



6 SEO FIXES

FOR YOUR WEBSITE IN 2020

About 391,000,000 results (1.04 seconds)

HOW TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC IN 2020

Search Engine Optimization, or organic search, is necessary not only to meet online business goals, but for eCommerce and lead gen sites to be profitable. Most online business owners, focused on their core competencies, hire a digital agency to chart the course to their enterprise's continued growth.

These professionals create a goals-oriented campaign with initiatives aimed to achieve their client's business objectives. Depending on a wide range of factors, however, not every key business metric may always yield the best results such as increased relevant traffic/leads, conversions/sales, and of course, revenue.

When key performance indicators have declined, there may be many more reasons for this downward trend other than the effect of the economy upon or increased competition in a given industry. Here we'll cover the top five SEO fixes to implement in 2020 for every online enterprise to grow as successful and profitable as possible.

1

QUALITY SITE CONTENT

What is quality content? It varies by site, industry, and user. Simply put, the most effective content anticipates and answers site users' questions in an easy to understand format. This content must be accurate, clear, and attributed where necessary. In short, quality site content will closely follow Google's "EAT" Search

Quality Guidelines: **EXPERTISE, AUTHORITY, TRUSTWORTHINESS.**

This caveat also means that content must refrain from becoming too 'salesy'.

This last directive can be difficult to achieve, as most eCommerce site owners know that to attract business, one most often has to ask for their business.



70%
— OF SMALL —
**BUSINESS SITES
LACK A CALL TO
ACTION (CTA) ON
THEIR HOMEPAGE**

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

Site content that search engines deem as 'quality' refers to its relevance to users. Through scans performed as part of their ranking algorithms, search engines such as Google 'reward' sites with quality content. Simply put: the more useful information readers find on your site, the higher your keyword rankings will be for the associated pages.

Quality content also assists in backlink generation initiatives. A key SEO strategy is to obtain and increase high-quality backlinks from websites with high authority. To Google, in particular, high-quality backlinks indicate greater credibility and trustworthiness.



Content provides a vehicle to incorporate keywords. As part of a sound SEO strategy, skillfully incorporating keywords in text that is relevant will make your brand/online business/enterprise more competitive.

Provide a great user experience via quality content coupled with ease of use. To build a successful SEO strategy it is essential that your website has a solid structure. That means creating a site that users can easily navigate to locate the products/information they came for, optimizing robot.txt files, and drafting effective backend metas. If it takes users too long to find or they cannot find what they came for, they will leave your site for a competitor's.

2

MOBILE UX

Year over Year, the number of mobile users accessing the internet exceeds desktop users. This means that every website must acknowledge and facilitate these users. Today and in the future, it will not be enough to have a mobile-friendly, or responsive site. One's mobile site must be so well-constructed that every user can quickly gain access to precisely the information and/or products they came for.

Therefore compatibility with all mobile devices is imperative. Once on your site, users must be influenced to purchase, and the shopping cart and transaction functions are swift and secure. In all, the mobile site should provide a satisfying experience for all users, time after time.



AS OF Q2 2018,
SMARTPHONES
— HELD A —
63%
SHARE OF ALL
RETAIL WEBSITE
— VISITS —

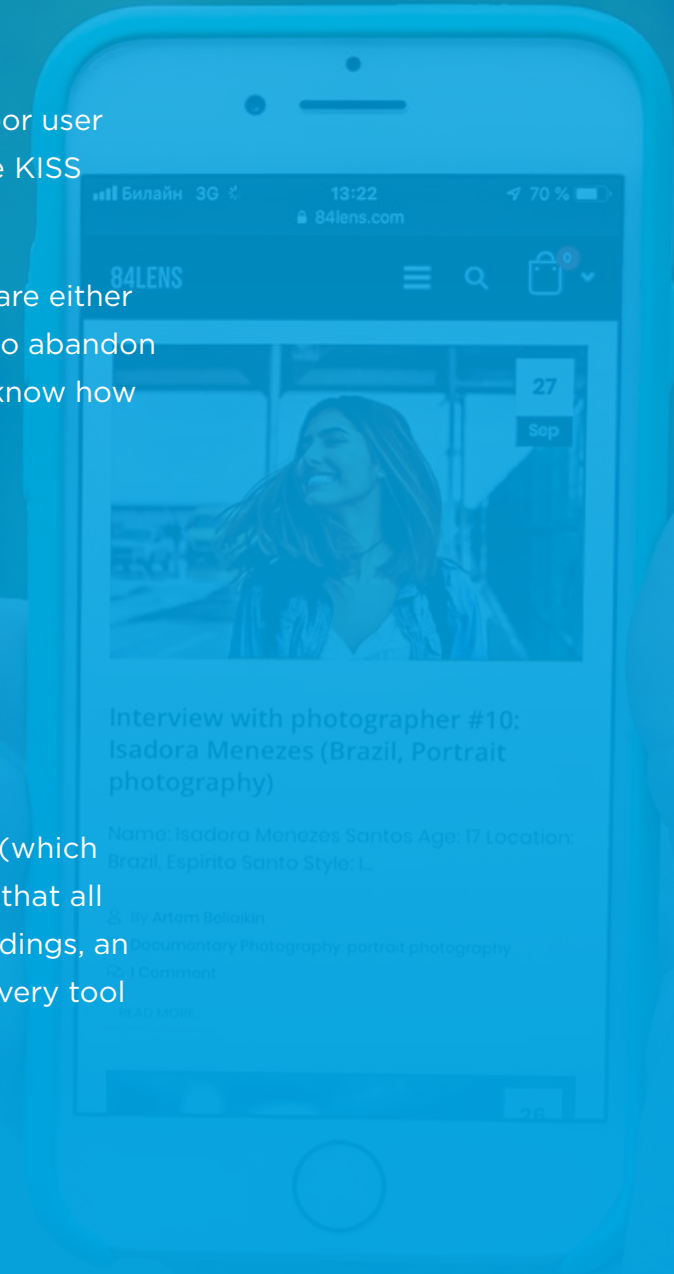
WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

What can cause potential customers to turn away and shop your competitors? A poor user experience. This begins with long page load times, and convoluted navigation. The KISS principle ('Keep it simple, stupid') has seldom been more valid.

Another Google mandate surrounds Accelerated Mobile Pages or AMP. Web pages are either static or dynamic. Essentially, static pages can load slowly causing many site users to abandon their searches. There are numerous 'work arounds' and an experienced agency will know how to ratify this issue within search engine acceptable parameters.



According to Google, over 90% of internet users are mobile. This means that SEO (which targets search engines) and UX (your mobile visitors' friend) must unite to ensure that all users receive the same quality experience. How? Via site structure that includes headings, an easy to follow 'roadmap', acknowledging user signals, and optimizing site speeds. Every tool that can be used to attract and retain mobile users will benefit any online business.



3

BACKLINKS

Backlinks are links to a website from another and have long been a tool used to promote a brand via shared site content, to attract site visitors, and, when properly applied offer mutual benefit to the home and host sites alike. Such links provide a 'vote of confidence' much like a job reference, that vouches for the integrity of the linked sites.

Therefore it is important to link with other sites that have as high an SEO trust score as possible. However, 'black hat' link schemes are common, therefore Google closely monitors this initiative and penalizes URLs that are linked to 'suspect' or low quality websites. Ensuring the links that point to your site are of the highest quality possible requires constant monitoring.



**COMPANIES
WHO ENGAGE
IN BLOGGING
— RECEIVE —**

97%
**MORE BACKLINKS
TO THEIR SITE**

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

Google continuously targets schemes and issues broad core updates. Staying on top of these changes and working to become and maintain compliance is essential to avoid negative site impact and possible penalties.

DISAVOW BAD BACKLINKS



TO AVOID SITE PENALTIES

Without quality backlinks, it is probably impossible for any business to remain competitive. However, backlinks have an indeterminate 'life' and must be constantly monitored and removed (disavowed) when they are no longer 'working' on a site's behalf.

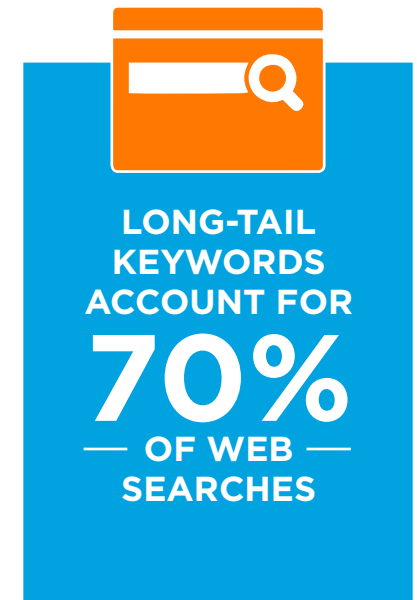
LONG TAIL SEARCHES

In many competitive industries, achieving a top ranking for a specific keyword may seem nearly impossible. While not as popular, long tail searches, or descriptive phrases, do garner a percentage of search volume, and therefore should not be overlooked. The theory here, especially for smaller enterprises, is that “part of something is always better than all of nothing.”

Now there are other cogent reasons to employ this strategy: voice search. The rise of mobile search will take on new directions. Accessing sites using our fingertips is increasingly being supplanted by users speaking into their devices using phrases that are scalable for search engines. Clearly, the future of search is long tail keywords.

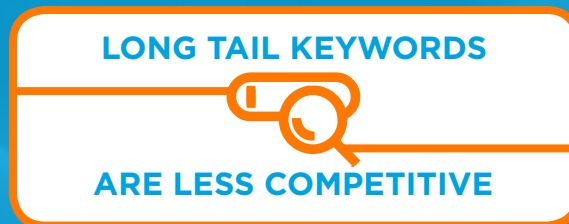
To prepare for this new direction in search, site owners can do two things:

- Ensure that their site content is simple and clearly understandable
- Also that it incorporates long tail keywords tied to current search usage



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

For industries where there is one Goliath and numerous Davids, directing at least part of an individual keyword list to long tails can be one of the best strategies is to move to the front of the pack even if overtaking the leader is not an option. In highly competitive fields, long tail keywords allow online businesses to climb the competitive ladder one rung at a time as well as to remain solvent.



It is much easier to rank for long tail keywords than for single word keywords. While there is lower search volume for these terms, the process enables sites to have more keywords that rank well. Cumulatively, these rankings drive more site traffic. Also with Voice Search on the rise, phrases will likely overtake individual keywords for the majority of searches.

5

NON-SECURE SITES

Perhaps one of the bigger threats to any online business in the coming year is the lack of awareness by business owners that their site could have unresolved security issues. Websites without a secure socket (HTTPS before the URL) are vulnerable to viruses, malware, and hacking. However, many websites only implemented a secure URL and did not realize that action alone would not fully resolve the issue nor protect the site from online threats. Content from former HTTP sites needed a refresh as well. Viewed as 'mixed content' sites by browsers in December 2019, Google began blocking site pages carried over from previously non-secured HTTP URLs, ie. mixed content sites.

Whereas previously Google's bots recognized and accepted HTTP content, now entire sites are being blocked by default. This is due to mixed sites creating confusing browser security UX, where a scanned site page presents itself as neither secure nor insecure but an unrecognized 'somewhere in between'.

Such sites 'banned' content includes scripts and iframes some types of images, audio, and video which will not be allowed to load. Google's move intends to rout sites and content which threaten users' privacy and security. Non-secure sites could easily be hacked and misleading content inserted. It is imperative for every online business owner whose Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are trending downward to make remediating this issue their #1 priority in 2020.



GOOGLE
SHOWS THAT
84%
OF ALL SITES
— INDEXED —
ARE CURRENTLY
ENCRYPTED

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

Secure websites protect users' privacy. This encryption means their online activity cannot be tracked nor, most important, their information stolen. In an era of identity theft, how do you want your customers to perceive you- as a site that safeguards their privacy or one that does not?

An SSL certificate ensures data integrity since files cannot be corrupted as they're being transferred. Google Chrome labels HTTP sites as insecure, and also cites that over 80% of users polled stated they would abandon carts if they became aware that the site was unprotected. A non-secure website can cost eCommerce site owners conversions and revenue.

SECURE HTTPS SITES RANK HIGHER



THAN NON SECURE HTTP SITES

Load speeds for HTTPS sites are markedly faster than HTTP sites. Numerous studies have noted that HTTPS sites tend to rank higher as well. In fact, according to MOZ, a leading online influencer, for major search engines, if they could perform a side by side comparison of two seemingly equal sites where one is HTTP and the other HTTPS, the secure site will be ranked higher by default. Google also notes that 40% of the search engine's page one organic listings are HTTPS. This is a compelling reason to have a solid SEO campaign supporting your business objectives.

OPTIMIZING YOUR WEBSITE FOR VOICE SEARCH

Most users access the internet via mobile devices. Increasingly, consumers are adding smart speakers to our offices and residences as well. If you haven't already, you likely soon will. The ability to perform voice searches streamlines the search process making users more productive and the sought after information even closer at hand. In fact, recent surveys have shown that almost 75% of consumers polled indicated they use voice search at least once a week to locate information, visit the associated site, and often to make a purchase.

This means that voice search users are not casually accessing the 'net; they are actively seeking to make a purchase. Therefore, just as it has become imperative to create a responsive website, overlooking this vital upgrade will leave reactive business owners playing catchup with their peers. As history has shown us, the uphill battle is often unsuccessful.



75%
OF CONSUMERS
POLLED USE
VOICE WEEKLY
TO SEARCH THE
— WEB —

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

Create listings on the local search directories that are appropriate for your industry. Ensure these are kept up to date and corresponds with similar information on your site. These listings can be an excellent lead gen source but must be maintained to retain their value.

Incorporate long tails into your keyword list. These are phrases that for voice search replace individual keywords. Think about it. Mobile and smart speaker users talk to their devices in phrases, not single-word search terms. Example: “Alexa: Which Italian restaurant in Huntington is running that ‘all you can eat’ promotion?” Here again, your agency must be vigilant to be certain your long tails reflect current voice search terminology. The goal here is to drive the most qualified traffic to your site, traffic that is more likely to convert than a site visitor who is ‘browsing’.

LONG TAIL SEARCH VOLUME WILL INCREASE



AS VOICE SEARCH POPULARITY GROWS

It is more important than ever that your online business is optimized for mobile users. For example, for those urgently seeking information, ensuring that your site loads quickly could mean the difference between making the sale and being passed over for a competitor’s site.



To conclude: The digital landscape is ever changing. Businesses must adapt or risk falling behind their competition. Therefore, when attracting and developing new business is the goal, it is essential that online business owners partner with a digital agency that is proactive rather than reactive. With a complete awareness of the digital landscape, the web professionals at Active Web Group, a highly experienced, full-service, and advanced digital agency, will develop a strategy around Google's mandates and navigate potential issues before they negatively impact your enterprise.

CALL TO SCHEDULE A CONSULTATION WITH OUR TEAM AT (800) 978-3417

