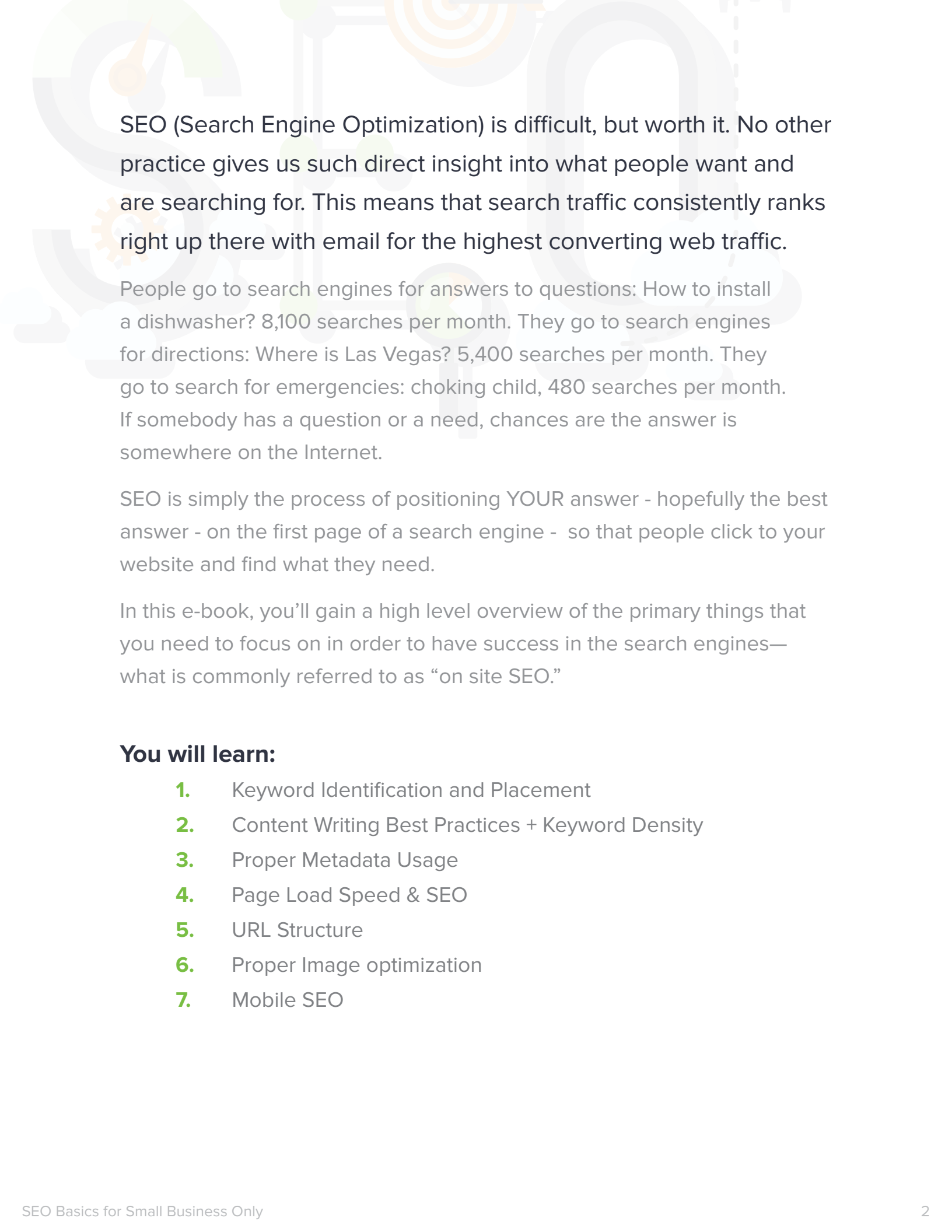




Basics

for Small Business Only



SEO (Search Engine Optimization) is difficult, but worth it. No other practice gives us such direct insight into what people want and are searching for. This means that search traffic consistently ranks right up there with email for the highest converting web traffic.

People go to search engines for answers to questions: How to install a dishwasher? 8,100 searches per month. They go to search engines for directions: Where is Las Vegas? 5,400 searches per month. They go to search for emergencies: choking child, 480 searches per month. If somebody has a question or a need, chances are the answer is somewhere on the Internet.

SEO is simply the process of positioning YOUR answer - hopefully the best answer - on the first page of a search engine - so that people click to your website and find what they need.

In this e-book, you'll gain a high level overview of the primary things that you need to focus on in order to have success in the search engines—what is commonly referred to as “on site SEO.”

You will learn:

1. Keyword Identification and Placement
2. Content Writing Best Practices + Keyword Density
3. Proper Metadata Usage
4. Page Load Speed & SEO
5. URL Structure
6. Proper Image optimization
7. Mobile SEO



How to use this book

This book will give you a solid understanding of SEO basics. As a small business owner, we know you are busy. We also know you need to have an understanding of some topics, like SEO, even if you won't always be directly handling the work yourself. The knowledge in this book will enable you to hire the best SEO consultant or agency, or function as a guide for your in-house SEO staff.

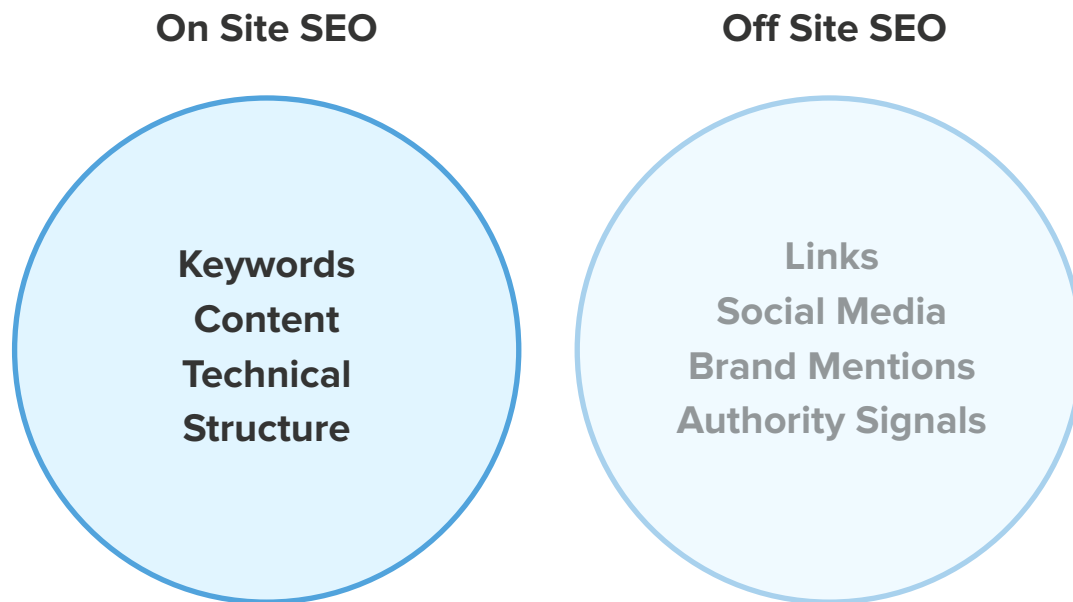
Whether you are handing your small business SEO efforts in house or hiring an agency or consultant - you'll have a new level of understanding of the SEO factors that you need to consider in order to build a powerhouse website.

The Two Spheres of SEO

Getting your website and your content to rank well in search requires focus on two different arenas. This is where a lot of small businesses go wrong with SEO. They see it as a quick fix or an easy method to a waterfall of qualified leads. They focus in on one or two tactics and lose sight of the whole picture.

Beware of any service or agency that promises to skyrocket your website to the top by using a “secret formula.” The long and short is that SEO is no longer a game of cheap tricks and sneaky manipulations. It’s hard, intentional, and detailed work that pays off when done correctly.

Here are the Two Spheres



On Site SEO

On site SEO is everything on your website that you can directly control and change. Because of this, on site is always a great place to begin.

When thinking about on site SEO, it's helpful to think through activities that have the highest "SEO Return on Investment (ROI)." What are the activities that will have the biggest impact and payoff for SEO?

Keyword Identification - ROI Rating 10/10

Keyword identification and placement is your foundation. Before you begin, get very clear on the keywords. When thinking about keywords, consider the following three factors:

1. Search Volume

Volume represents the amount of individual queries that the keyword, or group of keywords bring in every month. This is often the first big hurdle that a small business with little to no SEO experience needs to face and overcome.

Search volume represents how your customers actually talk, not how you think they talk. Conforming your language and thinking to match search volume language is a core discipline of good SEO. The sooner you can let this data drive your content, the sooner your SEO will take off.

The best free tool to discover keyword volume is [Google Keyword Planner](#).

You are looking for keywords that bring in significant traffic every month. It's impossible for us to define what "significant" means for you and your business. Only you can do that. For instance, if you have a highly-specialized product with a high price point, 100-500 searches per month for a highly-relevant keyword might be great volume.

If you have a lower price point product that has much more reaching demand, you may want to look for keywords that bring in 1,000 - 20,000 visitors per month. It's entirely up to you and your product. This is certainly something that you will want to discuss internally and with your SEO agency.



Search volume
represents **how
your customers
actually talk**,
not how you
think they talk.

Don't invest time and money in an SEO strategy that is doomed from the start because there is no search volume. Let this data guide and shape the language you use on your website.

2. Competition:

The second thing to consider is how difficult it is going to be to rank on the first page. [Moz.com](#) provides a handy keyword difficulty tool that you can use for research.

The competition for a particular keyword depends on a number of different factors.

- ✔ How monetizable is the keyword? The more money that can be made from the word, the more competition.
- ✔ How much volume does the keyword bring in?
- ✔ Are there big brands that dominate page 1 and 2 of the search results for the search term?

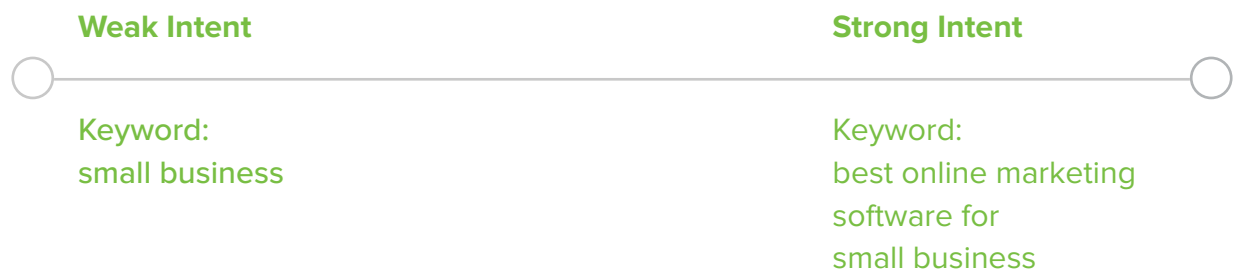
The reality is this: You can rank for any keyword you want, it just depends on how much time and resources you are willing to put into it. If slots 1 - 10 on the first page of the search results are all big companies and publishers that you have heard of, then you can safely assume that it is a very competitive keyword and it will take significant investment to begin ranking for that word.

This is where a good SEO agency will help you identify keywords that have good volume and are reachable for a small business.

3. Intent

Intent is as important as search volume when deciding on a keyword or keyword package to pursue. Intent is simply the safe assumptions that you can make about the person who is searching the term. This is where you need to put on your psychoanalyst hat.

Here is an example:



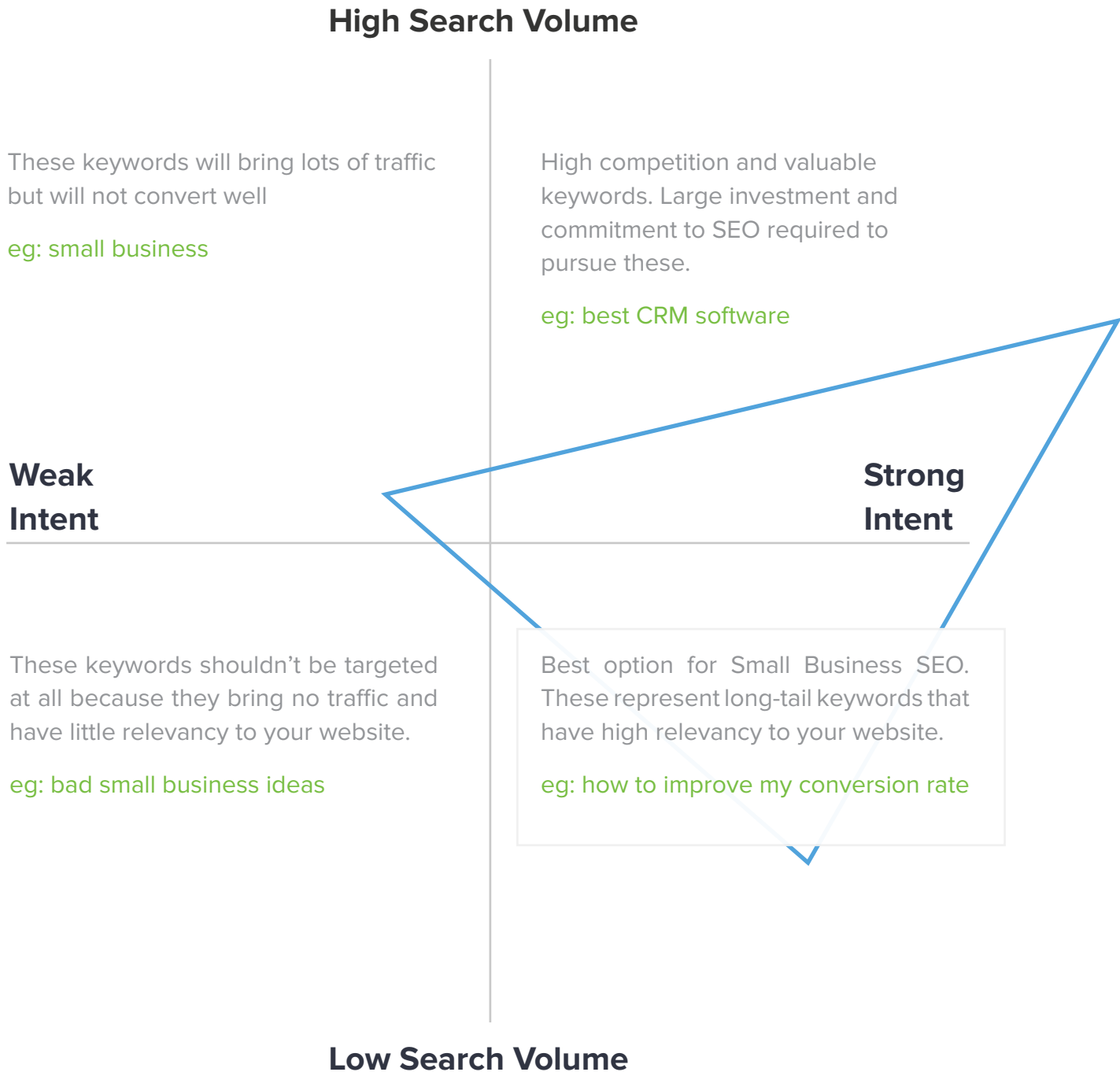
What is the reason for the search: small business? Who might be searching that term? It's impossible to know. There are countless reasons and types of people who might be searching the term "small business."

What about for the keyword: "best online marketing software for small business"? What might you surmise about the searcher for this term? It's rather simple. This searcher is most likely a small business owner or manager looking for marketing software that is served up online and geared for small businesses.

Bingo! There is a keyword that you can confidently optimize for.

Putting it together:

Ok, let's put these principles together to begin a rough sketch of the type of keywords you want target. In light of the explanations above, take a look at the following chart. The blue triangle is going to be your "sweet spot."



SEO Tips

Advanced SEO Fact

Search engines are becoming increasingly sophisticated and no longer need “exact match” keywords to tell them what the page is about. In fact, they can often decipher the gist of a page and assign strikingly accurate keywords to that page. I still recommend optimizing around a specific keyword, but avoid overuse of that keyword.

When Hiring an SEO Consulting Company

Make sure that they do in-depth keyword research as a starting place. Ask them to take into consideration the three pillars of keywords above: Volume, Intent and Competition.

What about your brand name?

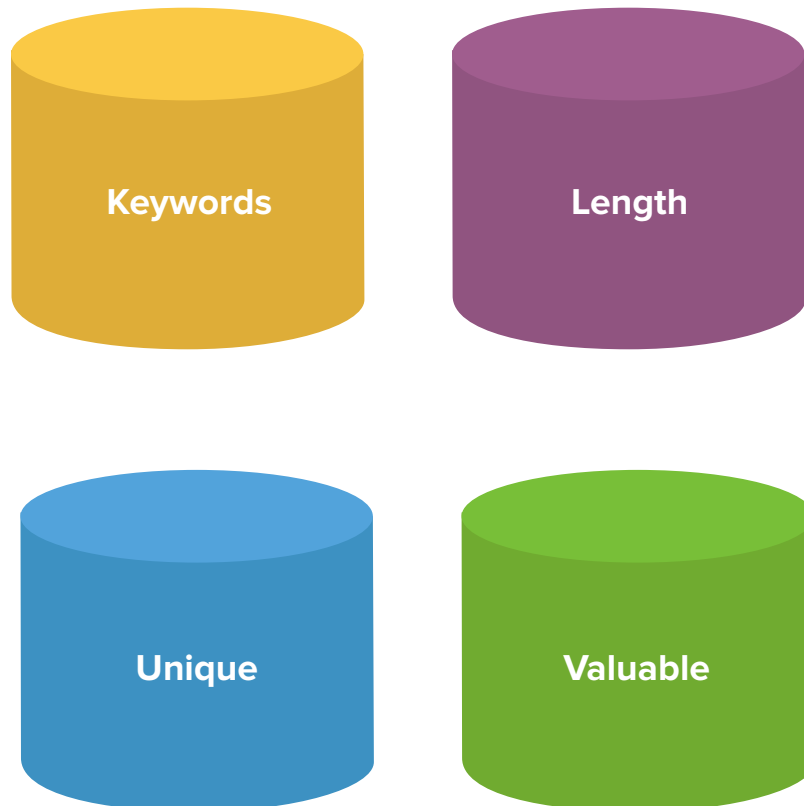
As your brand grows, it will naturally be found on search engines. As such, you don't need to specifically optimize your pages around your brand name. Using up your valuable “SEO real estate” on your brand name will not help you in the long run. Like we showed above, focus instead on high intent, low competition, and good-volume keywords that are closely related to your product.

Good Unique Content - ROI Rating 10/10

When developing content (i.e., website pages, blog posts, videos, landing pages, etc.) for SEO purposes, you need to balance four different aspects. Often, one or two of these things are ignored. Always remember that search engines are looking to serve up the best content for the particular query. Think of the search results as the “product” of the search engine company. They are always striving to make their “product” better. This means they are always on the hunt for the very cream of the content crop.

The better the content that they serve up to a searcher, the more delighted their “search customer” will be and the more likely they will be to return. This is the basic business model of search engines. With that said, quality content is not an option. You must incorporate quality content.

Here are the four pillars of quality SEO content with a brief explanation of each.





Keywords:

We have already covered the basics of how to select your keywords. In this section I want to go over the tactics of actually incorporating those keywords into the content on your website.

In the early days of SEO, when search engines were easy to “trick,” keyword-stuffing was a common practice that actually worked! If you wanted your website to be found for “light brown cargo shorts” your page would read like this...

“We have all of your light brown cargo shorts at our light brown cargo short store. Our light brown cargo shorts come in 4 sizes. Large light brown cargo shorts, medium light brown cargo shorts...”

You get the idea. Search engines have cracked down on this manipulative practice. In fact, now if you overuse a keyword, you can actually get penalized! You need be savvy and nuanced in implementing keywords into your content.

Today, search engines use keywords to help them build a picture of what the whole piece of content is about. In other words, they are smart enough to decipher your content without the overt use of keywords.

So, where does this leave you? You can still gently guide the search engines toward the keyword or keyword groups that you would like a particular piece of content to rank for.

Let's revisit our light brown cargo shorts example above. Here is how it should read.

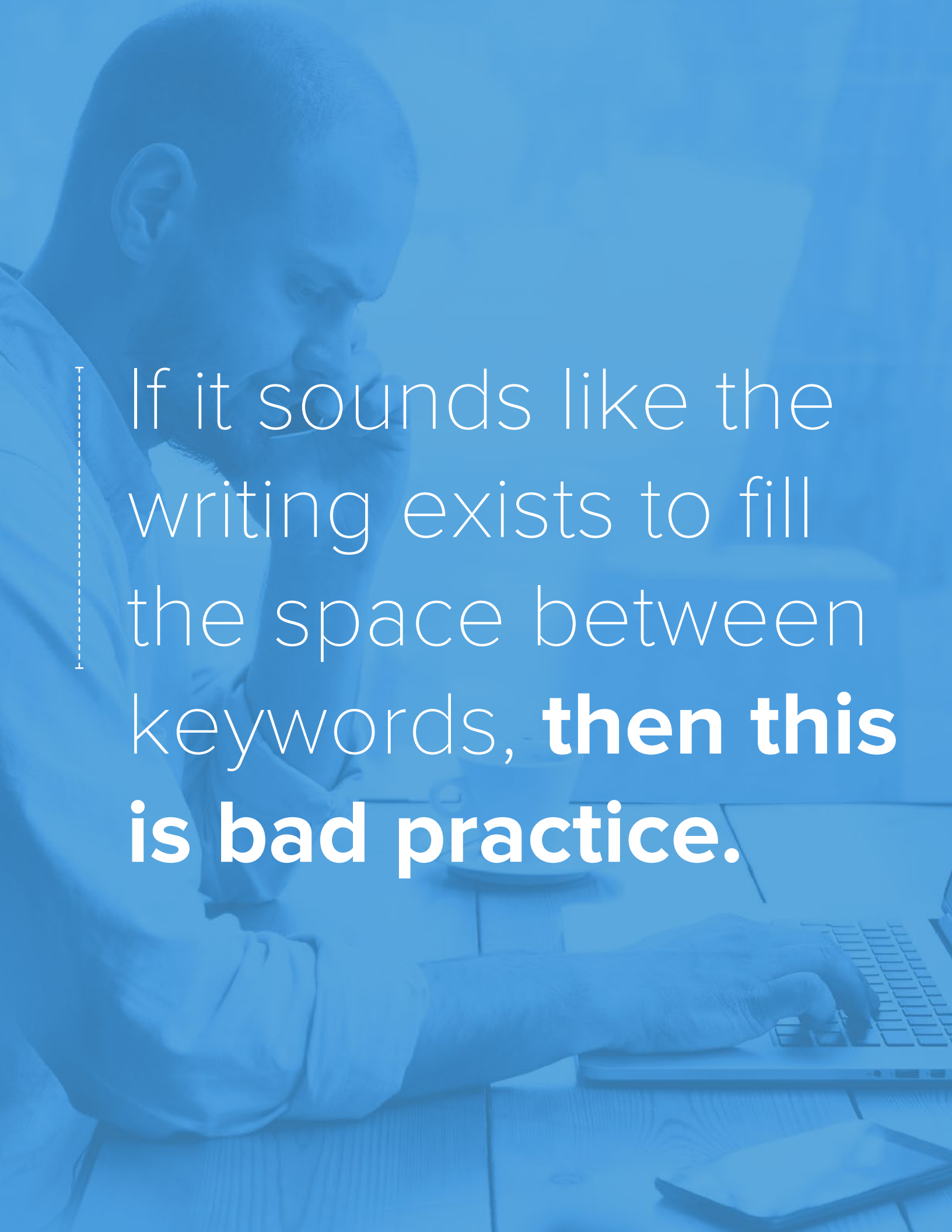
*“Hello shopper and welcome to our online store. If you found yourself here, it's probably because you are looking for shorts, particularly **cargo shorts**. Well, we have plenty of shorts for you!*

Our customers rave about our clothing. They say that they breathe easily, are easy to clean, and most of all, they don't shrink in the wash. The checkout process is simple and the whole thing is risk free.

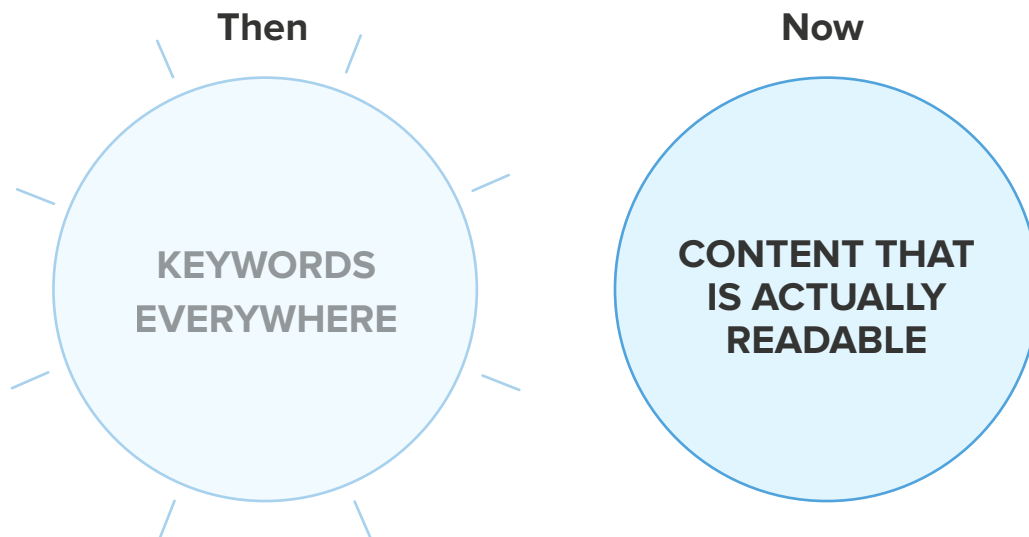
*How is it risk free you ask? Glad you asked. Let's say you purchased a large pair of our select **light brown cargo shorts** for \$25.00. We ship them to you the next day. You have 30 days to decide whether or not you like the shorts (notice how I don't use “light brown cargo shorts” here).”*

In this section of text, we used the primary keyword online one time, and a supporting keyword only one time as well.

Notice how the primary keyword is a natural fit into the flow of the sentence. This is modern day SEO writing. In other words, if it sounds like the writing exists to fill the space between keywords, then this is bad practice.



If it sounds like the writing exists to fill the space between keywords, **then this is bad practice.**



Long tail keywords

Long tail keywords are words and phrases that are more specific and generally have less search volume than short keyword phrases.

Short Tail Keyword: Marketing

Long Tail Keyword: How to build a marketing plan for my small business

Incorporating long tail keywords into content can give a good edge in capturing very specific queries. Although search volume is typically less, the upside is click through rate and conversion can be high as searchers will find the exact thing that they are looking for.

- ✔ Make it natural - Use the long tail where it makes sense.
- ✔ Use the exact phrase - Sometimes you need to get creative with your writing in order to fit the exact phrase in. Use colons, dashes, headlines, and other things in order to fit the keyword in.
- ✔ Use proper grammar.
- ✔ Don't stuff keywords into the content - Keyword-heavy content reads awkwardly and runs the risk of a penalty.
- ✔ Stay topically focused - make sure that the long tail keywords are in line with general direction of the content.

Length

The length of your content plays an important role in how well your page will rank in search engines. I will not give you an ideal word count because it varies so much for different markets and for different keywords.

With that said, you will never rank well for a given piece of content if your content is considered “thin.” That is, it doesn’t provide enough length to actually deliver useful, timely and interesting information. The best way to get an idea of how long your content should be is to do a search for the your keyword and look at the top 10 results.

If each article is 1,500 - 2,000 words, then you know that you will need to write a robust and in-depth piece of content in order to rank.

Length is all about your competition and the ability to deliver value.

Never puff up a piece of writing simply to add more words. **If it’s not valuable, don’t add it.”**

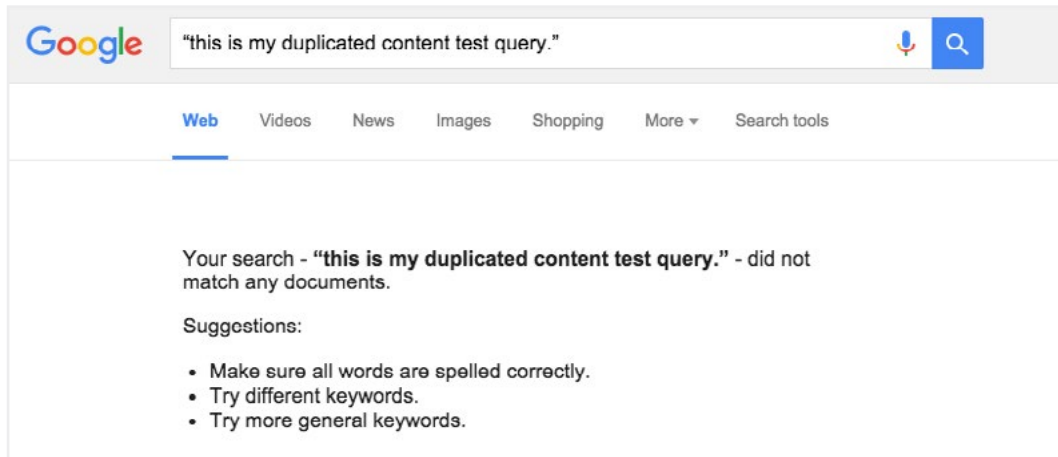
Uniqueness

One of the quickest and easiest ways to get your website penalized is to copy the content of other websites.

Search engines hate duplicated content. Let’s repeat that, **they hate duplicated content**. Writing good content can seem like a tremendous amount of work, and it is. This is often what tempts people to copy and paste content from another website.

Put the time and energy into writing your own content for your own audience. The best way to ensure that you aren’t accidentally duplicating content is to grab a string of text from your website and put it into a search engine with quotations around it:

It would look like this: *“this is my duplicated content test query.”*



So, what actually constitutes duplicated content?. [Here is what Google says:](#)

“Duplicate content generally refers to substantive blocks of content within or across domains that either completely match other content or are appreciably similar. Mostly, this is not deceptive in origin.”

Is it ok to have duplicated content within my own website?

No, you want each page on your website to have unique content. [Here is a full list](#) of measures that you can take to ensure duplicate content is a non-issue with your website.

Valuable

Out of all of the pillars, this one is the most subjective. But, it certainly needs to be included. Search engines are becoming increasingly sophisticated at deciphering the difference between good content and bad content.

If your content is valuable - or in SEO terms - if it provides an answer to the query that adds real value to the reader, it will have a much better chance of ranking well.

One of the best ways to provide real value in your content is to be specific. Avoid generalizations and dive into real solutions and answers. Reread your article and ask yourself, “If I found this page, would I find it valuable?”

Metadata - ROI Rating 9/10

Titles and Description

Front end metadata is HTML “head” code that provides users and search engines valuable data about the page. Over the years, the scope of different types of metadata have increased drastically. To keep it focused, we will look at two pieces of metadata that still provide incredible value to your SEO efforts.

These two “tags” are called the Title Tag and the Description Tag. Title and description tags serve to tell both the searcher and the the search engine exactly what your page is about. The following image is a screenshot of the HTML code of my personal website www.infantcpr.com.



```
1 <!DOCTYPE html>
2 <html>
3 <head><script type="text/javascript">var NREUMQ=NREUMQ||[],NREUMQ.push(["mark","firstbyte",new Date().getTime()]);</script>
4 <title>Infant CPR Classes - Online CPR & Choking Relief</title>
5 <meta property="og:url" content="https://www.infantcpr.com/" />
6 <meta property="og:image" content="https://www.infantcpr.com/assets/home_baby364.png" />
7 <meta property="og:image:type" content="image/png">
8 <meta property="og:image:width" content="538">
9 <meta property="og:image:height" content="364">
10
11 <meta charset='utf-8' />
12 <meta name="description" content="Learn how to perform CPR on an infant, child & adult. For parents, babysitters,
13 grandparents and caregivers. Complete in 1 hour." />
14 <link rel="canonical" content="/" />
15 <link href="/assets/application-65319e09ece3c9e6738fc38ab70558b7.css" media="all" rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" />
16 <link href="/assets/bootstrap-responsive.min-abe3ee38141fee802205e3f0acb765b2.css" media="screen" rel="stylesheet"
17 type="text/css" />
18 <script src="/assets/application-28d73fbd72e2992ca1e1609317603652f.js" type="text/javascript"></script>
```

Title Tag

Description Tag

Title Tag

Title tags are the most important SEO real estate on a page. A title tag is a piece of HTML code that goes in the “head” section of your website. The purpose is to tell search engines what to display as the clickable link in the search results page. At the writing of this e-book, search engines definitely look at the text and keywords you use in the title tag to determine how to rank your page.

Here are the best practices for implementing your title tags:

- ✔ Length 40-60 characters - anything longer will get cut off in the search engine results page.
- ✔ Include the primary keyword for the page at the beginning of the Title Tag.
- ✔ Use a unique title tag for each page - don't duplicate.

Title tag is 47 characters long with primary keyword as the first phrase.
<p>Infant CPR Classes - Online CPR & Choking Relief https://www.infantcpr.com/ ▼ Learn how to perform CPR on an infant, child & adult. For parents, babysitters, grandparents and caregivers. Complete in 1 hour. You've visited this page many times. Last visit: 9/13/15</p>
Description is 128 characters long that gives a succinct summary of the page

Remember, Title Tags will not appear on the actual page anywhere. They will only be seen on the search engine results page and the browser tab at the top of your internet browser.

Description Tag

Description text is the two lines of text that is displayed below the title in the search results. In the past, description text contributed toward keyword associations for search engines. This led to abusive practices, where people stuffed description text with keywords thus defeating the original purpose of description text: provide a clear description of what the page is about. Because of this, Google no longer looks at keywords in description text as a signal for ranking higher.

Instead, well-optimized description text contributes heavily toward a higher click through rate (CTR). You want to optimize the description text so that it entices a reader to click you your result.

The ideal length is between 110 - 160 characters. This text should read smoothly and capture exactly what the post is about. This text should never be keyword-stuffed.

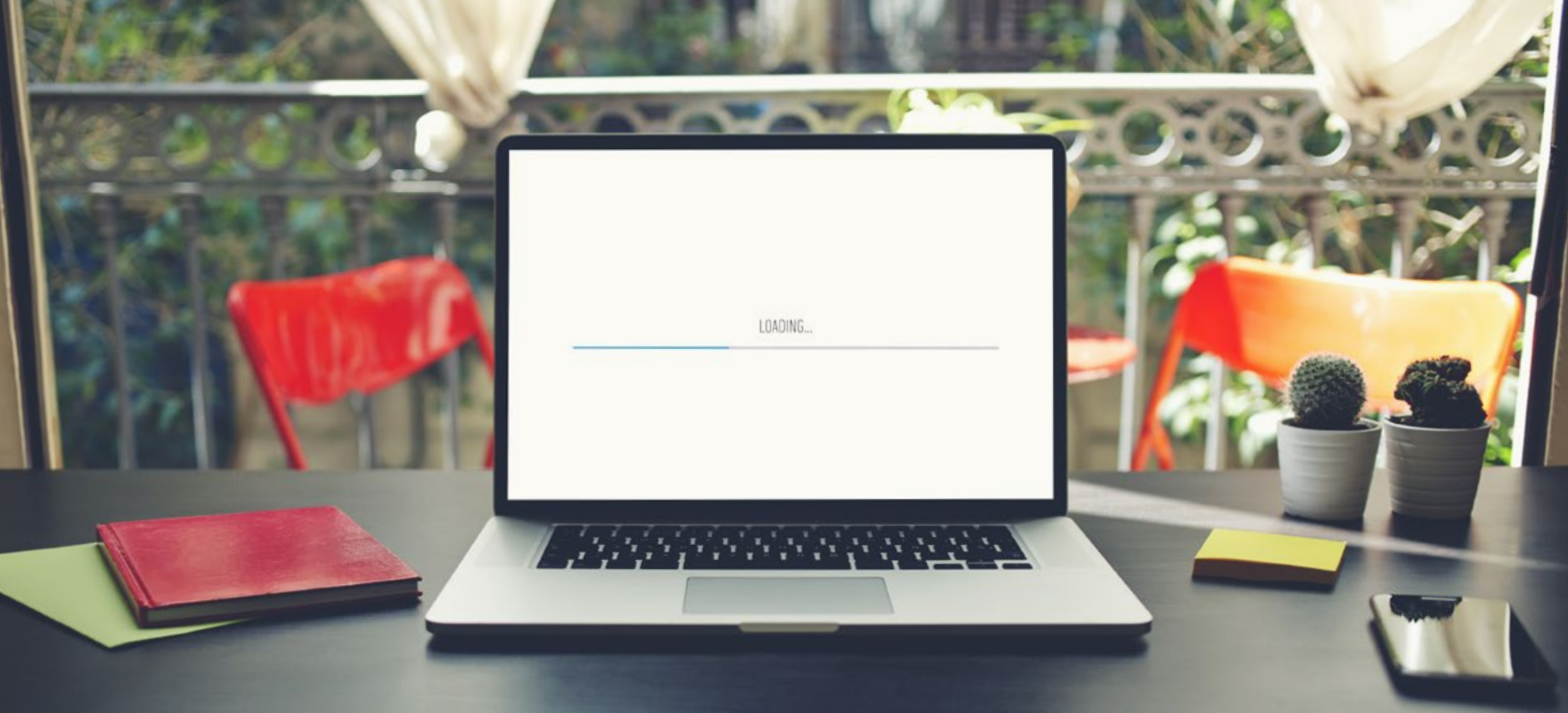
Summary

- ✔ 1-2 sentences describing exactly what the page is about.
- ✔ Include the primary keyword for the page at the beginning of the Title Tag.
- ✔ Use a unique title tag for each page - don't duplicate.

Page Load Speed - ROI Rating 9/10

Page load speed is the time it takes for your webpage to fully render and load. The slower the page load speed, the lower the user experience and the worse rating you will get from search engines. [Check out these stats.](#)

- ✔ 47% of online consumers expect a web page to load in 2 seconds or less
- ✔ 40% of people will abandon a site that takes more than 3 seconds to load
- ✔ 79% of online consumers are less likely to return to a slow website.



Unless you are a programmer or a web developer, you will not be able to significantly improve your page load speed on your own. You can, however, check your own page load speed. Here are two great tools for your use.

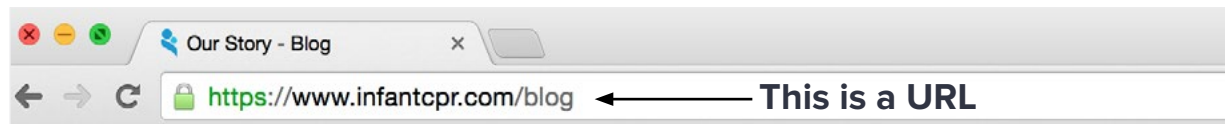


Your goal is to score higher than 85/100 in various page load speed checkers. In this ebook, we won't list out all of the factors that contribute to a slow website. Make sure to talk to your web developer or your SEO agency about hitting high page load speed marks. Always double check their work with your own test using the above tools - they use the same number which makes this an easy-to-measure metric.

Finally, if you have a Wordpress site, [click here](#) for a great plugin to help you with your page load speed.

URL Structure - ROI Rating 8/10

URL stands for “uniform resource locator” and it is simply the address of a web page.



URL structure is how your website is laid out and how the URLs are set up. The primary rule for URL structure is clarity and simplicity. To fully understand URL structure, we need to take a look at a very-specific, but extremely important SEO concept: Authority. We will dive into authority in more detail in a later e-book.

In the context of SEO, “Authority” is defined as how important and weighty your page is compared to other similar pages or websites. Numerous things contribute to the authority of your page. Some of these include backlinks, social media signals, domain age, and mentions of your brand across the internet. High authority pages will pass authority to your page through links and brand mentions. More often than not, your homepage will have the highest authority. That authority is passed through to your sub pages as illustrated in the following diagram.

Authority passes to interior pages based on how closely connected they are to the home page.



As of the writing of this e-book, the guiding principle is you want to keep your website as “flat” as possible. This means not creating unnecessary subfolders. For every subfolder or subcategory, you lose a little authority.

Don’t make it difficult for search engines to figure out what your page is about. Clearly identify each page in the URL and ensure that the pages are not in unnecessary subfolders. For instance, if you have a blog, you want the URL to look like this:

www.example.com/blog/blog-topic

not this:

www.example.com/blog/tagblogtopic/2015/varia/blog-topic

The rule is to keep it simple. Very few websites need deep complexity, multiple sections, wildcard parameters, and a host of other things that create confusions for search engines.

As a small business, you have a distinct advantage in that you can keep the URL structure of your website simple, clear, and easy to understand.

Image Use - ROI Rating 7/10

Proper image naming and usage is one of the easiest ways to improve your SEO. It’s also something that you want to do on an ongoing basis. Don’t get caught playing catch up!

Here are the two things you need to do with your images.

1. Name the actual image file something that is related to the keyword. For instance, if the keyword on the page is “responsive design instructions” then you could name your images “responsive design image 1.jpeg.”
2. The other thing you need to set is the Alt Tag. The alt tag needs to be very descriptive of what the image is. The Alt Tag serves two purposes:
 - a. Tells the search engine what the image is.
 - b. Tells people who can’t see what the image is.



Be careful with Alt Tags. In the past, people abused this tag to keyword stuff. Don't stuff your alt tags with keywords. It's better to provide a detailed description of the image in the alt tag that actually describes what the image is. If the keyword is a natural fit, then go ahead and include it.

As always, avoid duplication.

Again, I can't stress enough how important it is to do this from the beginning. If you are lazy about image

naming, it is only going to snowball. You are creating a tremendous amount of work to go back in and change all of the names later.

Mobile Friendly - ROI Rating 10/10

In April of 2015, Google announced that they would be penalizing websites in mobile search that weren't mobile-friendly.

The goal of the update is to increase the use of mobile design and responsive design for websites. The driving idea is to give mobile users a better experience when surfing the web.

What does this mean for your website?

if you don't want to see a decrease in mobile search traffic, you will need to make sure your website is mobile friendly. Read on to find out if you should consider building a mobile responsive website.

How can I tell if I get a lot of mobile search traffic?

Chances are relatively good that your website is getting it's fair share of mobile traffic. You can determine this by following these steps:

Step 1: Go to Google Analytics for your website.

Don't have Google Analytics installed? [Click here to find out how to install it.](#)

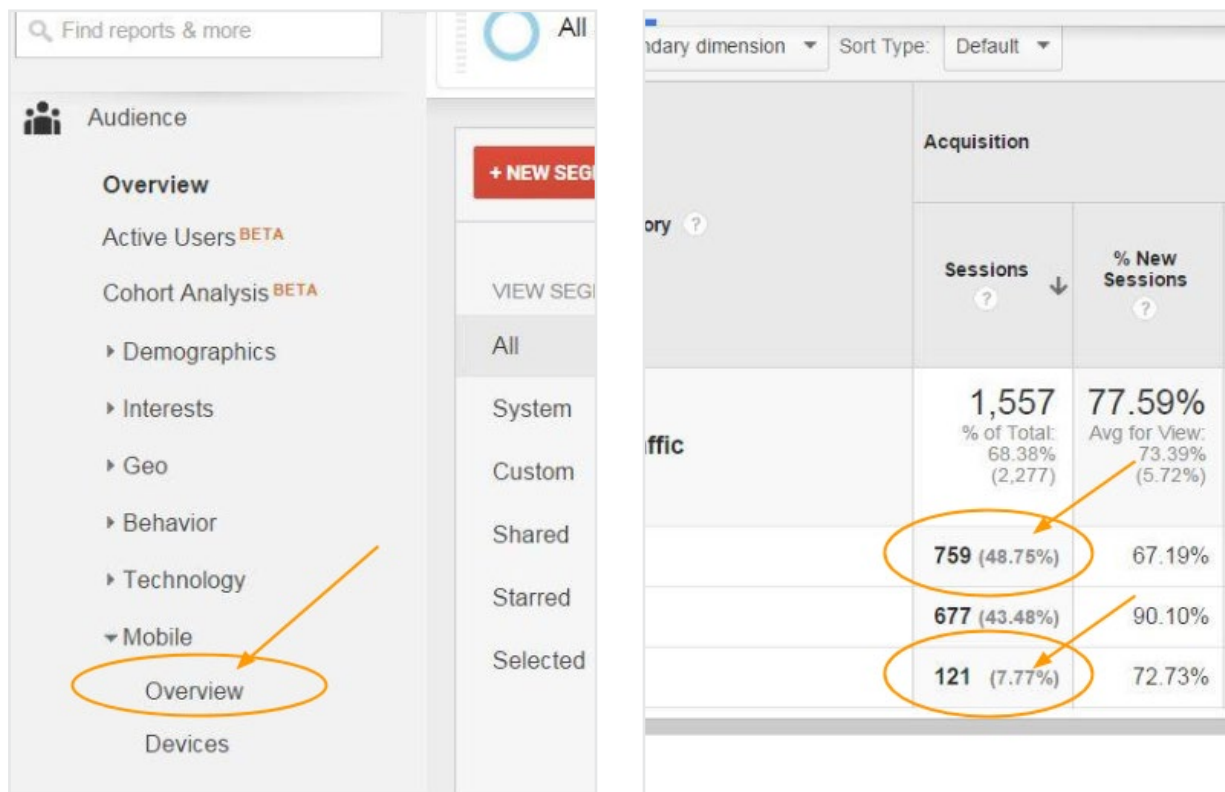
Step 2: Click on the button “Add Segment” then scroll down and select the box that says “organic traffic.”

The screenshot shows the Google Analytics Audience Overview interface. At the top, there's a header with 'Audience Overview' and navigation options like 'Email', 'Export', 'Add to Dashboard', and 'Shortcut'. Below this, a card displays 'All Sessions' with a 100.00% progress indicator. A prominent orange circle highlights the '+ Add Segment' button, with an arrow pointing to it from the text above. Below the card is a line chart showing 'Sessions' over time, with a y-axis ranging from 60 to 120 and x-axis dates from Aug 22 to Sep 12. The bottom section of the interface shows a list of segments. A red button '+ NEW SEGMENT' is visible. The segment list includes 'Multi-session Users', 'New Users', 'Non-bounce Sessions', 'Non-Converters', 'Organic Traffic', and 'Paid Traffic'. The 'Organic Traffic' segment is highlighted with an orange background and an orange circle, with an arrow pointing to it from the text above. A search bar and view controls are also present at the top of the segment list.

Segment Name	Created	Modified
<input type="checkbox"/> ☆ Multi-session Users		
<input type="checkbox"/> ☆ New Users		
<input type="checkbox"/> ☆ Non-bounce Sessions		
<input type="checkbox"/> ☆ Non-Converters		
<input type="checkbox"/> ☆ Organic Traffic		
<input type="checkbox"/> ☆ Paid Traffic		

You should see a second orange line indicating your organic traffic. You can select to remove “All Sessions” traffic by clicking the down arrow in the top right corner of this box.

Step 3: In the left menu under “audience,” click “mobile” then click “overview”



The image shows two parts of the Google Analytics interface. On the left is the 'Audience' menu with 'Overview' circled in orange and an arrow pointing to it. On the right is a table of traffic data with 'Sessions' and '% New Sessions' columns. The 'Sessions' column has three rows circled in orange: 1,557 (68.38% of total), 759 (48.75%), and 121 (7.77%).

Acquisition	Sessions	% New Sessions
Organic	1,557 % of Total: 68.38% (2,277)	77.59% Avg for View: 73.39% (5.72%)
Mobile	759 (48.75%)	67.19%
Desktop	677 (43.48%)	90.10%
Tablet	121 (7.77%)	72.73%

This will display the total amount of organic mobile search traffic to your website. This is the number that will see a reduction if your website is not mobile friendly.

How can I tell if my website is mobile friendly?

A quick way to determine if your website is mobile friendly is to use this tool by google. Insert your website exactly as it appears in your browser URL window, then click “Analyze.”

Remember to do this for each webpage on your website that you want to optimize.



Do I need to make all my pages mobile friendly?

The short answer is no. Google decides on a page-by-page basis what to rank. If most of your website is optimized for mobile and you have a few pages that are not, then those non-mobile pages won't bring down the rest of your website.

This means that you can focus on your most important pages first, and work to upgrade over time.

I want to make my website mobile friendly, what next?

If you use a platform like Wordpress, it may be as simple as finding a new theme that supports responsive design.

A responsive website takes into consideration the device that is currently displaying the site, and displays the site correctly on that device. Google considers websites that are “responsive” to be mobile friendly. In fact, over the long-term, it is best to invest in making your website responsive instead of setting up a separate, mobile-friendly version of your website.

This keeps things focused and simple from a content and link perspective.

If you have a custom-built website, then you may need to hire a responsive design professional to help you. This can be a large or small investment depending on the size and complexity of your website.

This is a great opportunity for you to support a local small design and web business.

CONCLUSION

Google it!

In today's world, the word Google is not just the name of the largest search engine. It's become a verb with a wikipedia page of it's own.

When you want or need something - whether the answer to a question, a community of like minded individuals or the latest piece of must-have technology - chances are you, like most people, take to the internet in search of the answer.

As quickly as you can type your query into the search bar and click enter, you are directed to page after page of carefully curated answers, solutions and products that fulfill your needs.

Our reliance on search is why SEO is essential to your small business.

It's kind of like having the services of the world's best matchmaker.

No, SEO is not a quick fix (then again, neither is finding love). But as a small business owner, it is essential that you not only understand how SEO impacts your business, but to be able to communicate your SEO needs to the person you've charged with your ongoing site optimization.

When you invest the time and the effort into optimizing your website for search engines, the dividends will be paid over time. And the payoff is huge. As your site moves up the rankings and gets closer and closer to the coveted first page, the rest is more site traffic, a more engaged audience and, ultimately, greater revenue.

You've poured your heart and soul into your business. Optimizing your website for SEO means that your customers, the ones who need exactly what you offer, will be that much more likely to find you.

And that's what we call a match made in SEO heaven.



Ryan Eland

Ryan Eland has never escaped the world of small business - and not that he would ever want to. He loves small business and he loves helping small businesses succeed through SEO. He has extensive experience in the highly-competitive online verticals of higher education degrees and online medical training. He also owns a CPR training website for new parents called www.infantcpr.com. But secretly, Ryan is a writer at heart, which is why we have him blog for us.



Helpful SEO

TOOLS

TOOL	PURPOSE
Google Webmaster Tools	The official portal for managing your website's presence in Google. Includes tools for keyword tracking and configuring sitemaps and robots.txt files.
Google Keyword Planner	Research regional demand for keywords that people are using in Google. Also displays estimate cost-per-click (CPC) rates for AdWords.
Google Trends	Aggregated research between phrases, regional demand and related words. Allows you to discover rising and falling terms.
Google PageSpeed Insights	Page load time is crucial to achieve high rankings. Use this tool to diagnose and measure the performance of your site.

TOOL	PURPOSE
Google Structured Data Testing Tool	Rich Snippets and structure data is often displayed in search results. This tool helps you understand exactly how Google and possibly other search engines interpret the data on your page.
Bing Webmaster Tools	The official portal for managing your website presence in Yahoo! and Bing. Includes tools for keyword tracking and configuring sitemaps and robots.txt files.
Moz	A premium service that offers extensive diagnostics and research features for your search engine optimization efforts
KISSMetrics	A premium service that offers deeper tracking and insights beyond web analytics such as conversion value and other key business analytics.
WordPress	A free content management system that makes creating and publishing content easy and scalable.

TOOL	PURPOSE
WordPress SEO by Yoast	A free plugin used in WordPress for creating optimized pages and posts that meet various search engine requirements. In addition, it offers built-in Open Graph and Sitemaps features.
Google URL Builder	When promoting your website from other links, paid media and email marketing, you can create URLs that fill data in your Google Analytics profile.
AuthorityLabs	A premium solution that allows you to objectively measure the positions your website appears for certain keywords on Google, Bing and Yahoo!



Get Found

Mastering SEO for Your Small Business 19

TOOL	PURPOSE
BuiltWith	Used to examine the services, tools and hosting providers another website is likely to be using.
SharedCount	Easily measure the social media shares and comments on a given web page.
WordStream	An alternative keyword research tool that emphasizes search intent of users
REDBot	A simple tool to review the HTTP Headers of your website. Used mostly to troubleshoot and confirm that your redirects are functioning properly.

TOOL	PURPOSE
Ubersuggest	Google Suggestions are often derived from recent search demand. This free tool helps you enumerate all the possible variations of the alphabet for keywords from Google.
Microdata Generator	Microdata is a form of metadata that informs search engines about the content on your page including people, places, events and product features. This tool makes it easy to generate the code within the correct technical specifications.
Facebook Open Graph Debugger	Your website may not appear as desired on Facebook. This tool helps you debug and confirm how Facebook interprets your content. Use of Open Graph Protocol meta tags are highly recommended.
WebPageTest	Web page loading performance is an important factor for optimal search engine ranking and user experience. This tool lets you test how fast your site loads and offers a plethora of technical recommendations to speed it up.
WP Engine & Pagely	Premium hosting providers that offer managed hosting for WordPress websites. They deliver fast-loading WordPress websites.



Search Engine Optimization

GLOSSARY

These are helpful terms, acronyms and phrases often used in the search engine optimization industry.

301 Redirect – A method of telling search engines that your site or a page has moved permanently to a new location. Use of 301 Redirects is strongly recommended when moving content or relocating pages on your website.

404 Page – A default page that is shown to users when they attempt to access a page that isn't available on a website. '404' relates to the HTTP Header response. It is recommended to configure your 404 Page so it is resourceful to those accessing it.

Analytics – “Analytics” or “GA” refers to Google Analytics, a free solution to track the performance and activities on your website.

Authorship – The practice of claiming your website and content based on your Google account. Authorship is claimed by use of your Google Plus ID and requires the ability to edit the page itself.

Crawler – Software that is configured to index web pages and proceed to additional pages by means of hyperlinks.

Deep-linking – The practice of linking to inner pages of a website instead of only the top-level domain. This is recommended and acceptable to do so long as links are relevant to the user experience.

Geotargeting – Describes how you wish to deliver content or information to people accessing the web from a specific location, often accurate to the city level.

HTTP – Hyper Text Transfer Protocol, is the technical specification used to access web pages on the Internet.

HTTP Headers – Headers instruct the browser how to transfer the content to the browser. For SEO purposes, Headers are useful to examine if you are serving 301 Redirects or 404 Pages or for other additional troubleshooting.

Hyperlinks, Links – A word that is clickable and takes the user and search engines to another page. Links interconnect websites and pages together.

Indexing – Describes the practice of search engines crawling your website and storing the information in the library of content (index).

Meta Tags – Describes the HTML codes used to display metadata to search engines. Includes description, keywords, indexing, archiving and publisher information.

Nofollow – The value of the “rel” (relationship) attribute of a hyperlink that informs search engines to not count your link as an endorsement of the following page. Nofollow links should be used where the link is inherently untrusted such as comments on a blog.

Open Graph Project – A technical specification that relays certain metadata to social networks like Facebook, Twitter and Google Plus.

Organic Search – Describes listings or traffic that originates from a search that do not relate to sponsor listings.

Penalty – A negative outcome from an activity that will lower the reputation and ranking of your website. Penalties are caused by keyword-stuffing, purchasing backlinks, etc.

Personalized Search – Traditional ranking of websites based solely on keyword matching is nearly obsolete. Google and other search engines deliver results based on the user’s location, whether they are signed in or not, and relationships they have with brands and other people.

Safe Browsing – Google routinely scans its index for unsafe or malicious content for web users. If Google detects content that is unsafe, they will apply a ranking penalty to the site and warn users not to proceed. To resolve and appeal a Safe Browsing action, follow these steps.

SEO – Search Engine Optimization, the practice and the industry that is focused on improving visibility of websites in search engine results.

SEM – Search Engine Marketing, often intended for paid advertising.

SERP – Search Engine Results Page, this is what displays results for users after they enter a search query.

Sitelinks – A sub-set of listings under the first organic search result, often related to popular pages visited by others.

Sitemap – A file that provides links, priority and update times for all the pages of your website. Sitemaps are not often seen by people, but rather by robots.

Robots.txt – A text file that instructs search engines to not index certain portions of your website; also links to your Sitemap file. Read more about the Robots Exclusion Standard.



Search Engine Optimization

CHECKLIST

Here is a handy checklist you can use to determine if your site or content is optimized and ready for search engines. Not all content or pages have to adhere to all these points, but it is a good set of guideline to get started.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Page Title
Is it descriptive and focused on the page itself? | <input type="checkbox"/> Accessibility: Mobile
Does your site render clearly and consistently across multiple devices? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meta: Description
Is it non-promotional while adding context to the title? | <input type="checkbox"/> Accessibility: URLs
Are your web addresses clear and concise? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meta: Authorship
Have you included your Google Plus profile or publisher ID? | <input type="checkbox"/> Accessibility: Sitemaps
Do you have a sitemap.xml file that is updated? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meta: Open Graph
Have you implemented the correct use of Open Graph tags and descriptions? | <input type="checkbox"/> Accessibility: Robots.txt
Do you allow crawlers to index your site in your robots.txt? |

Body: Headlines

Do you make use of your keywords in sub-headlines?

Accessibility: Robots.txt

Do you allow crawlers to index your site in your robots.txt

Body: Content

Is your content easily readable to visitors and can it be scanned?

Social: Presence

Do you have a presence on popular social networks?

Body: Keyword Use

Do you use variations of your keyword appropriately? Does it sound natural and intended for humans?

Social: Published Links

Have you published an update containing a link to your page?

Body: Images

Are the file names specific to the image? Do you have the 'alt' attribute description of the image?

Social: Profile Information

Is your profile description, contact info, address, phone number, website, etc., accurate and current

Body: Hyperlinks

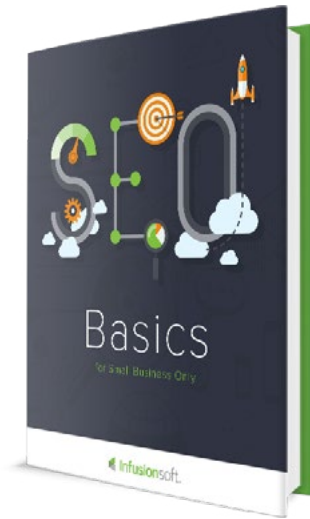
Is the anchor text descriptive in the link?

Body: Structured Data

Do your events include the structured data semantic code?

Free Seo Helper template

Check your email for a link to download a free Excel Spreadsheet that helps you write your titles, descriptions and keywords so they are search engine friendly. It will also give you an idea what your page may look like in search engines.



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