

I think this should be version 4, since I think I misnumbered the previous ones.

Search Engine Optimization:

An Overview of SEO for Small Business

Do you know what search engine optimization (SEO) means? In this article, we'll discuss a high-level overview of SEO meant for small businesses. These advanced techniques will help you improve your web presence, which will raise your visibility with interested government and defense contractor stakeholders.[JR1]

Part One: Search User Intent

It's important to keep in mind what your audience is looking for; your transition partners will not be able to connect with you or buy your technology [JR2] if they cannot get in touch with you – or even know that your products and services are available and ready to be used by industry or military outlets. **Algorithms** have undergone many changes in the past 10 years, but the overall goal is still the same as always: to answer user questions or help them find the information they need. As such, **search engines** have continually evolved to suit this need. There are four main inquiry categories: informational, navigational, transactional and commercial. We will talk about them in the next few paragraphs.

Informational searches provide the end-user more detailed information about what they want to know. In most cases, these searches are phrased as questions such as “What does SEO mean?” Meanwhile, **navigational searches** bring users to a particular website such as CNN or the *New York Times*. **Transactional searches** are what they sound like – when the user buys something. Transactions can also involve ordering or returning an item or canceling an order

altogether. Direct and explicit modifiers are associated with these searches to make the distinction even clearer. Finally, **commercial searches** focus on online shopping. This search comes down to making comparisons before making a final selection. All in all, intent -> **search engine optimization**^[JR1]. *Tapping into user intent* is critical for success. That's why savvy keyword research matters so much; we'll define what this entails below^[2] ^[JR3]. ^[JR3]

Other tactics meant to increase traffic and engagements alike are marketing funnels, calls-to-action, internal linking structures, page rank and CheiRank^[JR4]. Always remember that predicting user intent leads to better rankings, conversions, and distributions.

Part Two: Google's Ranking Factors and Algorithms

Did You Know? Google Can Be Your Secret Weapon!

As important as it is to know who your audience, customers, and partners are (and what they're looking for), it's just as important to know how Google's search engine "thinks." Thus, pay attention to the ranking factors and algorithms that are at work under the hood so to speak. Try adjusting keywords and search terms without making the phrases too wordy.^[JR6] ^[JR1] ^[BL2] So how do you do this? Good question, one which we will shortly answer.

First, you will need to determine which keywords have the highest potential yield. Targeted keywords can be discovered via free tools such as [Google's Keyword Planner](#)^[JR4] (GKP). ^[7] ^[JR8] Another way to monitor the performance of keywords and their associated search volumes is to use the tool known as Keywords Explorer ^[JR5] ([KWE](#)). GKP ^[9] can give you a broad idea of which keywords to target, while KWE allows you to drill down and gain more specific insights.

Second, continuously consider user search intent and the information, technologies, and services your small business provides to contractors, suppliers, and warfighters.

Third, do not underestimate the value of terms such as “business potential” for conceptually informative articles, white papers and news releases. And fourth, measure the ranking of the SEO keyword by using keyword difficulty (KD) which is included in Keyword Explorer.

More often than not, simply optimizing the algorithm is the best way to go. That said, it’s crucial to anticipate problematic algorithm flaws: unexpected limitations could hinder your performance. The two biggest issues related to this [problem](#) [\[JR10\]](#) are the inability to read non-text elements and algorithm manipulation. [\[JR3\]](#) With that in mind, how can you avoid such issues? [Attach captions and metatags](#) to any images you use. This method is especially simple if you are using a platform such as WordPress to build your company’s website. Doing so will help the algorithm “understand” the content you are attempting to publish. All that said, how can you minimize algorithm manipulation?

For this strategy to work, you need to focus on several techniques. Those techniques include providing value-added content, improving the user experience (UX_[JR6]), [\[11\]](#) [\[JR12\]](#) and reflecting external credibility. The two essential aspects of value-added content are brand new content and text that is not lifted directly (copied and pasted) from any other websites. So then, how do you optimize user experience? Make sure your website loads quickly and be sure to optimize it for access by mobile devices. And finally, how do you establish external credibility? You use backlinks - when another website leads to yours. In most cases, it can be a redirect to other pages on your own site.

Part Three: Indexing and Webcrawlers

Indexing and webcrawlers are integral components of leveraging more advanced SEO techniques, but what are they? Within this context, note that crawling is equivalent to reading

and both refer to the search engine's ability to skim for relevant topics and subject matter while scanning the web.

Several hundred ranking factors are used as part of the complex calculations to determine your site's ranking compared to thousands of other competitors. It's a crowded marketplace out there, so how can you put your best foot forward? The short answer: excellent indexing.[\[JR4\]](#) By indexing, you can facilitate public viewing of your business's web content. In that regard, let's talk about search engine results pages, or SERPs. Put simply, search engines depend on protocols known as crawling or reading, both of which facilitate skimming for relevant topics and subject matter. It's important to note that several hundred ranking factors are used in these calculations.

Without proper indexing, search engine results pages will not display your sites. What this means is that even if you deploy all the right keywords, nothing will happen. No inbound web traffic, no conversions, no points of contact, nothing. That's why so-called "crawl budgeting" matters so much. And the key parts of this method are faceted navigation/session identifiers, on-site duplicate content, soft error pages, hacked pages, infinite spaces and proxies, and low quality/spam content. [\[JR5\]](#) So what do these terms all mean? [Here is an excellent article that can unpack them.](#)

To ensure proper indexing, using accurate sitemaps is essential. Sitemaps provide a complete outline of your site's layout. It makes the site easier to navigate for users and search engines. So, what do you do? Begin by uploading the sitemap to its own page on your site. Then go to the Google Search Console's dashboard. Look along the left sidebar and click on the button labeled "sitemaps." Find the "add new sitemap" button and then input the associated address or URL for it.[\[JR6\]](#)

Finally, we need to talk about primary sitemap formats. Primary sitemap formats are encapsulated in three ways: XML, RSS, and TXT. XML is the best format for most of the sitemaps you can see and thus create. Since XML is so widely accepted, search engine crawl bots will have a much easier time finding this content.

[JR1]How would someone do this?

[BL2]How can/should I acknowledge the sources I use to revise the article?

[JR3]This seems like the meat of the story. Here is what folks should do--specifically.

[JR4]Also a good important subject here.

[JR5]This all needs to be explained.

[JR6]Super!

[JR7]Not sure why this is here.

[JR1]How is this the case?

[JR2]Not sure this is the correct word. Partner with? Buy your technology?

[JR3]Say that you will explain this below

[JR4]Link?

[JR5]Link?

[JR6]This might be a good topic for another article

[JR7]Is this actually an approach? I would take this sentence out.

[\[JR1\]](#)What does this mean? Spell it out.

Any advice for making sure I align the indentations correctly?

[\[JR3\]](#)Don't indent!

[\[JR4\]](#)I learned this term from your article. However, I don't see it spelled with a hyphen (or a space) anywhere on the internet.

[\[JR5\]](#)What does this phrase mean?

[\[JR6\]](#)What is an example of overdoing it? Do you explain this later?

The link for this was incredibly long, so I shortened it. Also, the link to the page itself is site-blocked.

[\[JR8\]](#)Did you report it as in inappropriate block?

Same as with the GKP

[\[JR10\]](#)I don't think this is the correct word here.

Does that mean you want me to delete this? Or is it just a suggestion for an upcoming article?

[\[JR12\]](#)Suggestion for an upcoming article