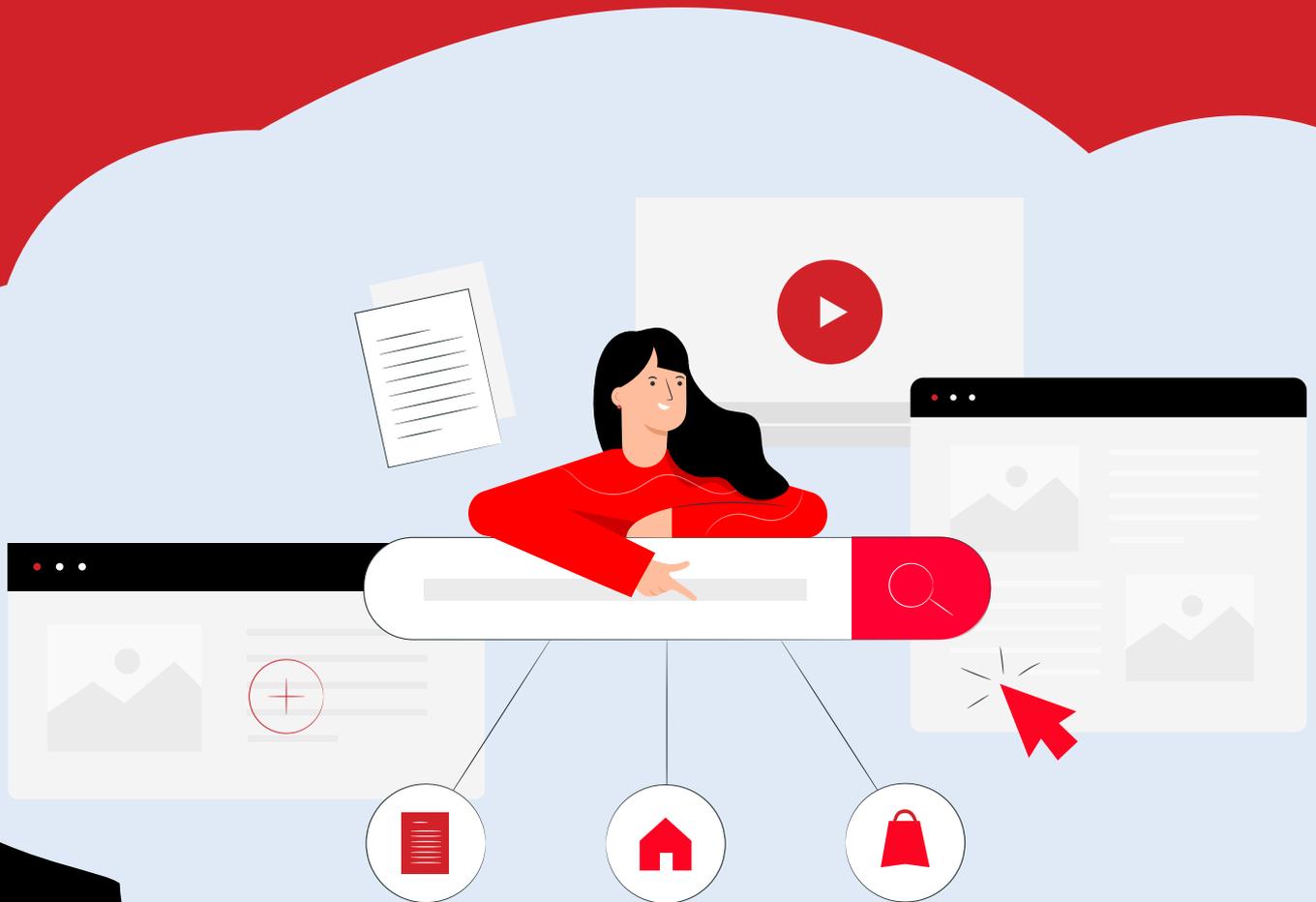


SEO Made Simple and Easy

A STEP BY STEP GUIDE



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INTRODUCTION

SEO – Simple and Easy steps to incorporate Search Engine Optimization in your Strategy

Does the mention of the word SEO give you the jitters? Do you feel overwhelmed by the technical jargon that the SEO folks throw around? I understand your pain. I went through this myself. I attended a workshop on SEO for beginners and came out of it a much confused being thinking, “I better find an expert to do this SEO thing for me”. Well you are not alone. In fact, [SEO is the least popular digital marketing](#) channel according to a recent survey done by [Clutch](#). Only about 44% of businesses spend time on SEO. This is because most folks don't understand SEO and its results are not immediately visible. It is a long-term game.

Let me tell you from my learning that SEO need not be as scary or techie as it sounds. It can be quite simple, logical, sensible and even easy to implement. I will give you a few guidelines on how to build a robust and long-term SEO strategy for whatever online business that you do.

Before we go into the steps, I want you to understand what is Search Engine Optimization? You know how we turn to Google every time we have questions? I have even typed the most personal questions during my times of confusion. For example, one day, after a long day of mulling on what is my life purpose on this planet, I event typed into Google – How to find clarity in life? I kid you not, Google returned me 107,000,000 results in 39 seconds. That made me feel like I am not the only one seeking answers to all kinds of questions on Google.

SEO is that magic sauce which will enable Google to decide that for every question that the user types into the search bar, what content should show up on the first page of its search results for the user. Or at least that's what SEO aims to achieve. Chances are that you will hit upon your relevant answer in the first two pages of your search results. Or if you are not satisfied, you will most likely modify your search query.

Now put yourself in the shoes of that person typing into the search bar of Google. If you can optimize your business offering or the content on your web presence from the point of view of that user, you have nailed it as far as SEO is concerned. Think like the user and customize your content to suit the need of that user. Google's powerful algorithms will do the rest of the magic and based on the relevancy score and best match between the user's query and content, it will throw up your content on top for sure!

I am trying to keep the technical jargon to the minimal in this post. Know this people, what you type into the Google search bar is what is called 'keywords' in the SEO community. Now let's get into the easy steps.

STEPS TO INCORPORATE SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION IN YOUR STRATEGY



Step 1

Keyword research

This is the number one step in setting up your SEO strategy. You need to do a thorough 'keyword' research to find out what are the users typing into Google Search Bar related to your business. Find out 10-20 such top keywords. There are certain tools that you can use to do this research effectively. [SEMrush](#) is one such paid tool which will give you superb intelligence. Google Keyword Planner is the best free tool out there to do keyword research. You would need to have an AdWords Account with Google. [Neil Patel](#) – the king of SEO also offers a free keyword tool called [UberSuggest](#). Some other paid tools worth mentioning are [Ahrefs](#) or [Moz](#).

Whichever tool you apply to do your keyword research, you will get the data on the search volume – how many people are searching for that keyword or phrase, competition, as in how many companies are competing for that keyword, which will determine its cost per click. If demand is more for that keyword, then its cost per click will be high.

To avoid getting confused with the jargon, just stick to this thumb rule on which keywords to optimize for – High Cost per Click + High Search Volume + Low Competition. This winning formula should help you to decide which keywords should you be creating content around.

Step 2

On Page Optimization

The next step is what the SEO people call On Page Optimization. This can get confusing quickly as it involves Page Titles, H1 tags, Meta tags, Alt Tags etc. I would like to recommend a very simple, yet effective tool called the [Yoast](#). This is a fantastic WordPress Plugin which will take minimal effort on your part to get an expert SEO on page optimization kicking in for every page of your web content. Just install this plugin on your website and it will literally do the job for you. All you will need to do then is to follow instructions and type in the content like the Titles, Snippets etc. Don't be afraid, it is easy to get this plugin installed and running.

Step 4

Building Links

Links are like endorsements or votes from others that they like your content or that they think your content is worthy of sharing. This indicates to Google that your content is of high quality and it raises your rank a few notches higher in Google's algorithms! Up goes your Page Rank and Domain Authority! (Technical Jargon that SEO folks throw around)

Here it is important to solicit backlinks from other websites or bloggers whose audience is likely to benefit from your content. For example, if you are into beauty and makeup, then your tips on Smokey eye makeup might be well aligned with a Makeup Products Brand's audience.

How we solicit backlinks? There is no magic formula or automation available for this. It just takes manual hard work. First, your keyword research will show you what others in your domain are writing about. Their target audience. In the world of SEO and content creation, the way to improve your authority is by benchmarking yourself against the best content out there and then trying to come up with something that is 10x times better than theirs.

A cool tool to help you do some research on what content is trending is [Buzzsumo](#). A very powerful tool to figure out what are the top influencers writing about and what content is doing well. Once you identify these people, their content and their target audience, you then simply find out who the creator of these content pieces are and write to them. Something to the tune of – Hey XYZ, I saw that you shared a post on ABC topic. I have written a better and more powerful post on the topic and I think your audience would benefit from this post. Would you please share my post's link on your website?

You send 100 such emails soliciting backlinks, 5 may respond and share your post on their website. But these are powerful links. They work wonders in proving to Google that your content is share-worthy. It really does well to raise your respect, subject matter expertise and authority.

Social Sharing is key in getting people to read and engage with your content. There are many unconventional methods of getting people's attention.

Here are just a few tips –

1. Push out your post on all social media channels as a link post.
2. Do a live video on Instagram Stories. Go live telling people what they are going to learn if they read your article. I have experienced a very high engagement rate on Instagram and Instagram Stories.
3. Convert your blog post into a video by using tools like [Lumen5](#) and share on social media. Videos get far more viewership, reach and engagement than static link posts.
4. Add a shortened custom link using [ly](#) to your Instagram Bio to lead people to your blog post every time you create new content. A long link is too unwieldy to remember. However, a short custom link is easy to navigate to. Moreover, you can collect data on the number of clicks to the custom link right from Bit.ly as well.
5. Use [Twitter](#) to tweet about your blog post using relevant hashtags and use full 240 characters to provide a short summary or brief of what the reader will learn from your post or link.

Step 5

Repeat the Cycle

SEO does not give instant results like paid advertising does. It is a long-term game which requires patience. It takes up to six months at least to see the results of your hard work. You keep repeating the cycle from Step 1-4 continuously over time. It does not have to be a time-consuming task. It just needs to be integrated into your overall content strategy. Everything you do is carefully thought out, created, pushed out and sit back and watch your page show up in top ten searches on Google from the millions of websites out there!

There I have shared it all when it comes to having a robust SEO Strategy. Do not be afraid of the jargon. Just do a thorough keyword research to find out what people are searching for related to your business. Find out what your competitors are sharing related to your chosen keywords. Produce content around your chosen keywords that is far superior to the content that is out there already. Share it on social. Solicit backlinks from others to share your content if their audience needs are aligned with yours. Don't worry about the jargon. Use simple effective tools like Yoast to do your on-page optimization for you. Invest in SEO as a long-term strategy rather than a short-term one. You are sure to win.

Do you think I have covered it all? Or if there are any questions or doubts, that I should cover more? Do let me know your thoughts and feedback. Leave comments. Share with others who will benefit from this post.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Anjuli Gopalakrishna is an expert in digital and social media marketing. She can help you with strategy and implementation of your digital marketing needs. She also provides 'skill based' training workshops on topics ranging from fashion industry to digital marketing.

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