

Search Engine Optimization: Your Health Club's Key to Being Found Online

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SEO strategies can help potential customer find your website.



Having your website set up for the best search engine optimization is important because millions of people search the Internet every day for products and services. You want your company to come up on the first page of the search when they look for something related to your company.

Did you know that 93 percent of online experiences start at a search engine? The introduction of Google search 15 years ago revolutionized the way consumers research information and make purchasing decisions. Gone are the days of flipping through the yellow pages or the newspaper. Today, consumers search for products and services online.

Whether you are in the market for a martial arts school or gym software, Google is the place to find it. However, with millions of businesses using search engines, it can be nearly impossible for small businesses to stand apart from the crowd. Search engine optimization (SEO) is the perfect solution for businesses that are looking to capture the attention of consumers without breaking the bank. Below are four of the most common questions business owners ask about SEO. The answers help explain its importance to your businesses' bottom line.

What is SEO? SEO is the digital marketing practice that focuses on optimizing your website to increase the number of visitors the site receives from search engines.

Why is SEO important? Millions of people use search engines such as Google every day to find a variety of products and services. According to a study by BrightEdge, "Fifty-one percent of traffic to websites comes from organic searches." So it is vital for your business to appear in these searches. In fact, 90 percent of consumers never click past the first page of search results, which means it is essential for your business to rank in the top 10 positions for all relevant search terms. The only way for businesses to secure such a ranking is by investing in SEO.

How does SEO work? SEO is a complex marketing strategy that uses a combination of factors:

- *Comprehensive keyword research.* By identifying who your target audience is, a SEO specialist can identify the corresponding keywords and phrases consumers use to find your business. By choosing the right combination of keywords, your SEO team can help drive relevant traffic to your site.

- *Website optimization.* Often referred to as "on page optimization," website optimization is one of the key elements of an SEO strategy. During this phase of your SEO campaign, your team will properly optimize coding elements such as title tags, images and home page content for a predetermined set of relevant keywords. By doing so, your website will be more relevant for popular search terms, making it easy for the search engines to index your site and increase your rankings.

- *Link building.* Perhaps the most crucial and ever-evolving element to a successful SEO campaign, the quality and quantity of links to your website are significant factors in determining your ranking. By using a diverse and strategic approach to building relevant links to your site, your SEO team should work to build your authority with a strong link portfolio. Using a strong back link portfolio is the only way for businesses to obtain and sustain high rankings.

- *Social integration.* From Facebook to LinkedIn to Google+, consumers are beginning to turn to social media before making purchasing decisions. By leveraging the customer engagement that social media provides, SEO experts can build your authority and secure your rankings as an industry leader.

Is it cost-effective? Unlike other traditional forms of marketing, SEO is more cost-effective. Delivering a much higher return for every dollar invested over time, an effective SEO strategy can attract thousands if not millions of targeted prospects to your website. Regardless of how large your site, SEO can scale up depending on how many people you want to reach (e.g., \$1,000 budget for national campaigns, \$300-\$500 budget for local campaigns). In addition, the impact of your SEO campaign has an ongoing effect; it may gain momentum for weeks, sometimes even years, after the campaign has begun.

An effective and affordable solution to marketing your business, SEO is a digital calling card letting you dictate how your business should be seen. Take control of your business's digital footprint, and see those searches turn into dollars.