Avoid Exact match domain names.

Your URL should match the page title but you can strip 'dead words' out of it such as "and", "or", "the".

Example

Good example: If your page title is 'bicycles for sale in mytown' your URL might be bicycles-for-sale-mytown.html.

Each page has one title and this can be found

Every page on your site should have a unique title of no more than 70 characters (or it won't show fully in the search results).

Meta keyword tag

Keep your keyword density for each word or phrase between 2 and 6% in order not to appear spammy and to ensure your text is easy to read.

Be aware that the major search engines understand different words that have the same meanings such as 'car' and 'automobile'.

Make sure your keywords appear naturally within the main text content of the page.

Internal links are any links within your website that take the user to another page within your website.

Make sure you have Google Analytics and Google Webmaster Tools set up correctly for your website.

Learn to analyse the successful pages and the not so successful pages by considering the click through rates, bounce rates, time on site, exit pages, visitor flow, etc.

There are many examples of companies that thrived in the SEO era:

Yelp, Wikipedia,Linked in and TripAdvisor are a few that truly mastered the SEO machine.

Trulia, which is in the Zillow Group portfolio, is another example of a company that mastered the dark arts of SEO.

Today, SEO is still incredibly important.

Companies spend tremendous time and resources trying to keep their search results in the top slots of a Google search.

But times, they are a-changing. Desktop web searches are in decline, and Google is dominant. As Google stretches for revenue growth, they have slowly, but surely, annexed the natural search results and converted this valuable real estate to advertising. They are turning free-riders into taxpayers. Their paid advertising results are so good and relevant that it’s debatable whether they are poisoning the consumer well, which would leave the door open for companies whose search results are “natural.” Some of my smart colleagues hope so, but I’m not so sure. In the travel vertical, for example,[EXPEDIA[https://cdncache-a.akamaihd.net/items/it/img/arrow-10x10.png](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/new-age-marketing-rich-barton#73265443)](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/new-age-marketing-rich-barton" \l "73265443" \o "Click to Continue > by Ads) is big enough to pay for those top search results, so when a person searches in Google for a flight from Seattle to New York and sees a great fare from Expedia front and center, why do they care how it got there?

SEO and natural search results are in decline. And, as alternative search paradigms (mobile, Alexa, AppStore) grow, and as Facebook/Youtube/Snapchat radically increase the volume and diversity of “avails,” I would argue that we are entering a new golden age of marketing and branding.

Queue the return of Don Draper — or, more accurately, his grandson — who loves a good tagline, but also appreciates the beauty of a well-built spreadsheet. The future is a diverse and modern marketing team, made up of the clever analytical marketer who uses big data to make smarter decisions, the public relations expert who finds ways to help the brand tell great stories, the social media guru who knows how to stay on top of the latest channels and engage directly with consumers, and, yes, the artist/storyteller who can move people to tears. Marketing is back. Aspiring startup engineers take heed: **Marry a marketer.**

I’m lucky enough to be involved with many companies who have done marketing and branding right, but one that figured this out early was Zillow. We launched Zillow in 2006 when the web was still a vast, flat playing field refereed by Google. We were wary of both SEO and SEM from the beginning, as we didn’t want to get hooked on Google’s oil. We wanted to drill our own wells (find our own customers) and make sure they knew they were on Zillow being empowered and enlightened and not just “on the web.”

We didn’t have much money, though, and we couldn’t invest in advertising, but we knew the most important “P” of the Marketing Mix 5 P’s is “Product.” So, we built a highly provocative product (with the Zestimate), and married that to a brilliant PR plan conceived by our head of communications, Amy Bohutinsky (now our COO).

On day one, so many millions of users showed up that Zillow.com tipped over for a day and half. For years after that, product and PR were our bread and butter. Only after we had 50 million users per month and a business model did we layer on traditional brand advertising, including TV. Our marketing took us to household-name status, and now Google users search for the term “Zillow” more often than the term “real estate.”

The lesson here is that Amy, representing marketing, was a full partner and strong voice in the room from the earliest days. Take heed: Bring in a great marketing partner early. And listen.

Branding is back, folks. Geeky grandson of Draper is here. If you’ve been living unhealthily off SEO and are feeling the pinch, go hit the gym. Start building new muscles. Your arms are skinny from disuse. Performance marketing. Social media marketing. PR. Branding. Look at your unaided awareness numbers. If you don’t know what

Learn how to SEO your website in 10 steps

Step 1 : How to SEO your domain name

What

Your domain name is something like www.nameyouchoose.com

How & Why

If you haven't registered a domain yet look for one that contains at least one of the keywords you want to rank for.

Avoid Exact match domain names.

If you already have a website established consider skipping this, it's only for an ideal world.

Example

www.bicyclesmytown.com is better than www.franksbicycles.com

More

For more detail skip to how to plan your SEO works.

Step 2 : How to SEO your URLs

What

A URL might be something like www.yoursite.com/thepageiwanttorank.html. The part we are talking about is thepageiwanttorank.html.

In WordPress it is known as the 'permalink'.

How & Why

Your purpose is to help search engines understand the content of the page because they place weight on the content of the URL and to make your page look more attractive in the search engine results.

Your URL should match the page title but you can strip 'dead words' out of it such as "and", "or", "the".

Example

Good example: If your page title is 'bicycles for sale in mytown' your URL might be bicycles-for-sale-mytown.html.

Bad Example: A URL like page.php?product=bicycles&town=anytown&transaction=forsale.

More

For more detail skip to how to SEO your URLs.

Step 3 : How to SEO your page titles

What

Each page has one title and this can be found:

within your HTML code tags <title> and </title>

are usually the post title in WordPress but can be edited if you have a plugin such as SEO for WordPress by Yoast.

How & Why

Your page title tells search engines what your content is about (and they will believe you if the content matches) so you should be looking to get one or two of the keywords you want to rank for in here.

The page title is also the blue text users click on in the search results of Google, Bing, Yahoo, etc. so it should be interesting and engaging to encourage visitors to click through.

Every page on your site should have a unique title of no more than 70 characters (or it won't show fully in the search results).

Example

example: If you were trying to rank for "successful website" then the title 10 steps to a successful website would be better than Things to make your site more popular because the former a) contains your keywords and b) is more attractive to users when seen in the search results.

More

For more detail skip to how to SEO your meta tags.

Step 4 : How to SEO your meta description tag

What

Each page has one meta description tag.

In the HTML code it looks like this: <meta description="The description of the page" />.

In WordPress the first 170 or so characters are taken from the post but you can edit this if you use a plugin such as SEO for Wordpress by Yoast.

How & Why

Every page should have a unique meta description of up to 190 characters which provides a summary of the page.

Meta descriptions often show as the black text in search results so they should be attractive and motivate internet users to click through.

Meta descriptions are ignored by search engines but as they can appear in the search results optimizing them is essential.

If in doubt use the first 190 characters from the pages visible content (not including the title).

Do not list keywords or go far over the 190 character limit.

Example

Sticking with our 'bicycle shop in anytown' the home page meta description might be: "We stock a wide range of bicycles for sale and we're open 7am to 7pm daily. Find us on the High Street, anytown, call us on 0800-1975-765 or order online 24/7/365. Low prices guaranteed".

More

For more detail skip to how to SEO your meta tags.

Step 5 : How to SEO (or not) your meta keyword tag

What

If you have these you will find them on each page:

within your HTML written as <meta name="keywords" content="keyword one, keyword two, keyword three" />.

in WordPress there is often a field called "keywords" for each post or static page.

How & Why

If you have keyword meta tags get rid of them. They are ignored by search engines and only assist your competitors in knowing what you are trying to rank for.

Example

None - don't do it!

More For more detail skip to how to SEO your meta tags

Step 6 : How to SEO your keyword density

What

Your keyword density is the percentage of times the keyword (or phrase) that you are trying to rank for shows in each page.

So if one of your keyword phrase is 'bicycles' and this appears twice in 100 words of content your density is 2%.

How & Why

Keep your keyword density for each word or phrase between 2 and 6% in order not to appear spammy and to ensure your text is easy to read.

Be aware that the major search engines understand different words that have the same meanings such as 'car' and 'automobile'.

Make sure your keywords appear naturally within the main text content of the page.

Example

More

Note that in the field of SEO keyword density is a hotly debated topic ranging from those who see it as essential to those who believe it is of no importance.

See the blog post Does keyword density matter in 2013? for more information.

Step 7 : How to SEO your internal links

What

Internal links are any links within your website that take the user to another page within your website.

The text within the link is known as anchor text. For example <a href="myotherpage.html">This is the anchor text</a>

How & Why

Whenever possible make your link text (rather than a graphic) and make that text descriptive (see examples below).

Where you have no choice but to use 'click here' or 'see more' consider changing them into graphics so their text is ignored and then use the title tag within the link code to be descriptive.

Example

If you are linking to a page about 'bicycle wheels' use 'bicycle wheels' as the text of the link, not (for example), 'click here'.

If you look in the box below I have not used click here as the link, instead I've used the title of the page I'm linking to.

More

For more detail skip to How unhelpful code affects your SEO.

Step 8 : How to SEO your code

What

Websites with poorly written code undermine the confidence search engines have in them because they will not be sure your pages will display correctly in all the different browsers such as Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari, etc.

How & Why

For websites written in code before HTML5 use the W3C Validator service.

For websites written in HTML 5 use validator.nu.

Note you may not be able to reduce your errors to zero (some additions such as Facebook can cause issues) but you should look to minimise any mistakes within your control.

Example

More

For more detail skip to How unhelpful code affects your SEO.

Step 9 : How to SEO your visitor behaviour

What

What your visitors do has a direct bearing on your organic rankings so you'll need to understand what makes them stay ... and what makes them leave.

How & Why

Make sure you have Google Analytics and Google Webmaster Tools set up correctly for your website.

Learn to analyse the successful pages and the not so successful pages by considering the click through rates, bounce rates, time on site, exit pages, visitor flow, etc.

Example

More

For more detail skip to User Behaviour and SEO.

Step 10 : How to SEO with link building

What

Links from other websites to yours tell the search engines you are popular so long as they are quality links from quality websites.

Ideally the content you create should persuade others naturally to link to you or share your content on social media platforms such as Facebook, Google+, Twitter, etc. so always consider your content as your number one link building tool.

How & Why

Do not engage in any link building 'programmes' or software. These are the fastest way to getting you banned from Google.

Think quality, not quantity. One good link is worth 1,000 poor quality ones.

Remember links from social media such as Facebook, Google+, Twitter, etc. count so make it easy for your visitors to share your content.

Ex