Search Engine Optimisation

Search engine optimisation (SEO) is the process of growing the quality and quantity of website traffic by increasing the visibility of a website or a web page to users of a web search engine. SEO refers to the improvement of unpaid results and excludes direct traffic and the purchase of paid placement.

In a nutshell, it's the process of getting traffic from the "free," "organic," "editorial" or "natural" search results on search engines.

3 KEY THINGS TO GRASP SEO

KEYWORD RESEARCH TO DETERMINE THE RIGHT FOCUS KEY PHRASES

find out what your target audience is searching and what it will take to actually rank for those keywords. Google's own **Keyword Planner** is the best tool for this. **Google Trends** is also a super handy tool to understand what your audience is searching for!

CONTENT IS KING

Ensure that you keep content on your website fresh and relevant with your chosen focus keywords in mind, Compose unique long-form content and make sure to add meta descriptions, inbound and outbound links and alt tag your images to help Google's bots crawl and rank your content.

USER EXPERIENCE

Search engines value user experience (UX) so, if your site is slow to load or isn't optimised for mobile, bounce rates will increase and therefore negatively impact your SEO efforts. We recommend using Google's **Page Speed Insights** Tool or **GT Metrix** to check your site speed.

DOs & DON'Ts

DO use analytics to measure performance - Keyword analytics and planning tools are your best allies when determining your focus keywords.

DO regularly check in with your site's UX. Use Google Analytics (GA) to monitor page bounce rates and measure overall performance. Make sure your site is mobile responsive!

DO create relevant content for your target market and write with selected focus keywords in mind. Ensure the title and meta description relate to the content clearly. Include links to key internal web pages along with a few external links to lift your content's credibility and improve SEO. Don't forget to link to your social media too! Install the **Yoast SEO plugin** to your website to guide your SEO efforts.

DON'T keyword stuff. This refers to the overuse of keywords which leads to poor readability and repetitive content. This is likely to put off customers, potentially reducing conversions, increasing bounce rates and in turn lowering rankings.

DON'T copy large pieces of content. Search engines favour fresh and original content which adds value to the user and keeps them interested on site.

DON'T avoid voice search! Almost 50% of online searches are now voice- activated. What this requires is more focus on conversational language for content along with targeting long-tail keyword phrases, paying more attention to mobile and leveraging Google My Business listings.