How To Optimise Your Content For SEO

With billions of websites fighting for traffic, how do you set yourself apart from the competition? Through Search Engine Optimisation (SEO), you can outrank your competitors and place yourself right in front of internet users who want what you're offering. Considering that 86% of internet users ignore paid ads, organic search remains the most powerful way to drive high-quality traffic to your website.

However, it’s not just about getting traffic. It’s also about how visitors interact with your site. The more engaging your content is, the longer visitors will spend interacting with it. Not only are you guaranteed higher conversions, but you’re also more likely to rank. So, when it comes to SEO, content is still king. And if you want to maximise your SEO strategy, you’ll need to focus on your content.

Let's dive into how to optimise your content for SEO.

What Is Content Optimisation?

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is the process of improving web page rankings in search engine results pages (SERPs). So, in the context of SEO strategy, content optimisation is simply refining your content to enhance your SEO efforts.

SEO content optimisation is an iterative process that typically entails:

1. Revisiting your SEO goals and objectives.
2. Identifying areas of weakness in your SEO strategy.
3. Tweaking your SEO strategy and tactics for even better results.
4. Staying up to date with algorithm updates and constantly aligning your efforts to SEO best practices.

Why Is Content Optimisation Important?

When it comes to SEO, there's no room for complacency — a Google algorithm update can knock you right off the top spot. Plus, in recent years Google has moved towards a people-first approach. This means quality content made for humans will be rewarded while keyword stuffing and other black hat SEO tactics will be penalised. Here are a few more reasons why optimising your content for SEO is a brilliant idea:

Visibility and credibility

Internet users are constantly searching for relevant, high-value content, so organic visibility is crucial. Making it to the first page of search results increases both your visibility and credibility. Internet users believe that the most relevant search results appear on the first page. In fact, 75% don't scroll past page one.

Increased conversions

Because SEO is highly targeted and customer-focused, you can be placed right in front of the users who need your products or services. If you rank in the top 5 of search results, you'll get high-quality traffic to your website. Once visitors are on your site, optimised content is what will keep them there. The longer they stay on your site and interact with your content, the more likely they are to convert.

Non-stop promotion

SEO efforts run round the clock to promote your website. If your content tops the search results pages, you can take advantage of all the search activity happening daily. There's no need to worry about your budget running out — once you've made the initial investment, your efforts will continue to yield results.

Greater returns

Although it takes time to reap the benefits of a high-quality SEO strategy, the results are worth it. Being the first listing on the Google results page guarantees you almost a third of all search traffic. Even being in the top 5 search results can make a significant contribution to your traffic. Plus, search engine leads provide a close rate that is 12% higher than traditional marketing. That's not all: SEO can reduce the cost of customer acquisition by 87.41% compared to digital advertising.

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Since Google holds the lion's share of the search engine market, following their guidelines is vital to a successful SEO strategy. The search engine giant uses more than 200 factors to rank websites. These include domain factors, page-level factors, site-level factors, backlinks, brand signals, and user interaction.

According to Backlinko, the most important Google ranking factors include:

- Referring domains
- On page SEO
- Content quality
- Mobile usability
- Backlinks
- Organic click-through rate
- Dwell time

Conduct an SEO site audit

An SEO site audit is the process of uncovering issues that may affect your ranking on search engines. Audits are crucial as they allow you to address problems that can make you lose out on organic traffic. They also allow you to understand your competitors and benchmark your site's performance against key industry metrics.

To conduct a comprehensive audit, you'll need 1) a site audit tool such as those offered by SEMrush or Ahrefs, 2) Google Analytics to get metrics and data about your site's performance, 3) Google page speed insights to measure your site's performance on mobile and desktop, 4) Google search console to check if your site is indexed correctly and how it's showing up on search results pages.

With a clearer view of major areas to improve, you can refine your SEO strategy and optimise these areas for increased traffic and conversions.

Optimise your content strategy

When it comes to outranking your competitors, create content for humans, not bots. The content on your website should provide value and address visitors' search queries.

Adopting an audience-first approach and understanding their search intent ensures that you deliver quality content that reflects your expertise. When you can give searchers exactly what they're looking for, your content is more likely to rank.

Consider what visitors stand to gain from landing on your website. Are you focused on a particular area of expertise? Will a visitor have their pain points addressed or will they leave frustrated? Focus on creating a satisfying user experience that demonstrates authority and solves problems. Doing so reduces bounce rates, increases conversions,

and helps your rankings.

To sum it up, content that ranks and converts:

- Is designed with the user and search intent in mind
- Is sensitive to user’s pain points
- Demonstrates authority or expertise
- Pushes customers' hot buttons
- Makes it easy for leads to act via clear CTA’s and well-designed capture forms

Audit your existing content

Optimising your content strategy allows you to craft new content that's better aligned with your SEO efforts. What about your old content? The good news is that you can still improve, and relaunch your old content.

Much like an SEO audit, a content audit aims to identify issues in your existing content that may be affecting your SEO efforts.

A content audit starts with identifying underperforming content. To do this, you can use the Search Analytics feature in the Google Search Console. Keep an eye out for pages that receive notable impressions but don't rank well. These could receive a major boost from being tweaked and relaunched. High-ranking pages that are experiencing a decline in organic traffic are also prime opportunities.

The next step is to optimise your content. You can do this by:

- Updating images for relevance and recency
- Improving structure
- Identifying keyword gaps
- Providing more recent research
- Addressing frequently asked questions
- Giving your audience even more value

When your content is optimised and ready to be relaunched, update the dates and hit publish. For maximum reach, leverage your mailing lists and social media presence to attract both old and new traffic.

Increase your domain authority

Increasing your domain authority used to depend on links. However, Google's most recent quality guidelines focus on Expertise, Authoritativeness, and Trustworthiness (E-A-T). This means that your ranking will be affected by how closely your content ticks these boxes.

Key ways to boost your E-A-T include publishing content that reflects your expertise or authority in a specific field and gaining press coverage or mentions from other authorities in your field. It's also important for your site to have a clear 'about' and 'contact' page. Other factors that contribute to trustworthiness include author bylines, references, and external links to sources.

Strengthen your brand signals

Brand signals tell search engines about the credibility of your site. Google considers brand signals as an important factor for determining a website's authority and tends to rank well-known brands higher.

A legitimate and growing social media presence tells search engines that your brand is popular and reputable, resulting in more favourable rankings. So, make sure that you have an official LinkedIn page as well as Facebook and Twitter accounts with lots of engagement. Having quality content on these platforms too is imperative for supporting your SEO strategy.

Address key technical SEO issues

Even the best content will go to waste if it can't be found. Technical SEO involves improving your site so that search engines can crawl, index, and render it. Based on Google’s most recent page experience update, some key issues to address include:

Website architecture

A website's architecture is how content is linked together and delivered to users and search engines. A great website architecture ensures that users can easily navigate between pages. It also makes it easy for search engines to crawl your content and make sense of it.

Page speed

A slow load time leads to a higher bounce rate, which Google associates with a

poor-quality website. If your website takes longer than 5 seconds to load, expect a 38% increase in bounce rates. Plus, for every extra second that your website takes to load, conversions could drop by up to 4.42%.

User-friendliness

Google's mobile-first index tells us that mobile-friendliness really matters. Considering that 55% of all worldwide internet traffic comes from mobile users and that more than half of them will leave your site if it takes more than 3 seconds to load, ensure that your website is mobile-friendly.

Track and improve your strategy

For continued success, your SEO strategy must be monitored and updated. Keep up with Google's platform and algorithm updates as failure to do so can cost you. Secondly, ensure that you're running monthly checks on the technical aspects of your SEO. Finally, make sure that your content stays relevant and up to date.

Content Optimisation Tools

Conducting audits, managing your efforts, and generating SEO-friendly content aren't easy tasks. Fortunately, there are quality content optimisation tools that allow you to take the guesswork out of meeting your SEO strategy goals.

Content optimisation tools can help you:

- See where your content needs revising or updating
- See how you compare against competitors
- Research keywords and content ideas
- Create new content that fills content gaps
- Find link opportunities
- Monitor your rank and progress

You have a lot of options when it comes to SEO tools. To guide your final decision, consider the features that matter most to you. If you're after the ease of an all-in-one SEO and content solution, go for tools such as Semrush, SE Ranking, or Moz Pro.

If content optimisation is your priority, consider tools like Surfer SEO, Frase, PageOptimizer Pro, or Wordmetrics. Combining any of the tools above with Google

Analytics and Google Search Console will boost your efforts and help you meet your SEO goals.

Content Optimisation Mistakes To Avoid

When you're working hard to maintain or improve your rankings, the last thing you want is to get penalised or de-indexed. Therefore, avoid doing any of the following:

Over-optimising your site

Yes, you read that right. You can be penalised for over-optimising your site. So, put an end to keyword stuffing, header tag stuffing, and other forms of over-optimization.

Using auto-generated content

It might be tempting to get volumes of content at the click of a button. But, relying on auto-generated content violates Google's people-first approach and could result in penalties or de-indexing.

Deceiving visitors

Any attempts to deceive or mislead site visitors aren't taken lightly. So, stay away from tactics such as sneaky redirects as you could be penalised or get your site de-indexed.

Compromising on quality

Together with thin or duplicate content, avoid creating content that isn't tailored to your audience. Simply repurposing content, or following trends instead of writing for your audience violates Google's quality guidelines.

Not prioritising user experience

If your site is filled with distracting pop-ups and ads, Google will interpret it as a low-quality site. As your page may be devalued, avoid using tactics that negatively affect user experience.

Final thoughts

An effective SEO strategy is a great way to leverage branding, quality content, and aspects of web development to drive qualified leads to your website. To maximise your results, focus on consistently providing quality content while sticking to SEO best practices.