BRIGHTEDGE WHITE PAPER: INTRODUCTION TO SEO AND PAID SUCCESS ON BAIDU

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1 INTRODUCTION TO BAIDU

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND MARKET SHARE

Baidu is the largest search engine in China. It was founded in 2000 by Robin Li and Eric Xu in Beijing. It is also the world's largest search engine focused on Chinese languages for the global market. The Chinese market currently has about 802 million internet users.[1]

Google left the Chinese market in 2010, and its departure created even more space for homegrown search engines like Baidu to grow in the market.

According to [Marketing to China](#), Baidu accounts for 80% market share in China, which amounts to 640 million online users; that equals about 2 times the entire population in the U.S.[2]
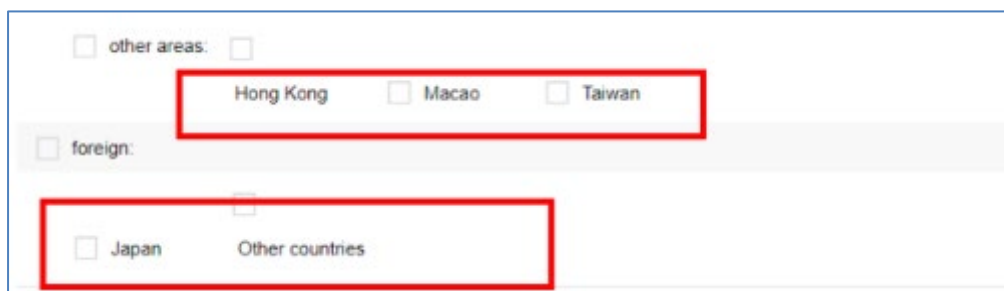
1.2 GROWTH AND SCALE

Baidu started with ten people and grew into the largest search engine in China with over 40,000 employees in less than 20 years. It is currently the 2nd largest search engine globally after Google. It also has offices in Japan, Egypt, Thailand, Brazil, India, and the U.S.[3]

Baidu expanded its reach to other areas in addition to the search engine services, such as music, group buying services, apps, and gaming as well as self-driving car investments.

The Baidu search engine and other Baidu-branded products are available in over 200 countries globally with 1.6 billion users in total. Baidu President Yaqin Zhang also revealed that Baidu has formed a tool matrix overseas with more than 700 million overseas users and a monthly activity of more than 250 million.

According to Baidu, the search engine handles an average of 6 billion searches per day from mainland China alone. Baidu is also used by tens of thousands of Chinese consumers overseas.

Figure 1 Baidu Overseas Targeting Options

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[1] 百度, baike.baidu.com, retrieved Jan 21, 2019
[2] [The Search Engine Market Share In China – 2018](#), marketingtochina.com, May 17, 2018
[3] 百度, baike.baidu.com, retrieved Jan 21, 2019

2 SEO ON BAIDU

2.1 BAIDU SPECIALITY SERPS

Baidu displays ads first on the top of the SERPs followed by the organic results. The most relevant content ranks higher, however, there is a tendency that Baidu prioritizes its own properties and brands over other third-party resources.

These are some well-known Baidu products to consider including in your content and SEO strategy to establish the authority online and expand coverage on the Baidu SERPs.

- Baidu Baike (Encyclopedia)
- Baidu Map
- Baidu Image
- Baidu Wenku (Articles)

- Baidu Zhidao (Baidu Knows)
- Baidu Jingyan (Experience)
- Baidu Koubei (reviews)

Figure 2 Baidu Example SERP

2.2 ABOUT THE BAIDU ALGORITHM

Like other major search engines, Baidu aims to deliver a better user experience, therefore, their algorithms also optimize for that. In most respects, the Baidu algorithm mirrors the criteria of the Google search algorithm, but the algorithms will not be weighted exactly the same.

To facilitate the learning for all webmasters, Baidu also has a dedicated section online for webmasters to keep up with its search engine guidelines. Ziyuan (https://ziyuan.baidu.com/) is the Baidu webmaster learning website that offers the official and latest guidelines to webmasters and digital marketers on how to optimize for better performance on Baidu.

Here is a summary of some of the named algorithm changes publicized in the past to give you a glimpse of the key SEO areas of emphasis on Baidu:

- Ice Bucket[4] – targets and suppresses gambling, porn, vulgar and illegal content online

- Beacon[5] – protects users' privacy and safety, promotes https

- Hurricane[6] – protects original content

- Breeze[7] – ensures the relevancy of the title and content

- Lightning[8] – promotes mobile-friendly sites, encourages the usage of Mobile Instant Pages (MIP)[9], which is their version of Accelerated Mobile Pages (AMP)[10].

Keep up with the news on the Ziyuan site to ensure you are following the latest SEO guidelines and algorithm changes.

2.3 BAIDU RANKING FACTORS

In order to rank well on Baidu, the site should perform well on the following criteria:

- Content quality
    - Bounce rate
    - Social signals
    - Time on site

- Keywords and content relevancy

- The URL should not be too long or complicated

- The page load speed of the website is crucial

- Mobile compatibility

- Backlink quality > quantity

- HTTPs is favored

In summary, to rank well in Baidu, the website should aim to deliver relevant, quality content, fast page delivery speed, and provide easy navigation, especially on mobile devices.

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[4] 百度搜索将推出冰桶算法 5.0，保障搜索用户体验 ziyuan.baidu.com, Dec 11, 2018
[5] 严厉打击恶意劫持 百度移动搜索推出烽火算法 2.0, ziyuan.baidu.com , May 17, 2018
[6] 百度搜索将推出飓风算法 2.0，严厉打击恶劣采集行为, ziyuan.baidu.com , Sep 13, 2018
[7] 百度推出清风算法，严惩网页标题作弊, ziyuan.baidu.com , Sep 14, 2017
[8] 关于百度上线 "闪电算法"的公告, ziyuan.baidu.com , Oct 19, 2017
[9] QCON 大会 MIP 全解读, ziyuan.baidu.com , Oct 25, 2016
[10] Google's AMP Top Stories Now Live In Mobile Search Results, searchengineland.com, Feb 24, 2016

2.4 RANKING FACTORS EXPLAINED

2.4.1   Site Indexation

The first step to rank on the search engine is to get indexed. You can use an advanced search operator to perform a site search to check if the site has been indexed by Baidu and how many pages have been indexed. However, this provides just an estimation; more accurate data is available within Ziyuan, Baidu webmaster tools.

Figure 3 Baidu Site Search

You can apply for the Baidu webmaster tools account at Ziyuan (https://ziyuan.baidu.com/).

However, this registration requires a mobile number from China, therefore, you would need some additional help from a local representative or agency to set this up.

2.4.2   Official Website Verifications and Trust Marks

Official account verification is important in China due to lack of trust in the market. Being verified by the search engine is a big plus and will attract more traffic and engagement. Verified businesses also rank higher on the search result page. Depending on the verification services used, the site may rank at a different position on the search results pages. Baidu will also display a 'V' badge next to the website URL to distinguish it from other websites.
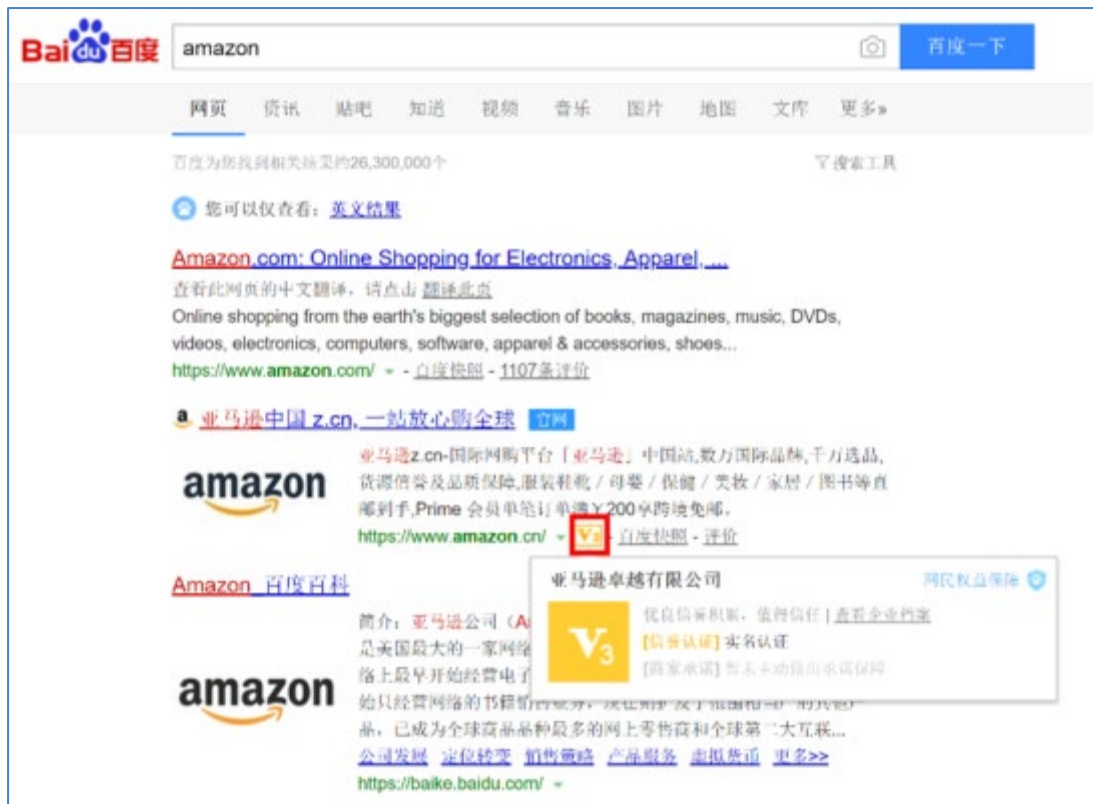
Figure 4 Baidu Trust Centre Badge

Baidu Trust Center (https://trust.baidu.com) is where businesses can apply for verification services online. These are paid services provided by the 3rd party agencies.

Depending on the services selected, the website will be assigned with V1, V2, or V3 badge.

Figure 5 Trust Center Services (browser translation)

Baidu Trustworthy Enterprise Zone service is the ultimate level of verification service available, it will appear in the first position when the brand name is searched. However, it is a pricey service to include, and it will require a local entity as Baidu is not able to verify overseas businesses yet.

Figure 6 Baidu Trustworthy Enterprise Service

2.4.3   Internet Content Provider (ICP) License
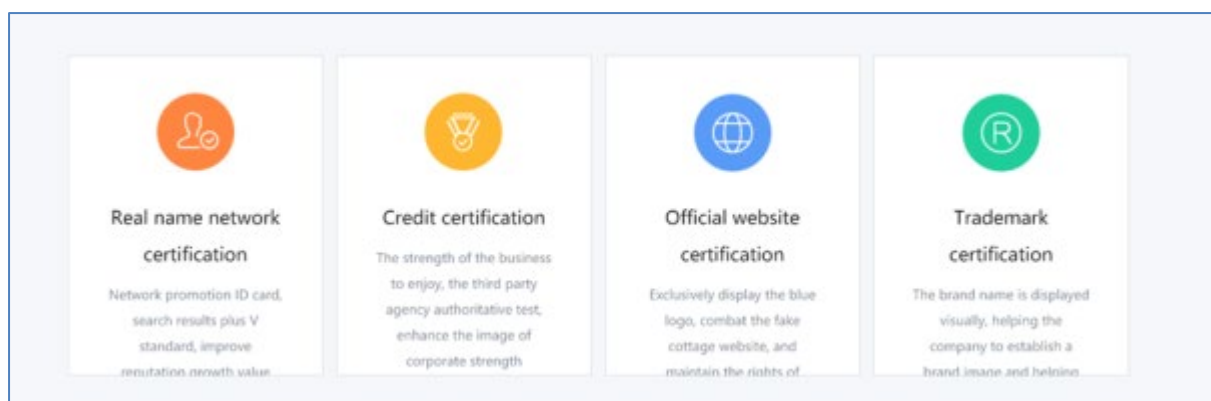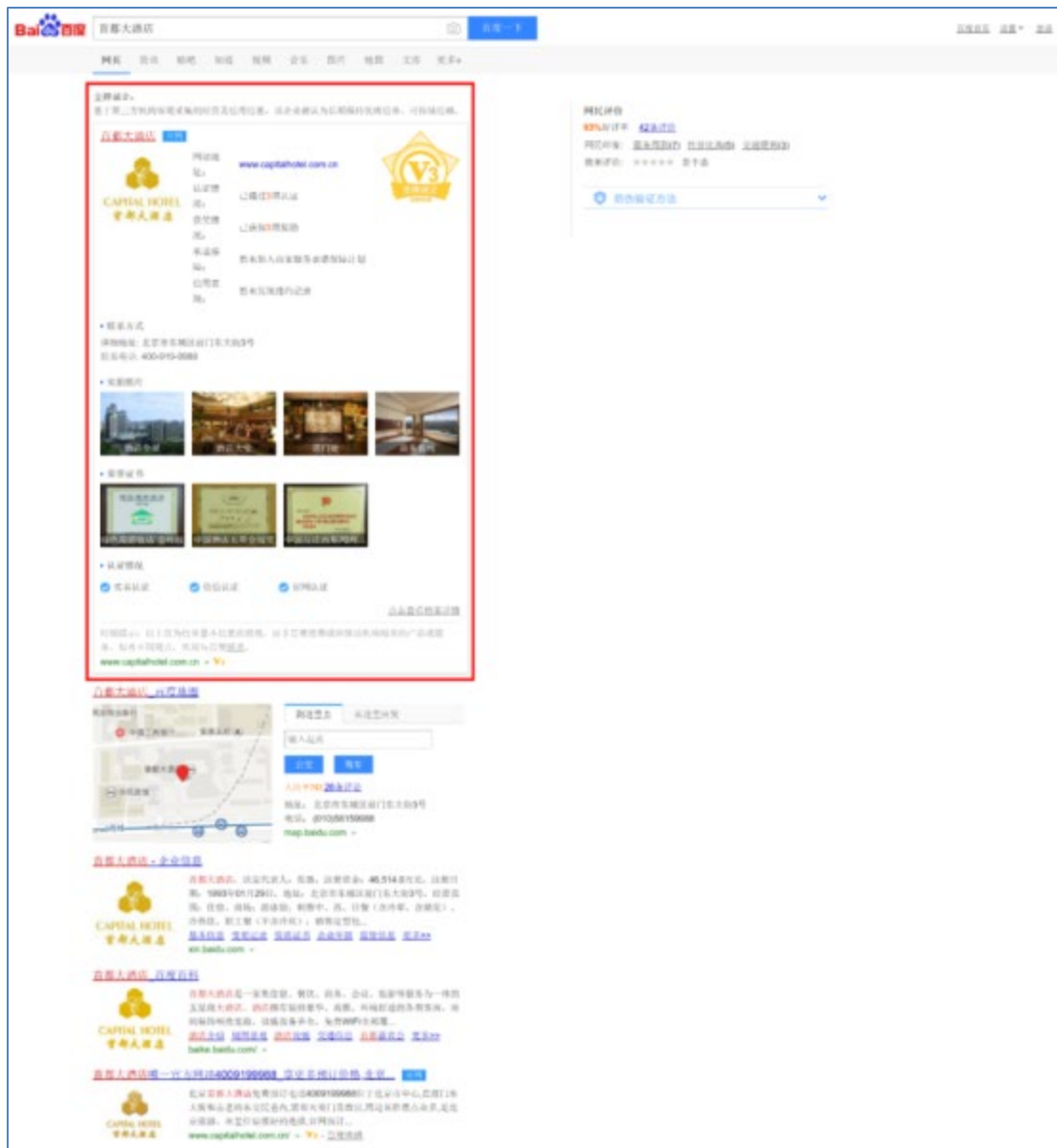
Although there are many benefits to getting the website verified, it is not easy for a foreign business to obtain the status because of the requirement of being a local entity and an ICP license[11].

So, what is ICP? It is an abbreviation for Internet Content Provider, which is a permit issued by the Chinese Ministry of Industry and Information Technology to permit China-based websites to operate in China. The ICP license numbers for Chinese websites can often be found on the bottom of the home page. For ecommerce website operation in China, an ICP commercial license is also required.

Apart from the real business verification, all other verifications require the business to provide an ICP license. To acquire an ICP license, the website should have a local domain and be hosted in

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[11] 中华人民共和国电信与信息服务业务经营许可证, baike.baidu.com, retrieved Jan 21, 2019

China. A local business entity is the prerequisite for this solution and often is an impossible requirement for many foreign businesses.

However, it is possible to get an ICP license through a local content delivery network. Alibaba cloud service has a page (https://www.alibabacloud.com/icp) explaining how ICP works and how to apply.

There are also other third-party content delivery networks that can provide the support.

2.4.4   Mobile Compatibility

According to 'The 42nd Survey Report' published by the China Internet Network Information Center, China has a staggering mobile penetration of 98.3% at the end of June 2018. The high mobile penetration rate makes mobile compatibility a must in China. The Baidu Mobile App alone has 600 million users.

The website can choose to use a responsive design or dedicated mobile site to meet the demands in the market. If there is a dedicated mobile version for the website, you should use a subdomain structure for the mobile site instead of a subfolder. For example, m.site.com is the preferred structure for a mobile site; it is not recommended to use something like, site.com/m/.

2.4.5   Page Load Speed and Content Delivery

China has started to pave the way to the 5G network, and speed is definitely an important factor for websites to rank higher on the search results page. If the website fails to load within 3-4 seconds, it will suffer on rank.

Websites hosted outside of China often have very slow loading speed when accessed from China. Traditionally, businesses should host near mainland China, such as in Hong Kong or Singapore, to improve the speed and bypass the local-hosting issue.

However, it is important to bear in mind that China has a vast landscape, a location near the south of China, like Hong Kong is still very far away from the northern end of China where Beijing is.

Therefore, a local content delivery network with multiple locations around China is a much more effective solution to accelerate the content delivery within China.

3 HOW TO DO SEO FOR BAIDU

3.1 ON-PAGE SEO

On-page SEO with Baidu includes meta tags, page content, and alt-tags as important factors for ranking.

Meta Data	Page Content	Image Alt Text
• Title Tag • Meta Description • Meta Keywords	• H1, H2 Tags • Body Content • Internal Links	• Alt Attribute

However, relative to Google, character limits are different on Baidu and the style could be different too.

3.1.1 Keyword Tools

First, you should use Baidu tools to determine the right keywords to target. Baidu Index and the Baidu Keywords tool are two great options to discover the keyword opportunities on Baidu.

Baidu Index (https://index.baidu.com/) offers great insights on the search trends, related searches, and basic demographic information of the internet users.
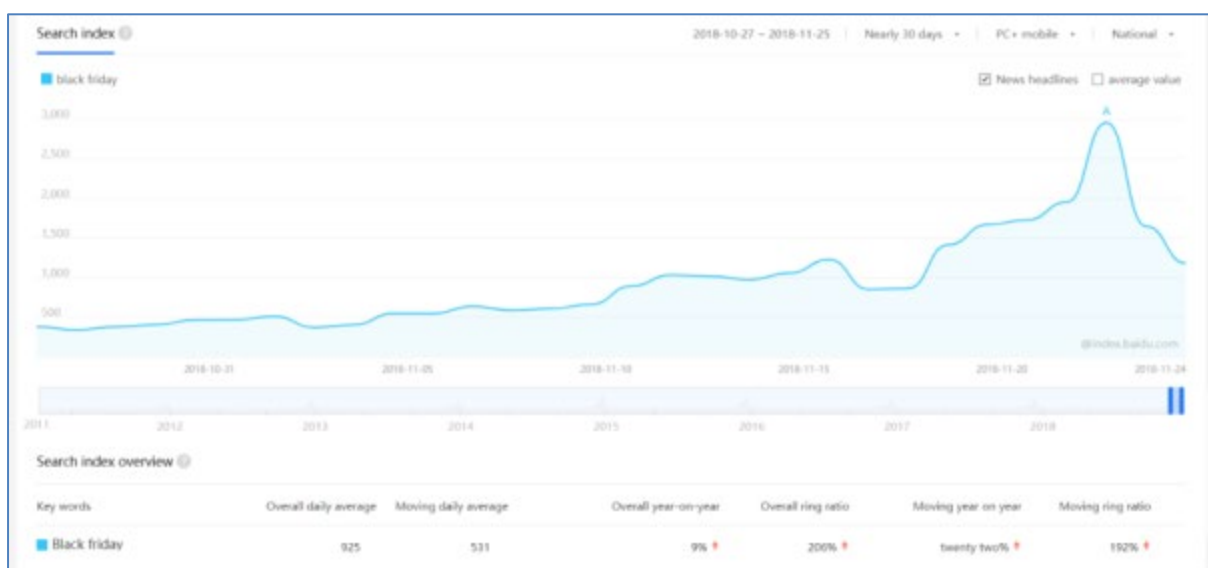

Figure 7 Baidu Index Example Keyword Index

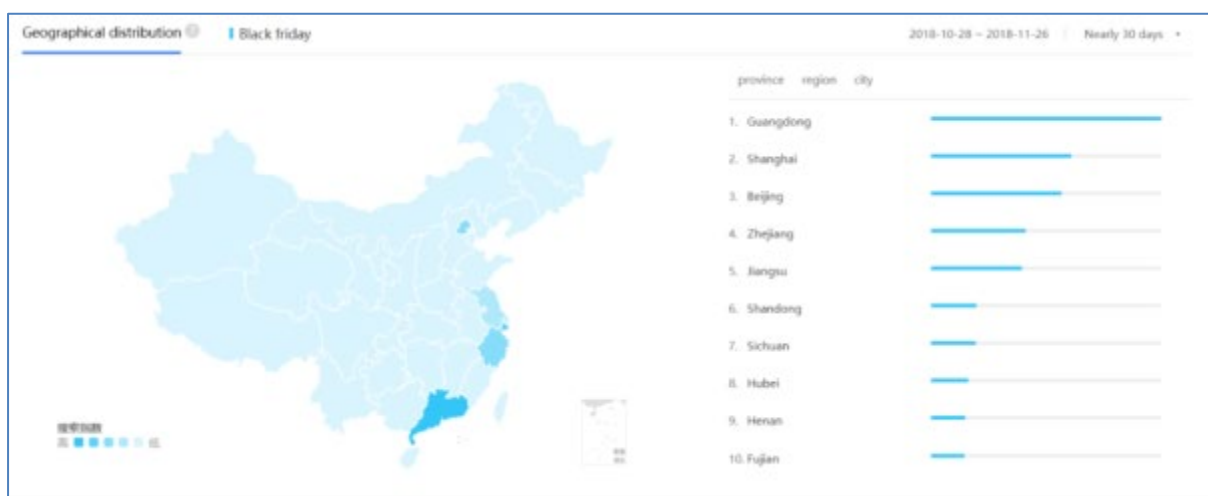*Figure 8 Baidu Index Example Related Searches*

Figure 9 Baidu Index Example Search Geographic Distribution

Figure 10 Baidu Index Example Demographic Distribution

The Baidu Keyword tool is available to all advertisers as a built-in function. It can be accessed from the portal website or via the offline editor tool.

The keyword tool can target keywords in specific cities and devices. It also suggests keyword ideas, competition, and suggested bid for the keywords.

At first glance the search volume may look low on Baidu, this is because Baidu provides daily search volumes on the desktop and mobile devices instead of monthly search volume.
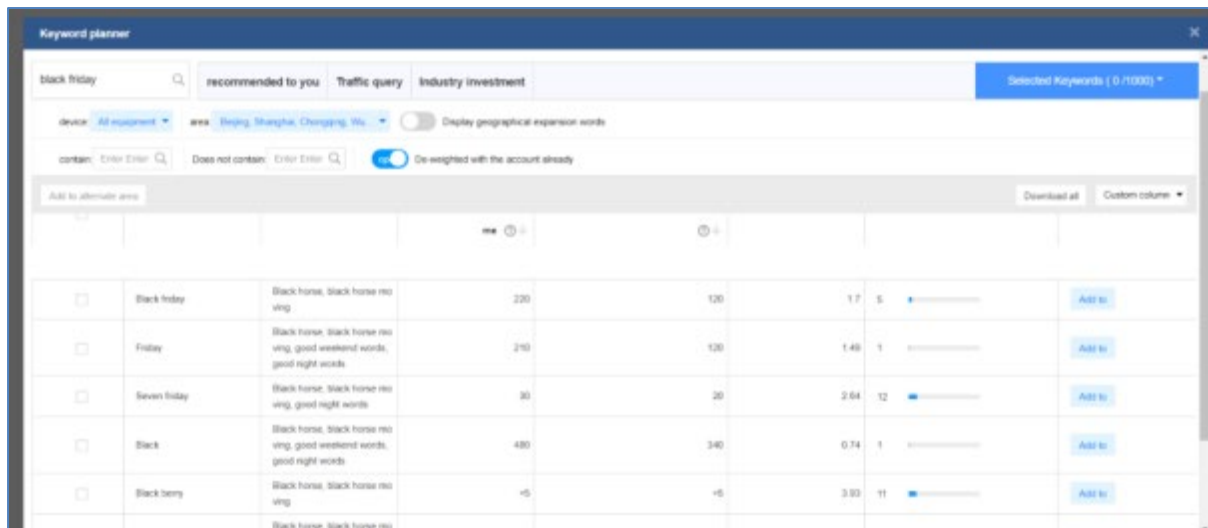
Figure 11 Baidu Keyword Tool

3.1.2   Meta Data, Titles, and Anchor Text

Meta data is important on Baidu. To rank well on Baidu, the website should optimize for the right keywords, use meta title, and meta description.

Baidu can display up to 30 Chinese characters in total for desktop without wrapping the content. And it is up to 26 Chinese characters in total on mobile. It is recommended to create something around 25 Chinese characters to make sure the full meta description will be displayed.

Here are some good examples Baidu published on the Ziyuan site.

The home page can be written in certain styles. For example, it could look like this: Site name / Brand Homepage / official website/ slogan

Some examples for the homepage:

Some examples for the homepage:

- 优酷首页 (translation : Youku Homepage)
- 京东 - 正品低价、品质保障、配送及时、轻松购物！（JD.COM - Authentic Low Price, quality reassurance, timely delivery, easy shopping online!)

Examples of other deeper pages:

- 男士频道 - 唯品会（Male - vip.com）
- 优酷音乐 - 优酷 （Youku Music – Youku）
- 鸡蛋的做法 - 菜谱 - 香哈网 （ How to cook eggs - recipe - website name）

As per the guideline published on Nov 14, 2018, Baidu recommends using '-' only as the title character separator, replacing ---，＿，|，——.

If a website title is over-optimized, typically with keyword stuffing, Baidu will automatically override the meta data and reduce the site result to just the name, company name, and the meta description will be replaced with auto-generated snippets.

Figure 12 Keyword Stuffing Website Meta Title

Figure 13 Keyword Stuffing Meta Title Changed By Baidu

3.1.3   Content

Content is king on Baidu. The search engine is heavily investing in content quality controls and launched a new project called Bear Paw[12] in 2018 to encourage websites to create original, fresh written content.

The Bear Paw project is also part of the new Baidu webmaster tools platform (https://ziyuan.baidu.com/xzh/intro/index). For websites with original and fresh content, they will be indexed more frequently and quickly by the search engine. Baidu claims that they would index the fresh content within 24 hours, which is an advantage.

The Bear Paw tools also enable webmasters to utilize some advanced features, such as generating structured data for Baidu. Baidu has been running offline workshops as well to promote the project to more webmasters.

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[12] 熊掌号使用手册, xiongzhang.baidu.com, retrieved Jan 21, 2019

3.1.4 Keyword Density

Keyword density is likely important, but it is not as a known ranking factor. It is all about the quality of the content and if it is relevant to the query. As explained in 3.1.2, if you stuff keywords in the title, the search engine will override the title. So you can't take density as a factor. Baidu is now focusing on the Bear Paw project, which emphasizes content quality. The keywords should be naturally inserted into the content rather than forced in the content to reach a certain frequency or density goal. Read more at https://ziyuan.baidu.com/college/articleinfo?id=1744 (In Chinese).

3.1.5 Baidu Products

As mentioned in section 2.1, Baidu in-house products tend to rank better on SERPs. Set up on Baidu products where they make sense for your business to increase the coverage of the brand/website on the search results page.

3.1.6 Backlinks

Link building is a must as well; the quality of the link is more important than the quantity of links. Buying links will trigger a penalty from Baidu.

3.1.7 Social Signals

Social sharing is a good option for link building, consider adding the Baidu share code on the website (http://share.baidu.com/code) and encourage users to share website content socially.

Figure 14 Baidu Social Share Icons

3.2 OFF-PAGE

Backlinks are a ranking factor on Baidu. However, the importance of the backlinks is decreasing. The quality of the links is more important in the algorithmic calculation. Recent Baidu algorithm updates show that Baidu is cracking down on link-spamming activities. The links should be natural and relevant to the business.

3.2.1 Link Building

There are 2 major parts to focus on for link building. Anchor Text Distribution and Backlinks Distribution, which determine how extensive your digital presence is and the relevancy of your site to your target keywords.

Anchor Text Distribution

There are 3 types of anchor text to consider:

- The URL
- Branded Keywords
- Generic Keywords

Backlink Distribution

Backlinks can be spread between owned and shared content, such as corporate social media accounts, press releases, and external mentions on relevant industry websites.

Figure 15 Backlink Distribution

3.3 INDEXATION

3.3.1 Set Up Webmaster Tools

A website can be indexed in two ways, one is to be discovered by the Baiduspider, two is to submit the website to the search engine.

A website can be quickly crawled by submitting the URLs with Baidu webmaster tools (https://ziyuan.baidu.com/). In generally, Baiduspider will start to crawl the pages within one hour

after the submission, however, whether it would be indexed will depend on the quality of the web page.

3.3.2 Sitemap

You can find the options for submitting the website from the navigation menu on the left-hand side of the Baidu webmaster tools account.

Figure 16 Baidu Webmaster Tools URL Submission

There are 3 ways to submit the URLs to Baidu.

- Automatic Submission
  Using scripts to automatically submit URLs to Baidu.
  For example, by installing the following script in the source code, it will automatically submit links to Baidu. It is a one-time deployment which saves time in future for webmasters. Whenever the new page is visited by users the first time, it will automatically submit the page to Baidu
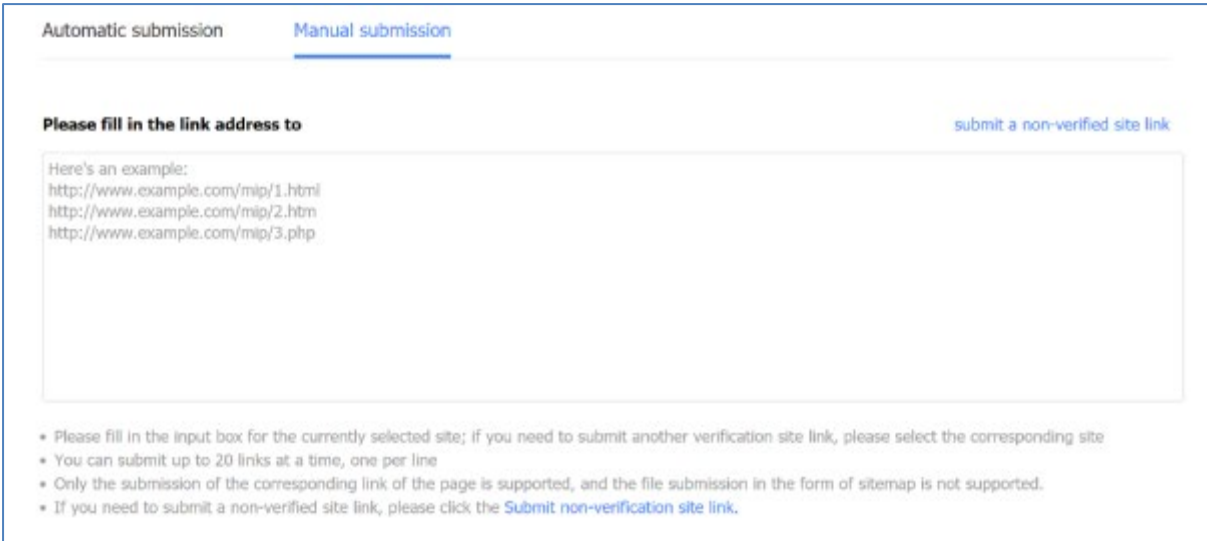
```
<script>
(function(){
    var bp = document.createElement('script');
    var curProtocol = window.location.protocol.split(':')[0];
    if (curProtocol === 'https') {
        bp.src = 'https://zz.bdstatic.com/linksubmit/push.js';
    }
    else {
        bp.src = 'http://push.zhanzhang.baidu.com/push.js';
    }
    var s = document.getElementsByTagName("script")[0];
    s.parentNode.insertBefore(bp, s);
})();
</script>
```

Figure 17 Baidu URL Auto Submission Script

- Sitemap Submission
  Baidu accepts sitemaps in 3 formats; they are txt, XML, and sitemap index file.
  Similar to Google Search Console, you should split up your large sitemaps. All formats limit a single sitemap to 10MB (you can compress the file) and 50,000 URLs.

- Manual Submission
  You can choose to manually submit URLs with the webmaster tools account. It can cover up to 20 URLs in each manual submission.

Figure 18 Baidu Webmaster Tools Manual URL Submission

3.3.3   Robots.txt

You can submit the robots.txt file to instruct which pages should and should not be indexed by the search engine.

The Baidu Robots tool currently supports 48k file content detection. Please ensure that your robots.txt file is not too large. The maximum length of the directory is no more than 250 characters.

3.3.4   Why is a site not indexed?

According to Baidu, once the sitemap is submitted, the spider will act on the task within 1 hour. By upgrading to the new Bear Paw account, new content can be indexed within 24 hours.

In general, the spider will visit the site daily. If the site has not been crawled or indexed completely by Baidu, there could be several reasons for this:

- The spider has been blocked. Some webmasters may block the spider by mistake within your settings.
- The content quality for the site is low or the site is not frequently updated. The spider will not visit as often.
- The site was not loading. Stable hosting is important to ensure the spider can crawl the site.
- Out of crawl budget. The spider would only spend a certain amount of time on one site.
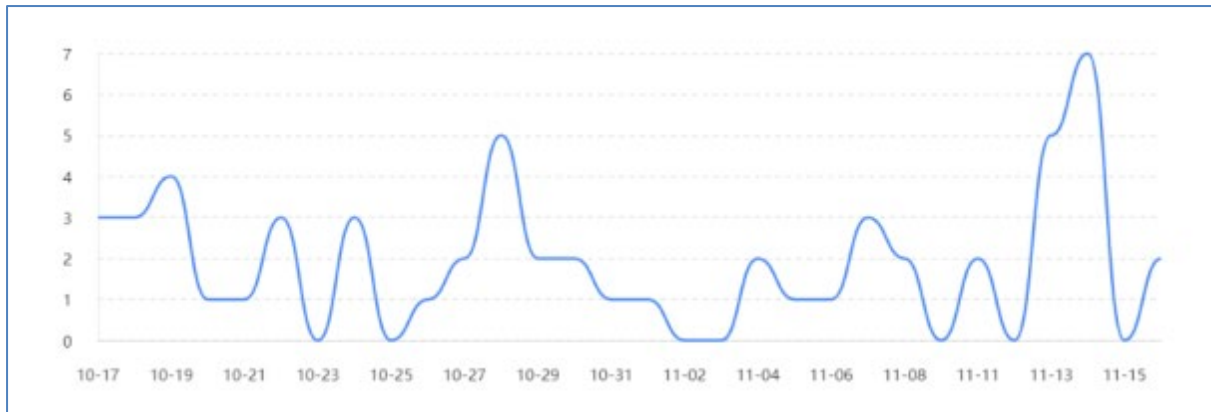
Figure 19 Baidu Spider Crawl Frequency Example

To ensure the site will be indexed frequently by the search engine without wasting crawl credit, focus on the following attributes when optimizing the website:

- Clear site structure and taxonomy will help the spider to crawl the site frequently.
- Clean URLs without too many additional parameters that would reduce the risk of not being indexed. If using a hashtag (#) it will result in some issues with the indexation. The search engine will only index the content before a hashtag (#).
- Focus on the content quality of the website and user experience.
- Use a CDN or a stable hosting solution to ensure the website is working when the spider crawls the site.
- Correctly use robots.txt and sitemaps to help the search engine to index the website.

3.4 OTHER TECHNICAL ASPECTS

Some technical elements could also have an impact on the website ranking.

3.4.1 Speed

Speed is a very clear ranking signal to the search engine. It is also mentioned in Baidu guidelines that if a mobile site takes more than 3 seconds to load, it is not likely to rank well.

To ensure the site will load fast for a better user experience, Baidu also recommends minimizing CSS and JavaScript on the page to reduce the loading time. A content delivery network or CDN can be a good solution as well to accelerate the content delivery.

3.4.2 MIP /AMP

Mobile and speed are important on Baidu. Baidu has also developed its own AMP (accelerated mobile pages) solution- MIP (mobile instant page) program to accelerate mobile loading speed.

It is similar to Google's AMP solution. Baidu revealed that they also support AMP so that developers would not need to double efforts when working on mobile acceleration.

3.4.3 HTTPS

HTTPs is also preferred by Baidu. It is also a requirement when deploying MIP on Baidu.

3.4.4 ccTLD and CDN

ccTLD is an important locality signal to Google, but how does that work on Baidu?

Local domain is not a ranking factor for Baidu[13]. Quite often you would notice that Chinese businesses use .com instead of a .cn domain. Just keep in mind, a .cn does provide a level of trust with users in China, which could help with CTR.

According to a Baidu SEO white paper, Baidu doesn't discriminate against any foreign sites. As long as the Baidu spider can crawl the site, it has a chance to rank on Baidu.

With speed being such an important factor to Baidu, the search engine also recommends using a content delivery network to accelerate the content delivery within China.

3.5 LANGUAGE MANAGEMENT AND HREF LANG

3.5.1 Chinese language

The font and size of Chinese characters are not ranking factors; however, it could affect the user experience, which could impact the ranking. There is no specific recommendation from Baidu on this subject matter, nevertheless, a Baidu official resource shared the original English blog on this subject matter (https://www.webfx.com/blog/web-design/fonts-ux/) and encouraged websites to test and improve overall user experience.

For example, because Chinese characters are more compact than Latin letters, it would improve the readability to use a larger size font for Chinese content.

If you are targeting mainland Chinese, make sure you use Simplified Chinese double-byte characters. Taiwan and Hong Kong use Traditional Chinese.

3.5.2 Geo-targeting

As mentioned previously, Baidu is the largest search engine dedicated to the Chinese language. Baidu understands the Chinese language better than any other search engine in its class. Although there is no official confirmation on how Baidu handles Hreflang, Baidu can pick up the Chinese content when the search query is in Chinese. If the Chinese site has enough search volume for the English terms, it could also display the Chinese website even when the search query is in a foreign language.

In a search for 'Air France' in both Mandarin and English, the Chinese website displayed as the first research result in both searches.

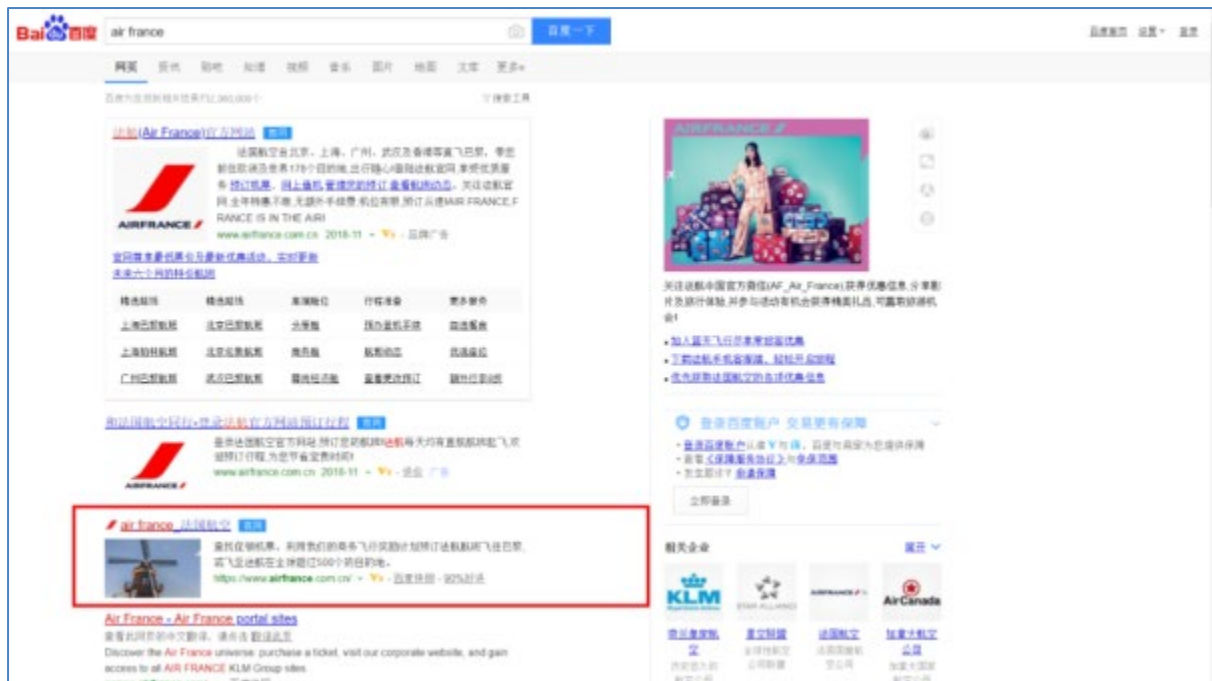---

[13] 百度搜索引擎优化指南 2.0, ziyuan.baidu.com, Dec 12, 2014

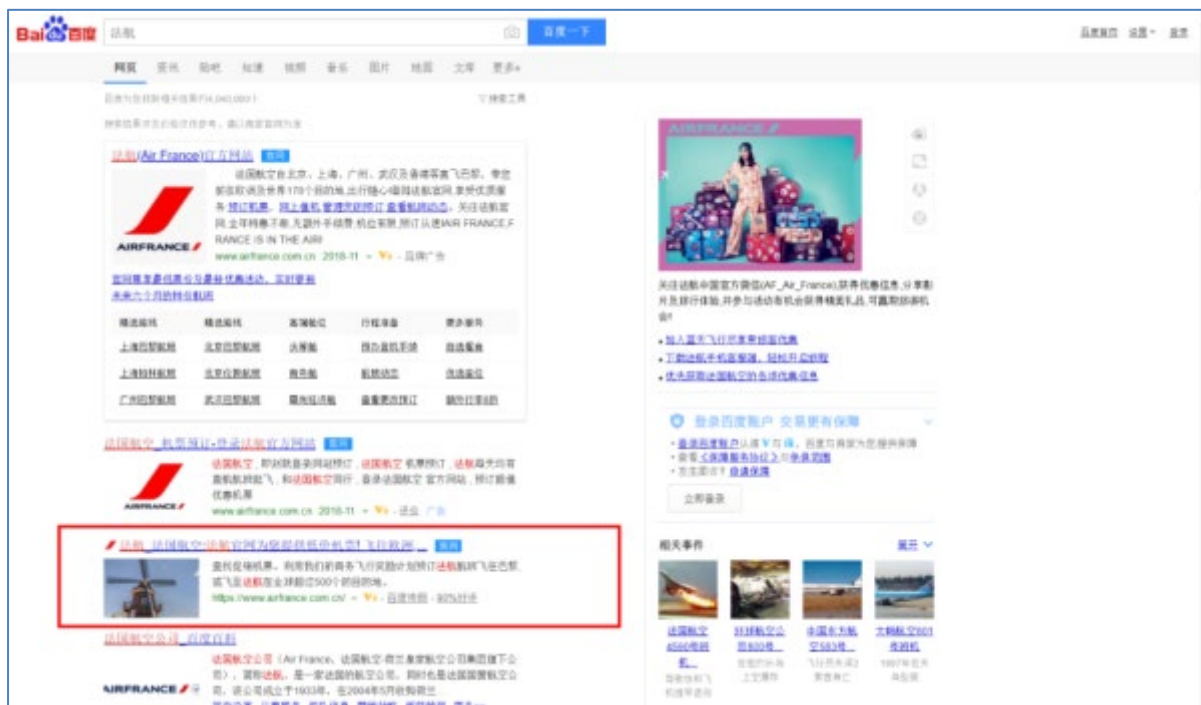*Figure 20 Air France in Search Result Page - English*

Figure 21 Air France in Search Result Page – Chinese

A similar search for British Airways, the English term only matched the English terms.

Figure 22 British Airways Chinese Search Term

Figure 23 British Airways English Search Term

3.5.3   How to Target Local Searches

It is possible to target the local region by adding additional information in the meta data. In one of the Baidu mobile optimization guidelines, it explains how to add location information to the website.

> Here is an example for targeting Beijing.
>
> <meta name="location" content="province=北京;city=北京; coord=116.306522891,40.0555055968">

The highlighted part should be replaced with relevant information.

Coord is the latitude and longitude information which can be abstracted from Baidu map.

4 BAIDU TRACKING

4.1 WHAT IS THE BAIDU ANALYTICS TOOL?

Baidu has its own analytics tool called Baidu Tongji, meaning analytics. It is easy to set up, like Google Analytics.

For example, this is the Baidu Tongji code you would need to add to the website before </head>

```
<script>
var _hmt = _hmt || [];
(function) {
  var hm = document.createElement("script");
  hm.src = "https://hm.baidu.com/hm.js?a4b0a6243ff9ca602e779849b84b93d4";
  var s = document.getElementsByTagName("script")[0];
  s.parentNode.insertBefore(hm, s);
})();
</script>
```

It is also linked with the Baidu advertising account, so if you already have a PPC account with Baidu, you can just simply activate the account, instead of registering for a new one.

For websites that do not run any advertisements with Baidu, a general account can be opened from the website. (https://tongji.baidu.com). Baidu Tongji also offers a dedicated account for tracking mobile Apps.

Figure 24 Baidu Tongji Login Page

It tracks and provides information including, organic traffic, keyword ranking, different traffic sources, conversion tracking, heat map, click map, and some other information.

4.2 FUNCTIONS

4.2.1 Baidu Search Term Ranking

Baidu Tongii can track keyword ranking positions and Baidu index score for up to 10 selected keywords for free. It can be a very good tool to learn how keywords perform on Baidu.
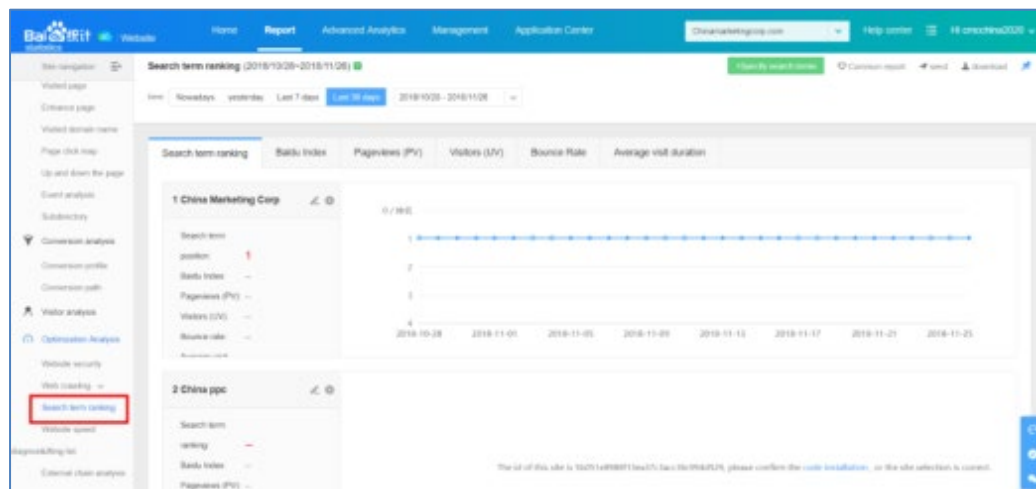

Figure 25 *Baidu Tongji Search Term Ranking Report*

4.2.2 Baidu Heat Maps and Click Maps

Heat maps and click maps are also useful to visualize the users' behavior on your website. It gathers information on how many times an area on the page is clicked by users. The visual demonstration is a good way to understand what worked on the site so that adjustments can be made accordingly to improve the interactions online.

Figure 26 Baidu Tongji Heat Map

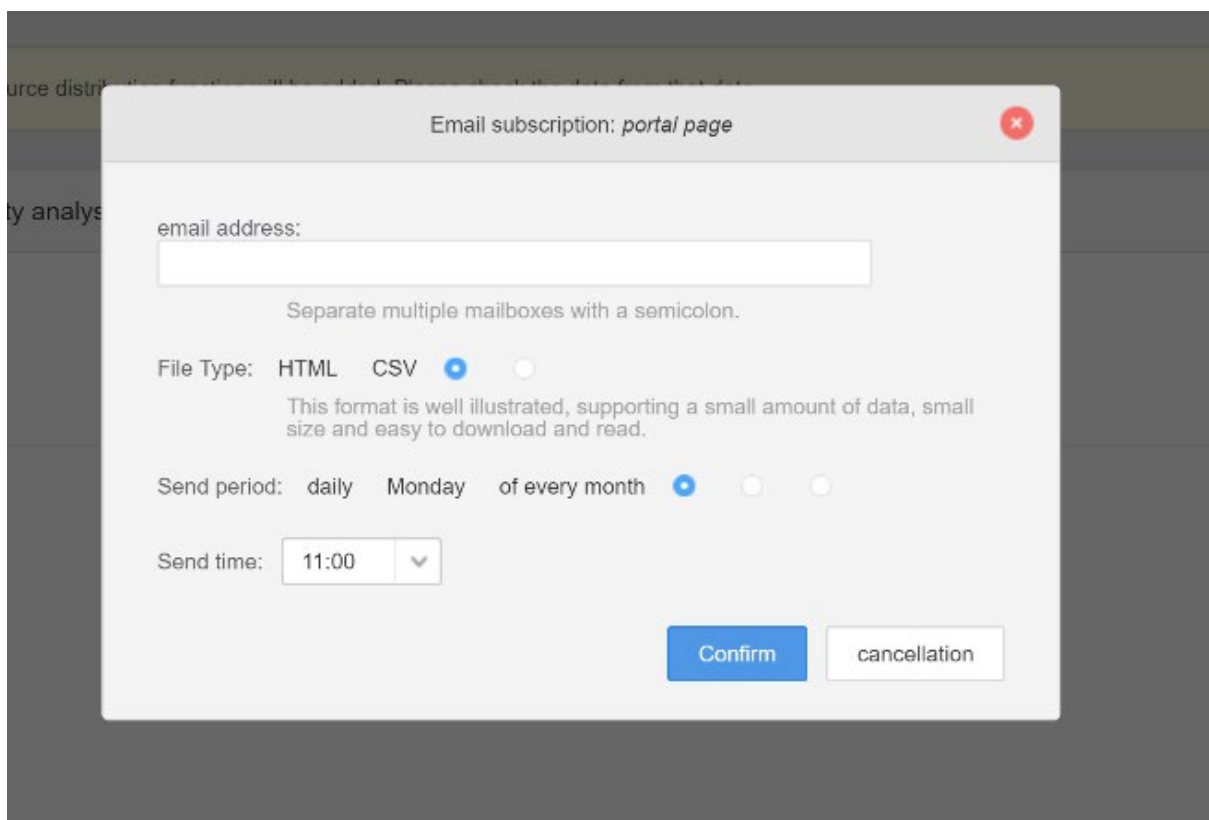### 4.2.3   Baidu Advertising Performance

If you are also running ads with Baidu, Baidu Tongji is where you can set up goals. It will also enable you set up remarketing campaigns and advertising targeting options for the DSP ads.

Baidu Tongji can provide display campaign publisher information which is not covered if you only use 3rd party UTM tracking. The information for all display publishers makes it a great tool to understand the display campaigns.

There are many other functions available with Baidu Tongji and the associated DSP targeting platform. If you are planning to run campaigns in China, it is highly recommended to include these tools in your list.

4.2.4   Reporting

If you would like to keep on track with one or several dashboard reports from the portal, you can also subscribe to reports from the Baidu Tongji. It will send reports in HTML or CSV format by emails on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis.

Figure 27 Baidu Tongji Subscribe Reports

5 PAID ON BAIDU

In addition to the standard paid search and display options, Baidu and other Chinese search engines all put a focus on brand traffic because brand recognition is an important factor that consumers would consider when buying online.

In a nutshell, Baidu divides their products into different categories, including search ads, native ads (in-feed ads), branding ads, and DSP ads.

It is believed that using Baidu paid ads improves organic performance.

5.1 BAIDU SEARCH ADS

Like search ads on other search engines, they are triggered by search queries. The advertising platform is in Mandarin only, but there is an English editor available for English speakers. However, the editor doesn't have access to all the features on the portal.

There are two portals that could be used for managing Baidu search ads.

5.1.1 Phoenix Nest Platform

The Baidu Phoenix advertising platform ([www2.baidu.com)](www2.baidu.com) was launched in 2009, and it is the default advertising portal on Baidu for all advertisers. Apart from running default text ads, it is also possible to add some advanced features to the standard ads at no extra cost.

The available extensions include:

- Images
- Logos
- Videos
- Sitelinks
- Contact forms
- Call extensions

The video embedded in the text ads will expand in the middle of the page if it is clicked. It will also land users on the landing page once the video is closed or completed. According to Baidu, the videos will reach a CTR of 6-7% and typically 40% of users would watch the full video.

It is a good practice if the brands have some engagement built into their videos in order to capture the viewers' attention within the first few seconds.

(Image: http://yingxiao.baidu.com/new/home/product/details/id/583)

Figure 28 *Baidu Ads with Video*

5.1.2   Baidu Shantou Platform

The Shantou platform (http://shantou.baidu.com) is an extension of the Phoenix Nest platform. It offers something very similar to the product listing ads (PLAs) on Google but with more options for different kinds of products.

The platform delivers results and ad options work well with advertisers with a lot of SKUs or products; for example, property investments, education, e-commerce, and travel products can really benefit from the unique showcase advertising placements.

Figure 29 Baidu Shantou Ads for Ecommerce

Figure 30 Baidu Shantou Ads for Property Sales

Figure 31 Baidu Shantou Ads for Cruise

Figure 32 Baidu Shantou Ads for English Language Course

5.2 BAIDU DSP ADS (BAIYI ADS)

Baidu Baiyi is a DSP[14] product on Baidu that offers placements on premium website publishers and Apps. The product is very effective for reaching mass amounts of potential audiences online at a lower cost per click rate. The Baiyi product has the capability to deliver up to 18 billion views daily.
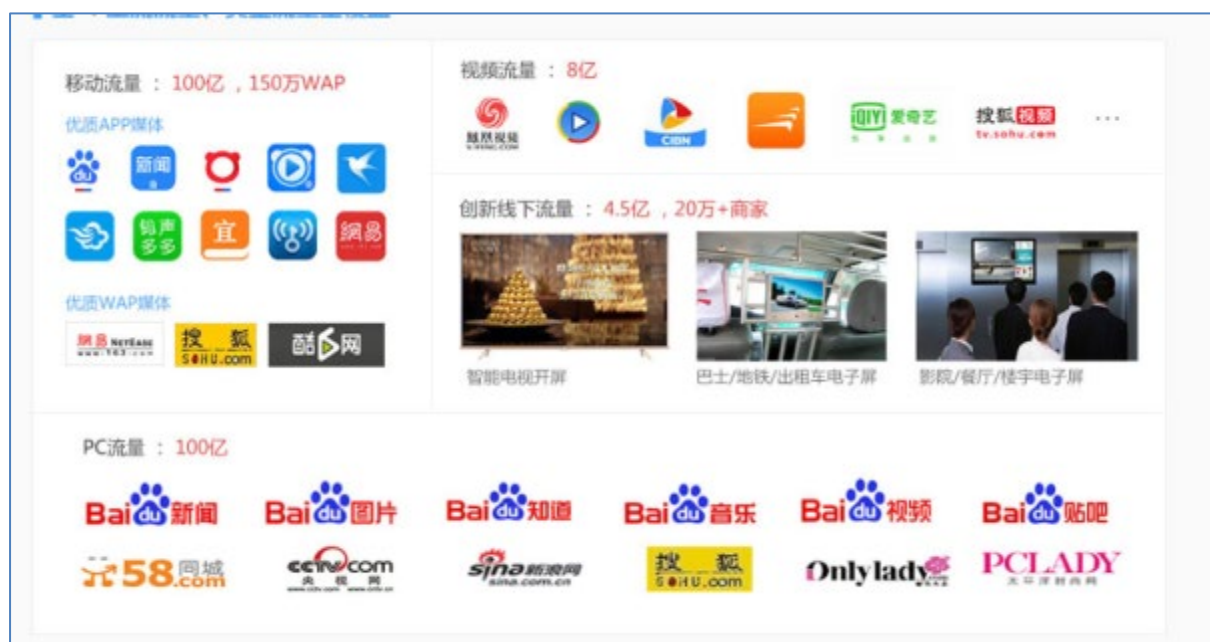

Figure 33 Baiyi Publishers

The Baiyi platform collects information from different Baidu products, such as search behavior information from the Baidu browser, search terms, visits from the Baidu keyboard APP, location information from Baidu map, and user behavior from Baidu DSK.

Baidu DSK records the user behaviour, such as what kind of Apps they've installed, how long did users spend on the App, and what kind of ads they clicked within the App.

You can access the Baiyi product from the Phoenix Nest platform. The product is available in both a CPC and CPM model.

There are many targeting options available on the Baiyi DSP; some unique options that Google does not yet cover but are worth exploring are:

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[14] 百度移动 dsp 定义, yingxiao.baidu.com, retrieved Jan 21, 2019

- Mobile operating systems and versions
- Education level
- Marital status
- Childcare status

Targeting capabilities are quite extensive and detailed, for example:

It is possible to target users who live in the Haidian district in Beijing who searched for "US holiday" related terms in the past and clicked on the ads, male, between 30-34 years old, with a bachelors degree, married with a 3-year-old child, on a Saturday night at 7pm-9pm, on a gaming app or News website.

5.3 BRAND ADS

As mentioned, brand recognition plays an important role in the decision-making process for Chinese users. It is typical to see most conversions coming from brand terms for well established brands. Therefore, brand traffic is valuable and Baidu, and other Chinese search engines created some advertising products in this area.

Brand Zone[15] is an ad block, a combination of search and display ads. It dominates the top of the search page whenever the brand terms are searched. It is guaranteed to be in the first position and only exclusive to the brand owners. This prevents competitors or dealers from ranking higher than the brand website itself. It is also a solution for brands which does not have intellectual property monitoring to protect their brand terms from being used by others in the Chinese market.

Figure 34 Baidu Brand Zone ads

The Brand Zone ads are contract ads, so it means you would need an additional contract with the search engine to run these kinds of ad units. The cost is normally based on the search volume of the selected brand terms in a fixed period of time. The minimum contract period is one month, and

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[15] [Baidu Brand Zone: Get the most out of your brand in China](#), blog.webcertain.com, Aug 25, 2015

the maximum contract length is 12 months. It is often called a CPT payment model (cost per time) when communicating with Baidu and other Chinese search engines.

Although it is not a cheap product to run, the performance is usually strong. On average, the product can reach a CTR of 80% or higher, and it would also drive the most conversions compared to other ad units or content.

Baidu References for Further Reading:

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