

Search Engine Optimization Fundamentals

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What is SEO?

- Search engine optimization (SEO) is the process of improving the visibility of a website or web page in "natural", "organic" or un-paid search results.
- SEO considers how search engines function and what people search for online.

Free SEO Tools and Services

- Google Analytics (www.google.com/analytics)
- Google Webmaster Tools (www.google.com/webmasters)
- Google Keyword Tool (adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal)
- SEOBook (tools.seobook.com)
- SEOMoz Tools (www.seomoz.org/tools)

Resources and Links

- Google's SEO Starter Guide (www.google.com/webmasters/docs/search-engine-optimization-starter-guide.pdf)
- Google Webmaster on YouTube (www.youtube.com/user/GoogleWebmasterHelp)
- SEO Ranking Factors 2009 (www.seomoz.org/article/search-ranking-factors)
- SEO Ranking Factors 2010 (www.scribd.com/doc/31477021/SEO-Ranking-Factors-2010-SMX-London)



Short and Simple Checklist (The Bare Minimum)

- Page title and description tag
- Content (and the use of keywords)
- Heading tags (particularly the H1 tag)
- External link destinations
- Anchor text for links
- Image filename and alt text
- Hierarchical navigation and friendly URLs

Search Engine Trends

- Personalized search results (different results for the same search)
- Local Search - Google Places prominent in the search engine result pages
- Social network data influencing search results (measure of trust)
- Social search – search results influenced by the searchers social connections
- Mobile specific search
- Videos and multimedia content influencing search results



Find more topics and cheat sheets by ProWorks at <http://www.proworks.com/blog/social-media-for-business>.

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SEOMoz SEO Ranking Factors by SEOMoz

The following ranking factors are based on aggregated responses of 72 SEO experts. The report was compiled and published by SEOMoz.

Factors scoring “Moderate Importance” are listed below. Other factors can be found in the full report.

Full report link: www.seomoz.org/article/search-ranking-factors



“Very High Importance”

- **Keywords in the title tag**
- Unique, relevant, valuable page content
- Keywords in anchor text from external links
- External link popularity, diversity of link sources, and page TrustRank
- *Publish web spam (negative effect)*



“High Importance”

- Keyword as first words of the title tag
- **Keywords in the domain name** (ProWorks.com vs. WebDevelopment.com)
- PageRank (algorithm based measure of importance)
- Topical relevance of external link sources (links from topical authorities/hubs)
- **Keywords in anchor text of internal links** (blog tags are an example)
- Geographic location of the host IP address (geo-targeting)
- *Links from known link brokers (negative effect)*
- *Link is paid for rather than editorially created (negative effect)*



“Moderate Importance”

- Keywords in the <H1> tag
- **Keywords in anchor text of internal and external links**
- Keyword use in the first 100 words of page content
- **Recency of page creation**
- Location of page within site hierarchy
- Internal link popularity
- Changes to links to the domain over time
- Links from restricted Top Level Domain extensions (examples .edu, .gov, .mil)
- **Good hierarchical content structure**
- Cloaking by user agent and cloaking by IP address
- Frequent server downtime and site inaccessibility
- Hiding text (with colors)
- Excessive repetition of anchor text in external links
- Geo-targeting set within Google Webmaster Tools (geo-targeting)
- Registration of site within Google Places (geo-targeting)
- *External links to web spam (negative effect)*

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