

2021

How Semrush Works and How You Can Use It To Build Better Links and Boost Your SEO



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SEMrush introduction



For over 10 years now [SEMrush](#) has been helping marketers build and fine-tune online visibility across multiple channels, be it search advertising, social media, or content marketing.

By and large [SEMrush](#) is a comprehensive SAS platform that takes care of providing marketers with insights and data to power up the online visibility strategy.

I am so excited to have you onboard and now it's time to make the most of your time with SEMrush. I will show you around the interface so you can enjoy the whole range of solutions this company offers.

We'll also have a look at the various data sources available to you and talk about the best ways to use them. You'll learn how to customize [SEMrush](#) to your needs and existing workflows. You'll also get to know how to use [SEMrush](#) together with your team, your clients or your contractors.

After we're done you'll be able to navigate [SEMrush](#) much easily and harness a hundred percent of its power to achieve your specific goals. Are you ready? Let's move forward.

SEMRUSH in numbers

[SEMrush](#) collects and process large volumes of data every single day. Domain and analytics reports provide you with a wealth of information about domains subdomains and URLs.

This offers you a bird's-eye view of a domains organic and paid search strategy, they're a perfect place to start for any digital marketing specialists. Currently they have over four hundred and fifty million domains in their database and counting.

Traffic analytics is built on a robust clickstream data based on 200 million real users.

You can analyze any website and get to know its audience, traffic sources, geography, and you can do this alongside visitors behavior to make sure you're doing data-driven decisions.

Keyword magic tool boasts over 8 billion keywords across 118 country databases. This allows you to generate tons and tons of high quality ideas for a single keyword, which it's pretty and central to enrich your SEO advertising and even your content marketing campaigns. On top of that, they have an extensive amount of information about backlinks to give you a real clear picture of any domains backlink profile.

[SEMrush](#) collects new backlinks on a daily basis and adds them to your database, which is updated publicly every two weeks. On top of the search in shopping ads analysis, they also offer display ads research.

With the [SEMrush](#) display advertising reports you can estimate how other companies effectively build display ads. You can also discover how the top publishers and advertisers and even ensure that your money is being spent wisely.

Over a hundred million ads are now available for your research inside of the SEMrush database as [SEMrush](#) is constantly growing we recommend checking www.SEMrush.com/stats from time to time for the latest and greatest info about the size of their databases, crawling speed, and plenty of other facts and figures.

Analyzing a Keyword's Value

When you launch a Keyword Overview report, Semrush will provide you with an initial assessment of a keyword's value.



- **Volume:** the average number of times per month that a keyword was queried on Google (on the national level).
- **Keyword Difficulty:** an estimation of how easy it would be to rank your website for this keyword with SEO
- **CPC:** cost-per-click ad advertiser pays Google for a click on their PPC ad on this keyword's SERP.
- **Com:** the density of advertisers bidding on this keyword for their ads on the national level. A score of 1.00 indicates the highest level of competition, and a score of 0.00 indicates no competition. Although this metric refers to competitors in paid search, it can be representative of a keyword's organic value as well.
- **Global Volume:** the combined total of the keyword's monthly search volumes across all of their country databases
- **Results on SERP (Search Engine Results Page):** the number of URLs displayed in organic search results for a given keyword.
- **SERP Features:** hover over the icons to see which special SERP features are present on the results page for this keyword
- **PLA:** the top Product Listing Ads (Google Shopping) seen on this keyword's SERP
- **Ads:** the top Google Ads PPC ads seen on this keyword's SERP
- **Trend:** how much interest web searchers have shown in a given keyword in the last 12 months.

Knowing search volume allows you to estimate how popular a keyword is. But popularity isn't the most important thing when picking your targets.

Finding the Right Keywords to Target

High-volume search terms are great for driving a lot of traffic. However, actually ranking for a high volume keyword is easier said than done.

The more popular a keyword, the more competition there will be to go after that sweet traffic. So, the higher the search volume, the harder it is to overrun your competition.

Let's say you run a website for a local electronics store. If you want to outrank your competitors on Google, it would be better to look for keywords with low volume and a low keyword difficulty score.

These keywords might fly "under the radar" of your competitor's strategy and could be quick wins for your site.

These are also known as **long-tail-keywords**. Long-tail keywords are smart targets because they are more specific with their intentions.

For example, the long tail keyword "**best wireless headphones for working out**" is much more specific compared to simply "**headphones.**"

While it may have less search volume, this keyword is more valuable for an SEO strategy because its intentions are more clear. In the SEO industry this is called “searcher intent.”

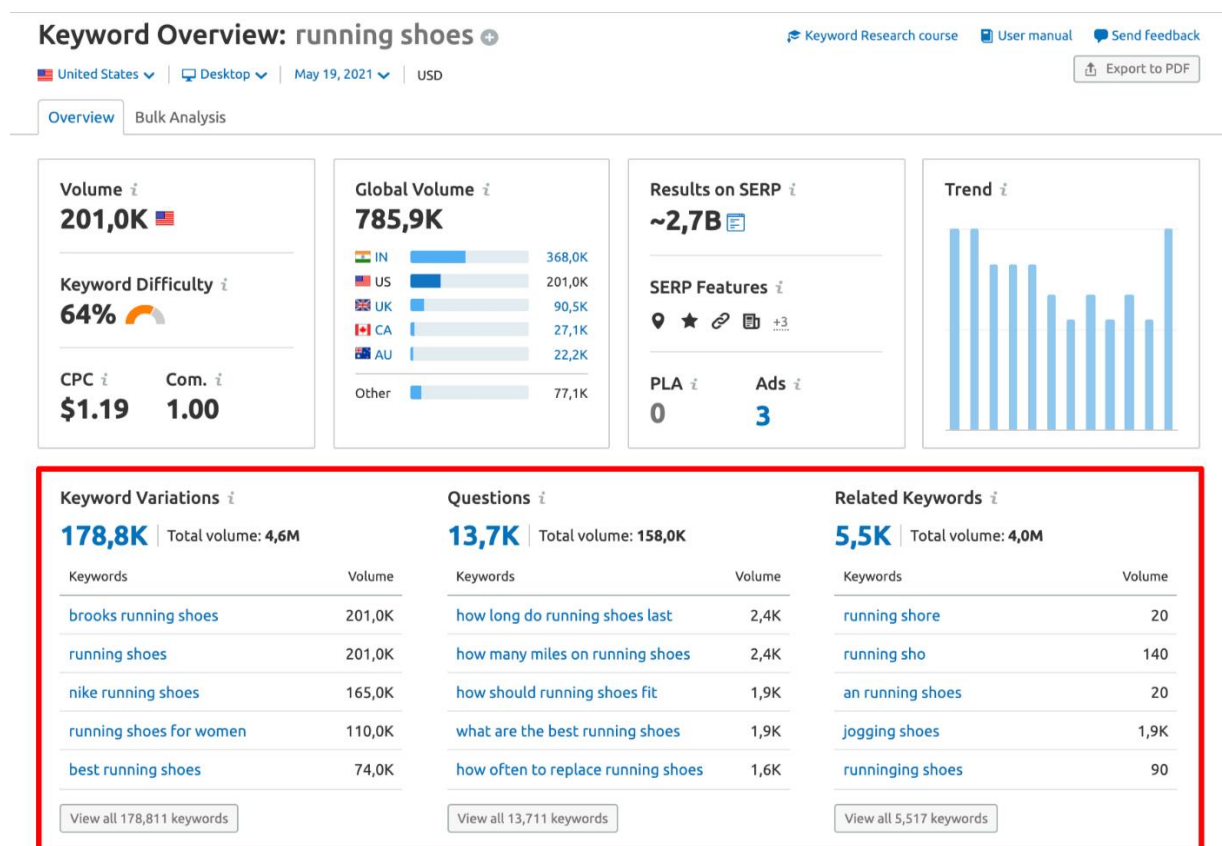
With a more specific keyword, you can be more effective targeting searchers by providing super-specific content on your website. In contrast, “headphones” would likely be too broad and competitive of a keyword to effectively target with SEO.

When thousands and thousands of people Google “headphones,” you can never know what they all want. But, when only a few hundred people search for “best wireless headphones for working out,” it’s easier to offer them exactly what they want.

Tip: use the Keyword Gap tool to find gaps in multiple competitors’ keyword strategies.

Keyword Variations, Questions & Related Keywords

The keyword variation widgets show you a snapshot of similar groups of keywords that you can dig through to find your perfect target keywords.



- **Keyword Variations:** search phrases that include your original keyword as well as additional modifying words. Keyword Variations help you find the most popular related searches to your main query.
- **Questions:** search terms where Semrush sees a “who, what, where, when, why, how, is, can, etc.” Questions are great for generating content ideas for blog posts, FAQs and content

pages on your site. Answering commonly searched questions can help your SEO, including voice search optimization.

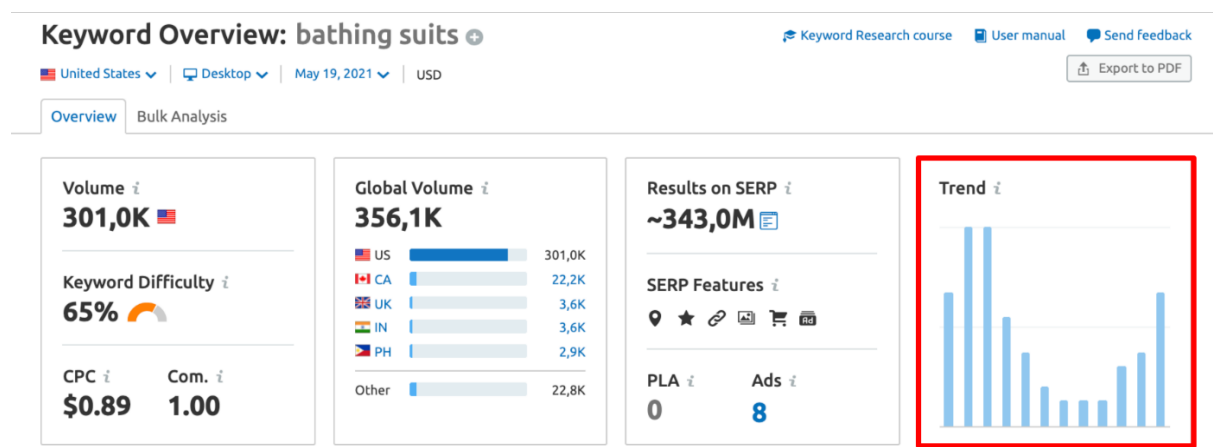
- **Related keywords:** keywords that have similar results as the queried keyword. With related keywords you'll find common misspellings and topically related search phrases. Related keywords make for excellent keywords to target with PPC, because misspelled keywords generally have a lower CPC and competition level.

This data is pulled directly from their [Keyword Magic Tool](#) so you also get the total volume and average keyword difficulty. If you click on the number of keyword suggestions you will be brought directly to the Keyword Magic Tool.

Checking the Trend

A keyword's **trend** helps you understand the seasonality of your target audience and predict when driving traffic with a particular search term will result in seasonal spikes.

The trend chart in this report will show whether or not a keyword's search volume fluctuates throughout the year or if it stays relatively constant.



If you see that a keyword's trend doesn't peak and stays at the same level, then you'll need to make sure that you're targeting this search query year-round.

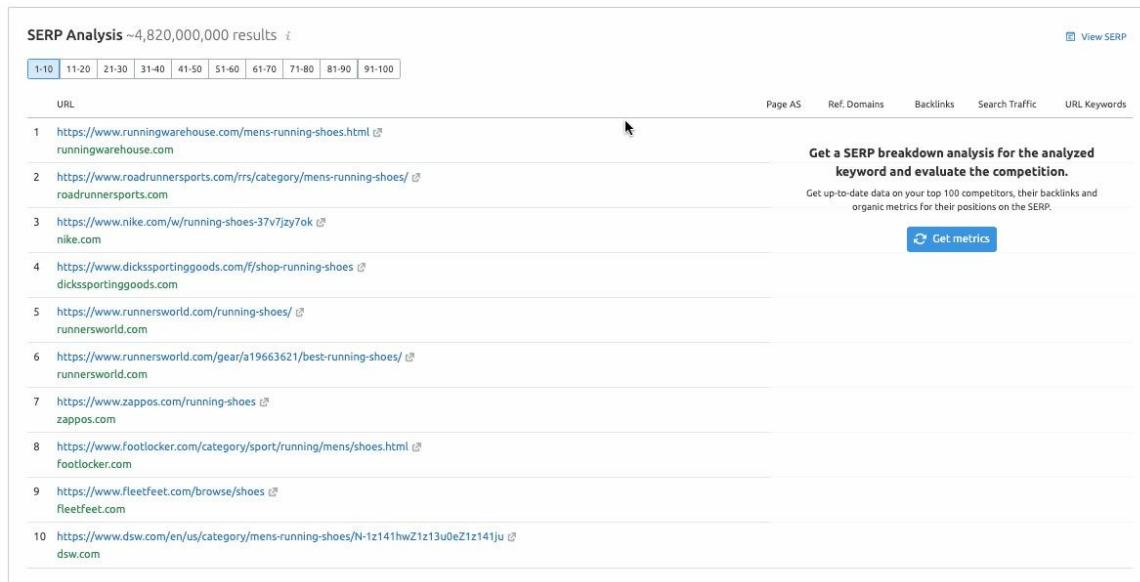
However, if a keyword has a seasonal spike, then you can plan accordingly. For example, a keyword like "bathing suits" may trend higher in the spring and summer months.

As a website, you could strategize with seasonal website content or an advertising campaign to target this keyword.

Analyzing a keyword's organic value

If you scroll down, you'll see the Keyword Overview report lists the top domains whose landing pages pop up organically for the search term you are analyzing.

You can view the SERP itself with the blue “View SERP” link, and generate real time metrics on these top performing websites with the button.



The screenshot displays the SEMrush SERP Analysis interface. At the top, it shows 'SERP Analysis ~4,820,000,000 results' and a 'View SERP' link. Below this is a pagination bar with ranges from 1-10 to 91-100. A table lists the top 10 search results, each with a rank, URL, and a small arrow icon. To the right of the table, there is a promotional box for a 'SERP breakdown analysis' with a 'Get metrics' button. Below the table, there are tabs for 'Page AS', 'Ref. Domains', 'Backlinks', 'Search Traffic', and 'URL Keywords'.

	URL	Page AS	Ref. Domains	Backlinks	Search Traffic	URL Keywords
1	https://www.runningwarehouse.com/mens-running-shoes.html					
2	https://www.roadrunnersports.com/rss/category/mens-running-shoes/					
3	https://www.nike.com/w/running-shoes-37v7jzy7ok					
4	https://www.dickssportinggoods.com/ff/shop-running-shoes					
5	https://www.runnersworld.com/running-shoes/					
6	https://www.runnersworld.com/gear/a19663621/best-running-shoes/					
7	https://www.zappos.com/running-shoes					
8	https://www.footlocker.com/category/sport/running/mens/shoes.html					
9	https://www.fleetfeet.com/browse/shoes					
10	https://www.dsw.com/en/us/category/mens-running-shoes/N-1z141hwZ1z13u0eZ1z141ju					

If you find your website in this list, congratulations! Google considers your page one of the best and most relevant to the given keyword. But don’t miss the chance to strengthen and improve your ranking.

Improving your search rankings organically can be the biggest factor when it comes to beating out your closest online competitors. Since billions of searches happen every day, getting your site up in the rankings for the right keywords can really pay off.

Whoever is ranking currently on the first page of results are your SEO competitors. You can check each competitor’s web page and analyze its content, structure and usage of the particular keyword. You can click on the small arrow to open the page in a new tab or click on the URL to open an Organic Research report for that webpage.

From that report you’ll be able to see this page’s keywords, backlinks, traffic share and more.

If your domain isn’t at the top of the search results, you should then analyze the content of those pages in order to learn from them.

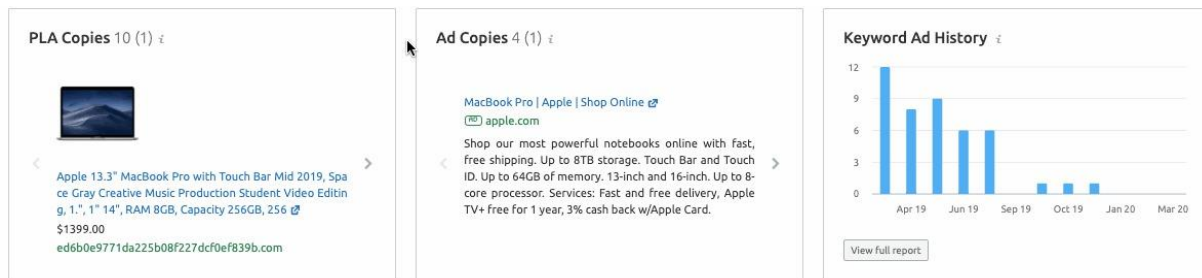
Project tools, [On Page SEO Checker](#), can help you generate ideas for improving your content.

Tip: You can export each part of the report in XLS or CSV formats.

Analyzing a keyword's advertising value

If your site doesn’t naturally rank for keywords, you can still get search traffic by [bidding on keywords](#) through Google Ads.

Below the organic listings you can also find the top PLA Copies (product listing ads), Ad Copies (Google Ads) that appear for a keyword in paid search results. Take these as inspiration for writing your own ad copy and analyze the landing pages they are pointing to.



If you're an ecommerce website, pay attention to the top [product listing ads](#). These advertisers are your top Google Shopping competitors.

The Keyword Ad History widget will show how actively websites bid on the keyword in the last 12 months on the national level. Click it and you'll be forwarded to the Keyword Ads History report, which will have more information.

By using Semrush Keyword Analytics you can determine your best performing ads over the past year. With this information you will be able to see which strategies are bringing in the greatest ROI and use this for continued success in your future search advertising.

If you have already been using the analyzed keyword for your advertising campaigns, you can use this data for improving your ads' search visibility.

Now that you're comfortable querying a Keyword Overview report, be sure to check out the [Keyword Magic Tool](#) to dive even deeper into keyword research.

Tip: To view historical data for a keyword, use the selector at the top.

Analyzing keywords in bulk

Using the **Bulk Analysis** tab you can analyze the metrics for up to 100 keywords. You will get the Volume, Trend, Keyword Difficulty, CPC, Competitive Density, SERP Features, Results on each keyword.

After comparing the keywords, send the keywords that best fit your SEO strategy to the Keyword Manager, a keyword repository for all your keywords gathered with different Semrush tools.

Enter up to 100 keywords separated by commas, or one per line (4/100)

1. bathing suits
2. women's bathing suits
3. plus size bathing suits
4. one-piece bathing suits
5.



Free examples: [buy books](#), [loans](#), [movies](#)

[X Clear](#)

Analyze

Bulk Keyword Analysis 4

[+ To Keyword Manager](#)

[Export](#)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Keyword	Volume	Trend	KD %	CPC (USD)	Com.	SERP Features	Results
<input type="checkbox"/>	bathing suits	301,0K		65	0.89	1.00	+2	343,0M
<input type="checkbox"/>	women's bathing suits	110,0K		47	1.06	1.00		91,0M
<input type="checkbox"/>	plus size bathing suits	60,5K		55	0.81	1.00	+2	35,0M
<input type="checkbox"/>	one-piece bathing suits	40,5K		54	0.86	1.00		54,0M

At the moment, you can get historical data only for one specific keyword at a time in Keyword Overview tool. Bulk Analysis allows analyzing sets of keywords, but metrics are always up-to-date.

Understanding the Keyword Difficulty Score

Keyword Difficulty is a metric that tells you how much SEO effort it might take to organically rank a page in the top 10 results on Google for a certain keyword. You can use it to plan out your SEO campaigns and set priorities.

Looking for keywords with low KD% scores will help you find long-tail keywords and low-hanging fruit for your campaigns. The higher the percentage is, the harder the competition will be, and the more work you will need to do before seeing results.

The keyword difficulty score is a percentage from 0 to 100, and the higher the percentage, the more difficult [SEMrush](#) predicts it would be to rank for. Keyword difficulty calculation is based on a variety of factors such as the median number of referring domains pointing to the URLs that are ranking, the median ratio of dofollow/nofollow links pointing to these, the median authority score of the domains that are ranking, and the SERP-related qualities of the keyword itself.

In general, there are 6 levels of how difficult it is to rank for a specific keyword:

1. **0-14 = Very easy.** These are the best opportunities to start ranking new web pages on Google as soon as possible without backlinks.
2. **15-29 = Easy.** These keywords have some competition but are still possible to rank for when you're starting out. To be able to rank for these, you'll need quality content focused on the keyword's intent.
3. **30-49 = Possible.** Slightly more competition. You'll need well-structured and unique content appropriately optimized for your keywords.

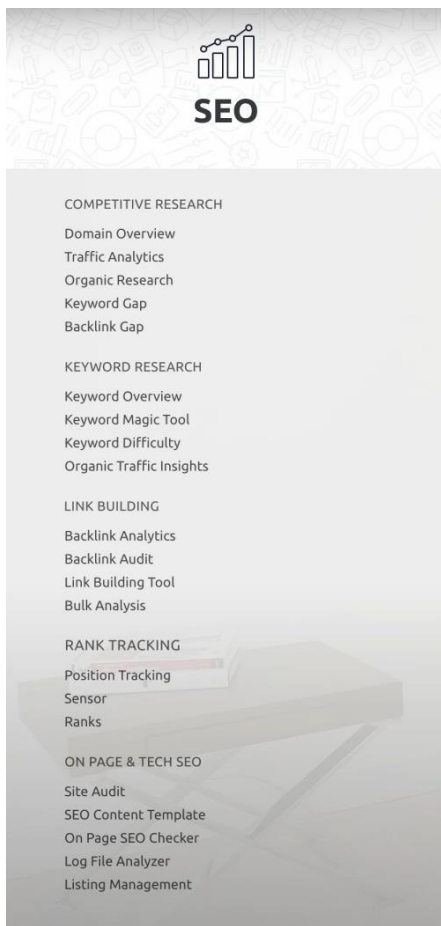
4. **50-69 = Difficult.** You'll need to have some backlinks in addition to your well-structured, helpful and optimized content in order to compete here.
5. **70-84 = Hard.** Even stiffer competition. These keywords will demand more effort in terms of getting higher authority referring domains in order to rank your well-optimized and helpful content among the top pages.
6. **85-100 = Very hard.** The absolute hardest keywords to compete for, especially for a new website. These will demand a lot of on-page SEO, link building, and content promotion efforts to eventually rank and acquire traffic.

Navigating SEMrush toolkits

[SEMrush](#) consists of over 30 different tools, grouped into five major toolkits for your convenience.

Switch between the toolkits using the drop-down list and the Left menu.

Let's have a closer look at each toolkit. SEO tool kit helps with every aspect of SEO.

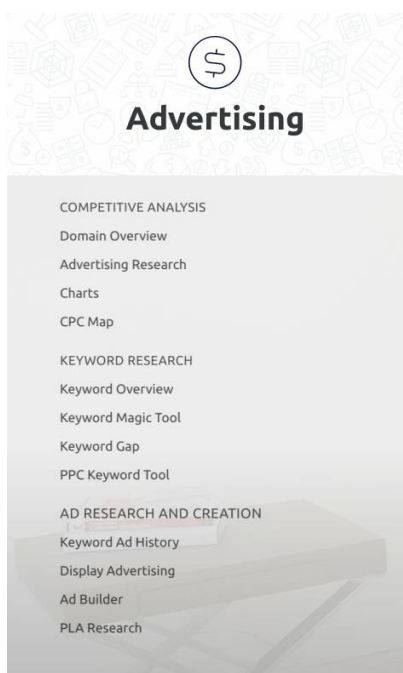


Insidem you'll find solutions for a competitive analysis, and keyword research, improving your backlink profile, conducting deep technical audit of your website and fixing the issues, local SEO, on-page SEO, and even daily rank tracking.



Now the content marketing toolkit covers the complete workflow, from analysis and strategy, topic and keyword research, to an actual creation of SEO optimized content and really maximizing its reach and impact.

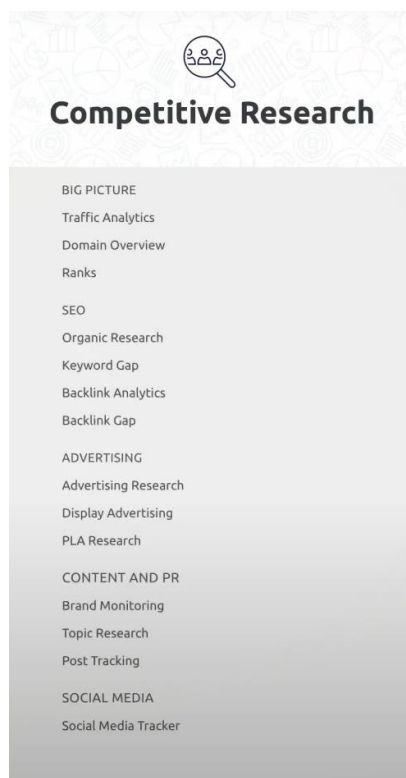
Work with the content published both on and off your site to get a much bigger picture.



The advertising toolkit offers tons of insights for your Google ads campaigns and tools to prepare your next campaign for launch. You'll find data to inform your search display and even product listing ads campaigns at all stages of the campaign. From competitive research to keyword collection to writing an ad copy and even managing the extensions.



With the social media toolkit you can see how your competitors engage with their audience on social to actually steal their best practices. It also helps with posting and content creation, influencer marketing as well as analytics and overall strategy enhancement.



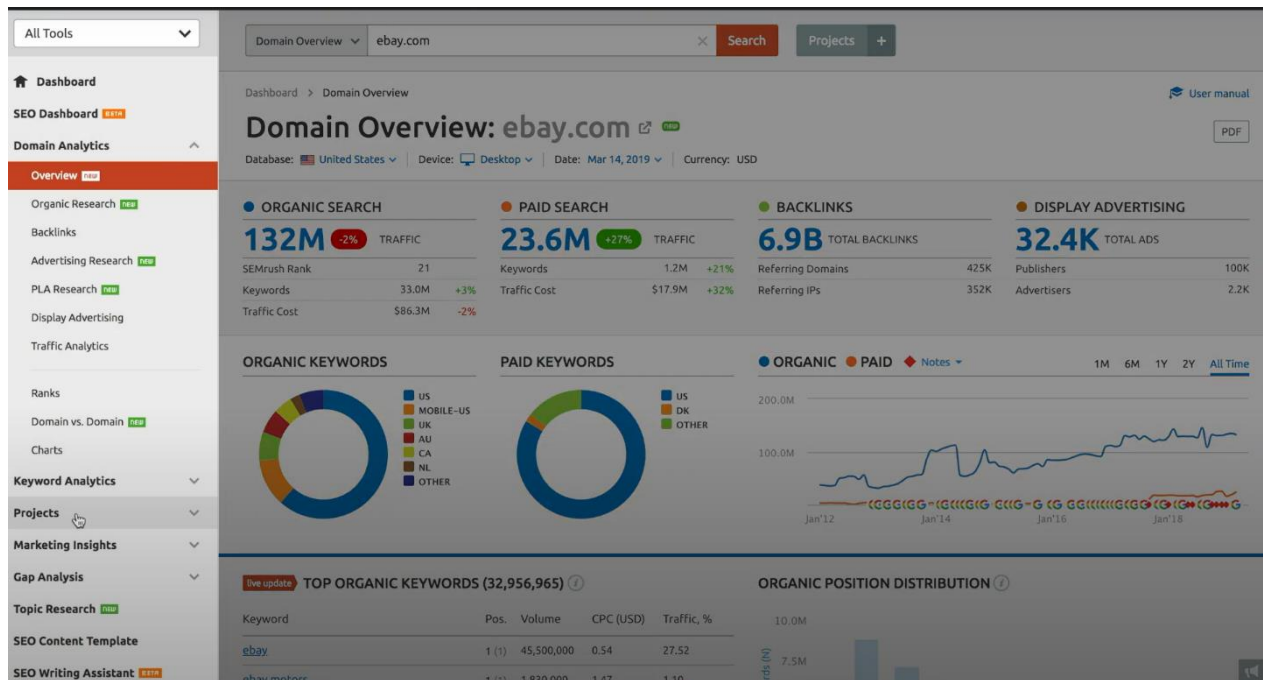
Competitive research toolkit unites powerful tools for a 360 degree market analysis, benchmarking pre-sales and even pitching. It provides comprehensive data about a website of your choice from their search engine marketing strategies and advertising tactics to their content performance, PR efforts, and followers growing techniques.

If you're part of an agency team that manages multiple clients, go for projects for you to have an instant access to all your clients metrics and progress overview. If you're an all-around player you might want to stick to the default all tools view.

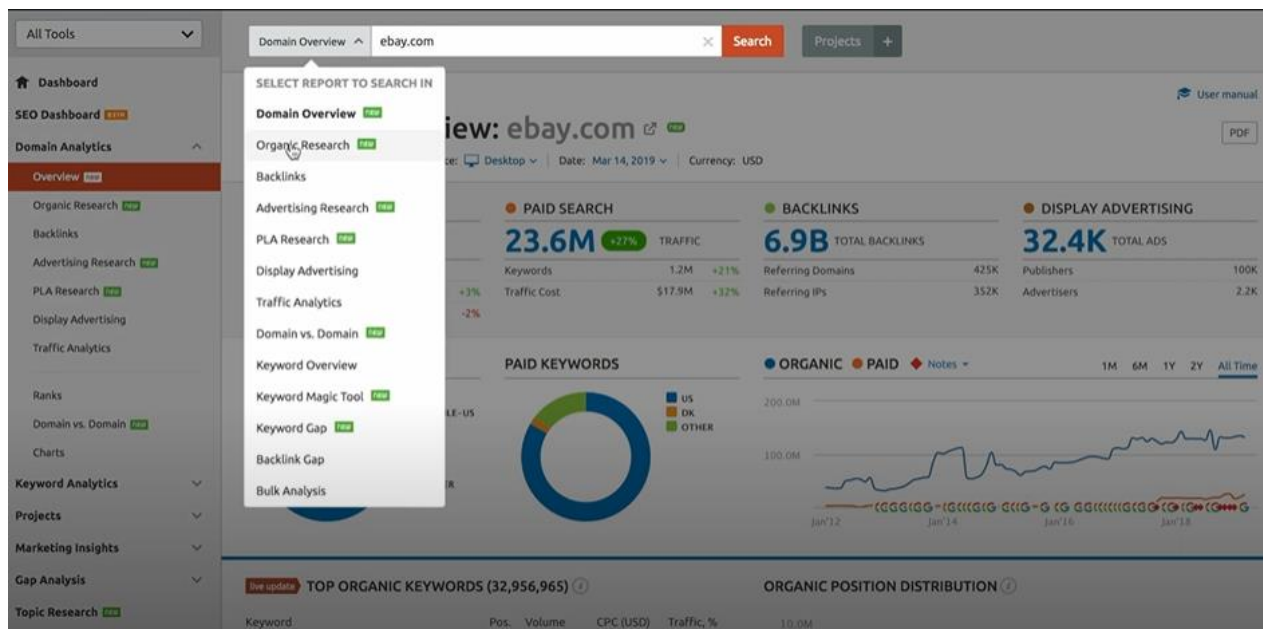
[Analytics report vs. Projects](#)

[SEMrush](#) offers you two ways of gathering this kind of data:

1. **Analytics reports.** This is found under domain analytics and keyword analytics. You can pull this research from their database of domains and keywords.
2. **Projects.** For projects you can start gathering research on it from across the internet as soon as you set up a tool within this section.



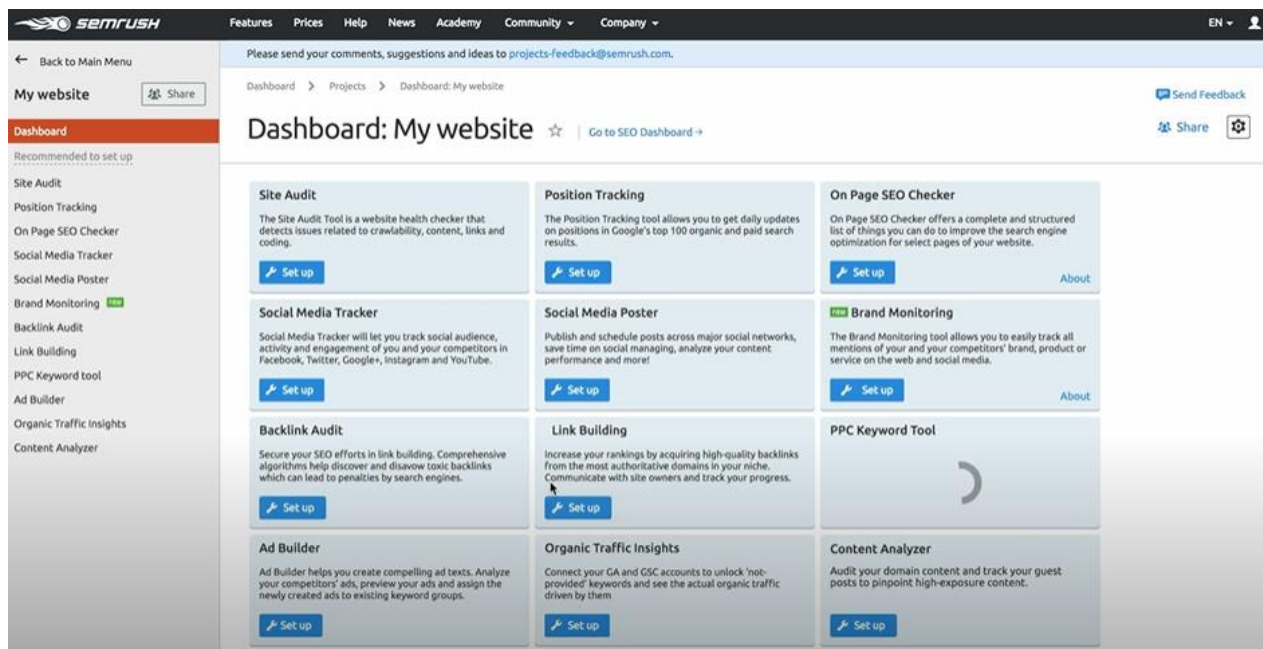
[SEMrush](#) analytics reports are easy to generate. Just find the report that you want to pull from the menu on the left, or the label next to the search bar:



Enter the domain or keyword to analyze in the [SEMrush](#) search bar and hit Search.

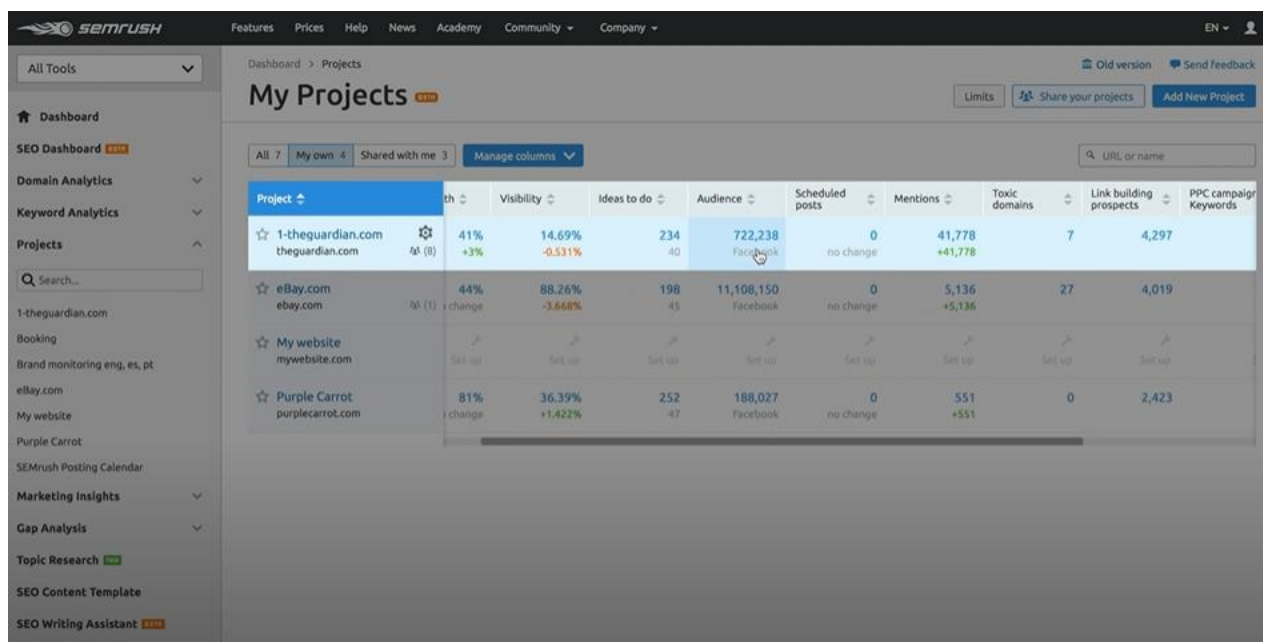
It's painless as it gets. Analytics reports primary use is to reverse engineer your competitors online strategy.

Projects provide you with actionable insights and really personalized suggestions how you can actually improve your online visibility.



When they say actionable they actually mean it. You can literally perform tasks like scheduling social media posts, creating ad copy, writing emails to the carefully selected link building prospects with [SEMrush](#).

Unlike an analytics report that is a one-time thing, a project is a friendly ecosystem that really helps you handle your everyday work and monitor the performance over time.



Integrations: Google products, Trello, and more...

To break up your [SEMrush](#) experience specifically they made it possible to integrate all this tools with various types of data providers and platforms. There are tons of connection points to really enhance and manage your data and get more out of these toolkit, from obtaining more insights with Google Analytics, maybe Google search console, and even Google my business integration.

You can also even have access to a more in-depth data from specialized tools like Majestic, to efficiently handle the routine tasks within the platform of your choice be it Trello, Gmail, and even more.

Customizing your SEMrush

I we've already showed you how you can switch between 5 [SEMrush](#) toolkits, so let's look at some more ways to customize your [SEMrush](#) and really adjust it to your priorities and routine.

While working with thematic dashboards drag and drop widgets to see what's important to you in the first place.

To support the brightest minds who really want to take [SEMrush](#) data to the next level, they offer API.

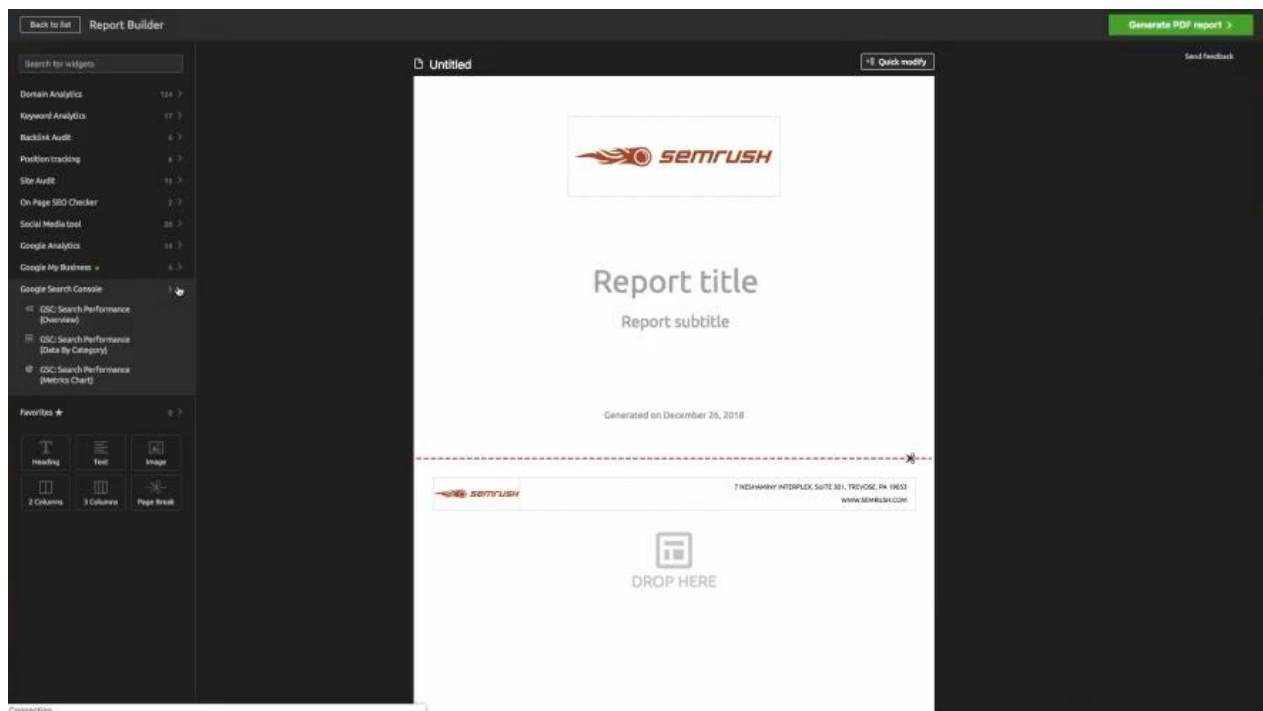


Application programming interface. API lets you skip the standard interface and extract raw data from their tools and reports, and then integrate it into your own scripts and programs to fit any custom need. It's great for creating bespoke dashboards or even a whole new application.

Colaboration and Reporting

A huge part of marketing is being able to communicate and present the results of your work. Luckily they have a few ways of how you can impress your boss, your business partners or even your teammates.

A PDF report builder called my reports allows, you to mix and match as [SEMrush](#) data widgets' with your own images text and Google services data.



But that's not, all these reports can be scheduled to be sent to anyone, automatically via email.

Besides that, you can customize your own reports and templates or work from one of many project templates.

If your schedule is too intense SEO monthly reports, competitor analysis, site audit overviews, they have it all in my reports.

Looking to create full transparency, they offer the ability to share your projects directly with other SEMrush users with read-only or editing access this is a great way to communicate with clients, team members or contractors.

By clicking the gear icon, next to the projects list, you'll be able to share multiple projects, all at once.

Getting the support you deserve

I hope that you realized that this is the beginning of a long lasting relationship, that's why people form [SEMrush](#) want to make a good impression and offer all of us the support we really deserve.

Their global customer help team is always ready to assist with any roadblocks you have while using SEMrush. They are trained software experts and speak English, Spanish, Italian, French, Chinese, Portuguese, and Russian.

Team members are available to respond during your office hours.

They're here to help if you need them. There are four ways to get a hold of someone on [SEMrush](#) team. First is phone you can call us at the number in the footer of their website to talk to one of

their team members, then there's live chat go to the knowledgebase and find the chat box in the bottom right hand corner of screen to ask quick questions and get answers from [SEMrush](#) team and then email. You can send them all of your questions concerns or feedback at mail@SEMrush.com.

They love screenshots, so don't forget to attach one so they can help you out as soon as possible. You can also find them on social. They're pretty much everywhere so just log in to your preferred social media platform and let's mingle.

How to get started for free with SEMrush

Use this link to try SEMrush for free: [CLICK HERE](#)