

DWIGHT DIGITAL

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Mastering

LOCAL SEO

A BASIC GUIDE

The easiest LOCAL SEO HOW TO on the internet

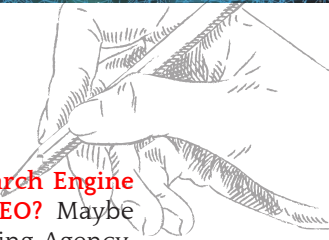
WRITTEN BY
MATTHEW DWIGHT



**START
HERE**

INTRODUCTION

WELCOME!



So, you're interested in learning about **Search Engine Optimization or commonly known as SEO**? Maybe you want to start your own Digital Marketing Agency, maybe you work for a company in their marketing department (or you are the marketing department), or maybe you're tight on cash, but know that you need to do something to help your business grow.

Regardless of how you got here, we're glad you're here. **In this eBook we'll break down the basics of SEO and how you can begin to perform and implement your own SEO strategy.** We'll explain details and strategies we use every day for our happy clients.

SEO takes time. It's not a one and done process. There are always ways to improve and the constant changes to Google's algorithm makes it a never-ending game of chase. **If at any point you have questions, get stuck, want additional help or information, reach out to us.** We've been doing this for a long time and have refined and redesigned our own strategies over and over again. We understand that this can get complicated, but we're hoping that this book will help you get started on your own SEO journey.

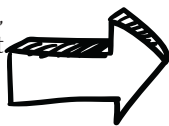




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WHAT IS SEO



SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

SEO stands for Search Engine Optimization, or more simply: where your business appears on Google (and other search engines) when your potential customers or clients look for you, or a service or product you offer. Okay, that's a mouthful. Let's break that out some more.

BREAK OUT

When you go to Google and type for "Chinese Food near me", Google's algorithm pulls results and displays them in order of what it deems as the most related and relevant to what you searched for. SEO is the practice of helping Google see that your business is more related or relevant than your competitors, so it appears higher in the results than them. This doesn't just drive people to your site, it drives people who are actively looking for what you offer to your site. That's the key difference between good SEO and bad SEO.

Those people who come to your site searching for what you offer are called your "Target Audience". In order to drive those people to your site you have to first identify who your target audience is.

IDENTIFYING YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE



As we mentioned earlier, your target audience consists of the people or businesses that are searching for you, your business, and/or the products or services you offer. **Take a moment and write down who your target audience is.** Keep it concise.

Now that you've identified your target audience take a few minutes to identify what your target audience might search for to find your business. If you're an electric company that makes house calls your target audience is anyone one searching for an electrical company right? Narrow that down more.



IDENTIFYING YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE



Answer the question: **Why are they searching for your business, services, or products?** Maybe they have an outlet that stopped working, maybe they need to run some new wires to install a new light fixture. What are **THOSE** people searching for. This is how you need to identify your target audience. Think about the questions they're asking.

Take a few minutes to write down at least 5 potential questions your target audience could ask on Google when looking for you, your business or the services and products you offer.



KEYWORD RESEARCH

These questions you just wrote down on the prior page are the first steps to finding the keywords that you are going to want to rank for. These questions are called "**longtail keywords.**"



History of Search

A quick history lesson on search engines. When we first started using search engines, we used broad search terms and the results we're typically broad as well, we had to filter through the results or reword our search to narrow down to the results that we wanted. Over the years our broad search terms have become more and more "human" and the results have become more accurate. In the past we might have searched for "electrician" and had to narrow down our results to find answers to the specific questions we had.



KEYWORD RESEARCH

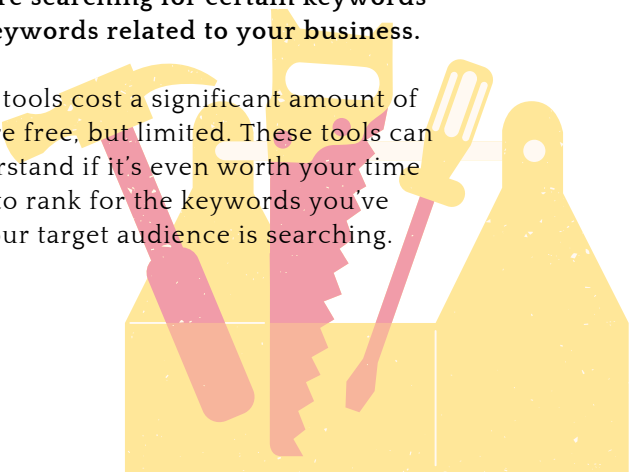
Nowadays, we search for “electricians near me” to find electricians that are located near our location. We search for “best electricians in Los Angeles” to find the electricians in LA with the best reviews. We search for “how to fix a broken outlet” to find answers on how to solve a problem we’re facing. All of these searches are longtail keywords. These longtail keywords provide specifics to an otherwise very general query. If you’re an electrician, these are the types of keywords you want to rank for.



There’s more to it than just ranking for the questions you answered on the previous page though, **how do you know how many people are searching for those questions you wrote down?**

That’s where keyword tools come in handy. **There are countless tools available to help you see how many people are searching for certain keywords and longtail keywords related to your business.**

Some of these tools cost a significant amount of money, some are free, but limited. These tools can help you understand if it’s even worth your time and energy to rank for the keywords you’ve identified your target audience is searching.





"keyword"

RESEARCH TOOLS

Here are some of the tools that we use, and you can use to help identify your keywords and longtail keywords. They can help you identify how many monthly searches your keywords get and how difficult it is to rank for those keywords.



GOOGLE KEYWORD PLANNER (FREE)



SEMrush (SUBSCRIPTION REQUIRED TO USE AFTER A FEW QUERIES)

Ubersuggest

Ubersuggest (SUBSCRIPTION REQUIRED TO USE AFTER A FEW QUERIES)



MOZ (SUBSCRIPTION REQUIRED TO USE REGULARLY)



These tools all have free versions of them and require a varying amount of difficulty to learn or understand. For the sake of keeping things simple we'll focus on one tool for now:

Moz.

We use Moz on every project, and you can too! You don't need to pay for a subscription if you're using it only so often or don't mind having limited results.

Their free version is more than capable of getting you started on the right foot and helping you identify the keywords that are worth trying to rank for.

The first thing you'll need to do is go to Moz's site and sign up for an account. A free account will get you 10 keyword queries a month. Although that's not much, that should be more than enough to get you started and focusing on a few keywords each month. Once you've signed up for a free account, direct yourself here ·

<https://analytics.moz.com/pro/keyword-explorer> and type in your keyword or longtail keyword in the Keyword Explorer.



"keyword"

RESEARCH TOOLS

Remember, you only have 10 queries a month, so use them wisely.

Start with searching for your longtail keywords and see how many searches that get's a month and how difficult it is to rank for (KD Score). **As you go through and research your longtail keywords, take note of the search volume.** If you're turning up searches with less than 100 search volume (the number of people searching for that longtail keyword) a month, go back to your keywords and re-evaluate them. It might be that you're getting too specific, and you need to broaden your scope a little to capture a larger audience. If you do this smartly, you should have no problem identifying your primary keywords and longtail keywords within the limit that Moz gives you on a free account.



It's okay if your search traffic isn't in the 1000s or more. To start you want to focus on what we commonly refer to "**low hanging fruit**". **Keywords and longtail keywords that have very low difficulty (on a scale of 0 to 100 with 100 being almost impossible to rank for and zero being very easy to rank for), primarily anything under 15, and decent search volume.** 500 or more is good. If you find a longtail keyword in the 1000s that's even better! Anything with over 10,000 organic searches a month and a difficulty score of less than 5 are considered the **Golden Keywords**. These should be your priority.

So, let's take a step back for a moment.

Let's say you need help finding your keywords or longtail keywords, but you know your competition is getting way more business than you. You can run what we call a **competitive analysis**.



COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS



A competitive analysis is a report that tells you what keywords and longtail keywords your competition is ranking for. You can use this report to then identify which keywords you want to research further and see how much traffic you could get from ranking on these keywords.

So how do you run a competitive analysis?

There are tools that we use, both free and subscription based, to help us identify what our competitors are ranking for and how we can outrank them. The most useful tools for identifying your competitors are:

- **UberSuggest** (3 free daily searches)
- **SEMrush** (paid subscription)
- **Moz** (this does count against your 10 free monthly queries).

For simplicity's sake, we'll explore UberSuggest so you don't end up using all your queries from Moz in one day.

Start by going here . https://app.neilpatel.com/en/traffic_analyzer/competitors and input the URL of your main competitors to see what their top search rankings are. The results can take a bit of time to load, but this tool is super helpful in identifying what they're ranking for and if it's worth your time and energy to try and outrank them based off keyword difficulty and search volume. Once the results do appear, you can see how much organic traffic they're getting a month and from what keywords and what position on Google they are for those keywords. Clicking on the keywords will show the average monthly search volume as well as the ranking difficulty.


Now that we know what your competition is ranking for and the keywords you want to rank for let's talk tackle the big question: **How do you rank for those keywords and outrank your competition?**

The Answer? It all boils down to content.



Competitive Analysis

CONTENT



CONTENT IS KING

Like we talked about, Google tries to deliver the most relevant and related results based on what you search for. It does this by scanning the internet for the keywords, longtail keywords, and similarly related phrases and delivering sites that mention those keywords. It tries it's best to identify which website is going to be the best subject matter expert to answer the questions you've asked.



CONTENT



That being said, if Google is scanning your site for those keywords you need to have them on your site somewhere. That does not mean you need to overload your site with these keywords. Google is smart enough to know if your “keyword stuffing”. It’s looking for natural flowing, high quality content that includes and relates to the keywords it’s been tasked with providing results for.

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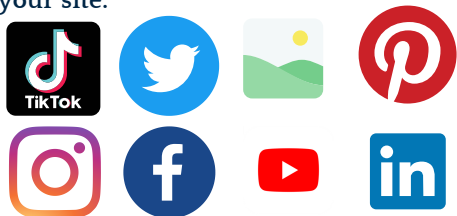
Remember: When writing content, focus first on your low hanging fruit keywords and your Golden Keywords with low ranking difficulty scores (KD Score).

A LITTLE MORE ABOUT CONTENT



What is content exactly? Content is simply anything that is on your website outside of the layout and design.

This can include pictures, videos, infographics, blogs, articles, product descriptions, employee bios, contact information, and anything else you can physically see and identify on your site.

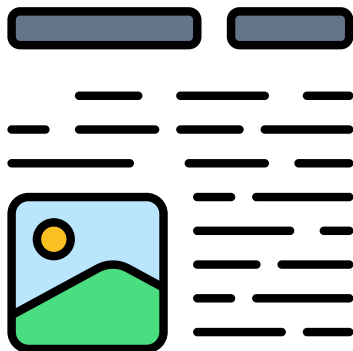


Now, how do you make GOOD content?

First, make sure that the keywords you're optimizing your content around is something that relates to you or your business in some capacity. The easiest form of content is blogs and articles.

Writing high quality 1000+ word blogs and articles around the keywords you want to rank for is a great way to start getting ranked. Make sure to also include a picture, video, or infographic on each blog. If your keywords revolve around a service or product you offer, build out your service page or product description with well written, detailed information about your product or service and include those keywords. **Product descriptions and service pages** should contain a minimum of about 750 words.

The number of times you need to include the keyword depends on a multitude of factors, but primarily: ranking difficulty and length of your content.



CONTENT



A good rule of thumb: if your content is around 750 words include your keyword naturally throughout the content about 3 to 4 times. Include it in your headings at least once and make sure to include it in your first sentence or paragraph. If your content is over 1000 words, include your keywords 4 to 5 times following the same advice as above.

Remember, if your readers would believe that you are a subject matter expert based off what they've read on your site then Google should too. Writing good content is a huge part of rankings and **good content is becoming more and more relevant with each Google Algorithm update**. If you need help getting started, you can use your competitive analysis to see what pages your competitor's site is ranking and review their content. **DO NOT PLAGIARIZE**.

Your content should be your own and unique.

Just like in college and high school, Google will absolutely punish your site if it catches you copying someone else's, and it will find out.

There's got to be more than that to ranking for keywords, right? Technically, yes. There are many other aspects of SEO than just content, but content plays a huge role. Okay, enough about content, for now. Let's talk about some of the other aspects that impact your rankings on Google.

ONSITE SEO: TITLES, SLUG, & ALT TEXT

Depending on which platform your site is built on, there are tools at your disposal to help you optimize your site beyond just writing good content. If your site is built on WordPress, you can install Yoast and use their plugin to help identify other areas that need improvement to help you rank.

NOTE: Their content checker is also an extremely powerful tool.

So, what are some things you can do to better optimize your site for SEO?

Let's start with the easy ones and move up from there.

First things first: Any pictures, videos, graphics, or infographics on your site make sure they're titled to reflect your keywords, your business, and the services or products you offer.

Keep it relevant though; if you have a picture of a boat and title it "Best car insurance in Austin, TX" because that's a keyword you want to rank for, all you're doing is hurting yourself. Google "looks" at pictures, videos and any other graphics and understands what it's looking at. If you try to pull that off, best case scenario Google will ignore you, worst case scenario Google will penalize you. **If you see a spot to add "Alt Text" add a sentence or keywords to properly describe the image, video, or graphic.** This should be similar to your title, but not the exact same wording. Although it doesn't make a huge impact, it's also wise to name your files accurately too. Don't just upload an image with a file name "image20220314.jpg", **rename your files to accurately reflect what it is.** This goes beyond SEO and is beneficial in making it easier to find later whether on your site or on your computer.

Each page on your site should have an H1 heading (typically the title at the top of the page), **several additional headings throughout the page**, content like we discussed earlier, a proper "slug" or URL extension, and a meta description summarizing the page. A "slug" is the URL extension at the end of your URL. It's the address name of your specific page. As an example, we'll use our site. [Dwrightdigital.com](https://dwrightdigital.com) would be the main URL and take you to the home page.

The "slug" or URL extension is anything that comes after the ".com" such as [dightdigital.com/services](https://dwrightdigital.com/services).

These slugs should match what your page is about, don't just leave it as "page-12". That doesn't tell your audience or Google anything about what the page is referencing. Your URL extension should be short and to the point though and can be parsed together with hyphens, like our Local SEO Checker tool page: dwrightdigital.com/local-seo-checker/.



ONSITE SEO: META DESCRIPTION



If you can, it's important to check that each of your pages on your website have an H1 Heading.

UberSuggest has a tool called "Site Audit" that can help you identify pages with missing H1 headings and other gaps in your website's onsite SEO. You can also use the Yoast plugin if you have a WordPress website to check your headings, modify your "slug", and add a meta description.

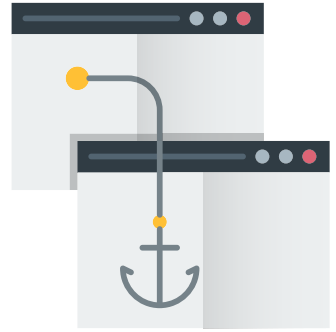
Meta descriptions provide a summary of the page. When you go to Google, and you search for something the text that you see below the search result URL is a meta description. If you leave it blank Google will take a snippet of that page and display it and sometimes it doesn't make sense without additional context. But writing a **good, concise, and intriguing** meta description that's under 160 characters will tell your target audience why they should click on your site over anyone else's. It also acts as a synopsis for Google to quickly identify that your page is related to the keywords you're trying to rank for.

By adding meta descriptions, high quality, well written content, media with proper titles and Alt text, and descriptive, but concise slugs will help ensure that your site ranks for any keywords that you're trying to target. But there is one more big important thing. **Backlinks.**

BACKLINKS

What is a backlink? A backlink is simply a link to your website on someone else's website. You don't want just any old backlink though; you need backlinks that are from other websites that Google considers credible and related to your website. This builds your trust, authenticity, and authority in your field of expertise in the eyes of Google. Backlinks can also serve as a way to drive more traffic to your site from someone else's site. If someone is on another website and they're reading an article about a service, you provide and reasons why you're the best choice compared to others they can click the link to be taken directly to your site. The difficult thing about backlinks is they can be hard to get. It's not easy finding credible, high-ranking sites that relate to your business and get them to put a link to your site on theirs. **So how do you get backlinks?**

There are several approaches to gaining backlinks. **The first is through creating content and inquiring to bloggers or other site owners if they would like to post the content you've written on their site. The second and probably the easiest and cheapest way is to create content worth quoting and sharing quotable mentions of your content on social media.** Blast it out there.

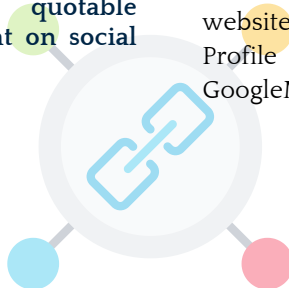


Create attractive infographics and media that others would want to share or use and have it link to your site. **The final way to create backlinks is through hiring a digital marketing agency like us.** We provide link building services by utilizing our huge network of bloggers, journalist, and site owners to find related sites where we can publish quality content with a link back to your site.

The more quality content you create for your site the more likely it is that you'll get organic backlinks.

**QUALITY
CONTENT
=
BACKLINKS**

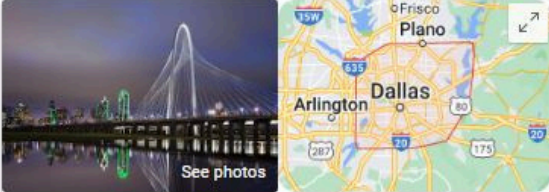
Over time these backlinks will boost Google's view of your site as an expert in the field and will continue to boost your rankings. Google also looks at one more thing, and for local businesses this is probably almost as important as having a website. Your Google Business Profile (formerly known as GoogleMyBusiness profile).



BONUS MATERIAL: GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE

If you're a local business or helping a local business rank for certain keywords on their site, make sure they have a **Google Business Profile (formerly GoogleMyBusiness profile or GMB)**. When you google your business name you should see a section on the right side of Google with your business name, hours of operation, area of service or address, reviews, and pictures.

This is your profile and if you haven't claimed it or it doesn't exist you need to make one. We explore more in depth all the ins and outs of your Google Business Profile in our eBook: *Mastering Your Google Business Profile*, but we wanted to make sure to include a bit about it in this eBook because we believe this is a critical part of any online presence for a business.



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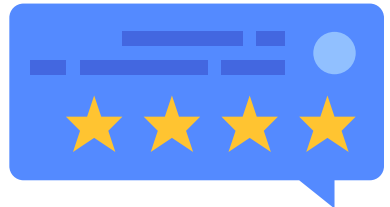
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BONUS MATERIAL: GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE

Once you've claimed or created your GBP, you'll need to update all your information: Contact info, hours of operation, address or service area, website, pictures. You should also take it a step further by add services and products to your profile, updating your business category and description, and writing common questions and answers that your target audience might ask. Include pictures and details about the services and products you offer. In addition, you can also add regular updates to your GBP, almost like you can on your social media platforms. When you run sales, have updates, offer new services, get new reviews, highlight them on your profile as well through posting an update.

The last important aspect of your Google Business Profile is reviews. Ask prior clients or customers for reviews. Reviews go a long way to improving your profile and increases the likelihood that your target audience will seek out your services or products. Think about the last time you went out to eat without checking the reviews on Google. How often does a negative review impact whether you shop somewhere, buy a product, or use a service from a certain company?



CONCLUSION

Whew, okay. Information overload. Hopefully though, this eBook gives you a good starting point with managing your own SEO and understanding the basics of SEO. Search Engine Optimization is a complicated continuous game of chess between you, your competitors, and Google. But you don't have to be a master chess player to win, you just need to be better than your competition.

Remember:

- Identify your target audience, the longtail keywords they're searching, and keywords your competition is ranking for.
- Quality content is king.
- Backlinks are important but will come with lots of good quality shared content.
- Optimize your site with onsite SEO tools.
- Utilize the free tools that are out there to give yourself a leg up above your competition.
- Build out your Google Business Profile.

Using this eBook as a reference guide when you begin going through your site to optimize it for SEO will help guarantee you rank for the keywords you want to rank for and drive more traffic to your site and your business.

If you need help, can't seem to figure out why you can't out rank your competitors, or just don't have the time to do it, let us help. We've been doing this for over a decade and have helped many businesses grow their online presence and improve their keyword rankings to boost their revenue.

Want to learn more?

Looking to get more in depth in the world of SEO?

Be on the lookout for our upcoming Mastering SEO course that takes a deeper dive into how to out rank your competitors, find more Golden Keywords, write instant ranking content, and building high quality, high authority backlinks.



Thank You!

Thank you for purchasing our eBook. We hope you find value in the hard work and effort we put into making this.

We'd love to hear your thoughts and if you like our book, please consider leaving us a review.

On behalf of our team, our supporters,
myself, and my wife,
thank you again.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matthew Dwight". The script is cursive and fluid.

Matthew Dwight
Owner
Dwight Digital LLC