



# UNLOCKING THE 5 SECRETS TO GETTING YOUR BUSINESS FOUND ONLINE

# What is Search Engine Optimization?

Search Engine Optimization (SEO for short) is often looked at as a magical dark art.

As a business owner, you have likely heard about it before. You've probably even been cold called or received spam emails from companies telling you that they can perform SEO services for your business.

It's important to understand that SEO itself is not a dark art. SEO is merely a series of processes that can be actioned for your business, that help the search engines to better understand the content and value of your website.

Of course, you do need to have good content in the first place. But we'll come to that in more detail later on in this guide.

The purpose of optimizing your website for the search engines is so that you gain visibility to your target audience. Your website needs to be on the first page of the search results for users who are looking for a business just like yours.

If you're not visible to your target audience, you will find getting eyes on your website an uphill struggle. Not many search engine users will go beyond the first page of the search results when they're searching. Just think about how you use search engines yourself - how many times do you go 5-10 pages into the results to get the answer that you're looking for?

The Internet has changed dramatically in the last decade. There are well over 1 billion websites on the Internet today and this number increases every day. More than 500,000 websites are created every single day - obviously they're not all competing with you, but in today's modern world it has never been easier for people to get started with a brand new website.

What this means is that unless you are the only person in the world who offers the exact product or service that you do and you have a core existing market, you're left in a crowded digital space, fighting for the attention of your audience.

This has left Search Engine Optimization as a vital service that you need if you want to stand out from the crowd. It's no longer a "nice to have", it's a "must have", to ensure that you are visible and can bring visitors to your website from the search engines.

Our free guide will walk you through 5 secrets to getting your website found in the search engines, and it all starts with research.

# 1 Keyword Research

Every search begins with keywords.

Every single search performed in a search engine starts with keywords. These are the words or phrases that an Internet user will type into their chosen search engine to perform their search.

For your business, you need to understand what your audience are searching for, so that you can target the content on your website for these particular keywords. This means getting into the mindset of a typical customer of your business and thinking about how they use the Internet.

**TIP:** Put yourself into the shoes of one of your customers. Write down 10 words or phrases that they would type into a search engine to find a business like yours.

There are many free and paid tools that you can use on the Internet to carry out keyword research. With these tools, you're looking for good opportunities for your business that you can target.

As an example, we really enjoy using the free keyword research tool - [Ubersuggest](#). On the Ubersuggest website, you enter in a keyword phrase and choose the language/country that you're targeting. For our example below we've used "plumber chicago" and English/United States.

**Keyword Overview:** plumber chicago



In the search that we've performed here, we can see that the keyword "plumber chicago" has a monthly search volume of 2,900, which would be approximately 100 per day.

We can also see an estimated difficulty for ranking a website highly in the search engines and the same for paid advertising. Finally, the Cost Per Click (CPC) for paid advertising is estimated to be \$27.64. This means that people are paying this much, for just one click through to their business.

If you were able to rank your website on the first page of Google for "plumber chicago" and generate 100 clicks through to your website per month, you'd be saving \$2,764 with SEO, rather than paying for the traffic using paid advertising.

**TIP:** Take the list of keywords that you've written down and run them through the Ubersuggest tool. Pay close attention to any that have an "easy" difficulty for SEO and don't forget to look through the 'Keyword Ideas' section for related keywords that you may not have considered yet.

# 2

# Existing Rankings

Where are you in the search engines?

Before making any changes to your website, you first need to know where your website is currently ranking for the list of keywords that you have put together.

Once you know your current rankings, you can then make a list of keywords that you can focus your efforts on, to achieve growth in the search engine results. If you try and make changes without knowing where you should focus your attention, you run the risk of wasting your precious time.

So, how do you look at where your website is currently ranking in the search engines?

If you're a sucker for punishment, you could open up a web browser (in incognito mode) and perform manual searches for each keyword. Then look at which page and position your website is showing in, if at all. There's a better way though...

There are tools that exist online that will track where your website is ranking for the keywords that you are targeting. One of our favourite solutions is SerpFox - <https://serpfox.com>.

SerpFox is a great tool for tracking and monitoring where your website is ranking in the search engines. They have a free account that allows you to monitor up to 10 keywords. The paid account which supports monitoring for up to 100 keywords is \$10/month.

After signing up for an account, you can add your keywords into SerpFox and tell it which search engines you'd like to track them in. We'd recommend selecting Google as a minimum here.

If your website is visible in the first 200 results for a particular keyword or keyword phrase that you've entered, you'll be able to see this data shortly. For any keywords where your website is not currently ranked in the top 10 positions, you're not visible in the first page of Google - so these are the keywords that you want to focus on.

SerpFox has an automated report feature built in, where it will send you scheduled reports on an ongoing basis. There's some details on how to do that on this help page, so take a few moments to get up weekly reports to your email address - <http://docs.serpfox.com/reports/how-do-i-add-a-scheduled-report>.

**TIP:** Create an account with SerpFox and add your keywords into the system. Give it a few minutes to pull in your positional data and then review your keywords list. For any keywords where you are not currently in positions 1-10, make a note of these as you will need to work on your website in order to make it more relevant for these keywords.

# 3

# On-Page SEO

Make sure your pages are optimized.

In the simplest terms, on-page SEO is the process of optimizing the pages of your website in order to increase their relevance to the search engines. The more relevance and authority that a search engine places on your page, the higher it will show in the search results.

This is one of the key areas of SEO for your business and it's something that you have full control over with your website. For keywords that are less competitive, it's sometimes possible to achieve a ranking on the first page of Google from good quality on-page SEO alone.

Let's run through 12 important on-page SEO factors for your pages. Some of these may need assistance from your web designer, but it's a good idea for you to have some understanding about each of them first:

- **Focus Keyword** - Every page should have a unique focus keyword. So, if you have a page that uses "Texas Roofing Specialist", you should not use it as a focus keyword on another page.
- **Content** - The quality and relevance of the content on a web page is the number one ranking factor in search engines. Your content should clearly fulfil the search purpose of the visitor. Make sure your focus keyword is used once in the first 100 words of the page. There's a lot of weight applied to longer content (1000+ words per page).
- **Title Tag** - Your title tag shows in the browser and is the main headline in the search results. The ideal length is 50-60 characters and you should always try to start it with your main keyword. Title tags are best written as a sentence.
- **Meta Description** - The meta description is used by search engines as the description for search results in their indexes. Meta descriptions should be around 140-160 characters in length and you should include your focus keyword inside this content.
- **URL** - Your page URLs should be search engine friendly and ideally include your focus keyword. Instead of 'example.com/pageid=?123' you would use 'example.com/your-keyword'.
- **Header Tags** - Your website should be using header tags. You may know these as <h1>, <h2> etc. Your page title should always use <h1> tags, as it's the most important heading on the page. Sub-headings should use <h2> and if necessary <h3> or further tags.
- **LSI Keywords** - Latent Semantic Indexing (LSI) keywords are a fancy way of saying related keywords. Make sure you sprinkle a few keywords that are related to your main focus keyword into your page content. This will help to increase the relevancy of your page.

# On-Page SEO

Make sure your pages are optimized.

- **Internal Linking** - Ideally you will want to have 1-3 internal links on each page of content. An internal link is a link that points to another piece of content on your site.
- **Outbound Linking** - Pages that link to an external piece of related content will typically rank higher in the search engines than one that doesn't. If you are able to link to an external website on your page, you should do so. If it doesn't make sense to do this (e.g. you're working on a product or sales page) don't worry too much.
- **Images / Video** - Good use of attractive images and embedded video will increase the dwell time of a user. By dwell time, we mean the length of time that a user stays on your website. You want to minimize the chance of a user going straight back to the search results after landing on your page as Google can use this as a sign of a low-quality page.
- **Website Speed** - The speed of your website is a ranking factor with the search engines. Slow websites are bad for users who are looking for information. Search engines such as Google will reward websites that load quickly. If your website takes longer than 2 seconds to load, it will typically need some optimization work to improve the speed.
- **SSL (HTTPS)** - There are many positive benefits of an SSL certificate. It creates trust with your visitors by displaying a padlock in their browser. You'll also find that search engines use it as a ranking factor towards the trust and security of a website. If you don't currently have an SSL certificate on your website, speak with your hosting company and make this a priority addition.

If you want to dive deeper into on-page SEO, there are many more ranking factors that you can take a look at, however the 12 we've listed above are some of the most important that you need to consider for your website.

If you work hard on making sure that each page of your website achieves each of the important ranking factors above, you'll be a long way forward in your quest to make your website more visible in the search engines.

**TIP:** Take some time to go through each page on your website and assess whether they have in place the 12 important factors that we've listed for you here. For any pages that are missing the mark, make a note of these and put a plan of action in place to make positive changes that will improve your on-page SEO.



# Local SEO

Help potential customers to discover you.

For the majority of businesses who are reading this, your local area will be very important to you in terms of sales and new business. Visibility in your local area can mean the difference between “okay” and “GREAT” sales.

Let's ensure you have better visibility with your local audience!

One of the best things you can do to help your business to be visible locally is to set up and optimize a Google My Business page. Of course, these are helpful no matter your location - so even if you're reading this and thinking that it's not important for you because you don't work with local clients, following these steps will still benefit your business.

Firstly, we need to make sure you don't have a Google My Business page already. Go to Google Maps (<https://www.google.com/maps/>) and in the search box type in the name of your business, e.g. Joe's Pizza. If you see a number of results come up, add in your location too.

If your business appears here, then you have a Google My Business page already. If it doesn't appear, then you can set one up for free. Head over to <https://www.google.com/business/> and click the green “Start Now” button.

When you first setup your page, you will need to follow the verification process. The standard verification process is via a postcard delivered to your business address within 14 days. You may also be presented with an option to verify by phone or email.

Once your page is verified, make sure you complete as much relevant information as possible.

You should pay particular attention to the following:

- **Business Name** - Make sure you use your full legal business name.
- **Business Description** - This area lets you describe your business and let interested parties know more about you.
- **Categories** - Select categories that are relevant to your business.
- **Address** - This should be your business address and you should ensure that you have the same details on your website.
- **Telephone Number** - This should be your business telephone number and you should ensure that you have the same number visible on your website.
- **Website URL** - Enter your business website URL here.
- **Opening Hours** - Let people know when you're open / available to assist them.
- **Photos** - This is one of the most important areas on the page and one that people neglect. Add your logo, some pictures of you / your team and photos / images of work that you have done for your clients.

# 5

# Content Creation

Content is king.

When it comes to SEO, content is King! There's no other way of looking at this, the quality and relevancy of the content on your website is the most important factor that will decide how the search engines treat it in their results.

A decade ago, SEO was more of a popularity contest. Whoever had the most links would show up higher in the search engines. Whilst backlinks (links from other websites that point to yours) are still valuable, the content on your website is most important.

Quality content encourages people to link to your content as a resource. This could be content on a page or in a blog post. Search engines such as Google LOVE content. They like content that is updated on a regular basis, hence why it's great to have a source of regularly updated content, like a blog.

How can you improve the content on your website? Great question!

The first thing you need to look at is if the content is answering the type of question that a user is asking the search engine, when they're looking for an answer. If a user comes through to your website when searching for an "emergency locksmith in New York", it's no use if you are not open or you only cut new keys for locks.

**TIP:** Review the content of your website with the keywords in mind that you picked out earlier in this guide. Are you giving the right message to your potential audience? Is there anywhere that you can improve your content by adding in more information, explaining the benefits of your product/service or using media such as images or videos?

The second thing that you need to consider is the length of your content. Time and time again we see that the top websites ranking in Google for search terms have a much higher content length on their pages.

The average small business website is quite light on content, with some having just a few sentences or a couple of paragraphs on pages. You want to avoid this wherever possible as you don't want the search engines to consider your pages to be low quality due to a lack of content.

**TIP:** Count the number of words on each of your pages. You can use a tool such as - <https://wordcounter.net/website-word-count>, to paste in the URL of your page and view the number of words. If your pages have less than 500 words, take some time to review your content and look at where you could share more in-depth information with your target audience.

# Now you have the key...

We've unlocked the SEO door and demystified 5 secrets of SEO to help you get your business found online. Now it's up to you to take action and start making steps forward with your business.

Throughout the guide we've given you action points and tips which will help you to understand more about SEO and to know what you need to do to grow your share of your market against your competitors.

It's important to remember that making changes for SEO will not bring overnight success. It's very much a long-term strategy, however it's one that can be a lot cheaper than Pay-Per-Click (PPC) in the long run.

Taking action today will be the first steps that your business needs to take in order to be visible in the search engines and connect with users who are looking for a business just like yours.

Whether you plan to carry out these SEO tips yourself or if you prefer to engage an SEO company like ours, you have more knowledge of the skill and it's no longer a dark art or a mystery.

We've got a few additional emails and tips coming your way over the next few days, so please look out for these in your inbox.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch!