



12 DIY SEO TIPS

ABOUT SEO, BUT THERE'S A LOT YOU CAN DO

IT'S EASY TO BECOME FLUSTERED WHEN THINKING

WITHOUT ANY EXPERT KNOWLEDGE. JUST READ ON...



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UNDERSTANDING HOW GOOGLE ACTUALLY WORKS

Driving search traffic remains the most desirable growth channel for most businesses that operate online, and your tourism business is no exception. People are searching for getaway destinations offering local experiences with more frequency since Covid became relevant. These people crave, need, and want a local vacation experience more than ever - they are searching the marketplace, and ready to buy, right now. They don't need to be "warmed up"... they just need to find that perfect experience asap. No wonder Google Ads remains the primary digital marketing channel in 2021, and we don't see that changing in 2022. But, the average cost per click with Google Ads can be pretty restrictive, especially for smaller businesses.

That's why ranking your site organically is so valuable. Earning your spot on at the top of Google's results pages for the keywords that matter is usually the defining moment that everything changed for most businesses who "make it" online. Because you're tapping into the world's most effective growth channel, without paying a fortune.

So, how do we earn a better Google ranking? We give IT (Google) what IT wants.

Read On...

KEYWORDS

1. FIND THE KEYWORDS GOOGLES ALIGNS TO YOUR SITE

This should be the first step for any SEO campaign, and we recommend the free Google Keyword Planner tool, which can be used to input your website's home page URL and review the keyword ideas Google provides. You should also do the same for two or three competitive sites.

2. BUILD LONG-TAIL KEYWORDS INTO YOUR CONTENT

A long-tail keyword phrase is one with more than two or three words, such as 'food catering services for businesses in the downtown Halifax area.' The shorter keywords are usually a lot more competitive, which means that other businesses are spending a lot of time, effort and money getting them to rank as they compete. Long-tail keywords are easier to rank for, can drive tremendous traffic, and are likely phrases people use when searching.

3. DO BASIC ON-PAGE OPTIMIZATIONS

Once you've identified your target keywords, make sure they're included in the title of your page, the body copy of your page, and if possible, the URL. Google is getting smarter about figuring out what a page is about, but it still helps to make it really clear your page is about a specific keyword.

Optimization Recommendations:

- A Web page's title tag is the most important attribute from an SEO perspective. Use the main keyword phrase in the beginning of the page title tag.
- Meta descriptions help attract visitors from the search results page. Use under 160 characters, 1 or 2 keyword phrases to describe the content.
- The H1 tag is the header of the page. Have only one H1 tag per page.
- Use the page's designated keyword phrase at least once near the beginning of the content, and also anywhere it makes sense, but not more than 4-5 times per page.
- Use keywords and their variations in the alt text of an image, and also in the image filename.

LINKS

There are great benefits to having a healthy back-link profile, but don't spend countless hours building links to no avail. While a high-quality link is still powerful, the link itself should not be the goal. If you post great content, the links will follow.

4. BUILD LINKS WITH INDUSTRY PARTNERS

Link building and social signals aren't about volume insomuch as they are about relationships. Links and social signals are more about whom you're connecting with and how you're engaging than they are about pure link volumes. We recommend building authority with the people in your industry who already have sway, or other businesses that compliment yours, such as local restaurants, breweries, museums, art galleries, etc. Their links, and the links from people they associate with, will have a greater impact on your Google search position because Google will rank this type of activity as authentic, and people-driven, therefore more valuable.

5. OFFER A TESTIMONIAL TO A SITE OR SERVICE YOU USE

People always appreciate an honest and well-thought-out testimonial, and in return you can earn a nice link back to your site. Contact all your suppliers or business partners and ask if they'd like a testimonial for their site. If they say yes, then write the testimonial and send it over with a picture and an appropriate link back to your site so people reading it can see its real.

6. SET UP GOOGLE ALERTS TO TRACK MENTIONS OF YOUR BUSINESS

You can get notification emails when new results for a topic show up in Google Search. For example, you can get info about news, products, or mentions of your business. When you come across a mention, reach out to the journalist or blogger in question to thank them for mentioning your company and to ask them to please consider linking to you in their article.

7. How do I make a Google alert?

Create an alert:

1. Go to Google Alerts.
2. In the box at the top, enter a topic you want to follow.
3. To change your settings, click Show options. You can change: How often you get notifications. The types of sites you'll see. Your language. ...
4. Click Create Alert. You'll get emails whenever we find matching search results.

BLOGGING & SOCIAL MEDIA

8. CREATE A COMPANY BLOG AND UPDATE IT REGULARLY

Many SEO experts recommend having a company blog. Google looks favorably on websites that have fresh content over static sites, and a blog is an ideal way to add new content to your site. Approach your blog strategically. Create content that people will enjoy and share with their friends on social networks - it's a great way to get traffic, organic links, and brand recognition. Be sure to include images, relevant links, quotes, and local tourism information that compliments your business.

9. FIND OUT WHICH BLOG POSTS PROVIDE THE BEST SOCIAL TRAFFIC

We recommend Buzzsumo as an ideal site for getting blog topic ideas because it shows you how existing posts and stories have been shared on social media. You should find articles on a topic that were frequently shared on social sites and then write your version of the story, and please, put your own spin on it. If you simply rewrite what's already been written, you're not adding value to any conversation, which means you're unlikely to get social media shares, links or other benefits that come with posting great content.

DEFINE YOUR SEO STRATEGY

10. UNDERSTAND THAT BRANDING AND SEO ARE NOT THE SAME

You may not consider yourself exclusively as a "Nova Scotia staycation destination" business; you may think more broadly and label your business as an accommodations & tourism operator. Well, guess what? Customers will never search for what you want them to search for. And they will never search on text found in your mission statement. Focus on what your potential customers are searching for, not what you want them to search for.

11. USE GOOGLE'S FREE TOOLS

We strongly suggest using the free Google Analytics and Google Webmasters tools for your site. These tools can tell you how much traffic you get from Google, which keywords are driving the most traffic, and what traffic is leading to the most conversions.

12. CREATE LOCAL LISTINGS ON YELP, GOOGLE & FACEBOOK

If your business has multiple locations, create a listing for each one and be sure to build out the listing with rich content – photos, videos, and links to your website. Google is increasingly focusing on returning local results, so it's critically important to have your local online presence properly mapped out.

We further recommend going to Google My Business to find your business and verify it. Be sure to fill out the form completely and exhaust the categories [listing the services you provide]. Most local businesses don't rank well because they haven't taken this small but vastly important step.

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Founded by Shelley Bellefontaine, AtlanticOnline.ca is a Digital Marketing Agency from southwest Nova Scotia.

We work with established companies, startups and tourism operators, to create and manage digital marketing projects that contribute to consistent online growth.

We serve clients across Canada and the eastern seaboard of the United States with outstanding digital marketing services. Our specialty is eCommerce website design to help our clients sell more products and services online and post-launch promotional activities, designed to keep brands relevant with their audience.

And over the past 20 years we've become more than just a trendy marketing agency. We have a history of generating success for our clients. We promote the heck out of your business every chance we get. We update your website on a regular basis with new content and cross-promote on your social channels. We speak directly to your audience through email marketing and targeted social media campaigns.

We're proud to serve organizations within Atlantic Canada and happily do so from our Nova Scotia technology studio near the mighty Atlantic Ocean.

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