

Introduction to SEO

inclusive design research centre
OCAD University

Katya Bovykina

katya.bovykina@gmail.com

Things to think about during today's community meeting:

- Are you building a website for people or for robots?
- Tools, tools, tools
- Never stop optimizing
- Quality vs. Quantity
- Any questions?

SEO - Search Engine Optimization

- is the process of affecting the visibility of a website or a web page in a search engine's unpaid results—often referred to as "natural," "organic," or "earned" results.

What is your ultimate goal?

SEO Metrics

Rankings: Increase SERP from 12 to 5 for “keyword”

Traffic: Increase organic traffic to the site by 15% in 2016

Conversions: Increase the conversion rate of the page by 0.5%

Tools: Google Search Console, Positionly, Google Analytics


Takeaway #1: Make it easy for search engines to find you

- Sitemap - make sure you have one. Use Google Search Console or Yoast plugin to submit.
- Keyword & content mapping - ahrefs - positions explorer
- Internal Linking

Takeaway #1: Make it easy for search engines to find you

URL Structure

<http://www.example.com/category-keyword/subcategory-keyword/primary-keyword.html>



SEO Cheat Sheet: Anatomy of A URL

1 <http://store.example.com/topics/subtopic/descriptive-product-name#top>

- 1** Protocol
- 2** Subdomain
- 3** Domain
- 4** Top-Level Domain
- 5** Folders / Paths
- 6** Page
- 7** Named Anchor

Keyword Priority¹

Observed Google priority of keyword placement:

- (1) Domain
- (2) Subdomain
- (3) Folder
- (4) Path/Page

SEO Tips for URLs

- Use **subdomains** carefully. They may be treated as separate entities, splitting domain authority.
- Separate **path** & **page** keywords with hyphens ("-").
- **Anchors** may help engines understand page structure.
- Keyword effectiveness in URLs decreases as URL length and keyword position increases.¹

¹ SEOMoz correlational data (2009)

SEO-FRIENDLY URL

Takeaway #2: Make it easy for people to find what they are looking for

- Site Speed (Google PageSpeed Insights)
- Navigation
- Responsive (Google Mobile-Friendly Test)
- Relevant content (5-second test)

On-Page Ranking Factors

- Title tags - includes target keyword for the page. No duplicates or missing.
- H1s - includes target keyword for the page. No duplicates or missing.
- URL - includes target keyword for the page.
- Word count - over 500/page you're trying to rank.
- Images - have alt text with target keyword for the page.

Off-site Ranking Factors

- Link Value & Link Juice
- Link Building Campaigns
- Influencer Marketing
- Domain authority (MozBar)

Errors

- 3xx Issues - Redirects. Screaming Frog to find them
- 4xx Issues - Client error. Use Google Search Console to find them
- 5xx Issues – Server error. Use Google Search Console to find them.
- Manual Actions - Use Google Search Console to find them

What to do when:

- A page doesn't rank high enough for the target keyword
- A competitor's page is ranking higher than yours for the target keyword
- Traffic numbers are low or decreasing
- Conversions are low or decreasing
- High bounce rates

Thank you!

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Tools - FREE

- **Google Analytics** – to track website traffic activity, conversions, etc.
- **Google Search Console** – to see crawl errors, see website performance, get Google to index your site faster, create & submit sitemap, etc.
- **Google Keyword Planner** – to find out search volume of specific keywords
- **Yoast Plugin for Wordpress** – to optimize pages, title tags, h1 tags across the site - <https://yoast.com/wordpress/plugins/seo/>

Tools FREE – cont'd

- **Google PageSpeed Insights** – to check website speed:
<https://developers.google.com/speed/pagespeed/>
- **Google Mobile-Friendly Test** – to see how responsive your website is:
<https://www.google.ca/webmasters/tools/mobile-friendly/>
- **Screaming Frog** – crawls the website, provides data about on-page elements, errors, backlinks, etc.
<http://www.screamingfrog.co.uk/seo-spider/>
- **MozBar** – to check website's Domain Authority. Can be used to tell how trustworthy the site is.

Tools – FREE/Subscription

- **Ahrefs** – shows keywords a site ranks for and positions, used for backlink analysis. <https://ahrefs.com/>. *Paid.*
- **Positionly** – used to track keyword rankings for a site over time www.positionly.com. *Paid.*
- <http://answerthepublic.com/> - find what questions people are looking answers for -> then create content to answer those questions. *Free.*
- **Hotjar** – heatmaps, on-page surveys, etc, Used to improve User Experience on the site. *Has free version.*
www.hotjar.com

Resources - guides

- The Beginner's Guide to SEO - <https://moz.com/beginners-guide-to-seo>
- Google Search Engine Optimization Starter Guide - <http://static.googleusercontent.com/media/www.google.com/en//webmasters/docs/search-engine-optimization-starter-guide.pdf>
- The Advanced Guide to SEO - <https://www.quicksprout.com/the-advanced-guide-to-seo/>

Resources - blogs

- <https://moz.com/blog>
- <http://searchengineland.com/>
- <https://inbound.org/>
- <http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/topic/seo>
- <http://www.seobook.com/blog>