



14 Ways to Increase Your Organic Traffic

with SEO Best Practices

1. MAKE SURE YOUR SITE IS MOBILE FRIENDLY

Mobile friendliness is now a critical ranking factor for search rankings. You may remember Google's big algorithm update in Spring 2015, lovingly referred to as "mobilegeddon"? Use [Google's Mobile-Friendliness Test](#) to check your site!

2. OPTIMIZE YOUR TITLES & META DESCRIPTIONS

Titles + meta descriptions (which are used to describe your pages in SERPs, or search engine results pages) have a huge impact on CTR and can help with your rankings.

I'm a big fan of the WordPress plugin Yoast SEO, which has a free version. Yoast adds sections to the edit screen for each of your pages and posts which allow you to easily customize your titles and descriptions and preview how they will appear in search results. It also gives you tips on improving other on-page factors.

3. OPTIMIZE YOUR PHOTOS

HOW TO MAKE YOUR PHOTOS SEARCH ENGINE FRIENDLY

- **Give your photo a title:** Please don't leave the generic image file name with a random string of characters (like image_28439_384857.jpg). Instead try 2-5 words separated with an underscore or hyphen.
- **Use alt tags:** Alternative text tells search engines what your picture is about, so be accurate and descriptive – ex: "strawberry-jelly-in-mason-jar" instead of just "jelly"
- **Watch your file size:** Nothing will slow down your website more than gigantic images. Make your images as small as you can without compromising their clarity (anything bigger than 1000px is probably excessive unless it's a hero/slider image). If using Photoshop, Export > Save for the Web.

4. USE SEO-FRIENDLY URLs

Create a simple URL structure that search engines and humans will love!

Example: website.com/my-keyword

URL DOS AND DON'TS:

- Avoid dynamic URLs (ex: website.com/?p=1234)
 - Update structure in WordPress Settings > Permalinks
- Keep URLs short: Edit the 'slug' field to assign a concise permalink for your post
 - If your post title is "5 Simple Overnight Oats Recipes That Will Change Your Morning Forever" – consider a permalink like: website.com/simple-overnight-oats
- Use only 1-2 keywords per URL (and always separate words with a hyphen)
- Use descriptive names for blog and shop categories
- Consider updating your site to https by installing an SSL certificate

5. ORGANIZE YOUR WEBSITE NAVIGATION

Well-structured and logical website navigation ensures that your users have a positive experience on your site AND helps Google determine which pages are important.

6. BE SMART ABOUT KEYWORDS

KEYWORD TIPS

- Do your research: [Google's Keyword Planner](#) is a great tool for finding out the search volume and competition for your keywords as well as brainstorming potential new keywords to target
- Use your keywords in titles, meta descriptions, image alt tags, headings/content, and URLs where possible
- Use long-tail keywords: they are less competitive + drive more qualified traffic
- Add keywords to your site naturally – don't abuse them (no stuffing!)

7. CREATE GREAT CONTENT

The best way to improve your SEO is to write amazing content that provides value to your readers. What kind of content would you take the time to read and share?

Rule of thumb: your blog post should educate, inspire, or entertain. Ex: curated lists and how-to guides.

Having trouble coming up with ideas? Try [HubSpot's Blog Topic Generator](#).

8. LINK TO INTERNAL PAGES

Review each of your posts for opportunities to link to other blog posts and pages on your website. These “internal links” will encourage users to stay on your site longer and will help those linked pages rank higher in search.

Use relevant anchor text: Instead of having the user click on an ugly URL, hyperlink keywords that correlate with the page being linked to.

9. FIX BROKEN LINKS + UTILIZE 301 REDIRECTS

Dead links, or URLs that can’t be found return a 404 (file not found) error. This delivers a poor user experience AND is terrible for SEO. If search engines find too many 404 errors on your website, they assume the site is poorly maintained.

Use 301 Redirects: 301s, or permanent redirects, redirect broken URLs to the correct URL. Bonus: 301s also push any “link juice” or ranking power from the old page to the new page!

10. LEVERAGE SOCIAL MEDIA

If you’re going to take the time to create and optimize content, make sure you also take the time to share it!

Social SEO “Mojo”: Yes, social media can indirectly influence your SEO. Social interactions (likes, shares, retweets, etc.) are registered by search engines and can help them determine the quality and relevance of your content.

11. INCREASE BACKLINKS (CAREFULLY)

Backlinks, or inbound links, are links from other websites to your website. Backlinks are great for driving traffic to your site AND can help you rank higher in search. Why? Because high-quality backlinks help show search engines the validity or relevancy of your content.

QUALITY OVER QUANTITY: I can't stress this enough. Lots of crappy links to your site will hurt you so much more than they will help. Engines could penalize you for linking tactics perceived as "spammy" (sometimes referred to as "black hat" seo).

TIPS FOR INCREASING "WHITE-HAT" INBOUND LINKS

- Create content worth sharing! (Free templates, resources, etc.)
- Encourage users to share your content (ex: incorporate "tweet this" links and pinnable images in your content)
- Write guest blog posts!
- Build relationships + collaborate: feature other bloggers/brands and they will be more inclined to return the favor
- Include social share links on your posts

12. OPTIMIZE YOUR SITE FOR LOCAL SEARCH

Local optimization helps improve your ranking and increases your exposure to potential customers and clients in geo-targeted locations like cities and states.

LOCAL SEO TIPS

- Include your city and state in your meta titles
- Display contact and location information prominently on your website (use a true physical address and phone number with a local area code)
- Create or claim your business listing on Google and Bing, and optimize your profile (add website link, contact info, branding, and high quality images)
- Ask your customers for reviews

13. IMPROVE YOUR SITE'S LOADING SPEED

Check how your site speed measures up with [Google's PageSpeed Insights tool](#) and make adjustments accordingly.

14. MONITOR YOUR EFFORTS

Create a Google Analytics account and keep an eye on your progress!