keyword examiner

User Guide

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Entering Your Licence Key

Once you have purchased your Keyword Examiner subscription, you will be given a licence key. This will enable you to use all of Keyword Examiner's features, but first you must enter the licence key in the software.

Simply click on the "Enter License Key" link at the top-right of the Keyword Examiner screen, which will display a box for you to enter your name, email address and the licence key. **You must enter the same name and email address you used when purchasing your subscription.**
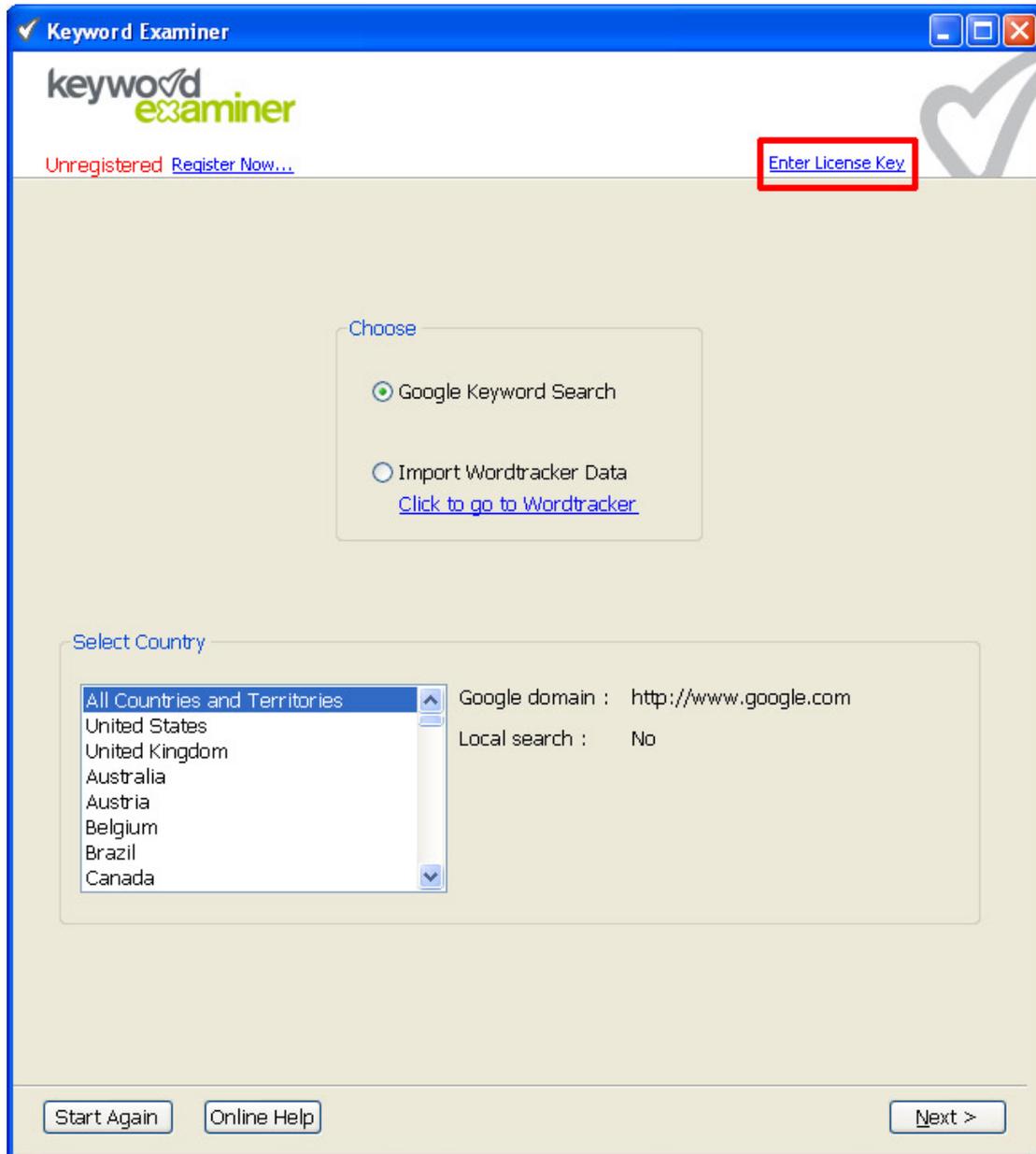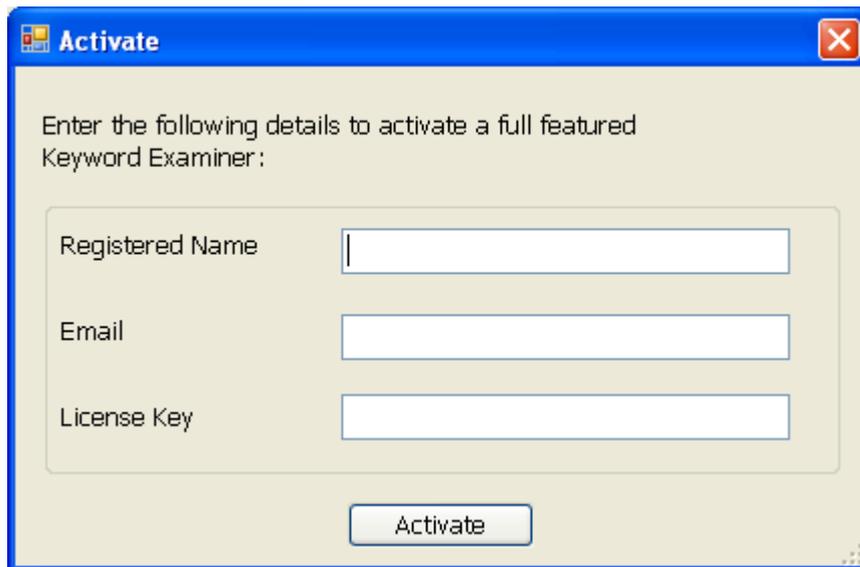
Enter the required information and click the Activate button. You should see a message telling you that Keyword Examiner has been successfully activated. The main Keyword Examiner screen will now say "Registered" followed by your name and email address.

Choosing A Keyword Source

Keyword Examiner can use two sources of keyword data: Google AdWords and Wordtracker. You can use either one or both of these simultaneously, but you must choose which source you want to start with: Google Keyword Search or Wordtracker Data.

Google Keyword Search will require you to choose the country that the keyword data comes from, then enter a list of keywords/phrases that you wish to get information for.

Using Wordtracker data will require you to have exported keyword data from Wordtracker in CSV format, so that it can be imported into Keyword Examiner.

You can choose to add in either data source later, if you wish.

Google Keyword Search

If you select this option, you must choose the country you want keyword data from in the list on the left. The information on the right will tell you which Google domain (address) the data will come from and whether there is a local search option (the choice between searching "the web" and "pages from [country]" that is available on some versions of Google, e.g. "pages from the UK" on google.co.uk).

When you have chosen the country you are interested in, click the Next button at the bottom-right of the screen. You will see a screen like this:

This screen replicates Google's external AdWords keyword tool:
https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal

Enter the "seed" words or phrases you want to research in the box at the top. A seed keyword is a general term or brand used to dig for all of the search phrases that people have used containing that seed keyword. You can enter as many words/phrases as you wish, but remember that Google's tool will return a maximum of 200 keywords.

You can then choose between Broad, Phrase or Exact match options. Imagine our entered keyphrase is "red rollerskates":

- Broad matching will list all phrases containing the words in your keyphrases, regardless of their order in the phrase or what other words are also in the phrase, e.g. "rollerskates that are red".

- Phrase matching will list all phrases that contain the words in your keyphrases in the order you entered them, without other words in-between, but with any other words in the phrase either side, e.g. "buy red rollerskates online".

- Exact matching will only list keywords in Google's database that exactly match the ones you have entered, in that order and with no other words in the phrase, e.g. "red rollerskates".

Finally on this screen, you must enter the code displayed. Google uses this to prevent automated software placing a huge load on its servers.

Click the Next button bottom-right to proceed. You should see a screen like this:

This is a list of keywords containing one or more of the words from your list. The AdWords Volume column shows the approximate average monthly number (volume) of searches performed on Google for that keyword.

You can change the order of the list to alphabetical (or reverse alphabetical) by clicking the Keyword column heading, or change the order to most (or least) popular by clicking the AdWords Volume heading.

You can also click the checkboxes next to each keyword, followed by the Remove button, to remove unwanted keywords from the list. A shorter list helps save time when Keyword Examiner is getting competition data. To select all keywords (e.g. if you want to remove the majority of keywords and deselect the few you want to keep), click the checkbox next to the Keyword column heading.

Getting Competition Data

You are now ready to get the competition data for your keywords, which requires you to make some selections from the choices at the top of the screen.

Results Count

There are three options in this section:

> **All in anchor**: This reports the number of web pages containing the keyword in at least one link to them (using the *allinanchor:keyword* search in Google). This is useful because search engines, Google in particular, use the words in links to pages (anchor text) to understand what other people (and site owners themselves) think the pages are about.
>
> You can see this in action if you search for the phrase "click here" on Google – the number one result is the Adobe Acrobat Reader download page, because so many people link to it using phrases like "click here to download…" Look at the page itself and you will see that "click here" doesn't actually appear anywhere, demonstrating the importance of this factor.
>
> **In Title**: This reports the number of pages containing the keyword in their title tag (using the *intitle:"keyword phrase"* search in Google). This is used because the title tag is the single most important aspect of the page itself when a search engine is deciding whether it is relevant to a search phrase.
>
> If the exact phrase appears in the title tag (the piece of code that sets the text in the window bar at the top of your browser), the search engine treats that as the title of the document and hence understands that it is likely to be very relevant for that phrase.
>
> The importance of the title tag for SEO is such that you could argue that you are only competing with other pages that have the keyword in their title tag (although links can outweigh this, as in the Adobe example above).
>
> **Exact match**: This reports the number of pages containing an exact match of the keyword (i.e. searched on Google with inverted commas around the phrase, e.g. *"keyword phrase"*). This is used because search engines need to see the phrase being used in the text of the page to know that it is relevant for the search term entered.
>
> Search engines are more likely to put pages near the top of search results if they contain an exact match for the phrase in question, rather than simply having the words scattered around the page somewhere, not necessarily in conjunction with each other.
>
> This is the measure of competitiveness that the classic Keyword Effectiveness Index (KEI) uses.

You can choose to use any or all of these criteria as your measures of competitiveness. The more you choose, the longer the search will take.

Search Pages From

This option is only available if the country version of Google you have chosen offers a "pages from [country]" option. For example, using the US version of Google will mean this option is unavailable.

It is important as Google will return different results depending on whether "the web" or "pages from [country]" is chosen, because the latter tries to remove "foreign" pages from the list, changing the amount of competition you will have. In the UK, around 40% of searches choose the "pages from the UK" option, so it can play an important role.

Google Server

Some countries allow you to choose whether you use Google.com (global) or Google.country when searching. If you are targeting a specific country, it is recommended to use the country-specific version of Google, as that is what most users will do.

When you have made your choices, click the Get Competition Data button to start the search. There is an automatic random delay between each search query, to alleviate the problem of Google detecting an automatic search and requesting a CAPTCHA code. If the searches happened very quickly one after the other, Google would be likely to ban your IP address from using its services, so the delay is an important safety feature.

However, due to the nature of the searches being performed, Google will eventually complain and request a CAPTCHA code. Like the code you have to enter on the AdWords Tool screen, this is to prevent automated tools placing too great a load on the server. This usually happens after around 150 searches have been performed, but there is no exact number.
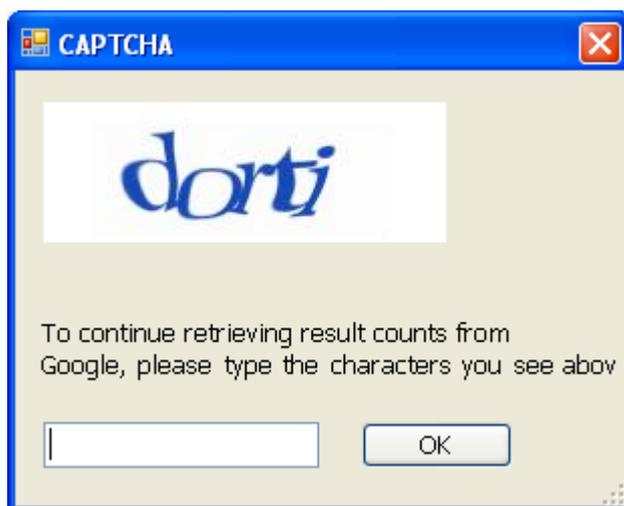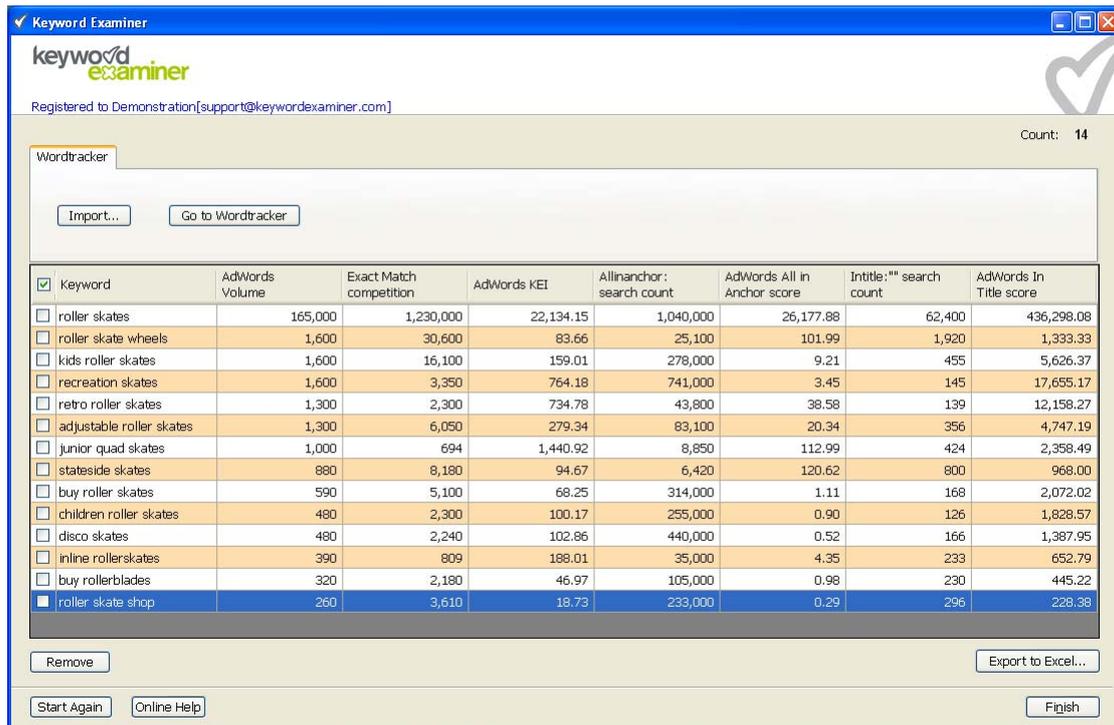

If you get a screen like this one, simply type in the code and press Enter. You should only get the code once for each list of keywords you are researching, but once it appears, you will see it every time you perform a new "Get Competition Data" search for around 24 hours. Once this has happened, you may also get the message when

using Google in your web browser or using the Google toolbar to search. We recommend you use the Google web page to search rather than the toolbar if this happens.

At any point, you may click on the Wordtracker tab to import Wordtracker data and add those keywords to the list. Please see the Wordtracker section for more information.

When the competition search has finished, you should see a screen like this:

You can stretch the window by clicking and dragging any blue edge.

This screen shows our list of chosen keywords and search volume, along with the competition data for each of the criteria chosen (exact match, all in anchor and in title). Next to each column for the competition data is another column providing a score.

The scores are based on the classic KEI formula, which is search volume squared divided by the number of exact match pages (volume^2/count). The higher the score, the more chance of success, as the formula will generate bigger numbers when the volume is bigger and/or the competition is lower (because you are dividing a large number by a small number).

The columns are as follows:

- **Exact Match competition**: The number of pages Google reports containing an exact match of the keyword, by searching for the keyword in inverted commas (e.g. "red rollerskates").

- **AdWords KEI**: The search volume (AdWords Volume) squared and divided by the exact match count. The higher the score, the better chance of success when optimising for this keyword.

- **Allinanchor: search count**: The number of pages Google reports that have at least one link to them using the keyword, using an *allinanchor:keyword* search.

- **AdWords All In Anchor score**: Search volume squared and divided by the All in Anchor count. Again, the higher the score the better.

- **Intitle:""" search count**: The number of pages Google reports containing the exact phrase in their title tag, using an *intitle:"key phrase"* search.

- **AdWords In Title score**: Search volume squared and divided by the In Title count, the higher the score the better.

If you add in Wordtracker data, you will also get columns for Wordtracker KEI, Wordtracker All In Anchor score and Wordtracker In Title score. These are calculated as above, but using the Wordtracker keyword search volumes instead of AdWords'. This is because AdWords and Wordtracker data are not comparable, so the calculations need to be done separately.

Be careful not to compare the Wordtracker score for one keyword with the AdWords score for another – they are not comparable due to the difference in data sources used by Wordtracker and AdWords.

As before, you can re-order the list using any of the criteria by simply clicking on the column heading of your choice.

In the example above, all of the phrases are fairly competitive, but looking at some of the factors you might choose to optimise your web page for "retro roller skates" or "children roller skates" because these have fairly low In Title counts.

Notice how the highest scores come from the most popular keywords – sometimes the scores can be misleading, as a keyword with a very high volume but still lots of competition can score highly, simply because of the maths involved. We therefore suggest that you look more at absolute numbers (the "count" columns) to analyse competition.

Exporting Data

Finally, you will probably want to save your list of keyword data. Click the Export to Excel button bottom-right to save a CSV-format file that can be used in any spreadsheet program. Once you leave this screen, either by closing the application or clicking Start Again, you will lose the keyword data, so remember to Export before moving on.

Using Wordtracker Data

If you have a Wordtracker account, you can export your Wordtracker keyword research and add Keyword Examiner's additional competition searches to it.

Wordtracker provides an additional source of data to Google AdWords and goes much deeper, delivering up to 1000 keywords per search (versus Google's 200). You can get an account for $59 per month or $329 per year by clicking here.

You will need to export your Wordtracker data as a comma separated (CSV) file and it must include Google and Google KEI data. It doesn't matter if it also contains MSN and/or Yahoo data. The Export options chosen should look something like this:
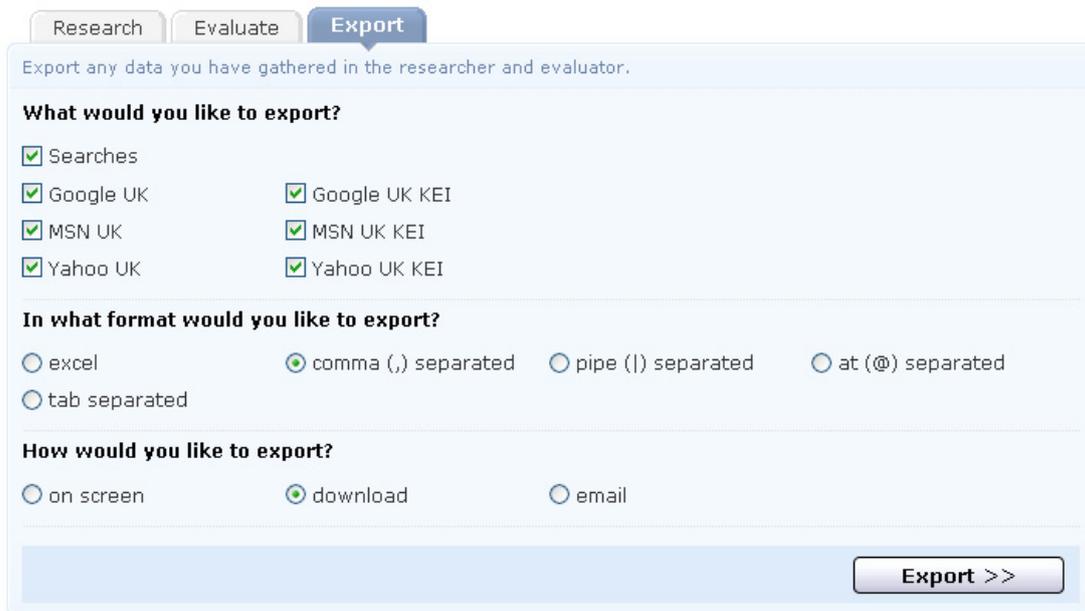
When you have the Wordtracker file saved to your computer, choose the Import Wordtracker Data option in Keyword Examiner and select the country version of Google that you want to use to get competition data. Then click the Next button, bottom-right.

If you have saved the file correctly, Keyword Examiner should display a screen listing the keywords, the number of searches from Wordtracker, the Google competition (this is Exact Match competition) and Google KEI, calculated by Wordtracker.

You are now able to select and remove keywords from the list if you wish, using the checkboxes next to each keyword and the Remove button below.

At this stage, you can get competition data straight away (i.e. solely for Wordtracker data), or add in AdWords search volumes and get more keywords using a Google AdWords search. Please jump to the **Getting Competition Data** section above if you don't want AdWords data.

If you want to add search volume data and more keywords from AdWords, click on the AdWords tab at the top of the screen. This will display a screen similar to this one:

This copies your list of keywords into the AdWords box to get Google AdWords search volume data for your Wordtracker keywords and to see if Google can add any more keywords using your list as the "seed". You can add or remove any keywords you want by clicking in the box and typing, highlighting etc.

To conduct the AdWords keyword search, type the code on the right hand side into the box and click the Go button. If there are more keywords found, they will be added to the overall list and the Count (top-right of the screen) will increase. New keywords will be added to the end of the list.

A new column will be added to your screen for AdWords Volume. If Google doesn't have any data for a particular keyword, the cell will be blank. Remember that Google only returns 200 keywords per search, so if your Wordtracker list contains more than 200 keywords, you will only get AdWords Search Volume data for the 200 most popular.

You are now ready to proceed to get competition data. Please see the **Getting Competition Data** section above.

When getting competition data, remember that if you have used both Wordtracker and AdWords data, you will get scoring columns for both sources of data, because they are not directly comparable (i.e. KEI based on AdWords search volume cannot be compared with KEI based on Wordtracker data). Wordtracker data is labelled as (WT) in the columns.

Not all keywords will require an Exact Match search, because Wordtracker data already contains this information (called Google Competition).

When the competition search has finished, remember to Export your data (see above).

Error Messages

When conducting a search with the AdWords Tool, you may get an error message that says "Not enough data. Please rephrase your keywords" – this occurs if Google doesn't return any keywords at all or, more likely, if the CAPTCHA code you entered has expired (it only lasts for 30 minutes).
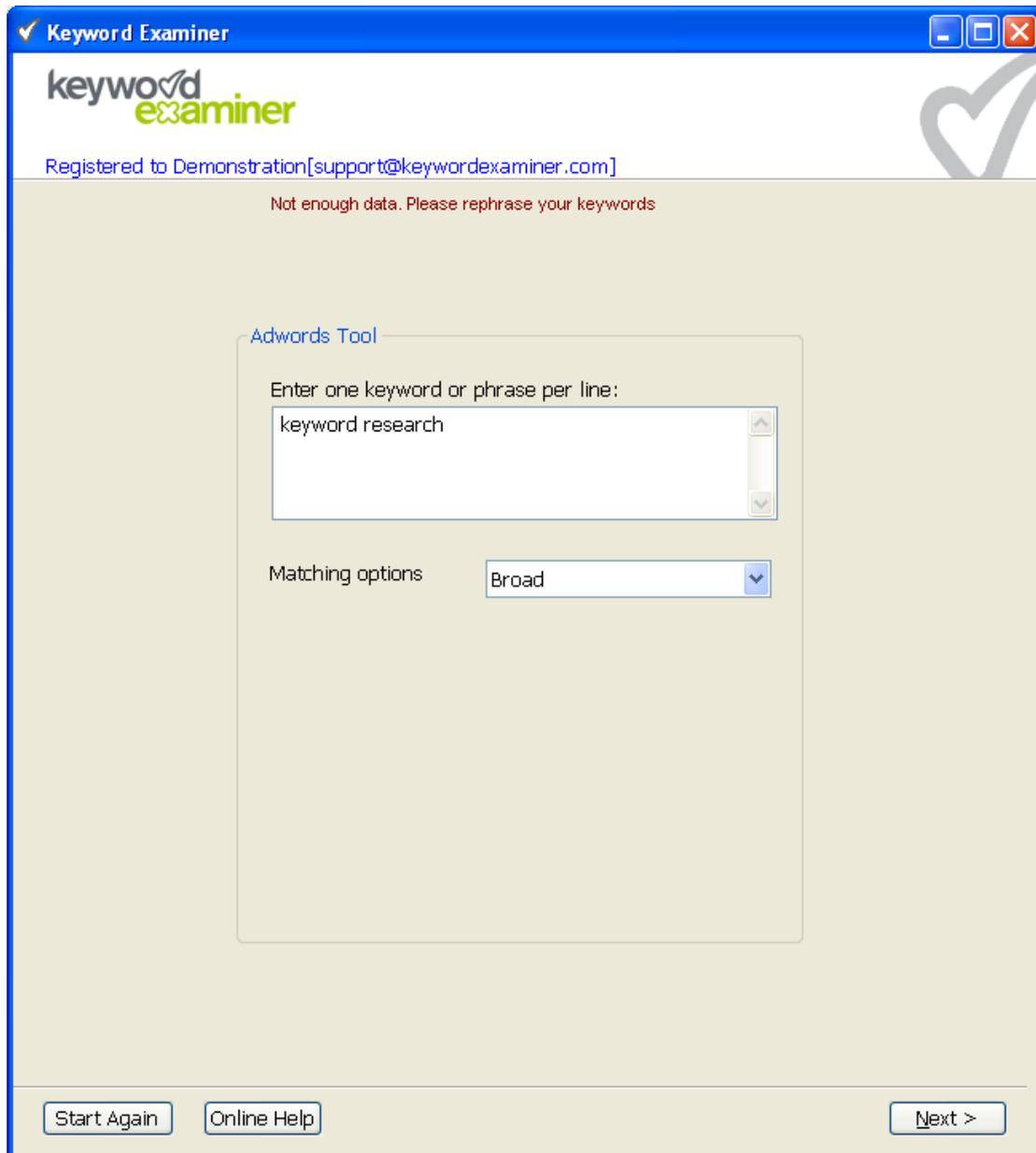
Simply click the Next button again, bottom-right, and Keyword Examiner will give you a new CAPTCHA code to enter.

If you type the CAPTCHA code in wrongly, you will get an error message saying "CAPTCHA you entered was wrong. Please try again." Simply enter the CAPTCHA code as you see it above the text box, which will now be highlighted red.
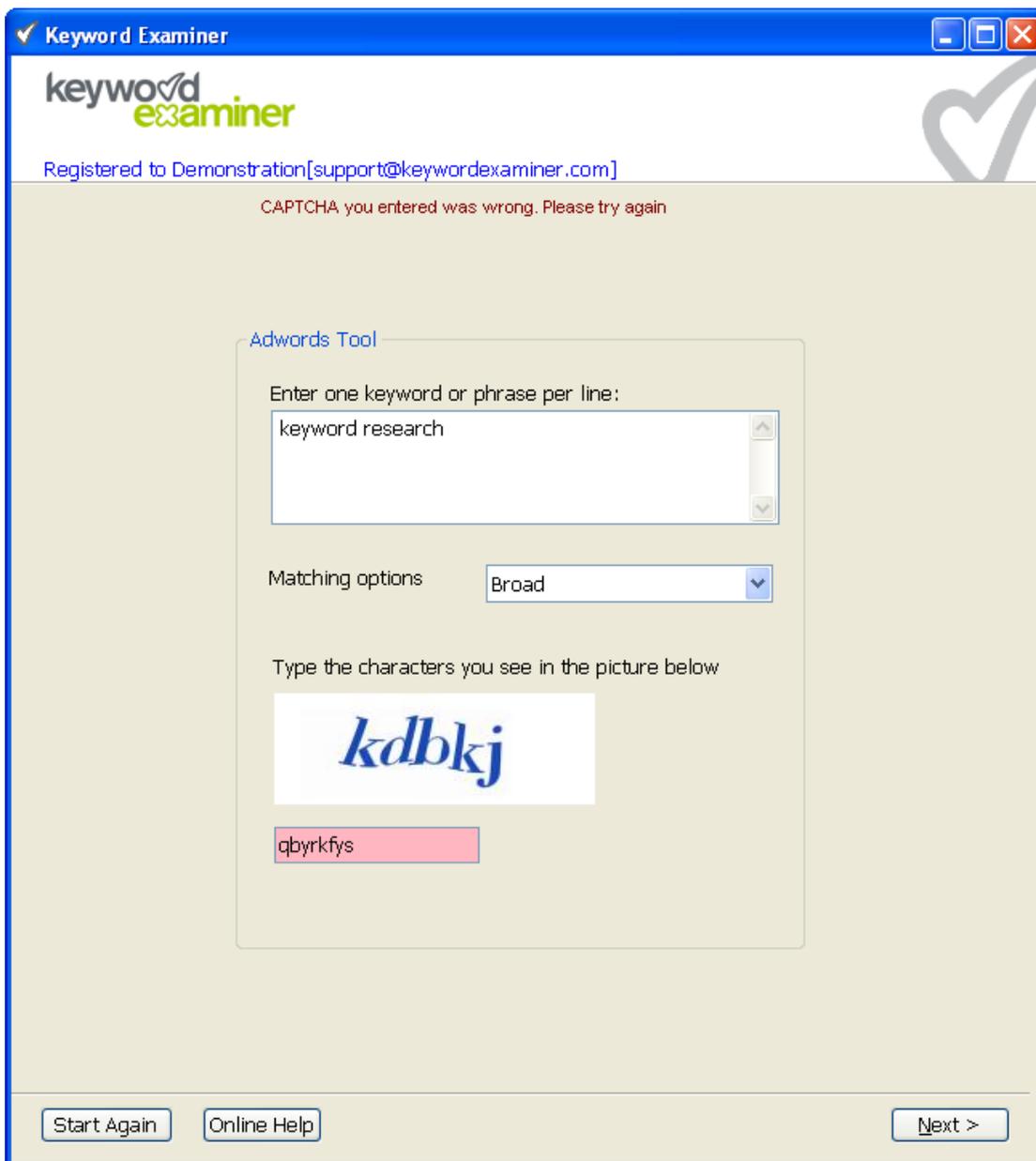
If you see this message, either your internet connection is unavailable or the Keyword Examiner site is unavailable:

Keyword Examiner needs to be online to check that your subscription is current and, of course, to access Google to perform searches.

Tips For Using Keyword Examiner

When you have finished getting competition data for your list of keywords, you will probably be thinking "what do I do with all this information!?"

The majority of the time we use Keyword Examiner ourselves, we are simply looking for keywords with reasonably high AdWords search volumes (in the hundreds is preferable) and reasonably low In Title counts (preferably under 100), because optimising your pages with this factor alone can make significant improvements if competition is low enough.

It will take a little time using the tool to get a feel for what a "good" or "bad" score or count is in your industry or niche. Some sectors are far more competitive than others and some people have much more competitive websites than others, so what represents a good opportunity for one website might be a difficult challenge for another.

To keep things moving as quickly as possible, try and remove all the keywords from the list that you know are too competitive or not relevant to your business, before you run the Competition Data search. This will also reduce the likelihood of getting CAPTCHA messages from Google.

If you have any questions or problems with Keyword Examiner, please see our Support pages: www.keywordexaminer.com/support