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A guide to SEO
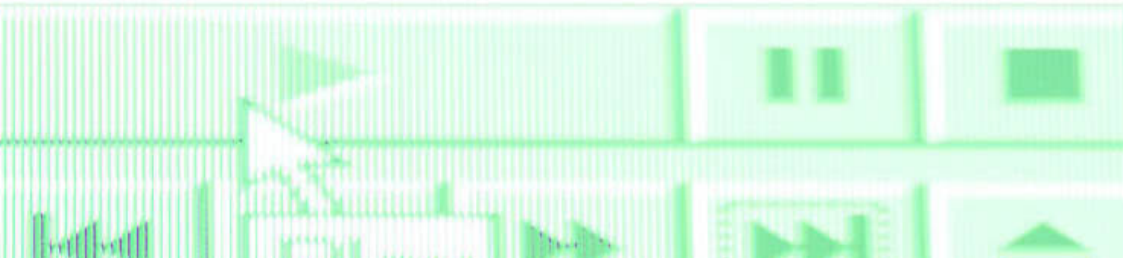
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Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)

Traditionally SEO was carried out (and not always very well) by web designers and agencies who looked after the build and maintenance of your website.

Site owners have now realised the benefit of involving SEO Specialists either at the outset of building a new website, or to review and revise what is already in place.

At New Image Systems we pride ourselves on understanding what you want to achieve from your website, unlike other companies who jump in with a quote and one size fits all attitude.

It is true that almost anyone can undertake some basic SEO tasks for their website but where to start?

In this guide we share with you where to start, common terms used in the SEO world and a Top 5 hints and tips.

Starting Out

Your website is up and running, great! But can anyone actually find it?

If you give someone your URL ie. www.newimagesystems.co.uk they should find your site, but what about people who don't know about your product or service yet, how do you reach them?

The best way to ensure that your website is found in the organic search engine results is to carry out Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) for your site.

This involves promoting your site above your competitors sites and striving to reach the number 1 position for your chosen keyword/phrase, no mean feat!

Top 5 Tips

We hope that our Top 5 tips below helps you on your way, but if you need further help with achieving results, please don't hesitate to contact us.

1. Review all of the Meta Tag information on each of your websites pages. Each page should contain a unique Title, Description and Keywords. Make sure that your keywords are used (but not overused) and ensure the content is appealing to site visitors as most Search Engines use this text to display in their search results.

2. Research your keywords; ensure that you know what your customers use as a search term when hunting for your product or service on Google and other Search Engines. You can get an indication of suggested keywords by using the Google Keyword Tool.

3. Install Google Analytics onto your website. This is a piece of code that cannot be seen by site visitors but will allow you to gather information regarding your visitors by volume, date and time, where they come from, what pages they visit and where they exit the site from and how quickly.

4. Content Management – This is really key to ensuring both Search Engines and visitors use your site and return to it in the future. Imagine having a home page that has said the same old thing for the past year? The Search Engines won't come back and crawl your site more often and your visitors are unlikely to return to read the same thing over again. Ensure that your content is optimised to use your researched keywords and is appealing to your visitors and most of all upload news, offers, industry information to keep the site fresh and well indexed.

5. Take time to build links into your site from other websites that are relevant to your business and are authoritive, which are usually sites that have many quality inbound links to their own website.

What to expect

Remember, SEO is not an overnight fix, it takes time, patience and some know how to really achieve results. However when you reach the coveted first page position on Google for your chosen keyword you'll notice an increase in traffic to your site and if you have a great site, an increase in requests for your services or products.

You've achieved your goal; relax... Unfortunately that isn't the case! Each time you and your competitor's websites are re-indexed by the Search Engines your organic ranking can rise or fall. Only by keeping your website optimised with new content and links, will help you to ensure you continue to reach your goal.

Common SEO Terms

Ad words This is also known as Google Pay Per Click and is a way of advertising your service or goods on Google Search Engine.

Affiliate An affiliate site advertises your products or services, when a sale is made via their site they earn a fee or commission from you.

Algorithm This is used by search engines to decide which web pages display for the given search query.

Alt text The Alt text is used to offer a title or description of an image on your website and is usually only seen when a user passes their cursor over the image.

Google analytics This free service allows you to gather and analyse data for your website including number of visitors, where they are from and more.

Anchor text This is the visible section of a link on a website ie. Click Here

Authority or trust The amount of trust that a site is given by a Search Engine for a given search query. This is built on relevant incoming links from other websites with trust.

Banner An image which can be used to advertise your services, product or a promotion on another website (usually paid advertising)

Back link This describes a link into your website from any other website or forum/blog.

Black hat Search engine optimisation tasks that are against the guidelines given by Google.

Bot This is a program which performs a given task automatically, Search Engines use them to find your website and index the pages.

Bounce rate This is the % of site users who visit your site and then leave it promptly without clicking on any links or other pages.

CMS stands for Content Management System which is basically the admin system where you, the website owner, can upload new text and images without needing to know anything about website programming.

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CPM This is actually Cost Per Thousand impressions, and is a statistic which measures the average cost of pay per click advertisements.

Crawler also known as a spider This is a program used by Search Engines mainly which reviews and gathers all of the data and information on your site.

Directory A list of websites held in a directory.

E-commerce site This describes a website which sells items.

Feed This is content or data which is delivered to or from a site or program, usually automated.

Google The most commonly used Search Engine.

HTML or Hyper Text Markup Language is a code used to program what and how you see the content of your website.

impression The act of a page or item being presented to a site visitor.

Indexed/Indexing Pages This is in relation to pages on a website that have been "recorded" by a Search Engine

Keyword/key phrase A word or phrase that a user searches upon in a Search Engine.

Keyword research To determine which keywords are relevant to your website.

Landing page this is the page that a site visitor lands on when clicking on a link from another site or Search Engine.

Link Either a peice of text or an image that can be clicked upon to visit either another site or a page on your website.

Link baiting This is where a page (usually with useful or interesting content) is written with the purpose of attracting links to your site from others.

Link building To set up incoming links to your website.

Link exchange As above but you also place a link on your site to whoever is linking to you.

Long tail (keywords) These are search queries which are usually more specific to your service/product ie. A dog called Basil, as oppose to just dog or Basil

META tags Information on each page of your website which is not visible to your visitors but is used by Search Engines to display information regarding your site on their search results.

Organic Search Results The results delivered by a Search Engine which have not been paid for.

Outlink A link which goes out to another page (not part of your website)

Pagerank (PR) Google assigns each web page a value between 0 and 1 which is generated after considering how many links you have into your site and other factors.

PPC (Pay Per Click) as per adwords description.

Robots.txt a file on your website which defines where a Search Engine can crawl.

Sandbox Where Google may put your website if you are found to be carrying out unethical SEO practices..

Search engine or SE a program used to search the internet ie. Google.

SEM Search Engine Marketing includes actions such as Search Engine Optimisation, Pay Per Click and other advertising/linking opportunities to increase traffic to your website.

SEO also known as Search Engine Optimisaion, the work undertaken to increase the number of visitors to your site by achieving high organic ranking positions in the Search Engines.

SERP Search Engine Results Page; those pages returned by a Search Engine when a search is performed by a user.

Site map A map of your website which links to every page on your website to assist with usability and Search Engine indexing.

Social media The act of shareing points of view or catching up with friends online ie. Blogs and Facebook.

Spam An unwanted message to your inbox (that you haven't subscribed to) or link to your website from a site full of irrelevant content.

Spider Used by search engines to crawl your site add web pages to their index.

Text link A text link that is not associated to a graphic or image.

URL Uniform Resource Locator; your website address