GUIDE

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE FOR SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

SEO

vonazon

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THE **INTRODUCTION**

Since SEO was introduced in 1991, it has been the focal point for businesses and marketers to drive growth. Even with the explosive growth of social media, SEO has still remained the most reliable way to put your content in front of the most people.

> **93% of online experiences still start with a search engine and Google is still #1 traffic referrer in the world.**

As important as SEO is, many marketers struggle to effectively explain it and often overcomplicate SEO with advanced technical jargon and a lack of clear direction. In reality, SEO is quite simple and can be broken down into key aspects that all equate to how search engines view and rank your website content. In this guide we will simplify and explain the factors that make up SEO and share some best practices to achieve high rankings for your content.

What is SEO?

SEO stands for **search engine optimization**, which is the practice of improving the ranking of your web pages so they appear higher in search engine results. Traffic earned from SEO is considered organic (or free) traffic, as opposed to paid traffic from sources like ads. The beautiful thing about organic traffic is that it's almost always guaranteed to be from someone interested in your content, and potentially your products or services.

How Does Google Rank Content?

HOW DOES **GOOGLE RANK CONTENT?**

Relevancy

This factor is fairly self-explanatory. Google decides what content to display during a search based on how relevant your content is to the search query.

> **For example,** if someone is shopping for a new and affordable television, they may search "best television under $500." Google will then look for articles that can help with that specific search.

Therefore, it's always a good idea to feature several different blogs and articles on your website that thoroughly cover your topic and its subtopics.

> **For this example,** if you're a company that sells or educates about television sets, your website should feature articles about the best affordable televisions.

In addition, you might want to create content about the most high-end, technologically advanced, or reliable televisions—any topics or subtopics your audience would be likely to search for.

HOW DOES GOOGLE RANK CONTENT?

Authority

Creating a wide range of content does not guarantee traffic or ranking. However, having a high authority site will help. Authority has to do with how much trust Google and other search engines have in your website. Authority can be earned in a variety of ways, but the most popular ways to build authority are through high-quality content, backlinks, and patience.

To determine quality, Google uses algorithms and bots to scan the readability of your content and notice how people are interacting with it.

If your content reads naturally and is proving to keep readers engaged, it has a much better chance of ranking higher over time.

Backlinks are created by other websites linking to your content. This is another reason why writing high quality content is so important. The better your content, the more inclined other websites will be to use it as a resource in their own content. Additionally, the more authority the websites using your content have, the more it will affect your ranking. High-authority websites will sometimes allow you to pay for a guest post on their website, where you can link to your website for some valuable and powerful backlinking.

The final key to achieving website authority is by being **patient and diligent.**

Ranking highly on search engines simply does not ever happen overnight. You need to give your content time to be recognized, interacted with, shared, and backlinked to.

While you're waiting, continue to churn out relevant and quality content that can help bolster your website and strengthen its reach.

WHAT OTHER FACTORS AFFECT RANKING?

WHAT OTHER FACTORS AFFECT RANKING?

01

Website Crawlability

Put simply, search engine bots need to be able to easily read and understand the content on your website. One of the most common mistakes you will find with website crawlability is when websites put text inside images. If the text is written and saved on the image itself, and not within the website content, search engines will not be able to read it.

See the text in the gradient to the right for an example of what not to do with web images.. Place your mouse cursor over the text on the image and notice how your computer does not recognize the text and does not switch your mouse pointer as it should when it hovers over text.

Try, try, try, and keep on trying is the rule that must be followed to become an expert in anything.

02

Safe Browsing (https://)

HTTPS is the secure version of HTTP, which is the main protocol used to send data between a web browser and a website. HTTPS encrypts communications and provides a more secure and safe environment for website owners and visitors. HTTPS has become an expectation for websites, as popular browsers like Chrome will even alert visitors who are attempting to visit a website without HTTPS, and urge them to visit elsewhere. Additionally, websites with HTTPS consistently rank better than those without it.

To secure your website with HTTPS, you need to acquire an SSL certificate. This can be done using several online services, and several hosting providers will automatically manage and renew your SSL certificate for you.

WHAT OTHER FACTORS AFFECT RANKING? CONT.

03
Content Quality
The primary focus of all your content should always be quality. High-quality content keeps readers engaged and encourages interaction. Search engines use factors like time spent on pages and websites to determine where to rank content.

04
Content Length
In general, the best performing blogs and articles range from 2100 to 2400 words. However, it is acceptable to slightly deviate from that number. For example, your pillar page (the primary, most important piece of content on your website) should be marginally longer than 2400 words, while your supporting blogs can be shorter than 2100.

05
Unique Content
Search engines are quick to recognize plagiarism and punish websites for not creating unique content. While it's a good idea to read other content to inspire your own, it's crucial to create content that is completely unique to you and offers something fresh to your readers.

06
Website Speed
Since search engines are essentially recommending websites to their users with their ranking, it's important to them that the websites perform at a high level. Studies have shown that your website homepage needs to load within 1.65 seconds to have a chance at ranking on the first page of Google. The best methods to speed up your website include optimizing images, using a content delivery system, and investing in robust, private hosting.

CHAPTER 3

BEST PRACTICES TO RAISE YOUR RANKING

BEST PRACTICES **TO RAISE YOUR RANKINGS**

☑ Keyword Research

Finding valuable and non-competitive keywords is key to SEO success. Use tools like SEMRush to discover keywords and phrases that will drive traffic to your website and aren't already dominated by high-authority websites.

☑ Avoid Keyword Stuffing

Once you've found your keywords, insert them in your content naturally and conversationally. Search engines look unfavorably on keyword stuffing, which refers to inserting your keywords too many times in your content in way that reads unnatural.

☑ Include META Tags

META elements are tags used in HTML and XHTML documents to provide structured metadata about a web page. In other words, this is an opportunity to directly tell search engines what your content is about. Be natural and concise, and don't forget to include your keywords and phrases!

☑ Keywords in Titles, Page Names & URLs

It's important to include your keywords in your article titles, page names and URLs. Ensure that your keywords are not the only words in these sections, and are instead seamlessly worked in.

☑ Longtail Keyword Phrases

A unique and effective way to increase your ranking is by facilitating longtail keyword phrases. As the name suggests, these are longer search phrases instead of just keywords. For example, instead of using the keywords "affordable televisions" you would use "5 most affordable televisions in 2022."

☑ Optimize Images

One of the most common factors that hurts the speed and performance of websites are large images. Optimizing your images adjusts their size to exactly what is necessary and nothing more. For example, if an image is displaying as 1000x1000 pixels on your website, but its original uploaded size is 2400x2400, optimizing the image will reduce it down to 1000x1000 and save memory and storage on your website, which increases speed.

☑ H1, H2, H3 Tags

H Tags are used to create headers and titles within your content. This increases the readability of your content by improving its organization, which makes it easier for search engines to understand and rank.

SEO
ANALYTIC TOOLS

SEMRUSH

A leading keyword research tool. Extremely valuable for discovering the volume and competitiveness of keywords. It's a good idea to always refer to SEMrush before selecting the keywords for a piece of content.

YOAST SEO

A holistic SEO platform that can manage and monitor the content on your website and provide suggestions. Yoast can also automatically create Meta tags for you.

HUBSPOT

Build your search authority and outrank competitors with HubSpot tools that help you plan your content strategy and optimize for SEO as you type.

SMALL SEO TOOLS PLAGIARISM CHECKER

Avoid your content being blacklisted for plagiarism by using this free checker to ensure you're always creating original content.

GET A FREE EVALUATION NOW

CONCLUSION

We hope this guide has provided some knowledge and peace of mind regarding the SEO process. Search engine optimization is not as daunting of a task as many like to make it seem and can often be accomplished by creating high quality content that includes well researched keywords and elements like meta tags. The most important thing is to get out there and start optimizing, be patient, and enjoy the results as they begin to roll-in.

Vonazon is a full-service marketing agency that are experts in SEO. We can guide you through writing SEO friendly content that will deliver traffic to your website. Contact us today to speak with our expert team and start growing your business using SEO and other brilliant marketing tactics.

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