

2017 DIY Guide: How to Do Your Own SEO



Search Engine Optimization.

"You have to do it!"

"You have to be ranked #1!"

"Why aren't you doing SEO??"

STOP ME IF YOU'VE HEARD THIS

I've done SEO for awhile now, and the biggest issue I see is that even though SEO has grown exponentially more and more popular every year—most people don't really know what it is, how it works, or what they are even aiming for when tackling SEO.

Unfortunately, there isn't any college degree that you can get for SEO. It changes all the time and all of it is controlled by our Google overlords (praise be to the great Google).

So you're left with a few options—hire a questionable overseas company spamming your inbox with beautiful headlines like, "SEO FOR ONLY \$1!!!" or "CAN I DO YOUR SEO FOR \$50?!?! PLEASE HIRE US!!"—yikes. OR, you can hire a reputable agency to do handle your SEO strategy, so you can focus on your business strengths. But rates vary widely, and it can be maddening to decide who to use for SEO.

Your final option is to do it yourself. And, if you're a resourceful, DIY-er (which I know you are because you're reading this), you can this guide to help you properly assess and address your SEO goals.

If you want to learn more about SEO in general, these are two great introductory guides:



<https://moz.com/beginners-guide-to-seo>



<https://blog.kissmetrics.com/seo-guide/>

Do You Know What Your Business Objectives Are?

What are your goals for your business and SEO? Make sure that whatever your business objectives are, that they can actually be met by SEO. We know SEO is not for everyone. We recommend you determine some S.M.A.R.T. marketing goals for your business and see if SEO aligns with them.

HubSpot does a great job of laying out their process for setting goals that you can follow:



[How to Set S.M.A.R.T. Marketing Goals - HubSpot](#)

Have You Done A Competitive Analysis Of Your Competitors?

The easiest way to kickstart your SEO is to look at what other people are doing. Search for the keywords that you want your website to show up for, and see who is there already. Don't include the behemoths in your search results like Yelp, Thumbtack or anything like that. They aren't going anywhere, and you shouldn't aim to outrank them.

Review what content tactics and digital marketing strategies they are using. Then, you can get a great head start by using your competitors strategies and improving on them!

Matthew Woodward has a great tutorial on how to analyze your competitors and Neil Patel has an in-depth guide to a bunch of different tools you can use to complete your analysis:



<http://www.matthewwoodward.co.uk/tutorials/backlink-competitor-analysis/>



<http://neilpatel.com/2015/12/05/12-competitor-analysis-tools-that-will-improve-your-site-traffic/>

Did You Do Proper Keyword Research & Analysis?

You may have heard, Google has taken away the free Keyword Planner. But that's no reason to panic, we just have to get more creative with our methods of finding keywords. Essentially, it'll be what language you think your customers will be using to search for a business like yours.

If you're a Chicago-based DUI lawyer, you'd want to target keywords like "chicago DUI lawyer" and other similar keywords.

Brian Dean at Backlinko and the Ahrefs team have fantastic pieces on keyword research and the Authority Hacker team shares the best tools for you to carry out the job:



<http://backlinko.com/keyword-research>



<https://ahrefs.com/blog/keyword-research/>



<https://www.authorityhacker.com/best-keyword-research-tools/>

Did You Make Sure Your Technical SEO Is On Point?

You need to make sure that the technical details Google is looking for are all met. Nothing is too complicated, but I will say this guide is specifically for WordPress. Follow these checklists.

Backlinko is an incredibly helpful 16 step checklist to optimize your on-site SEO. Local SEO Checklist is a free resource specifically geared to help your local business.

Siteliner and Screaming Frog are both great tools for assessing the quality of your website's technical SEO. We personally use Screaming Frog at FEAD, but it has to be downloaded onto your computer. Siteliner can be used directly in your browser. Check them out:



<http://backlinko.com/on-page-seo>



<http://www.siteliner.com/>



<http://localseochecklist.org/>



<https://www.screamingfrog.co.uk/seo-spider/>

How Is The Quality Of Your Content?

You've probably heard that quote, "Content is King". It's true, but how do you make good content? The best definition I've heard on the subject is from [Jay Acunzo](#), "Content marketing is just solving the same customer problems as your product but through media you create and distribute."

Don't think that you can spend 5 minutes slapping together 200 words and have it be quality. Gregory Ciotti (forgive the mild profanity, the content is good) has provided a brilliant resource for content, and so has contenttools:



<http://contenttools.com/content-marketing/content-creation/>



<http://thinktraffic.net/ways-to-write-epic-shit>

What Is The User Experience Like On Your Website?

If you have Google analytics, that's fantastic. If not, get it installed ASAP. Check your website traffic, make sure your bounce rate is under 90% and make sure that the time spent on your website is more than 1 minute.

You can pay \$50 for a user who will review your site and give you invaluable outside feedback on it, or you can get a free 5-minute video with Peek!

Peep Laja from ConversionXL has a wonderful guide on conversion optimization and Qualaroo does a deep dive for beginners into the world of conversion rate optimization. "Combine these resources to get the best results for your efforts:



<http://conversionxl.com/conversion-optimization-guide/>



<https://qualaroo.com/beginners-guide-to-cro/>



<http://peek.usertesting.com/>

How Many Links Do You Have And Are They Relevant?

We talked about how crucial SEO is for ranking in Google in this article [here](#). It's important to have lots of them, but PLEASE don't build links without thinking it through first. High quality, relevant links will help you win the ranking game, but low quality and/or low relevance links can hurt your ranking and even get you penalized or blacklisted by Google. Be careful out there.

You can find out how many links you have on your website through free tools like:

 <http://openlinkprofiler.org/>

 <http://explorer.cognitiveseo.com/>

SEO isn't easy, but that doesn't mean you can't give it your best shot. If you run into trouble or just get fed up with the effort, don't worry—that's why we're here! [Contact us](#) for a free 30-minute consultation today.