Amazon Advantage:

Product Listing Strategies to Boost Your Sales

Amazon Advantage: Product Listing Strategies to Boost Your Sales

Table of Contents

Publication Details

Also From Marketing Words:

For the complete collection of Marketing Words books and courses, [click here](#).

See the copywriting services we offer on [this page of our site](#).

Amazon Product Description Boot Camp Video Series
Go deeper into the process & look over my shoulder. **Watch** as I show you how to research keywords & create awesome listings. [Click here to learn more.](#)

Listing Lab Testing Group
Amazon products are more successful long-term when you continually test and refine your listings. Listing Lab shows you what to test and how with simple, easy-to-understand info & support. [Get the details.](#)
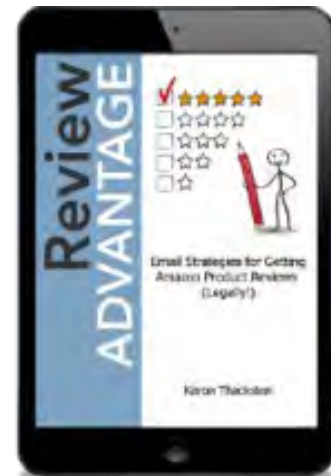
Review Advantage Ebook
Have you ever been thanked by a customer for sending a review request email? Our clients have! This ebook shows you how to create emails customers appreciate & respond to. [Buy now](#).

The Challenges of Selling on Amazon

Millions of people are making either a solid part-time or full-time living selling on Amazon. Plenty of folks have gone from a few hundred dollars a month in sales to millions and even billions as Amazon continues to embrace third-party sellers.

With all this growth on your side, what could be wrong? Well, just that: growth.

The more sellers who jump onto the Amazon bandwagon, the more competition you face.

With the growth of private labeling on Amazon, you also now have many identical products with different brand names.

How are customers supposed to choose? Generally, what happens is that people get confused, and confused minds don't buy. Or, if they must buy, they resort to whatever is cheapest and has the best [reviews](#).

**Differentiation is your Amazon advantage and
the surprising secret to making more sales at higher prices.**

You have to set yourself apart from the competition to be successful. Of course, that means making good decisions from the start, and choosing products that 1,000 other sellers aren't listing. Once you've done that, your primary way of separating your items from competitors — while still making good money — is with words.

Sure, you could drop your prices, but then you start freefalls of others that follow suit (either with manual or automated repricing) until your profits are dismal. You have a limited amount of space, so you have to choose your words oh-so-carefully. Your titles, bullets/features and

product descriptions must accomplish the task of **showing the uniqueness and value** of your items, or you will be seen as just another widget in the overcrowded selling space.

You've spent all this time and money to find or create a product (whether by manufacturing, private labeling, wholesaling, or bundling), so why wimp out on the copy that will make it sell?

Ranking in Amazon & Google: Before & After

For years, Amazon did not allow the copy you created for your listings to impact their internal or external search engines.

Until 2017, Amazon operated on a key**word**-based algorithm. You need keywords in your titles and in the various keyword fields available in your Seller Central account or inventory uploader spreadsheet. In 2017, Amazon made the switch to a machine-learning platform that focused on key**phrases** instead of individual keywords. Still, the injection of keyphrases into your copy isn't all you need to create a successful listing that sells.

Here are the best ways to get your products listed high in the search results:

- **Recent sales history** – A big one! Amazon will not organically rank product pages high in the search results unless they make sales on a regular basis.
- **Title of product** – VERY important! [Testing](#) title content and length is key to long-term success.
- **Descriptions** – Well-written, informative product descriptions that engage and entice shoppers.
- **Search Terms** – Correctly, deeply researched terms that are highly relevant inserted into as many fields as possible.
- **Following Amazon's terms of service (TOS)** – Amazon is continually tightening the reins on sellers to weed out those who attempt to manipulate its TOS with malicious intent.

Google works using a combination of key**phrases**, links, social signals, and about 200 other factors that are as tightly protected as Colonel Sanders' 11 herbs and spices.

And … don't forget your customers. The compelling titles, bullets, and product descriptions are — first and foremost — written for them, so this puzzle requires balance. Lots of balance.

Let's start to overcome these challenges by taking a look at who decides whether or not you actually make any money: your customers.

2

Who's Buying your Stuff and Why?

As a manufacturer, wholesaler, or private labeler, you'll need a firm grasp on your customers. Who's going to buy this gizmo you're selling? Why? What needs or wants does it fulfill? What's the payoff for the customer?

Where do you find the answers? By asking your customers. The problem is, on Amazon you don't usually have that ability before they buy. If you're a manufacturer who also sells products on your own website, you could connect with customers through that channel. However, if you only sell on third-party sites (Amazon, eBay, etc.), you usually aren't privy to that information unless you make direct contact via legal means through Amazon.

If you don't have direct access to customers, find other major sellers and read their reviews. Make notes about what customers liked and what they didn't like. Also, read through the questions and answers for the product (if there are any). Are the same questions being asked repeatedly? Are shoppers asking if a product will/will not do something? Are they asked where it was made? Write it down. It gives you insight into your customers' mindset and you can also use this information to create your unique competitive advantage (UCA) to differentiate your items.

Jot down any wording that customers and reviewers use when talking about the product that really strikes a chord with you. Look at reviews that have lots of votes for being helpful: you know those make an impact on other shoppers.

What will you do with all these notes? Use them throughout the process of creating your Amazon product listing.
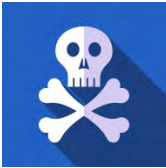
WARNING: I do not and am not advocating that you copy someone else's work. Using the *ideas* presented by others online that are then completely rewritten in your own words and using short, specific phrases from reviewers' public statements is perfectly legal under U.S. copyright law.

However, simply changing a few words from someone else's text (plagiarism) or directly copying another merchant's product listing verbatim (copyright infringement) are both illegal, immoral, and downright disgusting.

You can use the **Product Research Worksheet** provided to organize your thoughts and the information you collect during your research.

If you are a manufacturer, wholesaler, or private labeler, you'll also find some in-depth help by completing the target customer questionnaire that was included as a bonus with this training.

When it comes to highly competitive products or ones surrounded by suspicion, look for quotes from authoritative sources, including reputable magazines, blogs, comparisons, and product packaging. Think *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *Consumer Reports*, etc.

3

Positioning your Products as the Obvious Choice

As you check out the competition already on Amazon, pay attention to what they are saying, doing, and offering. Sure, you'll need to include the specifications of the product (size, color, brand, special features, etc.), but you don't want your listing to look or read the same as everyone else's.

As you're reviewing the pages, look specifically for ways you can position your product. One savvy seller saw that everybody else was listing paper shredders as an ordinary way to destroy bank statements or old checks. He decided to take the approach of positioning his as a "personal data security device."

Selling frozen-food trays? Instead of positioning them as freezer storage items, take the approach of making your family healthier, saving money on buying frozen dinners, creating a family activity with the kids, or saving time.

IDEA: Watch videos on YouTube or QVC and pay attention to infomercials on TV for the product you are writing about and/or similar products. You can get lots of ideas from those.

What else can you do to stand out? Multi-packs and bundling are enormously popular and quick ways to set yourself apart. You can also offer bonuses that other sellers don't have.

If everyone else is selling typical silicone mats for baking and cooking, you can sell a two-pack or three-pack. Or sell a bundle with a silicone mat, a spatula, and sheet pan (as an example). Amazon bundling pro **Jessica Larrew** was kind enough to offer **5 tips for bundling** that can help differentiate you from other sellers (and make you some serious cash!).

1. Choose items that are ALREADY being purchased together.

Amazon makes it very easy for us to see what customers are buying with each item. I use this as a starting point for all of the bundles that I create. When you go to any product page on Amazon, scroll down just under the description and find the section that says "Frequently Bought Together" for the items most purchased together. Then the section below that will give you even more ideas: "Customers Who Bought This Item Also Bought:"

When you take these items and you put them together, you are saving customers a step. They don't have to go looking for that other item. More importantly, you guarantee that they buy each of those items from YOU!

2. Use different suppliers to create the listings.

The reason that I like to mix my suppliers on bundles is that it makes it harder for your competition to get onto the listings.

This is especially true when you are using wholesale. If you have a wholesale account with ABC company and just choose three items from their catalog, any competitor with that same wholesale account can jump right on that listing with you. BUT, if you mix ABC company and XYZ company, your competition would have to have both accounts as well!

The same method can be applied to sourcing retail as well. Buy some items from Target and some items from Walgreens.

3. Make the bundle unique to you, exclusively.

If you are really creative, you can go one step further and make it so that no one else can get on your listing at all! You can do this by using special packaging, having special labels made, or having your own brand on the bundle.

You can even use your own copyrighted documents with your listings. You can make how-to guides or special letters that go with the items. For example, you could write a fill-in-the-blank love letter and include it with a bundle that has a teddy bear, fake rose, and heart candies. No one would ever be able to list on there because you wrote the love letter and hold the copyright for it.

4. Use bundles to make low-margin items more profitable.

One of the pitfalls people get into with Amazon is selling low-dollar items. The reason this is a problem is that Amazon takes so much of the sale in fees when the total price is less than $7.

If you take an item that is usually sold for a low price and combine two or three of these low-priced items together, you will save on your overall fees to Amazon. You will see an increase in your overall profit margin for the item sold as a bundle, rather than separately.

5. Don't forget to consider the size and packaging of bundles.

Two important aspects to remember when creating bundles is the size and how you are going to package them.

If you are bundling a pair of barbecue tongs and barbecue sauce, for example, it would be difficult to get those items packaged together simply because of the size difference in the items being bundled.

You also want to keep in mind that if an item is over 18 inches it goes into the "oversized" category for Amazon's fee structures. So make sure that you have enough margin to add more fees to your item.

Please read Amazon's bundling policy before you venture into this area.

And what about bonuses? How about providing a free recipe ebook with food-related items or a handy, laminated first-aid reference card with first-aid kits? Think of something that has low weight or is digital, so mailing will have minimal or no costs.

Let's look at a few examples of how copy is positioned differently, so you can see exactly what I'm talking about.

Product: Omega 3 Supplement

Nature Made Burp-less Fish Oil, 1000 Mg, 300 mg Omega-3, 150 Liquid Softgels from Nature Made

★★★★☆ ▾   635 customer reviews | 27 answered questions

4+

About the Product
- Purified to remove mercury
- Nature Made Fish Oil supply only comes from deep ocean waters, not farm raised fish
- No artificial colors; No artificial flavors, No artificial preservatives

---

Product Description

Size: **150**

Trust your health with Nature Made Fish Oil. The Omega-3's in Fish Oil may reduce coronary heart disease risk.

They protect the heart by keeping cell membranes flexible and healthy.

This copy uses extremely short, ordinary language to describe the product, but so do thousands of other listings. The text is accurate, but that's about all it is. With minimal information, there isn't a lot here to help shoppers make a buying decision. Lots of omega-3 supplements do this assuming that, because they are national brands, they will be immediately recognized and trusted. Not necessarily.

Then there is this omega-3 supplement from a company called Xtend-Life.

Xtend-Life Omega 3 / QH ULTRA Fish Oil with High DHA and EPA Plus CoQ10 Ubiquinol for Heart, Muscle Health and Cellular Energy for Over 40's (60 Soft Gels) from Xtendlife

★★★★☆ ▾   29 customer reviews | 4 answered questions

About the Product

- Contains bio-available CoQ10 in the form of genuine Kaneka QH®. Ubiquinol is immediately accessible to cells for creating cellular energy. Research shows Ubiquinol is much more effective than the commonly used Ubiquinone. Highly recommended if you're taking cholesterol-lowering drugs, to support healthy CoQ10 levels!

- Combining Lyco-O-mato® lycopene with AstaPure® astaxanthin, this fish oil blend will help support skin density and skin thickness while resisting skin scaling and roughness!

- Contains New Zealand Hoki fish oil harvested from the pristine waters of the Southern Ocean off the coast of New Zealand. We use Hoki fish oil and Tuna oil to create a highly bioavailable formula for maximum benefits!

More ▾

A Unique Omega 3/CoQ10 Blend Essential For Men and Women Over 40+

We have added genuine Kaneka QH Ubiquinol CoQ10 to our Omega 3/DHA Fish Oil Premium (also sold on Amazon) for a truly special blend formulated to meet the needs of men and women 40 and up.

This powerful Omega 3/CoQ10 blend offers some very important advantages:

Supports heart and muscle strength by boosting cellular energy levels
Defies aging of your skin from within
Supports brain, joint, eye, and hair health as well as healthy cholesterol levels & immune system
Helps support the body's ability to manage inflammation and return the area of inflammation to a healthy balanced state (also known as homeostasis).

High content of quality Omega-3 and DHA (700mg DHA per day)

Exceptional purity and freshness

With extremely high potency and absorption, Omega 3/QH Ultra meets and exceeds the strictest purity standards, including the GOED standards.

ATTENTION CHOLESTEROL DRUG USERS

If you are taking statins (cholesterol-lowering drugs), there is a possibility that you could have low levels of CoQ10 in your body which could lead to other health issues. By supplementing with Omega 3 QH Ultra, you help replenish these levels with the most potent and effective form of CoQ10, which your body needs to support better energy levels and health.

Try our exclusive blend of Omega 3, CoQ10, Astaxanthin and Lycopene that is only available from Xtend-Life. This special combination of ingredients is perfectly suited to support overall wellness and healthy aging. Also check out the other Xtend-Life Omega 3/DHA fish oil products available on Amazon.

Our Promise and Guarantee
Not 100% happy with your purchase from us?
Send it back within 365 days (a full year) of the purchase for a full refund or product replacement - whichever you prefer.

What did you notice? Rather than using generic language that could possibly describe *any* omega-3 product, the Xtend-Life copy is very specific about how it is different and better than the rest.

Positioning itself as being for people over 40, this product goes beyond being a mere omega-3 supplement and lets shoppers know right up front that it offers way more than the basics. Xtend-Life understands its target customers and provides copy that speaks directly to them.

The only way to write copy this compelling and specific is to understand whom you're talking to through your words. This is one place where all your prior research will come in very handy.

Practice What You've Learned

Using towels as an example, take a few minutes to go through the steps outlined above. Pretend you are a towel manufacturer, private labeler, or wholesaler, or a seller who is creating a new product by bundling. Research the phrase **heavy weight bath towels** and see what you come up with.

I found the following…

Features in common with most listings include:

- cotton
- heavy-weight
- thick
- soft
- absorbent
- oversized

Differences:

- 2-ply
- Ring spun (although nobody defined this term)
- Ounces/grams
- Type of cotton: Egyptian, Turkish, organic, ring-spun
- Other materials included: rayon, bamboo
- Hotel-quality

Reviews revealed that customers liked:

- Sustainability of bamboo (which, oddly, wasn't mentioned in the product copy)
- Dries quickly
- Made in the USA
- Large and thick
- Have become my favorite towel
- Holds up well to washings
- Good price
- No odor (chemical/industrial smell)

Reviewers didn't like:

- Towels faded slightly
- Have to be washed in cold water
- Poorly finished, looks cheap, puckers around trim
- Loose threads pulled and ran through the towels
- Was let down: reviews didn't seem real. Nothing special about these towels

Questions and answers brought this information:

- Where are the towels made?
- What does the set consist of?
- What size are the towels? (Several questions about this.)

- What is the weight of the towels?
- Do these towels mildew or smell bad?
- How long do they take to dry?
- A customer image shows a lot of dryer lint. Is this typical for these towels?
- Are they really absorbent?

Now, let's look at some examples and then write copy for our own towels.

Pinzon Egyptian Cotton 725-Gram 6-Piece Towel Set, White

by Pinzon by Amazon.com

★★★★ ☆ ▾   1,859 customer reviews | 12 answered questions

#1 Best Seller in Bath Towel Sets

Price: **$15.49** ✓*Prime*

In Stock.

Ships from and sold by Amazon.com. Gift-wrap available.

Want it tomorrow, July 15? Order within **7 hrs 38 mins** and choose **One-Day Shipping** at checkout. Details

Color: **White**

- 6-piece oversized and extra-heavy towel set includes 2 bath towels, 2 hand towels, and 2 washcloths; imported
- Woven with over 4-1/2 pounds of Egyptian cotton for softness, absorbency, and durability
- Available in an array of colors to easily accessorize with home linens
- Machine washable and dryable
- Bath towels measure 30 by 56 inches; hand towels measure 18 by 30 inches; washcloths measure 13 by 13 inches

Roll over image to zoom in

Product Description

Color: **White**

Indulge yourself in spa like luxury with this luxurious six-piece towel set. The set includes two oversized, extra heavy bath towels, two oversized extra heavy hand towels, and two oversized, extra heavy washcloths. The set is is made with approximately 4-1/2 pounds of Egyptian cotton--known for its softness, absorbency, and durability. These towels makes an ideal complement to any bathroom whether you use it to pamper yourself or reserve it for special guests. Egyptian cotton fibers are valued for their superior length and strength, which also reduces the buildup of pile and lint. These towels will feel cozy and comfortable against your skin every time you use them. Additionally the towels get softer with washing and drying.

While the headline is accurate, it isn't very enticing. Amazon mandates what can and can't legally go into a title. While some sellers opt to create more enticing titles, they risk having their titles edited (and losing the ability to change their own titles in the future), listings suspended, or listings suppressed until they bring their titles under compliance.

When I read the above title, I didn't think, "Wow! I need these towels." Instead, my first thought was, "Yep … that's a 725-gram towel." If I had typed "heavy-weight towel" or "725-gram towel" into Amazon's search engine, I would have looked at this listing and then clicked to several others because there's no real distinction between most of them.

There was a disconnect between the product title and the description. The title was very matter-of-fact and didn't give me any clue that these were luxury towels. I appreciated the "indulge yourself" approach of the product description, but many other towel manufacturers took this route as well.

REMEMBER: Most shoppers aren't just going to read your product copy. They will click to several different items before making a decision. Think back to your product research. Did you see the same features and benefits repeatedly when you were reading competitors' listings? Did you get bored after a while? So will your customers. This is one reason it is so vital to demonstrate your unique competitive advantage (UCA) and differentiate your products from the rest.

The title of the product below caught my attention because it mentioned imported towels used in spas and hotels. As I kept reading, the way they set themselves apart from other towel manufacturers held my interest and brought me to the point of purchase. I'd certainly buy these.

While I typically am not a huge fan of copy that focuses on the company or product instead of the customer, it was necessary in this instance because the differentiating point was the company's track record.

Roll over image to zoom in

Luxury Hotel & Spa Towels - 100% Turkish Cotton & Made in Turkey (White, Luxury Bath Towel - Set of 4)

by American Linen

★★★★⯪ ▾   32 customer reviews

| 3 answered questions

List Price: ~~$95.00~~
Price: **$47.50** ✓*Prime*
You Save: $47.50 (50%)

In Stock.

Sold by American Linen and Fulfilled by Amazon. Gift-wrap available.

Want it tomorrow, July 15? Order within **8 hrs 26 mins** and choose **One-Day Shipping** at checkout. Details

Color: **White**

Size: **Bath Towel - Qty 4**

| Bath Towel - Qty 4 | Hand Towel - Qty 6 |

| Wash Cloth - Qty 12 |

- 100% Turkish Cotton
- 4 Luxury Bath Towels 27"x54" - White
- Made from 100% Authentic Turkish Cotton in Turkey - accept no substitutes
- Heavy weight: 700gsm
- Towels get softer after every wash
- White - Vat dyed to remain bright!

Product Description

Color: White | Size: Bath Towel - Qty 4

American Linen has been selling Turkish towels for more than 15 years and contracts with only the very best mills in Turkey. Presently American Linen has 5 of the top selling towels on Amazon. This can't be done without making a superb product at a great price.

Towels made in Turkey are softer and more durable because it is the only country which does not use any bleach in the manufacturing process, including white towels.

All Turkish towels are VAT dyed which means the dye is infused into the yarns under high pressure and high temperature for 6-12 hours depending upon the color. This limits any fading of even the brightest colors. Even white towels are dyed white, not bleach white. For maximum color retention and softness, do not use any bleach when washing these towels.

You will feel the softness immediately, and the towels will get softer after each washing. And by using only Turkish cotton the durability is un-equaled. These towels should last you many years!

If for any reason, you would not give these 5 stars, please email and let me know.

How I'd Write It

Based on the information we have, here's my take.

Thinking about when towels are used, the typical answer is first thing in the morning. You just woke up, you're groggy, you don't want scratchy, itchy towels on your face and body. So, for this example, I'll position our pretend towel product as a way to start your morning off right.

Yes, the hotel approach sounds good up front, but if you've ever stayed in a hotel, you know most of their towels are washed without fabric softener. They are rough, not soft and cozy. As for the spa angle, it paints a great mental image. It might be possible to turn your bathroom into a spa-like environment with a new showerhead, a design makeover, or dimmer lighting, but just adding soft towels isn't going to do it, in my opinion.

Please note that this title is NOT 100% compliant with Amazon's terms of service (TOS). If you want to be completely in line with the TOS, you'll need to follow the templates Amazon provides in the Style Guides for each category. For this product, Amazon uses the following format:

Brand + Line/Pattern + Material + Product Type + Quantity, + Color
Example: Royal Velvet Classic Hand Towel, Peridot

Heavy Weight, 725-Gram Egyptian Cotton Towels Start Every Morning Off Right, Blue

- 100% ring-spun cotton proven to make the softest, most durable towels so you start your day off right.

- Thick and thirsty, these absorbent towels drink up the water, yet dry fast without any mildew or smell.
- Made in the USA, these bath towels will quickly become your favorite because they feel so velvety smooth against your skin and hold up wash after wash.
- Purchase individually so you get the exact size, quantity, and colors you want.
- Remarkably affordable for towels of this quality. You'll want several for each family member.

Product Description

These ultra-thick, spa-quality bath towels are made from the softest, ring-spun cotton offering superior absorption and fast drying times. It's affordable luxury that starts every day off right.

Let's face it — most of us don't leap out of bed with a giant grin on our faces. It takes time to emerge from our sleepy state and rejoin the conscious world. Scratchy, flimsy towels are an aggravation that only add irritation to your morning routine, so why use them?

Put a Bit of Luxury in Your Wake-Up Routine

Start your day off right with these plush, 100% Egyptian cotton towels. One touch and you'll understand why ring-spun cotton is preferred by almost everyone who uses it for its ultra-soft texture. Thick and plush, these towels quickly soak up every drop of water to get you on your way fast.

They are not soft on quality, though — no puckering, pulled threads, or fading here, even after multiple washings.

Want two bath towels for your body and hair? Need extra washcloths for your face? Purchase individually, so you get exactly what works best for you.

- Bath towels are a hefty 30" x 55"
- Hand towels measure 20" x 30"
- Wash cloths are 13" x 13"

With over a dozen popular colors to choose from, you'll look forward to using these super-soft towels every morning. (Makes the perfect housewarming or wedding gift, too!)

Order Today

Other Ways to Position Towels

What else can you think of besides positioning these towels as luxurious, a "spa-like" addition to your bathroom, or a great start to your day? You might also consider them as a mini-bathroom makeover. Adding new towels is a quick way to refresh the appearance of a bathroom without a big expense.

You could emphasize the quality more. The quality is mentioned some, but could be fleshed out in other ways to mention possible features and benefits such as organic cotton, seams that don't fray, tightly woven fabric that holds up to years of washing, etc. (if applicable).

If you add a bonus (scented soap, a dishtowel for the kitchen, a guide on using towels as gifts, a pack of dryer sheets, etc.) you'll make your product even more desirable.

Give it some thought and you'll likely find other ways to differentiate your towels.

Worksheet

Product Research

Are there other products *exactly* like yours being sold on Amazon now? _____

How are they (or similar products) positioned?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

What are the differences? _____

_____

_____

_____

In your research, did reviewers or others talk frequently about things they liked (that your product has) or things they did not like (that your product overcomes)?

_____

_____

_____

_____

What did reviewers **like** about similar products?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

What did reviewers **not like** about similar products?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

What questions were asked repeatedly about similar products?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

30 Ways to Position your Product

1. Bundle it with another product(s).
2. Mention another use others aren't talking about.
3. Focus on benefits instead of features.
4. Take the healthy approach.
5. Take the fast approach.
6. Take the easy approach.
7. Take the affordable approach.
8. Position it as family friendly.
9. Position it as luxurious.
10. Position it as a real value.
11. Solve a specific problem.
12. Relate your product to a news event.
13. Relate your product to a celebrity.
14. Relate it specifically to men, women, or children.
15. Offer a better guarantee.
16. Offer free shipping.
17. Make it Amazon Prime eligible.
18. Give a bonus.
19. Mention your Bestseller status (if applicable).
20. Mention that you have an enormous number of positive reviews (if true).
21. Offer a lower price.
22. Offer more colors.
23. Offer sets (if most others are open stock).
24. Offer open stock (if most others come in sets).
25. Relate it to vegetarians or vegans.
26. Position it as allergy-free.
27. Position it as dairy-, wheat-, casein-, gluten-free.
28. Position it as the latest technology.
29. Position it for an age group (senior citizens, young kids, teens, over 50).
30. Position it for a medical condition (arthritis, high blood pressure, migraines, menopause).

List 3 ways you can position your product:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4

Optimizing Listings for Amazon and Google

In addition to positioning your product so that it entices the shopper, you also want to optimize your listing to help it show high in Amazon's internal search engine as well as in Google.

While Amazon originally used an algorithm that was almost the polar opposite of Google's, the ecommerce giant has made significant changes over the years.

Here's an outline of some of Amazon's search criteria as they pertain to keywords and copy, and how they compare to Google's.

Search Element	Google	Amazon Before	Amazon Now
Keywords in Title (Product Name)	Yes	Yes	Yes
% of Keyphrase Match	Yes	No	Yes
Location of Keyphrases	Yes	Only for title	Yes
Adherence to Policies / Criteria	Yes	No	Increasing
Keyphrases / Words Used in Copy	Yes	Sort of	Yes
Backend Keywords / Search Terms	No	Yes	Yes
Keyword Stuffing	Yes	No	No
Trust Elements	Yes	Yes	Yes

Engagement (Time spent on page)	Yes	Yes	Yes
History	Yes	Yes (for sales)	Yes (for sales)
Listing Page Reputation	Yes	Yes	Yes
Use of Spam	Yes	No	Yes

There is much more to Amazon's algorithm than these few elements. No one knows everything Amazon takes into account before ranking product listings in the search results, but these give you an idea of what to include.

However, the process of optimizing listings has changed significantly from years past to today. It is no longer a simple matter of adding keywords to your title and Search Term fields. With the switch by Amazon to a machine-learning platform, you now need to optimize the entire product page instead of only the title and Search Terms sections.

Let's get detailed about the search elements in the chart above that apply to Amazon copywriting.

Keywords in Title (Product Name)

Amazon has always given more weight to search terms that are in the title. Supposedly, the first 80 characters are the most important and are where your primary keywords should go. However, the test results we've seen have varied. I encourage you to test this on your own listings as well.

Percentage of Keyword Match

Amazon looks at the degree of match between what the customer typed into the query box when doing his/her search and the words/phrases included in your listing. The greater percentage of match, the more likely you will rank well.

Location of Keywords

For years, Amazon wanted to see keywords in titles and in the backend Search Term fields. In fact, that information wasn't even searchable for the longest time as this **old screenshot** from Seller Central shows.

Elements used as keywords

- Product Name
- Brand/Designer/Manufacturer
- Search Terms
- Event Keywords

Note: The contents of the product description and feature bullets are not indexed in search.

This screenshot from the Product Features / Product Description page of the Home category Style Guide shows that Amazon now uses words from the title and other sections of the product listing for internal and external search.

This information also supports Amazon searches and external search engines, such as Google. See the guidelines provided in the Product title and Product description sections.

Adherence to Policies/Criteria

For the longest time, Amazon's policies were virtually unknown to sellers. Amazon has always done a fairly lame job of informing sellers about policies and helping them to understand the do's and don'ts of creating listings.

Over time, however, Amazon has begun to not only create more training for sellers, but also to make sellers more aware of what is allowed and not allowed in their listings.

Today, there are many more safeguards in place than before. For example, if you attempt to create a title longer than 200 characters, you receive an error. As Amazon adds more of these enforcement techniques, it may be that – eventually — sellers will only be allowed to add listings that are 100% compliant with the terms of service.

Keywords Used in Copy and Backend Keyphrases (Search Terms)

Amazon is steadily moving away from only considering the terms included in the Search Term section (which they did years ago) to barely paying attention to them. Today, Amazon much prefers that you insert important keywords and phrases into the title, key feature bullets, and description sections (to a much lesser extent).

Amazon clearly states that they are under no obligation to accept or use any keywords or phrases you submit. The Search Term fields are optional. If you want to rank well for a keyphrase, you are better off to include it in the copy instead of the Search Term fields.

What to Do with Search Terms

Look in your Seller Central account (Add a Product section). Go through the process of adding a **new** product (not finding an existing product). When you get to the Keyword tab, you'll see five **Search Term** fields (sometimes call "generic" or "hidden keywords"). Keywords go here.

> You'll have room to enter up to 1,000 characters in each of five field. However, Amazon **does not recommend** that you include that many. Amazon has some do's, don'ts, and suggestions for keyword inclusion and use.

Headlines

New feature improving the quality of search results
18 Aug 2017

Amazon launched a feature that limits the length of the generic keywords attribute to less than 200 bytes in Amazon.in, 500 bytes in Amazon.co.jp and 250 bytes in every other marketplace except Amazon.cn. The limits have been shown to improve the quality of search results. It applies to newly registered and existing ASINs.

Key Guidelines:

- Keep content within the prescribed length limit (less than 250, 200 for IN, 500 for JP):
    - Length limit applies to total content in all generic keyword fields (a max. of 5 attributes).
    - Whole entry will be rejected upon exceeding limit.
    - Number of bytes equals number of characters for alphanumeric characters (e.g. a-z, 0-9) while other characters can be 2 bytes or more. Examples include ä (2 bytes), £ (2 bytes), € (3 bytes) or ♥ (3 bytes).
    - Spaces and punctuation (";" "," ".") do not contribute to the length limit, but words should be space-separated. Punctuation between words is unnecessary.
- Optimising keyword content for search discoverability:
    - Do not include keywords that are not descriptive of the product.
    - Do not include brand names (even your own) or other product identifiers.
    - Do not duplicate content present in other attributes, such as title and bullet points.
    - No need to repeat keywords; once is enough.
    - Use keywords that are synonyms, hypernyms or spelling variations of content in visible attributes (e.g. if product title is 'whiskey', use 'whisky' in generic keywords).

What's the difference between "alternate spellings" (which they say you should use) and "common misspellings" which you should not use? I asked Amazon and this is what they said:

Amazon is an international platform. Buyers from across the globe look for products using various words. Certain words are spelled differently in different places.

For example:

- *color (spelled in US) / colour (spelled in UK)*
- *behavior (spelled in US) / behaviour (spelled in UK)*
- *flavor (spelled in US) / flavour (spelled in UK)*

It is always advised that sellers use alternate spellings so that search can cater to a wide area.

There are instances where the buyers use the alternate spellings. Hence, to increase product visibility we always advise the use of alternate spellings.

Along with the ones above, Seller Central also offers these [keyword tips](#).

Include (when applicable):

- *Brand and description — Laura Ashley Pillow Cases*
- *Product line — Sophia Collection*
- *Material or key ingredient — 300-Thread-Count*
- *Color — Blue*
- *Size — Queen*
- *Quantity — Set of 2*

If your product name has the word "blue" in it, **you don't need to repeat this word in your search terms.** *This* **won't increase the placement in results**. *Using the* Pillow Cases *product example above, additional search terms* not *already appearing in the product name might include:* luxury, cotton, *and* shams. *(Note, however, that you can get useful keywords from your product description and featured bullets, and from the names of Amazon.com browse nodes — for example,* Bedding Ensembles.*)*

Stemming

Amazon states that their system accounts for basic stemming. In case you are unfamiliar with this term, stemming is taking a core word and adding different endings. For example:

- diet
- diets

- dieting
- dietary
- dietician

However, before you leave the stemmed words out of your Search Term fields, check to see if Amazon is indeed accounting for them. Do a quick test.

Search for the core word, and then search for the stemmed versions. If the search results come up as identical, then Amazon has them both covered equally. If they come up different, however, you should include the stemmed keywords in your Search Term fields.

Here's an example. When I search for "silicone pet mat" I see these results (not including sponsored listings).

Snug Pet Feeding Mat for Dog and Cat In Premium FDA Grade Silicone

by Snug

$12.95 $29.99 ✔*Prime*

Get it by **Wednesday, Jan 6**

PetFusion Pet Food Mat in Premium FDA Grade Silicone [Large, Gray]

by PetFusion

$18.94 $19.95 ✔*Prime*

In stock but may require an extra 1-2 days to process.

More Buying Choices
$18.94 new (4 offers)
$10.99 used (6 offers)

Silicone Pet Food Mat by Tip-Top Petware, Multipurpose Pet Mat (Grey)

by Tip-Top Petware

$13.95 $23.95 ✔*Prime*

Get it by **Wednesday, Jan 6**

More Buying Choices
$13.95 new (2 offers)

SugarBooger Placemat Silicone, Pool Blue   Apr 30, 2015

by ORE Pet

$11.00 ✔*Prime*

Only 18 left in stock - order soon.

More Buying Choices
$11.00 new (2 offers)

When I change my search to include the plural version (the stemmed version with an "s" on the end), I see this:

Silicone Pet Food Mat by Tip-Top Petware, Multipurpose Pet Mat (Black)
by Tip-Top Petware
$13.95 $23.95 ✔Prime
Get it by **Wednesday, Jan 6**

More Buying Choices
$13.95 new (5 offers)

★★
Prod
... sa
100%

Pet !

Snug Pet Feeding Mat for Dog and Cat In Premium FDA Grade Silicone -
by Snug
$12.95 $20.99 ✔Prime
Get it by **Wednesday, Jan 6**

★★
Prod
... fee
preve

Pet !

Pet Food Mat for Dogs and Cats, Premium FDA Grade Silicone, Black, Wa
Outdoor...
by iHausPlus
$10.97 $30.00 ✔Prime
Get it by **Wednesday, Jan 6**

★★
Prod
... no

Pet !

SuperDesign Square Silicone Waterproof Non-slip Pet Feeding Mat, Pet F
by Super Design
$9.99 $32.00 ✔Prime
Get it by **Wednesday, Jan 6**

More Buying Choices
$9.99 new (2 offers)

★★
Prod
... To
Pet E

Pet !

You'll notice that — even though the keyword in the title is still showing as singular — the products included in the search results have changed. When this happens, I suggest using both the core word and the stemmed version in your Search Term fields.

My Quick & Dirty Keyword Research Method

While keyword research as a whole has changed a lot in the past few years, the method I use for Amazon product listings is its own animal.

I start on Amazon itself. You can walk through the process with me, if you'd like.

Start with a root keyphrase.

Go to Amazon.com and make sure "All" is visible beside the search box. If it isn't, click the arrow and choose "All departments."
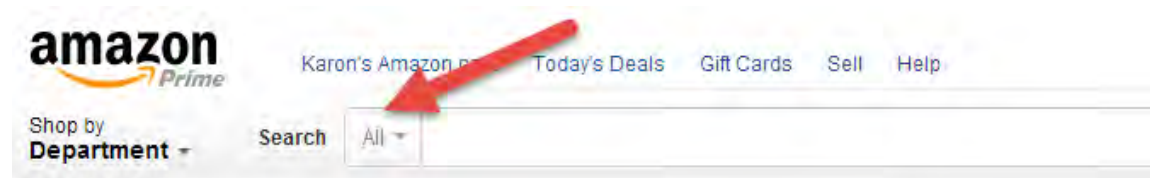

Building a Keyphrase List

Over the years, Amazon has realized that the use of highly relevant search terms plays a large role in directing qualified traffic to its product pages. For that reason, you would be wise to keep all the keywords and phrases you research as applicable and relevant to your product as possible.

Straying too far from the actual product elements may prove to lead traffic to your listing that simply leaves without purchasing. Having too many of these types of visitors will eventually cause your rankings to dwindle.

What's the first thing that comes to mind when you think about your product? Use that as your root keyphrase: your starting place. Type it into the Amazon search box and see what comes up. We'll use a USB drive as our example product, so I'll type in (yep, you guessed it!) *USB drive*.
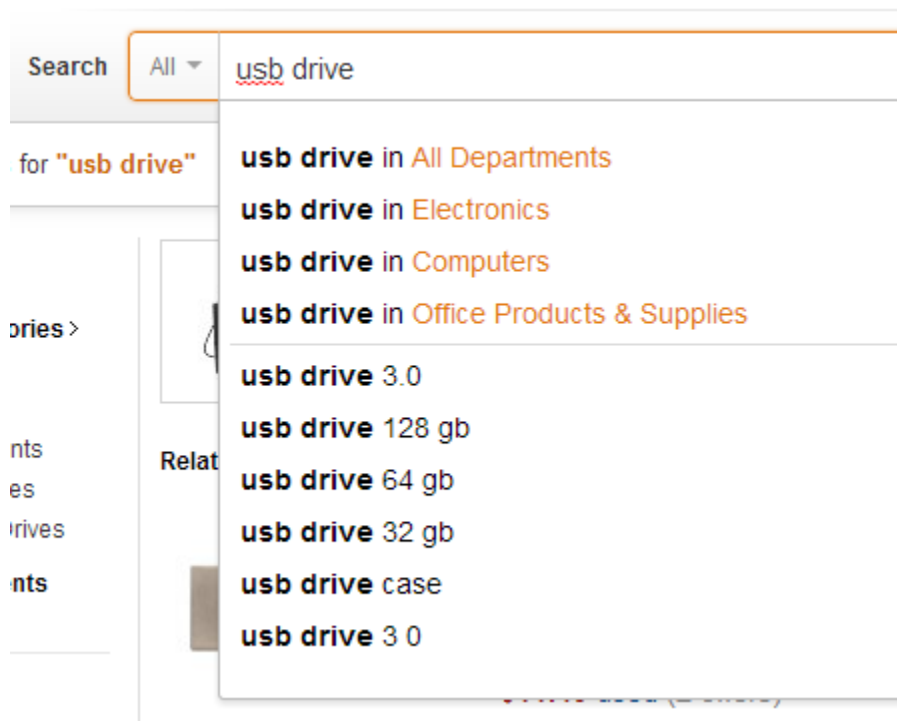
Look at what appears in the drop-down box. As I start to type, I'm watching the box (even though I'm not finished entering the phrase). Here's what I see:
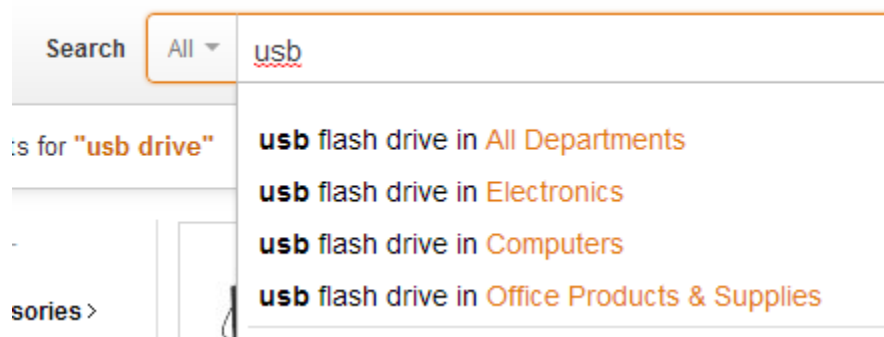
So now I have two keyphrases on my list:

- USB drive (my original term), and
- USB flash drive

If I keep typing the entire root keyphrase, the drop-down list changes and I get these:

That gives me several sizes to include on my keyword list. Remembering that it isn't necessary to repeat words, I'll remove the duplicate words that would be in my product name (title) and/or bullets. We end up with this:

- USB drive (my original term) – This would be used in the title.
- USB flash drive - Would use "flash" in the title.
- 3.0 - I would include "3.0" in the title.
- 3 0
- 128 gb - I would include the size in the title so it would not be used as one of my keywords in my Search Terms fields.

Think about the physical characteristics of the USB drive. Does it come in different colors, for instance? If so, add those to the keyword list.
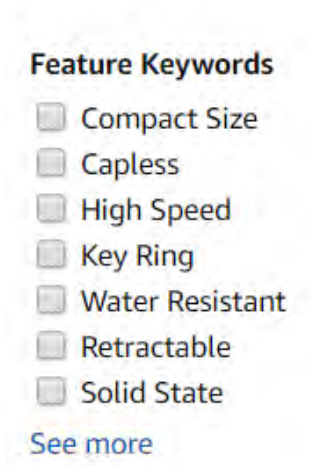
- USB drive (my original term) – This would be used in the title.
- USB flash drive - Would use "flash" in the title.
- 3.0 - I would include "3.0" in the title.
- 3 0
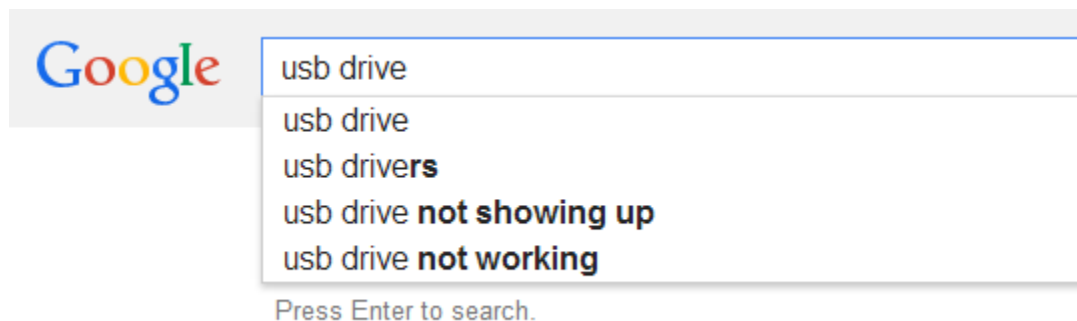- 128 gb - Include the size in the title.
- green
- blue

- pink
- yellow

And, if we look in the far-left sidebar of the Amazon search results page, we see some sorting / category / keyword options.

Feature Keywords
- [ ] Compact Size
- [ ] Capless
- [ ] High Speed
- [ ] Key Ring
- [ ] Water Resistant
- [ ] Retractable
- [ ] Solid State

See more

When I add those to the original search, I get *USB drive capless* and *key ring USB drive* that can go on our list. You can click the Computer Accessories category and possibly find some more ideas.

From this, we get *computer accessories* to add to our list.

Much like cellular products (which can be referred to as cellular, wireless, mobile, etc.) USB drives have many names. If we look on Google (and go through the same process as we did on Amazon), we see this:

Google | usb drive
usb drive
usb drive**rs**
usb drive **not showing up**
usb drive **not working**

Press Enter to search.

The same terms we already had, pretty much.

But if I click on USB drive in the list and scroll all the way to the bottom of the page, I see some other options.

Searches related to **usb drive**

usb **hard** drive	**custom** usb drive
usb drive **target**	usb drive **staples**
usb drive **bulk**	usb **flash** drive **reviews**
cool usb drive	**best** usb **flash** drive

As you're scrolling, glance at the title and description tags of the Google listings to see if any other keywords jump out at you.

You can probably think of others off the top of your head. I came up with a couple that I'll add to the list.

- USB drive (my original term) – This would be used in the title.
- USB flash drive - Would use "flash" in the title.
- 3.0 - I would include "3.0" in the title.
- 3 0
- 128 gb - Include the size in the title.
- green
- blue
- pink
- yellow
- computer accessories
- hard
- stick (USB flash stick, but we don't need to repeat "USB" or "flash." They are in the title.)
- data
- memory
- capless
- key ring

If you were stumped, you could type something like "synonyms for usb drive" into Google. I found new ones on Wiktionary by doing that.

- USB drive (my original term) – This would be used in the title.
- USB flash drive - Would use "flash" in the title.

- 3.0 - I would include "3.0" in the title.
- 3 0
- 128 gb - Include the size in the title.
- green
- blue
- pink
- yellow
- computer accessories
- hard
- stick (USB flash stick, but we don't need to repeat "USB" or "flash." They are in the title.)
- data
- memory
- capless
- key ring
- jump
- thumb
- pen

Also, computer accessories could be referred to as computer gadgets, so I'll add that to the list. I'll also clear out the ones we struck through, so we have a clean list.

- USB drive (my original term) – This would be used in the title.
- USB flash drive - Would use "flash" in the title.
- 3.0 - I would include "3.0" in the title.
- 3 0
- 128 gb - Include the size in the title.
- green
- blue
- pink
- yellow
- computer accessories
- computer gadgets
- hard
- stick (USB flash stick, but we don't need to repeat "USB" or "flash." They are in the title.)
- data
- memory
- capless
- key ring
- jump
- thumb
- pen

Your product might have different spellings (shower head vs. showerhead) that you could include in the keyword fields.

Think of materials, colors, shapes, sizes, categories, etc. to include.

For the holidays, think about including "stocking stuffers" or "gifts for dad/mom" in your keyword fields to increase traffic to your product pages. For other times of the year, you can list terms such as "back to school" or other relevant holidays such as Canada Day, July 4th, Valentine's Day or Thanksgiving. I'll add back to school to our keyword list.

- USB drive (my original term) – This would be used in the title.
- USB flash drive - Would use "flash" in the title.
- 3.0 - I would include "3.0" in the title.
- 3 0
- 128 gb - Include the size in the title.
- green
- blue
- pink
- yellow
- computer accessories
- computer gadgets
- hard
- stick (USB flash stick, but we don't need to repeat "USB" or "flash." They are in the title.)
- data
- memory
- capless
- key ring
- jump
- thumb
- pen
- back to school

For each of these keywords, I'd go back to Amazon and search again. In addition to typing in USB drive, I'd type in jump drive, then thumb drive and pen drive, etc. to see if still more keywords can be found. Try green memory stick, pink memory drive, etc. It only takes a second.

Then, format your keywords to see how many characters you have. You don't need to use commas (they just eat up more characters).

I encourage you to fill in as many relevant keywords as possible to ensure you get as much traffic as possible. You can seriously increase traffic to your page by adding just one, well-chosen keyword. Where else can you look?

- [Web CEO](#) (free and paid options)
- [Google Keyword Planner](#) (free if you have an AdWords account)
- [Fresh Key](#) ($49.95 one-time fee)
- [Merchant Words](#) (free and paid options)
- [Thesaurus.com](#) (free - search for synonyms)

Sorting Keywords

Before you enter your individual keywords into the Search Terms field for your product, you'll want to sort them into a logical order as recommended by Amazon.

Up to 250 characters will be indexed. Anything that exceeds 250 characters will cause the entire Search Terms section to be ignored.

Here's our finished list.

- USB drive (my original term) – This would be used in the title.
- USB flash drive - Would use "flash" in the title.
- 3.0 - I would include "3.0" in the title.
- 3 0
- 128 gb - Include the size in the title.
- green
- blue
- pink
- yellow
- computer accessories
- computer gadgets
- hard
- stick (USB flash stick, but we don't need to repeat "USB" or "flash." They are in the title.)
- data
- memory
- capless
- key ring
- jump
- thumb
- pen
- back to school

If individual keywords can be strung together to make logical keyphrases, Amazon suggests you do that. Remember, it isn't necessary to repeat words within the keyword fields that are already in the product title or bullets.

====== Formatting Keywords for Keyword Fields =======

> 3 0 green capless computer data memory stick blue pink yellow hard accessories gadgets key ring jump thumb pen back to school

If you don't want to keep double and triple checking between the Search Terms fields and your title, bullets and description; you can use a tool to remove the duplicates for you.

My favorite and the one the Marketing Words' team uses is Helium10.com. This suite of tools does a lot. The two tools we use most are Frankenstein (for deduping) and Scribbles to remove keywords from all the sections of your listing as you use them. Then you're left with a formatted list of search terms you can just copy and paste. Huge time-saver!

The keywords above equal 125 characters. If you find more, you can certainly add them. Because it is not necessary to repeat terms in your title or bullets, there isn't a lot left over for the Search Terms section.

Once you have your information sorted out, copy and paste the search terms into your product listing in Seller Central or upload them via a spreadsheet.

7 Types of Keywords to Consider When Doing Research

Information-Gathering Keywords

There is a proven buying process that most people go through before and during the time they shop for what they need. Some people go through it lightning fast while others take quite a long time.

During the first two phases of this process (*need recognition* and *information search*), people will usually type in phrases related to either the problem they are having or the solution they want to find.

1. Problem-Based Keywords

These types of search terms are phrases such as "get fit" or "stop snoring." These both describe a problem that someone might type in to see what solutions present themselves.

2. Solution-Based Keywords

Just the opposite are solution-based keywords. Instead of what you see above, someone might choose to look for "fitness watch" or "snoring products." These focus on finding a solution and can sometimes be a little more specific than problem-based keywords.

Buying Keywords

Once the need has been clearly identified and the search for preliminary information has been done, you'll notice that searchers tend to gradually get more specific. When that happens, shoppers may use some (or all) of the types of keywords below.

3. Product Descriptors

As the name implies, these keywords are related to ways people might describe your product or service. If you're selling USB drives, you'll likely have lots of keywords to use from this category because USB drives have many names. (Always search for synonyms for whatever keywords / phrases you include in your research.) In addition to "USB drive," these are also called:

- USB storage
- Removable memory stick/drive
- USB stick
- Thumb drive
- Flash stick/drive
- Portable memory stick/drive

…and about a dozen other names. People who are new to this type of technology may call them something completely unrelated, such as "small computer file storage device." My team and I recently saw this related to a bath product. The actual description for that type of product was "bath bomb." Because these are relatively new, people have been searching for them with all sort of descriptors, including "round fizzy bath balls."

4. Attribute Keywords

Again, this type of keyword is relatively self-explanatory because it focuses on the attributes of a product or service. Colors, sizes, shapes, and other features all fall under this classification.

5. Brand Keywords

You would, of course, want your own brand to be searchable, but you might also consider using other brands for which your product is compatible. Amazon does not allow you to insert *misleading* brands into your title or Search Term fields. If you're selling a Coach handbag you would not want to put competitor brands such as Liz Claiborne or Hermes into your Search Terms fields. That would be misleading.

6. Use Keywords

Sometimes people have a particular idea in mind for an item they are shopping for. Other times, there are several products that have the same description and they must specify the use in order to find search results that match the exact one they want.

For instance, the term "crab crackers" can mean food (snack crackers that are crab flavored) or it can mean a tool used to crack crab shells when eating crab legs. In order to find the one tool the searcher wants, s/he must search for something like "crab crackers for seafood" or "crackers for crab legs." Without including the use of the item, the search results will not be accurate for the search.

Another example is the word "hammock." There are dozens of types of hammocks and not all serve the same purpose. They can be used for camping, hiking, relaxing, etc. Combine the use with the attributes and you will probably find some great phrases such as "nylon hammock for camping" or "rope hammock for backyard."

7. Target Audience Keywords

There is a huge variety of target audience keywords that **could possibly** be used to drive traffic. These might include practically any descriptor of your target audience, such as:

- man
- woman
- kids

- adults
- children
- surfers
- hikers
- campers
- coffee lovers
- construction workers

Think of who your target customers are and research terms that include the various names they might be called (including their sex, gender, occupation, hobbies, and more).

Subjective Language in Search Terms

Because Amazon is cracking down on what they refer to as "subjective" or "marketing language," I do not recommend including these words or others like them in the Search Terms section:

- Best
- Free
- Excellent
- Luxury
- Cheap
- Bargain
- Perfect
- Easy
- Safe

- Latest
- Limited time
- Today only
- Winner
- Promotion
- Sale
- Discount
- Opportunity
- New release

Target Audience, Intended Use, Other Attributes & Subject Matter Fields

On the Keywords tab in the Add a Product section of Seller Central, you'll find other sections in addition to the Search Terms fields. These have to do with Amazon's browse search system.

Difference Between "Search" and "Browse"

While the "search" function on Amazon works like every other one you've probably used (go to the top of the page and type in words to conduct a search), Amazon also has additional search capability through its "browse" function.

Browse allows shoppers to click their way to the product they want using dropdown menus, lists of categories, and other options (usually in the left-hand sidebar or top navigation). The target audience, intended use, other attributes, and subject matter fields all influence browse searches.

Look below for progressive screenshots of a browse search in action. The sequence is as follows:

1. Open the drop-down menu.
2. Click to a general category and then a subcategory.
3. Refine the search by the parameters given.
4. Drill down to the exact product.
5. Sort by features.
6. Sort by more features.
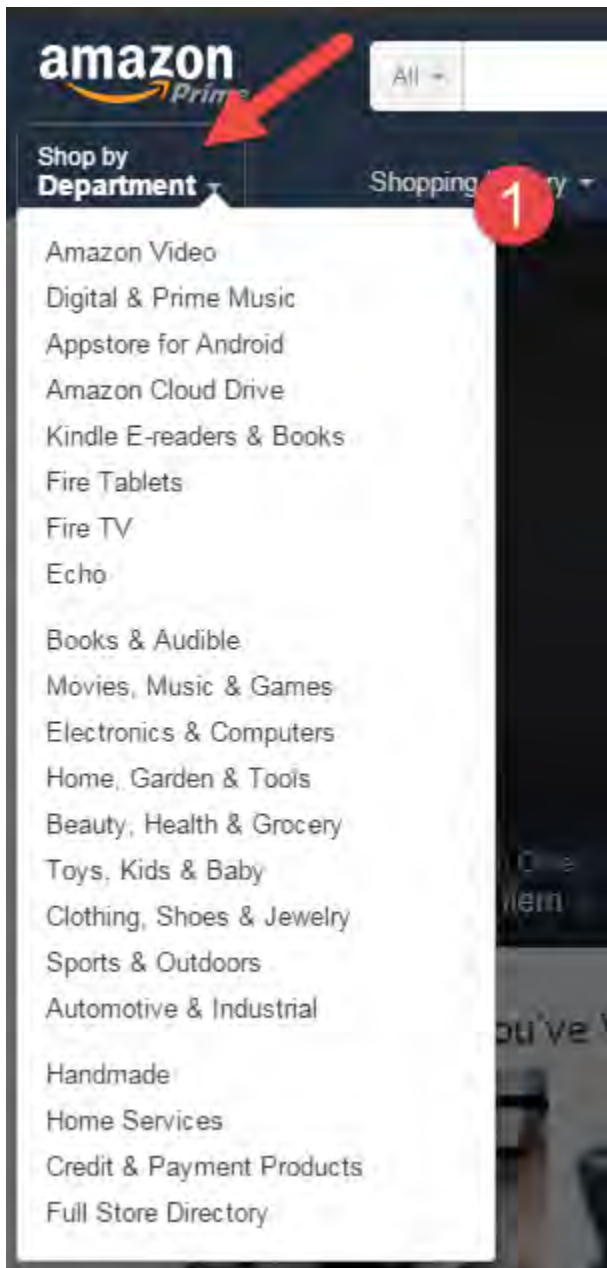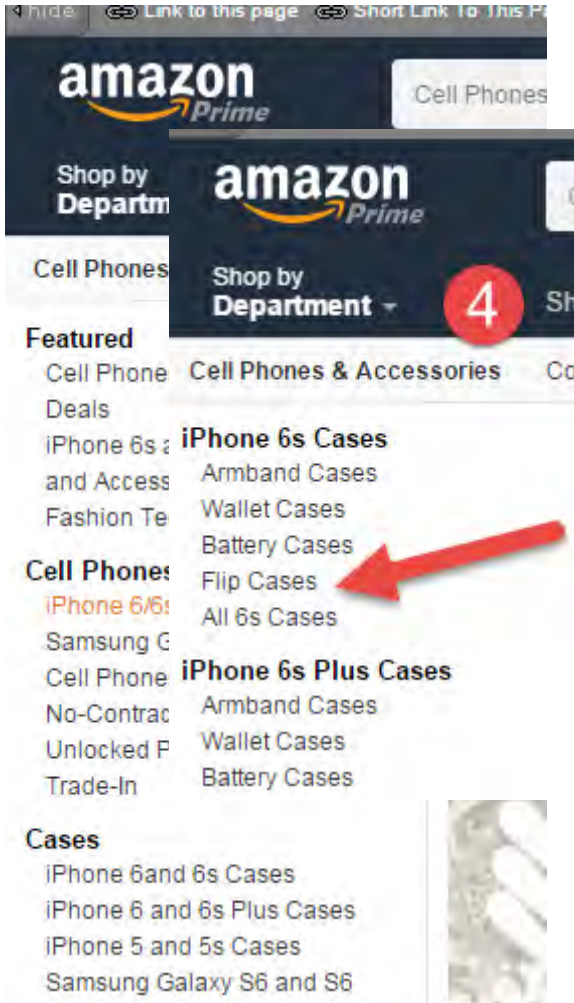
Refine by

Phone Compatibility

☐ iPhone 6/6S (68,758)
☐ iPhone 6/6S Plus (43,641)
☐ iPhone 5/5S (33,826)
☐ iPhone 5C (6,417)
☐ iPhone 4/4S (9,291)
☐ Samsung Galaxy S 6 (26,537)
☐ Samsung Galaxy S 6 Edge (7,091)
☐ Samsung Galaxy S 5 (55,623)
☐ Samsung Galaxy S 4 (29,194)
☐ Samsung Galaxy Note 4 (54,075)
☐ LG G3 (5,775)
☐ Fire Phone (11)

Featured Brands

☐ OtterBox (1)
☐ Verus (126)
☐ Maxboost (2)
☐ DACHUI (1)
☐ Obliq (22)
☐ Abacus24-7 (63)
☐ Hilda (18)
+ See more

Color

Material

☐ Fabric (10,732)
☐ Leather & Faux Leather (791,798)
☐ Metal (1,021)
☐ Plastic (2,519)
☐ Rubber & Silicone (5,463)
☐ Thermoplastic Polyurethane

Features

☐ Heavy Duty Protection (1,501)
☐ Kickstand (26,287)
☐ Screen Protector (10,658)
☐ Slim Fit (31,900)
☐ Sound Amplification (9)

Amazon Prime

☐ ✓Prime

Packaging Option

☐ Frustration-Free Packaging (2)

Avg. Customer Review

★★★★☆ & Up (23,722)
★★★☆☆ & Up (35,389)
★★☆☆☆ & Up (38,652)
★☆☆☆☆ & Up (41...)

International Shipping

☐ AmazonGlobal Eligible

Condition

New (883,153)
Used (633)
Refurbished (56)

Price

Under $10 (289,245)
$10 to $25 (553,428)
$25 to $50 (39,106)
$50 to $100 (2,045)
$100 & Above (433)

$ [   ] to $ [   ] GO

Discount

10% Off or More (624,887)
25% Off or More (587,835)
50% Off or More (416,363)
70% Off or More (225,339)

The keyword elements mentioned above influence (don't **control**, but influence) whether and where you show up in these browse menus. Most often, you have drop-down menus or checkboxes that you can click (inside your Add a Product section on the Keywords tab) that are prefilled with options. I recommend that you choose as many as are applicable. It's a simple process that may earn you more visibility and clicks.

When you login to your product listing and click to the Keywords tab, you'll see sections that may look like these. Not every category has the same options, so yours may look different from the screenshots shown below.

Using Keywords in Bullet & Description Sections

While including keywords in the bullet points has always been a good idea, it is now essential since Amazon revamped its search optimization policy.

Optimize listings for Search and Browse

Customers must be able to find your products before they can buy your products. Search is the primary way that customers use to locate products on Amazon. Customers search by entering keywords, which are matched against the information (title, description, etc.) you provide for a product. Factors such as degree of text match, price, availability, selection, and sales history help determine where your product appears in a customer's search results. By providing relevant and complete information for your product, you can increase your product's visibility and sales. Below are some general guidelines to improve your product listings.

Product Detail Page

Each individual word in the Product Name (Title) is searchable on its own. For example, a product called Laura Ashley Sophia Collection 300-Thread-Count Pillow Cases (Blue, Queen, Set of 2) is better than Blue Pillow Cases. This is because the recommended Product Name above includes this information:

- Brand - Laura Ashley
- Product line - Sophia Collection
- Material or key feature - 300-Thread-Count
- Product Type - Pillow Cases
- Color - Blue
- Size - Queen
- Packaging/Quantity - Set of 2

Note: Please refer to category-specific guidance on Seller Central for more information. Title guidelines and requirements might vary by category.

Information provided in the product description and bullet points is searchable by customers. The product description and bullet points help customers learn key details about your product. These sections should include product-related information in a clear and concise manner. Here is more information on writing good product descriptions and bullet descriptions: Improve product details. Amazon will remove your page/listings with long product descriptions.

If you can logically work keywords and phrases that are not already in your title into your bullets or description (without ruining the flow/message of the copy), you should do so. Each word/phrase only needs to be mentioned once. You do not have to repeat keywords, although sometimes it does seem to help in competitive situations. Any keywords that you do not have space for or that don't make sense to mention in the bullets or description can be put into the Search Term fields.

Keyword Research

Keyword Tips from Amazon:

- It is not necessary to use keywords from the title or bullets in the Search Terms field.
- It is not necessary to use commas or quotes around phrases in the Search Terms fields.
- Do not use common misspellings as keywords. (No need to include *bare* if you're selling Teddy bears, for example.)
- Only use highly relevant keywords. Don't try to mislead shoppers.
- Do not use simple stemming variations; plurals and singulars should automatically be included. (I recommend that you test this, however; I've seen search results change.)
- Use legitimate alternative spellings (airplane vs. aeroplane).
- Use synonyms (mobile vs. cellular vs. wireless).
- Put search terms in the most logical order.
- You may have a **total** of 250 characters (for all 5 fields combined). If you exceed 250 characters, Amazon states none of the fields will be indexed.

Root Keyword/Phrase: _____

Keywords found on Amazon:

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

Keywords found on Google:

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____

Keywords found on _____:

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

Synonyms:

_____   _____

_____   _____

Alternate Spellings:

_____   _____

_____   _____

Other Keywords:

Uses: _____

Colors: _____

Materials: _____

Ingredients: _____

Sizes: _____

Sets: _____

Flavors: _____

Holidays/Occasions: _____

Seasons: _____

Order Your List

Arrange your keyword list in logical order. You do not have to use all 5 fields.

{Line 1}

{Line 2}

{Line 3}

{Line 4}

{Line 5}

5

Capturing Attention with Enticing Product Titles

Now that we have all of the pre-writing phase taken care of, we can use our intel and keywords to start writing the titles. Keep in mind, the job of your product title (as with all short copy) is **not** to sell … it is to **get people to read** more.

If you download the Style Guide from Amazon (also called an Inventory Template), they will show you the exact format they prefer for titles in your category.

Brand + Description + Classification or Model # (Item Type: Running Shoe)

If you want to be in complete compliance with Amazon's TOS, enter your brand first, if applicable. Describe the product briefly and give the classification it falls into (running shoe, tennis shoe, etc.) and highlight anything unique that would show shoppers why they should buy your product instead of others'.

Is your product a multipack? A bundle? Does it offer a bonus product of some sort? Is it a limited-edition item?

The information doesn't have to fall into this exact order. For instance, if your brand isn't a household name, you might consider moving it to the end of the title instead of the front. Often, shoppers search by product description, type, or classification instead of by brand name.

The words in your title are searchable. They count as keywords. But be careful … you don't want to go overboard. Never sacrifice the quality or understandability of your product title for the sake of keywords. Be specific (model numbers, colors, etc.). Do NOT just list keyword after keyword after keyword. Not only is it boring for shoppers to read, it is likely to get your listing suspended by Amazon.

If you are selling bundles, please read Amazon's bundling requirements. You'll want to include the word "bundle" in your title, bullets, and product description.

Check your category limitations. Depending on your account, the maximum number of characters legally allowed for the Product Name (title) is 50 to 200.

For instance, at the time of this writing, the clothing category style guide reports a title limitation of 80 characters. Jewelry has a 100-character limit. Go to your Amazon Seller Central account and download the templates to find the character limits for the category(ies) you're selling in.
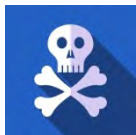
Amazon's Suppression Rule (released in 2015) is in full effect. This rule prevents titles that **exceed 200 characters** from showing up very well in the search results. Regardless of what your flat file or Add a Product section says, if your title exceeds 200 characters (in any category), it will most likely be suppressed.

Amazon often implements restrictions for what can be included in titles. See the list below from the Home / Garden / Kitchen / Pets category:

- Do not use ALL CAPS.
- Do not capitalize conjunctions (and, or, for), articles (the, a, an), prepositions with fewer than five letters (in, on, over, with, etc.).
- Do not include merchant information.
- **Do not include promotional messages such as "sale,"** or **"#1"** (use Manage Promotions on the Advertising link to include messaging).
- Do not use your merchant name for Brand or Manufacturer information, unless your product is Private Label.
- Do not include symbols (such as ! * $?) or special characters (such as ®, ©, ™) in your listings.

- Do not include key product features, product descriptions, or possible product uses in the title.

Here are some examples of good titles.

Casio Inc. HR-100TM Business Calculator by Casio
$39.95 $18.99 ✓Prime
Order in the next 5 hours and get it by Tuesday, Jul 29.
★★★★☆ ☑ (198)
Trade-in eligible for an Amazon gift

More Buying Choices
$16.19 new (87 offers)
$7.00 used (4 offers)
Product Features
Printing calculator
Electronics: See all 2,675 items

Texas Instruments TI-1795 SV Standard Function Calculator by Texas Instruments
$15.95 $10.08 ✓Prime
Order in the next 5 hours and get it by Tuesday, Jul 29.
★★★★☆ ☑ (109)
Trade-in eligible for an Amazon gift

More Buying Choices
$6.40 new (53 offers)
$0.24 used (7 offers)
Product Description
... The classic mini-desktop calcula
Electronics: See all 2,675 items

Avalon 8 Digit Dual Powered Desktop Calculator, LCD Display, Black by Avalon
$14.99 $6.72 ✓Prime
Only 13 left in stock - order soon.
★★★★☆ ☑ (6)
Product Description
... Avalon's calculators help you whiz

More Buying Choices
$6.72 new (3 offers)
Office Products: See all 2,114 item

The top two give the brand name, model, and category / classification. The third one, however, also adds the UCA of "dual powered." That's cool. I could use batteries or solar power. The others might also have that feature, but they don't say so. I'd click this listing before the others.

Complete Set of Trader Joe's Sunscreen Lotions (3 Bottles) by Tr

$25.90

Only 3 left in stock - order soon.

More Buying Choices
$24.40 new (6 offers)

Product Features
... toe in all situations under t

Beauty: See all 954 items

Mary Kay TimeWise Miracle Set, Normal/Dry Skin by Herbalife

~~$90.00~~ $63.99 ✓Prime

Only 12 left in stock - order soon.

More Buying Choices
$50.00 new (139 offers)
$61.75 open box (1 offer)

★★★★☆ ☑ (103)

Product Features
Day Solution with *Sunscreen*

Health & Personal Care: Se

The two examples above are for bundles. The top one offers all the Trader Joe's sunscreen products in one set of three bottles. This sets the product apart from other listings that only sell one type of the sunscreen. The title reflects that by using the words "complete" and "3 bottles."

The bottom listing takes a similar approach, but with Mary Kay skincare. By packaging four items into one bundled product, this seller has set him/herself apart from the rest of the crowd. The title clearly lets you know that this is a set and that it is for normal/dry skin.

Below are two other products that caught my attention because they stood out.

The top bottle has AUTOSEAL and a storage compartment. That's different! (Although it should not be in all caps.) The lower bottle is vacuum insulated. Both would have done the job of getting me to click through to read more.

Contigo AUTOSEAL Kangaroo Water Bottle with Storage Compartment, 24-Ounce, Blue (Aug 2, 201

~~$12.99~~ **$12.19** ✓Prime

Order in the next **4 hours** and get it by Tuesday, Jul 29.

More Buying Choices
$11.40 new (7 offers)

★★★★½ ☑ (386)

Product Features
... open - convenient one-handed *water bottle* operation from sip to seal ...

Sports & Outdoors: See all 63,189 items

Under Armour Dominate 24 Ounce Vacuum Insulated Stainless Steel Bottle with Flip Top Lid by Und

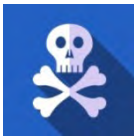**$27.99 - $99.80** ✓Prime

★★★★★ ☑ (202)

Some colors are Prime eligible

Product Description
... The Under Armour hydration *bottle* line from Thermos was built with the ...

Home & Kitchen: See all 22,865 items

 WARNING: Don't get carried away. The title below really overdoes it with the adjectives. "Lovely, cute, sweet…" "mat, silicone, rubber…" *Enough!*

ONOR-Tech Set of 6 Lovely Cute Sweet Semitransparent Lace Cup Mat Silicone Rubber Coaster for Wine, Glass, Tea...

$9.98

Only 15 left in stock - order soon.

Product Description
Package include: 1 set/ 6 pcs *Silicone* Coaster

Home & Kitchen: See all 493 items

The product page isn't the only place where your title (or bits and pieces of your title) will show. In fact, the examples above are not screenshots from product pages. They were taken from the Amazon search results page.

While you may have up to 200 characters (in *some* categories … others are as short as 50 characters) for your title on the product page, you'll also want to take into consideration the various places your title will appear.

Another place you'll find your title (if you are successful) is on the Amazon Bestsellers page.

Best Sellers in Health & Personal Care

1. Pampers Sensitive Wipes 7x Box 448 Count
★★★★☆ (1,276)
$10.97
6 new from $10.97

2. Quilted Northern Ultra Plush Bath Tis...
★★★★☆ (1,646)
$23.94
30 new from $23.94

3. Playtex Diaper Genie Refill, 270 coun...
★★★★☆ (1,013)
$17.99

As you can see, you get about 35 characters in the search results for bestsellers.

IDEA: Write your titles so that the first 35 characters make sense. That way, even if your title is too long for the entire thing to appear completely on these pages, you'll still be able to effectively get customers to click through to your list page.

Here are a couple of examples to show you…

n Clean & Renew ridge Refills...
★★★★☆ (1,835)
$20.14

Braun Clean & Renew Cartridge Refills, Frustration Free 4 Count
by Braun
★★★★☆ ▾ 1,835 customer reviews
| 30 answered questions
#1 Best Seller in Electric Foil Hair Shavers

Price: $20.14 ($5.04 / count) ✓Prime

In Stock.
Ships from and sold by Amazon.com in easy-to-open packaging. Gift-wrap available.

Want it Thursday, July 31? Order within 23 hrs 58 mins and choose Two-Day Shipping at checkout. Details

Even though "Frustration Free 4 Count" was cut off on the bestseller page, the first 35 (or so) characters were perfectly capable of getting the point across so people clicked to the product page. If I had to make one change, it would be to move the "4 Count" closer to the front. If the title read: Braun Clean & Renew 4 Count Cartridge… the shopper would know this wasn't just one filter, but four.


I like certain things about this example. "Silicone Bakeware Set (5 Piece)" is enough to let people know what the product is and that it is a multi-piece set. That would earn the clickthrough to the product page where the shopper could read the rest. *(This is one of those old, horribly long titles that has since been suppressed from the search results.)*

There's at least one more important place your product will likely appear … in the Google search engine results pages (SERPs). Just like the bestsellers page on the Amazon.com site, Google has a limit to how many characters they will show. Normally, that number is 60 to 65 characters.

But because Amazon will put their company name in front of your product title, you'll have less than the usual number of characters. It boils down to around 5 or 6 words (pretty much like the bestseller listing).
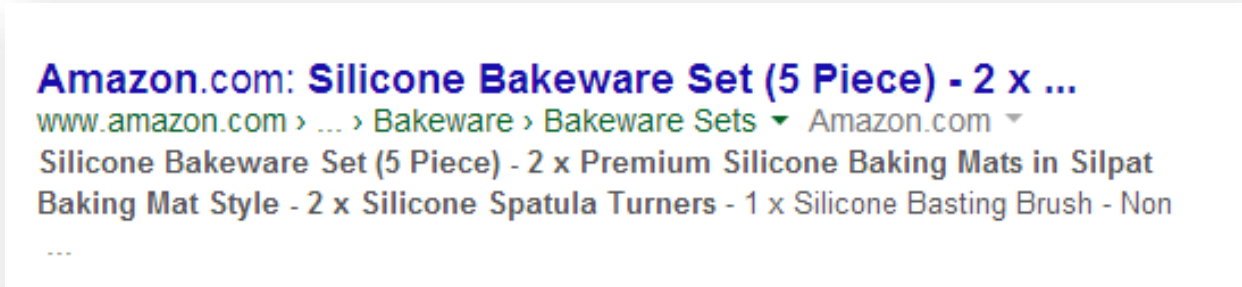
Product Titles

- As a *general guideline*, structure your product title this way:

    Brand + Description + Classification (Item Type: Running Shoe) + UCA

- Use keywords in your title that are both extremely relevant and also have high search volume.
- Check your category limitations for titles.
- Write a title so that the first 35 characters and the first 76 characters can stand alone, be enticing, and make sense.
- If you are selling bundles, use the word "bundle" or "set" in your title.
- Do not exceed 200 characters, or your listing may be suppressed in the search results.

Create 3 product titles below. You can test these with your product listing to see which sells better.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

6

Creating Compelling Bullets/Features

According to the advice that Amazon Seller Central gives about writing bullets (also called Key Product Features), these can have a big impact on your conversion rate. Basically, they should be focused, relatively short, benefit rich, and use keywords.

The typical maximum character count is 200 (about 28 words), but — as with titles—- this can vary from category to category and can also depend on whether you are using the Add a Product screen inside Seller Central or uploading a spreadsheet. Be sure to check your category if you are concerned about violating Amazon's terms of service.

In certain categories, Amazon has begun to post a 100-character-per-bullet limit in the Add a Product section of Seller Central. However, the Style Guides continue to have different information or no character limit mentioned at all. (Amazon can be truly confusing and frustrating sometimes with their arbitrary character counts!)

When it comes to writing bullets, I find that most people learn better by example rather than explanation. The simple way to think of bullet points is cause and effect. Name a feature and then ask yourself, "Why should someone care about this?"

Here are a few examples from Amazon:

- Powerful 18-volt rechargeable battery [FEATURE] delivers more power and longer run-time [BENEFIT]
- Extended 22-inch blade [FEATURE] provides a smooth and level cut [BENEFIT]
- 50-minute run-time [FEATURE] trims up to 1200 square feet per charge [BENEFIT]
- Low-vibration, dual-action blades [FEATURE] improve comfort and reduce fatigue [BENEFIT]

Those are good, but I've found some on product detail pages that are great!

About the Product

- Clinically Proven to Boost Energy: Packed with essential vitamins, minerals & antioxidants, VITAMIX was proven by a University of Malaga Spain study to help combat fatigue + improve energy & stamina.
- Fills Nutritional Gaps: Recovering from a long illness or major surgery? Our formula is designed to help replenish your body's nutrient stores so you bounce back to your normal self faster.
- Maintains Healthy Teeth & Bones: Contains D3 vitamins for healthy teeth and bones, and facilitates increased absorption and utilization of iron, B2, calcium and phosphorus. For ages 2 to seniors.
- Plant-Based, Non-GMO Goodness: All natural multivitamin contains cereals/grains, honey, and legumes-all healthy Mediterranean diet staples. Non-GMO, with no artificial colors or flavors.
- Pleasant Tasting-Works Faster: Easy-to-swallow liquid is absorbed by the body quicker, for faster results. And it tastes surprisingly good! Can be consumed alone or mixed in with juice, milk, or yogurt.

The bullets should be prioritized in order of importance (or what you **think** is the customer's order of importance). You should certainly [test rearranging the bullets](#) to see if that improves your conversion rate.

Keywords in Your Bullets

Additionally, you need to include keyphrases and words in the bullets. Here I see "essential vitamins" and "natural multivitamin," but you could insert others as well. For example, "Easy-to-swallow liquid" could include "vitamin" on the end if that phrase has high search volume.

by Cucitella

★★★★★ ▾   6 customer reviews

#1 New Release in Bakeware Sets

Price: $19.99

Sale: $12.99 ✔Prime | FREE Same-Day

Delivered today for FREE with qualifying orders over $35. Details

You Save: $7.00 (35%)

In Stock.

Want it TODAY, Aug. 1? Order within **1 hr 45 mins** and choose **Same-Day Delivery** at checkout. Details

Sold by WeMakeYouHappy and Fulfilled by Amazon.

- 2 Must-Have Tools, 1 Low Price: Conveniently bundled in one affordable set, our stainless steel pastry cutter + plastic bowl scraper are perfect for making bread, pies, pastries, pasta & more.
- Stainless Steel Pastry Scraper: Thick, sticky dough? No problem. This super-sharp scraper easily slices clean through. Great for kneading, dividing, even measuring - has inch increments on the blade!
- Plastic Bowl Scraper: No more mess! Our flexible plastic scraper conforms to the shape of your bowl, so you can easily scrape out every last dab of dough. Works on flat surfaces, too.
- People-Safe, Dishwasher-Safe: Use with confidence! Your rust-proof stainless steel scraper has a NON-SLIP rubber handle. Your bowl scraper features food-grade polypropylene. Both tools are BPA-Free.
- 100% Guaranteed: If you're ever unhappy with your Cucitella Scraper Set, send it back for a full refund of your purchase price. Plus, if it's defective, we'll replace it free of charge.

ll over image to zoom in

The bullets above focus on real-life uses in order to help shoppers visualize themselves working with this scraper in their kitchen for all sorts of tasks. Additionally, each bullet addresses a feature or benefit of the product.

$4.00 $52.77
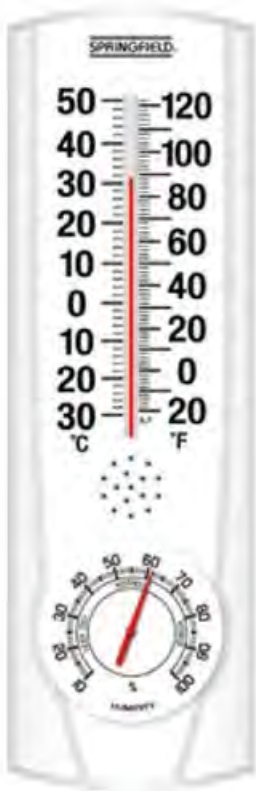
- This 9.125-inch analog patio thermometer and Hygrometer adds classic style and trustworthy temperature and humidity readings to your outdoor space.
- The low-profile body houses bold, easy-to-read graphics that indicate temperatures along the Fahrenheit and Celsius Scales as well as humidity percentage.
- Quality, UV-fade-resistant graphics withstand the the harshness of the outdoor elements.
- Shatter- and weather-resistant, this thermometer is built to last. Bold and easy-to-read numbers surround the classic mercury-looking red liquid.
- A bright white background makes the sans serif black lettering even more legible from across the porch or yard.

102 new from $3.86

Written in sentence structure (without a lead-in at the beginning), these bullets took an ordinary thermometer up a notch by underscoring how old-school is best, using words including "classic," "trustworthy," "low-profile," and "legible."

3 Piece Cat Scratcher 21" Sisal/Carpet

by Four Paws

★★★★☆ ▾ 235 customer reviews

List Price: ~~$21.69~~
Price: **$17.76** ✓Prime
You Save: $3.93 (18%)

In Stock.

Ships from and sold by Amazon.com. Gift-wrap available.

Want it tomorrow, July 30? Order within **10 hrs 17 mins** and choose **One-Day Shipping** at checkout. Details

- The pet industry?s only innovatively packaged, quality constructed, full sized cat scratching post!
- The Four Paws Sisal/Carpet scratching post measures an impressive 21? in height when assembled.
- Anchored by a wide 11 ¾? x 11 ¾? base, the scratcher assembles in less than two minutes.
- The post is laden with a cat?s two favorite scratching surfaces-sisal and carpet.

With these bullets, an "exclusive" approach was used with phrasing such as "The pet industry's only innovatively packaged…." Nobody else packages a scratching post like this company. (I wish they had explained that this means lower shipping costs for the customers.)

SoundAsleep Dream Series Air Mattress with ComfortCoil Technology & Internal High Capacity Pump [2014 MODEL]

by SoundAsleep Products

★★★★☆ ▾   789 customer reviews
| 49 answered questions

Currently unavailable.
We don't know when or if this item will be back in stock.

- ComfortCoil Technology showcases industry leading design with 40 internal air coils for added durability and support. Your bed remains flat and firm so you can stay SoundAsleep!
- Patented 1-click internal pump for easy and fast inflation / deflation. The Dream Series mattress reaches full inflation and firmness in under 4 minutes and can be topped off quickly and easily. The air mattress is designed for in-home use and is perfect for overnight guests, friends or relatives
- Queen Sized with Inflated Dimensions of: 78" x 58" x 19" - Raised "Double-height" air bed with dual chamber construction. "Sure-Grip" bottom prevents bed from unwanted sliding
- Extra thick, waterproof flocked top for added comfort and durability with multilayer, puncture-resistant material. Carry bag included for easy transport!
- SoundAsleep's consumer friendly 1-year guarantee. Call or email any time for support

Roll over image to zoom in

These folks did a great job, too.

Feature	Benefit
ComfortCoil Technology showcases industry leading design with 40 internal air coils for added durability and support.	Your bed remains flat and firm so you can stay SoundAsleep!
Patented 1-click internal pump for easy and fast inflation / deflation.	The Dream Series mattress reaches full inflation and firmness in under 4 minutes and can be topped off quickly and easily.
"Sure-Grip" bottom	Prevents bed from unwanted sliding

They've listed patented features and benefits and explained why this bed is better than others you might look at. They started with the most important information in the first couple of bullets and worked their way down from there.

4 Strategies for Crafting Exceptional Feature Bullets

Strategy #1: What sets you apart? (Go back to your positioning worksheet.) Are you offering a unique bundle? Giving away bonuses? Is your product certified? Do you have a new edition? Are you endorsed by a celebrity? Are you taking a different approach to the product? (Instead of pitching convenience for frozen food containers, you could position yours as a healthy way to feed your family fast.)

Strategy #2: Who are you selling to? Do you have multiple segments in your target audience? (Athletic shoes can be sold to fitness buffs, those with bad feet who need support, or fashion-conscious people who think the style is cute.) You want to have at least one bullet for every segment in your target audience.

Strategy #3: Incorporate lifestyle uses: As shown in one example above, tell the customer about all the ways they can use your product. A veggie peeler or blender can be used for dozens of different things that shoppers may not have thought about.

Strategy #4: Overcome objections: Have you seen bad reviews for other, similar products? Tell customers why yours is different / better.

IDEA: Sometimes I reverse the order and put the benefit first and then the feature to catch the shopper's attention quickly. For example, "The Dream Series mattress reaches full inflation and firmness in under 4 minutes. It can be topped off quickly and easily, thanks to its patented 1-click internal pump." Here's another one: "You won't struggle with unwanted sliding during the night. The 'Sure-Grip' bottom guarantees your inflatable mattress stays put."

If you are selling bundles, please read Amazon's bundling requirements. You'll want to include the word "bundle" in your bullets. The first bullet must state that the product is a bundle of however many items and identify all the products in the bundle.

Bad Example

Here's one product that just wastes the space given to them for bullets.

The Twister Golf Ball Cleaner
by Twister
★★★★☆ ▾ 9 customer reviews

List Price: ~~$39.24~~
    Price: **$14.95** ✓*Prime*
You Save: $24.29 (62%)

Only 12 left in stock.
Sold by Personal-Tech and Fulfilled by Amazon. Gift-wrap available.

Want it tomorrow, July 30? Order within **8 hrs 48 mins** and choose **One-Day Shipping** at checkout. Details

- Convenient and easy to use
- Only patented golf ball cleaner with scrubbing bristles
- Included in box: Twister, hook for hanging on golf bag, use instructions
- Material: Durable Plastic
- Color: White

Roll over image to zoom in

"Convenient and easy to use" — How? You can't tell anything from the picture. How does it work? How will it save me time? What makes it easy to use?

"Only patented golf ball cleaner with scrubbing bristles" — OK, that's something, but I'd need to know why these bristles are better than the ones on a golf ball brush.

"Included in box" — Yawn! If this was some piece of electronic equipment and I needed to know if cables, batteries, etc., were included, that would be one thing. But this isn't helpful to me.

They wasted two bullets on materials and colors. Pity.

Here's how I'd turn these around:

- Just 3 twists and The Twister golf ball cleaner conveniently washes your ball. In 5 seconds you're back on the links.
- The magic happens when the patented scrubbing bristles of this golf ball polisher get into every dimple so your ball flies farther and rolls smoother.
- Compact, portable, and lightweight. Your golf gadget includes a hook for easy hanging on your golf bag.
- Durable white plastic is tough enough to handle being tossed around with your clubs, and lasts for years.
- This golf accessory makes a great gift for birthdays, Father's Day, Christmas, or just to make your golf enthusiast smile.

Bullets/Features

What are the 5 biggest features customers should know about?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

What are the benefits for these features? (Why would shoppers care?)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Do you have at least one bullet for each segment of your target audience? If not, rework the features / benefits above until you do.

In what order will you list your bullets (most important one first)?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Are there objections that need to be overcome? If so, list them below so you can include them in your bullets.

_____   _____

_____   _____

Position your product above the competition by using statements like:

Unlike {ordinary/typical/usual} products, this {your product} offers _____.

If you offer a guarantee, include that as your last bullet. State it here:

_____

Which keywords do you want to work into your bullets?

_____   _____

_____   _____

Developing Product Descriptions that Set you Apart

All the information and research you've put into the title and bullets so far you'll also use when creating the product description, but in a slightly different way. The title is designed to capture attention and make people click. Bullets are written to build interest, and product descriptions are created to give more detail and close the sale.

Not all product descriptions should be written the same because (obviously) not all products are the same. There are combinations of elements that dictate what length of copy you need. I use the acronym F.A.C.E., which stands for:

- **F** — How familiar people are with the brand/product
- **A** — Who the audience is and what they want
- **C** — The cost of the item
- **E** — How much education it will take for customers to understand your product

For instance, if you are selling an existing product from an existing brand that everyone is familiar with, you probably don't need very long copy. If you have a totally new product from a completely new brand that no one is familiar with, you'll have to educate people about the

brand and the product, and build trust before you can make any sales. To do that will, obviously, require more copy.

Amazon expert [Lisa Suttora](#) gave permission for me to list these scenarios that she teaches. (I provided my explanations.)

Existing, Familiar Product + Existing, Familiar Brand — Cover Girl Age Defying Makeup — Practically every woman knows the Cover Girl brand, and the Age Defying Makeup brand has been around a long time also. They are both familiar and trusted. You can mention the names, and immediately ladies understand what you're talking about. This situation would only require short copy.

New Product — Existing Brand — Cover Girl Maxi-Lash Mascara (pretend product) — The existing brand (Cover Girl) comes out with a new product nobody has heard of yet. While Cover Girl is trusted and will have loyal customers already, those customers will have to get to know the deal with the new type of mascara. Depending on the type of product, this could require longer copy.

New Product — New Brand — ABC Cosmetics (pretend company) may come on the scene with its mascara product. The unfamiliar brand plus the unfamiliar product means lots of education will be necessary to convert customers. Because everything is new, longer copy would be recommended.

New Brand — New Functionality — This is much like the "new product — new brand" scenario above. A new tool manufacturer (XYZ Tools) could enter the market with a power drill that does things no one else's drills do. This will take a great deal of time to educate prospective customers. And, like the example above, longer copy would be suggested for this as well.

Existing Brand — New Functionality — Craftsman tools (a well-known brand from Sears®) has existing products. Power drills with basic functionality have been around for years. When Craftsman develops new attachments or uses for its drills, then you have a familiar brand offering new functionality for familiar products. This takes some education, but not nearly as much as with the example above.

Existing Brand — Existing Functionality — New Style — Similarly, if you have a Craftsman power drill (where the brand and functionality are familiar), but Craftsman changes the appearance or color (style), there is new desire for the product without the roadblock of all the education. That equals shorter copy.

Some products are well known and have excellent branding. They are practically no-brainers to buy. At this point, the product doesn't take a lot of selling … but getting shoppers to understand why they should buy from YOU might.

Example: sunscreen. If you sell Banana Boat sunscreen and so do 132 others, you'll have to find a way to stand out. Yes, it could be the lowest price. But it could also be your unique bundle or bonus. In that case, you'd give the necessary information about the sunscreen, but also play up the fact that the customer gets two tubes, or gets two tubes of sunscreen and also a tube of lip balm, or gets sunscreen and an ebook with 25 ways to prevent or reverse sun damage, etc.

How did you decide to position your product? That will play first and foremost in your product copy. You'll carry the theme through from the title to the bullets and then to the product description. Don't repeat the information in your bullets exactly as-is in your product copy. Use the bullets as a starting point, then expand on the details in the description.

TIP: Running out of space in your product description area? Include specifications in other sections such as technical details.

Let's look at some good (and bad) examples.

Anker® T300 Ultra-Slim Mini Bluetooth 3.0 Wireless Keyboard for iPad Air, iPad Mini 2, iPad Mini, iPad 4 / 3 / 2, Galaxy Tab and other Tablets - White
by Anker
★★★★ ▾   3,337 customer reviews
| 483 answered questions

Price: $49.99
Sale: $19.99 ✓Prime
You Save: $30.00 (60%)

Product Description

Color: **White**

A break from typos.
Trade in tapping for typing and experience the efficiency of a full keyboard to compliment your touchscreen. Sporting a super-slim profile (0.23in thin) and cord-free, keep the minimalistic, modern-aesthetic workspace - but get your work (or play) done faster.

Comfort is key.
The whisper-quiet, low-profile keys bring a whole new level of comfort to your fingertips. What's more, keep all your most-used functions and media controls closer than ever with our arsenal of Windows-dedicated hot keys.

Powerful perseverance.
Ultra-low power consumption keeps the keyboard going through 700 hours of continuous use. The automatic sleep mode adds even more perseverance - giving you up to half a year between battery changes.

Supports Bluetooth 3.0 and above devices including:
• Apple iPad Air, iPad mini with Retina Display, iPad 2, iPad 3, iPad 4, iPad mini; iPhone 4 & 4S, iPhone 5; iPod Touch
• Bluetooth-enabled PCs or Laptops with Windows XP / Vista / 7 / 8
• Bluetooth-enabled iMac / Macbooks with Mac OS X 10.2.8 or above (note that some exceptions may apply: we guarantee hassle-free support and easy returns/exchanges)
• Smartphones or tablets with Android 3.0 and above (This keyboard may have compatibility issues with Android 4.3 and 4.4.)
• Windows Mobile 5.0 and above
• Not compatible Mac mini

Note:
The keyboard will automatically go into power savings mode after 25 minutes of inactivity. Press any key and wait 2-3 seconds to wake the keyboard.

What I don't like — They didn't communicate the positioning of having "no typos" and "getting done faster" in the title. In their defense, they might not have had room due to the category requirements. (And in the sentence about no typos, they had one — "compliment" should be "complement." Ironic, yes?)

What I do like — Just about everything else. They really did a fabulous job. They obviously had the tablet user in mind when they wrote the copy. "Trade in tapping for typing" …. anyone who has used a virtual keyboard knows how wonky they can be, so making a play for efficiency is smart. The thin profile is also important because you don't want to haul around some monster-sized thing in your computer bag or backpack.

See the other benefits they list? Whisper-quiet (who wants to sit in public clanking out all sorts of noise?), low-profile keys for comfort and the most-used functions … very important for those of us who are constantly searching for the question-mark key.

Low power consumption is important, as is knowing which tablets / computers this keyboard is compatible with.

Easy to read, copy flows well and helps the customer envision him/herself using the product. Well done!

ZAMPA Soft-Sided Kennel, For Small Size Puppies & Cat's Carrier. With 2 Openings + Shoulder Strap Great For Travel. Foldable & Space-Free

by Zampa

★★★★☆ ▾ 9 customer reviews

List Price: $39.99
Sale: $24.99 ✔Prime
You Save: $15.00 (38%)

In Stock.
Sold by On The House and Fulfilled by Amazon. Gift-wrap available.

Product Description

Travel in style with the ZAMPA Soft-Sided Pet Carrier

Transporting your pets can be a hard task depending on how well they respond to being put in a carrier. The ZAMPA Soft-Sided - Cat and Dog Carrier is a perfect solution for small pets like cats, puppies, and small dogs up to 10 pounds. The carrier has mesh side windows and a mesh door which allows for great ventilation and natural light to enter the carrier, keeping your cat or dog happy and cool when traveling. This is important because you do not want your pet to overheat while they are being transported.

* **Thick quilted nylon construction for comfort.**
* **Durability, and security to keep your pet safe while on the road.**
* **Thick, removable pad adds even more cozy comfort for your pet.**
* **Interior leash clip, adjustable shoulder strap, and carrying handles.**

The ZAMPA Carrier is a soft sided and super lightweight making it easy to carry and comfortable for your pet no hard plastic or sharp edges so it's safe too. It even has a padded floor that can be removed for easy cleaning. One side has a full zipper opening to let your pet in and out, while the other side has a half opening to allow your pet to stick their head out and look around when they are traveling.

Click The Add To Cart Button To Buy.
Buy With Confidence 60 Days Money Back GUARANTEE!

What I didn't like — The punctuation and grammar are sometimes not correct. I'm sure hardly anyone else noticed. Since I write for a living, I'm overly sensitive to that. (And yes, I've been known to make my fair share of mistakes, too!)

What I did like — As pet owners, we want our pets to travel in style whether they care anything about it or not. I liked that they addressed this in the copy. It made me feel better to read that the seller understood that not all pets like being put into a carrier. Relating to my feelings and situation caught my attention. Also, the merchant didn't just list features and benefits… they related them to my pet.
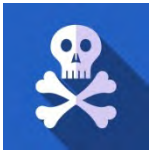
 As with titles and bullets, Amazon sets different character criteria for various categories. All categories, however, get 2,000 characters (about 300 words) for the product description section.

Want to get inside the minds of a couple of actual Amazon shoppers and see why they decided to buy certain products while ignoring others? Check out these Secret Shopper blog posts.

Bad Copy Examples

Whether you're writing the copy yourself or hiring someone else to do it, please make sure you and they have a firm grasp of the language. This listing is just awful, in my opinion. It is full of typos and attempts at the use of conversational English that just doesn't make sense.

Product Description

Color: Blue

Omaker- *Open your mind,we are the maker*
Omaker Bluetooth Speaker- *A...* *no simpler*

Take a try? Huh?

You should take a try:
1.Simple design,Unique Appearence

Simple sense?

Do what?

--Fashion design- the surface of the metallic simple sense,not only a bluetooth speaker ,but also an adornment.

--Only one button on the device for Telephone Answering Function (hands free)

2.Amazing sound

--Experience your tunes in high definition and surprising fullness realized through a 4W driver and bass port - outclassing than other similar sized portable speakers.

-- Apply AVS(Air vibration system) technology, making the low frequency amazing.

3.Easy use

Doesn't use any messy cables.

--"one cable" technology: not use any messy cable, music and charge function can be realized together connecting the same line (cable).

4.Travel Easier

???

--With ultra-portable compact size, makes it easy to carry and store while on-the-go. No hesitated to put in your backpack, Enjoy your journey

What's in the Box:

1 x Omaker Bluetooth Speaker
1 x USB Cable
1 x User's Manual

Do you know the definition of this word?

Maybe they used cheap translator software?

Warranty:

Every sale includes an 12-month, worry-free guarantee to prove the importance we set on quality.Just remember:We are the maker,Quality first is our tenet.

The example below goes way overboard in the use of the product name. There are lots of typos, and some attempts at using descriptive language backfire, in my opinion.

Click to open expanded view

TurboFlex™ PC Gaming Headset - Amazing Crisp Clear Stereo Over Ear Headphones with Microphone / Universal Computer Headset for Games, Skype, VoIP, etc. / Exceptional Noise Reduction and Noise Cancelling / Powerful Drivers with Deep Rich Bass / Ultra Lightweight & Comfortable for Extended Wear(Black)

by F&W

★★★ ▾   27 customer reviews

| 5 answered questions

Product Description

The TurboFlex™ PC Headset multiple-use stereo PC headsets

The TurboFlex™ PC Headset multiple-use stereo PC headsets Headset features a ___ ___ ___-performance and crystal clear sound.

The TurboFlex™ Computer Headset design was inspired by the aviation pilot industry headset thus reflecting in a world-class audio experience for PC gaming, music, and online communication. It's ultra lightweight and comfortable ergonomic design allows for hou___ ___ ___ear.

Ultra-Comfortable to Wear

The TurboFlex™ PC Headset is a comfortable headset, with a padded headband and a generous over-the-ear earcup design, allowing for longer gaming sessions without fatigue. An in-line volume control gives you quick convenience without needing to set your volume using software settings on your PC, laptop, or phone.

Boom Mic with Inline Volume Control

The drop down boom microphone on the TurboFlex™ PC Headset makes it easy to use and position when communicating with others or quickly swung up and out of the way when not needed.

Setup and Installation

Installation is simple with the two 3.5mm connector jacks. Just plug in one jack to the Microphone port and the other to the headphone port and your headset is ready to use. An in-line volume control gives you quick convenience without needing to set your volume using software settings on your PC, Mac, laptop, etc.

Technical Specifications

- Drivers: 2 x 40mm
- Impedance: 32 Ohm
- SPL: 119 +/-3dB
- Frequency Response: 20HZ -10 kHz
- Microphone Sensitivity: -58dB +3dB @ 1 kHZ
- Cable Length: 5.8 ft.

Annotations:
- "Do what? Just how many times can we say "TurboFlex (TM) PC Headset?"
- "Should be "its" not "it's" which is the contraction for "it is.""
- ""Reflecting in a world-class?""
- "Didn't we already say this?"

The HTML Debate

As long as there have been FBA (fulfilled by Amazon) sellers, there has been a conflict about using HTML coding in product descriptions. Amazon's official policy states that <u>HTML is not allowed</u>.

The one legal exception (at this point) is the line break tag.

Product detail page rules

Customers first learn about your offers on a product detail page. The following policies have been established to ensure that each product detail page represents a unique item in order to deliver a single page per product and optimize the buying experience.

Content-specific policies

- Comply with the style guide that applies to the product you're listing. The general styles that apply to all categories can be found at Amazon Services Quick Start Style Guide. Some categories have additional guidelines; the full set of category-specific style guidelines can be found at Templates for Specific Categories.
- Do not include HTML, JavaScript, or other types of executables other than break (</br>) in your detail pages. You can use break to provide the necessary line breaks when providing the description.
- The inclusion of any of the following information in detail page titles

The conflict lies in the fact that the system — despite Amazon's instruction — will insert HTML code when you paste it into the product description field (in Add a Product) or upload it via a spreadsheet. **Why would Amazon say one thing and do the opposite?**

Another question that comes up is why Amazon would allow authors (via Author Central) and vendors (via Vendor Central) to use HTML in their listings, but not allow sellers to do so in Seller Central.

Many sellers add the code anyway and just hope they won't get busted for it. But I decided to dig deeper and see what Amazon would say if pushed. I'll paste screenshots of the email conversation below from my Seller Central account … straight from Amazon.

Dear Seller,

Thank you for writing your concern to Amazon.com Seller Support.

After reviewing your e-mail and the example URL you've provided, I understand that you're concerned about the other sellers using 'html' under the product description on the detail page. Let me assist you with the details.

Kindly note, we do not recommend the sellers to use HTML codes in product descriptions on the detail pages. The reason is not because it violates the listing policy as of now, but this may end up in a scrambled data on the detail page. Hence we always ask the sellers to use the plain text while adding description.

As per our latest internal update we at Seller Support are not authorized to update the HTML codes in the product description on behalf of the sellers.

However, sellers can still use the HTML content in the product description from their selling account in certain consequences. Please check with the other seller's best practices using the below link for the seller forum:

https://sellercentral.amazon.com/forums/thread.jspa?messageID=2531728&#2531728

We would never want to disappoint a valued customer like you and we always endeavor to assist our customer with the best of our service, so we can ensure that we fulfill all of their needs. However sometimes we fail to do so due to factors out of our control. We at Amazon value our sellers' business as we value ours and are focused in making our policies and platforms seller friendly.

Amazed at what I saw, I decided to double check. Here's my follow-up and Amazon's confirmation.

karon@marketingwords.com   Sep 25, 2014 2:50 PM
Thank you for your message.

Let me make sure I understand. The forum thread you pointed me to is a discussion about how HTML is not allowed, but that the Product Description box will accept HTML code if you put it in. According to what you said ("However, sellers can still use the HTML content in the product description from their selling account in certain consequences.") do you mean we as sellers ARE allowed to use HTML in our product descriptions if we choose to?

That would be great! I am also a Kindle book author and have always wondered why Amazon would allow authors to use HTML but not sellers.

⌃ See less

Trouble adding or viewing a product

Case ID 256566951

Answered Case   View Your Case Log

Still need help with this specific issue?   [Reopen this case] | Have another issue?   [Submit a new case]

Expand all

Amazon   Sep 25, 2014 5:34 PM
Dear Seller,

Thank you for taking your valued time and writing back to us.

I would like to appreciate the interest you're showing to learn the usage of our policy of including 'html' on the product detail page.

The sellers can use the 'html' as well to describe their products in a clear way, so that the buyers can understand the details of the products well and purchase their products.

We being the earth's most customer centric company always support our sellers which eases our buyers and look to that they are availed with the best customer service.

Hope the provided information has answered your question. Please feel free to contact seller support for any other concerns.

I wish the best for you.

There are many others who have contacted Seller Central to ask if HTML was allowed and were told no. Like many other things in the Amazon universe, this seems to also be a point of conflicting information.

One thing has never changed: If you get a notice from Amazon, they will hold you accountable to what is listed in the Style Guide for your category, not what any Seller Central rep said in an email.

How to Create Legal Bullets

If you want to use "bullets" in your description, but do not want to violate Amazon's Terms of Service (TOS), you can create a list like this instead, using keyboard characters:

You'll love the unique features only the ABC Brand water bottle offers, including:

    -----> No-drip drinking spout
    -----> Vibrant colors
    -----> BPA-free plastic

You won't be able to include bolding, but you can make your own unique bullets. The indented arrows are created by adding blank spaces before each line. Then use the hyphen on your keyboard (usually above the letter "p") with a > on the end (which is normally on the same key as the period). The line breaks are created with the <br> tag like this:

You'll love the unique features only the ABC Brand water bottle offers, including:

    -----> No-drip drinking spout
    -----> Vibrant colors
    -----> BPA-free plastic

You could also use an asterisk (*) for each bullet or a hyphen, a plus sign (+), or something else.

Amazon is in the process of updating the Style Guides. I know this because I've been working directly with Seller Central to help find the inconsistencies and fix them. I've also been campaigning to get HTML allowed in all categories and to have longer, standardized character counts implemented. It is (to say the least) a slow process.

Keywords in Descriptions

As I mentioned when discussing keywords; they should be included in your product description. These should be key**phrases**, not keywords. You do not have to include them in the Search Term fields, but we have found that it does seem to help with rankings a bit.

Product Description

Use the product research you conducted in the beginning of this book. From that information, and your completed target audience questionnaire, answer the following questions:

How are you positioning this product? _____

_____

What length of copy do you need? Think about:

- **F** — How familiar people are with the brand/product
- **A** — Who the audience is and what they want
- **C** — The cost of the item
- **E** — How much education it will take for customers to understand your product

What pain points do your customers have with relation to this product? Are they trying to solve a problem of some sort? (Think of the pet carrier example.)

_____

_____

_____

In what situations will this product be used? (Think of the Bluetooth keyboard example.)

_____

_____

_____

What is particularly important to your customers with regard to this product? (Think about the baby food storage unit example.)

_____

_____

_____

How can you connect with your customers through your copy?

_____

_____

_____

- Use your bullet points as a starting position for the copy, and then expand and include additional details.

- Move specifications and technical details to other fields if you run out of room in your product description area.

- If you are selling bundles, you must state that in your description and also define what items are included.

- Use the line break code (either <br> or </br>) legally to separate paragraphs and to create legal bullets.

Which keywords do you want to work into your description?

_____

_____

_____

9

Is It Working?
How to Determine Your Conversion Rate

After all you've done to create a primo Amazon product listing, you want to make sure your efforts pay off. Yes, the number of sales you make will give you a good indication, but sales are not always the best measure of success. That's because you don't see *how many people walked away without buying.* That can only be determined by a conversion rate.

For instance, you might think you're doing pretty well with 2 sales of an item a day. But what if you knew that 10,000 shoppers per day looked at your sales page and only 2 of them bought? (That's a conversion rate of less than 2 tenths of 1 percent.) You might wonder if something was wrong with your listing page. You can begin to understand why the mere number of sales you make is a poor judge of your success, unless those sales are qualified against the number of times customers have looked at your page and left without buying.

While there are many different definitions and various types of conversion rates, we'll focus on this for our purposes:

Unique Page Visits / Number of Sales for a Set Period of Time

Amazon has a weird way of accounting for page views, in my opinion. While they are not unique, they do offer enough detail to give you a pretty good idea of how you're doing and whether you should make some changes to your listing.

To understand what's happening, let's look at a few explanations of terms you'll see in your Amazon reports.

Sessions

According to Amazon:

> Sessions are visits to your Amazon.com product detail pages by a customer within a 24-hour period. A user might view your pages many times on a single visit, resulting in a higher number of page views than sessions in your reports.
>
> A storefront or browse node visit by a user is not counted as a session in Business Reports.
>
> When viewing the "Detail Page Sales and Traffic" report, page views are summed only for days when there was sales activity on the ASIN. When viewing the "Detail Page Sales and Traffic by Child Item" report, page views are summed for the entire date range, regardless of sales activity.

Page Views

> Visits to your offer pages for a selected time period (a session). A user may view your offer pages multiple times within a single time period, resulting in a higher number of page views than sessions.
>
> When a child ASIN is visited, it does not also count as a visit to the parent ASIN. Additionally, a storefront or browse node visit does not count as a page view.
>
> When viewing the "Detail Page Sales and Traffic" report, page views are summed only for days when there was sales activity on the ASIN. When viewing the "Detail Page Sales and Traffic by Child Item" report, page views are summed for the entire date range, regardless of sales activity.

So you can see that there are some quirks. For instance, Amazon doesn't give you unique page visits. Instead they lump all visits by customers into sessions. This means that, if a customer visited the product page once on Tuesday, then again on Thursday, and twice on Friday, after which they bought, it would count as 3 page views/sessions instead of 1, even though it was the same customer.

All this is to say that — while the data Amazon gives you is better than nothing — it is a rather warped measure of how well your listing is doing.
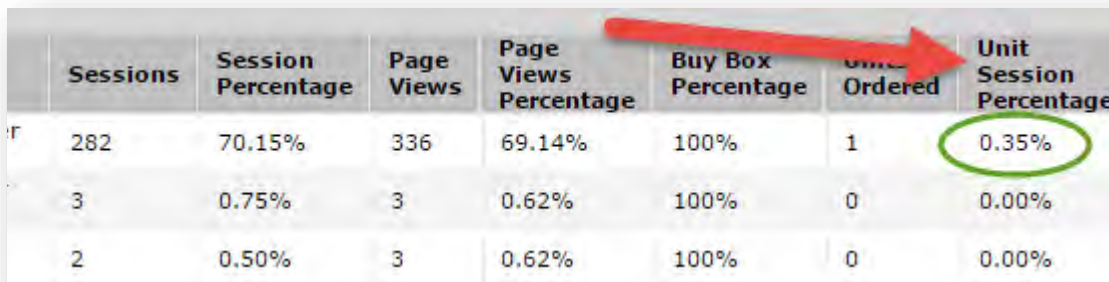
Unit Session Percentage

What you want to focus on is Unit Session Percentage. This is defined by Amazon as:

> The number of units purchased relative to the number of customers who viewed the products. Calculated by dividing the number of units by the number of sessions for a selected time period, and then expressed as a percentage.

It is the closest thing you're going to get to an actual conversion rate.

When you look at your statistics, you want to view the **Details Sales/Traffic** *by Child Item* (which is the most accurate and what Amazon recommends). The Parent option will skew the results even further. Don't use that.

This is what you're looking for when you log in to the report:

	Sessions	Session Percentage	Page Views	Page Views Percentage	Buy Box Percentage	Units Ordered	Unit Session Percentage
r	282	70.15%	336	69.14%	100%	1	0.35%
	3	0.75%	3	0.62%	100%	0	0.00%
	2	0.50%	3	0.62%	100%	0	0.00%

Also note that there is usually about a 2-day lag time with the data.

What do you do if your conversion rate is low? First, make sure you have a product that is in demand. If not, no amount of copy or traffic will make it sell. **Next … test!** Change up your title, your bullets, your description and/or your keywords until you find the right combination that brings in qualified traffic that wants what you have.

My Listing Lab monthly group offers professionally created tests that you can implement on your own listings to gain consistent improvements over time.

About Karon Thackston

Karon Thackston is President of [Marketing Words](#), a full-service copywriting agency specializing in conversion, ecommerce, and search engine copywriting.

She is a graduate of the DISC Behavioral Model course and also earned the designation of Certified Landing Page Specialist.

Karon has spoken at Search Marketing Expo, Internet Retailer, Blog Paws, and other conferences throughout the U.S., and conducted on-site corporate training.

With over 25 years of experience, she has contributed to the success of companies including Gorton's Seafood, American Boating Association, and almost 2,000 Amazon sellers.

Ready to Take the Next Step?

Perfect your skillset, go deeper into the optimization process and learn even more conversion strategies with the [Amazon Product Description Boot Camp](#) video series.

Use coupon **AMZADVBC** (all caps) to **save 25%.**

Want the Marketing Words Team to Create a Listing for You?

Get complete details about what's included, pricing, and turnaround time, and place your order [here](#).

Publication Details

Written by Karon Thackston

Marketing Words, Inc.
2211 Ridgeview Road
Elgin, SC 29045