

ESSENTIAL  
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## Marketers can use the landing page ratio metric

BY SCOTT BRINKER

How well are you doing in adopting a long tail strategy? A new metric called landing page ratio (LPR) can give you a quick snapshot of how deeply you're engaging your niche audiences beyond the click.

Start by asking yourself how many different search engine ads you have and how many different landing pages you have. When counting the number of ads, be as granular as possible. In search marketing, you'd count individual ad creatives as well as groups of tightly clustered keywords. You want both the creative and its context to be taken into consideration. For most companies, this quickly becomes a large number.

In counting the number of landing pages, count the number of destinations – distinct from a respondent's point of view – that have their own layout, flow and message. Minor variations of individual elements in the page (e.g., trying five different tweaked headlines) only count as one page. This isn't about optimizing one page; this is about deploying different pages for different ads.

Then, divide the number of ads by the number of landing pages. Thus, the landing page ratio is defined as the number of ads divided by the number of landing pages.

If you have 170 ads running, but you only have five distinct landing pages, then your landing page ratio is 170 divided by five, or 34. This means that for every 34 ads, you have one landing page. Your LPR is 34-to-1.

What should your LPR be? It depends. A one-to-one ratio would be a "perfect match" between a long tail of online advertising and a long tail of landing pages, giving you the maximum specificity for each niche audience and the greatest synergy with each individual ad. But you may not need to go that far to achieve your sweet spot.

I'd say a 10-to-one ratio represents "closely matched" ads and landing pages. With that kind of ratio, most of the keyword phrases that respondents click on should have landing pages that speak directly to the searcher's intentions. When

you experiment with different ad creatives, you'd typically have matching landing page creatives for each.

But a 100-to-1 ratio suggests that your landing pages are too generic, and you have an opportunity to improve your conversion rate by tightening your pre- and post-click synergy.

You can determine what's best for you by regularly calculating your LPR and observing how it aligns with your conversion rate, your return on advertising spend and cost per action metrics.

You can then experiment with different ratios to hone in on your most effective LPR zone.



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