

VOLUME 2
ISSUE 4
2019

PAGES

CLEAN
PROVEN
SEO

AN SEO MAGAZINE

SEEK KNOWLEDGE

AND

SEARCH PROVIDES

BECOMING DISCOVERABLE Garrett Mehrguth | CEO, Directive Consulting

GOOGLE IS NOT A SEARCH ENGINE Norm Vogeley | SEO Content Creation, Page One Power

DIFFERENT INDUSTRIES, DIFFERENT STRATEGIES Michael Stricker | Marketing Manager, Next Level Performance

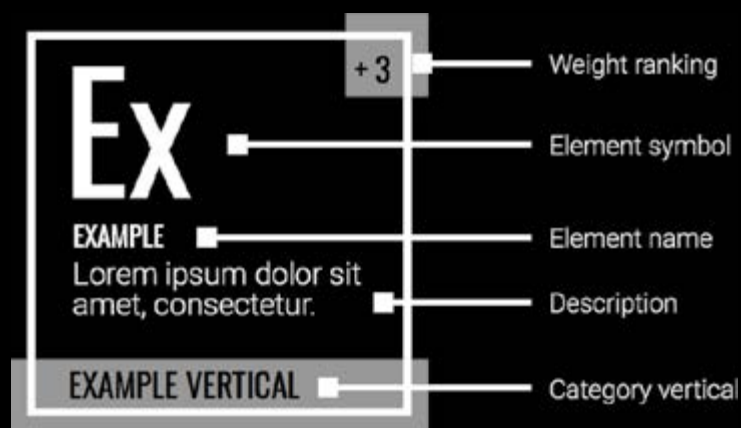
TIME IS MONEY Wes Marsh | Director of Marketing, BCA Technologies, Inc. & eRep CPQ

INTERVIEWING FOR AN SEO JOB Charles Taylor | SEO Manager, Verizon Fios

USING SOCIAL TO IMPROVE DIGITAL PR & LINK CAMPAIGNS David White | Director of Content Marketing, Connective3

PERIODIC TABLE OF SEO FACTORS 2019

Search engine optimization seems like alchemy to the uninitiated. This guide to success factors, best practices and potential pitfalls can build the framework for your SEO strategy.



Search Engine Land

SEARCHENGINELAND.COM



SCAN FOR THE FULL REPORT

Qu

QUALITY

Pages must be well-written and highly valuable.

CONTENT

+3

Rs

RESEARCH

Investigate keywords people may use to find your content.

CONTENT

+3

Cr

CRAWL

Search engines must easily crawl your pages.

ARCHITECTURE

+3

Kw

KEYWORDS

Build target keywords into your pages.

CONTENT

+2

Mo

MOBILE

Optimize for today's smartphones and tablets.

ARCHITECTURE

+3

Tt

TITLES

Build keywords into your titles.

HTML

+3

Co

COUNTRY

Consider the country of your searcher.

USER

+2

Fr

FRESHNESS

Create timely content; refresh or retire stagnant pages.

CONTENT

+2

Dd

DUPLICATE

Be smart. Use canonicals, redirects.

ARCHITECTURE

+2

Ds

DESCRIPTIONS

Meta tags should describe what pages are about.

HTML

+2

Lo

LOCALITY

Consider the region of your searcher.

USER

+2

Mm

MULTIMEDIA

Images, video and audio can set your content apart.

CONTENT

+2

Sp

SPEED

Your site should load quickly on any device.

ARCHITECTURE

+2

St

STRUCTURE

Use Schema and more to turn data into enhanced listings.

HTML

+2

Au

AUTHORITY

Authority is everything. Covet links, shares and other signals.

TRUST

+3

Va

VALUE

Seek links from trusted, quality websites.

LINKS

+3

Ux

USER EXPERIENCE

Experience matters more every day.

USER

+2

An

ANSWERS

Create content that can be turned into answers in the SERP.

CONTENT

+2

Ps

HTTPS

Provide a secure connection for visitors.

ARCHITECTURE

+2

Hd

HEADINGS

Build keywords into your H1-H2 tags, especially H1.

HTML

+2

En

ENGAGEMENT

Visitors should spend time with your pages, not bounce.

TRUST

+2

Ac

ANCHORS

Seek links from pages that use similar keywords.

LINKS

+2

Hs

HISTORY

Consider how regularly someone has visited your site.

USER

+1

Dt

DEPTH

Shallow content fails. Aim for substance.

CONTENT

+2

Ur

URLS

Build keywords into your page addresses.

ARCHITECTURE

+1

Am

AMP

Google's mobile page format is built for speed.

HTML

+1

Re

REPUTATION

Sites operating the same way for years carry weight.

TRUST

+1

Ba

BACKLINKS

The more high-quality links, the better.

LINKS

+1

In

INTENT

Consider why someone is conducting a specific search.

USER

+1

TOXINS

Cl

CLOAKING

Don't show the engines different pages than your searchers.

TOXINS

-3

Sc

SCHEMES

Buying links, spamming blogs, all terrible tactics.

TOXINS

-3

Sf

STUFFING

Don't be excessive with packing keywords into your copy.

TOXINS

-2

Ar

PIRACY

Hosting stolen content can get you flagged.

TOXINS

-1

Hi

HIDING

Making keywords invisible is a dirty trick.

TOXINS

-2

Iv

INTRUSIVE

Ad-heavy content, intrusive interstitials are a bad idea.

TOXINS

-1

EMERGING VERTICALS

Voi

VOICE

Say hi to Alexa, Google, Siri.

EMERGING VERTICALS

Loc

LOCAL

Listings, reviews, maps and more

EMERGING VERTICALS

Img

IMAGE

Photos, illustrations are rising in the SERP.

EMERGING VERTICALS

Vid

VIDEO

Searchers are looking for live action.

EMERGING VERTICALS

A photograph of a person in a white lab coat, likely a medical professional, working with a large stack of files or folders. The person is wearing a watch on their left wrist. In the background, a car wheel is visible. The entire image is overlaid with a warm, orange-red gradient. The word "WELCOME." is centered in the middle of the image in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

WELCOME.



PAGES

AN SEO MAGAZINE



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FEATURED *articles*



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GOOGLE IS NOT A SEARCH ENGINE

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READER VOICES

ON PAGES MAGAZINE



Got something to say about PAGES? Let your voice be heard.

We love hearing from you! Share your thoughts about PAGES on social media using the hashtag below, or send us an email at:

info@pagesSEOMagazine.com

#PAGESSEOMAGAZINE



The @pagesSEOMag website was just updated. I love everything that this organization is doing in the SEO community & highly recommend checking out the new site!!!

[@kristen_vaughn](#)



Can't wait to get my hands on the latest edition of @pagesSEOMag. Such an incredible hands on resource with actionable insights & tasks to help improve your SEO strategy. Proven methods from top & rising SEO Influencers & Practitioners. If you're not subscribed you're missing out.

[@Jen_Currier](#)



Pumped to talk site auditing & niche specialization w/@pagesSEOMag this month. Read and be wowed here.

[Casey Markee](#)
[@MediaWyse](#)

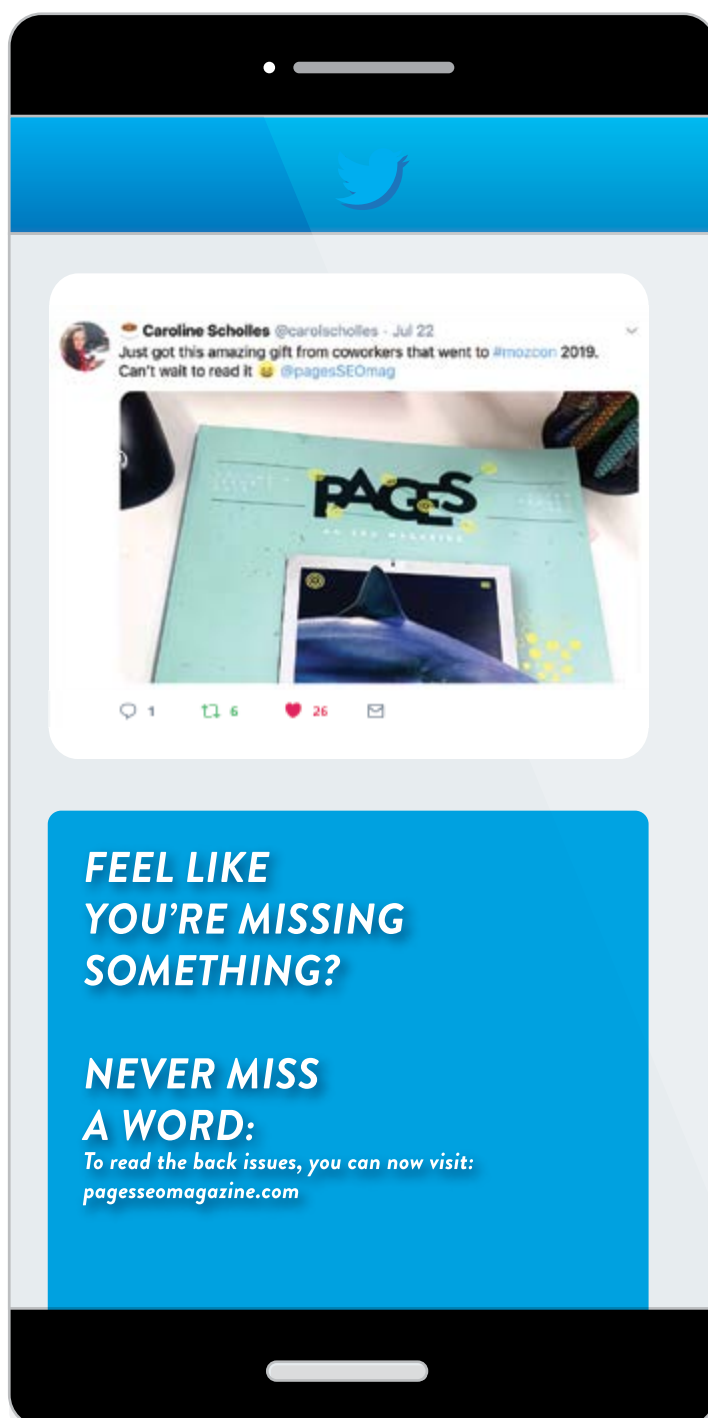


Continuing tradition with @pagesSEOMag. Relax in the pool or dive into an article? #mozcon

[@jaredbroussard](#)

Thanks

TWEETS A MILLION!





Two years ago, *PAGES* started with a vision to create a publication that would educate, uplift, and unify marketers everywhere. As we look back now, we are honored to have been welcomed into the lives of over 1,500 readers and subscribers. We have enjoyed hearing about how the magazine has supported you in your conversations within your agencies and have inspired you to grow professionally. It has been a pleasure to be part of your SEO journey. In this issue, we explore what it means to search and the adventure of seeking knowledge. We hope you enjoy your own adventure through the magazine.

On a personal note, I'll be transitioning away from *PAGES* magazine. Like most things in life, there are seasons to the things we do. My season with *PAGES* has ended, and a new one begins. Working on *PAGES* has been one of the greatest highlights of my career. I am so grateful to have been part of an outstanding team and company that have created something that has touched so many people in our industry and hopefully helped marketers get more from search. Although I am no longer a part of this magazine, I know great things are still ahead.

**THANK YOU
FOR READING
AND HERE'S
TO THE FUTURE**

JOE OLIVER
Editor-In-Chief

IN THIS ISSUE, THOMAS DROPS SOME KNOWLEDGE ON HOW TO GET NEW AND UPDATED PAGES INDEXED IN SEARCH.

Thomas Swisher is resident Web Analyst, SEO Strategist, and Data Scientist at Page One Power.

“HOW DO I GET A NEW/UPDATED PAGE INDEXED?”

I follow several Facebook forums to help me keep up with what is going on in the world of SEO. I have found that forums can be a great place to learn about what others are doing, as well as share my own ideas and help others.

Over time, I have found that some questions seem to be asked over and over. Often, these are people that are new to SEO and aren't really sure how search engines such as Google function.

One popular question I see is: “How do I get a new/updated page indexed?”

Today I want to share three simple steps to help ensure your content is properly indexed by Google.

First, you must understand that one of Google's main functions is to find, crawl, and index content — Google wants to find your content.

There are a few steps you can take to make this happen:

These are the steps I follow anytime I create new content or make changes to an existing page.

You can submit your article directly to Google by using the Google Search Console. Simply enter the page's URL in the inspection tool at the top of Search Console, and it will attempt to find the page if it is already indexed. Either way, in the first box on the right you will see “Request Indexing”; clicking this will put your page in Google's priority crawl queue. After 24 hours, I always check to see that the page has been indexed.

And that's it!

The first step to ranking in Google search is making sure your pages are being indexed by Google. Follow these simple steps to ensure your pages are where they need to be, and see you next time on another edition of Thomas's Tips! ☺

1. MAKE SURE YOUR ARTICLE IS INCLUDED IN YOUR SITE MAP. 2. MAKE SURE YOU HAVE INTERNAL LINKS POINTING TO YOUR ARTICLE. 3. SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLE TO GOOGLE.



If SEO professionals were Magic 8 Balls.

When am I gonna
rank for that
keyword?



CANNOT
PREDICT
NOW

Hmm, what about
now?



REPLY HAZY
TRY
AGAIN

What about...NOW?!



LET ME
DO MY
JOB

FUNNY

By
Amethyst Tagney
Page One Power

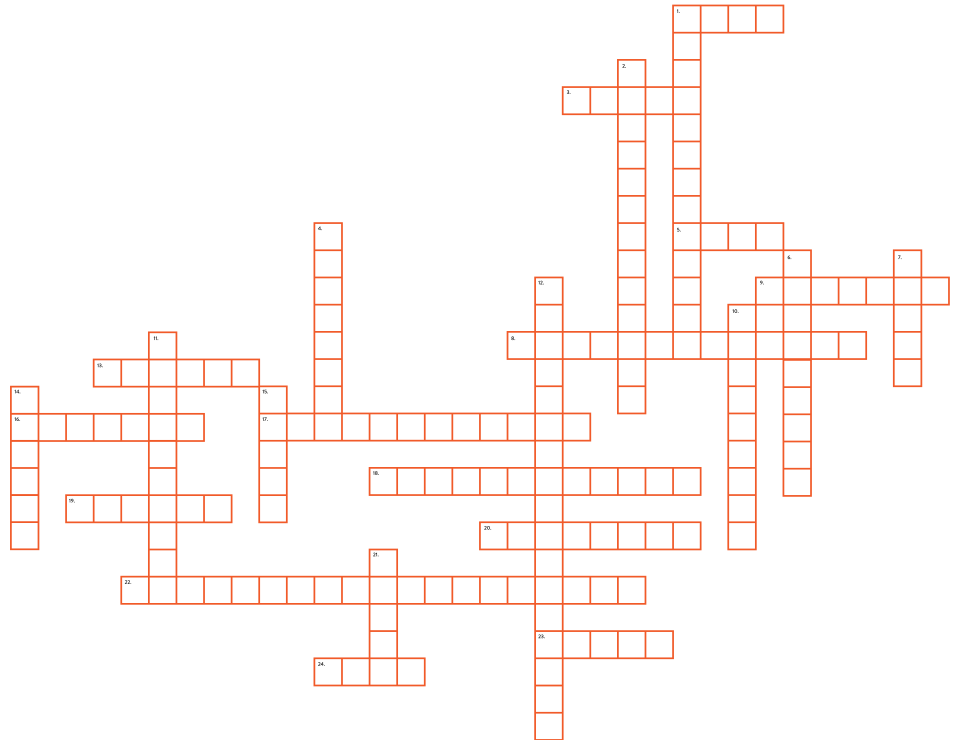
TIME KILLER



AKA: CROSSWORD

Use the clues to solve the crossword.
There are no spaces but there are
multi-word answers.

GOOD LUCK!
LINGUISTS



ACROSS

- Surprisingly earning 33% of the search market.
- Get your selfie stick.
- Each one of us.
- Get to where you are going on a site.
- These guidelines aren't a part of the algorithm.
- Incorporated in 1998.
- How people know what you do.
- Getting the most from your site.
- Can a user find you?
- Looking for something?
- Just type it in.
- What we're all hoping to achieve.
- We must all continue to do this.
- Everybody has one these days.

DOWN

- The path to earning more customers.
- Your favorite SEO Magazine.
- The web.
- Just how fast are you?
- Still in the search game.
- You better have an expert sharing their insights.
- Reach your audience.
- Nah, I'll look again.
- Make sure to mark it up.
- Your neighborhood.
- Some say a better way to reach your audience.

**HAVE AN SEO FUNNY?
WE'D LOVE TO HEAR IT.**

**CROSS ALL THE WORDS?
LET US KNOW!**

@pagesSEOmog

TIME IS MONEY.

You wouldn't waste time chasing a lead that has gone cold, you shouldn't settle for a website that can't keep up with the competition when it comes to speed.

Looking for a Quick Fix?

You're in luck. There are plenty of quick, easy solutions that can make a big impact in a small amount of time. When applied with other tools and strategies, the result is a faster site that will keep visitors sticking around longer.

One effective strategy is to minify, or remove unnecessary characters such as line breaks, white space, and comments from the source code, in Cascading Style Sheets (CSS), and JavaScript (JS). This can often be done with online tools via a plugin on a WordPress site.

Use CSS from an external stylesheet rather than inline whenever possible. Not only does it allow your browser to load your page faster due to fewer lines to compile, it also makes your site easier to maintain over time. Since JS blocks any further rendering of the page's

HTML until it has loaded all of its files, remove any JavaScript from your <head> section and place it at the bottom of the page so users don't see a blank page while the script loads. You can also defer your JS files through scripts to place them right before your closing body tag with </body> code. Use asynchronous loading for these files as well so they load simultaneously.

Gzip compression also positively affects your website's speed by condensing large files within your pages and style sheets to make it easier for your web server to talk to your browser. It can be done via a plugin or a mod_deflate script on the htaccess file.

Next, minimize redirects. This can be as simple as ensuring your incoming traffic points to the https version of your site rather

than the http version. This also applies to css and image file calls ensuring you're using the proper path for your domain such as yoursite.com instead of www.yoursite.com.

Plugins decrease site speed, so reduce their usage whenever possible. Review every plugin on your site and ensure you need it. Many functions of certain plugins can be handled in other ways, such as by editing your scripts and php files or via tools such as Google Tag Manager (GTM). This is especially true when you're looking to integrate your site with third-party marketing tools.

Speaking of GTM, use it or another tag manager such as Tealium to organize Universal Analytics, Google Ads, Facebook Pixel and other tags for remarketing, call tracking, A/B testing, and events in one script. Managing your tags in this way is important because these little bits of code can

make your site bulky on their own. By specifically controlling when your tags fire and keeping them contained inside a single script, you can speed up your site so that not every script has to load on every single page.

Keep an eye out throughout this issue for more One Pagers from Wes on how to improve your site's page speed to keep from losing out on customer traffic and user engagement. ☺

Side Note:

On a side note, you may be using custom link redirects or other Martech aspects for tracking purposes in social media. These should still be OK, but you will want to check the speed of those and balance the need for the information provided by those tracking tools.

SEO SHOULDN'T BE A GAMBLE

To get higher rankings,
you need better content
and more links.

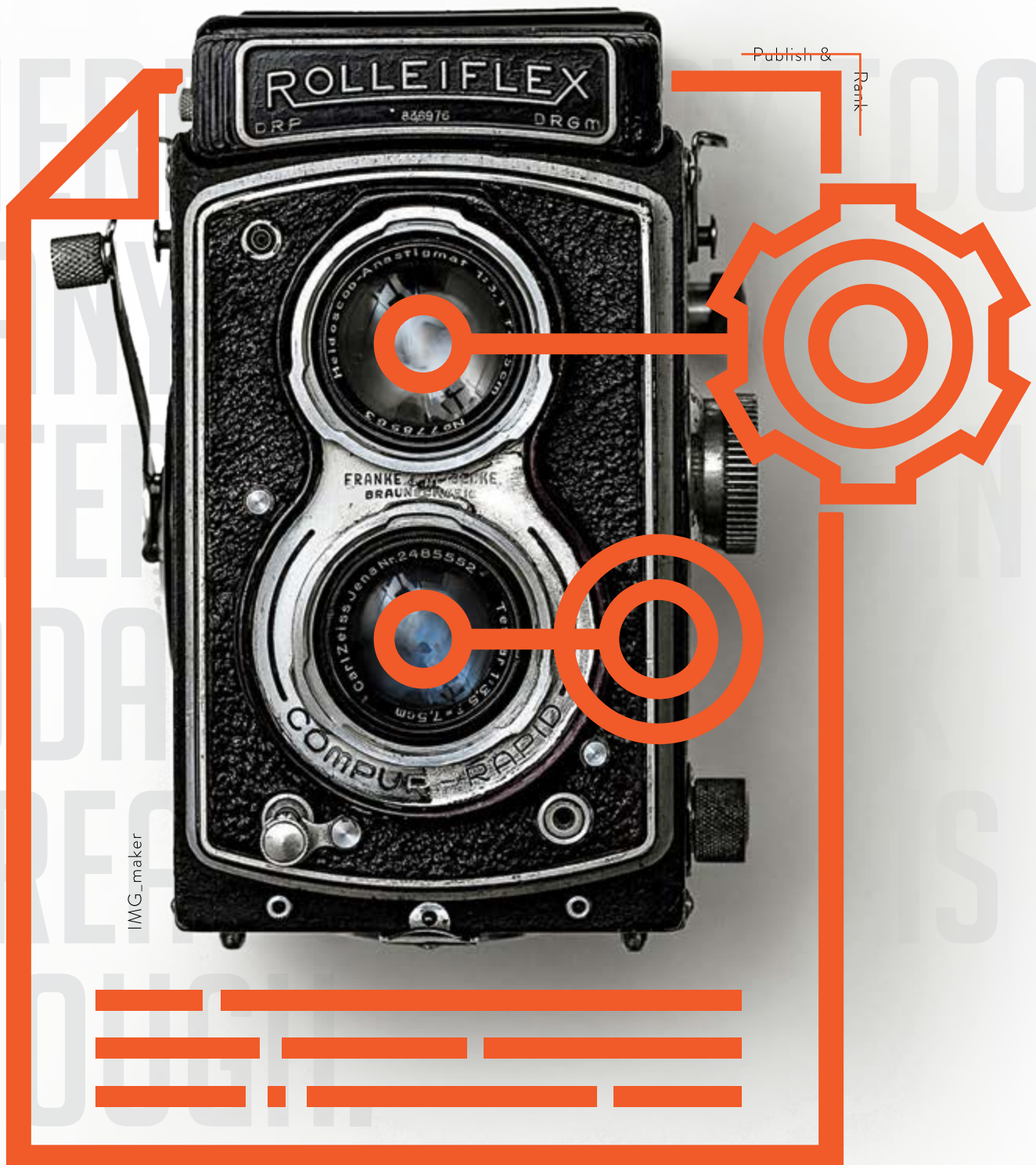
At Page One Power, we
focus on content and
links because they
provide proven results.

**DON'T ROLL
THE DICE WITH
YOUR WEBSITE,
PARTNER WITH
PAGE ONE POWER.**



PAGEONEPOWER

www.pageonepower.com

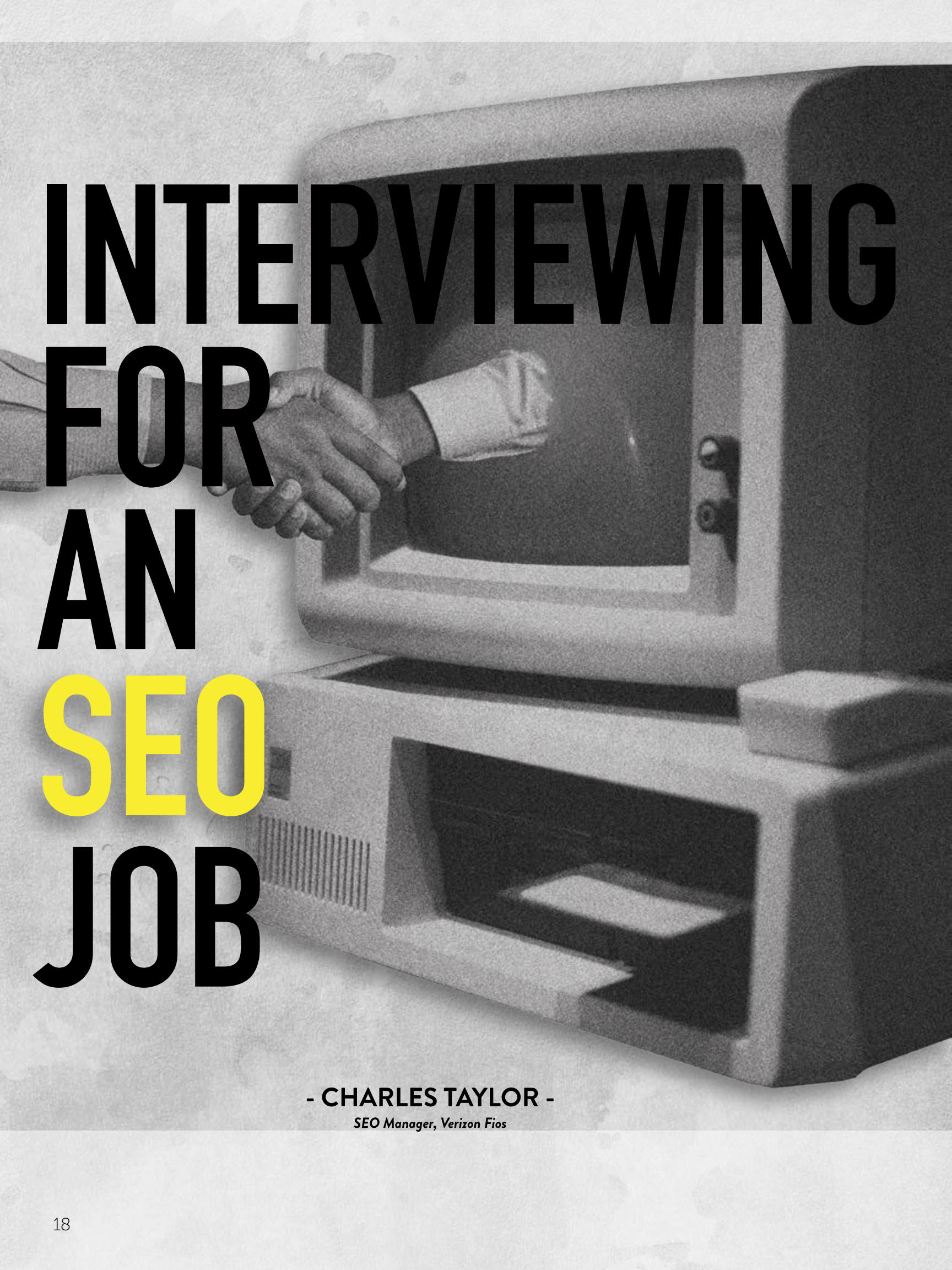


IMG_maker

**THERE ARE WAY TOO
MANY PEOPLE IN
INTERNET MARKETING
TODAY THAT THINK
'GREAT CONTENT' IS
ENOUGH.**

THEY SAY, 'IF I PUBLISH GREAT CONTENT,
GOOGLE WILL RANK ME.'
IF ONLY IT WERE THAT EASY.

**BRIAN DEAN,
BACKLINKO.COM**



INTERVIEWING FOR AN SEO JOB

- CHARLES TAYLOR -
SEO Manager, Verizon Fios

I wanted to take a break from SEO Mythbusting this month because I have something on my mind. It's about how to interview for an SEO position. I had a new position open up on my team recently and of course needed to fill it. I wrote up a corporately-approved job description (always a fun exercise) and released it into the wild. I was inundated with resumes within days. As always, there was a large percentage that I filtered out rather quickly, which left me with a core group of potentials. I took the time to speak with all of them on the phone, and while there were a couple bad calls, most seemed like good candidates. I should probably clarify that, while I always do phone pre-screens, I am very forgiving and usually schedule a face-to-face interview. Call me old school, but I do not believe anything can replace a face-to-face.

With my notes from the initial pre-screen calls, I set up about two weeks' worth of interviews and spoke to over a dozen people. What I found was very troubling. I met many candidates that could be SEO rock stars, but because they were so poorly prepared for the interview, they did not shine. I decided that this would be a great topic for this month's article: How to prepare for and shine in your next SEO interview.

A quick note: While these tips are all geared towards being SEO specific, they can apply to almost any SEM or digital marketing position. I would even suggest that if you ignore the specific tips and pull out the essential concepts, you could apply this article to almost any job interview. In addition, I am writing this for job seekers, but if you are looking to hire an SEO for the first time, you will probably find a few helpful tips or questions to ask. If not, let me know; that could be a great subject for a future article.

PREPARE AHEAD OF TIME

DURING THE INTERVIEW

POST INTERVIEW

PREPARE AHEAD

STUDY UP.



D OF TIME

RESEARCH THE COMPANY SITE

The first and probably most important thing you must do is research the company and their website. Find and visit the company site(s) — yes, they may have multiple sites as is very common with e-commerce companies. There are loads of tools you can use to find these sites, but first start with LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook. If you have trouble finding more than one domain, then swing by SpyOnWeb.com. This is a handy little tool; it shows sites with common IP Addresses, Google Analytics code, or even Google AdWords code.

Now that you have the company site(s), review them. Look for title tags, meta descriptions, internal links, canonical links, etc. If you have access to any tools like Screaming Frog, SEMRush, ahrefs, or Moz, use them for sure. This is not a full SEO Audit; it usually takes me about an hour. Afterwards, you should be prepared to discuss the site's current optimization: What are they doing right? What are they doing wrong? Can you give them any "quick fixes"? If you can produce any reports, then do so —we will talk more about that later.

DURING THE INT

WHAT VALUE CAN YOU CREATE?

It is now the day of the interview. I will assume you are dressed professionally and plan to show up 10–15 minutes early (because you have researched your travel route). These courtesies are so fundamental that I won't bother spending any more time discussing them.

Hiring employees is risky for companies, especially small and medium-sized companies. The interview is your chance to remove the risk of hiring you (over other candidates) by communicating the value you can create. This is your #1 goal: prove to them that you can create massive value for them via SEO. Show them past rankings, traffic or sales data. Quick note: be careful and respectful of past employer data. Personally, I rarely show raw numbers, even if no NDA exists. I usually stick with percentages. Demonstrate that you will respect their financial data by respecting your former employers' data.

If you have any SEO (or related) certificates or credentials, be sure to show and talk about them. I would not rely too heavily on them, but they will show that you take your career seriously. Educational credentials look good on resumes, but in interviews, I believe results speak louder than papers with fancy emblems.

BE PRESENT.
BE HONEST.

INTERVIEW

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

One of my favorite questions to ask during SEO interviews is: "Tell me the most innovative thing you've done in SEO." Then I am quiet. Many of us do not like to brag, but this is your chance to brag about yourself. Hold nothing back; give your juiciest tip, but be sure you know your audience. Do not start bragging about the latest black hat tactic if the interviewer has a conservative marketing strategy; you will scare him or her off. Likewise, if you can tell the interviewer is excited about cutting-edge tactics, then go for it!

My second favorite question is: "Tell me about an SEO project that failed." There seems to be an assumption that you have to portray yourself as infallible. None of us is perfect and no one expects you to be. The key is that you have learned from your mistakes. Explain the project, what you feel caused the failure, and how you would do it differently if you had the chance to do it over. The key here is NOT to point fingers and blame others...even if it was someone else's fault. Things go wrong all the time. Show your potential employer that you can handle adversity professionally.

TOOLS & GURUS

Lastly, when discussing your site analysis, be prepared to discuss the tools you have used, which ones you like to use...and why. Again, this shows employers you have a broad range of SEO knowledge. If you only use Google Search Console and Excel, that is OK, but you need to be prepared to explain why.

Often I have asked (or been asked) how I keep up with industry trends. Keeping up with trends shows that you are a self starter and will continue to build your skillset. SEO is one of those careers where everyone is self educated; there are no SEO degrees. Employers want to learn not only what you know, but that your knowledge will expand over time. What industry leaders do you listen to or read and why? What have you learned from them lately? It is always a bonus if you can discuss breaking news. If you can teach them something during the interview, you will gain instant credibility.

BRING A PORTFOLIO

Yes, we are in the digital era, but bring a couple copies of your resume (on nice paper) and all your paperwork in a nice presentation folder or even a locking report cover. Do you remember that site audit we discussed? Print it and place it here. Also, print past rankings reports and/or any SEO certificates and place it there as well. Refer to them during the interview and give them to the interviewer before you leave. Folks in sales use "leave behinds" all the time. Do you know why? They work! You are selling yourself so you should follow the same practice. For me, as an interviewer, this also shows that the interviewee is prepared, organized, and is taking the interview seriously. It gives interviewers insights into the type of work you will produce.

IS THE COMPANY A GOOD FIT FOR YOU?

Yes, you are interviewing them as well. Does their energy and enthusiasm match yours? If people at the company are ultra extroverts and you are a laid-back introvert, that may be a problem for everyone. Ask them questions about what they expect from you. What are their goals for you in the first 30 or 90 days? Where would they like YOU to be in 2-3 years? Do you want to expand beyond SEO or become the company's Grand Poobah of SEO? Either way, you need to determine your growth opportunities.

SPYING ON THE OPERATION

There is one last trick I use when going on interviews. I try to schedule my interviews for 9 or 10 a.m. That way I can drive in morning traffic to see what my commute will be like — bad commutes are a deal-breaker for me. I can also watch when and how people arrive. If you cannot do the morning, then do late afternoon — 3 or 4 p.m. so you can observe the reverse. Get a feel for the commute home and see if people are running out the door at 4:45 or toiling away past 7 p.m.

POST INTERVIEW

FOLLOW UP

Did you get a business card or contact email from everyone you met with? I hope so! The moment you get home, be sure to send a thank you note. Reiterate your enthusiasm and make specific mention of one or two discussion points. If something was left open, then answer it in the email.

I like to send personalized thank you emails, but that is not always possible. If you did not get someone's info, just ask for your email to be forwarded to the appropriate person.

I got a handwritten note once: very nice but I personally do not feel it is necessary. Use your judgement. Do you feel they would appreciate a handwritten note? Not sure? Did they have letters, cards, or notes displayed around the office? That will give you your answer.

TRUST YOUR GUT

You have completed the steps to a successful interview. With your preparation and professionalism, you have outshined all the other applicants and the company wants to hire you immediately. Now it is time for you to reflect on what YOU learned during the interview. Will this position

take you in the direction you wish to go with your career? Did you get a good feeling towards your direct manager and coworkers (if you met them too)? Do you believe you will blend well within the company culture? What does your gut tell you?

Personally, every time I have ever ignored a small warning in my gut when interviewing for a job or interviewing a person, I regret it. Now this takes time to develop, but learn to trust your gut. Looking for the small things is critical: office layout, culture, are the employees smiling and seem genuinely happy to be there, or are they keeping their heads down? Ultimately, interviews are about being prepared and noticing the little things — for both the interviewer and interviewee. Now go crush that interview and get your SEO dream job! ☺

W PROCESS

TOUCH BASE.
CROSS YOUR FINGERS.
GET THE JOB!



Charles is always ready
to share insight and industry
knowledge. Give him a follow
on Twitter here:
[@CharlesHTaylor](https://twitter.com/CharlesHTaylor)

SARAH

Bird

From a few hundred to over 37,000 customers worldwide, Sarah Bird, CEO of Moz, has grown the company thanks to her extraordinary leadership. Sarah joined Moz when it was just a startup and has been instrumental in helping the company become what is it today. She's also recognized for her conversations on culture, entrepreneurship, search marketing, and business models.

Sarah is energized by making things right and helping others, and is a master forecaster: she's able to spot and understand current and future problems, and find solutions that are right for her team and Moz's customers. Sarah also helps Moz uphold their core values — transparency, authenticity, generosity, fun, empathy, and exceptionality — in everything they do.

She's always a fan of a great baked goods, an engaging business book, and spending time with her son.



WHAT EXCITES YOU MOST ABOUT WORKING IN SEARCH MARKETING?

Search is getting very, very good.

We've found in our research that more than half of in-house marketers acknowledge that SERPs are becoming the default "homepage" for their business. Local search results provide map directions, hours of operation, reviews, and even menus for restaurants. Search is getting so good that people don't even need to leave the first page of their search to find the information they are looking for. Whereas some may see Google My Business featured snippets information as a threat, at Moz, we see it as an opportunity to provide a meaningful service that make a difference for our clients.

Additionally, thanks to recent advances in search technology, we can access search in entirely new ways from dozens of touchpoints. With the growing ubiquity of Amazon Alexa or Google Assistant enabled devices, search is a resource you can use while at home, at the office, and on the go. People have developed an expectation that their questions can be answered anywhere, at any time.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE FUTURE OF SEO? WHERE IS THE FIELD HEADED?

Voice search continues to gain momentum as consumers become more comfortable talking to their phones, watches, and smart speakers, and they are finding out how convenient on-demand information can be.

While voice search continues to grow, visual search is following closely and quietly behind. We are seeing search engines like Google and Bing adapt visual search technology and begin to implement it into their platforms, as are social platforms like Snapchat and Pinterest. Traditional search engines are still beta-testing visual search, so we still have a bit of waiting to do before we start building SEO tools. It is an opportunity for brands to shake up consumer behavior, which will be an exciting time in the search marketing world.

WHAT IS ONE THING THAT MOST BUSINESSES CAN CHANGE WITH REGARDS TO THEIR APPROACH TO SEO THAT COULD MAKE THE BIGGEST IMPACT ON THEIR SUCCESS IN THE SEARCH CHANNEL?

I think there is a misconception that search results in Google and Bing are the result of luck, or perhaps an all-knowing system that decides what appears on results pages, and that there is little a business owner can do to affect those results.

One of the things I recommend that has a quick and profound impact on a businesses search performance is up to date physical location information. The majority of purchases made in the United States every year are still in brick-and-mortar stores. Ensuring your hours of operation, store name, location, and other basic information is up to date and relevant can have a nearly overnight impact on your business. Local SEO levels the playing field for small, local businesses competing against big box stores.

WHAT IS YOUR MOST PROUD ACCOMPLISHMENT IN THE DIGITAL MARKETING FIELD?

I am unbelievably proud of the research and insights we have been able to make available for free on the Moz Blog, YouTube and elsewhere. Transparency is one of our *core values* at Moz, and whether you use our tools or not, we believe it is our mission to help others understand how the web works.

I'm very proud of the Whiteboard Friday sessions, blog posts, and whitepapers my colleagues and I have been able to present to the marketing industry, at no added cost.

I'm proud of Moz's core transparency value and what I have been able to contribute toward that value.

IF YOU COULD CHANGE ONE THING ABOUT SEO, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

That's quite the question. I think I would dispel the idea that SEO — unlike email marketing, PPC, or social media marketing — is a direct dollars in/dollars out approach to marketing. Of course, we can report on increases in SERP rankings and correlate that with an increase in search traffic, but SEO is so much more than that. SEO, like PR and content marketing, has a strong intangible value, too.

SEO reinforces brand knowledge, subject matter expertise, and trust. I would encourage all senior-level marketers to look beyond the direct ROI of search engine optimization and also look to the more abstract value SEO can have.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO MARKETERS OR OTHER INDIVIDUALS JUST GETTING STARTED IN SEARCH MARKETING?

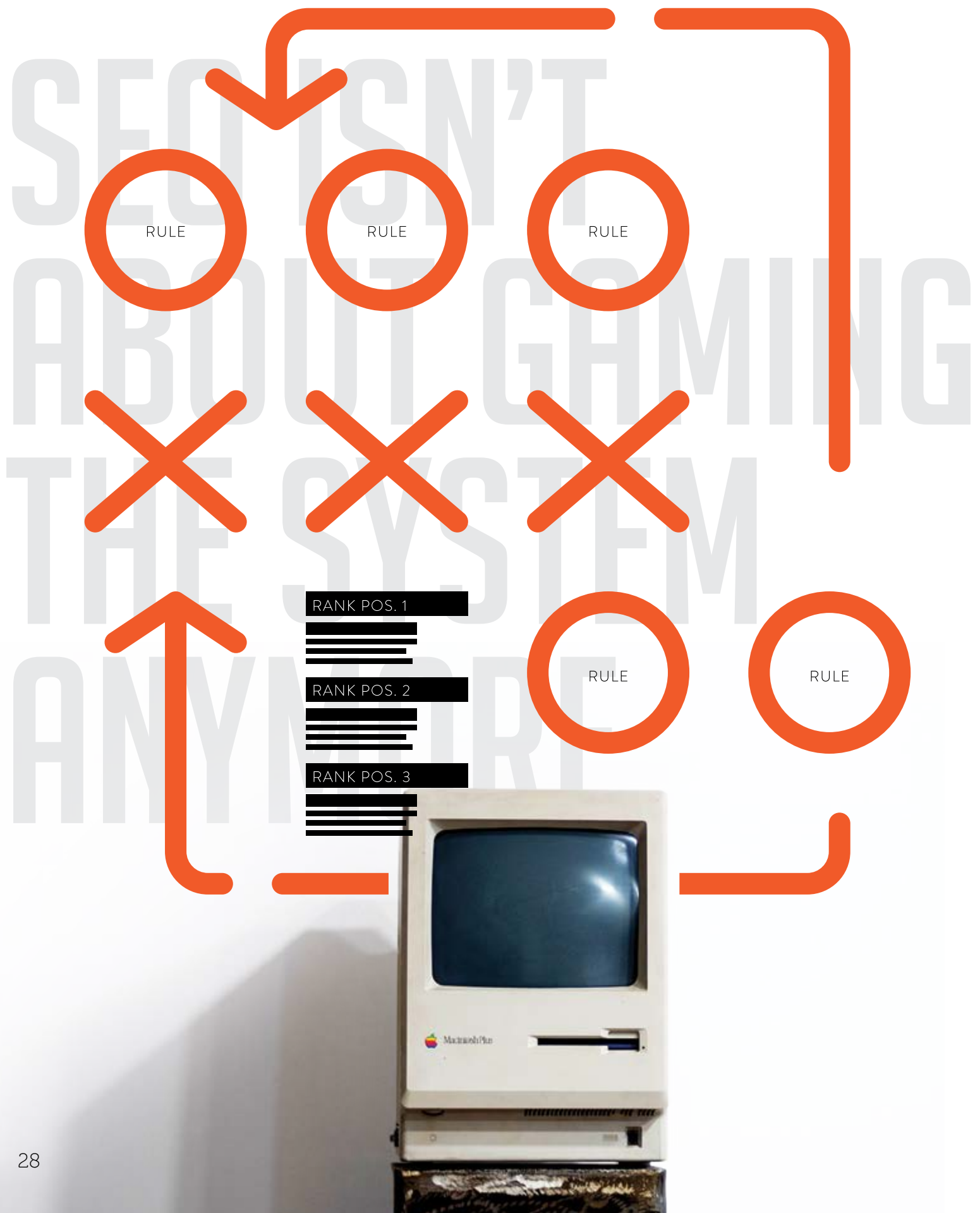
Search marketing isn't going away, rather it is adapting based on consumer needs and meeting them where they are — on phones, car navigation systems, smart speakers, and even televisions. Companies that don't have a defined SEO strategy are going to see those competitors that do have a plan pull ahead.

For those getting started in search marketing — or even old pros looking to brush up on the fundamentals — we've recently updated our "*Beginner's Guide to SEO*" with the latest best practices and industry terms. We make this guide available for free, with no email sign-ups or lead capture gates, because we believe that the only way we can become better marketers is to share knowledge.



If you want to stay in the loop with industry-leading information on search marketing, give her and the Moz team a follow on Twitter:

@Moz
@SarahBird



SEO ISN'T ABOUT GAMING THE SYSTEM ANYMORE;

IT'S ABOUT LEARNING
TO PLAY
BY THE RULES.

JORDAN TEICHER
CONTENTLY

USING S♥SOCIAL

MEDIA

TO

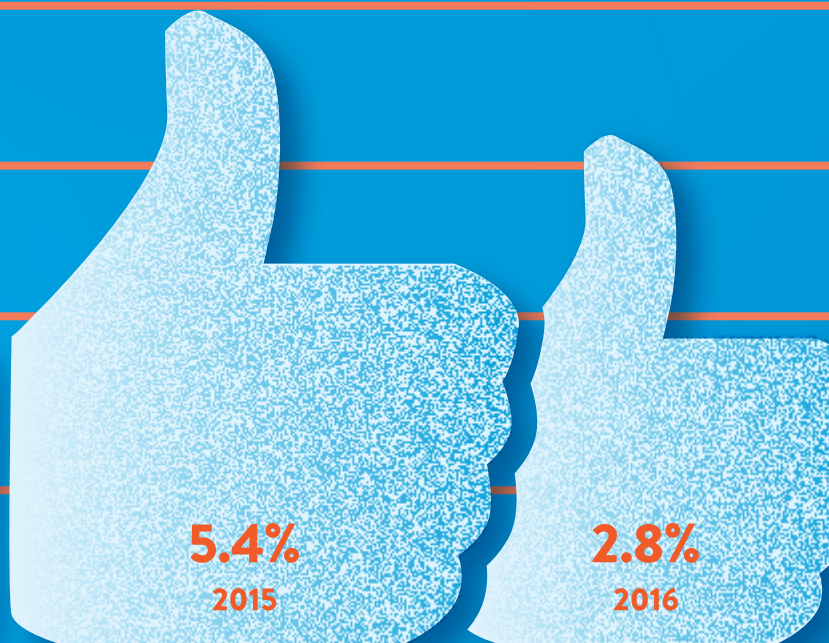
IMPROVE

YOUR

DIGITAL PR

&

LINK CAMPAIGNS



- DAVID WHITE -

Director of Content Marketing, Connective3

On the 11th of January 2018, the world of social media marketing changed forever, causing a headache for social media experts and an even bigger problem for content marketers. Let me explain:

Mark Zuckerberg, CEO and founder of Facebook, made an announcement which sent shivers down the spines of marketers worldwide.

The announcement detailed a change to the algorithm Facebook uses when prioritising posts on a user's newsfeed. Put simply, the changes made meant that Facebook now prioritises posts from friends and family, ultimately meaning that branded content needs to work harder in order to get the same screen time.

To put this into numbers, recent studies show that Facebook organic reach has fallen by more than 50% from 2015–2018.

This update caused unprecedented damage to many brands' social strategies, but what is often overlooked is how this update impacted news publishers, and subsequently, content marketers.

News publications such as national and regional papers rely heavily on Facebook to deliver traffic to their site (The more traffic, the more advertising!).

With the new algorithm, many media outlets saw huge decreases in that traffic. To take this one step further, journalists working in the newsrooms of those publications are now often targeted on the traffic their articles deliver.

With Facebook no longer delivering the same amount of traffic, journalists are now looking to other channels such as Apple News and Samsung Upday to deliver the traffic lost through Facebook.

According to *mac rumours*, Vox.com can get up to 50% of their daily traffic from Apple News alone.

Content marketers need journalists for links and coverage. If you create a story that will help the journalists achieve their KPIs, you are far more likely to get the links and coverage you desire.

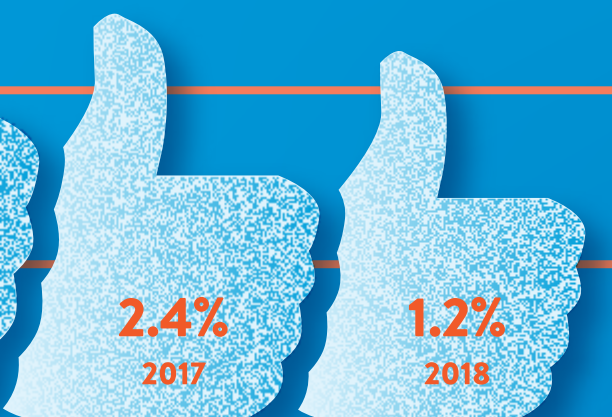
The question is, how do we understand what content works well on different channels? After all, once we have answered that, we can tailor our digital PR campaigns to give them the best chance of going viral and help exceed journalists' traffic KPIs.

Firstly, we need to understand that social is much bigger than just Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

There are hundreds of engaged social platforms that have relevant traffic waiting to be taken. **Conversationprism.com** is a great place to start before you even start.

The Conversation Prism was launched in 2008 by Brian Solis and shows a visual map of the social media landscape.

The prism reveals numerous social platforms, all of which hold a highly-engaged audience. It's our job as content marketers to understand which channels our audience visits, and then work out the best way to present content to them on their preferred channel. This is why in 2019, social listening is more important than ever for content marketers.



Organic Facebook reach in APAC
Data from <https://boneseyjaden.com/truth-facebook-organic-reach-2018/>



Launched in 2008 by Brian Solis and JESS3, The Conversation Prism is a visual map of the social media landscape. The prism is an ongoing study in digital ethnography that tracks dominant and promising social networks and organizes them by how they're used in everyday life. To check it out and get a high resolution download of the prism, check out conversationprism.com.

HOW TO USE SOCIAL LISTENING FOR CONTENT MARKETING

Social listening allows you to input a brand, a topic, or a social handle and see how people are engaging with that term or profile over social media, editorial, forums, YouTube, and online reviews.

Social listening offers you detailed information on what your audience is talking about and who they are engaging with. It can also show you the best content per platform.

For example, If I was to target the travel conversation on Reddit, I would need to know what content is most likely to get picked up and shared. Knowing this means I can tailor my campaign and then sell it into the press with the hope that their article also receives traffic from channels such as Reddit.

The first step any content marketer should take is to understand how to visualise their content. A great tool to work this out is **BuzzSumo**.

BuzzSumo allows you to input any keyword, in any language, and see what content has been written about that topic, broken down by social shares and backlinks.

For the sake of this article, imagine we are a travel brand in the UK selling holidays. BuzzSumo allows you to input the term “holiday” into their search bar, which then reveals what articles have been written about that topic over the past 2-5 years.

By following the steps to the right, we can see how best to visualise our content.

What you should get is data such as the pie chart below.

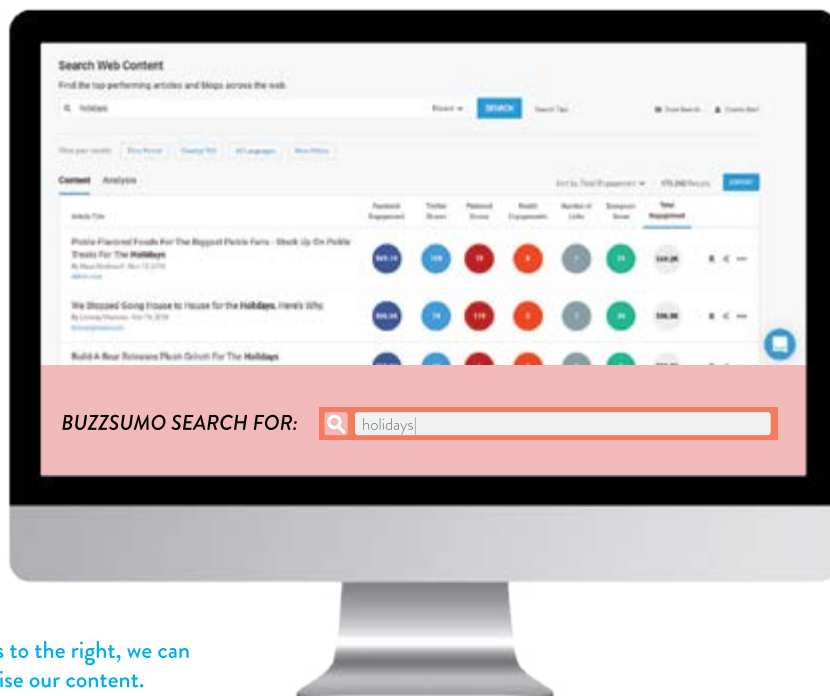
This shows that videos and “why” posts get the least amount of links. List features do OK and general articles (surveys, promotions, and write ups) do the best.

This is a great starting point and a perfect example of how to use social media to better your digital PR. The issue is, this is only half of the story. No matter how you visualise a campaign, it won't work if the idea you're writing about doesn't resonate with people.

You need to find conversations that your target audience are having and, if relevant, create content around those topics.

Social listening is a great way to work out what these conversations are.

For the sake of this article, I will be showing you how to do this with the social listening tool **Linkfluence**, however, before I do, I want to share other tools you can use, listed below (these are just some I have used previously, others are available).



step1:EXPORT

Export all articles to an excel sheet. The data exported will show the URLs, the number of shares per social channel, the number of links that article gained and how the article was visualised.

step2:REMOVE

Remove all the articles that gained zero links (as we don't want to learn from content that didn't perform).

step3:CREATE

Create a pivot table.

step4:FILTER

Filter for the content visualisation and compare against the number of links before visualising in a chart.



Brandwatch

PROS:
Great data visualisation and huge data set to play with.

CONS:
Expensive.



Mention

PROS:
Affordable and very user friendly

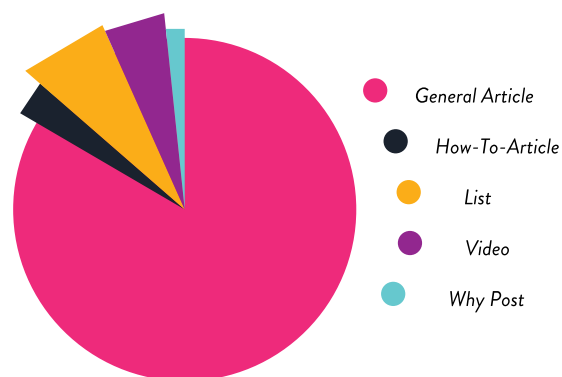
CONS:
Does not provide granular geographic data.



Social Searcher

PROS:
Free and very easy to use.

CONS:
Data is not as in-depth as other available tools.



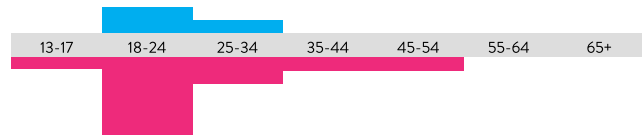


When you click on the subject, it reveals more details.

Main Topics - Entertainment

The Only Way Is Essex
Big Brother
Rylan Clark
Katie Price
Celebrity Juice
Geordie Shore
The X Factor
Celebrity Big Brother
Essex

Demography



The first thing social listening can show you is the accounts and conversations your social following are having. You can see this visualised at right. (I have removed the account details.)

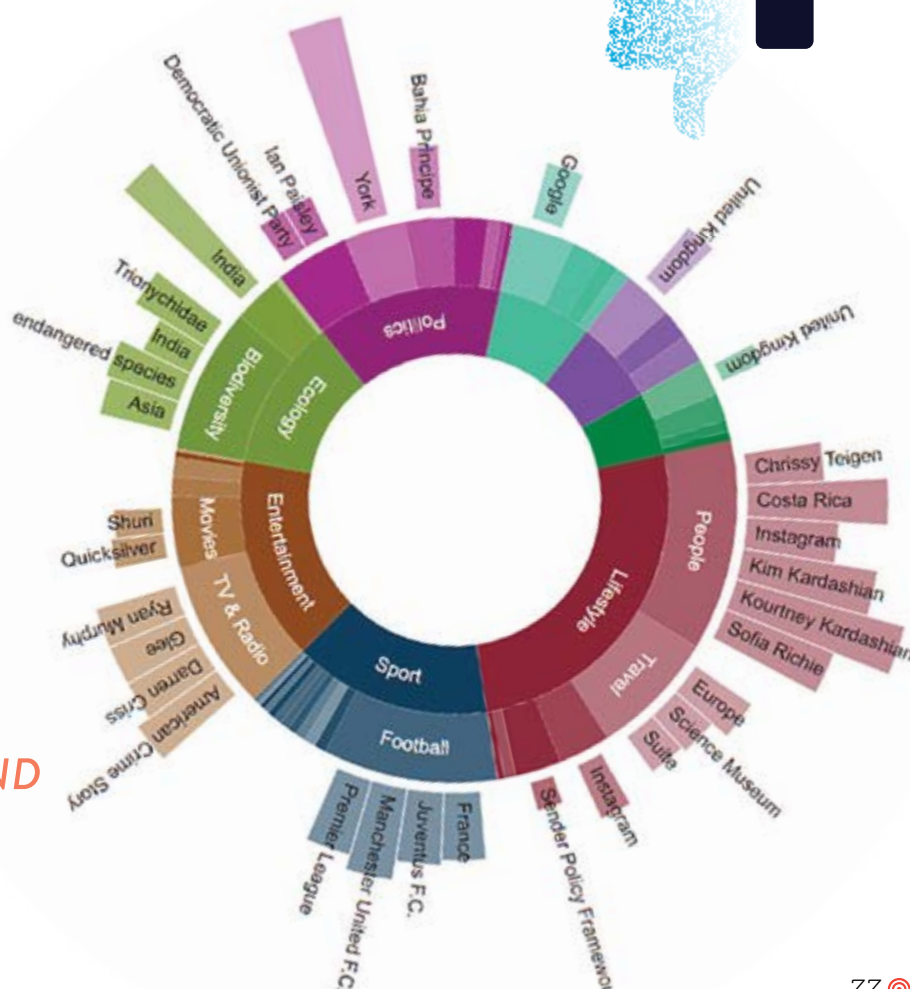
The image at right shows how you can work out what conversations and personalities your audience engages with. For the above, you may want to consider running an X Factor campaign as you know there is interest in this topic.

Social listening can also help you understand what conversations are happening over different channels (Reddit, forums, websites, etc.)

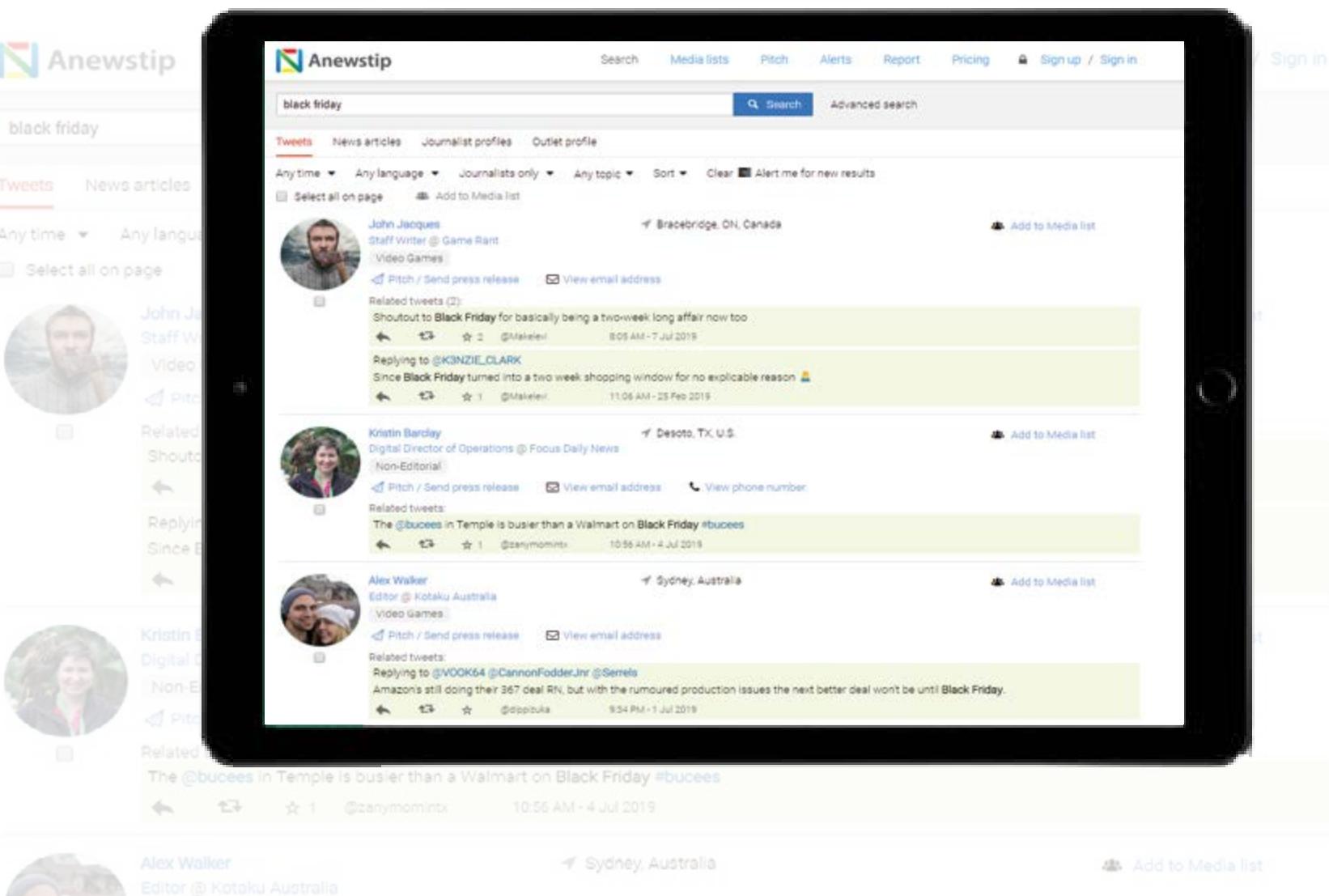
I inputted the term “family holiday” and “weekend break” into Linkfluence and asked for it to show the surrounding conversations pertaining to these search terms throughout online media.

The diagram below shows the surrounding topics, again offering a chance to create inspiration for the next PR campaign idea.

USING SOCIAL LISTENING TO FIND THE LIKES AND DISLIKES OF YOUR FOLLOWERS



SOCIAL LISTENING CAN ALSO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT CONVERSATIONS ARE HAPPENING OVER DIFFERENT CHANNELS.



IMPROVING OUTREACH VIA SOCIAL LISTENING

My final point on using social media to better your digital PR is when it comes to outreach.

Outreach, or media relations, is when we sell our idea into the media with the hope that they cover our campaign.

A great way to tailor your outreach strategy is to make sure you are targeting journalists who have a similar interest, or have recently talked about the subject of your PR campaign.

By analysing journalists' social profiles, we can search Twitter to see which press contacts have recently tweeted about a subject that is related to or is close to our PR campaign (ultimately meaning they might be more inclined to cover your story).

A great tool to do this at bulk and with ease is Anewstip.

Anewstip allows you to input keywords and find journalists who have tweeted about your subject.

You can break down the search criteria by time, language, and topic.

For example, if I had a campaign or data surrounding Black Friday, I could input the term "Black Friday" into the search function and see which journalists are currently engaging with that topic. I could then go find their details and approach them.

Using this bespoke and personal approach means that we are much more likely to land the coverage and links we require.

Newsrooms cuts, fake news, and changes to the media landscape are now having a huge impact on digital PR and link building activity.

Social media and digital PR should no longer work as two separate channels. When they work together they can improve the results and output from both sets of activity, whilst tackling the above-mentioned challenges.

Using social media means that digital PRs can improve their results and deliver campaigns they know are going to resonate with potential customers. 🎯

SUMMARY



Keep up with David and his arsenal of social expertise with a follow on Twitter: [@david_white90](https://twitter.com/david_white90)



THE FIRST STEP
ANY CONTENT
MARKETER SHOULD
TAKE IS TO
UNDERSTAND HOW
TO VISUALIZE
THEIR CONTENT.

DON'T BE A TOOL.

USE THE TOOLS

There's a wealth of tools at your disposal that provide insight on where your site could use some work and help you reach the goals you have set for it. The tools outlined here can assist with your speed optimizations. However, don't consider this a one-and-done effort. Make sure you keep track of every speed test you run and monitor your results over time.

When utilizing these tools, don't just test the homepage. Test all of your critical pages, order forms, and landing pages. You can always check your Google Analytics and navigate to Behavior > Site Content > All Pages, Landing Pages or Exit Pages to determine your best places for additional optimization. ☺



PageSpeed Insights

Find out your site's mobile and desktop score. This tool looks at your network latency but also brings in data from the Chrome User Experience Report, which examines real-world speed data that users have experienced when accessing your site. You will also get tips on specific opportunities to improve your results, along with the audits you've already passed.



WebPageTest.org

Another site to review performance, allowing you to also choose your own test location, browser, and device type to run your test on, which can be important for sites with a large geographic reach. This tool typically runs three tests at once to ensure you're getting the same results each time. Graphs are provided on the types of resources loaded on your site, as well as a waterfall chart that highlights key requests to address, so you can overlay that with your timelines around the first paint, first content paint, and fully loaded time.



Pingdom

In addition to waterfall charts and YSlow scoring models, Pingdom offers visualizations to understand how your elements appear as the page loads. As a bonus, they provide uptime monitoring to ensure your site is always available and alerts you in case of a problem.



GTMetrix.com

Get insights into your PageSpeed score and YSlow scores that will give specific recommendations and priorities of the issues. On top of this, you can see your page size, time to fully loaded, and number of HTTP requests. Additionally, GTMetrix offers a waterfall chart that delivers a request-by-request visualization of the page load. This lets you know specifically what issues are slowing down your site and where they're located.



Google Analytics

GA offers insights under Behavior > Site Speed where you can get historic data on your site's speed based on browser type, country, and page. The page report is especially important. If you see one of your most important pages showing up with a higher than average load time, you know exactly where you need to start optimizing. Keep in mind that GA uses a sampling of user data, so depending on your sample size, it may not be fully representative of the speeds your entire audience experiences.



Web.dev/Lighthouse

Web.dev is a tool from Google that leverages the Lighthouse platform. This test can give you insight into your SEO checks, accessibility, site performance, and adherence to best practices. Plus, the reports are easy to understand and share in PDF format.



LOOK HERE

- THAT'S ONE MORE PAIR OF EYES THAT COULD HAVE SEEN YOUR AD -

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ADVERTISING WITH *PAGES*, CONTACT US AT:

INFO@pagesSEOmagine.com

BEGGON DISCOV



- GARRETT MEHRGUTH -
CEO, Directive Consulting

ING ERABLE

Is your brand discoverable?

Let's go back to September 4th, 1998. On this day, Google was born.

Ever since, marketers have asked themselves, "How can I make sure my brand shows up when potential customers search for the products or services we sell?"

Fast forward to 2019: we have more data than we can analyze, more tactics than we can execute, and more confusion around search engines than ever before.

We also have become more focused on

The bigger plot is directly correlated to our culture. Our culture wants to comparison shop. I call this the "Yelp and Amazon Effect". We look tirelessly at Yelp reviews before choosing a restaurant. Then, when we get to the restaurant, we log back onto Yelp and look at "Popular Dishes". Our entire decision-making model is based on peer review.

Think about Amazon. How do you choose a product? Do you take stock in what the product marketer wrote in the description section? Or, like me, do you scroll right past their description and read the reviews? In fact, we trust brands so little that we then

the details—so much so, in fact, that we've begun to value our own website above all else.

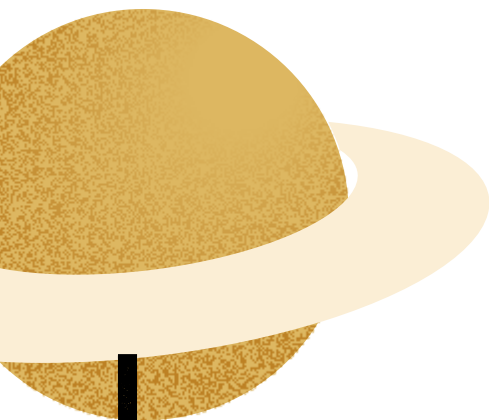
What I mean by that is the majority of our tactics are about getting potential customers to our website. Why? We can report on this data. It's all about US and OUR numbers, not the customer.

If we were really worried about the customer and our brands, we would start to think differently about search engines. We would realize that the most important part of search marketing is ensuring the right people discover our brand at the right time.

wonder if any of these reviews are fake, but never once do we trust the brand alone. We are too smart for that.

Google is aware of this culture shift. They recognize the "Yelp and Amazon Effect" and have changed how their algorithm chooses which search results to show when a searcher expresses purchasing intent.

It used to be that search marketers could show up for any keyword they wanted. A few links here, a little content there, and next thing you know, your brand is ranked number one.



Let's take a moment to search on your phone or computer: "top ERP software".

What do you find?

Every one of these results is a third-party website that makes money comparing multiple ERP vendors and charging those vendors to be on their list.

Is it transparent? No.

Is it fair? Not always.

But has there ever been anything fair about advertising?

In my opinion, this is the fairest it's ever been.

Today, a start-up ERP software can get a few raving fans, a small ad budget, and with a couple of reviews, can firmly plant themselves in the buying journey for anyone searching for an ERP software.

Unfortunately, most search marketers have no idea that the game has changed. Instead, they still try to manipulate Google and inject their website into search engine result pages (SERPs) that they will never rank for.

In the example above, no individual brand ranks in the top 10. This is not because SAP, Microsoft, and Odoo have small budgets, bad teams, and no SEO. This is because Google knows that these researcher wants peer reviews over a brand's website.

If your customer reads reviews before buying a breakfast burrito, they will read reviews before buying a two million dollar ERP software.

It's time to go back to the right question, "How do I make my brand discoverable?"



THE DISCOVERABILITY PROCESS

That said, I think it's beneficial to note that I am not some website-hating marketer living in a cave with his thoughts.

Instead, I am desperately trying to highlight a different way of thinking, a seismic shift in how we approach marketing in search engines.

Let's assume you are a pioneer and ready to take on a fresh, new approach. I have outlined below how you can go about turning the concept of discoverability into a viable strategy.

Step 1: Analyze the Buying Journey

If you have a keyword research tool like Moz, Ahrefs, or SEMrush, odds are you are probably attached to them. Unfortunately, these tools do little to inform you of the process of how an actual customer searches for what you offer.

Instead, I want you to use common sense and ignore your tools and data (common sense is a competitive advantage in 2019).

As a first step, put yourself in the mindset of your ideal customer. I like to role play so that my biases and assumptions don't hinder this process.

Pretend you are a middle manager at one of your target accounts.

Your boss, who is always in a hurry, passes you on the way to the restroom and lets you know that she is looking for a new ERP vendor.

She wants three quotes by the end of next week, and you know that any recommendations you make will be a direct reflection on your own personal judgment.

What do you do?

My guess is you search along the lines of:

- "Top ERP Software"
- "Best ERP Software"
- "ERP Software Reviews"

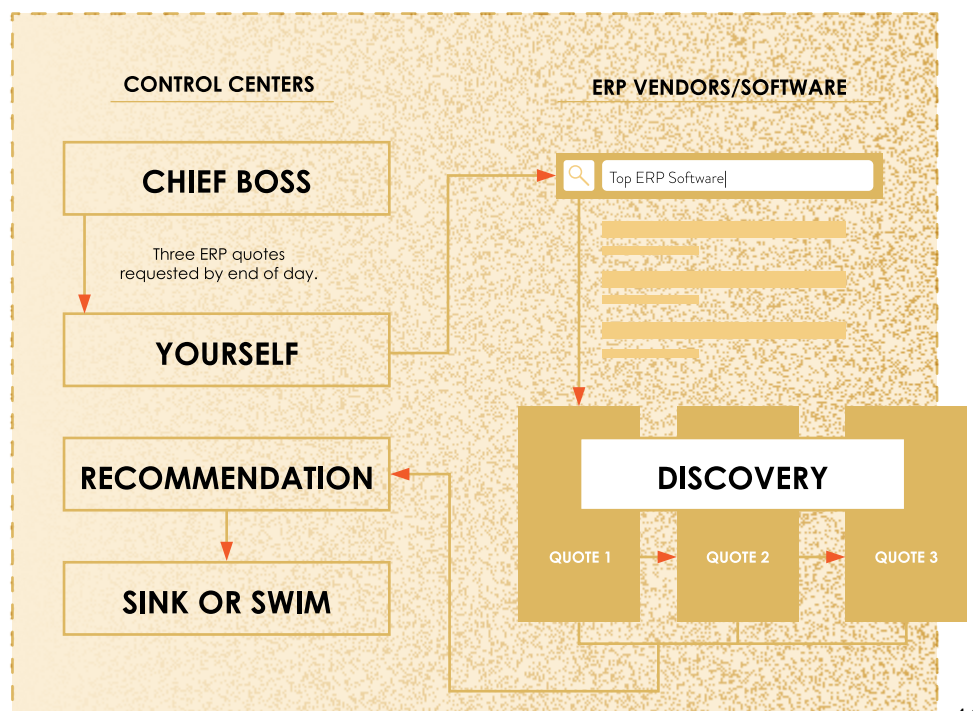
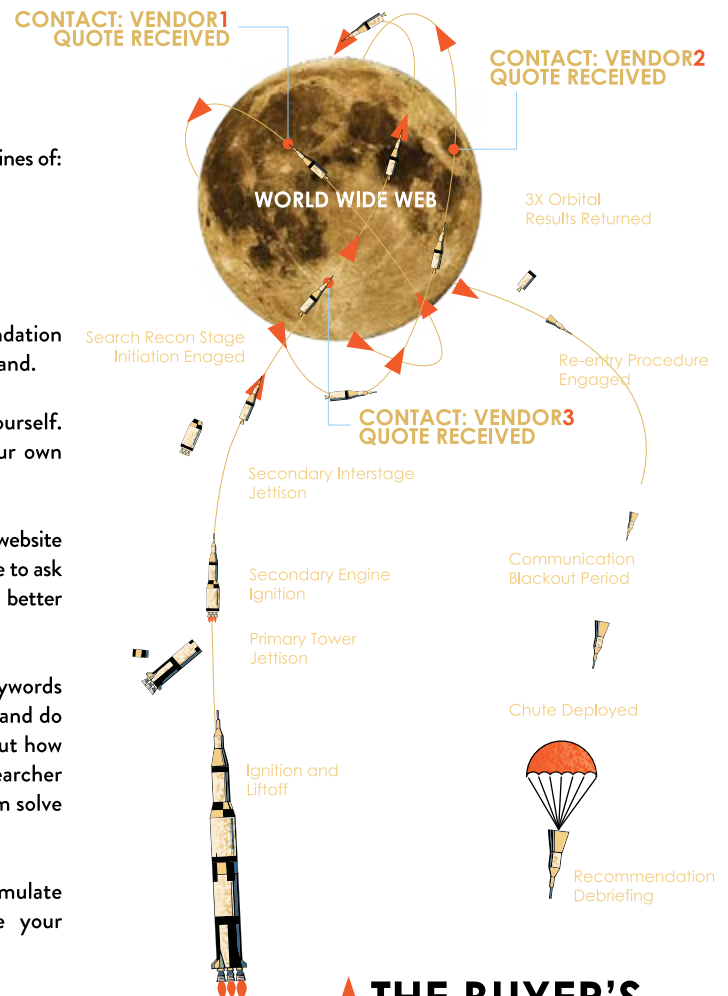
Make sure that any recommendation you make is from a reputable brand.

Now do the same thing for yourself. Replace ERP software with your own vertical. What do you find?

If you do find an individual website ranking, then this is a perfect time to ask yourself, "How could our website better answer the intent of this search?"

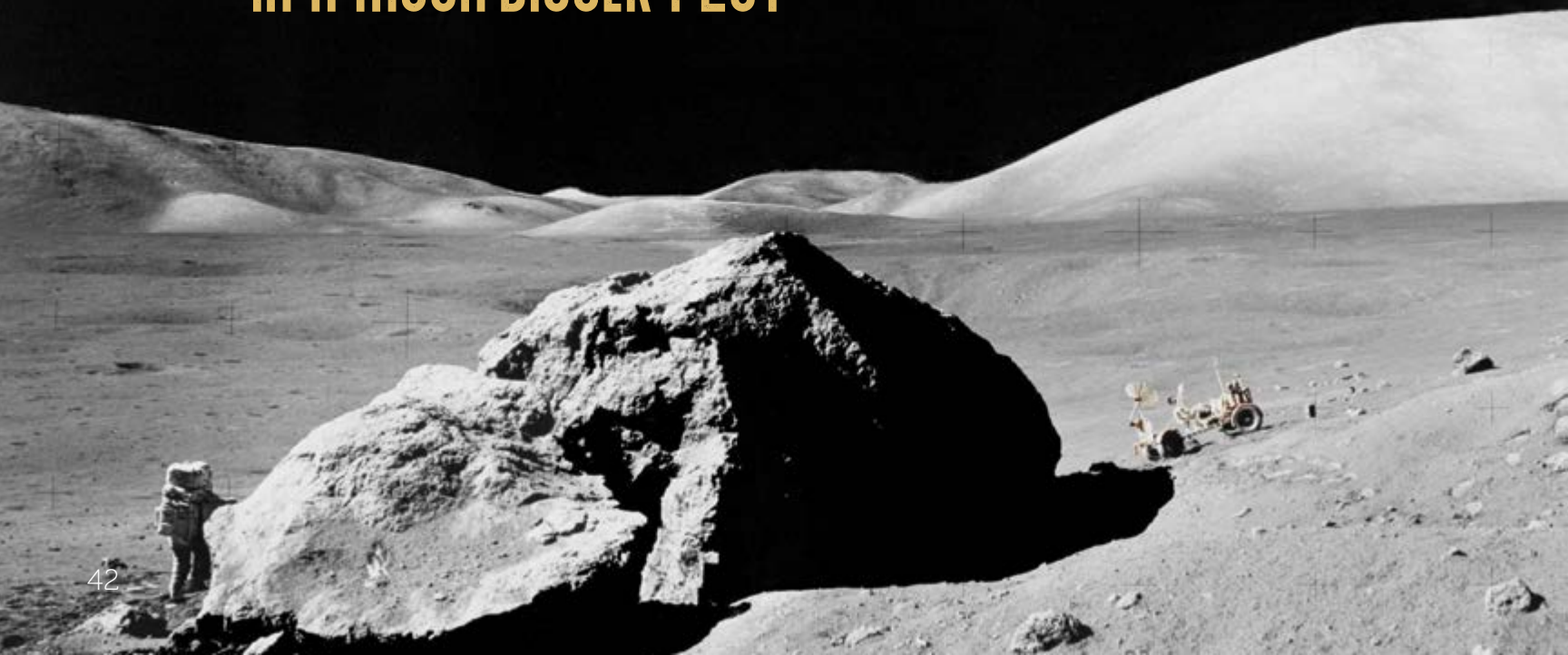
The trick isn't to identify keywords your competition is ranking for and do the same. The key is to figure out how to answer the intent of the searcher the best. How can you help them solve the task they have at hand?

From there, you can start to formulate a content strategy and make your brand even more discoverable.



OUR WEBSITE

IS A MINOR STAR
IN A MUCH BIGGER PLOT



Step 2: Evaluate Your Options

I assume you have found similar sites for your own vertical. If you are in local, you will find Yelp and Google My Business, among other sites.

If you are in professional services, you will find Clutch, 10best, etc. These sites exist in every industry, and the pages, some more than others, exist universally.

Click on the third-party sites that you find in your vertical and explore the results. Do you see your competition present? Is it reasonable to conclude that the middle manager you are pretending to be would have reason to trust these sites?

If you answered yes to either of those questions, I would argue it's time, while purchasing intent is strongest, to make your brand discoverable at the bottom of the funnel.

Each third-party review site varies; however, there are a couple of ways they allow you to make your brand discoverable, as seen above right.

Think of third-party review sites as supplemental. If you are investing any amount of money into search marketing, then I would argue that third-party review sites deserve to be part of your strategy.

Fortunately, these sites rarely require long-term commitments. One of my favorite things to do is to play around with positioning and spend.

What happens if we get the most reviews in our vertical and don't advertise?

What happens if we advertise in the number one spot on a list?

What about the number five spot?

By testing our positioning, I am able to determine the best path forward with each individual ad buy.

THIRD-PARTY SITE OPERATIONS

Each third-party review site varies; however, there are a couple of ways they allow you to make your brand discoverable:

CPC

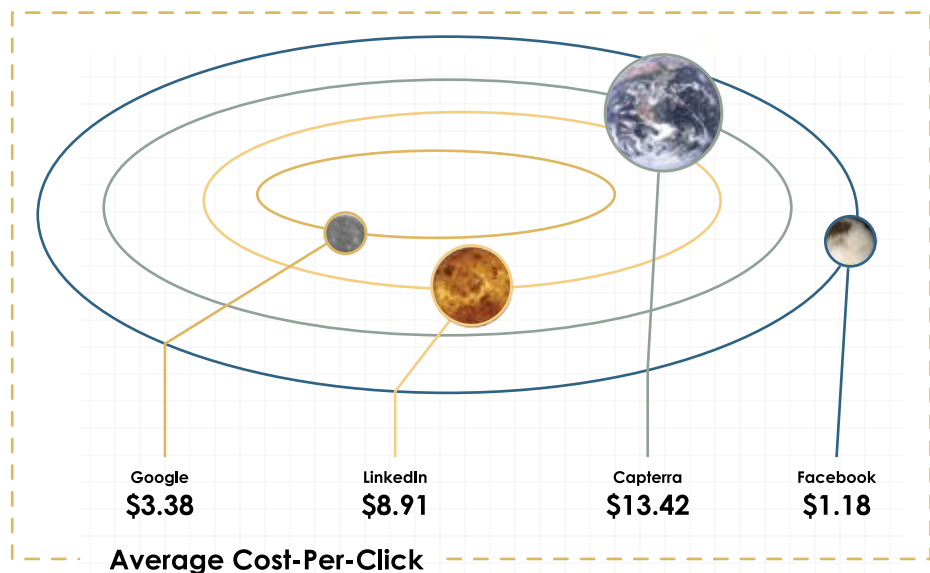
In this model, you set bids similar to Google Ads and pay every time someone clicks on your listing. The great part about this model is that with a large enough budget you can be a new player in a space, and though you have only a few reviews, still be number one — numero uno!

FIXED AMOUNT

In this model, you simply pay for a spot on a list. For example, they might say that the number one spot is \$5,000 a month, while the third spot is \$1,000 a month.

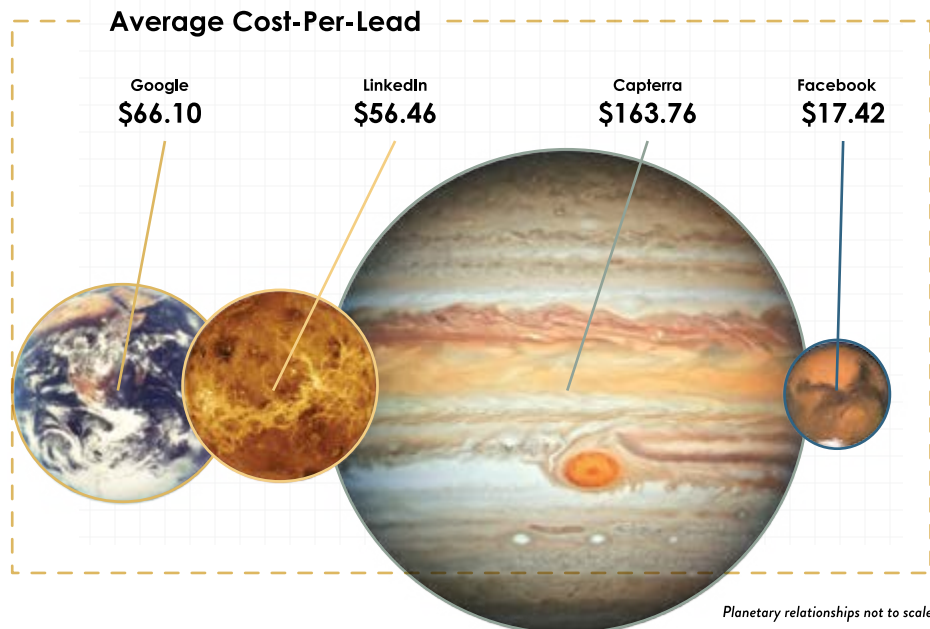
PPL

In this model, you pay per lead. The quality on these sites is often best, but the lead is more expensive. These sites traditionally qualify the accounts and then send them to you. We have found that the cost per demo/proposal is actually the cheapest from these sites due to a much higher qualification rate.



Actual data from SaaS clients in our portfolio.

For the full report please visit: <https://directiveconsulting.com/resources/>



Planetary relationships not to scale.

Step 3: Launch and Test

With this in mind, not all third-party review sites are created equal. In fact, many simply do not work or do not work specifically for certain markets, verticals, or types of buyers.

It's imperative that we have an attribution model in place. If at all possible, we want to base the success of our test on sales data, not marketing data.

The metrics I would look to analyze are the following:

Cost Per Lead
Cost Per Opportunity
Cost Per Deal
Revenue

If I can only see the cost per conversion, unfortunately, I will probably come to the wrong conclusion about the allocation of my time and spend.

You also want to test more than just the third party sites, particularly Google Ads and your own website to get a feel for the best way to bring in leads for your company.

For quite some time now, when marketers have looked to scale their search marketing, their first step has been to increase the number of keywords they target. And similar to third-party sites, there's a problem...not all keywords are created equal.

In fact, we found that when you scale the volume of keywords you target, the most likely scenario is a dip in performance. This is because you should traditionally head toward the top of the funnel and transition from satisfying purchasing intent queries to advertising on informational intent queries.

What if there was a different way to scale?

What if you scaled by showing up more often for the terms that you already know drive the KPIs that matter the most to your business.

This theory does not apply only to search engines. Think about event marketing!

How many times have you crushed an event in your industry, gone home, built out a strategy to advertise at 20 more events that year, and during the next event saw underwhelming performance?

Scale is rarely what we think it will be.

This new way of thinking is advocating this thought: "Instead of doing 20 new events, let's simply have 20 booths at our best event."

If you are seeing success, it's time to turn up your creativity. Take as much market share as possible on the SERP. Make your brand as discoverable as you can and show up in all the places you can, including:

- Google Ads
- Third-Party Review Sites
- GMB
- Organic
- Display

These options exist in some way, shape, or form in almost every industry. Take advantage of them!

In Conclusion: Tying It All Together

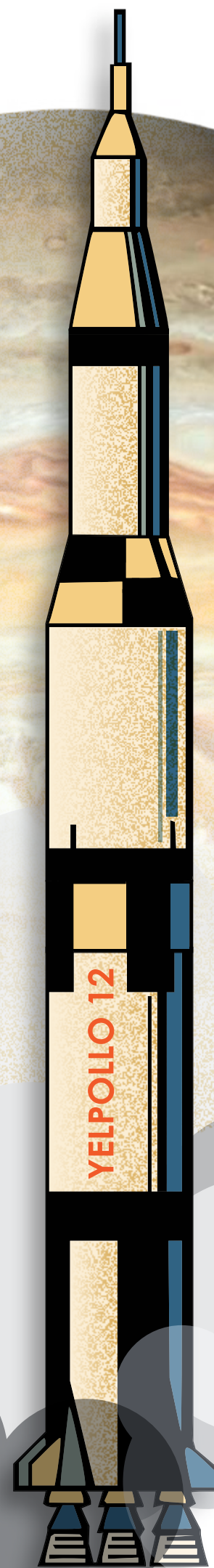
We have discussed the value of third-party review sites, walked through a process for discoverability, and explored a new way to think about scaling. The great news? You can experiment here. You can crawl, walk, and then run with the concept of discoverability.

Hopefully, it's the right time for you to execute and pave the road to search marketing success.

My dream is that you are able to make your brand discoverable, increase your ROI, and make your search efforts worth their while. ☺



*Blast into orbit with
Garrett on Twitter to
stay in tune with latest
discoveries in the search
marketing universe.
[@gmehrguth](#)*



THE KEY TO QUICK CONTENT DELIVERY.

Be sure to use Content Delivery Networks (CDNs), which can speed up your site by reducing latency and offering scalability for peak traffic times. CDNs distribute your website files across a network of servers around the world that deliver your data to your audience from the server closest to their physical location. Just as regional and local fulfillment centers help distribute online shopping orders in as little as one hour, the close server proximity to your audience means your site will load faster for the user.

A CDN will serve cached versions of your site, which is why caching is so important when it comes to speed optimization. It basically allows the server to remember the most relevant pages on your website to avoid the time-consuming process of recalculating data and retrieving pages. A best practice for static resources is to set a cache expiration policy of one year, or 31,557,600 seconds. Cacheable objects include images, media files, stylesheets, scripts, and fonts.

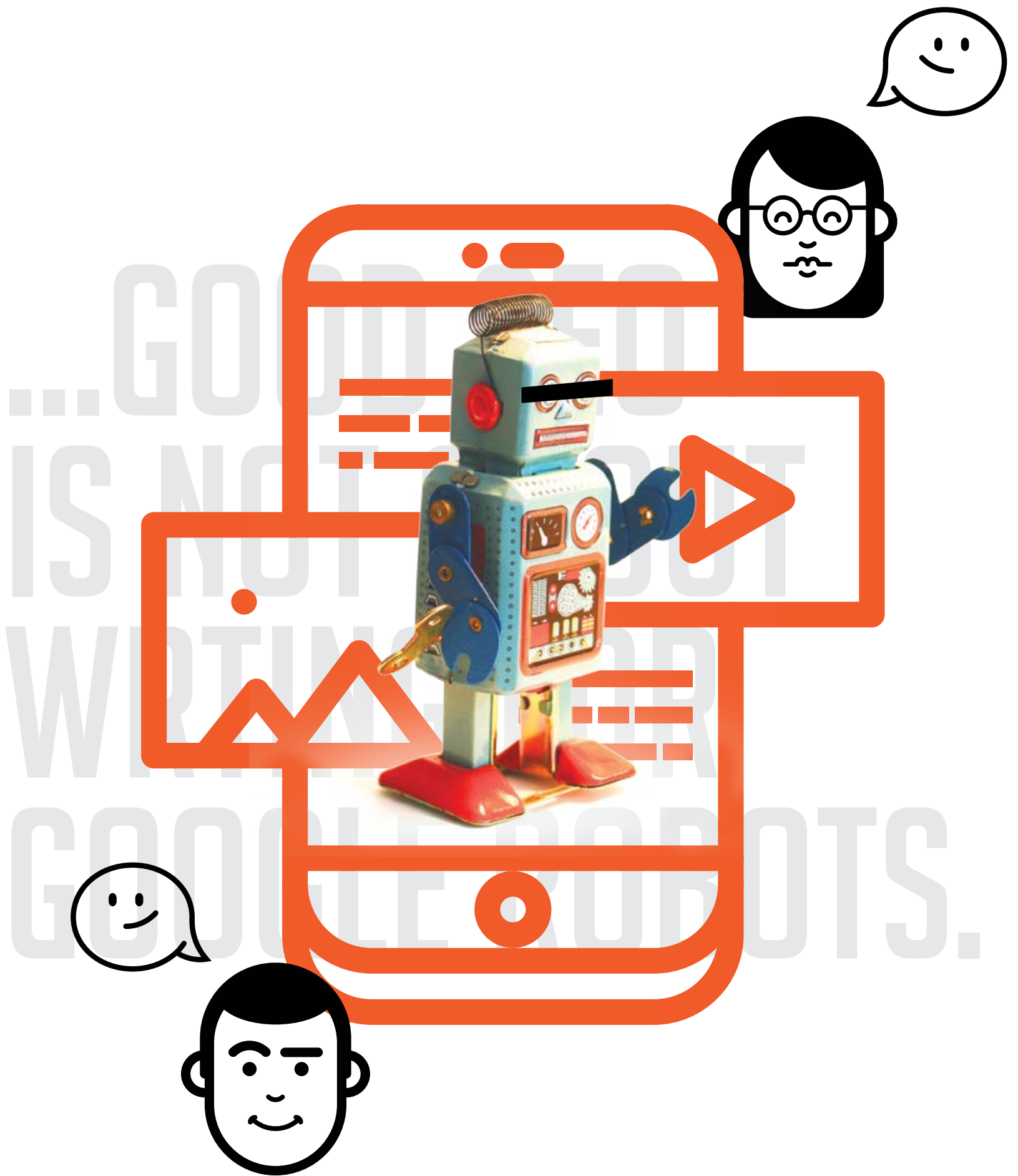
While you can check with your hosting provider for some of these features, look out for:

1. Individual page caching.
2. Preloaded cache that emulates a browser's crawl.
3. Browser caching for static files improving intrasite page load speeds. This is important for elements that repeat throughout your site, such as a logo, icons, CSS, JS and other files. While this will have less of an effect on your load times for a new user, it will improve the site's speed and the user experience as they visit multiple pages during their session or even in returning sessions if they haven't cleared their cache.
4. Server caching to display a static HTML page that avoids PHP processing.

When it comes to delivering content, use AMP versions of the site to strip down the fluff and deliver only the most relevant content. This is especially important for blog and news-related sites.

AMP (Accelerated Mobile Pages) is a web component framework built by Google that allows developers to create user-friendly websites and content. Each page can be optimized using AMP-specific features so it will require AMP-specific HTML tags.

Adoption of AMP pages is growing, with over 30 million sites using AMP. Be careful with your AMP implementation though. Third-party JS is not yet allowed, only AMP JS, and you'll have to sacrifice a lot of the UX elements of your web page. As always, balance your audience's needs for context with your own needs for site speed and functionality. ☺



**...GOOD SEO IS NOT
ABOUT WRITING FOR
“GOOGLE ROBOTS.”**

IT'S ABOUT WRITING IN A LANGUAGE THAT MATCHES WHAT YOUR READERS ARE USING.

**DANNY SULLIVAN
GOOGLE**

Different. Different. & Different.

Different Industries,
Different SEO Strategies

- MICHAEL STRICKER -
Marketing Manager, Next Level Performance

Google's Senior Webmaster Trends Analyst, John Mueller, indirectly reinforced your need for industry-specific SEO, during a recent Webmaster Central, contradicting a previous (Oct. 2, 2018) denial of differing algorithms for various industries.

John said Google, "...doesn't think about it that way; they look from the query – not the industry – but they're related".

The idea that rank factors have different weightings for domain types or business categories should not be news, but in case it is, here are some considerations, pointers, and gotchas.

FIND YOUR WEBSITE TYPE, AND READ ON!

LOCAL & SERVICE-AREA BUSINESSES



Dry Cleaners

Repair Services

Taverns

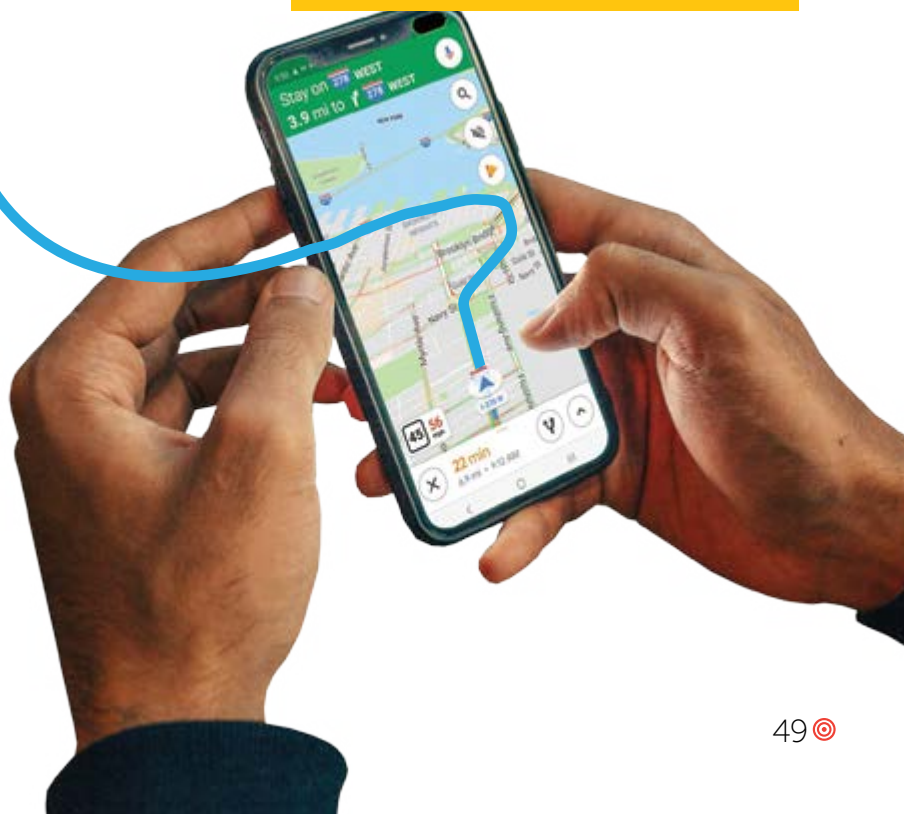
Restaurants

Delivery Services

Contractors

...these are all examples of businesses from which Google expects a firm declaration of geographic relevance and location. Google presents these types of businesses for what they interpret as local-intent searches: made with a mobile device, a location beyond a 'home' IP address / cell tower location (Google perceives many contextual cues about device and geolocation).

Directories and review sites (Yelp, Yellow Pages) are all staples of local SEO. Many of these share data sources. So if your or your client's business serves an area or region, then it will pay to define it on GMB as a business category type(s) — a service area for a business preferring distribution by phone or dispatched trucks, rather than a required visit to a central office. Send Google the signals it expects for local area businesses, and win the Map Markers, Map Pack, and Top 3 SERP listings so crucial for mobile visibility.



GOOGLE PERCEIVES
MANY CONTEXTUAL
CUES ABOUT DEVICE
AND GEOLOCATION.



SCHEMA SUCH AS:

Organization

Logo

Address

Local Business Listing Schema

...all enhance Google's comprehension and display of a local site in search, especially mobile. This can enhance your knowledge graph shown when your brand or company name is searched.

Structuring your data may also enable new Google services, such as in-SERP restaurant reservations. SEOs lament the loss of the "click-through" to the webpage when in-SERP search results answer the query, but business owners are likely to celebrate an increase in impulse buys.

A new wrinkle was just announced by Google: The patent to observe and act on 'quality time' spent in local establishments has been accompanied by "Welcome Offers." This is in exchange for following the business on Maps. And as Google observes consumer's in-store arrival and 'hangtime,' it will begin highlighting the top five percent of businesses in a particular category with the "Local Favorite" designation.



Becoming a Google Local Guide can help SEOs practice and gain credibility.

SO, ENJOY REWARDS FOR BUSINESSES THAT:

RANK WELL IN GOOGLE MAPS



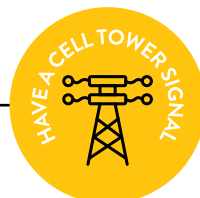
TEND A COMPREHENSIVE GOOGLE MY BUSINESS LISTING WITH FRESH, FAVORABLE USER-GENERATED CONTENT.



DEMONSTRATE THE ABILITY TO ATTRACT AND KEEP PEOPLE ON-SITE TO INSPIRE RETURN VISITS AND REGULAR CUSTOMERS.



TO SUPPORT THESE SIGNALS, BUSINESSES SHOULD:



...so that Google can track the presence of customers – as creepy as that sounds. Google My Business pages tend to outperform all of the most popular site-builder services (Wix, SquareSpace, Weebly) in Search visibility. (Surprise!)

A MULTI-PROPERTY APPROACH RECOMMENDS ATTENTION TO:

Maps locations

Google My Business pages

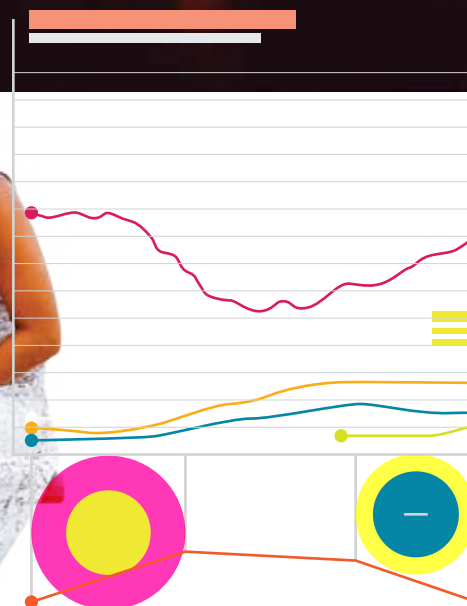
The business's own domain

A menu, order, & reservation site

Location-based directories

...to provide multiple golden search opportunities. It is expected that content will gradually accumulate on all of those web properties. Fresh photos and reviews must arrive from genuine users, preferably those with Google logins and multiple past reviews of other businesses. New offers and fresh posts will enliven any presence.

SEO's can consult and convince business owners of the value of cultivating online advocates, as well as answering legitimate gripes, so that any online activity is good for business. Becoming a Google Local Guide can help SEO's practice and gain credibility.



POPULAR CULTURE INDUSTRIES

QUALITY DESERVES FRESHNESS.
FRESHNESS DESERVES ITS OWN SIGNALS.

The categories to the right are likely to benefit from “sudden onset” SEO. What does that mean? For News items, Google has determined that Quality Deserves Freshness (QDF). That is, searchers will appreciate results that are recent, timely – or at least, well tended – accurate, and continually forthcoming.

An accelerated wave of fresh links sends a powerful signal. On other sites, for example, static blogs or ecommerce sites, a sudden surge of inbound links can signal new popularity, or the surge’s scale may warrant closer attention in Google’s quest against bulk link building... yet the addition of newly-emerging links to updated, refreshed, cultivated pages will expect signals in support of authentic news.

A high number of social sharing links that accumulate rapidly also propels the topical material to high visibility which, in turn, filters indirectly into Search. It is immaterial if the social links are nofollow since the traffic and interest will also fuel a spike in searches and resulting click-throughs. In the spikey, sudden-onset world of news, emotionally-propelled subjects will ride a trend wave that suddenly spikes, and almost as rapidly crashes. News sites rely on the combined effect of QDF, SEO, and social to lay down a carpet of individual spikes so dense that it creates a traffic plateau. Such search engine strategies may lack endurance. As soon as the efforts and expenditure on activity, cultivation of amplifiers, and influencers end, so do the spikes. What remains is a meager trace of search visibility as out-of-date queries occur, to no doubt settle bar bets. As the articles grow in length, depth, unique information, perspective, and other resources, they are likelier to attract inbound links by fans, other publications, and enthusiast sites and blogs.

Such added relevance gets another boost by citing entities that can be expected to be associated with the topic.

Exhibitions

Music

Entertainment

Celebrity

Photojournalism

News

• Sports Scores

Finance

• Stocks & Bonds
• Market Quotes

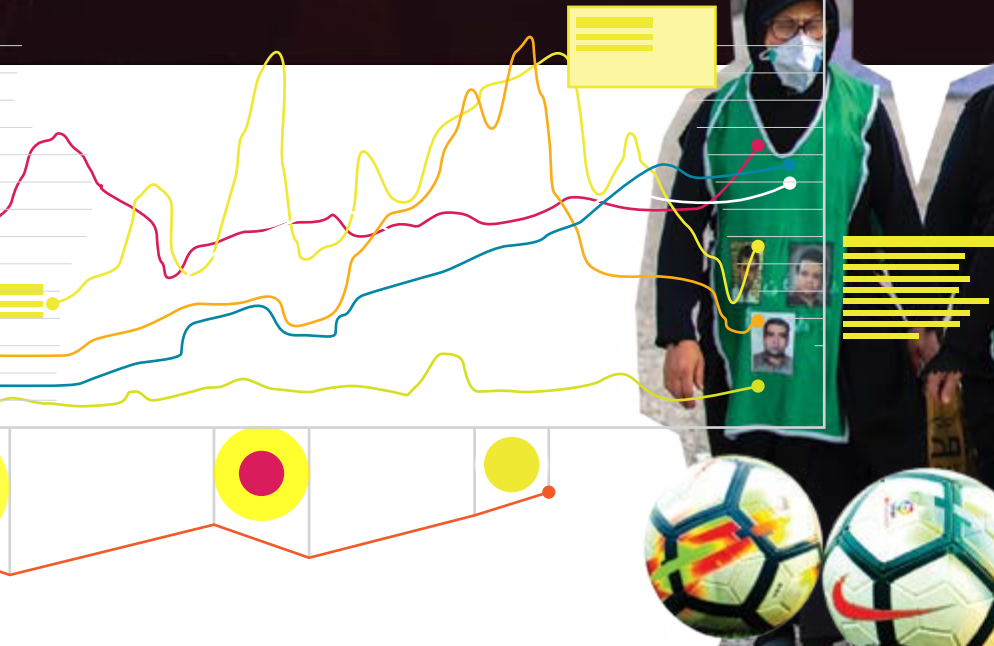
Movies

Plays

Popular Media

• Music
• TV

Gossip



Spouses

Authors

Editors

Critics

Dates

Agents

Studios

Locations

Recordings

Creative Productions

Pundits

These entities enrich the milieu of people, places, and things that make up a necessary and sufficiently comprehensive corpus deserving of SERP coverage for a broader range of associated keywords and phrases.

Outbound links would also be an expected feature to enable further investigation of:

- Related entities
- Information sources
- Biographies
- Oeuvre - body of work related to art, music, or literature for sustained authority or relevance.

SCHEMA SUCH AS:

Organization

Logo

News

Article

Fact Check

Q&A

Subscription

Paywall Content

...markup can all enhance news and universal search presence and presentation. Performance increases may not be directly attributable to extended structured data with additional property fields from schema.org, but this can help to give Google more context around the entities on your site.

← events near me



For You

Browse

Saved Events

09
SEPT

The Color Run



Save event



More info



Share

IN EVENT OF EVENTS

Events rely on the imminence of the event date to set the visibility clock of Quality Deserves Freshness (QDF). Events are a case where event schema and microdata markup can make a big difference, both for search engine comprehension and for presence in alternative SERP features where Google may index your labeled data and represent that in snippets or SERP-only tables of their own devising. Rather than decrying Google's increasing preference for In-SERP answers at the expense of search clicks, most event organizers and ticket sellers will leverage those markups to boost visibility. Location citations should relate to the national, regional, or local audience draw.

These event, exhibition, trade show, and conference SERP listings will quickly fade from view for date-related and "near me" queries.

They may retain some visibility for 'event name' searches, showing past years, especially if those pages have been enhanced by:

- Contemporary photo galleries
- Live blogging and journaling
- Videos
- Comments
- Testimonials
- Statistical recaps
 - Number of exhibitors
 - Number of attendees

VIRTUAL EVENTS

PODCASTS. WEBINARS. CHATS. STREAMS. ETC.

A further subset of event listing factors will apply to Virtual Events. Especially important is to cite the ongoing availability of presentation recordings. Such video and audio pages must rapidly attract their own links from:

- Calendars
- Schedules
- Lists
- Audience
- Brand
- Guest speakers

Host and guest brands, speaker biographies, and other entity info will add welcome depth when embedded or linked.

SCHEMA SUCH AS:

Event

Video & Livestream

Review Snippet

Subscription & Paywall Content Schema

All of these can enhance a search presence. New opportunity emerges: the primary lookups for podcasts have been iTunes and libraries. Now, Google has announced better coverage.

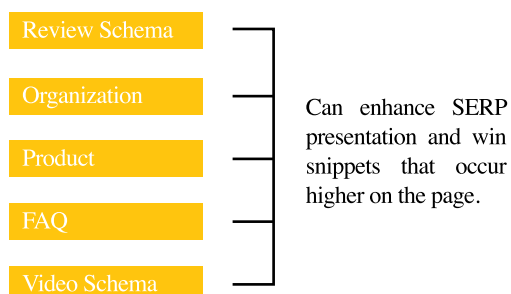
Events rely on the imminence of the event date to set the visibility clock of Quality Deserves Freshness (QDF).

eCOMMERCE

Ecommerce sites will thrive on citations of a myriad facets of products, in an organizational schema built of:

- Categories and Subcategories
- Gender
- Brands
- Cut
- Color
- Materials
- Features
- Price
- SKUs and Part Numbers

SCHEMA SUCH AS:



Provide, and perhaps markup, that info. Offer options to organize products as shoppers prefer. Connecting searchers with a “buy now” intent to for-sale products is one way Google keeps searchers happy, attracting ad dollars for top-of-page placement in Google Shopping. Shoppers closest to purchase will employ long, specific queries. Mobile devices encourage voice search, employing long, natural language-spoken search queries. Therefore, expect little devaluation of inbound links with very specific anchor text.

Google Search may accommodate domains with many thousands of products by the inclusion of a site search field (called *Sitelinks Searchbox*) right there in the SERP, for which Google provides specifications to obtain via schema. That field can lead to quicker conversions and sustained, productive clicks – the definition of search satisfaction. So, whether this SERP feature is a rank factor or not, it’s too conversion-empowering to ignore. Reviews are supremely useful to searchers, unless engineered. Google trusts their own collected reviews over others’, but trusts certain platforms enough to surface them in Knowledge Graphs and as Snippets.

BLOGS

WHAT NOT TO DO.

Blogs and topic-centric article sites are editorial in nature, and Google embraces that model as a reliable source of trustworthy information. But in the past decade, Google has found many such sites repulsively spamming the index, running link schemes as PBNs, or thinly-masked commercials with the intent to highjack clicks to affiliate links (undeclared profit motive, arbitrage model for ‘owning’ SERP status, and reselling clicks to the highest bidder). Blogs and content farms were once the spam factories of the web, filling SERPs with tripe and defrauding search engines. So, Google has evolved a deep set of ‘negative factors’ as a litmus test against dilution of SERP utility.

AVOID:

- Link Wheels
- Spun or duplicate content in the extreme
- Shallow, thin posts lacking utility
- Scraped or plagiarized content void of citation
- Bulk links
- Blogroll links & footer links

Blogs might better focus on derogates, than the trite

BLOGS

WHAT TO DO.

Blogs might better focus on what Google deprecates and derogates, than the trite litany of positive factors. Sort of.

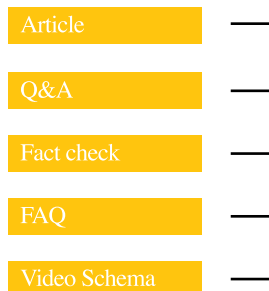
Many of the tenets of proper expository writing are applicable to blog and media vertical article site SEO:

- **Footnote citations** make good internal links to outbound links to authority
- **Correct grammar and spelling**
- **Proper citations** of extended quotations

These quality factors abound in blog ranking and articles, where professional writing skills are more valued than perhaps in ecommerce descriptions.

Google's recent release, "[What Webmasters Should Know About Google's Core Updates](#)" outlines the questions that content managers and webmasters should be asking about their page content, to meet user expectations for quality. This practical perspective may be more revealing than simply touting E.A.T. (Expertise, Authoritativeness, and Trustworthiness), for example.

SCHEMA SUCH AS:



Can all be useful schema markup to enhance earned listings. Comment and Open Graph (OG) markups may also improve uptake of UGC and related social mentions.

Let's Recite:

Fresh • Useful • Up-to-date • Unique, quality writing with clarity • Demonstrated depth of relevance (internal linking to details and reference, plus external links to authority) • Crawl paths to comprehensive coverage of related topics that enhance understanding and support decision making • User-generated content without link spam: some ongoing evidence of engagement can float a post in the SERPs much longer and higher than otherwise (witness many a long-reputation management campaign fought against a wall of constantly-renewed comments with 'verified' identities) • Some categoric organization by subject matter

FEATURES SUCH AS:

Outbound links in text to primary sources

Solid HTML structure, tagging, metadata

Mobile-friendly design with readable type sizes

Finger-sized tap target navigation for mobile

Original images (photos, illustrations, diagrams)

Well-compressed & relevant

Explicative alt text

Give blogs another chance to rank on page one results, and as an AnswerBox feature.

PSA:

"How-To" Schema can aid in search engine interpretation of this popular type of content.

However, "How To" content, itself, was part of the content farm fiasco that led to Google's Panda Update. Recipe and other specialized content types have spawned their own schema, and even plug-ins, to help automate its creation. So much so that penalties are routine for excessively-applied schema.

→ what Google deprecates and
→ litany of positive factors.

YOUR MONEY YOUR LIFE SITES (YMYL)

YOLO, uh I mean, YMYL sites are sites that may influence life-changing decisions and upon which big expenditures occur:

SITES SUCH AS:

Healthcare

Medical

Finance

Investment

Legal Law & Policy

STEM - Science, Tech, Engineering, Math

Science practically invented the importance of primary sources and peer-reviewed articles as a demonstration of importance, verity, and expertise. That model is valued by Google to evaluate in-depth articles. Queries producing these results often depend on factors seemingly beyond SEO control like:

SEARCHER HISTORY

(e.g. likes factual, non-commercial content from high-authority sources with lots of citations)

SEARCHER CONTEXT

(e.g. never clicks ads, spends long periods devouring organically-linked articles once clicked)

SPECIFICITY & COMPLEXITY OF QUERY

(e.g. makes the term long and sentence structured with complex informational intent)

HEALTHY MEDICAL & PHARMA

It has been suggested by Mueller that YMYL content had better be written by subject matter experts, and not by generalists. A good idea: editorial staff that includes a technical editor, or impose a professional review to maintain accuracy and cite primary sources.

SEE YA LATER, AGGREGATOR

Aggregator sites built to scrape and present useful data from other, more authoritative, origins may have to package those dynamic results with demonstrably greater expertise, improve entity profiles of staff and contributors, link out to the bastions of their respective industries, cite sources, and add significant value.

SENSITIVE INDUSTRIES

If products or services are sold on-site for sensitive sectors, then YMYL rules may apply. Google's algorithms can detect if a query is related to YMYL and then adjust the weights of the ranking algorithm

DISCLAIMER:

High-risk informational content about Health & Medical topics may require

- *Great authority*
- *Extensive citations*
- *Outbound linking*
- *Official entities from expert:*
 - *Authors*
 - *Editors*
 - *Contributors*

for those specific queries. Much regulatory red tape has been repealed in Washington DC, yet Google's fiercely-guarded reputation and defense against liability ensures additional scrutiny, and so beware unsubstantiated claims and overpromising in homeopathic remedies, holistic methods, or dealing in drugs subject to abuse, recreational drugs, psychoactive substances, or offering access to regulated substances subject to border interdiction.

FINANCE

Financial services are also subject to YMYL. Domains must offer "adequate information" for consumers to make informed decisions: rates, full disclosure of costs, and adherence to state and local regulations. When presenting rates, remember to state the formula (e.g. LIBOR + 0.5%) and link to the source used for the base rate to enable verification.

B2B - BUSINESS TO BUSINESS

B2B sites using funnel-based content to fish for leads may find some practices result in better rank, and yet, with the wrong intent, can kill conversions. Case in point: a solution provider published an evergreen set of expert articles and pages outlining solutions to business issues. Their CMS was applying dates to pages and URLs. That convinced Google that the content was news or PR, and thus subject to QDF freshness criteria. Many WordPress installs, if not properly configured, will build dated directories in which to archive duplicate content versions of posts in directories nested by year and month. So the articles would rank well for a few days, then fall out of sight in Google SERPs. A fresh supply of links, consistent canonicalization from dated URLs to shallow ones, plus some article schema improved the ability of new posts to 'hang' high in the SERPs for longer periods. The configuration was changed to eliminate the dated directory URL versions.

D2C - DIRECT TO CONSUMER

A company blog for a D2C / B2C domain was placed into a subdomain. The text lacked sufficient relevant internal linking and relevant anchor text within the text. Google treated that content as distinct from the primary domain, severing dozens of posts from greater detail, relevance, utility, and conversion. This reduced the relevance of primary domain pages for keywords and phrases covered in the subdomain blog.

Unite your content into logical, conversion-oriented crawl paths for users. That will enable Googlebot to sequentially crawl and index topically-related pages in a convincing display of depth and value to searchers.

Competitors are another type of related entity that Google understands. Legitimate comparisons of feature sets make for welcome guides for ecommerce, B2B and B2C searchers and shoppers. They afford a linkable resource for SEO and landings for ads that may leverage competitor brand keywords at a lower CPC due to a higher Quality Score and likelihood of converting.

LINK SOURCE SOURCERY

Links are essential to SEO, and various links are likely to be of greater value and better suited to certain industries or web business models.

Among the ways that Google evaluates trust is through **online reputation** — e.g. through online reviews or sentiment analysis — and use of **accurate information** (facts).

So, if your site sells directly, or collects B2B or B2C leads for YMYL-type products or services:

- Health & medical
- Financial & investment
- Legal services
- Security, etc.

...then your link sources are likely to have greater influence. Consider the referring domain's proximity to the reputation, age, and trouble-free operation's history of a 'seed set' of the web's most-trusted, highly-trafficked websites. Nuzzle up close to relevant, trusted domains when seeking inbound links. When in unfamiliar territory, try Majestic's TrustRank factor as a proxy.

The preceding is applicable at the domain level, as it applies to certain categories of business, but it also can positively affect SEO for sections. ☺



Give Michael a follow on Twitter for more industry-specific search knowledge.
[@RadioMS](#)



It is evident that Google knows what a site's business category is and weights certain factors more heavily in order to satisfy demanding searchers who are in a greater hurry than ever. What must an SEO do?

“It Depends.”

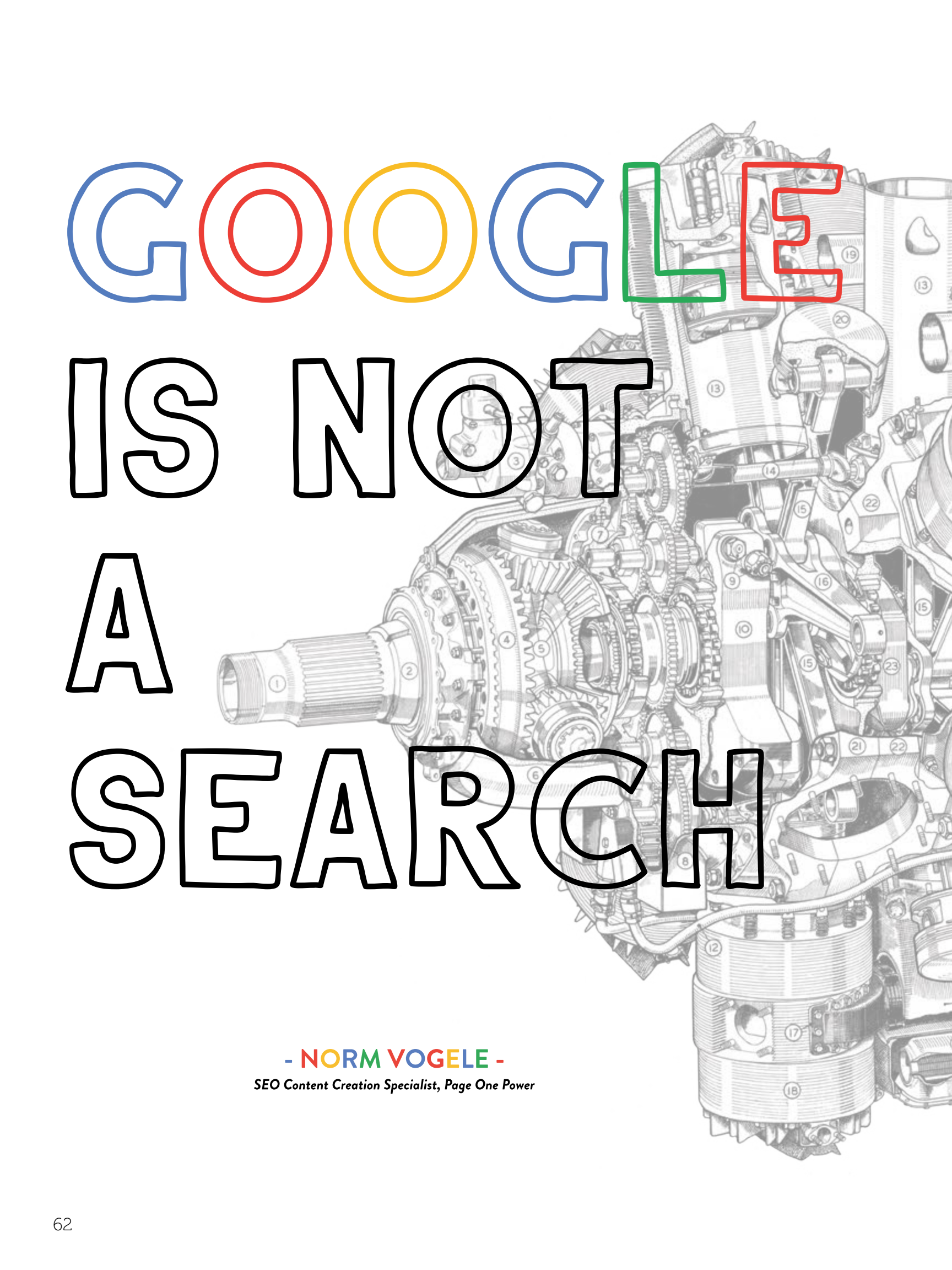
MAKE A PAGE YOU'RE
SO PROUD OF THAT
YOU WANT TO HANG
IT ON THE WALL.



GIVE THOSE ARTICLES AN OVERHAUL.

**MAKE A PAGE THAT
YOU'RE SO PROUD OF,
YOU WANT TO PRINT IT
AND FRAME IT ON THE
WALL.**

**ANDY CRESTODINA
ORBIT MEDIA STUDIOS**

A detailed technical line drawing of a mechanical assembly, likely a transmission or engine component, with various parts numbered from 1 to 23. The drawing is in the background, partially obscured by the text.

GOOGLE

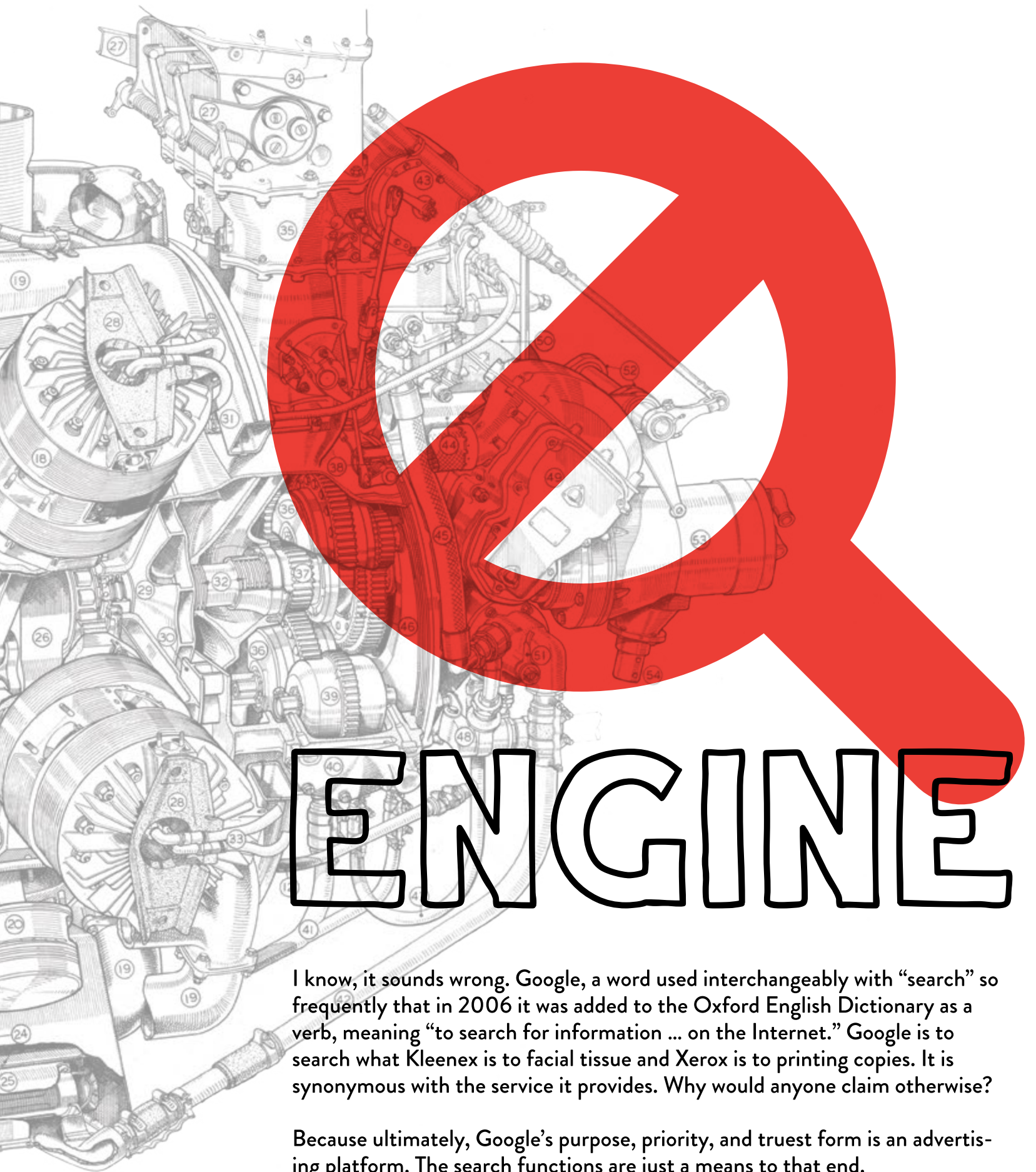
IS NOT

A

SEARCH

- NORM VOGELE -

SEO Content Creation Specialist, Page One Power



ENGINE

I know, it sounds wrong. Google, a word used interchangeably with “search” so frequently that in 2006 it was added to the Oxford English Dictionary as a verb, meaning “to search for information ... on the Internet.” Google is to search what Kleenex is to facial tissue and Xerox is to printing copies. It is synonymous with the service it provides. Why would anyone claim otherwise?

Because ultimately, Google’s purpose, priority, and truest form is an advertising platform. The search functions are just a means to that end.

YOU ARE WHAT YOU DO

Think of it this way: if someone earns their living working at a zoo, we call her a zookeeper. The person you call to fix a leak is a plumber. When you meet someone at a party, among the first questions you're likely to ask — and be asked — is some version of "So, what do you do?" And that's how you tend to define that person. The question isn't "how do you perform your job" or "what is involved in allowing you to make money" but simply "what's your job". If you met Google at a party and asked this same question, the best answer you would receive would be, "I'm in advertising."

And this simple truth has big implications for everyone who wants — or believes they deserve — to rank in Google's search results. Most people will say, "Google is a web search engine, and I have a website, therefore my website should appear in Google's search results." That is entirely the wrong perspective.

So let me be clear: whether you are in marketing, advertising, SEO, SEM, or simply trying to keep your small business afloat in a competitive market, Google has no vested interest in your success, or your visibility in organic search results. You're on your own — unless you are buying ad space.

HOW DOES GOOGLE MAKE MONEY

Simply put, Google makes money by selling ad space within its search results, or SERPs.

There's an old observation from the 1970s that has become particularly pertinent in the modern, digital world: If something is free, you are the product. Google provides free web search services in order to turn its users into a commodity: an audience for advertisers. This is the essence of Google's business model; though the scale and sophistication is almost unprecedented, the basics are as old and familiar as the wheel. It is content marketing — and the content drawing you in, making you feel like you've gotten something valuable for free so you'll come back for more, is the search results.

In many ways, Google isn't all that different from print newspapers, magazines, radio, or television. All the information, entertainment, and media they provide the public (often for free) is really just a means of getting attention, and building audience loyalty. All these mediums use their audience to sell advertisements: by the inch, by the second, or in Google's case, by the click and keyword.



GOOGLE IS
AN AD
PLATFORM.

PAY PER CLICK (PPC) ADVERTISING

If you purchase a television ad, how do you know it is working? By and large, you (and the people selling the ads) rely on correlational data: some number of people will probably see the ad, and some amount of the business you get after it plays is probably a result of the ad. Sometimes there's a call to action tagged on at the end: "Mention this ad and get an extra discount!" But it is hard to know for sure what is working, or who is even seeing it.

Google, by virtue of being a web-based company, can go further than that: it can measure exactly how many people search for something, how many click on an ad, and how many of those who click go on to actually buy something, sign up for a mailing list, or in any other way "convert" from searcher to customer. So when you purchase an ad in Google's search results, you aren't paying for the ad space per se, you are paying for the clicks your ad earns by being put in front of searchers. Hence, Pay Per Click, or PPC.

ADWORDS

On its face, PPC seems like a pretty equitable way for Google to turn its global audience into a commodity for advertisers. But, some markets and industries are more crowded and competitive than others. Some customers are more profitable, and some search phrases are more likely to be used by customers ready to convert than others.

This is where AdWords comes in. AdWords is essentially eBay, but for keywords instead of products. Advertisers use Google's AdWords to identify keywords they want to be associated with in the search results, and bid to have their ads featured at the top of the page. The more advertisers there are bidding on a keyword, the more the price per click gets driven up.

Multiply AdWords and PPC by the number of people searching on Google every minute of every day, and you can start to see just how lucrative the search marketing system is for Google. This may be the single largest, most reliable audience of any content marketing medium or platform in history — and Google knows more about its users than any television focus group or magazine subscription service could dream of.

GOOGLE REVENUE & AUDIENCE SIZE

Google's parent company, Alphabet, reported total revenues of just over \$39 billion in Q4 of 2018. Of that total, \$27 billion came from Google advertising — roughly 69% of all revenues were advertising sales. Although both Alphabet and Google are constantly growing, diversifying, and opening new revenue streams, that relationship between income and Google advertising has been pretty consistent historically. Revenues have also been growing by anywhere from 21% to 24% year over year, between 2017 and 2018.

By the numbers, Google is an ad company, and it is getting bigger all the time.

GOOGLE VS. TELEVISION

To put Google's purpose and business model into perspective, consider the most popular sitcom on American television in 2018: *The Big Bang Theory*.

Big Bang plays on the CBS network, which reported total Q4 revenues of \$4 billion in 2018. Like Google, CBS makes its money by selling ad time, and draws viewers with content. *Big Bang*'s audience size for Q4 of 2018 peaked at just about 13 million viewers — well above any other program in that time slot.

Google averages more than 3.5 billion searches per day, thanks to being the platform of choice for roughly 90% of all web searches. Granted, not all of those searches are lucrative spots to place an ad.

A search for "who is the current US president" doesn't lend itself to a marketing message; people just want a name. But if you imagine that as little as one out of every 100 searches features ads, that means Google is still serving three times as many people on an average day (35 million) than the most-watched sitcom does on its very best day.

And unlike sitcoms, to which viewers may or may not be paying attention (or being accurately sampled and measured by networks), people using Google search are doing so purposefully, with the intent of actively engaging with the results, and Google is keeping tabs on all of their behavior.

That is some seriously powerful content marketing. Thanks to paid advertising, Google is a virtual money-printing machine. Naturally, this makes other ad platforms — both search based and elsewhere — feel a little left out.

GOOGLE IS NOT A MONOPOLY

In literal terms, Google is not a monopoly in that there are numerous other search engines available to any user with web access — Bing, Yahoo, and Yandex being the most popular, outside of more country-specific platforms like China's Baidu.

But more to the point, Google is not an anticompetitive company when it comes to search. Per the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), antitrust laws are written to “prohibit conduct by a single firm that unreasonably restrains competition by creating or maintaining monopoly power.”

The FTC goes on to qualify the “unreasonable” part of the law, stating “the monopolist may be competing on the merits in a way that benefits consumers through greater efficiency or a unique set of products or services,” and “... ‘the willful acquisition or maintenance of that power as distinguished from growth or development as a consequence of a superior product, business acumen, or historic accident.’”

In other words, if you beat out the competition by being inherently better, luckier, or both, you aren't breaking the law. You're just winning the game. Both luck and genuine superiority are key to Google's dominance of web search.

GOOGLE MUST COMPETE FOR ITS AUDIENCE

Google is constantly tweaking, updating, and adding new features to its search services to stay relevant, appealing, and useful. In television, programs get canceled if they can't find and keep an audience that advertisers want to reach. Google is really no different — it has to evolve to provide dynamic, relevant search results to keep people using it over and over. Other search engines didn't evolve as quickly or effectively when the World Wide Web was first becoming a fact of life, so Google managed to make itself synonymous with search.

All of this matters deeply to businesses advertising on Google, marketers trying to rank content organically, or both. Google doesn't care about your site, brand, content, or SEO strategy on an individual level. It is focused on crawling, indexing, and analyzing the entire World Wide Web in order to constantly and consistently provide the best results, period. You aren't entitled to rank or appear in the SERPs — you have to provide value to searchers, otherwise you aren't helping Google reach and engage its users.

WHAT IT TAKES TO RANK ORGANICALLY

To use the example of television again: if you want to be seen by audiences of *The Big Bang Theory*, you have essentially two options:

ONE: Join the cast. Feature on the program itself as a guest star, background extra, or new character. In other words, be part of the content they are tuning in for.

TWO: Pay for ads during the broadcast and hope that people keep watching during the ad breaks. In other words, piggyback on the content they are tuning in for.

It isn't easy for actors to get on television, much less the most popular sitcom of the day. You need either great name recognition and cultural cachet, or incredible skill and broad appeal, and even then you need to capture the attention and support of the right people (producers, directors, other actors and industry insiders) just to have a shot at landing a role.

Search is exactly the same: there are a lot of websites looking for attention. To rank, yours needs to have either great name recognition (domain authority and existing traffic/engagement), or incredible appeal (great content and topical expertise).

Even if you have some combination of these things, you still need to capture the attention and support of the right people (online, that means getting backlinks from other trusted, authoritative websites to your content) to even have a shot at ranking for a given query.

The alternative to fighting your way to the top of the SERPs is to bid for AdWords and pay to have your ad featured, but this is still intrinsically competitive and potentially expensive.



IF SOMETHING
IS FREE, YOU
ARE THE
PRODUCT.



CONTENT MARKETING ISN'T FREE, FAST, OR EASY

Google is an ad platform. It works by drawing in a massive audience through its search tool and features, but this is just a new and interactive form of content marketing.

At the end of the day, you are better off thinking of Google as the latest addition to the world of news and entertainment — and recognizing that Google, like every other form of media, has to fight to reach, and retain, its audience. You can't expect to rank just because you have a website or did some light SEO to be discovered. Plenty of actors move to LA every year; few ever achieve stardom or become household names.

The good news is that it is still possible to get your content to rank — much easier than it is for actors to get discovered. Just know that it takes time, work, the right expectations, and above all, a strategy that works within the system.

Google needs to be able to discover, understand, and recall content effectively for it to continue to draw searchers (and advertisers) in with its SERPs. SEO is the practice of working with Google's algorithm and business structure to add value to the SERPs and reach searchers. Like a celebrity, you can't plan on it happening overnight, and there are no reliable shortcuts; persistence, strategy, and expert help can enable you to get you the results you're seeking. ☺

*For more opinions for
thought with Norm,
connect with him on*

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YOU NEED BETTER CONTENT AND MORE LINKS

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www.pageonepower.com



This issue's One Pagers have been courtesy of Wes Marsh. Keep up with him on Twitter: @WesMarshDigital

WHAT IS AN IMAGE & VIDEO?

Images and videos are often the culprits when a website is running slower than it should. It's extremely important to review the processes in which you're uploading media to your site to ensure proper specs and guidelines are followed.

Images and videos are often the culprits when a website is running slower than it should. It's extremely important to review the processes in which you're uploading media to your site to ensure proper specs and guidelines are followed.

Make sure to size images for the intended area. Don't use an image width of 1080px if you don't need it to take up the full screen. That means don't just upload that photo from your iPhone. It's too large and will slow down your site.

Instead, resize the image in Photoshop or GIMP before uploading it. While you're in Photoshop, make sure to use the "Save for Web" feature, which sets your image resolution to 72 dpi. Generally speaking, this is an ideal setting for a high-quality image on the web that balances an ideal resolution with image size. You can

further adjust the quality setting of a JPEG when you save the image on a scale of zero to twelve. A setting between eight and ten can significantly reduce the size of the file while still delivering an optimal viewing experience for your users.

Test your site with image optimization plugins as well. Obviously, you don't want to compromise on your theme or user experience, but even after you've optimized your images' size and quality in Photoshop, you can still find some benefits from image optimization plugins such as Autoptimize, Kraken, and Smush, among others. As with all plugins, ensure you actually need it and that it's making a difference. A good rule of thumb is to minimize the total number of plugins used by your site.

Next up is videos. Use external hosting platforms for videos because these files

are huge. YouTube is an obvious option and it's free, but you will have to deal with related videos appearing after yours shows up. This can potentially compromise your brand. To get around this, explore Vimeo and Vidyard as paid solutions. Either way, your site will load much faster if your video is loaded from an external server rather than your own.

To further optimize speed, don't use autoplay on video or audio files. The simple fact is that if the video has to render and start playing at the same time as the site loads, you can add 10MB or more to the size of your page — and that's just for a 30-second video.

Videos can increase conversion rates and dwell times, so they're valuable, but give the user control over when they want to start the video. This includes those amazing-looking video backgrounds in your header images. Make the determination as to whether the perceived impact of the video header is worth the very real negative impact to your page speed. Ultimately, this is a trade-off and you need to understand your audience and your competition, because page speed is a factor in Google's ranking algorithms.

Now that you know everything there is to know about website speed optimization, there's just one more thing to consider. No matter how much optimization you do with your images, videos, scripts and CSS, an ill-informed choice of a hosting solution can tank your efforts.

Make sure you choose a hosting option that can deliver the speeds and capacity to meet your traffic needs rather than just choosing the cheapest option. You may need to opt for a virtual private server or even a dedicated server (or cluster of servers), depending on your traffic fluctuations. Also, look for a cloud hosting provider that maintains a number of availability zones close to your target audience's physical location, and use a CDN to create a global network of proxy servers to deliver your cached content.

With so many resources available, there's really no reason that your website should be running slow. Put these tips to work for you and the result will be a faster site that provides a phenomenal experience for your visitors. ☺

FIVE BONUS IMAGE TIPS!

Set Up Device-specific Images to Use.

If your CMS theme allows you to use separate image sizes for desktop, tablet and mobile, then it can be worth the time to do this. That way the user's browser renders the optimal image size based on that device's resolution.

Know Your Audience.

If you're getting most of your traffic from mobile devices, then be judicious in how many images you upload, unless they're truly relevant to your site, such as a photo gallery.

Include Relevant Alt Tags.

Your alt tags should describe the image and give it a unique title. Not only will that further help the search engines understand the context of your site and improve the user experience, but it will increase your likelihood of having your images found in a Google image search. Even better, having proper alt tags is a great way to improve your ADA accessibility for users who may access your site via a screen reader or other device.

Be Careful with "Next-gen" Image Formats.

Yes, JPEG 2000, Web P, or JPEG XR will be recommended by certain tools, but keep in mind that they are not all supported by every browser. For reference, Web P is not supported by Safari or Internet Explorer, but it is supported by Chrome, Firefox, and Edge. JPEG 2000 only works with Safari at this time, and JPEG XR only works with IE and Edge. Until there is broad support across all major browsers for the "next-gen" image formats, you may be better off optimizing for speed in other ways.

Lazy Load Your Images Whenever Possible.

Page speed is all about the time it takes to first render. We're already seeing many websites load only the header and the first 100-150 words of content before prompting the user to "read more." This improves speed because the entire page isn't required to render all at once. Similar positive effects on page speed occur when you postpone the rendering of images until they're needed.



**THERE ARE NO
PARTICIPATION
TROPHIES FOR
SEO.**

IF YOU WANT TO WIN,
YOU HAVE TO BE THE BEST —
NOT SIMPLY “SHOW UP” TO THE WEB.

**NORM VOGELE,
PAGE ONE POWER**

FEEL LIKE YOU'RE MISSING SOMETHING?

If your desk seems a little bare without the first couple issues of *PAGES*, don't worry. We've got other ways to satisfy your need for SEO knowledge.

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WHAT THEY ARE
LOOKING FOR QUICKLY
AND EASILY
THEY WILL
AND



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AND EASILY, THEY
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WHO WANT
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ABOUT **SEO**.**

**GOT SOME KNOWLEDGE TO DROP ABOUT
SEARCH?**

LET'S HEAR IT.

PAGES is powered by contributions from those who are passionate about search. Each issue is focused on a different SEO topic, but always aims to explain how SEO can benefit a business. We're looking for insightful and accessible articles that explore the SEO tactics that help us achieve those benefits, aiding readers in developing a deeper understanding of how SEO fits into a marketing plan.

If you've got something you'd like to share about SEO with digital marketers, let us know!

Visit the *PAGES* website to view our contributor guidelines, and email us to pitch your ideas or get more details about upcoming themes:

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MEET THE *PAGES* CREW

An Apple fanboy, camping enthusiast, and developer of leaders. Joe believes great marketing lives at the crossroads of compelling design and interesting stories. When Joe's not helping the *PAGES* crew live at that crossroad, you'll find him in the mountains with his family or throwing quads in his local corn hole tournaments.

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Wrangler of tasks, keeper of peace, and organizer extraordinaire. Social media master and knick-knack emporium curator. Knows good marketing comes from collaboration, a warm office, and a few cups of strong coffee.

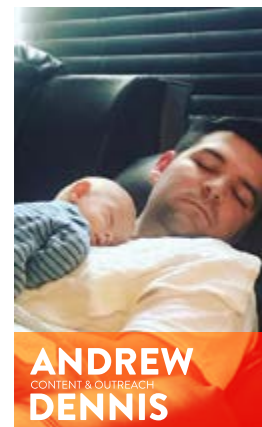
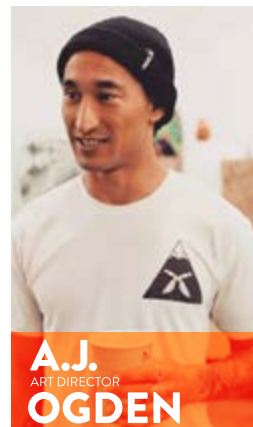
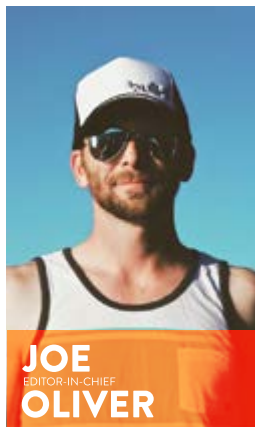
IG: @tomatobaby lifestyle

All-weather winter enthusiast, fair-weather golfer, summer-weather kook. Prefers standing sideways on boards and playing with dogs. Enjoys trying to find Neverland and tracking coordinates with a pencil and notebook in hand. Pleasantly surprised to be pushing analog treasures in a digital industry.

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Proud graduate of the University of Idaho and a (less) proud Detroit Lions fan. Fresh member to the Rad Dad Club.

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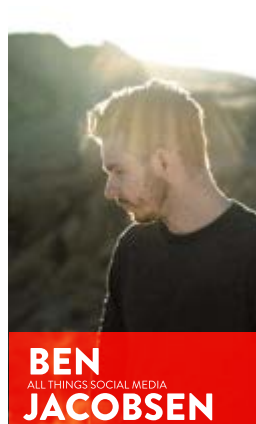


Hello



Thomas loves the trail, whether he's on wheels or foot. When he's not outside, he's at his desk studying SEO. He keeps the company of one dog, one plant, one fish, and several very grateful coworkers on the *PAGES* crew.

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Travel-crazed world explorer seeking out the perfect 'gram, and master of helping others. When not at work, she can be found reorganizing her cottage, crushing a 1,000-piece puzzle and listening to Hip Hop. 100% Hufflepuff, loves the beach, and Pumpkin Spice is her favorite season.

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THANK YOU

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Using Social Media to Improve Your Digital PR & Link Campaigns

Becoming Discoverable

Different, Different, & Different

Google Is Not a Search Engine

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K, bye



THE CREDIT

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Crossword Answers

Across:

1. Bing
3. Image
5. User
9. Site Map
12. Quality Raters
13. Google
16. Content
17. Optimization
18. Discoverable
19. Search
20. Keywords
22. Search Engine Results
23. Learn
24. Blog

Down:

1. Buyers Journey
2. PAGES Magazine
4. Internet
6. Site Speed
7. Yahoo
8. Your Money Your Life
10. Marketing
11. Bounce Rate
14. Schema
15. Local
21. Video

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