



**Inspyder SerpSpy
User's Reference Manual**

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Inspyder SerpSpy User's Reference Manual

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1 Introduction

SerpSpy from [Inspyder Software Inc.](#) is a Windows based utility that enables you track your website's search engine ranking across a range of keywords. SerpSpy makes monitoring dozens of keywords across all the major search engines easy. Just enter your domain name, some keywords, and click 'Go!'

SerpSpy is a web crawler so it captures your website's rank exactly as searchers see them, avoiding inaccuracies in search engine API results and human error.

There's no need to manually run hundreds of queries, just enter your keyword list and let SerpSpy do the rest.

Features and Benefits

- Ease of use - Just enter your URL, some keywords, and go!
- Internal Database - Ranking information is automatically saved after each successful run, so you don't have to worry about losing data.
- Template Driven Result Analysis - SerpSpy uses user adjustable templates for parsing search engine results, so it's possible to add new search engine support or adapt SerpSpy if search engine output changes.
- Copy and Paste from AdWords - You can easy import your keyword list from AdWords, just copy and paste! The 'Clean Keywords' tool automatically strips AdWords pricing and URL information.
- Fixed Cost - No tiered pricing or per-keyword fees.
- Automatic - Automatically check your website and get an email report every day, week or month.

SerpSpy requires Windows 2000/XP/2003. Please refer to the [web site](#) for current licensing and pricing information.

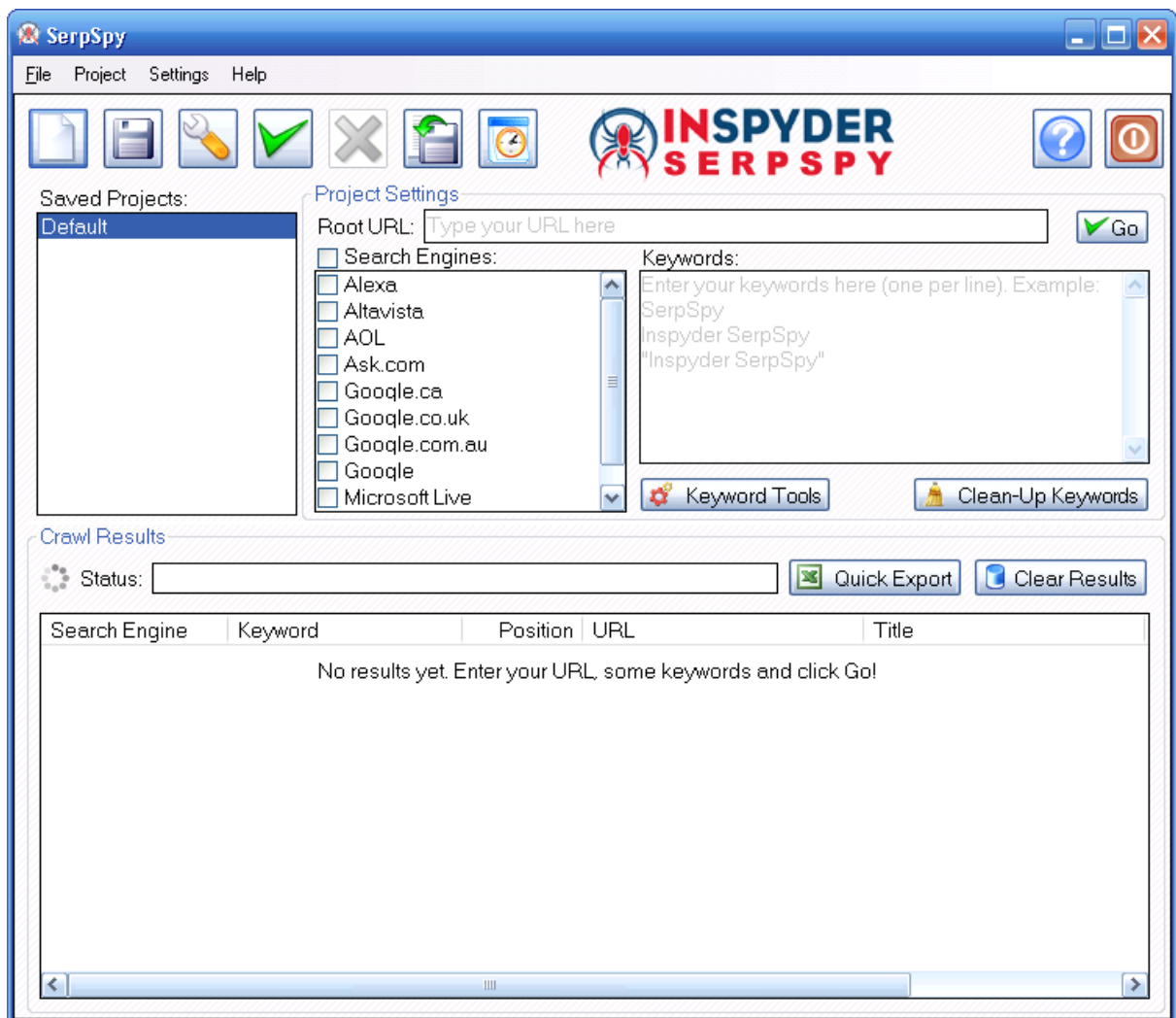
2 Quick Start Guide

Step 1 The default project is now loaded but does not contain any settings. Enter the URL of your website in the 'Root URL' field.

Step 2 Enter some keywords in the "Keywords" field, one keyword or keyphrase per line.

Step 3 Click the "Go" button.

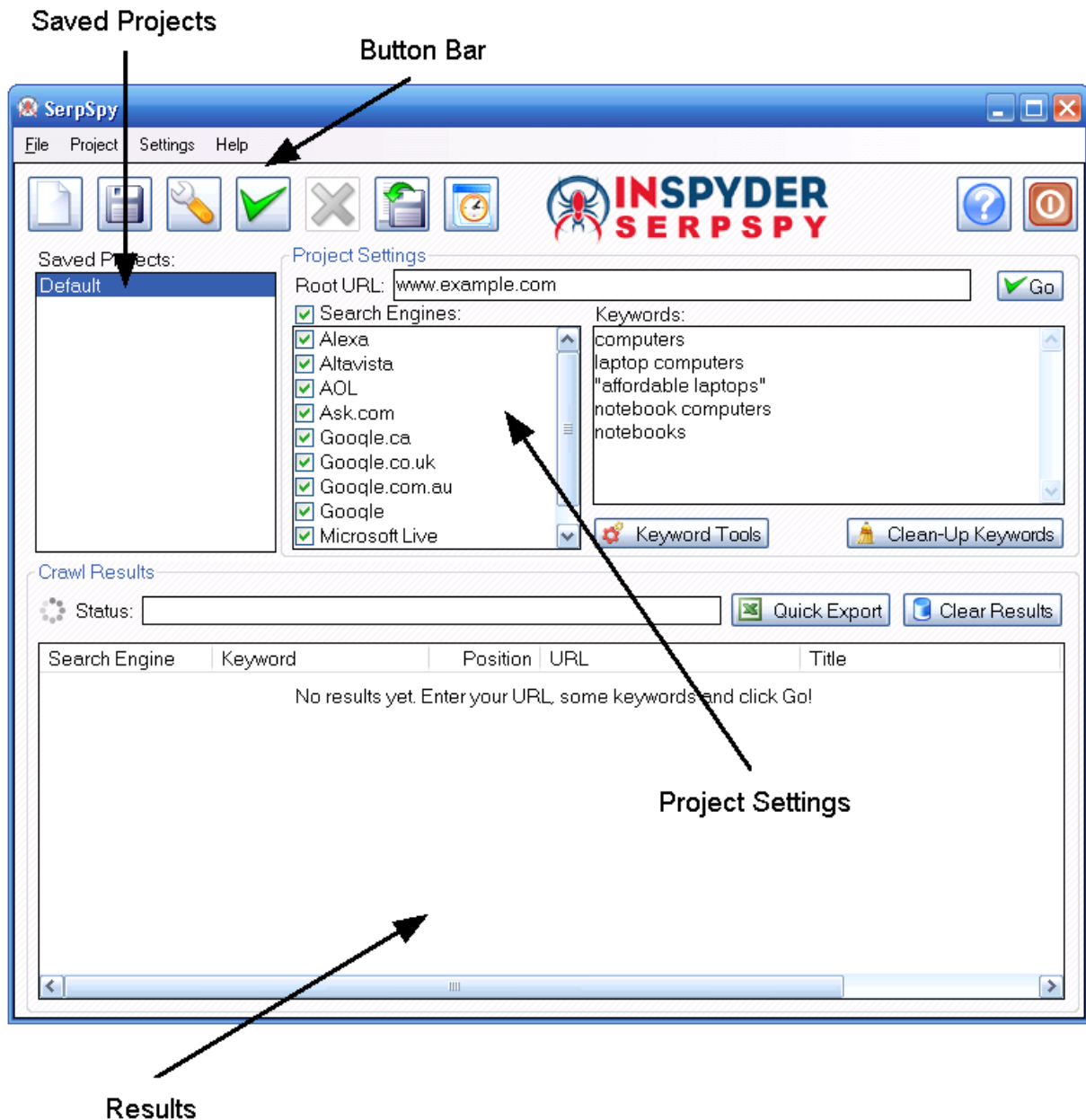
Step 4 Export your results to a PDF or Excel report for further review or analysis.



3 Usage

The SerpSpy user interface area is broken down into four main areas:

- Button Bar** The button bar provides quick access to the most frequently used features of SerpSpy.
- Saved Projects** This is a list of the currently saved projects. When you create a new project, it will appear in this list. Projects can be deleted or renamed by right clicking the project name in the project list.
- Project Settings** This is where the settings for the currently select project will appear.
- Scan Results** This is where the output from SerpSpy will be presented.



The following sections describe the individual fields and controls of Inspyder SerpSpy's user interface.

3.1 Button Bar & Menu

This section describes the functions of the button bar controls. These are the most often used features of SerpSpy and are placed on the button bar for convenience. Some of this functionality is available by right-clicking on controls in other parts of the user interface.



The **New Project** button is used to establish a new website that you wish to track. You will be prompted for a project name, which will appear in the Projects list, and the root URL of that web site.



The **Save Project** button is used to save the current project settings. The main menu contains a "**Save As**" command if you want to replicate the current project. As well, you can right-click on any project name in the Saved Projects list to delete or rename the project.



This button allows you to quickly access the Advanced Project Settings. For more information please refer to the [Advanced Project Settings](#) section of this document.



This button starts the querying processing. The querying can be interrupted at any time by clicking on the **Stop** button.



Use this button to stop the querying process.



This button provides a shortcut to create (or export) a report file. For more information please refer to the [Report Export](#) section of this manual.



This button provides quick access to the SerpSpy scheduler. Scheduling allows you to automatically collect and report keyword ranking information on a daily, weekly or monthly basis.



Provides access to the help file and About screen. The About screen contains the version number and your registration information.



Closes the program.

The main menu contains all of the functionality of the button bar, but extends that capability with a few additional commands. The most notable menu additions are the "**File | Save As**" and "**Project | View Keyword History**" commands. The "Project" menu contains features and options that are specific to the current project. The "Settings" menu contains features that are program wide or affect all projects.

3.2 Project

This section describes the options, fields and features of a Project (and the Project menu).


Root URL

Specify the address of the homepage for the website to be checked for. It is recommended that you do not include the "http://" or "https://" prefix, as not all search engines provide this in the results. If you wish to only find results for a specific page within your site, enter that page's exact URL here.

Go Button

Use this control to begin querying the search engines for your keywords. This



button has the same functionality as the  control on the button bar. It's included in this location for convenience.

Search Engines

The Search Engines check box list allows you to select which search engines you want queried for this project. By default, all search engines are checked. However,

if you are targeting optimization of a single search engine (or family of engines), then any unrelated search engines can be unchecked.

Keywords

The keywords field is where any keywords or queries should be entered. The keywords or keyphrases should be entered one per line. Queries are run exactly as they are entered here, so you can use search engine syntax in this field (such as enclosing a phrase in quotes).

To quickly generate a large number of phrases automatically, use the Keyphrase Generator tool.

Keyword Tools

See the [Keyword Tools](#) section for details.

Clean-Up Keywords

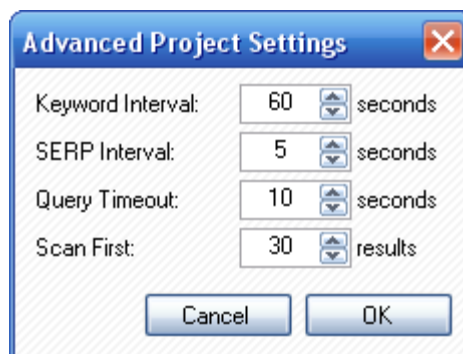
The clean-up keywords button is used to automatically make basic adjustments to the keyword list. It should be used after importing or adding a large number of keywords to the list. When this button is clicked, the keyword list is automatically:

1. Sorted
2. Duplicates are found and removed
3. Trailing and leading whitespace (spaces, tabs, blank lines, etc.) are automatically removed
4. AdWords pricing syntax is removed (for example: "keyword ** 0.50 ** http://www.example.com" is converted to "keyword")

For advanced users it may be of value to note that SerpSpy Projects and settings are stored in folder: C:\Documents and Settings\username\Application Data\SerpSpy\

3.2.1 Advanced Project Settings

The Advanced Project Settings provide you with a way to further refine how SerpSpy queries the search engines. These settings are project specific.



Keyword Interval

This is the minimum number of seconds to wait before querying the same search engine with the next keyword. If this value is too low, the search engine may detect SerpSpy as an automated querying tool and block future queries. A value of 60 seconds should suffice in most cases.

SERP Interval

This is the minimum number of seconds to wait before querying the same search engine for additional result pages. If this value is too low, the search engine may detect SerpSpy as an automated querying tool and block future queries. A value of 5 seconds should suffice in most cases.

Query Timeout

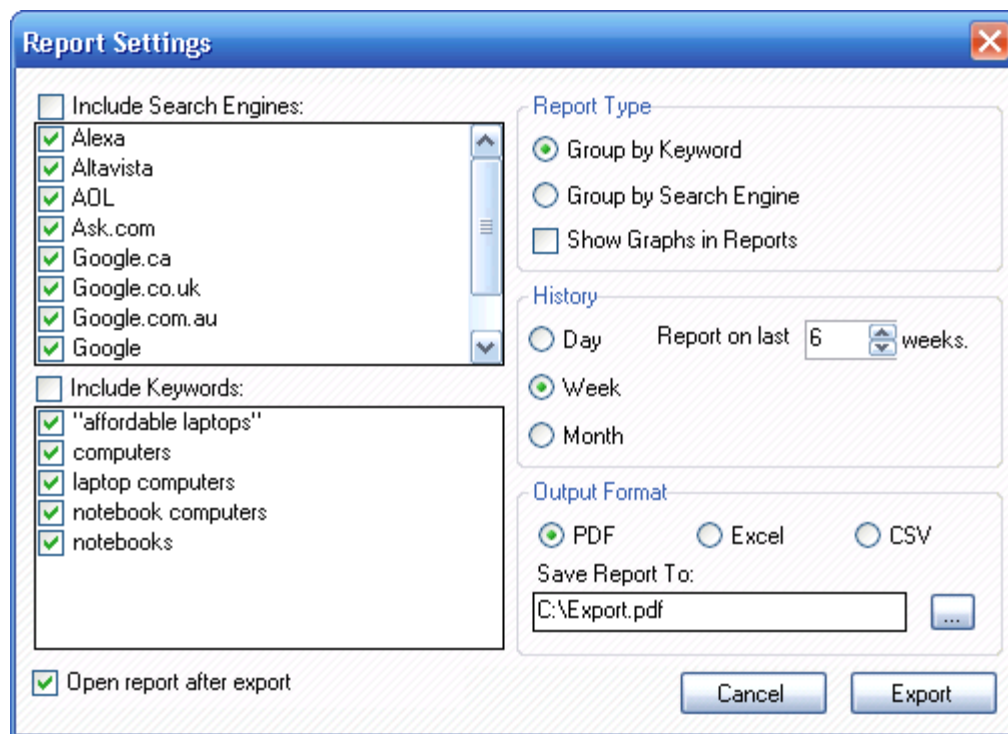
This is the maximum number of seconds that SerpSpy should wait for a response from the search engine.

Scan First

This is the number of top results that should be "searched" for your site using your keywords. Reducing this value improves performance (since less results must be checked) and can be used if you are not interested in results ranked beyond a certain point (such as the top 30). A value greater than 100 is not recommended.

3.2.2 Reporting (Exporting)

Once some keyword data has been successfully collected, it may be desirable to export the data to PDF or Excel format for further analysis.



Report Type (Excel and PDF Formats only): The Report Type section allows you to configure which report style to use when generating the report. There are two available report styles. The first, "Group by Keyword" shows ranking for each keyword as a section, with the results for each search engine within. This format is useful if you wish to compare how your site performs for each keyword across all search engines.

In contrast, the "Group by Search Engine" report shows the ranking for each search engine as a section, with the results for each keyword within. The "Show Graphs in Reports" options enables graphical charts but can increase the time required to generate the report (and the report file size). This format is useful if you wish to compare the performance of all keywords, search engine by search engine.

History: The Report History section allows you to configure how far back and what frequency of data should be reported on. Selecting Day, Week, or Month will include daily, weekly or monthly data respectively in the report. The data used in the report is sampled from the history database using the

closest possible data to the time the report is run. This makes it possible to run a report using the 'Day' frequency, even if keyword data is collected weekly. The data closest recorded date is used for any missing dates. If data is collected more than once a day, the closest time to the time when the report is run will be used.

Include Search Engines: These check boxes allow you to configure which search engines should be included in the report. For example, if you were creating a report targeting the Google family of search engines, you would uncheck the other engines, excluding their data from the output.

Include Keywords: These check boxes allow you to configure which keywords should be included in the report.

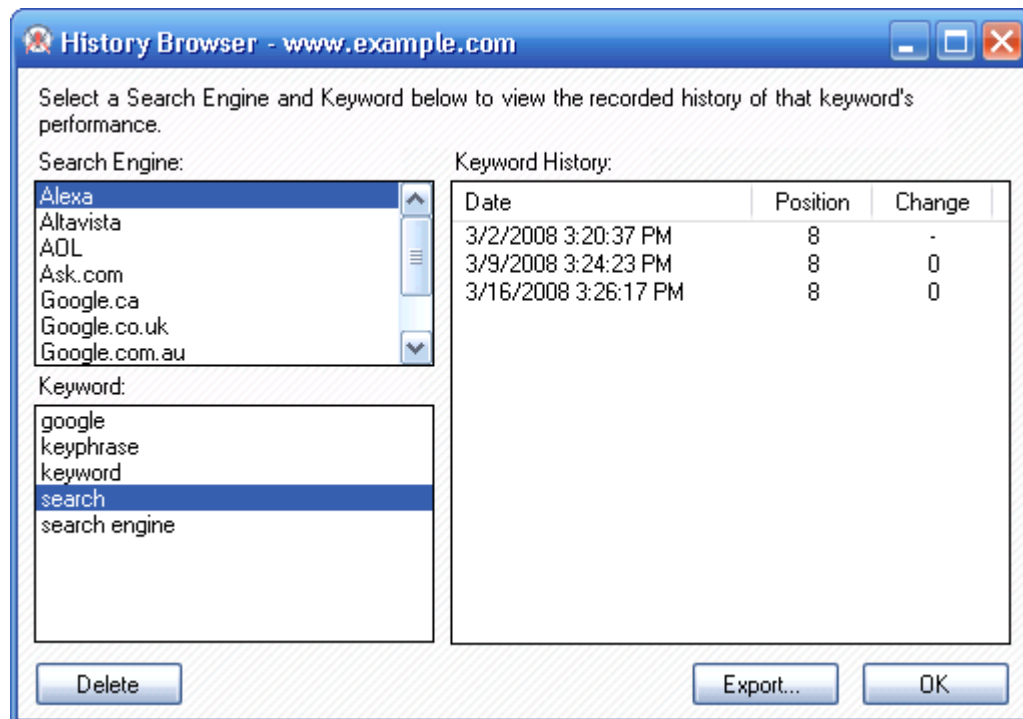
Output Format: This sections allows you to select the desired file type for the report. If CSV is selected the Report Type options become disabled. CSV reports can be opened in a spreadsheet application, like Microsoft Excel, and are formatted for easy analysis.

Save Report To: This is the filename of the report file (either in PDF or Excel). Use the Browse (...) button to change the file name and/or location.

Open report after export: If this option is checked, Inspyder SerpSpy will automatically try to open the PDF or Excel report in the default application (either your PDF viewer or spreadsheet).

3.2.3 Keyword History

The Keyword History Browser provides a way to review the previously collected keyword ranking data. It is a viewer for SerpSpy's internal database. To access the Keyword History Browser, click 'Tools | View Keyword History...' from the main menu bar.



Keyword history is stored by search engine and keyword combination. To begin viewing the history, select both a Search Engine entry and a Keyword entry. The ranking history will be retrieved and shown in the Keyword History list, along with the relative change. Improvements in rankings are

highlighted as green entries. Decreases in rankings are highlighted as red entries.

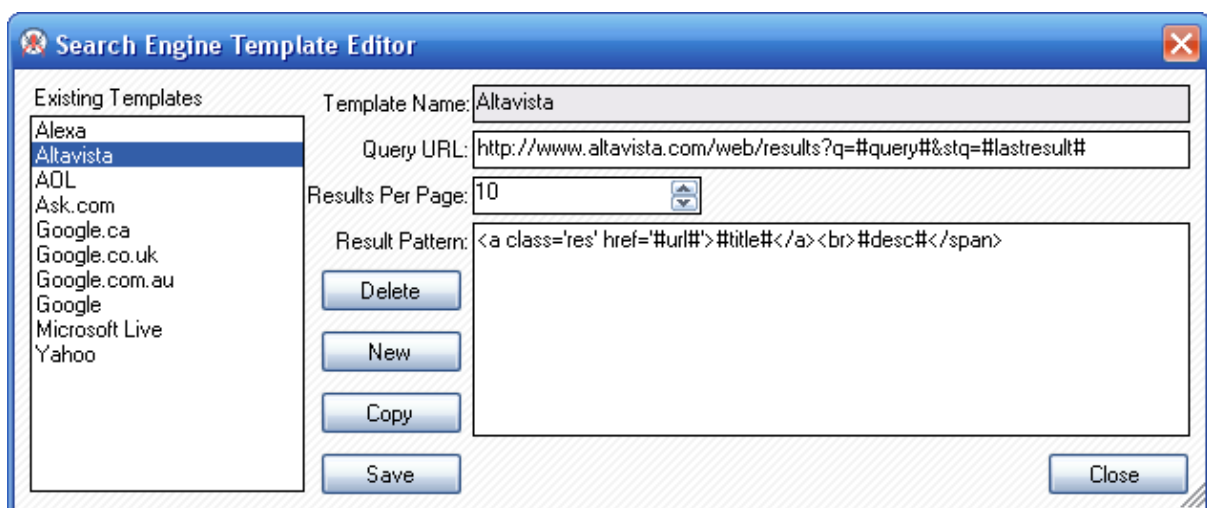
The 'Delete' button removes the keyword history for the selected keyword for **all search engines**. If you choose to delete a particular keyword's history, it cannot be undone. This feature is provided so that unwanted or incorrect keywords can be removed from the history (and subsequent reports).

The Export button provides quick access to the [Exporting/Reporting](#) function.

3.3 Settings

3.3.1 Search Engine Templates

To access this option, click 'Settings | Edit Search Engine Templates' from the main menubar. This option applies to every project configured in SerpSpy.



Existing Templates

These are the search engines that SerpSpy knows how to query. These templates can be modified, copied or deleted from the system. If a template is deleted, any keyword history for that search engine is saved, but no future queries can be run on that search engine (unless a new template with the same name is created).

Template Name

The template name is usually the name of the search engine. It must be unique (two templates cannot have the same name). Keywords are stored by "Search Engine" internally, and the "Search Engine" name is derived from the template name. Therefore it is not permitted to rename a template (as that keyword history will be lost).

Query URL

These are the URLs that SerpSpy will create to query each search engine with. The following items can be embedded in the query URL and it will automatically be replaced by SerpSpy at query time:

- #Query# - The query text (automatically URL encoded)
- #Page# - The page number (starts at 1, can be as high as necessary, depending on the number of keywords to check and the number of Results Per Page)
- #LastResult# - The number of the last result seen (starts at 0, if Results Per Page is 10, then second query will have value '10')
- #NextResult# - The number of the next expected result (starts at 1, if Results Per Page is 10, then second query will have value '11')

Results Per Page

This is the number of results that are expected per result page. It's possible to query some search engines in such a way that 10, 20, 50 or even 100 results are returned per page. This value should match whatever the Query URL returns. (For performance reasons, 10 Results Per Page is recommended.)

Result Pattern

This is the actual format of each result entry as provided by the search engine. The template is based on the HTML output of the search engine. The following markers can be embedded in the Result Pattern to match various dynamic portions of the result page:

- #URL# - (Required) The URL portion of the result. This is what SerpSpy will compare your Root URL value to when checking to see if a match is for your site or not.
- #Title# - (Required) The result's title provided by the search engine
- #Desc# - (Required) The Description blurb provided by the search engine
- * - Matches 0 or more characters but does not match HTML tags.
- {xxx,yyy} - Match "xxx" or "yyy". Some search engines include optional content, this syntax can be used to match that content or nothing (For example: "{<div>#desc#</div>}" matches anything between two <div> tags as the description, or nothing if that result has no description.)

Result patterns are case insensitive. The URL, Title and Desc markers will match anything, including HTML tags. The open/close HTML tags that surround the tag are used as the delimiters (so you cannot use the markers at the very start or very end of a pattern).

3.3.2 Email Configuration

SerpSpy has provisions for customizing the emails that can be sent when scheduled scanning has completed. The customization screen is accessed by clicking on the "**Settings | Email Settings**" menu item.

Enter the **SMTP Server** (mail server) that is used for your outgoing email, and fill out the **Sender** field with the email address to be used as the sender. If your SMTP server uses a non-standard port, it can be appended to the server address with a colon (example: smtp.example.com:25). These settings will be used when automatically exporting the results of a [scheduled keyword](#) data collection. The recipient's address is set up when setting SerpSpy to run on a scheduled basis.

Modify the **Subject** line or the email **Body** as desired and click the **OK** button to save your changes. Special tags can be used which are replaced with specific values by SerpSpy before the email is sent.

| Tag | Value |
|-----------|--|
| #URL# | The project Root URL |
| #PROJECT# | The name of the project |
| #CHANGES# | The keyword changes that were detected |

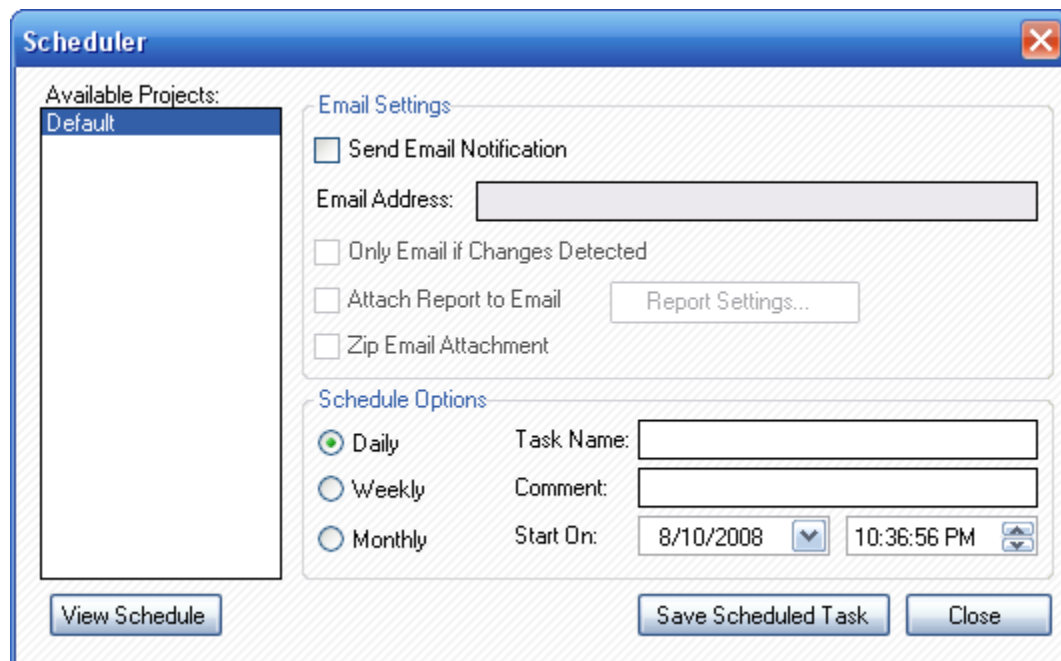
The sample screen illustrates the usage of the tags in customizing the email message **Subject** and **Body**.

The screenshot shows a standard Windows-style dialog box titled "Email Settings". It features a blue title bar with a close button (X) on the right. The main area contains several text input fields and a checkbox. The "SMTP Server" field is filled with "mail.example.com", and the "Use SSL" checkbox is unchecked. The "Username" field contains "sample" and is followed by the text "(Optional)". The "Password" field contains "*****" and is also followed by "(Optional)". The "Sender Address" field contains "webmaster@example.com". The "Subject" field contains "Search Engine Ranking Report - #Project# (#URL)". The "Body" field contains the text "The following keyword changes were detected:", followed by "#CHANGES#" on a new line, and "Report generated by Inspyder SerpSpy" on another. At the bottom left, there are two buttons: "Default" and "Test". At the bottom right, there are two buttons: "Cancel" and "OK".

Also keep in mind that the report with the full keyword history can be with the email as an attachment. The format of the attachment are specified in the [Scheduler](#) set up.

3.3.3 Scheduler

SerpSpy has the ability to run in an unattended mode to automatically collect keyword information on a regular basis. To configure SerpSpy for scheduled operation select "**Tools | Scheduler**" from the main menu bar. The Scheduler window contains the choices from the [Reporting/Exporting](#) window as well as those necessary for timing the execution of SerpSpy. Once the Schedule Options are filled in and the **Add Task** button is clicked the task will be scheduled using the Windows Task Scheduler.



Send Email Notification

SerpSpy can automatically send you an email notification when scheduled execution of a project is completed. To receive an email notification check this box and enter the recipient email address in the 'Email Address' field. More information about configuring email notification can be found in the [Email Configuration](#) section. Multiple email recipient addresses can be separated with a semi-colon (;).

Only Email if Changes Detected

If this box is checked, SerpSpy will suppress the email notification if no changes to your website's ranking are detected. This is useful if you wish to only receive alerts when your website's search engine result position changes.

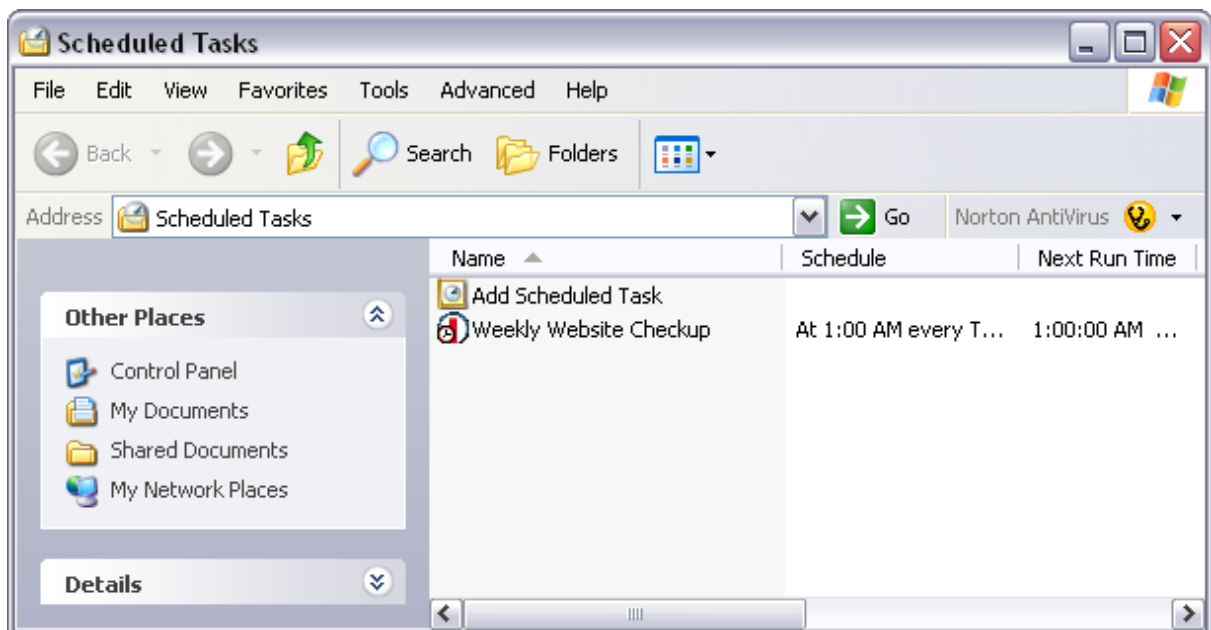
Attach Report to Email

Check this box if you wish to have a PDF or Excel report attached to the email notification message. Use the 'Report Settings...' button to configure the report. For more information on the report settings, see [Exporting](#).

Zip Email Attachment

If this option is checked, any attached reports will be compressed into a zip file.

Use the **View Schedule** button to view all the tasks submitted to the Windows Task Scheduler as well as **to modify the scheduling parameters**. If you double-click the scheduled entry in the Windows Scheduled Tasks dialog a new dialog will be displayed which contains all of the parameters for that task.



The actual command used to invoke SerpSpy is found in the 'Run:' field. You can modify the parameters used by Windows when it starts SerpSpy by **carefully** editing the contents of the Run field. The following are the command line arguments:

- project=** The project name to be analyzed (e.g. -project=default)
- email=** (Optional) This specifies the email address of the email notification recipient (do not use this option if you do not wish to receive an email notification)
- changes** (Optional) Indicates that the email notification should only be sent if keyword changes are detected
- filename=** (Optional) Indicates that SerpSpy should create and attach a report to the notification email. If this parameter is not specified, no report will be attached.
- template=** (Optional) The report template that should be used when generating the attached report ("History by Keyword.rdlc" or "History by Search Engine.rdlc")
- searchengines=** (Optional) A comma separated list of search engines to include in the attached report.
- keywords=** (Optional) Indicates which keywords should be included in the attached report file. If this option is omitted, all keywords found in the keyword history database will be automatically included. Keywords should be separated with a comma, and quotes must be preceded by a backslash (\).
- interval=** One of either "Day", "Week" or "Month", indicating the reporting interval that should be used
- history=** A number indicating how many days/weeks/months the report should include
- format=** Either "Excel" or "PDF" indicating the desired output format
- graphs** (Optional) Indicates that the attached report should include graphs (this can increase the file size of the report)
- zip** (Optional) Indicates that the attached report should be compressed into a zip file

To satisfy the Task Scheduler's parsing algorithm please ensure that each argument is placed within double-quotes (e.g. "-outputfile=report.html"). This is usually only required if the argument contains

spaces.

Note to Windows XP and 2003 users: The scheduled tasks will not run on an account with a blank password. For a workaround to this please see the SerpSpy FAQ.

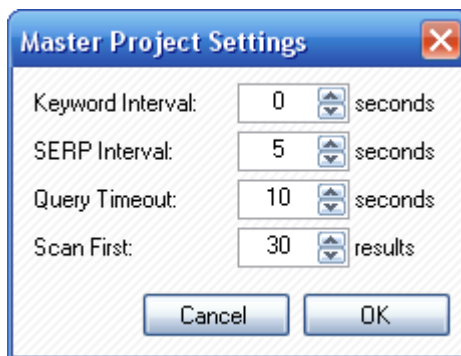
Scheduled Execution Return Codes:

These are the codes returned to the Windows Task Scheduler after the SerpSpy task has been executed. You can view them in the Scheduler window to help troubleshoot any problems.

- 0** Success (no errors)
- 1** Not registered
Solution: Run the program interactively and enter your registration information when prompted.
- 2** Invalid Project
Solution: That the project exists and the project name specified on the command line is spelled correctly.
- 3** Crawler Error
Solution: The crawler detected some type of unhandled error during crawling. Run this project in interactive mode and check for errors.
- 4** Email Error
Solution: A problem occurred when sending the email report. Check your [Email Configuration](#) and try again.

3.3.4 Master Project Settings

In addition to the regular user defined Projects, Inspyder SerpSpy contains a single Master Project. The Master Project contains the default values for any newly created projects. Options that are unique to every Project (such as Root URL) cannot be defined in the Master Project. To edit the Master Project click 'Tools | Edit Master Project...'. The settings in the Master Project Settings window are identical to those of a regular project.



For details on what each specific options means, please review the settings in the ['Advanced Project Settings'](#) section of the manual.

3.4 Crawl Results

This section describes the options, fields and features of the Scan Results group. After successfully querying all the search engines for all keywords, the results are automatically stored in SerpSpy's internal database.

Crawl Results

Status:

| Search Engine | Keyword | Position | URL | Title |
|----------------|----------------|----------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Alexa | computers | 3 | http://www.dell.com/conten... | Dell PCs: Desktop PCs, La... |
| AOL | computers | 2 | http://www.dell.com/ | Dell Computers Online |
| Ask.com | computers | 1 | http://www.dell.com/ | Learn about Dell's laptops,... |
| Google.com.au | computers | 11 | http://www.dell.com.au/ | Dell Australia: Computers, I... |
| Google.co.uk | computers | 12 | http://www.dell.com/uk | Dell UK homepage - Com... |
| Altavista | computers | - | | |
| Google.ca | computers | - | | |
| Yahoo | computers | - | | |
| Microsoft Live | computers | - | | |
| Google | computers | - | | |
| Alexa | dell computers | 1 | http://www.dell.com/ | Learn about Dell's la... |
| Altavista | dell computers | 2 | http://www.dell.com/outlet | Dell Factory Outlet |

Clear Results - Click to reset the contents of the **Scan Results** section.

Quick Export - Quick Export allows you to save the results shown to a CSV file (comma separated values). This file format can be opened in most spreadsheet applications (such as Microsoft Excel).

Search Engine - The search engine column contains the name of the search engine for this particular ranking.

Keyword - This column indicates the keyword/keyphrase/query used for this ranking.

Position - The ranking of the website (1 = 1st position). If the Root URL is not found on any SERP, than a dash is shown.

URL - The URL of the first search result that contains the Root URL.

Title - The page title given by the search engine for the matching result.

Description - The page description given by the search engine for the matching result.

Right-Clicking on any result will open up a menu with the following options:

Open SERP in Browser - This option will open the SERP on which this result was found in your default browser.

Open Page in Browser - This option will open the page listed in the URL field in your default browser.

3.5 Keyword Tools

SerpSpy provides a number of keyword tools to help you generate a list of relevant keywords to query search engines with. To change tools, select the tab at the top of the Keyword Tools window that contains the desired tool.

3.5.1 Server Log Parser

The Server Log Parser extracts actual queries from your web server's log files.

To use the Log Parser, enter the path to your web server log file in the 'Server Log File' field (or use the Browse button to locate the file). Then click the 'Search Server Log' button to begin parsing. When the process is complete any query keywords that are found in the log will be automatically added to the list of new keywords.

3.5.2 Website Crawler

The Website Crawler tool is used to extract possible keywords from a live website's content.

Enter the URL of the webpage you wish to crawl in the URL field. Click the 'Crawl Website' button to begin extracting keywords. The other settings located here can be used to fine-tune the keywords that are extracted.

Number of Pages to Crawl - Increase this value to increase the number of pages that the crawler will sample from the site. If you only wish to extract keywords from a single page set this value to 1.

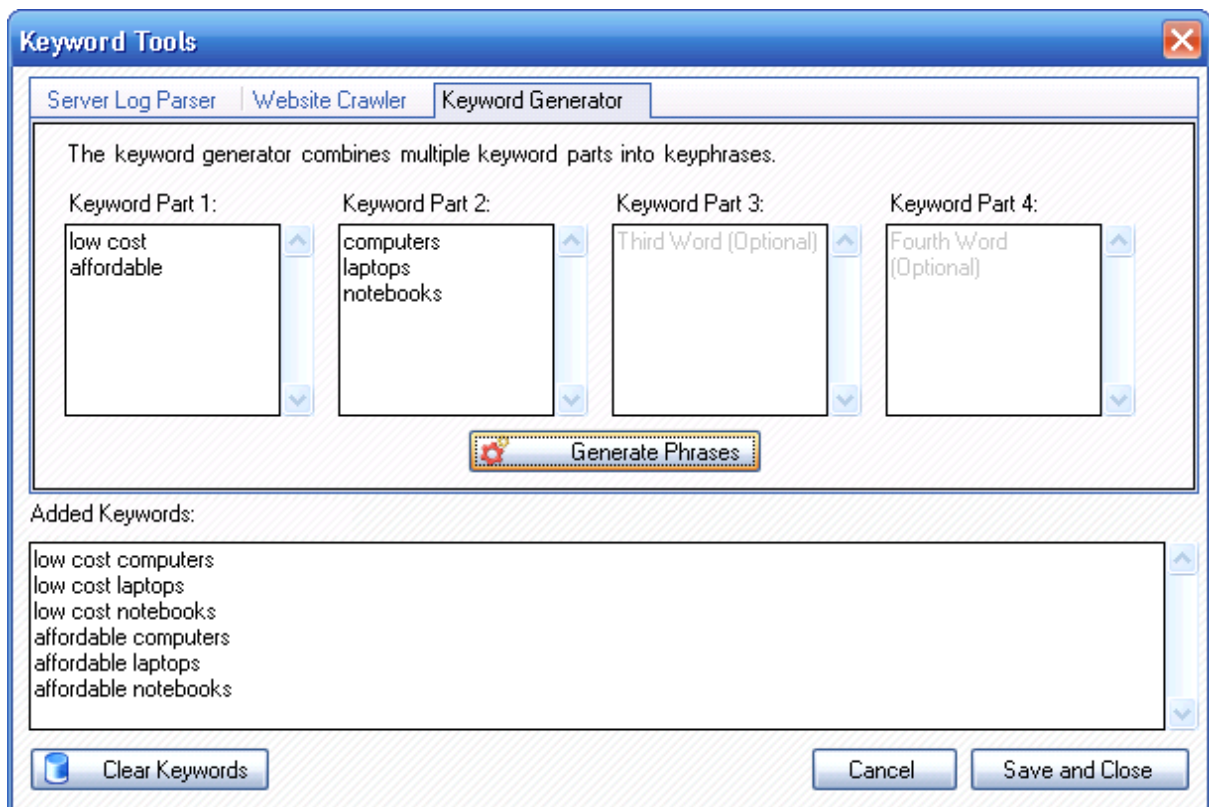
Max. Phrase Length - The length of phrases to extract in words. If this value is set to 3, phrases up to 3 words long will be extracted from the page. If this value is set to 1, only individual words will be extracted from the site.

Min. Word Length - This is the minimum number of characters in a word to be included as a possible keyword. Setting this value to 3 eliminates words like: a, the, in, and, etc. Set this value to 0 to include all words as possible keywords.

Extract Top - This is the percentage of keywords to extract from the total list of words found on the site. For content heavy pages it may be necessary to decrease this value to 5%, or even 1%, if too many words are found.

3.5.3 Keyword Generator

The Keyword Generator is used to create a large number of queries quickly from lists of synonyms. In the upper portion of the word generator window are four parallel areas for keywords. Each box corresponds to the first, second, third or fourth section of the keyword/keyphrase respectively. For example, if you had a website targeting affordable computers and laptops, your keywords might be something like "low cost laptop" and "affordable notebook". To generate all the permutations on that, enter in synonyms for "low cost" in the first keyword area, and synonyms for "laptop" in the second keyword area.



After clicking 'Generate Phrases' all the entries from each keyword box are combined into phrases. To save these keywords to your project, click 'Save and Close'.

4 About Inspyder Software

Founded in 2004, [Inspyder Software](http://inspyder.com) is a leading provider of web crawling technologies for content analysis, filtering and web access management. These technologies have formed the foundation of our software products and made 'Inspyder' a recognizable brand in the software industry.

As the World Wide Web continues to grow, organizations are looking for ways to improve their online presence, increase the quality of their sites, and maximize overall user experience. At Inspyder Software, our focus is on the development of technology that enables organizations to do just that.

For more information regarding future products, custom development or consulting services, please contact us at sales@inspyder.com.

5 Product License Agreement

This legal document is an agreement between you, as licensee and Inspyder Software Inc. ("Inspyder"), as licensor. You should carefully read the following terms and conditions before using this product. Using this product indicates your acceptance of these terms and conditions.

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