

Better Marketing



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SEO in 2025 Is Different — How to Rank a New Website

My step-by-step checklist + case study.



Victoria Kurichenko

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7 min read · Mar 9, 2025

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146

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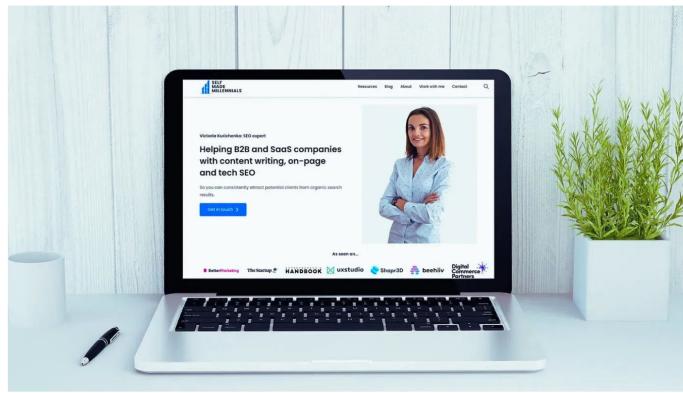


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Did you know that **96.55% of web pages get zero traffic from Google?**

1 · Top highlight

According to Ahrefs, the vast majority of websites never see a single visitor from search results.

3

What does that tell us?

- Most website owners don't really know how to do SEO properly – especially when starting from scratch.

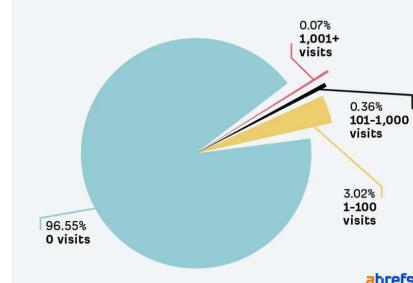
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- A small percentage of creators dominate Google's search results, while a vast amount of content is never seen.

1

That's exactly what Tim Soulo, CMO at Ahrefs, pointed out in his LinkedIn post.

96.55% of web pages get zero traffic from Google
Based on Ahrefs' study of 14 billion pages



Tim Soulo · 1st
CMO @ Ahrefs / \$100M+ ARR bootstrapped...
4mo · 13

"96.55% of web pages get 0 traffic from Google."
(based on Ahrefs research)

This says two things:

1. The sheer amount of competition you need to deal with to be in the other 3.45%.
2. How many work hours are wasted for nothing.

Yes... I know what you're going to say:

"But Tim, not every page is supposed to get traffic from Google!"

Well... Yes... But...

Google & Bing account for 70.62% of all referral traffic in the internet; with almost 4% referred by the likes of Yahoo & DDG (according to a recent research by Rand Fishkin).

So if it isn't search, then what? 🤔

Social platforms like this one don't like to send clicks elsewhere. You'll have much more success posting your content natively.

You might also argue that users can also navigate within your website to discover those "non-search" pages. Well, let's be real, your typical user session isn't really that long.

A screenshot from LinkedIn.

And if you've ever spent time and effort creating content only to get *zero* traffic, you know how frustrating that feels.

Your boss (or you) wants results.

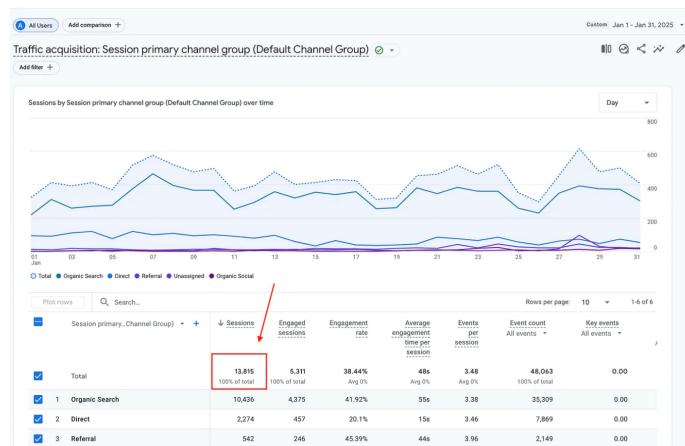
Mistakes are costly.

I get it.

I've been in the SEO game for years. First, helping B2B and SaaS companies grow their organic traffic, and now, as a solopreneur building my own online business.

I grew my website to 10,000+ monthly visits with just roughly 90 indexed pages, all while treating it as a side project.

Q 1



My website's traffic in January 2025. Source: GA.

In this article, I'll explain [how to do SEO for a new website](#) with actual steps and strategies.

You can also check my SEO ebook, "[How to Hit the Google Front Page](#)," for my step-by-step SEO content creation process.

I'll also show you exactly what worked for me and what I focus on now.

If you're launching a new website or just want to understand SEO finally, this guide is for you.

Let's get straight into it with this checklist. This is the *exact* process I followed to grow [my website](#):

1. Pick a domain name
2. Pick a hosting provider
3. Choose a content management platform (like WordPress)
4. Install SEO plugins
5. Plan a website structure
6. Set up Google Analytics and Google Search Console
7. Know your competitors and what works for them
8. Conduct keyword research to find suitable keywords
9. Create a content writing plan
10. Establish credibility

Q 1

11. Regularly publish optimized content
 12. Track the indexability of your website pages
 13. Collect and fix issues, if any
- Q 1
14. Start tracking your overall website performance
 15. Continue creating and publishing optimized content

In fact, I'm still doing step 15, consistently publishing and updating content, and it's paying off.

Despite multiple Google algorithm updates, my site keeps growing because I started with a solid SEO foundation from day one and have been sticking with it ever since.

Now, I know you might be wondering: "*How do I actually implement all these SEO strategies for my new website?*"

I'll walk you through the most important ones in detail.

Pick a hosting provider

Every website needs a home, and web hosting is where it all starts.

Google has made it clear: **page loading speed matters for rankings**. A slow website can hurt your chances of showing up in search results.

There are tons of hosting options out there.

Take Bluehost, for example.

They claim to be great for WordPress, but in my experience, their slow server response times made my site sluggish.

Q 1

A few years ago, I switched to Cloudways, and I haven't looked back. Their support team has also saved me more than once, like when I accidentally locked myself out of my site with a redirect loop!



Pick a content management system

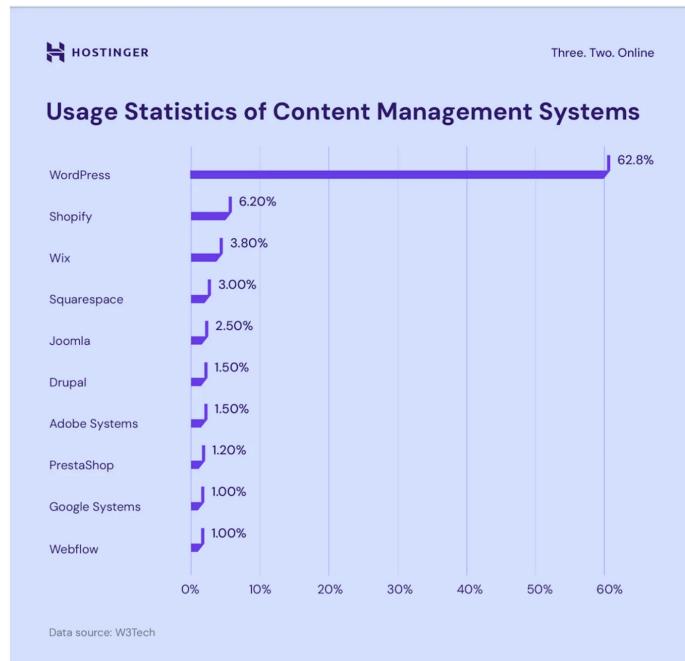
Here are some popular content management systems:

- **WordPress** —for blogging
- **Ghost** — simple, no-code setup
- **Wix** — drag-and-drop website builder
- **Shopify** — suitable for ecommerce
- **beehiiv** — great for combining a website with a newsletter

I've been using WordPress since 2021 because it's easy to tweak the code, optimize for search engines, and customize almost everything.

According to [W3techs](#), "*WordPress is used by 61.7% of all the websites whose content management system we know. This is 43.4% of all websites.*"

Here's a great chart from Hostinger that breaks it down visually. As you can see, WordPress is way ahead of the competition.



Usage statistics by content management systems. Source: Hostinger.

Use SEO plugins

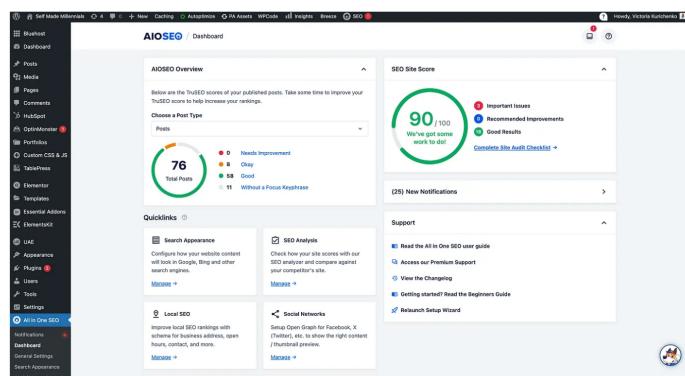
No matter what platform you use for your website, you'll need to get the SEO basics in place, including which pages are indexed and aren't, how your URLs are structured, and so on.

An SEO plugin makes this easy for WordPress users. The two most popular options are:

- All-in-One SEO (AIOSEO)
- Yoast SEO

I use AIOSEO's paid version mainly for automated schema markup. But it also has a site health checker, sitemap updates, and robots.txt controls.

I also use AIOSEO to optimize every page and blog post. Of course, I use other tools, too, but having a solid SEO plugin in place makes it easier.



All-in-One SEO plugin on my website.

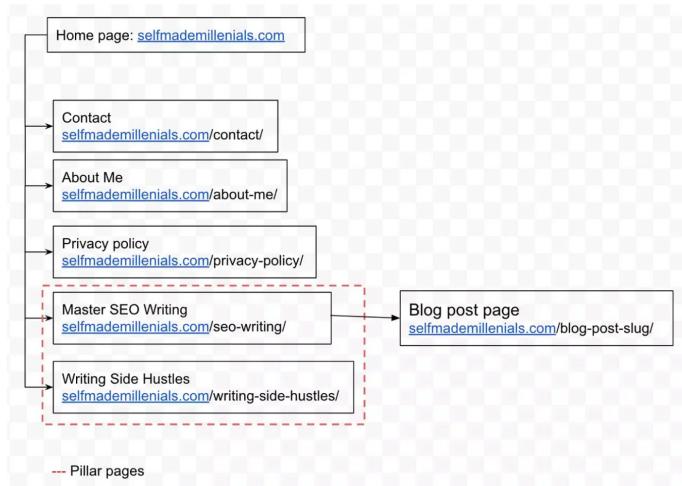
Come up with a website structure

Here's how I organized mine:

- A tree-like format with clear categories

- Blog posts at the first nesting level

A clear structure makes your content easier to find and improves your chances of ranking higher in search results.



An example of my website's URL structure.

Don't skip keyword research

Pick the right keywords, and your website may rank well for your target keywords.

Pick the wrong keywords (or not at all), and your site might never get noticed.

This is the simple truth website owners should remember.

If you're just starting out, focus on keywords that:

- Have a decent search volume
- Within your site's ranking potential
- Have business value

For a detailed, step-by-step guide on keyword research and SEO, you can [preorder the 4th edition of my SEO book](#). More details [here](#).

Put together a content writing plan

Keyword research isn't just about search volume. It's about creating a strategy that aligns with your business goals.

For example, my [Q1 2025 content plan](#) focuses on monetizable topics. Every keyword has a purpose.

If you're serious about growing your blog, I recommend choosing topics that align with your business goals.

Month	Keyword	Category	Task	Business value
January	AI marketing tools	SEO tools	▼ Write	affiliate commissions
January	SEO tools (page + cluster)	SEO tools	▼ Write	affiliate commissions
January	Best newsletter platforms	Creator tools	▼ Write	affiliate commissions
January	Creator tools (page update + cluster)	Creator tools	▼ Update	affiliate commissions
February	Solidstack alternatives	Creator tools	▼ Update	affiliate commissions
February	Content marketing tools for SEO	SEO tools	▼ Update	to attract new audience to my newsletter and sell my services
February	How to grow a blog (article + cluster)	SEO tools	▼ Update	ranking 10th, want to improve
February	Segment review	SEO tools	▼ Update	affiliate commissions
February	SEO books	SEO tools	▼ Update	sell my SEO book
February	Medium writing guide	Medium writing	▼ Update	to attract new audience to my newsletter and sell my services
February	SEO tools for small businesses	SEO tools	▼ Update	affiliate commissions
March	Best keyword research tools	SEO tools	▼ Write	expert blog post + sell my ebooks
March	Best technical seo tools	SEO tools	▼ Write	affiliate commissions
March	Writing side hustles	SEO tools	▼ Write	to attract new audience to my newsletter and sell my services
April	SEO courses	SEO tools	▼ Update	affiliate commissions

April	AI tool for content repurposing	Creator tools	Write	affiliate commissions
April	Memberful alternatives	Creator tools	Write	affiliate commissions
April	beehiv alternatives	Creator tools	Write	affiliate commissions
May	seo for a new website	How to grow a blog	Update	expert blog post + sell my products and services
May	online writing tools	Creator tools	Update	affiliate commissions
May	teachable review	Creator tools	Update	affiliate commissions
May	hire seo consultant	Creator tools	Update	sell my products and services

My content plan.

The most essential part of doing SEO in 2025 (probably)

It's about establishing credibility!

SEO and branding go hand in hand nowadays.

Google prioritizes content from trustworthy sources, which means building your personal or business brand is crucial. Q 1

I've built my brand across multiple platforms:

- Medium — 350+ articles, 20k+ followers
- LinkedIn — 2,500+ followers
- Reddit — Active participation Q 1

Authority builds trust, and trust improves SEO.

That's why every blog post I write includes an "About me" section, my personal stories, and professional experiences to make my content unique and helpful. Q 1

Publish optimized content

When it comes to SEO for a new website, three things matter:

1. Fixing technical issues
2. Building backlinks
3. Creating optimized content

If you're short on time, focus on content first.

Even authoritative sites won't rank without well-written and optimized content.

I share my exact SEO writing process in my [ebook](#), but the key takeaway is: Make your content better and more engaging than what's already ranking.

My optimization checklist includes:

- Inserting target keywords in the H1 and meta title
- Using keywords naturally in the first 300 words
- Structuring content with clear H2/H3 headings
- Adding relevant images with optimized alt text
- Keeping URLs clean and keyword-rich
- Internally linking to high-authority pages

This isn't about stuffing keywords.

It's about creating content that provides real value while following SEO best practices.

Don't forget tracking

You won't know how well your website is doing unless you track its progress.

Here's how I do it:

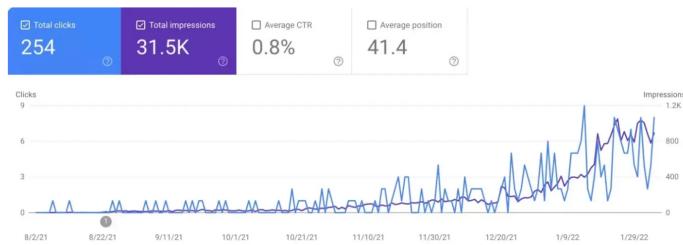
- [Google Search Console](#) — Tracks clicks, impressions, and ranking keywords
- [Semrush](#) — Monitors rankings and technical SEO
- [Ubersuggest](#) — Budget-friendly keyword research and tracking
- [Search Atlas](#) — AI-powered SEO insights, more affordable than Semrush and Ahrefs

How do I know this strategy works?

I'm not a fan of empty talk, so let me show you real results.

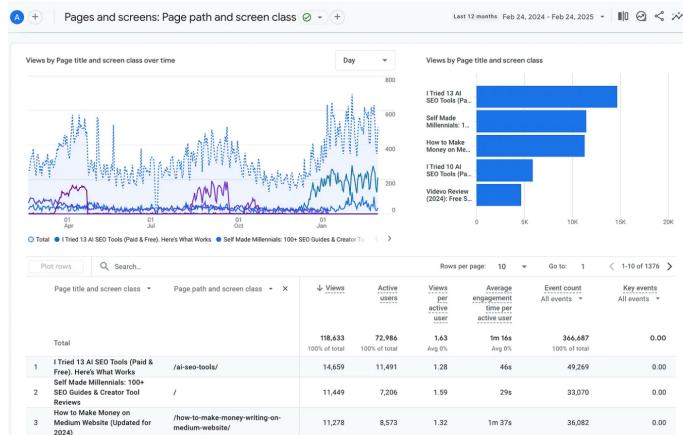
Here's how my website performed in the first six months.

Back when I had a full-time job and could only work on it during weekends.



Fast forward five years, still treating it as a side hustle and sticking to these same principles...

Now, my blog pulls in four figures a month from affiliates and partnerships.



My website performance in 2024 and the top-performing pages.

That's the impact of consistently following white-hat SEO practices and providing my audience with genuinely helpful content.

Even in the age of AI, I remain a firm believer that the best content can only be created by people.

Q 2

[Subscribe to my newsletter](#) and get a behind-the-scenes look at my journey as a solopreneur, SEO pro, and thriving content creator! 🚀

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SEO Business Technology Entrepreneurship Side Hustle

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Responses (146)



Fred Moras

What are your thoughts?



The Unseen Stitch

Mar 9



I firmly believe SEO isn't just about keywords; it's about quality content.

SEO success today is about building trust through valuable, engaging content.

Without credibility, even great keywords can't help your site rank.

Focus on creating unique... [more](#)



215

4 replies

Reply



Dave Reeder

Mar 9



Great article thanks, the piece about brand building is great, featuring your bio etc. By the way, the Ubersuggest link is dead.



156

4 replies

Reply



Rajesh Poovathum Kadavil

Mar 9



This is a fantastic SEO guide! Clear steps and practical tips make it super helpful. Thanks.



152

2 replies

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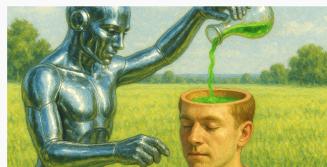
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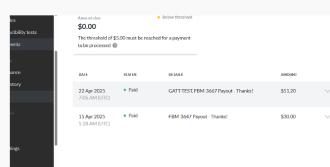
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