

WHAT IS SEO?

The Introductory Guide to Search Engine Optimization in 2017

PART 1: INTRODUCTION TO SEO	3	PART 4: IDENTIFY KEYWORDS	38
What is SEO?		Identify long-tail keywords	
How search engines work		How to check your web analytics	
How to rank on search engine results pages		Tools for keyword research	
Long-tail concept & theory		How to search for keywords	
Content is king			
How to develop an SEO strategy		PART 5: ANALYZE SEO PERFORMANCE	45
		Traffic	
PART 2: ON-PAGE SEO	20	Leads/ROI	
Indexability		Indexed pages	
URL structure		Inbound links	
Images		Keyword	
Title tags & meta tags		Rankings	
Headline tags		Technical status	
Internal links performance			
Mobile optimization		PART 6: WHAT COMES NEXT?	50
		Create a list of keywords	
PART 3: OFF-PAGE SEO	30	Create pages focused on keywords	
Google updates		Start blog	
How to use social media to distribute content		Create a link building plan	
How to use email to distribute content		Keep up to date with SEO news & methods	
Guest posting			
Blogging		SEO GLOSSARY & OTHER RESOURCES	54

A photograph of a silver MacBook Air laptop on a wooden desk. The laptop screen shows the Google search homepage in Portuguese, with the text 'Google Brasil' and a search bar. In the background, there is a magnifying glass and a water bottle. A white text box is overlaid on the laptop screen.

Part 1: Introduction to SEO

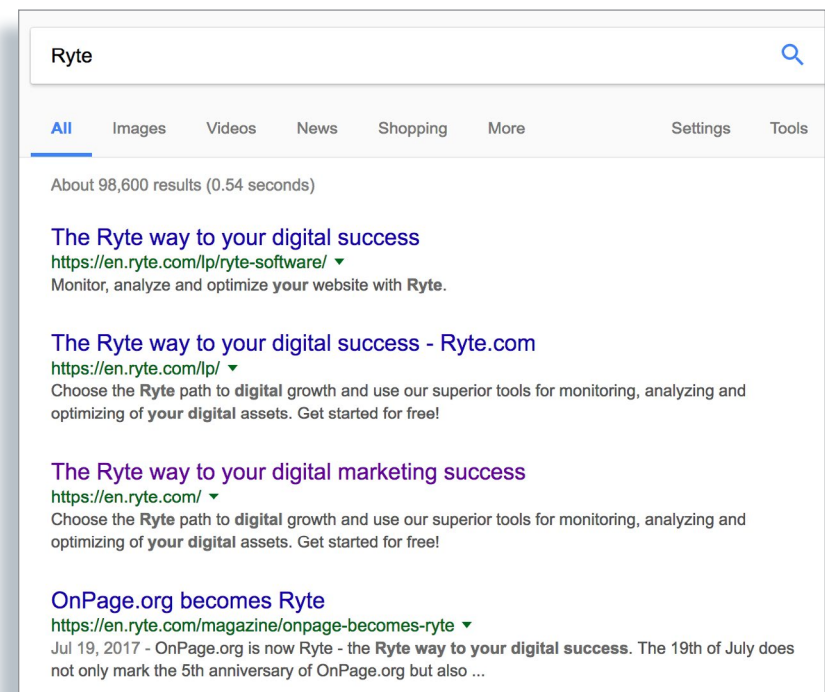
WHAT IS SEO?

“Search Engine Optimization” (SEO) refers to techniques that help you achieve better rankings for your website in organic search results.

Search Engine Optimization is all about making your website more visible to people who are using search engines to look for your product, brand, or services.

SEO is part of the general area of search engine marketing (SEM), which groups all marketing strategies related to searching processes. SEM is part of online marketing and covers both paid and organic search queries. All the measures that involve you paying to place ads in search engines are grouped together under SEA (search engine advertising). So, the SEM area is made up of both SEA and SEO.

SEA measures involve you paying for your website to be listed in the display area of a search engine when particular search queries or phrases are entered. Organic and paid listings both appear on the search results page. However, they appear at different positions on the results page. Paid text ads are also marked as such.





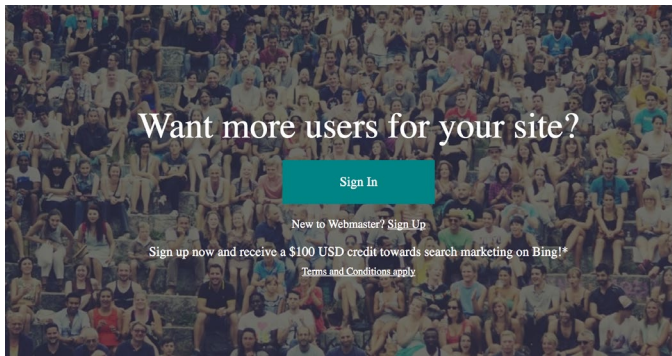
Why is it so important that your website is listed on search engines?

Each year more than 2.8 trillion search queries are made on Google alone. This means that Google answers more than 88,700 searches worldwide per second.¹ In other words: **Every second that your website is not indexed on Google, you miss out on hundreds, if not thousands, of opportunities in which someone might have accessed your website, viewed your content, and bought your product or services.**

By optimizing your website for search engines, not only can you improve its ranking, and thus be found by potential customers, but you can also create a better user experience. That is the key to SEO: you are optimizing for your visitors, not just for search engines.

Good SEO is long-term and follows guidelines.

Check out Bing's Webmaster tools:



Successful search engine optimization does not consist of short-term actions to achieve good rankings rapidly. Rather, SEO is a constant process, in which you are continually changing your website.

These changes are important because search engines are always upgrading and changing their criteria for good rankings. So, as the webmaster, you should always be aiming to give users and search engines the best possible result for every relevant search query.

You will satisfy users' needs by providing unique content and a website that works well on any device.

Check out Google's Webmaster tools:



SEO measures will help you to achieve this goal. To achieve and maintain good placements on result pages (SERPs) over the long term, you should follow the search engine's guidelines and focus on your target visitors (this approach is called "White Hat SEO"). Google and other search engines very quickly identify non-permitted, manipulative techniques and your website could be penalized.

Such penalties can cause you to drop far down in the rankings.

HOW SEARCH ENGINES WORK

Search engines have one goal: to give the searcher the exact information they are searching for.

For a search engine to be able to display relevant results when a user makes a search query, there has to be an archive of available information for it to select from. This archive is called an index. Every search engine has its own methods for gathering and prioritizing content from websites. Whatever the specific tactics or methods used, this process is known as indexing. Indeed, search engines attempt to scan and index the entire online universe. By doing so they can show you the relevant information when you search for it.

How does this work? Every search engine has a program known as a “bot” or “crawler”. These programs follow links and visit websites. As they do so, they index website content and follow the links on the website to other sites. If your website has not yet been indexed, it will not appear in search results.

Major search engines like Google, Bing, and Yahoo are continually indexing billions of websites. But how do they know what they ought to show you in the SERPs when you start a search query?



There are two key things which help search engines to classify websites:

1. The website's content: When they are indexing websites, the search engines' bots scan every one of a site's URLs and look for the starting points of the topics that are covered. They also browse the HTML code for metadata such as particular tags or markups, so that they can determine the relevance of individual pages to particular subjects.

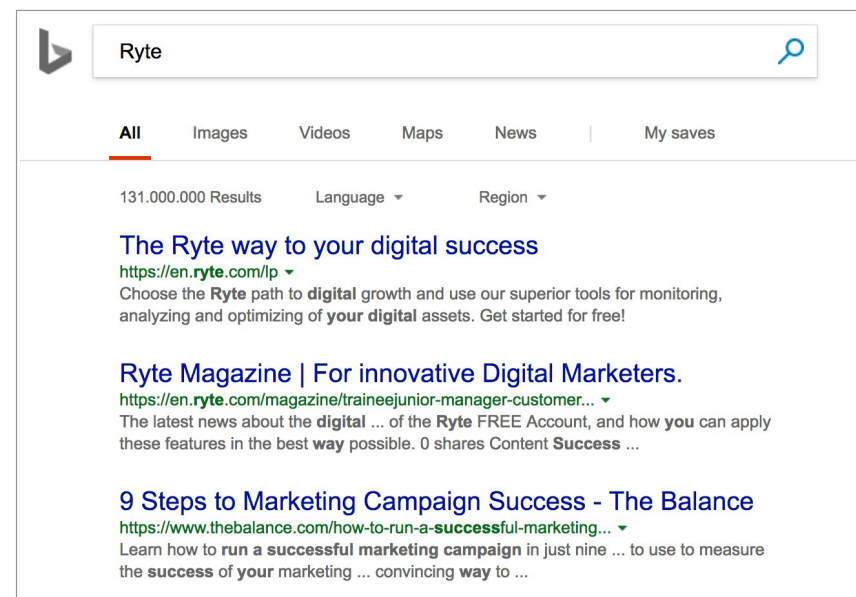
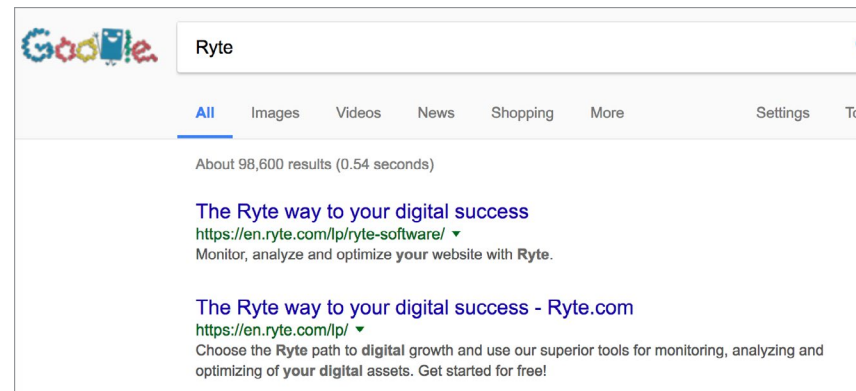
2. Links to the website: While search engine bots are scanning websites for indexing purposes, they also look for links to other websites. The more high-quality inbound links the website has, the greater its link authority. In theory, every inbound link counts as a positive recommendation for a website. However, it is not the quantity of inbound links that plays the biggest role for search engines; it's quality. For example, search engines might rate a link from a trusted website, like the New York Times (nytimes.com), as more valuable than a link from a minor, unrelated blog site. This boost from inbound links is also known as "link juice."

When a search query is being typed, the search engine looks in its index, even while it is being entered, for the most relevant information and displays the results in the SERPs. The results are then sorted by relevance.

When you run the same query on different search engines, you will probably get different results. This is because every search engine uses its own algorithm, based on various so-called “ranking factors.” These factors decide which results appear in the SERPs.

Google uses over 900 different factors to determine the relevance of a website to a search query. Here are some important factors that the search engine algorithm takes into account when ranking a website:

- The website’s content
- The website’s structure and internal links
- The searcher’s geographical location
- Mobile optimization
- Loading times
- Server accessibility
- Social signals (links from social networks)

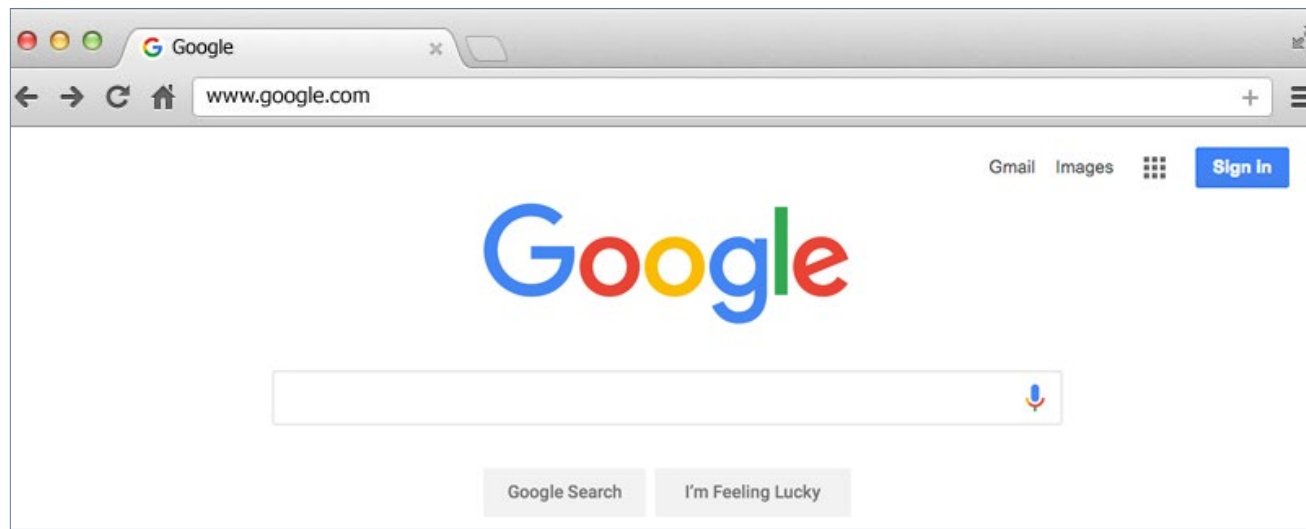


With a market capitalization of USD 470 billion ⁱⁱ, Alphabet Inc. dominates the search engine market with its Google search engine.

Google is the market leader because the company fundamentally revolutionized the way in which search engines work. The search engine group has a market share of over 93 percent in Germany ⁱⁱⁱ, and has held this position continuously for many years. In the United States, Google has a market share of just under 64 percent, followed by BING with over 21 percent. ^{iv}

In the days before Google (around 1997), search engines only indexed websites and took into account factors such as keyword density and keyword meta tags when determining the relevance of websites in relation to search queries. This approach was known as “Black Hat SEO.”

It involved, for example, tactics such as “keyword stuffing,” whereby websites were deliberately created with as many keywords as possible in order to achieve high rankings in the search results.



WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO FOR A GOOD RANKING

It's not difficult to ensure that your website will be indexed by a search engine. But it can be tricky to ensure that it is listed in association with specific keywords. Search engines look at four things when deciding ranking: rank, authority, relevance and technical issues.





RANK

The rank is the position that your website occupies in the SERPs for particular searches. **Your rank is an indicator of how relevant your website is for a search term from the search engine's perspective, and what authority it has.**

It is advisable to check regularly on your website's rank and positions in the SERPs in order to assess whether your SEO measures are having an effect. But because there are also many factors which you cannot influence, you should not get too stressed by rankings. It is perfectly normal if your website sometimes jumps 1-5 places. But if you manage to get your site 10, 20, or 30 places higher, you should be proud of yourself.

About 38,700,000 results (0.83 seconds)

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#1
DSW® Men's & Women's Sneakers - Free Shipping on...
Ad www.dsw.com/Sneakers
4.6 ★★★★★ rating for dsw.com
Shop the Latest Sneakers at DSW®. Order Online & Pick Up In-Store!
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Shop Cheap Athletic Sneakers - Exclusive Deals, Up To...
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Save On Athletic Sneakers & More On Zulily. New Styles Daily, Shop Now!
...Items that celebrate your personal style. – Huffington Post
Ratings: Prices 10/10 - Website 9/10 - Service 8/10 - Selection 8/10

#3
New Jordan Shoes - In Stock - Shop & Save at Eastbay
Ad www.eastbay.com/
Wide Selection of Colors & Sizes.
90-Day Returns · Free Shipping - No Min - 20% Off All Orders \$99+ · Loyalty Club
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AUTHORITY

As was described in the section “How search engines work,” search engines determine the authority and credibility of the content of a website, using such factors as the type and quality of inbound links from other websites. However, a large number of inbound links does not necessarily result in a high ranking. So, search engines also check the authority of sites that link to you, the context of the link, and which anchor text is being used. Another key factor in defining authority is the age of your domain. Older sites typically have a higher trust factor.

RELEVANCE

Relevance is one of the most important ranking factors. Search engines not only detect that you are using certain keywords, they also look for clues as to how relevant your content is to a particular search query. In addition to the actual text on your web pages, search engines also examine their structure, the use of keywords in your URLs, the formatting of the page (such as the use of bold font), and which keywords appear in the title and in the body of the text.

The work done by search engines is highly complex because, ultimately, they aim to try to think like humans.

Google is now extremely advanced and answers around 15 percent of its search queries with the help of artificial intelligence (AI). This AI is called “[Rankbrain](#)” and consists of machine learning algorithms. The fact that search engines are getting smarter has very practical consequences for SEO.

For this reason, it may seem tempting to keep changing your website content to get a better ranking on search engines. However, ultimately you will do better to put more energy into creating relevant, coherent content aimed at your target visitors (and potential customers). The better search engines become, the better quality and more unique your content should be.



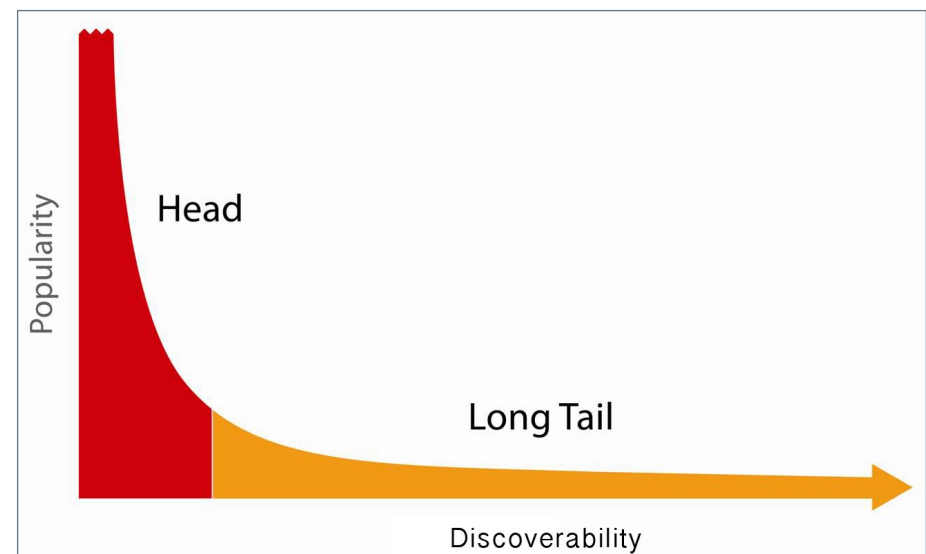
LONG-TAIL CONCEPT AND THEORY



To rank highly in SERPs with your website content, you should choose the path of “least resistance.”

Even though it seems logical, initially, to strive for a ranking using high-traffic keywords and terms, this will most likely result in a lot of frustration and wasted resources. Moreover, the traffic that you will get from a highly competitive keyword, will probably be of poor quality.

There are far more unique search queries than generic ones. **If you added up the search engine traffic of the most popular keywords, the number would not even come close to the amount of unique, niche keywords. This concept is known as “long-tail theory”.**

Choosing the right keywords is not always easy. For example, if you sell shoes, it is likely that you would want your website to rank for the term “shoe store” (a head term). However, if you optimize several pages of your website for a particular pair of shoes, you will have far greater success ranking for the niche keyword.




red tennis shoes with zippers  

All Shopping Images News Maps More Settings Tools

About 6,300,000 results (0.59 seconds)

Images for red tennis shoes with zippers



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Shoes, Women, Zipper, Casual | Shipped Free at Zappos
www.zappos.com/women-shoes/CK_XAToE7g2aDcABAQ.zso ▾
 237 items - Bootie (98) Comfort (77) Euro (44) High Tops (24) Wedges (16) Cowboy Boots (12) Platform (10) Athletic (8) Slouch (8) Ballerina (7) Peep Toe (6) ...

Womens Tennis Shoes With A Zipper - Kmart
www.kmart.com/search=womens%20tennis%20shoes%20with%20a%20zipper ▾
 Genuine Grip Women Slip-Resistant Slip on Zipper Work Shoes #461 Patent Black. \$65.00\$53.99 ... New Balance WC896 Women Round Toe Synthetic Purple Tennis Shoe. \$130.00\$103.99 NATURAL BLACK NAVY RED · \$47.99\$23.99 - ...

Womens Athletic Shoes, Running Shoes | FamousFootwear.com
www.famousfootwear.com ▾ Women's ▾
 Womens Athletic Shoes - Find top brands in running shoes and tennis shoes. ... Enter a street address, city and state, or zip code to find a store near you. Or Use My Current Skechers Women's Flex Appeal 2.0 Insights Memory Foam Sneaker Shoe. 8% OFF Converse Chuck Taylor All Star Low Top Sneaker Red.

Skechers Zipper Athletic Shoes - Sears
www.sears.com/search=skechers%20zipper%20athletic%20shoes ▾
 Skechers Girl's Twinkle Toes Splendorific Pink High-Top Athletic Shoes. \$54.99\$39.99 GO STEP Ikat Athletic Shoes · Beige Black Blue Red ... Sold by Bealls Florida · Levi's Women's Dhalia Zipper Black/Fuchsia High-Low Athletic Shoes.

A good example would be “red tennis shoes with zippers” (a long tail keyword). Of course, the number of people searching for the long tail keyword will be fewer than those who search for “shoe store.” However, you can be pretty sure that those few people get to a far later stage in your sales funnel and are more willing to buy your product than every person that searches for the term “shoe store.”

That is why long tail keywords are so effective. They are aimed at people who want to do something or who are looking for specific information, such as a manual or a service that can solve their problem. If you optimize for long tail keywords you will reap the benefits. You will find it easy to achieve good rankings in search engines, get qualified traffic, and convert that traffic into leads and customers.

CONTENT IS KING

Everyone is familiar with the expression “content is king.” Without rich content, you will find it difficult to achieve good rankings with specific keywords and to direct traffic to your website.

If your content fails to provide your users with any added value or to engross them, it will not help to acquire leads and/or customers. It is impossible to predict how people will search for content and which keywords they will use to do so. So, it is advisable to create content that can fully satisfy the users’ needs. **It is not just about the quantity (huge amounts of text); it’s more about the relevance of the content to potential searches.**

For example, think of potential questions about your offerings and try, with your content, to answer those questions as fully as is necessary and as succinctly as possible. Create unique content which appears nowhere else online. In this way, you can improve the likelihood that your website will achieve better rankings.



As you know, search engines are smart. So, if you create multiple web pages about the same subject, you are wasting your time.

You should instead focus on one web page. When creating content, there are various ways in which you can expand your online presence and improve your ranking chances without repeating yourself in the process:

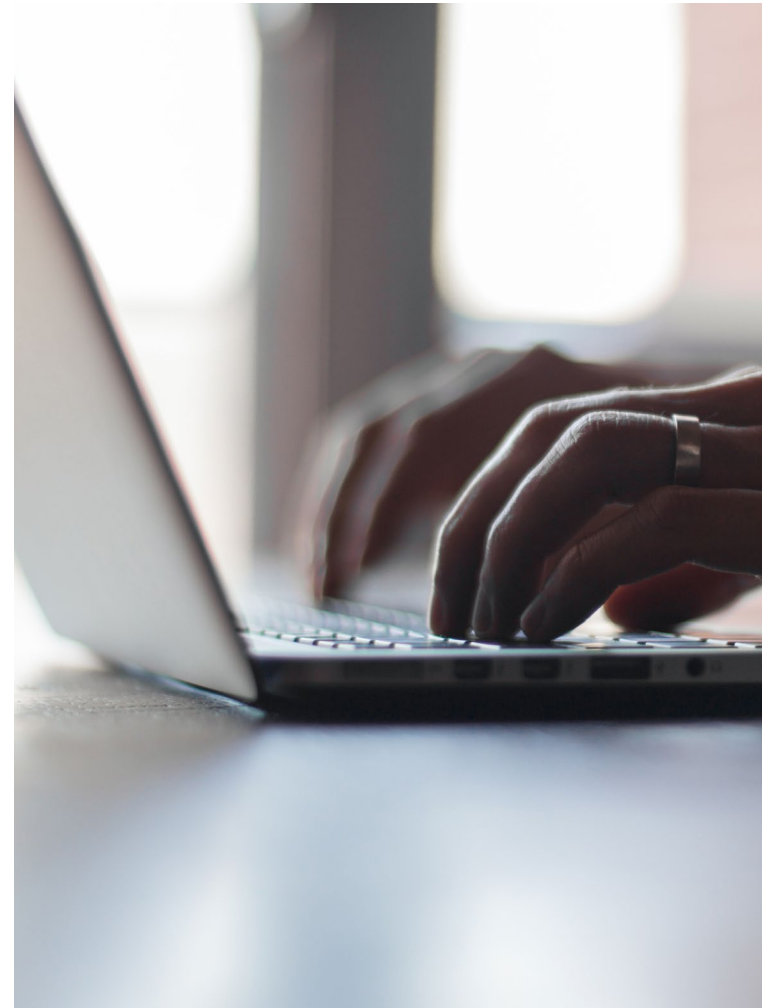
Homepage: Use your website to communicate your value proposition and your general marketing messages (known as “high-level messages”). If there is one page which should be optimized for generic keywords, it is your homepage.

Product/services pages: If you are selling products/services, create a separate page for each service or product.

Knowledge base: Give your users access to a page that offers them added value and provides further information about your subjects. On this page, you can provide graphics, ebooks, and white papers, for example.

Blog: Blogging is a great way to stay up to date while easily generating new, relevant content. **Blogging regularly (ideally once a week at a minimum) can have significant implications for search engine optimization, since each new blog entry represents a new web page.** Practical tips: What makes good content?

- Give your users genuine added value. Try to provide content that no other website has provided yet on the same subject.
- Ensure that you do not optimize your text by just adding the keyword to your text as much as possible. Instead, try to base the content on the term frequency of the top 10 sites in the SERPs.
- Remember that your content should be “holistic.” This means that it covers the topic in full, and includes different formats such as graphics, photos, or videos.
- When you are creating text, keep in mind that web users want to get information quickly. So, express yourself in as much detail as necessary, but as succinctly as possible. For example, avoid long, nested phrases and break up your texts with short paragraphs, bullet points, headings, and images.
- Structure your texts. This will enable your users to better absorb the content.



HOW TO DEVELOP AN SEO STRATEGY

If you are working out an SEO strategy, you should split it into two parts: on-page SEO and off-page SEO. On-page SEO refers to all the measures you can take effect on your own site. These measures make it easier for search engines to find your website, index it, and understand and classify your content. Off-page SEO covers issues which are external to your website and ensure an inflow of high-quality inbound links. Let's start with on-page SEO first.





On-page optimization is one part of search engine optimization and, as the name suggests, it covers all the measures and modifications that are made on your own website. There are several elements on your website which you can influence and which enable search engines to index your content and understand what it is about.



INDEXABILITY

If your website is to be able to achieve any rankings in SERPs, it has to be indexable.

You can affect your website’s indexability, for example, using a small file called “robots.txt.” This is a text file that is stored on your server. This file stores instructions for bots which specify which areas they may crawl and which they may not. When a search engine bot visits your website, it immediately looks for this file and follows its instructions.

The simplest form of a robots.txt file looks like this:

User-agent: *

You then save this content in a text file and save that in your website’s top level directory, for example:

<http://www.mysite.com/robots.txt>

The robots.txt file can also specify areas where the bot is not allowed to crawl. This “ban” is applied using the word “Disallow”:

User-agent: * (all bots)
Disallow: /customerlogin
Disallow: /payments

In principle, you should not restrict the bot with too many exceptions. Search engine bots should be allowed to crawl any areas that are important for displaying the website as users can see it.

Another element you can use to manage your website indexing is the XML sitemap. This is a machine-readable list of all your website’s important URLs. You can create this list in the Google Search Console (a free Google tool for managing and monitoring your website). The XML sitemap gives Google a reference to all your website’s URLs.



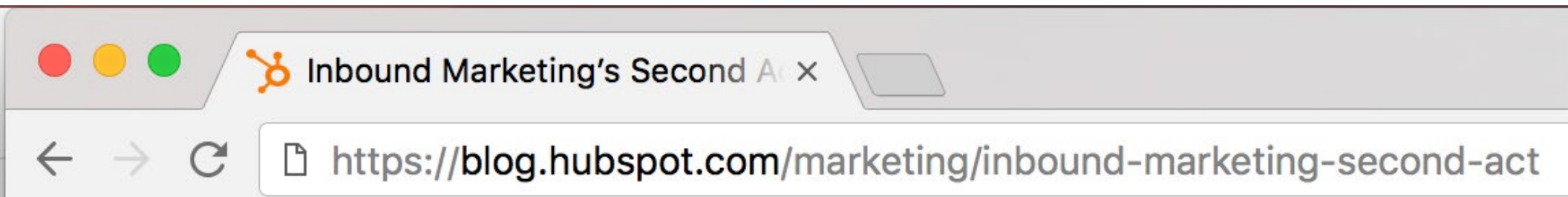
URL STRUCTURE

The structure of your URLs can also help search engines to better understand your website content. If you can alter the URL so that, for example, it includes the name of your website, you should make use of this.

These are so-called “speaking URLs.”

Three tips for a good URL structure:

- Use speaking URLs: By doing so, users know from the URL what is waiting for them on the landing page.
- Avoid superfluous directory levels. This will prevent your website from becoming too confusing.
- Avoid special characters in the URL: They can make it difficult for search engines to crawl.



IMAGES

There is nothing worse than a user landing on your site and being greeted with heaps of text. **Images are a great way to break up pieces of text, and also to communicate with search engines.**

Every image that you upload to your site will have a file name. If you insert the image into your website, your image's file name will also appear in your site's source text.

Since search engines scan your web page code, you should use file names that best describe the content of the image. For example, the name “red tennis shoes velcro. jpg” is more useful than “pic12345.jpg”.

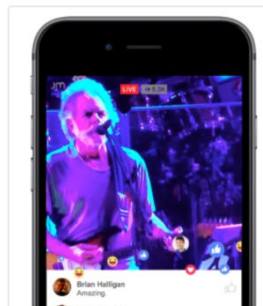
You can also help search engines by adding alt attributes (“alt” stands for “alternative”) to all your images. This metadata consists of a short piece of text which is displayed in the browser as an alternative if the graphic cannot be displayed because of technical problems.

The alt attributes have another purpose, too: They make your website more accessible. For example, reading programs for blind Internet users can read alt attributes.

In short: Reading is out, watching is in. Ten years ago, the power content marketing move was search + written content. Now, it's social media + video content.



And these aren't the hyper-produced, long-form videos from years past. The marketing teams winning the video game today are mastering live, off-the-cuff video. Additionally, Charlie Chaplin would likely raise an eyebrow to learn we've turned away from talkies: [A full 85% of videos today are watched without audio.](#)

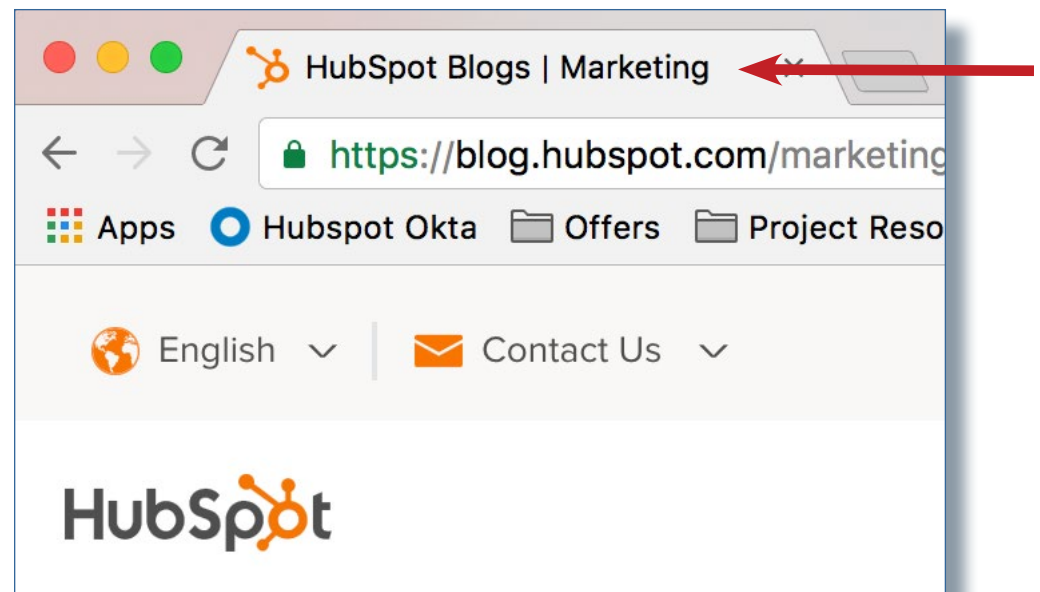


TITLE TAGS & META TAGS

In addition to the actual title bar of your site, every web page that you create has a so-called “title tag.” **This is the snippet of text that appears in the top left-hand corner or in your web browser tab.** The title tag is also shown as a blue link that appears in search engines when your website is listed in a SERP. Title tags have up to 70 characters, so you should choose your words wisely. The title tag is a ranking criterion for Google and other search engines. As title tags are easy to optimize, you should definitely address this issue.

Tips for using title tags:

- Use the website’s central keyword in the title tag.
- Be sure not to exceed the maximum length of the title tag, or it will be truncated in the SERPs.
- If possible, use your brand name in the title tag, for example, your website URL.
- Use a unique title tag for each web page.



The “meta description,” in contrast, is a piece of text that describes what a specific page is about. Meta descriptions are typically displayed as text below the blue links in search engine results. If you have no meta description, search engines usually take a piece of text at random from the content referenced by the link. The meta description is limited to 175 characters.

Tips on using meta descriptions:

- End your meta description with a call to action.
- Do not exceed the maximum length of 175 characters, or the description will be cut off in the SERPs.
- Use a separate description for each web page.

Keep in mind that the title and the description are usually the first elements that a new visitor to your website sees in the SERPs. So you can influence whether or not a visitor clicks on the search result with your website by optimizing the title and description.

The Ryte way to your digital marketing success ← **Title**

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[Ryte Wiki](#) · [Ryte Magazine](#) · [The Ryte affiliate program](#) · [OnPage.org becomes Ryte](#)

HEADLINE TAGS

When search engine crawlers scan your website, they look for clues about the content on your pages. If you use different headline tags, you structure your website's content and make it easier for visitors and crawlers to understand it.

Tips on using headline tags:

- Only use one h1 tag per web page.
- Use the central keyword in the h1 tag.
- Add other h tags in chronological order, i.e., h2, then h3 and h4 tags.

```
<div id="tagline">  
  <h1>Inbound Marketing Blog</h1>  
  <h2>SEO, Blogging, Social Media, Landing Pages,</h2>  
</div>
```

In August 2011, we did a round-up of the [23 best inbound marketing blogs](#) on the internet. But that was soooo two years ago, and it's high time we gave that list a refresh, don't you think?

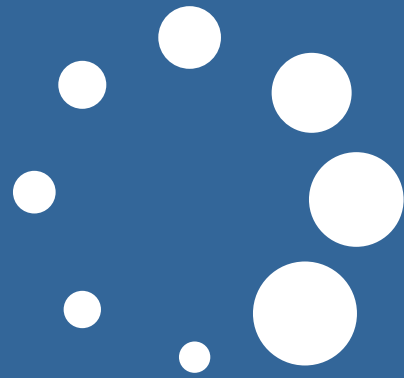
INTERNAL LINKS

Previously, we have only discussed inbound links, i.e., links that lead to your site via other websites. **If you create content on your blog or specific web pages, you should also nonetheless refer to other pages within your website.**

You can do this by adding a link between the pages. We recommend that you use anchor text to do this.

When you use anchor text, it suggests that the linked page is about the keyword or phrase in it. So, you can greatly increase the relevance of a web page to a particular subject or keyword. Meaningful anchor text also greatly improves user-friendliness.

Important: We recommend that you always use the same keyword to link a target page. This helps search engines to recognize that this page in your domain must be extremely relevant to a particular subject or keyword.



LOADING ...

PERFORMANCE

Search engines also assess, in great detail, the technical aspects of your website. For example, how quickly the site loads plays a major role in your website ranking. Search engines also take into account how accessible your server is. Because, ultimately, Google and other search engines want to provide the best possible search results. So, the aim is to guide visitors to sites which work well, and which can always be accessed and used.

Tips for better performance:

- Avoid large image files. They prevent your website from displaying quickly.
- Think about elements such as JavaScript and CSS. They can make it difficult for sites to display when they are first loaded.
- Avoid unnecessary comments in the source code.

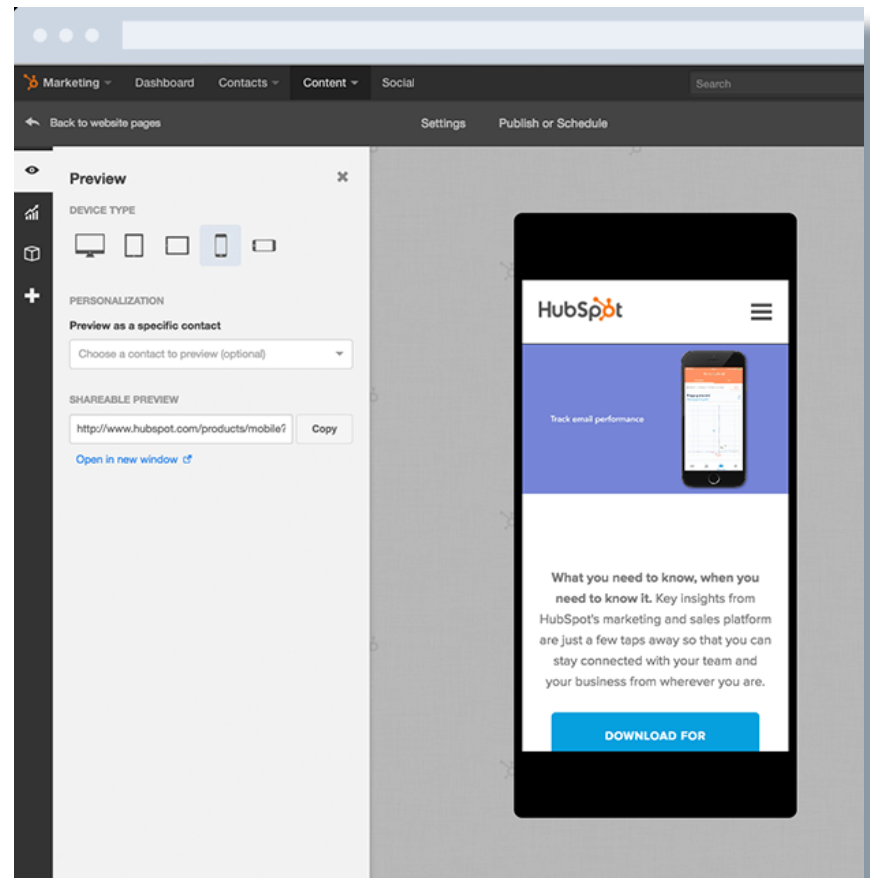
MOBILE OPTIMIZATION

Internet use is now increasingly mobile. Since 2015, mobile friendliness has been a ranking factor for Google. **If your website is not optimized for mobile devices, in statistical terms, you will be giving 50 percent of your visitors a poor user experience.** So good, long-term, on-page optimization also always includes optimizing your website for mobile. This includes all the measures that enable your content to be used easily on smart-phones, etc.

Mobile optimization tips:

- Deploy “responsive web design” if possible. This ensures that your website adjusts to any display size.
- Make sure that image files and other graphics are not too big. This prevents loading times from being unnecessarily increased for mobile users.
- Keep in mind that mobile users will be using touch screens with your website. So buttons should not be too close together.

[A detailed tutorial on mobile optimization is available here.](#)





Part 3: Off-Page SEO

You can use off-page optimization to improve your website's reputation and authority. This depends mainly on inbound links. Off-page optimization involves measures which ensure that good-quality, relevant backlinks are created in the long term. This is also referred to as “link building.”



QUANTITATIVE FACTORS

In theory, it is important for domain popularity that as many backlinks as possible link to a website. However, in the past, backlink quantity caused webmasters to manipulate link building. So these days, link volume is no longer weighted as heavily as it was when the commercial Internet age first began. Google now categorizes links that are bought from other sites, links from online catalogs and mass-created links from blogs as spam.

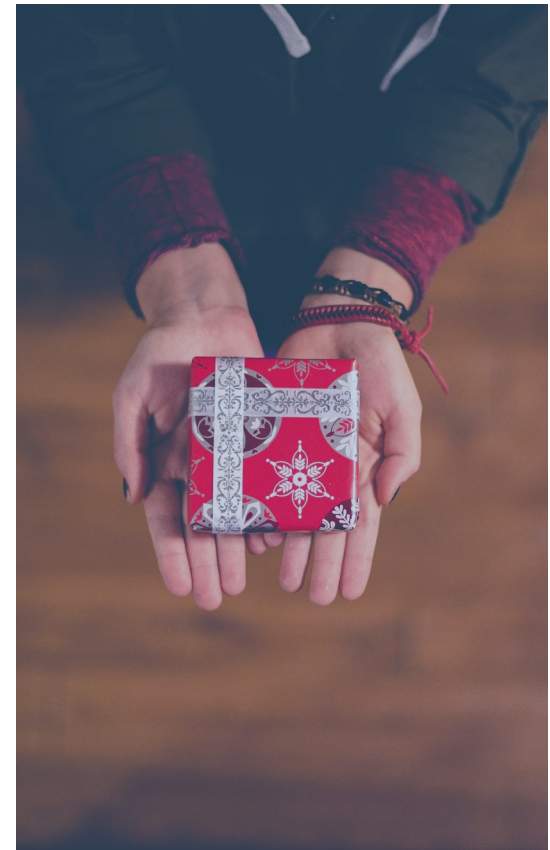
Sites that use these methods contravene webmaster guidelines and are likely to face a penalty in the form of lost ranking or, in the worst case, exclusion from the index. Google itself recommends that large numbers of links are only generated by unique content with added value for users. In the eyes of the search engine, links are automatically set to great content. They should not be created artificially.

QUALITATIVE FACTORS

Search engines evaluate the quality of backlinks. This involves a number of issues which you also need to keep in mind when creating links.

- **Subject relevance:** Google very quickly recognizes if a backlink matches the target page subject. Therefore, backlink content should always relate to the landing page.
- **Anchor text:** The link text should also relate to the target page and, of course, refer to the potential content.
- **Link location:** Google assesses precisely where the backlink was positioned on the linking page. Links from the content are probably rated more highly than links from the footer or the site navigation.
- **Follow or nofollow:** Webmasters can give each outgoing link the attribute “follow” or “nofollow.” This tells search engine bots whether they should follow the link or not. Google recommends that advertising links are given the nofollow tag. This causes these links to not be included in the ranking.

Important: Don't try to improve your website's reputation by buying links or deliberately sharing links. Google has become very good at detecting these types of manipulative measures. It means that you risk falling heavily down in the rankings and it can destroy much of what you have spent time and money on creating.



GOOGLE UPDATES

Google regularly refreshes its search engine algorithms. These are called “Google updates.”

These updates improve search results by gradually optimizing the specifications for website quality and relevance. At the same time, they counter web spam.

Among the best-known Google updates are “Google Panda” and “Google Penguin” in 2011. These two updates have ensured that it is increasingly difficult for websites with poor content and dubious links to achieve good rankings. Though the updates used to be run regularly on fixed dates, Panda and Penguin have been converted to one continuous update. This is steadily improving the Google algorithm and the holes for black hat SEO are narrowing all the time.



Source: Key Path EDU

USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO DISTRIBUTE CONTENT

Social networks play an important role in web use. They are used by billions of users around the world, and numbers are still rising. According to its own figures, Facebook alone had over 1.7 billion active users in the second quarter of 2016.

As well as Facebook, there are several other important social networks, such as Twitter, Tumblr, Instagram, Snapchat, and Pinterest. Social networks for professional purposes, such as LinkedIn and XING, also play an important role in distributing traffic and linking to websites.

Search engines also take into account the traffic generated by links from social networks. It is assumed that these so-called “social signals” can influence a website’s ranking at least when search queries relate to something current.

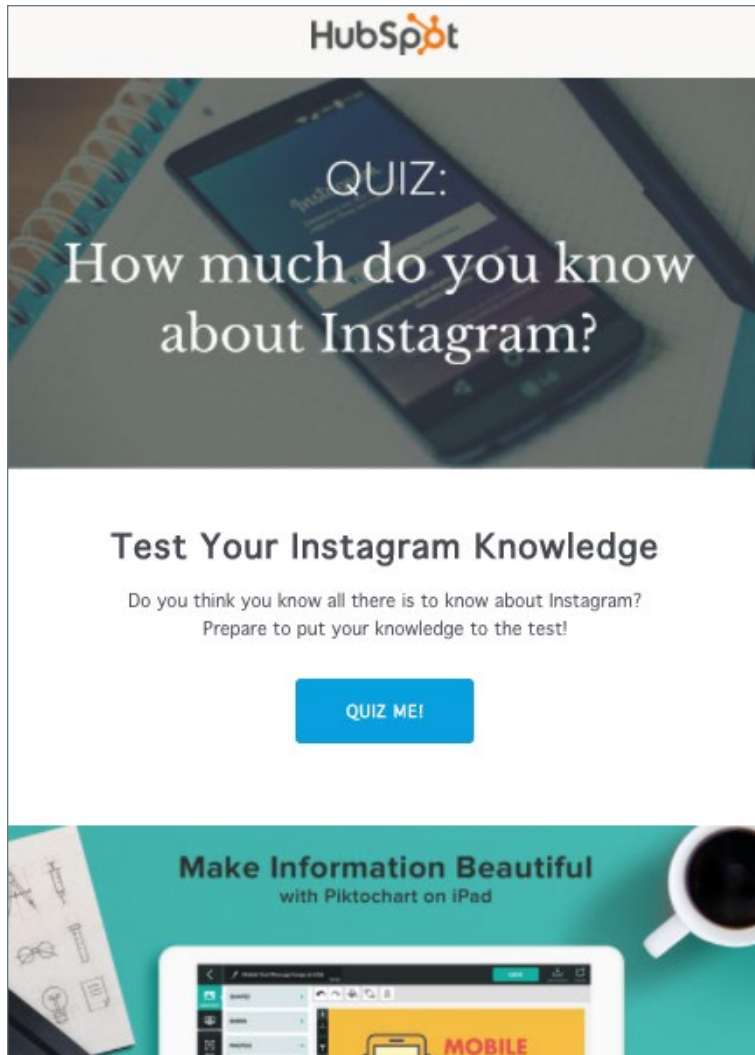
You should not only use social networks to acquire potential new customers, generate leads and build brand awareness, but also keep in mind the SEO benefits of having a brand presence on social networks.

For example, ensure that your content can be easily shared. The easiest way to do this is to put buttons for social networks on your site. HubSpot’s blogging software, for example, is ideal. It automatically adds sharing buttons for you.

Keep in mind, when using social networks, that you should also maintain these channels and regularly “feed” them new content.



USE EMAIL TO DISTRIBUTE CONTENT



These days almost every company uses emails to manage customer relationships (Customer Relationship Management) and to acquire new customers. It is not surprising that email marketing has really taken off in recent years as conventional mail has died out. It has never been easier to set up an email program, to upload address lists, and to communicate with customers. That said, the lightning speed with which business has shifted to email has also reduced its effectiveness across every industry. Now, there is so much email noise that every email that you send has to be useful.

The social network principle of simplicity also applies to your emails. Your emails should include a clear call-to-action, you should maintain your lists, generate leads, and convert them to customers, but you should also make it easy for your email readers to share their content with their friends and post it on social media. This will also extend the reach of your website content and give you more inbound links. Want more tips on email marketing? [Check out this guide.](#)

GUEST ARTICLES

Guest articles are a good way of improving your branding and getting high-quality backlinks. This area of off-page optimization has more to do with editing and PR. So you should look for publication channels that would be a good fit for you to write guest posts. So a key task is researching this type of site that you'd be publishing with.

Once you have found a suitable partner, you can not only generate backlinks but also reinforce your status as a subject expert.




The screenshot shows a HubSpot blog post. At the top is the HubSpot logo and a hamburger menu icon. Below the logo is a navigation bar with 'Marketing' and 'Sales' tabs. The main content area features the author's name 'Sean Zinsmeister', social media icons for Twitter and LinkedIn, and a link to 'http://www.infer.com'. A profile picture of Sean Zinsmeister is shown next to a bio: 'Sean Zinsmeister is senior director of product marketing at Infer. He previously worked at Nitro where he developed and led a global marketing team.' Below the bio is a graphic with the Infer logo and the text 'Thousands of external data points'. To the right of the graphic is the article title '5 Ways to Supercharge Sales with Predictive Lead Scoring' and the category 'SALES / July 5, 2016'.

HubSpot

Marketing Sales

Sean Zinsmeister

<http://www.infer.com>

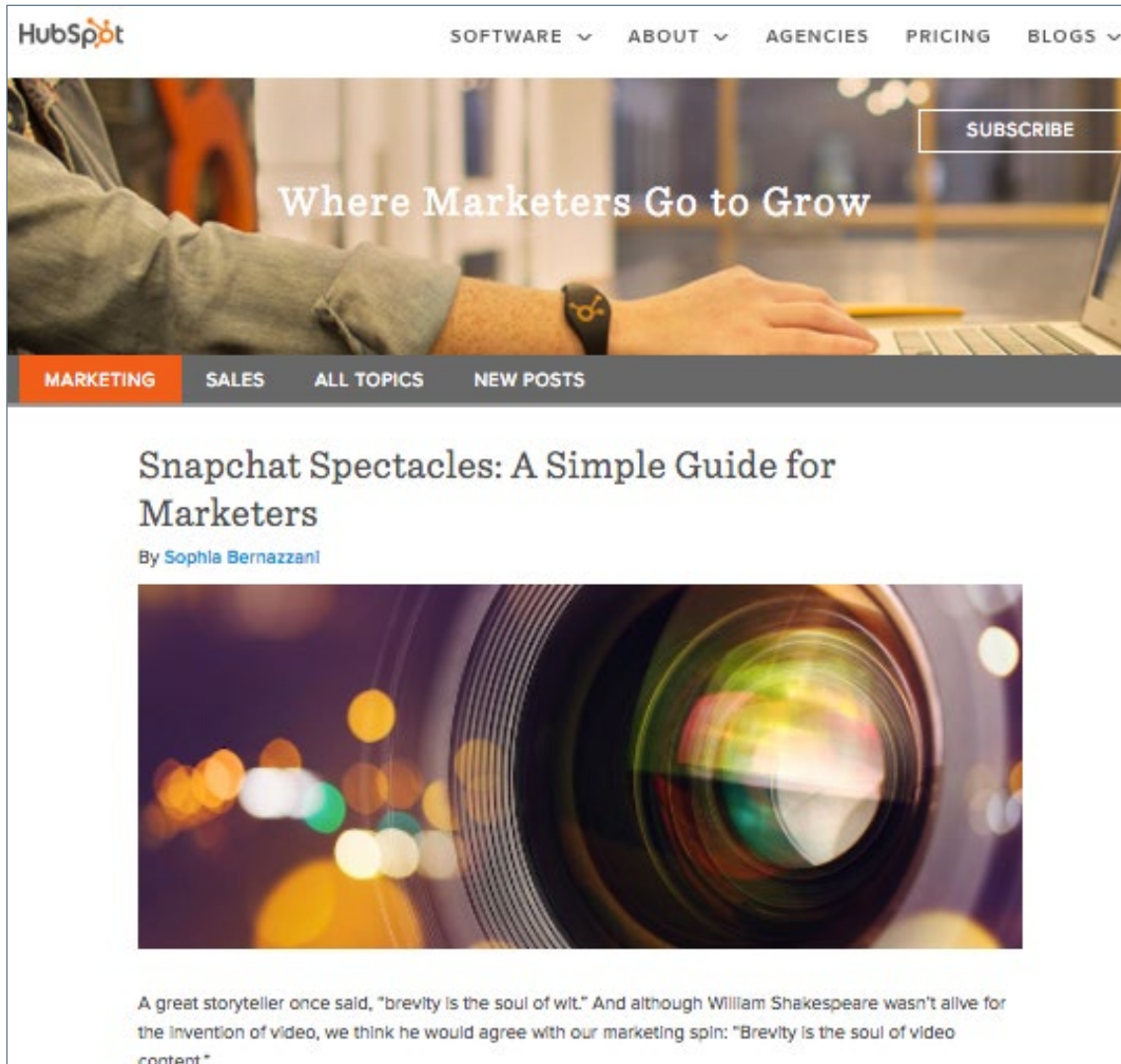


Sean Zinsmeister is senior director of product marketing at Infer. He previously worked at Nitro where he developed and led a global marketing team.

 Thousands of external data points

SALES / July 5, 2016

5 Ways to Supercharge Sales with Predictive Lead Scoring



BLOGGING

Blogs have evolved significantly over the last 10 years. Many companies already run their own blogs and use them to publish articles about their own subject areas and company news. Content by other authors can also be posted. This creates high-quality, relevant content that offers a lot of added value to users, customers, and potential customers.

It enables you to increase traffic to your website while also enabling other users to voluntarily link to you.

If you also share your blog posts on social networks and in your newsletter, you can generate additional traffic.

A close-up, blue-tinted image of a computer keyboard. The keys are visible, including 'Q', 'W', 'E', 'R', 'T', 'Y', 'A', 'S', 'D', 'F', 'G', 'Z', 'X', 'C', and 'V'. A white text box is centered over the keyboard.

Part 4: Identify Keywords

IDENTIFY LONG-TAIL KEYWORDS

As was discussed in this ebook’s section on “Long-tail concept & theory,” focusing on long tail keywords is key to successful search engine optimization. **Although these keywords get less traffic than generic short-tail terms, they are generally associated with better qualified traffic.** The good news is that choosing the right long-tail keywords for your websites is an extremely simple process.

Relevance is the key issue when choosing the right keywords. Keep in mind that the more specific and niche the keywords, the better.

Suppose you have a company that installs swimming pools: Which keyword will attract more qualified potential customers to your business?

“Swimming pool”

OR

“Install an underground fiberglass swimming pool”

<input type="checkbox"/>	▼ install swimming pool auckland
<input type="checkbox"/>	▼ installing swimming pool pump and filter
<input type="checkbox"/>	▼ how to install swimming pools above ground
<input type="checkbox"/>	▼ install a swimming pool
<input type="checkbox"/>	▼ install a swimming pool pump
<input type="checkbox"/>	▼ install an underwater motion swimming pool alarm
<input type="checkbox"/>	▼ install a swimming pool liner
<input type="checkbox"/>	▼ install swimming pool brisbane
<input type="checkbox"/>	▼ installing swimming pool in basement
<input type="checkbox"/>	▼ installing swimming pool solar blanket
<input type="checkbox"/>	▼ how to install a swimming pool booster pump
<input type="checkbox"/>	▼ install swimming pool coping
<input type="checkbox"/>	▼ install swimming pool canberra

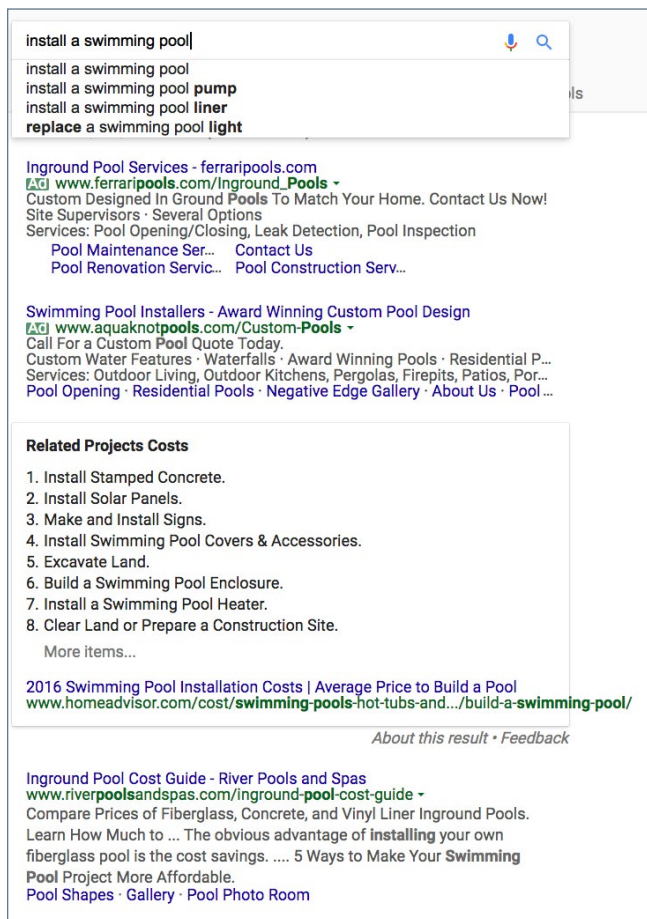
Clearly, the visitor who searches for “Install an underground fiberglass swimming pool” is already in research mode.

They are trying to find out about installation or find someone who will install a pool—and that could be you! Optimizing for “swimming pool” is of some value, but there is no doubt that this keyword addresses a far more general audience who may or may not have any interest in your services.

Another factor to note is optimizing in terms of the right keywords for location-based searches.

Search engine users will usually include their location in the search when looking for providers and contractors in their area. The search term “Install an underground fiberglass swimming pool” then becomes “Install an underground fiberglass swimming pool in Manchester.”

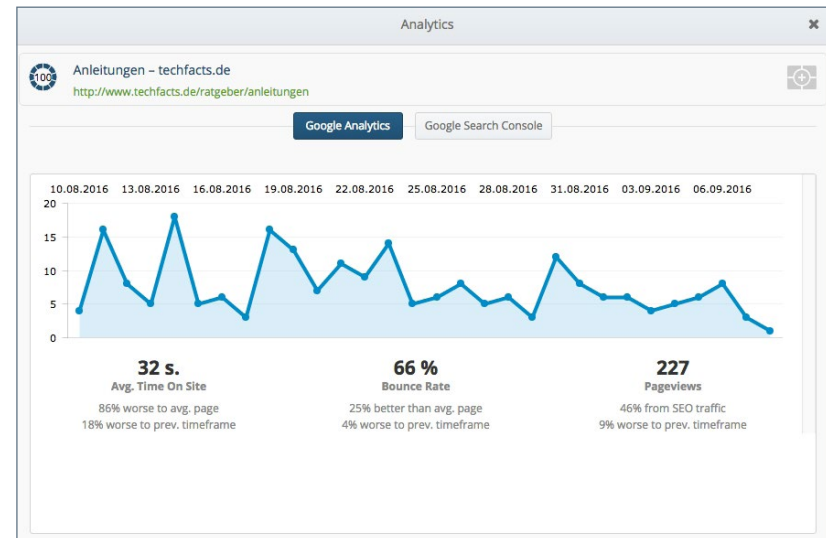
If you only run your business in one area, you might consider putting location-based keywords on all your web pages, because traffic from other areas won’t really help you. If your business operates in different areas, it is a good idea to set up a separate page for each area so that your brand appears wherever people are searching.



HOW YOU CHECK YOUR WEB ANALYTICS

Analytics tools such as Google Analytics, Google Search Console, Ryte and HubSpot enable you to examine many important details about your website and its usage. For example, the HubSpot tool can identify which organic keywords are already driving traffic to your website. The same is true of Google Search Console, which is free. These keywords create a good base of core keywords and give you a list of keywords that you can use to measure the performance of your future SEO efforts.

With Ryte, you can integrate data from the Google Search Console and Google Analytics via an interface. Because Google Search Console only stores keywords for 30 days, you can use Ryte to access older data. You also find out the keywords that are being used to find your website in SERPs, and data on bounce rates and click-through rates (CTR). In this way, you immediately know how satisfied users were with the result of their web search, and you can tweak your content or technology accordingly.



TOOLS FOR KEYWORD RESEARCH

Google's [Keyword Planner](#) is a free tool that can help you with keyword research. The tool is actually designed for the Google AdWords advertising program, and aims to help marketers select suitable keywords for ad placements. But it can also help you with search engine optimization.

For example, you can use the Keyword Planner to look for suitable terms for a keyword. Google's tool may also show you search terms relating to your website URL. For example, you can also enter a competitor's URL and search for relevant keywords like that.

Traffic data and trends can also be used to identify how frequently searches were run for each keyword.

HubSpot has also its own "Keyword" tool that can help you to find the best keywords to optimize your site. It also includes detailed data for every keyword. This tracking feature enables you to see which keywords are actually generating traffic and leads, and you can use this information to continue optimizing over the long term.

If you only want to look for search trends, you can use Google's free "[Google Trends](#)" tool. You can run searches there to look for global or regional search trends with terms of interest.



SEARCH FOR KEYWORDS

Besides studying your web analytics data and using keyword research tools, there is another very simple research method: Use the search engine itself to do keyword research.

The search engine can provide answers to certain key questions:

How much competition is there? Look at how many search results there are. If there are hundreds of thousands or millions of results, you should ask yourself whether it is worth the time and trouble to operate in that area.

How do your competitors rank? Pick out a keyword for which you want to optimize your site. Check out the top 20 search results: Are your competitors somewhere in there? What is your ranking for this keyword? This information should help you to find a good niche for you and your keywords, where your competitors are not operating. It may also be that you find keywords for which it is worth joining the competition.

Boston Interactive: Digital Marketing Agency
<https://www.bostoninteractive.com/> -
Web development, online **marketing**, and Internet solutions provider.

451 Marketing: Public Relations, Digital Marketing and Advertising
www.451marketing.com/ -
451 **Marketing**. Menu. About ... Ignite Brand Love. Learn about 451 **Marketing's** integrated approach to **marketing**. Watch ... **Boston** Headquarters. 100 North ...
[Careers](#) · [Team](#) · [About](#) · [Services](#)

Top Boston Digital Agencies - 2016 Reviews | Clutch.co
<https://clutch.co/agencies/digital/boston> -
CTP is an advertising, PR and digital **marketing agency** located in the heart of **Boston**. They offer branding, digital strategy, social media **marketing**, and web and mobile application design. Their client portfolio includes the **Boston** Red Sox, New Balance, MedExpress, and Microsoft.

CM Communications: Boston PR Firm - Marketing & Design Firm ...
www.cmcommunications.com/ -
CM Communications is a well-established **Boston**-based public relations and advertising **agency**. CM consults with other **firms** in the Greater **Boston** area, New ...

Digital Marketing & Advertising Agency | Full-Service Agency | AMP
ampagency.com/ -
We're a team of talented **marketing** and advertising experts who happen to love creating smart ... Who is AMP **Agency**? ... **Boston** · New York City · Los Angeles ...

Fuseideas - Boston Digital Marketing Agency
www.fuseideas.com/ -
Website development, SEO, PPC, social media & brand development.
Fuseideas offers.

8 Boston Marketing Agencies You Should Follow on LinkedIn | BostInno
bostinno.streetwise.co/.../boston-advertising-agencies-you-should-follow-on-linkedin/ -
Oct 24, 2013 - Naturally, **Boston's** premier **marketing agencies** are savvy content marketers. They've built an active presence on LinkedIn, broadcasting their ...

Does Google make any other recommendations? When you type a keyword in Google, your search form is populated with search results while you are still typing.

This feature is called “Google Suggest.” It is Google’s attempt to anticipate what you will search for. Beneath the SERPs, Google also suggests other popular searches for your term or your search phrase. You can use this information to your advantage. Just start typing in a keyword and see what Google immediately suggests or which other search queries are recommended. This is a very quick way to get ideas for keywords.

Tip: Even more specific supplements for search queries are often given on smartphones. You should therefore also use your smartphone for research.

Bonus tip: Another useful keyword tool is [Übersuggest](#).





Part 5: Analyze SEO Performance

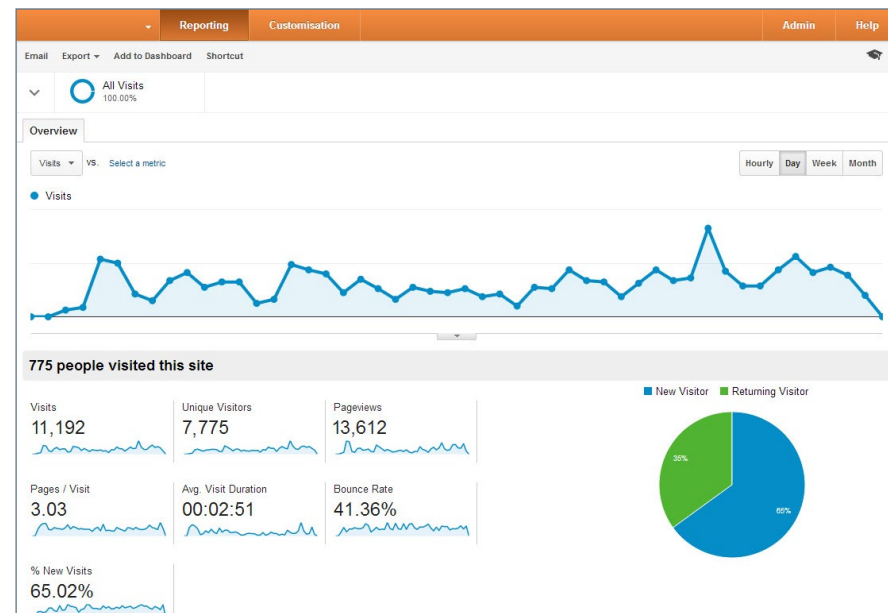
SEO measures can take some time and effort. But what is the point in investing time and effort if you cannot see the fruits of your labor? Luckily, there are numerous metrics that you can check on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis in order to keep your SEO plan on track and to measure your success.

TRAFFIC

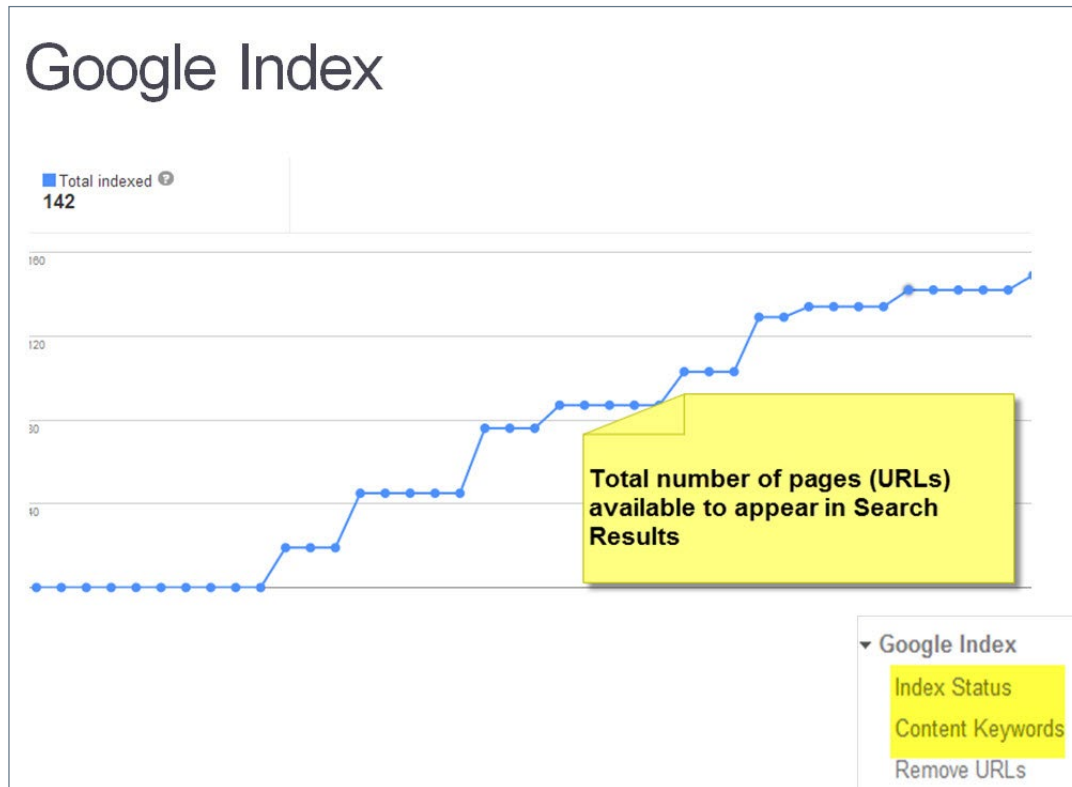
Every week, you should study an analysis of all the traffic from organic search queries to your website. This enables you to determine whether changes from previous weeks or months are having an effect.

LEADS/ROI

Web analytics tools like Google Analytics and inbound marketing solutions like HubSpot make it easy for you to identify how many conversions there have been on your website as a result of organic search traffic and keywords. These tools also enable you to set up different definitions of conversion (visitors, leads, customers), so that you get a very good idea of your SEO ROI (Return On Investment).



INDEXED PAGES



Source: Discover Your Customers

Measuring the number of search engines that have indexed your site is an easy way to check the website growth resulting from your SEO efforts. The more pages indexed, the easier it is to get a ranking for more keywords. Free tools, such as HubSpot’s “[Website Grader](#)” can show you how many of your pages have been indexed. Measure the number of pages indexed every month—it ought to keep increasing.

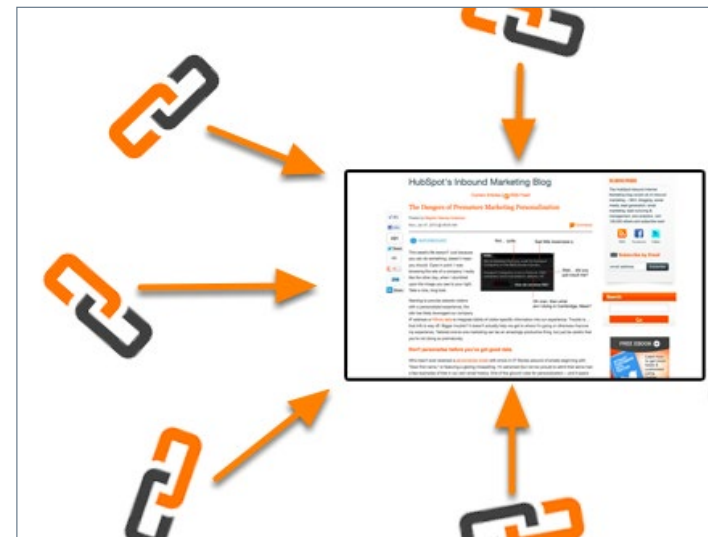
You can also run a “site query” on Google. It shows you how many of your website pages are indexed. To do this, just enter “site:” and your website URL on Google and start the search.

INBOUND LINKS

Inbound links are the easiest way to determine how successful your off-page SEO is. HubSpot's Website Grader gives you access to the current number of inbound links to your pages. Check this number every month. Any growth is good here. If there is any decline or abrupt change, you should examine the causes more closely. You should definitely check the inbound links if you get a warning about unnatural links from Google. However, you need to be using the free Google Search Console before you can receive this type of message.

KEYWORDS

Keep a list of keywords that bring traffic from organic search queries to your site. Study the organic search traffic in detail once a month, and analyze which keywords were responsible for the traffic. Your brand keywords will normally be responsible for most of it. Try, if possible, to distinguish between brand keywords and other keywords.



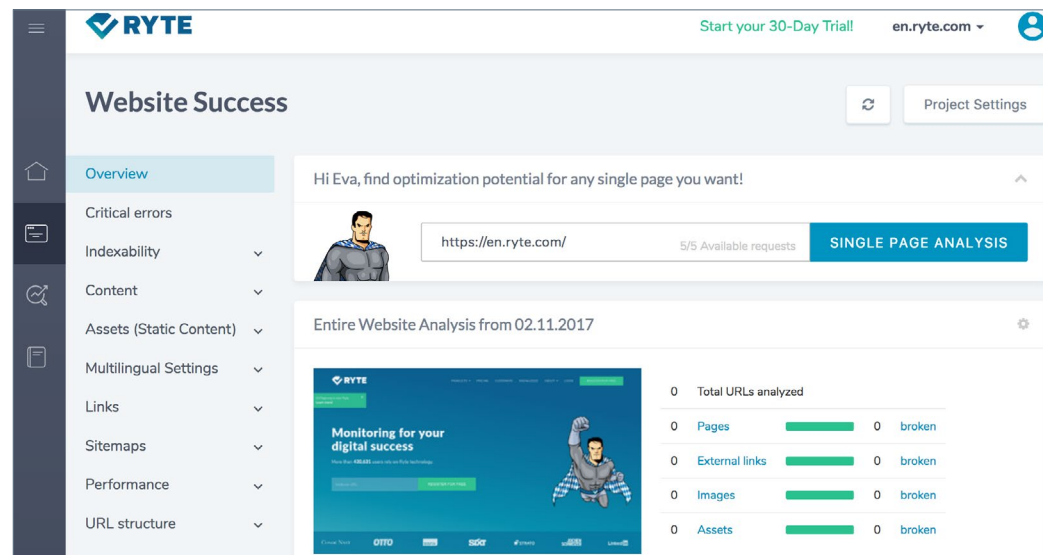
Source: Mytechnoways.com

RANKINGS

Create a list of the top 10 keywords for which you want to achieve rankings. Do a search once a month on Google and see where you stand in the rankings. Keep a record of the ranking and you will be able to see the progress of your SEO efforts. Note jumps by more than five places in the ranking, because these changes are not usually due just to normal changes and search engine updates.

TECHNICAL STATUS

Check your website’s technical status regularly. Are there any source code errors? Is the server accessible? Can the website be crawled? Ryte provides detailed reports that enable you to monitor all of your website’s technical issues.



Part 6: What comes next?

At this point, you should already have a good understanding of what SEO is, and why every online company should be aware of how crucial search engine optimization is to the business. Drawing up and implementing a SEO strategy can be a daunting task. However, the process can be manageable if you invest enough time and resources. Here are some things that you need to take into account when starting your SEO measures.

CREATE A LIST OF KEYWORDS

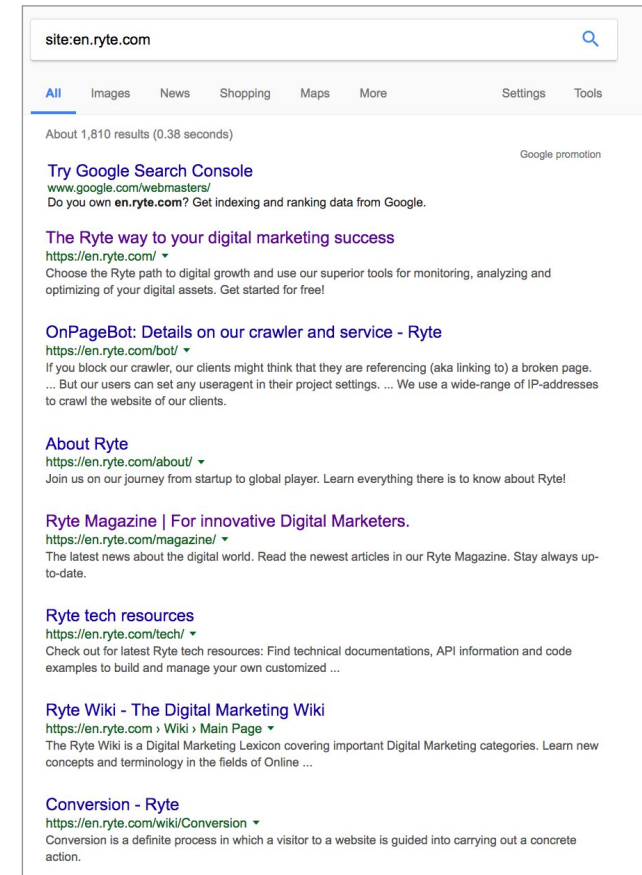
Do some keyword research and create a list of all the keywords for which you want to be ranked on search engines. Sort this list by priority or relevance to your business. And divide the words into “transactional” or “informational” keywords.

Transactional keywords include a clear user intention to purchase, such as “buy red sneakers.” Informational keywords, in contrast, focus on obtaining information. Buyers are in this phase, for example, when they want to know more about a product before they buy it.

Your keyword list should be a living document that you check and update at least once a month. Doing this will ensure that you are always doing keyword research and you will keep an eye on the keywords that are already ranking.

CREATE PAGES WITH KEYWORD FOCUS

After your keyword research, you will have a good idea of how you want to create many specific web pages. Each page needs content and images. You will also need to decide where you want to place these pages on your website, and which other sites or offers that you want to link.



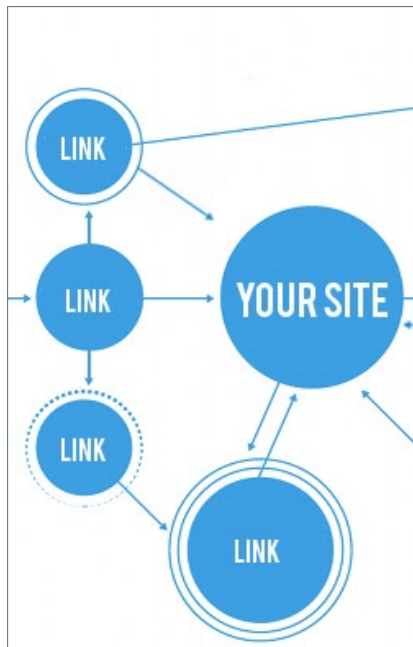
SET UP A BLOG

As already mentioned, blogging is a useful way to achieve better rankings for keywords and to engross your audience. If your company does not yet have a blog, we advise you to start one and write at least one blog entry per week.

Write about topics that interest your audience and/or potential customers and they will find their way to you via search engines. Also remember that every blog entry is a new web page that can be indexed by search engines and searched for by your target audience.

Other potential assets:

- Create ebooks which can be shared by users.
- Create striking infographics for social networks and your blog.
- Create product or informative videos that you share on your blog.



Source: Root3

CREATE A LINK BUILDING PLAN

Spend a little time thinking about how you can get inbound links for your website. Write informative, high-quality blog entries and share them on social networks. Another great way to get inbound links is to write blog entries about current events or news. This will increase the probability of getting links from media outlets or opinion shapers.

KEEP UP TO DATE IN TERMS OF SEO NEWS & METHODS

It's not always easy to stay current in terms of trends and best practices. The best way is always to read a lot. There are many online resources that make it easy to keep track of the latest SEO news and changes as they relate to your site.

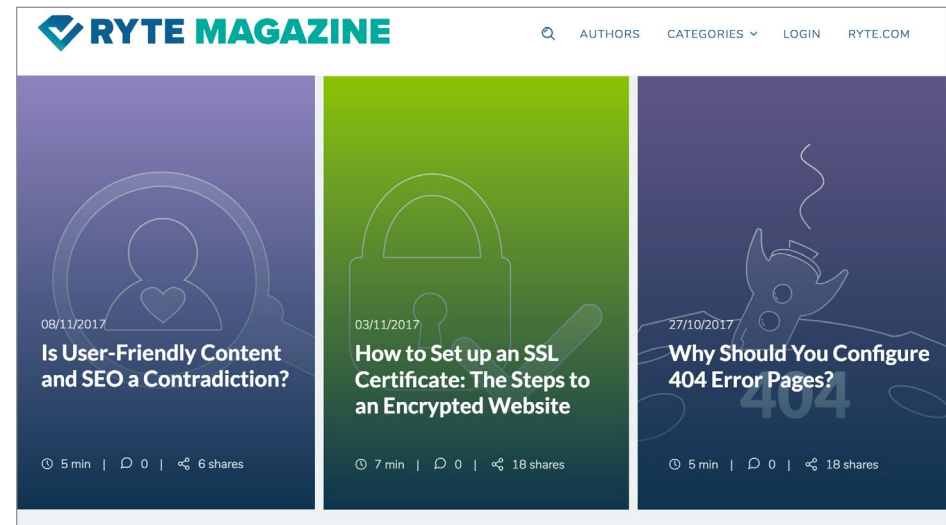
Here are some resources to get you started:

- www.Moz.com
- www.SEOBook.com
- www.SERoundTable.com
- www.SearchEngineLand.com
- blog.hubspot.com
- inbound.org
- [Ryte –Magazine](#)

You should now have all the tools and basic concepts you need to begin search engine optimization. Now take the time to develop a strategy that suits you, and get optimizing!

Need to put your new knowledge into strategic action?

HubSpot and Ryte also teamed up to bring you a 30-Day SEO planner. [Check it out here.](#)



A person is writing in a notebook with a pen. A magnifying glass is placed over the page, focusing on the text. The background is a blurred office setting. The text "SEO Glossary & Other Resources" is overlaid in a white box.

SEO Glossary & Other Resources

GLOSSARY

Algorithm – The calculations about various issues that search engines use to find the most relevant search results for a search query.

Alt tags – Short code snippets that allow you to link each image on your page to a short piece of informative text.

Anchor text – Text in your web page content that is linked to another page.

Black hat SEO – A dubious SEO approach involving manipulative measures to influence rankings. Search engines prohibit black hat SEO.

Keyword density – How often a keyword is mentioned on a page.

Headline tags – HTML code tag that are written with “<h1>Headline</h1>” and show text bigger in relation to the rest of the text.

Short-tail keywords – Generic phrases (typically 1-2 keywords long) that attract a significant volume of traffic but achieve little income.

HTML – Stands for Hypertext Markup Language, a standard code for tagging text files and formatting the font, color, graphics, and hyperlinks, and for creating web pages.

Inbound links – Links from external websites that lead to your site and do not originate from your domain. The terms “external links” and “backlinks” are synonyms.

Indexing – The operation used by search engines to crawl the web, to scan web pages and to store information about them.

CTR – Click-through rate refers to the ratio of the search result displayed and the clicks actually made on the search result.

Link building – The process by which inbound links are generated from other websites.

Link juice – The boost to the authority of a website that is given by inbound links from other websites with authority.

Long-tail terms – Keyword phrases with normally three or more keywords that attract a lower volume of search traffic, but are more valuable because they attract more qualified traffic than head terms.

Nofollow – A tag that is placed in the HTML code to tell search engines that the link is a paid link for which no link juice will be calculated.

Penalty – A ‘punishment’ by search engine providers when a webmaster contravenes search engine guidelines. The penalty can mean temporary ranking losses or, in the worst case, lead to the website being excluded from search results.

Search query – The term used to describe the actual keywords or phrases that a search engine user enters when searching.

SEM (search engine marketing) – Refers to all aspects of search queries, including organic and paid listings.

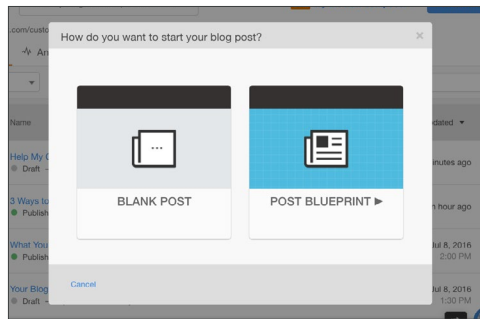
SEO (Search Engine Optimization) – Measures and methods of optimizing online content so that it is indexed, and so that the search engines can work out how relevant the content is to any particular search query, so that, ultimately, search engines can find it more easily.

SERPs (Search Engine Result Pages) – A search engine’s organic search results.

TF*IDF (Term frequency-Inverse document frequency) – This formula is used to calculate how often certain words appear in relation to a key term in the top 15 websites in the SERPs. This enables the potential relevance of a website to a search query to be calculated and the content to be optimized in response.

White hat SEO – This is the type of SEO measure which complies with search engine providers’ guidelines and focuses on the searching users’ needs.

Apply these SEO tips to your blog with HubSpot.



[Increase Your SEO Reach with HubSpot's Blogging Tool:](#)

- **Mobile-optimized:** Optimizes for mobile devices of any size
- **SEO-ready:** Includes built-in SEO tools to help increase organic traffic
- **Conversion driven:** Convert your blog readers by inserting relevant calls-to-action into your posts

OTHER RESOURCES:

- [i: Statista](#)
- [ii Onvista](#)
- [iii: Statista](#)
- [iv: Comscore](#)