



The Definitive **SEO** How-To Guide

**Prepare Yourself For Loads
Of Free Traffic**

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THE BASICS OF SEO

So, you've got a new or revamped website on the way, and decided to take your first steps into the big world of search engine optimisation (SEO)? Congratulations, you're already a step above your competition!

In the early days of creating digital content, any content asset that had the necessary keywords stuffed into them - along with some fake link building efforts - was able to rank well.

Today, Google's algorithm is able to pick up on content that isn't inherently of good quality. Additionally, if your content is plagiarised or with no quality links, you're looking at ranking on a page of Google your audience will never find you on.

Many businesses end up avoiding doing SEO because they find it daunting, or find that they have a better return from paid media. While it could be true that a short-term, high-spend paid campaign can get the results that you are after, for long-term brand success, SEO is a crucial pillar to your marketing strategy and overall efforts.

With this eBook, you'll get an outline of all things SEO, and actionable insights into what you can be doing differently, and more of, to improve SEO efforts on your website - and to drive valuable, FREE traffic to it!



WHY SEO IS IMPORTANT TO YOUR BUSINESS

With 3.2 billion internet users globally making multiple search queries every day (3.5 billion and counting) that lead to millions of websites, the digital landscape is a highly competitive space - to say the least. To make sure the right eyeballs are landing on your website (for terms related to what you are offering - whether a product or service), SEO tactics are key.

SEO is simply the process of getting website traffic from “free” or “organic” search results in search engines like Google, Bing, or Yahoo. When content is deemed as highly relevant to visitors by the search engines, it is ranked higher than content that sees visitors navigate away. When visitors leave (or “bounce”) from your website quickly, search engines determine the content to be less relevant than other pages, and rank it lower.

Think of SEO like a vote of confidence - the more that people like your content, the more confident Google is in recommending it to other users. To ensure that your website is optimised for search, all your SEO factors need to work together. SEO factors are anything that influence the rank of a website - however, Google has over 200 of these! Not just that, there's also over 10,000 ranking sub-signals.

There are luckily some key factors that influence your Search Engine Results Page (SERP) position, from time on site, to total backlinks, keyword presence and more. We'll look at these factors and a few other aspects of SEO within this eBook.



IF IT'S SO IMPORTANT, WHY ISN'T EVERYONE DOING IT?



A large part of why businesses don't do too much, if anything, in the way of SEO is that they put it in the "too-hard basket". Meaning that they think it either costs them too much money, or it seems like a lot of effort for so little return (not true...more on this later), or it takes too long to get any results - so it probably doesn't work.

Believe us, these are objections we've heard quite often. While it is true that SEO takes a longer time than say, Google Ads or Paid Social to show a return, it actually offers sustainable growth through results derived over a period of time.

As Google themselves say in their definition of SEO, it "is often about making small modifications to parts of your website. When viewed individually, these changes might seem like incremental improvements, but when combined with other optimisations, they could have a noticeable impact on your site's user experience and performance in organic search results."

While the modifications may be small, there are many that need to be made (this is the effort part of the equation). However, making those changes through a structured process will actually give you long-term success from your website - with tangible results you can see the source of after you've made them. A large part of this success is due to the fact that you are found through a search engine query (by ranking higher organically thanks to great SEO), meaning people who are ready to engage with you are landing on your website.

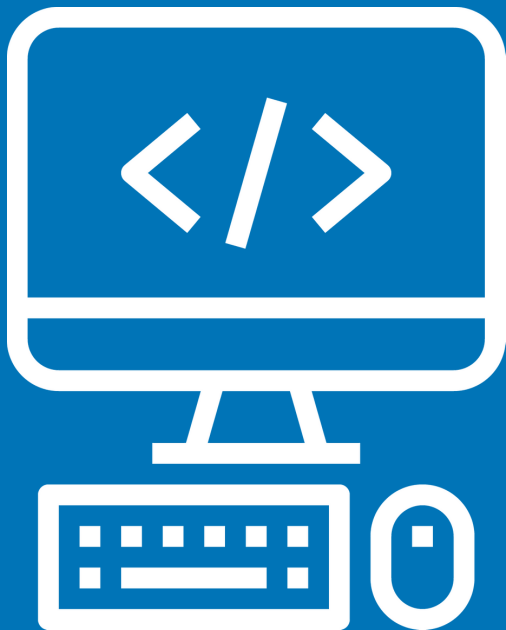
I ALREADY HAVE A WEBSITE, IS SEO STILL POSSIBLE?

Many businesses believe that optimisation efforts for search need to have been done well before their websites have launched. Or that the website needs to be refreshed/ revamped/ redone if it needs to be SEO-ready. This is simply not true.

As we said earlier, if you are already thinking about SEO on your website, you're probably ahead of your competition who isn't, and just decided to have a pretty website. But you know what doesn't matter to a search engine? A website that looks like a million bucks, but can't bring in the necessary (or just enough to matter) traffic. SEO helps you compete effectively in the digital space, gaining for you a much larger slice of the traffic pie for your industry.

We've had clients come to us with great looking websites that had no SEO work done in - all that effort was wasted as the numbers didn't show enough of a boost from traffic to even justify the work that had been done.

On the other hand, if the website looks ordinary, but is clunky to use, even if people are finding you they are not going to want to stay and complete that purchase. In the short tolerance economy, customers want good value but also good service (in this case, a website that can make their journey as simple and seamless as possible).



MY WEBSITE IS ACTUALLY OPTIMISED, AM I ALL SET?

The short answer to that? No, you are not.

Firstly, good job on having an optimised website! It is a bit of a long journey, so it deserves recognition. Just as a backup, you should check out the Comprehensive SEO Checklist a couple of pages down to see that you're all good to go on the optimisation front!

Along with your website, search engines actually weigh multiple sources on the internet. This includes social media platforms and online media mentions, so optimisation must be executed for everything you do online - videos, image alt tags, bios, etc.

This also brings us to another point that is generally a misconception - that search engines only look at text-based content to decide its rankability. Now, while we concede the text on the page is incredibly important - there are many other factors that influence your SERP rankings. These include content length, website security, keyword presence (how much, and is it there in the body, title and descriptions), videos (to uplift your quality), and the type of content you are putting out.

Speaking of content, the ultimate best practice in SEO today is strong content creation. Regardless of the impact of off-page techniques like consistent link-building and keyword maintenance, all search algorithms look for a foundation of high-quality, relevant content users can use to answer their questions.





You may have heard of On-Page and Off-Page SEO. The On-Page SEO is the stuff we mentioned on the previous page regarding factors that influence your SERP rankings. Off-Page SEO is when we talk about link building, social media and public relations - most of which you can't directly affect. So how do you make sure that you're influencing factors that are actually not in your direct control?

Link building is a HUGE part of SEO efforts, and one of the things that takes a lot of time (40% of your work in SEO actually). You can build links through being listed on the relevant online directories within your industry, creating content that can be linked to, using social listening tools to interact with content that is in your industry (creating a potential reciprocal effect), and repurposing existing content to create advanced content for your audience.

Additionally, you can influence off-page factors by using Google My Business and encouraging Google reviews (as well as social reviews and recommendations) from your customers. This builds into the thing we mentioned earlier, about improving the optics around your brand. The more people show they trust it and your content, the more search engines recognise your website as a source of valuable information to your customers (current and prospective).

Finally, don't forget to monitor your mentions online. Publicity can affect your rankings, and widely shared content about your organisation will be seen as a brand booster. If you want to feature in PR pieces, remember to create quick press releases - this helps you integrate the SEO you want into the story, and allows you to control how, where and when the story is told.

HOW CAN I DETERMINE SEO SUCCESS?

All your efforts would be wasted if you didn't know how to measure success, and what to look for. So, here's a handy guide on what factors you'd look at to determine SEO success:

- **Direct website traffic**, or traffic that comes from users typing in your URL in the URL bar.
- **Organic traffic** (from search terms), to show that there is traffic that is coming regardless of ads running - they're actually clicking on your link rather than the ad!
- **Time on site pages per session and bounce rate.** These factors combined will tell Google what the quality of your content is.
- Where you're **ranking for your highest converting, as well as identified target keywords.** You need to either maintain your position or move up.
- An increase in **traffic volume from your identified keywords.**
- Moz is a great tool to tell you **what your domain authority and page authority are**, which is an important factor that drives how well your website (or page in general) will rank in the SERPs.
- If your **referral traffic percentage** is growing you're doing well in your link building efforts.
- Taking the **percentage change in referral traffic that led to conversions** will tell you where your most valuable referral links are.
- While quality is more important than quantity, it's also important to measure **how many backlinks** are pointing to your site. Of those, a higher number of **links coming from a high authority site** (for your industry) bodes well.



Mistakes That Will Hurt Your Rankings

Now that we've told you all the things that influence rankings via Google, it's time to turn our attention to what NOT to do if you don't want Google's algorithm to punish you. The algorithm is always learning, so there's very little you are able to sneak past it.

Firstly, do not purchase links to get better rankings. This doesn't include PPC links from Google Ads, but more so links that are seen as unrelated to each other. Generally, Google flags the connection between unrelated websites as a sneaky paid link effort.

Another issue is that of duplicate content. Sometimes duplicate content accidentally gets created, so always check your link variations, secure vs unsecure, www vs non www URLs - they all add up.

Do not purchase reviews! If even one person brings it to Google's attention, you could get penalised - or worse, fined.

Finally, do not spam your content - either in comment sections as a link or through keyword stuffing your pages. Create quality content that makes people want to come back to your website - it helps so much more.



404 ERROR

Your Comprehensive SEO Checklist

Our SEO Checklist is a great place to start ensuring you're meeting the basic requirements for your SEO efforts to work for you. It outlines key SEO related areas you can focus on, and what steps you need to take within each area as well. Use it to ensure you are on the right path to having a website that ranks well, drives quality traffic, and generates tons of sales.

Tools Checklist

- ☐ Install Google Analytics
- ☐ Set Up Google Search Console
- ☐ Yoast (Or Similar)

Keyword Research Checklist

- ☐ Discover Your Primary Keywords
- ☐ Find (And Use) Long-tail Keywords
- ☐ Use The Right Tools (Keyword Finder, Answer The Public) For Keyword-driven Content

On-page Checklist

- ☐ Make Sure Your URL is Google-friendly
- ☐ Include Your Target Keyword In Tags & Descriptions
- ☐ Optimise Your Images

Linking Checklist

- ☐ Make Sure To Use Outbound Links
- ☐ Don't Forget Your Internal Links
- ☐ BYB (Build Your Backlinks)

Content Checklist

- ☐ Build Trustworthiness With A Great Intro
- ☐ Focus On Content Readability
- ☐ Use Content Formats That Are Well-Received
- ☐ Audit and Update Your Content
- ☐ Use Optimised Media

The SEO checklist - Explained

Here, we explain the SEO Checklist (and its sections and items) on the previous page in more detail.

Tools Checklist

- **Install Google Analytics:** As far as free tools go, Google Analytics is probably the best - it helps you understand how people find you, and what got them there. It's also easy to install - sign up and copy the tracking code issued into your website.
- **Set Up Google Search Console:** Once you've got Analytics going, the next best move is to set up Search Console, and connect the two. It helps track your site's performance, determine what keywords you're ranking for, and fix any errors.
- **Yoast (Or Similar):** Yoast (on Wordpress, Magento, Drupal) makes technical SEO stuff like robots.txt, creating sitemaps, optimising metadata, etc. easier to deal with. Install it (or similar SEO plugins for your platform) to optimise for search.



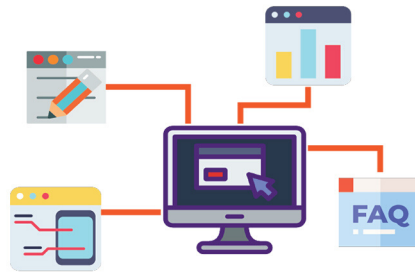
Keyword Research Checklist

- **Discover Your Primary Keywords:** While Google Keyword Planner is a tool designed for Google Ads, because it gives extremely accurate keyword data, it is great for finding primary keywords that your website pages need to target.
- **Find (And Use) Long-tail Keywords:** Long-tail keywords are very specific (potentially low volume) searches that tend to convert really well. The best way to find them is to use your primary and brand keywords as a base, and type into Google search - the autocomplete suggestions make perfect long-tail keywords.
- **Use The Right Tools For Keyword-driven Content:** Using the tool Keyword Finder helps you identify low competition keywords you can easily optimise to rank for. Additionally, use Answer the Public to plan your blogs and articles - it gives you question-based queries you can answer with your content.



On-page Checklist

- **Make Sure Your URL is Google-friendly:** Shorter URLs rank really well. What ranks better? Short and snappy descriptive URLs. Importantly, a URL needs to tell your audience what purpose the page has - and of course, include your target keyword.
- **Include Your Target Keyword In Tags & Descriptions:** Your title tag would benefit from having your target keyword, as would your meta description. However, don't force it - it's more important they increase CTR and drive the right traffic to the site. Also, don't forget to include it in your H1 tag (which should only appear once).
- **Optimise Your Images:** Optimising your image alt tags and filenames helps tell Google what the image is, and helps you rank content in image search as well - driving up your overall rankings. Be accurately descriptive, to increase page relevancy.



Linking Checklist

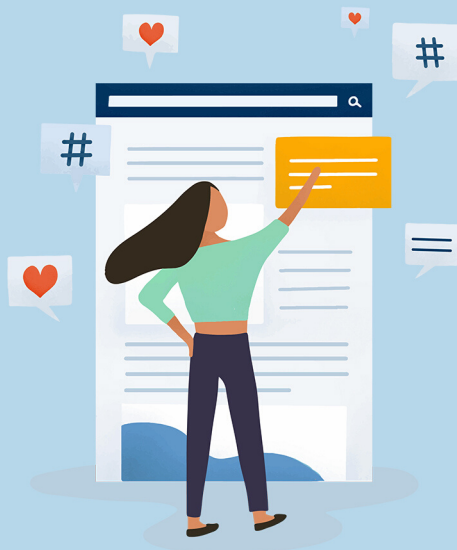
- **Use Optimised Media:** Breaking up your content with media is always a good idea. It is important to optimise the alt tags and descriptions of any media you use. Recommended media include images, infographics, quizzes and videos. Including media will also help improve your chances of being linked to.
- **Don't Forget Your Internal Links:** Use keyword-rich anchor text to link to internal pages on your site. This helps keep users on your site for longer, as they will see a chain of related content peppered across your site - leading them to stay longer.
- **BYB (Build Your Backlinks):** We've mentioned people linking to your content being important. This is because link building is a key factor to rank for SEO. So how do you do this? Apart from creating linkable content on your own website, you can guest post on reputed websites within your industry. Similar to this, appear on podcasts in your industry as a guest to get the right backlinks.





Content Checklist

- **Build Trustworthiness With A Great Intro:** If people aren't convinced to read your content, they bounce off your page. Also, they will choose not to link your content (more on this soon). How do you get them reading? Write an intro that resonates with them and promises the solution to the problem that brought them there.
- **Focus On Content Readability:** Break your content into easy-to-read chunks, using shorter sentences with simpler language where possible. Generously sprinkle your keyword and its synonyms through the content (bring up your target keyword in the first 150 words). Use a tool like Hemingway to ensure your content is highly readable - you want to aim for a year 8 level as much as you can.
- **Use Content Formats That Are Well-Received:** The most popular content formats are in-depth, research-driven content. Formats like case studies that prove something works (and to what level), research/survey findings that are unique to your business/industry, and evergreen content that is consistently relevant.



- **Audit and Update Your Content:** Make sure that you start with an audit of all the content on your site. Following this, make sure to regularly update and refresh your content to suit the times, as well as with current information.
- **Use Optimised Media:** Breaking up your content with media is always a good idea. It is important to optimise the alt tags and descriptions of any media you use. Recommended media include images, infographics, quizzes and videos. Including media will also help improve your chances of being linked to.

CONCLUSION

This eBook has provided an overview of the world of search engine optimisation, and the steps you can take to optimise your website or your blog. You can use this knowledge as a foundation to develop your website and blog into one of your most powerful, consistently converting assets.



To summarise:

SEO does take a bit longer than your other marketing efforts to implement, but it does offer you a greater return on investment

Make sure you have the right KPIs in place to measure SEO success

Don't do any quick-fixes, they will only serve to negatively impact your rankings

When done right, you will get tons of organic traffic and capture an audience that your competitors might otherwise have had access to

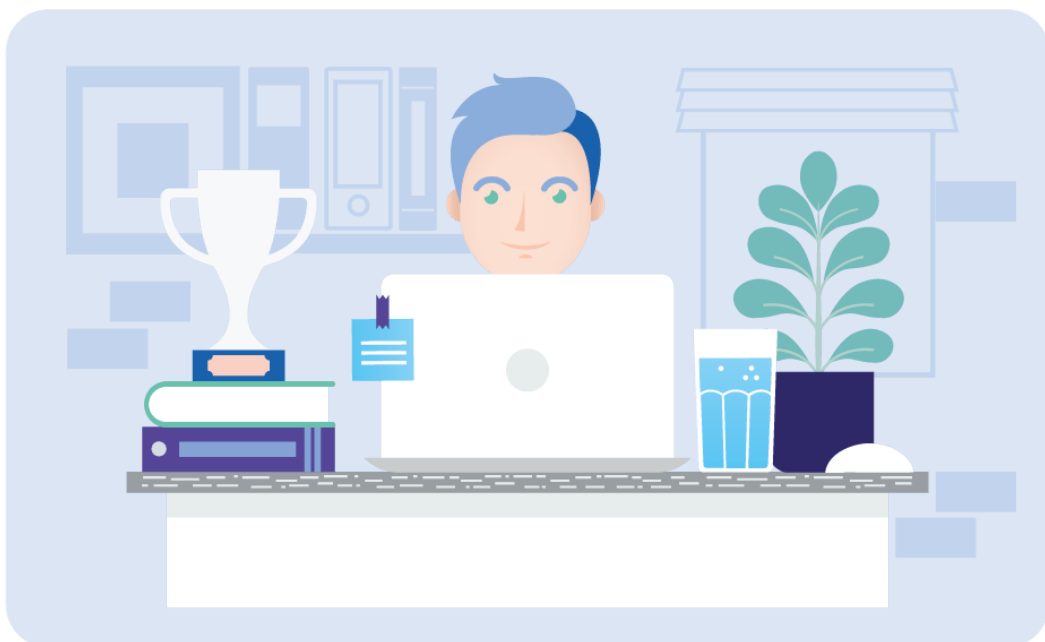


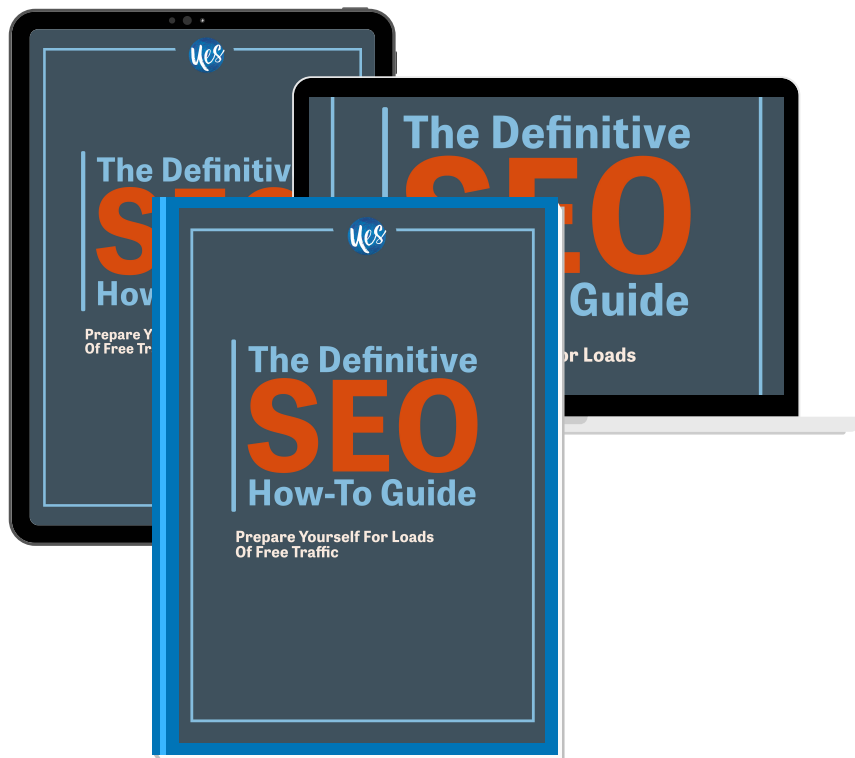
There are many SEO factors that influence your SERP rankings, and all are minor adjustments - when done altogether, they form a powerful foundation of strong search algorithm boosters

SPECIAL OFFER

If you would like to speak to one of our SEO experts to have a look at the efforts you make in the SEO space, we would be glad to book in a 30 minute strategy chat. We can see what you've done so far, and show you other strategies and make recommendations that will take your website to the next level.

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