SEO Rules!

How To Make Google Love Your Website, Drive Crazy Traffic, & Make Lots Of Money?

Search...

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Chapter 1
Introduction

The internet was created for the purpose of information sharing. It is a free space for anyone to put up their ideas and share what they have. Over the years, the ability to interact with almost anyone in the world through a computer has developed a new type of business.

The online business generally calls for a website and a way to earn money. It can be through advertising or selling products or services on the internet. The great thing about this is that online stores are not limited by location since anyone with internet access can get to the online store. This is very appealing to a lot of businessmen and now, there are thousands of online stores and websites aiming to make money through the internet.

With more online businesses, it becomes more and more difficult to get visitors to one's website. This is where Search Engine Optimization comes in.

Search Engine Optimization or SEO is the process of increasing a particular website's traffic through the manipulation of search engines like Google, Yahoo and Bing. The goal here is to increase the search engine ranking of the target website on a particular keyword. So for example, if the target website is an online store selling motorcycle parts, then the goal of SEO is to get the site to the number one spot whenever someone searches for the term "motorcycle parts for sale" on Google or any other search engine.

Today, it's almost impossible to make good money on the internet without proper SEO. It is essential to the success of any website. Basically, this is the first and most powerful tool that anyone can use when it comes to internet marketing. Proper Search Engine Optimization can lead to great profits, and better business. Now the question is how do you do SEO? First off, there are basic rules that you have to take apply when doing SEO and let me share all of them with you.

Chapter 2
SEO Tactics

With the amount of people doing SEO, there are tactics that each one of them would use. This is how you build up the website to the level of your competitors. Later, you will use specialized or advanced SEO tactics in order to gain higher ground and beat out your competitor.

Link Building

This is the first part of common SEO tactics and it can be broken down into several techniques or methods. But the basic principle here is that you spread links going to your website throughout the internet. This is done because one of the factors that affect search engine rankings is the number of links leading to the site. Basically each link is a "vote". The idea behind this from a search engine standpoint is that if a lot of websites link to a particular website, then that means the receiver has good content and is deserving of a higher spot in the rankings. Link Building is done in order to replicate this effect.

Directory Submission

This is the first and probably the most common link building method there is. Almost any website today uses this method and all SEO specialists are at least familiar with this method. It is the fastest and easiest way to gain links from all over the internet. So how does this go?

First off, there are websites on the internet designed to provide people a service similar to that of the Yellow Pages. The main difference is that instead of providing the address and phone number of a particular business, it provides the URL of a particular website. These sites are called Directories and they are huge compilations of various sites all over the internet.

What's great about Directories is that they also categorize the sites listed in them. Although categorization can differ from one Directory to another, it's still very helpful that they are categorized. And, another great thing here is that you can use them to gain links for your site.

Basically all you have to do is to look for a Directory (which isn't very hard). Next, look for the button to submit a site to their directory. You are then instructed to fill up a form containing information such as website name, the URL address, a quick description, e-mail of the submitter for verification, etc. After you do this, click on submit and it will be posted after the owners of the directory approve it.

Accomplish this process a couple of times every day and you're sure to gain good backlinks for your website.

Now there are good directories and bad directories to submit to. You can identify a good directory if it has a high page rank and if it does not use a "no follow" tag on the links. Bad directories on the other hand are the exact opposite. They have zero page rank, which could also indicate that they are blacklisted by Google, and they implement "no follow" tags.

Forum Posting

Another "old school" method of building up your backlinks is to make use of Forum Posting. It is a quick, easy and sometimes even fun way to get your links out and maybe even have someone directly click on them which is always a good thing. When it comes to Forum Posting however, the trick is moderation and substance.

To start things off, you need to find a forum in which you will post your links. Now there are several strategies that you can take here and it all depends on what you feel most comfortable with. But the basic idea is to find a forum that is at least remotely related to your website. Again, for example's sake, the target website deals with selling motorcycle parts, then it would be a good idea to sign up with a forum of motorcycle riders.

Once you have filled up the form and are an official member, the tricky part starts. Each forum has their own rules and regulations especially with regards to posting links. One of the most common rules you will find is that they do not allow you to post links in your messages until you reach a certain number of posts or weeks as a member. Also, when you get approved to post links, do not go on and overdo it. Do not post your link in every thread of the forum. This is a sure way to get your account banned and your posts deleted thus all that effort going to waste. Do it moderately and in an acceptable manner.

For example, post a link in your message only when you are referencing to something. Again let's go back to the motorcycle parts scenario. It would be ideal to reply to a message asking where to buy a particular part and suggest your website by posting the link.

Next, in forums, each member is allowed to create his or her own signature. This would become part of every message you post to a thread. Once you can place a link in your signature, do it then participate in several discussions. This is a great way to get a lot of links fast since all replies you make would automatically contain your link.

Article Submission

It is worth noting that when it comes to link building, it is very difficult to find a site owner willing to give you a link freely. Usually you give something back in return. In Directory Submissions, you provide content for them. In Forum Posting, they also get more content for their site. Another example of this is Article Submission.

The basic concept of Article Submission is that you give the Article Site content and they allow you to place a link in your article in return. Once it is approved and posted in their site, you get the link. It's as simple as that. Of course, there are rules here too. And each Article Site has their own set of rules and regulations.

The first thing that you have to consider is the quality of the article. You can't simply go around and submit a poorly written article to these Article Sites. If you do that, chances are you will get a low success rate and get one approved article for every twenty submissions that you do. Another thing you have to remember is NOT to copy another article word for word and submit it as your own. They have ways of checking for plagiarism. If you do this, it is a quick way to get your account deactivated. Worse, some of these Article Sites will block your actual IP address.

You should also refrain from articles that are too sensitive or controversial such as adult oriented articles and vulgarity. Keep it simple, keep it direct and informative. That is the best type of article to deliver.

In submitting an article, write one that is related to your product or service of course. Again back to the motorcycle parts scenario. If that is your website, then write an article about motorcycle parts. Look for an Article Directory which has a category that fits your article and submit it.

Now when it comes to the links, one Article Site can differ from another in their rules. Some sites allow you to place a link or two anywhere in the article. But most commonly, these sites will only allow you to place two links in your author biography box.

Link Exchange

Since the dawn of link building, this method has been done in order to get backlinks. As a matter of fact, this is the simplest way to get link building done. So how does it go?

Well, the name says it all. It is an exchange of links. You do this by messaging another website asking if he or she is willing to post a link in his or her site to yours and you will do the same. Of course, looking for a willing webmaster can be a pain. You have to surf through the internet for hours looking for websites and messaging them. Ideally, the sites you do Link Exchange with should be relevant to your website. For the motorcycle parts scenario, do Link Exchange with sites selling motorcycles or organization sites for motorcycle riders.

If you go on and ask several SEO specialists about Link Exchange, you will find that some of them, especially the new ones, have never tried this method. This is because exchanging links does not really produce that much success anymore. For one, there are a lot of factors that can hinder the other site from agreeing. One such factor is the page rank. A high page rank website will certainly not agree to Link Exchange if your site is new. They will gain nothing from it.

Another problem with Link Exchange is that since it is one of the earliest methods in increasing backlinks, Google and other search engines have found a way to counter its effects. They do not give a lot of credit to a link if it goes to a site that simply links back to the first website. Each link counted by search

engines is "graded" for quality. And if they see it as a Link Exchange between one site and another, they give the link a poor grade thus not giving much effect to the ranking of your site.

Blog Posting

One of the latest things to hit the internet is Blogging. This allows anyone to have their own little space on the internet and post their ideas, feelings, and basically anything they want. You don't need to understand any coding to create and maintain a blog. All you need is your ideas and thoughts to post.

Now, you can choose to either keep the blog private or broadcast it all over the internet. If you choose the latter, people can come in, read your posts and even comment on it. That last part is what you can use to spread your links even more.

Blog Posting is basically done by visiting various blogs. Choose a post, read it a bit and put in a comment. Inside the comment, you can place a link to the target website. It's that simple. Well, the idea is simple but the execution may not be that simple.

Unlike in Article Submission, Forum Posting and Directory Submission, there are no written guidelines when it comes to the approval of your comment and thus your link. You have no guide to ensure your link to be posted. This is because each blog is run differently depending on the owner. Some owners meticulously check each comment and only approve those with sense and substance. Others simply approve all comments. There are those who don't approve comments at all. Then you have blog owners who will approve your comment but remove the link before publishing it.

Success rate in Blog Posting can be low but the quality of each link posted is good. This is why SEO specialists still do it.

Link Buying

If you have the money, you can speed up your Link Building process significantly by purchasing links. This is done in a similar fashion as

advertising. There are websites that build up their content, do their SEO and get their site to become popular. Once that happens, they offer to place your link in their site; for a price of course.

As mentioned earlier, no one will willingly give you links for free on the internet. You have to give something in return. And since this is the business of making money, why not give money to make money? If you have the budget, then go for it. You can attain high quality links in no time at all.

There are a lot of sites and blogs that offer this service. You can look for them manually or you can use a service. There are services on the internet that lets the two sides meet. Here you can simply scan through their list of websites and blogs that offer Link Buying. You can check out their stats like page rank, traffic, and description. Once you have made your choice, simply contact the website and make your offer.

Of course, the better stats a website has, the more expensive their price will be. There's no real strategy here. Just have a budget for it, and buy as much high quality links as you can without going over that budget.

Content

When it comes to Search Engine Optimization, the content will play a huge role in your rankings. As they say, "Content is King, Link Building is Queen". Remember, all the hard work you do in building up your links will be for naught if your content is garbage. Search engines love websites that have good content and that only. If you can build good backlinks, you have to offer good content as well to achieve proper optimization and success.

Actually, it's not just for optimization's sake. SEO is about bringing in traffic, and how can you get people to go to your website if you have nothing significant to share? How can you convince people to stay on your website and buy something or click on an affiliate link if you have no articles, videos, or at least pictures in there? Simply put, you can't do any of that without proper content.

That being said, Search Engine Optimization should start with creating and uploading content. This can include a lot of things but the most basic piece of content that you will use is articles.

When writing your articles, you need to keep in mind two things: first is your reader, next are the search engines. You need to make sure that both aspects are taken care off. Make it easy for your readers to understand and digest what you have to say. You can have different approaches to writing your articles; it's up to you in which method you'll be comfortable in. The important thing is that you express what needs to be expressed. You let the readers understand where you are coming from. And, in a sales point of view, you have to convince them that they need to buy or avail of what you are offering. It's all about convincing your reader that what you say is true.

Next, you also have to treat search engines in the same manner and importance as your readers. This is because if you treat search engines right, they will place your content in a higher ranking. As mentioned earlier, they love good, unique content. That being said, how do you make them happy? First, make sure that your article is not plagiarized or simply copy and pasted onto your website. There are a lot of free online tools that lets you do that.

Next thing to remember is to make use of your keywords in your articles. Sprinkle them all over the place; but do not overdo it. Using your keywords too much can result in search engines not liking your site due to Keyword Stuffing. Use it a lot, but in a smart way.

Other things that can make search engines happy about your article are the use of tags like bold tags for your keywords, header tags and title tags. This can significantly improve the looks of your article in the eyes of search engines.

Of course, there's more than one type of content that you can use for your website. The main one would be articles, but you can also use pictures or images to enhance the look and feel of your website. It can also add emphasis to whatever you are saying in your article. Images are a great way to catch your reader's eye and get the message across faster.

Audio and video content are also good choices for certain websites. You can add audio messages or even background music for your website just to give it a better feel or ambiance. Plus, it lets your visitors remember the site. Videos on the other hand give you a faster and easier way to communicate with your visitors.

Chapter 3

Advanced SEO Secrets

The Common SEO Tactics are what most specialists use in order to get their websites up the rankings of Google, Yahoo and Bing among other search engines. It can be enough especially for websites that doesn't have a lot of competitors. But if you are looking to make more money or grow faster, there are other techniques that you can use of in order to get the results that you want. These are the Advanced SEO Tactics. These techniques will demand a bit more time and effort to pull off but the rewards are better as well.

Blogging

Earlier in Common SEO Tactics, it was discussed that blogs allow almost anyone to create his or her own space on the internet. One of the main uses of blogs is to write about your personal thoughts on something. There are people who use a blog to write reviews on movies they have seen. There are those who write about various restaurants and foods they have tried. And there are those who write about certain websites that are involved in something they are interested in.

Going back to the motorcycle parts scenario wherein your target website sells various parts and accessories for motorcycles, you can make use of a blog to inform other people about the products you are selling. You can also make use of this blog in order to share news regarding motorcycles.

Basically, with a blog, you have free reigns on whatever information you want to share. So how do you use this for SEO? Well, it is ideal to create an official blog for your website.

Having an official blog will give you two advantages. First of all, you get to interact with your customers. You can release news about your website, they can comment, and you can reply back to them. In this way, you are providing direct marketing to your customers which people always appreciate. They can also use this to ask questions about what you have to offer and you can reply back immediately. There's no need for emailing, calling or messaging. Plus, the great thing about this is that you don't have to answer a single question several times. If someone asks a particular question on the comments section and you answer, other people will get to read that and they don't need to ask again.

The second advantage that an official blog will give you is constant updates of content. Ideally your official blog should be within your actual site. For example, it should be www.example.com/blog and not www.exampleblog.com.

In this way, whenever you post something new on your blog, search engines will see this as an update of content in your actual website. Why would you want that? Because this will trigger search engines to keep looking at your website since you always have something new to share. This will be a plus for your site in their eyes. And as mentioned before, if search engines like it, then do it. The more they like what you do, the better chances you have to climb their rankings.

Basically having an official blog for your website enhances your overall marketing. At the same time, it improves your site's optimization. The only downside is that it can be a lot of work since you need to update this regularly. But if you have the time and effort to do so, it can bring in a lot of traffic for your site. The more traffic, the bigger chances you have of making money.

Multiple Site Link Exchange

In Common SEO Tactics, Link Exchange was discussed. This is the process of calling or contacting another website and offering to place a link in your site to his as long as they do the same for you. However, there are a lot of factors that can affect the efficiency of this method. On top of that, search engines have found a way to negate the effects of direct Link Exchange. To counter their countermove, you can make use of Multiple Site Link Exchange.

A webmaster or company would typically have more than one website. And if you have been in this business for quite some time, you could have several websites as well. If that is the case, then this will be a good approach to get links to your target website. So how does this go?

In its simplest form, Multiple Site Link Exchange would involve three websites. For example's sake, the sites are Web A, Web B and Web C. Say you own Web A and the other webmaster owns Web B and Web C. The deal would be Web A will link to Web B then Web C will link to Web A. Both sides benefit

from the deal and it would be next to impossible for search engines to detect the deal.

Of course, there are other variations here. This can involve four websites, five websites, six websites, and so on and so forth. The main thing about this is that both parties involved are satisfied with the results. And because there's more than two websites involved in the deal, you get enough flexibility to avoid any hindrance. In other words, the factors that can hinder the success of direct Link Exchange are not there when it comes to Multiple Site Link Exchange.

Now, you can offer this to other webmasters even if you only have a single website. But, if the site is new then it wouldn't have much effect if you link to their site. The trick here is to create a free blog since these are easier to improve SEO wise. Once they have page rank, you can offer to other webmasters that your blog will link to their site while their website links to yours. This is still considered Multiple Site Link Exchange.

So the basic thinking is that you give a link or two to them, and you gain the same amount. It's all about having everything you need in order to convince the other party to agree on the exchange. That is the main and only hindrance for this to work. Again, this can be a lot more work compared to the Common SEO Tactics, but if you get it done right, you will get better results overall. It all comes down on how you will convince the other webmaster to a deal that will benefit both your business and his/her business.

Link Wheel

The basic thing you need to remember when doing SEO is that you want to get as much links from as much high quality websites as possible. This can be a difficult thing since getting your links approved can take a lot of time. At the same time, a lot of other webmasters won't approve it if they don't get anything in return. But, what if you can control the approval of links? What if you can post anywhere and get 100% success rate? That will really give your business a boost. But, how do you do it? The answer is, by building a Link Wheel.

A Link Wheel is basically a mini web you have created for your money site or target website. It's like creating a whole community instead of waiting for the

community to grow on its own. The hard part here is that you have a lot of work in your hands. But the benefits are huge.

First off, you need a target website. Again, time to go back to the motorcycle parts scenario. Here you have a target website that sells motorcycle parts. You have good content. You have an official blog. Now all it needs are links to get it rolling. But instead of relying on traditional Link Building methods, you can create the websites that link to your target website.

Of course the main rebuttal here is that instead of having a single site to do SEO for, now you have several. So, to make things easier here, instead of actual sites, just use free blogging tools such as Wordpress and Blogger. For this example, create about five blogs. Blog A, Blog B, Blog C, Blog D and Blog E will all be independent from each other. Now, free blogs can get high page ranks faster since they are hosted in the main domain.

Now, you have to fill them up with content. Keep updating each blog as much as you can. Later, they will eventually get hits and traffic. Once that happens, they will attain a page rank. When they have page rank, it's time to do the linking.

The hard part of filling up content is now over. Just update them at least once a week or every two weeks once they attain a page rank you desire. Now comes the tricky part: linking them to the main website. There are two ways in which you can do this. You can have Blog A link to Blog B, Blog B to Blog C, Blog C to Blog D, Blog D to Blog E, and Blog E back to Blog A. This will then complete the Link Wheel. They will share all that link juice. Then, you can add a link in all of these blogs directing to your target website thus dumping all that link juice into your target site.

The other course of action you can take is to place the target website as part of the actual wheel and not in the middle of it all. You can do the same linking as mentioned above but instead of Blog E linking to Blog A, it links to the target website. Then the target website will have a link to Blog A. Which one to use will be totally up to you.

Social Media

A lot of people are on the internet because of Social Media. Here, they can communicate and share various information with their friends and family through the internet. So what can Social Media give you in terms of SEO? Well, they allow you to share links. And because there are a lot of people on these sites, search engines tend to give good grades on links found in here.

Facebook/Twitter

When the term Social Media is mentioned, the first two websites that will pop into the mind of an average person are Facebook and Twitter. Both of these websites have become the ideal form of Social Media. And both of these sites can give your business a huge boost in terms of direct traffic and SEO.

The first thing that you can use is Facebook. The great thing about this is that you can create a community on Facebook for your business. You have two options actually, either create a regular Facebook Profile for your business or create a Facebook Page. A Facebook Profile is what you would create for your personal use. A Facebook Page on the other hand is more or less like a profile but it has a Like button. So basically it would be better to use a Facebook Page.

Once you get a lot of people to like your Facebook page, you can divert them to your target website by simply posting a link on the page. This will instantly appear in their personal walls thus giving you instant potential for traffic. At the same time, you posted a single link but it will appear in several pages on Facebook. This is a fast and easy way to spread your links. Whenever someone "Likes" your link, it gets posted onto even more Facebook walls.

When it comes to Twitter, you create a Following instead of a community. You post Tweets or short messages and those who follow you get them. The thinking is basically the same as Facebook. You create a Following, you post a link, and they re-Tweet the link to their friends thus spreading the link even further.

Today, Facebook and Twitter are the most popular Social Media websites in the world. They are being used by millions of people. This means that once you are in the Social Media world, your business is exposed to all of these people. Of course not all of them would be interested in what you have to

offer. But the great thing about Facebook and Twitter is that you can target your market.

In Facebook, you can check the interests of each person. If they like something similar to what you are offering, then suggest that they Like your page. In Twitter, no one would follow you unless they are interested in your business. This is a marketer's dream.

With the use of Facebook and Twitter, you can grow your business faster. It helps in direct traffic and in SEO because both sites give you a wider internet presence. At the same time, you can also use this to improve customer relations. You can contact them one on one through posts and messaging. And, you can also use Social Media for announcements such as promos and to introduce new products. There are a lot of things that you can accomplish with proper Social Media.

Social Bookmarking

This is a very unique method because it combines Link Building and Social Media in one. Social Bookmarking has been created as a service for people to use anywhere they are. Basically in these websites, you can save your favourite web pages for reference or to read later on. Yes, this function is already built in browsers. But, what if you're on the go and don't use the same computer every time? What if your machine breaks down? Social Bookmarking sites give you the opportunity to save your favourite web pages and access it anywhere you are, whichever computer you are using.

So, how does this help in Search Engine Optimization? The answer is quite simple actually. In order to save web pages in Social Bookmarking websites, you enter the URL in them. This is then placed in your profile page or wall along with all the other pages you've saved. And there you have it, instant links.

Another great thing about Social Bookmarking is the fact that it is SOCIAL. This means that you can add friends in the website and you can share your list of favourite web pages with them. Much like in Facebook and Twitter, this can easily spread thus giving you a lot of links to your website.

However, there are limitations in making use of Social Bookmarking. Much like in Article Submission and Directory Submission, you cannot submit just

any link. If the link you are trying to submit contains adult related materials or inappropriate content, then it will be removed later on and your profile can get banned. So remember not to do that.

Other than that, Social Bookmarking is a great way to spread links. It uses the power of Social Media in order to help Link Building.

Video Marketing

One of the most popular websites to come out in recent years is YouTube. This can be considered as a Social Media site actually but due to the success it has garnered and the way it has changed the landscape of the internet, it has created a whole new branch on its own for Search Engine Optimization. Today, a lot of websites, including news sites, use the services of YouTube in order to place videos in their sites. That's how powerful this website has become. Now, it can be capitalized in terms of SEO and this is called Video Marketing.

In order to do Video Marketing, you first need to have a cool video. Something that can catch the attention of your target market and something that is significant to what you have to offer. If you're selling plants, you won't make a video that showcases ghosts and monsters to market the plants right? Going back to the example of a website selling motorcycle parts, you need to create a video that will show why this particular product is better than the rest and convince the watcher to purchase that product.

In the case of motorcycle parts, you can create a video showing a dirt bike riding in really rough terrain. The camera could show the shocks from time to time so that it focuses on the strength of the shocks. In the end, you can place a link to your target website saying this is the place you can buy them.

Sounds much like a commercial doesn't it? Well, that's the point actually. You can create a video much like how a commercial would go. But one of the main advantages of online Video Marketing is that you don't need fancy equipment and a huge budget. You don't need to worry about censorship. You don't need to TV time. All you need is a camera, an idea, and a YouTube account.

In order to do Video Marketing, you can simply grab your friends, make a video, and then upload it on YouTube. You can place the link inside the video, in the description, or in both. This immediately gives you links to your target website.

Of course, YouTube isn't the only video site available on the internet. There are a lot of others today that are trying to imitate the success of this website. You can opt to use one of these sites, a couple of them, or even all of them to spread your video and your links.

Also, as mentioned earlier, these video sites can also be considered as Social Media sites. This is because you can easily share the videos by posting them on various other sites like Facebook. At the same time, you can also grab the video and place it in your own website as well. There are a lot of things that you can do in order to spread this around. It's a lot easier than trying to spread an article.

Competitor Reverse Engineering

Nowadays, it's very difficult to have an original idea on the internet. You think it, it could already be there. You want to sell something on the internet? Most likely you have a direct or at least an indirect competitor. Some of the most congested niches on the net right now are diet drugs, pharmaceutical products, travel services, selling software of various kinds, and selling t-shirts to name a few. Now of course you what you can do is offer a better product or service so that you will sell. But the problem is, how will people find you? You will have to do SEO.

The problem with that is these people are on top for a reason. For one, their product or service must be good. If you are confident that what you have to offer is better than the current leader, then the only problem you have now is SEO. More often than not, the leader of any niche would have done SEO as well. To combat this, you need to do a lot more than what they have already done. You have to find your edge SEO-wise. You need something to get you ahead. But before you get ahead, you must catch up first. And you have a lot of ground to cover. That's where Competitor Reverse Engineering comes in.

Competitor Reverse Engineering is the process of checking what your competitor has done SEO wise and doing it yourself. The main question now is, how exactly do you do that? Well first of all, there are tools that you can use to check their backlinks. These are the same tools that you would use to check your own backlinks. Basically you do to their site what you would do to your site in order to see how SEO friendly or how properly optimized the website is. In doing so, you get an idea on where they post to get their

backlinks. Truth be told, this can take a very, very long time. You have to be really meticulous in doing this in order to get every last drop of information and every last detail on what they did. You will spend hours doing search engine queries and looking at their website.

Gather all the information that you can and take note of them. Now that you have this written down, it is time to analyse them.

The first useful information you will get out of doing this is to get an idea on how massive or how strong their SEO team is. You will see this in the number of backlinks they have and the number of indexed pages there are in search engines. With this information, you now have a benchmark on how big the workload you have in order to catch up with your competitor.

The next useful bit of information is you will find where to place your links. Check the backlinks. Not just the note of where they are, but actually look for them in the site they are published in. Look at where they are placed. Is it a comment? Is the link part of a signature in a forum post? Or is it a simple directory post? Whatever it is, list it down. Take note of every single detail of where the link is, how was it posted, etc. This will serve as your guide.

Now that you have the information in your hands, it's time to act using it. You know how your leading competitor got to his spot. In order to position yourself to take that spot, you have to be right behind them. You can do that by using this information in one of two ways. First, you can do it in the exact, same way they have done it.

Along with your regular Link Building efforts, try to do the things they have done as well. Post in directories you have found they posted in. Submit articles in Article Sites they have submitted in. Comment where they have commented. Do it the exact same way. The idea is, if they got to the top using these links, you will get near the top using the same procedure. This is the first and most logical approach to the information you have gathered regarding your competitor. But, there is another way in which you can use this information.

Instead of following what they have done step by step, this can simply serve as your guide in your own Link Building efforts. For example, if you find that most of their backlinks come from blog posting, then concentrate on blog posting as well. If they have more links in forums or directories, then focus on their areas. Basically do the same thing they have done but in your own way.

You don't really have to do it the exact same way. Of course, this option is a bit riskier compared to the first one but the results should also be there.

When it comes right down to it, Competitor Reverse Engineering is simply taking something that has worked and using it in your own business or website. This has been done not only on the internet, but in any market all over the world. A company would usually do the same thing as their competitor in order to gain leverage. The same idea applies with Search Engine Optimization. If they are doing well in this field, then do it.

Regarding legal ramifications and ethical standards, there are none when it comes to Competitor Reverse Engineering. You are not violating anything. You are not stealing anything. You are simply looking at the data readily available to anyone, analyzing it, and using it for your own benefit. Ethically and legally, there is nothing wrong with this.

Chapter 4

SEO Mistakes

Now, it's time to discuss the things that most Search Engine Optimization specialists do. It is important to remember these things because you have to learn from previous mistakes. Learn and analyse from mistakes, and you can do way better latter on.

Keywords

The keyword or phrase of your target website is the main focus of SEO. This is the term that you want to be on the number one ranking whenever someone searches for it. This is the core of your whole SEO operation. Make a mistake here, and everything else crumbles. But the truth is, most blunders by SEO specialists and webmasters is to not focus on their keywords. Below are some of the most common mistakes that people make with regards to their website's keywords.

Broad Keyword Use

One of the most common mistakes that SEO specialists make, especially the new ones, is to choose a keyword which is too broad for the website or page. Going back to the example of a website selling motorcycle parts; the ideal keyword here is "motorcycle parts" and "motorcycle parts for sale". You can use variations of this. The important thing is that you know this is the exact term or phrase people will use to look for you.

Now the mistake here is that some people opt to simply use "motorcycles" and "motorbikes" as their primary keywords. That is too broad. These words can mean so many things like motorcycle groups, motorcycles for sale, and anything that is about these vehicles. In essence, you place your website in a very competitive spot. Although it is not impossible to get the number one spot for "motorcycles" with a site dedicated to motorcycle parts, it is next to impossible.

When you target a keyword that it is too broad, especially single words, you will face steep competition and you are not in a good position to win this battle. More often than not, when this happens, your website would get lost in it all. Simply put, this is terrible SEO and you should always avoid terms that

are too broad for a website or page. This is unless you have no other choice or it's the perfect fit. But other than that, don't do it.

Focused Keyword Targeting

Focused Keyword Targeting is the exact opposite of the previous mistake mentioned. In here, the problem would be focusing too much or specifying the keyword too much. When you do that, you will surely have no competitors; and for a good reason. This is because no one would search for such a long or specific keyword. You will surely get to the number one spot in search engine rankings but you will get only a couple of visitors from that spot. This is because no one looks for such a specific term.

Back to the example of a website selling motorcycle parts; as mentioned earlier the ideal keyword is "motorcycle parts for sale". This is perfect because it already tells exactly what the website is about in the shortest way possible. Focused Keyword Targeting version of this would be something like "selling motorcycle engine lug nut". It's just way too long and too specific. Sometimes it's okay to go long, but too specific is what would kill your SEO efforts.

With this, you will still rank in other related keywords. But all that effort you put in will not get you to rank number one in related keywords. Simply put, it's still bad SEO of you use such a specific keyword. Fact of the matter is, when you specify too much on a keyword or phrase, you limit yourself. Instead of capitalizing on the huge market on the internet, you significantly decrease your possible traffic and sales. This is why it is not recommended for anyone to use too long and too specific keywords. Again, it will just put all your SEO effort to waste. You will not get anything significant out of this.

Keyword Stuffing

When it comes to using keywords, you have to be smart about it. You have to place them properly in your website. They need to appear everywhere. This will give your traffic and search engines the notion that the website is all about the keyword. In articles, in image descriptions, in image descriptions, in titles, in meta tags, you have to make use of your keywords in order to properly optimize a site. But, remember this: too much of a good thing can

always turn bad fast. In other words, if you use keywords too much, then search engines will not like your website. And when they don't like you, you won't get high rankings. This is called Keyword Stuffing.

Keyword Stuffing is probably one of the most well-known mistakes an SEO specialist can make. Sadly, this is still one of the most common mistakes as well. Basically what happens here is when you use the keyword or phrase way too much in an article. So, what's way too much?

There's actually no definite answer to what is way too much. But this is for certain. In a 100 word article, if your keyword appears twenty times, that's stuffing already. It's obvious that the article was made just to show the keyword. It's not really readable to anyone if you use the same word or phrase over and over again. This is why it is negated by search engines.

Another example here is when you write the title of the website. The title usually contains a few words. If you use the keyword here three times, again that's stuffing it. What you have to remember about Keyword Stuffing is if it doesn't look natural, or if it becomes unreadable, then you overdid it.

The question now is what is the proper keyword density for a website? Again, there is no definite answer for that. To be safe, it is ideal to at least have your keyword appear once in every paragraph of an article. Or, in a 500 word article, have it appear 5 times in total. That is a 1% keyword density. Although it's not perfect, it's the ideal density. It is safe and is still effective.

Unfriendly Coding

When creating a website, half of the effort goes into coding it and the other half goes into creating content for the site. Now, if one goes awry, everything becomes a failure. That being said, Googly, Yahoo and Bing along with other search engines not only looks at the content of a website, they look at how it was coded as well.

As a matter of fact, search engines look at a website in the form of codes and not as the final output. They will then analyse the keywords, the content, and everything else from here. However, if you are not careful, they will not be able to analyse everything properly. This happens because of poor coding.

Search engines look at your website from a code point of view. If the site is coded in an unfriendly way, then they won't be able to understand anything. They won't efficiently get the point of the site. In turn, because they don't understand it, it won't get indexed and it won't get rankings. With unfriendly coding, no matter how well your content is, no matter how well your link building is, you won't get the top spot in the search engine rankings if they don't understand the website.

One example of a search engine unfriendly site is one built with purely flash animation. Yes the site would look cool and all, but search engines will not be able to rank it properly. This is because they are not yet programmed to understand flash coding. It remains a difficult task. Right now, it's okay to use flash, just don't overdo it or create the entire website using it.

So how do you ensure that your code is friendly? This is actually the easy part. In 1994, the W3C or Word Wide Web Consortium was founded by the inventor of the internet, Tim Burners-Lee. Today, the organization sets the standards for proper coding on the internet. This is followed by search engines and websites. The guidelines can be found on the official website of the W3C.

Disregarding the Sitemap

A Sitemap is a page of the website. The use of this is to list down all the pages of the website in a single page. It's similar to the table of contents of a book. Once in the Sitemap, you can simply click on any link to get to any page of the website. It is very useful especially if a site can be a bit difficult to navigate through. But, there is a bigger purpose for the sitemap. If you don't put importance in it, your SEO efforts will get affected.

So, how does a Sitemap affect the overall SEO of a website? Well, it is related to the explanation given in the previous section about coding. Search engines analyse the entire website. They see it as a code. And to analyse every part of the site, they follow the links and the navigation. If you have a single page with links to all the pages, you essentially help out the search engine in analysing your entire website. They like that. And again, if search engines like

it, then do it. If you disregard the Sitemap and you have terrible navigation, chances are your website will not get high rankings in search engine results.

A lot of people disregard the Sitemap because it is too much trouble to create. Imagine, every time that you create a new page for your site you have to list it down manually on your Sitemap. But, it's still better to do all that work than to suffer the consequences of not having a Sitemap at all. Also, if you are using a CMS or Content Management System, you can automate the generation of a Sitemap anyways. So make sure you have one of these.

Ideally, the Sitemap should be search engine friendly. More often than not, this would look like a jumbled mess in the eyes of visitors. But, it is possible to create one which is friendly to both search engines and visitors. That is the best type of Sitemap so that people will also have an easier time navigating around your website.

Meta Tag Errors

In creating a website, you are given the opportunity to give it a title and a description within the code. This is found at the header part of the coding and is called the Meta Tags. These appear in every page of a website. If used properly, this can really help optimization. However, a lot of people take the effects of these tags for granted and hence, don't use them at all.

There are two main Meta Tags that you can use for your webpages. The first is the Meta Title Tag. It is the title of the entire page. This is used to describe the entire page in the shortest way possible. It can contain the actual name of the site or business then the slogan, or a quick description of what it is about. Ideally, your keyword should appear here in one way or another. It is important to place it here since this is the first thing that search engines will read in your site.

The next part is the Meta Description Tag. This is a more in-depth description of the entire page. Here you can explain a bit more about the products and services found on the current web page. This is another great opportunity for you to put in a keyword or two.

A lot of people neglect both these tags since they think it will not affect their sites that much. The fact of the matter is, there is an effect. And in a niche filled with competitors, every little bit helps in order to beat out the others in search engine rankings. This is why it is still important to take into account the use of Meta Tags.

Another common mistake related to Meta Tags is the use of the exact same title and description on every page of the website. Simply put, this will hurt your optimization a lot more than it will help you. If you are to use Meta Tags, make sure you go the whole nine yards and create unique titles and descriptions for each and every page of your website. In this way, they will not compete with each other.

Anchor Text Usage

The Anchor Text is the visible representation of a link. In other words, instead of seeing the actual URL of a link, users will see a word or phrase describing the link. This is used all over the internet and it's called an Anchor Text. In doing Link Building, you will most likely use this technique. However, there is a right way and a wrong way to do this; the latter being very common with a lot of beginners in the field of Search Engine Optimization.

The best example of a wrong usage of Anchor Text is to use "Click Me". First and foremost, the average internet user will no longer be fooled by that tactic. Simply put, it's been overdone. Next, it is always best to place your keyword as the Anchor Text. This gives the users an idea of what the link is all about and, it is a plus for search engines as well. It tells them that this URL is about the Anchor Text used. In all Link Building efforts, this must be taken into consideration. If not, those links will get a very low grade and thus be next to being useless.

Web Traffic Analytics

In SEO, you have to constantly adapt to the environment. You have to make adjustments based on news regarding search engines. You have to make adjustments based on announcements by the W3C. Basically, you will always have to adjust something. And one of the main indicators that you have to change something is your Web Traffic Analytics.

The Web Traffic Analytics is a tool that helps webmasters and SEO specialists determine various traffic date for a site. Here you can find how many people visit the website each day. Is there a growth in the number of visitors? Where are they coming from? All of these questions can be answered through Web Traffic Analytics. And based on the data you can gather from this tool, you can make the proper adjustments to optimize traffic.

For example, if a particular page is getting a lot of hits, then maybe it's time to tweak it a bit to share that traffic with the rest of the website. Or maybe you'd want to market that page a bit more to get even more traffic.

Every move and adjustment you make can be determined by you Web Traffic Analytics. This is a very important tool. Do not take this for granted and make sure you always have it up and running.

Web Page Removal/Website Redesign

One of the main reasons why a top performing website would come crashing down is sudden removal of certain pages. Some webmasters make the mistake of removing a page even if it is getting 20,000 hits a day simply because "it is time to move on". If there is traffic, capitalize on it. A high traffic page would definitely give a plus for the entire website in the eyes of search engines.

An even bigger mistake to removing a page is redesigning the entire website in one swoop. Unless it is underperforming or not getting any traffic, it is always a terrible idea to suddenly redesign everything. What will happen is that search engines will notice the huge change and thus place your ranking back to zero. It's a complete restart if you overhaul a website.

Ideally, the only time you will perform a complete overhaul of your website is

when it was blacklisted by Google, when the site is underperforming, or when you just bought a new URL with a different business plan in mind. Fact of the matter is, when it comes to sites; if it is not broken then don't try to fix it. All the hard work and effort you've place in SEO will disappear when you do an overhaul. Without any special circumstance, it is not a smart idea to hire a third party company to come in and rebuild your site.

If you really want to improve your website visually, you can do it in a slow, part by part manner. Do not go on and change everything in one go. Work on one part of the site, after it's done, go on to the next. This will be the best way to introduce a new design without losing much of the SEO work you have done in the past.

Chapter 5

SEO Game Plan

Lastly, the most important thing when performing Search Engine Optimization is that you should have a game plan. There are a lot of things that you can and need to do so you need to be organized. So, the first step you need to take is to create a strategy for the website on how you will promote it for search engines. You need to define what you will do, when you will do it and how you will do it before it is actually done. By keeping the entire operation organized, you know what should happen today and what you should be able to accomplish every week.

Now, the next thing you need to remember is when you have a strategy, stick with it. Whether it is immediately showing results or not, since you have a plan or a strategy already implemented, it is always better to stay with it rather than changing the entire thing every now and again.

Search Engine Optimization is a science and an art at the same time. You have to find the balance between the two in order to achieve the best results possible. There are so many things happening at any given time that it is next to impossible to keep up with each one. Know what things are important. Focus on them. Then you have to balance each part of the operation. It can be very difficult, but the rewards from properly doing SEO can be really huge.

To Your Success!

Alex Major

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