# SEO Foundations

## Overview of SEO (Search Engine Optimization)

Process of making improvements on and off website in order to gain more exposure in search engine results.

Goals of search engines:

To deliver relevant and authoritative content.

* Relevance:
  + How its written
  + How its implemented in code
  + How its linked to other websites
* Authoritative:
  + When other sites uses our site, it means that they trust us.
  + And industry leading blog or nonprofit or government agency linking our site has more priority.

Reading search engine result pages (SERPs):

Before optimizing, it would be nice to look at search engine results.

* Paid Listings – Advertisements
  + Google Ads or Microsoft Advertising are allowed to bid on keyword searches and place their ads in search result page.
* Natural results – no advertising dollars.
  + Generally, have a headline, a description and a visible URL.
* Videos, images, news, products, maps, and more.
* Wikipedia, review sites, and structure data sent via code.

How SEO affects your business

SEO strategy provides

* Intent-driven traffic
* Measurable results

It takes lot of time and money to create SEO. But it’s worth the business.

## Keywords: The Foundation of SEO

Planning and researching your SEO keywords

Choosing right keyword depends on

* Relevance
* Search volume
* Competitiveness

Basic questions which help you to choose keywords:

* What products or services do you offer?
* What problems do you solve?

Tools help to find and suggest more and similar keywords: (Relevance)

* Google search console
* Google Trends
* AnswerThePublic
* Moz Keyword Explorer
* And More

Some keywords have more search volume, while others having long description may have less search volume, called as long tail keywords.

Keyword categorization is a process, where group of similar keywords are grouped together. Ex: pink iPhone cases, green iPhone cases falls under same category.

Analyzing SEO keywords and leveraging keyword attributes

Tools that help to explore keywords and collect all the data that we’ll need:

* Moz Keyword Explorer
* Keywords Everywhere
* SpyFu
* Advanced Web Ranking Keyword Suggestions
* Ahrefs Keywords Explorer
* Semrush Keyword Magic

Mapping SEO keyword distribution and continually evaluating

Keyword Distribution – The process of assigning keywords to specific pages on your website.

* List out existing content pages.
* Match keywords to pages.
* Identify where new content is needed.

Keyword research, mapping, and evaluation is an ongoing process. The steps have to be taken few times a year to align with the time.

You need to

* Measure and adapt
* Use paid search to evaluate keywords

## Content Optimization for SEO: How Search Engines and People View Webpages

Outlining content optimization

Content Optimization is the process of continually improving the quality and relevancy of the words, pictures, and everything else that shows up on your pages.

Both people and search engines expect clarity and quality from your webpages.

Optimizing site structure

* Designing neat structure matters. It helps search engines to go through our structured site.
* Having dead links on the site is not good.
* There is no “right” structure that works for everyone

Optimizing on-page elements

On-page optimization is the process of fine-tuning relevance of a page for a certain keyword or search term.

For example,

* URL: instead of using *tour\_detail\_backpack.htm* as URL, change the link to *backpacking-tours-in-california.htm*. This is more optimized with reasonable keyword in more descriptive way.
* Title: more descriptive title is important. Instead of *A little about us …*, change it to *Backpacking tours in California – Explore California*. A short, descriptive and targeted keyword.
* Description: another meta tag which is suggested to provide is description of the pages. It is largely ignored by major search engines; however, it can improve search engine results clickthrough rate. It is shown under the title of the page, in search results.
* Keywords: another meta tag which was used provide relevant search words. It is now ignored by most of the search engines.
* H1 tags: These are observed by search engines. So let it be clearer and more descriptive. Instead of *Explore California*, use *Backpacking Tours in California provided by Backpack Cali*.
* Images: We can’t do anything much for images as search engines looks it as some colored dots. But we can change the name of the image and alt in more descriptive ways. src: from *backpack\_main* to *backpacking-tours-in-california* and alt: from *Backpack cali* to *Backpaging Tours in California by Backpack cali.*

Best practice is to use readable text surrounding non-text elements to describe what it’s about. For ex, videos, slideshows, carousels, audio or video content. Search engines analyze the text close to non-text elements and make correlation between them.

Test code using Google Rich Results Test or Schema Markup Validator.

## Content Optimization: Technical SEO

Interpreting the code behind webpages for SEO