

Seo For The Average Webmaster



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Search Engine Optimisation For The Real World SEO Techniques For Everyday Webmasters

Introduction: David Congreave, Tim Whiston, Roy Miller and Terry Telford recently recorded a tell-all TeleClass that showed attendees how to massage your website to grab the search engine's attention.

The following excerpts were taken directly from the TeleClass. You're about to: * Peek under the hood of your favorite search engine * Discover the difference between on page and off page optimisation *

Uncover the truth about keywords * Put content in review Peek under the hood of your favorite search

engine David: Ok. To start off, when we say search engines, we tend to say Google, because Google accounts for the vast majority of searches. For myself, Google ranges from 80 to 90 of my search engine

traffic. So when we talk about Google it means search engines in general. Ok. Search engines are

essentially a document retrieval program. They use computer programs that follow links on the internet and catalog web pages. The programs analyse the pages to try and figure out what the pages are about.

Once they establish the page content, that page is indexed under a keyword, or set of keywords that

relates to that page. When someone enters a search term into the search engines, the software displays

the most relevant webpages, based on the keywords they're filed under. You could think of the internet as a giant filing cabinet and each website is a file folder. The search engines simply sift through the files and pull out the ones that match what you're looking for. It usually starts with the top 10 results. So the challenge is trying to convince the search engines that your webpage is more important than everyone else in your niche. If you do that, it means a lot of traffic for your website.

Terry: So it's not a mystical instrument. It's just a document retrieval system.

David: Yeah. Actually it's like a match making service.

On page vs. off page SEO

Terry: Ok. Cool. So you have to make your website as attractive to Google as possible. But there's actually two kinds of search engine optimisation isn't there? On page and off page.

Tim: Yes. That's right.

Terry: Ok Tim, can you explain the difference between them?

Tim: Sure we'll start with on page. This is what most people think of when they think of search engine optimization. On page or onsite SEO refers to the elements of your webpage that tell Google what keywords to index your page under. The off site or off page optimization, refers to the number, quality and nature of the links that are pointing back to your pages. If we look at each of these in a little more detail, the primary element for onsite or on page optimisation would be your tags. The HTML title tags, the image ALT tags, the image filenames and the textual content. But the most important is the title tag. If you don't get anything else perfect, get that title tag right. It's going to synchronize up with your off site efforts and create some really nice results for you.

Terry: So we don't have to do anything with meta tags or descriptions? Nothing?

Tim: Well I wouldn't encourage somebody to completely neglect it, but more importantly you need to focus on your offsite optimisation. The truth about keywords

Terry: Ok. Now what about keywords? Should I be concerned with keywords when I'm developing a website?

Tim: I would start by keeping it basic and building a list of what we call a long tail keywords. Just get a pen and paper or a notepad on a computer. Start with common sense and write down all the terms you think people would be searching for in your niche. For example, if we continue with the organic gardening theme, maybe people are looking for natural fertilizer, organic gardening techniques, or organic gardening designs. After you write down all the terms you think people will be searching for within that niche, then start a bit of research and expand your list. It's kind of like trying to get into your prospects head.

Terry: So what Tim's saying is you sit down and write common sense words and phrases, that surround your subject matter. Can we give an example of that? How would you start?

David: It really depends on where you are coming from. If you have a website already and you want to optimise it, you already have a lot of your keywords on your pages. You built a

site that is full of keywords, so you want to look in Google and see which keywords you are ranking for already. Then you just optimize for those words so you move higher up the search engine rankings. If you want more keywords, or you haven't started a website yet, you will start with keyword research. Start by think about what your prospect will be looking for. And then if you want to get a little bit more detailed about it, you can use services like WordTracker.com

Terry: OK. Other than WordTracker, what other services are available?

David: Google has a free tool. If you go to Google's website and sign up for a free Google AdWords account, there are several tools in there that you can use to research your keywords.

Terry: Ok, so I can go either to Google or WordTracker and start off, like Tim said, with common sense and the system will pop out some additional keyword phrases for me.

Content in review

Terry: Ok. That brings up another aspect of developing your website. The content. I would like to switch gears for a moment from search engine optimisation and take 5 minutes with you Roy. If you can describe how you start to write copy for your website. Right from the very beginning.

Roy: The first thing to note is that search engines are getting a little bit smarter. Especially Google. They are a smart bunch of folks at Google. They are always improving their algorithms. One of the things they are getting smarter about is homing in on the pages that are truly helpful for people. If you are searching for a page about organic gardening, Google wants to find the best page about organic gardening for you. They want to serve up the page that gives the human searcher the best information about that topic. And you mention earlier, Terry about the spammy keyword stuffed pages that only a cyborg would understand. You don't want that. Increasingly, search engines are not looking favorably on pages like that. Especially Google. Google's getting pretty cut throat about it. And the reason is, they provide a service. They want people to come to Google and get good out of it. The only way to get good out of it is, to find pages that are actually helpful. So when people ask, how do we write copy that is good for humans and good for search engines? You can't forget the first part. Focus on the first part first. Make your copy good for human beings. It's got to communicate your message. If it's providing good information about your topic, search engines actually like that better than just a bunch of keywords in there that sound like you're talking in a chant. So that's the first thing to keep in mind. When people talk about copywriting, they often talk about sales pages. Most people who create those pages aren't really focused on SEO at all. They are getting traffic to those pages from other sources besides search engines. So when we are talking about web copy for the most part, when we are talking about it in SEO terms, we are talking about other kinds of copy. So you have a website

about organic gardening and on your home page you talk a little bit about organic gardening. You have a page with a different aspect of organic gardening. Remember the first rule is to make the page helpful to human beings and then you want to do what you might call SEO-affying your page. The other guys have talked about that a little bit. I know that in Lucid SEO we are going in a little more detail about it. But here's some examples of the things you might do to SEO-affy your copy. So you've made it useful to human beings. Then you want to inject your keyword into the copy or just go back and make sure your keywords are in your copy in ways that will make the search engines really like your page. So again, let's go back to something that is not even on your page in the way most people think about it. Your title tag. That's copy. People won't think about it as copy but it's copy. Copy doesn't mean just the text on the middle of your page, it's all the copy on your page. Tim mentioned the ALT tag in the image tag earlier. That's copy too. But getting back to the actual stuff that the human being can read on the page. Start with the title tags that show up in the title bar of your browser. Make sure your keywords are in it. On your page, you will have a headline or two. You're going to have H1 tags, H2 tags, H3 tags, anything with an H in it. Put your keywords in there. Then you want to make sure your keywords are in the actual text on the page, and you want to have a healthy amount of text on the page. If you just have a few keywords on the page, or a few words on the page that's probably not going to cut the mustard. What you really want is a healthy bit of text with your keywords in it in a natural way. So if you're trying to write human readable stuff, how do you do that? Well it's pretty easy, actually. Start by talking about your topic and use your keywords early and often in your copy. That is the rule of thumb. Early and often, just use your keywords. You don't need to get all in a twist about keyword density and all that stuff. Just use your keywords early and often naturally. Also, something else to mention, that is becoming relevant with search engines is related keywords. I won't go in to too much detail, but using stuff that is related to your keywords, but not exactly your keywords. So synonyms for your keywords. Topical stuff that relates to your keyword. Google's getting smarter, they are getting smarter all the time and they are going to be moving in the direction of really trying to figure out what the page is about. So don't just say, well my keyword is organic gardening. I'll include 67 instances of organic gardening on my page. That's not going to do it. Include organic gardening, a few times, 10 times, however many times, just a healthy number and also include related concepts in your copy that search engines will like. If you do that, you're going to end up with copy search engines like. But you're not going to fix it so human beings will look at your page and say, uuuggghhh! This

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