

HOW TO GET YOUR WEBSITE TO THE TOP OF GOOGLE



A Complete Guide to SEO

LOCALiQ

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Who are LOCALiQ?

We're an award-winning multi-channel digital marketing agency that specialises in SEO.

Established in 2018, our agency is passionate about simplifying the complexities of marketing for UK businesses; we drive more leads, increase your online growth and generate a high return on investment for your business.

Our leading SEO team already delivers outstanding results for hundreds of UK businesses. We'll help your business climb the SERPs and, in return, you'll see an increase in your organic traffic and conversions.

What makes LOCALiQ's SEO services different?

Complete, in-depth SEO audits

Before we start to optimise your site, we'll conduct a full SEO audit and competitor analysis to uncover any existing errors, areas for improvement or gaps in your content.

SEO best-practice as standard

Our team of SEO experts keep up-to-date with all the latest search updates, so you don't have to worry about slipping down the SERPs. Our team employ a mix of on-page, off-page, technical and local SEO to ensure maximum results for clients.

Regular reporting

We want our SEO team to be an extension of your team. Not only do we provide regular check-ins, but we also monitor keywords and conversions to provide you with in-depth reports, so you can see exactly what's working.

[Find out more about our SEO services](#)



We're proud to be recognised:

Microsoft Advertising

Global Partner Awards
Winner 2024



LOCALiQ
Global Rising Star
of the Year



Google ★★★★★

Based on 450+ reviews

Introduction

**You've likely heard of SEO before, but what does it mean?
And how can you use it for your business?**

We've created an in-depth guide that will help you gain an understanding of the key elements of SEO. This document will cover, on-page SEO, off-page SEO, technical SEO and local SEO, but first let's get started with some basics...

What is SEO?

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is the process of increasing a website's visibility in organic search results. The goal is to increase your website's visibility and ranking in the organic search results a search engine provides.

Why is SEO important?

The majority of online experiences begin with a search engine, a strong SEO strategy ensures that a website is well-positioned to attract organic traffic.

SEO contributes to the credibility and trustworthiness of a website. Search engines, such as Google, rank websites based on relevance and quality. By optimising content, improving site structure, and employing ethical practices, SEO helps establish a site as a reliable source of information, which can positively impact user trust. Ultimately, a well-executed SEO strategy not only drives organic traffic but also supports a website's overall online presence and reputation.

Free SEO audit

Start your journey to higher SERP positions.

With over 100+ SEO checks completed automatically, our free audit tool takes the pain out of auditing your website.

Audit my site



The Key Areas of SEO:

1. Keyword research

Identify relevant topics for your business, group keywords/phrases that fall into those topics and ensure they are a good fit for user intent.

2. Content creation

Create high quality, helpful content on your website. Use your chosen keywords in your content to help ensure your website appears in relevant searches.

3. On-page SEO

Optimise alt-text, meta tags, images and written content for SEO. Utilise linking (both external and internal) to help users find more related content.

4. Off-page SEO

Gain links from authoritative external websites. Optimise online listings and social media profiles. Utilise guest posting opportunities.

5. Technical SEO

Ensure your site is utilising HTTPS, create an XML sitemap, review URL structure and site speed. Ensure your website is optimised for Core Web Vitals and is mobile-friendly.

6. Local SEO

Optimise your Google Business Profile, ensure your name, address and phone number are consistent across the web, use location-based keywords.



Chapter 1: A guide to SEO basics.

There's a lot to consider when it comes to SEO, but ensuring the foundational elements of your website are in order can really make a difference. Here are a few things to tick off before you move onto the more complicated elements of SEO.

Purchase a good domain

A domain is a critical element for SEO for several reasons. Firstly, the domain name itself can have an impact on search engine rankings. Search engines may consider keywords in the domain when determining the relevance of a website to a particular search query. Choosing a domain that reflects the content or focus of the website can contribute to better visibility in search results. Be careful not to force keywords. A safe choice is to opt for your company name.

Secondly, the longevity and stability of a domain are essential for SEO. Search engines tend to trust older, established domains more than newly registered ones. A domain that has been consistently active and maintained is likely to have built up authority and credibility over time, positively influencing its SEO performance.

Additionally, the domain structure and organisation play a role in SEO. Clear and logical URL structures contribute to better user experience and make it easier for search engines to crawl and index the content on a website.

An easily navigable and well-structured domain can enhance the overall SEO friendliness of a site, contributing to

improved rankings in search engine results.

You'll also want to consider which domain extension, such as .com, will come after the name.

This is referred to as a Top-Level Domain (TLD) and it's the highest level in the hierarchical domain name system, serving as the main component of a web address. Examples of TLDs include familiar ones like .com, .org, and .net.

Try to stick with the more familiar ones listed above if you can, as this will help create brand trust, however if there's a genuine use-case for having a more niche domain extension then it will still be possible for your website to rank in the search results.

At LOCALiQ UK we opted for a .co.uk TLD to ensure users we able to differentiate our site from LOCALiQ in the US:

UK domain:

www.localiq.co.uk

US domain:

www.localiq.com

Use a reliable web host

If you're using a service like Wix, you'll likely already have hosting included in your package.

However, if your website is custom built, you will need to invest in web hosting so that your website can be universally accessed.

Web host is a service or company that provides the necessary infrastructure and technologies to make a website accessible on the internet. Web hosting involves storing the files, data, and content of a website on servers connected to the internet. These servers are maintained and managed by the web hosting provider,

ensuring that the website is available and accessible to users 24/7.

Web hosting services typically offer various plans and options to accommodate different needs, including shared hosting (where multiple websites share resources on the same server), dedicated hosting (providing a dedicated server for a single website), and cloud hosting (utilising a network of servers for enhanced reliability and scalability).

In essence, a web host acts as the foundation for a website, providing the necessary technology and resources to store, process, and deliver the content to users when they access the site through their web browsers.

When deciding on a web host, keep the following three things in mind:

1

Security: Obtain a free SSL/TLS certificate. Alternatively, you might donate to Let's Encrypt, a charity that provides free certificates.

2

The location of the server: Transferring information from the server to the user is a time-consuming process. Hosting companies with servers located in the same nation as most of your visitors are the most reliable.

3

Support: There should be round-the-clock help. Before signing up, be sure their support is solid by asking the above questions.

The LOCALiQ Lowdown

Want marketing insights delivered straight to your inbox every month?

Sign up to our monthly newsletter to receive industry tips, updates and the latest from LOCALiQ.

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Focus on good user experience

**Google prioritises websites that provide a good experience for the user.
There are several elements you should consider to achieve this:**

- **Make use of secure HTTPS**
HTTPS provides users with assurance that the website they are visiting is authentic and trustworthy. The presence of a secure connection is indicated by a padlock icon in the browser's address bar, instilling confidence in users and enhancing the website's credibility.
- **Check your site works on mobile devices**
With more searches taking place on mobile than ever before, it's crucial that your website works seamlessly across both desktop and mobile.
- **Use a responsive design**
Implementing responsive web design ensures that the layout and content of the website adapt fluidly to different screen sizes and orientations. This allows the website to display optimally across a wide range of devices.
- **Keep pop-ups to a minimum**
Pop-ups are a great way of commanding a user's attention, but they are often considered an inconvenience. If you really need to use them, make sure to test them thoroughly across devices. You'll want to ensure a user can swiftly close down a pop-up, if they can't they'll likely exit your website.
- **Optimise for touch gestures**
Incorporate touch-friendly features such as swipe-able carousels, expandable accordions, and gesture-based interactions to enhance the user experience on mobile devices.
- **Ensure fonts are legible**
Use simple, readable fonts and adjust font sizes and line spacing to enhance readability on mobile devices. Ensure that text remains legible and doesn't require users to pinch or zoom in to view content comfortably.
- **Verify your site loads quickly**
Improve website performance by optimising page load times. Minimise server response times, leverage browser caching, and reduce the number of HTTP requests to ensure swift loading of web pages, even on slower mobile networks.
- **Ensure cross-browser compatibility**
Test the website across different mobile browsers, including popular options like Chrome, Safari, Firefox, and Edge. Ensure that the website functions and displays correctly across all major mobile browsers to reach a broader audience.
- **Provide clear Calls to Action (CTAs)**
Use prominent and easily clickable CTAs to guide users towards desired actions, such as making a purchase, signing up for a newsletter, or contacting the business. Ensure that CTAs are well-positioned and distinguishable on smaller screens.
- **Optimise for voice search**
With the increasing popularity of voice search on mobile devices, optimise website content for natural language queries and conversational search phrases. This includes using long-tail keywords and answering common questions concisely.

LOCALiQ's top tip for improving user experience:

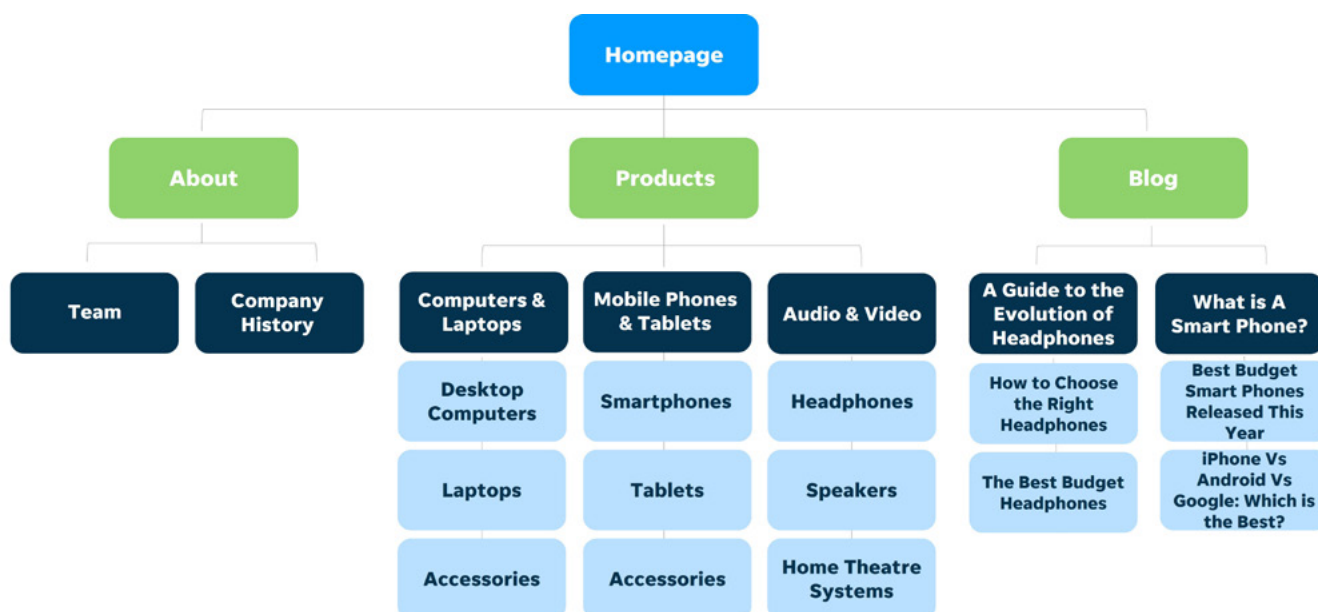
Continuously monitor website performance metrics, such as bounce rate, average session duration, and conversion rates, specifically for mobile users. Use analytics tools to identify areas for improvement and optimise the mobile user experience accordingly.

Build a site structure that makes sense

Both users and search engines should be able to navigate your website with ease. This is where “site structure” comes in. Site Structure refers to the way that you organise your web pages.

We recommend opting for a hierarchical structure as this is the layout that is used most often and is the easiest to understand.

Example of hierarchical website structure:



This structure utilises a “top level” navigation, which often includes a home page, about page, and services/product page. These pages then link out to other relevant pages that relate to each of those specified categories.

The example we’ve included above depicts what a website for an electronics store might look like if they were to adopt a hierarchical website structure.

Benefits of a hierarchical website structure:

1

Scalability & flexibility: This structure allow websites to accommodate a growing amount of content over time. New pages/sections can be added within existing categories or introduced as new top-level categories, providing flexibility to adapt to changing content requirements.

2

SEO-friendly: Search engines favour websites with clear, hierarchical structures. A well-organised hierarchy helps search engine crawlers understand the website’s content and context, leading to improved visibility and search engine rankings.





Chapter 2: On-page optimisation.

On-page SEO involves optimising individual web pages to improve their visibility in search engine results. This process includes creating high-quality and relevant content, strategically incorporating keywords in titles, headers, and meta tags, and ensuring a user-friendly experience.

By addressing these factors, website owners can enhance their pages' relevance and overall performance, ultimately increasing the likelihood of higher rankings in search engine results pages. Let's take a look at the key components of on-page SEO:

1. Keyword research

Keyword research is a crucial aspect of digital marketing and search engine optimisation (SEO). Before you start optimising your pages, you will first need to identify which keywords you'd like to rank for.

What are keywords?

Keywords are specific words or phrases that describe the main topics or themes of a piece of content, webpage, or online search query. In the context of search engine optimisation (SEO), keywords are words or phrases that users type into search engines when looking for information, products, or services online.

Website owners and content creators strategically choose and incorporate relevant keywords into their content to signal to search engines that the content is related to those specific topics.

The selection of appropriate keywords is a fundamental aspect SEO. By understanding the language and queries that users commonly use, content creators aim to align their material with the search intent of their target audience.

Keywords can be broad or specific, and they may vary depending on factors such as user intent, search volume, and competition. Effective keyword research involves identifying relevant keywords related to a particular topic or industry and selecting those that have the potential to drive targeted traffic to a website.

Why should businesses conduct keyword research?

There are two main reasons businesses should conduct keyword research; firstly, to gain insights into the topics and queries relevant to a business or website, and secondly, to strategically integrate these keywords into the content to improve its visibility on search engine results pages.

Effective use of keywords can enhance a webpage's visibility in search engine results, making it more likely to be discovered by users seeking information on a particular subject.

Keyword research tools and analytics help identify the most relevant and high-performing keywords for a given topic or industry.

Successful keyword research not only drives organic traffic but also ensures that the content resonates with the search intent of potential customers, contributing to a more robust and targeted online presence.

You can discover keywords and phrases that users are searching for by using tools such as Moz, SEMrush & UberSuggest. All of these have free options, but the features will be limited.

When conducting keyword research, you should always consider the monthly search volume and keyword difficulty. These metrics will be displayed in your chosen keyword research tool and will give you an idea of how many people are searching for that phrase a month, and how easy it is to rank for.

How to conduct keyword research:

Discover keywords and phrases that customers are searching for with SEMRush's Keyword Magic Tool. Generate keyword ideas, estimated monthly search volumes and many SEO metrics from their comprehensive keyword database.

Here's how to get started:

- 1** Enter your industry-related or service-related phrases into the keyword magic tool. For instance, if you're an Italian restaurant in Cardiff, you might opt for "Pizza in Cardiff", "Best pizza in Cardiff" etc.
- 2** Choose "broad match" keywords – this will show you keywords and questions containing your selected phrases.
- 3** View your keywords & their metrics – analyse different keywords by their monthly search volume and difficulty (KD %).
- 4** Save your keywords – save your selected keywords into a SEMRush project so you can view them quickly and easily.

What are the different types of keywords?

- **Seed keywords:**
Fundamental terms or short phrases that serve as the foundation for generating more specific keywords. These are often broad and help kick-start the keyword research process, e.g., “shoes,” “travel,” or “digital marketing.”
- **Short-tail keywords:**
Brief and general terms consisting of one or two words, e.g., “shoes” or “travel.”
- **Long-tail keywords:**
Longer and more specific phrases, often three words or more, e.g., “best running shoes for beginners” or “affordable family vacation ideas.”
- **Branded keywords:**
Specific to a particular brand or company, such as the brand name or variations of it, e.g., “Nike” or “iPhone.”
- **Product or service keywords:**
Directly related to the products or services offered, e.g., “digital marketing services” or “smartphone accessories.”
- **Transactional keywords:**
Indicating user intent to make a purchase or take a specific action, e.g., “buy fitness tracker” or “subscribe to newsletter.”
- **Informational keywords:**
Used when users seek information or answers to questions, e.g., “how to tie a tie” or “benefits of meditation.”
- **Navigational keywords:**
Used when users are looking for a specific website or page, often involving brand or website names, e.g., “YouTube” or “Facebook login.”
- **Geo-targeted keywords:**
Include location-specific terms to target audiences in a particular geographic area, e.g., “restaurants in London” or “plumber near me.”

These types of keywords, including the seed keywords, collectively contribute to a comprehensive keyword strategy, ensuring a well-rounded approach to reaching and engaging the target audience.



2. Optimise title tags

In on-page SEO, title tags play a crucial role in providing a concise and descriptive title for a webpage.

The title tag is an HTML element within the <head> section of a web page.

It is not visible on the page itself but is displayed as the clickable headline in search engine results. Title tags can also be referred to as Meta titles.

Title tags are distinct from heading tags (H1, H2, etc.), but they are related elements. The H1 tag, usually used for the main heading of a page, provides a primary indication to both users and search engines about the page's main topic.

Google recommends ensuring your title tag and your H1 are the same.

For effective on-page SEO, it's important to craft title tags that are both informative and include relevant keywords. The title tag should accurately represent the content of the page, enticing users to click through while also signalling to search engines what the page is about.

It's advisable to keep title tags within the recommended character limit to ensure they display properly in search results.

Optimising title tags is a fundamental practice in on-page SEO as they contribute significantly to a page's visibility and click-through rate in search engine rankings.

3. Optimise meta descriptions

Meta descriptions are another meta HTML element that may be modified in the code but not displayed on the page.

Meta descriptions are important for SEO because they provide a concise summary of a webpage's content, which appears below the page title in search engine results pages (SERPs).

While meta descriptions do not directly impact a webpage's ranking in search results, they play a crucial role in attracting clicks and driving organic traffic. A well-crafted meta description can entice users

to click through to the website, increasing its click-through rate (CTR) and improving its visibility in search results over time.

Additionally, meta descriptions offer an opportunity to incorporate relevant keywords, which can further enhance the page's relevance to specific search queries and improve its chances of being clicked on by users seeking relevant information or solutions.

Here is an example of how a meta title and meta description will pull through in the SERPs:



localiq.co.uk

https://localiq.co.uk > SEO

A Guide to Identifying and Fixing Keyword Cannibalisation

Meta title/title tag

MOZ DA: 36/100 (+3%) Ref Dom: 803 Ref Links: 539.94K Spam Score: 17% [Show backlinks](#)

Search traffic (uk): -/mo (website: 1500/mo) - Keywords (uk): - (website: 874)

18 Jul 2023 — Are your SEO efforts being hindered by **keyword** cannibalisation? Learn what it is and how to fix it to improve your **search** engine rankings.

Meta description

4. Optimise body content

Body content refers to the main text, information, and substance presented on a webpage. It is the primary content that users read and engage with when visiting a website.

Body content plays a crucial role in conveying information, delivering messages, and addressing the purpose or topic of a particular webpage.

When it comes to on-page SEO, optimising body content involves creating high-quality, relevant, and valuable text that aligns with the overall theme of the page. This content is what users find when scrolling through a webpage, and it significantly influences how

search engines assess the relevance and authority of the page.

Effective body content should be well-structured, include appropriate headings, incorporate relevant keywords naturally, and cater to a positive user experience. The goal is to provide valuable information to users while ensuring that search engines can understand and rank the content appropriately in search results.

How to create effective on-page content:

1

Create in-depth & unique content

Search algorithms favour longer and more unique content. If your website contains a substantial amount of duplicate content, numerous short pages (ranging from 50 to 200 words), or instances where only the title tag and a single line of text are altered, there may be a risk to your site's ability to rank.

It's advisable to assess your website comprehensively. Are there numerous thin or repetitive pages? If so, consider adding more relevant content to enhance their value. Alternatively, you can use a no-index meta tag to exclude specific pages from search results after reviewing your traffic statistics. This approach helps prevent Google from perceiving an attempt to boost low-quality page ranks.

2

Create engaging content

Engaging content keeps users on your website for longer durations. Search engines view this as a positive signal, indicating users are finding your content valuable and relevant. This can contribute to higher rankings. Engaging content also leads to a better overall user experience, which is another ranking factor for search engines like Google.

3

Consider the sharability of your content

Certain pages on your site will not get many links and shares. Before launching new pages on your site, consider who could share and link to them, and avoid launching too many pages that are thin on content.

Having too many pages that nobody links to or shares may harm your search engine rankings and give search engines a false impression of your site.

5. Consider URL structure

Choosing shorter, more descriptive URLs is beneficial for on-page SEO. These URLs are easier to copy, paste, and less likely to get cut off, enhancing user experience.

A well-structured, segmented URL not only makes it simpler to divide and understand report data but also influences the shareability of your site's content.

Instead of cramming multiple keywords into the URL, focus on keeping it concise and informative.

If you do have to make changes to your URL structure, ensure you use the appropriate (301 permanent) redirect type.

It's essential to handle URL changes carefully to maintain both search engine visibility and a positive user experience.

6. Include alt tags

How you annotate images on your website can significantly influence image search traffic and how search engines assess your website.

The HTML alt attribute serves as an opportunity to provide alternative information for images that might not be visible. An image's alt-text can often be viewed by hovering over an image.

Given the potential for issues such as broken image files or users facing difficulties connecting to your site, adding descriptive text for each image can enhance usability.

This practice also aids search engines in comprehending the characteristics of your website beyond its textual content. However, it's crucial to avoid "keyword stuffing" the alt attribute with your primary term and its variations.

If the target word isn't naturally part of the image description, refrain from including it in the alt attribute. Instead, approach the alt attribute as if you were describing the image to someone unable to see it.

This natural and descriptive approach not only helps to prevent triggering "over-optimisation" filters but also contributes to ranking for valuable, nuanced variations of your core topic often referred to as "long tail" keywords. Alt-text can be added via HTML, or if you use a website builder there will often be an alt-text section for you to fill in.

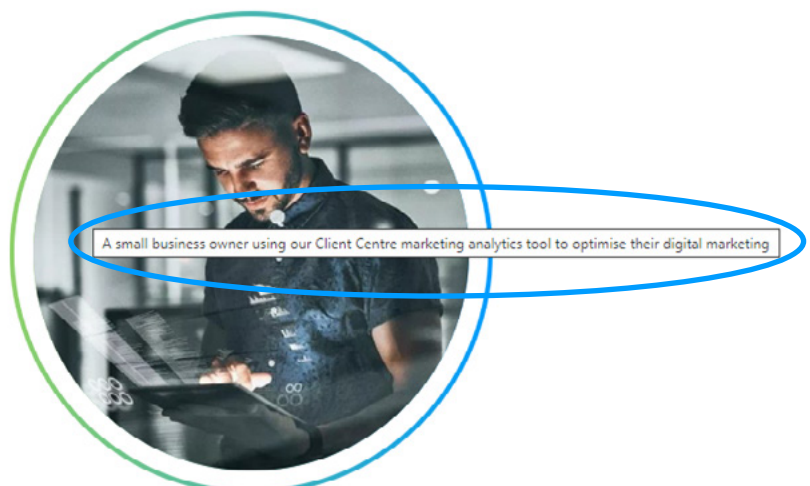
Here's an example of alt text being used on the LOCALiQ website:

ontrol of your
ing with
Q's lead
ird.

omers find your business with Client Centre.

ieO or paid social campaign, our smart-
analyses the routes they take to discover
iding you with the insights to achieve the
ir budget.

features, Client Centre is the go-to
ost-effective advertising decisions for your





Chapter 3: Off-page SEO.

Off-page SEO refers to the set of strategies and activities that are executed outside of your own website to enhance its visibility and authority in search engine results.

Unlike on-page SEO, which focuses on optimising elements within your website, off-page SEO is concerned with building a positive online reputation and increasing the credibility of your site through external factors.

Link building forms a core part of off-page SEO. The goal of off-page SEO is to acquire high-quality backlinks from reputable websites.

These backlinks act as endorsements, signalling to search engines that your content is valuable and trustworthy.

Social media presence and engagement also contribute to off-page SEO, as shares, likes, and mentions on platforms like Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and LinkedIn can positively influence your site's reputation.

Additionally, online reviews and citations from authoritative sources can impact off-page SEO. The overall goal is to establish your website as a reliable and authoritative source within your industry or niche, which, in turn, can lead to improved search engine rankings and increased organic traffic.

Off-page SEO tactics:

Link Building



Social Media



Guest Blogging



Online Listings



1. Link building/gaining backlinks

Backlinks are essential for off-page SEO as they serve as endorsements from reputable websites, signalling to search engines that your content is valuable.

These links contribute significantly to your website's authority, trustworthiness, and search engine rankings.

When authoritative sites link to your content, it boosts your credibility, leading to improved visibility in search results. Backlinks also facilitate the indexing and crawling of your web pages by search engine bots, enhancing the discoverability of your content.

Additionally, backlinks play a crucial role in driving targeted traffic to your site. When users click on links from other reputable sites, it not only increases your website's

visibility but also generates potential customers.

You should be aware that backlinks from too many "spammy" websites can be harmful to your SEO efforts. You should always look to gain backlinks from reputable websites with a higher domain authority.

The process might be time intensive and challenging, but can pay off if you do it properly. Let's take a look at the four most common approaches to off-page SEO link building.

How to earn backlinks:

1

Ask for links:

You can directly contact websites and ask them to link to yours (providing the content is relevant)

You can ask for links to blog posts, eBooks/guides, case studies, infographics, images etc.

2

Add links:

This is the process of adding your own website link to another, external website.

Websites you can add your own website to include: social media profiles, online directories, forums or Q&A sites.

3

Earn links:

This is when other websites consider your content to be of a high standard and link to it without you asking. Earned links are often considered the most valuable when it comes to SEO as it means your content is viewed as helpful.

You can earn links to different types of content including visual assets, online tools, blogs, infographics etc.

What makes a good backlink?

- **Relevance:** A good backlink should come from a website or webpage that is relevant to the content of the linked page. Relevance indicates to search engines that the link is genuine and adds value to the user's experience.
 - **Authority:** Backlinks from authoritative websites carry more weight in terms of SEO. Websites with high domain authority, trustworthiness, and credibility are more likely to positively impact the ranking of the linked page.
 - **Natural linking:** A good backlink is acquired naturally, meaning it is earned through the merit of the content rather than through manipulative tactics. Search engines favour organic backlinks that result from genuine interest, citations, or recommendations from other websites.
 - **Anchor text:** The anchor text, or the clickable text of the backlink, should be descriptive and relevant to the linked page's content. Well-optimised anchor text helps search engines understand the context of the linked page and contributes to its ranking for relevant keywords.
 - **Diversity:** Building a diverse backlink profile with links from a variety of sources and domains enhances the credibility and trustworthiness of the linked page. Diversity in backlinks signals to search engines that the website is valued by different communities and audiences.
 - **Quality of Linking Site:** Evaluate the quality of the website providing the backlink. Look for websites with high-quality content, a good reputation, and a strong online presence. Backlinks from spammy or low-quality websites can have a negative impact on SEO.
 - **Editorial backlinks:** Backlinks that are included naturally within the editorial content of a webpage are generally considered more valuable than links from sidebar widgets, footers, or other non-editorial sections. Editorial backlinks are more likely to be seen as genuine endorsements.
- Overall, a good backlink is one that is relevant, authoritative, natural, and contributes positively to the linked page's SEO efforts by enhancing its visibility, credibility, and ranking in search engine results.**



Want to build an effective back-link strategy?

Click here for more information on LOCALiQ's Digital PR Link Building service.

2. Guest posting or blogging

Guest posting or blogging involves creating and publishing content on other reputable websites within your industry or niche. This approach is beneficial for enhancing your website's visibility, authority, and overall SEO performance.

Firstly, guest posting allows you to acquire high-quality backlinks from authoritative sites.

When you contribute valuable content to reputable platforms, you often get the opportunity to include a link back to your own website.

These backlinks are considered by search engines as positive signals, indicating the credibility and relevance of your site, which can lead to improved search rankings.

Secondly, guest blogging helps establish your expertise and authority in your field.

By sharing valuable insights and information on other platforms, you showcase your knowledge to a wider audience.

This can result in increased trust and credibility, not only among the readers of the guest post but also in the eyes of search engines.

How to secure guest posts:

- **Research target sites:**
Identify niche-relevant websites accepting guest posts, ensuring they match your expertise and audience. Review their guidelines for compatibility.
- **Create quality content:**
Develop engaging, well-researched content tailored to the target site's audience and style, increasing the likelihood of acceptance.
- **Build relationships:**
Engage with editors or site owners through social media, sharing their content and commenting to establish a connection before pitching.
- **Personalised outreach:**
Tailor pitch emails to each site, showing familiarity with their content and explaining how your topic adds value to their audience.
- **Highlight expertise:**
Showcase your expertise by providing links to your previous work, building trust and increasing the chances of your pitch being accepted.
- **Follow guidelines:**
Adhere to each site's guest posting guidelines meticulously to avoid rejection, demonstrating your respect for their requirements.

3. Social media marketing

Social media offers numerous benefits to enhance a website's online presence and search engine rankings.

By actively engaging on popular platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, X and Instagram, businesses can amplify their content's reach and visibility.

Sharing blog posts, articles, and other relevant content on social media not only drives direct traffic but also encourages social signals, such as likes, shares, and comments, which can positively influence search engine algorithms.

These signals indicate to search engines that the content is valuable and resonates with users, potentially leading to improved rankings.

Secondly, social media provides an avenue for building relationships and

connecting with your target audience. Engaging with followers, responding to comments, and participating in conversations can foster a sense of community around your brand.

As users interact with your content and share it within their networks, it generates organic backlinks and contributes to a diverse link profile, a crucial factor in SEO.

Additionally, a strong social media presence enhances brand visibility, creating more opportunities for others to discover and link to your website, ultimately boosting its authority and credibility in the eyes of search engines.

4. Influencer marketing

Influencer marketing involves collaborating with individuals who have a significant and engaged following on social media or other online platforms to promote a brand, product, or service.

The collaboration may include sponsored posts, product reviews, or endorsements, leveraging the influencer's credibility to reach a broader audience.

For SEO, influencer marketing is beneficial as it can generate high-quality backlinks and enhance brand visibility. When influencers share content or link to your website, it creates valuable and natural backlinks, signalling to search engines that your site is reputable and relevant.

This combination of authoritative backlinks and increased visibility contributes to improved search engine rankings, making influencer marketing a valuable strategy for SEO.

If you're thinking about working with an influencer then make sure that you

carefully research them first. You'll want to ensure their values, content, and audience align with your brand. Look beyond follower counts to assess engagement, authenticity, and the relevance of their audience to your products or services.

When you do approach them, make sure you clearly communicate your expectations and terms of collaboration. This includes outlining deliverables, timelines, and compensation if applicable. Clarity helps prevent misunderstandings and ensures both parties are on the same page.

Encourage them to create content in their own authentic style. Audiences respond better to content that feels genuine and aligns with the influencer's usual tone and aesthetic.

5. High-quality content

If you're not consistently producing high-quality, shareable content, none of the aforementioned off-page SEO tactics will help.

When creating content for your web pages, ensure that it's informative and answers any questions that might be relevant to your chosen keywords.

High-quality content is the foundation for building a reputable online presence and attracting valuable, natural backlinks.

When your content is informative, engaging, and relevant to your target audience, it becomes more shareable and link-worthy.

This organic sharing and referencing generates more visibility for your website across various online platforms, which in turn can lead to increased

traffic and improved search engine rankings.

External websites and influencers are more likely to link to your content if it provides value to their audience.

High-quality content also showcases your expertise and establishes you as a thought leader in your industry.

This can also lead to brand mentions and positive reviews online, further solidifying your website's credibility and trustworthiness. Search engines take these factors into account when determining search rankings, favouring sites with a strong reputation.

Tips for creating high-quality content:

1

Focus on value: High-quality content offers value to the reader. It should be informative, engaging, and actionable. Whether it's a blog post, infographic, or video, your content should aim to educate, entertain, or inspire your audience.

2

Structure and clarity: Even the most valuable content can fall flat if it's poorly structured or difficult to understand. Use clear headings, subheadings, and bullet points to break up your content and make it easy to scan. Maintain a conversational tone and avoid overly complex language.

3

Update existing content: You're more likely to gain backlinks if it's clear that your web page is frequently updated. Make sure you regularly review your existing content to ensure it's still accurate and relevant. Not only does this ensure a good user experience, but it's also sends a positive signal to search engines. Regularly updated content suggests an active and maintained website. Google's algorithms consider freshness as a factor, indicating the information is potentially more current and reliable.



Chapter 4: Technical SEO.

Technical SEO refers to the optimisation of a website's technical aspects to improve its visibility and performance in search engine rankings.

Unlike on-page SEO, which focuses on content and user experience, technical SEO deals with the back-end elements that impact a site's crawling, indexing, and overall functionality. It is an essential component of a comprehensive SEO strategy, ensuring that search engines can effectively understand and interpret the content of a website.

Key elements of technical SEO include website speed and performance, mobile-friendliness, website structure and navigation, indexing issues, XML sitemaps, and the proper use of HTML tags. Optimising these technical aspects

helps search engines crawl and index a site more efficiently, leading to improved rankings in search results. Additionally, technical SEO plays a crucial role in enhancing user experience by ensuring faster page loading times, mobile responsiveness, and a well-organised site structure.

In summary, technical SEO involves fine-tuning the technical elements of a website to make it more search engine-friendly and user-friendly, ultimately contributing to higher search rankings and better overall performance in organic search results.

Here are the key elements of technical SEO:

Page speed:

Rapid page loads positively impact search engines, visitors, and conversion rates. Search engines, particularly Google, prioritise sites with quick loading speeds. The availability of tools, such as Google's PageSpeed Insights, helps identify and rectify specific issues affecting page performance.

Mobile-friendliness:

The mobile-friendliness of a site significantly influences its performance in search engine results, especially considering the prevalence of mobile traffic. Ensuring a website is optimised for mobile devices is essential for maintaining visibility and attracting traffic from mobile searches.

Redirects:

Proper implementation of redirects is crucial for a site's visibility in search results. Incorrect redirects can severely impact search rankings, making it important to avoid unnecessary changes to URLs unless there is a compelling business reason.

Duplicate content:

Duplicate and thin content can be detrimental to a site's SEO, as search engines like Google penalise websites for low-quality or manipulative material. Consolidating links onto one page and avoiding content duplication are strategies to maintain link equity and improve rankings.

XML sitemap:

An XML sitemap is essential for ensuring search engines index all content on a website. However, it's crucial to exclude unnecessary pages and understand that inclusion in a sitemap doesn't guarantee ranking. Various free programs can be utilised to create an XML sitemap.

Robots.txt, meta no-index, & meta No-follow:

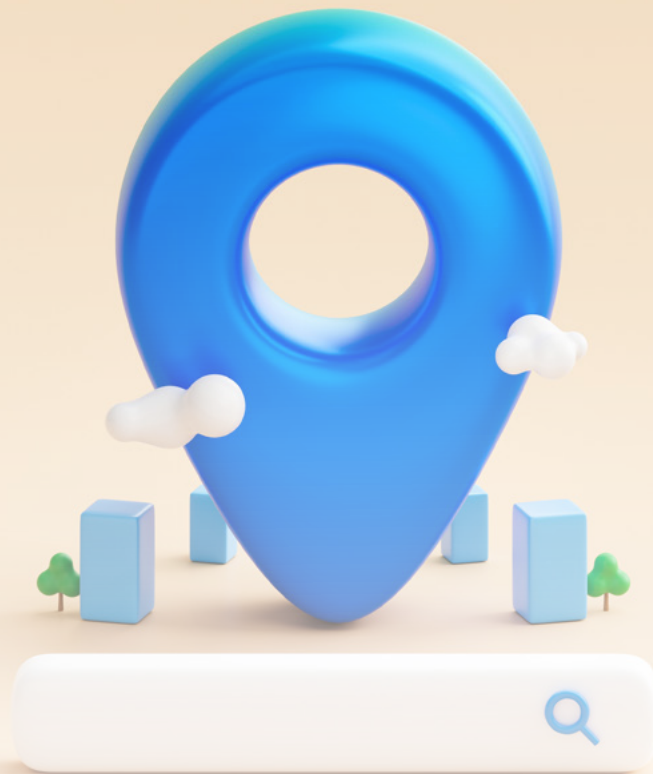
Technical files like robots.txt guide search engines on how to handle specific information on a site. Meta noindex and meta nofollow tags, while serving distinct functions, contribute to similar objectives of controlling search engine indexing for particular content.

Security:

Site security is paramount for technical SEO. Beyond addressing plugin conflicts and spam comments, securing a site via HTTPS (with an SSL certificate) is crucial. This not only safeguards the site but also aligns with current security standards, positively impacting search engine rankings.



**Click here for our
ultimate technical
SEO checklist.**



Chapter 5: Local SEO.

Local SEO, or Local Search Engine Optimisation, is a digital marketing strategy focused on enhancing the online visibility of businesses within a specific geographical area.

This approach aims to optimise a business's presence in local search results, ensuring it appears prominently when users search for products or services in a particular location.

Local SEO involves various tactics, such as optimising 'Google Business Profile' listings, acquiring local citations, integrating locally relevant keywords, and encouraging positive online reviews.

By tailoring digital efforts to localised factors, businesses can attract nearby

customers, improve their rankings in local searches, and establish a strong online presence within their community.

Local SEO is especially crucial for brick-and-mortar establishments, service providers, and businesses with a physical presence targeting local customers.

On the following pages we'll explore some of the local SEO techniques that you can utilise for your website.

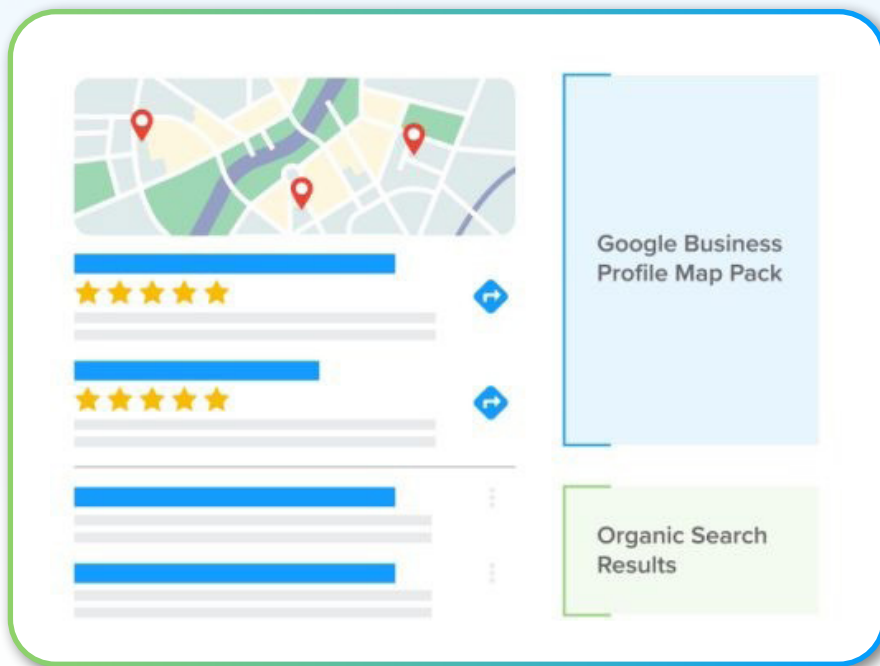
1. Set up and verify your Google Business Profile

Google Business Profile is a free tool from Google that allows you to manage your business profile in search results and Google Maps.

Creating a Google Business Profile can help your businesses appear in local Google searches.

You can create a profile for each of your store locations if applicable.

Updating your Google Business Profile (previously Google My Business) is crucial for your business as it can help you appear in Google's 'map pack' (see the example below), giving you an advantage over other competitors.



Here's our tips to setting up an effective Google Business Profile:

1. Set up your free profile by visiting [Google Business Profile](#).
2. Optimise your profile: Complete as much as possible, including the types of services you offer.
3. Verify your profile by following Google's verification process.
4. Encourage reviews: Reviews will help you rank higher, so ask clients to review your business.
5. Keep your profile updated with any business changes, such as seasonal opening hours or a new phone number.

When setting up your profile, ensure you use the same NAP (name, address and phone number) format across your profile and website.

2. Encourage local reviews

You should encourage local reviews as these can also affect your local search rankings.

These reviews, often found on platforms like Google Business Profile, not only influence potential customers' opinions but also significantly impact search engine rankings.

Positive reviews act as a testament to the quality of a business's products or services, building trust and credibility among local consumers.

Search engines, particularly Google, consider the quantity and sentiment of reviews as important ranking factors, with businesses garnering more positive

reviews generally receiving higher visibility in local search results.

Additionally, customer reviews contribute valuable, locally relevant content that aids search engines in understanding the business's offerings and relevance within its specific geographic location, further strengthening its presence in local searches.

Remember, you should always respond to reviews, both positive and negative, in a professional and timely manner.

If you have a Google Business Profile, reviews will be featured on the right-hand side of the SERPs when a user searches for your business on Google.

Google reviews

Write a review

Add a photo

Reviews aren't verified ⓘ



"The personal level of **service** I received was outstanding."



3. Join online directories

Online directories are a great way to boost your backlinks and search engine ranking.

These directories are like online phonebooks for the modern age. By getting listed in relevant directories, you're essentially putting your business name out there for potential customers to find.

There are several advantages to this approach. First, online directories increase your visibility in local searches. When people search for businesses like yours, your listing is more likely to pop up.

Second, search engines consider directory listings a sign of trust and legitimacy for your business, potentially boosting your local search ranking.

Finally, directories can also be a source of valuable customer reviews and a way to drive traffic to your website. Overall, getting listed in online directories is a win-win for local businesses, improving their online presence and attracting more local customers.

There are industry-specific directories available too, be sure to join these if applicable to your business.

Like before, be sure to include your address and contact details and ensure the information is consistent with your Google Business Profile and other directories.

How to optimise your web content for local SEO:

- **Target local keywords:** Include relevant local keywords throughout your content, including title tags, headers, meta descriptions, and the body copy itself. Research terms people in your area use to find businesses like yours.
- **Use locations in URLs:** If feasible, integrate your city or region into your web page's URL.
- **Optimise alt text:** If your website features images of your premises or local landmarks then you should update the alt-text for those images to include your city or region.
- **Include a map:** Enhance local relevance by featuring a Google Map showcasing your company's location on your landing page.
- **Create location pages:** If you have multiple locations you could create specific landing pages targeting your service areas. These pages should highlight the specific services you offer in each location and include details like local contact information and address variations.
- **Consistent NAP:** Embed your NAP (Name, Address, Phone number) consistently throughout your website, including the footer and contact page.
- **Use schema:** Use local business schema mark-up to provide structured data about your business to search engines.
- **Create local content:** Publish content that caters to your local audience. This could include blog posts about local events, community news, or how your business serves the specific needs of the area.
- **Optimise for mobile:** Make sure your website is mobile-friendly, as many local searches are conducted on smartphones.
- **Track and analyse your results:** Local SEO is an ongoing process. Use analytics tools to track your website traffic, monitor your local search ranking, and identify areas for improvement. Regularly review and adapt your strategy based on the data you collect.



Interested in finding out more about local SEO?

Click here for LOCALiQ's local SEO services.



Chapter 6: The Future of SEO.

The future of SEO is set to feature big shifts as advancements in technology start to shape the SERPs. There will also be a continued focus on user experience. Here are some key trends to watch:

- **Rise of Answer Engine Optimisation (AEO):** Search engines are getting better at understanding user intent and providing direct answers to search queries. AEO involves optimising content to answer user questions directly and comprehensively. This may involve creating content formatted for featured snippets or optimising for voice search.
 - **Focus on topical authority:** In addition to keyword ranking, building topical authority will be crucial. This means establishing your website as a trusted source on a particular topic by creating high-quality, in-depth content that covers the topic comprehensively.
 - **Integration with AI and machine learning:** Expect AI to play a bigger role in SEO. AI-powered tools such as OpenAI's ChatGPT, Bing's Co-Pilot and Google's Gemini can help with keyword research, content optimisation, and competitor analysis. However, human expertise will still be vital for crafting compelling content and understanding user intent.
 - **Evolving search landscape:** Zero-click searches may become more common. This is where users get answers directly on search engine results pages without clicking on any websites. Google's SGE will likely see an increase in these types of searches. This could potentially lead to a dip in web traffic, so businesses will need to adapt their strategies to cater to this evolving search landscape.
 - **Importance of video SEO:** With video consumption on the rise, video content is expected to play a more prominent role in SEO. Optimizing your videos for search and incorporating them into your content strategy will likely be beneficial.
- Ultimately, businesses will need to focus in on user-intent and ensure they are creating high-quality content across a variety of formats. It's likely that social media will start to play a bigger role in generating website traffic as search engines start to deliver more immersive and dynamic experience directly on their SERPs.**

Conclusion & next steps:

That concludes this guide to SEO. You should now have a foundational understanding of how search engines rank websites and how to optimise your online presence for increased search traffic, particularly from search engines like Google.

What's next? Prioritisation is key. Recognise that no site flawlessly executes every aspect of SEO. Identify your strengths, budget, and available resources to focus on areas that yield the best returns for your business. An SEO audit is a great place to start if you want to benchmark your current performance.

Remember, the ultimate goal of SEO is to enhance exposure and drive traffic to your business or site content. Therefore, seek strategies that align with your business objectives, avoiding the temptation to blindly chase after SEO trends or hastily adopt Google's recommendations without considering their broader impact on your business's success.

If you're interested in exploring SEO in even more detail, then be sure to [check out our SEO masterclass webinar series](#).

LOCALiQ

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Get started



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Rated 'great' on TrustPilot:



Excellent service from their SEO team...

Excellent service from their SEO team on our website migration last year. they worked with our website design agency and turned around thousands of redirects in less than 1 week. our previous agency said it would be 6 + weeks and at double the price... highly recommended for migrations. thanks again to the team for their help.



Know their stuff

Everyone at Local IQ was helpful, knowledgeable and responsive. They did a lot of good work on our SEO.



Consistent improvements in our SEO - Professional service.

Natasha, who manages our SEO, is very professional and knowledgeable and has consistently improved our SEO rankings. She has been very pro-active in managing the SEO aspects of our website and makes good recommendations on it's style and content. There have been a few bumps in the road on the management of our PPC campaign but none so much as making me want to terminate the contract. Emily, who now manages our PPC campaign has got to grips with our customer requirements much better than her predecessors and the campaign is now moving forward. We have monthly meetings which are productive and these are complemented by regular email exchanges.

