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## [The Best Tools for Do-It-Yourself SEO](#)

By [Tina Courtney-Brown](#) in [Featured](#)

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In the world of SEO, you're really only as good as the tools you use. Those who take on DIY SEO with a firm intuitive stance do so at their own risk. For most of us, what we assume folks will do to search and find our business on the web doesn't come close to hitting the mark. We should never bank the success of our business on the instincts we have about our customers – especially when there are plenty of tools to validate and guide us.

The good news is, there are oodles of tools out there built to help the DIY SEO marketer. The bad news is, it's incredibly tough to filter out the good from the bad. Let this article do the interviewing process – these tools and services are tried, tested, and approved to actually help you achieve and maintain ranking improvements.

### **Tools for Keyword Research**

All SEO is built on a foundation of strategically selected keywords. While your keywords may change over time, they truly do create the structure from which all content, copy, and marketing directions are based on. Therefore, it's advisable to use a couple of different free or paid tools to help you target the ideal keywords for your business.

#### **Google AdWords**

Google's suite of products vary in efficiency and usefulness, but [AdWords](#) is a slam dunk. This tool is beneficial not so much for actual hard numbers, but as an analysis for how popular a given search term is in the current market. Use it as a means of comparison for your top keyword selections. AdWords is excellent at visually displaying what terms work best. It's also aces at inspiring you to branch out, and generating additional keyword ideas you may not have yet considered.

#### **SEO Book**

Completely free and highly useful, [SEO Book](#) has a slew of offerings to enjoy while you hunt for the perfect keywords. Check out the keyword density analyzer, a PPC keyword wrapper, page comparison tool – even a typo generator that displays the common misspellings for selected keywords. Don't move forward with your keywords without first consulting this site for validation and assistance.

### **Tools for Paid Search and Keyword Ranking**

While organic tactics are absolutely necessary for long-term success, some businesses choose to use paid search for a quick shot of ranking adrenaline. Here are some tools and services that can aid in this process.

#### **SEMRush**

[SEMRush](#) offers a few free tools for the SEO practitioner, but their monthly subscription product is really where the meat of their service lies. Use SEMRush to discover what keywords your competitors are using for both organic and paid search results (free accounts only see the top 10, whereas paid accounts get the

whole enchilada.) Paid accounts also have access to organic rankings for any domain, search volume for keywords, total number of search results, and many more informative parameters.

### **PPC Partners**

Paid search is a challenging space to take on as a DIY-er, so this is one area where you're best served to enlist an expert. There are a lot of pay-per-click (PPC) firms out there, and who you choose should be a direct reflection of your business. For most small business owners, hiring a reasonably priced, mid-sized firm is ideal. You'll get personal attention from experts who have bona fide experience. Since you're looking to invest real cash in this paid search, make sure to find one that has testimonials to back up their claims.

Two examples of reputable, results-orientated PPC providers are [Webrageous](#) and [JumpFly](#). Both get high reviews for things like customer service, response, innovation, and fair pricing structures, so they both represent a good place to start your quest for stellar paid search results.

### **Tools to Monitor SEO Results**

All the SEO efforts in the world are meaningless if you're not tracking the actual success or failure rates. It's not always easy to decipher the story that analytics are actually attempting to tell, so it's important to choose tools that help demystify the process, and provide how-to guidance in reading each segment.

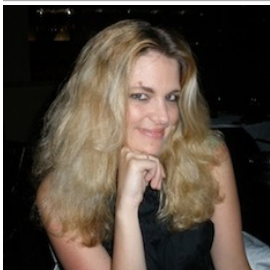
### **Authority Labs**

[Authority Labs](#) keeps it simple – enter a domain into their main interface, and you're able to track keyword rankings effortlessly. That's the free portion of the site. If you're willing to pay for a Pro plan (or just enjoy the free 30 day trial), you can watch up to 50 domains and 1,000 keywords (unlimited for higher subscriptions.) This is powerful stuff to gauge how your keywords are truly performing.

### **Raven Tools**

If you're opting for a paid tool across the board, [Raven Tools](#) is a sure bet. Built by an SEO agency for SEO experts, Raven covers just about every aspect of SEO planning and tracking. Their metrics tracking is absolutely stellar. It's powerful in part because Raven Tools draws data from a bevy of sources, including SEMoz, Google Analytics and Webmaster Tools, and of course, Google AdWords. It's a bit like one-stop-shopping in the world of SEO. The interface is intuitive, how-to guides are easy to read and very effective, and you'll be thrilled with the level of detail and variety of available tools and assistance.

Is there an SEO tool not listed here that you can't live without? Share your favorite tools in the comments section.



*Digital producer, game designer, Internet marketer and staff writer for [SiteProNews](#), one of the Web's foremost webmaster and tech news blogs, Tina Courtney-Brown has been shaping online businesses since 1996. She's produced and marketed innovative content for major players like Disney, as well as boutique startups galore, with fortes including social media, SEO, massively multiplayer games, social networks and project management. Tina is also a certified Reiki practitioner, herbalist, nonprofit director and true cooking diva. Learn more at her [personal website](#), or find her on Facebook and [Google+](#).*

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