3 FUNDAMENTALS OF SEO – BROAD OVERVIEW

If you follow the possible effective SEO strategies shared below, you will be able to experience first-hand knowledge about SEO works. As they say, SEO is not a one-day affair; thus, achieving the best results requires a lot of time and effort.

I'm breaking down Off-Page SEO into 3 easy-to-digest posts, backed by experience and data from top SEOs.

1. Understanding Keyword Research.

2. Understanding On Page + Technical SEO.

3. Understanding Off-Page SEO tactics and tools.

Keyword Research

Keyword research is the first step in the Search Engine Optimization process. It incorporates the determination of the targeted visitors' terms when searching for business or niche content. Because this where SEO begins from, as said SEO is (search engine optimization) we optimize keywords to appear in SERPs.

Keyword research is the process of finding and analyzing words and phrases that people enter into search engines to find content, products, or services like yours. It's the foundation of SEO, and it's crucial to get it right.

Why is keyword research important? Well, without it, you're essentially guessing what words and phrases your target audience is using to search for content like yours. And if you're not using the right keywords, you're missing out on potential traffic, engagement, and conversions.

Finding Keyword Ideas

So, how do you find keyword ideas? Here are a few strategies to get you started:

- **Brainstorming keywords**: Take 10-15 minutes to write down as many keywords related to your business or niche as you can think of. Don't worry too much about whether they're good or bad – just focus on getting as many ideas down as possible.

- **Using online tools**: Google Keyword Planner, Ubersuggest, and other tools can help you generate keyword ideas based on search volume, competition, and other metrics.

- **Analyzing competitors**: Take a look at your competitors' websites, social media, and content to see what keywords they're targeting.

How to Find Keyword Ideas

Here are a few more strategies for finding keyword ideas:

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- **Google Autocomplete**: Start typing a keyword into Google, and see what autocomplete suggestions come up. These can be great ideas for long-tail keywords!

- **Google Trends**: See what keywords are currently trending on Google, and how they relate to your business or niche.

- **Social media listening**: Pay attention to what people are talking about on social media, and what keywords they're using.

- **Customer feedback and surveys**: Ask your customers what they're searching for, and what keywords they use to find content like yours.

- **Google Keyword Planner**: Use the Keyword Planner to generate ideas for keywords related to your business or niche.

- **Ubersuggest**: A free tool that provides keyword suggestions based on Google Autocomplete data.

- **AnswerThePublic**: A tool that provides keyword suggestions based on questions people are asking online.

- **Quora**: A question-and-answer site where you can find keywords related to your niche.

- **Reddit**: A social news site where you can find keywords related to your niche.

- **Amazon Best Sellers**: See what products are currently popular on Amazon, and what keywords they're using.

- **eBay**: See what products are currently popular on eBay, and what keywords they're using.

- **Wikipedia**: See what topics are currently popular on Wikipedia, and what keywords they're using.

- **Forums**: Participate in online forums related to your niche, and see what keywords people are using.

- **Blog comments**: Read comments on blogs related to your niche, and see what keywords people are using.

- **Industry reports**: Read industry reports and see what keywords are being used.

- **Google Search Console**: If you have a website, check your Google Search Console account to see what keywords people are using to find your site.

- **Competitor analysis**: Analyze your competitors' websites and see what keywords they're using.

- **Keyword research tools**: Use tools like Ahrefs, SEMrush, Moz, and Long Tail Pro to generate keyword ideas.

- **Brainstorming**: Take some time to brainstorm keywords related to your business or niche.

- **Google Alerts**: Set up Google Alerts to receive notifications when new content is published that includes your target keywords.

- **Industry magazines**: Read industry magazines and see what keywords are being used.

- **Product reviews**: Read product reviews and see what keywords people are using.

Analyzing Keywords

Once you have a list of keyword ideas, it's time to analyze them. Here are a few things to consider:

- **Search volume**: How many people are searching for this keyword each month?

- **Competition**: How many other websites and content creators are targeting this keyword?

- **Keyword intent**: Is this keyword informational (someone's looking for answers), navigational (someone's looking for a specific website), or transactional (someone's looking to buy something)?

How to Analyze Keywords

Here are a few tools and strategies to help you analyze keywords:

- **Keyword research tools**: Ahrefs, SEMrush, Moz, and Google Keyword Planner can all help you analyze keywords and get a sense of their search volume, competition, and opportunity.

- **Keyword metrics**: Look at metrics like search volume, competition, CPC, and keyword difficulty to get a sense of which keywords are worth targeting.

- **Keyword gaps and opportunities**: Identify areas where your competitors are weak, and target those keywords to get ahead.

Targeting Keywords

Once you've analyzed your keywords, it's time to start targeting them. Here are a few strategies to get you started:

- **Create content that targets specific keywords**: Use your keywords in your meta tags, descriptions, headings, and body copy to help search engines understand what your content is about.

- **Optimize meta tags and descriptions**: Make sure your meta tags and descriptions are accurate, descriptive, and include your target keywords.

- **Use long-tail keywords**: Target longer, more specific keywords to reduce competition and increase conversions.

How to Target Keywords

Here are a few more strategies for targeting keywords:

- **Create a keyword strategy**: Decide which keywords you want to target, and how you'll use them in your content.

- **Use keywords in context**: Don't just stuff your content with keywords – use them in a natural, contextual way that makes sense to your audience.

- **Optimize for user intent**: Make sure your content is optimized for the intent behind the keyword – are people looking for information, navigation, or transaction?

Prioritizing Keywords

Not all keywords are created equal. Here are a few strategies for prioritizing keywords:

- **Understand keyword priority and focus**: Decide which keywords are most important to your business or niche, and focus on those first.

- **Create a keyword priority list**: Make a list of your top keywords, and prioritize them based on search volume, competition, and opportunity.

- **Focus on high-priority keywords**: Use your top keywords in your most important content, and optimize them for maximum impact.

How to Prioritize Keywords

Here are a few more strategies for prioritizing keywords:

- **Use keyword research tools**: Use tools like Ahrefs, SEMrush, and Moz to identify priority keywords and get a sense of their search volume and competition.

- **Analyze keyword competition and opportunity**: Look at metrics like CPC, keyword difficulty, and search volume.

- **Long-Tail Keywords**: To build a comprehensive strategy, it is worthwhile to introduce long-tail keywords (phrases that are more detailed and longer). These keywords generally have lower search volumes, but people searching for them are potential buyers, thus more likely to convert.

- **Keyword Placement:** Make keyword phrases flow well into articles; in the headings, title, meta description, and within the body. Do not use keywords excessively because you will end up harming your website.

- **Create a content calendar**: Plan out your content in advance, and make sure you're targeting your priority keywords in each piece.

Keyword Research Tools

There are many keyword research tools available, each with their own strengths and weaknesses. Here are a few popular options:

- **Ahrefs**: A comprehensive tool that offers keyword research, backlink analysis, and content optimization features.

- **SEMrush**: A digital marketing tool that offers keyword research, competitor analysis, and technical SEO audits.

- **Moz**: A SEO tool that offers keyword research, link building, and content optimization features.

- **Google Keyword Planner**: A free tool that offers keyword research and planning features, but requires a Google Ads account.

How to Use Keyword Research Tools

Here are a few tips for getting the most out of keyword research tools:

- **Start with broad keywords**: Enter broad keywords related to your business or niche, and see what suggestions the tool provides.

- **Use long-tail keywords**: Target longer, more specific keywords to reduce competition and increase conversions.

- **Analyze metrics**: Look at metrics like search volume, competition, CPC, and keyword difficulty to get a sense of which keywords are worth targeting.

- **Refine your search**: Use filters and refinements to narrow down your search and get more specific results.

Tips and Tricks

Here are a few additional tips and tricks for keyword research:

- **Use keyword research for content ideas**: Use keyword research to generate ideas for blog posts, articles, and other content.

- **Target keywords in meta tags**: Use your target keywords in your meta tags and descriptions to help search engines understand what your content is about.

- **Use keywords in headings and subheadings**: Use your target keywords in headings and subheadings to break up your content and make it more scannable.

- **Don't overdo it**: Don't stuff your content with keywords – use them in a natural, contextual way that makes sense to your audience.

On-Page SEO + Technical SEO

On Page SEO: A Quick Overview

On Page SEO refers to the techniques and strategies used to optimize individual web pages in order to improve their search engine rankings and drive more relevant traffic to the site.

Example:

Let's say you have a website that sells organic dog food. You want to optimize your product page for the keyword "organic dog food". You would use On Page SEO techniques such as writing a meta title and description that includes the keyword, using headings and subheadings that highlight the benefits of your product, and optimizing images and content to make it more search engine friendly.

On-page SEO concerns the tactics applied to a given website page to enhance its rank and traffic acquisition.

Technical SEO: A Quick Overview

"Technical SEO is like a master key that unlocks the full potential of a website, ensuring that search engines can crawl, index, and rank it efficiently, while also providing a seamless user experience."

In other words, technical SEO is the process of optimizing a website's technical aspects to improve its search engine rankings, user experience, and overall performance.

Example:

Think of a website as a luxurious mansion with many rooms (pages). Technical SEO is like ensuring that the mansion's architecture (website structure) is well-designed, the doors (links) are functioning properly, the windows (images) are clear and visible, and the foundation (website speed) is strong. This way, search engines like Google can easily navigate and index the mansion's rooms, and users can enjoy a smooth and comfortable experience while exploring it.

Checklist Covered With an Example Target

Keyword

- **Meta Title**: Write a unique and descriptive meta title for each page that includes the target keyword, keeping it under 60 characters (e.g., "Organic Dog Food | Natural Pet Food | (link unavailable)").

- **Meta Description**: Write a compelling and informative meta description for each page that includes the target keyword, keeping it under 160 characters (e.g., "Get natural and organic dog food at (link unavailable) Our pet food is made with high-quality ingredients and no artificial preservatives.").

- **Header Tags**: Use H1, H2, H3, etc. header tags to structure and organize content, with only one H1 tag per page (e.g., "<h1>Organic Dog Food</h1><h2>Natural Ingredients</h2><h3>No Artificial Preservatives</h3>").

- **Keyword Research**: Conduct thorough keyword research to identify relevant and high-traffic keywords, using tools like Google Keyword Planner, Ahrefs, or SEMrush (e.g., "organic dog food", "natural pet food", "pet food online").

- **Optimize Images**: Optimize images by using descriptive file names and alt tags that include target keywords, and compressing images to reduce file size (e.g., "organic-dog-food.jpg", "alt='Organic Dog Food Image'").

- **Page Speed**: Ensure that your page loads quickly (less than 3 seconds) to improve user experience and search engine rankings, using tools like Google PageSpeed Insights or GTmetrix (e.g., "Optimize images, minify CSS and JavaScript, enable browser caching").

- **Sitemap**: Create and submit a sitemap to help search engines understand your site's structure, using tools like Sitemap Generator or Yoast SEO (e.g., "sitemap.xml", "submit to Google Search Console").

- **Mobile-Friendliness**: Ensure that your site is mobile-friendly and responsive to cater to mobile users, using tools like Google Mobile-Friendly Test or Responsinator (e.g., "responsive design", "mobile-friendly layout").

- **Content Quality**: Create high-quality, engaging, and informative content that adds value to users, using tools like Grammarly or Hemingway Editor (e.g., "well-researched content", "engaging headlines").

- **Content Length**: Ensure that your content is comprehensive and lengthy enough to cover the topic, aiming for at least 500 words per page (e.g., "in-depth guides", "detailed reviews").

- **Keyword Density**: Use keywords naturally and avoid keyword stuffing (1-2% density), using tools like Keyword Density Checker or Ahrefs (e.g., "use keywords in meta tags, headings, and content").

- **Internal Linking**: Use descriptive anchor text for internal linking to help search engines understand your site's structure, using tools like Ahrefs or SEMrush (e.g., "anchor text='Dog Food Recipes'", "link to related content").

- **Outbound Linking**: Use high-quality and relevant outbound links to add credibility to your content, using tools like Ahrefs or Moz (e.g., "link to reputable sources", "cite research studies").

- **Anchor Text**: Use descriptive and varied anchor text for internal and outbound linking, avoiding generic text like "click here" (e.g., "anchor text='Natural Pet Food Benefits'", "anchor text='Pet Food Reviews'").

- **Content Freshness**: Keep content fresh and up-to-date to signal to search engines that your site is active and relevant (e.g., "regularly update blog posts", "refresh product pages").

- **Content Uniqueness**: Ensure that each page has unique and original content to avoid duplication and penalties (e.g., "use unique meta tags", "write unique product descriptions").

- **Content Readability**: Use clear and concise language to improve content readability and user experience (e.g., "use simple sentences", "break up long paragraphs").

- **Content Structure**: Use a logical structure for content to improve readability and search engine understanding (e.g., "use headings and subheadings", "use bullet points and lists").

- **Image Optimization**: Optimize images by compressing them and using descriptive file names and alt tags (e.g., "use image compression tools", "write descriptive alt tags").

- **Internal Linking Structure**: Use a logical internal linking structure to help search engines understand your site's hierarchy (e.g., "use category pages", "use breadcrumb navigation").

- **Outbound Linking Quality**: Ensure that outbound links are high-quality and relevant to add credibility to your content (e.g., "link to reputable sources", "avoid linking to low-quality sites").

- **Social Media Integration**: Integrate social media into your site to improve user engagement and sharing (e.g., "add social media buttons", "embed social media feeds").

- **Schema Markup**: Use schema markup to provide additional context to search engines about your content (e.g., "use schema for reviews", "use schema for events").

- **Local SEO**: Optimize your site for local search by including name, address, and phone number (NAP) consistently across the web (e.g., "use Google My Business", "include NAP on website").

- **Website Architecture**: Use a clear and logical website architecture to help search engines understand your site's structure (e.g., "use categories and subcategories", "use breadcrumb navigation").

- **Page Depth**: Ensure that important pages are within a reasonable depth from the homepage (e.g., "keep important pages within 3 clicks", "use flat site architecture").

- **Content Hierarchy**: Use a clear hierarchy for content to improve readability and search engine understanding (e.g., "use headings and subheadings", "use bullet points and lists").

- **Content Length**: Ensure that content is comprehensive and lengthy enough to cover the topic (e.g., "aim for at least 500 words per page", "use in-depth guides and tutorials").

- **Content Format**: Use a variety of content formats to improve user engagement and sharing (e.g., "use videos and images", "create infographics and podcasts").

- **Optimize Video Titles**: Use target keywords in video titles, e.g., " Organic Dog Food | Natural Pet Food | Pet Food Review".

- **Use Descriptive Image File Names**: Use target keywords in image file names, e.g., "organic-dog-food-image.jpg".

- **Optimize News Article Keywords**: Use target keywords in news article keywords, e.g., "organic dog food, natural pet food, pet food review".

- **Verify Google My Business Listing**: Verify Google My Business listing to improve local search visibility.

- **Establish Expertise**: Create high-quality content that showcases expertise in your industry.

- **Custom 404 Error Page:** Create a custom 404 error page that provides a good user experience and links to important pages on your website.

- **Soft 404 Error:** Avoid soft 404 errors by ensuring that non-existent URLs return a 404 status code and not a 200 status code.

- **No Index Tag:** Use the no index tag to prevent search engines from indexing specific pages or sections of your website.

- **No Follow Tag:** Use the no follow tag to prevent search engines from following specific links on your website.

- **Page Speed Optimization:** Optimize your website's page speed by compressing images, minifying CSS and JavaScript files, and leveraging browser caching.

- **Cumulative Layout Shift (CLS):** Optimize your website's CLS by ensuring that elements on your webpage do not shift unexpectedly, providing a smooth user experience.

- **First Input Delay (FID):** Optimize your website's FID by ensuring that your webpage responds quickly to user input, providing a smooth user experience.

- **Lazy Loading:** Use lazy loading to load content only when it's needed, reducing page load times and improving user experience.

- **Image Compression:** Compress images to reduce file size and improve page load times.

- **CSS and JavaScript Minification:** Minify CSS and JavaScript files to reduce file size and improve page load times.

- **Browser Caching:** Leverage browser caching to store frequently-used resources locally, reducing page load times.

- **Gzip Compression:** Use Gzip compression to reduce file size and improve page load times.

- **Website Security:** Ensure that your website has an SSL certificate and is secure, providing a trust indicator to search engines and users.

- **XML Sitemap:** Create and submit an XML sitemap to help search engines understand your website's structure.

- **Robots.txt File:** Create and optimize your robots.txt file to communicate with search engine crawlers.

- **Canonical URLs:** Use canonical URLs to prevent duplicate content issues and specify the preferred version of a webpage.

- **Meta Tags:** Use meta tags to provide additional context to search engines about your webpage.

- **Structured Data:** Use structured data to provide additional context to search engines about your content, using (link unavailable) vocabulary.

- **URL Structure:** Use descriptive and concise URLs that include target keywords, making it easy for search engines to understand your content.

- **Website Migration:** Plan and execute website migrations carefully, ensuring that SEO considerations are taken into account.

- **Website Redesign:** Plan and execute website redesigns carefully, ensuring that SEO considerations are taken into account.

- **Mobile-First Design:** Design your website with a mobile-first approach, providing a good user experience on mobile devices.

- **Progressive Web App (PWA):** Consider creating a PWA to provide a native app-like experience to users, improving engagement and conversion rates.

- **Search Engine Friendly (SEF) URLs:** Use SEF URLs that include target keywords, making it easy for search engines to understand your content.

- **URL Rewrite:** Use URL rewrite to create clean and descriptive URLs, improving user experience and search engine crawlability.

- **301 Redirects:** A 301 redirect is like a traffic cop, redirecting users and search engines to a new URL while preserving link equity."

- Example: If a website changes its domain name (e.g., from (link unavailable) to (link unavailable)), a 301 redirect ensures that users and search engines are redirected to the new domain while maintaining the original link equity.

- "Canonicalization is like a GPS for search engines, helping them navigate to the correct version of a webpage."

- Example: If a website has multiple URLs for the same content (e.g., (link unavailable) and (link unavailable)), canonicalization helps search engines understand that these URLs point to the same content and should be treated as one.

- "Core Web Vitals are like a website's vital signs, measuring its performance and user experience." Example: LCP (Largest Contentful Paint), FID (First Input Delay), and CLS (Cumulative Layout Shift) are Core Web Vitals that measure a website's loading speed, interactivity, and visual stability, respectively.

Note: Not every site may not necessariliy require each n everything thing from above bullets.

Off-Page SEO

"Off-Page SEO is like a reputation builder for your website, where you earn credibility and trust from other websites and sources, increasing your visibility and search engine rankings." Off-page SEO deals with creating the site's authenticity from the outside by linking and methods of link building.

Example:

Think of a popular restaurant in a city. The restaurant's reputation doesn't just come from the food they serve (on-page SEO), but also from the reviews and ratings they receive from customers on other websites like Yelp, Google Reviews, and TripAdvisor (off-page SEO). These reviews and ratings build the restaurant's reputation and credibility, making it more visible and attractive to potential customers.

In the same way, Off-Page SEO is about building your website's reputation and credibility by acquiring high-quality backlinks from other websites, directories, and sources. This helps search engines like Google understand that your website is a trusted and authoritative source in your industry, increasing your visibility and search engine rankings. Off Page SEO is a time taking process among this all, usually website owners go with link building service packages as it's a continuous process.

Backlinks: Ensure one gets quality backlinks from other sites with a good reputation. Rarely analyzed, backlinks have the attribute of votes of confidence and can benefit rankings.

Off-Page SEO Methods:

- **Guest Blogging:** Write informative articles for other websites in your industry, including a link back to your website.

- Example: Write a guest post for a popular marketing blog, linking back to your website's marketing services page.

- **Leave Comments:** Engage with other websites by leaving thoughtful comments, including a link to your website.

- Example: Comment on a relevant blog post, sharing your expertise and linking back to a related article on your website.

- **Reviews:** Encourage customers to leave reviews on your Google My Business listing or other relevant platforms.

- Example: Ask a satisfied customer to leave a review on your Google My Business listing, including a link to your website.

- **Testimonials:** Offer testimonials for other businesses, including a link back to your website.

- Example: Provide a testimonial for a software tool you use, linking back to your website's services page.

- **Partnerships:** Collaborate with other businesses, including a link to your website on their partner page.

- Example: Partner with a complementary business, linking to each other's websites on a dedicated partner page.

- **Resource Pages:** Create a resource page on your website, linking to other high-quality websites in your industry.

- Example: Create a resource page on your website, linking to other reputable marketing websites.

- **Broken Link Building:** Find broken links on other websites and offer to replace them with a working link to a similar article on your website.

- Example: Find a broken link on a popular blog, offering to replace it with a working link to a similar article on your website.

- **Content Promotion:** Promote your content on social media, including links to your website.

- Example: Share your latest blog post on Twitter, linking back to your website.

- **Influencer Outreach:** Reach out to influencers in your industry, asking them to share your content or link to your website.

- Example: Reach out to a popular influencer in your industry, asking them to share your latest blog post with their followers.

- **Linkable Assets:** Create linkable assets, such as infographics or eBooks, that other websites will want to link to.

- Example: Create an informative infographic, sharing it on your website and encouraging others to link to it.

- **PR and Outreach:** Reach out to journalists and bloggers, offering expert quotes or interviews, including a link to your website.

- Example: Offer expert quotes to a journalist writing an article on a topic related to your industry, linking back to your website.

- **Sponsored Content:** Create sponsored content for other websites, including a link back to your website.

- Example: Create a sponsored article for a popular industry publication, linking back to your website.

- **Web 2.0 Properties:** Create content on Web 2.0 properties, such as Medium or LinkedIn Pulse, linking back to your website.

- Example: Write an article on Medium, linking back to your website's services page.

- **Q&A Sites:** Answer questions on Q&A sites, such as Quora or Yahoo Answers, linking back to your website.

- Example: Answer a question on Quora, linking back to a related article on your website.

- **Podcast Guesting:** Appear as a guest on podcasts, including a link to your website in your bio or during the episode.

- Example: Appear as a guest on a popular marketing podcast, linking back to your website in your bio.

- **Video Content:** Create video content, such as YouTube videos or Vimeo clips, linking back to your website.

- Example: Create a YouTube video, linking back to your website in the video description.

- **Slideshare:** Create presentations on Slideshare, linking back to your website.

- Example: Create a presentation on Slideshare, linking back to your website's services page.

- **Doc Sharing:** Share documents, such as PDFs or eBooks, on document sharing sites, linking back to your website.

- Example: Share an eBook on Docstoc, linking back to your website.

- **Answer Sites:** Answer questions on answer sites, such as (link unavailable) or Blurtit, linking back to your website.

- Example: Answer a question on (link unavailable), linking back to a related article on your website.

- **Curated Content:** Create curated content, such as a list of industry resources, linking back to your website.

- Example: Create a list of industry resources on your website, linking to other reputable websites in your industry.

- **Industry Directories:** List your website in industry directories, such as Crunchbase or AngelList.

- Example: List your website in Crunchbase, including a link to your website.

- **Awards and Recognition:** Participate in awards and recognition programs, including a link to your website.

- **Expert Interviews:** Offer expert interviews to other websites, including a link back to your website.

- Example: Offer an expert interview to a popular industry blog, linking back to your website.

- **Webinars:** Host webinars and offer links to your website in the webinar description or during the presentation.

- Example: Host a webinar on a topic related to your industry, linking back to your website in the webinar description.

- **Online Communities:** Participate in online communities related to your industry, including links to your website in your signature or profile.

- Example: Participate in a Reddit community related to your industry, linking back to your website in your signature.

- **Reviews on Other Sites:** Encourage customers to leave reviews on other sites, such as Yelp or Google Reviews, including a link to your website.

- Example: Encourage customers to leave reviews on Yelp, linking back to your website.

- **Partnership Pages:** Create partnership pages on your website, linking to other businesses you've partnered with.

- Example: Create a partnership page on your website, linking to a complementary business you've partnered with.

- **Linkable Content:** Create linkable content, such as infographics or videos, that other websites will want to link to.

- Example: Create an informative infographic, sharing it on your website and encouraging others to link to it.

- **Resource Pages:** Create resource pages on your website, linking to other high-quality websites in your industry.

- Example: Create a resource page on your website, linking to other reputable marketing websites.

- **Blogger Outreach:** Reach out to bloggers in your industry, asking them to link to your website or content.

- Example: Reach out to a popular blogger in your industry, asking them to link to your latest blog post.