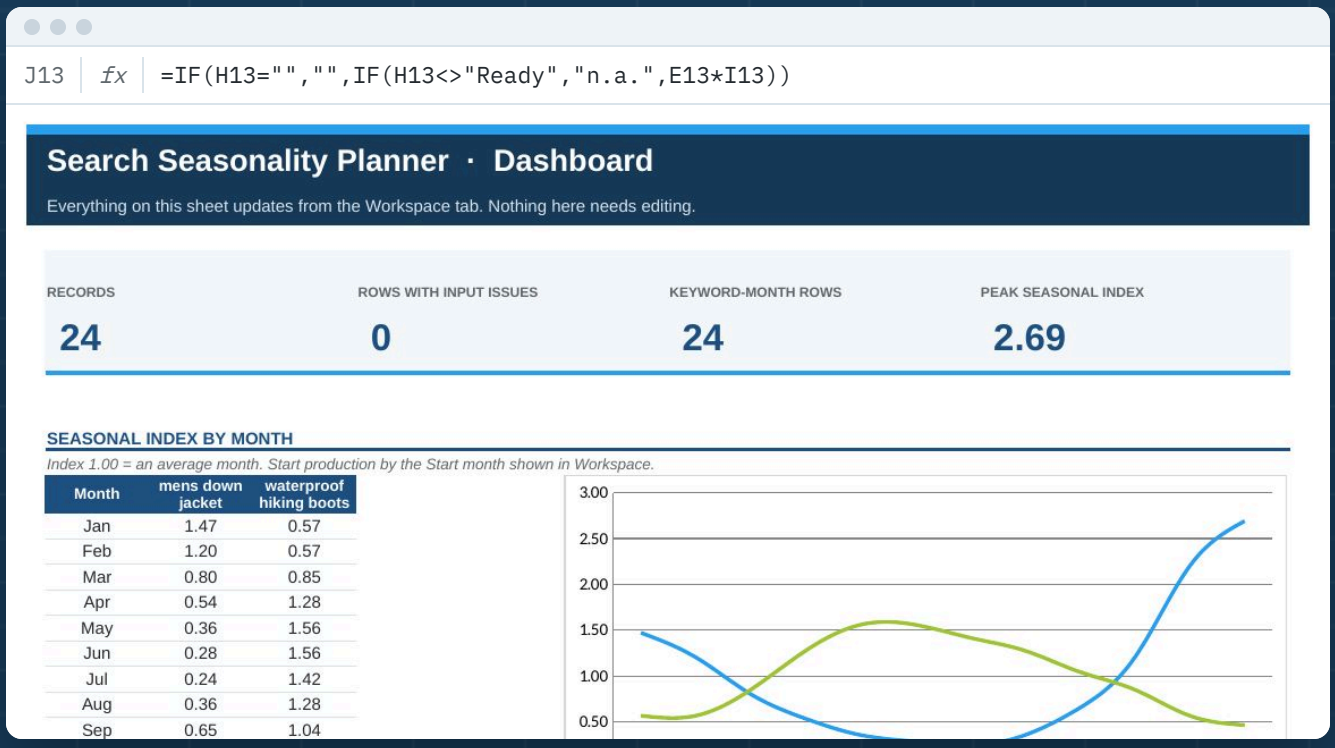
OptimizationTheory.com

Keyword Research Toolkit, resource 05

Search Seasonality Planner

Turn monthly search volume into a seasonal index, season-adjusted click targets and a publish-by month.

Built for the DataForSEO API: Labs: Keyword Overview



J13 | *fx* | =IF(H13="","",IF(H13<>"Ready","n.a.",E13*I13))

Search Seasonality Planner · Dashboard

Everything on this sheet updates from the Workspace tab. Nothing here needs editing.

RECORDS	ROWS WITH INPUT ISSUES	KEYWORD-MONTH ROWS	PEAK SEASONAL INDEX
24	0	24	2.69

SEASONAL INDEX BY MONTH

Index 1.00 = an average month. Start production by the Start month shown in Workspace.

Month	mens down jacket	waterproof hiking boots
Jan	1.47	0.57
Feb	1.20	0.57
Mar	0.80	0.85
Apr	0.54	1.28
May	0.36	1.56
Jun	0.28	1.56
Jul	0.24	1.42
Aug	0.36	1.28
Sep	0.65	1.04

Field guide, v3.0, November 2026

Jourdan Rombough, optimizationtheory.com

What this template decides

When demand for each keyword peaks, how much to scale traffic expectations month by month, and when to start production so content is ranking before the peak.

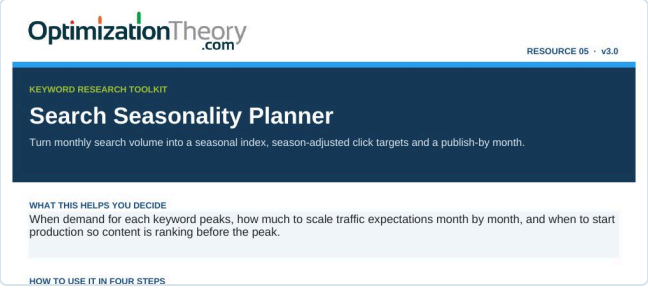
Seasonal keywords punish late publishing. A ski jacket guide published in November catches the tail of the season; the same guide published in August has time to get crawled, indexed and climb before demand arrives. Yet most content calendars plan around the month a topic is popular, not the months before it.

This seasonal keyword planner calculates a seasonal index for every keyword-month (that month's searches ÷ the monthly average), scales your baseline clicks by it, and works backwards from each month by your lead time to show the month production should start. The Dashboard charts the index so you can see each keyword's season at a glance.

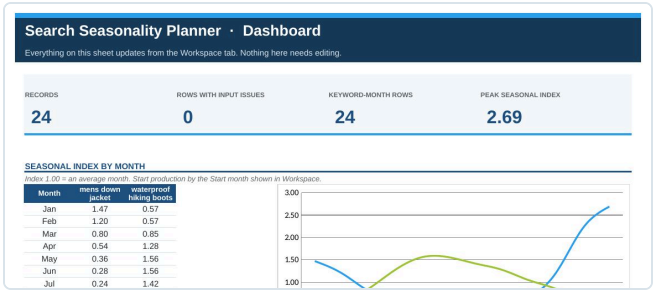
Who it's for

- Ecommerce and retail SEOs with seasonal catalogs
- Travel, events, education and tax-season businesses
- Content leads building an annual calendar
- Analysts explaining why traffic 'dropped' in a predictable month

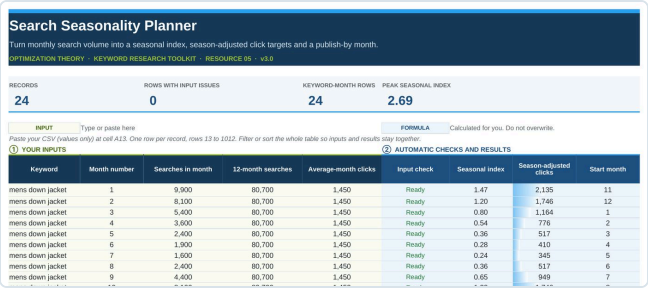
What's in the workbook



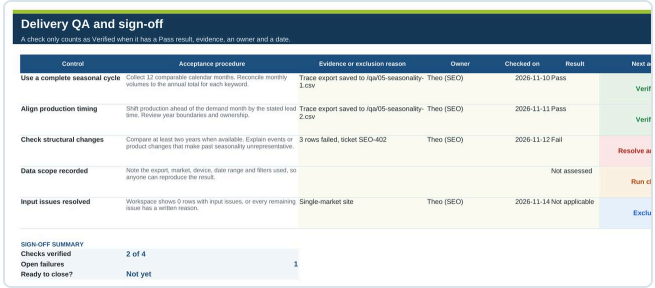
Start Here. Purpose, four-step setup and colour key.



Dashboard. KPIs, charts, Top 10 and an automatic action list.



Workspace. The working table, room for 1,000 rows.



Delivery QA. Evidence, owner and date for each validation step.

How the calculation works

Seasonal index = monthly searches ÷ (annual total ÷ 12). An index of 1.80 means that month runs 80% above average. Season-adjusted clicks = baseline clicks × index. Start month = the peak month minus your lead months, wrapped around the calendar.

The key formula, as written in the workbook

```
=IF(H13="","",IF(H13<>"Ready","n.a.",E13*I13))
```

Result column	Plain-English formula	What it tells you
Seasonal index	Searches in month ÷ (12-month searches ÷ 12)	Month searches divided by the 12-month average.
Season-adjusted clicks	Average-month clicks × Seasonal index	Average-month clicks multiplied by seasonal index.
Start month	MOD(Month number-Production lead months-1,12)+1	Calendar month to start production, wrapping to the previous year when required.

How to use it, step by step

1

Pull 12 months of volume

Export monthly search volume for each keyword. Use a full year so the annual total is complete.

2

Enter one row per keyword-month

Each row is one keyword in one month (1 to 12), with that month's searches and the 12-month total.

3

Add baseline clicks and lead time

Baseline clicks are your average monthly clicks today. Lead months is how far ahead you need to publish, typically 2 to 4.

4

Plan from the Start month

Read the seasonal index chart, then schedule work by the Start month column, not the peak month.

Search Seasonality Planner

Turn monthly search volume into a seasonal index, season-adjusted click targets and a publish-by month.

OPTIMIZATION THEORY · KEYWORD RESEARCH TOOLKIT · RESOURCE 05 · v3.0

RECORDS	ROWS WITH INPUT ISSUES	KEYWORD-MONTH ROWS	PEAK SEASONAL INDEX
24	0	24	2.69

INPUT Type or paste here — FORMULA Calculated for you. Do not overwrite.

Paste your CSV (values only) at cell A13. One row per record, rows 13 to 1012. Filter or sort the whole table so inputs and results stay together.

① YOUR INPUTS — ② AUTOMATIC CHECKS AND RESULTS

Keyword	Month number	Searches in month	12-month searches	Average-month clicks	Input check	Seasonal index	Season-adjusted clicks	Start month
mens down jacket	1	9,900	80,700	1,450	Ready	1.47	2,135	11
mens down jacket	2	8,100	80,700	1,450	Ready	1.20	1,746	12
mens down jacket	3	5,400	80,700	1,450	Ready	0.80	1,164	1
mens down jacket	4	3,600	80,700	1,450	Ready	0.54	776	2
mens down jacket	5	2,400	80,700	1,450	Ready	0.36	517	3
mens down jacket	6	1,900	80,700	1,450	Ready	0.28	410	4
mens down jacket	7	1,600	80,700	1,450	Ready	0.24	345	5
mens down jacket	8	2,400	80,700	1,450	Ready	0.36	517	6
mens down jacket	9	4,400	80,700	1,450	Ready	0.65	949	7
mens down jacket	10	8,100	80,700	1,450	Ready	1.20	1,746	8
mens down jacket	11	14,800	80,700	1,450	Ready	2.20	3,191	9
mens down jacket	12	18,100	80,700	1,450	Ready	2.69	3,903	10
waterproof hiking boot	1	4,400	93,100	1,720	Ready	0.57	975	10
waterproof hiking boot	2	4,400	93,100	1,720	Ready	0.57	975	11
waterproof hiking boot	3	6,600	93,100	1,720	Ready	0.85	1,463	12
waterproof hiking boot	4	9,900	93,100	1,720	Ready	1.28	2,195	1
waterproof hiking boot	5	12,100	93,100	1,720	Ready	1.56	2,683	2

The Workspace tab with the worked example. Lime cells are inputs; blue cells are formulas.

Fill it with DataForSEO

This template is built to run on **DataForSEO Labs: Keyword Overview**: search volume, monthly history, difficulty and intent for a list of keywords.

A helper command builds the input rows from saved API responses. The seasonality command expands each keyword's 12-month history into 12 rows and calculates the annual total. Add base clicks and lead months yourself.

1. Request the data

```
POST https://api.dataforseo.com/v3/dataforseo_labs/google/keyword_overview/live
[
  {
    "keywords": [
      "your keyword 1",
      "your keyword 2"
    ],
    "location_code": 2840,
    "language_code": "en"
  }
]
```

2. Save the full JSON response

Save the complete response, not just the task ID, next to the template folder.

3. Convert it to the input CSV

The script in the Automation folder runs offline: no API call, no credentials.

```
python3 Automation/dataforseo_import.py seasonality --input keyword-overview.json --output my-inputs.csv
```

Fills automatically	You add
Keyword, Month number, Searches in month, 12-month searches	Average-month clicks, Production lead months

Source reference fills automatically with the task ID, endpoint, location, language, device and snapshot time, so every row is traceable. Paste the finished CSV at Workspace cell A13. Estimate the cost first with the DataForSEO Cost Calculator (template 38).

Input dictionary

Keep the CSV columns in this order and paste values at Workspace cell A13. A missing observation stays blank; use 0 only for a measured zero or a verified No.

CSV field	Column	Meaning and rule	Typical source
`keyword`	Keyword	Exact query in the selected country and language.	DataForSEO: keyword
`month`	Month number	Calendar month 1 through 12.	DataForSEO: month
`monthly_searches`	Searches in month	Search volume for this keyword-month from monthly_searches.	DataForSEO: monthly_searches
`annual_total`	12-month searches	Sum of the same 12 monthly values for this keyword.	DataForSEO: annual_total
`base_clicks`	Average-month clicks	Assumed clicks in an average month, before seasonality.	Your records or manual review
`lead_months`	Production lead months	Whole months needed before peak demand.	Your records or manual review
`source_ref`	Source reference	Task ID, export filename and observation scope. Retain the untouched source response separately. Optional.	DataForSEO: source_ref

The worked example

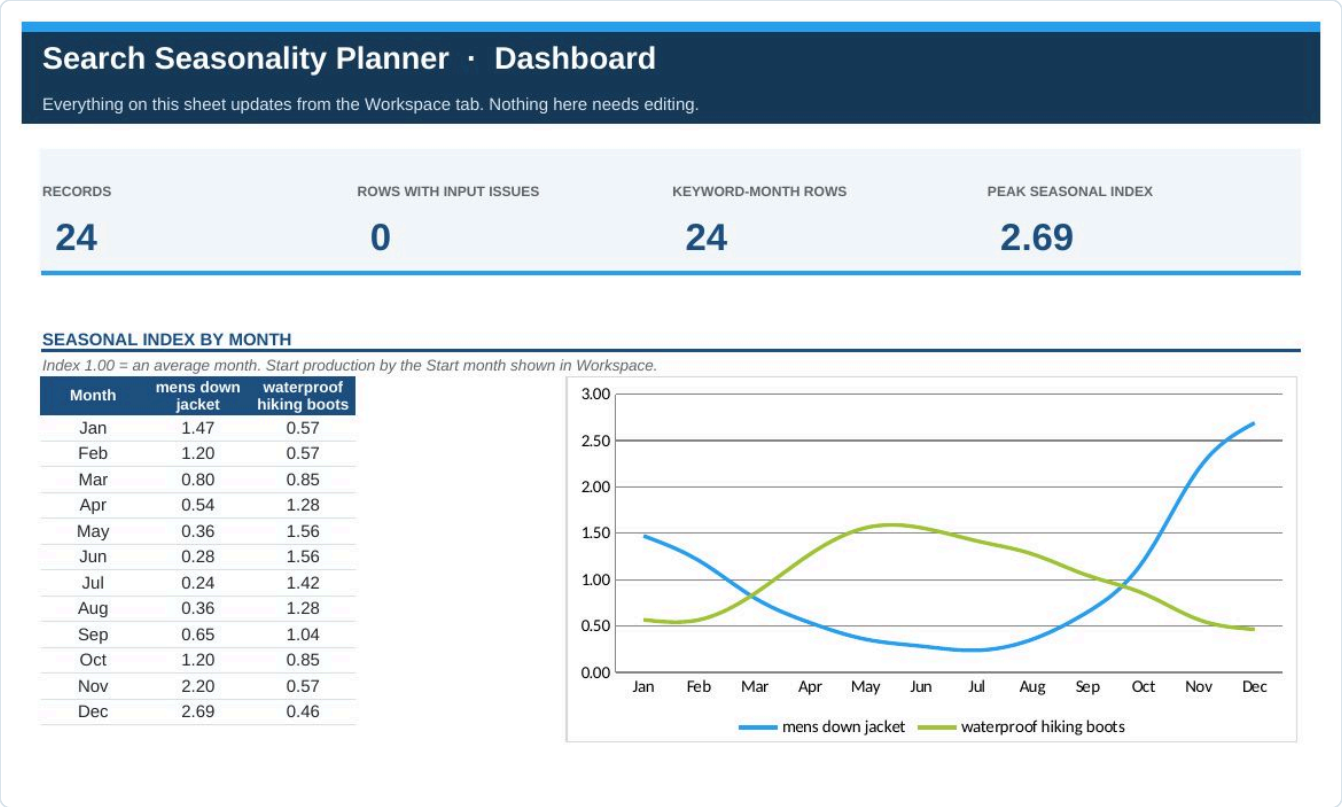
Every workbook ships filled with data from Northbeam Outdoor, a fictional outdoor-gear retailer. This one has 24 example rows.

24	0	24	2.69
Records	Rows with input issues	Keyword-month rows	Peak seasonal index

The down jacket peaks in December at well over twice its average month, so production needs to start in October. Hiking boots run the other way, peaking in late spring.

Top 10 by season-adjusted clicks

#	Keyword	Season-adjusted clicks
1	mens down jacket	3,903
2	mens down jacket	3,191
3	waterproof hiking boots	2,683
4	waterproof hiking boots	2,683
5	waterproof hiking boots	2,439



The Dashboard updates automatically from the Workspace tab.

Reading the result honestly

An index of 2 means twice the trailing 12-month average. It does not mean demand doubled year over year.

Limits. Historical patterns can shift. The annual total must cover the same 12 monthly observations.

Mistakes to avoid

Using a single average month as the forecast. Flat monthly targets make every winter look like a failure and every summer like a win. Report against the seasonal index.

Planning content in the peak month. By the time demand peaks it's too late to rank. Use the Start month.

Mixing years. Keep the 12 months from one continuous year so the annual total matches.

Tips from the field

Feed the index into the SEO forecast template's seasonality column.

Use the same index to explain month-over-month swings in reporting.

Pair with the content calendar template so due dates come from Start month automatically.

Questions people ask

What is search seasonality?

It's the predictable rise and fall of search demand for a keyword across the year, driven by weather, holidays, school terms and buying cycles.

How do I calculate a seasonal index?

Divide a month's search volume by the average monthly volume for the year. Above 1 is above-average demand; below 1 is below.

How far ahead should I publish seasonal content?

Usually two to four months before the peak, longer for competitive topics or new sites. That's what the lead months input controls.

Where can I get monthly search volume?

Google Keyword Planner, Google Trends (as a relative index), or the DataForSEO search volume endpoint, which returns 12 months per keyword.

Templates that work well with this one

SEO Forecast Template

Project added clicks and contribution per keyword cluster with CTR, attainment and seasonality you can defend.

SEO Content Calendar Template

Track owners, due dates and estimated vs completed hours, and flag overdue work automatically.

Keyword Prioritization Template

Rank every keyword by the profit it could add per hour of work, not by search volume alone.

SEO ROI Calculator

Turn incremental sessions into revenue, contribution, net return and a break-even month against real SEO costs.

SEO Visibility Score Calculator

Weight rankings by search volume and CTR to see real visibility gains and losses across a fixed keyword set.

SEO Roadmap Template

Sequence 90 days of SEO and GEO work by weighted opportunity per hour, dependencies and acceptance criteria.

Read the full tutorial online: **optimizationtheory.com/download-view/seo-seasonality-planner/**
Get all six templates in the **Keyword Research Toolkit**, or all 40 in the **Complete SEO & GEO Toolkit**.