

INTRODUCTION TO SEO

SEO (Search Engine Optimization) is an important part of your organic marketing strategy. You have built this business, and put your time, money, and energy into launching a website, creating content, and launching products and offers that can help change your ideal clients lives. So what do we want to see happen now? Well we want those people out there who are struggling with the problems you solve to “stumble” across you online when they are searching on Google for a solution. SEO is optimizing your website and your content (blog, YouTube, Pinterest etc.) so that it ideally will appear on page 1 of those people’s Google search results. Because if you only appear on page 10, or even page 2, those people aren’t very likely to end up clicking through to see what you have to offer.

So there are actually 3 categories when it comes to SEO:

Technical SEO is optimizing all the back-end settings on your website that contribute to how easily Google can index and rank your website.

On-Page SEO is optimizing the content on your website (on your home page, other pages (like sales, services, and about pages for eg.) and blog post pages) to improve that page’s ranking on Google.

Off-Page SEO - is optimizing your efforts to have your website appear on other places on the internet to boost your own sites authority.

SEO can certainly be a rabbit hole and you can go quite in-depth with your SEO strategies. And these strategies do vary depending on whether you’re talking about your website or platforms like Pinterest and YouTube which have their own nuances. But to keep things simple we really just want to ensure you’re taking a few simple and regular steps to help boost your SEO presence until you make any decisions about whether you want to hire out, or take courses, to explore more complex strategies.

Technical SEO

We first want to make sure that you are even appearing (indexed) on Google.

Step 1

Go to Google and type site:yourdomain.com. Don’t include https:// or www and no spaces. Just type in exactly ‘site:yourdomain.com’. And of course if your domain is .ca or .net etc. you would type that instead of .com.

Once you've typed that in the Google search bar you'll want to hit enter and see the results. By doing this form of search request your results will be restricted to coming from your website only. The results will show all of the pages that are eligible to get search traffic. If it's not indexed it's not going to receive any traffic from Google.

Step 2

Take a look at the number of results that came up in this search. You'll see that # at the top of your page. Bigger sites are going to have a large number of results while most entrepreneurs are going to come up with a smaller number.

The question is... does this number make sense to you. Do you think it accurately represents the number of pages and posts you've created on your website?

Step 3

Do you have results coming up? Well first you'll want to make sure that you performed the search query in Step 1 correctly. If you have, and you don't see anything coming up with this Google Index search then that means that maybe your site has been banned from Google (very unlikely unless you've been up to some shady shit). A resource you will want to check out is [Google Search Console](#) (formerly Webmaster Tools) to see if you've received any warnings or penalties from Google for your website.

Another possibility is that maybe you've inadvertently restricted your site from being visible. Try typing `yourdomain.com/robots.txt` (where domain.com is your website domain) into the Google search bar. If you see things following *User-agent: * Disallow: /* the things after Disallow are restricted from being visible to search engines. You will want to check and make sure that you don't have categories of content or parts of your site restricted from being visible. If you do, you will want to follow up with your web developer.

Another possibility is that maybe you've inadvertently restricted your site from being visible. If you are using Wordpress you may want to go into *Settings > Reading* and make sure that at the bottom where it says *Search engine visibility* that the checkbox for *Discourage search engines from indexing this site* is UNchecked.

If you notice particular pages missing from your results you can check the source code of those particular pages and make sure there isn't a 'noindex' directive on that page. It will look like this... `<META NAME="ROBOTS" CONTENT="NOINDEX">`. If that is on the page it will not appear in search engine results. To check the source code on a page on a Mac/Macbook you can right click on the page and select *Inspect*. Then hit Command F to search. You can search the query *noindex*.

So what if you have too many pages coming up or something just looks completely off and wonky. That is when you'll want to consult and SEO expert to try and diagnose the problem.

On-Page SEO

As we put our focus on On-Page SEO we want to start optimizing your website pages and the content you're putting out on Pinterest and YouTube. To do that we want to start being conscious about using Keywords and filling out post information with a plugin like Yoast SEO (if you're using Wordpress). SEO plugins like Yoast make it easy to start including things that will improve your SEO optimization like including the following:

- **Title Tag** - The title tag uses a primary keyword and/or a secondary keyword and stays within the character limit.
- **URL** - The URL uses no filler words and includes either a primary and/or secondary keyword.
- **Headline** - The headline stays between around 25-70 characters and uses a primary keyword and/or a secondary keyword.
- **Internal Links** - 2-5+ internal links are included in the content with anchor text that accurately represents the linked content.
- **Meta Description** - The meta description is between 120-158 characters and includes a primary keyword and possibly a secondary keyword and CTA.
- **Target Keyword** - The target keyword is used in a relevant way at least 3-5 times throughout the post.
- **Secondary Keywords** - Long-tail and secondary keywords are used at least 3-5 times throughout the post.

The Yoast website is also a great place to begin educating yourself on SEO.

When you look at your content strategy you're going to want to look at who your ideal client is and what the transformation is you're offering them and start researching keywords that your audience might be searching for. Keywords are the words and phrases your potential customers are typing into search engines, aka the stuff they are putting in the search bar. There are many resources and even tools out there to help you with your keyword research. A great one I like to use is a free Google Chrome Extension called Keywords Everywhere.

Off-Page SEO

Something you may want to consider in the future is building your Off-Page SEO. You can look into building an external link-building strategy where you partner with other relevant sites in your industry to link to content on other websites and hopefully have other partnerships with other relevant companies in your market relevant and authoritative sites link to your content.

Don't fall prey to all the people out there trying to offer to pay you to have you link to their website! This goes against Google's policies and can get your site penalized in search rankings or de-indexed altogether.