

SEO GUIDE 2017

Pixeletta Consultations

Best SEO Practices To Dominate In 2017

From its earliest days, Google's core search algorithm offered the most relevant and most organic search results quickly and accurately on a simple site with an iconic logo that has now become synonymous with the search giant's business. Searching amidst the world's vast data, Google cleverly cataloged and categorized pages using its PageRank formula, which assessed the quantity and power of links to any given webpage.

For a few years, Google's search worked seamlessly, repeatedly predicting the most relevant search results every single time, again and again. In fact, it was so good that it sent shockwaves through the internet, digitally obliterating its rivals over time. However, as Google's clever search engine grew into a colossus corporation, and both individuals and businesses realized the inherent power of appearing organically at the top of any search, things began to change.

The changes occurred at the behest of some unscrupulous characters who were hell-bent on gaming the system. With so much money at stake, do you really blame them? Once they learned the majority of the rules, they began poking and prodding Google's innards by building massive link farms and content farms, spinning low-quality articles, and auto-generating links in an effort to outgun other listings and secure the top spots on Google's lucrative Search Engine Results Pages (SERPs).

As a result, Google introduced several now-infamous adjustments to its algorithm that went by the names of Panda, Penguin and Hummingbird, just to name a few. As the less-than-savory characters began dominating Google's search by supposedly gaming the system, Google had to act or risk losing its relevancy. These algorithm adjustments were intended to both weed out the spoofs and scammers, while also fine-tuning its semantic search.

The Fundamental Components Of Search

Before we dive into some of the crucial rules for succeeding in SEO, we need to take a closer look at the fundamentals of Google's search engine.

The truth? Most people look at SEO the wrong way. They look at ways to do the least amount of work for the greatest initial return, when in fact, it's quite the opposite. Obviously SEO is one of the best skills that you can possibly learn, but in order to succeed with it, you need to do the most amount of work for the least initial return. It's a slow, steady and painful process, but that's also the nature of the beast.

Simply put, in the beginning, Google doesn't trust you. If Google doesn't trust you, you're not going to rank on those lucrative first-page SERPs. You'll be lost in the fray amidst millions of others who're trying to claw their way to the top. So, the first real guiding principle of SEO is trust. When you have Google's trust, you'll consistently rank highly. When you lack its trust, you'll be lost in an abysmal sea of low-ranking webpages. And no one wants that.

Below are some components that can really help out. Each of the components has many factors that influence it, but these are the specific foundational building blocks of just how Google's trust works. And, considering that trust is an inherent part of Google's relevancy equation, everything that you do should revolve around building Google's trust rather than losing it and having it taken away.

Trust Component #1: Indexed Age

Google cares deeply about the indexed age of both your site and its content. A brand new site that's a newcomer to Google is going to have a far harder time ranking on its SERPs than a site that has indexed age. Indexed age refers to the date that Google discovered the domain or webpage in question, not when it was originally registered or released.

Trust Component #2: Authority Profile

Google wants to see a healthy link profile that signifies authority. This means quality links coming from quality content across the web with a healthy diversity. It cares about the importance of the sites that are linking to your domain, but also the quality of the content those links are coming from. Further, it's looking for IP-diverse links, meaning they shouldn't all be coming from the same source. And it's looking for a healthy link velocity where high-quality links are being created with increased frequency over time.

Trust Component #3: Underlying Content

The underlying content is extremely important. Too many people skimp on content, but it's one of the major anchors that tether you to Google's relevancy algorithms. Thin content with errors, or duplicate content and spun content can really hurt you. Instead, the content not only has to be lengthy, but it has to be well-written, keyword centric and highly engaging where readers are spending a good amount of time digesting and consuming that content.

How to Dominate SEO in 2017

Like everyone else, you're likely wondering how you can appear relevantly and organically on Google's SERPs. Well, whether you're doing SEO in 2017 or any other year, it's important to pay homage to the components of trust. But, there are in fact 200+ factors that attribute to your rank in Google's current algorithm. The attributes will be discussed in the next chapter of this book. However, on a more general note, there are some rules you should be following.

The following rules will help you to dominate SEO in 2017. And no matter what Google changes moving forward, these rules will still provide the bedrock that you should govern your online activities around in order to make the greatest progress on those all-important SERPs. Follow these rules and you'll find yourself inching closer and closer to SEO domination on Google. Just remember that it won't happen overnight. It'll take time.

Attributes To Improve Your Website's Google Ranking

Google's search engine uses a variety of methods to determine which pages are displayed first in the results. Their exact formula is a secret, but there are always a few things you can do to improve your rank in Google search results. The term for this is Search Engine Optimization or SEO.

There are no guarantees and no quick schemes. If someone promises you quick results, it's probably a scam. No matter what you do, make sure you make a site that you want to visit and written the way humans would want to read it.

If you're gaming the system, sooner or later Google will figure it out and change their formula. You'll end up plummeting in the search results and wonder why.

Google Rank Tip #1 - Keyword Phrases (aka Give Your Page a Subject)

A keyword phrase is the words you think someone is most likely to put into a search engine to find your content - basically what you think the subject of your page would be according to Google. You could put a lot of energy into keyword phrases alone and improve your site ranking. Your keyword phrase should obviously appear somewhere in your content, preferably in the first paragraph or so. "This is an article about X, Y, or Z." Don't overdo it, and don't make it look unnatural. If it looks spammy, it probably is.

Again, the point here is to speak like a human and just use the words that humans are most likely to use when searching for a page about your topic. Telling people what they're about to read is helpful.

Making a word salad to cram in keyword phrases is not.

If you were searching for your own website, what keyword phrase would you type into Google for each page? Would you look for super fast widgets? Would you look for cooking with widgets? Try searching Google for that phrase. Did you get a lot of results?

Was the content what you expected to find? It may be helpful to get a different perspective. Ask someone else to read your page and suggest what they think your keyword phrase might be. You can also check Google Trends to see if one phrase is starting to gain popularity.

Try to stick to one key subject per page. That doesn't mean you should write stilted text or use odd phrases to keep your subject narrow. Your subject can be broad. Just don't put a bunch of random and unrelated content together. Clear writing is both easier to search and easier to read. Don't be afraid to be really long and detailed with that subject, so long as you start with the big ideas first and get into the weeds further down the page. In journalism, they call this the "inverted pyramid" style.

Google Rank Tip #2 - Keyword Density

One of the things Google looks for when it catalogs pages is the density of the keyword usage. In other words, how often the keyword occurs. Use natural phrasing. Don't try to trick the search engine by repeating the same word over and over or making text "invisible." It doesn't work. In fact, some of that behavior even get your website banned.

Give a strong opening paragraph that says what your page is actually about.

This is just good practice, but it may help search engines find your page, too.

Google Rank Tip #3 Name Your Pages

Give your pages a descriptive name with the <title> attribute. This is vital. Google often displays search results as a link using the Web page's title, so write it like you want it to be read. A link called 'untitled' isn't enticing, and nobody is going to click on it. When appropriate, use the page's keyword phrase in the title. If your article is about penguins, your title should have penguins in it, right?

Google Rank Tip #4 Pay Attention to Links

One of the biggest factors Google looks at is the hyperlink.

Google looks at both links to and from your website.

Google looks at the words you use in links to help determine the content of your page. Use links within web pages as a way to emphasize keywords. Rather than saying, "click here to learn more about SEO" you should say: Read more about SEO (Search Engine Optimization).

Links from other websites to your website are used to determine PageRank.

You can improve your PageRank by exchanging text links with other relevant websites. Linking to your own website is fine. Be a good citizen and link to places other than your own website - but only when relevant. Banner exchanges are not effective, and pages that want to charge you for this service are often known spammers that can hurt your rank.

There's some debate about just how many links you should have per page. This is one of those rules that's likely to bite you if you abuse it, so the key, again, should be to be helpful and natural with the rate and quantity of links you offer. Scripts that link your content to other pages or ads within your site may end up damaging your site in the long run.

Google Rank Tip #5 Social Networking

Social networking sites can be a good way to promote a site, but it is unclear how much it will affect your rank directly. That said, you may find that a great deal of your traffic comes from social networks, so be sure to make your content "social friendly." Add images and give your content engaging titles.

Google Rank Tip #6 Make Your Graphics Search Friendly

Give your images <alt> attributes. Not only does it make your website more accessible to the visually impaired, it also gives you another chance to place your relevant keywords where Google can see them. Just don't stuff keywords that don't belong.

Google Rank Tip #7 Make Website Mobile Friendly

An increasing number of people are using their phones to search for content. You want to make your content mobile-friendly for the sake of good user experience, but you also want to do it for the sake of search. There's no guessing on this one. Google has indicated that mobile-friendliness is a Google ranking signal. Follow some tips from Google on setting up your site for mobile.

Google Rank Tip #8 Good Design Is Popular Design

In the end, strong, well-organized pages are pages that Google tends to rank higher. They're also pages that tend to become more popular, which means Google will rank them even higher. Keep good design in mind as you go, and much of the SEO will design itself.