely better to find this out now than when the audience starts to actively express their discontent with your creative assets.



Get a fresh view of the market and be prepared for changes.

You may never have imagined some of the peaks and troughs in demand that have taken place recently. Take note of any new trends and act swiftly.



Adapt the best new practices and avoid other companies' mistakes.

When the regular playbook becomes outdated, it may be a priority to detect the tactics that you should exclude. Learn from your competitors' experience and make data-driven decisions.



Filter out any ideas that don't comply with your company's offering, positioning, ultimate goals and strategy.

No matter what brilliant insights you have found by looking at your competitors, if they don't align with your brand idea or roadmap, it's better to push them to the back burner. And this is when the next point becomes crucial:



Communicate competitive intelligence to other departments.

The key word here is "promptly", as this is how decisions have to be made in this fast-changing environment.

The well-being of many departments depends on the marketing team's actions, so expect more colleagues to care about communication and messaging.

Needless to say, any intelligence is invaluable for executives these days, so don't hesitate to [share your competitor analysis insights](#) across the relevant departments.



Encourage and initiate changes in your marketing plans and strategy
(if needed)

Don't be afraid of making tweaks to or even rethinking your entire strategy.

When the smoke clears, you will have a chance to carry out any of the earlier planned marketing experiments. But at the moment, this is what you do competitor analysis for: to discover not just greener, but safer, fields and move to them as quickly as you can.



How Often Should You Do Online Competitor Analysis?

How Often Should You Do Online Competitor Analysis?

Normally, we recommend doing competitor analysis **monthly** — to keep tabs on bigger trends and adjust your campaigns accordingly, and benchmarking **quarterly** — for example, the website traffic insights we presented in the first chapter of this ebook were derived with due regard for the Q1 2019 and Q4 2019 performance.

You can check and analyze competitors' metrics frequently, or only when you're ready to make adjustments in your campaign.

The good news is you won't have to dedicate too much time on constant data gathering and analysis. Set up an [automated competitor analysis report](#) and receive all the needed data carefully gathered for you by email.

If you haven't done it yet, don't hesitate and get your [7-day free trial](#) of the complete SEMrush Competitive Research Bundle.

And may it be the first step to insightful competitor research and stronger digital marketing performance.

[Get a Free Trial](#)





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