SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION – CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

BY JOE VANGSNESS 4/30/2024

INTRODUCTION

Background

SEO is part of Digital Marketing Strategy which includes five strategies:

Obtain Visitors – Engage – Convert – Retain - Get Ratings/Referrals

SEO has two components: On Page & Off Page

How search engines work

Crawl websites   **Index** the content   **Rank** the content   **Serve** results to searchers

Are your pages in the Google index?

Look at your Google search console page, or,

Go to Google and enter: site:yourdomainname

This will show you all of the pages that Google has indexed for your site

Determine your Digital Marketing goals

Examples: New customers, new members, sell products, obtain subscriptions, advocate

Develop personas or profiles of your target visitors

How Do You Set Smart SEO Goals for Your Team/Agency/Project? - Whiteboard Friday

12 minute video by: Rand Fishkin May 25th, 2018

https://moz.com/blog/smart-seo-goals

Competitor Research   Brief history of Google Search

SEO Ranking Factors Checklist by Optinmonster

https://optinmonster.com/seo-ranking-factors/

Evaluate Your Website with SEO Tools

SEO Rating   Hubspot Website Grader   https://website.grader.com/

Nibbler   https://nibbler.insites.com/

SEOptimer   https://www.seoptimer.com/

SeoQuake Browser Extension: https://www.seoquake.com/index.html

Site Content   Screaming Frog SEO Spider free version download, run as an app

https://www.screamingfrog.co.uk/

SEO – ON PAGE (aka Technical SEO)

Determine your Keywords

Keyword usage in the past with Meta Tag Keywords

Keywords can be one word or a phrase

Keyword tools

- Moz Keyword Explorer: https://moz.com/explorer (paid & free version)
- Google Adwords tool: https://ads.google.com/home/tools/keyword-planner/
- Google Trends: https://google.com/trends/
- Seobook.com keyword density analyzer
  http://tools.seobook.com/general/keyword-density/

Search Engine Journal: 44 Free Tools to Help You Find What People Search For
 https://www.searchenginejournal.com/seo-101/what-people-search-for/

Caution: Too many keywords on a page is called keyword stuffing and can be a problem

Google Penalties from their Algorithm or Manual Action for 'keyword stuffing'

Where to put keywords

Website content, Page title, page description, H1, H2, image alt tags

Page Title & Description Guide by Joe Vangsness
http://www.vangsness.com/sites/default/files/pagetitledescription.pdf

Google Guide: Influencing your title links in search results
https://developers.google.com/search/docs/advanced/appearance/title-link

Google Guide: Best practices for creating quality meta descriptions
https://developers.google.com/search/docs/advanced/appearance/snippet#meta-descriptions

SEO Plugins & Module options:

WordPress Yoast SEO   https://yoast.com/wordpress/plugins/seo/

Rank Math https://rankmath.com/

Yoast SEO Review: Why it's not all it's cracked up to be by Claire Paniccia
https://www.clairepaniccia.com/yoast-seo-review/

5 Reasons Why You Don't Need a WordPress SEO Plugin by Deepesh Sharma
https://www.makeuseof.com/reasons-why-you-dont-need-wordpress-seo-plugins/

Tom Dupuis compares Rank Math & Yoast
https://onlinemediamasters.com/rank-math-vs-yoast/

Drupal SEO checklist: https://www.drupal.org/project/seo_checklist

Google Developments

Mobile	Google Maps
Google Business Profile	People also ask
Google local 3 pack or local pack	People also search for

Structured Data & Google 'rich results'   https://Schema.org

Guidelines for representing your business on Google Business Profile
https://support.google.com/business/answer/3038177?hl=en

Search Generative Experience (SGE)

SEO - OFF PAGE

About Inbound Links or Backlinks to Your Site
Types of links:
> Follow - NoFollow - User Generated Content - Sponsored

Link has value: to your ranking and to visitors who click on your link

Tools to Check your backlinks or check your competitors' backlinks
https://majestic.com/
https://moz.com/link-explorer
Google search your web address
Google Search Console

Where to Obtain Links or Establish Links
Linkedin, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Yelp & Youtube

Local business information in directories known as aggregators:
> Data Axle   https://local-listings.data-axle.com/search
> Foursquare   https://foursquare.com/city-guide
> Neustar Localeze https://www.neustarlocaleze.biz/small-business-services/

Brightlocal.com offers tools for local business to establish links with directories.

Brightlocal.com recommends directories for local business based on their industry.
https://www.brightlocal.com/resources/top-citation-sites/industry/

Moz.com has a free local presence checker https://moz.com/products/local/check-listing#seo

Some sites I have seen with a high value
> About.Me
> Meetup.Com
> Thomasnet.Com For Manufacturers

Give testimonials to businesses you value and ask them to show your web address

Check for websites that have directories of businesses like yours, ex: Thomasnet.com

Check out: Link Building from an article by Sandeep Mallya

https://www.99signals.com/high-quality-backlinks/

LOCAL SEO FOR SMALL BUSINESS

Focus on getting into Google local pack, Google Maps, & organic search results. These are the priorities for local business.

1. Google Business Profile
2. Reviews and ratings
3. Quality content
4. Internal linking
5. Webpage and website optimization
6. Inbound links from directories

Use the exact same company name, address, phone number and web address anywhere you have it and in directories.

That is called a 'citation' or NAP or NAP + W. It helps to put your NAP in or near the header and in the footer of every page.

Brightlocal.com offers tools for local business SEO with a paid & free version.

MONITOR SEO PERFORMANCE THROUGH WEB ANALYTICS

Google Analytics

Universal Analytics (UA) was replaced by Google Analytics 4 (GA4)

Learn GA4 at Google's website: https://analytics.google.com/analytics/academy/

Google Search Console

Web statistics provided by Web hosting companies like AWSTATS

Learn more

Moz Beginners Guide to SEO

https://moz.com/beginners-guide-to-seo

SEO For Dummies, 7th Edition Book by Peter Kent (Author)

Is SEO Best Practice the Enemy of Success?   Helen Pollitt Helen Pollitt / July 25, 2019

https://www.searchenginejournal.com/seo-best-practice-enemy-success/315899/#close

Joe Vangsness   jv@vangsness.com

Vangsness Consulting
833 W. Chicago Ave. Ste. 204
 Chicago, IL 60642
 www.vangsness.com