

Search Engine Optimization Report

(BTW 490: Workplace Writing in a Digital Age)

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Statement on Ethics: in online discourse, there are good ways of performing search engine optimization (“white hat”) and bad ways (“black hat”). This class focuses on white hat strategies, which are sustainable and built for long-term success. Black hat strategies are successful in the short-term, until search engine algorithms identify off-content links and other off-topic strategies. Black hat strategies can harm a website’s long-term viability.

Further Reading:

-Google’s [Guide to Search Engine Optimization](#)

-Spinuzzi’s [Secret Sauce and Snake Oil: Writing Monthly Reports in a Highly Contingent Environment](#) (2010)

-Moore, Shackleton, and Bellows’ [Using Search Engine Optimization Techniques to Enhance the Visibility of Web-Based Extension Fact Sheets](#) (2015)

BACKGROUND

For our next assignment, we will write an SEO report. SEO is an acronym for Search Engine Optimization. The term describes the process used to boost a website's rating when it is searched for on an Internet search engine—i.e., Google, Yahoo, Bing, etc.—and the page rank that website has in relation to other similar websites. SEO writers use web content and tags (HTML code) in the structure of the webpage to improve the online performance of a website.

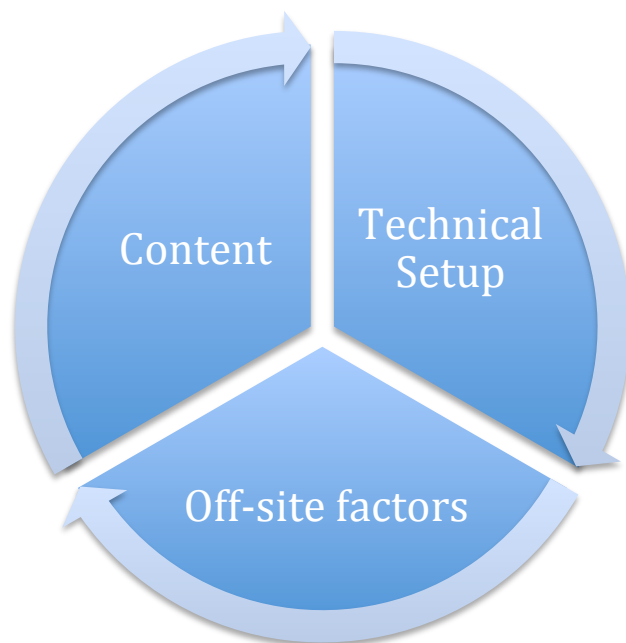
SEO is the process of improving the visibility of a website or a web page in a search engine's unpaid results (i.e., natural, organic, or earned). SEO can be used for a variety of online content, including searches for image and video, academic, and industry. SEO has a long complicated history and can be used both ethically and spuriously.

OLD SEO	vs	NEW SEO
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create content for search engine• No regard to content quality or relevance		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create content to provide real value to the audience• Focused on the audience it will attract

SEO is relevant in the world of e-commerce and online business, and for those involved in the creation of web sites and web content. Because most Internet users don't browse past the first page of search results they are offered, the higher a website can rank for a given keyword or phrase, the better its chances are of bringing in new customers.

For our SEO project, we will focus on the improvements made to a website

SEO REPORTS CONSIDERS THREE FACTORS



CONTENT

What is a Page Rank?

Page rank is a way of determining a website's importance dependent on its desirability and exposure. The term was derived by Google, who developed an algorithm to calculate rankings. When this algorithm is executed, it determines the number of links pointing to a website, the amount of relevant content it contains, and then assigns it a number between 1 and 10; 1 being the lowest level of rank, 10 being the highest. The higher a page rank, the better chance a website has of appearing at the top of an Internet search result page.

What is a Keyword?

A keyword is a word or phrase an Internet user will enter into a search engine when trying to locate something, i.e., a product or information. For example, a website selling herbal tea will list keywords such as, "herbal," "tea," and "tea bags," etc.

What is Keyword Density?

Keyword density is the numerical factor derived from dividing the number of words on the page of a website, by the number of keywords that are used within it. The more keywords used throughout a web page (and ultimately the entire site), the better the website will rank for that keyword or phrase. Websites that have too high a density tend to be considered as spam by search engines, and may be excluded.

OFF-SITE FACTORS

Pay-Per-Click advertising (covers creating compelling search advertising in Google and Bing [which also includes Yahoo!], display network advertising, affiliate advertising, and much more)

Social Media Marketing (covers creating fresh, compelling content and drawing followers [and the ultimate goal, sales] via many online venues, such as Facebook, Twitter, Google+, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr, FourSquare, Pinterest, and many more)

Local search (covers getting business profiles created in the major search engines, mapping sites, major search directories for business, niche industry directory sites, local media sites, and more)

On-page (covers an examination of all the on-page elements that affect how efficiently and effectively the search engine crawler consumes and interprets the content of a website)

Analytics (covers analyzing tracking and referrer data of website visitors and creating reports to identify the user population demographics and their behavior on a site)

Mobile (covers all things related to search on mobile devices, including the use of dedicated mobile sites and mobile interfaces like Apple's Siri)

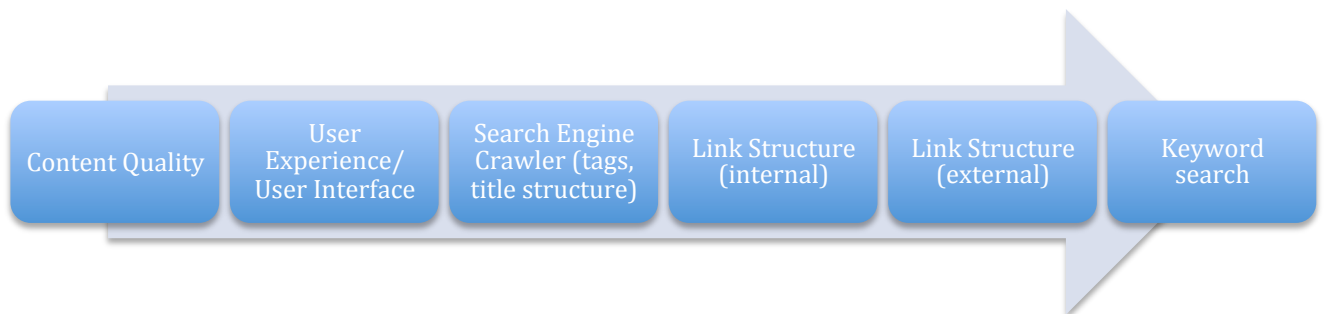
Content development (covers writers of webpage content, social media messaging, and even blog posts!)

Link building (covers the process of getting links from external websites to point to a target site)



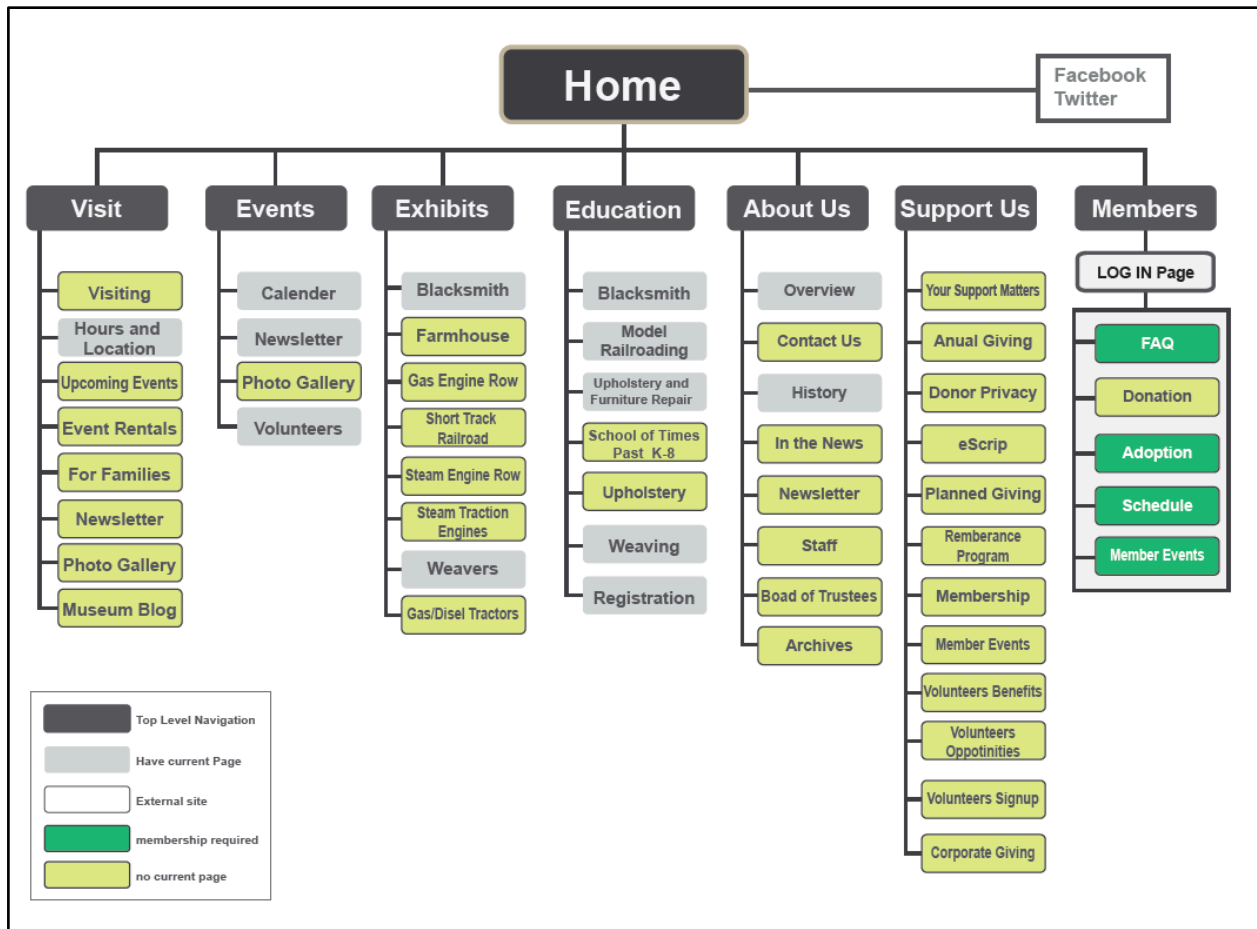
Keyword development (identifies the keywords and phrases to be used by websites to earn relevance to a targeted topic in search)

Reputation management (covers the task of maintaining the overall goodwill shown toward an individual or a company or mitigating the damage incurred by the same due to a public relations disaster)



TECHNICAL SETUP

The code in which the website is written, including tags on the site, also factor into SEO. The structure and navigation of the site should be simple and review for accessibility (both drive a website's ranking). SEO reports also generally produce a site map.



Site Map

WRITING A PROFESSIONAL SEO REPORT

Professional SEO reports traditionally have about SEVEN components:

- 1) Project overview
- 2) Work completed (that you've done for clients)
- 3) Keyword Progress
- 4) Impact on Traffic
 - a. Where does the website sit? (Google, Yahoo, etc)
 - b. IP neighbors
 - c. Blacklisting?
 - d. Duplication
 - e. Trending traffic (past 30-90 days)
 - f. Clean code
- 5) Site Map
- 6) Goal Completion/Sales (ROI Figures)
- 7) Next Steps; what should the website do next?

THE ASSIGNMENT

Thus far in the semester, you've built your own website presence (from the remediated resume portfolio). Since each person in the class already has a website, your goal is to write a **beginner level** SEO report for **two** fellow classmates. Each two-to-three page report should answer the following questions for your classmates:

- Where does their page rank on four separate search engines?
- Why does your classmate need to change about the content and the HTML code?
- What is the user experience like and how can be improved?
- At least one visual (screen-shot) and one video (screen-capture; 1-2 minutes)
- You will also offer your fellow classmates a “follow-up session” in class to discuss improvements for their websites

Skills Developed

- Analytical thought
- HTML observation and determining the effectiveness of HTML coding language
- Identification of writing patterns and themes
- Keyword research and evaluation
- Formative assessment and evaluation of writing
- Writing professional reports
- Usability testing
- Responding to the writing of others
- Copy-editing

FORMATTING THE REPORT

(training wheels)

- I. Title page
 - a. Project source
 - b. Start and Completion date
 - c. Project contact (name, email, etc)
 - d. Project Scope (what did you do?)
- II. Strategy
 - i. Programming
 - ii. Tactics
 - iii. Copy-writing
 - iv. User testing
- III. What steps should your classmate take to improve their search ranking, including changes made to the website's content and code?