SEO Basics

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Agenda

- SEO terminology
- Content ranking factors
- Researching keywords
- Increasing your site’s authority, trustworthiness and quality
- Best practices for metadata
- How to avoid SEO penalties
- Strategies for optimizing laptop & mobile traffic
- Staying current as SEO evolves
What is SEO?

- Process of improving the quality and quantity of website traffic to a website from search engines.
- Targets unpaid (organic) traffic vs. direct or paid traffic (PPC).
- Targets high rankings on SERP for most widely used search engines:
  - Google
  - Yahoo
  - Bing
Why do SEO?

- Increases lead generation
- Increases revenue from online/e-commerce sales
- Builds positive brand reputation
- Allows customers to find you easily
- Allows you to serve the information you want customers to see
- Optimizes digital marketing initiatives
- Helps smaller companies compete with big players
SEO Terminology to Know

- Keyword(s) – long tail/short tail
- Rank/Ranking Factor
- Search Engine Results Page (SERP)
- Display network
- Indexed pages/Indexing
- Crawlers
- Organic search
- Meta information
- Alt text
- H1, H2, H3 headers
- Slug
- UX/UE
- Landing page
- On site & Off site SEO
- Schemas
- Anchor Text
- Internal Links
- Link building
What do search engines look for?

Factors determining your rank or domain authority score:

- High quality/relevant content
- “Freshness” or consistent updates
- Backlinks/reputation score
- User experience – KPI’s are looked at like ease of navigation, bounce rates, internal links, etc.
- Technical items – page loading speed, mobile-friendliness (Note: More important in May 2021/Core Web Vitals Update)
- Relevance to searchers/Landing page experience

There may be 200+ ranking factors that Google algorithms consider. But, Google does not share them openly.
Search engines want to deliver the **fastest** and **most relevant answers to queries**.

Good SEO takes into account users’ **possible pain points**/queries and the technical aspects of the search engines algorithm or “rankbrain” to **provide the best answers**.

Content is king. A focus on **strong, relevant, keyword-based content** will take you far in SEO.
What is a keyword?

- Query that your potential website visitors might type into a search engine
- Focus content both on and off your website on a list of relevant keywords for your audience
- Tools to find keywords
  - Semrush
  - Moz
  - Ahrefs
- Goal: Get into top 3 spots on SERP (where users are most likely to click)
- 2nd page on SERP is death
What to look for in a keyword

- Relevancy to audience & goal
  - Example: Company looking to increase online sales: “Microplates for sale online” (longtail keyword) may be better than “Microplates”
  - High search volume
  - Low competition
    - These two factors can identify keywords that are easier to rank for, but will still generate traffic
- Tip: Create list of keywords. Don’t overdo it. Begin trying to rank for a few applicable keywords and grow over time by creating relevant content & good landing page experiences
Think like your target audience: What do they searching for? What do they need?

Utilize software (Ahrefs, Moz, Semrush, Ubersuggest) to get search volume and query data to test your hypothesis
  - Softwares provide number of search queries/mo., difficulty to rank for them, your current rank, and more.

Holy grail of keywords = high search volume, low competition.

Tips: Focus on keywords that will help you reach your goal. Usually, longer tail keyword are more helpful. Strive for a mix of long and short tail.
Increasing Your Scores

- Content, content, content!
- Avoid having a ‘flat site.’ Have a site with layers of great content and easy-to-use navigation. Give people reason to stay and click around.
- Use “schema markups” and “featured snippets” to provide short answers to common questions
- Have a solid earned backlink strategy
- Domain authority is a somewhat arbitrary score. Google doesn’t admit it’s a ranking factor. But, all items that go into DA are good practices
A Note about Featured Snippets

- Google is trying to keep users on SERP. This is where ads can be seen so they want to answer a question without additional clicks or re-searching.

- No one really knows what causes Google to pull your site in for a featured snippet.
  - Focus on good, simple content that answers a question.
Website metadata consists of a page title and meta description for every page. These provide search engines with important information about the content and purpose of each individual page on your website. They help search engines determine whether your website is relevant enough to display in search results.

Length restrictions/Best practices

- Should include keyword and be written mostly to entice users to take action.
- Update as web page content changes…but not constantly

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**384 Well Plates - Greiner Bio-One**

384 well microplates from Greiner Bio-One are unrivaled in quality. Shop our entire line of microplates online today at shop.gbo.com.
Avoiding SEO Penalties

- #1 way to avoid penalties: Keep your users in mind when doing SEO work. Be a trustworthy source of info.
- No ‘keyword stuffing’
- Ensure content is consistent, high-quality, and relevant to users
- Don’t promise something you won’t deliver
- Ensure site health is strong; pay attention to core web vitals
- Ensure everything on site is mobile friendly
- Don’t BUY LINKS
- Don’t work with companies that make unrealistic promises
  - “We can guarantee you ranking in the #1 spot within 30 days!”
  - “We can offer you hundreds of reputable backlinks"
Strategies for Optimizing on Mobile

- Majority of users do web surfing on mobile phones or tablets. If digital tools don't render correctly, you're in for trouble!
  - Decreases traffic + Google penalizes
- Check sites' mobile-friendliness with tools like “Mobile Friendly Test Tool” in Google Search Console
- Look at analytics for mobile vs. desktop – How can you optimize? What are the issues?
- View site on your mobile phone – can you navigate easily?
- Mobile screens are smaller; ensure website design is responsive.
Core Web Vitals

- Google announcement for May 2021: Larger emphasis on rankings for sites with strong Core Web Vitals.
  - Set of metrics for speed, responsiveness and visual stability.
    - Largest contentful paint. (Page loading speed)
    - First input delay. (Time it takes for users to interact with page)
    - Cumulative layout shift. (Visual stability – do things shift as page loads)
- Having a well-built page that is secure, user friendly, and fast!
- Can be easily checked through Google Search Console
Your SEO Toolkit

- SEMrush, Ahrefs, etc.
- Google Analytics or another analytics tool
- Google Search Console
- Google Tag Manager
- MOZ
- Many different options available. Explore and see which tools work best for you.
Staying Up-to-Date on SEO

- Moz is a great tool to track potential algorithm changes
- Monitor your own data. See any drop off in traffic? Did a keyword suddenly drop 10 spots? Could be an algorithm change.
- Follow key SEO experts – Neil Patel is a great one!
- Search Engine Journal
- Numerous blogs and YouTube pages
  - Semrush Blog
  - Yoast Blog
  - Search Engine Land
Top SEO Tips for 2021

- Pay special attention to Core Web Vitals – loading speed, Interactivity, & visual stability
- Always consider the searchers ‘intent’ with their query
- Consistent and relevant content creation
- Keyword research will become even more important
- Featured snippets/ Staying on SERP
- Video/Voice Search/Artificial Intelligence
Stay in Touch

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