

SEO BASICS... A BEGINNERS GUIDE



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WHAT IS SEO?

SEO stands for
“Search Engine
Optimization.”

It's all about increasing the quality and quantity of website traffic through non-paid (organic) search engine results.

A search engines' main goal is to guide people to the content they are searching for online, to provide answers to the questions they are seeking though words and phrases they type in to the search bar.

SEO is about making your content appealing and accessible to two audiences - the robots which crawl, index and rank your content, and the end user.

Understanding what they both want is fundamental to effective SEO.



WHY IS SEO IMPORTANT?

It's a cost effective big piece of pie!

When you consider the channels which can bring traffic to your website (paid advertising, social media, email marketing...), the majority of online traffic is driven by search engines.

Organic search results cover far more digital real estate and often receive more clicks than paid advertisements.

SEO is also one of the only online marketing channels that, when set up correctly, can continue to pay dividends over time. Paid advertising needs continuous funding to send traffic to your site, SEO needs initial investment (mostly of time) but the results usually have far greater longevity.





ALWAYS CONSIDER THE END USER

**Make content that
serves your
customers.**

It's fundamental to SEO to consider the end user in every activity you undertake.

Search engines share similar goals with the SEO industry - they want to match a user to the most relevant information available to them.

The goal is never to try and trick search engines. Instead, provide your visitors with a great online experience and make great content that is accessible to search engines.





DIMINISHING RETURNS

No website is ever going to be perfect in the eyes of search engines, so make sure to take the steps which will have the biggest impact in the long run.

It's not all about having the fastest website and page loading times to rank more highly than your competitors, but thinking about usability and functionality of your website too.

Stripping out lots of code, videos and large images may make the website and page speeds faster - but it may also impact your customers' user experience too!





RELEVANCY IS KEY

It's a feedback loop.
Reach the right audience and get rewarded with more of the same!

Consider your audience's demographics, their locality and their intent when they land on your website (research, purchase etc.) when creating or tailoring content for SEO.

If the content serves your customers well, it will be favoured by the search engines for that audience and will serve your page to even more of that type of person.

But, If you gain traffic for the wrong type of person, you will either fall out of favour with the search engines, or (potentially more damaging) continue to gain even more of the market share for the wrong type of person.



WHERE TO START

SEO is so broad it can be difficult to know where to begin.

SEO is a game of diminishing returns, so starting with the low hanging fruit is best for strategy as it gives you a solid foundation and potentially the quickest return on investment.

We've divided these "quick win" strategies into two categories: Onsite SEO and Technical SEO:



OPTIMISE TITLE TAGS & META DESCRIPTIONS

Include keywords and write in a way that will engage users (including CTAs and USPs) and summarise concisely what's content is on the page for the benefit of users and robots.

Keep title and meta descriptions short:

- Title Tags should be 55 characters
- Meta Descriptions 155 characters



OPTIMISE CONTENT

Include targeted and related keywords throughout the page copy.

Use keyword variations around 2-3 times throughout the body content.

Avoid keyword stuffing as it will compromise the quality of the page.

Create content that helps to answer users' search queries, engages users, and encourages them to share.

Be unique and provide value for your reader.



OPTIMISE IMAGES

Use a relevant image that goes with your text.

Pick a good file name for your image.

Make sure image dimensions match the image size as displayed.

Reduce file size for speedy loading.

Use image alt text. No need for a title text.

Provide all the context you can!



TECHNICAL SEO

Technical SEO is all about increasing readability for search engines, making it easier for them to understand your site and what you are all about. Consider:

- Site Architecture
- XML Sitemap
- Mobile Friendly Optimisation
- Quick loading
- Address 404 errors
- SSL security



Connect with us

Search engines are getting smarter, but they still need our help.

Need help with your SEO strategy?

Get in touch:

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