SMALL BUSINESS SEO CHECKLIST



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Link to associated blog article - Small Business SEO Checklist PDF: 20 Ways to Improve Your Rankings

- ☐ **Choose Relevant Keywords** - Brainstorm what types of words your audience is likely using to find information in your niche. Then use a keyword tool to uncover even more words. *Be sure to choose highly targeted, relevant keywords – especially those with commercial intent.* Look for the low-hanging fruit (longtail keywords) that may not have a lot of volume, but don't have a lot of competition.

- ☐ **Optimize Your Webpages** - Include your keywords strategically on webpages:
  - ☐ meta descriptions
  - ☐ page (and blog post) titles
  - ☐ subheadings
  - ☐ image descriptions
  - ☐ alt texts for images
  - ☐ anchor text for internal links
  - ☐ throughout the content (don't stuff your content with keywords phrase though)

- ☐ **Create High-Quality Content** - Craft engaging content around your keywords. Your goal should be to write for human readers first and only include your keywords if you can do so naturally. Above all, Google wants to provide a great experience for their visitors, and that includes sending visitors to sites with high-quality, useful content.

- ☐ **Improve Page-Load Speed** - Google likes to provide a great experience for their visitors and prefer to send them to high-performing webpages. So, ensure that your webpages load quickly. Use a tool like the Google PageSpeed to find out what might be slowing your web pages down and how to make improvements.

- ☐ **Utilize a Mobile-Friendly Design** - Use a mobile-friendly, responsive design that looks great on any device (desktops, tablets or mobile). In fact, more people are using their mobile devices to search. If your website doesn't load correctly or look pleasant on small devices, it won't rank well.

- ☐ **Use Internal Linking** - Be sure to use an appropriate keyword as the anchor text whenever you link to a page on your own website.

- ☐ **Create a Clear Website Structure** - Think through your web structure before you start building your website, which will help you create a site that's easy to navigate and includes a keyword in your navigation menu. Also, create an XML sitemap and submit it to Google.

- ☐ **Use Alt Tags for Images** - Alt tags helps Google better understand your images. Alt tags also make your website more accessible for people with vision impairments. Include your keywords in the alt tag and/or as part of a photo caption.

- [ ] **Build High-Quality Backlinks** - Naturally build backlinks from authority sites in your niche through guest posting, distributing press releases and such. Do not buy links or do link exchanges or get links from poor-quality sites.

- [ ] **Research Your Competitors** - Find out what keywords your competitors are using and where they're getting their backlinks. Then you can be sure you're optimizing for the same keywords and getting the same backlinks.

- [ ] **Craft Longform Content** - Google prefers longform content over "thin" content. Be sure your content is a minimum of 300 words long. Ideally, content pieces should be around 1000 words long where possible.

- [ ] **Optimize for Voice Search** - Quite a few members of your audience likely use voice search, so be sure to optimize content for it when possible. This often means optimizing for complete sentences (e.g., "how do I train my dog?" versus "dog training tips").

- [ ] **Secure Your Site** - Be sure you're using "https" and an unexpired SSL certificate. You can also embed relevant security badges on your site, especially on order forms, to build trust with users.

- [ ] **Monitor Bounce Rates** - Monitor your bounce rates and improve the quality of webpages where a lot of visitors click away quickly. If people land on your pages and immediately leave, Google isn't going to rank those pages.

- [ ] **Optimize URLs** - Create URL structures that include your keywords, for example, yourdomain.com/keywords.html.

- [ ] **Craft Shareable Content** - Create high-quality, unique and useful content. This helps get more people sharing your content, especially across social media. Google and other search engines take these "social signals" into consideration when determining rankings, plus you'll also get highly desirable backlinks if and when an authority site links back to your site.

- [ ] **Ensure Your Site is User Friendly** - Do usability and accessibility testing to be sure your site is easy to use and navigate for your audience:

    - [ ] Be sure your site's navigation is intuitive
    - [ ] Design content in multiple formats so that people of differing abilities can access it
    - [ ] Put the most important information at the top of each webpage
    - [ ] Design content for easy readability
    - [ ] Ask for only the information that's necessary when visitors fill out forms on your site

- [ ] **Audit Your Website Regularly** - Audit your site every three months or so to ensure that you catch broken links, broken scripts, and other issues affecting your page performance and search engine rankings. Here's a Website Audit Checklist PDF you can use.

- [ ] **Be Sure Your Site is Crawlable/Discoverable** - Ensure that your website is discoverable and crawable by firstly submitting your sitemap to Google via your Google Search Console account. Then ensure your website has a clear structure, strengthen your internal linking structure, regularly update and publish new content, and the other steps listed in this checklist.

- [ ] **Stay Informed and Up-to-date About SEO** - Follow authority websites such as SearchEngineWatch.com and SearchEngineJournal.com. For a more in-depth practical understanding of SEO check out RankMath's SEO Course.

SEO Resources

★ **RankMath SEO Course** - The Rank Math SEO course covers the nuts and bolts of SEO, from basic to advanced tactics to boost the organic traffic to your website and rank higher in the search engine results.

★ **Search Marketing Mastery** - With DigitalMarketer's Search Marketing Mastery, you'll learn how to build an SEO strategy that boosts your sales by attracting and converting your ideal leads.

★ **RankMath WordPress SEO Plugin** - RankMath is a WordPress SEO plugin that helps you optimize your content to rank better and higher in search engine result pages.

★ **Blaze AI Content Marketing Platform** - Blaze is your content marketing command-center for budget conscientious solopreneurs and small business owners that need to leverage AI for creating marketing content for their business. It has a very unique repurposing feature which allows you to quickly and easily convert one piece of content into several other pieces of content. For example, you can take a blog article and convert that into social media content, email newsletters, customer service responses, FAQs, landing pages, and more.

★ **Koala Writer** - There are many AI content writers out there, but to date Koala wins in terms of the quality of long form content.