

# 4

# Search Analytics

## Syllabus

*Search Analytics - Internal search, SEO and PPC*

*Performing internal site search analytics, Beginning search engine optimization, Measuring SEO efforts, Analyzing pay per click effectiveness.*

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Tracking and studying searches on your site is a valuable part of site analytics, but many site owners underestimate the benefit of it. Website search analytics can provide advantageous insights into what people are looking for on your site and also what your site looks like in search engine results.

#### 4.1 Types of Searches - Internal Search and External Search

There are two broad categories of search : external search and internal search, both of which offer different information to you as a site owner.

External search relates to the keywords people use to arrive at your site through search engines such as Google.

Internal search is tracking what users input into the search feature on your site. For example, WordPress and Drupal have built-in website search capabilities that you can log through Google Analytics.

### 4.2 SEO

#### 4.2.1 Introduction to Search Marketing

When a keyword is entered into any search engine, instantly one gets results (webpages) that are closely related to or match the search query. For businesses, being right in front of their customers every time they show interest in a related product or service can mean making big money and growing the business.

##### SEO concept

SEO or Search Engine Optimization is the process of optimising a website's visibility on the organic Search Engine Results Pages (SERPs) for a target set of keywords/keyphrases.

The higher the position of a webpage on the organic search results pages, the more "visible" the page will be.

#### 4.2.2 Working of Search Engine

##### Algorithms

Search engines use algorithms to calculate how worthy a page is to a relevant search query. There are hundreds of factors (Google uses over 200 ranking factors) that are used to calculate the authority of a webpage, and PageRank (based on a scale of 0 - 10) is one of them. Google assigns PageRank to every webpage it crawls. When another website links to your website, some of its PageRank is passed on to you. The more sites there are out

there linking to you, the higher your PageRank will be and the more trustworthy your site will look to search engines.

Google's search algorithm is very complex looks for pages that contain high-quality, relevant information about the searcher's query. They determine "quality" by a number of means, but prominent among those is still the number and quality of other websites that link to your page and your site as a whole.

##### Crawling

Search engines use bots or "spiders" to crawl billions of pages across the web by following links they find from billions of pages around the web.

Google determine relevance by "crawling" (or reading) your website's content and evaluating (algorithmically) whether that content is relevant to what the searcher is looking for, mostly based on the keywords it contains.

##### Indexing

Search engines then store the information it collects into its index.

##### Ranking

When a search query is entered, a search engine digs into its index for pages matching the user's search query, then sorts and displays the most relevant results to the user. The order in which the pages are displayed are calculated by search engine algorithms, taking into account hundreds of ranking factors. Each page is then given a ranking score. In order to rank highly on the search engines, your site needs to score higher than all the other sites that are eligible to show up for a relevant search query.

Increasingly, additional elements are being weighed by Google's algorithm to determine where your site will rank, such as :

- How people engage with your site ? (Do they find the information they need and stay on your site, or bounce back to the search page and click on another link ? Or do they just ignore your listing in search results altogether and never click-through ?)
- Your site's loading speed and "mobile friendliness".
- How much unique content you have (versus very "thin" low-value content or duplicate content) ?

There are hundreds of ranking factors Google's algorithm considers in response to searches, and they are constantly updating and refining their process.

#### **4.2.3 Google Major Algorithm Updates : Panda, Penguin, Hummingbird**

Every year, Google changes its algorithms some 500 times, that's 1 - 2 times on average each day. Every once in a while, Google rolls out a major algorithm update, and when they do so, many sites suffer a drop in rankings while many others enjoy a raise in rankings.

##### **Panda (2011)**

Lower the rankings of low-quality sites.

##### **Penguin (2012)**

Decrease rankings of sites that engage in black-hat SEO.

##### **Hummingbird (2013)**

Relevancy and knowledge graph update (Semantic search).

##### **RankBrain (2016)**

Machine learning to improve search result quality.

##### **BERT (2019)**

A revolutionary natural language processing model to better understand the meaning and intent of user search queries.

#### **4.2.4 Black-Hat SEO Techniques**

Black hat SEO techniques are likely to be villains, they are the tactics that may get a site higher SERP rankings, but are unethical and violate search engine guidelines.

Some of the top Black Hat SEO tactics to avoid when boosting your website's visibility.

1. **Keyword stuffing** - Hidden content masked with the use of code but stuffed with keyword jargon so it's only visible to the search engine crawler - may have worked in the past, but search algorithms have gotten smarter. Site owners engaging in this "number one no-no" will be subject to a hefty fine and/or the site may be blocked by search engine authorities.
2. **Meta keyword stuffing** - Unnaturally placing keywords in web page meta tags, page titles, or backlink anchor text - is easy enough for a trained monkey to conduct, but does not positively impact your SEO. In fact, it can turn away search engine crawlers.
3. **Link farming** is the process of gathering a whole slew of unrelated website links that are typically hidden from actual site visitors. Being listed on such a page won't get you traffic - in fact, it potentially puts you at risk of having your site flagged.

**4. Content cloaking** is a lot like electronic bait and switch. Search engine spiders are shown content that doesn't actually appear in the user's browser. This dual path helps sites rank for irrelevant content, and provides unwitting users with results other than that which they expected. A basic example would be providing HTML to search engines while showing images or Flash files to human users - a classic trick of spammers.

**5. Publishing bad content** provides no value to visitors and reflects poorly on you. Scraping or copying content from other sites was once nearly undetectable by search engines, which made it a bit of a rankings boon. Now, Google and other search engines have algorithms in place that not only recognize duplicate content, but instantly down-rank sites for duplication or other low-quality content.

#### **4.2.5 White-Hat SEO Techniques**

White Hat SEO techniques are just heroes, they are the tactics that work within search engines' terms of service to improve a site's Search Engine Results Page (SERP) rankings.

Some of the top White Hat SEO tactics you can use to "play by the rules" to boost your website's presence are,

1. **Quality content** written for the benefit of the reader, not the search engine crawler, is the most crucial element of modern day SEO. It is the best way to be rewarded by search engines and how they rank your site or blog. Always remember that quality content is king!
2. **Content-relevant keywords** based on disciplined research around page content is mandatory. Also, pay attention to **keyword usage**. Stick to one primary keyword and 2 or 3 secondary/supporting keywords.
3. **Keyword-rich page titles and metadata** are also mandatory. It's easy to overlook or underestimate these areas, but optimization is low-hanging fruit for most sites.
4. **Lean code/well-structured markup language** semantically structured markup language, including the use of keyword-rich heading elements on your pages, aid search engines in finding what they're looking for when crawling your site.
5. **Authoritative inbound links** that are gained organically versus paid links have become one of the most important elements in your SEO efforts. Attaining authoritative inbound links takes time and dedication, but the tremendous impact on how you rank in SERPs and increased overall site traffic make it well worth the effort.

6. Simple website navigation generally boosts where your site places in organic search rankings. It also helps visitors find what they need without getting frustrated, which is a win for potential conversions.
7. Fast page loading times is a necessity because, like simple navigation or mobile optimization, responsive sites don't frustrate visitors or encourage bounce. From an SEO standpoint, site speed is a search engine ranking signal. Sites that are slow in responding to visitor requests for whatever reason (large images, image carousels, etc.) generally rank lower in SERPs because the user experience is jeopardized. Be mindful of functionality and features and how they impact load times.

#### 4.2.6 SEO Types - Internal SEO and External SEO

Before your content can rank, it needs links. Google finds your posts and pages best when they're linked to from somewhere on the web. Internal links also connect your content and give Google an idea of the structure of your website. They can establish a hierarchy on your site, allowing you to give the most important pages and posts more link value than other, less valuable, pages. So using the right internal linking strategy can boost your SEO.

##### 4.2.6.1 Concept of Links - Internal and External Links

###### Internal links

Internal Links are hyperlinks that point at (target) the same domain as the domain that the link exists on (source). In layman's terms, an **internal link** is one that points to another page on the same website.

An internal link is any link from one page on your website to another page on your website. Both your users and search engines use links to find content on your website. Your users use links to navigate through your site and to find the content they want to find. Search engines also use links to navigate your site. They won't find a page if there are no links to it.

These type of links are useful for three reasons :

- They allow users to navigate a website.
- They help establish information hierarchy for the given website.
- They help spread link equity (ranking power) around websites.

There are several types of internal links. In addition to links on your homepage, menu, post feed, etc, you can also add links within your content. These are called as those contextual links. Contextual links point your users to interesting and related content.

Moreover, they allow search engines to find out what content on your site is related and to determine the value of that content. The more links an important page receives, the more important it will seem to search engines. Therefore, good internal links are crucial to your SEO.

###### Internal links vs external links

Every website consists of internal and external links. Internal links connect pages and posts on your own website and external links connect your pages to other websites.

###### Importance of links

Google follows links to discover content on websites and to rank this content in the search results. If a post or page gets a lot of links this is a signal to Google that it's an important or high-value article. This counts for internal as well as external links.

Internal linking is something you control as a site owner. With the right internal links, you'll guide your visitors and Google to your most important pages.

###### Relationships between content

Google crawls websites by following links, internal and external, using a bot called Googlebot. This bot arrives at the homepage of a website, starts to render the page and follows the first link. By following links Google can work out the relationship between the various pages, posts and other content. This way Google finds out which pages on your site cover similar subject matter.

###### Link value

In addition to understanding the relationship between content, Google divides link value between all links on a web page. Often, the homepage of a website has the greatest link value because it has the most backlinks. That link value will be shared between all the links found on that homepage. The link value passed to the following page will be divided between the links on that page, and so on.

Therefore, your newest blog posts will get more link value if you link to them from the homepage, instead of only on the category page. And Google will find new posts quicker if they're linked to from the homepage.

When you get the concept that links pass their link value on, you'll understand that more links to a post mean more value. Because Google deems a page that gets lots of valuable links as more important, you'll increase the chance of that page ranking.

**Setting up an internal linking strategy**

It's crucial for your site's SEO to evaluate and improve internal linking strategy on a regular basis. It's one of the ways to **improve the fitness of your website**. By adding the right internal links you make sure Google understands :

- the relevance of pages;
- the relationship between pages;
- and the value of pages.

To set up your internal linking strategy, there are several things to take into account. How you go about it exactly, of course, depends on your site and your goals, but the following steps are a good rule of thumb.

**4.2.7 Advantages SEO****Improve overall user experience on your site**

Having good knowledge on the topic of internal SEO and on-page ranking factors will help you better organize your site structure (arranging different categories according to specific themes) to deliver a great user experience, construct a good internal linking structure for better user navigation, and make your site more engaging, resulting in higher conversion rates.

**Increase offline sales**

Help your customers find you better with local directory listings such as Google Places, Yelp, and Street Directory. 80% of internet consumers in the product awareness stage conduct research online before deciding whether or not to make a purchase.

**Online reputation management**

Protecting your online reputation is getting more and more important these days as more and more consumers search for brand names on search engines instead of just entering the direct url i.e. "brandname.com" and the last thing you want them to see is a bad review of your company ranking above your company website.

**4.2.8 Internal SEO****Internal optimization process**

There are 4 main steps when it comes to internal SEO - Keyword Research, Organizing Site Structure, Constructing Content, and On-Page Optimization.

**Step 1 : Keyword research : competitive market research****Long-tail keywords -**

When starting out, you want to look out for as many long-tail keywords as you can. Long-tail keywords (more words) are not as difficult to rank highly for as generic keywords (fewer words). Long-tail keywords are also more specific to a user search query and are more likely to result in a conversion. Start with a generic theme i.e. "Website Design", if you are a web designer, then expand your list of keywords from there i.e. "Ecommerce Web Design", "Affordable Web Design", etc.

**Researching for new keywords -**

If you're building a brand new site, keyword research should be the first thing you do before filling up your site with content. If you're already running a site, it is also good practice to constantly expand your list of target keywords. Keyword research can help you discover what consumers are actually searching for. When you know what your consumers are looking or asking for, you can better design your content to answer their queries by speaking to them in their language. For example if you know people are searching for the exact keyphrase "How do you make a website", you can create an article titled "How to Make/Create A Your Own Website". You can develop a variety of content ideas just by going through your list of keywords. You need to build a long list of keywords before you start constructing and organizing your articles.

**Example of a list of keywords generated by a web design firm -**

Referencing to the list of keywords (keywords noted down from website contents), a web design firm will have a good idea of which keywords to optimize for and how to structure their website (SEO Siloing).

**Analyzing existing keywords that your site is already ranking for -**

If your site is already up and running for some time, you may want to sign up for **Google Analytics** (if you haven't already) and check which keywords your current visitors have been using to get to your site. These keywords in your analytics report are likely the keywords that you are already ranking well for, so you want to put more focus on them first. Once you've identified these keywords, the next step is to focus your internal optimization efforts on these keywords in the next 3 steps - Organizing site structure, constructing content, and on-page optimization.

**Step 2 : Organizing site structure : SEO siloing (website theming)**

Google and other search engines like Yahoo! give preference to theme-specific sites when deciding which results to show for a relevant user search query. But if you've already built a multi-themed site and want to rank for themed-specific search terms.

**SEO siloing / website theming / content hubs**

Google, Yahoo! favour sites that are theme-specific. Sites with clear structures, relevant high-quality content, and written in clean and neat code (no flash, minimal javascript, use HTML for most of their site) also tend to do very well in the search engines. Therefore it is safe to assume that you do not need to have only one topic on any one site in order to rank well for a theme-specific keyword.

**Siloing - Silo concept in terms of SEO**

A silo is a group of theme-specific subjects or topics in a website.

**1. SEO siloing and its importance in search engine optimization**

The term siloing originated as a way to identify the concept of grouping related information into distinct sections within a website. Much like the chapters in a book, a silo represents a group of themed or subject-specific content on your site. SEO siloing is the process of organizing different groups of content topics into specific categories. Much like a bookstore organizing different genres of books into different sections. In terms of SEO, this organizational structure is very important in order for the search engines to understand the theme and intention of your website and rank your site accordingly. There are two methods of SEO siloing. Physical siloing and virtual siloing.

**2. Physical siloing**

Physical siloing is organizing similar-topic content into similar categories or directories. Much like organizing your computer files into different folders.

**3. Virtual siloing**

Virtual siloing on the other hand, is utilizing internal links to relate subject-specific content to one another. i.e. linking from one blogpost to another, whereby both blogposts exist in different directories or categories.

**Sitemaps**

You also need to create a HTML or XML sitemap and submit it to the search engines. It's recommended to include a HTML sitemap for your visitors to refer to and an XML sitemap to submit to the search engines.

**Step 3 : Constructing content : creating your landing pages**

Landing pages are the pages that your visitors directly land onto when they click on a search result. It is important that your landing pages capture your visitor's attention and lead them to the inner pages of your site. If your landing page doesn't answer the search query or isn't compelling enough and majority of visitors landing on your landing page click the "back" button and go back to the search results, you'd likely see your rankings going down over time.

**There are three steps you should follow in order when constructing your landing pages,**

- 1) Plan your article using your researched keywords.
- 2) Write your article, keeping your keywords in focus.
- 3) Insert your keywords where appropriate. In the title tag, content body, image alt tags, and subheadings, brief summary.

Below figure depicts On-Page SEO Factors

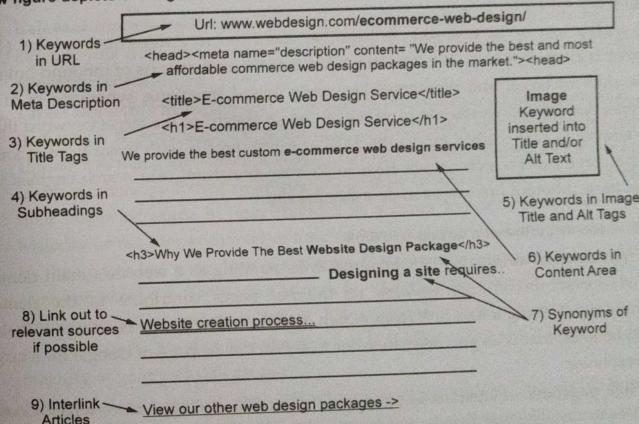


Fig. 4.2.1 On-page SEO process

**4.2.9 External SEO**

External SEO, more commonly known as off-page SEO is basically link building/marketing - Acquiring the most relevant backlinks from as many relevant high authority sites to achieve and maintain high rankings on the SERPs (Search Engine Result

Pages). A relevant backlink is an inbound link from one of the pages (with relevant meta information such as the title, description, etc.) of another similar-topic website.

#### Planning a successful link building campaign

In order to plan and execute a successful link building campaign for your site, you first need to understand that link building is a long and tedious process. One that requires skillfulness and extensive knowledge on the topic of SEO. However if you persevere, stick to white-hat rules of SEO, animal-proof (Panda, Penguin, Hummingbird) your SEO campaigns by staying updated, you will eventually taste the fruit of success.

#### Fundamental off-page SEO concepts

##### A backlink concept

A backlink is an inbound or incoming link (hyperlink) to a particular website, referenced from another website. Search engines rely on links to crawl the web and evaluate the authority and relevance of millions of websites.

##### An anchor text concept

An anchor text is the text you click on that takes you to a referenced url. i.e. (This statement is an anchor text). It is recommended that the anchor texts of inbound links be diverse (mix of target and non-target keywords, brand mentions, synonyms of target keywords, non-related words, etc.) and not all "exact match" to the target keyword that a site is aiming to rank highly for on the SERPs. A link profile with majority of inbound links that have exact-match anchor texts looks very unnatural, and search engines will devalue these inbound links or even de-index the site.

##### Properties and structure of a strong backlink

- High domain authority** - All inbound links pointing to a website's main domain ([www.example.com](http://www.example.com)) as well as its internal pages contribute to the domain authority. Getting a backlink from a high domain authority site is always valuable. Sometimes, that is all you need in order to get on the 1st page of Google for a target keyphrase.
- High pagerank** - PageRank is only one of over 200 ranking factors which Google uses to calculate and decide which page should rank over another. Inbound links pointing specifically to an internal page of a particular website contributes to the PageRank of the specific page. However if a page of say PageRank 6 has two outgoing links, the outgoing PageRank is diluted into half (PageRank 3 each). With everything else equal (i.e. Relevant page title, equal number of backlinks, etc.), a site with a higher PageRank will rank above the site with a lower PageRank.

**3. High trustrank** - Sites that receive a lot of quality relevant inbound links are more trusted than sites that receive lots of inbound links from low-quality, spammy sites. Getting a link directly from a very trusted site such as Entrepreneur.com will increase your site's TrustRank tremendously. Obtaining a second-tier, third-tier, or fourth-tier link will also increase your site's TrustRank but the value starts to drop the further it goes.

**4. Relevant co-citations** - If one is getting inbound links from an external page (Page A) and it is linking to Page B and Page C which are both relevant to site's content topic, this is a strong signal to search engines that your site is relevant to that particular topic.

**5. Relevant page title** - The page title should summarize the page's content topic, or rather, the main content topic should reflect the title of the page. Search engines use the page title as an important ranking factor when it comes to displaying relevant search results to the user.

**6. Relevant content topic** - Similar to the above Relevant Page Title ranking factor, an inbound link from a page with relevant content topic to your site will increase your relevancy score.

**7. Target keywords in anchor text** - The anchor text of a link is another ranking signal that search engines use. The wide-spread belief before the 2012 Google Penguin Update was that a keyword rich anchor text was a strong ranking factor. As a result, many webmasters started over-optimizing their inbound anchor texts by stuffing their target keywords in (exact match), in attempt to manipulate their rankings. Majority of the sites with over-optimized keyword-rich anchor texts who were hit by the update saw a big drop in rankings. Post-Penguin, anchor texts should not be over-optimized. i.e. If you want to rank for "Legal consultation", your anchor texts shouldn't all be "Legal consultation". There should be a good mix of different types of anchor text. One should make sure that it looks natural and doesn't make up the majority of your backlink profile.

**8. Placed in main content area** - The location of the backlink is also an important factor. A footer link isn't worth as much as a sidebar link, and a sidebar link isn't worth as much as an editorial link in the main content section.

**9. Age of page** - How long a page has been in Google's index is also a ranking factor. Creating a website is getting much simpler. There has been an increasing number of fly-by-night sites and many webpages come and go frequently. Therefore the older the page, the more trustworthy it is (provided it is frequently updated).

- 10. Age of backlink** - The older the backlink, the more TrustRank it gets.
- 11. Dofollow link** - Dofollow links are regular links without the rel="nofollow" attribute in the HTML code and they allow PageRank or Link Juice to be passed on to the linked page. While you're in the process of acquiring dofollow links, you also want to obtain nofollow links. Although you won't get any PageRank from a nofollow link, the main reason you also want to include nofollow links in your link profile is that search engines are able crawl a nofollow link and read its anchor text. Even though you don't get any PageRank flow, you'd still be awarded points for relevancy.

#### 4.3 Performing Internal Site Search Analytics

##### Concept of site search analysis

Site search analysis is the detailed examination of visitor search behavior on your website. Those behaviors include keyword and key-phrase searches, filter and facet selections, and search suggestion clicks. This analysis can be done through a dedicated site search analytics dashboard.

With site search analysis, you're able to enhance your website weekly or even daily based on what you continually discover about your users. For example:

- Retail and E-commerce sites can discover the week's most popular items and have them show up in more searches.
- Media websites can uncover popular topics and develop content that resonates better with their users.
- Almost any kind of website can improve design and functionality based on the latest user insights.

##### Steps for performing site search analytics

###### Step 1 : Find out and understand site-search usage

- i. Basics first. Most people hugely underestimate how many visitors use internal search, so the first step is simple : just get that number. The Site Search Overview shows you, by day, what percentage of visitors used site search on your website.
- ii. The site-search usage number for your website might be higher or lower, depending on the type of website it is. Anything more than say 5 % makes internal site search one of the most used navigational aids on your website.

- iii. There are very few places in your website's data where you can read visitors' minds, but with this simple report, you are doing exactly that. This is where the important insights and questions begin to arise,
  - o I didn't realize people really care about new campaigns that much !
  - o We explain cancellations right on the home page, so why is "cancel" the eighth most searched keyword ?
  - o We don't have any content on our site about quality score, and people are really looking for it.
- iv. Demystifies your users and their user intent - Every time your website's visitors type something into the search bar or apply a search filter, they're telling you valuable information about what they want. Understanding the customer is vital to the success of any business or site, and it can be particularly beneficial to marketing efforts such as market segmentation.

###### Step 2 : Look out for where visitors search and what they do next

- i. We all love our home pages and feel that home should be first page to be viewed, but the sad truth is that site visitors increasingly use search engines (and e-mail campaigns and Twitter links and so on) to go directly to internal pages, bypassing the home page.
- ii. That evolution in customer behavior raises this question: what first impression does your website produce ? This question can be answered by looking at the "Pages Searched On" report. This report lists the pages on which visitors used internal site search. This information can tell you how well page content works. Ideally, if the page is working, people shouldn't need to use your internal search.
- iii. The next step is to go to the pages from which searches are initiated, see what people are searching for, and figure out how to improve the content accordingly. This next report, the "Search Navigation" report, for a particular keyword, it shows you the web pages on which people did the internal search AND where they ended up on your website. Put another way, it shows you the top pages viewed after people type a search query. This report can give an in-depth understanding of visitor behavior. The box on the left shows where they start looking, in the middle is the search query they typed in, and the right box shows where they ended up.

###### Step 3 : Do quality check up - Measure site search quality

- i. Some people come to your site, take one look at it, and leave right away. This phenomenon is measured by your web analytics tool using a metric called bounce

rate, which analyzes the number of visits to your site that contain only one page view.

- ii. Bounce rate helps to measure the quality of traffic that each source - Google, e-mail campaigns, Facebook, etc., - sends to your website. It's also useful in understanding the quality of your landing pages : If they stink, people leave right away. If your bounce rate is high, it means something's amiss.
- iii. In Google Analytics, "% Search Exits" is a valuable metric you can use to measure the quality of your site-search results. It measures how many visitors leave the site as soon as they see the results of your internal site search engine of all those who do a search on your website.
- iv. Always look for keywords with a high % Search Exit rate such as numbers two, four, and seven above. This is how to interpret it : 343 visitors searched your website using the keyword "ad" and of those visitors, 71.43 % left the site as soon they saw the search results. Clearly, this is a problem. Now you can tune your internal search engine for these keywords.
- v. Another way to measure search quality is to measure the number of search result pages the visitor views. We are all trained by major search engines to expect the most relevant result on top of the first page, so we can hypothesize that if we provide the most relevant results at the top of the first results page, visitors will click on them and would be happy.
- vi. The report shows the search queries where visitors had to dig deeper into site search results to find what they were looking for. Consider the search query "gears," which has an average of 1.92 results pageviews. Two pages of search results, with an average of 30 to 40 links to look through to find what you're looking for, is too much. It's time to look at what the results are on page one and fix them.

#### Step 4 : Chop the Data - Make Segments

- i. In analytics, "segmentation" is the process of breaking your data into smaller pieces (segments) to understand the behavior of a smaller group of people, or different sources, or different outcomes. For example, you might look at all visitors, or only at visitors from search engines, visitors from e-mail campaigns, and so on.
- ii. If you want truly useful insights from your search data, you should make segments.
- iii. Segmentation helps to better understand customer intent and search behavior, because now it is known what these visitors did before they came to site and what they looked for once they arrived.

- iv. The next report is a more straightforward way to compare site-search usage, exits, refinements, and - this is new - time spent on the site after doing an internal site search.
- v. In most internal search reports, one can compute the increase or "lift" that site search provides. If you run a content site, does your internal search deliver relevant results and encourage visitors to spend time on your site ?

#### Step 5 : Enhances user experience (UX)

As visitors search and navigate your site, they leave a breadcrumb trail indicating how easy (or hard!) it was to find the things they desired. You can use these clues to fine-tune your website, tweaking the design to provide the most **customer-friendly UX**. You can now ensure that navigating your site is straightforward and intuitive for visitors.

#### Step 6 : Keep watch on end results - Measure outcomes

- i. One should use a report called Usage. In this report, click on the Goal Conversion tab to get the Outcomes (conversion) data. (Or an equivalent path in any tool.)
- ii. "Conversion" is a term commonly associated with e-commerce websites, but in web analytics, it denotes any type of measurable positive user interaction with the site.
- iii. If you are running an e-commerce website, you can also measure increased revenue (or lack thereof) for visitors who use site search, or you can measure the average order size. For example, you might find that your internal search engine is so good that it helps people find the products and services they're looking for quickly, which increases conversions and results in higher revenue and order size.

#### 4.4 Beginning Search Engine Optimization

##### Below are the steps for successful SEO

1. Crawl accessibility so engines can read your website.
2. Compelling content that answers the searcher's query.
3. Keyword optimized to attract searchers & engines.
4. Great user experience including a fast load speed and compelling UX.
5. Share-worthy content that earns links, citations, and amplification.
6. Title, URL, & description to draw high CTR in the rankings.
7. Snippet/schema markup to stand out in SERPs.

Above steps leads to beginning of SEO but SEO is an ongoing process that's broadly divided into four facets.

1. Keyword research
2. On-page SEO
3. Link building
4. Technical SEO

#### 1. Keyword research

Keyword research is the process of finding what your customers are searching for, how much traffic those terms can send your way, and how difficult it might be to rank for them.

##### i. Find keywords

Understanding what kinds of things your potential customers are searching for is the first step of the keyword research process. Unless you know this, there's no way you can even begin to create pages that will rank in search engines and attract valuable traffic.

Brainstorming words and phrases that define your industry is the best way to start this process. For an online computer store, these might be things like :

- Computer
- PC
- Mac
- Laptop
- Macbook

You can then use these as 'seed' keywords to find more ideas. Just plug them into a keyword research tools and check for one of the keyword ideas reports.

##### ii. Check traffic potential

Pretty much every keyword research tool will show estimated monthly search volumes for the keywords it finds. Search volume is usually a reasonable way to estimate the relative traffic potential of keywords. Generally speaking, pages targeting high-volume keywords will usually drive more traffic to your website than pages targeting low-volume keywords.

But keyword search volume isn't foolproof. There are instances where ranking #1 for a keyword with 1,000 monthly searches will drive more traffic than ranking #1 for a keyword with 2,000 monthly searches. For example, "submit website to search engines" vs. "seo tips."

#### iii. Check ranking difficulty

Even if a keyword seems relevant to your business and has high traffic potential, it won't always be easy to rank for. Many things factor into the ranking difficulty of a keyword, but the number of relevant, prominent websites linking to the top-ranking pages is arguably the most important. If there are other prominent websites on the subject link to the page, that's a good sign that the information is of high quality.

#### 2. On-page SEO

On-page SEO involves creating the kind of content searchers are looking for, and 'optimizing' it to help search engines better understand what it's about. Most people think this is all about keyword placement. Although that's part of it, it's far from the most important aspect.

##### i. Match search intent

If you fail to create the kind of content that searchers are looking for, and your chances of ranking are slim to none. This is known in the industry as aligning your content with **search intent**. Because Google understands what searchers are looking for better than anyone, the best way to judge search intent is to look for commonalities among the current top-ranking pages for your target keyword. For example, the results for "SEO tips" are all list-style blog posts. Yet the results for "speakers" are all category pages from ecommerce sites.

##### ii. Choose a descriptive URL slug

While setting up the website for SEO success, one should have a logical and descriptive URL structure. For each page or post you publish, you also need to set a descriptive slug - the part at the end of the URL.

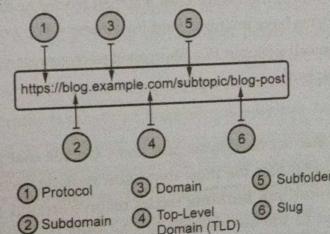


Fig. 4.4.1 URL slug

How best to do this depends on the subfolders before the URL slug. For example, your target keyword is "blue kid shirts." If your URL has no subfolders or generic subfolders like /blog/, just set the slug as your target keyword - yourwebsite.com/blue-kid-shirts/.

If there are 'contextual' subfolders like /kid/ or /shirts/, it's usually best to exclude repeated keywords - yourwebsite.com/kid/shirts/black/

#### iii. Write a compelling title tag.

Title tags are the blue clickable links that show up in the search results. It's one of the few weapons you have to entice searchers to click on your page, so it's important to make it as compelling as possible. The easiest way to do this is to align it with search intent.

For example, if we look at the titles of the top results for "best bluetooth mike," there are a couple of commonalities,

- They all contain the year. This hints that freshness is important to searchers.
- There's a lot of talk about portability. This hints at an important attribute.

Using this knowledge to our advantage, this seems like a pretty good title tag to go for:  
Best Bluetooth Mike (2021) : Top Picks for Portability.

#### iv. Optimize images.

Images can rank in Google Images and send traffic to your website.

##### Steps to optimize images

1. Name them well - Filenames help Google understand the image, so rabbit.png is better than IMG\_24675.png.
2. Use descriptive alt text - Alt text is code that describes an image in words. It's not visible on the page unless the visitor uses a screen reader or the image fails to load. Most website platforms have an input field for alt text when you upload an image.
3. Compress them - Install a plugin like Shortpixel to compress your images on the fly and improve page speed.

#### 3. Link building

Links from other websites act like 'votes' and show Google that people are vouching for your content. They're arguably the most important ranking factor, but getting good ones is not always easy. Most link building tactics revolve around creating link-worthy content, then reaching out to site owners and editors with a compelling reason to add your link to one of their pages. But there are other ways to get links.

#### i. Skyscraper technique

The Skyscraper technique is where you build links by creating even better content than what people are already linking to.

Below is the basic process,

- Find a relevant piece of content with lots of backlinks
- Create something better
- Ask people linking to the original content to link to yours instead

**Content Explorer** is arguably the quickest way to find 'skyscraper' opportunities. Just search for a topic, then filter for pages with plenty of referring domains (linking websites).

#### ii. Pursuing competitors' links

Understanding how competitors are attracting backlinks is the best way to create a link building strategy. If you can find patterns in their link profile, you know which link building tactics are probably the most effective for your website. Look for a page that's similar to yours and has plenty of referring domains (linking websites). If we do this for "SEO basics," we see plenty of pages with lots of backlinks.

#### 4. Technical SEO

Technical SEO is the process of helping search engines like Google to find, understand, and index your pages. There are various tools available that can help to carry out technical SEO.

#### 4.5 Measuring SEO Efforts - SEO KPI

##### 1. Organic traffic

- i. When searchers type a question, word, or string of words into a search engine, they will get a set of results showing the ads and pages related to the search query. Organic traffic is the number of visitors your site generates from people clicking on your webpages when they come up from search engine results.
- ii. Organic search traffic is what you want for your website because it's targeted. The person is looking for something specific, and if you can provide a solution, you'll gain a new subscriber or customer. It's also an effective indicator of the overall progress of your SEO strategy. Improvement in organic search results means your website's visibility through keyword ranking has gone up.

iv. One can use traffic analytics to get a closer look at your traffic, including total visits and traffic sources (e.g., direct, referral, paid, social, and search). We also provide a unique traffic journey view that lets you see where your traffic is coming from and where it goes once it leaves your site (which can help you identify potential competitors).

## 2. Conversion rate

The number of conversions (for a single desired action/goal) divided by the number of unique visits. A conversion rate can be applied to anything, from an email signup to a purchase to account creation. Knowing your conversion rate can help you gauge the Return On Investment (ROI) your website traffic might deliver.

## 3. Click-Through Rate

The Click-Through Rate (CTR) represents the percentage of users who clicked on your website from the SERP. For example, your CTR is 10 % if your site appeared on a results page 100 times in a week, and 10 people clicked on it. Use this metric as a barometer of how effective your title tags and meta descriptions are in attracting users' attention.

Don't be discouraged if you see low numbers in this metric; it just means you need to optimize your meta descriptions, titles, URLs and try to acquire some featured snippets that are relevant to your business. The average click rate for the first position in Google is 28.5 %. So, boosting your keyword ranking can also increase your click-through rate.

## 4. Time on page

How long did people spend on your page ? If you have a 2,000-word blog post that visitors are only spending an average of 10 seconds on, the chances are slim that this content is being consumed (unless they're a mega-speed reader). However, if a URL has a low time on page, that's not necessarily bad either. Consider the intent of the page. For example, it's normal for "Contact Us" pages to have a low average time on page.

## 5. Bounce rate

Your bounce rate represents the percentage of users who visit your site but leave without further interaction. Google Analytics counts a visit as an interaction if the user clicks on more than one page. In short, it measures the quality of a visit.

Different types of websites have different benchmark bounce rates. Tracking your bounce rate can also tell you if your lead magnet, content, or website layout is not appealing to your target market.

## 6. Crawlability

One should always check that primary web pages are crawlable by search engines, and that you are not accidentally blocking Googlebot or Bingbot via your robots.txt file. The website should have an accurate sitemap.xml file in place to help direct crawlers to your primary pages.

## 7. Indexed pages

One should always make sure that the primary web pages are found using Google. Doing a site:yoursite.com OR site:yoursite.com/specific-page, check in Google can help answer this question. If you notice some are missing, check to make sure a meta robots=noindex tag isn't excluding pages that should be indexed and found in search results.

## 8. Page speed

Page speed is an important element that affects most of the other metrics. Page speed is not only an important factor for your website's ranking, but it also impacts your conversion and bounce rates. Google's new page speed industry benchmarks established a big correlation between fast websites and low bounce rates. They found that as page load times go up, the chance of someone leaving your site increases. A website that takes 10 seconds to load means an increase in a bounce rate of around 120 %. Run your website through Google's PageSpeed Insights to find out if your site is fast. A score of 100% is fast. A score of 90 or above but not 100 % is considered good. If you got 50 to 90, that score needs improvement. A score of 50 % or below is considered poor.

## 9. Pages per visit

Was the goal of your page to keep readers engaged and take them to a next step ? If so, then pages per visit can be a valuable engagement metric. If the goal of your page is independent of other pages on your site (Ex : visitor came, got what they needed, then left), then low pages per visit are okay.

## 10. Returning visitors and direct visitors

It'll be way more difficult to improve your rankings if people don't like your site. But, beyond getting information from the two metrics namely, bounce rate and time on site, you should track other KPIs too. Having a high proportion of returning visitors means that people are not getting enough of you. Same goes for direct visits.

If your content sucks, then visitors aren't going to come back to your site. Think of these two metrics as value indicators. These metrics aren't essential, but having a solid

number of returning visitors and direct visitors suggests to Google that you have a memorable site, and you give off the kind of quality indicators that will help you rank.

#### 11. Keyword ranking

A keyword is a term that encompasses anything searched on a search engine. A single word or phrase is considered a keyword if it produces a results page on Google or any other search engine. To see results with this metric, your website and content need to be optimized to rank on top of search engines' results for specific keywords and long-tail keywords.

A simple way to track your Google ranking for keywords related to your business or products is to do a Google search. The results will show you where your website ranks for said competitive keywords. The ultimate goal is to get on the first page and as close to the top of Google as possible, considering **more than 25 % of people** click on the first Google search result.

#### 12. SERP visibility

For every query, Google produces an outcome or a search engine results page (SERP). These outcomes consist of organic results, ads, and **SERP features**. Examples of SERP features include **featured snippets (instant answer)**, **knowledge panels**, and image packs.

Search engine visibility measures how many people see your website in the search results, which could be affected by the authority of the SERP features. But overall, this metric gives you a bird's eye view of your SEO progress.

#### 13. Backlink quantity and quality

Backlinks are still one of the top ranking factors to consider for better SEO. One should focus on improving the quality and quantity of your backlinks and Google will show better search results.

If you aren't getting any new backlinks, or those backlinks are low quality, then you've got a problem with your strategy and it's time to course correct. Tracking your backlinks will give you very important information like :

- **How effective your link building strategies are ?** For example, if you're doing **broken link building** and you get 10 links from 100 emails sent, then you're getting a pretty solid response rate. Keep going !
- **Potential sources for future link building.** Chances are, not every link pointing towards your site is one that you've built yourself. By tracking your links, you'll be able to identify potential opportunities for future links.

- **How cost-effective your strategy is ?** If you spent \$500 to acquire a single link, and that link didn't budge your rankings, then it's time to adjust your strategy towards cheaper link acquisition options.

With **monitor backlinks**, you can quickly keep track of your new backlinks and get a good idea of how strong your links actually are.

#### 14. Website authority over time

Your website's authority score predicts how well a domain will rank. **Domain Authority (DA)** tells you how authoritative your domain is. The more authority your domain has, the easier it'll be to rank, and the more trustworthy you are in the eyes of Google. **Seeing your DA improve** is a strong indicator that your SEO efforts are paying off. Utilize domain authority scores to compare your website to your competitors and modify your SEO strategy to aim for a higher score than them.

New websites will always start with an authority score of 1. Websites that take time to build authority, **backlinks** and gain consistently high organic traffic will mostly be in the 40-to-60 range. This metric will also be slow to move, so don't be discouraged if your efforts do not seem to yield results immediately.

#### 15. Scroll depth

This measures how far visitors scroll down individual webpages. Are visitors reaching your important content ? If not, test different ways of providing the most important content higher up on your page, such as multimedia, contact forms, and so on. Also consider the quality of your content. One should take care of questions like - Are you omitting needless words ? Is it enticing for the visitor to continue down the page ?

#### 16. Mobile traffic

- i. In today's times more people use their mobile devices to search than desktop. To Google, **mobile is king**. A rise in mobile traffic means that you're doing things right in the eyes of Google. It means that your site is responsive, loads quickly and has high engagement metrics. Without these in place, you simply wouldn't rank in mobile search. This is doubly true if you've done a recent redesign or content those **adhere to mobile standards**.
- ii. Also, a rise in mobile traffic will tell you that you're ranking for certain mobile-specific keywords. Mobile rankings differ from desktop rankings, and you could also be picking up traffic from **voice-only mobile searches**.
- iii. Exactly how much traffic you can expect from mobile will depend upon your niche, however, if you're in any of the following fields, then you should expect over 60 % of your traffic to come from mobile users,

- o Beauty and Fitness
- o People and Society
- o Pets and Animals
- o Home and Garden
- o Health

#### 4.6 PPC (Pay - Per - Click)

##### 4.6.1 PPC Concept

Pay-Per-Click (PPC) is an advertising model that lets advertisers place ads on an advertisement platform and pay the host of the platform when their ad is clicked. Essentially, it's a way of buying visits to your site, rather than attempting to "earn" those visits organically.

The goal of the ad is to lead the user who clicks to the advertiser's website or app, where the user can complete a valuable action such as purchasing a product.

Search engine advertising is one of the most popular forms of PPC. It allows advertisers to bid for ad placement in a search engine's sponsored links when someone searches on a keyword that is related to their business offering.

For example, if we bid on the keyword "PPC software," our ad might show up in the very top spot on the Google results page.

Every time our ad is clicked, sending a visitor to our website, we have to pay the search engine a small fee. When PPC is working correctly, the fee is trivial, because the visit is worth more than what you pay for it. In other words, if we pay \$5 for a click, but the click results in a \$500 sale, then we've made a hefty profit.

Advertising services like Google Ads and Microsoft Ads operate with Real-Time Bidding (RTB), where advertising inventory is sold in a private automated auction using real-time data.

There are multiple aspects to be considered while building a winning PPC campaign - from researching and selecting the right keywords, to organizing those keywords into well-organized campaigns and ad groups, to setting up PPC landing pages that are optimized for conversions. Search engines reward advertisers who can create relevant, intelligently targeted pay-per-click campaigns by charging them less for ad clicks. If your ads and landing pages are useful and satisfying to users, Google charges you less per click, leading to higher profits for your business.

##### 4.6.2 Working Model of Paid Search

1. Every time there is an ad spot on a search engine results page (SERP), an auction takes place for the keyword instantaneously. A combination of multiple factors, including bid amount and the quality of the ad, decide the winner who will appear in the top position. These auctions are what keep the gears of PPC moving. They begin when someone searches for something on a search engine.
2. If there are advertisers interested in showing ads related to a user's search query, an auction is triggered based on keywords that are bid on by advertisers. The ads that win the auction then appear on the search engine results page. To get involved in these auctions, advertisers use accounts on platforms like Google Ads to set up their ads and determine where and when they would like those ads to appear. Accounts are split into campaigns for ease of management and reporting of different locations, product types, or other useful categorization.

##### 4.6.3 Factors Affecting PPC

Conducting PPC marketing through Google Ads is particularly valuable because, as the most popular search engine, Google gets massive amounts of traffic and therefore delivers the most impressions and clicks to your ads. How often your PPC ads appear depends on which keywords and match types you select. Below are the factors help to determine how successful your PPC advertising campaign will be,

1. **Keyword relevance** - Crafting relevant PPC keyword lists, tight keyword groups, and proper ad text.
2. **Landing page quality** - Creating optimized landing pages with persuasive, relevant content and a clear call-to-action, tailored to specific search queries.
3. **Quality score** - Quality Score is Google's rating of the quality and relevance of your keywords, landing pages, and PPC campaigns. Advertisers with better quality scores get more ad clicks at lower costs.
4. **Creative** - Enticing ad copy is vital; and if you're advertising on the display network.

##### 4.6.3.1 PPC Keyword Research

1. Keyword research for PPC can be incredibly time-consuming, but it is also incredibly important. Your entire PPC campaign is built around keywords, and the most successful Google Ads advertisers continuously grow and refine their PPC keyword list. If you only do keyword research once, when you create your first

campaign, you are probably missing out on hundreds of thousands of valuable, long-tail, low-cost and highly relevant keywords that could be driving traffic to your site. Keywords lie at the center of PPC, connecting advertisers to users' search queries.

- **Queries** are the actual words that users type into the search box of a search engine to find results.
  - **Keywords**, on the other hand, are what marketers use to target these users by matching their search queries.
2. Keywords work as generalized abstractions of a wide range of search queries prone to irregularities like misspellings.
  3. Depending on the keyword match types they use, advertisers can match search queries with more or less precision.
  4. It is also possible to have **negative keywords**, which will prevent ads from being triggered by search queries containing those keywords, to avoid irrelevant traffic.
  5. An effective PPC keyword list should be :
    - **Relevant** - No one wants to pay for Web traffic that has nothing to do with your business. You want to find targeted keywords that will lead to a higher PPC click-through rate, effective cost per click, and increased profits. That means the keywords you bid on should be closely related to the offerings you sell.
    - **Exhaustive** - Your keyword research should include not only the most popular and frequently searched terms in your niche, but also the long tail of search. Long-tail keywords are more specific and less common, but they add up to account for the majority of search-driven traffic. In addition, they are less competitive, and therefore less expensive.
    - **Expansive** - PPC is iterative. You want to constantly refine and expand your campaigns, and create an environment in which your keyword list is constantly growing and adapting.

#### 4.6.3.2 Managing PPC Campaigns

Once you've created your new campaigns, you'll need to manage them regularly to make sure they continue to be effective. In fact, regular account activity is one of the best predictors of account success. You should be continuously analyzing the performance of your account and making the following adjustments to optimize your campaigns,

- **Add PPC keywords** : Expand the reach of your PPC campaigns by adding keywords that are relevant to your business.

- **Add negative keywords** : Add non-converting terms as negative keywords to improve campaign relevancy and reduce wasted spend.
- **Split ad groups** : Improve Click-Through Rate (CTR) and Quality Score by splitting up your ad groups into smaller, more relevant ad groups, which help you create more targeted ad text and landing pages.
- **Review costly PPC keywords** : Review expensive, under-performing keywords and shut them off if necessary.
- **Refine landing pages** : Modify the content and Calls-To-Action (CTAs) of your landing pages to align with individual search queries in order to boost conversion rates. Don't send all your traffic to the same page.

#### 4.6.3.3 Ads

1. Along with keywords, advertisers need to prepare ads in their campaigns. These are combined together within ad groups that target shared sets of keywords and are organized by common themes. Ads are what the users will see if the auction is won, so they're essential to get right.
2. They typically contain headlines, description lines, and a URL. On a SERP, they can show up on top of the results or at the bottom of the page. It's good practice to test different versions of ad copy to see what performs best.
3. Services like Google Ads and Microsoft Ads provide features called ad extensions that enhance the appearance of ads.
4. Examples include sitelink extensions, which populate an ad with more links to different pages on a site, and call extensions, which add a phone number to the ad during business hours.
5. Ad extensions are great as they increase the visibility of ads by making them more engaging to users while communicating more information.

#### 4.6.3.4 Budgets & Bids

1. To participate in the auction, advertisers need to decide how much they're willing to spend on a given keyword. This is done using budgets at a campaign level and bids at the ad group or keyword level. Budgets are set at the campaign level and can be exceeded daily, but will not be overspent monthly.
2. Budgets should be set according to the overall account strategy, but bids are a more precise way of controlling expenses. All ad groups must have bids, but keyword-level bids override ad group level bids.

3. Most of the advertisers use automated bidding strategies. These allow advertisers to set a specific goal for their campaigns and then have the advertising platform determine the most appropriate bid for each auction.
4. Bid strategies can be applied to individual campaigns or a portfolio of multiple campaigns. Due to the RTB system, the actual amount paid by the advertiser is dependent on competitor activity and ad rank, not just the maximum bid.

#### 4.6.3.5 Ad Rank

1. There's more to winning the auction than having the highest bid. Search engines look at other factors to determine which ads should be at the top and most valuable spot on the SERP.
2. Search engines have their own particular ways of factoring in other elements to determine ad rank.

Google, for example, considers,

- o Bid amount.
  - o Ad relevance and quality.
  - o The context of the search (such as the user's device and time of day).
  - o Format impact (e.g., whether it includes extensions that enhance the format of the ad).
3. Quality Score is a metric that determines ad relevance. The components of Quality Score are,
    - o Historical Click-Through Rate (CTR).
    - o The relevance of the keyword to the ad.
    - o The relevance of the keyword and ad to the search query.
    - o Landing page quality.
  4. Ad relevance is absolutely essential; the higher the quality score is, the lower the CPC will be. Search engines penalize advertisers who bid on keywords with low Quality Scores by rarely showing their ads, even if they have high bids. Therefore, it's very important to have an engaging and relevant ad copy that includes high-volume keywords. But landing page quality shouldn't be overlooked either; ads will show less often when they point to sites with poor user experience. The web page must be relevant to the user, load quickly, and provide an overall smooth user experience.

#### 4.6.3.6 Targeting

1. Choosing the right keywords is what allows advertisers to show ads to relevant audiences. But there are other targeting options available to optimize campaigns, including,
  - o Device targeting.
  - o Location targeting.
  - o Day and time targeting.
  - o Demographic targeting.
2. This way, advertisers can target users on mobile in the evening, or users under 18 years and within a certain radius of a particular location, to optimize their ads' performance. These are valuable because different variations of ad copy, for example, might perform better for one group of users than for another.
3. Using remarketing tools that allow for more specific ad copy messaging and adjusted budgets, it can also be possible to target or exclude past visitors to a website who do follow-up searches.
4. Bids can be automatically adjusted for keywords based on targeting options, giving advertisers more control over traffic and spend by bidding when customers are more valuable to the business.

#### 4.6.3.7 Conversions

1. Conversions are the actions that advertisers actually want users to complete after clicking on their ad and depend on the type of business being advertised. Common examples of conversions are,
  - o Purchasing a service.
  - o Signing up for a newsletter.
  - o Placing a phone call.
  - o And more.
2. It is vital to track conversions to know whether a PPC campaign is doing well and how many conversions can be attributed to paid search rather than other marketing channels.
3. Platforms like Google Ads can track conversions using a snippet of code placed into the source code of the conversion page (which is reached after conversion, like a thank you page) to collect conversion data.

4. Conversion tracking can be tricky because conversion paths also tend to be more complicated than a simple click on an ad and a direct purchase. They often include multiple searches and website visits or can lead to an email, phone call, or in-store visit.

#### 4.6.4 Analyzing and Measuring PPC Effectiveness

##### 1. Measuring sales lift.

Most PPC campaigns tend to ladder up to the goal of driving more sales, whether those sales come through ecommerce purchases, in-store sales, or leads that will eventually result in sales. The starting points may be different but the goal is often the same. If your PPC campaign is designed to increase sales then the most important KPIs that you can track are the ones that will ultimately help you to track whether PPC is impacting sales.

i. **Measuring sales lift for ecommerce** - Measuring sales lift is, reasonably easiest for ecommerce companies as they have the benefit of tracking purchase data when it occurs. For these companies, having tracking in place to measure sales (along with the additional purchase data) is a fundamental KPI.

ii. **Measuring sales lift for in-store purchases** - Measuring in-store purchases can be a bit trickier but there are ways that advertisers can make some inferences around in-store sales. One way to do this is by using first-party data to connect in-store transactions back to digital advertising campaigns. Another way to do this is by offering folks to order in advance, or by offering coupons to use when they come into the store. In the absence of the ability to match back transaction data, qualified advertisers can measure store visits metric to estimate the foot traffic driven through their campaigns. Tracking the number of folks who use the location extension to get directions could be another way to measure the value of campaigns.

iii. **Measuring sales lift for lead generation** - Measuring sales lift for lead gen campaigns is all about tracking the full customer journey. For most lead gen companies, lead volume and cost per lead are important KPIs to track but that's only the tip of the iceberg as not all leads are created equal. Therefore, it is also important to track marketing qualified leads, sales qualified leads, and the pipeline all the way through to sales. Measuring the funnel conversion rates of leads helps advertisers to understand which channels, campaigns, and targeting options are driving the most valuable leads that are most likely to result in sales.

- iv. **Measuring sales lift through marketing mix modeling** - If you don't have a clear line of visibility from clicks to sales, and there's no way for you to track all the way from the first interaction to the close, marketing mix modeling may be for you. v. With marketing mix modeling, advertisers aim to monitor trends by looking at performance baseline and then monitoring performance against the baseline after certain marketing efforts have begun.

##### 2. Wasted spend

- The last thing you want to do when running a PPC analysis is waste money. When analyzing your PPC campaign, you'll want to look for areas where you might be wasting money on your campaign.
- When you analyze your campaign, look at your wasted spend ad metric. This will tell you where you're wasting money. For instance, you can see your wasted ad spend in your analysis if the ads you're running are receiving little engagement.
- This is a key metric to measure because it allows you to optimize areas of your account to spend your money more wisely. You can refine your keyword selection or optimize the time of day your ad runs to improve your campaign's performance.

##### 3. Quality score

- Your quality score is one of the most important metrics for your PPC campaign. If you've ever searched for information on how PPC works, you know that quality score is an important part of the PPC process.
- Quality score is the score Google gives on your ad to determine your ranking. Google wants to provide searchers with the most relevant information for their search queries. If you want to get good ad placement, you must create an ad that is relevant to the search query.
- Google bases your quality score on factors like relevancy, ad copy, and keyword selection. This metric, is the best way to improve your quality score is to create relevant ad copy. Once you have keywords selected, you need to ensure that your ad copy is relevant to those keywords. When you conduct an analysis for your PPC strategy, focus on monitoring your quality score and trying to improve it to gain a better ranking.

##### 4. Impression share

- Another great metric to monitor is your impression share. Impression share is how often your ads are triggered by relevant search queries. This is an important metric

to monitor because it tells you how often your audience searches a relevant query that triggers your ad to appear in the search results.

- ii. If you have a low impression share, your ad isn't appearing in many relevant search results. People aren't searching for terms attached to your ad, which means they aren't seeing your ad. It will negatively impact your PPC campaign.
- iii. To ensure you're driving success with your PPC campaign, continue to monitor your impression share to see if your ad is continually triggered in the search results.

#### 5. Clickthrough rate (CTR)

- i. Clickthrough Rate (CTR) is another valuable metric to monitor with your PPC analysis. This is one of the most important metrics for PPC. Your CTR tells you how often people click on your ad to engage with it.
- ii. You want to have people clicking on your ad and engaging with the content on your landing page. Having a high impression share isn't enough if searchers aren't actively clicking on your ad. You won't have a high Return On Investment (ROI) if you don't have people clicking on your ad.
- iii. Monitoring your CTR helps you see if you're remaining in competition with your competitors. You can see how many clicks you're getting to see if you're keeping up engagement on your ads. It's also a great way to see how your ROI compares to the clicks on your ad to see if your ad copy is relevant and helps drive conversions.

#### 6. Ad text optimization

- i. Your ad's text is a vital part of your campaign. It can determine whether your audience finds your ad interesting and engages with it or if they bounce back to the search results to look for a new business.
- ii. When you conduct your PPC analysis, ensure that you monitor your ad text. See how your ad text currently affects your CTR, quality score, and ROI. By monitoring your text to see how it drives results for your campaign, you will better understand your campaign's performance and can improve it to drive better results.

#### 7. Long-tail keyword optimization

Many AdWords advertisers focus predominantly on competitive, costly head terms, and neglect to pay sufficient attention to long-tail keywords that can yield strong conversions at lower costs if targeted effectively.

#### 8. Account activity

The more frequently you log in and actively manage, analyze, and optimize your account, the greater potential returns you'll experience. This metric provides valuable insight into how much time other businesses are spending managing their paid search campaigns.

#### 9. Landing page optimization

Strong ads alone are not enough to maximize PPC ROI. One should have enough landing pages and that too the pages should be optimized to maximize conversions. Since landing pages are where the real magic happens or doesn't, this is a crucial step in your PPC analysis.

#### 10. Mobile advertising

With mobile searches expected to surpass desktop searches by 2015 if not earlier, it is imperative that you identify and leverage opportunities for improvement in your mobile PPC ads. The text ads should be optimized for mobile. Sitelinks, call extensions, location extensions and other mobile paid search best practices should be used efficiently.

#### 11. PPC best practices

Even if you think you're doing everything right, there are always chances for improvement. By using the AdWords Performance Grader, you can see whether you're adhering to general PPC best practices - such as leverage modified broad match and properly setting up conversion tracking - and how your paid search management stacks up against your competition.

#### Review Questions

1. Define internal search and external search. (Refer section 4.1)
2. Explain SEO and its working. (Refer sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2)
3. What is black-hat SEO technique? (Refer section 4.2.4)
4. Define PPC and explain how it works. (Refer sections 4.6.1 and 4.6.2)
5. How PPC is analyzed and measured? (Refer section 4.6.4)