THE ULTIMATE
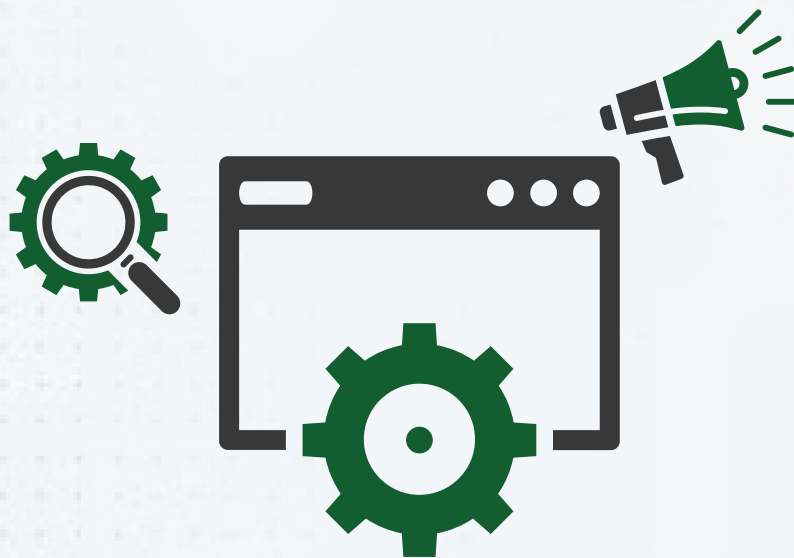# SEO
OPTIMIZATION
GUIDE: PART 2

Introduction

Everyone uses Google, or another search engine like Bing, to search for help with everyday obstacles and questions, or products and services to purchase. In fact, 68% of online experiences begin with a search engine. This indicates a growing importance on making sure your website has a strong presence on Google, otherwise you will have a difficult time building brand awareness and being found by your ideal customer online.

You know you want to attract more of your ideal target customers to your website so they can learn who you are and how your products or services can help them. You might even know SEO is an important part of that equation. What you likely don't know is how straightforward SEO is once you learn the basics. Master the information in these guides, and you'll be well on your way to implementing an SEO strategy that will get you found on Google more frequently, by more people—which in turn leads to more leads for your business.

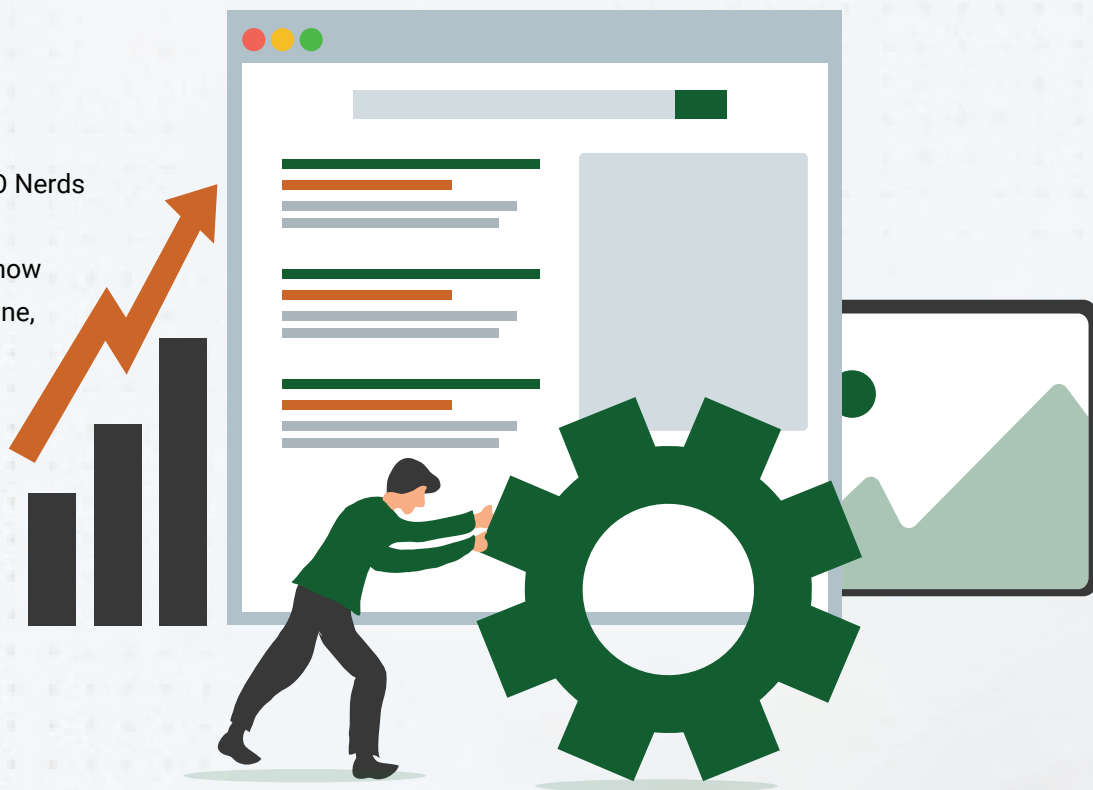In this 2-part SEO Optimization Guide eBook series, you will learn:

Part I
1. What SEO is and Why it's Important
2. Basic SEO Terminology
3. How to Build an SEO Strategy

Part II
1. Measuring SEO Success
2. SEO Tools to Use
3. Bonus Tips for the True SEO Nerds

This eBook you're reading right now is Part II! So if you missed part one, go back and read it first.
Now, let's dive in.

Measuring SEO Success

KPIs

KPIs (or Key Performance Indicators) are indicators of progress toward an intended result. In SEO, we measure a variety of KPIs in order to determine a specific marketing channel's success. At the business level, KPIs for organic (meaning unpaid) marketing efforts are going to be number of leads generated. How your company identifies and qualifies a lead is up to you—from eCommerce sales to contact form fill outs, etc.

Specifically, when looking at organic growth aside from leads or sales, we measure the following KPIs to track general brand awareness:

- Impressions
- Clicks
- Average Position
- Bounce Rate
- Average Time on Page

Impressions

According to Google, impressions represent how many times someone saw a link to your site on Google. Depending on the result type, the link might need to be scrolled or expanded into view. Impressions are important because they help you understand your reach. More impressions is indicative of your site performing well in terms of ranking. High impressions + low click through rate (more on that below) means your content is showing up in search results, but users aren't clicking on it. This indicates a need to adjust your content to match what people are looking for.

Clicks / Click Through Rate

Clicks represent how often someone clicked a link from Google (or any search engine) to your site. Clicks are important because they help you understand how well your content performs in terms of generating traffic to your site. Though you are unable to see competitor data, clicks also help you identify how well your content is performing against other content in the market.

Click through rate: The ratio of clicks divided by impressions for a given keyword or web page. Generally, a click through rate above 2% is considered above average. Further, the first Organic result of Google receives an average CTR of 39.6%.

Average Position

According to [Google](#), average position represents the relative ranking of the position of your link on Google, where 1 is the top position, 2 is the next position, and so on. Average position is an important metric to pay attention to, because the higher you show up in search results, the easier and more likely you are to be found by users performing searches. Ideally, companies should strive to be in the Top 20 positions of Google (first two pages) for any searches related to your offerings. Note: A link must get an impression for its position to be recorded. If a result does not get an impression, it will not have a rank at all.

Bounce Rate

Bounce rate is the percentage of visits to your website or web page where only 1 page was viewed, meaning no other actions were taken. Bounce rate doesn't directly affect SEO rankings, though may point out other SEO related issues such as a bad user experience or content that doesn't match search intent. On average, [blogs tend to have 70-90% bounce rates](#)—meaning 70-90% of users leave the website from that specific page.

Average Time on Page

According to [Google](#), average time on page refers to the amount of time visitors spend on a page of your site. Similar to bounce rate, average time on page doesn't directly affect SEO rankings, though may point out other SEO related issues such as a bad user experience or poor quality content.

Google Tools
### Google Analytics and Google Search Console

Google Search Console and Google Analytics ([don't miss the brand new GA4](#)) collect your website activity to give you data you can use to improve your SEO. You want to know how many visitors you are bringing in, who they are, and how they engage with your site to determine how to attract more of those visitors and get them to stick around and convert.

How to use these tools:

Review your Google Analytics data often.
Monitoring your goal completions, traffic, and most popular pages will help you understand what kind of content is performing well and what you should adjust, remove, or add.
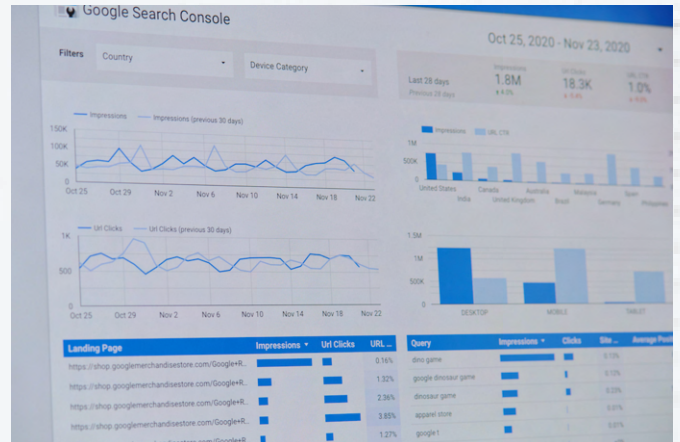
Ensure Google Search Console has indexed your site.
If it has not, your site will not show up in search results at all, meaning no amount of SEO improvement will help because Google doesn't recognize you. You can also check for site duplicates. If more than one version of your site is indexed, your data can become split across them.

Keyword Research Tools
## SEMRush, AHrefs, Uber Suggest, Moz

To learn more about the search market and keywords you should be targeting for your business, you can utilize a variety of tools. SEMRush, AHrefs, Uber Suggest, and Moz all provide information on keywords and domains. Specifically, you can use these tools' functionality to learn search volume and identify the competition for any given keyword—plus discover related keywords to target.

Additionally, you can analyze your own domain versus competitor domains to understand what keywords they are targeting and the corresponding pages so you can work to create better competing content.

These tools are incredibly useful for discovering new content to write for blogs and other ways to optimize your content to maximize your SEO rankings. Google Analytics and Google Search Console are great for your own website, but these tools are necessary to get a look at the competitive landscape and understand what others are doing in the market.

Some of the aforementioned tools require a monthly subscription in order to access, though &Marketing recommends using Uber Suggest as a starter because it has a free option to help you get started. If you are using Google Chrome as your main web browser, &Marketing also recommends installing Uber Suggest's Chrome Extension, which provides data within Google search results.

For the sake of transparency, SEMRush is the paid tool of choice for us at &Marketing. We also utilize Uber Suggest for a second set of data. Both AHrefs and Moz are comparable tools to SEMRush and are able to provide the same data.
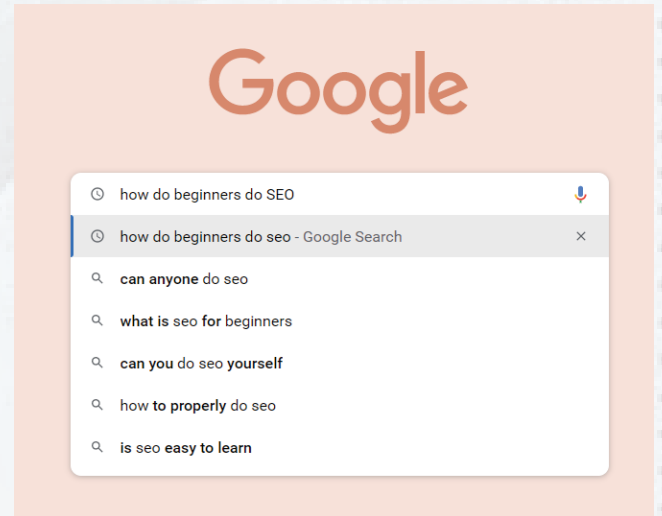
Bonus Tips For The Real SEO Nerds:

Local SEO and Local Map Packs

For local and regional businesses, SEO strategies should have a more geographic-specific focus . As mentioned in part 1 of this eBook series, the location of a user at the time of a Google search plays into the rankings for specific sites related to local businesses. For example, someone searching for "Pizza in New York" will receive pizza restaurants near them in New York and not Los Angeles.

If you have a local business, it's imperative to have a strong Google My Business account, which can be accomplished in part by including the right keywords in your profile and implementing a review strategy in order to generate user reviews. This will help you compete for the top position in the Google Map pack shown for local businesses.

> **Pro Tip:**
>
> If you are a national company with specific regional presences, your SEO strategy should include "Location" pages, or pages that house your location's address and other important information. As an example, pizza franchises will build a location-based directory to display all of their different store locations. With this setup, the pizza franchise will be able to rank well nationally, but also locally, for each of their different store locations.

Mobile SEO

The entirety of this eBook has focused on general SEO strategy but has not discussed any differences between desktop and mobile. Strategies for desktop and mobile are practically the same. But despite the similarities, mobile SEO has a few specific tactics that are important to consider:

Voice Optimization

Mobile users have the capability to use voice search. Through voice, people often search longer-tail keywords. This reinforces the importance of targeting long-tail keywords through your on-site content.

Map Optimization

Most people use Google and/or Apple maps exclusively on mobile devices. This reinforces the importance of creating strong business profiles, such as Google My Business, in order to rank well.

Mobile Speed

Mobile devices do not have the same computing power as desktops. This is important because mobile devices take longer to load websites and web pages. You should enlist a good web developer to review your mobile site setup and ensure it loads quickly so it can rank well.

For Web Developers
Page Speed, Image Optimizer, Source Code Minification

Part of SEO strategy involves optimizing the backend of a website. This falls outside of targeting keywords and ensuring content has the appropriate setup, solid strategy, and good writing. More specifically, Google has their own page speed metrics that help you identify where your website is performing well and the opportunities you have to improve page speed. Remember, this is important as it relates to Google's ranking factor "Usability of Web Pages".

You can run tests on your website at the following link: https://pagespeed.web.dev/

Most often, we see businesses struggle with:
- Uploading optimized images
- Too much hard code on the backend of the site

We recommend running the test for your own site and sending it to your web developers to fix. For the issues above, we recommend installing the following website plugins:

Image Optimization:
Smush, Optimus, EWWW Image Optimizer
Image Optimization plugins allow you to upload raw graphics, and the plugin automatically optimizes the size and resolution for your website. This will immediately aid in website speed.

Source Code Minification:
Autoptimize, WP Super Minify, W3 Total Cache
Code minification plugins automatically minimize and cache source code for your site in order to eliminate unneeded scripts that may be affecting your site performance. By installing a code minification plugin, you will see an immediate improvement in website speed.

Conclusion

SEO might seem like it's a complicated process with lots of acronyms and jargon. But once you understand what it is, why it's important, and how to approach it with a strategy that works, you can demystify this important marketing tactic and learn how to make it work for you.

This second part of the 2-part series has walked you through some of the more advanced elements of measuring the success of SEO once you get started, tools to use that make SEO even easier and more effective, and a few extra bonus tips. If some of the info in this eBook overwhelmed you, don't worry. Every single small step you take and improvement you make counts.

If you're trying to get your arms around SEO or are curious how leveraging this marketing strategy can help you generate more leads, grow your business, and meet your goals, reach out to our resident SEO expert today.

About the Author

Dexter Burgess

Marketing Manager Dexter Burgess takes the lead on implementing new tactics and promoting change through data-driven strategies. Dex works hard at client relations through consistent communication and positive feedback, never settling until the customer is understood and happy.

About &Marketing

&Marketing provides the robust outsourced marketing department growing companies need without the high overhead costs of big agencies or full-time employees. Our variable model empowers businesses to reach their growth goals through access to the guidance and expertise of senior level strategists and a flexible execution team.