

UNDERSTANDING SEO

Participant's Guide



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What is SEO?

Definition: SEO stands for Search Engine Optimization, which is the practice of optimizing your _____ and other digital marketing efforts to rank higher in search engine results like Google, Bing, and Yahoo.

SEO is vital because it drives organic (_____ - _____) traffic to your website, making it easier for users to find your content.

Terms

Optimized Keywords	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Definition: Optimized keywords are specific words or phrases strategically placed in your _____ to help search engines understand what your page is about.• Example: If you have a blog post about "DIY home gardening," using keywords like "gardening tips" can help users find your article.
Headers & Subheadings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explanation: Headers (H1, H2, H3, etc.) break your content into sections, making it more readable and organized. Search engines use them to understand your content's _____.• Example: In an article about travel destinations, using H2 headers like "Top Beach Getaways" and "City Escapes" can improve SEO.
Backlinks & Link Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Definition: Backlinks are links from other websites to yours. They show search engines that your content is _____.• Example: If a popular travel blog links to your article on "Unique Destinations," it can boost your SEO.
Indexing Your Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explanation: Indexing is the process by which search engines _____ information about your website. It ensures your site's visibility in search results.• Example: When you create a new webpage, submitting it to Google's Search Console prompts Google to index it, so it appears in search results.
Image Optimization: Alt Text & Image Descriptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Definition: Alt text and image descriptions are text descriptions of images, making them _____ to people with visual impairments and helping search engines understand the content of your images.• Example: For an image of a red rose, the alt text might be "Beautiful red rose in bloom," which enhances SEO and accessibility.
Tagging & Categorization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explanation: Properly tagging your content helps organize and classify it, making it easier for users to find. This is particularly useful for _____ and e-commerce sites.• Example: In an online fashion store, using tags like "summer dresses" and "casual wear" categorizes and boosts the visibility of your products.

Setting Up Google Search Console:

Sign In or Create a Google Account:

If you don't already have one, create a Google account. It's advisable to use the same Google account associated with your website.

Go to Google Search Console:

Visit the Google Search Console website at <https://search.google.com/search-console/>.

Add Your Property:

Click the "Start now" button and enter your website's domain (e.g., <https://www.yourwebsite.com>) in the provided field.

Verify Ownership:

There are multiple methods to verify ownership, including HTML file upload, HTML tag, Google Analytics, and Google Tag Manager. Choose the method that suits you best and follow the instructions to verify your website.

Using Google Search Console:

Once your website is verified, you can start using Google Search Console to improve your website's ranking:

Submit Your Sitemap:

After verification, submit your website's sitemap. A sitemap is a file that lists all the pages on your website and helps Google index them more efficiently. To do this:

- In the left menu, click on "Sitemaps."
- Click on the "Add/Test Sitemap" button and enter the URL of your sitemap (e.g., /sitemap.xml).

Creating a sitemap for your website is a crucial step in helping search engines index and understand the structure of your site. A sitemap is a file that lists all the pages on your website, making it easier for search engine crawlers to discover and index your content. Here's how to make a sitemap:

Using a Website Plugin or CMS

Many website content management systems (CMS) and website-building platforms have built-in tools or plugins that can automatically generate and update your sitemap. Here's how to create a sitemap using popular platforms:

WordPress:

- If you're using WordPress, you can use a plugin like "Yoast SEO" or "All in One SEO Pack" to create and manage your sitemap. These plugins often generate a sitemap for you automatically.
- Install and activate one of these plugins.
- Go to the plugin's settings, and you'll find options to enable or configure your sitemap.

Wix:

- For Wix websites, the platform generates a sitemap for you automatically. There's no need to create it manually.

Squarespace:

- Squarespace also creates a sitemap automatically. You can find your sitemap at "yoursite.com/sitemap.xml."
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Monitor Index Coverage:

Under the "Index" section, you can check the "Coverage" report. This report provides information on which pages are indexed, excluded, or have issues. Fix any errors or issues to ensure that Google can index your website properly.

Check Search Performance:

The "Performance" report provides data on how your website performs in Google search results. You can see information about clicks, impressions, click-through rates (CTR), and average position for your pages. Use this data to identify which pages are performing well and which need improvement. Address any issues, and make necessary improvements to your website's content and structure.

Discover Keyword Insights:

In the "Performance" report, you can filter data by queries, pages, countries, devices, and more. This allows you to see which keywords are driving traffic to your site and which pages are ranking for those keywords.

Monitor Mobile Usability:

Ensure your website is mobile-friendly. In the "Enhancements" section, check the "Mobile Usability" report to identify and fix issues that may affect your website's performance on mobile devices.

Set up Alerts:

In the "Settings" section, you can configure email notifications for critical issues, such as sudden drops in rankings, security problems, or indexing errors.

Submit URL Inspection:

To request indexing for a specific URL, use the "URL Inspection" tool. It allows you to check the index status of a page and request a re-crawl if necessary.

Regularly Review and Improve:

Google Search Console should be a regular part of your SEO routine. Keep an eye on your data, address any issues, and make necessary improvements to your website's content and structure.

By using Google Search Console effectively, you can gain insights into your website's performance in search results, identify areas for improvement, and take actions to enhance your website's ranking. Remember that SEO is an ongoing process, so regular monitoring and adjustments are key to maintaining and improving your website's position in search engine results.

SEO Checklist

SEO BASICS

- Set up Google Search Console (GSC)
- Set up Google Analytics
- If applicable, Install an SEO plugin to your website (Wordpress)

KEYWORD RESEARCH

- Identify your competitors
- Conduct a keyword gap analysis
- Find your main 'Money' keywords
- Find question keywords
- Analyze the intent of the pages that rank

TECHNICAL SEO

- Leverage 'URL Inspection' on GSC (Google Search Console)
- Ensure your website is mobile friendly
- Check your site's loading speed
- Make sure you are using HTTPS (e-commerce especially)
- Find and fix crawl errors (404)
- Fix broken links

ON-PAGE CONTENT

- Create H1 Tags with Keywords
- Create title tags and meta descriptions
- Alt descriptions
- Inject keywords into page content
- Run a content audit on your website
- Optimize pages for SEO
- Update outdated content



OFF-PAGE SEO

- Create a .BIO site or Linktree if audit shows it as an asset
- Leverage cross promotion
- Implement the Skyscraper Technique - link building strategy where you improve existing popular content and replicate the backlinks.
- Reach out for backlinks - participate in industry conversations, comment on people's blogs, reply to their social media posts, engage with their newsletters, do an interview, media feature, guest post, or something else.
- Turn unlinked mentions into links
- Set up and optimize your GMB (Google My Business) profile

Resources

- Free tools at: <https://www.markethouse.ca/resources>
- Help on our blog at: <https://www.markethouse.ca/blog>
- More ways to connect:
 - Our Podcast <https://www.markethouse.ca/podcast>
 - Our Membership Area <https://www.markethouse.ca/membership>

We hope this was an educational and informative experience for you and we wish you so much success moving forward with your business!

If you're interested in any services Market House offers, we would love to chat!

www.markethouse.ca | [@markethouseyeg](https://www.instagram.com/markethouseyeg)

Thank you from our team at

market **HOUSE**
— *Ltd.*