

Marketing

Assignment No. 5

Search Engine Optimization

SEO stands for “search engine optimization.” It’s the practice of increasing both the quality and quantity of website traffic, as well as exposure to your brand, through non-paid (also known as “organic”) search engine results.

Despite the acronym, SEO is as much about people as it is about search engines themselves. It’s about understanding what people are searching for online, the answers they are seeking, the words they’re using, and the type of content they wish to consume. Knowing the answers to these questions will allow you to connect to the people who are searching online for the solutions you offer.

Search engine optimization (SEO) consists in different operations which purpose is to increase the quantity and quality of traffic to a website through organic (non paid) search engine results.

The quality of traffic

The number of visitors to a website is not the most important thing in most cases. Visitors to a website must really be interested in the website they come to. Otherwise, they leave at once.

The quantity of traffic

Once you have quality traffic from search engine result pages (SERP), increasing the traffic should be your goal.

How SEO works

Basically, a search engine is a web page where users enter keywords to generate a list of links to different website that can potentially answer their needs. In order to generate a list of results, search engines need some sort of database containing references about all existing websites on the Internet. To gather all this information, search engines use crawlers. A crawler is a program that retrieves the information of all websites to create a gigantic index. Based on the user-supplied keywords, an algorithm matches all the data with the query and supplies a results list. Many factors are taken into consideration by a search engine's algorithm and algorithms are regularly changes in part to avoid unfair and tricky optimization strategies.

The keywords

Any content research process is based on keywords. Search engines create databases centered on keywords making it possible to pull out all documents containing one or several terms. You will then understand that a website about books should have the word «book» in its content.

Using keywords

When keywords are typed in for a search, the search engines looks into its databases for the words, of course. But it also takes in consideration many other things such as words order, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, in order to give the most possible relevant ranked results. The best and most basic way to optimize page ranking is to make sure the desired keywords you focus on are used in titles, text, and metadata.

Choosing keywords

As we already have said, the first step is to determine the keywords to be used. It is important to make sure the chosen keywords are the one most of people would used to search for a page like yours. Since everyone is using more or less the same SEO approach, there is a competition with keywords. This means more general terms will generate much more results than more specific terms. For instance, just imagine how many possible results you could get with a

search using the words «book» and «music». Now, imagine how much narrow would be the results with a search that would use «book about music». There would certainly have less results, but also less competition.

Keywords abuse

In the early age of Internet, it was common for web developers to stuff their pages with a humongous number of keywords to show up in maximum of queries results. But algorithms are smarter now and this would do much more harm than good. Use your keywords naturally and strategically, and make sure they are relevant with the content of your pages. You don't want a

maximum of visitors, you want a maximum of visitors interested in your contents.

The meta tags

Although meta tags do not constitute a magical solution that will boost a website's ranking, it may help a little. One thing is sure, it helps users knowing what the web pages are about, which is quite important. Although, bad practice can have very negative impacts, so it is important to avoid mistakes.

What Are meta Tags?

HTML meta tags are optional data tags placed into the <head> section of HTML pages in order to give browsers and various web services specific information about a page.

Charset meta tag

The charset meta tag tells the browsers the character encoding used in the HTML document. UTF-8 is the default character encoding in HTML5. Using this avoids having to manually code special characters such as accentuated letters. Although, for various reasons, it is now recommended to avoid using this meta tag and to prefer server side technology.

HTML4

```
<meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=UTF-8">
```

HTML5

```
<meta charset="UTF-8">
```

Description meta Tag

```
<meta name="description" content="Your description" />
```

The description meta tag shortly describes what is the page or the website's about. If the description isn't well written or does not reflect the page's content, the search engine replaces it with its own. The same thing would happen if you create an empty description. The description is what shows up in the search engines results. On top of informing the users on the nature of the page, it should also build interest in order to get more people visiting it. And more clicks a page gets positively influence ranking. Be careful never to use full quotation marks ("") in your description, this would cut it off. Use single quotes instead.