



## Search Engine Optimisation – SEO

Adrian Feane | Understanding how to implement SEM and improve your site's organic and paid search engine visibility and


DIGITAL MARKETING INSTITUTE

## Topics & Agenda

- 1 How Search Engines Work & How People Use Them?
- 2 Why Search Engine Marketing? – Its Importance & Role
- 3 SEO – A Definition, Campaign Planning, On Page & Off Page Optimisation.
- 4 Summary

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## How Do Search Engines Work?




**Spiders "Crawl"** | **Algorithm** | **Results**

The crawls visit your website and capture various data.

When a search is performed the Algorithm processes all the stored data and tries to provide the most relevant results possible.

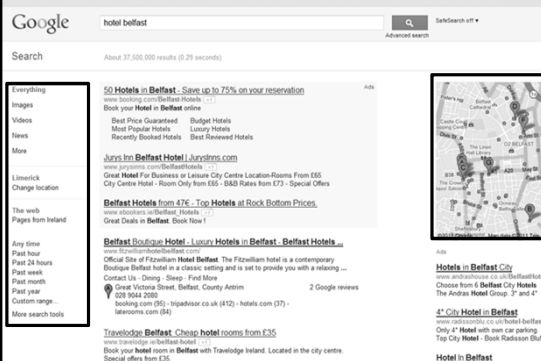
The results appear to the user a split second.

## Where do people look? (Heat Map Analysis)



Heat map analysis showing where users click on search results. The map shows a high concentration of clicks on the first few results, particularly the top one.

## Location Setting, Pages From, Google Places / Maps...



Search results for 'hotel belfast' showing various hotel listings, prices, and a map of Belfast.


## Understanding the Search "Funnel"

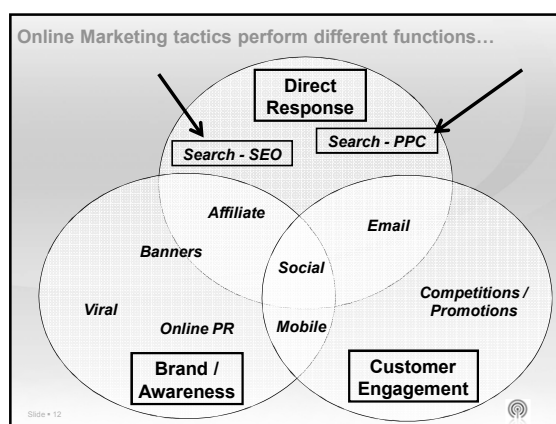
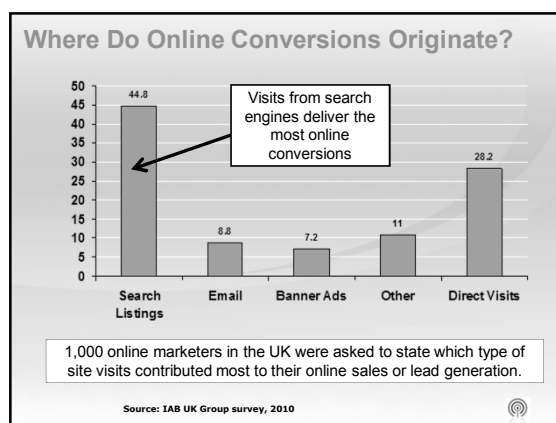
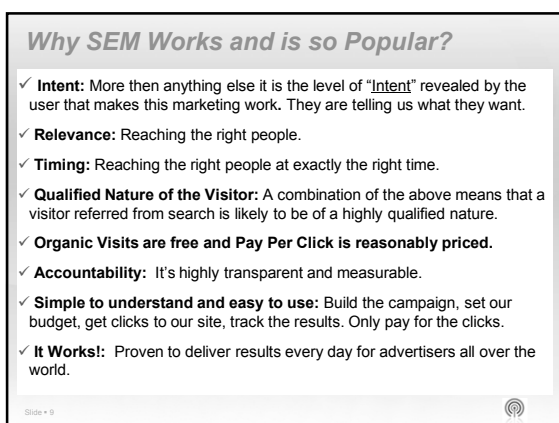
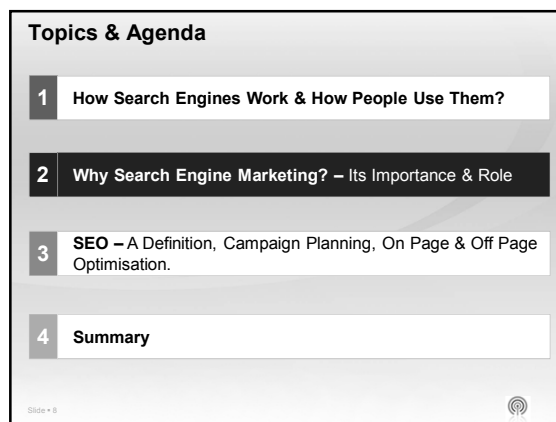
When people use search engines their behaviour and route to making a purchase can often be seen to resemble a "funnel" in terms of having a wide starting point, that progressively narrows until we reach the end result.

People perform various searches, refining as they go to add extra relevance.

### Consider an Example Search:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Search: **Hotels** (no click)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Search: **Hotels London** (click but no booking)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Search: **Mid week London hotel deals** (click and booking made)
- Booking / Sale / Conversion





### Potential Weaknesses of Search Marketing?

- **Lack of Branding Power.** It's potential inability to change people's emotions and influence them to act in a way they hadn't intended.

- **Ability to Promote entirely new ideas / inventions.** Search relies on existing demand to flourish so it could struggle in this regard.

Agree or Disagree? Discuss

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Questions?

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There are Two Key Parts to Any Search Engine Marketing Strategy...

1. Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)
2. Pay Per Click Advertising (PPC)

*Our Focus for Now is on SEO*

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### What's All The Fuss About? Why SEO?

*It's simple... this is about making money!*

**SEO Work**



**Visibility**



**Site Visits**



**Revenue**

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### SEO - A Definition

*Search Engine Optimisation is a specialised technique with the aim of improving your website's organic or algorithmic rankings across all relevant search engines.*

There are two fundamental areas to any SEO program:

1. **On Site - Website Optimisation**  
By analysing your website's underlying code, architecture, page content and making ongoing enhancements you can ensure that your website is returned prominently in the natural results of search engines such as Google.
2. **Off Site - Building PageRank**  
Building your website's Search Engine Ranking Power, or 'PageRank' as Google calls it, by developing quality, relevant inbound links to your site from other sites. Directory registrations make up a significant part of this work.



## SEO Campaign Planning

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### Steps in the SEO Campaign Planning Process...

1. Install **Google Analytics** if not already in place and start using it. In particular use Google analytics to understand your current levels of organic traffic and "net organic" traffic. Identify the keywords that are already sending traffic to your site.
2. Install **Google Webmaster Tools** and start using it.
3. **Site Audit**. A complete an overall SEO "Health Check" on your website(s).
4. **Keyword Research** – Keywords to target? Search Volumes?
5. **Benchmark** the rankings you intend to focus on improving.
6. Set **targets and timelines**. Discuss how much **budget** you'd be willing to invest to achieve those targets.

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### Keyword Tool – Gauge monthly search volumes, to get keyword ideas.

**Tip:** Use "Root" phrases to begin with and identify various search streams.



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#### Keyword Research

•Identify search phrases first before you start your SEO.

•What are people searching for to find your product or service?

•Build a list of relevant keywords for your website using this tool.

•Use **Google keyword research tool** (set up a Google Account first so you can log in an get better results – [google.com/accounts](http://google.com/accounts))

<https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal>

Keyword	Competition	Local Monthly Searches
"sessions"	Low	22,200
"investor"	Low	12,100
"asset management"	Low	8,100
"fir"	Low	8,100
"invest"	Medium	6,800
"investors"	Low	5,400
"business ideas"	High	5,400
"investing"	Medium	4,400
"state pension"	Low	3,600
"old age pension"	Low	2,900
"hedge fund"	Low	2,900
"invest in"	Medium	2,900
"superannuation"	Low	2,400
"annuity"	Medium	2,400
"pension scheme"	Low	2,400
"early retirement"	Low	1,900
"pensioners"	Low	1,900
"wealth management"	Low	1,900
"business plan template"	High	1,900
"retirement app"	Low	1,900
"financial management"	Low	1,800
"investment"	Low	1,800

### Benchmarking... automated tools

It would be too time consuming to benchmark your site manually on all search engines so use one of the below automated tools:

- **Web Position** [www.webposition.com](http://www.webposition.com)
- **Agent Web Ranking** [www.agentwebranking.com/](http://www.agentwebranking.com/)
- **Web CEO** [www.webceo.com](http://www.webceo.com)
- **Trellian SEO Toolkit v2** [www.trellian.com/](http://www.trellian.com/)

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### Exercise... Review a Sample Benchmarking document

Ranking Results	Keyword	Pos.	Page	Old Pos.	Changes
http://www.advancephoto.com	car mechanic	4	1	-	new
http://www.advancephoto.com	car repair	1	1	1	same
http://www.advancephoto.com	car repairs dublin	2	1	8	+5
http://www.advancephoto.com	car service dublin	3	1	3	same
http://www.advancephoto.com	catalytic converter	-	-	-	same
http://www.advancephoto.com	cost of timing belt	-	-	-	same
http://www.advancephoto.com	steering tracking	-	-	-	same
http://www.advancephoto.com	wheel alignment	5	1	-	new
http://www.advancephoto.com	Car Service	1	1	-	new
http://www.advancephoto.com	Car Servicing	1	1	1	same
http://www.advancephoto.com	full car service	4	1	5	+1
http://www.advancephoto.com	not pre test	8	1	24	+16
http://www.advancephoto.com	pre test	9	1	12	+3
http://www.advancephoto.com	brake fluid	4	1	4	same
http://www.advancephoto.com	brakes	6	1	4	-2
http://www.advancephoto.com	brake repairs	1	1	1	same
http://www.advancephoto.com	Car Brakes	3	1	3	same
http://www.advancephoto.com	car battery	6	1	6	same
http://www.advancephoto.com	car battery replacement	3	1	6	+3
http://www.advancephoto.com	new car battery	2	1	2	same
http://www.advancephoto.com	car exhaust repair	1	1	1	same
http://www.advancephoto.com	car shock absorbers	2	1	7	+5

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## Common SEO Objectives...

1. Increase organic traffic through improved search engine visibility. Put simply... make it **easier for people to find your site**.
2. **Improve the average ranking position of your site** across a variety of search terms. But not just for the sake of it (No vanity allowed!). No point in ranking well on keywords that no one searches for.
3. Greatly **increase the number / variety of search terms** that deliver organic traffic to your site. The "**Long Tail**".
4. Match and **better competitors efforts** online.
5. Drive **leads, bookings, revenue** etc to your business.



## Useful SEO Planning Tools...

### Some important SEO Tools to Use? (Mostly Free)

1. [www.google.com/analytics](http://www.google.com/analytics) – web statistics package
2. [www.google.com/webmaster/tools](http://www.google.com/webmaster/tools) – identifies any issues with SEO
3. [www.google.com/places](http://www.google.com/places) – claim your Google map listing & edit your profile.
4. <http://tools.summitmedia.co.uk/spider/> – shows if any issues crawling the site.
5. [www.linkpopularity.com](http://www.linkpopularity.com) – shows the no. Of links pointing to a site.
6. [www.google.com/toolbar](http://www.google.com/toolbar) – shows Google's pagerank (link popularity measure)
7. Ranking Software e.g. [www.webposition.com](http://www.webposition.com) or [www.agentwebranking.com](http://www.agentwebranking.com) (you pay a monthly subscription to use this service).

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Questions?

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Implementing SEO

**On Page Optimisation**

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## Key Thought... *Relevance*

### Relevance:

1. **Relevance is the key influencer of Organic Google rankings. How relevant is the content on your website to the search performed by the consumer?**
2. **The more relevant content on a page, the more chance you have to rank on a search for that phrase.**
3. **Any one page on your website is generally only effective for targeting at most 3 search terms.**
4. **So... the more pages you have on your site (with keyword rich content) the greater ability you have to rank for a broad selection of search terms.**
5. **It is possible to have both a content rich website with lots of pages and still maintain user friendly navigation and site design aesthetics.**



**Content is King for SEO**

***Start thinking about your content generation strategy now.***



## Common On Page Optimisation Tactics...

- Title Tags
- Description Tags
- Keywords Tags
- Keyword Rich Content - Assigned
- Link Text in Content (Internal Linking)
- Header Tags (H1-H6)
- Bold, Italics and Underline
- Alt tags/File Names
- Image & Video tags
- Search Friendly URL's
- Code to Content ratio
- Sitemap



## How do I make these changes?

1. Does the site have a Content Management System? (CMS)
  - If so, you should be able to edit the meta details and page content through the CMS. So get access to the CMS with the username and password.
2. Is the site managed through FTP (File Transfer Protocol)
  - If so, you will need the passwords and software like Dreamweaver which allows you to change text, images etc or Adobe Contribute which is a more basic version that allows you just to make text changes to the site.
  - The page gets downloaded, you make the changes and re upload to the live site.
  - Very important to ensure you are always working on the latest version of the live site.

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## Meta Title & Meta Description Tags

- Meta tags are important factors which we can control.
- Create keyword rich title tags (40 – 60 characters long).  
Eg Xyz Hotel Belfast – Budget Hotel Accommodation in Belfast.
- Create a unique title tag for every page.
- Do the same for the description tag (Up to 200 characters).
- Your webmaster will do this for you or you can use your own CMS.

**Pensions Board - Welcome to The Pensions Board website**  
[www.pensionsboard.ie/](http://www.pensionsboard.ie/) [ + ]  
 Safeguarding the interests of occupational pension scheme members and Personal Retirement Savings Account (PRSA) holders through effective regulation ...  
 Pension Calculators - General Pensions Information - Contact Us - Trustees

**Pensions - Executive Pension Plan, Executive Pensions, Executive...**  
[www.aib.ie/personal/pensions/AIB-Executive-Pension-Plan](http://www.aib.ie/personal/pensions/AIB-Executive-Pension-Plan) [ + ]  
 Visit aib.ie to find out more about executive pensions and executive pension schemes. With the AIB Executive Pension Plan you can have a tax efficient pension ...

**Pensions, Savings and Investments Ireland | Quinn-Life**  
[www.quinn-life.com/](http://www.quinn-life.com/) [ + ]  
 Quinn-Life specialise in Investments, Pensions and Savings. Contact us on ... Self-directed Pensions Read More ... REGULAR SAVINGS PLANS - Irish Savings ...

## Sitemap Creation

- An XML sitemap will allow Google to crawl, index and rank your pages more quickly.
- Download the XML sitemap programme. Create a sitemap and submit it in Google Webmaster Tools.

*Let's examine some live sites and review examples of these on-page optimisation tactics.*

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Questions?

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## Implementing SEO

### Off Page Optimisation

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#### Key Considerations – Influencers of Site Power & Rankings

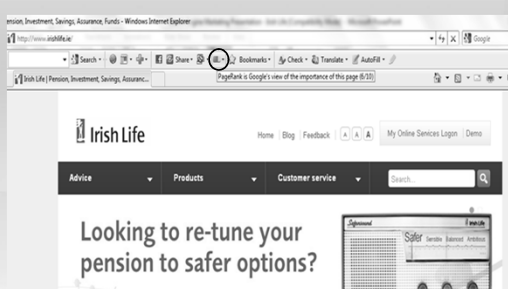
##### Important Factors for Off Page Optimisation:

- **PageRank** – Google's view of the importance of your site. Ranked from zero to ten.
- **In-bound links** – the number of other sites linking back to yours. Also the quality of those links (how powerful is the site giving you the link.)
- **Age of the site** – the longer a website has been online the more likely it is to rank well versus a newer site.
- **Relevance of the domain name** – to the search being performed. If your website is called cheapflightsmiddleeast.com it has a good chance of showing up for a search for "cheap flights middle east".
- **Country of origin / hosting / priority of the website** – where is your site hosted or what country have you stipulated through webmaster tools as your priority.



#### Google Page Rank

PageRank is Google's way of deciding a page's importance. Scale of 0-10. Download Google Toolbar to view: <http://www.google.com/toolbar/ff/index.html>



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*The factor most under our control and that we can influence through our SEO efforts is... **Link Building***



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## Link Building

#### To Consider....

- Get as many incoming links as possible.
- Ensure they are good quality sites.
- One way links are the best.
- Exchange links with sites that have higher Google page rank then you if possible
- Exchange links with sites in the same industry.
- It helps if you have unique content, a good blog etc so people will naturally link to you.
- Authority sites will naturally get lots of links.

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**Key Thought with Link Building...** the more links the better, the higher the PR of the referring site the better and the more relevant that site is to your industry / business the better.

[www.linkpopularity.com](http://www.linkpopularity.com) is just one tool that will help you to check your site's link popularity.

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## Link Building – Things You Can Do...

- ✓ Build a **database of good quality sites** in your industry that might be willing to exchange links with you. Record their home page, links page & contact details so you can email them with a link exchange request.
- ✓ Ensure you have **good quality, unique content** that people will want to link to.
- ✓ **Write your own Blog** with keyword rich links back to your website.
- ✓ **Comment on other people's Blogs** with links back to your site.
- ✓ Actively **promote high quality content through social media sites**.
- ✓ Check out **who is linking to your competitors** & add them to your database.
- ✓ Submit to **authoritative directory sites** in your area.

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## What Makes a Good Link?

### 1) Bad...

[www.domain.com](http://www.domain.com)

`<a href="http://www.domain.com">www.domain.com</a>`

Shows up on page as: [www.domain.com](http://www.domain.com)

### 2) Good...

Belfast City Hotel

`<a href="http://www.domain.com" title="Belfast City Hotel">`

Appears on page like: [Belfast City Hotel](http://www.domain.com)

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## Questions?

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## Case Study *(let's review together)*

**ADVANCE  
PITSTOP**

### (2) Search Engine Optimisation (SEO):

**Our Approach:** Intensive "on-site" and "off-site" search engine optimisation strategy.

- Our on-site work concentrated on implementing SEO fundamentals (site coding, meta tags, footer links, inner links, xml site map etc) and on focused content generation (adding more content to existing pages & creating a range of entirely new content rich pages). We also focused on spreading the strong home page PR to weak inner pages.
- Our off-site work concentrated on link building and article submissions. In particular with a focus on strengthening areas within the site that had poor existing PR.

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## Case Study... Results achieved

**ADVANCE  
PITSTOP**

### Results Generated:

When we started the SEO campaign for Advance Pitstop we benchmarked 50 of the most important search phrases on Google.ie for the business. This benchmarking document showed the existing rankings of the site across these priority search terms. Over a six month period we achieved the following results:

- ✓ From 0 (zero) position No.1 rankings on Google.ie to 8 No.1 rankings. (car repair, car servicing etc). ↑
- ✓ From 3 rankings in the top five positions to 20 top five rankings. ↑
- ✓ From 10 page one rankings to 38 page one rankings. ↑
- ✓ From having 32 rankings not registering within the top 3 pages on Google to having all 50 search terms ranking within the top 3 pages. ↑
- ✓ In addition to the benchmarked search terms we have delivered 350 brand new rankings for search terms that previously had zero visibility. The "long tail" benefit of SEO. ↑
- ✓ On the benchmarked search terms Advance has gone from having a page one visibility score of 20% to 76%. ↑
- ✓ Also we have increased the homepage PageRank of the site from 4 to 5. We have also increased in the inner page ranking of 10 pages within the Advance site. ↑
- ✓ Organic traffic (from SEO based rankings) to the site is up 300%. ↑
- ✓ Bookings from organic traffic are up 200%. ↑

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## Summary

- SEO is a vital part of any effective online marketing strategy.
- As a discipline it is certainly **more technically orientated** than any other area of online marketing.
- Although you can develop a better understanding and appreciation of SEO it's important to **acknowledge where a skills gap exists**. Advanced SEO and sometimes even basic SEO tasks are beyond the abilities of most marketing personnel so you'll **probably need help**.
- It's vital that your site (particularly a site still in design) **is built to be search engine friendly**. Changes during the design phase are easier and less expensive then later.
- Effective SEO does deliver **results and long term value**. It is worth the time and energy invested to get it right.



## Useful Reference Websites & Resources

- [www.searchengineguide.com](http://www.searchengineguide.com)
- [www.searchengineneeds.com](http://www.searchengineneeds.com)
- [www.searchengineinland.com](http://www.searchengineinland.com)
- <http://googleblog.blogspot.com/>
- <http://www.ppchero.com/>

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Questions?

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