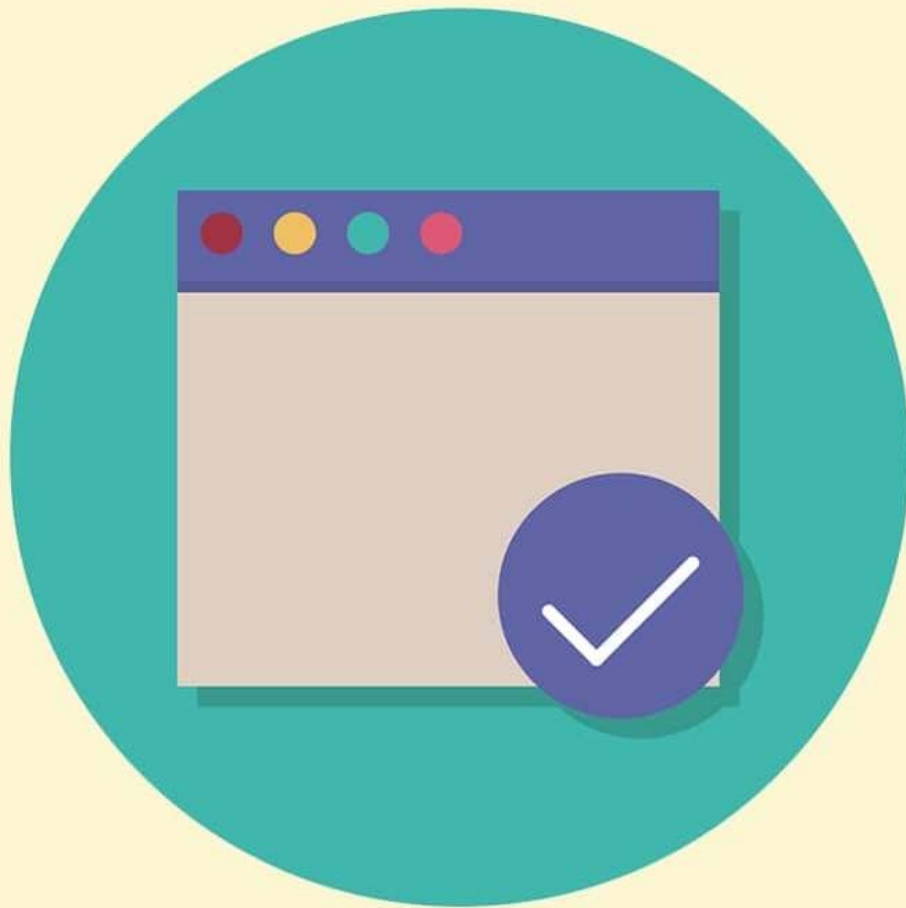


SEO FOR BEGINNERS



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THE TECHNIQUES YOU NEED
FOR FREE ORGANIC TRAFFIC

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Introduction

Managing a website doesn't have to be hard. It does have to be planned. If you want to be a successful online entrepreneur, you need to do certain things that keep the search engines happy. When you take action in your business according to particular methods and systems, you effectively tell the Internet what your business is about.

The search engines will then send you traffic (web surfers) that they think will benefit from what you offer. This is what makes optimizing for the search engines so important. If you don't do your job correctly, you get traffic that doesn't really care about what you have to say. Done properly, you get plenty of free and targeted traffic, the exact people that you are looking for.

This means that when you do SEO correctly, the people that end up on your website are happy. You are happy. The search engines are happy because they sent web surfers to a website that is related to exactly what those surfers were searching for. So in this way, you could look at search engine optimization as an online dating service – when everything goes right, you and your website visitors are a match made in heaven.



In this guide on SEO for beginners, you'll get started by understanding exactly what search engine optimization is. You will find out that there are different types of SEO, why you should use SEO to build your website, and some simple web design tricks and tools to make your job easier.

Then we will take a simple look at specific ways to create SEO-friendly content, some myths you need to know about search engine optimization, and ways you can track whether your efforts are paying off or not. You will learn the importance of social media in an SEO campaign, and you will discover a couple of "old school" SEO tactics that don't work anymore, and could get your site sandboxed or otherwise penalized by Google. Let's get started by defining search engine optimization.

What is SEO?

In defining search engine optimization, we are going to talk about how Google wants you to conduct business on your blog. There are obviously other search engines, like Yahoo and Bing, but the Big G is far and away the most influential search engine. Practice the SEO tactics you will learn in this report, and you will find you are keeping the other search engines happy as well.



The 2 Basic Functions of Search Engines

Search engines are just large pieces of code. They have 2 basic functions –

1. Crawling the World Wide Web to build an index of webpages, and
2. To give web surfers a list of webpages the search engines think are relevant to whatever people are searching for.

That's really all search engines do. They are a tool for searching the Internet. They have pieces of code called "spiders" that "crawl" all over the web constantly. They are always looking for updated information and new webpages. When they find a page that they have not indexed yet, they add that page to their search engine index.

Then the next time someone is searching the web, if they are looking for information that is on your website, the search engine will decide if that page is more or less relevant than all the other pages related to that topic. This is how Google comes up with a ranking order, listing the most relevant search terms in their opinion on the first page of results, numbered 1 through 10.

What Search Engines Say About SEO

SEO, as you know, stands for search engine optimization. You want to optimize your content for search engines, which means you want to make sure you tell Google and the other search engines precisely and exactly what your webpage is about. In the olden days, there were several tactics you could use to "trick" Google and manipulate the system.

This let really poor content get massive traffic. The web surfers were not happy, they let Google know what they thought, and now Google has changed for the better. While there are still SEO practices you need to follow, and we will cover those in a bit, as long as you produce lots of great content and you keep your readers happy and coming back for more, you will have to do minimal SEO work.



Since Google provides the most search results and traffic on the web, let's see what they have to say about smart SEO practices.

"Make pages primarily for users, not for search engines. Don't deceive your users or present different content to search engines than you display to users, a practice commonly referred to as cloaking."

In other words, don't write for search engine spiders, write for human beings. Solve problems. Care about your audience. Give away great information for free. Do those things, and SEO will largely take care of itself.

The 2 Different Types of SEO

There are dozens, if not hundreds, of search engine optimization practices. They all boil down to the following 2 different types of SEO.

1. On-Page SEO
2. Off-Page SEO

These are pretty self-explanatory. When you attempt to get the attention of search engines by working on a webpage or on your blog, this is on-page SEO. Off-page SEO refers to how authoritative your site is, and how popular it is. Put another way, on-page factors determine what phrases and words and topics you are going to rank for in the search engines. How high you rank for those particular search results is generally determined by your off-page SEO efforts.

On-page SEO work will include title tags, blog posts and other content, internal, in-site linking and page load speed. When you are building a presence on Facebook to drive traffic back to your blog, that is off-page SEO.

Why Should I Use SEO?

Guess what? You are actually using search engine optimization tactics whether you know it or not. If you don't intentionally try to make your headings, URL structure and alt text for images pleasing to the search engines, you are practicing bad SEO without knowing it. However you have built your website, you have been influencing the search engines, either positively or negatively.

Once someone discovers your website, they will usually go back to see your new content by typing in the name of your website. They may even add you as a favorite in their browser, and simply access your content that way. However, until someone discovers you and what you have to offer, the search engines are the primary way people are going to find you.

This is the premier reason for using search engine optimization... to get found.

Without it, you are just hoping that Google somehow stumbles across your website, figures out what topic or topics you are writing about, and then hopefully send you lots of traffic that is relevant and targeted. You have put a lot of work into your website content, so it makes no sense to just pray for luck where traffic and success is concerned.

SEO is important so that web surfers find your blog through the search engines. Without smart SEO practices, and there are fewer than you may imagine you need to make to have a significant impact, Google may never index your content, and all of your hard work could be for naught. If you plan on turning your website into a successful business, SEO is a must.



SEO-Friendly Design & Development and Creating Search Engine-Loving Content

The simplest web design tip you can practice is to have a professional developer build your site for you. In some cases though, you just don't have the money to pay a web designer. The same is true for hiring an SEO specialist. No worries, because the following practices, tools and techniques make designing and developing your website SEO-friendly, without being a pain in the neck, and they are rather easy to implement as well.

Use WordPress

There is a reason WordPress is the most popular website and blogging platform in the world. It is simple, there are thousands upon thousands of easy drag-and-drop templates and widgets that can accomplish whatever you want to do in a snap, and if you do hire a web designer, you can bet they are going to be familiar with the WordPress platform. If you are just getting started with your blog or website, consider using the [WordPress platform](#).

Using Alt Text for Images

Alt text will appear when an image on your blog does not display properly. Alt text is also used by screen reading software to help blind web surfers understand what your image is about. Since search engines crawl your images in a way that is very similar to how screen reading software works, adding relevant and explanatory text to your images is a must for good SEO.

Respect Your Headings

Anything you apply an H1 tag to is going to get mad respect from the search engines. Your headings are generally the largest words on your webpage, and search engines understand that as a sign that they are important. Having different target keywords and relevant phrases in your headings is a smart and simple SEO move, and it lets search engines know exactly what your webpages and blog posts are about.

Consider an Exact Match Domain

If you are blogging about essential oils and aromatherapy, does "Susie'sHealthandWellnessSite.com" really tell the search engines or your audience what you are all about? A better SEO choice would be "BestAromatherapyandEssentialOils.com", considering of course whether or not that would be available.

Having an exact match domain is not as important as it used to be in the eyes of the search engines, but it is still a factor search engines like Google use to understand what your blog is about.

Make Your Content Relevant... and Long

If your website focuses on weight loss tips for brand-new moms that just had a baby, writing a blog post about a recent fishing trip would confuse the search engines ... and your visitors. Focus on one topic on your website, and then make posts and deliver content that is relevant to that topic.

The old *"400 words of content is plenty"* rule does not apply any longer. Study after study shows that your blog posts and webpages should deliver more than 1,200 words of content, and more than 2,000 words if possible, if you want to please Big G and the other search engines. Just remember that you don't want to add filler. Make your content useful, solve problems, answer questions and help people.



Include Internal Links

Google has said repeatedly that each one of your webpages or blog posts should link to "at least one other static text link" on your site. This means including a keyword or phrase on one webpage that includes a clickable link to another page of your site that is about that same topic or phrase.

Include Smart Title Tags

Title tags are targeted keywords that you place in the title of each page on your website. Like an exact match domain name and headings, including words that tell the search engine what each webpage is about improve your ability to be found by the target audience you are looking for.

Keyword Research and Its Importance in SEO

You could make an argument that proper keyword research and implementation is the most important, and effective, SEO tool. That is because good keyword research...

1 – Helps you rank for the right keywords and phrases

2 – Reveals words and phrases relevant to your niche that are easy, moderately difficult and difficult to rank for

Without doing keyword research, you may chase particular words and phrases that have very difficult competition. There is absolutely no reason to even attempt to out-SEO the huge websites and companies that rank high for terms like "weight loss". After you do some keyword research, you may find that a term such as "over 50 weight loss tips" is much easier to rank for, because it has a lot less competition.

Here are a few different types of keywords.

- Longtail keywords – phrases with 3 or more words
- Navigational keywords – YouTube and Procter & Gamble are examples of keywords used to locate a particular website or brand
- Head-term keywords – These are words or phrases you want to rank for that contain just 1 or 2 words
- Informational keywords – Keyword phrases which begin "how to ..." or "where can I find ..." are used to inform your visitors
- Transactional keywords – These are keywords and phrases which are farther along the buying cycle, such as "buy tennis shoes online" or "where can I buy ..."

Here are a few popular free and paid keyword research tools.

- Google Adwords: Keyword Planner
- Market Samurai
- Soovle
- Google Correlate
- Uber Suggest
- AdWord & SEO Keyword Permutation Generator
- KWFinder
- Moz Keyword Explorer
- SEMRush

My personal favorite is [Market Samurai](#). The applications in the software include the right way to do keyword research and how to break those keywords down into what's relevant and what's not.

You might have seen the way that Google has some keyword phrases set up in a way that doesn't make sense – you know the ones – you have to be really creative when using them or otherwise your content sounds like a four year old tried to write it.

When some marketers see the results from these misplaced keywords, they think they've hit the big time and found a niche that few people are using. The reason the numbers return low in that keyword search is because the keywords don't work correctly and if you base your business on those keywords to get your traffic, success will elude you.

Market Samurai shows you how to avoid that trap, how to tap into the Broad Match Ratio to bypass keywords that can be dangerous to the health of your business. It shows you instead how to tap into the vein to get – not just any keywords – but the ones that bring you high traffic – the ones that don't just give you first place in ranking, but give you that all important click through rate with high traffic volumes.

To download a free copy of Market Samurai, [click here](#).

Common SEO Myths

There are some truths and some lies about search engine optimization you need to know. Keep the following points in mind every time you attempt to let the search engines know what you are writing about, and when you are trying to rank high for particular keywords.

Myth – Search Engine Optimization Will Get You Penalized by Google

If you practice 'black-hat' SEO tactics, you certainly do run the risk of getting delisted by Google, Bing, Yahoo and others. Paying link farms for thousands of backlinks to your site and buying fake reviews for your products and services is not a smart way to grab Google's attention. However, smart SEO practices, such as adding alt text to your images and internally linking your content are things that Google appreciates you doing.

Myth – Linking Multiple Websites on the Same Topic or Niche Will Get You Lots of Traffic

This used to be a very effective SEO tactic. You would build 5 or 10 blogs or websites, all on the same basic topic. You would link one to another, and that website to the next, continuing until you had a complete circle of sites linked to one another. Then each one of those sites would point directly to your main blog. Google has come out in recent years and said that they do not look very fondly on this practice.

Myth - SEO Is a One-Time Job

Search engine algorithms are always changing. You are always adding new content to your site, or you should be. Some content gets outdated. Links may "die", because the websites you are linking to and from disappear. There are a lot of reasons for looking at search engine optimization as an ongoing process, and not a one-time job.

Myth – Google Hates Link Building

When Google's own John Mueller in 2015 stated that link building is something he would try to avoid if he wanted to keep Google happy and he was building a website, concerned bloggers began pulling down their backlinks.

Natural backlinks, internal backlinks and other healthy SEO practices are appreciated by the search engines. They let search engines know how influential your site is, and where your traffic is coming from. What Mueller was referring to is the practice of building hundreds or thousands of links to a site or webpage that are not naturally and honestly created.

Myth – All You Have to Do Is Rank Really High for One Monster Keyword and Your SEO Work Is Done

No, you really don't want to do that. Writing tons and tons of content trying to link your blog posts and web content only for the keyword phrase "*how to make money blogging*" is a waste of time. The best way to rank for any particular niche or topic is to have several long, relevant, valuable pieces of content that have to do with all the topics and keywords and phrases that relate to your main focus.

This will get you traffic coming in for multiple longtail and shorter keywords and phrases. When Google sees that a whole bunch of different words and phrases, all related to a particular niche, are sending people to your site, each one of those individual keywords begins to rise in the rankings. Target multiple, relevant keywords and phrases, rather than just one or two.

Tracking Your SEO Success

Web analytics give you valuable insights into the people that show up on your website. There are incredibly useful pieces of software and analytic platforms that can show your visitors' demographics, the actions they take when they're on your site, their interests and the keywords that led them to you.

This means you definitely must have a Google Analytics account.

Google is the king of the search engines. So it would only make sense to let them tell you what they think is important about how people get to your webpages, and what they do once they are there. Honestly, signing up for a Google Analytics account and digging into the information is absolutely crucial for SEO success.

If you do not take advantage of the Google Analytics data that is being compiled and that is free to access, you may as well try to fly a plane as a rookie pilot with a blindfold on. Go to the following link now and sign up for an account if you do not already have one. It is free to do so.

<http://www.google.com/analytics/>

Once you have an account, give your GA about 30 days to start compiling information. After that time, you can use this analytic platform to compare your website's performance on two separate dates. You can also look at your progress or lack of progress regarding traffic and other metrics over a long time-frame, and access plenty of other free information that basically tells you what content is working for you and what content is not.

Once in GA, click on the "Acquisition" tab on the left. Scroll down to the "All Traffic" section and you can see how many people are arriving on your website, and where they came from. When you notice that a particular website or social media channel is delivering the bulk of your traffic, it is very easy to focus your content marketing and SEO efforts in that area.

Another powerful tool in Google Analytics is the "Organic Search Report". This report lets you measure your overall performance of search engine traffic, exactly how many people Google is sending to your website because they searched for keywords and phrases relevant your blog.

Page views, unique page views, total numbers of sessions, total numbers of users, and conversion rates are all important pieces of data Google compiles and presents to you in GA.

This is the biggest search engine in the world telling you exactly what is working for your site, and what isn't. You can then take the appropriate action to improve your performance.

The following tools are also good for tracking your level of SEO success.

- GetClicky.com
- Have a Mint.com
- ChurchAnalytics.com
- KissMetrics.com

For WordPress blogs and websites, use ...

- Google Analytics by Monster Insights
- AFS Analytics
- Jetpack by WordPress.com
- Simple Feed Stats
- WP Power Stats
- WP Statistics

Social Media as an SEO Tool

You probably don't need to be told that Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest are what are known as social media sites. People hang out there to socialize. They don't go there to be sold something. Social media networks are where people go to let their hair down, and in general, they have less than professional attitudes and expectations.

Social media is important for your website success, especially as an SEO tool. One of the most important pieces of the Google algorithm when they consider where they are going to rank your website for certain words and phrases is authority. If you take two identical websites, and one has an active social media following of 2,000 people, and the other one only has 200 people reading that site's content, take a wild guess as to which one Google is going to favor in the search engine rankings because of a higher authority score.

Get active on your social media networks. Don't try to sell. Simply inform and have fun. See what people are talking about and how they are behaving, and act in the same way. For every 3 or 4 posts or updates that are informational, fun and contain no links back to your blog, post an article or blog update to your social media accounts with a link back to your content.



2 Successful "Old School" SEO Methods That Don't Work Anymore

The following 2 SEO techniques used to be extremely good at getting you relevant traffic. Not only do they not work anymore, Google frowns upon them, and is more likely to punish you than reward you for these tactics.

1 - High Keyword Density Doesn't Work Anymore

Back in the earliest part of the 21st century, you could simply cram the same keyword into your content over and over, and Google would send you traffic. In some cases, the traffic was significant. Unfortunately, content like this just doesn't read properly. Consider the following.

"Dog training programs are great for training dogs. If you are looking for a dog training program, there are probably some behavioral issues you are trying to correct with your pooch. You could purchase a dog training program online, or buy a book about dog training. If you would like to see some highly rated dog training programs, check our list below."

That was probably very hard for you to read. It just doesn't flow. You keep getting pounded in the head about dog training programs, and in the old days, this type of writing would get lots of traffic. Make sure you don't do this, and you write to be understood first. Then you can go back and add industry-specific keywords here and there.

Keyword density is a phrase that describes how many times every 100 words you have a particular keyword or phrase. In the above example about dog training programs, the keyword density is roughly 6.6%. That means every 100 words, the phrase "dog training program(s)" would be found 6.6 times. Yikes! That's too much, and Google will spank you.

These days, having a particular word or a variation of the word 2 times every 100 words is more than enough to let the search engines know what your content is about.

2 - Change up Your Anchor Text

Anchor text is the text which is contained in an external link that points to one of your blog posts or webpages. In the past, again using the above example, you would have almost all your backlinks containing the anchor text "dog training program".

Just like keyword stuffing, this doesn't make Google very happy anymore. They want content that is natural. If you have a blog post that has 100 backlinks pointing to it from other sites and social media channels, you want several words and phrases that are related to the main idea of that blog post. If you are writing about dog training, you may want the anchor text on incoming links to use several of the following dog training-related phrases.

- Dog training
- Dog training programs
- How to train your dog
- Housebreaking your puppy
- Teaching your dog to heel
- Stopping your dog from biting



All those phrases ensure that Google will send you traffic related to those topics.

Google likes to see variety, with that variety having a central focus or theme. Be sure to use anchor text that definitely relates to whatever webpage or blog post you are pointing to, and focus on several relevant phrases rather than using only one.