#SEO101

SOHO House Chicago

SEO 101

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Ryan Erwin

- Web Strategist @ Orbit Media Studios

- Founder@ Internet Marketing Chicago

- Lead Organizer
  - WordCamp Chicago
  - hackhunger Hackathon (GCFD)

Experience

- Freelanced
- Small Business Owner
- In house
- Agency
- Managed Blogs and blog networks
- Created content & Sponsored content
- Passion: Problem Solving & Strategy

Audience Makeup

- Types of websites you manage?
  - ecommerce
  - marketing
  - informational
- SEO services?
  - outsourced
  - self managed - actively optimizing?
  - time dedicated
- Ask Questions ***AT ANY TIME***

Overview

- What is SEO
- Search Engines
- On vs Off Page SEO
- Site Architecture
- Hosting & Site Speed
- Keywords
- Analytics
- Sitemap
- Local
- Content Marketing (time permitting)

What is SEO???

What is SEO?

- Search Engine Optimization

- Process of making your site more searchable on the web

- This is a **PROCESS**….a challenge

- Marathon not a Sprint

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However, it can be….

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Search Journey

KEYPHRASE — What did they search for?

RANK — Do you have a relevant page ?

CLICK — Did the visitor come to the site?

VISIT — Did the site instill confidence?

ACTION — Did they buy or become a lead?

SEO Options

- Hire a company to manage
  vs
- Manage yourself

- Good base
  - Set it and forget it goes a long way

- It's challenging...it's a battle!

2 Paths After Today

1. Audit, update → Set it and forget it*

2. Step 1 & ongoing optimization

Step 1 gets you ahead of 75% of the crowd

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SEO Marathon

WAR

ROI WAR

- **Battling on 3 Fronts**
  - Search (SERP) **Impression**
  - Click Search - Drive Traffic **CTR**
  - ***Convert** → take desired action...(CRO) *THIS IS THE ROI*
    - Contact Form
    - Call
    - Purchase

Search Engines

Popular Search Engines

- Google
- Yahoo
- Bing
- Youtube*
- Facebook*

* function like search engines

SERP Goal

- Search Engines
  - make money on relevant ads and results
    - Impressions
    - Clicks
- Display best results on the web for X

On & Off Page SEO

Off Page

- Directories
  - general & industry specific
- Profiles
- Social Media

- High Value links
  - Link building
- Fill out profiles
  - complete and consistent

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Off Page: Link Building

Links are authority

Off Page: Link Building

more links = more authority

Off Page: Link Building

links from authoritative websites =
much more authority

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Off Page: Link Building

- 101: Links to your site are great!

- High Value links
  - Page Rank - algorithm basis
  - popularity content
  - think HighSchool - Freshman vs Senior
  - bobs medical blog vs NIH/Mayo
  - Indicated relevance
- 201 level - food for thought

201: Link Building Strategy

- Inbound Links
  - Attract links w/ high quality content

- Social Profiles
  - sharing and engaging
- Building out content relationships
  - I scratch your back & you scratch mine
  - attract links with influencer

On Page

- Elements physically on the site
  - Titles tags
  - Meta information
  - Content
  - Header & Footer

On Page: Title Tags

Title Tag

Best Practices

- Primary & secondary keywords | Branded
- 60 characters or less
- Avoid duplicates on pages

On Page: Title Tags

Google modified to provide best result

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On Page: Description (meta)

Meta Description

Does not appear on site page, only in page code.

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On Page: Description (meta)

Best Practices: Meta Description

- Create compelling descriptions
- Up to 160 characters
- Like Title tags, avoid duplicates
- WIIFM
  - What's in it for me?
  - Orbit Media is a web design and development firm in Chicago, creating custom, clean and results driven websites since 2001.
    - What does that tell me as an end user?

Content

- REMEMBER
  - be the best page on the web
    - DJ in Chicago
    - Healthy Beef Jerky
- Create compelling content
  - indicate relevance
  - keyword usage
  - detailed outline technique

Header & Footer

- Gateways to a conversion
  - REMEMBER
    - you want a visitor to take an action
- Avoid
  - Testimonials Page
    - Seed throughout site
  - Services Page
    - Break into their own page
    - Service vs Paid, SEO, Social

Scanning of Pages

F

Scanning of web page
See importance of main menu/navigation

Key Takeaways

1. Improve Usability
2. Improve Searchability
3. Increase Conversions
   - Sales
   - Leads
4. Create a Process LOOP
   - Analyze, Plan and Execute ...REPEAT...

Site Architecture

Audit your Critical Infrastructure

Set it & Forget it

1. Analytics
2. SSL certificate   Secure | https://v   vs   ⓘ Not Secure |
3. Hosting
   - speeds & backups
4. Sitemap
   - do you have one?
5. Google your company name and analyze results

What to do you with your Audit?

- Critical to identify and mitigate issues
  - Short term plan
  - low hanging fruit
  - right the ship
- Long term *(optional)*
  - ongoing updates
  - time and $
  - nice to have
  - create a road map

Hosting & Site Speed

Hosting

- Options
- Proprietary platform (paid service)
  - WordPress.com
  - Squarespace
    - They take care of hosting
- Hosted WordPress or Open Source
  - Bluehost/Dreamhost (Shared)
  - Managed hosting
    - Get what you pay for

Hosting Factors

- Speed

- Reliability/Uptime

- Security

- Backups

- Support

Features

- SSL integration
- one click install
- built in backups
- domain management
- email management
- support
  - call in, chat, email
- Inclusive vs added fees

Site Speed

- Factor in search
  - example: college entrance
- SERP (search engine results page)
  - serve up the best example
  - rise of mobile
  - page speed a huge factor
  - AMP project **AMP**
- Hosting Types
  - Shared / Managed / Dedicated

Hosting - Speed/Reliability

- **Shared Hosting**
  - Low volume
  - Shared server
- **Dedicated**
  - High Volume
- **Managed**
  - Manage WP core
  - Backups, CDN, SSL

Keywords

Keywords

- Identify Them!
  - Branded
  - focus
- Build into site content
- Example
  - Identify what you want to rank for
  - Build the best page on the internet for x?

Keyword Usage

- Focus keyword (primary)
- Supporting keywords (secondary)
- Example
  - Clothing Designer
    - Men's Dress Clothes
      - suits, ties, sport coats
    - Casual
      - jeans, t-shirts, gym shoes

Analytics

Analytics

- Free from Google
- Provides useful metrics
  - time on site
  - pages visited & for how long
- Should be implemented regardless of use
- Allows for meaningful measurement
  - Search→ Site→ Conversion

Site Map

Sitemaps

- Need to have one
  - Proprietary platform takes care of that
  - open source - needs to be setup

- Check
  - sitename.com**/sitemap.xml**

201 Advanced: Sitemaps

- html site map → **Sitemap**
  - dated -proper navigation
  - manual

- Orbit Media Studios
- Content Summit
- Website Audit
- Keyphrase Research
- Persona Research
- Marketing Website Design
- Ecommerce Web Design
- Web Content Writing

- XML sitemap
  - sitemap.xml talks to search engines
  - dynamic generation

Local SEO

Local SEO

- Map Listings
- Directory Listings
- Google Place
- Apple Maps
- Website footer

Local SEO

- Buzzword
- Semantic Search
  - searcher's intent
  - searcher's location
- ***Consistency with listings is key
- Provides more credibility to SE
- 123 Green Street vs 123 Green St
- Suite 100 vs #100

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SEO long game - Marathon not a sprint

1. Cohesive integrated strategy
   a. Optimized website
   b. Content creation plan
      i. Fresh, Relevant & Consistent
   c. Enhance w/Social media
2. Email Marketing
3. Marketing Automation
4. ***Audit, Analyze, Course Correct (if need)***

Content Marketing

Content Marketing

- Calendar

  - Coordinated creation and marketing

  - Forecast a year out

  - ex: marathon training

- Keyword analysis

  - Identifying kw that you can win for

  - Keyword research

Content Marketing

1. Maximize the value of content
   a. keyphrase usage

2. Measure successes and failures
   a. Exploit successes
   b. Adapt/modify/change to optimize misses

Now what???

- Lots of on and off page information
- Content creation work
  - keyword research and rankings
    - identify content battles to fight
  - find influencers in space
    - share
    - guest posting

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SEO→ CRO

SEO → CRO

- On and Off page work
  - Challenging
  - Reward is traffic
  - ***0 ROI***
- SEO → CRO
  - 2 of 3 battles won
  - need user to take desired action
  - User Psychology

SEO → CRO

- Page & Content Layout***
  - CTA - Call To Action
  - Intended Audience Taking an Action
  - Choreographed experience
  - Drive down digital sales/engagement funnel

- Analyze Actions
  - Course Correct → Execute

Now What…
Plan!

Time to Plan

- Create an action plan
  - Short term - low hanging fruit
    - immediate high impact issues
  - Long term - slow and steady wins SEO race

- Content/Editorial Calendar
  - create 1 month out
  - forecast 12 months out

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Prioritized Roadmap

- Immediate high impact issues should be remedied ASAP

- Content plan
  - content creation calendar
  - sync w/ editorial/ publishing

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THEN….

- Execute
- Analyze
  - Course Correct
    - Exploit Success
    - Pull back on fails
- Plan
- Execute….

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Review Key Points

1. Audit & Analyze Current Situation
   - Righting the Ship
   - Short Term Execution

2. SEO Marathon
   - slow/steady wins the race

1. Ongoing: Analyze, Plan and Execute

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Events in Chicago

- WordCamp Chicago (ONLY $40)
  - April 28-29, 2018 @ IIT Chicago Kent
- Content Jam
  http://www.contentjam.com/
    - SEO / Email Marketing Bootcamp
    - Content Marketing Conference
    - October 9-10, 201 in Chicago

Thank You & Questions

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