

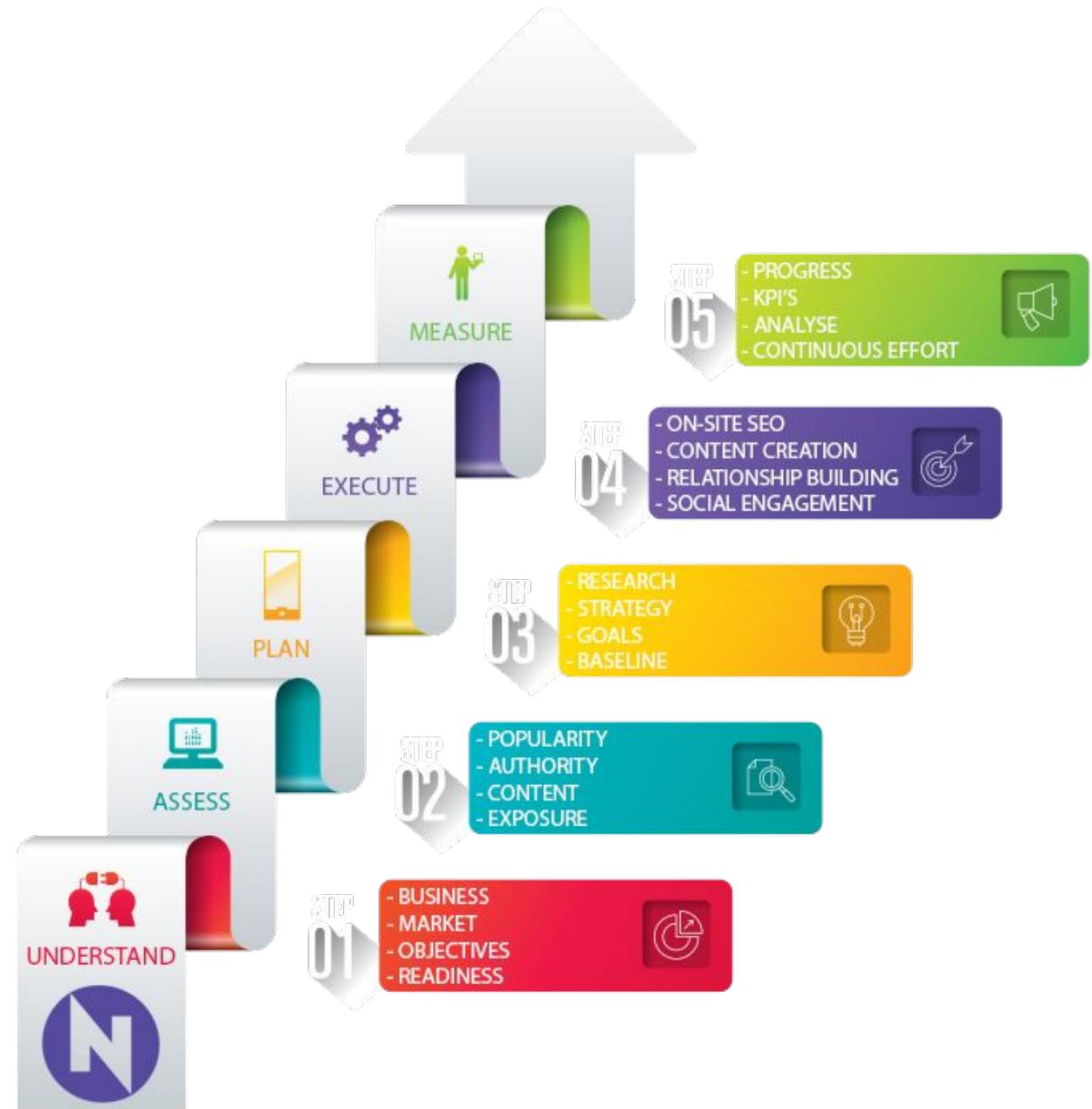
# SEO Guidelines

# What is SEO?

Search engine optimisation, or SEO, is one of the best tools that companies have in terms of gaining visibility online because it allows them to bring in more visitors through free, organic search results.

The major search engines like Google, Bing and Yahoo rank websites based on specific parameters they deem most important, and they do so at no cost to the website owners. In optimising your website and increasing your ranking in search engines results, you will gain more visibility and will, in turn, see an increase in visitor traffic to your website.

It is common practice for internet search users to not click through pages and pages of search results, so where a site ranks in a search results page is essential for directing more traffic toward the site. The higher a website naturally ranks in organic results of a search, the greater the chance that that site will be visited by a user.



# What's the big idea?

## To break it down...

An important aspect of SEO is making your website easy for both users and search engine robots to understand.

Although search engines have become increasingly sophisticated, they still can't see and understand a web page the same way a human can.

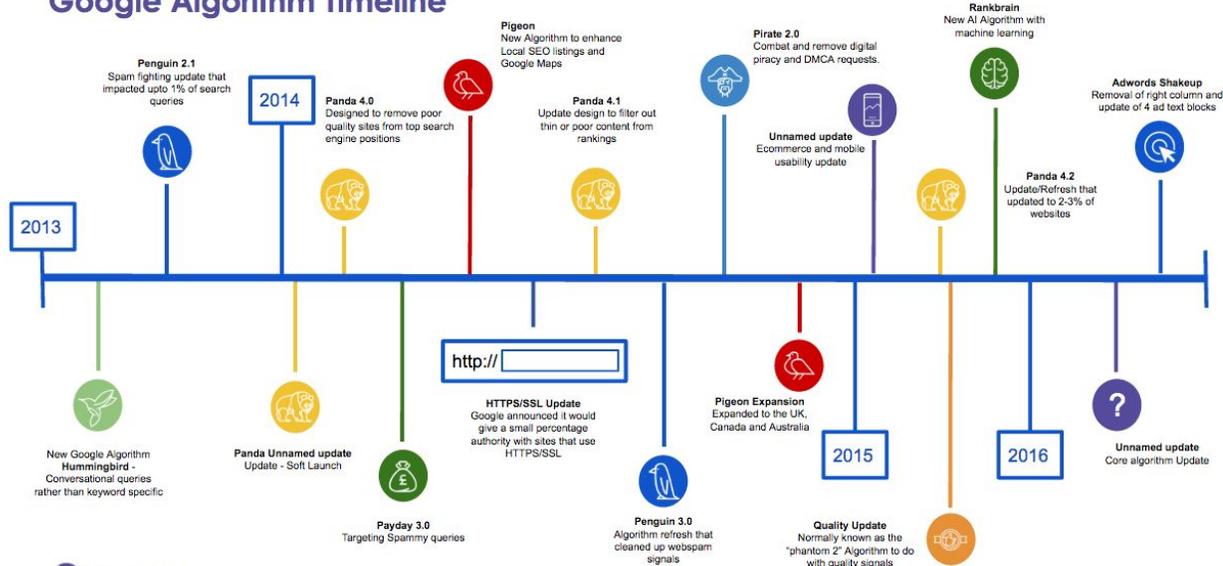
SEO helps the engines figure out what each page is about, and how useful it may be for users.

# What SEO components impact your rankings?

Google has launched algorithms that can improve positioning on a website and also against websites that do not adhere to their guidelines.

SEO has never been so popular, and in fact has the highest demand ever, as there are over 200 on-page SEO factors to now take into consideration. SEO experts have to determine whether web pages are compliant with the search engines technical requirements without detracting from the customer experience.

## Google Algorithm Timeline



SEO involves making sure your website pages, titles, tags, content and overall structure are optimised for your target keywords. SEO experts can then create and monitor website audits to track keywords positions on the search engines.

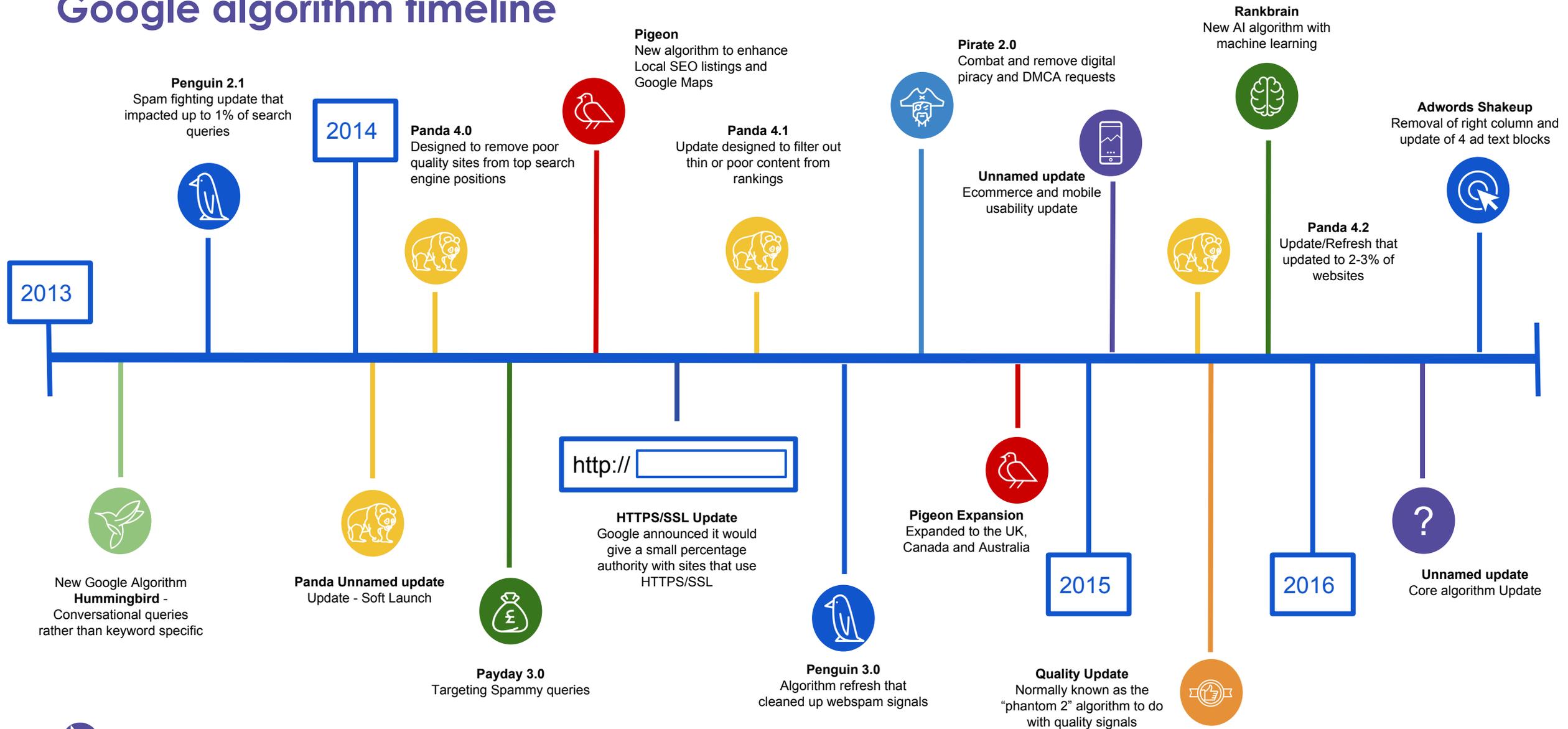
## Basic On-site SEO examples include:

- SEO-friendly URLs
- Modifiers in title "reviews", "guides", "2017" and so on
- Headline/Title H1, Subheadings H2 and H3
- Keyword density up to 2.5%
- Usage of internal and outbound links within content
- Latent semantic indexing keywords

## Basic SEO Auditing and KPI examples:

- Organic traffic CTR - Google Analytics/Webmaster tools
- Increased domain or URL authority benchmarking
- Rank for main converting keywords (local/organic)
- Rank for long tail and benchmark keywords
- Increase of organic traffic for geographical locations

# Google algorithm timeline



# The basics of search engine friendly design and development

# The basics of search engine design and development

Search engines are limited in how they crawl the web and interpret content.

A webpage doesn't look the same to you and me as it "looks" to a search engine. In these next few slides, we will focus on specific technical aspects of building (or modifying) web pages so that they are structured for both search engines and human visitors alike.

This is so project managers and client services teams can understand the elements of a web page and educate the client when needed.

## Basics of SEO

### SEO and Design

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Humans see pages as above.

Search engines view code and are limited to the information we provide unless the code is marked up correctly.

This is why we need certain markups and standards to be search engine compliant and to have fully web visibility.

```
<head>
  <title>Understanding SEO Basics</title>
  <meta name="description" content="Introduction of how the SEO process works with design and development">
  <html prefix="og: http://nitro-digital.com">
  <head>
    <meta property="og:title" content="SEO Basics" />
    <meta property="og:type" content="video.movie" />
    <meta property="og:url"
      content="http://www.example.com/seo" />
    <meta property="og:image"
      content="http://www.example.com/images/seo.jpg" />
    <link rel="alternate" href="http://example.com"
      hreflang="en-us" />
    <link href="http://www.example.com/seo2.html/"
      rel="canonical" />
  </head>
```

## <H1>Basics of SEO</H1>

### <H2>SEO and Design</H2>

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis [nostrud exercitation](http://example.com) ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint [occaecat](http://example.com) cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum.

# The basics of search engine design and development

## On-page SEO

- Google is getting smarter about figuring out what a page is about, but it still helps to make it really **clear** your page is about a specific keyword, i.e. "bladder cancer".
- A Web page's **title tag** is still "the most important attribute from an SEO perspective". "Use the main keyword phrase in the beginning of the page title tag. The first 64 characters of the title tag are shown as the click-through link in a Google search result. Every page of the website should have a unique page title tag."
- **Meta description tags** help attract visitors from the search results page. Include one or two keyword phrases that describe the page's content, and keep meta descriptions under 160 characters.
- The **H1 tag** is the header of the page. "Have only **one H1 tag** per page. This header needs to appeal to the page visitor and describe the page."
- The **H2 tag** is the subheading for the content on the page, you can use multiple H2s throughout the page and you can use H2-to-H6, H-6 being the lowest in the structure.
- Use the page's **designated keyword phrase** "at least once near the beginning of the content, and also anywhere it makes sense. Don't use the keyword phrase, its variation or a synonym more than 4-5 times per page."
- **Alt tags** are the floating descriptions that show up when you mouseover an image. It's usually best practice to use keywords and their variations in the alt text of an image, and also in the image filename.
- An **inbound link** is a hyperlink back to your site from another web site. The one constant and reliable strategy in search engine optimisation is that sites with a variety of high quality backlinks rank higher in the search engine results pages.
- **Open Graph protocol** and **Twitter Cards** enable any web page to become a rich object in a social graph. For instance, this is used on Facebook to allow any web page to have the same functionality as any other object on Facebook.
- Schema markup (**rich snippets**) provides a collection of shared vocabularies webmasters can use to mark up their pages in ways that can be understood by the major search engines: Google, Microsoft, Yandex and Yahoo. You use the schema.org vocabulary along with the microdata, RDFa or JSON-LD formats to add information to your web content.

# The basics of search engine design and development

Continued...

- The **URL structure** of a web document ideally should be as descriptive and brief as possible. If, for example, a site's structure has several levels of files and navigation, the URL should reflect this with folders and subfolders. Individual page's URLs should also be descriptive without being overly lengthy, so that a visitor who sees only the URL will have a good idea of what to expect on the page.
- The rel=**canonical** element, often called the “canonical link”, is an HTML element that helps webmasters prevent duplicate content issues. It does this by specifying the “**canonical URL**”, the “preferred” version of a web page. Using it well improves a site's SEO.
- Use **hreflang** for language and regional URLs. Many websites serve users from around the world with content translated or targeted to users in a certain region. Google uses the rel=**alternate** **hreflang="x"** attributes to serve the correct language or regional URL in search results.

Other activities include; and not limited too:

- **URL structures** - address of the website
- **XML sitemaps** - lists URLs and activity
- **Robots.txt** - communicate with spiders and block resources
- Video, persona and article **markup**
- **H1, H2** and through to **H6** hierarchies
- **Google Analytics** - track traffic and conversions
- **Google Webmaster tools** - submit sitemaps
- **Bing Webmaster tools** - submit sitemaps
- **Mobile Friendly Pages (AMP)**



## Summary

Sites that are not “in compliance with the search engines” have already started to be filtered from the search engine indexes, and many more are sure to follow.

This being said, if SEO standards are being adhered to, and/or advanced SEO techniques are being used on a web page, that page will be placed higher on the search engine results pages, increasing overall click through rate (CTR) to the web page.

# SEO Success Factors

All factors on the table are important, but those marked +3 carry more weight than +1 or 2.

No single factor guarantees top rankings or success, but having several favorable ones increases the odds.

Negative "violation" factors shown in red harm your chances.

Search engine optimisation seems like alchemy to the uninitiated. But there's a science to it. These are some important "ranking factors" and best practices that can lead to success with both search engines and human searchers.

ON-PAGE SEO			OFF-PAGE SEO			
CONTENT	ARCHITECTURE	HTML	TRUST	LINKS	PERSONAL	SOCIAL
Content +3	Crawlability +3	Titles +3	Website and page authority +3	Quality +3	Country hreflang +3	Reputation +2
Research +3	Duplicate +2	Description +2	Engage +2	Text +2	Local markup +3	Shares and Likes +1
Keywords +2	Mobile friendly +2	Structure +2	History +1	Count of pure links +1	Visit duration +3	
Fresh content +2	Pagespeed +2	Headers +1	Identity +1	Paid links -3	Social engagement +2	
Vertical content, video, etc. +2	URLs +1	Keyword stuffing -2	Piracy -1	Spam -3		
Answers +1	HTTPS +1	Hidden content -1	Too many ads -1			
Thin content -2	Cloaking or hidden links -3					

# Make sure your content gets seen

Getting the technical details of search engine friendly web development correct is important, but once the basics are covered, you must also market your content.

The engines by themselves have no formulas to gauge the quality of content on the web. Instead, search technology relies on the metrics of relevance and importance, and they measure those metrics by tracking what people do: what they discover, react to, comment on and link to. So, you can't just build a technically perfect website and write great content; you also have to get that content shared and talked about.

# Content and Keywords

Perhaps one of the most important SEO factors after creating good content is good keyword research. Keyword research is defined by the on-page SEO and keywords strategically inserted within the content using keyword density at 2.5%.

You want to create content using those keywords—the actual search terms people are using—so you can produce content that effectively “answers” that query.

For example, a page about “avoiding melanoma” might use technical jargon to describe ways to prevent skin cancer. But a search engine might skip or not rank that page highly if people are instead searching for “skin cancer prevention tips”. Your content needs to be written in the right “language” the language your customer or user is using when searching.



# Content and Keywords Checklist

## Optimise for Users

With users in mind, your content should be formed around the interests of audience segments to offer more value. Targeting your content will draw stronger followings and deliver more quality leads. While achieving high search rankings for keyword targeted content is valuable, speaking to an audience is what drives engagement and conversions.

- Identify how your post will offer value through education or entertainment and create content worth sharing
- Support your ideas with references to validated, external sources to increase credibility and authority
- Build your content around the topics and keyword phrases your audience is searching for to increase exposure
- Keep content “human” in delivery that is easily digestible and appropriate for your audience segments
- Establish your brand’s tone and voice in individual channels to create unique content that contributes to your overall focus and strategy
- Explore different content mediums and delivery channels to determine what methods generate the highest engagement
- Keep the limitations and unique features of mobile in mind when crafting content to ensure all users have a consistent and quality experience

## Optimise for Search Engines

Optimise your content and distribution channels to help search engines make connections between your content and the information your audience is searching for. Be careful to keep your content “human”, as search engines have evolved to respond to quality more than over optimisation techniques, such as keyword stuffing.

- Maintain a consistent schedule and focus by creating a content calendar that identifies topics and keywords for each piece of content
- Integrate keywords into content and back-end optimisation, such as headlines, page titles, URLs and meta descriptions
- Create unique pages for content to earn authority for individual assets
- Generate quality links from bloggers and trustworthy publications to help search engines connect content with keywords
- Perform periodic audits to discover and fix any broken links
- When applicable, optimise content for local search with unique pages and detailed information for individual locations
- Create an XML sitemap and submit to Google and Bing to assist in indexing pages
- Amplify content with press releases to increase visibility across the web

# Off-site SEO

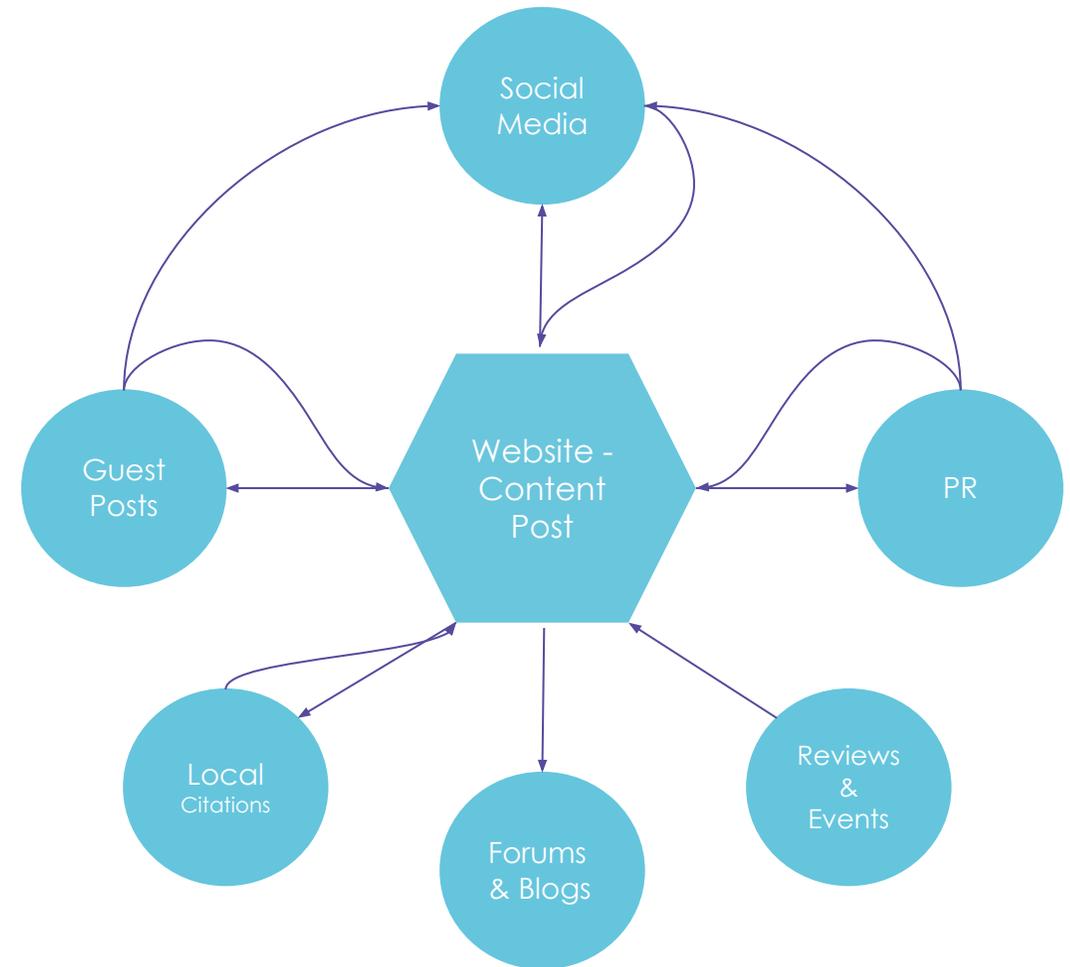
## Off-site SEO

Off-site SEO refers to all of the activities that you and others do external to your website to raise the ranking of a page with search engines. Off-site SEO can be associated with:

- Social media engagement
- Press releases
- Guest posting
- Bookmarking
- Local citations
- Advertising and promotions

On-page search engine optimisation happens within the site, while off-page SEO happens outside the site.

A website's ranking is highly based on SEO authority, and that authority is not established simply by your website content alone. It involves a combination of inbound links, outbound links and how many of those sites linking to you also have established SEO authority.



Typical flow of traffic from Off-site SEO Resources

# CRO and SEO

# CRO and SEO

In theory, conversion rate optimisation (CRO) aims to improve the user experience (UX), which, conveniently, is what Google wants to do as well with their top search results.

Therefore, the more you test and improve your site, the higher it should appear in the rankings.

You get more traffic, more conversions and therefore more money in an endless cycle if the standards and content are being pushed throughout the website.

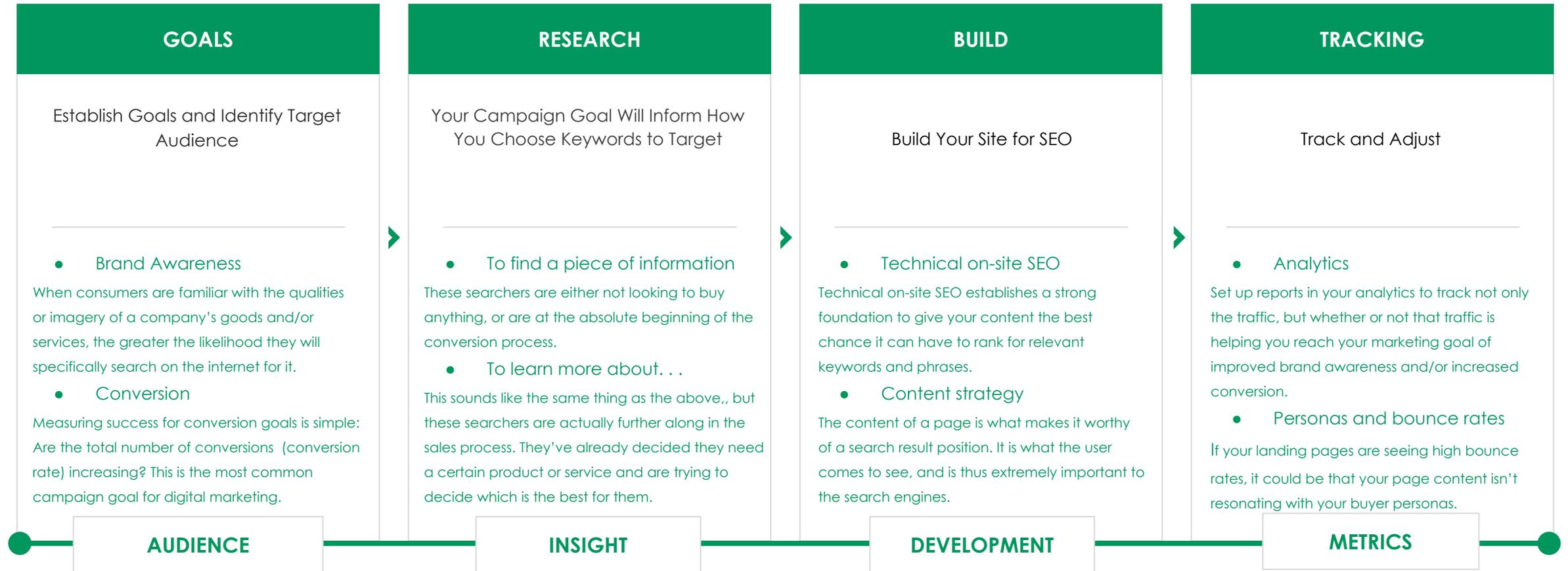
It's in Google's self interest to provide the best search experience for the user. So, they update their **algorithms** religiously to try to do that. And recent trends have placed on-page UX factors higher in importance than old factors like keyword density.

When an application increases the pagespeed, that generally helps search rankings as well, because people like fast pages and Google knows this contributes to a better UX.

	SEO	CRO
<b>Primary Goal</b>	Increase organic traffic	Increase conversions
<b>Location</b>	On website	On website
<b>Required Skills</b>	SEO Data Development Design Copy	Data Development Design Copy
<b>Who determines success</b>	Search engines	Website visitors
<b>Methods of improvement</b>	SEO & Site structure Keyword usage User experience Content creation External & Internal links Social engagement	Psychology Sociology Behavioral Manipulation Personalisation
<b>Primary Goal again</b>	Increase organic traffic	Increase conversions

# Measuring SEO Success

# Measuring SEO Success



**Key Takeaway:** Set up reports in your analytics to track not only the traffic, but whether or not that traffic is helping you reach your marketing goal of improved brand awareness and/or increased conversion.

# SEO Summary



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When creating websites and/or website content, you should always keep SEO in the forefront of your mind, and always follow best practices. Skipping the basics of SEO will only leave your site's foundation a mess, and prevent you from fully maximising revenue opportunities.

75% percent of internet use will be **mobile** in 2017, up slightly from 2016

A Backlinko report revealed that longer content tends to rank higher. The **average first page result** on Google contains 1,200 words

Google accounts for over 94% of all **mobile/tablet search traffic** globally, followed by Yahoo at 3% and Bing at 1%