

Three Keys to Improved SEO

Today's smart online marketers are constantly looking for ways to get more performance out of their web sites. Many do so by redesigning or upgrading their existing site with the aim to boost performance on the Search Engine Results Page (SERP), deliver more qualified visitors and capture more converted transactions.

Here are three keys to achieving these goals:

1. Improved indexing
2. Optimized page content
3. Better link building

Indexing refers to the collection, parsing and storage of data from web sites to facilitate fast, accurate information retrieval. **Effective indexing** requires that you make the necessary adjustments to your pages to ensure the search engines can *see and index all public content*.

Among the adjustments recommended are:

- 1) properly naming your page's URLs, removal of duplicate content, optimizing any Flash/Java Script elements.
- 2) setting up an HTML sitemap with a list of links to their Web site's pages to make them more visible and accessible to site crawlers and users. Listing all of these links with a sitemap improves site visibility and navigation.
- 3) constructing pages with Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) makes site navigation more 'crawlable' for the engines.

Next, creating and **optimizing content** elements for the site will help marketers boost rankings even further. Any content management system (CMS) you use should take SEO into account to automatically populate key SEO page elements. A web site's content must be visible to the search engine spiders and relevant to your end-users, so try to structure video, news and image content with universal search in mind, without compromising site aesthetics.

It's more important than ever to keep SERP top of mind. It's influenced by searcher's intent, his/her geographic location and recent search history. This is why you can also focus their keyword research efforts to:

- Diagram the donor giving and subscriber sign up processes.
- Map keywords according to searchers' intent (looking to donate; gain spiritual support; etc.)
- Create a list of high-volume keywords and rank them.
- Discover keywords that drive offline search demand.

With the right site content in place and visible to the engines, marketers can take full advantage of link building to further bolster SEO success.

Link building helps web sites and their pages establish credibility and gain authority with the engines. Each inbound link your web site receives serves as a reference point, or vote if you will, in its favor. Search engines evaluate the value of each link by determining the relevancy and authority of the site and page that is providing the link. The more relevant and influential references the search engines can find, the more trusted a site becomes. To help boost the impact of each link, marketers should work with referring web sites to optimize those links by ensuring the links contain descriptive anchor text, which is the text within the link. As a simple best practice, the anchor text should include the keywords that best describe the specific content provided on the target page.

Together, these key strategies help provide an effective way to increase natural search visibility, rank and qualified traffic to your web site. Put them into practice and you will begin to reap the rewards of improved SEO results.
