

Sprechen Ze PPC?

Researching Keywords In A Language You Don't Speak

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About Me

- 4+ years of SEM experience
- MS in Information Studies – University of Texas at Austin
- Quick resume:
 - PPC Analyst at Leverage Marketing
 - Internet Marketing Assistant at TechSkills
 - Sr. Marketing Associate (PPC) at uShip
- Currently Online Marketing Manager for BuildASign.com
- Blogs at www.ppcwithoutpity.com



The Challenge

- You need to launch an international PPC account, but you don't speak the local language
- You have a list of relevant keywords from your boss/your translator/your agency, but no way of knowing if they're going to drive qualified traffic
- What do you do?

CHALLENGE ACCEPTED



Research Strategy #1 – Google Images

Instead of using Google web search, use Google image search to get an easy-to-understand visual of what those foreign terms mean.

The screenshot shows a Google Images search interface. The search bar contains the text "fahnen banner". The search results are displayed in a grid format, showing various types of banners and flags. The filters on the left side of the page include:

- Web
- Images
- Maps
- Videos
- News
- Shopping
- More
- Any time
 - Past 24 hours
 - Past week
 - Custom range...
- All results
 - By subject
- Any size
 - Large
 - Medium
 - Icon
 - Larger than...
 - Exactly...
- Any color
 - Full color
 - Black and white

The search results include images of various banners, flags, and signs, such as a blue banner with yellow crosses, a white banner with a black cross, a yellow banner with a black cross, a red banner with a white cross, and a blue banner with a white cross. There are also images of banners with logos and text, such as "P. P. P.", "fahnenbanner", "PLANET BANNER", "SALON", "LERCHE", and "dubokan".

Research Strategy #2 – Search Query Reports

Once you have some keyword traffic, you can look at search query reports to find keywords to add and negative keywords.

Example: After our BuildASign.de launch, strange phrases and model numbers started appearing in the search query reports in our Banners campaign. It turns out that there's a popular battery company in Europe called Banner, and our broad and phrase matches were picking up traffic on searches for their batteries.



Research Strategy #3 – Ask A Real Foreigner

A literal translation won't help you navigate cultural differences in meaning. To do this, you need someone who understands the language and grew up in the culture.

You may have a native speaker in your office already – ask around. If not, you can find freelancers at reasonable rates on sites like Odesk and Elance.

It's better to work through keywords one-on-one via conversation rather than do a bulk upload. You'll learn why keywords aren't relevant, and discover new avenues of meaning to pursue.



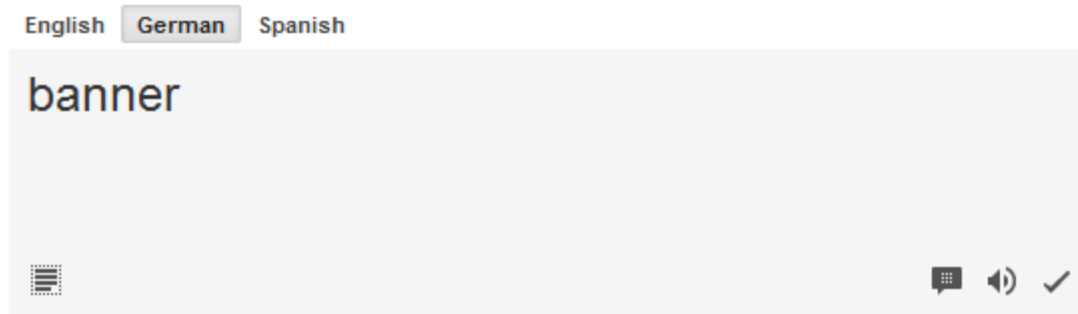
Some Pitfalls To Avoid...



1. Over-reliance on Google Translate
2. Using outside agencies for translation
3. Cultural differences in meaning

Pitfall #1 – Google Translate

Google Translate is really useful for getting a general idea if a keyword is relevant or not. But it's not very good at getting at the search intent behind the literal translation. Verify with a native speaker that the translations you are getting are correct.



New! Click the words above to edit and view alternate translations. [Dismiss](#)

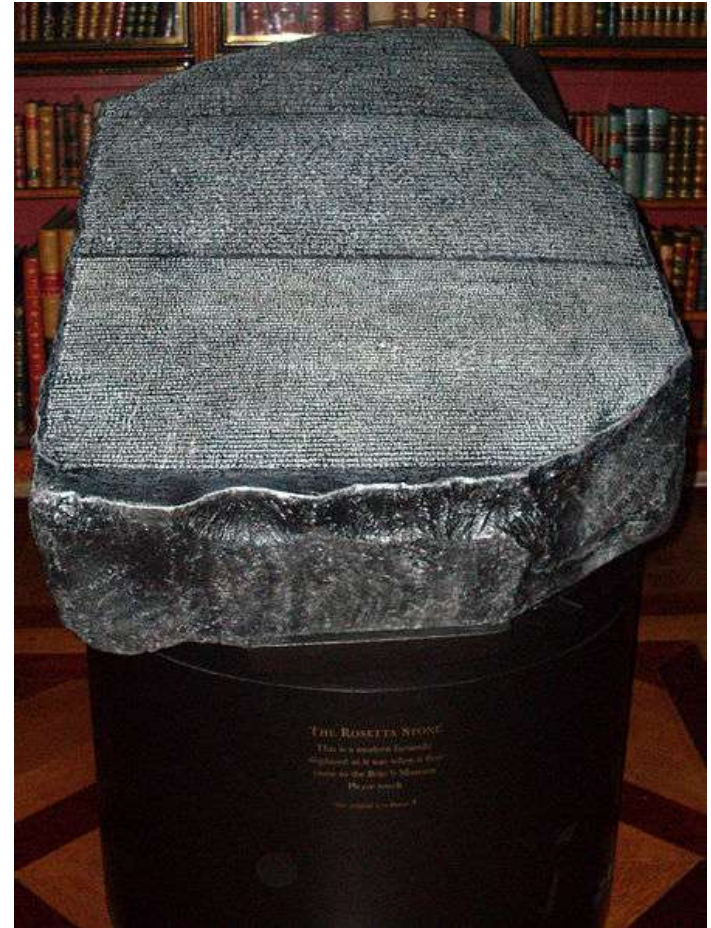
noun

Banner	banner, flag
Fahne	flag, banner, standard, colors, barb
Transparent	transparency, banner, neon sign
Panier	banner

Pitfall #2 – Outside Agencies

Using an outside agency to do a bulk translation of a website or PPC account may be necessary. But in my experience, these agencies tend to put out some pretty shoddy work that is easily caught by working one-on-one with a native speaker.

Agencies understand translation, but most of them *don't* understand PPC. They won't get the difference between literally translating and really examining the search intent behind each keyword.



Pitfall #3 - Cultural Differences In Meaning

Translation is pretty abstract stuff. It can be hard to discern shorthand, slang, and subtle differences between words. Sometimes you won't get this meaning from a literal translation.

US
“Shipping” =



UK
“Shipping” =



Key Takeaways

Three Research Strategies

1. Use Google Images
2. Mine search query reports
3. Interview native speakers

Three Pitfalls

1. Relying on Google Translate
2. Translation agencies
3. Cultural difference in meaning