

DIY SEO Guide

The comprehensive, practical and easy to understand guide that shows you exactly how to optimise your website and what link development activities will help improve your search engine position.

Created by Blueclaw
Read more tips on our [SEO Blog](#)

Introduction

Search Engine Optimisation is a technique used by companies to promote your website to gain higher visibility in the search engines. Your website ranking is based on a large number of factors, from link development, traffic generation, online advertising to on-site factors like relevant content generation, link path analysis and resolving any technical barriers that would prevent search engine spiders from crawling and indexing your website.

Google, Bing and Yahoo are the three most commonly used search engines, with Google leading the search traffic market with **62.6%** market share, Bing at **18.9%** and Yahoo at **12.7%**.

* Correct as of 14 July 2010 [Source](#)

So, what would a top place ranking on Google get you? Leaked data from AOL in 2006 shows that the following positions will get you approximately the following click through rates.

Google Rank	% CTR (Click Through Rate)	% CTR Compared to Position Above
1	42.3%	-
2	11.92%	-71.82%
3	8.44%	-80.04%
4	6.03%	-85.75%
5	4.86%	-88.52%
6	3.99%	-90.58%
7	3.37%	-92.95%
8	2.98%	-92.95%
9	2.83%	-93.32%
10	2.97%	-92.98%

[Source](#)

With so much traffic going into such limited positions on the Internet, this proves more than anything that investment in **time**, **finances** and **knowledge** is needed to gain these crucial search engine listings.

This guide will help you gain an understanding of search engines, how they operate, what they see, and how you can optimise your website to be more relevant and drive a higher number of relevant visitors to your website.

Firstly, before you jump into our DIY SEO guide, you will need to understand how search engines operate.

How do Search Engines find my website?

SEs "crawl" the Internet through a "web" of interconnecting links. These links help search engines to find web pages, images, PDF documents, podcasts, music, blog posts and more. Once they are found by a search engine "spider", the results are "indexed" in a really, really, really big database.

Contrary to what some people may tell you, submitting your website to search engines does not work. The best way of alerting Google to new content on your website is through submitting your website's sitemap to search engine webmaster tools, using Ping services (like pingoat.com), tweeting and other social media activities. We will go through each of these in more detail later in the guide.

How do Search Engines rank websites?

When Google crawls through a large number of websites, they use a complex algorithm to calculate what a website is about and its perceived value (spam vs. trusted authority sites). SEO attempts to unravel this highly guarded algorithmic factor to signal to the SEs what relevance the website has to a search query and its importance on the Internet compared to other (competitor) websites. Using this guide and seeking professional consultations can help you ensure that you website meets most of the 100 ranking factors that help your website rank higher in the search engines.

So if I make a website and publish it on the Internet, will it get high rankings immediately?

The short answer is no. If you have a great business but fail to promote it, it won't magically take off. Similarly, if you have a great website with useful products and content, you need to market it on the Internet. Search engines cannot do this for you - humans are the driving force in creating these vital links and associations with web pages. Youtube is a prime example - a video could go 'viral' in just a few hours through one funny video being shared on by a million people on Facebook, social bookmarking sites and then being picked up by newspaper sites.

How do we know how SEO works?

The SEO community has been active and experimenting for years, recording results all the time. So while there are constant refinements and changes to Google's algorithm, there are a few tried and tested methods that are known to work. The search engines themselves give webmasters tips to optimise their website for their spiders, see below:

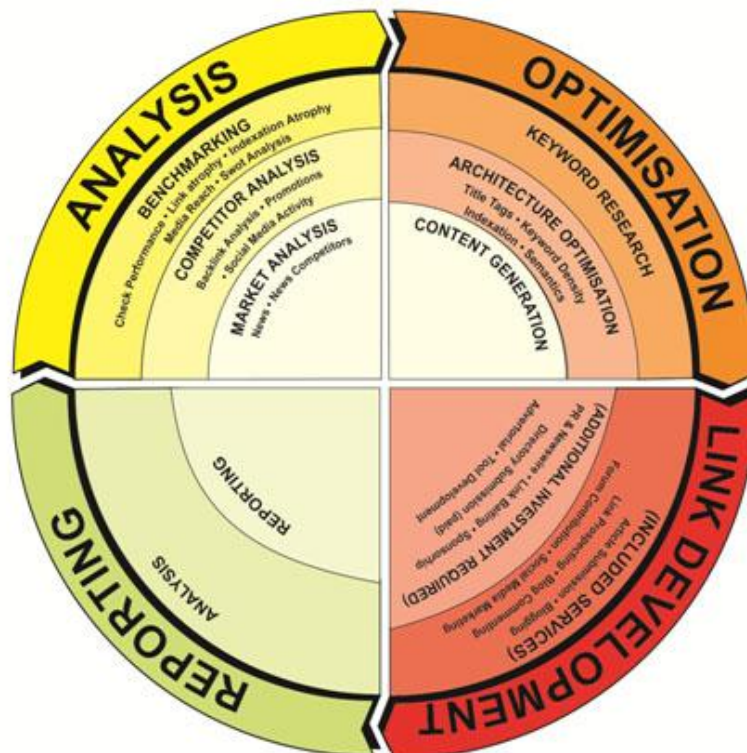
- **Bing** (<http://www.bing.com/community/blogs/webmaster/archive/2009/09/03/search-engine-optimization-for-bing.aspx>)
- **Yahoo** (<http://help.yahoo.com//us/yahoo/search/basics/basics-18.html>)
- **Google**
(<http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=35769>)

Through a combination of experimenting, sharing information and keeping up to date with the latest developments, the SEO community have come to understand how search engines work and implement some of the most crucial methods for gaining greater visibility and driving a higher amount of traffic to your website.

Blueclaw's DIY SEO Top Tips

Content Overview

- Tip 1: **Background Check Your Website & Your Market**
- Tip 2: **Plan your on-site SEO Strategy**
- Tip 3: **Monitoring and Tracking your Success!**
- Tip 4: **Offsite Link Building**
- Tip 5: **Query Deserves Freshness. Enter Social Media Marketing**



Tip 1

Background Check Your Website & Your Market

Keyword & Competitor Research

A good place to start before embarking on your SEO journey is to do some basic keyword research. Finding the right keywords for your business will be one of the most important foundations for your SEO campaign. Ensuring that you have chosen the best search queries for your business will mean that you will have higher conversion rates for visitors to your website.

Keep in mind that your research may uncover keywords that are different to the language that you may be currently using to describe your products. However, conducting the following keyword research will ensure you are targeting search terms that people are using, which will then send relevant visitors.

Begin by putting together a list of keywords that you want to be ranking for in Google. Enter this list into Google's **Keyword Research Tool** (<https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal>) and choose "Sorted by Local Monthly Searches" and "Exact Match". This will give you a good approximation of the number of searches for your keyword in the United Kingdom in the last month.

Find keywords

Based on one or both of the following:

Word or phrase (one per line)

sell cars
car dealerships
car dealers in leeds
best car dealer

Website

Advanced options

Locations: United Kingdom

Languages: English

Search

All Categories

Apparel
Beauty & Personal Care
Computers
Consumer Electronics
Family & Community
Finance
Food
Gifts & Occasions
Health
Hobbies & Leisure
Home & Garden
Law & Government
Products
Media & Events

Contains

Sort: Alphabetical | Highest count

☐ All
☐ a used car (18)
☐ best car dealer (3)
☐ car (64)
☐ car dealerships (9)
☐ cars (51)
☐ sell car (21)
☐ sell cars (15)
☐ sell my (16)
☐ used car (72)
☐ used cars (30)

Match Types

☐ Broad
☒ Exact
☐ Phrase

Keyword ideas

Sign in with your AdWords login information to see the full set of ideas for this search.

About this data

Download

Sorted by Local Monthly Searches Columns

Keyword	Competition	Global Monthly Searches	Local Monthly Searches	Local Search Trends
[sell cars]		301,000	246,000	
[auto cars]		165,000	135,000	
[second hand cars]		110,000	49,500	
[used car sales]		74,000	27,100	
[used car dealer]		246,000	22,200	
[car for sale]		90,500	22,200	
[car lease]		40,500	22,200	
[sell my car]		60,500	18,100	
[used car dealers]		90,500	14,800	
[car dealerships]		246,000	12,100	
[buy cars]		110,000	9,900	
[cheap used cars]		90,500	9,900	
[auto car]		33,100	9,900	
[buy car]		60,500	8,100	
[sell car]		27,100	6,600	
[car sale]		40,500	6,600	
[second hand car]		22,200	4,400	
[cars used]		12,100	4,400	

Go to page: 1 Show rows: 50 1 - 50 of 100

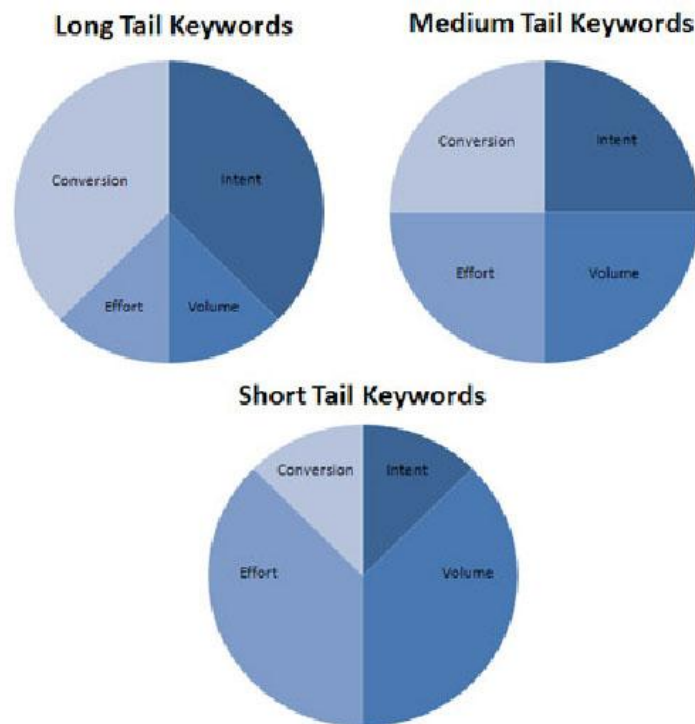
Once you have this keyword list you can download and export it to Excel. You could open several sheets in your Excel workbook and organise different keyword sets by category. This way you have clearly defined category keyword targets and you can pick out the ones that are most relevant to your business for the right landing pages.

Cross check your chosen keywords by entering it into Google to get an idea of what websites are currently ranking for those keywords. These are all your competitors. Are these companies that you can realistically compete against for this search term? Are they larger companies with higher marketing budgets? While it is not impossible to rank for some high volume search queries, if your competitors are multi-million turnover companies and/or reference sites (Wikipedia), large organisations (the United Nations) and government websites (Directgov), it may take a lot of time and finances to secure a listing in first page of Google. Learn to have realistic targets!

Tools like **IBP (Internet Business Promoter)** and **SEO Spyglass** can help you to analyse your competition to give you a good idea of keywords they are targeting and their backlinks which could give an indication of whether they are also conducting a SEO campaign.

For example, while [sell cars] may have 245,000 searches a month, if your business only targets Yorkshire or Leeds, a better keyword would be [sell cars in Leeds]

Keep in mind the following: although short tail keywords may have higher search volume, it does not necessarily equate to a higher amount of conversions on your website. For example a very general term, “car dealership” will not necessarily convert the first 1000 visitors if you are ranking at number 1 on Google. However, targeting “car dealership leeds”, though lower in search volume and may not send more than 100 visitors a month will send visitors that have typed in a query with very clear intent. If they land on the right page of your website, there is no reason why these 100 visitors cannot convert to customers.



Other keyword research tools:

- SEOMoz Keyword Difficulty Tool
- Google Insights for Search
- Google Trends

Search Engine friendly design & optimisation

As complex as search engines are, there are still limitations to what search engines can "read" from a website. For example, predominantly flash websites, audio files and poor link structures don't allow the search engines to read content on the website. Search engines cannot interpret code that is not in HTML format and obscure link structures will mean that some pages are not found and indexed by search engines. So ensure that your website contains clean code, clear, concise navigational structure and really relevant content.

Although not a ranking factor, ensuring your website is W3C compliant will also mean it is as accessible as possible for all users.

Rearranging Code on your Website

Traditionally when designing and coding a website, many people who follow the structure,

Logo, menu etc. in **header**, then content and side content in the **body**, then a footer.

However to take advantage of greater SEO benefits, if designing a brand new website, shuffle your code around to display

Content and sidecontent, **first** then footer **second**, then header, navigation menu etc.

This can be done without compromising the design of a website and as a visitor you will not see any difference visually. However this will hold great SEO benefit as search engines will be able to read the most important content first when 'crawling' the website. Having your content and keyword rich anchor text links high within the code gives it more weight as it is surrounded by relevant text, which menu links do not have.

See the code used (Page > View Source in Internet Explorer, Ctrl-U in Firefox) on this website:

<http://www.searchenginefriendlylayouts.com>

Images

Adding alt attributes for images. `` .

Also ensure that you have descriptive names for your images, e.g. ferrari-enzo.jpg instead of IMG8389_29.jpg. This would mean you have a higher likelihood of your image being indexed and shown on Google Images. Utilise keywords where it makes sense for your alt tags and make sure your images are surrounded by relevant content.

Writing content of unreadable material

For Flash, Videos and Audio, transcribe the content in text so it is indexed by search engines.

Check that Google can read this page by clicking "Cached" and make sure search engines can read what humans can read too!



URL Structures

The URLs of a website hold a lot of value in terms of SEO. Unless you are a large brand, often having a descriptive, keyword rich URL will help you in the SERPs. It also helps in terms of generating good anchor text links back to your website.

Consider <http://www.robincars.co.uk> and <http://www.cardealershipleeds.co.uk>

Tip: Avoid registering a new, hyphenated, keyword rich domain name as Google are starting to target these sites for penalties. E.g. <http://www.car-dealership-leeds.co.uk> However if your website has been running for years and contain relevant content, you should not worry.

Some other things to consider when dealing with URLs and links:

Optimising Links

This is what most links look like in code:

```
<a href="http://www.robincars.co.uk" title="Cheap Car Dealers">Cheap Car Dealers</a>
```

You can add value to your links by adding the **link title attribute** and have descriptive **Anchor Text**. That is the visible text shown on the website "Cheap Car Dealers"

Having high quality links into your website using your anchor text keyword is crucial for improving your position in the search engines. However you should not overdo your link building with keywords, and it is better to have a larger proportion of your links as brand names, rather than keyword rich ones.

Another good way of optimising links it to include it within the URL. Say you have a domain name based on your brand <http://www.robincars.co.uk>

Optimise your homepage with your broad keywords, but ensure your landing pages include the keyword within the URL, <http://www.robincars.co.uk/dealers-birmingham> and the content on this page matches the title. Using hyphens makes your longer URLs easier to type, as opposed to using _underscore or +plus.

Note that you do not have to repeat 'cars' in your URL as your brand name already contains the word cars. On the same vein, if you have done your keyword research homework, you will know that the difference between <http://www.robincars.co.uk/dealership-birmingham> and <http://www.robincars.co.uk/dealers-birmingham> is that the search volume on 'dealers' is **higher** than 'dealership'.

Sitemaps

Sitemaps are a good way of laying out your entire website in one page for the search engines to crawl and index. You can create “Google Sitemaps” and also HTML Sitemaps. If there are some links that have been missed, you can then submit your sitemap to the search engines for consideration through respective search engine Webmaster Tools. These are free services and will help you monitor and diagnose any potential problems with your website.

Google <http://www.google.com/webmasters/tools>

Bing <http://www.bing.com/webmaster>

Yahoo <http://siteexplorer.search.yahoo.com>

Free Google XML Site Creator <http://www.xml-sitemaps.com>

Tip 2

Plan your onsite SEO Strategy

Plan of Landing Pages

The first thing to do with your list of keywords is to identify the pages that would best suit your keywords. As a general rule, use general, broad keywords for your homepage (car dealers) and more specific medium - long tail keywords (cheap car dealers leads) for landing pages.

Use your keyword research to identify possible page topics and plan your landing page content by asking yourself the **5Ws and 1H** – Who, What, When, Where, Why, How? These questions will help you shape the content on the site by discovering what your customers may be asking when they are on that page.

Onsite Placements

The next step after having a clear idea of what your keywords are and where they are going to be placed is to sort out parts of your website code that are important for SEO.

Title Tag

<title>Your title here</title>

Located in the <head> section of your website, the title tag is literally the first thing that search engines see when they begin crawling your website. Your most important keyword should be placed right at the front of this tag, even before your brand name. Use keywords not more than twice in your title tag and only in variations if appropriate.

The title tag also dictates the clickable link on your organic site listing in Google. E.g.in this example, Coach Holidays is the main keyword for the nationalholidays.com website.

Coach Holidays, Tours and Coach Trips | National Holidays  
Sensational value **coach holidays**, tours, trips & short breaks by coach across Britain, Ireland and Europe - National Holidays.
www.nationalholidays.com/ - Cached - Similar

Content Structure

Content holds a very important place for on-site SEO. Writing genuinely relevant content that is readable and useful for humans is the best way of attracting and retaining visitors to your website. Having great informative text on your website also means that your website also has a higher chance of being revisited, bookmarked as a useful site and even shared amongst friends of your visitors.

It is a good idea to use keywords in your content, however **do not go overboard**. There is no magic formula in terms of keyword density, just keep your text logical and do not stuff it with keywords. In terms of structuring your content, ensure that your main keywords are used closer to the top of the page and used at least once in **** tags.

H1 – H6 tags

H1 – H6 tags are not essential but good practice to indicate headings and breaking up text. Use keywords in your headings, but don't spam H1 tags with your keywords. Follow a logical order and use H2 – H6 tags as well on the page.

Meta Information

<meta name="description" content="Your description here" />

Your meta description tag is another important tag to get right for attracting visitors. In the above example, it is the sentence **"Sensational value coach holidays, tours, trips & short breaks by coach across Britain, Ireland and Europe – National Holidays"**

Give a clear and concise description of your site as this is the first thing that visitors see when they decide whether or not to click through to your website.

Although different search engines show different number of characters for your title and meta description, the recommended length for a **title tag is 70 characters** and **150 characters for a meta description** if you do not want to have a sentence cut off with ellipses at the end of your listing. However your meta description can be as long as you like, as Google scans through the text and shows the appropriate segments based on your search query.

Meta descriptions do not hold any SEO value, so don't stuff it with keywords or write an essay.

<meta name="keywords" content="Keyword 1, Misspellings of Brand Name" />

While the meta keywords tag was once a very important part of SEO, it has now lapsed into disuse. There are still claims that search engines **Yahoo** and **Ask** consider the content of the meta keywords tag, however it is known to be ignored by Google and Bing. When using meta keywords, keep it short and by no means stuff all your keywords into this tag. If you are going to use this tag, only include common misspellings of your brand name and a few alternate spellings of your main keywords.

Meta Robots

Your meta robots tag controls search engine activity. For example, when developing a new page on your website you may want to tell the search engines not to index the page as it is unfinished or under construction. Adding this tag, **<meta name="robots" content="noindex, nofollow">** will render it invisible in the SERPs.

There is **no need** to tell the robots to 'index, follow' your pages as this is unnecessary code and is the default for all search engines.

The meta refresh, meta revisit-after, meta content type tags are all **useless** and should not be used as it is cluttering up your website code.

Canonical URLs

Canonicalization often refers to the duplication of content across several different pages on one website. This may occur due to a number of different scenarios, one of the severest forms of canonicalization is a duplication of your homepage when building your site. For example,

- <http://domain.com>
- <http://www.domain.com>
- <http://domain.com/>
- <http://www.domain.com/>
- <http://domain.com/index.html>
- <http://www.domain.com/index.html>

The other common route to canonicalization occurs when building e-commerce stores. E.g. consider the route to a pair of red shoes on a shoe website.

You may have created a “colour” category, so the red shoes are shown on this page

<http://www.robinshoeshop.co.uk/red/dorothys-shoes>

You may also have created a “heel height” category, so the **same content** are also shown on this page

<http://www.robinshoeshop.co.uk/high-heels/dorothys-shoes>

Having these pages with duplicate content may land you with a Google penalty and mean that you are essentially competing against yourself when it comes to search engine relevancy.

What you need to do is set up a 301 redirect all extraneous pages to your main target site using your .htaccess file. This informs search engines that this is a copy of the other page and all “link juice” should be given to that URL.

To create a 301 redirect, open up Notepad and create a file called .htaccess (make sure there is no .txt or any filename at the end)

Enter the following within the text area, **all on one line** and upload to the root of your website

redirect 301 /high-heels/dorothys-shoes <http://www.robinshoeshop.co.uk/red/dorothys-shoes>

An easy way of finding any dead links is to use **Google Webmaster Tools** – make sure you redirect all these dead links to the relevant active ones on your site.

Tip 3

Monitoring and Tracking your Success!

Google Analytics (<http://www.google.com/analytics>)

Analytics is probably the best **free** tool you could use to track the number of visitors, traffic sources and keywords to your website. Simply register online or enter your account details if you have an existing Google product login (Gmail, Google Adwords etc) for access to Analytics. It's easy to set up, just add a bit of code to the bottom of your website, just before the `</body>` closing tag and it will begin gathering information within 24 hours.

You can set it to send you weekly reports straight to your mailbox, add other people with Google accounts as users to see your data (like your SEO Company) and export reports straight from the dashboard for easy reporting.

Google Webmaster Tools (<http://www.google.com/webmasters/tools>)

Another free useful tool that you should use to diagnose any problems with your website. Use GWT to submit your sitemap to Google if there are certain pages on your website that has not been indexed, use "Fetch as Googlebot" to see if there are any errors when the Googlebot crawls your page and modify your Sitelinks if they are showing the wrong inner pages on your listing.

**** Other useful tools**

- Firebug
- Google Page Speed
- SEOmoz Toolbar
- SEO Quake
- Yahoo Linkdomain Queries
- Bing IP queries
- Open Site Explorer
- Google Alerts

Many of these plugins and tools are available for most new browsers and can help give you crucial SEO information at a glance.

Tip 4

Offsite Link Building

Equally as important as a good, optimised website with relevant content on your website are building high quality links to your website using your keywords. There are several ways of building a good base of links.

Directory Submissions

The most famous directory sites are DMOZ, BOTW, Yahoo Directory, Business.com and more. These high authority directories are trusted by Google but usually incur high, yearly fees. There are many others where you do not have to pay for listings but it may take several months before your site is approved.

Article Submissions

Article submission sites places a contextual link within an article that has been written about your business or industry. Some of the more well known ones are Ezine Articles and Articles Alley but there are hundreds of sites out there for this purpose.

Social Bookmarking

This is a good way of promoting a piece of interesting content. The social bookmarking community is active and one good piece of 'link bait' will often send thousands of visitors to your site within a few hours.

Microsite Development

Creating new websites based around different parts of your business is also another way of building links to your site and targeting more niche areas of your industry. Always use the keyword research tool to ensure that **you know what people are searching for**.

E.g. Set up a website called <http://www.robinusedcars.co.uk> and ensure that this site has content specifically tailored towards used cars.

However, there are several things to keep in mind when link building:

- Trust & Authority of the website
- Anchor Text
- Page Rank
- Domain Authority
- Number of links on a page
- Is it a Paid Link? (SEs are beginning to crack down on paid links as it is considered unethical – it is always best to build links naturally)

Tools like **Adgooroo**, **SEO Spyglass**, and **Market Samurai** can help you to find good sites to potentially contact to build links with.

Also Google's Blog Search is a great way of finding blogs that have been updated recently or contain your keyword.

Some easy techniques to link build are:

- Get your customers to link back to you using a descriptive contextual link through their website or even their blog.

E.g. We just got a great deal from the friendliest [car dealers in Leeds](#)

- Write on a blog (see Social Media Marketing section below)
- Create good 'link baiting' content – content or images that people may naturally link to and share with their friends. (See 'Will it Blend')

Tip 5

Query Deserves Freshness. Enter Social Media Marketing

Although it is easy to get carried away in terms of participating in social media, there is no point involving yourself unless you are going stay active. No one likes to see that your last Twitter update was 6 months ago and your blog has been neglected for 10 months. Visitors and more importantly search engines are starting place more emphasis on 'fresh' content.

Blogs

Content is an important basis of any website, and creating fresh content is beneficial for your website. Many blog platforms like Wordpress and Blogger automatically 'pings' or informs search engines that you have just posted new information on your website so they will then revisit your site to crawl and index this new content.

You could create both on-site blogs and off-site blogs. On-site blogs ride on the authority of your main domain and offers some great opportunities for capturing long-tail traffic to your website. Consider using descriptive, current content and titles for your blog post. E.g.
<http://www.robinCars.co.uk/blog/5-best-new-cars-of-2010>

Use tools like Google Trends and Google Insights for Search to cross check your keywords with the best times to post. For example, there are searches for 'Christmas presents' starting in earnest from September until Christmas day.

Web Search Interest: christmas presents

United Kingdom, Last 12 months

Categories: [Lifestyles \(25-50%\)](#), [Shopping \(25-50%\)](#), [Food & Drink \(0-10%\)](#), [Entertainment \(0-10%\)](#), [more...](#)



When you have built up a valuable vault of information on your blog, consider submitting it to Google News. (http://www.google.com/support/news_pub/bin/topic.py?hl=en&topic=11669)

Social Networking – which is best for you?

Consider your target audience when choosing which social networking site to have a presence on.

Facebook – Used mainly for connecting with people that you already know. Consider creating a page for your company if you want to get your brand noticed on Facebook. If appropriate, the new Facebook 'Like' button allows you to easily share content and products.

LinkedIn – Used mainly for business networking, consider joining groups, answering questions and creating company profiles to connect with other organisations or experts.

Twitter

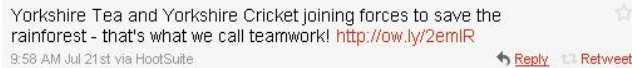
Here are some rough guidelines to get you started with Twitter.

- 140 character limit – micro-blogging
- Frequency: Aim for at least 1x a day
- Try to gain followers – start by following friends, colleagues, celebrities you are interested in, newspapers etc.
- Mix up the tweets – balance between company related events & promotions with human, everyday tweets about football, hobbies and day to day life.
- Don't just tweet and link to your blog – if you come across something interesting on the Internet, tweet it!
- Shorten your links – make the most of 140 characters and shorten your links out to blog posts & other websites with websites like www.bit.ly and www.tinyurl.com

Direct Messages: Typing **d username** will send a private direct message to someone. No one can see these messages publicly.

Mentions: Typing **@username** will send a public message to that person. You can use it to talk to someone, e.g. *Congratulations on completing the marathon @username!* Or to mention someone in your tweet, e.g. *Can't wait to get running with @username and @username2 on Sunday!* The @username tweet will appear on their feed.

Retweets: You can retweet a tweet from one of the people you are following automatically. When hovering over their tweet you can Reply (@username) or Retweet so their tweet will appear on your feed to your followers.



Alternatively, the “old school” method would be to tweet: RT @username [content, witty comment, link] **OR** forget about the RT and just paraphrase someone’s tweet or link, but good practice to give them credit. E.g. Practical SEO tips from @blueclaw <http://bit.ly/bluclawblog>

Hashtags: Used to ‘tag’ a tweet (like tags in blog posts). Best way to see this in action is World Cup tweets, each country is assigned a hashtag. E.g. England is #eng. You can filter all tweets mentioning #eng or England by searching for it. The ‘Trending’ topics are usually due to a large number of tweets mentioning the topics listed. Good to know what the Twittersphere is tweeting about.

Utilising Twitter Effectively

- Reach out to people you would not normally contact – network with industry experts!
- Instant question & feedback response – ask people’s opinions of your products
- Update with latest company news (new products, charity events)
- Assign one person in your company to check and respond to all tweets

Use free software like Tweetdeck, Echofon, Cotweet to manage your Twitter account with multiple users or if you are on the go.

Conclusion

Search engine optimisation is a **constantly changing landscape**, with new, complex algorithms being added every day. This guide should give you a clear overview of what to look out for when guiding your website designer and manager through building a search engine friendly website. You should also remember to make sure that content on your website is relevant and useful, not only to your business but also to what users are searching for. Once you have launched your website, remember to **keep on monitoring** the visitors, traffic sources and keywords used to access your site, don't shy away from **revising your keywords** to be more relevant and adding new content or building micro-sites to target new areas of your business.

Remember that rankings **naturally fluctuate** and that SEO is an ongoing process – even if you have completed all your on site optimisation and link building campaigns, it may still take your site **some time** to begin ranking. This is especially true for new websites and highly competitive industries – rankings may rise rapidly then drop. In the words of Douglas Adams, **Don't panic**. Search engines will eventually index and process the links which will slowly give your websites a boost in the rankings, massive spikes and drops are common in active SEO campaigns.

If you experience a **massive drop** in traffic for your website, chances are there is something wrong with your site. These can be due to a number of different scenarios, including:

- You have been banned by the search engines. Google advises on how to handle a penalty [here](#).
- You are blocking the search engines in your robots.txt or meta robots tag. Check Google Webmaster Tools to see if there are any crawler issues.
- Something has changed in the links pointing to your site – the links may have been devalued or a few of your links may have fallen into 'bad neighbourhoods'. Check your links manually and ensure that you always stick to reputable sites when building links.

Resources

Search engine tips for successful websites

- **Bing** - <http://www.bing.com/community/blogs/webmaster/archive/2009/09/03/search-engine-optimization-for-bing.aspx>
- **Yahoo** - <http://help.yahoo.com/l/us/yahoo/search/basics/basics-18.html>
- **Google** - <http://www.google.com/support/webmasters/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=35769>

Keyword Research

- **Google Keyword Research Tool** - <https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal>
- **Google Trends** - <http://www.google.com/trends>
- **Google Insights for Search** - <http://www.google.com/insights/search>

Web Development

- **W3C Markup Validation Service** - <http://validator.w3.org>
- **Search Engine Friendly Layouts** - <http://www.searchenginefriendlylayouts.com>
- **Free Google XML Site Creator** - <http://www.xml-sitemaps.com>
- **Firebug** - <http://www.getfirebug.com>
- **Google Page Speed** - <http://code.google.com/speed/page-speed>

Monitoring & Webmaster Tools

- **Google** - <http://www.google.com/webmasters/tools>
- **Bing** - <http://www.bing.com/webmaster>
- **Yahoo Site Explorer** - <http://siteexplorer.search.yahoo.com>
- **Google Analytics** - <http://www.google.com/analytics>

Link Building

- **DMOZ** - <http://www.dmoz.org>
- **BOTW** - <http://www.botw.org>
- **Yahoo Directory** - <http://dir.yahoo.com>
- <http://www.business.com>
- **Ezine Articles** - <http://www.ezinearticles.com>
- **Articles Alley** - <http://www.articlesalley.com>
- **Digg** - <http://digg.com>

SEO Tools

- **Internet Business Promoter** - <http://www.ibusinesspromoter.com>
- **SEO Spyglass** - <http://www.link-assistant.com/seo-spyglass/index.html>
- **Adgooroo** - <http://www.adgooroo.com>
- **Market Samurai** - <http://www.marketsamurai.com>
- **SEOMoz Toolbar** - <http://www.seomoz.org/seo-toolbar>
- **SEO Quake** - <http://www.seoquake.com>
- **Open Site Explorer** - <http://www.opensiteexplorer.org>
- **Yahoo Linkdomain Queries**
E.g. <http://uk.search.yahoo.com/search?p=linkdomain:yourwebsite.co.uk%20site:yourwebsite.co.uk>
- **Bing IP Queries** E.g. <http://www.bing.com/search?q=ip%3A123.456.789.10>
- **Google Alerts** - <http://www.google.com/alerts>

Social Media

- **Pingoat** - <http://www.pingoat.com>
- **Wordpress** - <http://www.wordpress.org> or <http://www.wordpress.com>
- **Blogger** - <http://www.blogger.com>
- **Facebook** - <http://www.facebook.com>
- **LinkedIn** - <http://www.linkedin.com>
- **Twitter** - <http://www.twitter.com>
- **Tweetdeck** - <http://www.tweetdeck.com>
- **Echofon** - <http://www.echofon.com>
- **Cotweet** - <http://www.cotweet.com>

Author & Contributors

This first edition of Blueclaw's DIY SEO Guide was written by Monica Chia with the help of the SEO team at Blueclaw.

Blueclaw's DIY SEO Guide was made available as a download on the Blueclaw website on Friday, 13th August 2010.

About Blueclaw:

Blueclaw Media Ltd, founded in 2005 by Fergus Clawson is an award winning Search Marketing and Conversion Optimisation company based in Leeds, England. Visit <http://www.blueclaw.co.uk> for more information on our SEO services and also to pick up further tips on our SEO blog.

Contact Blueclaw

Blueclaw Media Ltd
36, Whitehouse Street
Work Media Centre
Leeds, LS10 1AD

Tel: (0113) 234 3300
Fax: (0113) 3350397
Skype: blueclaw.co.uk
Follow us on **Twitter:** @blueclaw