

## Keyword Creativity Episode Four

# Big brother is watching you

### Story so far...

Bob Arden runs his own web design company. After discovering that he's about to become a father for the first time he's determined to improve the business, starting with the latest new business pitch, a website re-design. But the pitch is being run by Larry Mackay, an old buddy that he had fallen out with years ago, and the competitive agency is run by a once mutual friend, Carl Carter. Now Mike, his opinionated younger brother, has told him that Laura, his deputy at the agency, is working against him, helping Carl Carter win the pitch.



### In this episode...

- Bob finds out the truth about Laura.
- Mike tells Bob how smart keyword strategy can drive website content and win pitches.

read on...

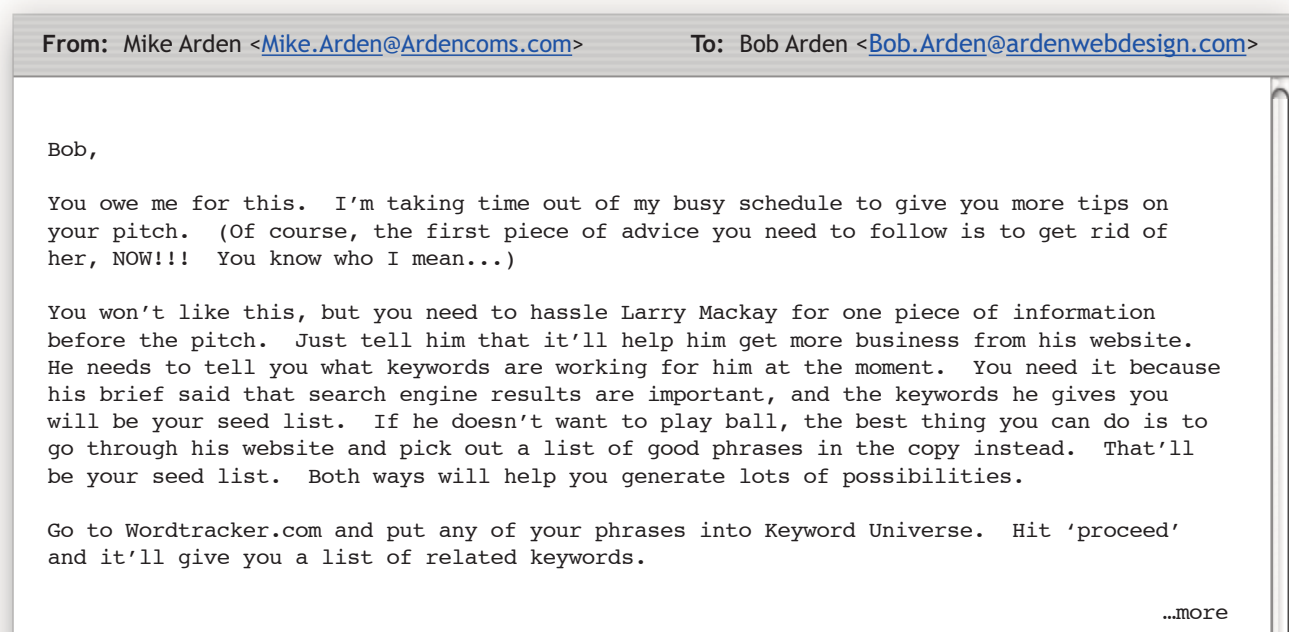
Five days later, it still didn't make any sense and I still didn't have any answers. Why would Laura do this to me? Why would she help another agency beat me? It wasn't the Laura I thought I knew, the little sister I had never had, but Mike said that I was too trusting. I started to think about things differently. We had never won a pitch against Carter Design, and now I wondered if Laura was the reason. Was I really so naive that she had able to do this for years without me spotting anything?

On the Monday, Mike told me to get rid of her straight away, to march her out of the agency. He said I had enough evidence, but I had also asked Pam, my wife, what she thought I should do. Pam and Laura were close too, as Laura had been to so many dinners and parties at our house. Pam didn't believe Laura would ever betray my trust and said that if I accused her of betraying her she would resign. Not only that, but Pam would never forgive me either. So I had spoken to Laura, but not asked her outright. I asked her if everything was fine with her and when she was going to tell me whatever it was she was going to tell me on Monday. She said that everything was fine and that her bit of news could keep. I was still unsure.

That wasn't my only concern. Laura had met Larry Mackay when I had been away on holiday, leaving me to work away at the pitch without being sure if I could trust the two people who were at the heart of it at the beginning. Could I trust Laura? Had Larry just drawn me into the pitch to get revenge on me after all these years. I had e-mailed Larry, asking some questions about the pitch, but all his replies had said was that everything he thought we needed was in the brief and that if it wasn't it should easily be resolved by a talented website design agency, without his help. I had worked with clients like that before, but was it more than just laziness this time?

Laura had to know that something was wrong. I'd kept her away from the pitch. I told her that it made more sense for me to work on it without her, as there were so many other projects running late that she could sort out. I didn't even show her the creative brief I wrote, something I always asked her advice on.

It was Friday afternoon and I was waiting to see the work that the creatives had done on the pitch so far. They still wanted five minutes, so I skimmed through the e-mails Mike had sent me on the pitch this week, wondering if I had missed anything in all the advice he had given.



I think even you can use your judgment to pick the best of these. Then just click each one as you work through them and Wordtracker will give you hundreds more, in the right-hand box:

**Related keywords for whitewater rafting**

Why do I need related keywords? [Click here](#)

1. [whitewater rafting](#)
2. [rafting](#)
3. [whitewater](#)
4. [river](#)
5. [maine](#)
6. [vacation](#)
7. [raft](#)
8. [white water rafting](#)
9. [white water](#)
10. [adventure](#)
11. [river rafting](#)
12. [white](#)

**Popularity Search**

Find out how popular your words actually are. Select words from the left window or simply enter your own into the text box below (up to 100 separated by carriage return, maximum of 10 for Overture).

[Proceed >>](#)

Searching... 300 row(s) returned  
Taken from all Dogpile & Metacrawler queries over the last 90 days.

Click here to add all keywords to your basket

| Keyword (?)                         | Count (?) | Predict (?) | Dig (?) |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|---------|
| <a href="#">whitewater rafting</a>  | 355       | 459         |         |
| <a href="#">white water rafting</a> | 50        | 67          |         |

Adult filter

(?) [Remove dubious](#)

Keywords for Wordtracker : 0

[Delete last term](#) [Clear all](#)

Keyword basket has just been cleared.

**Click here for step 3**

Some people go through the list individually to look for good keywords. Don't! Just hit 'Click here to add all keywords to your basket.'

Keywords for Wordtracker : **300**

[Delete last term](#) [Clear all](#)

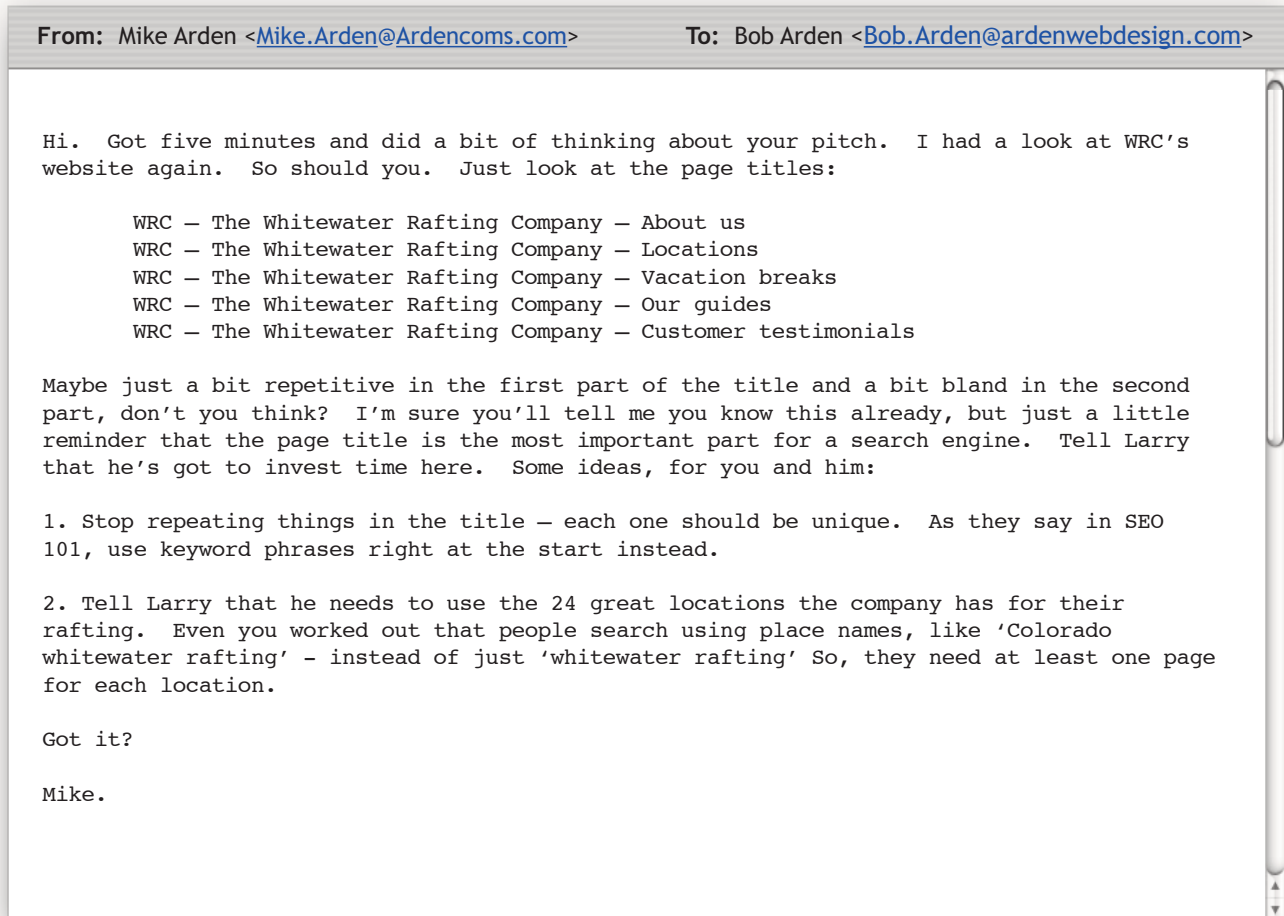
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**Click here for step 3**

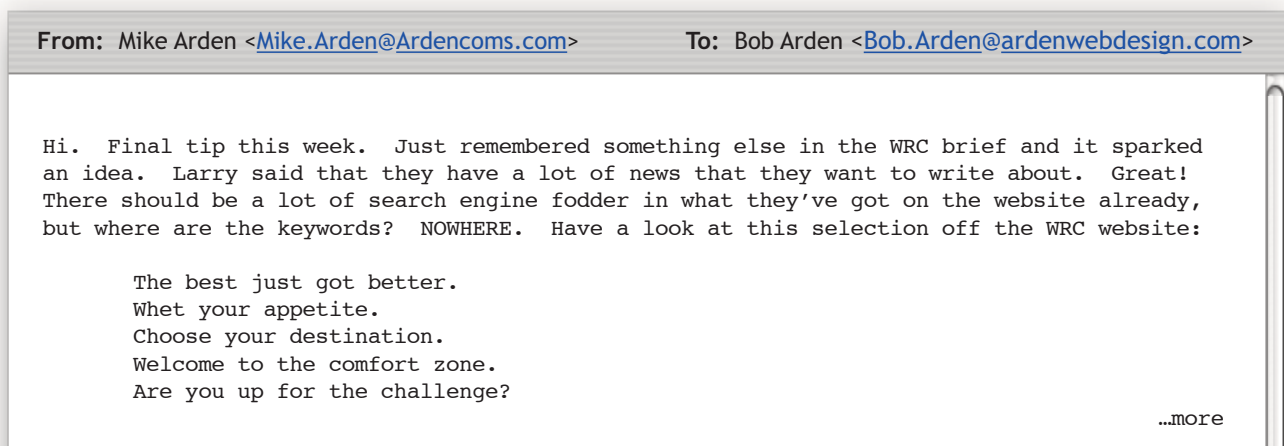
You'll get thousands of keywords in minutes. Now, there's a choice that your old buddy Larry Mackay has to make – does he want to compete head-on for the most popular terms or does he want to use niche opportunities his competition have missed? If he goes for popular terms you've got a lot of SEO work to do. If he goes for niche you will need to do a competition search for Google and others.

Good luck, Mike.

Of course, Larry hadn't answered my questions, just as I had expected, so we had done the work ourselves, but at least I really understood the options now. Working through all the keywords really gave me a sense of what sort of people were in our target audiences and what they were thinking. Thankfully, Mike had been more responsive than Larry. His e-mails kept on coming this week.



Of course, all of this was great advice, but there's was no need to tell Mike that. His intellectual ego kept the e-mails coming.



This sort of writing is fine for magazines, where people can see photographs and graphics. It's no use on a website, not an effective one anyway. Tell Larry that he has to include keywords in the headlines. Then you can tell him why:

- If he includes keywords in his headlines his pages will be found on search engines – each page is an entry point to his site.

- Listing the headlines internally as links will give him a nice little boost – Google likes internal links.

- A final bonus that'll impress Larry. When an external site links to one of his articles they normally use the name of the article as the linking text. So, if you include keywords, guess what? – you'll get another search engine boost.

Suggest article titles such as:

The best rafting just got better  
Whet your appetite for white water sports  
Choose your whitewater rafting destinations  
Welcome to the comfort zone – essential gear for whitewater rafting  
Are you up for a team adventure?

A final thought, something that you have to include in your pitch. Tell Larry that you'll get his writing team to meet up with you and you'll present them with a list of important keywords, and work with them to use those keywords to generate article ideas. Tell him that if that's too much for his internal team to take on board that he needs to get rid of them, and hire your agency to do the writing. Think you could manage that?

Mike

This was the sort of work that Laura usually did on pitches, so Mike had helped a lot. After reading those e-mails I even started to wonder if we could push Mike's thinking further. Could we do something about keywords for different target audiences, instead of thinking of the customer group as a big mass?

Larry's brief had talked about the different key audiences, corporate groups, experienced individuals and inexperienced individuals, so that had to be something that would impress him. As well as using these learnings to drive the copy we might recommend using it for different new sections, product names, publication names and micro-sites to pick up the different customer groups. I was starting to feel good about the pitch. Now all I had to worry about was the creative review, and Laura.

## To catch a thief

The creative review had gone pretty well, even though I had to give them work to do over the weekend, as the pitch was on Tuesday. The guys said that they really felt that they understood the sort of people they were talking to and the work that I had done on keywords for the creative brief had helped a lot.

Even though I hated to admit it a lot of that was thanks to Mike, but I had taken it even further than he had suggested.

I had done a lot of work on keywords, listing the results in the brief, but I had also used them to help make sense of the detail on audiences. Larry's brief hadn't brought his audiences to life, but by using the language that I now knew they used when searching online I was able to do this, not just by using their language in their customer profiles but also

by thinking what their search terms meant about how they felt about whitewater rafting .

But even though I had been pleased with my brief and I thought the creatives had done some good work I still felt unsure about how we were doing. There were all sorts of things flying around in my head, creating that uncertainty, not least meeting Larry Mackay again for the first time in ten years or being up against Carl Carter on the pitch. But probably the biggest reason was that I didn't have my pitch buddy working with me. No matter how much work you do a certain amount of judging creative work is always going to be subjective, and I liked to have Laura to confirm or deny my hunches.

My old pitch buddy was still acting strange. After the creative review, Laura asked me how it was all going. I told it was all going well but didn't say anything else. Then she asked me what I was doing over the weekend. I told her that Pam and I were going across the bridge as soon as I got home, staying with some friends in the city.

I couldn't stop myself taking almost all the creative work for the WRC pitch with me at the end of the day. I left the work that I'd rejected on my desk, wondering if she would take it to Carl Carter. Then I left, but I didn't go home. I waited around the corner.

As I followed Laura from the agency I told myself that this was crazy, that I should just go home to my wife and enjoy the weekend. But I couldn't stop myself. I wanted to see what she would get up to when she thought I was gone, when she thought that she didn't have to worry about me seeing her.

## The truth about Laura

I could have told myself that I was being stupid when I saw her going into Buck's and could have gone home then. If she was up to no good why would she do it there, the place where she and I always met on a Monday morning? But maybe she didn't care, not when she thought that her stupid boss had gone away for the weekend, too obsessed with the thought of fatherhood to think that his favorite employee might be playing dirty.

Buck's was full and noisy, with chattering, laughter and music. I didn't spot Laura straight away. Then I saw her, sitting at one of the corner tables, with a beer in her hand. She was with a man, but all I could see as I started to walk towards him was the back of his head. Laura hadn't seen me yet and as I got closer I saw in the man's face in full profile. It was one I knew well enough. We had seen each other around plenty of times over the last ten years, even though we had never spoken. Yes, I knew that skinny face, balding head and weak mouth well enough.

'Hello, Carl. Ten years ago you told me never to mix business and pleasure. So what's this?'

Carl and Laura turned to me at the same time. Laura's look was that of a naughty child caught by her father. The thrill of whatever naughtiness she had enjoyed had been ended by the shame of letting father down. Carl's expression was different. It was that of a naughty boy who wanted to be caught, who reveled in it.

'Well if it's not my old buddy, Bob Arden. We were just talking about you. Funny you never told Laura the story of how you and Pam really met.'

It had always been Mike that had got into fights when we were children. But I knew I was going to hit Carl. I couldn't stop myself. It was the smugness in his voice that did it, that and bringing Pam into this.

## In the next episode...



- **Laura confesses.**
- **Mike tells Bob how to use keywords to create better strategies for websites and to transform the web design process.**

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