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Complete SEO Guide to Scale Up Your Business!



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Introduction to SEO

If you are a beginner, SEO stands for search engine optimization and it is the process of helping a website rank in search engine results when users search for specific keywords. Just think about how you normally find the information you need in your everyday life, say, for instance, you needed to replace your smartphone and weren't sure which model to buy? Or where would you look up if you want to find a restaurant for dinner? How would you go about researching your options for learning a new skill?

Do you know that nearly 80% of the online buyers and 90% of the B2B buyers rely on search engines to find the products they are intending to buy? On any given day, people conduct more than 2.2 million searches, and that's just on Google leaving aside the other search engines.



If you're like the majority of the people, you'd reach for your smartphone or sit down at your desktop and enter a simple phrase into Google which displays the results suited to your needs.

These are the results that Google thinks the most relevant and useful based on the keywords you've entered. The websites that show up on the first page of your search results didn't happen by accident. There are certain algorithms that work behind to help Google understand what their content is about, relevance, and usefulness. If you want your target audience to find your website, you need to do extensive research to determine how users are performing the search, the topics, and accordingly optimize the pages.

Search engines like Google have become the go-to places for the majority of the people on the web. Combine this with the fact that the first-page results on Google get 67% of all clicks, you get an idea of why SEO is so crucial. So, you need to pay heed to have your presence on Google without which your survival is likely to be affected. Showing up on the front page of Google can be the deciding factor between a thriving business and the one that struggles for survival.

Keep on reading to know the A-Z of SEO, or jump ahead to the specific sections and know how to build your presence, and position your site in the search engine results.

Definition



Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is the art of ranking higher on the search engine results. It is an unpaid strategy, also known as the organic listings. Your online wealth which includes your websites, blogs, web pages, etc. is optimized for the search engines so that they appear as a top result for a certain keyword. It focuses on expanding your company's visibility in the organic search results. SEO helps your businesses rank better in SERPs (Search Engine Result Pages) that drive more visitors to the website thereby increase in conversions as well. It has become a mandatory marketing tactic if you want your website to be discovered online through search engines like Google.

How does SEO work?



While there are many search engines, Google is responsible for most of the search traffic and its traffic influx is no match to others. Although it may vary from niche to niche, Google still is the dominant player in the industry. Regardless of the search engine, search algorithms are also constantly changing. They are ever-evolving with hundreds of updates being released every year on how to rank the websites.

You may be wondering how does Google determines which pages to return in response to the search keyword. How do some websites get all the hot traffic? And more. Well, let's be honest. Search algorithms are extremely complex to comprehend and conclude what works and what doesn't. But keep focused on creating high-quality, relevant information that would be recognized by the search engines. They determine the relevance by crawling your website content and evaluate it. Among hundreds of ranking factors, some elements that are being weighed by Google's algorithm are your site speed, accessibility, mobile-friendliness, user experience, unique content, etc.

Why should I care about SEO?



There are millions of people who search every day for any matter of things, and this traffic can be extremely powerful for a business since this is high-intent traffic which has great potential for conversions. Beyond that also, your prospects are also looking for things that are not directly related to your products and services. There would be even more opportunities to connect with these people, help answer their queries, solve their problems, and become a trusted resource for them. This in turn has a knock-on effect since people go to their trusted resource who have been offering them valuable insights rather than going to someone they've never heard of.

How can SEO help my business?

If you are a business owner or a marketer, you got to know how essential SEO is **and how it is worth every second you invest in SEO.** SEO can help your business grow online and succeed. There are numerous businesses that are built off the back of organic traffic. It can play a pivotal role in your overall revenue and business growth.



New Customers

Your business always needs new customers. SEO is primarily all about rankings in the search engines. Better rankings drive more traffic which implies an increase in the possibility of attaining new customers. Better rankings in the search results mean more visits which should convert into more customers.



Lead Generation

Customers who are in the discovery phase, use Google to find something they have been wanting to know about. If you are not on the first pages of SERPs, there are more chances of you being not discovered. By following the SEO best practices, these leads would prefer you over your competitors.



More Traffic

Traffic is a key aspect of digital marketing. Suppose you have a well-built website but no traffic is coming to it from Google, then who will convert for you? None! By getting traffic from these organic channels, the chances of conversions would also be high. Even if your conversion rate is low, still traffic can improve your website's credibility.



New Customers

A right SEO strategy should be attracting more relevant traffic to your website. This entails targeting terms with the right search intent behind them i.e., people searching for a product or service are more likely to convert than those searching for less relevant terms.



Improved Conversion Rate

More targeted traffic means more conversions. With the right SEO strategy, people who are genuinely interested in what you offer come to you and even get converted more than a generic audience.



Improved Brand Awareness

The more your website pops up in the SERPs, the more aware people would be of your brand. There are more chances of clicking onto your site and even remember you for the future too. Anyone searching for something relevant to your business will be more likely to come to you once you establish your brand name.



Overtakes Competition

With higher rankings, you are hopefully finding a spot on the first pages of the SERP results. You can drive traffic and even potential sales directly from your competitors. People who were previously clicking others' websites, will now be likely to find your brand.



Cost-effective Marketing

You don't have to out-spend on the marketing front. SEO is a cost-effective marketing strategy that can help you go toe-to-toe with the big players in the search arena. The ROI of SEO is also quite high. Unlike the Pay-Per-Click ads, you aren't paying anything for the ad space.



Improved Usability

With best SEO practices, you can improve the usability and user experience of your site. By improving the usability of your website, your search engine rankings will also improve. A usable site will also attract and retain more customers making it a win-win situation.



Long-term Results

For paid channels, the results will last only as long as you spend money on them. But SEO is going to reap long-term results. Once your website attains a decent ranking, it will stay there as long as your SEO strategy is consistent and not outranked by your competitors.

If you still fail to see the value in investing your efforts in SEO, it is a no-brainer that you would be falling behind in the competitive web space. But if done in the right way, your business can really reap the **benefits of digital marketing and SEO**.

SEO tactics

When you are operating in a competitive space, you need to get your organic search strategy to drive your business growth, increase traffic, and secure better conversions in order to take your business to the next level. SEO rules change all the time and what we are presenting are simply some of the trends that have been followed for ages.

Let us walk through some of the proven and repeatable **SEO best practices** for optimizing the websites that help you drive targeted traffic. For this purpose, you need to improve your ranking in three areas -

1. Technical
2. On-page SEO
3. Off-page SEO



Technical SEO

Technical SEO is the process of optimizing your websites for the crawling and indexing phase. You can help the search engines access, crawl, interpret, and index your website without any hassles.

1. Specify a preferred domain - By doing so, you are instructing the search engines as to which domain you want to use throughout the lifetime of your website. In case you've changed your mind, you should use 301 redirects to switch between different formats.

2. Optimize Robots.txt - It is a text file in the root directory of your website that instructs the search engines as to which pages of your website they can crawl and index.

3. Optimize URL structure - URLs should be short and descriptive. Use keywords for targeting and avoid unnecessary characters or words.

4. Navigation and Website Structure - Search engines need to understand and index your websites easier. A well-defined structure helps the search engines to navigate and push your website higher in the rankings.

5. Add Breadcrumb menus - These help users navigate a website easily without any hassles and also hint to the search engines about the structure of the entire website.

6. Structured data markup - Helps in enhancing the presentation of your listings in the SERPs through featured snippets, knowledge graph entries, etc., and increases your click-through rates.

7. Check your canonical URLs - These help Google about which version of a page to take into account while indexing your website. This helps in avoiding duplicate content.

8. Optimize your 404 pages - These pages have to be customized and clear so that the visitors understand what went wrong when they tried to visit a missing page.

9. Optimize your XML sitemap - Sitemaps are used by the search engines as a guide while crawling the websites. Include only the important pages and make sure it is auto-updated when a new page is published.

10. Add SSL to make your website HTTPS - This ensures security and also serves as a ranking signal to establish trust with your users.

11. Website Load Speed - **Website Page Speed** is an important ranking signal and faster websites perform better even in the search rankings.

12. Mobile-responsiveness - With the introduction of the mobile-first index by Google, if you do not have fast and mobile-friendly websites, your rankings will also suffer.

13. Accelerated Mobile Pages (AMP) - AMP pages on your website are stored and served to the users through Google cache and makes loading faster on mobile devices.

On-Page SEO

On-page SEO refers to those strategies that you implement on your websites like URL optimization title and meta tag optimization, keyword optimization, and more.

1. Title - The title should be compelling, relevant, and correspond with the users' intent. It is meant for not just users but also crawlers.

2. URL - URL should be short and descriptive. If you decide to change the webpage URL, you should also add a proper redirection to avoid a 404 error.

3. Meta Description - A well-written meta description can help you stand out and appeal to the people who are browsing through the search results.

4. Keyword Search - This is essential to affirm that this page is in fact related to what the users were searching for.

5. Header Tags - Use header tags (h1 to h6) for clear headings to break up sections of your content with a neat and nested hierarchical system.

6. Duplicate Content - Avoid duplicate content as you may be penalized by the search engines or your website may lose its value which isn't appreciated by the readers.

7. Crawlability - Ensure your website isn't blocked from crawling by avoiding broken links, having a clear sitemap.xml, and providing enough internal links.

8. Responsive designs - Responsive designs and mobile development may help your readers have a great experience on whatever device they are on.

9. Media Optimization - Multimedia such as videos, images, and graphics may be a load on your website and hence they need to be optimized to improve the load speed.

10. Alt Tag - Optimize your images with descriptive alt tags that give the readers some context if the images fail to load.

Off-page SEO

The age-old adage "if you build it, they will come" isn't true in the case of websites. No matter how much time you spend on optimizing websites, there has to be a way on how people find it. Off-page SEO strategy is what you need to rank #1.

Off-page SEO refers to all the activities like links, social media strategy, etc. that occur off the website to raise your search rankings. The more quality links and comments point to your website, the better the rankings.

1. Evaluate Your Backlink Profile - the number of links to your website, number of domains linking to your site, number of pages with the maximum links, anchor text, etc.

2. Verify your competitors' backlink profiles - Not just of your direct competitors, but also the backlink profiles of your online competitors who compete with you for search space.

3. Improve your internal linking - This helps with content discoverability. Have at least three internal links. Use relevant, keyword-optimized anchor text while linking to internal pages.

4. Fix any 404 errors - Broken links result in 404 errors which makes the user leave your site which gives your competitor an outreach opportunity.

5. Optimize on-page SEO - Both on-page and off-page SEO go hand-in-hand and help your website achieve high rankings in the search results.

6. Assess your link-building options - Aim to focus your efforts on broken links, guest blogging, local citations, paid ads, social sharing, etc. for strategic advantage.

7. Get Your content within the reach - Power your pitch, add more value to your content, so that readers visit and stay on your website.

8. Update local citations - Trusted local citations and directories like Google My Business can help improve your off-page SEO. Avoid spammy directory sites.

9. Go for paid ads to promote content - You can go for Google Ads, or FB ads, to promote your content and proactively monitor, and improve your ad campaigns on a regular basis.

10. Go for Guest Blogging - Through guest blogging, you can spread awareness about your company and also generate some valuable backlinks.

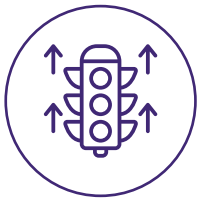
11. Share your content on social media - Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn can be used to post and promote high-value content that generates shares and links to your site.

Benefits of SEO

SEO is an essential part of any successful marketing strategy. One can enjoy a multitude of benefits offered by SEO.



Improved Visibility



Increased Traffic



Higher Rankings



Improved ROI



Increased Usability



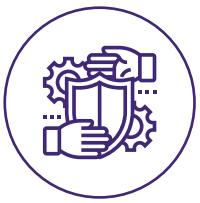
Brand Awareness



Laser-targeted audience



Increased Sales



Builds Trust & Credibility



Higher Conversion rate



Outranks Competitors



Break into new markets



Increases Social Media Presence



Augments User Experience



Drive Business Growth

E-commerce SEO

In a uber-competitive ecommerce world, you need to outrank your competitors to survive and thrive. Many ecommerce companies usually rely on paid ads and social media ads which require a steady stream of income. Despite the fact that SEO reaps the highest ROI, most of the online shops pay little to no consideration to SEO. SEO, on the other hand, requires upfront efforts wherein once you rank, you can make sales on autopilot with almost zero recurring expenses. With minimal efforts, you can have free, recurring, high-converting, hot traffic.



The best ecommerce SEO strategy entails the following -

- Keyword Research - Find the keywords customers are searching for
- Site architecture - Set up keyword research your navigation, category pages, and product pages. Make it simple based on your research and create highly relevant page URLs
- On-page SEO - Make sure your keywords are in the right places. Follow strategic keyword optimization at places such as meta tags and content.
- Technical SEO - Site speed, user experience, mobile-responsiveness, and links help search engines crawl your site efficiently.
- Local SEO - Help drive local organic traffic
- Link Building - Improves the authority of your website
- Content Marketing - Drive additional organic visitors
- Measurement - Use tools like Ahrens, Google Analytics to measure organic traffic and engagement metrics

How to choose an SEO agency?



There are many companies and agencies in the market who promise you the moon when it comes to SEO. Before you fall for such agencies, you need to understand that SEO isn't a one-time solution. And none can promise guaranteed results. An experienced agency would do what is best for your business by optimizing the website and monitors the results. If they aren't as anticipated, they would again sit with you and tweak the strategy a bit till you gets the desired results which is usually a time-consuming process.

If you want a long-term entrepreneurial game and survive in business for the long haul instead of making a quick buck, you shouldn't resort to black-hat SEO practices. Many companies focus on optimizing your content only for the search engines without due regard to the users and by dodging the rules. They bend and break the rules to get your sites to rank high but mind you, one day you may have to wake up to the rude shock of facing a penalty by the search engines.

Choose an agency like Skynet Technologies who has enough experience and expertise in running **digital marketing services** & **digital transformation services**. You need to build something sustainable so you need to find someone who is proficient even in other digital marketing channels that complement your SEO strategy. A good agency plays by the rules and gives you the best results possible.

As the search landscape is constantly evolving, **Skynet Technologies** has been offering tailor made white hat **SEO services** to give you the competitive thrust and out-hustle your business rivals in getting more qualified traffic, leads, and conversions.

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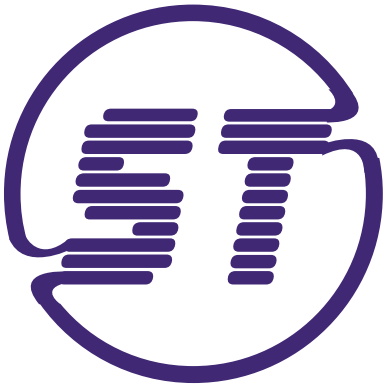
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