

Technical. The Nuts & Bolts of SEO



Want to understand more about the technical aspects of SEO? Below we explain some of the key elements in plain non- techno jargon unadulterated english.

1. SERPS / Organic / Natural Listings

The natural 'organic' search engine listings, or SERPs (search engine results pages) are what is shown after a search on a search engine such as Google in the main body of the page i.e. not the paid for results in boxes on the left hand column of the page (and sometimes on the top). These listings are what SEO is concerned with. Note that although these are called unpaid listings they are in fact paid for in most cases as to appear on the first pages of any search engine in a competitive industry necessitates hiring an SEO company.

2. PPC / Pay per click / Adwords

The pay per click listings (PPC), called Adwords by Google, occupy the left hand column of the listings page, and are paid for listings. Advertisers are charged an amount every time a customer clicks on one of the boxes. Pricing for each click is determined by the amount of competition for the keywords, and can range from 10 pence to £5 a click.

3. Ranking Factors

These are the factors that search engines use to judge how relevant your site is and therefore how high it should be ranked. The most important ones are:

- Keyword use in title tag
- Anchor Text of inbound link
- Age of site
- Link popularity within the site's internal link structure
- Topical relevance of inbound links
- Link popularity of site in topical community
- Keyword use in body text
- Global link popularity of sites that link to the site
- Global link authority of the site

4. Search Engines and Algorithms

Search Engines find and index the billions of pages on the web and then deliver the most relevant

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and important pages to users when they search. The relevance of a page is the degree to which the content of a page matches the keywords searched on. Therefore for a search on 'Casio digital cameras' all pages with that keyword phrase in their content are deemed relevant to the users search. However, the Search Engine also needs to determine which of these pages are most important and rank them accordingly and it does this by citation i.e. the act of one website referencing another. The importance of a website increases with every other website that references (links) to it. Therefore using mathematical formulas called algorithms - made up hundreds of secret variables - the search engines rank websites by relevance and importance.

5. Link Building

External links to a website are the critical factor in determining rank (the position in the search engine) i.e. links determine the importance of a website in relation to other websites with similar content. Link building is the most important part of SEO and should never stop - it is an ongoing part of the marketing of a website. In simple terms each link to a web page is a vote for that page, and the page with most votes gets the best ranking. However, not all links are equal. A link's value is determined by the importance (page rank) of the site the link is coming from, the authority of the site the link is on, the trustworthiness of the site, and the anchor text. There are many ways of obtaining links, and some of these are listed below:

- Using good content to attract links naturally
- Creating content to attract links
- Submission to directories
- Buying links
- Exchanging links
- Creating links via Social Media
- Grey and black hat strategies (link farms/link networks/automated link creation)

6. Keywords

A keyword is a need formulated into a string of words (keyword phrases) which describe that need succinctly when entered into a search engine e.g. 'buy casio digital camera'. The average number of keywords in a search is 3. However, a large percentage of searches are performed using up to 8 keywords. Research has shown that the more words a searcher uses when performing a transactional search (the more specific they are) the closer they are to a conversion action i.e. buy, sign up etc e.g. buy casio EXILIM hi-zoom EX-H10 digital camera.

7. Keyword Analysis

Every search in every search engine is recorded. Keyword analysis is the retrieving of this info in order to determine the keywords with the best returns in relation to the SEO campaign conversion goals i.e. what is the aim of the SEO campaign - sales/leads/traffic etc. Generally the best returns will come from the keywords with the highest searches to lowest competitiveness ratio. A keyword analysis also tries to understand the search behaviour of the users in order to determine what other synonymous keywords they may be using to find the same products and service. For this reason Keyword Analysis is ongoing due to the changing terminology and fashions in users' search behaviour.

Have a look at your internet market by entering your product or service keywords [here](#).

8. SEO Friendly Websites

Search engines use pieces of software called 'crawlers' in order to find and index websites. The 'crawlers' only 'see' websites in a certain way (they cannot read images, flash etc). Depending on what technology has been used to build a website, it may not be visible and will not be indexed and therefore will not show up in the search engine pages for a relevant search. Below we list the top ten tips to make a website SEO friendly (download the full version pdf [here](#)).

1. Make the site accessible by Search Engines by using HTML
2. Create a Logical Flat Information Architecture
3. Use Root domains not Subdomains
4. Optimize Domain names/URLs
5. Target Keywords in Tags
6. Use Keywords in the Content
7. Use 301 HTTP status code and a custom 404 page
8. Build an CMS that allows editing of SEO features
9. Use Keyword-rich Anchor Texts
10. Verify robots.txt file

9. Content

It is the content on a page (the words) that defines what a website is about for the search engines. Search engines place a lot importance on good original up-to-date content. Search engines create 'semantic maps' of all the words and phrases on a page and then use that map to decide whether a certain page fits a search query. If it does not it will not be shown to the user who performed the search query. Therefore it is obvious that in order for a website to get good rankings for their product or service words on the search engines they need to have these keywords show up in their content on the website. Good original content is also important in order to attract high quality links. Duplicate content within a site will be penalized and unoriginal content will not be ranked highly. For successful SEO original unique content is king.

10. Information Architecture

Information architecture of a website is the structure and flow of the hierarchy i.e. how the pages of the website are organised. For the search engines and users a flat structure is always best as this requires a minimum number of clicks to get to the desired page. Most content should be accessible in three clicks from the home page. If it is not the user is being asked to do too much work to find what they want, and may give up.

11. Black Hat Techniques

Black hat techniques are SEO techniques that push the limits or ignore the Webmaster Guidelines in the quest for better rankings. This may include:

- Buying links
- Using Link farms to obtain links
- Automated link creation
- Increasing ranking via spam
- Using NoFollow in link exchanges
- Keyword stuffing
- Hidden text

- Doorway pages
- Cloaked pages
- Scraper sites
- Article spinning

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Alternatively, fill in our contact form [here](#).

Thank you for your time.
with regards
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About Us

Place1 is a rapidly growing young and vibrant SEO company based in Bethnal Green, London. Our directors have worked in Internet Marketing since 2002.

Place1 is a breath of fresh air in the SEO industry because of our commitment to customer service, attention to detail and complete openness with our methods. This is underlined by our customer's 24hr access to the Apollo App which allows them to see anything and everything we do in relation to their campaign. We hide nothing. We don't believe SEO is a dark art, it is a marketing service firmly based on return of investment.

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