



9 SEO TIPS FOR YOUR SMALL BUSINESS

THEWIRE

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is a marketing tool that increases your visibility on big search engines like Google, Bing or Yahoo. These big three search engines are the primary method most Internet users will use to reach your site.

SEO:

Increase your visibility on

Google **bing** **YAHOO!**

SEO can help improve your business's rankings, drive traffic to your website and increase awareness in search engines to help you show up in customers' online search results.

Use these nine search engine optimization tips to help learn the basics of creating a search engine friendly website and help your business come out on top in customers' Internet searches.

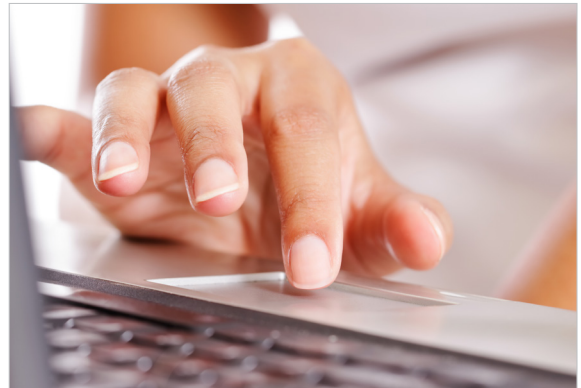


1. Brush Up on SEO 101

Google wants people to have a good experience when using their search engine. They select websites that deliver relevant information that's organized so someone can easily find it. If used appropriately, SEO can help websites do that. Google offers an [SEO Starter's Guide](#) that shows businesses how to use SEO to increase their visibility. They also have a [keyword planner tool](#) to help you extract the best keyword suggestions.

2. Pay for Website Clicks with Google AdWords

AdWords is a paid service that lets you designate which words web searchers are most likely to choose when searching online for your product. When a word or phrase you pick is used, your business appears prominently. The best part is, you only pay when someone clicks to visit your website or calls you from their device. For information about Google AdWords, [click here](#).



3. Nail the Big Three



While Google nets the lion's share of web searches, it's not the only engine you need to account for. Bing accounts for twenty percent of the market, and Yahoo isn't too far behind. Make sure your business is listed on all three engines. It's as simple as inputting your business name, address and phone number and any other important information, like hours of operation. Here's how you can submit your business to Google, Yahoo and Bing. Also, make sure you're consistent across all three platforms. Listings that don't agree cause confusion and errors.

Search Market Share in US:

Google Sites: 64%, Microsoft Sites: 20%, Yahoo Sites: 13%, Other: 3%.

Make sure your business is listed on all three.

Source: <http://searchengineland.com/bing-reaches-20-percent-search-milestone-in-us-market-218574>

4. Pick the Proper Categories

While establishing your search engine presence, you'll be asked to categorize your business. Make sure to get specific when choosing categories. For example, a book store would be a "Used Book Store," a "Rare Book Store" or a "Comic Book Store" (whatever is most appropriate for the business). Most engines allow for multiple categories — your job is to choose the correct ones. Be accurate and don't overlook this task, since all three search engines rarely, if ever, display businesses that aren't categorized.



Research from Skyword: Source: <http://www.searchenginepeople.com/blog/925-image-stats.html>

5. Visual Content Is King

Images are everything in today's digital landscape, so make sure you have plenty of good quality pictures of your business on your website and social media pages, like Facebook, Google+ and Pinterest. While you don't have to be an expert photographer to capture compelling shots of your storefront, products, customers and employees, you should strive for quality images. No thumbs in the corner or red-eye syndromes, if you can avoid them. And if you can't, get a relative with a photography hobby to take the pictures for you.



60% of consumers are more willing to consider local search results that include images.

23% of consumers are more likely to contact a business showcasing an image.

Source: <http://www.searchenginepeople.com/blog/925-image-stats.html>

6. Build a Content Rich Website

With mobile devices, social platforms and other offshoots, it pays to think of your website as corporate headquarters — a content-rich hub that supports all of your digital efforts. It's important to make sure your site has great material to support it. Include the mandatories like name, address and phone number, but also feature instructional videos, blog posts, customer testimonials and other information that will get your site noticed and generate links.

The most effective
B2B marketers
SPEND 39%
of their marketing
budgets on content.

Source: <http://www.cmo.com/articles/2015/7/22/15-mind-blowing-stats-about-content-marketing.html>

7. Make it Mobile

Take things one step further to make sure it's optimized for mobile. Mobile optimized means your site is designed to be read (and look good) on smaller screens, particularly smart phones. It also means the site can be navigated with the touch of a thumb — it should include buttons big enough so people can navigate using their digits. According to Google Research, 72% of consumers want mobile-friendly sites and are more apt to buy products and services from sites that work well on mobile devices. Plus, sites that are optimized for smartphones and other devices gain preferential treatment in Google's newest search algorithms.



8. Display Targeted Ads

If you're running promotional videos online, your business can earn money with Google AdSense. It's a free service that pays you for displaying targeted ads with your content. It's a service that's gaining in popularity with more than two million businesses signing on so far. To learn more about AdSense, [click here](#).



9. Put The Customer First

Make sure you're not writing for the search engines but for your readers (real people). Try to think of one or two keywords and phrases to target and use them naturally in your content. Last but not least, don't become too concerned with stuffing every keyword you can into your content. Make it your goal to create relevant and interesting pages above everything else.

By employing these must-have search engine optimization strategies, your business can increase its chances of attracting and keeping satisfied customers. These big three search engines are the primary method most Internet users will use to reach your site.

