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SEO Website Guide

by Blue2 Digital

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What is Search Engine Optimization?

Search engine optimization is essential when it comes to ranking higher in the search engine results page on Google. Many people often ask how to get to the first page on Google search. This can be done either organically, or through paid search. Regardless of which route you chose, it is fundamental to have a basic understanding of how search engine optimization works and how to apply it.

Let's discuss the difference between organic search and paid search. Both strategies are valuable to marketers in a sense that it will bring traffic to your site. When you type a search query into Google, the links that appear below the adverts are considered **organic results**. Organic results are not paid results. These results are based on many key factors:

1. Ranking
2. Content Quality on Site
3. Keywords
4. User Traffic
5. Site performance
6. User experience
7. Social traffic (a high social media presence)
 - a. Linking to the website
8. Meta Data

Google uses algorithms to identify how your site should be ranked and if your site covers most of those key factors, then you're more than likely to have a high ranking.

If you're paying to appear at the top of the search results, you will see your advert being shown higher than the organic results. Your ad will only be shown if you bid higher than competitors and when someone searches for that specific keyword that you're bidding on. Many consumers aren't even aware that the top results are adverts and they generally tend to click on them. Google does a good job at

making their paid adverts look like organic adverts so that they get a good amount of traffic. Many marketing professionals have bidding strategies and keyword analysis that they apply to the AdWords pay per click program. At Blue2 Digital, we have several strategies up our sleeves and we analyse what works with each client, because every campaign is different.

Now, let's get back to the SEO basics. The main question that people ask when it comes to search engine optimization is what steps can I take to improve my site SEO? Here's the basic list of steps that I take (and not limited to) at Blue2 Digital when I initially improve on-site SEO.

1. Optimize your internal and external site links
 - a. Make sure that your URL contains relevant phrases.
 - b. Make your links crawlable by robots
2. Tags
 - a. Add missing tags and make them concise
 - b. Strive for about 50-60 characters
 - c. Delete duplicate Title Tags
3. Meta Description
 - a. Avoid duplicate meta descriptions
 - b. Add missing meta data
 - c. Include Unique content
 - d. Make the description comprehensible for search engines and users
 - e. Keyword analyses
4. Images
 - a. Provide images with an alt attribute and correct broken images
5. Pages
 - a. Improve site speed / loading speed
 - b. Detect Error Pages
 - c. Find duplicate content pages
 - d. Make your pages mobile friendly

I cannot stress enough that your website should be maintained on a weekly basis. Technology changes very quickly and from an SEO perspective, implementing new changes and maintaining your site will ultimately increase your site traffic. When you're done optimizing your site, you need to make sure that your site is re-crawled and indexed. I would consider using a robots.txt so that you can tell the robots which pages to crawl. I would advise to not crawl pages that are hidden or private.

One thing that I would like to mention is that if you have several redirects, it will lose some of your page ranking on Google. The old page will get indexed and the rank does not transfer to the new one.

If you go through each basic step that is listed above, you should have no problem in achieving a higher ranking than before. Just remember to keep your content fresh and analyses your keywords. Have a solid social media strategy in place because it goes hand in hand in search engine results ranking. The reasoning behind this is that it drives traffic to your site as well, which increases organic visibility.

I hope this guide helps you in your optimizing endeavors!