Website Wizards

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION GUIDE

WEBSITE WIZARDS

SEO Fundamentals

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Overview:

There are no shortcuts to search engine optimization. The process is time consuming and takes dedication and a passion to help your business or website succeed online. Although we list results in weeks above, they will be minimal. To gain and maintain strong results for your website will take many months if not a year and even then, will be a continuous process to maintain it.

Although SEO is a time consuming and somewhat complex process, don't let this scare you away. If you plan to be in business for years if not even until retirement, then this area of business enhancement is a highly recommended task to work on. The results may be slow in coming but the rewards are well worth it.

In the following pages of this guide we will go over many areas that will help you gain keyword strength for your website both with search engines but also how to boost your website conversion rate with page visitors. Focus on areas that are within your understanding to accomplish and if needed, feel free to contact us for additional work.

SEO Critical Areas

- Technical Crawlability
- Website Content
- Keyword Relevance
- Back Links (referral links)
- Social Media Interactions
- Content Update Frequency
- Website User Experience
- Integration with Google Services

Technical Crawlability:

Technical crawlability is rated by how well search engine spiders (computers that scan your website) are able to access and read your website content. All websites are written in a coding format that is understandable to web browsers and search engines alike. Errors and improper formatting can be common among websites as are the ever-changing rules & proper guidelines on how a website should be formatted.

What may have been great a years ago such as some META Keyword tags now is becoming irrelevant today and, in some cases, may even affect the overall score of the website. It is important to review current SEO standards and adjust with the fast-moving trends in the Information technology era. There are several ways to do this from hiring a 3rd party company to perform an in-depth review to buying special software capable of scanning the website for you.

Other areas of technical crawlability are ensuring you have the proper back end files in place and fully updated such as a robots.txt, sitemap.xml, sitemap.html and keeping them up to date with new pages or changes.

Another many of our past clients have overlooked is the speed of a website. Website speed can be affected by paying for poor- or low-quality hosting plans which have slow or outdated servers and equipment. Slow connections and servers = slow response time to crawl requests and visitors which will have a heavy impact on your SEO score. Quality hosting is a must for anyone wanting superior placement on search results. To test your load times, you can utilize 3rd party services such as ours, use tools online or special software which will give you a detailed view of where you are doing good and where you need work.

Not ensuring technical crawlability can mean the difference between being listed on first page to being listed on 20th so it's well worth the time to review every aspect of your website from coding, image sizes and server resources.

Test Your Website Speed

| Google Insights | GTmetrix | Pingdom |

Did You Know!

MOST USERS WHO SEARCH ONLINE GENERALLY LOOK AT THE RESULTS ON PAGE ONE TO PAGE THREE BEFORE GIVING UP AND RUNNING A NEW SEARCH WITH DIFFERENT KEYWORDS.

If your website is not placing on the first few pages, you're missing out!

Website Content:

Website content holds a major role in determining the keywords and values given by search engines. A website with a few hundred words worth of text and 4 pages in depth will be fighting an uphill battle against websites packing thousands of words in text and 6 times the pages.

This being said, don't live in fear as odds are most of your competition has around the same level of pages and content as you! However, should you wish to out rank them, now is the time to make your website ten times better in the content department and website depth.

Search engine spiders love words and use special algorithms to determine if your wording is naturally formatted sentences or if it's a cheap ploy to try and trick them into boosting your websites keyword value. Write valuable content that is meant for visitors to help them understand you, your business and the reason for the website while at the same time keeping search engines in the back of your mind.

When writing content for your website do not use shortcuts and get straight to the point. Take your time and formulate clever sentences packing keywords within it and really make an effort to sell your product, service or solutions orientated business. Most potential customers will prefer more information on a company verses too little information to make up their mind.

Multiple high-quality images, detailed specs and a generous helping of verbiage goes a long way not only with search engines but with website visitors in turning them from visitor to client. Sell yourself, sell your service, sell your product and by doing so boost your SEO/Keywords and convert more visitors to clients....a win/win for you.

Continued:

Website Content:

Visitors looking to buy a product or service generally judge the quality of that product or service by website, description, quality images and content. If you are like many of our past client's, you know your profession well and exceed at it however unless you can convey that professionalism to an online visitor you may end up not being able to convert visitor traffic to calls or sales.

Properly formatted sentences and impact words help to drive a desire to buy or hire. A visitor can always choose to stop reading however additional effort to gather additional information is frowned upon for the most part.

Using words such as "You" "New" "Free" "Easy to Use" & "Guaranteed" have been shown to dramatically increase conversion results from just a visitor to active client/shopper. Different products and services have different motivational words that drive web visitors into closing on the sale or making contact.

When writing content, you should pay special attention to the headings and what tag value you place on them as this has weight with keyword values for your page. A website page should have 1 <h1> tag and depending on the page depth, several <h2> and <h3> tags to help break up the text along with assigning its importance on the page.

Content listed closer to the top of the page will be given higher weight than content listed at the bottom by search engines. The same holds true for your visitors. You generally want to catch them with the first few paragraphs when they enter a page rather than leaving your most impactful or informative text for the end.

Did You Know:

- Having special offers and opt-in promos increases motivation to further understand the person, service or product.

- Text and background color combinations have been shown to improve trust and buying impulse. Major food and beverage industries have utilized this for decades.

- Blogs and low-cost live chat options help retain potential customers before they make the decision to close the window and leave your website.

Did You Know!

ALTHOUGH YOU WANT A GOOD DEAL OF TEXT ON ANY WEBSITE, STUDIES HAVE SHOWN MOST USERS DON'T WANT A GIANT SCROLLING PAGE OF HIDEOUS TEXT.

Break up large amounts of text with formatting and image placement. Use multiple pages to keep page scrolling down to a reasonable level.

Keyword Relevance:

One aspect to promoting a website higher up in search engine results is knowing not only which keywords are most searched for your product or service but also how to incorporate those keywords into your content, backlinks and online blogs and posts.

Using keywords, you may think are best is not necessarily what the majority of web searchers will use when searching for your particular service or product. Always keep in mind people are different and how they search varies widely.

Keep in mind it's not always about a specific "key word" as nested keywords, long-tail keywords and keyword phrases also make up a big chunk of the overall "key word" value assigned to your websites overall score.

Paying for services such as Google Ads and Bing PPC ads also helps slightly in keyword assignment however an improperly coded website lacking in areas discussed in this PDF can easily cost you double the cost-per-click verses a website that has undergone considerable SEO maintenance.

Understanding which keywords are relevant with the highest overall impact for your website along with how to properly incorporate those words into content will in the long run give you natural website traffic for a fraction of the price of paying for advertising by the click.

If you are inexperienced in keyword assignment and content embedding it can take a good deal of time to fully grasp the technical aspects in this area of SEO however if you're willing to learn and have some considerable time to do so it will be a worthwhile venture.

Did You Know!

ALTHOUGH IT IS ARGUED BY MANY IN THE INDUSTRY, MOST WILL AGREE THAT KEYWORD ASSIGNMENT FOR JUST ABOUT ANY WEBSITE CAN BE 50% ON SITE AND 50% OR GREATER OFF SITE. IN OTHER WORDS SEARCH ENGINES GATHER KEYWORD DETAILS BY THE CONTENT IN POSTS AND BLOGS NOT EVEN ON YOUR WEBSITE BASED OFF THE LINKS AND DATA FROM OTHER WEBSITES.

YOUTUBE RELEVANT VIDEOS, TWITTER, FACEBOOK, GOOGLE +, LINKEDIN AND COUNTLESS OTHER WEBSITE PLATFORMS ARE CRUCIAL TO NOT ONLY FULLY UNDERSTAND BUT ALSO GAINS GREAT BACKLINKS TO YOUR WEBSITE AND HELPS GAIN ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC.

Back Links:

Establishing links pointing back to your website from other websites is a highly valuable and yet time consuming process. There are highly lucrative backlinks and there are dangerous backlinks which will negatively impact your websites SEO and keyword performance.

Getting backlinks to your website will provide maximum benefit when combined with the appropriate content and keywords alongside it. The anchor text you choose will carry some weight with it so select this wisely. If you have an option for description text, be sure to use informative and value-added text that helps draw clicks to your website.

Although it was acceptable in the past to arrange for two-way linking (both you and another website link to each other) it is now frowned upon and can hurt your SEO score to have mutual linking between websites when there is no reason for it. There are of course exceptions to this rule however it is generally best to avoid any type of two-way link agreements without cause.

Setting up a blog on a reputable and quality website, managing social media accounts and posting on content compatible forums are all great ways to boost your backlinks and normally free. It can be time consuming for those not familiar with the platforms but can be highly beneficial in the long run.

Backlinks are crawled by search engine spiders which they catalog along with keyword anchor text. This information is then cataloged with your websites content to give a clearer picture to search engine companies of what you and your site is about. Spiders will often follow links and as a result you will also benefit from additional crawls of your website.

Be sure when setting up backlinks that the page on your site that you link to and the keywords in the anchor text are similar and not misleading. It is also acceptable to simply link to your home page. instead of specific products or services pages but you will generally want an assortment of both as time goes on.

Did You Know!

MANY SHADY COMPANIES CAN BE FOUND OFFER THOUSANDS AND EVEN TENS OF THOUSANDS OF LINKS POINTING TO YOUR WEBSITE, AVOID! THESE OFFERS ARE SCAMS AND ONLY DEGRADE YOUR WEBSITES OVERALL SEO SCORE SINCE THEIR SPAM-LINK WEBSITES ARE WELL KNOWN BY GOOGLE AND OTHER SEARCH ENGINE COMPANIES.

DON'T WASTE YOUR HARD-EARNED MONEY TO GET CAUGHT IN THE WRONG PART OF DIGITAL TOWN WHEN DEALING WITH YOUR WEBSITE'S REPUTATION. THERE ARE NO SHORTCUTS TO GAINING SEO KEYWORD STATUS FROM SEARCH ENGINES.

DON'T BE FOOLED BY SCAMS AND OFFERS THAT WILL TAKE YOUR MONEY AND HURT YOUR DIGITAL REPUTATION.

Social Media Management:

One of the most important and free utilities any website owner can tackle is a social media footprint. Not only are you able to provide excellent back links to your website with embedded keywords but you greatly amplify your websites exposure to the customer base found within those websites.

Social media accounts take a bit of time to fully master and utilize however it is well worth the effort for anyone with the time to invest. Another benefit to social media websites is that many of them offer affordable advertising solutions to help draw even more customers to you and your final goal of new clients and customers.

Generally, you want to post at least one new update a week to each of the social media accounts and actively seek out and recruit new followers and likes. Posting informative information and images of your before and after services can give potential clients insightful information that just might gain you the call or email.

One aspect to search engines determining your digital business strength is how many likes, follows and interaction your social media accounts get. Even if you are not a fan of social media, your customer base most likely is so these accounts are crucial to setup and keep maintained with quality posts.

One commonly overlooked social media account is YouTube which has massive potential for gaining new clients and links. Although a video platform, it also offers comments and links within those comments. Choosing proper video titles and keep up to date on the comments is a highly effective and free approach to any quality social media campaign. As with other social media sites, YouTube also allows for paid advertising which may be of benefit to investigate further.

Keep in mind the key word to this is MANAGEMENT. Expect few results from little effort and expect quality results with quality time invested into managing your social accounts. As we have said before, search engine optimization takes time and there really are no shortcuts. Be patient and dedicated to the goal. With hard work and effort comes results.

Did You Know!

WE WORK WITH OVER SIXTY DIFFERENT SOCIAL MEDIA WEBSITES ON THE INTERNET TODAY!

KNOWING WHICH OF THOSE WEBSITES HAS THE GREATEST AMOUNT OF USERS WHO ARE MOST LIKELY TO BE INTERESTED IN YOUR PRODUCTS OR SERVICES CAN TAKE A LOT OF THE TIME AND EFFORT OUT OF MANAGING SOCIAL ACCOUNTS.

Content Update Frequency:

A little-known fact to any SEO strategy is keeping your website content fresh. A website that search engines visit and find has changed is considered a maintained website and active. Simply creating a website and never making changes after gives the impression the website may no longer be relevant to search results or even no longer in business.

The more time that has passed between your last content update, changes, additions, products update or pricing changes, the farther down your website will slide in search engine results over time. It is also important for website visitors to see changes being made as this gives them a better impression of the site itself and some additional sense of security.

Changes don't have to be grand overhauls of the website, it can be simple rewording of content, new pages, new products, sales, new services, additional text and information and even blogs. Basically, any change to the content of your website is for the good as long as all other SEO guidelines are followed, and the content added or changed helps visitors.

The more often you update your website content, the more often search engine spiders will want to come back and crawl the pages of it. If a website is indexed and shown to have not changed in 6 months there is little reason for the search engines to visit it all too often however should they visit and see continuous updates being made they want to be on top of it to keep their leading edge in the search engine industry.

As always, when making changes or updates to your website it is crucial to utilize current SEO practices to ensure maximum results. That being said, even updating improper webpages with improper SEO content updates is seen as a positive verses nothing at all.

Did You Know!

HOW OFTEN YOU SHOULD UPDATE CONTENT REALLY DEPENDS ON THE TYPE OF WEBSITE.

ALTHOUGH ANY WEBSITE UPDATING A FEW TIMES A WEEK WILL GET CONSIDERABLE IMPROVEMENTS TO SPIDER CRAWLS AND OVERALL SEO SCORE, MORE ATTENTION IS ON WEBSITES HAVING UPDATED BLOGS VERSE A SERVICE-ORIENTED WEBSITE THAT HAS NOT CHANGED IN YEARS.

IF YOU ADD A BLOG TO YOUR BUSINESS, SERVICE OR PRODUCT WEBSITE, USE IT. LEAVING BLOGS INACTIVE WITH A FEW POSTS A YEAR HAS LITTLE VALUE TO YOUR OVERALL SEO SCORE AND CAN BECOME MORE HASSLE THAN IT'S WORTH DUE TO SPAM AND SECURITY RELATED ISSUES.

Website User Experience:

In today's internet driven world it is becoming more common to see SEO tied in with the simple usability of your website, the visual formatting and the structure of your website pages. With the ability of spiders to understand fully the page layout, search engines are taking into account the user experience someone might have when visiting your website. Gone are the days of having one-page load thousands of lines of text filled with links and expecting a positive result within the realm of SEO.

Keeping a tidy list (navigation menu) of your most crucial pages such as Home, Contact Us, About Us and Products or Services is generally recommended to be placed at the top of your website where the majority of web users expect to find it. Having the privacy policy, terms of use, site map links should generally be placed at the bottom of the website in the footer.

Fonts are another area that can effect SEO score should the color or font size make it difficult for web visitors at different ages and abilities to be unable to read. 16px is currently the average font size used on most websites. Avoid overuse of color within text as it can turn off potential customers.

If you are planning to setup your own website keep in mind not everyone will think the way you do. Devices, browsers, screen size and resolution all play a major role in how a website will look. As the mobile market takes a bigger share of website traffic each year pay special attention to how the website responds to smaller devices such as phones.

Today's latest website designs will handle the smaller screens found on tablets and mobile phones by sensing these devices and making adjustments to the menus and other content in order to have them visually appealing to those visitors. If you are running on a website that goes back six or more years, then there is a good chance you are taking a hit to your SEO score from having a non-responsive (static) website.

As user experience starts to play an ever-increasing role in SEO scoring it is a must to stay up to date with the latest technology trends and new releases by search engine companies. Keeping your position on search results is not a game winning victory but an endless war. Like just about everything IT related, what works great today is trash can material tomorrow.

Did You Know!

A SOMEWHAT NEWER ADDITION TO SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION IS SEARCH ENGINE SPIDERS HAVING THE ABILITY TO DETECT PAGE CONTENT PLACEMENT AND ADVERTISING PLACEMENT IN TERMS OF WHERE IT RENDERS ON THE WEB PAGE FOR VARIOUS WEBSITE BROWSING DEVICES FROM DESKTOP TO MOBILE.

WEBSITES HAVING CALL TO ACTION BUTTONS SUCH AS OPT-IN LINKS OR BUY-IT NOW LINKS WHICH DISPLAY OFF THE VISIBLE PAGE UPON WEBSITE ENTRY OR PAGE CHANGE CAN TAKE A HIT TO THEIR OVERALL SEO SCORE AS SEARCH ENGINE COMPANIES FEEL IT CONFUSES THE WEBSITE VISITOR AS TO WHAT OPTIONS THEY HAVE.

WEBSITES WITH OVERPOPULATED ADVERTISEMENT SPACE OR MISLEADING ADVERTISEMENTS DISGUISE AS IN-SITE LINKS ARE ALSO GOING TO SEE A DRAMATIC REDUCTION TO THEIR OVERALL SEO SCORE.

Google Services:

- Google dashboard offers website owners a nice set of tools for tracking problems, search requests, site visits, error reports, statistics and other general website related information all under one account. Setting up and learning how to properly use google dashboard can be confusing and time consuming however once mastered you will have a complete list of tools at your fingertips which will help you greatly in the never-ending quest of SEO mastery.

- Google Analytics is a powerful adversary to understand and master however if given the time and effort will help you measure your advertising ROI as well as track your Flash, video, and social networking sites and applications. Proper use of this application can improve click through percentages and much more. They have teamed up with a well-known software sales program called "salesforce" which provides a great all in one approach for those in the online and offline sales driven business.

- Google AdSense is a program run by Google that allows publishers in the Google Network of content sites to serve automatic text, image, video, or interactive media advertisements, that are targeted to site content and audience.

- Google Ads is an online advertising service developed by Google, where advertisers pay to display brief advertising copy, product listings, and video content within the Google ad network to web users. AdWords allows those who are not currently listing on first page search results to be listed in the Ads section for a cost-per-click fee. Adwords can also list your product or services on websites who have a relevant website to your product or service and host google Ads on their website.

Did You Know!

ASIDE FROM GOOGLE, THERE ARE OTHER SEARCH ENGINE PROVIDERS WHO ALSO HAVE THEIR OWN UTILITIES WORTH CHECKING OUT.

IF YOU WANT TO GO ALL OUT WHEN DEALING WITH YOUR WEBSITE SEO WE RECOMMEND GOOGLE AND BING AS THE BARE MINIMUM FOR ANY QUALITY WEBSITE WANTING TO STAY AHEAD OF THE PACK.

SOME TESTING AND REPORTING HAS SUGGESTED THAT SIMPLY HAVING THESE DASHBOARDS ACTIVE AND LOGGING INTO THEM OFTEN HELPS TO SLIGHTLY IMPROVE YOUR WEBSITE SEO SCORE AS IT'S AN INDICATOR THE WEBSITE IS WELL LOOKED AFTER BY THE SITE OWNER AND THEREFORE AN ACTIVE SITE.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: WHY WILL IT TAKE SO LONG TO SEE SEO RESULTS?
A: SEARCH ENGINE COMPANIES GUARD THEIR ALGORITHM TO NO END BECAUSE IT'S THE HEART OF THEIR WHOLE OPERATION. ASIDE FROM TIME TO WAIT FOR SPIDER CRAWLS AND CATALOG YOUR SITE, THERE IS ALSO THE NEED FOR COMPANIES LIKE GOOGLE TO STOP PEOPLE FROM TESTING AND RETESTING ON DEMO WEBSITES UNTIL THEY GAIN A CLEAR PICTURE OF HOW THEIR TESTS GO REPORTED. BY HAVING A DELAY IN A MONTH OR MORE, THIS ENSURES MINIMAL TESTING CAN BE PERFORMED IN A GIVEN YEAR.

Q: I WANT TO PAY FOR SEO HELP BUT MY WEBSITE IS PRETTY OLD AND OUTDATED, IS IT WORTH THE MONEY?
A: THE MOST CRUCIAL STEP YOU CAN MAKE TO SEO IMPROVEMENT ON AN OUTDATED WEBSITE PLATFORM IS TO UPGRADE THE WEBSITE. AS MOBILE TAKES ON BIGGER SHARES OF THE WEB BROWSING TRAFFIC IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT YOUR WEBSITE NOT ONLY WELCOMES THESE CUSTOMERS BUT RENDERS THE WEBSITE IN A WAY THAT IS SUITABLE FOR MOBILE DEVICES. THIS IS NOT ONLY FOR SEO REASONS BUT ALSO FOR VISITOR TO CUSTOMER CONVERSION SUCCESS.

Q: HOW OFTEN DO SEARCH ENGINE PROVIDERS CHANGE THEIR ALGORITHM?
A: THERE IS NO KNOWN ROADMAP FOR ALGORITHM CHANGES OR UPDATES HOWEVER THE MOST BASIC ANSWER IS: WHEN THEY NEED TO. THIS NORMALLY MEANS MICRO UPDATES THAT HAPPEN SEVERAL TIMES A YEAR AND MAJOR CHANGES THAT MAY BE ONCE OR TWICE A YEAR.

Q: I HAVE A FLASH WEBSITE, IS THIS BAD IN TERMS OF SEO?
A: YES. A FULL FLASH DRIVEN WEBSITE IS BASICALLY AN INTERACTIVE VIDEO THAT OFFERS LITTLE CONTENT FOR SEARCH ENGINES TO CRAWL OR CATALOG. ALTHOUGH FLASH WEBSITES ARE VISUALLY STUNNING, THEY ARE A BAD CHOICE FOR ANYONE WANTING TO HAVE A WEBSITE WITH A FIGHTING CHANCE IN THE COMPETITIVE CONTENT AND SITE DEPTH DRIVEN WORLD WE SURF IN. THESE ARE ONLY A FEW OF THE MANY REASONS FULL FLASH WEBSITES ARE A BAD CHOICE FOR SEO RESULTS.

Managed SEO Services

Website Wizards offers Search Engine Optimization services for small and medium sized business owners seeking to further expand their online footprint and keyword strength with search engines and do so utilizing only white-hat SEO practices approved of industry wide. (no mass-linking, no junk or copyright infringement content and no shortcuts)

With our combination of on-page and off-page SEO improvement techniques we can boost your website or pages naturally with search engines such as Google and Bing. Each SEO project is specifically geared toward you, your products or services and the current condition of your website.

We offer solutions for any budget and work with you 1-on-1 with your website goals and develop the best approach to achieve better results with search engines. If you would like more information on our services please see our website page detailing SEO services and solutions.

For More Information

SEO Services

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This guide was meant to offer those wanting to better understand search engine optimization key areas where many website owners fall short or make mistakes. This is by no means a complete guide to SEO however taking the time to read this guide and put to use the many key areas highlighted will indeed boost your overall SEO score. Should you have questions or comments on our guide please feel free to contact us any time.

Thank you for taking the time to read our guide on the fundamentals to SEO improvements.