WHAT IS SEO & HOW IT WORKS

SEO is an acronym that stands for **Search Engine Optimization**, which is the process of optimizing your website to get organic or un-paid traffic from search engines' result pages.

In order to display your site, search engines will scan, or crawl your website to better understand what the site is about. This helps them deliver more relevant results to those who are searching for certain topics or keywords. Similarly, the search engines' scan will determine how easy it is to navigate and read, rewarding user-friendly sites with higher rankings on the search engine results page.

In order to properly optimize a site a good deal of work may need to be done over a sustained period of time, both to establish the site and to build its ranking or Authority. While this can be time consuming and expensive at the beginning (should you choose to hire a professional) it will provide the biggest bang for the buck over time. As once a site is optimized and has established its Authority in its specific field, it will continue to generate traffic without the cost of advertising.

How Do You Optimize A Website?

Optimizing a site is a three-step process that involves:

1. **On-Page SEO**: research, content creation and optimizing the site performance,
   a. Research: review ranking competitors to see what URLs, title tags, keywords and long-tail tags they are using
   b. Do keyword research: see what other keywords and phrases are comparable to yours and how competitive they are in your area (Google Local).
   c. Make content relevant and compelling to be informative to others
   d. Optimize URLs: used descriptive names that define the page
   e. Optimize Page / H1: make titles concise with ranking keywords
   f. Optimize Navigation Menu: use same name as title & URL
   g. Optimize Images: make sure images have been optimized to 72ppi and titled (alt tags)
   h. Consistent Name, Address, Phone: this should be consisted on every page

    i. Feature Complete Location: Contact Us page for Google Local

    j. Structured Data Markup: use schema markup

    k. Employ site maps (XML); help Google find you and update your site

    l. Setup 301 redirects: point traffic to new URLs or domains

2. **Off-Page SEO:** Google and backlinks

    a. Claim "Google My Business" listing

    b. Claim Bing, other directories, especially niche specific directories

    c. Make sure all directories have the exactly same information as website

    d. Select business categories carefully to rank with keywords

    e. Set up Google Webmaster and Google Analytics

    f. Build valuable links back to the website through syndication and engagement.

3. **Content Creation:** blogs, social media content, videos, infographics, etc.

    a. Create regular blogs that are optimized to reflect the search terms of the various aspects of your business

    b. Select social platforms that you will actually use and where your customers are and make your business visible

    c. Create Yelp and other review listings

    d. YouTube is the 2nd largest search engine so an optimized video posted on it can be better ranked that your website. Therefore, create videos that describe what you do and post them to your YouTube channel and optimize each video with appropriate keywords.

Resources (Free)

Entrepreneur SEO Checklist: https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/231235

wikiHow How To Optimize Your Website: https://www.wikihow.com/optimize-your-website

Local SEO Checklist: https://localseochecklist.org

Wordtracker Keyword Research: https://www.wordtracker.com/

Amazon Keyword Research: https://keywordtool.io/amazon

Google Keyword Research: https://ads.google.com/home/tools/keyword-planner/

Hashtag Marketing: https://hashtagify.me/hashtag/tbt

Knowem: https://knowem.com (secure your brand