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# SEE

The Past, Present, and Future



How to Focus Your SEO Efforts  
for Maximum Visibility

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Learn more  
about how  
search engines  
operate.



Tweet This Guide!

# The Basics

## How Search Engines Work

Any time you search for something online, you are almost instantly presented with a list of (mostly) relevant results from all over the web. Somehow, search engines are able find the web pages that match your specific queries. **How do they do this?!** And – more importantly – how can optimizing for search engines still play a role in helping your business get found?

In the simplest terms, you can think of searching the web as looking in a very large book with a very, very impressive index. This index tells you exactly where everything is located. When you perform a search, programs check against the index to determine the most relevant search results, as well as the order (or “rank”) in which they will appear and be returned to you.





Google owns  
67% of the U.S.  
search market.

# The Basics

Yahoo owns  
11% of the U.S.  
search market.

## What Is SEO?

SEO refers to techniques that help your website rank higher in organic (or “natural”) search results, thus making your website more visible to people who are looking for your brand, your product, or your service via search engines like Google, Bing, and Yahoo.



Google



bing



YAHOO!

Over the years, the recipe for ranking success has included things like title tags, meta descriptions, keyword tags, keyword density, H1 tags, image attributes, links from certain domains, volume of links, quality of links, internal link structure, anchor text in inbound links, and more.

Source:  
comScore

Bing owns  
18% of the U.S.  
search market.





# *The Basics*

## The Changing Face of SEO

More recently, the ingredient list for a “perfect” search ranking has expanded to include tweets, retweets, likes, social mentions, page load time, rel-canonical management, and content marketing. Along the way, some old standbys made their appearances ... things like user experience, quality of content, and depth of content, to mention a few. Yet with all of this SEO knowledge that has been accumulated, so many websites still fail. How is this possible?

The answer:

**MARKETERS ARE STUCK  
IN THEIR OLD WAYS.**



Learn the full story of how SEO began.



Tweet This Guide!

# Back in the Day

## How We Used to Think About SEO

**Once upon a time**, SEO could be defined using two broad categories: 1) on-page SEO, and 2) off-page SEO, which could be boiled down to 1) keywords, and 2) links. The idea was to aggregate as many of each in order to beat your competitors in the search results and rank as close to #1 as possible.

### On-Page SEO

- Keywords
- Page Title
- Title Tags

### Off-Page SEO

- Links
- Links
- Links





# Back in the Day

## The Problems with “Old SEO”

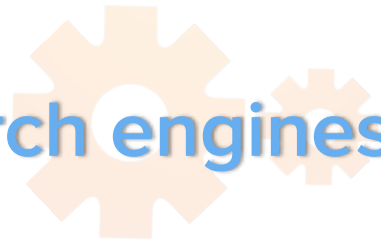
1. SEO was treated like a game.



2. SEO was about quantity, not quality.



3. SEO was focused on search engines, not searchers.



4. SEO was too “cookie cutter.”







# Back in the Day

## Learning from the Past

**Rankings** happen for many reasons, and the keyword or query is just the initiator of the process. You should optimize a page to be the strongest it can be in search only after you've made it the best page for a specific need or topic.

There are multiple variations of **keywords** for any one topic, and therefore your focus should be on the page and the topic, not just one or two of potentially hundreds of keywords.

Never assume that your site should rank #1 without first knowing why it's helpful to searchers. Just ranking isn't enough: **You need to provide what people are looking for** with enough depth and insight that they stay on your site and are compelled to take action (contact you, share your content, etc.).



Read Google's  
full definition of  
SEO here..



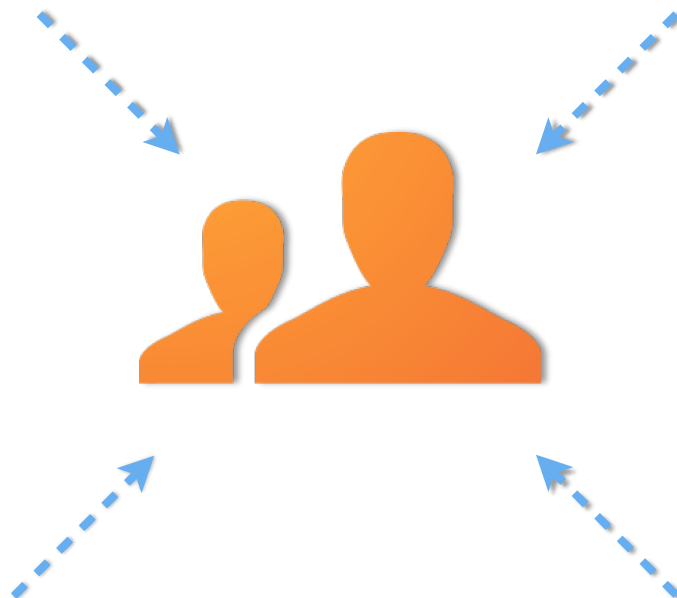
Tweet This Guide!

# Today

## An Introduction to Modern SEO

According to **Google**, SEO is “about making small [meaningful] modifications to parts of your website. When viewed individually, these changes might seem like incremental improvements, but when combined with other optimizations, they could have a noticeable impact on your site's user experience and performance in organic search results ... [where] your ultimate consumers are your users, not search engines.”

In short, you need to understand not only the web, but also your visitors and what your visitors want – and get – out of your website.





# Today

## The Key to SEO: Meaningful Content

What does Google consider "high quality"?

By creating content that is **high quality**, compelling, and relevant, you can engage your site's visitors in a meaningful way. When content resonates with someone, it feels personal and authentic. The new direction of SEO is all about creating a unique user experience for each visitor and personalizing those experiences as much as possible.





# Today

## How Your Website Helps (or Hurts) SEO

You want your website to easily provide that unique user experience, right? Unfortunately, most websites are stale and do just the opposite. Here's why:

**1. Websites need additional coding to optimize for mobile.**

Many websites today require special templates or additional coding to optimize for mobile. When a mobile searcher arrives on a site that isn't mobile-friendly, you can bet they'll have a less-than-stellar experience.

**2. A website's CMS is isolated.** A content management system (CMS) often stands alone from the rest of your site's architecture, creating a fragmented experience for your visitors.

**3. Websites offer the same static experience to everyone.**

**76% of website visitors want a site that "makes it easy for me to find what I want."** And yet, most websites show the same thing to every person who visits.

**4. Some websites are slow to load.** The speed and performance of your website will vary depending on what CMS you use.

**5. Many websites haven't caught up with recent search**

**engine changes.** Social media and mobile have more influence on SEO than ever before. Despite this fact, most CMS tools have yet to incorporate these elements out-of-the-box.





# Today

## So, What Do You Need?

You need a system that functions as a fully integrated website. One that is part content system, part personalization engine, and that is customizable for you, your team, and each individual visitor.

Inbound marketing is about tailoring your content creation strategy to attract not just any old person wandering around the internet, but your ideal customers -- also known as **your buyer personas**.

Wouldn't it be great if for each one of those personas the content that your website displayed was actually unique -- like how Amazon tailors what you see based on what you like? (Full disclosure: We've built a system that can do just that. It's called a **COS: content optimization system**.

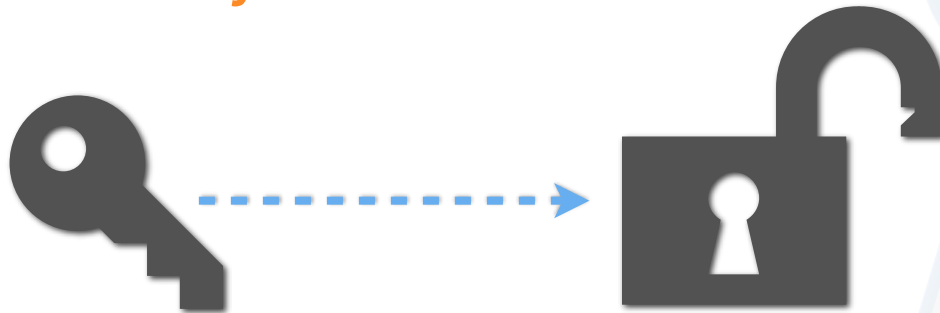
Learn more  
about buyer  
personas.





# Today

## Where Do Keywords Fit In?



Learn more about keyword research.

The tried-and-true approach to keyword optimization requires that you research relevant keywords, track visitors through your site, watch conversions, tweak, and then try to make the right decisions. The keywords you optimize your site around serve as the foundation upon which each and every page is built. **Selecting the right keywords** (those that speak to – and use the same language as – your ideal buyer) is essential to building that framework.

Beyond having a strong, user-focused keyword foundation, your website pages themselves can help to attract new visitors to your site. This is because Google gives precedence to pages that load quickly and whose HTML is search-engine friendly.





# Today

## Keyword Research Tips for the Modern Marketer

1. Understand "transactional" vs. "informational" keywords.
2. Use alternative tools like [www.similarsites.com](http://www.similarsites.com) or [marketing.grader.com](http://marketing.grader.com) for competitor research.
3. Google's keyword tool is now "Keyword Planner".
4. Use [AdWords auction insights](#).
5. Look at data from [Webmaster tools](#).

**\*Bonus Tip:** If a competitor bids on a keyword each month, it's probably working for them.





# Today

## Loss of Data Needn't Mean Loss of Direction

Learn more  
about Google's  
keyword  
encryption.

With [Google encrypting search more widely now](#) (80% or more of a site's keyword data is now “unknown”), marketers may be at a loss as to which keywords are driving success. However, if you focus entirely on what you don't have anymore, your SEO will come to a standstill. Instead, focus on what you can (or could) have, such as page analytics and visitor data (i.e. how an individual found your website and how they're engaging with your content).

With so much broad data available to help you understand your visitors today, it's easier than ever to look at behavioral patterns, build sites that elicit desired responses, and align your business in ways that impress searchers and keep them coming back.







# Today

## How to Rock at SEO Today: 10 Tips

1. Develop more unique, in-depth content
2. Truly understand what “quality” means
3. Truly understand your buyer personas
4. Don’t add content for the sake of having more content
5. Never add pages without having direct access to them
6. Rethink what “link-building” means
7. Rethink what “keywords” mean
8. Test your pages in different browsers before publishing
9. Make sure your site is technically optimized (if using a traditional CMS)
10. Make sure you have a Google+ personal profile and that it’s tied to your content





# The Future

## If You're Useful, They Will Come

We don't want any old traffic coming to our site – we want the right traffic. We want the people who are going to be the most likely to become leads, and, ultimately, happy customers. **The content that best attracts those “right people”** is content that is educational in nature and that appeals to those who are just beginning to recognize they have a problem that needs solving.

Your blog is an excellent (if not the best) place on your site to provide this helpful, educational material, and one of the most effective ways to share this content with the world is through social media. Regularly sharing content via your social posts, tweets, etc. can also help to get your name out there and – in return – bring people to **your website**.

Learn about  
2014 content  
trends.





# The Future

## Create for Humans, Not Search Engines

Search engines are extremely complex. The bottom line is that search engines are trying to anticipate what human beings want as they search ... **even before they begin their search!**

It is very easy to get caught up in the old way of thinking about SEO: links, keywords, and rank. However, modifying your website's content with the idea that you'll "rank" in Google is like going out and buying a lottery ticket with the hopes that you'll strike it big.

When in doubt, always err on the side of providing relevant and coherent content that your website's visitors (your prospects) can digest. If you find yourself doing something solely for the search engines, you should take a moment to ask yourself why.





# The Future

## To Summarize, Here's What Will Help:

1. Providing unique experiences throughout your website to better engage users
2. Surfacing unique content readily and easily
3. Creating content that provides context and personalization
4. Establishing a content strategy that focuses on creating quality, in-depth, and unique content
5. Understanding your business's buyer personas
6. Having clearly defined business goals (other than ranking)
7. Covering basic SEO to [improve your site's visibility](#) in search results


Learn more  
from Google.





# Resources

- [Blog SEO for the Modern Marketer: How to Optimize Your Posts](#)
- [Free Ebook: Learning SEO from the Experts](#)
- [SEO Guru: Google Is Abusing Its Monopoly Power](#)
- [Free Ebook: 17 SEO Myths You Should Leave Behind in 2013](#)



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